

Project Exploration Trip: Cook Islands

Driving Renewable Energy and Sustainable Infrastructure Development

Focus Area: Energy Infrastructure and E-Mobility

PROJECT EXPLORATION TRIP AS PART OF THE GERMAN ENERGY SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE BY THE BMW

- The Cook Islands are working to reduce fossil fuel dependence and emissions. This project offers local organisations the chance to explore renewable energy and e-mobility solutions with experienced international partners.
- Organised by the German-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce (GNZCC), the initiative connects local stakeholders with German SMEs offering reliable, sustainable technologies and long-term partnership potential. Interested organisations are invited to contact the GNZCC.
- Participating organisations can engage directly with German companies, shape joint pilot projects, and explore investment opportunities tailored to the local energy needs.

Overview

The Project Exploration Trip (PER), conducted under the German Energy Solutions Initiative of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE), is intended to open up new business opportunities for German companies in the fields of renewable energy and infrastructure with a focus on energy systems and e-mobility in the Cook Islands. The initiative also serves as a gateway to the broader Pacific Islands market. Prior to the trip, participating companies will receive a detailed project brief and an invitation to take part in an information session on 2 September 2025 featuring expert insights from a sector specialist.

The problem

The Cook Islands are pursuing an ambitious decarbonisation strategy aimed at reducing their dependence on imported fossil fuels, ensuring a sustainable energy supply and

responding to the impacts of climate change. The focus lies on renewable energy, battery storage systems, and zero-emission mobility solutions, including green hydrogen – all of which play a central role in the country's economic and environmental future. Despite initial progress in the areas of solar energy, storage systems, and charging infrastructure, there remains considerable development potential, particularly in the expansion of stable and efficient energy systems and a sustainable transport infrastructure.

There is strong demand for smart grids, scalable battery storage, and hybrid energy systems, e.g. solar and green hydrogen, to balance fluctuations in renewable energy generation and to strengthen energy independence.

E-mobility in the Cook Islands is still in its early stages, yet it offers significant opportunities for a climate-friendly transformation of the transport sector.

Renewable Energy Share in the Cook Islands' Electricity Mix (2014–2023)

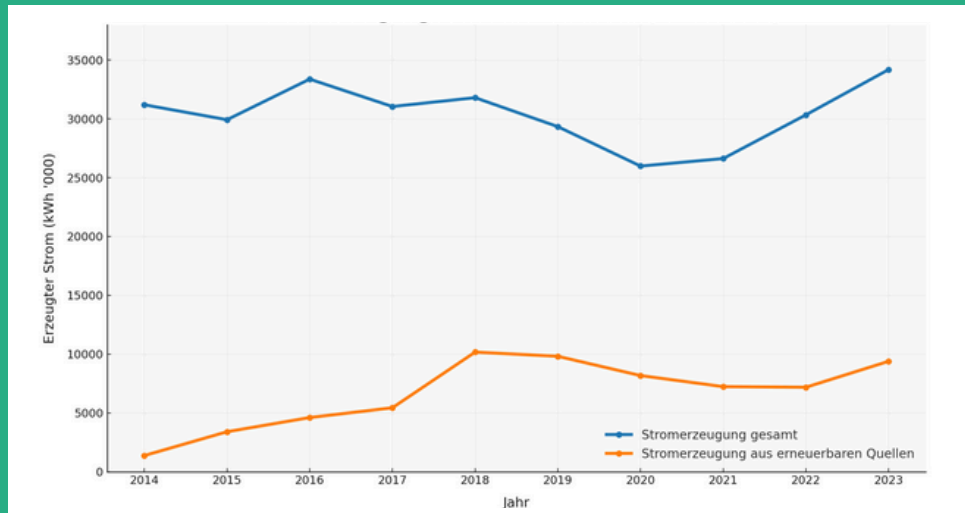


Fig. 1: Electricity Generation in the Cook Islands 2014–2023. Source: <https://stats.gov.ck/miscellaneous-statistics-march-quarter-2024/>; own representation

The solution

By facilitating contacts between German companies and stakeholders in the Cook Islands as part of the PER, the country's decarbonisation efforts are supported through targeted projects with German technology and expertise. Smart grid technologies, automated grid control, load management systems, green hydrogen, electric buses and boats, and vehicle-to-grid solutions are key pillars in the development of a sustainable energy infrastructure in the Cook Islands. However, local experience with the implementation of such technologies remains limited. The participating German companies bring valuable expertise and are well positioned to support Cook Islands organisations in closing technology and knowledge gaps.

Who can take part?

German SMEs or foreign subsidiaries of German companies may apply through the parent company based in Germany. Employees of the subsidiary are then eligible to participate in the project exploration trip (PER). Cook Islands companies,

utilities, and institutions interested in improving their energy or mobility systems are encouraged to request a meeting with the German companies through the GNZCC. These meetings provide a chance to discuss specific needs, identify potential solutions, and explore project cooperation.

Benefits

The project offers mutual benefits for German SMEs and the Cook Islands. For German companies specialising in renewable energy, it provides valuable insights, access to relevant stakeholders, and concrete project opportunities to support market entry in the Cook Islands and the Pacific region more broadly. Local stakeholders in the Cook Islands gain access to innovative technologies, proven expertise, and potential partners who can support their efforts to reduce reliance on imported fuels, improve infrastructure resilience, and promote e-mobility. By forming consortia, German companies can offer turnkey solutions for renewable energy development projects.

How will the project be implemented?

The aim of the project is to support German SMEs in entering the market in the Cook Islands – and the Pacific region more broadly – through targeted preparation and identification of relevant local stakeholders. Participating companies will receive a comprehensive briefing on local opportunities during a digital information session.

The project exploration trip (PER), scheduled for 1–5 December 2025, will be organised by the GNZCC in close coordination with its established network in the Cook Islands. The programme will include executive roundtables, site visits, cooperation talks, as well as group meetings and B2B discussions. The overarching objective is to facilitate the formation of German company consortia for the implementation of projects in this emerging market.