

NEWSLETTER

THE FEDERAL MINISTRY
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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Topics

Climate and Energy | Economy and Products | Nature and Biological
Diversity | Europe and International | Government Funding | Water,
Waste and Soil | Health and Chemical Safety

Publications



Innovation made in Germany honoured by IKU award 2011

For the third time, the Federal Environment Ministry and the Federation of German Industries (BDI) have jointly presented the German Innovation Award for Climate and Environment 2011 (IKU). The prize recognises and rewards outstanding ideas and innovations in climate and environmental protection. As in the years before, the renowned jury headed by former environment minister Prof. Klaus Töpfer in 2011 received a large number of applications by companies and research facilities. The IKU 2011 was awarded in four categories, with the winners each receiving 25,000 euros. At the awards ceremony, Federal Environment Minister Röttgen noted that the winning projects represented impressive examples of how combating climate change and economic success were not mutually exclusive. [more]

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Climate | Energy



Renewables a key pillar of energy supply

In 2011, the share of renewable energies in Germany's overall power generation once again saw a significant increase, according to preliminary estimates calculated by the Working Group on Renewable Energy Statistics (AGEE-Stat) for the Federal Environment Ministry. Notably in the electricity sector, renewable energies surged to around 20 per cent of electricity consumption – compared to 17 per cent in 2010. Since the year 2000, the renewables' share has roughly tripled. [more]



Renewable Energy Sources Act 2012

In line with the transformation of its energy system, Germany plans to incrementally increase its use of renewable energy over the next forty years to reduce greenhouse gas emissions up to 95 per cent by 2050 compared to their 1990 levels. In order to achieve these aims, the German Bundestag in 2011 revised the pioneering Renewable Energy Sources Act. Having entered into force on January 1, 2012, the new EEG 2012 amendment affirms

Germany's ambitious energy goals, stipulating for example that renewable energy shall account for 35% of the overall electricity production by 2020. In addition, it reflects the legislative support for the rapid development of solar PV, also imposing an equalisation scheme on Germany's energy consumers through revisions in energy feed-in tariffs. [more]

Economy | Products

Developing the top-runner approach on EU level

The purpose of the so-called top-runner approach is to foster a competitive edge for the development of new, more efficient technologies by declaring the best technology available on the market as standard for all products. Implemented of the principle on EU level, however, has so far not been able to exploit its full efficiency potential. The Federal Environment and the Federal Economics Ministries therefore have come up with a joint concept paper which presents concrete proposals on how the top-runner approach can be further developed at EU level. Energy efficiency standards, for instance, need to take the most efficient products of a group as reference. In addition, the German government suggests energy consumption labelling to be implemented quickly and extended to other product groups. [more]

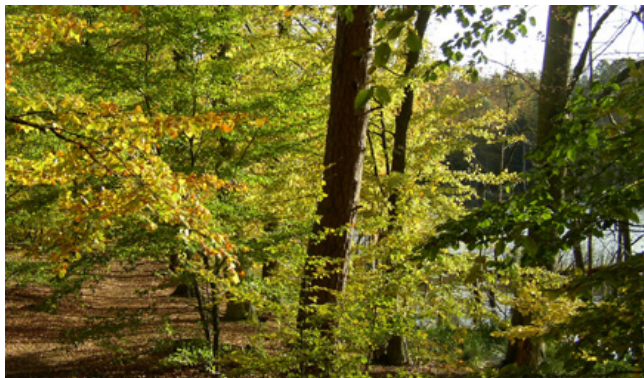
Nature | Biological Diversity



Röttgen launches UN Decade on Biodiversity for Germany

On 8 November 2011 Federal Environment Minister Norbert Röttgen in Berlin officially opened the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, responding to a call from the UN General Assembly to halt the loss of biological diversity in the decade between 2011 and 2020. Governments and private players worldwide are encouraged to commit themselves to nature and the conservation of biological diversity. The Federal

Environment Minister said that biodiversity conservation represented a worthwhile investment in the future. Röttgen launched a competition to find the best decade projects, inviting stakeholders to create their own activities related to the focal topic „enjoy diversity - nature is recreation“. [more]



Germany receives certificate for UN World Heritage Site

On 25 June 2011 the UNESCO declared five German beech forest areas World Heritage Sites. At a ceremony held on 16 November 2011 in Berlin, Federal Environment Minister Norbert Röttgen received the official inscription certificate from Kishore Rao, Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Center. Röttgen commended the dedication of the German states and partner

countries to preserving the valuable natural beech forests. The World Heritage status represented a commitment to continue to accord highest priority to the conservation of our outstanding natural assets, he added. [more]

➤ [BMU brochure “Beech forests - UNESCO World Natural Heritage”](#)

INFO

Europe | International

Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment revised

The EU’s Permanent Representatives Committee on 22 December 2011 finally reached agreement on the revision of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive. Intended to increase collection and recycling targets for waste electrical and electronic equipment and curb illegal exports, the new directive will lay down minimum standards covering all electrical and electronic devices. In addition, the European registration procedure for placing electronic equipment on the market will be streamlined in order to serve manufacturers and importers. Once it has entered into force the Directive will be transposed into German law through an amendment to the Electrical and Electronic Equipment Act (ElektroG). [more]

Europe | International



Deal reached at UN climate talks

After two weeks of intensive negotiations, the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban was concluded on 12 December 2011 with a success for international climate change diplomacy. With the so-called Durban package the Parties defined a roadmap for a new climate agreement that will apply to all countries which is to be adopted no later than 2015. At the same time, the participant states decided to continue the Kyoto Protocol with a second commitment period. Other important decisions made under the Durban Package include the establishment of a Green Climate Fund, structures for an Adaptation Committee and a Climate Technology Centre and Network.

Federal Environment Minister Norbert Röttgen said the Durban Package marked a qualitative leap forward, since it laid the foundations for the first international climate agreement to apply to all countries. [more]

- Durban Package
- Mali and Grenada prepare for adaptation to climate change
- BMU supports Dominican Republic in assuming leading role in climate protection

INFO

Further funding for the protection of the ozone layer approved

At the joint conference of the parties to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol, held in Bali in November 2011, member states made decisions on further international funding for the protection of the ozone layer. Decisions included the replenishment of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol through additional contributions of 450 million US dollars between 2012 and 2014. Germany, providing around 8 per cent of the amount, is the third largest contributor. Despite the current financial crisis, the funding for measures to protect the ozone layer has remained stable. The fund supports developing and industrialising countries in complying with their obligations of phasing out the production and use of ozone-depleting substances. [more]



Renewable energies and energy efficiency pay off for Europe as well

On 15 December 2011, the EU Commission introduced its new Energy Roadmap to 2050, which describes several technological and economic approaches to achieving Europe's low-carbon 2050 objectives. The aim of the roadmap is to fulfil these climate targets while improving Europe's competitiveness and security of supply. Federal Environment Minister Norbert Röttgen

welcomed the roadmap, explaining that it was in Europe's own interest to combine the expansion of renewable energies with rigorous measures to improve energy efficiency. [more]

Europe | International



EU proposes new safety rules for offshore drilling

As a reaction to the Deep Water Horizon platform disaster and ensuing oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in May 2010, the European Commission on 27 October 2011 presented its proposal for a regulation on safety of offshore oil and gas prospecting, operation and production activities. The proposal contains concise rules covering the entire offshore prospecting cycle,

including granting of licences, emergency response, regional extension of the scope of environmental liability to all EU waters and international cooperation. Federal Environment Minister Norbert Röttgen welcomed the EU's initiative to reach out beyond Europe's borders and establish a global safety architecture for offshore oil and gas activities. [more]

Government Funding

BMU boosts energy-related modernisation of buildings in Latvia

The energy-related modernisation of system-built buildings offers great potential for climate protection in Germany and across Europe. A successful project in this area, supported by the Federal Environment Ministry with around 1 million euros, has just been concluded in Latvia. Between 2003 and 2011, nine typical system-built residential buildings in the Baltic state had been modernised in line with German energy standards. The project also included the training of managers for the modernisation of buildings, who in turn serve as multipliers by initiating further modernisation projects. The BMU programme offers support for model projects for the climate-friendly economic development in the new EU member states and candidate countries. [more]

➤ [BMU programme "Pilot projects abroad"](#)

INFO

Germany supports Morocco's solar plan

Within the ICI framework the BMU will provide a grant of 15 million euros to help finance the first large solar power station in Morocco. A first agreement between the KfW bank and the Moroccan Agency for Solar Energy was signed on 14 December 2011. Construction for the plant that will be located in the south of Morocco will start this year. With a storage capacity of three hours the power station is expected to extend electricity supply from solar energy into the early evening. [more]

Government Funding



New insurance solutions to protect states particularly vulnerable to climate change

Developing countries located in disaster-prone regions - such as the Caribbean - are particularly hard hit by the consequences of global climate change and struggle to adapt to the increasing risk. The BMU has approved funding for a unique project that will develop insurance solutions in Caribbean states. The objective is to protect small farmers from losing their livelihoods due to a

hurricane or a flood by offering microinsurance linked with disaster risk reduction and risk management. Funded by 2 million euros, the three-year project features an umbrella of the Munich Climate Insurance Initiative involving Munich Re, the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) and specialist microinsurance broker MicroEnsure. [more]

Water | Waste | Soil

Waste management sector sets up „German RETech Partnership“

On 20 December 2011, representatives of waste management companies and German higher education institutions established the association „German RETech Partnership“ in Bonn, thus turning the Federal Environment Ministry’s existing Export Initiative Recycling and Efficiency Technologies (RETech) into a private entity. The association will continue to focus on improving export opportunities for companies in the waste management sector and on promoting know-how transfer and technology export. The goal is to strengthen modern waste management structures in developing and newly industrialising countries in particular. [more]

- RETech - Export Initiative Recycling and Efficiency Technologies
- www.retech-germany.net

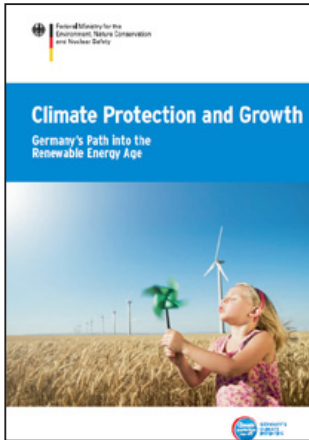
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Health | Chemical Safety

Improved labelling of chemicals and toxicity information

Classification and labelling of chemicals in Germany is now based on internationally used standards, according to an amendment to the German Chemicals Act that entered into force on 9 November 2011. The new regulation features a substantial change regarding the visual appearance of chemical labelling; the previous labels with danger symbols on an orange background will be replaced by labels similar to traffic signs with a hazard pictogram on a white background with a red frame. In addition, the new act extends the reporting obligations concerning the composition of mixtures to poisoning information and treatment centres, thus contributing to a significant improvement of health protection. [more]

Publications



Climate Protection and Growth - Germany's Path into the Renewable Energy Age

The transformation of the energy system represents a major modernisation and innovation project for the German economy at the start of the 21st century. However, it is essential to ensure that energy remains affordable for everyone. That is why the Federal Government is relying on a mix of publicly funded support schemes and economic incentives in order to promote renewable energies and energy efficiency. This new brochure provides a comprehensive overview of Germany's ambitious energy policy. In addition to an outline of the challenges, trends and opportunities involved, the publication also includes information

on the legislation and key funding programmes. [more]

➤ [Order online](#)

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The BMU online editorial team

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