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"The Energy Research Programme in Germany"; Dr. Christiane Fricke

- Abstract -

The German government's energy research policy rests on its Fifth Energy Research Programme, 'Innovation and New Energy Technologies', which was announced in June 2005 for the period up to 2008. Within this period the Federal Government is making about €1,7 billion available for R&D in modern energy technologies. The programme forms the basis for national funding policy in the coming years.

By funding research and development for modern energy technologies, the German government pursues the following goals:

- Making a sound contribution to fulfilling current policy requirements: this primarily involves securing a balanced energy mix so as to increase energy productivity, raise the share of renewables and secure reductions in energy-related greenhouse gas emissions at minimum cost.

- Securing and expanding available technology to improve both responsiveness and flexibility in energy supply to allow industry and consumers the ability to adapt to new trends.

Apart from its specific energy policy research agenda, energy research policy accelerates innovation, speeds up energy technology's access to the market, fosters the development of climate-compatible practices and makes them available to other countries. This boosts economic growth and employment in Germany.

Current priority funding areas include "Modern power plant technologies using coal and gas, including CO_2 sequestration and storage", "Photovoltaics", "Offshore wind energy", "Fuel cells and hydrogen", "Technologies and processes for energy-optimised buildings" as well as "Technologies and processes for use of biomass for energy".

The programme also encompasses – across the board – energy-saving technologies in industry, commerce, trade and services, all other renewable energy sources (hydro, solar, geothermal, etc.), research on nuclear safety and nuclear waste disposal, and research on nuclear fusion.