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Press Relations Officer: Martin Ittershagen
PR-staff: Anke Döpke, Dieter Leutert,
Fotini Mavromati, Theresa Pfeifer, Martin Stallmann
Address: Postfach 1406, 06813 Dessau-Roßlau
Telephone: +49 340/21 03-2122, -2827, -2250, -2318, -3927, -2507
E-Mail: pressestelle@uba.de
Internet: www.umweltbundesamt.de



106 million tonnes less CO₂

UBA publishes report on emissions saved through use of renewable energies in 2007

A new report by the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) which accounts for the emissions from renewable energy sources (*Emissionsbilanz erneuerbarer Energieträger*) concludes that roughly 106 million tonnes of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO₂) were saved through the use of renewable energies in 2007. The report provides an account of renewable energy sources that has been updated in terms of method as well as content.

Development of renewable energies has been very successful over the past ten years. In 2007, they supplied roughly ten percent of total final energy consumption, a share that is threefold that of 1997.

Energy supplied by renewables avoids emissions of greenhouse and other gases that pollute the environment. To determine the emissions saved in the electricity, heating and transport energy sectors, the Federal Environment Agency has issued an account of renewable energy sources updated in both its method and content. The net emissions balance is composed of volume of emissions saved as well as new emissions- produced by upstream processes, for example. During an expert workshop held at the Federal Environment Agency on 12-13 March 2009 in cooperation with the Working Group on Renewable Energies - Statistics (AGEE-Stat), the data sources and methodology of emissions accounting applied were discussed and fine-tuned.

The results of a new calculation of net emissions from renewable energies show that the volume of emissions saved was as follows: 67 million tonnes CO₂ in the power sector, 28 million tonnes CO₂ in the heating sector, and 11 million tonnes CO₂ in the transport sector. This adds up to CO₂ emissions savings of about 106 million tonnes in 2007.

A more detailed look at the greenhouse gases methane and nitrous oxide revealed a net emissions balance for renewable energies (taking into account upstream processes) with emissions savings amounting to some 107 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalents in 2007. This is emissions savings of about 71 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalents in the electricity sector alone. An additional 29 million tonnes and 7 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalents, respectively, are accounted for by the heating and transport sectors.

Due to lacking data and an ongoing debate about calculation methodology, there is no account of direct or indirect changes in land use.

The Emissionsbilanz erneuerbarer Energieträger report is available as a free download at:
http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/uba-info-medien-e/mysql_medien.php?anfrage=Kennummer&Suchwort=3761

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