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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



Emissions trading is a big plus for climate protection in Germany

Operators produced far lower volume of greenhouse gases in 2008

Operators and facilities in Germany subject to emissions trading generated a total of 473 million tonnes of ozone-depleting carbon dioxide (CO₂) in 2008, representing a reduction of 14 million tonnes of emissions on 2007 levels. Operators participating in emissions trading were in major part responsible for mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions in Germany. When taking into account the extended scope of trading in the second trading period, reductions for 2008 are well above 3 percent. The national greenhouse gas inventory which takes stock of other sectors and harmful climate gases such as methane or nitrous oxide declined by 1.2 percent. "Emissions trading is a proven instrument for promoting effective climate protection", says Dr. Hans-Jürgen Nantke, Head of the German Emissions Trading Authority (DEHSt) at the Federal Environment Agency (UBA).

The installations obligated to engage in emissions trading account for roughly half of all greenhouse gas emissions in Germany. The national budget of the emissions trading sector for the 2008-2012 trading period was cut drastically compared to the 2005-2007 period, amounting to 451 million emissions allowances annually. DEHSt allocated some 90 percent of these to operators free of charge. For the first time, the number of issued certificates was lower than actual emissions of installations. It is mainly operators of installations in the energy industry who must apply additional emissions allowances to compensate for their CO₂ emissions; that is, they may purchase certificates on the European market, use emission reduction certificates from the Kyoto Protocol's project-based Joint Implementation (JI) and Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), or resort to use of certificates already issued for 2009. "After the surplus of certificates on the market in the first trading period (2005-2007), there is now more incentive for technical measures to mitigate CO₂ at the installation level", said Nantke.

The operators of 1,659 installations in the energy sector and emissions-intensive industries in Germany are subject to reporting their annual emissions and to surrendering emissions allowances accordingly. Operators have until 30 April 2009 to balance the accounts for emissions from their installations.

Registration with UBA of operators obligated to trade in emissions is nearly complete for 2008. The Agency has begun review of the emissions reports submitted by operators.

A detailed evaluation of the carbon dioxide emissions from the emissions trading sector will be available on the Internet soon at: www.dehst.de

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