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Joint press release with the Federal Ministry for the Environment

Material efficiency in production saves resources and lowers costs

Federal Environment Minister Peter Altmaier presented the Federal Ministry for Environment's new funding priority "Material efficiency in production" at the Hannover Messe trade show today. The BMU is supporting the initiative under the Environmental Innovation Programme with a funding volume of up to 20 million euros. The objective of the funding priority is the optimisation of production processes to conserve natural resources. The Federal Environment Agency will supervise the new funding programme, and the KfW banking group will take on its administrative and financial management.

German manufacturing firms have high costs for materials. In 2009 average costs for raw materials, auxiliary supplies and fuel accounted for more than 40 per cent of gross production value. That is twice as much as payroll costs. Raw materials are more than just a cost factor, however. Their extraction, processing and use as well as disposal have a considerable environmental impact. Modernisation of technology could save about 20 per cent of material costs. The new funding priority is aimed at increasing this potential and is a contribution to the implementation of the Germany Resource Efficiency Programme (ProgRes).

Funding will be provided to innovative pilot projects which promote:

- implementation of material-efficient production processes,
- substitutes for material-intensive production processes, and
- use of residual and waste materials as secondary raw materials.

For the first time the review of projects will examine processing and production processes in their entirety, from raw material extraction to the finished product. Applications for funding can be submitted until 30 September 2013.

The Federal Environment Agency's new web-based brochure *Umweltinnovationsprogramm - Erfolgsgeschichten des Umweltbundesamts* features exemplary resource conservation projects which have received funding.

For more information see: <http://www.umweltinnovationsprogramm.de/Materialeffizienz>

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