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UBA President praises sustainable tourism and urges continued moves forward

First *Fahrtziel Natur* Award presented in Düsseldorf

The *Fahrtziel Natur*, or "Destination Nature", Award 2009, was granted in Düsseldorf for the first time today. This prize, with a cash value of 25,000 euros in the form of a communications package, has gone to the Nationalpark- und Naturparkregion Bayerischer Wald (Bavarian Forest) for its Igelbusse/Bayernwald Ticket project. The award-winning project is exemplary in its cross-linkage and optimisation of sustainable mobility for the tourism sector. The Bavarian Forest national park is linked to public means of transport, and its most important facilities and trails can be accessed via the Waldbahn train and the natural gas-fueled Igel bus. The Bayernwald ticket entitles passengers to travel on bus and rail in the middle of Europe's largest forest reserve.

At the award ceremony, the President of the Federal Environment Agency (UBA), Jochen Flasbarth, praised the goals set by *Fahrtziel Natur*. "The initiative unites experiencing nature in nature preserves with environmentally friendly mobility and climate protection. Tourism possibilities have become not only attractive, but sustainable, too", said Flasbarth. The UBA President indicated there is still much to be done, saying, "to make safe and comfortable rail travel more attractive to even more people, it must be made possible to take bicycles along on ICE trains. Furthermore, the subsidies for the most harmful of all transport modes, the aeroplane, must be stopped by levying energy taxes on the aviation sector, too. As long as the railways are at a systematic competitive disadvantage compared to aviation as a result of different taxation, it is no wonder that the potential of rail travel has not yet been tapped." On this occasion Flasbarth deemed it proper that the aviation sector will be included in European emissions trading as of 2012 and thus be charged with its share of environmental costs.

The *Fahrtziel Natur* Award was initiated by *Fahrtziel Natur*, a cooperation of Deutsche Bahn and the environmental organisations BUND, NABU and Verkehrsclub Deutschland. Ten of the seventeen destinations to nature preserves participated in the contest.

For more information on "*Fahrtziel Natur*" and the award go to http://www.fahrtziel-natur.de/regional/view/fzn/ueb_fzn.shtml.

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