

# Press Release No. 46/2012

**Press Relation Officer:** Martin Ittershagen

**Deputy Press Relation Officer:** Stephan Gabriel Haufe

**PR-staff:** Magnus Maier Marc Rathmann, Martin Stallmann;  
Office: Doreen Redlich, Uwe Weber

**Telephone:** +49 340 2103 -2122, -6625, -2067, -2250, -2507, -2669, -2637

**Address:** Federal Environment Agency, P.O. box 1406, 06813 Dessau-Roßlau

**E-Mail:** [pressestelle@uba.de](mailto:pressestelle@uba.de)

**Internet:** [www.umweltbundesamt.de](http://www.umweltbundesamt.de)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/umweltbundesamt.de](http://www.facebook.com/umweltbundesamt.de)



Joint press release of WBGU, UBA and SRU

## The prospects for Doha – we must use the time available up to 2020

**The German Federal Government's climate advisors say the EU should target 30-percent-lower emissions by 2020**

Global greenhouse-gas emissions from fossil fuels have reached new record levels, yet there will be no new, globally binding climate-protection agreement for all states before 2020. The challenge now, therefore, is to launch other initiatives to achieve further reductions in greenhouse gases before 2020 – but to be much more ambitious than we have been up to now. To this purpose, groundbreaking alliances should be formed quickly between pioneering states. This is where EU comes in. If it increased its 2020 emissions-reduction target to 30 percent, this would send an important signal to the nations of the world. Technically and economically this could easily be achieved, because the 20 percent reduction targeted for 2020 up to now has already almost been reached. Speaking at a joint press conference in the run-up to the 18th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Doha, Qatar, high-ranking representatives of the WBGU, the UBA and the SRU said that raising the reduction target was therefore overdue. Germany must support and encourage the 30 percent figure so that Europe could maintain its pioneering role in climate protection.

If the current trend of rising emissions of greenhouse gases - especially carbon dioxide - is not broken, the world could be heading for a global warming of four degrees this century. This is shown by the newly published World Bank report. Heat waves, crop failures and sea level rise would be the result. This makes a clear roadmap for international climate protection all the more necessary. Such a roadmap can now be decided at the UN Climate Change Conference in Doha. The world's public should take the national leaders at their word who agreed a new climate-protection treaty after 2020 in Durban last year. If such a treaty is to be decided and successfully implemented, a detailed plan is needed for the negotiations on a new global treaty by 2015. The Kyoto Protocol remains the only binding agreement up to 2020. Its second commitment period must be established with high standards. Clear reduction targets are important for this. This is the only way to prevent a regulatory vacuum. This is a real threat, because global greenhouse-gas reduction will not be continued in all states on a contractual basis under international law until 2020 at the earliest. Another important issue in Doha will be to flesh out the financial commitments of the industrialised countries for the period up to 2020 in order to support climate protection and adaptation in developing countries.

**Dirk Messner, Vice-Chair, German Advisory Council on Global Change (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen - WBGU), emphasises:** "However, it is also important that the nations in Doha agree on a master plan for the coming negotiations on a new climate treaty, which from 2020 will then oblige all states - not only the industrialised countries - to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. This step sounds unspectacular, but it is the basis for the purposeful work that we now need. Time is short, because we must set the course for much greater greenhouse gas reductions now, otherwise it will cost us all the more later. It is not only a matter of new technologies and renewable energy sources; it is about the transformation of entire societies and their infrastructures. The more serious the future climate changes turn out to be, the more expensive adjustment measures will become. It is not enough for politicians to set themselves targets. They must now also tackle implementation."

**Jochen Flasbarth, President of the Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt - UBA) says:** "The EU's role is of great importance to the future negotiations. The previous target of reducing greenhouse gases by 20 percent by 2020 is not ambitious enough which is also recognised worldwide. The EU therefore needs a new, more suitable target, e.g. a 30 percent reduction in greenhouse gases. This would again send out the scarcity signal that is much needed, also for emissions trading. Germany has started along the road to a low-carbon economy by transforming its energy system (Energiewende). We can contribute our practical experience with the Energiewende to the climate negotiations and demonstrate that a shift to a low-carbon economy is both possible and promising."

**Martin Faulstich, Chair of the Advisory Council on the Environment (Sachverständigenrat für Umweltfragen - SRU):** "In a finite world, the climate-damaging industrial society must be transformed into a sustainable industrial society anyway. If Germany now courageously and ambitiously develops and implements innovative climate-protection solutions, this will generate significant industrial-policy opportunities for our export-oriented economy. Technologies and services for resource and energy efficiency and a renewable energy supply are needed all over the world. In this way Germany, as a pioneer, can consolidate its leading position on the world markets and simultaneously create numerous sustainable jobs."

**Contact persons for the media**

Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt, UBA): Martin Ittershagen, Press spokesperson, Wörlitzer Platz 1, 06844 Dessau, tel.: 0340 2103 2122, fax: 0340 2104 2122,  
[martin.ittershagen@uba.de](mailto:martin.ittershagen@uba.de), [www.umweltbundesamt.de](http://www.umweltbundesamt.de)

German Advisory Council on Global Change (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat der Bundesregierung Globale Umweltveränderungen, WBGU)

Dr. Benno Pilardeaux, Head of Media and Public Relations, Luisenstrasse 46, 10117 Berlin, tel.: 030 263948 0, fax: 030 263948 50, [bpilardeaux@wbgu.de](mailto:bpilardeaux@wbgu.de), [www.wbgu.de](http://www.wbgu.de)

Advisory Council on the Environment (Sachverständigenrat für Umweltfragen, SRU): Dr. Christian Hey, Luisenstrasse 46, 10117 Berlin, tel.: 030 26 36 96 110, [christian.hey@umweltrat.de](mailto:christian.hey@umweltrat.de), [www.umweltrat.de](http://www.umweltrat.de)

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