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Joint press release with the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

Greenhouse gas emissions up by 1.6 percent in year 2012

Emissions still 192 million tonnes under Kyoto targets for years 2008 to 2012

According to the first preliminary calculations and estimations of the Federal Environment Agency (UBA), greenhouse gas emissions in Germany rose by 1.6 percent in 2012. Nevertheless; Germany clearly exceeded its reduction target under the Kyoto Protocol. When compared with 1990 greenhouse gas emissions in 2012 have dropped by 25.5 percent; a 21 percent decrease was needed on average for the years 2008 to 2012. In total roughly 931 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent were released, 14 million tonnes more than the previous year. CO₂ emissions went up most with an increase of 2.0 percent. The reason for this increase is that more hard coal and lignite was burned for generating electricity and more gas was used to heat houses and apartments due to cold weather. However, the expansion of renewable energies curbed the rise in emissions.

Current figures are the first to cover the whole of the first Kyoto Protocol commitment period. Actual emissions are likely to be 192 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent below the emissions budget for the period from 2008 to 2012. "The reduction we have already achieved marks an important milestone on the path towards our ambitious reduction target for 2020 and beyond. But it also shows that more decisions are necessary for the climate friendly restructuring of our energy supply" explained Federal Environment Minister Peter Altmaier. In order to reach these ambitious German climate targets changes to EU emissions trading, more energy upgrades for buildings and substantial efforts towards sustainable mobility are necessary.

UBA President Jochen Flasbarth stated: "The significant increase in climate-damaging gases, which many had predicted would result from the nuclear phase out, has been avoided as it is counteracted by the further expansion of renewable energies. However, I am concerned about

the trend to use more coal again for generating electricity." Flasbarth therefore called for a substantial boost to be given to European emissions trading: "The backloading of 900 million carbon allowances, suggested by the EU Commission, would be the first step. Ultimately, the allowances must be permanently and not temporarily taken off the market. This can be best accomplished by raising the EU climate target. The weaknesses in emissions trading have led to the current irrationally low electricity prices on the energy exchange." Measures such as backloading - postponing the auctioning of carbon allowances - are currently being negotiated at EU level. The Commission recently proposed that roughly 900 million carbon allowances be temporarily held back from the market in order to re-establish the effectiveness of emissions trading. The environment committee of the European Parliament agreed to the proposal on 19 February 2013. The final decision is to be made by the EU Council and Parliament.

Background paper on greenhouse gas emissions in Germany 2012 (in German):

<http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/uba-info-medien-e/4432.html>

Reporting up to 2011 on the EIONET website:

<http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/de/eu/ghgmm/envuppzuq>

overview of emission trends (in German):

<http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/emissionen/publikationen.htm>

Dessau-Roßlau, 25.02.2013