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Progress made or a standstill in environmental protection?

Answers provided in new manual with 44 environmental indicators

How exactly is the state of the environment in Germany? The answers to this question are provided in the new manual with environmental indicators (*Umweltdaten Deutschland - Umweltindikatoren*) published by the Federal Environment Agency. Whether it is energy productivity, land use or air, water or soil pollutants, the manual lists core facts on environmental issues stemming from the environmental core indicator system. Environmental indicators are part of the Federal Environment Agency's (UBA) environmental core indicators that provide information about environmental progress made on the path to sustainable development in Germany. The Federal Environment Agency (UBA) is publishing the *Environmental Data for Germany - Environmental Indicators* manual in cooperation with the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the Federal Statistical Office and German Meteorological Service.

Environmental indicators describe the state of the environment and report on positive and negative trends whilst providing a quick and up-to-date overview of the condition of the environment in Germany. This shows where environmental policy has been successful and where there is still room for more effort.

The following are some of the more encouraging developments:

Greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 18.5 percent from 1990 to 2005. Preliminary data for 2007 even points to a 20.4 percent reduction over 1990 levels.

The share of renewable energies in overall electricity production in 2006 was 11.7 percent, and preliminary data for 2007 indicates a rate of 14.2 percent. As such, Germany has more than met its target to achieve 12.5 percent by 2010.

Energy productivity rose by about 31 percent between 1990 and 2006. It is also positive to report that energy productivity rose by 7.7% in 2007. At this rate, the federal government's resolution to double energy productivity by 2020 can be achieved.

Transport intensity for passenger transport in 2005 was not much below the index value of 1999, about 96 percent. Efforts must be stepped up in this area, for by 2020 it is meant to be reduced to 80 percent of 1999 levels. Transport intensity describes the ratio between domestic person-kilometres and price-adjusted GDP.

Using 1990 as an index, air pollutant emissions declined by 55 percent up until 2005; this trend would have to continue to achieve the 70% reduction target by 2010.

Raw material productivity rose by 33.5 percent between 1994 and 2005, although that rate must be increased if the goal to double it by 2020 is to be achieved.

Increased efforts are required in the following areas:

The expansion of settlement and transport areas, or demand for land, slowed down slightly in 1992-1996 from 120 ha/day to 113 ha/day in 2003-2006. This is still far removed from the formulated goal of 30 ha/day by 2020.

Cropland used for organic farming rose to a mere 4.9 percent up until 2006, from its share of 1.6 percent in 1994, and is hardly expected to reach the goal of 20% organic farming on agricultural land by 2010.

The nitrogen surplus in the farm gate balance has declined overall by 8 percent since 1991. At 103.9 kg/ha, this is wide of the mark of 80 kg/ha by 2010.

Freight transport intensity, measured as domestic transport volume in kilometre/tonne in relation to price-adjusted gross domestic product, rose to 110 percent in 2005 compared to the 1999 figure. This displays a trend contrary to the goal of reducing freight transport intensity by 2020 to levels 95% of those in 1999.

The German edition of *Environmental Data for Germany - Environmental Indicators* manual can be downloaded from <http://www.umweltdaten.de/publikationen/fpdf-l/3435.pdf> and in English at <http://www.umweltdaten.de/publikationen/fpdf-l/3436.pdf>.

A print version in German and English is available free from the Federal Environment Agency, c/o GVP, PF 33 03 61, 53183 Bonn or by sending an email to uba@broschuerenversand.de.

More information on the Federal Environment Agency environmental core indicator system is at <http://www.umweltbundesamt-umwelt-deutschland.de>.

Dessau-Roßlau, 20 March 2008