

Climate Change : Climate Politics

Climate: Policy Signal has to be “loud, long and legal”

Germany is hosting the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm. Germanwatch Director Christoph Bals talks about his expectations and what has to be done in Germany to stop global warming.



Christoph Bals

Germanwatch's Executive Director Christoph Bals (Photo: Germanwatch)

What has to be done in Germany to stop climate change? What steps would be most effective?

I see three main criteria for climate policy decisions in Germany: What is the long term relevance for the emission trend in Germany? What is the relevance of policy decisions to support international climate dynamics? Is the policy signal “loud, long and legal” so that the financial market can base investment decisions on it?

The further development of the carbon market with stringent caps and full auctioning is crucial. The EU-Emission Trading System has the potential to become the cornerstone of an emerging international system, if it is well designed. The feed-in law for renewable energy has shown, that it can pave the way for renewable electricity. Similarly effective incentive systems for co-generation and solar heat should be introduced during this legislature period.

Related Articles

- 1. Climate Profile Germany - Introduction
- 2. Climate Profile Germany - Factsheet
- Germanwatch

Who are the most important players in Germany in the fight against climate change, and why? Whose support is crucial?

Four players are crucial: the politicians, the finance sector, energy intensive business sectors and civil society. The political sector has to set the right framework, that channels the thousands of billions of Euro in a climate friendly direction, which are going to be invested in the coming decades worldwide into the energy and transportation system. The finance sector has to make the right investment decisions, especially for long term investments (utilities, airplanes ...). The energy

intensive business sectors have to invent business models which allow them to move into a less greenhouse intensive future. And the civil society has to generate constructive pressure on politicians to move forward and at the same time it has to buy more climate friendly products and services.

What positive steps can the world expect from Germany in future international efforts to stop climate change?

The German government has played a very constructive role during the EU- and G8-presidency, to move international climate policy forward. The EU-decisions from March 07 are a break through on EU-level. I'm not very optimistic that the G8 summit in Heiligendamm will bring a similar international step forward. But it is good to see, that the German presidency is fighting for it. It is less clear, whether the German government has the courage to bring forward the national transformation of energy, transportation and building sectors as needed. If Germany moved forward here, its credibility for international negotiations would be much stronger.

editor: Thilo Kunzemann

publishing date: June 4, 2007

© Allianz 2007, All Rights Reserved