

As at: 5 July 2016

German Bundestag

Committee on the Environment, Nature Conservation,
Building and Nuclear Safety

Committee printed paper

18(16)409

**Item 12a) of the 88th sitting on 6 July 16
5 July 2016**

**Motion for a resolution
tabled by the CDU/CSU and SPD parliamentary groups**

on the communication by the Federal Government

**Programme for the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources
(German Resource Efficiency Programme II)**

- Printed paper 18/7777 –

The Committee is requested to adopt the following resolution:

I. The German Bundestag notes:

Given the finite nature of natural resources, increasingly difficult extraction conditions, trade-distorting resource policies and foreseeable price and distribution conflicts over mineral and energy resources, lowering our consumption of resources and materials is indispensable to protect the environment and the climate. At the same time, the key prerequisite for the economic success of our country is a secure and sustainable supply of raw materials.

The amount of natural resources we use substantially exceeds the earth's ability to replenish these. This means that only a forward-looking policy which conserves resources and uses them more efficiently will ensure generational equity. Lowering the use of materials and the consumption of energy resources that often goes hand in hand with this also make an important contribution to protecting the climate, as processing methods that conserve resources release fewer greenhouse gases.

Reducing the consumption of resources and materials is one of the key challenges of our time and simultaneously harbours major opportunities. For companies, using as little energy as possible and dealing sparingly with resources is an economic necessity. The wide-ranging endeavours by the business community in this vein must continue to be supported in order to create incentives and remove obstacles. This will set the course for ensuring that in the future economic prosperity for all goes hand in hand with social cohesion and the protection of our natural environment.

Improving resource efficiency promotes the competitiveness of the German economy, creates new jobs and secures employment in a lasting way. Many German companies are global leaders in the field of efficiency technologies and are contributing to unlocking more of the potential that exists thanks to technological innovation.

On 29 February 2012, the Federal Cabinet adopted the German Resource Efficiency Programme (ProgRes); the German Bundestag issued an opinion on this on 8 March 2012 (Printed paper 17/8575). In the scope of ProgRes, the Federal Government has decided to report at four-year intervals on the development of resource efficiency, to evaluate the progress made and to further develop the resource efficiency programme. The first progress report (ProgRes II) is now available.

II. The German Bundestag welcomes that

1. the Federal Government is continuing to advocate and work towards an increase in resource efficiency in the scope of the German Resource Efficiency Programme II and understands improving resource efficiency as a challenge and at the same time an opportunity for sustainable development which takes into account both economic and ecological and social aspects;
2. ProgRess II is being expanded to include fossil resources used in materials and energy and resource efficiency are increasingly being viewed as two sides of the same coin;
3. with the new indicator “total resource productivity” in ProgRess II the Federal Government has developed an indicator which can map the development of resource efficiency in Germany more reliably than the resource productivity indicator from the 2002 Sustainability Strategy, and that it has adopted a target for 2030 which entails an increase in total resource productivity of 30 % compared to 2010;
4. resource efficiency plays an important role at European level including in the context of the Circular Economy Package revised by the European Commission and that European initiatives for a more circular economy are to be bolstered;
5. product responsibility is being strengthened and the possibility of intelligently expanding this to include to new product groups with untapped recycling potential is being examined. Product responsibility is to be widened so that resource protection, waste avoidance, reusability and recyclability are already given consideration in the development and production phase;
6. with the foundation of the “G7 Alliance on Resource Efficiency” at the G7 Summit in Schloss Elmau in June 2015 resource efficiency was adopted as a permanent feature of the G7’s work and that this was reaffirmed this year under the Japanese presidency;
7. resource efficiency is also enshrined in the broader international context on the basis of the global Sustainable Development Goals (cf. Sustainable Development Goals 8.4, 9.4, 11.b, 12.2);
8. resource efficiency is to be boosted in the bilateral cooperation with developing countries and emerging economies;
9. the Federal Government wishes to work closely with exporting countries and civil society to do justice to its shared responsibility for sustainable local management of resources;
10. the continued expansion of a closer-knit network of business and industry, scientists and political actors is being supported to research technological developments, new processes or materials with a focus on applications and to put these into operational practice more swiftly. This also includes continuing to promote successful advisory and networking work such as the German Materials Efficiency Agency (demea) and the VDI Centre for Resource Efficiency (VDI-ZRE), in close coordination with the expansion of the German Resources Agency (DERA) at the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Resources (BGR). The continued existence and development of the Resource Efficiency Competence Centre and the Resource Efficiency Network can make an important contribution to this.
11. resource conservation is to be introduced as a criteria for trade and consumers to improve consumer information on resource-efficient products and enable resource-efficient consumerism.

III. The German Bundestag calls on the Federal Government

1. to develop a comprehensive national strategy to promote research and innovation for new resource technologies. Here, in particular, RD&I programmes (RD&I: Research, Development and Innovation) without any technological bias for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) - which make a considerable contribution to supporting the development of resource-efficient technologies - should be strengthened and accents from earlier programmes, such as the use in materials of CO₂ or innovative production techniques for cement, whose production currently is a major source of CO₂, should be included again;
2. to develop and expand the advice programmes and schemes for companies on how to improve their resource efficiency, in particular those provided by demea (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy) and VDI ZRE (Federal Ministry of the Environment) in tandem with the *Länder* (federal states) and business organisations close to SMEs, in order to promote awareness primarily at SMEs on how to deal more efficiently with resources and to improve the potential for raising performance and competitiveness by dealing more sparingly with abiotic and biotic resources;
3. to foster technological innovation for resource efficiency and to ensure that there are no advance decisions favouring a particular type of technology;
4. to systematically interlink the activities on energy and resource efficiency in the future, to develop corresponding communication structures, and to verify to what extent energy efficiency and material

- efficiency audits can be better attuned to each other and conducted jointly in the future;
5. to improve the methodological basis for assessing the resource consumption of certain product groups across the entire product lifecycle using life cycle assessment;
 6. to continue the cooperation with the *Länder* in the “Alliance for Sustainable Procurement” and in the scope of the alliance to examine to what extent resource efficiency can be bolstered in public procurement;
 7. to advocate and work towards the area of resource efficiency being backed up by concrete instruments and deadlines in the Circular Economy Package of the European Commission, which allow Europe to lead the way conceptually and economically;
 8. in the implementation of the Ecodesign Directive, in addition to examining energy consumption, to advocate and work towards the consumption of resources being taken into account more in the future, as fundamentally set forth in the work programme since 2012;
 9. to advocate and work towards step-by-step expansion of the Ecodesign Directive’s scope of application to include other product groups in addition to the ones relevant to energy consumption and to continue to politically support the efforts by the European Commission to include resource efficiency and specifically material efficiency in the Ecodesign Directive;
 10. to transpose the provisions of the Ecodesign Directive nationally and in that context to examine to what extent it is possible to give greater consideration to resource protection and waste avoidance in production/product design;
 11. to present proposals on expanding product responsibility as an instrument for waste avoidance without delay;
 12. to develop concepts for improving waste avoidance, in particular to research through simulations what new opportunities are possible for improving waste avoidance, *inter alia* systems for consumers to return used appliances;
 13. to do more to tackle the illegal export of waste and, like for the provisions applying to electric appliances, to verify which other product groups are particularly affected;
 14. to encourage more recycling of household and commercial waste, *inter alia* by higher and more dynamic recycling quotas;
 15. during the German presidency in 2017, to make resource efficiency a permanent part of the G20’s work, as successfully done in the G7,
 16. to make full use of the impetus on resource efficiency from the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) in the continuing of the National Sustainability Strategy;
 17. to set forth resource efficiency as a focus of investigation for one of the next research reports of the German Sustainability Strategy;
 18. to continue to report to the German Bundestag every four years on the development of resource efficiency in Germany.