

Energy efficiency and CO₂ mitigation: la fondue à la Suisse

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General set up

The Swiss Kyoto goal has been transferred to national legislation in the CO₂ reduction law; the law is in force since 2001. It sets a national CO₂ reduction target (CO₂ emissions to be reduced by 10% from 1990 to 2010). The target shall be reached with voluntary activities and a subsidiary CO₂ tax.

Voluntary agreements are elaborated and implemented in co-operation with the (privately run) Swiss private sector energy agency. The agency works with two different models: a model for SME and the "Swiss energy-model" for big energy consumers.

Current status of implementation

Today, roughly 40% of the CO₂ emissions caused by the industry and trade sectors are included in the agency. The respective companies are mainly members of energy model groups, which jointly reach pre-defined goals concerning the increase of energy efficiency and the reduction of CO₂ emissions. The goals are individually defined, based on the potentials of the companies. The concerted reduction of CO₂ emissions of the energy agency as a whole runs up to about 13% in 2010 compared to 1990.

The monitoring of the results shows, that the agency and the member companies are on track; it is even visible, that the measured results are slightly better than the set goals.

Key to success

Experience shows, that three main reasons lead companies to join the agency and the energy model: i) the group approach, which increases the efficiency of identifying profitable measures as well as their implementation, ii) the legal frame conditions with a clear reduction law containing incentives for voluntary action, and iii) the subsidiary CO₂ tax. Recently a further incentive was created: in certain cities in Switzerland companies get a discount on their electricity bills when they achieve defined energy efficiency goals, which are the same as the ones set in the voluntary agreements.