

Answer of the Federal Government

to the Minor Interpellation

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German-Russian cooperation in climate protection

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Preliminary remarks of the questioners

A few months ahead of the UN Climate Conference COP 15 in Copenhagen (7-18 December 2009), which is central to worldwide climate protection, Russia must be regarded as one of the most difficult but at the same time most important negotiating partners in the struggle to agree a post-2012 climate convention.

In the final document negotiated at the G8 meeting in Heiligendamm in June 2007, the sole commitment made by Russia, together with the United States, was to “seriously consider” at least halving global greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Nevertheless, Russia, together with its G8 partners, accepted the findings of the Fourth Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which states that human activity is the main cause of climate change. During the COP 14 UN Climate Conference in December 2008 the Russian Government declared it was striving to stabilise greenhouse gas emissions in Russia which had been growing since 1999 up to the time of the current economic crisis. As at the beginning of May 2009, however, the Russian Government, in the course of the current UNFCCC negotiations and in contrast to other countries, has not yet published emission targets for the periods to 2020 and to 2050.

It is true that because of the collapse of the highly energy-intensive Soviet heavy industry, Russian greenhouse gas emissions (excluding emissions from forests and through soil use) in 2007 were 34 per cent lower than they were in 1990. Independent Russian experts are currently forecasting a level of emissions for 2020 that will be 25 per cent below the 1990 level. Yet Russian industry continues to be one of the most energy-intensive and CO₂-intensive industries in the world. According to figures from Gazprom (20 April 2009), up to 100 billion cubic metres of natural gas could be saved each year in the country with simple energy efficiency measures. This would be equivalent to three times the volume of Russian gas supplied to Germany. According to figures produced by the World Bank, the energy intensity of the Russian economy has fallen by 3.4 per cent per year since 1990, but most of the other former Soviet Republics achieved annual reductions of between 6 and 7 per cent in the same period. In order even to maintain 3.4 per cent in the future, the World Bank believes that more pro-active policymaking is required.

Global warming continues to be largely ignored by the Russian public. Reporting on the issue in the media is being stepped up only very slowly. Starting from a very low level, the subjects of energy efficiency, renewable energies and climate protection have, however, been enjoying heightened political attention in recent months. The Government’s target now is to cut the energy intensity of industry by at least 40 per cent by 2020. To this effect, the Government and the Duma are currently drafting a bill on “Energy saving and increasing energy efficiency”. A first Renewable Energies Decree of January 2009 is intended to increase the share of renewable energies on the energy market from the current level of under one per cent to 4.5 per cent by 2020 (with the exception of large-scale hydropower). According to Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko, however, expanding renewable energies is only a secondary priority for the Russian Government.

With the announcement of a climate doctrine on 23 April 2009, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin underlined for the first time the need and the government’s will to pursue an active Russian climate policy. Under certain circumstances this could open up additional possibilities for German-Russian and for European-Russian cooperation in the area of climate protection which could create new impetus for a sufficiently ambitious post-2012 climate convention ahead of the crucial UN climate negotiations in December 2009.

We ask the Federal Government:

International climate negotiations

1. How does the Federal Government assess the role of Russia in the current climate negotiations in the framework of the UNFCCC, G8, G20 and the Major Economies Forum?

Answer:

Russia is a key partner for climate protection both as one of the biggest producers of greenhouse gas emissions and as a consumer and exporter of fossil fuels.

2. In the opinion of the Federal Government, what should be the scale of the cap on Russian greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (base year 1990)?

Answer:

Russia is an industrialised country and has a quantified commitment to limit emissions under the Kyoto Protocol (as an Annex I country). The Federal Government and the EU are of the view that all industrialised countries should accept binding quantified commitments to limit or reduce emissions under a Copenhagen Convention. Based on information contained in the Fourth Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the industrialised countries should collectively cut their greenhouse gas emissions by between 25 and 40 per cent of 1990 levels by 2020 in order to meet the target set by the Federal Government and the EU to limit the rise in average global surface temperature to below 2°C compared to pre-industrial times. The Federal Government and the EU believe that industrialised countries should cut their emissions on a scale which is compatible with the EU's target of a cut of 30 per cent by 2020 against the base year of 1990.

3. What is the Federal Government's attitude to the crediting of unused Russian and Ukrainian emission entitlements from the current accounting period to the period starting in 2012?

Answer:

The combined surplus emission entitlements (Assigned Amount Units, AAUs) from Russia and Ukraine in the Kyoto commitment period 2008 to 2012 are likely to amount to more than 1.6 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (UNFCCC data). The European Commission calculates that after other countries (e.g. Japan and Canada) have bought up surplus AAUs, a surplus of 7.4 billion tonnes will still remain after 2012, 5.5 billion tonnes of which will be from Russia alone. If these amounts and also AAUs from transition countries were to be credited to a future climate convention to cap greenhouse gas emissions for the period 2012 to 2020, the emission cuts of Annex I countries would be reduced by around 4 per cent.

Germany and the EU are arguing with vigour that a Copenhagen Convention should include the goal of limiting the rise in the average global temperature to under 2°C. The IPCC has shown that industrialised countries would have to reduce their total emissions by 25-40% by 2020 against the 1990 level in order to meet this target. The IPCC has not so far included surplus AAUs in its calculations. It follows that a cut in emissions by the industrialised countries totalling 25-40% would not be sufficient to achieve the 2°C target.

The Federal Government believes that it is imperative to frame a future global convention on emission caps in such a way that unused surplus AAUs do not jeopardise the climate protection targets. For the EU countries which are at the same time transition economies, surplus AAUs had already been taken into account in the setting of the EU climate protection target. A comparable arrangement should be sought for Russia and Ukraine too.

4. In the view of the Federal Government, should Russia provide a share of the resources needed internationally to fund adaptation and technology transfer in non-Annex I countries and if so, how much?

Answer:

Funding adaptation and reduction measures in developing countries is a central topic in international climate negotiations. The Federal Government takes the view that all – except the poorest – countries should bear their share of emission reduction measures according to their means. For this reason, the Federal Government

advocates that Russia, too, should make an appropriate contribution to climate protection measures.

Russian climate policy

5. To what extent does the Russian decree promoting renewable energies adopted in January 2009 provide an adequate framework to encourage a sufficient scale of additional investment in renewable energies?

Answer:

The Federal Government has not yet examined whether or not the current legal conditions in Russia offer an adequate incentive to encourage a sufficient scale of additional investment in renewable energies. In order to answer this question it would be necessary to conduct a scientific study. This cannot be done in the context of answering a minor interpellation.

- a) To what extent has the Russian legislature taken a lead from the German Renewable Energies Act initiated by the Red-Green Federal Government?

Answer:

The Federal Government has no information as to whether or to what extent the Russian legislature took a lead from the Renewable Energies Act.

- b) What new opportunities for investment can the Federal Government see for German firms in the area of renewables after the Russian Renewable Energies Decree enters into force?

Answer:

On the intervention of the German side, the question of the increased use of renewable energies has already been discussed many times in the German-Russian Working Group on Strategic Economic and Financial Cooperation (SAG), most recently at its 25th meeting in Berlin on 20/21 April 2009, in order to bring about closer cooperation between German and Russian firms, particularly in relation to the supply of plant and knowhow transfer, culminating in investment.

Up to now renewable energies – apart from hydropower – have played a relatively minor role in Russia. It is to be hoped that the Russian Decree to Promote Renewable Energies of January 2009 creates an adequate investment incentive. Because Russia, by virtue of its natural and geographical conditions, has considerable potential to exploit a variety of forms of renewable energy, the conditions for the expansion of this sector, with the involvement of German firms, are good. The existing links within the framework of the SAG can be used for this purpose.

Bilateral cooperation

6. With which Russian governmental and non-governmental organisations does the Federal Government have the most promising and most active working contacts in the field of climate change, renewable energies and energy efficiency?

Answer:

The Federal Government works together with the **Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology**, the Ministry for Economic Development and the Energy Ministry of the Russian Federation.

Cooperation with the Rostechnadzor Agency, including on environmental and energy-related issues, needs to be reconfigured after the structural changes in Russia in 2008.

The main cooperation agreements at regional level in these areas are with the regions of Sverdlovsk and Krasnodar.

7. In what concrete projects and discussion forums in the areas of increasing energy efficiency and promoting renewable energies, as well as climate change in general in Russia, is the Federal Government currently involved, including via the German Energy Agency (dena), and what is the financial scope of their involvement?

Answer:

The Federal Government uses all its political contacts at federal and regional level in order to highlight the need to increase energy efficiency and promote the use of renewable energies. In Moscow in June 2008, Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel reached agreement with the Minister for Economic Development and the **Minister of Natural Resources and Ecology** to work together on increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies in Russia.

Agreement was reached with the Prime Minister of the region of Sverdlovsk in June 2008 to develop Sverdlovsk into a model region for German-Russian cooperation, with energy efficiency as a priority area. The partnership will draw on German experience. With the support of the German Energy Agency (dena), pilot projects will be carried out in the buildings sector and in industry. A joint internet platform will help facilitate the establishment of a network of interested companies, scientific establishments and local governments. There are also plans to pass on German experience in the creation of a legal framework for energy efficiency measures. The Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations, the Eastern and Central Europe Association and the KfW banking group will be partners in the project.

In 2008, the Federal Government launched the first projects in Russia under the International Climate Initiative (ICI). Russia is one of the ICI's five priority countries. One exemplary project in relation to adaptation to climate change involves the acquisition of a conservation concession for an area of around 400,000 hectares of virgin forest in the Bikin region and its sustainable management (see also answer to question 21). In addition, there are plans to support the financing facilities of the EBRD and the KfW; both projects await approval in the near future. These loan funds are to be used to finance investment in small and medium-sized enterprises which are engaged in increasing energy efficiency and expanding renewable energies there. The German Energy Agency, for example, is to provide support within an ICI project for the design of a new concept for the power supply for the Winter Olympics in Sochi involving renewable energies, energy efficiency and heat-power cogeneration.

In its bilateral cooperation, the Federal Environment Ministry uses flexible mechanisms developed in the Kyoto Protocol, in this instance in particular project-based cooperation in the framework of joint implementation (JI) to improve energy efficiency. The groundwork to put in place the conditions for German-Russian JI projects is carried out in cooperation with the federal and regional agencies. One such project involving the German Energy Agency produced a JI handbook for Russian companies. Sverdlovsk and Krasnodar are priority regions for JI projects, particularly in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energies. In response to a local request, a handbook to identify suitable technical standards in the areas of solar energy and near-surface geothermal energy was developed by the German Energy Agency (dena) for the Krasnodar region. Dena also examined the JI potential in the area of biomass (wood) for the Ural region. The Federal Environment Ministry has advised the regions of Murmansk, Altai and Nizhni Novgorod on the increased use of renewable energies.

The energy efficiency subgroup of the German-Russian Working Group on Strategic Economic and Financial Cooperation (SAG), chaired by the German Energy Agency for the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, is working with the Russian Energy Ministry on concrete cooperation projects on the subject of energy efficiency in various regions of Russia (with reference to the projects, see answer to question 18). In addition, the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology is co-chair, with the Russian Energy Ministry, of the Joint Thematic Group on Energy Efficiency of the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue.

8. What other initiatives are planned and to what extent does the Federal Government see the need for further action?

Answer:

Particularly in view of climate-related challenges, the Federal Government will use all the possibilities at its disposal to deepen cooperation in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energies. Further projects are under consideration for 2009 within the framework of the International Climate Initiative.

How does the Federal Government assess the engagement in this respect of the development banks operating with German participation in Russia: the World Bank, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)?

Answer:

All three development banks have stepped up their activities in Russia in the energy and environmental field. The Federal Government lobbies on the boards of the banks for due consideration to be given to this area. The EBRD is a strategically important financial institution in relation to supporting the transformation process, particularly in the Russian Federation. The fallout from the financial crisis has further increased the importance of the EBRD, a factor which is to be taken into account in relation to the intended increase in capacity. With the Sustainable Energy Initiative launched in 2006, the focus on energy efficiency and renewable energies has become a firm part of the EBRD's core business. Within the framework of this initiative, for example, the EBRD is supporting efforts to ensure that Russia meets its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol. In 2008, the bank signed an equity investment of around 60 million euro for this project. Improved environmental performance is a precondition for the commitment of EBRD funds to the development of oil and gas fields. In 2008, approximately 1.8 billion euro in project funding was pledged to Russia (of which around 800 million euro was earmarked for the infrastructure and energy sector). This represents 37 per cent of EBRD's annual business volume.

In addition to its stake in EBRD's equity capital, the Federal Government supports concrete EBRD advisory projects and credit facilities to promote energy efficiency in the Russian Federation within the framework of the International Climate Initiative.

The energy and environmental sector in Russia is also a funding priority for the European Investment Bank (EIB). In the period 2007-2013, the EIB is making available a total of 3.7 billion euro under its external mandate for projects in Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Russia. An additional 3 billion euro is being made available for this period via the facility for energy sustainability and security of supply to fund energy projects in third countries.

10. Will the Federal Government bring its influence to bear on the boards of the three banks to ensure that they step up their engagement in the area of climate protection in Russia and the CIS?

Answer:

See answer to question 9.

11. What scope is there for the planned Russian-German energy agency Rudea to develop into a Russian counterpart to the German Energy Agency (dena)?
- a) How precisely is the financial and organisational structure of Rudea regulated and in what stages is the agency being established?
- b) Where will the headquarters of Rudea be located and how many members of staff will it have in its initial phase?

Answer:

It is intended that the planned Russian-German energy agency RuDEA will be established and built up using the successful format of dena as a model. Dena's stake in RuDEA will enable it to contribute its experience directly to the new agency and ensure comparable standards. This follows the Russian Government's request for dena to be a partner in RuDEA.

RuDEA will be established as an association under Russian law with its seat in Moscow. The question of dena's participation in RuDEA is still a subject of negotiation between the German and Russian side; details have not yet, therefore, been finalised.

The statutes of the future RuDEA, which will also determine its objectives and purpose, are currently under discussion.

12. What is the basis for the decision, as reported, that the promotion of renewable energies will not be a priority area of Rudea's work and that the intention is only to run model projects in the area of renewable energies to supplement the promotion of energy efficiency?

See answer to question 11.

13. Does the Federal Government or dena plan to use the Rudea model of cooperation as an example for cooperation with other countries in the area of renewable energies and energy efficiency?

Answer

There are no current plans for further cooperation projects using the RuDEA model.

14. What possibilities does the Federal Government see of expanding the financing of Rudea by making the EBRD, EIB and the World Bank stakeholders?

Answer:

The Federal Government will review the possibilities of expanding financing by involving the above-mentioned banks in providing support and funding.

15. In which projects, with which partners and on what financial and personnel-related scale is the German Embassy in Moscow involved in climate protection?

Answer:

Two desk officers and one assistant desk officer at the Moscow Embassy deal with energy- and climate-related issues. In terms of climate protection, they deal primarily with questions of renewable energies and energy saving.

Climate protection is a cross-cutting subject which involves various sections of the Embassy. One of the Embassy's important tasks is to explain German climate policy positions to the Russian Government. It is in regular contact with the responsible Russian agencies in this regard. The Embassy also works hard in the Russian public arena to argue for the need for an ambitious and demanding climate policy, using for this purpose the instrument of public diplomacy. In addition, the Moscow Embassy reports regularly on Russian climate policy. Within the framework of the very extensive German visitor traffic to Russia, particularly from the Federal *Länder*, the Embassy exerts influence on programme design to ensure an appropriate focus on climate-related and energy efficiency themes. In its foreign trade promotion activities, the Moscow Embassy supports the efforts of German industry to promote the environmental friendliness and energy efficiency of their products in the Russian market.

Furthermore, the Embassy and the consulates-general in Russia work closely with dena to promote energy-efficient technical solutions, e.g. in the housing industry and the municipal sector.

16. Does the Federal Government have any plans to expand its engagement in this sector, possibly in collaboration with the Embassies of the United Kingdom and Denmark which are very active in the area of climate change?

Answer:

The Embassy works actively on climate-related issues with the EU Representations in Moscow, in particular with the Representations of the European Commission, the United Kingdom and Sweden. This includes involvement in joint reporting on Russian climate policy.

It is planned to step up this involvement in the future. The German Embassy will give more prominence to the role of Russia in the international climate negotiations, at G8 meetings and at the meetings of the Major Economies Forum (MEF). A particular concern in this context will be to analyse the strategic importance of Russian energy and climate policy and its effects on general political relations with Germany and the EU.

17. To what extent will the Federal Government use the forthcoming German-Russian intergovernmental consultations in mid-July to initiate additional concrete joint projects in the area of climate protection?

Answer:

The Federal Environment Ministry is currently examining whether credit agreements can be signed at the intergovernmental consultations on 16 July 2009 to increase the use of renewable energies and to improve energy efficiency.

18. What concrete issues and projects is the energy efficiency subgroup currently dealing with within the German-Russian Working Group on Strategic Economic and Financial Cooperation and what activities is the subgroup planning in its medium- and long-term planning?

Answer:

The energy efficiency subgroup of the German-Russian Working Group on Strategic Economic Cooperation and Development is dealing with and planning the following cooperation projects: (i) the creation of a legal and economic framework for energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies; (ii) energy efficiency on the demand side, in particular the setting up of a modernisation partnership with the region of Sverdlovsk with respect to energy efficiency, renewable energies, joint implementation, and water and waste systems; (iii) renewable energies, in particular environmental improvements in the Rostov area involving converting coal-powered boiler houses to heat pump plants; (iv) information, capacity building and training, in particular the establishment of a joint information platform for energy efficiency involving regional information centres.

Current pilot projects include the formulation of a concept for power supply to the Winter Olympics in Sochi involving renewable energies, energy efficiency and heat-power cogeneration (see also answer to question 7); the refurbishment of the power supply to a children's hospital and a housing block in Yekaterinburg in Sverdlovsk; a project, initiated by Siemens AG in cooperation with the city of Yekaterinburg, to identify energy efficiency potential in all sectors of the city of Yekaterinburg; the establishment of cooperation in the areas of wind power and decentralised power supply in Kamchatka, and the setting up and implementation of a German-Russian training programme in the areas of energy efficiency and renewable energies. Future pilot projects are to be identified in the areas of municipal infrastructure, industry and commerce, waste recycling and the use of biomass.

19. Does the Federal Government see any possibilities to incorporate an exchange of ideas on the Green New Deal as well as increased cooperation in the area of climate change and clean development in the keynote topic of this year's Petersburg Dialogue "Ways out of the crisis – German and Russian challenges"?
20. In the opinion of the Federal Government, what concrete approaches could be used to generate more attention for this subject in the Petersburg Dialogue?

Answer to questions 19 and 20:

As a German-Russian discussion forum for cooperation between civil societies, the Petersburg Dialogue is also devoted to current economic and social issues and challenges. Key issues relating to German-Russian relations are discussed in plenary sessions and eight working group meetings (including politics, economics, workshop for the future) and, where possible, new initiatives are launched.

The Federal Government attaches very great importance to strengthening cooperation in the area of climate change and supports, as far as possible, corresponding efforts in civil society.

21. Is the Federal Government involved in efforts to preserve virgin forests in Russia and if so, in what form?

Answer:

Traditionally, Germany and Russia maintain close contacts and good bilateral cooperation in the area of forest monitoring, conservation and sustainable forestry. In this context, the special challenges of dealing with the extensive but poorly accessible virgin forest regions in Russia have always been a matter of particular concern. The massive naturally occurring forest fires which every year lay waste to vast expanses of forest and in the process pump huge quantities of matter into the atmosphere are a particular problem. Germany has been promoting scientific and technical exchange in this area for a long time in the form of bilateral cooperation projects sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV), particularly in the area of research cooperation. In this way, the Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute (vTI) has established the most extensive collection of data on Russian forests outside Russia which provides a good basis for evaluating forest conditions. In the wake of reforms to the forestry sector, which in certain Russian regions have led to critical situations in relation to the over-exploitation of virgin forests, the BMELV has, in response to requests, provided support to the Russian Government and the Duma on questions of controlled privatisation, forestry organisation and forestry legislation in the light of experiences in Germany. Discussions are currently underway on a formal agreement between the BMELV and the Russian Federal Forestry Agency on forestry cooperation; this could be finalised by the end of 2009. Protecting Russia's virgin forests is also a regular topic in the long-term cooperation between the Federal Environment Ministry (BMU) and the Russian **Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology** in the area of nature conservation, most recently at the meeting of the corresponding working group on 14/15 May 2009.

The Federal Environment Ministry is conducting a project in the virgin forest in the Bikin region, as part of the International Climate Initiative, to ban conventional logging on a long-term basis in the forest and hence keep carbon dioxide locked up naturally in the forest biomass. Protecting these forests through the acquisition of a concession for their special use is a pilot project for Russia. Over and above this, it is the first forest-related climate protection project in Russia and the temperate and boreal forest sector in which extensive forest conservation has been financed by climate funds generated through the sale of certificates. At the same time, the project secures the livelihoods of the indigenous population.

22. To the knowledge of the Federal Government, to what extent does Germany share responsibility for the destruction of Russia's virgin forests through the import of timber and timber products and what is the Federal Government doing to prevent the import into Germany of such products which are harmful to the climate?

Answer:

In principle, responsibility for enforcing national law as well as for protecting the forests and practising sustainable forestry rests with Russian agencies. At the same time, the Federal Government is seeking a total ban in Germany on the import of and trade in illegally logged timber. For this purpose it contributes to the drafting of the EU Commission Proposal for a FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) Regulation. The proposal provides *inter alia* for a duty of care on the part of all market participants who trade timber for the first time in the EU, regular controls by the appropriate authorities, an exchange of information between member states and the establishment of a committee to deal with questions of implementation. For many years, representations have been made at bilateral level about the need for measures to combat illegal logging and about the additional risks created by the decentralisation of responsibilities for forest resources which has been carried out under the reform of forest law. The agreement between the BMELV and the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and the Russian Federal Forestry Agency on forestry cooperation referred to in question 21 will consequently also include support for forest certification and measures to combat illegal logging.

23. What Russian-German cooperation projects does the Federal Government rate as being particularly relevant in terms of rapidly raising joint climate protection efforts to a new quality level?

Answer:

The cooperation project with the Sverdlovsk region could attain model character. The financing facilities in the framework of the International Climate Initiative are also regarded as being particularly relevant.

24. What role did the subjects of climate protection, international climate negotiations, energy efficiency and renewable energies as well as green investment and anti-crisis programmes (Green New Deal) play in the EU-Russia summit on 21 and 22 May?

Answer:

The subject of climate protection was particularly prominent at the plenary session of the EU-Russia summit on 21 and 22 May 2009. The EU stressed the need to achieve a fair and comprehensive outcome to the climate conference in Copenhagen. The Russian President underlined the fact that the EU and Russia pursue common goals in this area and expressed the hope that a positive outcome would be reached. The EU welcomed Russia's pledges to cut energy intensity and increase energy efficiency and declared its readiness to work with Russia in the field of clean technologies in the energy sector. Further efforts on the part of all countries are needed to achieve global climate protection targets.

25. How much of a role does the strengthening of the EU-Russia dialogue in the field of climate change play in the negotiations for a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Russia?

Answer:

The role the strengthening of the EU-Russia dialogue in the field of climate change has played in the negotiations for a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Russia is reflected in the inclusion in the new agreement of energy efficiency, the development of renewable energies and the promotion of a high level of environmental protection measures, particularly in the energy sector.

26. Will the Federal Government press its EU partners and the Russian Government to give the subject of climate protection greater priority in bilateral talks within the framework of the Four Common Spaces, not only with respect to the First Space covering economic issues and the environment, but also and in particular with respect to the Third Space (external security) and the Fourth Space (research and education)?

Answer:

The Federal Government will examine in what areas of the Common Spaces of External Security and Research and Development there are starting points for upgrading climate protection. The talks being held in the framework of the subgroup on climate protection in the EU-Russia dialogue in the environmental area (in the Common Economic Space) are continuing.

27. Does the Federal Government see a need to focus greater attention on the subjects of energy efficiency and renewable energies in the EU-Russia energy dialogue?

Answer:

No. Energy efficiency is already a priority area of the EU-Russia energy dialogue. The following topics are included in the 2008/2009 work programme of the Thematic Group on Energy Efficiency: legislation, regulation, exchange of experiences on the promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energies, investment incentives, cooperation and exchange at regional level, and the use of the Kyoto mechanisms to save primary energy.

28. Will the Federal Government press for the setting of corresponding priorities within the EU and with respect to the Russian Government?

Answer:

See answer to question 27.

29. How does the Federal Government assess the potential and opportunities of an "EU-Russia Partnership for Climate Protection and Clean Development" on the pattern of the Asia-Pacific Partnership for Clean Development and Climate?

Answer:

At the present time the Federal Government does not believe that such a partnership would create any added value over existing cooperation forums.

30. Will the Federal Government use the forthcoming meetings of the G8 governments, that is to say not only the summit of heads of state and government from 8 to 10 July, but also the meeting of G8 energy ministers on 24/25 May, to work bilaterally and multilaterally with our Russian partners to seek and strengthen dialogue on a post-2012 convention which sets ambitious climate protection targets?

Answer:

Climate protection has been a regular subject on the G8 agenda for a number of years. The Federal Government takes every opportunity, particularly those offered by the G8, to seek dialogue with Russia on climate protection.

31. What scope is there to extend the bilateral pilot initiative for more energy efficiency in Yekaterinburg agreed in October 2008 by the Russian Government and the Federal Government to other major Russian cities?

Answer:

The pilot character of the bilateral initiative to make Yekaterinburg more energy-efficient creates the possibility of follow-up projects in other large Russian cities.

- a) Does the Federal Government have plans for a corresponding expansion of the pilot with Russian partners?

Answer: Not yet.

- b) What quantifiable results does the Federal Government anticipate from the initiative?

Answer:

In terms of the pilot projects which are still in the development phase, the Federal Government anticipates in principle an improvement in the corresponding energy balances.

32. Following the publication of a draft Russian climate doctrine on 23 April 2009, does the Federal Government see new possibilities for German-Russian and European-Russian cooperation in the area of climate protection?
- a) If so, in what areas?

Answer:

On the basis of information available at this time, the draft Russian climate doctrine acknowledges for the first time that climate change is principally a manmade phenomenon. It also states that this process also has far-reaching negative consequences for Russia and makes it necessary to take measures to reduce emissions and to adapt to climate change. It also sees a need for international cooperation.

The Federal Government welcomes this acknowledgment and supports the view that cooperation, particularly on energy efficiency and renewable energies, needs to be deepened and the dialogue on an appropriate commitment by Russia to cap emissions for the period after 2012 intensively pursued.

- b) Is the Federal Government already in talks with its Russian partners in this respect?

Answer:

As with all developments in the area of climate in Russia, the Russian climate doctrine is a subject covered in the Federal Government's talks with the Russian Government as well as in the various different dialogue and cooperation processes.

33. Does the Federal Government judge the bilateral and multilateral dialogue as well as cooperation with Russia on meeting the 2 degree target to be sufficiently intensive?

Answer:

The Federal Government and the EU are already engaged in intensive dialogue with Russia. The subject is discussed both within the framework of international negotiations (UNFCCC, G8, MEF, etc.) and at bilateral level. These dialogues will be stepped up even more ahead of the Copenhagen negotiations.

34. Does the Federal Government have any plans, also in conjunction with partner countries such as, for example, the EU or the United States, to set up additional forums of dialogue and action on climate change with Russia not yet mentioned here?

Answer:

No.