



Social Democratic appeal for an energy transition

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has once again highlighted the urgent need for CO₂ reduction measures. Two degrees of warming should not be seen as a right; instead, it is essential to minimise CO₂. Otherwise, climate change will become the poverty trap of the 21st century, causing crop failures, floods and rising sea levels. There are already 25 million climate refugees today; this could soar to up to 140 million people by 2050. There is a danger that further wars will break out over the distribution of dwindling resources.

Climate change threatens the foundations of life of more and more people. The poorest are hit first and hardest. The energy transition is therefore a matter of social justice and a policy which promotes peace!

The energy, transport and heating transition, which needs to be accelerated, is the key element in climate protection. As lignite alone accounts for 55% of the electricity sector's emissions, we need a rapid phase-out of coal-fired power generation.

Shifting to forward-looking technologies will enable us to phase out coal in a socially responsible manner by 2030 – a phase-out which prevents illness, which creates work – including for those employed in the coal industry today – and which boosts the competitiveness of German businesses.

Renewable energy, together with storage and smart grids, must take the place of nuclear power and fossil fuels – not the reverse. Incentives must be created to encourage this.

We need an accelerated transition to 100 per cent renewable energy. Caps on increased use of renewable energy are counterproductive.

National measures are often said to be irrelevant in terms of international climate action. That is not true. Firstly, the Paris Climate Agreement calls for national contributions to be made to curbing climate change. Secondly, past climate protection measures, in the form of the increased use of renewable energy, demonstrate how important it is to show leadership. The Renewable Energy Sources Act, of which the Social Democrat Hermann Scheer was a key architect, and which entered into force in 2000 under an SPD-Alliance 90/The Greens

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coalition government, is regarded as the main catalyst for a now global shift to renewable energy sources. It also enabled renewable energy technologies to become economically competitive.

Climate protection means thinking globally and acting locally. As a leading technology country and exporter, Germany has a special responsibility to pursue a decentralised approach, with the participation of local people. This can also promote value creation in rural areas and reduce the pressure on urban centres, alleviating the housing shortage.

Dependence on finite energy resources means a foreseeable rise in energy poverty when this scarcity is reflected in energy prices. Fuel supply shortages caused by low river levels, which are already leading to varying prices within Germany at present, are a warning sign. Each year, the people of Germany pay for 57 billion euros in subsidies harmful to the climate. Pollutants have a price, and this must be made visible. Only then can an energy market develop.

We support a carbon or pollutant pricing mechanism for a fair energy market!

“The rapid and comprehensive introduction of renewable energy sources today guarantees that tomorrow we will have environmentally friendly, secure and low-cost energy for all.”

Dr Hermann Scheer (29 April 1944 – 14 October 2010)

Initial signatories

- **Dr Nina Scheer**, Member of the Bundestag, Deputy Chairwoman of the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Sustainable Development, deputy spokeswoman of the Working Group on the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag, Siebeneichen
- **Christian Pegel**, Minister of Energy, Infrastructure and Digitalisation of Land Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Greifswald
- **Johann Saathoff**, Member of the Bundestag, energy-policy coordinator of the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag, Krummhörn
- **Carsten Träger**, Member of the Bundestag, spokesman of the Working Group on the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of the SPD parliamentary group in the Bundestag, Fürth
- **Ute Vogt**, Member of the Bundestag, Stuttgart
- **Ulrich Kelber**, Former Member of the Bundestag, Bonn
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- **Professor Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker**, former Member of the Bundestag, Emmendingen
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