



Is Preventive Climate Protection the only Challenge for RWE?

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As an energy and water utility, RWE emits approx. 113 million tons of the greenhouse gas CO₂ in Germany and some further 21.0 million tons in the UK (2003). Thus, RWE is the largest single emitter in Europe for whom climate change has become a focal issue. A major part of the emissions stems from lignite-fired power generation in Germany's Rhenish district. With the existing lignite-fired power plants having reached an age of more than 40 years, RWE is now facing extensive reinvestments.

New electricity generating plants will also have to pay off over a correspondingly long period of time. Thus, investment decisions must necessarily take account of the climate change issue. At the same time and on an equal scale, the company must provide for economic efficiency and security of supply. The present paper outlines the target conflict between environmental protection/here: climate change, economic efficiency and security of supply. Moreover, the paper deals with the issue of what contribution RWE can make to the climate debate.