

Planned measures to reduce emissions include:

- An energy tax is discussed in order to further enforce energy conservation and increase the use of renewable energy.
- An optimisation of the electricity supply sector including new cost-oriented tariff structures.
- An exchange of research results among utilities in order to promote new technologies for energy conservation and renewable energy.
- A reorganisation of the Energy Conservation Agency. The Agency will act as a clearing house for research and information activities.
- A change in the tax system for motor vehicles.
- A reduction of hydrocarbon losses and greenhouse gases from motor vehicles.

The Ministry for Economic Affairs is heading an inter-ministerial committee on energy policy responses to the problem of climate change.

2. Factors Influencing Decisions

Hydropower is the main indigenous energy source, covering over 70 per cent of electricity output. Oil covers 45 per cent of the energy supply and gas 18 per cent, both mainly imported. In 1978 a majority voted against the commissioning of a nuclear plant in a national referendum, which effectively halted nuclear programme in Austria.

The federal nature of Austria's constitution means that both the federal (Bund) and regional governments (Länder) have responsibilities in energy and environmental policies. Examples of responsibilities of the regional governments are: building codes and air pollution from space heating.

3. Relevant Studies

- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Angelegenheiten (Ministry for Economic Affairs): Energiebericht 1990 der Österreichischen Bundesregierung (1990 Energy Report from the Austrian Federal Government). Wien, 1990.
- An evaluation of the energy conservation potential.