

We need an efficiency revolution. I am firmly convinced that an appreciable increase in energy efficiency will be one of the key features of a modern economy. We need modern power stations which combine the highest possible efficiency with the lowest possible levels of pollution. We must make more use of the potential of renewable forms of energy. In Germany, for example, we intend to double the share of renewable forms of energy by the year 2010.

What further concrete options do we have to effectively counter the greenhouse effect?

Firstly, we must do something in our own homes. Particularly in older buildings, far too much energy is still being lost. With the aid of an Energy Savings Ordinance we intend to greatly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in buildings.

Secondly, in the field of transport the number of vehicles on the road, and thus CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, will continue to increase in the coming years. It is imperative to do more here to ensure that the reduction achieved in harmful emissions, for instance in the industrial sector, is not cancelled out again. Let there be no mistake: I am not talking about restricting mobility. Rather, we need vehicles which use much less fuel than at present. The three-litre car recently presented is a good step forward in this respect. And in freight traffic we need a greater shift from transport by road to rail.

Thirdly, there are also still considerable possibilities for saving energy in private consumption. I am thinking here of economical fridges and lights, energy-saving computers, as well as televisions and audio systems. Whether it is a spectacular technical innovation or a merely gradual one: these are the markets of the future. They not only offer opportunities for protecting our environment but also for preserving and creating modern jobs. Those with political responsibility should therefore remember that anyone trying to slow down climate protection or merely failing to make progress will in just a few years' time be out of touch with one of the most important markets of the next millennium.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1998 was the warmest year since regular temperature records began more than a hundred years ago. The five hottest years since the 15th century have all been in the 1990s. From the international insurance industry we know that most of the damage which must be replaced today is caused by bad weather: storms, hailstones and floods.