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Matthias Machnig: Tapping the gold mine of environmental and energy technology markets worldwide

Matthias Machnig, State Secretary at the Federal Environment Ministry, has called for OECD countries to adopt more vigorous industrial policy initiatives in the context of climate protection and energy supply. At today's OECD Workshop on Environmental Innovation and Global Markets in Berlin, Machnig said: "There is a growing recognition, on our part, of the environmental and economic challenges facing the OECD countries in the context of climate and resource protection. There is a gold mine to be tapped here: with a market volume of 1000 billion euro for environmental technologies and innovation, which is likely to double again by 2020, there are massive opportunities here."

Environmental technology must become a new lead industry, said Machnig, so that strategically important future-oriented sectors can be strengthened and industrial structures geared towards increasing resource scarcity. Machnig welcomed the initiative of Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the OECD, for an innovation strategy which prioritises climate and energy efficiency technologies.

The two-day workshop organised jointly by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) brings together 100 participants to discuss how industry and governments can best promote innovation that meets environmental objectives. In the context of increasingly globalised markets and ever more pressing global environmental problems, dynamic new markets for environmental and energy efficiency technologies are emerging in the newly industrialising countries. Yet according to a recent OECD study, neither governments nor businesses are adequately prepared as yet to respond to the resulting opportunities and challenges.