

## LandFrauen for increasing energy efficiency and performing the energy transition



With the phasing out of nuclear power and the development of renewable energy, policy in Germany has embarked on a path that has far reaching consequences, especially for people in rural areas, as the energy transition will predominantly take place here. The landscape in those regions will significantly change as will the competition in land use increase. As a consequence, integrated land use strategies at federal level in Germany will also grow in importance alongside the energy transition.

**LandFrauen** in Germany are already making an important contribution to the success of the energy transition and to the security of energy supply in the future. They not only engage in positions as operators of photovoltaic plants, biogas plants, and wind turbines. As the largest educational institution for women in rural Space, **LandFrauen** collectives can also contribute to a more large-scale advertisement of the significance of the 3E strategy (conservation, efficiency, renewable energies) and by that allow for a greater acceptance in the population.



Despite numerous difficulties, the German association of **LandFrauen** assumes that the energy transition is capable of triggering a change in economic and social structure and ultimately leading to a value change in rural areas with a largely positive effect. Decisive will be here that the energy generation will remain in the hands of the population in the respective region. This implies that energy from biogas plants stays with the operating farmer. A reduction to the role of supplier of raw materials is contrary to the self-understanding of female agricultural entrepreneurs and therefore will hardly gain acceptance. The future development towards modern equipment and new energy crops is to be supported by research. Additional ecological compensation areas should not be stated in connection with the use of land for renewable energy.



### Building Participatory Processes

A substantial and still often underestimated success factor for the switch to renewable energy sources are

Citizen participation processes. With over 12,000 local chapters, more than 500,000 individual members in Germany, **LandFrauen** help building such processes and also act as important multipliers on the scene. In the development of regional energy concepts and land use strategies,

**LandFrauen** will even further extend their contribution in the future, whether as an elected representative or as a consultant. The association of **LandFrauen** in Germany is arguing for a comprehensive voice for all



affected citizens in the establishment of renewable energy sites and the construction of new transmission lines. Owners of agricultural land are to be compensated adequately for occupied land.

### **More Energy Efficiency, More Energy Conservation**

Energy efficiency is another key factor for a successful energy transition. The association of **LandFrauen** in Germany offers its cooperation to achieve set goals in energy efficiency.

Although Germany has experienced relatively good success in energy efficiency, the potentials are by no means exhausted in this area. **LandFrauen** appealed to the policy in Germany and at the European level, not to move away from their energy efficiency targets and to promote the necessary legislation for it. For this reliable and secure long-term financing of efficiency measures are crucial.

In particular, the following legislations or amendments are urgently expected and the association of **LandFrauen** in Germany will continue to actively support them: the EU Energy Efficiency Directive, the Renewable Energy Heat Act, the Combined Heat and Power Act and the tax incentives for the CO<sub>2</sub> Building Rehabilitation Program.

### **Scope on Household**

Through energy-efficient and resource-saving living standards households can make an important contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gases. However, action begins with knowledge and awareness. Here politics, Ministries of Education, general education schools, vocational schools, community colleges, as well as the association of **LandFrauen** in Germany are called to take action.

Sustainable housekeeping is a core competence of **LandFrauen**. They are capable to locate and create education and counseling services where needed. Educational content includes, for example, a planned purchase order to avoid of quantitative bad buys, conscious food handling to prevent food waste, compliance with energy efficiency classes in the purchase of new household appliances, but also appropriate heating and ventilation and the use of energy-conscious home appliances.

80% of the total energy consumed by households is for heating. For this reason, in addition to promoting efficient heating systems and the promotion of heat from renewable sources, the promotion of structural thermal protection is of particular importance as well. CO<sub>2</sub> Building Rehabilitation in particular of traditional real estate still represents a problem that has to be solved. Renovation requirements for those types of buildings are particularly high and often absent in the professional craftsmen knowledge for an appropriate renovation. A 3-year project supported by the Chamber of Crafts in Osnabrück is founded to address this problem. It is jointly executed by the University of Münster, the county of Osnabrück, and the **LandFrauen** of the region of Osnabrück integrated in the association of **LandFrauen** Weser-Ems from October 2011. There are discussions to extend the project country-wide.

The association of **LandFrauen** expects the following of policy makers:

- 1) To advance the promotion of CO<sub>2</sub> Building Rehabilitation
  - i) by expanding the financing volume
  - ii) through a quick agreement on the fiscal support,
  - iii) by creating other incentive systems that appeal to parts of the populations that do not have the possibility of tax deductions.



- 2) Promotion of renewable heat (heat from biogas and solar systems; promotion of cogeneration, etc.) and the installation of more efficient heating systems in the private sector.
- 3) The provision of funds for counseling, education and training opportunities and projects of **LandFrauen** in the field of energy efficiency and energy conservation in private households.

Local communities should lead by example and take on a pioneering role in planning building insulations for their buildings.

### Scope on the Agricultural Sector

Experts estimate that most farms can save 15% to 25% of their energy consumption in the short and medium term without capital investment. Simple measures not only help to reduce emission of greenhouse gases, but will also result in cost savings. Nevertheless, appropriate consultation services are yet to be offered nationwide.

The single operation energy efficiency advisory within GAK-Rahmenplan<sup>i</sup> requires co-financing by the states, where it fails in many cases. The Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection together with the federal program to increase energy efficiency in agriculture and horticulture has provided a total of 28 million euros from 2009-2012 in order to promote investment measures. So far, the federal program is only applied in horticulture.

For that reason the association of **LandFrauen** in Germany is demanding:

- The development of advisory services for energy conservation in agriculture needs to be continued, in particular advice for single operations based on the GAK framework plan. All states should participate through co-financing of the program.
- The continuation of the federal program to increase energy efficiency in agriculture and horticulture should be checked. The high requirements to the applicants need to be reconsidered. An extension of the funding to other energy-intensive production areas (e.g. pig breeding) is desirable, however, only with an easing of the eligibility criteria.

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<sup>i</sup> Framework of the Joint Task "Improvement of Agricultural Structures and Coastal Protection"