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Biogas market grows throughout Europe

3,000 new biogas plants will be constructed in Europe by the end of 2013 – this is the forecast of the German experts ecoprolog and Fraunhofer UMSICHT. The additional capacity of these facilities will amount to more than 1,700 MW_{el}.

In Europe, biogas generation is growing as never before. In early 2010, about 5,900 biogas plants with an installed electrical capacity of 2,300 MW_{el} are operational. More than 3,000 biogas plants with an electrical capacity of more than 1,700 MW_{el} will be constructed between 2009 and 2013.

Within the European biogas industry, Germany remains the largest market. Nevertheless, more and more countries are following and create the necessary general frameworks for a fast growth of the national biogas industries. The system of fixed feed-in tariffs for electricity from renewable energies is gradually establishing throughout Europe. In order to promote the use of renewable energies, even the rather market-oriented United Kingdom introduced a feed-in tariff this April.

All these efforts happen against the background of the Kyoto protocol requirements and the specifications of the EU Renewable Energy Directive. They force the states to drastically increase the share of renewable energies. In many countries, biogas has to contribute to this aim.

The traditional biogas markets in Central Europe are the largest ones and keep on growing continuously. Within these markets the modernisation of existing plants will become a main field of investments. In addition to Central Europe, France, Spain and Great Britain have a lot of catching up to do in terms of biogas generation. New markets are also emerging in Eastern Europe, such as in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary.

The feeding-in of conditioned biogas (biomethane) is becoming more and more attractive. Private and public energy providers are surging onto this market and want to set up their own capacities. The construction and conversion of these plants will continue to increase.

Due to technological progresses, there might be a comeback of plants for the digestion of biowaste (for example from municipal waste). The use of organic refuse is becoming more interesting again - especially against the background of partially considerably fluctuating prices for energy crops. At present, everything points to a building boom in this sector in Great Britain.

The recently published multi-client study "The Market for Biogas Plants in Europe" by ecoprolog/Fraunhofer UMSICHT evaluates the operator and plant markets for biogas plants in Europe and can be ordered at www.ecoprolog.com.

The Cologne based consultancy ecoprolog with offices and representations in Germany, Canada, Japan, China, France and Italy specialises in the markets of environmental and energy technology. The Fraunhofer Institute for Environmental, Safety and Energy Technology UMSICHT develops, examines and optimises techniques within the sectors of environmental engineering, safety engineering, process technology and energy technology. Together, we elaborate market studies of selected segments within the field of environmental technology.