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PRESSEMITTEILUNG

Tackling climate change: Business professor advocates more green growth.

Sustainable economic growth: Prof. Dr. Werner Schulz of the University of Hohenheim sees enormous potential for projects in the public sector.

Sustainable, ecologically-friendly economic development could potentially solve the three greatest crises of our time: the environment, the economy and society. That is the belief of environmental economist, Prof. Dr. Werner Schulz of the University of Hohenheim, which he expressed at the start of the World Climate Conference. The state, as a means of facilitating development, should take a leading role in awarding contracts and must demand more sustainable, ecologically-friendly goods and services.

As an expert in the field of environmental economics, Prof. Dr. Werner Schulz sees the World Climate Conference in South Africa with mixed emotions. "Much depends on Europe and the United States. But Asia also seems altogether ready to engage in discussions. Japan has starting to think differently since Fukushima. Perhaps something is going to happen, but I still have yet to see any concrete road map." At the same time, he believes the current topics landscape to be a tricky one. There are presently too many other topics competing for attention and which seem more important. "The eurozone crisis is at the center of attention nowadays. But it's crucial that decisions are finally made once and for all concerning climate change." **Green growth as a key to solving the crises** A possible way out of the dilemma is to focus more concretely on green development. "We need more incentives to make businesses move towards sustainable growth. Sustainable, ecologically-friendly economic development could potentially solve the three greatest crises of our time: the environment, the economy and society." The specialist for business economics describes such efforts here at the University: "In Hohenheim we started using green electricity this year. This protects the environment and reduces CO2 emissions. And it also makes good sense economically: It is even cheaper than normal electricity. The best-case scenario is that more jobs will be created in this sector with the University as a customer: The maintenance of a newly-built hydropower plant is more work-intensive than that of a conventional power plant. It even makes sense on a social level since it creates new jobs." Green growth could bring three-fold dividends: social, ecological and economic ones. "A lot can be implemented around the world." A public sector initiative which Dr. Schulz envisions is the awarding of state projects based on their ecological-friendliness. "There are essentially three pillars of environmental politics: Strict rules and bans, economic incentive schemes involving licenses and environmental taxes, and finally the spreading of information via educational campaigns and counselling. Purchasing by the state has received far too little consideration. The state should focus much more on ecologically-sound providers of goods and services when awarding billion-dollar contracts."

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