

## "Atmosfair" balances out CO2 from flights

Federal Environment Minister Jürgen Trittin and UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer promote climate-friendly flying

Flying pollutes the atmosphere more than any other mode of transport. But not everybody can or wants to find an alternative to flying, even if they know that the flight will contribute to global warming. Some environmentally aware passengers would undoubtedly be willing to pay a voluntary compensation payment for the resulting CO2 emissions if there were a practicable way to do this. This is now possible thanks to "atmosfair", an initiative for climate-friendly flying jointly developed by the environmental organisation Germanwatch, the forum anders reisen and the company 500ppm together with the Federal Environment Ministry. Federal Environment Minister Jürgen Trittin and UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer are patrons of this initiative. They presented this project today in Berlin.

Using "atmosfair" each airline passenger can calculate the amount of climate gases his/her flight will cause and how much it would cost in euros to save equivalent emissions elsewhere, such as by making a financial contribution to specific climate-protection projects in developing countries. For example, the approx. 560 kilograms CO2 caused by each passenger on a return flight from Frankfurt to Mallorca would have to be balanced out by a payment of 10 euros. Anyone wishing to participate in "atmosfair" can either pay this voluntary contribution direct to the travel agent from the "forum anders reisen" when purchasing the ticket or via the "atmosfair" website at [www.atmosfair.de](http://www.atmosfair.de).

Federal Environment Minister Jürgen Trittin: "Air traffic makes a major contribution to climate change and is showing enormous growth. Since 1970 international air traffic has increased almost five-fold. I welcome the "atmosfair" initiative, since the aim of the initiative is not to put people off flying, but instead to give them the opportunity to make a voluntary payment as compensation for the climate-damaging consequences of their flights."

Minister Trittin announced that he intends to compensate for the work-related flights taken by Ministry staff and the Ministry's subsidiary authorities pursuant to "atmosfair" standards by promoting climate protection projects abroad as part of a research project in a pilot phase. "I hope that by the middle of next year we will have created all technical and budgetary prerequisites for structuring our work-related flights in a climate-neutral way, in line with atmosfair."

The funds from "atmosfair" will go to climate protection projects in India and Brazil. For example, "atmosfair" is supporting the equipping of 10 industrial kitchens in India with concentrating solar power installations. So far these kitchens have been powered by the incineration of diesel oil and wood - damaging to the environment and health. Thanks to "atmosfair" around 570 tonnes CO2 per year will be saved following the switch to solar power.

In Rio de Janeiro the university, the municipal waste disposal authority and the Brazilian enterprise USINA VERDE S.A. joined together to construct a small power plant at which the university's waste is mineralised while at the same time generating electricity thermally. With a daily waste volume from the university of 30 tonnes, a power plant with a capacity of 1 MW is

being operated, diesel fuel for the transport of waste is being saved and around 2 tonnes of landfill gas emissions are being avoided. The university can generate its own electricity with this new technology and in doing so is protecting the environment by avoided around 15,000 tonnes CO2 every year.

All "atmosfair" projects satisfy very high environmental and social standards and reduce climate gases merely by using renewable energies or a more efficient use of fuels, for example thermal insulation.

In addition, all "atmosfair" projects are also so-called CDM projects. CDM is a term from the Kyoto Protocol and stands for Clean Development Mechanism: the technology transfer taking place within the framework of this Clean Development Mechanism aids industrialised countries in complying with their climate protection commitments by investing in emissions reductions in developing countries. At the same time this supports sustainable development in the developing countries because new technologies are used that these countries would often not be able to finance themselves.

Federal Environment Minister Trittin: "With the CDM projects, "atmosfair" is already using the framework agreed in the Kyoto Protocol. This ensures that global emissions will actually be reduced."

"atmosfair" will enter the CDM credits in the national emissions register in an account for cancelled credits following purchase. This ensures they are permanently withdrawn from the market.

Further information is available at [www.atmosfair.de](http://www.atmosfair.de).