

Herrn Bundeskanzler Olaf Scholz  
Bundeskanzleramt  
Willy-Brandt-Straße 1  
10557 Berlin

Berlin, 04/14/2023

## **Call for continued operation of German nuclear power plants**

Dear Chancellor Scholz,

We are among the leading international scientists from various fields of research, including natural, environmental and climate sciences. In view of the threat that climate change poses to life on our planet and the obvious energy crisis in which Germany and Europe find themselves due to the unavailability of Russian natural gas, we call on you to continue operating the last German nuclear power plants.<sup>1</sup>

We welcome the efforts of the German government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Germany, a country of particular economic and political importance in Europe, in accordance with international agreements. However, in 2022, CO2 emission goals were exceeded by 40 million metric tons due to the increased use of coal-fired power plants resulting from the necessary cuts in natural gas consumption; estimates for 2023 assume 38 million metric tons.

The Emsland, Isar II and Neckarwestheim II nuclear power plants supplied a total of 32.7 billion kilowatt hours of low-emission electricity in 2022.<sup>2</sup> German private households most recently consumed an average of 3190 kWh of electrical energy per year.<sup>3</sup> This means that these three power plants can supply more than 10 million, or a quarter, of German households with electricity. The resulting reduction in the amount of electricity required from coal-fired power plants could save up to 30 million tons of CO2 per year.

In the past, other European countries also pursued plans to reduce their nuclear power generation capacities. In recent years, however, many of these countries have taken a different stance on nuclear power due to rising energy costs, which has been

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<sup>1</sup> KfW banking group, <https://www.kfw.de/PDF/Download-Center/Konzernthemen/Research/PDF-Dokumente-Fokus-Volkswirtschaft/Fokus-2022/Fokus-Nr.-400-September-2022-BIP-und-THG-Ausstoß.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Federal Statistical Office of Germany, [https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2023/03/PD23\\_090\\_43312.html](https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2023/03/PD23_090_43312.html)

<sup>3</sup> Federal Statistical Office of Germany, <https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Umwelt/UGR/private-haushalte/Tabellen/stromverbrauch-haushalte.html>

exacerbated by the most recent loss of Russian natural gas deliveries. France, the UK, Poland, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands, among others, are planning to build new nuclear power plants or are already doing so, while Belgium and Switzerland are seeking to extend the operating licenses of their plants.

For these reasons, in the interest of the citizens of Germany, Europe and the world, we call on you to reconsider Germany's plans to phase out nuclear power and to use the remaining German nuclear power plants in order to alleviate the energy crisis and help achieving Germany's climate targets.

Your leadership position as head of government of the Federal Republic of Germany has a special responsibility in this matter.

Sincerely,

The signatories

## The Signatories

Prof. Klaus von Klitzing, Nobelpreisträger für Physik 1985, Max Planck Institut für Festkörperforschung

Prof. Steven Chu, Nobelpreisträger für Physik 1997, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Prof. James Hansen, Klimaforscher, Goddard Institute for Space Studies

Prof. Kerry Emanuel, Klimaforscher, Lorenz Center, MIT

Prof. Pushker Kharecha, Klimaforscher, Columbia Climate School, Columbia University

Prof. Szymon Malinowski, Klimaforscher, Institut für Geophysik, Universität Warschau

Prof. Hans von Storch, Klimaforscher, Institut für Küstenforschung Geesthacht

Prof. Tom Wigley, Klimaforscher, University of Adelaide

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Prof. Cornelius Courts, Institut für Rechtsmedizin, Uniklinik Köln

Prof. Wolfgang Dahmen, Mathematiker, Leibniz-Preisträger, RWTH Aachen

Prof. Markus Fitza, Ökonom, Frankfurt School of Finance and Management

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