

# THE KEY TO THE FUTURE

The Science Year 2012  
"Project Earth: Our Future"  
focuses on research for  
sustainable development



An Initiative of the Federal Ministry  
of Education and Research

Science Year

2012

PROJECT  
**EARTH**  
Our Future



**Dear reader,**

Sustainability means cutting only as much wood as can grow back again and living off the harvest rather than the seeds. If we act in line with this precept, which chief mining administrator Hans Carl von Carlowitz postulated as early as the 18th century, future generations will still be able to use the same natural resources that we are using today.

The Science Year 2012, which is dedicated to the topic of sustainability, is therefore focussing on three important questions: How do we want to live? What do we want to live on? How can we preserve and protect our environment? In times of climate change, population growth and loss of biodiversity, we need appropriate answers to all these questions.

Science and research will have to play a key role in answering them. They will have to contribute to finding sustainable solutions to the current challenges. Science-based analyses and innovations are the prerequisite for implementing the principle of sustainability – on a global and national scale, locally in cities and municipalities, in politics and the economy.

With its many discussions and partners, the Science Year 2012 will contribute to making sustainability research transparent and to making the results available to a broad general public. In addition, it encourages people to become actively involved. I would therefore like to invite you to join in. Please contribute to "Project Earth: Our Future" together with institutes, universities and other research institutions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Annette Kurat". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Federal Minister of Education and Research

# JOIN IN

Citizens campaign for sustainable approaches in their city, young people collect old mobile phones and look into the topic of recycling, and young scientists and researchers present their field of research in an accessible and entertaining way. The Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future" provides many opportunities to deal with research for sustainable development. These are some of the events and actions that are scheduled to take place over the coming few months:

## Learning from the big screen

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A special programme of the nation-wide SchulKinoWochen is designed to motivate school students to look into the objectives, challenges and fields of action of sustainability research. Five selected films address questions in the field of environmental and climate protection and sustainable economy and consumption.

[www.schulkinowochen.de](http://www.schulkinowochen.de)

## Book your very own researcher!

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The Forschungsbörse aims to bring together school classes and researchers working in the field of sustainability. Schools all over Germany can invite researchers and sustainability experts to visit their classrooms or visit them at their place of work.

[www.forschungsboerse.de](http://www.forschungsboerse.de)

## Resources in mobile phones

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Precious resources such as gold and palladium can be found in mobile phones. The campaign "The Resource Expedition" shows that everyone can contribute to "Project Earth: Our Future" simply by feeding his or her old mobile phone into the recycling process and thus making sure that fewer resources have to be used.

[www.die-rohstoff-expedition.de](http://www.die-rohstoff-expedition.de)



## Sustainability on class trips

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Together with the German Youth Hostel Association, the Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future" features the action package "Sustainability on class trips". Experimental modules and a quiz make topics such as consumption and climate tangible for students.

# HIGHLIGHT EVENTS

## Science Festival in Lübeck

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Lübeck is celebrating the Science Summer from 2 to 6 June. The science festival features many attractions, such as exhibitions, science slams, presentations on the topic of sustainability, a puppet theatre, the science film festival and many programmes for children and young people as well as a Long Night of Laboratories as the opening event.

[www.wissenschaftssommer2012.de](http://www.wissenschaftssommer2012.de)



## The floating Science Centre

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From May to October, the exhibition ship MS Wissenschaft is showcasing how research contributes to making our lives more sustainable and environmentally friendly. The on-board exhibition displays topics such as environmentally sound washing or sustainable shopping as well as exhibits on climate models and biodiversity. The ship will call at about 35 cities. The hands-on exhibition is geared at visitors from the age of ten.

[www.ms-wissenschaft.de](http://www.ms-wissenschaft.de)

## Welcome to the ZukunftsWerkStadt

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The Federal Ministry of Education and Research is running a competition to support German cities and districts that are developing and implementing municipal sustainability projects together with their citizens. ZukunftsWerkStadt brings together civic action groups and grassroots initiatives, municipal authorities and scientists.

[www.zukunftsprojekt-erde.de/zukunftswerkstadt](http://www.zukunftsprojekt-erde.de/zukunftswerkstadt)

## Entertaining science

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At a science slam, young researchers are given ten minutes to present their scientific contribution to sustainability in a nutshell – to a non-professional audience which will then evaluate the presentation. The eight winners of the regional competitions will meet in Berlin in autumn 2012 to compete in the finals.

[www.scienceslam-im-wissenschaftsjahr.de](http://www.scienceslam-im-wissenschaftsjahr.de)

## Science Year online

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The website of the Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future" shows a large number of dates, events and measures offered in the course of 2012 on the topic of sustainability research. The website is the central communication platform of the Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future" and offers a newsletter, programmes for schools, opportunities for partner participation and hands-on content for children. [www.zukunftsprojekt-erde.de](http://www.zukunftsprojekt-erde.de)



[www.zukunftsprojekt-erde.de](http://www.zukunftsprojekt-erde.de)



**RIO+20**  
20 - 22 June

## What will you be doing on 20 June?

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From 3 to 14 June 1992, representatives of 178 states met in Rio de Janeiro for the first Earth Summit. Twenty years on, the second meeting in Rio will address three priorities from 20 to 22 June: the development of a "greener" economy, the fight against poverty and an institutional framework for sustainable development. The Science Year 2012 "The Earth: Our Future" will back the meeting with a number of actions and events in Germany.

**[www.zukunftprojekt-erde.de](http://www.zukunftprojekt-erde.de)**

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) is funding over 500 international projects in 62 countries on five continents in the field of sustainable development, primarily via the BMBF platform FONA (Research for Sustainable Development). The Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future" will focus on three questions to enhance the dialogue on objectives, challenges and fields of action in sustainability research:

## How do we want to live?

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How can we lead a good life without jeopardizing the basis of life of future generations? This question is the starting point for sustainability research. In order to ensure that our world remains worth living in, research and society need to jointly develop new solutions and approaches on how to build, live, eat, travel and communicate in future without harming our natural environment.

## What do we want to live on?

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Water, energy, metals – many resources are becoming scarce and are overexploited. However, most of them are indispensable. We can use research and science to develop innovative strategies and approaches which enable us to use rare materials more efficiently and to recycle. There are already shortages of some resources, such as the so-called rare earth elements. Future economic processes will therefore have to use resources more carefully, and new innovative production processes and approaches to value creation will have to be developed.

## How can we preserve our environment?

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Economic globalization and human intervention in nature are changing our environment. Climate change and the loss of biodiversity are already threatening the balance of nature. German researchers are therefore working worldwide to find new ways to protect the environment and conserve the basis of our existence.



## Become a partner

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The Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future" depends on the involvement of partners from science, industry, society and culture. If you are planning an event or activity in the field of sustainability research and enter this into the events calendar, we will support you in the related PR work.

## Subscribe to the newsletter

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The monthly newsletter of the Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future" provides information on topics, dates and events. Subscribe online under [www.zukunftprojekt-erde.de](http://www.zukunftprojekt-erde.de).

## Contact

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### Editorial Office of the Science Year 2012 "Project Earth: Our Future"

Saarbrücker Straße 37 | 10405 Berlin

Phone: +49 (0)30 818777-24 Fax: +49 30 818777-25

[redaktionsbuero@zukunftprojekt-erde.de](mailto:redaktionsbuero@zukunftprojekt-erde.de)

Further information is available at:

[www.zukunftprojekt-erde.de](http://www.zukunftprojekt-erde.de) and [en.zukunftprojekt-erde.de](http://en.zukunftprojekt-erde.de)

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The Science Years are a joint initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and Science in Dialogue (WiD). Since 2000, the Science Years have served as a platform for exchanges between the broad public and science along selected topics, with a special focus on young people.



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