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Voluntary contribution for climate protection in the Jungfrau region

Energy – CO₂ reduction of about 5,000 tonnes

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The language of the Eiger, the Mönch and the Jungfrau

Glacier lake, glacier retreat, rock fall and flood. These are terms that people from the city agglomerations of Bern, Zurich and Geneva perhaps know from the media. Abroad, hardly at all. In the Jungfrau region, however, these are not simply any old terms. Here, they are understood.

The Jungfrau region has understood that something fundamental is changing. Something that concerns the living environment and, quite simply, the basis of existence. Hoteliers, transport companies, municipal authorities and mountain guides, in all some 7,000 inhabitants, are experiencing what is happening on a daily basis. But they not only perceive the consequences of climate change, they take it seriously and are prepared to act.

All those who live and work here are concerned. Nature's signs are understood. The language of the Eiger, the Mönch and the Jungfrau is understood. It comes as no surprise that the unique initiative JUNGFRAU CLIMATE CO2OPERATION is starting off at the foot of this world-famous, UNESCO-protected mountain and that it is already being implemented in the area of energy.

Grindelwald wood-fuelled heat network as an example

The Grindelwald wood-fuelled heat network is a typical example of the consternation and readiness to react with regard to climate-protection matters. Some years ago, worried hoteliers launched the idea to replace as many fossil heating systems as possible by local carbon-neutral wood energy and this on their own initiative. The maxim was the planned use of forests in order to economize on heating oil and to protect the climate. Consequently, in 2007, the hoteliers association, the tradesmen and industry association, the municipality, Elektrizitätswerk Grindelwald AG (EWG) and BKW FMB Energie (BKW) joined forces to found Holzwärme Grindelwald AG (HWG).

When the Grindelwald wood-fuelled heat network goes on-stream in 2010/11, it will alone result in an annual reduction of over 4,000 tonnes CO₂. The switchover of a number of hotels, as well as other private and public buildings, from heating oil to wood heating means that around 80 fewer tankers will travel to Grindelwald every year. In return, in the region's forests and in the heat station, about a dozen permanent workplaces will be created for local people.

10 percent CO₂ savings in the area of room heating

Numerous companies and other interested parties, who were unable to join the network because of being too far away, are starting their own initiatives for replacing their fossil-heating systems with carbon-neutral heating systems. Not only in Grindelwald, but in other municipalities in the region as well. Ideas for large projects are currently being discussed in Wengen and Mürren. Even if only a small percentage of these projects can be realized within the next three years or so, a considerable CO₂ reduction of about 5,000 tonnes per annum could potentially be achieved.



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According to experts' estimates, 5,000 tonnes represents a saving of roughly 10% CO₂ in the area of room heating. This is a remarkable performance for a region, even by international comparison. But, we are not there yet. However, most projects are well on the way. And in order not to be dependent on conjectures and estimations, the JUNGFRAU CLIMATE CO₂OPERATION consortium wants to have the effectively achieved CO₂ reduction properly recorded over time by independent experts and to report periodically to the interested public.

Energy ventures for climate, the region and tourism

Over and above the area of room heating, the Jungfrau Climate Charter aims to provide an incentive for implementing appropriate measures in the energy field. The four regional energy companies, the Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald power stations, the Jungfrau Railways and the BKW accept the challenge of climate protection, support the Jungfrau Climate Charter and will collaborate actively in the JUNGFRAU KLIMA-CO₂OPERATION.

The four companies will develop measures for promoting energy efficiency in a targeted manner as 1to1 energy partners. They will also strengthen their measures for promoting new renewable energies, particularly in the fields of biomass, solar energy and micro-hydropower. As the world's highest installation of its kind, the solar power station on the Jungfraujoch, constructed at the end of 2007 by BKW in collaboration with Jungfrau Railways, is the most well-known example. This is also due to the fact that Bertrand Piccard had the solar cells for his SolarImpulse project tested here by BKW.

The four energy companies will support the JUNGFRAU CLIMATE CO₂OPERATION as much as possible. They are doing so for the benefit of the climate, the region and tourism, and this in more than one way. Such as with the six climate tips and the technical upkeep of the one hundred GPS-guided iPhone devices, with the mentioned measures for CO₂ reduction as well as with targeted communication to the 1.5 million people to whom they supply electricity in other parts of Switzerland.

A first large-scale awareness campaign at the clients of all the 130 Swiss partner companies of 1to1 energy will already start in the next few days. Further measures are being planned for next year. The measures in the field of energy as intended in the Jungfrau Climate Charter should have a beneficial effect and make the language of the Eiger, the Mönch and the Jungfrau comprehensible far beyond regional and state borders.