atomstromlos. klimafreundlich. bürgereigen.
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Introducing the *Elektrizitätswerke Schönau* (EWS):

Citizens' electric revolution

1986, subsequent to the worst case scenario in Chernobyl, a parents' Initiative was launched against atomic energy in the small Black Forest town of Schönau. As the operators of the local grid attempted to hinder these citizens' activities, be they attempts to save energy or demands for more environmentally friendly power generators, the idea of buying the Schönau grid, and thus determining the future of its general framework, came into being. The antiatom-initiative wouldn't let itself be put off by two referenda, nor by overpriced demands for millions, and so, in 1997, a citizens' initiative took over the grid and its community's supply. In this it is unique in Germany. The press wrote lovingly of the "'Schönau electricity rebels having won a David against Goliath battle", and the victory of the Schönau residents against the atomic lobby was enthusiastically celebrated throughout Germany. When the German electricity market was deregulated in 1998, the EWS was quick to seize the opportunity and henceforth supply all its Schönau customers exclusively with electricity produced with renewable energy and cogeneration: Schönau was free of atomic and coal electricity. The EWS introduced generous subsidised plans for renewable energy and cogeneration, and thus the proportion of environmentally friendly energy creation in Schönau continuously increases: EWS has the largest percentage of solar electricity of any grid supplier in Germany (by now approx. 6 per cent of total electricity requirements within the grid of EWS Schönau are supplied by solar power) and it also has the highest concentration of smal cogeneration units.

Nationwide eco-electricity sales

One year later, in 1999, when the electricity market was opened up to householders, the EWS was able to supply customers throughout Germany with clean electricity. The EWS business philosophy is based on ecological guiding principles that reject atomic and coal electricity, subsidise renewable energy, and posit the reduction of electricity consumption whilst also supporting the climate-compatible use of cogeneration. Since Chernobyl, this ecological concept has been the basis of Schönau's activities and is being consistently and coherently applied by the Schönau power supplier EWS. When it comes to the supply of sustainable and climate-friendly energy, matters of conservation and efficiency are of ever increasing importance. The faster the reduction in energy consumption and demand levels in Western Europe, the sooner it will become possible to switch to renewable energy sources. Cogeneration (also known as combined heat and

power, CHP) is assigned particular significance in the question of energy efficiency and the scenarios envisaged for sustainable power supply – therefore the EWS employs a small amount of gas-driven, highly efficient cogeneration units in its electricity mixture (0,4% cogeneration, 99,6% renewables in 2010).

Advancement of ecological electricity production

Approximately 130.000 electricity users (in around 750 grid areas) across Germany and 8300 gas users in Southern Germany have already chosen the EWS. This is not only due to the consistent and coherently ecological approach within the local grid and the clean electricity mixture, but also thanks to the advancement of new, ecological electricity production that it practices. Almost the entire amount of electricity sold, created by hydraulic power, was in 2011 produced by new (i.e. sixyears-old or newer) equipment. The producers, furthermore, invest in new equipment or the upgrading of existing equipment. In addition to this, the EWS subsidises new, ecological, electricity production equipment among its customers. Approximately 1950 units have been created in this manner - solar units, cogeneration units, biogas and hydraulic power units. Decentralised production of electricity creates jobs and growth in a future-friendly economy, and is the basis of sustainable energy production.

Motivational and charismatic power

The EWS is more than just an electricity supplier and its goals are broader. The EWS wants to encourage independence of action, the will to change and create. The success of the EWS can therefore only be partially measured by the amount of its customers and the units it has subsidised. What cannot be measured or put into figures is the great motivational and charismatic power that Schönau exudes and which triggers much activity. Schönau's electricity seminars, for example, are attended by people who share its goals and plan to join together and execute common projects. In this manner, a perpetually growing network of ecologically sound initiatives is created and goes into action. Furthermore, the EWS practices what politicians preach and demand; the headquarters of EWS features a solar power unit. "Electricity-creating heating", a cogeneration unit, has been installed in the office block, and the listed building on the company premises is being insulated by specialists.

EWS
ElektrizitätsWerke
Schönau

Prizes for the EWS
The EWS' work has repeatedly garnered prizes. Not only the shareholders and workers of the EWS are pleased by this; the customers too are happy to see that they are vindicated in participating in the EWS' vision of sustainable and fair power production.

Prizes for the Schönau energy initiatives:

2011 Goldman Environmental Prize
2010 Querdenker Award (lateral thinkers award)
2008 Utopia Award
2008 Ashoka Fellow – Social Entrepreneur
2007 Deutscher Gründerpreis (German Business Founder Award)
2006 Preis der Arbeit (employment prize)
2004 Bundesverdienstkreuz am Band (Ferderal Cross of Merit)
2003 European Solar Prize
1999 Gutedelpreis (Gutedel prize)
1999 Nuclear Free Future Award
1997 Henry Ford European Conservation Award
1997 Förderpreis „Demokratie Leben"(living democracy sponsorship award)
1996 Ökomanager des Jahres 1996 (eco-manager of the year 1996)
1994 Deutscher Energiepreis (German energy prize)

Business figures as of February 2012:
Shareholders: 1830
Customers electricity: Approx. 130.000
Customers natural gas: Approx. 8.300
Employees: 65
Subsidised units: Hitherto, some 1950

* current status march 2012