

I hope your symposiums to be held during the next hours and days also will become a useful link between scientific research and the implementation of its results in practice.

Let me once more refer to the climate problem.

I would also like to emphasise that the Federal Government takes a very serious view of the dangers to our surroundings which would be caused by a possible climate change. Thus, it is aiming for a reduction of CO₂ emissions in Germany by 25 - 30 % by the year 2005. For this purpose it has set up a programme including a variety of areas, a programme which will be implemented gradually. In this context forest measures can also contribute to an increase in carbon sequestration and thus counteract possible climate change. The afforestation of land left fallow or farmland, for example, is also important in this regard. The main subject of the symposium offers the best conditions for sounding out from various points of view the possibilities and limits of planting coppices in industrialised nations.

I am particularly pleased that the Centre for Agricultural Landscape and Land Use Research in Müncheberg and Eberswalde, in collaboration with the University of Cottbus, has succeeded in organising this high-level international event and thereby directing attention to the research institutions recently set up in the new Federal States which follow the great tradition of Eberswalde forest research.

Let me finally express my hope that you will have the opportunity to get an impression of the soothing effects of the extended forests around Berlin while you are here.