Press

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# German Environmental Award

Every year, the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU) awards the German Environmental Prize, thus recognising exceptional achievements by those who have contributed to the protection and conservation of the environment, climate, biodiversity and resources in an exemplary way. The prize, which comes with EUR 500,000 in prize money, is one of Europe's most prestigious and richest environmental awards. The DBU has awarded the German Environmental Prize every year since 1993. In 2025 it was presented for the 33rd time. This year climate scientist Professor Dr Sonia Isabelle Seneviratne and management duo Lars Baumgürtel and engineer Dr. Birgitt Bendiek from the steel galvanising company Zinq were honoured. The ceremony took place on 26 October in Chemnitz.

The prize can be split between multiple individuals, and is intended to serve as an inspiring example for others. The achievements of the prize recipients should be so impressive that they motivate others to follow in their footsteps. The prize can be awarded for projects and individual measures, as well as to honour an individual's lifetime achievements. Candidates for the German Environmental Prize are first nominated to the German Federal Environmental Foundation by groups such as employers' associations and labour unions, churches, environmental organisations and nature conservancies, scientific associations and research councils, trade and commercial associations, and the media. Individuals cannot nominate themselves. A jury of prominent figures from the fields of industry, science and technology as well as from various societal organisations is selected by the DBU Board of Trustees and makes a recommendation on who they feel should be awarded the prize for that year. The DBU Board of Trustees then makes the final decision.

In 2024, the German Environmental Prize went to peatland researcher Dr Franziska Tanneberger and electrical engineer Thomas Speidel. Recent award winners include the climate scientist Professor Friederike Otto and wood construction pioneer Dagmar Fritz-Kramer (2023), engineering duo Friedrich Mewis and Dirk Lehmann, biologist Dr Christof Schenck (all three 2022), ecologist Professor Dr Katrin Böhning-Gaese, peatland researcher Professor Dr Dr h.c. Hans Joosten (both 2021). In previous years, Reinhard Schneider (2019), the owner of Werner und Mertz that amongst others produces "Frosch", a washing and cleaning product, the marine biologist Professor Dr Antje Boetius (2018), as well as climate scientists Professor Dr Mojib Latif, Professor Dr Johan Rockström (both 2015) and Professor Dr Joachim Schellnhuber (2007) were honored. An overview of all past prize recipients is to be found here: https://www.dbu.de/en/umweltpreis/award-winners/


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