



Climate protection and resource efficiency

Natural resources are finite, which means we are under growing pressure to find alternatives. Making the most of available resources brings its own set of challenges for us and our customers, which is why this year's report puts the spotlight on climate and environmental protection plus resource efficiency.

Environmental and climate protection

Linde has identified climate change as one of the factors that is set to influence our business in the future. Its impact is not only evident in the changes we are experiencing today; it will be magnified by shifting customer requirements, new legal regulations and stricter government policies. Environmental policy in many of our target countries also provides a defining framework for our business as we explore ways our technologies can help customers comply even more efficiently with local environmental laws.

Our Gases and Engineering Divisions already offer a broad portfolio of environment-, climate- and resource-aware products and processes. Our aim is to focus our R&D efforts even more and intensify our search for economically viable, competitive alternatives to fossil fuels. However, climate and environmental protection also puts the spotlight on our own processes and the need to optimise resource, emission and waste levels. Following the introduction of an IT system to capture environmental indicators, we have been able to improve the quality of this data. And so for the first time we have decided to set voluntary Group-wide environmental targets for 2010.

Infinite stream of ideas for a finite supply of resources

The Linde Corporate Responsibility Report 2010 looks in particular at innovative, forward-looking technologies, targeted especially at energy, water and secondary raw materials. Our pilot plant in Leuna (Germany) is a case in point. From autumn 2010 onwards, this plant will be producing "green hydrogen" from crude glycerol – a by-product of rapeseed-based biodiesel production. Development breakthroughs and the increasing deployment of low-carbon energy technologies are also opening up short- and long-term growth opportunities for our Gases Division. This growth will be fuelled by rising demand for our products and services to support various industrial processes such as solar cell manufacturing and wind turbine welding. Our patented applications have been shown to raise productivity and quality levels in metal processing.

Supplies of natural resources are finite, which is why conservation is so important. Water is the most important raw material we have. Yet it is not evenly distributed around the globe and is becoming increasingly scarce. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 1.1 billion people already live without access to clean drinking water. To alleviate this situation, we are working hard to find new solutions to condition drinking water, reduce consumption of fresh water, increase grey water recycling and remove impurities such as hormones.

We are also focusing our efforts on secondary raw materials. These materials are recycled from waste products such as used glass, plastic, aluminium, tin and compound materials. Turning waste into reusable materials as efficiently as possible is crucial, as recycled materials ease pressure on primary resources. Compared with conventional processes, recycling with industrial gases can help to lower emissions and energy consumption across a wide range of materials including aluminium and rubber.

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