

being regarded as a project for society in a whole, in which the population plays an active part.

In terms of the discussion surrounding environmental justice, Brazil is a staunch proponent of the concept of a historical debt owed by the countries of the industrialised West. Without wishing to belittle the argument's moral aspect, it is however clear that even the acknowledgement of a historical debt cannot lead to a solution. The newly industrialised countries alone are today responsible for causing more than three times the maximum level of carbon emissions that the IPCC estimates would be necessary to limit global warming to just two degrees.

Even though the Kyoto Protocol does not set out binding reduction targets for newly industrialised and developing countries, at the Copenhagen Conference in 2009 Brazil voluntarily agreed to reduce greenhouse emissions by almost 40 percent by 2020. The supervisor of the emissions report published by the

Brazilian economics ministry, Danielly Godiva Santana de Souza, announced in May that this target will in all likelihood be met, given that reductions of 36 percent had already been achieved by 2011. The bulk of these reductions can be attributed to the decline in deforestation, which once again poses the question of whether Brazil is still on course to meet its target in light of the latest figures on this issue.

How Brazil's negotiating position will develop in the future depends in part on the outcome of the presidential elections. An abrupt change of course is hardly to be expected even in the event of victory for the current opposition parties. However, the list of candidates includes environmental activist Marina da Silva, who is standing for the post of vice-president. On the other side of the fence, the more economically liberal PSDB party is also in the running. Success for this party could usher in new possibilities for a decentralised energy policy.

CHILE

Holger Haibach

On 21 May 2014 Michelle Bachelet, who was elected president of Chile for the second time in March, delivered her speech on the state of the nation. Among other topics, she addressed the issue of climate change, warning that phenomena such as high temperatures and droughts are no longer just one-off events, but could be regular occurrences in the coming years. At the same time, she made it clear that this is not merely due to natural causes, but that the population is also partly responsible as a result of practices such as excessive consumption of water. Bachelet's speech left no room for doubt that both climate and energy policy would occupy a central role in her government programme.

Climate change has therefore made its way onto the new Bachelet government's political agenda. What is more, of the 56 measures that she plans to tackle in her first 100 days in government, those concerning environmental and energy policy have already been implemented. This includes a comprehensive Energy Agenda. The population is also increasingly paying attention to the issue of climate change, mainly because Chile is a country that is frequently affected

by natural disasters and the effects of climate change (melting of the glaciers, declining water supply, drought). Particularly farmers in the affected regions in the isolated northern and southern parts of the country are devoting more and more of their attention to this increasingly urgent issue. Climate change is regarded as an obstacle to the economy, a cause of social inequality and a threat to the food supply. In general, awareness of climate change in Chile is rising among politicians and the population alike, although the will to change mentalities and take concrete steps must be strengthened further.

President Bachelet's government programme gives priority to energy policy in general and energy security policy specifically. The Energy Agenda forms a part of her economic policy and is supposed to play a fundamental role in the daily lives of Chilean families and the development of Chile's economy. Bachelet maintains that the country's dependence on fossil energy sources must be reduced and renewable energies developed in order to keep pace with the changes in climate policy that are occurring globally. Chile imports 60 percent of its primary energy, making it dependent on price fluctuations and instability, as well as the supply limitations caused by political and

climate-related factors and the vicissitudes of the energy market. In her speech, Bachelet mentioned a number of aspects in which Chile is lagging behind other countries with regard to energy.

Her new government intends to address the most pressing problems with its Energy Plan, which comprises the following key points:

GOALS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S ENERGY PLAN

- Lowering the cost of electricity supply in the next decade for households, businesses and small enterprises by 25 percent in comparison to the prices quoted in the last tender process
- Raising the share of renewable energies in the energy mix to 20 percent by 2025
- Increasing efficiency in the consumption of energy
- Creating a system to stabilise fuel prices

Besides addressing key issues in energy policy, the government's Energy Agenda includes aspects of public policy as well:

PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

- A new role for the state in the evolution of the energy sector (including expansion of the energy ministry and modernising the supervisory authority for electricity and fuels)
- Reducing energy prices by means of enhanced competition, efficiency and variety on the energy market (price benefits for long-term clients, use of liquefied gas instead of diesel in electricity generation)
- Developing the country's own energy resources (support for renewables and hydropower, use of wood as an energy source [bioenergy])
- Expanding national and regional energy grids
- Creating an efficient energy sector that regulates consumption (new energy efficiency law, campaigns and training programmes on energy efficiency, support for energy management at the municipal level)
- Incentives for investment in Chile's energy sector (support for thermoelectric projects that meet environmental requirements and provide secure energy for the country, involvement of municipalities in the development of energy projects)
- Increased participation at municipal and regional level (including development of an agenda for hydropower)

The extent to which all these points can be addressed within the current president's term remains to be seen. Given that the country's primary export, copper, is obtained by means of a very energy-intensive procedure, it will be necessary to weigh many conflicting interests against each other.

The area of the world that receives the most direct sunlight – the Atacama Desert – is located in Chile: the 210 square kilometres of desert have the potential to produce enough electricity for the entire planet for a year. However, far too little is being done to tap this potential. According to experts, Chile could be a world leader in solar energy by 2020. The country possesses extensive natural resources that are so far not being exploited to the full, and which require greater support and development.

Chile has repeatedly sought to become more involved in multilateral energy policy, albeit generally in the areas of gas and fossil fuels, which are growing increasingly scarce. With regard to renewable energies, the prevailing opinion in Chile is that the country has enough potential to even export energy from renewable sources to other countries at some stage. However, to date only neighbouring countries, in particular Argentina, have been considered as potential buyers. While the role of the United Nations in the climate debate is respected, and the standards negotiated there with regard to the environment and climate are complied with, the country does not have a strong presence in terms of multilateral international climate policy. Although Chile is among the signatories of the Kyoto Protocol that are not required to reduce emissions, it has nevertheless made a commitment to participate in the development of the CDM. For the period

following 2012, the country has agreed to reduce its expected emissions in the fields of energy efficiency, renewables, soil use and forest management by 20 percent by 2020, compared to its 2007 levels.

In parliamentary discussions, Europe is frequently cited as an example in terms of climate and energy policy. Although Chileans are aware of the importance of creating an appropriate energy policy and pursuing sustainability, progress achieved in this regard remains a long way from the European example. Spain is considered a role model for its wind energy, while Iceland is seen as a renewable energy pioneer in that it generates 100 percent of its electricity needs from renewable sources. Chile is particularly interested in Iceland's use of geothermal energy, as it too has untapped geothermal potential. However, even the European systems are by no means regarded as perfect; in Spain, for instance, the subsidies granted to renewables could no longer be guaranteed during the economic and financial crisis. While Germany is admired for generating 20 percent of its overall electricity needs from renewable sources, this system is not considered viable by the Chilean government as the majority of the costs are borne by end consumers. The transformation of Germany's energy model is regarded as promising and auspicious, but could not be implemented in Chile due to its high costs and the lower level of awareness in the Chilean population (among ordinary citizens but also at corporate and state level).

COSTA RICA

Graciela Incer | Henning Suhr

According to the IPCC, Costa Rica and the other Central American countries occupy a region in which the effects of climate change will be particularly severe. The most serious consequences are expected to manifest themselves in the intensity and variability of the rainy season and the prolongation of the dry season. A decline in rainfall is predicted in the generally drier parts of the country such as the northwest region and certain Pacific coastal areas. In contrast, in areas where flooding is common or those close to

rivers (southern Pacific, plains on the Atlantic coast), increased rainfall is expected. Certain coastal areas are under serious threat from the forecast rise in sea level. It is even suggested that there could soon be two dry and rainy seasons: the rainy season (from May to November) would be punctuated by a dry period in July and August. Similarly, a brief period of rain could occur during the dry season.

Changes in temperature and rainfall will also have a socio-economic impact. In particular agriculture, transport infrastructure and the health sector will be