

Energy Resources and Policy

Assignment: Policy initiatives to stimulate the development of renewable energy sources

Increasingly ambitious targets for reducing carbon emissions and exploiting renewable energy sources are emerging from national governments. The targets are accompanied by various policy initiatives, suggesting that market forces alone will not deliver the pace of change required.

Feed-in tariffs were introduced in Germany some ten years ago, leading to the widespread adoption of photovoltaic systems and to the establishment of a substantial wind turbine manufacturing industry. They subsequently appeared in several other European countries, and were recently introduced in the UK. What developments can we expect as a result?

Are feed-in tariffs an effective way to encourage the development of renewables? Who gains from their adoption? Who are the losers? And what are their limitations? Produce a critique of feed-in tariffs as a policy tool, drawing on experiences from Germany and elsewhere.

Widen the discussion to explore how other policy initiatives might complement (or replace) feed-in tariffs in moving us towards the targets set for 2050 and beyond. Conclude with your recommendations on how renewable energy development should be managed in future years.

The report addressing the questions posed above should be no more than 600 words. The submission deadline will be announced in class.

External sources of information should be referenced in the usual way. You are reminded of our regulations about plagiarism – by all means refer to published articles on the subject, and quote from them if you wish. But this article must be your own work.