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Publication of the first Swiss Cleantech Report

Cleantech rising to prominence

Environmentally friendly technologies are becoming increasingly important to Switzerland as an economic and research hub. A new study has revealed that Swiss companies in all sectors are investing substantial sums in energy-efficient technologies. What's more, Switzerland would appear to be one of the most innovative countries in the world in this area.

Cleantech is gaining ground in Switzerland. Clear evidence of this rise to the fore is the publication of the first Swiss Cleantech Report, which takes an in-depth look at the Swiss cleantech industry from a number of angles and documents the huge growth potential of technologies designed to use natural resources efficiently and sustainably. Indeed, Switzerland has long been aware of and promoted the vast economic potential afforded by environmentally friendly technologies, well before the recent reactor disasters in Japan.

Substantial proportion of investment channelled into cleantech applications

In a recent scientific study, the Business Research Centre (KOF) at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zürich looked at the economic mechanisms involved in generating and expanding energy-efficient technologies. The KOF concluded from its findings that on average, Swiss companies channelled between 5 and 7% of their total investment into energy-efficient technologies. Accordingly, the Swiss economy is already using cleantech products on a wide scale and across a broad range of sectors. The proportion of investment in energy-efficient technologies is particularly high in the paper and electrical engineering industries at over 12%, while power supply companies allocate some 48% of their entire investment to such technologies. The main drivers behind this high proportion of investment by power companies, regardless of their size, are high energy prices and environmental factors.

Switzerland as an international leader in innovation

As a cleantech pioneer, Switzerland is one of the most innovative countries in the world: in 2008 alone, 20 patent applications in the cleantech area were filed per million inhabitants. «As far as R&D is concerned, Switzerland is indeed top notch», says Gian-Luca Bona, Director of Empa, the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technologies, one of the project partners who published the Swiss Cleantech Report.

«But it takes much more for Swiss industry to be able to take advantage of the "big business" that cleantech is likely to become. We need to transfer research results much more effectively into innovative – and marketable – technologies.»

Swiss Cleantech Report 2011

The Swiss Cleantech Report is a current survey of the Swiss cleantech sector. It illustrates Switzerland's excellent framework for environmentally friendly technologies in terms of research and development, economic implementation and attractive funding options. As a location for industry and science, Switzerland plays a leading role in this field. The Swiss Cleantech Report is published by a number of key research institutes and establishments in the economic and public sector. Besides Empa, project partners include the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET), CleantechAlps, CSEM, the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property, Osec, the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI), SIX Swiss Exchange and swisscleantech.

Further information

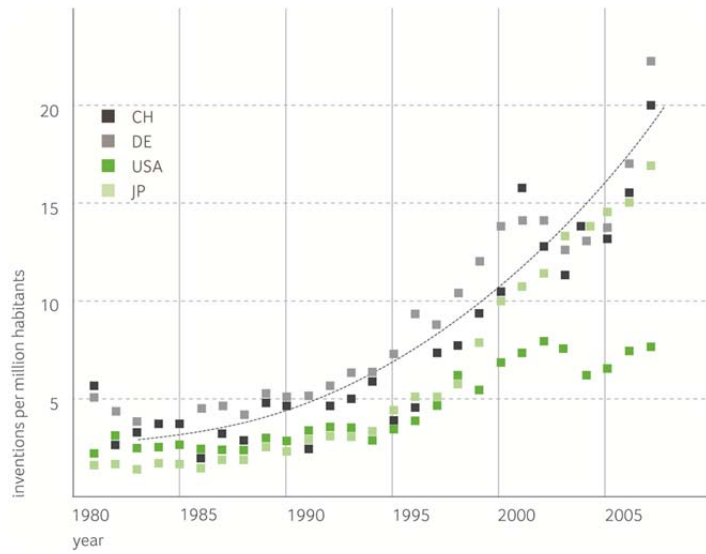
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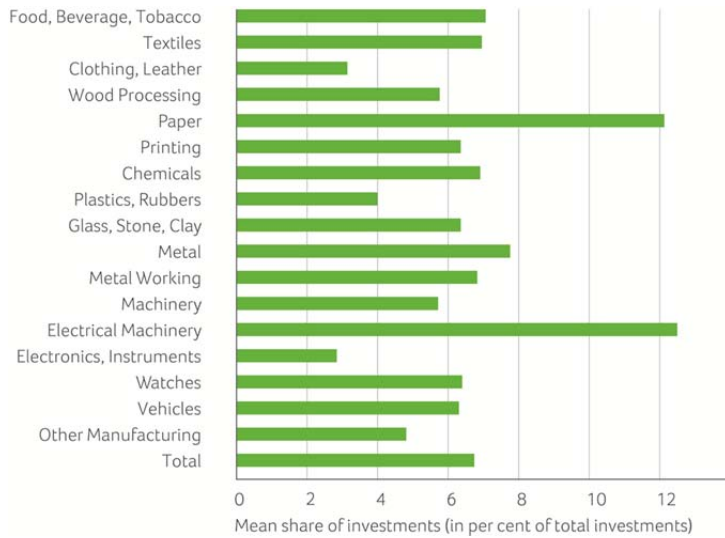
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Number of patent applications (per capita) filed in respect of inventions designed to combat or adapt to climate change.



Mean share of companies' total investment channelled into energy-efficient technologies (in %).
 Owing to its exceptionally high proportion of investment (48%), the power supply sector has not been plotted.

The text and images are available in electronic form from: redaktion@empa.ch