Press release

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German Environmental Award for practical pioneers

DBU honors Franziska Tanneberger and Thomas Speidel

Osnabrück. Two business and science personalities will be honored this year with the German Environmental Award of the German Federal Environmental Foundation (*Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt*, *DBU*): peatland researcher Dr. Franziska Tanneberger (46) from Greifswald and electrical engineer Thomas Speidel (57) from Nürtingen near Stuttgart will share the prize of 500,000 euros. It is one of the most highly endowed environmental awards in Europe and is presented annually by the DBU, this year for the 32nd time. Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier will present the prize on October 27 in Mainz.

Strategic foresight and in rubber boots with farmers

"Thomas Speidel is characterized by innovative strength, strategic foresight and economic daring," says DBU Secretary General Alexander Bonde. "He is a pioneer for climate-friendly electromobility." Moor researcher Tanneberger, according to Bonde, "develops utilization perspectives even in rubber boots together with farmers. For her, protection and use of moorland do not exclude each other. She is committed to the sustainable use of wet moors."

"Like a Swiss army knife for the energy transition"

As Managing Director of ads-tec Energy, Thomas Speidel, father of three, has developed innovative battery-buffered high-performance systems that act as a multi-tool, "like a Swiss army knife for the energy transition" (Speidel). For example, they enable charging in minutes instead of hours. One target: the rapid, nationwide expansion of the currently still rather limited charging infrastructure - a prerequisite for greater acceptance of environmentally friendly e-mobility and thus reducing emissions of climate-damaging carbon dioxide (CO_2) through the optimal use of renewable energies. According to Speidel, making the lower overall costs of electromobility tangible for everyone will make a decisive contribution to its success and resolve the ban on combustion engines for new registrations planned in the European Union (EU) from 2035. Germany also has ambitious goals: the registration of 15 million electric vehicles nationwide by 2030 and the installation of one million public charging points - an almost tenfold increase in both cases. Added to this is the Climate Protection Act, according to which Germany wants to be climate-neutral by 2045, i.e. not emit more greenhouse gases than can be absorbed. In short: e-mobility is a decisive lever for the transport and climate protection targets.

Battery storage systems for fast charging electric vehicles

According to Speidel, the battery-buffered fast chargers can be installed flexibly on roads, at company buildings, in residential areas without garages or wall boxes as well as in urban conurbations and remote locations. There are two

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models: *ChargeBox* and *ChargePost* - the latter as tall as a telephone box, each weighing around three tons and each equipped with two fast-charging points. The storage systems with integrated lithium-ion battery slowly draw power from the existing power grid, store it and convert the alternating current from the grid into direct current, which can be used for charging with an output of 320 kilowatts. If an e-vehicle is docked, it can be charged within minutes with a surge from the storage reserves. Speidel: "Just like a toilet cistern, which fills up slowly and empties in no time when used." What's more, *ChargeBox* and *ChargePost* are multi-tools in addition to fast charging. Thanks to their battery storage system, they secure locally generated solar energy, stabilize the grid - and avoid power bottlenecks wherever there is a lack of grid expansion.

Driving force in the revitalization and rewetting of peatlands

Climate neutrality in Germany by 2045 and in the EU by 2050 also plays a significant role in Franziska Tanneberger's work. Her trump card: peatlands are the best allies when it comes to climate protection. The internationally renowned peatland researcher is therefore regarded as a driving force in the revitalization and rewetting of peatlands and as a bridge builder between science, politics and agriculture. Whether at World Climate Conferences, at the World Biodiversity Council or in EU agricultural policy, Tanneberger takes every opportunity to praise peatlands as veritable climate and biodiversity protectors: "Natural and wet peatlands remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and then store this carbon, which makes them really good helpers in climate protection." They are also multi-talented: they are carbon sinks, water reservoirs and guarantors of biodiversity.

Moorland protection hand in hand with agriculture

Nevertheless, there is a huge challenge: according to Tanneberger, more than 90 percent of peatlands in Germany alone have been drained - and climate-damaging greenhouse gases (GHG) are escaping from them. "Across Germany, dry peatlands are responsible for seven percent of GHG emissions. And what I find very sad is that they are responsible for a huge loss of species diversity and biodiversity," says the peatland researcher. "We need to rewet peatlands." Her research shows how this can go hand in hand with agriculture. Examples include the reed roofs on houses in northern Germany, the use of litter in Bavaria and also innovative, great new building and insulation materials." Not forgetting the great added value for biodiversity on rewetted areas.

First global peatland status report and portfolio with more than 60 patents

According to DBU Secretary General Alexander Bonde, both personalities are "genuine practical pioneers who have shown outstanding commitment in advancing environmental and biodiversity protection, as well as climate protection with technological progress". Mother-of-two Tanneberger, author and co-director of the Greifswald Mire Center, played a key role in the Global Peatland Assessment, the first global peatland status report. And Thomas Speidel, President of the Federal Association for Energy Storage Systems (*Bundesverband für Energiespeichersysteme, BVES*) since 2016 and involved in two co-founded foundations, has more than 60 German and international patent applications in his portfolio, including for battery technology and storage solutions.

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