

Press Release 1/2016

**IGBCE President Vassiliadis is the Coal Importer Association's guest
Power supply remains secure and affordable only with coal-fired power plants
Change in the Association's management: Wodopia succeeds Schmitz**

The Verein der Kohlenimporteure e.V. (VDKi) had a high-ranking visitor at its New Year's Reception in the Hotel Grand Elysée in Hamburg on 15/01/2016. The president of the *Industriegewerkschaft Bergbau, Energie und Chemie*, Mr Michael Vassiliadis, was the principal speaker before an audience of about 170 members and guests of the VDKi.

He commented on the most recent proposals from "Agora Energiewende" for the exit from coal as follows: *"None of this is convincing. We need a general concept for our energy policies that incorporates social, economic and climate policy goals. Instead, "Agora Energiewende" subordinates energy policy to a regulation strategy based solely on climate protection. The Agora ideas cannot stand up to the demands of reality"*, noted the IGBCE president.

As reported recently in the FAZ, "the Berlin foundation *Agora Energiewende*, which is financed by German and foreign philanthropists, regularly sticks its nose into matters of energy policy."

Despite – or even because of – the energy turnaround, hard coal is an indispensable and competitive source of energy that is dependably available and can offset fluctuations in the supply from renewable energy sources. It is simultaneously an important raw material, especially for the steel industry.

VDKi Chairman Dr Cieslik: *"Records in kWh power generation from renewable energy sources alone do not represent success. The electricity must also be transported to the consumers, and it must be affordable. But renewable energies cannot guarantee either. The expansion of the grid is not keeping pace with the unchecked development of green power, and the annual subsidies have reached the mark of almost €25 billion. Moreover, the grid operators are being subjected to enormous subsequent costs that will ultimately be borne by the power consumers."*

Cieslik continued: *"One thing has not changed since the Climate Summit of Paris: coal-fired power plants are the only way to ensure that power supply remains secure and affordable."*

The Chairman also announced a change in the Association's management:

At his own request, Dr Schmitz is stepping down from his position as managing director as of 31/12/2015. He was the president of the Coal Importer Association from 2004 to 2010 and has been the managing director since 01/01/2011. Dr Cieslik in his thank-you speech: *"Under Dr Schmitz' management, the Association was modernized and enriched with energy business competencies. Dr Schmitz deserves special thanks for his work on the subjects of corporate social responsibility and logistics and transport law, always with the goal of securing a legal basis for the import of coal that was in conformity with practice as well as generally accepted."*

He followed his remarks with the introduction of the new managing director, Dr Franz-Josef Wodopia.

Franz-Josef Wodopia was born in 1957. He earned his degree in economics in 1981, and in 1985 he earned a doctorate of economic sciences (rer. pol.) at the University of Heidelberg. He entered the service of the *Gesamtverband Steinkohle (GVSt)*, Essen, in 1986, moving in 1989 to the IG BCE, Hanover, at last as the head of the department "Mining and Energy Industry".

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Managing Director: Dr Franz-Josef Wodopia, Professor; Chairman: Dr Wolfgang Cieslik

He became the chief executive in 2005, and from 1 May 2006 to December 2015 he was managing director of the GVSt. From 2000 to 2007, he held a post as a work-and-study professor for economic sciences for engineers at the TFH Georg Agricola in Bochum, where he has been an honorary professor since 2007. Franz-Josef Wodopia is vice-president of EURACOAL in Brussels, the European Association for Coal and Lignite, where this Association is also a member. Dr Cieslik, speaking about the new managing director: *“Our appointment of Mr Wodopia to the position secures an experienced man with excellent knowledge of coal and coal mining for our Association. He stands for continuity and competence.”*

Hamburg, 15/01/2016

Responsible pursuant to the German Press Act: Verein der Kohlenimporteure e.V.,
Dr Franz-Josef Wodopia, Managing Director

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Dr Erich Schmitz



Prof Dr Franz-Josef Wodopia