

The FEA is the central federal advisory authority on environmental protection in Germany. Established 1974 as an independent federal authority the FEA has the following primary functions:

- Scientific support for the federal government in matters relating to immissions control, soil conservation, waste and water management and environmental health issues, particularly in preparing legal and administrative regulations,
- Establishing and running an information system for environmental planning, as well as an environmental documentation centre, measuring large-scale air pollution and providing information to the public and making available central services and assistance for departmental research and for the co-ordination of federal environmental research, supporting the assessment of the environmental impact of action taken by the federal government.

Due to its nature as a governmental organisation FEA is involved in many international co-operations and programs in all fields of environmental protection. Among others, there is a close relationship to the European Commission, to the NATO Council on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS), to OECD as well as to Central and Eastern European institutions. From 1996 to 1998 the FEA was the co-ordinator and principal contractor of the European Commission for the Concerted Action on Risk assessment for Contaminated Land CARACAS. The FEA is currently one of the participating scientific institutions of the EU Concerted Action CLARINET chairing the working group 1 on brownfield redevelopment. The results of the work of the FEA are published as "Reports" (Berichte), "Materials" (Materialien), "Texts" (Texte), and in the "Environmental Planning and Information System" (Umplis) and the "UNESCO Documents on Environmental Education".

#### **Organisation:**

In 1994, the FEA employed 1,186 people, of which almost 50% had a university-level qualification. The budget for 1994 was over 91 million DM, and a further 210 million DM was given over to the agency for investment and research.

#### Scope of work

The scope of activities encompasses among others:

- assessment of environmentally relevant chemicals and new substances and of so-called waste substance notifications under the Chemicals Act
- participation in the implementation of the Plant Protection Act, the Genetic Engineering Act, the Leaded Petrol Act and the Marine Dumping Act, as a common authority
- cooperating in the implementation of soil conservation plans and the clean-up of disused landfills and contaminated sites
- clearing house for matters relating to the Basel Convention
- coordination and advice on environmental damage to monuments and national heritage
- national clearing house for UNESCO in matters relating to environmental education
- cooperating in awarding environmental seals and promoting environmentally friendly products, especially within the public sector
- national reference laboratory for the EU in monitoring air pollution
- WHO collaborating centre for air quality management and air pollution control secretary of the Immediate Aid Committee for Drinking Water

conducting tests provided for under §10c of the Federal Epidemics Act the European centre for atmospheric emissions within the European Environmental Agency.