

**SPEECH TO MARK THE PRESENTATION OF THE
EUBIA INDUSTRY AWARD 2009**

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Dear Mr Fjällström,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would first like to say thank you, Mr Fjällström, for the friendly welcome, your kind words and of course this prestigious award.

The issue of renewable energies is one that concerns each and every one of us. And this is not just because hardly a day goes by when the press does not report on the issue of climate change, environmental disasters or the consequences of increased CO₂ emissions. Our world is being shaped by the increasing pace of technological progress, along with a rapid rise in the demand for energy around the world and a considerable impact on the environment. "Before we start to change the world, it might make more sense not to destroy it first," was an observation made by the French diplomat and poet Paul Claudel almost 100 years ago.

All of us gathered here are well aware that renewable energies may provide the solution which will allow future generations to live in an environment which is unspoilt. And bioenergy in particular has a key role to play here. The existing potential needs to be developed and utilised quickly so that a substantial and sustainable contribution can be made to the supply of energy on a long-term basis. With each new biogas plant that is constructed, we help to conserve the environment and also make ourselves less dependent on foreign imports. Our bio natural gas plants in particular make a crucial contribution to this. But we could also have made greater progress with development if the potential of bioenergy had been identified and advanced at an earlier stage. The sector has come up against many obstacles over the years.

When our company was founded back in 1995, wind energy, solar energy and bioenergy were very low profile. When Ulrich Schmack together with two of his brothers constructed a biogas plant with an output of almost 30 kW at his parents' business, they were regarded as being slightly crazy. Happily, this has since changed. The company and the bioenergy sector have experienced rapid development.

With entrepreneurial courage and skill, the Schmack brothers successfully managed to conquer a new market. They turned a family business into a highly productive company which operates on the international stage and has a great future ahead of it. And the future for biogas has only just begun.

There is huge potential for innovation both in plant engineering and in terms of microbiology. Our company identified this potential at an early stage and our employees have successfully delivered a number of pioneering projects. These range from the first agricultural biogas plants to the first gas feed facilities in Germany, from the first microbiological studies to a renowned in-house research centre for optimising biological processes.

Specific legislation in different countries, with the Renewable Energies Act in Germany leading the way, provides new opportunities and we too will not simply settle for what we have achieved so far. The biogas plants of the future will run more efficiently and more stably, the gas yield will be higher and the throughput speed of the fermentation substrate in the plant will be shorter.

We are working on this, and we are using our energy to do so!

It is nice when your work is acknowledged and appreciated, as it has been today. I would like to offer you my sincere thanks for this. I would also like to thank you on behalf of all the employees who work so hard to ensure that our company is so successful. As the American steel magnate Charles M. Schwab (1862-1939) once observed: "The way to develop the best that is in a man is by appreciation and encouragement." On this note, I shall take this award back home with me.

Thank you very much!

