The 2000-Watt Society:
Embarking on an energy, environment and climate policy with a long-term perspective

Today, in the city of Zurich, every resident consumes yearly around three times as much energy as globally available resources and the durability of the environment allow for. This leads to excessive air and noise pollution for the city's population, which in turn endangers its health. In addition, this aggravates the greenhouse gas effect and thereby exerts a negative influence on the world's climate.

With the focus for the legislature period 2006-2010 on "Zurich: A Sustainable City – On the Way to being a 2000-Watt Society", Zurich's City Council is focusing on energy, environment and climate policy founded on a long-term perspective. The City Council wants to thus ensure that coming generations continue to enjoy a city offering an excellent quality of life.

Specifications contained in the "2000-Watt Society" are to form the guiding principles. This goal presents a major challenge, as the annual average energy consumption per head compared with today should amount to only one third (i.e. from 6000-watt to 2000-watt) and CO2 emissions must be reduced to one ninth of current levels. In addition, at least 75% of energy must be produced from renewable sources.

As a contribution to attaining these goals, the following strategical focal points are envisaged:

- substantial increase in energy efficiency and in the use of renewable energy sources
- the planning, construction and management of buildings that are oriented towards the 2000-watt principle, including so-called "lighthouse projects" which already contain the specifications of the 2000-Watt Society
- encouraging pedestrian and cycle traffic, expanding rail, tram and bus transport networks and supporting the creation and use of energy and environmentally efficient motor vehicles
- raising awareness of the city's administration's behaviour and that of its population, with regard to the environment and health, by expanding knowledge on the inter-linkages between environmental damage and its ramifications for health (including health care costs); as well as providing incentives for taking preventative measures for protecting the environment and health.