

# #KLIMAFIT AN IDEA COMES OF AGE

Without knowledge, there can be no climate protection: in keeping with this simple logic, REKLIM and its partners launched an unprecedented project. In 'crash courses', they train interested citizens to become climate multipliers - at their local community college, and using a teaching plan that is precisely tailored to the participants' home region. A project that began with small steps but is rapidly gaining momentum, as this timeline shows.

2008

## LAYING THE FIRST STONE

In the context of the climate protection initiative, Germany's Federal Ministry of the Environment agreed to provide local communities with funding to hire their own climate protection manager. The goal: help cities and municipalities develop and implement individual climate protection concepts with the aid of these experts.



**2015**

### **DEFINING THE GLOBAL CLIMATE TARGET**

At the 21st UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in December 2015, for the first time the representatives of 195 countries concluded a broad, legally binding agreement on global climate protection. The agreement included an action plan intended to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius.

**< 2°**

**2016**

### **AMBITIOUS PLANS FOR GERMANY**

In November 2016, Germany's federal government approved a climate protection plan for 2050, making it one of the first countries to create a long-term climate protection strategy and present it to the United Nations, as called for in the Paris Agreement. Germany's long-term goal is to become largely greenhouse-neutral by the year 2050.

**2016**



Armin Bobsien

### **ONE MAN'S INSIGHT**

In Emmendingen, a town of 28,000 inhabitants in southwest Baden-Württemberg, climate protection manager Armin Bobsien concluded that a given city or community doesn't need just one climate protection expert; ideally, it should have as many experts as citizens. Accordingly, he decided to train his fellow citizens to become multipliers for local climate protection. Now all he needed was someone with previous experience in the area, but who?

**2016**

### **AN IDEA BECOMES A PLAN**

While researching training options, Armin Bobsien stumbled across an online seminar on climate change and its impacts. Bobsien found the approach used in the seminar, which was prepared by the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) Germany and the German Climate Consortium (DKK), promising. But the content chiefly focused on the global climate and offered very little information on the changes in southwest Baden-Württemberg, which were his top priority. In response, he contacted the WWF Germany.

**2016 FROM PLAN TO COURSE CONCEPT**

2016

### DRESS REHEARSAL IN EMMENDINGEN

The first trial run for the new course concept took place at the community college in Emmendingen: five evenings, 20 participants, and a host of researchers. The modern course concept was well received - so well, in fact, that half of the participants came up with idea of regularly meeting for a #klimafit regulars' table. Their goal: promote climate protection in Emmendingen through local campaigns of their own. During WWF Earth Hour 2017, for the first time the lights on Emmendinger Tor, the centrepiece arch in the city's historic quarter, were temporarily doused. And that was just the beginning...

2016

### FROM PLAN TO COURSE CONCEPT

The WWF welcomed the request from Emmendingen, and worked together with Armin Bobsien to design a first test climate course for those who worked during the day. The course is intended to be offered at local community colleges, present essential climate-relevant information concisely, promote exchanges between the participants, provide a forum for new ideas, and above all focus on the regional impacts of climate change. But who knows the most about the effects of climate change in Germany? And who could provide the necessary content? REKLIM, of course. No sooner said than done, they soon set to work!



All illustrations were done during a workshop in Hamburg, Germany.

**MARCH 2017**

**THE FIRST SPONSOR GETS ON BOARD**

The positive response in Emmendingen encouraged the WWF and REKLIM to take the next step. They jointly submitted an application for funding to the Robert Bosch Foundation, in order to expand the project to additional cities.

**The target groups:**

On the one hand, those who want to help make their cities and communities more climate-friendly. This includes architects, energy consultants, green-space planners, craftspeople, heating installers and town council / municipal council members. On the other, the course addresses parts of the workforce that are especially affected by the regional impacts of climate change, e.g. those working in agriculture and forestry. But all citizens who simply want to learn more about regional climate change are also warmly invited to attend.

**The concept:**

The #klimafit evening sessions combine expert presentations, group discussions and digital learning, giving the participants the chance to talk with leading experts on climate change at the global, regional and local level. A moderator who is familiar with the region guides the group through the content; in turn, the community's climate protection representative shares information on local challenges. By the end of the course, the participants hopefully see themselves as multipliers for climate protection in their communities, and know a great deal more about the effects of global climate change in their own backyard, and what they can do in response.

**SEPTEMBER 2017**

**KICK-OFF IN SIX PILOT CITIES**

In September 2017, #klimafit was launched at community colleges in six cities throughout southwest Germany: Bad Säckingen, Emmendingen, Bühl, Offenburg, Heidelberg and Stuttgart. The response from the 115 participants was overwhelmingly positive: in the final evaluation, 95 percent claimed they would recommend the course to a friend; 71 percent reported that their expectations with regard to learning more about climate change were completely satisfied; and 91 percent confirmed that they had learned a great deal about the effects of climate change in their own region.



**95%**

**JUNI 2018 REFINING THE CONCEPT: WHAT DO COMMUNITIES TRULY NEED?**

**JUNE 2018**

**REFINING THE CONCEPT: WHAT DO COMMUNITIES TRULY NEED?**

Despite this excellent feedback, everything good can always be made even better: in response, on 5 June 2018 the #klimafit organisers invited actors from the areas climate protection and climate adaptation, as well as representatives of the federal, state and local government, to a workshop in Hamburg. Together, they discussed how the course could better meet the needs of citizens and communities. One of the ideas put forward: teaching participants how to stand up and get actively involved. But how?

**OCTOBER 2018**

**A SECOND SPONSOR JOINS IN**

Duly impressed by the concept, the regional connection, and the dialogue between researchers and citizens, in the autumn of 2018 the Klaus Tschira Foundation became the second major sponsor for #klimafit.

**JANUARY 2019**

**NORDIC BY NATURE**

In early 2019, the community colleges in seven Northern German cities added #klimafit to their curricula: Hamburg, Bremerhaven, Bremen, Emden, Eckernförde, Rostock and Greifswald. Once again, the content was tailored to the specific region. Further, some of the theoretical content was removed, leaving considerably more room for topics like networking and how to take action. At the same time, the second round of #klimafit courses were being offered in Southwest Germany, and were chiefly financed by the communities themselves. Held in the spring of 2019, these courses attracted 274 men and women, who were also surveyed in terms of what they learned and their opinions on the project.

**MAY 2019**

**ADDRESSING THE CENTRE**

The lessons learned from the project's second phase in Southwest and Northern Germany were integrated into the course concept for Central Germany, and new courses in Hannover, Leipzig and Berlin, as well as Munich, were planned to commence in the spring of 2020. The new regional focus areas include drought and flooding. As a next step, the organisers have set the ambitious goal of offering the course nationwide, so as to make even more communities 'klimafit'.

# HOW DOES THE #KLIMAFIT COURSE ACTUALLY WORK?





#klimafit is a new course format offered at community colleges, intended to train normal citizens to become climate multipliers in their own communities. It introduces participants to the scientific fundamentals of the climate and climate change, equips them with the skills they need in their new role, and especially focuses on regional climate change. The format combines classroom teaching and online work, while also giving participants the chance to speak with climate researchers and get in touch with local climate protection initiatives. #klimafit is accompanied by local / municipal climate protection representatives.

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## TEAMWORK NATIONWIDE

THE FOLLOWING VALUED PARTNERS HAVE HELPED MAKE #KLIMAFIT A SUCCESS

### Our anchors onsite: Community colleges

Community colleges can be found in nearly every town. Known and trusted as unbiased adult education centres, people are rarely anxious about visiting them. Taken together, these two aspects make them ideal partners. In addition, many community colleges are now making great strides with regard to digitalisation. As such, #klimafit and its digital learning formats came at just the right time.



### Our sponsors:

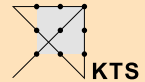
#### The foundations

#klimafit continues to grow, thanks to the vital financial support provided by the Robert Bosch Foundation and the Klaus Tschira Foundation. For both sponsors, the dialogue between the research community and society at large is a matter close to their heart. After all, knowledge alone isn't what sets societal transformation in motion; it takes people, who join forces to drive that change. And it is precisely this idea that #klimafit is putting into practice.



Robert Bosch  
Stiftung

Klaus Tschira Stiftung  
gemeinnützige GmbH



### Our educational experts for climate protection:

#### The WWF Germany

The WWF's Education division has specialised in developing continuing education products that combine digital technologies with conventional group-based learning. Its motto: having fun while learning, and using what you learn to help shape the future.

### Our climate experts:

#### REKLIM - Helmholtz climate initiative on regional climate change

In the context of the REKLIM initiative, nine Helmholtz Centres have been jointly investigating the regional effects of climate change for the past ten years. The participating experts share their expertise and latest findings e.g. as presentations or in study materials for the course.



a workshop in Hamburg, Germany.