

Press release

Environmental technologies as the focus of politics and business: top representatives at IFAT Munich 2026

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- Top politicians from the EU, German government, and German states
- International ministerial delegations from Europe and overseas
- Circularity as a unifying theme across politics, business, and associations

IFAT Munich 2026 will once again underscore its role as the central platform for environmental technologies: High-ranking representatives from politics, business, industry associations, and international institutions will use the world-leading trade fair from May 4 to 7, 2026 to discuss key future issues related to circularity and climate protection. With its central theme of “Circularity is a must,” IFAT Munich will specifically address the issues that are currently right at the top of the political agenda—from raw material security and resilient supply chains to climate protection and industrial transformation—making it the place where political objectives and technological solutions effectively come together.

Joint opening by Schneider, Roswall, and Glauber

The considerable political importance of the industry will already be evident at the official opening: **Germany’s Environment Minister Carsten Schneider, EU Commissioner Jessika Roswall, and Bavaria’s Environment Minister Thorsten Glauber** will jointly open IFAT Munich 2026. On Monday, May 4, at 10:00, they will send a clear signal on the Blue Stage (Hall B2) for closely dovetailing European, national, and regional environmental policy.

“The fact that so many high-ranking political decision-makers are coming to Munich shows that the transformation to a circular economy has long become an item on the political agenda,” says Exhibition Director Philipp Eisenmann. “With its central theme of “Circularity is a must,” IFAT Munich is bringing together key players—and, above all, the solutions that are needed now.”

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VDA President Hildegard Müller on the Future of Mobility

A special focus in 2026 is on the close exchange between politics and business. Hildegard Müller, President of the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA), for example, underscores the growing importance of circularity and resource efficiency for industrial value chains. She will speak on Monday, May 4, at 13:30 on the Orange Stage (Hall A5) at the invitation of the Federal Association of the German Waste Management, Water and Recycling Industry (BDE).

Strong showing by ministers from the German states

In addition to members of the German and federal state parliaments, and representatives of the European Parliament, a host of state ministers will also attend IFAT Munich. **Hubert Aiwanger, Bavarian State Minister for Economic Affairs, Regional Development and Energy**, will open the Spotlight Area “Hydrogen in the Circular Economy” on Monday, May 4, at 13:30 on the Hydrogen Stage (Hall A4). Both state ministers from North Rhine-Westphalia, **Mona Neubaur (Minister for Economic Affairs, Industry, Climate Action and Energy)** and **Oliver Krischer (Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Transport)**, will also travel to Munich on the opening day to discuss circularity with experts.

Political impetus at the European level

A key highlight will be the European top-level talk on the circular economy, with high-ranking representatives from politics, business, and institutions discussing the further development of the circular economy in Europe. The event will be held on Wednesday, March 6, at 09:30 on the Neo Stage (Hall A5). Among those in attendance will be **Eric Mamer, Director-General of the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Environment**. He will discuss with **Glenn Schmidt, Vice President of Global Sustainability at the BMW Group**, **Ulla Hüppe, Global Vice President and Global Sustainability Lead at Henkel AG & Co. KGaA**, and **Felicitas Riedl, Director of the Innovation and Competitiveness Department at the Projects Directorate, European Investment Bank (EIB)**. The top-level talk underscores IFAT Munich’s role as a platform for dialog between European politics, industry, and practice, and demonstrates how closely regulatory conditions and technological solutions now dovetail.

International ministerial delegations at IFAT Munich

IFAT Munich also attracts considerable political interest internationally: Political leaders from several countries use the trade fair as a platform for exchange and collaboration. Among those expected to attend are the environment ministers from Austria, Bolivia, Egypt and South Africa. That underscores IFAT Munich's role as a global meeting place for political decision-makers and industry representatives alike.

IFAT Munich as a political pacesetter

The large number of high-ranking participants shows that environmental technologies are more than ever the focus of political attention. IFAT Munich 2026 will be the central venue, where political guidelines, economic innovations, and social expectations converge—and where the course is set for a sustainable future.

You can find more information about IFAT Munich and the event program at

www.ifat.de/en

IFAT Munich

IFAT Munich is the world's leading platform for environmental technologies. Every two years, it presents solutions for water, recycling and circularity. The next IFAT Munich will be held at the exhibition center in Munich from May 4 to 7, 2026.

IFAT worldwide

In addition to the world's leading trade fair IFAT Munich, IFAT is currently the world's largest network for environmental technologies with eleven trade fairs. The global IFAT network includes IE expo China in Shanghai, IE expo Chengdu, IE expo Guangzhou and IE expo Shenzhen as well as IFAT Africa in Johannesburg, IFAT Eurasia in Istanbul, IFAT India in Mumbai, IFAT Delhi in New Delhi, IFAT Brasil in São Paulo, Singapore International Water Week (in cooperation with IFAT) in Singapore and, from 2026, IFAT Saudi Arabia in Riyadh. Together, the events of the IFAT network are driving the transformation toward sustainable technologies worldwide.

Messe München

As one of the leading trade fair organizers, Messe München presents the world of tomorrow at its around 90 international trade fairs. Its portfolio comprises trade fairs for capital and consumer goods, as well as for new technologies. These include 14 of the world's leading trade fairs such as bauma, BAU, IFAT and electronica, cooperative events such as the IAA MOBILITY, and numerous guest events. With an international network of affiliated companies and foreign representatives, Messe München is active worldwide. Together with its around 1,200 employees in the Group, it organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Thailand, the U.S., and Saudi Arabia. Around 150 events held annually attract more than 50,000 exhibitors and around three million visitors in Germany and abroad. That makes Messe München an important economic driver, triggering purchasing power effects in the billions.