**Germany’s elephant in the room.**

* **Co2 in Germany since nuclear switched off**
* **CO2 per kWh of different energy sources**
* **UK biggest absolute reduction in Co2** <http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/EE-Anti-nuclear-Germany-is-Europes-biggest-GHG-emitter-13111701.html>
* **ElectricityMap.org**
* **Grid watch (UK and France)**

Beware the headlines. That’s nothing new, of course. You may have heard that Germany is in the midst of a great *Energiewende*, or energy transition. The highly-publicised plan would have Germany reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% of 1990 levels and produce 60% of its electricity from renewable energy sources by the year 2050 [1]. An honourable ambition! I hear you cry. Honourable indeed, but behind the glossy PR there lurks a dirty secret.

*[Disclaimer: I work in the nuclear industry!]*

Let your mind slip back to 2011. There was this *huge* earthquake off the coast of Japan [2]. Like, really huge. In fact, it was the most powerful ever recorded in Japan, and the fourth most powerful earthquake in the world since modern record-keeping began in 1900 [3].

but there is an elephant in the room, and the elephant happens to spew out *massive* quantities of sooty, sulphurous, carcinogenic pollution.

[1] [*The Energy of the Future: Fourth "Energy Transition" Monitoring Report — Summary*](https://www.bmwi.de/Redaktion/EN/Publikationen/vierter-monitoring-bericht-energie-der-zukunft-kurzfassung.pdf) (PDF). Berlin, Germany: Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi). November 2015. Retrieved 2017-11-18.

[2] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_T%C5%8Dhoku_earthquake_and_tsunami>

[3]

1. [*"New USGS number puts Japan quake at 4th largest"*](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/03/14/501364/main20043126.shtml). [*CBS News*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CBS_News). Associated Press. 14 March 2011. [*Archived*](https://www.webcitation.org/5xgjFTgf4?url=http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/03/14/501364/main20043126.shtml) from the original on 4 April 2011*. Retrieved 15 March 2011*.
2. Branigan, Tania (13 March 2011). [*"Tsunami, earthquake, nuclear crisis – now Japan faces power cuts"*](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/mar/13/japan-tsunami-earthquake-power-cuts). The Guardian. London. [*Archived*](https://www.webcitation.org/5xDAT05x0?url=http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/mar/13/japan-tsunami-earthquake-power-cuts/print) from the original on 15 March 2011*. Retrieved 15 March 2011*.
3. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_T%C5%8Dhoku_earthquake_and_tsunami#cite_ref-3news_31-0) [*"Japan quake – 7th largest in recorded history"*](http://www.3news.co.nz/Japan-quake---7th-largest-in-recorded-history/tabid/417/articleID/201998/Default.aspx). 11 March 2011. [*Archived*](https://www.webcitation.org/5xtOn8fYs?url=http://www.3news.co.nz/Japan-quake---7th-largest-in-recorded-history/tabid/417/articleID/201998/Default.aspx) from the original on 12 April 2011*. Retrieved 11 March 2011*.