

# Open Letter



Dear Mr Buhrow,

We are addressing you in your capacity as chairman of the German public broadcaster ARD.

We, the representatives and supporters of the initiative **KLIMA° vor acht**, call upon you to offer scientifically sound and comprehensible climate reporting, daily and at prime time.

For a good year now, we have been able to observe how quickly the ARD stations react to the pandemic. News on the current development finds its place daily at prime time, before and as part of the evening main news (Tagesschau) as well as in special programmes directly afterwards. In this way, ARD made a crucial contribution to informing the public and thus also to overcoming this crisis. ARD acted quickly, appropriately and in an exemplary manner, because COVID-19 was understood as a crisis from the very beginning.

The situation is quite different in the case of the climate crisis, an existential threat to human civilisation. In Germany, we too are increasingly and tangibly affected by the effects of global warming. Yet, there is insufficient reporting, contextualisation and education on this topic in television programmes.

Although there are good programmes on the topic of climate change, for example as part of the ARD theme week, they are too often broadcast late in the evening. There, however, programmes reach only relatively few viewers. Moreover, only an audience already sensitised to the topic decides to watch such programmes at late hours. Valuable content is usually only published online. Unlike in the case of the pandemic, there is no regular prime-time coverage.

For 20 years, ARD has produced a daily news programme on developments in the financial markets. A programme whose content and presentation are so specific that they hardly concern or interest many people. But is it not the responsibility of public broadcasting to provide comprehensive information about an existential crisis that affects everyone?

A format like **KLIMA° vor acht** could do just that. It would be about communicating scientific facts, reporting on current developments and contextualising new findings. A short daily

format could whet people's appetites for a future worth living in, show perspectives and approaches to solutions and illustrate the need for action. We cordially invite you, Mr. Buhrow, to a discussion about this.

Many viewers would like to see **KLIMA° vor acht**. Last year, almost 30,000 people signed a petition<sup>1</sup> to this effect. At the time, ARD told the petitioners that there were already many programmes on the subject.

We have counted them: In 2020, ARD had 128 programmes with the term "climate" in their title or description, not counting repeats. By contrast, almost three times as many, 365 programmes, were devoted to the topic of economics - not including the 253 episodes of "Börse vor acht". This is disproportionate in view of an existential crisis that is accelerating and intensifying.

Reporting on the state of all our livelihoods is by no means a partisan interest. Regardless of the political spectrum, all people are equally dependent on these same livelihoods. However, inadequate reporting can create the impression that the climate crisis cannot be that dramatic or is already sufficiently under control.

Dear Mr Buhrow, take a pioneering role in the German TV landscape: Have a format like **KLIMA° vor acht** developed and implemented, and give it a good slot - for example, immediately before the news!

The representatives and supporters of **KLIMA° vor acht** e.V.

<Signatures>

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.change.org/p/ard-strahlen-sie-anstelle-der-börse-vor-8-eine-sendung-aus-die-sich-dem-klimaschutz-widmet-4f3eb6cd-6030-4a0e-8d01-c7beb4b55ef5>