



The British Council recently launched the 'ZeroCarbonCity' campaign to tackle global climate change through the sharing of information between major cities around the world. A unique feature of the campaign is that it "shifts the emphasis of attention towards mitigation, adaptation and practical measures" (Lord Kinnoek, at the launch in 2005).

The ZeroCarbonCity campaign is a £4 million British Council climate change initiative involving over 100 cities in 60 countries, with an outreach of over 6 million people. The campaign stems from the need for global action on climate change. The aim is to raise the levels of awareness and encourage public debate about the challenges of climate change facing major cities, which tend to be the largest generators of greenhouse gases.

Lord Kinnoek, chair of the British Council, formally launched the campaign on 1 March 2005, describing this as an opportunity to create "international links of understanding and action... built between cities, even when States cannot agree". The launch was sponsored by the UK Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

A multi-layered approach is taken to climate change, covering many aspects ranging from

urban planning to personal lifestyles, and consists of the following innovative activities:

- The NorthSouthEastWest exhibition, a product of a partnership between the British Council and The Climate Group, will travel to all 100 cities demonstrating the impacts of climate change as well as a range of practical solutions to the problem, from reducing vehicle emissions to insulating buildings. It features photos taken by the Magnum Photographic Agency which illustrate climate change issues and solutions

Green Week will be the venue for the Brussels opening of NorthSouthEastWest -a 360° view on climate change. European Commissioner for Environment Stavros Dimas will inaugurate the exhibition on the opening day of Green Week. The Directorate General Environment will host the exhibition in the European Commission's headquarters-Berlaymont. The exhibition will be open to the public on the Berlaymont Esplanade from the 31st of May to the 9th of June, 2005.

As part of the Green Week conference programme, Dr Lloyd Anderson from the British Council will briefly present the British Council's 'Zero Carbon City campaign'. This will take place during the session on 'HotCampaign or Cool Campaign' on Tue 31st May from 14.30 to 18.00 in Charlemagne Building.

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>> from ten countries worldwide. The exhibition is supported by a book of essays by prominent, diverse, contributors e.g. Tony Blair, Leonardo di Caprio, Sir David King and Kofi Annan amongst others.

- A programme of debates using city venues as a platform for open discussions and expert commentary on climate change. This includes a programme called Café Scientifique, a series of debates held in different venues around the world focussing on the links between science, technology and society. There is also an online debate facility through 'openDemocracy.net', an online global magazine about politics and culture, providing an online forum for debate. A series of articles from scientists, city planners, policy makers and other experts is provided as support material. A summary report of the debate will be distributed at the G8 summit in July 2005. To join the online debate please visit:
http://www.opendemocracy.net/climate_change

- Other activities and outcomes include: drama workshops; educational projects; a literature collection of climate change books; websites dedicated to climate change issues; and a book about contrasting case-studies of cities around the world with suggested solutions. For more information on these please visit the ZeroCarbonCity website (details opposite).

DEFRA, one of the official sponsors of ZeroCarbonCity, consider the campaign to be consistent with the UK's climate change priorities during their presidency of the G8. Other important aspects of the campaign noted by DEFRA are that it:

- Includes countries that are not bound by the Kyoto treaty;
- Potentially brings countries together that cannot currently agree on climate change;
- Is open to all members across society including householders, businesses, as well as the old and the young.

The EECN is DG Environment's support structure for the European Environmental Communication Networks. Currently these include the Green Spiders Network and The Network of Urban Forums for Sustainable Development.

The website can be accessed here:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/networks/index_en.htm

For further information, teaching resources and publications relating to the ZeroCarbonCity campaign please visit the website or contact Clare Sears at:

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