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Climate Change Performance Index released at UN-climate summit

"Coalition of the responsible" needed to prevent dangerous climate change

Durban, December 6, 2011: The new edition of the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) was released by Germanwatch and CAN-Europe in Durban at the UN climate talks today. Again, none of the 58 highest-emitting countries has done enough to prevent dangerous climate change, leaving ranks one to three open. The next ranks went to three European countries, Sweden, UK and Germany. The countries ranked worst this year are Saudi Arabia, Iran and Kazakhstan. Overall, the ranking was influenced by the worldwide economic crisis. This resulted in higher growth of emissions in emerging economies compared to industrial countries.

"This year's Index shows worrying results. The worldwide addiction to coal has not been stopped, but rather increased. 80 percent of the index is influenced by emissions trends and absolute emissions levels", says Jan Burck, Author of the Index at Germanwatch. Five out of the ten biggest emitters, namely Iran (60), China (57), Russia (56), Canada (54) and USA (52) were rated with the label 'very poor' performance. "Among these countries, China is the only one with a good policy rating. Its encouraging development of renewable energies and energy efficiency targets in the 12th Five Year Plan can help China to climb up a few ranks in the future. But most countries cannot lean back either. Instead, we need a 'coalition of the responsible' for a better climate protection", adds Burck.

"The EU and other constructive developed and developing countries, including the emerging economies, cannot wait for the US, Canada and other laggards any longer", says Wendel Trio, Director of CAN-Europe. "The EU plays an important role in the development of this 'coalition of the responsible'. Even while the results show clear differences between EU member states, the EU needs to unite behind the goal to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 30 percent by 2020. More decisive action under the leadership of Denmark, the incoming presidency, should increase the performance of all EU countries", further says Wendel Trio. "The first three countries on the Index should drive the EU as a whole towards more action on climate change and support the Danish presidency in this", he adds.

While no country deserved the label 'very good', some countries implemented initiatives helping to reduce their emissions. "Sweden is an example on how to reduce emissions effectively in the residential sector. This is the result of long term climate measures, like CO₂-taxes since the early nineties. But without sufficient new climate initiatives, Sweden received a poor policy rating this year", explains Burck.

South Africa, host of the UN climate conference, is ranked 38th. Its results have two sides: On the one hand, emissions in South Africa are increasing, but on the other hand experts gave it a relatively good national policy rating.

The CCPI 2012 evaluates and ranks the 58 highest-emitting countries based on both CO₂ emissions and climate policies. This year, more than 200 experts from the respective countries have assisted with analysing national policies.

The complete CCPI 2012 and a guide through its methodology can be found at www.germanwatch.org/ccpi

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