

MEDIA RELEASE

Vancouver crowned Earth Hour Capital 2013

Gland, Switzerland – WWF's Earth Hour City Challenge (EHCC) has recognised the City of Vancouver, Canada, for its innovative actions on climate change and dedication to create a sustainable, pleasant urban environment for current and future residents.

After carefully reviewing the merits of the six finalists, the EHCC jury of experts* unanimously cast their votes for Vancouver as the first ever Global Earth Hour Capital. Also in the running for the title were finalists Forlì in Italy; New Delhi, India; Oslo, Norway; Uppsala, Sweden; and San Francisco, USA.

Vancouver has been recognised by the jury for its ambition to be global leader on climate-smart urban development in spite of low national ambitions. The city's overall holistic and strategic approach to climate action – specifically its impressive transportation strategy, solid actions on the impact of food and progressive neighbourhood energy plan – were seen as evidence of how Vancouver aims to play an active role in the global transition towards a 100% renewable future within the next few decades.

Example targets for Vancouver include that by 2020 all new buildings are to be carbon neutral in their operations; citizens are to make over 50% of trips by foot, bicycle or public transport; and the number of green jobs is to have doubled.

"Local governments around the world are striving to create attractive, smart cities while tackling a multitude of urgent environmental challenges. Vancouver can serve as a role model for how cities can engage residents in these efforts, thereby accelerating the transition towards low carbon development," said Jim Leape, Director General of WWF International.

"I applaud Vancouver's vision and innovation. More cities everywhere need to find inspiration in the bold initiatives of Vancouver and the other finalists and build on them, bringing climate action at the scale and speed necessary to secure sustainable, attractive lifestyles for people across the planet," said Leape.

The EHCC aims to mobilise action and support from cities in the global transition towards a climate-friendly future. Finalists were selected among the 66 participating cities from Canada, India, Italy, Norway, Sweden and the USA. Cities were asked to present actual climate commitments, performance and actions for evaluation by the jury who were asked to pay particular attention to cities with holistic, inspiring and credible plans for low-carbon development.

"Combined, these cities have reported no less than 1,008 mitigation actions, a significant number of which include measures to increase the share of renewable energy. Through this initiative we hope to support and award more bold decisions by city leaders in combatting climate change and securing both attractive and sustainable lifestyles for the rapidly growing number of urban inhabitants on our planet," said Carina Borgström Hansson, Lead of WWF's Earth Hour City Challenge.

In addition to the jury selection, WWF has invited the general public to voice their support for the sustainability actions of the 17 finalists in our People's Choice campaign. Vancouver received the greatest number of votes in this process too. The city's successful public engagement is confirmed by the range of contributions received via social media and on the People's Choice platform.

WWF has worked closely with ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, in mobilising cities to join the challenge. ICLEI provided the use of its carbonn Cities Climate Registry (cCCR) – the platform through which data was collected. The Swedish Postcode Lottery has provided invaluable support to the project as the main financial partner.

Vancouver will be presented with the Global Earth Hour Capital 2013 award at a conference on March 19, 2013 in Malmö, Sweden.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors

***Earth Hour City Challenge Jury**

- Gino van Begin, Secretary General of ICLEI
- Martha Delgado, General Director of the Secretariat of the Global Cities Covenant on Climate
- Amanda Eichel, Director of Initiatives and City Support, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group
- Christiana Figueres, UNFCCC Executive Secretary
- Simon Giles, Senior Principal Intelligent Cities, Accenture Global, Accenture
- Dan Hoornweg, Professor and Jeff Boyce Research Chair, University of Ontario Institute of Technology
- Pietro Laureano, architect and urban planner, is a UNESCO consultant
- Conor Riffle, Head of CDP Cities

For more information, please contact:

Carina Borgström-Hansson, PhD, Lead, Earth Hour City Challenge, WWF

Tel: +46 708 855 185, Email: Carina.Borgstrom-Hansson@wwf.se

Barbara Evaeus, Communications Manager Earth Hour City Challenge, WWF

Tel: +46 70 393 9030, Email: barbara.evaeus@wwf.se

www.earthhour.org/ehcc or follow us on Facebook and Twitter [@EHcitychallenge](https://twitter.com/EHcitychallenge)

About WWF

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, with almost five million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

www.panda.org/news for latest news and media resources