



NEWS RELEASE

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Are you ready to Connect4Climate?

World Bank kicks off social media climate campaign with *photo/video competition for African youth*

Washington, DC / Pretoria, September 15, 2011 -- The World Bank, in collaboration with more than 30 global partners, is launching the Connect4Climate initiative -- a campaign, a competition, and a community that cares about climate change.

The campaign kicks off today with a photo/video competition for African youth, aged 13 to 30, which is designed to raise awareness about climate change.

“The Connect4Climate competition is a chance to tap the rich potential of Africa’s youth – offering them a platform via our websites and Facebook pages – not only to articulate the challenges of climate change seen from their perspective, but also to use their enormous potential as agents of social change to raise awareness and mobilize for climate adaptation and mitigation within Africa,” said Obiageli Ezekwesili, Vice-President of the World Bank’s Africa Region.

Launching the competition at the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) in Bamako today, World Bank Special Envoy for Climate Change Andrew Steer said, ***“Across Africa, there are many remarkable examples of action in response to the threat of climate change. These stories should be seen, read, and heard by young and old alike in Africa and around the world.”***

Through photos and videos of 60 seconds or less, those entering the Connect4Climate competition are encouraged to answer the question: ‘What does climate change mean to you, your family, your community, your country?’

“We are looking for candid and compelling stories that illustrate how climate change affects the everyday lives of people in Africa—and how they respond to

*it,” Steer added. **“Connect4Climate will help young people to engage on this critical issue and give them a voice in the global climate change conversation.”***

Participants in the competition are invited to share their personal stories and solutions for change in six Connect4Climate award categories: 1) Agriculture; 2) Energy; 3) Forests; 4) Gender; 5) Health; and 6) Water. Deadline for submissions is **November 15, 2011**.

Winners will be announced at the December 2011 United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP17) in Durban, South Africa. Prizes will include solar backpacks, video cameras, and computer tablets. The best entries will be featured in an exhibition at the conference.

Supporting both the competition and the campaign are more than 30 Connect4Climate partners, including international organizations, social media networks, UN agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, as well as civil society, private sector, public sector, and youth organizations.

Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility, one of C4C’s sponsors, said, ***“I expect this platform to be an inspiration for those most often regarded as too young to be heard . Now, young Africans can reach world audiences through this new social media channel. I am convinced that the search for solutions to today’s climate change challenges must include those who will suffer its consequences the most and have the most to contribute through their daily actions. These are the young stakeholders.”***

With an ever-growing list of partners and collaborators, the Connect4Climate website and its associated social media platforms will act as a digital hub for all parties interested in raising awareness about climate change issues and participating in an interactive, global dialogue on climate change.

As the competition gains momentum, the connections made through Facebook and the images and videos uploaded on the website will jumpstart a global exchange amongst young activists with a passion for the environment and development.

Corrado Clini, the Director General of the Italian Ministry of Environment, one of Connect4Climate's core partners, said, ***“Today’s rapidly changing social media environment presents a great opportunity for global discussion and advocacy. With an impressive coalition of partners, Connect4Climate will amplify local voices and enable policymakers to listen and learn from the innovations that are happening throughout Africa.”***

Designed to include direct links to relevant World Bank and partner sites, the Connect4Climate website will feature photos, videos, podcasts, songs, articles, related campaigns, as well as ongoing and future climate change activities on the ground.

To enter the competition go to: www.facebook.com/connect4climate or www.connect4climate.org

Follow C4C on twitter.com/connect4climate

Connect4Climate is a global partnership initiative supported by the World Bank and the Italian Ministry of Environment.

Connect4Climate Knowledge Partners include:

Africa Rural Connect/National Peace Corps Association, African Union, Cittadinanzattiva Onlus, Convention on Biological Diversity, Children's Radio Foundation, Coaches Across Continents, Communication for Sustainable Development Initiative (CSDI), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Flickr, Georgetown University Center for Social Impact Communication, Inter Press Service, IULM University, Johns Hopkins University-School of Advanced International Studies, Mwelu Foundation, NR2154, Project Diaspora, Solar Sister, www.soundtracker.fm, Television Trust for the Environment, United Nations Association-National Capital Area, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNF/Global Alliance for Clean Cook Stoves, UNFCCC, UNIC Pretoria, UNICEF, Unite4Climate Zambia (UNICEF), Voice of America, World Bank Institute IMAGE Network, Youthink!

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