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## PRESS RELEASE

### **UNFCCC: Rising industrialized countries emissions underscore urgent need for political action on climate change at Poznan meeting**

(Bonn, 17 November 2008) – Two weeks ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan, Poland, the UN Climate Change Secretariat in Bonn has reported that greenhouse gas emissions in industrialized countries continue to rise.

Data submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) shows that emissions of 40 industrialized countries that have greenhouse gas reporting obligations under the Convention remained in 2006 below the 1990 level by about 5%, but rose by 2.3 percent in the time-frame 2000 to 2006.

For the smaller group of those industrialized countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol, emissions in 2006 were about 17% below the Kyoto baseline, but still growing after the year 2000. The initial decrease in Kyoto countries' emissions mainly came about through the economic decline of economies in transition (countries in eastern and central Europe) in the 1990s.

"Meanwhile, the biggest recent increase in emissions of industrialized countries has come from economies in transition, which have seen a rise of 7.4% in greenhouse gas emissions within the 2000 to 2006 time-frame."

"The figures clearly underscore the urgency for the UN negotiating process to make good progress in Poznan and move forward quickly in designing a new agreement to respond to the challenge of climate change," said Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC.

The UN's top climate change official also noted that accounting data, including emission quotas for the Kyoto commitment period 2008–2012, have been finalized for almost all Kyoto countries. Such data is already used in emissions trading conducted by countries in accordance with the rules established by the Kyoto Protocol.

"Emission quotas defined by the Kyoto Protocol are no longer simple numbers on paper – they are part of real-time operation of the global carbon market," said Yvo de Boer. "We see the carbon market working and this is an important message, not least for the Poznan meeting," he added.



The UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan (1-12 December) constitutes the half-way mark of a two-year negotiating process, set to culminate in an ambitious international climate change deal in Copenhagen next year.

In Poland, negotiators will take stock of the progress made in the first year of the talks and map out what needs to be done to reach agreement at the end of 2009. The meeting will also be an important opportunity for ministers to determine the key ingredients of a shared vision on long-term cooperation to address climate change.

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## **About the UNFCCC**

With 192 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol has to date 183 member Parties. Under the Protocol, 37 States, consisting of highly industrialized countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

## **About international emissions trading**

In addition to the implementation of climate-friendly policies at home, the Kyoto Protocol allows industrialized countries to meet their emission targets through trading emission allowances on a newly-created carbon market. Countries that reduce emissions below their targets can sell some of their surplus allowances to other countries that have deficits. Companies investing in climate friendly projects can obtain additional carbon credits in exchange for every tonne of emissions saved through the Kyoto Protocol's project-based mechanisms (Clean Development Mechanism and Joint Implementation). These can then be freely traded on the carbon market.

## **Note to journalists**

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