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PRESS RELEASE

UN Climate Change Secretariat Launches Initiative to Showcase Efforts by People, Companies and Governments to go Climate Neutral

(Marrakech, Morocco, 17 November 2016) – The United Nations Climate Change secretariat today launched a new initiative that will showcase efforts by individuals, companies and governments that are achieving real results in transitioning to climate neutrality.

Momentum for Change: Climate Neutral Now brings together two of the secretariat’s flagship activities that recognize leadership in tackling climate change by non-Party stakeholders.

In December 2011, the secretariat launched its [Momentum for Change](#) initiative to shine a light on the enormous groundswell of activities underway across the globe that are moving the world toward a highly resilient, low-carbon future. In September 2015, the secretariat launched its [Climate Neutral Now](#) initiative to urge individuals, companies and governments to measure their climate footprint, reduce their greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible, and offset what they cannot reduce using UN-certified emissions reductions.

Speaking Thursday morning at a special event at the UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakech, Morocco, senior government officials and influential corporate leaders highlighted the importance of climate neutrality, especially as national governments prepare to implement the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

“There is no reason today not to measure, reduce and offset your emissions and become climate neutral now – especially if you are living in a developed country,” said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa. “Over time the need for offsets is going to decline as energy systems become ever more low carbon, healthy ecosystems like forests expand and we arrive at a climate neutral world in the second half of the century. Climate change will affect everyone, yet everyone can effect positive change starting today and beginning now.”

Harry Verhaar, Head of Global Public & Government Affairs with Philips Lighting, also spoke at the event. Philips has publically pledged to cut its carbon footprint to zero by 2020.



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“We will become carbon neutral from a combination of efficiency gains and business process re-engineering. By 2020, our carbon footprint will shrink to zero from reducing energy consumption, close monitoring of our supply chain and logistics, plus strict conditions for business travel,” said Mr. Verhaar. “We are committed to achieve 80% of our business revenues from sustainable operations by 2020. By sharing lessons from our experience, we can work collaboratively to meet the needs of our customers and the planet.”

Philips isn't the only company taking strong action on climate change, Microsoft has also been a corporate leader when it comes to putting innovations to work to minimize its environmental impact.

“We believe that our responsibility as a leading cloud services provider require that our business practices have a positive impact on the communities we serve. And that is why we are working towards new solutions to realize a low-carbon future and address climate change,” said Tamara (“TJ”) DiCaprio, Microsoft’s Senior Director of Environmental Sustainability. “To that end, we’ve operated 100% carbon neutral for our datacentres, offices, labs, manufacturing plants, and business air travel since 2012 by establishing an internal carbon fee model that holds our business groups accountable for their carbon impact of their operations.”

Microsoft has also been actively involved in the secretariat’s Climate Neutral Now initiative, not only by pledging to go carbon neutral but also by providing its Azure cloud computing platform on which the secretariat’s online [platform for voluntary cancellation](#) of certified emission reductions is built.

According to the UNFCCC secretariat’s Climate Neutral Now initiative, climate neutrality is a three step process, which requires individuals, companies and governments to:

1. Measure their climate footprint;
2. Reduce their emissions as much as possible;
3. Offset what they cannot reduce with UN certified emission reductions.

The new partnership between Climate Neutral Now and Momentum for Change is part of a larger initiative that showcases successful climate action around the world. In 2017, Momentum for Change will have five focus areas: Women for Results, Financing for Climate Friendly Investment, ICT Solutions, Planetary Health and, now, Climate Neutral Now.

Beginning next year, people, institutions and companies can submit examples of how they are transitioning to climate neutrality. The most inspiring, innovative and successful activities will be



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selected as Momentum for Change Lighthouse Activities, which will be recognized and celebrated during the 2017 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 23).

Digital assets:

Photos, fact sheets and other assets are available for download at: <http://bit.ly/m4c-assets>

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