

Press release

21 young people from Namibia become a part of a worldwide climate network

Wolfsburg, 07.05.2012. In Wolfsburg, nearly 200 young people from eleven countries, amongst others from Namibia, laid the foundation stone for a worldwide youth climate network. Youthinkgreen, the German-based educational initiative, organised the International Youth Climate Week at the end of April 2012. The goal of the project, which culminates in an International Youth Climate Summit in mid-2013, is to train school-age participants to become critically-minded climate ambassadors. They aim to implement specific everyday action against climate change in 13 cities around the globe through local sustainability projects. The students from Windhoek participate with project which will provide solar energy for schools.

The young climate ambassadors are supported by their new patron, Christina Figueres, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the German Federal Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel as well as by the EU-Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard. "Local commitment by means of specific everyday life measures and global exchange of experiences are two crucial elements in the fight against climate change. With the help of the new network all young participants of the project Youthinkgreen set a good example," says Figueres.

An online social network at www.youthinkgreen.org enables them to exchange experiences regardless of national borders.

The young climate ambassadors will have the opportunity to express their desire to motivate other people to actively campaign against climate change via this platform.

„youthinkgreen – jugend denkt um.welt“ is sponsored by Volkswagen Aktiengesellschaft, the Mercator Foundation, the German Federal Environmental Agency (UBA), the Bingo Environmental Lottery Foundation, and the Federal Foreign Office.



Schirmherrschaft:

Bundeskanzlerin
Dr. Angela Merkel
Präsident des Europäischen Parlaments a.D
Dr. Hans-Gert Pöttering

**You can find more information, including footage, on our website:
www.youthinkgreen.org/presse.**

Background information of the initiative:

Since its inception at the UN climate summit in Durban in 2011, „youthinkgreen - jugend denkt um.welt“ has trained young people all over the world as climate ambassadors. Our participants come from Germany, Iceland, Bulgaria, Italy, Egypt, Namibia, India, China, Peru, Brazil and Turkey.

Under the slogan „Pathways to sustainable development – youth in action campaigns for change“, the young activists have met from 22nd to 30th April 2012 for a week of intensive work. Together with researchers and climate experts they developed strategies and solutions to achieve an environmental rethink in society, politics and the economy. Furthermore, the working programme for the week gave them the opportunity to look behind the scenes at Volkswagen AG and explore its approach to sustainable mobility, summarised by the motto “Think Blue”.

By cooperating with with Europe’s largest automobile manufacturer and non-governmental organisations such as Germanwatch, delegates can critically assess claims that mobility is compatible with environmental goals.

“We will have achieved our aims when awareness of the big challenges of our time - sustainable mobility, sustainable consumption, and sustainable energy and resource use – is a permanent feature of these youngsters’ daily lives,” summarises Helmut Spiering, honorary head of the project. These aims are pursued by all the youth groups, regardless of whether their members live in Brazil, Iceland, China, Egypt, India or Germany. The participants gain in-depth knowledge in the areas of sustainability and media, essential for their work as climate ambassadors.

The initiative builds on the success of previous events. The first European Youth Summit on Climate took place in Berlin in 2009. Back then, more than 100 young people from five European countries were trained as climate ambassadors, supported by climate experts, prominent figures and representatives from civil society, the media, politics, and the economy.

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und Reaktorsicherheit

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