**PRESS RELEASE**

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**EU commissioner launches Nordic climate innovation centre**

**Connie Hedegaard, the EU commissioner for Climate Action, will today (7 February 2014) officially open a new Nordic centre for Europe’s main climate innovation initiative, Climate-KIC.**

The Denmark-based location allows start-up entrepreneurs, businesses, climate professionals, students and government officials from across the Nordic countries to join Climate-KIC’s European partnership to work on innovative solutions for the cause and effects of climate change.

*Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Action, said: "We need to start making the transition to a sustainable, low-carbon society as soon as possible. And we need innovative solutions to build this low-carbon economy.”*

*“Climate-KIC, a European platform for innovation, addressing climate change, can help us find these innovative solutions,” Hedegaard said.*

Climate-KIC’s new centre is embedded in the Technical University of Denmark’s Lyngby campus – 15 kilometres north of Copenhagen - and will function as a hub for Climate-KIC’s activities in the Nordic countries.

**A key region of Europe**

*“This is a very important new initiative for Climate-KIC – enlarging our innovation base to include this key region of Europe,” said Mary Ritter, Chief Executive Officer, Climate-KIC.*

*“We are starting from a very strong base in Denmark and will progressively extend the partnership to build a truly Nordic centre. In this context, I’m delighted that we already have an excellent Swedish partner – Chalmers University of Technology – on board,” says Ritter.*

*Hedegaard said: “With Denmark's strong position within clean-tech, a new Nordic Centre in Denmark will contribute to development in the field of climate innovation and help create jobs and growth."*

Aside from the Technical University of Denmark, the University of Copenhagen and Sweden’s Chalmers University of Technology, two of Denmark’s largest manufacturing companies – Grundfos and VELUX Group – and the City of Copenhagen will collaborate through the centre to tackle climate change and create green jobs.

Copenhagen was recently named European Green Capital of 2014 by the European Commission, and has placed public-private partnerships at the core of its approach to eco-innovation and sustainable employment.

Climate-KIC’s Northern expansion will strengthen Europe’s leading position in the field of global climate change mitigation and adaptation by including Nordic clean-tech start-ups, corporations and students in its European projects and programmes.

*“Scandinavian knowledge institutions and businesses have a long tradition of addressing the climate agenda,” said Henrik Wegener, provost of the Technical University of Denmark, “This tradition is now being given an additional boost with the creation of an extensive partnership across sectors and national borders,” he said.*

**New partners**

Climate-KIC’s new Nordic centre consists of the following partners:

* Technical University of Denmark
* University of Copenhagen
* Chalmers University of Technology (Gothenburg, Sweden)
* City of Copenhagen (European Green Capital of 2014)
* Grundfos (Pumps)
* VELUX Group (Windows and skylights)
* COWI (Consulting)
* Novozymes (Biotechnology)
* Realdania (Philanthropic organisation focussing on the built environment)
* ROCKWOOL (Insulation)

*Thomas Bjørnholm, pro-rector for Research and Innovation at the University of Copenhagen, says the new centre is a unique opportunity for Denmark: “Our research and education environments have the chance to work with some of the best researchers in the world.”*

*“We are able to generate opportunities for the creative transformation of knowledge and ideas into economically valuable products or services that can help meet the challenges of climate change,” he added.*

**The EU’s main climate innovation initiative**

Climate-KIC is the EU’s main climate innovation initiative. It is Europe’s largest public-private innovation partnership focused on mitigating and adapting to climate change.

The initiative consists of over 200 large companies, small and medium sized enterprises, academic institutions and the public sector, including partners such as Bayer, Imperial College London, KLM, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, ETH Zurich and GDF Suez. For a full Climate-KIC partner overview see: http://www.climate-kic.org/partners

Climate-KIC is one of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) created in 2010 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), the EU body tasked with creating sustainable European growth while dealing with the global challenges of our time.

The organisation has its headquarters in London, UK, and operates through centres across Europe to support start-up companies, to bring together partners on innovation projects and to educate students to bring about a connected, creative transformation of knowledge and ideas into products and services that help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Climate-KIC has centres in France, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, the UK and a new Nordic centre in Denmark.

The organisation is also represented in the European regions of Valencia, Spain; Central Hungary; Emilia Romagna, Italy; Lower Silesia, Poland; Hessen, Germany and the West Midlands in the UK.

Though its regional outreach programme, Climate-KIC works with partners in Slovenia, Cork/Dublin, Ireland; Helsinki/Uusimaa, Finland; North Portugal (and Lisbon); South Moravia, Czech Republic and Timis, Romania.

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