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ECF demands paradigm shift in transport sector

Alliance for walking, cycling, wheeling and 'passenging' launched at Bali UN Climate Conference. Its main task will be to lobby politics to work for sustainable transport: less cars, more human powered mobility.

"The transport sector is one of the main contributors to climate change, therefore it has to be part of its solution", declares Manfred Neun, President of the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF). Neun says this one day after the European Commission introduced new legislation regarding CO2 fines for carmakers. This proposal for new legislation came under fire from the German government, protecting its domestic carmakers. In particular German manufacturers failed to live up to a 1998 voluntary agreement by the EU's Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA) to achieving a target of 140g/km by 2008. This failure fits into the global picture that carbon dioxide emissions from road transport in the EU have increased by 26 percent from 1990–2004.

Therefore, ECF demands a paradigm shift in politics. Instead of waiting for expensive new technologies that should finally reduce CO2-car emissions, politics should less focus on cars and more on bicycles. In urban transport, bicycles are the fastest and most efficient transport mode; they are emission-free, noiseless and good for your health. *"This globe is desperate for more cycling"*, says Neun.

The bicycle has a huge potential. In the European Union, a majority of car journeys are short distance drives: 50 percent are shorter than five kilometres. If only 30 percent of car journeys below six kilometres were replaced by bicycle trips, this would lead to a four percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from road traffic. A necessary way to go since the European Union has entered into a clear commitment in 2007: reducing its CO2 emissions at least by 20% in 2020 (compared to 1990 levels).

To lobby the paradigm shift, ECF helped to launch the *Global Alliance for EcoMobility* in Bali. More than 30 global companies, business and user associations, expert organizations, local governments and United Nations agencies have joined together in a partnership for the integrated promotion of walking, cycling, wheeling and 'passenging' (the use of public transport) in cities. ECF President Manfred Neun has sent a video message to Bali which can be seen here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zb3er4IY-oo>

Once more, ECF renews its offer to the European Commission to cooperate on achieving sustainable development in the transport sector.

Note to editors:

ECF is the umbrella federation of 51 national cyclists' associations in Europe and beyond. On behalf of half a million cyclists, we promote cycling for daily transport and recreation. Cycling has many angles: In the ECF *Declaration of Berne* we ask the European institutions to adopt cycling-friendly policies as a means for tackling climate change and for saving our cities from air pollution and congestion. Sustainable tourism is the very meaning of our European cycle route network, EuroVelo®. We develop and share new concepts on cycling by organising a biennial Velo-city® conference.

Contact:

ECF - Rue Joseph II 166 - 1000 Brussels;
Mobile Manfred Neun: +49 1715275145