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Why is the EC launching this campaign?

Combating climate change is one of the biggest challenges we face today. The fight against climate change is a priority at European level. However, in order to succeed, all sectors of society – such as industry, transport, agriculture, households – have to make a contribution.

Surveys confirm that winning the battle against climate change is important to Europe's citizens. In fact, climate change figures among the top three concerns of European citizens regarding the environment.[1] At the same time, many people tend to feel helpless in the face of this challenge, they think that it is the duty of others - industry, politicians, etc. - to combat climate change, or they think that their actions do not have any impact.

The Commission is reaching out to citizens across the EU with this campaign to increase their awareness of climate change and demonstrate how individuals can help fight it. The aim is to show that simple everyday actions lead collectively to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Households are directly responsible for around 16% of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions, which result from energy production and use. 70% of the energy used by households is spent on heating homes, 14% on heating water and 12% on lighting and electric appliances. Private car use is responsible for another 10% of EU greenhouse gas emissions. But we are also indirectly responsible for other greenhouse gas emissions since we buy products made with energy, we use planes, we generate waste, etc. We have the power to influence those emissions. The campaign gives more than 50 tips how we can reduce emissions without compromising our quality of life.

What are the campaign's goals?

The main objectives of the climate change awareness campaign are:

To improve awareness and understanding of climate change amongst citizens;

To demonstrate that daily activities can collectively make a big difference and that each individual has a role to play in the fight against climate change; and

To motivate citizens to undertake these small, significant changes to their daily routine.

What is the campaign's message?

The main message of the campaign is that simple daily choices, like turning up the air conditioning or leaving a tap to drip or a light switched on, have a direct impact on climate change. This message is translated into the slogan, "You control climate change." The supporting line on the poster - "Turn Down. Switch Off. Recycle. Walk." - directs people to the many things they can easily do to reduce their carbon emissions. This message gives people a sense of both empowerment and responsibility. More comprehensive information and concrete tips under these four headings can be found on the campaign web site.

How will you communicate your message?

At the launch of the campaign, giant campaign banners on public buildings will be unveiled in most EU

capitals, and statues in the capitals will wear campaign T-shirts. The campaign also uses TV, outdoor and newspaper advertising and a range of electronic tools, such e-mailings, to attract attention. Comprehensive information is available on the campaign web site, which will go online on 29 May 2006 at: www.climatechange.eu.com