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## **Vancouver promises Green Games as Winter Olympics kick off UNEP to assess Games' environmental performance**

**Vancouver (Canada), 12 February 2010** - As the 2010 Winter Olympics kick off in Vancouver, the athletes will not be the only ones going for gold - the Game organizers are also shooting for the stars with a series of ambitious environmental goals.

The Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) have been working with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) over the last three years in a bid to enhance the event's environmental performance and increase green awareness.

The Olympic organizers have focused on minimizing the event's carbon impact, with clean technology choices, an expanded transport system for the city, green construction for the Olympic venues, and a commitment to offset direct carbon emissions from the Games.

Some of the environmentally-friendly features of the Olympic sites include low-flow toilets that use rainwater for flushing, energy-efficient grass-clad roofs and separate bins for compostable waste.

The Games' green performance will be reviewed by UNEP in an Environmental Assessment Report which will be published later in 2010.

The report will look at areas such as the greening of the venues, sustainable transport and waste management, and Vancouver 2010's climate neutrality target and work with non-governmental organizations.

VANOC is also planning to use the Games to inspire broader awareness and action on climate-change solutions.

UNEP and VANOC have partnered on the Do Your Part video contest, which called on youth aged 13 to 24 across Canada to produce a 30- to 90-second video or animation clip to show how youth can do their part to live a more environmentally-friendly lifestyle during and well beyond the 2010 Games.

The winner of the video contest will be announced at an award ceremony on 13 February during a special event to celebrate contributions to the Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Program.

The award ceremony will be attended by Wilfred Lemke, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace.

UNEP's work with Vancouver 2010 is one of several partnerships with major sporting events to help lower the carbon footprint of sports and raise green awareness.

UNEP is advising the organizers of the Sochi 2014 Olympics in Russia, and has also worked with Torino 2006 and Beijing 2008 - producing an Environmental Assessment of the Beijing Games that assessed how well the 2008 organizers fulfilled their eco-pledges.

This year, UNEP is partnering with the FIFA World Cup in South Africa, where it is helping to fund solar-powered and energy-efficient street lamps, traffic lights and billboards in several host cities around the country.

In addition, UNEP is involved in partnerships to help green the Commonwealth Games which will take place in New Delhi (India) in October 2010, as well as the Indian Premier League (IPL) for cricket.

### **Notes to Editors**

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2007 at UN headquarters in New York City to enhance the environmental performance at the 2010 Winter Games and increase public awareness of the importance of environmental protection and sustainable development.

UNEP's Environmental Assessment Report on the Vancouver Games' green performance will be published in late 2010.