

Press release 17th November 2015

The City of Reykjavík and 103 enterprises sign a joint Declaration on Climate Change:

# Businesses pledge to take active measures to curb global warming

A Declaration on Climate Issues was signed yesterday at Höfði House in Reykjavík, Iceland.

Participation far exceeded expectations: a total of 103 businesses and institutions pledged to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and cut waste. The progress will be monitored, and the companies will regularly publish information on their actions.

This joint venture was launched by the City of Reykjavík and Festa – the Icelandic Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility, and the signing of the Declaration marks the formal commencement of the project. It is intended to motivate businesses and institutions to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases, thus actively taking responsibility towards global environmental concerns and their local community. Participants will be offered information about climate issues – both practical guidance and accounts of the experience of other businesses in reducing their greenhouse emissions. The businesses which are affiliated to Festa, the agencies and institutions of the City of Reykjavík, as well as 300 of the largest companies in Iceland, were invited to take part in the project.

## Wide impact

The 103 businesses which have signed the Declaration are of diverse kinds – large and small, manufacturing companies, enterprises in industry and services, universities etc. The declaration touches the life of more than 70,000 people directly as the companies employ a total of more than 43,000 people in addition to over 30,000 students who attend the educational institutions which are participating. The services provided by these businesses and agencies affect every person in Iceland, in one way or another.

In addition to its leadership of the project, the City of Reykjavík will also participate in measures to reduce emissions. “The policy of the City of Reykjavík is to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by

35% by 2020. This policy was first formulated in 2009, and it now forms a part of the Reykjavík Municipal Plan. The City administration is also developing strategies to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases arising from its own activities," says Mayor Dagur B. Eggertsson. "The City of Reykjavík will certainly make its own contribution in this collaborative project, and we will also be able to learn much from our collaboration with businesses."

## Companies must operate in harmony with society

At the beginning of December this year at the 21<sup>st</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is to be agreed. Its objectives are to combat global warming and reduce emission of greenhouse gases.

"The nations of the world now face the consequences of climate change. The United Nations play a leading role in analysing the problem, addressing it, and adjusting to altered conditions," states the Declaration signed today at Höfði House. "Cities and towns, together with businesses of all sizes, have a growing role to play with respect to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, and meeting targets regarding emissions."

Ketill Berg Magnússon, CEO of Festa, says that many managers of businesses relate environmental issues to the long-term prospects of their companies: "They have realised that the operations of businesses must be in harmony with the society in which they operate," says Magnússon, who goes on to point out that businesses around the world have increasingly been taking a stand on environmental issues.

### Further information:

For further information, including the full text of the Declaration, list of participants, etc. see the City of Reykjavík website <http://reykjavik.is/loftslagsmal> and the Festa website <http://festasamfelagsabyrgd.is/>

Or contact **Ketill Berg Magnússon** CEO of Festa - Icelandic Center for Corporate Social Responsibility ([ketill@csriceland.is](mailto:ketill@csriceland.is)) and **Þórhildur Ósk Halldórsdóttir** ([thorhildur.osk.halldorsdottir@reykjavik.is](mailto:thorhildur.osk.halldorsdottir@reykjavik.is)) Head of Statistics and Analysis, Office of the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer at the City of Reykjavík.