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Rockwool Group President to G8 summit leaders:

Reduce the climate crisis and the jobs crisis at one blow

Pick the low hanging fruits. Fears intensify that the G8 summit discussions about climate change and the current financial crisis will end fruitlessly. Group President and CEO of the insulation and climate solution giant Rockwool International A/S, Mr Eelco van Heel, urges the leaders of the world's largest economies, convening until 10 July in Italy, to think long-term and reduce CO₂ emissions and unemployment rates in a profitable way.

The world is facing a climate crisis of unexpected dimensions. Climate change is happening faster than predicted just two years ago. As the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU) recently revealed in their synthesis report, ice caps are melting more rapidly and the water level is rising faster than feared, and the oceans are getting warmer.

At the same time, G8 leaders must tackle a financial crisis, with people all over the world losing their jobs. Idle hands are becoming plentiful, not least within the construction industry.

Green jobs by the hundred thousands

With this reality as backdrop, Group President and CEO of Rockwool International A/S Eelco van Heel calls for immediate political action:

”We need politicians to tackle both problems at the same time. 40 percent of the energy used in Europe and the United States is used for buildings. Here lies a massive potential for profitable energy and CO₂ efficiency. Hundred thousands of jobs can be created if stimulus packages target sustainable investments. Just by making our building modernizations energy efficient we would create more than 500,000 jobs in Europe alone”, says Eelco van Heel.

Low hanging fruit

”We need politicians to ensure the right incentives and conditions for a more climate friendly building stock. It's a low hanging fruit. We see clear proof that energy efficiency standards combined with stimulus packages and subsidy schemes actually motivate real estate owners to significantly reducing their waste of energy and CO₂. And it increases employment too. Now we need all countries to get on board and reap the benefits”, Eelco van Heel continues.

”It is vital that countries already having gathered positive experience get the rest of the world on board. Combining our efforts is what we need to do in order to solve these compelling global challenges”, says Eelco van Heel.

Further information:

Thomas Nordli
Group Communications
Rockwool International A/S
+45 46 55 80 33

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Facts

The G8 convenes until 10 July in L'Aquila in Italy. It consists of France, United States, United Kingdom, Russia, Germany, Japan, Italy and Canada. The European Union also attends the Summit.

http://www.g8italia2009.it/G8/G8-G8_Layout_locale-1199882116809_Home.htm

The synthesis report from The International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU), published on 18th of June 2009, gathered the research results from the scientific climate congress in Copenhagen, March 2009, where more than 2000 researchers from 80 countries convened in order to prepare input for the UN climate summit in December 2009 in Copenhagen.

Read the synthesis report here: <http://climatecongress.ku.dk/pdf/synthesisreport>

Insulation of buildings and processes is seen as one of the most profitable climate solutions, capable of saving millions of tones of CO₂ and billions of euros in unnecessary energy costs.

A report made by Ecofys concludes that, in Europe alone, energy costs worth €70 billion and 460 million tones of CO₂ could be saved per year if, over time, buildings already facing renovation were brought to meet modern energy standards. According to the trade organisation EURIMA (European Mineral Wool Manufacturers Association) this would create more than 500,000 jobs:

http://www.eurima.org/uploads/pdf/building_270Billion_euro/Sensitivity-analysis_Ecofys_VI_06June06_final.pdf