



****Internews' Earth Journalism Awards Press Release - Embargoed until Friday June 5 2009, 12.00 pm Paris-time, GMT+2****

Internews Launches Competition for World's Best Climate Change Reporting

Earth Journalism Awards to Culminate at Pivotal Copenhagen Conference

(June 5 2009) Internews, the global media assistance organisation, opened the Earth Journalism Awards on World Environment Day today with a call to professional and citizen journalists around the world to enter their best reporting on climate change. Winners will be flown to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15) in Copenhagen this December, where they will cover these pivotal negotiations and be honoured at a high-profile awards ceremony.

"It is very important to deepen public understanding of climate change and the urgent need for an agreement in Copenhagen. The media has a vital role to play both in explaining what is required for the world to be able to make a dramatic shift towards a low carbon society and to be able to adapt to the inevitable effects of climate change. I welcome, therefore, the Earth Journalism Awards initiative", said Yvo de Boer, the Executive Director of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) from the ongoing Bonn Climate Change Talks.

At Copenhagen, 200 countries will be concluding negotiations on the future of the Kyoto Protocol to combat climate change. The complexity and potential impact of the measures under negotiation in December make Copenhagen one of the most significant gatherings in history.

Internews established the Earth Journalism Awards this year to encourage and celebrate the best media coverage of climate change and the Copenhagen agenda. Internews has designed the awards to be as accessible and relevant as possible to national, local and citizen media around the world.

A total of 14 awards are now open for entry:

- Seven Regional Awards on current affairs and news reporting on climate change: *Eurasia, South Asia, East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East & North Africa, Latin America & the Caribbean, and North America, Europe & Australia.*
- Six Thematic Awards: *The Negotiations Award, The Human Voices Award, The Energy Award, The Forests Award, The Climate Change and Nature Award, The Climate Change Adaptation Award.*

The 14th award – the Global Public Award – will be chosen by the public, which will be invited to vote online for the best story drawn from the winning regional and thematic awards through a social networking campaign on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

A 7th thematic award - The MTV Positive Change Award - will be open for entry from June 22 2009.

The winning journalists will be invited to Copenhagen for a high-profile ceremony held during the conference and will receive support from Internews to report from COP15 for their home media.

Details of the awards are available at <http://awards.earthjournalism.org>, where journalists can now register and upload their entries until September 7 2009 (12.00 pm, Paris-time, GMT+2).

“Accurate, understandable reporting on climate change is essential in order to engage the public and their leaders to work for the best policy solutions,” said James Fahn, the Director of Internews’ Earth Journalism Network. “Particularly in the developing world, where most of the impact of climate change is being felt, citizens have an urgent need to understand what is at stake at Copenhagen and beyond, and local media are the key to this understanding.”

The Earth Journalism Awards were first announced on Earth Day April 22 at a meeting of the G-8 Environment Ministers Meeting in Siracusa, Italy at a Communications Roundtable hosted by The World Bank and the Government of Italy. Since then, over 300 journalists from 100 countries have registered.

Mark Harvey, Internews Europe’s Director of Development, said, “Whether you work for a major national broadcaster, freelance for a local daily newspaper or report for a community radio station, you have an opportunity to showcase your reporting on climate change in Copenhagen via the Earth Journalism Awards.”

Partners and sponsors of the Earth Journalism Awards include the COP15 host country, the Government of Denmark; MTV International; The World Bank; the Italian Ministry of Environment and the Protection of Territory and Sea; the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation; the Edgerton Family Foundation; Flip Video Spotlight; and the Global Forum for Media Development.

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Notes for Editors:

Internews is an international media development organization that was established in 1982. Its mission is to empower local media worldwide to provide people with the news and information that they need, the ability to connect, and the means to make their voices heard. Internews activities include training, production, media infrastructure, and media law and policy. Internews has worked in over 70 countries and currently has offices in 33 countries throughout Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North America.

In 2004, Internews developed the **Earth Journalism Network** (EJN) to enable journalists from developing countries cover the environment more effectively. EJN establishes networks of environmental journalists in countries where they don't exist, and builds their capacity where they do, through training workshops, support for production and distribution, and dispersing small grants.

For more information, see: www.internews.org & www.internews.eu