

PRESS RELEASE

The Sustainable Business Association and EIT Climate-KIC Close European Partnership

Dutch Innovations Gain Access to Major Growth Opportunities in European Market

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The Sustainable Business Association and EIT Climate-KIC will join forces to roll out Dutch business innovations at the European level that will directly contribute to alleviating climate issues. To this end, the two organizations signed a long-term cooperation agreement on 18 February, during the Annual Conference of the Sustainable Business Association. With this move, the two organizations provide significant impact and concretely help to fulfil the goals laid out in the climate summit in Paris.

Dutch sustainable businesses are international leaders when it comes to innovations that reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. Both technically and financially, numerous solutions have been developed, particularly in the field of clean tech. However, "upscaling has lagged behind," says Marga Hoek, the CEO of the Sustainable Business Association. "For Dutch companies to really upscale, we need the European market. EIT Climate-KIC's mission is to bring innovations to the European market faster in order to accelerate the transition to a low carbon economy. Through this collaboration, Dutch innovations can be rolled out on a much larger scale and therefore be more effective both in a business sense and in climate terms," said Hoek.

According to Bertrand van Ee, Ambassador of EIT Climate-KIC and Hoek, the COP21 Climate Agreement is "a message to the business community." Both regard the fight against climate change as the biggest challenge ever for business. "This challenge offers tremendous business opportunities," says van Ee. "Just last year, \$ 270 billion was invested in low-carbon clean energy solutions, in addition to at least 130 billion dollars in energy efficiency. And we have only just begun.

Growth with a Purpose

The cooperation between the Sustainable Business Association and EIT Climate-KIC will lead to a number of concrete, international projects and programs by the end of 2016 that will generate both business and positive impact. The simultaneous alignment of business, government and science (Triple Helix) will ensure the successful rollout and implementation. The priorities for 2016 are 'Urban Transitions' (energy-producing and energy-efficient buildings) and 'Sustainable Production Systems' (clean technology in manufacturing).

"The Netherlands is literally a breeding ground for innovation," says Hoek. "But to scale up, businesses need the European market, and with this collaboration, we can give them better access to this market. Scale is also needed for these companies to provide solutions to climate issues.

If you think in terms of creating positive CO2 impact, companies not only become sustainable themselves but also contribute to helping the environment. Or buildings that not only supply sustainable energy, therefore emitting no CO2, but also deliver information via big data about how further innovations can improve this behavior even more.

According to Van Ee and Hoek, there is too little international progress on both fronts while Dutch companies have already developed initiatives which could have enormous market potential. Hoek: "The focus is now truly on the international scale up these innovations in the EU, with implications for both business and climate. In other words: business as a force for good."

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Notes to editors:

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Photo Caption: left: mr Bertrand van Ee (EIT Climate-KIC), right: ms Marga Hoek (De Groene Zaak), photographer Dennis Wisse.

'De Groene Zaak' is the leading Sustainable Business Association in The Netherlands, uniting over two hundred pioneering companies. We are the Dutch Chapter of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and a founding partner of the European business network Ecopreneur. All our partners hold to a clear business principle: transforming our current economic order to a sustainable and circular one as fast as possible.

De Groene Zaak supports this goal by lobbying for fair competition for sustainable business, by putting sustainability issues on the public agenda, and by connecting sustainable entrepreneurs within our network to grow a sustainable economy. In addition, our partners create new innovations and opportunities through cooperation with the green-minded scientific network, which provides partners with access to innovative new research and expert knowledge.

www.degroenezaak.com

EIT Climate KIC is Europe's largest public-private innovation partnership focused on climate change, consisting of dynamic companies, the best academic institutions and the public sector.

Climate-KIC is one of three Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) created in 2010 by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). The EIT is an EU body whose mission is to create sustainable growth. We support this mission by addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation. Climate KIC integrates education, entrepreneurship and innovation resulting in connected, creative transformation of knowledge and ideas into economically viable products or services that help to mitigate climate change.

www.climate-kic.org