



Media Release

Flight demonstrates aviation climate commitment

GENEVA, 23 November 2009 – The Dutch airline KLM has today made important step towards the global aviation industry target of carbon neutral growth from 2020. In the latest in a series of sustainable biofuel flights that have taken place around the world, KLM today conducted a flight partly powered by a biofuel produced from the plant camelina. The flight took off from Amsterdam Schiphol Airport for a demonstration lasting around one hour. On board were a number of Dutch government officials and industry partners – the first time passengers have been on board a biofuels demonstration flight.

Last December an Air New Zealand Boeing 747 test flight used a 50% mix of biofuel from the plant jatropha. Following this, Continental Airlines flew one of its Boeing 737 aircraft on a 50% biofuel mix from algae and jatropha and Japan Airlines flew a Boeing 747 with a 50% blend of biofuel made from camelina, jatropha and algae.

Paul Steele, Executive Director of the Geneva-based Air Transport Action Group, the only global organisation representing all parts of the commercial air transport sector, said, “This flight today and KLM’s significant announcement of investment in biofuels is a further clear demonstration of the industry’s commitment to reducing carbon emissions. As the world’s governments work towards an agreement on climate change in Copenhagen in a few weeks, we can proudly say that aviation is showing leadership in the business community.”

In the last few months, the aviation industry has committed to capping its carbon emissions from 2020 and working towards reducing its carbon emissions by 2050 to half of what they were in 2005. It is the only global industry sector to have made such ambitious, global targets.

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“Work is accelerating across the aviation industry to reach these industry-wide targets and goals. Today’s flight demonstrates to governments, academic institutions and potential suppliers of second-generation aviation biofuels that our industry is ready for these new sustainable low-carbon fuels. We now need their support to get biofuels flowing into the wings of aircraft around the world.”

The aviation industry is pursuing sustainable biofuel options that can be ‘dropped-in’ to existing jet fuel, enabling airlines to use increasing amounts of biofuel as the supply becomes available. After a series of test flights earlier this year, the fuel is now being analysed by standards authorities before being certified for use in commercial flights. The industry expects certification to be granted as early as next year.

“The most important thing about our industry’s move towards biofuels is that they come from sustainable supplies. KLM, by partnering with global environmental group WWF, has shown that we are only interested in sustainable supplies of biofuels. Groups across the industry are working on a set of sustainability criteria to ensure that any biofuel feedstocks we end up using don’t impact on land or water that could be used for food supplies.”

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Notes for media:

- The KLM biofuel demonstration flight took off at 1415 CET (0815 US Eastern / 1315 London / 1715 Dubai / 2115 Hong Kong), 23 November 2009.
- For information on the global targets set by aviation: <http://www.enviro.aero/copenhagen>
- A web resource has been established about the biofuel trials occurring around the world, as well as background information on : www.enviro.aero/biofuels
- For more information, please contact Haldane Dodd, Head of Communications for the Air Transport Action Group, Geneva: Tel: +41 79 429 8710, doddh@atag.org
- KLM media relations: +3120 649 4545 or <http://corporate.klm.com/en/newsroom/press-releases>
- The Air Transport Action Group is the only aviation industry body that comprises the whole commercial air transport sector and counts among its members the large aircraft and engine manufacturers as well as the global associations representing airlines, airports and air traffic control organisations. It focuses on ensuring the future growth of air transport is sustainable and highlighting the economic benefits that aviation brings to society. It ensures the industry has a coordinated approach to tackling its climate change impacts.