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MEDIA RELEASE

SFU hosts second Renewable Cities Global Learning Forum

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Renewable Cities, a global program of the SFU Centre for Dialogue, will again be convening a Global Learning Forum in Vancouver from May 17–19, 2017. This three-day solutions-focused dialogue on the transition to 100 per cent renewable energy in cities brings together leaders from 60 cities across the world working in local governments, the private sector, utilities, non-governmental organizations, First Nations and research communities.

"We are excited to host the second Global Learning Forum 2017 to bring together and inspire urban leaders from around North America and the world to advance energy solutions," says Michael Small, Renewable Cities' executive director.

Forum 2017 is organized in a participatory format and includes 31 workshops, six plenary sessions, four site visits and a networking reception. Vancouver mayor Gregor Robertson will be speaking on a panel with the former mayor of Rio de Janeiro, Eduardo Paes, about how cities can cooperate with one another to advance energy leadership. Experts and implementers from across the globe, including staff from leading cities and representatives from the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Siemens, Google, and BC Hydro will be participating in the event.

Small says cities contribute to three quarters of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and it is crucial for policy makers to adapt to changing demands for energy, infrastructure and space as global urbanization trends continue.

"Through this conference, we hope to continue our mission in supporting cities through the transition to 100 per cent renewable energy and increased energy efficiency."

WHAT: Renewable Cities' Global Learning Forum 2017 (renewablecities.ca/forum2017)

WHEN: Wednesday, May 17–Friday, May 19, 2017

WHERE: Four Seasons Hotel, 791 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, B.C.

WHY: To convene the leaders of the 100 per cent renewable energy in cities movement with implementers and experts from around North America

FAST FACTS:

Over the past two years, over a dozen cities in North America alone have committed to transitioning to 100 per cent renewable energy, including the Cities of Vancouver and Victoria. At the UN Climate Convention at COP21 in Paris, nearly 1000 local government elected officials from around the world came together to make the aspirational commitment to 100 per cent renewable energy or an 80 per cent carbon reduction by 2050.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:

Media are invited to attend the forum and can register for a full media pass by emailing Keane Gruending

at keane_gruending@sfu.ca as well as on site at the registration desk.

Notable speakers who are available for media interviews include:

Adnan Z. Amin, director-general, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

Amin leads IRENA, whose membership tripled to 170 countries in five years under his leadership. He has 25 years of experience in sustainable development, international energy and environment policy.

Anna Tenje, mayor of Växjö, Sweden

Växjö is the world's first city to commit to fossil fuel free in 1991. The city reduced emissions by 48 per cent in two decades and has the lowest carbon footprint in any European city.

Eduardo Paes, former mayor of Rio de Janeiro and chair of C40

Paes is one of the leading voices in the world for urban climate action. Under his leadership, Rio saw the largest expansion of public transit in the city's history

Jodie Van Horn, director of Sierra Club's Ready for 100

Van Horn has led nearly 30 American cities to commit to using 100 per cent renewable energy.

Karen Clarke-Whistler, chief environment officer of TD Bank Group

TD Bank is the only major Canadian company to commit to 100 per cent renewable energy.

Ray Wills, managing director of Future Smart Strategies and adjunct professor at the University of Western Australia

Wills is a respected expert in disruptive technology adoption as well as an adviser on sustainability and technology from Australia.

Tzeporah Berman, environmentalist and writer

Berman is one of Canada's most well-known environmentalists as well as the country's ambassador to the global 100 per cent renewable energy campaign.

Aase Nyegaard, deputy mayor of Sønderborg, Denmark

Sønderborg is one of the world's most ambitious renewable energy transition cities, striving to move to zero emissions by 2030.

Andrea Reimer, councillor of Vancouver

Reimer is a leader for Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan and the Renewable Cities Strategy. She is an international spokesperson towards local government action on climate change.

Anna Leidreiter, senior programme manager of World Future Council's Climate, Energy and Cities

Leidreiter directs the global 100 per cent renewable energy campaign and advises governments of all levels across the world on energy policy.

Desiree Williams-Rajee, equity specialist, City of Portland, Oregon

Williams-Rajee was honored by the White House as a Climate Equity Champion of Change for her work on the City of Portland Multnomah County Climate Action Plan which has set forth a new model of engagement and policy making for other cities in North America.

Eric Martinot, director, Global Initiative for Distributed and Local Energy

Martinot is one the world's leading experts on distributed energy and advises governments in China and the United States on how to align policy, technology and business models.

Gwen Holdmann, director, Alaska Center for Energy and Power

Gwen lives off-grid with her family and leads an applied energy research program in Alaska.

José Etcheverry, professor, York University

Etcheverry is a pioneering academic, working internationally on the transition to 100 per cent renewable energy, including playing a research and coordinating role for governments interested in the energy transition target.

Steve Nicholas, vice president of US Programs, Institute for Sustainable Communities

Nicholas is an early adopter of municipal climate action in the U.S. He co-authored the City of Seattle's first climate action

plan a decade ago and now works to advance this leadership in other cities.

Tracey Holdmann (Cooper), president, The Valley Centre

Holdmann is helping to change the channel on indigenous self-governance in Australia by championing the transition to local and renewable energy

Trevor Birtch, mayor of Woodstock, Ontario and councillor of Oxford County, Ontario

Birtch is helping lead Oxford County, Ontario, and its 100,000 residents to 100 per cent renewable energy in electricity, heating and cooling, and transport.

ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded more than 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada's leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 145,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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