



*******Press Release*******

Call for ArcelorMittal to make 2012 Olympic Games carbon neutral by cancelling a fraction of its vast surplus of carbon allowances.

*******For Immediate Release*******

Green groups, Sandbag and the Low Carbon Community Network (LCCN), have called upon the steelmaker ArcelorMittal – official London 2012 Olympic Supporter - to offset the carbon emissions of the 2012 Olympic Games by cancelling spare carbon allowances it received from European governments. Campaigners from Sandbag and the LCCN argue that less than 3% of the excess EU certificates the steelmaker received for free would be sufficient to make the games carbon neutral.

London 2012 undertook a groundbreaking carbon foot printing study of the Olympic Games. The report concluded the carbon footprint of the Games [1] will be 3.4 million tonne of carbon dioxide equivalents (3.4MtCO₂e).

The environmental credentials of the Games have come under close scrutiny. Many have questioned in particular the construction of the ArcelorMittal Orbit, a 114.5 metres, 2,000 tonne, steel structure designed as a piece of public art as well as an observation tower. It was largely donated by the UK's richest man, Lakshmi Mittal [2], is made from 63% recycled steel and is intended to form part of the lasting legacy of the Games.

The choice of such a structure has been questioned: the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012, in their Annual Review in 2011 [3], said that they 'find it hard to see justification for a massive steel structure that appears to serve little purpose'. Others have also questioned if a steel tower is really the best symbol of the greenest Olympics ever.

Sandbag and the LCCN today call on ArcelorMittal to help London 2012 surpass its sustainable targets, by agreeing to cancel 3.4 million tonnes of carbon allowances, equivalent to the calculated carbon footprint of the games. In particular this would help London 2012 achieve the zero carbon principle of the 'One Planet Living Approach' [4], which helped shape the Games Sustainability targets.

ArcelorMittal operations in Europe are included in the EU emissions trading scheme (ETS) which requires polluting installations to pay for their emissions by surrendering carbon allowances equivalent to their emissions each year. The vast majority of these allowances [5] have been handed out to for free and have left some companies with a sizeable windfall.

ArcelorMittal currently has a surplus of 123 million [6] freely allocated carbon allowances, worth an estimated €1,6billion, making it the most oversupplied company in the EUETS. This vast surplus is the product of lobbying [7] for free allowances, as well as the effects of the unforeseen recession in 2009.

LCCN Chair Chris Church said:

“Given the ArcelorMittal Orbit is one of the most carbon intensive projects in the Olympic Park, it's only appropriate that ArcelorMittal take positive action to improve the environmental footprint of the Games.”

Sandbag Policy Officer Rob Elsworth said:

"For ArcelorMittal, a carbon neutral London 2012 would be a far better Olympic legacy than the Orbit could ever be. What is more the steelmaker could achieve this effortlessly by cancelling less than 3% of the spare carbon allowances that European governments awarded them for free. Such a gesture would also help reduce the supply of allowances in the EU emissions trading scheme at a time when it is struggling to remain relevant."

--ENDS--

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Notes to Editor

The Sandbag Climate Campaign is the NGO leading in research-led campaigning for effective emissions trading. Through expert analysis, hard hitting reports and targeted advocacy we aim to shine a light on what's working and what's not and campaign for changes that could save billions of tonnes of carbon emissions.
www.sandbag.org.uk

The Low Carbon Communities Network (LCCN) is an NGO with the aim of encouraging the adoption of low carbon and zero carbon technologies and lifestyles at a community level, and to enable groups engaged in this to be as effective and efficient as possible.
www.lowcarboncommunities.net

[1] London 2012. (March 2010) *Carbon footprint study – Methodology and reference footprint*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.london2012.com/mm%5CDocument%5CPublications%5CSustainability%5C01%5C24%5C08%5C76%5Ccarbon-footprint-study.pdf>

[2] ArcelorMittal funded up to £19.6 million of the £22.7 million sculpture with the outstanding £3.1 million provided by the Greater London Authority <http://www.arcelormittalorbit.com/media-centre/words/arcelormittal-orbit-facts-and-figures>

According to the Times rich list Lakshmi Mittal is the UK's richest man with a net worth of £12.7 Billion. <http://www.therichest.org/nation/sunday-times-rich-list/>

[3] Commission for a Sustainable London 2012. (April 2011) *Game changing? Annual Review 2010* [Online] Available from: <http://www.cslondon.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2011/04/CSLAnnual-Review-20102.pdf>

[4] The 10 principles that make up the *One Planet Approach* include: Zero Carbon, Zero Waste, Sustainable Transport, Local and Sustainable Materials, Local and Sustainable Food, Sustainable water, Land Use and Wildlife, Culture and Community, Equity and Local Economy, Health and Happiness. <http://www.oneplanetliving.org/index.html>

[5] EU Emission Allowances, or EUAs, are the credits that are allocated to the companies covered by the EU Emission Trading Scheme. Each one represents the right to emit one tonne of carbon dioxide. There are a fixed number of EUAs available to industries covered by the EU Emission Trading Scheme. EUAs are tradable. Carbon Retirement buys and retires EUAs. <http://www.carbonretirement.com/content/what-eua>

[6] Sandbag (June 2012) *Losing the lead? Europe's flagging carbon market*. [Online] Available from: http://www.sandbag.org.uk/site_media/pdfs/reports/Losing_the_lead_modified_3.7.2012_1.pdf

[7] Worst EU lobbying Awards 2010 - ArcelorMittal Worst Climate Lobbying <http://www.worstlobby.eu/2010/nominee/arcelormittal>