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MAYOR BLOOMBERG RELEASES ANNUAL *PlaNYC* CITYWIDE GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY AND KICKS-OFF CLIMATE WEEK NYC 2011

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Citywide Down 12 Percent Since 2005; City Government's Emissions Down Nearly Five Percent in the Last Fiscal Year

The following are Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's remarks as prepared for delivery this morning at the Climate Week NYC Opening Ceremony at the New York Academy of Sciences in Lower Manhattan:

"Thank you, Mark. And let me also wish all our distinguished visitors a sincere welcome to what we modestly think of as the world's greatest, greenest city: New York.

"We are delighted, as always, to join the Climate Group in launching Climate Week NYC, which this year highlights the 'clean revolution' – the actions by businesses and governments worldwide that are reducing the impact of climate change. Coinciding as it does with the annual session of the UN General Assembly, Climate Week helps call the attention of world leaders and world media to that all-important task.

"Over the past year, New Yorkers have had a taste of what climate change may mean for our city. We've seen the rainiest day and rainiest month ever. A tornado. A hurricane. The snowiest January on record. And 16 blistering days of 90-degree-plus heat during this past July and early August. Perhaps such extreme weather events are merely coincidental. Or perhaps they're warnings of what the future holds – unless we act now.

"With the stakes as high as they are, just doing nothing is no option. And as the governments representing what is now the majority of the world's population, cities must take the lead. As we've said in the past: While nations may talk about a global response, cities act locally.

"More than four years ago we launched *PlaNYC* – our comprehensive strategy for creating a greener, greater New York. We're well on our way to achieving its goals. We are, for example, almost halfway to planting a million new trees citywide.

(more)

“We’ve also passed a landmark ‘green buildings’ law that will cut energy costs and create up to 17,000 new jobs for New Yorkers. And as a municipal government, we are setting an example of what can be achieved: installing 250,000 lower-watt traffic signals and streetlights, we’ve cut their energy consumption by 25 percent.

“By improving the capture of methane at our wastewater treatment plants, we’ve cut their emissions of that particular greenhouse gas by 15 percent just in the past year. And we are going to make the most of City-owned rooftops and decommissioned landfills by using them for more renewable power generation.

“At the heart of *PlaNYC* – which we updated on Earth Day this year – is our commitment to shrinking New York City’s carbon footprint by 30 percent from the baseline measurement we took in 2005 – and reducing City government’s footprint 30 percent by 2017.

“Today, the City is releasing its fifth annual greenhouse gas inventory, which charts our progress toward those goals. And I’m glad to say that we’re headed in the right direction.

“We cut City government’s greenhouse gas emissions 4.6 percent during the 12 months ending June 30th, compared to the previous fiscal year. That keeps us on course to hitting our 2017 goal. And despite the city’s growing population, and despite very, very warm temperatures during the summer of 2010, we also cut citywide greenhouse gas emissions again last year. They’re now nearly 12 percent below their 2005 levels.

“We also recognize that while these efforts, and those of other businesses and governments worldwide, can reduce the severity of climate change, the best scientific evidence is that we probably can’t eliminate our impact on the world’s climate completely. And that’s why we’ve also launched a comprehensive effort to understand the climate risks we face and reduce our vulnerabilities.

“In addition, New York is also a charter member of the C40 Climate Leadership Group – an organization of cities around the world that are at the forefront of addressing climate change. It’s my privilege to be C40’s chair, and my pleasure to report that C40 is making huge strides in assisting the world’s cities in addressing climate change and mitigating its effects.

“At a meeting in Sao Paulo earlier this year, we forged an historic agreement with the World Bank – represented here today by Andrew Steer, the bank’s special representative on climate change. This partnership creates new opportunities to tap into the World Bank’s technical and financial resources to support climate change projects in cities worldwide. It will help leverage private investment in such projects as well.

“And that’s completely in keeping with the mission of the Climate Group – which continues to take the lead in forging the public-private partnerships on climate change that are so crucial.”

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Contact: Stu Loeser/Marc La Vorgna

(212) 788-2958

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