

## **Environmentalists tell German automakers to drop suit against Calif.'s proposed emissions law**

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FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) -- A group of national environmental organizations on Monday urged German automakers to drop their lawsuit against California's proposed stricter clean air regulations, accusing the carmakers of double standards.

In letters addressed to the heads of BMW, DaimlerChrysler, Porsche and Volkswagen, nine German environmental groups urged the companies to make more environmentally friendly cars, instead of fighting laws that would force them to do so.

"It is hypocrisy that the German automobile industry portrays itself as environmentally friendly on the one hand and on the other hand, legally challenges a decisive environmental regulation," said Manfred Treber from the Germanwatch organization.

The letters argued that several other U.S. states and Canada were ready to adopt similar regulations, which would make them the law for one-third of the North American car market.

The regulations, adopted in September, call for smaller engines and other technological changes to cut emissions by 25 percent for cars and light trucks, and about 18 percent for larger trucks and SUVs. They are to be phased in by 2009.

The four German carmakers joined Ford Motor Co., General Motors Corp., Mitsubishi Motors, Mazda, and Toyota Motor Co. in December in a suit to block the regulations.

There was no immediate reaction from the German carmakers.

## **City hosts U.N. green meeting**

Suzanne Herel, Staff Writer

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San Francisco will become the first U.S. city to host the United Nations World Environment Day conference, when mayors from around the world arrive in June with the goal of hammering out environmental accords to promote "green cities."

Mayor Gavin Newsom announced the city's role in the annual conference Monday at City Hall, accompanied by two former mayors, U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Willie Brown. They will join the other two former mayors still living, Art Agnos and Frank Jordan, in chairing the conference, which was created by the United Nations in 1972.

"This is the first United Nations conference to focus on urban environment," Newsom said. "The accords that we mayors sign will leave a legacy that advances environmental well-being for cities around the world."

So far, 43 mayors have confirmed they are coming, Newsom said, including those from London; Shanghai; Kabul, Afghanistan; Buenos Aires; Sydney; Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Jakarta, Indonesia; Rome; and Istanbul.

The conference will be held June 1-5 and will include 160 community events, including a tour of Muir Woods with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Mikhail Gorbachev, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and actors Angelina Jolie and Robert Redford also are expected to attend.

Events will range from organic menus at area restaurants to a display of artwork created with recycled material. A Green Cities Expo also will be held at Fort Mason June 3-5.

Mayoral participants will brainstorm and develop a set of Urban Environmental Accords with an eye toward improving the environment in cities around the world. The categories to be addressed are urban design, transportation, energy, open space, recycling, health and water, and include 21 action items to be targeted over the next seven years.

Jared Blumenfeld, director of the San Francisco Department of the Environment, said the majority of the world's population now lives in cities, a relatively new development. And city dwellers consume 75 percent of the world's natural resources.

It is estimated that around the world, 1 million people move to cities each week.

"Mayors have the power to shape the future of the world's environment," Blumenfeld said.

Environmental goals

Participating cities each year are expected to pick three actions from the following list to adopt as goals, policies or laws:

Energy: Renewable energy, energy efficiency, climate change

Recycling: Zero waste, manufacturer responsibility, consumer responsibility

Urban design: Green buildings, smart growth, land-use planning

Urban nature: Parks, urban forest, wildlife

Transportation: Public transportation, clean vehicles, reducing congestion

Environmental health: Toxics reduction, healthy food systems, clean air

Water: Clean water, water conservation, wastewater

Source: World Environment Day 2005