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Press Release

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Green Offices Saved a Two-Kilometre Tower of Paper

In 2009, Finnish Green Offices saved a total of 2,230 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions compared to the previous year by cutting consumption (*). The amount corresponds to over 260 passenger car trips around the world. WWF Green Office is an environmental service for offices, aiming at reducing the ecological footprint of offices and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions. The Green Office network includes 180 organisations.

Green Offices annually report to WWF on their consumption with at least three different consumption figures. These indicators have been selected together with WWF, and they describe the most significant impacts on the environment. The indicators include, for example, the consumption of paper, electricity, heat, and car fuel, air travel and the amount of unsorted waste.

“The most popular consumption savings targets in 2009 were electricity, paper and car and air travel. Because of the cold winter, heat consumption increased, but on the whole, the network’s emissions have dropped dramatically!” Green Office Specialist **Mikko Kuiri** from WWF says.

Electricity consumption has dropped throughout the entire network. In total, Green Offices saved over 4 GWh (4,005,600 kWh) of electricity compared to the previous year (*). That corresponds to the greenhouse gas emissions from 835,500 fuel litres or the average annual emissions of 450 detached houses using district heating. “Small procedures save a significant amount of energy. You should switch off lights and appliances whenever you don’t need them and set power saving settings on your electronic equipment”, Kuiri says.

The consumption of paper in the network has decreased by 16 % from the previous year (*). This means a total of almost 22 million sheets of paper and 200 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions savings. “With the amount of paper saved, you could build a tower measuring over two kilometres and weighing around 100 tonnes. In euros, that’s 152,000 worth of savings. You can reduce your paper consumption by, for example, avoiding printing, switching to electronic documents and printing on both sides of a sheet.”

Car and air travel have also decreased in many offices. In total, road and air transport savings have amounted to 1,140 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (1140 tCO₂) (*). That corresponds to the greenhouse gas emissions from 485,000 fuel litres or the average annual emissions of 260 detached houses using district heating.

“The recession made many think about alternatives to travelling. Long-distance negotiations, telephone conferences and other communications solutions save time and reduce the need to travel. When travelling, you should favour rail transport to air transport”, Kuiri says.

Seven offices with an existing figure of waste quantities from the previous year reported on their waste quantities. The total amount of all waste from these offices has dropped from 1,040,000 to 814,000 kilogrammes (*). This corresponds to 168 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions (168 tCO₂ekv).



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** Consumption figures were recorded from the offices with existing indicator figures from the previous year (paper 82 offices; electricity 79 offices; road transport 15 offices; air transport 12 offices; waste 7 offices). Examples corresponding to savings are based on WWF's Climate Calculator (www.ilmastolaskuri.fi).*

Green Office

WWF Green Office is an environmental service for offices, with which offices can reduce their environmental load, achieve savings and slow down climate change. It is a practical environmental programme, based on the general principles of the ISO 14 001 and EMAS environmental programmes. WWF grants offices that meet its criteria the right to use the Green Office label.

Office premises have a key role in energy consumption and sustainable solutions. Green Office motivates personnel to make environmentally friendly choices in their everyday life, improves environmental awareness and saves resources. Both the organisation and the environment benefit from the system.

At present, the Green Office network includes 180 organisations with a total of approximately 45,000 employees. The network includes companies, public sector and third sector operators. The programme is gaining an international foothold, and at the moment, it is in use in e.g. the Baltic states, Romania and Indonesia.

www.wwf.fi/green_office

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WWF Finland is part of the international WWF network, endeavouring to save the world's most unique natural phenomena and most endangered species. WWF's goal is a world where man and nature coexist in harmony. Donations from ordinary people make WWF's work possible.