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Saudi Arabia Earns 1st Place Fossil of the Day for Trying to Silence Civil Society

Cancun, Mexico – Saudi Arabia earned the 1st place Fossil of the Day for trying to limit civil society’s participation and voice in the negotiations. This is Saudi Arabia’s second Fossil at the Cancun negotiations. On Wednesday, it shared a 1st place Fossil with Norway, Kuwait, Algeria, UAE, Egypt, Iraq, Qatar, & Jordan for proposing Carbon Capture and Storage in the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol. No other countries received a Fossil today.

The text of the award reads:

“The first place Fossil is awarded to Saudi Arabia. We assume that Saudi Arabia was included in the consensus that led to last year’s statement by the SBI recognizing the ‘fundamental value’ of effective public participation. We also understand that Saudi Arabia is still a party to the Convention, which also recognizes the role of observers.

So today we applaud Saudi Arabia’s audacity in suggesting, in today’s informal on enhancing the engagement of observers, that observers are actually over-represented in the UNFCCC process. Relying on registration statistics from COP15 in Copenhagen, the delegate suggested that the large number of NGO observers there, and of side events in Cancun, is somehow relevant to the effectiveness of our participation. Stating that the delegates had other ‘important things’ to spend their time on, Saudi Arabia ‘wonder[ed] if there is really a pressing need at this time to dedicate time and resources to further enhance [public] engagement.’

For its audacious attempt to limit participation, we award Saudi Arabia the first place Fossil. (Following the spirit of Saudi Arabia’s intervention, we have not invited them to actually receive this award.)”
FOSSIL OF THE DAY AWARD

Media Release

About CAN: The Climate Action Network is a worldwide network of roughly 500 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels. www.climatenetwork.org

About the fossils: The Fossil of the Day awards were first presented at the climate talks in 1999 in Bonn, initiated by the German NGO Forum. During United Nations climate change negotiations (www.unfccc.int), members of the Climate Action Network (CAN), vote for countries judged to have done their 'best' to block progress in the negotiations in the last days of talks.

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