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## University of York to feature at climate change summit

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The University of York will have a significant presence at the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit next week.

Dr Johan Kuylenstierna and Professor John Whitelegg, of the Stockholm Environment Institute in the Department of Biology at York, will be presenting papers in Copenhagen.

Dr Kuylenstierna will examine ways of securing benefits in developing countries through action to combat air pollution and climate change. Professor Whitelegg is to present a paper on how to deliver a low carbon transport sector.

Meanwhile, University of York student Urias Goll will be master of ceremonies when the governments of Norway and Liberia sign a bilateral agreement at the summit.

### Pollution and greenhouse gases

Dr Kuylenstierna will speak at an event, organised by the US Environmental Protection Agency and its Swedish counterpart, called 'How Smart Air Pollution Control Can Help with Climate Mitigation'.

He said: "Air pollutants and greenhouse gases cannot reasonably be treated separately any longer. The same sources emit both air pollution and greenhouse gases, and some measures will limit one type of emission but increase another.

"And some greenhouse gases are also air pollutants. For example, ground-level ozone is the third most important greenhouse gas but is not dealt with under current climate policy. It also causes health problems and our SEI centre at the University of York is heavily engaged in the estimation of crop yield losses also caused by ozone pollution, that run into billions of dollars annually."

SEI is helping the United Nations Environment Programme to assess the issues related to black carbon (a warming agent and an important pollutant affecting health and the melting of ice in key glaciers) and tropospheric ozone to collate key information that can inform policy makers about the potential benefits of integrated policies.

### Low carbon transport

Professor Whitelegg will set out "a simple, attractive and effective plan to produce at least an 80% reduction in transport's carbon emissions by 2050."

He added: "Transport's carbon emissions continue to grow and are fed by a powerful mixture of mythology, perverse subsidies, poor quality spatial planning and streets

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Dr Johan Kuylenstierna

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that prioritise the car and deter the pedestrian and the cyclist.

transport future is possible, desirable and deliverable  
Professor John Whitelegg

“The time has now arrived when we must move on from analysis and demonstrate clearly that a low carbon transport future is possible, desirable and deliverable. “

He said the plan, including deterrents on car use and a large-scale switch to walking, cycling and public transport, would result in local economic development, improvements to air quality, noise reduction, reduced obesity and a resurgence of community life and supportive neighbourhoods.

### Reducing Liberia's deforestation

Before coming to York, Urias Goll was the administrative coordinator of the National Climate Change Secretariat, the body co-ordinating action on the issue across the Liberian Government.

In recognition of his work, he has now been invited to take part in the ceremony which will conclude an agreement designed to support efforts reduce deforestation in Liberia.

In addition to his role with the Liberian delegation to the summit, Urias will also be a member of the international youth delegation attending the event to ensure that the voice of young people is heard at the event.

He said: “I'm very proud to be representing both my country and young people at an event that will play a very important part in deciding how we are going to combat climate change.”

Urias is currently studying a Masters degree in Environmental Economics and Environmental Management in the University's Environment Department.

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### Notes to editors:

- ▶ The Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) is an international, independent environment and development research institute. It is a part of an international network of centres with the York centre based in the Department of Biology at the University of York.
- ▶ The University of York's [Department of Biology](#) is one of the leading centres for biological teaching and research in the UK. In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, it was ranked equal first among broad spectrum bioscience departments in the UK for quality that was judged to be world-leading. The Department both teaches degree courses and undertakes research across the whole spectrum of modern Biology, from molecular genetics and biochemistry to ecology. Its biomedical research includes an Immunology and Infection Unit (jointly with the Hull York Medical School), work on infertility and three research professors funded by Yorkshire Cancer Research and York Against Cancer.
- ▶ The [Environment Department](#) at the University of York provides the integrated approach essential to finding practical solutions to real world problems. Its research on sustainable solutions to environmental problems is internationally recognised. Its teaching programmes are designed to produce scientists, managers and policy-makers who can meet the challenges of the 21st century.

