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Global alliance of universities founded for CO₂ neutrality

Regine Rachow *Press Office*

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On the eve of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, a good two dozen universities and research institutions from around the world have joined forces in an alliance to combat climate change. At an online conference on Thursday, they founded the "World Alliance of Universities on Carbon Neutrality," or WAUCN. The alliance aims to push collaboration among leading researchers and student talent, as well as decision-makers in business and politics. The Leibniz Institute for Catalysis in Rostock, LIKAT, is one of the founding members of WAUCN.

The initiative is the brainchild of the University of Birmingham and Southeast University in Nanjing, China. The alliance aims to "move the world towards net zero emissions and carbon neutrality," as Prof. Sir David Eastwood, vice chancellor of the University of Birmingham, told some 80 participants at the opening. To that end, he said, there is a growing coalition around the world.

WAUCN seeks research partnerships to achieve and meet climate goals, and aims to provide further impetus through conferences and workshops. "It is the first open-world alliance of universities focused on talent training and research collaboration in climate-neutral technologies," Prof. Zhang Guangjun, president of Southeast University, emphasized at the inaugural conference.

Among these technologies, catalysis is of particular importance. "It is the key technology for the global economic transition to renewable raw materials and renewable energy," emphasized LIKAT Director Prof. Matthias Beller. LIKAT is one of the leading institutes in catalysis research. It participates in international projects, such as the EU hydrogen strategy, and maintains close research partnerships around the world.

The 26th UN Climate Change Conference begins Sunday in Glasgow and is scheduled to last until Nov. 12.

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