

Press release

Running again for the climate: Friedhelm Weidemann crosses the Brazilian rainforest

- **Ultramarathon for the Vaillant campaign “Places worth protecting”**
- **One hundred forty kilometres through the Brazilian jungle**
- **Rainforests are the world’s air conditioning system**

Remscheid, 14 November 2016 – Running again: Friedhelm Weidemann once again travelled the world as Vaillant’s climate champion. For the campaign “Places worth protecting”, the 57-year-old faced the world’s most challenging long-distance course, the Jungle Marathon through the Brazilian rainforest. Vaillant’s campaign “Places worth protecting” aims to raise awareness of regions that are threatened by climate change and to call for greater climate protection. In late 2014, Weidemann completed a marathon through Antarctica for the same cause. This time, he faced the humid heat of the Brazilian jungle: 140 kilometres through thick vegetation, rivers and swamps in four days – impenetrable land as far as the eye could see. Deafening noise followed him day and night. The animals that live in the jungle are always there, even if they are rarely in sight. There was a new adventure around every bend in the track, or indeed a fright. “Once I almost ran into an anteater. I was petrified, but so was he!” Weidemann recalls. He spent the nights in a hammock so that he was safe from attacks by jungle dwellers with four paws.

Why do this to oneself?

Why do this to oneself? “An incredible place – gigantic, varied and beautiful. After my run at the South Pole, I wanted to draw attention to the next place that is under severe threat from climate change,” explains Weidemann. Rainforests are the world’s air conditioning system, and they are threatened by deforestation on a massive scale. They protect the earth from further global warming and absorb carbon dioxide. Biodiversity in the tropical rainforest is like nowhere else on the planet. A fifth of our fresh water reserves can also be found here.

An exceptional feat by an outstanding runner

The jungle and the Antarctic have hosted just two of the almost 300 marathons completed by Friedhelm Weidemann in 30 years. Finland, Siberia, the United States, South Africa, Dubai, Morocco – his running career reads like the brochure of a multifaceted travel agency. “Running in nature fills me with energy for daily life. That’s why I return to the natural world to promote environmental and climate protection,” says Weidemann.

Enormous potential savings through energy-efficient heating technology

Vaillant supports him in this mission. As a manufacturer of technology that saves resources, Vaillant is committed to protecting the climate and preserving the environment. Modern heating technology is one of the most important factors in the fight against climate change. Private households are the largest energy consumers in Europe, even compared to the industrial sector. Around 40 per cent of energy is used in buildings, of which almost 90 per cent can be attributed to generating hot water and heating.

Internally, Vaillant also sets an example with its strategic sustainability programme S.E.E.D.S. The sustainability targets adopted throughout the company in 2011 are an important development in the area of ecology. These include reducing CO₂ emissions by 25 per cent by 2020.

Find out more in our online special about Friedhelm Weidemann’s rainforest marathon at www.vaillant-group.com.

About Vaillant

Vaillant provides its customers all around the world with environmentally friendly and energy-saving heating and ventilation systems which are increasingly using renewable energy sources. Its product portfolio encompasses solar thermal and photovoltaic installations, heat pumps, pellet boilers, ventilation installations for low-energy houses, combined heat and power systems, highly efficient heating systems based on fossil fuels, and intelligent control units.

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Caption: For the Vaillant campaign “Places worth protecting”, Friedhelm Weidemann ran through Brazil’s deepest jungle. He prepared for this feat in Vaillant’s climate chamber.

Image credits: Vaillant