

## Launch of NorthSouthEastWest Exhibition

Sir John Bond  
Group Chairman, HSBC Holdings Plc

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Distinguished guests, good evening.

My name is John Bond and I am Group Chairman of HSBC. You may be wondering why a banker is addressing you this evening on the subject of climate change.

Well, I am not a scientist. And I am certainly no expert on climate change. But I do believe climate change is the biggest single environmental challenge we face this century.

By we, I mean of course, the world. Climate change is a global problem and it therefore requires global solutions. Governments, business, NGOs and individuals all need to work together if we are to realise our ambitions for a low carbon future.

At HSBC, we want to play our part in building a more sustainable world. In the last year, we have taken a number of steps forward. Last spring, we signed up as a founder member of the Climate Group, and as you can see today, our relationship is going from strength to strength.

We also believe we are the first major bank in the world to commit to becoming carbon neutral in all our operations worldwide. We will achieve this by reducing the energy we use and, as far as possible, by buying electricity from renewable sources. For example, we've cut our carbon dioxide emissions by a thousand tonnes a year simply by installing new water coolers in our head office in Hong Kong. And we have saved ourselves nearly US\$150,000 a year - something to truly warm a banker's heart!

We will offset our remaining emissions by investing in projects which reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and by purchasing carbon allowances. We are also looking at ways to extend this carbon neutral approach to our supply chain.

We believe that collectively, these initiatives set a new benchmark, and we hope that others will join us.

At the same time, we know that we cannot solve the problem of climate change on our own.

We are working with a number of partners to help other organisations improve their sustainability.

For example, we are using our experience to launch a pilot project to help a small number of schools in the UK to become carbon neutral.

We have established the HSBC Partnership in Environmental Innovation, a three-year, £650,000 collaboration with the universities of Newcastle and East Anglia. This aims to increase knowledge of the causes and impacts of climate change; to understand better public attitudes to it; and to produce new technologies and other practical measures.

We know, however, that we can only play a small part in solving the difficulties posed by climate change. Governments, with input from NGOs, have the difficult task of setting the policy in this area. And as climate change will affect rich and poor countries equally, it is very encouraging to see that climate change is high on the agendas of both developed and developing countries.

For example, rapid development in China, a part of the world in which HSBC has a great interest, has increased demand for energy enormously and, as a result, emissions have increased. China has already recognised the dual challenge of establishing secure energy sources and preserving climate stability. As I'm sure you will have heard, on 28 February, China passed its first renewable energy law, and is hoping to increase its use of renewable energy to 10 per cent of its total energy consumption. This is a massive commitment and clearly demonstrates the importance China, among others, attaches to this issue.

I would like to conclude by saying that I hope you enjoy the NorthSouthEastWest exhibition and the book that accompanies it. You can see from the photos on display, that the exhibition shows the impact of climate change in the most striking way. But the images are also inspiring, demonstrating as they do the tremendous ability of human beings to adapt to the enormous challenges that climate change presents to us all. That should give us all a great sense of optimism for the future.

Thank you.

**climate change is  
a global problem**