



ESBG Resolution

Towards a greener savings and retail banking sector

Brussels, 7 May 2008

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The scientifically-demonstrated need to urgently take action to lessen the adverse impact of climate change calls for a global, concerted response from the scientific, political, civil society, industry and business worlds. As a building block of the global economy, the financial community has an important contribution to bring to define sustainable solutions.

ESBG members are all committed to sustainable development and long-standing corporate social players, at local and regional level. With the environmental challenge becoming one of the main collective hazards ever experienced worldwide, their responsible engagement in favour of the future of the planet comes as an expected part of the return to society they embody and of their long-term commitment to the communities in which they operate.

Indeed, ESBG members have a lot to contribute and a number of them are already engaged on this path, through an environmental friendly offer of products and services, through the implementation of environmentally responsible investment policies, through the introduction of pro-environment criteria in project financing, through financial support to alternative energy schemes and eco-innovation, through the introduction of environmental concerns, primarily the reduction of CO2 emissions, in their general building and transportation policy etc.

The opportunities for the savings and retail banking sector are there but require a collective and proactive approach, in order to prompt the definition and the introduction of innovative and creative business solutions to meet the environmental challenges.

In this context, ESBG and its members want to contribute and assist society in successfully responding to the current threats, act as eco-responsible market-drivers and support to communities.

In this respect, ESBG will work towards:

- supporting members in building significant capacity within their organisations to evaluate fully the exposure to environmental issues and to develop suitable business responses;
- evaluating how to best integrate in corporates' general policies environmental aspects, including energy efficiency, recycling, waste reduction, transport/travel and building arrangements;
- developing and exchanging best practices in how to incorporate the environment dimension in retail banking offers, operations and processes and promote environment-friendly products and services with clients;
- exploring solutions on how to raise awareness on environmental concerns with clients, employees, suppliers, investors and other stakeholders, and, especially for those operating at local level and in smaller organisations, accompany them in strengthening their "green" capacity;
- exchanging experiences and knowledge with peers in order to extend best practices, and regularly evaluate progress made;

- engaging and developing dialogue relating to environmental matters with policy-makers and involved institutions, including civil society organisations, at national, EU and international level in order to develop an enabling framework to contribute effectively to the reduction of business impact on the environment;
- assessing the opportunities for partnership with public authorities and private stakeholders, at local, EU and international level to develop practical, workable and long-term environment-friendly solutions, which can benefit the large public.

As part of ESG commitment to the United Nations Global Compact Principles, specific attention will also be given:

- to support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- to undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;
- to encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.



ESBG - The European voice of savings and retail banking

ESBG (European Savings Banks Group) is an international banking association that represents one of the largest European retail banking networks, comprising about one third of the retail banking market in Europe. As at the start of 2006, the ESBG comprised approximately 870 individual savings and retail banks operating 84,000 branches and employing 971,000 people with total assets amounting to €5,216 billion. The ESBG represents the interest of its members vis-à-vis the EU Institutions and generates, facilitates and manages high quality cross-border banking projects.

ESBG members are typically savings and retail banks or associations thereof. They are often organised in decentralised networks and offer their services throughout their region. ESBG member banks have reinvested responsibly in their region for many decades and are one distinct benchmark for corporate social responsibility activities throughout Europe and the world.



ESBG

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