

27 March 2009

HSBC RECOGNISED FOR GREEN LEADERSHIP

HSBC in Hong Kong has been awarded the first Gold Award for its all-round outstanding environmental performance in the financial sector from the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Peter Wong, Executive Director of The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, accepted the award today on behalf of HSBC, at the official presentation ceremony held for the Sectoral Hong Kong Awards for Environmental Excellence (HKAEE).

The Sectoral Awards Scheme aims to recognise and award organisations with outstanding environmental performance across every aspect of their business. Industry sectors covered by the Sectoral Awards Scheme include construction, financial institutions, hotels, restaurants and catering, property management, retail, transport, logistics, the public sector and non-governmental organisations. This is the first time the HKAEE have judged organisations by industry sector.

Upon accepting the award from The Honourable Donald Tsang, Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mr Wong said, “We are honoured to receive this top Environmental Excellence Award from the Hong Kong Awards for Environmental Excellence today. Sustainability is one of the core values in HSBC’s business strategy. Being the world’s first bank to become carbon neutral, we will continue to explore ways to improve our environmental performance through the adoption of new technologies and innovation and to motivate our employees, customers, and suppliers to do the same.”

HSBC has demonstrated its green leadership in a number of areas, including:

- carbon neutrality – HSBC was the world’s first bank and FTSE 100 Company to go carbon neutral¹ in 2005. HSBC’s experience in operating a carbon-controlled business can be applied to its clients and the financial services sector;

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- dedicated management team – HSBC has a dedicated Corporate Sustainability team covering the Asia-Pacific region to develop, coordinate and implement corporate sustainability and environmental initiatives across 20 countries/territories²;
- staff engagement and environmental training – in partnership with Earthwatch, HSBC has developed a Climate Change business training programme for its staff, which involves two weeks of scientific research activities in the primary and secondary forests of the Gutianshan National Nature Reserve in Zhejiang Province, East China. Upon return, these ‘climate champions’ will share their valuable knowledge and expertise with other colleagues to develop a more sustainable business and workplace;
- ability to influence with ‘green’ services – HSBC has policies in place to help customers manage risks in projects with high environmental and social impacts. In addition, HSBC helps customers invest in low-carbon and energy efficient technologies through Green Equipment Financing services. It has a Climate Change Centre of Excellence based in Bangalore, India, and launched its innovative Green Credit Card last year, in which a percentage of spending on the card is directed to an environmental programme;
- environmental programmes – since 2002, HSBC’s environmental management programme has identified major areas of direct environmental impact and has actively managed them by setting targets and actions. HSBC has also committed to spending US\$90 million to reduce the environmental impact of its buildings and business operations over five years; and
- synergistic partnership programmes: HSBC has a number of environmental partnership programmes in the community to promote biodiversity, wetland conservation, environmental research and lifestyle changes. Examples include Hong Kong’s first carbon calculator, HSBC Wetland Days, and the HSBC Climate Partnership. The latter is a five-year US\$100 million global programme with Earthwatch, The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, The Climate Group and WWF.

Teresa Au, Head of Corporate Sustainability Asia-Pacific Region, said: “Despite the challenges of the global recession, HSBC remains committed to a low-carbon economy which we believe will make a long-term positive contribution to the community and will benefit generations to come.”

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Members of the judging panel included: Prof. Tsui Lap-Chee, Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Hong Kong (and Chairman of the Award Judging Panel), Ms Anissa Wong, Permanent Secretary for the Environment, HKSAR and Dr. Ng Cho-nam, member of Advisory Council on the Environment, HKSAR.

For more details of HSBC's long-standing commitment to the environment and its sustainability initiatives, please visit www.hsbc.com.hk/sustainability.

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Notes to editors:

Photo captions

Photo 1 – Peter Wong (right), Executive Director of The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited received the Financial Institutions (Gold Award) under the Hong Kong Awards for Environmental Excellence scheme at the award presentation ceremony from Donald Tsang, Chief Executive of the HKSAR.

Photo 2 – Peter Wong (right) and Teresa Au (left), HSBC Head of Corporate Sustainability Asia-Pacific Region shared the joy with Edward Yau (centre), Secretary for the Environment, HKSAR Government.

Footnotes

1: In October 2005, HSBC became the world's first major bank to become 'carbon neutral'. This has been achieved by managing and reducing its direct emissions, reducing the carbon intensity of the electricity it uses by buying electricity from renewable sources where feasible and offsetting the remaining carbon dioxide emissions by buying 'carbon credits' from 'green' projects.

2: HSBC's operations and businesses in these 20 Asia-Pacific countries/territories are: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Macau, Malaysia, Mauritius, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore, South Africa, New Zealand, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

HSBC Climate Partnership

Launched in 2007, the groundbreaking HSBC Climate Partnership brings together four leading environmental organisations – The Climate Group, Earthwatch, The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute and WWF – to fight climate change impacts for people, forests, water and cities. HSBC has committed funding of US\$100 million over five years, and will involve more than 100,000 employees worldwide in learning and volunteering programmes to promote action on climate change in 20 cities across the globe. Employees will work with our partners' scientists on a two-week project to gather climate change data from forests in four climate centres. On return, these employees will act as 'Climate Champions' within HSBC, sharing valuable knowledge and expertise with colleagues to develop a more sustainable business and workplace.

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited is the founding and a principal member of the HSBC Group which, with over 9,500 offices in 86 countries and territories and assets of US\$2,527 billion at 31 December 2008, is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations.

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