

## **UNEP Statement by Financial Institutions on the Environment & Sustainable Development**

**( As Revised - May 1997 )**

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We members of the financial services industry recognize that sustainable development depends upon a positive interaction between economic and social development, and environmental protection, to balance the interests of this and future generations. We further recognize that sustainable development is the collective responsibility of government, business, and individuals. We are committed to working cooperatively with these sectors within the framework of market mechanisms toward common environmental goals.

### **1. Commitment to Sustainable Development**

- 1.1 We regard sustainable development as a fundamental aspect of sound business management.
- 1.2 We believe that sustainable development can best be achieved by allowing markets to work within an appropriate framework of cost-efficient regulations and economic instruments. Governments in all countries have a leadership role in establishing and enforcing long-term common environmental priorities and values.
- 1.3 We regard the financial services sector as an important contributor towards sustainable development, in association with other economic sectors.
- 1.4 We recognize that sustainable development is a corporate commitment and an integral part of our pursuit of good corporate citizenship.

### **2. Environmental Management and Financial Institutions**

- 2.1 We support the precautionary approach to environmental management, which strives to anticipate and prevent potential environmental degradation.
- 2.2 We are committed to complying with local, national, and international environmental regulations applicable to our operations and business services. We will work towards integrating environmental considerations into our operations, asset management, and other business decisions, in all markets.

- 2.3 We recognize that identifying and quantifying environmental risks should be part of the normal process of risk assessment and management, both in domestic and international operations. With regard to our customers, we regard compliance with applicable environmental regulations and the use of sound environmental practices as important factors in demonstrating effective corporate management.
- 2.4 We will endeavor to pursue the best practice in environmental management, including energy efficiency, recycling and waste reduction. We will seek to form business relations with partners, suppliers, and subcontractors who follow similarly high environmental standards.
- 2.5 We intend to update our practices periodically to incorporate relevant developments in environmental management. We encourage the industry to undertake research in these and related areas.
- 2.6 We recognize the need to conduct internal environmental reviews on a periodic basis, and to measure our activities against our environmental goals.
- 2.7 We encourage the financial services sector to develop products and services which will promote environmental protection.

### **3. Public Awareness and Communication**

- 3.1 We recommend that financial institutions develop and publish a statement of their environmental policy and periodically report on the steps they have taken to promote integration of environmental considerations into their operations..
- 3.2 We will share information with customers, as appropriate, so that they may strengthen their own capacity to reduce environmental risk and promote sustainable development.
- 3.3 We will foster openness and dialogue relating to environmental matters with relevant audiences, including shareholders, employees, customers, governments, and the public.
- 3.4 We ask the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to assist the industry to further the principles and goals of this Statement by providing, within its capacity, relevant information relating to sustainable development.
- 3.5 We will encourage other financial institutions to support this Statement. We are committed to share with them our experiences and knowledge in order to extend best practices.
- 3.6 We will work with UNEP periodically to review the success in implementing this Statement and will revise it as appropriate.

*We, the undersigned, endorse the principles set forth in the above statement and will endeavor to ensure that our policies and business actions promote the consideration of the environment and sustainable development.*