



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**European Savings Banks Group**

**ESBG calls for a fair, ambitious and binding climate change agreement in Copenhagen**

30 November 2009

**Brussels** – In a letter to the participants at the United Nations Climate Change Conference that will take place in Copenhagen from 7- 18 December 2009, ESBG, the European voice of savings and retail banking, stated that it was firmly convinced of the need to take urgent action in favour of the planet and confirmed its support for a fair, ambitious and binding climate change agreement in Copenhagen.

Chris De Noose, Managing Director of ESBG, said “ESBG and its member recognize that preventing catastrophic climate change by dramatically cutting global greenhouse gas emissions will require a global concerted response from the business, political, civil society, industry and scientific communities across countries and continents in the developed, emerging and developing world. We urge all of the participants at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen to act in order to break the current gridlock and reach a global agreement that will make it possible to pave the way to making the world a better and sustainable place to live for future generations.”

As a fundamental driver of the global economy, the financial community has an important contribution to make to defining sustainable solutions. The members of the ESBG have a long history of socially responsible banking all over Europe as well as a commitment to sustainable development - including environmental issues - at local and regional level. This responsible engagement is a part of the return to society that is a part of the mission of ESBG members. It reflects their long-term commitment to the communities in which they operate.

In concrete terms, this commitment will consist of ESBG supporting national and European actions to achieve greenhouse gas emission reduction targets by providing finance for energy efficiency projects and services as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Consideration is also being given to the possibility of extending this commitment worldwide through ESBG’s sister organisation, the World Savings Banks Institute (WSBI).

**Editors Notes**

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**WSBI – ESBG – The Global 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, with total assets of € 5,985 billion (1 January 2006). It represents the interests of





its members vis-à-vis the EU Institutions and generates, facilitates and manages high quality cross-border banking projects.

WSBI (World Savings Banks Institute) is one of the largest international banking associations and the only global representative of savings and retail banking. Founded in 1924, it represents savings and retail banks and associations thereof in 92 countries of the world (Asia-Pacific, the Americas, Africa and Europe – via ESBG, the European Savings Banks Group). It works closely with international financial institutions and donor agencies and promotes access to financial services worldwide – be it in developing or developed regions. At the start of 2008, assets of member banks amounted to more than €10,000 billion, with operations through more than 380,000 branches and outlets.

WSBI and 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*. WSBI and ESBG member banks have reinvested *responsibly* in their region for many decades and are a distinct benchmark for corporate social responsibility activities throughout Europe and the world.