

13 July 2007

HSBC LAUNCHES INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE

New Research Shows Developing Countries Most Concerned About Need to Combat Climate Change

HSBC's first international survey of public attitudes towards climate change highlights a surprising spectrum of opinions across the world. Climate change may be a global issue, but reactions to it vary strongly. The **HSBC Climate Confidence Index** shows that people in developing economies exhibit the greatest concern, commitment and optimism towards the problem of climate change and in developed economies the greatest indifference, reluctance and fatalism.

Overall, the survey reveals that citizens of China and India are most optimistic that the problem of climate change can be overcome, while those in France, Germany and the UK are least optimistic that a solution will be found.

The research, based on a sample of 9,000 people in nine countries and across four continents, also demonstrates that:

- Climate change is having a significant impact on public opinion in the developing countries surveyed. Around 60 percent of respondents registered a high level of concern in China, India, Mexico and Brazil, compared with only 22 per cent in the UK and 26 per cent in Germany; and
- People's assessment of their commitment to tackling climate is higher in developing economies. Around 47 per cent of people indicated high levels of personal commitment to combating climate change in India and Brazil, compared with only 19 per cent in the UK.

more

HSBC Launches International Survey of Public Attitudes towards Climate Change/2

Jon Williams, Head of Group Sustainable Development, HSBC Holdings plc, said: “The HSBC Climate Confidence Index is an important barometer of international public attitudes towards climate change. Over time we believe it will enable us to better understand the actions individuals are prepared to take in reducing their carbon footprint and how we can work with governments and the business community to provide financial solutions to support them.”

The index also highlights the emergence of so-called 'green rejection' in the developed world - a rejection that climate change is a problem, of solutions to it and of the institutions proposing them. Green rejection is strongest in the UK and Germany, where respondents were among the least engaged and optimistic about the challenge. In the US, respondents were by far the most confident and optimistic of all the developed economies surveyed.

With regard to whose responsibility it is to tackle the problem, a clear majority of all respondents across countries and age groups - 68 per cent - believe that governments should be playing the leading role, compared with NGOs, companies and individuals. However only 33 per cent felt that governments play this role today.

The launch of the HSBC Climate Confidence Index is part of HSBC's broader strategy to contribute to tackling climate change. Other initiatives include the **Global Environmental Efficiency Programme**, a US\$90m commitment to reduce its own direct environmental impacts; the **Carbon Finance Strategy**, to help clients respond to the challenges and opportunities of creating a low-carbon economy; and the **HSBC Climate Partnership**, a US\$100m programme involving four of the world's most respected environmental groups and HSBC's 315,000 employees in helping reduce the impacts of climate change worldwide. HSBC has also recently announced the appointment of **Sir Nicholas Stern** as its Special Adviser on Economic Development and Climate Change.

Media inquiries to Ophelia Quach on (852)2822 4947 or at opheliaquach@hsbc.com.hk

ends/more

Notes to editors

1. Survey report and country profile

The survey report and profiles for China and Hong Kong SAR are attached with this release. Profiles for other seven countries will be provided upon request.

2. HSBC Climate Confidence Index

In one of the biggest research projects of its kind ever undertaken, nine thousand respondents completed an internet based survey in nine countries and their answers were analysed and converted into an index indicating the level of concern. The countries surveyed were: Brazil, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong SAR, India, Mexico, UK and USA. For further information, please go to: www.hsbc.com

3. HSBC Holdings plc – www.hsbc.com

The HSBC Group is one of the largest banking and financial services organisations in the world. The Group has around 10,000 offices in 82 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa, serves over 125 million customers and has assets of US\$1,861 billion as 31 December 2006. HSBC was the first major bank – and the first FTSE 100 company – to become carbon neutral.