

Athens, 26 March 2010

Press Release

HSBC JOINS WWF'S EARTH HOUR 2010

HSBC offices in more than 50 countries will be switching off their lights this year to show support for WWF's Earth Hour.

Earth Hour is an annual campaign led by **WWF** that calls for individuals and businesses across the world to switch off their lights for one hour on Saturday March 27th at 8.30pm. **HSBC** believes that this symbolic act will help raise awareness about over-consumption of the world's resources.

This year, **HSBC** has encouraged employees to become involved in Earth Hour activities and show their personal support by signing up to the campaign at www.earthhour.org.

Simon Martin, Head of HSBC Group Corporate Sustainability commented: "HSBC will switch off lights in its offices around the world to highlight to our employees, customers and the public the continued importance of thinking about the way we consume resources. Climate change remains a clear challenge to human society, and the symbolic act of powering down our offices for an hour is a way of heightening awareness of the need for everybody to act responsibly and cohesively to manage the challenge."

Across the globe, HSBC employees are demonstrating their commitment to Earth Hour 2010. HSBC volunteers, Climate Champions, are taking the lead by encouraging fellow colleagues to join them in supporting Earth Hour and switching off their lights.

As part of the HSBC Climate Partnership, WWF is working to make the Amazon, Ganges, Thames and Yangtze - and the millions of people who depend on them - less vulnerable to climate change. Already with the support of HSBC, WWF has helped increase the number of protected areas in the central and lower Yangtze River delta covering a total area of 1.65 million hectares. The protected areas will not only help safeguard 50 threatened species, but will also provide areas of land where large floods – which are predicted to increase as a result of climate change – can be absorbed, thereby protecting the local communities.