

Video transcript

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Group Environment Manager

Aviva was the first insurer to become carbon neutral worldwide in 2006.

Since that time we have worked with our carbon brokers to procure credits from projects where Aviva has a presence or where we believe there to be a strong need for carbon finance. For example, our projects to offset our 2007 emissions are located in India and China, and we are looking to develop projects in Africa going forward.

We are also keen to work closely with suggestions and ideas from our colleagues. Aviva India put us in touch with a solar power project, which we have been able to incorporate into our offsetting commitments, and we've even been able to introduce the project provider to our carbon broker in order for further credits to be realised.

It's not only important to us to have environmental benefits from our projects but also to look at the social and, if possible, educational additionality. To highlight this we are supporting a clean stove initiative that our former CEO Richard Harvey is bringing to fruition in Kenya. This exciting project replaces the need for an unsustainable fuel for stoves in schools. It has the benefit of providing a sustainable fuel, employment and training for local tradesmen and a clean, smokeless environment for children to work in.

Offsetting is not a guilt tax for us. It is something that we believe is the right thing to do as a responsible corporate citizen. We know that we can't reduce our carbon emission use to nothing and we have to be globally conscious of the impact of our work on the environment.

We are really conscious that we are not just offsetting our emissions but focussing on reduction in carbon use. In 2007, we have achieved an excellent reduction in CO2 emissions – 10.8 per cent in our existing businesses, which is a fantastic achievement.

We have many initiatives in place to reduce our usage, which include a commitment to purchase energy from zero emission sources. Engaging our employees to switch off monitors, phone chargers and lights overnight are just a few examples. We have set a target to reduce emissions by five per cent year on year, a tough challenge but one we are enthusiastic to meet.