

Video transcript

Chairman's statement

“Our response to the widely reported threat from increased carbon emissions and rising temperatures is to become the first global insurer to become ‘carbon neutral’.”

Lord Sharman of Redlynch OBE
Chairman

Aviva's purpose is to provide prosperity and peace of mind to our customers. Sustainability, an issue of global significance to our stakeholders and to our business internationally, is central to achieving that purpose.

Our instinctive response to the widely reported threat from increased carbon emissions and rising temperatures was to step forward and take the lead as the first global insurer to become “carbon neutral”. We have six maturing projects in hand delivering the remaining carbon credits we need. They include “green” cement production in the Netherlands and Ireland; a biogas project in Sri Lanka; the mass provision of efficient wood-burning stoves in Africa; treadle pumps for irrigation in rural India and wind turbines in India and China. I'm very pleased that we have managed to find projects that not only offset our carbon output but also promote local community benefits.

External measures of our success include a global award for our innovative approach to embedding diversity across the group from the World Diversity Leadership Council, under the auspices of the United Nations Global Compact. Our pioneering approach to climate change disclosure also led to our being recognised as “best in class” by the Carbon Disclosure Project.

As a member of the Aviva board's CSR committee, I take a keen personal interest in the progress of initiatives around the group. We are determined that CSR issues should always be on the agenda, and become embedded in the organisation. I am delighted that so many of our employees demonstrate an impressive level of commitment and enthusiasm for making this part of normal business for Aviva. These are people who want to be proud of the company they work for, and who want to be part of a socially, environmentally and ethically responsible organisation.

This is not just about corporate social responsibility, it makes sound business sense. After all, if we are to offer our customers protection against some of the adverse consequences of climate change and environmental degradation, such as flooding, we want to reduce the risk of such events ever happening.

I hope that all our shareholders, business partners, customers and employees will share our sense of pride at these achievements, and support us as we look to build on those achievements in the future.

Lord Sharman of Redlynch OBE
Chairman