

## PRESS RELEASE

### **BANCA INTESA ADOPTS EQUATOR PRINCIPLES**

Milano, August 4<sup>st</sup> 2006 – Banca Intesa adopts Equator Principles, a system of guidelines that orient financial institutions in view of minimising social and environmental impact of international project finance activities.

The adoption of the principles marks a further step in the path for the definition of Banca Intesa's corporate social and environmental responsibility. This path commenced already from the 2003-2005 Business Plan which conjugated, restructuring and relaunch objectives; confirmed and strengthened by the 2005-2007 Business Plan, which places sustainable growth at the centre of activities and projects; another step in this path is the recent approval of the Code of Ethics (which expresses the values in which the Bank believes and that must orient the behaviour of those who are part of it), the Guidelines (which define the internal strategies and the projects which substantiate them), the Social and Environmental Report (which measures the consistency of facts with respect to the values and opens a new channel of dialogue with all of the Bank's stakeholders).

The approval of such instruments, together with the adoption of the initiatives promoted by the UN (Global Compact and Unep Finance Initiative), testify Banca Intesa's strong commitment to transparency and consistency in actions, fundamental levers to consolidate the trust of its stakeholders and strengthening its social reputation.

The Equator Principles, based on the environmental and social standards of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank organism which deals with private investment in Developing Countries, have to date been adopted by 36 financial institutions and cover approximately 75% of project financing worldwide. Banca Intesa recognises global, environmental and social challenges that our Country must face in pursuing sustainable growth; for this reason it is committing itself to financing projects which comply with the criteria set out by the Principles, selecting them on the basis of an assessment of their high, medium or low risk level.

Banca Intesa thus completes another phase in its sustainability programme not only in terms of future growth but also in terms of governance of Social and Environmental Responsibility, conjugating the objective of supporting the economy of the Country, of the community and of the environment with the satisfaction of all of its stakeholders.