

Mr. Nick Robins

Head, Climate Change Centre of Excellence, HSBC

Mr. Nick Robins joined HSBC in late 2007 to launch and direct its newly-established Climate Change Centre of Excellence, whose aim is to analyze and communicate the long-term commercial consequences of climate change for the HSBC Group and its clients. The strapline they use for work in this area is 'Financing Change, Changing Finance', which neatly captures the dual role of financial market participants in the face of climatic disruption and wider sustainability threats: first, to direct finance towards assets that sustain and enhance financial as well as human, social and natural capital; and second, to engage in the reshaping of capital markets themselves so that they reward sustainable choices.

Mr. Nick Robins has worked on the policy, business and financial aspects of sustainability since the late 1980s, with time spent at the Economist Intelligence Unit, the European Commission's Environmental Directorate, the Business Council for Sustainable Development, the International Institute for Environment and Development, and Henderson Global Investors, where he was head of SRI funds prior to joining HSBC.

He is particularly interested in how HSBC translate the 'soft consensus' around climate change and sustainability among investors into 'hard action'. Halving global greenhouse gas emissions by mid-century, while providing for a 50% larger world population in the context of intensifying water stress and a depleting resource base, suggests that fundamental rethinking is required of investment strategies, fiduciary duties, ownership actions and policy engagement. Here, he is interested to explore how the dynamic between voluntary initiatives (such as CDP, EAI, PRI...) and market norms/rules can become more effective.