**SUSTAINABILITY BANKING REPORT**

The Bank adopts a two-pronged approach to sustainability through:

* actions the Bank commits to take to embed sustainability into its business practices and policies and;
* actions intended to influence other stakeholders to promote sustainability.

At GMB, we understand that our business activities and operations impact on the environment and the society in which we operate. Hence, our sustainability approach has been tailored to proactively incorporate sustainability principles into our business dealings with our clients as well as our internal practices and operations. This approach has enabled us to effectively manage the environmental and social risks associated with our business interactions and internal operations.

**OUR SUSTAINABILITY GOALS**

For the financial year 2021, the Board approved the Bank’s Sustainability Goals which covered the following themes:

1. **Cut emissions**

Efforts to achieve this as approved by the Board include the following:

* Reducing our business travel emissions by 50%
* Sourcing 100% renewable energy and energy saving initiatives for our buildings
* Plan to convert of our fleet to hybrid and electric vehicles as these vehicles become more available in the country
* Engaging with our major suppliers with the goal of having two-thirds of them meeting carbon emission reduction targets
* Investing in environment sustaining market solutions for emissions we cannot eliminate

1. **Embed Sustainability**

The Bank recognizes that appropriate tone at the top, Board and Senior Management support as well as appropriate governance structure is key to the successful operationalization of the Sustainable Banking Principles. We recognize that we must align our climate policies, practices, and actions across our organization.

The Board approved the following action plans to achieve this goal:

* Designating a Board member to be responsible for sustainability initiatives across the Bank
* Prioritizing discussion of climate change on executive agendas
* Considering gender-inclusive workplace culture in the Human Capital Policy
* Embedding climate-smart considerations into decisions on office operations, real estate, and investments
* Continuing to report our annual emissions externally for transparency and accountability
* Development of Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Committee Charter to drive the implementation of the sustainable banking principles.

1. **Empower individuals: Educate and inspire staff of the Bank to act on climate change**

By engaging and educating our employees on climate change impacts—decisions about what they consume, use, and buy, we will enable our people to make positive climate choices at home and at work, and amplify these through their personal networks.

The Bank organized a training on sustainability for all employees of the Bank on the 7th of December 2021 to create awareness with regards to the Bank’s sustainability initiatives and the responsibilities of each employee. The Bank intends to have more of such sessions in the coming years.

1. **Collaborate with clients, alliance partners, NGOs, industry groups, suppliers, and others on sustainability initiatives.**

The Bank recognizes the importance of collaborating with others in driving the sustainability efforts rather than acting alone. To achieve this goal, the Board has approved a plan to ensure collaboration with clients, alliance partners, NGOs, industry groups, suppliers, and others to:

* Increase demand for responsible products and services
* Remove roadblocks that get in the way of enacting change and
* Support efforts geared at creating innovative climate solutions at a systems and operations level

**Other Sustainability Achievements in 2021**

1. **Reduction in Greenhouse Emissions**

The Bank is progressing with implementing the sustainable banking principles and currently building structures that will support the achievement of the sustainability goals, the Bank was able to reduce its environmental footprints emanating from its business operations during the year through the following actions:

* Energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions:
* As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Bank implemented the remote working arrangement during the year which led to reduction in the usage of cars and by implication, reduction in carbon emissions.
* The Bank also invested in the use of energy saving electrical appliances such as energy-efficient bulbs. The energy saving requirements are also currently being built into the Bank’s procurement process.
* **Paper reduction:** The Bank was able to cut down on paper usage and printing during the year. This was mainly driven through staff awareness, launch of the Board Effect solution for board e-papers as well as remote working.

1. **Our Employees**

We recognize our employees as our most valuable asset. Employees are key to the achievement of the Bank’s strategic initiatives as well as driving the implementation of the Bank’s sustainability efforts. During the year, the staff of the Bank were engaged in the following ways:

* **Training**: In line with its strategic objective, the Bank promotes a healthy learning culture by deploying various forms of blended learning towards improving the competencies of its workforce
* **Gender-inclusive workforce:** The Bank is an equal opportunity employer and continues to make efforts to create opportunities for women in the workplace. The Bank also strives towards achieving a gender-inclusive workplace. The Bank currently has a workforce made up of 34% female gender.
* **Health and Safety:** The Bank recognises the impact of healthy employees on its overall performance and has existing structures that support health and safety in the workplace. The Bank, through its Human Resources Policy, guides the activities of staff to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. Staff benefits from health services through registered Health Maintenance Organisations (HMOs). There are also established procedures that supports timely mitigation of risks of occupational and workplace hazards.

**Our Corporate Social Investment (CSI) Initiatives**

The Bank recognises that economic empowerment is necessary for community development. In line with the Bank’s commitment to collaborate with clients, alliance partners, NGOs, industry groups, suppliers, and others towards driving the sustainability initiatives, the Bank identified and provided financial support to the following bodies during the Year under review:

* **Federal Medical Centre, Ebute Meta** – The Bank provided financial assistance by paying the medical bills of some indigent patients admitted at the hospital during the year.
* **Warif Employment Programme –** The Bank collaborated with Warif Women Programme by providing financial support towards empowerment of women in rural areas. The program aims to empower women through vocational skills acquisition, basic financial literacy, and information on preventing and reporting gender-based violence.
* **Visit and donation to Living Fountain Orphanage -** Inspired by the sustainability initiative and as part of the 2021 end-of-the-year celebrations, employees of the Bank made voluntary donations to support the Living Fountain Orphanage at Oniru Lagos. The proceeds from the donation were used to purchase consumables for the orphaned children.

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