It is a pleasure to share with you the CEB’s Corporate Social Responsibility report for 2019. Taken together with the Global Reporting Initiative index, this report gives you an overview of how the CEB contributed to socially and environmentally sustainable development over the last year.

By virtue of its exclusively social mandate, the CEB has been and remains firmly committed to all aspects of social responsibility, including sustainability in the broad sense of the word but also transparency, accountability, and good governance, in line with the highest international standards and practices. In addition to the dedicated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) unit and the Office of the Chief Compliance Officer, all CEB directorates engage with CSR-related matters and coordinate with each other in that respect.

In the course of 2019, we continued to finance projects with a high social content across Europe and actually increased disbursements to € 2.8 billion while maintaining a high level of new loan approvals at € 4 billion. Our third Social Inclusion Bond issued in 2019 attracted significant interest from the international investor community, as had been the case in the two previous years. Supporting Europe’s most vulnerable population groups and strengthening social cohesion remain at the heart of our activity and mission.

Environmental concerns have always been part of our project selection and monitoring criteria but since last year they have taken centre stage in our strategic framework and planning, operations, and internal business activities. The CEB Development Plan 2020-2022 places additional emphasis on environmental sustainability as well as on how to support in the most effective way possible CEB members in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In its Environmental Statement released in 2019, the CEB made a firm commitment to enhancing further its environmental performance in internal business operations with a focus on minimising its carbon footprint through targeted action.

With all this in mind, it is heartening to see that our efforts continue to be recognised, which is reflected in our sustainability reviews and ratings: the CEB has been awarded a ‘prime’ status by ISS ESG and has been rated ‘leader’ by MSCI ESG and ‘outperformer’ by Sustainalytics.

This can only strengthen further our resolve to be not just the social development bank in Europe but also a socially responsible bank.

Paris, 2 March 2020
Rolf WENZEL