



Swiss Re appeals to city companies to clean up

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London, 14 May 2003 – Global reinsurer Swiss Re is today calling for London-based companies to follow its lead in helping to remove 1,000 tonnes of litter from the capital's river. Led by Ruurd de Fluiter, Swiss Re UK's Chief Executive Officer, a group of employees has temporarily traded-in the office for the riverbank to help environment group, Thames21, clear debris from the River Thames foreshore.

While research shows that the River Thames is cleaner now than it has been for 130 years, at least 1,000 tonnes of rubbish - the equivalent weight of 680 saloon cars - is still removed from the tidal Thames each year.

The charity warns that much more is washed out to sea, where it contributes to the global problem of marine debris pollution, responsible for killing wildlife throughout the world.

Mark Lloyd, director, Thames21, said: "If every Londoner threw one piece of litter into the Thames, it could very quickly become a global crisis - a simple crisp bag or bottle can be carried for miles into the open ocean by the tidal currents, with devastating effects. It's now time for London to take responsibility and help resolve this ongoing problem.

"Support from companies such as Swiss Re brings us one step closer to creating a waterway web in the capital which Londoners can be proud of and which is safe on a local and global level."

Swiss Re has adopted two stretches of the Thames riverbank through the Thames21 'Adopt-a-river' scheme and will carry out a number of clean-up sessions throughout the year.

Ruurd de Fluiter said: "Swiss Re is committed to raising awareness of issues surrounding water management, and climate change and sustainability. Our support of Thames21 is just one of the many water-related initiatives which form part of our good citizenship programme - 'Sharing Solutions'.

"It's essential that industries and individuals alike are aware of the local and global consequences of throwing waste into the Thames. We ask for our contemporaries based in London to follow our lead and volunteer their time to help clean the river for everyone to enjoy."

Notes to editors

Swiss Re

Swiss Re is a leading reinsurer and the world's largest life and health reinsurer. The company is global, operating from 70 offices in 30 countries. Since its foundation in 1863, Swiss Re has been in the reinsurance business. Swiss Re has three business groups: Property & Casualty, Life & Health and Financial Services. Swiss Re offers a wide range of traditional reinsurance products and related services, which are complemented by insurance-based corporate finance solutions and supplementary services. Swiss Re is rated "AA+" by Standard & Poor's, "Aa1" by Moody's and "A++" by A.M. Best.

Thames 21

Thames 21 is a joint initiative between ENCAMS (previously Tidy Britain Group), the Port of London Authority (PLA), the Environment Agency, British Waterways, Thames Water and the Corporation of London, to address poor local environmental quality on the Thames, its tributaries and the canals throughout London.

A further water initiative in conjunction with Swiss Re:

Museum of London

In 2002, Swiss Re sponsored the Working Water Exhibition at the Museum of London involving the reconstruction of a Roman water-lifting machine. The remains of two water-lifting machines were excavated in the city of London in 2001 and are believed to have supplied 114,000 litres of water every 16 hours. The machines provide an early example of a sustainable water management system.