



2

Letter
from the Chairman

The World Commission on the Environment stated that "Sustainability is the ability of mankind to meet our present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs" (Our common future, 1987). We could say that it is a question of guaranteeing a better quality of life for everyone, both now and for the generations to come.

It consists of improving quality of life through the integration of three factors, all interdependent: economic development, protection of the environment and social responsibility.

We are witnessing the disappearance of the Baconian paradigm, accepted until the late twentieth century and which somewhat ingenuously took for granted that there was a natural link between scientific and human progress. We have since learnt that scientific advancement is neither a necessary nor direct synonym of well-being for all.

We have also learnt that human beings need more than what mere market play alone can provide. We are witnessing a new era of social mobility, rejecting the causes of the unfair exclusion of others from the benefits of this market. Sooner or later, the businesses themselves will have to collaborate towards the disappearance of these causes and assume a model of sustainable development together with the community. The number of citizens who are concerned with the environment is growing; these are people able to foresee the long-term consequences of their behaviour and willing to act consistently. These are citizens who give their opinions and who assess and grant legitimacy to business behaviour, going beyond strict legal compliance. These citizens are not asking for greater power; they are asking for those who hold the power to do so responsibly.

In Eroski's history, the vision of sustainable development formed an essential part of the company's founding values, exceeding the fulfilment of environmental regulations, legal requirements for staff management and the mere implementation of cleaner production concepts.

The Eroski Group is run on a peer-to-peer structural basis, an outstanding juridical and business organisation which embodies our values of social responsibility and marks our philosophy and identity. This is an organisation run by everyone for everyone, in which 12,298 workers are owners and key figures and a further 493,986 consumer members participate in education and information activities geared towards developing a healthy, environmentally friendly and solidarity-orientated lifestyle.

Our company has a peer-to-peer system of government with both workers and consumers on its Administration Council, to enable a combination of the sensitivities of both and bring the Group's strategy closer to the needs and expectations of society. Our vocation for attending and defending the consumers' rights and interests reaffirms our commitment to offering reliable products and services, practising solidarity with the community and being concerned with the environment.

In this Sustainability Report, we assess our goals over the last three years and quantify our progress over this period, with the introduction of continuous improvement dynamics to the indicators of consumer vocation, our contribution to the development of the community and our commitment to the environment.

This Report has been drawn up in conformity with the 2002 Global Reporting Initiative Guide, and it is a balanced, reasonable presentation of the economic, environmental and social activity of our organisation.

Fortunately we are not alone on the path of sustainable development. We are accompanied by numerous businesses and social and citizens' groups who have a global vision of human activity, and incorporate these values to their vision and behaviour.



Constan Dacosta

