

The ESG Report

ESG's impact on the fund industry

Sustainable Investment Monitor



The ESG Report launches its Sustainable Investment Monitor in this issue with analysis of leading Australian, Canadian and UK pension fund allocations to the four main sustainable sectors, along with examples of specific schemes that they are investing in.

Next month we will add the Netherlands, the Nordic region and the US. And in December we will have completed our first review of the allocations of the world's largest 500 pension funds to the main sustainable investment areas. From that point onwards our tracking service will come into operation. It will record how asset owners' allocations are changing: we will have data on which sustainable sectors are growing fastest, and slowest, in popularity with pension funds.

Up until now data on institutional allocations to sustainable investment sectors has been scarce to non-existent. Whilst there is some sketchy information on the overall ESG allocations by pension funds to ESG, as a whole, there is little data on the individual sectors where investors are allocating to.

Continued on page 7 >>

Time to bury ESG?



It doubtless made sense to club environmental, social and governance causes together when Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, did it back in 2004. But it no longer makes sense now.

The reasons for making a sustainable investment allocation have next to nothing to do with investing in, say, social housing or any of the other areas that come under the 'S' pillar. Nor has it got anything to do with investing in companies with good governance practices. Put another way, allocating to schemes intended to meet investment objectives under the 'S' and 'G' pillars – commendable as they might very well be – makes no difference whatsoever to the environment, or vice versa.

Clubbing environmental, social and governance causes together - as it is currently done – makes it much more difficult to determine where investors allocations are actually going to.

Continues on page 16 >>

In this issue

Features

- 1 Sustainable Investment Monitor
- 1 Time to bury ESG?
- 7 Sustainable Investment Monitor
Story continued from front page
- 13 Crypto and ESG
- 16 Time to bury ESG?
Story continued from front page

News

- 2 Event: The future of the international fund centres
- 3 Research on service providers' ESG capabilities
- 3 SIS expanded to include ESG functionality
- 4 Emission reduction investing report
- 4 Positive ESG flow data
- 6 BlackRock attacked in Louisiana

Listings

- 19 AIFMD service providers
AIFMD related Company listings
- 20 Domicile service provider listing
Company listings by Domicile

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