

EIRIS News Release

UK ethical investment hits record £11.3Bn high

6 October 2011. Figures released today by EIRIS, the non-profit sustainable investment research firm, show that the amount of money invested in Britain's green and ethical retail funds (i.e. those funds open to the general public) has reached a record high of £11.3Bn.

Launched in the run up to the UK's third National Ethical Investment Week (16 -22 October 2011), the latest figure of £11.3 billion* represents over three quarters of a million investors in green and ethical funds, up from around 250,000 investors in 2001 when £4 billion was invested ethically in the UK. Statistics from the Investment Management Association show that gross retail sales into UK Ethical funds were up by 25% in quarter two of 2011 compared with the same quarter in 2010.

Growing demand

Increased interest in ethical finance is backed up by the findings of EIRIS' latest Ipsos MORI national consumer survey which explores consumer attitudes to ethical finance in Great Britain. The poll surveyed 1,030 adults and finds that 38% of the British public with a financial product or service are interested in green or ethical financial products and services with more women than men (41% versus 34%) expressing an interest. Of those interested, 90% said they would be likely to switch to a different provider if it offered green or ethical investment products.

The poll also explores the extent to which consumers feel that many of the sustainability themes which green and ethical investment funds seek to address will impact upon the global economy. When asked 'What impact, if any, do you think each of the following will have on the global economy in the next 10 years':

- 61% of respondents said natural resource scarcity will have a negative impact on the global economy;
- 59% said growing population will have a negative impact;
- 57% said availability of global food supplies will have a negative impact;
- 56% said environmental damage will have a negative impact;
- 56% said ageing population will have a negative impact;

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- 52% said water scarcity will have a negative impact;
- 49% said climate change will have a negative impact, and
- 46% said reduction in biodiversity will have a negative impact on the global economy.

Viva la difference?

Last week EIRIS also ran a national opinion poll survey with Ipsos MORI to mark National Ethical Investment Week in France. The survey found that 60% of the French public said they attach either 'great importance' or 'some importance' to incorporating environmental, social and ethical issues when selecting financial products. Click [here](#) for further details.

"We've seen a huge increase in the amount of money being invested ethically and this has gone hand-in-hand with the interest in ethical consumerism in general" said Mark Robertson, Head of Communications at EIRIS and editor of YourEthicalMoney.org. "Our survey shows that expectations around ethical finance are evolving. The public now agree that big issues like climate change, dwindling natural resources and population growth will have a negative impact on the global economy".

"Since the credit-crunch, people are better informed about the impacts that their spending and investments can have, both positive and negative, and more of us are turning to ethical investment which takes a longer-term approach. By avoiding companies with a negative impact, or focusing investment on those providing positive products and services tackling key sustainability challenges, green and ethical funds offer the opportunity to both make money whilst tackling global problems" added Mr Robertson.

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Notes to editors:

1. The £11.3Bn figure is an estimate based on total assets under management data collected from 83 UK domiciled green and ethical retail funds between 30 June 2011- August 2011. As at 31 December 2010 EIRIS data shows that there was around £10.9 Bn invested in UK domiciled green and ethical retail funds.

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2. The National Online Consumer Survey was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of non-profit research organisation EIRIS, to gauge consumer attitudes to green and ethical finance among British consumers; A sample of 1,037 British adults aged between 16 and 64 years responded to the online survey, across England, Scotland and Wales. Amongst the original sample, a first filter was applied to survey only those holding at least one financial product or service, resulting in a final sample of 975 respondents. Fieldwork was conducted using an online method, and took place between 1st October - 3rd October 2011. Data have been weighted to known population figures for Great Britain.
3. National Ethical Investment Week (www.neiw.org) is a national campaign which runs from 16 - 22 October and aims to ensure everyone knows that they have green and ethical options when it comes to their financial decisions. The campaign highlights how green and ethical investments allow investors to have a positive impact on the environment and society, while still making as good a return as with other investments. NEIW brings together Advisers, Charities and Trusts, Financial Organisations, Faith Groups, NGOS and Community Groups to raise awareness of green and ethical investing.
4. www.YourEthicalMoney.org provides comprehensive resources addressing green and ethical concerns related to all major areas of finance including banking, investments, pensions, insurance and credit cards. Users can search for their bank or building society, as well as their insurance, credit card or mortgage provider, to find out how it measures up against a set of specially developed green and ethical criteria. Users can also search for investment products, including ISAs and funds that match their green and ethical concerns or learn about how their pension scheme invests. The site also features a section dedicated to student finance and guides on financial exclusion and greenwash in financial product marketing.
5. EIRIS is a leading global provider of independent research into the social, environmental governance and ethical performance of companies. EIRIS, a UK-based organisation with offices in the US and France together with its international research partners, has a wealth of experience in the field of responsible investment research. EIRIS provides comprehensive research on around 3,000 companies in Europe, North America and the Asia Pacific region. EIRIS is already retained by 100 institutional clients including pension and retail fund managers, banks, private client brokers, charities and religious institutions across Europe, North America, Australia and Asia. EIRIS has developed a comprehensive suite of products to help investors assess their portfolios and design investment strategies in response to the challenge of a carbon-constrained economy. For more information visit www.eiris.org or email: info@eiris.org.

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