

## **UK ethical investment hits record high of £9.5 billion**

**Figures released today by EIRIS, the London based non-profit sustainable investment specialists, show that as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009 the amount of money invested in Britain's green and ethical retail funds (i.e. those funds open to the general public) reached £9.5 billion.**

The £9.5 billion represents approximately three quarters of a million investors in ethical funds, up from around 200,000 investors in 1999 when around £2.4 billion was invested ethically in the UK.

The last ten years has also seen the universe of UK ethical retail funds expand considerably. There are now almost 100 green and ethical funds available to UK investors - a decade ago there were just a couple of dozen.

Growing consumer interest in ethical finance is backed up by the findings of EIRIS' recent Ipsos/MORI survey national consumer which explored post credit-crunch attitudes to ethical finance and found that 44% of the British public are interested in finding out about the ethical credentials of the next financial product or service that they buy. Three-quarters of those interested also said they are likely to take this into consideration when next buying a financial product or service.

Mark Robertson, EIRIS spokesperson said '2010 is a critical year for rebuilding public trust in UK financial institutions. It's clear that increasing numbers of consumers are turning to those financial institutions which offer financial products that make money whilst making a positive difference to the world'.

'The world is changing fast and many of the issues targeted by green and ethical investment funds such as the need to tackle ageing populations, reduce levels of obesity, address the global power shortage, tackle water scarcity and climate change are creating attractive business opportunities, which in turn are creating great investment opportunities which consumers can take advantage of' he continued.

Growing consumer interest in issues like climate change, human rights, fairtrade and poverty is set to drive demand for green and ethical investment which will be further boosted by the recent launch of the UK's first ever consumer website dedicated to ethical finance, [YourEthicalMoney.org](http://YourEthicalMoney.org). This independent, non-profit website provides free advice to help anyone wanting to learn about how and where their money is invested, search for green and ethical financial products, or find out how they can help make finance more sustainable.

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### **Notes to Editors**

1. Since 1989 EIRIS has produced statistics which track the year on year growth in funds under management in UK domiciled green and ethical funds. See [www.eiris.org/news/statistics.html](http://www.eiris.org/news/statistics.html). The £9.5 billion figure quoted is based on an analysis of around 94 green and ethical funds and is correct as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009. The figure may not reflect recent changes in stock markets which have taken place since 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009 which may have caused the overall total for funds under management in UK green and ethical retail funds to rise or fall accordingly.
2. [www.YourEthicalMoney.org](http://www.YourEthicalMoney.org) has been set up to empower consumers to make green and ethical product choices that can help build a more sustainable financial future. This entirely free-to-use new site 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; learn about how their pension scheme invests or find an ethical child trust fund for their kids. The site features a section dedicated to student finance and guides on financial exclusion and greenwash in financial product marketing. It offers practical resources including 'Next Steps' guides and letter templates to consumers who want to give their finances an ethical makeover, as well as take-away resources on all the core areas covered by the site.
3. EIRIS' [National Online Consumer Survey](#) was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of EIRIS, to gauge current interest in green and ethical finance among British consumers; explore post credit-crunch attitudes to ethical finance; and identify current barriers to investing. A sample of 1,037 British adults aged between 16 and 64 years responded to the survey, across England, Scotland and Wales. Fieldwork was conducted using an online method, and took place between 30<sup>th</sup> October 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009. Data have been weighted to the known population of Great Britain.
4. EIRIS [www.EIRIS.org](http://www.EIRIS.org) is a leading global provider of independent research into the environmental, social, governance (ESG) and ethical performance of companies. An independent, not-for-profit organisation, we work to help our clients develop the market in ways that benefit investors, asset managers and the wider world. Our mission is to empower responsible investors with independent assessments of companies and advice on integrating them with investment decisions. EIRIS now provides responsible investment services to more than 100 asset owners, asset managers, banks, stock brokers and governments around the world - as well as major index providers. We have over 25 years experience of promoting responsible investment and helping consumers, charities and advisers invest responsibly.

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