

Sustainable investment means an investment in an economic activity that contributes to an environmental or social objective, provided that the investment does not significantly harm any environmental or social objective and that the investee companies follow good governance practices.

The **EU Taxonomy** is a classification system laid down in Regulation (EU) 2020/852, establishing a list of **environmentally sustainable economic activities**. That Regulation does not include a list of socially sustainable economic activities. Sustainable investments with an environmental objective might be aligned with the Taxonomy or not.

Product name: **Total Return Credit Fund**

Legal entity identifier **549300O80EVHVV2VU007**

Environmental and/or social characteristics

Does this financial product have a sustainable investment objective?

Yes

It made **sustainable investments with an environmental objective**: %

in economic activities that qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy

in economic activities that do not qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy

It made **sustainable investments with a social objective**: %

No

It promoted **Environmental/Social (E/S) characteristics** and while it did not have as its objective a sustainable investment, it had a proportion of 27.54% of sustainable investments

with an environmental objective in economic activities that qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy

with an environmental objective in economic activities that do not qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy

with a social objective

It promoted E/S characteristics, but **did not make any sustainable investments**

To what extent were the environmental and/or social characteristics promoted by this financial product met?

To promote the environmental and social characteristics, the Fund applied ESG assessment criteria, ESG screening criteria and promoted good governance including social factors.

The portfolio is underpinned by our well-established active management approach of security selection tailored to the overall environment, which combines fundamental and environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations into our individual name, sector and top-down portfolio construction decisions. An assessment of a company's sustainability is supported by proprietary company rating models and a deeply embedded ESG framework utilising on-desk Fixed Income and central ESG resources.

The Fund:

- Excluded companies with poor ESG business practices. This is achieved through a set of exclusions,

which identify controversial business activities and ESG laggards i.e. companies rated poorly based on their management of ESG risks within their business.

- Engaged with companies to gather a forward-looking insight into management of ESG risks, opportunities and actively influence the management of these factors in line with best practice standards.
- Targeted a lower carbon intensity than the benchmark.

The Fund seeks to:

- Generate consistent risk-adjusted outperformance using our active management approach of stock selection tailored to the overall environment.
- Benefit from our active engagement with companies, where we encourage positive changes in corporate behaviour.
- Construct a portfolio that invests in companies with strong Environmental, Social and Governance practices.
- Leverage the support and insights of our large, dedicated Fixed Income team and embedded ESG specialists' resources.

We also applied an ESG Risk Rating of Low, Medium, High (Low is better) to each issuer. This is credit profile-specific and represents how impactful we believe ESG risks are likely to be to the credit quality of the issuer now and in the future. The key areas of focus are the materiality of the inherent Environmental and Social risks of the sector of operation (e.g. extraction, water usage, cyber security) and how specific companies manage these risks, combined with the quality and sustainability of their corporate governance. This materiality assessment is combined with a judgement on the timeframe over which these ESG risks may have an impact. Our analysts utilise an ESG Risk Rating Framework to support making these assessments. This is a proprietary tool designed to help focus the knowledge and expertise of credit analysts in a systematic way to substantiate the overall ESG Risk Rating (Low/Medium/High) assigned to debt issuers.

Additionally, our proprietary ESG House Score, developed by our central ESG investment team in collaboration with the Quantitative investment team, was used to identify companies with potentially high or poorly managed ESG risks. The score is calculated by combining a variety of data inputs within a proprietary framework in which different ESG factors are weighted according to how material they are for each sector. This allows us to see how companies rank in a global context.

To complement this, we also utilise our active stewardship and engagement activities.

This Fund did not refer to a benchmark index for portfolio construction. However, the reference benchmark could be used as a comparator for Fund performance and as a comparison for the Fund's binding commitments.

Sustainability indicators measure how the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product are attained.

● **How did the sustainability indicators perform?**

ESG Assessment Criteria: We apply an ESG Risk Rating of Low, Medium, High (Low is better) to each issuer. This is credit profile-specific and represents how impactful we believe ESG risks are likely to be to the credit quality of the issuer now and in the future. There are 2 high risk issuers held in the fund, 1 of the issuer is not high risk due to governance issues therefore, since all pass the good governance check, the fund is able to invest in these. But, the high risk rating prevents the names being considered as a sustainable investment. We continue to review the position and engage where practical, however, we are in general holding these names as they are high conviction positions and ensure the fund can continue to meet its broader financial objectives. The other issuer is a Russian name we are unable to trade due to sanctions so cannot exit the position.

ESG screening criteria: We confirm that during the reporting period, binary exclusions were applied to exclude the particular areas of investment related to UN Global Compact, Controversial Weapons, Tobacco Manufacturing and Thermal Coal. These screening criteria apply in a binding manner and there are no holdings in the fund that fail the agreed criteria.

Our proprietary ESG House Score, developed by our central sustainability team in collaboration with the Quantitative investment team, is used to identify companies with potentially high or poorly managed ESG risks. The score is calculated by combining a variety of data inputs within a proprietary framework in which different ESG factors are weighted according to how material they are for each sector.

We confirm that during the reporting period the Fund excluded companies with the highest ESG risks, as identified by the ESG House Score. This is implemented by excluding the bottom 5% of issuers with an ESG House Score that are in the benchmark.

Carbon intensity: We confirm that during the reporting period the portfolio carbon intensity was lower than the benchmark, in line with our overall commitment. As at year-end, the fund's weighted average carbon intensity (Scope 1 and 2) relative to the benchmark was 45.54%.

Good governance: We confirm that during the reporting period the Fund focused engagement and analysis on governance and that we avoided those companies with the worst governance practices.

● ***...and compared to previous periods?***

ESG Assessment Criteria: At the end of the previous year, 3 ESG high risk issuers were held in the fund. None of these were high risk due to governance issues. Therefore, since all pass the good governance check, the fund was able to invest in these.

ESG screening criteria: We confirm that during the previous period, binary exclusions were applied to exclude the particular areas of investment related to UN Global Compact, Controversial Weapons, Tobacco Manufacturing and Thermal Coal. These screening criteria apply in a binding manner and there were no holdings in the fund that fail the agreed criteria in the previous period.

During the previous reporting period the Fund excluded companies with the highest ESG risks, as identified by the ESG House Score. This is implemented by excluding the bottom 5% of issuers with an ESG House Score that are in the benchmark.

Carbon intensity: As at year-end, the fund's weighted average carbon intensity (Scope 1 and 2) relative to the benchmark was 46.8%.

Good governance: We confirm that during the reporting period the Fund focused engagement and analysis on governance and that we avoided those companies with the worst governance practices.

● ***What were the objectives of the sustainable investments that the financial product partially made and how did the sustainable investment contribute to such objectives?***

(1) The Fund's sustainable investments will contribute to either environmental or social objectives, or both. Where the objective relates to the environment, the investment will contribute to at least one of the following objectives: climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, the sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources, the transition to a circular economy, pollution prevention and control, and the protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems. Where the objective relates to social matters, the investment will contribute to social objectives in line with one of the Sustainable Development Goals. [The objectives of the sustainable investments may vary from time to time depending on the specific activity or investment. No specific environmental or social objective is being targeted, from those listed above.]

(2) Sustainable Investment Methodology

The objective of the sustainable investment is to make a contribution to solving an environmental or social challenge, in addition to not causing significant harm, and being well governed. Each sustainable investment may make a contribution to Environmental or Social issues. In fact, many companies will make a positive contribution to both. We use the six environmental objectives of the Taxonomy to inform Environmental contributions, including:

(1) climate change mitigation, (2) climate change adaptation, (3) sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources, (4) transition to a circular economy, (5) pollution prevention and control, and (6) protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems. In addition, abrdn use the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their sub-goals to supplement the EU Taxonomy topics and provide a framework for considering Social objectives

An economic activity must have a positive economic contribution to qualify as a Sustainable investment, this includes consideration of Environmental or Socially aligned revenues, Capex, Opex or sustainable operations. abrdn seek to establish or estimate the share of the investee company's economic activities/contribution towards a sustainable objective and it is this element that is weighted and counted towards the Sub-fund's total aggregated proportion of Sustainable Investments.

abrdn uses a combination of the following approaches: i. a quantitative methodology based on a combination of publicly available data sources; and ii. using abrdn's own insight and engagement outcomes abrdn overlay the quantitative methodology with a qualitative assessment to calculate an overall percentage of economic contribution towards a sustainable objective for each holding in a Fund.

Principal adverse impacts are the most significant negative impacts of investment decisions on sustainability factors relating to environmental, social and employee matters, respect for human rights, anti- corruption and anti- bribery matters.

● ***How did the sustainable investments that the financial product partially made not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective?***

As required by the SFDR Delegated Regulation, the investment does not cause Significant Harm ("Do No Significant Harm"/ "DNSH") to any of the sustainable investment objectives. abrdn have created a 3-step process to ensure consideration of DNSH:

i. Sector Exclusions

abrdn have identified a number of sectors which automatically do not qualify for inclusion as a Sustainable Investment as they are considered to be causing significant harm. These include but are not limited to: (1) Defence, (2) Coal, (3) Oil & Gas Exploration, Production and associate activities, (4) tobacco, (5) gambling and (6) alcohol.

ii. DNSH Binary Test

The DNSH test, is a binary pass/fail test which signals if the company passes or fails criteria for the SFDR Article 2 (17) "do no significant harm". Pass indicates under abrdn's methodology the company has no ties to controversial weapons, less than 1% of revenue from thermal coal, less than 5% of revenue from tobacco related activities, is not a tobacco producer, and has no red/severe ESG Controversies. If the company fails this test, it cannot be considered a Sustainable Investment. Abrdn's approach is aligned with the SFDR PAIs included within tables 1, 2 & 3 of the SFDR Delegated Regulation and is based on external data sources and abrdn internal insights.

iii. DNSH Materiality Flag

Using a number of additional screens and flags, abrdn consider the additional SFDR PAI's indicators as defined by the SFDR Delegated Regulation to identify areas for improvement or potential future concern. These indicators are not considered to cause significant harm and therefore a company with active DNSH materiality flags may still be considered to be a Sustainable Investment. abrdn aim to enhance the engagement activities to focus on these areas and seek to deliver better outcomes by resolving the issue.

— ***How were the indicators for adverse impacts on sustainability factors taken into account?***

The fund considers Principle Adverse Impact Indicators defined by the SFDR Delegated Regulation.

Pre investment, abrdn applies a number of norms and activity-based screens related to PAIs, including but not limited to: UN Global Compact, controversial weapons, and thermal coal extraction.

UNGC: The Fund uses norms-based screens and controversy filters to exclude companies that may be in breach of international norms described in the OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises and the UN guiding principles on business and human rights, as well as state owned entities in countries which violate norms.

Controversial Weapons: The Fund excludes companies with business activities related to controversial weapons (cluster munitions, anti-personnel landmines, nuclear weapons, chemical and biological weapons, white phosphorus, non-detectable fragments, incendiary devices, depleted uranium ammunition or blinding lasers).

Thermal Coal Extraction: The Fund excludes companies with exposure to the fossil fuels sector based on percentage of revenue from thermal coal extraction.

abrtn apply a fund specific set of company exclusions, more detail on these and the overall process is captured within the Investment Approach, which is published at www.abrtn.com under "Fund Centre".

Post-investment the following PAI indicators are considered:

- o abrtn monitors all mandatory and additional PAI indicators via our ESG integration investment process using a combination of our proprietary house score and 3rd party data feeds. PAI indicators that either fail a specific binary test or are considered above typical are flagged for review and may be selected for company engagement.

- o Consideration of portfolio carbon intensity and GHG emissions via our Climate tools and risk analysis

- o Governance indicators via our proprietary governance scores and risk framework, including consideration of sound management structures, employee relations, remuneration of staff and tax compliance

- o On an on-going basis the investment universe is scanned for companies that may be in breach of international norms described in the OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises and the UN guiding principles on business and human rights, as well as state owned entities in countries which violate norms.

Were sustainable investments aligned with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights? Details:

Yes, all sustainable investments are aligned with OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights. Breaches and violations of these international norms are flagged by an event-driven controversy and are captured in the investment process, and in turn excluded from consideration as a sustainable investment.

The EU Taxonomy sets out a “do not significant harm” principle by which Taxonomy-aligned investments should not significantly harm EU Taxonomy objectives and is accompanied by specific Union criteria.

The “do no significant harm” principle applies only to those investments underlying the financial product that take into account the EU criteria for environmentally sustainable economic activities. The investments underlying the remaining portion of this financial product do not take into account the EU criteria for environmentally sustainable economic activities.

Any other sustainable investments must also not significantly harm any environmental or social objectives.



How did this financial product consider principal adverse impacts on sustainability factors?

(1) GHG Emissions Scope 1 & 2 and carbon footprint: This is undertaken via monitoring of the carbon benchmark and we confirm that during the reporting period that the portfolio performed better than the benchmark and in line with our overall commitment.

(2) Exclusions: We confirm that screening in line with our approach documents has been undertaken during the reporting period



What were the top investments of this financial product?

The list includes the investments constituting the **greatest proportion of investments** of the financial product during the reference period which is:
- - 31/12/2023

Largest Investments	Sector	% Assets	Country
WORKSPACE GROUP PLC 2.25% 03/11/2028	Real Estate	1.37	United Kingdom
TIME WARNER CABLE LLC 7.3% 07/01/2038	Communications	1.37	United States of America
LLOYDS BANKING GROUP PLC 2.707% 12/03/2035	Financials	1.28	United Kingdom
ALTICE FRANCE SA 5.875% 02/01/2027	Communications	1.19	France
PNERA 1 B 1.75% 05/22/2030	Unclassified	1.10	Italy
VICI PROPERTIES LP 4.75% 02/15/2028	Financials	1.10	United States of America
BANCO SANTANDER SA 2.25% 10/04/2032	Financials	1.10	Spain
HCA INC 7.5% 11/15/2095	Health Care	1.09	United States of America
CULLINAN HOLDCO 4.625% 10/15/2026	Energy	1.07	Luxembourg
ENCORE CAPITAL GROUP INC 5.375% 02/15/2026	Financials	1.07	United States of America
MYLAN INC 5.4% 11/29/2043	Health Care	1.06	United States of America
ATHORA NETHERLANDS 7%	Financials	1.05	Netherlands
POST HOLDINGS INC 5.5% 12/15/2029	Consumer Staples	1.04	United States of America
TAURS 2021-DE3 D 3.4% 12/22/2030	Unclassified	1.02	Ireland
ADVANCED DRAINAGE SYSTEM 6.375% 06/15/2030	Materials	1.00	United States of America

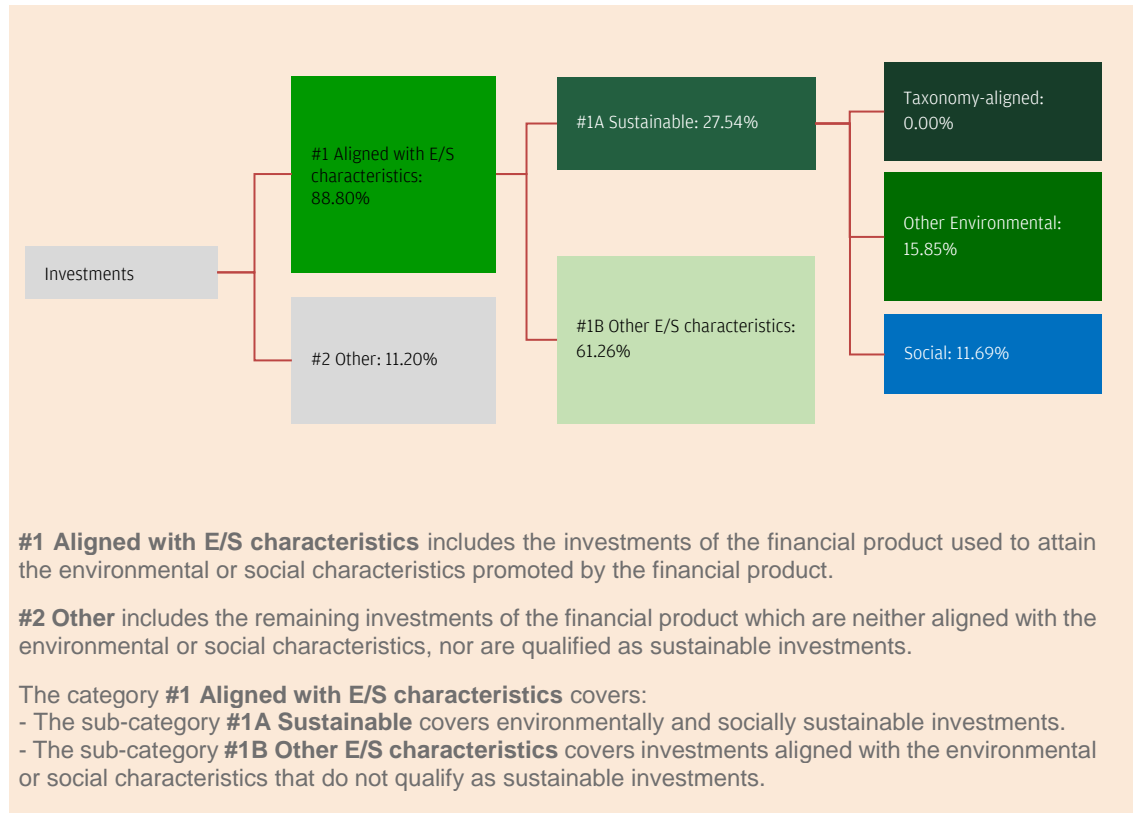


What was the proportion of sustainability-related investments?

Asset allocation describes the share of investments in specific assets.

● **What was the asset allocation?**

The fund committed to hold a minimum of 70% of the Fund's assets aligned with E/S characteristics. Environmental and social safeguards were met by applying certain PAI's, where relevant, to these underlying assets. The Fund invested a maximum of 30% of assets in the "Other" category, which include cash, money market instruments and derivatives.



● **In which economic sectors were the investments made?**

Sector	Sub-sector	% Assets
Consumer Discretionary	Consumer Discretionary Products	1.56
Consumer Discretionary	Automobiles Manufacturing	1.57
Consumer Discretionary	Consumer Services	1.11
Consumer Discretionary	Consumer Discretionary Services	0.47
Consumer Discretionary	Travel & Lodging	0.30
Consumer Discretionary	Retail - Consumer Discretionary	1.00
Consumer Discretionary	Home Improvement	0.94
Consumer Discretionary	Homebuilders	0.63
Consumer Discretionary	Auto Parts Manufacturing	1.03
Consumer Discretionary	Retail & Whsle - Discretionary	0.91
Consumer Discretionary	Department Stores	0.71
Financials	Financial Services	3.19
Financials	Real Estate	2.96
Financials	Insurance	0.93
Financials	Banking	15.42
Financials	Banks	1.52
Financials	Life Insurance	2.01
Real Estate	Real Estate	1.87
Industrials	Industrial Other	1.85
Industrials	Industrial Products	2.31
Industrials	Industrial Services	0.95

Utilities	Utilities	3.26
Materials	Chemicals	0.51
Materials	Construction Materials Manufacturing	0.62
Materials	Materials	2.51
Materials	Forest & Paper Products Manufacturing	0.89
Materials	Containers & Packaging	1.44
Health Care	Health Care	1.12
Health Care	Health Care Facilities & Services	2.57
Health Care	Pharmaceuticals	2.51
Health Care	Biotechnology	1.44
Communications	Telecommunications	2.12
Communications	Wireline Telecommunications Services	1.31
Communications	Media	0.32
Communications	Wireless Telecommunications Services	2.03
Communications	Entertainment Content	1.73
Communications	Cable & Satellite	2.99
Technology	Software & Tech Services	0.69
Technology	Software & Services	1.17
Technology	Tech Hardware & Semiconductors	0.18
Technology	Hardware	0.13
Consumer Staples	Consumer Staple Products	1.90
Consumer Staples	Food & Beverage	0.48
Consumer Staples	Supermarkets & Pharmacies	0.94
Energy	Oil & Gas	2.17
Energy	Integrated Oils	0.77
Energy	Renewable Energy	1.07
Energy	Pipeline	0.63
Government	Sovereigns	1.04

Enabling activities directly enable other activities to make a substantial contribution to an environmental objective.

Transitional activities are economic activities for which low-carbon alternatives are not yet available and that have greenhouse gas emission levels corresponding to the best performance.



To what extent were the sustainable investments with an environmental objective aligned with the EU Taxonomy?

The fund holds 0% sustainable investments with an environmental objective aligned with the EU Taxonomy. This assessment has not been subject to an external review.

These sustainable investments will not be EU Taxonomy aligned as the environmental objective does not have associated technical standards for comparison and relevant data is not available to confirm alignment

Yes

In fossil gas

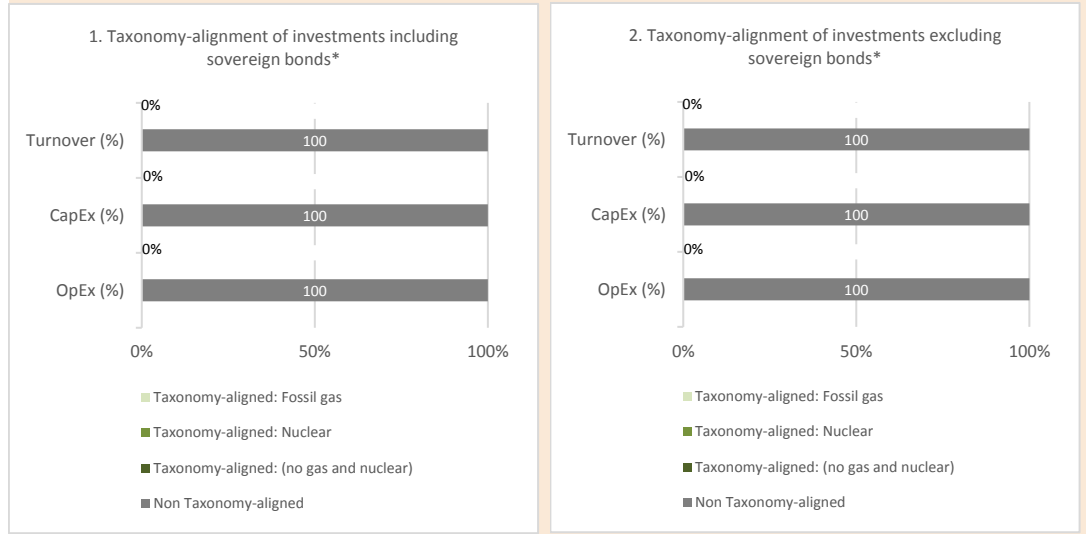
In nuclear energy

No

Taxonomy-aligned activities are expressed as a share of:

- **turnover** reflecting the share of revenue from green activities of investee companies.
- **capital expenditure (Capex)** showing the green investments made by investee companies, e.g. for a transition to a green economy.
- **operational expenditure (Opex)** reflecting green operational activities of investee companies.

The graphs below show in green the percentage of investments that were aligned with the EU Taxonomy. As there is no appropriate methodology to determine the taxonomy-alignment of sovereign bonds*, the first graph shows the Taxonomy alignment in relation to all the investments of the financial product including sovereign bonds, while the second graph shows the Taxonomy alignment only in relation to the investments of the financial product other than sovereign bonds.



This graph represents 0 % of the total investment.

*For the purpose of these graphs, 'sovereign bonds' consist of all sovereign exposures

● **What was the share of investments made in transitional and enabling activities?**

The fund holds 0% investments made in transitional and enabling activities.

● **How did the percentage of investments that were aligned with the EU Taxonomy compare with previous reference periods?**

No change

are sustainable investments with an environmental objective that **do not take into account the criteria** for environmentally sustainable economic activities under Regulation (EU) 22/852.



What was the share of sustainable investments with an environmental objective not aligned with the EU Taxonomy?

The share of sustainable investments with an environmental objective not aligned with the EU Taxonomy is 16%



What was the share of socially sustainable investments?

The share of sustainable investments with a social objective is 12%



What investments were included under “other”, what was their purpose and were there any minimum environmental or social safeguards?

The Fund invested 11% of assets in the “Other” category. The investments included under "other" are cash, money market instruments, derivatives. The purpose of these assets are to meet liquidity, target return or manage risk and may not contribute to the environmental or social aspects of the Fund.



What actions have been taken to meet the environmental and/or social characteristics during the reference period?

The fund's screening, scoring requirements and benchmark targets ensure that the portfolio is invested in companies that uphold appropriate ESG standards. The fund has also engaged with issuers on topics which may include Climate change, Environment, Labour, Human rights, Corporate Governance and Behaviour.



How did this financial product perform compared to the reference benchmark?

Not applicable

Reference benchmarks are indexes to measure whether the financial product attains the environmental or social characteristics that they promote.

- ***How does the reference benchmark differ from a broad market index?***

Not applicable

- ***How did this financial product perform with regard to the sustainability indicators to determine the alignment of the reference benchmark with the environmental or social characteristics promoted?***

Not applicable

- ***How did this financial product perform compared with the reference benchmark?***

Not applicable

- ***How did this financial product perform compared with the broad market index?***

Not applicable