



Pre-contractual disclosure for the financial products referred to in Article 8, paragraphs 1, 2 and 2a, of Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 and Article 6, first paragraph, of Regulation (EU) 2020/852

Product name:

abrdrn SICAV II - Total Return Credit Fund

Legal entity identifier

549300080EVHVV2VU007

**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.

## Environmental and/or social characteristics

Does this financial product have a sustainable investment objective?

Yes

No

It will make a minimum of **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 will make a minimum of **sustainable investments with a social objective** \_%

It **promotes Environmental/Social (E/S) characteristics** and while it does not have as its objective a sustainable investment, it will have a minimum proportion of 0 % 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 promotes E/S characteristics, but **will not make any sustainable investments**



### What environmental and/or social characteristics are promoted by this financial product?

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

To promote the environmental and social characteristics, the Fund applies ESG assessment criteria, ESG screening criteria and promotes 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 will:

- Exclude 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.
- Engage 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.
- Target 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 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. 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, 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. 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 does not refer to a benchmark index for portfolio construction. However, the reference benchmark can be used as a comparator for Fund performance and as a comparison for the Fund's binding commitments.

● ***What Sustainability Indicators are used to measure the attainment of each of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by this financial product?***

The measures applied by the Fund are:

- ESG assessment criteria,
- ESG screening criteria,
- a carbon intensity targeting lower than benchmark,
- promotes good governance including social factors.

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

The Fund also excludes 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.

● ***What are the objectives of the sustainable investments that the financial product partially intends to make and how does the sustainable investment contribute to such objectives?***

The Fund has not set a minimum proportion of sustainable investments.

● ***How do the sustainable investments that the financial product partially intends to make, not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective?***

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.

The Fund has not set a minimum proportion of sustainable investments.

-> How have the indicators for adverse impacts on sustainability factors been taken into account?

The Fund has not set a minimum proportion of sustainable investments.

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

The Fund has not set a minimum proportion of sustainable investments.

*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 EU 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.*



### Does this financial product consider principal adverse impacts on sustainability factors?

Yes, this Fund considers Principal Adverse Impacts (PAI) on sustainability factors.

Principal Adverse Impact Indicators are metrics that measure the negative effects on environmental and social matters. abrdn consider PAIs within the investment process for the Fund, this may include considering whether to make an investment, or they may be used as an engagement tool for example where there is no policy in place and this would be beneficial, or where carbon emissions are considered to be high, abrdn may engage to seek the creation of a long-term target and reduction plan. abrdn assess PAIs by using, amongst others, the PAI indicators referred to in the SFDR Delegated Regulation; however, dependent on data availability, quality and relevance to the investments not all SFDR PAI indicators may be considered. Where Funds consider PAIs, information on that consideration will be made available in annual reports.

No



The investment strategy guides investment decisions based on factors such as investment objectives and risk tolerance.

## What investment strategy does this financial product follow?

The portfolio is underpinned by abrdn's well-established active management approach of security selection tailored to the overall environment, which combines fundamental and environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations into the 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 will:

- Exclude 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.
- Engage 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.
- Target 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 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. 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 its corporate governance. This materiality assessment is combined with a judgement on the timeframe over which these ESG risks may have an impact. Our analyst utilises 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.

Our proprietary ESG House Score, developed by our central ESG investment 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. This allows us to see how companies rank in a global context.

The abrdn ESG House Score was designed so that it can be broken down into specific themes and categories. The ESG score comprises of two scores; the Operational score and Governance score. This allows a quick view of a company's relative positioning on its management of ESG issues at a granular level.

- The Governance score assesses the corporate governance structure and the quality and behaviour of corporate leadership and executive management.
- The Operational score assesses the ability of the company's leadership team to implement effective environmental and social risk reduction and mitigation strategies in its operations.

The Fund excludes 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. We engage 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.

Additionally, abrdn apply a set of company exclusions, which are related to the UN Global Compact, Controversial Weapons, Tobacco Manufacturing and Thermal Coal.

- **What are the binding elements of the investment strategy used to select the investments to attain each of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by this financial product?**

The binding elements used by the Fund are:

- a carbon intensity target lower than benchmark

Binary exclusions are 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 on an ongoing basis.

- **What is the committed minimum rate to reduce the scope of the investments considered prior to the application of that investment strategy?**

The Fund excludes 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 reference benchmark.

- **What is the policy to assess good governance practices of the investee companies?**

For this Fund, the investee company needs to follow good governance practices in particular with respect to sound management structures, employee relations, remuneration of staff and tax compliance. This can be demonstrated by the monitoring of certain PAI indicators, for example corruption, tax compliance and diversity. In addition, by using abrdn's proprietary ESG scores within the investment process abrdn screen out any investments with low governance scores. Our governance scores assess a company's corporate governance and management structure (including remuneration of staff policies) and the quality and behaviour of its leadership and management. A low score will typically be given where there are concerns in relation to financially materially controversies, poor tax compliance or governance concerns, or poor treatment of employees or minority shareholders.

The investment must further be 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.

Good governance practices include sound management structures, employee relations, remuneration of staff and tax compliance.



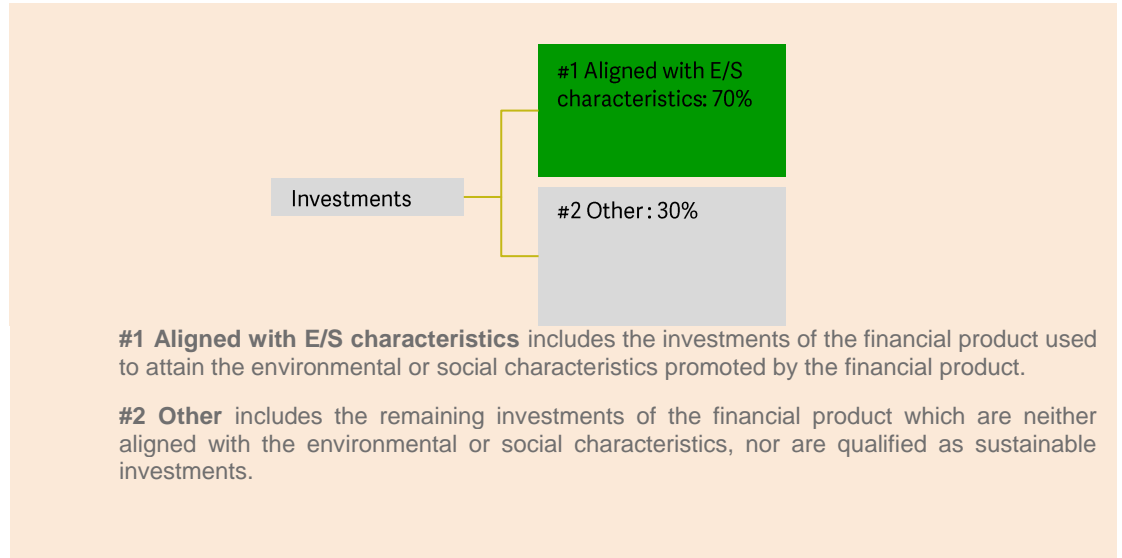
## What is the asset allocation planned for this financial product?

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

**Asset allocation** describes the share of investments in specific assets.

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.



### ● **How does the use of derivatives attain the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product?**

Where the Fund uses derivatives for directional credit market exposure, it will aim to use those that most accurately reflect the ESG criteria. However, the Fund may take long positions on indices that may not entirely align to the environmental or social characteristics, in order to meet the investment objective and manage risk. The Fund will limit any long exposure to companies which are non-compliant with the ESG criteria to 3% in aggregate of the Fund's NAV.



### **To what minimum extent are sustainable investments with an environmental objective aligned with the EU Taxonomy?**

The Fund has not set a minimum proportion of investments in Taxonomy aligned economic activities. This graph represents 100% of the total investment.

### ● **Does the financial product invest in fossil gas and/or nuclear energy related activities that comply with the EU Taxonomy ?<sup>1</sup>**

Yes

In fossil gas

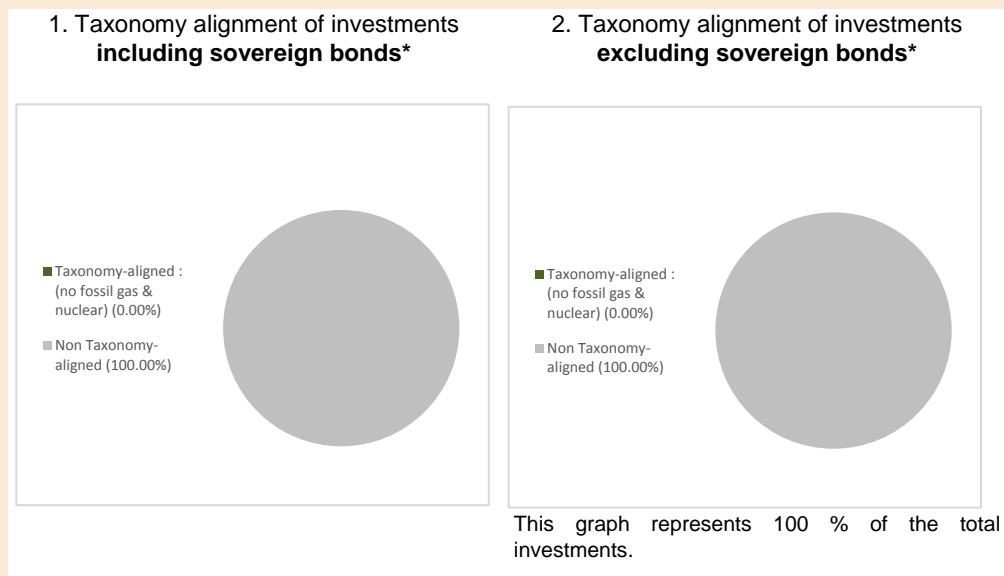
In nuclear energy

No

<sup>1</sup> Fossil gas and/or nuclear related activities will only comply with the EU Taxonomy where they contribute to limiting climate change ("climate change mitigation") and do not significantly harm any EU Taxonomy objectives - see explanatory note in the left hand margin. The full criteria for fossil gas and nuclear energy economic activities that comply with the EU Taxonomy are laid down in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1214.



The two graphs below show in green the minimum percentage of investments that are 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.



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

**Enabling activities** directly enable other activities to make a substantial contribution to an environmental objective. **Transitional activities** are activities for which low-carbon alternatives are not yet available and among others have greenhouse gas emission levels corresponding to the best performance.

● **What is the minimum share of investments in transitional and enabling activities?**

Not applicable



**What is the minimum share of sustainable investments with an environmental objective that are not aligned with the EU Taxonomy?**

Not applicable



are sustainable investments with an environmental objective that **do not take into account the criteria** for environmentally sustainable economic activities under the EU Taxonomy.



**What is the minimum share of socially sustainable investments?**

Not applicable



## What investments are included under “#2 Other”, what is their purpose and are there any minimum environmental or social safeguards?

The investments included under "other" are cash, money market instruments, derivatives and may also include sovereign bonds. 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.

There are certain environmental and social safeguards that are met by applying PAI's. Where relevant, these are applied to the underlying securities.



## Is a specific index designated as a reference benchmark to determine whether this financial product is aligned with the environmental and/or social characteristics that it promotes?

No

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

- ***How is the reference benchmark continuously aligned with each of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product?***

Not applicable

- ***How is the alignment of the investment strategy with the methodology of the index ensured on a continuous basis?***

Not applicable

- ***How does the designated index differ from a relevant broad market index?***

Not applicable

- ***Where can the methodology used for the calculation of the designated index be found?***

Not applicable



## Where can I find more product specific information online?

Fund specific documentation, including Sustainability Related Disclosures, are published at [www.abrdn.com](http://www.abrdn.com) under **Fund Centre**.

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