



# Sustainability



Global Equities Ethical

Q4 2024

#### Sustainable Philosophy

#### **Core Beliefs**

Our active approach to the stewardship of investments ensures sustainability commitments

We emphasize active ownership to influence positive change and progress

The integration of sustainability factors is key to our longterm investment research process

Prioritising pro-active engagement rather than excluding and divesting

Investing responsibly is aligned with superior risk-adjusted long-term returns

#### **Our actions**

Engaging directly with and voting on investee companies

Researching sustainability factors is fully integrated into our overall investment approach

Materiality ensures that we prioritise what matters most

Extensive screening to ensure norm-based alignment

## C WorldWide Global Equities Ethical

#### **Quarterly Comments**

**Ultra-Processed Food** 

As 2024 concludes, we review the year behind us and consider the main sustainability topics we came across and maybe to some extent topics that surprised us.

Despite some shake-up in commitment to international recognised initiatives, predominantly from some US institutions, the longer-term climate change and energy transition agendas, to varying degrees, are here to stay, now also accompanied by its emerging sibling biodiversity. Furthermore, social topics both within human capital and supply chain resilience remain material mainstays for most companies. One topic of continued focus remains the development of ultra-processed foods (UPF).

The definition of UPF is not entirely uniform, but the market tends to adhere to the academic definition that comes from the NOVA food classification system, which was developed by researchers at the University of São Paulo, Brazil and supported by the British Heart Association: UPFs typically have more than one ingredient that you never or rarely find in a kitchen. They also tend to include many additives and ingredients that are not typically used in home cooking, such as preservatives, emulsifiers, sweeteners, and artificial colours and flavours. These foods generally have a long shelf life.

During the last 18 months, there has been an increased coverage of UPF in media, especially since the European Society of Cardiology in August 2023 presented two studies highlighting meaningful increased risk of heart attack and strokes from diets high in sugar, salt, and fat, i.e. what you typically see in UPF. This also seems to have led to an increase in consumer awareness, highlighted by a doubling of UPF as a Google search term over the same period.

Attention to the health risks associated with UPF has also been increasing in the financial press as well as there has been increased mentioning of UPF in transcripts from corporates' earnings call.

This may be affected by the younger consumer generations such as Millennials and especially Generation Z having focus on a healthier lifestyle, tend to cook from scratch, and to some extent prefer natural foods, non-processed, or plant based as a Bernstein study from July 2024 shows.

In some regions, the rise of alternative protein supports certain dietary beliefs as it causes less harm to animals and the environment. The question remains on how it affects overall health when the additives required to obtain the desired look, taste and texture of meat include flavourings, colourings, emulsifiers, texture modifiers, gelling agents and binding agents?



#### Sanctions Screenings

All investments are screened against Refinitiv World-Check sanctions-screening covering all known sanction bodies

#### Norms-Based Global Standards Screenings

Convention Breach screenings, compliance with UN Global Compact Principles, OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

#### **Investment Exclusions**

None of the companies within the portfolio exceeds a certain level of involvement in the activities specified

- o% Controversial Weapons
- 5% Military Contracting, manufacturing military weapon systems or integral, tailor-made components of these weapons
- 5% Military Contracting, providing tailor-made products or services that support military weapons
- o% Small Arms, assault weapons
- o% Small Arms, small arms or key components to small arms
- 5% Adult Entertainment
- 5% Alcoholic Beverages
- 5% Gambling
- 5% Tobacco Products
- 5% Oil & Gas, oil and gas exploration, production, refining, transportation, or storage

In our annual commitment to engage with Master students at Copenhagen Business School (CBS) in Denmark, we provided this specific case to a group of students studying the minor Critical Cases in Sustainable Investments and for them to explore how our main investment strategies are exposed to the risks and opportunities within UPF.

The case work showed that key exposure is found in our portfolio companies within the consumer staples sector such as food and ingredients companies as well as retail and convenience stores. Furthermore, healthcare companies and to some extent insurance companies can be linked to the opportunities that lie within an increasing overweight population and resulting lifestyle diseases.

We believe that this is a relevant topic to engage on with the companies directly exposed to UPF. Our ambition is to better understand how these companies navigate in the space where shareholder returns are key but where stakeholder concerns on socially responsible actions also play a part in many investment decision making processes.

#### **Portfolio Changes**

There were no changes to the portfolio during the quarter.

#### **Direct Engagements**

#### Atlas Copco

We met with the VP of Sustainability to get an update on Atlas Copco's sustainability strategy.

Atlas Copco's sustainability strategy is firmly integrated into its business model, with recently updated sustainability targets emphasizing circularity, climate transition, and gender balance in leadership.

The company's focus on energy efficiency across its product lines, particularly compressors, highlights its commitment to reducing environmental impacts and enhancing customer value. Efforts to integrate circularity principles into product design and lifecycle management further support sustainable growth opportunities. While Atlas Copco has made progress in reducing Scope 1 and 2 emissions, challenges remain in tackling Scope 3 emissions, which depend heavily on decarbonizing global energy grids.

Regulatory compliance, including alignment with the EU taxonomy and CSRD, presents ongoing complexities that require adaptive strategies. The company is also investing in human capital management, with decentralized approaches tailored to regional needs, and linking ESG metrics to executive compensation to reinforce accountability.

These efforts, coupled with market expansion into areas like hydrogen compression and battery technology, should position Atlas Copco to address both current sustainability responsibilities and emerging opportunities in a competitive landscape.



- 10% Oil & Gas, generation of electricity from oil or gas
- o% Thermal Coal, thermal coal extraction
- 5% Thermal Coal, generation of electricity from thermal coal
- o% Oil Sands
- o% Shale Energy

#### Adobe

We met with Adobe during a research trip to the US to get an update on its business strategy including material sustainability matters such as human capital and sustainability incentives at the executive level.

Adobe distinguishes itself from many California-based companies by avoiding layoffs, as "hiring and firing" is not part of its culture. Instead, the company focuses on the human component, creating an environment where new recruits are engaged with exciting projects to boost retention.

In areas like AI and content authenticity, the company seeks to lead innovation and remain at the forefront of the industry. ESG measures are integrated into compensation structures, reflecting the importance of sustainability across the organization. Notably, C-level executives are deeply involved in driving these initiatives, ensuring that Adobe's values are woven into its strategy and operations.

#### Epiroc

We met with the VP of Sustainability at Epiroc to get an update on its sustainability strategy.

As with Atlas Copco, Epiroc's sustainability strategy is also deeply embedded within its core business model, focusing on sustainable innovation to meet the evolving needs of the mining and infrastructure sectors. Its investments in automation, electrification, and digitalization aim to enhance operational efficiency, safety, and environmental performance. The company's emphasis on circular economy practices, including retrofitting and re-using older machines, showcases its commitment to resource optimization.

Despite achieving significant progress in reducing Scope 1 and 2 emissions, the challenge of mitigating Scope 3 emissions from product use remains a focal area. Regulatory complexities, such as those posed by the EU taxonomy and upcoming CSRD, underscore the need for adaptive reporting and operational strategies.

Epiroc's proactive collaboration with suppliers and customers enhances innovation and supply chain sustainability, addressing risks related to emissions, human rights, and transparency. Additionally, its focus on gender diversity and worker safety reflects efforts to build a more inclusive and responsible workforce. By aligning sustainability initiatives with business goals, Epiroc is wellpositioned to capture growth opportunities, particularly in electrification and sustainable mining, while addressing global material sustainability demands.

#### **Proxy Voting**

While the number of AGMs held in the last quarter of the year was significantly lower than in the previous quarters, proxy voting remained active.



#### Microsoft

We supported a shareholder proposal regarding a report on AI misinformation and disinformation, aligned with Glass Lewis but opposing management recommendations. While the company has taken steps, including publishing its inaugural Responsible AI Transparency Report and adhering to the European and Australian Codes of Practice for Disinformation and Misinformation, we identified areas for improvement. Specifically, the company's disclosures lack sufficient detail on the effectiveness of its efforts to mitigate misinformation and disinformation. We believe the company should expand its reporting to address how it mitigates risks to its operations and finances stemming from AIgenerated misinformation and disinformation.

#### Procter & Gamble Co.

We opposed a shareholder proposal regarding a median gender and racial pay equity report, aligning with both management and Glass Lewis recommendations.

As per the Glass Lewis analysis, P&G has provided comprehensive disclosures regarding pay equity, including the results of its 2023 global and U.S. workforce pay equity analysis. The company confirmed equitable pay for comparable roles and performance, regardless of gender or ethnicity, based on audits conducted across multiple countries. Additionally, P&G has committed to continuing its annual public disclosure of its adjusted gender pay gap globally and race/ethnicity pay gap in the U.S., which addresses the proposal's key concerns.

#### Ferguson Enterprises Inc.

We supported the election of Bill Brundage, aligning with management recommendations but opposing Glass Lewis's recommendation.

The rationale was based on the recognition of the CFO's valuable role on the board. Ferguson classifies Brundage as "Non-Independent," but this classification does not violate any Code of Corporate Governance or the NYSE Listed Company Manual. The CFO brings a unique skill set that enhances board decision-making. While having a CFO on the board is not mandatory, there is no reason to exclude them solely based on their executive role.

A full list of all meetings voted is available upon request or can be retrieved directly from the C WorldWide website.

### C WORLDWIDE GLOBAL EQUITIES ETHICAL

70%

60%

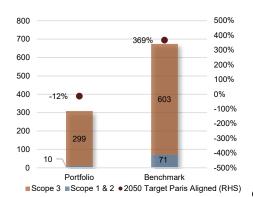
50%

40%

Sustainalytics Portfolio Risk Rating: Low Benchmark: MSCI All Country World Index

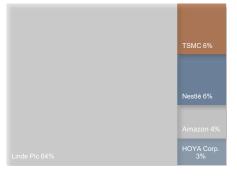
**Climate Target Assessment** 

#### Emissions Exposure & SDS (tCO2e)



The above graph summarises the portfolio's carbon footprint compared with the benchmark. The Sustainability Development Scenario (SDS) pathway on the right-hand side of the graph is fully aligned with the Paris Agreement. The graph indicates whether the portfolio and benchmark are expected to over-/undershoot against the allocated carbon budget until 2050.

**Top 4 Contributors to Portfolio Emissions** 



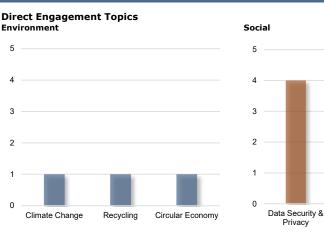
Carbon Intensity (tCO2e/mill. USD revenue)



30% 20% 10% 0% só 1 arge 1 arget Ś Approved Ambitious 40 comm Hori Portfolio Benchmark

The above graph shows how many of the companies in the portfolio have set climate targets and how ambitious these are. Having ambitious targets, being committed to Science-Based Targets (SBT) or having approved SBT shows close alignment with the Paris Agreement.

Source: ISS Data Desk (Climate Assessment). Based on a portfolio Value of 1,000,000 USD. Portfolio as of 31st of December 2024





Total direct company engagements for the portfolio: 8

Throughout the quarter, we conducted several direct engagements with the portfolio companies. Our ESG engagements have most often incorporated an aspect of each subject E, S, and G. The above graphs show the top three engagement topics within environmental, social and governance aspects. There are several sub-topics within each category that can overlap within one engagement.

Labeling

#### Collective Engagement

5

0

Initial Development					
Established					
Dialogue					
8			tific		
Commitments to Address	o				
Strategy Development		• -			
Advanced Stage of Implementing the Strategy	9				
	of Implementing the Strategy Strategy Development Commitments t Address Engagement Dialogue	the Strategy Strategy Development Commitments to Address Engagement	of Implementing the Strategy Strategy Development Commitments to Address Engagement Dialogue	of Implementing the Strategy Strategy Development Commitments to Address Engagement Dialogue	of Implementing the Strategy Strategy Development Commitments to Address Engagement Dialogue

Proxy Voting					
Meetings Voted	100%	3			
Proposals Voted	100%	54			
Proposal Voted Against Manage- ment	15%	8			
	69%	Board Related			
Proposal Categories (Top 3)	13%	Compensation			
	7%	SHP: Social			

The above graph illustrates our collective engagements with Sustainalytics. The companies are shown within what milestone they have reached thus far and rated according to their communication in relation to the specific engagement topic.

We utilise proxy voting to emphasise the topics discussed with the investee companies in our ongoing engagement with them and to vote on key issues important to the governance of the investee companies. The table above shows key topics and how votes have been cast during the guarter.

#### Source: Sustainalytics. Portfolio as of 31st of December 2024

Source: Glass Lewis Proxy Voting. Portfolio as of 31st of December 2024

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# Active Investments

C WorldWide Asset Management Fondsmaeglerselskab A/S is a focused asset manager. Our objective is to deliver consistent, long term capital growth for clients through active investments in listed equities on global stock exchanges.

Our clients are primarily institutional investors and external distribution channels. Our product range includes discretionary asset management services and commingled fund products.

The combination of a unique investment philosophy based on careful stock picking and longterm global trends coupled with a stable team of experienced portfolio managers, has since 1986 resulted in world-class investment performance.

Please find more of our Sustainability Reports on cworldwide.se.

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