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### 1. Eurosif Update

**Advisory Council Meeting:** At the April 9 Advisory Council Meeting, Eurosif discussed current and future activities, a changing governance plan and future projects for the upcoming year. Members appeared pleased with the progress to date and interested in the potential for Eurosif to make an impact in the months to come.

**Pan European Transparency Guidelines for the Retail Sector:** The process is reaching the final stages as Eurosif has now received input from the UK, DE, IT, SP, BE, and NL. The French submission is expected shortly and all comments are currently being incorporated into a working Draft 2. The original process had Eurosif presenting Draft 2 to the Advisory Council for final comments. However, as mentioned in an earlier communication, Eurosif has decided that the best means to reach a final draft for piloting purposes is through the formation of an Editing Team. This volunteer group will help synthesise the remaining issues so the Transparency Guidelines will be finished by the end of May 2003.

**Thought Leadership: Eurosif publishes article in Funds Europe Magazine:** In a Funds Europe article entitled "Can SRI Help Corporate Governance? ", Matt Christensen and Sylvain Guyoton describe the rapid growth of the SRI funds markets and show how SRI is perceived differently according to countries and cultures. Ultimately, the authors emphasise the need for greater cooperation among stakeholders and discuss Eurosif 's role in this regard for the coming years. Funds Europe is a leading publication providing in-depth analysis of all issues pertaining to the construction of cross-border funds in Europe. The magazine reaches 10,000 subscribers representing senior directors at leading fund managers, banks and other financial institutions. Its April 2003 supplement is entirely devoted to governance and CSR issues.

For more info about Funds Europe, visit [www.funds-europe.com](http://www.funds-europe.com)

**Public Role in Policy Development: Matt Christensen chairs roundtable at G8 Forum on Future and the Environment:** In a Key Forum leading up to this summer's G8 Summit, the invitation-only event brought leading CEOs, politicians and CSR practitioners together on March 27-28 near Paris to discuss corporate environmental responsibility. The results of the Forum will be communicated directly to Jacques Chirac's Administration as France is the host of the G8 Summit this June and environmental issues are one of the most important subjects that President Chirac wishes to address. Matt Christensen moderated one of the six roundtables entitled "Investor interest for corporate environmental responsibility strategy". Participants ranged from Nicole Notat, CEO of Vigeo to Hanns-Michael HÖLZ, MD, Global Head of Public Relations & Sustainable Development, Deutsche Bank Group.

**Future plans:** Matt Christensen will be one of the featured speakers at the 2nd European Socially Responsible Investing Congress 2003 in Stockholm June 3-4. Interestingly, this congress takes place at a joint venue with the 3rd Annual North European Pension & Investing Conference, a leading event for the financial investment community in Northern Europe. Matt will be setting the scene for the conference by discussing the mainstreaming of

SRI as a part of the pension manager's agenda. His talk falls under the heading of: "Why are we here today ? Regulatory and market drivers for socially responsible investing".

For more info and registration, please see:

- 2nd European Socially Responsible Investing Congress: [www.imn.org/a474/m/](http://www.imn.org/a474/m/)
- (For more information on the parallel conference in the same venue, please see:
- 3rd Annual North European Pension & Investing Conference: [www.imn.org/a473/m/](http://www.imn.org/a473/m/))

## 2. EU Update

### Multi-Stakeholder Forum:

At the present time, the first meetings for all four-sub theme roundtables have been held. The four-roundtable themes are as follows:

1. "Improving knowledge about CSR and facilitating the exchange of experience and good practice"
2. "Fostering CSR among SMEs"
3. "CSR Development aspects"
4. "Diversity, convergence and transparency of CSR practices and tools" (1st meeting on April 7)

The first meeting of the sub theme roundtable on 'Diversity...' yielded some very good questions about how realistic it is to expect CSR will be streamlined and harmonised over the coming years. There were quite different opinions expressed and the examples presented at the Forum illustrated the difficulties in agreeing definitions as well as creating transparency. The second meetings of each roundtable will begin later in the summer. During that time, I expect the Forum's direction will start to become more clear. I also anticipate the Forum will ask the Commission to play a larger role in guiding the discussion.

### IORP:

The proposed IORP directive is now past its second reading at the European Parliament. SRI issues have unfortunately not been brought up during the open debates in Parliament so far. Though Members of Parliament acknowledge the concern, the lack of common definition of SRI /CSR among EU members is the main obstacle in the path of proposing amendments, the deadline for approval being May 13th 2003.

## 3. News from Eurosif members

### Fédération des Experts Comptables Européens – FEE

The winners of the European Sustainability Reporting Awards, (ESRA), an event organised by FEE, have just been announced. The ESRA has continued to attract more sponsoring bodies - there are now 16 participating countries.

The following companies have been awarded:

Best sustainability report 2002: The Co-operative Bank plc (UK)

Best environmental report 2002: SCA (Sweden)

Best first-time report 2002: Canary Wharf Group plc (UK)

Best SME report 2002: Neumarkter Lammsbräu (Germany)

More details, including the Judge's Report, can be found at [www.accaglobal.com/sustainability/awards/esra](http://www.accaglobal.com/sustainability/awards/esra)

### New members

Eurosif wishes to welcome the following new members:

#### Dexia Asset Management, Belgium

This Belgian fund manager is a subsidiary of Dexia-AM, which manages EUR 58 billion worldwide

Its clients are mostly institutional investors. Dexia-AM is one of Europe's leaders in Ethical funds which represent 1,9% of its assets

[www.dexia-am.com](http://www.dexia-am.com)

### **Oikocredit Development, The Netherlands**

Oikocredit was created as an alternative investment instrument for churches. It manages EUR 188 million in credit. It was created in 1975 and has customers all over the world. It specializes in credit for development, with a focus on project viability, cooperative structure, women, environment, and impact on community.

[www.oikocredit.org](http://www.oikocredit.org)

### **Institute for Responsible Business, The Netherlands**

The Institute is a part of Nyenrode's University centre on Organisational Ethics, Integrity, CSR and SRI. Nyenrode University, the prominent business school in Holland, has always been a leader on the subject of Business Ethics in Europe.

(Website currently being relaunched)

### **Insight Investments, UK**

Insight Investment is the brand new investment arm of the Halifax and Bank of Scotland Group (HBOS).

It manages £56 billion in funds. Insight Investment actively promotes and supports corporate governance and corporate responsibility

[www.insightinvestment.com/responsibility/responsibility\\_home.asp](http://www.insightinvestment.com/responsibility/responsibility_home.asp)

## **4. News from National and Regional SIFs**

### **VBDO (Dutch SIF)**

#### **VBDO Transparency Guidelines to verify Dutch SRI funds**

With the financial support from the Dutch Government, VBDO will be developing a tool for verifying Dutch SRI funds that are using the VBDO Transparency Guidelines. A part of this project will be devoted to conducting a first experimental verification by the Dutch Consumer organisation. The results of this project will be made public at the end of August this year.

Learn more at [www.vbdo.nl](http://www.vbdo.nl)

#### **SRI Disclosure Dutch pension funds**

Because there is no legislation on pension fund disclosure about SRI policies in the Netherlands, VBDO has taken the initiative of a voluntary disclosure project. In a letter to the two Dutch Pensionfund Associations (OPF and VB) VBDO proposed to develop a voluntary disclosure statement on SRI-policies for pension funds. OPF and VB are currently discussing this proposal. Despite the lack of a disclosure regulation some of the larger pension funds already do disclose on their SRI policies.

Learn more at [www.vbdo.nl](http://www.vbdo.nl)

### **FIR (French SIF)**

#### **June Event: Paris Responsible Finance - European Roadshow**

FIR will be organizing a great event in the tradition of companies' financial roadshows. Investors, together with SRI practitioners will sit down with 24 major Euronext listed corporations and discuss views and expectations in the field of social and environmental issues. This is an unusually large gathering of SRI actors and should trigger more similar events in the future. The Roadshow will take place at the Palais de la Bourse in Paris on June 4-5.

For information and registration please contact Patrick Boulte: +33 (0)1 40 15 92 39,

Mail : [pkboulte@club-internet.fr](mailto:pkboulte@club-internet.fr)

### **Forum per la Finanza Sostenibile (Italian SIF)**

#### **International Conference in October**

FFS will be hosting an international conference in Rome on SRI and Corporate Governance in October 2003. The focus of the conference will be on SRI and Corporate Governance and Romano Prodi, the current President of the European Commission is expected to be a keynote speaker.

More at [www.finanzasostenibile.it](http://www.finanzasostenibile.it)

### U.S. SIF

#### Proxy Voting Disclosure Victory

Following a massive mail-in action to the SEC in 2002, the Shareholder Action Network, a US SIF project, was able to push through legislation requiring mutual funds and registered investment advisors to disclose their proxy votes and guidelines.

On Jan. 23, 2003, the SEC adopted the new mutual fund proxy disclosure rules, which were then reviewed and left unchanged by the Office of Management and Budget.

For a full copy of the statement, visit: [www.socialinvest.org/Areas/News/030128.htm](http://www.socialinvest.org/Areas/News/030128.htm)

## 5. SRI news in Europe

### The founding of a Swiss Corporate Governance Agency (SCGA) was recently announced

The Swiss Corporate Governance Agency is an opportunity for pension funds to make a positive contribution to regain consumer confidence in a time that is currently marked by the loss of confidence in the markets. The SCGA links the interest of institutional investors to those of the companies in which they have invested. The non-profit is positioning itself to increase the importance of Corporate Governance/SRI on the Swiss pension fund market.

### SRI finds new gate to Internet in Germany

SRI practitioners may welcome a new website dedicated to SRI funds in German speaking countries. This website is a joint project led by the Environmental management and Administration Institute at the European Business School and supported by UNEP and the German Ministry for Education. Its extensive coverage of the retail SRI market allows interested consumers to research up to 80 funds in the German speaking countries at a remarkable detail.

For more info: [www.nachhaltiges-investment.org](http://www.nachhaltiges-investment.org) (Web site in German)

### FT Article shows private sector push for sustainability guidelines in project finance industry - 9 April 2003

Significant actors from the project finance world in Europe and the US are keen to follow the IFC's sustainable development rules as drafted in an agreement called "Equator principles". The FT goes on to suggest that this could prompt other actors and export credit agencies to follow a similar route.

#### **Abstract:**

Citigroup, together with ABN Amro, Barclays and West LB, signed an agreement called "Equator principles" which require the IFC's social and environmental rules for sustainable development to be observed by banks in the project finance field. This unusual effort from the private sector could lead to a wider acceptance of these guidelines in the industry.

This is most important at a time when the world is weary of the Bush administration when it comes to environmental issues and previous US-led initiatives to come up with common guidelines among credit agencies have failed. Today experts hail this private sector initiative as both a sign that these guidelines, which cover essential aspects of social and environmental development issues, are both useful and viable.

For more information or to read the complete article: [www.ft.com](http://www.ft.com) (subscription required)

### Investors Relation Society releases study on perception of CSR/SRI by IR professionals - 16 April 2003

While most IR professionals find demands overblown due to an excessive number of lobby groups and 'questionnaire fatigue', they find CSR/SRI programs definitely a part of IR.

See press release [www.ir-soc.org.uk/newsroom/releaseview.cfm?id=86](http://www.ir-soc.org.uk/newsroom/releaseview.cfm?id=86)

### AA1000: AccountAbility launches first corporate responsibility assurance standard - 25 March 2003

This Standard is developed to ensure quality and credibility of corporate reporting of social and environmental performance. AA1000 is hailed as a potentially important contribution to

restoring public trust in corporations and sets a landmark for more accurate reporting and professionalisation of the sector.

Full info available at [www.accountability.org.uk](http://www.accountability.org.uk)

### **Ethical investment finds way into French Catholic church - 14 April 2003**

New York Times reports of efforts by Sister Nicole Ruelle to establish ethical investment as an alternative to real estate for French Catholic church. After successfully setting up two funds with French banks, Ruelle plans a move to Rome for future developments.

Find more on this story:

[www.nytimes.com/2003/04/14/international/europe/14PARI.html?8hpiib](http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/14/international/europe/14PARI.html?8hpiib)

(website registration (free) required)

## **6. Upcoming events**

### **E-conference on the Role of Business In Fighting HIV/AIDS - April 21 to May 9, 2003**

A World Bank Institute and UN Global Compact project

[www.worldbank.org/wbi/corpgov/csr/econferences/hivaids/index.html](http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/corpgov/csr/econferences/hivaids/index.html)

### **Global Governance and the Search for Justice, International Conference - April 29 - May 1 - Sheffield, UK**

[www.shef.ac.uk/law/conferences/globalisation/globe2003.htm](http://www.shef.ac.uk/law/conferences/globalisation/globe2003.htm)

### **Canadian Social Investment Conference 2003 - June 1-3 – Vancouver, Canada**

[www.socialinvestment.ca](http://www.socialinvestment.ca)

### **2nd European Socially Responsible Investing Congress 2003 - June 3-4, Stockholm**

(See Eurosif [update/future plans section](#) of this newsletter above)

Info and registration: [www.imn.org/a473/m/](http://www.imn.org/a473/m/)

### **Paris Responsible Finance - European roadshow - Paris, June 4-5, Palais de la Bourse – Paris**

A FIR/Euronext project (see SIF news section above)

Contact: [eric.loiselet@terra-nova.fr](mailto:eric.loiselet@terra-nova.fr)

### **Three day international CSR/CS Seminar at EOQ-EFQM Convention - 4-6 June, The Hague**

The Social Dimensions of Business Excellence

[www.eoq2003.nl](http://www.eoq2003.nl)

### **SRI action in Korea - 17-18 June 2003, Seoul, Korea**

[www.asria.org](http://www.asria.org)

### **Investor interest in corporate sustainability and the disclosure of material risk - 19/20 June 2003, INSEAD Fontainebleau**

This joint INSEAD/CSR Europe conference will address a core issue faced by business: how much do investors need to know about a firm's corporate sustainability activities and how relevant is this information for their assessment of a firm's material risk? More information as well as registration details can be obtained from [Kai.Hockerts@insead.edu](mailto:Kai.Hockerts@insead.edu) or [Michele.Duhamel@insead.edu](mailto:Michele.Duhamel@insead.edu) and will be posted on [www.sricompass.org](http://www.sricompass.org) as soon as it is available.

### **Finance for sustainable development / Eco-efficiency Biennale - June 7-8 2003, Turin**

A meeting of the business world and business culture and climatic and environmental research

[www.eco-efficiency.net](http://www.eco-efficiency.net)

### **Corporate governance and corporate sustainability reporting: what do stakeholders want? - 9 July, Amsterdam**

At the occasion of the 9th Annual ICGN Conference, the GRI and ICGN are pleased to host an open panel session which will highlight the linkages between corporate governance and corporate sustainability reporting

To register for this free event please contact the GRI Secretariat at:

Fax: +31.(0)20.531.0031

E-mail: [info@globalreporting.org](mailto:info@globalreporting.org)

[www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)

### **Long-Term Fund Performance - 8-9 September – London**

Defining the Financial Impacts of SRI on Institutional Portfolios, and Assessing the Demand and the Incentives to Factor SRI and Engagement Policies into Mainstream Investments (contact details to be confirmed)

### **14th annual SRI in the Rockies - October 19-22 – Lake Tahoe, USA**

SRI in the Rockies is one of the major annual gatherings of the socially responsible investment industry in the U.S.

[www.sriintherockies.com](http://www.sriintherockies.com)

### **UNEP FI Tokyo Roundtable 'Sustaining Value' – A Meeting on Finance and Sustainability - October 20-21, 2003 – Tokyo, Japan**

[www.unepfi.net/tokyo](http://www.unepfi.net/tokyo)

### **Triple Bottom Line Investing Conference 2003 - November 6-7 – Amsterdam**

[www.tbli.org](http://www.tbli.org)