

Press Release

From Coffee to Copenhagen: Make Money and Make a Difference

London, 9 November 2009 – With the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit just a month away, new research has found that more than two thirds (70%) of people in Great Britain consider their outlook and lifestyle to be either very or fairly green and ethical. The poll, conducted by YouGov on behalf of National Ethical Investment Week (NEIW), also found that half (49%) of people with savings and investments would like to make money *and* make a difference. But, despite this positive attitude and a growing array of financial products to choose from, only 8% of investors currently hold a green and ethical investment or savings product.

The research highlights a ‘green gap’ in peoples’ attitudes towards ethical and environmental issues and the actions they currently take, especially when it comes to investing. To help breach this green gap, NEIW aims to raise awareness of the green and ethical options available to investors. The week runs from 8 – 14 November 2009, featuring 30 events across the country. NEIW is coordinated by UKSIF – the sustainable investment and finance association, and sponsored by Aviva Investors, CCLA Investment Management, The Co-operative Financial Services and Henderson New Star.

Penny Shepherd MBE, chief executive of UKSIF, said:

“Whether it’s buying fair trade coffee or making greater efforts to reduce and recycle waste, large numbers of people are putting their money where their mouth is and doing their bit to create a sustainable future. There are some simple steps you can take to apply these principles to your pension, ISA or other investments. Green and ethical investments provide a great way to make money and make a difference. As a starting point, talk to your financial adviser or visit the NEIW website www.neiw.org.”



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In terms of the specific green and ethical areas favoured by investors, the research showed a bias towards shares and funds that help to make a positive impact close to home. When asked which of the following issues would you consider assisting through your investments to help them receive greater funding, more than half selected renewable energy (54%) and waste reduction (52%).

However, just under half (44%) of investors said that the financial services industry needs to work much harder to provide clearer evidence of the green and ethical impacts of investments to attract more money.

Penny added:

“You can now invest in a range of issues that have a positive impact on people, the planet and animals. But, just as investors tend to favour UK home grown shares and funds, so too there’s a preference for green and ethical funds that have an immediate impact at home.

“However, the financial services industry must become more transparent and clearly show the green and ethical impact of investments. The leading providers of these investments do demonstrate the positive effects that they can have on the world. However, we want to encourage others in the financial services industry to join them. Our research shows this will attract significant further money into green and ethical investments.”

According to EIRiS, there is more than £7 billion invested in green and ethical funds in the UK – up from £1.5 billion 10 years ago. And the IMA’s most recent statistics show that quarterly net sales of ethical funds increased three-fold year-on-year to £59m – the highest level since 2007.

Comments from the sponsors of the second National Ethical Investment Week:

Steve Waygood, Head of sustainability research and engagement, Aviva Investors, said: "The success of initiatives such as Fairtrade fortnight has taught us the value of setting aside time to focus on the benefits of great initiatives. NEIW helps bring the SRI community together to focus on the long term financial and moral benefits associated with investing with your conscience. The NEIW research also shows just how many individuals care about the concepts when they are asked. Many fund managers are doing excellent work in this area, but it is often hidden away from view and extremely hard for the end investor to find out what is going on. The key challenge is helping end investors to understand what questions to ask of their fund managers, and what they can expect to hear."



Helen Wildsmith, CCLA Head of Ethical and Responsible Investment said: "Charities, churches and wealthy individuals are leading innovation. Our client survey showed that over 70% of charities want us to influence the "worst of the worst" companies in relation to climate change and human rights, but divest if persistent engagement fails. It is still unusual to combine these approaches, but clients are driving creative thinking about how to build cost-effective coalitions for change."

Rod Bulmer, Executive Director, Retail, at Cooperative Financial Services (CFS) said: "There is evidence that factors such as trust and responsibility are becoming increasingly influential to consumers when choosing their financial products, with The Co-operative Bank experiencing a 68 per cent rise in new current account sales since last year - a traditionally stagnant market.

"Going forwards we believe the merger between CFS and Britannia will give consumers more access to products from a trusted organisation that is member owned, customer led and ethically guided."

George Latham, head of SRI funds at Henderson New Star said: "Investors are starting to really see how they can profit from the shift to a more sustainable world. Events such as the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference are putting sustainability issues up on both the political and media agenda. We are seeing a growing interest from investors in themes that provide solutions to sustainability challenges including water management and education alongside more traditional 'green' investment themes such as cleaner energy and sustainable transport."

The survey was carried out online by YouGov plc, among 2092 GB adults aged 18+. Data is weighted to be representative of the GB population. Fieldwork ran from 23 to 26 October, 2009.

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Notes to Editors

About National Ethical Investment Week
National Ethical Investment Week (NEIW), the campaign to raise awareness of green and ethical investment options, is coordinated by UKSIF – the sustainable investment and finance association, and sponsored by Aviva Investors, CCLA Investment Management, The Co-operative Financial Services and Henderson New Star. It is supported by the Association of Independent Financial Advisers (AIFA). For more information, visit www.neiw.org.



About UKSIF

UKSIF, the sustainable investment and finance association, promotes responsible investment and other forms of finance that support sustainable economic development, enhance quality of life and safeguard the environment. It also seeks to ensure that individual and institutional investors can reflect their values in their investments. Founded in 1991, it has over 200 members including financial advisers, asset managers, research providers, pension funds, banks and non-governmental organisations. For more info, visit www.uksif.org.

