

SYCOMORE AM: A NEW LABEL DEMONSTRATING OUR CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT!

- Sycomore Asset Management is one of the first asset management companies to receive the Belgian “Towards Sustainability” label for five SRI funds;
- Confirming its engagement, Sycomore AM is supporting the Central Labelling Agency (CLA) as a Signatory and as a result, has committed to applying for the label for all its responsible or sustainable financial products sold in Belgium.

Paris, November 7th 2019. Sycomore AM has received the “Towards Sustainability” Label for five SRI funds. This label, created in 2019 by Febelfin, the Belgian Financial Sector Federation, aims to promote financial products with an embedded responsible investment approach, while creating a framework that instils a sense of trust for end-clients.

The “Towards Sustainability” Label is based on a quality standard that defines a set of criteria that asset management companies will have to comply with - the *Quality Standard for Sustainable and Socially Responsible Financial Products*. This standard is built around five key principles:

1. Integrating sustainable development considerations in the analysis and selection of investments
2. Avoiding the funding of businesses that are controversial due to their negative impacts on society or on the environment
3. Providing transparent information on the responsible investment approach deployed by the asset management company
4. Informing end-clients using clear and understandable material
5. Ensuring the compliance of labelled products thanks to a dedicated labelling agency and through audits conducted by independent third parties.

“Beyond the integration of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) considerations when analysing our investments, this label - as it is also the case with French labels - requires that assets are selected based on ESG criteria. The methods used to make this selection are chosen by the asset managers. While the French SRI Label suggests a minimal selection ratio of 20%, the Belgian label makes no such recommendation. The latter has chosen to specify the businesses deemed to be controversial and therefore not eligible to a responsible/sustainable fund: for example, any activities that violate one of the principles of the United Nations’ Global Compact, as well as weapon and tobacco activities, are excluded. As far as energy is concerned, the label aims to avoid the funding of businesses that are not aligned with the energy transition, and particularly with the Paris Agreement. In the event that such companies are financed, the investor is required to engage a shareholder dialogue aimed at supporting the transition. The Label also stands out for its flexible nature: the criteria are revised on a regular basis, for example to ensure they remain consistent with European regulation” explains Anne-Claire Imperiale, Co-Head of ESG Research at Sycomore AM.

To underpin its engagement, Sycomore AM is also a Signatory of the Belgian label’s initiative: any fund sold in Belgium as a responsible or sustainable strategy must comply with the quality standard and apply for the Label.

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She adds that “receiving this label fits into Sycomore AM’s broader approach as an engaged and responsible investor committed to addressing societal and environmental challenges. This new and external label acknowledges the sincerity of our efforts and helps raise awareness amongst our end-clients”

About Sycomore Asset Management

Founded in 2001, Sycomore Asset Management is an investment firm driven by a strong entrepreneurial spirit.

Since its creation, Sycomore has been committed to delivering long-term returns by identifying the levers that enable a company to generate sustainable value.

The firm’s expertise draws on a fieldwork approach and a proprietary corporate fundamental analysis model, which includes financial and extra-financial criteria. Its team of 21 analysts-fund managers, including 7 ESG specialists (Environment, Social and Governance) focus on assessing the overall performance of a company with respect to its stakeholders: shareholders, clients, employees, suppliers, civil society and the environment.

Since 2015, Sycomore AM has expanded its range of social, societal and environmental impact funds: first with Sycomore Happy@Work, dedicated to human capital, then Sycomore Eco Solutions, with a focus on natural capital, and Sycomore Shared Growth, specialised in societal capital. Recently, the firm launched Sycomore Next Generation, a fund committed to providing a better future for the next generations.

In partnership with Quantis and I Care & Consult, Sycomore Am has recently launched the NEC Initiative, a collaborative open-source platform aimed at measuring the extent to which a product, service, company, portfolio or index is aligned with the energy and environmental transition.

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