

First Sentier Investors and MUFG launch Sustainable Investment Institute

Inaugural research report addresses global microplastic pollution

Tuesday, 11 May 2021: First Sentier Investors, a leading global investment manager, and its shareholder Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation (the Trust Bank), a subsidiary of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc. (MUFG), today jointly launched the First Sentier MUFG Sustainable Investment Institute (the institute).

The institute will commission and publish high-quality research on a range of sustainability and sustainable investment related topics. The research aims to enhance industry awareness of sustainable investment, report on market trends and best practice, and promote a greater understanding of how such issues can impact long-term investment performance.

The institute's first report, titled "[Microplastic Pollution: Causes, Consequences, and Issues for Investors](#)", was published today as part of the launch. Microplastic pollution has received considerably less attention from policymakers, companies, and investors than comparable issues such as marine macroplastic pollution and waste management. Researched and authored by Chronos Sustainability, the report explores the critical and growing problem of microplastics and microfibers in the environment and the potential effect on human health. The study outlines regulatory, behavioural and operational actions that should be taken to remove this pollution and prevent more from entering the environment.

Mark Steinberg, CEO of First Sentier Investors, said: "Sustainability issues have an impact on society and the environment and increasingly affect the performance of companies, sectors, and economies. As responsible investors, we seek to use our role to highlight these issues and use our influence to make a positive impact on specific sustainability topics that affect us all. The institute's initial report illustrates this focus with an in-depth analysis of the microplastics and microfibers problem while, most importantly, outlining an agenda for action that we, as investors, and the broader community can all play a part in fulfilling."

Takayuki Yasuda, Chief Executive, Asset Management & Investor Services Business Unit at the Trust Bank, said: "With this initiative, we want to foster industry debate on critical sustainability topics and help influence more responsible investment practices. Investors today are, more than ever, seeking independent and robust research that not only increases awareness and understanding of environmental, social and governance issues but which also drives change. The research published by the institute will respond to this demand. By providing this platform to work with companies and our peers, we aim to help improve sustainability outcomes."

The institute has appointed an external academic advisory board to inform its research agenda and ensure its research meets high standards of rigour. The initial members each bring extensive research expertise, along with experience in working with governments, the financial services industry and leading sustainability initiatives, and include:

- Alex Edmans, Professor of Finance at London Business School and Academic Director of the Centre for Corporate Governance. Professor Edmans's research interests include corporate finance, behavioural finance and responsible investing.
- Norichika Kanie, Professor in the Graduate School of Media and Governance at Keio University. Professor Kanie's research focuses on international environmental governance, and he led a three year strategic project on Sustainable Development Goals funded by the Ministry of the

Environment, Japan. The UN Secretary General has appointed Professor Kanie as one of fifteen independent scientists to prepare the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report.

- Jake Reynolds, Executive Director, Sustainable Economy, at the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, is responsible for CISL's research, including the pioneering Prince of Wales Global Sustainability Fellowship Programme. Dr Reynolds acts as a senior advisor to CISL's Centre for Sustainable Finance which develops practical thought leadership through long-running collaborations with the investment, banking and insurance industries.

The institute plans to appoint additional academic board members in due course. To meet its goal of being an independently-led body, the institute will also appoint an external candidate to lead the organisation.

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Notes to editors

Academic advisory board member bios

- Alex Edmans, Professor of Finance at London Business School and Academic Director of the Centre for Corporate Governance. [Link to bio](#)
- Norichika Kanie, Professor in the Graduate School of Media and Governance at Keio University. [Link to bio](#)
- Jake Reynolds, Executive Director, Sustainable Economy, at the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership. [Link to bio](#)

About First Sentier Investors

First Sentier Investors manages US\$180.3 billion in assets (as at 31 March 2021) on behalf of institutional investors, pension funds, wholesale distributors, investment platforms, financial advisers and their clients worldwide.

The firm operates as a standalone global investment management business with offices across Europe, the Americas, and Asia Pacific. First Sentier Investors' expertise spans a range of asset classes and specialist investment sectors focused on delivering sustainable investment success based on responsible investment principles.

Formerly First State Investments, the firm was acquired from the Commonwealth Bank of Australia in August 2019 by Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc.

About MUFG

Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc. (MUFG) is one of the world's leading financial groups. Headquartered in Tokyo and with over 360 years of history, MUFG has a global network with around 2,600 locations in more than 50 countries. The Group has over 180,000 employees and offers services including commercial banking, trust banking, securities, credit cards, consumer finance, asset management, and leasing. The Group aims to "be the world's most trusted financial group" through close collaboration among our operating companies and flexibly respond to all of the financial needs of our customers, serving society, and fostering shared and sustainable growth for a better world. MUFG's shares trade on the Tokyo, Nagoya, and New York stock exchanges.

For more information, visit <https://www.mufg.jp/english>.

About the Trust Bank

Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation, as a core member of MUFG, provides its customers with a wide range of comprehensive financial solutions leveraging unique and highly professional functions as a leading trust bank. Such financial solutions include real estate, stock transfer agency, asset management and investor services, and inheritance related services, in addition to banking operations. We aim to realize our vision to be the trust bank that creates "a safe and affluent society" and "a bright future with our customers together" by always supporting our customers' and society's challenges based on Trust, and thus created a new key concept: "Trust Drives Our Future".

For more information, visit <https://www.tr.mufg.jp/english>.

About Chronos Sustainability

Chronos Sustainability was established in 2017 with the objective of delivering transformative, systemic change in the social and environmental performance of key industry sectors through expert analysis of complex systems and effective multi-stakeholder partnerships. Chronos works extensively with global investors and global investor networks to build their understanding of the investment implications of sustainability related issues, developing tools and strategies to enable them to build sustainability into their investment research and engagement.

For more information, visit www.chronossustainability.com

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