

# press release

## **Standard Chartered Private Bank finds increased interest in sustainable investments amidst COVID-19**

***59 per cent affluent and high net worth Hong Kong investors will invest 5 to 15 percent of their funds in sustainable investments over the next three years***

**13 July 2020, Hong Kong** – Standard Chartered Private Bank’s Sustainable Investing Review 2020 revealed that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a shift in the priorities of global investors who are re-evaluating the worth of investments that help society. As many as 90 per cent of investors surveyed said they are interested in sustainable investments with 42 per cent planning to invest 5 to 15 per cent of their funds in sustainable assets over the next three years.

The Private Bank’s third annual survey covered around 1000 investors with a specific focus on affluent and high net worth (HNW) investors in Hong Kong, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

In Hong Kong, all of the surveyed affluent and HNW investors who previously did not make any sustainable investments said they are interested to invest in the area, while 78 per cent with sustainable assets holdings continued to express interest.

Over the next three years, 59 per cent of Hong Kong’s affluent and HNW investors, would consider investing 5 to 15 per cent of their funds in sustainable investments, with 43 per cent looking to invest 25 per cent or more.

Investors willing to make trade-offs in risk, returns and liquidity to achieve social outcomes are substantially more likely to be interested in sustainable investing. However, such trade-offs are often perceived rather than real. Early evidence of the effect of COVID-19 has shown some form of resilience in terms of environmental, social and governance (ESG) strategies. A recent analysis by [Refinitiv](#) showed that the performance of the ESG funds analysed was higher than the average performance of conventional funds.

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic is clearly reflected in this year’s findings which highlighted investors’ focus on areas that build resilience against future crises. Nearly 50 per cent rated the

United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of *Good health and Well-being* and *Clean Water and Sanitation* as being of relatively higher importance. Investors in Hong Kong rated *Climate Action* and *Life Below Water* as being of relatively higher importance.

Consistent with previous studies, this year's survey shows that investors lack knowledge about how to meet social and impact goals that are of interest to them. This continues to impede investors who want to make sustainable investments. Besides the lack of knowledge, the other top barriers to investment in this segment are apprehension, lack of motivation and advice.

**Didier von Daeniken, Global Head, Private Banking, Standard Chartered**, said: "While interest in sustainable investing continues to grow, there remains a significant knowledge gap among investors. As a bank, we have a critical role to play in helping to bridge this gap and facilitate our clients' sustainable investing journey and ambitions. Knowing how clients' investor personalities influence their investment approach allows us to help unlock any barriers. This is where our Impact Philosophy is useful in giving clients a structured framework to identify environmental and social causes that matter to them, as well as to understand the risks and returns of potential opportunities."

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## **Note to Editors**

The Standard Chartered Sustainable Investing Review 2020 surveyed 1085 investors with a specific focus on affluent and high networth investors in Hong Kong, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom. The survey was conducted by Agility Research & Strategy and the data was analysed by behavioural finance experts from Oxford Risk and used robust behavioural and attitudinal techniques. Respondents represented a broad range of age, gender, location, and education. For further details, please refer to the [full report](#) and methodology.

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