

# Guidelines for responsible investments

## Contents

Background and purpose

Responsible investments

Corporate governance

Responsibility for monitoring the guidelines

Facts



# Background and purpose

Pareto Asset Management AS ("Pareto Asset Management") aims at contributing to sustainable development of markets and long-term value creation by investing in a responsible and ethical manner. We believe that responsible investments are important for achieving the best possible risk-adjusted return for our unitholders and customers. Sustainability and sound corporate governance give companies competitive advantages and contribute to long-term value creation.

This document sets out guidelines for responsible investments undertaken by Pareto Asset Management on behalf of our unitholders and individual asset owners. The purpose of the policy is to prevent Pareto Asset Management from contributing to the violation of human rights, labor rights, corruption, environmental damage or other unethical actions. Furthermore, we consider it important to integrate sustainability assessments into our investment processes, as this can also affect the long-term value of our investment.

We expect the companies that we invest in to comply with the same principles.

As part of our efforts to promote responsible investments, Pareto Asset Management has signed the UN Principles for Responsible Investment ("UN PRI")<sup>1</sup>. These guidelines are based on UN PRI, the UN Global Compact<sup>2</sup>, the guidelines for the Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global, the Principles for the exercise of ownership rights in investment companies from the Norwegian Fund and Asset Management Association, as well as internationally recognised principles and conventions.

## Responsible investments

### 2.1 Priorities

We seek to invest in companies that have good quality of operations and management. The companies should have a clear focus on ethical issues in their attitudes and actions, as well as having a value base for the business that complies with the guidelines. The companies must exert good corporate governance, comply with national legislation as well as international conventions, and show an open and complementary information policy. This means we emphasise social conditions, the environment, sustainability and good corporate governance when considering a company.

Ethical risk assessments must be conducted before an investment can be made.



## 2.2 Exclusion of companies

Pareto Asset Management shall not be invested, on behalf of our funds and customers, in companies which themselves or through entities they control:

- Produce weapons that, in normal use, violate basic humanitarian principles
- Produce tobacco
- Sell weapons or military equipment to states subject to sanctions from the UN Security Council or other international measures directed at a particular country that Norway has supported (mandate for the management of the SPU section 3-1 second paragraph letter c)
- Mining companies and power producers that themselves or consolidated with controlled entities receive 30 percent or more of their revenues from thermal coal, or base 30 percent or more of their operations on thermal coal activity
- Produce pornography

Pareto Asset Management may decide to exclude a company if there is an unacceptable risk that the company contributes or is responsible for:

- Human rights violations, such as killing, torture, deprivation of liberty, forced labour and exploitation of children, including child labour<sup>3</sup>
- Violations of individuals' rights in war or conflict situations
- Breach of basic employee rights
- Severe environmental damage
- Actions or omissions that lead to greenhouse gas emissions at an aggregated company level
- Corruption
- Other repeated or significant violations of basic ethical norms

Pareto Asset Management shall exercise a precautionary principle in connection with investments in biotechnology companies, gambling and alcohol.

## Corporate governance

Pareto Asset Management shall exercise active ownership in the portfolio companies in order to promote responsible business operations. This means that we will use our ownership rights and influence in the companies to help move the companies in a positive direction in terms of social relations, environmental issues, sustainability and good corporate governance.

When there is a specific reason to believe that a company violates our policy of responsible investments, we will consider addressing the issue with the company's management and encouraging the company to correct the circumstances. If necessary change is not implemented, Pareto Asset Management will normally sell all positions in the company.

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<sup>1</sup> The contents of UNPRI can be found here: [www.unpri.org/pri/what-are-the-principles-for-responsible-investment](http://www.unpri.org/pri/what-are-the-principles-for-responsible-investment).

<sup>2</sup> The UN Global Compact contains ten general principles derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights in Work and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

<sup>3</sup> This includes "the worst forms of child labour" as defined in the ILO Convention (No. 182) Article 3.

# Responsibility for monitoring the guidelines

Pareto Asset Management has established an ethics committee entrusted with the responsibility to ensure that the company's guidelines for responsible investments are up to date and appropriate, as well as assess and decide exclusion of companies in accordance with paragraph 2.3 of the guidelines. It will also assist portfolio managers with training, advice and sparring as needed. In particularly demanding cases, the Ethics Committee shall inform the CEO.

The Ethics Committee is headed by the company's chief investment officer and consists, in addition, of representatives of different departments as required.

Twice a year, the Ethics Committee prepares a report on our guidelines for responsible investments and the practice of these. The report reviews specific topics we have worked with as well as relevant company assessments and dilemmas. It shall be available to our customers.

The chairman of the Ethics Committee shall annually provide the Board of Pareto Asset Management with an overview of the status of ongoing work for responsible investments in the company.

The Compliance Manager shall supervise compliance with our Guidelines for Responsible Investments, including the necessary exclusion of companies. In addition, the compliance officer will attend meetings of the Ethics Committee as an observer.

## Facts

Behind the UNPRI principles is the UN Environment Program Finance Initiative (UNEP FI). UNEP FI is a global partnership between the United Nations Environment Program and the financial sector. Among the goals for the collaboration is to identify, promote and realize best environmental and sustainability practices in the financial industry. Central to this collaboration are ESG questions, derived from the English concepts environmental issues, social issues and corporate governance.

Through our signature, we committed ourselves to respond to ESG questions that may follow, to the best of both our customers in the long run and for society as a whole:

1. We will implement ESG issues in our investment analysis and decision-making processes
2. We will practice active ownership and implement ESG in our ownership policy and its exercise
3. We will work for satisfactory reporting on ESG topics from our portfolio companies
4. We will promote acceptance and implementation of the principles in the financial industry
5. We will work with other signatories to strengthen the effect of the principles and their implementation
6. We will report on our activities and our progress in implementing the principles

Our signature also includes a more general, implicit obligation to follow principles and standards anchored in the UN. These are voluntary, non-judicial recommendations that express expectations of good corporate governance, and which provide expectations for good corporate practices in dealing with environmental and social issues. In assessing our investments, these principles and standards will act as a reference framework and guide.

The UN Global Compact contains ten general principles derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights in Work and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. The principles are general and state, among other things, that companies must respect human rights and not be involved in violations of them, maintain freedom of association and collective bargaining rights, and eliminate all forms of forced labor, child labor and discrimination in working life.