

Neuberger Berman Emerging Market Debt Sustainable Investment Grade Blend Fund

The following disclosure is made in respect of the Portfolio pursuant to Article 10 of Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on sustainability-related disclosures in the financial services sector (“**SFDR**”) as supplemented by the Commission Delegated Regulation 2022/1288 of 6 April 2022 supplementing SFDR and the EU Taxonomy (the “**Delegated Act**”). **The disclosure is provided pursuant to the requirements of SFDR and is provided solely for the benefit of investors in the European Union.**

This document does not constitute an offer or an invitation to subscribe for interests of the Portfolio or any other alternative investment vehicle, and the information presented in this document is provided for the benefit of investors in the European Union and may be subject to change.

The Portfolio is currently classified as an Article 8 financial product for the purposes of SFDR. However, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager reserve the right to reclassify the Portfolio if legislative changes, enhancements, clarifications and/or minimum criteria are introduced which would impact its classification. Any such reclassification will be reflected in updated disclosures.

In case of any inconsistency between this disclosure and the supplement of the Portfolio, as amended and supplemented from time to time (the “**Supplement**”), the provisions of the Supplement shall prevail. Any defined terms not otherwise defined, have the meaning given to them in the Supplement.

This disclosure is provided in the English language. In case of discrepancies between the English version and any translation of the Summary section of this disclosure, the English version shall prevail.

Last updated: 1 July 2025

Neuberger Berman Emerging Market Debt Sustainable Investment Grade Blend Fund

The Portfolio is categorised as an Article 8 financial product for the purposes of SFDR.

As part of the investment process, the investment team promote a variety of environmental and social characteristics, as detailed below. These environmental and social characteristics are promoted using NB ESG Quotient. The NB ESG Quotient is built around the concept of sector specific financially material environmental, social or governance risk and opportunity, and produces an overall ESG rating for issuers by assessing them against certain ESG metrics.

Summary

No sustainable investment objective This Portfolio promotes environmental or social characteristics, but does not have as its objective sustainable investment. However, the Portfolio commits to holding a minimum of 50% sustainable investments.

Environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio The following environmental and social characteristics are promoted, as part of the NB ESG Quotient rating for sovereign issuers:

Environmental Characteristics: sovereign energy efficiency; climate change adaptation; deforestation; GHG emissions; air and household pollution; and unsafe sanitation.

The Portfolio commits to a net zero goal.

Social Characteristics: progress towards the SDGs; health and education levels; regulatory quality; political stability and freedoms; workforce inclusivity; research & development.

The following environmental and social characteristics are promoted, where relevant to the specific industry and issuer, as part of the NB ESG Quotient rating for corporate issuers:

Environmental Characteristics: biodiversity and land usage; carbon emissions; opportunities in clean technologies; water stress; toxic emissions & waste; financing environmental impact; product carbon footprint; environmental policy; environmental management system; GHG reduction programme; green procurement policy; and non-GHG air emissions programmes.

Social Characteristics: health & safety; human capital development; labour management; privacy & data security; product safety & quality; financial products safety; workforce inclusivity; community involvement programmes; and human rights policy.

Investment strategy The Portfolio aims to achieve a target average return of 1% over the Benchmark, before fees over a market cycle (typically 3 years) by investing primarily in a blend of investment grade rated hard and local emerging market currency denominated debt, issued by sovereigns, quasi-sovereigns, sub-sovereigns and corporate credits in Emerging Market Countries that meet the Sustainable Criteria. The Benchmark comprises of 1/3 weighting to the JP Morgan GBI Emerging Markets Global Diversified Investment Grade 15% Cap Index (Total Return, Unhedged, USD) and 2/3 weighting to the JP Morgan EMBI Global Diversified Investment Grade Index (Total Return, USD).

Assessment of Good Governance

Governance factors that the investment team tracks for corporate issuers may include: (i) senior management experience and sector expertise; (ii) ownership/board experience

	and alignment of incentives; (iii) corporate strategy and balance sheet strategy; (iv) financial and accounting strategy & disclosure; and (v) regulatory / legal track record.
Proportion of investments	The Portfolio aims to directly hold a minimum of 90% investments that are aligned with the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio. The Portfolio commits to holding a minimum of 50% sustainable investments.
Monitoring of environmental or social characteristics	The investment team considers a variety of sustainability indicators to measure the environmental and/or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio, including: I. the NB ESG Quotient; II. Avoidance criteria and involvement policies.
Methodologies for environmental or social characteristics	The investment team will track and report on the performance of the above sustainability indicators. These sustainability indicators will be used to measure the attainment of each of the environmental and social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio and will be included in the Portfolio's mandatory periodic report.
Data sources and processing	ESG data or analytical inputs are derived from proprietary investment tools and in-house research (which incorporates critical thinking and human judgment into the process) alongside multiple datasets including international financial organisations, external data vendors, company direct disclosures, company indirect disclosures, development agencies and specialty research providers.
Limitations to methodologies and data	Limitations in both methodology and data may include but are not limited to: lack of standardisation of data providers' methodologies; incomplete corporate reporting standards and misalignment with the corporate ESG data provided by the vendors; inconsistencies in the vendors' methodologies for reporting ESG data and disclosures used for deriving third-party metrics; inconsistencies in corporate hierarchies and entity identifiers can lead to inconsistencies in how data providers assign and map ESG datasets to securities; low company coverage across certain indicators and asset classes, especially in private companies and companies that reside in Emerging Markets; divergence in the data quality and coverage for Private Markets (Debt and Equity); some data sets can be reported at a significant time-lag; and some of the available third-party data is calculated based on proxy or data estimates. Neuberger Berman is satisfied that for its financial products, classified as Article 8 or Article 9 under the SFDR, such limitations do not affect either the promotion of the environmental or social characteristics, or the attainment of the sustainable investment objective committed to, by the relevant financial product.
Due diligence	Before making investments, Neuberger Berman will conduct reasonable and appropriate due diligence based on the facts and circumstances applicable to each investment.
Engagement policies	Engagement is an important component of the Portfolio's investment process.
Designated reference benchmark	N/A

Neuberger Berman Emerging Market Debt Sustainable Investment Grade Blend Fund

No sustainable investment objective of the financial product

This financial product promotes environmental or social characteristics, but does not have as its objective sustainable investment.

However, the Portfolio commits to holding a minimum of 50% sustainable investments.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager will take into account the following principal adverse impacts indicators outlined in Part 1 of the below table (the “**PAIs**”) and the principal adverse impacts for sovereign issuers outlined in Part 2 of the table below (the “**Sovereign PAIs**”) when determining whether the sustainable investments that the Portfolio intends to make, do not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective:

Part 1 – PAIs	
Theme	Adverse sustainability indicator
Greenhouse gas emissions	PAI 1 - GHG emissions PAI 2 - Carbon footprint PAI 3 - GHG intensity of investee companies PAI 4 - Exposure to companies active in the fossil fuel sector PAI 5 - Share of non-renewable energy consumption and production PAI 6 - Energy consumption intensity per high impact climate sector
Biodiversity	PAI 7 - Activities negatively affecting biodiversity-sensitive areas
Water	PAI 8 - Emissions to water
Waste	PAI 9 - Hazardous waste and radioactive waste ratio
Social and employee matters	PAI 10 - Violations of UN Global Compact principles and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises PAI 11 - Lack of processes and compliance mechanisms to monitor compliance with UN Global Compact principles and OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises PAI 12 - Unadjusted gender pay gap PAI 13 - Board gender diversity PAI 14 - Exposure to controversial weapons (anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions, chemical weapons and biological weapons)
Part 2 – Sovereign PAIs	
Environmental	PAI 15 - GHG intensity of investee countries
Social	PAI 16 - Investee countries subject to social violations

Consideration of the above PAIs is limited by the availability of adequate, reliable and verifiable data coverage for such indicators (in the Manager's and the Sub-Investment Manager's subjective view) in respect of the sustainable investments of the Portfolio, but this may evolve with improving data quality and availability. The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager will utilise third-party data and proxy data along with internal research to take into account the PAIs and Sovereign PAIs.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager, when determining whether the sustainable investments that the Portfolio intends to make, do not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective of the Portfolio's sustainable investments, will take account of the PAIs through a combination of:

- Monitoring issuers which fall below the quantitative and qualitative tolerance thresholds set for a PAI or Sovereign PAI;
- Setting engagement objectives where the Portfolio falls below the quantitative and qualitative tolerance thresholds set for a PAI or Sovereign PAIs; and
- Application of the avoidance criteria and involvement policies detailed below, which includes taking into account several of the PAIs.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager will not invest in issuers whose activities have been identified as breaching, or are not consistent with, the Neuberger Berman Global Standards Policy which excludes identified violators of the following international standards: (i) the UNGC Principles, (ii) the UNGPs, (iii) OECD Guidelines and (iv) the ILO Standards.

Environmental or social characteristics of the financial product

As part of the investment process, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager promote a variety of environmental and social characteristics, as detailed below. These environmental and social characteristics are promoted using the NB ESG Quotient. The NB ESG Quotient is built around the concept of sector specific financially material environmental, social or governance risk and opportunity, and produces an overall ESG rating for issuers by assessing them against certain ESG metrics.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager use the NB ESG Quotient to promote the environmental and social characteristics listed below by prioritising investment in securities issued by issuers with a relatively favourable and/or an improving NB ESG Quotient rating. The Portfolio does not invest in issuers which rank in the bottom decile in terms of the NB ESG Quotient, with no near term improvement prospects.

The following environmental and social characteristics are promoted, as part of the NB ESG Quotient rating for sovereign issuers:

- **Environmental Characteristics:** sovereign energy efficiency; climate change adaptation; deforestation; GHG emissions; air and household pollution; and unsafe sanitation.

In aiming to align the Portfolio with a net-zero goal, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager intend that by 2030 at least 90% of the Portfolio's corporate issuer exposure: i) be considered as 'Achieving net-zero', 'Aligned to a net-zero pathway' or 'Aligning towards a net-zero pathway' as categorised by the NB Net-Zero Alignment Indicator; or ii) be subject to engagement on an ongoing basis.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager intend that by 2050, 100% of the Portfolio's corporate issuer exposure be considered as 'Achieving net-zero'. For further information regarding the NB Net-Zero Alignment Indicator, please see the "Sustainability Investment Criteria" section of the Prospectus.

Additionally, the Portfolio must reduce the carbon footprint of its corporate issuer exposure across scope 1, 2, and material scope 3 GHG emissions¹, by a minimum of 30% by 2030 relative to a 2019 baseline

¹ Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from an issuer's owned or controlled sources (such as emissions created directly by the issuer's business processes or from vehicles owned by the issuer). Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of electricity, steam, heating and cooling consumed by the issuer.

and a subsequent decline to net-zero by 2050. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no annual reduction target, instead the reduction target focuses solely on the 2030 milestone and the 2050 net-zero goal. The 2019 baseline may be subject to re-calculation as data quality and disclosure expands over time, particularly with respect to scope 3 emissions.

- **Social Characteristics:** progress towards the SDGs; health and education levels; regulatory quality; political stability and freedoms; workforce inclusivity; and research & development.

The following environmental and social characteristics are promoted, where relevant to the specific industry and issuer, as part of the NB ESG Quotient rating for corporate issuers:

- **Environmental Characteristics:** biodiversity and land usage; carbon emissions; opportunities in clean technologies; water stress; toxic emissions & waste; financing environmental impact; product carbon footprint; environmental policy; environmental management system; GHG reduction programme; green procurement policy; and non-GHG air emissions programmes.
- **Social Characteristics:** health & safety; human capital development; labour management; privacy & data security; product safety & quality; financial products safety; workforce inclusivity; community involvement programmes; and human rights policy.

Performance in relation to these environmental and social characteristics will be measured through the NB ESG Quotient, and will be reported in aggregate in the Portfolio's mandatory periodic report template (as per the requirements of Article 11 of SFDR).

The NB ESG Quotient methodology will evolve over time and all environmental, social or governance characteristics included therein are reviewed regularly and are subject to annual review to ensure that the most pertinent environmental, social or governance characteristics are captured. Accordingly, the environmental and social characteristics promoted as part of the NB ESG Quotient are subject to change. For the avoidance of doubt, if the environmental or social characteristics promoted as part of the NB ESG Quotient change, this website disclosure will be updated accordingly.

Avoidance criteria are also applied (as further set out below) as part of the construction and ongoing monitoring of the Portfolio. These represent additional environmental and social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio.

A reference benchmark has not been designated for the purpose of attaining the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio.

Investment strategy

The Portfolio aims to achieve a target average return of 1% over the Benchmark, before fees over a market cycle (typically 3 years) by investing primarily in a blend of investment grade rated hard and local emerging market currency denominated debt, issued by sovereigns, quasi-sovereigns, sub-sovereigns and corporate credits in Emerging Market Countries that meet the Sustainable Criteria. The Benchmark comprises of 1/3 weighting to the J.P. Morgan GBI Emerging Markets Global Diversified Investment Grade 15% Cap Index (Total Return, Unhedged, USD) and 2/3 weighting to the J.P. Morgan EMBI Global Diversified Investment Grade Index (Total Return, USD).

The Portfolio is aiming to align with a net-zero goal, as further described in this SFDR Annex and in the "Sustainable Investment Criteria" section of the Prospectus.

For sovereign bonds, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager deploy a methodology that tracks a country's net-zero alignment according to GermanWatch's Climate Change Performance Index, which is recommended by

Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions that occur in an issuer's value chain (such as emissions from products or services consumed by the issuer, disposal of its waste, employee commuting, distribution and transport of its products or its investments).

the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change² (“IIGCC”), as well as Climate Action Tracker. Any net-zero commitments and targets are set in the expectation that governments will follow through on their own commitments to ensure the objectives of the Paris Agreement are met, including increasing the ambition of their Nationally Determined Contributions (“NDCs”).

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager consider and evaluate environmental, social or governance characteristics, as an important component of their credit analysis discipline, when making investment decisions. The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager utilise the NB ESG Quotient criteria, as part of the Portfolio construction and investment management process. As noted above, NB ESG Quotient assigns weightings to environmental, social or governance characteristics for each sector to derive the NB ESG Quotient rating. Issuers with a favourable and/or an improving NB ESG Quotient rating have a higher chance of ending up in the Portfolio. The Portfolio does not invest in issuers which rank in the bottom decile in terms of their NB ESG Quotient, with no near term improvement prospects.

The environmental, social or governance analysis is performed internally, with the support of third-party data, and is not outsourced.

In addition, corporate credit worthiness is complemented by fundamental analysis aimed at assessing the issuer’s financial performance such as revenue/earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortisation (“EBITDA”) growth, cash flow growth, capital expenditures, leverage trends and liquidity profile.

Environmental, social or governance characteristics are promoted at three different levels:

- i. Integrating proprietary environmental, social or governance analysis:

The NB ESG Quotient ratings are generated for issuers in the Portfolio. The NB ESG Quotient rating for issuers is utilised to help to better identify risks and opportunities in the overall credit and value assessment.

The NB ESG Quotient is a key component of the internal credit ratings and can help to identify business risks (including financially material environmental, social or governance risks), which would cause deterioration in an issuer’s credit profile. Internal credit ratings can be notched up or down based on the NB ESG Quotient rating, and this is monitored by the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager as an important component of the investment process for the Portfolio.

By integrating the investment team’s proprietary environmental, social or governance analysis (the NB ESG Quotient) into their internal credit ratings, there is a direct link between their analysis of material environmental, social or governance characteristics and portfolio construction activities across their strategy.

Issuers with a favourable and/or an improving NB ESG Quotient rating have a higher chance of ending up in the Portfolio. The Portfolio does not invest in issuers which rank in the bottom decile in terms of the NB ESG Quotient, with no near term improvement prospects.

- ii. Engagement:

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager engage directly with management teams of issuers through a robust engagement program.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager may also engage with sovereign issuers in developed and Emerging Market Countries. Where the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager seek to engage with sovereigns, such engagement efforts may include speaking regularly to government officials, policy makers and international financial organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Asian Development Bank, with onsite visits whenever possible, and utilise such meetings to engage with sovereign issuers on sustainability-related topics, where the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager see scope for improvement for the relevant country.

²The IIGCC created the Net-Zero Investment Framework to assist asset owners and asset managers to develop net-zero investment strategies or to fulfil the requirements of net-zero commitments. The IIGCC’s target setting guidance is a component of the Net-Zero Investment Framework.

The sovereign engagement process tends to focus on the various areas relating to SDGs under the UNGC Principles, and the UNGPs. In addition, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager monitor and engage with countries on reducing GHG emissions and improving policies towards net-zero alignment. Sovereign engagement is also carried out with countries to improve fiscal transparency, tackle corruption and comply with FATF recommendations to address strategic deficiencies in counter money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing. Progress on sovereign engagement is tracked centrally in the Manager's and the Sub-Investment Manager's engagement log.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager view this direct engagement with issuers, as an important part of its investment process (including the investment selection process). Issuers that are not receptive to engagement are less likely to be held (or to continue to be held) by the Portfolio.

This program is focused on in-person meetings, email and conference calls to understand financially material environmental, social or governance risks, opportunities, and assess good corporate governance practices of issuers. As part of the direct engagement process, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager may set objectives for the issuers to attain. These objectives as well as the issuers' progress with respect to same are monitored and tracked by the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager through an internal Neuberger Berman ("NB") engagement tracker.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager believe this consistent engagement with issuers can help reduce credit risk and promote positive sustainable corporate change. It is an important tool to identify and better understand an issuer's risk factors and performance. The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager also use it to promote change, when necessary, which they believe will result in positive outcomes for creditors and broader stakeholders. The success of both the Manager's and the Sub-Investment Manager's constructive engagement efforts with issuers will depend on each of the issuer's receptiveness and responsiveness to such engagement.

iii. Avoidance criteria and involvement policies:

To ensure that the environmental and social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio can be attained, the Portfolio will apply the avoidance criteria and involvement policies explained in more detail in the "Methodologies for environmental or social characteristics" section, which place limitations on the investable universe.

Policy to assess good governance practices of the investee companies

The governance factors that the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager track for corporate issuers may include: (i) senior management experience and sector expertise; (ii) ownership/board experience and alignment of incentives; (iii) corporate strategy and balance sheet strategy; (iv) financial and accounting strategy & disclosure; and (v) regulatory / legal track record.

Engagement with management is an important component of the Portfolio's investment process, and the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager engage directly with management teams of issuers through a robust engagement program. This program is focused on in-person meetings, email and conference calls to understand risks, opportunities and assess good corporate governance practices of corporate issuers. The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager view this direct engagement with issuers, as an important part of its investment process.

The timing of the engagement may be reactionary in certain cases, opportunistic in cases of industry events or pre-planned meetings, or proactive where time allows and without undue restrictions such as during quiet periods or M&A events that may prevent outreach actions. Ultimately, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager aim to prioritise engagement that is expected, based on the Manager's and the Sub-Investment Manager's subjective analysis, to have a high impact on the protection of and improvement to the value of the Portfolio, be it through the advancement of actionable disclosure, understanding of risks and risk management at an issuer, or through influence and action to mitigate risks (including sustainability risks) and take advantage of investment opportunities.

Additionally, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager also track governance factors for Emerging Market Countries such as: (i) the political sphere of the relevant country, (ii) the adherence to the rule of law, (iii) control of corruption, political uncertainty related to upcoming elections and (iv) a focus of the quality of economic governance, namely the government's role as an effective regulator and support of the private sector through responsible financial, macroeconomic and international trade policies.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager may take into account other governance factors as appropriate from time to time.

As described above, the Portfolio will only invest in securities issued by issuers whose activities do not breach the Neuberger Berman Global Standards Policy which identifies violators of the following international standards: (i) the UNGC Principles, (ii) the OECD Guidelines, (iii) the UNGPs and (iv) the ILO Standards.

Proportion of investments

The Portfolio aims to hold a minimum of 90% investments that are aligned with the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio. The Portfolio commits to holding a minimum of 50% in sustainable investments. The Portfolio aims to hold a maximum of 10% investments that are not aligned with the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio and are not sustainable investments, and which fall into the “Other” section of the Portfolio.

Please note that while the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager aim to achieve the asset allocation targets outlined, these figures may fluctuate during the investment period and ultimately, as with any investment target, may not be attained.

The exact asset allocation of this Portfolio will be reported in the Portfolio’s mandatory periodic report SFDR template, for the relevant reference period. This will be calculated based on the average of the four quarter ends.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager have calculated the proportion of investments aligned with the environmental and/or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio: i) that hold either an NB ESG Quotient rating or a third-party equivalent ESG rating that is used as part of the portfolio construction and investment management process of the Portfolio; and/or ii) with whom the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager have engaged directly. The calculation is based on a mark-to-market assessment of the Portfolio and may rely on incomplete or inaccurate issuer or third-party data.

While the Portfolio may use derivatives for efficient portfolio management investment purposes and/or, hedging, it will not use derivatives to promote environmental or social characteristics.

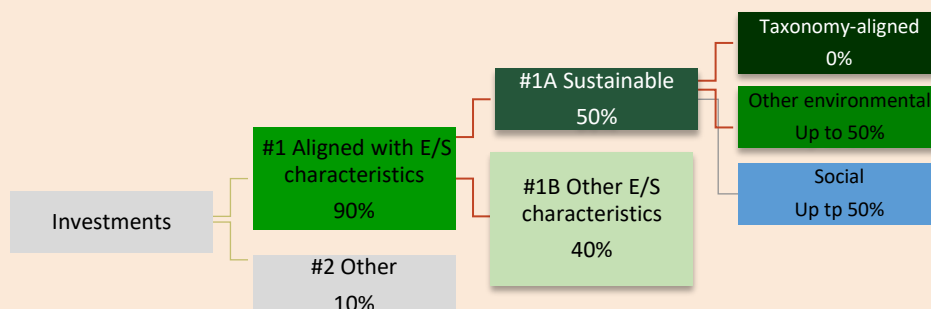
“Other” includes the remaining investments of the Portfolio (which may include but are not limited to derivatives or security collateralized by a pool of similar assets or receivables listed in the Supplement for the Portfolio) that are neither aligned with the environmental or social characteristics, nor are qualified as sustainable investments.

The “Other” section in the Portfolio is held for a number of reasons that the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager feel will be beneficial to the Portfolio, such as, but not limited to, achieving risk management, and/or to ensure adequate liquidity, hedging and collateral cover.

As noted below, the Portfolio will be invested in compliance with avoidance criteria and involvement policies, on a continuous basis. This ensures that investments made by the Portfolio seek to align with international environmental and social safeguards such as the UNGC Principles, UNGPs, OECD Guidelines and ILO Standards.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager believe that these policies prevent investment in issuers that most egregiously violate environmental and/or social minimum standards and ensures that the Portfolio can successfully promote its environmental and social characteristics.

The above steps ensure that robust environmental and social safeguards are in place.



#1 Aligned with E/S characteristics includes the investments of the financial product used to attain the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product.

#2 Other includes the remaining investments of the financial product which are neither aligned with the environmental or social characteristics, nor are qualified as sustainable investments.

The category **#1 Aligned with E/S characteristics** covers:

- The sub-category **#1A Sustainable** covers sustainable investments with environmental or social objectives.
- The sub-category **#1B Other E/S characteristics** covers investments aligned with the environmental or social characteristics that do not qualify as sustainable investments.

Monitoring of environmental or social characteristics

Following investment, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager monitor issuers on an ongoing basis to track their performance with respect to environmental and social characteristics. In particular, the Manager and Sub-Investment Manager will track and report on the performance of (i) the NB ESG Quotient; and (ii) the adherence to the avoidance criteria and involvement policies applied to the Portfolio. These sustainability indicators will be used to measure the attainment of each of the environmental and social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio and will be included in the Portfolio's mandatory periodic report (as per the requirements of Article 11 of SFDR).

Methodologies for environmental or social characteristics

As part of the investment process, the Manager and Sub-Investment Manager consider a variety of sustainability indicators to measure the environmental and/or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio. These are listed below:

i. The NB ESG Quotient:

The NB ESG Quotient (as explained in the section headed "Environmental or social characteristics of the financial product") is used to measure the environmental and social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio.

The NB ESG Quotient assigns weightings to environmental, social or governance factors for countries and for corporate sectors to derive the NB ESG Quotient rating. While the NB ESG Quotient rating of issuers is considered as part of the investment process, there is no minimum NB ESG Quotient rating to be attained by an issuer prior to investment. Issuers with a favourable and/or an improving NB ESG Quotient rating have a higher chance of being included in the Portfolio.

The Portfolio does not invest in Issuers which rank in the bottom of the NB ESG Quotient, with no near term improvement prospects.

ii. Avoidance criteria and involvement policies:

To ensure that the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio can be attained, the Portfolio will not invest in securities issued by issuers whose activities have been identified as breaching, or are not consistent with, the Neuberger Berman Controversial Weapons Policy, the Neuberger Berman Thermal Coal Involvement Policy and the EU PAB exclusions provided for under the Neuberger Berman EU Climate Benchmark Standard Exclusions Policy. The Neuberger Berman Sustainable Exclusion Policy is also applied when determining what investments to make for the Portfolio.

The Portfolio will prohibit investment in securities issued by issuers that (i) derive more than 1% of their revenue from thermal coal mining through the application of EU PAB exclusions provided for under the Neuberger Berman EU Climate Benchmark Standard Exclusions Policy; or (ii) are expanding new thermal coal power generation.

The Portfolio will exclude issuers from the investment universe that manufacture incendiary weapons using white phosphorus or that have an industry tie to nuclear weapons. The Portfolio will exclude securities issued by issuers that derive 5% or more of revenue from the production of adult entertainment materials; or the production of conventional weapons. Furthermore, the Portfolio will not invest in securities issued by issuers whose activities have been identified as breaching, or are not consistent with, the Neuberger Berman Global Standards Policy which excludes identified violators of the following international standards: (i) the UNGC Principles, (ii) the OECD Guidelines, (iii) the UNGPs, (iii) the UNGPs and (iv) the ILO Standards. The Portfolio also excludes issuers from the investment universe that are involved in the manufacturing of fur, gambling or nuclear power. Further details on these avoidance criteria and involvement policies are set out in the “*Sustainable Investment Criteria*” section of the Prospectus.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager will not invest in debt securities and money market instruments issued by sovereign issuers which are identified by the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager as having weak sustainability practices. Such avoidance criteria will be based on a number of factors including environmental, social or governance factors, human rights shortcomings or non-compliance with minimum international tax or financial standards as further detailed below:

- Sovereign issuers which are ranked in the bottom decile based on the NB ESG Quotient, with no near term improvement prospects; or
- Sovereign issuers which have been excluded from the J.P. Morgan ESG EMBI Global Diversified Index (Total Return, USD) based on environmental, social or governance considerations; or
- Sovereign issuers where top officials have been sanctioned by the UN Security Council based on human rights violations; or
- Sovereign issuers which are assessed as having high and increasing GHG intensity levels; or
- Sovereign issuers which are assessed as having poor and deteriorating human rights and rule of law metrics; or
- Sovereign issuers which are non-compliant with the standard put forth by the OECD’s Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes, or sovereign issuers that are classified as a high risk jurisdiction subject to a call for action by the Financial Action Task Force (“**FATF**”).

For the avoidance of doubt, while the Portfolio will not invest in such securities, they may underlie credit derivatives which the Portfolio uses for hedging purposes only.

Data sources and processing

ESG data or analytical inputs are derived from proprietary investment tools and in-house research (which incorporates critical thinking and human judgment into the process) alongside multiple datasets including international financial organisations, external data vendors, company direct disclosures (e.g., sustainability reports, annual reports, regulatory filings, and company websites), company indirect disclosures (e.g., government agency published data, industry and trade association data, and third-party financial data providers), development agencies and specialty research providers.

ESG data is a key domain and part of our internal data governance with an assigned ESG Data Steward and a dedicated Stewardship and Sustainable Investing (“SSI”) Technology Team. The ESG Data Steward has periodic engagements with ESG data vendors to discuss data coverage and evolution in methodologies. Subscription to multiple data vendors enables us to evaluate company coverage and quality of data between vendors. In addition, our Stewardship and Sustainable Investing Group (“SSI Group”) and ESG Data and Reporting team work together to explore new data products and vendors to evaluate potential enhancements to our existing data coverage and governance, as well as identifying innovative and non-traditional data sources, which may provide additional insights. NB actively seeks to identify additional data and research, which may enhance our analysis.

ESG data is integrated throughout the firm’s operating management system, compliance and risk management systems, providing all stakeholders transparency, into most portfolio ESG metrics in real time.

NB believes that the most effective way to integrate financially material environmental, social and governance factors into an investment process over the long term is for investment teams themselves to research such factors and consider them alongside other inputs into the investment process. For this reason, environmental, social and governance research is included in the work of our research analysts rather than employing a separate research team.

The investment teams can then choose how best to apply all the tools of active management, whether that is to engage or ultimately to buy or sell a company based upon its risk-adjusted potential return.

NB expects that data availability and quality will improve as the demand, regulation, international disclosure standards and methods for obtaining and reporting data mature, which would also reduce the proportion of data that is estimated or that relies on proxy data.

Limitations to methodologies and data

As a global investor, NB operates in many different jurisdictions, most of which are adopting sustainability-related reporting and disclosure requirements. The need to comply with these regulations is taken into consideration when applicable in business decisions around developing or enhancing infrastructure such as committees focused on stewardship and sustainability matters, risk oversight and monitoring tools, and internal audit. NB monitors legal and regulatory requirements that may directly affect our business. For SFDR, NB considers that the limitations in both methodology and data may include but are not limited to:

- Lack of standardisation of data providers’ methodologies;
- Incomplete corporate reporting standards and misalignment with the corporate ESG data provided by the vendors;
- Inconsistencies in the vendors’ methodologies for reporting ESG data and disclosures of the underlying data used for deriving third-party metrics;
- Inconsistencies in corporate hierarchies and entity identifiers can lead to inconsistencies in how data providers assign and map ESG datasets to securities;
- Low company coverage across certain indicators and asset classes, especially in private companies and companies that reside in Emerging Markets;
- Divergence in the data quality and coverage for Private Markets (Debt and Equity);
- Some data sets can be reported at a significant time-lag; and

- Some of the available third-party data is calculated based on data estimates or proxies. There may be discrepancies between the models estimating the data and actual reported data, and significant deviations when data is restated or the underlying assumptions of these models are altered.

NB has developed a firm-wide proprietary ratings system, the NB ESG Quotient, which is under regular review to enhance methodology and data coverage.

The NB ESG Quotient leverages third-party data, but not third-party aggregate scores. The NB ESG Quotient enhances the analysis and research of financially material environmental, social and governance risks and opportunities.

In addition, NB continues to advocate for greater standardised disclosures; for example, NB is a member of the International Sustainability Standards Board's ("ISSB") Investor Advisory Group ("IIAG"), which aims to provide strategic guidance on developing International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS") Sustainability Disclosure Standards and ensure that the investor perspective is considered in the standard-setting process. NB is also a member of the IFRS Sustainability Alliance, which aims to develop a more coherent and comprehensive system for corporate disclosure.

In line with our belief that climate change is a material driver of investment risk and return across industries and asset classes, NB is also a formal supporter of the recommendations of the Taskforce on Climate Related Financial Disclosure ("TCFD") which have now come under the scope of the ISSB. Alongside ISSB standards, the TCFD recommendations continue to help develop voluntary, consistent climate-related financial risk disclosures.

The limitations discussed impact all consumers of ESG data and are not specific to NB. NB is satisfied that for its financial products, classified as Article 8 or Article 9 under the SFDR, such limitations do not affect the attainment of environmental or social characteristics or the attainment of the sustainable investment objective committed to by the relevant financial product, in particular because of the steps taken by NB to mitigate such limitations:

- As noted above, NB periodically engages with data vendors on data quality, and the third-party sources relied upon are the same as those relied upon by the broader market, and so are likely to be refined as the market for products with environmental or social characteristics matures;
- NB does not believe that there is currently one third-party data provider that holistically provides all data required under the SFDR. NB periodically reviews select third-party data providers, this allows NB to identify the best available data sources.
- NB engages directly with management teams of corporate issuers through a robust engagement program; and
- Each investment opportunity's environmental and social characteristics are evaluated in detail, in accordance with our internal frameworks and using a variety of data sources, having regard to these limitations as well (where appropriate).

Due diligence

NB applies a high standard of due diligence in the selection and ongoing monitoring of investments made by the Portfolio to ensure delivery of the Portfolio's investment objectives and compliance with the investment, liquidity and risk guidelines of the Portfolio, as well as integrating sustainability risk and financially material environmental, social and governance considerations.

NB views the integration of financially material environmental, social and governance factors as the practice of incorporating financially material environmental, social and governance risks and opportunities (as a binding element) into the investment decision-making process. This integration sits alongside traditional financial considerations and should enrich NB's investment teams' analysis of issuers by providing a toolkit for identifying financially material environmental, social and governance risks and opportunities, informing investment decisions. NB believes that financially material environmental, social and governance factors may be an important driver of long-term investment returns from both an opportunity and a risk-mitigation perspective.

Before making investments, the investment team will conduct due diligence that it deems reasonable and appropriate based on the facts and circumstances applicable to each investment. The investment team will assess the investment's environmental and social characteristics promoted by the product using (as appropriate) internal analyses, screens, proprietary tools, and third-party data sources, and may also evaluate other important and complex governance issues related to the investment. The investment team may select investments on the basis of information and data filed by the issuers of such securities with various regulatory bodies or made directly available to NB by the issuers of the securities, or through sources other than the issuers.

The Portfolio applies the Neuberger Berman Thermal Coal Involvement Policy. Additionally, the Portfolio will not invest in securities issued by issuers whose activities have been identified as breaching the Neuberger Berman Controversial Weapons Policy or the Neuberger Berman Global Standards Policy.

The Neuberger Berman Controversial Weapons Policy, Neuberger Berman Thermal Coal Involvement Policy, and the Neuberger Berman Global Standards Policy are subject to internal review by the Neuberger Berman Stewardship and Sustainable Investing Committee. The implementation of these policies is managed by the NB Asset Management Guideline Oversight Team in collaboration with Legal and Compliance.

NB's SSI Group provides expert guidance, resources, and training to investment professionals during the investment process and works to improve the firm's environmental, social and governance practices. In partnership with the firm's SSI Group, investment teams are trained on environmental, social and governance due diligence best practices and guidance at least once a year, but often more frequently.

The investment professionals responsible for portfolio management are the first step in maintaining compliance with the Portfolio's investment guidelines and avoidance criteria. While NB looks to the investment professionals as the first step in the compliance process, NB recognizes the need for additional, independent, and ongoing oversight. To this end, a rigorous risk management framework is established that features dedicated investment and operational risk teams inclusive of independent guidelines oversight, such as avoidance criteria, who work to protect client assets and our reputation. Our risk professionals act as an independent complement to each investment team's portfolio construction process, driving investment and operational risk reviews in collaboration with other control units of the firm, such as information technology, operations, legal and compliance, asset management guideline oversight and internal audit.

Engagement policies

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager engage directly with management teams of issuers through a robust engagement program.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager may also engage with sovereign issuers in developed and Emerging Market Countries. Where the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager seek to engage with sovereigns, such engagement efforts may include speaking regularly to government officials, policy makers and international financial organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Asian Development Bank, with onsite visits whenever possible, and utilise such meetings to engage with sovereign issuers on

sustainability-related topics, where the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager see scope for improvement for the relevant country.

The sovereign engagement process tends to focus on the various areas relating to SDGs under the UNGC Principles, and the UNGPs. In addition, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager monitor and engage with countries on reducing GHG emissions and improving policies towards net-zero alignment. Sovereign engagement is also carried out with countries to improve fiscal transparency, tackle corruption and comply with FATF recommendations to address strategic deficiencies in counter money laundering, terrorist financing and proliferation financing. Progress on sovereign engagement is tracked centrally in the Manager's and the Sub-Investment Manager's engagement log.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager view this direct engagement with issuers, as an important part of its investment process (including the investment selection process). Issuers that are not receptive to engagement are less likely to be held (or to continue to be held) by the Portfolio.

This program is focused on in-person meetings, email and conference calls to understand financially material environmental, social or governance risks, opportunities, and assess good corporate governance practices of issuers. As part of the direct engagement process, the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager may set objectives for the issuers to attain. These objectives as well as the issuers' progress with respect to same are monitored and tracked by the Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager through an internal NB engagement tracker.

The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager believe this consistent engagement with issuers can help reduce credit risk and promote positive sustainable corporate change. It is an important tool to identify and better understand an issuer's risk factors and performance. The Manager and the Sub-Investment Manager also use it to promote change, when necessary, which they believe will result in positive outcomes for creditors and broader stakeholders. The success of both the Manager's and the Sub-Investment Manager's constructive engagement efforts with issuers will depend on each of the issuer's receptiveness and responsiveness to such engagement.

Designated reference benchmark

The Portfolio's benchmark has not been designated as a reference benchmark. Therefore, it is not consistent with the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Portfolio.