

April 2021

## Erste Group's Green Consumption Pledge

An Initiative by the European Commission

Since Erste's founding over 200 years ago as the first Austrian savings bank, we have been following the principle of making financial products and services accessible and disseminating prosperity throughout all segments of society. Assuming responsibility for our actions and offering our services to reduce the risk of poverty or social exclusion, has been our purpose and guiding principle ever since. As one of the largest financial services providers in the Eastern part of the EU, we still strive to actively create added value for people, the environment, the economies and, more generally, for the region and communities in which we operate.

Securing the prosperity of future generations increasingly means also reevaluating and reconsidering how we contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources. At Erste Group, we understand that everything we do has an impact on the environment, whether in the form of our facilities or the mobility of our employees. Most importantly, we can make a positive impact with the financing products and solutions that we offer to more than 16 million customers across seven markets in the CEE (Central and Eastern Europe) region.

We want to continue our progress towards a more sustainable society and economy and be an active part of the green transition, also by offering our clients the opportunity to invest in ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) products supported by transparent and accessible information. That is why we stand with the European Commission in their efforts and make the following commitments:

### Pledge (2)

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2021 EAM (Erste Asset Management) manages 11 ERSTE-labelled funds awarded with the Austrian Ecolabel UZ49<sup>1</sup>. Until the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2023 EAM plans to increase the number of ERSTE-labelled funds awarded with the Austrian Ecolabel UZ49 to at least 17. This signifies an increase of at least 50%.

### Pledge (4)

We will increase the share of EAM's discretionary marketing budget (defined as overall budget minus contribution to Erste Bank and Sparkassen Group activities) dedicated to marketing ESG topics and products to at least 25% until the end of 2023. Goal achievement will be measured based on EAM's profit and loss statement for the year 2023 and will be published in the non-financial chapter of Erste Group's annual report.

We will inform our distribution partners and institutional clients on a regular basis about the latest ESG topics and research in order to promote ESG investments.

EAM pledges to inform clients in at least three layers on ESG topics and activities:

- The Handbook of Responsibility will serve as basic information on ESG. The publication will be updated on a yearly basis to include the latest developments on ESG.
- Our quarterly ESGenius Newsletter will provide a theme-based in-depth analysis of the latest ESG developments.
- Starting in April 2021, we will - until the end of 2023 - publish 100 articles and publications on ESG topics on our financial blog. Our blogs will provide our clients with information on the latest ESG developments and trends.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.umweltzeichen.at/en/products/sustainable-finance>

- We will list all ESG related publications in a comprehensive form on our webpage by the end of each month so that interested clients and the general public can easily access the information and validate the pledge. The information will be published on the content pages for private investors<sup>2</sup> and institutional investors<sup>3</sup>.

As part of a regular scheduled communication, we offer educational sessions to our distribution partners and institutional clients to drive investors' education with regard to ESG investments. Information on the events will be made publicly available on our webpage.

- EAM will host webinars for EAM's institutional and retail sales channel on a quarterly basis.
- Various regular meetings with advisors throughout the savings bank sector are held. Three of these meetings are held yearly with approximately 1.000 participants in each event.

Moreover, we pledge to host at least one full-day ESG conference per year to our institutional clients across the region.

## **Pledge (5)**

Until the end of 2021 EAM pledges to:

- provide SDG-reporting (Sustainable Development Goals) for all ERSTE-labelled mutual funds and impact reporting for all ERSTE-labelled impact funds managed by EAM (qualified as Article 9 under the EU Disclosure Regulation) and make the report available on EAM's webpage.
- exercise voting rights according to our Sustainable Voting Policy and publish our voting decisions on our homepage.

Finally, we commit to report at least annually our progress on our webpage and in Erste Group's Sustainability report.

EAM will provide information on our yearly progress in achieving the goals we committed to in this pledge on our webpage: <https://www.erste-am.at/en/private-investors/sustainability>

Bernd Spalt, CEO Erste Group Bank AG

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.erste-am.at/en/private-investors/sustainability>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.erste-am.at/en/institutional-investors/nachhaltigkeit/publications-and-guidelines>