

Call for Papers
for the Conference Stream on
The Contribution of Sustainable Investments to
Sustainable Development

within the

11th Annual International Sustainable Development Research Conference

June 6-8, 2005 in Helsinki at Finlandia Hall, Finland

Conference Website: www.erpenvironment.org

Session Convenors: Dr. Pontus Cerin and Dr. Peter Dobers

Being the linchpin in the increasingly globalised economy, the financial sector has the potential to play a key role in the international struggle towards Sustainable Development (SD) by steering today's but also tomorrow's resource usage. Increasingly, initiatives are taken by actors in the financial community to not only regard the fiduciary responsibility of investors, but also to incorporate wider concerns of ethical, social and environmental character.

Sustainable Investments (SI), among numerous denominations, are investments that combine the investors' financial needs and the investment's societal and environmental impacts. This investment segment has grown to a non-negligible size during the last decade and has found many advocates within as well as outside the investment community such as academics, analysts, investors, NGO's and fund trustees. The common promotion of SI's is by merely stressing their financial performance in comparison to mainstream investments, neglecting to emphasise the environmental and social performance of such investments.

A contributing factor for this may be due to the difficulties for companies to extract quantifiable data, despite existing reporting and assessment initiatives. Another issue obstructing a clear view on the societal contribution of SI's is the fundamental question of who is to decide what is ethical and sustainable. To what degree are the ethical considerations of institutional and mutual funds coherent with the views of investors and society in general?

The main objective of this conference special stream is to survey the SI phenomenon today, detecting and discussing present opportunities and obstacles, and importantly, to find roads for improvements, enhancing the imperative role that SIs can play in financing operations that lead to improved environmental and social performances in concert with a thriving economy. For the conference stream on the Contribution of Sustainable Investments to Sustainable Development, we are seeking offers of papers addressing the following research areas:

- How can SI become a long-term driver for influencing corporate behaviour towards SD?
- Identify institutional opportunities and obstacles for SI – incentive and decision structures

- Bridging the gap between mainstream analysts and the SRI community
- Development of legal frameworks that support a new role for fiduciaries
- The problem of retrieving a fair picture of firms' sustainability work and its outcomes
- Using material and energy flow models, e.g. life cycle assessment, to grasp firm contribution to SD
- Who is to decide what is ethical or not, and what is considered ethical tomorrow?
- How are ethical considerations communicated in the investment value chain?
- The contribution of initiatives from ethical analysis, UN, OECD, GRI and DJSI in SI
- The potential role for SI in emerging market economies and (as seed money) through venture capital
- What determines accessory in an investment's ethical (unethical) activities?
- Investor strategies when investments go wrong – shareholder engagement or exclusion?

The conference stream will be chaired by Pontus Cerin and Peter Dobers from Unit of Industrial Dynamics, Department of Industrial Economics and Management (INDEK), Royal Institute of Technology (KTH).

Papers submitted to the special stream are considered for publication in the *Progress in Industrial Ecology* special issue on 'The Contribution of Sustainable Investments to Sustainable Development'.

Initial abstracts of approximately 200 words should be emailed to Pontus Cerin at cerin@kth.se or Peter Dobers at dobers@kth.se with a copy to Jouni Korhonen at jouni.korhonen@uta.fi by February 11, 2005.