

Sustainability related disclosures

Capitalised terms used but not defined herein shall have the meanings set forth in the Fund’s supplement.

Product name: M&G OPTIMAL INCOME FAM FUND  
 Legal entity identifier: 635400ZSWNWUL3K7NJ24

## Environmental and/or social characteristics

Does this financial product have a sustainable investment objective?	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> It will make a minimum of sustainable investments with an environmental objective: ___% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> in economic activities that qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> in economic activities that do not qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> It will make a minimum of sustainable investments with a social objective: ___%	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It promotes Environmental/Social (E/S) characteristics and while it does not have as its objective a sustainable investment, it will have a minimum proportion of 20% of sustainable investments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> with an environmental objective in economic activities that qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> with an environmental objective in economic activities that do not qualify as environmentally sustainable under the EU Taxonomy</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> with a social objective</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> It promotes E/S characteristics, but will not make any sustainable investments

### A. Summary

The Fund promotes environmental or social characteristics, but does not have as its objective sustainable investment. The Fund may allocate to sustainable investments of any type. The Investment Manager uses a series of proprietary tests based on available data to determine whether and how an investment makes positive contribution(s) towards environmental and social objectives. Sustainable investments that the Fund intends to make do not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective as they are required to pass a series of tests. The Investment Manager’s research process includes consideration of Principal Adverse Impact indicators for all investments where data is available, which allows the Investment Manager to make informed investment decisions. Investments held by the Fund are then subject to ongoing monitoring and a quarterly review process. All investments purchased by the Fund must pass the

Investment Manager's good governance tests, and in addition, sustainable investments must also pass tests to confirm they do no significant harm, as described above. These tests embed a consideration of the OECD Guidelines and UN Guiding Principles.

The Fund promotes the use of an Exclusionary Approach and a Positive ESG Tilt. The Fund excludes certain potential investments from its investment universe to mitigate potential negative effects on the environment and society. Consideration of ESG Factors is fully integrated into analysis and investment decisions. The Manager's exclusion list which is based on the Manager's exclusion policy and compiled by the Manager will apply. The Investment Manager operates a data driven quantitative good governance test used to consider investments into companies. For sustainable investments, principal adverse impacts are a key part of assessing such investments do not do significant harm.

The Investment Manager expects at least 70% of the Fund to be aligned to the promoted E/S characteristics. At least 20% of the Fund will be in Sustainable Investments. Whilst the minimum mandatory allocation to Taxonomy-aligned sustainable investments is 0%, the Fund is permitted to allocate to such investments, which would form part of its overall allocation to sustainable investments with environmental objectives. Derivatives used to take investment exposure to diversified financial indices (excluding technical trades), and funds may be held for any reason permitted by the Fund's investment policy and will be subject to such minimum environmental or social safeguard tests as the Investment Manager considers appropriate, for example a minimum weighted ESG score test.

The Fund's exclusions are coded and monitored on a pre and post trade basis as investment restrictions to prevent and detect investments that would not be compliant with the stated exclusions. The Fund's Positive ESG Tilt is coded and monitored on a pre and post trade basis as an investment restriction to prevent the Fund being managed in a way that is not compliant with the binding characteristic of the Positive ESG Tilt.

Data received from third party vendors typically comes from reputable and, in some cases, audited sources, such as annual reports of sustainability reports. To ensure that interpretation of data is consistent, benchmarking exercises are performed where appropriate. Data is processed through a combination of external and internal proprietary systems and digital platform tools which monitor the exposure of the funds both at fund and security level both pre and post trade. Use of estimated data is limited. However when an estimation is needed proprietary analysis and tools are used.

There are a variety of methods that can be used to measure the attainment of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the Fund using the sustainability indicators depending on the asset class or information type, such as binary pass/fail test (e.g. exclusion of sanctioned companies or countries) and proprietary analysis to form an assessment of the sustainability characteristics (e.g. net zero alignment).

Incomplete, inaccurate or unavailable ESG data may also act as a methodological limitation to a non-financial investment strategy. Where limitations in the methodologies and data have been identified, the Investment Manager seeks to mitigate these through governance and oversight.

ESG due diligence is carried out as a part of fundamental investment research. Research analysts assess the Principal Adverse Impact metrics and identify key sustainability risks in order to evaluate and express their materiality for the subject company or investment. Appropriate consideration of ESG factors is a mandatory objective in the due diligence process for analysts and fund managers.

Engagement is part of the environmental or social investment strategy. The Investment Manager undertakes all investment stewardship engagements and proxy voting with the goal of protecting and enhancing the long-term value of client's assets, with engagement representing an integral part of how the Investment Manager integrates ESG considerations in its investment process.

No reference benchmark has been designated to determine whether this Fund is aligned with the environmental or social characteristics that it promotes.

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## **B. No sustainable Investment Objective**

The Fund promotes environmental or social characteristics, but does not have as its objective sustainable investment.

### **What are the objectives of the sustainable investments that the financial product partially intends to make and how does the sustainable investment contribute to such objectives?**

The Fund may allocate to sustainable investments of any type, i.e. investments with an environmental, and/or a social objective. The Fund is not required to favour any specific type of sustainable investment. The Investment Manager uses a series of proprietary tests based on available data to determine whether and how an investment makes positive contribution(s) towards environmental and social objectives.

### **How do the sustainable investments that the financial product partially intends to make, not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective?**

Sustainable investments that the Fund intends to make do not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective as they are required to pass a series of tests, including:

1. Whether they represent significant exposure to businesses the Investment Manager considers harmful
2. Principal Adverse Impact indicators considered to render the investment incompatible with sustainable investment (violations of the UN Global Compact Principles or the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, social violations by sovereigns such as being subject to sanctions, negative effects on biodiversity sensitive areas)
3. Other Principal Adverse Impact indicators form part of a materiality assessment to understand whether any exposures are compatible with sustainable investment

## **How does this financial product take into account principal adverse impacts on sustainability factors?**

The Investment Manager's research process includes consideration of Principal Adverse Impact indicators for all investments where data is available (i.e. not just for sustainable investments), which allows the Investment Manager to make informed investment decisions.

The Fund's consideration of Principal Adverse Impact indicators is used as part of understanding the operating practices of the investments purchased by the Fund.

Investments held by the Fund are then subject to ongoing monitoring and a quarterly review process.

## **Are the sustainable investments aligned with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights?**

All investments purchased by the Fund must pass the Investment Manager's good governance tests, and in addition, sustainable investments must also pass tests to confirm they do no significant harm, as described above. These tests embed a consideration of the OECD Guidelines and UN Guiding Principles.

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### **C. Environmental or social characteristics promoted by this financial product**

#### **What are the environmental or social characteristics promoted by this financial product?**

The Fund promotes the use of an Exclusionary Approach and a Positive ESG Tilt (as defined below):

The Fund excludes certain potential investments from its investment universe to mitigate potential negative effects on the environment and society. For securitised investments such as asset-backed securities (ABS), this also includes assessing them against the Investment Manager's proprietary scoring methodology ("Exclusionary Approach").

The Fund maintains a weighted average ESG rating that is higher than that of its investment universe ("Positive ESG Tilt"). In constructing a portfolio positively tilted towards investments with better ESG characteristics, the Investment Manager may nonetheless invest in investments across the full spectrum of ESG ratings. At an individual security level, the Investment Manager favours investments with better ESG characteristics where this is not detrimental to the pursuit of the financial investment objective. No reference benchmark has been designated for the purpose of attaining the Fund's promoted environmental and/or social characteristics.

### **D. The Investment Strategy**

**What investment strategy does this financial product follow and how is the strategy implemented in the investment process on a continuous basis?**

Consideration of ESG Factors is fully integrated into analysis and investment decisions. In order to identify securities for purchase, the Investment Manager reduces the potential investment universe as follows:

1. The exclusions listed in the ESG Criteria are screened out.
2. The Investment Manager then performs further analysis, including consideration of ESG factors, to identify and take advantage of investment opportunities. The Investment Manager favours issuers with better ESG characteristics where this is not detrimental to the pursuit of the financial investment objective. This process should result in a portfolio with better ESG characteristics. In constructing a portfolio positively tilted towards investments with better ESG characteristics, the Investment Manager may nonetheless invest in investments across the full spectrum of ESG ratings.
3. The Investment Manager then performs further analysis to consider the valuation of these companies and the appropriate time to purchase in consideration of the Fund's financial objective.

The Fund's ESG Criteria apply to at least:

- 90% of debt securities, money market instruments with an investment grade credit rating; sovereign debt issued by developed countries; and equities issued by large capitalisation companies in developed countries;
- 75% of debt securities and money market instruments with a high yield credit rating; sovereign debt issued by emerging market countries; equities issued by large capitalisation companies in emerging market countries; and equities issued by small and mid-capitalisation companies in any country.

The Manager's exclusion list which is based on the Manager's exclusion policy and compiled by the Manager will apply. Exclusion categories considered in the exclusion policy are United Nations Global Compact Principles, Controversial Weapons, Tobacco, Climate Change and Forced Labour. See the Manager's website for more detail on the application of the exclusion policy.

**What are the binding elements of the investment strategy used to select the investments to attain each of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by this financial product?**

The following elements are binding:

- The Fund's exclusions;
- The Fund's Positive ESG Tilt;

- The amount of the Fund aligned to the promoted environmental and/or social characteristics; and
- Minimum levels of sustainable investments.

Where it is in the best interests of investors, the Fund may temporarily deviate from one or more of these elements, for example if the Investment Manager considers it prudent to hold high levels of cash in response to market conditions.

**What is the policy to assess good governance practices of the investee companies?**

The Investment Manager operates a data driven quantitative good governance test used to consider investments into companies. The Investment Manager excludes investments in securities that are considered as failing the Investment Manager's good governance test.

**Is there a commitment to reduce by a minimum rate the scope of investments considered prior to the application of the strategy? (Including an indication of the rate)**

Not applicable.

**Does this financial product consider principal adverse impacts on sustainability factors?**

- Yes  
 No

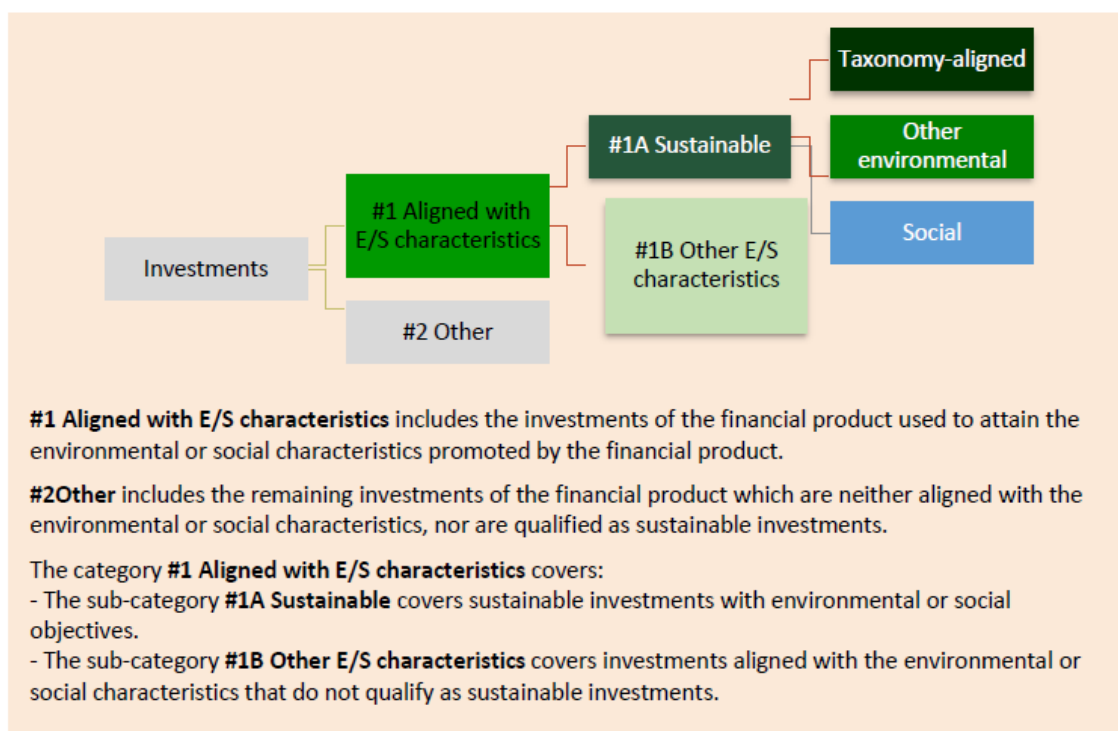
Yes, for sustainable investments, principal adverse impacts are a key part of assessing such investments do not do significant harm as explained above. For other investments the Investment Manager's research process includes consideration of Principal Adverse Impact indicators for all investments where data is available, which allows the Investment Manager to make informed investment decisions, as explained above.

Information on how the principal adverse impacts were taken into account will be provided in the Fund's annual report.

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**E. Proportion of Investments**

**What is the planned asset allocation for this financial product?**



The Investment Manager expects at least 70% of the Fund to be aligned to the promoted E/S characteristics. At least 20% of the Fund will be in Sustainable Investments.

### How does the use of derivatives attain the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product?

Derivatives may be considered aligned with the promoted environmental and/or social characteristics on the following basis:

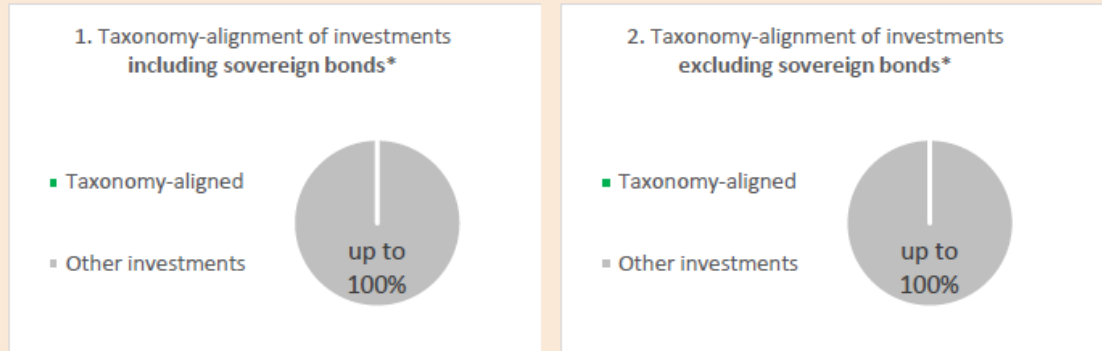
Exclusions:

1. Where a derivative represents exposure to a single name it must be a permitted investment for the Fund.
2. Where a derivative represents exposure to a diversified financial index, it must deliver an evidencable alignment to the promoted characteristics.

### What is the minimum share of investments with an environmental objective aligned with the EU Taxonomy? (including what methodology is used for the calculation of the alignment with the EU Taxonomy and why; and what the minimum share of transitional and enabling activities)

Whilst the minimum mandatory allocation to Taxonomy-aligned sustainable investments is 0%, the Fund is permitted to allocate to such investments, which would form part of its overall allocation to sustainable investments with environmental objectives.

The two graphs below show in green the minimum percentage of investments that are aligned with the EU Taxonomy. As there is no appropriate methodology to determine the Taxonomy-alignment of sovereign bonds\*, the first graph shows the Taxonomy alignment in relation to all the investments of the financial product including sovereign bonds, while the second graph shows the Taxonomy alignment only in relation to the investments of the financial product other than sovereign bonds.



\* For the purpose of these graphs, 'sovereign bonds' consist of all sovereign exposures

**What is the minimum share of sustainable investments with an environmental objective that are not aligned with the EU Taxonomy?**

5%

**What is the minimum share of socially sustainable investments?**

5%

**What investments are included under “#2 Other”, what is their purpose and are there any minimum environmental or social safeguards?**

The Fund may hold cash, near cash and money market funds, FX, interest rate derivatives and similar derivatives (which may include certain technical trades such as government bond futures used for duration trades) as “Other” investments, for any purpose permitted by the Fund’s investment policy. No minimum environmental or social safeguards are applied.

Derivatives used to take investment exposure to diversified financial indices (excluding technical trades), and funds (i.e. UCITS and other UCIs) may be held for any reason permitted by the Fund’s investment policy and will be subject to such minimum environmental or social safeguard tests as the Investment Manager considers appropriate, for example a minimum weighted ESG score test.

The Fund may also hold as Other investments those investments where insufficient data exists to determine the investments’ alignment with the promoted characteristics. It is also possible that the Fund may hold investments that are not in line with the promoted characteristics, e.g. as a result of a merger or other corporate action, or as a result of the characteristics of a previously acquired investment changing. Where this happens, the Fund



will generally seek to dispose of them in the best interests of investors, but may not always be able to do so immediately.

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## **F. Monitoring of environmental or social characteristics**

### **What sustainability indicators are used to measure the attainment of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by this financial product?**

The sustainability indicators selected to demonstrate the attainment of the promoted environmental and/or social characteristics are:

- Exclusionary approach: Percentage (%) of NAV held in excluded investments
- Exclusionary approach: Percentage (%) of ABS below the Investment Manager's threshold for alignment
- Positive ESG Tilt: Portfolio weighted average ESG score versus investment universe weighted average ESG score.

### **How are the environmental or social characteristics and the sustainability indicators monitored throughout the lifecycle of the financial product and the related internal/external control mechanism?**

The Fund's exclusions are coded and monitored on a pre and post trade basis as investment restrictions to prevent and detect investments that would not be compliant with the stated exclusions. Incidents are recorded, and resolved through an incident investigation process, and are reported as part of the SFDR reporting.

The Fund's Positive ESG Tilt is coded and monitored on a pre and post trade basis as an investment restriction to prevent the Fund being managed in a way that is not compliant with the binding characteristic of the Positive ESG Tilt. The relevant characteristic is reported on as part of the SFDR reporting.

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## **G. Methodologies**

### **What is the methodology to measure the attainment of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product using the sustainability indicators?**

There are a variety of methods that can be used depending on the asset class or information type:

- binary pass/fail test e.g. exclusion of sanctioned companies or countries
- meets or exceeds a specific threshold e.g. revenue to contributes to an environmental outcome, or more than % of board diversity
- industry certification evidencing sustainability performance e.g. Climate Bond Initiative (CBI) certified bond

- contributes a set % of revenue to a climate, environmental or social cause
- proprietary analysis to form an assessment of the sustainability characteristics e.g. net zero alignment

In the case that particular data points are not available or insufficient, it is expected that the Investment Manager's own assessment will be sufficient.

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## **H. Data Sourcing and processing**

**What are the data sources used to attain each of the environmental or social characteristics including the measures taken to ensure data quality, how data is processed and the proportion of data that is estimated?**

### Data Sources

Information can be sourced from third party data vendors including companies such as MSCI, Bloomberg or sourced from proprietary research and analysis.

### Measures taken to ensure data quality

Data received from third party vendors typically comes from reputable and, in some cases, audited sources, such as annual reports of sustainability reports. Upon receipt, the data is checked by the analysts. To ensure that interpretation of data is consistent, benchmarking exercises are performed where appropriate. Collected ESG data is evaluated via use of a proprietary ESG scorecard, which is populated by the analysts.

### How data is processed

Data is processed through a combination of external and internal proprietary systems and digital platform tools which monitor the exposure of the funds both at fund and security level both pre and post trade.

### Proportion of data that is estimated

Use of estimated data is limited. However when an estimation is needed proprietary analysis and tools are used. For example, if a portfolio company does not disclose its greenhouse gas emissions, an estimation is made using the Investment Manager's proprietary carbon emission tool which estimates portfolio companies' carbon intensity levels.

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## **I. Limitations to methodologies and data**

**What are the limitations to the methodologies and data sources? (Including how such limitations do not affect the attainment of the environmental or social characteristics and the actions taken to address such limitations)**

ESG information from third party data providers and/or obtained directly from the issuers may be incomplete, inaccurate, stale or unavailable. As a result, there is a risk that the Fund

may incorrectly assess an issuer. This in turn can result in the incorrect inclusion or exclusion of a company in the portfolio of the Fund. Incomplete, inaccurate or unavailable ESG data may also act as a methodological limitation to a non-financial investment strategy (such as the application of ESG risk and opportunity characteristics). Where identified, the Investment Manager will seek to mitigate this risk through its own assessment and take any appropriate remediation as necessary.

Where limitations in the methodologies and data have been identified, the Investment Manager seeks to mitigate these through governance and oversight. Whilst, as with financial data, it is impossible to completely eliminate the risk of impact of an external data vendor error, the Investment Manager does conduct its own reviews and challenges where it believes investments have been misclassified. Where the methodologies and/or data are insufficient post mitigation to evidence that an investment is in compliance with the promoted characteristics, such investment may only be purchased if it is suitable for inclusion as an “Other” investment, and the Investment Manager will continue to consider what further information can be obtained through additional research.

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## **J. Due Diligence**

### **What is the due diligence carried out on the underlying assets and what are the internal and external controls in place?**

ESG due diligence is carried out as a part of fundamental investment research. Research analysts assess the Principal Adverse Impact metrics and identify key sustainability risks in order to evaluate and express their materiality for the subject company or investment. Analysts reflect their assessments in either written research or an ESG Scorecard.

Where applicable, the analyst uses the ESG Scorecard to evaluate 15 mandatory and common factors and additional idiosyncratic factors deemed relevant to the subject company’s risk profile and business mix. The mandatory factors for evaluation are as follows:

- Climate: Disclosure, Intensity, Footprint, Vulnerability, Intent
- Governance: Ownership & Control, Political Interference & Sovereign Concerns, Strategy and Financial policy, Disclosure and Transparency, Board, Regulation, Compliance and Oversight, Cybersecurity, Corporate culture and controversy
- Social: Modern Slavery, Diversity & Inclusion
- Sector-specific Key Issues determined from the SASB Materiality Map.

In addition to the proprietary assessments described above, investment decision-making may also take account of third party ESG ratings, where available.

Appropriate consideration of ESG factors is a mandatory objective in the due diligence process for analysts and fund managers.

The section above entitled 'Monitoring of environmental or social characteristics' details the controls associated with the components of due diligence listed herein.

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#### **K. Engagement Policies**

**Is engagement part of the environmental or social investment strategy?**

Yes

**If so, what are the engagement policies? (Including any management procedures applicable to sustainability-related controversies in investee companies)**

The Investment Manager believes that the long-term success of companies is supported by effective investor stewardship and high standards of corporate governance. The Investment Manager believes that if a company is run well, and sustainably, it is more likely to be successful in the long run. The Investment Manager undertakes all investment stewardship engagements and proxy voting with the goal of protecting and enhancing the long-term value of client's assets, with engagement representing an integral part of how the Investment Manager integrates ESG considerations in its investment process. The Investment Manager is committed to being transparent about how it conducts investment stewardship activities in support of long-term sustainable performance for its clients. The precise nature of the engagement will vary depending on the investments held, but these overarching principles will inform the Investment Manager's conduct when engaging with companies, whether through voting equities in general meetings or in its participation in bondholder committees.

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#### **L. Reference Benchmark**

**Has a reference benchmark been designated for the purpose of attaining these characteristics promoted by the financial product?**

Yes

No

**How is that index designated as a reference benchmark aligned with the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product? (including the input data, the methodologies used to select those data, the rebalancing methodologies and how the index is calculated)**

No reference benchmark has been designated to determine whether this Fund is aligned with the environmental or social characteristics that it promotes.

**How is the reference benchmark continuously aligned with each of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by the financial product?**

This question is not applicable.

**How does the designated index differ from a relevant broad market index?**

This question is not applicable.

**Where can the methodology used for the calculation of the designated index be found?**

This question is not applicable.