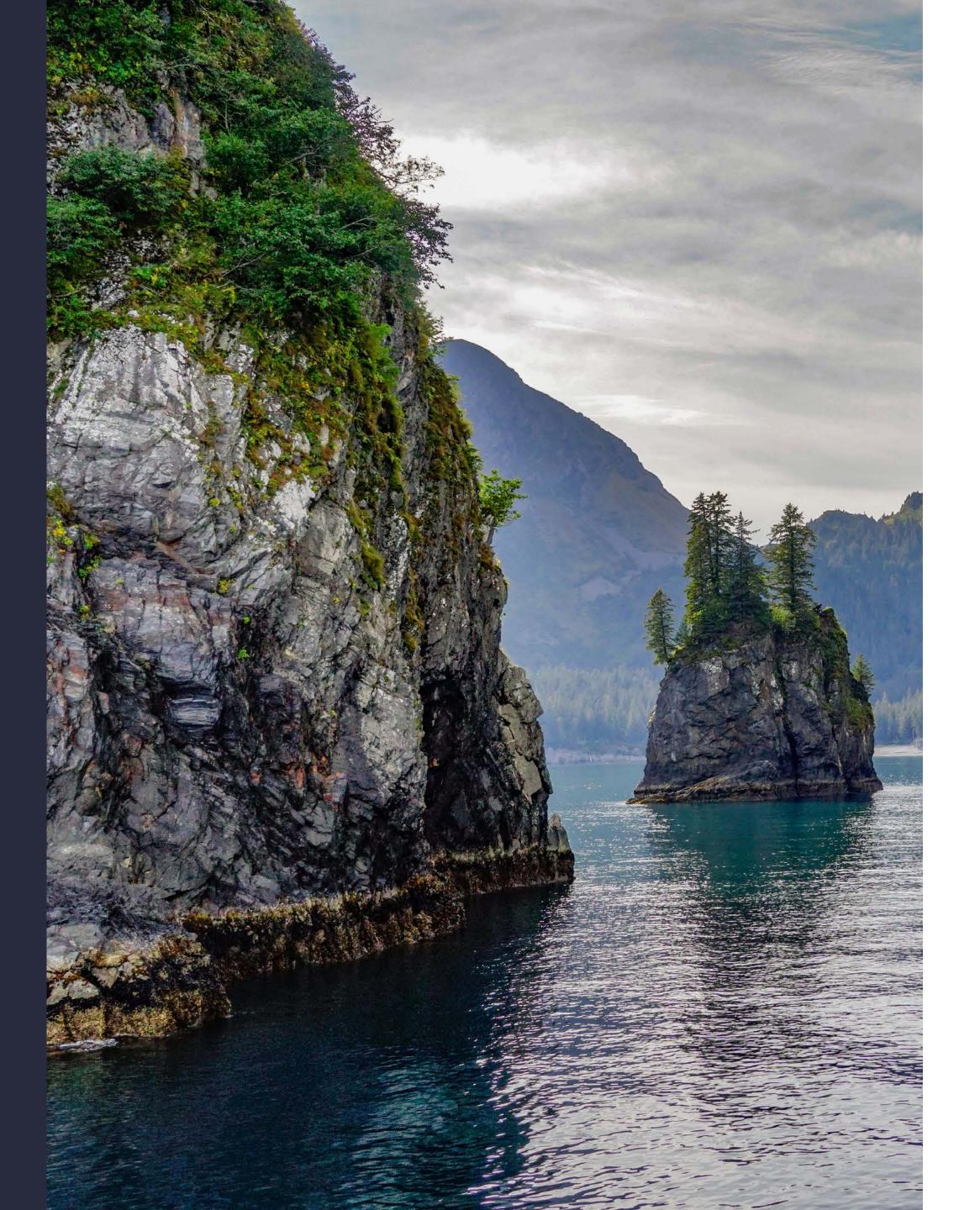




Sustainable and responsible investing report 2023



## What you'll find

A message from Paul R. Lorentz	3
Who we are	4
Our sustainability highlights	19
Our commitment to nature	20
Advancements in ESG integration	21
Stewardship	22
Recognition	22
Global collaboration	23
Taking action on climate and nature	25
Our role as investors	26
Our approach to sustainable investing	30
Sustainable investing in action	38

The disclosures in this report cover the activities of the investment management teams within Manulife Investment Management. In this report, 'we' refers to Manulife Investment Management. The report does not cover the activities of nonaffiliated investment managers who manage some client assets on our behalf, or the activities of CQS, which is a wholly owned multi-sector alternative credit manager acquired by Manulife Investment Management in 2024. All information in this report is as of December 31, 2023, unless otherwise indicated. This report was published in August 2024.

## A message from Paul R. Lorentz

I'm pleased to present our latest sustainable and responsible investing report—our fifth annual statement covering our global asset management business.

As partners with our clients, we're charged with being good stewards of their capital, and this is what motivates our efforts to build portfolios that can stand the test of time. This is the core proposition of our practice of sustainable and responsible investing: to create value for our clients by managing their capital—and the real assets over which we have operational control—toward a persistently thriving future state. To do this well, we apply the full range of our global expertise, based in our long experience as investors, risk managers, and stewards of assets such as timberland, agriculture, and real estate. Sustainability matters to our clients for a variety of reasons, but first and foremost it matters because it's a source of long-term value creation.

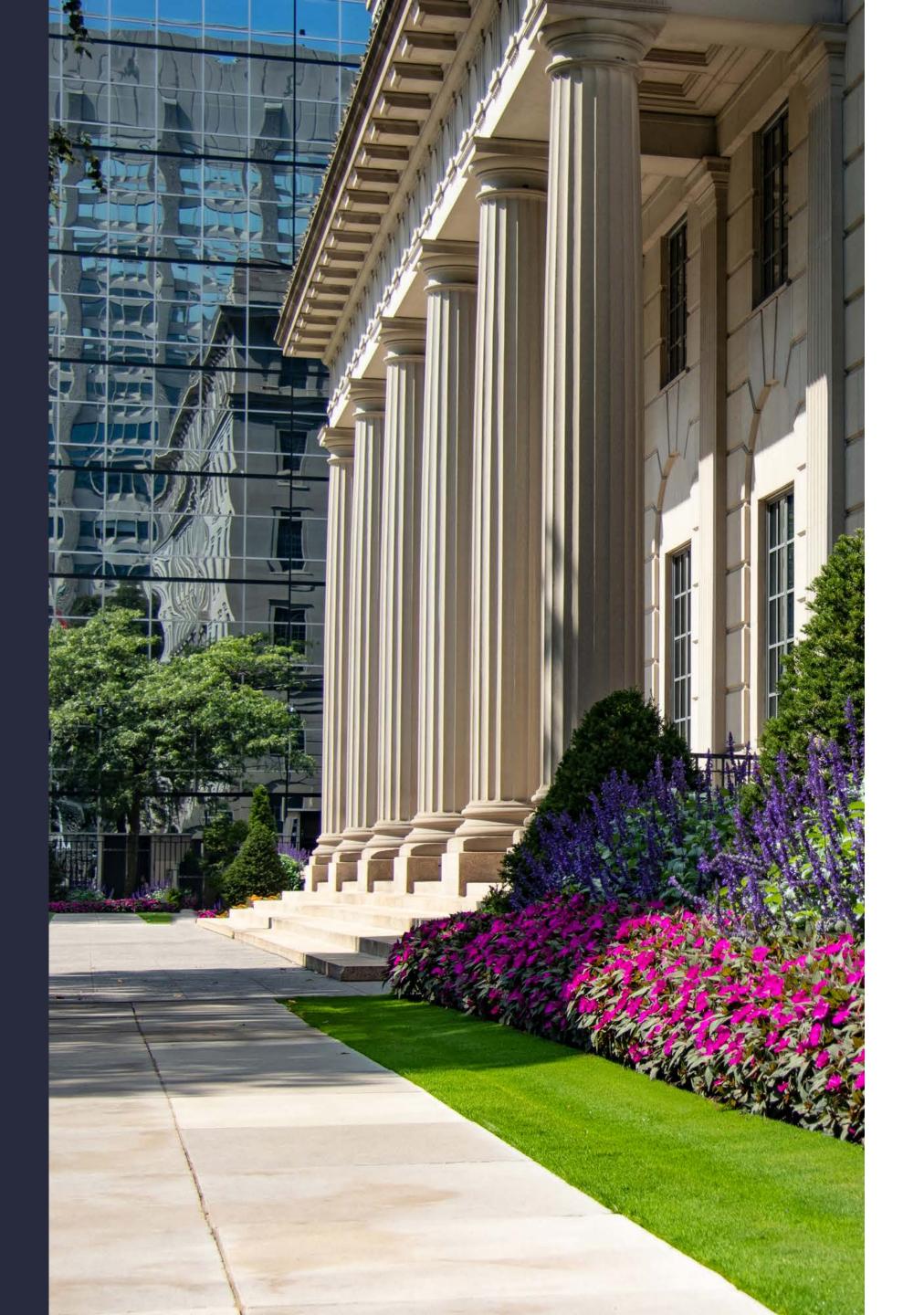
Our focus on the future entails grappling with some of the most intractable problems of today—the systemic risks of climate change and nature loss—and it demands that we recognize the interconnectedness of these issues. After all, the global economy is heavily dependent on nature, and the diversity of life and the foundations of global agricultural stability are highly sensitive to climatic conditions. As a growing chorus of academic researchers has highlighted, business is systemically dependent on nature and economic growth is already being negatively affected by the effects of climate change and the loss of our natural environment. As part of our approach to sustainability, we believe that tackling systemic risks such as nature loss is in the best interests of our clients, because even well-diversified investors can't effectively be insulated from these risks' systemic, global economic effects. Accordingly, we consider the impact of nature loss in our investment process and decision-making as well as in our asset stewardship. We seek to avoid the loss of nature in assets that we operate and promote movement toward a circular economy, and we view these efforts as an integral part of our commitment to helping our clients achieve their objectives and build resilient portfolios.

In this report, readers will find a broad range of information about our sustainable investing efforts, including our approach to governance, details regarding recently launched sustainable investment strategies, and asset-class specific facets of our practice. In addition, we outline our ongoing commitment to collaborative efforts to help mitigate systemic risks and to invest in areas in which adaptation to a changing climate and a changing natural world is revealing new opportunities for asset owners.

Our conviction in sustainable investing is evidenced by our actions. As a global asset manager, we believe sustainable investing helps build portfolio resilience to financially material risks and better exposures to related opportunities, thereby enhancing long-term value creation potential. This report communicates both the fundamental processes of our work in this regard and the latest updates on our outcomes-focused stewardship practices. We hope you find it useful in learning more about our approach to sustainable investing.



Paul R. Lorentz
President and CEO
Manulife Investment Management



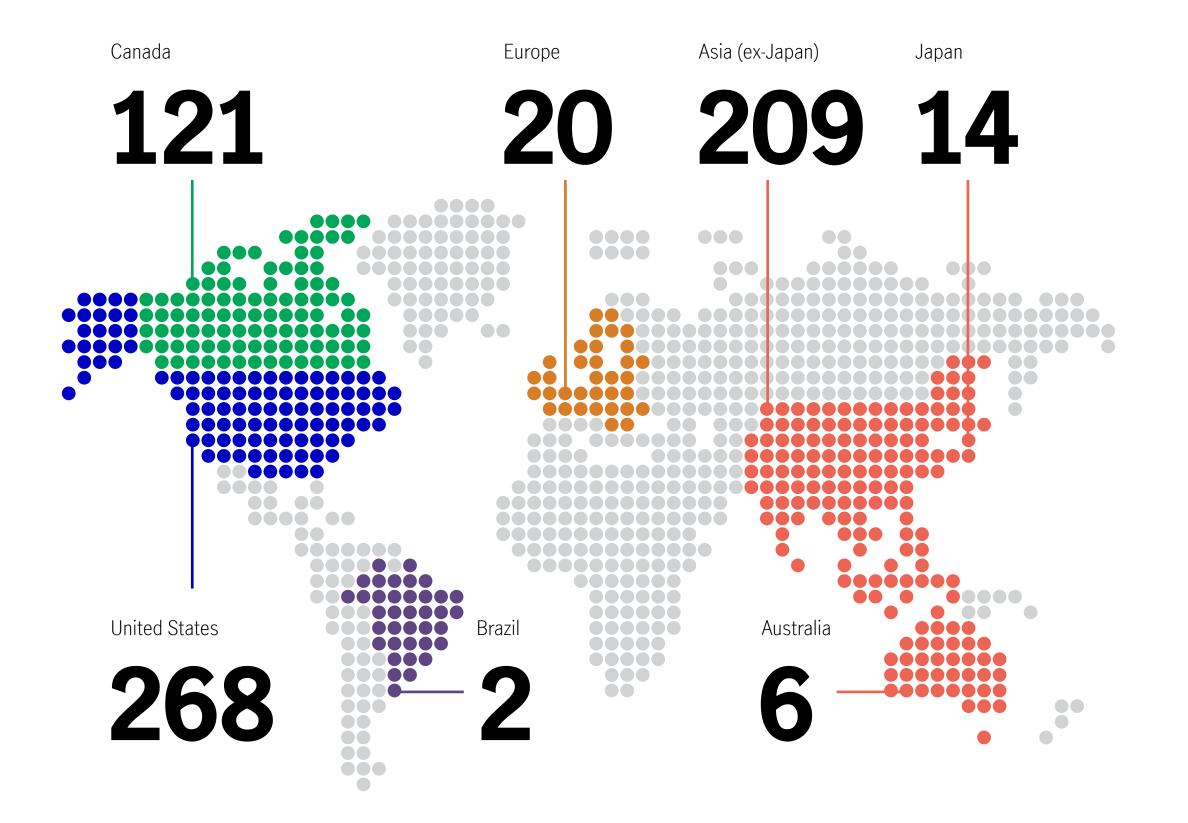
## **About Manulife Investment Management**

Manulife Investment Management is the global wealth and asset management segment of Manulife Financial Corporation (Manulife). Our mission is to make decisions easier and lives better by empowering investors for a better tomorrow.

Serving more than 17 million individuals, institutions, and retirement plan members, we believe our global reach, complementary businesses, and the strength of our parent company position us to help investors capitalize on today's emerging global trends. We provide our clients access to public and private investment solutions across equity, fixed-income, multi-asset, alternative, and sustainability-linked strategies, such as natural capital, to help them make more informed financial decisions and achieve their investment objectives. Not all offerings are available in all jurisdictions. For additional information, please visit manulifeim.com.

## Combining local insight with global reach

640 investment professionals with offices in 20 geographies



Source: Manulife Investment Management, as of December 31, 2023. Manulife Investment Management's team of global investment professionals includes expertise from several Manulife Investment Management affiliates and joint ventures; not all entities represent all asset classes.



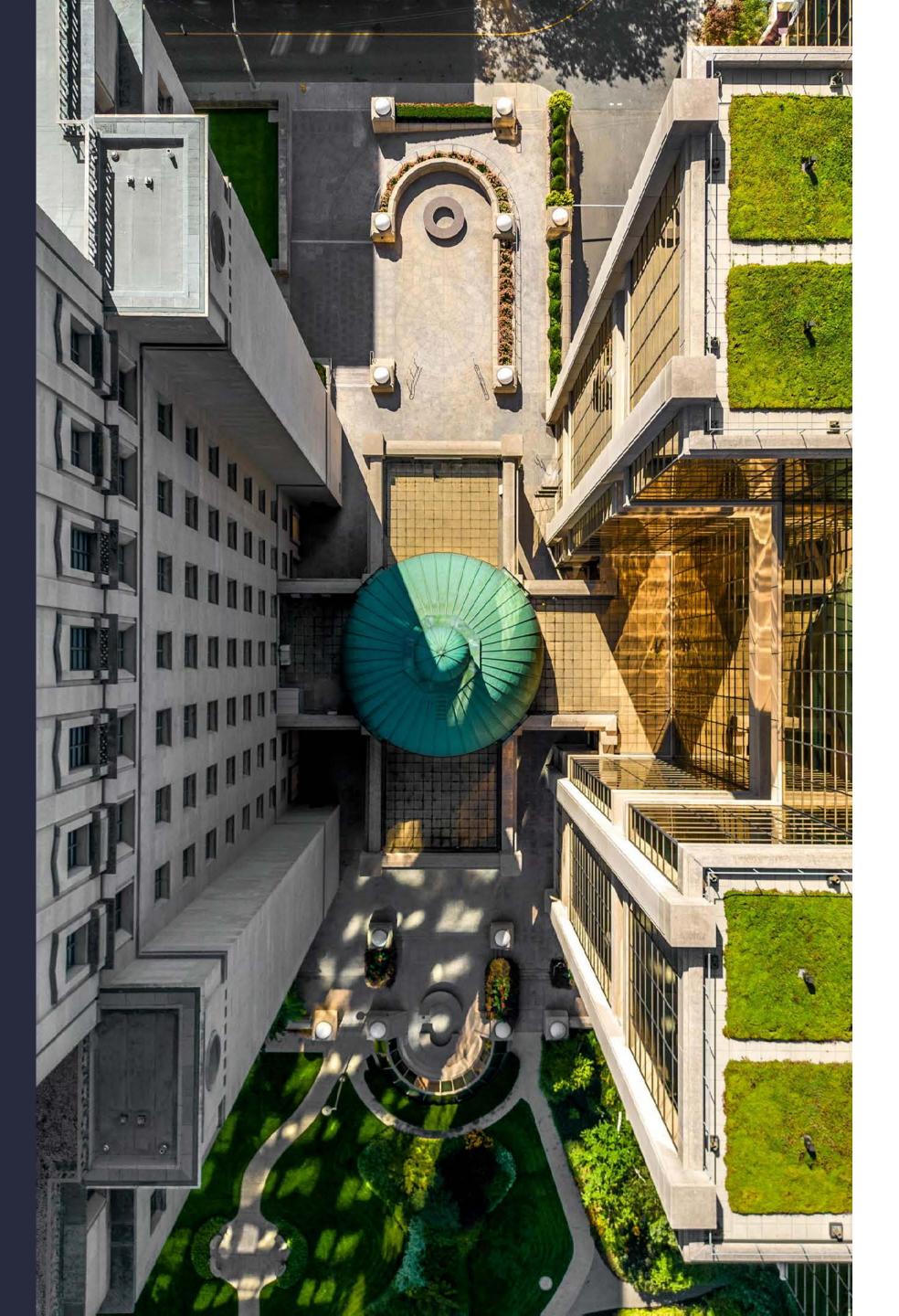
\$609B

in institutional AUM

1,000+

## institutional accounts

Assets under management (AUM) include assets internally managed by Manulife Investment Management on behalf of external clients, the Manulife general account and other affiliated businesses, but excludes assets under management and administration (AUMA). The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change and may not reflect regulatory AUM as reported on certain affiliates' Form ADV. Manulife Investment Management AUMA is as of December 31, 2023, and includes CAD\$607.6 billion in AUM and CAD\$1.5 billion in AUA.



## What makes us unique?

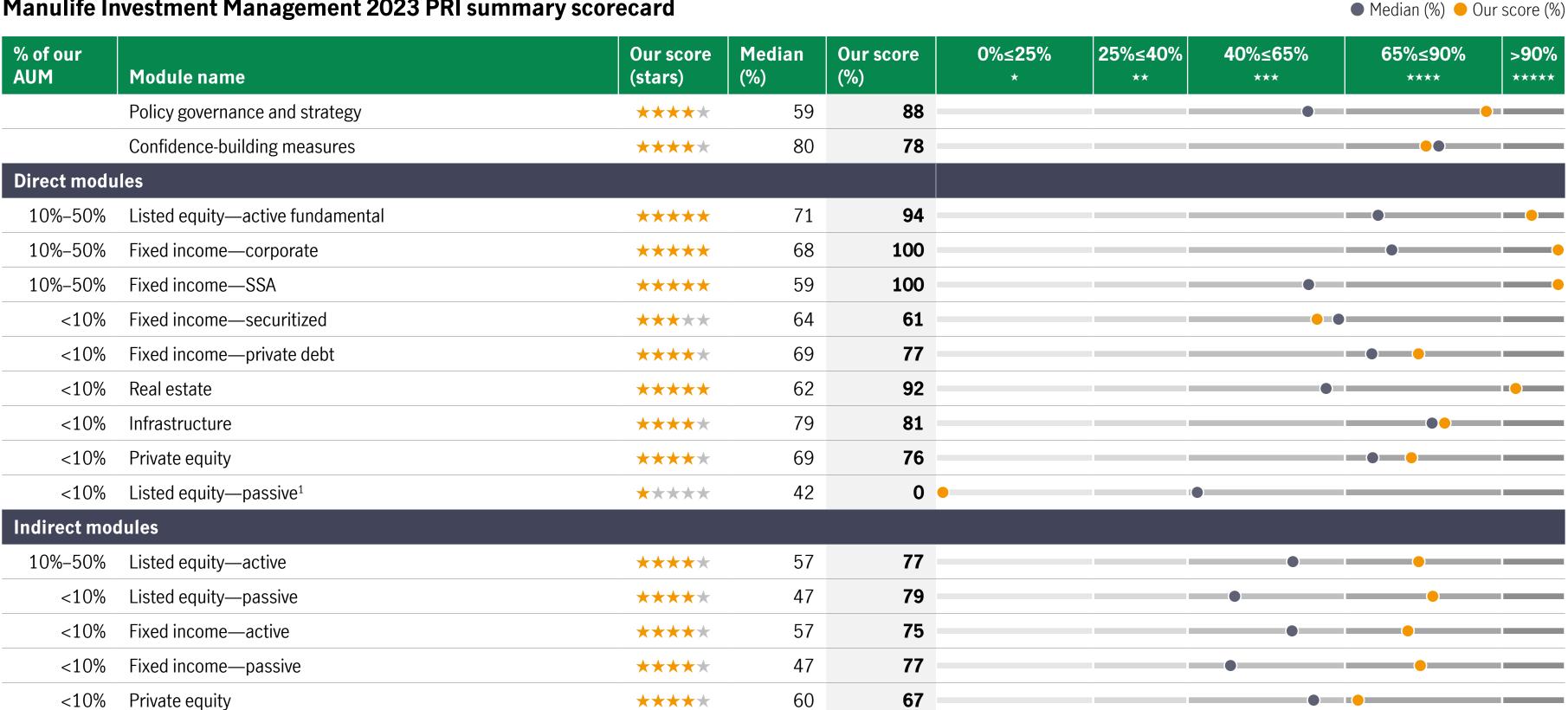
Manulife, our parent company, has a storied history dating back more than 130 years in Canada, 125 years in Asia, and 155 years with the John Hancock brand in the United States. Manulife Investment Management is an important part of this history. We have strong footholds in North America and Asia, which include some of the fastest-growing economies in the world, and our commitments extend to clients around the globe.

At Manulife Investment Management, we seek to provide solutions for clients using a wide breadth of capabilities, and our commitment to sustainable investing is rooted in our belief that our clients' interests are best served by considering financially material sustainability factors. In addition, our manager-investor/operator model in some sectors gives us a dual perspective on sustainable business practices and concerns. Beyond investing, we're also stewards of assets—such as real estate, timberland, and agriculture—and so we have a deep appreciation of the challenges and potential benefits of adhering to sustainable operating practices.

#### We're committed to sustainable investing

Our latest summary scorecard from the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) demonstrates the depth of our commitment.

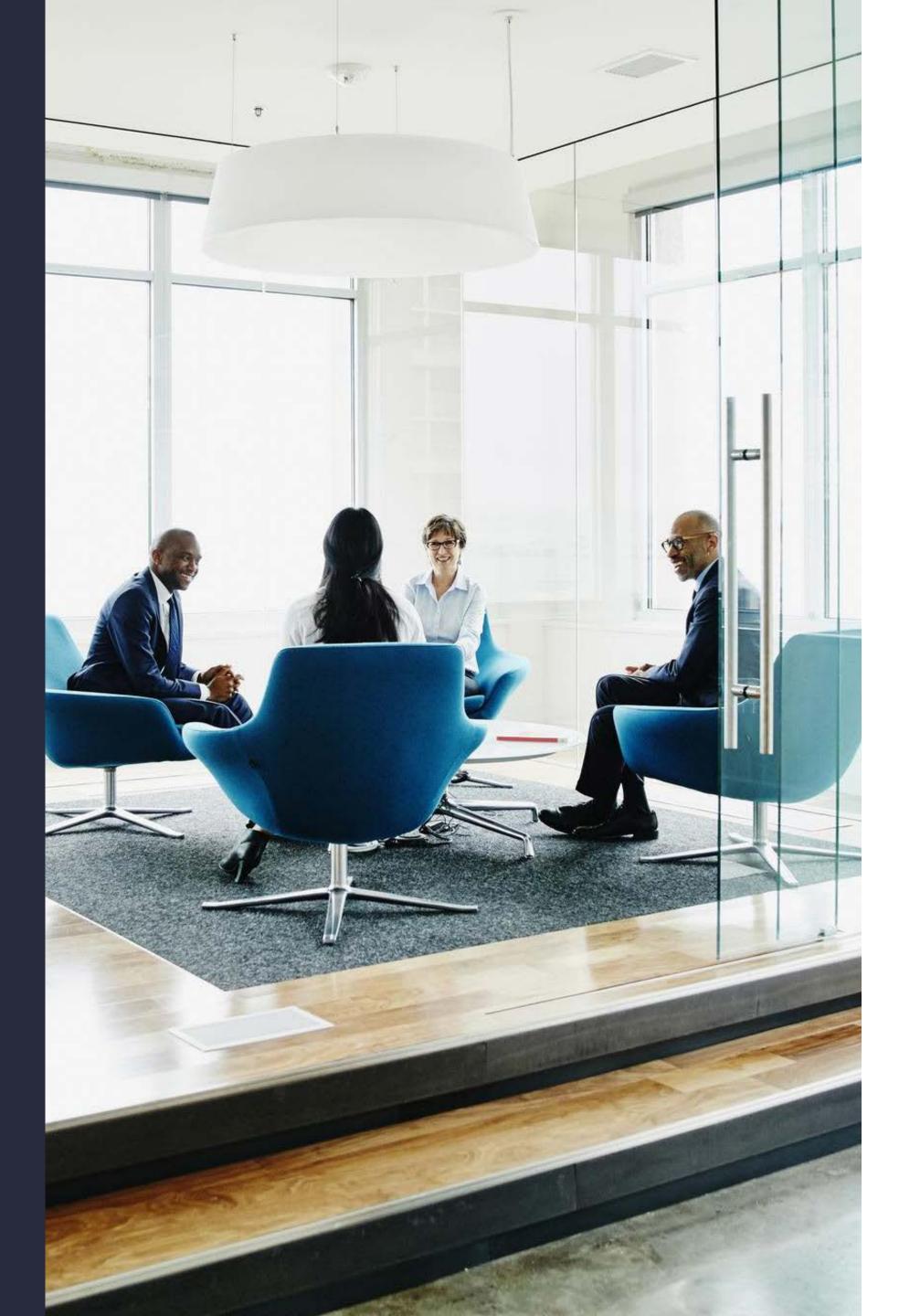
#### Manulife Investment Management 2023 PRI summary scorecard



Manulife Investment Management is a signatory to the UNPRI and pays a signatory fee calculated based on AUM as reported in the PRI's latest Annual Reporting and Assessment Framework, published in December 2023. It is compulsory for signatories to report on their responsible investment activities periodically. The PRI assesses a signatory's activities according to its assessment methodology, and its output includes the PRI Assessment Report and Transparency Report from which this summary scorecard was sourced. Visit the PRI website for details and assessment methodology.

The percentage score is based on the points scored in all applicable assessed indicators for each module. It is calculated as the total points achieved divided by the total points available (only considering applicable indicators) in the module. Indirect modules relate to the 'Manager Selection, Appointment and Monitoring (SAM)' modules of the PRI reporting framework.

1 Manulife Investment Management currently does not manage any passive equity strategies where the investment mandates or policies permits us to incorporate ESG considerations into investment decisions. For assets managed by our passive listed equities strategies, we are an active steward where we review and vote proxy and engage investee companies.



## Our sustainable investing teams

To better serve our clients, we have two sustainable investing teams—one dedicated to publicly traded securities, including equities, fixed income, and asset allocation, and another dedicated to supporting private markets asset classes, including real estate, private equity, private credit, timberland, agriculture, and infrastructure. These teams are staffed by professionals with broad and diverse skill sets that make them well suited to address the dynamic and complex requirements of sustainable investing and asset stewardship at a global firm. Some of these professionals have decades of investment experience, while others have worked at sustainable investing data providers, possess legal backgrounds, or bring scientific credentials to their roles.

These skill sets are complemented by varying degrees of tenure and regional expertise. Taken holistically, our teams have the skill and experience to support complex investment research, robust client reporting, product development, financial modeling, proxy voting decision-making, issuer engagement, and collaboration with peers through industry initiatives.

Our sustainable investing teams work across the full spectrum of our investment strategies as well as across geographies. This enables us to ensure that we consistently integrate financially relevant sustainability issues into our investment processes where practical or possible; comprehensively disseminate training, analytical tools, and data resources; and provide support to all investment teams in terms of research and stewardship activities.

In 2023, we created three new roles, one dedicated to helping our organization better manage, internalize, and engage with regulators on sustainable investing-related regulations in private markets, the second focused on social impact across private asset classes, and the third a dedicated climate change analyst.

## Our sustainability-focused professionals support our asset management teams globally

30

dedicated sustainable investing professionals

400+

investment professionals are advised on sustainability



with expertise across regions and asset classes



ESG research and analysis



Implementation of sustainability practices



Training and education sessions



Proxy voting research



Stewardship practices for operation of real assets

### **Investment teams**

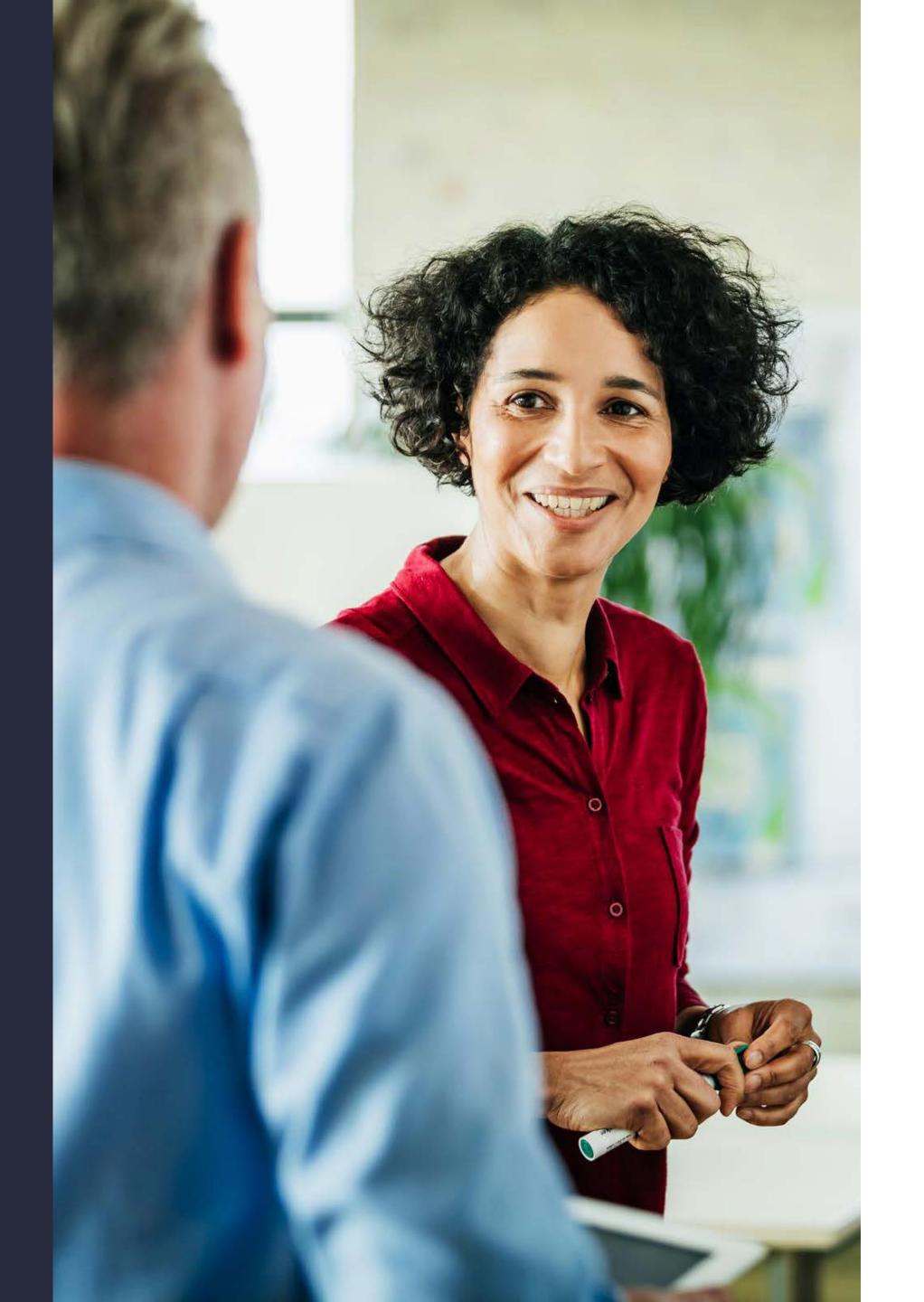
Integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors and stewardship in their investment activities

- Listed equity
- Fixed income
- Multi-asset solutions
- Real estate
- Infrastructure
- Private equity and credit (PE&C)
- Timberland
- Agriculture

## Real asset operation teams

Integration of sustainable investing within assets we operate in real estate, timberland, and agriculture

Source: Manulife Investment Management, as of December 31, 2023. We seek to incorporate material sustainability considerations throughout the stages of our investment and asset ownership lifecycles, taking into account the characteristics of the asset class and investment process in question, as well as industry and geography, among other factors. Each investment team operates in different markets and with different nuances to its approach to investing. Accordingly, each team integrates sustainability factors into its investment approach is impractical or impossible; for example, in relation to certain instrument types where sustainable comparable alternatives are unavailable, passive products, funds that invest in derivative instruments, products managed in accordance with specific client objectives, and delegation to third-party investment managers. Refer to Manulife Investment Management's <u>sustainable investing and sustainability risk statement</u> for further details.



## Our governance approach

Manulife Investment Management has established a governance structure to oversee our investment teams' sustainable investing activities and our ongoing stewardship activities.

We view the involvement of leaders in all asset classes, as well as representatives from functional areas such as operations, legal, compliance, risk, and technology, to be crucial to supporting our sustainable investing activities across the organization and ensuring the buy-in and commitment required for success.

In addition, the sustainability governance structure of Manulife Investment Management is connected to larger sustainability governance at our parent company, Manulife. The president and CEO of Manulife Investment Management is joined by other senior Manulife leaders on the Manulife executive sustainability council, and the leaders of our sustainable investing teams in Manulife Investment Management work closely with Manulife's chief sustainability officer. In this way, Manulife Investment Management's governance structure is well connected to the broader sustainability community and leadership across Manulife.

Our governance structure includes two sustainable investing committees (SICs), one for public markets investments and the other for private markets investments. The heads of public and private markets investments chair their respective SICs with membership drawn from Manulife Investment Management's leadership team. The SICs oversee our teams' sustainable investing activities and support the implementation of our <u>sustainable investing and sustainability risk statement</u>.

This structure is supported by teams of sustainable investing professionals who facilitate the implementation of Manulife Investment Management's approach to sustainable investing. This occurs through a variety of activities and projects, which include preparing annual business plans, identifying and developing sustainable investing best practices, supporting investment teams to develop tools and methodologies to consider these best practices across the investment lifecycle, advising on product development, and leading the participation in external initiatives or collaborative industry engagement.

## Our sustainability governance

■ Manulife ■ Manulife Investment Management

	Corporate governance and nominating committee  Audit committee		Management resources and compensation committee				Risk committee			
	Executive sustainability council									
General counsel	Chief marketing officer—chair	Chief human resources officer	Chief executive officer	Manulife	nt and CEO, e Investment agement	Chief sustainability officer	Chief financial officer	Chief operations officer	Chief investment officer	Chief risk officer

Sustainability center of expertise	Legal and compliance center of expertise
<ul> <li>Composed of sustainability professionals across public markets, private markets, the general account, and the Manulife organization</li> <li>Provides a forum for information sharing and consultation on sustainability initiatives, performance, and reporting</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Composed of legal and compliance members from each business unit and region</li> <li>Legal, compliance, and regulatory affairs consultation</li> <li>Provides a forum for information sharing and consultation on legal and compliance related to Manulife sustainability matters</li> </ul>

Our committees and working groups are convened to enable regular decision-making oversight					
Public markets sustainable investing committee	Proxy voting working group	Private markets sustainable investing committee			
<ul> <li>Integral to public markets strategic oversight</li> <li>Focuses on key sustainability initiatives and strategy</li> <li>Comprises senior cross-functional leads and sustainability team members</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Members include cross-functional business heads in public markets</li> <li>Reviews escalated voting decisions</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Supports sustainability integration across private markets</li> <li>Led by the global head of private markets</li> <li>Includes global heads of private asset classes, sustainability specialists, and representatives from strategy, risk, distribution, legal, and marketing</li> </ul>			

## We strive to build a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture

Across our global offices—and in alignment with the beliefs and practices of our parent company—we focus on a shared set of six core values that helps engender high employee engagement and define who we are and how we work together:

- **1 Own it**—We feel empowered to make decisions and take action to deliver our mission.
- **2 Think big**—Anything is possible. We can always find a better way.
- **3 Share your humanity**—We build a supportive, diverse, and thriving workplace.
- **4 Get it done together**—We're surrounded by an amazing team. We do it better by working together.
- **5** Obsess about customers—We predict their needs and do everything in our power to satisfy them.
- **6 Do the right thing**—We act with integrity and do what we say.

We strive to live these values daily and incorporate them into our investment decision-making processes.

We value getting things done together as investment teams and believe collective action offers a powerful model for asset management. Through regular collaboration, including across asset classes and investment disciplines, we collectively work toward establishing a sense of shared and individual ownership, as well as a personal sense of involvement, as we strive to meet the needs of clients. This is how we want to operate our business for the long term: fostering a collaborative culture around meeting the needs of our clients. We're committed to striving to always do the right thing, both by our clients and our broader stakeholders.

We value innovation and thinking big because we believe these modes of thought and action are central to the project of mitigating and adapting to systemic risks such as climate change and nature loss.

We believe our culture is strong, not least because of the value we place on sharing our humanity—which is another way of saying practicing empathy and acting authentically with our colleagues.

Drawing strength from these values, our goals and efforts toward fostering better diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at our firm demonstrate our commitment to our employees' health and professional growth as well as to the strength of the communities in which we live and work. We believe we're stronger when we embrace our differences and that diversity in gender, race, religion, identity, and ability plays a key role in driving innovation and growth within our company.

Our employee resource groups (ERGs), which are founded within the greater Manulife organization and include Manulife Investment Management employees, play an integral role in championing diversity and building an inclusive work environment. These voluntary networks involve employees united by a common identity, trait, or interest and are a much-used resource at the firm. They enable us to work together to address barriers to advancement and provide personal and professional development opportunities.

## Our employee resource groups

ERG	Description
Ability	Building a culture of differently abled inclusion (visible and invisible)—for employees, families, and customers
AMP	Association of Multicultural Professionals (AMP) champions member development, promotes cultural awareness, and advocates for unity through open dialogue and events
EMBRACE	For ethnic minorities living and working in the Hong Kong business segment, as well as for their allies, EMBRACE aims to create an environment in which communication and cooperation help members bridge race and culture and support each other in fully living their identities at work and beyond
Family	A community to share family experiences and support member challenges
GenerationNEXT	Mobilizing our young professionals to be the next generation of leaders through education, networking, and volunteerism
GWA	The Global Women's Alliance (GWA) supports and encourages the recruitment, development, and advancement of women throughout our organization by providing a network and opportunities in which women can be mentored, share experiences, and have fulfilling careers
IPTA	Indigenous Peoples and Their Allies (IPTA) aims to better enable our indigenous employees to advance professionally and have open and honest conversations while increasing the awareness of indigenous peoples for all employees
LatinX	Promoting the education and awareness about Latin American diversity and culture while demystifying myths, misinformation, and unconscious bias
Male Allies	Creates safe spaces to discuss gender issues and raise men's understanding of them and to encourage men and women to be vocal, visible role models for change
MiLE	Military Employment Community (MiLE) is building a strong network of support for all employees who are current service members, veterans, their families, and supporters
PACES	The Pan-Asian Community for Employee Success (PACES) builds the presence, influence, and leadership potential of Pan-Asian employees
PROUD	Aims to promote an inclusive workplace for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender employees in order to promote their full and unencumbered contribution
Sustainability Hub	The Manulife Sustainability Hub is a forum for Manulife employees to engage with sustainability. It aims to provide education about sustainability, employee engagement with Manulife's sustainability strategic goals, and a venue for passionate employees to collaborate and propose ideas to make Manulife a more sustainable place to work
VIBE	Valuing the Inclusion of Black Experiences (VIBE) better enables our black employees to advance professionally, support the aspirations of potential employees, and increase awareness of various black cultures

# Manulife maintains a DEI microsite available to all employees. It features DEI news, events, recordings, and other learning resources.

Some of the strategic activities focused on talent recruitment, retention, and development include targeted recruitment efforts at diverse post-secondary schools across North America; offering our employees training on allyship, unconscious bias, and inclusive leadership; and an inclusive language initiative that we launched globally for all employees.

# Manulife Investment Management embraces the DEI goals adopted by our parent company, Manulife

An inclusive culture and brand with diverse talent that drives high performance until each one of us feels as though we belong



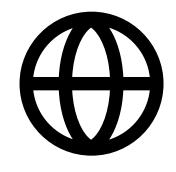
#### **Talent**

Diversity at all levels in the organization that's reflective of the communities in which we serve



#### Culture

Employees thrive because they feel they belong and can bring their authentic selves to work



## Community

Strong partnerships and DEI support in the external communities in which we live, work, and serve

## **Employee recognition**

## 96% of our employees

were recognized through Podium in 2023, with 13,369 awards given.

Source: Manulife Investment Management, as of December 31, 2023.

## **Employee engagement scores**

2022

2023

4.22 4.31

which puts us in the 79<sup>th</sup> percentile against Gallup's financial and insurance company benchmark.

Source: Manulife Investment Management, as of December 31, 2023. Engagement scores are rated on a five-point scale.

#### **Gender statistics for Manulife Investment Management**

	Woman (%)	<b>M</b> an (%)	Another gender (%)
By region			
All	41.7	58.2	0.1
Asia	55.3	44.7	
Canada	45.3	54.5	0.2
Europe	48.3	51.7	
United States	33.8	66.0	0.1
Other	30.5	69.5	
By organizational level			
VP and above	26.9	73.1	
AVP, director, manager	34.9	65.1	>0.1

Source: Manulife Investment Management, as of December 31, 2023. Data excludes staff who chose not to respond/preferred not to disclose; globally, this represented 1.1% of staff. Other includes Australia, Brazil, Chile and New Zealand.

## Recent sustainability milestones

## 2023

- Named the world's largest natural capital investment manager<sup>2</sup>
- Maintained acceptance as a signatory to the <u>UK Stewardship Code</u>
- Launched the following thematic strategies<sup>3</sup>
  - Sustainable Pacific Asia bond strategy
  - Global environmental transition strategy
- Developed a firmwide <u>client-directed exclusions framework</u> and a water statement, which we published in 2024
- Published our inaugural Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)-aligned <u>nature disclosure</u>, outlining our approach to nature in the stewardship and management of timberland and agricultural assets
- Reached implementation of at least one regenerative farming practice across 100% of managed agriculture investment properties

- Partnered with the <u>Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife</u>
   (ODFW) and the <u>Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation</u> to permanently
   conserve the Minam River State Wildlife Area, an area of land
   larger than Yellowstone National Park and the largest single
   conservation project in ODFW history<sup>4</sup>
- Received a 1<sup>st</sup> place GRESB ranking for our general account submission<sup>5</sup>
- Achieved one or more third-party sustainable building certifications<sup>6</sup> for 90% of properties in our real estate business
- Formalized a sustainable investing strategy and climate change strategy for our PE&C business, which included establishing near-term priorities and longer-term commitments

**6** Calculated based on square footage of the gross floor area of properties in the global equity portfolio where Manulife Investment is the asset manager. This excludes vacant lands, new developments, club investments or other non-equity assets. Totals from different certification standards do not sum as properties with multiple certifications are only counted once.

<sup>2</sup> IPE research, as of January 29, 2024. Ranking is based on total natural capital assets under management (AUM), which include forestry/timberland and agriculture/farmland AUM. Firms were asked to provide AUM and the as of dates vary from December 31, 2022, to December 31, 2023. 3 Not all strategies are available in all jurisdictions or to all clients. 4 Minam River Acquisition – Oregon.

<sup>5 2023,</sup> GRESB Real Estate Assessment 1st Place for our general account submission. Based on GRESB results released October 2023 cover the 2022 time period. Most current data shown. Manulife Investment Management paid a fee to be considered for the ranking. For more information, please visit gresb.com/nl-en/2023-real-estate-assessment-results.

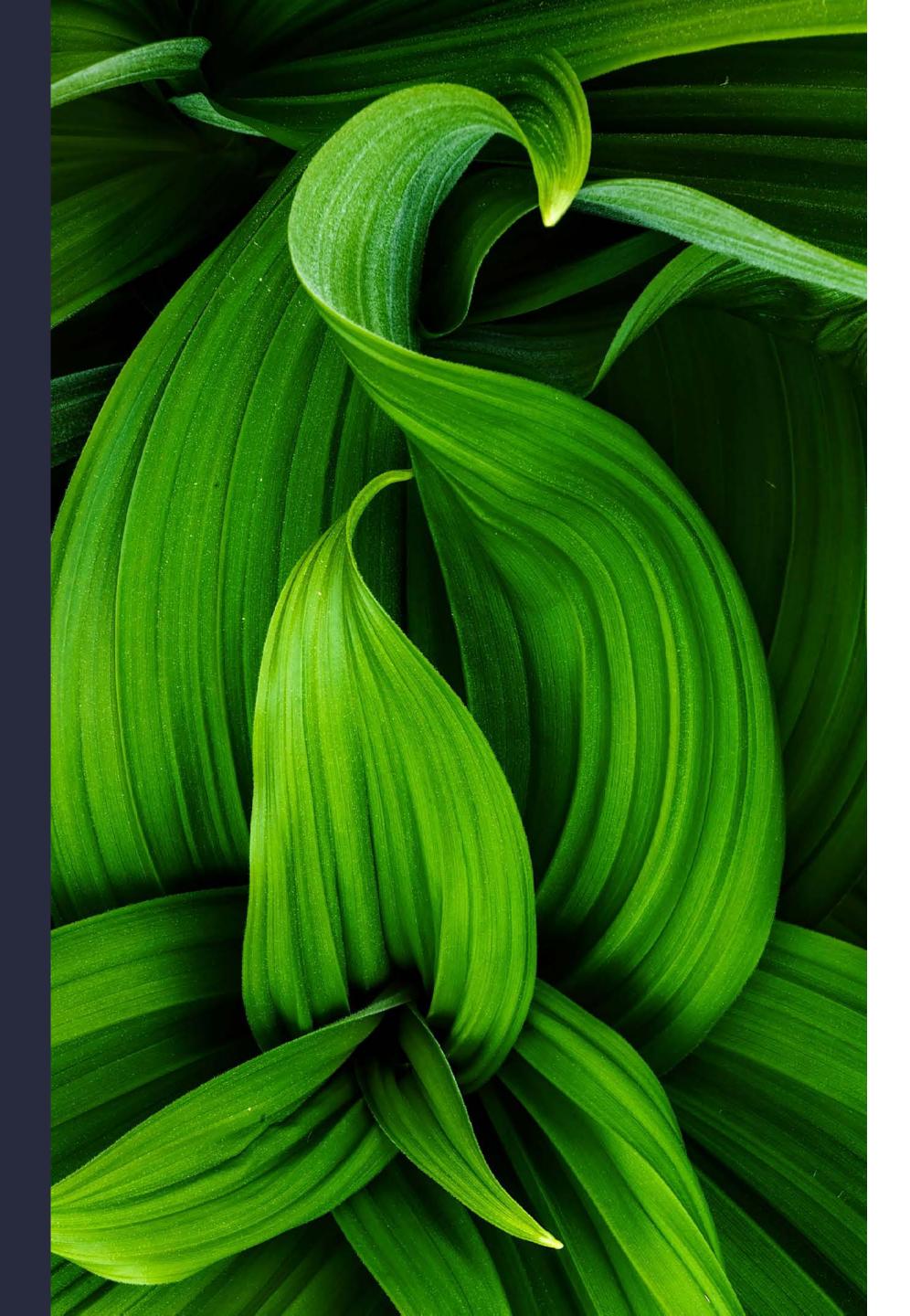
## 2022

- Launched several new thematic strategies in fixed income, equities, and private markets asset classes
- Participated in the <u>Leading Harvest</u> pilot program in Australia for global standards of farmland certification
- Published our <u>nature statement</u>, articulating our commitment to assess and manage nature-related risks and opportunities across investments
- Published our <u>carbon principles</u>, a high-integrity climate benefit methodology, for timberland assets
- Recognized as a 10-year GRESB participant member<sup>7</sup>
- Became a signatory to the <u>ESG Data Convergence Initiative</u> (EDCI)
- Became a signatory to the Institutional Limited Partners Association (ILPA) <u>Diversity in Action</u>

### 2021

- Published our inaugural stewardship report and accepted as a signatory to the UK Stewardship Code
- Published our first Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)-aligned <u>climate risk report</u> for our real estate portfolio
- Certified 100% of our U.S. farmlands under the <u>Leading Harvest</u>
   Farmland Management Standard<sup>8</sup>
- Timberland group made its <u>inaugural impact-first investment</u>, used primarily for carbon storage
- Launched our first global climate strategy for listed equities

**7** GRESB. Manulife Investment Management has submitted to the GRESB Real Estate Assessment at the fund level since 2012, operating as Standard Life until 2015. Recognition given on October 12, 2022, was based on the reporting period 2012 through 2022. **8** Certification as of May 17, 2021, by Leading Harvest and is based on an annual assessment of the conformation to the Farmland Management Standard. Please see leading harvest.org.



## Our commitment to nature

As part of our commitment to helping our clients achieve their objectives and build resilient portfolios, we're committed to positively affecting nature and biodiversity through our business and investment activities. We aim to proactively assess and manage nature-related risks and opportunities across our investments because we understand how essential nature is for the future success of businesses, the economy, and society.

#### How we engage with nature

- We invest in a global economy dependent on nature—Nature and biodiversity are critical for the functioning of society and the global economy. According to the World Economic Forum, over half the world's total GDP—about \$44 trillion of economic value generation—is moderately or highly dependent on nature and the services it provides to society.
- Consideration of nature in investment decision-making—We believe companies that better manage natural resources and environmental impacts from operations can offer investors a better risk/reward profile over the long term as nature-related risks begin to manifest both physically and financially.
- Our approach to nature in the investment process and asset stewardship— Nature considerations are a key part of our stewardship approach, including issuer engagement, proxy voting, and real asset stewardship. We also participate in several collaborative initiatives addressing nature loss; for example, Finance for Biodiversity and the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership.



For more information please read our <u>nature statement</u>, which can be found on our global institutional website.

## Advancements in ESG integration

Since joining the PRI in 2015,<sup>9</sup> we've worked to continuously improve integration of sustainability factors into investment decision-making with iterative improvements each year.

To that end, our sustainability professionals identify tools to help our investment teams assess ESG risks and opportunities, and we develop new tools where we see an opportunity to add value.

- We've developed a tool to aggregate third-party climate risk data for public markets investments at a portfolio and issuer level. This tool is housed on a central global research platform that all investment teams can access.
- For real estate, we use a tool that provides a portfolio view of our sustainability data. This is updated to our Sustainable Building Standards framework for real estate, which defines requirements and best practices for our third-party property managers and encourages improvement while addressing the need for advancement, guidance, tools, and consistency.
- We added a physical climate risk tool within our infrastructure, timberland, and agriculture businesses, alongside an existing tool in real estate, and rolled out new ESG integration tools across all our global PE&C strategies.
- We launched an ESG research framework for public markets investments that prompts analysis of the ESG indicators for an issuer where we've identified that the indicators in question are likely to be financially material.

Category	Indicator
Environmental	<ul> <li>Climate change—physical risk</li> <li>Climate—transition (including energy management)</li> <li>Resource management (air, water, pollution, and waste)</li> <li>Biodiversity</li> </ul>
Social	<ul> <li>Product quality and safety</li> <li>Labor practices (including occupational safety, labor rights, development and training, and DEI)</li> <li>Community relations</li> <li>Privacy and security</li> </ul>
Governance	<ul> <li>Track record, culture, and ownership considerations</li> <li>Related party transactions and audit</li> <li>Board and management structure</li> <li>Executive compensation</li> </ul>

We continued to train our investment professionals on the latest sustainable investing practices and ESG integration. In 2023, training included topics in sustainability materiality, emerging sustainability regulation, nature and biodiversity, and climate science and policy. The sustainable investment teams also support an internal sustainable investing information hub in which they collect research and related discussions of sustainability topics.

**<sup>9</sup>** Manulife Investment Management was formerly Manulife Asset Management, which signed on to the UNPRI in 2015.

## Stewardship

+008

unique issuers engaged<sup>10</sup>

100%

of U.S. and Australian farmland is certified under the Leading Harvest management standard<sup>11</sup>

492,000

acres of sensitive lands protected<sup>13</sup>

25+

vendors, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), governments, and industry bodies<sup>10</sup>

100%

of our 5.4 million acres of sustainably managed timberland is third-party certified<sup>12</sup>

## Recognition

Retained our Avant Gardist rating in the 2024 Responsible Investment Brand Index<sup>14</sup>

Named the world's largest natural capital investment manager by IPE<sup>2</sup>

Winner of Agri Investor Awards 2023—Timberland Deal of the Year: Americas<sup>15</sup>

10 The global category includes vendors, NGOs, and influencers with a worldwide focus and coverage. 11 Recertification for US as of July 22, 2023, initial Australian certification as of November 29, 2023. Includes both third-party leased and directly operated assets. Oliver Williams, global head of agriculture, is current chair of the Board of Directors for Leading Harvest. For more information on Leading Harvest, please see <u>leadingharvest.org/about</u>. 12 As of December 31, 2023, 100% of our forests were certified under either Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) (3.2 million acres in the U.S. and Canada) or Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) (2.2 million acres in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, and Chile). The most current data is shown. 13 Sensitive lands are critical habitat or lands with high cultural value on our properties that are protected or managed for purposes outside of timber production. We work closely with environmental groups to consummate conservation transactions that will protect these lands. 14 Hirschel and Kramer (H&K) Responsible Investment Brand Index (RIBI™) highlights the ability of close to 600 asset managers globally to translate their efforts towards responsible investment into their core brand. The RIBI™ is made up of two ratings: the Commitment rating which focuses on hard factors (e.g., level and quality of Listed Equity voting), and the Brand rating which focuses on soft factors (e.g., the existence of a Purpose statement and the quality of its expression). The Avant-Gardist rating is given to firms with above average on Commitment rating and Brand rating. Manulife Investment Management paid a fee for the rights to use the award logo. For further information, please visit: ri-brandindex.org. 15 Manulife Investment Management was recognized for the acquisition of 55,000 acres of timberland in South Carolina in April 2024. For further information about the award categories, please visit Agri Investor Awards frequently asked questions.

## Global collaboration

To help inform our sustainable investing practices, we engage with sustainability-focused organizations, including:

**30% Club Canada Investor Group**—We're an active member and participant.

**AIGCC**—We're a member of the Asia Investor Group on Climate Change (AIGCC) working groups and chair the physical risk and adaptation working group. We assisted in the development the Expectations of National Adaptation Plans in Asia, which was brought to COP 27 in late 2022.

<u>CDP Non-Disclosure Campaign</u>—We supported the campaign to boost transparency because we believe this drives up rates of corporate disclosure of carbon emissions.

<u>Ceres' Valuing Water Initiative</u>—We're a member of the Investor Water Hub, Private Equity Working Group, and founding member of the Valuing Water Investor Working Group.

<u>Climate Action 100+</u>—A founding member since 2017, we've continued to engage and encourage firms to improve climate-related governance and disclosures and reduce emissions across their value chains.











**Finance for Biodiversity Pledge**—We signed the pledge and joined the advisory board and several working groups of the Finance for Biodiversity Foundation in 2021. By signing onto the pledge, we've committed to collaborate and engage with companies on biodiversity and assess our own biodiversity impact. This will enable us to set targets and disclose appropriate reporting on biodiversity aspects by 2025.

Nature Action 100+—Beginning in 2024, we've participated in this global investor-led engagement initiative, which focuses on supporting greater corporate ambition and action to reverse nature and biodiversity loss.

**PRI**—We're a member of <u>several working groups</u>:

- Infrastructure Advisory Committee (member, past chair)
- Real Estate Advisory Committee (member)
- Sovereign and Sub-Sovereign Debt Advisory Committees (member)
- Listed Equity Advisory Committee (chair)
- Stewardship Initiative on Nature Signatory Advisory Committee (member)

**PRI Spring**—We're a member of the Signatory Advisory Committee and a member of the initiative, which aims to use its influence to halt and reverse global biodiversity loss by 2030.

<u>ULI</u>—We're a member of the Mapping ESG Steering Committee for the Urban Land Institute (ULI).

**WBCSD**—We participate in the <u>World Business Council for Sustainable</u> <u>Development's</u> (WBCSD's) Forest Solutions Group and Nature Action projects.













## Taking action on climate and nature

**NCC**—We've partnered with the Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC) through its investment in the Conservation Technology Project, which is designed to increase capacity for, and accelerate, the pace of conservation by harnessing technology to play a key role in supporting conservation decision-making.

**TNFD**—As a member of the TNFD Forum, we supported the development of a risk management and disclosure framework for nature-related risks, which was finalized and published in 2023.

Finance for Biodiversity Pledge and Foundation—We're signatories to the pledge and members of the foundation, where we sit on the advisory board and working groups (engagement, public policy, impact assessment, target setting) committed to developing best practices around assessing impact, both positive and negative, on biodiversity and the creation of targets to increase significant positive effects on biodiversity.

<u>WBCSD</u>—As a member of the WBCSD, we collaborate with other organizations to advance sustainable business development and are involved in the Nature Action and Scaling Positive Agriculture programs and the Forest Solution Group.

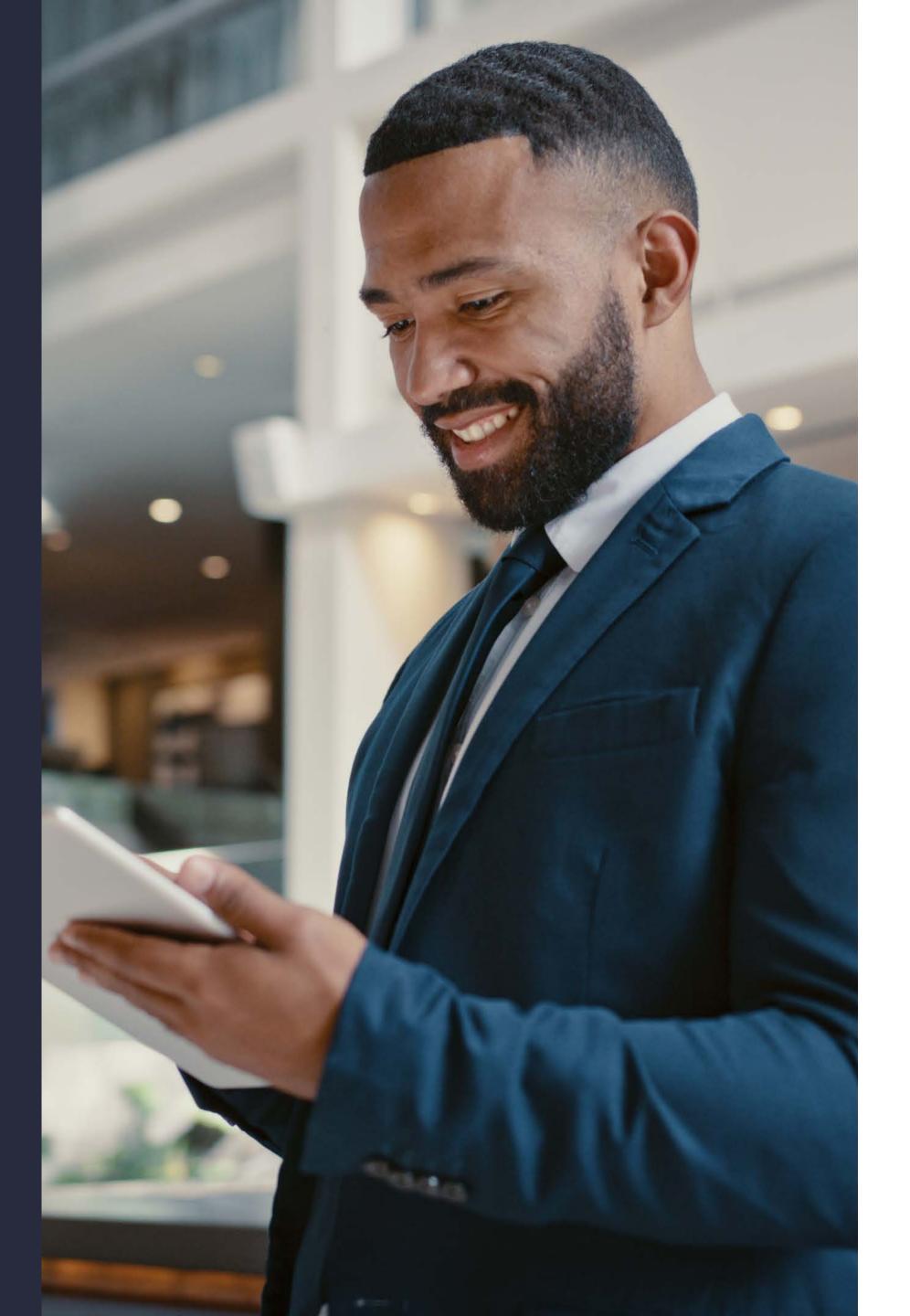












## Our purpose is embedded in our strategy and culture

As an active global investment manager, in-depth research and analysis drive our investment activities and shape our daily decisions.

With a culture steeped in careful and objective analysis, knowledge sharing, and global collaboration, we understand how sustainability principles should inform our investment practices from the bottom up.

In our view, sustainability is an important driver of financial value, while strong stewardship practices help us build strong relationships with all our stakeholders, from clients and employees to tenants, borrowers, and investment partners. This belief manifests across the different facets of our global business as operators of private assets, equity holders, and debt holders.

These different facets of our identity enhance our stewardship efforts, as they allow us to leverage fundamentally different perspectives in our daily activities.

## Our beliefs support our culture of stewardship

Manulife Investment Management's commitment to sustainable investing is driven by our beliefs.

## Sustainability factors can have a material impact on financial value

We believe sustainability factors can materially affect financial value; therefore, we see value in integrating the analysis of sustainability risks and opportunities into our investing processes.<sup>16</sup>



## Active managers have a stewardship advantage

We believe active managers are well placed to manage stewardship effectively, as we're able to bring our experience to work with company management to encourage effective change. Where we operate assets, we believe it's our responsibility to pursue the best sustainability processes and standards for our firm, our employees, and our clients.



## We believe in offering clients sustainable investing choices

We believe in offering choices to investors, from ESG integration to impact investments. A broad range of products enables investors to better meet an equally broad range of goals.



**16** A sustainability risk is any ESG event that, if it occurs, could or will have a material negative impact on the value of investments we make for our clients (sustainability risks). Sustainability or ESG factors include environmental, social, and employee matters; respect for human rights; and anti-corruption and anti-bribery matters (sustainability factors). Please see our <u>sustainable investing and sustainability risk statement</u> for further details.

## How we help our clients

Our sustainable investing capabilities are broad, ranging from ESG integration to impact investing.

- We seek to support our clients' objectives by leveraging our sustainability and investment expertise across a broad range of public and private asset classes, as well as by offering multi-asset solutions.
- We continuously seek to enhance our product offerings and our reporting in line with industry standards and best practices.
- We take a consultative approach to meeting our clients' sustainability objectives.
- We host sustainability education and training for our employees, clients, and other industry participants.

#### **Robust communications**

We're focused on achieving the best outcome we can for our clients, aligned to their objectives. This drives us to collaborate with our clients and beneficiaries to understand and strive to meet or exceed their needs and to work with them on accessing that part of our sustainability offering that's most suitable for pursuing their objectives. During our interactions, we elicit clients' feedback on their investment goals and will specifically review sustainable investment goals as directed by individual clients.

We're a global asset manager investing not only across multiple asset classes, but also serving clients across geographies. We've observed that the awareness and understanding of sustainable investing among our clients vary. Some are very knowledgeable about sustainable investing and integration and may request specific actions or ESG data metrics or ask us to fill out a questionnaire on our sustainable investing practices, including investment stewardship. Others will articulate requirements in an investment policy statement that can cover preferences ranging from investment objectives and time horizons to risk tolerance and asset mix. We use this to better inform our client reporting and ensure that we're continually educating, where necessary, as well as being transparent.

- **PRI assessment**—As signatories to the PRI, we publish our assessment report in line with the PRI's reporting cycle. Clients will sometimes use this report as a springboard to a deeper dive into our active ownership and investing activities.
- **Asset class-specific sustainability reports**—We publish annual reports for our <u>timberland</u>, <u>agriculture</u>, and <u>real estate</u> asset classes.
- <u>Stewardship report</u>—On an annual basis, we publish a report focusing on our culture of stewardship, risk management, and how our active ownership practices are driven by our client and stakeholder focus.
- **Proxy voting dashboard**—We disclose our quarterly public markets proxy voting records, which can be accessed through our institutional investor website.
- <u>Climate-related financial disclosures report</u>—This annual public report uses the TCFD framework to report on strategy, governance, risk management, and metrics and targets related to climate change in our business.
- <u>Nature-related financial disclosure</u>—Our timberland and agriculture nature disclosure is informed by the recommendations of the TNFD.
- <u>Case studies website</u>—We regularly publish new case studies on our institutional investor website that highlight the issues, actions, and outcomes at the core of our sustainability and stewardship efforts.

Our clients routinely request customized reporting to supplement our public reports; for example, for clients invested in public assets, on request, we may provide more detailed information of the engagement and/or proxy voting activities we undertake in relation to holdings in that client's portfolio. We may share specific engagement outcomes or a review of votes on shareholder proposals to provide information as to how we practice stewardship on behalf of an asset owner. For clients invested in private markets, we provide more detailed fund-level reporting for thematic strategies, assist with bespoke requirements, and support ad hoc requests; for example, we submit data to industry benchmarks, including GRESB and the EDCI, and clients may ask us to share updates, data, or additional details about our activities with them.



Our approach to sustainable investing rests on three pillars: integration, stewardship, and collaboration. While their expressions may vary by asset class and investment team, each pillar is fundamental to our investment approach and forms the basis on which we pursue our sustainability objectives and those of our clients.

## Integration

- In alignment with our clients' financial objectives, we incorporate material sustainability considerations throughout the stages of our investment and asset ownership lifecycles<sup>16</sup>
- Seek to strengthen the potential risk/reward profile of our clients' portfolios
- Exercise rights to encourage best practices in sustainability factor reporting and management (e.g., proxy voting)

## Stewardship

- Engage with companies to address sustainability-related challenges and enhance sustainability-related opportunities
- We seek to protect and enhance the value of assets we operate



## Collaboration

- We seek to collaborate with organizations across the world to amplify our impact on global, systemic issues
- This work allows us to expand the scope of our sustainabilityfocused activity as we strive to build more resilient portfolios and help steer the markets toward more sustainable outcomes



For illustrative purposes only.

SRI report 2023
31

## Integration

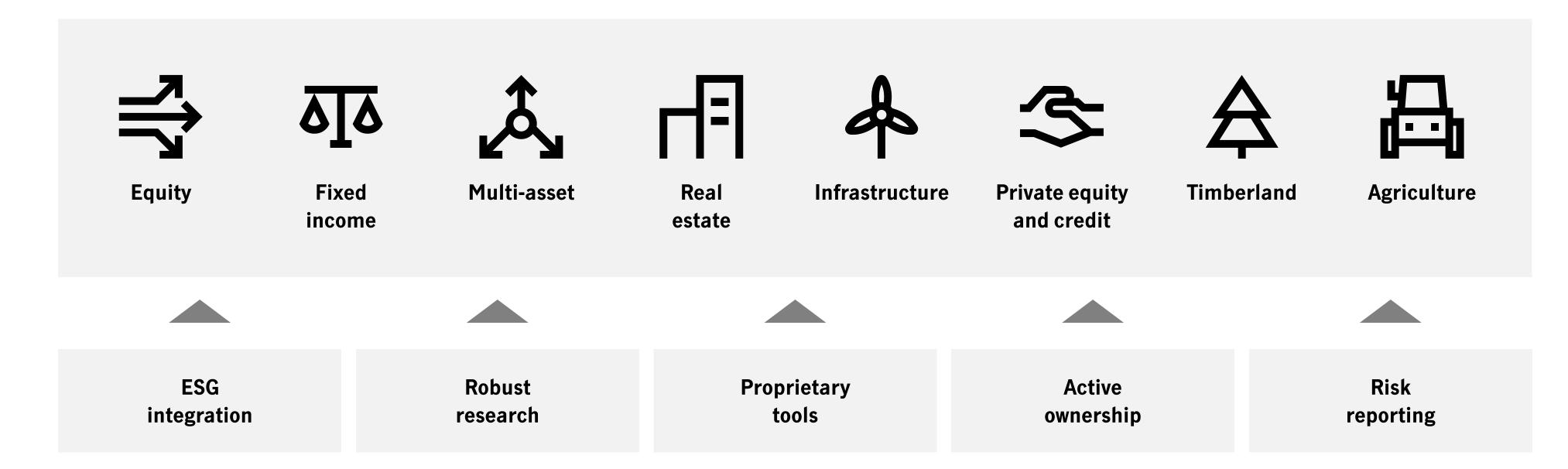
We combine active investment management with a deep understanding and integrated analysis of sustainability issues.

Our integration practices grow from the investment philosophies and approaches of our investment teams across asset classes. The approach of each team practicing this integration is reinforced and strengthened by the global and regional perspectives of our 30 sustainability professionals. This support extends across the investment, product, and asset class lifecycles and includes:

- Analysis of sustainability risks and opportunities
- Development of tools to aid sustainable investing
- Frequent communication on sustainable investing information
- Engagement with management teams

- Training and education
- Guidance on exercising rights

#### Integration of sustainability analysis is owned and applied by each investment team



#### The spectrum of our sustainability offering

# integration (including active ownership)

Consideration and analysis of financially material sustainability risks and factors as part of investment decisionmaking

## Negative (and norms-based) screening<sup>17</sup>

Industry sectors or companies excluded/ divested from to avoid risk or to better align with client values

# Positive or best-in-class (and norms-based) screening<sup>17</sup>

Investments that target companies or industries with better sustainability performance

## Thematic/ sustainabilitythemed investments

Investments that specifically target sustainability themes (e.g., clean energy, green property, climate mitigation, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)-aligned solutions)

## **Impact** investments

Investments that intentionally and additionally seek to generate positive, measurable social, and/or environmental impact as a core component of their investment thesis alongside a financial return, which emphasizes the optimization of social and/or environmental benefits and may result in a financial trade-off

For illustrative purposes only. A sustainability risk is any ESG event that, if it occurs, could or will have a material negative impact on the value of investments we make for our clients (sustainability risks). Sustainability or ESG factors include environmental, social, and employee matters; respect for human rights; and anti-corruption and anti-bribery matters (sustainability factors). Please see our sustainable investing and sustainability risk statement for further details.

**17** Applicable to public markets strategies.

## Stewardship

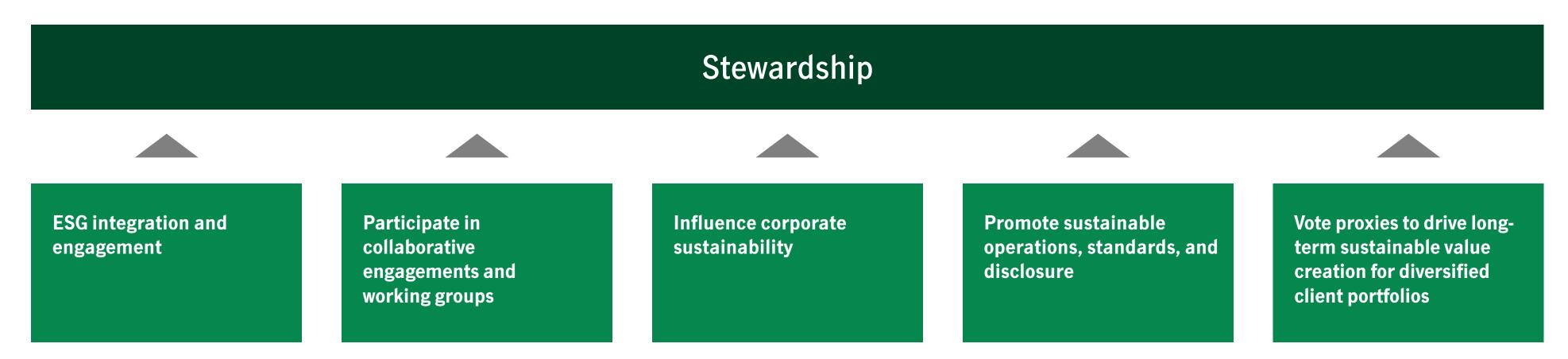
We recognize the critical connection between deciding to invest and maintaining a strong program of stewardship to protect each of our investments. The central objective of our approach is to strengthen the potential risk/reward profile of our clients' portfolios.

In our listed equities and fixed-income investments, one aspect of our stewardship efforts is to engage with company management. We use our findings from these engagements to help determine intrinsic valuation, and we also collaborate with issuers through these conversations to encourage best practices related to issuer-specific sustainability factors.

In our private markets investments, we're frequently investors in and simultaneously operators of assets, which we believe gives us a unique perspective on sustainable business practices and concerns. For example, where we invest assets in our real estate, timberland, and agriculture portfolios, we seek to enhance the value of our assets while, in turn, having a positive impact on our stakeholders. In our infrastructure, private equity, and private credit investments, we focus on building strong relationships with companies, sponsors, and coinvestors, which enables us to take a meaningful approach to sustainability and enhances our influence over key assets and portfolio companies.

As long-term investors and as a steward of our clients' capital, we're able to use our broad experience with sustainability implementation, research, governance, and collaboration to manage sustainability-related investment risks and opportunities over extended time horizons across asset classes.

#### Stewardship activities can advance financial objectives and operating strength



For illustrative purposes only.

SRI report 2023 34

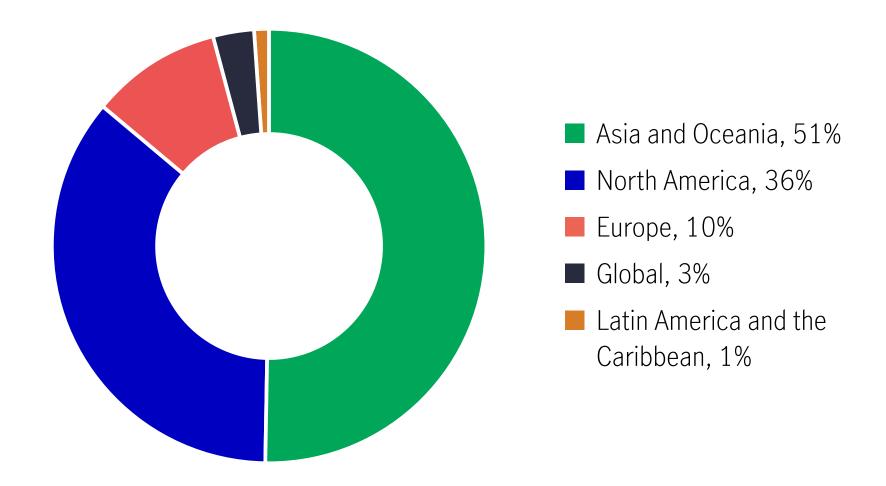
## From engagement volume to a focus on outcomes

Both the investment professionals and sustainable investing team members at Manulife Investment Management have conversations with issuers across our holdings. We shifted our focus from scaling up the volume of conversations to outcome-oriented engagement and seeking to influence firms to enhance their practices and mitigate the impact of material sustainability risks.

Although we recognize that this focus on outcome-based engagements can take months—if not longer—to achieve our desired results, we believe our focus on collaboration with firms to mitigate risk is beneficial to our portfolios and clients over the longer term.

800+ unique issuers
25+ vendors, NGOs, governments, and industry bodies
1,250+ unique interactions

#### Unique entities engaged by region



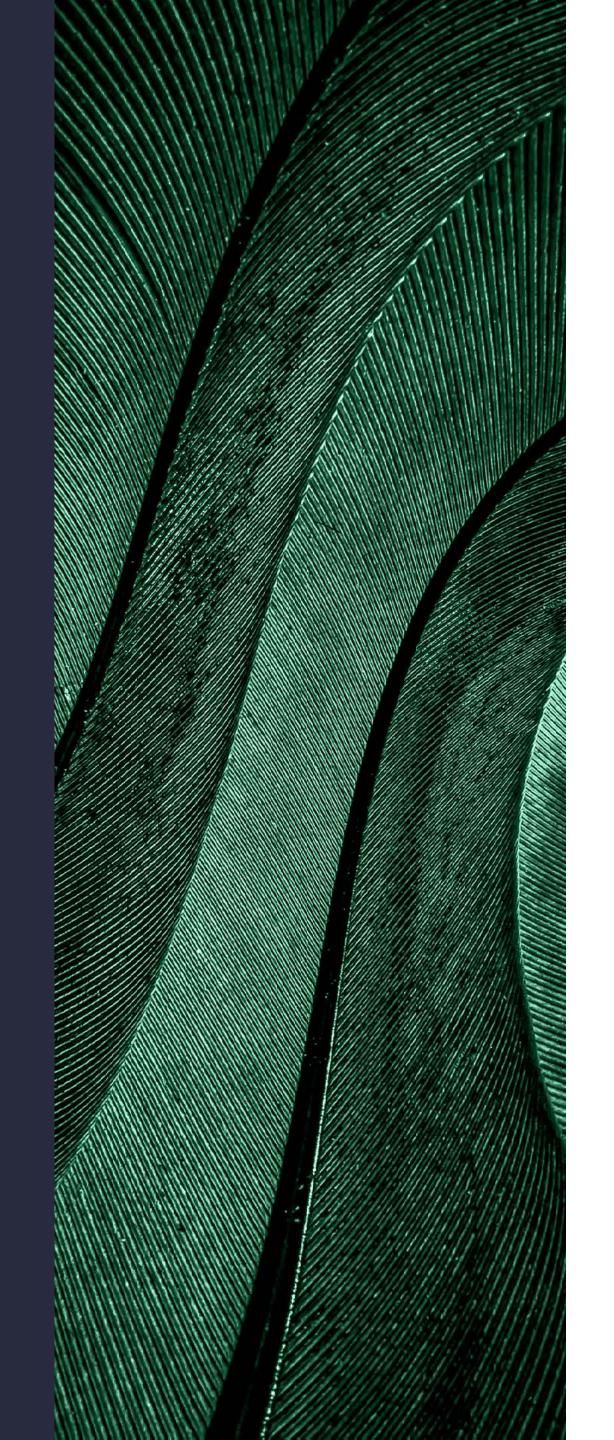
The global category includes vendors, NGOs, and influencers with a worldwide focus and coverage. Mexico is included in the Latin America and Caribbean category. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### Thoughtful execution of proxy voting rights

Manulife Investment Management executes proxy voting rights in accordance with our global proxy voting policy and procedures. Where Manulife Investment Management is granted and accepts responsibility for voting proxies for client accounts, we'll seek to ensure proxies are received and voted in the best interests of our clients. We take a thoughtful approach to voting that involves voting decision reviews and suggestions from our investment and sustainability professionals through the lens of our proxy voting principles. Our proxy voting principles outline our general approach to proxy voting matters, including director elections, executive remuneration, shareholder rights, and sustainability issues. Some high-level voting trends for accounts where we have proxy voting authority across shareholder proposal types are listed below.

	Shareholder proposals	Number of proposals	Votes contrary to management	Reasons we voted contrary to management
Environmental	Reporting on climate change	50	92%	Disclosure would help shareholders assess governance and strategy related to the management of physical and transition risks associated with climate change
	Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions	46	92%	Adoption of robust mid- and long-term targets encourages emissions reductions and reduces risk
Social	DEI	49	90%	<ul> <li>Disclosure on pay gap allows investor assessment of retention/recruitment risk and opportunities</li> <li>Reporting could help investors assess human capital management and community engagement risk</li> </ul>
	Health and safety	65	92%	Disclosure would help investors assess the congruency of political spending, trade association work, and policy engagement with public statements and positions
Governance	Compensation	151	54%	<ul> <li>Support increased disclosure around the executive compensation structure</li> <li>Support creation of provisions to claw back executive compensation in certain instances</li> <li>Support the requirement for shareholder vote on severance agreements</li> </ul>
	Shareholder rights	80	78%	<ul> <li>Support elimination of dual-class shares with differential voting rights</li> <li>Support the right to call special meetings and written consent</li> <li>Support removal of poison pills</li> </ul>

Source: Manulife Investment Management, as of December 31, 2023.



# Collaboration

Around the globe, we participate in a wide variety of collaborative engagements with industry peers, nonprofits, NGOs, and supranational entities. This work allows us to expand the scope of our sustainability-focused activity as we seek to build more resilient portfolios. Our collaborative engagements may focus on individual investments or systemic risks—and sometimes both.

# We seek to amplify our impact through global collaboration



## **Market education**

We engage with a wide range of industry participants and seek to be a leading voice



# Regulatory/policy focus

We consult and collaborate globally to influence the regulatory landscape and encourage sustainability best practices



### **Issuer focus**

We address systemic risks by working toward outcomes at individual issuers



In 2023, we contributed to and supported many collaborative initiatives in our capacity as lead investor, founding member, supporting member, or group participant. Themes included climate, corporate governance, nature and biodiversity, and policy development.

For more information, please see our <u>stewardship report</u>.

While participating in a variety of collaborative engagements, we retain discretion and make unilateral and independent investment decisions.

Sustainable investing in action

# Infrastructure

AUM: \$21,447 million<sup>18</sup>

Investment professionals: 27<sup>19</sup>

# Highlights

- The infrastructure team has over \$5 billion in renewable energy equity investments, including wind, solar, and battery storage.<sup>20</sup>
- We're a member of the PRI Infrastructure Advisory Committee.
- We supported the <u>EDCI</u>, which aims to streamline the private investment industry's historically fragmented approach to collecting and reporting ESG data. Our annual infrastructure ESG questionnaires are now aligned with the initiative.

# Integration

The importance of sustainable investing in infrastructure is particularly apparent due to the long-term nature of the assets and investment horizon. As such, we believe that management of sustainability risks and opportunities in our infrastructure investments can lead to attractive risk-adjusted returns over the long term.

Our team's ESG integration practices include the following key steps and are applicable to all of our investments across all geographies:

- We use an ESG due diligence process focused on materiality that was developed using a combination of external resources from the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) and the PRI as well as our own expertise.
- We document the outcomes of our ESG due diligence in the investment memorandum, which is evaluated during the investment committee approval process.
- Once an investment is made, the infrastructure team continues to monitor all material aspects that might affect an asset or company, including ESG factors.

### Partnering with our portfolio companies to advance sustainability

As a long-term investor with a commitment to sustainable growth, we seek to integrate sustainability across the investment lifecycle. As part of our postinvestment process, we work together with our portfolio companies to actively monitor and manage material aspects of the investment, including sustainability factors identified during due diligence.

We're mindful that some portfolio companies may be at different points in their sustainability journeys. We view this as an opportunity to help advance their sustainability performance, acting as a trusted advisor to help better align their strategy, governance structure, risk management, and metrics and targets with leading sustainability practices.

**<sup>18</sup>** Manulife Financial Corporation, 2023. The infrastructure team manages renewable energy-related private equity investments on behalf of external clients and the insurance business of Manulife. Total includes \$2.29 billion of assets managed on behalf of external clients. The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change. **19** Manulife Investment Management's global investment professional team includes expertise from several affiliates and joint ventures; not all entities represent all asset classes. **20** The infrastructure team manages renewable energy-related private equity investments on behalf of external clients and the insurance business of Manulife. Total includes \$1.87 billion of assets managed on behalf of external clients. For reporting, renewable energy in our infrastructure equity AUM (third party and general account) includes investments in solar power generation and transmission, wind power generation and transmission, hydroelectric generation, biofuel collection, biomass waste to energy, and battery energy storage systems.

### Asset stewardship playbook

To provide our investment and portfolio company management teams with a resource to enhance their understanding and advance sustainability in line with leading practices, we've developed our asset stewardship playbook. While the playbook is constantly evolving to stay current with new developments, it currently includes our:

- **Sustainability policy template**—The sustainability policy template acts as a key resource for portfolio companies to help formalize governance and oversight of and commitments across material sustainability factors.
- Sustainability risk management framework—We developed guidance on sustainability-related risk management practices, including a proprietary sustainability risk assessment matrix, that portfolio companies can use to identify, assess, and monitor material sustainability risk factors.
- Support for sustainability data collection and target setting—To support ESG data collection and target-setting efforts, we use a tailored approach for each portfolio company, focusing on metrics that are most meaningful to their business. This may include GHG emissions, energy consumption, biodiversity, and water management. As a result, our portfolio companies are better equipped to improve performance measurement and monitoring across material sustainability factors.

# Stewardship

We work selectively with entities in which we invest to help them become more sustainable in the context of our investment horizon.

Our infrastructure team typically seeks to monitor and influence an investment through a board seat, protective controls, or governance—or a combination of these. These rights enable the investment team to exert influence or veto power regarding key decisions made with respect to a company's commercial or financial operations, as well as management and oversight of relevant sustainability risks and opportunities. Board seats, in particular, allow us to engage directly in the activities of a given investment.

To enhance our ESG monitoring practices, our sustainable investing team in private markets is implementing an annual ESG monitoring process to collect ESG-related data across our infrastructure portfolio. The data collected during the monitoring process will be used to track and measure the ESG performance of our investments.

### Collaboration

We work with a range of market participants, regulators, and NGOs to address global sustainability challenges.

The infrastructure team recognizes the importance of collaborating with other investors and industry experts, both to gain insight into evolving best practices and to contribute to the development and adoption of ESG integration globally. With this in mind, the infrastructure team has been involved in the following initiatives:

- PRI Infrastructure Advisory Committee—Our global head of corporate finance and infrastructure sits on the PRI Infrastructure Advisory Committee as a representative for Manulife Investment Management. The committee advises the PRI on the overall strategic direction of the infrastructure workstream and supports the delivery of key projects and initiatives within the workstream.
- LTIIA—Our vice president and senior managing director of power and infrastructure, sits on the board of the Long Term Infrastructure Investors Association (LTIIA). The LTIIA works with a wide range of stakeholders—infrastructure investors, policymakers, and academics, among others—to enable the long-term, responsible deployment of private capital in public infrastructure projects around the world.

# Listed equities and fixed income

Listed equities Fixed income

AUM: \$140,453 million<sup>21</sup> AUM: \$225,416 million<sup>22</sup>

Investment professionals: 165+19 Investment professionals: 169+19

# **Highlights**

- We launched our proprietary ESG research framework, which updates our integration process and applies to both listed equities and fixed-income assets.
- We launched our sustainable Pacific Asia bond strategy, which invests in securities of companies and/or governments (and related issuers) that demonstrate strong or improving sustainability attributes.
- We launched our equity-based global environmental transition strategy, which invests in companies that positively contribute to a low-carbon environmental transition and/or adapt or mitigate the effects of climate change.
- We supported more than half of shareholder resolutions encouraging iterative disclosure and performance improvements at companies to encourage more resilience across our clients' diversified portfolios. On climate-related proposals specifically, we supported over two-thirds of shareholder resolutions, in aggregate, across all equity holdings in active and passive portfolios. This reflects our view that climate change represents a clear financial risk that poses systemic challenges.

# **Integration**

Each team integrates sustainability factors in a manner that best complements its own unique strategies. Although each team has a unique investment process, the overall approach to ESG integration is consistent for the respective asset class and occurs throughout the investment lifecycle from due diligence to risk monitoring and active ownership.

### **Listed equities**

The sustainable investing framework employed within our equity portfolios is an extension of our fundamental, bottom-up research. Each equity team bears responsibility for the evaluation of sustainability factors throughout the due diligence and decision-making processes in the pursuit of attractive risk-adjusted returns and capital preservation objectives.

Through their fundamental research process, our investment teams derive a risk/reward profile incorporating sustainability risks and opportunities that can help shape the teams' modeling and define sensitivities around their estimates of fair value.

**<sup>21</sup>** Manulife Financial Corporation, 2023. Alpha-focused equities: AUM includes certain balanced funds, which are mainly equity weighted. The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change. **22** Manulife Financial Corporation, 2023. Fixed income: AUM includes certain balanced funds which are mainly fixed income weighted. The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change.

#### Fixed income

For fixed-income portfolios, sustainability risk analysis is an integral part of our credit research process (excluding securitized and money market assets). Our investment teams adapt their approach to ESG integration, stewardship, and collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders to meet the unique considerations of their respective strategies and the regions in which they operate.

Our approach to fixed-income ESG integration is adapted to identify the material issues within each industry. In addition to the materiality of sustainability risks, where appropriate, our investment professionals seek to assess the timing of likely impact. Credit analysts are responsible for completing an ESG risk assessment and can use the ESG risk profile to adjust the relative value ranking of names within a given industry. Across our fixed-income strategies, our investment teams have access to a variety of tools that support their ESG integration processes. Examples include our:

- **Proprietary sovereign ESG risk model**—In addition to our ESG research framework, this additional model is a unique product of collaborative work between our sustainable investing team and veteran sovereign debt and multi-sector fixed-income professionals.
- **ESG credit risk analysis template**—This tool helps our teams assess the potential impact of sustainability factors on spreads and default risk.

We believe that seeking to address systemic risks is a key element in ESG integration. We also seek to address systemic risks in our thematic products, such as our climate equity and climate bond strategies, in which we endeavor to identify climate leaders and those companies that are implementing real-world decarbonization activities.

## **Stewardship**

We're signatories to various stewardship codes (including the <u>UK Stewardship Code</u>) to support our belief that sustainable investing requires discipline and appropriate governance frameworks. Our stewardship activities are evident in the extensive engagement discussions between the investment teams and the companies they work with. Complementing these engagements are escalation techniques deployed in the event of failure to make progress.

Our stewardship for the equity asset class includes both corporate engagements and proxy voting.

We take our active ownership responsibility seriously. In 2023, we voted contrary to management's recommended vote on 13% of proposals. These include the following instances:

- Advisory vote on executive compensation—We may vote against the advisory say-on-pay vote if a company isn't responsive to our concerns across a range of executive compensation issues. These may include misalignment between firm performance and executive remuneration, weak targets for executive bonus, or our wish to see executive performance benchmarked against different metrics.
- **Director vote**—We may vote against directors if the board is unresponsive to requests made through our engagement with them or if we see significant failures relative to executive compensation, board composition, audit oversight, or general governance.
- **Shareholder proposals**—We may choose to support a shareholder proposal to encourage iterative improvements on performance and disclosure related to governance matters.

Within fixed income, we engage with issuers on various sustainability topics, which gives us insight into their respective business models, strategies, and risk profiles. The representatives with whom we speak can differ by fixed-income asset type: With corporate bonds, we seek to interact with senior management teams. When engaging sovereign and municipal bond issuers, we'll seek to speak with a government representative in an environmental or financial role and local finance and elected officials. For securitized debt, we engage management teams, investment bankers, rating agencies, and industry trade associations. Through our engagements as bondholders, we seek to protect and grow invested capital while also supporting the resiliency of the capital markets.

By engaging with companies when they need to fundraise, we can also influence those issuers to commit to adopting best practices in sustainable risk mitigation. Through credit events, we may also have the opportunity to renegotiate terms or may emerge from the event with equity and voting rights that we exercise to protect our stakeholders' interests. Ultimately, we aim to strategically time our engagements in order to maximize our influence.

We continue to build our influence over debt issuers and are finding that bondholders may not be fully exercising their rights to advance sustainable outcomes. We've heard from some issuers, for example, that they're generally not engaged by debt holders on sustainability risks and opportunities and can be appreciative when we approach them. This feedback is encouraging to us, and we've learned that firms are generally receptive to our feedback as debt holders.

### Collaboration

We believe collaboration on systemic sustainability issues is aligned with our fiduciary duty to our clients as an asset manager to manage risks in their diversified portfolios. Through collaborative engagement, working with industry partners and sustainability-focused organizations, we seek to amplify our collective impact, reduce the noise of numerous points of view by unifying our message to key corporate management teams,

and help companies focus on setting goals with meaningfully positive outcomes. In these efforts, we leverage the full range of knowledge available to us across our global platform. While participating in a variety of collaborative engagements, we retain discretion and make unilateral and independent investment decisions.

During the year, we added <u>illustrative examples</u> of engagements, including equityfocused examples in which we met with companies to encourage action to mitigate sustainability risks to enhance long-term value.

- PRI Listed Equity Advisory Committee—As a member of this committee, we provide input, advice, and insight to support the design and development of an ambitious strategy for listed equities that reflects the need for action to address critical sustainability issues.
- <u>Credit Roundtable</u>—We're a member of the Credit Roundtable, an association of corporate bond market participants focused on education, outreach, and advocacy designed to give debt holders a stronger voice with debt-issuing companies.
- PRI Sub-Sovereign Debt Advisory Committee—We have representation on this committee. This committee includes representatives from PRI signatories who are focused on promoting more systematic and transparent ESG integration in subsovereign debt investing.
- <u>TCFD</u>—Our Japan fixed-income team is an active participant in the Japanese government-backed TCFD Consortium, which fosters valuable disclosure of climate-related risks by member companies.
- **EMIA**—We're a member of the Emerging Markets Investors Alliance (EMIA), a nonprofit organization that enables institutional emerging-market investors to support good governance, promote sustainable development, and improve the adoption of ESG best practices. We're part of EMIA's debt and fiscal governance working group, which brings together institutional investors, policy experts, and government finance officials with the goal of advancing fiscal transparency and sustainability in emerging markets. We're also a member of the organization's agriculture, ESG, and extractive industries working groups.

# **Multi-asset solutions**

AUM: \$197,333 million<sup>23</sup>

Investment professionals: 45+19

### **Overview**

As allocators of capital, our Multi-Asset Solutions Team (MAST) has taken a top-down approach to constructing diversified portfolios across multiple asset classes and sectors, combining dynamic asset allocation with holistic risk management. The team is focused on evaluating potential opportunities and risks in order to achieve tailored investment outcomes and solutions on behalf of clients. The analysis and integration of ESG factors are a natural complement to the research put forth by MAST. Further, the team believes ESG factors play a meaningful role in the evolution of capital markets and, as such, embraces the principles of sustainability that help drive improved outcomes for stakeholders.

# **Integration**

MAST has achieved our highest level of ESG integration and uses a framework for evaluating aspects of ESG risk and opportunity that aligns with the team's investment process. This framework consists of the following:

- Partnership with our public markets sustainable investing team
- Coordination across the equity and fixed-income teams and MAST to share sustainable investment views, enabling MAST to develop fundamental top-down views of risks and opportunities across industries
- Collaboration with the internal global manager research team to assess depth and quality of ESG integration for managers of individual actively managed asset classes used in multi-asset solutions
- Research into, and publication of, macroeconomic analyses on ESG topics and their potential impact on the capital markets
- Incorporation of ESG adjustments and scenarios into economic and fundamental market inputs driving asset class forecasts
- Enhancement of data aggregation and analysis, quantitative approaches, and portfolio construction tools to incorporate ESG considerations

# **23** Manulife Financial Corporation, 2023. Multi-asset solutions: AUM includes \$7.3 billion advised by multi-asset solutions (MAST) index team and managed by other Manulife Investment Management investment teams, and, \$47.1 billion allocated to investment strategies managed by other Manulife Investment Management investment teams. The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change.

# ESG integration in multi-asset is different

### **Security selector ESG integration**

- Bottom-up security analysis
- Analysis of disclosed financial and sustainability-related statements
- Analysts directly engage with corporate management related to ESG intiatives
- Ability to affect investments through active ownership
- ESG impact incorporated into relevant price targets/discount rates

### **Asset allocator ESG integration**

- Incorporation of ESG factors within top-down macro research and forecasting
- Build-out of ESG data infrastructure for cross-asset analysis
- Inclusion of ESG factors into MAST's research framework
- Stewardship of capital through engagement with underlying managers
- Portfolio construction that incorporates ESG factors

# Private equity and credit

AUM: \$23,183 million<sup>24</sup>

Investment professionals: 67<sup>19</sup>

# Highlights

- We formalized our sustainable investing governance and oversight by establishing a new SIC chaired by the global head of PE&C and comprising senior investment strategy heads. We also expanded our sustainable investing working group to include representatives from all PE&C investment teams.
- The newly formed PE&C SIC established the group's sustainable investing north star and approved its first formalized sustainable investing strategy and climate strategy.
- We completed a ground-up rebuild of all our ESG integration tools and processes, designed to improve our ability to extract decision-useful investment insight.
- Another important milestone this year was the launch of our very first sustainability-themed investment fund (Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation Article 8), and by doing so enhanced our capabilities of creating new and bespoke sustainability-themed investment products and solutions for our clients.
- During the year, we initiated research on a new sustainability theme called the sustainable digital economy (SDE). The SDE research work is focused on building knowledge about new and emerging issues, risks, and opportunities stemming from the intersection of technology and sustainability, with the overall goal being to drive new and unique insight that can inform diligence and capital allocation decision-making.

# **Integration**

Within PE&C, the ability to analyze potentially material sustainability issues prior to making an investment allows us to better assess potential downside risks.

Across investments and geographies, our PE&C teams conduct an ESG assessment of each investment during due diligence and incorporate findings into their fundamental analysis. For our co-investments, secondaries, senior credit, and junior credit, an ESG assessment is done of the sponsor as well. To inform their assessments, the teams use an internally developed ESG due diligence tool, which is based on external resources from SASB and the PRI as well as our own expertise.

The outcomes of ESG due diligence are documented in the final investment memorandum, which is presented during the investment committee approval process. ESG documentation in the investment memorandum includes a summary of material sustainability factors, identification and discussion of red flags, areas for improvement, the sponsor's plans to address any gaps, and areas in which the portfolio company is already well advanced.

Once an investment is made, the teams work closely with their investment partners to monitor material items that might affect the investment or company, including sustainability factors. The investment teams leverage a variety of tools such as shareholder rights, board seats, and our broader relationships with investment partners, who typically control the underlying portfolio companies, to help ensure material sustainability issues aren't overlooked.

## Stewardship

During the holding period of our PE&C investments, we aim to work with our investment partners and portfolio companies to support sustainability objectives.

To enhance our active ownership practices, we developed an ESG monitoring process. The outcomes of this process will allow us to measure ESG performance across our PE&C portfolios. The data we collect may further enhance our own practices and allow us to report to investors on ESG-related activities and metrics.

We seek to actively engage with the general partners (GPs) of funds that we invest in and GPs and other equity partners for our direct investments. Typical conversation topics may include the firm's recent investment activities, notable business updates, and personnel and quarterly performance updates. If we have board seats or board observer rights, we participate in quarterly board meetings as well as any interim update calls. In some of our investments that don't have boards, we participate in key decisions as a member of the investment company or as a member of the limited partner advisory committee (LPAC); this gives our team access to all key decision makers at the ownership and management levels. When holding a seat on an LPAC, we may specifically review certain matters, including conflicts of interest and waivers of limited partner (LP) restrictions. Although we may be one investor as part of a consortium, most significant decisions are made at the board or member level with the full support of all parties.

### **Collaboration**

We work with a range of market participants, policymakers, regulators, and NGOs to address global sustainability challenges.

The PE&C teams recognize the importance of collaborating with other investors and industry experts in order to gain insight into evolving best practices and to contribute to the development and adoption of ESG integration globally.

In our capacity as an institutional investor, we seek to engage in constructive dialogue with firms and organizations on a variety of investment matters with the goal of enhancing long-term investment value. When appropriate, we may engage with companies to seek positive change in their disclosure, management, and performance related to material sustainability factors.

# Real estate

AUM: \$26,397 million<sup>25</sup>

Investment professionals: 72<sup>19</sup>

# **Highlights**

- Manulife Investment Management was recognized as a GRESB Sector Leader, ranking 1<sup>st</sup> in the peer group.<sup>26</sup>
- We updated our Sustainable Building Standards to adapt to industry changes and ensure continuous improvement across our global portfolio. To ensure our sustainability practices are upheld, we include the Sustainable Building Standards in our property management agreements and require them to report on their progress on an annual basis.
- We conducted a climate scenario analysis that identified how climate change may affect our real estate business. The study identified risks and associated business implications from future climate states and assessed current and potential preparedness strategies to address climate risks. The risks and opportunities will be used to inform industry frameworks.
- Starting in 2022, Manulife initiated a GHG working group to identify strategies for progressing meaningful decarbonization within its general account portfolio. As part of this, we helped to develop minimum requirement guidelines, which directed external consultants toward a consistent set of objectives and metrics when evaluating different projects, with the added context of emissions. At the end of 2023, over 70 asset-level decarbonization plans were completed, representing almost half of Manulife's real estate scope 1 and scope 2 GHG footprint.
- We initiated a human rights impact assessment in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business. The assessment sought to understand the scope, scale, remediability, and likelihood of potential human rights impacts and to assess our strengths and weaknesses in our existing due diligence mechanisms.

## **Stewardship**

As asset managers, we follow five sustainable real estate commitments:

- **L** Minimize our environmental impact
- 2 Support health and wellness
- **3** Promote responsible business practices
- 4 Engage our stakeholders on sustainability
- **5** Be accountable for our performance

Our approach to sustainability in real estate is based on responsible property investment and aligns with global standards and benchmarks, including GRESB. Across our global portfolio, we set energy reduction targets, as well as targets for water use and waste diversion; we set a long-term GHG reduction target of 80% by 2050. We report on progress toward these targets annually in our <u>real estate sustainability report</u>.

### **Collaboration**

We work with a range of market participants, policymakers, regulators, and NGOs to address global sustainability challenges. For example, we sponsored a collaborative industry initiative to update the Carbon Risk Real Estate Model (CRREM) to better reflect North American assets. CRREM is used to identify, using modeled trajectories, when a particular property is forecast to become a stranded asset. These more granular North American CRREM curves were needed to enable U.S. and Canadian real estate owners to set accurate 1.5°C-aligned decarbonization targets. The initiative was supported by ULI, Lawrence Berkley National Lab, and members of the North American real estate community. We're also chair of the Real Property Association of Canada Zero Carbon Working Group, which convenes Canadian real estate owners and managers to advance industry knowledge on carbon reduction in real estate.

**25** Manulife Financial Corporation, 2023. Manulife Investment Management Private Markets (US) LLC (Manulife IM PM (US)) manages \$1.8 billion of real estate equity strategies on a discretionary basis and \$0.7B on a nondiscretionary basis. The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change. **26** 2023, GRESB Real Estate Assessment for the Standing Investments Benchmark Regional Sector Leader, Americas, Diversified Office/Industrial. Based on GRESB results released October 2023 cover the 2022 time period. Most current data shown. Manulife Investment Management paid a fee to be considered for the ranking. For more information, please visit gresb.com/nl-en/2023-real-estate-assessment-results.

# Timberland and agriculture

Timberland Agriculture

AUM: \$14,826 million<sup>27</sup> AUM: \$6,287 million<sup>28</sup> Investment professionals: 71<sup>19</sup>

# **Highlights**

- We established decarbonization working groups across our timberland and agriculture investment capabilities. Chaired by our global heads of operations, staffed by our timberland and agriculture sustainability team, and consisting of representative operational leaders across each of our major investment regions, these working groups are designed to identify and pursue practical opportunities to reduce GHG emissions and increase carbon removals in line with the Paris Agreement and corporate climate goals.
- We published our inaugural TNFD-aligned nature disclosure, which outlines our approach to nature in the stewardship and management of timberland and agricultural assets.
- We partnered with the ODFW and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to permanently conserve the Minam River State Wildlife Area, an area of land larger than Yellowstone National Park and the largest single conservation project in ODFW history.<sup>4</sup>

- We continued to work toward scaling our regenerative agriculture efforts and engaged external experts to help us scale regenerative practices. As of the end of December 2023, 100% of our agriculture properties were employing at least one regenerative practice.
- We continued to pursue comprehensive third-party certification of our properties:
- 100% of our managed forests were certified under either the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and our forests in Australia and New Zealand carry dual certification to both FSC and the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC).<sup>12</sup>
- 100% of our clients' properties in the United States and Australia are certified to the Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard, <sup>11</sup> and we're participating in a pilot in Canada in 2024.

27 Manulife Financial Corporation, 2023. AUM is managed on a discretionary and non-discretionary basis for the Manulife's General Account, its affiliates and third party clients. The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change. 28 Manulife Financial Corporation, 2023. Aggregate fund-level market value. The methodologies used to compile the total AUM are subject to change.

## Integration

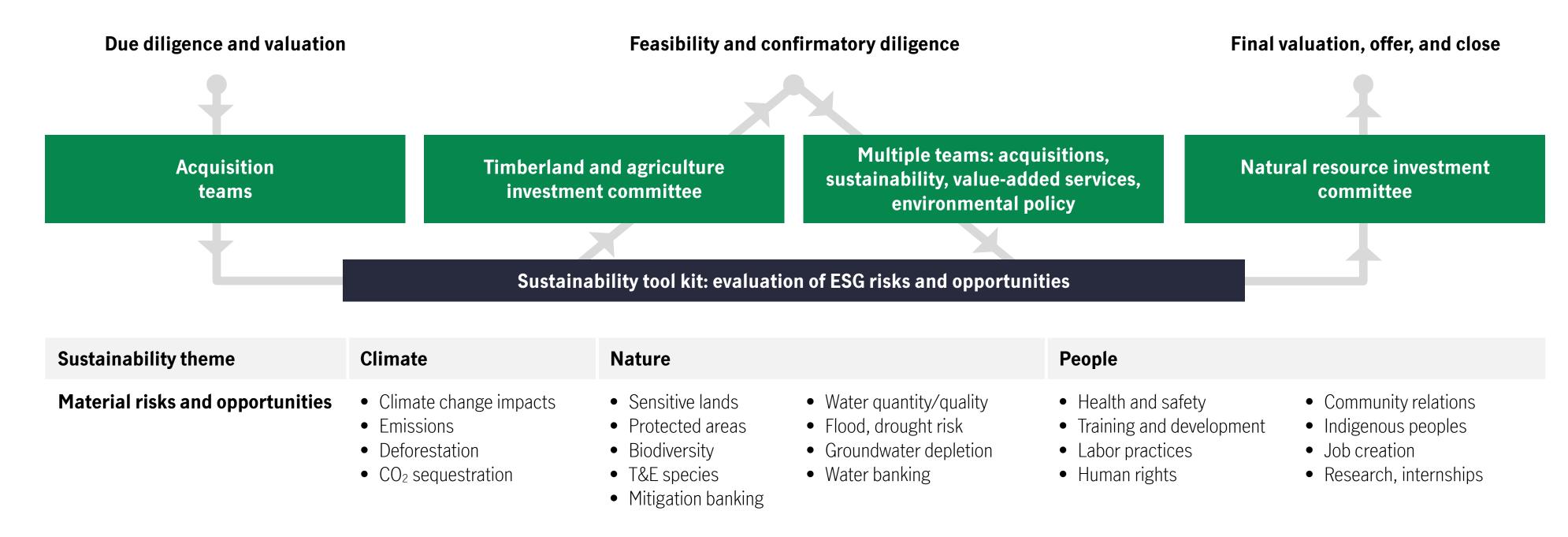
Sustainable forestry and farming practices allow us to actively manage and protect our clients' timberland and agriculture investments in ways that generate competitive risk-adjusted returns, maintain or enhance sustainability values, and reduce operating risk.

Since 2021, we've used a proprietary question-based tool kit co-developed in house by our sustainability, acquisitions, and operations teams to identify, assess, and score ESG components of every deal we consider. We call this our sustainability tool kit. This tool kit highlights both potential risks and opportunities, and it enables us to quantify risk using stoplight indicators to rate inherent risk, risk mitigation

potential, and residual risk. We then aggregate these upward to produce an overall numerical sustainability score for the asset, which can be used in our underwriting. The completed tool kit assessment is provided in every deal package presented to our natural resource investment committee to ensure that investment decisions explicitly consider relevant sustainability risks and opportunities.

Together with our policy on deforestation, carbon principles, and carbon tool kit (used specifically for forest carbon project evaluation), this approach is designed to systematically consider all identified material sustainability risks and opportunities in our investment process.

# **Investment process**



## Stewardship

Good stewardship is good business. Our clients' financial success directly depends on the health of our forests and farms. Our vertically integrated teams give us the ability to craft and execute long-term asset management plans that promote forest and farm health and resilience, which are intrinsic to generating financial returns. Our sustainable investment practices are in line with key environmental and social objectives set out by third-party sustainability standards, such as the SFI, FSC, and Leading Harvest.

In order to ensure that we operate consistently within these standards, we follow a comprehensive set of stewardship principles that integrates the development, management, and operation of working lands for useful products with a commitment to conserve soil, air, and water quality; biological diversity; wildlife habitats; and participation in vibrant, healthy communities. These principles inform more granular stewardship policies that guide our property management professionals in day-to-day asset management decisions.

We're proud that, as of year-end 2023, 100% of our forests were certified under either the SFI or FSC,<sup>12</sup> and some of our forests in Australia and New Zealand carry dual FSC and PEFC accreditation. The same is true for our agriculture business, where, as of year-end 2023, 100% of our clients' properties in the United States and Australia were certified to the Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard,<sup>11</sup> and we're participating in a pilot in Canada in 2024. We believe these certifications demonstrate our commitment to stewardship, providing our key stakeholders assurance of sustainable practices, robust management, and continuous improvement.

### **Collaboration**

Getting things done together is one of our core values, with collaboration being a cornerstone of our business. We recognize that we can't specialize in everything, and we seek to establish mutually beneficial relationships with organizations and companies that can complement our strengths and that have a similar culture and values.

These relationships not only help us improve our sustainability performance, they also reflect our conviction that when it comes to solving global challenges, we're all in this together. The following are some of the organizations we actively partnered with in 2023, whether through program participation, research funding, or charitable contributions.

- We actively participated in the <u>WBCSD</u>'s Forest Solutions Group and Nature Action projects in collaboration with industry partners, focused on scaling both forestry and agriculture as natural climate solutions.
- We supported the <u>Michigan State University Department of Forestry Forest Carbon and Climate Program's</u> mission to increase the understanding and implementation of climate-smart forest management.
- We supported the <u>Pollinator Partnership</u>'s efforts to promote pollinator health—critical to food and ecosystems—through conservation, education, and research.
- We provided funding to the <u>American Bird Conservancy</u> for its work in conserving wild birds and their habitats throughout North America, including threatened and endangered species.
- In our agriculture operations, we worked with the U.S. state of California's Fresno Irrigation District to develop an eight-acre recharge basin for improving the health of the local aquifer and reducing flood risk for our neighbors.
- In our timberland operations, our property management team in Brazil was actively involved in several social campaigns; examples include Fogo Zero (zero fire, to mitigate high fire risk in the region due to high temperature, low humidity, and the culture of clearing land with fire) and empoderamento feminino (female empowerment).

For more information, please see our <u>natural capital sustainability report</u>.



The case studies shown here are for illustrative purposes only, do not represent all of the investments made, sold, or recommended for client accounts, and should not be considered an indication of the ESG integration, performance, or characteristics of any current or future Manulife Investment Management product or investment strategy.

Manulife Investment Management conducts hundreds of ESG engagements each year but does not engage on all issues or with all issuers in our portfolios. We also frequently conduct collaborative engagements in which we do not set the terms of engagement but lend our support in order to achieve a desired outcome. Where we manage and operate physical assets, we seek to weave sustainability into our operational strategies and execution. The case studies shown are illustrative of different types of engagements across our in-house investment teams, asset classes and geographies in which we operate. While we conduct outcome-based engagements to enhance long term-financial value for our clients, we recognize that our engagements may not necessarily result in outcomes which are significant or quantifiable. In addition, we acknowledge that any observed outcomes may be attributable to factors and influences independent of our engagement activities. Our approach to ESG investing and incorporation of ESG principles into the investment process differs by investment strategy and investment team. It should not be assumed that an investment in the company discussed herein was or will be profitable. Actual investments will vary and there is no guarantee that a particular fund or client account will hold the investments or reflect the characteristics identified herein. Please see our ESG policies for details. We consider that the integration of sustainability risks in the decision-making process is an important element in determining long-term performance outcomes and is an effective risk mitigation technique. Our approach to sustainability provides a flexible framework that supports implementation across different asset classes and investment teams. While we believe that sustainable investing will lead to better long-term investment, we may forego the opportunity to invest in an investment which we otherwise believe likely to outperform over time.

Investing involves risks, including the potential loss of principal. Financial markets are volatile and can fluctuate significantly in response to company, industry, political, regulatory, market, or economic developments. These risks are magnified for investments made in emerging markets. Currency risk is the risk that fluctuations in exchange rates may adversely affect the value of a portfolio's investments.

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#### **Manulife Investment Management**

Manulife Investment Management is the global wealth and asset management segment of Manulife Financial Corporation. We draw on more than a century of financial stewardship to partner with clients across our institutional, retail, and retirement businesses globally. Our specialist approach to money management includes the highly differentiated strategies of our fixed-income, specialized equity, multi-asset solutions, and private markets teams—along with access to specialized, unaffiliated asset managers from around the world through our multimanager model.

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