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Publication of annual study on the volume of sustainable investments in Switzerland: 23% increase reported

Volume of sustainable investments in Switzerland reaches a record level / growth of 23% compared to previous year / proportion of private investors rises / increase in active voting

Zurich, 11 March 2011 – The sustainable investment market in Switzerland experienced further strong growth in 2010, continuing the previous year's trend. This is indicated by the findings of the study 'Sustainable Investments in Switzerland' that was published by the independent consulting firm onValues and the Sustainable Investment Forum (FNG) Switzerland in Zurich on 11 March 2011. According to the study, the volume of sustainable investments totalled CHF 42 billion at the end of 2010, representing a record level. This corresponds to an increase of 23% compared to 2009.

"The sector displayed impressive growth, demonstrating that there is an increasing demand for sustainable financial products among investors," stated Sabine Döbeli, Vice-Chairwoman of the Sustainable Investment Forum (SIF) and Head of SIF Switzerland, with regard to the latest figures. "The strength of the sustainable investment market is also mirrored by the development of net new assets: sustainable funds showed net inflows of around 4% in 2010, compared to a net asset outflow in the same range for the average Swiss fund," the finance and sustainability expert added.

Investment funds accounted for the largest proportion (58%) of sustainable investments in 2010, an increase compared to the previous year. Mandates represented 38% and structured products 4% of the market. Private investors also further strengthened their market position: their share of the market rose slightly to a total of 57%, while institutional investors saw their share decline. Equity investments remained the most dominant asset class at 63%.

According to Dr. Ivo Knoepfel, the author of the study and Managing Director of onValues, there were few changes in 2010 in terms of the use of the various sustainable investment approaches – with one exception: "We saw a significant increase in active voting, i.e. the exercising of shareholders' voting rights at Annual General Meetings," explained the finance expert. "This development is also in line with the fact that 44% of the banks and asset managers surveyed are planning to exercise their voting rights more actively in the future," added Knoepfel.

Similar to in the past, asset managers in Switzerland once again displayed a strong preference for the best-in-class approach in 2010. The same applies to the use of exclusion criteria relating to sectors such as arms and tobacco, as well as to exploitative child labour. Participants in this year's study were asked for the first time about the use of the integration approach under which social and environmental aspects, as well as criteria relating to good corporate governance, are integrated into traditional financial analyses. In total, the study identified CHF 5.6 billion of assets that are managed according to this approach.

onValues has been conducting the study about the sustainable investment market in Switzerland on behalf of SIF Switzerland on an annual basis since 2005. The survey methods used are compatible with the methodology prescribed by the European Sustainable Investment Forum (Eurosif). onValues estimates that the study covers more than 95% of the sustainable investment market in Switzerland. The study was supported by the following institutions: Bank Sarasin, Bank Vontobel, Ethos, Inrate, Kaiser Ritter Partner, Raiffeisen Switzerland, SAM Group, Swisscanto and Zürcher Kantonalbank.

Further information is available at: www.forum-ng.org and www.onvalues.ch.

The study 'Sustainable Investments in Switzerland' can be downloaded free of charge at:

www.forum-ng.org/images/stories/Regional_CH/sustainable_investments_in_switzerland_2010.pdf

Contacts:

Dr. Ivo Knoepfel, Managing Director of onValues GmbH, knoepfel@onvalues.ch, tel. +41 43 344 94 93.

Sabine Döbeli, Vice-Chairwoman of FNG and Head of FNG Switzerland, doebeli@forum-ng.org, tel. +41 58 283 62 16.

FNG Switzerland is part of the Sustainable Investment Forum (Forum Nachhaltige Geldanlagen, FNG), which is active in German-speaking Europe. This specialist association for sustainable investments in Germany, Austria and Switzerland currently has around 140 members and is committed to promoting a more sustainable approach to business within the finance industry. SIF awards a transparency logo for sustainable public funds and is a founding member of the European Sustainable Investment Forum (Eurosif).