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db Advisory Multibrands - DWS StepIn ESG Future Trends

This financial product promotes environmental and social characteristics and qualifies as product in accordance with Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/2088.

No sustainable investment objective

This financial product promotes environmental or social characteristics, but does not have as its objective sustainable investment.

The sub-fund commits to partially invest in sustainable investments. To ensure those sustainable investments do not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment following processes are implemented:

DNSH Assessment

The sustainable investments in which the sub-fund invests are assessed to ensure they do not cause significant harm to any environmental or social sustainable investment objective. This is achieved by taking into account the indicators for principal adverse impacts on sustainability factors (dependent on relevance) as described below. If a significant harm is identified, the investment cannot be considered sustainable.

Integration of adverse impacts on sustainability factors

The Sustainability Investment Assessment systematically integrates the mandatory principal adverse indicators on sustainability factors (dependent on relevance) from Table 1 and relevant indicators from Tables 2 and 3 of Annex I of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1288 supplementing the SFDR. Taking into account these principal adverse impacts, DWS has established quantitative thresholds and/or qualitative values to assess a significant harm on any of the environmental or social sustainable investment objectives. These values are set based upon various external and internal factors, such as data availability or market developments and may be adapted going forward.

Alignment with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

The alignment of sustainable investments with, amongst others, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights is evaluated through the Norm Controversy Assessment (as further described below). Companies with the worst Norm Controversy Assessment of "F" are excluded as an investment.

Environmental or social characteristics of the financial product

This sub-fund promotes environmental and social characteristics related to a general consideration of ESG criteria by investing in target funds that are aligned with the EU Paris-aligned Benchmark exclusion criteria as set forth in article 12(1) of Commission Delegated Regulation 2020/1818 (PAB-Exclusions). These target funds exclude, for example, companies that are found in violation of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) principles or the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and companies whose involvement in specific fossil fuel related activities exceed determined revenue thresholds.

Further, this sub-fund promotes a minimum proportion of sustainable investments in accordance with article 2(17) of the regulation on sustainability-related disclosures in the financial services sector (SFDR).

This sub-fund has not designated a reference benchmark for the purpose of attaining the environmental and social characteristics promoted.

Investment strategy

This sub-fund pursues a strategy based on multiple asset classes as main investment strategy. The sub-fund will invest globally in fixed income assets such as interest-bearing securities, convertible bonds, money-market instruments, bank balances and fixed income investment funds (the "Fixed Income Assets") as well as equities and/or securities equivalent to equities and equity investment funds ("the Equities"). A fund with a predominate fixed income proportion qualifies as fixed income investment fund while a fund with a predominate equity proportion qualifies as equity investment fund. Investment in Fixed Income Assets and Equities shall be mainly held through investment funds. Derivatives may be used for efficient portfolio management purposes, mainly to hedge foreign currency risks.

At the launch date, the sub-fund's assets shall be predominantly invested in Fixed Income Assets, mainly held through at least six investment funds. The portfolio management intends to decrease the respective proportion of Fixed Income Assets step-by-step over a three-year period and simultaneously increase the respective proportion invested into Equities to at least 90%.

In contrast to traditional benchmark-oriented investment funds, the sub-fund management pursues an "Future trends concept" by investing in funds with a focus on companies well positioned to benefit from future trends, such as technological innovation, environmental and social developments, Sustainable Development Goals. Further details regarding the main investment strategy are specified in the Special Section of the Sales Prospectus.

At least 80% of the sub-fund's net assets are allocated to investments that meet the promoted environmental and social characteristics as described in the following sections. The alignment of the portfolio with the binding elements of the investment strategy used to attain the promoted environmental and social characteristics as well as the PAB-Exclusions is continuously controlled via the sub-fund's investment guidelines monitoring.



Proportion of investments

This sub-fund invests at least 80% of its net assets in investments that are aligned with the promoted environmental and social characteristics. Within this category, at least 10% of the sub-fund's assets qualify as sustainable investments in the sense of article 2(17) SFDR. Up to 20% of the sub-fund's net assets may be invested in all permissible assets for which either the DWS ESG assessment methodology is not applied or for which ESG data coverage is incomplete. A more detailed description of the specific asset allocation of this sub-fund can be found in the Special Section of the Sales Prospectus.

Derivatives are currently not used to attain the environmental and social characteristics promoted by the sub-fund.

Monitoring of environmental or social characteristics

For the purpose of the investment guideline monitoring, a coding process is established in which the investment policy as described in the prospectus and the investment limits contained therein are coded in accordance into the investment management system. This applies in particular to the respective ESG investment limits. The investment limits are monitored daily pre- and post-trade in the investment management system to ensure compliance with the investment guidelines. In pre-trade monitoring, it is ensured that the investment limits are complied with before trading. However, if a breach has been detected, the breach will be investigated for its cause and scope, addressed and corrected in accordance with legal/regulatory requirements and guidelines.

Methodologies

The attainment of the promoted environmental and social characteristics as well as the sustainable investment is assessed via the application of an in-house ESG assessment methodology and ESG specific exclusion thresholds as further described in the section "What are the binding elements of the investment strategy used to select the investments to attain each of the environmental or social characteristics promoted by this financial product?". The methodology applies the following assessment approaches as sustainability indicators:

- **Target Fund Assessment which is based on the**
 - Assessment of target funds regarding the alignment with the PAB-Exclusions and, where applicable, the
 - Freedom House Status used as an indicator for the political and civil liberties of a country for underlying investments.
- **Sustainability Investment Assessment** used as an indicator to measure the proportion of sustainable investments pursuant to article 2(17) SFDR.

Data sources and processing

DWS sources sustainability information from different data vendors. Each of the commercial data vendors established upstream controls to ensure quality of their processes and of the data that is being provided. In addition, DWS has set up different quality control processes for inbound ESG data and ESG assessments derived by the DWS ESG Engine. The ESG assessments are quality controlled and/or validated by responsible teams and/or councils. Based on current understanding of the regulatory guidelines on estimates, DWS classifies all data that is not publicly reported by investee companies under (regulatory) reporting requirements as estimated data (including data received from data vendors if they do not disclose their coverage of estimated data). Therefore, up to 100% of the data used may be reported as estimated data.

Limitations to methodologies and data

DWS ESG assessments are based on external vendor data and/or DWS internal assessments and research. In both cases, potential expert-based subjectivity weighs in. The prevalence of potential subjectivity constitutes a limitation if not properly mitigated. DWS mitigates this potential challenge by selecting the methodology deemed most reasonable for the relevant DWS ESG assessment under consideration, e.g. by seeking for cross vendor consensus in order to avoid bias or by applying a worst off assessment approach in order to gather different facets deemed relevant by different ESG providers regarding the same topic. ESG assessments based on DWS internal research follow at least a four-eye principle approach and are regularly reviewed by the relevant DWS ESG council. Further data limitations, including limited data coverage for certain asset classes and investments, outdated data and structural data update issues, may apply.

Due Diligence

The due diligence carried out on the underlying assets of a financial product is governed by relevant internal policies, key operating documents and handbooks. The due diligence is based on the availability of ESG data which the sub-fund management sources from external ESG data vendors. In addition to the external quality assurance by the vendors, the sub-fund management has processes and governance bodies in place that control the quality of the ESG signals.

Engagement policies

Engagement with investee companies is carried out centrally by DWS according to DWS's established policies, procedures, and governance framework, as described in the DWS Stewardship Statement related to stewardship activities, which also include the exercise of voting rights. As such, engagement and other stewardship activities are exercised based on the aggregated holdings managed by the DWS legal entities in scope of the DWS Stewardship Statement. Engagement, or stewardship generally, is therefore not conducted or reported at the individual product level.

While stewardship is conducted at entity level, engagement and voting activities may still relate to corporate issuers (investee companies) held in the portfolio of this sub-fund.

In particular, DWS conducts engagement with corporate issuers across both equity and fixed income holdings. Engagement activities are carried out exclusively in relation to directly held equity and fixed income positions. DWS does not conduct engagement with corporate issuers where exposure arises exclusively through indirect holdings, e.g. corporate issuers held in the portfolio of target funds.

Engagement activities are intended to identify and address financially material risks and opportunities relevant to long term value creation. While engagement is applied across both equity and fixed income instruments, stewardship activities are inherently more limited for fixed income instruments due to the absence of shareholder voting rights.

The description of the policies regarding the exercise of voting rights and engagement activities of the Management Company is available to investors online at www.dws.com/footer/legal-resources. Information on the exercise of voting rights and on engagement activities carried out is published in aggregated form at the level of the DWS legal entities covered by those policies described in the DWS Stewardship Statement, which includes DWS Investment S.A as Management Company.

Designated reference benchmark

This sub-fund has not designated a reference benchmark to determine whether it is aligned with the environmental and social characteristics that it promotes.