

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Winner: Ausbil Fund recognised at Lonsec awards for ESG investing and engagement

**Lonsec has awarded the Ausbil Active Sustainable Equity Fund as the winner of its Sustainable Investment Award.**

The Lonsec Sustainable Investment Award seeks to recognise and highlight the work of asset managers and key players incorporating ESG into their investment approach to add value to investors.

An ESG (environment, social and governance) approach, is integrated in Ausbil's investment decision making process, driven by a focused ESG engagement team, and overseen by one of Australia's most respected Chief Investment Officers, Paul Xiradis.

"We are delighted to be recognised by Lonsec with this award," said Xiradis. "We feel so strongly about the benefits of investing responsibly, that we have integrated ESG across all of our investment strategies, with ESG consideration built into our investment process."

The Ausbil Active Sustainable Equity Investment Fund is a true-to-label sustainable and responsible investment fund that actively engages companies, within its universe, to improve on all measures of ESG, and actively exercises its voting rights accordingly.

"What gives our Active Sustainable Equity Fund its edge is our reach into the boards and management of Australia's listed companies. Our active engagement with these companies helps us achieve better outcomes," said Mr Xiradis.

Mr Xiradis' track record is one of the longest in the country, the core active equity strategy starting in 1997. Mr Xiradis was early in seeing that the only way forward in active investment was to integrate ESG firmly in the firm's culture, approach and decision making. Excellence in corporate governance (G) has always been a critical consideration in Ausbil's process, from the very beginning in 1997. Over 10 years ago, Ausbil added environment (E) and social (S) considerations to the investment process, bringing together the full ESG approach across all funds.

Ausbil's ESG Research Team, of three dedicated ESG Analysts, is led by the experienced Måns Carlsson-Sweeny. "In our engagements we frequently encourage companies to adopt best practice in ESG risk management, which can in turn, help them become more sustainable businesses. That also helps increase the universe of companies in which we are willing to invest, and contributes to a better society."

"Every year we engage on ESG issues with Australia's largest companies, which fundamentally improves the overall awareness of ESG in corporate Australia, and deepens our investment decision making process," said Mr Carlsson-Sweeny.

Ausbil's ESG Research Team has been actively engaging across all the ESG areas. Ausbil recently became the first Australian signatory to the International Declaration on Plastic Pollution (IDPP), has been actively engaging with resources companies on safe work and tailings dam safety, working with retailers on human rights in their global supply chains, raising awareness of sexual harassment, in advising on better climate related financial disclosures (TCFD), on governance practices and remuneration, and on fair wages for workers, amongst many other areas of action.

Mr Carlsson-Sweeny was commended this month by Anti-Slavery Australia for his work in promoting the cause of workers in worldwide supply chains who are subject to modern slavery and other degrading conditions.

### **About Ausbil Investment Management**

Ausbil Investment Management Limited is a leading Australian based investment manager. Established in April 1997, Ausbil's core business is the management of Australian and global equities for major superannuation funds, institutional investors, master trust and retail clients. Ausbil is owned by its employees and New York Life Investment Management (NYLIM), a wholly owned subsidiary of New York Life Insurance Company. As at 30 September 2019, Ausbil manage over \$12.0 billion in funds under management.

### **About Ausbil Active Sustainable Equity Fund**

The Fund provides exposure to an actively managed portfolio, predominantly made up of listed Australian equities which meet Ausbil's sustainability approach to investing. The Fund invests in a portfolio of listed Australian companies which are primarily selected from the S&P/ASX 200 Index, that have a relatively good sustainability profile, and are not subject to long-term earnings sustainability risk.

### **Paul Xiradis, Executive Chairman, Chief Investment Officer, Head of Equities**

Paul co-founded Ausbil in 1997 as an Australian equities house, building Ausbil into one of Australia's leading investment managers, offering Australian and global equity funds. Paul holds the position of Executive Chairman of Ausbil, Chief Investment Officer and Head of Equities. He is responsible for portfolio construction and strategy, and management of the Equities team. Paul has been instrumental in building Ausbil into a multi-billion dollar investment manager. Paul's role includes investment strategy, portfolio construction and input into the investment management of Ausbil's funds.

### **Måns Carlsson-Sweeny, Head of ESG Research, Ausbil Investment Management**

Måns leads Ausbil's ESG Research Team who take an active approach to engaging Australia's listed companies on environment, social and governance issues. As a trained analyst, Måns also leads Ausbil's integration of proprietary ESG scoring, research and ratings within Ausbil's top-down bottom-up valuation approach so that ESG is fundamental in all of Ausbil's investment decisions. Måns has been with Ausbil since 2015. In 2019, Måns was honoured by Anti-Slavery Australia with a Certificate of High Commendation for contribution to identifying the risk of modern slavery in investment activities and promoting better practices and awareness across the investor community.

Ausbil's ESG Research Team is actively engaged in collaborating with a wide range of ESG and responsible investing groups. Ausbil reports on all active collaboration in ESG and RI regularly, summarising our engagement in an extensive annual report, the most recent which can be found here: <https://www.ausbil.com.au/Ausbil/media/Documents/Research%20and%20Insights/Ausbil-%e2%80%93-ESG-Engagement-Annual-Report-2018.pdf>

The Ausbil Active Sustainable Equity Fund provides exposure to an actively managed portfolio, predominantly made up of listed Australian equities which meet Ausbil's sustainability approach to investing. The PDS can be obtained from our website at [www.ausbil.com.au](http://www.ausbil.com.au).

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### Ausbil's ongoing ESG collaborations include extensive work with the following groups

- Climate Action 100+: Ausbil is a collaborating member of Climate Action 100+, an investor initiative to ensure the world's largest corporate greenhouse gas emitters take necessary action on climate change. The companies include 100 'systemically important emitters', accounting for two-thirds of annual global industrial emissions, alongside more than 60 others with significant opportunity to drive the clean energy transition. <http://www.climateaction100.org/>
- RIAA Human Rights Working Group: Ausbil is an active collaborator with the Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA), champions of responsible investing and a sustainable financial system in Australia and New Zealand. RIAA is dedicated to ensuring capital is aligned with achieving a healthy society, environment and economy, and has over 240 members managing more than \$9 trillion in assets globally. <https://responsibleinvestment.org/hrwg/>
- Investor Alliance for Human Rights: Ausbil continues to actively collaborate with the Alliance. The Investor Alliance for Human Rights is a collective action platform for responsible investment that is grounded in respect for people's fundamental rights. <https://investorsforhumanrights.org/>
- PRI (Principles of Responsible Investment): Ausbil is a signatory to the PRI, and is active through the PRI network globally in promoting the responsible investment program of the organisation, speaking at PRI conferences and participating in PRI working groups. The PRI is the world's leading proponent of responsible investment. <https://www.unpri.org/>
- ACSI (Australian Council of Superannuation Investors): Ausbil collaborates actively with ACSI in promoting ESG principles in investing. Established in 2001, ACSI exists to provide a strong, collective voice on environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues. Membership includes 39 Australian and international asset owners and institutional investors, with over \$2.2 trillion in assets under management. <http://www.acsi.org.au>
- Anti-Slavery Australia: Ausbil has been collaborating with Anti-Slavery Australia on protecting the human rights of trafficked and enslaved people through research, policy development, law reform, professional practice, education and advocacy. In this area, Måns Carlsson-Sweeny, has been recognised in 2019 with an Anti-Slavery Australia Freedom Award Certificate of High Commendation for his work in combatting slavery in investment supply chains. <http://www.antislavery.org.au/>
- International Declaration on Plastic Pollution (Signatory): Ausbil is the first Australian company to become a signatory. As You Sow is a non-profit organization that promotes environmental and social corporate responsibility through shareholder advocacy, coalition building and innovative legal strategies. <http://www.asyousow.org>
- Australian Federal Government: Ausbil has actively engaged with the Australian Government on guidance for the Modern Slavery Act (MSA). Ausbil continued its involvement in a panel of experts advising the Australian Government (Department of Home Affairs) on the guidance for the Australian Modern Slavery Act (MSA). Following the publication of the draft guidance in March, Ausbil has engaged with the Department of Home Affairs to provide additional guidance for investors, clarifying their reporting obligations. The guidance was published on 26 September and can be read at the following link: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/criminal-justice/files/modern-slavery-reporting-entities.pdf>