abrdn SICAV I

Global High Yield Sustainable Bond Fund

May 2025

Summary

The Global High Yield Sustainable Bond Fund seeks to deliver long-term performance through positive company selection across a range of sustainability metrics including climate change, environment, labour and human rights. Security selection will be supported by a targeted company engagement plan, in order to deliver a positive contribution towards environmental and/or societal change.

The portfolio is underpinned by our well-established active management approach of security selection tailored to the overall environment, which combines fundamental and ESG considerations into our individual name, sector and top-down portfolio construction decisions. An assessment of a company's sustainability is supported by proprietary company rating models and a deeply embedded ESG framework utilising on-desk Fixed Income and central ESG resources.

The Fund is classified under SFDR as Article 8 and therefore promotes Environmental & Social characteristics and investments follow good governance practices.

The Fund will:

- Exclude companies identified as not having sustainable business practices. This is achieved through a set of exclusions, which identify controversial business activities and ESG laggards i.e. companies rated poorly based on their management of ESG risks within their business.
- Avoid investing in certain prohibited sectors regarded as being at odds with the environmental & social characteristics.
- Set out specific engagement plans for companies with the greatest potential for improvement in their ESG characteristics, based on identified metrics with clearly defined milestones for success over a defined period of time.
- Target an equal or better ESG score compared to the benchmark.
- Target a carbon intensity that meets the following milestones vs. a baseline of the benchmark (Bloomberg Global High Yield Corporate Index 2% Issuer Cap) level carbon intensity as of 31st December 2019:
  - At least 25% lower by 31st December 2025.
  - At least 55% lower by 31st December 2030.

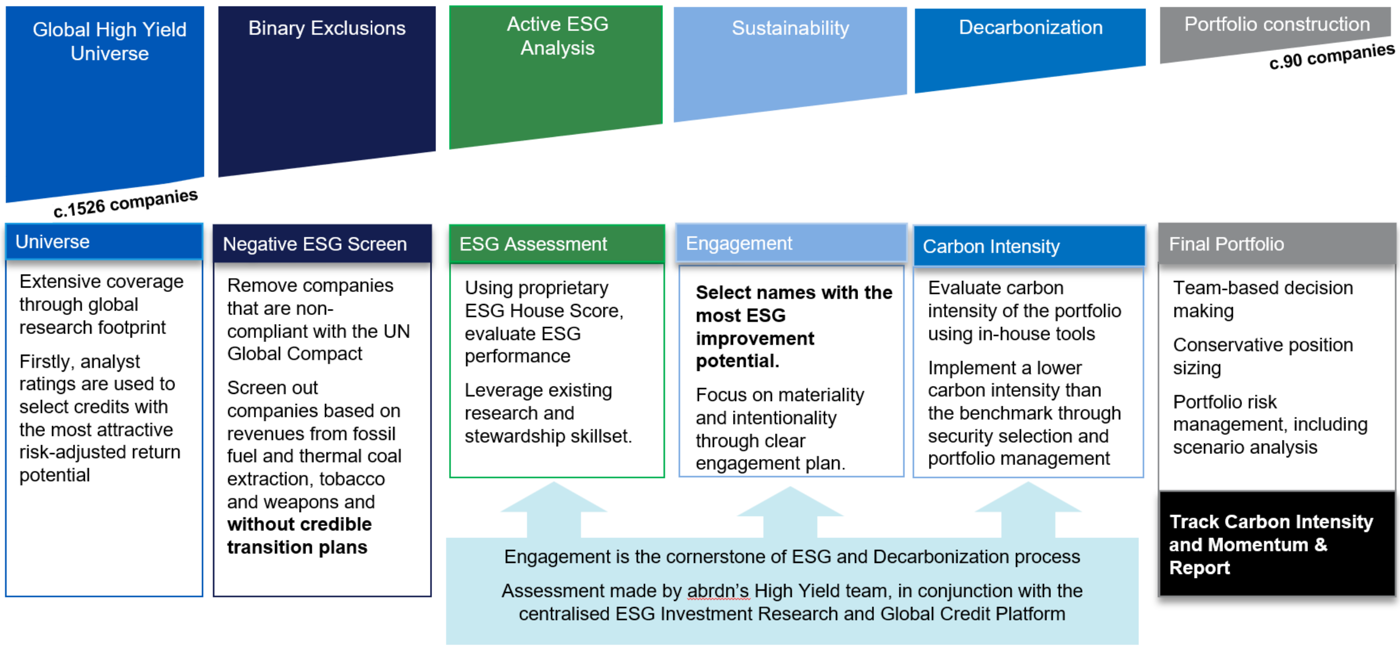
The Investment Framework

The Fund seeks to:

- Generate consistent risk-adjusted outperformance using our active management approach of credit selection tailored to the overall environment.
- Benefit from our active engagement with companies, where we actively encourage positive change in corporate behaviour.
- Construct a portfolio that invests in companies with strong ESG practices and/or with the greatest potential for improvement in their ESG characteristics.
- Leverage the support and insights of our large, dedicated Fixed income team and embedded ESG specialist resources.

ESG Assessment Criteria

The Fund uses a number of ESG Assessment Criteria in the investment process:



ESG Laggards

The Fund excludes companies rated poorly based on their management of ESG risks within their business. This is drawn from the insights of our credit analysts and central ESG investment function. In this regard we utilise two proprietary models to screen the investment universe:

ESG Risk Rating

Our credit analysts apply an ESG Risk Rating of Low, Medium, High (Low is better) to each issuer. This is credit profile-specific and represents how impactful we believe ESG risks are likely to be to the credit quality of the issuer now and in the future. The key area of focus is the materiality of the inherent Environmental and Social risks of the sector of operation (e.g. extraction. water usage, cyber security) and how specific companies manage these risks, combined with the quality and sustainability of its corporate governance. This materiality assessment is combined with a judgement on the timeframe over which these ESG risks may have an impact. Our analyst utilises an ESG Risk Rating Framework to support making these assessments. This is a proprietary tool designed to help focus the knowledge and expertise of credit analysts in a systematic way to substantiate the overall ESG Risk Rating (low/medium/high) assigned to debt issuers.

The Fund will exclude companies with a High ESG Risk Rating.

ESG House Score

Our proprietary ESG House Score, developed by our central ESG investment team in collaboration with the Quantitative investment team, is used to identify companies with potentially high or poorly managed ESG risks. The score is calculated by combining a variety of data inputs within a proprietary framework in which different ESG factors are weighted according to how material they are for each sector. This allows us to see how companies rank in a global context.

The abrdn ESG House Score was designed so that it can be broken down into specific themes and categories. The ESG score comprises of two scores; the Operational score and Governance score. This allows a quick view of a company's relative positioning on its management of ESG issues at a granular level.

- The Governance score assesses the corporate governance structure and the quality and behaviour of corporate leadership and executive management.
- The Operational score assesses the ability of the company's leadership team to implement effective environmental and social risk reduction and mitigation strategies in its operations.

To complement this, we also utilise our active stewardship and engagement activities.

The Fund excludes companies with the highest ESG risks, as identified by the ESG House Score. This is implemented by excluding at least the bottom 5%.[1] of issuers with an ESG House Score that are in the benchmark. The ESG House Score cut-off will be the hurdle rate portfolio holdings will have to be higher than, to be considered for investment.

Laggard Opportunities Basket:

Through our engagement with external company management teams, the Fund may identify companies which currently have an ESG House Score below the ESG House Score hurdle rate but that are assessed on a forward-looking basis as presenting a strong opportunity to make significant, positive and measurable change over the medium term, and therefore are deemed suitable for the Laggard Opportunities Basket.

Purpose

Given the current gap between ESG standards in the High Yield universe and the more developed Investment Grade universe, the purpose of the Laggard Opportunities Basket is twofold: to make positive change in the sector and capture alpha opportunities through the identification of companies with improving Sustainable characteristics.

Constraints

A maximum of 5% of the Fund can be allocated to the Laggard Opportunities Basket. All holdings identified as Laggard Opportunities Basket holdings will be monitored on an ongoing basis in order to ensure compliance with the 5% limit.

Exclusions

The Laggard Opportunities Basket investment universe will be issuers with an ESG House Score, which is below the hurdle rate.

The screen will be achieved by firstly applying exclusions criteria. The standards for the Laggard Opportunities Basket mean any issuer with a High ESG Credit Risk Rating is not permitted.

Laggard Opportunities Basket Process

For each issuer considered for the Laggard Opportunities Basket, there will be a rationale, based on engagement with the issuer, that their ESG credentials are likely to improve within a reasonable time frame. Milestones which are clear, credible and observable / measurable shall be established in order to monitor progress toward the goals / commitments believed to support this improvement.

Each name shall be formally reviewed for ongoing suitability on an annual basis. Holdings within the Laggard Opportunities Basket will be monitored for reports on progress toward milestones in order to test / maintain conviction that the issuer remains on track to achieve the required improvement agreed at the point of acceptance of the exemption. An entity shall be removed from the Laggard Opportunities Basket once it successfully meets the relevant improvements and is therefore no longer regarded as an ESG Laggard, or it is no longer deemed suitable.

[1] State Owned Entities (SOEs), Asset Backed Securities (ABS) & Collateralised Loan Obligations (CLOs) are excluded from the ESG House Score laggards' calculation. This is due to lower levels of disclosure resulting in inaccurate scores or not enough information to generate a score. Please note SOEs, ABS & CLOs are still captured by all of the other sustainability screens i.e. the Controversial Business Actives and the Credit ESG Risk Rating.

Portfolio Commitments

Performance

To measure financial performance, the Fund's reference index is the Bloomberg Global High Yield Corporate Index 2% Issuer Cap (Hedged to USD). The Fund aims to outperform the index before charges. While the index is representative of the investment opportunities we explore for the fund, the index is not constructed using any environmental or social criteria.

Portfolio ESG rating vs. the benchmark[2]

As a feature of the portfolio construction decisions, portfolio managers will target a weighted average ESG House Score equal to or better than the benchmark.

Carbon Footprint

The Fund will target a carbon intensity that meets the following milestones vs. a baseline of the benchmark (Bloomberg Global High Yield Corporate Index 2% Issuer Cap) level carbon intensity as of 31st December 2019:

- At least 25% lower by 31st December 2025.
- At least 55% lower by 31st December 2030.

The carbon intensity is as measured by the abrdn Carbon Footprint tool (which uses Trucost data for Scope 1&2 emissions)[3]. This tool enables analysis of company, sector and the overall portfolios carbon footprint.

Sustainable Investments

The SFDR provides a general definition of "Sustainable Investment". This definition applies to Funds which have a sustainable investment objective. In addition, Article 8 Funds may also set a minimum proportion of Sustainable Investments, but they do not have a specific sustainable objective. This Fund makes a commitment to a minimum proportion in Sustainable Investments of 40%.

In line with the SFDR definition, abrdn has developed an approach on how to satisfy the three criteria for Sustainable Investments in the relevant Funds as set out below. The three criteria are:

1. **Economic Contribution** - The economic activity makes a positive contribution to an environmental or social objective.
2. **No Significant Harm** - The investment does not cause Significant Harm ("Do No Significant Harm"/ "DNSH") to any of the sustainable investment objectives.
3. **Good Governance** - The investee company follows good governance practices.

If the investment passes all of the above three tests, it can then be deemed as a Sustainable Investment, and a numerical value will be assigned to reflect its level of economic contribution. Additional information on the Article 8 approach to making Sustainable Investments is detailed in the SFDR Annex, appended to the fund prospectus.

[2] ESG House Score and Carbon Footprint calculations exclude instruments with no data and therefore excludes Cash, Government Bonds and Derivative Holdings for the portfolio.
[3] Our current approach is to consider Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions at company and sector level. We use Scope 1 and 2 emissions for calculating the portfolio's carbon footprint in order to avoid double counting and data inconsistencies as recommended by TCFD.

Exclusions and Restrictions Criteria

The Fund targets to exclude at least 20% of the Fund's benchmark investable universe, through a combination of in-house proprietary scoring tools (detailed above) and the use of negative criteria to avoid investing in certain industries and activities that our customers are concerned with. The Fund avoids investing in areas that are set out in the table below.

For more details, please visit our website at **www.abrdn.com** under "Sustainable Investing" where we have position statements on various ESG-related issues.

Screen	Criteria The Fund excludes investments that:	Data Source
UN Global Compact or OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises	Fail to uphold one or more principles.	We utilise a combination of external data sources, including MSCI and our own internal research and insights, as well as sustained engagement.
State-Owned Enterprises	Are state-owned enterprises in countries subject to international sanctions or that materially violate universal basic principles.[4]	We utilise a combination of external data sources, including MSCI and our own internal research and insights.
Weapons	Have any tie to controversial weapons covering; cluster munitions, anti-personnel landmines, nuclear weapons, chemical and biological weapons, non-detectable fragments, incendiary devices, depleted uranium ammunition or blinding lasers.	MSCI
	Have a revenue contribution of 5% or more from conventional weapons.	MSCI
Tobacco	Are involved in the cultivation or production of tobacco products or have revenue contribution of 5% or more from tobacco wholesale trading.	MSCI
Coal[5]	Derive 1% or more of revenue from the exploration, mining, extraction, distribution or refining of hard coal and lignite and/or	MSCI, Global Coal Exit List (https://www.coalexit.org/), investment research

[4] Countries sanctioned by the UN are used as the initial basis for the screen. This is then combined with abrdn's own internal research and insight to arrive at a final list of excluded countries.
[5] This excludes coal mined for internal power generation (e.g. in the case of vertically integrated power producers); intra-company sales of mined thermal coal; and revenue from coal trading.

	are directly investing in new thermal coal extraction or power generation capacity in their own operations.	
Oil & Gas	Have a revenue contribution of 5% or more from unconventional oil and gas extraction and/or Derive 10% or more of revenue from the exploration, extraction, distribution or refining of oil fuels and/or Derive 50% or more of revenue from the exploration, extraction, manufacturing or distribution of gaseous fuels.	MSCI
Electricity Generation	Derive 50% or more of revenue from electricity generation with a GHG intensity of more than 100g CO_2e/kWh	MSCI
Electricity Generation and alignment with Transition Pathway	Are directly involved in electricity generation which has a carbon emission intensity inconsistent with the Paris Agreement 2 degrees scenario unless identified as a 'Transition Focused Company' (see below).	Trucost, MSCI

The above sets out the screens that are applied for this Fund. We cannot exhaustively list screens that are not applied, and it is important for investors to be clear that the interpretation of ESG and sustainability criteria is subjective, meaning that the Fund may invest in companies which do not align with the personal views of individual investors.

Prohibited Sectors

The Fund will avoid investing in the following prohibited sectors regarded as being at odds with the environmental & social characteristics of the Fund:

- Aerospace & Defence
    a. Airlines
- Hotels, Restaurants & Leisure
    a. Casinos & Gaming
- Tobacco
- Beverages
    a. Brewers
    b. Distillers & Vintners

Labelled Bond Methodology Details

For the screens related to coal, fuels or electricity generation, an exemption will be made for Labelled Bonds including Green, Social, and Sustainable. This does not extend to Sustainability-linked bonds. This approach will only apply to an individual bond and not the issuer in its entirety.

Each bond applying this exemption must either be issued under the European Green Bonds Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2023/2631) or must clearly evidence that its proceeds are not financing any of the activities stated in these exclusions. These bonds must also pass our own internal labelled bond framework and the issuer must adhere to all other screens above.

A maximum of 10% of the portfolio can be invested in labelled bonds generating these exemptions.

Investment in financial derivative instruments, money market instruments and cash may not adhere to this approach.

Active Stewardship

Active Ownership

In our view, good governance and stewardship are vital to safeguard the way in which a company is managed and to ensure that it operates responsibly in relation to its customer, employees, shareholders, and the wider community. We also believe that markets and companies which adopt best practices in corporate governance and risk management – including the management of environmental and social risks – are more likely to deliver sustainable, long-term investment performance.

As owners of companies, the process of stewardship is a natural part of our investment approach as we seek to benefit from their long-term success on our clients' behalf. Our fund managers and analysts regularly meet with the management and non-executive directors of companies in which we invest.

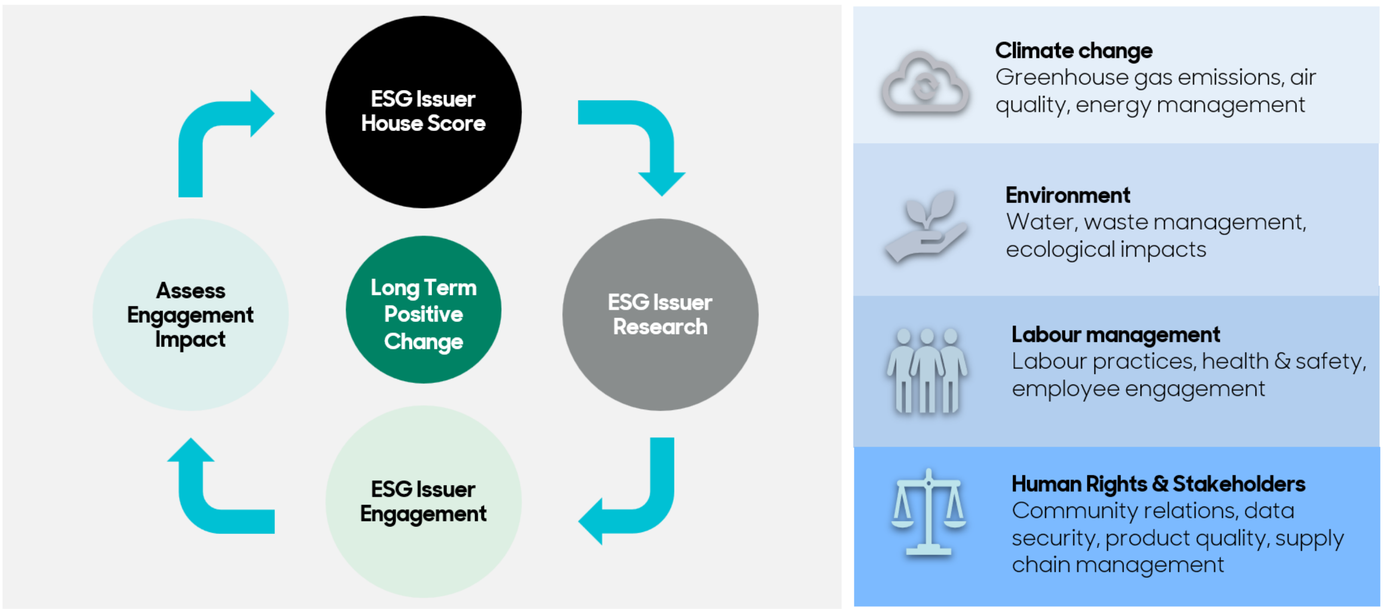
ESG Engagement

At abrdn, our engagement with company management teams is a key element of our research process and ongoing stewardship programme. It provides us with a more holistic view of a company, including current and future ESG risks that it needs to manage and opportunities from which it may benefit. Engagement also gives us the opportunity to discuss any areas of concern, share best practice and drive positive change.
We establish our priorities for engagement in these ways:

1. The use of our ESG house score, in combination with
2. Bottom-up research insights from our investment teams across asset classes, and
3. Areas of thematic focus from our company-level stewardship activities

The Fund's focus on ongoing engagement aims to identify not only the most sustainable issuers in the investment universe, but also those companies with the greatest potential for improvement in their ESG characteristics. This will focus on the following areas:

Positive Impact	• Goal to deliver the **most long-term positive impact on sustainability**, we will give particular focus to companies where we believe our **attention will have the greatest impact**. • Use proprietary House score to evidence improvements.



The holdings in the portfolio will fall into three tiers, ranging from the most sustainable issuers in Tier 1 to issuers who are still at an early stage of their development in terms of sustainability in Tier 3.

The level of engagement will vary depending on the tier and will be targeted at companies where we believe our attention and capital will have a meaningful contribution towards long term improvement in terms of their ESG characteristics.

Engagement Principal	• Issuers vary dramatically regarding their sustainability journey based on geography, lifecycle stage and their ownership structure. • Seeing immediate change in company's early in their sustainability journey is rare. However, this does not mean that engagement is not beneficial.		
Engagement Groups	**Top Tier (T1)** The most sustainable issuers in the portfolio, while able to be held, **will have a light focus for engagement.**	**Middle Tier (T2)** In most cases will be public companies. Target issuers with the **greatest intent** and **potential for positive change** through our engagement.	**Bottom Tier (T3)** Primarily private companies. As many of these companies are **early in the process** toward greater sustainability the focus is usually on improving disclosure.
Engagement Agenda	Diligence Engagement: Focus on names that promote our themes: SDGs / Green Bonds / Thematic	Priority Engagement will broadly be grouped into: **(a) Climate change (b) Environment/biodiversity (c) Labour management and (d) Human Rights & Stakeholders**	

Tier 1 diligence engagements will focus mainly on broader sustainability themes. Companies in tiers 2 & 3 will be assessed against agreed milestones on an ongoing basis in order to track their progress. These can be held as long as the companies are deemed to have credible intentions to improve their sustainability.

Tier 3 will include issuers included in the Laggard Opportunities Basket, as defined above in the "ESG Laggards" section.

Should we identify that a company has not made sufficient progress against agreed milestones and we believe our engagement objectives cannot be met, we intend to divest as soon as practicable, taking account of market conditions and the best interests of investors.

Stock Lending

abrdn ESG funds take part in our Stock Lending programme, details of which can be found in the prospectus. Collateral held on behalf of ESG funds is currently restricted to Government bonds and securities issued by constituents of the MSCI ESG Screened indices; further detail on these indices can be found at https://www.msci.com/esg-screened-indexes.

Divestment Approach

Disinvestment from an issuer is required:

- If they become in breach of any of the negative or norms-based screens. OR
- If their ESG Risk Rating moves to "High". OR
- If they no longer meet the ESG House Score hurdle and are not deemed suitable for the Laggard Opportunities Basket.

Should the review of a security result in it being deemed non-compliant, the intention would be exit as soon as is practicably possible, but generally no longer than 3 months, allowing for market conditions.

Additional Disclosures

For further information about the Fund, including the prospectus, annual report and accounts, half-yearly reports, the latest share prices, or other practical information, please visit www.abrdn.com where documents may be obtained free of charge.

Further information can also be obtained from:
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The rights of investors in this Fund are limited to the assets of this Fund.

For further information about Paying agents, Depositories, Custodians and Administrators, please refer to the Prospectus.

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