



# Press release

Brussels, 6 November 2019 – 5.15 p.m.

## Entire range of KBC SRI funds awarded Febelfin quality certification for sustainable investment

### KBC has additional sustainability criteria of its own in place

With its quality certification label, Febelfin has set out the minimum conditions to be met by socially responsible investments (SRI). The label is designed to provide consumers with a means for comparing the sustainable products offered by different financial institutions. KBC had already [expressed](#) its support for Febelfin's initiative and has now tested its own SRI products against this standard. It transpires that all 65 of its SRI funds are fully compliant with the Febelfin standard and even surpass it in certain cases.

**Johan Thijs, KBC Group CEO**, warmly welcomed Febelfin's quality standard: *'Today, investors expect open and honest communication on the SRI quality of investment products offered by their bank. Our open dialogue and transparent communication with customers and stakeholders on how we approach sustainability provides us with a clear idea of their expectations, so that we can build a better and more sustainable society together. I'm delighted that KBC's long-standing concern in this area is now also being supported at sector level. The fact that all our SRI funds are Febelfin quality-certified reaffirms our role as a pioneer in the field of sustainability.'*

KBC's exclusion criteria are fully in line with those required by the Febelfin quality standard. Indeed, for many sectors, KBC uses criteria that are even stricter. For instance, KBC has completely excluded fossil fuel investments from its SRI funds (i.e. coal, lignite, oil or natural gas). The exclusion applies not only to the extraction, processing and transportation of fossil fuels, but also to the generation of fossil-fuel based electricity. That sends out a clear message to the customer: you do not invest in fossil fuel companies when you invest in an SRI fund at KBC. Furthermore, KBC has its own set of policy guidelines for sectors such as the gambling, adult entertainment, and fur and leather goods industries.

Producers of controversial weapons, companies that violate the principles of the UN Global Compact, tobacco producers, investments linked to agricultural crops or livestock, and government bonds issued by controversial countries are excluded from KBC's investment funds as standard.

KBC works constantly on its objectives and policies. This is done with the help of extensive scientific research, internationally renowned sustainability institutions and a network of academics and sustainability specialists from various domains. Given this approach, KBC welcomes Febelfin's announcement that it intends to review and tighten the current minimum standards on a regular basis going forward. Investors can therefore be sure that the certification is up to date and reflects society's changing expectations towards sustainability.

KBC was in fact one of the first companies in Belgium to put its weight behind SRI, with customers having access to SRI funds from as far back as 1992. KBC has steadily increased its SRI offering in response to the constantly changing expectations of society, where sustainability and social responsibility are now clearly to the fore. KBC's [sustainability framework](#), which was updated in mid-2018, applies not only in Belgium, but also in all the countries where the KBC group operates.

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