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The Banker
PWM
PROFESSIONAL WEALTH MANAGEMENT

BEST PRIVATE BANK FOR SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

Bank Sarasin & Co

Bank Sarasin has more than 20 years' experience in sustainable asset management and is one of the leading providers of socially responsible investments in Switzerland.

The bank focuses on giving consideration to financial, social as well as environmental factors when analysing issuers of securities. The bank has a sustainable investment approach that is built around themes such as renewable energies or water. The bank argues that giving attention to sustainability can help reduce investment risks.

For example, Bank Sarasin argues that no investments were made in Greek, Portuguese or Spanish sovereign bonds. Another recent example is that Bank Sarasin was not affected by the Gulf of Mexico oil disaster as it did not invest in the companies involved. Also, companies that have more than 5 per cent of their turnover from nuclear energy were not included in the investments.

Burkhard Varnholt, chief investment officer and head of asset management, product and sales, comments on the changes that have been occurring in the industry: "The most significant drivers of change are also shaping a new, global, economic and political order: globalisation, demographic change, the shifting balance of power between the public, financial and corporate sector, and increasing environmental concerns. All of these factors are radically challenging old business models and enforcing a new mindset for asset managers to embrace sustainable investment choices as a real opportunity."

And commenting on the challenges of Bank Sarasin, Mr Varnholt notes: "We need to scale our business model to keep up with rapidly growing demand. This requires the utmost focus, rigour and prudence as people and ideas are our most valuable assets. You might call this a high-class problem to deal with – but it's also tremendously challenging and rewarding."



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*Burkhard Varnholt,
Bank Sarasin*

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