

# Media Release

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Investing in food sector transformation:

## **RobecoSAM launches Sustainable Food Equities strategy**

- **New name of existing strategy reflects its focus on companies along the entire food value chain**
- **Strategy creates positive social impact by investing in companies that are building a more sustainable food system**
- **Combines RobecoSAM's expertise in thematic investing and SI analysis**

RobecoSAM, the investment specialist that has focused exclusively on Sustainability Investing (SI) for over 22 years, today announced the renaming of the RobecoSAM Sustainable Agribusiness strategy to the RobecoSAM Sustainable Food Equities strategy (the "strategy"). The new name reflects the strategy's focus on investing in companies along the entire food value chain that are building a more sustainable food system by addressing the most critical issues around resource scarcity, food supply, and demographic changes. The strategy continues to be managed by Holger Frey and is tailored to investors looking to create positive impact while generating competitive returns. The name change is effective immediately.

### **Creating positive social impact by harvesting opportunities along the entire food value chain**

The food sector is undergoing a radical transformation. Demand for food is increasing (70% more food will be required to feed the global population by 2050<sup>1</sup>), there are marked shifts in consumption trends (66% of consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable goods<sup>2</sup>), and food science and technology are becoming increasingly important productivity drivers (AgTech is core to delivering a 70% increase in global crop production by 2050<sup>3</sup>). These significant changes bring with them attractive investment opportunities along the entire food value chain.

The RobecoSAM Sustainable Food Equities strategy aims to identify and invest in market leaders with innovative business models that are at the forefront of the food sector transformation. Specifically, the strategy invests in food security, production & logistics, sustainable processing and food consumption companies that are building a more sustainable food system. An investment in the fund also means investing in companies that contribute to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as SDG 2 "zero hunger".

**Holger Frey, Senior Portfolio Manager, RobecoSAM Sustainable Food Equities Strategy, RobecoSAM:** "Rising food demand, changing consumer preferences and increasing digitization are driving a radical transformation of the food value chain, which creates compelling opportunities for investors. The RobecoSAM Sustainable Food Equities strategy draws on RobecoSAM's collective thematic expertise gained over more than 22 years to identify high-quality, innovative companies along the entire food value chain that are leading this transformation toward a more sustainable food system."

### **ESG integrated investment process**

The investment team behind the strategy comprises of an experienced group of thematic investing specialists and RobecoSAM SI research analysts. By combining RobecoSAM thematic research expertise with SI analysis, ESG criteria are fully integrated along the investment process across key sustainable food areas. Specialized SI screens for the food sector that assess extra-financial data (e.g. animal welfare) are applied as part of the due diligence process. The result is a well-diversified, but concentrated portfolio across the entire sustainable food value chain.

In addition, voting and engagement practices also form an integral part of the strategy's integrated investment process. By collaborating closely with SI research analysts, the strategy's investment management team places emphasis on having constructive dialogues with food companies to encourage sustainable practices. Engagement themes include: food security, social issues in the food and agribusiness supply chain, and improving sustainability in the meat and fish supply chain.

The RobecoSAM Sustainable Food Equities strategy is benchmarked against the MSCI World Index TRN.

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**About RobecoSAM**

Founded in 1995, RobecoSAM is an investment specialist focused exclusively on Sustainability Investing. It offers asset management, indices, impact analysis and investing, sustainability assessments, and benchmarking services. The company's asset management capabilities cater to institutional asset owners and financial intermediaries and cover a range of ESG-integrated investments, featuring a strong track record in resource efficiency-themed strategies. Together with S&P Dow Jones Indices, RobecoSAM publishes the globally recognized Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI) as well as the S&P ESG Factor Weighted Index series, the first index family to treat ESG as a standalone performance factor using the RobecoSAM Smart ESG methodology. Based on its Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA), an annual ESG analysis of approximately 4,500 listed companies, RobecoSAM has compiled one of the world's most comprehensive databases of financially material sustainability information. The CSA data is also included in USD 104 billion of assets under management at Robeco.

RobecoSAM is a sister company of Robeco, the Dutch investment management firm founded in 1929. Both entities are subsidiaries of ORIX Corporation Europe N.V., the center of asset management expertise for ORIX Corporation. As a reflection of its own commitment to advancing sustainable investment practices, RobecoSAM is a signatory of the PRI, UN Global Compact and Climate Action 100+, a supporter of the Task force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure (TCFD), as well as a member of Eurosif, Swiss Sustainable Finance, Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), and Portfolio Decarbonization Coalition (PDC). As of December 31, 2017, RobecoSAM had client assets under management, advice and/or license of approximately USD 20 billion.

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<sup>1</sup> "The food systems of the future need to be smarter, more efficient", Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2015. <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/275009/icode/>

<sup>2</sup> "The Sustainability Imperative", Nielson, 2015. <http://www.nielsen.com/content/dam/nielsen-global/co/docs/Reports/2015/global-sustainability-report.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> "Precision Farming Cheating Malthus with Digital Agriculture", Equity Research, The Goldman Sachs Group Inc., 2016. [https://docdrop.org/static/drop-pdf/GSR\\_agriculture-N1sH6.pdf](https://docdrop.org/static/drop-pdf/GSR_agriculture-N1sH6.pdf)