



## Statement of Policy Regarding Responsible Investment

### Principles for Responsible Investment, ESG, and Socially Responsible Investment

#### 1. Introduction

AB (“**AB**” or “**we**”) is appointed by our clients as an investment manager with a fiduciary responsibility to help them achieve their investment objectives over the long term. Generally, our clients’ objective is to maximize the financial return of their portfolios within appropriate risk parameters. AB has long recognized that environmental, social and governance (“**ESG**”) issues can impact the performance of investment portfolios. Accordingly, we have sought to integrate ESG factors into our investment process to the extent that the integration of such factors is consistent with our fiduciary duty to help our clients achieve their investment objectives and protect their economic interests.

Our policy draws a distinction between how the Principles for Responsible Investment (“**PRI**” or “**Principles**”), and Socially Responsible Investing (“**SRI**”) incorporate ESG factors. PRI is based on the premise that, because ESG issues can affect investment performance, appropriate consideration of ESG issues and engagement regarding them is firmly within the bounds of a mainstream investment manager’s fiduciary duties to its clients. Furthermore, PRI is intended to be applied only in ways that are consistent with those mainstream fiduciary duties.

SRI, which refers to a spectrum of investment strategies that seek to integrate ethical, moral, sustainability and other non-financial factors into the investment process, generally involves exclusion and/or divestment, as well as investment guidelines that restrict investments. AB may accept such guideline restrictions upon client request.



## **2. Approach to ESG**

Our long-standing policy has been to include ESG factors in our extensive fundamental research and consider them carefully when we believe they are material to our forecasts and investment decisions. If we determine that these aspects of an issuer's past, current or anticipated behavior are material to its future expected returns, we address these concerns in our forecasts, research reviews, investment decisions and engagement. In addition, we have well-developed proxy voting policies that incorporate ESG issues and engagement.

## **3. Commitment to the PRI**

In recent years, we have gained greater clarity on how the PRI initiative, based on information from PRI Advisory Council members and from other signatories, provides a framework for incorporating ESG factors into investment research and decision-making. Furthermore, our industry has become, over time, more aware of the importance of ESG factors. We acknowledge these developments and seek to refine what has been our process in this area.

After careful consideration, we determined that becoming a PRI signatory would enhance our current ESG practices and align with our fiduciary duties to our clients as a mainstream investment manager. Accordingly, we became a signatory, effective November 1, 2011.

In signing the PRI, AB as an investment manager publicly commits to adopt and implement all six Principles, where consistent with our fiduciary responsibilities, and to make progress over time on implementation of the Principles.

The six principles are:

1. We will incorporate ESG issues into investment research and decision-making processes.

AB Examples: ESG issues are included in the research analysis process. In some cases, external service providers of ESG-related tools are utilized; we have conducted proxy voting training and will have continued and expanded



training for investment professionals to incorporate ESG issues into investment analysis and decision-making processes across our firm.

2. We will be active owners and incorporate ESG issues into our ownership policies and practices.

AB Examples: We are active owners through our proxy voting process (for additional information, please refer to our *Statement of Policies and Procedures for Proxy Voting Manual*); we engage issuers on ESG matters in our investment research process (we define “engagement” as discussions with management about ESG issues when they are, or we believe they are reasonably likely to become, material).

3. We will seek appropriate disclosure on ESG issues by the entities in which we invest.

AB Examples: Generally, we support transparency regarding ESG issues when we conclude the disclosure is reasonable. Similarly, in proxy voting, we will support shareholder initiatives and resolutions promoting ESG disclosure when we conclude the disclosure is reasonable.

4. We will promote acceptance and implementation of the Principles within the investment industry.

AB Examples: By signing the PRI, we have taken an important first step in promoting acceptance and implementation of the six Principles within our industry.

5. We will work together to enhance our effectiveness in implementing the Principles.

AB Examples: We will engage with clients and participate in forums with other PRI signatories to better understand how the PRI are applied in our respective businesses. As a PRI signatory, we have access to information, tools and other signatories to help ensure that we are effective in our endeavors to implement the PRI.

6. We will report on our activities and progress towards implementing



the Principles.

AB Examples: We will respond to the 2012 PRI questionnaire and disclose PRI scores from the questionnaire in response to inquiries from clients and in requests for proposals; we will provide examples as requested concerning active ownership activities (voting, engagement or policy dialogue).

#### **4. RI Committee**

Our firm's RI Committee provides AB stakeholders, including employees, clients, prospects, consultants and service providers alike, with a resource within our firm on which they can rely for information regarding our approach to ESG issues and how those issues are incorporated in different ways by the PRI and SRI. Additionally, the RI Committee is responsible for assisting AB personnel to further implement our firm's RI policies and practices, and, over time, to make progress on implementing all six Principles.

The RI Committee has a diverse membership, including senior representatives from investments, distribution/sales and legal. The Committee is chaired by Linda Giuliano, Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer-Equities.

If you have questions or desire additional information about this Policy, we encourage you to contact the RI Committee at [Rinquiries@ABglobal.com](mailto:Rinquiries@ABglobal.com).