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EU'S STRATEGY

90% reduction in GHG emissions by 2040

2024 began with key framework providers for sustainability disclosure upgrading their frameworks to enable better ESG disclosure and many securities commissions making watertight norms to avoid greenwashing. The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) has developed scope 3 target setting while EU's expert advisors openly opposed the inclusion of gas and nuclear energy into the EU Taxonomy guidelines.



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Introduction

The February issue talks about the European Commission (EC)'s aim to slash the European Union (EU)'s net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 90% by 2040, aligning with climate neutrality goals. However, revised targets omit specific goals for agricultural emissions due to a week-long protest carried out by farmers in France for improved pay, less bureaucracy, and protection from foreign competition. The plan emphasizes carbon capture, drawing criticism for neglecting fossil fuel dependency and agricultural emissions. L&T Technology Services (LTTS) and AT&T have formed a strategic alliance to combat global emissions through advanced solutions. LTTS will utilize its IoT and 5G connectivity while participating in the Connected Climate Initiative by AT&T. HSBC and Google Cloud have collaborated to support climate tech companies through venture debt financing. In other news, AXA Investment Managers has appointed Thomas Coudert as Head of Sustainability.

MSCI has launched the MSCI Private Company Data Connect to gather sustainability and climate data from private firms. BNP Paribas Asset Management has entered the active ETF market with ESG strategies. China has introduced new regulations for its carbon emissions trading system, effective from May 2024. Suncor Energy faces a record USD11mn fine for air pollution violations at its Colorado refinery, emphasizing the importance of environmental regulations and compliance consequences.



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MARKET TRENDS

Trends driving positive environmental and social change

Businesses, financial institutions, and regulatory bodies have realized the significance of addressing ESG risks and capitalizing on the underlying opportunities to adopt sustainability. Catch the latest developments in industries from government mandates to revolutionary initiatives in this section.

Companies embracing science-based emissions targets doubled



SCIENCE
BASED
TARGETS

The Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) has reported a significant surge, with 4,204 companies doubling the approval

of emissions reduction targets. This remarkable growth prompted organizational improvements, including independence, sector-specific standards development, and a review of the net-zero standard.

► Source: The Independent

EU unveils industrial carbon management strategy for net-zero emissions



The EU has set net-zero CO2 emissions by 2050, proposing industrial carbon management strategies to achieve 90% emissions reduction by 2040. The

plan includes developing CO2 storage capacity, creating a single market for CO2, and promoting investment and innovation in carbon capture and utilization technologies.

► Source: European Commission

EU's strategy: 90% reduction in GHG emissions by 2040



The EC has proposed a 90% reduction in net GHG emissions by 2040, a challenging goal testing

the region's commitment to fighting climate change ahead of EU elections. Despite aligning with recommendations from EU climate advisors, the Commission softened its stance on agriculture emissions after farmers in France expressed their disappointment in EU green rules among other concerns, thus removing a requirement for a 30% reduction in non-CO2 emissions by 2040.

► Source: Aljazeera

USPS introduces new emissions reduction targets for 2030



The US Postal Service (USPS) has announced new sustainability goals, in line with its Delivering for America plan. Targets include a 40% reduction

in Scope 1 and 2 emissions and a 20% cut in Scope 3 emissions by 2030. Strategies involve optimizing transportation, increasing recyclability, and integrating environmental policies into operations.

► Source: ESG Broadcast

Singapore mandates sustainable fuel for departing flights starting 2026

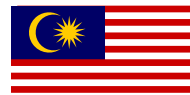


Singapore plans to mandate sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) for all outbound flights starting 2026, aiming for a 1% usage target initially, escalating to 3–5% by 2030.

SAF, crucial for aviation decarbonization, is expected to contribute significantly to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. An SAF levy will be introduced to ensure cost certainty for airlines and travelers.

► Source: Reuters

Malaysia initiates consultation on IFRS sustainability reporting standards adoption



The Malaysia Securities Commission's Advisory Committee on Sustainability Reporting (ACSR) has initiated a consultation on

adopting the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation's International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) for mandatory reporting requirements. This follows the launch of the ACSR in 2023, aiming to integrate ISSB standards into Malaysia's National Sustainability Reporting Framework (NSRF). The consultation seeks feedback on implementing IFRS S1 and S2, proposing timelines and reliefs for issuers.

► Source: ESG today

Australian companies seek one-year extension for climate reporting compliance



The Business Council of Australia (BCA) has proposed extending the preparation time for companies to comply with Australia's new

mandatory climate-related reporting law by an extra year. The BCA recommends a "training wheels" approach, allowing companies to develop necessary skills. They also advocate for expanded immunity from liability and alignment with international standards.

► Source: ESG today



COLLABORATIONS

Companies joining forces to shape sustainable solutions

ESG issues continue to grow in relevance, be it employee health & safety or climate change. The impact is multifold in current times. Investor groups and corporates are increasingly collaborating to address such issues and drive sustainability. The following are the major coalitions in the ESG space.

Deloitte collaborates with Informatica, Workiva to establish new ESG data management

Deloitte.



workiva

Deloitte has strengthened its partnerships with Informatica and Workiva to launch a new ecosystem focusing on ESG deployment and reporting accurate ESG data. It aims to simplify ESG implementation

for clients, addressing concerns about data management and facilitating regulatory compliance, transparent disclosure, and risk management.

► Source: ESG Today

HSBC, Google collaborate to fund and expand climate technology companies



HSBC and Google Cloud have joined forces to support climate tech companies by connecting HSBC's climate tech finance team with companies in Google

Cloud Ready – Sustainability (GCR-Sustainability) validation program, offering venture debt financing options. The partnership aims to increase partners in the program and provide financing opportunities for HSBC.

► Source: ESG Today

Airbus and TotalEnergies unveil new partnership for sustainable aviation fuel

AIRBUS



Airbus and TotalEnergies have launched a strategic partnership to advance SAF development, aiming for decarbonization in aviation by 2050. TotalEnergies

will supply SAF to Airbus, focusing on research and development for tailored sustainable fuels and emission reduction.

► Source: ESG Today

Lululemon and Samsara Eco introduce breakthrough in nylon recycling



Lululemon and Samsara Eco have collaborated to create the first-ever Swiftly Tech long-sleeve top using enzymatically recycled nylon 6,6, addressing

the challenge of recycling this commonly used textile material. Samsara Eco's enzymatic technology extracts nylon 6,6 from end-of-life textiles, offering a sustainable solution for Lululemon's material sourcing goals.

► Source: ESG Today

AT&T and L&T form strategic partnership to drive climate solution



L&T Technology Services (LTTS) and AT&T have formed a strategic alliance to combat global emissions by developing advanced solutions. LTTS will join AT&T's Connected Climate

Initiative, leveraging connectivity solutions like IoT and 5G to reduce GHG emissions. LTTS offers a range of sustainability services aimed at mitigating environmental impact and fostering positive change for organizations worldwide.

► Source: ESG News

Fils and Telr collaborate to advance sustainability in finance and payments



Fils, an ESG-focused fintech, has partnered with Telr, an online payment gateway, to integrate sustainable infrastructure into finance and payments. Telr

merchants can track emissions, access carbon markets, and demonstrate positive environmental impact through robust reporting, reducing greenwashing. The collaboration enhances Telr's suite of services, fostering sustainability in global payment operations.

► Source: ESG News



PEOPLE MOVEMENTS

Thought leadership through key hires

Companies across the globe are demanding analysts, strategists, and knowledgeable professionals to understand and drive their ESG data, strategies, and solutions for a range of stakeholders. This section brings you the latest movements of such highly skilled professionals in the ESG sector.

Pollination hires Dame Amelia Fawcett as Senior Adviser



Pollination has announced the appointment of Dame Amelia Fawcett as Senior Adviser to the business. She is responsible for advising the firm on how to help clients navigate the evolving nature and biodiversity landscape. Currently, Fawcett is the lead Director of State Street,

Co-chair of the International Panel on Biodiversity Credits, Chair of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and Chair of the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance.

► Source: ESG Clarity

Medtronic welcomes Raman Venkatesh as Chief Sustainability Officer



Medtronic has appointed Raman Venkatesh as the first Chief Sustainability Officer. He will be responsible for leading the development and execution of Medtronic's environmental sustainability strategy. With his blend of scientific expertise and strategic sustainability

experience, Venkatesh brings a strong foundation to Medtronic's environmental efforts.

► Source: Medtronic

Paul Travers joins AIB as Managing Director



AIB welcomes Paul Travers to the newly created role of Managing Director of the Climate Capital unit. He will be responsible for driving the bank's expanded green lending activities focused on renewable energy companies and critical infrastructure projects across

Ireland, the UK, Europe, and North America.

► Source: ESG Today

IAIM hires Alicia Forry as Head of ESG, Alternative Investments



Investec Alternative Investment Management (IAIM) welcomed Alicia Forry as Head of ESG, Alternative Investments. In her new role, she will help to further embed a responsible investing framework and series of processes across Investec's private market credit strategies.

She is also a member of Investec's Sustainable Business Forum.

► Source: Investec

AXA IM AMRO welcomes Thomas Coudert as Head of Sustainability



AXA Investment Managers (AXA IM) has appointed Thomas Coudert as Head of Sustainability, Core Investments. He is responsible for overseeing sustainability across the Core Investment platform. Based in Paris, Thomas reports to Marion le Morhedec, Global

Head of Fixed Income and member of the AXA IM's management board.

► Source: ESG Today



FINTECH

Innovation in sustainable investing

The fintech section captures various innovations in the data analytics, software solutioning, and technology space that benefit both investors and data providers. Learn about the most groundbreaking technologies leading their way to ESG.

Microsoft enhances sustainability platform with AI, value chain data solutions



Microsoft has introduced new data and AI solutions to its sustainability platform

– Microsoft Cloud for Sustainability. The solutions include tools aimed to accelerate ESG data analytics, enhance sustainability data management and reporting, and facilitate data collection and analysis across the value chain, providing organizations with valuable insights and regulatory compliance capabilities.

► Source: ESG today

SIX introduces solution for banks to evaluate sustainability of small businesses in loan portfolios



SIX and Greenomy have collaborated to introduce a solution for banks, facilitating the assessment of sustainability performance and transition paths for small to medium enterprises

(SMEs) in their loan portfolios. This initiative aligns with increasing bank commitments to monitor sustainability and address regulatory pressures for ESG reporting. The solution streamlines sustainability assessments for SMEs, assisting banks in meeting emerging disclosure standards, and calculating the EU Banking Book Taxonomy Alignment Ratio.

► Source: ESG today

MSCI introduces reporting solution for sustainability data for private markets



MSCI has launched the MSCI Private Company Data Connect, a platform designed

to gather and convey sustainability and climate data from private companies to general partner investors and lenders. This initiative addresses the growing demand for increased reporting and data on the overall sustainability of general partner investments. The platform utilizes the ESG Integrated Disclosure Project template and incorporates an AI-powered carbon measurement and reporting tool from Persefoni.

► Source: ESG Today

IBM improves ESG platform by incorporating supply chain emissions data capabilities



IBM has expanded its Envizi ESG Suite with a Supply Chain

Intelligence module, addressing the need for companies to monitor and disclose Scope 3 emissions in compliance with evolving sustainability reporting standards. The module facilitates the collection and analysis of emissions data across supply chains, aiding in the efficient calculation and reporting of Scope 3 emissions. Automated features enhance data quality and identify emission reduction opportunities.

► Source: ESG Broadcast



PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Industry demands met with sustainable investment products and ESG data & services

As businesses work toward getting ESG-compliant and investors channel their funds into ESG products, the market is gearing up to facilitate all forms of products and services. In this section, you will find news on key products and services including the launch of climate change-targeted funds as well as ESG data and services.

Iberdrola, Inditex, Santander, Telefónica jointly launch first-ever forum on Sustainable Legal Practices



The inaugural forum of Sustainable Legal Advice, hosted by companies including Iberdrola and Inditex, aimed to foster dialog on legal and sustainability issues under the ESG criteria. Certified as a sustainable event by the Spanish

Association for Standardization and Certification (AENOR), it emphasized the role of legal advisors in advancing sustainability strategies and discussed the importance of technology and diversity in legal workflows.

► Source: ESG News

EPA unveils Clean Ports Program to develop zero-emission infrastructure



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has launched the USD3bn clean ports program to fund zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure, aligning with US President Biden's environmental

agenda to tackle climate change and reduce pollution. EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan announced the initiative, emphasizing its focus on promoting community health, creating jobs, and advancing environmental justice.

► Source: ESG News

BNP Paribas AM introduces inaugural active ETFs



BNP PARIBAS

BNP Paribas Asset Management has entered the active ETF market

with two-euro government and corporate bond ESG strategies. BJLM and BJLN which are listed on Deutsche Boerse and Borsa Italiana, feature total expense ratios (TERs) of 0.18% and 0.25% respectively. The bonds follow an index-like approach with BNPP AM's unique ESG methodology and exclusion policies.

► Source: ETF Stream

Goldman Sachs AM introduces global green bond ETF



Goldman Sachs AM (GSAM) has expanded its fixed income ESG range with the launch of its first UCITS ETF, the Goldman Sachs Global Green Bond UCITS ETF (GSGR), listed on multiple

exchanges with a TER of 0.22%. GSGR tracks the Solactive Global Green Bond select index, screening issuers and bonds based on sustainable criteria.

► Source: ETF Stream

Canada launches second green bond offering, includes nuclear power in eligible investment categories



The Government of Canada has announced its second green bond, aiming to raise USD4bn for green infrastructure and nature conservation projects to support climate goals. The new bond's eligible expenditure areas include clean transportation, renewable energy, and some nuclear energy activities, marking Canada as the first to include nuclear in its green bond framework.

► Source: ESG Today

Japan debuts inaugural Climate Transition Bond offering



The Government of Japan has successfully completed its inaugural climate transition bond offering, raising USD5.3bn to support its transition to a carbon-neutral economy, with a focus on decarbonizing hard-to-abate industrial sectors. This marks the first step to achieving Japan's net zero emissions goal by 2050, with priority to investments in sectors that reduce emissions.

► Source: ESG Today

Hong Kong launches Digital Green Bond



The Government of Hong Kong has issued approximately USD765mn in digital green bonds, marking the world's first multi-currency digital bond offering. These tokenized green bonds, represented on a blockchain network, aim to promote sustainability while leveraging fintech innovations. The bonds support projects outlined in Hong Kong's Green Bond Framework, including renewable energy, pollution mitigation, and climate change adaptation.

► Source: ESG Today



LAWS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

Major policies that pave the way to disclosure in the industry

Policy reformation and amendments in the ESG reporting space are at an all-time high. What started as a voluntary disclosure is now making its way to becoming mandates. Be it sustainable investments standards or climate change reporting mandates and transparency in governance practices, we bring you the latest regulatory updates in this section.



Singapore implements mandatory climate reporting

Singapore has introduced mandatory climate-related reporting requirements for listed and large non-listed companies starting 2025. The requirements will be divided into two phases, starting with listed companies in 2025 and large non-listed companies in 2027. The government shall support companies in developing sustainability reporting and assurance competencies. The move aimed to strengthen companies' sustainability capabilities.

► Source: ESG Today



China enhances carbon trading system

China signed new regulations for its carbon emissions trading system, focused on the establishment of a legal framework and strengthened control of GHG emissions in carbon-intensive sectors. The new rules allocated responsibility to government ministries and introduced stricter penalties for entities falsifying information. The new regulations will be effective from May 2024.

► Source: ESG today

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) ratings: Council and Parliament reach agreement

EU institutions secure deal on ESG rating regulation

The Council and European Parliament reached a provisional agreement on a regulation on ESG rating

activities to boost investor confidence in sustainable products. The new rules aim to improve the transparency and integrity of ESG ratings providers and prevent conflicts of interest. ESG ratings providers will be supervised by European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA). It also introduced a temporary registration regime for small ESG rating providers.

► Source: European Council of the European Union



Europe adopts pioneering law to restore ecosystems

The European Parliament has adopted the first EU law to restore degraded ecosystems, aimed to restore 20% of land and sea areas by 2030 and all ecosystems in need by 2050. The law also requires EU members to restore 30% of drained peatland by 2030, 40% by 2040, and 50% by 2050.

► Source: Down to Earth



Global mining industry adopts groundbreaking GRI standard

The GRI Mining Standard, launched in 2024, is a global standard that addresses the sustainability impacts of the mining sector. It reflects stakeholder demands for transparency and enables companies to report their impacts using a common set of metrics. The standard covers 25 topics, including site-level transparency, critical themes, and three new topics – tailings management, artisanal and small-scale mining, and operating in conflict zones.

► Source: GRI Standard



CONTROVERSIES

Global sustainability watchdogs chasing wrongdoers

Do companies follow their ESG commitments? Tracking corporate controversies helps in investment decisions and enables stakeholders to determine whether the companies are being fair to their commitments or merely greenwashing. We bring you the top controversies in this section.



Gemini settles regulatory dispute, returns USD1.1bn to customers

Gemini, a cryptocurrency exchange, will return over USD1.1bn to customers who lost money in its lending program and pay a USD37mn fine. This comes after a settlement deal with the New York Department of Financial Services (NYDFS). Gemini's lending program, Earn, was halted during a crypto market crash in November 2022. As a result, Genesis Global Capital, the company Gemini was in collaboration with, filed for bankruptcy. NYDFS asserted that Gemini failed to exercise adequate oversight over Genesis during the Earn program and neglected to maintain sufficient reserves.

► Source: Economic Times

Abbott Labs must face lawsuit over PediaSure height claims

Lawsuit against Abbott labs over PediaSure height claims moves forward

Abbott's attempt to dismiss a lawsuit alleging claims about PediaSure's ability to help children grow taller has been rejected by a U.S. District Court judge. The lawsuit seeks damages for New Yorkers who were 'deceived into buying or overpaying for PediaSure'. Abbott asserts PediaSure is for ages two to 13, aiding in weight-for-height percentiles improvement within eight weeks. Abbott has not commented on the judge's decision.

► Source: XM



Pilot files lawsuit against American Airlines over ESG investments

American Airlines faces a lawsuit over its ESG retirement investing practices, alleging neglect of ESG factors. Despite attempts to be dismissed, the court allowed the case to proceed, highlighting the rising significance of ESG considerations in

corporate decisions. It signals increasing pressure for companies to align with sustainability principles, facing scrutiny from investors and legal perspectives, potentially fostering greater accountability and integration of sustainability factors in investment strategies. American Airlines declined to comment.

► Source: Reuters



Environmental groups file complaints against Standard Chartered

Standard Chartered is under scrutiny as a complaint targets the bank for its alleged involvement in funding coal plant projects. Environmental and human rights groups have lodged the complaint, accusing the bank of financing four coal-fired power plants in the Philippines. The Philippine Movement for Climate Justice, Inclusive Development International (IDI), Recourse, and BankTrack stated that due to inadequate bank due diligence, local communities have experienced forced evictions, loss of livelihoods, respiratory and skin diseases due to air and water pollution, and instances of intimidation and violence.

► Source: U.S. News



Suncor Energy hit with record USD11mn fine for air pollution violations

Suncor Energy faces a record USD11mn fine in Colorado for air pollution violations at its refinery. Violations involve exceeding permitted levels of sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide, and other harmful pollutants. This penalty, the largest imposed by

Colorado regulators for air pollution violations, mandates Suncor to take corrective actions to enhance air quality in nearby communities.

► Source: ESG News



Zalando to remove misleading sustainability claims in agreement with EU Commission

Zalando reached an agreement with the EC to eliminate misleading sustainability claims from its platform due to concerns over greenwashing. Zalando has committed to improving transparency and accuracy in sustainability messaging by removing or clarifying misleading claims, emphasizing genuine sustainability efforts and consumer trust. This agreement aims to promote informed consumer choices and support a sustainable future by addressing deceptive claims.

► Source: ESG Today

GREEN
WASHING



SGA BLOGS

“Top Business Sustainability Goals for 2024: Making an Impact” [Read More...](#)

“How to Spot Greenwashing : 2024 Outlook” [Read More...](#)

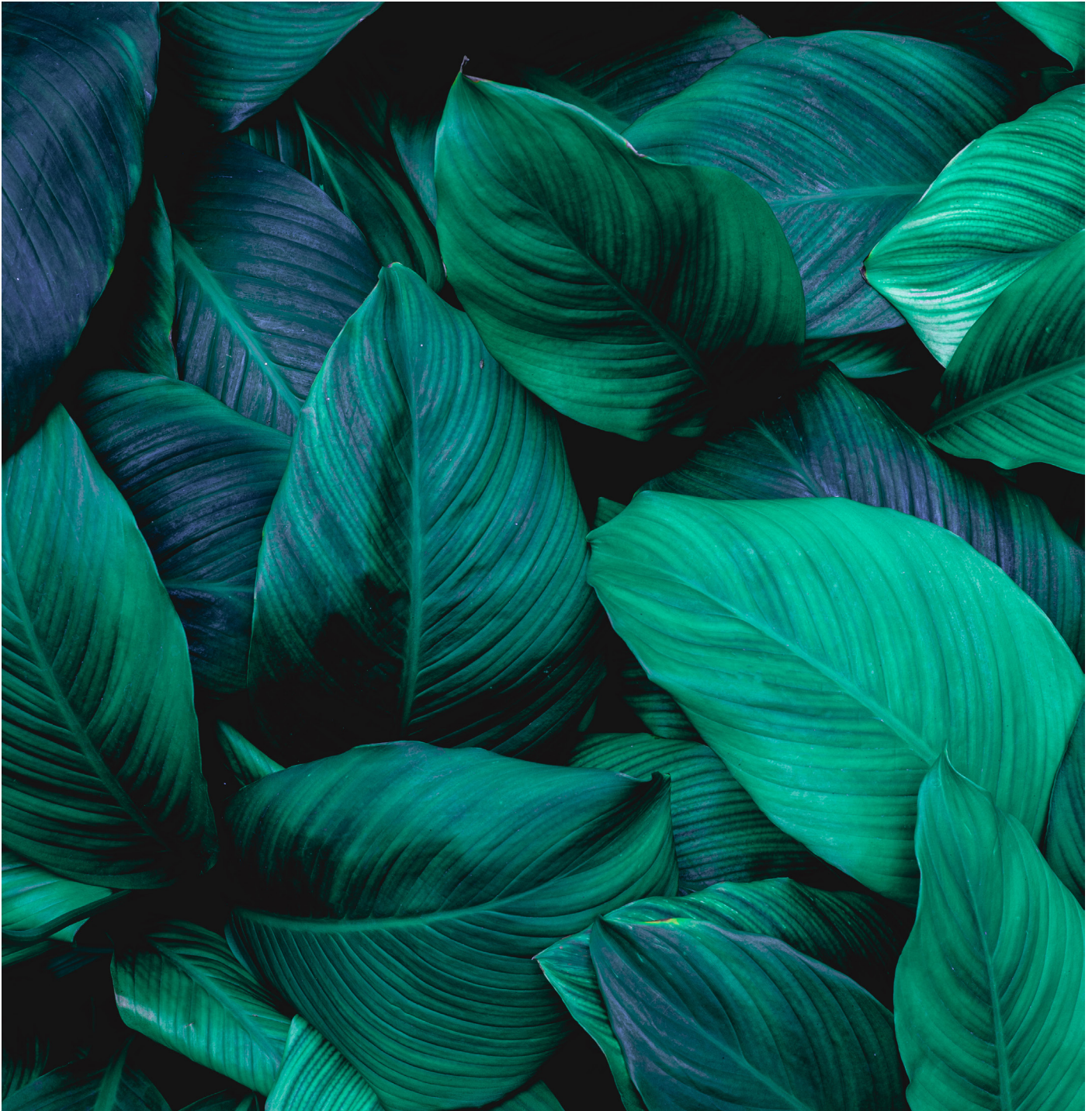
“Investing in the Green Revolution: A Comprehensive Guide to Sustainable Development” [Read More...](#)

“Authenticity Over Greenwashing: How Brands Are Engaging with Customers and Building Trust?” [Read More...](#)



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