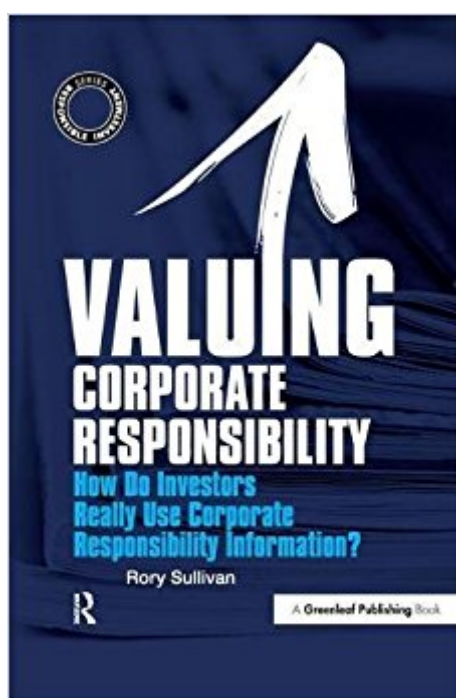


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Valuing Corporate Responsibility: How Do Investors Really Use Corporate Responsibility Information? (The Responsible Investment Series)



Synopsis

Investors have taken a long time to pay attention to corporate responsibility. Despite the growing number of companies that were taking action to manage the social and environmental impacts of their activities and operations and that were reporting on their corporate responsibility performance, mainstream investors' interest in governance issues was, on the whole, piqued only in those situations where a major accident or scandal hit the headlines. This has changed dramatically. With over 600 large investment institutions, including asset managers, insurance companies and pension funds having signed the UN-backed Principles for Responsible Investment, it can now be plausibly argued that "responsible investment" has become mainstream. This change is potentially of huge significance, and the investment community is now widely seen as one of the key audiences for the thousands of corporate responsibility reports produced each year. Yet the reality is that there is a striking lack of understanding among companies of investors' interests. The consequence has been that, despite many companies identifying investors as one of the critical audiences for their corporate responsibility reports, most investors – even those that have made commitments to responsible investment – see these reports as irrelevant to their investment decision-making. The problem is compounded by the singularly poor job that investors do of explaining to companies what sort of information they are really interested in, and where corporate responsibility performance fits into their overall assessments of companies. This has led to frustrations on both sides. Investors have been accused of not paying sufficient attention to companies' corporate responsibility performance, and companies have been accused of producing information that not only has no immediate relevance to investors but, worse, seems to have no relevance to the key business challenges that these companies face. Valuing Corporate Responsibility aims to address the "dialogue of the deaf" that characterizes too many of the discussions between companies and their investors on corporate responsibility issues, through: 1. Explaining to companies what responsible investment looks like in practice and, from this analysis, explaining what sort of corporate responsibility information investors are interested in and how this information is used in practice. 2. Explaining to investors some of the practical difficulties faced by companies when preparing corporate responsibility reports and the implications for the quality and utility of the data provided in these reports. Valuing Corporate Responsibility also analyses how issues such as investors' views on materiality and investment time-frames influence the dialogue that investors have with companies on corporate responsibility matters. It concludes that there is a need for a major rethink of current approaches to responsible investment, as the manner in which most investors are implementing their responsible investment commitments is unlikely to see them

making a substantial contribution to improving corporate responsibility performance or to the wider goals of sustainable development. Written by one of the world's leading experts on responsible investment, *Valuing Corporate Responsibility* is one of the most important books to be written on corporate responsibility over the past decade. It is of relevance not only to companies and to responsible investment professionals but to all those interested in really understanding how companies and their investors relate to each other and the implications of this relationship for sustainable development.

Book Information

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to keep from screaming during the event, and pray they don't have to repeat it once it's all over. Social and environmental reporting is time-consuming, labour-intensive and expensive. So what's the value? Well, more than you might think, argues social responsibility investment guru Rory Sullivan ... Full post... - Ethical Corporation's Management Blog, 1 May 2011 - Oliver Balch

Dr Rory Sullivan is a Senior Research Fellow in the School of Earth and Environment at the University of Leeds and a Strategic Advisor to Ethix SRI Advisors. He was previously Head of Responsible Investment at Insight Investment, where he established Insight Investment as one of the world's leading investment managers for the manner in which it integrated environmental, social and governance issues into its investment processes and for the quality of its engagement with companies and governments on social and environmental issues. Rory is an internationally recognised expert on the investment implications of climate change. He has researched the investment implications of climate change (regulation and adaptation) for a range of sectors, including electricity utilities, aviation, water utilities, oil, gas and mining, and infrastructure, evaluated the climate change strategies of major UK and European companies, and engaged with these companies to encourage them to improve their management of their greenhouse gas emissions and to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. He also has played a leading role in public policy debates on mandatory carbon reporting and on the design and implementation of policy measures that would facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy. He has been a Member of the World Economic Forum's Taskforce on Low Carbon Economic Prosperity, a Member of the Steering Committee of the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC), Chair of the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI's) Carbon Reporting Working Group, Co-Chair of the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEPFI) Human Rights Working Group and a Member of the Advisory Group for the Global Reporting Initiative Electricity Utility Sector Supplement. He led the drafting of the IIGCC Investor Statement on Climate Change and was a contributor to the UNDP 2007/2008 Human Development Report (Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World). His previous experience includes advising Environment Australia and the OECD on the development and implementation of pollutant release and transfer registers, and advising companies on greenhouse gas emission inventories and management. He has authored a series of major reports on the investment implications of social and environmental issues, including: Better Returns in a Better World (Oxfam); Managing the Unavoidable: Investment Implications of a Changing Climate (Insight Investment); Managing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Across the Value Chain: The New Agenda (Insight Investment and Acona); Taking the Temperature: Assessing the

Performance of Leading UK and European Companies in Responding to Climate Change (Insight Investment); and Climate Change Policy and the Electricity Industry (Chatham House). He has written over 400 articles, book chapters and papers on climate change, energy policy and investment issues, and is the author/editor of six books on these issues. These include Corporate Responses to Climate Change (editor; Greenleaf Publishing, 2008), Responsible Investment (co-editor; Greenleaf Publishing, 2006), Rethinking Voluntary Approaches in Environmental Policy (Edward Elgar, 2005), and Business and Human Rights: Dilemmas and Solutions (editor; Greenleaf Publishing, 2003). Rory holds a first-class honours degree in electrical engineering (University College Cork, Ireland), postgraduate degrees in Environmental Science (University of Manchester) and Environmental Law (University of Sydney) and a PhD in Law (Queen Mary, University of London).

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