



March 2022

Enhanced Labeled Bond Principles

The Emerging Markets Investors Alliance’s (EMIA) Enhanced Labeled Bond Principles offer guidance for emerging market labeled bonds to promote the development of a labeled bond market that can make a meaningful contribution toward improved environmental, social, and governance (ESG) outcomes.

EMIA plans to periodically revise these principles as the labeled bond market develops and evolves.

Principles for Use-of-Proceeds Bonds (Green, Social, and Sustainability)

Regarding Use of Proceeds

1. Use of proceeds on green and social bonds must be solely allocated to the uses specified in the legal documentation provided at issuance.
2. Use of proceeds on sustainability bonds must provide an intended percentage breakdown between green and social uses ex ante, to ensure appropriate thematic labelling.
3. Net proceeds from use-of-proceeds bonds may not be used to refinance the issuer’s existing bonds, unless those bonds were also use-of-proceeds bonds and the original projects have retained their economic value. Issuers must disclose the lookback period if refinancing any existing bonds.

Regarding the Process for Project Evaluation and Selection

4. Use-of-proceeds frameworks (e.g., an issuer’s green bond framework) must include a well-articulated, inclusive process that details community/grassroot-level involvement. The issuer must also conduct and provide clear and comprehensive analysis of the intended and unintended impacts across E, S, and G dimensions,

typically carried out over several months.

5. The project selection committee should have independent oversight, with the majority of the selection committee composed of independent members, i.e., those who are not part of the company's management. In addition, the use of proceeds must be independently audited by an external verifier. For sovereign issuers and agencies, the independent oversight should be provided by a Multilateral Development Bank or other International Financial Institution, whenever possible.

Regarding Management of Proceeds and Post-Issuance Reporting (Accountability of the External Verifier)

6. Unless otherwise prohibited by law, net proceeds should be kept in a structure that is ring-fenced from the general budget or other funds to avoid commingling and to ensure separation from general operating expenses or other non-impact items. This must be verified by external oversight.
7. Issuers of use-of-proceeds bonds must make annual impact reporting publicly available for all targeted projects. While it is expected that annual impact reporting will be conducted by the same independent external verifier who provides an initial opinion on the issuer's impact framework, all use-of-proceeds bonds must include a mechanism allowing bondholders to change the external verifier throughout the life of the bond.
8. Recourse on misuse of funds: Should the independent verifier find in their annual review that any funds have been spent on items different from those specified in the legal documentation provided at issuance, they should make this public; and the issuer should be required to immediately replenish these funds in the ring-fenced pool from its general budget.
9. Issuers must report any findings from the external verifier regarding a failure to spend proceeds on specified uses throughout the life of the bond to all ESG data providers and scoring agencies for a reassessment of implications regarding the issuer's general ESG status/ratings (with consequences that could include losing labeled certification, exclusion from ESG benchmark indexes, Bloomberg de-labelling, etc.). Issuers should be required to report the reasons for the change in the use of funds, including those stemming from the issuer's inability to find eligible projects, a general change in strategic goals or financial situation, or any other reason.

Principles for Sustainability-Linked Bonds (SLBs)

10. Timeliness and Scope: Predetermined sustainability performance targets must comprise a new or strengthened set of key performance indicator (KPI) targets and timeframe. An issuer should not issue a bond with target levels and plans used in previous issuances. The use of more than one KPI is encouraged.
11. SLBs' sustainability performance targets must be material to the issuer's central ESG strategy. In the case of corporates, they should be mapped to the SASB standards for the sector in which the company operates.
12. Trajectory: SLBs must have yearly checkpoints in addition to the KPI "trigger point." The KPI "trigger point" should be midway (or earlier) between the issuance date and the earlier of the maturity date or call date.