

The Church of England's Ethical Investment Advisory Group ("EIAG") has today published advice to the National Investing Bodies (NIBs) to guide their approach to international human rights norms. The EIAG advises robust human rights due diligence across supply chains, and that the NIBs continue to ensure that human rights are respected by the companies in which they invest. The NIBs have published a new stand-alone Human Rights policy in line with this guidance.

The EIAG provides timely, practical, and theologically grounded advice to the three NIBs to enable them to invest in a way that is distinctly Christian and Anglican. Its expert and independent membership include leading Christian theologians, business people, investors and other practitioners.

The NIBs' policy was developed and agreed upon by all three National Investing Bodies. The NIBs have a long track record of engagement on human rights topics. Other policies have previously referenced Human Rights, but this new policy sets out a comprehensive and more detailed approach to stewardship on Human Rights.

Recent and ongoing engagement work carried out by the NIBs on this issue include:

- Following the destruction of Juukan Gorge in Australia, an ancient site of great significance to indigenous communities with evidence of human occupation over 46000 years (older than Stonehenge, the Lascaux Caves and the Egyptian Pyramids combined), the Church of England Pensions Board, the Church Commissioners, and 62 other investors escalated their engagement on indigenous rights, engaging and examining the approach taken by 78 mining companies, and reviewing how standards of best practice are applied and monitored across the sector.
- The Church Commissioners and Church of England Pensions Board also jointly worked with the Swedish Council on Ethics on the publication of clear investor expectations on Human Rights and Big Tech companies. Given the integral part tech companies play in today's society, especially considering the internet, social media and mobile phones are interwoven in the fabric of our daily lives, the engagement is ongoing.
- CCLA, investment manager for the CBF Church of England Funds, launched the Find It, Fix It, Prevent It initiative which unites the investment sector with NGOs and academics to call on companies to proactively identify modern slavery in their supply chains, to take action to improve the lives of those affected and work to prevent reoccurrence.

Anna McDonald, Secretary to the Church of England's Ethical Investment Advisory Group, said:

"This new guidance for the national investing bodies acknowledges that investors, like all business actors, have a responsibility to address the risks to people present in their investments and provides a reasoned and theological reflection detailing why respect for international human rights norms is grounded in Christian tradition and teaching.

"Whilst the EIAG believes that a truly Christian conception of a just society needs more than a minimal legal framework established by rights, it believes that a minimum framework is helpful particularly with regard to the Church's investments in businesses. The EIAG believes all human beings have an irremovable dignity as persons which must be respected and protected. It affirms the responsibility of all businesses to respect and protect this dignity and endorses the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as the authoritative global framework for helping

businesses assess their impacts on human rights.

“The EIAG has been pleased to see the NIBs adopt a robust and updated human rights policy based on our guidance, and will look forward to their continued work protecting human rights through their investments. We expect the publication of these documents to strengthen their hand in engagement, public policy dialogue, and in calling for change.”

The full report is [available to read and download](#).

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