

# Balanced Fund

Interim Financial Report  
as at 31 December 2022



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# Directors' Report

# Directors' Report

For the half-year ended 31 December 2022

The Directors of Australian Ethical Investment Limited, the "Responsible Entity" of the Australian Ethical Balanced Fund ("the Scheme") present the directors' report together with the financial statements and notes to the financial statements of the Scheme for the half-year ended 31 December 2022 and the accompanying independent auditor's report.

## RESPONSIBLE ENTITY

Australian Ethical Investment Limited (ABN 47 003 188 930) serves as the Responsible Entity for the Scheme.

The following persons were Directors of Australian Ethical Investment Limited (AEIL) during the period under review and up to the date of this report unless otherwise indicated:

- John McMurdo, Managing Director and CEO
- Julie Orr
- Kate Greenhill
- Mara Bun
- Michael Monaghan
- Stephen Gibbs (Chair)

## PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES AND STATE OF AFFAIRS

The principal activity of the Scheme is to pool investors' savings to invest in a diversified portfolio of asset types, in accordance with the investment objectives and guidelines as set out in the current Product Disclosure Statement and within the provisions of the Scheme's Constitution. The Constitution of the Scheme authorises investments in a range of assets which may include cash, property, alternative assets, fixed interest securities and both domestic and international equities. Investments are sought to pursue the goal of a just and sustainable society and the protection of the natural environment as well as providing unitholders (the Scheme's investors) with a competitive financial return.

In November 2022, the Australian Ethical successfully managed and completed the Christian Super successor fund transfer (SFT). This resulted in the Scheme receiving \$1.18b of in-specie assets from the SFT.

There were no significant changes in the nature of the Scheme's principal activities during the period and there were no significant changes in the Scheme's state of affairs, except those highlighted in the review of operations.

## REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

2022 was the year when both Australians and the economy swung back into action, and we started to settle into the "new normal" following several extraordinarily disrupted years of the Covid-19 pandemic. Our borders reopened, and many were reunited with friends and family for the first time in too long.

However, the economic backdrop has been far from normal, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine continuing to cause global supply chain disruptions, pushing up inflation to levels not seen in decades and resulting in a rebound in energy stocks. And the reopening of China later in the year then saw mining stocks also outperform in the market. Pure-play investors like Australian Ethical have been negatively impacted by the exclusion of much of the resources and energy sectors that have driven most of the market performance during this period.

But signs are pointing to a shift, the International Energy Agency has forecast that the security and price stability of domestically produced renewable energy has become so attractive to governments that it will become the world's top source of electricity in the next three years. And of course, there is an ever-more-urgent need for Australia to

switch to more renewable forms of energy if we are as a nation going to meet our 2030 targets in line with the Paris Agreement.

Consumer sentiment is also shifting. In May, we elected a new Federal Government that is taking a more consultative approach, while working to push forward a more progressive agenda.

As the climate crisis grows ever more urgent, so too will our voice in calling for others across the industry to listen to what Australians are telling us they want – their money invested in sectors and companies that are good for people, animals, and the planet.

## Overview

The investments of the Scheme are consistent with those set out in the Scheme's Product Disclosure Statement dated 30 September 2022.

## Results

Both cultural and economic shifts have continued over the past six months. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February brought the world's reliance on fossil fuels into sharp focus, with the war in Ukraine seeing energy and mining stocks soaring. While significant uncertainty remained, demonstrated by the heightened level of the Volatility Index through the period, domestic and global markets made a small recovery from the significant negative performance seen in the first half of the year.

Total return is the percentage change of a unitholder's financial interest in the Scheme assuming all distributions are reinvested in the Scheme. These returns are calculated in accordance with FSC Standard 6 Product Performance - Calculation of Returns. The Scheme achieved the following total returns for the period:

- Retail class 2.25% (December 2021: 5.25%); and
- Wholesale class 2.59% (December 2021: 5.60%).

The wholesale class underperformed its SAA weighted benchmark, returning 2.6% against the benchmark return of 4.8%. While the domestic equities portfolio was the largest contributor to absolute performance, returning 6.0%, it was also the largest detractor to relative performance, underperforming its S&P/ASX 300 benchmark which returned 9.8%.

The portfolio's Financials sector drove a significant portion of the portfolios absolute performance, with financial companies such as banks and insurers benefiting from the rising rate environment. Materials also made a significant contribution to the portfolio's absolute performance, increasing 16.7% over the 6-months. Despite providing the greatest contribution to absolute performance, both Financials and Materials were the largest detractor to relative performance, due to underperformance in the Financials sector, and a large underweight position in the Materials sector.

The International Equities portfolio underperformed the MSCI World Index ex AU benchmark, primarily attributed to overweight positions in the Communication Services and Information Technology sectors, and a zero weighting in the Energy sector. Technology stocks declined significantly as the inflation induced Central Bank rate hikes impacted the previously elevated valuations, and long dated future cash flows characteristic of the technology stocks. Energy stocks, which rose 19.7%, benefited from a significant increase in energy prices. There have been some positive signs in the retraction of energy prices.

Our unlisted investments in the property sector continued to perform well through the six-month period, rising 4.6%. Our Healthcare Property investments performed particularly well, rising 6.2%. While we expect unlisted valuations to respond to the decline we have seen in listed property, the healthcare property portfolio has so far remained resilient, with its defensive characteristics continuing to appear attractive for investors.

Fixed income's defensive characteristics however were not evident during the year with bond yields rising rapidly as central banks signalled aggressive tightening policy to tackle increasingly high rates of inflation.

The Scheme seeks to provide a balance between capital growth and a moderate level of income through a diversified portfolio of assets that supports the Australian Ethical Charter. The recommended minimum investment timeframe is 5 years.

## Distributions paid and/or payable

Distributions paid and/or payable by the Scheme during the period are shown in the accompanying Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income.

As per Note 2 the interim distributions of \$21,863,319 (December 2021: \$19,243,405) were as follows:

- Retail class of 0.31 (December 2021: 0.21) cents per unit;
- Wholesale class of 0.85 (December 2021: 0.73) cents per unit; and
- Zero class of 0.99 (December 2021: 1.34) cents per unit.

The prior year final distribution of \$111,744,376 was paid in July 2022.

## Net assets

The value of the Scheme's net assets attributable to unitholders as at 31 December 2022 was \$4,168,376.446 (30 June 2022: \$2,841,480,190).

## Fees

Responsible Entity fees charged for the period were as follows:

- 1.42% for the retail class (December 2021: 1.42%);
- 0.76% for the wholesale class (December 2021: 0.76%); and
- Nil for the zero class (December 2021: Nil).

Management costs as reported in the Scheme's Product Disclosure Statement include 0.10% (retail class) and 0.10% (wholesale class) indirect costs attributable to fees and costs of specialist asset managers in unlisted property trusts and alternative assets. These additional costs form part of the net performance of the Scheme however are not payable to the Responsible Entity.

## Climate change

### GOVERNING CLIMATE-RELATED DECISION MAKING

2022 ended with some mixed results from the COP27 United Nations Climate Conference and COP15 United Nations Biodiversity Conference. A Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted with twenty-three 2030 targets, including to conserve at least 30% of the world's land, coasts, and oceans, to restore 30% of land and marine ecosystems, and to halve food waste. There was agreement to establish a fund to financially support nations most vulnerable to the climate crisis, though with limited details about sources of the funding. Countries signalled support for more renewables and phasing out of coal, though they were less clear about the need to phase out oil and gas. Our ethical investing and stewardship will leverage the growing global consensus on what is needed to limit warming and preserve and restore biodiversity. We will also use our influence to focus on progress in areas like transitioning away from fossil fuels where we see gaps in global consensus and action.

Our approach to ethical investment is governed by our Ethical Charter, and our Investment Team and Head of Ethics Research are responsible for its implementation across our investment activities.

The Charter's principles are applied using our ethical frameworks, policies, and measurement systems. These require detailed assessment of the impacts of climate change on people, animals, and the environment, which in turn affects the way we invest including through negative and positive screening, engagement and advocacy, and climate performance measurement and reporting.

Our Investment Team and Head of Ethics Research are also responsible for approving new and updated ethical frameworks, which include our climate-related ethical screening criteria for emissions intensive sectors. The Board has oversight of our ethical frameworks, with quarterly reporting to the Board of changes to frameworks and critical ethical issues.

Our Ethics Research team applies our Ethical Charter on a day-to-day basis in our investment screening. The team monitors existing and emerging ethical risks (including climate-related risks) using diverse company, industry, government, responsible investment, scientific, civil society, and news sources.

The main direct impact of climate change on Australian Ethical's business is its effect on our investment portfolios. The prospects and value of the businesses we invest in are exposed to risks and opportunities flowing from the many effects of climate change. Our investment screening and company engagement guides us to sectors and companies which are aligning their businesses with the transition needed to limit global warming to 1.5°C. These companies are better positioned to manage many climate-related risks, such as the risk of introduction or increase in carbon pricing. However, the effects of climate change will be felt across the economy and society. Higher global warming threatens to disrupt trade and financial markets and carries significant risk of loss to all investment portfolios.

Physical impacts like sea level rise and extreme weather are already changing where and how buildings and infrastructure can be safely built. Changes in temperature and rainfall are affecting the productivity and viability of different types of agriculture.

Achieving the Paris goals of limiting the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C and then to 1.5°C is essential, but not easy. The 2022 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report provided an update of the scientific assessment of how this can be achieved through urgent action to reduce emissions across the economy. It will require a complete transformation of the way the world produces and consumes energy, as well as radical measures to cut emissions from other key sources such as transport, land use and agriculture. It will also require ambitious climate policies from governments.

Our ethics research team monitors existing and emerging climate-related risks using diverse information sources. The team monitors developments in:

- scientific understanding of the rate and impacts of global warming
- domestic and international climate policy and regulation
- technological innovation in climate mitigation and adaptation

Our ethical screening and engagement approach focuses on the need to reduce emissions to limit dangerous climate change, but also recognises it is crucial that companies have business models and strategies which are adaptable to the physical impacts of current and future climate change.

#### INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

Our ethical research defines our sustainable investment universe, guiding us to companies better positioned to manage many risks arising from a transition to net zero emissions. Our ethical assessment of the climate impacts of companies and industry sectors and their products and services can also assist us to identify climate-related financial risks and opportunities and feed into our buy, sell and portfolio management decisions. For example, company prospects and valuations in the energy sector may be affected by our assessment of the future regulatory environment for the sector.

#### THE RESILIENCE OF OUR REAL ESTATE AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Real estate and infrastructure are exposed to many physical impacts of different levels of global warming. Greater extremes of heat and cold raise operating costs and in some cases will threaten operational viability. Increased frequency and severity of wind, fire, storms and flooding across the globe mean many assets will suffer significant damage more often, increasing repair costs and the need for additional investment to protect them. Some buildings and infrastructure will no longer be capable of fulfilling their original function and will become liabilities rather than assets, with owners required to dismantle or decommission them. We rely heavily on the management of climate-

related risks by our external property and infrastructure managers and describe some of their work and challenges in our annual climate reporting.

#### INFLUENCING COMPANIES

We encourage better measurement and reporting of direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions; ambitious emissions reduction targets; and analysis of the resilience of the company's business strategy to different climate scenarios. We aim to reduce companies' contribution to global warming as well as reducing climate-related harm to their business prospects. Through engagement we also build our own understanding of climate-related risk.

We exercise our influence through private engagement, voting at company meetings, public praise or criticism, shareholder resolutions and divestment.

#### INDEMNITIES AND INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR THE RESPONSIBLE ENTITY AND AUDITORS

No insurance premiums are paid for out of the assets of the Scheme for insurance cover provided to the Responsible Entity, its officers or auditor of the Scheme. Where the Responsible Entity acts in accordance with the Scheme's Constitution and the law, it is generally entitled to an indemnity out of the assets of the Scheme against losses incurred while acting on behalf of the Scheme. The auditor of the Scheme is not indemnified out of the assets of the Scheme.

#### ROUNDING OF AMOUNTS

The Scheme is of a kind referred to in ASIC Corporations Instrument 2016/191, issued by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, relating to 'rounding off'. Amounts in this report have been rounded off in accordance with that Corporations' Instrument to the nearest thousand dollars, or in certain cases, the nearest dollar.

#### AUDITOR'S DECLARATION

The auditor's independence declaration is included on page 10 of this report and forms part of the directors' report for the half-year ended 31 December 2022.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors of Australian Ethical Investment Limited.



John McMurdo  
Managing Director  
Australian Ethical Investment Limited  
21 February 2023



# Lead Auditor's Independence Declaration



# Lead Auditor's Independence Declaration under Section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001

To the Directors of Australian Ethical Investment Limited, The Responsible  
Entity for the Australian Ethical Balanced Fund

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the review of Australian Ethical  
Balanced Fund for the half-year ended 31 December 2022 there have been:

- i. no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the  
*Corporations Act 2001* in relation to the review; and
- ii. no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the review.

KPMG

Andrew Reeves  
*Partner*

Sydney  
21 February 2023

# Financial Statements

# Financial Statements

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the half-year ended 31 December 2022

	Note	Dec-22 \$'000	Dec-21 \$'000
<b>Investment income</b>			
Interest		207	-
Dividends		23,769	23,484
Net change in fair value of financial assets		33,848	163,609
Other income		-	123
<b>Net investment income</b>		<b>57,824</b>	<b>187,216</b>
<b>Operating expenses</b>			
Management fees		1,604	1,538
<b>Operating expenses before finance costs</b>		<b>1,604</b>	<b>1,538</b>
<b>Profit/(loss) from operating activities</b>		<b>56,220</b>	<b>185,678</b>
<b>Finance costs</b>			
Distributions paid and payable to unitholders of the Scheme	2	(21,863)	(19,243)
<b>Change in net assets attributable to unitholders (total comprehensive income)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>34,357</b>	<b>166,435</b>

The above statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 31 December 2022

	Note	Dec-22 \$'000	Jun-22 \$'000
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents		12,402	13,806
Receivables		20,754	100,493
Financial assets held at fair value through profit or loss	5	4,157,179	2,838,988
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>4,190,335</b>	<b>2,953,287</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Payables		96	63
Distribution payable	2	21,863	111,744
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>21,959</b>	<b>111,807</b>
<b>Net assets attributable to unitholders</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4,168,376</b>	<b>2,841,480</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Net assets attributable to unitholders at net asset value price		4,191,899	2,954,292
Distribution payable to unitholders of the Scheme	2	(21,863)	(111,744)
Adjustments arising from different unit pricing and accounting valuations		(1,660)	(1,068)
<b>Total net assets attributable to unitholders</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4,168,376</b>	<b>2,841,480</b>

*The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.*

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## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the half-year ended 31 December 2022

The Scheme's net assets attributable to unitholders are classified as a liability under AASB 132 'Financial Instruments: Presentation'. As such the Scheme has no equity and no items of changes in equity at the start and end of the period.

*The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.*

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the half-year ended 31 December 2022

	Dec-22 \$'000	Dec-21 \$'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Interest received	207	-
Dividends received	5,992	3,486
Other income received	-	123
Management fees paid	(1,575)	(1,494)
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>4,624</b>	<b>2,115</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Proceeds from sale of investments	265,661	103,916
Purchase of investments	(268,437)	(347,676)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(2,776)</b>	<b>(243,760)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Proceeds from issue of units	218,221	300,912
Payments for redemption of units	(217,378)	(73,863)
Distributions paid to unitholders	(4,095)	(2,975)
<b>Net cash provided by financing activities</b>	<b>(3,252)</b>	<b>224,074</b>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(1,404)	(17,571)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 July	13,806	30,817
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December</b>	<b>12,402</b>	<b>13,246</b>

*The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.*

# Notes to the Financial Statements



# Notes to the Financial Statements

For the half-year ended 31 December 2022

## NOTE 1 – SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### REPORTING ENTITY

The Australian Ethical Balanced Fund ("the Scheme"), a for-profit entity, is a registered managed investment scheme under the Corporations Act 2001. The Scheme was constituted on 2 November 1999 and will terminate on 1 November 2079 unless terminated earlier in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme's Constitution. The Scheme is domiciled in Australia. The financial statements of the Scheme are for the half-year ended 31 December 2022.

### Statement of compliance

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (AASBs) adopted by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and the Corporations Act 2001. The financial statements of the Scheme comply with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) and interpretations adopted by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB).

### BASIS OF PREPARATION

These financial statements are presented in Australian dollars which is the functional currency and are prepared on a fair value basis with financial assets designated at fair value through profit or loss and derivatives which are measured at fair value, except for receivables and payables which are measured at cost.

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented, unless otherwise stated.

The Statement of Financial Position is prepared on a liquidity basis. All balances including financial assets held at fair value are readily converted to cash, except for investments in the Australian Ethical Alternatives Fund and direct unlisted property assets.

This interim financial report is a general-purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with AASB 134 Interim Financial Reporting and the Corporations Act 2001. Compliance with AASB 134 ensures compliance with International Financial Reporting Standard IAS 34 Interim Financial Reporting. The interim financial report covers Australian Ethical Balanced Fund ("the Scheme") as an individual entity. The Responsible Entity of the Scheme is Australian Ethical Investment Limited (the "Responsible Entity"). The registered office is Boardroom Pty Limited, Grosvenor Place, Level 12, 225 George Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000. The interim financial report is presented in Australian dollars, which is the Scheme's functional currency.

Selected explanatory notes are included to explain events and transactions that are significant to an understanding of the changes in financial position and performance of the Scheme since the last annual financial statements as at and for the year ended 30 June 2022. The interim financial report does not include all of the information required for full annual financial reports and should be read in conjunction with the annual financial report of the Scheme as at and for the year ended 30 June 2022, and any public announcements made in respect of the Scheme during the reporting period in accordance with continuous disclosure requirements of the Corporations Act 2001.

### ESTIMATES AND JUDGEMENTS

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of accounting estimates which, by definition, will seldom equal the actual results. Management also needs to exercise judgement in applying the Scheme's accounting policies.

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the Scheme and are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

## **FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT PRINCIPLES**

Financial instruments comprise financial assets held at fair value through profit or loss, receivables, cash and cash equivalents, payables, and distributions payable.

The Scheme can invest into a variety of assets, including property, fixed interest securities, unit trusts, and both domestic and international equities. Generally, valuation information is obtained from third-party industry standard service providers to ensure that the most recent security prices are obtained. The prices used to value investments include, but are not limited to:

- independent prices obtained for each security;
- quoted 'bid' prices on securities; and
- redemption prices published by the relevant Responsible Entity, for investments into unlisted unit trusts.

For certain investments, prices cannot be obtained from the above sources. In these instances, valuations obtained from service providers are estimated using valuation models which are consistent with accepted industry practice and incorporate the best available information regarding assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the assets or liabilities. Irrespective of the method used by third-party industry standard service providers to obtain valuations, prices achieved in actual transactions may be different.

The Scheme's assets are measured at fair value in accordance with AASB13 Fair Value Measurement. This is taken as last market bid price being the price a market participant would pay to buy the asset and is different to the price used in the unit pricing process which is the last sale price. The statement of financial position presents the difference in the values used in unit pricing to this financial report.

## **Classification**

On initial recognition a financial asset is classified as measured at amortised cost, fair value through profit or loss, or fair value through other comprehensive income. Financial liabilities are classified as measured at amortised cost or fair value through profit or loss.

## **Recognition and initial measurement**

A financial instrument is recognised when the Scheme becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Purchases and sales of financial assets are accounted for at trade date (i.e. the date the Scheme commits itself to purchase or sell the asset).

## **Measurement**

After initial recognition, all instruments classified at fair value through profit or loss are measured at fair value with changes in their fair value recognised in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income. All other financial instruments are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less any recognised impairment.

Financial liabilities arising from redeemable units issued by the Scheme are carried at the redemption amount representing the unitholders' rights to the residual interest in the Scheme's assets, effectively the fair value at the reporting date.

## **Derecognition**

The Scheme derecognises a financial asset when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire, or it transfers the rights to receive the contractual cash flows in a transaction in which substantially all of the risks and

rewards of ownership of the financial asset are transferred, or in which the Scheme neither transfers nor retains substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership and does not retain control of the financial asset.

On derecognition of a financial asset, the difference between the carrying amount of the asset (or the carrying amount allocated to the portion of the asset that is derecognised) and the consideration received (including any new asset obtained less any new liability assumed) is recognised in profit or loss. Any interest in such transferred financial assets that is created or retained by the Scheme is recognised as a separate asset or liability. The Scheme derecognises a financial liability when its contractual obligations are discharged or cancelled or expire.

### Impairment of financial assets held at amortised cost

AASB 9 requires an 'expected credit loss' model to apply to financial assets measured at amortised cost, contract assets and debt instruments, but not equity instruments held at fair value through profit or loss. The financial assets at amortised cost consists of trade receivables and cash and cash equivalents.

### STANDARDS AND INTERPRETATIONS ON ISSUE BUT NOT YET ADOPTED

Certain new accounting standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 31 December 2022 reporting period and have not been early adopted by the Scheme. Management have assessed that none of these are expected to have a material impact on the financial statements of the Scheme.

### NOTE 2 – DISTRIBUTIONS PAID AND PAYABLE

	<b>Dec-22</b>	Dec-21
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
<b>Distributions payable</b>	<b>21,863</b>	19,243

The Scheme's interim distributions for the period were as follows:

- Retail class of 0.31 (December 2021: 0.21) cents per unit;
- Wholesale class of 0.85 (December 2021: 0.73) cents per unit; and
- Zero class of 0.99 (December 2021: 1.34) cents per unit.

The prior year final distribution of \$111,744,376 was paid in July 2022.

### NOTE 3 – ISSUED UNITS

Each unit represents a right to an individual share in the Scheme per the Constitution. Zero class units are issued to other schemes managed by the Responsible Entity, the Australian Ethical Retail Superannuation Fund (AERSF), and institutional investors. Institutional investors are not charged a direct fee through the Scheme but are subject to separate fee arrangements. All rights attached to zero class units are the same as those of the other classes.

	<b>Dec-22 Units</b>	Dec-21 Units
<b>Retail class</b>		
On issue at beginning of period	49,530,454	44,893,008
Issued	4,701,733	19,353,109
Reclassified to wholesale class	(1,704,930)	(14,264,731)
Redeemed	(2,488,514)	(2,113,963)
<b>On issue at period end</b>	<b>50,038,743</b>	47,867,423
<b>Wholesale class</b>		
On issue at beginning of period	122,257,805	90,039,040
Issued	22,162,578	17,678,112
Reclassified from retail class	1,713,037	14,320,286
Redeemed	(8,211,514)	(6,906,233)
<b>On issue at period end</b>	<b>137,921,906</b>	115,131,205
<b>Zero class</b>		
On issue at beginning of period	1,399,187,225	1,231,471,376
SFT investment	622,756,573	-
Issued	149,480,371	156,088,569
Redeemed	(105,225,333)	(26,043,223)
<b>On issue at period end</b>	<b>2,066,198,836</b>	1,361,516,722

## NOTE 4 – NET ASSETS ATTRIBUTABLE TO UNITHOLDERS

The Scheme manages its net assets attributable to unitholders as capital, notwithstanding net assets attributable to unitholders are classified as a liability. The amount of net assets attributable to unitholders can change significantly daily as the Scheme is subject to daily applications and redemptions at the discretion of unitholders. Applications and redemptions are reviewed relative to the liquidity of the Scheme's underlying assets on a daily basis by the Responsible Entity. Under the terms of the Scheme's Constitution, the Responsible Entity has the discretion to reject an application for units and to defer a redemption of units if the exercise of such discretion is in the best interest of the unitholders.

The objective of the Scheme is to provide unitholders with returns in accordance with the Product Disclosure Statement. The Scheme aims to provide investors with a balance between capital growth and a moderate level of income through a diversified portfolio of assets.

	<b>Dec-22</b> <b>\$'000</b>	Dec-21 \$'000
Opening balance	2,841,480	2,764,633
SFT investment	1,184,047	-
Issued	218,221	300,912
Distributions reinvested	107,649	99,870
Redeemed	(217,378)	(73,863)
Change in net assets attributable to unitholders	34,357	166,435
<b>Net assets attributable to unitholders</b>	<b>4,168,376</b>	<b>3,257,987</b>

## NOTE 5 – FAIR VALUES

The following table provides an analysis of financial instruments that are measured after initial recognition at fair value, grouped into Levels 1 to 3 based on the degree to which the fair value is observable.

In November 2022, the Australian Ethical successfully managed and completed the Christian Super successor fund transfer (SFT). This resulted in the Scheme receiving \$1.18b of in-specie assets from the SFT.

Level 1: Using quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities.

Level 2: Derived from inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (i.e. as prices) or indirectly (i.e. derived from prices).

Level 3: Derived from valuation techniques that include inputs for the asset or liability that is not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs). This category includes instruments valued using quoted prices in active markets for similar instruments, quoted prices for identical or similar instruments in markets that are considered less than active or other valuation techniques.

	<b>Dec-22</b>			<b>Total</b> <b>\$'000</b>
	<b>Level 1</b> <b>\$'000</b>	<b>Level 2</b> <b>\$'000</b>	<b>Level 3</b> <b>\$'000</b>	
<b>Designated at fair value through profit or loss</b>				
<b>Unit trusts</b>				
Unlisted Australian Ethical trusts	-	3,607,878	194,836	3,802,714
Unlisted property trusts		354,465		354,465

Unlisted infrastructure			-	-
Limited partnership interests	-	-	-	-
<b>Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,962,343</b>	<b>194,836</b>	<b>4,157,179</b>

	Jun-22			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Designated at fair value through profit or loss				
Unit trusts				
Unlisted Australian Ethical trusts	-	2,436,239	57,314	2,493,553
Unlisted property trust		345,435		345,435
Unlisted infrastructure			-	-
Limited partnership interests	-	-	-	-
<b>Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,781,674</b>	<b>57,314</b>	<b>2,838,988</b>

The Scheme does not hold any Level 1 assets. During the period there were no transfers between levels.

In the analysis it is assumed that the amount of financial assets exposed to fluctuations in unobservable inputs as at the balance sheet date is representative of the balances held throughout the financial year. No other flow-on effects or fluctuations in fair value have been taken into account.

The table below describes the valuation techniques used in the measurement of fair value for assets categorised as Level 2 and 3. Exposure to unlisted property, early-stage venture capital partnerships and unlisted infrastructure is through the investment in the Australian Ethical Funds.

Asset type	Valuation technique	Interest held by the Scheme
Unlisted property trust	The valuation measurement is market value as defined by the International Valuation Standards Council and adopted by the Australian Property Institute. The fair value of direct property assets is based on independent external valuations. A variety of established valuation techniques are used by valuers in determining the value of direct property investments. These include, discounted cashflows, capitalisation of rental income and analysis of comparable recent sale transactions.	Direct Investment in units issued by the schemes
Early-stage venture capital partnerships	Valuation techniques are in accordance with International Private Equity and Venture Capital (IPEV) valuation principles endorsed by the Australian Investment Council (AIC). In estimating Fair Value of investments, the valuation techniques that are appropriate in light of the nature, facts and circumstances of the investment are applied. Consistent valuation techniques for investments with similar characteristics, industries and/or geographies is considered and used. There are a number of different	Limited partnership interest indirectly held through the Australian Ethical Funds

techniques applied, including 'Price of Recent Investment', 'Multiples', 'Net Assets', 'Discounted Cash Flows or Earnings'.

Asset type	Valuation technique	Interest held by the Scheme
Unlisted infrastructure	Third-party experts apply valuation techniques to determine fair value. Valuers use accepted valuation methodologies that are most appropriate for each asset, considering factors such as asset size, characteristics, and domicile. The assumptions within the valuation techniques applied to infrastructure assets can include income capitalisation, discounted cash flow, trading and transaction earnings multiples or direct sales comparison. The assumptions are determined by the valuer and adjusted to reflect the current consensus view of economic conditions and asset specific drivers.	Investment in units issued held by the scheme indirectly held through the Australian Ethical Funds

At balance date, the effect on net assets attributable to unitholders as a result of a 10% change in the internal valuation of Level 3 assets, with all other variables remaining constant would be as follows:

	Dec-22 \$'000	Jun-22 \$'000
Increase in alternative assets by 10% (2021: 10%)	19,484	5,731
Decrease in alternative assets by 10% (2021: 10%)	(19,484)	(5,731)

The following table shows a reconciliation from the beginning balances to the ending balances for fair value measurements in Level 3 of the fair value hierarchy.

	Dec-22 \$'000	Jun-22 \$'000
Opening balance at 1 July	57,314	40,645
Acquisition of externally managed Level 3 assets	-	2,035
Acquisition of units in Australian Ethical Alternatives Fund	69,440	54,830
Acquisition of units in Australian Ethical Defensive Alternatives Fund	71,243	-
Disposal of units in Australian Ethical Alternatives Fund	(5,292)	(48,593)
Net fair value profit/(loss)	2,131	8,397
<b>Total Level 3 assets held at fair value</b>	<b>194,836</b>	<b>57,314</b>

#### CARRYING AMOUNTS VERSUS FAIR VALUE

The fair values of financial assets and liabilities approximates their carrying amounts in the Statement of Financial Position.

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## **NOTE 6 – CONTINGENCIES**

There are no contingent assets or liabilities as at 31 December 2022 (June 2022: Nil).

## **NOTE 7 – EVENTS OCCURRING AFTER THE REPORTING DATE**

As the investments in the Scheme are measured at their 31 December 2022 fair values in the financial report, any volatility in values after the balance date is not reflected in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income or the Statement of Financial Position. However, the current value of investments is reflected in the current unit price.

During the period from 31 December 2022 and the date of this report, there were no items, transactions, or events of a material and unusual nature likely in the opinion of the Responsible Entity, to significantly affect the operations of the Scheme, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Scheme in future financial periods.



# Directors' Declaration

# Directors' Declaration

In the opinion of the Directors of Australian Ethical Investment Limited, the Responsible Entity of the Australian Ethical Balanced Fund ("the Scheme"):

- a) The financial statements and notes to the financial statements that are set out in this report are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:
  - i. Giving a true and fair view of the Scheme's financial position as at 31 December 2022 and of its performance for the six-month period ended on that date; and
  - ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards and Corporations Regulations 2001;
- b) There are reasonable grounds to believe that the Scheme will be able to pay its debts when they become due and payable: and
- c) The Scheme has operated during the half-year ended 31 December 2022 in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme's Constitution.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors of Australian Ethical Investment Limited.



John McMurdo  
Managing Director  
Australian Ethical Investment Limited  
21 February 2023

# Independent Auditor's Report



# Independent Auditor's Review Report

To the unitholders of Australian Ethical Balanced Fund

## Conclusion

We have reviewed the accompanying **Interim Financial Report** of Australian Ethical Balanced Fund (the Scheme).

Based on our review, which is not an audit, we have not become aware of any matter that makes us believe that the Interim Financial Report of Australian Ethical Balanced Fund does not comply with the *Corporations Act 2001*, including:

- giving a true and fair view of the Scheme's financial position as at 31 December 2022 and of its performance for the Interim Period ended on that date; and
- complying with *Australian Accounting Standard AASB 134 Interim Financial Reporting* and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

The **Interim Financial Report** comprises:

- Statement of financial position as at 31 December 2022;
- Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the Interim Period ended on that date;
- Statement of changes in equity and Statement of cash flows for the Interim Period ended on that date;
- Notes 1 to 7 comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information; and
- The Directors' Declaration.

## Basis for Conclusion

We conducted our review in accordance with ASRE 2410 *Review of a Financial Report Performed by the Independent Auditor of the Entity*. Our responsibilities are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Review of the Financial Report* section of our report.

We are independent of the Scheme in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* and the ethical requirements of the *Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the annual financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.



## Responsibilities of the Directors for the Interim Financial Report

The Directors of Australian Ethical Investment Limited (the Responsible Entity) are responsible for:

- the preparation of the Interim Financial Report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with *Australian Accounting Standards* and the *Corporations Act 2001*; and
- for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the Interim Financial Report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

## Auditor's responsibility for the review of the Interim Financial Report

Our responsibility is to express a conclusion on the Interim Financial Report based on our review. ASRE 2410 requires us to conclude whether we have become aware of any matter that makes us believe that the Interim Financial Report does not comply with the *Corporations Act 2001* including giving a true and fair view of the Scheme's financial position as at 31 December 2022 and its performance for the Interim Period ended on that date, and complying with *Australian Accounting Standard AASB 134 Interim Financial Reporting* and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

A review of an Interim Financial Report consists of making enquiries, primarily of persons responsible for financial and accounting matters, and applying analytical and other review procedures. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit conducted in accordance with *Australian Auditing Standards* and consequently does not enable us to obtain assurance that we would become aware of all significant matters that might be identified in an audit. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion.

KPMG

Andrew Reeves  
Partner

Sydney  
21 February 2023