



PRESS RELEASE

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Power of Active Engagement on Display in NEI's 2020 Focus List

- Governance, energy transition, human rights among this year's focus areas for engagement
- Companies selected for engagement include Suncor, Google, GM, Starbucks, Amazon, Johnson & Johnson
- 90% of companies "responsive" or "highly responsive" to engagement in 2019

TORONTO, March 11, 2020 – Northwest & Ethical Investments L.P. ("NEI Investments" or "NEI") today released its annual [Corporate Engagement Focus List for 2020](#). Published every year since 2002, the 2020 Focus List identifies NEI's five key areas of focus and names the top companies selected for engagement on specific environmental, social and governance (ESG) themes. It is the most extensive program of its kind in Canada. The Focus List also provides an assessment of the prior year's outcomes, giving asset managers, financial advisors, institutional and retail investors, and other stakeholders an opportunity to review the progress NEI is making toward improving investment value and building a more sustainable future.

"We've honed our corporate engagement program over many years to be a powerful tool for driving change on behalf of our investors and other stakeholders," said Jamie Bonham, Director of Corporate Engagement at NEI Investments. "We apply our influence across an array of companies in different sectors, but this year, we're especially focused on helping energy companies transition to a low-carbon future, and on making sure human rights are a top consideration in the digital economy," he added. "Now that responsible investing is finally resonating with Canadians in a meaningful way, we're more excited than ever to demonstrate the benefits of effective corporate engagement."

The NEI approach to corporate engagement is a proprietary model that incorporates internationally recognized principles and frameworks such as the Principles for Responsible Investment, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the OECD Guidelines, and others.

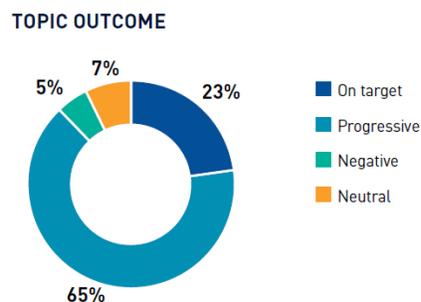
Five areas of focus

1. **Governance.** An overarching theme in our 2020 engagements, we will address such topics as board diversity, board and director independence, linking equitable compensation to ESG outcomes, and effective oversight of key ESG issues.
2. **Energy transition.** We will spearhead critical collaborations with **Suncor, Canadian Natural Resources, Cenovus, GM** and others to drive sector-wide progress on policies and performance standards, and we will address the need for proactive, responsible solutions to the challenges of a low-carbon future.
3. **Responsible consumption.** Eliminating plastic waste remains a top focus of our work. We will continue to push forward-thinking, action-oriented companies such as **Starbucks** and **Unilever** to meet their targets, while leveraging their momentum to extract similar commitments from other companies.

4. **Human rights.** We will continue to advocate for human rights to be at the core of the new digital economy, engaging with companies including **Google** and **Amazon** on protecting digital rights, ensuring online privacy, and understanding the intersection of human rights and artificial intelligence.
5. **Health and well-being.** We will continue push for affordable and equitable access to nutritious food, and to critically important medicine with **PepsiCo**, **Johnson & Johnson** and others.

90% of companies “responsive” or “highly responsive”

In 2019, NEI engaged 86 companies through intensive dialogue, which can include meetings, phone calls, shareholder resolutions, and other points of contact. Fully 90% of those companies were either “responsive” or “highly responsive.” The graph below illustrates progress toward outcomes among those companies.



And, NEI voted 10,775 proxy items at 858 company meetings, which puts 2019 among NEI’s biggest years ever in terms of the scale of its proxy voting program.

Read this year’s Corporate Engagement Focus List here: neinvestments.com/pages/responsible-investing/esg-difference/focus-list/

About NEI Investments

Northwest & Ethical Investments L.P. (“NEI”) is a Canadian asset manager committed to providing focused investment solutions advised by best-of-breed, independent portfolio managers. NEI delivers disciplined, active asset management with a longstanding focus on environmental, social and governance factors, and a well-defined corporate engagement process designed to create sustainable long-term value. NEI is a wholly owned subsidiary of Aviso Wealth, a national, integrated financial services company, with approximately \$65 billion in assets. For more information please visit www.neinvestments.com

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