

News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Manulife Investment Management (M) Berhad launches Manulife Global Aqua Fund to capture opportunities from the growing global water value chain

Kuala Lumpur – Manulife Investment Management (M) Berhad announces today the launch of Manulife Global Aqua Fund (the “Fund”), which aims to mitigate the increasing gap between the demand and supply of water and rising concerns over global water quality through investment. The Fund aims to provide capital appreciation by investing at least 95% of the Fund’s net asset value (NAV) in the BNP Paribas Funds Aqua (the “Target Fund”), which is managed by BNP Paribas Asset Management Luxembourg. The Target Fund invests in stocks across three broad sectors in the growing global water value chain: Water Infrastructure, Water Treatment and Water Utilities. The water domain is expected to offer long-term growth opportunities, due to five compelling drivers:

1. **Urbanisation:** 68% of the world’s population is expected to live in cities by 2050¹, more infrastructure planning and management are needed.
2. **New infrastructures and upgrades:** Aging infrastructure has caused inefficiencies in water supply and may present health risks².
3. **Water scarcity:** Water scarcity is a top risk identified by governments, corporations and academia³.
4. **Rapidly growing water value chain:** Potentially significant growth opportunities across the entire water value chain to keep up with supply and demand.
5. **Technological innovation:** At a national level, countries are channeling large amounts of money into innovation⁴.

Jason Chong, CEO, Manulife Investment Management (M) Berhad said: “By launching the Manulife Global Aqua Fund, we want to engage investors in Malaysia and together address one of the key issues in global climate change – the increasingly scarce supply of clean water. Globally we are facing a critical situation, especially with more frequent occurrences of floods in Asia, wildfires in the US and Australia, and intense drought in Africa, all of which are adding pressure on our precious water resources.”

¹ United Nations, 2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects

² Source: Google; Epoch Times, “Civic Exchange: The Illusion of Plenty” report – May 2017, SCMP – July 2017

³ World Economic Forum, Global Risks 2015

⁴ Source: BNP Paribas Asset Management – BNP Paribas Aqua, Investing in Blue Gold, April 2021. The above may contain projections or other forward-looking statements regarding future events or estimates. There is no assurance that such events will occur, and actual results may be significantly different from what is contained herein.

“The challenges the water industry is facing may cause serious consequences to our livelihood. The United Nations estimated that 700 million people could be displaced by water scarcity by 2030⁵, while more than 400 million people will be at risk of floods by 2050⁶. Serious water pollution is harming the environment, as 80% of global wastewater goes untreated, containing everything from human waste to highly toxic industrial discharges⁷. With the rise of new industries, such as semiconductor production, the demand for water will only increase as years progress.” Chong added.

Angelia Chin-Sharpe, CEO, BNP Paribas Asset Management Malaysia said: “As one of the world’s largest manager of sustainability themed assets, BNP Paribas Asset Management has been integrating sustainable investment practices into the heart of what we do since 2002; and is focused on achieving potential long-term sustainable investment returns for clients.

“There is a misconception that investing in water-related companies is narrowly focused on utilities. But in truth, there is a surprisingly diverse range of opportunities spanning across sectors, regions and end markets. Our Aqua strategy began in 2008, and we have observed that the water-related sector is resilient throughout economic cycles⁸. We expect the opportunities in this theme to remain strong in the years ahead, as urbanisation and innovation continues on its trajectory around the world.”

The Fund is a qualified Sustainable and Responsible Investment (SRI) fund under the Securities Commission Malaysia’s Guidelines on Sustainable and Responsible Investment Funds.

The Fund is suitable for investors with a medium-term investment horizon, who are willing to accept higher level of market risks and tolerate volatility; who wish to seek capital appreciation and investment exposure in companies within the global water value chain.

The Target Fund portfolio has a diversified exposure globally in water-related companies, accessing an investment universe of approximately 270 companies worth US\$1.9trillion market capitalisation⁹. As of 30 June 2021, the top regions that the Target Fund invests in are companies in North America (50%), Europe (36%) and Asia and Japan (9%), with exposure to Water Treatment and Efficiency (39%), Water Infrastructure (37%) and Water Utilities (21%) value chains¹⁰.

Distribution of income by the Fund, if any, is incidental. Based in Euro, the Fund will be offered in A (RM-Hedged) Class, A (AUD-Hedged) Class, A (SGD-Hedged) Class and A (USD-Hedged) Class. The Fund is now available for subscription through HSBC Bank Malaysia Berhad.

For more information about the Manulife Global Aqua Fund, please visit manulifeinvestment.com.my.

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⁵ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2020/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020.pdf>.

⁶ <https://www.unwater.org/water-facts/climate-change/>.

⁷ Source: United Nations, 2020.

⁸ Source: Investing in water: tapping into a source of resilient growth, Impax Asset Management, November 2016

⁹ Source: Impax Asset Management, June 2021

¹⁰ Source: Bloomberg, data as at 30 June 2021;

About Manulife Investment Management (M) Berhad

Manulife Investment Management (M) Berhad Registration No: 200801033087 (834424-U) (“Manulife IM (Malaysia)”) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Manulife Holdings Berhad (listed on Bursa Malaysia), which is majority owned by Canada-based Manulife Financial Corporation. Manulife IM (Malaysia) offers a comprehensive range of 61 unit trust and PRS funds in the asset classes of equity, fixed income and money market. Since 2010, Manulife IM (Malaysia) has bagged 47 awards in total; with the four most significant house awards being won in 2017 & 2018, namely the Best Overall Award Malaysia Provident for EPF-Approved Funds by The Edge | Thomson Reuters Lipper Fund Awards 2017, the Most Outstanding Islamic Asset Management Company by KLIFF Islamic Finance Awards 2017, Top Investment House Malaysia - Rank 5 in Asian Local Currency Bonds by The Asset Benchmark Research Awards 2017 and the Best Group Over 3 Years - Mixed Assets by Thomson Reuters Lipper Global Islamic Fund Award 2018. Visit us online at manulifeinvestment.com.my.

About Manulife Investment Management

Manulife Investment Management is the global wealth and asset management segment of Manulife Financial Corporation. We draw on more than a century of financial stewardship and the full resources of our parent company to serve individuals, institutions, and retirement plan members worldwide. Headquartered in Toronto, our leading capabilities in public and private markets are strengthened by an investment footprint that spans 18 geographies. We complement these capabilities by providing access to a network of unaffiliated asset managers from around the world. We’re committed to investing responsibly across our businesses. We develop innovative global frameworks for sustainable investing, collaboratively engage with companies in our securities portfolios, and maintain a high standard of stewardship where we own and operate assets, and we believe in supporting financial well-being through our workplace retirement plans. Today, plan sponsors around the world rely on our retirement plan administration and investment expertise to help their employees plan for, save for, and live a better retirement.

As of June 30, 2021, Manulife Investment Management’s assets under management and administration, including assets managed for Manulife’s other segments, totaled CAD \$1.0 trillion (US \$834 billion). Not all offerings are available in all jurisdictions. For additional information, please visit manulifeim.com.

About Manulife

Manulife Financial Corporation is a leading international financial services provider that helps people make their decisions easier and lives better. With our global headquarters in Toronto, Canada, we operate as Manulife across our offices in Canada, Asia, and Europe, and primarily as John Hancock in the United States. We provide financial advice, insurance, and our global wealth and asset management segment, Manulife Investment Management, serves individuals, institutions and retirement plan members worldwide. At the end of 2020, we had more than 37,000 employees, over 118,000 agents, and thousands of distribution partners, serving over 30 million customers. As of June 30, 2021, we had CAD\$1.3 trillion (US\$1.1 trillion) in assets under management and administration, and in the previous 12 months we made \$31.3 billion in payments to our customers. Our principal operations are in Asia, Canada and the United States where we have served customers for more than 155 years. We trade as 'MFC' on the Toronto, New York, and the Philippine stock exchanges and under '945' in Hong Kong.

Disclaimer

The above information has not been reviewed by the SC and is subject to the relevant warning, disclaimer, qualification or terms and conditions stated herein. Investors are advised to read and understand the contents of the Prospectus of Manulife Global Aqua Fund dated 26 October 2021 and all the respective Product Highlights Sheet(s) (collectively, the “Offering Documents”), obtainable at our offices or website, before investing. The Offering Documents have been registered with the Securities Commission Malaysia (SC), however the registration with the SC does not amount to nor indicate that the SC has recommended or endorsed the product. There are risks involved with investing in unit trust funds; wholesale funds and/or Private Retirement Schemes. Some of these risks associated with investments in unit trust funds; wholesale funds and/or Private Retirement Schemes are interest rate fluctuation risk, foreign exchange or currency risk, country risk, political risk, credit risk, non-compliance risk, counterparty risk, target fund manager risk, liquidity risk and interest rate risk. For further details on the risk profile of all the funds, please refer to the Risk Factors

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section in the Offering Documents. The price of units and income distribution may go down as well as up. Investors should compare and consider the fees, charges and costs involved. Investors are advised to conduct own risk assessment and consult the professional advisers if in doubt on the action to be taken.

Manulife Investment Management (M) Berhad Registration No: 200801033087 (834424-U) (hereinafter referred to as “Manulife IM (Malaysia)”) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Manulife Holdings Berhad and holds a Capital Markets Services License for fund management, dealing in securities restricted to unit trusts, dealing in private retirement schemes and financial planning under the Capital Markets and Services Act 2007. Manulife IM (Malaysia) operates under the brand name of Manulife Investment Management which is the global wealth and asset management segment of Manulife Financial Corporation. Information posted herein is intended for the exclusive use by the recipients who are allowed to receive it under the applicable laws and regulations of the relevant jurisdictions. Certain information in this material may contain projections or other forward-looking statements regarding future events, targets, management discipline, estimates or other development trends of financial markets. There is no assurance that such events will occur, and actual results may be significantly different from what is contained herein.

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