

## PRESS RELEASE

Auckland, 30 July 2008

### **ING NZ launches sustainable growth fund to meet growing market demand**

#### **Internationally recognised sustainable growth fund launched in New Zealand for socially responsible investors with an eye for profits.**

ING (NZ) Limited today announced that it has introduced a Sustainable Growth Fund into New Zealand as an option within the SIL KiwiSaver scheme. The Fund combines socially-responsible investment with an international equity portfolio and focuses on achieving a return for investors that is comparable with that of traditional international equity investments.

Philip Houghton-Brown, Chief Investment Officer from ING (NZ) Limited said "As the largest KiwiSaver provider, we are pleased to introduce one of the few sustainable growth funds currently available in New Zealand as an investment option for our KiwiSaver members. Demand is increasing in New Zealand for sustainable investment strategies, and our fund focuses on investing in companies that meet a range of environmental, social and transparency criteria, but that also demonstrate sound financial prospects.

"We felt that it was extremely important to ensure that our members had access to a sustainable fund alternative. Overseas, the ING Sustainable Growth Fund has been performing well in relative terms, which means that our clients can rest assured that not only are they investing in companies that are acting in a socially responsible manner, but that they also have the potential to achieve attractive results."

The Fund invests directly into the ING Sustainable Growth Fund, managed by ING Investment Management (based in Europe) since 2000. Since it was founded, the ING Sustainable Growth fund has outperformed the Morgan Stanley Capital International World Index by an average of 1%.

Houghton-Brown continued, "The performance of the ING Sustainable Growth Fund supports studies that have highlighted how over the long-term, taking into account socially responsible factors has had no negative effect on returns. All of the companies that are included within our fund are rigorously assessed to ensure that they meet 'best in class' independent criteria."

"We recognise that in order to meet the needs of our clients, we must provide them with a diverse range of options that all have the ability to deliver a good return on investment. The introduction of the Sustainable Growth Fund into the SIL KiwiSaver scheme provides investors with the opportunity to invest in companies that work towards sustainable development while at the same time providing the potential for good returns."

In assessing the suitability of companies for investment, ING IM uses independent research network Sustainable investment Research international (SiRi).

The SiRi research enables ING to assess companies on sustainability factors such as the environment, social involvement and corporate governance. Each company then receives a score for each factor, which is subsequently weighted against a host of other performance criteria. On the basis of these assessments, the 'best in class' companies are selected for inclusion in ING's Sustainable Growth fund. "Best in class" means the company is in the top half of its sector globally. Any companies that score below the sector average are excluded.

"Each company included in the ING Sustainable Fund is assessed to ensure that it meets independent sustainability measures and has above average growth expectations," concluded Houghton-Brown.

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#### **Profile ING**

ING is a global financial institution of Dutch origin offering banking, insurance and asset management to over 75 million private, corporate and institutional clients in more than 50 countries. With a diverse workforce of about 120,000 people, ING comprises a broad spectrum of prominent companies that increasingly serve their clients under the ING brand.