



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**PRDG2014**

## **Desjardins supports diversity**

### ***Desjardins creates SocieTerra Diversity Fund and signs UN Women’s Empowerment Principles***

**Montreal, March 6, 2020** – Desjardins marks International Women’s Day 2020 by announcing the creation of its SocieTerra Diversity Fund. The fund will be available starting March 9. Desjardins also recently became one of the first Canadian financial institutions to sign the United Nations Women’s Empowerment Principles.

#### **Desjardins SocieTerra Diversity Fund**

This fund is rooted in responsible investment principles and will invest primarily in multinational companies with 30% female representation on the board of directors or 15% on the executive management committee. It’s the first actively managed global equity mutual fund in Canada to focus on increasing gender diversity. The fund will be managed by Lazard Asset Management, an internationally renowned portfolio manager.

Currently, eight of the eleven Desjardins SocieTerra Funds are managed by women. Desjardins is also a member of the 30% Club Canadian Investor Group, which is committed to increasing the number of women on corporate boards and in executive management positions, with the goal of 30% representation by 2022.

“I firmly believe that diversity enriches organizations and needs to be prioritized. Bringing new perspectives and skills to the table not only leads to more innovation and better results, but also helps us do a better job meeting the needs of our members and clients. We need to create an environment in which everyone can reach their full potential, both personally and professionally, regardless of gender,” said Desjardins Group President and CEO Guy Cormier.

The fund will invest in companies that have made a clear and quantifiable commitment to greater female representation. It will concentrate on companies that have taken concrete steps over at least the last three years. Desjardins will continue to be an engaged shareholder and encourage companies to welcome more women onto their boards and into senior management roles. [To learn more.](#)

#### **Proud signatory of the United Nations Women’s Empowerment Principles**

“Desjardins Group is committed to speeding up the advancement of women. We’ve already achieved parity on our management committee and our board of directors will reach the same target by 2024. But that’s not enough: we want to play a more active role empowering women in other organizations as well. It’s why we signed the United Nations Women’s Empowerment

Principles and why we're taking steps to launch products like our new fund focusing on diversity," said Guy Cormier.

Desjardins is one of the first Canadian financial institutions to sign the UN Women's Empowerment Principles. This initiative strongly encourages business leaders to take action to improve gender equality. The UN has also developed a tool kit to help companies assess their own gender gap and take effective, transparent action to improve their performance and results.

*Desjardins Funds are not guaranteed, their value fluctuates frequently, and their past performance is not indicative of their future returns. Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses all may be associated with mutual fund investments. Please read the prospectus before investing. Desjardins Funds are offered by registered dealers.*

## **About Desjardins Group**

[Desjardins Group](#) is the leading cooperative financial group in Canada and the fifth largest cooperative financial group in the world, with assets of \$313.0 billion. It has been rated one of Canada's Top 100 Employers by Mediacorp. To meet the diverse needs of its members and clients, Desjardins offers a full range of products and services to individuals and businesses through its extensive distribution network, online platforms and subsidiaries across Canada. Ranked among the world's strongest banks according to The Banker magazine, Desjardins has one of the highest capital ratios and [credit ratings](#) in the industry.

### **For further information (*media inquiries only*):**

Public Relations, Desjardins Group  
514 281-7000 or 1-866-866-7000, ext. 5553436  
[media@desjardins.com](mailto:media@desjardins.com)