### SRE Economics Lecture 10

# Financing Sustainable Real Estate at the Portfolio Level

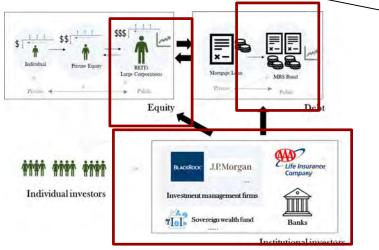
Siqi Zheng

(MIT Center for Real Estate)

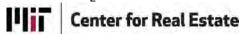


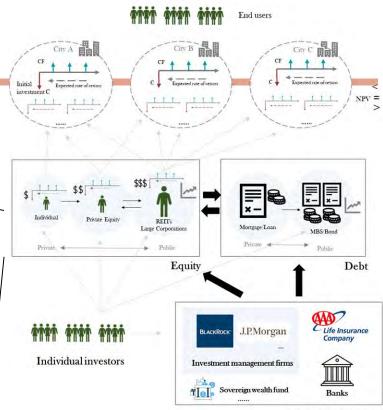
# Knowledge Structure

Where we are for this class?
 Portfolio finance!



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Institutional investors

		Private		Public
Equity		Private Property	1.0	REITS
		Assets		Stock
		PE		
Debt	٠	Mortgage		Bond
		Loan		MBS



r = WACC (weighted average cost of capital)

### Outline

- Sustainable real estate investments at portfolio level
  - Equity: Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)
  - Debt: Green Bond

Benchmarking & Disclosure

## Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)

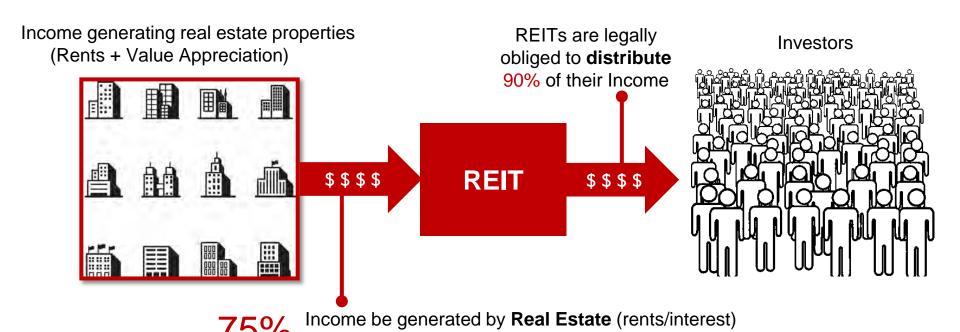
There Are Multiple Ways to Invest in Real Estate beyond Buying a Building

	PRIVATE	PUBLIC	
EQUITY	<ul> <li>Private property assets</li> <li>Private equity (PE) fund</li> </ul>	<ul><li>REITs</li><li>Corporate Stock</li></ul>	Equity  • Existing equity (re-invest) • Capital market (new shareholders)
DEBT	<ul><li>Loans</li><li>Mortgages</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Corporate RE Bonds</li> <li>Debt securities (MBS)</li> </ul>	Banks (mortgage or loans)  Corporate Bonds

### **Basic Structure of REITs**

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Real Estate Investment Trust



Center for Real Estate

Tax benefit: REITs typically don't pay corporate income taxes; and their earnings are passed along as dividend payments which are taxed according to the investor's marginal tax rate.

Assets must be **Real Estate** assets (Buildings/mortgages)

### Portfolio Investments in Real Estate

Real Estate Investment Trust VS Direct Real Estate

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Direct Real Estate [Buying a Building]	<ul> <li>High level of control over decisions</li> <li>High exposure to desired market</li> <li>No intermediaries</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Low liquidity</li> <li>High upfront investments</li> <li>High risk</li> <li>Requires high effort/knowledge in process selecting right</li> </ul>
REITs	<ul> <li>Highly liquid</li> <li>Transparency of reporting</li> <li>Easier to diversify portfolio</li> <li>Long term returns similar to underlying real estate</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>properties</li> <li>High correlation in the short term with stock markets</li> <li>Lower control</li> </ul>

# Countries and Regionals that have Adopted the US **REIT Approach**

#### Countries and Regions that Have Adopted the U.S. REIT Approach



#### CHINA EXPANDS REIT REGIME TO INCLUDE MALLS AND DEPARTMENT STORES

2023/03/27 BY BEATRICE LAFORGA — LEAVE A COMMENT



The revised REIT policy could provide opportunities for developers like Dalian Wanda Group (Getty Images)

China has expanded its pilot program for publicly traded real estate investment trusts (REITs) to include shopping malls and other retail properties, as authorities continue to expand access to liquidity for companies in the property sector.

With the country's public REIT regime approaching its second birthday, the China Securities Regulatory Commission on Friday published new rules allowing for real estate investment trusts listed on mainland stock exchanges to include "consumer-related infrastructure projects," such as department stores, shopping centres, farmer's markets and other retail properties.



#### **Push from Institutional Investors**

64% of REIT by equity market capitalization has disclosed carbon targets in 2021, a sharp increase from 46% in 2020 (NAREIT, 2022).

Some of the most pro-ESG investors are from northern and western European countries; Middle East sovereign wealth funds care the least about ESG issues; while American institutional investors sit in the middle.

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Central bank of Norway



Dutch pension fund investment company



European multinational insurance and asset management company with HQs in Germany

# RESOLUTION CAPITAL

Global real estate securities manager with HQs in Sydney



Canadian real estate investment and asset management company with HQs in Montreal





### Doing Well by Doing Good? Evidence from Green REITs

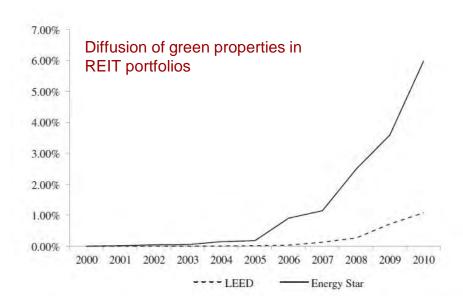
#### Do green assets generate higher return?

Eichholtz et al (2012) connect the number of buildings that are green certified in REIT's to find:

- Those REITs have larger share of green buildings have higher return on equity (ROE) or return on assets (ROA)
- They also have better stock performance in US stock market

#### Endogeneity problem:

Reverse causality/Omitted variable bias
Well-performing companies generate higher
cash flow and have excess cash that can be
spend on green investments.





<u>Source</u>: Eichholtz, P., Kok, N., & Yonder, E. (2012). Portfolio greenness and the financial performance of REITs. *Journal of International Money and Finance*, *31*(7), 1911-1929. Courtesy of Elsevier, Inc., <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com">https://www.sciencedirect.com</a>. Used with permission.

### Doing Well by Doing Good? Evidence from Green REITs

Green portfolios are more profitable portfolios.

An increase of 1% of LEED assets of REITs:

- Operating performance
   3.5% increase in return on assets
   7.9% increase in return on equity
- Stock performance
   Lower market beta (a risk measure)
   by 0.14 (energy price, business cycle, regulations)

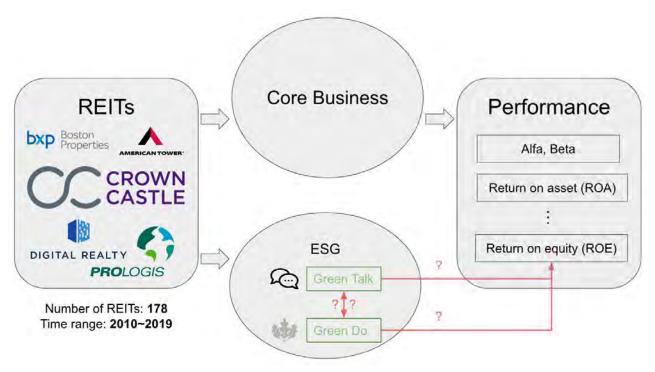
Variables	LEED
	(1)
Panel A: return on assets	8° 15' 11' 11' 11' 11' 11'
Number of certified properties (predicted)	3.42*** [1.26]
Sq.ft. of certified properties (predicted)	500 427 02
Total assets (log)	-0.33** [0.15]
Real estate investment growth (percent)	-0.01 [0.01]
Price-Book ratio	0.01*** [0.00]
Age	0.06*** [0.02]
Property type controls	Y
Year-fixed effects	Y
Constant	Y
Observations	972
Log (likelihood)	-2927
Hansen J (Prob.)	0.36
Kleibergen-Paap (prob.)	0.00
Panel B: return on equity	2 2 2 2 2 2
Number of certified properties (predicted)	7.92*** [2.99]
Sq.ft. of certified properties (predicted)	
Total assets (log)	-0.32 [0.53]
Real estate investment growth (percent)	-0.02 [0.03]
Price-Book ratio	0.02*** [0.01]
Age	0.09* [0.05]
Property type controls	Y
Year-fixed effects	Y
Constant	Y
Observations	972
Log (likelihood)	-3869
Hansen J (prob.)	0.72
Kleibergen-Paap (prob.)	0.00

Variables	LEED
	(1)
Panel B: Beta	
Number of certified properties (predicted)	-0.140** [0.063]
Sq.ft. of certified properties (predicted)	
Total assets (log)	0.194*** [0.009]
Real estate investment growth (percent)	-0.001** [0.000]
Debt ratio	-0.225*** [0.081]
Price-Book ratio	0.000*** [0.000]
Age	0.001 [0.001]
Property type controls	Y
Year-fixed effects	Y
Constant	Y
Observations	716
Log (likelihood)	9.563
Hansen J (prob.)	0.85
Kleibergen-Paap (prob.)	0.00



<u>Source</u>: Eichholtz, P., Kok, N., & Yonder, E. (2012). Portfolio greenness and the financial performance of REITs. *Journal of International Money and Finance*, *31*(7), 1911-1929. Courtesy of Elsevier, Inc., <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com">https://www.sciencedirect.com</a>. Used with permission.

### Our New Project: "Green Talking" and "Green Doing"



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### Outline

- Sustainable real estate investments at portfolio level
  - Equity: Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)
  - Debt: Green Bond

- Drivers of sustainable real estate investments
  - Why do institutional investors care about sustainability and climate risks?
  - Benchmarking & Disclosure

#### **Green Bonds**

#### Green bonds:

Issued by governments or companies.

Only fund businesses or projects that are GREEN.

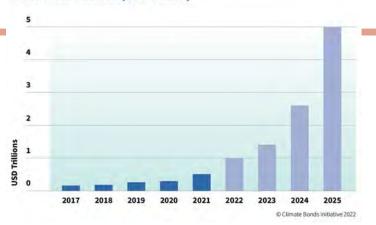


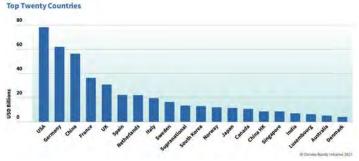
Bond

Promise to repay in the future with interest % in exchange for money to be used now for income-generating

Center for Real Estate

#### Green Bond Issuance (USD Trillion)



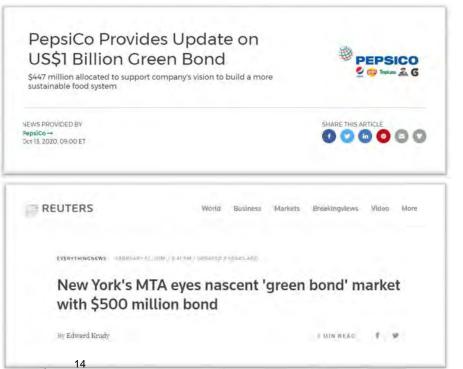


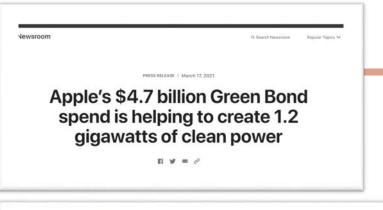
Source: <a href="https://www.climatebonds.net/2022/01/500bn-green-issuance-2021-social-and-sustainable-acceleration-annual-green-1tn-sight-market">https://www.climatebonds.net/2022/01/500bn-green-issuance-2021-social-and-sustainable-acceleration-annual-green-1tn-sight-market</a> © Climate Bonds. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <a href="https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/">https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/</a>.

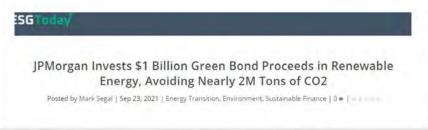


#### Green Bonds

Diverse issuers







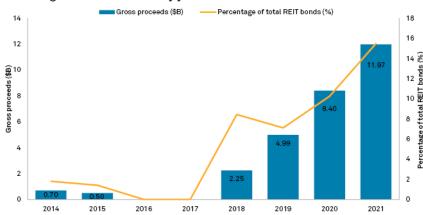




#### **Green Bonds for REITs**

 Green bonds growing as a share of REIT debt issuance

#### US REIT green bond issuance by year



Data compiled Jan. 28, 2022.

Includes senior debt bond issuances by S&P Global Market Intelligence-covered equity REITs completed between Jan. 1, 2014, and Dec. 31, 2021, with an intended use of proceeds related primarily to green projects.

Source: S&P Global Market Intelligence

Source: https://www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/latest-news-headlines/green-bond-issuance-by-us-reits-grew-in-2021-68335451

Green bond issuances by US R	EITs in 2021	Offering completion	Gross proceeds	Coupon rate	Treasury spread <sup>1</sup>
Company (ticker)	Property focus	date	· (\$M)	(%)	(pps)
Healthpeak Properties Inc. (PEAK)	Healthcare	11/15/21	500.0	2.125	0.7
Host Hotels & Resorts Inc. (HST)	Hotel	11/08/21	450.0	2.900	1.6
AvalonBay Communities Inc. (AVB)	Multifamily	11/08/21	400.0	1.900	0.6
Duke Realty Corp. (DRE)	Industrial	11/01/21	500.0	2.250	0.8
W. P. Carey Inc. (WPC)	Diversified	10/05/21	350.0	2.450	1.0
Kilroy Realty Corp. (KRC)	Office	09/23/21	450.0	2.650	1.3
Boston Properties Inc. (BXP)	Office	09/15/21	850.0	2.450	1.2
AvalonBay Communities Inc. (AVB)	Multifamily	09/08/21	700.0	2.050	0.7
Rexford Industrial Realty Inc. (REXR)	Industrial	08/04/21	400.0	2.150	1.1
Equity Residential (EQR)	Multifamily	08/03/21	500.0	1.850	0.7
Terreno Realty Corp. (TRNO)	Industrial	07/15/21	100.0	2.410	NA
Realty Income Corp. (0)	Single tenant	07/08/21	550.6	1.125	NA
Realty Income Corp. (0)	Single tenant	07/08/21	481.8	1.750	NA
Healthpeak Properties Inc. (PEAK)	Healthcare	06/30/21	450.0	1.350	0.5
Vornado Realty Trust (VNO)	Office	05/13/21	400.0	2.150	1.4
Vornado Realty Trust (VNO)	Office	05/13/21	350.0	3.400	1.8
Equinix Inc. (EQIX)	Data center	05/03/21	1,000.0	2.500	1.0
Boston Properties Inc. (BXP)	Office	03/02/21	850.0	2.550	1.2
Equinix Inc. (EQIX)	Data center	02/24/21	606.6	0.250	NΑ
Equinix Inc. (EQIX)	Data center	02/24/21	728.0	1.000	NA
Alexandria Real Estate Equities Inc. (ARE)	Office	02/03/21	900.0	2.000	0.9
Duke Realty Corp. (DRE)	Industrial	01/11/21	450.0	1.750	0.7

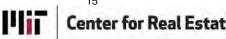
Data compiled Jan. 28, 2022.

NA = not available

Includes senior debt issuances by publicly traded U.S. equity REITs completed between Jan. 1, 2021, and Dec. 31, 2021, with an intended use of proceeds related primarily to green projects.

<sup>1</sup> Represents the difference in yield between the underlying debt security and a U.S. Treasury note with the same maturity date at the time of issuance.

Source: S&P Global Market Intelligence



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#### Green Bonds for REITs

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Boston Properties Prices \$850.0 Million Offering of Green Bonds; Elects to Redeem \$1.0 Billion of Senior Unsecured Notes Due February 2023

September 15, 2021 PDF Version

- BXP green bond history: \$1.0 billion in Nov 2018, \$850.0 million in June 2019, \$850.0 million in March 2021, \$850.0 million in Sep 2021.
- The 12-year bond deal priced at a spread of 115 basis points above Treasurys to yield 2.45%.
- Expect to use proceeds to repay outstanding corporate debt coming due and to fund
   or refinance eligible U.S. green projects.



### The Greenness of REITs Helps Lower Bond Spread

Asset level: lower mortgage spread
The spreads of mortgages on environmental
certified buildings are 24 to 29 basis points lower.
(translates into a reduction of \$147,000 to \$206,000
interest payment for an average commercial
building)

**Portfolio level**: lower bond spread Doubling a portfolio's share of certified buildings (an average REIT from 3 to 6 percent) lowers the bond spread by 21 to 74 basis points.

Table 2
Environmental Certification and Mortgage Spreads OLS Regressions (2006–2015).

VARIABLES	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Environmental Certification (1=yes)	-0.243** [0.110]	-0.246** [0.110]	-0.285** [0.133]	-0.269* [0.141]
Year-Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State-Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Asset Type-Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Firm-Fixed Effects	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	5596	5596	2889	2889
Adjusted R-squared	0.514	0.514	0.537	0.646

(column 3-6: different controls)

Table 3
Environmental Certification and Corporate Bond Spreads OLS, 2-Stage GMM, and Change by Year Regressions (2006–2015).

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	(	OLS	2-Stag	ge GMM
Green Share (in logs)	-0.093* [0.049]	-0.211*** [0.057]	-0.160 [0.357]	-0.738*** [0.161]
Year-Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Asset Type-Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	240	1628	240	1628
Adjusted R-squared	0.741	0.833	0.731	0.817
Hansen J (prob.)			0.034	0.518
Kleibergen Paap (prob.)			0.287	0.000

(column 1 and 3 are origination; column 2 and 4 are secondary markets)



Eichholtz, P., Holtermans, R., Kok, N. and Yönder, E., 2019. Environmental performance and the cost of debt: Evidence from commercial mortgages and REIT bonds. Journal of Banking & Finance, 102, pp.19-32. Courtesy of Elsevier, Inc., <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com">https://www.sciencedirect.com</a>. Used with permission.

### Another example: Fannie Mae Multifamily Green Bonds

- Fannie Mae: Leading provider of financing. Own 21% of the outstanding debt on multifamily properties in US.
- Green Financing products
- (1) Green Rewards Mortgage Loan
  Eligibility: Properties retrofitting existing properties and can reduce energy and water consumption by a combined minimum of 30% (at least 15% from energy).
- (2) Green Building Certification Mortgage Loan
  Eligibility: New construction property awarded by green
  building certifications recognized by Fannie Mae.

A loan that uses the above green financing products is eligible to be securitized as a **Fannie Mae Green Bond**.

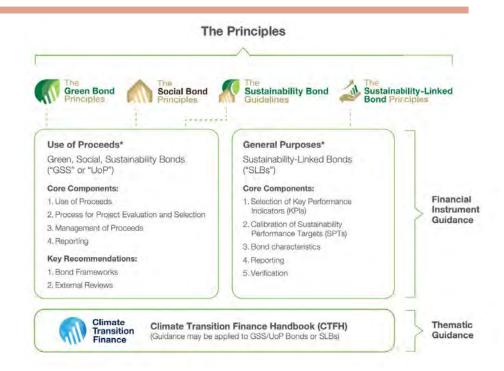




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### Green Bonds: How to signal the market Greenness?

- Green bonds: the money raised from investors is used exclusively to finance projects that have a positive environmental impact, such as green buildings
- Major investors from asset managers to insurers and pension are demanding them
- EU deal: orders exceeded the securities available by more than 11 times
- Green bond principles (avoid greenwashing) making false or misleading claims about the underlying asset



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### **Outline**

- Sustainable real estate investments at portfolio level
  - Portfolio investment (diversity) makes sense
  - Sustainable portfolio makes sense: equity and debt

Benchmarking & Disclosure

# Data, Measurement, and Benchmarking

#### Data acquisition:

Incorporate language into lease to obligate the tenants to share utility data [EPA Portfolio Manager]

Data integration and visualization: energy, emissions, and water data for third party validation.

Third-party assurance ("audit"): The assurance process includes sampling and verifying the data and issuing an assurance opinion.



Scope 1-3 emissions calculation: [Quantis], [One Click LCA], and [EC3]

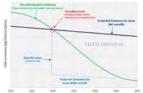






Portfolio evaluation framework and benchmarking







Public domain image courtesy of US EPA.



enter for Real Estate

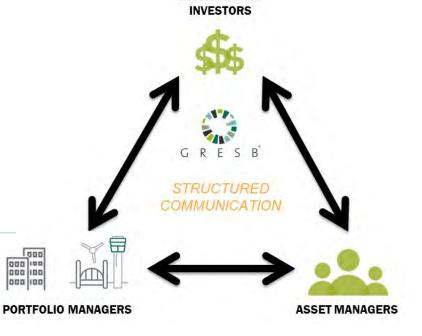
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# **Solving information asymmetry: Benchmarking and Disclosure**

Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark



Assess and benchmark FSG. performance of real assets, providing standardized and validated data to capital markets.



INSTITUTIONAL



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#### GRESB: Real Estate Assessment



# Management Component

<u>Q</u>				Q
Leadership	Policies	Reporting	Risk Management	Stakeholder Engagement

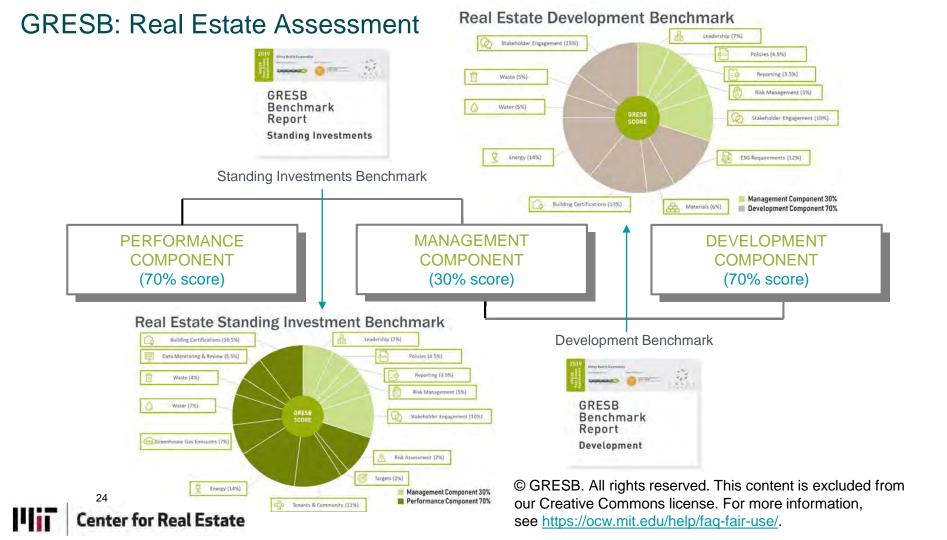
Performance Component

Å	<b>®</b>	200	₫	GHG
Risk Assessment	Targets	Tenants & Community	Energy	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
0	ि		Ĉ₽	
Water	Waste	Data Monitoring & Review	Building Certifications	

Development Component

	4	G	벟
ESG Requirements	Materials	Building Certifications	Energy
0	ि	Q	
Water	Waste	Stakeholder Engagement	





#### **GRESB: Benchmark Report**

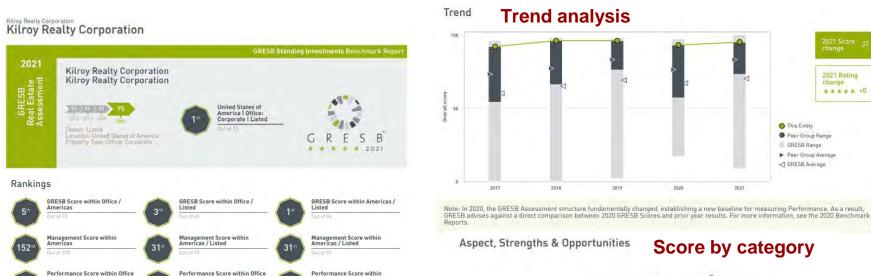
/ Americas

# Clobally diversified . Entities with only one companies submitted

Example: Kilroy Realty Corporation (source)

change \*\*\*\*

This Entity Peer Group Range GRESB Range Peer Group Average GRESB Average



MANAGEMENT COMPONENT

Americas | Listed (97 entities)

#### Comparisons against peer groups

Americas / Listed



/ Listed



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### GRESB: Benchmark Report

Example: Boston Properties (source)





### Private Equity Real Estate Return and GRESB rating

#### How GRESB ESG disclosure impact private equity real estate return?

- Substantial adoption of GRESB in private (non-listed) funds/firms.
- GRESB participation and performance are both significant predictors of fund returns.

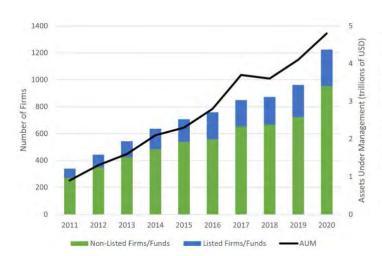


Table 2 All models are estimated using Fama-MacBeth regressions with Newey-West standard errors. The dependent variable in all estimations is *Total Return*. *GRESB* is a dummy variable tracking GRESB Real Estate Assessment participation and *GRESB Score* represents the earned score on that Assessment, scaling from zero to five. The omitted category for model estimations (1), (2), and (3) is *Past Return*, which is included in model estimations (4), (5), and (6). \*\*\*, \*\*, and \* indicate statistical significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
GRESB		0.339***			0.349***	
		(3.25)			(3.38)	
GRESB Score			0.077***			0.090***
			(3.39)			(4.48)



Devine, A., Sanderford, A., & Wang, C. (2022). Sustainability and Private Equity Real Estate Returns. Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics. © Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <a href="https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/">https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/</a>.

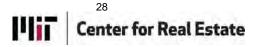
### REITs Performance and GRESB rating

#### **How GRESB ESG disclosure impact REIT performance?**

 GRESB ESG disclosure levels are positively associated with REITs' operational performance (ROA and ROE), while less salient for stock market performance.

Table 3: Regression estimates for overall GRESB score and financial performance

Dependent variable	(1) log ROA	(2) log ROA	(3) log ROE	(4) log ROE	(5) log stock return	(6) log stock return		
Estimation method	Fixed effects	Heckman	Fixed effects	Heckman	Fixed effects	Heckman		
ln_GRESB score	0.0126** (2.30)	0.0133** (2.74)	0.0329** (2.71)	0.0345**	0.000153 (1.51)	0.000161* (1.75)		



Fuerst, F. (2015). The financial rewards of sustainability: A global performance study of real estate investment trusts. Available at SSRN 2619434. © Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see <a href="https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/">https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/</a>.

### REIT Financing and GRESB rating

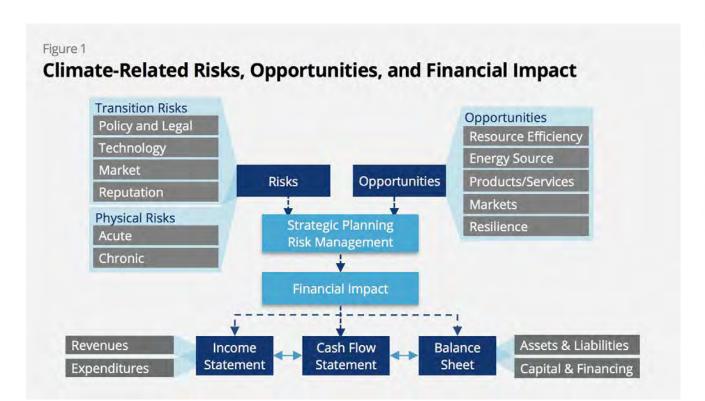
#### How GRESB ESG disclosure impact debt financing for green REITs?

- Strong, negative relation between ESG disclosure level and the interest payments for REITs
- Higher corporate credit ratings (i.e., S&P's AAA, BBB,...)

	Weighted avera	ge interest rate	Interest to-debt ratio					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)				
Variables	Coefficient	t-Statistic	Coefficient	t-Statistic				
ESG disclosure level—B	0.427***	3.00	0.439***	3.12				
ESG disclosure level—C	0.508***	2.88	0.608***	4.06				
ESG disclosure level—D	0.715***	3.57	0.885***	3.92				
ESG disclosure level—E	1.067***	3.67	1.371***	5.39				



# Disclosure and Reporting: TCFD

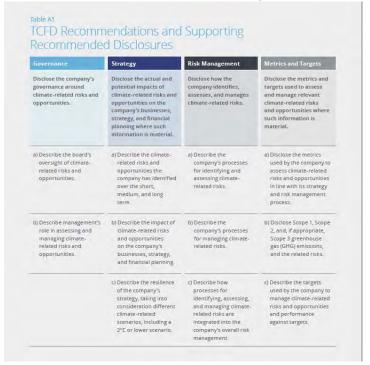






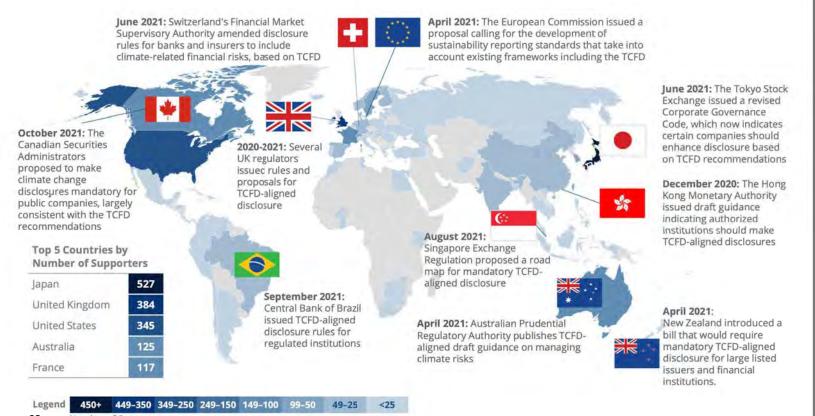
# Disclosure and Reporting: TCFD

Solving information asymmetries: The role of reporting





# Countries mandating climate risk disclosures





Number of Supporters

#### **ESG** Confusion

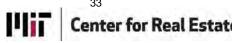
#### Professor Roberto Rigobon at MIT Sloan:

https://mitsloan.mit.edu/sustainability-initiative/aggregate-confusion-project

- **ESG data are noisy and unreliable.** The correlation among six prominent ratings agencies (KLD, Sustainalytics, Moody's ESG (Vigeo-Eiris), S&P Global (RobecoSAM), Refinitiv (Asset4), and MSCI) was on average 0.54. In comparison, mainstream credit ratings from Moody's and Standard & Poor's are correlated at 0.92.
- Three factors driving ratings divergence: **Scope**, **Measurement**, **Weights Divergence**.
- **Rater effect**: A rater's overall view of a firm influences the measurement of specific categories.

Correlations between ESG ratings at the aggregate rating level (ESG) and at the level of the environmental dimension (E), the social dimension (S), and the governance dimension (G) using the common sample. The results are similar using pairwise common samples based on the full sample. SA, SP, MO, RE, KL, and MS are short for Sustainalytics, S&P Global, Moody's ESG, Refinitiv, KLD, and MSCI, respectively.

	KL	KL	KL	KL	KL	SA	SA	SA	SA	MO	MO	MO	SP	SP	RE	Average
	SA	MO	SP	RE	MS	MO	SP	RE	MS	SP	RE	MS	RE	MS	MS	
ESG	0.53	0.49	0.44	0.42	0.53	0.71	0.67	0.67	0.46	0.7	0.69	0.42	0.62	0.38	0.38	0.54
0	0.59	0.55	0.54	0.54	0.37	0.68	0.66	0.64	0.37	0.73	0.66	0.35	0.7	0.29	0.23	0.53
	0.31	0.33	0.21	0.22	0.41	0.58	0.55	0.55	0.27	0.68	0.66	0.28	0.65	0.26	0.27	0.42
3	0.02	0.01	-0.01	-0.05	0.16	0.54	0.51	0.49	0.16	0.76	0.76	0.14	0.79	0.11	0.07	0.30



#### **ESG** Confusion

- Propose two noise-correction procedures (instrument ESG ratings with ratings of other ESG rating agencies)
- After correcting for attenuation bias of ESG noises, the effect of ESG performance on stock returns is stronger than previously estimated.

	40.7	11/2	OLS		Pruned IV											
Region	Rater	Coeffs	StdErr		Coeffs	StdErr					Vali	d IV	T.			Ftest
	ISS	0.152	0.071	**	0.137	0.054	***		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1258
	MSCI	0.123	0.053	**	0.194	0.071	***	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1029
EUR	Refinitiv	0.012	0.066		0.183	0.071	***	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1660
	RepRisk	0.146	0.069	**	0.333	0.072	***	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	432
	S&P Global	0.122	0.083		0.055	0.055		×	1	1	1		1	1	1	1296
	Sustainalytics	0.123	0.076		0.237	0.071	***	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	881
	TVL	0.039	0.066		0.634	0.071	***	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	125
	Moody's	0.027	0.076		0.220	0.071	***	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1874

• Other ongoing ESG improvement: https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/why-sustainable-business-needs-better-esg-ratings Berg, F., Koelbel, J. F., Pavlova, A., & Rigobon, R. (2022). ESG confusion and stock returns: Tackling



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