

The Green Room

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Why Australian investors are changing how they invest

Rising living costs and growing global uncertainty are not driving investors away from environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing, but they are reshaping where capital is flowing and what investors now expect in return.

Anyone who has spent time in the responsible and ethical investing space will recognise the cycle: periods of strong investor enthusiasm followed by moments of hesitation as markets, policy settings and world events shift sentiment around “green” investing.

These cycles have often been shaped by major events, from the Global Financial Crisis and COVID-19 through to Australia’s Black Summer bushfires of 2019–2020, alongside the broader evolution of the ESG industry itself as investors increasingly scrutinise transparency, impact and greenwashing claims.

What is emerging now is not a retreat from ethical investing, but a more discerning and mature investor focus on credibility, resilience and measurable real-world outcomes. NorthStar Impact Funds argues that ‘geopolitical fragmentation is accelerating the push towards energy and industrial sovereignty, creating durable, policy-backed demand’ across sectors critical to the low-carbon transition. This helps explain why capital continues to flow towards businesses delivering tangible solutions rather than relying solely on sustainability narratives.

This shift is already evident in parts of the market benefiting from long-term investment in energy and industrial infrastructure. NorthStar holdings such as Southern Cross Electrical Engineering have seen growing demand from grid upgrades, data centre connections and broader electrification projects, supported by a materially expanding order book and sustained utility investment. Similarly, Tasmea is benefiting from rising expenditure across energy infrastructure, providing the essential maintenance and industrial services that enable large-scale projects to operate and expand.

[MoneyMag](#) and [NorthStar Impact Fund](#)

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SUSTAINABLE ENERGY NEWS

Australia

Battery storage, Data Centres and Korean low-emissions iron plant WA

Impax Sustainable Leaders Fund

Investing in Climate Resilience

Investing in Climate Resilience

As extreme weather events become more frequent and costly, investment opportunities are emerging in companies helping communities and infrastructure adapt to a changing climate.

Global investment manager Impax Asset Management has identified a growing universe of businesses providing climate adaptation solutions, helping governments, utilities, businesses and households prepare for, respond to and recover from climate-related disruptions.

The Three Stages of Adaptation

Preparation

Investing in infrastructure and technologies that reduce future climate damage before disasters occur.

Response

Keeping essential systems operating during extreme weather events to maintain critical services and business continuity.

Recovery

Rebuilding stronger after climate events, embedding resilience into infrastructure and communities.

Why Water Matters

Water is emerging as one of the most important climate adaptation themes globally.

From floods and stormwater damage through to drought and water scarcity, many climate risks ultimately materialise through water systems. Yet decades of underinvestment have left infrastructure vulnerable, with an estimated 30% of treated water lost before it even reaches consumers.

This is creating water adaptation opportunities primarily within four clusters:

- Stormwater Infrastructure - Advanced Drainage Systems supplies stormwater infrastructure helping cities reduce urban flood risk.
- Water purification solutions - Xylem provides emergency water treatment and purification systems during disasters.
- Water efficiency technologies - Valmont develops advanced irrigation technologies that significantly reduce agricultural water use.
- Water providers- Veolia supports water and municipal services across around 100 countries, playing a key role in climate resilience and recovery.

Innovation Beyond Water Utilities

Climate adaptation is also reshaping industries such as digital infrastructure.

Data centres - which are highly water and energy intensive, can reduce water consumption by up to 70% through recycling systems. Technologies developed by Schneider Electric and Vertiv are helping operators move toward closed-loop cooling systems that can eliminate the need for fresh water supply altogether.

For further reading:

[Impax: Climate adaptation is no longer tomorrow's investment opportunity](#)

FUND MANAGER NEWS

Virescent Ventures

Investment company **Samsara Eco** - is tackling one of the toughest circular economy challenges - turning hard-to-recycle plastics and textiles back into usable materials at scale.

Samsara Eco was named on **CNBC's** annual Disruptor 50 list, alongside Anthropic, OpenAI, Mistral AI, and more.

The difference between an innovator and a true disruptor is that it doesn't just compete within the existing system. A disruptor changes the system itself.

For decades, the global economy has operated on a linear model: take finite resources from the planet, make products, throw them away, repeat. The model is fundamentally broken.

All materials have value. Our system treats them as disposable, leaving us all open to geopolitical, supply chain, and compliance risks. Instead of constantly extracting more from the Earth and relying on concentrated supply points, Samsara Eco is regenerating what's already in circulation.

COMPANY NEWS

Meridian Energy

Meridian has been included in S&P Global Dow Jones Best-in-Class World Index - a global measure of corporate sustainability performance. At a time when energy security, climate risk and trust in institutions are under growing scrutiny, Meridian has been ranked in the top 10% of utilities worldwide, and the only New Zealand company to achieve this distinction!

Meridian's Renewable Energy Certificates

Each year, the majority of the net proceeds from Meridian's Certified Renewable Energy product are distributed to community groups across Aotearoa. The fund helps them take real steps toward a lower-carbon future, without diverting from the important work they already do, from electric delivery vans to solar-powered swimming pools.

The Certified electricity from Meridian is matched to the power put into the grid by Meridian's Certified hydroelectric power station and wind farms, which are independently verified as 100% renewable and releasing zero carbon emissions.

This process earns the buyer internationally recognised Renewable Energy Certificates, which allow them to report on their market-based Scope 2 emissions as zero (using the market-based reporting methodology, in accordance with the GHG Protocol's Scope 2 Guidance).

[Meridian new Impact & Transparency report](#)

Technology One

\$278 billion construction pipeline depends on faster, smarter environmental approvals – AI can help

Australia has \$278 billion worth of housing, clean energy, and infrastructure projects sitting in the pipeline. Many of them are waiting not because of a lack of ambition or investment, but because of the approvals system and the time taken to process them.

To better understand that problem, and what technology can do about it, [TechnologyOne](#) partnered with the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) on research into Australia's environmental approvals system.

The result is [Approved: How AI and data can transform Australia's environmental approvals](#), a report that examines where the system is breaking down, what other countries are doing to address it, and how [AI](#) can help [Australian governments](#) move faster without compromising the environmental standards that matter.

As an example, a single complex referral can run to 8,500 pages of documentation, requiring compliance with up to 26 separate pieces of legislation, and can cost more than \$250,000 in public sector time to assess.

The international evidence is encouraging, but the CEDA research includes an important warning: AI layered onto broken systems will not deliver results.

AI won't replace human judgement, nor should it, but it can help decision-makers navigate complexity, reduce duplication and focus their expertise where it matters most.

In 2026, Technology One applied AI to one of the most time-consuming elements of [local government](#) service delivery: development application approvals. Working with councils, it used AI to cut approval times by around 40 per cent without compromising the integrity of the process.

[Download the report](#)

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY NEWS

Nanuk New World Fund holding Contemporary Amperex Technology Limited (CATL) signed its first major sodium-ion battery storage deal – a three-year, 60 GWh agreement to supply Beijing HyperStrong Technology. CATL plans to begin mass-production of sodium ion cells in the final quarter of this year. It also unveiled a new battery that recharges from 10% to 98% charge in six minutes, usurping its rival BYD's announcement of fast-charging technology last month.

CATL also raised about \$5b in a Hong Kong share placement – the largest such offering in Hong Kong this year. EVE Energy, another Chinese battery manufacturer, announced it will build two new battery plants with combined capacity of 110 GWh at a cost of 11 billion yuan (\$1.6b), spanning utility-scale storage and EV cells.

AUSTRALIA

Australia's electricity market operator said battery capacity more than doubled year-on-year to March, and batteries became the most frequent price-setter in more than one-third of trading intervals in Q1 for the first time. Gas-fired generation fell 24% to the lowest level since 1999 and average wholesale electricity prices dropped 12%, with batteries increasingly shifting daytime renewable surplus into evening peaks.

The report also noted 11 large-scale data centre projects connected to transmission in Victoria and NSW in the quarter, representing 5.4 GW of maximum demand.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella made a joint appearance with Prime Minister Albanese to announce A\$25b (\$18b) of investment in Australia by 2029.

Western Australia approved Korean steel manufacturer Posco's proposed low-emissions iron plant at Port Hedland with a stated cost of A\$4.3 billion and planned output of 2 million tons per year. The reporting said the plant would use gas and potentially hydrogen to halve emissions compared with conventional production, pending approvals from joint venture partners.

Source: Nanuk New World Fund