

DESIREE FIXLER



Impact & ESG Investing Professional

Desiree is recognised globally as a leading expert and one of the most influential practitioners in sustainable finance.

With over 25 years' experience in sustainable finance and investment banking, she is a trusted advisor to financial institutions, NGOs and regulators, including the UK's Financial Conduct Authority and the Monetary Authority of Singapore, and a visiting professor at Cambridge University. As such, she is at the forefront of global efforts to drive greater transparency, accountability and impact in the practice of sustainable finance.

Desiree was Group Sustainability Officer at Deutsche Bank's asset manager, DWS, when she exposed extensive greenwashing at the company - huge discrepancies between the company's public ESG claims and its internal statements and actions. When her concerns and her job were dismissed by the C-suite and the board, she decided to speak out publicly. The US and German authorities then launched investigations, which culminated in a police raid on the company's headquarters, the ousting of the CEO and senior executives at the company, and the SEC's largest greenwashing fine.

Desiree's whistleblowing sent shockwaves through the financial industry and galvanised efforts to combat greenwashing. She tells her story with poignancy and candor, sharing this cautionary yet inspiring tale for clearer ESG disclosure and a more evidence-based approach to sustainability.

Prior to joining DWS, she held senior positions at JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank and Zais Group, where she built and managed ESG investment and structured credit businesses. Her track record in product innovation includes several award-winning and market-changing products, including the development of the iTraxx and CDX indices, as well as a number of impact securitisations.

Desiree holds a BSc Economics (Hons) from the London School of Economics. She is a member of the CFA's ESG Technical Committee, a member of the LSE's Entrepreneurship Advisory Group and a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Responsible Investing.

Frequently quoted in the media, she is known for her outspoken advocacy of reform in ESG and impact investing policy and practice. As a speaker, she provides expert insight on the state and outlook of the ESG movement, greenwashing prevention, whistleblowing and risk management.

Topics (Selection):

- ESG Investing - Best Practice
- Greenwashing - Detection and Prevention
- Speaking up and Whistleblowing
- Resilience, Overcoming Adversity