Sustainable Finance has become at the forefront of present thinking and practices in Europe. Research on ESG and its impacts, which was develop at the beginning of the century by some pioneers, is now mainstream. Finance professionals and their colleagues embrace the many aspects of this new approach and sometimes struggle with the implementation challenges and the regulations. The ambition of Bankers Markets and Investors is therefore to publish relevant and top quality research bringing new insights on this field that could help practitioners to address these challenges.

The first Sustainable Finance Forum was held in Paris on Friday December 2023. It was meant at fostering dialog between academics and finance professionals on the crucial and exiting topics of sustainable finance. Organized by the French Finance Association AFFI, it was supported by many French professional associations, including investors, asset managers, bankers, intermediaries, treasurers, financial controllers and corporates. BMI and its publisher ESKA Publishing were key contributors to many aspects of this new conference. Given the success of this AFFI has decided to organize such a conference every year in December.

Three panels discussed topics related to the most discussed items on the agenda of corporates, intermediaries and Investors selected with the help of the relevant professional associations: “How to implement ESG transformations?” was the corporate theme; “How to enhance financial knowledge of the public?” was the one for intermediaries ; and finally “How can investors influence corporate ESG policies?” was discussed in the Investors panel. Key note speeches from Jacques Attali, writer, introduced the morning sessions and Olivier Garnier, Banque de France Directeur General concluded it. Each panel was introduced by a scientific expert setting the context and summarizing the recent literature on the topic.

The afternoon, introduced by a key note speech from Olivier Zerbib on recent developments in Sustainable Finance, was dedicated to scientific contributions. Articles submitted according to a call for paper were selected by a scientific committee that privileged scientific quality, relevance to the topic and usefulness to professionals. Twenty papers were presented and an selection of these contributions are presented in this BMI issue. They have been peer reviewed in the same way as classical articles.

The Focus On from Frederic Lobez was the introduction of the second panel of the morning. The seven other papers were presented in the various streams dedicated to corporates, banks, markets and investors. They reflected current thinking and research in the many fields of finance reconsidered with the angle of sustainability.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue and would be delighted to receive contributions to the future Sustainable Finance Forums.