

Media Release

IFM Investors 



CALLING FOR UNITED ACTION AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY ACROSS THE INVESTMENT CHAIN

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As modern slavery remains one of the most under-addressed human rights issues today, global private markets investor, IFM Investors, is urging united action across the investment chain to drive greater transparency, consistent data, and collaborative solutions.

Its latest paper, 'Addressing Modern Slavery in Investment Portfolios' highlights that modern slavery remains deeply embedded in the global economy and by extension, in the portfolios of institutional investors across the world.

The paper suggests that while asset owners across major markets are increasingly prioritising modern slavery considerations in their investment processes, modern slavery risks remain among the most difficult to detect in investment due diligence. Unlike environmental concerns which are often assessed through technical metrics and proxy indicators, modern slavery is often hidden in opaque supply chains, informal labour structures and complex webs of subcontracting.

IFM outlines that while the regulatory environment is evolving rapidly - with over 70% of major market companies now subject to modern slavery or human rights rules - gaps remain, with many laws emphasising disclosure over action and lacking enforcement.

The paper argues that addressing modern slavery risks requires coordinated action across the investment ecosystem—asset owners, managers, companies, regulators, governments, civil society, and affected communities. IFM believes that investors must embed modern slavery considerations across the investment cycle, go beyond company disclosures for data, and use their governance influence through voting and stewardship.

As part of a strategic organisational response to modern slavery, the paper showcases IFM's internal supply chain risk assessment model, which maps potential risk exposures across supply chains at sub-industry level, spanning upstream, operational, and downstream activities.

Additionally, the paper provides a consolidated list of recommendations aimed at investors, policymakers, data providers and other industry actors calling for a more systematic approach to identifying and ultimately eradicating modern slavery from investment portfolios, with an aspiration to drive positive change in the real economy too.

Read 'Addressing Modern Slavery in Investment Portfolios' and the recommendations [here](#).

Quotes attributable to Maria Nazarova-Doyle, Global Head of Sustainable Investment, IFM Investors:

"Modern slavery is not just a social issue—it's a material investment risk that can erode value, damage trust, and expose portfolios to mounting legal liabilities. While institutional investors are paying closer attention to the problem, they still face major hurdles in addressing it. Detection is difficult, tools are fragmented, disclosure is inconsistent, and the issue often hides deep in supply chains where oversight is weakest.

"Any meaningful progress will require collaboration between asset owners, asset managers, companies, regulators, civil society, governments, and potentially affected workers and communities to drive greater transparency, consistent data, and collaborative solutions."

Quote attributable to Antonia Parkes, Senior Director in ESG & Stewardship, AustralianSuper:

"Modern slavery practices are a systemic risk. One company cannot fix that risk on its own. As well as engaging with some of the assets we invest in directly through our ESG and Stewardship program, we also engage in collaborative forums because it's important we work with other investors to look at opportunities to address modern slavery risks."

Quote attributable to Liza McDonald, Head of Responsible Investment, Aware Super:

"Investors can significantly contribute by educating companies on the importance of reporting instances of modern slavery and removing the stigma associated with such disclosures. This effort would help the market strive for a transparency level comparable to the reporting of near misses in safety protocols."

Quote attributable to Tom Sanders, Senior ESG Analyst, Nest:

"Respect for human rights and eradicating modern slavery in business are strongly associated with value chain resilience and a stable business operating environment. As investors, we recognise the operational, financial, legal and reputational risks companies face when they fail to manage modern slavery and human rights risks."

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About IFM Investors

IFM Investors is a global asset manager, founded and owned by pension funds, with capabilities in infrastructure equity and debt, private equity, private credit, real estate and listed equities. Our purpose is to invest, protect and grow the long-term retirement savings of working people.

With assets under management of approximately \$232.3 AUD billion (as at 31 March 2025), we serve over 750 institutional investors worldwide. IFM operates from 13 offices across Australia, Europe, North America and Asia.