

# DESIREE FIXLER

LONDON  
SPEAKER  
BUREAU

- **ESG and Sustainability Advocate for Change**
- **Trusted Advisor to Financial Institutions and Regulators, Including the UK's FCA and Monetary Authority of Singapore**
- **Whistleblower on Greenwashing**



Desiree is globally recognized as a top expert and one of the most influential in the practice of sustainable finance. She is known for her candid advocacy to reform policy and practice around ESG and impact investing and is frequently in the media. As a professional speaker, she provides expert insights on the current state and outlook of the ESG movement, the prevention of greenwashing, whistleblowing and risk management.

With over 25 years of experience in sustainable finance and investment banking, she serves a trusted advisor to financial institutions, NGOs and regulators including the UK's Financial Conduct Authority and the Monetary Authority of Singapore and guest lectures at Cambridge University. Accordingly, 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 firm's public ESG claims and its internal statements and actions. When her concerns as well as her job were dismissed by the C-suite and Board, she decided to speak out publicly. US and German authorities next launched investigations, which culminated in a police raid at the firm's headquarters, the ousting of the CEO and senior executives at the firm and the largest SEC greenwashing fine.

Desiree's whistleblowing action sent shockwaves throughout the finance industry and galvanized efforts to tackle greenwashing. She poignantly and candidly tells her story to drive this cautionary yet inspirational tale home for the sake of clearer ESG disclosures and a more evidence-based approach to sustainability.

Prior to DWS, she has held senior roles at JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank and Zais Group, where she built and managed ESG investing and structured credit businesses. Her track record of product innovation includes several award-winning and market transformational products, including the development of the iTraxx and CDX indices, as well as a series of impact securitizations.

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.

## Topics:

- ESG Investing Best Practice

## Topics

- Economics
- ESG
- Finance
- Sustainability
- Whistleblow

Desiree is a big proponent for greater ESG disclosure requirements and actual delivery on net zero and diversity and inclusion pledges and commitments. She advises on governance and organization set-up, incentive mechanisms, ESG data collection and aggregation, engagement strategies, product development and crucially regulatory readiness.

- Greenwashing Detection and Prevention

Discusses and help companies and investors spot what may be considered ESG-washing in product labels and strategies, statements and pledges. With ESG regulation, enforcement actions and litigation greatly on the rise, many companies are having to urgently re-assess the integrity of their products and services and public statements to ensure full and accurate disclosure.

- Speaking Up and Whistleblowing to Effect Change

Desiree draws on her own experience to outline what she considered to be greenwashing practices and the colossal corporate governance failure at DWS, which led to 7 regulatory authorities investigating the firm and the firm marking down their ESG AUM by 75%. It culminated with 50 federal police agents raiding Deutsche Bank and DWS, the removal of the CEO, Chairman and several other senior leaders as well as 14% of the market cap of the company with further penalties potentially pending. She discusses how integral it is to speak out against misconduct and about how so many whistleblowers strive to protect and move companies to a better place.

- Resilience, Overcoming Adversity and Reinvention

Desiree was publicly fired and discredited as a chief sustainability officer of a large asset manager. She speaks about a pretty brutal year of trying to set the record straight, salvaging her life and crucially holding the firm to account. She did just that and now have a new life in London working as an ESG consultant to a number of regulators, financial institutions and non-profits.

- Diversity and the Gender Pay Gap

How to recruit, retain and promote diversity so as to banish old school group thinking and the resulting backward status quo behaviours. How to identify problem areas and divisions and the needed tools and metrics to allow diversity and inclusion to flourish.