

PRESS RELEASE



**A discussion with Greek American Entrepreneurs:
entitled "Sustainability – An Opportunity to Create Long Term Value"**

Mr. C. Dean Metropoulos, *Chairman & CEO - Metropoulos & Co*
Mr. John Koudounis, *President & Chief Executive Officer - Calamos Investments*

Moderator:

Mr. Evangelos I. Lakatzis, *Partner - Saplegal - A.S. Papadimitriou & Partners Law Firm*

In the context of the

13th Annual Capital Link Sustainability Forum
"Financing & Investments Spearheading Sustainable Growth"

Thursday, June 8, 2023
Divani Caravel Athens Hotel

Video YouTube: <https://youtu.be/Wfj5XxMBeb4>

[Photos available here](#)

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

Greek-American entrepreneurs **Mr. C. Dean Metropoulos, *Chairman & CEO - Metropoulos & Co***, and **Mr. John Koudounis, *President & Chief Executive Officer - Calamos Investments***, participated in a discussion entitled **"Sustainability – An Opportunity to Create Long Term Value,"** which took place in the context of the **13th Annual Capital Link Sustainability Forum: "Financing & Investments Spearheading Sustainable Growth"** on **Thursday, June 8, 2023**, at the **Divani Caravel Hotel**. **Mr. Evangelos I. Lakatzis, *Partner - Saplegal - A.S. Papadimitriou & Partners Law Firm***, moderated the discussion.

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The panel discussion took place in a full room with a large audience of more than 400 people, including top governmental representatives, the Forum's speakers, and high-level executives of major industry companies and banks, with the honoring presence of Mr. Antonis Samaras, ex-Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Stergios Pitsiorlas, former Deputy Minister of Finance and Development and many others.



Mr. C. Dean Metropoulos, Chairman & CEO - Metropoulos & Co



C. Dean Metropoulos, Chairman & CEO - Metropoulos & Co with his boutique private equity and management firm with a distinct and highly respected 40-year history makes several private equity investments including the acquisition of Nestle's U.S. and Canadian spring water business for close to \$5 billion dollars, which includes all brands in the U.S. and Canada. He recently closed with Apollo the acquisition of three Hispanic supermarket chains throughout the U.S., making it the largest such chain in this fastest growing demographic. In addition, Mr. Metropoulos, with the Gores Group, has done several SPACS, including the number one technology company providing self-driving technology in the world.

In addition, Mr. Metropoulos and his family are focused on philanthropy. Mrs. Metropoulos is a key benefactor in partnership with King Charles to provide education for children in Africa and Greece, among other countries.. Mrs. Metropoulos is also a key founder of the Epigenetics Cancer Research Center at Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital. In addition, Mr. Metropoulos is a member of the Giving Pledge with Warren Buffett and Bill Gates in the support of medical and educational programs throughout the world. Mr. and Mrs. Metropoulos' sons, Evan and Daren, are becoming more involved with saving reefs, oceans and abused animals.

Metropoulos and Co. is a boutique private equity and management firm with a distinct and highly respected 40-year history. Mr. Metropoulos and his sons, Evan and Daren, have been involved in the building, restructuring, and reinvigorating of numerous businesses and hundreds of historic brands around the world; many of which have 200-year histories and are part of the fabric of our culture. Evan and Daren have been uniquely creative in the innovation and marketing of these iconic brands,

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reuniting them with modern generations. A few of the brands include: Ghirardelli, Hostess/Twinkie, Perrier Jouet and Mumm champagnes, Poland Springs water, Pabst Blue Ribbon, Bumblebee, Chef Boyardee, Premier Foods—the number one U.K. consumer company, among many others. The firm has been involved, to-date, in over 78 acquisitions and five SPACS involving over \$60 billion in invested capital. Metropoulos & Co. has earned some of the most attractive returns on Wall Street and is a highly sought-after partner by investors around the world..

During the discussion, **Mr. C. Dean Metropoulos, Chairman & CEO - Metropoulos & Co**, stated:

“Embracing regulations and investments to save our planet and provide hope for human equality.

Our planet is facing several challenges with the rapid degradation of our environment, and the many social biases and traditions that leave so many of our humans isolated and behind in this ever-changing world. Government, heightened awareness, and technology will provide potential relief, but will we be in time.

Toxic carbon emissions are wreaking havoc with our planet: Temperatures are accelerating and will rise +2.7 degrees C in the next 25 years. Expanding deserts by 11%-18% per year. Melting poles and glaciers generating 150 billion tons of floating ice, causing ocean temperatures and sea levels to rise dangerously— 10” by 2050, 20” by 2060, threatening many parts of our world.

Population is growing rapidly and is the core challenge to our planet - 1 billion in 1880, 3 billion in 1960, 8.040 billion today. People are also living longer, 48 years in 1950, 75 years today and rising. We also consume more protein - Cattle are a huge contributor to CO2 emissions, plus grazing and sandstorms accelerate the deserts. Deforestation, Mining – coal and other minerals, is pressuring our planet’s equilibrium between humans and nature. In addition, we drive far more cars – 25M in 1950, 1.5 billion today.

World leaders, business, and philanthropy are seriously discussing, embracing, and attempting to pass regulations, and reporting and enforcing compliance. These moves were endorsed by the Paris Accords of 2015 signed by 193 countries and 196 signatories – (slide 1), and many other follow-up actions have been introduced. ESG is attracting much investment today -- \$1 trillion in 2019; \$3.6 trillion in 2023. Technology and AI are serious tools to accelerate our efforts – electric vehicles – 14% today, 75% by 2040, nuclear fusion, a few years away, will harness the sun with lasers and hydrogen atoms and will create a new future of clean energy.”

Mr. Metropoulos was asked the following question: *“Is there a conflict for investors between optimizing returns and supporting ESG?”*

His answer was that: “We can accomplish both. Governments have a role to play in that, as the answers are not always obvious. For example, we should already be using more solar energy today. Reporting quarterly to the relevant authorities about certain things is now an obligation, which causes people to think about what’s happening in their organizations. Returns on investments can coexist with investing in new technologies, and the paybacks are going to be very attractive. Talking about it in rooms like these is an important first step”

The next question: *“What are your thoughts as to whether we will be in time to save our planet?”*

Mr. Metropoulos answered: “Humans are remarkably resourceful. Tech and AI will be helpful, but we need to speed up our fight against the degradation of our environment, and for that certain mentalities have to change. Human beings are still filling oceans with rubbish. The challenge of course is that we don’t know what the world is going to look like in 25 years, but I remain optimistic.”

Mr. John Koudounis, *President & Chief Executive Officer* - Calamos Investments



John Koudounis joined Calamos Investments as Chief Executive Officer in 2016. He became the firm's first designated CEO hired by Founder John Calamos, Sr., as part of Calamos' succession plan. Serving as a driving force behind improving strategic initiatives, Mr. Koudounis plays a critical role in delivering innovative solutions to business development and expanding product breadth for the firm's global base of clients. Under his leadership, firm profitability and AUM growth have increased substantially.

Mr. Koudounis has 33 years of financial services experience including executive leadership in the global securities business and a deep background in global capital markets. Most recently, he served as President and Chief Executive Officer of Mizuho Securities USA, Inc. (MSUSA), a subsidiary of Mizuho Financial Group, one of the world's largest full-service financial institutions. During his tenure at Mizuho Securities, he built the firm into a full-service investment bank, expanding its debt and equity capital markets teams. Because of his leadership, the firm also grew in profitability, number of clients, and product diversification, allowing Mizuho to be considered globally as a top tier investment bank. Prior to joining MSUSA in 2008, he was Managing Director and Head of Fixed Income for ABN AMRO Americas where he played a critical role in that firm's successful growth.

Mr. Koudounis, often sought after for his thought leadership, serves as a speaker at conferences worldwide and appears frequently on financial news programs including CNN, Fox Business, CNBC, Bloomberg TV, TD Ameritrade Network, Yahoo Finance Live, and others.

In addition to his executive career, Mr. Koudounis upholds a dedication to philanthropy through various board positions and community outreach. He is the Founder of the Chicago CEO COVID-19 Coalition, an organization he created in 2020 during the pandemic to provide COVID-19 relief and recovery for the city and bring Chicago's business leaders together in a time of need. This initiative focused on four critical areas in COVID recovery: food, shelter/homelessness, counseling services, and PPE. The Coalition distributed over \$1.5 million in proceeds from its successful telethon.

During the discussion, **Mr. John Koudounis, *President & Chief Executive Officer*- Calamos Investments**, stated:

"Calamos Investments is trusted by investors since 1977. We've pioneered the use of alternative investment solutions to enhance returns and manage risk. Our team has been doing this since before ESG was trendy and even a thing. They've proven that one can invest in ESG and have significant returns, beating the S&P every year.

When I met with Giannis Antetokoumpo, we realized that we have shared values. We created a joint venture to try to do some good.

By 2025 we expect 50 trillion in investable assets in ESG. The US is behind Europe and other parts of the world, but we're catching up. People need to be aware, and companies seem to want to do more towards our common goals. We're here to help them. We want to make sure that anyone in the world can participate and invest, from 25 dollars to multi-million contributions."

Mr. Koudounis was asked the following question: "*How have you seen ESG develop from your perspective over the last decade?*"

To which he answered: "There's been a tremendous amount of change. I believe the turning point was the financial crisis of 2008, which forced many people to look at things differently. A lot of the younger generation has a huge interest in investing in

ESG. Different generations have different priorities. Young people have an increased interest in the environment. I'm not advocating for any government to force people to invest in something they don't want to invest in, but the choice needs to be there. We provide liquidity for the companies that are doing the right things."

The next question: "How do you feel about the increased scrutiny around ESG investing and how do you see ESG investing evolving in the coming years?"

Mr. Koudounis answered: "There's undoubtedly a huge amount of scrutiny. Lots of people after all are exaggerating their involvement in ESG to make it seem more than it is. We have a committee that our top execs are a part of, that focuses on what we do for our communities. Awareness has increased and I believe that to be a good thing, because complying with these standards is the only way to ensure best practices are being followed."

Mr. Evangelos I. Lakatzis, Partner - Saplegal - A.S. Papadimitriou & Partners Law Firm, stated:

"The panel discussion addressed the issue of sustainable development as a primary parameter for growth and attracting investments in the business horizon, and furthermore as a key to creating long-term value and a positive footprint in the international and global economy. Initially, the speakers underlined the need for an immediate shift to sustainability, the compliance to new regulations and the holistic adoption by the companies of an ESG strategy with the general benefit at environmental, humanitarian, and social level as an ultimate objective. The panelists debated whether the support of an ESG model and the focus on long-term value go hand in hand with optimizing profit, being a decisive factor for companies to improve their access to financing and overall profitability. But is there still time to reverse the environmental damage? Estimates were expressed as to whether we can act in time to achieve the climate transition goals by adopting sustainable development or the destruction of ecosystems is now inevitable. At the same time, the panelists expressed their opinion regarding the development of ESG model and the general progress of companies in sustainable development from their perspective during the last decade. Finally, they commented on the ever-increasing scrutiny surrounding ESG investing and provided their prediction for the evolution of sustainable investing in the coming years."

Following the discussion, Mr. Metropoulos and Mr. Koudounis held a Q&A session with members of the audience.

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The Forum offered the opportunity to a limited number of NGOs, to showcase and communicate their programs, needs and objectives by exhibiting in a specific space where the NGO representatives met and interacted with the Forum participants. With Capital Link's globalized profile, their promotion is extensive, offering NGOs the opportunity to create real time and direct interaction of all Sustainability stakeholders. **NGOs that participated:** • Eliza – Zero Tolerance for Child Abuse • Steps Forward for the Child with Disability – “ELEPAP” • “E.M.E.I.S” - Scientific Society of Mastology–Treatment and Support • Centre of Social Care of people with intellectual disability – “ESTIA” • Cerebral Palsy Greece/Open Door • “HLIAXTIDA” Org. • HELPHELLAS • FairLife Lung Cancer Care • The "Pammakaristos" Children's Foundation • Road Safety Institute “Panos Mylonas” • “Karkinaki” - for awareness for Childhood and Adolescent Cancer • Therapy Center for Dependent Individulas – “KETHEA” • K.S.D.E.O. "EDRA" • LIFELINE HELLAS • “Mazi gia to paidi” – Together for Children • “Merimna” Nonprofit Organization • “ALMA” – AMEA • “Agalia” Organization • Pedriatic Trauma Care • Psychopedagogical Center "PNOE".

For further information:

Please visit Forum's website:

<http://csringreece.gr/forum/2023/agenda.php>

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