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LO Selection
TargetNetZero (USD) Credit Bond
Newsletter

Sustainability • Fixed Income

31 August 2024

OVERVIEW OF THE FIXED INCOME MARKET

After a sharp risk off drawdown to begin the month, fixed income recovered markedly to record a second successive month of strong performance in August. Return drivers varied across geographies, with high yield outperforming in Europe, whereas US saw more upside from duration, albeit also alongside compressing spreads. However this differential between regions was actually driven by EUR HY real estate, which saw massive outperformance. Outside of this, performance across regions in the credit space was more comparable.

Markets were violently jolted at the start of the month as a brutal carry unwind saw risk on carry positive positions upended. The exact trigger is debatable but the sell off was initially started following the Bank of Japan's hawkish rate hike, and then sent into overdrive by a very weak US labour market report. The latter saw a sharp increase in pricing of the speed and magnitude of the impending cutting cycle by the Federal Reserve, at one point pricing as much as 75bps of cuts by the September meeting, including an emergency cut. The sharp move rocked the popular USD vs JPY carry trade, spilling over into wider carry positive trades as unwinding accelerated. A natural loser of the carry unwind was short volatility positions, exemplified by the VIX which suffered a record intraday increase.

However, this carry unwind induced risk off episode was ultimately extremely short lived, with risk assets reversing intraday around a stronger than expected ISM services report, which reintroduced some perspective that the US economy wasn't dropping off of a cliff edge. This ultimately began a reversal in risk markets which was almost as swift as the initial shock. Credit spreads recovered entirely within a matter of days and continued to cyclical tights. Rates however largely held their gains despite some repricing of very front-end expectations after the overshoot. The diversifying nature of rates against credit was a welcome reminder to focus on the macro picture through such nature and that with growth now more in focus than inflation, duration has the potential to once again play an important role in portfolios as cuts progress.

On the macro picture, it was ultimately a continuation again of the recent trend, inflation continues to lose steam and return to target levels led by goods disinflation, but also slowing services. On the other hand, growth is trending lower but remaining robust, whilst labour markets are correcting to more natural levels. The triggering of the Sahm rule in the US labour market was a key focus of concern for recession signaling, but in reality, the move higher in the unemployment rate has come from increased labour supply rate than layoffs. Whilst this trend continues, marginally higher unemployment cannot be taken as an imminent recession signal.

This broad picture was affirmed by Fed chair Powell when speaking on the back of the Jackson Hole summit, confirming that he now sees it as time to lower rates, and that the speed and magnitude will spend on incoming data. His clear emphasis on the labour market now being the number one priority for the Federal reserve marks a clear shift in focus and should mean inflation data can take somewhat of a backseat in coming months, assuming no sudden sharp exogenous shock.

PERFORMANCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

The relative performance is positive versus its benchmark for the month of August.

Our underweight exposure on the higher rated bonds had a marginal impact on the relative performance. The sector allocation contribution impact was neutral during the period. The security selection was positive, notably in the TMT-Transport and Financial sectors.

The relative performance is negative versus its benchmark year-to-date.

Our underweight exposure on the higher rated bonds had a neutral impact on the relative performance. The sector allocation contribution to relative performance has been slightly negative during the period.

The security selection was slightly negative since the beginning of the year.

OUTLOOK

The events of the month reinforced rather than questioned our stance on fixed income, with a preference for duration remaining intact. We acknowledge increasing risks from diverging monetary policy backdrop and increased political uncertainty, but also take comfort in the swift recovery in credit markets following the carry unwind, underlining the appetite for credit remains strong and real money participants have sufficient cash to deploy to take advantage of buying opportunities. We remain focused on core fundamental trends, which as of now show slowing, but not collapsing demand, with earnings continuing to come in robust, albeit at slower growth rates the previous quarters.

SUSTAINABILITY

Date set for public hearings at the International Court of Justice which could help define countries' legal obligations to fight climate change:

The top United Nations court announced that public hearings will open on 2 December in a landmark case seeking a non-binding advisory opinion on "the obligations of States in respect of climate change."

The UN court's panel of 15 judges from around the world will seek to answer two questions: what are countries obliged to do under international law to protect the climate and environment from human-caused greenhouse gas emissions; and what are the legal consequences for governments where their acts of lack of action have significantly harmed the climate and environment? The court said it had received written comments from 62 nations and organisations including the EU, UK, US and Brazil in regard to the case.

This landmark climate case follows a the UN tribunal on maritime law in May, which said that carbon emissions qualify as marine pollution and countries must take steps to mitigate and adapt to their adverse effects.

China has cut new coal power plant permits by nearly 80%:

China is the world's largest builder of coal-fired power stations, yet a new report shows that they cut the number of permits for new plants by nearly 80% in the first half of 2024, indicating that they may be reaching a turning point on coal.

A review of project documents by Greenpeace East Asia found that 14 new coal plants were approved from January to June with a total capacity of 10.3 gigawatts, compared with 50.4 gigawatts in the first half of 2023.

Analysts at the Helsinki-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air believe China's carbon emissions may have peaked in 2023, after reporting that emissions fell 1% year-on-year in the second quarter of 2024.

EU outlines the benefits of multi-billion-euro environmental action:

The EU's flagship environmental protection scheme has improved the conservation status of 435 species while cutting greenhouse gas and nitrogen oxides (NOx) pollution, producing a tenfold return on the ?3.46 billion invested in the seven years to 2020, the European Commission has claimed in a review of the last budget period.

The LIFE programme is the only European instrument which directly funds environmental action on the ground, supporting +1,100 projects from 2014 to 2020. These projects ranged from 'traditional' conservation projects to supporting policy makers in redesigning the EU emissions trading system, which sets a cap for industrial carbon emissions.

Budget allocation to LIFE has been increased to ?5.4bn for the current seven-year period to 2027.

PERFORMANCE

30.08.2024	INCEPTION	AUM	MONTH-TO-DATE	YEAR-TO-DATE	INCEPTION-TO-DATE	5 Year Ann. Return	10 Year Ann. Return
LO Selection TargetNetZero USD Credit Bond NA	28.02.2014	USD 107 mn	1.39%	4.27%	28.04%	1.25%	2.22%
ICE BofA 1-10 Year US Corporate Index (USD)			1.27%	4.63%	33.92%	1.80%	2.69%

Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Performance is presented net of fees. AUM as of the date of the table.

RISK AND REWARD PROFILE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Lower Risk Higher Risk

The following risks may be materially relevant but may not always be adequately captured by the synthetic risk indicator and may cause additional loss:
Credit risk: A significant level of investment in debt securities or risky securities implies that the risk of, or actual, default may have a material impact on performance. The likelihood of this depends on the credit-worthiness of the issuers.
Liquidity risk: Where a significant level of investment is made in financial instruments that may under certain circumstances have a relatively low level of liquidity, there is a material risk that the fund will not be able to transact at advantageous times or prices. This could reduce the fund's returns.
Operational risk and risks related to asset safekeeping: In specific circumstances, there may be a material risk of loss resulting from human error, inadequate or failed internal systems, processes or controls, or from external events.

Before taking any investment decision, please read the latest version of the prospectus, the articles of incorporation, the Key Information Documents (KIDs) and the latest annual report and semi-annual report. Please pay attention to the Appendix B "Risk Factors Annex" of the prospectus.

Incorporation of extra-financial risks into the investment decision process may result in underweighting of profitable investments from the sub-fund's investment universe and may also lead the management of the sub-fund to underweight investments that will continue to perform. Sustainability risks may lead to a significant deterioration in the financial profile, profitability or reputation of an underlying investment and may therefore have a significant impact on its market price or liquidity.

The Fund has been classified as a financial product subject to Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 on sustainability-related disclosures in the financial sector (the “SFDR”). The Fund promotes, among other characteristics, environmental or social characteristics, or a combination of those characteristics, provided that the companies in which the investments are made follow good governance practices.

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Investments are subject to a variety of risks: The investments mentioned in this document may carry risks that are difficult to quantify and integrate into an investment assessment. In general, products such as equities, bonds, forex, or money market instruments bear risks, which are higher in the case of derivative, structured, and private equity products; these are aimed solely at investors who are able to understand their nature and characteristics and to bear their associated risks. On request, LOIM will be pleased to provide investors with more detailed information concerning risks associated with given instruments. The liquidity of an investment is subject to supply and demand. Some products may not have a well-established secondary market or in extreme market conditions may be difficult to value, resulting in price volatility and making it difficult to obtain a price to dispose of the asset.

Where the Fund is denominated in a currency other than an investor's base currency, changes in the rate of exchange may have an adverse effect on price and income. All performance figures reflect the reinvestment of interest and dividends and do not take account the commissions and costs incurred on the issue and redemption of shares/units; performance figures are estimated and unaudited. Net performance shows the performance net of fees and expenses for the relevant fund/share class over the reference period. This document does not contain personalised recommendations or advice and is not intended to substitute any professional advice on investment in financial products. Neither this marketing communication nor this document nor any part of it shall form the basis of, or be relied on in connection with, any contract to purchase or subscription to the Fund. Not all costs are listed in this document and the investor is recommended to refer to the Offering documents for more information.

The articles of association, the prospectus, the Key Information Document ("PRIIPS/KIDs"), and the subscription form are the only official Offering Documents of the Fund's shares (the "Offering Documents"). No party is authorised to provide information or make assurances that are not contained in the Offering Documents.

Access to documents in country of registrations:
The PRIIPS/KIDs are available in one of the official languages of your country and a Prospectus is available in English, French, and Italian.

The PRIIPS/KIDs and the Prospectus together with the Articles of Incorporation and the last annual and semi-annual financial report are available on www.loim.com or can be requested free of charge at the registered office of the Fund or of the Management Company, from the distributors of the Fund or from the local representatives as mentioned below. These Offering Documents are provided for information and illustration and is not a contractually binding document or an information required by any legislative provisions and is not sufficient to take an investment decision.

Please refer to the prospectus and the PRIIPS/KIDs before making any final investment decisions. Before making an investment in the Fund, an investor should read the entire Offering Documents, and in particular the risk factors pertaining to an investment in the Fund, consider carefully the suitability of such investment to his/her particular circumstances and, where necessary, obtain independent professional advice in respect of **risks**, as well as any **legal, regulatory, credit, tax,** and **accounting consequences**.

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Belgium. Financial services Provider: CACEIS Belgium S.A., Avenue du Port 86 C, b 320, 1000 Brussels, Supervisory Authority: Autorité des services et marchés financiers (FSMA).
France. Representative: CACEIS Bank, Rue Gabriel Péri 89-91, 92120 Montrouge, Supervisory Authority: Autorité des marchés financiers (AMF).
Germany. Representative: DekaBank Deutsche Girozentrale, Mainzer Landstraße 16, D-60325 Frankfurt am Main, Supervisory Authority: Bundesanstalt für Finanzdienstleistungsaufsicht (BaFin).
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Liechtenstein. Representative, LGT Bank AG Herrengasse 12, 9490 Vaduz, Supervisory Authority: Finanzmarktaufsicht Liechtenstein ("FMA").
Luxembourg: Commission de Surveillance du Secteur Financier (CSSF), 291, route d'Arlon, L-1150 Luxembourg; www.cssf.lu.
Netherlands. Representative: Lombard Odier Funds (Europe) S.A. – Dutch Branch, Parklaan 26, 3016 BC Rotterdam, Supervisory Authority: Autoriteit Financiële Markten (AFM).
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For details regarding the star rating method:

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