



MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

July 2019

The Fund returned +0.60% for the month, compared with +0.23 for the HFRX Absolute Return Index. The Fund continues to achieve its objective of being a low volatility fund (6.34% since inception July 2014) with low correlation to equity markets, as a consequence of our risk averse strategies.

At the end of H1 2019, our models indicate that all major markets' YTD rises have no basis in any fundamentals i.e. either company earnings or the macro backdrop. Volatility (VIX) is below its historical long term average. We expect the US dollar to continue appreciating in 2019 although the outlook for US interest rates is less certain. This implies an outlook of more defaults in lower-quality sovereign and corporate bonds.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Base Currency: AUD
Entity Type: Open Ended Unit Trust
PMs: Marcel von Pfyffer (CIO)
 Neill Colledge
Launch date: Jul-2014
Benchmark: 0% (Absolute Return)
Fees: 1 and 10
Domicile: Australia
Close of Financial Year: 30th June
Unit Pricing: Weekly
APIR Code: PKF0001AU
ISIN Code: AU60PKF00011
Fund Administration: APEX Fund
 Services (Australia)

Fund Custodian: Sargon CT
Prime Broker: Interactive Brokers
Auditors: Grant Thornton
Compliance: King Irving

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PERFORMANCE (Inception JUL-2014)	Arminius Capital ALPS Fund	HFRX (USD) ABSOLUTE RETURN INDEX	CREDIT SUISSE GLOBAL MACRO (USD) INDEX	SOCIETE GENERALE CTA MUTUAL FUND INDEX
1 Month	0.60%	0.23%	7.10%	3.29%
3 Months	2.20%	1.03%	5.82%	4.23%
Calendar YTD	2.54%	1.89%	15.99%	6.34%
1 Year	-8.30%	0.39%	2.93%	6.36%
3 Years	3.68%	4.74%	14.95%	-2.77%
5 Years	11.66%	7.68%	6.67%	5.96%
Cumulative since Inception JUL 2014	14.00%	7.05%	8.01%	6.12%

Arminius Capital ALPS Fund (Inception July-2014) Returns are net of base fees; gross of performance fee.

%	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	CY
2014	-	-	-	-	INCEPTION =>		2.09%	0.04%	-1.43%	2.02%	1.18%	2.35%	6.37%
2015	3.85%	1.56%	-0.07%	-1.47%	0.77%	-0.09%	0.52%	-1.23%	-0.45%	1.23%	0.19%	-2.43%	2.26%
2016	-0.38%	-2.38%	0.54%	2.37%	1.22%	0.41%	-0.10%	0.03%	0.00%	0.20%	3.55%	4.60%	10.33%
2017	-0.13%	2.69%	3.31%	0.10%	1.25%	0.02%	-0.34%	1.28%	-1.45%	1.93%	-1.41%	1.04%	8.47%
2018	3.94%	-2.64%	-3.56%	0.49%	0.24%	-0.57%	-1.77%	0.88%	-1.94%	-3.90%	-3.75%	-2.26%	-14.1%
2019	0.08%	0.12%	0.35%	-0.22%	1.39%	0.20%	0.60%	-	-	-	-	-	2.54%

* 2014/07 - 2015/02 Strategy run as Mandate, 2015/03+ as Unit Trust Structure. EOM date is typically last Friday of month.

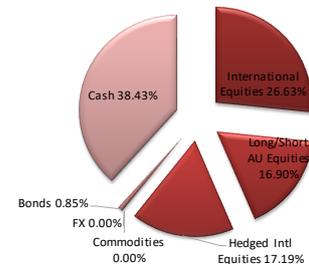
FUND OBJECTIVES: The fund provides investors with exposure to all asset classes in the global macro universe. Arminius' aim is to provide smooth positive returns with lower volatility and lower risk than concentrated single market/asset class exposure. Our absolute return investment methodology utilises a combination of fundamental, momentum and quantitative inputs. As an absolute return fund, the objective is to preserve the capital base across every 3 year rolling period.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY: Arminius uses econometric modelling based on macro-economic indicators alongside fundamentals pertinent to each individual instrument within each asset class. Momentum is taken into account only once the fundamental value of each instrument has been ascertained. Low volatility and risk management is complemented by frequent re-balancing and equal weighting, according to what each hedging sub-strategy dictates.

FUND STATISTICS MONTHLY

From July 2014	ALPS Fund	XJO
Sharpe Ratio	0.30	0.38
Sortino Ratio (RFR)	1.12	1.56
Downside Deviation	1.71%	2.75%
Standard Deviation	1.83%	3.29%
Annualized SD	6.34%	11.41%
Mean Monthly Return	0.24%	0.44%
Compound Monthly Return	0.22%	0.38%
Excess Return (RFR)	1.92%	4.29%
Portfolio Correlation to XJO	0.49	-
R ² Coefficient of Determination	0.08	-

STRATEGIC ASSET ALLOCATION at Month's commencement



FUND PERFORMANCE:

The Fund returned +0.60% for the month, compared with +0.23 for the HFRX Absolute Return Index. The Australian market's July rise of +2.93% beat all of the world's major equity markets. The US S&P500 price index rose by +1.31%, Japan's Nikkei 225 by +1.15%, and Europe's Stoxx 600 by only +0.23%. China's markets fell: the Shanghai Composite was down -1.56% and the Hang Seng dropped -2.68%.

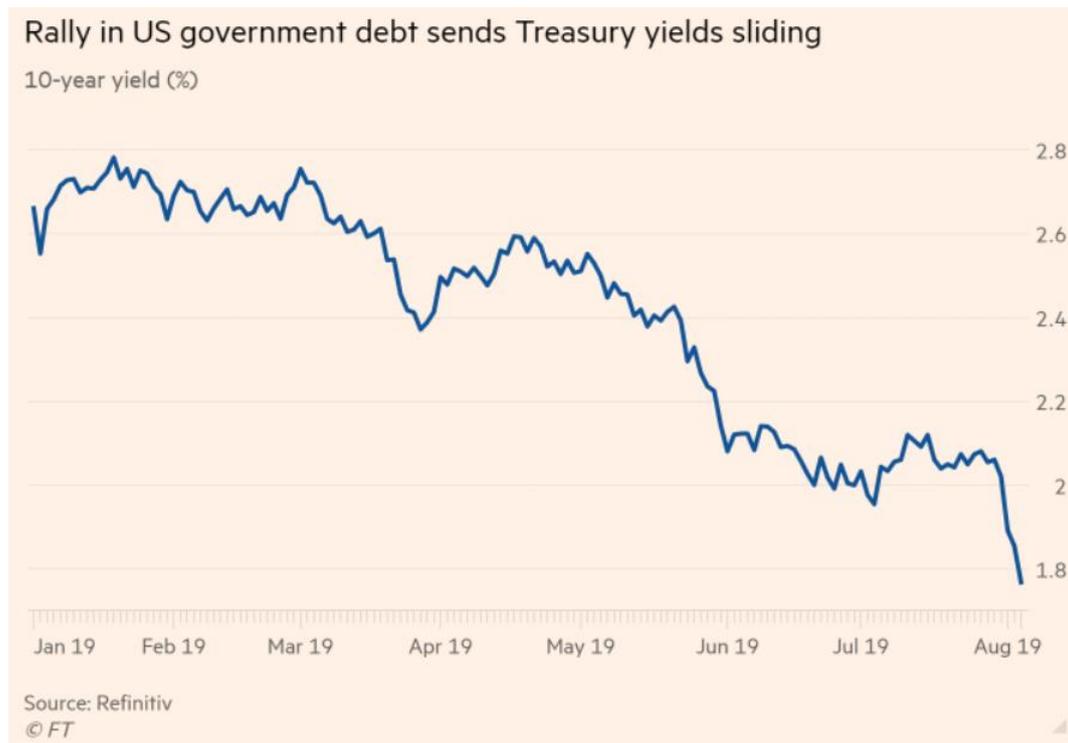


As if the ongoing protests in Hong Kong were not enough of a problem, Chinese investors worked out that the US trade war was not going to end any time soon. In addition, Chinese authorities stated very clearly that they were not planning another big stimulus for the economy, and they said very specifically that they were not going to pump up the property market again.

The S&P/ASX200 price index has finally broken its pre-GFC record of 6851.5, set on 30 November 2007. On 30 July the index hit an intraday high of 6872.9, but ended the day slightly lower and finished the month at 6813. All sectors of the ASX recorded positive returns in July, led by Consumer Staples, Healthcare, and Information Technology. Discouraging news on commodity prices (except gold!) meant that the Energy and Materials sector underperformed the rest of the market. BHP, Rio, and Fortescue all fell in price when the Brazilian iron ore exporter Vale indicated that it would be re-opening some of the mines which have been shut down.

INVESTMENT OUTLOOK

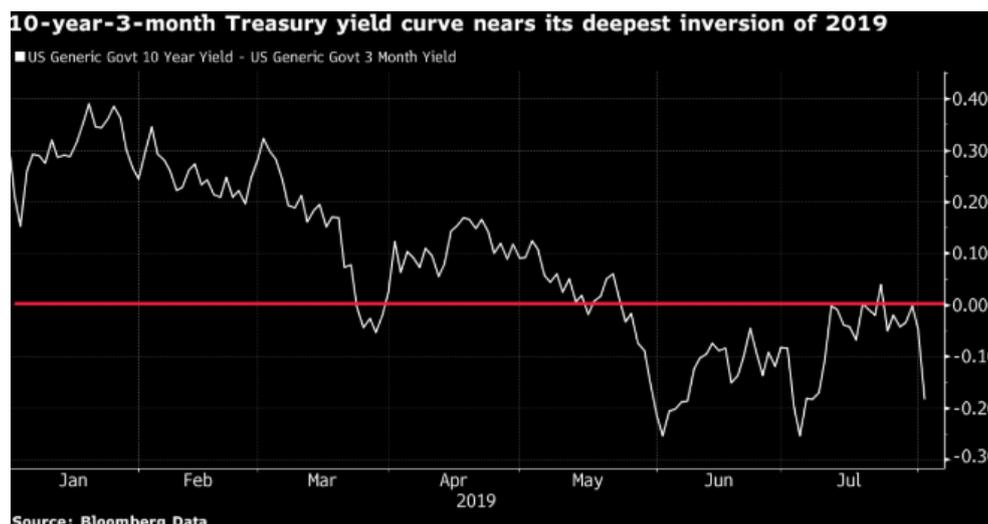
The outlook for global equity markets suddenly turned negative in early August, when The Donald sent out a tweet threatening China with more tariffs unless it did what he wanted. Global markets reacted with alarm. The Chinese government reacted with an official statement saying that China would not submit to US bullying. Investors have concluded that a negotiated peace in the US-China trade war is now unlikely, so they are preparing for slower economic growth, as well as serious disruption to trade and currencies. (Trends in the trade war are covered in more detail in our reports on the **Arminius ALCE Australian Equities Strategy** July 2019 Report found here: <http://arminiuscapital.com.au/funds/>)



Investors lowered their portfolio risk by dumping equities in favour of government bonds, especially the bonds of stable jurisdictions like the US, Japan, Germany, and Switzerland. Yields on US bonds went into a power dive (see the chart above), reaching their lowest levels since 2016. Yields on Japanese, German and Swiss bonds are already negative, so they went more negative. More than USD \$15 trillion worth of bonds now carry negative yields, including half the bonds issued by European governments. (Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish bonds still carry positive yields.) As the chart below shows, bond yields are falling all around the world. The bond market is saying very clearly that it expects a global slowdown, not to mention recessions in several countries.



We have previously mentioned the inversion of the US yield curve as a reliable indicator of recession within about 18 months. As the chart below shows, the inversion has become longer and deeper, flashing a very large warning signal. On top of that, US company results for the June quarter are showing little or no profit growth, amid management commentary about the problems caused by tariffs and the trade war.



On a brighter note, the US is not going to suffer another Federal budget squabble or debt ceiling collision or government shutdown. Under a negotiated compromise, the budgetary status quo has been extended to 2021, i.e. after the next Presidential election. Connoisseurs of US politics were able to enjoy watching how brutally the three septuagenarian cage-fighters Donald Trump, Mitch McConnell and Nancy Pelosi rammed the compromise down the throats of their reluctant followers.

Europe continues to provide endless entertainment. The long-running Brexit farce now looks like culminating in a no-deal Brexit on 31 October, followed by Boris Johnson gambling on a general election. The Italian government seems to have fallen flat on its face again, but Italy just can't compete with the English talent for comedy. The Germans, meanwhile, remain sober and sensible, with boringly logical politics which produces budget surpluses and trade surpluses year in and year out.



Germany and Japan are already suffering from the global slowdown. In both countries, the core of their manufacturing industry is the production of capital goods (such as machinery) and consumer goods (such as cars) which are exported all over the world. But worldwide declines in business capex and the car industry are reducing demand for their products, which is the reason behind the current downturn in the German factory sector shown in the chart below.



The Australian economy is materially exposed to the US-China trade war and to the probable US recession. The upcoming result season will tell us a lot about the near-term prospects for Australia, but the news is unlikely to be good enough to offset the risks in the rest of the world. The resources sector (except for the gold miners!) is suffering from weakening commodity prices. The banking sector is having difficulty adjusting to life after the Hayne Royal Commission, not only in repaying their maltreated customers, but also in meeting new standards of behaviour. On top of this, the banks need to modify their business models to cope with a long period of low interest rates.

There are some bright spots. Income-oriented investors have rushed into high-yield stocks such as utilities and property trusts, propelling share prices upwards. House prices have stopped falling – but the collapsing prices of the building materials stocks are telling us that the housing market is not about to take off again. In addition, the newly elected Morrison government has a clear mandate to launch fiscal and industry policies which would stimulate the economy. On balance, we remain cautious, because the performance of the Australian share market depends on events outside Australia.

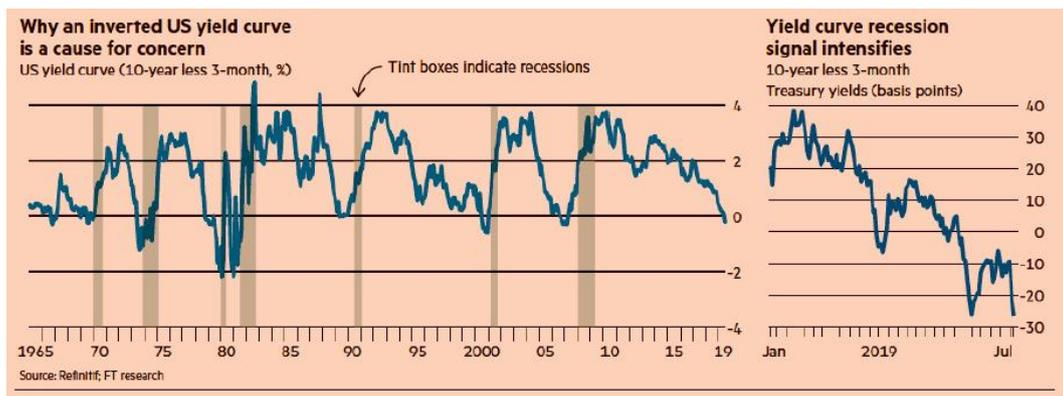
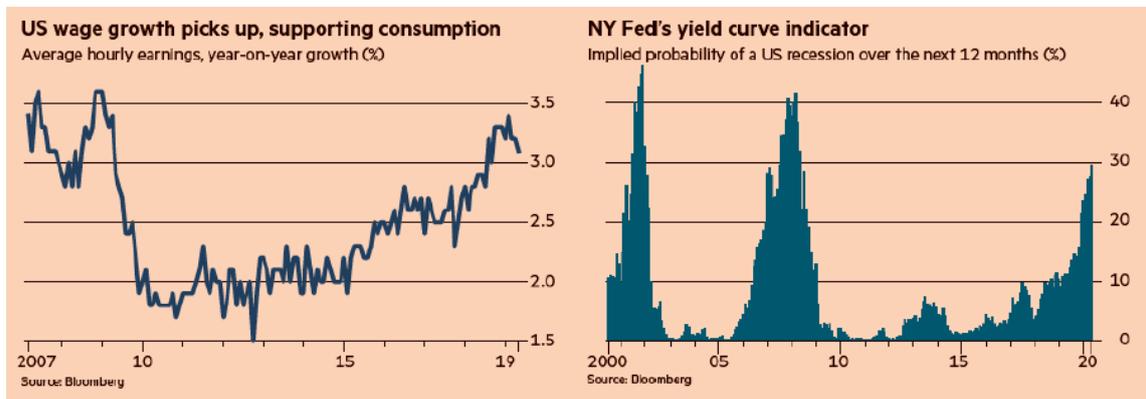
US STOCKMARKET AND ECONOMY – ABOUT TO RUN OUT OF STEAM?

The majority of the impressive gains in CY2019 in the S&P500 have all been made up to 30 April. Through May, June and July the market has only contributed 0.74%.

- Jan to April: +18.9%
- May: -7.5%
- June to July: +0.7%



The US economy is now in its 121st month of consecutive expansion, exceeding the previous record period of 1991-2001. We wrote last year that US wage growth needed to increase alongside jobs growth for the US economic growth record to continue. We have seen it do this through 2019, however it has also begun to occur alongside the “newly famous again” yield curve indicator of pending US recessions.





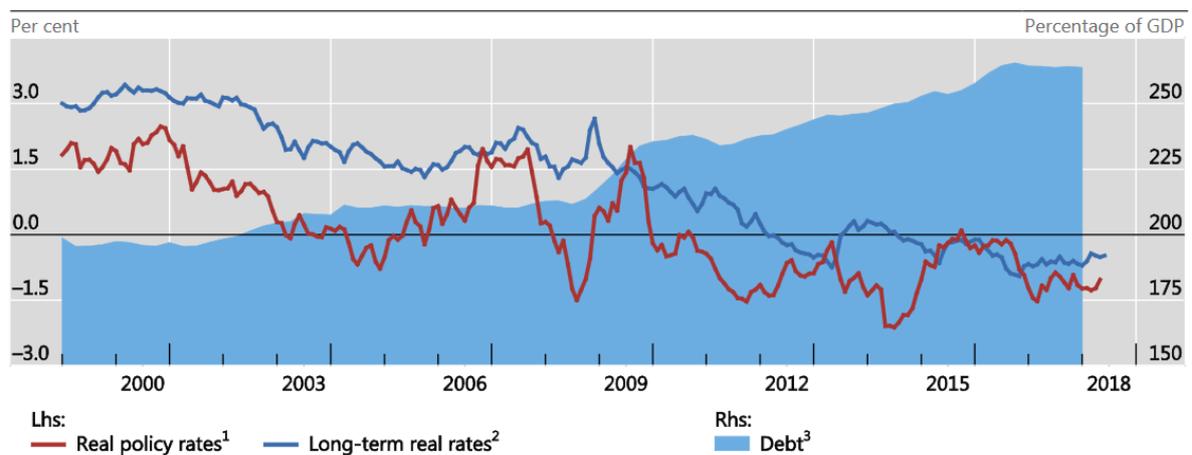
Whilst global debt market issuances continues to revel in ultra low interest rates (and the negative rate grand total has now exceeded \$14 Trillion in July) we observe in light of the US Federal Reserve cutting the Fed Funds rate by 0.25% in July, the potential tipping point of the beginning of the global debt trap that we have been warning of for some time.



The BIS in particular is beginning to devote more and more attention to this issue. If debt rises in proportion to GDP expansion, there is rationale for the continued issuance of debt.

Into a debt trap?

Graph 14



¹ Nominal rate less headline consumer price inflation. Simple average of Germany, Japan and the United States. ² Simple average of index-linked 10-year government bond yields of France, Japan and the United States. ³ Total credit to non-financial sectors. Weighted average of the G7 economies plus China based on GDP and PPP exchange rates.

Sources: Bloomberg; Datastream; national data; BIS calculations.

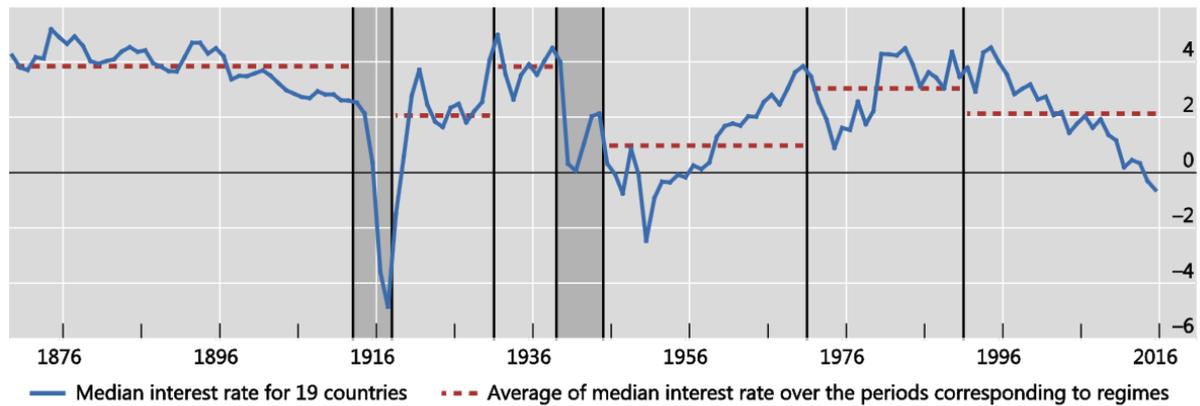


However, with the US effectively the only country of material note that is growing (EU & Japanese growth is stagnant, Chinese growth demonstrably slowing) then the justification for continued debt issuance at both corporate and sovereign levels, just to take advantage of “low interest rate repayments” to the bond holders, loses its economic justification – and invites the greater catastrophe of the pending debt trap. Should we indeed be embarking upon “a really new NEW normal” this time, of permanent low or negative interest rates, then debt issuance becomes a problem of cosmic proportions.

The influence of monetary regimes on the real long-term rate¹

In per cent

Graph 3



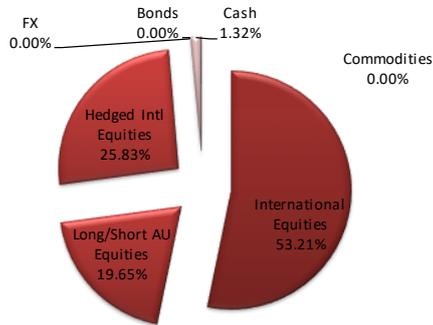
¹ Monetary policy regimes, in order: (mainly) classical gold standard; post-WWI gold standard; other interwar years; Bretton Woods; initial post-Bretton Woods (pre-Volcker); post-Volcker tightening and inflation targeting. Shaded areas indicate WWI and WWII (excluded from the empirical analysis).

Source: Borio et al (2017a).

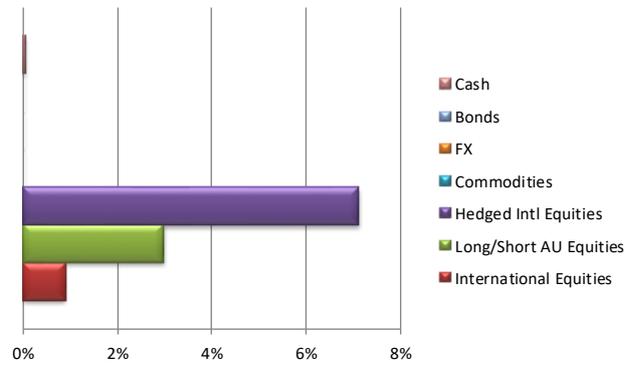


PERFORMANCE TABLES

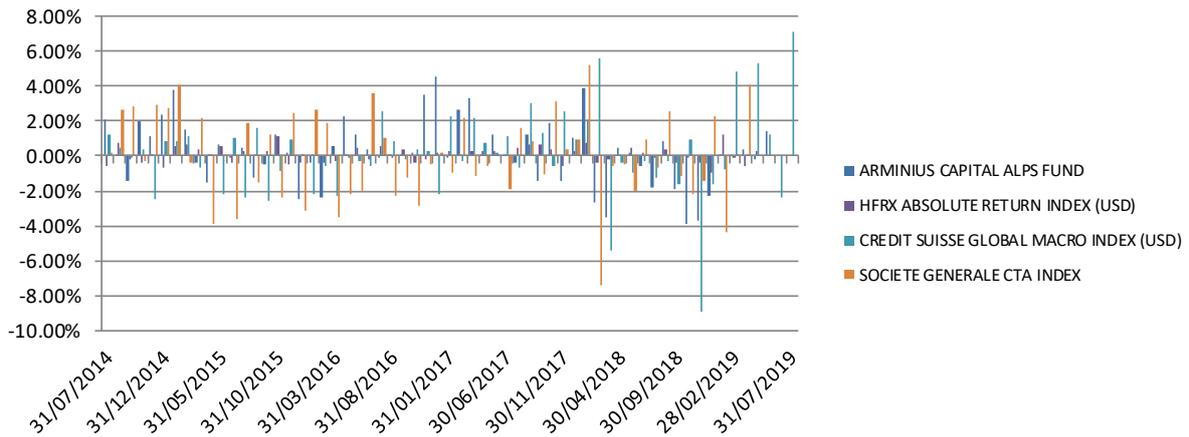
Exposure at month's end as % of NAV



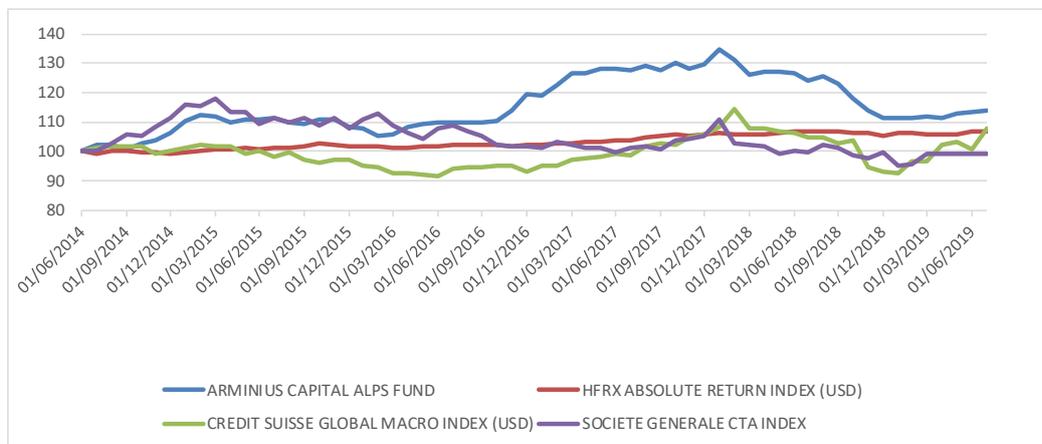
Monthly Asset Class average returns of individual constituents per SAA in domestic market currency



Monthly Performance since Inception July 2014



Cumulative Performance since Inception (Base 100 = 30 June 2014)





GLOBAL FINANCIAL MARKETS – MONTHLY DATA

EQUITIES	30-Jun-19	31-Jul-19	ROR
EUROPE			
Germany DAX (TR)	12398.8	12189.0	-1.69%
Switzerland SMI (PR)	9898.2	9919.3	0.21%
STOXX Europe 600 (EUR)	384.9	385.8	0.23%
FTSE 100	7425.6	7586.8	2.17%
France CAC 40	5539.0	5518.9	-0.36%
FTSE MIB	21234.8	21398.2	0.77%
Netherlands AEX	561.8	572.1	1.84%
Belgium BEL 20	3547.5	3701.4	4.34%
OMX Stockholm 30	1622.4	1599.8	-1.40%
Norway Oslo All-Share	966.9	957.2	-1.01%
Ireland ISEQ	6152.6	6111.1	-0.67%
Spain IBEX 35	9198.8	8971.0	-2.48%
Cyprus CSE General	71.1	70.6	-0.70%
AMERICAS			
S&P 500	2941.8	2980.4	1.31%
DJ 30 Industrials	26600.0	26864.3	0.99%
DJ 65 Composite Average	8796.8	8895.2	1.12%
NASDAQ Composite	8006.2	8175.4	2.11%
Russell 1000	1629.0	1652.4	1.44%
S&P TSX	16382.2	16406.6	0.15%
Brazil Bovespa	100967.2	101812.1	0.84%
Mexico IPC	43161.2	40863.1	-5.32%
ASIA			
S&P ASX 200	6618.8	6812.6	2.93%
Nikkei 225	21275.9	21521.5	1.15%
Hang Seng	28542.6	27777.8	-2.68%
Korea KOSPI	2130.6	2024.6	-4.98%
FTSE Strait Times	3321.6	3300.8	-0.63%
Taiwan TAIEX	10730.8	10823.8	0.87%
New Zealand NZX 50 (TR)	10501.1	10857.8	3.40%
Shanghai SSE Composite	2978.9	2932.5	-1.56%
China Shenzhen A Share	1634.0	1643.3	0.57%
India S&P BSE SENSEX	39394.6	37481.1	-4.86%
FTSE Bursa Malaysia KLCI	1672.1	1634.9	-2.23%
Indonesia JSX	6358.6	6390.5	0.50%
FOREIGN EXCHANGE			
AUD/USD	0.704	0.685	-2.63%
EUR/USD	1.145	1.113	-2.79%
JPY/USD	107.170	108.419	1.17%
GBP/USD	1.275	1.219	-4.40%
CHF/USD	1.032	1.011	-2.07%
USD/CAD	0.766	0.759	-0.91%
EUR/GBP	0.898	0.913	1.69%
EUR/AUD	1.627	1.624	-0.16%
USD/CHF	0.977	0.994	1.78%
GBP/AUD	1.808	1.777	-1.73%
CBOE Volatility Index	15.08	16.12	6.90%

COMMODITIES	30-Jun-19	31-Jul-19	ROR
Energy			
Crude Oil WTI (NYM \$/bbl) Continuous	58.47	58.58	0.19%
Brent Crude (ICE \$/bbl) Continuous	64.74	65.05	0.48%
NY Harbor ULSD (NYM \$/gal) Continuous	1.94	1.97	1.61%
NY Harb RBOB (NYM \$/gal) Continuous	1.90	1.86	-1.78%
Natural Gas (NYM \$/btu) Continuous	2.31	2.23	-3.25%
Precious Metals			
Gold (NYM \$/ozt) Continuous	1413.70	1437.80	1.70%
Silver (NYM \$/ozt) Continuous	15.34	16.41	6.94%
Industrial Metals			
Aluminum (LME Cash \$/t)	1773.50	1776.50	0.17%
High Grade Copper (NYM \$/lbs) Continuous	5972.00	5926.00	-0.77%
Nickel (LME Cash \$/t)	12665.00	14360.00	13.38%
Iron Ore 62% CN TSI (NYM \$/mt)	109.18	120.02	9.93%
Zinc (LME Cash \$/t)	2580.50	2425.50	-6.01%
Agricultural			
Corn (CBT \$/bu) Continuous	4.32	4.10	-4.98%
Soybeans (CBT \$/bu) Continuous	9.23	8.82	-4.50%
Wheat (CBT \$/bu) Continuous	5.27	4.87	-7.59%
Cotton #2 (NYF \$/lbs) Continuous	0.66	0.64	-3.39%
Sugar #11 (NYF \$/lbs) Continuous	0.13	0.12	-3.25%
Indices			
GS Commodity (CME) Continuous	423.85	421.45	-0.57%
PowerShares DB Commodity Index Tracking Fund	15.73	15.55	-1.14%
db x-trackers SICAV - db x-trackers DB COMMODITY BO	14.34	14.12	-1.49%

10 YEAR SOVEREIGN YIELDS	30-Jun-19	31-Jul-19	Yield D
US	2.00%	2.02%	0.02%
UK	0.83%	0.62%	-0.20%
Europe	-0.32%	-0.43%	-0.10%
Australia	1.32%	1.20%	-0.12%
Belgium	0.07%	-0.11%	-0.17%
Canada	1.46%	1.52%	0.06%
Denmark	-0.26%	-0.36%	-0.11%
France	-0.01%	-0.17%	-0.16%
Germany	-0.33%	-0.43%	-0.10%
Greece	2.43%	2.02%	-0.40%
Ireland	0.17%	0.10%	-0.08%
Italy	2.08%	1.56%	-0.53%
Japan	-0.16%	-0.16%	0.00%
Netherlands	-0.16%	-0.31%	-0.16%
New Zealand	1.57%	1.44%	-0.13%
Norway	1.43%	1.38%	-0.05%
Portugal	0.47%	0.36%	-0.11%
Spain	0.39%	0.30%	-0.09%
Sweden	0.02%	-0.14%	-0.16%
Switzerland	-0.55%	-0.72%	0.18%

ROR = Rate of Return
Yield D = Yield differential

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