

Perpetual Investment Funds

PERPETUAL ESG CREDIT INCOME FUND - CLASS A

September 2024



FUND FACTS

Investment objective: To provide investors with regular income and consistent returns above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index (before fees and taxes) over rolling three-year periods by investing in a diverse range of income generating assets that meet Perpetual's ESG and values-based criteria.

Benchmark: Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index
Inception date: June 2018
Size of fund: \$59.2 million as at 30 June 2024
APIR: PER1744AU
Mgmt Fee: 0.59% pa*
Benchmark Yield: 4.361% as at 30 September 2024
Suggested minimum investment period: Three years or longer

FUND BENEFITS

Provides investors access to an actively managed credit and fixed income fund and the opportunity to align their investments with their personal values and ESG preferences.

FUND RISKS

All investments carry risk and different strategies may carry different levels of risk. The relevant product disclosure statement or offer document for a fund should be considered before deciding whether to acquire or hold units in that fund. Your financial adviser can assist you in determining whether a fund is suited to your financial needs.

TOTAL RETURNS % (AFTER FEES) AS AT 30 September 2024

	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	1 YR	2 YRS PA	3 YRS PA	5 YRS PA	7 YRS PA	INCEPT PA
Perpetual ESG Credit Income Fund – Class A	0.73	1.77	3.65	9.03	8.42	4.88	4.01	-	3.79
Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index	0.36	1.11	2.21	4.41	3.99	2.82	1.81	-	1.81

Please note: Performance for Perpetual's complete list of investment funds is available on www.perpetual.com.au. Past performance is not indicative of future performance.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- RBA on hold; Fed lowers rates by 50 bps;
- Domestic credit rangebound;
- Primary market busy, led by securitisations;
- The outlook remains negative.

ESG APPROACH

Before being considered for investment, companies or issuers must pass a series of exclusionary screens. The screening processes is designed to limit the investible universe to only those companies or issuers that meet minimum values-based and ESG standards. The Perpetual ESG Credit Income Fund first applies a values-based and ESG exclusionary screen. Sovereign issuers are subject to a separate exclusionary screen. Please refer to the Perpetual Investment Funds PDS for further information.

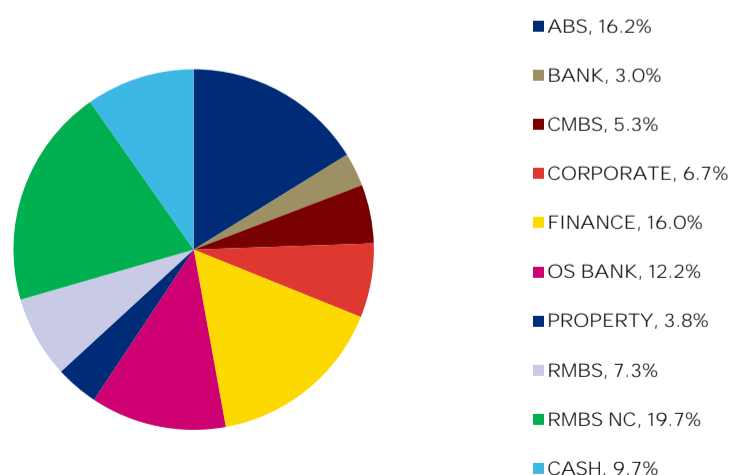
PORTFOLIO COMPOSITION

	BREAKDOWN
Senior Debt	26.64%
Subordinated Debt	62.73%
Hybrid Debt	10.63%
Running Yield [#]	5.93%
Portfolio Weighted Average Life (yrs)	3.20 yrs
No. Securities	64
Modified Duration	0.12

* Information on Management Costs (including estimated indirect costs) is set out in the Fund's PDS.

[^]The methodology used to calculate Running Yield is derived from FactSet, and calculated as follows: The coupon rate of the security / the capital price of the security. Note that the exception is discounted securities, where a Yield to Maturity calculation is used.

PORTFOLIO SECTORS



MARKET COMMENTARY

Financial markets consolidated during September with equities posting gains as the US commenced monetary easing and China unveiled a substantial monetary policy stimulus package intended to resuscitate the economy and support the embattled property market.

Domestic bond yields traded in a tight range, ending the month close to start of month levels. The RBA held rates at 4.35% at their September meeting while minutes revealed a dovish shift from a tightening to neutral bias. The Fed commenced monetary easing, cutting rates by 50 bps in September. US bond yields reacted favourably and the treasury curve flattened as short end yields rallied.

Credit spreads were rangebound during September. Spreads in government adjacent sectors including supranational and government agencies tightened while non-financial corporates widened marginally on aggregate.

A notable development in September was commentary from APRA proposing that banks phase out the use of additional Tier 1 capital bonds (Hybrids) and replace them with cheaper and more reliable forms of capital that would absorb losses more effectively in times of stress. This was in response to the 2023 turmoil observed in global banks following the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and acquisition (and subsequent write-off of AT1 capital) of Credit Suisse by UBS.

Primary markets saw a diverse array of issuers, highlighted by the return to market of a number of non-financial corporates. There were a number of new senior unsecured corporate deals, including Qantas (10 year 5.9% \$500M), Origin Energy (7 year 5.35% \$500m) and Telstra (6 Year 4.75% \$450M). QBE Insurance Group raised \$750M across fixed and floating tranches while major bank issuance was headlined by \$2.7B senior unsecured deal from Westpac. By the end of the third quarter, securitisation volumes surpassed their previous full calendar year record. Despite the elevated securitisation volume throughout 2024, demand has proved resilient.

PORTFOLIO COMMENTARY

Credit spread dynamics contributed to performance during September. While credit spreads traded in a tight range on aggregate, **the Fund's security selection** was rewarded across financials and corporate sectors. Allocation to securitised sectors was constructive in spite of the pressure on spreads from persistent elevated securitisation volumes.

The Fund's yield premium above bank bills was the most substantial contributor to performance during the month. Allocation to RMBS, domestic and offshore banks – led by subordinated issues – remain the key contributors to income return. The portfolio's running yield was 5.9% at month end, with the spread (credit yield premium) measured at 1.8%.

Active duration management contributed to performance during the month. The portfolio began September with a short (negative) duration position which was closed for profit early in the month. Following a rally in yields over the first two weeks of September, the Manager elected to reinstate the short duration position mid-month which performed well as yields rose from their mid-month nadir, following the U.S Federal Reserve's initial 50 basis point reduction in the cash rate. Duration was returned close to benchmark later during the month as profit was taken on this position.

Sector and risk allocations were actively managed. The Manager elected to add allocation to the property sector via a new \$600M fixed rate deal from Scentre Group. The Fund also added allocation to CMBS and ABS.

The outlook for credit is negative and the Fund is defensively positioned. The Manager continues to look for attractively priced issues and relative value opportunities while carefully managing credit and liquidity risks.

The Fund invests in quality issuers that meet Perpetual's ESG and Values based criteria relating to what the company is in the business of and the way business operations are conducted respectively. Upon application of the ESG and Values based criteria, several bond issuers have been screened out. These include, for example, companies involved in the extraction of fossil fuels or companies whose revenues are significantly associated with socially questionable products or services.

OUTLOOK

The credit outlook declined further throughout September ending the month with a strong negative reading.

Valuation indicators are marginally negative. While credit spreads are at neutral levels, AUD swap and basis swap levels are detracting from the overall outlook.

The Growth outlook declined to neutral. The ratio of upgrades to downgrades remains supportive however the macroeconomic growth and equity capital market indicators worsened during the month. Survey data has declined over the September quarter, UK Q2 GDP failed to meet consensus expectations and China – while improving – remains challenged.

Supply and demand indicators remained firmly negative. Elevated recent primary market volumes, coupled with a lean upcoming maturity schedule weigh on the credit outlook. The issuance pipeline has moderated somewhat, softening the negative reading.

Technical indicators remain marginally negative. Intermediary positioning and US equity market indicators are positively contributing, while cash levels of domestic real money accounts and US credit spread indicators are detracting from the overall outlook.

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The product disclosure statement (PDS) for the relevant fund, issued by PIML, should be considered before deciding whether to acquire or hold units in the fund. The PDS and Target Market Determination can be obtained by calling 1800 022 033 or visiting our website www.perpetual.com.au. No company in the Perpetual Group (Perpetual Limited ABN 86 000 431 827 and its subsidiaries) guarantees the performance of any fund or the return of an investor's capital. Total return shown for the fund(s) have been calculated using exit prices after taking into account all of Perpetual's ongoing fees and assuming reinvestment of distributions. No allowance has been made for contribution or withdrawal fees or taxation (except in the case of superannuation funds, as applicable). Past performance is not indicative of future performance.

MORE INFORMATION

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