GLOBAL ALLOCATION ABSOLUTE RETURN STRATEGY

Quarterly Investment Review

PRODUCT OVERVIEW

The GMO Global Allocation Absolute Return Strategy seeks to generate positive total return, rather than "relative" return, by allocating dynamically across asset classes, free from the constraints of traditional benchmarks. The Strategy invests in actively managed equity, fixed income, alternative, and cash strategies, as well as a GMO-managed diversified liquid alternatives mutual fund, which seeks positive total return with low volatility relative to equity markets and low correlation over a full market cycle to traditional market indices.

The philosophy that underlies all of GMO's Asset Allocation investment strategies is the belief that, at times and in the short term, the pricing of asset classes can deviate from true intrinsic value, but mean reverts to appropriate valuation levels over the long term. GMO's proprietary 7-Year Asset Class Forecasts form the foundation of our investment process, providing a framework to assess the return opportunity embedded in different asset classes. We use that insight to allocate to what we believe are the most attractively priced asset classes. GMO's Asset Allocation approach is flexible, not pre-determined by static allocations or benchmark-related ranges, constrained only by our unwillingness to overpay for an asset. We also seek to add value through security selection within both traditional and alternative asset classes.

MAJOR PERFORMANCE DRIVERS

Long-only equities represented 48.3% of the portfolio on average through the quarter, with 9.9% in Emerging Markets with a distinct value bias, 6.3% in Japan Fundamental Value, 5.0% in Developed ex-U.S. Small Value, 5.9% in Developed ex-U.S., 4.1% in Resource equity, 5.1% in U.S. Opportunistic Value, 9.1% in International Opportunistic Value, and 2.9% in Japan Small Value.

The equity portfolio returned 11.5% for the quarter, well behind the MSCI ACWI return of 14.9%. Top-down allocations were very unhelpful as the U.S. strongly outperformed developed ex-USA, although this was somewhat offset by an excellent return from emerging markets, while value also underperformed growth for the quarter. Security selection was modestly positive for the quarter. Our Emerging Markets portfolio returned 28.9%, ahead of the MSCI Emerging Markets Index return of 24.1%. The Japan Fundamental Value portfolio posted 16.6%, compared to the TOPIX return of 12.0%, while the Japan Small Value exposure posted -0.7%, and the Developed ex-USA Small Cap portfolio delivered 5.5%. The Developed ex-USA exposure posted 17.0%, which beat the MSCI World ex-USA Index by 680 bps and the MSCI World ex-USA Value Index by 890 bps. Resource equity posted -5.5%. The U.S. Opportunistic Value exposure returned 6.6%, which was 320 bps behind the MSCI USA Value Index return of 9.8%, and International Opportunistic Value posted 5.4%, behind the MSCI World ex-USA Value return of 8.1%.

Alternative strategies averaged 29.9% through the quarter, including 14.9% in Equity Dislocation, 13.0% in the Alternative Allocation Strategy, a broad and diversified range of alternative approaches in a single holding, and a 2.0% exposure to emerging market currencies. Alternative strategies returned -1.1% for the quarter, including the return on collateral. Equity Dislocation returned -1.4%, ahead of the MSCI ACWI Value minus MSCI ACWI Growth comparator return of -9.2%. The Alternative Allocation Strategy posted -2.6% for the quarter, and the emerging market currency exposure returned 4.1%.

Fixed income represented 21.8% of the portfolio on average through the quarter, including 1.8% in Asset-Backed Securities and 20.0% in U.S. Treasury Notes. Our fixed income strategies returned -2.1% for the quarter, behind the Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate return of 0.7%. Asset-Backed Securities posted 0.8%, ahead of the Bloomberg U.S. Securitized Index return of 0.6%. It was a tough quarter for traditional duration, and the U.S. Treasury exposure fell -2.3%.

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ANNUALIZED RETURNS (USD, %) (QUARTER-END)

	Quarter-End	YTD	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	10-Year	Since Inception
Global Allocation Absolute Return Strategy (net)	3.42	9.15	22.79	13.95	7.99	6.10	7.32
Global Allocation Absolute Return Strategy (gross)	3.67	9.69	24.02	15.10	9.07	7.17	8.38
CPI Index	0.69	2.01	3.44	3.06	4.18	3.32	2.55
Value Add	+2.73	+7.14	+19.34	+10.90	+3.81	+2.78	+4.77

RISKS

Risks associated with investing in the Strategy may include the risk that one or more of the underlying portfolios will not perform as expected and that the Strategy will indirectly be exposed to all of the risks of an investment in the underlying portfolios. Other risks associated with investing in the Strategy may include: (1) Market Risk - Equities: the market price of equities may decline due to factors affecting the issuer, its industries, or the economy and equity markets generally. Declines in stock market prices generally are likely to reduce the net asset value of the Fund's shares; (2) Market Risk - Fixed Income Investments: the market price of a fixed income investment can decline due to a number of market-related factors, including rising interest rates and widening credit spreads or decreased liquidity stemming from the market's uncertainty about the value of a fixed income investment (or class of fixed income investments); and (3) Non-U.S. Investment Risk: the market prices of many non-U.S. securities (particularly of companies tied economically to emerging countries) fluctuate more than those of U.S. securities. Many non-U.S. markets (particularly emerging markets) are less stable, smaller, less liquid, and less regulated than U.S. markets, and the cost of trading in those markets often is higher than it is in U.S. markets. This is not a complete list of risks associated with investing in the Strategy. Please contact GMO for more information.

Composite Inception Date: 31-Jul-01

Performance Returns: Performance for the year of inception is less than a full calendar year. Returns shown for periods greater than one year are on an annualized basis. To obtain performance information to the most recent month-end, visit www.gmo.com. **Performance data quoted represents past performance and is not indicative of future results.** Net returns are presented after the deduction of a model advisory fee and incentive fee if applicable. These returns include transaction costs, commissions and withholding taxes on foreign income and capital gains and include the reinvestment of dividends and other income, as applicable. Fees paid by accounts within the composite may be higher or lower than the model fees used. Gross returns are presented gross of management fees and any incentive fees if applicable. These returns include transaction costs, commissions, withholding taxes on foreign income and capital gains and include the reinvestment of dividends and other income, as applicable. If management and incentive fees were deducted performance would be lower. For example, if, before fees, the strategy were to achieve a 10% annual rate of return above its hurdle rate each year for ten years, and an annual advisory fee of 1% and incentive fee of 20% of net returns above the hurdle rate were charged during that period, the resulting average annual net return (after the deduction of management and incentive fees) would be approximately 7.20%. **GMO LLC claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®). A Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) Composite Report is available at www.gmo.com by clicking the GIPS® Composite Report link in the documents section of the strategy page. GIPS® is a registered trademark owned by CFA Institute. CFA Institute does not endorse or promote this organization, nor does it warrant the accuracy or quality of the content contained herein. Actual fees are disclosed in Part 2 of GMO's Form ADV and are also available in each strategy's Composite Report.** Returns include a substantial, one-time litigation settlement recovery received on December 16, 2024. This event contributed 0.90% to 2024 annual performance, based on a representative account. Performance for other periods, including this date, was also positively impacted, sometimes materially. Without this recovery, performance would have been lower in both absolute terms and relative to the benchmark. Additional information is available upon request. The portfolio is actively-managed, is not managed relative to a benchmark and uses an index for performance comparison purposes only and, where applicable, to compute a performance fee.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Comparator Index(es): The CPI (Consumer Price Index) for All Urban Consumers US All Items is published monthly by the U.S. government as an indicator of changes in price levels (or inflation) paid by urban consumers for a representative basket of goods and services. CPI Index returns are typically reported on the 15th of the month. The CPI data reported may not include the most recent month-end which could impact the data that GMO has provided.

The above information is based on a representative account in the Strategy selected because it has the fewest restrictions and best represents the implementation of the Strategy.

For private bank intermediaries in Singapore and Hong Kong, these materials are intended for institutional and Accredited/Professional Investors Use Only.

ABOUT GMO

Founded in 1977, GMO is a global asset manager committed to delivering superior performance and advice to our clients. We are privately owned, which allows us to singularly focus on our sole business – achieving outstanding long-term client investment outcomes. Offering multi-asset, equity, fixed income, and alternative strategies, we invest with a long-term, valuation-based philosophical approach.

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*GMO's West Coast Hub is comprised of members of Investment, Global Client Relations, and other teams located in and around the Greater San Francisco area
**Representative Office