

Fragility Returns, Complacency Remains



David Schassler
Head of Multi-Asset Solutions,
Portfolio Manager

VanEck's Multi-Asset Solutions team employs macro research, fundamental security selection, and quantitative strategies, to build dynamic model portfolios based on client-specific risk profiles. Headed by David Schassler, the team offers a comprehensive perspective on market trends, asset allocation, and strategic analysis.

3.3%

Headline Year-over-Year (YoY) inflation (CPI) came in hot at 3.3%. Largely driven by a 10.9% increase in energy costs, this is the highest level in about 2 years.

\$110+

Brent crude surpassed \$110 per barrel multiple times as the Iran conflict continued to escalate and exceed most duration expectations.

20%

Roughly 1/5th of global container trade volume passes through the Strait of Hormuz making it one of the most critical points in the global supply chain.*

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Other assets held by the strategies may have performed differently during the period.
*Source: IMF Portwatch.

Cracks in the Foundation

Globalization powered decades of prosperity. It was efficient, scalable, and deflationary.

Until it wasn't.

The first crack came during COVID, when the complexity behind that system broke under pressure. Supply chains froze. The world was reminded that efficiency and resilience are not the same thing.

The system healed. Trade resumed. Markets moved on.

Now we're getting the second reminder.

The Second Shock: Fragility Returns

The Iran conflict has exposed the same vulnerability, this time through a different channel. When stronger powers face asymmetry, the response is rarely conventional.

This time, the focus is the Strait of Hormuz.

This is not just another shipping lane.

It is a critical artery.

When it tightened, the system strained.

If it closes, the system breaks.

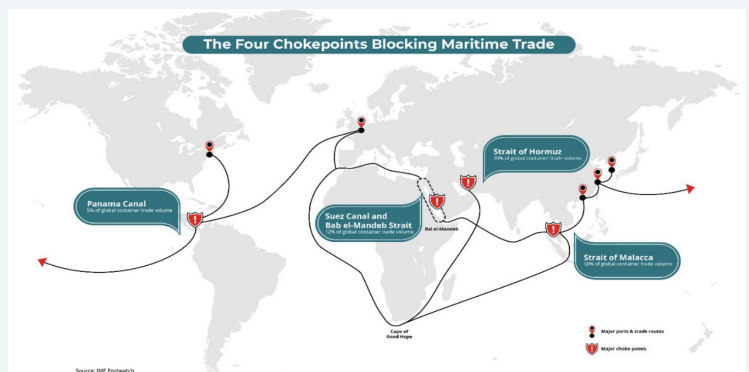
We recently hosted a webinar on this exact issue. Listen to it. It's worth your time.

Antonio de Pinho, Senior Analyst specializing in energy research, breaks down why this is not a quick fix.

[Webinar Replay: A Macro Playbook for Market Volatility and Geopolitical Conflict](#)

Energy markets are reacting accordingly.

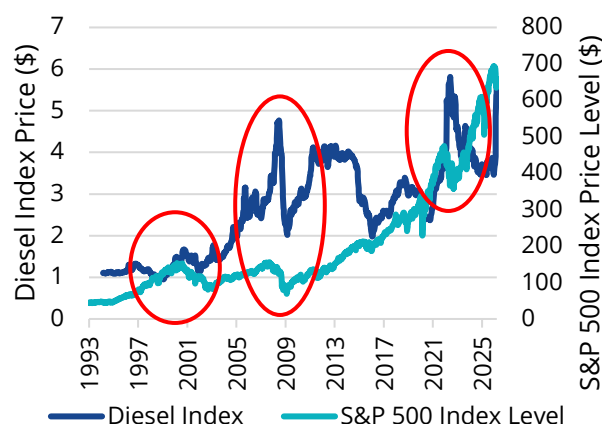
Historically, when energy prices surge, equity markets struggle. Higher energy costs act as a tax on the global economy.



The views expressed are for illustrative purposes only, subject to change without notice, do not constitute investment advice or recommendations, and are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of VanEck or its other employees. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

And yet today, equities are hovering near all-time highs.
 That is not a coincidence. It is a statement.
 Markets are betting this disruption is temporary. That the Strait will reopen quickly. That the system will once again prove resilient.
 That may be right.
 We are not willing to assume it is.
 We have reduced equity exposure across our Wealth Builder models by about 1%. This was based on recognition that risks have shifted, and that taking profits into strength is prudent.

Energy Shocks and Market Selloffs Coincide

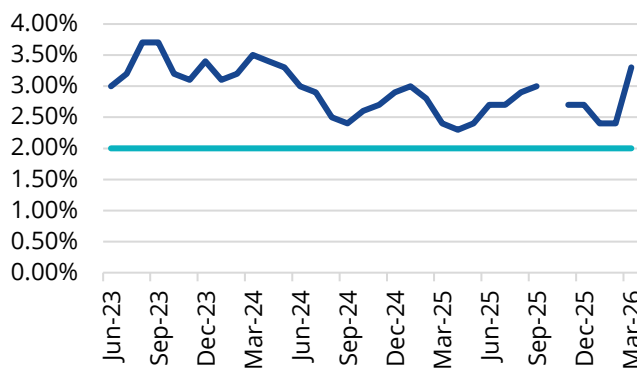


Source: Bloomberg; as of April 2026. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Index performance is not illustrative of fund performance. It is not possible to invest directly in an index.

Inflation is Back in the Conversation

At the same time, inflation is no longer theoretical.
 CPI has moved to 3.3% year-over-year, with a sharp monthly acceleration. ISM price indices are rising across both services and manufacturing. Survey data shows inflation expectations are moving higher globally.
 Could this fade next month? Possibly.
 But the direction of travel has changed, and markets are still positioned for the opposite.

Inflation Takes a Turn in the Wrong Direction



Source: BLS; as of April 2026. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Index performance is not illustrative of fund performance. It is not possible to invest directly in an index.

Technology is the Real Driver

For those still unsure how technology will reshape the world over the next five years, look no further than this conflict. Iran is clearly on the wrong side of technology.
 This is not just a geopolitical event. It is a case study in disruption.
 Technology is compressing time. It is lowering costs. It is changing how power is projected and how systems are challenged.
 The gap between those who adapt and those who do not is widening in real time.
 That is the real lesson. This is about using technology as force multiplication.
 This dynamic does not stop at the battlefield.
 It applies to every sector, every industry, every company, and every individual.
 The next five years may present challenges for those who are slow to adapt.

The views expressed are for illustrative purposes only, subject to change without notice, do not constitute investment advice or recommendations, and are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of VanEck or its other employees. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Volatility Creates Opportunity

Volatility creates opportunity, and we've been active.

This is especially true for the VanEck Commodity Strategy ETF (PIT). Our strategy is designed to ride momentum and take advantage of overbought and oversold conditions.

Last year, our models viewed gold and other metals as overbought and energy as oversold.

So, we did something about it.

We spent the second half of 2025 working down our gold position and buying energy. We purchased diversified baskets of highly correlated energy holdings, such as WTI, Brent, and heating oil.

The first chart tracks our energy trades within PIT - green marks our buys, red marks our sells - illustrated against WTI prices at the time of our transactions. The light blue line shows our total energy weight.

These purchases were funded primarily from sales of metals. We sold diversified baskets of precious and industrial metals, such as gold, silver, and copper.

The second chart tracks our metals trades within PIT, shown against gold prices. The dark blue line shows our total metals weight.

Recently, we have been going the other way.

To us, energy prices look overbought and precious and base metals look oversold.

But the opportunity is not simply directional. It is structural.

Commodity markets, like equities, are expressing a degree of complacency. The backwardated shape of the futures curve for WTI reflects a market that expects energy prices to fall, with near-term contract prices significantly above those that settle further out. It is even more extreme in Heating Oil/Diesel and European Gas Oil.

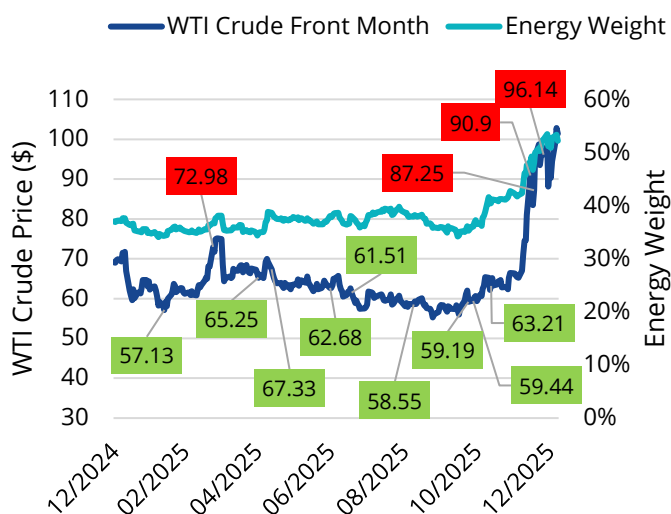
We are not convinced.

We have shifted a significant portion of our energy exposure in PIT from the front-month to contracts that expire in late summer.

This positioning is intentional.

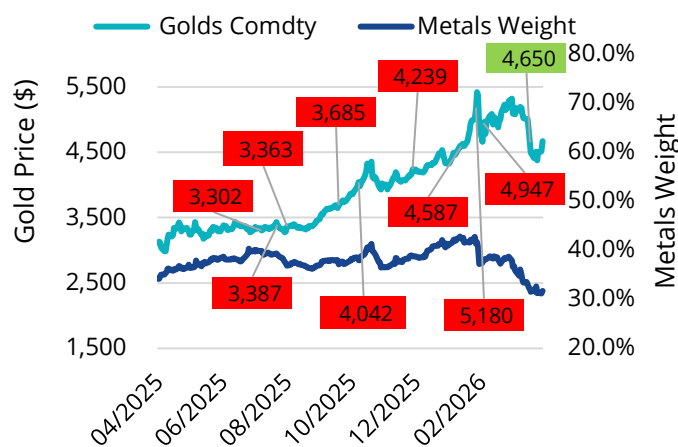
If higher energy prices prove to be sticky, this positioning benefits. If there is a quick resolution and energy prices fall, the front-month contracts we reduced would be expected to decline more sharply.

PIT Energy Trades



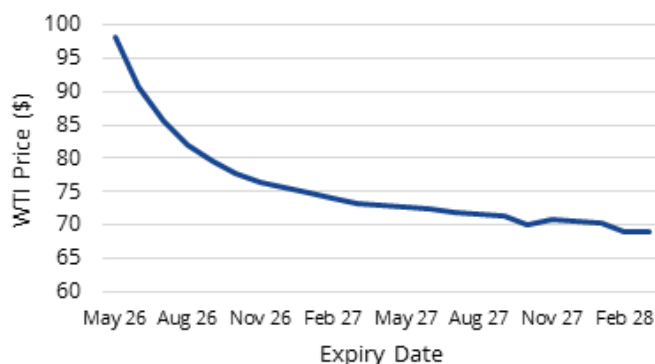
Source: VanEck, Bloomberg; as of April 2026. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

PIT Metals Trades



Source: VanEck, Bloomberg; as of April 2026. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

PIT's Oil Exposure is Front Heavy



Source: VanEck; as of April 2026.

The views expressed are for illustrative purposes only, subject to change without notice, do not constitute investment advice or recommendations, and are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of VanEck or its other employees. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Position for Both Outcomes

Markets remain overly complacent.

Equities are near all-time highs. Credit spreads are tight. Energy futures curves are deeply backwardated, suggesting markets expect this to pass quickly.

We are less convinced.

Our job is not to predict outcomes with certainty. It is to define risks and build portfolios that can perform across a range of scenarios.

Standardized Performance

	Inception Date	1M	3M	YTD	1Y	3Y	5Y	Since Inception
Wealth Builder Plus Conservative Strategy	7/1/2024							
Net		-3.03	-0.43	-0.43	8.06	--	--	7.44
Gross		-3.03	-0.43	-0.43	8.06	--	--	7.44
20% ACWI/80% ICE US Broad Market Index		-2.90	-0.64	-0.64	7.14	--	--	6.70
Wealth Builder Plus Moderate Strategy	7/1/2024							
Net		-4.54	-1.12	-1.12	14.45	--	--	11.01
Gross		-4.54	-1.12	-1.12	14.45	--	--	11.01
60% ACWI/40% ICE US Broad Market Index		-5.15	-2.06	-2.06	12.78	--	--	9.51
Wealth Builder Plus Aggressive Strategy	7/1/2024							
Net		-5.20	-1.37	-1.37	17.91	--	--	12.97
Gross		-5.20	-1.37	-1.37	17.91	--	--	12.97
80% ACWI/20% ICE US Broad Market Index		-6.26	-2.79	-2.79	15.58	--	--	10.82
VanEck Commodity Strategy (PIT)	12/20/2022							
PIT (NAV)		18.64	36.61	36.61	54.19	21.32	--	18.22
PIT (Market Price)		18.54	37.04	37.04	54.31	21.48	--	18.31
Bloomberg Commodity Index (BCOM)		11.50	24.41	24.41	32.29	13.88	--	11.07

The performance data quoted represents past performance. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Performance may be lower or higher than performance data quoted. Performance figures presented herein are preliminary and may differ slightly from final performance figures. Net and gross performance may be substantially similar when VanEck does not overlay a fee. Please contact us at info@vaneck.com for additional information.

Returns greater than 1 year are annualized.

Source: VanEck. As of 3/31/2026.

The views expressed are for illustrative purposes only, subject to change without notice, do not constitute investment advice or recommendations, and are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of VanEck or its other employees. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Disclosures

This is not an offer to buy or sell, or a recommendation to buy or sell any of the securities, financial instruments or digital assets mentioned herein. The information presented does not involve the rendering of personalized investment, financial, legal, tax advice, or any call to action. Certain statements contained herein may constitute projections, forecasts and other forward-looking statements, which do not reflect actual results, are for illustrative purposes only, are valid as of the date of this communication, and are subject to change without notice. Actual future performance of any assets or industries mentioned are unknown. Information provided by third party sources are believed to be reliable and have not been independently verified for accuracy or completeness and cannot be guaranteed. VanEck does not guarantee the accuracy of third party data. The information herein represents the opinion of the author(s), but not necessarily those of VanEck or its other employees.

Any projections, market outlooks or estimates in this material are forward-looking statements and are based upon certain assumptions that are solely the opinion of VanEck. Any projections, outlooks or assumptions should not be construed to be indicative of the actual events which will occur. Further, any information regarding portfolio composition, portfolio composition methodology, investment process or limits, or valuation methods of evaluating companies and markets are intended as guidelines which may be modified or changed by VanEck at any time in its sole discretion without notice.

The models are not mutual funds or other types of securities and will not be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission as investment companies under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, and no units or shares of the models will be registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, nor will they be registered with any state securities regulator. Accordingly, the models are not subject to compliance with the requirements of such acts.

The portfolio holdings presented represent securities held as of the period indicated and may not be representative of current or future investments. Such data may vary for each client in the strategy due to, but not limited to, asset size, market conditions, client guidelines and the diversity of portfolio holdings. Portfolio holdings are subject to change without notice and are being provided for illustrative purposes only. Nothing contained herein should be construed as (i) an offer to buy any security or (ii) a recommendation as to the advisability of investing in, purchasing or selling any security. This material is being provided for illustrative purposes only. Past performance is no guarantee of future results.

An investment in the strategies may be subject to risks which include, among others, equity securities, market, volatility, futures contract, investments related to bitcoin and bitcoin futures, derivatives, social media analytics, information technology, communication services, consumer discretionary, software and internet software, financials and semiconductor industries, emerging market securities, counterparty, foreign securities, foreign currency, non-U.S. issuers, investment capacity, target exposure and rebalancing, small- and medium-capitalization companies, borrowing and leverage, indirect investment, credit, interest rate, illiquidity, investing in other investment companies, management, non-diversified, operational, portfolio turnover, regulatory, repurchase agreements, tax, cash transactions, authorized participant concentration, no guarantee of active trading market, trading issues, fund shares trading, premium/discount and liquidity of fund shares, U.S. government securities, debt securities, municipal securities, securitized/asset-backed securities, and sovereign bond risks, all of which could significantly and adversely affect the strategies.

Digital asset investments are subject to significant risk and may not be suitable for all investors. Digital asset prices are highly volatile, and the value of digital assets, can rise or fall dramatically and quickly. If their value goes down, there's no guarantee that it will rise again. As a result, there is a significant risk of loss of your entire principal investment.

All investing is subject to risk, including the possible loss of the money you invest. As with any investment strategy, there is no guarantee that investment objectives will be met and investors may lose money. Diversification does not ensure a profit or protect against a loss in a declining market. Past performance is no guarantee of future performance.

Model Portfolio information is designed to be used by financial advisors solely as an educational resource, along with other potential resources advisors may consider, in providing services to their end clients. VanEck's Model Portfolios and related content are for information only and are not intended to provide, and should not be relied on for, tax, legal, accounting, investment or financial planning advice by VanEck, nor should any VanEck Model Portfolio information be considered or relied upon as investment advice or as a recommendation from VanEck, including regarding the use or suitability of any VanEck Model Portfolio, any particular security or any particular strategy. In providing VanEck Model Portfolio information, VanEck is not acting and has not agreed to act in an investment advisory, fiduciary or quasi-fiduciary capacity to any advisor or end client, and has no responsibility in connection therewith, and is not providing individualized investment advice to any advisor or end client, including based on or tailored to the circumstance of any advisor or end client. The Model Portfolio information is provided "as is," without warranty of any kind, express or implied. VanEck is not responsible for determining the securities to be purchased, held and/or sold for any advisor or end client accounts, nor is VanEck responsible for determining the suitability or appropriateness of a Model Portfolio or any securities included therein for any third party, including end clients. Advisors are solely responsible for making investment recommendations and/or decisions with respect to an end client, and should consider the end client's individual financial circumstances, investment time frame, risk tolerance level and investment goals in determining the appropriateness of a particular investment or strategy, without input from VanEck. VanEck does not have investment discretion and does not place trade orders for any end client accounts. Information and other marketing materials provided to you by VanEck concerning a Model Portfolio—including allocations, performance and other characteristics—may not be indicative of an end client's actual experience from investing in one or more of the funds included in a Model Portfolio. Using an asset allocation strategy does not ensure a profit or protect against loss, and diversification does not eliminate the risk of experiencing investment losses. There is no assurance that investing in accordance with a Model Portfolio's allocations will provide positive performance over any period. Any content or information included in or related to a VanEck Model Portfolio, including descriptions, allocations, data, fund details and disclosures are subject to change and may not be altered by an advisor or other third party in any way.

The S&P 500 Index is a product of S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC and/or its affiliates and has been licensed for use by Van Eck Associates Corporation. Copyright © 2024 S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, a division of S&P Global, Inc., and/or its affiliates. All rights reserved. Redistribution or reproduction in whole or in part are prohibited without written permission of S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC. For more information on any of S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC's indices please visit <https://www.spglobal.com/spdji/en/>. S&P® is a registered trademark of S&P Global and Dow Jones® is a registered trademark of Dow Jones Trademark Holdings LLC. Neither S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, Dow Jones Trademark Holdings LLC, their affiliates nor their third party licensors make any representation or warranty, express or implied, as to the ability of any index to accurately represent the asset class or market sector that it purports to represent and neither S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, Dow Jones Trademark Holdings LLC, their affiliates nor their third party licensors shall have any liability for any errors, omissions, or interruptions of any index or the data included therein.

The S&P 500® Index consists of 500 widely held common stocks covering industrial, utility, financial and transportation sector; as an Index, it is unmanaged and is not a security in which investments can be made.

GIPS Disclosures

Van Eck Associates Corporation (“VanEck”) is an independent investment adviser registered under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. VanEck, which commenced operations 1985 (predecessor company in 1955), provides investment advisory services to registered investment companies, other pooled investment vehicles, separate institutional clients, and private investment accounts.

VanEck claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. VanEck has been independently verified for the periods January 1, 2006 through September 30, 2025. The verification reports are available upon request. A firm that claims compliance with the GIPS standards must establish policies and procedures for complying with all the applicable requirements of the GIPS standards. Verification provides assurance on whether the firm’s policies and procedures related to composite and pooled fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been designed in compliance with the GIPS standards and have been implemented on a firm-wide basis. Verification does not provide assurance on the accuracy of any specific performance report. The Wealth Builder Moderate (Proprietary) composite’s inception date is July 1, 2024 and the creation date is July 1, 2024. GIPS® is a registered trademark of CFA Institute. CFA Institute does not endorse or promote this organization, nor does it warrant the accuracy or quality of the content contained herein.

Wealth Builder Plus Moderate (Proprietary) is a diversified, risk-balanced portfolio of U.S. listed ETFs that gains exposure to key asset classes. These include, U.S., developed international and emerging market equities, U.S. investment grade, high yield and emerging market debt, and commodity futures, gold bullion and natural resource equities. Additionally, the strategy may gain exposure, through U.S. listed ETFs, to more differentiated assets, such as digital assets and high yield alternatives. The strategy will re-balance periodically to maintain diversification and its overall risk profile. The Wealth Builder Plus Moderate (Proprietary) risk level is moderate. 100% of composite assets are proprietary.

60% ACWI 40% US Broad Market Index (6040MOD) is a blended index of 60 % MSCI ACWI and 40% ICE BofA US Broad Market Index. MSCI All Country World Index (MXWD) is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index designed to measure the combined equity market performance of developed and emerging markets countries. ICE BofA US Broad Market Index (US00) tracks the performance of US dollar denominated investment grade debt publicly issued and settled in the US domestic market, including US Treasury, quasi-government, corporate, securitized and collateralized securities.

Wealth Builder Plus Conservative (Proprietary) is a diversified, risk-balanced portfolio of U.S. listed ETFs that gains exposure to key asset classes. These include, U.S., developed international and emerging market equities, U.S. investment grade, high yield and emerging market debt, and commodity futures, gold bullion and natural resource equities. Additionally, the strategy may gain exposure, through U.S. listed ETFs, to more differentiated assets, such as digital assets and high yield alternatives. The strategy will re-balance periodically to maintain diversification and its overall risk profile. The Wealth Builder Plus Conservative (Proprietary) risk level is conservative. 100% of composite assets are proprietary.

20% ACWI 80% US Broad Market Index (2080CON) is a blended index of 20 % MSCI ACWI and 80% ICE BofA US Broad Market Index. MSCI All Country World Index (MXWD) is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index designed to measure the combined equity market performance of developed and emerging markets countries. ICE BofA US Broad Market Index (US00) tracks the performance of US dollar denominated investment grade debt publicly issued and settled in the US domestic market, including US Treasury, quasi-government, corporate, securitized and collateralized securities.

Wealth Builder Plus Aggressive (Proprietary) is a diversified, risk-balanced portfolio of U.S. listed ETFs that gains exposure to key asset classes. These include, U.S., developed international and emerging market equities, U.S. investment grade, high yield and emerging market debt, and commodity futures, gold bullion and natural resource equities. Additionally, the strategy may gain exposure, through U.S. listed ETFs, to more differentiated assets, such as digital assets and high yield alternatives. The strategy will re-balance periodically to maintain diversification and its overall risk profile. The Wealth Builder Plus Aggressive (Proprietary) risk level is aggressive. 100% of composite assets are proprietary.

80% ACWI 20% US Broad Market Index (8020AGG) is a blended index of 80 % MSCI ACWI and 20% ICE BofA US Broad Market Index. MSCI All Country World Index (MXWD) is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index designed to measure the combined equity market performance of developed and emerging markets countries. ICE BofA US Broad Market Index (US00) tracks the performance of US dollar denominated investment grade debt publicly issued and settled in the US domestic market, including US Treasury, quasi-government, corporate, securitized and collateralized securities.

The composite returns represent the total returns of all fully discretionary portfolios within the strategies’ mandate. The returns of the portfolio are time-weighted, based on trade date accounting. VanEck’s policy is to accrue interest income and recognize dividend income and short dividend expense as reported on ex-dividend date. Interest income is recognized when received. Interest, dividends, and capital gains accrued on foreign securities are reported net of non-reclaimable foreign withholding taxes. Portfolio valuations are based on market values and expressed in US Dollars.

Composite returns are shown gross and net of management fees while including the reinvestment of all income. Brokerage and transaction expenses such as exchange, duty, and commission fees are deducted from trade amounts to determine net transaction costs/proceeds which are reflected in both gross and net returns. Net of fee performance is calculated by deducting actual management fees and in some instances, performance based fees charged to each account.

The composite returns represent past performance and are not reliable indicators of future results which may vary. The composite and comparative index returns can be found on the following page. Additional information regarding policies for valuing investments, calculating performance and preparing GIPS Reports are all available upon request.

Van Eck Associates Corporation (the “Adviser”) has agreed to waive fees and/or pay Fund expenses to the extent necessary to prevent the operating expenses of the Fund (excluding acquired fund fees and expenses, trading expenses, taxes and extraordinary expenses). The expense limitation is expected to continue until the Fund’s Board of Trustees acts to discontinue all or a portion of such expense limitation. A complete list of composite and limited distribution pooled fund descriptions and list of broad distribution pooled funds is available upon request.

Total Firm AUM include all discretionary and non-discretionary assets under management of VanEck, including all fee-paying accounts and accounts managed outside the Firm (e.g. by sub-advisers) where VanEck has allocation and selection authority. Firm proprietary accounts are included in the definition of firm assets. The three-year annualized standard deviation, gross of fees, found on the following page, measures the variability of the composite and the benchmark returns over the preceding 36 month period.

The significant cash flow policy has been suspended for this composite since its inception.



Van Eck Associates Corporation
666 Third Avenue | New York, NY 10017
vaneck.com | 800.826.2333

Exchange-Traded Funds
Mutual Funds
Institutional Funds
Model Delivery
Separately Managed Accounts
UCITS Funds
UCITS Exchange-Traded Funds