

# Schroder ISF\* Global Climate Change Equity

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## Performance overview

- Global equity markets advanced in July, amid greater clarity on trade tariffs, as the US announced deals with several major trading partners in advance of the 1 August deadline.
- The House of Representatives approved President Trump's flagship tax and spending plans (the 'Big Beautiful Bill') which brought more clarity to the policy backdrop.
- While several supportive clean energy provisions were removed, the final legislation proved less detrimental than many had anticipated. Combined with signs of improving earnings momentum and a softening of tariff concerns, this helped the sector perform relatively well in July.
- Stylistically, growth stocks saw resurgent performance in the US while value stocks significantly outperformed outside of the US. Information technology stocks continued their rebound from the falls suffered earlier in the year.
- The fund posted a positive return and outperformed the MSCI All Country World index over the month.

## Drivers of fund performance

- Stock selection in industrials and communication services added value during the month. Our zero-weight allocation to healthcare was also supportive. Conversely, our slight underweight to the information technology sector weighed on returns.
- By region, allocations to North America and Continental Europe contributed whereas holdings in the UK and Japan detracted.
- Industrial technology company, **TE Connectivity** performed well through July, the company announced positive quarterly earnings which resulted in market analysts upgrading the stock. TE Connectivity also benefitted from improving market sentiment for AI applications and energy solutions.
- Wind equipment company, **Vestas Wind Systems**, outperformed in July as the stock re-rated thanks to Positive policy news in the US.

- Lack of exposure to the Mega cap technology names weighed on relative returns during the period, particularly not holding shares in, Nvidia.
- Despite being one of the top contributors in June, our position in **Arm Holdings**, underperformed during July. The company issued second quarter forecasts slightly below analysts' expectations which saw the share price decline. However, we are encouraged by the announcement of plans to develop its own chips and components.

## Portfolio activity:

- We initiated a new position in water technology company, **Xylem**. The company provide innovative technologies and services to improve water quality, manage water resources, and enhance water infrastructure. A credible turnaround plan is underway under the new management team, who are focused on operating efficiencies and the core business products.
- Another new holding in the portfolio, is environmental services business, **Republic Services**, the company specialise in waste management and recycling. Republic Services has recently launched a new renewable natural gas facility aiding progress towards its long-term environmental strategy.
- We sold our holdings in integrated solid waste services company, Waste Connections.

## Outlook/positioning

**Shifts in US policy fuel global uncertainty:** The Trump administration's announcement of sweeping new US tariffs triggered a sharp sell-off, shaking investor confidence and adding to an already uncertain backdrop. While the announced pause has offered momentary relief for investors, the unpredictability of the new policy environment paints an uncertain picture for global markets and the Climate Change theme.

Many energy transition technologies rely on complex global supply chains, so one consequence of higher global tariffs will likely be a costlier energy transition, particularly in the US. This will not necessarily translate into increased costs everywhere; it remains to be seen

whether other regions will erect barriers against China trade flows as part of negotiations with the US. The prices of some goods may even fall as supply flows shift.

There will also be relative winners from increased US tariffs, such as international producers who now have greater access to US end markets due to manufacturing operations being built or already operational in the US. Consequently, there will be greater demand with reduced competition from Chinese-based peers for these companies which will be supportive for revenue growth. Near term, the increased uncertainty will lead to slower decision-making on energy transition projects, particularly in the US.

There is an inflation and consumption shock developing in the US economy, and while the pressure is temporarily relieved by the tariff pause, the underlying risk of recession is elevated. The underweight to US equities, particularly domestic sectors like financials and consumer stocks, should be a positive for relative performance in the short-term.

**US climate policy** There are still some risks to overcome, including adjustments to US tax policy proposals as we continue to move through the budget reconciliation process and the potential consequences of tariffs following the 90-Day pause, but overall we continue to think that the catalysts for the theme can continue to play out over the rest of this year even through periods of potential volatility.

**Faling rate environment:** While the implications of US tariff policy will have an inflationary impact on many aspects of the Climate Change theme, ongoing rate cuts will provide some offset to the rising costs elsewhere. Global interest rates continue to fall with central banks announcing further cuts to base rates, giving a much-needed boost for capital-intensive green projects, making investments in renewables, energy storage, and other climate technologies more attractive.

**Preference for European climate names:** The outlook for European investment and economic activity remains favourable in comparison with other regions. We are maintaining our overweight to Europe and the constructive outlook is driven by a pivot towards pro-growth policy and fiscal support as well as a greater recovery potential from an economy with greater sensitivity to rates.

**Long-term foundations for climate investment:** Outside of the US, the energy transition is not standing still. Despite short-term challenges, global climate policy frameworks such as the EU Green Deal, along with widespread corporate commitments on climate, continue to support efforts to decarbonise global economies. Renewable energy remains very competitive

with other energy sources, and EV prices are declining as the industry scales. Encouraging data points on EV demand in Europe as well as resilient utility spending on the energy transition further bolster this outlook. Valuations across many climate-related assets continue to be attractive after a period of prolonged weakness for the theme.

**Conclusion:** The rapid pace of policy change requires a calm and considered approach to investment decisions. Sentiment and valuations have fallen and uncertainty is high. Yet, fundamentals for many of the sectors that we invest in are intact, and climate change remains a theme which offers long-term structural growth. Periods of turmoil can create some of the best long-term opportunities for disciplined investors, and we are prepared to act where we see opportunities arise. We are monitoring the evolving situation closely, incorporating new information into our investment cases and continuing to pursue our fundamentally-driven investment approach.

Past performance does not predict future returns. The value of investments and the income from them may go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount originally invested.

### Calendar year performance (%)

	Fund	Benchmark***
2024	4.3	17.5
2023	12.3	22.2
2022	-24.4	-18.4
2021	11.2	19.3
2020	51.7	15.9
2019	25.5	27.7
2018	-10.8	-8.7
2017	30.5	22.4
2016	2.7	7.5
2015	2.0	-0.9

Source : Schroders, net of fees, NAV to NAV with net income reinvested. C Acc share class, as at 31 December 2024. \*\*\*MSCI All Country World - Net Return. The Fund does not have a target benchmark. The Fund's performance should be compared against the MSCI All Country World (Net TR) index. The comparator benchmark is only included for performance comparison purposes and does not have any bearing on how the Investment Manager invests the Fund's assets. The Fund's investment universe is expected to overlap materially with the components of the comparator benchmark.

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