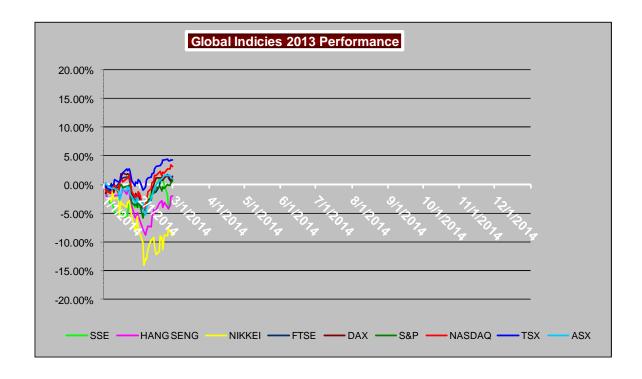


# **GDB March 2014 Newsletter**

## **Monthly Market Summary:**

2014 February Market Activity		
SSE COMPOSITE	2,056.30	+23.22 (+1.14%)
HANG SENG	22,836.96	+801.54 (+3.64%)
NIKKEI 225	14,841.07	-73.46 (-0.49%)
FTSE 100	6,809.70	+299.30 (+4.60%)
DAX	9,692.08	+385.60 (+4.14%)
DOW	16,321.71	+622.86 (+3.97%)
S&P 500	1,859.45	+76.86 (+4.31%)
NASDAQ COMPOSITE	4,308.12	+204.24 (+4.98%)
ASX 200	5,404.80	+214.80 (+4.14%)
TSX COMPOSITE	14,209.60	+514.70 (+3.76%)
TSX VENTURE	1025.37	+74.05 (+7.78%)

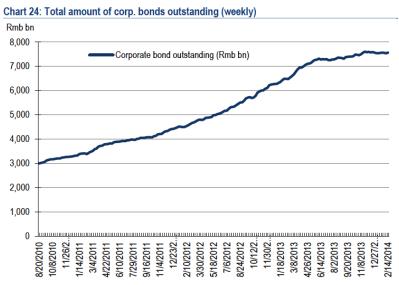




#### **Investment Themes:**

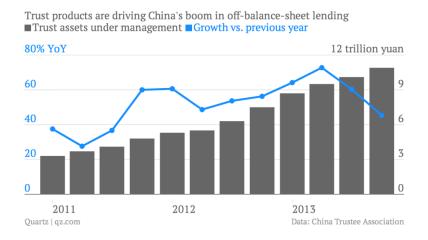
On March 7, China's onshore bond market has experienced its first ever default with Shanghai Chaori Solar Energy Science & Technology Co. failing to meet 89 million yuan (USD 14.5 million) interest obligations on its 1 billion yuan bonds issued in 2012. Although the defaulted is tiny relative to the overall domestic corporate bond market, estimated at USD 1.5 trillion, this marks an unprecedented event in which the government and the state-owned banks have refrained from step in to provide backstop. Until now, investment products on the brink of default have all been bailed out in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, for example, the last minute rescue of Credit Equals Gold #1 Trust by an "unnamed third-party" at the end of January. Just a week after Chaori's default, Zhejiang Xingrun Real Estate Co. announced that it would not be able to repay about 3.5 billion yuan (USD 625 million) of its debt to creditors, including more than 15 banks.

The absence of government backstop to corporate debt default marks a major policy shift and has effectively forced the market to re-examine and re-price risk in China's private debt sector including corporate debt and trust products. The absence of risk has led to a surge in corporate debt and trust product demand in recent years. China's onshore corporate bond market has ballooned from 800 billion yuan in 2007 to more than 9 trillion yuan now according to BofA/Merrill Lynch:



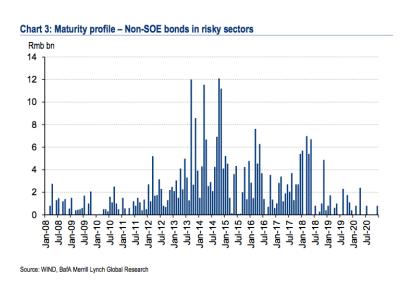


The demand for trust products has also grown exponentially over the years due to investor's belief that default risk is non-existent; it's now sitting at 10.9 trillion yuan:



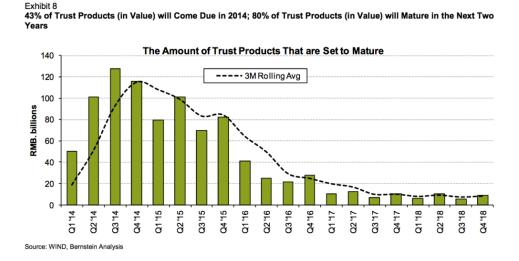
At this point, we think the re-pricing of risk will be segregated in the private sector as a default by SOEs will likely trigger widespread systematic risk that the central government would want to circumvent; having said that, we do have to caution that the state owned banks are the creditors to many of these debts (around 38% according to BofA/Merrill Lynch).

The timing of the government's new stance on credit market may not be the most ideal as many of these debts mature and may need to be rolled over in the latter half of this year:





On top of that, 43% of the 10.9 trillion yuan worth of outstanding trust products also comes due in 2014:



As rates rise and credit market tightens, many companies will find it more challenging to raise funds in the bond market. In fact, the defaults so far has already caused repercussion in the Chinese bond markets. In the first half of March, at least 22 companies postponed or cancelled their scheduled short-and-medium-term bond issuances.

Another unintended side-effects of private sector default is the impact on the collaterals many these private company post for loans. It is a common practice in China to use copper and iron ore as collateral to secure unconventional low-interest rate loans from lenders. Analysts estimate that around 60% of the copper in Chinese warehouses is held in storage as a form of collateral against debt. As creditor default increases, lenders will unwind these collaterals to recoup losses. Iron ore prices have slid to 18 months lows while copper prices receded to 4 year lows in March.

For the months to come, we expect volatility to pick up as China credit story unfolds. Unlike the credit and commodities market, the equity market has yet to pick up this cue outside of China. There is a saying on Wall Street., credit always leads equities. With S&P at its all time highs, and 16% of its earnings coming from the emerging markets, large portion of that from China, we see headwind ahead if China's credit condition deteriorates. At the same time, we believe the 4-year low copper price presents a good entry opportunity as much of the declining prices may be



attributed to speculation of margin selling from Chinese creditors. If China is able to overcome its debt woes, and its economy continues to steer ahead, the price for copper should not be at where it is today. If credit situation worsens and leads to government intervention to stimulate economy, much of the stimulus is likely be infrastructure driven, and again the price for copper will be supported by demand. Lastly, non-Chinese buyers will use the current opportunity to re-stock their own copper inventory at current's multi-year low price.

We believe the Chinese credit market is a major macro risk in the coming months and we will continue to monitor the situation to advise the best course of action for our clients.



### **Investment Opportunities:**

#### 1. Sino-GDB Fund

Fund managed by GDB Capital. Event-driven investments using hedging strategies and combinations of long/short positions in equities, futures, and commodities and their derivatives. Fund targets gross pre-tax IRR of 20% per annum, and returned 108% in 2012 and 194% in 2013. Minimum investment USD 100,000. GDB will insure against investment losses up to 5% of original investment. Following are the benchmark comparisons of GDB Fund performance against the major US Indices.

