ROBECOSAM SMART ENERGY EQUITIES

Energy efficiency in AI driving performance



- Big returns in Big Data
- Electric Equipment Suppliers deliver strong results and positive outlook
- Renewable Energy and Electric Vehicles markets suffering from hangover

Market review and developments

Equity markets continued to grind harder in the first quarter of 2024 with several equity indexes breaking new record highs. Q1 2024 turned out to be the best Q1 performance in five years for global equities actually, driven by hopes of a soft economic landing in the US, enthusiasm about AI, as well as anticipated central bank rate cuts. Overall, what began as tech-driven rally in January broadened out across the quarter, with equities in Europe and Japan beginning to outpace the US. An interesting note of the global market rally is the fact that even government bond yields have risen year-to-date.

Regionally, Japan outperformed all other markets with a 20% rally in Q1 based on growing confidence in the economy and rising prices for domestic chip-related stocks. European stocks also outperformed the US in the first quarter with the Euro Stoxx 50 gaining over 12%. The S&P 500 gained 10% in the first quarter, its best start to the year since 2019, while interestingly, tech heavy Nasdaq was slightly lagging with 9%. Emerging markets underperformed once again with China being the biggest drag. For the quarter, Semiconductors and Information Technology were among the best-performing sectors fueled by the AI hype. Communications as well as Energy were also performing well. Laggards in the quarter were mainly REITs, Utilities as well as Consumer Discretionary. The former two are suffering due to delays in Fed rate cuts.

Artificial intelligence has taken the world by storm. As companies and even countries are trying to secure crucial AI chips in order to win the race, the focus shifts to secondary effects of the AI boom. Energy demand for running these power-hungry AI chips is becoming a crucial topic, as one single chip can consume up to 1000 Watts(!) which is equivalent to a full-powered hairdryer. Energy efficiency solutions in the data center can reduce operating expenses by more than 40%, such as more efficient power distribution, better chip design and switching to liquid cooling from traditional air-based cooling.

Regardless, the huge energy consumption remains. Energy companies increasingly cite AI power consumption as a leading contributor to new demand as data centers could comprise up to 7.5% of total US electricity consumption by 2030, according to data from Boston Consulting Group. The data center market is expected to grow around five-fold through 2035 due to generative AI, cloud adoption and data sovereignty. Current data center power needs in Europe are 32 GWh but are expected to increase to >160 GWh by 2035. The increase in power consumption will require roughly an additional 50 GW of renewable installations in Europe, or about EUR 35 billion of renewable investments.

PORTFOLIO MANAGER'S UPDATE MARCH 2024

Marketing material for professional investors, not for onward distribution



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Roman Boner, CFA Senior Portfolio Manager



Michael Studer, PhD Co-Portfolio Manager



Sanaa Hakim, MBA Co-Portfolio Manager

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Performance

Last quarter's performance¹

Performance for Q1 2024 was ahead of the investable universe, but behind global equity markets.

The Energy Efficiency cluster was by far the best performer, but with wide dispersion between the subclusters. Big Data did extremely well in the quarter, thanks to Arm's share price jump on the back of a bullish forecast by management. During their results presentation, the company revealed they are guiding for 30% royalty growth in 2024 due to strong adoption and price lift for its new Armv9 product platform. Vertiv followed closely on the back of strong data center demand driven by Al solutions. A negative outlier was the fiberoptics company Lumentum, which suffered from a product transition and weak demand from telecom customers.

In Energy Efficient Buildings, good performance was driven by the continued positive share price reaction of roof insulation and construction materials company Carlisle after strong results and guidance. In Industrial Processes, Regal Rexnord, a leading motion control manufacturer, delivered very strong results contrary to the IoT company Nordic Semiconductor, which reported another disappointing set of results due to continued inventory corrections in the Industrial sector and a cautious outlook by the new CEO. The subcluster Transportation is suffering from a slowdown in the EV market, but strong stock selection with investments in train manufacturer Alstom and Chinese EV maker BYD led to a positive contribution.

The Energy Distribution cluster was the second-best performer in the fund, with positive performance from the subcluster Equipment suppliers, but slightly negative contribution from Electric Networks. Within Equipment Suppliers, the biggest positive outperformer was Quanta Services, which continues to capitalize on the increasing grid investment and the buildout of renewables in North America. Smart metering company Itron benefited from strong demand from Utilities for smart meters and services around energy management as power systems get increasingly complex. Strong demand for data center power supply driven by AI adoption and fast rising electrification trends led to strong performance of the French electrification and automation bellwether Schneider Electric alongside the US electrical company nVent. On the other hand, the more defensive subcluster Electric Networks was more restrained in an increasingly risk-on environment combined with interest rates staying higher for longer. Accordingly, Terna and SSE underperformed. Contrary to the weak performance of national networks, the US company Avangrid performed strongly in March following an offer from Iberdrola to buy out minority shareholders at a premium to the last traded levels.

The Energy Management cluster could not escape the negative investor sentiment toward the EV sector. Semiconductor power management companies were all suffering from continued inventory corrections in industrial end markets and investor fears that the Automotive market will eventually inflect on weaker EV demand and high inventory levels. The weakest performance came from the largest automotive and power semiconductor company Infineon as the Chinese government supposedly asked car manufacturers to increase local semiconductor content, which might come at the expense of Infineon. Monolithic Power Systems was the only positive outlier in the subcluster, profiting from power solutions for AI chips in the datacenter. The Energy Storage subcluster saw an even weaker performance on battery oversupply amid a weaker EV market. Accordingly, Albemarle suffered from lower lithium market prices.

Performance of the Renewable Energy cluster was below the fund's performance as rising rates and fears of less political support for clean energy after both the upcoming US and EU elections were weighing on the sentiment. Additionally, energy and power prices softened, particularly in Europe as another mild winter combined with soft industrial production weighted on demand and removed some urgency to build out renewables. In Solar, the weakest performer was Meyer Burger as European and German governments were not able to come up with a resilience bonus to rebuild a European solar industry. On the other hand, the US model of reshoring is working: First Solar continued to execute well, and their order book grows at attractive prices. The interest rate sensitive power producer Sunrun suffered most in this quarter even as they reported solid numbers and refinanced their debt, which was the

1 In this text, performance is always in base currency.

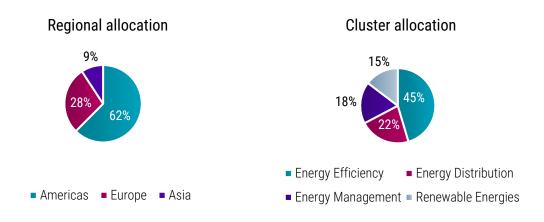
right step forward. However, they had poor timing in launching their convertible debt which led to a selloff in the shares.

	YTD	Last month	Last 3 months	Last 6 months	Last 12 months	Last 2 years p.a.	Last 3 years p.a.	Last 5 years p.a.	Since first performance date p.a.
RobecoSAM Smart Energy Equities (gross of fees, EUR) ¹	6.42%	2.44%	6.42%	12.23%	4.64%	4.72%	6.25%	18.88%	11.29%
MSCI World Index TRN	11.37%	3.42%	11.37%	18.92%	25.86%	9.47%	11.71%	12.95%	9.14%
Excess return	-4.94%	-0.98%	-4.94%	-6.69%	-21.22%	-4.75%	-5.46%	5.94%	2.15%
RobecoSAM Smart Energy Equities (gross of fees, USD) ²	4.05%	2.24%	4.05%	14.49%	4.02%	3.17%	3.29%	17.96%	9.20%
MSCI World Index TRN	8.88%	3.21%	8.88%	21.31%	25.11%	7.85%	8.60%	12.07%	7.43%
Excess return	-4.83%	-0.98%	-4.83%	-6.82%	-21.09%	-4.68%	-5.31%	5.89%	1.77%
RobecoSAM Smart Energy Equities (gross of fees, GBP) ³	4.99%	2.37%	4.99%	10.61%	1.79%	5.33%	6.37%	18.70%	14.05%
MSCI World Index TRN	9.88%	3.35%	9.88%	17.21%	22.45%	10.11%	11.84%	12.77%	12.10%
Excess return	-4.88%	-0.99%	-4.88%	-6.60%	-20.66%	-4.78%	-5.47%	5.92%	1.95%

Table 1 - Periodic performance comparison - March 2024

Source: Robeco. Performance since inception is as of the first full month. Periods shorter than one year are not annualized. The value of your investments may fluctuate. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Returns gross of fees, based on gross asset value. The values and returns indicated here are before costs: they do not take into account the management fee and any other administration costs related to the fund, nor the fees and costs which may be charged when subscribing, redeeming and/or switching units. These have a negative effect on the returns shown. ¹ first performance date: 30.09.2003, ² first performance date: 30.09.2006, ³ first performance date: 31.03.2013. Effective 29 October 2020, selected RobecoSAM equity funds were merged onto the RCGF SICAV platform and received new inception dates, share classes, and ISIN codes. All performance prior to the RCGF SICAV merger on 29 October 2020 has been calculated based on the investment policies, fees, and share classes of the respective sub-fund under the previous SICAV.

Portfolio review



Portfolio changes and positioning

Throughout the quarter, we adjusted our portfolio in the Wind sector. We initiated a new position in Nordex, a leading European wind turbine manufacturer and took profits in Vestas after strong relative performance. Within the solar sector, we sold our remaining position in Solaredge while we increased our position in Sunrun. We used the weakness in the Renewable Power Producers to increase as valuation became increasingly attractive.



We also initiated a position in Trane Technologies while we have entirely sold our position in Nibe as the European heat pump market is soft. We have taken some profits in the Big Data subcluster after the Al-fueled rally in the first quarter. In Energy Efficient Transportation, we have built a new position in the rail company Alstom while we have entirely sold our position in Ballard Power. Within power semiconductors, we further increased our position in Renesas while we sold out our remaining position in Rohm.

Table 2 - Portfolio top ten holdings

Company Country*		Company focus		
Quanta Services Inc	United States	High voltage and renewable energy contractor	4.43%	
Carlisle Cos Inc	United States	Commercial roofing insulation	4.26%	
Vertiv Holdings Co	United States	Power infrastructure provider for datacenters	4.02%	
ARM Holdings PLC ADR	Great Britain	Design company for power-efficient semiconductor chips		
Monolithic Power Systems Inc	United States	Power management semiconductors		
Schneider Electric SE	France	Power distribution systems	3.76%	
Marvell Technology Inc	United States	High-performance network and storage processors	3.53%	
Renesas Electronics Corp	Japan	Semiconductors (microcontrollers & analog) for automotive/industrial		
PTC Inc	United States	Software provider for 3D and PLM applications		
Infineon Technologies AG	Germany	Power semiconductors, sensors, connectivity	3.42%	
Total			38.22%	

Source: Robeco * Company domicile, data as of 29.03.2024

The above stated data may differ from data on the monthly factsheets due to different sources.

The companies shown in this table are for illustrative purposes only in order to demonstrate the investment strategy on the date stated. It cannot be guaranteed that the strategy/fund will consider the companies in the future. No reference can be made to the future development of the companies.

Name	% average weight	Total return (%)	Contribution to return (%)	Start % weight	End % weight
ARM HOLDINGS PLC-ADR	4.2%	70.3%	2.6%	3.8%	4.0%
VERTIV HOLDINGS CO-A	4.0%	74.2%	2.4%	3.4%	4.0%
CARLISLE COS INC	3.8%	28.8%	1.0%	3.4%	4.3%
QUANTA SERVICES INC	3.9%	23.3%	0.9%	3.7%	4.4%
MARVELL TECHNOLOGY INC	3.9%	20.5%	0.8%	3.4%	3.5%
INFINEON TECHNOLOGIES AG	3.8%	-15.7%	-0.7%	4.2%	3.4%
NORDIC SEMICONDUCTOR ASA	1.3%	-34.5%	-0.6%	1.6%	1.1%
SUNRUN INC	1.5%	-31.2%	-0.6%	1.9%	1.7%
VESTAS WIND SYSTEMS A/S	2.7%	-10.0%	-0.4%	3.9%	1.9%
SAMSUNG SDI CO LTD	0.4%	-26.6%	-0.4%	1.5%	0.0%

Table 3 - Top & bottom 5 contributors

Source: Bloomberg. Data as at 29.03.2024.

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Portfolio Negative	IndexPositive				
1 POVERTY	0.00% 0.00%	2 ZERO HUNGER	0.00% 0.00%	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	0.00% 0.00%
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	0.00% 3.20%	5 GENDER EQUALITY	1.53% ⁷ 2.97%	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	5.03% ¹ 15.56%
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	0.00% 0.23%	8 DECENT WORK AND	0.00% 23.27%	9 INDUSTRY: INNOVATION	2.54% 2.61%
	5.66% 3.29%		4.29% 40.01%	AND INFRASTRUCTORE	0.32% 43.28%
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	0.00% 0.00%	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES	0.00% 13.00%	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	0.00% 5.70% 6.67% 2.83%
13 CLIMATE	0.00% 23.91%	14 LIFE BELOW WATER	0.00% 0.00%	15 LIFE DM LAND	0.00% 0.00%
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	0.00% 3.36%	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	0.00% 0.00%		J. J J 70 Z. 1470
Ptf • 97.4% cov	9.53% 3.55% vered (46 of 47 positions)	<u>A</u> A	2.58% 0.00%		
ldx 1 • 100.0%	0.0% (0.0%) covered (1465 of 1465 position	not assessed 0.0% not ma	pped 2.6% cash & other) 0.0% not covered		
	0.0%	not account 0.0% not ma	anad 0.0% acab 8 atbar)		

Figure 1 - Portfolio Impact on Individual SDGs

(0.0% not assessed 0.0% not mapped 0.0% cash & other)

Source: Data as at 29.03.2024.

Robeco. Use of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) logos, including the color wheel, and icons shall only serve explanatory and illustrative purposes and may not be interpreted as an endorsement by the United Nations of this entity, or the product(s) or service(s) mentioned in this document. The opinions or interpretations shown in this document hence do not reflect the opinion or interpretations of the United Nations. Note: This report shows the portfolio's impact on specific Sustainable Development Goals. The graphs depict the portfolio weight allocated to companies contributing to (or detracting from) each individual SDG. As a company can have an impact on several SDGs (or none), the values shown in the report do not sum to 100%.

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Outlook

Inflation in North America and Europe continues its downward path, approaching more acceptable levels. However, inflation may also stay above central bank targets a bit longer. Long-term interest rates started to decline from last year's highs but bounced back slightly in the first quarter of 2024. The Fed tightening cycle has likely pivoted as high rates negatively impacted consumer behavior and growth outlooks. Economic data remains mixed but the US labor market is stronger than expected. We believe inflation is increasingly under control and that central banks are starting to discuss the rate-cut cycle. An escalating situation in the Middle East however could add renewed pressure on energy prices and cause further problems for the global economy and inflation.

Peaking interest rates give some needed valuation support for the Renewable Energy sector which was negatively impacted by accelerated interest rate hikes. We currently see higher capital costs only as a temporary setback for the Renewable Energy sector as the growth outlook in this decade remains strong and financing is still widely available. This creates attractive entry points in the mid- to long-term. In the Semiconductor sector, the cyclical bottom is near, as the Consumer Electronics vertical is finally bottoming with PC sales already recovering. Investments in data centers are also improving, mainly driven by the excitement around power-hungry AI applications. Only the industrial end-markets are still weakening due to inventory digestion. We expect the automotive power semiconductor market to mostly escape a cyclical downturn this time round. The secular trend of electric cars continues to drive higher semiconductor content. This, coupled with an under-shipment of cars in the last few years, provides a strong cushion against a potential macro setback.

For industrial companies, the pandemic disrupted supply chains all over the world but lead times are now normalizing. In many cases, lead times have improved from over a year to only a few months. Therefore, over the next few quarters, we will see more companies de-stocking their inventory positions. Does this mean demand is dwindling? Not necessarily. For some of our core holdings in Industrials, backlogs remain high, which will drive revenue growth for the next 12 to 18 months or longer, depending on how fast backlogs can be worked down. We will continue to watch the dynamics between inventory, orders, and backlogs closely in the quarters ahead because it will be an important determinant of 2024 earnings power.

Overall, we remain confident on the earnings outlook going into 2024 even with a more challenging macro backdrop, as high energy prices and the urgent need for energy independence act as catalysts for more investments in smart energy technologies. The fund management team remains constructive on the mid- to long-term prospects of our holdings.

Fundamental long-term drivers for the Smart Energy strategy remain as strong as ever. Rising and more volatile prices coupled with the need for more security will incentivize efficiency investments and the electrification of the energy system providing a further boost to renewable energy. Globally, policy support is likely to remain strong, with the latest IPCC climate report calling for greater and faster action. At the COP28 Climate Conference in December 2023, countries formally committed to transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems for the first time. The community also set the ambitious goal to triple renewables energy by 2030 and to double energy efficiency improvements, which imply a strong acceleration in investments from today's level.

Rising carbon prices and a clearer regulatory framework provide further incentives and confidence for corporates and governments to invest in decarbonization sooner rather than later. The Inflation Reduction Act from last year brings the US back to its ambitious decarbonization path. Long-term incentives for renewable energy, green hydrogen and storage solutions provide a very promising framework and increase the growth outlook substantially. The war in Ukraine has acted as a catalyst to rethink the energy strategy and to transform the energy market more quickly, particularly in Europe. The EU's REPower plan and the Green Deal should give the EU the necessary regulatory support to decarbonize and become more energy-independent.

To remain on track on the net-zero roadmap, the International Energy Agency (IEA) updated their estimates and now recommends bolder action. The IEA sees annual installation of renewables to triple from today's level by 2030. Meanwhile, the annual rate of energy efficiency improvements are doubling, sales of electric vehicles and heat pumps are rising sharply, and energy sector methane emissions have fallen by 75%. Based on proven and often cost-



effective technologies for lowering emissions, these strategies deliver more than 80% of the reductions needed by the end of the decade.

The fund continues to focus on renewables, smart grid suppliers, power management and battery companies – notably for electric automotive applications, firms that improve the power efficiency of data centers, and/or provide energy-efficient solutions for industrials and buildings end markets.

Why invest in the strategy?

The future of energy is electric. Our economies will decarbonize as clean energy takes over. An investment in the Smart Energy fund is an investment in transformational change brought about by renewable power generation, smart grids and energy efficiency.

Sustainable investment objective (SFDR)

The fund's sustainable investments aim to further the transformation and decarbonization of the global energy sector. The sustainable investment objective is attained by mainly investing in companies that advance the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Affordable and clean energy goal (SDG 7), Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), Industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), Sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) and Climate action (SDG 13). A part of the investments made by the fund contribute to the environmental objective of Climate Mitigation under the Taxonomy regulation.

The fund has a carbon-reduction objective and uses a climate-transition benchmark to monitor the carbon profile.

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Additional information for investors with residence or seat in Mexico

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Additional information for investors with residence or seat in Peru

The Superintendencia del Mercado de Valores (SMV) does not exercise any supervision over this Fund and therefore the management of it. The information the Fund provides to its investors and the other services it provides to them are the sole responsibility of the Administrator. This Prospectus is not for public distribution

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Additional information for investors with residence or seat in Spain

Robeco Institutional Asset Management B.V., Sucursal en España with identification number W0032687F and having its registered office in Madrid at Calle Serrano 47-14°, is registered with the Spanish Commercial Registry in Madrid, in volume 19.957, page 190, section 8, sheet M-351927 and with the National Securities Market Commission (CNMV) in the Official Register of branches of European investment services companies, under number 24. The investment funds or SICAV mentioned in this document are regulated by the corresponding authorities of their country of origin and are registered in the Special Registry of the CNMV of Foreign Collective Investment Institutions marketed in Spain. Additional information for investors with residence or seat in South Africa

Robeco Institutional Asset Management B.V. is registered and regulated by the Financial Sector Conduct Authority in South Africa.

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Additional information for investors with residence or seat in the United Arab Emirates

Some Funds referred to in this marketing material have been registered with the UAE Securities and Commodities Authority ("the Authority"). Details of all Registered Funds can be found on the Authority's website. The Authority assumes no liability for the accuracy of the information set out in this material/document, nor for the failure of any persons engaged in the investment Fund in performing their duties and responsibilities.

Additional information for investors with residence or seat in the United Kingdom

Robeco Institutional Asset Management B.V (FRN: 977582) is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Additional information for investors with residence or seat in Uruguay

The sale of the Fund qualifies as a private placement pursuant to section 2 of Uruguayan law 18,627. The Fund must not be offered or sold to the public in Uruguay, except under circumstances which do not constitute a public offering or distribution under Uruguayan laws and regulations. The Fund is not and will not be registered with the Financial Services Superintendency of the Central Bank of Uruguay. The Fund corresponds to investment funds that are not investment funds regulated by Uruguayan law 16,774 dated 27 September 1996, as amended.