

# The ESG and low carbon effect in the Shiller US strategy.

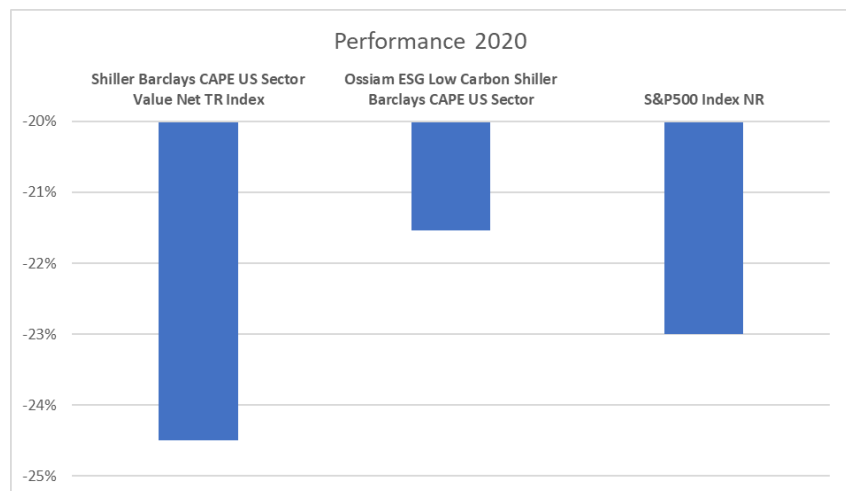
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**Abstract:** The paper analyses the excess return between the Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector Value Index and its ESG and low carbon version since the beginning of 2020. Although expected, we prove that the low carbon feature has been a very powerful feature of the strategy in these last few weeks, allowing it to avoid stocks that have been seriously hit by fears of economic disruptions and recession caused by the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. The document is based on the performances of the indices/strategies and not of the investment vehicles. Moreover, the period analysed in this document is very short and volatile, therefore the results may be affected by statistical errors and may not be representative of long-term metrics.

The Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector strategy, the ESG and low carbon version of the Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector Value Index, is outperforming its original version substantially since the beginning of the year. While the objective of the former is to deliver a very similar risk/return profile, while significantly reducing the carbon foot print and improving the ESG quality of the portfolio by performing several exclusion filters, it is a remarkable fact that in the last two severe drawdowns (Q4 2018 and since mid-February 2020) the Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector strategy is proving more resilient.

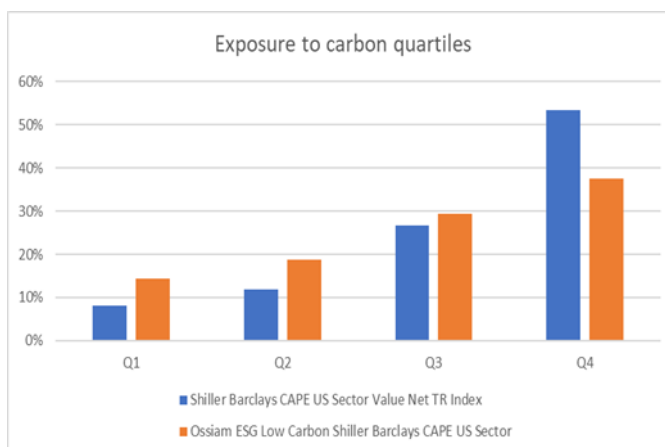


Source: Bloomberg, Barclays, Ossiam, Sustainalytics, Trucost. Calculation in USD.  
Data from December 31, 2019 to March 12, 2020.  
Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

The gap between the two strategies is ~3% since the beginning of the year, and it has grown larger over the last few weeks, as fears of the economic impact of Covid-19 on the economies are pushing the market down. Because both strategies share the same sector selection based on long-term valuations and the Relative CAPE®, the difference must be the results of the ESG and Low Carbon overlay, which exclude, on average, half of the names in the CAPE strategy (both for ESG exclusions and the low carbon optimization).

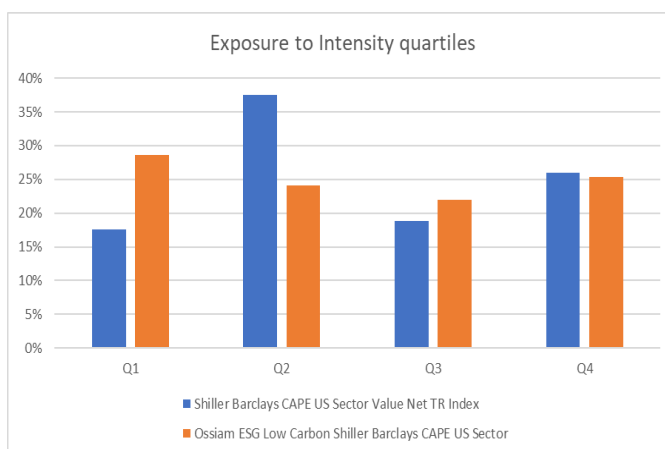
To see the effect of the overlay, we first classify each stock in the S&P 500 Index into quartiles

based on their a) GHG Emissions as well as b) Intensities (i.e. GHG Emissions over Revenues). Stocks in the lowest quartile are those with lower emissions (resp. intensities), while stocks in the upper quartile are those with the highest emissions (resp. intensities). The exposure to these quartiles, as of March 12, 2020 is given below:



Source: Bloomberg, Barclays, Ossiam, Sustainalytics, Trucost. Calculation in USD.  
Data from December 31, 2019 to March 12, 2020.  
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Not surprisingly, the ESG Low carbon version favours stocks in the lowest quartiles (so with less GHG emissions and intensities) while lowering the exposure to stocks in the highest quartiles. This is the direct consequence of the 40% reduction target in both GHG emissions and intensities (as well as GHG potential emission from reserves).



Source: Bloomberg, Barclays, Ossiam, Sustainalytics, Trucost. Calculation in USD.  
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We can then run a classic Brinson-like performance attribution of the Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector strategy over the classic Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector Value Index, across different dimensions of the ESG Low Carbon policy to have a better understanding of the sources of this gap in performance. We start by looking first at GICS-1 sectors:

31-Dec-2019 12-Mar-2020	Sector Allocation	Stock Picking	Excess Return	Avg. Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Weight	PnL Sector	ret Sector	Avg. Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Value Net TR Index Weight	PnL Sector	ret Sector
<b>Total</b>	-0.29%	3.25%	<b>2.95%</b>		<b>-21.54%</b>			<b>-24.49%</b>	
Communication Services	0.00%	0.19%	0.20%	24.90%	-5.42%	-20.74%	25.08%	-5.38%	-20.38%
Consumer Staples	-0.05%	0.27%	0.22%	12.34%	0.75%	3.07%	12.24%	0.31%	1.96%
Industrials	0.01%	<b>0.99%</b>	1.00%	22.89%	-6.86%	<b>-25.71%</b>	23.13%	-8.03%	<b>-29.64%</b>
Information Technology	0.01%	0.43%	0.44%	25.52%	-3.93%	-16.27%	25.26%	-4.49%	-17.97%
Materials	-0.27%	<b>1.36%</b>	1.09%	14.35%	-6.95%	<b>-25.92%</b>	14.30%	-8.06%	<b>-28.78%</b>

Source: Bloomberg, Barclays, Ossiam, Sustainalytics, Trucost. Calculation in USD.  
Data from December 31, 2019 to March 12, 2020. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

The total excess return since December 31, 2019 is 2.95%. This can be explained essentially by the stock picking effect (since the sector allocation of both strategies is matched). Most of the stock picking comes from two sectors: Industrials and Materials. Not surprising, these sectors are usually carbon intensive and usually contains stocks that are excluded by our ESG policy (ex. Controversial weapons, Controversy, etc.).

More precisely, we see how the Industrial sector in the classical Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector Value Index delivered a -29.64%, while the same sector in the Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector strategy is down by -25.71%. Same picture for Materials. A better selection in these sectors contributed for 2.35% (1.36% + 0.99%) of the total excess returns. If we look at the carbon quartiles, which form a dynamic classification of stocks, the excess return is equally split between allocation and picking effects: 1.29% (out of 2.95% of excess return) comes from the allocation effect; the rest (1.66%) is the stock picking effect.

31-Dec-2019 12-Mar-2020	Carbon Allocation	Stock Picking	Excess Return	Avg. Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Weight	PnL Carbon	ret Carbon	Avg. Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Value Net TR Index Weight	PnL Carbon	ret Carbon
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.29%</b>	<b>1.66%</b>	<b>2.95%</b>		<b>-21.54%</b>			<b>-24.49%</b>	
Q1	<b>0.52%</b>	-0.04%	0.48%	<b>14.65%</b>	-2.31%	-16.72%	<b>7.65%</b>	-1.31%	-16.26%
Q2	0.28%	0.11%	0.38%	18.33%	-3.76%	-19.65%	11.46%	-2.45%	-20.11%
Q3	0.31%	0.32%	0.62%	24.45%	-7.72%	-24.54%	24.74%	-7.39%	-25.90%
Q4	0.19%	<b>1.27%</b>	1.46%	42.55%	-8.59%	<b>-22.01%</b>	56.16%	-14.21%	<b>-25.49%</b>

Source: Bloomberg, Barclays, Ossiam, Sustainalytics, Trucost. Calculation in USD.  
Data from December 31, 2019 to March 12, 2020. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

The allocation effect (1.29%) is positive for the four quartiles. For the lowest one (Q1) we see that it is the result of a greater exposure (14.65% on average for the Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector strategy compared to only 7.65% for the Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector Value Index) and this quartile is proving particularly resilient since the beginning of the year (~-16% in both strategies, compared to the -24.49% for the Shiller Barclays CAPE® US Sector Value Index).

For the picking effect, most of it comes from the highest quartile, the one with the stocks with the highest GHG emissions. This is the combined effect of lower exposure (-42.55% vs -56.16%) as well as a relative better performance (-22.01% vs. -25.49%). This simple analysis shows that the ESG and low carbon overlay tilts the portfolio towards stocks with lighter carbon footprints (Q1) and, at the same time gives the strategy a better edge, in terms of stock picking, for stocks with higher carbon footprints.

When we use intensity quartiles, the picture is consistent: positive allocation in the lowest quartile Q1 (stocks with the lowest intensities, therefore more carbon-efficient) and stock picking in the highest quartile Q4 (the most carbon-inefficient stocks).

31-Dec-2019 12-Mar-2020	Intensity Allocation	Stock Picking	Excess Return	Avg.Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Weight	PnL Intensity	ret Intensity	Avg.Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Value Net TR Index Weight	PnL Intensity	ret Intensity
Total	0.69%	2.26%	2.95%		-21.54%			-24.49%	
Q1	0.89%	0.14%	1.03%	28.37%	-4.41%	-15.52%	16.86%	-2.77%	-16.05%
Q2	-0.15%	-0.10%	-0.24%	27.68%	-5.69%	-22.87%	39.61%	-8.78%	-22.80%
Q3	-0.02%	0.72%	0.70%	21.64%	-5.08%	-22.82%	21.65%	-5.23%	-26.31%
Q4	-0.04%	1.50%	1.47%	22.29%	-7.30%	-25.40%	21.88%	-8.84%	-29.80%

Source: Bloomberg, Barclays, Ossiam, Sustainalytics, Trucost. Calculation in USD.

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Among the worst contributors the Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector strategy avoided, we see Linde in the Materials sectors, whose business is highly related to global demand of industrial gases, that has reached -25% since the beginning of the year and represent ~4% of the Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Value Index. Other stocks in Quartile 4 (both carbon emissions and intensity) are Boeing (-52%, Aerospace & Defence), Du Pont De Nemours (-47%, Chemicals), Dow (-56%, Chemicals), Freeport-McMoran (-45%, Copper), Nucor (-43%, Steel), Delta (-41%), United Airlines (-57%), American Airlines (-52%), all airlines groups.

On the other end, Facebook who is down as the market (-25%) is excluded by the high controversy level. Among the few with positive return, Newmont (+3%, Gold) has a much larger weight in the Ossiam ESG Low Carbon Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector strategy (3%) than in the Shiller Barclays CAPE US Sector Value (1.7%).

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