

Japan Value Equity Green

June 2025

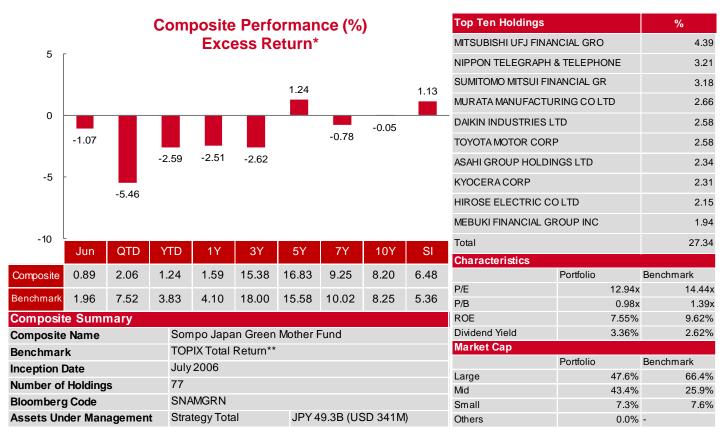
Strategy

Green Strategy invests in Japanese equities that meet environmental management and investment value criteria, and aims to achieve above-benchmark return in the mid- to long-term. We use a bottom-up approach. The Japanese equity research team analyzes intrinsic value of individual stocks and compares it with market price in order to identify undervalued stocks. Environmental research is conducted by Sompo Risk Management, a leading company in domestic ESG research.

Market Review

Japanese market prices rose on increased expectations for rate cuts in the US following the drop in geopolitical risk in the Middle East. Growth outperformed value as long-term interest rates fell on the increase in expectations for the Fed to cut rates.

The market ended the first half of the month little changed. It was weighed down by concern over harsher tariff policy out of the US but was supported by decreased concerns over a potential recession in the US following better-than-expected US jobs data. For most of the second half of the month the market continued to seesaw back and forth. While investors were negative on increased geopolitical risk in the Middle East following Israeli attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities, they were positive on progress in talks between the US and China to reduce trade tensions. The market then rose at the end of the month despite the US attacking Iran as investors were positive on the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Iran and a Fed official stating support for early rate cuts.



^{*} Excess return figures are annualized for three years and longer.

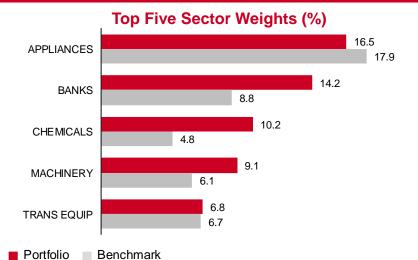
The data shown is of a representative account. Past performance is not a guarantee of future returns.

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^{**} TOPIX Total Return Index includes the dividends paid by the index constituents.



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Attribution Analysis

Both sector allocation and stock selection detracted from performance. In sector allocation, underweighting (UW) of Wholesale and Services and overweighting (OW) of Machinery contributed to performance, while UW of Other Prod, Info & Comm and OW of Banks detracted. In stock selection, OW of Sumco, Nippon Express and UW of Sony Group contributed to performance, while UW of SoftBank Group, Nintendo, and Advantest detracted. Last month we increased holdings of Sekisui House, Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Group, and Sawai Group Holdings and decreased holdings of Aeon Financial Service, Dai-ichi Life Holdings, and Seino Holdings.

Outlook

We expect the market will continue to face heavy upside resistance. There is an increasing likelihood that Japanese corporate earnings will enter a period of stagnation as despite positives from a recovery in domestic real wages and capital efficiency improvement measures implemented by companies following pressure from the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE), additional Trump tariffs are expected to have a negative impact. Valuation metrics like forward P/E are already above undervalued levels despite there still being no clear outlook on how tariffs will ultimately end up as the overall market has been pushed up by a small number of stocks. We believe caution is needed over the short term as there is a growing opinion amongst investors that the Fed will cut rates early to counter a slowdown in the US economy. That said, we do not foresee any large fall in the Japanese market as there is strong equity demand from the high level of large-scale share buybacks seen recently and the BoJ has relatively accommodative monetary policy compared to the US and Europe.

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