

Melville Douglas STANLIB Bond Fund

Fund information update at 31 December 2024

What is the fund's objective?

The objective of the fund is to achieve capital preservation and income generation by investing in long-term fixed interest securities. This fund is an actively managed, unconstrained, South African fixed-income strategy that aims to generate consistent and predictable long term returns through investments in high quality income-yielding debt securities.

What does the fund invest in?

Securities will normally consist of a spread of gilts, semi-gilts, loan stock, debentures, debenture bonds, approved securities, notes and liquid assets and any other securities which are consistent with the fund's investment policy.

What possible risks are associated with this fund?

General market risks include a rise or volatility in bond yields, rising interest rates, economic and political risk, inflation uncertainty and duration risk. Where foreign securities are included in the portfolio there may be additional risks, such as potential constraints on liquidity and the repatriation of funds, macro-economic risks, political risks, tax risks, settlement risks, and potential limitations on the availability of market information.

Risk rating

Conservative	Moderately conservative	Moderate	Moderately aggressive	Aggressive
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What is the suggested investment period for this fund?

Minimum period

1 Month	6 Months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	7 Years
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Who should consider investing in this fund?

This fund suits investors that are looking for stable income and reasonable capital growth over the longer term.

Income

Distribution Net income is calculated and accrued daily and is declared and distributed quarterly.

Declaration 31 March, 30 June, 30 September, 31 December

General fund information

Manager(s) Mzimasi Mabece, Paolo Senatore and Bernard Drotschie

Size (NAV) R 3.03 billion

Classification South African - Interest Bearing - Variable Term

Benchmark FTSE/JSE All Bond Index

Regulation 28 Complies

Regulation 28 of the Pension Funds Act sets the limits in terms of the maximum exposure the retirement fund and the individual retirement fund member's savings (i.e. your savings) may have to various asset classes. For more information please refer to the Regulation 28 Guidelines available on our website (www.stanlib.com). This Fund complies with this Regulation.

Class A

Launch 01 July 2014

ISIN number ZAE000191763

JSE code MDBFA

Minimum investment requirements -

Lump sum R 50,000

Monthly R 1,000

What are the costs to invest in this fund?

Maximum charges including VAT

	Class A
Initial fee (manager)	0.000%
Initial fee (adviser)	3.450%
Annual fee (manager)	0.863%
Annual fee (adviser)	0.000%
Performance fee	N/A

Annual fee (manager) – this is a service charge (% based) applicable to each class of a fund, that is levied on the value of your portfolio and includes the **Annual fee (adviser)** fee (where applicable). Annual fees are calculated and accrued daily and recovered monthly from the income awaiting distribution in the fund.

Cost ratios (annual) including VAT as at 30 September 2024

	Class A
Based on period from:	01/10/2021
Total Expense	0.87%
Transaction Costs	0.00%
Total Investment Charge	0.87%
1 Year Total Expense	0.86%

Total Expense (TER): This ratio shows the charges, levies and fees relating to the management of the portfolio and is expressed as a percentage of the average net asset value of the portfolio, calculated over the period shown and annualised to the most recently completed quarter. A higher TER does not necessarily imply a poor return, nor does a low TER imply a good return. The current TER should not be regarded as an indication of future TERs.

Transaction Costs (TC): This ratio shows the percentage of the value of the fund incurred as costs relating to the buying and selling of the fund's underlying assets. TC are a necessary cost in administering the fund and impacts fund returns. It should not be considered in isolation as returns may be impacted by many other factors over time including market returns, the type of fund, investment decisions of the investment manager and the TER.

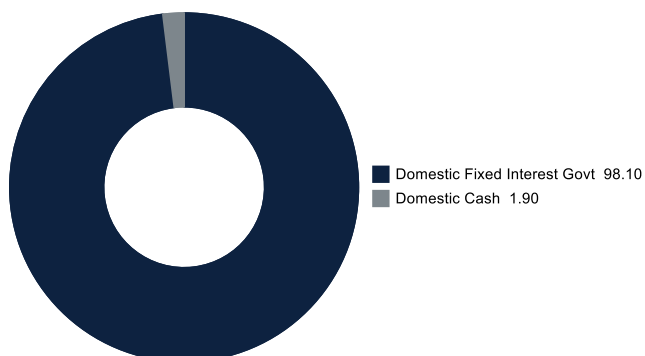
Total Investment Charges (TIC): This ratio is simply the sum of the TER and TC, showing the percentage of the value of the fund incurred as costs relating to the investment of the fund. It should be noted that performance figures account for all costs included in the TIC ratio, so you should not deduct the TIC from performance figures, the performance is already net of the TIC.

Melville Douglas STANLIB Bond Fund

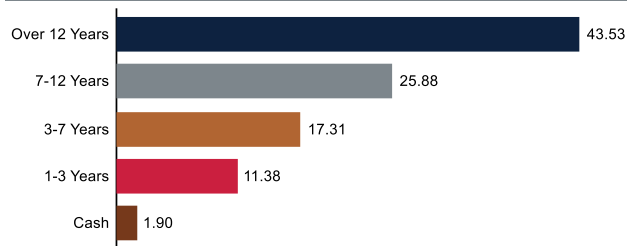
Monthly update at 31 December 2024

Holdings

Asset allocation (%)



Fixed Interest allocation (%)



Fixed Interest Top 10 Issuer exposure (%)



Performance and Income

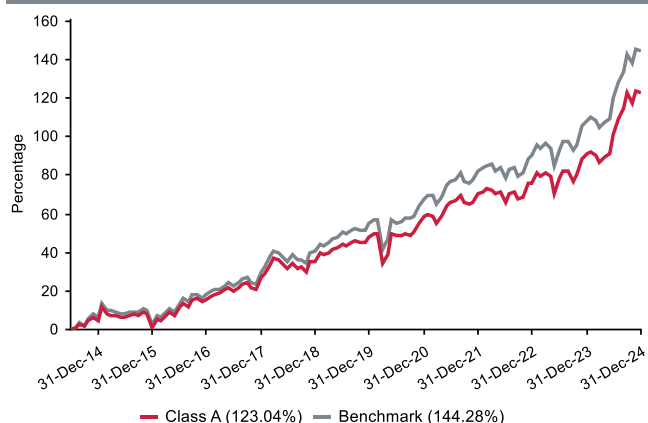
Class A Launch: 01 July 2014

Benchmark: FTSE/JSE All Bond Index

Returns (%)	1yr	3yrs	5yrs	7yrs	10yrs
Class A					
Class	16.61	9.37	8.54	8.40	7.86
Rank/Out of	29/48	29/38	24/31	23/26	14/17
Sector Average	16.06	9.71	8.93	8.79	8.16
Benchmark	17.18	10.25	9.56	9.40	8.65

Returns (%) shown are cumulative for all periods shorter than or equal to 1 year and annualised for all periods greater than 1 year.

Cumulative performance (%) from Launch



Statistics (%)	1yr	3yrs	5yrs	7yrs	10yrs
Class A					
Positive Months	8	23	39	55	76
Max Gain	19.79	34.61	66.89	76.56	121.44
Max Drawdown	-2.58	-5.81	-10.44	-10.44	-10.44
Highest	25.95	25.95	25.95	25.95	25.95
Lowest	3.25	-0.74	-4.09	-4.09	-5.81

Highest – this reflects the highest 12 month return during the period.

Lowest - this reflects the lowest 12 month return during the period.

Amount declared (cents per unit)

	Class A
28 March 24	2.02
28 June 24	2.16
30 September 24	2.20
31 December 24	2.16
In last 12 months	8.54
In 2023	7.90

Melville Douglas STANLIB Bond Fund

Quarterly update at 31 December 2024

Who are the investment managers?

Since 1983 Melville Douglas has been delivering superior investment returns across a number of asset classes. As a global boutique investment management company within the Standard Bank Group, we are uniquely positioned to offer domestic and offshore investment solutions. What truly sets Melville Douglas apart is our experienced investment team and our approach to investing – driven by balance, a long-term view and a commitment to fundamental research – which informs our investment decisions across the board.



Mzimasi Mabece
BSc
Head of Fixed Income: South Africa

Mzimasi has more than 14 years financial market experience spanning both quantitative analysis as well as portfolio management and has managed both fixed income and equity funds. Prior to joining Melville Douglas, he was Head of Fixed Income at Mvunonala Asset Managers. He previously held Portfolio Manager roles at Prowess Investment Managers and Old Mutual Investment Group (OMIGSA) and also worked at Sanlam Investments as a fixed income Quantitative Analyst. Mzimasi holds a BSc degree.



Paolo Senatore
MSc (Mechanical Engineering)
Strategist

Paolo joined Melville Douglas in 2018 as a strategist and co-manages the Melville Douglas STANLIB High Alpha Fund. From 1995 he was with the FirstRand Group, gaining over 20 years' financial market experience. In 2000, he became CIO of RMB Private Bank Portfolio Management with the responsibility of growing the specialised institutional business. He was CIO for Ashburton Investments, FirstRand's asset management initiative, from its inception, and was instrumental in consolidating asset management businesses and investment processes. He holds an MSc (Mechanical Engineering).



Bernard Drotschie
BCom (Hons), CFA®, CFPTM
Chief Investment Officer

Bernard joined Melville Douglas in 2002 as a portfolio manager and analyst, prior to which he worked for Absa Asset Management. He is the lead manager on the Melville Douglas Global Growth Fund (USD) and co-manages the Melville Douglas Balanced Fund (USD) and the Melville Douglas Income Funds. He holds a BCom (Hons) degree in Econometrics, is a CFA® Charterholder and a Certified Financial Planner™ professional.

Fund review

The sell off in the last quarter of the year notwithstanding, local bonds outperformed domestic equities on a rolling twelve- and thirty-six-months basis (17.2% y/y vs 13.4% y/y and 10.2% y/y vs 8.7% y/y respectively). This performance was underpinned by benign inflation, lower interest rates outlook and a positive political backdrop.

The fund performed ahead of the benchmark and its peers (17.3% vs 17.2%) over a 12-month basis.

Market overview

2024 was a very tumultuous year, leaving asset price volatility in its wake. The year began on an optimistic note with global central banks expected to dial back on interest rates as early as the first quarter of the year, as the battle against inflation seemed to have been won. This soon proved a difficult task to accomplish, with inflation rearing its stubborn head again, forcing policy makers, in their forward guidance, into moderating market expectations. The year also had a heavy-laden political calendar with almost half the globe's eligible voters going to the polls in 2024. South Africa held its general elections at the end of May and the results ushered a new era of politics in the country. The African National Congress (ANC) which had governed the country since 1994, lost its electoral majority but remained the biggest party. This meant there was no outright winner and after behind closed-door negotiations and horse trading, ten political parties came together to form a government in a cooperative political arrangement known as a "government of national unity" (GNU). This GNU arrangement led by the ANC was well received by investors and financial markets alike, with domestic assets and currency rallying aggressively after this country specific risk had unwound.

Local bonds led the recovery in the second half of the year with this asset class delivering more than 26% y/y rolling twelve months return by the end of the third quarter. Bond yields had rallied from 12.2% at the end of May to 10.0% by the end of September. The local currency posted an almost 11% recovery in a very short space of time, with the rand recovering from R19.23/\$ at the end of April to R17.11 by the end of September. Assigning the recovery of the local currency and domestic assets, to the positive political backdrop alone would be grossly inaccurate and would tell only a fraction of the story. Domestic markets recovery, like their global counterparts, were driven mainly by the benign inflation and interest rates outlook as well as the resultant actions of central banks.

In the second half of the year Bank of England and the European Central Bank were first off the blocks and finally began the long-awaited policy cutting cycle. Both the US Federal Reserve (US Fed) and the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) followed suit in their respective meetings in September. The SARB cut interest rates by 25 basis points (bps) after headline inflation had decelerated to 4.4% y/y. This was followed again by a further 25 bps cut in the final meeting of the year in November, after inflation had decelerated further and sharply to 2.8% y/y by the end of October. The print was not only below the central bank's 4.5% midpoint target and where the bank would want to anchor long term inflation expectations, but below the bank's 3% - 6% target band. The central bank described risk to inflation as evenly balanced, citing improvements to Eskom's performance as positive to inflation. By the end of the year, the power utility had managed to provide uninterrupted power supply to the national grid for almost nine months. However, policy makers voiced their concerns about the electricity tariff hike which Eskom is applying for, and which is almost 40%.

The buoyancy in local asset prices and the domestic currency was rudely disrupted by the outcome of the US elections which were held at the beginning of November. Mr Donald Trump, the former President, and his Republican Party swept to victory promising a reconfiguration of US trade relations. This reconfiguration, through inward looking policies that will put American interests first, will determine how the United States trade with the outside world. Trump has promised to impose tariffs on imported goods from those trading partners whom he deems not to serve his 'America first' policy.

Emerging market currencies and bond yields bore the brunt of this uncertainty with local bond yields selling off from 10.0% at the end of September to 10.25% by the end of the year. The local currency gave back its gains with the rand weakening to R18.84/\$ by the end of 2024 from R17.11/\$ at the end of September.

Looking ahead

There is consensus amongst economists that the global policy cutting cycle will not be as deep as was initially expected. This, in our view, limits a rally in the short area of the yield curve and we expect longer dated bonds to outperform their short counterparties. With the recent issuance of two new bonds in the 7 – 15-year area of the curve, we expect liquidity in this area of the curve and thus superior performance from this area in 2025. In general, we expect bonds to continue generating better returns over the next year.

The commentary gives the views of the portfolio manager at the time of writing. Any forecasts or commentary included in this document are not guaranteed to occur.

Change in allocation of the fund over the quarter

Asset type	Q4 2024	Q3 2024	Change
Domestic Cash	1.90	3.97	-2.07
Domestic Fixed Interest Govt	98.10	96.03	2.07

The portfolio adhered to its portfolio objective over the quarter.

Fund classes

Class	Type	Price (cpu)	Units	NAV (Rand)
A	Retail	95.61	6,135,781.07	5,866,367.80

All data as at 31 December 2024.

Units – amount of participatory interests (units) in issue in relevant class.

Melville Douglas STANLIB Bond Fund

Important information update at 31 December 2024



Disclosures

Collective Investment Schemes in Securities (CIS) are generally medium to long term investments. The value of participatory interests may go down as well as up and past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. CIS are traded at ruling prices and can engage in borrowing and scrip lending.

The Melville Douglas STANLIB Bond Fund is a portfolio of the STANLIB Collective Investment Scheme (the Scheme).

The manager of the Scheme is STANLIB Collective Investments (RF) (Pty) Limited (the Manager). The Manager is authorised in terms of the Collective Investment Schemes Control Act, No. 45 of 2002 (CISCA) to administer Collective Investment Schemes (CIS) in Securities. Liberty is a full member of the Association for Savings and Investments of South Africa (ASISA). The Manager is a member of the Liberty Group of Companies. The manager has a right to close a portfolio to new investors in order to manage the portfolio more efficiently in accordance with its mandate. The Manager does not provide any guarantee either with respect to the capital or the return of a CIS portfolio. A schedule of fees and charges and maximum commissions is available on request from the Manager.

The trustee of the Scheme is Standard Chartered Bank.

The investments of this portfolio are managed, on behalf of the Manager, by Melville Douglas Investment Management (Pty) Ltd, an authorised financial services provider (FSP), FSP No. 595, under the Financial Advisory and Intermediary Services Act (FAIS), Act No. 37 of 2002.

Prices are calculated and published on each working day, these prices are available on the Manager's website (www.stanlib.com) and in South African printed news media. This portfolio is valued at 15h00. Forward pricing is used. Investments and repurchases will receive the price of the same day if received prior to 15h00.

This portfolio is permitted to invest in foreign securities. Should the portfolio include any foreign securities these could expose the portfolio to any of the following risks: potential constraints on liquidity and the repatriation of funds; macroeconomic risks; political risks; foreign exchange risks; tax risks; settlement risks; and potential limitations on the availability of market information.

This is a portfolio that derives its income primarily from interest-bearing instruments. The yield (if shown) is a current effective yield calculated daily.

This portfolio is a third party named, co-named portfolio. The Manager retains full legal responsibility for this portfolio. A third party named, co-named portfolio is a portfolio bearing the name of both the Manager and the financial services provider (FSP) where the FSP, under an agreement with the Manager, undertakes financial services of a discretionary nature, as contemplated in the Financial Advisory and Intermediary Services Act, Act No. 37 of 2002 (FAIS), in relation to the assets of the portfolio. Melville Douglas Investment Management (Pty) Ltd, an authorised FSP, FSP No. 595, FAIS, is the third party manager of this portfolio.

The FSP is a related party to the Manager, the FSP may earn additional fees other than those charged by the Manager. It is the responsibility of the FSP to disclose additional fees to the investor. This document is not advice, as defined under FAIS. Please be advised that there may be representatives acting under supervision.

All performance returns and ranking figures quoted are shown in ZAR and are based on data sourced from Morningstar or Statpro and are as at 31 December 2024.

Annualised return figures are the compound annualised growth rate (CAGR) calculated from the cumulative return for the period being measured. These annualised returns provide an indication of the annual return achieved over the period had an investment been held for the entire period. Actual annual figures are available on request from the Manager.

Portfolio performance figures are calculated for the relevant class of the portfolio, for a lump sum investment, on a NAV-NAV basis, with income reinvested on the ex-dividend date. Individual investor performance may differ due to initial fees, actual investment date, date of reinvestment of income and dividend withholding tax. Portfolio performance accounts for all costs that contribute to the calculation of the cost ratios quoted, all returns quoted are after these costs have been accounted for.

Statistics - Positive Months: the number of individual 1 month periods during the specified time period where the return was not negative; Max Gain: the maximum gain in a trough-to-peak incline before a new trough is attained, quoted as the percentage between the trough and the peak. It is an indicator of upside risk over a specified time period (quoted for all periods of 1 year or longer); Max Drawdown: the maximum loss in a peak-to-trough decline before a new peak is attained, quoted as the percentage between the peak and the trough. It is an indicator of downside risk over a specified time period (quoted for periods of 1 year or longer, where no value is shown no loss was experienced); Highest and Lowest: the highest and the lowest 1 year return (%) that occurred during the specified time period (quoted for all relevant classes launched 1 year or more prior to current month end date).

Additional information about this product including, but not limited to, brochures, application forms and annual or quarterly reports, can be obtained free of charge, from the Manager and from the Manager's website (www.stanlib.com).

Contact details

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