

# Ecofin Global Water ESG Fund (EBLU)



Ecofin Global Water ESG Fund (EBLU) received a Four Star Overall Morningstar Rating™ among 107 Natural Resources funds (based on a weighted average of the fund's three-, five- and ten-year risk-adjusted return measure, if applicable) as of 3/31/2022.

## 1Q 2022 QUARTERLY COMMENTARY

Represents the aggregate ranking of the Fund's holdings as of 3/31/2022. Certain information ©2022 MSCI ESG Research LLC. Reproduced by permission; no further distribution.



The Ecofin Global Water ESG Fund uses a passive management approach and seeks to track the total return performance of the Ecofin Global Water ESG Index®.

The firm provides research-driven indices that can be used as a realistic basis for exchange-traded products and thought leadership in the universe of essential assets. Indices are intended to fill a void in the market and provide benchmarks and investable asset class universes for use by investment professionals, research analysts and industry executives to analyze relative performance as well as to provide a basis for passively managed exchange-traded products.

### About the Ecofin brand

Ecofin unites ecology and finance and has roots back to the early 1990s. Our mission is to generate strong risk-adjusted returns and measurable impacts. We invest in essential assets and services that contribute to more sustainable human ecosystems and communities. We are socially-minded, ESG-attentive investors, successfully harnessing years of expertise investing in social impact, sustainable infrastructure, energy transition and clean water & environment. Our strategies are accessible through a variety of investment solutions and seek to achieve positive impacts that align with UN Sustainable Development Goals by addressing pressing global issues surrounding climate action, clean energy and water, education, healthcare and sustainable communities.

**The Ecofin Global Water ESG Fund (EBLU) offers direct exposure to the otherwise fragmented water industry. We believe that water is perhaps one of the most essential assets and is an area that requires continued investment in the years to come. This fund provides access to the water infrastructure, as well as equipment and service companies operating across all aspect of the water value chain, that appear poised to benefit from the expected and much needed investment in rebuilding existing infrastructure, constructing new infrastructure and better managing this vital, but finite resource.**

### Water update and outlook

The water sector, as measured by the Ecofin Global Water ESG Net Total Return Index, returned -15.90% during the first quarter. The Ecofin Global Water ESG Fund seeks to track this index.

First quarter was a rough period for risk-assets, as investor concerns regarding inflation, tighter global monetary policies, higher interest rates and heightened geopolitical tensions weighed on global equity markets. Early in the quarter, elevated inflation data combined with hawkish pivots from key global central banks drove investor sentiment and valuations lower, especially in high growth sectors. Following the weak start to the year for global equities, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February furthered "risk-off" sentiment as geopolitical tensions escalated and energy / commodity prices surged. Market sentiment continued to deteriorate in March with renewed COVID-driven lockdowns in China and the negative implications for supply chains and economic growth. The deteriorating economic growth outlook resulting from these factors combined with elevated market risks drove the water sector lower during the quarter. Specifically, many structural growth equities were de-rated and surging inflation led to concerns around margin compression causing a handful of names in the portfolio to be under considerable pressure. As frustrating as the first quarter was from a returns standpoint, fundamentals remain healthy and earnings estimates are largely in-line with previous expectations due to the underlying secular growth drivers for the sector.

From a water value chain standpoint, the agriculture equipment and services sub-sector was the strongest returning sub-sector in the portfolio and the only one to finish in the green during the first quarter. Increased demand for irrigation equipment, which resulted in positive earnings revisions during the quarter, drove positive performance for agriculture equipment companies. Robust irrigation demand is supported by strong fundamentals, including crop prices, which remain elevated. Corn and soybean prices increased 23% and 18%, respectively, in the first quarter. Additionally, the conflict in Ukraine has raised additional concerns regarding available supply of agricultural commodities, leading to further increases in prices in early second quarter. Demand for irrigation is expected to remain strong throughout 2022 due to elevated commodity prices, strong projected farm income and increasing international activity as food security trends become a focus given the Ukraine disruptions and its importance to global wheat production.

The engineering & construction (E&C) sub-sector held in well during the quarter as robust backlogs and the prospect of increased spending later in the year supported the equities. Additionally, E&Cs are largely shielded from growing wage inflation due to contractual protections with customers, which supports margin outlooks in the back half of 2022. We continue to expect E&Cs with exposure to the U.S. to benefit from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) later this year and into 2023. Continued focus on water quality and specifically per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination supported the sub-sector as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) gets closer to formally regulating the harmful chemicals.

Portfolio companies have proprietary technologies to treat PFAS, which is expected to be a rapidly growing opportunity over the coming years.

After digesting significant interest rate moves early in the year causing underperformance, the utility sector bounced back strongly as market risks increased throughout the quarter. Utilities benefitted from a “flight to safety” in the latter half of the quarter as investors began to price in a lower economic growth outlook and a flattening yield curve. From a fundamental standpoint, utilities continue to exhibit strong growth profiles underpinned by regulated capital expenditure programs that we believe will remain robust over the long-run supporting the equities. In the near-term, utilities are expected to perform relatively well as their attractive and defensive growth profiles provide support in the current market environment.

The pump, pipes and valves and filtration, treatment and test sub-sectors were the largest drags during the quarter. From an equity market perspective, the move higher in real interest rates and increased risks resulted in a rotation out of secular growth companies in the quarter, which weighed on a number of securities in the sector. The significant de-rating in those names, despite generally constructive earnings outlooks, caused large drawdowns in a handful of companies. Furthermore, in the latter half of the quarter, as commodity prices surged and uncertainty around the economic growth outlook increased, concerns regarding top line growth and margins weighed on the equities. Over the medium-to-long term, we continue to expect above market growth for many companies in the two sub-sectors as secular tailwinds remain strong. However, in the near-term, the equities will have to get through this period of uncertainty to be rewarded for that growth outlook.

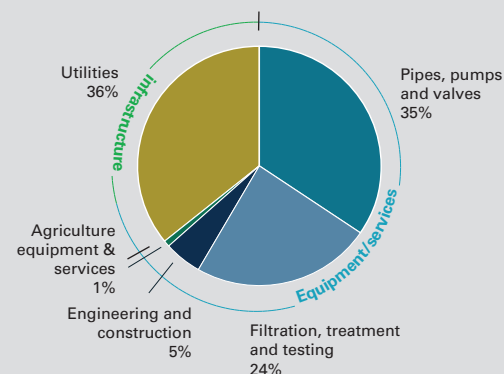
In summary, global water equities took a breather during the first quarter as a multitude of risk factors (inflation, monetary policy, interest rates and geopolitical tensions) weighed on risk-assets throughout the quarter. The drawdown in the sector was a de-rating from a multiple perspective, as the weighted average earnings outlook for water companies remains essentially unchanged from the end of 2021.

Secular tailwinds in the water sector will likely continue to provide momentum for strong risk-adjusted equity performance over the medium-to-long term. Many of those tailwinds, including increased infrastructure spending and technology adoption and corporate sustainability initiatives, are in the very early innings of playing out, which furthers confidence in the sector. The near-term set-up from an equity standpoint will likely remain volatile as global central banks attempt to dampen inflation and geopolitical tensions remain high, both of which have negative implications for global economic growth.

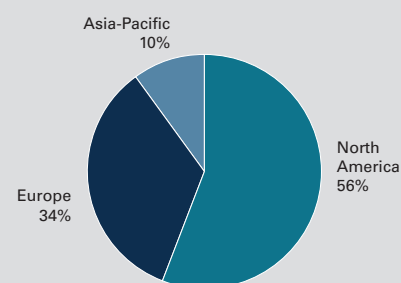
Companies with exposure to end-markets with healthy momentum that will likely execute through continued supply chain and commodity inflation headwinds and provide relatively strong earnings growth. Companies that can exhibit top and bottom line growth over the next 12 – 18 months will be rewarded in equity markets as “growth” becomes more scarce in this economic environment. Additionally, water utilities with strong growth profiles in constructive regulatory jurisdictions will likely perform relatively well the remainder of 2022 and into 2023. Lastly, there is potential for project activity in the U.S. to begin to pick up later in the year as funding from the IIJA is released and projects move into the execution phase. This will support many companies from E&C firms helping with design and implementation to pumps, pipes & valves companies supplying key materials for those projects.

### Portfolio as of 3/31/2022

#### By sector<sup>1</sup>



#### By geographic exposure



<sup>1</sup>Equipment/services includes pipes, pumps and valves and filtration, treatment and testing.  
Water infrastructure includes utilities and engineering and construction. Portfolio composition is subject to change due to ongoing management of the fund. References to specific securities or sectors should not be construed as a recommendation by the fund or its advisor.

### Top 10 holdings (as of 3/31/2022)

1. American Water Works Company, Inc.	7.9%	6. Xylem Inc.	5.0%
2. Ecolab Inc.	7.8%	7. Essential Utilities, Inc.	4.2%
3. Geberit Ag-Reg	7.3%	8. Severn Trent Plc	4.2%
4. Ferguson Plc	6.9%	9. United Utilities Group Plc	4.1%
5. Veolia Environnement	6.8%	10. Tetra Tech Inc	3.9%

### Key quarterly performance drivers

- Agriculture equipment and services was the lone sub-sector to drive positive contribution during the quarter
- Utilities and E&C held in relatively better but still were negative contributors
- Pipes, pumps & valves and filtration, treatment & test were the largest drags on performance

### Performance as of 3/31/2022

	1Q 2022	Calendar YTD	1 year	3 year	5 year	Since inception*
EBLU market price	-16.83%	-16.83%	2.75%	15.07%	12.24%	12.35%
EBLU NAV	-16.05%	-16.05%	3.24%	15.59%	12.33%	12.39%
Underlying index	-15.90%	-15.90%	3.56%	15.94%	12.77%	12.83%

Top five contributors	Company type
Severn Trent Plc	Water utility
Guangdong Investment Ltd	Water utility
United Utilities Group PLC	Water utility
Evoqua Water Technologies Corp	Filtration, treatment and test
Lindsay Corporation	Agriculture equipment & services

Bottom five contributors	Company type
Aalberts N.V	Pipes, pumps & valves
Ecolab Inc.	Filtration, treatment and test
Xylem Inc	Pipes, pumps & valves
Ferguson Plc	Pipes, pumps & valves
Geberit Group	Filtration, treatment and test

\*The fund commenced operations on 2/14/2017.

Effective 6/15/2018, the fund's investment objective changed to track the net total return performance of the Ecofin Global Water ESG Index<sup>SM</sup>. Prior to 6/15/2018, the fund's investment objective was to track the total return performance of the Tortoise Water Index<sup>®</sup>. Underlying index performance is blended using the Tortoise Water Index<sup>®</sup> from inception to 6/15/2018 and the Ecofin Global Water ESG Index<sup>SM</sup> after 6/15/2018. **Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. Investment return and principal value will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than original cost. Returns less than one year are not annualized. NAV prices are used to calculate market price performance prior to the date when the fund first traded. Market performance is determined using the bid/ask midpoint at 4:00pm Eastern time, when the NAV is typically calculated. Market performance does not represent the returns you would receive if you traded shares at other times. For the fund's most recent month end performance, please call (844) TR-INDEX or (844) 874-6339.**

**As stated in the Prospectus, the total annual operating expenses are 0.40%. The advisor has agreed to pay all expenses incurred by the fund except for the advisory fee, interest, taxes, brokerage expenses and other fees, charges, taxes, levies or expenses (such as stamp taxes) incurred in connection with the execution of portfolio transactions or in connection with creation and redemption transactions. Index returns are for illustrative purposes only. Unlike the fund return, index return is pre-expenses and taxes. Index performance returns do not reflect any management fees, transaction costs or expenses.**

## Disclosures

TIS Advisors is the adviser to the Ecofin Global Water ESG Fund and is a registered investment adviser providing research-driven indices that can be used as a realistic basis for exchange-traded products and thought leadership in the universe of essential assets. Its indices are intended to fill a void in the market and provide benchmarks and investable asset class universes for use by investment professionals, research analysts and industry executives to analyze relative performance as well as to provide a basis for passively managed exchange-traded products. Vident Investment Advisory, LLC serves as sub-adviser to the Fund.

Impact investing and/or Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) managers may take into consideration factors beyond traditional financial information to select securities, which could result in relative investment performance deviating from other strategies or broad market benchmarks, depending on whether such sectors or investments are in or out of favor in the market. Further, ESG strategies may rely on certain values-based criteria to eliminate exposures found in similar strategies or broad market benchmarks, which could also result in relative investment performance deviating.

Cash flow: the net amount of cash and cash-equivalents being transferred into and out of a business.

PMI: The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) is an index of the prevailing direction of economic trends in the manufacturing and service sectors. It consists of a diffusion index that summarizes whether market conditions, as viewed by purchasing managers, are expanding, staying the same, or contracting. The purpose of the PMI is to provide information about current and future business conditions to company decision makers, analysts, and investors. The MSCI ACWI Index captures large and mid cap representation across 23 Developed Markets and 26 Emerging Markets countries. The index covers approximately 85% of the global investable equity opportunity set.

***The fund's investment objective, risks, charges and expenses must be considered carefully before investing. The summary and statutory prospectus contains this and other important information about the fund and may be obtained by calling 844-TR-INDEX (844-874-6339) or visiting [www.ecofininvest.com](http://www.ecofininvest.com). Read it carefully before investing.***

**Shares of exchange-traded funds (ETFs) are not individually redeemable and owners of the shares may acquire those shares from the ETF and tender those shares for redemption to the ETF in Creation Units only, see the ETF prospectus for additional information regarding Creation Units. Investors may purchase or sell ETF shares throughout the day through any brokerage account, which will result in typical brokerage commissions.**

**Investing involves risk. Principal loss is possible. Investment in the water infrastructure and management industry may significantly affect the value of the shares of the fund. Companies in the water industry are subject to environmental considerations, taxes, government regulation, price and supply fluctuations, competition and water conservation influences. Investments in non-U.S. companies (including Canadian issuers) involve risk not ordinarily associated with investments in securities and instruments of U.S. issuers, including risks related to political, social and economic developments abroad, differences between U.S. and foreign regulatory and accounting requirements, tax risk and market practices, as well as fluctuations in foreign currencies. The fund invests in small and mid-cap companies, which involve additional risks such as limited liquidity and greater volatility than larger companies. The fund is not actively managed, and therefore the fund generally will not sell a security due to current or projected underperformance of a security, industry or sector, unless that security is removed from the index or the selling of the security is otherwise required upon a rebalancing of the index. There is no**

**guarantee that the fund will achieve a high degree of correlation to the index and therefore achieve its investment objective. The fund has elected to be, and intends to qualify each year for treatment as, a regulated investment company (RIC). To maintain the fund's qualification for federal income tax treatment as a RIC, the fund must meet certain source-of-income, asset diversification and annual distribution requirements. If for any taxable year the fund fails to qualify for the special federal income tax treatment afforded to RICs, all of the fund's taxable income will be subject to federal income tax at regular corporate rates (without any deduction for distributions to its shareholders) and its income available for distribution will be reduced. Derivatives involve risks different from, and in certain cases, greater than the risks presented by more traditional investments. The fund is non-diversified, meaning it may concentrate its assets in fewer individual holdings than a diversified fund. Therefore, the fund is more exposed to individual stock volatility than a diversified fund.**

The Tortoise Water Index<sup>®</sup> is a float-adjusted, modified market capitalization-weighted index comprised of companies that are materially engaged in the water infrastructure or water management industries. The Ecofin Global Water ESG Index<sup>®</sup> is a proprietary, rules-based, modified capitalization-weighted, float-adjusted index comprised of companies that are materially engaged in the water infrastructure or water management industries. Ecofin Global Water ESG Index<sup>®</sup> and Tortoise Water Index<sup>®</sup> (the "Indices") are the exclusive property of TIS Advisors, which has contracted with S&P Opco, LLC (a subsidiary of S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC) to calculate and maintain the Indices. The Indices are not sponsored by S&P Dow Jones Indices or its affiliates or its third party licensors (collectively, "S&P Dow Jones Indices"). S&P Dow Jones Indices will not be liable for any errors or omission in calculating the Indices. "Calculated by S&P Dow Jones Indices" and its related stylized mark(s) are service marks of S&P Dow Jones Indices and have been licensed for use by TIS Advisors and its affiliates. S&P<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC ("SPFS"), and Dow Jones<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of Dow Jones Trademark Holdings LLC ("Dow Jones"). The MSCI World Index, a broad global equity index that represents large and mid-cap equity performance across 23 developed markets countries. It covers approximately 85% of the free float-adjusted market capitalization in each country and does not offer exposure to emerging markets. The S&P Global Infrastructure Index is designed to track 75 companies from around the world chosen to represent the listed infrastructure industry while maintaining liquidity and tradability. No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any format or by any means including electronically or mechanically, by photocopying, or by any other form or manner whatsoever, without the prior written consent of TIS Advisors. It is not possible to invest directly in an index.

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The Morningstar Rating<sup>™</sup> for funds, or "star rating," is calculated for managed products (including mutual funds, variable annuity and variable life subaccounts, exchange-traded funds, closed-end funds and separate accounts) with at least a three-year history without adjustment for sales load. Exchange-traded funds and open-ended mutual funds are considered a single population for comparative purposes. It is calculated based on a Morningstar Risk-Adjusted Return measure that accounts for variation in a managed product's monthly excess performance, placing more emphasis on downward variations and rewarding consistent performance. The top 10% of products in each product category receive five stars, the next 22.5% receive four stars, the next 35% receive three stars, the next 22.5% receive two stars, and the bottom 10% receive one star. The Overall Morningstar Rating<sup>™</sup> for a managed product is derived from a weighted average of the performance figures associated with its three-, five- and 10-year (if applicable) Morningstar Rating<sup>™</sup> metrics. The weights are: 100% three-year rating for 36 - 59 months of total returns, 60% five-year



rating/40% three-year rating for 60 - 119 months of total returns, and 50% 10-year rating/30% five-year rating/20% three-year rating for 120 or more months of total returns. While the 10-year overall star rating formula seems to give the most weight to the 10-year period, the most recent three-year period actually has the greatest impact because it is included in all three rating periods. As of 3/31/2022, EBLU was rated against 107 and 100 Natural Resource Funds over the three- and five-year time periods. EBLU received three stars and 4 stars, respectively, over those periods. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Nothing contained on this communication constitutes tax, legal or investment advice. Investors must consult their tax advisor or legal counsel for advice and information concerning their particular situation.

MSCI ESG Research LLC's ("MSCI ESG") Fund Metrics and Ratings (the "Information") provide environmental, social and governance data with respect to underlying securities within more than 31,000 multi-asset class Mutual Funds and ETFs globally. MSCI ESG is a Registered Investment Adviser under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. MSCI ESG materials have not been submitted to, nor received approval from, the US SEC or any other regulatory body. None of the Information constitutes an offer to buy or sell, or a promotion or recommendation of, any security, financial instrument or product or trading strategy, nor should it be taken as an indication or guarantee of any future performance, analysis, forecast or prediction. None of the Information can be used to determine which securities to buy or sell or when to buy or sell them. The Information is provided "as is" and the user of the Information assumes the entire risk of any use it may make or permit to be made of the Information.

The MSCI ESG Fund Ratings is designed to assess the resilience of a fund's aggregate holdings to long term ESG risks. Highly rated funds consist of issuers with leading or improving management of key ESG risks.

- AAA, AA: Leader- The companies that the fund invests in tend to show strong and/or improving management of financially relevant environmental, social and governance issues. These companies may be more resilient to disruptions arising from ESG events.
- A, BB, BB: Average- The fund invests in companies that tend to show average management of ESG issues, or in a mix of companies with both above-average and below-average ESG risk management.
- B, CCC: Laggard- The fund is exposed to companies that do not demonstrate adequate management of the ESG risks that they face or show worsening management of these issues. These companies may be more vulnerable to disruptions arising from ESG events.

The Fund ESG Rating is calculated as a direct mapping of "Fund ESG Quality Score" to letter rating categories.

- 8.6- 10: AAA
- 7.1- 8.6: AA
- 5.7- 7.1: A
- 4.3- 5.7: BBB
- 2.9- 4.3: BB
- 1.4- 2.9: B
- 0.0- 1.4: CCC

The "Fund ESG Quality Score" assesses the resilience of a fund's aggregate holdings to long term ESG risks. Highly rated funds consist of issuers with leading or improving management of key ESG risks, based on a granular breakdown of each issuer's business: its core product or business segments, the locations of its assets or revenues, and other relevant measures such as outsourced production. The "Fund ESG Quality Score" is provided on a 0-10 score, with 0 and 10 being the respective lowest and highest possible fund scores.

The "Fund ESG Quality Score" is assessed using the underlying holding's "Overall ESG Scores", "Overall ESG Ratings", and "Overall ESG Rating Trends". It is calculated in a series of 3 steps.

Step 1: Calculate the "Fund Weighted Average ESG Score" of the underlying holding's "Overall ESG Scores". The Overall ESG Scores represent either the ESG Ratings Final Industry-Adjusted Score or Government Adjusted ESG Score of the issuer. Methodology for the issuer level scores are available in the MSCI ESG Ratings Methodology document.

Step 2: Calculate adjustment % based on fund exposure to "Fund ESG Laggards ()", "Fund ESG Trend Negative ()", and "Fund ESG Trend Positive (%)".

Step 3: Multiply the "Fund Weighted Average ESG Score" by (1 + Adjustment %).

For more information please visit <https://www.msci.com/esg-fund-ratings>

**Earnings growth is not a measure of the Fund's future performance.**

Quasar Distributors, LLC, Distributor

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