



PH&N LifeTime 2030 Fund

Commentary as at June 30, 2024

The global economy continued to demonstrate resilience in the face of higher-than-expected interest rates and geopolitical concerns. While inflation cooled sufficiently to prompt central-bank rate cuts in Canada and the eurozone, the U.S. Federal Reserve (the “Fed”) delayed rate reductions given that U.S. inflation remained higher than in most other developed countries. The wars in Ukraine and Gaza persisted, with little sign of ending.

Major government-bond markets posted losses in the first half of 2024, paring some of last year’s strong performance as economic growth and inflation stayed generally stronger than anticipated. Investors began 2024 expecting the Fed to cut interest rates at least three times in the first half of the year but were disappointed. The U.S. continued to report relatively strong economic growth and inflation. The Fed kept interest rates in a range of 5.25% to 5.50% and hinted that inflation would have to come down more for rates to decline. In contrast to the U.S., inflation and growth moderated more in the eurozone and Canada, leading to June rate cuts by their central banks. The drop in the Bank of Canada’s policy rate, to 4.75% from 5.00%, was the first rate reduction since the pandemic.

Equity markets climbed to new highs in the second quarter of 2024, although the gains were concentrated in a small group of the biggest technology stocks that have benefited from advances in artificial intelligence. Valuations in equity markets outside of U.S. large-caps were less demanding, meaning global equity markets could offer attractive returns should economic and corporate-profit growth remain positive. Emerging-market stocks continued to underperform their developed-market counterparts.

The portfolio manager’s base case has the economy experiencing a soft landing, inflation falling gradually toward central bankers’ 2% targets and central banks delivering modest monetary easing. Against this backdrop, prospective returns for fixed income appear solid, in the mid-single digits with further upside potential should the economy falter. Stocks still offer superior return potential versus bonds but the upside has been reduced by the latest rally and the equity-risk premium is narrow.

This has been provided by RBC Global Asset Management Inc. (RBC GAM) and is for informational purposes, as of the date noted only. Discussion of any securities in this report is not a recommendation to buy or sell any specific security, and is subject to change. It is not intended to provide legal, accounting, tax, investment, financial or other advice and such information should not be relied upon for providing such advice. RBC GAM takes reasonable steps to provide up-to-date, accurate and reliable information, and believes the information to be so when provided. Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Interest rates, market conditions, tax rulings and other investment factors are subject to rapid change which may materially impact analysis that is included in this document. You should consult with your advisor before taking any action based upon the information contained in this document. All opinions constitute our judgment as of the dates indicated, are subject to change without notice and are provided in good faith without legal responsibility. Information obtained from third parties is believed to be reliable but RBC GAM and its affiliates assume no responsibility for any errors or omissions or for any loss or damage suffered. RBC GAM reserves the right at any time and without notice to change, amend or cease publication of the information.

Please consult your advisor and read the prospectus or Fund Facts document before investing. There may be commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses associated with mutual fund investments. Mutual funds are not guaranteed or covered by the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation or by any other government deposit insurer. Mutual fund unit values change frequently. For money market funds, there can be no assurances that the fund will be able to maintain its net asset value per security at a constant amount or that the full amount of your investment in the fund will be returned to you. Past performance may not be repeated. RBC Funds, RBC Private Pools, RBC Alternative Funds and PH&N Funds are offered by RBC Global Asset Management Inc. (RBC GAM) and distributed through authorized dealers in Canada.

This document may contain forward-looking statements about a fund or general economic factors which are not guarantees of future performance. Forward-looking statements involve inherent risk and uncertainties, so it is possible that predictions, forecasts, projections and other forward-looking statements will not be achieved. We caution you not to place undue reliance on these statements as a number of important factors could cause actual events or results to differ materially from those expressed or implied in any forward-looking statement. All opinions in forward-looking statements are subject to change without notice and are provided in good faith but without legal responsibility.