

Presale:

MCF CLO IX Ltd./MCF CLO IX LLC (Refinancing And Extension)

March 26, 2024

Preliminary ratings

Class	Preliminary rating	Balance (mil. \$)	Overcollateralization (%)	Par subordination (%)	Interest rate (%)
A-1-RR	AAA (sf)	125.50	170.94	41.50	Three-month CME term SOFR + 2.00
A-L-RR	AAA (sf)	50.00	170.94	41.50	Three-month CME term SOFR + 2.00
B-RR	AA (sf)	22.50	140.85	29.00	Three-month CME term SOFR + 2.70
B-L	AA (sf)	15.00	140.85	29.00	Three-month CME term SOFR + 2.70
C-RR (deferrable)	A (sf)	18.00	129.87	23.00	Three-month CME term SOFR + 3.25
D-RR (deferrable)	BBB- (sf)	15.00	121.95	18.00	Three-month CME term SOFR + 5.25
E-R (deferrable)	BB- (sf)	18.00	113.64	12.00	Three-month CME term SOFR + 8.06
Subordinated notes	NR	38.78	N/A	N/A	Residual

Note: This presale report is based on information as of March 26, 2024. The ratings shown are preliminary. This report does not constitute a recommendation to buy, hold, or sell securities. Subsequent information may result in the assignment of final ratings that differ from the preliminary ratings. NR--Not rated. N/A--Not applicable.

Executive Summary

MCF CLO IX Ltd. is a \$302.78 million middle market CLO managed by Apogem Capital LLC, a subsidiary of New York Life Insurance Co. This is a proposed second refinancing of its June 2019 transaction, which underwent a first refinancing in February 2022.

Based on provisions in the transaction documents and the portfolio characteristics:

- The replacement class A-1-RR, A-L-RR, B-RR, C-RR, D-RR, and E-R notes and the class A-L-RR

PRIMARY CREDIT ANALYST

David M Postilion, CFA
New York
+ 1 (212) 438 0030
david.postilion
@spglobal.com

SECONDARY CONTACTS

Varun Saykhedkar
Toronto
varun.saykhedkar
@spglobal.com

Iris Xu, CFA
Chicago
(1) 312-233-7015
iris.xu
@spglobal.com

- loans are expected to be issued at higher spreads over three-month SOFR than the corresponding original debt tranches.
- The replacement class A-RR, A-L-RR, B-RR, C-RR, D-RR, and E-RR notes and the class A-L-RR loans are expected to be issued at floating spreads, replacing the floating spreads on the current debt tranches.
 - In connection with the refinancing, the issuer is adding class B-L loans, pro rata to the class B-RR notes, to the capital structure, while also removing the class A-2 notes, subordinate to the class A-1 notes and loans, from the structure.
 - The reinvestment period and stated maturity will each be extended by approximately 4.75 years.
 - In connection with the refinancing, the issuer is adding provisions related to workout assets.
 - Of the identified underlying collateral obligations, 97.40% have credit ratings (which may include confidential ratings, private ratings, and credit estimates) assigned by S&P Global Ratings.
 - Of the identified underlying collateral obligations, 2.11% have recovery ratings (which may include confidential and private ratings) assigned by S&P Global Ratings.

After analyzing the changes to the transaction, we assigned our preliminary ratings to the replacement class A-1-RR, B-RR, C-RR, D-RR, and E-R notes and the replacement class A-L-RR and B-L loans. The original class A-1-R, A-2-R, B-R, C-R, D-R, and E notes and the original class A-1-R loans are expected to be fully redeemed with the proceeds from the replacement notes issued on the March 28, 2024, refinancing date. On the refinancing date, we expect to withdraw the ratings on the original notes and assign ratings to the new notes.

Key Credit Metrics

Selected credit metrics

	MCF CLO IX Ltd.
Total leverage (x)(i)	6.81
Par subordination ('AAA'/'BBB') (%)	41.50/18.00
WA cost of debt %(ii)	2.78
Portfolio WAS (excluding floors) (%)	5.35
SDR ('AAA'/'BBB') (%)	75.02/55.28
WA portfolio recovery ('AAA'/'BBB') (%)	49.02/62.13

(i)Total debt to equity (excluding any class X debt, if applicable). (ii)Spread over SOFR for all classes, excluding the subordinated notes and, if applicable, any class X debt. Additionally, if there is a fixed-rate tranche, SOFR is subtracted from the fixed coupon in the calculation.
WA--Weighted average. WAS--Weighted average spread. SDR--Scenario default rate.

Transaction Timeline/Participants

Transaction timeline

Expected closing date	March 28, 2024.
Effective date	Not applicable.
Debt payment frequency	Quarterly, beginning July 17, 2024.
Non-call period end date	March 28, 2026.
Reinvestment period end date	April 17, 2028.
Stated maturity date	April 17, 2036.

Participants

Collateral manager	Apogem Capital LLC.
Placement agent	Wells Fargo Securities LLC.
Trustee	Wells Fargo Bank N.A.

Rationale

The preliminary ratings assigned to MCF CLO IX Ltd./MCF CLO IX LLC's floating-rate debt reflect our assessment of:

- The diversification of the collateral pool, which consists primarily of middle market speculative-grade (rated 'BB+' and lower) senior secured term loans.
- The credit enhancement provided through subordination, excess spread, and overcollateralization.
- The experience of the collateral manager's team, which can affect the performance of the rated debt through portfolio identification and ongoing management.
- The transaction's legal structure, which is expected to be bankruptcy remote.

We may choose to make qualitative adjustments to our analysis when rating CLO tranches to reflect the likelihood that changes to the underlying assets' credit profile may affect a portfolio's credit quality in the near term. This is consistent with paragraph 15 of our criteria for analyzing CLOs (see "Global Methodology And Assumptions For CLOs And Corporate CDOs," published June 21, 2019). To do this, we may review the likelihood of near-term changes to the portfolio's credit profile by evaluating the transaction's specific risk factors. Based on our review of these factors, we believe there is adequate cushion between this CLO tranches' break-even default rates (BDRs) and scenario default rates (SDRs) to address the possibility of near-term changes to the portfolio's credit quality.

Environmental, Social, And Governance

We regard the exposure to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) credit factors in the transaction as being broadly in line with our benchmark for the sector (see "ESG Industry Report Card: Collateralized Loan Obligations," published March 31, 2021). For CLOs, we view the exposure to environmental credit factors as below average, to social credit factors as below average, and to governance credit factors as average, primarily due to the diversity of the assets within the sector. Since we view the credit impact of ESG factors for this transaction as being in line with our ESG benchmark for the sector, we made no specific adjustments in our rating analysis to account for any ESG-related credit risks or opportunities.

Collateral Manager

Apogem Capital LLC currently manages seven middle market CLOs and has approximately \$2.6 billion in total CLO assets under management (AUM). Including non-CLO assets, Apogem Capital LLC has about \$41.0 billion in total AUM, which includes about \$15.9 billion in direct lending.

Quantitative Analysis

In analyzing this transaction, S&P Global Ratings conducted a quantitative review consisting of two analyses: a portfolio analysis and a cash flow analysis.

Understanding our portfolio and cash flow analyses

For the portfolio analysis, S&P Global Ratings ran the portfolio presented to us through the CDO Evaluator model, which defaults portions of the underlying collateral based on the default probability and correlation assumptions defined in S&P Global Ratings criteria. This resulted in a set of SDRs that represent expected default levels for the portfolio under the different stress scenarios associated with each rating level (see chart 1).

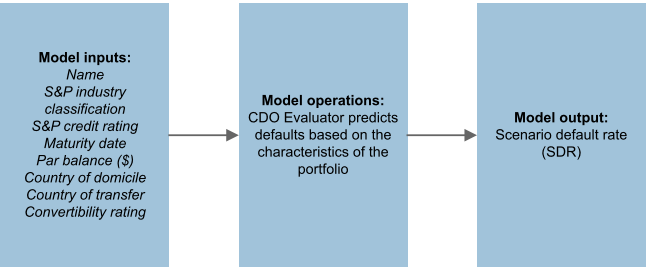
For example, the 'AAA' stress scenario assumes an extreme level of stress that is similar to what was experienced during the Great Depression, while the 'BBB' stress scenario assumes a high, but less severe, level of stress that is more akin to the 2008 recession. As a result, the portfolio will experience a higher level of defaults in the 'AAA' stress scenario than the 'BBB' stress scenario.

For the cash flow analysis, we input the transaction-specific structural features presented to us into the Standard & Poor's Cash Flow Evaluator model to generate a base case set of cash flows. These cash flows are then subjected to various default timing and interest rate stress scenarios to arrive at a BDR for each rated class of debt (see chart 2).

For each class, the BDR represents the maximum amount of defaults that the class can withstand while still being able to pay timely interest and ultimate principal to its debtholders. Classes with higher subordination typically have higher BDRs.

Chart 1

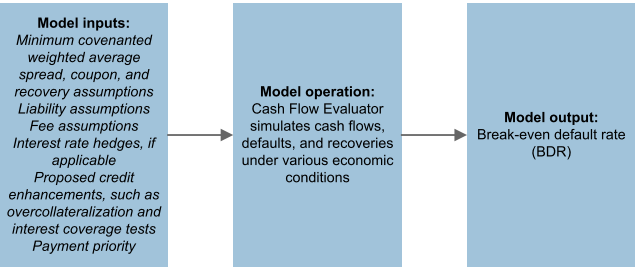
CDO Evaluator



Copyright © 2024 by Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC. All rights reserved.

Chart 2

Cash Flow Evaluator



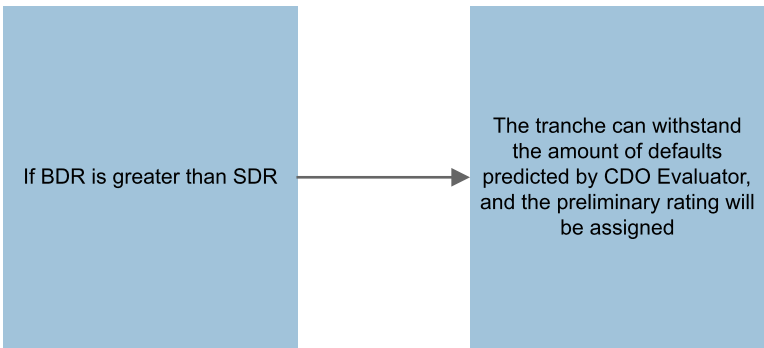
Copyright © 2024 by Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC. All rights reserved.

Connecting the portfolio and cash flow analyses

For a tranche to achieve a particular rating, it must be able to withstand the level of defaults projected by the CDO Evaluator and still pay timely interest and principal (see chart 3).

Chart 3

Assignment of tranche rating



Copyright © 2024 by Standard & Poor’s Financial Services LLC. All rights reserved.

The results shown in table 1 indicate that the rated debt has sufficient credit enhancement to withstand our projected default levels.

Table 1

Credit enhancement

Class	Preliminary rating	BDR (%)	SDR (%)	BDR cushion (%)
A-1-RR	AAA (sf)	86.99	75.02	11.97
A-L-RR	AAA (sf)	86.99	75.02	11.97
B-RR	AA (sf)	76.78	67.47	9.31
B-L	AA (sf)	76.78	67.47	9.31
C-RR (deferrable)	A (sf)	68.35	61.08	7.27
D-RR (deferrable)	BBB- (sf)	60.74	51.04	9.71
E-R (deferrable)	BB- (sf)	56.09	42.85	13.24

BDR--Break-even default rate. SDR--Scenario default rate.

Supplemental tests

We also conduct a largest-industry default test and a largest-obligor default test according to our "Global Methodology And Assumptions For CLOs And Corporate CDOs," criteria published June 21, 2019. Under these assumptions, the debt can withstand the loss amounts indicated in table 2 at their preliminary rating levels.

Table 2

Supplemental tests

Class	Preliminary rating	Preliminary amount (mil. \$)	Largest-industry default test loss amount (mil. \$)	Largest-obligor default test loss amount (mil. \$)
A-1-RR	AAA (sf)	125.50	30.96	47.13
A-L-RR	AAA (sf)	50.00	30.96	47.13
B-RR	AA (sf)	22.50	30.96	38.66
B-L	AA (sf)	15.00	30.96	38.66
C-RR (deferrable)	A (sf)	18.00	N/A	29.50
D-RR (deferrable)	BBB- (sf)	15.00	N/A	23.02
E-R (deferrable)	BB- (sf)	18.00	N/A	16.93

N/A--Not applicable.

Collateral Quality Tests

In addition to the quantitative framework, we produce and review collateral quality metrics to assess specific risks inherent in a transaction. The results for the collateral quality tests, based on the identified portfolio provided to us, are shown in table 3.

Table 3

Collateral quality metrics--performing identified collateral

Test	WA	Covenant	Margin
WA life (years)(i)	4.05	8.00	3.95
WAS (including floors) (%)	5.35	5.25	0.10
WA fixed coupon (%) (ii)	N/A	7.00	N/A
WA rating	B-	N/A	N/A

(i) The calculated value may include an adjustment to some asset maturity inputs if the resulting pool's WA maturity is less than the length of the reinvestment period. (ii) The calculated value does not give credit to excess spread, which may positively adjust the calculation when determining compliance with the covenant. WA--Weighted average. WAS--Weighted average spread. N/A--Not applicable.

Portfolio Characteristics

Metrics based on the portfolio presented to S&P Global Ratings and the level of ramp-up completion are shown in tables 4A and 4B.

Table 4A

Target collateral obligations

Target par balance (mil. \$)	300.00
Par balance of identified collateral (mil. \$)	271.20
Par balance of collateral not yet identified (mil. \$)	28.80
S&P Global Ratings' ratings and confidential indications (% of identified collateral)(i)	97.40

(i) May include confidential ratings, private ratings, and credit estimates.

In the portfolio data referenced for this analysis, the issuer identified approximately 90.40% of the portfolio's collateral. As the portfolio composition changes, the information and results presented in tables 5 and 6 and charts 4-7 are also likely to change.

Obligor concentration

Table 5 shows the top five obligor holdings of the underlying portfolio presented to S&P Global Ratings as of the date of this publication.

Table 5

Top five obligor holdings

Obligor reference	Industry	Security type	S&P Global Ratings' credit rating	S&P Global Ratings' implied rating	CreditWatch/Outlook	Notional amount (mil. \$)		Notional amount (%)	
						Obligor	Cumulative	Obligor	Cumulative
1	Distributors	Senior secured	N/A	No	N/A	5.39	5.39	1.99	1.99
2	Insurance	Senior secured	N/A	No	N/A	5.37	10.77	1.98	3.97
3	Health care providers and services	Senior secured	N/A	No	N/A	5.37	16.14	1.98	5.95
4	Communications equipment	Senior secured	N/A	No	N/A	5.11	21.25	1.88	7.83
5	Software	Senior secured	N/A	No	N/A	4.93	26.17	1.82	9.65

N/A--Not applicable.

Industry and ratings distribution

Chart 4 shows the top five industry distribution in the portfolio, and chart 6 shows the ratings distribution in the portfolio.

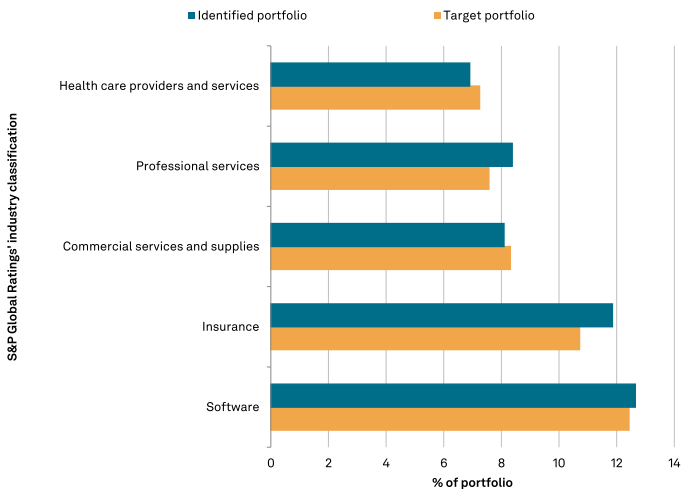
Table 4B

Identified collateral obligations (obligors)

No. of obligors	120
Avg. obligor holding (%)	0.83
Largest-obligor holding (%)	1.99
Smallest-obligor holding (%)	0.13

Chart 4

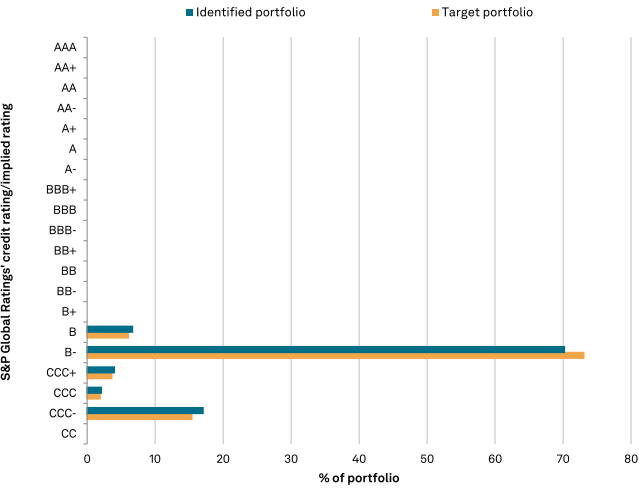
Industry distribution



Copyright © 2024 by Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC. All rights reserved.

Chart 5

Rating distribution



Copyright © 2024 by Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC. All rights reserved.

Recovery rating and maturity distribution

Table 6 and chart 6 present a summary of the S&P Global Ratings loan recovery rates for the identified portfolio. Chart 7 shows the maturity distribution in the identified portfolio.

Table 6

Performing identified collateral modeled WARR

Liability rating category	WARR (%)	Min. covenanted WARR (%)
AAA (sf)	49.02	49.00
AA (sf)	54.09	54.00
A (sf)	58.08	58.00
BBB (sf)	62.13	62.10
BB (sf)	73.81	73.80

WARR--Weighted average recovery rate.

Chart 6

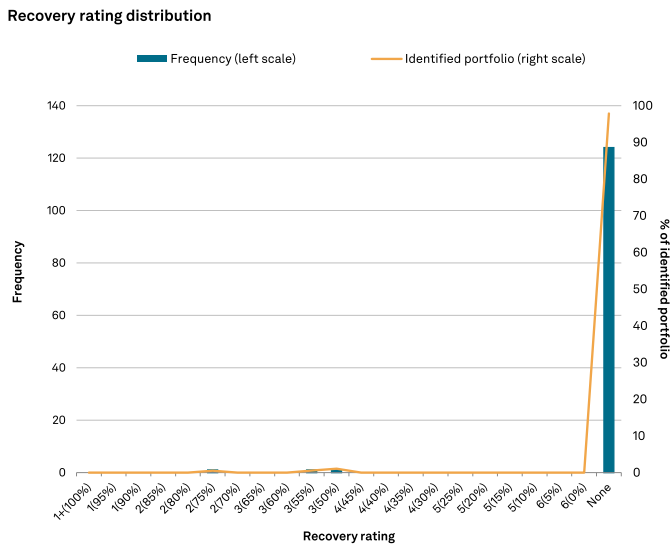
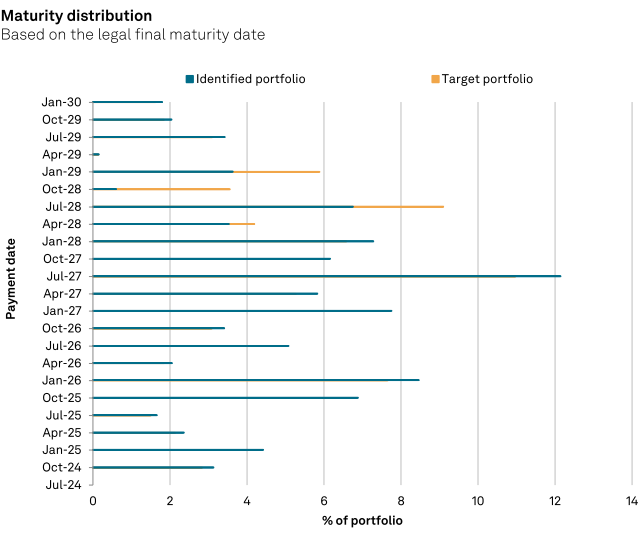


Chart 7



Debt Payment Considerations

Overcollateralization and interest coverage tests

The rated debt benefits from certain structural features that require sequential mandatory redemption upon a breach of any overcollateralization or interest coverage test (see table 7).

Table 7

O/C and I/C tests

Class	Actual O/C (%)	Min. O/C required (%)	Min. I/C required (%)
A / B	140.85	130.85	120.00
C	129.87	121.87	110.00
D	121.95	115.95	105.00
E	113.64	109.14	N/A

O/C--Overcollateralization. I/C--Interest coverage. N/A--Not applicable.

Application Of Standard & Poor's CDO Monitor/Compliance With Standard & Poor's CDO Monitor Test

Standard & Poor's CDO Monitor is a tool that collateral managers use during the reinvestment period to determine if a particular trade or series of trades increases the risk to the rated liabilities.

The CDO Monitor Test will be considered passing if the results indicate that the current portfolio produces an SDR that is equal to or below the transaction's BDR. There is no requirement that the

CDO Monitor Test be considered after the reinvestment period, or when reinvesting proceeds from the sale of a credit risk or a defaulted obligation or proceeds from an equity security.

For this transaction, the non-model version of CDO Monitor may be used as an alternative to the model-based approach. The non-model version is built on the foundation of six portfolio benchmarks, which are used to provide insight into the characteristics that inform the way S&P Global Ratings assesses credit quality. These benchmarks are meant to enhance transparency for investors and other CLO market participants by allowing them to compare metrics across transactions and assess changes within a given CLO over time (for more details, see "S&P Global Ratings' Updated Assumptions For CDO Monitor Non-Model Version," published June 21, 2019, and "Standard & Poor's Introduces Non-Model Version Of CDO Monitor," published Dec. 8, 2014).

Table 8

CDO Monitor metrics

	MCF CLO IX Ltd.
S&P Global Ratings' weighted average rating factor(i)	4,031.43
Default rate dispersion(ii)	733.99
Obligor diversity measure(iii)	96.43
Industry diversity measure(iv)	16.27
Regional diversity measure(v)	1.01
Weighted average life (years)(vi)	2.97

(i)S&P Global Ratings' weighted average rating factor (SPWARF): The SPWARF is calculated by multiplying the par balance of each collateral obligation that has a 'CCC-' or higher rating from S&P Global Ratings by the S&P Global Ratings' rating factor, then summing the total for the portfolio, and then dividing the result by the aggregate principal balance of all collateral obligations included in the calculation. (ii)Default rate dispersion (DRD): The DRD is calculated by multiplying the par balance for each collateral obligation that has a 'CCC-' or higher rating from S&P Global Ratings by the absolute value of the difference between the S&P Global Ratings' rating factor and the SPWARF, then summing the total for the portfolio, and then dividing the result by the aggregate principal balance of the collateral obligations included in the calculation. (iii)Obligor diversity measure (ODM): The ODM is the measure of the effective number of obligors in the pool obtained by squaring the result for each obligor and taking the reciprocal of the sum of these squares [i.e., $1/\sum(i)^2$]. (iv)Industry diversity measure (IDM): The IDM is the effective number of industries in the pool obtained in the same way as the ODM. (v)Regional diversity measure (RDM): The RDM is the effective number of regions in the pool obtained in the same way as the ODM and IDM. (vi)Weighted average life: The portfolio's weighted average life is based on the remaining number of years to maturity for each loan.

Surveillance

S&P Global Ratings will maintain active surveillance on the rated debt until the debt matures or is retired, or until its credit ratings on the transaction have been withdrawn. The purpose of surveillance is to assess whether the rated debt is performing within the initial parameters and assumptions applied to each rating category. The issuer is required under the terms of the transaction documents to supply periodic reports and notices to S&P Global Ratings to maintain continuous surveillance on the rated debt. For more information on our CLO surveillance process, see "CLO Spotlight: S&P Global Ratings' Surveillance Process For Monitoring CLO Transactions," published Oct. 14, 2022.

Related Criteria

- General Criteria: Environmental, Social, And Governance Principles In Credit Ratings, Oct. 10, 2021
- Criteria | Structured Finance | General: Global Framework For Payment Structure And Cash

Flow Analysis Of Structured Finance Securities, Dec. 22, 2020

- Criteria | Structured Finance | General: Methodology To Derive Stressed Interest Rates In Structured Finance, Oct. 18, 2019
- Criteria | Structured Finance | CDOs: Global Methodology And Assumptions For CLOs And Corporate CDOs, June 21, 2019
- Criteria | Structured Finance | Legal: U.S. Structured Finance Asset Isolation And Special-Purpose Entity Criteria, May 15, 2019
- Criteria | Structured Finance | General: Counterparty Risk Framework: Methodology And Assumptions, March 8, 2019
- Criteria | Structured Finance | General: Incorporating Sovereign Risk In Rating Structured Finance Securities: Methodology And Assumptions, Jan. 30, 2019
- Legal Criteria: Structured Finance: Asset Isolation And Special-Purpose Entity Methodology, March 29, 2017
- General Criteria: Guarantee Criteria, Oct. 21, 2016
- Criteria | Structured Finance | General: Global Framework For Assessing Operational Risk In Structured Finance Transactions, Oct. 9, 2014
- Criteria | Structured Finance | CDOs: CDOs Of Project Finance Debt: Global Methodology And Assumptions, March 19, 2014
- General Criteria: Global Investment Criteria For Temporary Investments In Transaction Accounts, May 31, 2012
- Criteria | Structured Finance | CDOs: Global CDOs Of Pooled Structured Finance Assets: Methodology And Assumptions, Feb. 21, 2012
- General Criteria: Principles Of Credit Ratings, Feb. 16, 2011
- Criteria | Structured Finance | CDOs: Surveillance Methodology For Global Cash Flow And Hybrid CDOs Subject To Acceleration Or Liquidation After An EOD, Sept. 2, 2009
- Criteria | Structured Finance | General: Structured Finance Criteria Introduced For Cayman Islands Special-Purpose Entities, July 18, 2002

Related Research

- Credit FAQ: A Closer Look At Uptier Priming And Asset Drop-Down Provisions In U.S. CLOs, July 26, 2023
- Global Structured Finance 2023 Outlook, Jan. 11, 2023
- Scenario Analysis: How Resilient Are Middle-Market CLO Ratings (2022 Update), Oct. 19, 2022
- CLO Spotlight: S&P Global Ratings' Surveillance Process For Monitoring CLO Transactions, Oct. 14, 2022
- Scenario Analysis: How The Next Downturn Could Affect U.S. BSL CLO Ratings (2022 Update), Aug. 4, 2022
- ESG Industry Report Card: Collateralized Loan Obligations, March 31, 2021
- Credit FAQ: Anatomy Of A Credit Estimate: What It Means And How We Do It, Jan. 14, 2021

Presale: MCF CLO IX Ltd./MCF CLO IX LLC (Refinancing And Extension)

- All You Need To Know About CDO Monitor, March 26, 2020
- Credit FAQ: Understanding S&P Global Ratings' Updated CLO And Corporate CDO Criteria, June 26, 2019
- CLO Spotlight: S&P Global Ratings' Updated Assumptions For CDO Monitor Non-Model Version, June 21, 2019
- Credit FAQ: Key Considerations For September 2018 Updates To CDO Evaluator Industry Codes, Sept. 26, 2018
- Global Structured Finance Scenario And Sensitivity Analysis 2016: The Effects Of The Top Five Macroeconomic Factors, Dec. 16, 2016
- New Version Of CDO Evaluator (7.1) Includes Updated Corporate Industry Codes, Sept. 13, 2016
- CLO Spotlight: How S&P Global Ratings Assesses Operational And Administrative Risks Of CLO Collateral Managers, April 19, 2016
- S&P Adds Transparency To Its Effective Date Process For CLOs, April 20, 2015
- How Typical CLO Document Provisions Affect Maintenance Of Collateral Characteristics For Managed CLOs, Nov. 6, 2013
- CDO Spotlight: How Deferrable Assets In CLOs Are Treated Under Standard & Poor's Methodology, Oct. 1, 2012

Copyright © 2024 Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC. All rights reserved.

No content (including ratings, credit-related analyses and data, valuations, model, software or other application or output therefrom) or any part thereof (Content) may be modified, reverse engineered, reproduced or distributed in any form by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of Standard & Poor's Financial Services LLC or its affiliates (collectively, S&P). The Content shall not be used for any unlawful or unauthorized purposes. S&P and any third-party providers, as well as their directors, officers, shareholders, employees or agents (collectively S&P Parties) do not guarantee the accuracy, completeness, timeliness or availability of the Content. S&P Parties are not responsible for any errors or omissions (negligent or otherwise), regardless of the cause, for the results obtained from the use of the Content, or for the security or maintenance of any data input by the user. The Content is provided on an "as is" basis. S&P PARTIES DISCLAIM ANY AND ALL EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTIES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ANY WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE OR USE, FREEDOM FROM BUGS, SOFTWARE ERRORS OR DEFECTS, THAT THE CONTENT'S FUNCTIONING WILL BE UNINTERRUPTED OR THAT THE CONTENT WILL OPERATE WITH ANY SOFTWARE OR HARDWARE CONFIGURATION. In no event shall S&P Parties be liable to any party for any direct, indirect, incidental, exemplary, compensatory, punitive, special or consequential damages, costs, expenses, legal fees, or losses (including, without limitation, lost income or lost profits and opportunity costs or losses caused by negligence) in connection with any use of the Content even if advised of the possibility of such damages.

Credit-related and other analyses, including ratings, and statements in the Content are statements of opinion as of the date they are expressed and not statements of fact. S&P's opinions, analyses and rating acknowledgment decisions (described below) are not recommendations to purchase, hold, or sell any securities or to make any investment decisions, and do not address the suitability of any security. S&P assumes no obligation to update the Content following publication in any form or format. The Content should not be relied on and is not a substitute for the skill, judgment and experience of the user, its management, employees, advisors and/or clients when making investment and other business decisions. S&P does not act as a fiduciary or an investment advisor except where registered as such. While S&P has obtained information from sources it believes to be reliable, S&P does not perform an audit and undertakes no duty of due diligence or independent verification of any information it receives. Rating-related publications may be published for a variety of reasons that are not necessarily dependent on action by rating committees, including, but not limited to, the publication of a periodic update on a credit rating and related analyses.

To the extent that regulatory authorities allow a rating agency to acknowledge in one jurisdiction a rating issued in another jurisdiction for certain regulatory purposes, S&P reserves the right to assign, withdraw or suspend such acknowledgment at any time and in its sole discretion. S&P Parties disclaim any duty whatsoever arising out of the assignment, withdrawal or suspension of an acknowledgment as well as any liability for any damage alleged to have been suffered on account thereof.

S&P keeps certain activities of its business units separate from each other in order to preserve the independence and objectivity of their respective activities. As a result, certain business units of S&P may have information that is not available to other S&P business units. S&P has established policies and procedures to maintain the confidentiality of certain non-public information received in connection with each analytical process.

S&P may receive compensation for its ratings and certain credit-related analyses, normally from issuers or underwriters of securities or from obligors. S&P reserves the right to disseminate its opinions and analyses. S&P's public ratings and analyses are made available on its Web sites, www.standardandpoors.com (free of charge), and www.ratingsdirect.com and www.globalcreditportal.com (subscription), and may be distributed through other means, including via S&P publications and third-party redistributors. Additional information about our ratings fees is available at www.standardandpoors.com/usratingsfees.