Evaluating Currency Exposures and Hedging Strategies Amidst Global Economic Challenges: A Six-Month Outlook for ABC Firm

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October 26, 2023

Contents

Executive Summary	2
Economic and Geopolitical Exposure Impact on Firm ABC	2
Forecasted Future Spot Rates for Firm ABC	3
Evaluation of Firm ABC's exposure	7
Appendices	9
References	18

Executive Summary

Due to its widespread global operations, Firm ABC, an Australian-based agricultural machinery manufacturer, confronts pressing economic and geopolitical challenges. Elevated global inflation and fluctuating interest rates bring about operational and financial risks, intensified by its international supply chain and diverse clientele. Additionally, a capricious geopolitical scene introduces further complexity. Future spot rate predictions foresee AUD appreciating against NZD and USD but depreciating vis-a-vis GBP, EUR, and CAD. Due to its international reach, Firm ABC faces multifaceted currency-related risks: transactional, translational, and economic. Among the evaluated hedging strategies, Forward Hedging is advised for NZD receivables and JPY & USD payables, delivering significant savings. Money Market Hedging provides better results for CAD receivables. Conversely, GBP, EUR receivables, and EUR payables are recommended to remain unhedged. Additionally, Options Hedging allows the firm to benefit from favourable rate movements while securing a guaranteed rate. In conclusion, Firm ABC should employ a mixed approach, integrating Forward and Options Hedging. This dual-strategy not only furnishes protection against adverse shifts but also imparts flexibility. By adopting active hedging, the firm can stabilize its future cash flows, modify investor perceptions concerning its risk, potentially lowering capital costs, and safeguard its overall value, ensuring the preservation of shareholder wealth.

Economic and Geopolitical Exposure Impact on Firm ABC

Firm ABC, a prominent agricultural machinery manufacturer based in Australia, is strategically placed in the global market with its extensive network of suppliers from countries like Japan, Germany, and the USA, and its diversified clientele across New Zealand, Canada, the UK, and Italy. However, the current global economic climate, especially the rising trend of high inflation rates, widespread interest rate hikes, and the volatile geopolitical landscape, brings the firm multifaceted challenges and exposures.

Firstly, the global-wide high inflation rates directly affect Firm ABC's operations. With increased costs of raw materials stated in ABARES 2023 Australian Agriculture Snapshot, vital for the manufacturing process, can be exacerbated by the firm's international supply chain, particularly given its payment obligations in multiple currencies, like JPY, EUR and USD, over the upcoming months. The company's potential inability to pass these augmented production costs to the end consumer could erode its profit margins. Furthermore, as inflation erodes consumers' purchasing power, this could lead to subdued demand for Firm ABC's machinery, especially in countries with more pronounced inflation (RBA 2023). The inflation disparity between Australia and its trade partners

can dent the firm's export competitiveness. Coupled with business uncertainty and high inflation rates can disrupt the company's long-term growth strategy, affecting investment decisions and potential expansions.

Global-wide interest rate hikes introduce another layer of complexity to Firm ABC's financial management. With two significant payments due in EUR to their German supplier and another substantial payment in USD to their US supplier, the company's borrowing costs could rise. If the Australian dollar weakens in this environment, the firm's payment obligations in foreign currencies might become more expensive, impacting the firm's liquidity and overall financial health. Moreover, their 2,000,000 EUR term deposit in the UK might be affected by rate changes, influencing the return on this investment. On the consumer front, higher interest rates could deter spending on capital-intensive products like agricultural machinery, diminishing Firm ABC's sales (IBISWorld 2023). A potential appreciation of the Australian dollar due to interest rate dynamics could further hamper the firm's export competitiveness.

Lastly, the ever-evolving global geopolitical environment poses both risks and opportunities. The company's vast export portfolio exposes it to trade policies and potential tariffs (ACCC 2021). A sudden geopolitical event might lead to supply chain disruptions, especially concerning Firm ABC's pending payments and receivables in diverse currencies like NZD, CAD, GBP, and EUR (KPMG 2020). Unforeseen changes in trade regulations, intellectual property rights, or environmental standards could add operational challenges, while market volatility triggered by geopolitical unrest could impact consumer demand and confidence.

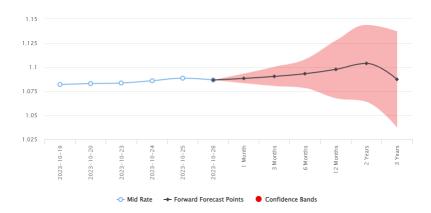
With its extensive global operations, Firm ABC is exposed to global economic and geopolitical challenges. Given its international procurement and sales activities, proactive risk management, financial hedging, and agile strategies are essential to navigate these complexities.

Forecasted Future Spot Rates for Firm ABC

AUD/NZD Forecast

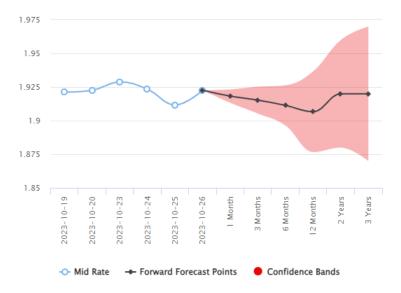
The Fundamental approach used within our quantitative analysis in Appendix 1 predicts that the Australian Dollar will strengthen against the New Zealand Dollar in the upcoming months. The forecast indicates an exchange rate of approximately 1.0838, with a notable low standard deviation of 1.2313. Pound Sterling Live (2023) also expects the rate to be around 1.0849 within a month. Conversely, Gov Capital (2023) anticipates a surge to 1.747077635808 by the end of the year. The geopolitical dynamics between Australia and New Zealand, trade partnerships, and regional stability play a role. Both countries, closely

tied in the Pacific region, will influence each other's currencies based on their respective economic performances. Therefore, we can expect AUD to appreciate against the NZD.



AUD/GBP Forecast

The Forward Rate in our analysis, seen in Appendix 2, shows a standard deviation 2.2250, predicting the AUD/GBP rate to be 0.511. This differs slightly from the Commonwealth Bank's (2023) projection of 0.55 GBP by the end of 2023 and Westpac's (2023) prediction of 0.54 GBP for the same period. Meanwhile, Wallet Investor (2023) is more pessimistic, anticipating a rate of around 0.521 as of October 24, 2023. Brexit aftermath and the UK's new trade partnerships could significantly impact GBP. On the other hand, Australia's economic resilience and adaptability to global challenges will determine the AUD's performance. The forecasts vary, but the general sentiment leans towards AUD's depreciation against the GBP.



AUD/USD Forecast

Given the ongoing momentum indicators, AUD/USD may lean towards a "sell on rallies" position for 2023. The AUD's strength is buoyed by inflation figures and the Reserve Bank of Australia's hawkish stance. According to the Fundamental approach in our analysis in Appendix 3, the predicted rate is 0.644 with a standard deviation of 3.0079. The pair's resistance is at 0.6400, but a break could see it reaching 0.6429. Factors like the RBA's hawkish stance, which contrasts with the US Federal Reserve's expected aggressive rate hikes, will be influential. Australia's global stance, especially its relationship with major economies like China and the US, can significantly affect this pair. Hence, we anticipate the Australian Dollar appreciating against the US Dollar.

AUD/JPY Forecast

The predominant sentiment for the AUD/JPY pair is bearish for 2023. Following a 15% rise in 2022, experts believe a long-term decline is on the horizon for the upcoming year. Using the Random Walk model within our analysis seen in Appendix 4, with the lowest deviation at 3.5094, the forecasted rate is 94.38. In contrast, Westpac and NAB predict 96.5 and 87 cents by December 2023, respectively. Therefore, we can say that AUD will still be appreciated over JPY.

AUD/EUR Forecast

Fluctuations are anticipated in the Euro to Australian Dollar exchange rate throughout 2023. The Fundamental approach in our analysis, which can be viewed in Appendix 5, with its lowest standard deviation of 2.3865, projects an AUD/EUR rate of 0.5985. According to market pricing, the rate might be around 1.6667 monthly and 1.6684 in three months. The EU's recovery from the pandemic, combined with its geopolitical stance on issues like climate change and trade, can boost the EUR. Australia's trade agreements with EU member countries and its global stance on similar issues will influence the AUD. Hence, the AUD is projected to depreciate against the EUR.



AUD/CAD Forecast

In 2023, the Canadian Dollar appreciated 6.42% against the Australian Dollar, leading to a 6.04% decrease in the AUD/CAD exchange rate. As per the Fundamental Approach's prediction in Appendix 6, with a deviation of 1.7891, the forecasted rate for AUD/CAD is set at 0.8756. Canada's position as a major oil exporter and its relationship with its North American counterparts, particularly the US, will drive the CAD. Australia's stance on global energy markets will impact the AUD, especially its coal exports and the shift towards renewable energy. Hence, AUD is expected to depreciate against CAD.

Given the diverse forecasts and inherent volatility of currency exchange rates, Firm ABC must judiciously approach its hedging and risk management strategies. By monitoring these rates and using a combination of different hedging techniques, the company can potentially mitigate its exposure to adverse currency movements.

Evaluation of Firm ABC's exposure

Firm ABC has a widespread international presence, exposing it to many currency-related risks: transactional, translational, and economic. As the world grapples with uncertainties, a proactive approach to these exposures must be taken to ensure the firm's profit margins, liquidity, and overarching strategic goals.

Hedging Strategies Explored

Forward Hedging:

- Advantages: This method secures an exchange rate for upcoming transactions, clarifying future cash flows. It is a direct approach that eradicates currency risks.
- **Disadvantages:** Should the market move favourably, Firm ABC misses out. Once settled upon, it lacks flexibility.
- Overall Impact: With stable anticipated cash flows, the cost of capital could be reduced due to increased earnings predictability.

Money Market Hedging (MMH):

- Advantages: MMH uses the money market to safeguard against potential foreign exchange liabilities or entitlements. It acts as a buffer against negative currency shifts.
- **Disadvantages:** Compared to forward Hedging, it is more intricate and may sometimes need to be more practical due to fluctuating interest rates across nations.
- Overall Impact: MMH offers similar benefits to forward hedging, possibly reducing capital costs.

Options Hedging:

- Advantages: This provides the choice (without obligation) to exchange currency at a predetermined rate, setting a floor and allowing favourable market gains.
- **Disadvantages:** It demands an initial premium, which can be expensive, especially over extended durations.
- Overall Impact: While it curtails cash flow volatility, the premium might increase the capital cost.

No Hedging:

- Advantages: The absence of preliminary costs or charges and the ability to fully leverage beneficial market shifts.
- **Disadvantages:** It leaves the company vulnerable to currency risks, potentially leading to considerable fiscal setbacks if rates go south.
- Overall Impact: This could heighten the unpredictability of cash flows, possibly augmenting capital costs owing to escalated risks.

Repercussions on Cost of Capital and Enterprise Value

While defending against detrimental currency shifts, Hedging may also curtail the weighted average cost of capital (WACC). With diminished risks, investors may settle for smaller returns, cutting equity costs. Simultaneously, attractive borrowing rates can bring down debt expenditures. This cumulative impact can boost the company's worth.

Specific Recommendations for Firm ABC

By comparing the most favourable results across different hedging strategies as seen calculated within Appendices 7-13:

- NZD Receivables: Forward Contracts heighten outcomes by \$1,787,000.
- CAD Receivables: MMH is more fruitful by \$2,961,270.29.
- GBP & EUR Receivables: It is advisable not to hedge.
- JPY & USD Payables: Forward Hedging presents savings, with the USD savings amounting to \$190,006.58.
- EUR Payables: Hedging is not beneficial.

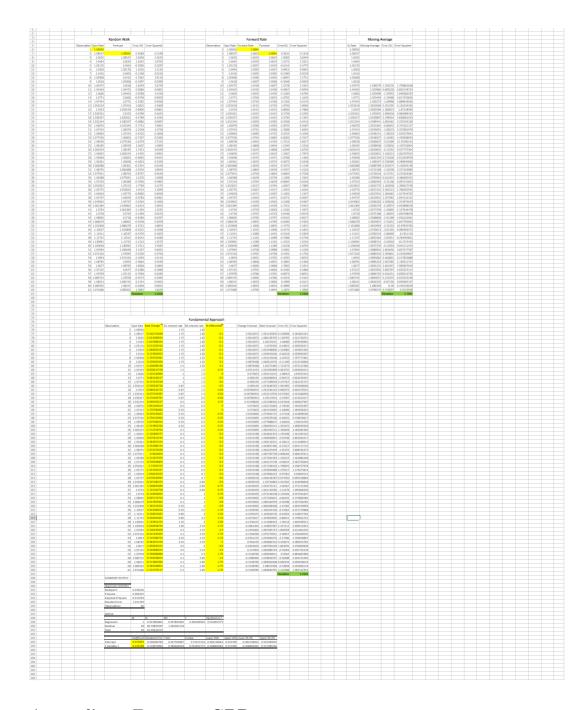
In juxtaposition with a non-hedging stance:

• Forward Contracts heighten the NZD Receivable outcome by \$1,787,000.00, and MMH enhances the CAD Receivable by \$2,961,270.29. However, GBP, EUR Receivables, and EUR Payables fare better unhedged. For JPY and USD Payables, Forward Hedging has savings of \$-2,294.84 and \$190,006.58, respectively.

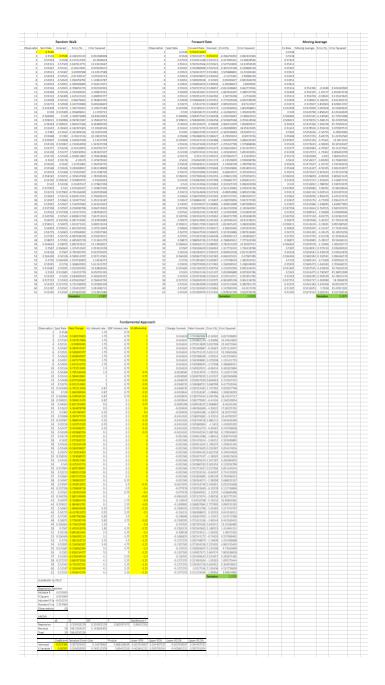
In conclusion, Firm ABC should consider merging both Forward and Options Hedging. The former is apt for specific cash flows, while the latter is more suited for fluctuating ones. This twin-strategy not only offers protection but also flexibility. By actively hedging, Firm ABC can stabilise its future cash flows and alter perceptions about its risk, possibly leading to decreased capital costs. Moreover, shielding against unfavourable currency shifts safeguards firm value, ensuring shareholder wealth remains intact.

Appendices

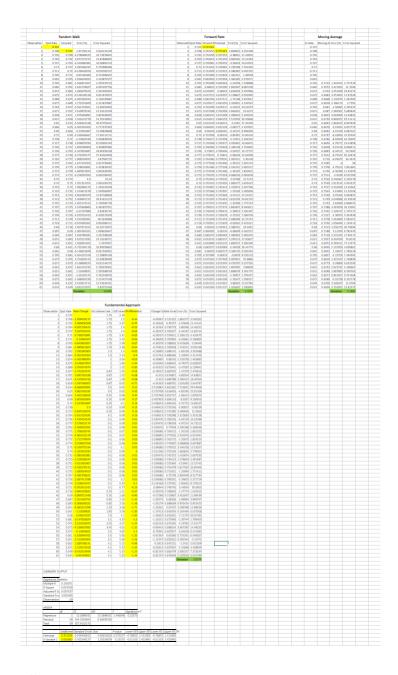
Appendix 1- Forecast: NZD



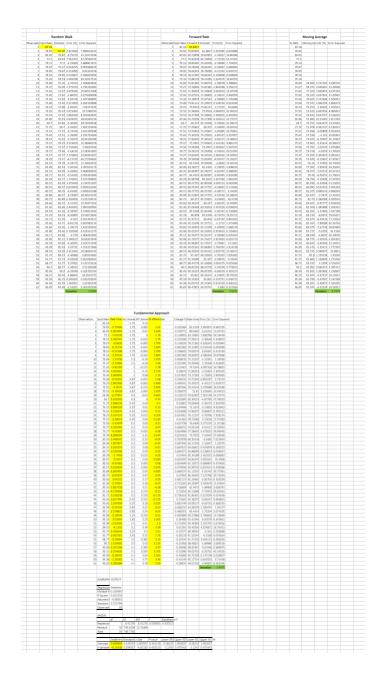
Appendix 2- Forecast: GBP



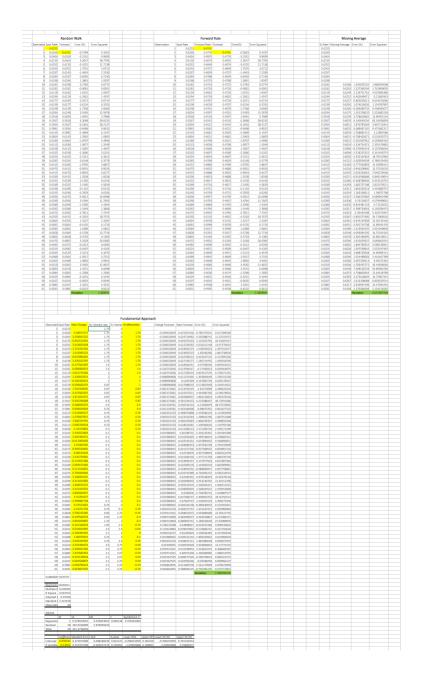
Appendix 3- Forecast: USD



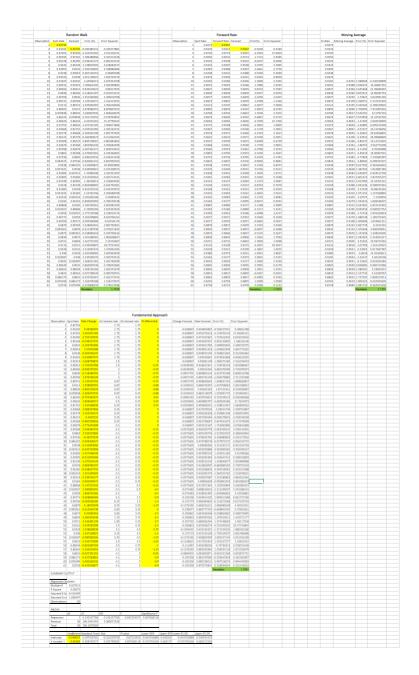
Appendix 4- Forecast: JPY



Appendix 5- Forecast: EUR



Appendix 6- Forecast: CAD



Appendix 7- Hedge: EUR payable

				3000000	EUR	payable	in	3 months								
1, no hed	ge	forecaste	d exchange	rate formed in se	ection 3 us	ed to ocnv	ert this amount		300	0000	EUR	into AUD	\$5,012,53	0.28	AUD	in 3M
2, Forwar	d	3M forward rate		(spot rate under	MONITO	R board + b	asis points under	Quote) -> E	lid/ask rate: AUD/EUR:	sell E	UR, buy	AUD at the ra	te the dealer is willing	to se	ell (offer	or ask)
		0.598	551505										\$5,012,10	0.00	AUD	in 3M
3, Money	Market he	dging	Now we l	oorrow \$P EUR an	d exchang	e it for AUI	(use spot rate/e	x rate) at th	e offer or ask rate (bor	rrowe	d from N	ION board)				
			P =	\$2,992,611.99		x0=	\$2,821,089.73									
													\$2,828,49	5.09	AUD	in 3M
4, Option	s Hedging															
we need a	a right to se	ell EUR 3mi	II in 3M, so	a PUT is needed												
Access FX	Options C	alculator to	tailor you	r inputs, and choo	se the sha	ded (ask p	remium) at TIME	0								
in 3M	it depend	s if excersiz	ed, then (s	trike * 3 mill EUR	+ (- AUD p	remium) *	(1+AUD rate/4))						\$5,139,50	3.56	AUD	in 3M
		if not ever	ersized the	en our forecasted	ex rate * 3	mill FLIR +	(- ALID premium)	*/1+the ah	ove deposit AUD rate/	411			\$5,116,78	7 11	ΔUD	in 3M

Appendix 8- Hedge: JPY payable

													Outcome		
				30000000	JPY	payable	in	2 months							
1, no hed	dge	forecaste	d exchange	rate formed in secti	on 3 used	to ocnvert	this amount			300000000	JPY	into AUD	\$3,191,062.98	AUD	in 3M
2, Forwar	rd	3M forw	ard rate	(spot rate under M	ONITOR b	oard + basi	s points under Q	(uote) -> Bio	i/ask rate:	AUD/JPY: sell JPY, bu	ıy AUD at	the rate the deale	er is willing to sell (offe	er or ask)	
		98	3.945										\$3,193,357.82	AUD	in 3M
3, Mone	y Market he	dging		orrow P JPY and exc					fer or ask r	ate (borrowed from	MON bo	ard)			
			P =	300220161.5	JPY	x0=	\$3,170,893.13						\$3,193,089.38	AUD	in 3M
4, Optior	ns Hedging														
we need	a right to se	ell JPY 300	mill in 3M, s	so a PUT is needed											
Access F	X Options C	alculator to	tailor your	inputs, and choose	the shade	ed (ask pren	nium) at TIME 0								
in 3M	it depend	ls if excersi	zed, then (s	trike * 300 mill JPY +	(- AUD pr	remium) *(1	L+AUD rate/4))						\$3,261,719.11	AUD	in 3M
		if not exc	ersized, the	n our forecasted ex	rate * 300	mill JPY + (- AUD premium) *(1+the ab	ove depos	it AUD rate/4))			\$3,253,123.38	AUD	in 3M

Appendix 9- Hedge: USD payable

				\$8,000,000.00	USD	payable	in	4 months							
1, no hedge	f	forecasted	exchange	rate formed in se	ction 3 use	ed to ocnve	ert this amount			\$8,000,000.00	USD	into AUD	\$12,428,767.63	AUD	in 3M
2, Forward	3	3M forward rate		(spot rate under	MONITOR	board + b	asis points under C	luote) -> Bio	d/ask rate:	AUD/USD: sell U	SD, buy Al	JD at the rate	e the dealer is willing to sel	(offer o	rask)
	0.633976												\$12,618,774.21	AUD	in 3M
3, Money M	larket hedg	ging	Now we b	orrow \$P USD an	d exchange	e it for ΔΙΙΓ	/use snot rate/ev	rate) at the	offer or a	d (b	from MO	M honed)			
								rate) at the	otter or as	ik rate (borrowed	JITOM IVIO	N DOard)			
			P =	\$7,853,660.14		x0=	\$12,430,611.17	rate) at the	offer or as	k rate (borrowed	I ITOITI IVIO	N board)			
								rate) at the	offer or as	k rate (borrowed	I I O II I VIO	N board)	\$12,608,782.85	AUD	in 3M
4, Options H	ledging							rate) at the	Oller Or as	k rate (borrowed	a irom wo	N board)	\$12,608,782.85	AUD	in 3M
		I USD 8mil	P =					rate) at the	oner or as	k rate (porrower	a from MO	N board)	\$12,608,782.85	AUD	in 3M
we need a ri	ight to sell		P =	\$7,853,660.14 a PUT is needed		x0=			oner or as	k rate (porrowed	a from MO	N board)	\$12,608,782.85	AUD	in 3M
we need a ri Access FX O	ight to sell ptions Cald	culator to	P = I in 3M, so tailor your	\$7,853,660.14 a PUT is needed	se the sha	x0= ded (ask pr	\$12,430,611.17		offer or as	k rate (porrowed	arrom wo	N board)	\$12,608,782.85 \$12,927,944.42		in 3M

Appendix 10- Hedge: CAD receivables

												Outcome				
				\$6,000,000.00	CAD	recievable	in	4 months								
, no hedge	forecasted	l exchange	rate formed in sec	tion 3 use	d to ocnvert	this amount		\$6,000,000.00	CAD	into AUD	\$5,253,454.81	AUD	in 4M			
, Forward	4M forward rate		(spot rate under I	MONITOR	board + basi	is points under Qu	iote) -> Bid/ask	rate: AUD/CAD: sell CA	D, buy Al	JD at the rate the	dealer is willing to sell (offer or a	ısk)			
		2.2367										\$13,420,200.00	AUD	in 4M		
3. Money	y Market hed	iging	Now we	borrow SP CAD and	exchange	it for AUD (use spot rate/ex ra	ate) at the offer	or ask rate (borrowed)	rom MO	N board)					
,,			P =	\$5,925,194.4204			\$8,129,366.7448		,							
												\$8,214,725.10	AUD	in 4M		
	ns Hedging															
1, Option	a right to se	II CAD 6mill	in 4M, so	a PUT is needed												
	u right to se			inputs and choose	the chade	ed (ask prem	nium) at TIME 0									
ve need		Iculator to	ailor your	iliputs, allu ciloose	. unc should		s if excersized, then (strike * 6 mill CAD + (- AUD premium) *(1+AUD rate/4))									
ve need	X Options Ca											\$5,181,804.70	AUD	in 3M		

Appendix 11- Hedge: EUR receivable

				4000000	EUR	recievable	in	3 months							
1, no hec	ge	forecasted	dexchange	rate formed in sec	tion 3 used	to ocnver	t this amount			4000000	EUR	into AUD	\$2,394,000.50	AUD	in 3M
2, Forwa	d	3M forwa	rd rate	(spot rate under I	MONITOR b	oard + bas	is points under (Quote) -> Bio	l/ask rate:	AUD/EUR: sell E	UR, buy A	UD at the rate the	dealer is willing to sel	ll (offer o	r ask)
		2.38	8281												
													\$9,553,124.00	AUD	in 3M
3, Money	Market hed	lging	Now we b	orrow \$P EUR and	exchange i	t for AUD (use spot rate/ex	rate) at the	offer or as	k rate (borrowed	from M	ON board)			
			P =	\$3,990,149.32		x0=	\$3,761,932.73								
													\$3,771,807.80	AUD	in 3M
4, Option	s Hedging														
we need	a right to sel	I EUR 4mill	in 3M, so a	PUT is needed											
		culator to	tailor your i	inputs, and choose	the shade	d (ask pren	nium) at TIME 0								
	Options Ca			nds if excersized, then (strike * 4 mill EUR + (- AUD premium) *(1+AUD rate/4))											
			ed, then (st	rike * 4 mill EUR +	(- AUD pre	mium) *(1-	+AUD rate/4))						\$2,262,648.23	AUD	in 3M

Appendix 12- Hedge: GBP receivable

												Out	come		
			7000000	GBP	recievable	in	3 months								
1, no hedge	forecaste	d exchange	rate formed in section	on 3 used	to ocnvert th	is amount			7000000	GBP	into AUD	\$	3,579,284.56	AUD	in 3M
2, Forward	3M forw	ard rate	(spot rate under MC	ONITOR bo	ard + basis	ooints under Qu	uote) -> Bid/	ask rate: A	UD/GBP: sell GB	, buy AUI	at the rate th	he dealer is w	illing to sell (c	offer or ask)	
	3.	1342										\$2	1,939,400.00	AUD	in 3M
3, Money Market	nedging		oorrow \$P GBP and ex					ffer or ask	rate (borrowed f	rom MON	l board)				
		P =	\$6,976,237.19		x0=	\$8,490,080.66									
												\$	8,512,367.12	AUD	in 3M
4, Options Hedgin															
we need a right to	sell GBP 7mi	I in 3M, so	a PUT is needed												
Access FX Options	Calculator to	tailor your	inputs, and choose th	he shaded	(ask premiu	m) at TIME 0									
in 3M it depe	ds if excersi	zed, then (s	trike * 7 mill GBP + (-					\$	3,418,550.22	AUD	in 3M				
	if not excersized, then our forecasted ex rate * 7mill GBP + (- AUD premium) *(1+the above deposit AU											\$	8,291,950.22	AUD	in 3M

Appendix 13- Hedge: NZD receivable

				\$5,000,000.00	NZD	recievable	in	3 months							
1, no hedge	1	forecasted	dexchange	rate formed in se	ction 3 us	ed to ocnve	rt this amount			\$5,000,000.00	NZD	into AUD	\$5,420,000.00	AUD	in 3M
2, Forward		3M forward rate		(spot rate under	MONITOR	board + ba	isis points under Q	uote) -> Bid	/ask rate: A	UD/NZD: sell NZ	D, buy AUI	D at the rate	the dealer is willing to sell (o	ffer or ask)
		1.4	414												
													\$7,207,000.00	AUD	in 3M
3, Money Mark	et hedg	ing	Now we b	orrow \$P NZD and	d exchange	e it for AUD	(use spot rate/ex	rate) at the	offer or ask	rate (borrowed	from MON	board)			
			P =	\$4,932,182.491		x0 =	\$2,871,023.4279	AUD							
													\$2,901,169.17	AUD	in 3M
4, Options Hedg	ging														
we need a right	to sell	NZD 5mill	in 3M, so	a PUT is needed											
Access FX Optio	ns Calc	ulator to	tailor your	inputs, and choos	e the shad	led (ask pre	mium) at TIME 0								
in 3M it de	pends i	if excersiz	ed, then (s	trike * 5 mill NZD	+ (- AUD p	remium) *(1+AUD rate/4))						\$5,379,986.13	AUD	in 3M
	i	if not exce	ersized, the	n our forecasted	ex rate * 5	mill NZD +	(- AUD premium) *	(1+the abov	e deposit A	UD rate/4))			\$5,368,486.13	AUD	in 3M

References