

NZDUSD

Ruling nothing out

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Chief Investment Office GWM

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- The August ANZ Business Outlook showed business confidence has dropped to it lowest level since 2008, despite a 50bps rate cut on 7 August.
- Governor Adrian Orr's comments at Jackson Hole were taken to mean that the bank would keep the official cash rate on hold in Sept., but the drop in confidence makes a cut possible.
- We cut our NZDUSD forecasts to 0.61 (from 0.65) in three, 0.63 (0.65) in six and 0.65 (0.67) in 12 months.

Ruling nothing out

New Zealand's business sentiment index fell sharply again in August, by 8.0pts to –52.3, bringing business confidence to its lowest level since 2008. Meanwhile, firms' own activity outlook fell by 5.5pts to –0.5, marking the first negative print since mid-2009. What makes this particularly concerning is that the survey responses were filled in after the Reserve Bank of New Zealand's (RBNZ) surprise 50bps cut to interest rates on 7 August. The biggest concerns for the RBNZ are most likely firms' pricing intentions, which fell to the lowest level since late 2017, and employment intentions, which also declined. Inflation expectations edged down as well, to their lowest level since end-2016.

Retail activity has also been weak. Volumes increased by only 0.2% q/q in 2Q19 – the lowest quarterly increase since 1Q18 and 2Q15. This, in part, was behind our recent downgrade to New Zealand's 2Q GDP growth (0.4% q/q, down from 0.5% q/q). We do expect household consumption to stabilize toward the end of the year and into 2020, which should help shore up GDP growth next year. Farm-gate dairy prices should remain steady into 2020, though we expect production volumes to be flat. So over six and 12 months, the terms of trade should remain supportive of the NZ dollar.

Investment considerations

Prospects: We forecast a weaker NZDUSD over the next few months, as we expect at least two more rate cuts from the RBNZ (November and February) before mid-2020, further CNY weakness and subdued business sentiment to continue.

Boundaries: The NZDUSD exchange rate is closing in on a critical level of support (0.628). We see the next technical level of support to be 0.598. With momentum indicators pointing downward, we believe a sustainable recovery for the currency would depend on some relief on the US-China trade spat or a broad-based depreciation of the USD. We expect AUDZND to trade roughly between 1.04 and 1.08 in three months.

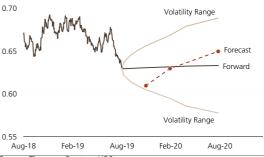
Risks: After today's move, the risks are two sided. But if tariffs rise, trade issues escalate further and global growth weakens, we would expect broad US dollar weakness to initially relieve some of the strain. On a relative basis, we see AUDUSD as a weaker link than NZDUSD in this scenario.

Long Term Trend:

Currency forecast:NZDUSD PPP* TEEER 7 in 12 m 30.Aug.19in 3 m in 6 m 0.63 0.61 0.63 0.65 0.60 0.58 UBS Thomson Reuters, Macrobond. calculation. *Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is not a forecast per se, but a long-term equilibrium value for an exchange rate, calculated by UBS, TEEER refers to the 'trend-extrapolated equilibrium exchange rate', which is a three-year projection of the PPP.

NZDUSD

Price performance, forecast and implicit volatility



Source: Thomson Reuters, UBS

NZ business sentiment has fallen further Business sentiment index, lhs; NZDUSD, rhs



Source: Bloomberg, UBS

Fundamental influence

	Curr	GDP F	CPI F	3MLibor (1)	10YYield (1)
2019	NZD	2.2	1.5	0.5	1.1
2020	NZD	2.6	2.0	0.5	1.2
2019	USD	2.4	1.6	1.8	1.6
2020	USD	1.8	1.9	1.6	1.7

F=Forecast, (1) Year end

Source: UBS

NZDUSD

Appendix

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