

Banking Sector

Macro pain widens, clouds recovery

Sluggish growth continued in 2015F; brighter 2016F outlook remains uncertain

We revised 2015F sector profit growth to 4% from 8% (to 3% from 7% excluding BAY) factoring in the heightened credit quality risk. The sector's current 1.4x PBV, 10x PER, <10% total return to our revised TPs along with sluggish growth implies that it will unlikely outperform SET in 2015F. While a 12% profit growth in 2016F still relies heavily on fiscal execution and elections. We prefer to accumulate our top picks (KBANK, SCB, TMB, and TCAP) at a lower entry level.

Cut 2015-17F earnings by an average of 4% post 1Q15 results

We raise 2015F credit cost to 92bps from 86bps and cut loan growth to 7% from 9% for our covered-banks. 1Q15 results and management's tone hint that commercial bank NPL formation potentially sees further uptick in forthcoming quarters if the economy remains stagnant. This would not only impact credit cost but also loan growth, spread and operating costs, as banks are likely to tighten their credit underwriting criteria further and spend more time/costs on debt collection.

Earnings momentum will unlikely turn attractive in 2Q15

Although the recent share prices fall might have fairly valued in the worse-than-expected 1Q15 results, earnings momentum in 2Q15 will still face provision pressure (further rise in NPLs vs. slipped LLR), more rates cut, and non-NII growth slowdown. In our view, upbeat non-NII in 1Q15 (brought by FOREX/investment/dividend income and brokerage/bancassurance/mutual fund fees) was intermittently driven by high volatility in the currency/bond/capital markets during 1Q. This should tone down in 2Q15 as capital/currency markets have seen less volatility since April.

Cut GGM-based TP by 3-13%

We cut GGM-based TP by 3-12% (mainly for TMB) in this report and cut our TP for KKP and KTB early this week by 9-13% on credit quality decline. In our view, share price falling this week should have fairly priced in ongoing credit quality concern for these banks. In contrast, BBL share standstill post result is not attractive risk-reward as <12% RoE justifies the 1x PBV. Even though BBL's profit beat forecast, it was driven by non-core fees whilst its NPL formation (before write-offs) rose more than SCB/KBANK/KTB indicating that its loan book is not more defensive than peers in an environment of systemic NPL escalation. Our top pick among commercial bank is KBANK (followed by SCB and TMB) and TCAP for auto HP banks. However, we would prefer to accumulate shares at a lower entry level.

Valuation methodology and key risks

We base our target prices for Thai banks on the Gordon Growth Model, from which we derive P/B multiples, which we then apply to estimated book values to set our target prices. Key upside/downside risks are (i) execution of the government's economic stimulus/political reform policies, (ii) return of political instability, (iii) interest/inflation/currency volatility, and (iv) tougher industry regulations and competition.

Rating

Neutral

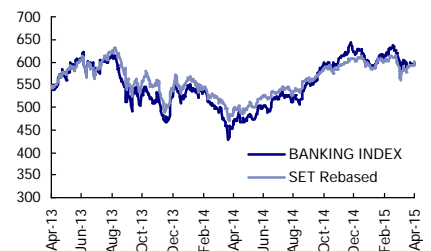
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SECTOR SUMMARY

Index:

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| 52-week high | 688.00 |
| 52-week low | 505.69 |
| Market capitalization: | Bt2,356.71bn |
| Avg. Daily Turnover: | Bt6.33bn |

BANKING



Source: Bloomberg Finance LP

| Performance (%) | -1m | -3m | -12m |
|-----------------|--------|---------|------|
| BANKING | (3.69) | (18.00) | 5.47 |
| SET | 1.63 | (3.35) | 8.53 |

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1Q15: sector bottom line largely in line

Aggregated net profit of Bt51.1bn for our covered banks in 1Q15 was fairly in line with both our and Bloomberg consensus forecasts of Bt51.6bn and Bt52bn, respectively. Looking at the sector as a whole, 1Q15 results indicate that while most banks were able to generate greater than expected non-NII, they more importantly all missed on credit quality (except TCAP) and operating costs (except SCB, TMB and KBANK).

On an individual basis, only the earnings of KBANK (sustainable strong fee-based income) and TCAP (improving auto loan quality and LLR buffer) were in line with our investment case. KTB, BAY, TMB, and KKP all saw profit miss our forecasts on larger-than-expected provision and personnel expenses. BBL and SCB on the other hand both beat our forecasts on non-core non-NII (also OPEX management for SCB).

Figure 1. 1Q15 net profit results

| | DB TISCO forecast | Bloomberg consensus forecast | 1Q15 | 1Q14 | 4Q14 | % yoy chg. | % qoq chg. | compare to DB TISCO forecast | compare to BBG consensus forecast | | |
|--------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| BBL | 8,944 | 9,222 | 9,407 | 8,965 | 8,764 | 5% | 7% | Better than expected | 5% | In line | 2% |
| KTB | 8,812 | 8,506 | 8,154 | 8,310 | 8,091 | -2% | 1% | Lower than expected | -7% | In line | -4% |
| SCB | 12,102 | 12,625 | 13,152 | 13,129 | 12,230 | 0% | 8% | Better than expected | 9% | In line | 4% |
| KBANK | 12,339 | 12,791 | 12,401 | 11,939 | 9,967 | 4% | 24% | In line | 1% | In line | -3% |
| BAY | 4,550 | 4,387 | 4,326 | 3,266 | 3,937 | 32% | 10% | Lower than expected | -5% | In line | -1% |
| TMB | 2,495 | 2,405 | 1,637 | 1,602 | 3,080 | 2% | -47% | Lower than expected | -34% | Lower than expected | -32% |
| TCAP | 1,363 | 1,336 | 1,332 | 1,323 | 1,359 | 1% | -2% | In line | -2% | In line | 0% |
| KKP | 997 | 836 | 664 | 699 | 489 | -5% | 36% | Lower than expected | -33% | Lower than expected | -21% |
| Total | 51,603 | 52,107 | 51,073 | 49,233 | 47,917 | 4% | 7% | In line | -1% | In line | -2% |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate, Bloomberg Finance LP

Stars aligned for 1Q15's upbeat non-NII; likely to lose steam in 2Q15

We had earlier anticipated YoY non-NII recovery would underpin 2015F sector earnings growth (particularly in 1Q15), supported by a low 1H14 base and the merger of BAY-BTMU. In fact, quarterly non-NII turned out even stronger than expected (+14% YoY, +7% QoQ) with most banks beating our forecasts on Forex/investment, brokerage, bancassurance, and mutual fund income.

Though we have now factored 1Q15's larger-than-expected non-core non-NII into our full-year forecasts, it still ends up being offset by the lower-than-expected core fee & service income growth of some banks in 1Q15 (SCB, TCAP, and KKP).

Figure 2. Non-NII

| | 1Q15 | 1Q14 | 4Q14 | % YoY | % QoQ |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-----------|
| BBL | 10,752 | 8,622 | 8,935 | 25% | 20% |
| KTB | 6,771 | 5,807 | 6,167 | 17% | 10% |
| SCB | 12,010 | 11,510 | 11,406 | 4% | 5% |
| KBANK | 15,258 | 13,645 | 13,928 | 12% | 10% |
| BAY | 6,156 | 5,028 | 6,530 | 22% | -6% |
| TMB | 2,260 | 1,792 | 2,482 | 26% | -9% |
| TCAP | 3,185 | 3,182 | 3,001 | 0% | 6% |
| KK | 1,201 | 811 | 1,448 | 48% | -17% |
| Total | 57,594 | 50,397 | 53,898 | 14% | 7% |

Source: Company data

Figure 3. Fee & service income

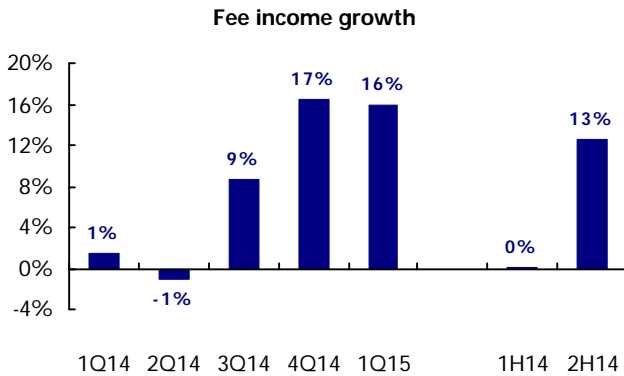
| | 1Q15 | 1Q14 | 4Q14 | % YoY | % QoQ |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------|-----------|
| BBL | 6,394 | 5,209 | 5,749 | 23% | 11% |
| KTB | 4,812 | 3,900 | 4,281 | 23% | 12% |
| SCB | 6,630 | 6,290 | 7,124 | 5% | -7% |
| KBANK | 9,033 | 7,880 | 8,638 | 15% | 5% |
| BAY | 4,292 | 3,447 | 3,966 | 24% | 8% |
| TMB | 1,688 | 1,136 | 1,677 | 49% | 1% |
| TCAP | 1,366 | 1,561 | 1,809 | -13% | -25% |
| KK | 863 | 816 | 861 | 6% | 0% |
| Total | 35,077 | 30,239 | 34,105 | 16% | 3% |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate, Bloomberg Finance LP

We also believe the upbeat non-core non-NII in 1Q15 could be attributed to increased volatility in the Thai currency, bond, and stock markets in the lead up to and aftermath of the March policy rate cut. We note that while this phenomenon (rate cut catalyzing non-NII) has historical precedent, it should not be considered "the rule". That being said, further fall in bond yields in

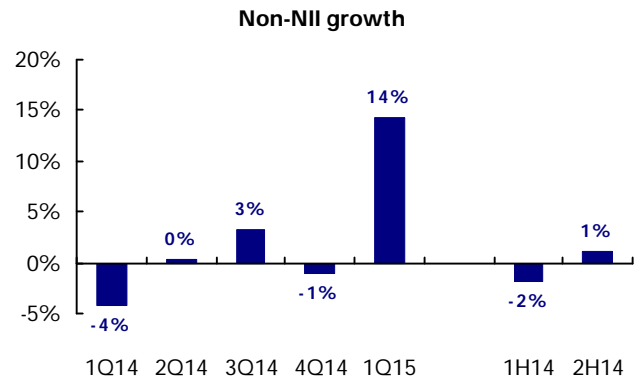
April (figure 6) might reflect anticipation of another round of rate cuts, which could offer moderate support for banks' investment gain in 2Q15 (particularly for BBL). However, we still expect these businesses to slow overall this quarter as capital/currency markets have been less volatile since April (figure 7). Looking further ahead, we expect growth to slow in 2H15 as last year's low core fee/service income and non-NII base was mainly in the 1H (figure 4-5).

Figure 4. Fee & service income growth (% YoY)



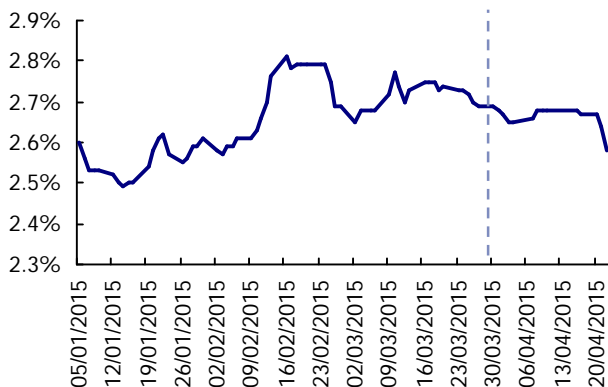
Source: Company data

Figure 5. Non-NII growth (% YoY)



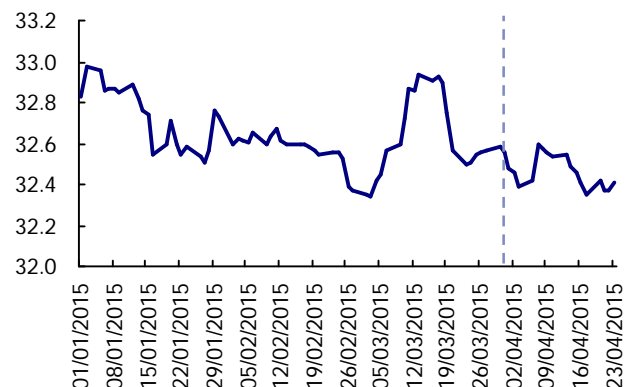
Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate

Figure 6. 10-year Thai bond yield



Source: Thai BMA

Figure 7. USD:THB



Source: Bloomberg Finance LP

Loan quality missed expectations considerably ...

We raise sector credit cost to 92bps from 86bps for 2015F. Tracking the NPL formation and special-mentioned loans trend in 4Q14, we had anticipated NPLs rising further for commercial banks and stabilizing/improving for auto hire-purchase banks. Though auto HP bank TCAP did see improvement in 1Q15, peer KKP saw deterioration and the degree of NPL formation in the bank sector as a whole was higher than expected.

Figure 8. Credit cost revisions (2015F)

| Unit: bps to loans | Previous | New |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|
| BBL | 49 | 50 |
| KTB | 72 | 85 |
| SCB | 75 | 80 |
| KBANK | 95 | 100 |
| BAY | 155 | 160 |
| TMB | 70 | 90 |
| TCAP | 95 | 90 |
| KKP | 150 | 180 |
| Total | 86 | 92 |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate

From figure 10, investors might be surprised by the surge in KTB's NPL balance as well as the jumps seen for KKP, BAY, TMB, BBL and KBANK in 1Q15. Figure 11 indicates that KKP, TMB, and BBL posted the biggest NPL formation rates at +0.8-1.9% whilst those of KTB, SCB, KBANK and BAY were lower at +0.3-0.4%. This is because some banks (i.e. BBL and TMB) have a greater ability to write off NPLs as they have higher excess LLR cushion. In contrast, KTB has a leaner excess LLR and thus it decided to report a larger NPL balance in order to keep LLR/NPL coverage above 100%. We believe banks are likely to maintain high credit costs (as in 2015) in order to rebuild NPL cushions in later quarters.

Figure 9. NPL balance movement

| | QoQ % | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | 1Q14 | 2Q14 | 3Q14 | 4Q14 | 1Q15 |
| BBL | 4.1% | 0.0% | 2.5% | -2.3% | 5.4% |
| KTB | 10.3% | -0.4% | 8.7% | -14.8% | 18.4% |
| SCB | 0.6% | 4.2% | 0.5% | 1.4% | 1.0% |
| KBANK | 1.0% | 1.0% | 2.4% | 3.0% | 5.1% |
| BAY | 14.9% | 0.7% | -0.9% | 0.0% | 6.9% |
| TMB | 3.9% | -10.8% | 1.2% | -14.0% | 6.1% |
| TCAP | 2.2% | 0.1% | -2.4% | -12.6% | -3.3% |
| KK | 13.7% | 30.3% | -2.9% | -1.2% | 14.1% |
| Total | 5.5% | 0.7% | 2.2% | -5.9% | 6.9% |

Source: Company data

Figure 10. LLR/NPL

| | QoQ % | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1Q14 | 2Q14 | 3Q14 | 4Q14 | 1Q15 |
| BBL | 210% | 216% | 198% | 204% | 190% |
| KTB | 102% | 113% | 108% | 124% | 116% |
| SCB | 148% | 141% | 141% | 138% | 138% |
| KBANK | 138% | 141% | 142% | 141% | 140% |
| BAY | 134% | 133% | 140% | 133% | 138% |
| TMB | 138% | 143% | 139% | 157% | 150% |
| TCAP | 81% | 81% | 81% | 87% | 88% |
| KK | 91% | 69% | 71% | 82% | 74% |
| Total | 133% | 135% | 132% | 139% | 134% |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate

Figure 11. Estimated NPL formation by bank (from reconciliation of LLR movement vs. specific LLR/NPL ratio)

| | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 1Q14 | 2Q14 | 3Q14 | 4Q14 | 1Q15 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| BBL | 2.0% | 1.3% | 0.5% | 1.1% | -0.2% | 0.0% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 1.4% | 0.1% | 0.0% | 1.5% | 0.0% | 0.8% |
| KTB | 4.8% | 8.2% | 3.0% | 0.9% | -0.1% | 1.2% | 0.4% | 0.7% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 0.3% | -0.3% | 0.3% |
| SCB | 2.4% | 2.0% | 1.7% | 0.6% | 0.8% | 0.7% | 0.5% | 1.1% | 1.1% | 0.6% | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.3% |
| KBANK | 0.9% | 0.4% | 0.8% | 1.6% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.8% | 1.4% | 1.1% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.4% |
| BAY | 1.7% | 4.8% | 2.5% | 3.0% | 4.0% | 4.0% | 2.0% | 2.6% | 3.5% | 1.0% | 0.6% | 0.4% | 1.6% | 0.4% |
| TMB | 4.8% | 4.4% | 0.5% | 1.0% | 0.0% | -0.3% | -0.5% | 0.8% | 0.5% | 0.4% | -0.3% | 0.7% | -0.1% | 0.9% |
| TCAP | 0.4% | 1.5% | 1.9% | 1.5% | 4.9% | 0.5% | 0.8% | 1.8% | 1.6% | 0.5% | 0.6% | 0.2% | 0.3% | -0.1% |
| KKP | 3.4% | 4.0% | 2.2% | 0.0% | 1.4% | 1.6% | 1.3% | 3.7% | 5.6% | 1.6% | 2.3% | 1.0% | 0.9% | 1.9% |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate

Messages from several banks post 1Q15 results hint that NPL formation has the potential to further rise for commercial banks in the upcoming quarters if the economy continues to stagnate. As seen in figure 11, all banks (except BBL) have seen NPL formation pick up significantly since GDP growth began moderating from its high 2013 base (particularly in the auto hire-purchase and SME businesses). Political turmoil in 1H14 further hurt SME/auto HP loan quality for all banks and began to hurt the corporate loan quality of BBL in late 2014.

From 1Q15 data and messages from several banks, it is clear that the surge in NPL formation from small SMEs is broad based (no specific industry) for all commercial banks even including BBL. Note that BAY reported rise in corporate NPLs and KTB reported rise in mortgage NPLs from the self-employed segment. This indicates that the NPL climb could be systemic or caused by macro factors.

In our view, industries with very sensitive cashflows in the SME segment that were directly hit by the GDP growth slowdown, farm price slump, sluggish exports, and political turmoil since 2013-14 should have already been classified as NPLs in previous quarters. Therefore the further deterioration in SME loan quality in 1Q15 (not confined to specific industries like agriculture or exports as the Street earlier suspected) could indicate that the pace of economic recovery YTD remains anemic. With little support from public spending, trade, and private investment, another cluster of SMEs which had sufficient cashflow last year, ended up succumbing to the economic weakness and turned to be NPLs.

In sum, we believe public investment disbursement in 2H15 may now be the only remaining weapon to help stop Thai banks loss on NPL. However, such a move remains uncertain and could still prove insufficient. Hence we see scope for a further rise in NPLs at commercial banks over the next few quarters. Even should the government kick-start the public investment engine “on time”, concerns remain, namely; 1) the investment budget for FY2015 is minimal and has a slow multiplier effect on GDP, and 2) the investment will have direct benefit to construction-related sectors, not directly to the agricultural/commerce/services/export sectors which have been suffering from weak consumer purchasing power (high household debt, weak farm income, moderate wage growth). While kick-starting public spending would provide an immediate boost to business sentiment (as seen in the past decade), the private sector doesn’t usually resume full investment until after an election.

... Hence loan growth will be impacted

We cut sector 2015F loan growth to 7% from 9% (or to 5% from 6% excluding BAY which integrated BTMU in 1Q15). Loans grew 7% YoY and 3.2% QoQ in 1Q15 (or only 4.3% YoY and 1% QoQ if excluding BAY). Since credit quality deteriorated more than expected on a broad base, we have seen some banks begin to acknowledge that it will impact their loan growth target as they are likely to tighten credit underwriting criteria further and will have to spend more time/cost on credit quality monitoring/debt collection over credit growth. The credit quality decline will also impact loan spread and cost to income marginally if banks are unable to grow high-risk high-return loans as planned.

Figure 12. Loan growth forecast revision (2015F)

| Unit: % yoy | Previous | New |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------|
| BBL | 4% | 3% |
| KTB | 10% | 7% |
| SCB | 5% | 5% |
| KBANK | 8% | 7% |
| BAY | 29% | 28% |
| TMB | 10% | 8% |
| TCAP | 1% | -4% |
| KKP | 1% | -3% |
| Total | 9% | 7% |

Source: DB TISCO estimate

Earnings and target price revisions

In sum, we cut sector earnings by 4% on average for 2015-17F on upward revision to credit cost and downward revision to loan growth/NIM. Given the absence of signals for a sharp recovery by 2H15 (public infrastructure spending is unlikely to directly resolve the household debt issue) and potential for further rate cuts, loan margin is likely to deteriorate further for commercial banks. Our revised earnings are 3% below Bloomberg consensus forecasts for 2015-17F on average. This mainly reflects our conservative credit cost/NIM forecasts for KTB (11% below consensus) and BBL (7% below consensus). We now project 2015 sector earnings growth of 2.5% (vs. 6.5% previously).

Figure 13. 2015-17F earnings revisions

| | New forecast | | | Previous forecast | | | % change from previous forecast | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2015F | 2016F | 2017F | 2015F | 2016F | 2017F | 2015F | 2016F | 2017F | 2015-17F |
| BBL | 35,151 | 37,521 | 42,704 | 36,096 | 39,149 | 45,019 | -2.6% | -4.2% | -5.1% | -4.1% |
| KTB | 33,214 | 36,194 | 41,433 | 34,151 | 37,582 | 43,123 | -2.7% | -3.7% | -3.9% | -3.5% |
| SCB | 54,108 | 59,935 | 67,326 | 55,888 | 62,974 | 70,854 | -3.2% | -4.8% | -5.0% | -4.4% |
| KBANK | 50,373 | 58,043 | 65,139 | 51,933 | 59,342 | 65,703 | -3.0% | -2.2% | -0.9% | -1.9% |
| BAY | 17,503 | 24,252 | 26,281 | 17,611 | 24,214 | 26,667 | -0.6% | 0.2% | -1.4% | -0.7% |
| TMB | 8,963 | 11,847 | 12,870 | 10,463 | 12,534 | 13,595 | -14.3% | -5.5% | -5.3% | -8.0% |
| TCAP | 5,693 | 6,470 | 6,942 | 5,764 | 6,468 | 6,955 | -1.2% | 0.0% | -0.2% | -0.4% |
| KKP | 3,524 | 4,523 | 4,882 | 4,151 | 4,901 | 5,356 | -15.1% | -7.7% | -8.8% | -10.3% |
| Total | 208,529 | 238,787 | 267,578 | 216,058 | 247,165 | 277,272 | -3.5% | -3.4% | -3.5% | -3.5% |
| Total (exclude BAY) | 191,026 | 214,534 | 241,297 | 198,447 | 222,950 | 250,605 | -3.7% | -3.8% | -3.7% | -3.7% |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate

Figure 14. 2015-17F earnings growth revisions

| | New forecast | | | Previous forecast | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2015F | 2016F | 2017F | 2015F | 2016F | 2017F |
| BBL | -3.3% | 6.7% | 13.8% | -0.6% | 8.5% | 15.0% |
| KTB | 0.1% | 9.0% | 14.5% | 2.9% | 10.0% | 14.7% |
| SCB | 1.5% | 10.8% | 12.3% | 4.8% | 12.7% | 12.5% |
| KBANK | 9.1% | 15.2% | 12.2% | 12.5% | 14.3% | 10.7% |
| BAY | 23.5% | 38.6% | 8.4% | 24.3% | 37.5% | 10.1% |
| TMB | -7.0% | 32.2% | 8.6% | 8.5% | 19.8% | 8.5% |
| TCAP | 11.2% | 13.6% | 7.3% | 12.6% | 12.2% | 7.5% |
| KKP | 33.7% | 28.4% | 7.9% | 57.5% | 18.1% | 9.3% |
| Total | -3.3% | 6.7% | 13.8% | -0.6% | 8.5% | 15.0% |
| Total (exclude BAY) | 2.5% | 12.3% | 12.5% | 6.5% | 12.3% | 12.4% |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate

We cut GGM-based target prices of our covered banks by 3-13% on downward revisions to 2015-17F earnings/RoE. We base our target prices for Thai banks on the Gordon Growth Model, from which we derive P/B multiples, which we then apply to estimated book values to set our target prices. Regarding CoE, we factor in DB's discount rate assumptions of a 2.5% risk-free rate and 9.2% risk premium. Our growth rate is based on long-term real GDP growth of 3-4% and a domestic inflation rate of 3-4%.

Figure 15. 2015F GGM-based valuation revision

| | Rating | Target price | Targeted PBV | Mid-term RoE | CoE | Current Price (Bt) | Upside to TP | Dividend yield | Total return | Current PBV (x) | Current PER (x) |
|-------|--------|------------------|--------------|--------------|-------|--------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| BBL | Hold | Bt182 from Bt190 | 1.0 | 11.8% | 11.7% | 189 | -3.7% | 4.0% | 0.3% | 1.0 | 10.3 |
| KTB | Hold | Bt21 from Bt24 | 1.2 | 14.0% | 13.1% | 20.6 | 1.9% | 4.6% | 6.6% | 1.1 | 8.7 |
| SCB | Hold | Bt174 from Bt187 | 2.0 | 18.7% | 13.1% | 169.5 | 2.7% | 3.7% | 6.3% | 1.8 | 10.6 |
| KBANK | Hold | Bt238 from Bt246 | 2.0 | 18.5% | 13.1% | 222 | 7.2% | 2.0% | 9.2% | 1.8 | 10.5 |
| BAY | Sell | Bt31 | 1.2 | 12.0% | 11.3% | 42.5 | -27.1% | 2.0% | -25.0% | 1.6 | 17.9 |
| TMB | Hold | Bt3 from Bt3.4 | 1.9 | 14.8% | 11.4% | 2.74 | 9.5% | 2.2% | 11.7% | 1.6 | 13.4 |
| TCAP | Buy | Bt40 | 0.9 | 11.3% | 11.7% | 34.25 | 16.8% | 4.7% | 21.5% | 0.8 | 7.7 |
| KKP | Hold | Bt39 | 0.9 | 11.9% | 12.3% | 38.75 | 0.6% | 4.3% | 5.0% | 0.9 | 9.3 |

Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate

Although long-term fundamentals and franchise value of commercial banks are superior to auto HP banks, we consider auto HP bank stocks attractive in 2015F in terms of undemanding valuations and the bottoming-out of the auto business outlook. Regarding outlook, we highlight some specific positives for auto HP banks; 1) loan quality has shown gradual stabilization/improvement since 2H14, 2) rate cuts stand to benefit the margin of auto HP banks in 1H15, and 3) net loan decline should begin to reverse around YE2015F. This outlook runs contrary to that of commercial banks which are likely to see credit quality and NIM further hurt their earnings in the near term.

TCAP remains our only Buy. Its current valuation risk-reward (the most discounted in the sector) is attractive for credit quality and B/S buffer improvement trend (confirmed in 1Q15 results). Management's announced stock repurchase scheme also hints that the stock is undervalued and/or the company's outlook is improving.

Among large commercial banks, we prefer KBANK for a more secured earnings growth outlook driven by its solid deposit/SME/fee franchises. In addition, peers' asset quality and LLR buffers have recently deteriorated to be in line/below those of KBANK. While SCB is our second-place pick, its strong non-NII growth is not driven by the core fee business as seen in KBANK and its PBV-RoE is less attractive vs. KBANK, in our view. We expect BBL and KTB to remain under pressure in 2015F on NIM (rates cut, easing LDR policy, and less flexibility to expand high-risk high-return loan mix further) and NPL escalation. Among mid-sized commercial banks, we prefer TMB over BAY for superior mid-term RoE at less expensive valuations.

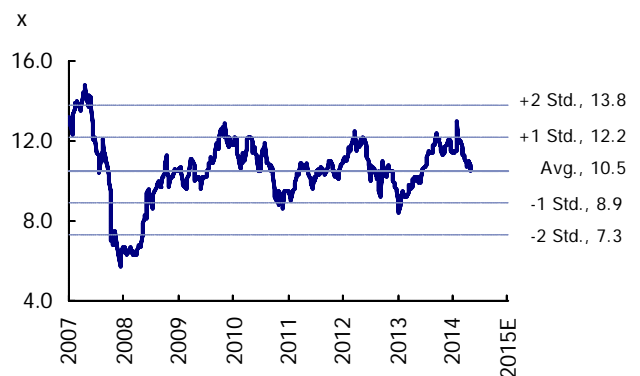
The post 1Q15 results share price plunge appears to have fairly priced-in the worse-than-expected credit quality trend, in our view. The decline, in conjunction with downward earnings revisions, has also opened up some marginal upside to TPs for most banks. Only BBL's shares (which rallied in the lead-up to 1Q results after being a YTD laggard) have yet to correct and thus now provide the smallest upside to TP vs. peers. Regarding BBL, we believe that because 1) its better-than-expected results weren't driven by its core business and 2) it experienced material loan quality/LLR deterioration, the bank may not be as defensive as investors assume in an environment of systemic NPL escalation.

Figure 16. 1-year fwd PBV



Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate, Bloomberg Finance LP

Figure 17. 1-year fwd PER



Source: Company data, DB TISCO estimate, Bloomberg Finance LP

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