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Michael Vandenberghe, Director, European Business Development, NTree International Limited, London.

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China and Commodities: A Beautiful Symbiosis

Mr. Vandenberghe, what is the strategy of your company?

NTree is a financial markets consultancy. We educate European asset managers and asset allocators about the exciting investment and capital market opportunities China has to offer. We achieve this via educational seminars, conference calls, technical papers, one-on-one meetings and other marketing and media avenues.

NTree works with Chinese on-shore asset managers, China-market index issuers and stock exchanges to promote the investment case for China to professional investors looking to access China's onshore capital markets and commodities.

Why China and commodities in particular?

China is the world's second largest economy and has the second largest capital markets in the world. However, foreign participation in Chinese capital markets is relatively low and consequently most institutional investors are underweight China. But in recent years China has opened up capital markets with a variety of channels to enable overseas investors to access China equity and bond markets.

As China is the world's largest consumer of commodities, investing in China and investing in commodities are deeply interconnected; institutional investors have to understand both stories.

So you are a bridge builder between China and Europe? And vice versa?

Yes, we are a bridge between China and professional investors in Europe. There are myths when it comes to investing in China. For example, that China's economy is export dependent and that is hard to get accurate economic data there. The reality is much different and we work with our clients to bridge that gap between conception and factual knowledge to allow investors make the best

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informed investment decisions when it comes to China. Conversely, we work with Chinese asset managers to help them better understand the landscape of European investors and their needs.

How important is the Swiss financial market for you?

The Swiss financial market is one of the most competitive in the world and remains the global leader in cross-border private banking. I lived in Zurich for ten years and had various roles in the financial sector including asset management. Therefore, I understand the Swiss market well. The variety and multitude of professional investors, both institutional and private, makes the Swiss market of key importance for us to have the best knowledge of the needs and requirements of investors when they allocate to China.

In which other countries is your company active?

Our key markets are United Kingdom, the DACH region, Benelux, Italy and Scandinavia. We recently made some new hires and expanded our team to six people with a combined experience of 50 years in asset management, investment banking, and distribution. Our team has a versatile background where each member has a unique skillset and expertise that we can leverage with our international clients.

About the person

Michael Vandenberghe joined NTree in 2019 after graduating with an MBA from EDHEC Business School. He worked in asset management for most of his professional career on both the sell and buy side for well-established firms including State Street Global Advisors, Swisscanto, and UBS Global Asset Management. His areas of expertise encompass macroeconomics, asset allocation, and fund product knowledge including ETFs.

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