

JPM-pp1

Asia Pacific Equity Research

19 June 2015

# Anhui Conch - H (914 HK)

Overweight

Price: HK\$29.10

18 Jun 2015

Price Target: HK\$33.00

PT End Date: 31 Dec 2015

## Strategic investment in West China Cement

We view Anhui Conch's (Conch) 16.7% investment in West China Cement (WCC, 2233.HK NR) as a positive strategic move that will amplify its market position in a region that will strongly benefit from China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) plan. Along with the company's 14.8% investment in Jidong Cement, its own and WCC capacity, we estimate all three companies will control c65% market share in the Shaanxi province. Conch's WCC investment follows its purchase of a 55% stake in Shengta Cement earlier this week and signals the company's accelerating M+A efforts at a depressed point of the cycle. Armed with a strong balance sheet and solid free cash generation, Conch is well positioned to benefit from the market downturn. Reiterate OW rating.

- **Strategic investment in West China Cement (WCC).** Conch announced this morning that the company had agreed to invest HKD1.5Bn (at HKD1.69) in exchange for 16.67% equity stakes in West China Cement (2233 HK). We consider the transaction price (EV/capacity) of cRMB360/t as an attractive entry point, given that industry replacement cost (including limestone quarry) would cost cRMB400-450/t. Conch stated that the company and WCC would explore other possible collaboration with a view to create synergies, including the formation of JVs. Excluding any benefits from increased market discipline, we estimate a potential earnings increment of 0.7% and 0.9% to Conch's FY15/16 results, respectively (based on WCC consensus estimates).

- **About West China Cement (WCC).** WCC is the market leader in Shaanxi, with total capacity of 27Mt (21.1Mt in Shaanxi, 4.1mt in Xinjiang and 1.8Mt in Guizhou). Shaanxi cement markets have outperformed the national market with cement prices falling only by 5% YTD (against the national average of a 15% fall), despite demand falling 10% 4M15 (against China -5%). Following its strategic stake, we estimate the combined group (Conch + WCC) will hold a 42.6% share in Shaanxi cement market. Along with Conch's 14.8% in Jidong Cement (000401 CH), we estimate a combined market share of c65%. This should help improve pricing power and production discipline, with increased market concentration.

- **Accelerating M&A strategy.** Conch has accelerated M&A in recent months in the face of soft market conditions, as smaller players struggle with losses. Earlier this week, Conch announced the purchase of a 55% stake in Jiangxi based, Shengta Cement for an enterprise value of RMB2.0Bn (cRMB370/t EV/t). We estimate Conch's 4.6mt of clinker capacity in Nanchang holds a 7% market share in the Jiangxi province but combined with Shengta's similar sized capacity, Conch's market share will double to 14-15% share.

- **Strong balance sheet, key beneficiary of industry downturn - Stay OW.** Conch remains our preferred cement sector play, given a solid organic growth outlook, low-cost operations and strong balance sheet. In our view, Conch's clean balance sheet (net gearing at 4%) and strong free cash generation places them in a strong position to benefit in further M+A during the industry downturn. Conch shares offer strong leverage to China's stimulus efforts focused on boosting infrastructure and OBOR projects. Our H-share price target of HKD33.0, equates to 13.4x FY15 PE and 1.9x PB, in line with its historical means (P/E 13.7x, P/B 2.2x).

Table 1: 2014 Shanxi cement industry overview

Province	Clinker capacity (mt)	Corporate	Clinker capacity (mt)	Market share (%)
Shaanxi	56.6	WCC	13.8	24.4
		Jidong	12.7	22.5
		Conch	10.3	18.2
		Sheng Wei	6.6	11.6

Source: Digital Cement, J.P. Morgan

Table 2: HK-listed cement players' EV/capacity (RMB/t)

Company	Ticker	Share price HKD	Market share USDm	FY14	FY14	FY14	EV RMBm	FY14	Implied
				Total Debts RMBm	Total Cash RMBm	Minorities RMBm		Capacity mt	EV/t RMB/t
WCC	2233 HK	1.69	979	4,033	496	46	9,697	27	359
Shanshui	691 HK	6.29	2,725	16,149	1,286	768	32,654	103	318
CNBM	3323 HK	7.58	5,247	177,024	15,995	21,404	215,210	400	538
Conch	914 HK	28.90	19,943	17,767	13,322	3,541	131,860	257	513
CR Cement	1313 HK	4.47	3,744	20,284	4,151	535	36,738	78	469

Source: Company data, Bloomberg, J.P. Morgan estimates. Note: Prices as of 18 June 2015 close.

Figure 1: Cement prices in Shaanxi and China (PO42.5)



Source: Digital Cement, J.P. Morgan

Figure 1: Industry Landscape in Central Shaanxi



Source: WCC, J.P. Morgan

Figure 2: Industry Landscape in Southern Shaanxi

Source: WCC, J.P. Morgan

### Investment Thesis

Anhui Conch is the second-largest cement producer in China (after CNBM), with total cement capacity of 270Mt (vs CNBM: 400Mt) at end-2014. With nearly 80% of the company's capacity located in the Eastern and Southern regions, Conch is well positioned to leverage tighter markets and higher utilization levels in coming years, in our view. Looking forward, policy measures to support urbanization and reduce capacity set the stage for improved utilization rates. Stay OW.

### Valuation

Our Dec-15 PT of HK\$33.00 is based on a blended average of: 1) P/B-ROE valuation (HK\$32.90), based on a 1.9x P/BV; 2) HK \$37.40 using an 7.7x EV/EBITDA multiple; 3) HK\$37.60 using a five-year average P/E multiple of 11.9x; and 4) a DCF-based NPV of HK\$28.60.

### Risks to Rating and Price Target

The key risks to our rating and price target include:

- Fluctuations in the cement/clinker prices that are materially above or below our existing forecasts, given that Conch, as a pure cement play, derives all of its earnings from the production and sale of cement and clinker.
- On the raw materials side, movements in coal price and power tariffs provide earnings risks. These cost items combined account for over 60% of its total production cost.
- Slower-than-expected additions in cement capacity may affect volume growth while Conch is constructing 10 production lines domestically and in Indonesia.
- Conch has expressed a new focus on M&A. M&A transaction price/size may pose an upside/downside risk.
- Regulatory risk as high environmental awareness may raise capex requirement and eliminate obsolete capacity. Also, 5-10% of Conch's earnings come from government subsidies. Any change in government tax policy may impact earnings adversely.
- Conch's share price movements have historically correlated more strongly with the Hang Seng Index.

## Asia Metals and Mining

AC

Daniel Kang

(852) 2800 8570

daniel.kang@jpmorgan.com

Bloomberg JPMA KANG &lt;GO&gt;

Waiyin Karen Li, CFA

(852) 2800-8561

waiyin.karen.li@jpmorgan.com

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Date	Rating	Share Price (HK\$)	Price Target (HK \$)
17-Jul-08	N	16.67	15.00
05-Sep-08	N	11.55	12.66
17-Oct-08	N	9.00	8.00
13-Nov-08	N	10.30	10.00
07-Jan-09	UW	13.53	10.00
03-Mar-09	UW	11.47	9.33
15-May-09	OW	16.68	23.33
12-Mar-10	N	16.95	19.33
26-Oct-10	N	22.87	23.33
12-Jan-11	OW	24.87	30.66
07-Apr-11	OW	31.47	47.00
22-Sep-11	OW	22.60	40.00
14-Oct-11	OW	24.85	34.00
16-Feb-12	OW	26.95	32.00
18-Apr-12	OW	24.90	30.00
20-Apr-12	OW	24.90	28.00
08-Jul-12	OW	20.50	25.00
24-Oct-12	OW	25.85	30.00
23-Mar-13	OW	26.15	32.00
18-Oct-13	NR	26.90	--
11-Dec-13	OW	30.25	35.00
25-Mar-14	OW	29.90	38.00
27-Aug-14	OW	28.75	36.00
03-Mar-15	OW	26.70	33.00

<http://gfd-app.emea.jpmchase.net:6080/server/console/chart/?shareClassId=503703&shareClassServerId=4&chartDesignation=1&actionType=C>

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