

## **Rating Action: Moody's downgrades to A3(sf) notes in 328 Spanish ABS, RMBS and CLO transactions**

---

Global Credit Research - 02 Jul 2012

### **Most Spanish ABS, RMBS and CLO ratings are on review for downgrade**

Madrid, July 02, 2012 -- Moody's Investors Service has today downgraded to A3(sf) the ratings of 583 securities across 328 structured finance transactions, including asset-backed securities, residential mortgage-backed securities and collateralised debt obligations (ABS, RMBS and CDOs). Concurrently, Moody's has also placed or maintained on review for downgrade the ratings of most Spanish ABS, RMBS and CDO securities.

Please click on this link [http://www.moodys.com/viewresearchdoc.aspx?docid=PBS\\_SF290362](http://www.moodys.com/viewresearchdoc.aspx?docid=PBS_SF290362) for the List of Affected Credit Ratings. This list is an integral part of this Press Release and identifies each affected issuer.

The three drivers for today's downgrades and review placements are:

- (i) Moody's decision on 26 June 2012 to lower the Spanish country ceiling, and therefore the maximum rating that Moody's will assign to a domestic Spanish issuer including structured finance transactions backed by Spanish receivables, to A3, in connection with our downgrade of Spain's government bond ratings to Baa3 from A3 on 13 June 2012 and the initiation of a review for further downgrade.
- (ii) Increased counterparty risks, following Moody's downgrade of various Spanish banks' long-term ratings and the placement of those bank ratings on review for further downgrade on 25 June 2012.
- (iii) Moody's intention to re-assess the credit enhancement levels consistent with each structured finance rating category, given the deteriorating credit conditions in Spain.

For additional information on Structured Finance ratings, please refer to the webpage containing Moody's related announcements <http://www.moodys.com/eusovereign>.

### **RATINGS RATIONALE**

#### **--FIRST DRIVER --- NEW COUNTRY CEILING AND SOVEREIGN RATING REVIEW**

Moody's lowered to A3 the Spanish country ceiling, which signifies the maximum rating that Moody's will assign to a domestic issuer, including SF transactions backed by Spanish receivables ([http://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC\\_143384](http://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_143384)). The lowering of the ceiling was prompted by the increased risk of severe financial and economic dislocation implied by the weakening of the Spanish government's creditworthiness, as reflected by Moody's downgrade of Spain's government bond ratings to Baa3 from A3 on 13 June 2012, and the initiation of a review for further downgrade ([http://www.moodys.com/research/Moodys-downgrades-Spains-government-bond-rating-to-Baa3-from-A3--PR\\_248236](http://www.moodys.com/research/Moodys-downgrades-Spains-government-bond-rating-to-Baa3-from-A3--PR_248236)).

Spain's revised country ceiling captures Moody's assessment of 'country' risks that need to be factored into the rating of all locally domiciled obligors, i.e. risks that arise from immutable political, institutional, financial and economic factors within the country. They include the risk of systemic economic disruption, the crystallisation of severe financial stability risks and factors implying regulatory and legal uncertainty such as the possibility of currency redenomination. The assessment of country risk takes into account a number of the same factors that Moody's considers when determining a sovereign's credit strength.

The highest achievable rating for most Spanish structured finance transactions is now A3(sf), down from Aa2(sf) previously. This ceiling also applies to Spanish structured finance transactions issued by non-Spanish issuers, as these are backed entirely by Spanish assets with material exposure to the risks reflected in the country ceiling. The only Spanish structured finance securities that remain rated above A3(sf) are those that benefit from a full and unconditional guarantee provided by a non-Spanish counterparty rated higher than A3.

Moody's has placed or maintained on review the ratings of all Spanish structured finance securities now rated at the new country ceiling in consideration of the review for downgrade of the ratings of Spain's government bonds and of those of Spanish banks.

#### --SECOND DRIVER --- INCREASED COUNTERPARTY RISK

Following the 25 June downgrades of Spanish bank ratings, the ratings of both Banco Santander S.A. (Baa2 deposits; BFSR C-/BCA baa2, all on review for downgrade) and Santander Consumer Finance S.A. (Baa2 deposits; BFSR C-/BCA baa2, all on review for downgrade) are one notch higher than the sovereign's rating (please see Moody's press release "Moody's downgrades Spanish banks" ([http://www.moodys.com/research/Moodys-downgrades-Spanish-banks--PR\\_249316](http://www.moodys.com/research/Moodys-downgrades-Spanish-banks--PR_249316))). All other affected banks' standalone ratings are now at or below Spain's Baa3 rating. Furthermore, Spanish bank ratings remain on review for further downgrade, creating the potential for increased operational and financial risks affecting Spanish ABS, RMBS and CDO securities exposed to these banks.

The deterioration in the credit quality of Spanish banks negatively affects structured finance securities because of the various roles that banks play in these transactions. Moody's review of Spanish structured finance ratings will reflect their degree of credit linkage to the affected banks, depending on the credit quality of these banks, their roles in the transactions and the likelihood of protection mechanisms being available if they fail to perform their roles.

Moody's has placed or maintained on review all structured finance securities rated in the Baa category due to the Spanish bank rating review and in order to re-assess credit enhancement levels consistent with this rating category.

#### --THIRD DRIVER --- RE-ASSESSMENT OF CREDIT ENHANCEMENT FOR MEZZANINE AND JUNIOR SECURITIES

Moody's has placed on review for downgrade the ratings of Spanish mezzanine and junior securities in order to re-assess the credit enhancement levels consistent with each structured finance rating category in light of deteriorating credit conditions in Spain and expected asset performance deterioration. However, Moody's did not place on review for downgrade ratings in these categories for a limited number of ABS and RMBS securities that benefited from a high level of credit enhancement that would be available to protect the notes against further shocks.

#### RATING METHODOLOGIES

Sovereign credit quality impacts structured finance and covered bonds ratings primarily through the performance of underlying collateral and the credit quality of counterparties, as detailed in the Rating Implementation Guidance "How Sovereign Credit Quality May Affect Other Ratings" ([http://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC\\_139495](http://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_139495)). Structured finance and covered bond securities benefit from revenue diversification, credit enhancement and other structural features. As a result they can achieve higher ratings than other non-structured issuers and may, where certain conditions are met, exceed the sovereign by a limited number of notches, subject to the constraint of the relevant country ceiling.

The purpose of the country ceiling (or 'guideline') is described in the Rating Implementation Guidance "The Local Currency Deposit Ceiling" ([http://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC\\_98554](http://www.moodys.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBC_98554)). Moody's is considering reintroducing individual country ceilings for other euro area members, which could affect further the maximum structured finance rating achievable in those countries, as discussed in Moody's special report "Rating Euro Area Governments Through Extraordinary Times -- An Updated Summary" ([http://www.moodys.com/research/Rating-Euro-Area-Governments-Through-Extraordinary-Times-Implications-of-Spains--PBC\\_142756](http://www.moodys.com/research/Rating-Euro-Area-Governments-Through-Extraordinary-Times-Implications-of-Spains--PBC_142756)).

For notes that benefit from an external guarantee, Moody's rating is the higher of the guarantor's rating and the underlying rating of the notes.

The rating considerations described in this press release complement the principal rating methodologies applicable to each Spanish ABS, RMBS and CLO transaction, which are listed in the list of affected credit ratings (link provided above in this press release).

Moody's rating methodology for the Spanish electricity tariff deficit transactions considers the strength of the specific legislation enacted to set forth the regulatory claims and the repayment mechanisms, the creditworthiness and strategic role of key counterparties. For further information on the rating approach, please see the new issue reports publicly available for these transactions on Moody's website .

## OTHER DEVELOPMENTS MAY NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE NOTES

As the Euro area crisis continues, the rating of the structured finance notes remain exposed to the uncertainties of credit conditions in the general economy. The deteriorating creditworthiness of euro area sovereigns as well as the weakening credit profile of the global banking sector could negatively impact the ratings of the notes.

Key modeling assumptions, sensitivities, cash-flow analysis and stress scenarios for the affected transactions have not been updated as the rating action has been primarily driven by the lowering of Spain's country ceiling, the placement on review of Spanish bank ratings and Moody's decision to re-assess credit enhancement levels consistent with Spanish structured finance ratings.

## REGULATORY DISCLOSURES

Please click on this link [http://www.moody.com/viewresearchdoc.aspx?docid=PBS\\_SF290362](http://www.moody.com/viewresearchdoc.aspx?docid=PBS_SF290362) for the list of each credit rating affected by a change in rating or review status. This list is an integral part of this press release and provides, for each of the credit ratings covered, Moody's disclosures on the following items:

- Ratings Rationale
- Methodologies and Models applicable
- Person Approving Credit Ratings, Lead Analyst
- Releasing office

For ratings issued on a program, series or category/class of debt, this announcement provides relevant regulatory disclosures in relation to each rating of a subsequently issued bond or note of the same series or category/class of debt or pursuant to a program for which the ratings are derived exclusively from existing ratings in accordance with Moody's rating practices. For ratings issued on a support provider, this announcement provides relevant regulatory disclosures in relation to the rating action on the support provider and in relation to each particular rating action for securities that derive their credit ratings from the support provider's credit rating. For provisional ratings, this announcement provides relevant regulatory disclosures in relation to the provisional rating assigned, and in relation to a definitive rating that may be assigned subsequent to the final issuance of the debt, in each case where the transaction structure and terms have not changed prior to the assignment of the definitive rating in a manner that would have affected the rating. For further information please see the ratings tab on the issuer/entity page for the respective issuer on [www.moody.com](http://www.moody.com).

The ratings have been disclosed to the rated entities or their designated agent(s) and issued with no amendment resulting from that disclosure.

Information sources used to prepare each of the ratings are the following: parties involved in the ratings, public information, and confidential and proprietary Moody's Investors Service information.

Moody's did not receive or take into account a third party assessment on the due diligence performed regarding the underlying assets or financial instruments related to the monitoring of these transactions in the past six months.

Moody's considers the quality of information available on the rated entities, obligations or credits satisfactory for the purposes of issuing these reviews.

Moody's adopts all necessary measures so that the information it uses in assigning the ratings is of sufficient quality and from sources Moody's considers to be reliable including, when appropriate, independent third-party sources.

However, Moody's is not an auditor and cannot in every instance independently verify or validate information received in the rating process.

Moody's Investors Service may have provided Ancillary or Other Permissible Service(s) to the rated entities or their related third parties within the two years preceding the credit rating action. Please see the special report "Ancillary or other permissible services provided to entities rated by MIS's EU credit rating agencies" on the ratings disclosure page on our website [www.moody.com](http://www.moody.com) for further information.

The below contact information is provided for information purposes only. Please see the issuer page on

www.moodys.com for Moody's regulatory disclosure of the name of the Lead Analyst, Rating Analyst, Person Approving Credit Ratings, and the office that has issued the credit rating.

The relevant Releasing Office for each rating is identified under the Debt/Tranche List section on the Ratings tab of each issuer/entity page on moodys.com

Please see the ratings disclosure page on www.moodys.com for general disclosure on potential conflicts of interests.

Please see the ratings disclosure page on www.moodys.com for information on (A) MCO's major shareholders (above 5%) and for (B) further information regarding certain affiliations that may exist between directors of MCO and rated entities as well as (C) the names of entities that hold ratings from MIS that have also publicly reported to the SEC an ownership interest in MCO of more than 5%. A member of the board of directors of this rated entity may also be a member of the board of directors of a shareholder of Moody's Corporation; however, Moody's has not independently verified this matter.

Please see Moody's Rating Symbols and Definitions on the Rating Process page on www.moodys.com for further information on the meaning of each rating category and the definition of default and recovery.

Please see ratings tab on the issuer/entity page on www.moodys.com for the last rating action and the rating history.

The date on which some ratings were first released goes back to a time before Moody's ratings were fully digitized and accurate data may not be available. Consequently, Moody's provides a date that it believes is the most reliable and accurate based on the information that is available to it. Please see the ratings disclosure page on our website www.moodys.com for further information.

Please see www.moodys.com for any updates on changes to the lead rating analyst and to the Moody's legal entity that has issued the rating.

Maria Turbica Manrique  
Asst Vice President - Analyst  
Structured Finance Group  
Moody's Investors Service Espana, S.A.  
Calle Principe de Vergara, 131, 6 Planta  
Madrid 28002  
Spain

Ariel Weil  
Vice President - Senior Analyst  
Structured Finance Group  
JOURNALISTS: 44 20 7772 5456  
SUBSCRIBERS: 44 20 7772 5454

Releasing Office:  
Moody's Investors Service Espana, S.A.  
Calle Principe de Vergara, 131, 6 Planta  
Madrid 28002  
Spain  
JOURNALISTS: 44 20 7772 5456  
SUBSCRIBERS: 44 20 7772 5454



© 2012 Moody's Investors Service, Inc. and/or its licensors and affiliates (collectively, "MOODY'S"). All rights reserved.

**CREDIT RATINGS ISSUED BY MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE, INC. ("MIS") AND ITS AFFILIATES ARE MOODY'S CURRENT OPINIONS OF THE RELATIVE FUTURE CREDIT**

**RISK OF ENTITIES, CREDIT COMMITMENTS, OR DEBT OR DEBT-LIKE SECURITIES, AND CREDIT RATINGS AND RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS PUBLISHED BY MOODY'S ("MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS") MAY INCLUDE MOODY'S CURRENT OPINIONS OF THE RELATIVE FUTURE CREDIT RISK OF ENTITIES, CREDIT COMMITMENTS, OR DEBT OR DEBT-LIKE SECURITIES. MOODY'S DEFINES CREDIT RISK AS THE RISK THAT AN ENTITY MAY NOT MEET ITS CONTRACTUAL, FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS AS THEY COME DUE AND ANY ESTIMATED FINANCIAL LOSS IN THE EVENT OF DEFAULT. CREDIT RATINGS DO NOT ADDRESS ANY OTHER RISK, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO: LIQUIDITY RISK, MARKET VALUE RISK, OR PRICE VOLATILITY. CREDIT RATINGS AND MOODY'S OPINIONS INCLUDED IN MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT STATEMENTS OF CURRENT OR HISTORICAL FACT. CREDIT RATINGS AND MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS DO NOT CONSTITUTE OR PROVIDE INVESTMENT OR FINANCIAL ADVICE, AND CREDIT RATINGS AND MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS ARE NOT AND DO NOT PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO PURCHASE, SELL, OR HOLD PARTICULAR SECURITIES. NEITHER CREDIT RATINGS NOR MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS COMMENT ON THE SUITABILITY OF AN INVESTMENT FOR ANY PARTICULAR INVESTOR. MOODY'S ISSUES ITS CREDIT RATINGS AND PUBLISHES MOODY'S PUBLICATIONS WITH THE EXPECTATION AND UNDERSTANDING THAT EACH INVESTOR WILL MAKE ITS OWN STUDY AND EVALUATION OF EACH SECURITY THAT IS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR PURCHASE, HOLDING, OR SALE.**

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS PROTECTED BY LAW, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COPYRIGHT LAW, AND NONE OF SUCH INFORMATION MAY BE COPIED OR OTHERWISE REPRODUCED, REPACKAGED, FURTHER TRANSMITTED, TRANSFERRED, DISSEMINATED, REDISTRIBUTED OR RESOLD, OR STORED FOR SUBSEQUENT USE FOR ANY SUCH PURPOSE, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, IN ANY FORM OR MANNER OR BY ANY MEANS WHATSOEVER, BY ANY PERSON WITHOUT MOODY'S PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT. All information contained herein is obtained by MOODY'S from sources believed by it to be accurate and reliable. Because of the possibility of human or mechanical error as well as other factors, however, all information contained herein is provided "AS IS" without warranty of any kind. MOODY'S adopts all necessary measures so that the information it uses in assigning a credit rating is of sufficient quality and from sources Moody's considers to be reliable, including, when appropriate, independent third-party sources. However, MOODY'S is not an auditor and cannot in every instance independently verify or validate information received in the rating process. Under no circumstances shall MOODY'S have any liability to any person or entity for (a) any loss or damage in whole or in part caused by, resulting from, or relating to, any error (negligent or otherwise) or other circumstance or contingency within or outside the control of MOODY'S or any of its directors, officers, employees or agents in connection with the procurement, collection, compilation, analysis, interpretation, communication, publication or delivery of any such information, or (b) any direct, indirect, special, consequential, compensatory or incidental damages whatsoever (including without limitation, lost profits), even if MOODY'S is advised in advance of the possibility of such damages, resulting from the use of or inability to use, any such information. The ratings, financial reporting analysis, projections, and other observations, if any, constituting part of the information contained herein are, and must be construed solely as, statements of opinion and not statements of fact or recommendations to purchase, sell or hold any securities. Each user of the information contained herein must make its own study and evaluation of each security it may consider purchasing, holding or selling. NO WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, AS TO THE ACCURACY, TIMELINESS, COMPLETENESS, MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PARTICULAR PURPOSE OF ANY SUCH RATING OR OTHER OPINION OR INFORMATION IS GIVEN OR MADE BY MOODY'S IN ANY FORM OR MANNER WHATSOEVER.

MIS, a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Corporation ("MCO"), hereby discloses that most issuers of debt securities (including corporate and municipal bonds, debentures, notes and commercial paper) and preferred stock rated by MIS have, prior to assignment of any rating, agreed to pay to MIS for appraisal and rating services rendered by it fees ranging from \$1,500 to approximately \$2,500,000. MCO and MIS also maintain policies and

procedures to address the independence of MIS's ratings and rating processes. Information regarding certain affiliations that may exist between directors of MCO and rated entities, and between entities who hold ratings from MIS and have also publicly reported to the SEC an ownership interest in MCO of more than 5%, is posted annually at [www.moody.com](http://www.moody.com) under the heading "Shareholder Relations — Corporate Governance — Director and Shareholder Affiliation Policy."

Any publication into Australia of this document is by MOODY'S affiliate, Moody's Investors Service Pty Limited ABN 61 003 399 657, which holds Australian Financial Services License no. 336969. This document is intended to be provided only to "wholesale clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001. By continuing to access this document from within Australia, you represent to MOODY'S that you are, or are accessing the document as a representative of, a "wholesale client" and that neither you nor the entity you represent will directly or indirectly disseminate this document or its contents to "retail clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, credit ratings assigned on and after October 1, 2010 by Moody's Japan K.K. ("MJKK") are MJKK's current opinions of the relative future credit risk of entities, credit commitments, or debt or debt-like securities. In such a case, "MIS" in the foregoing statements shall be deemed to be replaced with "MJKK". MJKK is a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Group Japan G.K., which is wholly owned by Moody's Overseas Holdings Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of MCO.

This credit rating is an opinion as to the creditworthiness of a debt obligation of the issuer, not on the equity securities of the issuer or any form of security that is available to retail investors. It would be dangerous for retail investors to make any investment decision based on this credit rating. If in doubt you should contact your financial or other professional adviser.