

CPSE Boards Set to get More Autonomy

Our Bureau

New Delhi: The Centre has decided to restructure the boards of top state-run companies within six months to bring them on par with their global peers by giving greater autonomy in decision-making.

The finance ministry has conveyed the plan to the senior management of select companies including BHEL, NTPC, BPCL, HPCL, IOC, ONGC, and SAIL, giving them the timeframe for board reorganisation. This will include hiring at least four part-time non-official directors, gradually increasing their strength to at least a third of the board's total strength.

A Department of Public Enterprises memo also noted that the existing procedures will continue for selecting full-time directors and part-time government nominee directors.

However, a search committee

comprising the chairman of Public Enterprises Selection Board (PSEB); secretary (PSEB) in Department of Public Enterprises (DPE); secretary of the administrative ministry, and an eminent person nominated by the industry minister will select non-official part-time directors, the department said, in the guidelines issued late Tuesday.

"This number should be more for those PSEs which have a very large number of Functional Directors," the guideline said.



Last week, the government had approved a restructuring of the boards of THDC India and NEEPCO, both units of NTPC, by appointing a non-executive chairperson and re-designating the CMD position to managing director. It also reduced the board size to seven members, eliminating certain director positions to streamline decision-making.

Oil majors to tie up for exploration in Gujarat

Mumbai: Reliance Industries, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), and BP Exploration (Alpha) will collaborate to discover and extract oil and gas in the offshore exploration block of the Saurashtra basin. RIL was previously considering additional exploration activities following a decrease in production at its KGD6 basin. TNN



Reliance, ONGC, BP ink offshore exploration deal

Mumbai: Reliance Industries signed a joint operating agreement with state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation and BP Exploration (Alpha) for the offshore exploration of a block located off the western coast in the Saurashtra basin. The block was awarded to RIL, ONGC and BP as part of the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy. OUR BUREAU



RIL inks joint operating deal with ONGC, BP for Saurashtra block

Reliance Industries Ltd has entered into a joint operating agreement with state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and BP Exploration for a Saurashtra basin oil and gas exploration block, the firm said on Tuesday. The three firms had, for the first time, come together to bid for an area for finding and producing oil and gas in offshore exploration of Block GS-OSHP-2022/2 in the 9th bid round of Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) last year.

PTI

Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy cuts refinery output after EU sanctions

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

NAYARA ENERGY, a Rosneft-backed Indian refinery, has reduced operations at its 400,000-barrel-per-day (bpd) facility following announcement of new European Union sanctions on Russian crude oil.

The report citing industry sources said Nayara is currently operating the refinery at 70% to 80% of capacity, down from over 100% in each of the three months through June 2025. The operational cutback follows the EU's July 18, 2025, announcement of a fresh sanctions package targeting Russia. The measures include a reduced price cap on Russian crude and the unprecedented imposition of sanctions on Nayara Energy, marking the first instance of the EU sanctioning an Indian entity in connection with the Russia-Ukraine conflict.



Nayara operates India's third-largest refinery, located at Vadinar port in Gujarat, accounting for 8% of the country's refining capacity of 5.2 million bpd. It oversees a retail network of more than 6,750 petrol stations across the country. Russian oil major Rosneft owns a 49.13% stake in the firm.

Following the sanctions, Nayara has faced increasing difficulties in exporting refined products due to mounting storage constraints and growing

reluctance among traders to handle its cargoes. The company typically exports at least four million barrels of refined fuels—including diesel, jet fuel, gasoline, and naphtha—each month through global traders.

Additionally, US tech giant Microsoft has suspended its services to Nayara Energy, prompting the company to initiate legal action. Nayara alleges Microsoft unilaterally and abruptly suspended access to critical services, including proprietary tools and data, despite these services being obtained under fully paid licences. In the interim, Nayara has turned to domestic provider Rediff.com for IT services.

Adding to the turmoil, CEO Alessandro des Dorides resigned last week. He has been replaced by Sergey Denisov, the company's Chief Development Officer.



Rupee hits over 4-month low, falls 21 paise to 86.91 against dollar

MUMBAI: The rupee declined to over four-month low level and closed 21 paise weaker at 86.91 against the US dollar on Tuesday, weighed down by a jump in the American currency index and a surge in crude oil prices.

Forex traders said month-end dollar demand from Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and importers further pressurised the rupee.

Moreover, investors remained on the sidelines ahead of the US Federal Reserve and Bank of Japan's monetary policy decision this week.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 86.76 and touched an intra-day low of 86.92 against the greenback, surpassing the closing level of March 17 when the unit had ended at 86.81 versus dollar.

At the end of Tuesday's trading session, the local unit settled at 86.91, down 21 paise over its previous closing price.

On Monday, the rupee had settled at 86.70 against the dollar. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose marginally by 0.13 per cent to 98.75. PII

Why Nayara is caught in the sanctions crossfire

Nayara Energy will be hit by EU sanctions as Russia's Rosneft holds 49.13% stake in the company

bl.explainer

Rishi Ranjan Kala

Why has Nayara Energy initiated legal action against Microsoft?

Nayara Energy has approached the Delhi High Court, to make Microsoft resume its services to the company. It stated that Microsoft had abruptly suspended critical services, which will impact its ability to meet its obligations to Indian customers and stakeholders.

According to Nayara Energy, Microsoft is unilaterally interpreting the European Union (EU) sanctions against Russia. Microsoft is reportedly restricting Nayara Energy's access to its own data, proprietary tools, and products, despite these being acquired under fully paid-up licenses, because Russian oil and gas giant Rosneft holds a 49.13 per cent stake in it.

What is the 18th sanctions package of the European Union on Russia?

The main action is lowering of the crude oil price cap from \$60 a barrel to \$47.6 and introduction of a new system that ensures the cap is always 15 per cent lower than the average market price for Urals crude in the last six months. The EU also imposed a transaction ban for Nord Stream 1 and 2 (natural gas), which means that no EU operator can engage in any transaction regarding the Nord

Additionally, there is an import ban on refined oil products derived from Russian crude. This prevents Russian crude oil from reaching the EU market in any form. Consequently, the EU will not buy refined petroleum products derived from Russian crude and processed in a third country, such as India and Turkey.

The new measures on Russia focus on five building blocks: cutting energy revenues, hitting the banking sector, further weakening its military-industrial complex, strengthening anti-circumvention measures, and holding the country accountable for its crimes against Ukrainian children and cultural heritage.

How have these sanctions impacted Nayara Energy?

The impact on Nayara Energy, and its 20 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) Vadinar refinery, is more severe due to its reliance on Russian crude oil. Its presence in the middle distillate exports market to Europe makes it vulnerable.

However, Kpler's Lead Research Analyst for Refining & Modeling, Sumit Ritolia, pointed out that when contextualised by trade data, Nayara's exposure to the European refined product market appears limited in scale.

In 2024, Nayara exported an average of around 10,000 barrels per day (b/d) of jet fuel, with total volumes peaking at



NAYARA ENERGY. Sanctions whammy
REUTERS

These exports primarily targeted the UK, The Netherlands, and France, which account for less than 5 per cent of Nayara's total refined product output. The company's primary market share lies in Asia and Africa, and it maintains a strong domestic market presence, alongside a relatively diversified export portfolio, he added.

How do these restrictive actions impact Russia's energy trade?

"The immediate implication is a major reshuffling of both crude and product flows: from diesel to Urals. However, the sanctions will not cause an outright collapse in Russian oil exports, but will increase transaction costs, complicate arbitrage, and further isolate Russia from premium markets", global real-time data and analytics provider Kpler told

The full impact will unfold gradually over the next 6-12 months, with enforcement clarity, compliance behaviour, and secondary sanctions likely to shape the outcome.

The sanctions will push Russia's oil flows toward new routes. Indian and Turkish refiners will be forced to redirect diesel cargoes away from Europe, potentially flooding alternative markets such as Africa, Latin America, or South-East Asia. This displacement will likely trigger regional imbalances and distort pricing spreads, especially in the middle distillates segment.

For India, the impact will be most visible at the intersection of compliance scrutiny, trade realignment, and margin optimisation — particularly for private-sector refiners with strong export footprints along with state-export oriented refineries.

What is the way ahead for Indian refiners?

For India refiners freight rates will be higher as Russian shadow fleets have been sanctioned, which would impact margins thereby pulling down profits.

Near-term volatility is expected in diesel. In the short term, European buyers will increasingly scrutinise all cargoes from India until robust certification frameworks are established, which could temporarily dampen



तेल-गैस क्षेत्रों की खोज में तेजी: पुरी

पेट्रोलियम मंत्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी ने मंगलवार को कहा कि देश में तेल एवं गैस क्षेत्रों की खोज में नई तेजी आई है। उन्होंने कहा कि साल 2015 से 172 हाइड्रोकार्बन डिस्कवरी हुई हैं, जिनमें 62 समुद्री इलाकों में हैं। पुरी ने राज्यसभा को यह बात एक लिखित जवाब में बताई। पुरी ने कहा कि 2022 में समुद्री इलाके में करीब 10 लाख वर्ग किलोमीटर क्षेत्र में उत्खनन की इजाजत देने से अडमान-निकोबार ऑफशोर बेसिन सहित डीपवॉटर इलाकों में बड़ी संभावनाओं के द्वार खुले।

बैंक, लोन कंपनी-गैस सेवाओं से जुड़े झगड़ों का अब होगा जल्द समाधान

भास्कर न्यूज़ | नई दिल्ली

पारंपरिक अदालतों के बाहर निपटाया जा सकेगा विवाद

दिल्ली में बैंक, लोन कंपनी या गैस कनेक्शन से जुड़ी किसी भी परेशानी का हल जल्दी और आसानी से मिल सकेगा। दिल्ली के एलजी वीके सक्सेना ने एक बड़ा फैसला लेते हुए बैंकिंग सेवाएं, गैर-बैंकिंग वित्तीय कंपनियां और गैस आपूर्ति सेवाएं को लोक उपयोगी सेवाएं की सूची में शामिल करने को मंजूरी दे दी है। इस कदम के बाद इन सेवाओं से जुड़े विवादों को अब स्थायी लोक अदालतों में सुना जा सकेगा, जहां

एलजी द्वारा दी गई कानून विभाग को मंजूरी के प्रस्ताव में कहा गया है कि इन तीनों सेवाओं को लोक उपयोगी सेवाओं के रूप में अधिसूचित करके, बड़ी संख्या में बैंकिंग और गैर-बैंकिंग वित्तीय क्षेत्रों में ऋण, वित्तीय बसुली, बचत और निवेश, सेवा-संबंधी शिकायतों और बिलिंग संबंधी मुद्दों से जुड़े विवादों का, पारंपरिक अदालतों के बाहर प्रभावी और शीघ्रता से निपटारा किया जा सकता है। इस कदम से स्थायी लोक अदालतों को इन मामलों का निपटारा करने का अधिकार मिल जाएगा, जिससे नियमित अदालतों पर बोझ कम होगा और जनता को कम खर्च पर सुलभ और समयबद्ध कानूनी उपाय उपलब्ध होंगे।

जल्दी, सस्ते और सरल तरीके से बार-बार कोर्ट के चक्कर नहीं लगाने फैसला किया जाएगा और लोगों को पड़ेंगे।

बैंकिंग-गैस आपूर्ति की स्थायी लोक अदालत में हो सकेगी सुनवाई

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी) : राजधानी की तीन सेवाओं, बैंकिंग सेवाओं, गैर-बैंकिंग वित्तीय कंपनियों और गैस आपूर्ति सेवाओं के मामले अब स्थायी लोक अदालत में भी सुने जा सकेंगे। दिल्ली के उपराज्यपाल वी के सक्सेना ने इन सभी सेवाओं की श्रेणी को 'लोक उपयोगी सेवाओं' में शामिल करने को मंजूरी दे दी है। एलजी की मंजूरी के बाद इनसे जुड़े विवादों का समाधान करने का वैकल्पिक तंत्र उपलब्ध हो सकेगा। इस आशय का एक प्रस्ताव दिल्ली सरकार के कानून विभाग द्वारा भेजा गया था, जिसमें दिल्ली में बड़ी संख्या में बैंकिंग और अन्य वित्तीय संस्थानों तथा गैस सेवाओं की आपूर्ति से संबंधित विवादों का हवाला देते हुए इन सेवाओं को लोक उपयोगी सेवाओं की श्रेणी में शामिल करने की अनुशंसा की गई थी। इस कदम से आम सेवा संबंधी शिकायतों से दो-चार हो रही एक बड़ी आबादी

स्थायी लोक अदालत को मिलेगा निपटारा का अधिकार

इस कदम से स्थायी लोक अदालतों को इन मामलों का निपटारा करने का अधिकार मिल जाएगा, जिससे नियमित अदालतों पर बोझ कम होगा और जनता को कम खर्च पर सुलभ और समयबद्ध कानूनी उपाय उपलब्ध होंगे। प्रस्ताव में यह भी कहा गया है कि ये तीनों सेवाएं, लोक उपयोगी सेवाओं की विशेषताओं से पूरी तरह मेल खाती हैं और इन क्षेत्रों में विवादों की बढ़ती संख्या को देखते हुए, ऐसे मामलों का शीघ्र, कम खर्च पर शांतिपूर्ण समाधान सुनिश्चित करना अत्यंत आवश्यक है।

को तेज, अधिक न्यायसंगत और कुशल कानूनी समाधान मिलने की उम्मीद है।



भारत में काम करने वाली ईएंडपी कंपनियों ने वर्ष 2015 से 172 हाइड्रोकार्बन क्षेत्र खोजे : हरदीप पुरी

आज समाज नेटवर्क

नई दिल्ली। केन्द्रीय पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी ने मंगलवार को संसद को बताया कि भारत में तेल और गैस की खोज में नए सिरे से उछाल आ रहा है, जिसके तहत 2022 में लगभग दस लाख वर्ग किलोमीटर के पूर्व 'नो-गो' अपतटीय क्षेत्रों को खोला गया। केन्द्रीय मंत्री पुरी ने राज्यसभा में एक प्रश्न के लिखित उत्तर में कहा, "इस कदम से विशेष रूप से अंडमान-निकोबार (एएन) अपतटीय बेसिन जैसे गहरे पानी और सीमांत क्षेत्रों में महत्वपूर्ण अन्वेषण क्षेत्र खुल गए हैं। साथ ही, अपतटीय अन्वेषण गतिविधि में तेजी आई है।" उन्होंने जानकारी दी कि वर्ष 2015 से भारत में कार्यरत अन्वेषण और उत्पादन (ईएंडपी) कंपनियों ने 172 हाइड्रोकार्बन क्षेत्र खोजे हैं, जिनमें 62 अपतटीय क्षेत्रों में हैं।

उन्होंने बंगाल-अराकान तलछट प्रणाली के अंतर्गत अंडमान और निकोबार अपतटीय बेसिन के भूवैज्ञानिक महत्व को बताया, जो इस बेसिन के जंक्शन पर स्थित है। उन्होंने कहा कि भारतीय और बर्मी प्लेटों की सीमा पर स्थित टेक्टोनिक सेटिंग ने कई स्ट्रेटीग्राफिक ट्रैप्स (भूगर्भीय संरचना जो तेल या गैस को रोकती है, जिससे यह एक जलाशय में जमा हो जाता है) का निर्माण किया है, जो हाइड्रोकार्बन संचय के लिए अनुकूल हैं।



केन्द्रीय मंत्री पुरी ने बताया कि ओएनजीसी ने 20 ब्लॉक में हाइड्रोकार्बन खोजें की हैं, जिनमें अनुमानित 75 मिलियन मीट्रिक टन तेल समतुल्य (एमएमटीओई) भंडार है।

ऑयल इंडिया लिमिटेड ने पिछले चार वर्षों में सात तेल और गैस स्रोतों की खोज की है, जिनमें अनुमानित 9.8 मिलियन बैरल तेल और 2,706.3 मिलियन मानक घन मीटर गैस भंडार है। हाइड्रोकार्बन रिसोर्स असेसमेंट स्टडी

(एचआरएस) 2017 का उल्लेख करते हुए केन्द्रीय मंत्री पुरी ने कहा कि अंडमान और निकोबार द्वीप समूह की हाइड्रोकार्बन क्षमता 371 एमएमटीओई आंकी गई थी। उन्होंने कहा कि अंडमान और निकोबार द्वीप समूह के अपतटीय क्षेत्र सहित भारत के अनन्त आर्थिक क्षेत्र के लगभग 80,000 लाइन किलोमीटर को कवर करने वाला एक 2डी ब्रॉडबैंड भूकंपीय सर्वेक्षण 2024 में पूरा हो गया है।

भारत में तेल और गैस अन्वेषण में नई तेजी : हरदीप सिंह पुरी



नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): राज्यसभा में एक प्रश्न के लिखित उत्तर में, केंद्रीय पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री, हरदीप सिंह पुरी ने कहा कि 2022 में लगभग दस लाख वर्ग किलोमीटर के पूर्व 'नो-गो' अपतटीय क्षेत्रों को खोलना एक ऐतिहासिक विकास है। उन्होंने कहा

कि इस कदम ने विशेष रूप से अंडमान-निकोबार (एएन) अपतटीय बेसिन जैसे गहरे पानी और सीमांत क्षेत्रों में महत्वपूर्ण अन्वेषण सीमाओं को खोल दिया है, और अपतटीय गतिविधि में वर्तमान गति को गति देने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है। उन्होंने कहा कि भारत में तेल और गैस अन्वेषण में, विशेष रूप से अपतटीय क्षेत्रों में, नए सिरे से तेजी देखी जा रही है, जो देश की विशाल अप्रयुक्त हाइड्रोकार्बन क्षमता को रेखांकित करता है। उन्होंने राज्यसभा में बताया कि 2015 से, भारत में कार्यरत अन्वेषण और उत्पादन (ईएंडपी) कंपनियों ने 172 हाइड्रोकार्बन खोजों की सूचना दी है।





रिलायंस का ओएनजीसी, बीपी के साथ समझौता

नयी दिल्ली। रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज लिमिटेड ने सौराष्ट्र बेसिन में तेल एवं गैस की खोज के लिए सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की कंपनी ओएनजीसी और बीपी एक्सप्लोरेशन (अल्फा) लिमिटेड के साथ संयुक्त परिचालन समझौता किया है। आरआईएल ने मंगलवार को एक बयान में कहा कि 28 जुलाई को ओएनजीसी के कार्यालय में इस समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए। सौराष्ट्र ब्लॉक को खुला क्षेत्र लाइसेंसिंग नीति की नौवीं बोली प्रक्रिया के तहत तीनों कंपनियों को संयुक्त रूप से आवंटित किया गया था। यह ब्लॉक गुजरात तट से सटे पश्चिमी समुद्री क्षेत्र में स्थित है और इसका क्षेत्रफल 5,454 वर्ग किलोमीटर है।

रिलायंस का सौराष्ट्र ब्लॉक के लिए ओएनजीसी, बीपी से करार

नई दिल्ली (भाषा)। रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज लिमिटेड ने सौराष्ट्र बेसिन में तेल एवं गैस की खोज के लिए सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की कंपनी ओएनजीसी और बीपी एक्सप्लोरेशन (अल्फा) लिमिटेड के साथ संयुक्त परिचालन समझौता किया है। आरआईएल ने मंगलवार को एक बयान में कहा कि 28 जुलाई को ओएनजीसी के कार्यालय में इस समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए। सौराष्ट्र ब्लॉक को खुला क्षेत्र लाइसेंसिंग नीति की नौवीं बोली प्रक्रिया के तहत तीनों कंपनियों को संयुक्त रूप से आवंटित किया गया था। यह ब्लॉक गुजरात तट से सटे पश्चिमी समुद्री क्षेत्र में स्थित है और इसका क्षेत्रफल 5,454 वर्ग किलोमीटर है। समझौते के मुताबिक, इस ब्लॉक में ओएनजीसी को परिचालक की भूमिका दी गई है और तीनों कंपनियां मिलकर क्षेत्र में हाइड्रोकार्बन संसाधनों की खोज और दोहन के लिए अन्वेषण गतिविधियां चलाएंगी। यह पहला अवसर है जब रिलायंस, ओएनजीसी और बीपी ने किसी अपतटीय ब्लॉक की खोज और उत्पादन के लिए एक साथ साझेदारी की है।

Renewable energy**Dutch pension giant pledges \$650mn to Octopus Australia**

Commitment by APG towards solar and battery projects will boost Canberra's efforts to move away from fossil fuels



A solar farm on the outskirts of Gunnedah, New South Wales: APG says it is committing to help develop big solar and battery projects in Australia © David Gray/Bloomberg

Rachel Millard and **Mary McDougall** in London and **Nic Fildes** in Sydney

Published 13 HOURS AGO

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The biggest asset manager in the Netherlands has pledged to invest A\$1bn (\$652mn) in renewable energy group Octopus Australia, in a boost to Australia's efforts to shift away from fossil fuels.

APG Asset Management, which manages the €544bn Dutch pension fund ABP, said on Tuesday it was committing the funds to help develop big solar and battery projects, ending a two-to-three-year search by the energy company for a global funding partner.

Sam Reynolds, chief executive of Octopus Australia, said it marked the start of what he expected to be a “multibillion-dollar, multiyear relationship”.

He added that Australia needed “about £250bn” spent on its energy projects over the next 10 years, which was “too much” for the country's own A\$4.1tn superannuation system — already large domestic investors — to absorb.

Australia's Labor government is set to revise its 2035 climate targets in September. Simon Stiell, head of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, said in Sydney this week that Australia needed to go beyond "bog standard" targets and urged more investment in renewable energy.

A third of Australian homes already have rooftop solar panels, and the government has proposed subsidies for household battery storage. However, larger renewable energy projects have come under threat, with BP and Fortescue pulling out of green hydrogen plans in the past week while several offshore wind projects have also been shelved.

The move by APG — one of the largest commitments to renewable energy made in Australia — underscores its pledge to meet its net zero emissions target by 2050 or sooner and its confidence in the returns that the sector can deliver.

Hans-Martin Aerts, head of Asia-Pacific infrastructure and private natural capital for APG, said the partnership was "a unique opportunity to participate in the rapidly growing Australian renewable energy market . . . with the potential to deliver attractive risk-adjusted returns".

Octopus Australia is part of the London-based Octopus Group, an investment business that also owns a large stake in UK household energy supplier [Octopus Energy](#).

Octopus Australia will use the funding from APG on its Blind Creek solar and battery project in New South Wales, which it aims to start building in October.

It will have 300 megawatts of solar capacity and almost 500 megawatt-hours of battery storage capacity. The funding will also go towards its 1 gigawatt-hour Blackstone battery project near Brisbane.

KPMG acted as senior financial adviser on the deal, led by M&A partner Gavin Quantock.

Australia sourced almost two-thirds of its electricity from fossil fuels — mostly coal — in 2023 but wants 82 per cent from renewable electricity by 2030. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's government is due to set a 2035 emissions reduction target in September.

Also on Tuesday, the UK's £7bn Smart Pension, an acquisitive defined contribution pension scheme, announced a £330mn investment in two funds managed by Octopus Energy Generation, which invests in renewable energy.

The investment will make up 5 per cent of Smart Pension's default fund and will be used to finance wind farms through Octopus's £1.5bn Sky fund and other projects including ground-source heat pumps through the smaller Octopus Energy Transition fund.

"It's only just now that you are getting the products that you can invest in," said Andrew Evans, group chief executive of Smart, adding that there would be "more and more opportunities" to invest directly in British infrastructure because more pension funds had committed to do so.

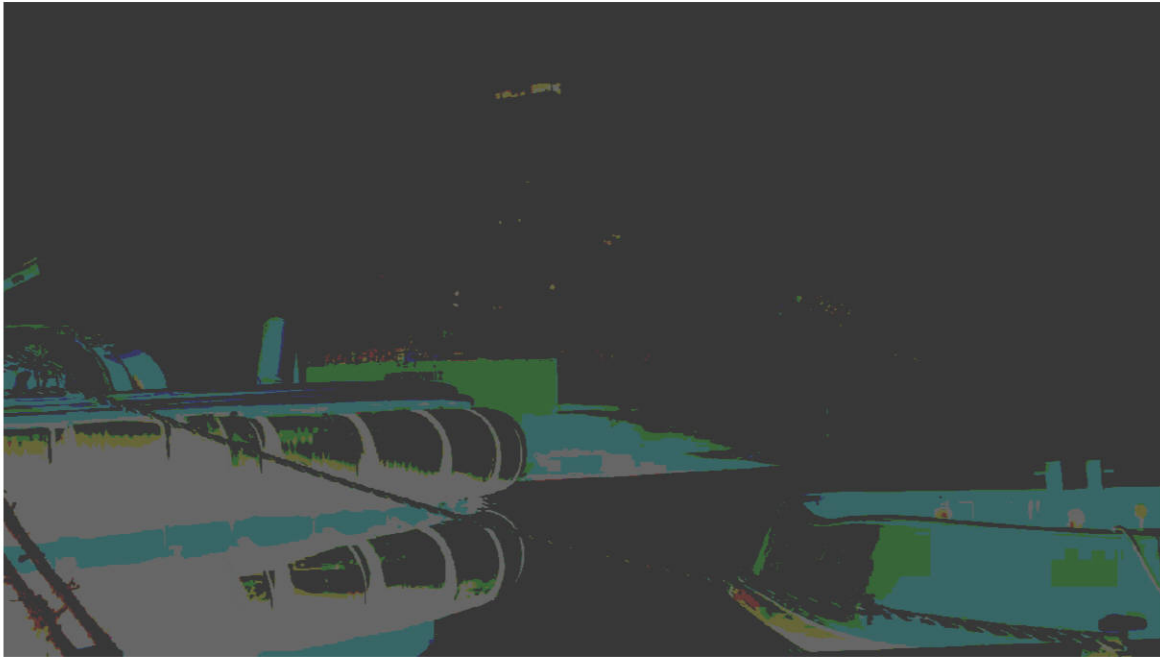
Under a compact signed at Mansion House in London this year, 17 of the UK's largest workplace defined contribution pension providers [pledged to invest at least 5 per cent](#) of their default funds in UK private markets by 2030.

Alex Brierley, co-head of Octopus Energy Generation, said it was a "big ticket" investment from Smart Pension that he hoped would grow as more savers paid into the fund.

He added that he had seen "an increase in interest over the course of the last six months" across other pension funds.

Oil & Gas industry**Donald Trump's EU oil and gas deal is 'pie in the sky', energy experts warn**

Analysts dismiss plan but executives welcome sign of more support for fossil fuel exports



LNG executives said the deal could help developers secure more financing to build a new wave of liquefaction plants in the Gulf of Mexico — the heart of the US's bustling gas-export industry © Mark Felix/Bloomberg

Jamie Smyth and **Martha Muir** in New York and **Kristina Shevory** in Austin

Published 13 HOURS AGO

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Brussels' vow to buy \$750bn of American energy as part of a new US-EU trade deal will be impossible to meet and is based on "pie in the sky" numbers, experts have warned, even as producers said it could boost sales.

The [deal](#), announced by President Donald Trump and European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen on Sunday, requires EU companies to buy \$250bn worth of US oil, natural gas and nuclear technologies for each of the next three years.

Analysts were puzzled by a target that would involve decisions by shareholder-owned companies in a continent also trying to decarbonise its economy.

"Even if Europe did want to increase its imports, I don't know the mechanism by which the EU goes to these companies and tells them to buy more US energy," said Matt Smith at [energy](#) consultancy Kpler.

The numbers were “pie in the sky”, he added. “Companies are beholden to their shareholders and have a duty to buy the cheapest feedstock.”

The announcement on Sunday put energy at the heart of a trade deal Trump claimed was one of the most significant ever, averting a looming tariff war between two of the world’s biggest economies.

Trump has touted an era of American “energy dominance” based on “unleashing” fossil fuel output, although drilling in the prolific shale oil and gas sector has slowed since he returned to the White House.

Shares in US energy companies rose on Monday on news of the EU deal, which could buoy liquefied [natural gas](#) and oil exporters that have already benefited from Europe’s efforts to cut Russian energy imports.

But the rally faded as the reality of the Trump plan, which was light on details other than the top-line number, sank in.

Last year, the EU imported more than \$435.7bn worth of energy — but US fossil fuel supplies to the bloc accounted for just \$75bn.

Brussels still has a plan to phase out purchases of Russian gas altogether by 2028, including LNG, which would open another gap for US exporters.

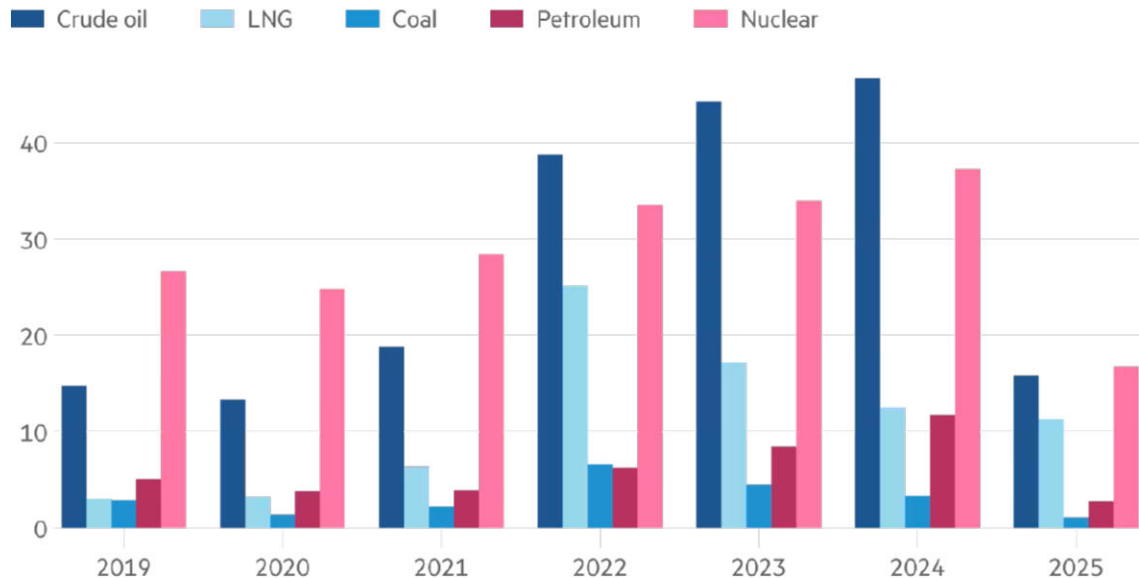
But analysts say the \$250bn target would be impossible to meet while ensuring Europe’s — and Trump’s — desire for cheap, secure energy supplies.

“This would require Europe to import a lot more volumes of gas and oil from the US, diverting away from other suppliers, while assuming oil and gas prices would remain high or even increase to reach the \$250bn target,” said Anne-Sophie Corbeau, an energy analyst at Columbia University’s Center on Global Energy Policy.

“We want to reduce energy bills and President Trump wants to reduce oil prices — so this agreement makes no sense.”

US energy exports to Europe are well below \$250bn

Total exports value (\$bn)



Nuclear includes natural uranium and compounds, enriched and depleted uranium, nuclear reactors and reactor parts and fuel

American producers were more enthusiastic about the deal, saying it would help European companies that import energy to sign more US supply deals.

The American Petroleum Institute, Big Oil's powerful Washington lobby group, said the agreement would "solidify America's role" as a critical supplier to Europe.

LNG executives said it could help developers secure more financing to build a new wave of liquefaction plants in the Gulf of Mexico — the heart of the US's bustling gas-export industry.

"This is a catalyst that certainly supports continued offtake contracting," said Ben Dell, chair of Commonwealth LNG, referring to long-term purchase agreements. His company is developing a new liquefaction facility in Louisiana.

Hours after Trump and Von der Leyen announced the trade deal, Venture Global, an US LNG exporter with multiple European contracts, said it was moving ahead with a \$15bn project to produce 28mn tonnes of LNG a year — equivalent to almost half of Germany's current gas demand.

"We applaud President Trump's trade deal," said Venture Global chief executive Mike Sabel, although he acknowledged the financing for the project was arranged earlier. Venture Global would "quickly deliver . . . abundant LNG supply".

Shares in Venture Global jumped by almost 8 per cent early on Monday, while those of rival LNG producers Cheniere Energy and NextDecade rose by almost 5 per cent. Venture Global closed up 4 per cent and Cheniere and Next Decade were both up by about 1 per cent.

The S&P 500 energy sector, which includes the oil and gas companies that would supply the extra energy for a new export boom, closed just over 1 per cent higher.

Analysts pointed to Trump's history of big-ticket announcements that also [failed](#), including a 2020 deal with China in his first term. Beijing was supposed to buy an extra \$200bn worth of US exports, but did not.

"The first-term history of phase one, managed trade with China offers an inauspicious precedent for the \$750bn EU energy pledge," said Kevin Book, managing director at ClearView Energy Partners, a Washington consultancy.

Bill Farren-Price, head of gas research at the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, said it was hard to see how the EU could mount a fivefold increase in the value of energy imports from the US while it pivoted to renewables.

"European gas demand is soft and energy prices are falling. In any case, it is private companies not states that contract for energy imports," he said. "Like it or not, in Europe the windmills are winning."

A \$750 Billion Energy Purchase Won't Come Easy

BY GEORGI KANTCHEV
AND ED BALLARD

The European Union has promised President Trump a \$750 billion shopping spree on American energy. Making good on that pledge will be a tall order.

The energy deal is a centerpiece of the trade agreement reached between Washington and Brussels on Sunday, which sets baseline U.S. tariffs at 15% for most European goods. The EU has agreed to buy \$250 billion of U.S. oil, natural gas and nuclear fuels per year for three years, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said.

To fulfill that pledge, the EU would have to purchase more than double the amount of American energy it did last year—while the U.S. would need to significantly ramp up its energy exports.

The commitment appears more aspirational than realistic, analysts said. Purchases of the agreed-upon magnitude would require a major rearrangement of energy flows, and it isn't clear whether U.S. companies could even export that much. Private companies, which constitute the majority of Europe's energy importers, would also need to be persuaded to give priority to a political directive over market trends.

"It's a nice number but it's just not realistic," said Warren Patterson, head of commodities strategy at ING Bank. "You'd

essentially have to divert all energy trade. That's just not possible."

European officials said Monday that the plan to increase energy purchases isn't legally binding and is based on amounts the bloc thinks it can accommodate. Purchases would also depend in part on U.S. infrastructure capacities, they said.

Europe learned the danger of relying on a single energy supplier when Russia—previously the continent's largest energy supplier—invaded Ukraine in 2022. In response, the EU has worked to diversify its energy imports. It now sources oil and natural gas

from an array of nations.

The deal with Trump would essentially result in the EU "rotating from Russia to the U.S. as a key energy supplier," Deutsche Bank analysts wrote in a note to clients Monday.

The EU imported 376 billion euros, equivalent to \$440 billion, of oil, natural gas and coal from various countries last year. Roughly €65 billion of that came from the U.S., according to Eurostat, the bloc's statistics agency.

Europe has already sharply increased its purchases of American energy. The U.S. was the EU's largest oil supplier last year, with a 16% share of imports, according to data from Eurostat. The U.S. also provided almost half of the EU's imported liquefied natural gas.

Ramping up energy imports further to hit the \$250 billion



Europe has already boosted purchases of U.S. energy. Above, an LNG export facility in Louisiana.

target might be a stretch.

"Even if the EU were to buy the entirety of U.S. crude and LNG exports, the annual value of its purchases would total only \$141 billion," according to

research firm Gavekal. It based its figures on current prices and the U.S.'s estimated year-end LNG export capacity.

Another fundamental obstacle is that private companies, not governments, handle most energy procurement in the EU. Their decisions are typically guided by market prices and consumer demand.

Brussels can't dictate to private companies where they buy energy, said Marc-Antoine Eyl-Mazzega, director of the energy and climate program at French think tank Ifri. "This is a private industry in Europe as much as in the U.S.," he said.

Companies also have existing long-term supply agreements with other countries such as Norway, Qatar, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia. Should these contracts be broken, the companies could face significant fi-

nancial penalties and potential lawsuits.

Even most long-term LNG contracts with Russia aren't expected to end before 2027, the target date by which the bloc

wants to phase out Russian fossil fuel imports, said Andreas Schröder, head of energy analytics at research provider ICIS. "The U.S. cannot simply take on all the market share in Europe," Schröder said.

There are also questions about whether the U.S. could deliver enough energy to hit the target. American LNG terminals, where natural gas is supercooled and loaded onto tankers, are already operating at near-full capacity. While companies are expanding facilities in Louisiana and Texas, this process will take several years.

On the European side, U.S. energy would encounter significant infrastructure bottlenecks. Europe's re-gasification and pipeline networks, which receive and process LNG, are stretched to their limits, and

expansion would require huge investment. The region's refineries would also likely struggle to process extra volumes of light U.S. crude to produce diesel.

There could be environmental pushback too. Large additional imports of U.S. energy might clash with the EU's goal of reducing fossil fuel consumption.

And market dynamics could further complicate the deal's arithmetic. ICIS projects that global gas prices will fall in the coming years as the market enters a period of oversupply. As LNG prices drop, the value of Europe's imports from the U.S. would decrease, making the \$750 billion goal even harder to achieve.

"Energy trade has always been a key item in the EU-U.S. trade dialogue in recent years," said Simone Tagliapietra, a senior fellow at Bruegel, a think tank. "But market dynamics rather than political declarations have been the determining factor."

In national interest to find Bass gas



ERIC JOHNSTON
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Is there more gas to be squeezed out of Bass Strait? That depends on who is doing the squeezing.

A change of control of the Bass Strait joint venture from Texan giant ExxonMobil to Meg O'Neill's Woodside is a historic moment for the Australian energy field that through its life has pumped tens of billions in oil and gas revenues.

The deal flips the script. Suddenly, the unloved Victorian field moves from a collection of near-depleted wells to something that's closer to prospective. In fact, there could be another 200PJ of conventional gas under the moody blue waters, a number that is not insignificant, and if delivered would fill projected east coast shortfalls into the next decade.

The switch from Woodside as a passive owner to invested operator is significant. It changes the narrative around Bass Strait. Although the ownership of the Esso venture remains unchanged at 50-50 between Exxon and Woodside, the fate of the fields and strategy now rests with an Australian firm, not with a US super-major.

Even as Woodside spends billions overseas, including offshore Africa and now building its Louisiana LNG business, it is much closer aligned to the national interest than the Houston-headquartered Exxon could ever be.

Woodside's O'Neill herself is a major player in Australia's energy politics and even more now that she assumes control of Bass Strait which, despite its advanced age, is still the biggest east coast gas supplier.

This gives the Woodside boss much-needed political capital on the east coast as it seeks to expand on the North West Shelf.

Woodside and O'Neill have been sensitive to criticism, while

Continued on Page 20

More gas in the Bass? Depends if it's in national interest

Continued from Page 13

Australia's biggest energy player was doing plenty on global markets it was doing little for the east coast, where the bulk of industry and households are based.

There's hope among some big Bass Strait customers that Woodside will also bring greater transparency around how much gas is left under the water and future prospects.

As a tiny field in the hands of the much bigger Exxon, there's often been a higher threshold for disclosure of resources.

Yesterday the story was Bass Strait is closing down, today with Woodside as operator, the venture now eyeing the development of four new wells with the potential of 200PJ of gas to be sold into the domestic market. Who knows what else Woodside will find out there with a fresh review of exploration data?

Out of gas

With Exxon as operator, Bass Strait's perennial problem was that it had been competing against much bigger and more lucrative projects when it comes to capital and management attention.

For the low returns and the long shots on offer, there's next to no incentive for Exxon to throw more money at the field compared to its portfolio of mega-projects around the world. Yet a few hundred PJ here and there could make all the difference to the strained east coast gas market that has been starved following a near dec-



A few hundred PJ extra could make all the difference to the east coast gas market

\$200m spend for Kipper IB last year.

Gas pumped from that project brings more to the market, but has the advantage of extending the life of the Esso venture's strategically important Longford processing plant into the next decade. However, for Exxon, the outlay was a rounding error in its annual \$US30bn (\$46bn) global capex spend.

Exxon has been the joint

owner and operator of the Bass Strait fields for more than 50 years. First with BHP as its foundation partner, and then that stake was flipped to Woodside as part of the mining giant's recent \$40bn energy exit. Exxon tried to sell its stake a decade ago but didn't get any significant bites, largely given the massive clean-up liabilities.

For more than a decade, Exxon's public comments on Bass

Strait have been about a managed exit, with a costly decommissioning project of oil platforms and pipelines connecting the mainland already underway. Symbolically, Esso House, the venture's prominent Melbourne HQ in Southbank was sold several years ago and has since been torn down.

As a non-operator, Woodside has been paying the decommissioning bills but largely was along for the ride.

Earlier this year, O'Neill was telling investors to think of Bass Strait as being in a "steady state level of activity" around decommissioning in coming years.

Now O'Neill, herself a former Exxon executive, wants us to think about Bass Strait as a "value maximisation" strategy that aims for further production improvements. The transfer is not an insignificant commitment for Woodside. Through the change in control, it inherits 600 Exxon staff working on Bass Strait. It is also on the hook for future clean-up costs for new projects it commissions. Exxon is still exposed to existing historical clean-up commitments, but now takes a back seat in driving strategy.

Exxon says it remains committed to Australia, both for upstream and downstream operations. It is a co-owner of the giant Gorgon field with Chevron and Shell.

How an alignment of energy interests changes the fate of production represents a powerful argument when it comes to the fate of another domestic producer and LNG exporter: Santos.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers will have to weigh up whether Santos could be acquired by a consortium led by Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) under a \$29bn deal. Due diligence is underway and any bid will need to be reviewed by the foreign investment review board.

Big ideas

Westpac has reached for the big ideas as part of the bank's contri-

bution to the Treasurer's productivity roundtable. Chief executive Anthony Miller has put in a 40-page submission raising areas of reform, particularly for housing, regional Australia and energy.

On energy, Westpac calls out the slow approval process in getting renewable projects up. Australia's approval regime is among "the most complex and slow in the world", the bank says, with projects facing layers of regulation across local, state, and federal levels of government. It also says gas should be considered part of the energy mix, and discussion around stimulating interest needs to be extended to adding gas-fired peaking capacity to help keep the energy grid stable.

Miller's Westpac goes slower on whole of system tax reform. This is complex, could take years and should be saved for its own forum for another time. However, one proposal is to embed 2.5 per cent annual escalation of income tax brackets to ensure taxpayers aren't double penalised for supply shocks.

"The reality is that the current system relies on periodic, ad hoc tax cuts to avoid the share of

household income going to tax inexorably rising," the bank says in its submission. The proposal for an annual escalation is a more measured approach and reduces the risk that a large tax cut is given at the wrong point in the economic cycle.

Chalmers' productivity roundtable kicks off next month and the Productivity Commission releases its first interim report on the topic this week.

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Russian Oil Discount Lowest Since Start of War Despite EU Push

By Bloomberg News

July 29, 2025 at 9:27 PM GMT+5:30

Russia's Urals crude is trading at its narrowest discount relative to benchmark prices since the Kremlin started its war against Ukraine in 2022.

The European Union announced sanctions against Russia, including a lower price cap on Russian oil, but the discount has narrowed even after the announcement.

Analysts, including Muyu Xu and Ronald Smith, attribute the narrow discount to factors such as Asian demand and tight Russian supplies, and expect the discount to potentially rise again when the EU's new price cap takes effect.

Russia's flagship Urals crude is trading at its narrowest discount relative to benchmark prices since the Kremlin started its war against Ukraine in 2022, suggesting that fresh European sanctions have so far failed to make an impact.

The grade shipped from Russia's western ports has traded at an average discount of \$11.45 a barrel to the North Sea Dated marker in recent days, according to Argus Media data compiled by Bloomberg. That's the narrowest gap since February 2022, when Russia started its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The discount has narrowed even after the European Union announced what the bloc's top diplomat, Kaja Kallas, billed as "one of its strongest" sanctions packages against Russia earlier this month. In a bid to limit the flow of petrodollars into Kremlin coffers, Brussels will lower its price cap on Russian oil to \$47.60 a barrel from \$60, and ban imports of petroleum products made from the country's crude. Urals traded above \$58 last week.

So far, the US hasn't joined the EU's latest push to lower the price threshold that bars access to key Western services such as insurance and shipping for oil sales above the limit. Russia adapted to the initial cap, introduced in December 2022, by building a massive shadow fleet of tankers and offering wider discounts to its customers.

Asian demand and tight Russian supplies are probably helping narrow the discount, while the EU restrictions haven't taken effect yet.

"A narrower Urals discount may follow firm demand in Asia, in particular in China as its refiners only have negligible exposure to EU sanctions because they don't sell much to Europe," said Muyu Xu, a senior crude oil analyst at research firm Kpler. "Also, Russia oil buyers care less about EU sanctions, unlike their serious concerns over US restrictions."

Russian crude supplies also remain relatively tight as the nation's output so far has lagged the production quota increases set by OPEC+, according to Giovanni Staunovo, a commodity analyst at UBS Group AG. "That could be a factor reducing the discount to benchmark," he said.

It may be too early to assess the impact of the EU's 18th sanctions package against Moscow. The new price cap is set to come into force on Sept. 3, while the ban on purchasing oil products made from Russian crude will only take effect in late January next year.

But India, currently the biggest importer of Russian crude, is already looking to diversify away from the supplies, according to analysts and refinery executives. If demand from at least some Indian buyers shrinks, it will give the remaining clients additional leverage to negotiate deeper discounts from Russian oil producers.

"I would expect the discount to rise again from Sept. 3, but probably not by very much unless the Europeans have found a way to enforce them," said Ronald Smith from Emerging Markets Oil & Gas Consulting Partners LLC. "Europe and the US have reasons to make sure the sanctions aren't too effective. Halting Russian exports would necessarily cause the price of oil to skyrocket for everyone."

Still, if concerns over an oil surplus later this year materialize, that will ultimately weigh on global prices, also pushing Urals down. Russia, which relies on oil and gas for roughly a third of its revenues, is already grappling with a widening fiscal deficit as the current price of its crude is below the \$69.7 a barrel originally projected in the 2025 budget.

The price of Urals shipped from Russia's Baltic Sea port of Primorsk and the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, on a free-on-board basis, averaged \$58.06 a barrel on Friday, according to Argus Media data compiled by Bloomberg.

Egypt Plans More LNG Deals, Driving Global Competition for Fuel

By Salma El Wardany

July 29, 2025 at 12:30 PM GMT+5:30

Egypt is planning to buy liquefied natural gas beyond the volumes it has already agreed to until 2028, to meet surging demand and fill a gap left by declining local output, according to people familiar with the situation.

The nation's import bill for petroleum products and LNG is expected to be about \$20 billion this year, up from \$12.5 billion in 2024, according to people familiar with the plans.

"The natural gas shortfall is going to be one of the biggest burdens on Egypt's current account and dollar liquidity for the foreseeable future," said Riccardo Fabiani, interim program director for the Middle East and North Africa at the International Crisis Group.

Egypt is poised to boost liquefied natural gas purchases until the end of the decade, tightening the global market and raising the prospect of yet-higher import bills.

The nation is planning to buy LNG beyond the sizable volumes it's already agreed to until 2028, as it looks to meet surging demand and fill a gap left by declining local output, according to people familiar with the situation. It has signed 10-year deals for import infrastructure and is in talks with Qatar over long-term gas supply contracts.

The plans signal Egypt is likely to miss a 2027 target for resuming exports, highlighting the dramatic reversal in energy fortunes that turned it into a net gas importer only recently. There's no sign the situation will improve in the longer term as it grapples with soaring power demand exacerbated by climate change, and North Africa's fastest-growing population.

Egypt's recent import deals have already contributed to tightening the global LNG market, at a time when Europe has been looking for extra shipments to refill storage sites and replace Russian gas. If the nation keeps attracting cargoes for years, it's likely to absorb some of the additional supply as new projects come online and help support prices.

For Cairo, the financial impact of the heavy purchases is significant. Its import bill for petroleum products and LNG is expected to be about \$20 billion this year, up from \$12.5 billion in 2024, according to people familiar with the plans who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the matter.

Egypt is seeking to revamp the economy after securing a \$57 billion bailout package last year, and heavy LNG purchases will add new financing pressures. The country is already grappling with a plunge in Suez Canal revenue caused by Yemeni militant attacks on Red Sea shipping over the past 18 months, although tourist arrivals are expected to hit a new record this year.

“The natural gas shortfall is going to be one of the biggest burdens on Egypt’s current account and dollar liquidity for the foreseeable future,” said Riccardo Fabiani, interim program director for the Middle East and North Africa at the [International Crisis Group](#).

Egypt’s oil ministry didn’t respond to a request for comment.

On-Off Exporter

The country reemerged as a net LNG exporter in 2019 thanks to new production from [Eni SpA](#)’s giant Zohr discovery, ending several years in which liquefaction facilities at Damietta and Idku had been idle due to insufficient domestic gas supply.

Restarting exports was an economic boon. LNG shipments peaked at about 9 billion cubic meters in 2022, just as European gas prices surged following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Egypt’s gas export revenue reached \$8.4 billion in 2022, up from \$3.5 billion in 2021, government data show.

The windfall was short-lived. By 2023 domestic gas production was posting double-digit annual declines, led by Zohr dropping below its peak levels.

Eni declined to comment on current supply. “However, we confirm that production is in line with plans, that it is off-plateau, and that Zohr production trends are comparable to those of fields with similar characteristics across the world.”

The Italian company planned to drill two additional wells at Zohr, after the Egyptian government had started to clear a payment backlog, Chief Financial Officer Francesco Gattei said on an earnings call in February.

At the same time, Egypt’s demand for gas to generate power has risen due to a growing population and sweltering weather, which increases demand for air conditioning. Cairo had to choose between keeping the lights on and giving up LNG exports.

By 2024, the country was again a net LNG importer. Egypt’s total gas output recently dropped below 4 billion cubic feet a day for the first time since July 2016.

President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi’s government last year bulked up on LNG imports as it vowed to end rolling power cuts, a plan that was largely successful. It’s also pushing ahead with the plan to make monthly repayment of arrears to foreign energy companies to encourage them to boost investments.

“For Egypt to get back to self-sufficiency, that would require significant exploration success and several years to bring discoveries to market,” said Martijn Murphy, principal analyst for upstream North African and Eastern Mediterranean at consultant Wood Mackenzie Ltd.

Import Dependency

With plans to stimulate domestic production still to take effect, authorities are focusing on securing long-term imports and insulating the country against geopolitically-linked market price fluctuations.

Besides LNG, Egypt also buys Israeli gas through a pipeline. Last month, Israel’s war with Iran prompted the precautionary shutdown of the Leviathan field in the eastern Mediterranean. Exports were halted for over a week, and Cairo was forced to temporarily cut off supplies to some industries.

“The solution shouldn’t be cutting gas supplies to fertilizer plants, because this impacts farmers, agriculture produce and exports,” Egyptian billionaire businessman Naguib Sawiris told Al Arabiya in an interview. “We shouldn’t have depended on Israeli gas.”

Adapting to the new reality, Egypt agreed with giants including Saudi Aramco, Trafigura Group and Vitol Group to bring in as many as 290 LNG cargoes, running from July until 2028. It’s also in talks with Qatar over long-term deals.

Such energy security comes at a price. Piped gas from Israel costs under \$6 per million British thermal units, two of the people said. That’s less than half what Cairo pays for LNG.

“Cost is higher with these contracts,” said Wood Mackenzie’s Murphy. But getting a better deal could mean locking in Egypt’s status as an importer for a yet-longer period. “It will try to get longer-term deals to bring the prices down.”

Australia Urged to Rein In Gas Exports as Supply Crunch Looms

By [Keira Wright](#)

July 29, 2025 at 11:33 AM GMT+5:30

A new report links Australia's liquefied natural gas export boom to surging local energy prices, fueling pressure to curb shipments and shore up domestic supply.

Wholesale electricity prices on Australia's main grid have jumped, averaging A\$107.67 per megawatt-hour, with wholesale gas prices tripling, according to the report by The Australia Institute.

Mark Ogge, principal adviser at The Australia Institute, says expanding supplies won't resolve the shortfall unless more gas is reserved for local use.

A new report linking Australia's liquefied natural gas export boom to surging local energy prices is fueling fresh pressure to curb shipments and shore up domestic supply.

Wholesale electricity prices on Australia's main grid have jumped about 73% since liquefied natural gas exports began a decade ago, averaging A\$107.67 (\$70.24) per megawatt-hour, according to research released Tuesday by progressive think tank, [The Australia Institute](#). It found that there is a risk of shortfall in the fourth quarter and throughout 2026 should Queensland producers export all their uncontracted gas.

Australia is one of the world's biggest exporters of liquefied natural gas, shipping about a fifth of global supply, mainly to Asia. That's helped drive up local energy costs, with wholesale gas prices tripling, according to the report.

The export boom has also added pressure to a looming [supply crunch](#) in the nation's south-eastern states — home to about two-thirds of the population. That's forcing policymakers to consider imports to bolster supplies. Another hurdle for the nation's electricity grid is its reliance on aging coal-fired plants, which still generate around 65% of Australia's power needs.

The report comes as Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. pursues a [\\$19 billion takeover](#) of Santos Ltd., one of Australia's top gas producers. If successful, the company known as Adnoc will be tasked with balancing lucrative LNG exports with local supply commitments like the Narrabri project — a development that could meet up to half of New South Wales' [gas demand](#).

Expanding supplies won't resolve the shortfall unless more gas is reserved for local use, Mark Ogge, principal adviser at the institute, told reporters on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Geoff Crittenden, chief executive of industry group [Weld Australia](#), warned that without urgent action on input costs — including energy — manufacturers will continue to move offshore.

“As Australia's coal-fired power stations retire, the least cost replacement for that energy is renewable energy, firmed with storage, backed with gas, and connected with

upgraded networks,” Australian Energy Market Operator chief executive, Daniel Westerman, said Tuesday at a conference in Sydney.



The \$147 Billion Green Hydrogen Bubble That BP Helped Burst

By Keira Wright, Sing Yee Ong, Will Mathis, and Will Wade

July 30, 2025 at 3:30 AM GMT+5:30

Australia's long-held ambitions to tap its abundant renewable resources and vast uninhabited landmass to become a global green hydrogen leader are fast unraveling.

Despite strong government backing and significant private sector interest, at least seven big hydrogen production projects have been delayed, scaled back, or canceled in the last year. Chief among them was BP Plc's decision last week to exit a \$36 billion facility in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, which had targeted starting production this decade.

Around the world, project withdrawals have accelerated as developers struggle to secure customers willing to pay a premium for the fuel. Costs remain persistently high, unlike the sharp price drops seen in solar and wind that have boosted their competitiveness.

That's raised concerns about the feasibility of using renewable energy to produce hydrogen that can be stored, transported and consumed like a fossil fuel to help nations meet net zero goals. It also looks set to make Asia's goal of cutting hard-to-tackle emissions tougher to achieve.

"This isn't just an Australian issue — there has been a slowdown in development globally, in large part because the cost hasn't come down as fast as previously forecast," said Simon Nicholas, an analyst at The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, a think tank that seeks to accelerate the energy transition. "I hope that the bursting of the hydrogen hype bubble is an opportunity for a reset."

There are more green hydrogen projects under development in Australia than in any other country, with a A\$225 billion (\$147 billion) pipeline worth of proposed projects, according to the government. But only three relatively minor plants are actually operational in the country, while most others remain in preliminary planning stages.

In recent years, many of the largest energy companies have tempered plans for green hydrogen as a way to better scale up renewable electricity. Plans to produce about 1.67 million tons of clean hydrogen had been shelved as of the end of June, according to BloombergNEF — over five times the amount of actual capacity. Meanwhile, just 1.9% of planned projects have secured financing or started construction.

Europe, which could become one of the world's largest consumers of green hydrogen in its push to achieve climate neutrality by mid-century, has grappled to overcome high costs, forcing some projects to be abandoned despite government support.

Growth of the technology in the US is also now in doubt after Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill significantly limited tax credits to produce the fuel. A year ago, credits were expected to help lead to about 1.2 million metric tons of annual green hydrogen production by 2030, BNEF said.

“If those incentives don’t exist, I don’t think this industry will exist,” said Payal Kaur, BNEF’s hydrogen analyst. “There will be cancellations if the economics don’t work, and the economics don’t work without the credits.”

In Australia, the challenges come despite strong government support and some of the world’s best natural conditions to produce hydrogen using renewables. The government has committed at least A\$4 billion to support the green hydrogen industry to bridge the cost gap between production and market prices. However, access to most of this funding depends on developers proving commercial viability upfront — a challenge as long-term buyers remain scarce.

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency is responsible for administering the government’s Hydrogen Headstart program and has so far provided more than A\$370 million to 65 renewable hydrogen projects. The agency “appreciates that the renewable hydrogen industry is nascent and will naturally experience challenges as it scales up,” it said.

Fortescue Ltd. and Woodside Energy Ltd. said this month they would withdraw from green hydrogen plans in Australia and the US. While those announcements are disappointing, the clean fuel is essential to manufacturing and industry in a net zero future, Australian Energy Minister Chris Bowen said.

Some green hydrogen projects are still moving forward, despite the cost challenges. In Europe, climate policies are encouraging deals, such as the one between Germany’s RWE AG and TotalEnergies SE to supply hydrogen to an oil refinery. Those contracts will help to underpin new production.

Elsewhere, China and India are pushing ahead in a race to produce some of the world’s cheapest green hydrogen. Even so, the clean fuel remains far more expensive than fossil fuels, according to BloombergNEF. For now, demand is mainly concentrated in sectors already using hydrogen, such as oil refining and fertilizer production.

China also benefits from a mature domestic supply chain of electrolyzers — the machines that convert water into hydrogen and oxygen — that has helped reduce project costs. In contrast, Australia depends on European-made production units, which cost multiples of the Chinese ones, according to Nigel Rambhujun, a hydrogen analyst at Rystad Energy.

Australia’s hydrogen dreams, meanwhile, risk being left in tatters.

The current “situation may prompt a reassessment of sourcing strategies, with greater emphasis on evaluating alternative regions,” said Shintaro Onishi, a hydrogen and ammonia analyst at Wood Mackenzie. The researcher has already incorporated a “limited future role of Australian hydrogen exports” in its outlook, he said.

Salt caverns new model for storing hydrogen

By LI MENGHAN

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Construction has begun on a major hydrogen storage project using salt caverns in Changzhou city, eastern Jiangsu province, marking a significant step forward in China's development of large-scale hydrogen storage technology.

Touted as one of the most promising clean energy sources, hydrogen is seen as a key component to China's energy transition strategy. However, storing the gas remains a technical challenge because hydrogen is the smallest molecule in nature and has a high penetration capability.

Salt caverns — large underground spaces created within natural salt deposits — are increasingly favored for hydrogen storage due to their excellent sealing performance, large capacity, low cost and high safety standards. Their natural impermeability and structural stability make them well suited for storing gases such as hydrogen.

The project is being developed by China National Salt Industry Group in collaboration with Tsinghua University. It involves the construction of two salt caverns, two wells for hydrogen injection and extraction, and two additional wells for injecting high-pressure air and expelling brine, according to a statement on the company's website.

Qian Qihu, an academician with the Chinese Academy of Engineering, has welcomed the project's launch, describing salt cavern hydrogen storage as a "golden key" to solving technological bottlenecks in the hydrogen energy industry. He said the facility is expected to turn underground salt caverns into an "energy treasure trove", creating a new development model for hydrogen storage and helping to amplify China's voice in the global clean energy space.

Li Yaoqiang, chairman of China National Salt Industry Group, said the project will serve the country's dual carbon goals — peaking carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality before 2060 — while contributing to national energy security. He said the company will harness its rich salt cavern resources and technical expertise to support the expansion of hydrogen energy infrastructure and promote innovation in salt cavern use.

"Salt will evolve from seasoning and industrial material to a foundation for future energy storage," Li said.

Woodside senses opportunity in tired field

COLIN PACKHAM

Woodside will become a bigger force in east coast oil and gas after reaching a deal with ExxonMobil to take operational control of their Gippsland Basin joint venture – the region's most important domestic gas source – and potentially develop new supply.

The agreement marks the end of an era for the Bass Strait partnership, with Woodside assuming control from Exxon's Australian subsidiary, Esso, which has managed the project for decades.

Under the revised structure, Woodside will oversee day-to-day business and have the right to pursue and develop new gas fields without Exxon's involvement.

The move represents a strategic expansion for the Perth-based energy major and reinforces its ambition to bolster gas supply on the east coast, where there are acute concerns over future shortages. The Australian Energy Market Operator has forecast a structural supply deficit by 2029 unless new sources of fuel are developed.

Woodside has identified about 200 petajoules of potential new gas reserves in the Gippsland Basin, but said further technical work was required and that a final investment decision regarding its development was yet to be made. It would involve four new wells.

Woodside shares rose 15 per cent to \$26.60 on Tuesday.

Chief operating officer Liz Westcott said the deal strengthened Woodside's role in domestic energy supply.

"The transfer of operatorship builds on 40 years of Woodside's

demonstrated offshore and on-shore operations capability," Ms Westcott said.

"Under the agreement, Woodside will assume operatorship of the offshore Bass Strait production assets, the Longford Gas Plant, the Long Island Point gas liquids processing facility and associated pipeline infrastructure.

"Every molecule of natural gas produced in the Bass Strait is sold into the east coast market for local homes, manufacturers and power generators."

Woodside said it hoped to complete the transfer of operations in 2026 pending regulatory approvals.

Any development would need to proceed relatively quickly to address supply pressures ahead of the scheduled closure of the Longford gas plant in 2033.

The Gippsland Basin joint venture, operating since the late



“Every molecule of natural gas produced in the Bass Strait is sold into the east coast market for local homes, manufacturers, and power generators”

LIZ WESTCOTT Woodside Energy COO

Any development would need to proceed relatively quickly to address supply pressures

1960s, supplies about 40 per cent of Victoria's gas and remains a critical contributor to the National Electricity Market. However, output from the basin has been in steady decline, triggering increased pressure from government and industry for new investment.

Woodside has historically been more dominant in Western Australia.

The company has pursued an aggressive growth strategy in recent years, developing major projects and completing acquisitions

that have transformed it into one of the world's top LNG exporters.

Josh Stabler, managing director of energy consultancy company Energy Edge, said the Exxon deal was bold and potentially risky.

"The riskiness is associated with the fact that Longford reached a recent peak in operations during 2022 but declined by 37 per cent by 2024, and the AEMO Victorian Gas Planning Report stating closure of the facility in 2033," Mr Stabler said.

"The boldness will be a test of the well-earned competency of Woodside's operational teams and their ability to bring gas to the southern gas market in a timely and cost-effective fashion."

Expanding the company's domestic footprint through new east coast developments could

[Continued on Page 19](#)

Woodside eyes new gas with Gippsland deal

[Continued from Page 13](#)

also help deflect criticism that it has prioritised exports over local supply.

The timing of the deal comes ahead of anticipated reforms to the Australian Domestic Gas Security Mechanism and a new round of heads-of-agreement negotiations between the federal government and east coast LNG producers.

The Albanese government is seeking to guarantee sufficient supply and ease cost pressures on manufacturers and households.

Gas policy remains politically sensitive, with the government arguing that gas is essential to support renewables during the energy transition, while environ-

ment groups continue to oppose new developments on climate grounds.

Despite the controversy, Woodside maintains that gas will be a critical component of Australia's energy mix in the medium term. The company said its expanded role in Gippsland would allow it to act more nimbly to bring new supply online and maximise existing infrastructure ahead of looming shortfalls.

Woodside has faced climate sensitivity around its global expansion efforts, such as its new \$19.2bn Scarborough LNG development that is poised to be completed within months. Its annual meeting in Perth in May was a fiery affair due to a climate protest from environmentalists.

Trump's EPA targets key health ruling underpinning all US greenhouse gas rules

By Valerie Volcovici and David Shepardson

July 30, 2025 5:08 AM GMT+5:30 Updated 1 hour ago

WASHINGTON, July 29 (Reuters) - The Trump administration said on Tuesday it will rescind the long-standing finding that greenhouse gas emissions endanger human health, removing the legal foundation for all U.S. greenhouse gas regulations.

If finalized, the repeal would end current limits on greenhouse gas pollution from vehicle tailpipes, power plants, smokestacks and other sources, and hamper future U.S. efforts to combat global warming.

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin announced the agency's plan to rescind the "endangerment finding" at an event at a car dealership in Indiana, alongside Energy Secretary Chris Wright, and called it the largest deregulatory action in U.S. history.

The proposal, which needs to undergo a public comment period, would cut \$54 billion in costs annually through the repeal of all greenhouse gas standards, including the vehicle tailpipe standard, he said.

Under President Joe Biden, the EPA said the tailpipe rules through 2032 would avoid more than 7 billion tons of carbon emissions as it prodded automakers to build more EVs and provide nearly \$100 billion of annual net benefits to society including \$62 billion in reduced fuel costs, and maintenance and repair costs for drivers.

Environmental groups blasted the move, saying it spells the end of the road for U.S. action against climate change, even as the impacts of global warming become more severe.

"With today's announcement, the EPA is telling us in no uncertain terms that U.S. efforts to address climate change are over. For the industries that contribute most to climate change, the message is 'pollute more.' For everyone feeling the pain of climate disasters, the message is 'you're on our own,'" said Abigail Dillen, president of Earthjustice.

The move is expected to trigger legal challenges, according to several environmental groups, states and lawyers.

Zeldin said a 2024 Supreme Court decision that reduced the power of federal agencies to interpret the laws they administer, known as the Chevron deference, means that the EPA does not have the ability to regulate greenhouse gases.

This sheep farm in South Africa has shifted its practices in a bid to meet sustainable standards.

"We do not have that power on our own to decide as an agency that we are going to combat global climate change because we give ourselves that power," Zeldin said.

He added that if Congress decides it wants to amend the federal Clean Air Act to explicitly state the U.S. should regulate carbon dioxide, methane and other planet-warming gases, the EPA would follow its lead.

SHAKING THE FOUNDATION

The endangerment finding's roots date back to 2009, when the EPA under former Democratic President Barack Obama issued a finding that emissions from new motor vehicles contribute to pollution and endanger public health and welfare.

That assessment followed a 2007 U.S. Supreme Court decision in its landmark *Massachusetts v. EPA* case that said the EPA has the authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions and required the agency to make a scientific finding on whether those emissions endanger public health.

The endangerment finding was upheld in several legal challenges and underpinned subsequent greenhouse gas regulations, ranging from tailpipe standards for vehicles, carbon dioxide standards for aircraft, and methane standards for oil and gas operations.

Zeldin and Wright challenged the global scientific consensus on climate change that global warming and its impacts have since been unfolding faster than expected and that policymakers need to step up action to curb global greenhouse gas emissions.

They also contradict the advisory opinion issued last week by the International Court of Justice, which said failure by governments to reduce emissions could be an internationally wrongful act, and found that treaties such as the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change should be considered legally binding.

The administration has already dismissed all authors of the U.S. National Climate Assessment, which detailed climate change impacts across the country.

"Now the public is open to engage in a thoughtful dialogue about what is climate change? It is a real physical phenomenon. It's worthy of study. It's worthy of even some action, but what we have done instead is nothing related to the actual science of climate change or pragmatic ways to make progress," Wright said.

Zeldin said on a podcast earlier Tuesday that the endangerment finding never acknowledged "any benefit or need for carbon dioxide."

Industry reaction was limited on Tuesday, with some trade groups weighing in and some companies remaining quiet.

American Trucking Associations welcomed the announcement, saying that Biden-era vehicle emissions standards "put the trucking industry on a path to economic ruin and would have crippled our supply chain," said its president, Chris Spear.

Ford ([F.N.](#)), said in a statement that Biden-created tailpipe standards did "not align with the market," and America needs "a single, stable standard to foster business planning."

"The standard should align with science and customer choice, reduce carbon emissions by getting more stringent over time, and grow American manufacturing," Ford said.

Other automakers Toyota ([7203.T](#)), GM ([GM.N](#)), Stellantis ([STLAM.MI](#)), declined to comment.

Marty Durbin, president of the Global Energy Institute at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said it welcomed the administration's focus on affordable energy but said it is still weighing the proposal.

"While we did not call for this proposal, we are reviewing it and will consult with members so we can provide constructive feedback to the agency," he said.

California Air Resources Board chair Liane Randolph said the EPA move chooses "polluter fantasyland over proven science. Meanwhile, back on Earth, the planet continues to suffer the consequences of unchecked carbon pollution."



Petrobras' oil output rises 7.6% in Q2 boosted by production vessels ramp-up

By [Fabio Teixeira](#) and [Marta Nogueira](#)

July 30, 2025 5:29 AM GMT+5:30 Updated 1 hour ago

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 29 (Reuters) - Brazilian state-run oil firm

Petrobras ([PETR4.SA](#)), produced 2.32 million barrels of oil per day in Brazil during the second quarter, it reported on Tuesday, marking a 7.6% rise over the same period last year, as new production vessels increased output.

In the second quarter, four floating production vessels increased output, one reached peak production and another started operations ahead of schedule, boosting output for the period, the firm said.

Petrobras' total oil, gas and gas liquids production reached 2.91 million barrels of oil equivalent per day (boed) in the second quarter, up 7.8% from a year earlier, and sales of oil, gas and derivatives reached 2.98 million boed, a 1.6% increase.

Petrobras' exports of oil and derivatives rose 2.7% to some 874,000 barrels per day, the firm said. During the period, China was the main destination for the company's oil, receiving 54% of the total, four percentage points above the same period last year.

The United States received around 8% of oil exports, up from 5% in the second quarter of 2024.

Earlier this month Petrobras Chief Executive Magda Chambriard [told Reuters](#) that the firm may redirect the oil it sells to the U.S., sending more to Asia and Pacific markets if higher tariffs the U.S. announced for the South American country come into effect.



Germany's energy use rises 2.3% in first half of 2025

By Reuters

July 29, 20255:00 PM GMT+5:30Updated 13 hours ago

FRANKFURT, July 29 (Reuters) - Germany's energy use rose 2.3% in the first half of 2025, industry statistics group AGEB said on Tuesday, citing cooler weather and a small uptick in economic performance as drivers.

Energy usage in Europe's biggest economy increased to 187.3 million metric tons of coal equivalent, an industry standard measure, from 183.1 million in the first six months of 2024, AGEB's January-June report showed.

Usage for the whole of 2024, was 359.6 million tons, down 1.1% on the year before.

In the first half of 2025, natural gas usage rose by 4.7%, while light heating oil was up by nearly 18% due to weather patterns, AGEB said.

Usage of imported hard coal was flat overall, but varied between sectors.

Coal inputs in power stations rose by 23% as more conventional power was needed to offset weather-related declines in wind and hydro-electric generation. However, photovoltaic power consumption increased by 25%.

The steel industry, on the other hand, used 12% less hard coal, in line with its lower pig iron production.

AGEB estimated that the increase in thermal power plants' production led to 2.6% more CO2 emissions in the six months.

ENERGY SOURCE	H1 2024 *	H1 2025	PCT CHANGE YR/YR	RESPECTIVE SHARE OF TOTAL USE in H1 2025
Oil	64.3	66.0	+ 2.6	35.2
Natural gas	50.1	52.5	+ 4.7	28.0
Hard coal	13.1	13.1	+ 0.1	7.0
Lignite	13.1	12.9	- 1.4	6.9
Nuclear energy	...	...	...	0.0
Renewables	37.9	38.4	+ 1.3	20.5

Foreign power trade balance	1.1	0.9	...	0.5
Others	3.5	3.5	+ 0.4	1.9
TOTAL	183.1	187.3	+ 2.3	100.0

*Energy use numbers in million tons coal equivalent units. One unit equals 29.308 petajoules. Table allows for rounding errors.

EU's \$250 billion-per-year spending on US energy is unrealistic

By Kate Abnett and Arathy Somasekhar

July 29, 2025 1:04 PM GMT+5:30 Updated 17 hours ago

BRUSSELS/HOUSTON, July 28 (Reuters) - The European Union's pledge to buy \$250 billion of U.S. energy supplies per year is unrealistic because it would require the redirection of most U.S. energy exports towards Europe and the EU has little control over the energy its companies import.

The U.S. and EU struck a framework trade deal on Sunday, which will impose 15% U.S. tariffs on most EU goods. The deal included a pledge for the EU to spend \$250 billion annually on U.S. energy - imports of oil, liquefied natural gas and nuclear technology - for the next three years.

Total U.S. energy exports to all buyers worldwide in 2024 amounted to \$318 billion, U.S. Energy Information Administration data showed. Of that, the EU imported a combined \$76 billion of U.S. petroleum, LNG and solid fuels such as coal in 2024, according to Reuters' calculations based on Eurostat data.

More than tripling those imports was unrealistic, analysts said.

Arturo Regalado, senior LNG analyst at Kpler, said the scope of the energy trade envisioned in the deal "exceeds market realities."

"U.S. oil flows would need to fully redirect towards the EU to reach the target, or the value of LNG imports from the US would need to increase sixfold," Regalado said.

There is strong competition for U.S. energy exports as other countries need the supplies - and have themselves pledged to buy more in trade deals.

Japan agreed to a "major expansion of U.S. energy exports" in its U.S. trade deal last week, the White House said in a statement. South Korea has also indicated interest in investing and purchasing fuel from an Alaskan LNG project as it seeks a trade deal.

Competition for U.S. energy could drive up benchmark U.S. oil and gas prices and encourage U.S. producers to favour exports over domestic supply. That could make fuel and power costs more expensive, which would be a political and economic headache for U.S. and EU leaders.

Neither side has detailed what was included in the energy deal - or whether it covered items such as energy services or parts for power grids and plants.

For Stefan Erasmus, it's a step in the right direction in ensuring that he maximizes production while protecting the environment.

The EU estimates its member countries' plans to expand nuclear energy would require hundreds of billions of euros in investments by 2050. Its nuclear reactor-related imports, however, totalled just 53.3 billion euros in 2024, trade data shows.

The energy pledge reflected the EU's analysis of how much U.S. energy supply it could accommodate, a senior EU official said, but that would depend on investments in U.S. oil and LNG infrastructure, European import infrastructure, and shipping capacity.

"These figures, again, are not taken out of thin air. So yes, they require investments," said the senior official, who declined to be named. "Yes, it will vary according to the energy sources. But these are figures which are reachable."

There was no public commitment to the delivery, the official added, because the EU would not buy the energy - its companies would.

Private companies import most of Europe's oil, while a mix of private and state-run companies import gas. The European Commission can aggregate demand for LNG to negotiate better terms, but cannot force companies to buy fuel. That is a commercial decision.

"It's just unrealistic," ICIS analysts Andreas Schröder and Ajay Parmar said in written comments to Reuters. "Either Europe pays a super high non-market reflective price for U.S. LNG or it takes way too much LNG volumes, more than it can cope with."

U.S. PRODUCTION

The United States is already the EU's top supplier of LNG and oil, shipping 44% of EU LNG needs and 15.4% of its oil in 2024, according to EU data.

Raising imports to the target would require a U.S. LNG expansion way beyond what is planned through 2030, said Jacob Mandel, research lead at Aurora Energy Research.

"You can add on capacity," Mandel said. "But if you're talking about the scale that would be necessary to meet these targets, the \$250 billion, then it's not really feasible."

Europe could buy \$50 billion more of U.S. LNG annually as supply increases, he said.

REPLACING RUSSIA

The EU has said it could import more U.S. energy as its plan advances to end Russian oil and gas imports by 2028.

The EU imported around 94 million barrels of Russian oil last year - 3% of the bloc's crude purchases - and 52 billion cubic metres (bcm) of Russian LNG and gas, according to EU data. For comparison, the EU imported 45 bcm of U.S. LNG last year.

Higher EU fuel purchases would, however, run counter to forecasts for EU demand to decline as it shifts to clean energy, analysts said.

"There is no major need for the EU to import more oil from the U.S., in fact, its oil demand peaked a number of years ago," Schröder and Parmar said.



Australia's Woodside Energy takes operatorship of Bass Strait assets from ExxonMobil

By Reuters

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July 29 (Reuters) - Australia's Woodside Energy ([WDS.AX](#)), said on Tuesday it will take over operatorship of the Bass Strait oil and gas assets from ExxonMobil ([XOM.N](#)), unlocking an estimated \$60 million in synergies.

The Bass Strait portfolio includes the Gippsland Basin and the Kipper Unit joint ventures. Woodside and ExxonMobil each hold a 50% stake in the Gippsland Basin, while they own 32.5% each in the Kipper Unit. ExxonMobil had been the operator of these assets until now.

The change in operatorship will not affect the companies' equity interests or existing decommissioning plans and provisions, Woodside said.

The company flagged future development potential under its capital allocation framework, identifying four possible wells that could supply up to 200 petajoules of gas to the domestic market.

The announcement comes just weeks after the Australian government said it was considering a gas reservation policy for the east coast to help avert supply shortfalls.