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Argus *West Africa Oil*

Crude and products prices and regional coverage

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MARKET COMMENTARY

Global prices higher on trade disputes

Global crude prices edged up following US president Donald Trump's announcement of plans to impose import tariffs on several countries. Atlantic benchmark North Sea Dated gained 19¢/bl to $75.10/bl in the week to 13 February, while US market WTI added 68¢/bl to $71.29/bl.

Nigerian differentials lose steam

Nigerian differentials for March-loading cargoes lost steam this week, inching down by 10-25¢/bl, as expensive west African crude coupled with tepid European demand failed to stoke buying appetite. Light and very light sweet grades shed the most, while mid-distillate rich medium sweet grades remained fairly supported. Seasonal refinery maintenance in the core European market has dampened demand, while Indian buyers are opting for cheaper alternatives including US WTI. Angolan crude differentials were assessed steady, except for light sweet Nemba, which added 20¢/bl. But traders noted that demand is now tapering off and the pace of buying has slowed. The provisional April programme is expected to be issued early next week.

Gasoline margins fall on poor export demand

Eurobob non-oxy barge premiums to Dated fell by $1.40/bl to $10.10/bl this week. Amsterdam-Rotterdam-Antwerp (ARA) gasoline stocks saw a 9.5pc draw, for the first time in 10 weeks. ARA stocks were down to 1.52mn t, but remained at record highs as export demand is still lacklustre.

Products				
Delivered west Africa	**Price (*naira/l*)**	**± 12 Feb**	**Price (*$/t*)**	**± 12 Feb**
Gasoline				
Argus Eurobob oxy	830.13	-17.09	733.10	-16.22
Jet				
Jet/kerosine			771.75	-20.00
Gasoil				
Gasoil 1000ppm	930.92	-19.58	731.25	-16.50
fob STS Lome	**Price (*naira/l*)**	**± 12 Feb**	**Price (*$/t*)**	**± 12 Feb**
Gasoil				
Gasoil 50ppm	929.33	-24.34	730.000	-20.250

PRICES

Crude					*$/bl*
	Model basis	**Price basis**	**Differential**	**Price**	**± 12 Feb**
Basis crude					
N Sea Dated		N Sea forward	-0.05	75.10	-0.68
Dalia		Dated	+0.65	75.75	-0.68
Doba		Dated	-0.25	74.85	+0.82
Dalia/Doba average		Dated	+0.20	75.30	+0.07
Girassol		Dated	+2.05	77.15	-0.68
Qua Iboe		Dated	+1.20	76.30	-0.68
Nigeria					
Abo Blend	Qua Iboe	Dated	+1.02	76.12	-0.59
Akpo	Qua Iboe	Dated	-0.32	74.78	-0.62
Antan Blend	Qua Iboe	Dated	+1.04	76.14	-0.61
Asaramatoru	Qua Iboe	Dated	+1.31	76.41	-0.68
Ebok	Dalia/Doba	Dated	+0.32	75.42	+0.15
Eremor	Dalia/Doba	Dated	-6.85	68.25	+0.58
Ima	Qua Iboe	Dated	-1.27	73.83	-0.53
Obe	Qua Iboe	Dated	+0.39	75.49	-0.60
Okono Blend	Qua Iboe	Dated	+1.16	76.26	-0.69
Okoro	Dalia/Doba	Dated	+2.91	78.01	+0.28
Okwori	Qua Iboe	Dated	+2.19	77.29	-0.76
Okwuibome	Qua Iboe	Dated	+1.73	76.83	-0.69
Oyo	Qua Iboe	Dated	+3.21	78.31	-0.75
Pennington	Qua Iboe	Dated	+1.51	76.61	-0.68
Ukpokiti	Qua Iboe	Dated	+1.17	76.27	-0.69
Yoho Light	Qua Iboe	Dated	+0.85	75.95	-0.67
Angola					
Mondo	Girassol	Dated	+0.30	75.40	-0.69
Palanca	Girassol	Dated	+0.93	76.03	-0.62
Pazflor	Dalia/Doba	Dated	+1.34	76.44	+0.04
Plutonio	Girassol	Dated	+0.54	75.64	-0.66
Saturno	Dalia/Doba	Dated	-0.81	74.29	-0.10
Saxi-Batuque	Girassol	Dated	+0.73	75.83	-0.64
Cameroon					
Kole Marine	Girassol	Dated	+0.75	75.85	-0.62
Congo (Brazzaville)					
N'Kossa	Girassol	Dated	-0.64	74.46	-0.60
Gabon					
Rabi Light	Girassol	Dated	-2.17	72.93	-0.64
Ghana					
Ten	Girassol	Dated	+0.72	75.82	-0.61

NEWS

Dangote targets full capacity within a month

Nigeria's privately owned 650,000 b/d Dangote refinery could reach maximum operating capacity within a month, according to sources with knowledge of the matter who said the plant reached 85pc of nameplate capacity at the end of January.

The stated goal appears ambitious, with data from monitoring firm Kpler and oil analytics firm Vortexa showing Dangote ran at an implied range of 395,000-430,000 b/d to date this month, which is 61-66pc of capacity. The implied range was 350,000-400,000 b/d in January, or 54-62pc operating capacity. *Argus* pegged Dangote's crude receipts at a record 405,000 b/d in January.

Dangote runs may be boosted by upstream regulator NUPRC's decision in early February to ensure Nigeria's crude is supplied to meet domestic refinery demand before it issues crude export permits.

Routine maintenance at state-owned NNPC's 125,000 b/d Warri refinery could have made more domestic crude available for Dangote use. Crude allocations to Warri were cancelled and offered out to the wider market last week, according to a market participant. But this would have been a short-term measure, with a source saying the work at Warri was completed as of 9 February, and about 1.15mn bl of crude are scheduled to be pumped to the plant.

Downstream regulator NMDPRA projected that Dangote will require 550,000 b/d of Nigerian crude grades for January–June this year, while NNPC's 210,000 b/d Port Harcourt and 125,000 b/d Warri plants will require 60,000 b/d and 75,000 b/d, respectively. Nigeria produced 1.51mn b/d of crude in January, according to *Argus'* estimate.

Warri restarted at the end of last year, having been off line since 2019. Diesel loadings from the refinery have averaged eight trucks a day, sources said last week, with sufficient supply available to sustain ongoing truck loadout operations. Warri has not started producing gasoline, sources said.

By George Maher-Bonnett, Adebiyi Olusolape and Sanjana Shivdas

Dangote crude receipts hit new high in January

Crude receipts at Nigeria's 650,000 b/d Dangote refinery edged to a new high in January.

Argus tracking data show the refinery received 405,000 b/d last month, up from a previous high of 395,000 b/d in December, broadly in line with tracking data from monitoring agency Kpler and oil analytics firm Vortexa.

For the first time in five months, Dangote took receipt of a 2mn bl cargo of US WTI on a very large crude carrier (VLCC) and, for the first time since the refinery began operations, there was a delivery from Angola of about 1mn bl of Pazflor.

At 24.7°API, January's Pazflor shipment is significantly different from the average specification of crude previously received by Dangote, suggesting the refinery may be looking to expand its products range. Dangote has issued a tender to receive more WTI, with a likely arrival date of March.

Last month's deliveries included 65,000 b/d each of WTI and Nigerian Forcados, plus 60,000 b/d of domestic grade Bonny Light. The remainder consisted of Pazflor, plus Nigerian grades CJ Blend, Nembe, Yoho, Odudu and Okwuibome. No cargoes of Amenam were delivered to Dangote in December or January, after having previously been a regular grade.

Dangote is maintaining a consistent slate in terms of gravity and sulphur content. *Argus* assessed January's receipts at a weighted average gravity of 34.9°API and of under 0.2pc sulphur content, compared with 36.3°API and under 0.2pc sulphur in December.

February's crude deliveries to Dangote include cargoes of Nigerian grades Yoho, Forcados, Utapate and Qua Iboe, all of which have unloaded. A 1mn bl shipment of Bonny Light is nearing the refinery's discharge buoy.

A VLCC, which some tracking systems said unloaded crude from Chad and Equatorial Guinea at Dangote in December, appears instead to have loaded fuel oil. The tanker is full at present, offshore southeastern Africa and en route to the Mideast Gulf.

By Adam Porter

NNPC redirects Feb crude from Warri refinery

Nigerian state-owned NNPC has offered to the market three cargoes of medium-sweet Escravos crude that it has redirected from its 125,000 b/d Warri refinery, sources said.

Two sources said two cargoes were placed and a third is available, while another said all three cargoes were sold.

NNPC probably reallocated the cargoes because of recent routine maintenance at Warri, which receives crude by pipeline. A source said this work was completed as of 9 February.

February exports of Escravos were set at 136,000 b/d on four shipments. March exports are scheduled at 124,000 b/d on five shipments, according to loading programmes.

Sources said NNPC also may cancel crude allocations to its 210,000 b/d Port Harcourt refinery and offer the cargoes to the market. NNPC did not immediately respond to an *Argus* request for comment.

Port Harcourt is designed to run light sweet Bonny Light grade. February exports of Bonny Light were set at

NEWS

241,000 b/d on seven cargoes in February and at 189,000 b/d on six cargoes in March.
By Sanjana Shivdas

Dakar refinery takes first cargo of Sangomar

Senegal's state-owned SAR's 30,000 b/d Dakar refinery has taken receipt of its first cargo of domestic crude grade Sangomar, according to sources with knowledge of the matter.

Vessel-tracking data from Kpler show the *Almi Odyssey* discharged 530,000 bl of Sangomar at Senegal's sole refinery on 8 February. The crude would start to be processed on 10 February, sources said.

The delivery was made within the scheduled timeline set out by refinery sources that previously said Sangomar would be supplied to the Dakar refinery from February. No other crude cargoes are signalling delivery to Senegal at present, according to Kpler.

China has been the chief buyer of Sangomar crude since exports of the grade began in July last year. But February loadings of the grade have not included any destinations other than Senegal, according to Kpler.

The Dakar refinery is expected to run the medium grade alongside a light crude blend at a 75:25 ratio. The light crude is normally Nigerian light sweet Erha, a source said.
By George Maher-Bonnett

DRC orders audits of oil producer Perenco

The Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC's) hydrocarbons ministry has ordered audits to be carried out on UK-French oil producer Perenco to assess the environmental impact of the firm's activities in the country, as well as its production levels.

Perenco's DRC subsidiaries were notified of the audits in December last year and are working closely with the ministry through the process, the firm said. The company's Perenco Rep subsidiary operates onshore the DRC, while its Muanda International Oil unit is active offshore.

Perenco is the DRC's only producing operator. The country's Coco crude — a blend of production from offshore and onshore fields — is exported from the Muanda terminal.

Perenco's DRC crude production has averaged 19,500 b/d over the past five years. Substantial investment is required to maintain production at current levels and offset natural decline at mature fields.

"Operating a mature field means constantly fighting against the natural decline of the reservoirs," it said.

Perenco was subject to a lawsuit launched in November 2022 by Sherpa and Friends of the Earth France and supported by the US' Environmental Investigation Agency over pollution associated with its activities in the DRC. The firm denies the allegations and told *Argus* that the legal proceedings in France are ongoing.

Perenco has successfully defended itself in the lower courts and the case is on appeal. "It is worth noting that no proceedings have been opened in the DRC with the local authorities," a spokesman said.

Perenco bought Italian firm Eni's DRC interests in 14 producing oil and gas fields for $300mn in 2023. It has been present in the DRC since 2000 and employs 1,500 DRC nationals.

In late January this year, the M23 militant group took over Goma in the DRC's eastern province of North Kivu after weeks of intense fighting with FARDC armed forces. Goma is a major mineral trading hub for tantalum, tin and tungsten concentrates.

The DRC's government has repeatedly accused Rwanda of supporting M23, a claim denied by both Rwanda and the M23. Earlier this month, M23 rebels declared a unilateral ceasefire to pave the way for mediation talks in Tanzania on 8 February. But the DRC's government said the ceasefire was a hoax after the M23 seized the town of Nyabibwe, south of Goma on the eastern shore of Lake Kivu, ahead of the talks.

UN secretary-general António Guterres has warned that the M23 offensive raises the risk of a regional war, which could encompass the mining region and, potentially, nearby oil developments.
By Elaine Mills

NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

The prices in Argus West Africa Oil are calculated by combining Argus' proprietary refinery gate value (RGV) model with assessments published in the previous UK working day's Argus Crude, Argus European Products, Argus Asia-Pacific Products and Argus Freight reports.
For details visit argusmedia.com/methodology

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