

Crude Oil

Argus

Bruce Fulin
VP Business Development

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A view of Argus

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Coverage includes markets for



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- Biofuels
- Fertilizers
- Agriculture
- Chemicals, including petrochemicals and oleochemicals
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- Market reporting, news, and analysis
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- Conferences

Argus prices are used as benchmarks worldwide, including for



- US crude oil
- European gasoline and biofuels
- Asia-Pacific LPG
- Coal
- European steel
- US and European environmental markets



Crude market outlook

a. Supply and demand balance

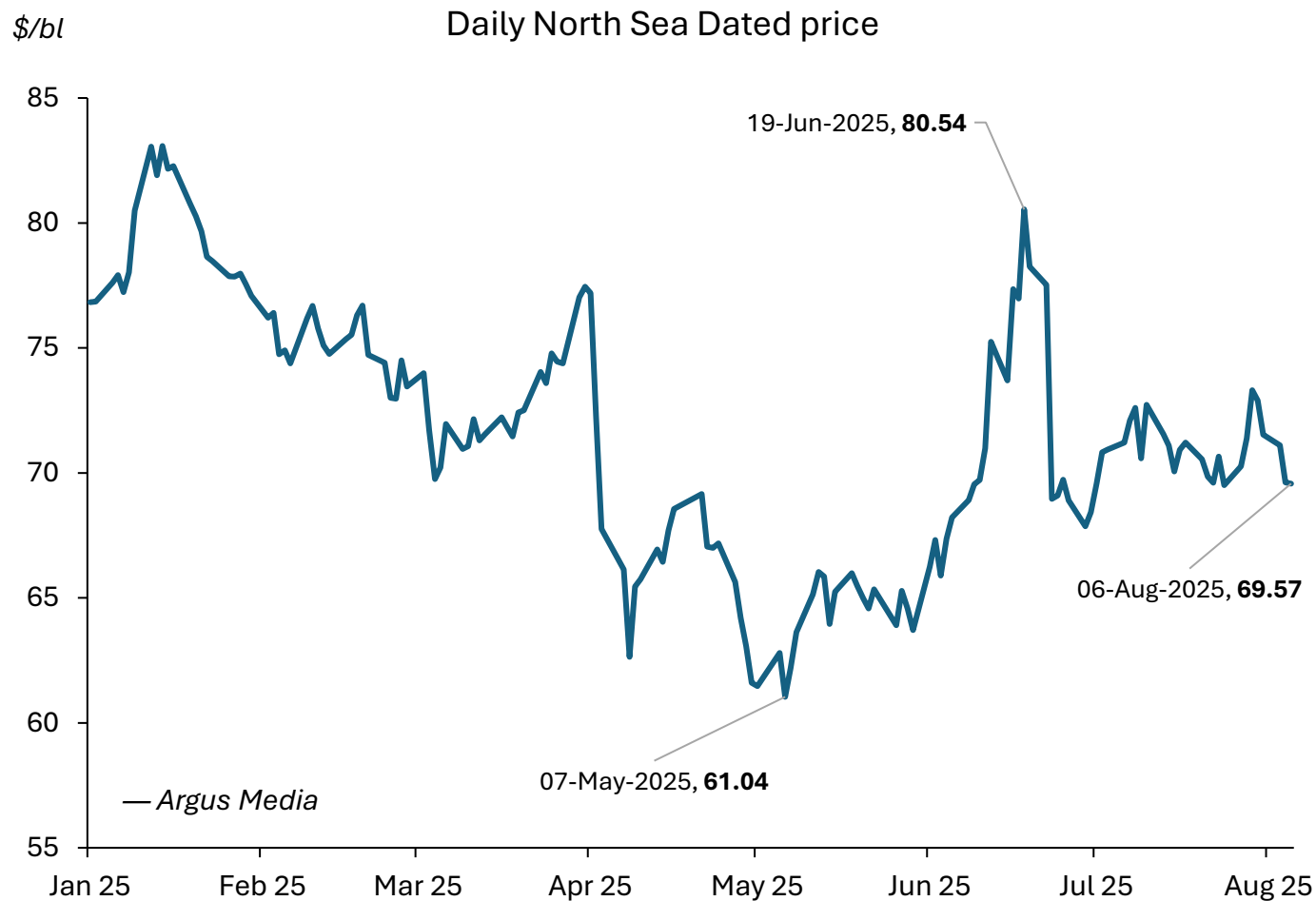
- i. Opec+ unwinding and non-Opec supply growth**
- ii. Global oil demand growth and US tariffs**

Crude differentials

Market Trends

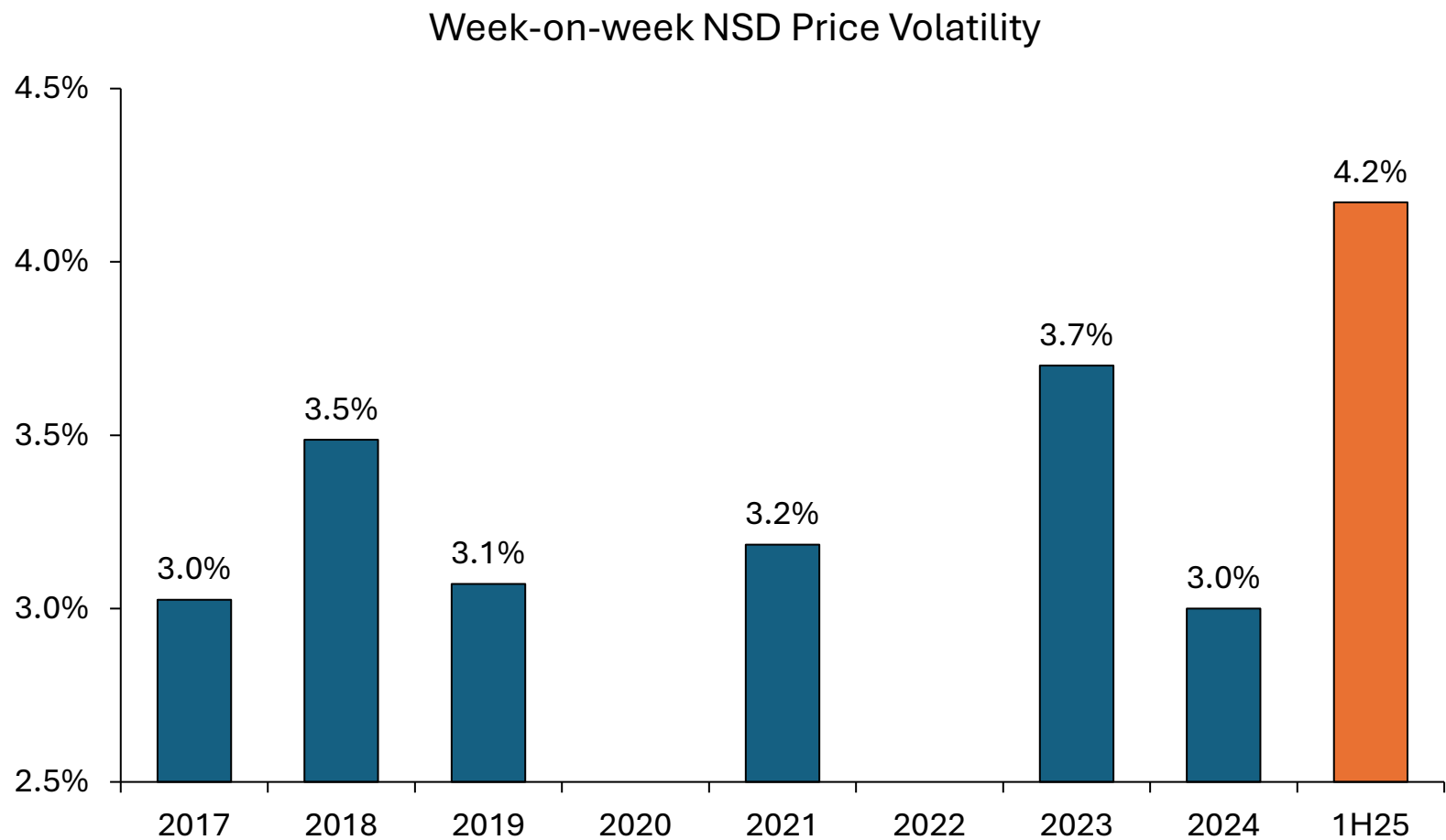
Crude Infrastructure

Oil prices hovering around \$70/bl after volatile 1H25

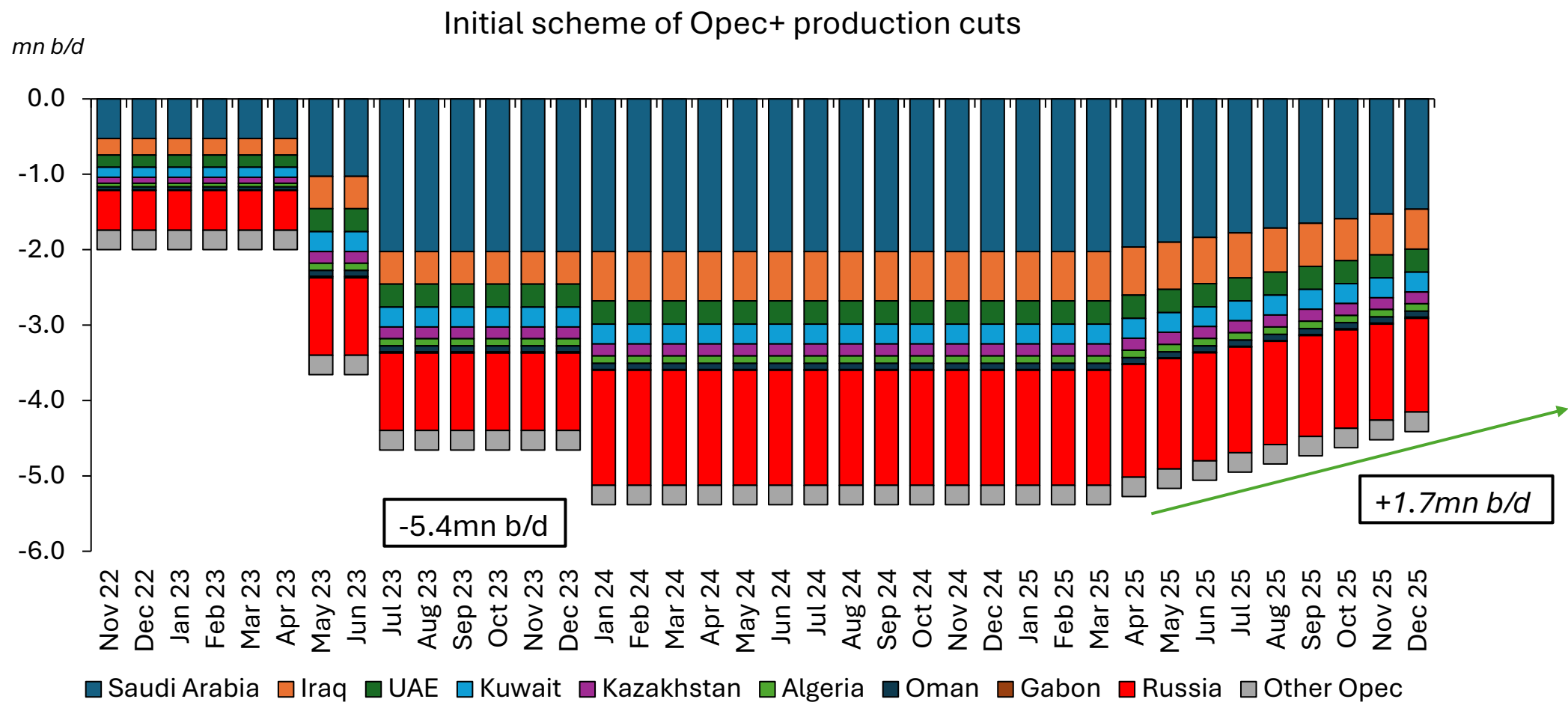


- Significant volatility in crude prices over 1H25
- US tariff policy since “Liberation Day” pressured prices down
- Israel-Iran ‘12-day war’ in June saw prices rise by \$20/bl on risk to Strait of Hormuz
- Uncertainty surrounding:
 - US trade deals
 - Opec+ future restraint
 - Sanctions on Iran, Venezuela, Russia

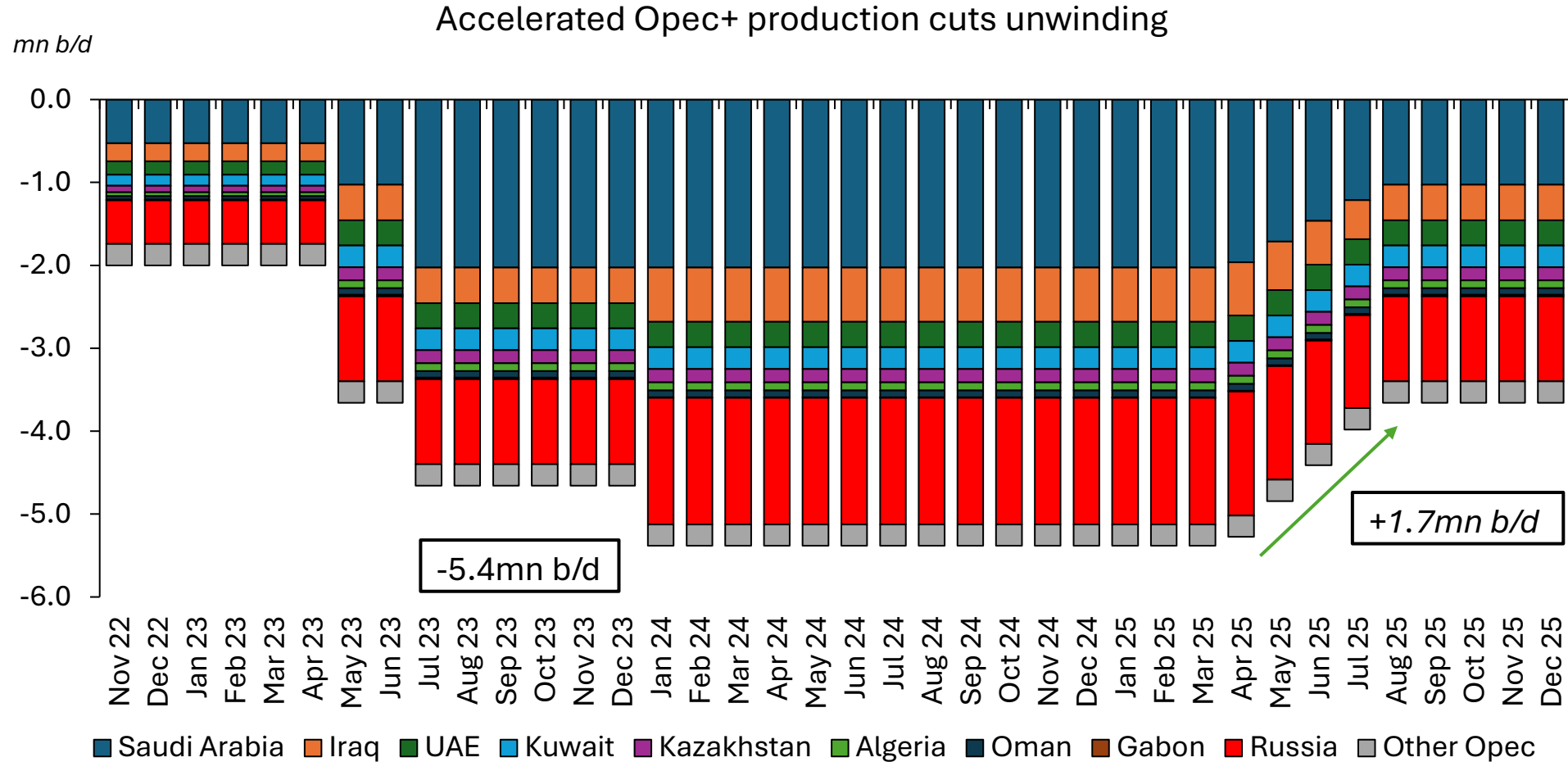
Average week-on-week volatility surpassed only in 2020 and 2022



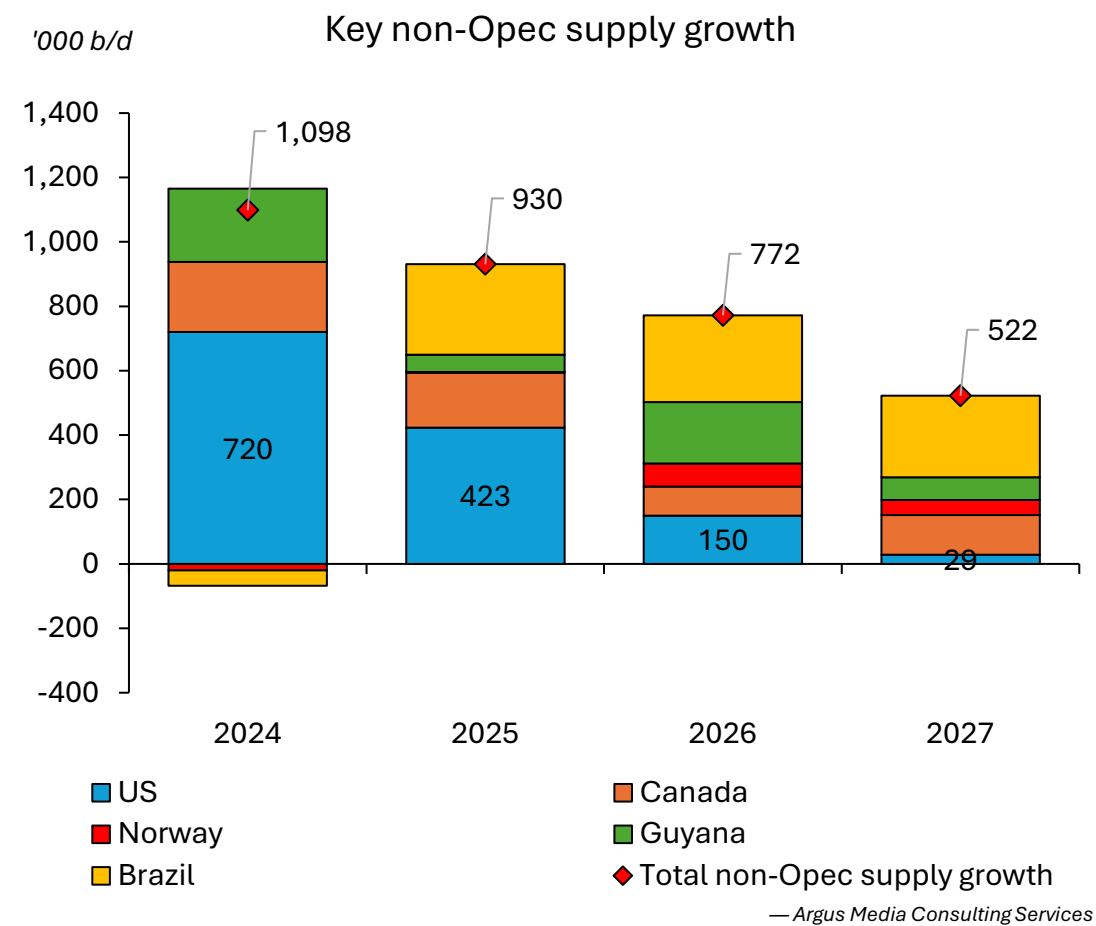
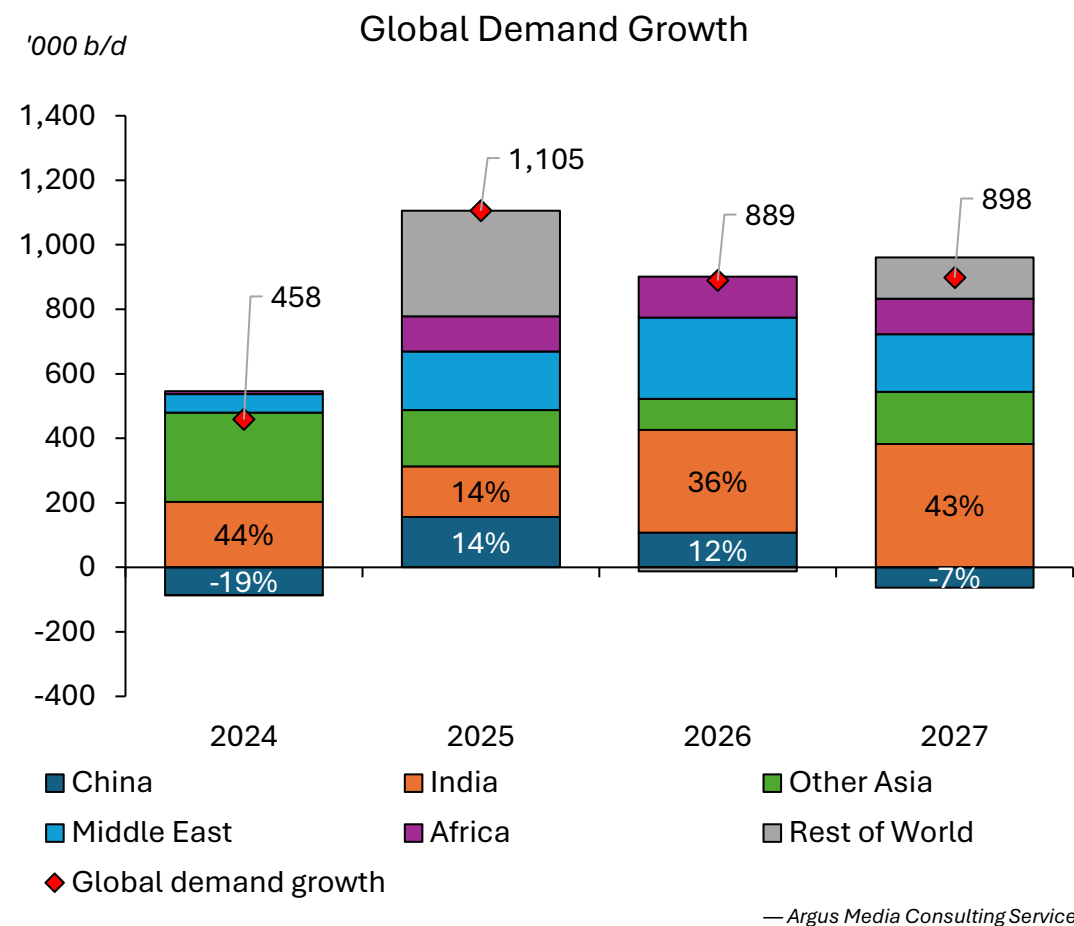
Opec+ begin unwinding production restraint in April



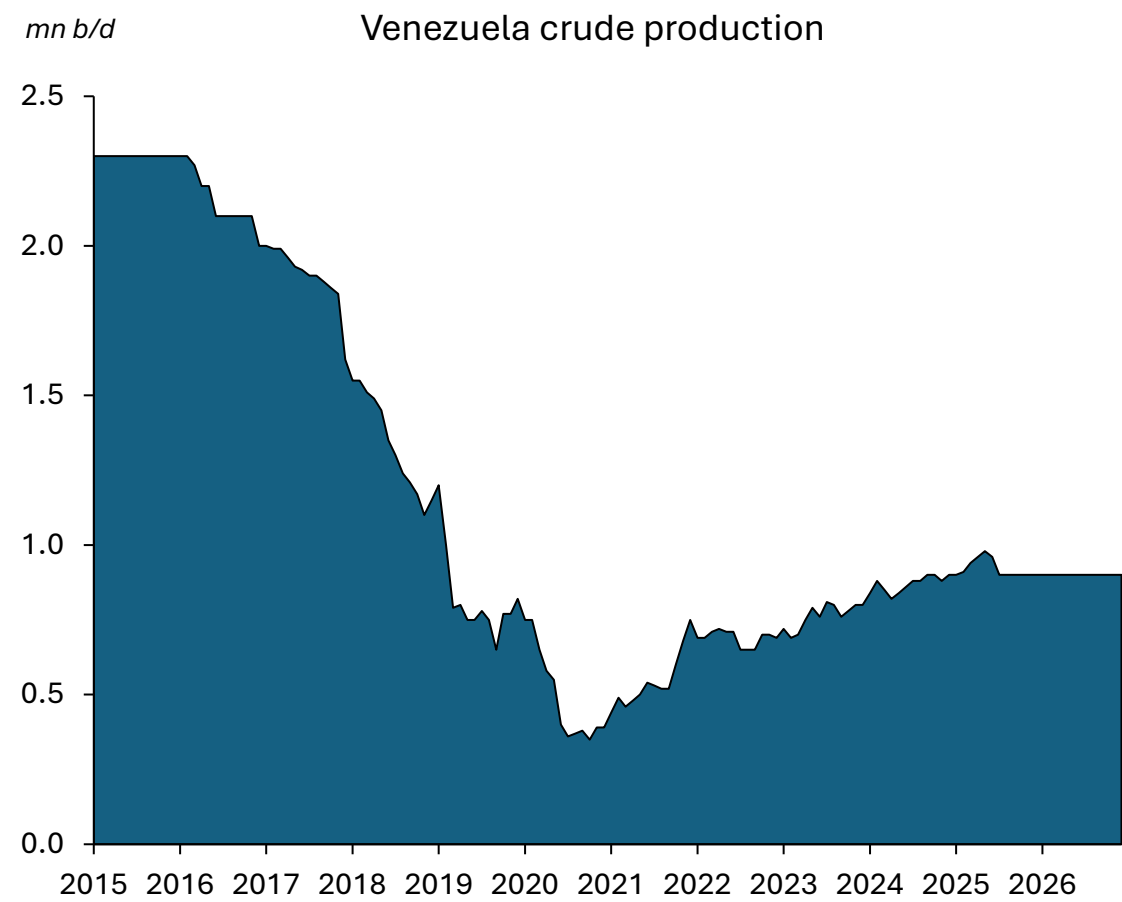
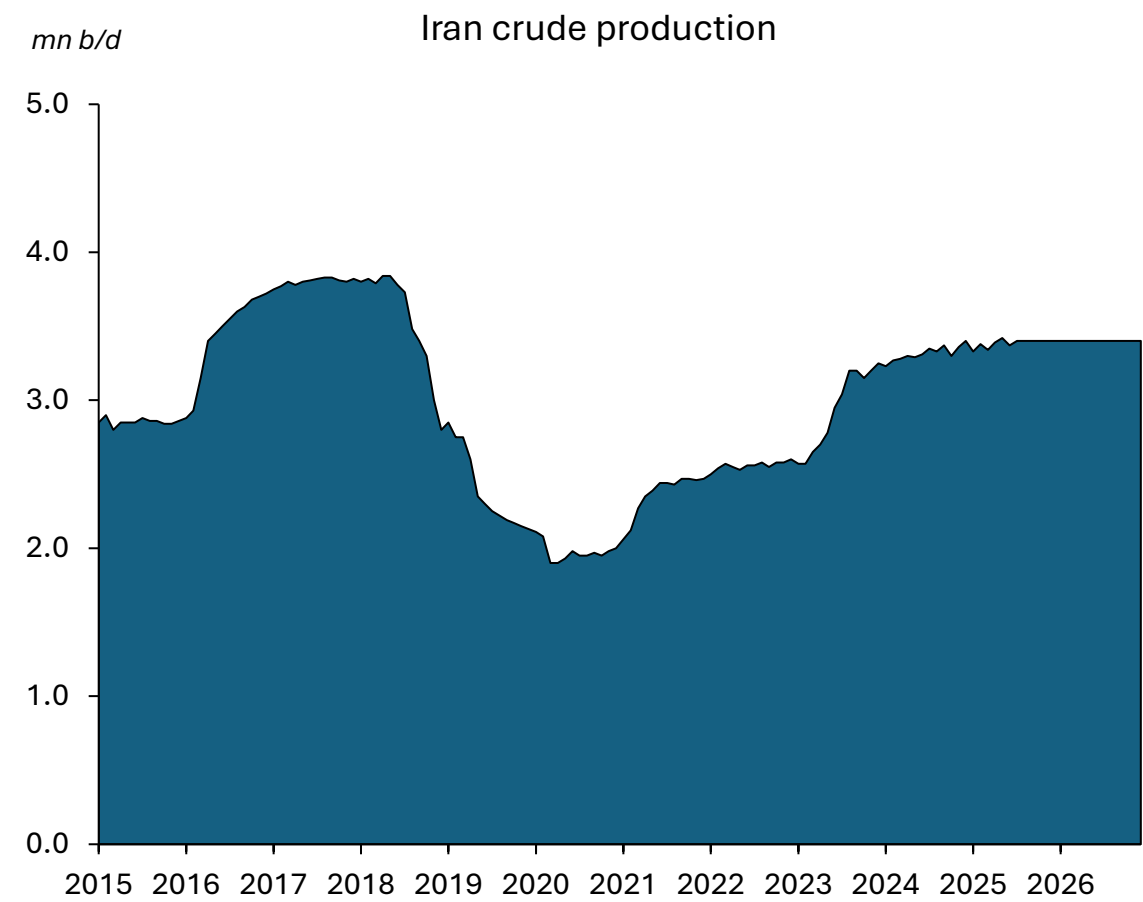
Accelerated pace foreshortens cuts unwinding by 13 months



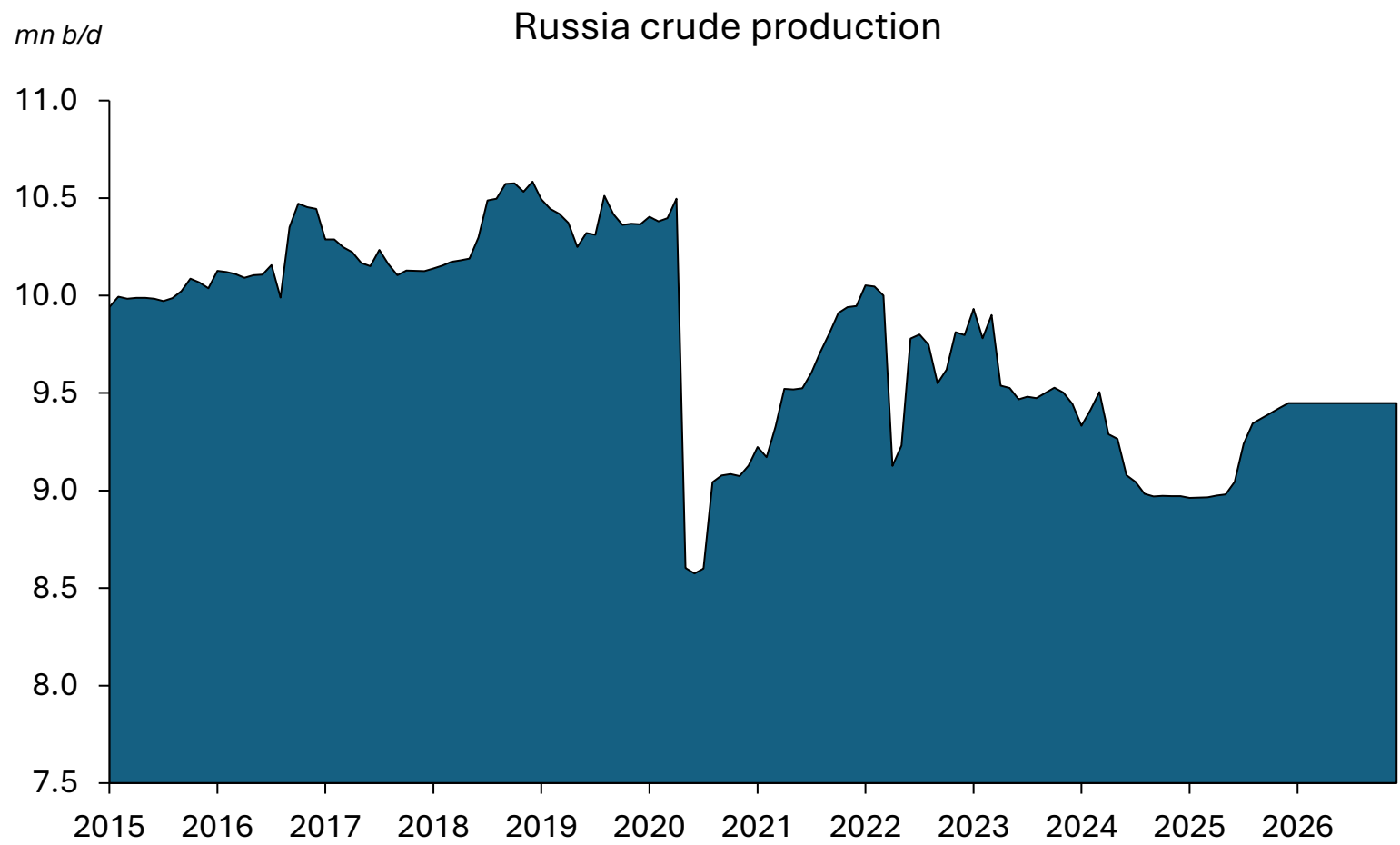
Limited scope for Opec barrels to return as non-Opec supply growth is satisfying global demand growth



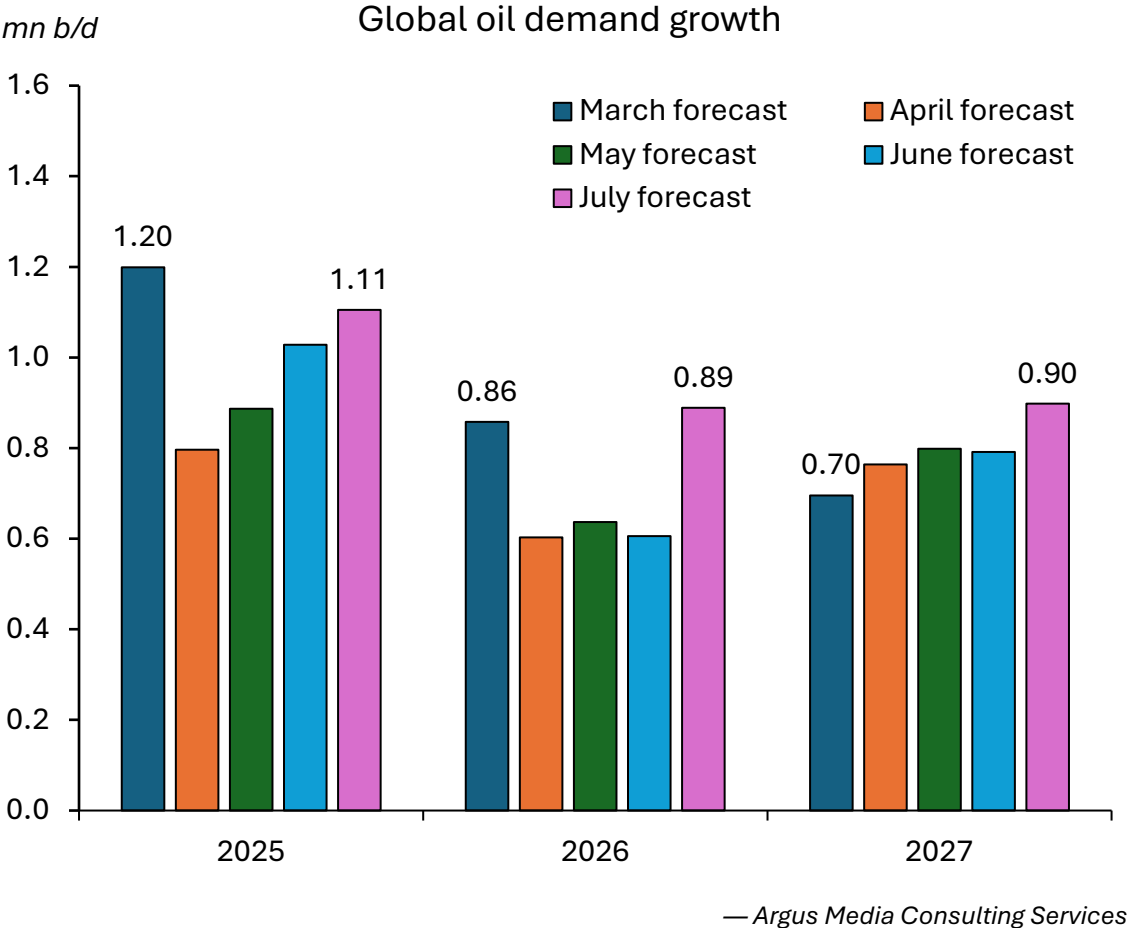
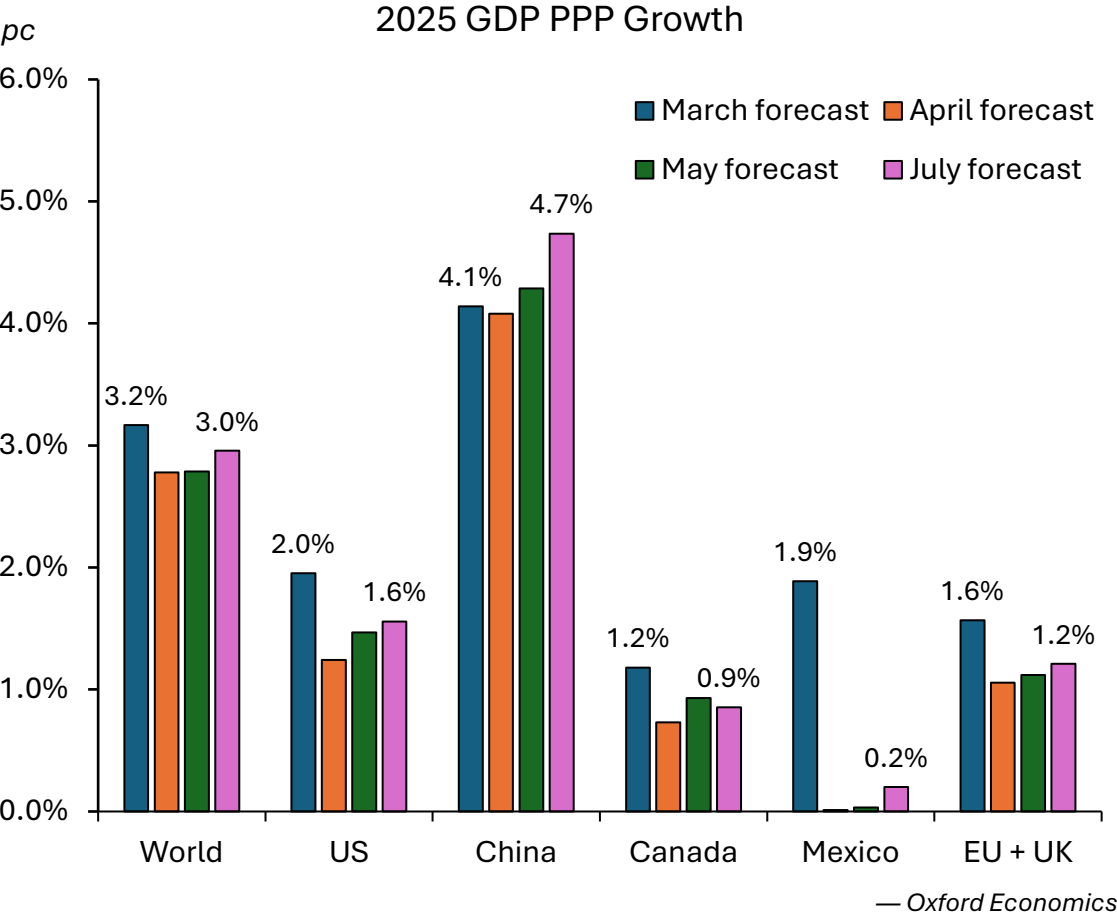
Prospects of sanctions on Iran and Venezuela depend on US foreign policy



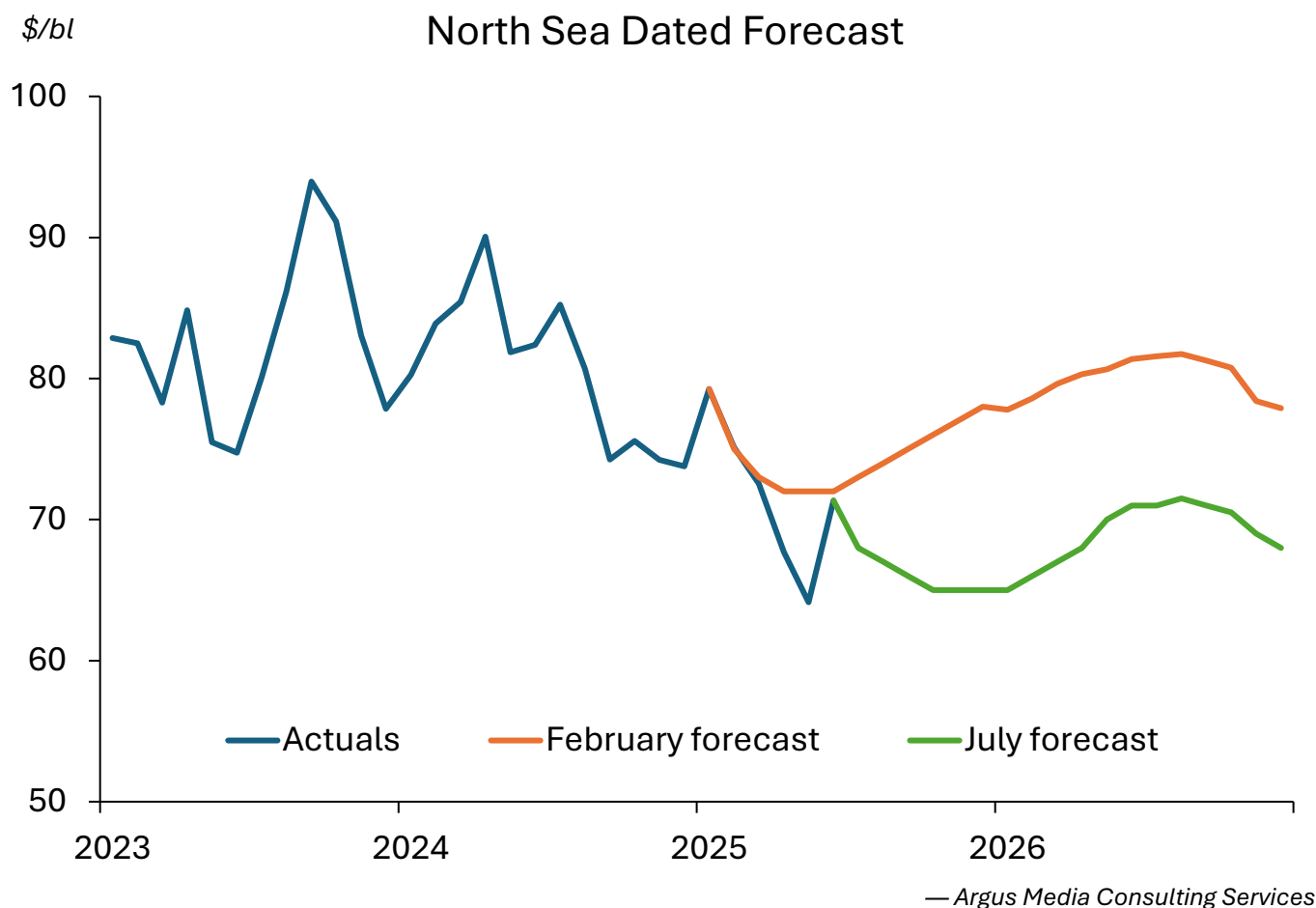
Russia now the focus of the Trump administration



Global GDP and oil demand forecasts have been steadily revised as US tariffs policy evolves



Drastic acceleration of Opec+ cuts unwinding has pushed prices expectations down by \$10/bl



Downside risks

- US tariff negotiations result in high tariffs
- US shale proves more resilient to lower price environment
- Venezuela sanctions waiver

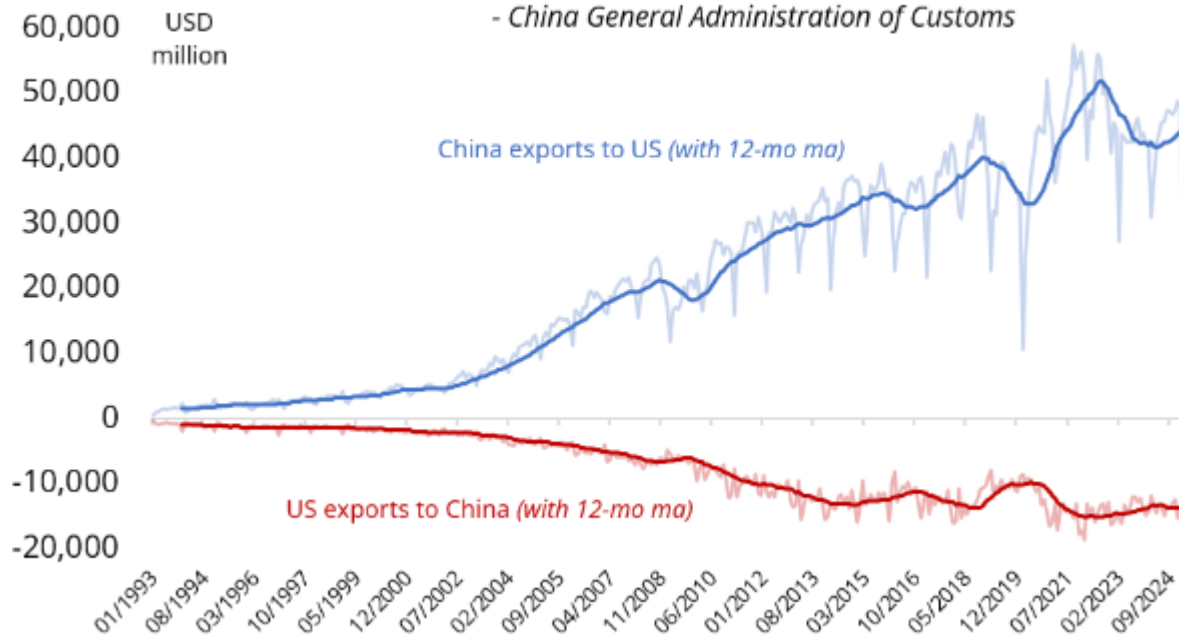
Upside risks

- Sanctions on Russia, Iran
- Opec+ planned production hikes fail to materialise

China in the trade war crosshairs

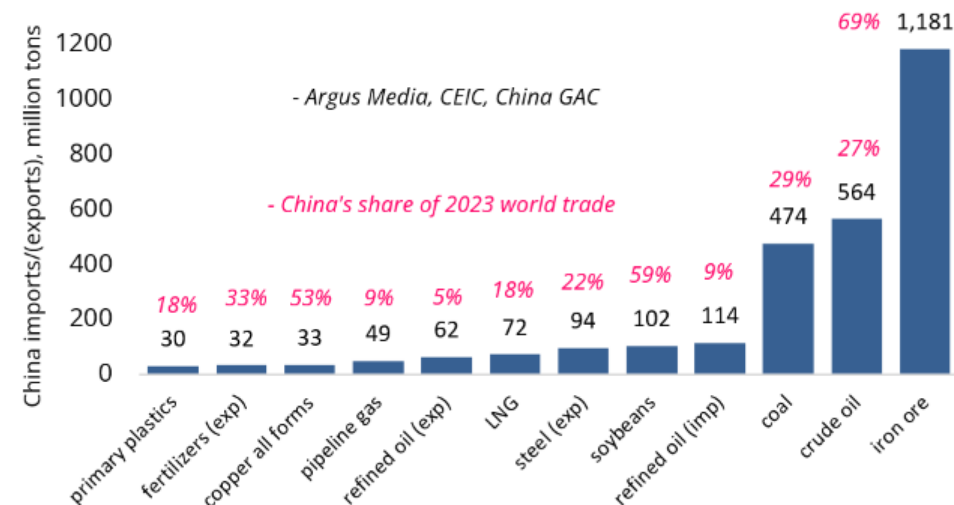
China-US monthly trade in goods & services

- China General Administration of Customs



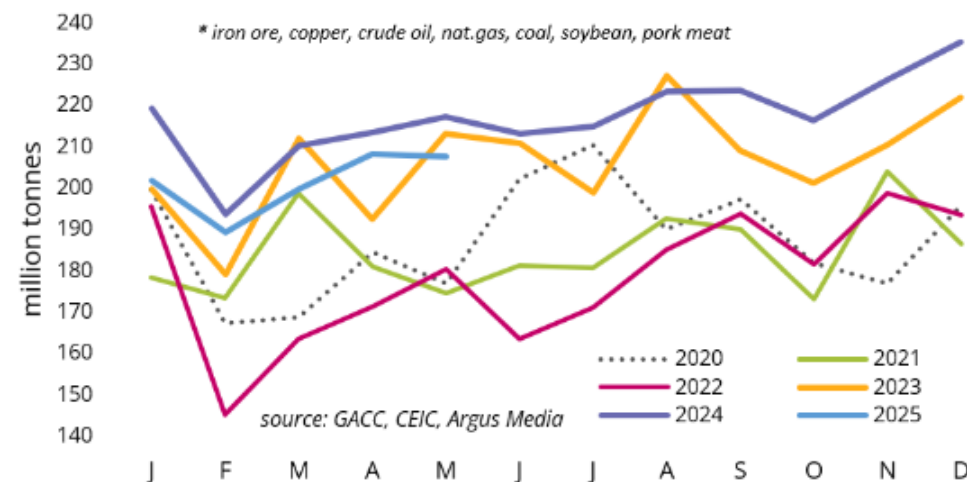
- China is the US' principal target with tariffs.
- Manufacturing/export slow-down will weigh on *some* commodity imports (not crude so far).
- More fiscal stimulus focused on consumers required to prevent deflationary spiral.
- Also some modest monetary stimulus.

29% of key commodity trade involves China



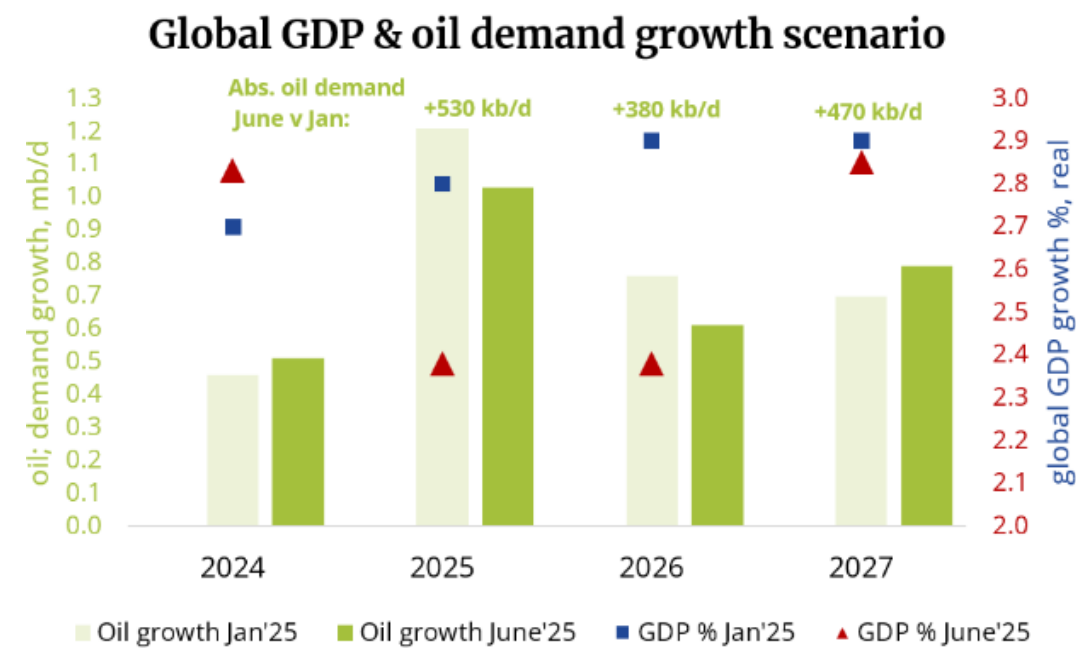
China Jan-May commodity* imports -5% YoY

* iron ore, copper, crude oil, nat.gas, coal, soybean, pork meat



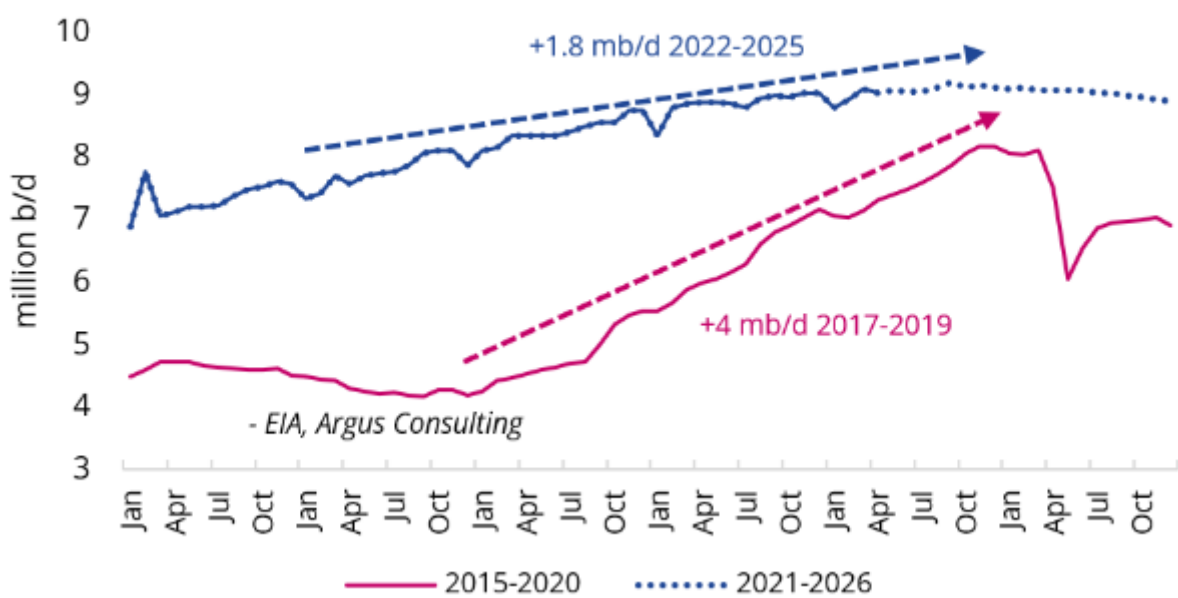
source: GACC, CEIC, Argus Media

“Tariff light” assumption limits hit to oil demand growth

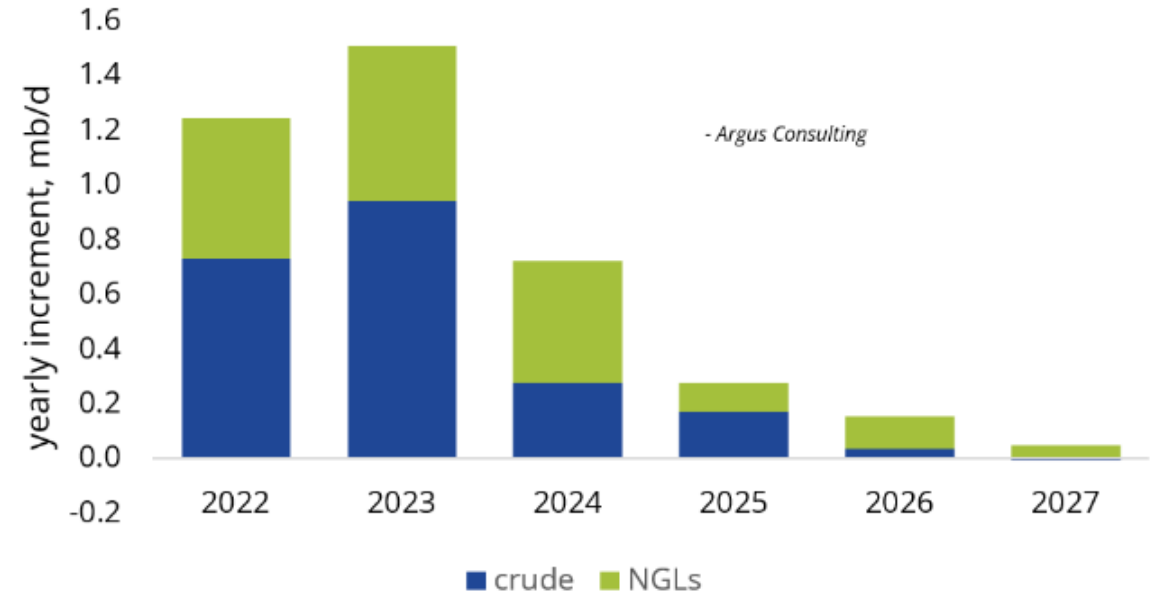


“Drill baby, drill” may not move the US oil supply needle much

A new normal for US shale oil

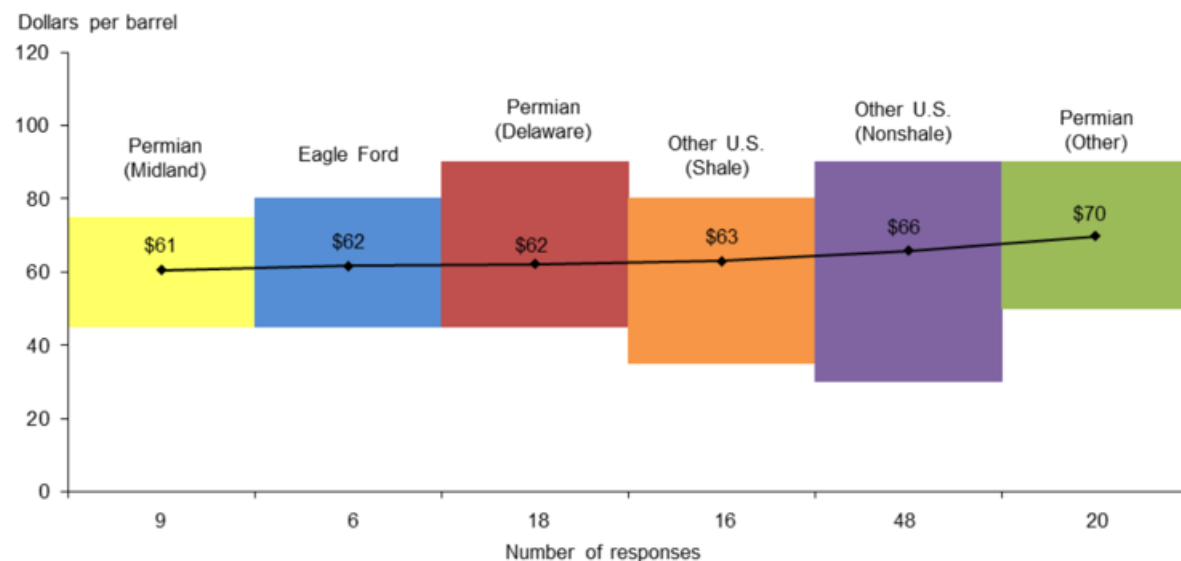


US oil supply growth receding



US shale: \$50 crude & +3mb/d o.e. output are incompatible

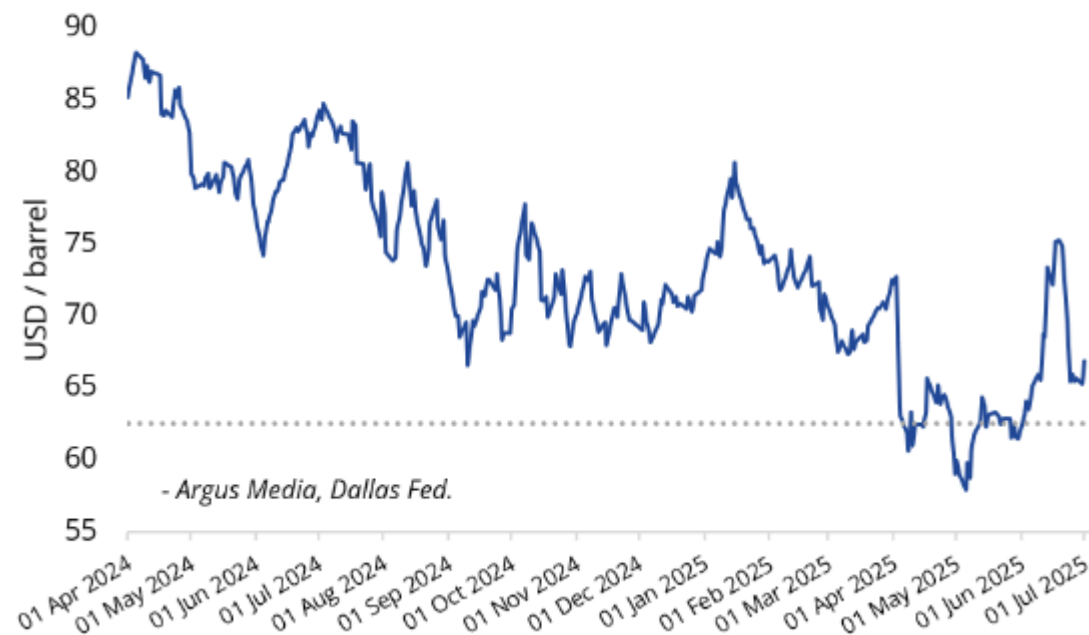
WTI price to drill new wells



NOTES: Lines show the mean, and bars show the range of responses. Executives from 81 exploration and production firms answered this question during the survey collection period, March 12–20, 2025.

SOURCE: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

WTI Midand & new shale well breakeven

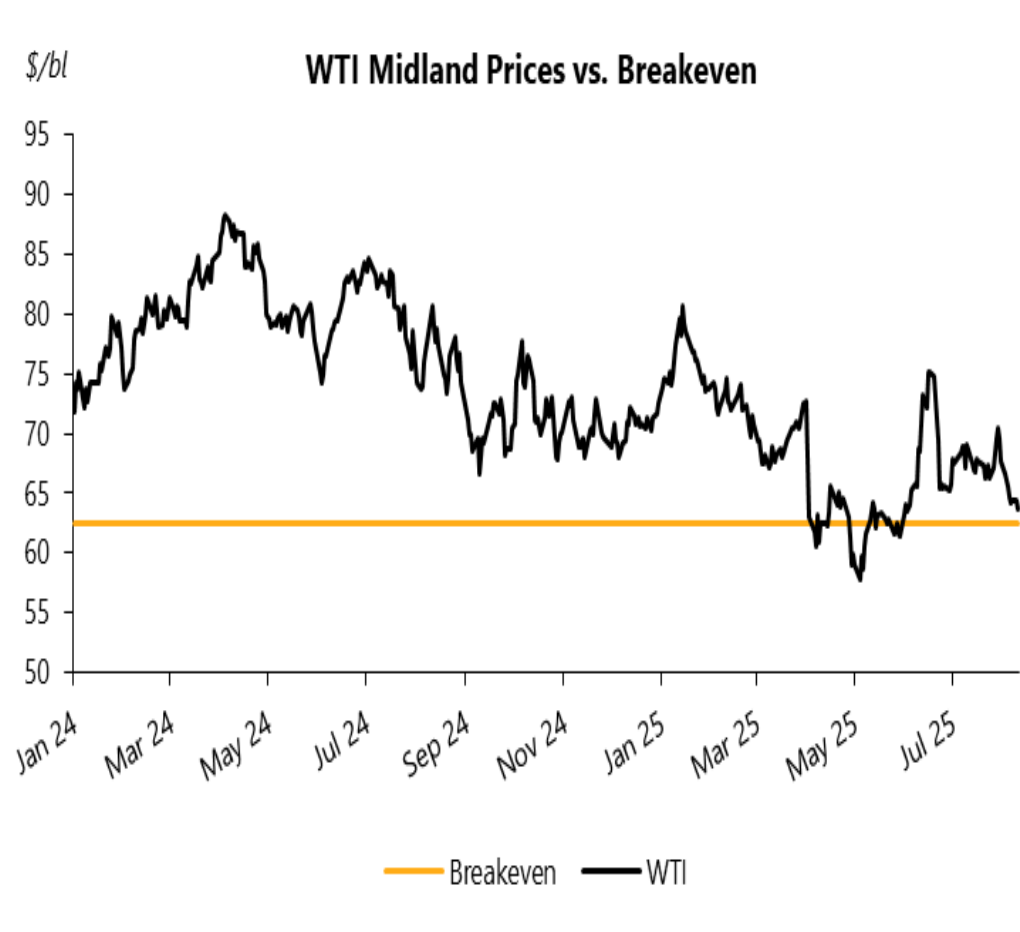


WTI hovering around breakeven price of \$62.50/bl

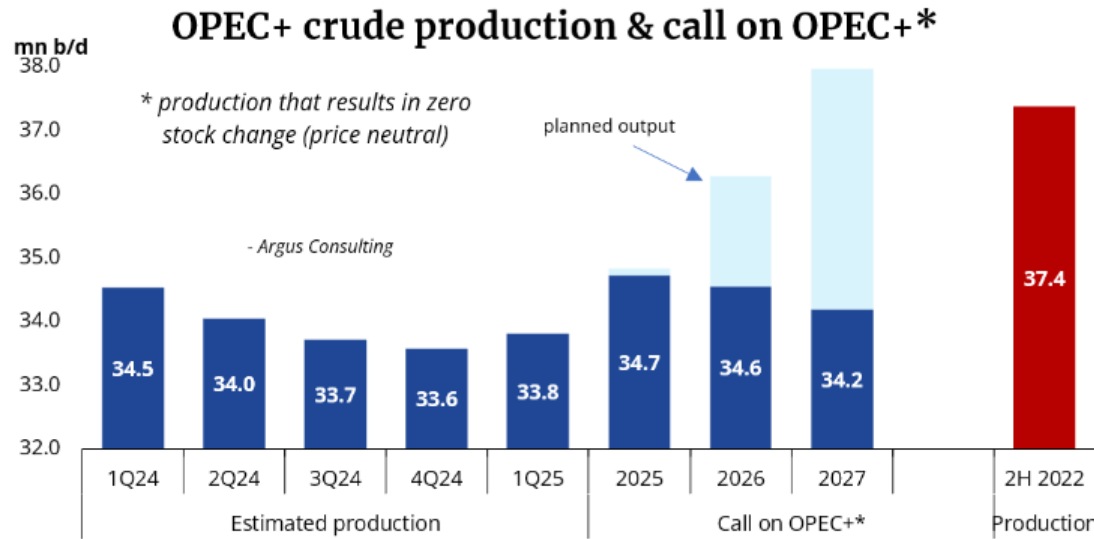
Figure 4: Full-cycle breakeven price for US shale oil plays
USD per barrel



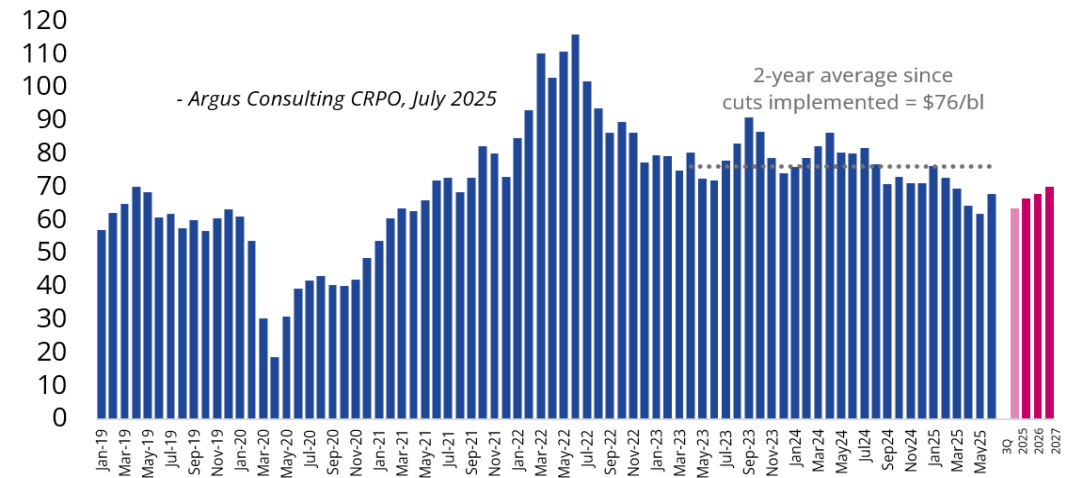
Source: Rystad Energy ShaleWellCube; Rystad Energy research and analysis



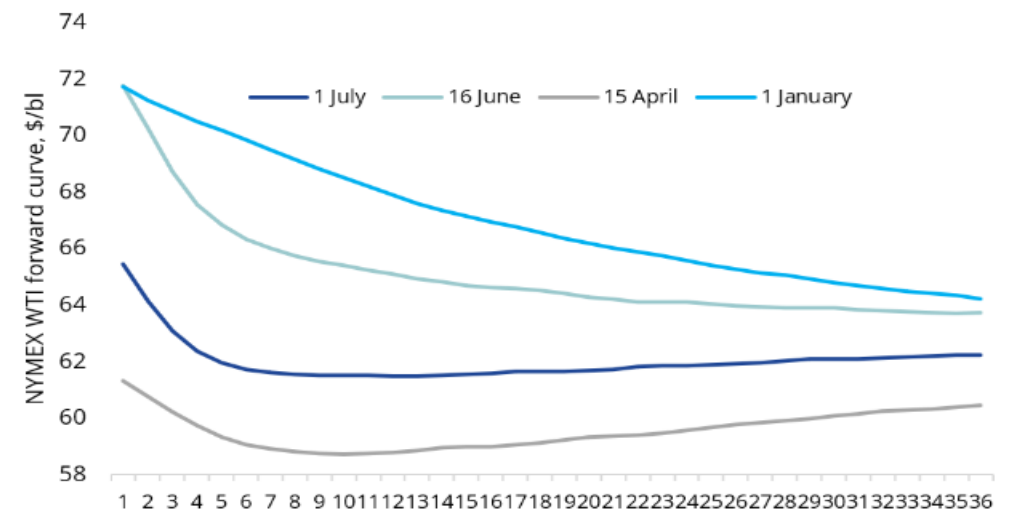
Holding the line with our crude price forecast for now



WTI Houston forecast, \$/bl



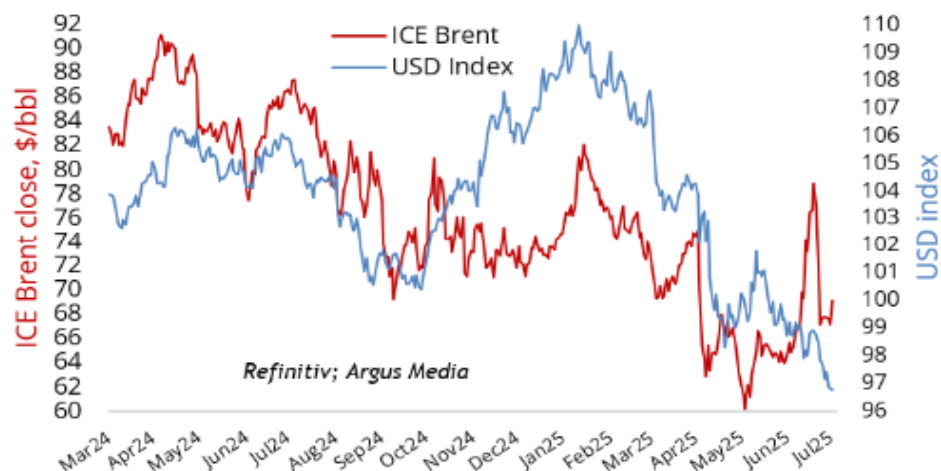
Volatile WTI time structure



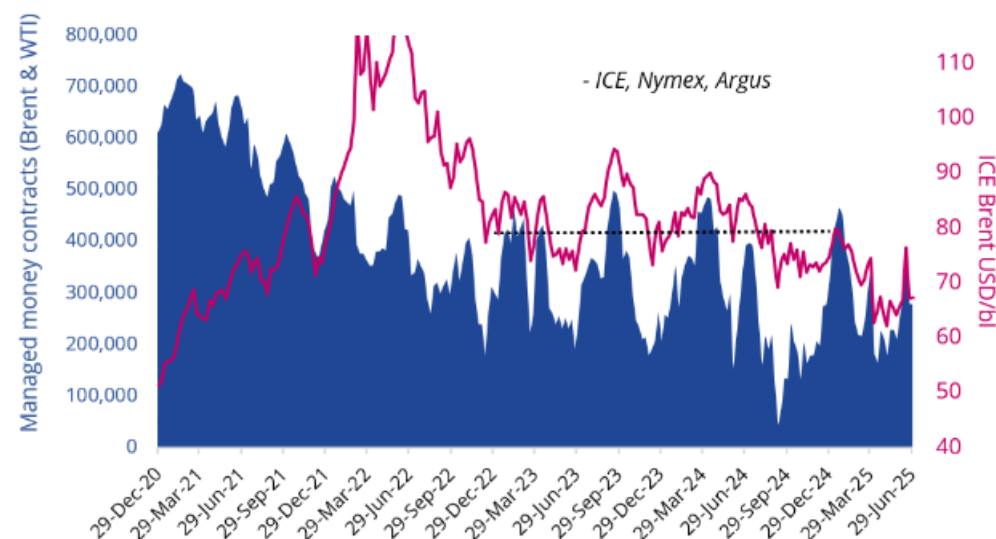
- Accelerated tapering of voluntary supply cuts, if sustained, could advance potential market surplus into 2H 2025.
- We retain a belief that ultimately price will matter more than market share to key OPEC+ decision makers.
- Argus assumptions remain that:
 - 1) Trump tariffs will ultimately be negotiated down to lower levels than initially announced;
 - 2) OPEC+ will eventually return to regulating supply to minimise market surplus.
- But downside risks to crude prices are multiplying.

Crude prices sliced & diced

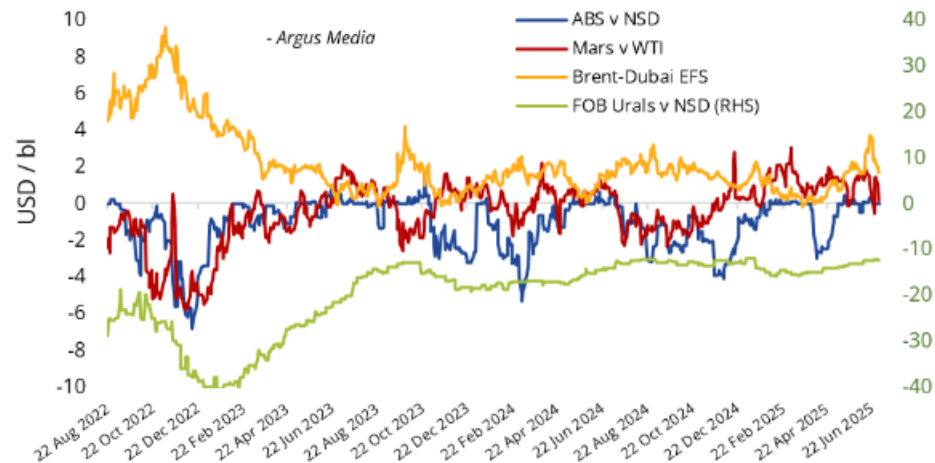
Brent and the US Dollar Index



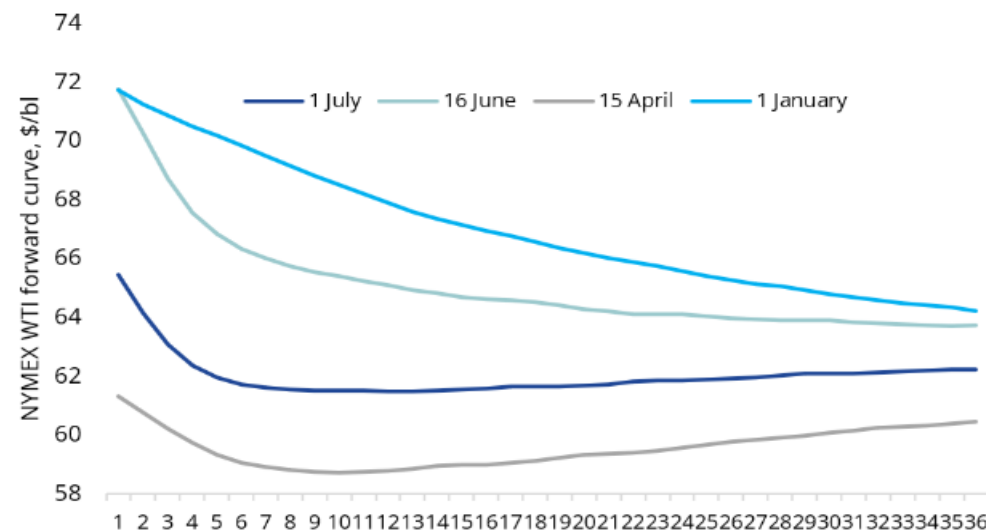
Crude speculative net length & ICE Brent



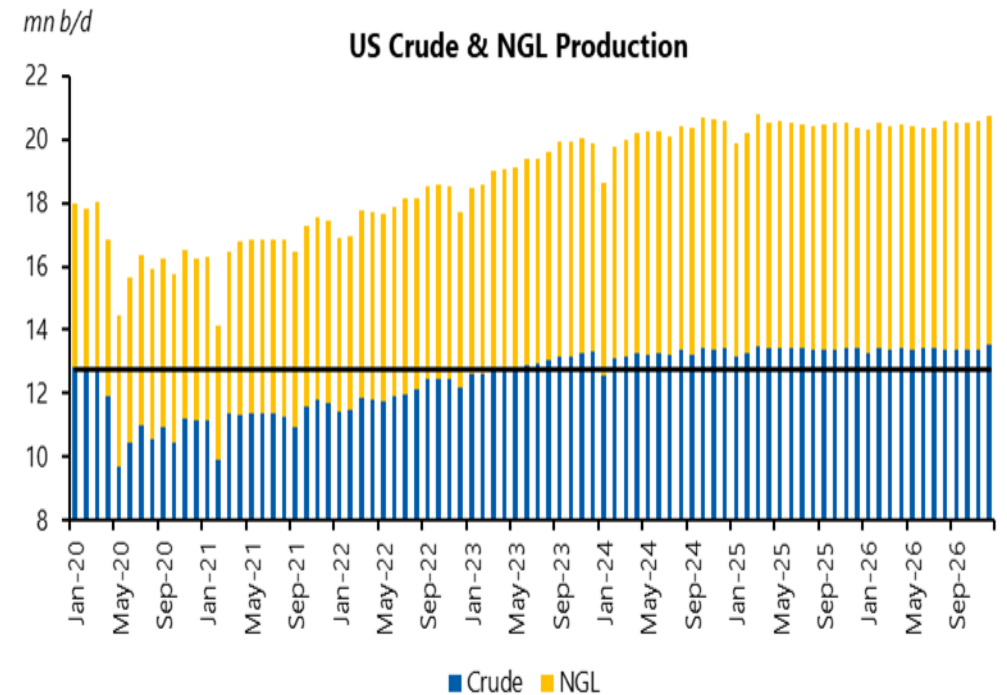
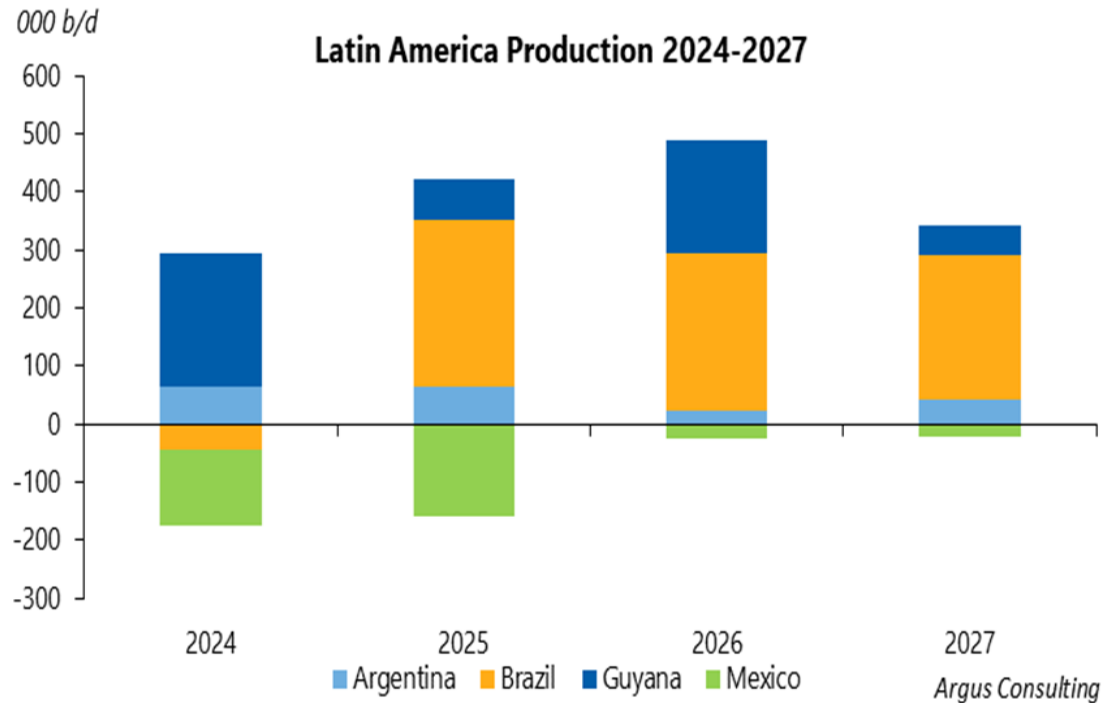
Sour crude strength persists



Volatile WTI time structure



Latin America continues to grow production – while the US struggles





Trends shaping global crude flows

A world of new variables will determine crude flows

Summary

- It is difficult to find any fundamentals supporting higher prices. By almost any measure, the market faces mounting oversupply if Opec+ pursues accelerated tapering.
- We already see a global stockbuild in the first quarter of this year, and we also put the market's need for Opec crude over the remainder of 2025 well below where production will be if the tapering process continues as planned whether or not Riyadh gets its way over continuing to increase aggressively in August and September
- This view does not fit with recent price rises. We should acknowledge that our crude price forecast is at odds with the fundamentals presented in the balance table. Regular readers, we hope, will understand that the table displays what we think will happen if what Opec+ currently plans is delivered. It assumes the accelerated programme through July and the more muted original March schedule beyond that. It is a market characterised by oversupply and therefore, potentially, low prices. For this reason it almost certainly will not happen.
- In 40 years, it is possible to count on one hand the number of times that prices have been left to look after them-selves. It happens on those rare occasions when the tensions of market management become too much to bear. This could be such a time. But if there were to be a break-down in Opec+ cohesion, it would be brief - it always is. We are comfortable continuing to forecast prices at levels that are at odds with the global balance we show - in the expectation that Opec(+) will always eventually return to manage the market

Near-term price drivers

	Bullish	Bearish
Fundamentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Opec+ output hike for July not as large as feared by market▲ Opec+ incremental crude exports tempered by surge in direct crude burn and refinery runs in Mideast Gulf▲ Canadian wildfires/US hurricane season can threaten output▲ Peak demand season in the northern hemisphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▼ China crude stocks at record highs (Kpler)▼ Brazil output up 14pc y-o-y in Apr, new FPSO on stream in May▼ Norway's Johan Castberg field starts production
Sentiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ Presidents Trump and Xi resume direct trade discussions▲ Iran talks appear at a dead-end▲ Russia-Ukraine escalation with Kiev's latest drone attack▲ US Senate may introduce new Russia sanctions legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▼ Little progress in US trade talks with Japan, EU and other key trading partners, with end of 90-day tariff pause approaching▼ Tariff uncertainty keeps GDP and oil demand growth projections on the soft side▼ Longer-term concerns over US deficit
Macroeconomics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▲ ECB cuts policy rate to 2pc▲ US dollar and treasuries markets stabilise▲ Equity markets in recovery▲ Likely short-term US boost from Trump's budget bill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▼ Weekly US jobless claims hit seven-month high▼ Trump administration doubles steel and aluminium tariffs▼ Gold market again breaching historical highs▼ May manufacturing PMIs weak for US, Europe and China

Source: Argus Crude and Refined Products Outlook, June 2025

| Now add infrastructure factors to crude flow calculus

Texas **rig counts** falling. Will WTI prices in low \$60s cut rigs, build “DUCs” and cut exports of Permian light crude?



Could **new light crude processing capacity** in the US Gulf coast (recent refinery closures) also keep more Permian in the US?



Kazakhstan and Iraq have many **newly completed fields**, already producing above their OPEC+ targets. So does a 411kbd rise from OPEC+ really result in 411kbd of new crude on the market?



TMX is major new infrastructure that gets about 500kbd to the Pacific; has removed bottlenecks on pipelines to US Gulf. But will Canadian producers boost output to the point of the return of apportionment? Enbridge had 4% apportionment for June.



OPEC+ goes with 411kbd initial rise in May



OPEC+ were to add the 2.2mn b/d of allocation cuts back into the market at a rate of 137kbd each month from May '25 through September '26











Not clear if they will return to the 137kbd monthly increments from August '25



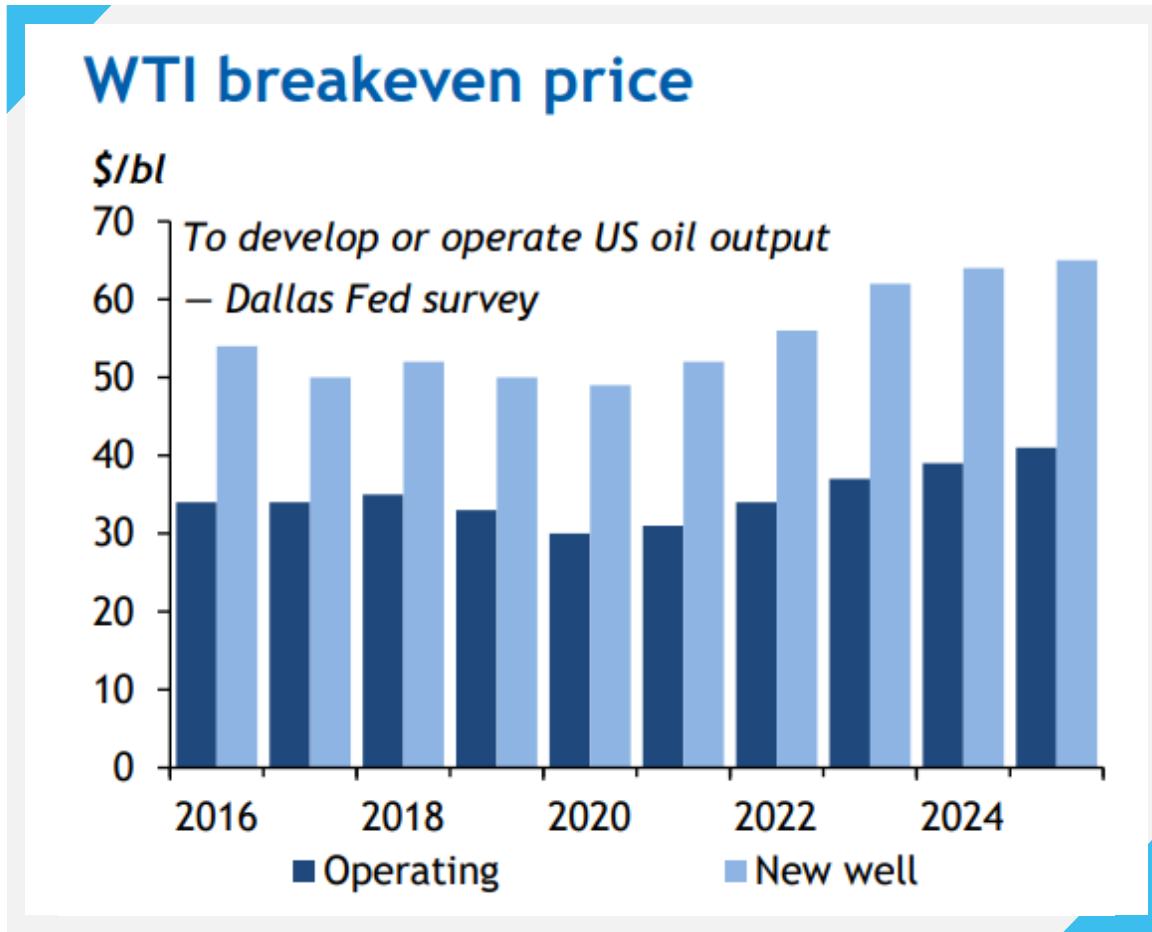
Iraq and Kazakhstan have been under the microscope for violations

New Opec+ targets ('000 b/d)

	May target	± Apr target	Compensation*, May	Effective rise
 Saudi Arabia	9,200	166	6	160
 Iraq	4,049	37	135	-98
 Kuwait	2,443	22	15	7
 UAE	3,015	77	10	67
 Algeria	919	8	na	8
 Russia	9,083	79	76	3
 Oman	768	7	10	-3
 Kazakhstan	1,486	13	57	-44
Total	30,963	411	309	102

*For previous overproduction

Oil & gas sector already feeling the pain

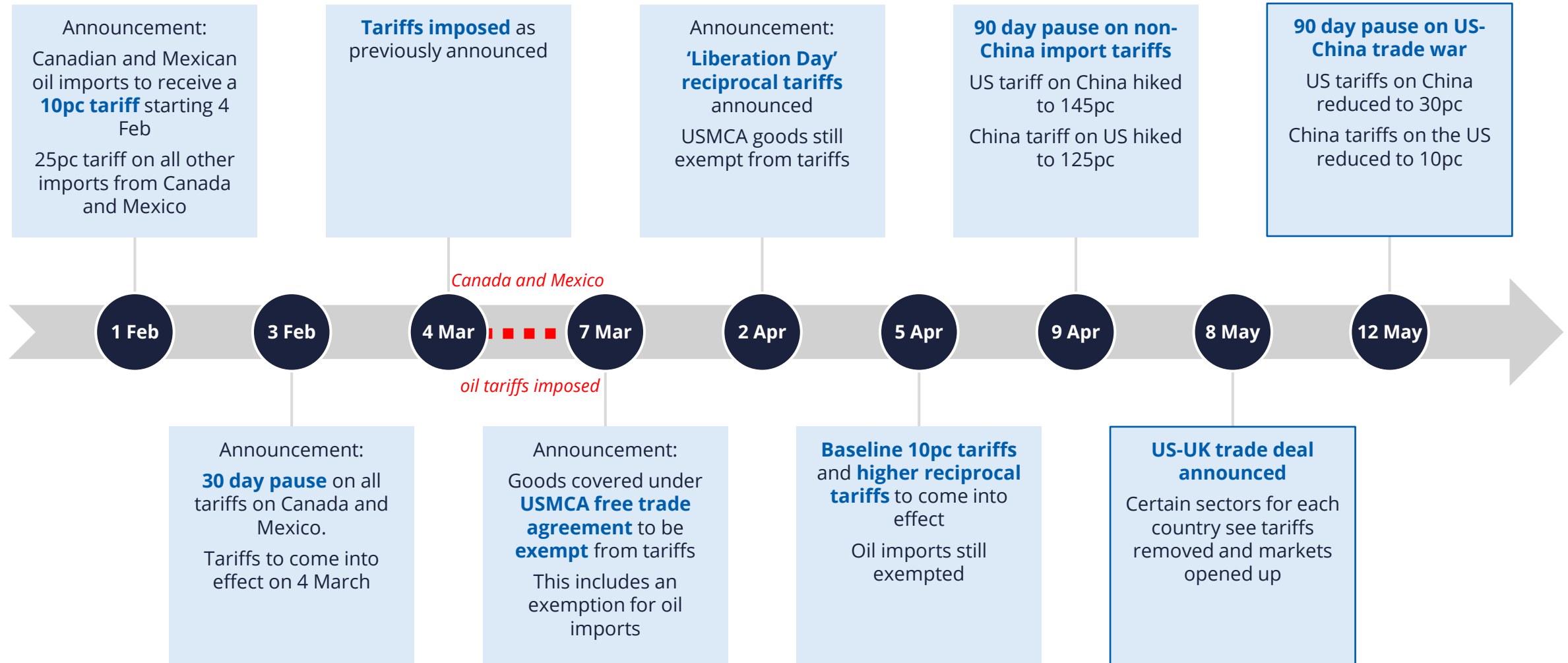


Source: Argus Global Markets, 4 April 2025

- At \$50 oil, production would decline significantly
- “\$70 is the new \$50”
- WTI breakeven prices for new wells up by 30% since 2020
- Tariffs hit op costs

Lower oil prices and rising costs are squeezing profits for cash-hungry producers across the Texas-New Mexico shale oil sector. “At \$50/bl oil, we will see US oil production start to decline immediately and likely significantly,” another executive says. “The US oil cost curve is in a different place than it was five years ago; \$70/bl is the new \$50/bl.” Average breakeven WTI prices for profitably drilling new wells are up by a third since 2020, rising from \$49/bl to \$65/bl this year, in the Dallas Fed survey (see graph). Operating costs are rising even faster, up by 37pc to \$41/bl in 2020-25. Oil trade may be exempt from Trump’s tariff plans, but most of the equipment and materials needed to produce it are likely to be affected. “The administration’s tariffs immediately increased the cost of our casing and tubing by 25pc,” another survey respondent says.

A timeline of US 2025 import tariffs



Argus sees oversupply and lower prices through 1Q26

Forecast crude prices (\$/bl)

	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	2Q25	3Q25	2025	2026	2027
Ice Brent	64.01	64.00	64.20	64.10	64.80	64.50	67.80	69.10	71.10
Nymex WTI	60.94	61.00	61.20	61.10	61.60	61.50	64.60	66.60	68.60
North Sea Dated	64.14	65.00	65.00	65.00	65.60	65.30	68.60	69.90	71.80
WCS Hardisty	50.78	50.80	50.10	49.70	51.40	50.40	53.40	54.00	54.90
WCS Houston	57.51	57.30	57.30	56.80	58.20	57.50	60.90	62.30	63.40

Summary of global oil balance (mn b/d)

	1Q24	2Q24	3Q24	4Q24	2024	1Q25	2Q25	3Q25	4Q25	2025	2026	2027
Demand	100.6	102.3	102.5	102.4	101.9	101.6	102.3	103.6	103.7	102.8	103.4	104.2
Global balance*	0.5	-0.4	-0.9	-0.3	-0.3	0.4	0.8	0.8	1	0.7	2.5	4.1

*equivalent to global stock change, assuming Opec+ production cuts get unwind as per official Opec announcements at the time of publication

Source: Argus Crude and Refined Products Outlook, June 2025

Impressive Crude System



Links Canadian Crude into the US Refining system

Major Pipelines into the International export market of WTI Crude

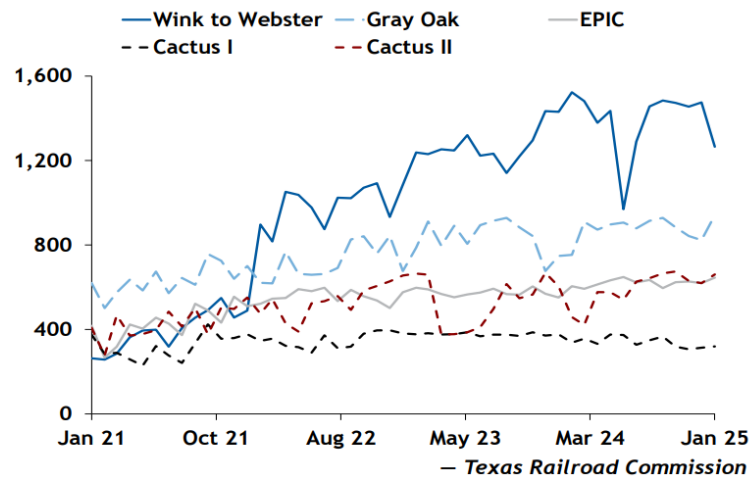


Focus on US Gulf coast

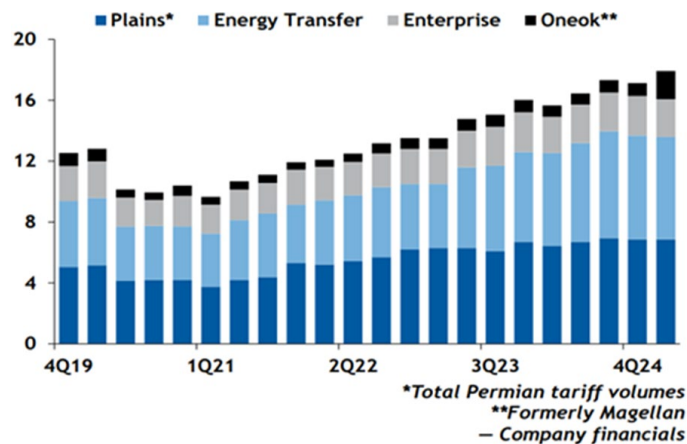
Infrastructure makes it the global crude trade crossroads

US export crude pipeline network is flexible, but few new mega projects given unknown costs/tight capital

Key Permian pipelines monthly deliveries ('000 b/d)

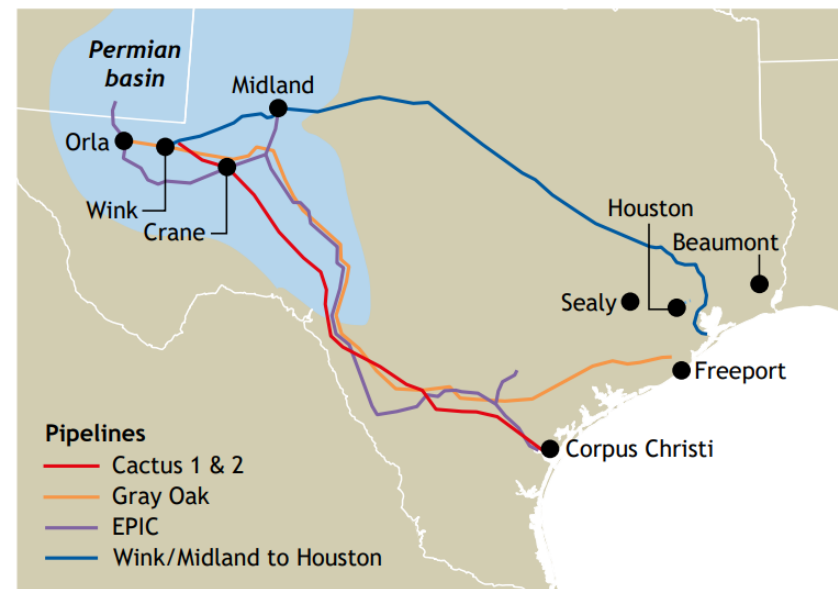


US Midstream company crude pipeline thruputs (mn b/d)



“Buying, not Building” (eg ONEOK)

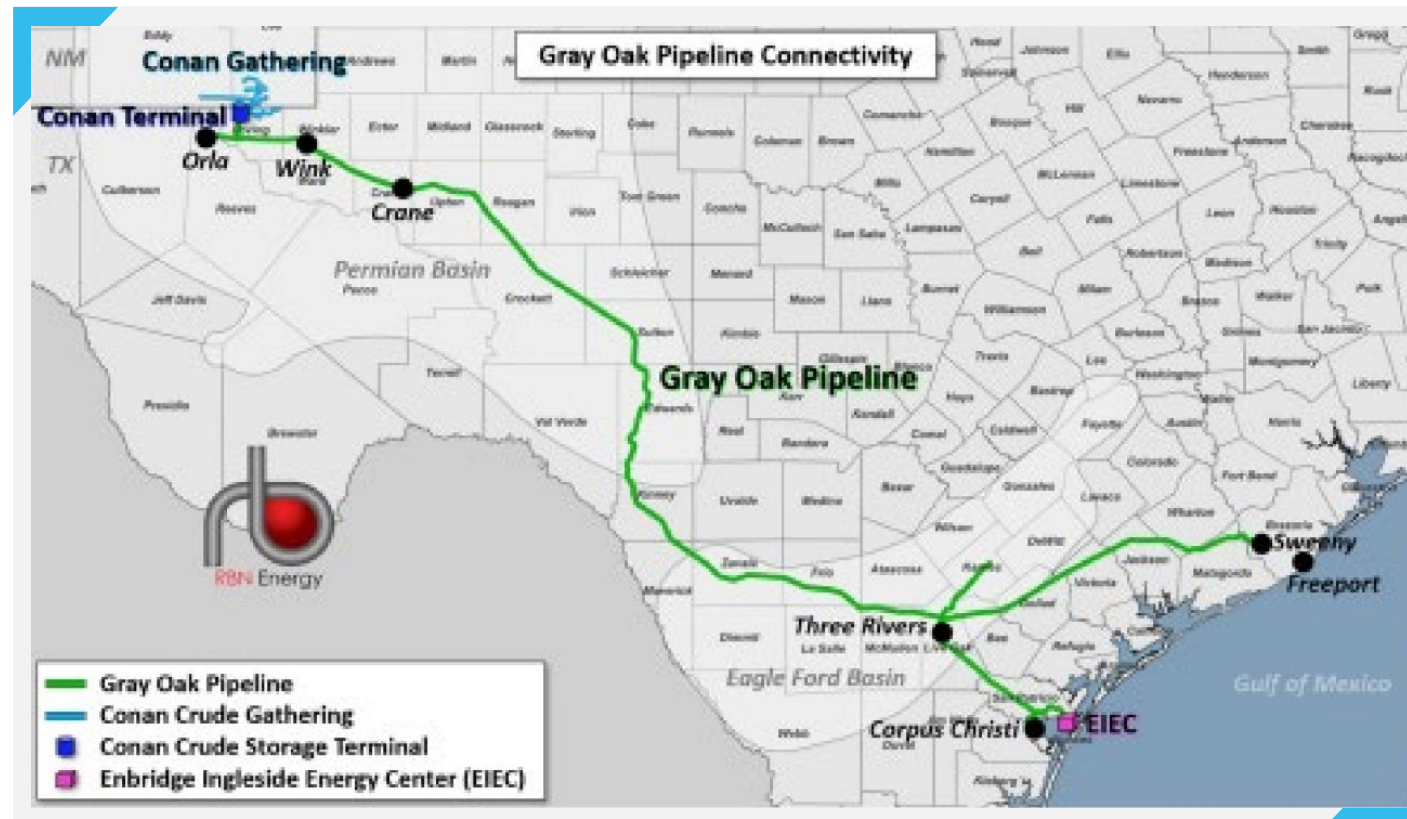
Key Permian basin pipelines



Source: Argus Petroleum Transportation, 16 May 2025

Enbridge Gray Oak example of incremental build out

- Gray Oak jointly owned by Enbridge (68.5%), Marathon Petroleum (25%) and P66 (6.5%)
- Recently added 80,000 b/d westward expansion to pull crude from Wink, Orla and Marathon's Conan gathering hubs. Eagle Ford connects at Three Rivers
- Gray Oak is pursuing a 120kbd capacity expansion, of which 80kbd was completed in April 2025. The remaining 40kbd capacity boost will come in April 2026. Total capacity will be 1.02mn b/d. DRA may be part of the plan.
- Enbridge also expanding capacity at its Ingleside dock complex (EIEC), which already accounts for 30% of all US crude exports.
Adding 2.5mn bl of new storage at EIEC; total storage will be 20.5mn bl in 2026
- Recent completion of Phase II of Corpus Christi Channel Improvement Project (dredging +) now enables EIEC to load up to 1.6mn bl onto a 2mn bl VLCC (so only one Aframax needed to top off the VLCC). Lower cost operations.



Source: RBN blog, 22 May 2025

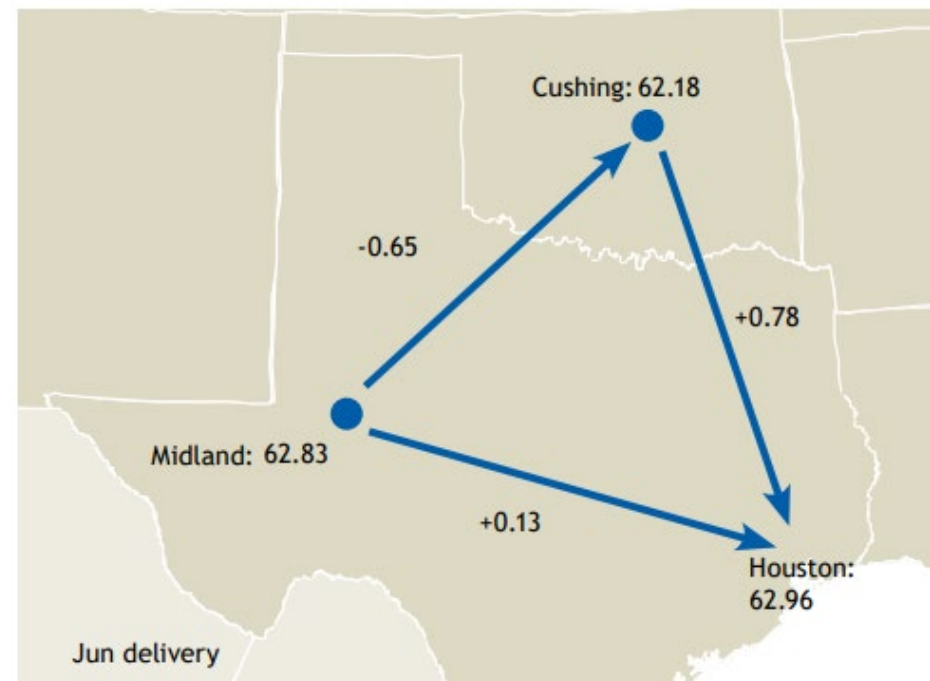
Midland-Houston Spread Changes

WTI Mid to Houston spread



Midland-Houston price spread hit \$22.35/bbl on 28 Aug 2018

WTI regional prices and spreads (\$/bbl)



On Friday, 23 May 2025 the spread was 13 cents

Infrastructure makes US Gulf coast the “epicenter” of global light crude price discovery



Why it's the Epicenter:

9.9mn b/d production
meets 9.5mn b/d refining
capacity + 4.3mn b/d
exports

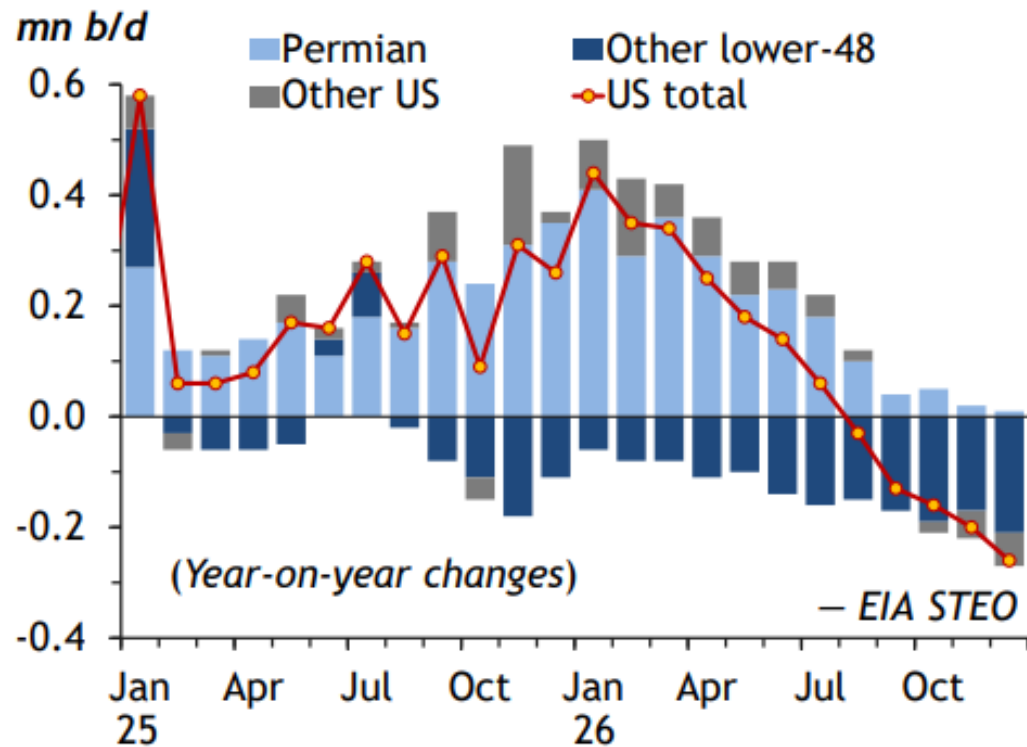
Market implications:

The US Gulf nexus of supply & demand makes WTI a global benchmark price:

- June of 2023 – WTI begins setting the price of North Sea Dated roughly ½ of all trade days; often > 1mn b/d of WTI going to Europe.
- Transparency of US pipeline markets (specifically WTI Houston at ONEOK's East Houston terminal) draw European refiners to buy WTI in US Gulf market instead of waiting for it to get to Rotterdam.
 - North Sea buyers hedge with WTI Houston.
 - WTI Houston now also in many Asian contracts
 - Price of WTI Houston determines flows globally.
- Thanks to pipeline and dock complex infrastructure, flows of WTI to Europe and Asia are essentially uninhibited.

EIA sees US crude output peaking late this year

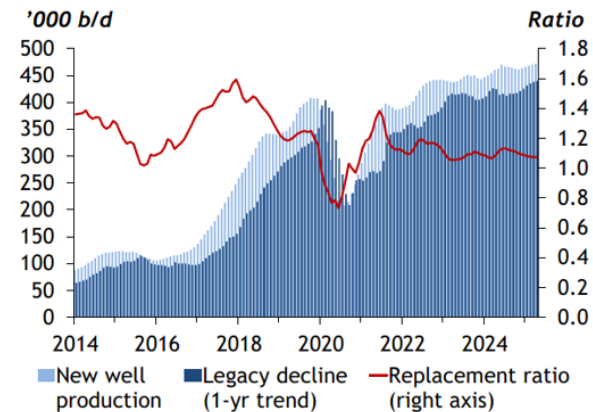
US production growth outlook



Latest US EIA Short-term Energy Outlook (STEO) sees US tight oil output peaking in August 2025 at 9.3mn b/d. Permian output edges up past August, but other shale basins decline

COP and Diamondback among others talking about reduced capex spending in Permian

Permian production replacement



Permian must produce about 400,000 b/d of new oil each year to replace legacy well decline.

PADD 3 - Argus WTI Houston at the Epicenter of Crude Price Discovery



Production

12%

Of Global Oil Production



Refining

10%

Of Global Refining Capacity



Exports

10%

Of Global waterborne volumes

9.0+ mmb/d production

6.0+ mmb/d Permian Basin

7.5+ mmb/d Permian takeaway

50+ complex refineries

10.0 mmb/d CDU capacity

16.4pc global coking capacity

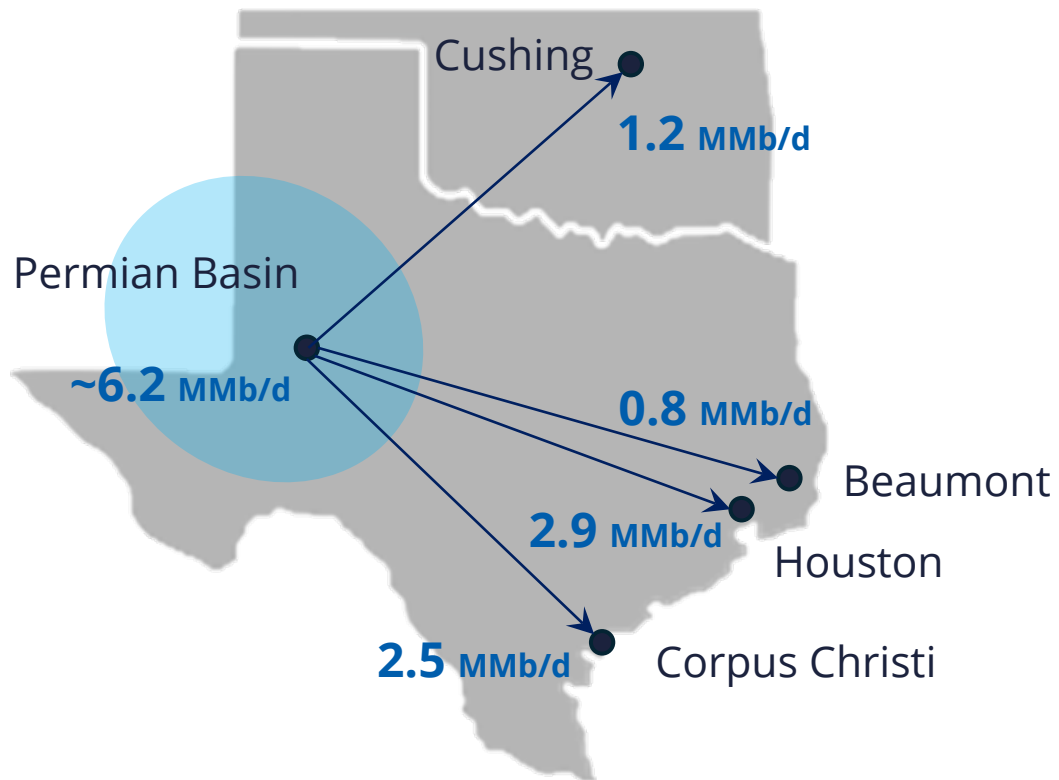
4.0+ mmb/d exports

20+ major loading terminals

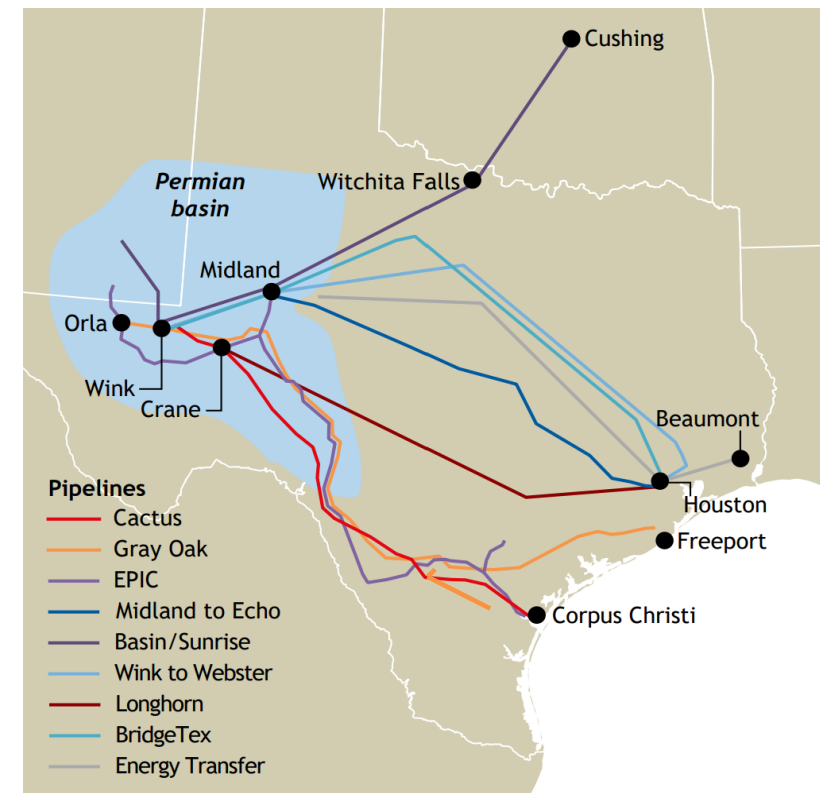
70+ destination countries

Midland WTI: Pipeline Transportation

Permian Take-Away Capacity



Numerous Pipelines and Refinery Connectivity



Enbridge Ingleside Energy Center

Storage capacity:
17.6 million barrels

Export capacity:
1.6 million barrels per
day

Loading capacity:
160,000 barrels per
hour across three
berths



EIEC is the largest crude oil export terminal by volume in North America, loading an average of 25% of all U.S. Gulf Coast crude exports yearly.

Its strategic location at Ingleside, Texas, positions the facility at the gateway of international shipping lanes. EIEC is a strategic intersection of pipeline connectivity and export optionality, making it a cost-advantaged location for transporting crude oil and other products.

EIEC has been a key link in the expansion of WTI into international markets. In 2024, WTI was included in the Brent trading market, with EIEC barrels contributing to the price in the world market.

With direct connectivity to Cactus I, Cactus II, Gray Oak, EPIC, and Harvest, EIEC can receive multiple crudes into the facility from the Permian and Eagle Ford basins.

| Gibson Energy Terminal – South Texas Gateway

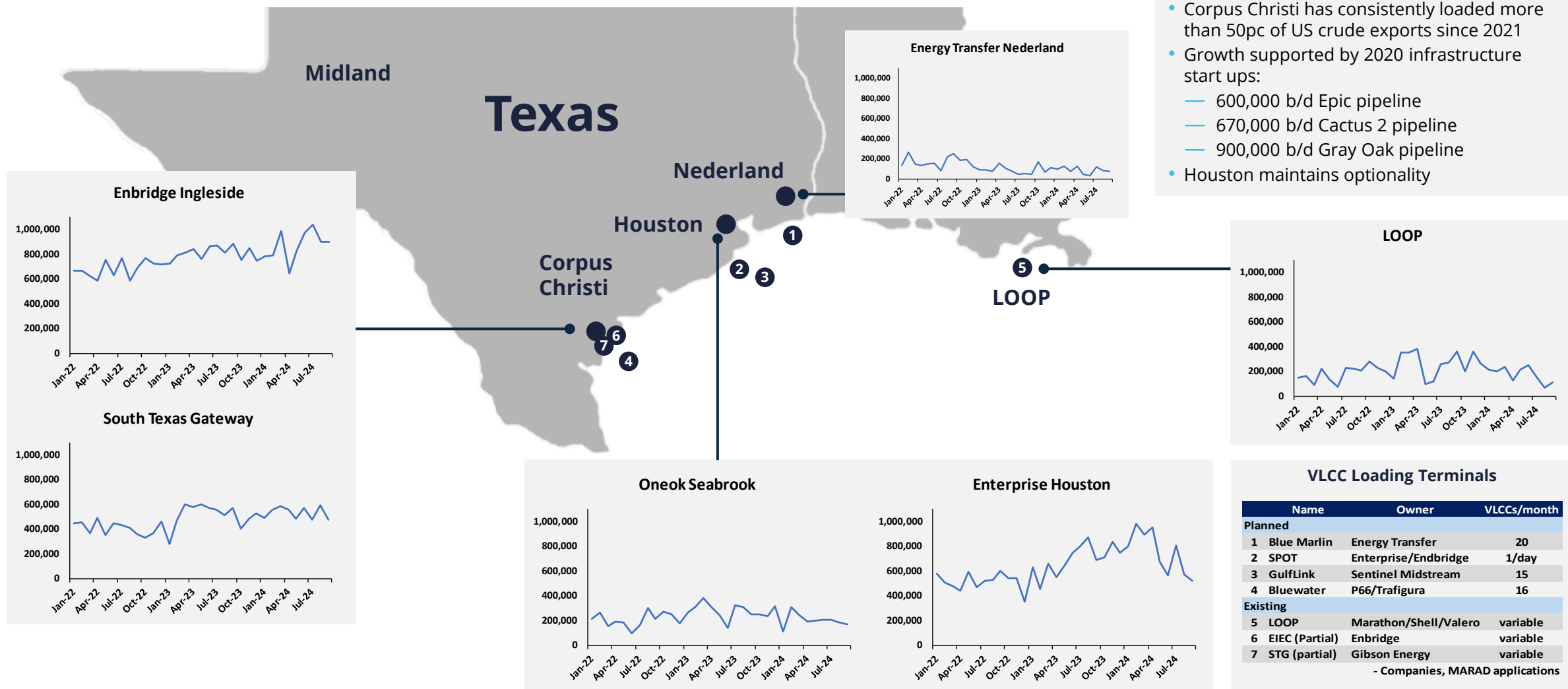
20 tanks, 8.6 million bbls

2.7 mbpd of Permian and Eagleford connectivity

2 Deep water docks for VLLC

2nd largest US crude export terminal

USGC Exports: Corpus Christi takes over as top hub

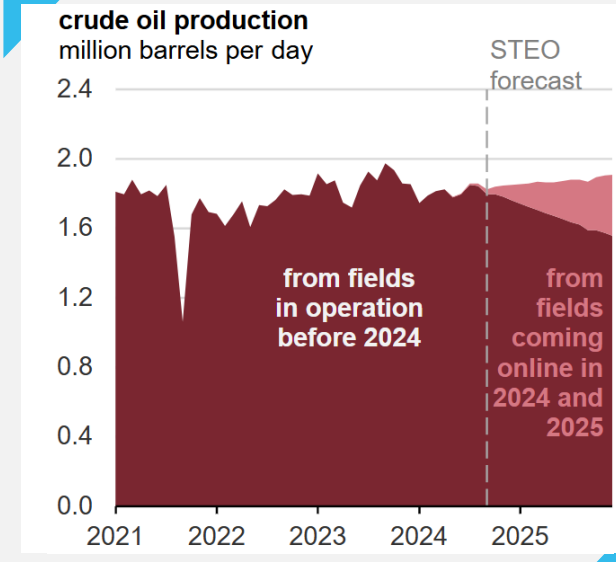
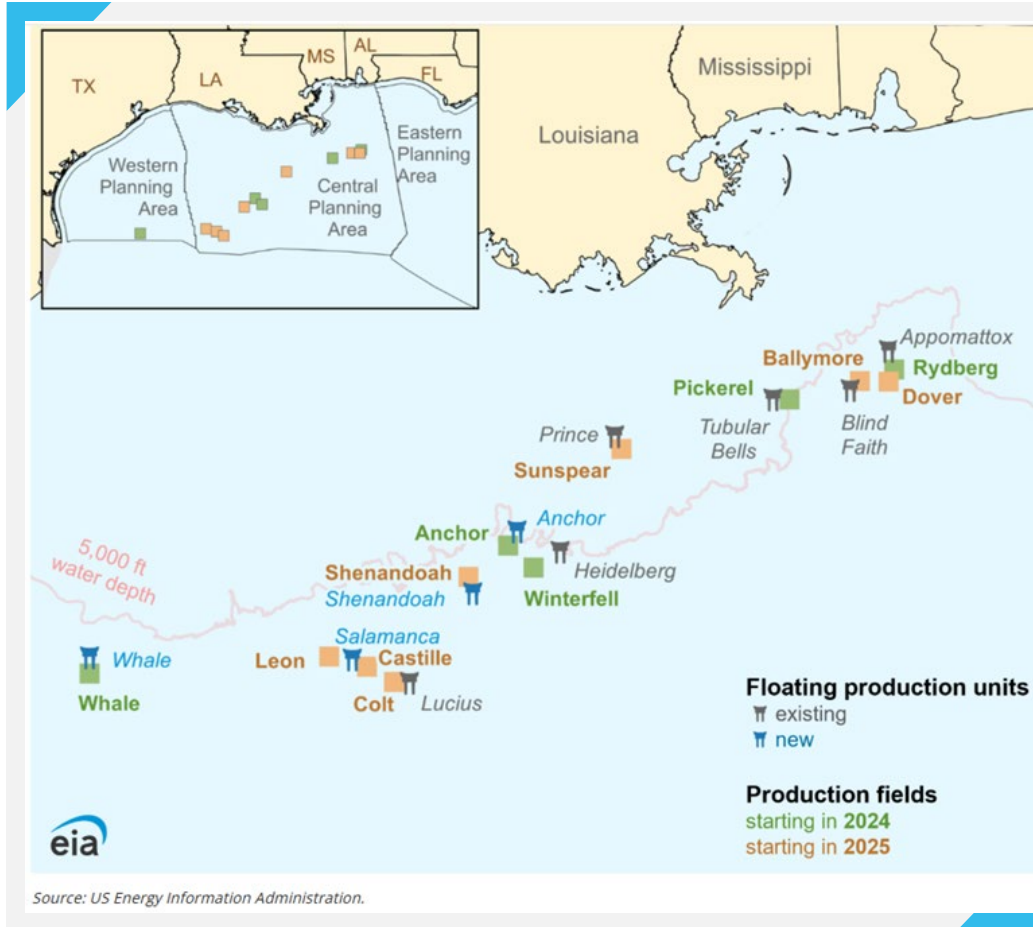


- Corpus Christi has consistently loaded more than 50pc of US crude exports since 2021
- Growth supported by 2020 infrastructure start ups:
 - 600,000 b/d Epic pipeline
 - 670,000 b/d Cactus 2 pipeline
 - 900,000 b/d Gray Oak pipeline
- Houston maintains optionality



**Don't forget offshore
US Gulf**

New platforms adding medium sour



Supply of offshore US Gulf coast medium sour is rising; 12 new fields in 2024/25

Export demand for medium sour Mars currently down, but blending “synthetic” Mars in Asia has been popular:

- WCS + Midland-quality WTI
- TMX + Murban or ESPO

Infrastructure (free connection from ECHO to Beaumont on Seaway) makes WCS Houston work

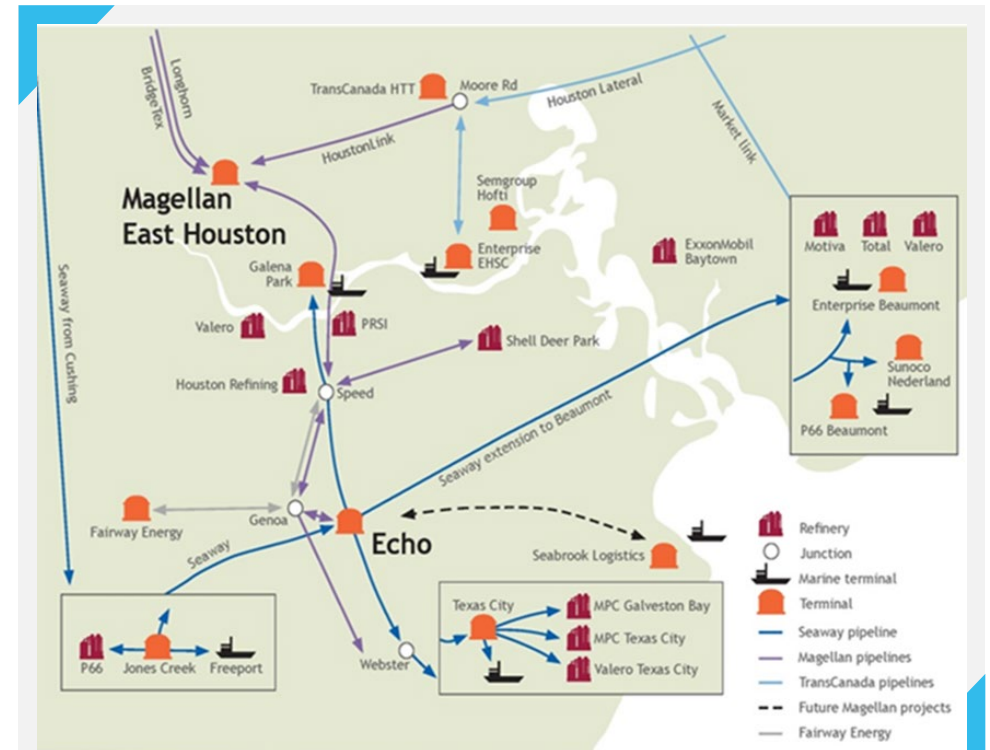
WCS Houston + VLCC freight to China competes with Pacific Cold Lake fob Vancouver + Aframax freight to China to determine where China sources its heavy Canadian crude

TMX High TAN DES Shandong competes with other delivered grades/determines crude flow to China:

Delivered Shandong prices (\$/bl)

Grade	Timing	Basis	Diff Mid	Low	High	Price	±
ESPO Blend	Jun	Aug Ice Brent	+2.00	66.51	67.11	66.81	+0.49
Djeno	Jul	Sep Ice Brent	+3.80	67.76	68.36	68.06	+0.72
Tupi	Aug	Oct Ice Brent	+4.30	67.77	68.57	68.17	+0.46
	Aug	Jul Dated	+3.20	na	na	na	-0.10
Johan Sverdrup	Aug	Oct Ice Brent	+5.30	67.67	70.67	69.17	+0.76
Oman	Jun	Aug Ice Brent	-2.20	62.11	63.11	62.61	+0.49
Urals	Jul	Sep Ice Brent	+2.00	65.96	66.56	66.26	+0.42
TMX high TAN	Aug	Oct Ice Brent	-2.30	61.37	61.77	61.57	-0.44

Source: Argus Crude, 20 May 2025



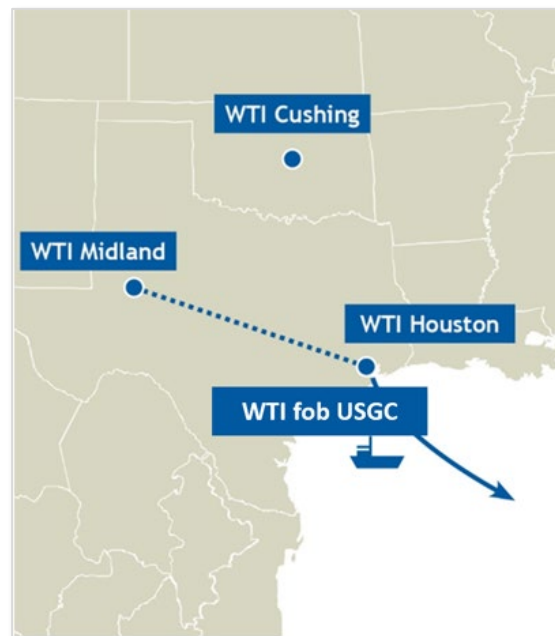
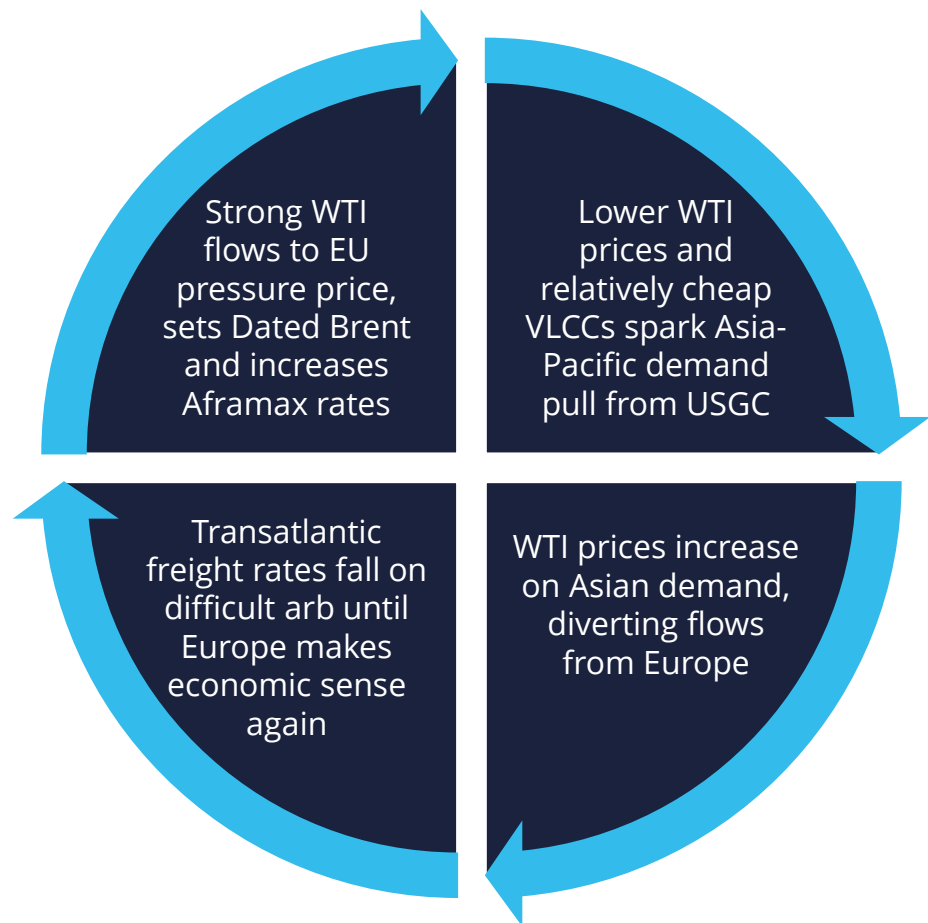
Quality:

- Cold Lake and WCS quality converge after 1,000 miles (+) in pipelines, storage tanks.
- The grades typically trade within 5 cents of each other in Houston

Location:

- WCS and Cold Lake price at parity at ECHO, P66 Beaumont and Nederland terminals
- Argus WCS Houston physical price pools trades of CLK and WCS, typically reflects 300,000 – 400,000 b/d of reported trades

The cycle will always go on...

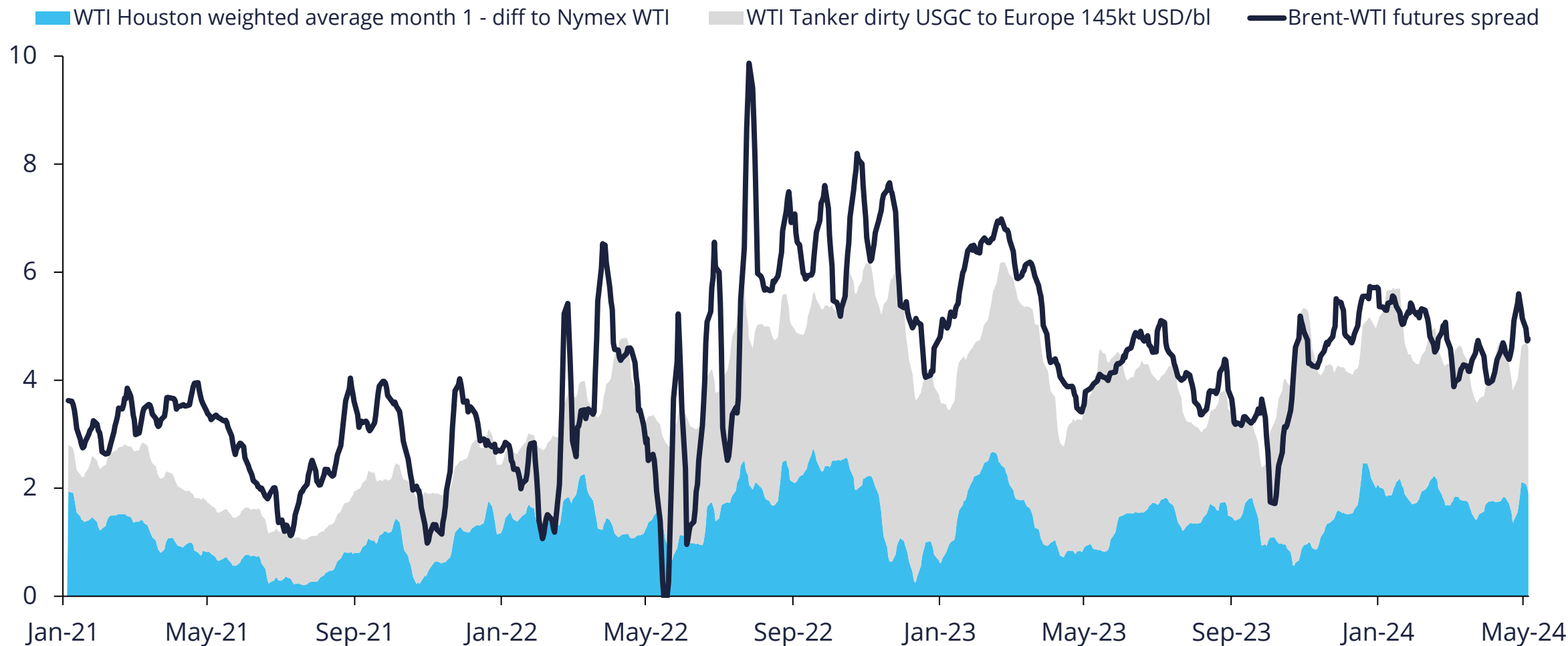


Each pricing point has a specific role to play in the ebbs and flows of the global market

The USGC has matured into a center for price discovery

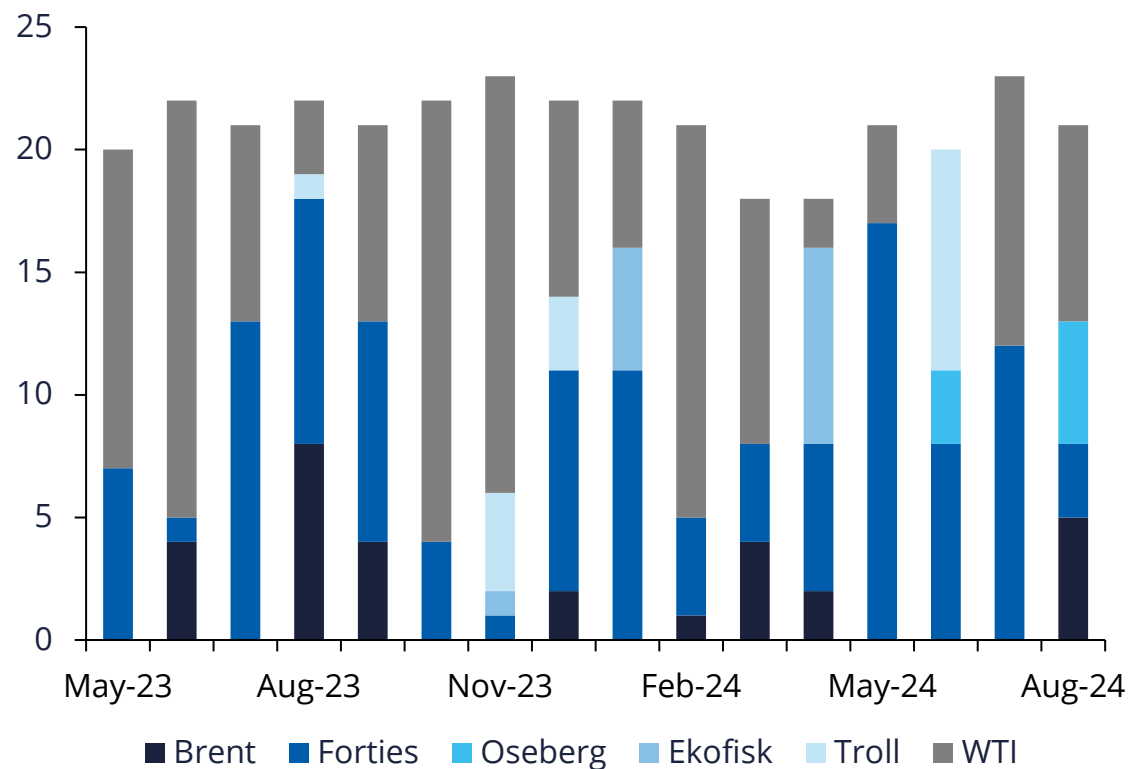


Brent now effectively WTI + Freight

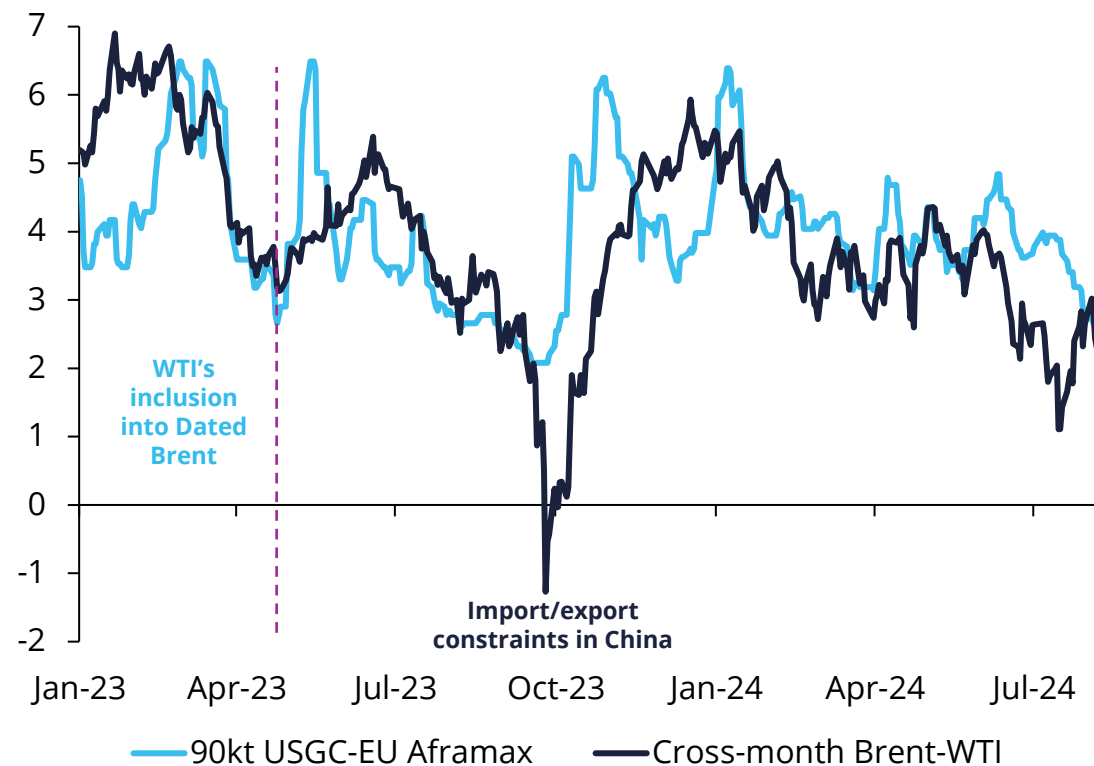


WTI shapes Dated Brent benchmark

What sets Dated? (days/month)

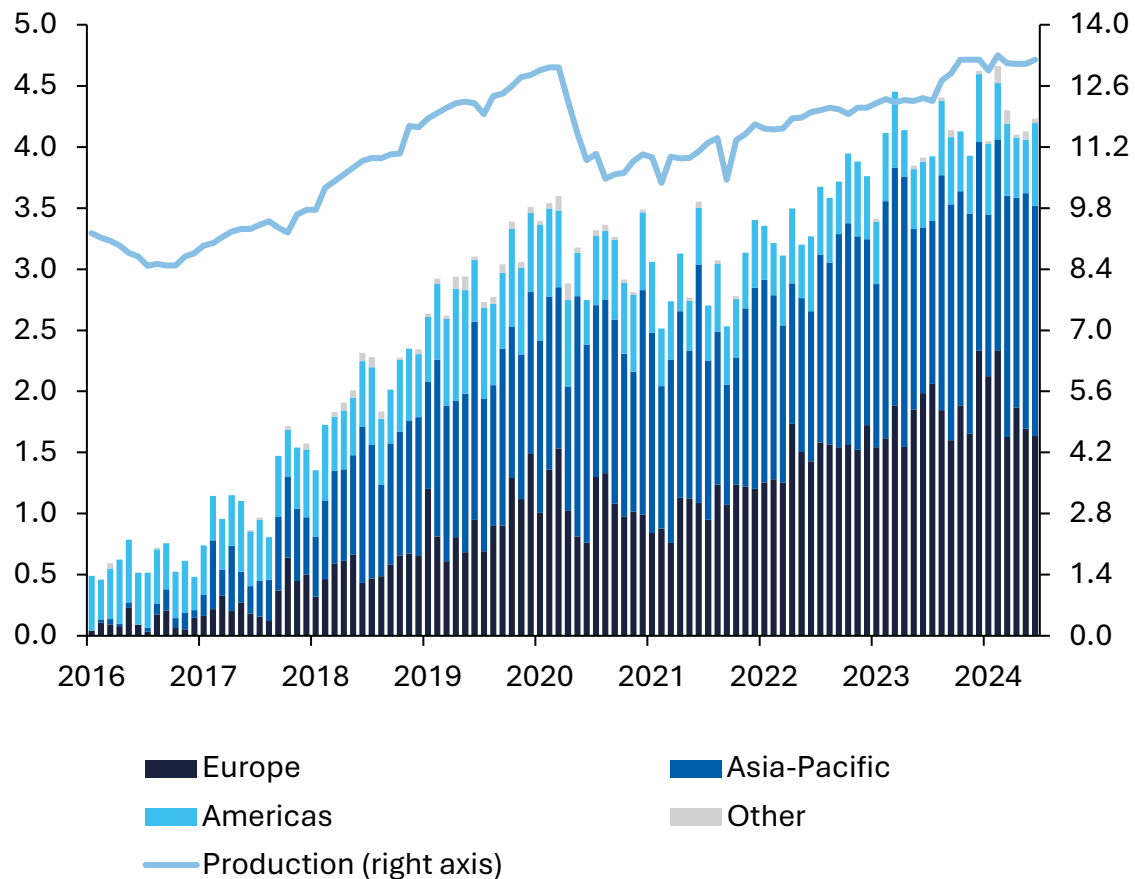


Aframax rates become key determinant (\$/bbl)

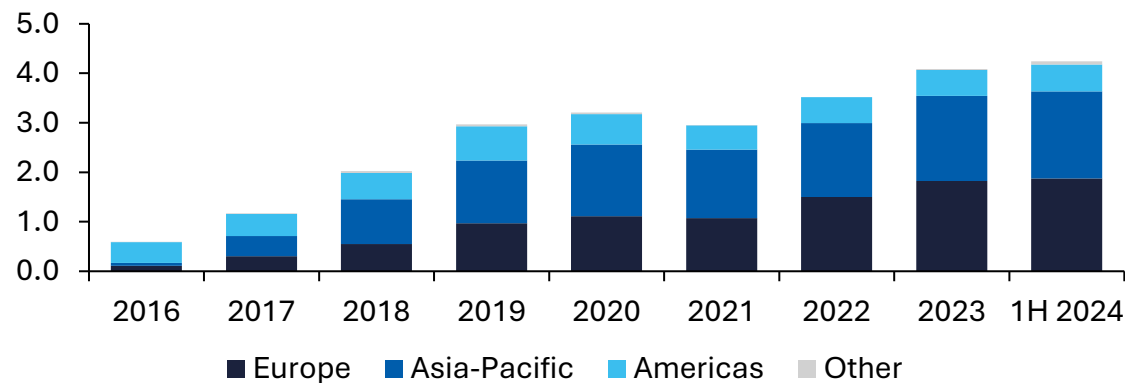


Midland WTI: Impacting global markets

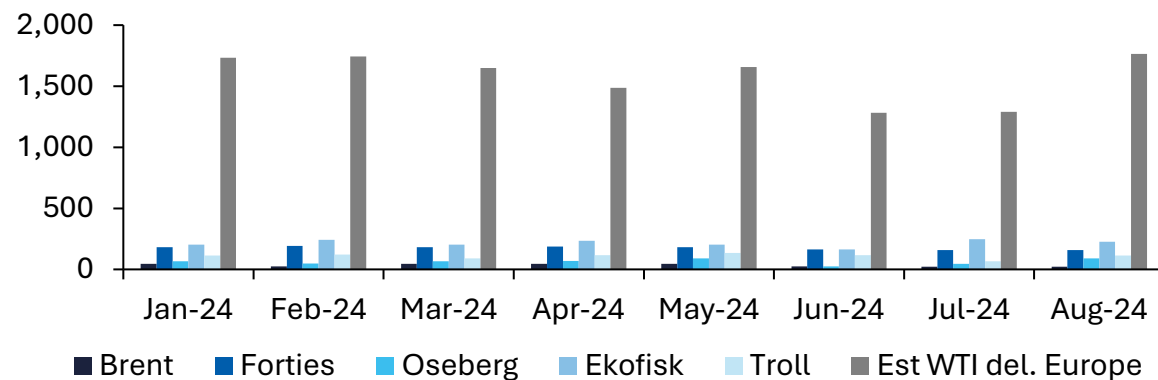
US crude exports vs production (MMb/d)

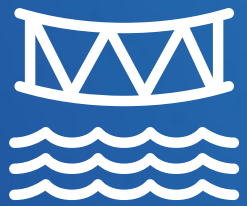


US export loadings by destination region (mn b/d)



WTI dominates BFOET loadings ('000 b/d)

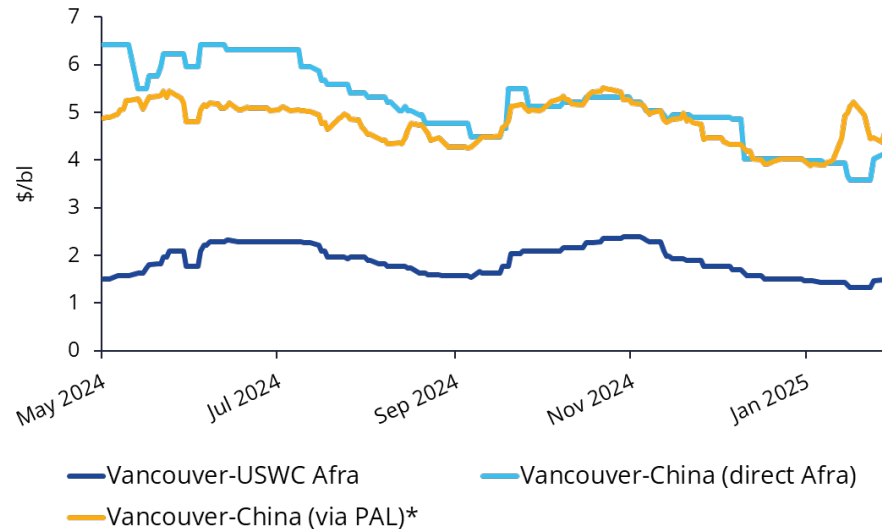




North/South infrastructure

TMX/Westridge docks change everything in the Pacific

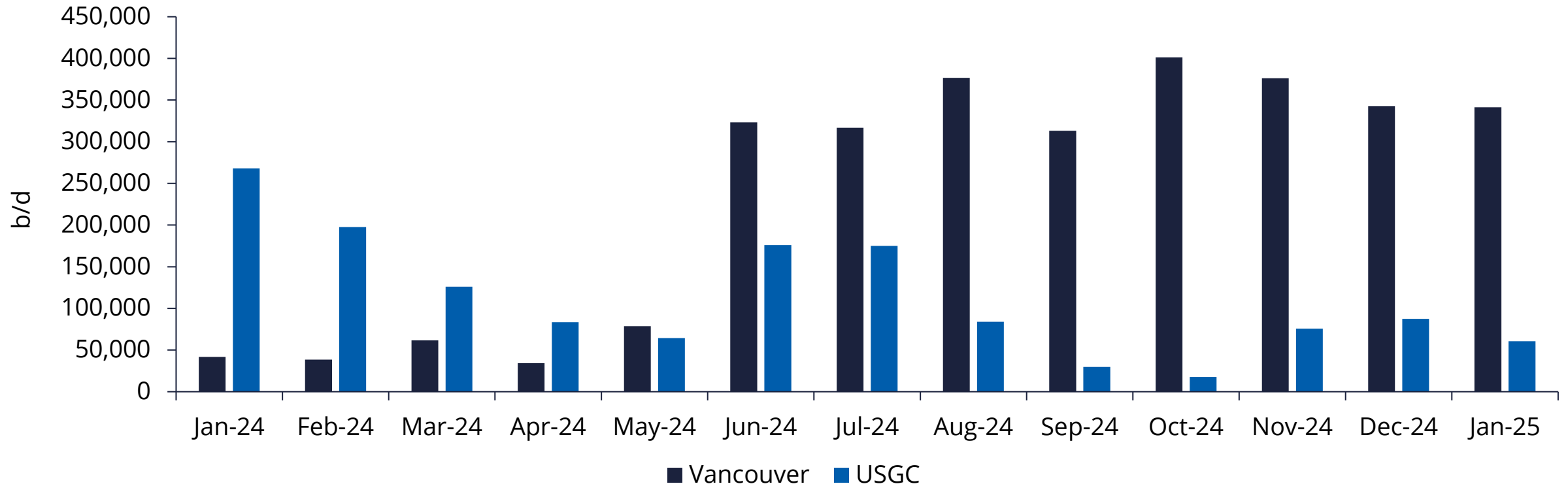
- Aframaxes directly to Asia are currently less expensive and faster than VLCCs
- Incentivizing Canadian producers to charter ships and sell on a delivered basis



- Tariff worries seen in shift of TMX cargoes away from California. (Went from about 12 cargoes/month early this year to just four May-loading cargoes as of 22 May)



Vancouver replaced USGC in exports of Canadian heavy crude

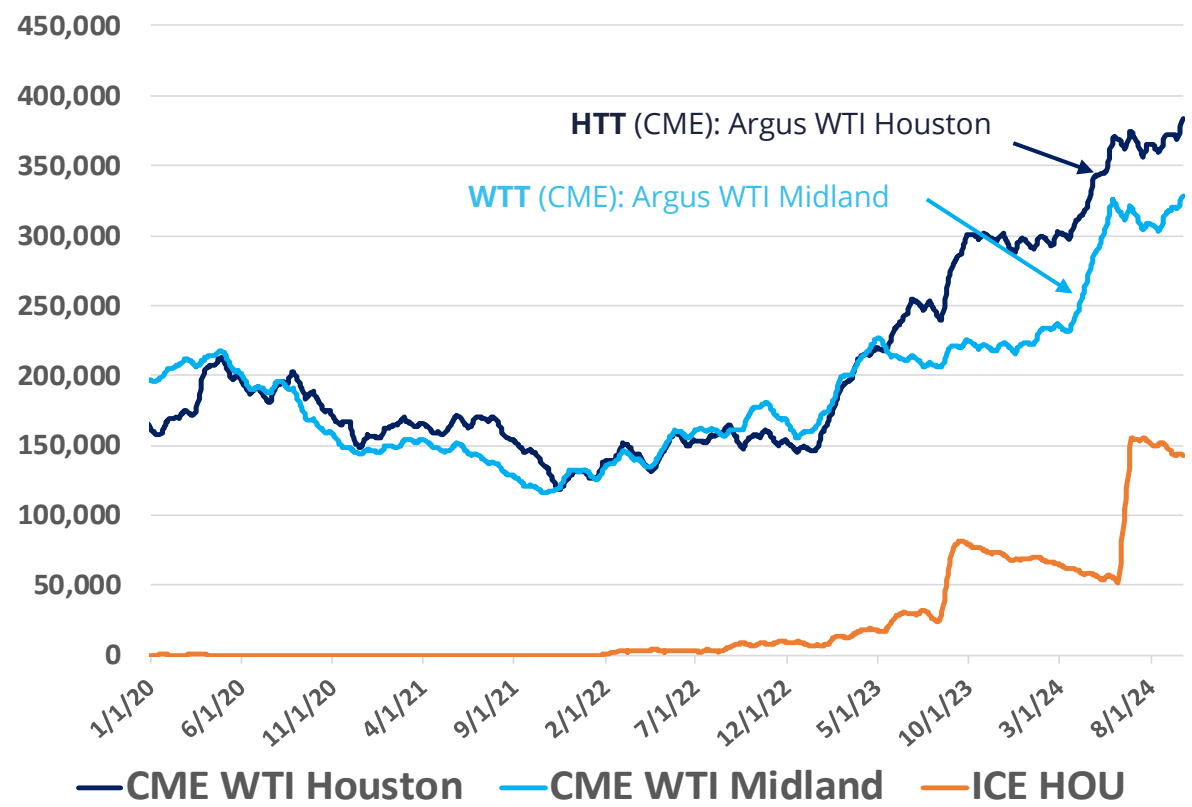


But Spain, India, perhaps Thailand could find US Gulf a better source of heavy Canadian crude

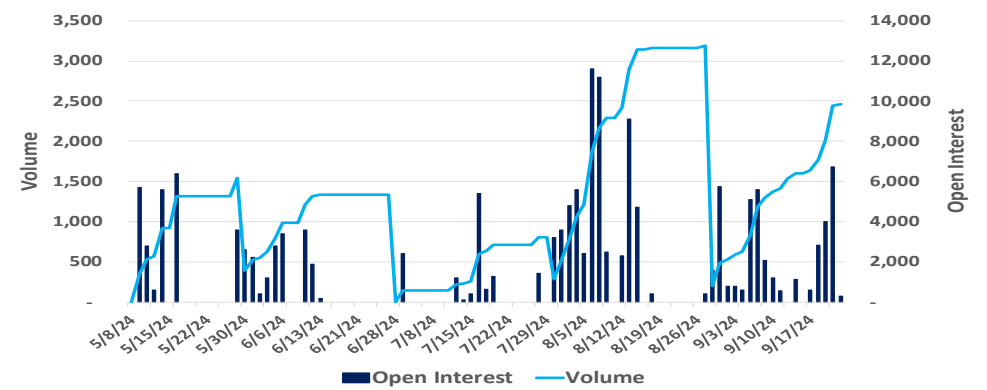
Source: Vortexa

Midland WTI: Robust Financial Tools

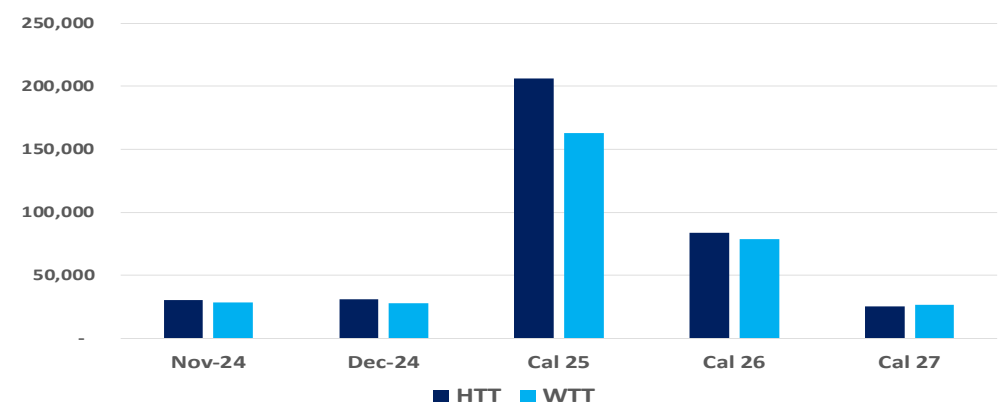
WTI Houston & Midland Open Interest 14 day/avg



HTT (CME): Balmo Volume & Open interest



WTI Houston & Midland Open Interest 9/30/24





Summary

- Infrastructure is key to crude flows – can you get your hands on that cheap sweet barrel you want?
- There are few midstream mega projects planned in crude infrastructure in North America right now. Tight capital, uncertain demand, tariffs and sanctions.
- But incremental expansions are happening; Gray Oak is an example. M&A is capturing some efficiencies
- US crude production growth is slowing. Permian will be more resilient than most other basins, and we expect growth offshore US Gulf coast and even in Alaska.
- TMX is the big infrastructure story in North America. It not only connects Canadian heavy crude to Asia and California; it also removes bottlenecks on lines to the US Gulf coast, narrowing the discount Canadian sellers have to accept at Edmonton and Hardisty.
- In spite of TMX, there will continue to be re-exports of Canadian heavy from the US Gulf coast – to India, Spain and other locations where there is a freight advantage.

Canadian crude exports

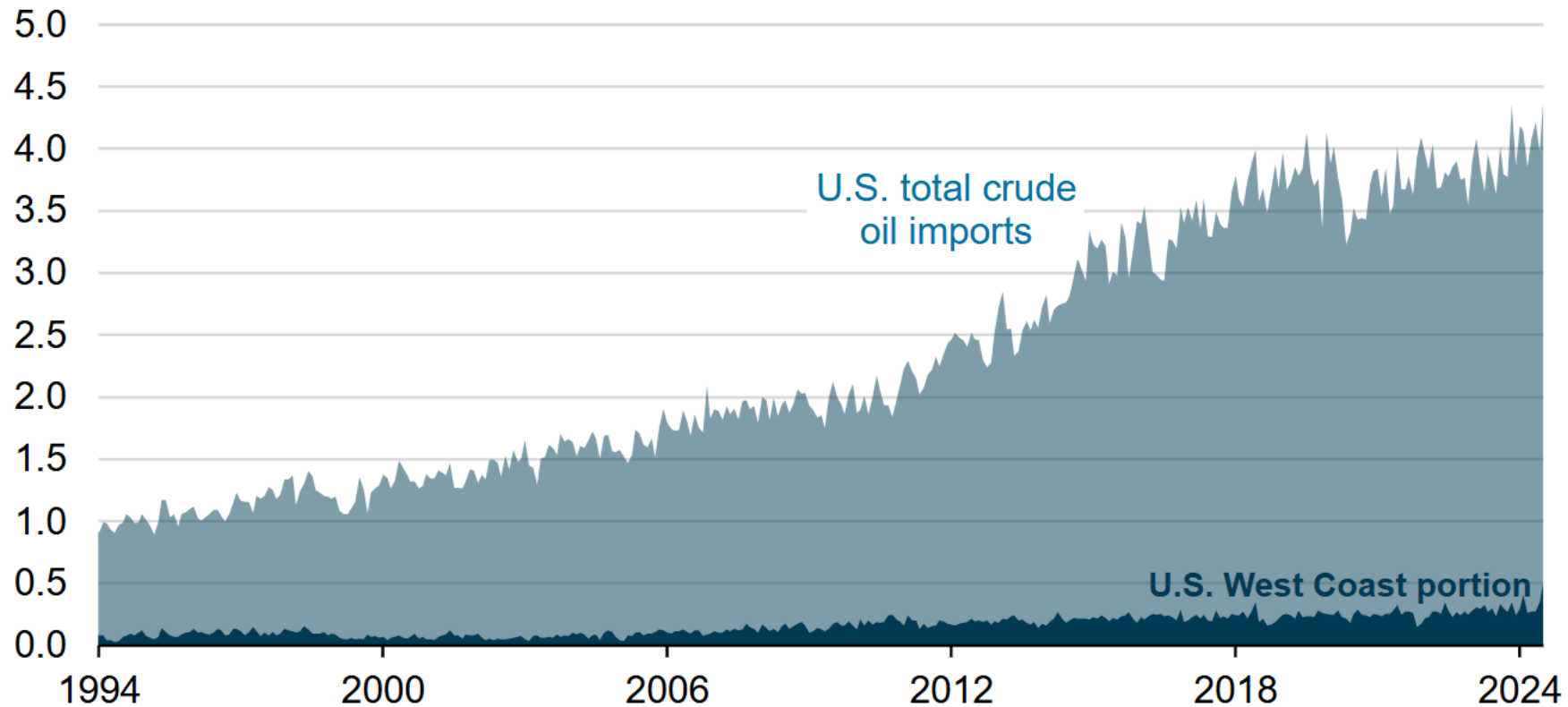
Argus

26 August 2025



Canada's exports to the US quadrupled from the mid-90s to early 2024; but mainly via pipelines

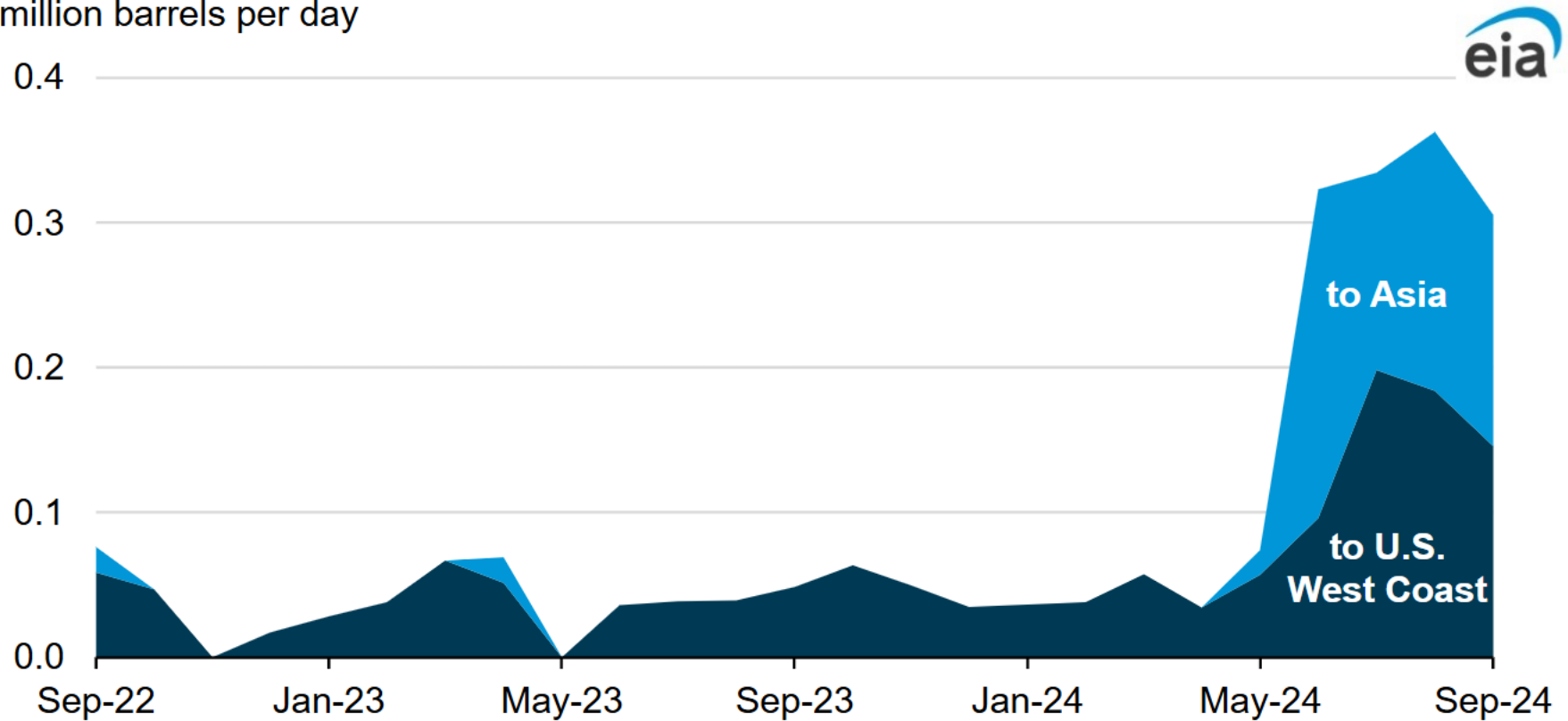
Monthly U.S. crude oil imports from Canada (Jan 1994–Jul 2024)
million barrels per day



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, [Petroleum Supply Monthly](#)

TMX makes western Canada a maritime exporter

Monthly marine crude oil exports from West Canada by destination (Sep 2022–Sep 2024)
million barrels per day



Data source: Vortexa Analytics

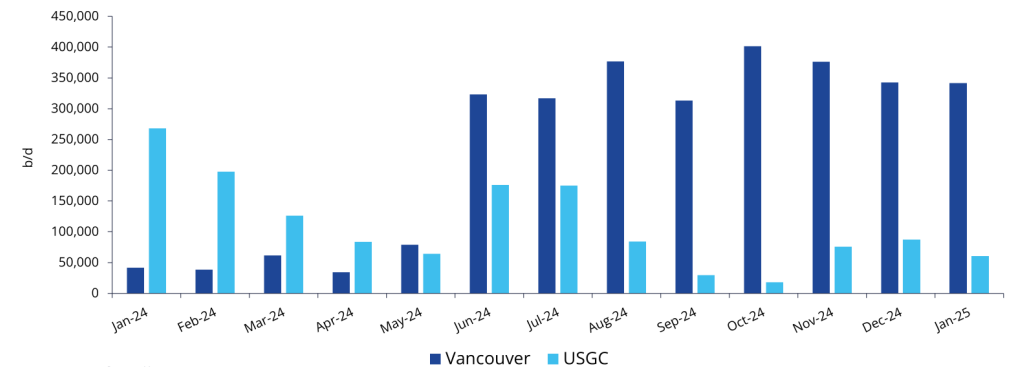
TMX eliminated bottlenecks, narrowed the discounts for crude produced in Alberta, and moved most exports of Canadian heavy grades from the US Gulf coast to Vancouver

WCS Hardisty v Nymex CMA

1M 2M 3M 6M 1Y 5Y Custom

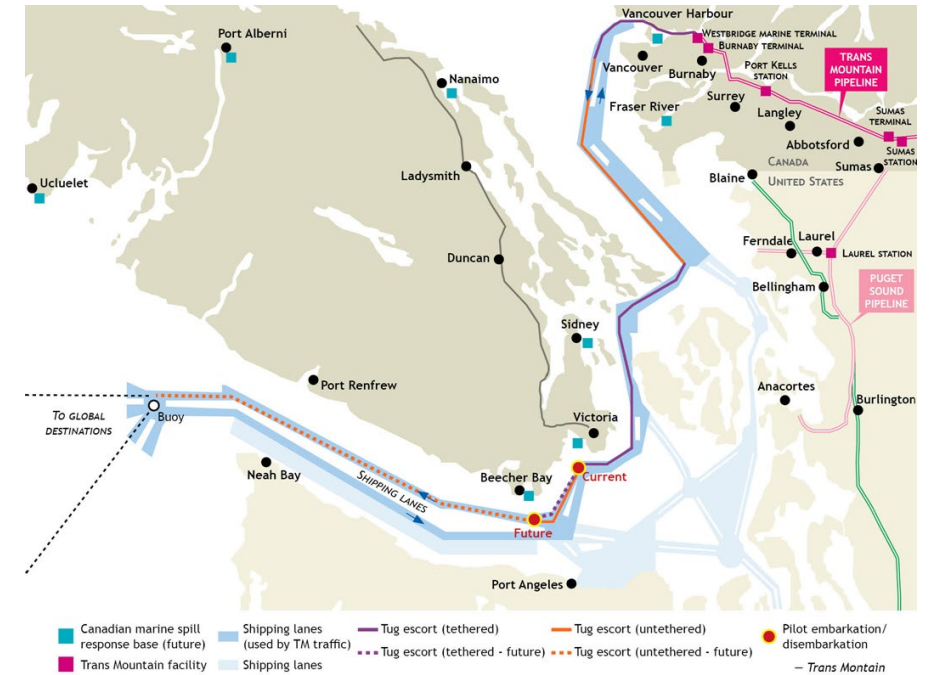


Vancouver replaced USGC in exports of Canadian heavy crude



But Spain, India, perhaps Thailand could find US Gulf a better source of heavy Canadian crude

We need a new vocabulary

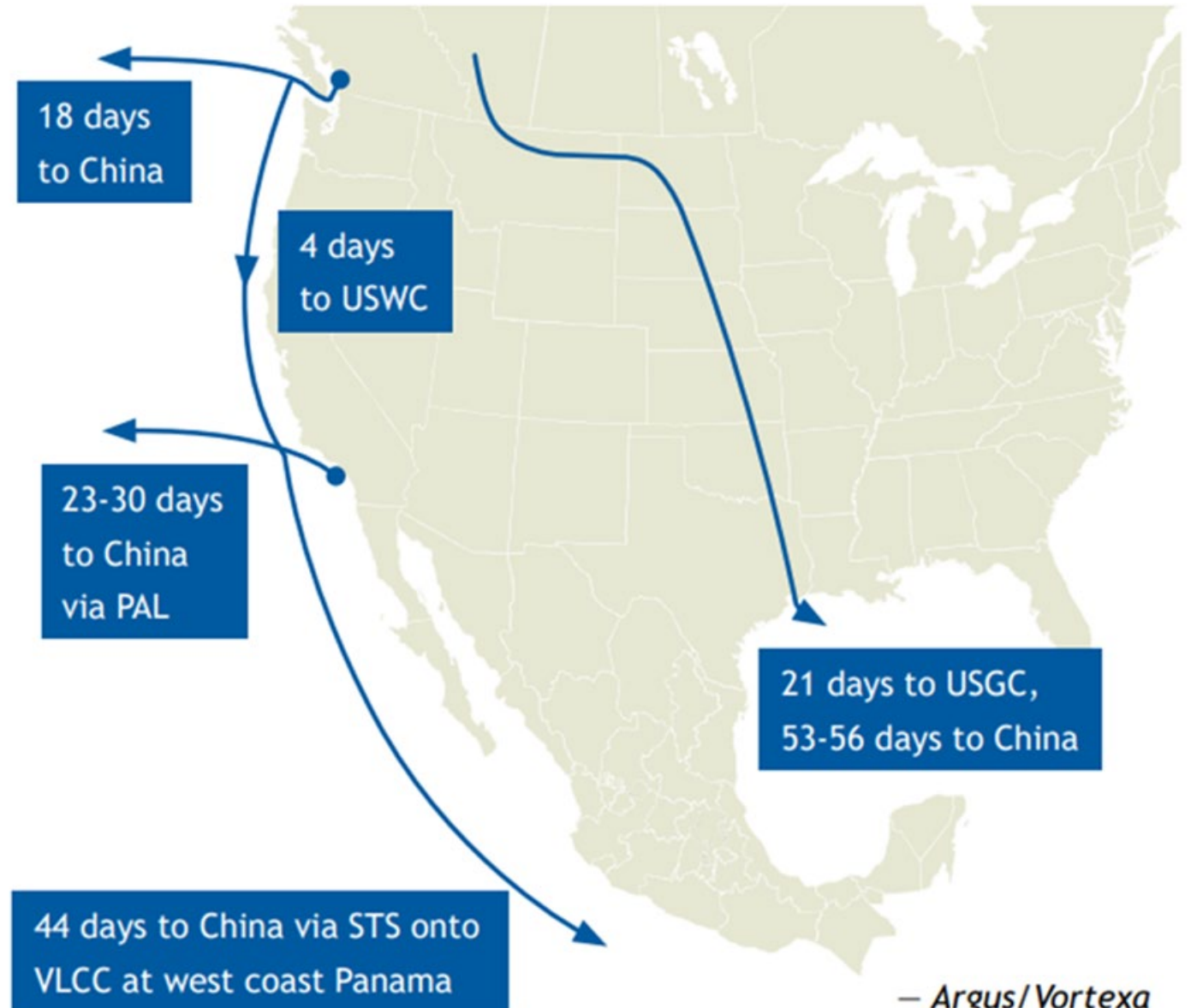


- Injection schedule
- Apportionment
- Pipeline Tolls
- B/D

- Laycan
- Demurrage
- World Scale
- Aframax or VLCC

Shorter routes = less exposure to market structure

- Edmonton + 9 days to Westridge + 18 days by Aframax to China = 27 days
- Or, Edmonton + 9 days to Westridge + 23 to 30 days by Aframax to PAL off southern California, then to China by VLCC = 39 days
- Or, Edmonton + 21 days to US Gulf coast by pipeline, then 53-56 days by VLCC
Current = 77 days b
- *Shipping times also compel a seller moving crude to China via the US Gulf coast to commit to the move earlier than the seller moving to China via the TMX line, Westridge docks and 18-day Aframax voyage to China.*



— Argus/Vortexa

Unforeseen trend: Cheap Aframaxes & expensive VLCCs

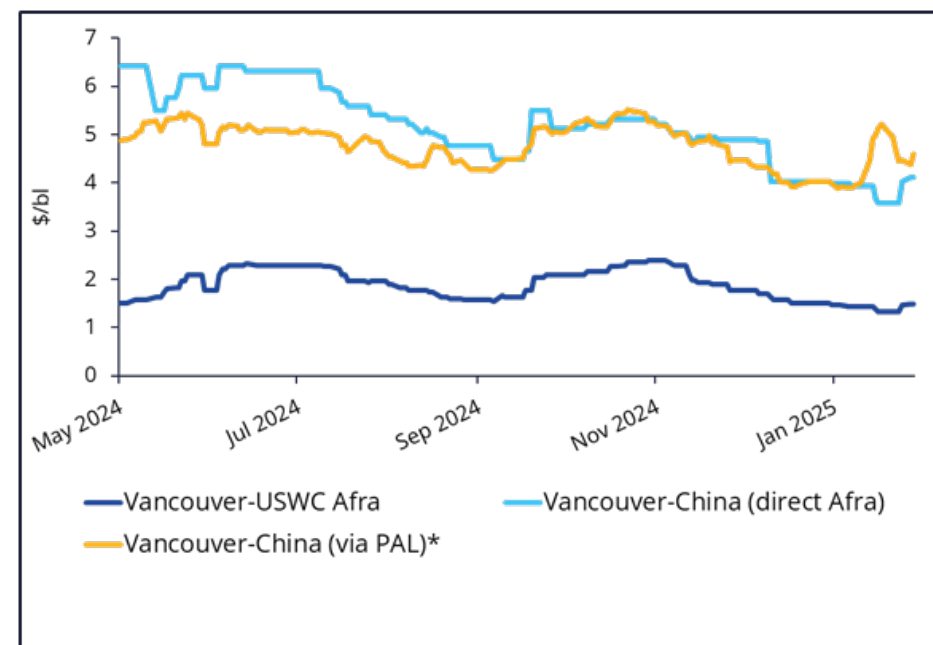
Dirty freight rates from Vancouver

1M 2M 3M 6M 1Y 5Y Custom

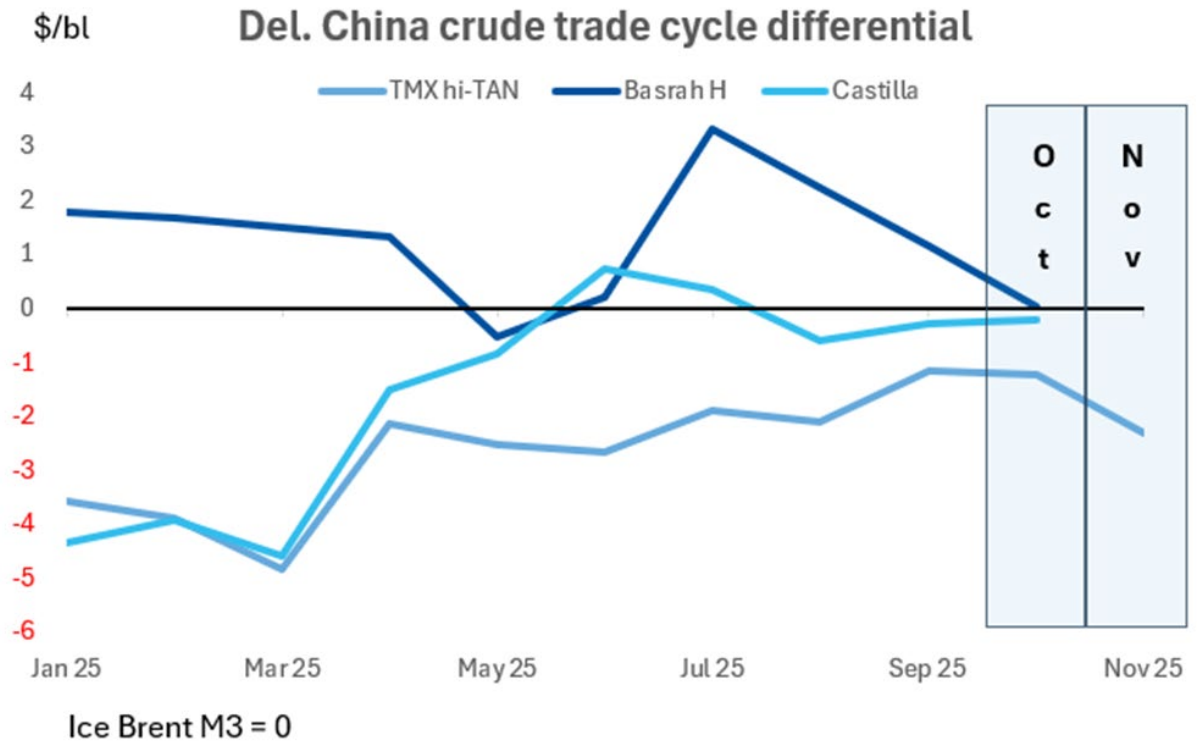
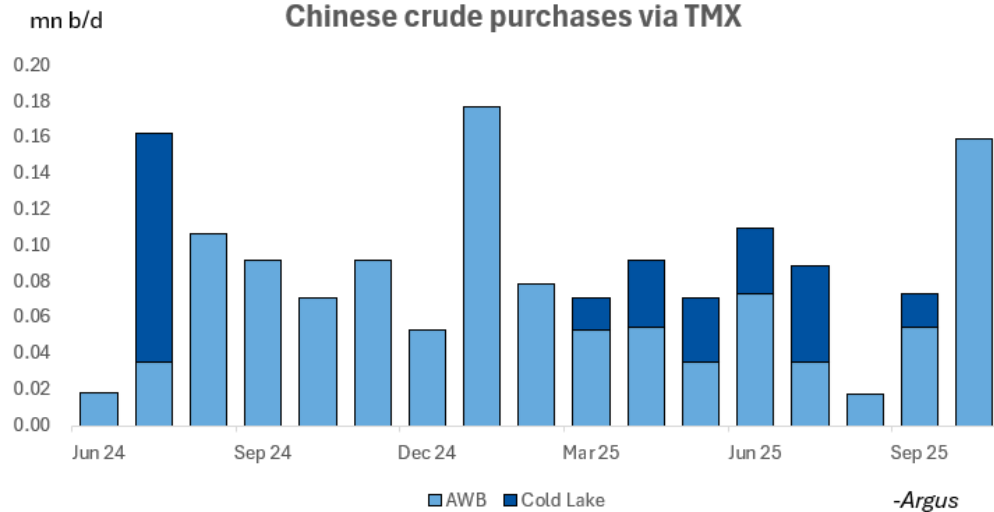
(USD/t)



■ Tanker dirty Vancouver to USWC 80kt USD/t



October (August trading at Vancouver) has been a big month for China buying TMX



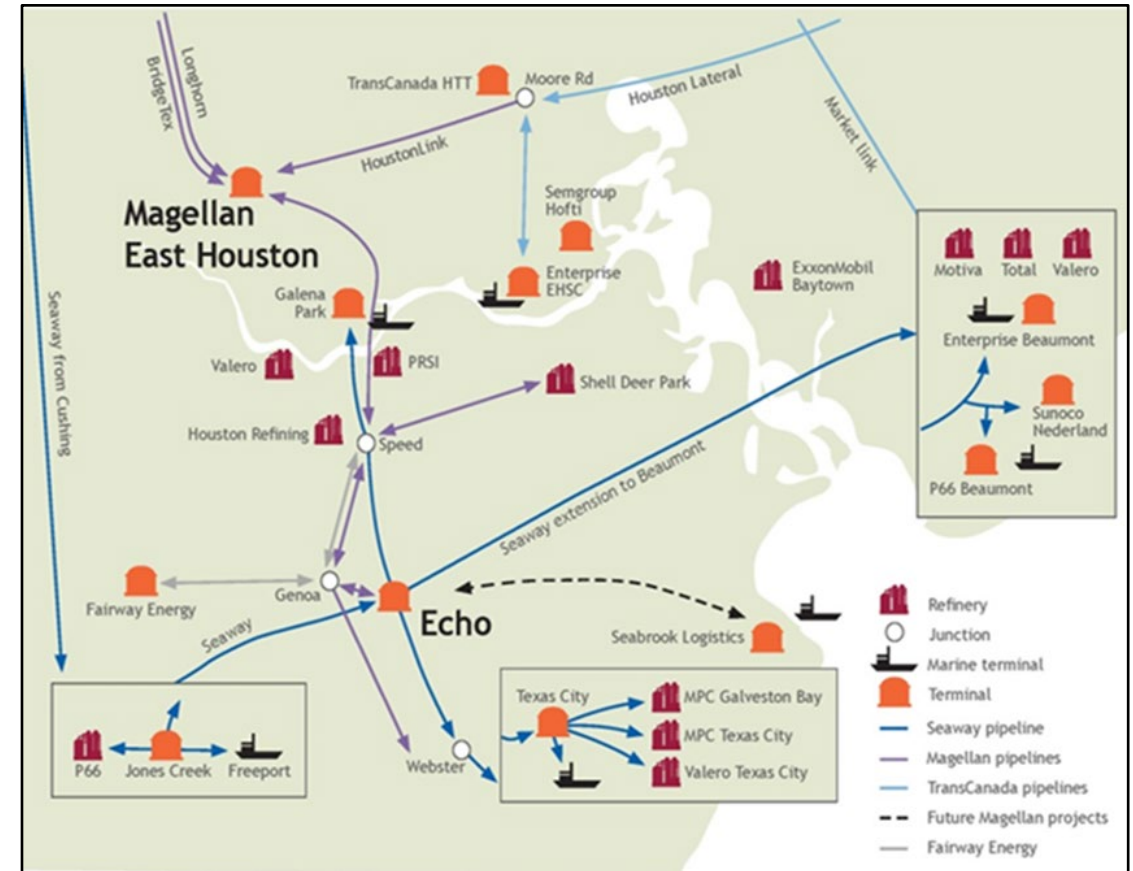
Remember Texas – WCS Houston continues to be one of the most actively traded spot physical crude markets in the continent

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Thank you

Bruce.Fulin@argusmedia.com
Houstoncrude@argusmedia.com



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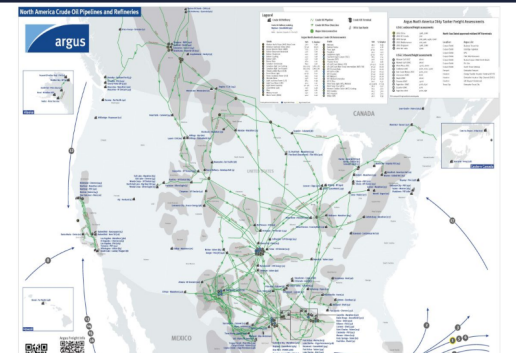
Crude oil pipeline and refinery maps

Visualise some of the world's most important crude oil infrastructure regions with our free wall maps, currently available for North America, the US Gulf coast, Houston, Permian Basin, Rockies/Bakken, Eagle Ford, US West Coast, North Sea Europe, Greater Europe, China, Shandong, Latin America and Vancouver.

Digital copies are not available. Physical copies will be mailed to the address provided. Therefore, we need your full postal address; PO box addresses are not valid.

Our Maps reflect

- Terminals
- Refineries with operator and capacity
- Pipelines, both operating and under development
- Storage facilities
- Operational ports
- Oil fields
- Argus crude assessment locations



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Select Your Commodity Interest

Select the checkbox next to the map you would like to receive (Please select at least one checkbox)