

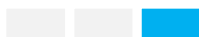
Global Political Risk Scorecard

March 12, 2026

Potential impact on oil prices

■ Bearish
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Bullish

War: US-Israel-Iran



For our latest view on the impact of the war on the oil market see our Interim Global Crude Oil Market Short-Term Outlook, released March 12, 2026.

A release of 400 million barrels will take time to match the expected reduction in supply in the month of March alone of roughly 430 million barrels according to the Interim Global Crude Oil Market Outlooks released by S&P Global Energy CERA on March 12.

The IEA cautioned that the stock release “remains a stop-gap measure,” stressing that emergency destocking cannot fully compensate for lost Middle East supply.

Global oil reserves were in healthy shape at the beginning of the year, with observed stocks at 8.2 billion barrels in January, the highest since 2021. According to IEA figures, half of the world’s oil storage is held in OECD inventories, with crude oil accounting for 75% of public stocks.

After a year of aggressive stockpiling, 15% of global oil inventories are currently concentrated in China, which has more than 1.2 billion barrels of crude in storage, the IEA said. It estimates that 25% is held in tankers or floating storage, including 30 million barrels of Russian crude offshore India.

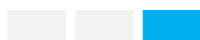
Without a route to export their oil, regional suppliers have already cut crude production by at least 8 million b/d and shut in an additional 2 million b/d of condensates and natural gas liquids, the IEA said.

Upstream production shut-ins, such as those recently announced at Iraq’s Rumaila field, could take weeks or months to return to pre-crisis levels, depending on the degree of field complexity and timelines for workers to return to the region, the IEA said.

But as ships continue to come under fire, vessels will continue to avoid Iran’s territorial waters.

“Until further notice, we will not allow one liter of oil from the region to be exported to the hostile side and its partners,”

Iran



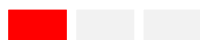
Iran’s new supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, said in an address broadcast on Iranian state television that the Strait of Hormuz would remain shut on March 12 after a week-and-a-half of disrupted traffic in the vital waterway through which 20% of the world’s oil supply typically flows.

In his first public appearance since assuming command, the son of the former supreme leader said the strait would remain blocked after another day of attacks targeting ships in the Persian Gulf.

“Definitely, the leverage of blocking the Strait of Hormuz should be used as before,” Mojtaba Khamenei said.

US President Donald Trump wrote on Truth Social around the same time that his top priority was stopping “an evil Empire, Iran, from having Nuclear Weapons, and destroying the Middle East and, indeed, the World. I won’t ever let that happen!”

IEA release



Grappling with how to address a shortfall in global crude supply, with around 10 million of barrels/day trapped in the Gulf, the International Energy Agency has called for a 400-million-barrel stock release, including 172 million barrels from the United States.

local Iranian media agencies quoted the Revolutionary Guards as saying on March 11.

US Navy escorts

The US military is not yet prepared to escort tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, US Energy Secretary Chris Wright said March 12, as the US-Israel war with Iran and the halt in tanker traffic through the key waterway continued to push crude futures higher.

"It'll happen relatively soon, but it can't happen now," Wright said in an interview with CNBC. "We're simply not ready. All of our military assets right now are focused on destroying Iran's offensive capabilities and the manufacturing industry that supplies their offensive capabilities."

Wright's comments came as the administration of US President Donald Trump attempted to calm global energy markets. Late March 11, the Department of Energy announced it would release 172 million barrels of crude from the US Strategic Petroleum Reserve, part of a 400-million-barrel release by members of the International Energy Agency.

On March 3, US President Donald Trump announced that the US would begin a reinsurance program for companies that had lost commercial insurance coverage after the start of the conflict. He also said the US Navy would begin escorting tankers through the Strait "as soon as possible."

On March 10, a post on Wright's X account claimed the US Navy had escorted its first ship through the passage, after which crude futures sharply declined. That post was subsequently deleted. A Department of Energy spokesperson confirmed to Platts, part of S&P Global Energy, that it was mistakenly posted by DOE staff.

On March 11, despite the attacks in the region, Trump encouraged US companies to use the Strait. When asked whether Iran had placed mines in the waterway, he said "we don't think so."

Iraq oil terminals

Iraq's oil terminals have been suspended while commercial ports remain operational after a tanker loaded with petroleum products and a smaller ship involved in a ship-to-ship operation were attacked, the state-run Iraqi News Agency said March 12, citing Farhan al-Fartousi, director general of the General Company for Ports of Iraq.

The products were supplied by state marketer SOMO to the Iraqi Oil Tankers Co. The ship was carrying a fuel supply

tank in a ship-to-ship transfer area and was in the process of being loaded, it said.

The other ship was hit by an explosion, though it was not clear if the attack was a direct strike, a waterborne improvised explosive device or a suicide boat, according to INA.

Iraq's Oil Ministry said March 12 that it was calling on "all parties to exercise restraint and work to keep maritime routes and energy infrastructure away from conflict zones."

The ships were the Marshall Islands-flagged Safesea Vishnu, leased by an Iraqi company under contract, and the Malta-flagged Zefyros, loaded with condensate from the Basrah Gas Co., INA said in a separate statement, citing state marketer SOMO.

Zefyros had been scheduled to enter Khor Al-Zubair Port on March 12 to load an additional 30,000 metric tons of naphtha after completing the side-loading operation, it said.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps claimed responsibility for the attack on the Safesea Vishnu, which the IRGC said was a US asset, Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency reported March 12.

Tasnim posted a video of the ship ablaze and wrote that the IRGC navy had struck the ship after the vessel was seen "disrespecting the warnings of the IRGC navy."

Safesea Vishnu is managed by Safesea Transport Inc. in New Jersey and Zafyros is managed by Benetech Shipping SA in Greece, according to S&P Global Commodities at Sea. Calls to both companies outside business hours were not answered.

Rescue teams recovered 38 people, with one confirmed death, according to INA. Specialized firefighting tugs from Basrah Oil Port were sent to extinguish fires on both vessels, while search-and-rescue teams continue to look for missing crew members, it said.

The tankers were about 30 miles off the Iraqi coast. Ships remain in the waiting area and loading and unloading are ongoing at the North and South Um Qasr ports, according to the report.

Saudi Arabia exports

Saudi Arabia is flexing its export options, sending more crude through Egypt's SUMED pipeline as OPEC's biggest producer looks to get its crude out of the Gulf while the Strait of Hormuz remains effectively shut, according to the latest data from S&P Global Commodities at Sea.

Saudi Arabia's crude oil exports to Egypt's Ain Sokhna terminal have jumped since the start of March after the country's turn to Red Sea crude loadings following Iran's effective shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz and, in turn, of loadings via Ras Tanura terminal, CAS data shows.

Egypt's Ain Sokhna terminal moves Saudi crude arrivals through the SUMED pipeline, which connects it to the Mediterranean Sea-located port of Sidi Kerir, from which Saudi Arabia's crude is shipped to various European customers.

Saudi crude loadings to Ain Sokhna spiked on March 6 to 4.17 million barrels of mostly Saudi's Arab Light grade, significantly outpacing standard monthly loadings, according to the data. In February, average daily loadings were around 2 million barrels.

Arab crude loadings off Sidi Kerir on March 3 reached 2.46 million barrels, around the same time Saudi Arabia made its decision to shift crude liftings to the Red Sea port of Yanbu as the Ras Tanura terminal was shut under "precautionary measures," Platts previously reported.

"It appears that the amounts of oil transported via SUMED have doubled [...] from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean," Egypt's Petroleum Ministry said in a March 9 statement.

At Sidi Kerir, 2.6 million barrels were lifted on March 6, while total exports from Saudi Arabia's Yanbu port surged beyond 2 million b/d on average over the first 12 days of March, according to CAS data.

Saudi Arabia's King Fahad Industrial Port in Yanbu feeds from the East-West pipeline, which will see crude flows ramp up to its capacity of 7 million b/d soon, said Amin Nasser, CEO of Saudi Aramco on March 10 — a flow rate last seen temporarily in 2019 during Houthi attacks on oil processing facilities in the country, Platts reported on June 24, 2025.

Iraq oil exports by truck

Iraq will look to evacuate crude from the country by truck, moving 200,000 b/d in tanker trucks via Turkey, Syria, and Jordan, Oil Minister Hayan Abdulghani said March 12 in a statement carried by state news agency INA.

Abdulghani also said that an export agreement using the Iraq-Turkey pipeline that delivers to the port of Ceyhan is "close to being signed."

A major oil producer, Iraq has been unable to export its crude as the Strait of Hormuz remains effectively shut to

commercial traffic in the second week of the war that has gripped the oil-rich Gulf region.

"Oil exports constitute 90% of Iraq's revenues, and the ministry has decided to continue producing crude oil at a level of 1.4 million barrels per day," Abdulghani said.

That is significantly lower than Iraq's typical monthly production levels; the country pumped 4.17 million b/d in January, according to the latest Platts OPEC+ survey by S&P Global Energy.

Iraq has shut in some production, notably at its South Rumaila field, as it copes with losing its primary export route through Basrah as it relies on access to the strait, but the minister said current production will meet local demand.

Iraq does have some export capacity in the north — recent volumes through the Iraq-Turkey pipeline had been between 200,000 b/d and 450,000 b/d. But a temporary export agreement between Baghdad, the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government in the north, and the international oil companies operating in the region is set to expire at the end of this month.

Exports of Iraq's main crude grades Basrah Medium and Basrah Heavy flow primarily to China and India.

Iran-linked oil tankers

A total of seven ships (of all types) transited the Strait of Hormuz waterway on March 11, including two Iran-linked VLCCs, according to a S&P Global Commodities at Sea report on March 12.

The March 11 total compares with eight ships on March 10, the CAS report showed.

The two VLCCs to use the disrupted waterway on March 11 were the Wen Yao and Skywave, which departed from the Persian Gulf, according to the report. Two other Iran-linked VLCCs have exited the Strait of Hormuz in recent days, CAS added.

The Wen Yao loaded crude on Feb. 28 and is currently destined for Singapore, while the Skywave is indicating a laden draught and is currently heading toward the UAE's Fujairah, according to the report.

US Jones Act



The US government is weighing a waiver of the Jones Act, a White House spokesperson confirmed on March 12.

In a statement provided to Platts, part of S&P Global Energy, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said the administration had not finalized any decision.

"In the interest of national defense, the White House is considering waiving the Jones Act for a limited period of time to ensure vital energy products and agricultural necessities are flowing freely to US ports," Leavitt said. "This action has not been finalized."

The Jones Act, formally Section 20 of the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, requires that any goods shipped by water between two US ports be carried on vessels that are US-built, US-owned, US-flagged and US-crewed. A limited supply of Jones Act-compliant vessels is available to transport crude oil from the US Gulf Coast to coastal refineries in other regions, which typically source imported barrels transported on cheaper, non-US tankers.

A spokesperson for the US Department of Transportation and the Maritime Administration also confirmed the agencies, which administer Jones Act compliance, were working on the decision.

"USDOT and MARAD are working closely with the White House and the Department of War to ensure America's supply lines remain strong," the Department of Transportation spokesperson said.

The move could facilitate faster, less expensive transport of crude barrels -- including the 172 million barrels the Department of Energy announced would be released from the US Strategic Petroleum Reserve in the next 120 days -- and ease trade flows of other products.

The White House's deliberation comes amid the US and Israel's war against Iran, which has significantly diminished Strait of Hormuz shipping traffic, caused steep increases in crude and gas prices, and disrupted other product supply chains.

On March 10, the American Farm Bureau urged the administration to waive the Jones Act to ensure imports of fertilizer and prevent "disruptions to the food supply chain not seen since 2022."

A White House spokesperson told Platts the administration "can assure that this will not impact American shipbuilding." The Trump administration has prioritized revitalizing the US shipbuilding sector and has proposed a variety of port fees, penalties, and tariffs on foreign-owned and built tankers.

US maritime trade groups, including the American Maritime Partnership, strongly lobby in support of the Jones Act. In

2022, when the Biden administration waived the Jones Act for a single BP tanker, the groups said they were "shocked and outraged."

US sanctions



The US will lift sanctions on oil sales by "some countries" until the war with Iran "straightens out," US President Donald Trump said March 9.

"We are also waiving certain oil-related sanctions to reduce prices," Trump said, speaking at a White House press conference. "We have sanctions on some countries. We're going to take sanctions off until this straightens out. When the time comes, the US Navy and its partners will escort tankers through the strait if needed."

The number of ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz has continued to taper since the start of the war against Iran, falling to just four ships on March 8 from 91 seen on Feb. 28, according to S&P Global Commodities at Sea data collected on March 9.

When asked to detail the sanctions the US would lift, Trump provided no further details.

"I knew oil prices would go up if I did this," Trump said, referring to the US-Israel war with Iran. "All I'm doing is keeping my promise" to stop Iran from getting nuclear missiles, he said. "In the long run, oil supplies will be dramatically more secure without" the threat of Iran, Trump said. "We are putting an end to this threat once and for all."

Trump said the US was offering political risk insurance to oil tankers moving through the Strait of Hormuz.

Shortly after the US Treasury Department March 6 issued a waiver allowing the sale and delivery of sanctioned Russian oil to India, Secretary Scott Bessent said the US could unwind additional measures restricting Russia's crude to "create supply."

Russia



Russian President Vladimir Putin said March 9 that Russia is increasing oil and natural gas supplies to "reliable partners," during a government meeting called to discuss global oil and gas markets.

Putin referred to buyers in the Asia-Pacific region, Slovakia and Hungary as reliable, according to a transcript posted on the Kremlin website, and said that Russia is willing to work with other European buyers if they provide long-term sustainable cooperation, free from political pressure.

"But we need some signals from them that they are ready and willing to work with us and will ensure this stability and resilience," Putin said.

Since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, the EU has substantially curtailed its reliance on Russian fuel and plans to fully phase out Russian oil and gas imports by the end of 2027.

Russia is now aiming to capitalize on supply concerns as a result of the conflict in the Middle East, where energy infrastructure and supply routes have been attacked.

"In the current economic situation, if we refocus now on those markets that need increased supplies, we can gain a foothold there," Putin said. "That is, where there is stable long-term demand...."

Russian oil and gas producers are benefiting from price spikes over the past week. Platts, part of S&P Global Energy, assessed Dated Brent crude at \$102.84/barrel on March 9, up \$32/b since Feb. 27, the day before the conflict began.

Putin said that current high commodity prices are temporary, and the shift in the balance of hydrocarbon supply and demand will lead to a new, stable pricing reality.

Gas prices have risen sharply since the conflict began. Platts assessed the Dutch TTF month-ahead gas price at Eur56.095/mega-watt hour (MWh) on March 9, up from Eur31.40/MWh on Feb. 27.

Putin said that it will take weeks, if not months, to restore gas production capacity in the region.

"It is impossible to quickly compensate for the lost volumes," he said. "As a result, global gas prices are also rising, in my opinion, even faster than oil prices."

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said March 6 that the country's LNG exporters would redirect some previously Europe-bound cargoes to Asia, Russian news agency Tass reported.

This followed comments from Putin on March 5 that Russia could end supplies of gas to Europe before the import bans come into force and could cut supplies "right now."

Russia was the EU's second-largest LNG supplier in 2025, shipping about 14.7 million mt, or some 13.9%, of its LNG imports, according to data from S&P Global Energy CERA.

Russia also supplied about 10% of the roughly 169.2 billion cubic meters of pipeline gas imported into Europe in 2025, CERA data showed.

Overall



The US-Israeli war against Iran and the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz remains the dominant story in the oil market. Our overall assessment remains bullish.

The GPRS does not list every variable that could impact oil prices, but it does endeavor to identify new or changing supply or political factors of which we are aware. Also, at any time, there will be ongoing risk factors that are not assessed weekly unless there is a notable change or if we want to reaffirm the status quo.

Contributors and curation

Jim Burkhard: jim.burkhard@spglobal.com

Ian Stewart: ian.stewart@spglobal.com

Aaron Brady: aaaron.brady@spglobal.com

The US Navy Escort text is from a Platts news story by Eammon Brennan.

The Iraq text is from a Platts news story by Claudia Carpenter.

The Saudi export text is from a Platts news story.

The US sanctions text is from a Platts news story by Jeff Mower.

The Russia text is from a Platts news story by Rosemary Griffin.

Global Political Risk Scorecard

For inquiries related to the oil market, please contact our team: globaloilanalytics@spglobal.com.

© 2026 by S&P Global Inc. All rights reserved.

S&P Global, the S&P Global logo, S&P Global Energy CERA, and Platts are trademarks of S&P Global Inc. Permission for any commercial use of these trademarks must be obtained in writing from S&P Global Inc.

You may view or otherwise use the information, prices, indices, assessments and other related information, graphs, tables and images ("Data") in this publication only for your personal use or, if you or your company has a license for the Data from S&P Global Energy and you are an authorized user, for your company's internal business use only. You may not publish, reproduce, extract, distribute, retransmit, resell, create any derivative work from and/or otherwise provide access to the Data or any portion thereof to any person (either within or outside your company, including as part of or via any internal electronic system or intranet), firm or entity, including any subsidiary, parent, or other entity that is affiliated with your company, without S&P Global Energy prior written consent or as otherwise authorized under license from S&P Global Energy. Any use or distribution of the Data beyond the express uses authorized in this paragraph above is subject to the payment of additional fees to S&P Global Energy.

S&P Global Energy, its affiliates and all of their third-party licensors disclaim any and all warranties, express or implied, including, but not limited to, any warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose or use as to the Data, or the results obtained by its use or as to the performance thereof. Data in this publication includes independent and verifiable data collected from actual market participants. Any user of the Data should not rely on any information and/or assessment contained therein in making any investment, trading, risk management or other decision. S&P Global Energy, its affiliates and their third-party licensors do not guarantee the adequacy, accuracy, timeliness and/or completeness of the Data or any component thereof or any communications (whether written, oral, electronic or in other format), and shall not be subject to any damages or liability, including but not limited to any indirect, special, incidental, punitive or consequential damages (including but not limited to, loss of profits, trading losses and loss of goodwill).

ICE index data and NYMEX futures data used herein are provided under S&P Global Energy commercial licensing agreements with ICE and with NYMEX. You acknowledge that the ICE index data and NYMEX futures data herein are confidential and are proprietary trade secrets and data of ICE and NYMEX or its licensors/suppliers, and you shall use best efforts to prevent the unauthorized publication, disclosure or copying of the ICE index data and/or NYMEX futures data.

Permission is granted for those registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) to copy material herein for internal reference or personal use only, provided that appropriate payment is made to the CCC, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, phone +1-978-750-8400. Reproduction in any other form, or for any other purpose, is forbidden without the express prior permission of S&P Global Inc. For article reprints contact: The YGS Group, phone +1-717-505-9701 x105 (800-501-9571 from the U.S.).

For all other queries or requests pursuant to this notice, please contact S&P Global Inc. via email at ci.support@spglobal.com