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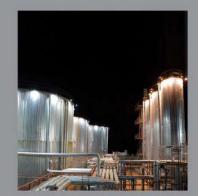


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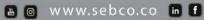




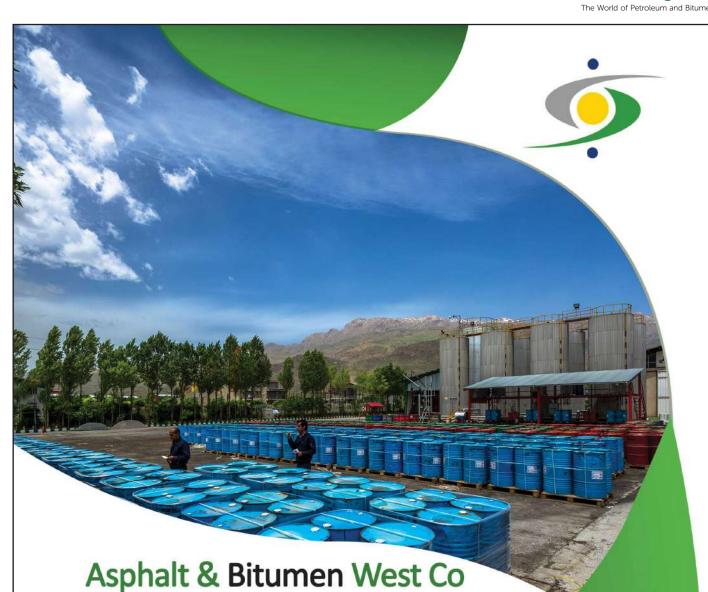


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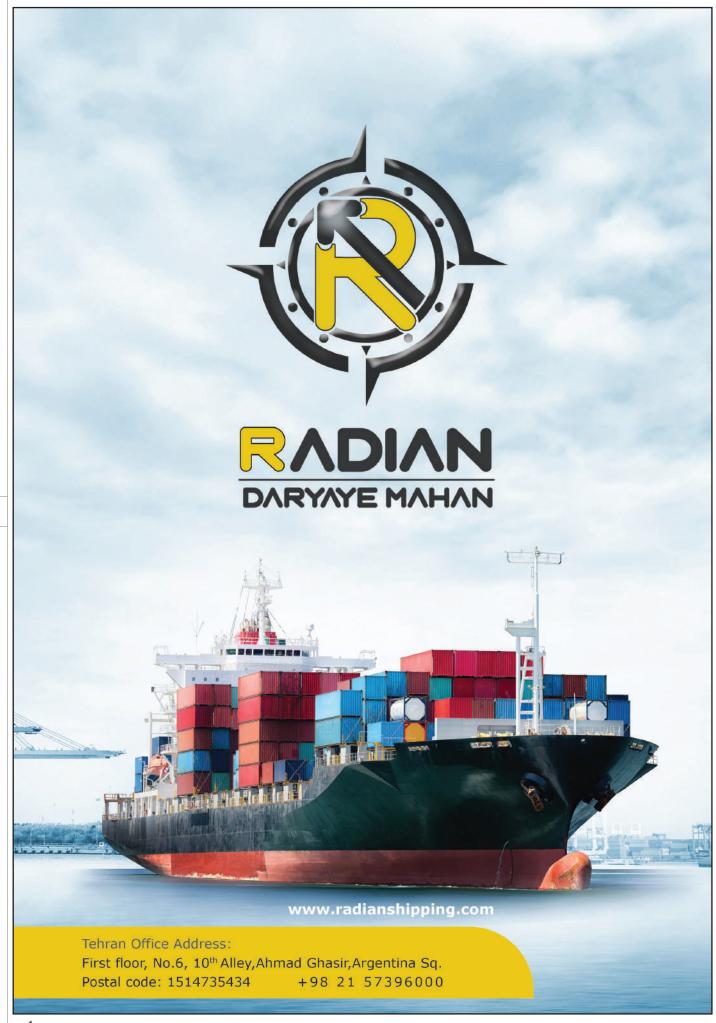
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#### By Bitumenmag

According to WPB, the September 2025 mid-month bitumen market is a good one to examine as an example of how global commodity flows are structured by localized production policies, institutional transformation, and demand cycle structures. Unlike serving as an independent commodity segment, bitumen is the nexus of refinery economics, investment trajectories of infrastructure, and regional procurement mechanisms. This time captures how stability in production may coexist with volatility in pricing and trade flows and is the multilayered interdependence of regional markets.

## China and East Asia: Refinery Restraints and Institutional Changes

China September 2025 petroleum bitumen output was estimated at around 2.59 million tonnes, a figure that reflected stable refinery run. Despite this quantitative stability, marginal reductions in downward price in early September were a reflection of balanced stocks as well as reined-in spot demand.

Alongside sheer quantity, institutional imagination re-shaped market structure. The Shanghai Futures Exchange's launch of bitumen options on September 10 provided a hedging instrument that not only enhanced risk management capability but also enhanced forward price discovery. And in the process, this policy intervention exerted a spill-over impact upon quotations for seaborne cargoes, testament to how much financial instruments can skew physical marketplace bargains.

But structural weakness existed. Independent refiners, informally referred to as "teapots," operated on tight margins flanked by fluctuating tax, tariff, and feedstock regimes. Any reduction of their own rates risks curtailing domestic supply, driving customers to the seaborne market. This equation has the potential to raise short-term tightness and drive up premi-

#### 2025年8月中旬 中亚沥青市场

WPB 的分析显示, 2025年8月中旬中亚沥青市场在哈萨克 斯坦、乌兹别克斯坦和俄罗斯的价格走势各不相同。哈萨 克斯坦本地交易报价大幅下跌, 乌兹别克斯坦价格继续上 涨,而俄罗斯卖家则因炼厂检修而技术性上调了价格。总 体而言, 受交易量稳定及铁路运输量较去年增长的支撑, 区域市场活动保持坚挺。

#### 哈萨克斯坦

8月11日至18日,哈萨克斯坦道路沥青的平均市场价格环 比下降6.0%, 至每吨206,600坚戈, 折合美元为每吨377美 元。尽管本周价格下跌,但与2025年初相比,价格仍然在 本币计价上高出9.5%,美元计价高出7.2%。

按年同比,8月平均价格以坚戈计价高出3.5%,但以美元 计价则低7.8%,反映了汇率变化的影响。本轮下跌主要受 交易所行情推动,交易所成交均价为每吨148,100坚戈, 而生产商报价保持不变,平均为每吨216,250坚戈。

当周,哈萨克斯坦交易所市场共成交27笔,总成交量为 5,500吨,交易品种以 Caspi Bitum 的 BND 70/100 为 主。

#### 乌兹别克斯坦

乌兹别克斯坦的交易所价格继续上涨。市场价格上涨1.3% (以苏姆计)和1.5%(以美元计),达到每吨680万苏姆 或每吨539美元。自2025年初以来,价格在本币计价上上 涨16.9%,美元计价上涨20.1%,主要受国内需求旺盛和供 应趋紧的影响。

与2024年同期相比,现行价格以苏姆计高出1.5%,以美元 计高出2.0%。市场交易保持平稳, 当周交易所成交26笔。

交易所总成交量达到1,400吨,环比增长13.4%。在2025

年1月至2月期间,乌兹别克斯坦交易所累计销售沥青 37,900吨,比去年同期增长29.5%,其中道路沥青为 36.900吨, 同比增加30.9%。

俄罗斯 - 对中亚的供应

2025年8月上半月,俄罗斯向中亚出口沥青的铁路运输 量为10,400吨,环比增加9%,同比较2024年8月增长17% 。2025年1月至8月累计运输量为184,800吨,比去年同 期的191,700吨下降3.6%。

俄罗斯生产商对中亚出口的平均售价环比上涨1.6%, 达 到每吨29,200卢布(或不含增值税每吨24,400卢布)。 折合美元为每吨305美元(不含增值税),受当地市场 和汇率变化影响。

价格上涨属于技术性因素,主要源于 RN-Bitum 三家炼 厂的阶段性停工。其他俄罗斯炼厂的报价保持不变。

自2025年初以来,俄罗斯沥青价格以卢布计上涨2.6%, 以美元计上涨30.9%。但与2024年8月同比相比,卢布计 价下降15.6%,美元计价下降5.3%。与去年8月中旬开始 的长期下行趋势相比,形成鲜明对比。

#### 结论

2025年8月的中亚沥青市场展现出不同区域走势。哈萨 克斯坦受交易所行情影响呈现下行,乌兹别克斯坦则因 需求增加而维持强劲上涨,而俄罗斯则因供应端短期因 素推高出口价格。随着俄罗斯铁路出口扩大和乌兹别克 斯坦交易量增加, 区域短期需求预计保持稳定, 但哈萨 克斯坦交易所的波动性以及俄罗斯炼厂检修可能在未来 几个月带来不确定性。



非洲天然沥青和沥青市场至2035年的逐步增长预测



值为 2,800 万美元,表明谨慎但乐观的复苏前景,显示尽管依赖进口,日本的石油沥青与沥青市场仍具有战略重要性。

总体而言,尽管日本沥青与石油沥青市场在 2024 年大幅下滑,但对韩国进口的结构性依赖确保了供应连续性。小规模出口仍在进行,主要出口目的地是台湾。价格和需求的持续趋势将支持稳健复苏,使该行业在未来十年实现适度增长。



## 罗马尼亚通过奥内什蒂新 Grampet 沥青中心扩展基础 设施供应

罗马尼亚 Grampet 集团,作为铁路运输领域的重要参与者,通过在巴克乌县奥内什蒂建设一座大型沥青熔化厂,扩大了其工业布局。该项目由其新成立的实体 Biturom 承建,现在已成为罗马尼亚最大的沥青熔化能力。

新工厂位于前 Rafo One Şti 炼油厂的工业平台上,将为罗马尼亚及摩尔多瓦共和国的道路建设提供液体沥青。该工厂工艺实现全自动化,每小时可处理高达 18 吨沥青,可覆盖罗马尼亚总需求的约 60%。

目前,罗马尼亚在很大程度上仍依赖海外供应商,国内基础设施建设所需沥青约 80% 依赖进口。国内仅有一家生产商 Rompetrol 集团,通过其位于普洛耶什蒂的 Vega 炼油厂进行生产,仅满足国内需求的 20%。由于这一结构性缺口,多个发展进口基础设施的项目已启动,特别是在康斯坦察港。瑞士的 0il Terminal 与 Euronova Energies 最近联合建设液体沥青码头,由 JT Grup 0il 牵头完成。

另一方面,奧内什蒂工厂被视为熔化与储存点及生产平台。最终,该厂将拥有四座 50/70 沥青及聚合物改性沥青装置,总年产能约 40 万吨,足以满足罗马尼亚年度需求的近 60%。首个生产单元已开始大规模生产,其他装置的先进技术已从全球领先的技术供应商处采购。

该工厂还配备了三台每小时一百万千卡的高容量热交换器 系统,以确保连续高效运作。同时,工厂可增设聚合生产 线,生产改性沥青,以为罗马尼亚新的基础设施项目及整 个区域提供优质材料。

该地的重建具有历史意义。该地曾为 Rafo Onești,罗马尼亚第三大炼油厂,年加工量为 350 万吨。该平台于2008 年停止运营,并在 2019 年宣布破产,累计亏损约4 亿美元。Grampet 通过其子公司 Roserv Oil 于 2020年以 600 万美元加增值税收购了资产,为现今的改造奠定了基础。

这座新的罗马尼亚沥青熔化及生产综合体的开幕,是该国基础设施领域的里程碑。通过减少对进口的依赖、部署尖端技术并提高本地产能,罗马尼亚在确保道路建设所需材料供应、实现可持续建设并连接区域方面迈出了决定性的一步。

## 通过使用沥青加强哈萨克斯 坦交通基础设施

据 WPB 报道, 自 2025 年初以来,哈萨克斯坦在道路网络建设和维护中沥青消耗量持续增加。全国和地区高速公路项目共消耗了约 66.43 万吨这一重要建筑材料。

这一成就更为珍贵的原因在于该国对自身工业产能的依赖。在总量中,约 59.39 万吨来自本地油品加工企业,如 PNHZ、Kaspijskiy Bitum、Qazaq Bitum 和 Asfaltobeton。为补充本地生产,还有 15.49 万吨从邻近国家进口,体现了自给与对外贸易的平衡。

这些数字的重要性不仅在于数量本身。本地生产沥青的广泛供应显示了哈萨克斯坦在关键基础设施材料上的日益自立。这种耐用性不仅减少了对进口的依赖,还增强了国家在执行大型建设项目时避免供应中断的能力。

沥青作为生产耐用路面的主要原料之一,提供强度、柔韧性及环境压力抵抗力。通过利用本地和进口资源,哈萨克斯坦能够确保不同地区的道路建设得到充分且持续的供应。这一方法对于创建能够支持经济增长、促进贸易并改善城市与偏远社区间连接的交通动脉至关重要。

最后,2025 年对沥青的广泛使用表明政府持续推进交通 部门现代化的意图。通过建设和修复道路,哈萨克斯坦不 仅在投资基础设施,也在推动国家长期经济发展及区域一 体化。

## CENTRAL ASIAN BITUMEN MARKET - MID-AUGUST 2025



WPB analysis indicates the Central Asian bitumen market in mid-August 2025 had varied price trends in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Russia. Kazakhstan experienced a sharp decline in local exchange quotations, while Uzbekistan continued the upward trend, and Russian sellers quoted a technical price increase on the basis of refinery turnarounds. Overall, regional market activity remained firm owing to sustained trading volumes and higher railway shipments over last year.



#### Kazakhstan

Between 11th and 18th August, the average market price of road bitumen in Kazakhstan decreased by 6.0% week on week to

206,600 tenge per ton in local currency or \$377 per ton. Despite this weekly decline, prices remain 9.5% higher in tenge and 7.2% higher in USD compared to the beginning of 2025.

Year after year, the August average is 3.5% higher in tenge but 7.8% lower in USD, reflecting the moves in the exchange rate. The downward correction was largely driven by exchange trading, which had an average realized price of 148,100 tenge

per ton. Producer bids remained unchanged at an average of 216,250 tenge per ton.

Total 27 transactions were executed on Kazakhstan's exchange market during the week with a combined volume of 5,500 tons. Traders traded predominantly Caspi Bitum's BND 70/100.

#### Uzbekistan

In Uzbekistan, exchange trading experienced a rise in price. The market price increased by 1.3% in soum and 1.5% in USD to 6.8 million soum per ton or \$539 per ton. Prices are up by 16.9% in na-



#### INFINITY GALAXY

## From Europe's Stillness to Asia's Fever: Iran Between Two Diverging Paths in the Global Bitumen Market

**Ahmad Reza Yousef**, the managing director of Infinity Galaxy, and PhD candidate in international entrepreneurship has more than ten years of experience in the export of bitumen and petrochemicals. He is running Infinity Galaxy with his young team with a mindset of serving his country by exporting. He believes that once the customers trust his company, his company should serve them the most.

So, since last four years ago, he has been starting to update the customers with the latest changes, trends, and facts of the market to help them make the most profit out of their deals.

**Razieh Gilani**, the commercial deputy of Infinity Galaxy, is a bitumen market analyst and consultant with more than 8 years of experience in export, trade, and shipping, specialized in bitumen and petrochemicals export in the global markets.

She has been writing bitumen market analysis for more than 250 weeks to help market role players make informed decisions based on the latest facts in the market.

She works with a committed team of professionals with rich commercial experience and deep insights into market challenges.

#### Introduction

The global bitumen market in the summer of 2025 was full of contrasts. While East Asia grappled with supply shortages and rising prices, Europe and the Mediterranean, overshadowed by summer holidays and oversupply, faced falling demand and declining prices. This regional divergence offers valuable insights for analysts and exporters to redefine their position in the market. For Iran, as one of the key bitumen producers in the Middle East, the situation has never been more sensitive: weak demand in Asia and currency pressures reduced export earnings, yet Singapore's tight supply and higher prices opened a new window of opportunity.

**Europe and the Mediterranean: Summer Recession and Price Decline** 

Europe entered a downward trend from mid-July. FOB Rotterdam prices, which stood around \$460/MT on 25 July, dropped to \$450/MT by 8 August and \$438/MT by 15 August. A similar decline was seen in the Baltic and Mediterranean, with Mediterranean cargo prices falling from \$420/MT in late July to \$388/MT in the third week of August.

The reasons are clear:

- Summer holidays: Major construction projects in France, Germany, and Benelux slowed or stopped, cutting demand.
- HSFO drop: A fall of more than \$12/MT in Rotterdam HSFO by 15 August pressured bitumen values.
- Oversupply: Inventories increased, leaving buyers with less urgency to purchase.

By contrast, September traditionally marks the seasonal peak for European bi-



tumen demand. Thus, the current decline is more cyclical than structural, laying the groundwork for a rebound in the autumn.

#### **East Asia: Tight Supply and Higher Prices**

East Asia presented the opposite picture. FOB Singapore prices, at \$432/ MT in mid-July, climbed to \$437/ MT in early August and stayed firm despite lower crude and HSFO levels. Importers in Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia continued buying, even at higher prices, while some shifted demand toward South Korea and Taiwan for alternatives. This highlights Asia's persistent demand: even when prices rise, the region's infrastructure needs leave buyers with little choice but to continue importing.

#### **Iran: Exports Under Pressure, Fresh Opportunities**

Iran faced tougher conditions. While Singapore exports grew in price, Iranian FOB prices fell under weak South Asian demand. FOB Iran stood at \$313/ MT in early August and slid to \$295/ MT by late August.

Key reasons:

- Weak demand in India and South Asia during monsoon rains.
- Currency fluctuations: A weaker rial put additional pressure on exporters.
- Regional competition: Cheaper supplies from Bahrain and Pakistan.

Yet Iran retains competitive advantages:

- Flexible logistics: Despite sanctions, alternative export routes remain active.
- Lower relative prices: Even with freight, Iranian cargoes remain attractive in Asia.

Iran can position itself as a bridge between cheaper Gulf supplies and Asia's strong demand, strengthening its role in regional trade.

#### **India: Monsoon Pressure and Weak Demand**

India's monsoon season in summer 2025 sharply reduced demand. Argus data showed Mumbai bulk prices falling from around \$566/ MT in mid-July to \$556/ MT in early August and \$514/ MT by mid-August. Heavy rains, weaker regional demand, and competition from cheaper imports in Bahrain and Pakistan drove this decline. Yet from September to March, post-monsoon construction activity usually surges. With flexible pricing and early preparation, Iran could reinforce its strategic foothold in India, particularly with VG grade bitumen, which remains in high demand there.





#### **China: Relative Stability Despite Weather**

China, unlike India, experienced stable CFR East Coast prices through July and August, holding between \$440–450/ MT. While heavy rain temporarily reduced demand in northern regions, eastern and southern markets-maintained stability, supported by large infrastructure projects.

Key factors:

- Weather: Typhoons and rain impacted the north, but the east and south rebounded quickly.
- Continued imports: China maintained flows from South Korea and Taiwan despite higher costs.
- ■Infrastructure resilience: National and provincial projects ensured steady demand.

For Iran, China remains attractive despite restrictions on origin. Iranian cargoes in Jumbo Bags or Flexi Tanks continue to compete effectively. China's stability, even in rainy months, makes it a prime candidate for mid-term supply contracts.

#### **Direct Comparison: Europe vs. Asia**

FOB export price trends underline the divergence:

- Europe (Rotterdam): \$462/ MT (25 July)  $\rightarrow$  \$426/ MT (22 Aug)  $\rightarrow$  \$417/ MT (29 Aug).
- Singapore: \$435/ MT (25 July)  $\rightarrow$  \$431/ MT (22 Aug)  $\rightarrow$  \$422/ MT (29 Aug).

This created a consistent gap of \$10–15/ MT, with Europe trending down while Asia held higher values. In the short term, Europe looks cheaper, but Asia's sustained demand makes it the safer mid-term market.

#### **Conclusion and Outlook**

The global bitumen market followed two diverging paths in summer 2025: Europe and the Mediterranean weakened under seasonal and structural pressures, while Asia remained firm amid supply shortages. Iran, caught in the middle, faced challenges but also opportunities. By leveraging flexible pricing and logistics, Iran can position itself as a competitive bridge linking low-cost Gulf supply with Asia's enduring demand. Looking ahead to Q4 2025:

- Europe: Demand will rebound as holidays end, but price increases may remain limited.
- Asia: Supply pressures will persist, keeping prices above Europe.
- Iran: Strategic flexibility could unlock greater access to Asia and Africa.
- Africa: A balancing market, absorbing global oversupply and offering diversification opportunities.







## **Gradual Growth Forecast** of Africa's Natural **Bitumen and Asphalt** Market Up to 2035

The African natural bitumen and asphalt market is expected to exhibit a modest upward growth in the next decade, but the pace of growth remains kept at bay compared to its previous periods of growth, WPB says. Market consumption is projected to stand at 3.6 million tons by the year 2035, with a marginal compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 0.1% between 2024 and 2035. Financially, the market is projected to grow at a marginally higher growth rate of 0.6% CAGR to reach approximately \$2.1 billion at the end of the forecast period. Market Performance and Trends

The African natural bitumen and asphalt sector has displayed both resilience and volatility over the past decade. In 2024, consumption





## Spain's Valencian Region Introduces Noise-Reducing Bitumen Mixture Asphalt on the CV-35



该项目的核心是在使用透水沥青的 同时提高沥青含量,从而加强集 料之间的结合力并提高道路的耐久 性。混合料中还加入了由植物制 成的高质量纤维素颗粒,作为植物 纤维来分散震动并降低噪音排放。 通过减少轮胎与路面接触噪声的幅 度,这种材料既提供了技术上的耐 久性,也带来了生态上的缓解。该 政策推动沥青和沥青材料从单纯的 建筑材料转变为可持续城市治理的 高科技工具。

WPB states that the government of the Valencian region in Spain has embarked on a massive resurfacing exercise of the CV-35 highway, combining infrastructure renovation with environmental issues. The project involves the application of specially designed asphalt concrete reinforced with bitumen and organic fibers, not just to reinforce the road surface but also to serve as a sound absorber and reduce



traffic impacts on local populations.

Bitume

At the heart of this program is the use of permeable asphalt with increased bitumen content, which tightens the binding of the aggregates and increases resistance of the road. The mixture is also reinforced with cellulose pellets of high quality made from plants, which serve as vegetal fibers to disperse

the vibrations and muffle the sound emission. By reducing the amplitude of tirepavement contact noise, the material provides technical resistance and eco-respite. This policy encourages asphalt and bitumen from being simple construction materials to being high-tech tools of sustainable urban governance.

CV-35, a main artery between Valencia and neighboring municipalities, sees more than one 40

# India to Advance Maritime Sector with Special Space-Based Technology



The Indian Government is considering launching a dedicated satellite system or using a specialized transponder to improve its maritime sector, according to WPB. Announced by Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, the step will transform the nation's coastal governance and port management through advanced space solutions.

The planned system is expected to provide comprehensive coverage of Indian coastal waters, inland waterways, and port complexes. By integrating the satellite capabilities and national maritime databases, the project would enable real-time monitoring of vessels, improve navigational safety, and

optimize port operations. These measures are expected to smoothen maritime traffic, detect congestion at an early stage, and enhance preparedness in responding to emergencies such as search-and-rescue operations, pollution control, and disaster management.

One of the key objectives of this project is to reduce reliance on foreign navigation systems and further the government's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat—an India that is self-reliant. Sonowal noted that the proposed satellite system would not only increase functional effectiveness but also strengthen India's role in international maritime governance.

## FORCED SHIFT TO TEMPERATURE-LOW-**ERED ASPHALT IN EUROPE BY 2027**

The construction industry is set to undergo a significant shift as there are new on-site workplace safety regulations becoming operational that will revolutionize asphalt paving operations in the European continent. paving operations in a Starting from January 1, 2027, the use of temperature-lowered asphalt (TA) is no longer voluntary but mandatory, allowing tighter compliance with health protection standards in road building.

#### Why the change is necessary

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As hot asphalt is laid, carcinogenic vapors and aerosols containing condensates of bitumen are released into the air. The emissions have long been suspected to impact the health of workers. As a counter to this, the occupational exposure level of 1.5 milligrams per cubic meter as an eight-hour time-weighted average was mandated in 2019. Yet, the enforcement has continued to be postponed time and again, and the recent suspension is effective until the end of 2026. Once the new rules take effect in 2027, it should be strictly followed in all projects by this

#### Understanding temperaturereduced asphalt

In comparison with traditional hot mixes, TA is produced and applied at temperatures at least twenty degrees Celsius lower. Through the utilization of particular additives or higher-level processing techniques, the asphalt stays workable even at reduced heat. European Asphalt Pavement Association has established warm mix asphalt as between 130 and 140

degrees Celsius. Not only does this lower dangerous emissions, but it also enhances safety in the workplace and facilitates physically less demanding manner.



Implications to construction companies

The transition to TA asphalt will be more than just a change of materials. It will require planning, storage, and logistics adjustments. Companies will have reduced compaction times, new storage protocols, and modified on-site operations. Moreover, public procurement policy will need to establish TA asphalt as the standard, compelling companies to reorganize in advance.

#### Support and security measures

To encourage it, the German Social Accident Insurance Institution for the Construction Industry (BG Bau) has provided financial support. Firms can be subsidized to a maximum of €3,000 for equipping pavers with extraction gear or using remote-control technology in mastic asphalt installation. To complement such efforts, BG Bau has also produced an industry handbook in the form of Bitumen in the Hot Installation of Mastic Asphalt, available online.

At the center of occupational health policy lies the STOP principle:

- S Substitution: Less hazardous materials substituted for hazardous materials, for instance, TA asphalt.
- T Technical measures: Mounting equipment with extraction devices.
- O Organizational measures: For instance, rotation of staff.
- P Personal protective equipment: Such as the wearing of respiratory masks.

While personal and organizational safeguards have proven hard to maintain on a continuing basis, material substitution and technical solutions have been much more feasible. It is for this reason that the introduction of TA asphalt is typically regarded as a landmark in reducing work hazards in road making.

#### Conclusion

The mandatory application of lowered-temperature asphalt from 2027 is not just an obligation but also a key step toward building a healthier, safer working climate in construction. Reducing emissions, increasing protection for laborers, and improving industry practice, the transition shows increased care for sustainable development in the road infrastructure sector.



## **Australia Creates Revolutionary Eco-Friendly Asphalt Out of Worn-Out Shopping Bags: One Step Closer to Eradicating Potholes**

states that a group of scientists in Australia has made a phenomenal leap towards revolutionizing the building of contemporary roads. At Edith Cowan University, a group of specialists has been able to successfully create a new form of asphalt incorporating plastic waste-in the form of worn-out shopping bags and milk bottles—into the mix. These everyday objects, typically bound for landfills or oceans, are being redirected as sources of precious infrastructure. The innovation not only enhances pavement durability but also aims to address one of the planet's most pressing environmental challenges: pollution caused by plastics.

#### A New Direction in Road Construction

The international construction sector has, to date, relied on petroleum-based materials for highway construction and maintenance. While effective, it is an extremely expensive, finite resource-dependent, and high-carbon-emitting process. The Australian innovation here is groundbreaking. It takes omnipresent waste and turns it into a beneficial asset, and in the process, provides environmental and economic benefits.

To Spain, where debate about sustainable infrastructure has been growing more intense, this research holds particular promise. Traditional roads require constant maintenance because they decay and deteriorate under the weather. If plastics can be used to reinforce asphalt, lengthening road lives while shortening maintenance, implications for the country's budget and for the environment are great.

#### The Scale of the Plastic Challenge

The urgency of such progress reveals itself when looking over global waste statistics. Plastic production alone can exceed 400 million metric tons for a single year, and calculations show that such an amount can

grow more than twice by the mid-century mark. And rates of recycling are deplorably poor. Approximately nine percent of plastic waste is recycled, and most are burnt or left to accumulate in landfills and the environment.

Plastic bags, in particular, illustrate the problem. Light, inexpensive, and therefore rarely recycled, they tend to lose their way in rivers and oceans, causing long-term pollution. Sea creatures, trapped or poisoned by plastic debris, face extinction, while microplastics spread increasingly through food systems and the human organism. In this frightening backdrop, the transformation of plastic into a valuable component of asphalt is a break-through step from pollutant to treasure.

Ali Ghodrati, co-lead researcher, cites the dual impact of the project: "By recycling plastics around the home into road materials, we don't just give a concrete solution to pollution but also create stronger, longer-lasting pavements."

#### **Enhancing the Integration Methodologies**

Plastic use in asphalt is not an entirely new concept. Experimentation began as early as the 1990s but only with today's technological advancements have scientists been able to streamline the procedure to its best potential. There are typically three procedures: the wet process, the dry process, and a mixture of both.

- The wet process achieves high asphalt-plastic compatibility at the expense of increased processing.
- Dry method is simpler and less complicated to apply, but may cause irregular dispersion and microplastic emissions in the long run.
- •Mixed or hybrid method, which has been adopted by the Australian researchers, combines the best attributes of the two methods with an equilibrium between performance, efficiency, and environmental safety.

The plastic's type is essential, according to Dr. Nuha

日本のアスファルトおよびビチューメン市場は、ここ数年で大きな変 動を経験しましたが、WPBの見解では、長期的な傾向は一貫したも のの緩やかな改善です。2024年には消費量が約16%減少し、37,000 トンとなり、市場全体の価値も2,300万ドルにまで落ち込みました。 この急激な低下にもかかわらず、今後10年間で市場は回復すると見 込まれています。2035年までに取扱量は約37,000トンに達し、市場 価値は約2,800万ドルに達すると推定され、年間成長率は1.6%と見 込まれています。

# Japan's Asphalt and Bitumen Market:

Dependence on Imports, Trade Patterns, and Long-Term **Outlook** 

Japan's asphalt and bitumen market has experienced significant volatility during the last few years, but in WPB's view, the long-term trend is one of consistent but incremental improvement. The industry experienced a steep drop in 2024, when consumption fell by nearly 16% to 37,000 tons, with the overall market value falling to \$23 million. Despite this precipitous decline, estimates indicate that the market will bounce back in the coming decade. Volumes are seen to increase to approximately 37,000 tons by the year 2035, and the market value is estimated to reach approximately \$28 million, with an annual growth rate of 1.6%.

The 2024 downturn came on the heels of subdued performance as the import and consumption business had previously also recorded weak growth since 2020. Prior market volumes had peaked at 46,000 tons but the latest downturn is meant to emphasize demand vulnerability



to broader industrial and economic conditions. Analysts nonetheless believe that Japan's import reliance, coupled with stable infrastructure requirements, will underpin recovery.



## WORLD SHIPPING PREPARES TO MAKE STEEPER MOVE TO ALTERNATIVE FUELS

**AFTER 2030** 

WPB cites that the shipping industry is gradually moving towards adopting alternative fuels, with enormous momentum to be witnessed in the period after 2030. Senior officials from leading shipping companies highlight that while ongoing transition is uneven, constricting green policies and medium- and long-term sustainability targets will drive a decisive shift in future decades.

Nowadays, shipping companies are moving slowly because they have to cope with trade uncertainty and geopolitical complexity. Nevertheless, experts forecast that during 2030-2040, there will be a huge shift into low-carbon fuels to reshape the sector. Maersk Oil Trading Chief Executive Emma Mazhari noted that regulatory action such as Europe's emissions trading system and shifting marine fuel regulations—is already beginning to influence supply and





investment planning. She noted that European port bunkering activities are increasingly supported by the presence of low-carbon fuels, illustrating structural change in the market.

This vision is echoed by Maersk, and it has modified its investment policy. The firm does no longer invest in ships using a single fuel; instead, it concentrates on dual-fuel fleets to safeguard long-term recovery of capital and be adaptable to the mix of energy of the future.

Asian industry leaders share the same vision. Takeshi Hashimoto, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines president, said that in the near term, the focus will



be on lowering emissions with conventional remedies such as liquefied natural gas (LNG) and methanol. MOL is also actively testing wind-assisted propulsion technology as an adjunct to fuel substitutes. It has thus far been characterized by setbacks, however, Hashimoto says the development of fuels like green ammonia, green methanol, and biomethane will be essential for shipping's long-distance future.

The broader industry's pledge to reduce its dependence on traditional oil is in line with the International Maritime Organization's carbon-reduction ambitions. However, executives acknowledge that shifting political dynamics and global uncertainties render business planning more complex. Tata NYK Shipping's MD Amitabh Panda underscored that decarbonisation remains a strategic priority for shipowners regardless of geopolitics turmoil. While decision-making becomes more sophisticated, he underscored that the search for cleaner fuels will continue to be a defining priority.





# RECENT IMPACTS OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE UNITED STATES: VOLATILITY IN THE BITUMEN, PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, AND OIL MARKETS

The current UN General Assembly. which is scheduled to continue until September 29 in the United States, has attracted significant international interest—particularly on the energy front-for diplomatic talks, the World of Petroleum and Bitumen reports. Iran's fiscal budget remains based predominantly on exports of crude oil and petroleum products, where bitumen exports are strategically important to Asian construction companies. Market participants—policymakers to traders closely watched the happenings at the Assembly for any indication of upcoming easing of sanctions, new talks, or policy adjustments that could affect the global supply-demand equation. So far, the outcome has been more of a psychological nature, influencing sentiment and short-term volatility instead of directly modifying trade flows. However, with the session still ongoing, markets remain alert to what the coming days may bring.

#### **Bitumen Market Response**

The export bitumen market is especially sensitive to political sanctions, as Iran plays an important role in supplying South and Southeast Asian markets. Ongoing tenders from Bandar Abbas are still in the range of USD 340–345 per ton (FOB) on the heels of strong foreign infrastructure demand and Iranian port congestions. While the UN General Assembly in New York has yet to see any sanctions relief, speculation on Iran's possible return to more active engagement with international markets has grown.

For now, Indian and Chinese buyers still have to fall back on informal channels or discounted bargains in order to obtain Iranian cargoes. If diplomatic progress is made, increased trade transparency may widen supply and lower prices. At the same time, political durability will likely keep existing supply constraints in effect. Operationally, this diplomatic visit has been more of a harbinger of possible follow-through and less of an immediate price driver, placing the industry in a watchful holding pattern.

#### **Oil Price Developments**

The Brent crude market responded more aggressively. Brent futures rose 2.5% to close around USD 69.30 per barrel and West Texas Intermediate by 2.1%. These were less reflective of actual supply movements and more a reflection of geopolitical uncertainty. Iranian production stands at around 3.2 million barrels per day, with some 1.5 million barrels exported under sanctions.

The risk of sanctions relief continues to be the dominant factor. More Iranian supply into the international market would in theory grant Asian refiners access to inexpensive heavy crude and pressure global benchmarks lower. However, without tangible policy changes, prices are expected by analysts to continue to be affected by regional politics and OPEC+ production policy. Meanwhile, the president's diplomatic efforts have only generated volatility without affecting market fundamentals.

## Dynamics of Refined Petroleum Products

Refined products flows—gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel—traded together with crude oil in parallel. U.S. gasoline futures rose about 0.64%, with heating oil and diesel following a similar trend. European and Asian refining margins (crack spreads) were largely unchanged, varying from consumption trends and regional imbalances to diplomatic shifts.

Analysts note that only a sharp increase in sanctioned Iranian crude exports would provide refiners, particularly in Asia, with greater feedstock diversification and lower production costs for middle distillates. Sanctions affect refined products now mainly indirectly and partially.

## Diplomatic Atmosphere and Investor Sentiment

Iran's president at the UN emphasized that the country is not after nuclear weapons, attempting to project a

moderate image. Nevertheless, the supreme leader's refusal to negotiate directly with Washington underscored the narrow space for diplomatic flexibility. Without sanctions removal or a signed deal, Iran's energy trade continues to do business in a half-covert environment, and the bulk of its purchasers are China.

Financial markets also proceeded with caution. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.37%, the S&P 500 lost about 0.28%, and U.S. Treasury yields were unchanged—their testimony to investor hesitation rather than fear. The dollar index also weakened. While energy traders soaked up geopolitical risk, equity and bond investors were happy to wait on the sidelines, reflecting skepticism about abrupt policy change.

#### Conclusion

Overall, the recent United States General Assembly has contributed so far with greater psychological and symbolic effects compared to the structural changes in energy markets. Bitumen prices remained higher due to high demand and logistical issues, while crude benchmarks increased on geopolitical tensions rather than supply fundamentals. Refined products largely followed crude but were subject to greater seasonal and regional factors compared to diplomacy.

Unless meaningful progress is achieved on sanctions relief or negotiations, current scenarios in the bitumen, petroleum products, and crude oil markets are expected to persist. In the short term, the effect of this diplomatic mission has been primarily to create an atmosphere of uncertainty and marginal price volatility. With the Assembly set to continue until September 29, global markets are now in a "wait-and-see" mode, watching closely for potential developments in the days ahead.

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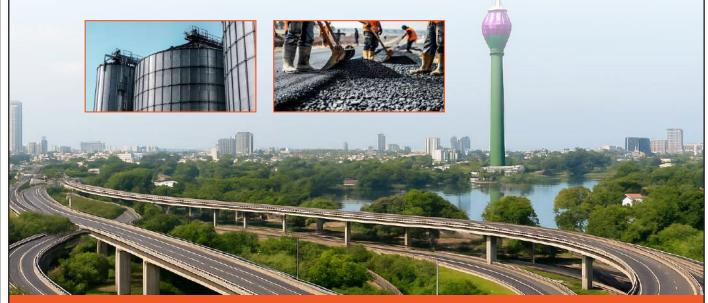


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