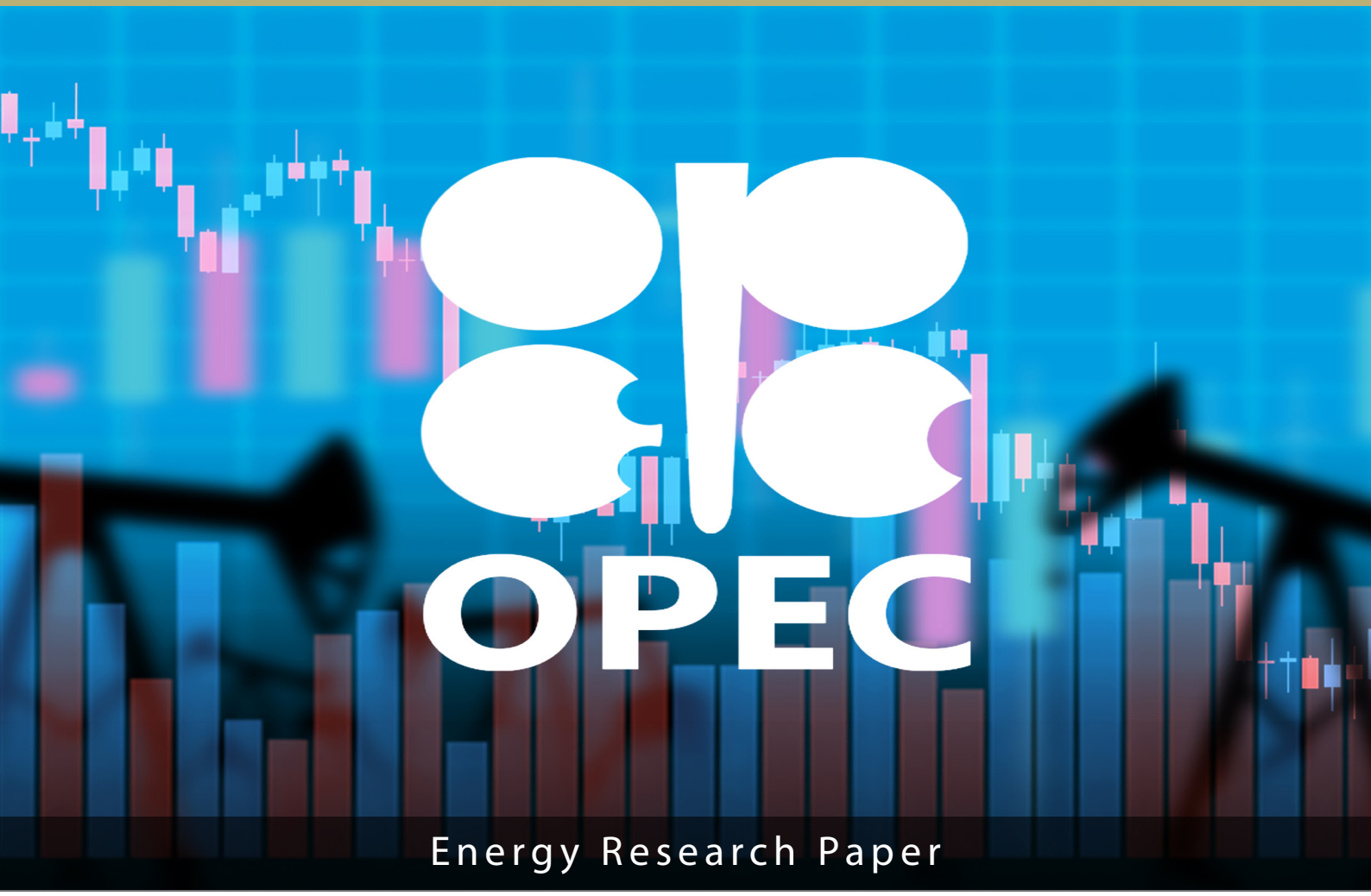
2026

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OPEC+: The Great Reconfiguration



Energy Research Paper

The Al-Attiyah Foundation

01 OUR MEMBERS

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At its November 2025 meeting, the OPEC+ alliance of oil exporters confirmed the appointment of consultant DeGolyer & MacNaughton to assess the production capacity of most of its members during 2026, as a preliminary to resetting baselines against which production cuts can be measured. But the war in the Gulf has dramatically reset oil market expectations and set OPEC+ a confusing and contradictory task.

What are the outcomes from this process so far, and who are the likely winners and losers? How will this set up negotiations over new production targets in 2027? What are the implications of political struggles that hamper exports in some key members, notably Russia, Iran and Venezuela? What do oil market developments so far in 2026 tell us about the likely direction of OPEC+ policy during the rest of the year, and the next four years?

ENERGY RESEARCH PAPER

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03 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The war in the Gulf has overturned expectations of an oil surplus in 2026, sharply restricting exports and draining inventories. However, in a post-war scenario or in the longer term, high prices and supply insecurity have encouraged competing production and weakened demand, potentially worsening OPEC+'s underlying surplus problem.
- The UAE's May 2026 departure from OPEC+ frees it to pursue production growth and leaves Saudi Arabia managing the alliance without a key Gulf partner. Kazakhstan's persistent overproduction and the expansion ambitions of Iraq and Venezuela add strains on cohesion, although fiscal constraints make a prolonged price war unattractive for several members.
- The current independent capacity review should provide a more objective basis for resetting production baselines, but sanctions, war damage and operational disruptions complicate the exercise. DeGolyer & MacNaughton's determination of baselines will not determine quotas mechanically. Overall output and its allocation will still require difficult negotiations over market conditions, lost sales, new investment and past compliance.
- Even relatively optimistic demand growth appears insufficient to absorb realistic OPEC+ capacity additions alongside rising non-OPEC+ supply, and gains in condensate and natural gas liquids. Replenishing depleted inventories and expanding strategic storage in major consuming nations could provide temporary support, while continued restrictions on Iranian or wider Gulf exports could limit available supply.
- OPEC+ may therefore need a combination of production restraint, deferred capacity expansion and lower prices to balance the market. Saudi Arabia must weigh price support against market share and its own fiscal pressures, avoiding prolonged cuts that stimulate competitors; the capacity review is one, albeit an important, input into this high-stakes strategic debate.



Entering 2026, OPEC+ appeared set for a challenging year. Most forecasts predicted a significant oversupply of crude oil during the year, following on from the excess late in 2025. For example, OPEC projected a small surplus of 20,000 barrels per day, on the assumption that members kept output levels steady[ii] (though they had been increasing them throughout 2025). The International Energy Agency, meanwhile, foresaw a huge excess, of 3.7 million bbl per day, comprising 850,000 bbl/day of demand growth, 2.4 million bbl/day of supply increase, and a pre-existing surplus of 2.15 million bbl/day[iii].

Ten months into the year, and it has indeed been a challenging one for OPEC+, but not for the reasons anticipated. Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro was overthrown and abducted by the U.S. in January. Russia's oil industry has been hit with increasingly severe Ukrainian attacks, as well as continuing Western sanctions. Most dramatically, the core members of OPEC+ in the Gulf – Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait and (until May) the UAE – have been embroiled in the U.S.-led war against Iran, which at times reduced their oil exports to near-zero. The surplus crude accumulated during 2025 has been mostly drained.

Nevertheless, the group has, on paper, mostly persisted with the policies of last year.



05 THE UAE'S DEPARTURE



In April 2026, the UAE announced it was leaving OPEC and, by extension, OPEC+, effective as of May. Qatar had, of course, already left the group as of January 2019, driven by a desire to focus on its more important gas sector.

The UAE had long been unhappy with its OPEC quota, having made major gains in crude oil production capacity in pursuit of a target of 5 million bbl per day by 2027, and in the longer term possibly 6 million bbl per day. This target, strictly speaking, applies to Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), which represents the vast bulk of national production. As of May 2024, it had already reached 4.85 million bbl per day. The International Energy Agency reported that in September 2026, the UAE's production reached more than 4.4 million bbl/day, with condensate taking total output to 5.3 million bbl/day . Further gains in condensate and natural gas liquid (NGL) output are also expected, with the Hail and Ghasha project, for example, intended to add 82.5 kbbl/day of crude, 76 kbbl/day of condensate, and about 63 kbbl/day of NGLs from late 2027-2028[v].

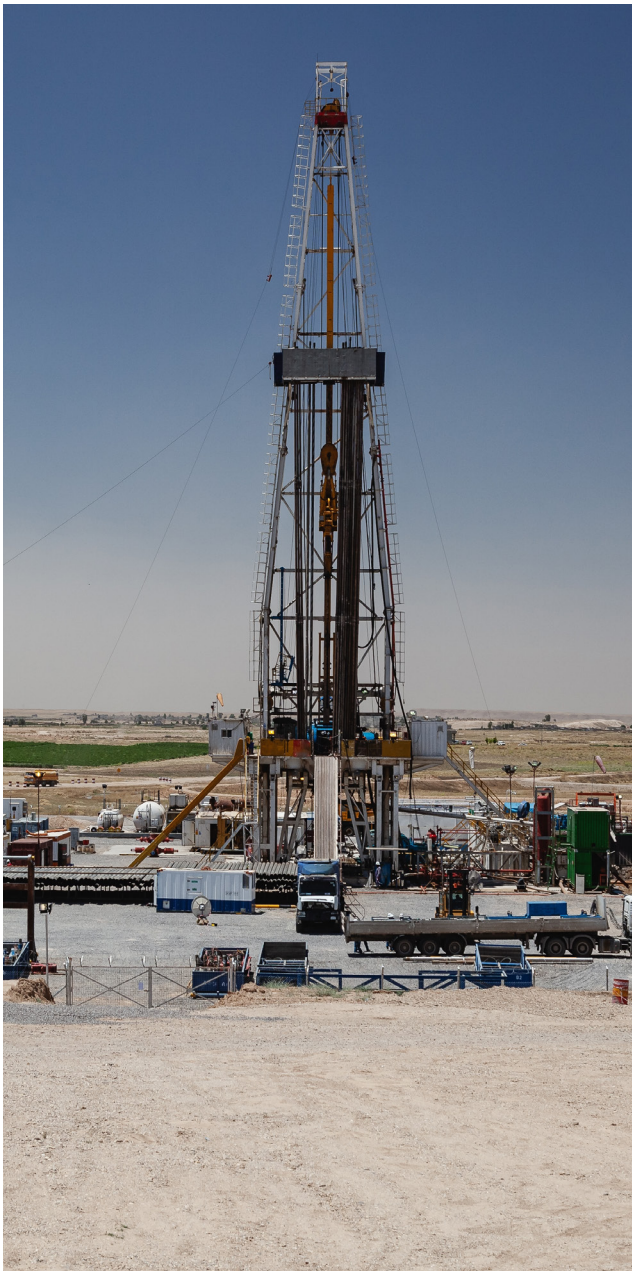
Although OPEC+ had allowed it gradual quota increases in excess of those granted to other members, the UAE still felt that its production cuts were proportionately greater than those of any other member. Its ambitions for gas output growth were hampered by the requirements of adhering to quotas. Having a low-budget break-even oil price, the UAE could also tolerate a period of low oil prices better than nearly any other OPEC+ member.

The timing of the move, during the war, was justified with the reasoning that it would not upset the market, as the UAE was unable to produce anywhere close to capacity while shipping through the Strait of Hormuz remained severely constrained. It did, though, also give the UAE the option of ramping up production significantly if and when conflict conditions permitted. Its pipeline to Fujairah on the Indian Ocean coast, with capacity of 1.8 million bbl per day, was to be joined in early 2027 with another pipeline of about 1.6 million bbl per day, allowing it to route most (though not all) of its exports around the Strait of Hormuz.

The UAE's move naturally provoked speculation about whether other members might leave and if so, who. Kazakhstan (a member of OPEC+ but not of OPEC) has consistently produced well above its OPEC+ allowance, has not adhered to required 'compensation cuts', is adding further production capacity, and is not as dependent on oil revenues as its peers. Although its exports have sometimes been reduced by Ukrainian attacks on the Black Sea loading terminals, it has mostly been able to produce freely and is of course not directly affected by the war in the Gulf.

Within OPEC, Iraq has significant ambitions for production growth, and in 2025 was generally over-producing. The higher targets proposed by new prime minister Ali Al Zaidi are implausible, but nevertheless Iraq should still be able to achieve significant growth to 2030, if the conflict situation permits. But Iraq is more likely to use the threat of departure to push for higher quotas. Given its high budget break-even, its lack of sovereign wealth holdings, and the economic damage inflicted by the conflict, it is not in a position to fight a price war.

Venezuela also wants to make significant production increases, which can be partly achieved by rehabilitating older fields neglected during the presidencies of Hugo Chávez (1999-2013) and Maduro. Production has already recovered from 0.89 million bbl per day in December 2025 to 1.15 million bbl per day as of September 2026. Leaving OPEC could also improve its relations with the U.S., which has long been critical of the organisation.



Avoidance of production quotas may be helpful in attracting private-sector investment. However, Venezuela's production costs are high so, as with Iraq, it would not benefit from fighting a price or market-share war with Saudi Arabia. This already happened during 1997-98, and inflicted severe damage on the Venezuelan economy.

Conversely, there is a question as to whether there may be new members of OPEC or at least OPEC+. Guyana, whose production has rapidly risen to 906,000 bbl per day, has been mentioned but its vice-president says it does not want to join[vi]. It would certainly not benefit from taking on production constraints while output is rising rapidly. It is also a close U.S. ally, and Washington would not view a decision to join OPEC favourably.

Brazil's government approved joining OPEC+ in February 2025, but it appears to be a 'dialogue only partner', and certainly has not committed to any production restraint[vii]. Oil output of 4.3 million bbl per day, with plans to reach 5 million bbl/d, would make it a major prize for OPEC+, of a similar scale to Iraq. Mexico is notionally an OPEC+ member, but again without a set quota, and in any case its production is in long-term decline.

There is no other obvious significant producer that is likely to join, although some smaller members similar to Gabon or Brunei might drop in or out, and perhaps Angola, which left at the start of 2024, might return.





OPEC+ is currently carrying out a capacity review of its members. This is being performed by the well-known U.S. petroleum consultancy DeGolyer and MacNaughton[viii], except for Iran, Russia and Venezuela because of U.S. sanctions. An undisclosed Indian company is carrying out the review of Venezuela and Russia, while Iran's capacity will be assessed on actual short-term production. The review was intended to be completed by the end of September 2026, but because of the war in the Gulf, it has now been delayed to mid-November[ix]. Presumably, given the UAE's withdrawal from OPEC, it has been dropped from the exercise.

The evaluation is obviously complicated by the war. Several members cannot export freely, are under strict U.S. sanctions or blockade, have suffered war damage, or forced shut-ins and interruptions to normal drilling and field operations, that may have affected capacity.

Nevertheless, the study is crucial as, for the first time, it would provide an independent, objective baseline for every member of the alliance.

The OPEC+ countries could be roughly divided into groups based on their production capacity:

- Current, technically feasible plans to expand capacity, although in some cases this may be hampered by political issues (Iraq, Venezuela, Libya, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Nigeria, Iran, Russia and, before its exit, the UAE)
- Technical capability to expand capacity, but no active plans to do so (Saudi Arabia)
- Constrained by resource base from significant capacity expansion (Algeria, Oman, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of the Congo, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Malaysia, South Sudan, Sudan)

OPEC+ baselines were last set in 2022, with some adjustments since then. It has been clear that several members were struggling to achieve their allocated production levels, and in the four years since, production capacity will probably have declined further. However, the total production assigned to these countries is relatively small and will not affect overall OPEC+ strategy much.

Those countries with the resource base and technical capability to increase capacity are a diverse bunch.

Table 1 OPEC+ Production Growth Targets

Country	Production in December 2025 (Mbbl/d)	Production target (Mbbl/d)	Date
Saudi Arabia	10.08	13.5	2027 (dropped)
Iraq	4.15	6 10	2028 2032
Iran	3.2	4.5	2030
Russia	9.6	10.8	2030
Libya	1.15	2	2030-31
Nigeria	1.45	2 3	2027 2030
Venezuela	0.89	1.3 1.6-1.8	End-2026 2028
Kazakhstan	1.55	1.99	Early 2030s
Kuwait	2.6	3.5 4	2030 2035
(UAE)	3.4	5 6	2030 Option

Saudi Arabia is the most important strategic player. In early 2024, the Ministry of Energy instructed Saudi Aramco to drop its plans to raise sustainable capacity from 12 to 13 million bbl per day by 2027[x]. Including additional gains in the Neutral Zone (not operated by Aramco), this would have brought total national capacity to about 13.3 million bbl per day.

However, Saudi Arabia could restore these plans quite quickly if market conditions warrant. Saudi Arabia's export capacity should also increase by 2030 because of the development of the Jafurah unconventional gas resource, which will yield about 630,000 barrels per day of natural gas liquids and condensate, and the phase-out of oil for power generation in favour of gas and renewables, which will save up to 1 million bbl per day of domestic oil consumption, comprising direct crude (468 kbbl/day in January-August 2026) and fuel oil (582 kbbl/day in the same period), by the early 2030s[xi].

Iraq is the other large potential source of growth. It has proposed various ambitious production targets in recent years, with the latest strategic plan for 2027-30, and an announcement by Prime Minister Ali Al Zaidi, indicating almost 10 million bbl/day by 2030[xii]. This is heavily over-ambitious on that timeline. Iraq is also severely constrained by the continuing constriction of the Strait of Hormuz, the lack of alternative export routes, insufficient government finance, and inadequate supporting infrastructure such as power generation, gas treatment and water injection. However, significant gains are possible through executing planned expansion projects and new field developments (Table 2).

Table 2 Iraq Oil Field Expansions

Field (operator)	Production increase (kb/d)	Date
Kirkuk (BP)	100 1150	Short-term Long-term
East Baghdad (ZhenHua)	60	2026
West Qurna-1 (PetroChina)	40	2026
West Qurna-2 (Chevron)	340	2027
Rumaila (BP/PetroChina)	300	August 2027
Ratawi (TotalEnergies)	150	2028
Eridu (former Lukoil)	250	2028
Luhais (Basra Oil Company)	100	2028
Hamrin (HKN)	120	After 2028
Tuba (Geo-Jade)	170	2029?
Faihaa (UEG)	100	2029
Daimah (KAR)	150	2029
Majnoon (ExxonMobil*)	240	2030?
Sindbad (Halliburton)	100	2031
Nahr bin Umr (Halliburton)	250	2031
Zubair (ENI)	150	Before 2035
Qayarah (Sonangol)	67	NA
Huwaiza (Geo-Jade)	450	NA
Salman (Rosneft)	NA	NA
Middle Euphrates (Zhongman)	NA	NA
Jabal Sanam (Geo-Jade)	NA	NA

* In negotiation

The total increase from these projects is up to 4.2 million bbl/day, which would take Iraq's capacity to over 8 million bbl/day, not allowing for declines in other fields. Some new projects and discoveries could be added to this list. However, it is more likely that at least some of the planned expansions will be significantly delayed, as has happened to most Iraqi field developments. Looking at the most realistic of these projects in the short to medium term, a gain of about 800-1000 kbbl/day by 2030 is plausible, taking Iraq's capacity to around 5.2-5.4 million bbl/day.

Iran's trajectory obviously depends strongly on the outcome of the current war and U.S. sanctions. While output of 3.2 million bbl per day in December 2025 was constrained by sanctions, and Iran's reliance on China as its only significant customer, it could reach about 3.8 million bbl/day from existing capacity.



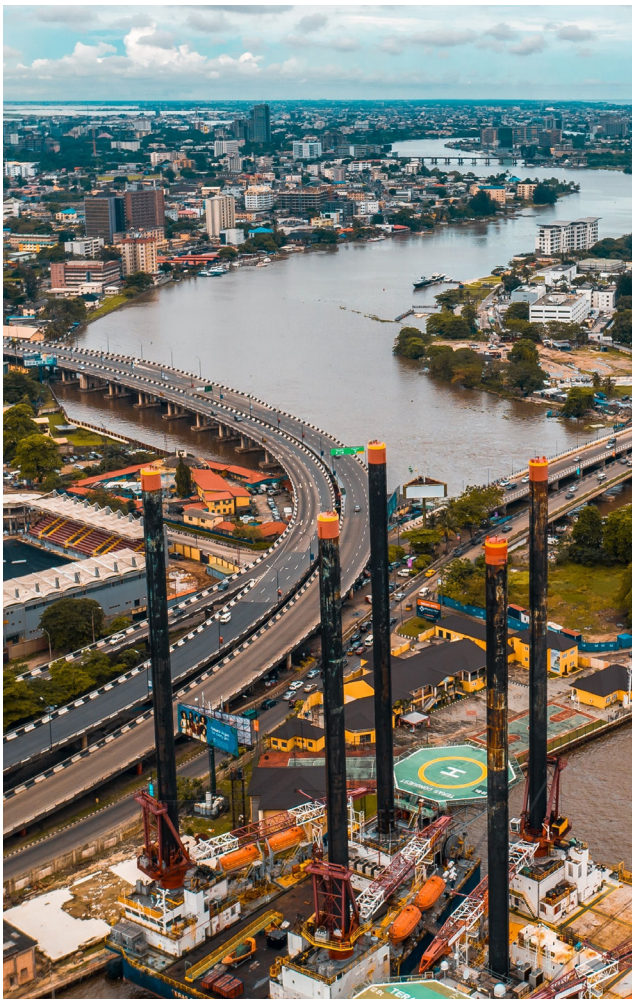
A target of 4.5 million bbl/day is probably over-ambitious for 2030[xiii], but could be achieved later with major international investment. In turn, this would require a much more favourable and open investment climate and more attractive contractual terms. Conversely, in a case in which the US blockade continues, Iranian production may continue at levels just enough to meet domestic demand, of about 1.7 million bbl/day.

For the others, Russia's oil production base is mature, and further gains depend on heavy investment in East Siberian projects such as Vostok Oil, and the offshore Arctic, with major associated infrastructure needs, or unconventional oil such as the Bazhenov of West Siberia, requiring extensive hydraulic fracturing. This is unlikely to progress while the war with Ukraine continues, because of the imperative of military spending and sanctions. Venezuela has significant short-term potential for growth from refurbishing light oil projects, but longer-term gains depend on its extra-heavy Orinoco crude, requiring a relatively attractive investment environment and reasonably strong oil prices.

Projects in Libya, Nigeria and Kuwait are often affected in different ways by domestic political opposition, and in the case of the first two, sabotage and insecurity. But a revival of activity in Nigeria's deepwater, with the Bonga North West and South West projects adding about 260-280 kbbl/day by the early 2030s, is promising. The onshore industry has been almost entirely transferred into indigenous hands, which may ease the issues of theft and domestic opposition, but raise challenges of finance and technical capability. Recent offshore discoveries in Kuwait are under appraisal but offer new development potential.

Libya has been successful in attracting major international interest in recent bid rounds, despite continuing factional disputes and community protests.

An optimistic but plausible case would therefore see the other OPEC+ countries, other than Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Iran, but including the UAE, adding about 6 million bbl/day of production capacity by 2030, over their December 2025 actual output. 1.6 million bbl/day of this comes from the UAE which, as noted, has left OPEC and OPEC+, although it may continue to cooperate with them. Against this, a small amount could be deducted for natural declines in output in other OPEC+ members such as Azerbaijan and Malaysia.

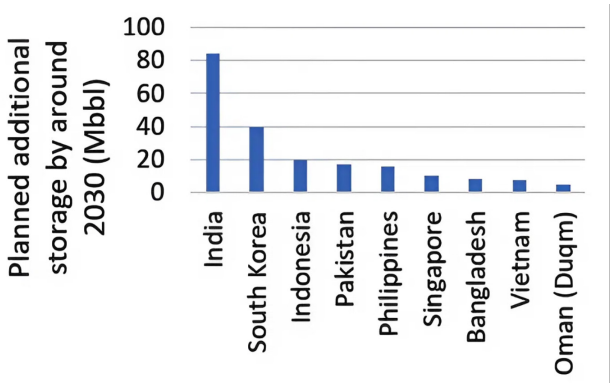




Views on world oil demand vary significantly between the three main international agencies (the IEA, the US Energy Information Administration and OPEC) as well as between independent consultants. Not all forecasts have yet adjusted for the impacts of the war in the Gulf, which remain highly uncertain in any case.

2.6-3 billion barrels of global oil production has been lost from the war[xiv]. Some of this represents initially rather high inventories, and some has been replaced by higher production outside the Gulf, or by demand destruction. Global oil inventories in February 2026, just before the start of the war, were about 8.2 billion barrels, well above more typical levels of 7.7-7.8 billion bbl[xv]. Plans by major Asian economies to expand strategic oil storage add up to over 200 million barrels by around 2030 (Figure 1), excluding China which could potentially add much more. Not all these projects will proceed, however.

Figure 1 Planned Additional Oil Storage Capacity in Major Asian Economies by Around 2030[xvi]



Replacing the lost inventories to typical average levels would require production to exceed demand by about 1.7 million bbl/day over four years (for example, 2027-2030). Filling the planned Asian strategic storage requires another 140,000 bbl/day over that period.

However, in 2025, OPEC foresaw 2030 demand of 113.3 Mbbl per day, an increase from 105.1 Mbbl per day in 2025. The EIA did not release its usual biannual International Energy Outlook

in 2025, but its 2023 edition forecast 101.9 Mbbl per day, essentially flat on 102 Mbbl per day in that year. In 2025, the IEA predicted 105.5 Mbbl per day by 2030, up from 103 Mbbl per day in 2024. For another comparison, in December 2024, the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies (OIES) predicted demand in 2030 to grow by 6.3 Mbbl/day over 2023 levels[xvii].

Acknowledging the high level of uncertainty, the differing years and definitions, and the change in circumstances, these forecasts predict, in the most optimistic cases, from 4.4-6.4 million bbl/day of demand growth by 2030 over recent levels. A significant share of this demand growth, 3.2 Mbbl/day in the OIES case, is for LPG, derived mostly from natural gas rather than crude oil.

Non-OPEC+ oil output is also expected to grow. The IEA sees expansion of 3.1 Mbbl/day by 2030, led by Brazil, Guyana, Suriname, and the Vaca Muerta shale formation of Argentina, with the U.S. also contributing albeit at a slowing rate.[xviii] As discussed, Brazil will contribute about 0,7 Mbbl/day of this. Kenya[xix] and Uganda[xx] are due to start up in 2026-27, while new entrants, notably Namibia, may also be producing by around 2030[xxi] . NGLs, from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and elsewhere, will also contribute.

This therefore leaves growth in the "call on OPEC+" crude at 1.3-3.3 Mbbl/day in the most optimistic viewpoint. If it is assumed that the UAE uses its new capacity to the full, then at most 1.7 Mbbl/day is left to be shared between the remaining OPEC+ states. However, as discussed, their plans quite realistically add 4.4 Mbbl/day (excluding the UAE) in that period. That assumes that Saudi Arabia does not choose to increase crude oil capacity.

Additional production of OPEC+ condensate and NGLs will further limit the call on crude oil. The situation may be worse than this for the OPEC+ countries since, as noted, the high prices and disruption in 2026 have probably reduced demand in the long term, and incentivised new production outside the Gulf.

There are three significant potential offsets. The first is the required refilling of drained inventories and the filling of new strategic storage, which, as noted, could add about 1.85 million bbl/day of effective demand over four years. Once filled, though, this demand would drop off, potentially worsening the oversupply after the refilling period.

The second would be if the U.S. blockade and sanctions on Iran continue to prevent most of its exports; in this case, about 1.5 million bbl/day of pre-war exports and another 0.6 million bbl/day of anticipated post-war expansion could be removed. This indicates that from 0.6-2.7 million bbl/day of existing or new OPEC+ capacity will have to be idle in 2030, even in an optimistic view of demand. This also implicitly assumes the existing production cuts of December 2025 continue (though by this point, the additional 'voluntary' cuts by a subset of members had already been phased out).

The third is if there is continuing restriction of oil exports from the Gulf region or further damage to oil or NGL production from the U.S.-Iran war, taking a significant time to repair.



Without significant offsets, balancing the market would therefore require some combination of:

- Production cuts from existing and/or new capacity
- Deferral of some OPEC+ expansion plans
- Lower prices to incentivise higher demand
- Lower prices to deter competing non-OPEC+ production
- Oil into storage (albeit this would only be temporary and amount to no more than a few hundred thousand barrels per day on a sustained basis)

This suggests that the conclusion of the consultants' exercise to assess OPEC+ members' capacity will be important. Countries will be seeking to establish a high baseline, so that the likely cuts required will be from an elevated level.

However, it is unlikely that the exercise will radically revise capacity estimates for most countries involved. Iran, Nigeria, Libya and Venezuela will be questionable, given that their technical capacity is probably well above what can practically be produced given above-ground security or political issues. Baselines for the smaller African members will probably be cut but as observed, this will not be highly material overall. It may be significant for these smaller producers, but if their allocation is cut too severely, they may leave OPEC+.

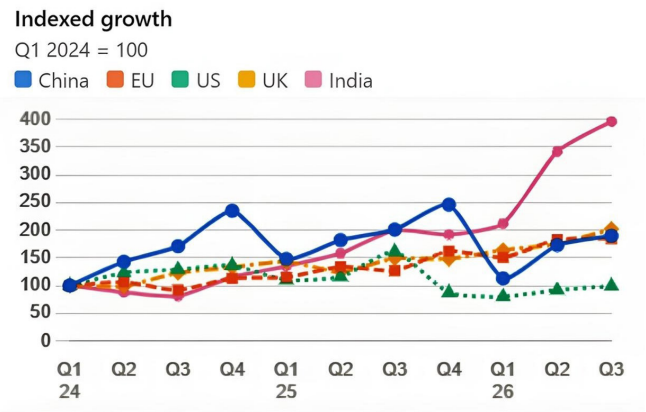
Even after the exercise of assessing baselines concludes and assuming (probably over-optimistically) that all members broadly accept their baselines, that does not determine OPEC+ production allocations. Firstly, the group's overall production target must be determined, depending on market conditions and strategy.

Then, this would be divided between the members. If this implies, for example, an overall 10% cut below maximum capacity, that does not imply that every member will be allocated a production level 10% below its baseline. Members will plead special circumstances: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq may want allowances for lost production during the war, Venezuela will point to the need to rebuild its collapsed industry, Iran will push for compensation for lost sales due to sanctions, Russia too may argue it has been limited by sanctions and Ukrainian attacks, and Libya will claim it is hard to commit to fixed production targets because of continuing political interference and insecurity. For members with excess production – notably Kazakhstan – Saudi Arabia may demand that they properly compensate with subsequent cuts.

Some members, such as Iraq and Venezuela, will continue investing in new production capacity. After one or two years, as the UAE did, they may return and request higher allocations to acknowledge this increased capacity. Conversely, maximum output from other members will decline as fields mature. But OPEC+ as a whole, and specifically Saudi Arabia, will want to avoid a situation of strategic investment in new capacity solely to secure higher production quotas.

Saudi Arabia, in particular, will also want to avoid a repeat of the situation from 2016-2024: a series of steep production cuts, which raised prices, but only quite temporarily, and which encouraged competing output from areas such as the US, Canada, Brazil and China, while limiting demand growth. This becomes more urgent as the improving performance and cost of electric vehicles, and their energy security advantages, limit growth in gasoline and diesel demand. India in particular has seen a sharp acceleration in EV sales since the start of the war, while growth in the UK and EU has been steady since 2024 (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Electric car sales growth in major markets, 2024-2026[xxii]





This does not preclude that Saudi Arabia and other OPEC+ members could cut production steeply but temporarily to deal with a sharp drop in demand, for example because of a global recession, or an unusual situation such as the 2020 Covid pandemic. But they would be reluctant to allow such cuts to become quasi-permanent.

From 2025, OPEC+ changed policy and steadily phased out the 'voluntary' cuts made by a subgroup of members including Saudi Arabia. By the end of 2025, this had been achieved, and attention was turning to whether the group was ready to begin phasing out the overall cuts made in 2016 and 2020. This process was, of course, interrupted by the outbreak of the US-Iran war. The extra oil on the market did cause prices to decline steadily during 2025, but a large part was mopped up by Chinese inventory-building. Without that, prices would have dropped much more sharply, or OPEC+ would have had to pause its increases.

If OPEC+ is unable to reach a satisfactory agreement, Saudi Arabia, supported probably by Kuwait, would have to apply pressure. Typically, it has done so by increasing production and lowering prices. The Kingdom is in a weaker fiscal position to do so than historically, because of its heavy investments in economic diversification, the economic damage inflicted by the war, and the need to spend on new pipelines and better protection of critical sites.

To damage US short-cycle shale production, on past experience, takes at least 6-9 months of lower prices (at least below $60 per barrel). Deterring longer lead-time production in countries such as Canada, Brazil and Guyana would require a more extended period of low oil prices, probably at least one to two years, and would not show much effect before three to four years. However, a few months of low prices might be sufficient to bring Iraq, Russia and Venezuela back into discussions. Venezuela has high production costs and an extraordinary debt load, Russia also has high costs for new developments (though not for existing production) and extensive military spending, while Iraq has severe budgetary requirements for social services.



17 CONCLUSION

The U.S./Israel-Iran war, commencing on 28 February 2026, continues as of the date of this report. Although renewed intense military action is possible, since the ceasefire collapsed on 8 July, hostilities have mostly been confined to Iranian attacks on tankers in and around the Gulf, and the U.S. blockade of Iranian oil exports. Iranian allies in Yemen and Iraq have attacked some Saudi oil infrastructure subsequently, causing damage but not serious production or export interruptions.

This puts OPEC+ in a difficult position. Four of its core members – Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq and, on the other side, Iran – have seen their oil production and exports severely reduced. The UAE, which left the group in May, has also been affected. However, by using alternative pipelines, the UAE and Saudi Arabia have been able to maintain significant oil sales. The progress in 'shuttle' operations and U.S. escorts from September 2026 onwards also led to a substantial recovery in Gulf crude oil exports, indeed a recovery to near pre-war levels in some weeks, excluding Iran.

However, competing production outside the Gulf has been heavily incentivised by high prices and the insecure oil market. Oil demand, meanwhile, has been hit by emergency measures, high prices, and improving non-oil technologies, notably electric vehicles. The problem that OPEC+ faced immediately before the war – relatively modest oil demand growth, strong production growth outside the group, and expansion of capacity within OPEC+ – has not gone away.

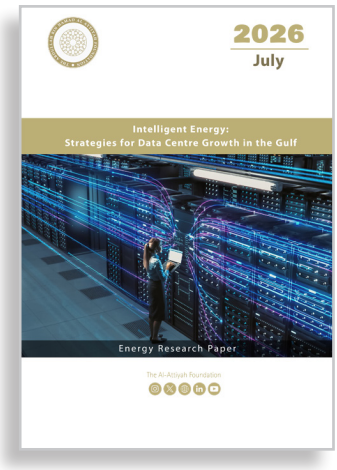
On the contrary, it is likely to be worse than foreseen in 2025. The need to refill drained inventories and rebuild strategic buffers may support apparent oil demand in a post-war period. Conversely, the war may continue, either at a low level with continuing export restrictions, or more intensely with significant additional damage to production and export infrastructure. But that would be very negative for the affected countries – likely the GCC members plus Iraq and Iran itself – while it could be positive for OPEC+ members outside the immediate range of the war, such as Libya, Venezuela, Nigeria and Russia.

If a post-war situation or an extended ceasefire does see a return to market surplus, Saudi Arabia will have to manage the resulting competition strategically, and now without the help of the UAE. The process of independently assessing each OPEC+ country's maximum sustainable production level is an interesting and important one. But it is only one input into what is likely to be a complex, tense and high-stakes debate over the group's medium- and long-term production policy.



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July – 2026

Intelligent Energy: Strategies for Data Centre Growth in the Gulf

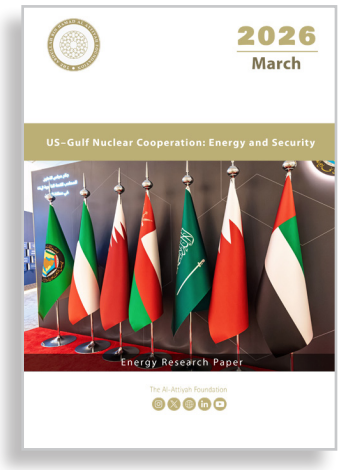
Gulf data centre capacity is rising rapidly, with more than US$ 8.5 billion in new investments planned by 2027 and Saudi Arabia alone accounting for up to 80% of the region's new power capacity for data centres.



May – 2026

Gulf and US Investments in Global Critical Metals and Minerals

Gulf states are accelerating global investments in critical metals and minerals, focusing on securing long-term supply for industries linked to clean energy and advanced manufacturing. The US has sought to build partnerships with the GCC for these materials.



March – 2026

US–Gulf Nuclear Cooperation: Energy and Security

Three of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are actively developing civil nuclear power programmes. Growing demand for electricity and desalination, ample financial resources, and political systems capable of delivering large-scale projects on time and within budget support this expansion.

Our partners collaborate with The Al-Attiyah Foundation on various projects and research within the themes of energy and sustainable development.







































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