

Transneft Pledges to Sustain Oil Exports to West

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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State pipeline operator Transneft said Russia can sustain crude oil exports to the West next year even as it increases deliveries to Asia via an expanded link to the Pacific port of Kozmino.

Transneft deputy vice president Igor Katsal said crude oil would not be redirected from outlets in western Russia to fill the expanded East Siberia-Pacific Ocean pipeline, or ESPO, and he predicted that westward exports would be flat year on year in 2013.

Katsal said that with state-owned oil company Rosneft's

Vankor oil field due to hit 25 million tons of production next year, up from 18 in 2012, exports of the pipeline's crude-oil blend via Kozmino could increase without robbing westward flows.

The expanded link to Russia's eastern oil fields, known as ESPO-2, is expected to carry up to 21 million tons of crude next year to Kozmino, which is at less than full capacity, executives

said Wednesday.

Total Kozmino exports are likely to amount to as much as 25 million tons next year, including up to 4 million tons shipped by rail, the Russian pipeline monopoly said.

The pipeline splits into two branches near the town of Skovorodino and delivers 15 million tons of crude oil per year to China. The pipeline was financed by an oil-backed loan from that country.

Some of Russia's eastern refineries are seeking more crude from the expanded pipeline but have yet to receive commitments of additional volumes, which could detract from export.

Transneft CEO Nikolai Tokarev said Rosneft's Komsomolsk refinery would not receive additional volumes next year.

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