

Dry FFA Market Signals

Bull

- **ECSA Market:** Long-haul Brazilian soybean and Argentine wheat trades are expected to provide strong support to grain-carrying bulk demand. Brazil's soybean harvest has reached 11%, in line with expectations, supporting strong exports in late Feb and early March. However, increased ballast supply into the South Atlantic ahead of the Brazil soybean season also adds pressure. This week, vessel tracking data projects weekly ECSA shipments could retreat to 5.9 MMT, down 1.8 MMT from the previous week's peak but well above its 4-week MA of 4.2 MMT. (Pmx & Smx)
- **Bauxite Exports:** Capesize bauxite shipments from Guinea peaked at 4.6 million tonnes last week after steady increases for five consecutive weeks. In the coming weeks, vessel data projects bauxite flows would slow down after the port stockpiles and return to a weekly volume of around 2 million tonnes. On the other hand, Australian bauxite shipments fell to a nine-month low due to seasonal rainfall, with recovery expected from March. (Cape)

Bear

- **Iron Ore Key Routes:** Both basins softened gradually last week despite healthy iron ore flows reported from Australia, while activity in both the North and South Atlantic was limited for most of the week until a small uptick before the weekend. C5 fixed lower from the mid-low \$9s for 17–19 Feb at the start of last week to a low of \$8.30 for 21–23 Feb, before recovering to \$8.45 for 22–23 Feb. In the Atlantic, C3 was only heard to have firm fixtures midweek at \$24.5 for 9–11 Mar; later in the week, activity picked up slightly with lower fixing rates below \$24 for mid- to late-March loading dates.
- For this week, vessel data suggests Australian iron ore shipments would drop below their four-week moving average near 16.0 MMT for the week covering late-Feb loading dates; a similar decline is also expected on the Australia-to-China route. On top of that, Brazilian iron ore exports are also projected to drop further, with weekly total shipments forecast to fall to 6.4 MMT from the previous week, against a recent four-week MA of 6.1 MMT. On the demand side, Chinese iron ore port inventory climbed to a fresh record level, while restocking activity would be muted as weak demand enters the Lunar New Year. (Cape)
- **Coal Shipments:** Coal exports from Indonesia are still slow-moving, with activity likely to be less active during the Lunar New Year period. On the other hand, Australian coal shipments have seen three weeks of firm volumes at 6.3–6.7 million tonnes per week, above their recent range. By vessel size, Panamax coal shipments saw the previous downward trend flatten and stabilize below its recent range of 14.3 million tonnes per week; this week, coal volume is expected to drift slightly lower. (Cape & Pmx)
- **US Grains Shipments:** Reduced grain exports are forecast for another week, with further declines expected given more competitive pricing from Brazil. However, China signalled potential additional US soybean purchases of 8 million tonnes of cargoes. (Pmx & Smx)

Ferrous Market Signals

Bull

- As Tropical Cyclone Mitchell moves south, Port Hedland in northwest Australia resumed operations on Sunday. The terminal handles a significant share of Australia's iron ore exports for major miners including BHP and Fortescue Metals Group.
- Although it is now clear that MACF and NHGF are not subject to import restrictions, Chinese steel mills continue to avoid direct purchases of these two brands from miners in the seaborne spot market, with traders becoming the primary counterparties.
- While spot PLV cargoes remained scarce, market sources reported active offers for prompt-loading Australian PLV Peak Downs cargoes, though details could not be verified before market close.
- Gold and silver started to bounce after a historical slump during the past week, supported by US Fed rate-cut expectations and selling restrictions from major exchanges.
- Indian domestic metallurgical coke prices extended gains on the East Coast in the week to February 6, driven by firm demand and rising coking coal costs. Prices for 65/63 CSR blast furnace coke (25–80 mm) reached 34,000–35,000 rupees/mt (\$375–\$386/mt) ex-stock East India (excluding 5% GST), up from 32,000–34,000 rupees/mt in the week ended January 23. Domestic coke shortages in East India and antidumping duties on imports have boosted domestic demand.

Bear

- As the Chinese New Year approaches, reduced downstream steel production and elevated inventories continued to weigh on prices. Trading activity slowed significantly in both primary and secondary markets.
- China's port-stock iron ore prices declined further to end the trading week, with muted liquidity amid completed mill restocking.
- Kazakh integrated iron and steel enterprise Qarmet, located in Temirtau, Kraganda Region of central Kazakhstan, announced via its Telegram channel on February 6 that it produced 3.8 million metric tons of steel in 2025, a 12% increase from 3.4 million metric tons in 2024.

Market Data Snapshot (6th Feb)

Open Interest /lots	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26
Cape5TC (180)	19,327	14,224	9,843	9,667	9,694	7,612
Pmx5TC	21,202	18,236	15,667	12,954	12,869	7,457
Smx10TC	12,650	9,885	7,432	6,975	6,910	4,302
Iron Ore (IODEX)	328,944	502,768	221,572	161,693	91,300	30,200
Coking Coal	3,338	3,405	1,165	995	2,175	1,087
US HRC	6,983	9,226	5,911	3,817	2,061	1,419
FOB China HRC	1,244	1,065	544	431	320	104

Price	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26
Cape5TC (180) \$/day	22,604	26,725	27,729	28,282	28,779	29,121
Pmx5TC \$/day	14,857	17,171	18,014	17,961	17,289	16,650
Smx10TC \$/day	14,141	16,909	17,884	17,716	17,477	16,738
Iron Ore (IODEX) \$/mt	99.58	99.04	98.97	98.96	98.79	98.58
Coking Coal \$/mt	247.00	234.50	225.00	223.50	222.50	222.50
US HRC \$/st	977	971	970	958	933	912
FOB China HRC \$/t	464.5	466.0	466.5	468.0	470.0	473.5

OI WoW %	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26
Cape5TC (180)	5.1%	9.6%	3.3%	2.9%	2.9%	3.1%
Pmx5TC	1.8%	0.7%	8.4%	8.2%	7.7%	4.8%
Smx10TC	-0.7%	2.3%	4.4%	3.7%	3.7%	4.4%
Iron Ore (IODEX)	-0.5%	-4.3%	12.5%	26.6%	20.0%	6.5%
Coking Coal	0.9%	12.6%	9.2%	3.1%	3.3%	-0.9%
US HRC	3.2%	-0.6%	3.4%	9.3%	3.6%	5.3%
FOB China HRC	-0.6%	20.5%	9.2%	1.2%	1.6%	0.0%

Price WoW %	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26
Cape5TC (180) \$/day	-11.4%	-8.7%	-6.0%	-5.1%	-4.5%	-3.0%
Pmx5TC \$/day	-8.5%	-5.7%	-3.0%	-1.4%	-2.5%	-2.6%
Smx10TC \$/day	12.0%	10.0%	13.1%	13.2%	12.5%	14.1%
Iron Ore (IODEX) \$/mt	-3.9%	-4.6%	-4.6%	-4.6%	-4.6%	-4.6%
Coking Coal \$/mt	-0.4%	-1.5%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-0.9%	-1.3%
US HRC \$/st	0.5%	-0.9%	-0.2%	0.3%	-0.4%	-0.5%
FOB China HRC \$/t	1.8%	-0.1%	0.0%	-1.0%	-1.7%	-1.6%

Sources: EEX, SGX, CME

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