



Styrene Butadiene Rubber (Asia-Pacific)

By Ai Teng Lim
10-Apr-2024

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Please click [here](#) for full details on the criteria ICIS uses in making these price assessments.

All prices in the weekly analysis on 10 April are assessed based on information collated up to 9 April. Please click [here](#) for the ICIS publishing schedule.

OVERVIEW

- **Trade stymied by extensive holiday market closures**
- **Sellers still looking to recoup feedstock costs**
- **But buyers resistant to existing offers**

Trade momentum in the Asian spot import for styrene-butadiene-rubber (SBR) continues to taper amid ongoing holiday market closures in the region.

Several outlets in southeast Asia, like Indonesia and Malaysia, will be shut for the extended Eid ul Fitr holiday beginning 10 April.

Players in Thailand are winding down too ahead of the Songkran festival in mid-April.

The Eid holidays are observed in some parts of India too, and most players retreated to the sidelines as such. Some are also mindful not to commit more heavily until after India's national elections are over in late Q2 2024, market players said.

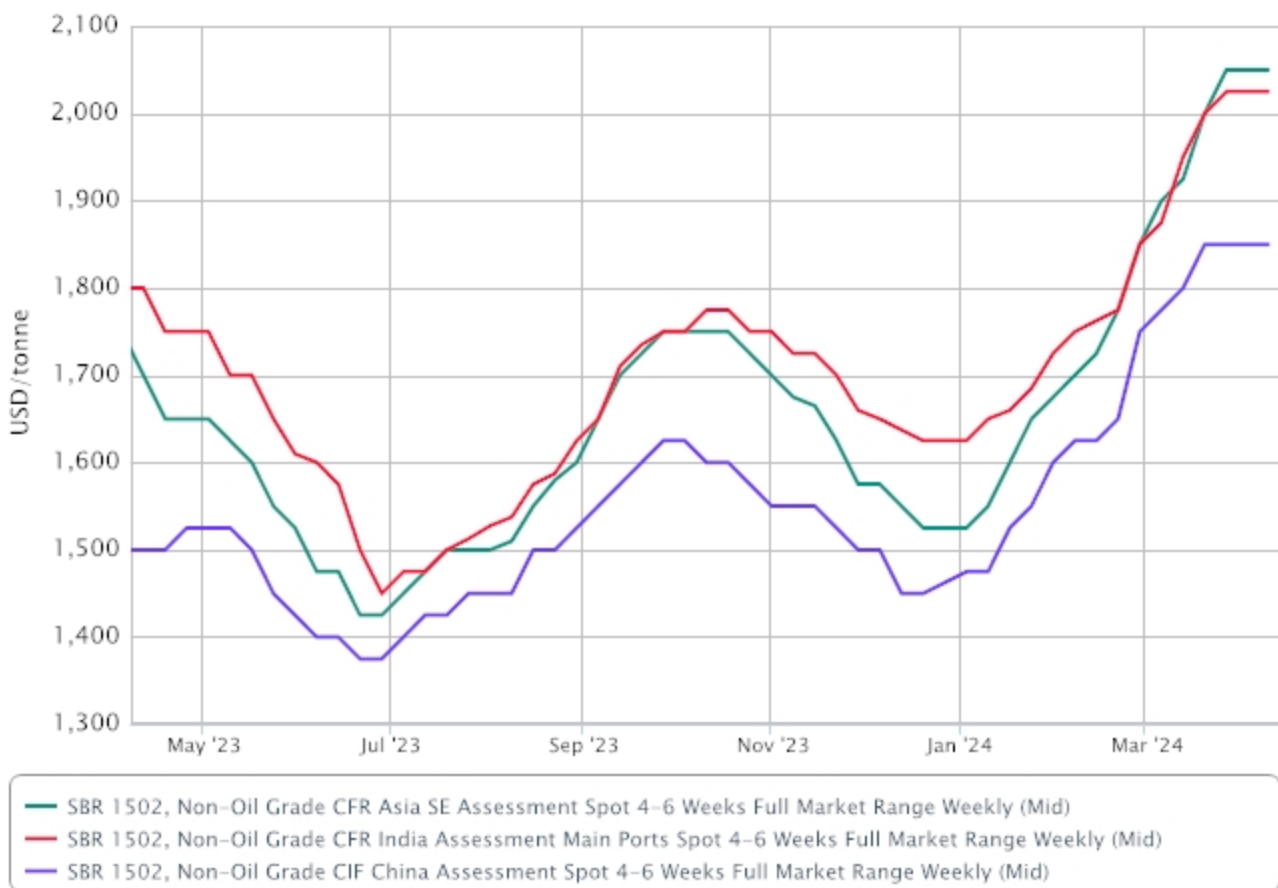
Meanwhile, SBR offers [held firm](#), supported by steady feedstock butadiene costs. Spot availabilities are limited too, ahead of an upcoming plant maintenance in northeast Asia.

Preoccupied with protecting their frail margins, sellers are unwilling to price down to induce buying, even though their current offers failed to gain much traction with buyers, market sources said.

Instead, sellers remain quite confident that there will be healthy demand support, especially in the wake of upbeat news such as a three-month-long streak of increases in the [world manufacturing output index](#).

Market players said that all eyes are also on China, watchful of how and if the country may keep up with the

[buoyancy](#) seen in March of its downstream manufacturing activities.



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OUTLOOK

- Regional spot supplies expected to stay snug for rest of H1 2024
- Volatility in [crude](#) markets may drive upstream price movements
- Security and political [risks](#) may weigh on demand sentiment

PRICES

SPOT PRICES

			Price Range		Four Weeks Ago	US CTS/lb
SBR 1502, Non-Oil Grade						
CIF China	USD/tonne	n/c	1800-1900	n/c	1750-1850	81.65-86.18
CFR Asia SE	USD/tonne	n/c	2000.00-2100.00	n/c	1900.00-1950.00	90.72-95.25
CFR India Main Ports	USD/tonne	n/c	1950.00-2100.00	n/c	1900.00-2000.00	88.45-95.25
SBR 1712, Oil-Extended						

CIF China	USD/tonne	n/c	1750-1850	n/c	1700-1800	79.38-83.91
CFR Asia SE	USD/tonne	n/c	1950.00-2050.00	n/c	1850.00-1900.00	88.45-92.99
CFR India Main Ports	USD/tonne	n/c	1900.00-2050.00	n/c	1850.00-1950.00	86.18-92.99

China

CIF China assessments for both the non-oil 1502 and the oil-extended 1712 grades were rolled over in a thinly discussed market.

China was shut much of the trading week for the three day Qing Ming Festivals from 4-6 April.

Local end-users were also amply covered by domestic products and have minimal requirements for US dollar denominated imports.

That said, import offers were heard steady with foreign suppliers mostly determined to prioritise defending margins over achieving sales volumes with lower asking prices.

Domestic prices in east China for the 1502 grade climbed as local producers hiked offers to keep pace with rising prices for feedstock BD.

East China domestic SBR 1502 prices

Price (CNY/tonne)	This week's close*	Previous week's close
E China Ex-Warehouse	13,300-13,600	13,100-13,400

*As at 9 April

Southeast Asia

CFR SE Asian assessments for the non-oil 1502 grade were also rolled over, with the bulk of buy-sell discussions and limited deals heard within rangebound levels.

CFR SE Asian assessments for the oil-extended 1712 grade were also unchanged with stable 1502 grade.

With natural rubber prices still holding at firmer levels, compared to late 2023, market players said that this may also serve to bolster buying interest for SBR as a cheaper substitution product for natural rubbers.

Natural Rubber SMR 20 Reference Price - US cents/kg FOB Malaysia

Apr 2024	(1-9)	Mar 2024	Feb 2024	Jan 2024	Dec 2023	Nov 2023	Oct 2023
164.35		165.36	156.66	154.20	146.31	148.42	145.26

Source: Malaysian Rubber Board

India

CFR India assessments also held steady for the non-oil 1502 grade, on broadly unchanged buy-sell pricing indications for northeast Asia origin imports.

Offers for May shipment materials hovered at the higher-end.

Substantive buying interest for these forward import shipment was however tepid, with some end-users heard still able to obtain imported materials from the domestic market, albeit materials that have flowed into India much earlier, market sources said.

Furthermore, there was no lack of more competitively priced materials from non-Asia suppliers, and these only served to dent buying interest for NE Asian materials, market players said.

CFR India assessments for the oil-extended 1712 grades were also unchanged with stable 1502 grade assessments.

UPSTREAM

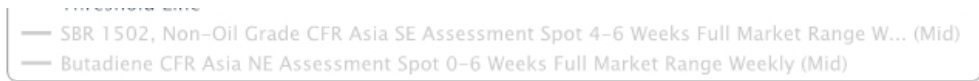
Butadiene

- China keeps up export offers
- But discussions muted on holiday trade lull
- Some buyers pull back to wait and see

The chart below shows the spread between butadiene and SBR, which remains in the unhealthy zone.

[Downstream spread – butadiene NE Asia and SBR SE Asia](#)

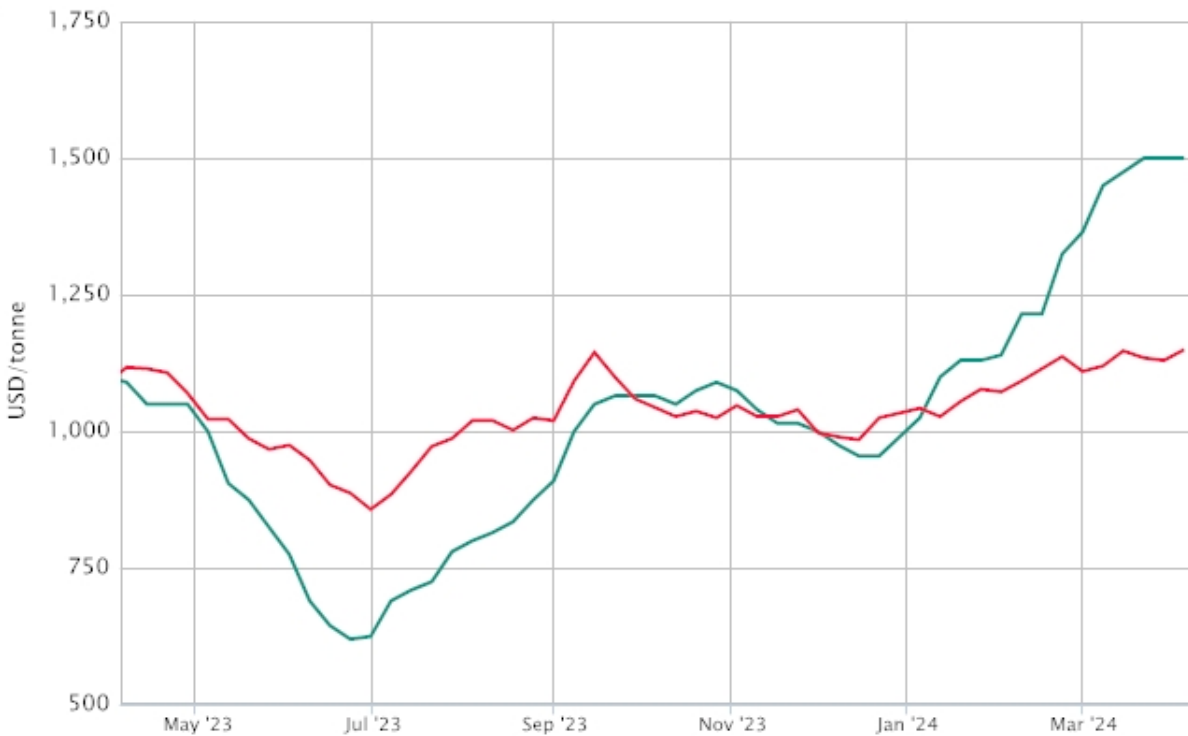




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Styrene

- Firm crude, feedstock market trends support regional SM levels
- China shore-tank inventory sees noticeable falls tracking limited new cargo arrivals
- Rise in Europe SM levels stimulates China export talks



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PRODUCTION

A plant in east China, with a total nameplate capacity of 170,000 tonnes/year, has [shut](#) one of its three lines, for a month-long maintenance from 20 March.

Another 100,000 tonnes/year [unit](#) in Taiwan is also scheduled for a near-month-long maintenance in May.

Click [here](#) for the Asian SBR Live Disruption Tracker.

OTHER REGIONS

Europe

- Upstream styrene prices increase for April
- ETRMA signs Antwerp Declaration
- Stable spot prices

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