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## | EU sanctions likely to ban imports of Russian helium

By Phil Kornbluth on May 08, 2024 | 

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Word out of Brussels this week is that the 14<sup>th</sup> sanctions package proposed by the EU would include a ban on imports of Russian helium into the EU.

While the sanctions package is still under review and details are not yet available, it seems likely that a ban on helium imports will be included in the final package.

Russia currently produces bulk liquid helium from three different sources. Gazprom produces helium at its Amur gas processing plant in Eastern Siberia and another gas processing plant located in Orenburg, while Irkutsk Oil Company produces helium from its Yarakinsky Plant located in the Ural Region. Presently, these sources account for approximately 12-13% of global supply.

It is not clear how impactful a ban on Russian helium imports would be on Russian helium production, since, at present, the majority of Russia's helium production is exported to China and other non-EU countries including Korea, India and the UAE.

However, some of the helium produced in Russia is currently exported to the EU. Presumably, at least some of the helium that is currently exported to the EU could be redirected to other markets.

While the impact of new EU sanctions on helium may not be very impactful, the threat of new sanctions is a reminder of the fragility of the helium supply chain, even though Helium Shortage 4.0 has recently come to an end and the supply of helium has recently been quite plentiful (click [here](#) to read more details).

Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson recently had talks with Ukraine's Energy Minister German Galushchenko, during an official visit to Kyiv, to strengthen the resilience of the Ukrainian energy system and preparations for the next heating season. Ukraine has already lost more than 8 GW from Russian attacks.

Minister Galushchenko added, "Sanctions should deprive Russia of the opportunity to be any kind of player in the world markets."

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