

## APERTURE & FOCUS

WEEK 10 | 7 Mar 2024



### GLOBAL APERTURE

Global airfreight volumes [experienced record 9% week-over-week growth](#) between February 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, owing this to collective spikes from major cargo hubs from around the world as volumes shift from sea to air amid the Red Sea disruptions. Air exports at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport surged 58% year-over-year in January, according to a recent report that listed Bangkok, along with Colombo and Dubai, as gateways that benefitted from this strong modal shift. Despite a temporary dip in overall demand, this trend reflects cargo owners seeking faster, yet affordable, alternatives to navigate the disruptions.

In the midst of a sharp revenue fall, partly due to these same Red Sea disruptions, Egypt [has begun studying further expansions of the Suez Canal](#), including extending a second channel to increase shipping volumes and prevent disruptions. The proposed extension aims to enhance canal competitiveness and capacity for larger vessels, building on current expansions prompted by past blockages and addressing recent financial challenges.

### REGIONAL FOCUS – AMERICAS

**United States:** Participants at a U.S.-China Green Port and Low-Carbon meeting advocated for enhanced port cooperation to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable operations. [Discussions focused on potential collaboration between the Port of Long Beach and Port of Shenzhen](#), both actively pursuing green port construction. Hutchison Ports Yantian aims for a 30% reduction in carbon emissions per TEU by 2030 and to achieve net zero carbon emissions in the long term.

The Oakland International Container Terminal (OICT) is considering on-dock rail solutions to enhance efficiency, potentially closing a road separating OICT from rail connections. A new rail connection to Reno, [Nevada is set to operate soon, reducing truck traffic on Interstate 80](#). Plans to increase refrigeration capacity, including additional reefer plugs at the TraPac terminal and expansion by PCC Logistics, are underway to support growing reefer cargo demand in Oakland.

**Latin America:** Hidrovias do Brasil, Port of Açú, and Wilson Sons have released a manifesto urging Brazil to overcome historical limitations in the maritime sector, [proposing solutions like innovation incentives and collaboration between stakeholders](#). [The document emphasizes the need for long-term policies](#), innovation tracking metrics, and leveraging Brazil's coastline and infrastructure for global competitiveness.

**Mexico:** Mexico's ports experienced [a significant 20% year-over-year increase in container volume](#) in January, handling 728,116 TEUs across the country's 18 ports, with major contributions from its Pacific Coast ports, particularly Manzanillo and Lazaro Cardenas which reported record movements. This surge is attributed partly to more foreign manufacturers nearshoring operations to Mexico, notably in Tijuana, enhancing containerized freight import volumes and spurring the creation of new industries.

## REGIONAL FOCUS – ASIA-PACIFIC

**China:** China plans substantial investments in logistics infrastructure, with Dalian allocating over \$33 billion for its transport network, emphasizing port and rail improvements. [Shanghai is also investing in a new terminal and regional rail projects for better connectivity](#). Overall, China has budgeted \$173 billion for transport projects to boost its economy and foreign investor confidence.

**Singapore, Australia:** On March 5, 2024, Singapore and Australia signed a MoU for the Singapore-Australia Green and Digital Shipping Corridor (GDSC), [focusing on maritime decarbonization and digitalization](#). The initiative aims to develop zero or near-zero greenhouse gas emission fuel supply chains and improve digital information exchange between ports. This collaboration supports the international maritime community's goals and aligns with the Singapore-Australia Green Economy Agreement.



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## REGIONAL FOCUS – EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA

**South Africa:** Transnet is investing \$52 million in seven new tugboats for Durban and East London ports to address inefficiencies and congestion, [replacing aging crafts with improved pull and maneuverability](#). This investment comes amid efforts to modernize operations, including new management appointments and contracting international companies to operate terminals.

**The Netherlands:** The Port of Rotterdam has introduced the Secure Chain system for all Latin America import containers, ensuring secure and reliable releases through authorized parties. [Effective from March 31st, this digital initiative combats drug crime by creating a closed logistics chain](#). Major shipping lines are gradually connecting their customers to this system, enhancing Dutch port logistics efficiency.

**Germany:** Negotiations between Lufthansa and trade union ver.di [are set to resume](#) on March 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> after unsuccessful talks and repeated strikes by ground staff at Lufthansa Cargo. The ongoing disputes, which have led to cargo disruptions across Germany, are poised for further escalation if the upcoming negotiations fail to produce a satisfactory agreement, with the union prepared to intensify their strike actions.

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