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Japan Boosts Natural Gas Imports From Russia

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Japan, the world's largest importer of liquefied natural gas (LNG), imported over 200% more of the fossil fuel from Russia in August, the Kommersant business daily reported Thursday, citing data from Japan's finance ministry.

Japan buys two-thirds of its LNG from Australia, Malaysia and Qatar, according to Kommersant. Russia accounts for 9% of Japan's LNG imports, followed by the United States with 6%.

According to the finance ministry's customs data, Japan shipped 450,000 metric tons of LNG from Russia last month — a 211.2% increase from August 2021.

Related article: Putin Replaces Sakhalin-2 Energy Project Operator With New Domestic Entity

Japan's LNG shipment boost follows Russia's replacement of the Sakhalin-2 LNG project's

operator with a domestic entity in response to “unfriendly” Western sanctions.

The move sparked uncertainty over the continuity of LNG supplies, though Japanese buyers renewed contracts to buy LNG from Sakhalin-2 after they were guaranteed the same financial terms by the new Russian operating company.

August 2022 data published by Japan’s finance ministry showed a 67.4% increase in total imports from Russia and a 21.5% decrease in exports.

Japan has joined its ally the United States and other Western countries in imposing unprecedented sanctions on Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. Scores of Japanese industrial, tech and consumer companies have left or suspended operations in Russia since the February invasion.

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