PNA Purse Seine Monthly Update

April 2025

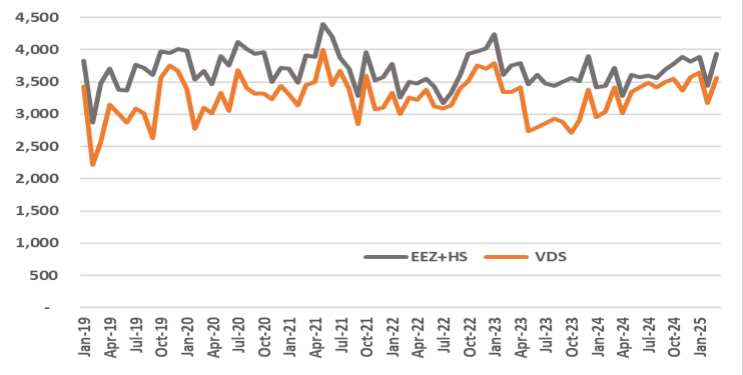
Key trends:

- Based on preliminary figures (and revised data), Mar saw increases in overall purse seine fishing effort and total catch, while staying at a steady overall catch rate. Fleet concentration remained heaviest in the west while we saw some shift to the east.
- Overall effort rose 14% to 3,934 days in Mar with highest concentration in PG and FM accounting for 40%. Overall fishing intensity in EEZs decreased slightly while intensity in HS increased by 25%. Preliminary data in early Apr showed similar concentration as in Mar being heaviest in PG and FM, while seeing some shift to KI.
- The overall average daily catch rate in Mar was 28t with highest rates in NR and MH, at 44t and 42t respectively. Catch rate for SKJ rose slightly to 20t but early Apr data pointed to a low catch rate of 16t.
- The Mar overall catches increased by 15% to 109,685t mainly due to the low SKJ catch component. On the other hand, large BET and YFT catch rates increased, while small BET and YFT catch rates dropped. PG and KI accounted for 54% of total catch.
- Reported total transhipped volume increased to about 68,666t with most transhipping through PG and KI. These accounted for 70% of total.
- Bangkok SKJ prices in Mar as reported by Thai Union increased to $1,740/mt while the Singapore MGO price decreased by 3% to an average $661/mt. The SKJ and MGO price differential increased slightly.
- La Niña conditions end, the tropical Pacific is now ENSO-neutral, and with more than 50% chance, forecasters expect the neutral state to continue through the fall.

Overall Fishing effort (Days)

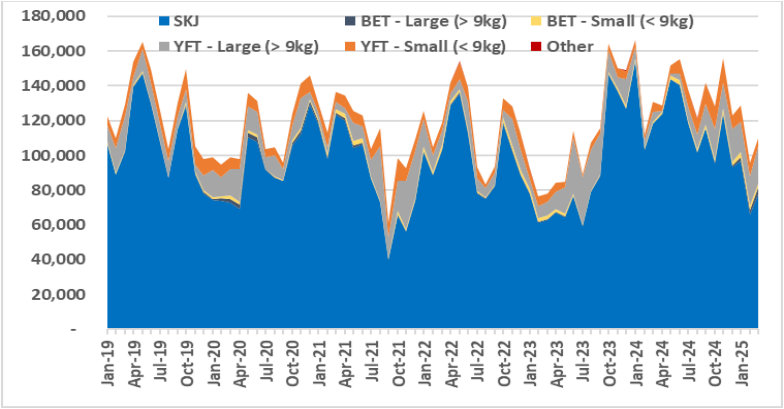
Overall Effort & Distribution of Effort (PNA EEZs+HS)

- The Mar overall fishing effort (EEZ+HS) increased 14% at 3,934 days from Feb and 6% higher than last year. Overall fishing intensity in EEZs decreased slightly by 1% while intensity in HS increased by 25%. Mar VDS usage at 3,558 was 12% higher than in Feb, +4% y-o-y, +10% y-t-d and +29% against Mar average since 2020.
- Effort concentration was highest in PG at 28% (49% of total in Feb) and KI, 25% (14%). Effort shares increased in KI, FM to 12% (3%), HS 10% (8%), MH 5% (1%), PW 0.20% (0.13%), and TK 0.12% (0.07%). Effort shares declined for SB 8% (10%) and TV 4% (6%), while NR stayed steady at 9%. In early Apr, effort concentrated in KI (35%), PG (49%), HS (11%), and FM (9%).



Catch (mt)

Total catch (By Species) & Distribution of catch (PNA EEZs+HS)

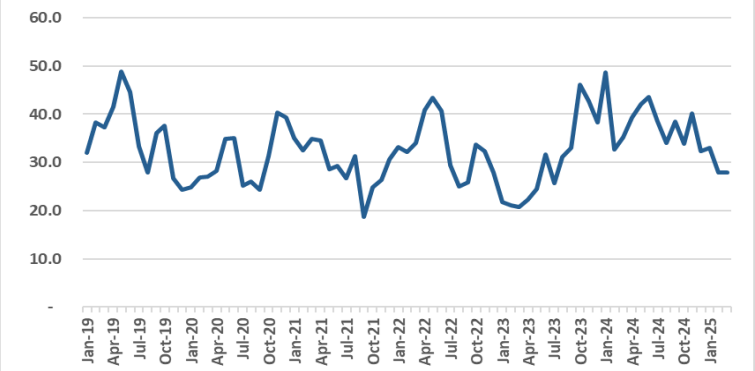


- Total catch (EEZ+HS) in Mar rose by 15% (95,794t in Feb) to 109,685t. SKJ increased by 17% (-32%) to 77,484t. Large BET and Large YFT increased, 68% to 4,092t and 26% to 21,347, respectively. Small YFT and small BET dropped, -39% to 4,655t and -18% to 2,100t, respectively. The Mar '25 total catch was -16% y-o-y, -18% y-t-d and -3% against Mar average since 2020.
- Catches were highest in KI, 27% of total (15% in Feb), PG 27% (52%), and NR 15% (12%). Catch shares increased for KI, FM 10% (2%), MH 8% (1%), SB 10% (7%), and TK 0.05% (0%). Catch shares dropped for PG, HS 3% (7%) and TV 2% (4%). There were no reported catches for PW.

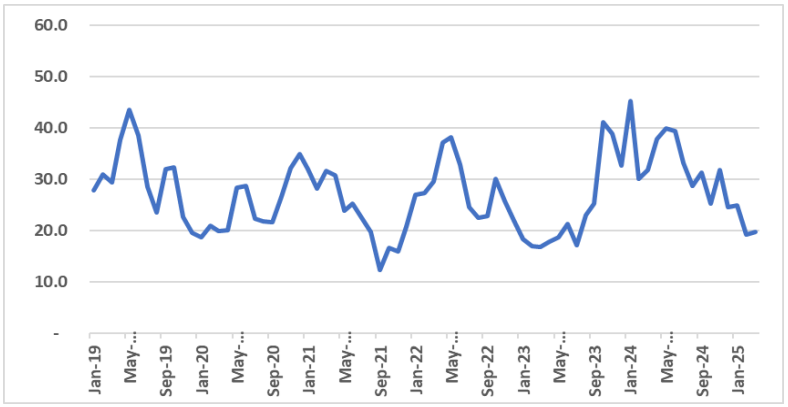
Catch rates (mt per day)

Overall Catch Rates & Catch Rates by Zone (PNA EEZs+HS)

- Overall catch rate in Mar stayed steady at 28t to Feb when it dropped by 16%. The Mar catch rate comparisons were -21% y-o-y, -24% y-t-d and -8% on Mar average in the last 5 years. In early Apr, total daily catch averaged 22t or 22% below the March catch rate.
- The catch rates were highest in NR at 44t (18% on Feb) and MH at 42t (95%). Most EEZs registered significant increases especially that of MH, SB to 36t (83%), KI to 30t (6%), FM to 23t (15%), and TK to 11t (up from no catch in Feb). Other EEZ decreases were PG to 30t (-10%), TV to 17t (-19%), and HS to 9t (-65%).

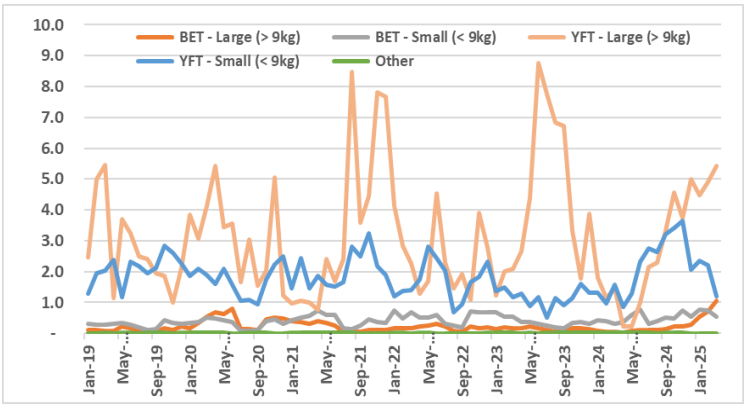


Skipjack



- SKJ catch rate in Mar was 20t, 2% compared to Feb, -38% compared to the same month last year, -40% comparing the year to date and -24% against the Mar average over the 2020-'25 period. SKJ catch rate for early Apr at 16t is a decrease of 20% on Mar.

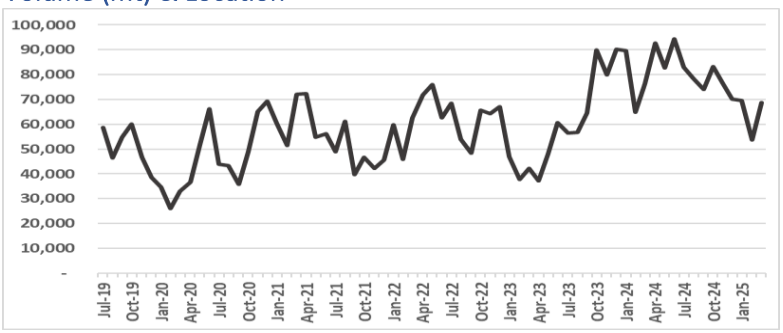
Other species



- The Mar catch rates for large BET and large YFT were 1t and 5t, increases of 47%, and 10%, respectively. The catch rates for small BET and small YFT were 0.5t and 1t, a decrease of 28% and 47%, respectively. Early data for Apr showed increases of 21% for large BET, 3% for small BET, including decreases of 39% and 38% for small YFT and large YFT, respectively.

Reported Transhipment

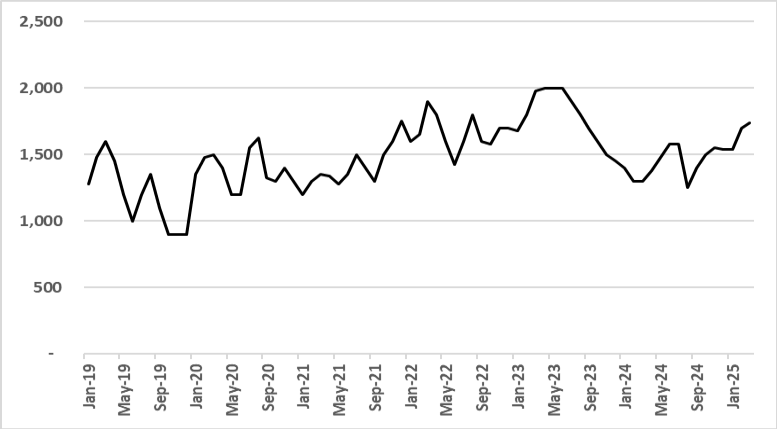
Volume (mt) & Location



- Reported transhipped volumes in PNA ports in Mar was 68,666t, an increase of 28% (53,635t) against Feb. A total of 102 transfers to carriers were reported, as against 92 in Feb, up 11%. Note that transhipment volumes for some vessels are not available.
- Transhipped volumes were highest in PG accounting for 48% (48% of total in Feb), KI 22% (15%), and FM 16% (9%). MH accounted for 13% (18%) and SB 1% (10%). There were no reported transhipments in NR or TV for the month.

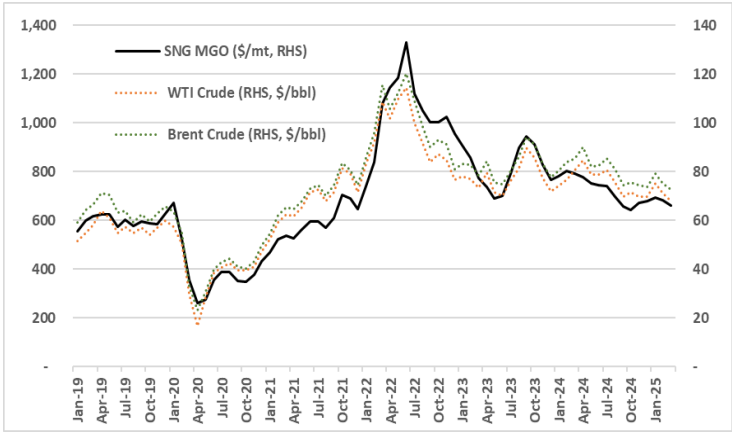
Prices

SKJ Price (US$/mt)



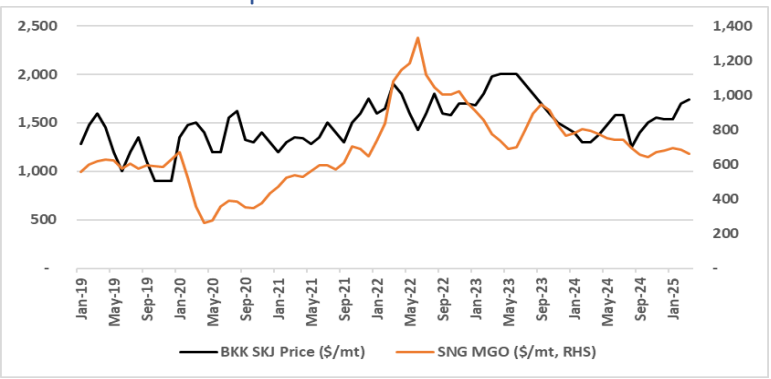
- Bangkok SKJ prices as reported by Thai Union increased slightly by 2% to $1,740/mt during Mar[i]. Reportedly, lower skipjack supply has strongly pushed the value of the raw material in the Bangkok processing hub[ii].

Fuel price



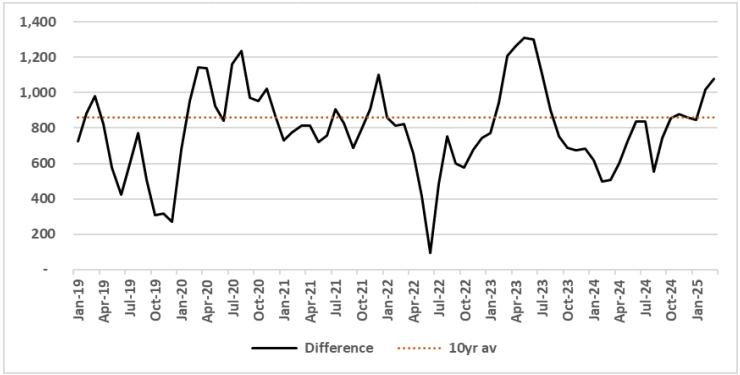
- SGP MGO[iii] average price slid slightly, dropping 3% to $661/mt. As of 16 Apr '25, SGP MGO stood at US$611/mt, a 8% decrease on Mar average. The WTI benchmark and Brent benchmark[iv] decreased by 5% and 3%, respectively. Reportedly this drop in prices from the previous month is due to demand for oil expected to stagnate in the coming months[v].

BKK SKJ Price vs Fuel price



- In Mar the SGP MGO price decreased marginally, while the BKK SKJ price rose slightly. As a result, the price differential increased, with the rise in SKJ price outpacing the change in SGP MGO price.

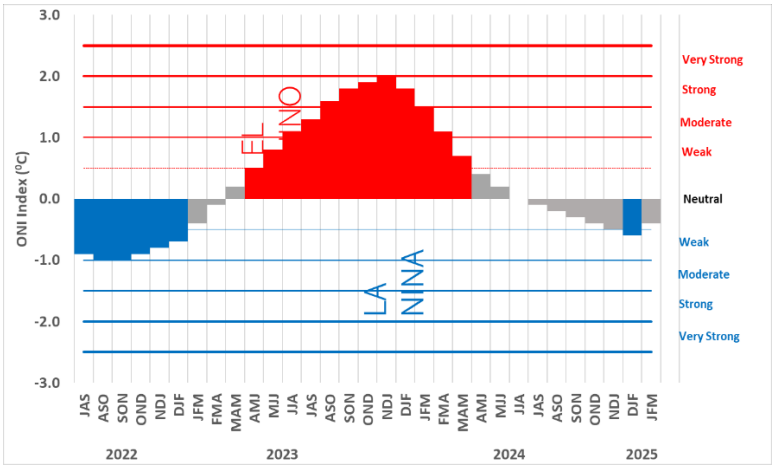
Price differential (US$/t) (BKK SKJ – Fuel)



- The Mar differential between BKK SKJ price and SGP MGO increased to $1,079 from $1,017 in Feb, and surpassed the long-term average of $862/t.

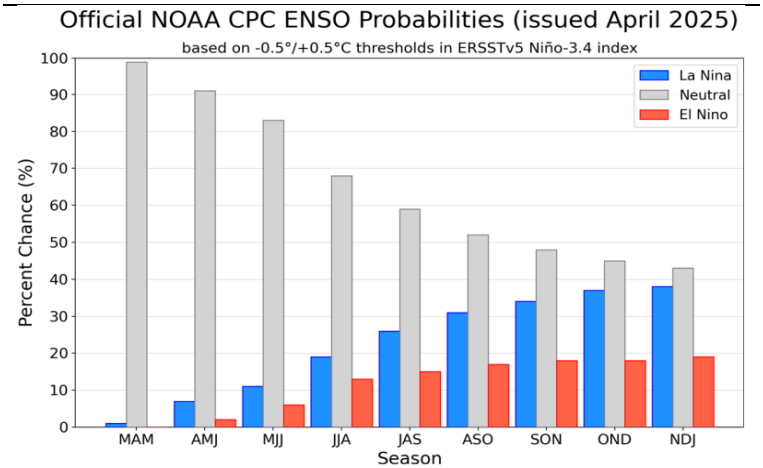
ENSO Data[vi]

NOAA ENSO Oceanic Nino Index (ONI)



- The Jan-Mar ONI (Niño-3.4 Region) saw a rise of the 3-month SST mean to -0.4°C (Neutral) from -0.6°C (La Niña) departure the previous period. The westernmost Niño index values were near zero, while positive index values persisted in the easternmost Niño-3 and Niño-1+2 regions.

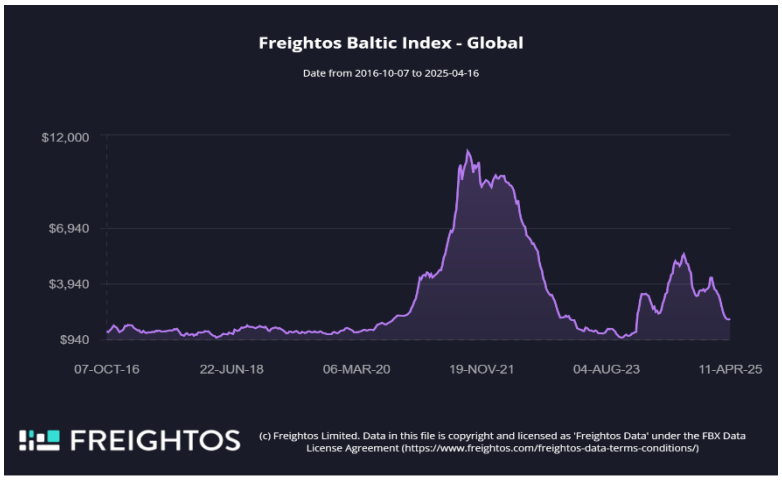
NOAA ENSO ONI Probabilities

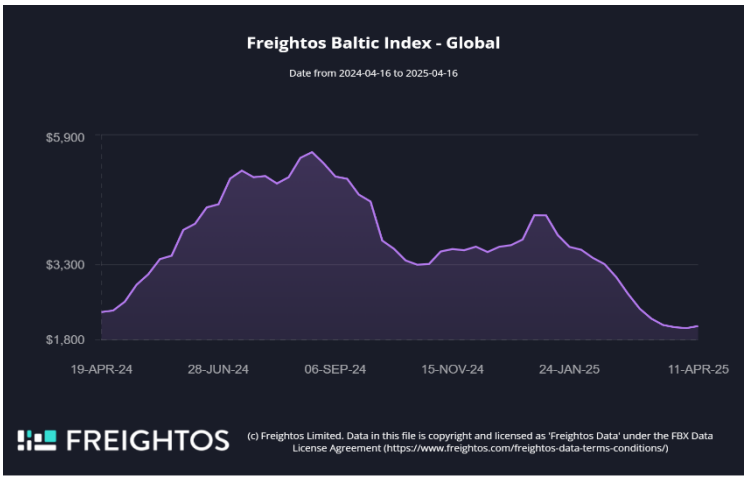


- After just a few months of La Niña conditions, the tropical Pacific is now ENSO-neutral, and forecasters expect neutral to continue through the Northern Hemisphere summer. Neutral is also the most likely state through the fall (greater than 50% chance).

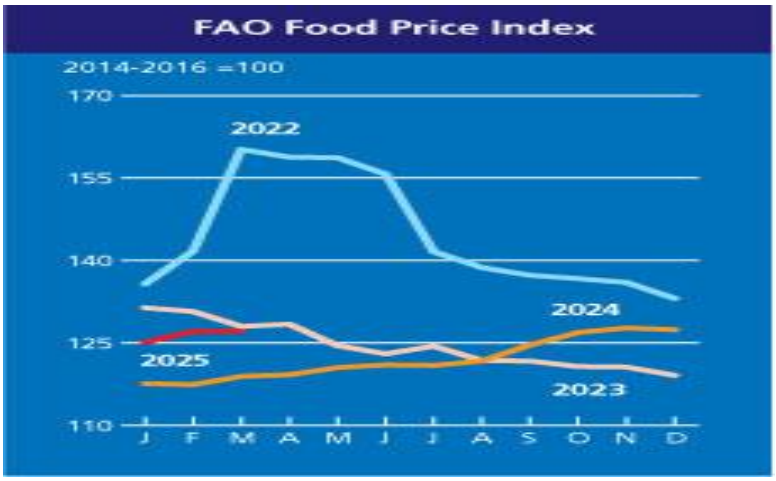
Other issues:

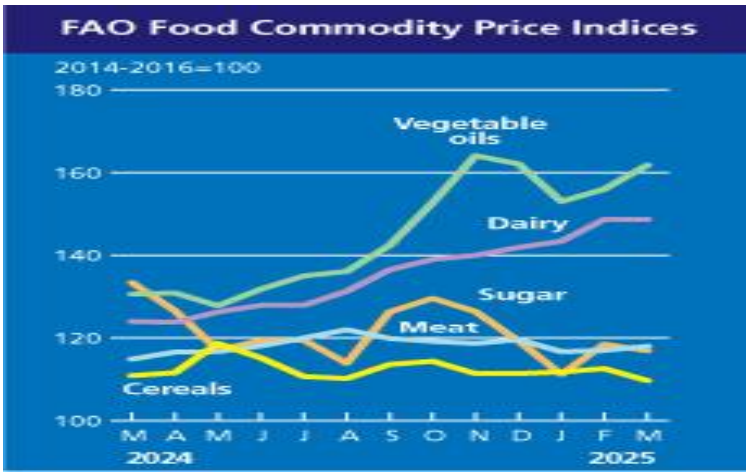
The FBX global container freight index for a 40ft container decreased 25% to $2,050 at the end of Mar from $2,718 at the end of Feb when it rose from $3,600 at end of Jan. As of 11th Apr, this has increased marginally by 1% to $2,075[vii]. The current FBX freight rate is 17% lower compared to a year ago.





The FAO Food Price Index* (FFPI) averaged 127.1 points in Mar, remaining nearly unchanged from Feb. Declines in cereals and sugar price indices offset increases in those of meat and vegetable oils, while the dairy price index remained stable. Overall, the FFPI was 8.2 points (6.9 percent) higher than its corresponding level one year ago but remained 33.1 points (20.7 percent) below its peak reached in March 2022[viii].





Notes:

- Data on catch, effort, catch rates and transhipment is based on electronic reporting through iFIMS as at 16th March, 2025. Updates to previous monthly catch and effort data were made and some data therefore would have changed due to more information having been changed over time. Figures for February 2025 should be considered preliminary.
- The EEZs+HS effort figures in the fishing effort graph do not include a VDS vessel size adjustment factor. The actual VDS usage figures are adjusted for vessel size. HS days may include some non-fishing time. HS effort figures are those for the eastern high seas and HSPs 4 and 5.
- The Oceanic Nino Index (ONI) measures sea surface temperature (SST) departures from average with thresholds of +/- 0.5ºC and El Nino is characterised by a positive ONI >= +0.5ºC and La Nina by a negative ONI <= -0.5ºC. A full-fledged El Niño or La Niña episode must exceed these thresholds for a period of at least 5 consecutive overlapping 3-month seasons (NOAA).

[i] https://investor.thaiunion.com/raw_material.html
[ii] https://www.atuna.com/news/bangkok-skipjack-price-soars/
[iii] https://shipandbunker.com/prices/apac/sea/sg-sin-singapore#MGO
[iv] https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/commodity-markets
[v] https://www.statista.com/statistics/262861/uk-brent-crude-oil-monthly-price-development/#:~:text=In%20November%202024%2C%20the%20average,to%20this%20fall%20in%20prices
[vi] https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/ensodisc.pdf
[vii] https://fbx.freightos.com/
[viii] https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/