Russia eyes additional oil export cuts of about 50,000 bpd in December

MOSCOW — Russia said on Sunday it would deepen oil export cuts in December by potentially 50,000 barrels per day (bpd) or more, earlier than promised, as the world's biggest exporters try to support the global oil price.

Saudi Arabia and Russia, the world's two biggest oil exporters, called in December for all OPEC+ members to join an agreement on output cuts after a fractious meeting of the producers' club.

Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Riyadh shortly after the meeting of OPEC+, which brings together the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Russia and other allies.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak, Mr. Putin's top oil and gas point man, was quoted by Russia's three main news agencies as saying that Russia would deepen cuts beyond the 300,000 barrels per day of cuts already agreed for this year.

"Already in December we will add additional volumes," Mr. Novak was quoted as saying by Interfax news agency. "By how much, we'll see based on the results of December — there may be an additional 50,000 bpd, maybe more."

Russia had pledged to a cut of 300,000 bpd compared to the May-June exports — and to keep at that level until the end of the year.

In December, Russia agreed to deepen those cuts to 500,000 bpd in the first quarter of 2024, the Russian agencies said.

Due to promises made to OPEC+, Russia's oil exports in 2023 will total less than the 247 million tons used in Russia's main macro-economic forecasts, Mr. Novak said.

Mr. Novak said he hoped that Gazprom and Chinese producer CNPC could soon agree on the contract conditions for gas sales through the Power of Siberia-2 pipeline.

Russia has been in talks for years about building the Power of Siberia-2 which will carry about 50 billion cubic metres of gas a year from Yamal in northern Russia to China via Mongolia.

"We expect that the company should reach an agreement as soon as possible," Mr. Novak said. — ***Reuters***

Business travel emissions drop as many firms fly less

LONDON — Almost half of 217 global firms cut their business travel carbon emissions by at least 50% between 2019 and 2022, analysis published on Monday found, as corporate air travel returned at a much slower pace since the pandemic than leisure flights.

Despite a global rebound, business travel has been slow to return to 2019 levels, with many corporate clients turning to video conferencing or rail trips rather than flying.

Global business travel firms say this trend could hit corporate relationships, while environmentalists argue it represents an important step in minimizing overall emissions.

Advocacy group Transport and Environment has said that a 50% reduction in business travel from pre-COVID levels is needed this decade to cap global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Major companies such as tech firm SAP, accounting firm PwC and Lloyd's Banking Group all reduced their corporate air travel emissions by more than 75% compared to 2019, the Travel Smart Emissions Tracker analysis concluded.

"The way forward is collaboration with more online meetings, more travel by train and less by plane," Denise Auclair, Travel Smart campaign manager, said in a statement.

However, the study found 21 of the companies exceeded their levels of flying compared to 2019, with L3Harris, Boston Scientific and Marriott International increasing their carbon emissions by more than 69% compared to 2019.

L3Harris, Boston Scientific and Marriott International did not respond to requests for comment.

Airlines say the corporate travel decline could harm their business and economic growth, but robust post-pandemic consumer demand for flying has tempered fears.

A joint survey by American Express Global Business Travel (Amex GBT) and the *Harvard Business Review* released in September said 84% of businesses believe in-person trips still bring "tangible business value."

Business trips generated as much as half of passenger revenue at US airlines before the pandemic, industry group Airlines for America estimated. This helped airlines sell high-margin premium seats and ill weekday flights.

In Europe, airlines like Air France have shifted their strategies, with others trying to make up for the business drop by selling more premium trips to leisure travelers. — ***Reuters***