MDS Transmodal

Global trade indices: December 2010

MDS Transmodal collates trade data by tonnage from over 40 countries on a continuing rolling basis and matches that data between importers and exporters. Data is subdivided by cargo types, unitised volumes are estimated through storage and containerisation rates and forecasts developed at an individual country x country x 3,000 commodities based on short and long run trends. The global totals include all tonnes traded, including that by pipeline and overland.

Results are updated on a monthly basis and are summarised below showing changes over time.

Change in the index on a monthly basis will therefore be the means by which evidence from fluctuations described in trade data can be used to show how world trade is moving forward.

Global international tonnes:
2009: 9.556 billion
2010: 10.817 billion (provisional)

Global international trade indices (all tonnes)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	*2010*
Q1	100	97	104	95	108
Q2	100	100	107	97	111
Q3	100	99	105	101	112
Q4	100	100	98	102	115
Full year	100	99	103	99	112

Change from quarter in previous year by destination region and projection

	Asia	N. America	Europe/Med	Latin America	Gulf & ISC	Sub Saharan Africa	Oceania
Q1 2009 to Q1 2010	+24%	+4%	+9%	+23%	+14%	+10%	+8%
Q2 2009 to Q2 2010	+12%	+19%	+15%	+29%	+9%	-3%	+10%
Q3 2009 to Q3 2010	+5%	+13%	+16%	+23%	+12%	+1%	+7%
Projection							
Q4 2009 to Q4 2010	*+8%*	*+12%*	*+19%*	*+18%*	*+24%*	*+9%*	*+1%*
Q1 2010 to Q1 2011	*+12%*	*+2%*	*+18%*	*+22%*	*+26%*	*+5%*	*+8%*
Q2 2010 to Q2 2011	*+8%*	*+1%*	*+12%*	*+12%*	*+18%*	*+10%*	*+2%*

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Growth from quarter in previous year and forecast by commodity group (tonnes)

	Bulk liquid	Coal	Ores	Grain	Forest product	Metals	Unitised
to Q1 2010	5%	21%	32%	8%	25%	16%	17%
to Q2 2010	9%	20%	17%	5%	22%	23%	18%
to Q3 2010	8%	14%	2%	9%	19%	11%	17%
Projection							
to Q4 2010	*10%*	*13%*	*0%*	*11%*	*24%*	*8%*	*19%*
to Q1 2011	*12%*	*15%*	*4%*	*1%*	*23%*	*5%*	*13%*
to Q2 2011	*6%*	*15%*	*4%*	*4%*	*14%*	*1%*	*10%*

Estimated loaded container traffic 2010: 112.0 million TEU

Growth from quarter in previous year by dominant container flow (TEU).

	To Europe/Med	To North America	From Far East	Global
to Q1 2010	14%	15%	24%	20%
to Q2 2010	20%	24%	24%	20%
to Q3 2010	17%	19%	17%	16%
Projection				
to Q4 2010	*23%*	*16%*	*16%*	*18%*
to Q1 2011	*21%*	*13%*	*18%*	*18%*
to Q2 2011	*15%*	*8%*	*11%*	*13%*

Overall loaded container TEU index by quarter where 2006 = 100

	To Europe/Med	To North America	From Far East	Global
to Q1 2010	113.8	100.6	130.5	122.9
to Q2 2010	118.6	106.6	133.6	126.3
to Q3 2010	118.7	108.7	128.7	126.1
Projection				
to Q4 2010	*122.3*	*107.7*	*129.7*	*130.2*
to Q1 2011	*122.3*	*107.2*	*140.4*	*136.8*
to Q2 2011	*117.3*	*107.6*	*133.8*	*133.6*

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It is a curious feature of the maritime industry that while it has a voracious appetite for statistics generated from 'within' it makes little use of the vast amount of data that it (effectively) supplies to the public sector through Customs entries. This may in the past have been because the data was seen as slow to emerge, is fragmented across many countries and is not presented in a user-friendly manner. There are a handful of companies that compile data from different countries and supply bespoke analyses; MDS Transmodal included. However, no one has appeared to use the available data to publish a global picture that can plot recent demand for shipping services and to use that analysis to project future traffic. When they do appear, global analyses tend to be in value form, and often concentrate on GDP rather than tonnage output.

MDS Transmodal is seeking to fill that gap by producing monthly indices of world trade, subdivided by world regions and major commodity groups. The first edition of this analysis shows that in 2010, global tonnage of internationally traded goods appears set to have grown by 11.5% to reach 10.82 billion tonnes. Total tonnages moved in Q4 2010 are up 15% on the same quarter in 2006 and 13% up on Q4 2009. By tonnage, Latin America's imports are growing the fastest at 23% above Q4 levels in 2009, while Asian imports, up 24% in Q1 2009, are only expected to grow by 5% from Q4 2009 to Q4 2010. Trade in bulk liquids (which include gas), coal and grain are all projected to continue growing, but the rapid growth in ores appears to have slowed, at least temporarily. Containerised tonnages are set to have grown by 19% between Q4 2009 and Q4 2010 while, measured in TEU, traffic has grown by 18%, faster to Europe than to North America.

As a regional destination, the Gulf & Indian sub Continent appear set for the fastest growth while in the container sector, Far East exports are set to exceed 2006 levels by a massive 33% while imports to Europe will have grown by only 17% and to North America by only 8%, such is the growing strength of trade within the Far East itself.