



China 2018 manganese ore be supported by strong demand: executive

Hainan, China (Platts)--16 Mar 2018 9:33 am EDT/13:33 GMT

Manganese ore prices in 2018 are expected to stay high in China on the back of continued strong demand, said Linqiang Wei, Deputy General Manager of Kam Wah Holdings at the FerroAlloyNet 13th International Manganese Products Summit on Hainan Island, China, on Friday.

Prevailing environmental protection policies would also add support to manganese this year, Wei said.

"Despite the talks of steel and ferroalloy production cuts last year, improved technology and productivity in operations has resulted in more consumption of manganese," Wei said.

"Everyone is eyeing potential ferroalloy restarts since the winter cut period ended on March 15, but there's also talks that some restarts will be delayed in the north due to bad air quality there now," he added.

Wei expects silicomanganese output to increase this year in south China, which would add support to manganese ore prices.

"Silicomanganese prices are also very high, and that will support manganese ore as well," he added.

The steel market in China will be relatively balanced in 2018, with stable consumption expected, Wei said.

"The steel industry has a huge impact on manganese ore, and this year we must eye the US Trump tariffs for clearer direction. For now, we've seen steel plants buying more silicomanganese this week, so they seem optimistic so far," he said.

On Friday, the Platts weekly 44% manganese ore assessment was \$8.60/dry metric ton unit CIF China basis, unchanged from last week. The Platts 37% grade ore also continued at a stable \$8/dmtu.

In domestic China, spot prices at Tianjin port were heard at around Yuan 70/dmtu (\$11/dmtu) for 44% minimum lumps, and Yuan 64/dmtu for 37% ores.

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