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Ecuador: Pipeline Linking Amazon Oilfields &amp; Balao Port Temporarily Shut Down

by Barbara Khol

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According to an April 28 report by state-run oil company PETROECUADOR published in daily newspaper Hoy (Quito), the 503-km. pipeline linking Amazon region oilfields with the Pacific Balao port was shut down recently, result of difficulties in crude export delivery. Storage tanks at the port were full, requiring the suspension of pumping operations. Problems include congestion at the Panama Canal, and delays by long-term contract buyers in arranging tanker transport. Crude production operations continued as usual. Ecuador produces about 290,000 barrels of crude per day, of which 150,000 bpd are shipped from the Balao port. Port facility remodeling is underway aimed at permitting docking of oil tankers of up to 36,000 dead weight tonnes.

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