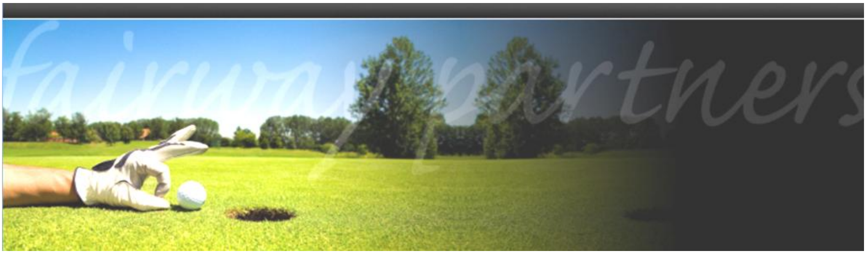

TRADE FINANCE

REVIEW

Q2 2015

(April – June)

FAIRWAY PARTNERS

Contents

Market News

Banks Start Exiting Trade Finance

It appears that the business of supporting companies with trade finance, documentary support, FX, risk management, and other services may not be as appealing in the past.

There is much recent news around banks shrinking their balance sheets and this is one of the businesses that can be shrunk relatively rapidly given the short term nature of trade obligations. In addition, the efforts to keep up with compliance around trade have greatly increased costs without corresponding revenue gains.

RBS has decided to pull out of 25 of the 38 countries it currently has operations and with that, close its Global Transaction service ("GTS") operations. It is expected that others may follow.

King Trade Capital Provides $5MM in Facilities in Two Transactions

King Trade Capital is Canada's oldest and largest independent purchase order, trade, and contract finance provider for small to middle-market companies in the U.S., UK and Canada. Since 1993, KTC has provided more than $1.5 billion of capital to over 300 public and private companies worldwide.

They recently announced the continuing expansion of cross-border purchase order and trade finance offering in Canada, with a $2 million purchase order finance facility for an importer of personal care accessories and a $3 million trade finance facility for a Canadian importer of automotive accessories.

Both companies had exhausted open credit terms from their suppliers and needed more inventory to fill orders. The commercial finance company's referred each prospect to King Trade Capital in order to leverage their expertise in funding international inventory purchases. King Trade Capital worked with both companies and introduced factors to finance the accounts receivable and create even more liquidity for both companies. As a result of financing, the company's significantly reduced the risk associated with providing unsecured financing in the form of cash deposits to overseas suppliers, and increased their buying power with their current suppliers.

GE Decides to Exit Banking

In a move suspected to be largely related to US regulators' crackdown on non-bank financial institutions, General Electrics announced the sale of most of its GE Capital assets and a return to its industrial roots, while retaining its trade finance business. GE Capital accounts for around half of GE's profits. GE Capital's operating profit was $7 billion last year. Its 500 billion in assets would make it the country's seventh-largest bank.

While GE Capital Real Estates assets are being sold to buyers including funds managed by Blackstone for approximately US$26.5bn, with Wells Fargo acquiring a portion of the performing loans, the trade finance and factoring business will remain part of the company's financial services.

Other "vertical" financial businesses retained include GE Capital aviation services, energy financial services and healthcare equipment finance, while most of the commercial lending and leasing segment and all US and international consumer platforms will be disposed of.

RBS to pass clients to BNP

Royal Bank of Scotland has confirmed it will stop all cash management and trade finance services to thousands of customers outside Britain and Ireland and will instead refer them to BNP Paribas. This all forms part of the bank's longer term strategy to focus on lending to British households and business resulting in reducing their investment bank and international operations.

"As part of our strategy to make RBS a simpler, stronger and more sustainable bank, RBS Transaction Services will focus on its home market capabilities in the UK and the Republic of Ireland," Marc Townsend, head of RBS's Global Transaction Services, said recently.

RBS, 78 percent-owned by the government, said it will continue to offer transaction services to both small and large businesses in Britain as well as multi-national businesses from western Europe, the United States and the Asia Pacific which have significant links to the UK and Ireland. It will also provide transaction services to global financial institutions.

The bank said there would be a streamlined process to make the transition as smooth as possible for customers moving their transaction banking to Paribas.

"We are confident that it has the people, country coverage, strong global product capability and infrastructure in transaction services to be an attractive alternative for our affected customers," said Townsend.

EDC funds Bombardier aircraft export

Export Development Canada (EDC) has signed a US$45mn deal with China's AVIC International Leasing to fund the purchase of two CRJ900 NextGen aircraft from Canada's Bombardier. This is the first aircraft financing agreement in China involving a Chinese borrower serving a Chinese regional airline, and involves offshore and onshore jurisdictions, including China's Tianjin Port free trade zone and is seen as an important milestone.

The aircraft will be operated by China Express Airlines under a financial lease with AVIC Leasing, a subsidiary of the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC). The airline has ordered 28 CRJ900 NextGen aircraft from Bombardier, 14 of which had been delivered as of March 31, 2015

Deutsche Bank keeps cash and trade link

Despite the low interest-rate environment, Deutsche Bank's global transaction banking (GTB) division reported revenues of €4.1 billion for 2014, an increase of €77 million on 2013, a 2% year-on-year rise.

The bank works with its client base to provide specialized solutions, rather than having a principal focus on scale by client numbers or regions. Through its approach to innovation, Deutsche has established cash-management programmes with a number of international companies, including PayPal.

Deutsche launched the accounts receivable manager for Sepa solution in 2013 to streamline PayPal's euro receivables reconciliation into a single automated process. It allows PayPal to use IBAN numbers for its customers, rather than having to match up its existing client data. The bank has ensured the business is working efficiently through keeping certain areas of the transaction banking divisions separate, but maintaining close co-operation. Underneath the Regional Managers are separate Heads for Trade Finance and for Cash Management. They are experts in their own fields, but are closely connected. Deutsche has developed training programmes to ensure staff understand those close connections.

International factoring: an alternative to LCs

International Factoring is gradually gaining popularity due to an increase in open-account transactions globally, where buyers do not need to make third party payment guarantee. International factoring provides a solution to the problems faced in case of open-account trade as the factor/bank collects money from abroad by approaching importers in their own country, in their own language and in the locally accepted manner.

At a seminar on international factoring for foreign trade, organised by the International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh in partnership with Factors Chain International (FCI), Asian Development Bank and Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM), at Westin Dhaka, experts suggested that Bangladesh should introduce international factoring.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed said international factoring removes the danger of open-account trade under two-factor system very easily, regardless of whether the exporter is a small or large organisation.

International factoring is necessary for better and smooth trade finance, said Nazneen Sultana, Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank. “It is time to review cross-border factoring issue by focusing on cost-benefit and legal issues.”

GLI Finance Buys Up Further Stake in TradeRiver in Shares

GLI Finance Ltd announced it has agreed an all-share deal to acquire a further stake in online trade finance company TradeRiver Finance Ltd. Under the deal, GLI will issue 6.2 million shares and 791,418 zero dividend preference shares to TradeRiver's shareholders. Based on GLI's closing mid-market price of 57.5 pence per share, the valuation of TradeRiver's assets represents an 11.4% premium to GLI's holding valuation of GBP9.1 million at the end of December. The deal gives GLI a 43.9% stake in TradeRiver's ordinary shares and a 100% holding of its preference shares

RosBank’s documentary obligations portfolio grows by 47 percent

RosBank reported that its portfolio of trade finance documentary obligations increased 47 percent over the course of 2014.

Steps taken in the previous year to help the region develop trade financing across seven regional teams with a pool of experts at their disposal, allowed the network to grow its portfolio by 50 percent overall. In the spectrum of documentary obligations the bank was able to conduct over 3,600 transactions which allowed their client pool to grow. Approximately 250 companies use the bank’s services in this area.

“Rosbank continues to play a leading role in the market of documentary operations and trade financing among privately owned Russian banks in terms of the portfolio," RosBank Deputy Director of Transactional Banking Services and Head of Trade Finance Marianne Kuzanov said. "We expect that the size of the portfolio will increase by 25 percent by the end of this year as compared with the end of 2014″

Lloyds pledges extra support for start-ups and exporters

The bank's Helping Britain Prosper campaign was launched last year to help bolster the nation's economy, and it's SME Charter, a separate initiative to support small firms. Lloyds Banking Group recently announced several new "pledges" to support UK prosperity, including creating 20,000 new digital champions, driving growth in the UK's start-ups, and helping companies to export their wares abroad.

The bank is committed to supporting an additional 5,000 businesses to trade internationally, an increase of 7% on its current list of 70,000 exporting customers. Lloyds will work with UK Trade & Investment, the Government body, to encourage small firms to tap into international markets over the next three years.

Lloyds will help 1,000 UK start-ups to become £1m-turnover businesses by 2018 as part of its SME Charter, offering mentoring, networking and investment opportunities, and spreading the support across a wide cross-section of industries.

Lloyds also plan to grow its net lending to small and medium-sized enterprise (SMEs) by least £1bn per year, according to the SME Charter, which also promises to increase trade finance for small exporters by 25pc.

It is not clear how well Lloyds fared on its historic pledges. Last year, it said that £50m would be funnelled into the UK small housebuilders to build 60,000 new homes. That target has now been reduced to £35m. Its previous digital skills target has also been adjusted, as has the number of businesses it previously pledged to help trade internationally. However, it has met targets to help one in five start-ups get off the ground, and supports bank accounts for one in four social enterprises. Group chief executive Antonio Horta-Osario said: “We believe no other bank is better placed to help Britain prosper. We are proud of what we have achieved so far but know there is a lot more hard work ahead.”

Supply Chain Finance Market Growing Worldwide

Globally, the supply chain finance (SCF) market is expanding and maturing. A new report from BCR Publishing, a news provider that specializes in the receivables finance industry, estimates a growth of 30 percent per year. BCR’s research shows the market could be worth €43 billion ($46.5 billion) in terms of the funds currently in use.

The report reveals several trends expected to shape supply chain finance over the next 12 months. Throughout the report, those interviewed point to the varying description of the practice. For some supply chain finance has become synonymous with supplier finance. Others take a more holistic view, opening up the meaning to include reverse factoring, buyer-centric supply chain finance, approved payables finance and pre-shipment finance. The work toward common standards has begun. In 2014, six of the most influential bankers’ associations came together to form the Global SCF Forum. Part of the group’s mandate is developing globally accepted market terms to be used industry wide. The hope is a common knowledge base combined with standard definition make joint or multiple partner deals across national borders less trouble.

Supply chain finance, once the sole purview of highly specialized big banks, is seeing smaller, regional and domestic banks offer SCF services. Increased completion as more and more players entering the field, places downward pressure on prices. Anil Walia, Global Head of Supply Chain Finance at the Royal Bank of Scotland told BCR researchers he expects the trend to continue as new entrants seek market share. “Whether they’re able to deliver at the level of more established banks is really going to be the test,” Walia adds. “If they’re unable to deliver, then there’s going to be shake up in two years.”

Technology is another major trend changing supply chain finance for banks and suppliers. Increasing adoption of both cloud and e-invoicing technologies gives lenders deeper visibility into potential and immediate access to transactional date.. E-invoicing gives providers greater visibility into the purchase patterns and payables of businesses seeking finance.. Openness and transparency provides financers an actual risk profile and removes a lot of uncertainty from the supply chain financing process. Electronic tools also open new opportunities for lines of business, like pre-shipment financing. Growing integration of electronic tools across the supply chain, like purchase-to-pay systems, give banks a clear look into confirmed payables.

Overall growth in supply chain finance is expected to be strong. Regionally, markets anticipate varying levels of growth and distinctive challenges.

ICC Banking Commission Submission on BCBS Revisions to The Standardised Approach To Credit Risk Proposal

The ICC Banking Commission continues to advocate for appropriate and well-calibrated regulatory treatment of trade finance on various fronts, including as related to reserve requirements and capital adequacy standards promulgated by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS). Along with the ongoing efforts of Member Banks and the Banking Commission Team around the ICC Trade Register, they recently engaged in internal deliberations and dialogue with interested industry associations, to respond to a consultation request by the BCBS.

The Banking Commission paper makes numerous specific recommendations that have the potential to result in positive refinements to the regulatory treatment of trade finance by the BCBS and by national regulatory authorities charged with the implementation of capital adequacy standards. Specific recommendations include requests for the BCBS to consider:

- Differentiated treatment for claims on banks less than 90 days old and rolled over
- Differentiated treatment for trade finance exposures to corporate counterparties
- CCF for Commitments be revised to 20% or 50% based on exposure/product, in lieu of 75%
- The application of 0% CCF for certain types of trade finance commitments
- Recalibration of CCF from 50% to 20% for certain types of trade-related guarantee exposures
- Continued use of external ratings for emerging market MDBs when they not highly rated or qualifying

MDBs

- That consideration be given to the introduction of a new sub-clause aimed at providing greater clarity and guidance around the application of CCF to off-balance sheet items.
- A redrafting of clause 53 aimed at ensuring consistency in the application of CCF to Letters of Credit (L/C)
- That the Basel Committee provides specific guidance relative to appropriate/best practices in the reporting of CCF, specifically around aggregation of sub-limits covering multiple products and the risk weighting assigned in the context of such structures.
- Specific or lower risk weights for commodity trade finance when supported by strong structures and liquid collateral
- Clarify the use of insurance contracts issued by ECAs and other insurance companies when they satisfy the eligibility requirements for set out under the collateral mitigation framework

Final report – Cole Commission

The Cole Commission has published its final report, producing a series of recommendations to improve the UK's export performance. In the forefront, Commission chairman Graham Cole writes that more needs to be done to speed up the process of achieving the ambitious £1tn by 2020 export target set by Chancellor George Osborne three years ago.

The action points proposed focus around five topics, including:

- Cabinet-level leadership to drive exports, combined with an implementation committee to facilitate real action;

- A reformed, customer-focused UK Export Finance (UKEF) and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) working as one to champion UK exports;
- A "One Stop Shop" that co-ordinates and simplifies all SME export support and has a strong focus on enhancing SME digital capabilities;
- A public procurement strategy that encourages bidders to bring UK SMEs into their supply chain, ready for exporting;
- An education system that puts international trade and exports on the agenda, through a greater utilisation of foreign students, enhanced relationships, and a dedicated qualification for exports.

A major change from the Commission's interim report published last April is the retracting of the UKTI-UKEF proposed merge in favour of a co-location of the agencies, as well as a shared "core set of KPIs that place enhancing exports as the first order priority" and "greater access to UKTI's international network." Speaking at GTR UK Trade and Export Finance conference in the beginning of June, Paul Croucher, Head of Trade Finance and Insurance solutions at UKEF, said that moving the agencies into the same office buildings was "a possibility we're looking to explore".

The Commission also found that support for SMEs needed improvement. They call for an end of the "one-size-fits-all approach" and instead recommend "streamlining the application process for SMEs".

Russia’s Sberbank and Italy’s Sace sign MoU

Sberbank of Russia and Italia export credit agency Sace signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) during the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum. The MoU aims at developing a long-term co-operation concerning export credit to support foreign trade operations between the Russian Federation and Italy.

Despite the sanctions, Russia remains an important partner for Italy. Alessandro Castellano, Sace’s CEO remarks: “With over €4.4bn of exposure in our portfolio, Russia remains the top foreign market for Sace”

Misys wins Trade Finance award for second consecutive year

Misys, the leading financial software company, has been awarded Best Trade Finance Tech-solutions Company in this year's Trade Finance Awards for Excellence for the second year in a row.

Voted for by the industry, the win reflects another strong year in trade finance for Misys, with new deals in Germany and India, important go-lives for Tier one global banks in the UK and US, and a growing client base of over 200 financial institutions now using its trade and financial supply chain management solutions. Within the last year, Misys has also been named a Leader in Gartner's Magic Quadrant for International Core Banking, and "Best in Class" by CEB TowerGroup for corporate client services and transaction capabilities in trade services.

Misys has seen double digit growth in demand for FusionBanking Corporate Channels, its integrated online banking solution for trade, supply chain finance, corporate cash management and commercial lending. The company has continued to invest in new technology, delivering a new relationship-based pricing and billing engine and further support for the latest innovations in digital trade finance and corporate connectivity, such as the Bank Payment Obligation and Electronic Bills of Lading.

Daniel Schmand succeeds Tan as ICC Chair

Schmand has been appointed chair of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Banking Commission for a three-year term from 1st May, taking over from Tan Kah Chye, who has chaired the commission since 2010. Tan will be taking on a new role as chair of the ICC Academy.

Daniel Schmand is Managing Director and Head of Trade Finance and Cash Management Corporates for Europe, the Middle East and Africa at Deutsche Bank's Global Transaction Banking (GTB) division. He is also responsible for the global co-ordination of the bank's trade finance activities. He was appointed vice-chair of the ICC Banking Commission responsible for supply chain finance in 2012.

Commodities

Goldman Sachs now leads global banks in commodity trading revenues

The commodity trading divisions of Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Barclays, BNP Paribas, Citigroup, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan, Morgan Stanley and UBS, were monitored by Coalition, a financial analytics company. They reported that collectively, banks enjoyed a 9% increase in commodity revenue in 2014, despite the chronically low prices of some key commodities. Total revenue was US$4.9bn in 2014 and while it was the first upward tick since 2011, it still represents a fraction of the combined US$14.1bn banks were taking in before the crisis in 2008.

JP Morgan sold its commodities division to trader Mercuria in 2014 and falling oil prices and the massive commodity fraud uncovered in Qingdao, China last year have led to many banks paring back their commodities business in Asia.

Standard Chartered were expecting heavy losses, as reported by Macquarie: “StanChart will suffer from a combination of commodity finance-related defaults and revenue pressure, in our view. For StanChart we estimate US$3.9bn stress test losses on its US$61bn commodity exposure. In addition we see the risk that the bank may have to top up currently weak NPL coverage ratios to a more comfortable level of 80% which would cost US$2bn (pre-tax). Adding all negative together, one year of pre-tax profit (2015E) would get wiped out by assuming front end loaded losses and the capital shortfall would increase to just below US$8bn based on our assumptions."

Data from Citi showed that trade finance declined 1.4% last year compared to a surge of 43.8% in 2013. In December in Hong Kong, the 1.4% contraction in trade finance was the first reversal since December 2009.

Whilst compliance issues are taking Banks longer to complete deals, there has been an increase in funds entering the market in an effort to take advantage of the vacuum banks have left.

Singapore builds up local expertise for commodity trading

According to a 2014 Global Trade Review (GTR) Asia report, Singapore is now the busiest port in the world by tonnage, although there is a severe lack of local talent supply, especially since Singaporeans make up only about 60 per cent of the more than 14,000 workers in the industry.

Commodity trading companies are finding that the lack of talent with the right skillsets is a challenge, as reported by global agri-commodity firm Olam. As a result, the company is taking a "long view" on its talent, to create a talent pipeline for its trading roles. Olam ensures that employees get a minimum of five to six years of experience in managing complex supply chain operations in one or more of the firm's operating countries. It also fosters employee development along five to 10-year time horizons.

Local education programmes with a focus on international trade are starting to emerge, equipping more graduates with the skillsets to thrive in the commodity trading industry.

In 2007, the Singapore Management University (SMU) set up the International Trading Institute (ITI) in collaboration with IE Singapore and industry partners. The institute has produced more than 300 graduates so far under its international trading concentration, offered to students majoring in finance. Education gives Singapore's physical commodity trade a competitive edge "as local talent is a very sticky factor in building comparative advantage for any country", said professor of finance (practice) and academic director of ITI, Annie Koh.

Nanyang Technological University (NTU), is embarking on a new International Trading Programme (ITP) that will adopt a multidisciplinary approach to commodity trading.

They are also looking at how to create awareness of the opportunities available and encourage students to enter the physical commodity trading industry.

Commodity Traders Vow Openness as Oil Volatility Brings Boom

Leaders of the industry gathered in Lausanne with commodity traders on track for one of their best years since the financial crisis.

Increased oil price volatility and markets in contango, where current prices are lower than those on futures markets, have created the most favourable conditions for oil traders in more than four years. As banks exit or scale back their physical commodities business due to regulatory pressure, the independent commodity trading industry has become more visible.

Regulatory pressure on banks has raised compliance standards and put pressure on traders to provide more information. As a result, commodity traders are promising more openness as their key role in global energy, food and metals markets attracts scrutiny. Trading houses including Trafigura, Gunvor Group Ltd. and Mercuria Energy Group Ltd. are investing in assets including refineries, storage facilities and pipelines and have tapped new sources of funding including bonds and partnerships with private equity.

Citi faces headwinds in commodity trade finance

Citigroup Inc and rivals in the commodity trade finance sector are facing headwinds of weak oil prices, sanctions on Russia and stiff competition, which have pressured fees. The US bank, which launched its business in the sector three years ago, has shifted attention from China, where fees are weak, to Africa and Latin America, said Kris van Broekhoven, Global Head of Commodity Trade Finance.

"It's still a tough environment," he told Reuters. "China is not an easy market. It's very competitive and pricing is low. We want growth, but not at any cost." Citi started off with oil, added metals last year and plans to include agricultural commodities by the end of 2015. The bulk of its business has come from financing deals with big trading houses and this is being expanded to include the next tier of mid-sized traders, Van Broekhoven said.

A sharp drop in oil prices and rising costs in areas of compliance and regulation have caused Citi to refrain from certain businesses where the returns are insufficient. "When the costs are increasing, at a certain point it no longer makes sense to do something at the price the client is paying," he said. "I do believe the moment will come when banks will reprice a bit upwards. That's one thing I would expect over the next 12 months." Citi, the third-biggest US bank by assets, is pressing on with its expansion in commodity trade finance and is still growing its revenues in the sector every year despite the challenges, Van Broekhoven said.

According to a report in the Financial Times in 2012, Citi aimed to make more than $200 million in net income from the business within three years. Van Broekhoven declined to give specific revenue figures or to comment on the reported target. Sanctions on Russia due to the Ukraine crisis have also had an impact on Citi's business since it has been a big player in the region, Van Broekhoven said. To help counter the challenges, the commodity trade finance business, which has a headcount of 14, plans to expand into Latin America this year. Citi plans to add staff in that region and is also recruiting someone to run agricultural trade finance globally, he said.

BB Energy secures oversubscribed RCF

Energy trading company BB Energy has signed its revolving credit facility (RCF) at US$200mn, tacking on an additional US$25mn since syndication was launched in May.

The oversubscribed facility has a tenor of 12 months and also contains an up to one-year extension option, at each lender’s discretion. It will be used to refinance last year's US$175mn RCF and for general corporate and working capital purposes.

The company's CFO Riccardo Greco comments on the signing: "As it expands its trading activities, BB Energy continues to deliver solid business and financial performance; the interest received from the banking community in this year's RCF is the recognition of such a pattern. We look forward to developing new business opportunities with the support of our enlarging banking pool which we thank once again."

Isbank Germany licenses Surecomp trade finance package

Surecomp®, the leading global provider of trade finance solutions for banks and corporations, recently announced that Isbank AG, the European arm of Turkey's leading bank Türkiye Is Bankasi A.S., has licensed Surecomp's state-of-the-art DOKA 5® trade finance system. Headquartered in Frankfurt, Isbank spearheads its parent company's international expansion plans, and promotes close commercial and other ties between Western Europe and Turkey.

Isbank sought an efficient, agile and responsive trade finance solution to meet the business challenges of its corporate clients, recognising that trade finance is a key element in building strong international operations, and that the bank's in-place manual system would not allow for the growth strategy envisaged. The bank wanted to partner with a solution provider who could offer advanced software solutions along with superior integration and support services. Working closely with Swiss-headquartered Avaloq Banking System, a Surecomp partner, Isbank completed the implementation and went live with it's the new core system in record time.

“Our goal is to accompany our clients in their international business growth through a long-term partnership approach, supported by the dedication and passion of our trade finance professionals,” remarked Moshe Wolfson, Surecomp Vice President Sales EMEA and Global Head of Marketing. “We greatly appreciate Isbank’s vote of confidence in our company, and look forward to successfully partnering with the bank in the years ahead.”

Mercuria signs US$2.5bn RCFs

Energy and commodities group Mercuria has closed US$2.5bn-worth of multicurrency revolving credit facilities (RCFs). The facilities were oversubscribed by 35% following an initial launch at US$2.1bn last April, and were subsequently increased in aggregate, with a scale-back in participations.

“We are very pleased with the strong outcome. More than 50 banks committed to the facilities including a number of new geographically diverse banks,” says Guillaume Vermersch, group chief financial officer of Mercuria, adding: “These Facilities reflect Mercuria’s sustained business growth boosted by the recent acquisition of the JP Morgan physical commodities trading books.”

The facilities include a US$ 1.9bn 364-day tranche and a US$600mn three-year RCF. According to a Mercuria statement, they will be used for general corporate purposes and working capital including the refinancing of the group’s maturing US$2.055bn 364-day and US$595mn three-year European RCFs dated June 20, 2014.

Middle East

Sidra Ancile Global Structured Trade Investment Fund exceeds SR250m (Middle East)

The fund that is co-managed by Saudi-based Sidra Capital and Swiss-based INOKS Capital has made 135 short-term investments up to 2014 across a variety of geographies and soft commodities, recently surpassing SR250 million (66 million) under management to become the world's largest Islamic structured trade investment fund. The fund is fully Shariah-compliant and sets high ethical standards.

The fund has invested across Africa East Europe Asia and MENA region and it's strategy is to support growth in the real economy by actively providing working capital to non-speculative value added SMEs focusing on agricultural commodities energies and metals. This much needed growth capital will allow real tangible non-speculative businesses to mature and in the process generate wealth for the investors and the invested communities.

National Bank of Fujairah underscores focus on precious metals and jewellery sectors with launch of diamond financing business

National Bank of Fujairah PJSC (NBF) recently announced the establishment of a specialised team focused on financing manufacturers and traders of rough and polished diamonds to compliment the bank's focus on the precious metals and jewellery sectors. They have hired industry experts from Antwerp Diamond Bank's (ADB) operations in Dubai to run the business, providing short-term purchase and sales financing to established diamond players as they ship raw diamonds from producing nations in the African and European continents to manufacturers in India and the Far East.

Vikram Pradhan, NBF 's Head of Corporate & Institutional Banking, said that the launch of the bank's diamond financing business coincides with the rise of Dubai as one of the diamond capitals of the world: "With Dubai's strategic location on global trade routes, its open business climate and modern infrastructure, it's no wonder that the city has quickly taken its rightful place as one of the leading diamond centres in the world".

According to the Dubai Diamond Exchange, a regional trading platform overseen by the Dubai Multi Commodities Centre (DMCC), the emirate's diamond trade is valued at nearly $35 billion in 2013 and 2014, up from less than $5 million in 2001.

Ahmed bin Sulayem, Executive Chairman of DMCC, said: "Over the past decade, Dubai has effectively leveraged its location on the 'New Silk Route' at the heart of the global diamond trade.

"**Investors eye companies with Iranian ties in anticipation of sanctions lifting**

Negotiators are seeking to finalise a deal that would check Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for an end to the economic sanctions. Multinationals located in nearby countries and those that have kept ties with the Islamic republic during sanctions are anticipating a big lift from this opening up of the Middle East's second-biggest economy.

According to Hasnain Malik, the Head of Frontier-Markets Equity Strategy at Exotix Partners in Dubai, Dubai will get a 5% boost to its economy from lifting sanctions on Iran

MTN is among the stocks likely to benefit since it owns 49% of MTN Irancell, the second-biggest telecommunications company in Iran. MTN recently reported that it had about $1bn to repatriate from Iran, including an accumulated dividend and loan repayment due from Irancell.

MTN's shares have fallen 7.4% during the first three months of this year. "They'll have the benefit of being able to repatriate cash that's been stranded there for some time," Avior Research Analyst David Lerche says. "The lifting of sanctions is probably going to be positive for the Iranian economy as a whole, and that would help consumer spending and therefore MTN's operations in Iran."

Helen Elfer, Lonely Planet's Middle East destination editor, expects "a big impact on Iran's tourism industry", saying: "More flights and access to the international banking system would make a major difference to travellers."

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is continuing to support the development of international trade in Tajikistan with both financial support and training.

On 30th March 2015, the EBRD provided a new trade finance facility to Access Bank Tajikistan under the EBRD's Trade Facilitation Programme (TFP). On the same day, jointly with Tajik Banking Association, the Bank held a workshop on the latest rules of International Chamber of

Commerce (ICC) on International Standard Banking Practice (ISBP), according to EBRD.

A new TFP facility for AccessBank Tajikistan for the amount of €200,000 was signed alongside the workshop... "We are very pleased that AccessBank Tajikistan, which the EBRD co-founded and which already partners with us to support MSMEs, will now also be able to support Tajik companies trading with foreign partners through our trade facilitation programme," said Richard Jones., Head of the EBRD's resident office in Dushanbe.

Launched in 1999, the TFP aims to promote foreign trade to, from and among the EBRD's countries of operations. Under the programme, the EBRD provides guarantees to international confirming banks and also grants short-term loans to select banks and factoring companies for on-lending to local exporters, importers and distributors. The TFP currently includes over 100 partner banks in 23 countries where the Bank invests, with limits exceeding €1.5 billion in total, and more than 800 confirming banks worldwide.

Since the beginning of its operations in the country, the EBRD has invested close to US$ 320 million in Tajikistan across many sectors of the economy.

Gulf Finance launches Trade Finance solutions for SMEs

This leading provider of growth finance to SMEs and micro businesses, has launched its own suite of trade finance solutions to help support the business requirements of clients engaged in imports and exports. The Company offers an extensive product suite consisting of Small Business

Loans, Business Vehicle Finance, Commercial Finance including working capital, asset finance and invoice finance, Medical Equipment Finance and Marine Finance.

The available trade finance solutions include Letters of Credit, Bonds and Guarantees, starting at a minimum of AED 50,000 for a minimum period of 30 days. They offer a dedicated and experienced team specialized in trade finance to support this funding initiative.

"The UAE has developed into a regional trading hub and our research shows that there is a gap in the market for the position of Trade Finance services to SME's and micro businesses"' commented, David Hunt, CEO of Gulf Finance.

"By launching our trade finance facility we hope to close this gap by fulfilling SME's requirements for both short and long-term liquidity, making it affordable and accessible for SMEs to engage in real cross-border trade transactions. Our own market research, the recently launched Gulf Finance SME Sentiment Survey, tells us that 20% of our customers are looking to expand into new markets."

Asia

China rolls out FTZ model despite Shanghai let-down

China has launched three new free trade zones (FTZ) - Guangdong, Tianjin and Fujian They will be run on the same model as the maiden zone in Shanghai, launched in September 2013 and have been chosen largely for geographical reasons.

The government hopes this will help boost economic growth, as it looks for ways to meet its growth targets, amid fears of a prolonged slowdown. Banks and companies based in the Shanghai FTZ have been permitted some levels of cross-border lending and renminbi sweeping – initiatives which China hoped would help increase the international usage of the currency.

There appear to be widespread doubts as to the efficacy of the first FTZ, with Critics pointing out that some of the crucial objectives of the FTZ, such as the free-floating of the Rmb and its full convertibility, as well as free interest rates, have yet to be met, although local authorities have voiced intentions to continue to move towards these goals.

A recent survey by the US Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai showed that the majority of US companies working in the zone have yet to experience any material benefit from doing so. 73% of companies surveyed reported "no tangible benefits" for business. Whilst others have urged patience, with a senior figure at Citi reporting "Things are beginning to move. As clients get more involved, we will also get more involved. It’s something which is extremely welcome. It has increased our business but also presents new trade finance opportunities,”

Australia hopeful of a trade and investment agreement with India by year-end

India is Australia’s top VET (Vocational Education and Training) market, having grown 27 per cent in the past year alone, and the demand across the next decade is likely to be phenomenal.

Andrew Robb, Minister for Trade and Investment, Australia confirmed that “Australia is looking to conclude a bilateral economic trade and investment agreement by the end of this year with focus being Services, including education and training,”

As part of his inspiring economic transformation plan, India’s Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has set his country the task of skilling and training 500 million Indians by 2022.”

Alibaba enlists startups to provide UK trade financing

The Alibaba’s partnerships with iwoca and ezbob, two finance providers for small businesses across the UK, are intended to provide short-term working capital to businesses that otherwise would have trouble securing funds from banks.

British companies looking to source cheap components or goods from Chinese suppliers apply for credit online; the providers review their business track records, tax returns and other data, and then provide a swift decision.

It is similar to its recently announced tie-up with Lending Club in the US, although unlike Lending Club (a peer-to-peer loans matching service), Ezbob and Iwoca would provide the financing themselves. They already lend to Amazon.com and eBay merchants.

Both will be providing micro-loans of GBP 50,000 (USD 75,315) and up to qualified firms, at anticipated interest rates of 0.75% to 2% monthly. Funds are channelled directly to Chinese suppliers.

Alibaba's executives are looking for similar providers to extend financing to markets such as Australia, Germany and Canada

Iran to raise stake in Islamic finance body as it prepares for possible sanctions relief

The Jeddah-based International Islamic Trade Finance Corp (ITFC) promotes Islamic trade financing, which follows religious principles such as a ban on interest payments. With 56 shareholders including about 31 member countries, it extends direct financing and cooperates with other providers to support sharia-compliant trade. Islamic trade finance serves only a tiny fraction of global trade, partly because Islamic banks are relatively small and lack the expertise and large international networks of mainstream Western banks.

Since its inception in 2008, the ITFC has extended $594 million worth of financing approvals for Iran, all of that before 2012, when the sanctions were tightened and effectively froze Tehran out of the global banking system. During 2014 the ITFC approved transactions worth $5.2 billion, up from $3.4 billion in 2013, with over three-quarters of the money going to finance trade in the energy sector.

In preparation for possible easing of sanctions on its foreign trade in exchange for curbing its nuclear program, Iran plans to raise its stake in the ITFC, becoming its third largest shareholder, a move which could help Iran rebuild its international trading links if the sanctions are eased. This depends on whether negotiations between Tehran and world powers can reach agreement on its disputed nuclear program. An agreement looks to be imminent,, although both sides say major obstacles remain. The ITFC's annual general assembly has approved an increase of Iran's subscription by 8,500 shares. Its annual report says each share is worth $10,000, implying Iran would pay $85 million to lift its stake.

At the end of 2013, Iran's subscription was just $1.92 million, which made it the 22nd largest shareholder in the ITFC, behind Bangladesh and just ahead of Bahrain. At present, the Islamic Development Bank [ISDBA.UL] is the largest shareholder in the ITFC with a stake worth $266 million; Saudi Arabia holds second spot at $120 million. The ITFC has total paid-up capital of $701.9 million.

The ITFC resolution said Iran would increase its stake via three equal and consecutive instalments. The first instalment is due in six months time, but Iran could opt to pay any or all of the instalments before the due date.

DBS Bank Singapore Receives Approval to Issue Letters of Credit for Trading on DME

Following recent approval approved to issue Letters of Credit (LCs) for trading crude oil on the Exchange, DBS becomes the first Singapore bank to be able to issue LCs directly from Singapore on behalf of its clients to guarantee deliveries of Oman crude oil.

Owain Johnson, Managing Director, The Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME), recently said "We are pleased to announce that DBS is the first Singapore bank with regional Asia presence to be awarded this status. As a major bank in Singapore with a strong credit rating, we believe DBS would play a significant role in contributing to higher trade volumes conducted by over 400 commodity players based on Singapore. DBS ' support is a significant step that will further enhance the trading environment offered by the Exchange and allow our customers to manage risks more effectively."

Africa

WTO Celebrating 20th Anniversary in Morocco

The World Trade Organization chose Marrakesh, its birth place, to celebrate its 20th anniversary with a high-level conference on the topic "WTO 20 years: celebrating successes, meeting challenges to come."

The conference took place in April and was attended by the WTO Director-General, Roberto Azevêdo, Mr Achim Steiner, Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and some 40 African Trade Ministers.

The importance of ensuring that trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive was emphasized by both Mr Azevedo and Mr Steiner.

WTO worries over financial sector's capacity to support industrial firms

WTO are concerned that a lack of capacity in the financial sector to support industries, and also a lack of access to the international financial system could be a significant trade barrier for developing countries.

Citing a survey by the African Development Bank of 300 banks operating in 45 African countries, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has described the market for trade finance in Nigeria and other developing countries in the continent to be hovering around $350 billion. They consider that the figure could be markedly higher if a significant share of the financing requested by traders had not been rejected, noting that based on such rejections, the estimate for the value of unmet demand for trade finance in Africa is about $120 billion, representing one-third of the gap in the existing market.

Comparing the situation in Africa to that of Asia, the WTO stated that the Asian Development Bank, in a similar survey in Asia, found preliminary estimates showing an unmet demand of about $800 billion.

According to the WTO, up to 80 per cent of global trade is supported by some form of financing or credit insurance noting that the impact of financial limitations on a country's trading potential can be very, very significant.

The Director-General, WTO, Roberto Azevêdo in a statement stated that in many countries there is a lack of capacity in the financial sector to support trade, therefore limiting the ability of these countries to use simple instruments such as letters of credit for trade.

The lack of development of the financial sector is seen as a significant barrier to trade. It can prevent developing countries from integrating into the trading system and accessing further trade opportunities. The WTO are therefore committed to doing everything possible to help developing countries to integrate into the global trading system. This is reflected in the outcomes of the Bali Package, currently being implemented . And it is reflected in the current negotiations on the work programme to conclude the Doha Round. "But the effectiveness of all this work will be lessened if proper access to trade finance is not secured", said Mr Azevêdo.

Morocco is ready for Islamic banking

The country's central bank governor, Abdellatif Jouahri, says that Morocco will introduce its first fully-compliant Islamic bank by 2016.

Last January the Moroccan government adopted a bill drafted in 2012 regulating shariah-compliant banking products and allowing foreign Islamic banks to operate in the country's banking sector. Morocco has also approved plans to create a shariah board of Islamic scholars to preside over the Islamic finance industry. While the country has been slow to set it up, it is not too late to profit from the popularity of Islamic banking. "It is going to be extremely good for the Moroccan economy," Maninder Managing Director at Encore Solutions told GTR. "There is definitely going to be high demand for the services," he said.

While Islamic banking currently occupies a small percentage of the market share, demand for this type of product is high and constantly growing. According to Ernst & Young's analysis International Islamic banking assets were expected to exceed US$778bn last year, and are set to triple to more than US$2tn in the next four years,

According to Mr Bhandari,, the reasons for Islamic banking's popularity are not simply religious, but also financial – from a borrowing as well as deposits perspective, as profit rates paid on deposits and balances by Islamic banks are usually higher than those paid by conventional banks, and related to risk and safety – because all the counterparties involved in Islamic banking transactions are taking an equal risk and not just passing the risk on to the client.

Tapping the market in Sudan

Bank of Khartoum 's Head of Corporate Banking, Yacoub Mohamed Zafir Al-Alem believes that whilst past restrictions have limited the Sudanese corporate banking market, the potential now exists for considerable growth.

He says that the Sudanese economy can confidently be classified as a 'virgin one' that essentially needs large corporate companies well-equipped with extensive experience and know-how to establish large scale projects. Ongoing economic and regulatory reforms are aimed at attracting increasing foreign and local investors. Inevitably, these investors will be heavily reliant on the corporate banking sector to facilitate business and cater to their banking products and services requirements.

With this in mind the Bank are targeting a client base consisting of large corporations and NGOs. They are able to provide services to clients that need finance or cash management solutions. A typical client has revenues of over $10 million per annum and an established track record in his/her sector, excellent management capabilities, great financial performance and a sterling reputation

As the oldest and largest bank in Sudan by balance sheet size. Bank of Khartoum are able to assure clients of their reliability which enables them to finance single obligors with amounts larger than their competitors. With a branch network of 73 branches and 27 sub-branches spread all over the country and a large foreign correspondent network, Bank of Khartoum have become the partner of choice for many large corporations and NGOs.

$120bn trade finance gap is holding back Africa's growth

Stanbic Bank, a member of Standard Bank, offers a corporate trade finance programme that facilitates domestic and international trade by guaranteeing payment for goods shipments. They offer competitive funding costs and experienced teams to help businesses succeed. The bank's footprint across 20 countries in Africa enables it to provide comprehensive trade finance solutions. They consider that a lack of access to affordable trade finance is holding back the economic and employment potential of African countries, a view upheld by The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the largest business organisation in the world, who agree that the African market is clearly underserviced from a trade finance perspective.

According to the African Development Bank's (AfDB) recent report on trade finance in Africa, the conservative estimate for the value of unmet demand for bank-intermediated trade finance is between US$110 billion and US $120 billion, which is significantly higher than earlier estimated figures of US$25 billion.

As trade finance has a direct impact on employment, a great number of jobs could be created if small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Africa, could do cross border transactions that would have been supported by the unmet gap in demand for trade finance.

The WTO's World Trade Report 2014 says the potential of trade in supporting development has not yet been fully realised. The emerging trends suggest, however, that trade will be a major force for development in the future.

Despite the positive outlook, the WTO report says 2014 was the third straight year of below average trade growth and that this will not change in 2015.

People Moves

Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Hires

From 6th April, **Ken Stratton** has been appointed First General Manager and Regional Head of Transaction Banking Sales, Asia Transaction Banking Office. He reports to **Noritoshi Murakami**, General Manager of Asian Transaction Banking Office and will be based in Singapore.

Stratton has more than 30 years of experience in financial services and has worked in both cash and trade positions in global banks across Asia Pacific and the US. Before joining BTMU, he was managing his own consulting company providing transaction banking and relationship management training across Asia.

He will supervise the bank's transaction banking business, including cash management and trade finance across 12 markets within the Asia and Oceania region and be responsible for developing and setting the strategic direction for the Asia and Oceania region's transaction banking business, deepening existing client relationships, and driving new client growth across a broad sector comprising multinational and large local corporates and financial institutions.

Michael Hogan has joined the bank as Head of Transaction Banking, Emea, in London. He previously worked at National Australia Bank in Singapore as Head of Trade, Asia.

Nedbank Capital appoints Anne-Marie Woolley as Energy and Metals Unit Head

Formerly Standard Bank's Head of Structured Trade and Commodity Finance in Africa, **Anne-Marie Woolley** provided a key component in the revised trade structure, with three new divisions aligned across agricommodities, energy and metals and bank risk.

She will report to Nedbank Capital Global Commodity Finance Head **Sekete Mokgehle.**

Mokgehle said the bank risk stream would also be restructured to incorporate a larger team with the international and South African business.

Woolley added that her vision was to diversify the portfolio, which was currently predominantly international trader-oriented, albeit with an African flavour, and to develop trade finance structuring and execution skills across the team members.

"Key to our success will be the forging of close ties and greater joint transactions with Ecobank," she commented.

IFIC's new Deputy Managing Directors

Fariduddin Al Mahmud and **Shah Md Moinuddin**, two senior Executive Vice Presidents of the bank have been promoted to Deputy Managing Directors, Mahmud, a marketing major from Dhaka University, joined IFIC in 1984. He has experience in trade finance, credit administration, corporate banking and internal control and compliance.

Moinuddin, an accounting major from Dhaka University, has been associated with IFIC since 1986. He brings trade finance, credit and corporate banking experience to the new appointment.

Westpac move Gordon Sparrow to London

Previously the bank's Executive Director, Head of Trade and Supply Chain Finance/Bank Sales, **Gordon Sparrow** has moved from Sydney to London, taking up the post of Executive Director , GTS.

His remit remains the same, although he has added responsibility for transactional sales for Emea and the Americas.

AIG appointments to London trade credit team

Terri-Louise Osborn and **Duarte Pedreira** take up the post of Corporate Manager.

Terrie-Louise started her career in credit insurance on the graduate scheme at Euler Hermes in 2007 and subsequently worked in foreign and domestic risk underwriting and global account management for the German insurer.

Duarte started his trade finance career as a forfaiting trader at the London office of Banif Bank in 2005, moving to Standard Bank in Africa, where he worked until 2013. He joins AIG from Caspian Sea Capital, where he held the role of Director for Structured Trade and Commodity Finance Advisory.

Tom Bryant joins as a Senior Underwriter. His experience includes underwriting roles at Amlin, Euler Hermes and QBE, and a credit analyst position at Stemcor.

Gearóid Finnerty joins as an Underwriter within the eBonded team. He previously worked within a compliance role in RSA Ireland before moving to Atradius Reinsurance in Dublin.

Michel Meylacq has been hired as an Underwriter, having recently graduated from Manchester Business School.

Will Clark, Head of AIF UK, Trade Credit explained "Our emphasis will be on how to provide more certainty to our traditional products, especially by way of our non-cancellable credit insurance offering. It's clear that there are some significant shifts taking place in credit quality across the globe and this will continue in the near to medium term. From a client perspective it's important to know that the credit insurance policy will respond in terms of supporting companies' current and future sales, funding as well as claims,"

"It's also clear that working together with the finance sector and technology will shape insurers, brokers and well as clients' business models, allowing opportunity in terms of operational efficiency as well as capital management. Our expanded team will help to reinforce our successes of the past and our growth into tomorrow."

Mizuho Bank has announced a number of moves within its global trade finance team.

Masahiro Goda, previously General Manager of the Global Trade Finance Division, Asia Oceania Department, has moved from Singapore to Tokyo to take on the newly-created role of Executive Director of the Global Trade Finance Division. He is replaced in Singapore by **Kaoru Mochizuki**, previously Deputy Head of the Asia Oceania department.

Motoo Matsumoto, is promoted from Deputy General Manager of Trade Finance Team Number 2, to become Head of the Emea Department, Global Trade Finance Division and moves from Tokyo to London

Kanae Iomori is taking on the Deputy General Manager position vacated by Matsumoto. She was previously part of the credit department in London.

Junichiro Yoshiyama, Deputy General Manager of Trade Finance Team Number 1, moves to the bank's International Trade Business Promotion Division.

Yoshiyama's previous role is now filled by **Koichi Asano**, who was previously working within the international corporate advisory division.

HSBC names China PCM Head

Lewis Sun has been appointed as Head of payments and Cash Management (PCM) in China. He reports functionally **to Kee Joo Wong** and locally to **Terence Chiu**, Head of Commercial Banking, HSBC China, and the Head of Global Banking and Markets, HSBC China.

Sun joined the bank's China PCM team in 2002 as a Product Manager and has since held roles including Head of Product, Head of Sales and, most recently, Head of Global Banking Corporate Sales. He has 18 years of banking and IT experience.

Sun succeeds **Kee Joo Wong** who was recently appointed as Regional Head of PCM for HSBC Asia Pacific.

Cotti sets up advisory business

Daniel Cotti has launched Cotti Trade & Treasury (CTT), an advisory service for the Trade Finance and Treasury Management industry, specialising in providing advice to banks, companies, investors, regulators, government agencies and industry associations around the world.

He will be offering advice on a strategic level, encompassing products, solutions and people: "solving the what, how and who", he says. "At the moment it's not transaction-specific, but I wouldn't exclude that going forward."

As part of this new service, Cotti will be teaming up with fellow consultant service providers around the world. "The idea is to create a network of partnerships with other people in the trade finance and treasury space and team up with them to provide solutions to clients,"

The first of these partnerships is with Treasury Strategies (TSI), a Chicago-based consulting firm.

Cotti has 36 years of banking experience working for, among others, Citibank, ABN Amro and RBS, His most recent role was as head of global trade at JP Morgan, which he left last year.

Pravin Advani replaces Daniel Cotti at J P Morgan

Pravin Advani has been named as Head of Global Trade & Loan Products at JP Morgan.

He makes the move from his current position as Regional Trade Executive, Asia. He will remain based in Singapore and report to **Andy O'Brien,** Global Head of Loan Capital Strategy for Banking.

Advani has more than 25 years' experience in the banking industry, with a focus on the pan-Asian, Eastern Europe and Middle East markets. He joined JP Morgan in 2010 as Regional Head of Global Trade for Asia Pacific. He has also held roles at RBS, ABN Amro and Citi.

Tan leaves JP Morgan

Tan Kah Chye has left JP Morgan and his position as the bank's Managing Director, Global Head of Trade Finance Securitisation. It is rumoured that he may be returning to Singapore.

Tan joined the bank in November 2013 shortly after leaving Barclays, where he had held the position of Vice-Chair, Corporate Banking.

BBVA appoints new Global Head of Trade

From 24th April **Francisco Javier Fernández de Trocóniz** will become BBVA's Head of Global Trade Finance and International Financial Institutions, based in Madrid. This position was left vacant by the transfer of **Nicholas Shaw** to London where he will head up the bank's corporate banking division.

Previously Fernández de Trocóniz was BBVA's Head of Corporate and Investment Banking for Spain and Portugal, and before that worked in London, where he was in charge of BBVA Northern Europe Global Corporate Banking.

Dalal to run Citi's SCF team – moving from Singapore

Parvaiz Dalal has been appointed as head of supply chain finance for EMEA. He will report to **Sameer Sehgal**, EMEA head of trade finance, export and agency finance, and commodities. Dalal will supervise the product, onboarding and sales capabilities, working closely with sales, coverage and banking partners

He moves from Singapore, where he spent five and half years as Citi's head of structured trade and asset distribution for Asia Pacific. He joined the London office in March, taking over from **Abhijit Prasad**, who left in August.

Before joining Citi, Dalal worked at Royal Bank of Scotland, ABN Amro, and Credit Lyonnaise.

SocGen names Collin India country head

SG has appointed **Evelyne Collin** as Chief Executive and country officer for India, reporting to Singapore based Pascal Lambert head of SG's corporate end investment banking division For Southeast Asia.

Collin began her Mumbai based posting on March 9, replacing **Mark Vives** who left the bank to pursue outside opportunities.

She has 30 years of experience in risk, structured finance and the commodities market, starting at SG in Hamburg in 1986. She spent the majority of her career at the bank working with the natural resource group of the corporate and investment banking division first as the deputy head of structured commodity and mining finance, rising to global head of trade finance.

Most recently, she was the Paris-based deputy head of corporate commodity and trade finance, managing oil traders' financing teams in Europe while overseeing business development activities for Africa.

The bank has yet to name Collin's successor in Paris but indicated that her duties will be divided amongst the commodity end trade finance team

Rabobank hires Americas Commodity Head

Muriel Schwab joins Rabobank New York as Head of Trade and Commodity Finance (TCF) Americas on 1st July, reporting to **Jasper van Schaik**, Global Head of Trade and Commodity Finance.

She will have regional responsibility for the bank's TCF activities in New York, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires and Santiago, working in close co-ordination with the global business heads for agri, metals, energy and trade finance.

Schwab has spent the past year finalising a masters degree at Yale. Her last role was as CFO Asia Pacific, Board Director and Chairman of the management committee at Gunvor Singapore. She has also held positions with Credit Suisse and ING in Geneva.

Hedge fund Markham Rae Trade Capital Partners appoints two well-known trade figures to its advisory board.

The first is **Kah Chye Tan**, the former chairman of the ICC's Banking Commission. He has worked in senior trade finance roles with JP Morgan, Barclays and Standard Chartered over a career that has made him one of the most recognisable names in trade.

Also joining the board is **Sir David Cooksey**, a former director at the Bank of England, who worked as chairman of Bechtel, London and Continental Railways, the Audit Commission and UK Financial Investments.

The appointments are designed to augment the in-house trade finance team at Markham Rae. The company CEO Jonathan Martin welcomed the pair, saying: "Sir David and Kah Chye's combined knowledge experience and understanding is an invaluable addition board."

Avot moves east as DB plan to grow their GTB offering in MEA

Sébastien Avot, currently director in the distribution and trading Emea team for Deutsche Bank's global transaction banking (GTB) division will move from London to Dubai on July 1 to take up the position of Head of

Distribution and trading for Middle East and Africa. He will continue to report to **Boris Jaquet**, Regional Head Emea for distribution and trading.

Avot joined the bank in October 2010, focusing on distributing syndicated unsecured and structured loans for global borrowers into the Emea region, in both primary and secondary markets. Prior to that he was at BNP Paribas, where he was responsible for selling loans in France, Russia, the CIS and Turkey, as well as some secondary sales, until 2010.

GE Capital MD joins HSBC

Inwha Huh joins HSBC as Head of Global Trade and Receivables Finance (GTRF), US and Canada, from 23rd June. She will report to **Stuart Tait,** Global Head of GTRF, and Wyatt Crowell, Senior Executive Vice-President and Head of Commercial Banking, HSBC Bank USA and be responsible for leading and managing HSBC's GTRF activities across the US and Canada for commercial and global banking clients.

Previously Huh was Managing Director, Global Trade Finance Strategy, at GE Capital and prior to that held a number of roles in trade finance and commercial banking at Deutsche Bank, JP Morgan and BNY Mellon, in the US, UK and Asia.

She succeeds **Prabhat Vira,** who takes up the new role of Global Head of Strategic Transformation, GTRF, also reporting to Tait.

New Philippines country head at Citi

Aftab Ahmed has been named country officer for Citi in the Philippines, effective from 15th July. Moving from his role as country officer for Citi Hungary, where he simultaneously manages the bank's Balkan and Baltic Regions in Central and Eastern Europe, having previously headed up the bank's Egyptian operations, he will report to **Michel Zink**, Head of Asean, and will be responsible for managing Citi's entire service portfolio – including trade finance – in the Philippines.

Ahmed replaces **Batara Sianturi,** who will assume the role of head of the bank's Indonesian operations.

In a 39-year career with Citi, he has worked across 10 countries, holding senior roles in Pakistan, New Zealand, Taiwan and Germany. He began his career as a trainee in New Orleans. He has also had a number of regional remits, including director of retail branch expansion and operations for Citi North America, consumer finance head for Asia Pacific, and consumer cluster head for Pakistan, Middle East and Egypt.

Fehr replaces Daniel Son at Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo has appointed **Kai Fehr** as head of international trade services (ITS) for Asia Pacific, replacing **Daniel Son,** who has relocated to Charlotte, North Carolina, to lead the same department in the US. Fehr will report to **Chris Lewis**, Head of ITS and is based in Singapore.

Fehr will be responsible for business development, relationship management and distribution for customers across APAC.

Fehr joined Wells Fargo in 2014 to head up the Asia ITS sales team, before which he headed up Barclays trade and working capital team in Asia. Before Barclays, he managed structured facilities for UniCredit's Asian clients, also in Singapore.

Daniel Son has returned to Charlotte after many years working for Wells Fargo and previously Wachovia in Asia.

UniCredit names head of trade finance, France

Dominique Honoré has joined UniCredit's Paris team as Head of Trade Finance International Sales for France.

She moves from RBS, where she worked for almost nine years as Head of Trade and Supply Chain, France. She has also held positions at ANZ, Barclays and Crédit Lyonnais.

The bank has also hired a new senior compliance officer: **Aude Oberrieder** joins UniCredit Paris after having previously worked for six years as compliance officer at Royal Bank of Canada before joining Oudart for one year.

TFR scoop: Potter to join Deutsche Bank

According to a Deutsche Bank spokesperson, **Angela Potter** will join the bank's Global Transaction Banking Division later this year. Her exact title has yet to be confirmed.

She is currently Managing Director of Transaction Services UK at RBS where she has been since October 2012.

Klink joins Scotiabank

Scotiabank has appointed **Karl Klink** as Director Trade Finance Sales to further strengthen its European Global Transaction Banking (GTB) presence. He is placed in London and reports to **Pierre D'Avignon** (vice-president trade finance sales, GTB).

Klink joined the bank in March from Lloyds Bank, where he was looking after the oil and gas, consumer and specialist finance sectors. He has also worked at Citibank.

Mwaba to join Afreximbank

Gwen Mwaba joined Afreximbank in May as Regional Manager, West Africa. It is believed that she will be relocating from London to Abuja.

Mwaba makes the move from Standard Bank, where her last position was as executive vice-president structured trade finance.

Equnox appoints UK head

Equinox Global has named **Nick King** as its new Head of UK and Ireland. King joins the London-based team from Travis Perkins on 6th July. King has 30-plus years of experience in credit management, in both the UK and internationally. His previous experience includes roles at Brightpoint Europe, NACCO Materials Handling Group and Atlas Copco Compressors.

In his new position, King reports to **Mike Holley**, Chief Executive of Equinox Global, who comments: "Nick's appointment represents an important step change in the scale, pace and service quality of our UK business. Nick will bring invaluable experience, particularly of the construction and distribution industries, and his service on the boards of our industry's trade bodies will bring an important additional dimension to our growing business."

Commerzbank appoints India export finance advisor

Commerzbank has appointed **Sujata Dabholkar** as Mumbai-based advisor for its long-term export finance business. She will be responsible for expanding the bank's client base for ECA transactions in India.

Dabholkar brings over three decades of industry experience in trade and export finance and correspondent banking to her new role. She was instrumental in setting up the Mumbai representative office of Bayerische Vereinsbank, Germany (now UniCredit Bank). As chief representative, she built up a strong platform for the bank in India, both with financial institutions and corporate clients. She previously also worked at Nordbanken (now Nordea AB) and HSH Nordbank (which she left to join Commerzbank), where she was responsible for establishing the banks' footprint in the Indian market.

Dabholkar reports to **Cathrin Karpinski,** Export Finance/Head of International Markets at the Commerzbank head office