

# Natural Gas Exports to Japan, and the New Energy Secretary – ML Strategies Weekly Energy and Environmental Update

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As Congress continues to debate deficit reduction plans in advance of the March 1 sequestration deadline, the administration focuses on issues surrounding natural gas exports and new agency leadership. On February 22, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe came to the U.S. for bilateral talks with President Obama, in which he urged the President to approve U.S. natural gas exports to Japan. Japanese government officials continue to lobby the administration and Congress to approve liquefied natural gas exports to Japan, which is struggling to offset the loss of nuclear generation following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster. However, the Department of Energy is in the middle of a public comment period for two economic studies investigating the impacts of LGN exports on natural gas prices and American businesses.

Outgoing Energy Secretary Steven Chu will return to Stanford University as soon as his successor is confirmed. Although the President has not yet nominated a replacement for Secretary Chu, Ernest Moniz, a physicist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, appears to be the top pick. For more, please see [ML Strategies'](#) most recent [Energy and Environmental Update](#).

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