



The bank for a changing world

SESSION 1: RECENT OIL MARKET VOLATILITY

- 1. Harry Tchilinguirian (BNP Paribas)
- 2. Paul Horsnell (Standard Chartered Bank)
- 3. Dave Ernsberger (S&P Global Platts)
- 4. Q&A



Volatility: defining what we are talking about

Price Predictability

- Volatility is all about the predictability of price changes.
- When the dispersion in daily price changes is low, then the price path becomes predictable and volatility is considered low.
- In the financial world, volatility relates to uncertainty around the size of daily changes in a security's value over a period of time.

Not level shifts in the price

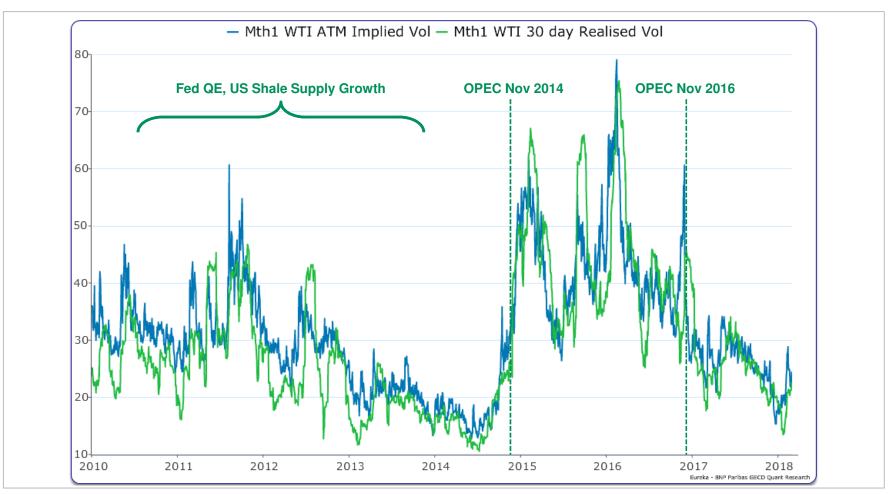
- Moving from a high absolute price level to a low absolute price level (or vice versa) is not always synonymous with higher volatility.
- If the price move is orderly, or in other words, it occurs with regular daily changes, price volatility can remain low.

The cost of insurance

- Volatility is an empirical measurement but also represents the price of insurance. Implied volatility in option markets is virtually the same thing as the price (or premium) of an option in pricing models.
- Implied volatility can be sensitive to liquidity conditions (number of buyers/seller, bid/offer) and thus deviate from realized volatility.



NYMEX WTI Mth1: historical versus implied ATM volatility (%)

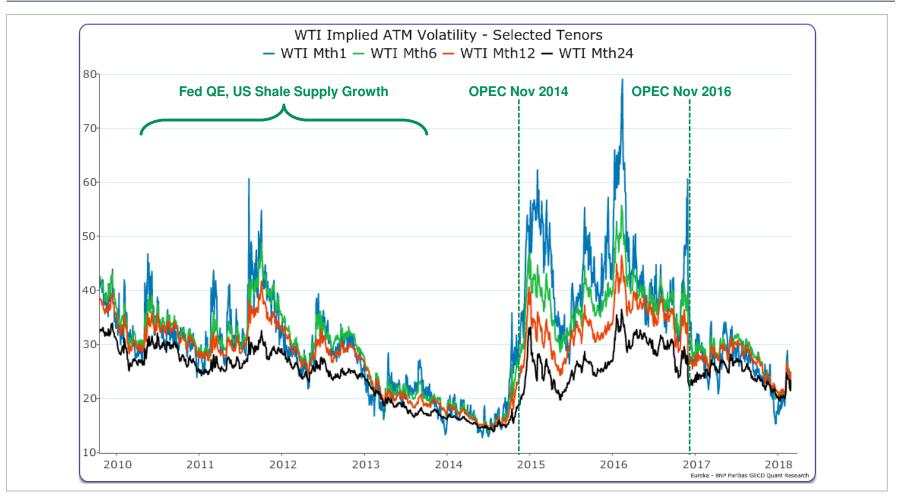


Source: Bloomberg, BNP Paribas - Daily to 01/03//18

Implied volatility typically, but not always, at a premium to realised volatility.



Volatility: NYMEX WTI implied ATM from front to back (%)

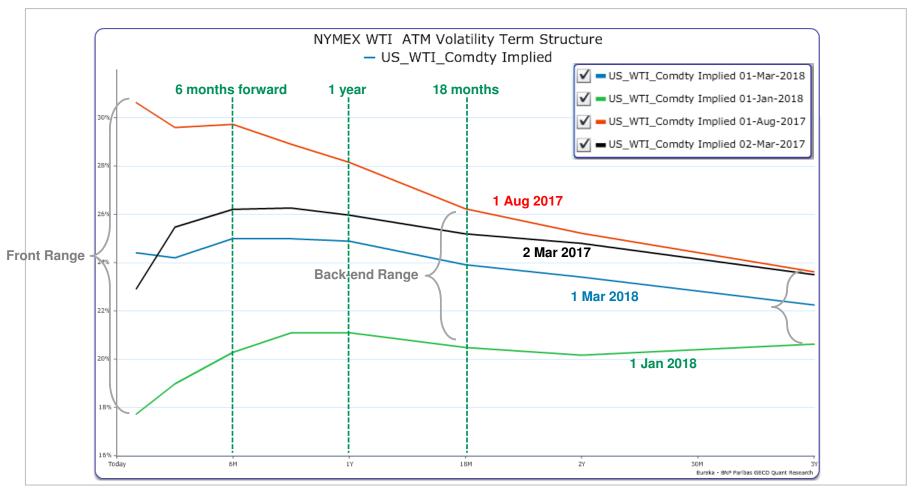


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Regime shifts. Implied volatility across tenors is now just below historical averages.



Like oil futures, oil implied volatility has curve too

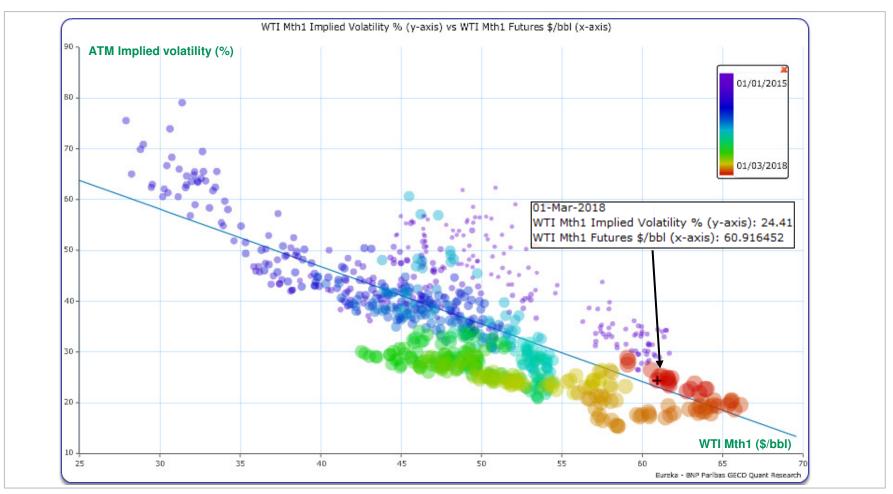


Source: BNP Paribas

Back-end volatility shaped by producer/consumer hedging flow, front-end volatility more sensitive to various contemporaneous fundamental, financial, macro, currency, sentiment and geopolitical factors.



NYMEX WTI Mth: futures (\$/bbl) vs. implied ATM volatility (%)

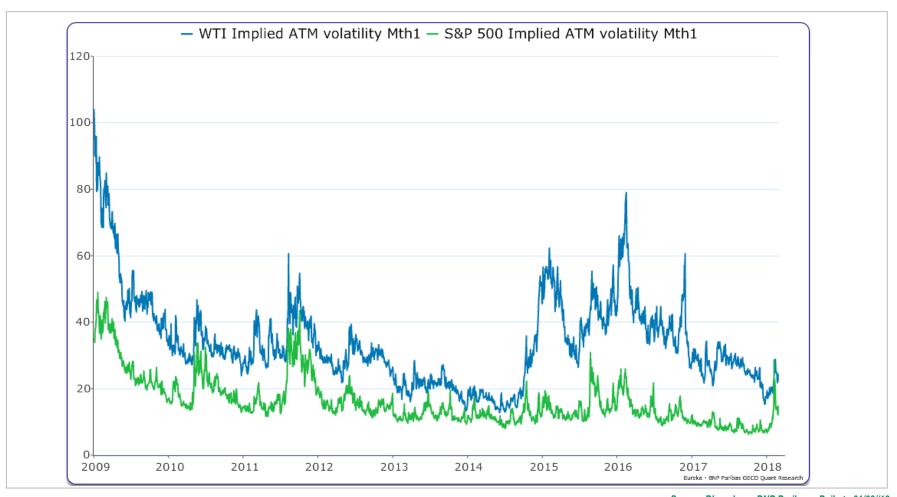


Source: Bloomberg, BNP Paribas - Daily to 01/03//18

Typically volatility tends to be lower with higher oil prices and vice-versa.



Oil volatility versus equity volatility (i)

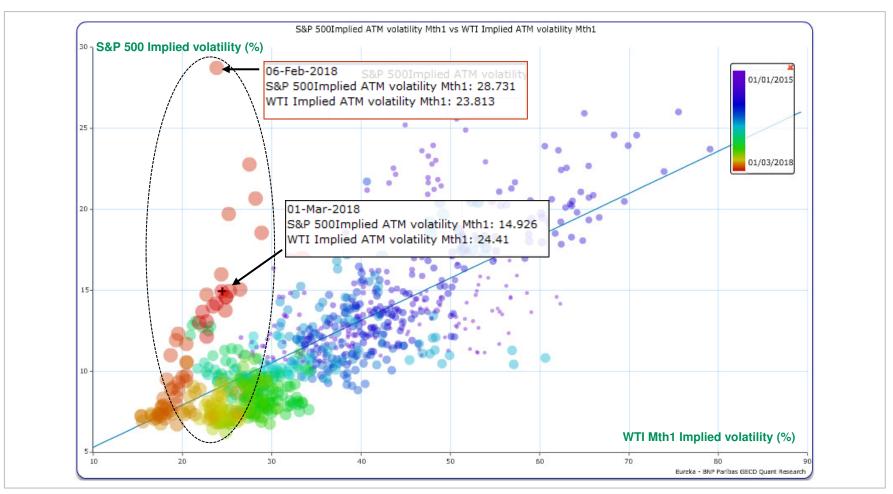


Source: Bloomberg, BNP Paribas - Daily to 01/03//18

Oil volatility historically higher than other risky assets like equities.



Oil volatility versus equity volatility (ii)



Source: Bloomberg, BNP Paribas - Daily to 01/03//18

Oil and equity volatility since 2015 are only loosely linearly related, with a lot of dispersion. Recent equity turbulence in February did not spillover much to oil volatility.



Volatility drivers: the usual suspects (i)

Oil inventories

Stock are a buffer when supply and demand do not meet. Storage allows to move surplus supply or accommodate stronger demand (industry stocks). Strategic stocks can serve in supply disruptions.

Swing producers Spare capacity

The ability to meet demand growth, replace supply disruptions at an upstream level – use at the discretion of producers. Takes to time to tap into spare capacity. Max capacity sustainable for a limited period.

Short-cycle supply

Ability to develop new supply very quickly in response to price signals. Not the same as a swing supply – non discretionary, market driven.

Monetary accommodation

Unconventional monetary policy like quantitative easing distorts the relative pricing between bonds and risky assets. It is in effect a volatility suppressant for financial assets.

Geopolitics/ **Unplanned outages**

Escalation in geopolitical tension: a perennial source of volatility for oil, notably where major producing regions or countries are involved. Unplanned outages, very important where benchmarks are concerned.



Volatility drivers: the usual suspects (ii)

Cross asset correlation

Financialisation of the asset class, notably for commodities with large open interest (e.g. oil, gold) - potential for cross-asset arbitrage absent changes in the fundamentals that may cause price volatility.

Changing market participants

Access to oil markets by non-specialists (ETFs). Non-fundamentals approaches to commodities (CTAs, Quants, Algorithmic-black box, High frequency trading) – Adding or subtracting to volatility?

Regulation

Position limits, inventory holding constraints etc. could lead to wider bid/offer spread, thus price volatility.

Participants exiting

Less liquidity: exit in recent years of traditional oil derivative market participants (banks) active in the back end of the curve for hedging purposes.

Volatility optimality

Is there such a thing as an optimal volatility level that would satisfy producers, consumers, derivative intermediaries?



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