



SPOTLIGHT

Energy exploration and escalating disputes
in the Eastern Mediterranean



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DISCOVERY OF NATURAL GAS RESERVES EXACERBATES LONG-STANDING ISSUES

The Eastern Mediterranean's recent natural gas discoveries and growing economic potential have set the stage for intensifying disputes over exploration rights and exclusive economic zones (EEZ). In particular, the Turkish government's assertiveness and its willingness to aggressively respond to both perceived threats and possible opportunities have created an environment prone to crisis. This Spotlight discusses how mounting geopolitical tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean have also accompanied military posturing in war-torn Libya. It offers insight into the value of Maxar's maritime monitoring and imagery analysis.

ESTIMATED RECOVERABLE
NATURAL GAS IN THE
EASTERN MED., PER THE
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

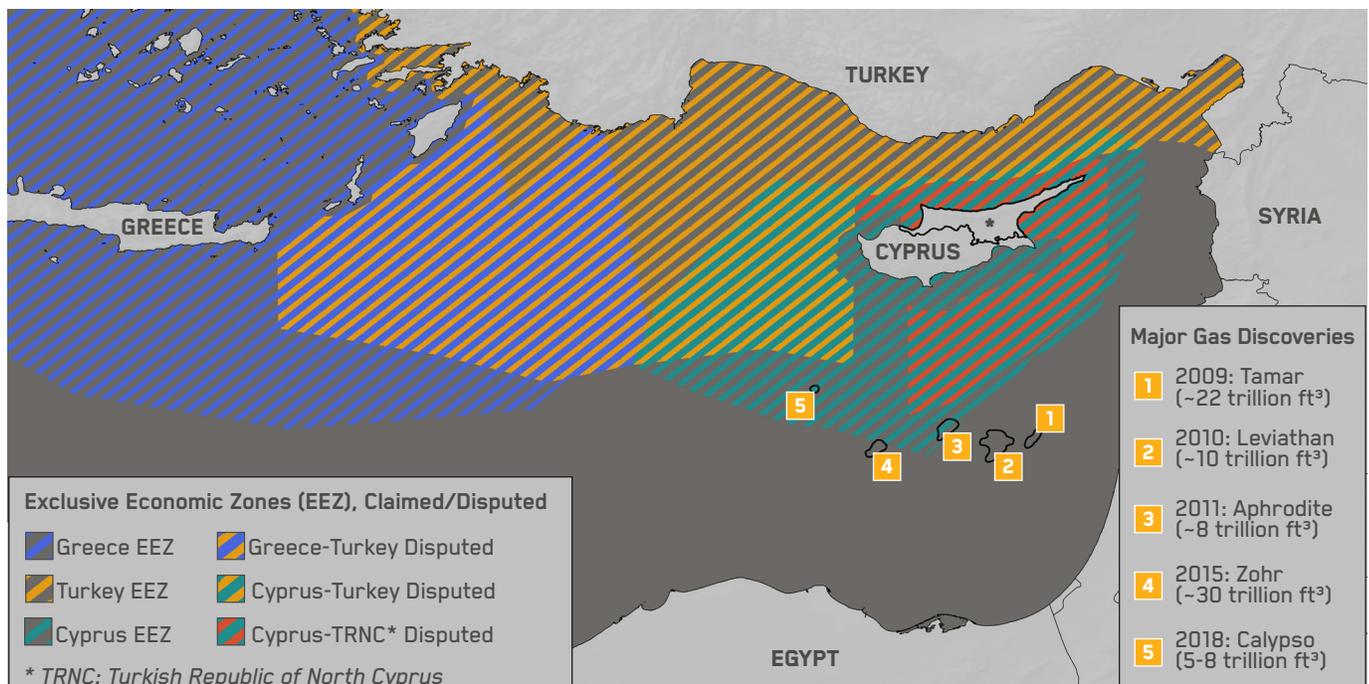
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TRILLION FT³

SUMMARY OF UNIQUE TOOLS & APPLICATIONS

Vessel Detection Service. Maxar's maritime surveillance, Vessel Detection Service, provides an unclassified synthetic aperture radar detection feed to maritime security organizations to effectively tip and cue other sensors or platforms. Whether you want to identify foreign naval vessels approaching territorial waters or vessels that are engaged in illegal activity, Maxar is the world leader in near-real-time (less than four hours) delivery of broad-area satellite monitoring.

Imagery Analysis. Maxar's imagery analysis reports are comprehensive studies depicting full-scale awareness of ongoing activity in an area of conflict or interest, generally up to 300 square kilometers. These quick-turn reports include 10-15 pages of analysis and are compiled by a team of senior imagery analysts and subject matter experts.

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN CLAIMED AND DISPUTED WATERS



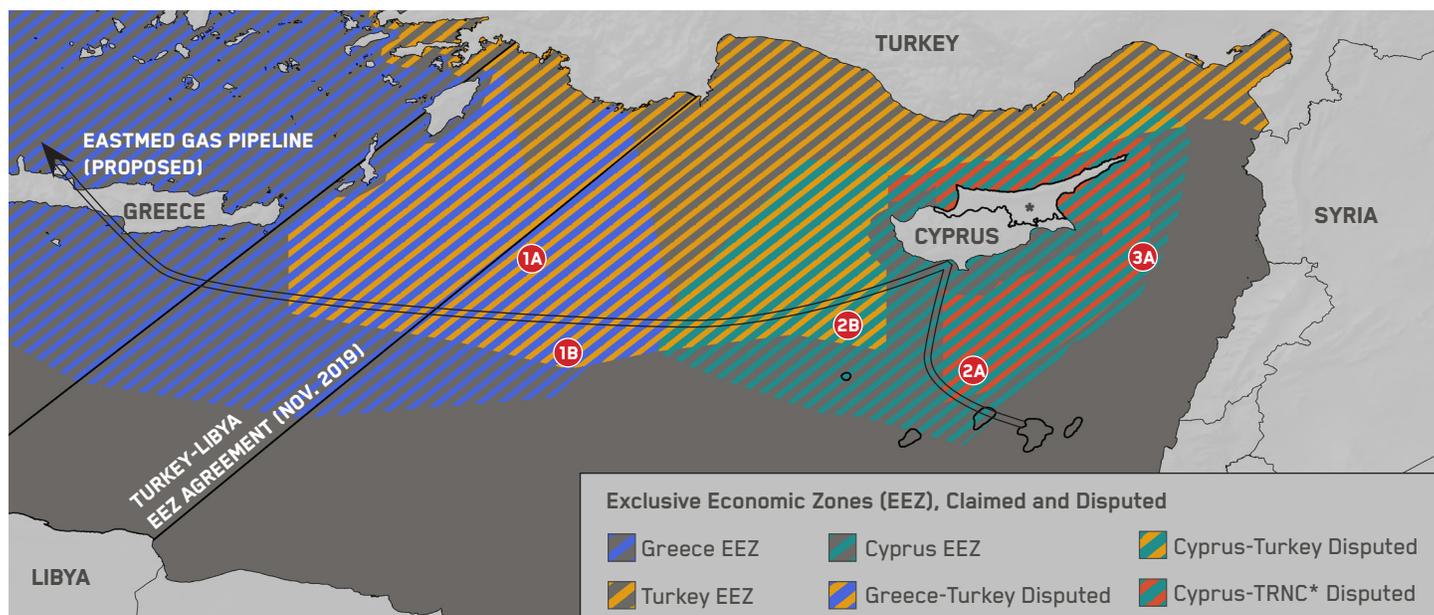
In January 2019, Egypt, Greece, Cyprus and Israel collaborated with French and Italian energy companies to establish the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum. While not explicitly anti-Turkish in intent, it increased Turkey's perception of being isolated and excluded from the potential economic opportunities emerging from natural gas development in the region. Turkey's efforts to address its perceived encirclement picked up in November 2019, when it signed an agreement on maritime boundaries and EEZs with the internationally recognized Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli. Turkey did so to supplement its claim to disputed waters near the Greek islands of Crete, Karpathos and Rhodes.

On January 2, 2020, Greece, Cyprus and Israel signed the EastMed gas pipeline project. The plan is to build a pipeline from the developing Israeli and Cypriot gas fields through Greece and into Italy. If realized, this project will reduce the European Union's dependence on Russian gas currently flowing through Turkish pipelines, thereby negatively affecting the

Turkish economy. This development accelerated Turkey's efforts to reassert its position in Eastern Mediterranean resource extraction and geopolitics.

For much of 2020, the Oruc Reis, a Turkish seismic research vessel, skirted contested waters. Escorted by the Turkish navy, the vessel entered Greece's claimed EEZ on several occasions, which prompted heightened attention from the other interested states in the region. By late July, Greece had dispatched warships to operate in the vicinity of the Oruc Reis. The show of force on both sides culminated with a mild collision between Greek and Turkish warships on August 12. In mid-September, Turkey called the Oruc Reis back to port 10 days earlier than scheduled, possibly a result of mounting political and economic pressures. Although Greece applauded the move, Turkish officials downplayed its significance. Defense Minister Hulusi Akar claimed the vessel would continue with exploration operations and that Turkey was not giving up rights to the area.

PROPOSED PIPELINE AND DETECTIONS OF TURKISH VESSELS IN CONTESTED WATERS

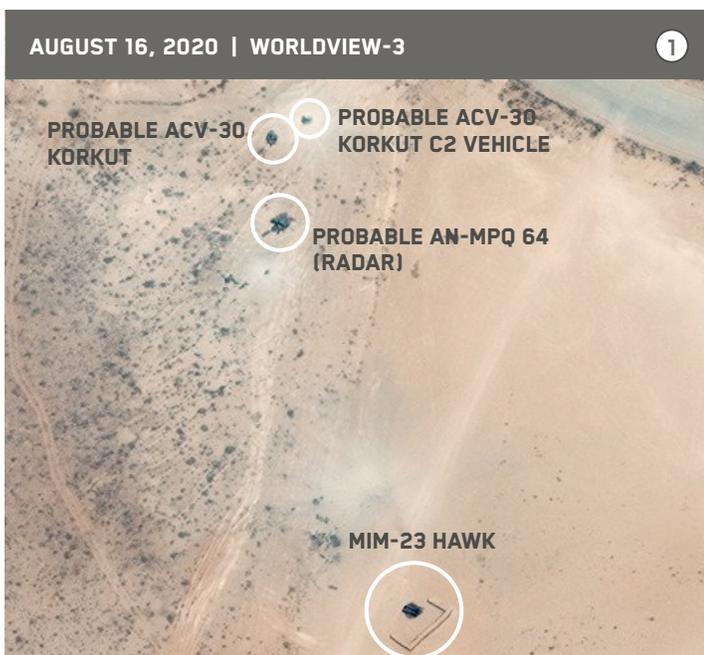


GROWING PROXY SHOWDOWN IN LIBYA

The November 2019 EEZ agreement between Turkey and Libya also had terms for Turkish military support to the U.N.-backed, Tripoli-based GNA. At the same time that the EastMed gas pipeline project was being signed in early January 2020, the Turkish Parliament approved a bill authorizing the deployment of Turkish military forces into Libya. A few hundred military advisers, air defense systems, military materials and equipment, drones and fighters recruited from Syria soon followed.

This support proved critical for the GNA's recent defense of Tripoli from the Libyan National Army (LNA), the faction supported by Egypt, Russia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The following satellite imagery depicts the positioning of Turkish air defense systems at the important Al Watiyah air base in northwest Libya, which was reclaimed from the LNA in May 2020.

TURKISH AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS AT AL WATIYAH AIR BASE



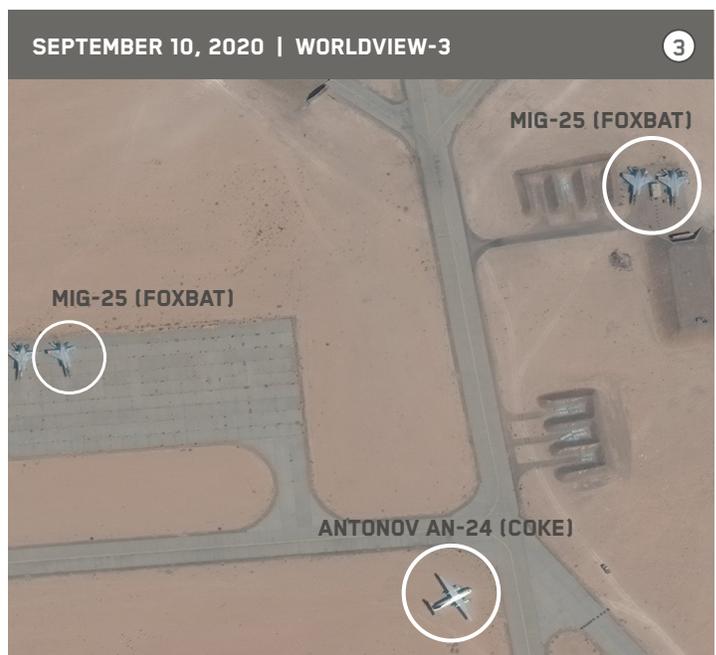
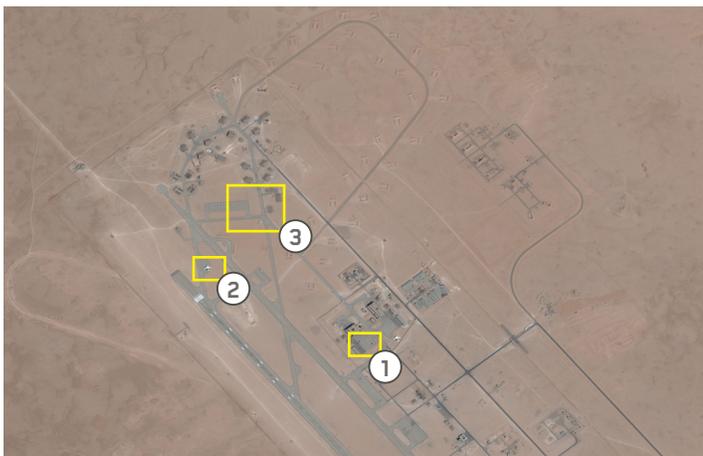
The mounting successes of the GNA and the solidification of Turkey's presence in Libya quickly prompted further foreign intervention. By June, Russian military aircraft appeared at the central Libyan airfield of Al Jufra to provide additional support to the Russian private military companies already working with the LNA. Emirati supply flights were also captured via satellite imagery at multiple bases in the region.

By late June, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi further upped the ante by threatening overt military

intervention if GNA forces, or their allies, moved east of Sirte. This coastal city is the gateway to controlling much of Libya's oil production. Satellite imagery of Egypt's western military bases also reinforced el-Sissi's declaration and suggested his words were more than just rhetoric (see page 6).

The prospects of a significant escalation, and likely also exhaustion from over a year of conflict, created an opportunity for negotiations that eventually led to the recent cease-fire.

LNA AND PROXY PRESENCE AT AL JUFRA AIR BASE



EGYPT'S BUILDUP AT SIDI BARRANI AIR BASE



CONCLUSION

While the immediate risk of conflict may be waning for now, the long-term issues both at sea and ashore remain unresolved. These rivalries and escalating disputes are setting the stage for stronger threats and more frequent engagements. As such, it is imperative to have scalable clarity in as close to real time as possible, especially for those serving in the defense and intelligence, maritime security and oil/natural gas domains. With Maxar's Vessel Detection Service and imagery analysis reports, you get the expertise and insights that you need in order to quickly identify maritime traffic or monitor military posturing within your area of interest.



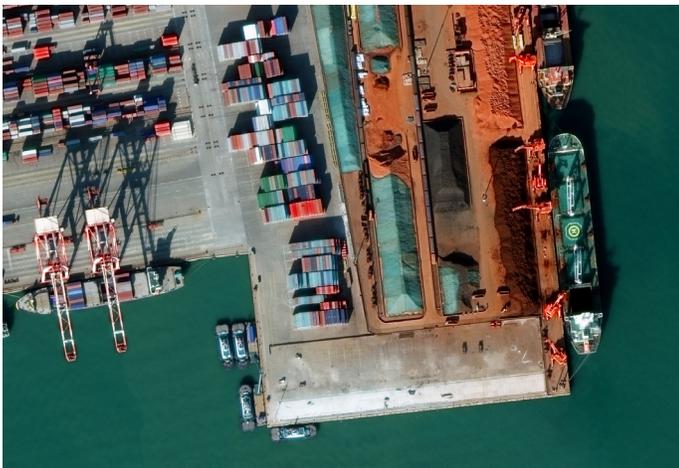
TURKISH NAVAL ESCORT FOR ORUÇ REIS (EPA-EFE/TURKISH DEFENSE MIN.)

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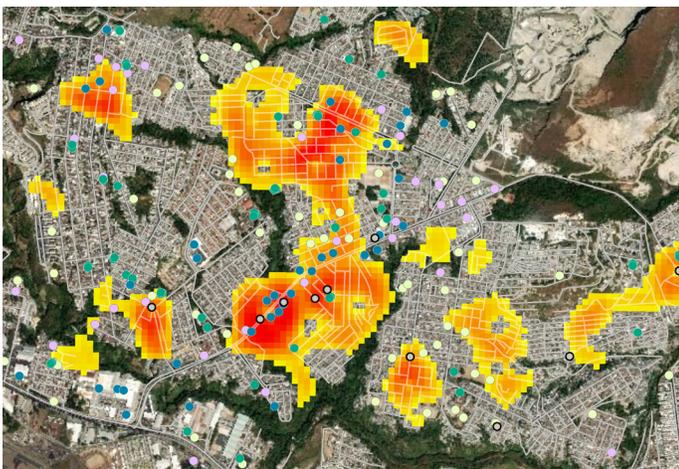
MAP DATA

Expedite analysis with GIS-ready data derived from satellite imagery, including 3D models and digitized polygons.



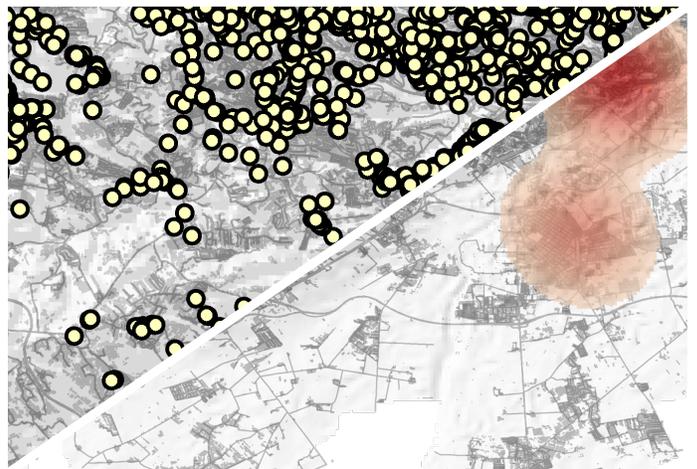
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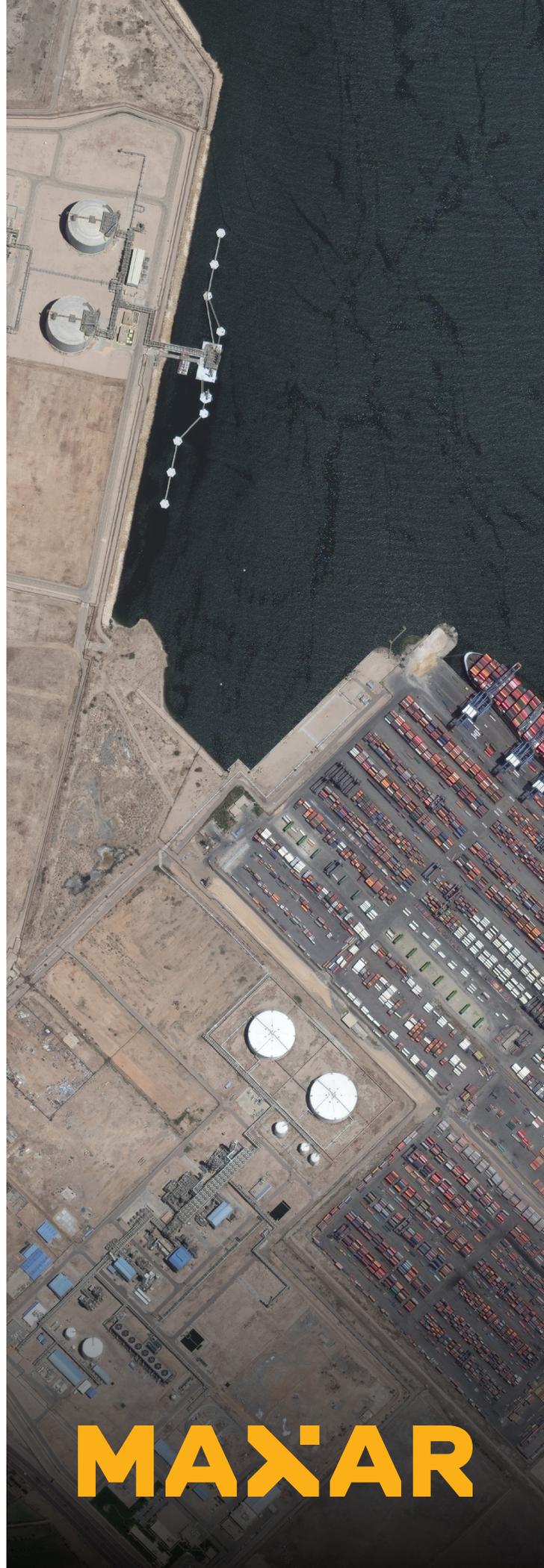
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