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Contents

Weekly news roundup (19-23 June)

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International

A high-level meeting in Thessaloniki earlier this month provided the leaders of Greece, Cyprus and Israel the opportunity to reiterate their commitment to regional cooperation and support for the EastMed Gas Pipeline project. [Read more in our analysis \[1\]](#)

US and Canada

Canada – Canadian oil company Cenovus Energy is scrambling to divest a suite of assets to [pay off its CAD 13 billion \(USD 9.7 billion\) debt pile \[2\]](#), in the midst of its CEO leaving, share price crumbling and a broader cost-cutting drive to help the company weather the oil price downturn.

Aurora LNG has restarted the [environmental review process \[3\]](#) for its proposed 24 mtpa capacity LNG plant in the province of British Columbia.

US – US shale exploration and pipeline company EQT is to [buy compatriot Rice Energy \[4\]](#) for USD 6.7 billion. The deal is the largest in the US shale sector for almost three years and will see EQT become the largest producer of unconventional gas in the lower 48 states.

Utility GenOn, a subsidiary of NRG Energy, has [filed for bankruptcy \[3\]](#) after struggling with low electricity prices.

Delfin Midstream took a step forwards with its Delfin LNG project, [America's first FLNG scheme \[5\]](#), by roping Golar LNG to supply its proprietary floating liquefaction technology at the site in the Gulf of Mexico.

Alaskan E&P company Hilcorp Alaska was the sole bidder in the US government's [Cook Inlet oil and gas exploration tender \[6\]](#).

Africa

Senegal – Australian listed oil and gas player FAR Limited is starting arbitration proceedings to [resolve a dispute arising from ConocoPhillips' sale \[7\]](#) of its interest in three blocks offshore Senegal to compatriot Woodside Petroleum.

Asia Pacific

India – Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation (GSPC) is [selling off a 25% stake \[6\]](#) in its under-construction 5 mtpa Mundra LNG import terminal to Petronet LNG, according to reports.

Indonesia – The country is set to receive its first [shipment of locally produced LNG \[8\]](#) this week from the Jangkrik field situated in the island's deep waters of the Kutei Basin.

Japan – Japanese utilities Tepco Electric Power and Chubu Electric Power have agreed to integrate their existing thermal power generation businesses [3] and run them through their existing joint venture company JERA.

Inpex is establishing an LNG trading unit [6] that is expected to come online next month, which will fall under the company's global energy marketing division.

Singapore – Singapore LNG has completed the country's first LNG bunkering [3] at its facility on Jurong Island over 18-20 June, when Shell's new-build LNG bunkering vessel 'Cardissa' was refuelled.

South Korea – Veteran left-of-centre politician Moon Jae-in was sworn in as South Korea's new president on 10 May. Moon has pledged to make the environment the centre of his government's energy policy and is keen to replace both coal-fired power plants and nuclear power with gas and renewables. But he can do so without upsetting the major players in the country's power sector? Read more in our feature [9]

Australasia

Australia – The country's government has sanctioned a study to examine the gas potential [10] of offshore basins in Southern Australia, amid ongoing concerns and mixed messages over a potential gas shortfall in east and south-east markets.

Australia's federal government has delayed implementing sweeping controls on LNG exports [11] until early next year.

Papua New Guinea – Oil Search has secured a new five-year credit facility [6] of USD 600 million with 14 banks in Australia, Papua New Guinean and international lenders.

Europe

EU – The European Commission has approved Dong Energy's USD 1.3 billion sale of its upstream oil and gas business [6] to Ineos under EU merger regulation policy.

Finland – Finnish transmission system operator Gasum has increased its stake [6] in Norwegian LNG company Skangas by 19%.

Ireland – Irish outfit Providence Resources has received the first payment from Total for a 35% stake in the Frontier Exploration Licence 2/14 [6] off the south-west coast of Ireland.

Norway – The Norwegian government has issued an upbeat assessment of the country's undeveloped oil and gas reserves [12] and estimates of resources that are yet to be discovered, despite recent warnings of declining production and upstream investment.

Poland – The European Commission (EC) is set to invest EUR 112.5 million (USD 125 million) in the construction of a natural gas pipeline in Poland to satisfy local energy demands and supply neighbouring territories, a move complimenting EU policy to boost competition in the bloc's eastern energy markets.

UK – Centrica Storage (CSL) has decided to close permanently the Rough gas storage facility [13], the UK's largest gas store, off the Yorkshire coast.

The European Commission has approved Shell's sale of its UK North Sea oil and gas assets [3] to private

equity-backed Chrysaor in a deal worth USD 3.8 billion.

Centrica has agreed to sell two UK combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) power stations [14] totalling 2.3 GW of capacity to Czech outfit EPH, Europe's seventh largest power generator, for GBP 318 million (USD 402 million).

Meridian Holdings, owner of the proposed Port Meridian offshore import project in the UK, is now targeting both LNG and compressed natural gas imports following the signing of a series agreements [15] with CNG solutions company Global Energy Ventures (GEV).

The UK government-backed Oil and Gas Authority has released a 'tight gas strategy' to help unlock the 3.8 Tcf of remaining accessible gas [16] it estimates is available within the maturing Southern North Sea (SNS).

Latin America

Guyana – ExxonMobil has reached a final investment decision [3] for the massive Liza oil field off the coast of Guyana.

Mexico – The country has auctioned off 10 shallow water blocks [17] in its latest exploration and production tender.

Middle East

Israel – Athens-based Energean Oil & Gas is targeting a final investment decision by the end of this year at the Karish and Tanin gas fields [18] offshore Israel, after filing a field development plan with Israeli authorities.

Iran – European energy companies are tentatively returning to Iran's oil and gas sector following the extension of US sanctions waivers, with Eni agreeing to study two hydrocarbon fields and Total inching towards a long-awaited investment on the South Pars gas field.

Iran has begun gas pipeline exports [6] into Iraq after a three-year delay.

Qatar – Shell has strengthened ties with Qatargas by signing a new LNG sales agreement [19] for an extra 1.1 mt of liquefied gas per annum, in a clear sign that it is largely business as usual for the world's largest LNG exporting country and its partners despite the imposition of sanctions by neighbouring Gulf states.

Russia and CIS

Russia – The partners of the Yamal LNG plant have raised EUR 425 million [3] from Swedish bank Raiffeisen Bank and Italy's Intesa Sanpaolo.

Rosneft is drilling the northernmost exploratory well [3] on the Eastern Arctic shelf.

The European Commission has cleared the formation of a joint venture [3] between Russia's NIPiGas, UK-based TechnipFMC and Germany's Linde to provide engineering and design services for LNG projects in Russia.

Key European investors in the Nord Stream 2 (NS2) gas pipeline project are on high alert following a move by the US Senate to impose new sanctions on Russia [20].

Rosneft has completed its USD 13 billion acquisition of India's Essar Oil [6], the Russian company reported at its annual general meeting this week.



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