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From Engie and SSE to BP: How women strive to break barriers in the energy sector

A clear disparity between male and female workers in the energy sector still exists today, as women make up less than 20% of the global energy workforce, below the global average of 40%, according to IEA data from November 2023.

The NGO has said the share of women in senior management positions in major energy firms is similar to that of the broader economy, at around 18%, in part due to the gender imbalance within those studying STEM degrees.

“Narrowing the gender imbalance depends, in part, on increasing the number of women entering vocational or educational programmes relevant to energy, which continue to be dominated by men,” the report said.

But some companies are making a conscious effort to ensure their workforce is becoming more diversified. BP, for example, has set a 2025 goal to have a 40/60 female to male split across its group leadership.

Azerbaijan NOC SOCAR already has a 40/60 female to male ratio within its Baku-based workforce, and French utility Engie is ensuring women are placed in all departments of the business, including infrastructure and distribution.

On International Women’s Day Gas Matters Today celebrates some of the energy industry’s top female figures as we highlight key gender developments in the sector:

Interview: Jurgita Silinskaite-Vensloviene, head of LNG commerce at KN Energies [1]

As European countries like Germany and Italy scrambled to source floating storage and regasification units (FSRUs) to secure LNG this year, Lithuanian LNG operator Klaipėdos Nafta considered itself an example to be followed and an opportunity for various connecting Baltic countries.

Interview: Katy Burke, engineer manager, SSE Thermal Keadby Carbon Capture Project [2]

UK utility SSE Thermal pushed on with its plans to deploy CCUS technologies in 2023, with hydrogen key to the company’s decarbonisation strategy, says Katy Burke, engineer manager for the company’s Keadby Carbon Capture Project.

Clean energy workforce overtakes fossil fuel headcount on rapid renewables growth [3]

Headcount within the clean energy sector's workforce has surpassed fossil fuels, accounting for 52% of the global energy workforce in 2022. Fossil fuel jobs remained below pre-pandemic levels in 2022, due to a slow rebound and shift by many IOCs to a cleaner energy workforce.

BP faces tough diversity decision in CEO search [4]

BP faced pressure to source a diverse replacement for CEO Bernard Looney after his resignation over allegations of serious misconduct while shareholders expect the energy giant to source the most qualified candidate regardless of diversity and inclusion expectations.

Why BP chose Kate Thomson for the top finance job [5]

Kate Thomson's appointment as BP's new CFO marked the completion of an executive restructuring following Murray Auchincloss' CEO appointment.

Thomson, who was interim CFO since September, is the first woman to take on company's most senior finance position. BP's current executive team is 64% female.

Energy scholar Anne-Sophie Corbeau: Pause on new US LNG is no 'apocalypse now' [6]

The decision by the White House to pause approvals for proposed US LNG export projects is "no reason to worry", according to Anne-Sophie Corbeau, a global research scholar at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

EDF vice president Mandy Rambharos says 'gas is a lesser evil' amid Biden pause [7]

Amid the US' indefinite pause on permits for new LNG exports, a senior executive of the US-based Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) says the advocacy group recognises that "gas is a requirement".

"Globally, gas is a lesser evil," EDF vice president Mandy Rambharos told Gas Matters Today in an exclusive interview.

Interview: Anne-Sophie Corbeau, Centre on Global Energy Policy, Columbia U [8]

Anne-Sophie Corbeau is a global research scholar at Columbia University's Centre on Global Energy Policy. In this exclusive interview, she explains why the US pause on approvals for new LNG export projects “is no cause for concern” and highlights how disruption at the Panama Canal and Red Sea could result in “intelligent solutions” for LNG trade.

Petrobras, ICE, Seatrrium executives weigh up CBAM, carbon tax [9]

Petrobras' executive manager for climate change and decarbonisation, Viviana Canhao Coelho said the EU carbon border adjustment mechanism is a policy that helps companies determine where to place their projects.

“It's the type of policy for the best place for projects to be placed, if you want to optimise it. You want everything to be done where it can be done cheaper and with the lowest carbon footprint,” Coelho said.

Engie CEO says firm is realistic on renewables: ‘Not everything can be electrified’ [10]

The boss of French utility Engie said the firm is bullish about the need to develop renewables, but also ‘realistic’ as to the challenges this effort requires.

“As much as we are very motivated and bullish and we need to develop renewables, we are also quite realistic that not everything can be electrified,” Catherine Fiamma MacGregor said.

Harbour Energy needs attractive returns to invest in UK CCS – CEO [11]

Harbour Energy's CEO Linda Cook said a stable, fair and attractive fiscal environment was needed to invest in carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects in the UK, including in Viking CCS which is currently undergoing a Front-End Engineering Design (FEED) process.

What Engie's Catherine MacGregor does to boost women: 'I get intentionally engaged' [12]

Of the small handful of women in top management jobs at energy firms, Engie CEO Catherine Fiamma MacGregor is arguably among the most senior – the issue of doing more to get women into leadership in the sector needs to be taken “very, very seriously”, she says.

MacGregor sees the challenge as part of her responsibility, resulting in her personal focus staffing, promotion and appointments at Engie. -NM



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