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Weekly news roundup (24-28 June 2019)

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Analysis

Egyptian state-owned EGAS has made the bold claim that the country will export 12 mt of LNG next fiscal year [1], but those volumes would require LNG terminals at Idku and Damietta to export at full throttle as well as freely flowing pipeline imports from neighbouring countries.

Asia Pacific

Malaysia – The E&P arm of Thai state-owned firm PTT has hailed its largest-ever natural gas discovery [2] offshore Sarawak containing “multi-Tcf” of gas resources, which experts believe could be monetised by back-filling the Malaysia LNG plant.

Vietnam – Osaka Gas is continuing its expansion across south-east Asia [3] after agreeing to form a new joint venture with compatriot Sojitz Corporation to supply gas in Vietnam.

Vietnam’s first LNG terminal has taken a major step [4] towards fruition after PetroVietnam awarded an engineering, procurement and construction contract (EPC) to a consortium spearheaded by Samsung C&T and concluded a deal to supply gas from the terminal to PetroVietnam Power.

Central & South America

Brazil – The government has begun a wide-ranging liberalisation of the gas sector [5] after passing a resolution mandating measures designed to unpick national oil company Petrobras’ monopoly and increase competition in supply, transportation and distribution.

Europe

EU – European decarbonisation targets are more likely to be achieved if hydrogen derived from natural gas [6] is included in the solution, and pyrolysis offers key advantages over other means of producing the fuel, according to a report commissioned by a German lobby group.

Bulgaria – Bulgaria has taken a key step towards establishing a regional gas hub [7] that the government has been proposing for several years by introducing legislation to liberalise its gas market.

UK – The UK has become the world’s first major economy to set a legally binding target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 [8] in the wake of recent protests by the activist movement Extinction Rebellion, which had called for net zero emissions in 2025.

Middle East

Qatar – The delays plaguing a major upstream gas project seem to have been overcome after Qatar Petroleum’s CEO announced that the Barzan project is scheduled to start up [9] by the end of 2019, while the company and Chevron Phillips also plan to build the largest ethane cracker in the Middle East.

North Africa

Algeria – The chairman and CEO of state-owned oil and gas company Sonatrach, Rachid Hachichi, outlined a strategic plan to diversify the country’s energy sector [10] during a gathering of the Algerian Gas Industry Association last week in Oran.

North America

Mexico – The president of Mexico has waded into a diplomatic dispute with Canada over Mexican utility CFE’s bid to claw back capacity payments [11] to a newly-built Canadian-owned US-Mexico gas pipeline.

Canada – Shell has provided a major boost to Pieridae Energy’s Goldboro LNG project [12] by agreeing to sell producing upstream assets in Alberta, with the cash plus stock deal seeing Pieridae secure enough gas to fill the first train of its east coast plant.

US – Time has run out for the first proposed FLNG project in the US [13], with project developer Delfin LNG requesting an additional three-and-a-half years to construct the proposed 13 mtpa facility off the coast of Louisiana.

Upgrading two ageing coal-fired stations in Colorado with carbon capture technology would deliver cheaper electricity, lower emissions and greater economic benefits than gas-fired units [14] and renewables with storage, a report commissioned by the US energy department suggests.

The White House has narrowed the scope for carbon dioxide emissions [15] to count against natural gas infrastructure project approvals, in draft guidance aimed at clarifying how federal agencies consider greenhouse gas emissions.

Kinder Morgan has won a court battle with Texan landowners and officials seeking to block the construction of the Permian Highway pipeline [16], after a judge upheld the company’s right to determine pipeline routes and use eminent domain to purchase land.

Activist investor Carl Icahn is canvassing support among fellow shareholders in Occidental Petroleum to replace four company directors and change corporate governance rules in response to management’s “mistaken” move to acquire Anadarko Petroleum [17].

Injecting air and carbon dioxide into underwater methane hydrate deposits [18] could unlock resources while cutting emissions by trapping CO₂ underground, according to new research that might help to overcome the difficulties of harnessing this vast untapped resource.

California’s utility regulator has moved towards imposing a fine on SoCalGas [19] over the 2015 Aliso Canyon methane leak – the largest in US history – and is investigating whether the company and its owner Sempra Energy adequately prioritise safety.

Russia & CIS

Turkmenistan – Turkmen president Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov has inaugurated a 15,500 b/d capacity gas-to-liquids plant [20] outside capital city Ashgabat. The plant is the first of its kind in Central

Asia and is designed to produce gasoline for domestic consumption.

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