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Weekly news roundup (17-21 July)

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International

Bermuda-based Hoegh LNG and leading LNG carrier fleet operator, Qatar's Nakilat, have signed a preliminary deal to collaborate on floating storage regasification unit (FSRU) projects [1].

US & Canada

Canada – The country's National Energy Board (NEB) has highlighted uncertainty over LNG export ambitions [2], citing global "lower prices and fierce competition" preventing projects from making swifter headway.

US – ConocoPhillips is planning a long-term shut-in at Kenai LNG plant in Alaska [3] this coming winter due to the current low price environment while the search for a buyer for the ageing liquefaction facility continues.

President Donald Trump has nominated Washington-based energy lawyer Kevin McIntyre as chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [4], possibly until late June 2023.

E&P firms operating at US shale plays continue to make strides in efficiency and domestic [5] gas production could hit an all-time high [5] in the coming months, according to the Energy Information Administration.

BP is considering selling midstream oil and gas assets by going public [6] through a master limited partnership. The move could free up capital for upstream investment, according to one expert.

Sempra Energy subsidiary Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) is to resume [7] limited injections at the Aliso Canyon storage facility [7], with 40% of its wells cleared for operation.

Venture Global has recruited a new chief commercial officer [8] by poaching LNG veteran Tom Earl from Total.

ExxonMobil has launched a legal challenge against the US Treasury [9] after being fined USD 2 million for allegedly violating Russian sanctions in its dealings with state-owned Rosneft in 2014 – when US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson was at the helm of the US major.

Africa

Mozambique – The positive final investment decision (FID) on the Coral South floating LNG (FLNG) project at the start of June has paved the way for Mozambique to finally become an LNG exporter in the early 2020s. However, it is a long-delayed and modest start, considering the huge gas discoveries, amounting to almost 200 Tcf, made in the offshore Rovuma Basin between 2010 and 2013. Read more in our feature. [10]

Asia Pacific

Bangladesh – Excelerate Energy has awarded a contract to MacGregor, a subsidiary of Finnish cargo-handling manufacturer Cargotec, to supply technical goods and services for the Moheshkhali floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) [8], which is expected online in Q2 2018.

China – Chinese imports of Australian LNG from Gladstone [11] port hit a record high [11] in June driven by strong economic growth and coal-to-gas switching to reduce pollution in major cities.

India – Royal Dutch Shell and Reliance Industries are challenging a USD 3 billion [12] bill by the Indian government [12] related to disputed profits and royalties allegedly due from interests in the Panna, Mukta and Tapti fields offshore Mumbai.

India's government has reportedly approved state-affiliated Oil and Natural Gas Corporation's (ONGC) to acquire a majority stake in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), with a view to creating a state-run integrated oil and gas major [8] to "compete with private and foreign players".

Thailand – State energy firm PTT has received a first [8] LNG cargo from Malaysia's Petronas [8] under a 15-year deal covering up to 1.2 mtpa.

Australasia

Australia – Australia's federal government has hit out at state governments and territories that have banned onshore gas drilling [13], calling for a unified country-wide approach to ensuring sufficient supply to meet demand.

Europe

Germany – Plans to construct Germany's first LNG import terminal [14] are back on the table after the European Commission approved a joint venture that will perform a feasibility study.

Walt Disney cruise company Disney Cruise Line has ordered a third new LNG-powered cruise liner [8] from German shipyard giant Meyer Werft for delivery by 2023.

Ireland – Texas LNG player NextDecade is looking to export US gas into Ireland after signing a memorandum of understanding to collaborate on installing an FSRU [15] in Cork [15].

Norway – Statoil has expressed disappointment at discovering a "small" gas field in the Barents Sea [8] between Russia and Norway, dashing hopes for striking oil.

Sweden – Belgium-based Fluxys has agreed to assist in developing LNG bunkering operations [8] at Gothenburg port [8].

UK – The European Commission has approved Ineos's USD 250 million acquisition of the Forties Pipeline System [8] in the UK North Sea, saying the deal would raise no competition concerns.

Latin America & Caribbean

Argentina – State-owned energy company YPF and international partners Total, BP unit Pan American Energy and Wintershall plan to jointly invest USD 1.15 billion in three shale blocks [16] located in the country's highly prospective Vaca Muerta basin.

Brazil / Mexico – Latin America's two largest economies have unveiled separate details of their next oil and gas tenders [17], with Brazil rolling out new contractual terms for its latest auction scheduled for September and Mexico heading into deep waters early in 2018.

Middle East

Iraq – The country's central government has awarded a contract to service [18]s firm BHGE to install a natural gas-to-liquids (NGL) plant [18] that will help recover flared gas at the country's Nassiriya and Al Gharraf oil fields.

Iraq has launched a tender for nine [8]exploration blocks [8] on the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border, the Iraqi-Iranian border and in Iraqi waters of the Arab Gulf.

Israel – Energean is looking to seal its second [19] supply contract from the Tanin and Karish fields [19], offshore Israel, with the Athens-based company holding talks with a trio of Israeli companies regarding possible 15-year contracts.

Athens-based Energean has lined up a third buyer for gas from [20]the Tanin and Karish fields [20] offshore Israel after the company signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding with RAPAC communication & Infrastructure, which is looking to build two power plants in Israel.

Jordan – State power company NEPCO has called a tender [8]for 16 LNG cargos in 2018 [8], as part of efforts to secure some 1.1 mt during the period, possibly to replace a contract with Shell set to expire later this year.



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