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FEATURE: Milestone year for FLNG meets reality check

Only a handful of years ago, floating liquefaction was seen as a game-changing answer to the ballooning capital costs of liquefaction projects. But as Petronas' FLNG Satu (PFLNG Satu) is getting ready to load its first export cargo – becoming the industry's first functioning manifestation – the future of FLNG is clouded by unhelpful market conditions and the growing realisation that moving natural gas liquefaction offshore is more technically challenging than anticipated.

Many of the projects that were put forward in the early part of this decade, while oil prices were north of USD 100/barrel, have fallen by the wayside. Those that have gone ahead have faced significant delays, not least because the engineering challenges of squeezing a gas liquefaction facility onto the limited area of a floating hull have proved to be formidable.



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