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[1]

International

Total beat analysts' expectations for Q4'20, but reported a massive 66% drop in full-year profits, which the company blamed on the impacts of Covid-19, as it announced plans to rebrand as TotalEnergies and transform into a "broad energy company" [2] focused on LNG, renewables and electricity.

Equinor has exited the Bakken shale play [3] and after agreeing to sell its acreage and associated midstream assets to Grayson Mill Energy for ~USD 900 million, marking the Norwegian firm's latest retreat from the US shale patch, which has contributed to record annual losses for 2020.

Shell's share price dipped last week after the Anglo-Dutch major said it would incrementally cut emissions intensity [4] at operations by promoting gas in its production mix and using CCS and carbon offsets, but green campaigners called these plans "delusional" and suggested the strategy relies too heavily on "tree planting".

Japan's Inpex Corp last week posted its first annual loss since its foundation [5] through mergers in 2008, reporting net losses of over USD 1 billion for 2020, triggered by lower oil and gas sales and prices as well as impairment losses chiefly on assets in Australia and the US.

?Asia Pacific

Japan / Malaysia – Japan’s largest power producer JERA has signed a deal with Malaysia’s Petronas to join forces in achieving their net zero targets [6] by establishing hydrogen and ammonia supply chains while promoting LNG use in Asia.

Japan – The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) today published “ambitious” plans to ramp up Japanese ammonia consumption [7] with a view to using the fuel in shipping, power generation, and industry.

?Australasia

Australia – Queensland’s state-controlled utility CleanCo expects to receive losses from operating its 385 MW Swanbank E gas-fired station until it retires in 2036 as lower gas prices are not compensating [8] for lower power prices, according to a government report.

Papua New Guinea – Total is reportedly looking to take a development decision on its 5.4 mtpa Papua LNG project [9] in 2022, while separate reports suggest the firm has signed a long-awaited fiscal stability agreement with the Papua New Guinea government.

?Europe

France / Germany – Air Liquide and Siemens Energy have signed an MoU with the objective to combine their expertise in hydrogen electrolysis [10] technologies in a move to roll out large hydrogen projects in Germany and France.

EU – Carbon prices in the EU Emissions Trading System have experienced very high volatility [11], as speculative investors drove the market to record highs before rumours of intervention by Brussels led to a brief crash and rally.

UK – BP and Total dominated the UK’s first offshore wind licensing round in 10 years [12], with BP marking its entry into the country’s offshore wind market by picking up two leases to develop a total of 3 GW of wind power generation.

?Middle East

Qatar – Qatar Petroleum is again transforming the global LNG business after taking FID on the North Field East expansion [13], the world’s largest and most competitive LNG project, which will raise the Gulf nation’s production to 110 mtpa from 2025 and is expected to set an industry benchmark for emissions reductions as it includes one of the largest-ever CCS systems.

?North America

US – Bermuda-based offshore drilling contractor Seadrill has filed for bankruptcy [14] protection for its five Asian subsidiaries in US Bankruptcy Court in the Southern District of Texas, the firm announced on Sunday.

Shale pioneer Chesapeake Energy [15] has emerged from bankruptcy [15], eight months after its high-profile Chapter 11 filing, with the company saying it has “fundamentally reset” its business and promises to prioritise capital returns and gas production while reducing emissions.

Venture Global LNG has secured a USD 500 million loan to “fund pre-FID construction activities” [16] at its Plaquemines LNG project in Louisiana, while the US’ largest LNG player Cheniere seeks permission to put in service the third train at its Corpus Christi LNG plant.

Mexico – Officials from state-owned utility CFE have backed the electricity market reform bill [17] introduced by president Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, after calling for the cancellation of long-term power purchase contracts with independent power producers.

?South Asia

India – The country’s largest distributor GAIL expects to sell its entire US LNG volumes into its home market [18] from 2023, the firm said in its quarterly results last week after having struggled to manage its US LNG portfolio since long-term deals kicked off in 2018.

India’s largest LNG importer Petronet LNG plans to expand [19]the Dahej terminal to 22.5 mtpa [19] by around 2026, in line with the government’s goal to increase the share of gas in the domestic energy mix from the current ~6% to 25% by the end of the decade.

Pakistan – State-owned Pakistan LNG has reportedly defaulted on payments for LNG shipments with state bank United Bank, raising concerns of a prolonged gas shortage [20], as many Pakistani power producers turn to fuel oil amid a winter gas supply crunch.

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