



Gaz naturel liquéfié - Développements au Canada

14 octobre 2005

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When it is cooled to -130°C , natural gas becomes a liquid and occupies six hundred times less space than it does in its gaseous form. Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is rapidly becoming an important part of the North American energy supply mix, particularly as domestic supplies of natural gas near exhaustion and demand continues to increase. Currently, LNG is the source for only about 6% of the global consumption of natural gas, but this percentage is expected to rise to 11% by 2010 and to more than 20% by 2020.

LNG will be imported into North America from the Persian Gulf region, Russia, Indonesia and parts of Africa. Source countries generally have large gas reserves and relatively slight domestic demand. The gas is liquefied and transferred to ships large enough to carry LNG to supply fourteen million homes with a day's supply of natural gas. Countries receiving LNG will require large port facilities, as well as branch pipeline and re-gasification plant infrastructure to transform the LNG back into natural gas and to transmit the gas to market.

The nature of LNG and domestic security concerns have made proposed LNG developments a hot-button issue in the United States. Deep-water port facilities are required to accommodate an increasingly larger LNG shipping fleet. Proximity to mature natural gas markets brings domestic security concerns to the forefront of any development, particularly where port facilities are co-located with the market. Although the LNG process is inherently safe and enjoys a solid safety record, large shipping and re-gasification facilities could be vulnerable to terrorist attacks, and this has caused widespread resistance to LNG developments near large, urban centres. Currently, four LNG facilities are in operation in the United States, but in the last year there has been opposition to the development of facilities in Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and California based on a variety of environmental and security concerns.

The development of LNG infrastructure in Canada is seen as a partial solution to some of the risks facing such projects in the United States. Importing LNG to Canada permits the gas to be sold in both Canadian and American markets through existing or planned pipelines. There is less public resistance to LNG developments in Canada due, in part, to the fact that the country is perceived as being less of a terrorist target. There is also the ability to construct LNG ports and re-gasification plants in less densely populated areas, which would minimize the possible impact of any safety or security incidents.

Several LNG projects are now in various stages of development in Canada. The most advanced are the Canaport Project near Saint John, New Brunswick and the Bear Head Project in Point Tupper, Nova Scotia. The Canaport Project is being led by Irving Oil, which has partnered with Repsol YPF, a Spanish oil and gas company that will source the LNG. The Canaport Project has received provincial and federal regulatory approval and plans to produce one billion cubic feet per day [1 Bcf/d]. The Irving group of

companies also plans to construct a 500-750 MW gas-fired generating station adjacent to the Canaport site. The Bear Head Project is being developed by Anadarko Petroleum and will use the existing Maritimes and Northeast Pipeline to deliver gas into the New England markets. The Bear Head Project has also received provincial and federal approval and plans to produce up to 1.75 Bcf/d.

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