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Floating LNG - Has its Time Come?

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Abstract

Floating LNG (FLNG) has captured the imagination of engineers and LNG business developers ever since it was first considered over a decade ago. The concept is simple, but attractive: "Let's put the LNG facilities directly over the offshore gas resource rather than processing and piping the gas long distances to shore". FLNG has huge potential to extend the portfolio of traditional LNG schemes necessary to meet the energy challenge of the 21st Century. Whilst technological and commercial challenges may have prevented FLNG succeeding to date, as evidenced by the fact that there are no FLNG facilities currently in operation; and whilst today's dynamic business environment, technological advancements, maturing 'easy gas' developments, heightened environmental scrutiny and overheated construction market have delayed FIDs for LNG projects, this same combination of forces and trends have led to the energy industry's renewed interest in FLNG.

Shell will share its perspectives on FLNG - reflecting on the learnings of past studies as well as looking forward to its plans over the next decade, including the expectation that one or more of its FLNG solutions will be in operation globally. The current technical concept with some of its key technical challenges, and the inherent safety approach applied throughout the design will be described. The process configuration of the topsides, the design of the substructure, the environmental characteristics, and the mooring system will also be covered.