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RWD keynote outline for WGC

Session: The Biggest Challenges and Opportunities Facing the Global Gas Industry

800 words/c.6-7 mins @120wpm

Introduction

Hello everyone and good afternoon.

Thank you Maria [van der Hoeven].

It's great to be here in D.C. today – and hard to believe it's already three year's since we gathered for WGC in Paris.

At that occasion many of us talked about the age of gas and the numbers continue to back that up.

Last year gas accounted for the largest source of growth in energy consumption with production almost double the 10-year average growth rate.

We are living in remarkable times and it's often overlooked the contribution that energy makes to that.

Just in the last 30 years the global population has gone from 5 billion to well over 7 billion.¹

We're living 7 years longer, on average.²

Global GDP has gone from under \$20 trillion to well over \$70 trillion.³

And extreme poverty has been cut in half.⁴

In that same period of time, global energy consumption has increased by around 80 per cent, and that's no coincidence.⁵

Energy has been essential to human progress.

The world has its problems, but the big picture is that it's getting better, not worse.

It's a pattern that's set to continue and energy demand will keep going up to support it - up around a third over the next two decades, on the most likely path.

¹ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/world-population-prospects-the-2017-revision.html>

² <https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/world-population-prospects-the-2017-revision.html>

³ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD>

⁴ <http://www.politifact.com/global-news/statements/2016/mar/23/gayle-smith/did-we-really-reduce-extreme-poverty-half-30-years/>

⁵ BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2018

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One The downside of that growth is the pressure it puts on the planet from greenhouse gas emissions.

That's why gas is going to be more important than ever as part of the energy mix.

We know that because gas is abundant, affordable and if you use it instead of coal you can cut the emissions from power generation in half.

Commented [JPH1]: I would defer to Bob Stout but comparing coal negatively to gas, as opposed to simply describing the merits of gas, is considered very politically sensitive, not just with the coal lobby but with the US Administration. Can it be framed differently?

That's important, particularly given the uptick in emissions last year.

Here in the US we've seen how switching from coal to gas has reduced emissions levels down to those last seen in the 1990s.

Over in the UK they're down to 1890s levels.

In short, gas can support the increase in energy demand and help lower emissions – the dual challenge.

We all know that.

But step outside this room, this conference, our industry – and you get other views.

Commented [JPH2]: Paul, in answer to your question, there are definitely other views. Though I don't think there is a single anti-gas lobby.

For some people, gas has an image problem.

Commented [JPH3]: What does that mean? You don't say anything about concerns about so-called lock-in, the idea that, once built, gas locks in future emissions above a level consistent with 2 degrees, at least without CCUS. All the models with a continuing role for gas see wide CCUS deployment. I think we have to acknowledge the need for CCUS on gas, eventually at least.

Some may not be aware of the benefits of gas.

Others see the benefits, but are genuinely concerned about methane emissions.

That's a legitimate concern and we share it – and it can and is being overcome.

Then there is another camp that wants to discredit gas as an option, regardless of the methane emissions issue.

Commented [JPH4]: How does this group differ from those for whom gas has an image problem?

That's unfortunate as it risks denying the world of one of the key means of delivering the Paris goals – which is switching from coal to gas in power

We have an obligation to counter this view – to make the case for gas in a way that removes any doubts about its long term benefits.

And to do that, we need to do two things.

Tackling methane emissions

The first of those is to get ahead of the game on methane emissions.

When gas is in the pipes or being used efficiently then it's great for the environment.

That's not so much the case if it leaks out before it's consumed.

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That's because natural gas is mostly methane – which is a strong greenhouse gas if it finds its way into atmosphere, more potent than carbon dioxide in the near-term.

I know a lot is already happening in companies individually and across the industry collectively.

Total and BP along with 8 other companies are partners in the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative, the OGCI, for example, where tackling methane emissions is a priority.

Experts from across the industry, academia and NGOs have also drawn up a set of Methane Guiding Principles that share best practice on methane.

That's just two examples of how we can work together to limit methane.

If the industry as a whole were to reduce its methane intensity to 0.2 per cent then methane would go from being a big part of the global warming threat to an almost negligible part.

Those aren't my words. They are what Steve Pacala from Princeton University said. He's one of the world experts on methane.

We're aiming for that 0.2 per cent target ourselves in BP and we're sharing what we learn as we go along.

Gas as a destination fuel

The second challenge is helping people see gas as a destination fuel, not just a transition fuel – one that's part of a low carbon future, not just a fuel for getting there.

That means ~~a number of things need to change~~ ~~winning a number of arguments~~.

- For investment in infrastructure and open markets to create a more globalised market for gas.
- For backing innovation and technology to decarbonise gas, particularly in carbon capture and storage.
- For partnering gas with renewable power,
- And for carbon pricing, which will help to make all of those happen.

Commented [JPH5]: OK. If you're going to tackle the CCUS/destination issue later in the paper, I think you might need to set up the distinction between transition and destination earlier – to pre-empt my reaction above. Unabated gas can have an immediate large-scale benefit. But to prevent long term lock in and become part of the destination it will need CCUS – and that needs to happen soon (before 2040), and be retrofitted to the transition assets.

Commented [JPH6]: Phrase makes it sound academic. This is existential, it must happen.

Commented [JPH7]: You might want to add the need for transitional incentives for CCUS on a scale comparable to evs or renewables. CCUS is much less costly per tonne than they are, and could be deployed more quickly on a larger scale – but it has received almost no support. This needs to change.

Conclusion

The world is going to need around a third more energy over the next two decades, and that is all coming from developing economies.

So as well as being cleaner, all the extra energy also needs to be affordable and secure.

That's why gas is a vital fuel for helping advance the energy transition, and why I believe we should be taking the all steps required to make the case for its benefits.

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Thank you.