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Recent Developments in Russian Arctic Oil and Gas

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decade or so, Russia has continued to see an increase in oil and gas development in its Arctic regions. This recent growth in Russian Arctic oil and gas has been spurred primarily by growing demand for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in Europe and Asia, with the Russian Arctic lying between these two major markets, technological advances, favourable regulatory conditions, massive support from Federal and regional governments (availability of incentives, such as tax breaks and state financial support), and partnerships with foreign investors, amongst other factors.

We will look at recently completed projects (completed in the past decade or so) and some that are currently underway or due to kick off in the near future. The focus will be on oil and gas development with a marine connection, i.e. offshore projects or onshore projects that also have a significant marine component. Most regions of the Russian Arctic will be touched on, from the Kola Peninsula in the west to Chukotka in the east, though most time will be spent on what is happening in the West Siberian Arctic, as that is where the vast majority of Russia's oil and (particularly) gas reserves are located. We will also briefly touch on recent activity on the Sakhalin shelf which, while nowhere near the Arctic Circle, does experience 'Arctic-like' conditions, notably sea ice.

SPEAKER'S BIOGRAPHY

Ben Seligman's passion for the Arctic began over 25 years ago when he took an undergraduate course on polar resources and policy. He went on to complete graduate work before joining Shell in 2000 as a project specialist. Highlights at Shell included working on the Sakhalin 2 Project, the Mackenzie Gas Project, Shell's Alaska Venture, Arctic R&D and then more recently on unconventional / shale oil and gas projects and the LNG Canada project. Since departing Shell in 2017, Ben has completed some consulting work for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Ben holds a Masters and PhD from the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge University. His PhD focused on pipeline construction and operation in permafrost conditions in the Russian Arctic.

He is a past Chair and Scholarship Chair of the SNAME Arctic Section. He was also on the organizing committee of several Ictech conferences.