

Sustainability is the key to companies' future

It is no longer possible for any of us to carry out our oil or gas exploitation activities without proper regard to the broader issues of environmental protection and social capital development," states Lew Watts, Director Africa, Latin America, and Mediterranean Rim Shell Gas & Power – Sustainable Development and Latin America. He is going to be one of the speakers in the plenary session "The World Summit on Sustainable Development — the Petroleum Industry, Perspective and Response." The word "sustainable," he says, is key to all our companies' futures. "For my case is simply this: no company can expect to survive as a sustainable entity if it does not operate within a sustainable society, environment and economy supported by its own sustainable policies, organisation, principles and values," explains Watts.

About his presentation, Watts says that his aim is to look at the sustainable development challenges that are directly linked to the oil and gas business as a whole and are likely to affect everybody in the years to come. "We have a legitimate role to play in meeting the world's energy needs, but only if we do this responsibly," he notes. Watts says that this emphasis on Sustainable Development, on the need to frame one's activities within the needs of the environment and society in which we work, is not a platitude, but a pre-requisite for doing sound business in the 21st Century.

Business principles

"All of us have different views of how the future will play out and, as a consequence, which issues and factors will be the most critical to our companies and our customers. In Shell, we try to look at these futures through the lens of scenarios." Concerning his presentation, he hopes to demonstrate, however, that there are some issues that are generic, or common, to any reasonable future scenario and that addressing these will require the collective efforts of all stakeholders.



LEW WATTS

Watts explains that sustainable development means carrying out the activities in recognition of the needs of society and the environment, both today and in the future, whilst ensuring that the own investments are profitable. "We

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insist on all our staff carrying out their work under a global set of business principles. We aspire to be a reliable and trusted member of society, whether local or global," he notes. It is for this reason that Shell has defined seven Principles of Sustainable Development for use in action planning throughout their operations: generate robust profitability; deliver value for customers; protect the environment; manage resources; respect and safeguard people; benefit communities; work with stakeholders.

Global oil and gas industry

For Watts, the oil and gas industry has long operated in an international arena commensurate with its key role of meeting the world's energy needs and providing key revenues for producer governments. "This has not changed," he observes, "but the task has become even more important and complex as the world adapts to the challenges of globalisation, the need for transparency and accountability, the legitimate need of key stakeholders to be heard, and the

growing realisation that energy consumption is affecting the world's climate."

Watts explains that energy security has become an issue for all — from the poorest members of society to large energy-hungry nations concerned over their continued long-term economic growth. Finally, the energy mix of the world is shifting towards gas as finite oil reserves are depleted and this new cleaner, more efficient gas resource base is increasingly opened up to international and sub-regional trade.

An opportunity to network

As for what Lew Watts expects of the 17th WPC, he believes that the Congress is an excellent opportunity to network with delegates from around the world. "It offers also the opportunity of listening to key speakers on some of the wider geopolitical issues affecting our business, as well as some of the more significant projects and their technological challenges," and he adds, "for those of us involved in the oil and gas business in South America, it will be a time to meet old friends from industry and government." For those new to this area, Watts is sure they will feel the excitement of the opportunities and challenges in a continent with major hydrocarbon resources, and equally significant highly-concentrated markets.

Plenary 2 – The World Summit on Sustainable Development – The Petroleum Industry, Perspective and Response
September 2, 10:00 a.m.

Keynote Speakers: Lew Watts, Director Africa, Latin America, and Mediterranean Rim Shell Gas & Power, and Einar Steensnaes, Minister for Petroleum and Energy of Norway

Session Chairman: Ram Naik, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas of India