



PUBLIC LAUNCH OF THE JODI-GAS WORLD DATABASE

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The Joint Organisations Data Initiative’s natural gas world database (JODI-Gas) is being launched to the public at the 14th International Energy Forum Ministerial Meeting in Moscow. Can you give us some background on JODI-Gas? Energy ministers have for nearly eight years been calling for the extension of the JODI platform to cover natural gas, in light of the need for better and more comprehensive gas data over both short- and long-term horizons. During the last two years, the JODI partners have made admirable progress in advancing JODI-Gas to its current standing: the database now features data for over 70 countries.

Can you tell us about recent progress that has been made? Developing JODI-Gas from a call from ministers to monthly data submissions for 70 countries must have involved a lot of hard work on the part of the partners, as well as significant and sustained co-ordination efforts.

Certainly, and this is an important point, because some stakeholders perceive JODI to be just a database, but it is much more than that. There is a great deal of co-operation and co-ordination that goes on behind the scenes, and over the last couple of years the JODI partners have worked together to imbue JODI-Gas with renewed momentum. JODI-Gas gained this renewed momentum at the 2nd Gas Data Transparency Conference, generously hosted by Qatar in May 2012, wherein the JODI partners agreed to request the conversion of JODI-Gas from the exercise that began back in October 2009 to a permanent reporting initiative.

By October 2012, the JODI partners had received approval from their respective executives and boards. By the following month, there were 52 countries and economies submitting gas data, representing around two thirds of global gas supply and demand. The JODI partners launched a beta version of JODI-Gas on 16 January 2013, which was expected

to heighten interest and attract more countries and economies to participate in the initiative. That’s exactly what happened. By June of last year, 71 countries were participating in JODI-Gas, representing around 80 percent of global gas supply and demand. It is important to note that during the beta launch phase, only countries and economies submitting data were granted access to the JODI-Gas database.

Sensing that we were making tangible progress and getting closer to a public launch, the IEF and JODI partners organised the 3rd Gas Data Transparency Conference, which was generously hosted by Indonesia in June 2013. The primary objective of the 3rd Conference was to convene the key stakeholders and jointly define the remaining milestones prior to launch. The 3rd Gas Data Transparency Conference achieved its objective. One of the agreed upon pre-launch targets was the publication of the JODI-Gas Manual, which was completed in February 2014. The UN Statistics Division deserves special thanks for having led the drafting of the document, which was subsequently reviewed by all JODI partners and other industry experts. We hope it will serve as a valuable reference document for years to come.

Another agreed upon pre-condition to launch was the organisation of a JODI Regional Training Workshop that included a module on JODI-Gas. I am proud to say that not one but two such workshops have already been held, in Kuala Lumpur in November 2013 and in Baku in February of this year. Statisticians from 25 countries participated in those two workshops, so we can confidently say that we are getting the word out about JODI-Gas. Yet another milestone was the inclusion of more gas data from key producing and consuming countries. On that note, I am pleased to report that the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) officially became a JODI

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The beta version of JODI-Gas was launched **January 16, 2013**

The JODI-Gas manual was completed **February 2014**

GECF became a JODI partner **April 2014**



partner in April 2014. We very much look forward to the data contributions from their member countries.

How is information collected and what is featured in JODI-Gas?

In terms of the JODI-Gas data supply chain, each month natural gas companies submit monthly data on production, demand, imports, exports and stocks to their national statistics offices or energy ministries. Professionals at the national statistics offices or ministries analyse the data, fill out the JODI-Gas questionnaires, and submit them to their respective JODI partner organisations. Each JODI partner then reviews the data, compares what it received to secondary sources if available, clarifies doubts with the submitters if necessary, and then sends the data to the IEF.

The IEF again checks the data for outliers or inconsistencies, engages in dialogue with the JODI Partners as needed, and finally uploads the data onto the JODI website for worldwide dissemination. As you can tell from that description of the JODI-Gas data supply chain, we rely enormously on the efforts and contributions of gas companies and national administrations every single month. We like to think of JODI as more of a commitment than a database.

Could you provide us with some practical examples of how gas data might lead to better decision-making?

A variety of stakeholders have told us that they expect JODI-Gas to help enhance energy data transparency. Gas data are relevant whether one is analysing today's market dynamics or looking farther afield. Market analysts scrutinise short-term data in part to develop a better understanding of the root causes of price volatility.

Over the long-term, comprehensive data sets empower market actors engaged in strategic planning and making investment decisions. Of equal importance to the long-term stability and smooth functioning of the market is that companies and governments have sound analytical foundations upon which to build a better understanding of expectations for the future business environment. Irrespective of the time frame, natural gas industry analysts worldwide are faced with an exceptionally difficult task as monthly or quarterly data are in short supply, inconsistencies in definitions

are common, and data are presented in a range of different units. The JODI-Gas database is expected to help address these challenges.

What happens after the launch? How will the IEF and the JODI partners maintain the recent momentum you developed in the build up to the launch?

One of the key success factors will be keeping the various actors in the data supply chain engaged and in touch with one another. There is employee turnover along all stages of the data supply chain.

“We rely enormously on the efforts and contributions of gas companies.”

People retire, new focal points are hired, and there is a lot of relationship management involved in keeping the data flowing and keeping the channels of communication open, so that any data-related questions can be resolved in a timely manner.

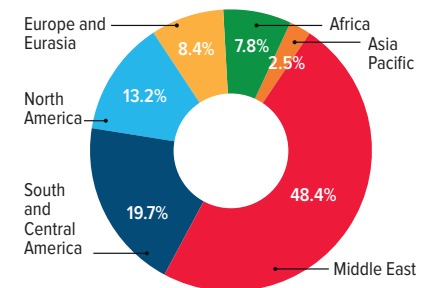
In terms of sustaining high-level commitment to data transparency, the IEF has been doing its part to extol the benefits of gas data transparency, for example at the GECF Summit of Heads of State and Government in Russia held last July. During this meeting at the Kremlin, the IEF encouraged all GECF members to support JODI and emphasised that better information helps to mitigate price volatility, aides in the planning and execution of investments, and contributes to the promotion of global energy security.

Is JODI-Gas an example of promoting importance of energy co-operation and energy interdependence?

Indeed, working together and sharing monthly oil and gas data highlights our interdependence, underscores the importance of a sustained dialogue, and, in the end, benefits consumers and producers alike. Using the example of JODI-Gas, producers have an interest in sharing information to help ensure that buyers of gas – their customers – have a good idea about expected future supply levels and can plan their off-take accordingly.

Consumers have an interest in sharing information so they can signal to producers their expected future demand levels, thereby enabling producers to plan their infrastructure build-out to ensure adequate and uninterrupted supply. In other words, producers want to know if there will be demand and consumers want to know if there will be supply. The continuing search for an answer to this question highlights the interdependence of energy market actors and underscores the need for sustained producer-consumer dialogue. JODI-Oil is a well-established, concrete outcome of that dialogue, and JODI-Gas will soon raise its profile as another. ■

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Distribution of proved oil reserves (2012), total = 1,668.9 billion barrels of oil
Source: BP Statistical Review 2013