

# Aker Solutions and Leading Operators Join Forces to Qualify Subsea Gas Separation

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OSLO, Nov. 15, 2019 - Aker Solutions and a group of the world's leading oil and gas operators have come together in a joint industry project with the aim of making subsea gas separation a reality.

Using CO<sub>2</sub> injection to increase recovery rates in offshore oil and gas fields can improve the economics of a field significantly. So far, the separation of 'back-produced' CO<sub>2</sub> from the well-stream has been considered carried out on an existing platform, at high cost and making the concept economically unattractive.

Now Aker Solutions together with energy companies Total, Pertamina, Equinor and industry group the CO<sub>2</sub> Capture Project (CCP), have initiated a Joint Industry Project (JIP) to identify required membrane qualities for a subsea gas and CO<sub>2</sub> separation process, to minimize pretreatment needs and avoid large processing modules.

Flooding an oil field with CO<sub>2</sub> increases recovery rates, and extends the life of an offshore field. Aker Solutions has developed concepts for subsea processing of well streams from CO<sub>2</sub>-flooded oil fields, in which CO<sub>2</sub>-rich gas is separated, compressed and reinjected back into the reservoir. The hydrocarbon-enriched gas can then be routed to the topside production facility.

Subsea gas separation has the potential to make CO<sub>2</sub>-rich gas fields commercially viable.

## Testing Membranes

A prerequisite for the concept to be technically and economically attractive is that the gas separation is done with robust membranes that reduce pretreatment requirements and remove the need for large processing plants.

Also, the qualified operating range for relevant membrane materials do not match the optimal operating conditions for gas separation on the seabed. Hence, testing must be done in order to obtain knowledge about membrane performance under relevant conditions.

The project will perform tests of different membrane qualities under relevant conditions related to pressure, temperature, gas composition and rates. The tests will be carried out by the SINTEF research institute in Norway. The project also includes technical and economic engineering studies to assess the technology concept based on the test results.

The project aims to:

- Qualify membrane qualities that are suitable for bulk separation of CO<sub>2</sub> in a typical subsea process
- Confirm technical and economic use of subsea processing as a favorable concept for the realization of offshore CO<sub>2</sub> separation in combination with reinjection and storage of CO<sub>2</sub>

Aker Solutions delivered the first subsea gas compression system to Equinor for the Åsgard field offshore Norway. The system has been in operation with no unplanned downtime since it was installed in 2015. The subsea gas separation technology in combination with the subsea gas compression technology could make offshore handling of CO<sub>2</sub> for EOR technically and economically attractive.

\*Current CCP members are BP, Chevron and Petrobras.

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