

Early start for Wintershall's Maria field: production begins one year ahead of schedule

- **Project costs for subsea field reduced by more than 20%**
- **Production in Norway to increase to more than 100,000 barrels oil equivalent per day**

Stavanger/Kassel. Wintershall, and its licence partners Petoro and Spirit Energy, have started production at the Maria field one year ahead of schedule. Costs have been reduced by more than 20% compared to plan. Oil production has now begun, whereas originally start-up was intended for the fourth quarter of 2018. At an expected final investment cost of around 12 billion NOK, the project will stay more than 3 billion NOK below the original budget. Maria is the first own-operated field in Norway, which Wintershall takes all the way from exploration, through development and to production. Following a solid growth course on the Norwegian Continental Shelf, Wintershall Norge has increased its daily production from 3,000 boepd (barrel of oil equivalent per day) in 2009 to around 100,000 boepd today.

“Ahead of schedule and below budget: Maria is a major achievement for Wintershall, our partners and our suppliers. In challenging times, we have kept a clear focus on smart engineering and sharp project management. The fact that we have achieved this so quickly without incidents is a real credit to the whole team that worked so hard to make this happen,” said Martin Bachmann, Wintershall Executive Board Member for Exploration and Production in Europe and Middle

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Verena Sattel
PI-17-24
Phone +49 561 301-3301
Fax +49 561 301-1321
press@wintershall.com
www.wintershall.com

Wintershall Holding GmbH
Corporate Communications
P.O. Box 10 40 20
34112 Kassel, Germany

East. “The experience gained in the Maria project will serve as a blueprint, for our Nova development, previously known as Skarfjell, and worldwide.”

Exceeding expectations

Wintershall and its partners submitted the Plan for Development and Operation (PDO) to the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy in 2015. For Hugo Dijkgraaf, Wintershall Norge Managing Director and until recently Maria Project Director, Maria’s early production kick-off is also a signal: “Delivering a production start-up 2 years and 3 months after PDO approval by the ministry for such a complex offshore project is a testament to Wintershall’s capability to deliver on development projects. Construction and installation of the subsea equipment and pipelines was completed without any major problems or delays, and this summer we drilled some of the most efficient wells in the history of the Haltenbanken area. This excellent progress would not have been possible without the cooperation of Statoil as operator on the host platforms. Maria is a role model for an outstanding cooperation between operators and suppliers.” In combination with an innovative procurement approach, Wintershall awarded more than 90% of all Maria contracts to companies based in Norway culminating in an expected work amount of 34,000 man years over the Maria lifetime.

Smart synergies

The subsea Maria field in the Haltenbanken area of the Norwegian Sea is connected via subsea tiebacks to the Statoil-operated Kristin, Heidrun and Åsgard B production platforms, making it one of the most complex underwater projects in the world. By tying into local infrastructure and with a planned 25-year life span, Maria could also help prolong the production horizon of surrounding fields. “It is a complex plan, but we focused on simple execution. By using tried and tested components, and working closely with excellent suppliers, we have delivered a field that will continue to return value to us, our

partners, and the whole of Norway, for many years to come,” said Jens Balmer, Head of Maria Project. The Maria well-stream will go to the Kristin platform for processing while supply of water for injection into the reservoir will come from the Heidrun platform and lift gas will be provided from Åsgard B via the Tyrihans subsea template. Processed oil will be shipped to the Åsgard field for storage and offloading to shuttle tankers. Gas will be exported via the Åsgard Transport System to Kårstø.

The Maria field is located approximately 20 kilometers east of the Kristin field and about 45 kilometers south of the Heidrun field. Wintershall Norge is the operator of the license with a 50% share. Petoro has a 30% share and Spirit Energy owns the remaining 20%. Recoverable reserves of the field are estimated around 180 million barrels of oil equivalent (boe), of which the majority is oil.

Wintershall Holding GmbH, based in Kassel, Germany, is a wholly owned subsidiary of BASF in Ludwigshafen. The company has been active in the extraction of natural resources for 120 years, and in the exploration and production of crude oil and natural gas for over 80 years. Wintershall focuses on selected core regions where the company has built up a high level of regional and technological expertise. These are Europe, Russia, North Africa, South America, and increasingly the Middle East region. The company wants to expand its business further with exploration and production, selected partnerships, innovation and technological competence. Wintershall employs about 2,000 staff worldwide from 50 nations and is now Germany’s largest, internationally active crude oil and natural gas producer.

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