



**Exploring the Arctic  
is an even more crucial mission than exploring space.  
This is the key message of the RAO/CIS Offshore 2017 National Forum  
that was recently held in St Petersburg, Russia.**

*From 12 September to 15 September 2017, St Petersburg hosted RAO/CIS Offshore 2017, the 13th International Conference and Exhibition for Oil and Gas Resources Development of the Russian Arctic and CIS Continental Shelf.*

This year, the Conference and Exhibition welcomed over 300 Russian and international companies, including **Gazprom, Rosneft, Lukoil, Gazprom Neft, Sevmash, Gazprom Flot, Gazpromneft-Sakhalin, the Russian Geological Research Institute, Okeanpribor, Afrikantov OKB Mechanical Engineering, Krylov State Research Centre, Zvezda Shipbuilding Complex, Aker Solutions, DNV GL, General Electric Oil&Gas, KBR, Kvaerner, Siemens, TechnipFMC, etc.** The events' participants demonstrated their achievements offshore oil and gas resources development.

The Forum opened with a Plenary Session titled **“REALISATION OF SHELF PROJECTS IS A DRIVING FORCE OF INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT”**.

“The history and content of our conference proves that the matters of exploring the Arctic and the continental shelf are entering their final stage,” said **Alexey Kontorovich**, member of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) and the chairman of the RAS Research Council for Geology, Oil and Gas Resources Development, as he officially opened the meeting. “20 years ago, shelf exploration was treated like something out of science fiction. And now our knowledge of the Arctic and its exploration comes not from vague guesswork but from sound geological research, which is to keep improving further.”

During the discussion, **Kirill Molodtsov**, Deputy Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation, pointed out, “According to the Ministry of Energy estimates, the offshore oil and gas development will remain on the rise. Last year, our exploration of the shelf resulted in over 22.3 million tonnes of oil and over 32.9 billion cubic metres of gas extracted, which is almost 17% more than in 2015 for oil and almost 4% more for gas. We are expecting the same growth this year as well. The amount of oil extracted is likely to reach approximately 26 million tonnes, while the amount of gas may be as much as 34 billion cubic metres.” **Evgeny Kiselyov**, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation and head of the Federal Subsoil Resources Management Agency, believes that “we must not start serious work on the shelf without environmentally friendly technology, because oil spills in the Arctic cannot be allowed to happen. We hope that the companies will make good use of this time out, that we will have no need to extend the ban, and that, on the contrary, we will all be able to start executing new projects in the coming years.”

The delegates were especially interested in speeches delivered by **Valery Golubev**, member of the Gazprom board; **Andrey Patrushev**, Deputy CEO of Gazprom Neft; **Ilya Mandrik**, Vice-President of Lukoil; **Nils Andreas Masvie**, Vice-President of DNV GL AS; **Yevgeny Zagorodniy**, Vice President for Commercial Shipbuilding at the United Shipbuilding Corporation; and **Sissel Eriksen**, head of exploration at the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate.

**Throughout the four days of the Forum's operation**, industry experts attended the Plenary Session and ten conference sessions, where they discussed the key issues and prospects of exploring the Arctic and the continental shelf. In a way, the Forum became a manner of proving grounds for testing how ready Russian engineering research and technology is for beginning large-scale exploration of the world's northernmost hydrocarbon deposits. The agenda included issues linked to bolstering the resource potential of Russia's continental shelf, providing the necessary technology and equipment for exploring the oil and gas deposits of the Arctic zone (including the energy infrastructure), creating a modern fleet for servicing improved routes of oil and gas transportation by sea, and ensuring the industrial and environmental integrity of the continental shelf. The Forum's business programme brought together over **500 delegates**, with more than **250 reports** being made.

The RAO/CIS Offshore 2017 **exhibition** was housed in the Mikhailovsky Manezh Exhibition Center and sparked a keen interest among the Russian and foreign experts from the relevant areas, as well as representatives of the industrial, business, and academic community. The event was attended by more than **1900** experts from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, the Slovak Republic, and the United Kingdom.

During the exhibition, Gazprom Transgaz St. Petersburg announced the start of its new R&D project: the creation of Russia's first manned underwater device for working on cross-country submarine pipelines. The project's results will be essential for using submarine pipelines and other hydrotechnical structures, as

well as for doing various types of work and inspecting underwater structures owned by third-party Russian and foreign clients (this includes inspections of sea bed areas that can be used for future resource extraction). Apart from underwater technical maintenance and exploration, the device will also be capable of completing rescue missions and helping with ship salvage.

As per established tradition, the exhibition venue also hosted **an award ceremony for the International Contest for R&D and innovation works** aimed at development of the Arctic and continental shelf, organised by the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation.

**The Forum's third day, 14 September, was especially eventful:**

- That was when the two-day **Young Professionals Forum** began. Students and young researchers presented more than 40 reports before the demanding judging panel. The best and brightest were rewarded for their effort with diplomas and commemorative prizes. This also was the first time when the Young Professionals Forum included a fascinating **brainstorm session**, titled **“Me in 10 years’ time. Ideal conditions for my professional development.”** The students’ goal was to present their vision of their future life. During the conference, young professionals had a unique opportunity to have a Q&A session with the RAO/CIS Offshore 2017 speakers, who represented the industry’s leading companies and institutions.
- **The RAO/CIS Offshore 2017 Best Stand Competition culminated in an official award ceremony.** The panel of competent judges found it far from easy to determine who was the absolute best. So in the end, each nomination had several winners. The winning companies included SCF GEO, LUKOIL, Gazprom Neft, Zvezda Shipbuilding Complex, Gazprom Flot, NAECO, Sevmas, Aker Solutions, the Computer Modelling Laboratory of the St. Petersburg State University, and others. The **Audience Choice Award** went to St. Petersburg Mining University.
- **For the first time in its history, RAO/CIS Offshore served as a platform for signing the memorandum on the Sozvezdye Association of Oil and Gas Suppliers joining the Arctic Communications Cluster, which was created by the Arctic Academy of Sciences and the St. Petersburg Branch of the Central Science Research Telecommunication Institute.**

St. Petersburg holds the rightly earned title of Russia’s cultural capital, so it was no accident that the official reception in honour of the RAO/CIS Offshore 2017 opening (the Music Night) took place at the Mariinsky Theatre’s concert hall. The brilliant performers effortlessly enthralled their listeners, whisking them away into the wondrous and fantastical world of music. The Forum participants witnessed an unforgettable show, starring the theatre’s soloists and conducted by the inimitable Mikhail Sinkevich.

**The RAO/CIS Offshore 2017 Forum was supported** by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Transport, the Emercom of Russia, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Federal Subsoil Resources Management Agency, St. Petersburg Administration, and the Kurchatov Institute Russian Research Centre.

**The RAO/CIS Offshore event was organized by:** the Government of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, the Federal Subsoil Resources Management Agency, the RAS Research Council for Geology, Oil and Gas Resources Development, Gazprom, and RESTEC® Exhibition Company.

The next opinion-sharing meeting between the industry’s leading companies and the representatives of the state authorities and the academic community will take place in St. Petersburg from **2 to 5 October 2018**, during the **Offshore Marintec Russia 2018 International Exhibition and Conference on Shipbuilding and Development of Hi-Tech Equipment for the Development of the Arctic and Continental Shelf.**



Find out more on the event’s official website [www.rao-offshore.ru](http://www.rao-offshore.ru)