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## **B.C. TO PUSH FOR** LNG EXPORTS DURING ASIAN TRADE MISSIONS

Deputy Premier Rich Coleman will meet next week with the chief executive officer of Malaysia's state-owned Petronas as the B.C. government embarks on two Asian trade missions to spur provincial exports of liquefied natural gas.

Mr. Coleman will speak at the Gastech energy industry conference next Wednesday in Singapore, where he will also discuss B.C. LNG exports in a dinner meeting with Petronas CEO Wan Zulkiflee Wan Ariffin.

Petronas leads the Pacific NorthWest LNG consortium. The other partners are from Japan, China, India and Brunei.

The B.C. Liberals campaigned hard to promote LNG's prospects in the 2013 B.C. election, boasting that exports of the fuel would transform the provincial economy. Industry experts consider Pacific NorthWest LNG the front-runner in the race for approval to start projects in B.C., although its proposal faces vocal opposition from environmentalists and some prominent members of Lax Kw'alaams First Nation.



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The trips come as anti-LNG activists step up protests. Last week, more than 180 people

environmental representing groups and First **Nations** marched in downtown Vancouver.

LUXURY REAL ESTATE

Garry Reece will join other native leaders at a rally in Prince Rupert to express concern about potential damage to Flora Bank, a sandy area with eelgrass that shelters juvenile salmon. Pacific NorthWest LNG

www.markmilne.com International Trade Minister Teresa Wat will head a separate trade mission to China from Oct. 30 to Nov. 7, stopping in Beijing, Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Shenzhen. They will address topics such as LNG, agriculture and clean technology. After China, Ms. Wat will visit Vietnam.

On Saturday, Lax Kw'alaams Mayor wants to build an \$11.4-billion export

Mr. Coleman, who oversees the province's LNG file in his role as Natural Gas Development Minister, will fly to Japan after his Singapore trip. He will meet in Tokyo with Petroleum Exploration Japan (a Pacific NorthWest LNG coowner) and Mitsubishi (a member of the LNG Canada joint venture led by Royal Dutch Shell PLC). Premier Christv Clark and

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terminal on Lelu Island next to Flora Bank, which is under the jurisdiction of the Prince Rupert Port Authority.

Mr. Coleman said in an interview that a court challenge launched by Mr. Reece would not delay Pacific NorthWest LNG's plans to start construction in 2016, subject to approval from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. On Sept. 21, Mr. Reece filed a claim on behalf of the Allied Tribes of Lax Kw'alaams to seek aboriginal title to Lelu Island and Flora Bank.

"It just means you have this court situation out there that some day may come in as a factor," Mr. Coleman said. "You just have to let the legal court case go on while you are doing your work."

Weak LNG prices in Asia, a looming glut of supplies and fierce global competition have cast doubt on how many of the 20 LNG proposals in B.C. might come to fruition, if any.

But Mr. Coleman said he is witnessing steady progress by international players still keen to start the province's LNG industry.

"I just continue to smile, get the work done and stay optimistic," he said. "Whatever LNG plant sends its first shipment around the world, then I'll say, 'I told you so.' If you don't start believing in something and going after something, you never accomplish anything. It doesn't matter whether it's LNG, whether it's in your business or in your life. You set your goals and you go to achieve them."

Mr. Reece said Flora Bank's ecologically sensitive habitat for

juvenile salmon will be at risk even if Pacific NorthWest LNG builds a suspension bridge and pier to minimize dredging in the Skeena River estuary. "It's all about protecting Flora Bank. People are passionate about the whole area," he said. "We have had problems right from get-go with Petronas."

He said he is gathering input on Lelu Island, listening to critics who say it should be ruled out as an LNG export site.

Mr. Reece is seeking re-election as mayor. His rivals in the Nov. 19 Lax Kw'alaams Band election are John Helin, Carl Sampson Jr. and Robert Moraes.

Pacific NorthWest LNG president Michael Culbert said the Petronasled consortium has been openminded and willing to talk. "We think we've been very transparent," he said in a recent interview.

#### CANADIAN ENERGY FIRMS DOUBLING DOWN ON CLEANTECH: COSIA

oilsands, innovations the that reduce the environmental footprint also tend to save money Members of Canada's Oil Sands Innovation Alliance (COSIA) are "doubling down" on sharing their green technologies despite the pinch from low crude oil prices, the group's boss said. The aim of COSIA, which was launched in early 2012, is to enable competing oilsands companies to share environmental technologies without running afoul of intellectual property law.

COSIA CEO Dan Wicklum said there's not a big difference between COSIA's portfolio of active projects this year versus last: 219 compared to 223.

But the number of new projects started is down more sharply—37 projects worth \$23 million this year versus 68 projects worth \$200 million, according to COSIA's 2014 performance update.

Under the COSIA model, companies

basically divide the work up, an attractive proposition from a cost perspective no matter what the oil price is, Wicklum said. "If it made sense four years

ago, it makes more sense now."
"What I'm hearing from companies is they're essentially doubling down

on the concept of COSIA," he said. Brian Ferguson, chief executive of COSIA member Cenovus Energy, said his company has had to "throttle back a bit" on research and development







spending as part of companywide cuts, but that continued investment in technology is crucial to the company's long-term future.

Overall capital spending at Cenovus is down by about 40 per cent this year versus last year.

Cenovus' research and development spending for 2014 was \$125 million, not including the technological improvements that go into day-to-day operations at its flagship Christina Lake and Foster Creek projects in northeastern Alberta.

A figure is not yet available for this year's R&D spend at Cenovus.

In the oilsands, innovations that reduce the environmental footprint also tend to save money, said Wicklum. That could mean, for example, burning less natural gas and guzzling fewer barrels of water to produce the steam needed to draw bitumen from deep underground.

"There's an absolute direct correlation very often between cutting costs and environmental performance," he said.

Also Wednesday, COSIA said its members have made headway on reducing the amount of fresh water needed to produce a barrel of bitumen, though it cautioned it is still early days and results may vary significantly from year to year.

Between 2012 and 2014, it said water use intensity fell by 30 per cent for mining operations and 36 per cent for steam-driven projects although absolute oilsands production rose over the period.

COSIA said its members are

recycling more of the water used in their operations and using more non-potable salty water.

#### BANK OF CANADA HOLDS INTEREST RATE AT 0.5% AS OIL SHOCK LINGERS

Weak projections for economic growth this year - both in this country and globally - and a new federal government set on a string of budget deficits expected to begin next year could present the Bank of Canada with some major forecasting challenges.

But for now, the central bank is maintaining Canada is on a recovery path after pulling out of an oil-collapse fuelled recession in the first half of 2015, with that initial rebound driven mainly by improving exports to a strengthening U.S. economy.

Governor Stephen Poloz on Wednesday kept the trendsetting interest rate unchanged at 0.5 per cent, as widely anticipated, and growth in the third quarter of this year will be stronger than forecast a few months ago.

"Canada's growth has rebounded, as projected in July," the central bank said in its quarterly Monetary Policy Report, even as energy prices continued to pull down revenues in oil-producing regions of the country. "In non-resource sectors, the lookedfor signs of strength are more evident, supported by the stimulative effects of previous monetary actions and past depreciation of the Canadian dollar," the bank said.

Wednesday's MPR estimates the

third-quarter at 2.5 per cent, up from 1.5 per cent in the July forecast, and coming after contractions of 0.8 per cent and 0.5 per cent in the previous quarters. For the fourth quarter, the bank expects growth of 1.5 per cent. As for all of 2015, policy-makers are predicting an increase of 1.1 per cent, unchanged from the previous MPR.

"Global economic growth has been a little weaker than expected this year, but the dynamics pointing to a pickup in 2016 and 2017 remain largely intact," the bank said.

"Uncertainty about China's transition to a slower growth path has

contributed to further downward pressure on prices for oil and other commodities. These factors are weighing on growth in many emerging markets and some other economies."

Policy-makers, however, expect the impact of weak energy prices and lower borrowing costs will help to underpin global growth over the next two years.

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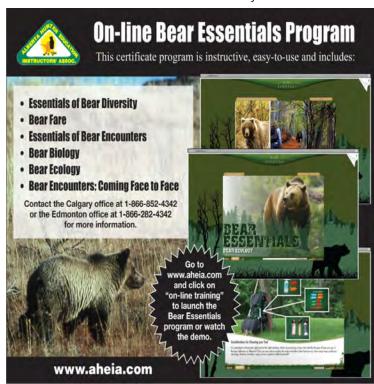
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10 years of rule under Stephen Harper ended amid a struggling commodities-driven economy laid low in part by plunging oil prices, Paul Vieira reports.

Mr. Harper pledged to make Canada an energy superpower, but the commodity-price decline clouded that legacy, along with the frustrated effort to build the long-delayed Keystone XL pipeline. Mr. Trudeau has said one of his most important jobs would be torebuild relations with the U.S.—Canada's biggest trading partner and a major importer Canadian oil—which were marred by Mr. Harper's focus on obtaining approval for the pipeline.

Another issue was Mr. Harper's decision to set strict conditions on Chinese investment in the energy industry, which caused confusion among global Canada's investors about openness to foreign investment.

The Canadian oil industry might have missed a golden opportunity for expansion under Mr. Harper, the Globe and Mail writes. Nevertheless, the Conservatives maintained their support in the resource-rich western provinces despite the Liberal party's first majority in 15 years.

Canadian Oil Sands recommended its shareholders reject a hostile, 4.47 billion Canadian dóllar (\$3.46 billion) takeover offer from Suncor Energy Inc., Chester Dawson and Judy McKinnon report.

A CAN'T-MISS OIL TRADE GOES BUST FOR HEDGE FUNDS

The continuing oil-price slide is

also taking a toll on hedge-fund and private-equity managers who hoped to profit from a reversal of the decline over the past year by piling into debt issued by froubled energy companies, Rob Copeland reports. "A lot of hot money chased into what we believe are insolvent companies at best," said Paul Twitchell, partner at hedgefund firm Whitebox Advisors LLC.

An energy fund at Magnetar Capital LLC, for example, is down 12% this year through the end of September, after the firm invested in distressed oil and gas companies. Brigade Capital Management LP's main hedge fund is having its worst stretch since 2008 in part because of the firm's exposure to junk-rated energy companies.

Still, Carlyle Group LP is pitching investors on a new \$2.5 billion with projects fund energy and companies as its target.

Meanwhile, in Iran, U.S. energy companies are watching from the sidelines while European oil companies are in fierce competition for the best oil and gas fields when Western sanctions are Benoit Faucon reports. lifted,

GERMANS HAVE A BURNING NEED FOR MORE GARBAGE

Germany isn't producing enough of its own trash to feed waste-to-energy plants, so it's importing garbage, Eliot Brown reports. Germans built garbage-burning power plants over the past decade but they also recycled more, which led to the shortage of household waste. Now it's arriving from England, Ireland, Italy and Switzerland, among others.

the U.S., electric utilities are shifting more of their fixed costs to monthly customer fees, Rebecca Smith reports.

Oil prices were largely lower Tuesday as investors expected little action from producers meeting this week to alleviate the global supply glut. Members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, the 12-nation oil cartel, and non-OPEC nations, like Russia and Mexico, are meeting in Vienna on Wednesday. Although participants have said that

supply cuts will be discussed, few analysts expect any meaningful departure from OPEC's policy to pump oil to defend its market share.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.5% to \$48.37 a barrel on London's ICE Futures exchange. On the New York Mercantile Exchange, West Texas Intermediate futures were trading down 0.1% at \$46.25 a barrel.







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#### SHELL CANADA GETS GREEN LIGHT TO DRILL FOR OIL OFF NOVA SCOTIA COAST

Shell's timeline to cap a blowout is still between 12 and 13 days

The Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board has authorized a Shell Canada Ltd. drilling plan in the Shelburne Basin that allows the company between 12 and 13 days to contain subsea blowouts, but one environmental group is concerned the capping stack won't be housed here.

The timeframe is shorter than the original 21-day plan, but still falls short of the U.S. requirement of 24 hours for drilling in the waters off Alaska.

Shell Canada would also have to deploy a second capping stack as a contingency plan.

In the environmental assessment for the project, Shell Canada said the capping stack equipment would be brought in from Stavanger, Norway. Shell said it would also deploy a backup stack from Brazil.

Stuart Pinks, the CEO of the Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board, said the original timeline seemed too long.

"We looked at it and said, 'You know, 21 days seems like a long time,'" he said Tuesday.

The Ecology Action Centre is calling the shorter timeline an improvement, but it would like to see the capping technology housed in Atlantic Canada.

"If we want an offshore oil and

gas industry, then we should be willing — or the company should be willing — to pay for the technology in place for any kind of emergency," said policy director Mark Butler.

He says there is no guarantee Shell would be able to get the capping stack to Nova Scotia within the approved timelines.

"The best way to minimize the time is to have that technology here in Atlantic Canada, so it's one to two days, or 24 hours to get that technology out to the site," said Butler.

Pinks said with a limited number of capping stacks available in the world, it isn't feasible to have one close to every drilling site.

The board said in a news release it is confident Shell Canada will take "all reasonable precautions" to protect the environment and work safely while drilling.

Shell Canada's original plan came under fire from critics who felt the 21-day window to contain subsea blowouts was too long.

An online petition by an international environmental group opposing Shell's application to drill off Nova Scotia has collected more than 232,000 signatures.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board says regulations around the world say capping stack gear should be available on site within 10 to 30 days.

Earlier this year, Shell Canada submitted applications for a deepwater drilling program 250 kilometres off the coast of Nova Scotia.

The drilling will run for about 10 months in water more than 2,000 metres deep. In a statement, Shell called the Shelburne Basin an "unexplored geological region."

The first phase of the program involves drilling two exploratory wells: Cheshire and Monterey Jack.

On Tuesday afternoon, Pinks said the board had given Shell Canada the go-ahead to drill the Cheshire well, which means the company could start drilling as soon as Wednesday. Approval for drilling at Monterey Jack will be required at a later date.

The

drill ship required for the exploratory drilling — the Stena IceMAX — arrived in Nova Scotia on Monday and is capable of drilling in water depths of up to 3,000 metres.

Shell says about half of the IceMAX's crew is Canadian, and half of the Canadians are Nova Scotians.

Beginning this year, Shell has a four-year window to drill exploratory wells off the coast.

In 2013, Shell pegged the project's total price tag at \$970 million.



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#### WRITEDOWNS PILE ON AMID CRASH IN RESOURCE VALUES

Canada's natural resources are simply not worth as much as they were just a few years ago.

Teck Resources (TCKb.TO 5.14%) became the latest to announce an asset writedown on Thursday, with the Vancouver-based miner announcing a \$2.2-billion charge along with its third-quarter earnings. Most of the writedown ¬ \$1.5-billion was related to its coal business, which accounts for about 38 percent of Teck's total revenue. Precision Drilling (PD. TO 3.42%) also wrote down the value of its assets by \$74-million when the company announced third-quarter results on Thursday, entirely due to the crash in crude oil prices and the significant halt in oil and gas drilling activity that ensued.

Commodity asset values have not declined anywhere near as much as the value of the commodities roughly US\$88 per tonne, are barely one quarter of the US\$330/tonne level they hit back in 2011 and have declined by 20 percent over the past three months alone. Andrew Hamlin, vice-president and portfolio manager at Aston Hill, told BNN on Thursday morning that writedowns from resource companies are a signal from producers that more suffering is expected in the not-too-distant future.

"What they're trying to tell us is they are trying to get ahead of the pain that is coming along the way," Hamlin said. "[Teck and Precision Drilling] are doing the prudent move; take the pain now and then try and rebuild going forward."

The writedowns announced Thursday are far from the first announced among Canada's major natural resources producers. Producers of heavy bitumen from the oil sands of Alberta have been hit particularly hard. In February of 2015, Husky Energy (HSE.TO 2.59%) took a \$622-million charge on its assets in western Canada and, around the same time, Cenovus Energy recorded a \$497-million to a writedown) related to its Pelican Lake oil sands project. As far back as July 2014, Suncor Energy took a \$1.2-billion impairment related in large part to Total's decision to halt its \$11-billion Joslyn oil sands mine, of which Suncor (SU.TO 2.94%) holds a roughly 37 percent stake.

Cuts to resource valuations arguably run even deeper south of the border, where vast swaths of shale oil and gas fields in the central and southern Ŭnited States have dramatically declined in value over the past few years. Calgary-based Encana, which has significantly expanded its U.S. footprint in recent years through a

variety of acquisitions led by CEO Doug Suttles, took a \$2.1-billion charge in its second-quarter results related specifically to its U.S. asset base, bringing Encana's total U.S. writedowns in 2015 to \$4-billion.

Back in Canada, oil sands giants Suncor, Cenovus (CVE.TO 0.45%), Husky and Imperial report their thirdquarter results next week, at which point we shall see whether the wave of writedowns will continue. Tune into BNN for all the latest details as the great Canadian natural resource valuation crash continues.

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