

2007 IADC Environmental Conference & Exhibition

Drilling industry boosts environmental awareness, pushes knowledge acquisition

MUCH ADO WAS made recently about a report by international scientists suggesting that human activity is causing a warming of the Earth's climate. While that trend can't be reversed overnight, it does highlight an increasingly important challenge for the drilling industry — to continue improving its environmental performance.

"There's definitely a continuing upward trend," said Dr **Ian Hudson**, corporate environmental advisor for **Transocean**. "Environment is becoming increasingly more important and is featuring on the agenda more now compared with 5 or 10 years ago. More environmentally sensitive 'green' products have become available and viable. More companies are adopting environmental management systems, which means more business decisions now include consideration of the environment. Those are definitely positive steps in the right direction."

Another positive step will be taken in April when IADC holds the 2007 IADC Environmental Conference & Exhibition in Amsterdam. Following 2005's IADC Environmental Conference in Stavanger, Norway, this year's event will cover an even wider range of topics, from sustainable drilling to noise abatement practices for drilling in populated areas to why HSE management is good business.

"Awareness is increasing on many levels," said **Ger-Jan Windhorst**, **Noble Drilling** manager HSE&Q Europe. "It's a common perception outside the industry that we're dirty people who don't want to change. That's absolutely not true. This industry has many responsible people who want to change things for the better. Awareness doesn't come overnight. It takes time, and it takes education."

Mr Windhorst will serve as moderator of the panel discussion on 3 April at the conference. He also will make a presentation on 4 April with **Franco Marques**, Noble environmental coordinator, on Noble's initiatives to implement the principle of "continuous improvement" of environmental performance.

Dr Hudson, who was a keynote speaker and session coordinator at the 2005 event, will be the keynote speaker on the first day of this year's conference. He will address the issues of climate change and how the industry can better manage its interaction with the environment.

"I'm promoting the message of responsibility. We can be responsible as an industry, and that means being aware that our operations do have an impact on the environment. But if we are informed about where we are operating and how our operations fit in with the environment, we can drill in an environmentally responsible manner," he said.

Noting that the 2005 conference was very successful, Dr Hudson said he looks forward to the 2007 event and hopes it will help propel the industry towards taking concrete action steps to improve environmental performance.

"The first conference in Stavanger set the scene as far as IADC and drilling contractors getting proactive in this area. We're working hard on increasing awareness," he said. "What I'm hoping to see from the second conference is that we walk away



with a set of initiatives that the industry can agree on and tackle together. It's great to see companies making very specific environmental efforts, but the summation of those efforts in a more coordinated approach would be much more powerful. The IADC conference is a great forum to do that."

Mr Windhorst agreed that the conference is a valuable event for the drilling industry. "It's important that those outside the industry, whether it's governments or NGOs, see that we take environmental performance very seriously," he said. "IADC conferences also help the industry to share knowledge and common practices. We get a mutual understanding of what should be done and what shouldn't be done."

More than two dozen presentations will be made at the conference by drilling contractors, operators and service companies. Representatives from governmental and regulatory agencies also will make presentations, including **Ingrid Aarstad** and **Vidar Kristensen** of the Norwegian Petroleum Safety Authority and **Judy Wilson** of the US Minerals Management Service. **Joe Hurt**, IADC senior director of land and HSE, will discuss the recently developed Environmental Data Guidelines, which aims to help drilling contractors consistently track and internally report environmental performance.

For more information on the conference or to register, go online to www.iadc.org/conferences.htm. ♠