

AAPG 17th International Conference and Exhibition

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Address by
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It's a real pleasure for me as CEO of IFP to take part in the opening session of this AAPG International Conference. Due to the number of participants and the quality of the presentations, I anticipate this conference in Paris will be an historic event.

Hydrocarbon resources in France have never been important. But as we used to say, "En France, on n'a pas de pétrole, mais on a des idées." After decades of continuous efforts built among others on technology, French expertise is now internationally recognized. French oil and gas companies are very active worldwide, some French companies are world leaders of the supply and service industry, and IFP is recognized as an international research and training center.

It's an honor for France to host for the third time the AAPG International Conference. The participation of François Loos, the French Industry Minister, tells us how important is this conference.

First, I would like you to thank warmly all the sponsors. Their participation has contributed to the high quality of this event.

This conference is taking place in the right time, due to the present turmoil of the oil market as well as a growing concern on energy resources. In fact, the world is now facing a huge energy challenge. Technology will contribute to bring solutions, and IFP is prepared to continue to develop new technologies for the oil industry.

Three decades after the first oil shock, we are entering a new paradigm of the oil market. In the 1970s, due to the oil shocks, huge surplus capacities appeared in the upstream as well as in downstream and logistic, contributing to cap oil prices and creating flexibility. It's over now and for the years to come – we consider (the) oil market will be tight with higher prices. This situation is creating a major concern more specifically for the supply of energy to the transport sector, which is relying on oil at 95 percent. At the same time, we need to take into account seriously the major environmental challenge of the energy sector, both local environment and global.

The community of geologists you represent here today is deeply involved on two major technological challenges of the energy sector : extending hydrocarbon resources on one side, reducing CO₂ emissions on the other side. Technology may contribute to solve the concerns linked to the limited resources of hydrocarbons, which become more and more sensitive recently. This can be achieved by exploring new horizons, such as ultra deep offshore or deeply buried reservoirs. Improving oil recovery is also a key priority.

CO₂ capture and underground storage is also emerging as an efficient mean to reduce CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere: the know-how of the oil industry will be very useful to develop this option.

In order to develop those technologies, it will be necessary to increase significantly the R&D spending. This is mandatory to be able to provide to the industry methodologies, softwares, products, equipments and processes it needs. As well, it will be necessary to train qualified people. You are well aware this is a growing concern as a lot of people will retire in the next ten years.

So, the world is facing huge energy challenges – but technology may contribute to offer some solutions.

IFP is willing to contribute to offer those technological responses. We have been working for 60 years to bring technologies to the international oil industry and we will continue to bring our unique expertise. Our approach is combining experience on the field and modeling ; and as geologist, you are well aware how important is it for geoscientists to "go back to the rocks."

As an applied research center, we develop technologies (that) industry may implement directly or through services companies, including some of our subsidiaries created by IFP. We use to work in close cooperation with the oil industry, IOC, independant companies as well as NOC with whom IFP has developed partnership and created research centers within those national companies.

IFP is deeply involved in CO₂ capture and storage. Our expertise is recognised internationally and we are leading many projects in France and in Europe. We are organizing an international conference on this issue here in Paris Sept. 14-15 ; I invite you to attend this conference if you are available.

Last but not least, IFP is also contributing to the training of efficient people for the international oil industry through IFP School for initial training, and IFP Training for continuous education.

So, we are clearly facing huge energy challenges. Technology will bring some solutions, and at IFP we are prepared to continue to play a key role for the oil industry.

I am confident that during these three days together, we will pave the way for innovative technologies.