

Low-cost LNG supplier Qatar to remain in ‘relatively strong competitive position’ : S&P



*** Qatar's revenue stream will be significantly enhanced by North Field expansion, whereby Qatari liquefied natural gas production capacity is expected to increase by 64%**

As a low-cost LNG supplier, Qatar will remain in a “relatively strong competitive position” even after 2030, although demand is likely to peak in the mid-2030s, with increasing use of renewables in the energy market having a gradual impact on demand for hydrocarbons, S&P Global noted in its ratings upgrade.

S&P recently raised its long-term sovereign credit rating on Qatar to ‘AA’ from ‘AA-’, assigned a stable outlook, and affirmed the country’s ‘A-1+’ short-term rating.

In its overview, S&P noted Qatar’s debt interest costs as a share of government revenue have fallen, and therefore it

expects them to remain low because the government is repaying maturing debt.

Additionally, the government's revenue stream will be significantly enhanced by the North Field expansion, whereby Qatari liquefied natural gas production capacity is expected to increase by 64% (by 2027).

"The upgrade reflects structural improvements in the Qatari government's fiscal position. The government's strategy of paying off maturing debt, will sustainably reduce debt-servicing costs to below 5% of general government revenue over 2022-2025," S&P said.

Higher gas production related to the North Field expansion, expected to come onstream from end-2025, should further increase Qatari government revenue.

Qatar remains one of the largest exporters of LNG globally. Between 2025 and 2027, the government plans to increase its LNG production capacity by about 64%, from 77mn tonnes per year to 126mn tpy.

The strategic pivot away from Russian gas, particularly by European economies, suggests there will be a ready market for the additional Qatari gas.

In its forecast, S&P said, "We assume that LNG production levels will be largely flat until 2025, but increase by about 30% over 2026-2027, on the assumption that the full increase in capacity will take some time to be fully utilised."

S&P said it expects "strong" non-hydrocarbon sector growth as Qatar hosts the FIFA World Cup from November 20 to December 18, which will support an economic expansion of about 5% in 2022.

After the tournament, S&P has forecast real GDP growth will average about 2.5% over 2023-2025 as gas production levels remain broadly stable and non-hydrocarbon sector growth normalises around 4%.

The country's strong general government net asset position remains a credit strength and it expects it to increase over the period to 2025, supported by investment returns on Qatar's sovereign wealth fund, Qatar Investment Authority (QIA),

assets, and the government's repayment of maturing external debt.

Averaging about 150% of GDP in 2022-2025, Qatar Government's large liquid assets provide it with a strong buffer to mitigate the economic effects of external or financial shocks.

QatarEnergy announces hydrocarbon discovery in Brazil's Sepia field



QNA/Doha

QatarEnergy Monday announced an oil discovery in the 4-BRSA-1386D-RJS well in Brazil's world class Sepia oil field, which is located in the prolific Santos Basin in water depths of about 2,000 meters off the coast of Rio de Janeiro.

QatarEnergy acquired a working interest in the Sépia Co-

Participated Area in December 2021 during the 2nd Transfer-of-Rights Surplus Bidding Round, which was organized and managed by Brazil's National Agency for Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels (ANP). The Area is operated by Petrobras (with a participating interest of about 52 percent) in partnership with TotalEnergies (19.2 percent), QatarEnergy (14.4 percent) and Petronas Petróleo Brasil Ltda (14.4 percent), with Pre Sal Petróleo S.A. (PPSA) as manager. The Sepia shared reservoir is currently producing about 170,000 barrels of oil per day.

Commenting on this occasion, HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs, the President and CEO of QatarEnergy, Saad bin Sherida Al Kaabi, said: "We are encouraged by this discovery, which comes as a result of strategic cooperation with reputable partners in our effort to unlock more global energy resources as part of our comprehensive growth strategy. On this occasion, I would like to congratulate our partners, and I look forward to more future achievements."

The discovery is significant in that the well penetrated a net oil column, which is one of the thickest ever encountered in Brazil. Partners will continue operations to characterize the conditions of the discovered reservoirs and verify the extent of the discovery by conducting well tests. (QNA)

QatarEnergy Trading to offtake, market 70% of LNG produced by Golden Pass

project in US



Doha

Affiliates of QatarEnergy and ExxonMobil have agreed to independently offtake and market their respective proportionate equity shares of LNG produced by the Golden Pass LNG Export Project located in Sabine Pass, Texas, the US.

Pursuant to the agreement, QatarEnergy Trading, a wholly owned subsidiary of QatarEnergy, will offtake, transport, and trade 70% of the LNG produced by Golden Pass LNG.

The construction of Golden Pass, which has a total production capacity in excess of 18mn tonnes of LNG per year, is well underway with first LNG production expected by the end of 2024.

Commenting on this development, HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs, Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi, also the President and CEO of QatarEnergy said, "The energy market is highly dynamic and undergoing a period of transformation, and LNG will continue to play a key role in meeting global energy demand and ensuring security of supply. This agreement is an important addition to our efforts to meet demand for cleaner energy and to support the economic and environmental requirements for a practical, equitable and realistic energy transition."

Al-Kaabi added: "QatarEnergy is the global leader in LNG, the cleanest of all fossil fuels, and it is only natural for us to increase focus on LNG trading and portfolio optimisation to deliver innovative LNG solutions that meet the needs of our customers across the globe. I am proud of what QatarEnergy Trading has achieved in the very short time since its inception and with this new addition to its portfolio, I am confident that QatarEnergy Trading will accelerate its efforts to deliver on our aspiration of becoming a world leader in LNG trading in the near future."

As a result of this arrangement, Ocean LNG Limited, a joint venture established in 2016 between affiliates of QatarEnergy and ExxonMobil for offtaking and marketing the entire production of Golden Pass LNG, has ceased operations, and will be wound down.

رغبة قطرية في الدخول إلى التحالف للتنقيب عن النفط في البلوكين 4 و 9



عقد رئيس الحكومة نجيب ميقاتي اجتماعاً مع وزير الطاقة والمياه وليد فياض واعضاء هيئة ادارة قطاع البترول التي تضم وسام شباط، وسام الذهبي، غابي دعبول ووليد نصر .

وأعلن الوزير فياض بعد الاجتماع: عقدنا لقاء اليوم مع دولة الرئيس ميقاتي بمعية أعضاء هيئة إدارة البترول، بعد زيارته قمت بها لفخامة رئيس الجمهورية لتهنئته بالإنجاز التاريخي بشأن ترسيم الحدود وترسيخ حق لبنان بال المباشرة منذ الآن، بأعمال الاستكشاف في حقل قانا وسائر البلوكات في مياه البحر عندنا .

وكشف الوزير فياض عن رغبة قطرية في الدخول إلى التحالف للتنقيب عن النفط في البلوكين 4 و9. وقال: "لقد وردت الرغبة القطرية عبر رسالة من معالي وزير النفط القطري سعد الكعبي أعلن فيها نوايا دولة قطر الشقيقة بمشاركة لبنان بالدخول إلى التحالف الذي سينقب في البلوكين 4 و9 لتصبح قطر الشريك الثالث لشركتي " توتال " وأيني " في هذين الحقلين، وهذا أمر مهم جداً، لأننا نعرف قدرة قطر الاستثمارية ورغبتها التي أعلنت عنها عبر زيارات مختلفة لسفيرها للوزارة للاستثمار في النهوض الاقتصادي للبنان في قطاع النفط والغاز ، في التنقيب وانتاج الطاقة .

وقال: لقد أرسلوا إلى الوزارة المدراء العامين للشركة المملوكة من الدولة القطرية، وهي مهتمة بالاستثمار في قطاع الطاقة وانتاج الطاقة في شكل عام. ونحن نشكر دولة قطر على رغبتها في مشاركة لبنان باستثمار موارده والاستثمار في بناء الاقتصاد اللبناني. لقد عهدنا دائماً وقوف قطر إلى جانب الشعب اللبناني .

اضاف: أما الموضوع الثاني فهو ضرورة دعم هيئة إدارة البترول بالكادر البشري لمراقبة هذه المرحلة وادارتها وخصوصاً العلاقة مع الشركاء، اي العلاقة التحالفية وإدارة العقد الذي يسمح بإدارة أعمال الاستخراج والاستكشاف التي ستبدأ قريباً ان شاء الله، ووضع الجدول الزمني المحدد للإنجازات المتوقعة بالنسبة إلى الأمور اللوجستية وأمور الحفر والمنصة التي ستنشأ لإنتاج الغاز والنفط. ومن الضروري أن يكون لدى الهيئة الموارد اللازمة والكادر البشري المناسب لإدارة هذه المرحلة، وكان دولة الرئيس متباوباً في هذا الشأن .

اجتماع تربوي

ورأس الرئيس ميقاتي اجتماعاً اجتماعاً شارك فيه وزير التربية والتعليم العالي القاضي عباس الحلبي، الوزير المفوض في سفارة العراق في لبنان أمين النصراوي، المستشاره الثقافية بان الموسوي، القنصل الأول مهند يحيى، مدير عام وزارة التربية في لبنان الدكتور عماد

الاشقر، ومدير عام التعليم العالي الدكتور مازن الخطيب، ورئيسة دائرة المعايير والامتحانات الرسمية أمل شعبان. وتم خلال الاجتماع بحث شؤون الطلبة العراقيين في لبنان.

الوزير الحلبي

بعد الاجتماع قال وزير التربية: عرضنا الموضوع المتعلق بالمعايير الذي تقدم به الطلاب العراقيون الذين يتبعون دراستهم في بعض الجامعات في لبنان، والمشاكل التي انعكست سلباً على سير المعاملات، وتم الاتفاق على وضع آليات محددة تسهل على هؤلاء الطلاب من جهة مراعاة القوانين العراقية المطبقة، وكذلك القوانين اللبنانية المطبقة على موضوع المصادقات والمعايير، واتفقنا على متابعة البحث في اجتماعات متتالية كل أسبوعين مرة بيننا وبين فريق السفارة لوضع حد لاي إشكالات قد تصيب أوضاع هؤلاء الطلاب في لبنان. نحن نعمل على تسهيل الموضوع مع مراعاة القوانين المطبقة، وعلى الجامعات المعنية التي سببت هذه المشكلة ان تساعدنا على ضبط الأعداد التي تواجدت إليها من الطلاب العراقيين، لأن هناك أخطاء ارتكبها بعض هذه الجامعات كما ان هناك أخطاء ارتكبها بعض الطلاب، ولا نريد ان يتم دفع الثمن من قبل وزارة التربية التي تقوم بما عليها في تسهيل مهمة هؤلاء الطلاب. هذا الاتفاق سيسري في الأيام القليلة المقبلة ونأمل ان نتوصل الى حل هذه الإشكالات.

النصراوي

بدوره قال الوزير المفوض في سفارة العراق في لبنان أمين النصراوي بعد الاجتماع: "التقينا دوله رئيس الوزراء ميقاتي بحضور وزير التربية اللبناني والوفد الفني المرافق له، تحدثنا في كثير من الأمور التي تخص الطلبة العراقيين في لبنان، ونقلنا له تحيات دوله رئيس الوزراء مصطفى الكاظمي، وتحفيتها بشأن ضرورة تسهيل أمور الطلبة الدارسين في لبنان. تطرقنا الى بعض المواضيع الفنية التي تواجه الأخوان الطلبة في بيروت، وتم الاتفاق على وضع آلية جديدة، وعلى تحديد اجتماعات دورية بين السفارة والملحقية الثقافية في بيروت ووزارة التربية لتذليل أي عقبة او مشكلة تواجه الطلبة العراقيين في لبنان.

أضاف: تداولنا مع الرئيس ميقاتي في بعض القضايا المتعلقة بالساحة اللبنانية واستمعنا الى رأيه في الكثير من المواضيع التي تدور حالياً، وكانت فرصة للإضاءة على العلاقة المميزة بين العراق ولبنان.

وإجتمع رئيس الحكومة مع وزير الدفاع الوطني موريس سليم، ثم مع وزير السياحة وليد نصار .

Multi-billion dollar North Field development enters key phase



Pratap John The multi-billion dollar North Field development, the largest ever LNG project in the world, has reached a crucial phase with QatarEnergy beginning to announce partners for NFS project that will further increase Qatar's liquefied natural gas production capacity from 110mn tonnes per year to 126 mtpy by 2026 or 2027.

The North Field South (NFS) has many unique features, the foremost of which is its advanced environmental characteristics. This includes significant carbon capture and sequestration technologies and capacity.

NFS comprises two mega LNG trains with a combined capacity of 16mn tonnes per year.

QatarEnergy's first partner in the NFS project is TotalEnergies, which will have an effective net participating

interest of 9.375% out of a total 25% interest available for international partners.

QatarEnergy will hold a 75% stake in the NFS project, HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi said at a media event in Doha recently.

“The other partners in this project will be announced in due course,” HE al-Kaabi said.

The minister noted: “We are committing big investments to lower the carbon intensity of our energy products, which constitute a key pillar of QatarEnergy’s sustainability and energy transition strategy.”

QatarEnergy targets more than 11 mtpy of carbon capture and storage (CCS) and the production of 5GW of solar power by 2035, HE al-Kaabi said, highlighting Qatar’s commitment to CCS and renewable energy production.

“QatarEnergy is moving forward to help meet the growing global demand for cleaner energy, of which LNG is the backbone for a serious and realistic energy transition,” he said.

Recently, QatarEnergy announced the Ammonia-7 Project, the industry’s first world-scale and largest blue ammonia project with a capacity of 1.2 mtpy.”

Blue ammonia is produced when the carbon dioxide generated during conventional ammonia production is captured and stored. It can be transported using conventional ships and then be used in power stations to produce low-carbon electricity.

The new plant, which is estimated to cost \$1.156bn, will be located in the Mesaieed Industrial City (MIC) and will be operated by Qafco as part of its integrated facilities.

In August, QatarEnergy’s affiliates, QatarEnergy Renewable Solutions (QRS) and Qatar Fertiliser Company (Qafco) signed the agreements for the construction of the Ammonia-7 project, the industry’s first world-scale as well as the largest blue ammonia train, which is expected to come into operation by the first quarter of 2026.

The North Field Expansion Project, comprising NFS and the North Field East (NFE) expansion projects, is the industry’s largest ever LNG project.

It will start production in 2026 and will add more than 48 mtpy to the world’s LNG supplies. Five partnership agreements have been signed in June and July this year covering the NFE project, which comprises four mega LNG trains with a combined

capacity of 32 mtpy.

"Most project contracts have been awarded, while the onshore EPC contract is expected to be awarded in early 2023," HE al-Kaabi noted.

North Field expansion to see world's 'most responsibly produced LNG,' says Shell CEO



The North Field expansion that will include carbon capture and storage is expected to see the "most responsibly produced LNG" in the world, noted Shell CEO Ben van Beurden.

Speaking in Doha Tuesday, van Beurden said, "This expansion is good news for Qatar... for the world... and for Shell.

"Because this responsibly produced gas is consistent with Qatar's energy sustainability strategy, and also for Shell's strategy to become a net zero emission energy business by 2050."

He said "natural gas plays a role an important role in world wide transition to net zero emissions energy system."

"If we switch from coal to gas for production of iron or steel, that can result in a reduction of CO2 equivalent, saving 38%. And that is very significant."

van Beurden said, "I thank His Highness for taking the decision to end the moratorium of the development of NF in 2017. It was a crucial step forward towards realising Qatar's National Vision for 2030."

"I am honoured that Shell has been selected by QatarEnergy as a partner in the NFE project. Through its pioneering integration with carbon capture and storage, this landmark project will help provide LNG the world urgently needs at a lower carbon footprint. This agreement deepens our strategic partnership with QatarEnergy which includes multiple international partnerships such as the world-class Pearl GTL asset."

"We are committed to maximise the value of the LNG expansion for the State of Qatar and continue to be a trusted, reliable and long-term partner in Qatar's continued progress," van Beurden noted.

QatarEnergy Tuesday announced the selection of Shell as partner in the North Field East (NFE) expansion project, the single largest project in the history of the LNG industry.

The partnership agreement was signed at a ceremony in QatarEnergy's headquarters by HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad Sherida al-Kaabi, also the President and CEO of QatarEnergy, and Ben van Beurden, in the presence of senior executives from both companies.

Pursuant to the agreement, QatarEnergy and Shell will become partners in a new joint venture company (JV), in which QatarEnergy will hold a 75% interest while Shell will hold the remaining 25% interest.

In turn, the JV will own 25% of the entire NFE project, which includes 4 mega LNG trains with a combined nameplate LNG capacity of 32mn tonnes per year.

Other buyers could join North Field expansion 'if they add value': Al-Kaabi

HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi said other buyers could join the \$29bn North Field expansion "if they add value".

Speaking to reporters in Doha Tuesday al-Kaabi, also the President and CEO of QatarEnergy said, "We had been in discussions with several buyers – or value added partners as well call it, around the world who have shown interest... and very eager interest I would say.

"It depends on the value they add...if they add value they would come in. We are proceeding with the project, regardless. There could be some, if we find good opportunities and a win-win situation. We really are not in a rush to do that...there is no big need to do that."

On the "value added partners", the minister noted, "Basically, they need to be a buyer of LNG... so they need to demonstrate that they can give us a price that is above the market price. This is because they will be coming into the best project that exists in the LNG business from a cost perspective and from a return perspective (in the world) and the largest ever built."

Al-Kaabi said QatarEnergy has very capable marketing organisations that are working on marketing these volumes – and the likes of Shell only add to additional marketing capability.

The minister said QatarEnergy had finalised the selection of IOCs in the North Field East (NFE) Expansion project following its selection of Shell as a partner.

QatarEnergy and Shell will become partners in a new joint

venture company (JV), in which QatarEnergy will hold a 75% interest while Shell will hold the remaining 25% interest. This agreement is the fifth and last in a series of partnership announcements in the multi-billion dollar NFE project, which will raise Qatar's LNG export capacity from the current 77mn tonnes per year (mtpy) to 110 mtpy. The North Field East (NFE) expansion project is the single largest project in the history of the global LNG industry.

QatarEnergy joins 'Aiming for Zero' industry initiative aiming to eliminate methane footprint by 2030



فطّر للطاقة

QatarEnergy, the country's hydrocarbon bellwether, has joined the 'Aiming for Zero Methane Emissions' Initiative', an

industry-led move that aims to reach near zero methane emissions from operated oil and gas assets by 2030.

QatarEnergy is the first company to join the initiative outside its 12 existing signatories: Aramco, BP, Chevron, CNPC, Eni, Equinor, ExxonMobil, Occidental, Petrobras, Repsol, Shell and TotalEnergies.

The initiative adopts an all-in approach that treats methane emissions as seriously as the industry treats safety. It supports the implementation of sound regulations to tackle methane emissions and encourages governments to include methane emissions reduction targets as part of their climate strategies.

“By being the first company to join the Aiming for Zero Methane Emissions Initiative outside its 12 existing signatories, we are reaffirming Qatar’s priorities and commitments with regards to the climate change agenda, and its unwavering support to the global effort to reducing emissions, including methane,” HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs as well as the President and Chief Executive of QatarEnergy, Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi said.

This also falls in line with QatarEnergy’s recently announced sustainability strategy and follows landmark steps that include signing the guiding principles on reducing methane emissions across the natural gas value chain and endorsing the Global Methane Pledge, he added.

On this occasion, Bob Dudley, chair of the OGCI (Oil and Gas Climate Initiative), said “We are proud to welcome QatarEnergy, one of the world’s largest integrated energy providers, to the Aiming for Zero Methane Emissions Initiative.”

Recognising that eliminating methane emissions from the oil and gas industry represents one of the best short-term ways of addressing climate change, he encouraged others to join this ambitious effort to eliminate the oil and gas industry’s methane footprint by 2030.

The ‘Aiming for Zero Methane Emissions Initiative’ was launched in March 2022 by the OGCI member chief executives.

All energy companies involved in the exploration, extraction and/or production of oil or natural gas can join as signatories at no financial cost.

Other organisations striving to have a positive influence on reducing methane emissions from the oil and gas industry can join as supporters.

Companies joining the Initiative agree to do what it takes to reach near zero methane emissions in their operations, reporting transparently, adopting better monitoring and measurement technologies and supporting the implementation of sound regulations.

Crunch UN talks face pressure to land global nature pact in 2022 By Nita Bhalla and Michael Taylor



Mara Siana Conservancy, /Kenya/Kuala Lumpur

A cross the endless savannah dotted with flat-topped acacia trees, Mara Siana Conservancy in western Kenya teems with elephants, giraffes, zebra and impala, alongside the Maasai people who inhabit the area with their vast herds of livestock.

But this wasn't always the case.

The 25,000-acre (100sq km) landscape adjoining the famed Maasai Mara National Reserve had become devoid of wildlife until the Maasai got together in 2016 to create a community-run wildlife area to protect local biodiversity and generate tourism income.

"When the conservancy started, there was only one zebra and one topi (antelope) in this valley," said Evans Sitati, manager of the Mara Siana Conservancy, standing by his open-topped jeep as a herd of buffalo lazily munched on lush grassland nearby.

"The Maasai's livestock had taken over the land and there was over-grazing and ... no space for the wildlife. But within a month of creating the conservancy, the wildlife started coming back."

On Tuesday, crunch UN talks began a few hours' drive away from

Mara Siana conservancy, in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, aimed at tackling this same problem: halting and reversing the devastating loss of biodiversity across the planet.

Improving conservation and management of natural areas, such as parks, oceans, forests and wetlands, is seen as vital to safeguarding the ecosystems and wildlife on which people depend and limiting global warming to internationally agreed goals.

But forests are still being cut down worldwide – often to produce commodities like palm oil, soybean and beef – destroying biodiversity and undermining climate action, as trees absorb about a third of planet-warming emissions produced worldwide.

To tackle such losses, about 195 countries are set to finalise an accord to stem human damage to plants, animals and ecosystems – similar to the Paris climate agreement – at a UN summit, known as COP15.

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity announced on Tuesday that the final part of the summit, led by host nation China, is now scheduled to take place in Canada from December 5-17.

The talks have been postponed several times due to Covid-19, with China finally agreeing that the second part of the summit should be held in Montreal, as it grapples with the pandemic.

The first in-person negotiations in two years held in Geneva in March left many environmentalists frustrated by slow progress, with governments realising an extra session in Kenya was needed this week to land a deal by the end of the year.

“The science is very clear. Biodiversity is in crisis. One million species are at risk of extinction in the next few decades,” said Guido Broekhoven, head of policy at WWF International, which is supporting the Mara Siana conservancy.

“But it’s not just about the biodiversity. The aim is to find ways such as the conservancy project that combines conservation with development objectives to benefit both people and nature.”

Finance provided by rich countries to help developing nations do their part under the expected new nature deal is a thorny

issue, observers said ahead of the Nairobi talks which run from June 21-26.

How to involve and protect the rights of indigenous groups and communities living in and around natural areas – who play a vital role in conservation – is also a live topic, they said. “Finance remains the largest challenge in the negotiations,” said Brian O’Donnell, director of the US-based Campaign for Nature. “Without adequate finance, policies and programs aimed at conserving nature will not be successful.”

Susan Lieberman, vice president of international policy at the Wildlife Conservation Society, said Nairobi could reach agreement on a widely supported pledge seen as central to the new global deal – to protect at least 30% of the planet’s land and oceans by 2030.

A coalition of more than 80 countries has already backed the 30×30 goal, which is part of the draft treaty, although many biodiversity-rich nations in Southeast Asia are yet to sign up.

“We are in the midst of a global conservation crisis, with increasing species extinctions and increasing risk of ecosystem collapse,” said Lieberman.

“The adoption of a strong framework of government commitments on biodiversity is critical – it cannot wait.”

Rights groups say a global pact will only succeed on the ground if it brings onboard indigenous peoples like the Maasai.

They comprise less than 5% of the world’s population but protect 80% of the Earth’s biodiversity in forests, deserts, grasslands and marine environments, where they have lived for centuries, according to WWF.

Yet there is very little recognition of, or support for, their efforts in ensuring a resilient and healthy planet, especially in Africa.

Kenya’s community-run protected wildlife areas, known as conservancies, have often been lauded as a gold standard in benefiting both people and nature.

Maasai landowners lease part of their land for safari camps

and lodges, and as shareholders, local communities earn tourist dollars from camp stays, game drives, village tours and handicrafts.

The funds generated are also used to improve access to water, healthcare and education for communities, and to help them set up small businesses, while maintaining their traditional herding way of life.

There are 15 conservancies around the Mara, collectively benefiting more than 100,000 people through land lease payments and salaried jobs including rangers, tour guides, housekeepers and drivers.

But even this model faces challenges.

Fidelis Mpoe, a Maasai ranger at Mara Siana Conservancy whose father is one of its 1,500 shareholders, said climate change was taking a toll, with increasing dry spells forcing locals to bring their cattle into the conservancy to graze.

"This leads to more human-animal conflict, especially with the elephants trampling over children who are herding. Then the community wants to take revenge on the animal and we have to try and make them understand," he added.

In neighbouring Tanzania, violence has erupted between Maasai pastoralists and security forces over government plans to cordon off their land for wildlife protection.

Earlier this month, one officer was killed and several protesters were injured during demonstrations by the Maasai, who accuse the authorities of trying to force them off their land to make way for safaris and hunting expeditions.

The government has rejected these accusations, saying it wants to protect the area from human activity.

"Fortress conservation efforts that result in the forcible dispossession of people are no solution to the biodiversity crisis," said Basma Eid, campaign co-ordinator at the International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, an alliance of over 280 organisations representing indigenous groups.

"In Nairobi, states must commit to adopting a human rights approach overall, in cross-cutting ways across key targets,"

she said in a statement. – Thomson Reuters Foundation

FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 infrastructure is ready: al-Thawadi



Hassan al-Thawadi, Secretary-General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC), said the infrastructure for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 was ready. Speaking at the Qatar Economic Forum, Powered by Bloomberg, Wednesday, al-Thawadi added that work is underway to implement the rest of the projects related to some roads that witnessed delays in implementation as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and global economic fluctuations.

The SC Secretary-General expressed his confidence that the rest of the projects related to the World Cup will be completed on time. He pointed out that efforts are being made

to respond to various housing requests during the tournament's activities at acceptable prices, especially considering that FIFA received 27mn requests for World Cup tickets with 1.2 million tickets sold. The next opportunity to purchase World Cup tickets will be on a first-come, first-served basis, but the date has not been announced yet. World Cup qualification matches have now concluded and all 32 available slots for the tournament have been secured.

Al-Thawadi admitted it was hard to stop businesses taking advantage by raising prices and said he was working to limit 'price-gouging' as costs soar for the Qatari capital's accommodation.

"I think about 1.2 million tickets have already been purchased," al-Thawadi said. "So people are actually buying and people are excited to come there. There's no doubt about that."

There will be 130,000 rooms in hotels, apartments, cruise ships and desert camps, where there will be 1,000 tents. But al-Thawadi admitted it was "tricky" reining in accommodation prices, which are soaring in line with demand. "(We want to) avoid price-gouging," he said. "Obviously market forces always mean that as long as there's a lot of demand, prices skyrocket. We're trying to create an environment where the business community benefits but at the same time, it is affordable and accessible for the fans as well."

"In terms of availability, we've tried to ensure that we provide different offerings on different categories. So from the affordable, which range from \$80 to \$100 a night all the way to the pricier ones in terms of five-star hotels," al-Thawadi said.

The SC secretary-general stated that a number of hotels will be operational before the start of World Cup which will contribute to diversifying the offer to Qatar's guests. He pointed out that the tournament will represent an opportunity for fans to travel to Qatar and the countries of the region,

and to learn about different Arab cultures.

Al-Thawadi highlighted that the importance of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 lies in bringing people from different parts of the world together as a major and distinguished global event, and an occasion to celebrate football and encourage national teams, stressing that this session of the tournament will allow everyone to celebrate and learn about the depth of Qatari culture in the context of respecting the customs of the country.

Al-Thawadi stressed the gains made for the benefit of workers in Qatar and the approved laws that support workers' rights, which made Qatar a pioneer in this field, contrary to what some promote. He pointed out Qatar allocated \$28bn billion to provide jobs for workers during the World Cup.

"We've set benchmarks in the region by dismantling the kafala system and implementing non-discriminatory minimum wages. I'm very proud to say the SC's project on reimbursement of recruitment fees has seen businesses voluntarily joining in and making a commitment of about \$28 million, out of which, \$22 million have been repaid to workers. This is not an initiative that'll end when the spotlight goes away, this is something we're committed to, and we'll continue doing," he said.