



MIDDLE EAST TECHNOLOGY FORUM
FOR REFINING & PETROCHEMICALS

6–8 May 2025 | Dubai, UAE

POST EVENT REPORT

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Introduction

To remain competitive, refiners and petrochemical producers in the Middle East must enhance efficiency through digitalisation, optimise feedstock use, expand into sustainable products, and invest in decarbonisation. By integrating biofuels, green hydrogen, and circular economy practices, they can future proof their operations while maintaining global leadership.

ME-TECH 2025 - 15th Middle East Technology Forum for Refining and Petrochemicals, the premier technical event for the refining and petrochemical industries in the Middle East, once again addressed the challenges and opportunities facing the downstream sector: from core refining technologies, and petrochemical integration, to energy efficiency optimisation, catalysts innovation, coprocessing of alternative feeds, and technologies and solutions accelerating the energy transition.



And, new this year, there was an elevated focus on **AI & Digitalisation** for predictive maintenance and process optimisation, energy efficiency and sustainability, supply chain resilience, workforce safety, and enhanced demand forecasting.



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Participating Companies



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Media Partners



Key Speakers



**Khalid Khalfan
Al Asmi**
Chief Executive
Officer
OQBI



**Eisa M.
Al-Suwaigh**
Manager -
Global Optimizer
ARAMCO



**Mohammed
Al Hazmi**
Director -
Technology and
Innovation
SABIC



Stuart Turl
Vice President,
Consulting &
Middle East
WOOD



Hatem Belfadhel
Global Technology
Leader Oil To
Chemicals (OTC)
SABIC



**Ahmed
Al Shandudi**
Head of Strategy
and Sustainability
OQ



Mikael Berthod
Head of JV Management
Refining & Business
Development
**OMV REFINING &
MARKETING**



Zaki Al Madhari
Lead Process
Engineer
SATORP



Nadeen Awwad
Energy
Management
Engineer
ADNOC REFINING



Norm Gilsdorf
Chief Executive
Officer
PLANT.DIGITAL



Eamonn Collins
Vice President,
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Fabien Lundy
Vice President -
Commercial (EMEA)
AXENS



David McNamara
Senior Business
Development Manager
**EXXONMOBIL
CATALYST &
LICENSING**



**Richard
Charlesworth**
Executive Director
**S&P GLOBAL
COMMODITY
INSIGHTS**



Goutam Biswas
Technology Director
**CHEVRON LUMMUS
GLOBAL (CLG)**



Anton Tvelenev
Director
KBR



Vipin Goel
Senior Sales
Director
W. R. GRACE & CO.



Yasser Mahmoud
Principal Sales Manager
**SHELL CATALYSTS &
TECHNOLOGIES**



Hernando Salgado
Technical Service
Manager
BASF



Song Xinrui
Licensing
Contractual
Support Manager
ENI



Ronan Tregouet
Vice President for
Heavy Industries
**SCHNEIDER
ELECTRIC**

ME-TECH In Numbers

3

Days

80+

Companies

30+

Countries

40+

Speakers and
panellists

200+

Registered
Delegates

10+

Hours of
Networking

21

Sponsors &
Exhibitors

200+

Pre-Arranges
1-to-1 Meetings

10+

Hours of
Content



Testimonials



The information about the future of petrochemicals and refining, the importance of integration, as well as the significance of digitalization and CO2 reduction, was extremely valuable.

NHT CCR Process Lead Engineer, [SOCAR TÜRKİYE](#)

Attending ME-TECH 2025 in Dubai has been an inspiring and truly enriching experience. The event brought together brilliant minds, cutting-edge innovations, and forward-thinking technologies that are shaping the future of the industry. I'm leaving with value.

Process Engineer Supervisor, [SATORP](#)

A great edition with great interaction and networking opportunities.

Head of JV Management Refining & Business Development, [OMV REFINING & MARKETING](#)

Good position, professional audience, very specific topic presentation, everybody is doing good job!

Licensing Contractual Support Manager, ENI

As a refinery engineer, ME-TECH 2025 delivered exactly what I needed. The interactive panel on digital twins for refinery operations gave me actionable strategies to improve yield monitoring at my facility. The networking app connected me with vendors and delegates.

Lead Process Engineer, SATORP

Great event as always - we are mainly here for networking which we always manage to fulfill.

**Regional Head - EMEA+India ,
ZEOLYST INTERNATIONAL**

Great place to network with people and exchange experience

Principal Solutions Consultant, ASPENTECH

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Video Highlights



VIEW IT ON YOUTUBE

[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/ZEUEE2DQM1Q?FEATURE=SHARED](https://youtu.be/zeuee2dqm1q?feature=shared)



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Pre-Conference Seminar

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The pre-conference seminar - **Powering Ahead: Middle East's Role in a Sustainable Energy Future** - was hosted by **Wood**, a leader in the industry, and one of EPC's premium partners, with experts from its regional and international teams showcasing how, **"The Middle East's downstream industry is transforming, driven by the need to adapt to changing global energy demands and environmental regulations"**, with a focus on how the region can maintain its leadership in the global energy mix and develop cutting-edge technologies while ensuring a sustainable and resilient future.



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Conference Highlights



Day One of the Conference opened with the KEYNOTE MARKET OVERVIEW, **“The Outlook for Oil, Refining and Petrochemicals: A Tour of the new Eras”**, presented by **Richard Charlesworth, Executive Director, S&P Global Commodity Insights**, which offered insights on how global events and trends will impact future oil prices, highlighted what the future of refining is - now the “platinum age” of margins is over, and concluded with an assessment of when margins in basic chemicals might recover.

This was followed by a new Special Feature, the KEYNOTE FIRESIDE CHAT, **Operational Efficiency and Sustainability Through Digitalisation**, which saw **Juan Carlos Gonzalez Bonilla, Partner, EY**, sit down with **Norm Gilsdorf, CEO, Plant.Digital**, to explore how advanced digital solutions can streamline plant operations for optimal efficiency, delivering improved productivity, profitability, safety, and sustainability.



KEYNOTE FIRESIDE CHAT

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Norm Gilsdorf
Chief Executive Officer
PLANT.DIGITAL



Juan Carlos Gonzalez Bonilla
Partner
EY

Digitalisation Investment

- Despite decades of investment, many digitalisation programs struggle with low ROI and poor adoption.
- Barriers include complexity, lack of integration, and slow implementation.

ROI Challenges

- Digital solutions in industry are often cumbersome and difficult to implement compared to the seamless, intuitive digital experiences in consumer life.
- Successful ROI depends on both ease of implementation and value realisation.

Adoption and Integration

- Adoption hinges on change management, training, and aligning technology with business processes.
- A critical mistake is implementing new digital tools without removing outdated processes, leading to redundancy and confusion.

Strategic Focus

- Avoid large, heavy transformation programs; instead, pursue small, focused changes within manageable planning cycles.
- Incremental improvements can deliver quick wins and build momentum for broader change.

Digital Solutions That Work

Examples include:

1. Digital logbooks—improve shift handovers and reduce errors.
 2. AI-driven predictive maintenance—improve equipment reliability and reduce downtime.
- Success is contingent on fully embedding these tools into daily workflows.

Sustainability and Decarbonisation

- Technology is essential for achieving sustainability goals but must be cost-effective and scalable.
- AI and digital tools are seen as critical enablers for improving margins while pursuing net-zero objectives.

Future Outlook and Organisational Fit

- The workforce is becoming more digitally savvy; organisations must evolve to leverage new talent rather than suppress it.
- Successful digitalisation requires a new execution model—not just digitising old methods but rethinking how projects are run.

In conclusion, to drive operational efficiency and sustainability, organisations must rethink how they approach digitalisation—focusing on simplicity, business alignment, quick wins, and scalability. The transition must be rooted in organisational change, not just technology upgrades.



Next up was the much-anticipated KEYNOTE PANEL, **“Remaining Profitable in a Rapidly Evolving Landscape”**, which was expertly moderated by **Richard Charlesworth**, Executive Director, **S&P Global Commodity Insights**, and joining him on the panel, we were delighted to have such established subject matter experts as: **Mohammed H. AL-Hazmi**, Director, Technology & Innovation, **SABIC**, **Mikael Berthod**, Head of JV Management Refining & Business Development, **OMV Refining & Marketing**, **Stuart Turl**, Vice President, Consulting & Middle East, **Wood**, and **Fabien Lundy**, Commercial Vice President - Europe, Middle East & Africa Region, **Axens**. The panel discussed the viable options available to regional producers with refinery margins under increasing pressure, especially as the world transitions away from transportation fuels.

KEYNOTE PANEL

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Pivot to Petrochemicals

- The integration of refining and petrochemicals is necessary to remain competitive, especially amid declining margins in traditional fuels.
- Global competitiveness requires complexity and flexibility: only diversified and complex assets can survive long-term.
- Petrochemicals hold greater value over traditional fuels, with steady demand growth of 3–4% per year.



Regional & Global Market Conditions

- Middle East refiners face higher pressure than Europe due to more expensive regional crudes and newer, more complex facilities.
- Europe's margin pressure is better managed through operational efficiency and regulatory structures (ETS and product premiums).

Decarbonisation & Climate Mitigation

- Scope 1 & 2 prioritised: Due to high costs, producers are tackling direct and energy-related emissions first.
- Scope 3 is on the radar, with long-term strategic implications for financing and access to capital.
- Technology solutions: advancements in catalysts, electrical heating, plastic recycling, and flexible revamps were highlighted.
- Investment barriers: Decarbonisation projects often lack commercial viability without carbon pricing or premiums—especially outside of Europe.

Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)

- SAF demand is rising due to regulations (e.g., ReFuel EU, CORSIA).
- Production costs remain high, and profitability hinges on product premiums and policy support.
- Scale-up needed: Current SAF is mostly lipid-based; advanced routes like synthetic SAF are still in development.

Challenges for European Refiners

- Integrating petrochemicals with older, less profitable refineries is not always enough.
- A complete business model rethink is needed, focusing on product diversification, CapEx optimisation, and decarbonisation.



Digitalisation & Flexibility

- AI and machine learning were emphasised for real-time optimisation and market responsiveness.
- A resilient product mix and digital agility are critical to profitability.

Government Integration & Strategic Planning

- Middle East producers are pursuing vertical and international integration to hedge risks and diversify income.
- The value of shared infrastructure and industrial clusters was stressed to reduce costs of decarbonisation initiatives.

Session Two, **AI & Digitalisation: Reducing Costs and Enhancing Energy Efficiency and Sustainability**, moderated by **Eamonn Collins**, Vice President, Decarbonisation, **Wood**, got underway with a presentation from **Norm Gilsdorf**, CEO, **Plant.Digital**, on **“How to make Digital Projects achieve their ROI”**, which looked at what needs to be done - besides a "technology-only" focus - to get more value out of Digital Solutions for downstream refineries and petrochemical customers, examined what a holistic approach for a successful and sustainable organisational, operational, and OT architectural model might look like, asked how Digital solutions, which will soon be layered with AI, lead to significant value creation, and concluded with the technologies that will drive the most acceptance and ROI.

Next was **Jitendra Chellani**, Senior Staff Consultant, **KBC (A Yokogawa Company)**, with his presentation, **“Refinery-wide Process Digital Twin”**, which discussed the strategic approach to defining and deploying a Process Digital Twin, offered an understanding of how to improve the profitability of the overall refinery margin with a Process Digital Twin, and concluded with a client case study.



The final presentation in this session, **“Hybrid Models! A game changer to Optimise Process Assets”**, came from **Emad Gebesy**, Principal Solutions Consultant, **AspenTech**, and it looked at harnessing AI and Machine Learning for Process Optimisation, discussed integrating First Principles with AI for Enhanced Modelling, and democratising Advanced Technologies for Operational Excellence, and concluded with learnings from Success Stories to Achieve Operational Excellence.



These presentations set the scene perfectly for the second KEYNOTE PANEL, **“AI & Digitalisation - Shaping Smart Refining & Petrochemicals Production”**. Adeptly moderated by **Ankur Bansal**, Partner, **EY - Parthenon MENA**, the panel explored how AI and digital solutions are shaping smart operations - Transitioning from traditional business models to digital-driven processes to meet an organisation's overall goals. Ankur was joined by a stellar line-up of thought leaders, which included: **Ahmed Al Shandudi**, Head of Strategy & Sustainability, **OQ**, **Eisa M. Al-Suwaigh**, Manager - Global Optimizer, **Aramco**, **Saif Sheikh**, Senior Director - Solution Consulting, **AspenTech**, **Khalil Sharif**, Digital Transformation Department Head, **Plant.Digital**, and **Ronan Tregouet**, VP for Heavy Industries, **Schneider Electric**.



AI & DIGITALISATION PANEL

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Overview

- AI is foundational, not optional, for the refining and petrochemical sectors.
- Successful AI deployment requires balancing cutting-edge technology with human domain expertise and operational context.
- Use-case-driven implementation is critical; AI should solve targeted business problems, not be implemented for its own sake.
- Cross-functional collaboration—involving IT, OT, engineers, data scientists, and management—is essential.

Successful AI Applications

- Predictive maintenance: 10–20% reduction in maintenance costs.
- Energy management, inventory optimisation, and market analysis.
- Design, operate, and maintain integration through hybrid AI and first-principles models.
- AI-driven supply chain planning and digital twins for process and asset optimisation.

Challenges Identified

- Data quality & availability: Clean, structured, and relevant data is foundational for effective AI.
- Legacy infrastructure: Many refineries operate on outdated systems (from the 60s to 2020), creating integration hurdles.
- People & skills:
 1. Misalignment between data science and domain expertise.
 2. Talent gaps in AI and digital transformation leadership.
- Governance & cybersecurity: Regulatory compliance, especially around data localisation, is increasingly vital.
- Cultural mindset shift: Resistance to AI can be overcome with change management and “quick win” success stories.



Risks Highlighted

- Ethical misuse and lack of governance.
- Pilot fatigue: Projects that never scale due to poor scope or unclear ROI.
- Underutilised solutions due to weak adoption or poor feedback loops.
- Opaque decision-making by AI models without human interpretability.

Collaboration Imperative

- Strong call for operator-supplier-academia-regulator partnerships.
- Emphasis on open systems, not vendor lock-in.
- Importance of sharing best practices and co-developing solutions across companies.

ROI & Measurement

ROI should be measured through clear KPIs - for example:

- Efficiency gains
- Emissions reductions
- Uptime and reliability improvements
- Tangible ROI examples include energy intensity reductions, forecasting accuracy, and cost avoidance.
- AI success must be sustainable, not project-based, supported by continuous feedback and retraining.

Wishlist for the Next 12 Months

- Accelerate real implementation over discussion.
- Build trust in data quality and model transparency.
- Adopt hybrid models combining physics-based and AI approaches.
- Start small, prove value, then scale.
- Develop regional AI leadership and digital ecosystems.
- Focus on long-term programmatic readiness, not short-term AI pilots.



After a highly engaging networking lunch, sponsored by **IPCO**, Session Three, Asset Optimisation & Emissions Reduction - Part I, began. Moderated by the extremely knowledgeable **Fadi Mhaini**, Vice President & General Manager, MENA, **Lummus Technology**, **Stuart Turl**, Vice President, Consulting & Middle East, **Wood**, got the session underway with his presentation, **“Large-scale Decarbonisation of Refining Assets”**, which examined current challenges and opportunities, highlighted recent projects and success factors, and concluded with key strategies and actionable measures to position the Middle East as a global leader in sustainable energy practices.

Next was **Dinesh Kumar Khosla**, Global Market Manager - Hydrocracking & Heavy Ends, **Axens**, with his presentation, **“Hydrocracking Technologies: Axens innovative paths for carbon footprint reduction from equipment to catalyst solutions”**, which provided insights on multiple innovative pathways available to support decarbonisation of a Hydrocracking unit, including advanced catalytic solutions enabling lower energy requirements in the unit, catalyst management solutions involving regeneration & re-use of the catalysts to minimise costs and the carbon footprint, and finally innovative equipment solutions for minimising the carbon footprint and operating cost.

This was followed by **David Mc Namara**, Senior Business Development Manager, **ExxonMobil Catalysts and Licensing**, with his presentation, **“Boosting Refinery Profitability with Galexia Celestia™ and MIDW™ drop-in Catalyst Technology Solutions”**, which highlighted how the Galexia™ platform of high-performance catalysts helps operators to maximize profitability both inside and outside the battery limits, shared an example in which Celestia™, a step-out bulk metal hydrotreating catalyst developed by ExxonMobil and Ketjen, and ExxonMobil’s advantaged MIDW™ isomerization dewaxing catalyst have been deployed in a VGO hydrocracker, and concluded with a case study demonstrating Celestia™ catalyst’s exceptional activity, which enables improved yields and product quality across the hydrocracker, as well as offering additional flexibility to optimise downstream assets.

And bringing this session to a close was **Dan Moloney**, EVP Projects & Technology, **GIDARA Energy**, with his presentation, **“Breaking Feedstock Barriers with HTW® Gasification”**, which explored the untapped potential of waste as a sustainable feedstock for fuel production, provided an understanding of how gasification technology transforms waste into sustainable fuels for maritime and aviation sectors, addressed technical challenges in integrating waste-to-fuel processes within existing supply chains, and concluded with insights about scaling and integrating gasification technology to meet global transportation fuel demands.

Session Four, Technology & Catalyst Innovations - Part I, moderated by the highly experienced **Sanjay Lodha**, Global Business Director, **Tubacex Group**, opened with a presentation from **Jiang Nan**, Project Manager, **SINOPEC**, on **“DCC Technology Development & Application”**, which comprised, a basic Introduction to DCC Family Tech, common characteristics for DCC Family Tech, DCC PLUS development and application, and finally, DCC pro development and application.

The next presentation, **“Adapting to Feed Changes: Challenges and Mitigation Strategies for FCCs”**, was given by **Hernando Salgado**, Technical Service Manager - Refining Catalysts, **BASF**, and looked at the flexibility of FCCs to handle new feeds and adapt to increasing shifts in crude sources, then highlighted the challenges introduced by new feeds, such as contaminants, heavy tails, and different coking behaviour, and how the FCC can be impacted, and concluded by offering some best practices observed both operationally and catalytically for dealing with these challenges.



Then **Fahd Fathi**, Technology Manager, **Shell Catalysts & Technologies**, gave his presentation, “**Amine Based Desulphurisation Options for Refineries**”, which examined the challenges in tackling Sulphur emissions from refineries, looked at Amine based technologies for emissions desulphurisation, and finished with pre-combustion vs post combustion Sulphur capture.

Bringing Session Four to a close, was a presentation on, “**Refinery Catalyst Recycling**”, given by **Arnold Huismans**, VP Sales & Marketing, **Moxba Group**, which gave an overview of its full-service spent catalyst recycling, highlighted how its sustainable approach has the lowest carbon footprint, and finished by showcasing the raw materials and products it manufactures from refinery waste.

Delegates moved into the exhibition hall for the final session of the day, EPC's unique Exhibitor Spotlight. This year, there were four, 10-minute presentations, from: **Crystaphase**, **WIKA**, **Hindustan Platinum**, and **Dynamics Scientific**, which took place in a more relaxed environment, while refreshments were served.

With the Conference programme now concluded for Day One, the Delegates were treated to delicious canapes, and a delightful selection of drinks at the **Official Networking Reception** proudly sponsored by **Sinopec**, setting the tone for an engaging evening of industry dialogue and the strengthening of connections.

Day Two started with Session Six, Technology & Catalysts Innovation - Part II, with **Scott Kendrick**, Director, **Crystaphase**, a seasoned moderator at the helm.

The first presentation, "**EST Slurry Hydrocracking: Versatile technology for upgrading conventional fossil feed as well as tomorrow's lower carbon feedstock**", was co-presented by **Goutam Biswas**, Technology Director, **Chevron Lummus Global**, and **Song Xinrui**, Licensing Contractual Support Manager, **Eni**, which showcased how EST stands alone in its ability to process a wide range of present day and future feedstocks, including the most difficult circular feedstocks. This unique capability allows for seamless integration with existing petrochemical complexes, resulting in significant reductions in operating expenses, energy efficiency, lower carbon intensity, and improved project economics.

Next up was **Varun Mathur**, Market Manager “Middle East”, **IPCO**, with his presentation, “**Liquid to Solid - Understanding the Why, How, and Purpose**”, which highlighted the most widely used solidification technologies, including advantages and disadvantages, discussed the solid product produced from the pastillation, flaking and granulation process, which included the advantages and disadvantages for shipping and end user, and concluded with examples of different facilities using these technologies.

We then had another co-presentation from **Manish Saraswat**, Sales Manager - **AFMEI**, and **Giovanni Galetti**, Senior Licensing Manager, **LyondellBasell**, titled, “**Advancements in Polyolefin Technologies and Catalysts**”, which showcased the differentiated polyolefin catalyst portfolio, the metallocene polypropylene catalyst and products, and the latest polyolefin technologies.

Manfred Wittner, Director Business Development Licensing, **Lummus Novolen Technology**, followed this with his presentation, “**Polymer Technologies for Global Competitiveness**”, which outlined how Lummus Technology, as master licensor of technologies, is meeting the growing polymer demand with a wide technology portfolio - PP, HDPE, LDPE/EVA and SAP - which is transforming the polymer value chain from ‘linear’ to ‘circular’.

Anton Tvelenev, Global Petrochemicals Director, Consulting, **KBR**, brought this session to a close with his presentation, “**Low-Cost Ethylene**”, which provided an overview of current trends facing ethylene producers, with a focus on cost competitiveness of ethylene operations, and the integration opportunities between steam cracking operations, refining, and gas processing.





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Session Seven, Asset Optimisation & Emissions reduction - Part II, moderated by industry stalwart, **David Mc Namara**, Senior Business Development Manager, **ExxonMobil Catalysts and Licensing**, began with a presentation from **Rahul Khandelwal**, Business Director, **GTC Vorro Technology**, on **“Novel Sulfur Removal Pathways to Aid Energy Reduction and Decarbonization”**, which looked at ways to improve energy efficiency and decarbonisation while reducing SOx emissions in an industrial complex, cited a case study showcasing the benefits of fuel gas desulfurization, and explored how acid dew point reduction leads to higher energy recovery across the air preheaters associated with fired heaters.

Next up was **Jay Jeong**, Refinery Process Specialist, **Alfa Laval**, with his presentation, **“Heavy oil processes - destined to suffer from heavy fouling?”**, discussing fouling - in the refinery visbreaking and hydrocracker units - with case studies showcasing solutions for the heavy-fouling processes.

This was followed by **Sanjay Lodha**, Global Business Director, **Tubacex Group**, with his presentation, **“Tubacoat Technology Performance at Delayed Coker Unit Fired Heater at North American Refinery”**, highlighting its innovative, commercially proven technology for increased cycle length for critical refining and petrochemical units, which is a game changer for increased run length, OPEX and CAPEX reduction, reliable operations, and efficiency improvements, and concluded with results from major US, Europe, and Asia refineries.

This session was wrapped up with a presentation, **“Repositioning Refinery FCC Units for the Low-carbon and Circular Future”**, from **Tie-Pan Shi**, Technical Director, **HCpect**, which showcased its new circular plastics deep cracking technology to produce olefins in a single step, and how FCC units can shift to low-carbon chemicals with minimal cost.



Session Eight, Asset Optimisation & Emissions Reduction - Part II, moderated by **Dan Moloney**, EVP Projects & Technology, **GIDARA Energy**, got underway with a presentation from, **Igor Kostromin**, Licensing Manager, **Topsoe**, titled, “**Step-by-Step Approach to Reducing CO2 Footprint through SRUs**”, which explored the limitations of the traditional Claus process and the advantages of Wet Gas Sulfuric Acid (WSA) technology for maximizing energy recovery and minimizing CO2 and SO2 emissions, showcased successful refinery transitions to WSA technology, highlighting quantifiable CO2 reductions, operational improvements, and financial benefits, and concluded with a potential strategy for the phased implementation of WSA technology as a viable and financially attractive pathway for refineries to achieve their carbon reduction targets.

Following this was the first of two Producer Case Studies. The presentation from **Nadeen Awwad**, Engineer, Energy Management, **ADNOC Refining**, “**Heater Efficiency Dashboard and its Value for Operations**”, demonstrated how the migration from an excel based, to a digital dashboard equipped the operations team with the data and insights needed to analyse the heater performance to make necessary decisions and act accordingly.

The second producer presentation, and final presentation of the conference, “**Continuous Catalytic Reforming (CCR) Process Heater/Furnace Tube's Ceramic Coating**”, came from **Zaki Almadhari**, Lead Process Engineer, **SATORP**. He began with a brief introduction on Continuous Catalytic Reforming (CCR), then looked at CCR Process Furnace/Heater function and heat transfer, the tubes condition at the end of the operating cycle, and the ceramic coating benefits and results.

The final act, to bring ME-TECH 2025 to a close, was the CLOSING PANEL,

“Decarbonisation - Can the Middle East lead the Energy Transition”.

Moderated by **Marcio Wagner da Silva**, Optimisation and Process Engineering Manager, **Petrobras**, the panel explored the complex path to decarbonising the refining and petrochemical industries, with a particular focus on the Middle East’s role in leading, or shaping the energy transition. Joining Marcio, was an extremely strong line-up of thought leaders, which included: **Hatem Belfadhel**, Technology and Innovation Fellow, **SABIC**, **Mikael Berthod**, Head of JV Management Refining & Business Development, **OMV Refining & Marketing**, **Eamonn Collins**, Vice President, Decarbonisation, **Wood**, **Joseph Ibrahim**, Managing Director, Middle East, **Axens**, and **Yasser Mahmoud**, Licensing Technology Manager, **Shell Catalysts & Technologies**.

DECARBONISATION PANEL

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Decarbonisation is non-optional but costly

- All speakers agreed that decarbonisation is essential—not optional.
- It is expensive and requires a holistic, collaborative approach involving:
 1. Governments
 2. Private sector
 3. Financial institutions
 4. Technology providers
 5. Public-private partnerships

Collaboration is a Recurring Theme

- The scale of the challenge necessitates global and cross-sector collaboration.
- Coordinated efforts are needed to de-risk technologies and improve project economics.
- Effective carbon pricing and regulatory frameworks are critical enablers.

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)

- CCS is viewed as a key pillar—but not the only solution.
- CCS projects are progressing, especially in the Middle East (e.g., Aramco's 9 Mtpa project in Saudi Arabia).
- The challenge lies more in economic viability than technical feasibility.
- CCS is most effective when integrated with industrial clusters.

Middle East Positioning

The region is well-positioned to lead in areas like:

- Low-cost renewable energy (especially solar)
- Green hydrogen production
- Integrated refining and petrochemical hubs
- Natural advantages and long-term vision (e.g., Vision 2030) provide a strategic edge.

Refining–Petrochemical Integration

- Crude-to-chemicals is a viable pathway for reducing emissions intensity.
- However, it won't fully decarbonise crude use; it's only a partial solution (projected 16–17% of crude by 2050).
- Integration helps improve resilience and value capture but must be supported by regulatory and market incentives.

Digitalisation and AI

- Real-time optimisation, AI, and advanced process control are essential tools.
- These technologies can reduce inefficiencies and Scope 1–3 emissions while supporting traceability and product carbon footprint disclosure.

Regional Strategies and Leadership

- Not every region or company needs to lead in all areas; strategic focus is key.
- Some regions (like MENA) have natural leadership in green hydrogen and solar.
- Others (like Europe) may lead in regulation, circular economy, and emissions trading.
- Smart followers can benefit by learning from leaders' successes and failures

In conclusion, decarbonising the refining and petrochemical industries requires a multi-pronged strategy tailored to regional strengths and economic realities. The Middle East has the potential to lead in several areas, particularly where natural resources and political will align. Success hinges on collaboration, regulatory support, and a pragmatic mix of technologies including CCS, electrification, integration, and AI.



Networking Evening

On Wednesday, 7 May, immediately following the Exhibitor Spotlight, delegates came together for an exclusive Networking Reception hosted by **Sinopec** at Harbours, an elegant cozy lounge bar located on the 4th floor of the JW Marriott Hotel in Dubai Marina.

The evening offered more than just networking - guests were treated to the smooth sounds of a live jazz lounge band, creating a sophisticated and relaxing atmosphere. Set within Harbours' refined ambiance, the event provided the perfect backdrop for meaningful conversations, new connections, and a premium experience.

All registered delegates were welcomed to unwind in style, rounding off the day with music, elegance, and excellent company.

Dr. Renyang Zheng, Deputy Director of International Cooperation, **Sinopec Tech**, shared thoughtful insights, emphasising the critical role of innovation and partnership in advancing the petrochemicals sector. His words resonated with attendees, reinforcing Sinopec's commitment to technological progress and strengthening global collaboration across the industry.





Photo Booth



#METECH in the Media

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What an incredible #METECH!

We joined other energy actors in Dubai last week for some dynamic discussions about the opportunities and challenges of #hydrocracking within our ever-evolving energy landscape.

Our experts, including **Dinesh Kumar Khosla**, presented Axens' ecosystem of solutions, which together can minimize the carbon footprint associated with hydrocrackers.

These solutions include Advanced Catalytic Solutions, Catalyst Management Solutions High-Efficiency Heat Exchangers, Electrical Radiant Tubular Heaters, and more.

Thanks to **Euro Petroleum Consultants** for this great event.

Scott Kendrick • 1st
Director at Crystaphase

Crystaphase Exhibitor spotlight to wrap up day 1 @ #METECH. Big thanks to **Euro Petroleum Consultants** for a great event

Yasser Mahmoud • 3rd+
Refining & Biofuels Technology ...
1w •

really enjoyed our conversation as part of the closing panel at #METECH this year. An important question on Can the Middle East Lead the Energy Transition?

We agreed on the potential the region has to lead, considering its privileged geographic position, abundant natural resources and ability to deploy technology at both speed and scale. The need for collaboration across industry partners, governments and society was clear. Without this creativity and collaboration we won't succeed in bringing down the cost of important technologies such as biofuels and carbon capture, which will be critical to decarbonise our energy system.

Look forward to continuing the conversation and a massive thanks to **Euro Petroleum Consultants** for hosting such an excellent event and my fellow panelists for their insights.

Euro Petroleum Consultants
10,937 followers

Varun Mathur • 3rd+
Market Manager 'Middle East' Sales & ...
1w •

Thank you EPC team for organizing this amazing event #METECH! It brought us lots of value and helped us engage with industry experts and showcase our technology and expertise.

Zhonglin(Frank) Zh... • 1st
Cleaner Energy Better Life
1w •

<https://lnkd.in/gm4aYmxN>

Kimberley J. Pereira • 2nd
Exhibitions, Conferences, ...
1w •

Innovation was in focus at #METECH 2025 as our Gold Sponsor **SINOPEC** took the stage to share their advancements in DCC (Deep Catalytic ... more

METECH
MIDDLE EAST TECHNOLOGY FORUM
FOR REFINING & PETROCHEMICALS

ORGANISED BY
EPC

Ronan Tréguët • 2nd
VP Energies & Chemicals at Schneider Electric
1w •

Thank you for the invitation **Euro Petroleum Consultants** to discuss the role of Digital & AI to transform the downstream industry!

Such technologies shall be a lever for more efficiency and decarbonisation through deeper clean electrification and autonomous operations.

Sanjay Lodha • 2nd
Global Business Director - Tubacoat, Green Hydrogen Tubacex Spain
1w •

It is always pleasure to meet and interact with u on these important topic and look forward to visiting your refinery in Sept 2025.

Suhail Diaz Valderr... • 2nd
Director Future Energies ...
2w •

Excited to participate at #METECH with our extraordinary team at Wood in Dubai, leading the pre-conference seminar: 'Powering Ahead: The... more

KBC A Yokogawa Company
60,163 followers

Jitendra Chellani
Senior Staff Consultant
KBC
Based in Abu Dhabi

KBC Senior Consultant Jitendra Chellani spoke today at ME-TECH 2025 ...

IPCO AB
5,653 followers
1w •

Efficiency through solidification – IPCO shares expertise at #METECH 2025... more

OQ Base Industries
12,470 followers
1w •

ME-TECH 2025 في منتدى أوكيو للصناعات الأساسية بمشاركة خبراء في المنطقة، والذي أقيم في دبي. ... more

Dr. Meritxell Vila-Fontes • 1st
Founder / CEO at MERTY Catalysts & Innovation / MERTY Chemicals
1w •

Great first day at #METECH in Dubai!

Plenty of inspiring talks, innovative technologies, and valuable conversations with outstanding professionals from across the industry 🙌

Huge thanks to everyone I met today — and to the organizers for making it all possible! 🙌

Looking forward to the next sessions tomorrow!!

Blair Fraser • 2nd
Head of Carbon Advisory I ...
1w •

It's been a fantastic week in the UAE — starting with insightful client meetings in Abu Dhabi, followed by #METECH2025 in Dubai.... more

Hatem A. Belfadhel • 2nd
Global Technology Leader Oil To Chemicals (OTC) at SABIC

It was a real pleasure engaging with you, the panel the ME-TECH team and all contributors.

Sheikh Saifuddin • 2nd
Senior Director Solution Consulting at Aspen Technology
2w •

Good knowledge share session with all panelists and great questions from the attendees. #METECH

Grateful for the opportunity to attend METECH and stay ahead with the latest updates of our industry big thank you to EPC for organizing such a...



with COLIN CHAPMAN and 6 others +2

What's next for the region's downstream sector? At ME-TECH 2025 in Dubai, industry leaders tackled the shift toward integration, digitalisation, and low-...



Middle East Downstream Update - Oil & Gas Middle East
oilandgasmiddleeast.com

Day 2 at #METECH and the momentum keeps building! 🔥 ... more



with Abdallah Al Zyoud and 6 others +1

Starting the second day of technical discussions in the Middle East Technology Forum for Refining and Petrochemicals (METECH) 2025!

The event is dealing with fundamental topics related to the sustainability of the downstream industry players with discussions centered in one of the most relevant refining market which can define trends and strategies to face the challenges imposed to the downstream players...#METECH2025

Thanks, for this outstanding opportunity Euro Petroleum Consultants! A really amazing event!!!



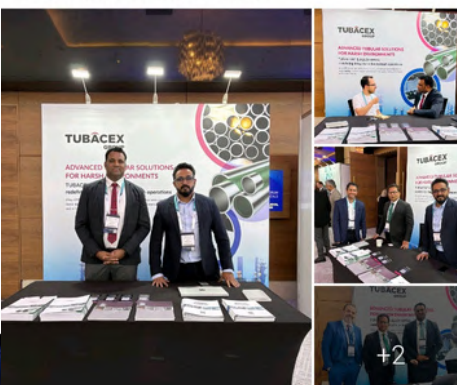
We had a fantastic time at #METECH2025 with Euro Petroleum Consultants! Our EVP Projects & Technology, Dan Moloney, shared how GIDARA... more

METECH2025 & GIDARA Recap • 4 pages



METECH 2025 RECAP
BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW, TODAY
Swipe Right

It was a privilege to participate in #METECH in Dubai, where we showcased our Advanced Tubular Solutions for Harsh Environments.... more



Attending ME-TECH 2025 this week? Make sure to catch one of our Senior Consultants, Jitendra Chellani, on Wednesday 7 May at 11:... more



ExxonMobil Catalysts and Technology Licensing, sponsored, exhibited, and presented at #METECH in Dubai.

As an eventful conference where we engaged with customers and business partners. Dr. David Mc Namara, Senior Business Development Manager, delivered an actual presentation on increasing refinery profitability using Celestia™ and W™ high performance drop-in catalyst solutions.

Click here to learn about Celestia™ . <https://lnkd.in/g7rqBjms>

En Melendez Louis Burns Kathryn Cole William Lierman Barbara Jackson



We were honored to participate in ME-TECH 2025, the premier Middle East Technology Forum for Refining and Petrochemicals!... more



Had a great time at the #METECH2025 in Dubai, lots of interesting industry insights and great networking. Thanks to Euro Petroleum Consultants for... more



It was a pleasure to speak at #METECH25 and share about ADNOC Group Refining's digital transformation of heaters' thermal efficiencies.

Euro Petroleum Consultants

#METECH25 #EnergyEfficiency #HeaterEfficiency #Decarbonization #Digitalization



Looking back
at ME-TECH
2025

A huge thank you to all of our speakers, sponsors, and attendees who attended and contributed to the success of ME-TECH 2025. We will continue the discussions next year...

JOIN THE DISCUSSION!

Contact us today and don't miss out!

SAVE THE DATE!

5-7 May 2026 | Dubai, UAE



Mark Grennell

Conference Producer &
Business Development
Director



Maryanne Morris

Conference Director



europetro.com/metech





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