

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for regasification of liquefied natural gas (LNG), comprising:
 - (a) filling an LNG carrier with LNG at an LNG hub, the LNG carrier having a storage
5 capacity;
 - (b) transporting the LNG in the LNG carrier to an LNG receiving terminal;
 - (c) offloading the LNG from the LNG carrier to LNG storage at the LNG receiving terminal, wherein the LNG storage has less storage capacity than the storage capacity of the LNG carrier;
 - 10 (d) regasifying the LNG at a regasification rate using regasification equipment at the LNG receiving terminal;
 - (e) maintaining the LNG carrier at the LNG receiving terminal until the LNG carrier is empty;
 - (f) when the LNG carrier is empty, returning the LNG carrier to the LNG hub; and
 - 15 (g) repeating steps (a)-(f);wherein the storage capacity of the LNG storage is sufficient to supply LNG to the regasification equipment to maintain regasifying the LNG at the regasification rate until the LNG carrier returns with additional LNG from the LNG hub; and
wherein the LNG carrier is the sole source of LNG for the LNG receiving terminal.
- 20 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the LNG receiving terminal comprises a floating regasification unit.
3. The method of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the LNG storage capacity of the LNG storage is between 5,000 and 50,000 cubic meters.
4. The method of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the LNG storage capacity of the LNG
25 storage is between 15,000 and 35,000 cubic meters.
5. The method of any one of claims 1-4, wherein the LNG carrier has a maximum LNG storage capacity of between 100,000 and 150,000 cubic meters.
6. The method of any one of claims 1-5, wherein the LNG receiving terminal is less than 3,500 kilometers away from the LNG hub.

7. The method of any one of claims 1-6, wherein the regasification rate is less than one million tons of LNG per year (1 MTA).
8. The method of any one of claims 1-7, wherein the LNG receiving terminal is one of a plurality of LNG receiving terminals, and wherein the LNG carrier is one of a plurality of LNG carriers, each of the plurality of LNG carriers being associated with a respective one of the plurality of LNG receiving terminals and dedicated as a sole source of LNG thereto, and wherein LNG storage at each of the plurality of LNG receiving terminals has a storage capacity that is smaller than a storage capacity of the respective LNC carrier associated therewith, the method further comprising:
- 10 filling each one of the plurality of LNG carriers with LNG at the LNG hub;
- transporting LNG in each of the plurality of LNG carriers to the respective LNG receiving terminals;
- offloading the LNG from said each of the plurality of LNG carriers to the LNG storage of the respective LNG receiving terminal;
- 15 regasifying the LNG using regasification equipment at the respective LNG receiving terminal; and
- returning each of the plurality of LNG carriers to the LNG hub when said each LNG carrier is empty;
- wherein the storage capacity of the LNG storage at each of the plurality of LNG receiving terminals is sufficient to supply LNG to the regasification equipment at said each LNG receiving terminal to maintain regasifying the LNG until the respective LNG carrier returns with additional LNG from the LNG hub.
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9. An liquefied natural gas (LNG) regasification terminal, comprising:
- an LNG carrier configured to be filled with LNG at an LNG hub, the LNG carrier
- 25 having a storage capacity;
- an LNG receiving terminal to which the LNG carrier is directed, the LNG carrier being the sole source of LNG for the LNG receiving terminal, the LNG receiving terminal comprising
- LNG storage having a storage capacity, wherein the storage capacity of the LNG storage is less than the storage capacity of the LNG carrier, and wherein the
- 30 LNG carrier is configured to offload the LNG to the LNG storage; and

regasification equipment configured to regasify the LNG stored in the LNG storage at a regasification rate;

wherein the LNG carrier is maintained at the LNG receiving terminal until the carrier is empty, and wherein the LNG carrier returns to the LNG hub when the LNG carrier is empty;

5 wherein the storage capacity of the LNG storage is sufficient to supply LNG to the regasification equipment to maintain regasifying the LNG at the regasification rate until the LNG carrier returns with additional LNG from the LNG hub.

10 10. The LNG regasification terminal of claim 9, wherein the LNG receiving terminal comprises a floating regasification unit.

10 11. The LNG regasification terminal of claim 9 or claim 10, wherein the LNG storage capacity of the LNG storage is between 5,000 and 50,000 cubic meters of LNG.

12. The LNG regasification terminal of claim 9 or claim 10, wherein the LNG storage capacity of the LNG storage is between 15,000 and 35,000 cubic meters of LNG.

15 13. The LNG regasification terminal of any one of claims 9-12, wherein the LNG carrier has a maximum LNG storage capacity of between 100,000 and 150,000 cubic meters.

14. The LNG regasification terminal of any one of claims 9-13, wherein the LNG receiving terminal is less than 3,500 kilometers away from the LNG hub.

15 15. The LNG regasification terminal of any one of claims 9-14, wherein the regasification rate is less than one million tons of LNG per year (1 MTA).

20 16. The LNG regasification terminal of any one of claims 9-15, wherein the LNG receiving terminal is one of a plurality of LNG receiving terminals, and wherein the LNG carrier is one of a plurality of LNG carriers, each of the plurality of LNG carriers being associated with a respective one of the plurality of LNG receiving terminals and dedicated as a sole source of LNG thereto, and wherein LNG storage at each of the plurality of LNG receiving terminals has
25 a storage capacity that is smaller than a storage capacity of the respective LNC carrier associated therewith:

 wherein each one of the plurality of LNG carriers is filled with LNG at the LNG hub;

 wherein LNG is transported in each of the plurality of LNG carriers to the respective LNG receiving terminals and is

30 offloaded to the LNG storage of the respective LNG receiving terminal, and

regasified using the regasification equipment of the respective LNG receiving terminal; and

wherein each of the plurality of LNG carriers is returned to the LNG hub when said each LNG carrier is empty such that the storage capacity of the LNG storage of each of the plurality of LNG receiving terminals is sufficient to supply LNG to the regasification equipment at said each LNG receiving terminal, to maintain regasifying the LNG until the respective LNG carrier returns with additional LNG from the LNG hub.

17. A method for regasification of liquefied natural gas (LNG), comprising:

(a) filling an LNG carrier with LNG at an LNG hub, the LNG carrier having a maximum LNG storage capacity of between 100,000 and 150,000 cubic meters;

(b) transporting the LNG in the LNG carrier to a floating regasification unit, wherein the LNG carrier is the sole source of LNG for the floating regasification unit;

(c) offloading the LNG from the LNG carrier to LNG storage at the floating regasification unit, wherein the LNG storage has a maximum LNG storage capacity of between 15,000 and 35,000 cubic meters;

(d) regasifying the LNG at a regasification rate using regasification equipment at the floating regasification unit;

(e) maintaining the LNG carrier at the floating regasification unit until the LNG carrier is empty;

(f) when the LNG carrier is empty, returning the LNG carrier to the LNG hub; and

(g) repeating steps (a)-(f);

wherein the storage capacity of the LNG storage is sufficient to supply LNG to the regasification equipment to maintain regasifying the LNG at the regasification rate until the LNG carrier returns with additional LNG from the LNG hub.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein floating regasification unit is less than 3,500 kilometers away from the LNG hub.

19. The method of claim 17 or claim 18, wherein the regasification rate is less than one million tons of LNG per year (1 MTA).

20. A method for regasification of liquefied natural gas (LNG), comprising:

(a) filling an LNG carrier with LNG at an LNG hub, the LNG carrier having a storage

capacity;

(b) transporting the LNG in the LNG carrier to one or more LNG receiving terminals;

(c) at each of the one or more receiving terminals,

5 (c1) offloading the LNG from the LNG carrier to LNG storage at the LNG receiving terminal, wherein the LNG storage at the LNG receiving terminal has less storage capacity than the storage capacity of the LNG carrier;

(c2) regasifying the LNG at a regasification rate corresponding to the LNG terminal;

10 (c3) maintaining the LNG carrier at the LNG receiving terminal until the LNG storage at the LNG terminal has sufficient LNG stored therein to maintain the regasification at the regasification rate until the LNG carrier returns to the LNG receiving terminal;

(d) when the LNG carrier is empty, returning the LNG carrier to the LNG hub; and

(e) repeating steps (a)-(d);

15 wherein the LNG carrier is the sole source of LNG for each of the LNG receiving terminals.