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ContourGlobal inaugurates innovative KivuWatt energy facility in Rwanda and announces 25% increased production capacity from first phase

- KivuWatt gas extraction and power generating facility successfully operational since December 2015
- Operation exceeding expectations and will reach 100 MW by 2019 with 9 additional MW being made available from the existing facility by year end
- Ground-breaking facility reduces the risk of release of toxic gases and sets Rwanda on the road to double its energy production by 2020

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Kibuye, New York, May 16, 2016

ContourGlobal, the US-based energy corporation, has inaugurated its KivuWatt power plant in Kibuye, Rwanda, on the shores of Lake Kivu, in the presence of Rwanda's H.E. President Paul Kagame, James Musoni, Minister of Infrastructure and Jean Bosco Mugiraneza, CEO Rwanda Energy Group. ContourGlobal was represented by its President & Chief Executive Officer, Joseph C. Brandt, Karl Schnadt, Executive Vice-President & Chief Operating Officer, Cheick-Oumar Sylla, Executive Vice President Business Development Africa, and Jarmo Gummerus, Director of KivuWatt Ltd. Also in attendance were Ambassadors from the United States of America, the Netherlands, Belgium, China and the European Union, and representatives from Wartsila and other partners in the project.

The KivuWatt project is the only gas/water extraction project currently operating in the world. The innovative project utilizes methane gas found in Lake Kivu's deep waters to generate low carbon emission electricity, and by reducing the amount of methane in the Lake also reduces the risk of the methane's catastrophic release.

The world's leading development banks joined the KivuWatt project in 2011 when the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Emerging Africa Infrastructure Fund (EAIF), the Netherlands Development Finance Company (FMO) and Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries (BIO) extended debt financing to the project.

Joseph C. Brandt, President and Chief Executive Officer of ContourGlobal said: “In 2008 we entered into a partnership with the Government of Rwanda to transform the menace of Lake Kivu’s unique gas deposits into the source of something good for the people of Rwanda. The hard fought KivuWatt project has realized the Lake’s potential envisioned by President H.E. Paul Kagame. We are proud to have catalyzed his vision into a substantial operating project that is mitigating the threat of environmental catastrophe while providing clean, reliable electricity to Rwanda.”

Karl Schnadt, ContourGlobal’s Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer: “We have successfully brought into operation this unique project and overcome the many challenges posed by this unprecedented attempt at large-scale gas extraction on the lake. Our design and technology are performing even better than expected and we are pleased to announce today that the gas extraction facility will support at least an additional 9 MW of power generation. We are undertaking the works to transform this unexpected gas into additional electricity for Rwanda’s grid by year-end.”

KivuWatt’s Technology and Process

The gas extraction process brings gas-laden waters from 35 bars to 2 bars of pressure via a gas separator where gas bubbles are extracted from the water. Raw gas is then washed in four wash towers, ultimately producing clean methane gas. This gas is then transported to the power plant through a pipeline where combustion engines generate electricity to be supplied to the Rwanda energy grid. KivuWatt’s gas extraction facility sits on a barge anchored 13 km off-shore. Phase 2 of the project will add two or three barges to this configuration on the lake to generate an additional 75 MW. In addition to gas extraction and power generation, ContourGlobal is also engaging with the local population, training and developing local workers and funding charitable projects such as providing a library and computers to Kibuye schools.

ContourGlobal in Africa

ContourGlobal began operating in Africa in 2008 when it developed and constructed its flagship power plant in Lome, Togo. The ContourGlobal Togo plant, winner of the US Overseas Private Investment Corporation’s 2014 “Impact Award for Critical Infrastructure,” was placed into commercial operation in 2010 and has been a reliable producer of electricity for the country ever since.

In 2013, ContourGlobal acquired an existing brownfield thermal power plant in Senegal and began developing and constructing a new 53 MW thermal energy facility. The facility began operation in April 2016 and will be the lowest-cost liquid-fuel power plant in Senegal and can easily be converted to burn clean natural gas. In December 2015, ContourGlobal announced an expansion of the project to include an additional 33 MW of installed capacity to be constructed at the existing site by October 2016. The combined 86 MW Cap des Biches power plant will significantly boost power supply to the people and industry of Senegal. ContourGlobal also provides efficient tri-generation in Nigeria to three of CocaCola Hellenic Bottling Company’s bottling plants and has nearly 2,000 MW of projects under development throughout Africa.

About ContourGlobal

ContourGlobal is a developer and operator of electric power generation facilities. The Company owns and operates a portfolio of 62 power plants in both thermal and renewable technologies, with approximately 4,000 MW of installed gross capacity in operation. The projects are located in 20 countries on 3 continents, utilizing a wide range of fuel types, technology and equipment. 1,800 people work for ContourGlobal around the globe.