

# The latest in 'floating pipelines'

The M&C Group, on stand 3.124, is keen to explain the advantages of its shuttle tanker designs, which can be used in climates where the laying of deepwater oil pipelines is logistically or financially infeasible.

The tankers have been compared to a kind of 'floating pipeline', with no assistance required from tugs for loading from offshore installations, as with other tankers. Technology includes CPP and flap rudder(s), two or three bow and stern thrusters (of which at least one is an Azimuth, for maneuverability). On top of this, the vessels feature the latest dynamic positioning technology to in order to maintain a stable loading position.

Loading systems are varied – single point mooring, where a vessel connects to an offshore loading buoy to offload oil; tandem loading, whereby the shuttle tanker connects to the stern of the FPSO, using dynamic positioning to maintain position during the transfer; single anchor loading, a technique used in shallow water, whereby the vessel connects to cables via an underwater buoy; and the high-tech Single Turret Loading system whereby a

submerged buoy comes up through a cone-shaped turret on the keel of the shuttle tanker. All M&C vessels can be equipped for any of these systems.

M&C group is looking to take advantage of an oil exploration market



in which harsher climates and deeper waters render the running of tankers increasingly profitable. "Offshore production is expected to represent more than 35 percent of World's production by 2015," M&C Group md Michael Stefanakis, said.

"Offshore Oil Production and Shuttle Tankers transportation is an area of significant opportunity as well as one with high development potential. In coming years, high spec Shuttle Tankers of Suezmax size and with environmental packages will be constructed in order to meet growing market demands".