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### **Texas A&M at Qatar hosts international workshop on autonomous underwater vehicles**

More than 45 experts participated in a workshop on autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) recently hosted by Texas A&M University at Qatar in Education City.

The oil and gas industry in Qatar represents the vital source of income to the country with most of its infrastructure being offshore, said Dr. Mansour Karkoub, professor of mechanical engineering at Texas A&M at Qatar and workshop organizer. Karkoub also directs the Smart System Lab at Texas A&M at Qatar.

“At the Smart System Lab, we have been developing solutions for the oil and gas industry in the area of autonomous systems and asset integrity for the past six years,” Karkoub said. “This workshop was a valuable opportunity to share the latest research discoveries and expertise in the area of AUVs and their application in the oil and gas industry, as well as environment monitoring and protection.”

The workshop, called the Consortium for O&G Asset Integrity and Environmental Monitoring in Qatar, featured noted AUV scientists and speakers from local industry, including Maersk Oil Research & Technology Centre, Qatar Petroleum, Siemens, Shell, Rasgas, and Qatar Computing Research Institute; the Qatari Navy; and top universities in the U.S., Europe and the Middle East, including MIT, Georgia Tech, Rice University, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Texas A&M and Texas A&M at Qatar, KAUST, Kuwait University, Qatar University, Hamad bin Khalifa University, University of Porto (Portugal) and National Technical University of Athens (Greece).

Featured speakers were all experts in control, optimization, ocean engineering, underwater robotics, sensor technology, computer science, and industry and government guests also invited to attend.

The objective of the workshop was to develop priority research and technology

development areas for environmental monitoring, search and rescue, and asset integrity for the oil and gas industry. Participants explored emerging trends and opportunities for advancing innovation in O&G asset integrity, environmental monitoring and protection, and related technologies through intelligent application, research and development of innovative autonomous systems, sensors and communication technologies.

Karkoub also said the workshop aimed to help lay the foundation for the first consortium for advancing AUV research for the purpose of offshore infrastructure sustainability in Qatar and in the region in line with Qatar National Research Strategy and Qatar National Vision 2030. The experts who were invited to present their work also assisted in developing a roadmap to establish a research program and training facilities in AUVs that will put the State of Qatar among the leading nations in subsea asset integrity and environmental monitoring and protection.

“I am happy with the turnout and the enthusiasm of the participants,” Karkoub said. “The workshop was a total success and a follow up meeting will be held soon at KAUST.”

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#### About Texas A&M University at Qatar

Texas A&M University, recognized as having one of the premier engineering programs in the world, has offered undergraduate degrees in chemical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, mechanical engineering and petroleum engineering at Qatar Foundation’s Education City campus since 2003, and graduate degrees in chemical engineering since fall 2011. Texas A&M at Qatar has awarded more than 635 degrees since 2007. In addition to engineering courses, Texas A&M at Qatar provides classes in science, mathematics, liberal arts and the humanities. All four of the engineering programs offered at Texas A&M at Qatar are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET. The curricula offered at Texas A&M at Qatar are materially the same as those offered at the main campus in College Station, Texas, and the courses in Doha are taught in English in a co-educational setting. The reputation for excellence is the same, as is the commitment to equip engineers to lead the next generation of engineering advancement. Faculty from around the world are attracted to Texas A&M at Qatar to provide this educational experience and to participate in research activities now valued at more than \$224 million, and that address issues important to the State of Qatar. Visit [www.qatar.tamu.edu](http://www.qatar.tamu.edu).