

The VEBA terminal in Libya experienced the benefits of the BLABO® system

One tank cleaning job at the VEBA terminal at Ras Lanuf in Libya saved the desert from being contaminated by 22,148 m³ of crude oil. Instead, the terminal received almost 4 mill. USD worth of recovered oil.

The Libyan service provider, VAOS Ltd., cleaned a crude oil tank at the VEBA terminal in Ras Lanuf using the BLABO® system from Oreco A/S. It was the first time that this particularly terminal chose an automated system to clean its tanks. The tank to be cleaned had a very high level of sludge, forcing the VEBA terminal to find an alternative method to the conventional, manual cleaning as human entry in the tank was impossible.

Challenges

The tank was a very large tank, reaching 80 meters in diameter and was filled with oil sludge at a height of more than 4.5 meters. Due to the large sludge volume it was not possible to land the roof on its legs and the roof was still floating when VAOS commenced the desludging and cleaning process.



Disposal of oil sludge into desert ponds is common practice in Libya. This oil pond has the size of a small lake and poses a potential threat for the environment in the future.

Neither a high level of sludge nor a roof that floats on the sludge pose a problem for the BLABO® technology - on the contrary, the system is built to conquer such challenges. The sludge volume also meant that the roof tilted to one side, leaving a gap in the sealing, which required the construction of an extra seal. This was necessary in order to maintain the highest possible safety level during the cleaning process.

Eco-friendly and cost-effective process

It is normal procedure in Libya to pump sludge into oil ponds or directly into the desert. By choosing VAOS as contractor for this cleaning job, a new environmental-friendly approach opened up.

VAOS offers services to the oil industry and is the only service provider in Libya that provides simultaneous tank cleaning and oil recovery using the Oreco BLABO® system.

This choice saved the Libyan environment from being further contaminated. Instead, 22,148 m³ of recovered oil was pumped directly to an oil tanker, moored at a nearby pier. The recovered oil represented a value of close to 4 mill. USD - a sum that otherwise would have been wasted into the desert sand.

Facts and figures

Location:	VEBA Terminal, Ras Lanuf, Libya
Contractor:	VAOS Ltd.
Tank size:	Volume: 80,384 m ³ Ø: 80 m
Tank content:	Crude oil
Roof:	Floating roof with singledeck, cone down
Sludge content:	22,600 m ³
Cleaning nozzles:	10 Single Nozzle Sweepers
Time consumpt.:	Mobilisation: 6 days BLABO in use: 110 days De-mobilisation: 5 days
Recovery rate:	Hydrocarbons: 98%
Recovered oil:	22,148 m ³
Value of rec. oil:	Approx. 4 mill. USD
Calculation:	22,148 x 6.3 x 28 USD = 3,906,907, USD. (1 m ³ = 6.3 barrels, 1 barrel oil costs approx. 28 USD)