Natural gas plays a significant role in the power supply mix and should be relied upon as a transitional fuel toward a net-zero carbon future, Dawn Constantin, BP Energy's vice president of regulatory affairs told attendees at the Mid-Continent LDC gas forum in Chicago, Illinois.

Many companies have committed to net zero emissions goals over the next three to four decades as more consumers demand cleaner energy across all sectors. As utilities look to diversify the power supply mix with natural gas, renewables, renewable natural gas (RNG) and responsibly sourced gas (RSG), gas can play a key role in expediting the transition, Constantin said.

RSG is conventional natural gas that is produced by methods that meet certain environmental, social and corporate governance standards. It must be verified by third-party monitoring companies that issue RSG certifications.

Produced gas can see its carbon footprint lowered with carbon capture and storage technology or transitioned into hydrogen in order for producers to meet these net zero emissions goals.

Adding hydrogen to natural gas can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions if the hydrogen is made from low-carbon energy sources such as biomass, solar, nuclear or fossil resources with carbon capture and storage.

"If you can take the carbon out and generate all that hydrogen, that is viable and could be easy to add to the value chain", Constantin said. Already companies such an Enbridge have announced plans to blend hydrogen from its Ontario power-to-gas facility later this year in order to supply greener gas to its customers and reduce its carbon footprint. Chevron plans to triple its spending on lower-carbon initiatives and expand its RNG production.