China / Hong Kong Company Update **Tian Lun Gas Holdings**

Bloomberg: 1600 HK Equity | Reuters: 1600.HK

Refer to important disclosures at the end of this report

DBS Group Research . Equity

1 Apr 2022

A good bargain

Investment Thesis

BUY (Upgrade from Hold)

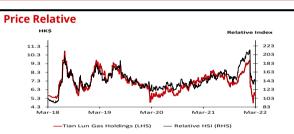
Last Traded Price (31 Mar 2022): HK\$5.56 (HSI: 21,997) Price Target 12-mth: HK\$7.40 (33% upside) (Prev HK\$9.00)

Analyst

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What's New

- 2% growth in FY21 core profit was below expectations due to lower dollar margin
- Gas volume growth target of >20% in FY22, among the • highest for gas distributors
- Target to install 1GW of rooftop solar power by 2025
- Upgrade to BUY as most negatives are priced in; TP set at ٠ HK\$7.40



Forecasts and Valuation

Forecasts and valuation	on			
Forecasts and Valuation FY Dec (RMBm) Turnover EBITDA Pre-tax Profit Net Profit Net Profit Gth (Pre-ex) (%) EPS (RMB) EPS (HK\$) Core EPS (RMB) Core EPS (RMB) Core EPS (HK\$) EPS Gth (%) Core EPS (HK\$) DPS (HK\$) BV Per Share (HK\$) PE (X) CorePE (X) P/Cash Flow (X) P/Free CF (X) EV/EBITDA (X) Net Div Yield (%) P/Book Value (X) Net Debt/Equity (X) ROAE(%) Earnings Rev (%):	2020A 6,440 1.773 1.418 1.043 895 10.3 1.04 1.29 0.89 1.10 30.8 9.2 1.29 0.34 5.0 3.2 4.1 4.3 5.0 3.2 4.1 4.6 6.1 1.0 0.7 24.3	2021A 7.650 1.822 1.363 1.001 915 2.2 1.00 1.24 0.92 1.13 (3.9) 2.4 1.24 0.35 6.42 4.5 4.9 4.0 6.0 5.5 6.2 0.9 1.0 20.2	2022F 9,434 2.024 1.378 1.009 10.3 0.97 1.19 0.97 1.19 (3.6) 5.5 1.18 0.38 7.49 4.7 4.7 4.7 3.5 5.0 6.9 0.7 0.8 17.4 (9)	2023F 11.608 2.354 1.622 1.190 1.190 1.79 1.13 1.40 1.70 17.0 17.0 17.0 17.0 1.39 0.45 8.54 4.0 4.0 3.1 111.4 4.6 8.0 0.7 0.7 17.4 (1)
Earnings Rev (%): Consensus EPS (RMB) Other Broker Recs:		B:7	(9) 1.14 S:0	(1) 1.28 H:1

Source of all data on this page: Company, DBS Bank (Hong Kong) Limited ("DBS HK"), Thomson Reuters





Where we differ:

We are more bullish on Tian Lun Gas' business development and our turnover estimates are >10% higher than the market.

Key Risks to Our View:

Our call depends on the company's ability to secure new rural coalto-gas projects from the government and new M&A deals ahead. Slow expansion progress will be negative for the share price. High LNG prices will put pressure on dollar margin.

At A Glance

Issued Capital (m shrs)	1,010
Mkt Cap (HK\$m/US\$m)	5,616 / 717
Major Shareholders (%)	
Gold Shine Development Ltd.	46.6
Zhuhai Port Co., Ltd.	11.9
Zhang (Yingcen)	8.4
Koo (Yuen Kim)	6.9
Free Float (%)	26.2
3m Avg. Daily Val. (US\$m)	4.28
GICS Industry: Utilities / Gas Utilities	

gas distributors under our coverage. Various strategic partnerships will help Tian Lun Gas to diversify into low carbon business with an installation target of 1GW of rooftop solar power by 2025. Positive signs for lower LNG prices ahead. We reckon the current high LNG prices at close to Rmb8,000 per ton in China is not sustainable as there are signs that prices may trend down. Demand from China is expected to be muted. We understand that LNG consumption in North East Asia had declined in 2M2022. There are cancellations of bookings at

Robust gas volume growth of around 20% p.a. for FY22/23. This is underpinned by around 8-10% organic growth, aggressive expansion in

rural coal-to-gas conversions, and more M&A opportunities in second-

and third-tier cities. Its target gas volume growth is the highest among

PipeChina's LNG terminal capacity for the period from April to December. LNG prices in China has also slipped recently. Softer tensions at the Ukraine border may lead to further price downtrend in LNG, a positive share price catalyst.

Valuation is too low. After our downgrade in August 2021, Tian Lun Gas' share price has corrected as much as 42%. The current valuation at around 5x FY22 PE is more than -1SD of its 5-year historical average, which is close to the previous low in March 2020. With a higher dividend payout ratio, the dividend yield is attractive at almost 7%. We believe the current valuation is a good entry point as most negatives have already been reflected.

Valuation:

We have revised down our core profit estimates by 6-12% to factor in a lower dollar margin. Given Tian Lun Gas' initiatives in low carbon business, its operation is not as predictable as before. We have thus changed our valuation method from DCF to PEG. Our new TP is set at HK\$7.40, based on 0.95x PEG.



WHAT'S NEW

Too cheap to ignore

Tian Lun Gas reported a 2% increase in FY21 core profit to Rmb915m, behind of our estimate of 11% growth. The major reason was lower than expected dollar margin of Rmb0.49/cm (our estimate: Rmb0.53/cm). Turnover increased 18.8% to Rmb7.65bn, ahead of our estimated Rmb7.5bn. In particular, performance of value added services were encouraging with robust growth of 95% and 56% in turnover and gross profit respectively. Gas volume growth of 29% was also above expectation. The number of new connections was less than expected, particularly for rural coal-to-gas business due to delay in construction amid serious flooding in Henan. Net debt-equity ratio jumped from around 69% in FY20 to 96% in FY21. Final DPS of Rmb0.1457 was declared with total payout ratio up by 1ppt to 31%.

Despite challenges from weak economic growth in China and dollar margin pressure from high LNG prices, Tian Lun Gas gave a relatively optimistic guidance for FY22, in our view. Firstly, Tian Lun Gas expects gas volume growth of 20-25% in FY22, which is the highest amongst gas distributors under our coverage. We reckon the target is achievable because it has been actively acquiring more customers, with the customer base growing at 30% and 17% in FY20 and FY21 respectively. We believe its strong market presence in Henan rural township areas will allow Tian Lun Gas to enlarge its customer base by >10% going forward. In addition, Tian Lun Gas has focused on securing industrial and commercial (I&C) users, offering integrated energy solutions. This has increased gas volume growth from I&C users. In fact, overall gas volume growth in 2M2022 was strong at >20% and bodes well for the company to achieve its target. We project gas volume growth of 20-21% in FY22/23.

Second, Tian Lun Gas **expects dollar margin to decline marginally despite the current high LNG prices.** This is achieved through improvement in the cost pass-through mechanism, diversified procurement sources and higher gas volume from I&C users. In addition, cost pass-through has completed for I&C users and the positive impact will be reflected but partly offset by negative impact from high LNG prices in FY22. To be conservative, we have assumed dollar margin to go down by >Rmb0.02/cm to below Rmb0.47/cm. The LNG price is the key factor affecting Tian Lun Gas' dollar margin. While the Ukraine crisis is the major uncertainty on LNG prices, there are a few positive signs. First, Asian spot LNG prices fell recently as concerns over disruptions of Russian gas have slightly eased. Second, China's winter season is coming to an end and demand will be muted. In fact, LNG consumption in North-east Asia only accounted for 54% of global LNG imports in the first two months of 2022, compared with 67% in 2021. In addition, according to data recently released by PipeChina, spare LNG receiving capacity at its seven LNG terminals was around 10m tons for April to December 2022, which is equivalent to around 49% of its capacity. This figure is higher than that released in February, indicating cancellation of bookings due to lack of demand. All these indicate that the current high LNG price of over Rmb8,000/ton may not be sustainable. A downtrend will be a positive catalyst to Tian Lun Gas' share price.

In addition, Tian Lun Gas' strong market presence and large customer base in rural county areas in Henan bodes well for the development of its low carbon operation. With **a target of installing 1GW of rooftop solar power by 2025**, it has already commenced construction of its first pilot project in Shilin Town, Hebi. It targets to achieve 20MW of operating capacity, 80-100MW under construction and secure new orders of 300MW in the project pipeline. If these materialize, we estimate the above will bring in EPC revenue of around Rmb410m and Rmb800m with an installation of 100MW and 250MW in FY22/23 respectively. We have yet to factor in revenue from O&M which will be upside risk on our estimates.

Tian Lun Gas' share price has corrected as much as 42% since our downgrade in August 21. Currently, the counter trades at 5x FY22 PE which is around -2SD from its 5-year historical average. Such valuation is also close to the previous trough in March 20. Thus, we believe most negatives have been reflected. With a higher dividend payout ratio, the counter now offers an attractive yield of almost 7%. We upgrade our rating to BUY with TP of HK\$7.40 which is based on 0.95x PEG. The TP also implies 6.7x FY22 PE which is equivalent to -0.5SD of its 5-year historical average to reflect the Ukraine crisis risk.



Company Background

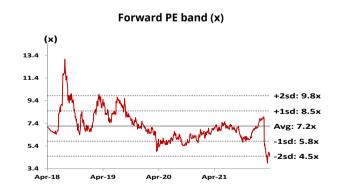
China Tian Lun Gas (Tian Lun Gas) was founded in 2002 by Mr. Zhang Yingcen and was listed in 2010 on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. The company is involved in the development and operations of city gas projects, vehicle gas refilling stations, and long-haul pipelines. It operates most of its city gas projects in the Henan province and continues to expand nationwide.

Income Statement (RMB m)

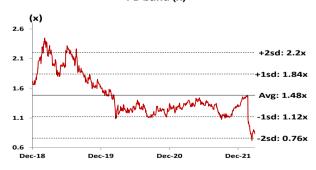
FY Dec	2020A	2021A	% cha vov
Revenue	6,440	7,650	18.8
Cost of Goods Sold	(4,654)	(5,871)	26.2
Gross Profit	1,786	1,779	(0.4)
Other Opng (Exp)/Inc	(231)	(264)	14.1
Operating Profit	1,555	1,516	(2.5)
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	0	0	nm
Associates & JV Inc	(46)	(10)	77.6
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(239)	(228)	4.6
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	148	86	(42.2)
Pre-tax Profit	1,418	1,363	(3.9)
Тах	(355)	(335)	(5.6)
Minority Interest	(20)	(27)	(35.6)
Net Profit	1,043	1,001	(4.1)
Net Profit before Except.	895	915	2.2
EBITDA	1,773	1,822	2.8
Margins & Ratio			
Gross Margins (%)	27.7	23.3	
Opg Profit Margin (%)	24.1	19.8	
Net Profit Margin (%)	16.2	13.1	

Source: Company, DBS HK

Historical PE and PB band



PB band (x)



Source: Thomson Reuters, DBS HK



FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
City and township gas sales volume growth (%) New connection for	7.2	7.9	28.6	21.3	20.3
residential users (city) ('000)	260.9	265.6	291.5	300.0	300.0
New connection for residential users (rural) ('000)	578.2	566.6	347.2	300.0	300.0
Dollar margin (Rmb / 100 m3) Source: Company, DBS HK	55.0	56.0	49.0	46.8	44.8

Segmental Breakdown (RMB m)

FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Revenues (RMB m)	2013A	20204	2021A	20221	20231
Sales of natural gas in cylinders	2,980	3,061	4,090	5,268	6,464
Sales of natural gas in bulk	1,081	674	1,027	1,284	1,605
Engineering construction services	2,355	2,550	2,222	2,383	2,841
All other segments	132	155	312	499	699
Total	6,549	6,440	7,650	9,434	11,608

Source: Company, DBS HK

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Income Statement (RMB m)

FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023
Revenue	6,549	6,440	7,650	9,434	11,60
Cost of Goods Sold	(4,845)	(4,654)	(5,871)	(7,440)	(9,272
Gross Profit	1,704	1,786	1,779	1,994	2,33
Other Opng (Exp)/Inc	(247)	(231)	(264)	(324)	(396
Operating Profit	1,457	1,555	1,516	1,670	1,94
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	0	0	0	0	(
Associates & JV Inc	(42)	(46)	(10)	(5)	(2
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(266)	(239)	(228)	(287)	(318
Dividend Income	0	0	0	0	
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	(22)	148	86	0	
- Pre-tax Profit	1,127	1,418	1,363	1,378	1,62
Тах	(314)	(355)	(335)	(338)	(398
Minority Interest	(24)	(20)	(27)	(30)	(33
Preference Dividend	0	0	0	0	
 Net Profit	789	1,043	1,001	1,009	1,19
Net Profit before Except.	811	895	915	1,009	1,19
EBITDA	1,651	1,773	1,822	2,024	2,35
Growth					
Revenue Gth (%)	28.1	(1.7)	18.8	23.3	23.
EBITDA Gth (%)	30.4	7.4	2.8	11.1	16.
Opg Profit Gth (%)	33.6	6.7	(2.5)	10.2	16.
Net Profit Gth (%)	38.7	32.2	(4.1)	0.8	17.
Margins & Ratio					
Gross Margins (%)	26.0	27.7	23.3	21.1	20.
Opg Profit Margin (%)	22.3	24.1	19.8	17.7	16.
Net Profit Margin (%)	12.1	16.2	13.1	10.7	10.
ROAE (%)	20.3	24.3	20.2	17.4	17.
ROA (%)	6.6	8.4	7.1	6.2	6.
ROCE (%)	10.6	11.3	9.8	9.3	9.
Div Payout Ratio (%)	29.7	26.3	28.1	32.3	32.
Net Interest Cover (x)	5.5	6.5	6.6	5.8	6.
Source: Company, DBS HK					

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Tian Lun Gas Holdings



Interim Income Statement (RMB m)

FY Dec	2H2019	1H2020	2H2020	1H2021	2H2021
Revenue	3,398	2,996	3,444	3,599	4,051
Cost of Goods Sold	(2,524)	(2,159)	(2,495)	(2,731)	(3,141)
Gross Profit	874	836	950	869	911
Other Oper. (Exp)/Inc	(136)	(108)	(124)	(109)	(155)
Operating Profit	739	729	826	760	755
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	0	0	0	0	0
Associates & JV Inc	(25)	(14)	(32)	(10)	(1)
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(145)	(128)	(111)	(111)	(117)
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	(17)	(49)	198	66	19
Pre-tax Profit	552	539	880	706	657
Тах	(160)	(151)	(204)	(175)	(160)
Minority Interest	(8)	(12)	(8)	(16)	(12)
Net Profit	384	375	668	515	485
Net profit bef Except.	401	424	471	449	466
Growth					
Revenue Gth (%)	5.7	(4.9)	1.4	20.2	17.6
Opg Profit Gth (%)	(24.2)	1.4	11.8	4.3	(8.5)
Net Profit Gth (%)	8.4	(7.3)	73.9	37.4	(27.4)
Margins					
Gross Margins (%)	25.7	27.9	27.6	24.1	22.5
Opg Profit Margins (%)	21.7	24.3	24.0	21.1	18.6
Net Profit Margins (%)	11.3	12.5	19.4	14.3	12.0
Source: Company, DBS HK					



FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Net Fixed Assets	2,850	3,035	3,519	4,283	5,493
Invts in Associates & JVs	0	0	0	0	C
Other LT Assets	5,191	5,521	6,371	6,247	6,124
Cash & ST Invts	1,350	1,640	1,015	1,698	1,857
Inventory	205	116	155	285	351
Debtors	2,057	2,555	3,823	4,714	5,765
Other Current Assets	286	52	223	275	339
Total Assets	11,939	12,918	15,105	17,502	19,928
ST Debt	1,312	2,295	2,058	1,858	1,738
Creditors	1,677	1,829	2,017	2,629	3,235
Other Current Liab	324	433	480	438	438
LT Debt	3,880	2,770	4,248	4,914	5,770
Other LT Liabilities	559	611	773	934	1,094
Shareholder's Equity	3,891	4,699	5,218	6,389	7,279
Minority Interests	297	281	310	340	373
Total Cap. & Liab.	11,939	12,918	15,105	17,502	19,928
Non-Cash Wkg. Capital	548	461	1,703	2,207	2,782
Net Cash/(Debt)	(3,843)	(3,425)	(5,291)	(5,074)	(5,651
Debtors Turn (avg days)	114.7	130.7	152.1	165.1	164.
Creditors Turn (avg days)	132.8	145.8	126.4	119.8	120.8
Inventory Turn (avg days)	16.2	13.3	8.9	11.3	13.1
Asset Turnover (x)	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6
Current Ratio (x)	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.4	1.5
Quick Ratio (x)	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.4
Net Debt/Equity (X)	0.9	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.7
rice bebuilding (i)		07	1.0	0.8	0.8
	1.0	0.7	1.0	0.0	0.0
Net Debt/Equity ex MI (X) Capex to Debt (%)	1.0 6.1	0.7 5.6	5.8	14.8	20.0
Net Debt/Equity ex MI (X)					

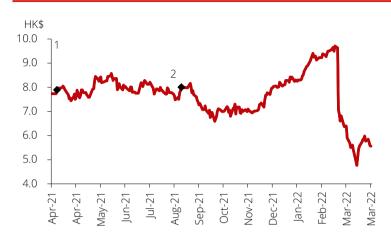
Cash Flow Statement (RMB m)

FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Pre-Tax Profit	1,127	1,418	1,363	1,378	1,622
Dep. & Amort.	236	264	317	360	414
Tax Paid	(170)	(261)	(261)	(178)	(238)
Assoc. & JV Inc/(loss)	0	0	0	5	2
(Pft)/ Loss on disposal of FAs	10	10	10	0	0
Chg in Wkg.Cap.	(234)	(247)	(1,251)	(549)	(681)
Other Operating CF	324	206	934	332	425
Met Operating CF	1,294	1,390	1,112	1,348	1,543
Capital Exp.(net)	(317)	(281)	(366)	(1,000)	(1,500)
Other Invts.(net)	0	0	0	0	0
Invts in Assoc. & JV	0	(21)	(21)	0	0
Div from Assoc & JV	8	0	0	(5)	(2)
Other Investing CF	59	(562)	(651)	0	0
Net Investing CF	(250)	(865)	(1,038)	(1,005)	(1,502)
Div Paid	(212)	(235)	(270)	(253)	(300)
Chg in Gross Debt	(295)	66	1,241	466	736
Capital Issues	0	0	0	414	0
Other Financing CF	(266)	(60)	(1,670)	(287)	(318)
Met Financing CF	(773)	(230)	(699)	341	118
Currency Adjustments	3	(5)	0	0	0
Chg in Cash	274	290	(625)	683	159
Opg CFPS (RMB)	1.54	1.63	2.36	1.81	2.11
Free CFPS (RMB)	0.99	1.11	0.75	0.33	0.04

Source: Company, DBS HK



Target Price & Ratings History



S.N	o. Date	Closing Price	12-mth Target Price	Rating
1:	7-Apr-21	HK\$7.89	HK\$9.20	Buy
2:	27-Aug-21	HK\$8.00	HK\$9.00	Hold

Source: DBS HK Analyst: Patricia Yeung

lan Chui



DBS HK recommendations are based on an Absolute Total Return* Rating system, defined as follows:

STRONG BUY (>20% total return over the next 3 months, with identifiable share price catalysts within this time frame)

BUY (>15% total return over the next 12 months for small caps, >10% for large caps)

HOLD (-10% to +15% total return over the next 12 months for small caps, -10% to +10% for large caps)

FULLY VALUED (negative total return, i.e., > -10% over the next 12 months)

SELL (negative total return of > -20% over the next 3 months, with identifiable share price catalysts within this time frame)

*Share price appreciation + dividends

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Sources for all charts and tables are DBS HK unless otherwise specified.

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