

FACT SHEET

On June 1, Brazilian company Petrobras was awarded by the NZ Govt a five year exploratory license for oil and gas in the Raukumara Basin. The license starts from a mere 4 kilometres and goes out to 110 km.

The Raukumara Basin is situated in the East Cape/ Bay of Plenty region.

The granted permit area is 12,330 sq km.

There are three stages to the exploratory permit:

Stage One – Over a period of 18 months there will be the gathering and then the analysing of 2D seismic data. In the initial two months of Stage One, a large ship will tow an array of compressed airguns throughout the Raukumara Basin shooting sonic booms of up to 240dB towards the seabed (Imagine standing next to a landing Space Shuttle and you get the idea of how loud that is). This data will then be sent back up to the ship to be collected and further analysed.

If Petrobras believe it viable to continue then they will move onto:

Stage Two – Over the next 18 months they will be gathering and analysing 3D seismic data in much the same manner as Stage One.

If Stage One and Two proves viable then Petrobras will drill an exploratory drill.

The massive oil and gas spill in the Gulf of Mexico, which took three months to cap and spilled millions of barrels of oil, was an exploratory drill.

The depth of the exploratory drill in the Gulf of Mexico was 1500 metres. In the Raukumara Basin proposed depths range from 1500 m to 3000 m.

NZ has almost no capacity to deal with a major spill and has no adequate or enforceable means of compensation.

The Raukumara Basin sits on a major and active fault line. In a high seismic activity area such as the Raukumara Basin there is an extremely high possibility that there would be damage to any sub-sea installations (wells, pipe lines) in the probable event of an earth quake

Who is Petrobras?

Petrobras is the fourth largest energy company in the world. They are financially backed by the Brazilian Govt, who in 2009 invested 82 billion dollars. The US Govt has also invested over 2 billion dollars to support Petrobras to drill elsewhere in the world.

Petrobras have a shocking environmental record of oil and gas spills and understating their accidents. According to Greenpeace Brazil, between 1975 – 2001 Petrobras had 18 major spills, 141 people were killed and approximately 29 million of barrels of oil have been spilt. In 2001, the world's largest production platform, owned by Petrobras, exploded killing 11 workers and then sank spilling over a million gallons of oil and gas.

In August 2010, Petrobras had a further spill on the coast of Rio De Janeiro. Petrobras official report said the oil spill was minor and no impact on the beach or wildlife. However, independent reports from newspapers and TV, say oil was washed up on the beach turning tourists away and affecting their sea and bird life.

We are dealing with a Petrochemical industry that understates and covers up accidents and information. We are also dealing with a Govt that is very pro mining and is opening vast amounts of NZ waters to mining companies.

Deep-sea offshore drilling is dangerous and a high risk to our environment. The Petrochemical industry does not have the technology to safely mine offshore deep-sea oil and gas.

Drilling for fossil fuels, such as oil and gas, is unsustainable. It has taken the world to naturally make oil over a timeframe of 150 million years. It has taken us approximately 150 years to use 50 % of the world's oil.

We are seriously running out of oil.

The resistance to nuclear power in Aotearoa is based on the long term harm that a major leak would do to our natural environment. We only have to ask people from the Gulf of Mexico or the Niger Delta to gauge the reality of what could happen if an oil spill was to occur.

Now is the time to tell the Government that we want to invest in clean green energy alternatives.