

Beehive Multi-Well Exploration Drilling Environment Plan

1. Purpose of this report

NOPSEMA has accepted the Beehive Multi-Well Exploration Drilling Environment Plan (the EP) submitted by EOG Resources Australia Block WA-488 Pty Ltd ('EOG') (the titleholder) for exploration drilling activities within exploration permit WA-488-P in Commonwealth waters of the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf (JBG), located approximately 77 km off the Western Australian (WA) coastline. The activity is scheduled to be completed between 1 January 2025 and 31 December 2029.

As required by the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2023 (the Environment Regulations), the public was provided with an opportunity to comment on the EP between 8 July 2024 and 7 August 2024. There were two public comments received during the public comment period. After this period, EOG took into account public comments and prepared a Report on Public Comment which is published on NOPSEMA's website¹.

Following the public comment period, the titleholder submitted the EP to NOPSEMA on 16 September 2024 for assessment. NOPSEMA has since completed its assessment of the EP and determined that it is reasonably satisfied that the EP meets the criteria for acceptance². NOPSEMA made this decision on 2 January 2025.

This report summarises how NOPSEMA took public comments into account in making its decision. Where comments were received outside of the public comment period, these comments were not considered by NOPSEMA in its assessment of the EP³.

This report references the accepted Beehive Multi-Well Exploration Drilling Environment Plan (Document No. 996161-2024-Beehive-MW-Drilling-EP-Rev2) submitted by EOG, which is available on the NOPSEMA website and should be referred to for further information.

1.1. Key matters that NOPSEMA took into account

During its assessment of the EP, NOPSEMA considered each public comment received during the public comment period and identified the following relevant key matters⁴:

- concerns about the impacts of artificial light emissions from the activity on threatened marine turtle species;
- concerns about the impacts of underwater noise emissions from the activity on marine mammals and other sound sensitive species;
- concerns about the impact of vessels movements from the activity on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES);
- concerns that the titleholder has not adequately evaluated greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from the activity;

¹ EOG Beehive Multi-Well Exploration Drilling: Public Comment Report, September 2024

² Environment Regulations, Regulation 34

³ Environment Regulations, Regulation 30(6)(b)

⁴ Environment Regulations, Regulation 30(6)(a)

- concerns that the activity is inconsistent with Australia's commitment to the Paris agreement;
- concerns about the impacts of an oil spill on the marine environment, including marine protected areas and sensitive environment receptors; and
- concerns about the titleholder's capacity to respond to an oil spill.

NOPSEMA took into account these public comments and relevant key matters, and also the Titleholder's Report on Public Comment¹ during the EP assessment process (in accordance with relevant NOPSEMA policies and procedures), in determining that it was reasonably satisfied that the EP met the criteria for acceptance².

In relation to the key matters listed above, NOPSEMA concluded that the EP demonstrated that environmental impacts and risks of the activity will be reduced to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP) and to an acceptable level. This is because, the EP demonstrated that:

- the costs of implementing any further control measures would be grossly disproportionate to the benefits to the environment that could be gained; and
- the defined acceptable levels of impact and risk were well informed (based on reasonable internal and external context, legislative and industry standards) and would be met for the duration of the activity.

1.2. Information relevant to NOPSEMA's decision:

In making the decision to accept this EP, NOPSEMA took into account:

- the Environment Regulations;
- NOPSEMA Assessment Policy (PL0050), Environment Plan Assessment Policy (PL1347), Environment Plan Decision Making Guidelines (GL1721), Environment Plan Content Requirement Guidance Note (GN1344) and Consultation in the course of preparing an Environment Plan Guideline (GL2086);
- the Beehive Multi-Well Exploration Drilling Environment Plan (Document No. 996161-2024-Beehive-MW-Drilling-EP-Rev2), and the titleholder's Oil Pollution Emergency Plan and Operational and Scientific Monitoring Plan (Document No. 96161-2022-Beehive#1-Drilling-OPEP-Rev6);
- the information provided and objections or claims raised by relevant persons through the relevant persons consultation process;
- the comments raised during the public comment period;
- relevant plans of management and threatened species recovery plans developed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and relevant guidance published by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW); and
- relevant legislative requirements that apply to the activity and are relevant to the environmental management of the activity.

2. Next steps

Responsibility for the ongoing environmental performance of the exploratory drilling activity remains, at all times, with EOG.

NOPSEMA has legislated responsibilities to inspect and investigate offshore petroleum and greenhouse gas storage activities, and to enforce compliance with environmental law. These functions will be applied to this activity in accordance with NOPSEMA's policies.

3. Sensitive Information

Sensitive information received during the public comment period, such as the names and contact details of commenters and specific information identified by the commenter or relevant person as 'sensitive', is not published in this report. Sensitive information is contained in a sensitive information part of the EP which has been considered by NOPSEMA during its assessment process.

4. Further information

If you would like further information about the activity, please contact the titleholder's nominated liaison person specified in the EP and on NOPSEMA's webpage for the Beehive Multi-Well Exploration Drilling activity.

If you would like to be notified of regulatory information on the activity, such as start and end dates and enforcement actions (if any), please subscribe to updates from the [Underway Offshore page](#) on NOPSEMA's website.