



## Greater Exmouth Multi-client Marine Seismic Surveys EP

This document provides notification of NOPSEMA’s decision made under regulation 10 of the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2009 (Environment Regulations). In this instance, NOPSEMA is still not reasonably satisfied that the environment plan meets the criteria set out in regulation 10A, and therefore must refuse to accept the environment plan.

### Submission information

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| <b>Titleholder<sup>1</sup>:</b>  | Spectrum Geo Pty Ltd   |
| <b>Environment plan:</b>   | Greater Exmouth Multi- client Marine Seismic Surveys   |
| <b>Petroleum title(s)/Application number(s):</b>                         | Title applicant<br>SPA – A37639  |
| <b>Date submitted to NOPSEMA:</b>  | 07/07/2016   |
| <b>Activities type(s)<sup>2</sup>:</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seismic Survey</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Activity overview:</b><br><i>As described on the NOPSEMA website.</i> | <p>In the North-west Marine Region (NWMR) offshore from Western Australia (WA), the geophysical company Spectrum Geo Pty Ltd (Spectrum) proposes to acquire multi-client marine seismic surveys (MSS) within the Greater Exmouth operational area. The Greater Exmouth operational area comprises of an area of approximately 105,600 square kilometres (km<sup>2</sup>) of Australian Commonwealth waters. The Greater Exmouth MSS may be acquired as a single survey, or as separate surveys (not concurrently) depending on weather, vessel availability and regulatory and operator financial approvals.</p> <p>At the closest point, the southern boundary of the operational area is ~ 67 km from the nearest land (Hermite Island) and ~ 124 km from the mainland coastline (Dampier town). South of the operational area are the Montebello Islands Commonwealth marine reserve boundary (~28 km away) and Barrow Island marine management area (~80 km away). The northeast corner of the operational area overlaps with the multiple use zone of the Argo-Rowley Terrace CMR and is ~50 km to the boundary of the Argo-Rowley Terrace CMR Marine Park zone (IUCN zone II). The Greater Exmouth operational area excludes WA State waters.</p> <p>Water depths throughout the operational area range from 33–3,300 m, and seismic activities will not occur in water shallower than 100 m, or within 12 km of the Glomar shoals.</p> <p><b>Operational Details</b><br/>In terms of technical methods and procedures, the proposed MSS will be similar to others conducted in Australian marine waters. No unique or unusual equipment or operations are proposed. The proposed MSS will be undertaken</p> |

using a purpose-built, seismic survey vessel. During the proposed activities, the survey vessel will traverse a series of pre-determined sail lines within the operational area at a speed of approximately 8–9 km/hour. The operating pressure for the acoustic source will be approximately 2,000 psi with a maximum volume of 4,350 cubic inches.

#### Timing of the Activity

The Greater Exmouth EP is designed for a duration of three years. The timing of commencement and duration of individual surveys have not yet been determined, but the first survey (once the EP is accepted) will not occur before Q4 2017. The MSS activity will also not occur during peak pygmy blue whale migration periods. Furthermore, the commencement of each survey will be dependent on fair sea state conditions suitable for marine seismic acquisition, vessel(s) availability, client data schedule requirements and granting of approvals from the appropriate government bodies.

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| <b>Decision:</b>         | Refuse to accept   |
| <b>Decision date:</b>    | 29/09/2016   |
| <b>Decision made by:</b> | Representative of NOPSEMA: A/Environment Manager - Seismic & Production Operations |

## Basis of decision

NOPSEMA has assessed the environment plan in accordance with its assessment policies and procedures. On completion of assessment, NOPSEMA has decided that it is not reasonably satisfied that the environment plan meets the criteria below as set out in regulation 10A of the Environment Regulations:

- (a) is appropriate for the nature and scale of the activity
- (c) demonstrates that the environmental impacts and risks of the activity will be of an acceptable level
- (g) demonstrates that:
  - (i) the titleholder has carried out the consultations required by Division 2.2A
  - (ii) the measures (if any) that the titleholder has adopted, or proposes to adopt, because of the consultations are appropriate

## Titleholder requirements

NOPSEMA's decision to refuse to accept the environment plan means that assessment of the submission is complete. A titleholder can submit a new environment plan for the same activity to NOPSEMA for assessment. However, this will constitute a new submission and attract an environment plan levy.

## How to get further information

If you have any further questions regarding the activity it is suggested you contact the titleholder's nominated liaison person for the activity.

If you would like to access any further information regarding this decision, or would like to contact NOPSEMA please email [environment@nopsema.gov.au](mailto:environment@nopsema.gov.au).

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<sup>1</sup> A titleholder includes an applicant for a petroleum access authority, petroleum special prospecting authority, pipeline licence, greenhouse gas search authority or greenhouse gas special authority under sub-regulation 9(2).

<sup>2</sup> Activity type as listed in the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Regulatory Levies) Regulations 2004