

## Baldfish Drilling

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 providing an opportunity to modify and resubmit the environment plan as it is not reasonably satisfied that the plans meets the acceptance criteria set out in the regulations.

### Submission information

<b>Titleholder<sup>1</sup>:</b>	Esso Deepwater Gippsland Pty Ltd
<b>Environment plan:</b>	Baldfish Drilling Environment Plan, Rev 0
<b>Petroleum title(s)/Application number(s):</b>	VIC/P70
<b>Date submitted to NOPSEMA:</b>	14/12/2017
<b>Activities type(s)<sup>2</sup>:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drilling</li> </ul>
<b>Activity overview:</b> <i>As described on the NOPSEMA website.</i>	<p>The Baldfish operational area is located approximately 90 km from shore in Exploration Permit Area VIC/P790. Water depth within VIC/P70 ranges from 200 m to over 3 km, with the two drill locations, Hairtail-1 and Baldfish-1, at ~359m and ~665m respectively.</p> <p>Block VIC/P70, in the deepwater Gippsland basin, was acquired by Esso Deepwater Gippsland Pty Ltd (“Esso Deepwater”), a wholly owned subsidiary of Exxon Mobil Corporation, in Q2, 2017. It is the first new exploration acreage acquired by ExxonMobil in Australia since 2010, and the first in the Gippsland Basin since 1996.</p> <p>Vic/P70 incorporates the area previously the subject of blocks VIC/P45 and VIC/P59, previously explored by Apache Energy. Since acquiring the field, Esso Deepwater has accelerated exploration drilling plans in response to concerns about domestic gas shortages.</p> <p>The scope of the EP encompasses all activities relating to the Baldfish exploration drilling activities within the operational area of the Baldfish wells as outlined in this EP, including the 500m radius exclusion zone around each well within Exploration Block VIC/P70, in Commonwealth waters.</p> <p>This EP demonstrates that Esso Deepwater has a sound understanding of how its operations interact with the environment and demonstrates the implementation of controls to reduce environmental risks to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP) and acceptable levels. It also sets appropriate environmental performance outcomes, standards, and measurement criteria for these controls.</p>
<b>Decision:</b>	Not reasonably satisfied
<b>Decision date:</b>	15/01/2018



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<b>Resubmission due date<sup>3</sup>:</b>	14 February 2018
<b>Decision made by:</b>	Representative of NOPSEMA: Environment Manager - Drilling & Developments

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## 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
- (b) demonstrates that the environmental impacts and risks of the activity will be reduced to as low as reasonably practicable
- (c) demonstrates that the environmental impacts and risks of the activity will be of an acceptable level
- (d) provides for appropriate environmental performance outcomes, environmental performance standards and measurement criteria
- (e) includes an appropriate implementation strategy and monitoring, recording and reporting arrangements
- (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

In accordance with regulation 10, the titleholder is required to modify and resubmit the environment plan. Upon resubmission of the plan, NOPSEMA will continue to assess the submission in accordance with its assessment policies and make a decision under regulation 10. After a titleholder has been provided with reasonable opportunity to modify and resubmit an environment plan, NOPSEMA will make a final decision on whether to accept or refuse to accept the environment plan.

## 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

<sup>3</sup> NOPSEMA sets the proposed timeframe for resubmission; after which NOPSEMA may determine a reasonable opportunity has been given and NOPSEMA may refuse to accept the plan. Titleholders can request an extended timeframe.