12th Gabon Shallow and Deep Water Licensing Round
The forthcoming license includes both shallow and deep water blocks offshore Gabon, leveraging the new insights on exploration potential offered by use of new 3D seismic data on the margin, over a number of different exploration plays.

New commercial terms announced encouraging new investment in Gabon's petroleum sector offshore.

The blocks on offer are shown on the map (left). They are generally covered by new multi-client 3D seismic ensuring the availability of cost effective access to the best data to evaluate the acreage.

Offshore Gabon offers significant and material prospectivity in both new and proven oil plays along the margin. The offshore area may be divided by geology into three distinct areas; North, Central and South. Although exploration has been undertaken in shallow waters along this whole margin, improvements in imaging of modern seismic, particularly 3D seismic, mean that new traps and reservoirs can now be identified which previous technologies were unable to image. The DGH is ensuring that the best available seismic is available through multi-client companies for potential investors to evaluate the acreage.

Exploration for oil trapped in reservoirs that have never been seen before, on state of the art seismic data with well data to understand the working of the hydrocarbon system gives new investment opportunities to discover significant volumes of new oil. Existing infrastructure allows this oil to be rapidly developed. In hand with this, the new fiscal terms for sharing revenue from production being introduced by the DGH allows companies to recover investment quicker, and to improve investment returns, reflecting the risks of investment in exploration and development.

With these measures the DGH is introducing a powerful opportunity to evaluate, invest and develop profitable new business in the waters offshore Gabon.
Northern Gabon

Offshore Prospectivity

Exploration offshore the North of Gabon has focused on shallow oil plays in the post-salt in shallow water. This has led to several oil discoveries, proving a post-salt hydrocarbon system is working.

The pre-salt has been much less explored with some gas discovered close to shore, however, North Gabon offers pre- and post-salt oil plays unexplored by previous exploration initiatives in the past because of the available imaging and drilling technologies of that time.

These areas can now be approached with modern state of the art seismic imaging and drilling capabilities. Recent industry evaluations indicate that near to shore, the deeper pre-salt syn-rift offers structural plays with good quality reservoirs, sitting above oil prone source kitchens.

Additionally further offshore to the west the post-salt is so thick that post-salt source rocks will also be oil generative, where post-salt "sub-salt" plays are identified on modern seismic data. These are unexplored to date supplementing the proven salt dome drapes, salt diapir flanks and stratigraphic plays.

Southern and Central Gabon

Offshore Prospectivity

In the central area offshore Gabon, licence blocks are offered in the outer part of the Ogooue Delta, where water depths deterred drilling in early exploration phases. Here simple structures in the post-salt remain undrilled in close proximity to oil discoveries and fields in the prolific shallow water area. Sandstone channel, slope and fan plays are all envisaged draped over and around the underlying salt diapirs. However, stratigraphic targets can now be imaged in these areas that could not be resolved with older seismic technologies. Additionally the carbonates of the post-salt are now imaged to have high porosity intervals sitting either above post-salt mature source rocks, or next to salt welds providing migration windows for oil coming from the syn-rift.

In the Ogooue Delta sub-salt plays are almost completely unexplored, yielding an exploration opportunity of unparalleled magnitude where new imaging allows sufficient risk reduction.

In the South of Gabon, pre-salt plays dominate prospectivity. However, in addition to the proven Gamba Sandstone post-rift pre-salt plays, we now see multiple, material, syn-rift anticlines previously hidden in poorly imaged seismic. The only wells to test this play in South Gabon have been successful, and the opportunity exists to participate in exploration for a new oil play adjacent to infrastructure in a mature basin administered by a sophisticated and experienced DGH administration.
Although oil discoveries have been made offshore and onshore Gabon for nearly 60 years, much oil and gas remains to be discovered, being previously hidden by poor imaging or unreachable with available drilling technologies. This is self-evident from the recent string of successes drilled deep offshore Gabon. Oil and gas condensate has been consistently discovered illustrating the rich potential of these basins.

The Multi-Client data that supports the evaluations of the Licensing Round (see map right) can be obtained from TGS, CGG, PGS and ION.

The successes of recent years are only the beginning for new value creation in Gabon. The initiatives of the DGH to promote a new license round, including the introduction of new fiscal terms that better reflect the reward due for invested exploration risks, is the stage upon which both new and familiar actors can perform, and be successful opening a new era for exploration offshore Gabon.

On behalf of the DGH we wish you success in your evaluation endeavours and look forward to welcoming you to new exploration adventures offshore Gabon.

License Round Roadshows

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Bid round closes 30 April 2020
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