

Our Ref: 01.08.06.15/527C
UKOP Doc Ref:1371998



Offshore Petroleum Regulator
for Environment & Decommissioning

CNOOC PETROLEUM EUROPE LIMITED
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Registered No.: 01051137

Date: 27th November 2024

Department for Energy Security &
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Dear Sir / Madam

**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2020
SCOTT**

A screening direction for the project detailed in your application, reference PR/2521/0 (Version 3), dated 18th November 2024 has been issued under regulation 6 of the above Regulations. The screening direction notice, and any relevant conditions and comments are attached. A copy of this screening direction will be forwarded to the application consultees, the Oil and Gas Authority and published on the gov.uk website.

If you have any queries in relation to this screening direction or the attachments, please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] or email the Environmental Management Team at opred@energysecurity.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully

Validity unknown

Digitally signed by Department for Energy Security
and Net Zero
Date: 2024.11.27 14:16:59 GMT
Reason: On behalf of the Secretary of State
Location: Offshore Petroleum Regulator for
Environment and Decommissioning



**THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING
AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2020**

**SCREENING DIRECTION CONFIRMING THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT IS NOT REQUIRED**

SCOTT

PR/2521/0 (Version 3)

Whereas CNOOC PETROLEUM EUROPE LIMITED has made an application dated 18th November 2024, under The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020, and whereas the Secretary of State has considered the application and is satisfied that the project is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment; in exercise of the powers available under regulation 6, the Secretary of State hereby directs that the application for consent in respect of the project need not be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment, provided that the project is carried out as described in the application for the screening direction and in accordance with the conditions specified in the attached schedule.

In giving a screening direction under regulation 6 of the above Regulations, the Secretary of State accordingly gives agreement to the Oil and Gas Authority to the grant of consent for the project as detailed in the application, PCON/5161/2 and PCON/8090/0.

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THE OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION, PRODUCTION, UNLOADING AND STORAGE (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2020

SCHEDULE OF SCREENING DIRECTION CONDITIONS

The grant of this screening direction is conditional upon the screening direction holder complying with the following conditions.

1 Screening direction validity

This screening direction shall be valid from 29 November 2024.

2 Change to production level(s)

The holder of the screening direction shall ensure that the change in the level(s) of production do not exceed the amended level(s) detailed in the application for the screening direction, and in the application for consent relating to the approval for the getting of petroleum issued under the relevant production licence Model Clause.

3 Prevention of pollution

The holder of the screening direction must ensure that appropriate measures are taken to minimise discharges, emissions and waste, in particular through the appropriate use of technology; and to ensure that necessary measures are taken to prevent incidents affecting the environment or, where they occur, to limit their consequences in relation to the environment.

4 Inspections

Should the Department consider it necessary or expedient for an inspector appointed by the Secretary of State to investigate whether the conditions of the screening direction are being complied with, the holder of the screening direction shall afford the inspector with such facilities and assistance as the inspector considers necessary to exercise the powers conferred by the regulations. The holder of the screening direction shall additionally ensure that copies (electronic or paper) of the screening direction and any other relevant documents are available for inspection by the inspector at:

- a) the premises of the holder of the screening direction; and
- b) the facilities undertaking the project covered by the screening direction.

5 Check monitoring

Should the Department consider it necessary or expedient to undertake an independent monitoring programme to assess the impact of the project covered by the screening direction, the screening direction holder shall afford the Department



with such facilities and assistance as the Department considers necessary to undertake the work.

6 Atmospheric emissions returns

Following completion of the project covered by the screening direction, the holder of the screening direction shall report all relevant atmospheric emissions, such as combustion emissions, using the appropriate Environmental Emissions Monitoring System (EEMS) reporting forms.

7 Unauthorised deposits

Following completion of the project covered by the screening direction, the holder of the screening direction shall recover any materials accidentally or temporarily deposited on the seabed, such as debris, temporary containers, structures or deposits, or scientific instruments, and shall return the materials to land. If it is not possible to recover any of these deposits, full details of the materials remaining on the seabed must be reported to the Department in accordance with the requirements of Petroleum Operations Notice No.2 (PON2).

8 Screening direction variation

In the event that the holder of the screening direction proposes changes to any of the particulars detailed in the application for a screening direction, the holder must notify the Department immediately and submit an application for a post screening direction amendment. The post screening direction must be in place prior to the amended proposals taking effect.

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COMMENTS ON THE APPLICATION FOR SCREENING DIRECTION

Section 1

The attention of screening direction holders is drawn to the following provisions regarding The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2020.

1) You are deemed to have satisfied yourself that there are no barriers, legal or otherwise, to the carrying out of the project covered by the screening direction. The issue of a screening direction does not absolve the screening direction holder from obtaining such authorisations, consents etc that may be required under any other legislation.

2) The Department would draw your attention to the following comments:

The Department has no comments

3) All communications relating to the screening direction should be addressed to:

opred@energysecurity.gov.uk

or

Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment & Decommissioning
Department for Energy Security & Net Zero
AB1 Building
Crimon Place
Aberdeen
AB10 1BJ



SCHEDULE OF SCREENING DIRECTION DECISION REASONS

The Secretary of State has decided that, based on the information provided, the project is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The main reasons for this decision are:

1) Decision reasons

The following provides a summary of the assessment undertaken to determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required for this project, summarises the information considered, the potential impacts and sets out the main reasons for the decision made. In considering whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is required or not, the following have been taken into account:

- a. The information provided by the developer;
- b. The matters listed in Schedule 5 of The Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration, Production, Unloading and Storage (Environmental Impact Regulations 2020) (the Regulations);
- c. The results of any preliminary verifications or assessments of the effects on the environment of the project; and
- d. Any conditions that the Secretary of State may attach to the agreement to the grant of consent.

Characteristics of the project

Having regard, in particular, to the matters identified at paragraphs 1(a) to (g) of Schedule 5 to the Regulations, the characteristics of the project include the following:-

Summary of the project

Increase in oil and gas production from the Scott field as a consequence of the J47 and J48 wells coming online and the drilling of the ST04 well.

Description of the project

This project consists of an increase in oil production of less than 500 tonnes per day and gas production of less than 500,000 cubic meters per day at the Scott field due to two new producing wells (J47 and J48) coming online in 2024 and the proposed drilling of the ST04 well. This meets the definition of "project" under the Offshore EIA regulations (2020). The existing production consent is valid until 2024 and this application seeks to extend this to 2027.

No cumulative impacts are expected to occur with any other existing or approved

projects currently, from the project.

There is no change to the assessment of a major accident. The Developer has control measures in place to reduce the risk of a major accident occurring and the probability of such an event occurring is very low.

It is not considered to be likely that the project will be affected by natural disasters.

Other than the matters considered further below, there is not likely to be any significant impact of the project on population and human health.

Location of the project

Having regard, in particular, to the matters identified at paragraphs 2(a) to (c) of Schedule 5 to the Regulations, the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the project has been considered as follows:-

The Scott field is located in Block 15/22a in the central North Sea, approximately 77 km from the UK/Norwegian median line and 142 km from the coastline of northeast Scotland.

The mean water depth is approximately 140 m at the Scott platform and the wave height ranges from 2.11 - 2.40 m.

Samples taken from within the Scott area are represented by homogenous fine material (silt and clay or mud) with low but variable proportions of sand and minimal coarse material. Sample locations around the site were classified as 'circalittoral fine mud'.

A survey of the area showed that the area had a moderately diverse macrofaunal community, dominated by burrowing anemone and polychaetes. Juvenile ocean quahog were also present in low densities within the platform area. The epifauna within the area is sparse, comprising of sea pens, mobile crustaceans such as hermit crab and squat lobsters. The data also shows the presence of burrowing megafauna, with the slender sea pen observed (<15 cm). These sea pens were observed along the survey route and was considered 'frequent' on the SACFOR scale. Burrow densities were observed to be common or frequent in ROV footage, and the habitat 'sea pen and burrowing megafauna' is potentially present.

Numerous strings of pockmarks were observed which were interpreted to be relict, likely originating from gas seep features. There was no evidence of the Annex I leaking gases or submarine structures made by leaking gases during any survey of the area.

Minke whale, long finned pilot whale, common dolphin, white-beaked dolphin, Atlantic white-sided dolphin and harbour porpoise have all been recorded in the vicinity of the Scott area. Densities of the species are categorised as low to moderate, with the exception of the common dolphin, harbour porpoise and white beaked dolphin which



are observed in high density from May to September/October. Grey and harbour seals may be encountered but due to the distance from shore, it is unlikely that the area is visited regularly or in high numbers. Density maps show the presence of grey seals and harbour seals in the area of the platform as between >0% and <0.05% and >0% and <0.001% of the mean percentage at sea population per 25 km² respectively.

Seabird oil sensitivity in the vicinity of the Scott field is low to extremely high throughout the year.

The Scott platform is not situated within any conservation areas, with the nearest area of conservation interest being the Scanner Pockmark SAC which lies 45 km to the east. This site is designating for the Annex I habitat 'submarine structures made by leaking gases'. The nearest NCMPA is the Central Fladen NCMPA which is 64 km to the north, which is designed for the protection of burrowed mud including sea pens and burrowing megafauna.

The Scott field lies within ICES rectangle 45F0, which is a spawning area for cod, Norway lobster and Norway pout. The Scott field is situated within nursery areas for anglerfish, blue whiting, cod, European hake, herring, ling, mackerel, Norway lobster, Norway pout, sandeel, spotted ray, spurdog, sprat and whiting. The area is mainly targeted for shellfish, followed by demersal species and fishing effort would be considered low. The operations take place in an established 500 m zone and thus fishing activity will not be impacted.

The Scott field is not within a MoD practice and exercise area and there are no military restrictions. Shipping activity within the area is relatively low. There are three wrecks within 10 km of the Scott platform area, but none are wrecks designated under the Protection of Military Remains or are of Historical Importance. The closest renewable development is the Acorn Carbon Capture and Storage area, which is located 36 km south-west of the platform.

Given the location of the project, the areas identified at paragraphs 2(c)(i), (iii), (iv), (vi), (vii) and (viii) of Schedule 5 are not likely to be affected by the project.

Type and characteristics of the potential impact

In accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 5 to the Regulations, the likely significant effects of the project on the environment have been considered. Potential effects on the environment from the activities associated with the project and were assessed, including impacts arising from atmospheric emissions, seabed disturbance, physical presence, planned discharges and accidental spills. Other than the matters considered further below, there is not likely to be any significant impact of the project or on population and human health.

The proposed increase in oil and gas production from the Scott field is the result of two new producing wells (J47 and J48) coming online in 2024 and the proposed drilling of the ST04 well. The increases are within the design capacity of the existing



Scott facilities. There will be only minor changes to the operating mode, emissions or discharges from the Scott platform. Flaring and venting operations will remain unchanged as result of the increase in production and therefore no significant change in the atmospheric emissions or environmental impacts are expected.

No increase in produced water discharge volumes and discharged oil is expected and there are no requirements for an increase in chemicals due to the increase in production.

The probability of an accidental event leading to a release from the platform or a loss of the inventory will not increase as a result of the revised production.

There are no expected transboundary impacts as a result of the project and no cumulative impacts have been identified given the other known existing and approved projects in the wider area.

The requested increase in production is not expected to result in an increase in the total quantity of oil and gas to be extracted over the lifetime of the Scott field.

It is considered that the increase in production from the Scott field is not likely to have a significant impact on other offshore activities or other users of the sea, the seabed, marine life or cetacean species and no cumulative impacts are expected to occur. The development is in line with the policies of the Scottish Marine Plan.

Decision

Taking the above considerations into account, the Secretary of State has concluded that the project is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment and that an environmental impact assessment is not required.

2) Mitigation of significant effects

The following are features of the project or measures envisaged that the developer has proposed to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment:

Not applicable