

## Cooper Joins African Oil Hunt

**Junior oil producer and explorer Cooper Energy has entered into a JV with UK-based Afrex Ltd and Pancontinental Oil & Gas to explore for oil in the Mediterranean Sea off Morocco.**

The company sees it as a frontier-style exploration play with the potential for large oil and gas discoveries.

The joint venture covers the 6,457sqkm Mediterranean Est Reconnaissance Licence, an offshore block bounded by the Morocco-Spain maritime border to the north and the Morocco-Algeria maritime border to the east.



Cooper Energy chief executive Mike Scott said the company is very excited about its first venture outside Australia.

"This project is a low-cost entry opportunity with a potentially high future value," he said. "This is a very good fit to one of our key objective areas.

"To meet our growth aspirations we are evaluating several other business opportunities so that we can build an exciting exploration portfolio that contains a number of large leads and prospects."

Cooper will earn a 20 percent interest in the licence by funding up to US\$175,000 for the first year's minimum work programme, with a backing guarantee for this amount with the Government of Morocco.

On completion of this phase, Cooper can elect to either remain at 20 percent or acquire an additional 10 percent by contributing US\$175,000 towards the minimum US\$300,000 commitment for the second year.

In the first year the JV will shoot 500km of high quality 2D seismic data to define leads and prospects in the southern portion of the licence and investigate the potential for leads and prospects in the northern areas.

Scott said the two major target types defined in the Mediterranean Est area were turbidites lapping on to basement ridges and draped over shale or salt diapirs.

"Turbidite leads have the potential for world class oil or gas accumulations. Similar reservoirs around the world typically contain hundreds of millions of barrels of oil," he said.

"In the Mediterranean Est licence, turbidites are seen to be draped across structural highs resulting in large leads, similar to the accumulation of hydrocarbons in the highly prospective and producing oil regions such as the Gulf of Mexico, offshore Nigeria, and more recently offshore Mauritania.

"What encourages us is that within the entire Western Mediterranean offshore Moroccan area only three exploration wells have been drilled, and we believe none is a valid test of either play type."

Scott said that while oil was the principal exploration thrust, gas was also valuable in this region.

"Europe is extremely gas hungry, so a gas discovery in this part of the Mediterranean would put us in a very strategic position to supply a major growing market."

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