

Ecopetrol and U.S. player embarking on hydrocarbon quest in deep waters off Colombia

EXPLORATION & PRODUCTION

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In a bid to strengthen offshore exploration, Colombia's state-owned oil and gas company [Ecopetrol](#) has joined forces with a subsidiary of the U.S.-headquartered [Occidental Petroleum Corp. \(Oxy\)](#) to undertake joint exploration activities in four blocks of the Colombian Caribbean in search of hydrocarbons.

[Ecopetrol](#) revealed on Wednesday that it has signed a **joint exploration agreement** with Anadarko Colombia Company, a subsidiary of Oxy, for Blocks **COL 1**, **COL 2**, **COL 6**, and **COL 7**, located in deep waters in the northeast of the Colombian Caribbean, to look for hydrocarbons in an "area with attractive potential."

Felipe Bayón, CEO of [Ecopetrol](#), remarked: "We are very pleased to seal this new alliance with Oxy, a first-rate partner, to continue **strengthening the exploration portfolio** in the Colombian Caribbean in line with our 2040 strategy 'Energy that transforms', one of whose drivers seeks to maintain competitiveness in the hydrocarbon chain by **increasing offshore exploration**."

Under the terms of this deal, [Ecopetrol](#) will acquire a **40 per cent stake in the exploration and production rights** for these blocks, while Anadarko will keep the operatorship along with the remaining 60 per cent interest. According to the Colombian player, this deal is subject to the approval of Colombia's regulator National Hydrocarbons Agency (ANH).



[Ecopetrol](#)-Oxy deal; Source: [Ecopetrol](#)

Located off the coast of the provinces of Atlántico, Magdalena, and La Guajira, at an average distance of more than 150 kilometres from the coastline of these jurisdictions, the four blocks underwent geological evaluations, which were carried out based on seismic information acquired in the area by Anadarko.

These geological evaluations indicate the possibility of **significant accumulations of hydrocarbons** under different geological concepts in this sector of the **Colombia Basin**, based on [Ecopetrol](#)'s statement. The company further stated that, if these accumulations are confirmed, it would constitute a transformational event for the Colombian oil industry.

In lieu of this, [Ecopetrol](#) and Oxy intend to explore the areas in which these four blocks are situated by acquiring seabed samples and drilling an exploration well. This plan is subject to regulatory authorizations and the completion of technical studies. The Colombian player believes that the well to be drilled represents an "important technological challenge," given that it would be done in deep waters.

Currently, [Ecopetrol](#)'s portfolio of offshore assets in the Colombian Caribbean includes an area in production: **Guajira Association Contract**; two evaluation areas: **Tayrona Orca** and **KG** (Fuerte Sur, Purple Angel and COL-5); and four exploratory blocks: **Tayrona**, **COL-5**, **GUAOFF-1**, and **GUAOFF-10**.