



MEMBER COUNTRY PROFILE

Country name	Cyprus
Organisation:	Department of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment
Country Representative(s):	Irene Constantinou - Senior Officer; Savvas Aspris - Officer; Theodora Ioannou - Officer; Marios Papanicolaou - Officer
Primary Contact:	iconstantinou@environment.moa.gov.cy theoannou@environment.moa.gov.cy saspris@environment.moa.gov.cy mpapanicolaou@environment.moa.gov.cy
Regime scope:	Within the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, the Department of Environment administers environmental oversight of offshore hydrocarbonleum activities in areas under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Cyprus. The Ministry is the competent authority for the Offshore Protocol to the Barcelona Convention, with the relevant regulatory functions carried out through the Department. These include environmental impact assessment, authorisation, environmental conditions, compliance monitoring, environmental liability and coordination of external emergency-response planning. The Department also has functions under the national framework for the environmentally safe geological storage of CO₂, which extends to the Cyprus Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf. There are currently no operating offshore carbon capture and storage projects.
Governance arrangements:	The Department is a government department within the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, which is the competent authority for the Offshore Protocol and specified related legislation. Environmental regulation is institutionally separate from hydrocarbonleum resource licensing, commercial development and royalty/revenue functions, which are administered by the Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry through the Hydrocarbons Service. Offshore major-accident and occupational safety is regulated by the Department of Labour Inspection. The Department of Environment coordinates with these authorities and with the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research, the Geological Survey Department and the relevant emergency-response authorities, as required.
Legislation type:	Ratified international and regional instruments; EU-derived and national primary legislation; secondary regulations; and activity-specific licences, environmental decisions and permits containing binding conditions. The regime combines prescriptive requirements with risk- and performance-based duties, including the use of best available techniques.



Links to relevant legislation:	Core legislation and official sources: Offshore Protocol - Cyprus Ratifying Law 20(III)/2001 Environmental Impact Assessment Law 127(I)/2018 Hydrocarbons (Prospection, Exploration and Exploitation) Law 4(I)/2007 External Emergency Response Plans for Offshore Oil and Gas Operations Law 59(I)/2016 Environmental Liability Law 189(I)/2007 Geological Storage of Carbon Dioxide Law 71(I)/2012 Public Access to Environmental Information Law 119(I)/2004 Offshore Oil and Gas Safety Regulations 2015 (K.D.P. 424/2015)
Extent of government approval:	Offshore hydrocarbon activities are subject to multiple government approvals. A hydrocarbons licence is granted under the Hydrocarbons Law and administered through the Hydrocarbons Service. Before an activity begins, the applicable environmental impact assessment procedure must be completed and an authorisation under the Offshore Protocol must be obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment; the application is administered through the Department of Environment. Safety submissions and notifications are handled by the Department of Labour Inspection, while external emergency-response planning is addressed under Law 59(I)/2016.
Nature of duties imposed:	Operators are responsible for preventing, reducing, combating and controlling pollution; using best available techniques; complying with all approval and permit conditions; implementing environmental management and monitoring programmes; reporting incidents and relevant discharges; maintaining contingency arrangements; and managing chemicals, waste and decommissioning. The polluter-pays principle and environmental liability obligations apply. Operators must take preventive and remedial action and maintain the insurance or other financial security required by the applicable authorisation and legal framework.
Physical objects in the regime:	Status at August 2026: 0 producing offshore platforms; 0 FPSOs; 0 permanent MODUs; and 0 active offshore CO2 storage installations. Drillships or other MODUs are deployed temporarily for individual exploration or appraisal campaigns and are not continuously present. The regime also covers offshore wells, subsea installations, pipelines, temporary drilling units and any future production or CO2 storage facilities.
Compliance assurance mechanisms:	Assurance mechanisms include technical review of applications, environmental impact assessments and monitoring plans; binding permit conditions; routine and incident reporting; requests for records, data, measurements and samples; environmental monitoring; and regular or extraordinary inspections. The EIA Law also permits the use of an independent external environmental auditor, at the project proponent's cost, where required. Non-compliance may lead to corrective or preventive measures and administrative or criminal enforcement under the applicable legislation. Environmental liability powers include remediation and recovery of costs from the operator.
Financial basis:	The Department is funded primarily through annual appropriations from the State Budget. Operators bear the costs of preparing applications and studies, meeting permit conditions, monitoring, any required external environmental audit, emergency preparedness and response, pollution prevention and remediation, and applicable financial-security obligations.



Environmental regulation responsibilities:	The Department leads the environmental assessment of relevant projects and administers, on behalf of the competent Ministry, authorisations under the Offshore Protocol. It sets and monitors environmental conditions addressing pollution prevention, discharges, chemicals, waste, biodiversity and protected areas, environmental monitoring, contingency planning, decommissioning and restoration. It also performs functions relating to environmental liability, external emergency-response planning and geological storage of CO₂. Hydrocarbon resource licensing and royalty/revenue functions, and offshore occupational/major-accident safety regulation, are assigned to other competent authorities.
Oil spill response:	The operator must maintain activity-specific contingency arrangements and adequate response capability, notify incidents without delay, undertake source control and clean-up, and bear the applicable response and remediation costs. The Department addresses preparedness and response requirements through Offshore Protocol authorisations and coordinates external emergency planning under Law 59(I)/2016. National operational marine-pollution response is organised through the ORFEAS (ORPHEUS) National Contingency Plan, with the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research performing oil-pollution standby and response functions in coordination with the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre and other services. Regional and subregional cooperation is available through REMPEC and the Cyprus-Greece-Israel marine oil-pollution contingency arrangements.
Transparency:	Environmental information is accessible under Law 119(I)/2004 and the Aarhus Convention. Environmental impact assessment notices, studies, consultations, decisions and monitoring or enforcement information are published or made available where the relevant provisions apply. Access is subject to lawful restrictions protecting commercial or industrial confidentiality, public security and essential State interests. The EIA Law expressly exempts EEZ hydrocarbon activities concerning essential State interests from specified public-consultation, publication and public-register requirements.
Research:	The evidence base is developed through project-specific baseline surveys and environmental impact assessments, operator monitoring programmes, national marine-environment monitoring and technical studies. The Department cooperates, as appropriate, with the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research, the Geological Survey Department, universities and research institutions, EU programmes, UNEP/MAP, REMPEC and international regulatory networks. The Department may commission or participate in targeted studies, technical reviews and peer exchanges where required for regulatory decision-making.
Profile date:	August 2026