

Country Update - May 2023

Country: Israel

Main Priorities for regulators (current and next year's):

- Approving the agreement on the maritime border between the State of Israel and the Republic of Lebanon (November 2022).
- A Strategic Environmental Assessment for Offshore Renewable Energy was initiated.
- Development of a regulatory framework for rights granting for subsurface usage (CCS, compressed air, H₂, etc.), and Offshore Renewable Energy under the Natural Resources Administration.

Changes in governance structure/responsibilities: No

New regulations for offshore activities (recently released or in progress):

- Offshore facilities abandonment policy and guidelines, were published on May 3rd 2023 for public remarks.
- FDP Environmental Base of Design guidelines – RIA in perperation.
- New discussions to begin on the Maritime Zoning bill, which should define clearly the Israeli EEZ and its legal contents, according to UNCLOS.

Recent major incidents and root cause analysis (lessons learned):

- No major incidents originating from O&G offshore operations.
- Mostly small-scale platform operation mishaps (release of acidic water from open drain sump; flare activations as a result of ESDs), subsea leakage of MEG.

Offshore activity outlook (i.e. upcoming bids, enhanced oil recovery efforts, decommissioning, etc):

- Plug and abandonment of the first project in Israel Yam Tetis field - Pipelines should be disassembled and removed completely from the seabed, unless they are covered by at least 50 cm of sediment or if the water depth is more than 600 m (under which case, it should be flushed and sealed and left in place). Drytree well heads were removed (7/8). Well heads that are left on the seabed (250-600 m water depth) are to be covered by a net guard (4).
- Karish FPSO, the 3rd gasfield facility of Israel. First gas started on 13.11.2022. Up to 8.27 BCM/year. Production of NG will be incriced up to 20 BCM/year => enable to convert all coil based utilities to NG.
- Copletion of 2 new production until July 2023.
- 4th exploration bid round with additional 26 blocks in the EEZ was published, covering around 5500 sqkm. Closing Date for Submission of Bids – 29.6.2023. NGO appealed to the Suprim Cort of Justice.
- East-Med Pipeline Project - a strategic gas pipeline approx. 2,100 km long (of which approx. 350 km onshore and approx. 1,750 km offshore), which will allow for export of natural gas located in the exclusive economic zones of Israel and Cyprus to Greece and Italy and from there to the rest of Europe.

Identify emerging trends that may affect offshore activities:

- Climate crisis vs further development of NG.
- Development of offshore renewable energy.
- A draft master plan is being discussed among all stakeholders, to declare up to 30% of the Israeli EEZ as MPA's, according to the provisions of the Barcelona Convention and to the CBD Convention.
- Gas crisis in Europe may open opportunities.