Woodside is proposing to undertake geophysical and geotechnical surveys within Commonwealth waters to support the proposed Greater Enfield Development (GED).

The proposed survey program was accepted by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) in November 2013, under the Exmouth and North West Shelf Geophysical and Geotechnical Campaign Environment Plan, submitted by Woodside. The proposed survey scope aligns with the accepted environment plan activity description and the surveys are now scheduled for Q4 2015.

The proposed surveys will be conducted in petroleum tiles WA-28-L and WA-36-R, which are held by Woodside Energy Ltd (60%) and Mitsui E&P Australia Pty Ltd (40%), WA-32-L held by BHP Petroleum (Australia) (50%) and Woodside (50%) and WA-35-L held by Quadrant PVG P/L (52.5%) and INPEX Alpha Ltd (47.5%). The proposed surveys will also cover a section of open title between WA-35-L and WA-255-P.

Figure 1: Proposed operational area for GED geophysical and geotechnical surveys.
The purpose of the survey campaign is to provide seabed and near seabed shallow geological information for engineering studies in support of development decisions during the front end engineering design (FEED) phase, scheduled for Q3 2015. The GED concept comprises of the Laverda and Cimatti reservoir tie-back to the Ngujima-Yin floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) facility.

Survey Details

The total area, where the surveys will be conducted, is approximately 718 km². This area is a portion of the approved Exmouth and North West Shelf Geophysical and Geotechnical Campaign Environment Plan operational area of approximately 6,645 km². The nearest point from the area of surveys is approximately 20 km from the Ningaloo State Marine Park and approximately 40 km from Exmouth. Water depths in the survey area range from approximately 250 m to 1000 m.

The geophysical survey is expected to take approximately 10-14 days to complete and the geotechnical survey is expected to take approximately 28 days, depending on weather conditions. At the time of publication, the geophysical survey and geotechnical survey are scheduled for October 2015 and November/December 2015 respectively.

Activity Summary

Woodside proposes to undertake the geophysical survey using conventional or industry standard techniques using autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) mounted acoustic sensors including:
- Multi-Beam Echo Sounder (MBES);
- Side Scan Sonar (SSS); and
- Chirp Sub Bottom Profiler.

The geotechnical survey will include in-situ testing and the recovery of seabed samples taken at specific locations. The geotechnical survey will be undertaken using industry standard techniques.

Environmental Management

Woodside has a long history of successfully conducting geophysical and geotechnical surveys offshore of Western Australia. The GED geophysical and geotechnical surveys have been subject to rigorous environmental risk assessment and planning.

Woodside conducted an environmental risk assessment in preparation for the GED geophysical and geotechnical surveys. A number of mitigation and management measures will be implemented during the proposed survey, including:
- Measures to protect marine fauna from vessel activities and to prevent vessel collisions;
- All routine discharges to meet the relevant requirements of the International Convention of the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 73/78 (referred to as MARPOL (73/78);
- Other wastes will be contained on board vessels and discharged at appropriate land-based facilities;
- Appropriate spill response plans and equipment to be kept and maintained on vessels;
- The vessels to be managed as appropriate to prevent the introduction of invasive marine species.

Environmental Approvals

The Exmouth and North West Shelf Geophysical and Geotechnical Campaign Environment Plan was prepared as part of the requirements under the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2009 (Cth) as administered by NOPSEMA. The Environment Plan was accepted by NOPSEMA in November 2013.

Vessels

Vessels have not been confirmed at the time of publication. If any stakeholders would like further information on the survey vessels (once confirmed), please advise Woodside on the contact numbers outlined below.

Further information

If you would like additional information or to discuss the proposed activity, please contact:

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All information is current as at August 2015. Proposed timing for the activity may be subject to change.