

UK FIRM GETS OIL SEARCH CONTRACT

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Kennedy Senelwa

The National Oil Corporation of Kenya has awarded PGS of United Kingdom the contract to carry out a survey for oil and gas depots inside Kenya's coastline. The parastatal's acting managing director, Mwendia Nyaga, said PGS will map out potential oil (hydrocarbon) deposits in the deep sea Lamu basin.

Mr Nyaga said that the bid by PGS was competitive, and the survey would be done on the Government's behalf.

In February this year, the corporation asked international firms interested in carrying out such surveys to buy bid documents at Sh4,700 (\$70).

Its mandate includes disseminating exploration data from various exploration activities in form of reports and promoting the same to oil companies in order to attract them to prospect for oil in Kenya. Bid documents were submitted by March 13, and bidders were required to have over five years relevant experience and the ability to market the data acquired.

They were also required to be registered seismic acquisition firms, with good market capital ratings.

Previous contract

The contract awarded to PSG comes when GX Technology Corp (GXT) has completed a similar survey off the coasts of Kenya, Tanzania and Madagascar. GXT's senior vice president, Ken Williamson said the data will help oil exploration firms in the three countries. "A new basin-scale data programme was critical to help companies thoroughly investigate this region's resource potential. We are excited to include East AfricaSPAN in our globally expanding library," he said.

Speaking on telephone from Houston in America, Mr Williamson, said East Africa has a complex geology and available data is limited.

He said GXT acquired 8,300 km of data, working closely with regional experts to custom-design the programme. So far Kenya's search for oil deposits has failed to yield positive data on commercially viable deposits.