

Oil and gas exploration opened in East Cape and Northland

[Northland Block Offer](#)

[Raukumara Block Offer](#)

Energy and Resources Minister Gerry Brownlee today announced the opening of bidding for new petroleum exploration permits across two large offshore areas, the Raukumara (East Cape) and Northland basins.

Two extensive blocks are being offered for bidding across Raukumara and six blocks across Northland, with a combined total area of over 66,000 square kilometres.

"This is a unique combination of exploration blocks offering a variety of opportunities that will appeal to explorers," Mr Brownlee said.

A number of the major oil companies have already indicated interest in the New Zealand region, and in coming months Crown Minerals will continue to promote bidding rounds in Australia, North America, Europe and Asia.

"The current block offers keep up the momentum generated by previous block offer releases such as offshore Taranaki to realise gas reserves for our domestic market and to discover potentially large oil and gas reserves in our deep water basins."

"At this time of uncertainty in international financial markets, as well as the fall in oil prices, it is important for the government to maintain interest in New Zealand by providing new data to support block offers with attractive terms," Mr Brownlee said.

The government is maintaining exploration momentum in New Zealand via further data acquisition programmes to support future blocks offers.

"The Crown Minerals Group has achieved considerable success with the data acquisition initiative which will continue over the next few years," Mr Brownlee said.

The bidding round will close in January 2010.

Details on the bidding round, including location maps and free technical data, can be obtained at the Crown Minerals website:

www.crownminerals.govt.nz

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Northland and Raukumara Block Offers

