

# Gippsland Offshore Takeover For Browse Basin Acreage

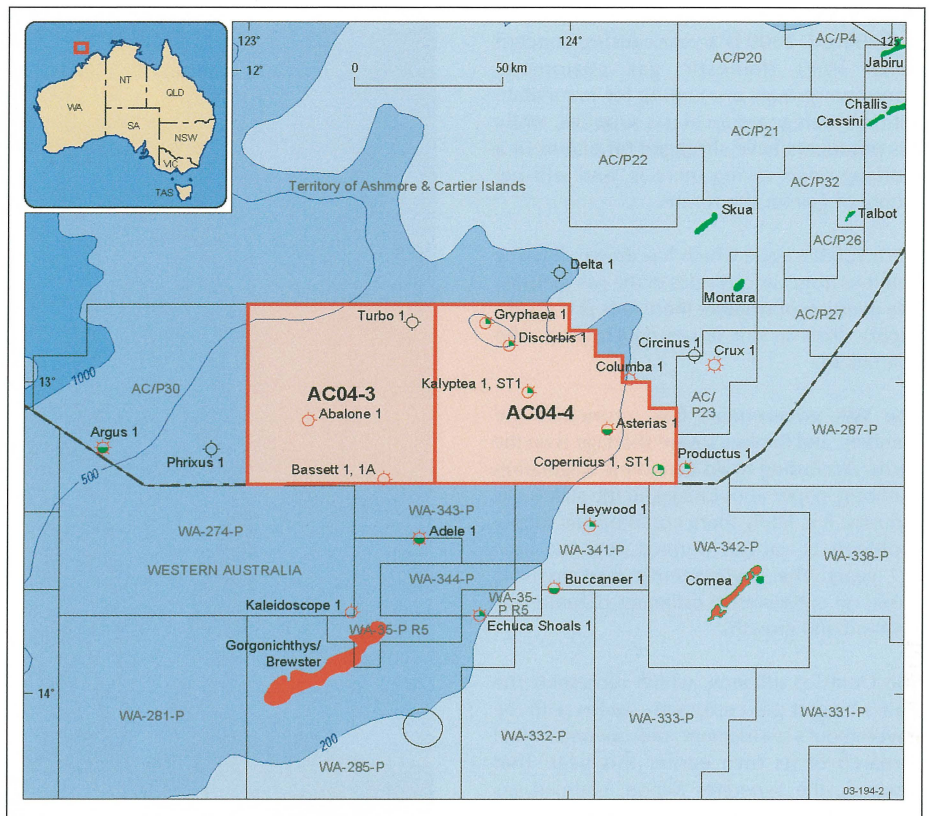
Gippsland Offshore Petroleum will acquire a 100% interest in a potentially lucrative Browse Basin permit through a proposed takeover of privately owned oil and gas explorer, FINDER Exploration Pty Ltd (Finder), for \$A25 million in shares.

FINDER directors have unanimously accepted the offer consisting of 80 million Gippsland Offshore shares at a price of 31¢ per share. Under the agreement, Gippsland Offshore and FINDER will create a new upstream oil and gas company with a market capitalisation of approximately A\$65 million.

Cathy Norman, Gippsland Offshore Managing Director, has said, "The deal will create an entity with an excellent asset portfolio spread across seven countries. The addition of FINDER's 100% owned Browse basin permit to Gippsland Offshore's portfolio gives us a strong position in Australia's premier exploration acreage."

Gippsland Offshore will acquire permit AC/P 36 in the Browse Basin, located approximately 80 km north of the Inpex-operated Ichthys gas field. The permit has complete 3D seismic data coverage and FINDER has undertaken interpretation and seismic inversion to identify drillable prospects. The prospect is estimated to contain 8 Tcf of natural gas, the first well is scheduled to be drilled in 2009.

Through the takeover of FINDER, Gippsland Offshore will have exploration projects in Australia, Madagascar, France, Kenya, the UK, New Zealand and Jamaica. Gippsland Offshore and FINDER are equal partners in a key Jamaican exploration project after jointly being awarded



AC/P36, the acreage owned by FINDER Exploration sold to Gippsland Petroleum for A\$25 million in shares.

five blocks in the first Jamaica licencing round for 20 years.

"The asset portfolio of FINDER is a logical fit with our own offshore operations. The combined entity will benefit from owning 100% of our

exciting Jamaica exploration project. Our two companies have been working together on this project and we welcome the addition of FINDER's technical and entrepreneurial skills to complement our exploration team", Norman said. ■