

Bass Strait Project Given The Green Light

The development of the \$1.4 BB Turrum oil and gas field in Victoria's Bass Strait has been given the go-ahead after approval from development participants.

Joint venture partners ExxonMobil and BHP Billiton approved the development, months after the approval of the Kipper gas project, also located in the Gippsland Basin.

The Turrum project will be located 42 km off the Victorian coast.

BHP CEO, J. Michael Yeager, said the project will build on BHP's long-life producing assets in the Bass Strait and add new supplies of oil and

natural gas to meet the future energy needs of south eastern Australia.

"Our Bass Strait resource base continues to have significant opportunities to develop, even after producing for nearly four decades", he said.

ExxonMobil Australia Chairman, Mark Nolan, said, "The Turrum field holds approximately 1 Tcf of gas and 110 MM bbl of oil and gas liquids – that's enough energy to power a city of a million people for 20 years.

"The Turrum Project will also have a significant impact on the Gippsland economy, with up to 100 additional jobs created in the construction phase.

This is in addition to the 1000 people currently employed through ExxonMobil in Gippsland.

"Bass Strait has a strong long-term future. We estimate that there is still around 7 Tcf of gas to be produced, and we're confident that means we have over 30 years of gas remaining."

It is anticipated that construction on the Turrum project will begin in 2009, with oil production expected to commence in 2011. ■
