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Offshore oil and gas drilling

Missed opportunity for robust EU rules, as EP rubber-stamps new legislation

The European Parliament today voted to adopt new EU legislation dealing with offshore oil and gas exploration. The Greens expressed regret that the final legislative agreement, endorsed today, falls short of providing robust regulation of the sector. After the vote, Green energy spokesperson **Michèle Rivasi** stated:

"The legislation adopted today will fail to provide for robust regulation of offshore drilling in the EU. The new rules fall far short of providing an adequate regulatory framework to reflect the significant, cross-border risks of offshore exploration. The legislation was framed as the EU's response to the Deepwater Horizon disaster but the outcome rubber-stamped today is clearly a massively missed opportunity.

"The legislation fails to address the current gaps in EU rules on offshore exploration, notably as regards liability for accidents and independent safety assessments of installations. It also fails to call for a moratorium on drilling in sensitive or extreme environments (like the Arctic).

"The absence of a meaningful EU oversight structure is a major shortcoming in terms of ensuring offshore exploration safety given the cross-border nature of the associated risks. The European Maritime Safety Agency will be given no oversight competence and its role will be primarily limited to post-accident situations.

"The legislation will also fail to ensure that offshore operators are fully liable and financially responsible for any damages resulting from accidents. Crucially, there are no provisions for a financial security mechanism, to which operators would be required to contribute, and which would be used to cover damages in the case of an accident."

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Michèle Rivasi

Member

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