

## EMA accelerates approvals for oil and gas projects

BETWEEN November 2025 and January 2026, the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) said it issued environmental clearances to Heritage Petroleum, EOG Resources, the National Gas Company, ExxonMobil, and Perenco.

The EMA said the approvals reflect an accelerated pace of project review under its newly appointed board, while several other applications remain under assessment.

'The Environmental Management Authority has issued several Certificates of Environmental Clearance (CECs) for major oil and gas projects since the appointment of its board of directors on 14 November 2025, reflecting steady progress over a nine-week period. This accelerated pace underscores the authority's commitment to supporting the Government's policy direction and the Prime Minister's mandate to make business easier while upholding strong environmental and regulatory standards,' it stated.

The EMA stated that as part of this process, Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar was present at the formal handover of a CEC certificate to Perenco.

'Between November 2025 and January 2026, CECs were issued to Heritage Petroleum, EOG Resources, The National Gas Company, ExxonMobil, and Perenco, enabling activities such as offshore drilling, seismic surveys, pipeline modifications, and the redevelopment of existing wells,' it stated.

'The EMA also confirmed that several CEC applications remain under active review, with most pending matters awaiting additional information or clarification from applicants. A number of these applications, including projects submitted by Perenco, Touchstone (Primera Oil and Gas), and EOG Resources, are expected to be concluded by the end of February 2026, once outstanding responses are received and assessed,' the EMA stated. The EMA said it was working directly with oil and gas operators through targeted meetings, pre-application consultations, and technical discussions to speed up processing while maintaining environmental standards.

'These engagements are designed to clarify regulatory requirements, reduce application deficiencies, and improve the overall quality and timeliness of submissions,' it stated.

'These projects are expected to contribute significantly to Trinidad and Tobago's development by creating employment opportunities, generating revenue, and earning valuable foreign exchange. The Government remains committed to balancing economic growth with environmental responsibility, ensuring that the nation's natural resources are protected for current and future generations,' the EMA stated.