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# Early signs look good on JDZ well

## Despite talk supermajors keep mum on Obo-1 probe

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**SUPERMAJORS** Chevron and ExxonMobil have encountered encouraging early signs at exploration well Obo-1 off the Joint Development Zone (JDZ) administered by Nigeria and Sao Tome, industry sources said.

The partners are staying tight-lipped about the probe and while sources cautioned that it is too early to tell for sure, they added that electrical logs being run to evaluate the open hole were looking positive. They also said that the expected lower structures were present.

Last week, the Joint Ministerial Council reported Obo-1, which is being drilled by Transocean drillship Deepwater Discovery was drilling ahead "without pollution incident and the well logged with 13-5/8 inch casing run at a depth of 12,500 feet".

Brian O' Cathain, the chief executive of minority participant Afren, earlier put the chance of success at 55%, citing a P50 reserves level of 636 million barrels.

Fresh evidence of the aerial extent of Chevron's Block 1 target indicates the structure straddles the boundary of Block 2 where Sinopec of China recently signed an memorandum of understanding with US minnow ERHC to take over operatorship, sources said.

Sinopec has requested time to secure Beijing's approval of the MoU to operate Block 2.

There is also talk the structure may run into Nigerian EEZ Block 256 where Devon is operator.

Speculation about the future of ERHC also continues.

As well as contacts with Sinopec, company chief executive Walter Brandhuber was said to have received contacts from Chevron. He flew into Abuja on Tuesday night.

•• ERHC this week said formal approval had been won for Swiss explorer Addax Petroleum to enter as operator of Block 4 in the JDZ.

The move follows a decision by Noble Energy to discontinue its partnership with ERHC on the licence provisionally awarded under last year's second JDZ licensing round.

The Abuja-based Joint Development Authority has also approved Addax's replacement of Pioneer Natural Resources in Block-3 where Anadarko remains operator.



Bringing home the goods: children in Sao Tome

Photo: PRESSEFOTO

## Peak cooking on gas with success in Niger Delta

**NIGERIA'S** Peak Petroleum and technical partner Equator Exploration are said to have struck a 200-foot gas interval, confirming a gas reservoir offshore the Niger Delta.

Appraisal well BD-X1 on development licence OML-122, drilled in less than 300 metres of water, was located east of Shell's Bonga field and south-west of its EA field.

The discovery well drilled by Deminex Oil three decades ago encountered several gas zones and tested an oil zone but Peak/EEL's well has "confirmed the presence of hydrocarbon-bearing formations in a structurally higher position than in the discovery well."

BD-X1 well is currently drilling ahead