



Sushma Rawat, Director, Exploration, [ONGC Ltd](#) said that ONGC intends to collaborate with TotalEnergies, a French energy giant, for oil and gas exploration and production in the Andaman Islands.

Rawat also mentioned that potential hydrocarbon blocks are expected to be auctioned off in the next round of auctions for the Open Acreage Licensing Programme, for which both companies may submit a joint proposal.

Rawat said, “For deepwater, talks are underway with Total. Andamans, which is coming up, is mostly deepwater. The government has an Island Exploration Project, a lot of seismic data is being acquired in the Andamans which will be processed and analysed. Within a month we will know whether Total would be coming there with us and in what way. With Total we still have to sign an MoU. The talks are in the final stages. The blocks would be put up for auction either through the open acreage licencing policy (OALP-XI) round of auction or there may be a separate round for deepwater exploration and production while the initial survey is being carried out by the government”.

With the National Island Exploration Project (NIEP), the government has set high goals in an unstable world oil market to lessen its reliance on crude oil imports. Rawat stated, “For international partnerships we had a global outreach programme, which was initiated 2-3 years ago. In that area we have gone ahead, and held a lot of technical discussions and four MoUs have been signed right from ExxonMobil to Equinor to Chevron and all. So, we are looking forward to tie ups with Total and others right from exploration and enhanced oil recovery to carbon capture and renewables”.

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