



Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
55 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HP
United Kingdom
By email only:

27 June 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

Protect our ocean & climate: Respect the new Environmental Impact Assessment guidance for scope 3 emissions, follow the science

Cc: Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

We, the Ocean Alliance Against Offshore Drilling, write to commend you on the robust updates to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidance for scope 3 emissions and urge you to implement them in practice by rejecting applications for new oil and gas fields, including Rosebank. We are heartened to see the new guidance reflect the expert submissions to the consultation, meaning that oil and gas companies can no longer conceal the true extent of their climate impacts in environmental impact assessments. We congratulate the government on taking this science-led approach and strongly encourage you to honour nature and climate commitments in future decisions made on oil and gas project applications.

The new guidance further establishes the UK as a global standard-setter and a leader in international climate action. This is critical, with new research warning we have a mere three years left to limit warming to 1.5C.¹ UK seas have already felt the brunt of the climate crisis this year, with prolonged and intense heatwaves threatening marine life and protected ecosystems.²

For the sake of our ocean, we must act urgently to limit the extent of future warming. Each new oil and gas project harms our seas, both directly through pollution, intense noise and habitat damage, and more broadly through the impacts of the climate crisis. **We urge the government to follow the science and reject new oil and gas projects, including the Rosebank field when its EIA is**

¹ Forster, P. M. et al (2025) 'Indicators of Global Climate Change 2024: annual update of key indicators of the state of the climate system and human influence', *Earth System Science Data*, 17.6, <https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-17-2641-2025>.

² Berthou, S. (2025) 'Waters surrounding UK gripped by prolonged marine heatwave', Met Office (22 May 2025) <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/uk-waters-gripped-by-prolonged-marine-heatwave>.

submitted. Burning Rosebank's 500 million barrels of oil and gas would have devastating impacts on our ocean, intensifying marine heatwaves, worsening ocean acidification and compounding pressures on already stressed ecosystems.

In addition, the direct impacts of Rosebank on the surrounding marine environment must not be forgotten or ignored. The Rosebank pipeline would cut through the protected Faroe-Shetland Sponge Belt, threatening rare deep-sea sponge habitats as well as ocean quahogs, which can live for over 500 years.³

The waters around Rosebank are also nationally and internationally important areas for cetaceans. Endangered sei whales, blue whales and fin whales are regularly seen in the region, as are numerous other cetacean species, including bottlenose dolphin, white-beaked dolphin and humpback whales.⁴ It is vital from both a nature and climate perspective that this application is refused.

Protecting UK seas from new oil and gas developments should go hand in hand with the government's recent positive steps towards protecting the ocean from destructive fishing in protected areas. Working together, DESNZ and DEFRA can lead the way to ensure our seas thrive, for people and planet.

We cannot delay on our commitments to the ocean or the climate any longer. We urge you to centre science in your decision-making, as you have done in the updated guidance, and reject the application for the Rosebank field and all other oil and gas projects.

Yours sincerely,

The Ocean Alliance Against Offshore Drilling

The Ocean Alliance Against Offshore Drilling is a network of over 60 marine NGOS, businesses and community groups united behind calls to end new oil and gas in UK seas.

³ Rosebank Field Development Environmental Statement, August 2022, pages 154-159.

⁴ Rosebank Field Development Environmental Statement, August 2022, p.173.