

Fracking project is planned at the Petišovci gas field in the north-east of Slovenia. The environmental impact assessment is needed before any permits can be issued for hydraulic fracturing planned by British company Ascent Resources-this decision from Slovenian Environment Agency (ARSO) was upheld by the Administrative Court.

The ruling was announced by The London-based oil and gas exploration company, which is operating in Slovenia with its partner Geoenergo.

It added that it is “in the process of beginning preparations for submission of an environmental impact assessment, alongside the stimulation and field development planning which was initiated recently”.

ARSO said in March last year that the plans for hydraulic fracturing required an environmental impact assessment and this was confirmed in June last year by the Environment Ministry. Geoenergo therefore turned to the Administrative Court, which has upheld the decision.

“The court decision, along with earlier action by the state, will constitute important evidence to support the claim the company intends to bring against Slovenia under the Energy Charter Treaty,” Ascent Resources added on Tuesday in a reference to plans to demand EUR 50 million in damages from Slovenia for delays in the development of the gas field.

Geoenergo, which is co-owned by the Slovenian state-controlled energy companies Petrol and Nafta Lendava and has been striving for the project together with Ascent Resources since May 2017, expressed on Wednesday regret over the court’s decision.

It assessed that “an environmental impact assessment is not necessary for the planned intervention, one that has already been executed in past on several occasions in line with Slovenian legislation”.

Geoenergo, which spoke of a key project “for the development of north-east Slovenia that would provide greater energy independence for Slovenia”, added that the ruling would have negative consequences for “what are already unreasonably protracted administrative procedure that prevent the preservation of the existing production of gas”.

Meanwhile, Ascent Resources announced for its investors that it would hold on to plans for the re-stimulation of its producing wells in Petišovci. It expects to obtain the necessary permits by the end of the year.

Ascent Resources moreover wrote that it has “observed the recent changes introduced by the new Slovenian government and increasingly confident position on the likelihood of the project receiving the permits required for further stimulation”.

Source: total-slovenia-news.com



Environmental assessment for fracking plans in Slovenia necessary for Ascent Resources