

## Noble Globetrotter II to start drilling for gas off Bulgaria's coast in May

The Noble Globetrotter II will start drilling for oil and gas in the Black Sea block of Khan Asparuh off Bulgaria's coast early next month, Total's General Manager for Bulgaria, Xavier Faugeras, has announced.

On Tuesday, Faugeras presented the exploration vessel at the Port of Burgas before leaving to the Port of Varna. From there the ship will proceed on Friday to the Khan Asparuh block to start drilling at water depths of 200 meters.

Initial seismic surveys related to the Khan Asparuh block as well as at the Silistar block are quite optimistic, Bulgaria's Energy Minister Temenuzhka Petkova has said.

She based her optimism on the discovery of deposits of 84 billion cubic meters of natural gas in a neighbouring block in which Romania has been prospecting for hydrocarbons.

Exploration for oil and gas at Khan Asparuh would continue four or five months, Petkova said.

Bulgaria hopes to decrease its almost total dependence on gas imports from Russia if commercial deposits of hydrocarbons are discovered at the Bulgarian offshore blocks in the Black Sea.

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