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Offshore and Deep Water Morocco: New Plays from the Mediterranean to Mauritania

Morocco has had exploration for hydrocarbons for decades. Only relatively small fields have been discovered, primarily in the Rharb-Rif and Essaouira basins. These have been small because the reservoirs are formed due to complex thrust faulting in the Atlas and pre Atlas zones.

With the advent of deep water exploration, however, Morocco becomes a much more attractive area for larger discoveries. From the South and West Alboran Basins in the Mediterranean, the Gulf of Cadiz Basin in the northwest, to the Tarafaya-Aiiun- Boujdour Basins in the southwest many prospective areas have opened up.

The offshore basins are complex, and can be divided into a series of depositional centers that offer unique opportunities and risks. These basins include styles such as over-thrusting, volcanism, complex salt tectonics, slumping, and carbonate banks. Each offers risks and rewards that are generally complex and difficult to assess. In this paper an assessment of the prospectivity of some of these basins is presented.