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Hydrocarbon Potential of the Ucayali Basin, Peru

The Ucayali basin is a structural depression defined during the last phase of the Andean tectonic. This basin was part of the great Cretaceous basin that extended east of the current Andean chain along the Peruvian territory. Later on, the Andean tectonic individualized the different basins of the Peruvian jungle just as we know them now. The current configuration of the basin covers an area of 105,000 Km².

Morphologically the basin is formed by two well-differentiated structural trends, aligned NNW-SSE, the sub-Andean thrust and folded belt and the Amazon plain. The sedimentary section of the basin has a thickness among 1000 to 10000 m, with ages from the Paleozoic to Quaternary. The reservoirs are Permian to Cretaceous in age. The main source rocks are the Pucara formation to the north and the Paleozoic sequence to the south.

The hydrocarbon exploration began in 1939. The accumulated production is about 50 MMBO, coming from several small fields. In 1984 was discovered the giant Camisea gas/condensate field in the southern subandean belt. Later on, three additional exploratory wells were drilled with similar success, reaching a total area reserve of 22 TCF and 1090 MMbbl.

Recent geological works have identified 117 structures even not drilled in the entire basin. In many of these structures, enough seismic information exists as to guarantee its prospectiveness. The potential unrisks reserves for these undrilled structures are 9,239 MMBOE. The undoubtedly exploration success in the subandean area of the southern Ucayali basin, encourages to continue the exploration in this basin.