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Morocco's oil shale: new program

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Morocco has important oil shale resources located in three main deposits: The Timahdit , Tarfaya and Tangier deposits. These deposits have been subject, during the 1970s and 80s, to several detailed studies: Geological surveys, mining studies, lab tests, research and development studies and pilot plant tests for in situ and surface pyrolysis processes.

These studies showed that the Timahdit deposit contains more than 42 billion metric tons of oil shale, the Tarfaya deposit contains more than 80 billion metric tons of oil shale and the Tangier deposit may contain 4 to 6 billion metric tons of oil shale.

The *Office National des Hydrocarbures et des Mines* (ONHYM), the public institution in charge of the development of the Moroccan oil shale, established a new strategy which consists of:

- ⇒ Setting up an appropriate regulations regarding oil shale,
- ⇒ Promoting Moroccan oil shale locally and internationally to develop partnerships with oil companies, companies involved in oil shale extraction processes, research centers and others,
- ⇒ Investigating new geological zones that may contain bituminous rocks,
- ⇒ Developing a national expertise by creating the *National Oil Shale Committee* composed of Moroccan competencies and experts.

Currently ONHYM counts six partners, working in the previously confirmed oil shale zones or investigating new potential oil shale zones throughout the country, including the National Office of Electricity. ONHYM continues to receive requests from companies interested in exploring potential oil shale zones.