



25 September 2013

Media Release

Proposed regulations for exploratory drilling not good enough

The Environmental Defence Society has today lodged a submission on proposed regulations covering petroleum exploratory drilling, discharges and dumping within the exclusive economic zone.

“The key issue these regulations need to address is the potential for a blow out from an exploratory well,” said EDS Policy Director Raewyn Peart. “Such an event could have catastrophic consequences for New Zealand.

“However, the proposed regulations provide no guidance on how to manage this risk. No standards are proposed against which drilling proposals would be measured. There is also to be no public submission or hearing process.

“EDS is also concerned that the Discussion Document provides no information on the environmental effects of proposed regulations for discharges and dumping within the exclusive economic zone. We question how the Minister for the Environment will be able to make a quality decision on the basis of so little information.

“The Government has expressed commitment to putting in place a world-class regulatory regime for New Zealand’s exclusive economic zone. Unfortunately, the proposed regulations in their current form will not deliver this.

“What we need is a regulatory framework which is robust and transparent and which applies a comprehensive risk management system to any exploratory drilling proposals.

“The proposed regulations will need to be considerably strengthened in order to achieve this,” Ms Peart concluded.

EDS’s submission is available on EDS’s website.