The shelf 2010 – Undiscovered resources

The volume of estimated, undiscovered resources on the Norwegian continental shelf has been reduced from 3.3 to 2.6 billion standard cubic metres of oil equivalents (Sm$^3$ o.e.). The largest reduction can be explained by discoveries totalling 400 million Sm$^3$ o.e. since 2006. In addition, estimates have been written down following disappointing exploration results in several important play models, and following new surveys off Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja.

The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate has carried out a new analysis of the undiscovered resources on the Norwegian shelf. The resource estimates include calculating the volume of recoverable petroleum resources that can be found in an area, if exploration is conducted on all prospects throughout the entire area. The volume that is actually proven and produced depends on both economic and technical factors.

Disappointing drilling results in several of the important play models in the deep water areas of the Norwegian Sea are one of the main reasons for the lower resource estimate. In addition, the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate’s surveys off Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja suggest lower prospectivity than previously assumed.

Discoveries totalling 400 Sm$^3$ made in the last four years are also deducted from the undiscovered resources.

The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate has updated its estimate of undiscovered petroleum resources for the entire Norwegian continental shelf. The previous update was conducted in 2006 and published in the 2007 Resource Report. The NPD has subsequently published new estimates for the Barents Sea (the 2009 Resource Report) and for the areas off Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja (April 2010).

In the North Sea, expected undiscovered liquid estimates have been reduced from 675 to 565 million Sm$^3$ o.e, while the expected gas volume has been reduced from 500 to 280 billion Sm3 o.e.

In the Norwegian Sea, the expected undiscovered liquid estimate has been reduced from 370 to 325 million Sm$^3$ o.e., while the expected gas volume has been reduced from 825 to 455 billion Sm$^3$ o.e.

The estimate for the Barents Sea has basically remained unchanged since the 2009 Resource Report.

The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate’s estimate of undiscovered resources has varied somewhat through the years. Until 2002, the expected statistical value rose because several new play models were defined and confirmed by discoveries. After 2002, estimates have been scaled back, mainly because discovery history showed that the estimates made prior to drilling were higher than the