

## Brazilian and UK scientists explore research partnerships to improve safe exploitation of oil and gas

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The safe exploitation of deep water oil heads the agenda at an international research workshop hosted by the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande de Norte (UFRN) in Natal, Brazil this week.

Oil and gas are mainstays of both the Brazilian and UK economies, providing a natural area for exchange of knowledge and expertise. Seven of the ten largest discoveries made this millennium have been made off Brazilian shores, but their location in deep water presents profound challenges for safe exploitation.

Scientists from the Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham are meeting with leading researchers from across Brazil to explore complementary research strengths to address these challenges.

Discussion topics include using seismic imaging and microfossils to map out and date oil-bearing rocks, oil generation, enhanced recovery of oil from beneath the surface and optimising the flow of oil from the drilling platform to the refinery.

The workshop will also provide the opportunity to share expertise on new technologies to monitor drilling and production, and the development of corrosion resistant materials essential for safer drilling and production in hostile deep water environments. Furthermore, the UK scientists will showcase methods of carbon capture and sequestration to reduce the effect of hydrocarbon use on climate.

Dr Aderson do Nascimento from UFRN, said: "Strengthening the Brazil-UK partnership in such a relevant economic and scientific theme is surely very important for all of us. This workshop provides great collaboration opportunities for academia in Brazil with our UK counterparts. Here at UFRN we are delighted to host this initiative."

Professor Tim Reston from the University of Birmingham, said: "As oil exploration and production in Brazil continues to grow, further development in cutting edge technologies is vital. Building on our joint expertise, we look forward to developing partnerships with Brazilian colleagues to collectively address the challenges ahead."

Professor Colin Snape from the University of Nottingham, added: "The Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham have a number of leading research groups in oil and gas who will attend the workshop. The workshop offers a unique opportunity for the UK and Brazilian university research groups to forge long-term partnerships. The initial focus of the partnerships is planned to be joint PhD training to provide highly skilled and specialist engineers for Brazil to maximise economic benefit from its huge oil and gas discoveries."

Sponsored by UK Trade and Investment, as part of the UKBrasil Season of culture, business and education, the workshop runs from 12th to 14th November 2012.

The workshop is one element of a significant joint investment by the Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham to support partnership development and research collaboration with Brazilian institutions. Other initiatives include 20 PhD scholarships for Brazilian students to study at Birmingham or Nottingham, a visiting fellows programme, a £480k research fund with the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP) and a series of workshops including one around Sporting Legacies. Both universities are also participating in the Science without Borders scheme and operate a joint office in Joinville, State of Santa Catarina.

### Notes to Editors

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