



12 January 2022

The Most Honourable Philip E. Davis, Q.C.
Prime Minister of The Bahamas
Office of the Prime Minister
Sir Cecil Wallace Whitfield Centre
PO Box CB 10980
Nassau, N.P, The Bahamas
primeminister@bahamas.gov.bs

Re: Call for Government Transparency and a Nationwide Ban on Oil Drilling

Government record requests regarding Challenger Energy Group (Bahamas Offshore Petroleum Co Ltd, Bahamas Petroleum Co Ltd, All subsidiaries and affiliates):

- Second Request for License Renewal Application and for public accounting of fees paid and outstanding to Government of The Bahamas
 - Third Request for information and reports on BPC Perseverance #1 Well drilling results, environmental impacts and site safety.
 - Fourth Request for License Agreements and Permits granted to authorize offshore oil drilling in Bahamian waters, and Certificate of Insurance.
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Dear Prime Minister Davis,

This letter is a formal request on behalf of the Bahamian public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) for documents pertaining to Challenger Energy Group, formerly Bahamas Petroleum Company, Bahamas Offshore Petroleum Limited and all subsidiaries (hereinafter referred to as “CEG”) application for renewal of their offshore oil drilling license(s). We additionally seek a full public accounting of fees that have been paid by CEG to date, and those that are still outstanding to the Government of The Bahamas. We also kindly request your attention to our three earlier FOIA requests related to this topic, dated: 26 January, 2021, 23 March, 2021, and 13 July 2021. This is our fourth request for information related to plans, licenses, government approvals, activities and reports surrounding CEG’s operations in Bahamian waters during 2020 and early 2021.

With this letter we reiterate our request for copies of all license agreements, reports, information, logs, as well as BPC's full certificate(s) of insurance. We also reiterate our prior request for information on the "minimum requirements" of insurance that were required of Challenger Energy Group during this drilling operation. Please also transmit all drilling reports, communications, compliance and safety observations, drilling results data and analysis, and any information in Government possession regarding potential or actual environmental impacts of the activities associated with the CEG's Perseverance #1 Well.

We wish to reiterate our recent expression to you, dated 18 October 2021, of our vigorous opposition to oil drilling in Bahamian waters and strongly urge that we move together to impose a permanent ban on fossil fuels exploration anywhere in our maritime borders. As we have all learned of and experienced the damaging impacts of global warming to coastal nations like The Bahamas, we must all agree that such oil development activity would only exacerbate our current climate crisis. The permanent ban will move The Bahamas away from filling the dual roles of climate victims and of a fossil fuel colony for investors, and allow us to build up and grow stronger blue and green economies.

We continue to be moved and inspired by your recent Address to the United Nations Assembly, with the following powerful declarations:

"We cannot set goals we have no intention of meeting. We cannot keep postponing the change we need for countries like mine to survive. If we are the serious leaders these times require, we must raise our ambitions, and make real commitments to cut emissions. We must make real progress on bridging the divides in investment, and access-to-technology and skills, especially in areas relevant to climate mitigation and adaptation.

We are going to build structural and economic resilience, in a green recovery, with plans to invest in climate-smart infrastructure and environmental protection. The Bahamas will lead on wetland and ocean preservation..."

Keeping in mind that Scientists at Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its recent [6th Assessment report](#) have stated unequivocally that we must move forward with strong and rapid reductions in carbon-emitting fossil fuels in the short term in order to stabilize the climate, or else we can only expect to see the duration, frequency and intensity of extreme conditions to increase. This is our time to act now, and with a sense of urgency as we have no legal obligation that would prevent us from doing so.

This is clearly not the time to get into this business, this is the time to get out, and progress towards stronger blue and green economies for The Bahamas and a sustainable future. For the first time since 2007 there are no active oil drilling licenses in The Bahamas. Please help lead this by banning fossil fuel exploration and drilling in The Bahamas. In doing so, we will take a step into the future by removing the influence of the dirty fossil fuels industry so that we focus on the resilient, green recovery efforts for a sustainable economic future.

We await your most favourable response.

Yours Respectfully,
OUR ISLANDS, OUR FUTURE



Casuarina McKinney-Lambert
BREEF



Rashema Ingraham
Waterkeepers Bahamas

Enclosures:

Full PDF of 1st Request letter – dated 26 January 2021

Full PDF of 2nd Request letter – dated 23 March 2021

Full PDF of 3rd Request letter – dated 13 July 2021

CC:

Sen. Hon. Mr. L. Ryan Pinder - Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs

Hon. Mr. Vaughn Miller, MP - Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources

Hon. Mr. Clay G. Sweeting, MP - Minister of Agriculture and Marine Resources

Hon. Justice Keith Thompson (Ret.) - Freedom of Information Commissioner