



Press Release
April 17, 2023

Serious questions over the withdrawal of ENEOS Holdings and other entities from the Yetagun gas project

On April 13, ENEOS Holdings (hereinafter referred to as “ENEOS”) [announced](#) that their withdrawal from the Yetagun gas project in Myanmar had been approved by the Myanmar “government” on April 12, in reference to the illegitimate military junta.

This announcement by ENEOS provided little information, with the company stating, “The impact of this transaction on our consolidated financial results is expected to be minimal”, and made no reference to the company’s obligations to responsibly exit, in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines.

Malaysian company Petronas has been the operator of the Yetagun gas project, under a partnership with Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE), PTTEP of Thailand, and the ENEOS consolidated subsidiary, Nippon Oil Exploration (Myanmar). Other investors in Nippon Oil are the Japanese Government and Mitsubishi Corporation.

While Petronas announced its [withdrawal](#) in 2022, it has not issued an update on the current status of its exit and any steps it has taken to divest from Myanmar responsibly.

Last year and also this year, Mekong Watch, FoE Japan and Justice For Myanmar (JFM) strongly urged ENEOS and its partners to responsibly disengage, with transparency and through consultation with local communities and civil society stakeholders. However, our demands were ignored.

In exiting Myanmar, ENEOS and its international partners have apparently failed to ensure that revenue from the project would not flow to the Myanmar military. Also, ENEOS and its international partners have not taken appropriate steps to close the field, which is predicted to be near depletion. While under control of the illegal military junta, MOGE cannot be trusted to close the gas field in an environmentally responsible way.

According to information obtained by JFM, the Yetagun gas project is being taken over by Gulf Petroleum Myanmar, which is part of the Thailand-based Northern Gulf Petroleum group. Northern Gulf Petroleum is structured through shell companies in Bermuda, a tax haven, according to [information](#) on the GPM website on June 28, 2022 (which has now been removed), and has a holding company in Singapore, a corporate structure that uses secrecy jurisdictions that may help facilitate payments to the junta. The selection of GPM as a successor implies that ENEOS, the Government of Japan, and Mitsubishi Corporation have not taken adequate measures to identify, prevent, mitigate and remedy the negative environmental and social impacts related to their withdrawal.

We call on ENEOS, the Government of Japan and Mitsubishi Corporation to disclose their human rights due diligence in relation to their withdrawal from Myanmar, and the steps they will take to address negative impacts, in accordance with their international human rights responsibilities.

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