OIL AND GAS

Brazil revises environmental assessment rules for O&G block offerings

Greater predictability for block offerings, with new factors to watch

On 9 November 2026, the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MMA) issued **Interministerial Directive 5/2026**, introducing new rules for the **Environmental Assessment of Sedimentary Areas (AAAS)** and supporting **Environmental Study of Sedimentary Areas (EAAS)**.

MAIN CHANGES

1. CLASSIFICATION OF AREAS

The moratorium category has been eliminated.

SUITABLE *(aptas)*
Social and environmental conditions compatible with oil and gas exploration and production using industry best practices.

UNSUITABLE *(não aptas)*
Legal restrictions, environmental assets incompatible with oil and gas activities, land-use conflicts, or insufficient information to assess environmental impacts and risks.

An unsuitable classification can only be changed through a review of the AAAS.

2. NEW DEADLINES

Main deadlines:

30 days Establish the Technical Coordination Committee (CTA)	**30 + 30 days** EAAS terms of reference (30-day extension available)	**180 days** Engage a contractor to conduct the EAAS (extension available)	**Up to 1 year** Prepare the EAAS
At least 30 days Public consultation	**30 days** Prepare the proposed AAAS and supporting report	**30 days** Ministerial approval	**5 days** Publish the EAAS and AAAS

AAAS valid for **10 years**, subject to earlier review

3. STREAMLINED DECISION-MAKING

The Interministerial Commission has been eliminated.

The proposed AAAS will be prepared by the Technical Coordination Committee (CTA) and submitted directly to the MME and MMA ministers for approval.

CTA composition

MME · MMA · Ibama · ICMBio · ANP · EPE

Coordinated by the MME, with equal representation of energy and environmental bodies.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public consultation on the EAAS and its Executive Report

- Digital participation prioritized
- In-person sessions only if required by the EAAS terms of reference
- No express requirement to respond to each submission

5. JOINT DETERMINATION

A Joint Determination *(Manifestação Conjunta)* may be used instead of an AAAS.

The MME and MMA will determine which areas undergo an AAAS and which will be assessed through a Joint Determination.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR COMPANIES?

The new deadlines and streamlined decision-making may make environmental assessments, and therefore the timing of new block offerings, more predictable.

At the same time, areas can be classified as unsuitable if there is insufficient information to assess environmental impacts and risks, making it increasingly important for companies to monitor the assessment process.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Classifications of acreage and basins of interest
- Whether areas will undergo an AAAS or Joint Determination
- Information gaps identified in assessments
- EAAS recommendations for environmental licensing
- Opportunities to participate in public consultations