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Oil Companies - International (Citi)  
CEEMEA | Russian Federation

## Russian Oil Tax Reform

### Alert: MET breaks on Bazhenov shale: Sufficient for a West Siberian renaissance?

Last week Russia's Ministry of Finance proposed a series of tax breaks for hard-to-recover oil reserves, including a complete waiver of extraction taxes for the Bazhenov shale. This formation, we think, holds the geological potential to revitalize West Siberian oil production, but only in the right fiscal regime. Unfortunately, these initial breaks may fall a bit short. If gotten right, however, winners would include most West Siberian oil producers, as well as pipe producers, OFS companies, and the Russian government itself via higher export duties.

**The Bazhenov Shale – an opportunity for all:** Underlying all of West Siberia, the Bazhenov is the source rock for over 90% of the oil produced from the region's conventional fields. The formation is already a proven producer in places via old-fashioned vertical wells, particularly around Salym, but is unpredictable, with maybe one in five wells producing and the others effectively dry, according to the USGS. US shale technology – the combination of horizontal wells and multi-stage fracs – may make the Bazhenov a consistent producer, but only if the fiscal regime is lightened up considerably, in our view.

**The 100% MET break may not quite make the Bazhenov economic:** Our calculations show that the proposed full waiver of the Mineral Extraction Tax (MET) – roughly \$20/bbl in a \$100/bbl oil environment – just might make development of the Bazhenov economic, but producers will either need to realize very good initial production rates on the average well and/or relatively low well costs, using typical results seen in the Bakken shale of North Dakota as a comparison. See the following page for more details.

**MET break does not mean Russian government foregoes all revenue:** As the Russian domestic oil market is already fully supplied, any increase in oil production will necessarily mean an increase in exports. As the export duty is the larger of the two main taxes assessed on the oil industry – \$49/bbl in a \$100/bbl oil environment relative to the MET's \$20/bbl – a shale revolution in Russia could generate significant revenues for the government. Production of 500kbd from the Bazhenov – assuming no cannibalization from conventional activities – would add a significant \$8.9bn per annum to the government's coffers, we calculate, via export duties.

**Leveraging existing infrastructure may give West Siberia a second life:** We see the development of the Bazhenov as an excellent way to leverage on decades of investment in West Siberian surface infrastructure – roads, pipelines, electricity supply, towns, etc. – allowing oil producers in the area to extend the useful life of old fields by years. With over 100,000 wells already drilled in West Siberia's Khanty-Mansiysk region, which includes the core oil producing Middle Ob region, there is much infrastructure to leverage off of.

See Appendix A-1 for Analyst Certification, Important Disclosures and non-US research analyst disclosures.

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#### ■ Industry Overview

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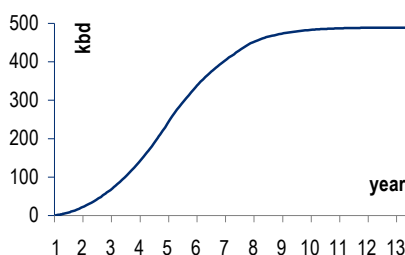
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Figure 1. Theoretical shale production, kbd



Assumptions: • Initial production rate: 700b/d rising to 1,500 over 5 years; • Rigs: 2 in the play climbing to 50; • Rig efficiency: 0.5 wells/rig/mo climbing to 0.8.

Source: Citi Research

Figure 2. Bakken vs. Bazhenov

	Bazhenov	Bakken
Basin area, sq mi	360,000	200,000
Depth, ft	8,856	10,000
Net Thickness, ft	70-130	150
Thermal maturity (Ro, %)	0.7-1.1	0.9
Total organic content, %	7%-11%+	10%
Total Porosity, %	5%-10%	5%-7%
Permeability, (md)	n/a	20-500
Pressure (psi)	7,250	5,600
Clay content, %	20%	5%
Silica/carbonate content, %	60%	95%
Initial well production, bpd	???	500-1,500
Well cost, \$m/well	???	\$7.5

Source: USGS, ROGTEC, Citi Research

Notes: Permeability is difficult to measure in the Bazhenov, as core samples tend to shatter uselessly before reaching the surface; Bazhenov advantages: Shallower depth, higher TOC, and higher pressure. Disadvantages: Clay content and silica numbers could decrease effectiveness of fracs; thermal maturity is low in some parts of the Bazhenov, tending to kerogen rather than oil in those spots.

**How much could West Siberia produce?:** This answer depends partly on the productivity of the average well and the availability of resources (drilling rigs are the relatively easy part – making sure Russia has enough pumping power to run thousands of fracs annually will require investment). As we show in Figure 2, the Bazhenov is superior to the Bakken on a few parameters (shallower and over-pressured, lowering well costs raising production rates), but inferior on others (lower silica/higher clay content may reduce frac effectiveness; not as thermally mature in some areas). To give an idea of the sensitivities, we show the results of a shale play model in Figure 1 at left, which assumes eventual per-well initial production rates of 1,500kbd, first year decline rates of 80%, a slow ramp-up of rigs in the play from an initial 2 to 50 over the course of 5 years, and rig efficiency rising from 0.5 wells per rig per month to 0.8 over that same time period. Production in this model plateaus at c500kbd, with these sensitivities: • Each additional rig raises the sustainable production rate by 10kbd; • Each 0.1 increment in rig efficiency (i.e., 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a well per month) raises plateau production by 60kbd; • Each 100bpd in the initial production rate boosts plateau production by 33kbd for the whole play.

**What are reasonable assumptions for those constraints?:** Rig count: In 2011 Russia had around 535 development rigs working in West Siberia. We think devoting 1/10<sup>th</sup> of that number to the Bazhenov in the course of several years is not unreasonable, especially as new rigs can be built in the interim. By comparison, there are between 180 and 200 rigs working in each of the Bakken and Eagle Ford shale plays in North Dakota and Texas. Well costs: An individual well in North Dakota costs around \$7.5mn, but we would expect initial costs in West Siberia to be far higher in spite of 10% shallower wells, but costs should come down over time as effort levels ramp up. Rig efficiency: We have based our efficiency assumptions on those seen in North Dakota, but note that while the Bazhenov is shallower than the Bakken, rig transport in swampy West Siberia is likely to be more difficult.

**100% MET break may fall just short:** In Figures 3 and 4 we model IRRs vs. well costs and initial 30-day production rates for the Bazhenov. Absent MET breaks (Figure 3) an average horizontal well with multiple fracs will only clear a reasonable cost of capital in the rather unlikely event that well costs are \$5mn and 30-day initial production rates average almost 2,000bpd. Limited press reports indicate that some test wells have produced in that range, but the data are anecdotal at this point. Estimates of well costs are practically nonexistent (and at this point irrelevant, as we'd expect substantial efficiencies as the play moves beyond experimental wells into full development), but we think are unlikely to be less than the \$7.5mn/well seen in the Bakken. Therefore, we conclude the MET break may fall short of the stimulus needed, unless the average Bazhenov well proves to be very productive.

Figure 3. Bazhenov well IRR – No tax breaks

		Initial well cost, \$mn		
		\$5.0	\$7.5	\$10.0
Initial pdtn, kbd	500	n/a	n/a	n/a
	1,000	-15%	-27%	n/a
	1,500	6%	-13%	-23%
	2,000	26%	0%	-13%

Source: Citi Research

Figure 4. Bazhenov well IRR – 100% MET break

		Initial well cost, \$mn		
		\$5.0	\$7.5	\$10.0
Initial pdtn, kbd	500	-14%	-27%	-33%
	1,000	27%	1%	-12%
	1,500	68%	28%	8%
	2,000	109%	55%	28%

Source: Citi Research

## Appendix A-1

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