

Total denied Brazil off shore drilling licences in Amazon Reef



Total SA was denied permission to drill five deep-water blocks in the Amazon Reef off Brazil's coast over biodiversity concerns. The Brazilian Environment Agency, known as Ibama, said on Friday that oil exploration in the area could threaten sea life in case of a spill. Plus, documents presented during the five-year assessment failed to ensure an adequate emergency plan would be in place, the agency said. The denial comes three weeks before President-Elect Jair Bolsonaro – who has strongly criticised Ibama's environmental licensing and promised more resource exploration in the Amazon – takes office on January 1. Total won the licences during Brazil's 11th oil round in 2013 in partnerships with BP Plc and state-controlled Petroleo Brasileiro SA.

The company will analyse documents sent by Ibama and decide on the next steps, according to an e-mailed response to

questions. "Ibama did the right thing in denying Total its licence to drill," said Thiago Almeida, a climate and energy campaigner for Greenpeace Brazil. "More than 2mn Amazon Reef defenders from all around the world stood up against Total's reckless plans to drill for oil near this unique and biologically significant area."