# Article

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Enhanced Recovery of Natural Gas Condensate Reservoir Using Carbon-Dioxide: A Simulation Study

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#### Abstract

This study is aimed at improving the recovery of Natural Gas Condensate from a Niger-Delta Reservoir in Nigeria, with 35.1 million stock tank barrel (MMSTB) and a 6879 pounds per square inch (psi) reservoir pressure. ECLIPSE 300, a compositional reservoir simulator, was employed to simulate (mimic) the candidate reservoir conditions so as to understand the performance of Carbon-dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) as the injecting fluid, while enhancing the recovery of the natural gas condensate from the reservoir. Nine case studies with different CO2 injection rates were considered to determine the optimum CO<sub>2</sub> injection rate. These were compared with the recovery from the natural energy drive of the reservoir. Using the natural energy (drive) of the reservoir, only 11.04MMSTB of natural gas condensates was recovered, which indicated a 32% recovery factor for the natural drive system. Case 6 with CO<sub>2</sub> injection rate of 4000 stock tank barrel per day (STB/D) recorded the optimum recovery factor for this natural gas condensate reservoir. This case 6 yielded an ultimate recovery of 21.65MMSTB with a recovery factor of 62%. This simulation results, precisely considering the reservoir conditions, indicated that CO<sub>2</sub> can be used to enhance natural gas condensate recovery from Niger-Delta reservoirs as demonstrated in this study. Another significance of this study is that  $CO_2$  with its adverse effects to the atmosphere and environment can be gainfully used for enhanced natural gas recovery as well as stored in hydrocarbon reservoirs so as to reduce its volume in the atmosphere.

Keywords: Natural gas condensate; Carbon-dioxide; CO2 injection; Enhanced gas recovery; Reservoir simulation.

#### 1. Introduction

The world is incessantly experiencing a growing demand for energy resources to meet the ever-increasing energy consumption due to rising population <sup>[1-2]</sup>. Also, there has been a shift of focus from liquid fossil fuels to a more environmentally friendly and cheap energy sources such as natural gas. This shift however, is consequent upon the fact that natural gas emits less greenhouse gasses like CO<sub>2</sub> thus limiting the current hazardous environmental energy impacts due to global warming – about 34 Gigatons of  $CO_2$  as reported by the International Energy Agency <sup>[3]</sup>. In 2019, Ajayi et al. <sup>[4]</sup> proposed that fossil fuels reservoirs offer a stochastic approach for the sequestration of Carbon (IV) oxide. Moreover, this translates to the fact that CO<sub>2</sub> which is deemed a nuisance to the environment, can be re-used as a means for enhanced gas recovery (EGR) instead of discharging it irresponsibly to the environment. Even so, Amin et al. also demonstrated in their research that similar approach can be applied to gas shale reservoirs <sup>[5]</sup>. Consequently, depleted gas reservoirs become rejuvenated or energised through CO<sub>2</sub> injection <sup>[6]</sup>. Moreover, Morsy *et al.* <sup>[7]</sup> highlighted the concern that gas condensate reservoir requires an effective CO2 injection method to bypass the condition of "condensate banking" during enhanced recovery. Gas condensate reservoirs offer excellent storage capabilities for CO<sub>2</sub> plus an extra merit of improved gas recovery through re-injection to the reservoir to augment the inherent drive mechanism of the concerned reservoir <sup>[8-9]</sup>.

Condensates are usually formed from the gas stream upon production from gas condensate reservoirs <sup>[10]</sup>. This happens when pressure suddenly declines below the dew point pressure of the natural gas, thereby reducing mobility to the surface during production. In addition, Jo <sup>[11]</sup>

opined that the fall of pressure below dew point in gas condensate reservoirs is the reason for "condensate blockage" in the wellbore which in turn, causes decline in gas flow rate and productivity. Also, retrograde condensation is another concern that needs to be looked into considering its negative impacts on natural gas production from condensate reservoirs. This concern is attributed to reduced reservoir capacity emanating from the coalescing of liquid in the reservoir. The unwanted liquid accumulation causes high liquid dropout that reduces gas relative permeability. Nevertheless, the role of CO<sub>2</sub> injection in this scenario is to re-vaporize the condensed flow and increase mobility for optimum gas recovery <sup>[12]</sup>. With respects to the afore-stated challenges, it is obvious that production enhancement from condensate reservoirs is a necessity for optimum gas recovery. However, this paper seeks to demonstrate how CO<sub>2</sub> injection can be used for the enhancement of gas condensate reservoirs in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria through Enhanced Gas Recovery (EGR). A simulation approach using Eclipse 300 modeling toolkit will be presented and discussed in subsequent sections.

# 2. Theories and definitions

Enhanced oil recovery through Carbon (IV) oxide injection have long been practiced in the oil and gas industry to primarily displace oil to the wellbore for increased productivity, especially for depleted oil reservoirs <sup>[13]</sup>. Recent research works have demonstrated the efficacy of using CO<sub>2</sub> injection as a means of enhancing hydrocarbon recovery from gas condensate reservoirs <sup>[14-17]</sup>. According to literature, there are two basic methods of CO<sub>2</sub> injection. They are; miscible and immiscible gas injection (CO<sub>2</sub>) <sup>[18]</sup>. Basically, miscible CO<sub>2</sub> injection enhances oil production by reducing crude oil viscosity thus elevating oil displacement efficiency. In same fashion, CO<sub>2</sub> injection is employed to gas reservoirs to foster optimum gas recovery. Notwithstanding, the procedure is more complicated than that of oil reservoirs due to the following factors <sup>[19]</sup>;

1) Adsorption of gases within reservoir rocks.

2) The chemical affiliation between  $CO_2$  and natural gas

Depleted gas reservoirs provide a larger volumetric capacity to house  $CO_2$  when compared to oil reservoirs. Invariably,  $CO_2$  is mostly stored at critical conditions (i.e. >32°C and 7.4Mpa). Under reservoir conditions,  $CO_2$  is completely miscible with natural gas thus making it constitute nuisance to the natural gas resource. Carbon (IV) oxide is anti-combustive in nature, when completely mixed with natural gas; it increases the sweetening requirements of natural gas which are usually expensive. Hence, practical  $CO_2$ -EGR procedures are somewhat challenging especially when specifying the right quantity of  $CO_2$  to be injected into the reservoir <sup>[1]</sup>. Consistent simulation modeling is subject to parameters like dispersion coefficient and tortuosity – as mixing take place by the process of diffusion in many reservoirs <sup>[20]</sup>. Superfluous amount of  $CO_2$  leads to early breakthrough in production wells. More so, subsurface reservoir temperature modelling is often needed to describe the behavior of the fluid during injection, production and shut-in <sup>[21]</sup>. It also creates a medium to determine other parameters like production height and location <sup>[22]</sup>. In practice, there is need for CO2 injection to be optimized using appropriate simulation methods to circumvent the condition of produced gas contamination that increases the treatment costs of the produced gas <sup>[19]</sup>.

# 2.1. Gas reservoirs

Gas reservoirs are basically grouped into condensates, wet and dry gas reservoirs <sup>[23</sup>]. In short, gas reservoirs are generally best described using phase diagrams <sup>[24]</sup>. The phase diagram showing different types of gas reservoirs is illustrated in Figure 1. It is paramount to address the effect of CO<sub>2</sub> injection on the gas phase behavior. PVT laboratory experimentations have shown that CO<sub>2</sub> has a drying impact on condensate and wet reservoirs. Conversely, CO<sub>2</sub> has a wetting effect on dry gas reservoirs. Conventionally, upon the addition of CO<sub>2</sub> in the reservoir, compressibility of gas declines and provides a high storage capacity in the process <sup>[25]</sup>. In depleted retrograde gas condensate reservoirs, liquid condenses from the gas stream at conditions below the dew point. This drop below dew-point has two major effects; firstly, gas production decrease due to near-well blockage, and secondly, reduced mobility of fluid flow

to the wellbore. Although it is no longer a controversy that gas recovery factors are generally higher than those of oil fields, some challenges are usually encountered <sup>[26]</sup>. A number of productivity losses have been recounted for wells in gas-condensate fields. In Arun field, which was operated by ExxonMobil, the loss in some wells was greater than 50%. There was also another case where two wells from a field operated by ExxonMobil were reported to have died due to condensate blockage.



Temperature

Figure 1. Phase diagram of different gas reservoirs [1]

Gas condensate reservoirs are mostly affected by near-wellbore condensate blockage. However, the extent to which condensate dropout constitute a production problem is dependent on the ratio of pressure drop within the reservoir to the total pressure drop from distant areas of the reservoir. At a relatively high pressure drop, condensate blockage issues need to be addressed for well deliverability. This condition typically applies in a formation with a low reservoir capacity (kh) <sup>[11]</sup>. Condensate blockage can be assumed to double the pressure drop in the reservoir for the same flow rate. Also, it is possible to increase the temperature of the accumulated liquid in the gas wellbore through methanol injection – so as to curb the problem of condensate blocking <sup>[27]</sup>. Another, approach to this problem is to perform hydraulic fracturing of the reservoir to the liquid bank thereby temporarily improving gas productivity <sup>[28]</sup>. Theoretically, flow in gas condensate fields can be subdivided into three reservoir regions, although in some scenarios not all three are present. Figure 2. illustrates the regions encountered during gas production from condensate reservoirs. The two regions nearest to the wellbore can exist at bottom hole pressures lower than the dew point of the gas stream. The third region, distant from the producing well, exists only when the reservoir pressure is above the dew point. Above the dew point pressure of gas, only one phase of fluid can exist – gas. The interior periphery of this region occurs where the pressure equals the dew point pressure of the original reservoir gas. This boundary is not stationary, but moves outward as hydrocarbon are produced from the well and the formation pressure drops, eventually disappearing as the outer-boundary pressure drops below the dew-point.

In the second region which is the condensate-buildup region, liquid condenses out from the gas phase, but its saturation remains small and immobile. The amount of liquid that drops out is determined by the gas phase characteristics, as described by its PVT diagram. The liquid saturation increases and the gas phase become slimmer as gas flows to the wellbore.

In the first region, closest to producing well, both gas and condensate phases flow. The condensate saturation here is greater than the critical condensate saturation. This region ranges in size from tens of feet to lean condensates to hundreds of feet for rich condensates. Its size is proportional to the volume of gas drained and the percentage of liquid dropout. It extends farther from the well for layers with higher permeability than average since a larger volume of gas has flowed through these layers.



Figure 2. Three regions in gas condensate reservoirs

# 2.2. Concepts of reservoir simulation

Reservoir simulation – using commercial tools – is usually conducted to monitor the impact of *CO2* injection on the deliverability of gas wells and condensate rates enhancement. The simulation envisages a systematic application of numerical modelling through discretization method used for spatial gridding of radial mesh. In short, the resulting simulator incorporates concise implicit time functions and diverse point schemes based on finite difference approximations or appropriate linearization schemes as demonstrated in recent literatures <sup>[29-31]</sup>. These schemes mimic unstructured grids and packed tensor permeability precisely while employing "equation of state" (EoS) for the fluid model.

# 3. Methodology

This section discusses the implementation of dynamic reservoir simulation tool ECLIPSE 300 specialized in compositional modeling to account for the following effects:

- i. Condensate production and saturation
- ii. CO<sub>2</sub> injection under pressure depletion

For this purpose, the software used with basic features of the reservoir are delineated to characterize fluid properties such as viscosity, density, API gravity, and rock properties (porosity, relative permeability, compressibility) gas production rate, pressure of reservoir, depth of the reservoir, area of the field of operation. Following this, simulations of the gas condensate reservoir was performed for the gas condensate reservoir under pressure depletion for the hypothetical reservoir with one producer well.

# 3.1. Simulator work flow and case runs

A typical Eclipse Simulator Workflow consists of defining the Cases (Runs Specification) and this step is critical and the objective is clearly defined here. Then the collected data is reviewed followed by building of the model and property modeling - 3D grid modeling (Import, editing etc.), initialization, scheduling. History matching (optimization) is then performed in which the pressure and production match are established. Finally, forecasting or prediction of future production outcomes under varying operating strategies.

For the purpose of this paper, case runs were carried out involving simulated scenarios, prior to changing the reservoir geological features in the grid tab, petrophysical properties and well production conditions. Individual cases were reported on the run manager tool in the ECLIPSE 300 to avoid bugs. Careful set of input rules was followed to avoid errors in which case the run manager hangs and becomes inappropriate to generate the output file and data. The hypothetical reservoir was modelled with some permeability and porosity values generated from the pseudo pressure integral function method. For the purpose of clarity, a producer well system (AD\_1) was assumed to be operating at a producing rate of 4000MScf/day with an equidistant injector well.

### 3.2. Data gathering and presentation

The data used for this study include

1) 3D static modelled grid and property data,

2) well data for one relative permeability data.

Table 1 shows the PVT Fluid Composition versus depth for DAMA Reservoir. Table 3 also shows the correlations Endpoints used in generation Special Core Analysis (SCAL).

### 3.3. Model description

For the purpose of model simulation, a Niger delta gas condensate field consisting of one proposed producing well (Well-01) was used for this study. The simulation models a 6800acres gas condensate field. The constructed model is in grid unit of feet with the following grid axis with respect to map coordinates and dimensions :79 x 19 x 12. The reservoirs fluid properties with respect to depth have been tabulated in the Table 1.

### 3.4. Case definition

The Eclipse simulation has been built with inputs from the static model, and other engineering data. Simulation start date was defined for the cases. Grid dimensions (in x, y and z directions) were specified as illustrated by Table 2. Cartesian grid and corner point grid geometry options were chosen for more accurate reservoir modeling. Reservoir fluid phases (water, oil, gas, dissolved gas and vaporized oil) were defined. A fully implicit solution method was used for all the runs to guarantee convergence of the solution type.

Depth (ft)	Z1	Z2	Z3	Z4	Z5	Z6	Z7
15257	0.016	0.669	0.178	0.029	0.071	0.032	0.005
15506.7	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15510.64	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15514.58	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15518.52	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15522.47	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15526.41	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15530.35	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15534.29	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15538.23	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15542.17	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15546.11	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15550.06	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15554	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15557.94	0.016	0.664	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15561.88	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15565.82	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15569.76	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15573.7	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15577.65	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15581.59	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15585.53	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15589.47	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15593.41	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15597.35	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15601.29	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15605.24	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15609.18	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15613.12	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15617.06	0.016	0.663	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005
15621	0.016	0.662	0.178	0.03	0.073	0.034	0.005

Table 1. PVT Fluid Composition vs depth

Table 2. Simulation	Grid Dimensions	Reservoir Specifications
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GRID options	Geometry options	Grid dimensions			PVT considerations
Cartesian	Corpor point	I	J	K	Water-Oil-Gas
Cartesian	Corner point	79	19	12	Water-OII-Gas

Table 3. Corey Endpoints values

Corey Water	4	Corey Oil Gas	3
Corey Gas	3	Sgmin	0
Corey Oil Water	3	Sgcr	0.05
Swmin	0.25	Sgi	0
Swi	0.25	Krg (Sorg)	0.7
Swmax	1	Krg (Sgmax)	0.7
Sorw	0.1	Sorg	0.1
Kro( Sgmin)	0.9	Kro (Swmin)	0.9

Some of the basic reservoir properties can be seen in Table 4. All the data gathered were integrated and quality checked, and were further used to archive a fit for purpose dynamic model for DAMA reservoir.

Table 4. Reservoir properties

Decenvoir description	Values
Reservoir description	Values
Total field area, acres	6800
Average thickness, ft	100
Average reservoir depth, ft	8920
Datum depth, ft	15527
GOW depth, ft	15593.8
Initial reservoir pressure, psia	6879
Reservoir temperature, oF	227
Average porosity, %	14
Average water saturation, %	25
Dew point pressure, psia	4700

#### 4. Results and discussion

Model was initialized under hydrostatic equilibrations, the contact used were carried forward from the static modeling. The equilibration data is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Equilibration data

Reservoir_ A	Pi (Psia)	Datum depth (Ft)	Gwc (Ft)
Dama	6879	15527	15593.8

Table 6. Initialized volume

Static volumes	Oil dynamic volumes	Gas dynamic volumes	Gas (reservoir volume)
(MMSTB)	(rb) (reservoir volume)	(MMSTB)	(MMSCF)
35.1	0	34.85	195.65

Table 6 show the Initialized volume from the dynamic initialization, the oil reservoir volume is zero (0) showing that the fluid exists as gas condensate in the reservoir but the condensate drops out at the separator with a volume of 34.85MMSTB which is quite reflective that very reasonable quantity can be recovered if properly managed.

Also, Carter-Tracy analytical aquifer was attached as bottom drive to sustain the energy of the reservoir as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Carter-Tracy's Aquifer Data

Aquifer perm (Md)	100
Aquifer Angle	177°
Compresibility	4.20e-06

Figure 3 presents the oil saturation map, the map proves that there was no liquid formed at the initial state of the reservoir life. The oil saturation is zero (0) as seen from the map. Also, figure 4 shows the condensate saturation map at the initial stage of the reservoir.

To achieve the objectives of this paper, different case runs have been carried out on the simulated model. To start with, the reservoir was firstly investigated under natural gas depletion. Furthermore, other cases where then run, which considered the duration of the injection of  $CO_2$  and varying the rates of injection to determine the optimal injection pressure.



Figure 3. Initial oil saturation map



Figure 4. Condensate saturation map

# 4.1. Case 1 (Base case)

In this case the reservoir was subjected to natural depletion, and well AD\_01 was opened to production. The predicted production period is for 25 years from (2017 to 2041) with a maximum reservoir liquid production rate of 4000Mstb/day. This was done to investigate the efficiency of the natural depletion and to determine the recovery factor on natural depletion. Figure 5 illustrates the production profile of the base case simulation runs. Also figure 6 shows the gas condensate saturation map and the oil (oil drop out due to attending due point at the reservoir) saturation map at the end of prediction while Table 8 shows the summary results. Until the year of 2020, field oil production is increasing at a constant rate, but subsequently,

the field faces the reduction of oil production as shown in figure 5. In other words, the field's production potential is not attained. Therefore, in order to increase production, we need to apply the  $CO_2$  injection.



Figure 5. Production Profile of the base case simulation



Figure 6. EOP gas condensate saturation map



Oil dynamic vol- umes (MMSTB) (wrt separator)	Dynamic ultimate recovery (MMSTB)	R.F @ end of his- tory (%)	Oil rate @ end of prediction STB/day	BHP @ end of his- tory (PSIA)
34.85	11.04	31.67	123	2064

# 4.2. Case 2 (CO<sub>2</sub> injection)

CO<sub>2</sub> injection has been carried out. The reservoir pressure is being maintained by the injection of CO<sub>2</sub>. DAMA reservoir has been observed under natural depletion to have started declining in rate after the year 2020 hence pressure maintenance with CO<sub>2</sub> injection had been kick started just at the time of production rate decline. The injection well has been set to BHP control. It was observed that under natural depletion, the reservoir BHP attained a minimum pressure of 2064psia. Therefore, the injection BHP target has been set to a pressure above the minimum reservoir pressure after natural depletion prediction. Based on these, further sensitivity analysis have been carried out by running different simulation scenarios using different injection BHP target starting from a target minimum of 2500psia to a target maximum of 7500psia to achieve an optimum injection pressure that will yield maximum recovery. The maximum injection pressure 7500 psia was used in other to stay within the pressure regime as observed in the reservoir to avoid over pressuring the system which could lead to fracturing.

The injection well coordinate is represented in Table 9. The  $CO_2$  injection gas composition is also represented in Table 10

5				
Well Name	i coordinate	J	K upper	K lower
INJ	37	7	8	11

Table 9. Injection well coordinates

Table 10	. Injection	gas	composition
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Component	Mole%	Component	Mole%
H <sub>2</sub>	1.8	C3	14.16
CO <sub>2</sub>	32.92	iC4	7.77
C1	23.37	nC4	5
C2	14.98		

Table 11 shows the summary of results obtained from the injection BHP targets that was considered. Table 11 presents the summary of all the cases that have been considered. It shows the BHP target that was used for each case, their respective ultimate recovery (UR) and recovery factor (R.F). It can be observed that the BHP target for Case 1 and 2 had no effect on condensate recovery, therefore they have a uniform ultimate recovery and recovery factor with the base case. Figure 7 represents the incremental field oil production total for all case scenarios.

The pressure profile for all case is illustrated in Fig. 4.6. Case 9 pressure profile looks to be over pressured. In other to determine the maximum  $CO_2$  injection pressure (BHP target) that is best for the reservoir and also, to avoid having over pressured system, an analytical plot of R.F vs Injection BHP target has been made to properly ascertain the maximum injection pressure. This could be seen in Figure 9.

Cases	CO <sub>2</sub> BHP in- jection (psi)	CO <sub>2</sub> injected vol- ume (STB/D)	Ultimate recovery (MMSTB)	Recovery fac- tor (%)
Base Case	0	0	11.04	32
Case 1	3000	4000	11.04	32
Case 2	4000	4000	11.04	32
Case 3	5000	4000	15.99	46
Case 4	5500	4000	17.61	50
Case 5	6000	4000	19.45	56
Case 6	6500	4000	21.65	62
Case 7	7500	4000	24.02	69
Case 8	9000	4000	26.12	75
Case 9	15000	4000	27.4	79

Table 11. BHP injection cases







Figure 8. Field pressure for all cases





From the plot, the R.F seems to have attained a plateau between 9,000 psia and 15,000 psia, the difference in R.F at 15,000 psia is also insignificant compared to the pressure difference between the both cases.

### 5. Conclusion

It is an established fact that the total oil dynamic volume with respect to the separator is 34.85MMSTB. From the results obtained in chapter four, it was clearly seen that only a total of 11.04MMSTB (with a recovery factor of 0.32%) was able to be recovered using the natural drive system (i.e. without CO<sub>2</sub> injection) of the reservoir, this recovery can be considered quite insufficient compared to the total dynamic oil volume. Therefore, the purpose for CO<sub>2</sub> injection was considered in order to seek an incremental recovery of the total oil dynamic volume present in the reservoir. Nine (9) BHP target cases were simulated to obtain the best pressure at which the  $CO_2$  gas can be injected for the optimal recovery of oil. Case 1 and 2 with injection pressures of 3000psia and 4000psia respectively gave exactly the same ultimate recovery and recovery factor as the base case. Furthermore, five BHP cases (Cases 3 to 7) that were below the reservoir pressure were simulated and it was observed that there was a significant proaressive increase in the ultimate recovery and recovery factor. In addition, two extra BHP cases (Cases 8 and 9) whose injection pressures (9000psia and 15,000psia respectively) were above the reservoir pressure were simulated to see their impact in ultimate recovery and recovery factor. It was seen that there was no significant increment in the ultimate recovery and recovery factor of oil.

#### Conflict of interest

The authors declare that this paper has no conflict of interest whatsoever with any organization, individual or research works previously done anywhere else.

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