

# Palestinian Natural Gas Ambitions

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Simon Henderson is the Baker fellow and director of the Bernstein Program on Gulf and Energy Policy at The Washington Institute, specializing in energy matters and the conservative Arab states of the Persian Gulf.




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**A closer look at the legal, economic, and political issues surrounding gas and oil exploration off Gaza's coast, including associated power plant proposals and other ventures.**

**M**ost of the natural gas (about 40 tcf) found so far in the Eastern Mediterranean's Levant Basin has been in Israel's Exclusive Economic Zone, with a small amount offshore Cyprus, but one of the earliest discoveries, in 2000, was offshore the Gaza Strip. The exploitation of this discovery, the Gaza Marine field (1 tcf), could provide more reliable electricity to the Gaza Strip and boost the revenues of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank.

Gaza Marine is the single largest Palestinian economic asset -- though earlier this year the PA also invited tenders to explore for oil in an area of the West Bank from just north of Qalqiliya to the west of Ramallah. Prospects for discovering oil in commercial quantities there seem slim, but meanwhile development of Gaza Marine remains elusive -- the latest setback occurred in March when news of reconciliation between the PA and Hamas in the Gaza Strip reportedly prompted the Israeli government to withdraw from talks on its development...

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