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Mexico auctions 19 deepwater oil blocks in Gulf

5^D Mexico has auctioned off 19 deepwater oil blocks located in the Gulf of Mexico, the largest such auction since the government opened the country's hydrocarbons sector to private industry.

Royal Dutch Shell won nine of the blocks four as a lone bidder, four in a consortium with Qatar Petroleum, and one in association with the state oil giant Petroleos de Mexico (Pemex), Mexican officials said.

Pemex won four blocks, two alone and two in consortium with other companies.

PC Carigali, a unit of Malaysian oil giant Petronas, won six blocks, two alone and four in alliance with other companies.

The blocks are together estimated to contain the equivalent of 4.2 billion barrels of oil. -