



China's Major Gas Field Discovery in the South China Sea

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China has announced the discovery of the **Lingshui 36-1 gas field in the South China Sea**, marking it as the **world's first large, ultra-shallow gas field in ultra-deep waters**. This significant find could intensify the already existing geopolitical tensions in the region.

- The Lingshui 36-1 gas field is estimated to contain over **100 billion cubic meters of natural gas**, positioning it as a substantial resource in the South China Sea.
- As the **world's largest natural gas importer**, spending approximately USD 64.3 billion on gas in 2023, China aims to enhance its energy security with this discovery.
- The South China Sea's combined **original gas in place (OGIP) exceeds 1 trillion cubic metres**, emphasizing its critical role in global energy resources.
- The **South China Sea is contested by** the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan against China's claims.
 - Past incidents, like the **2014 Vietnam protests over China's oil rig**, show the diplomatic issues related to resource development. The United States, European Union, Japan, and allies support the smaller nations' claims, increasing regional tensions.

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