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Rockhopper Exploration plc
("Rockhopper" or the "Company")

Drilling Programme Update

**Sea Lion Exploration Well – 14/10-2
Oil Discovery**

Rockhopper Exploration, the North Falkland Basin oil and gas exploration company, is pleased to announce that well 14/10-2 on the Sea Lion prospect has reached a depth of 2,744 metres. Initial data collected indicate that this well is an oil discovery, which would be the first in the North Falkland Basin.

The Company has run a suite of wireline logs and logging data collected thus far indicate that the well has encountered a 150 metre gross interval of sand and shales. The data show that the well has 53 metres of net pay distributed in multiple pay zones, the thickest of which has a net pay of 25 metres. These pay zones have an average porosity of 19%.

Rockhopper now intends to collect additional logging information prior to making a decision whether to plug and abandon the well, or to suspend the well for future testing. The Company is also considering whether to drill an appraisal well on Sea Lion later during the current drilling campaign. Further information will be distributed in due course.

It remains the intention of the Company to drill the Ernest prospect in the fourth slot of the overall Falklands Drilling programme.

Samuel Moody, Managing Director, commented:

"We are extremely excited by the results of this well. While we are presently acquiring additional data, current indications are that we have made the first oil discovery in the North Falkland Basin. We will now focus on analysing in more detail the data gathered from the well, in addition to continuing preparations for the drilling of our Ernest prospect later in the year."

Enquiries:

Rockhopper Exploration plc
Sam Moody - Managing Director
Tel. +44 (0)20 7920 2340 (via M: Communications)

M: Communications
Patrick d'Ancona or Ben Simons
Tel. +44 (0)20 7920 2340

Canaccord Adams
Jeffrey Auld/ Elijah Colby/ Henry Fitzgerald O'Connor
Tel. +44 (0) 20 7050 6500

Notes to Editors

Rockhopper was established in February 2004 with a strategy to invest in and carry out an offshore oil



exploration programme to the north of the Falkland Islands. The Company floated on AIM in August 2005 and holds a 100 per cent. interest in four offshore production licences: PL023, PL024, PL032 and PL033 which cover approximately 3,800 sq. km. Rockhopper has also farmed in to licences PL003 and PL004 which are operated by Desire Petroleum in which it holds a 7.5% working interest. These licences have been granted by the Falkland Islands government.

An extensive work programme has been carried out over a number of years on the licences operated by Rockhopper. This has included 2D and 3D Seismic and Controlled Source Electromagnetic Mapping (CSEM). In February 2010, the Ocean Guardian drilling rig arrived in Falklands waters to carry out a multi-well drilling campaign. Rockhopper has drilled an exploration well on its Sea Lion prospect and current indications are that the Company has made the first oil discovery in the North Falkland Basin. Further analysis is being carried out. The Company intends to drill its Ernest prospect later during 2010 in addition to participating in further wells with Desire.

In November 2009 the Company completed an equity placing to raise gross proceeds of £50 million which covers the anticipated costs of these wells, including contingencies.

Rockhopper Exploration plc www.rockhopperexploration.co.uk

NB: This statement has been approved by the Company's geological staff who include David Bodecott (Exploration Director), who is a Member of Petroleum Exploration Society of Great Britain (PESGB) and the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) with over 30 years of experience in petroleum exploration and management, for the purpose of the Guidance Note for Mining, Oil and Gas Companies issued by the London Stock Exchange in respect of AIM companies, which outline standards of disclosure for mineral projects.