

Pumping Cash into Gas

The government has launched a **zł.1 billion** research program to find new ways of drilling for and extracting shale gas while reducing damage to the environment.

Two government agencies—the **National Center for Research and Development (NCBiR)** and the Industrial Development Agency (ARP)—July 11 signed an agreement to finance research by Polish companies aiming to develop original technology for the extraction of shale gas.

Under the agreement, the NCBiR will contribute **zł.250 million** to the program. The ARP will provide another **zł.250 million** from its Business Restructuring Fund in the form of corporate loans. The remaining **zł.500 million** will come from companies interested in applying the research findings.

According to Treasury Minister Mikołaj Budzanowski, three Polish fuel companies, PGNiG, Orlen and Lotos, have expressed an interest in taking part in the program. Budzanowski added that some countries, including the United States, have already developed shale gas extraction technology, but Poland has different geological conditions

Factfile

- A total of 111 concessions have been issued for shale gas drilling in Poland since 2007.
- 28 new applications for concessions are still being examined.
- The concessions cover a total area of 90,000 square kilometers.
- 23 shale gas wells have been drilled so far, with another six still being drilled.
- A total of 41 wells are due to be drilled by the end of the year.

and needs different technology. In the United States, shale gas has been extracted since 2007.

NCBiR head, Prof. **Krzysztof Jan Kurzydłowski**, said the scientific community has an important role to play in the project. "The key goal of the program is to develop know-how, chiefly technology adapted to Poland's geological conditions," he said. "An additional effect we hope to achieve is a stronger relationship between the scientific and business communities and greater commitment from the business sector to research and development work."

The program will run until 2022. Funding will go to projects with budgets ranging from **zł.3 million** to **zł.200 million** and covering a period no longer than 36 months.

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