



**ESSO PRODUCTION RESEARCH COMPANY**

EPR69-ES19

GEOCHEMICAL ANALYSIS OF CANNED CUTTINGS  
SAMPLES FROM THE ESSO 25/11-1 WELL, NORWAY

  
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Stratigraphic Geology Division

May 1969

Technical Service Report

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Canned cuttings samples from the interval 1250-8030 feet were analyzed for their yields of hydrocarbon gases. Chips of uniform lithology were picked from 34 of these samples and analyzed for total organic matter and light gasolines (C<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>7</sub>). Visual characteristics of the kerogen were also determined on 13 of the picked samples.

Several zones of high methane yields are indicated in the interval 1350-4000 feet, and reservoirs associated with these intervals might contain appreciable accumulations of dry gas. Cuttings from the intervals 5350-5850 and 6450-6750 feet gave high yields of wet gas, suggesting oil prone source strata. Oil shows such as were encountered below 5600 feet in this well might be expected, based on the cuttings gas patterns.

The cuttings gas becomes notably wetter below 5000 feet, the yields of C<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>7</sub> gasolines become significant at about 5400 feet, and the kerogen alteration first becomes as high as 2+ at about 5400 feet. These three observations support the suggestion that thermal diagenesis first approaches the mature state at about 5400 feet. The high-methane gas yielded by samples above 5000 feet is thus likely to be due to organic immaturity of this section rather than to a strictly gas-prone nature of the organic matter.

Kerogen alteration ratings range no higher than 2+, suggesting that subsurface temperatures have not been high enough to destroy any liquid hydrocarbon accumulations that may have been present.

Kerogen types are variable, suggesting mixed oil-prone and gas-prone organic matter in the various strata that were sampled. A few scattered samples gave low cyclohexane/methylcyclopentane ratios, suggesting "non-oily" organic matter. Most of these samples apparently contain amorphous as well as woody and coaly kerogen. The woody and coaly material is commonly considered to represent gas-prone material, but amorphous kerogen has often been assumed to represent oil-prone material.

## INTRODUCTION

Canned cuttings samples from the interval 1250-8030 feet in the Esso 25/11-1 well were analyzed for their yields of hydrocarbon gases. Selected samples of uniform lithology were further analyzed for total organic matter concentrations and yields of light gasoline (C<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>7</sub>) hydrocarbons, and some were also analyzed for visual characteristics of their kerogen.

The purpose of these analyses was to provide means for estimating the source character and the degree of diagenetic maturity of the organic matter in the sections penetrated by the well.

Results of cuttings gas analyses were plotted on 1:2000 vertical scale strip logs and transmitted to the North Sea Study Group with our letter of October 2, 1967. Cuttings samples that were selected for further analyses were chosen on the basis of results of the cuttings gas data.

The cuttings from the interval 5700-7400 feet were collected and shipped in glass rather than metal cans. The 5700-ft sample, which was in a glass container, yielded notably less total gas than the preceding 5600-ft sample which was stored in metal. This suggests that the "glass samples" may possibly have given lower gas yields than the metal samples, as will be discussed later.

The drilling mud used in the 25/11-1 well contained notable amounts of diesel oil, so that most of the samples had a strong diesel odor and fluoresced in ultra violet light. The diesel oil prevented us from making useful determinations of intermediate hydrocarbon (C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>14</sub>) yields from these samples, but apparently did not seriously interfere with the light gasoline analysis.

This report includes complete tabulations of results of the cuttings gas, visual kerogen, total organic matter and gasoline analyses that were run, plus graphic plots of these data. Explanations of our criteria for interpreting the data, plus brief discussions of the results of the analyses are included.

A service report EPR67-ES99 on crude oil samples from the 25/11-1 well was sent to the North Sea Study Group in November, 1967. This earlier report concerned liquid hydrocarbons from various sand zones in the interval 5685-5829 feet.

Charges for this service work have been billed to the North Sea Study Group through our Job No. 9042.

## PROCEDURE

Compositions and concentrations of hydrocarbon gases in the air spaces above the cuttings in the sample cans were determined by gas chromatography. Similar data were obtained on the gases released from a standard mixture of cuttings plus tap water after agitation for 2 minutes in a Waring blender. Combined results on air space gas plus cuttings gas were calculated for each sample. The data from the combined results were plotted graphically to show the vertical variations in total gas ( $C_1-C_4$ ) and wet gas ( $C_2-C_4$ ) and graphical plots were also made of the percent wet gas in total gas (Fig. 1).

Cuttings gas yields showed several vertical zonations which roughly correspond to different organic facies in the stratigraphic sections represented by the samples. Representative cuttings samples from the different distinctive zones defined by the cuttings gas were selected for further analyses. The selected samples were then picked by hand to provide materials of uniform lithologies for the additional work.

Some of the sample intervals that were chosen contained soft argillaceous cuttings dispersed in drilling mud, and they completely disaggregated when we attempted to wash the mud away. As a result, we were not able to obtain cuttings chips from all of the intervals of interest.

All of the "picked" cuttings were analyzed for light gasoline ( $C_4-C_7$ ) compounds and total organic matter, and 13 of them were also analyzed for visual kerogen characteristics. Two core samples from approximately 3625 and 5714 feet were also analyzed for total organic matter and  $C_4-C_7$  hydrocarbons.

Results of the cuttings gas analyses are given in Table I. Results of the additional chemical and visual kerogen analyses are given in Tables II and III.

## BASES FOR INTERPRETING DATA

### Cuttings Gas

Cuttings gas data give indications of the vertical variability in the source character of a section of interest. The ratio of wet gas ( $C_2-C_4$ ) to total gas ( $C_1-C_4$ ) may distinguish methane-prone from oil- and "wet" gas-prone sections. The critical value of this ratio varies from basin to basin. In Western Canada wet gas concentrations of about 45% or greater are considered to be indicative of sections that are likely to produce oil or gas with significant amounts of hydrocarbon liquids. In the Permian section of West Texas the significant ratio appears to be closer to 20% or greater of wet gas in total gas.

The significant values for total amounts of hydrocarbon gas yielded by the cuttings also appear to vary from basin to basin, and possibly must be established separately for each area of interest. Zones with the greatest yields of gas are considered to be of most interest as sources.

Oil in the drilling mud makes it nearly impossible to establish practical quantitative criteria that can be used in comparing different wells. The oil will tend to reduce the amount of cuttings gas released during agitation in the blender, and it will affect the composition of the hydrocarbon gas that is obtained for analysis. However, even with oil in the mud, significant vertical patterns in hydrocarbon gas concentrations and compositions can be established in each well. The patterns from different wells can be compared to establish regional trends or areal configurations of different organic facies within a section of interest.

### Visual Kerogen

Kerogen data give two types of information. The color alteration (carbonization) provides a gross indication of the amount of thermal diagenesis that the organic matter has undergone. The types of materials comprising the kerogen help define different organic facies that are present in the sampled sections and they may indicate the source character of some of these facies.

Kerogen color alterations are rated on a 1 to 5 scale, from unaltered to almost completely carbonized, respectively. Ratings of 4 or 5 suggest that subsurface temperatures have been high enough to destroy most of the producible liquid hydrocarbons. Sections in which kerogen alteration is rated 4 and 5 are more likely to be characterized by dry gas production, if producible hydrocarbons are found in the associated reservoirs. Immobile pyrobitumens may also be found in these reservoir beds. Alteration ratings of 1 to 2 suggest that thermal diagenesis of the kerogen has barely begun, and reservoir hydrocarbons, if present, are likely to be gases, possibly associated with heavy, asphaltic oils. Ratings of 2+ to 3 suggest that maturation of the material has progressed to the point that gas, liquid hydrocarbons, or mixed oil and gas may be produced, depending on the nature of the original source materials. A rating of 2 may be associated with either immature or moderately mature sediments, based on other chemical evidence, and hence is not diagnostic. The interpretation of the significance of alteration ratings of 4 or 5 is the most reliable of the above tentative rules of thumb.

Types of kerogen materials that are commonly recognized include amorphous, finely disseminated, algal, herbaceous, woody and coaly. The source significance of these types is not established, but there have been suggestions in some areas, such as the offshore of southern Australia, that gas production is possibly associated with woody and coaly kerogen, whereas beds rated as oil sources may include rocks containing amorphous, finely disseminated and algal materials. These observations are speculative.

### Total Organic Matter

The total organic matter concentration gives a rough indication of the richness of a rock in materials that can produce hydrocarbons. However, this measure alone does not indicate whether the organic material is oil-prone, gas-prone or mixed oil and gas prone. Rocks containing less than about 0.5% total organic matter are generally rated as poor sources, but this is modified by lithology. Carbonate sequences possibly include source rocks with still lower concentrations of total organic matter than 0.5%.

Sections that are notable for their production of dry gas (mainly methane) have commonly been found to be characterized by source rocks containing greater than about 1.1% total organic matter. However, a measure of the liquid hydrocarbons in these richer rocks is also necessary to determine whether they should be rated as oil prone or gas prone.

### Light Gasoline (C<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>7</sub>) Hydrocarbons

Light gasolines apparently do not appear in source beds in concentrations above one or two parts per million until a fair degree of maturation occurs. Therefore, gasoline concentrations give one criterion of the degree of thermal maturation that the organic matter has attained

In addition, ratios of specific gasoline compounds may indicate the possible source character of the rocks. In particular, the ratio of cyclohexane to methylcyclopentane (CH/MCP) has been found to be useful in the U. S. Gulf Coast and the Alaskan areas for distinguishing "non oily" from "oily" facies. To date commercial oil has not been found associated with strata having a CH/MCP ratio of less than 0.25. However, dry gas has been found in strata characterized by lower ratio values as well as in sections with ratios greater than 0.25.

The CH/MCP ratio is also useful in helping distinguish different organic facies that may be present within an oil-like section. Ratios all above 0.25 in value may show groupings in vertical patterns that correlate with stratigraphic zones that have distinctive source characteristics. Definition of such zones may be quite useful for correlating reservoired oils with specific source intervals.

### DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The analytical results are summarized graphically in Figure 1 and are tabulated in Tables I, II and III.

In Tables I-III some of the sample depths are followed by a "-" and some are followed by a "+". The "-" indicates that the listed depth is the lower limit of the 50-ft interval represented by the sample, and the "+" indicates that the depth is the upper limit. This dual numbering system is used because the samples arrived in two different shipments, and the cuttings gas for each shipment was analyzed by two different operators. Each operator recorded the depths differently, as indicated. It was more economical to add the "+" and "-" symbols than to repunch all the data for a new machine printout.

### Cuttings Gas

Several zones from 1350 to 4000 feet gave high yields of predominantly methane gas, suggesting that dry gas might be present in associated reservoirs in this interval (Fig. 1). The dry gas could be an early product generated by immature oil-prone organic matter, or it could represent hydrocarbon generation from gas-prone

material. If it came from immature oil-prone matter, heavy asphaltic oils might also be encountered in porous beds in this interval, but probably not in commercial amounts at these depths. Some of the high methane yields, particularly at 2700 feet and 3000-3200 feet, are associated with coals, which generally generate large amounts of gas.

The interval from approximately 5350 to 5850 feet gave high total gas yields with high percentages of wet gas, suggesting an oil-prone source interval. This is consistent with the oil shows that were noted below 5600 feet. The interval 6450-6750 feet also gave moderately high yields of gas with high wet gas content and suggests another oil-prone interval. Crude oil or wet gas might be expected in appropriate traps in reservoir zones associated with these two intervals.

The profile of percent C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>4</sub> in total gas (Fig. 1) shows a notable increase below 5000 feet, suggesting that thermal maturation has caused significant generation of light hydrocarbon liquids below this depth. The very low wet gas concentration above 5000 feet is typical of diagenetically immature sections.

#### Total Organic Matter

The total organic contents of samples throughout the section are typical of strata that have been hydrocarbon sources. In general, the samples with higher than average total gas yields included lithologies that contained higher than average total organic matter (Fig. 1, Table II).

#### Light Gasoline (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>7</sub>) Hydrocarbons

The samples from 3000 and 3500 feet gave up above average amounts of C<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>7</sub> hydrocarbons, but in view of their high organic content (the 3000-ft sample was a coal), the yields are less significant. They do suggest that these strata represent an immature oil-prone section rather than a strictly gas-prone interval, but these beds would need to be buried deeper before one could expect appreciable generation of medium gravity crude oils.

Consistent presence of appreciable gasoline in the samples begins at about 5400 feet. It appears that this is approximately the depth at which thermal diagenesis of oil-prone organic matter has approached a mature state.

Ratios of cyclohexane to methylcyclopentane (Table III) are mostly greater than 1. Ratio values below 0.25 were found in gasolines from samples at 3500, 4000, 6500 and 8000 feet. These low ratio values are believed to be indicative of "non-oily" but possibly gas-prone strata.

#### Kerogen

Kerogen alteration ratings (Table II) range from 1 (unaltered) to 2+ (moderately altered). Evidently the subsurface temperatures encountered by this section have not been high enough to have destroyed accumulations of liquid hydrocarbons. The first alteration as high as 2+ was encountered in the 5400-ft sample, which is the approximate depth at which consistently appreciable amounts of gasolines began to be present.



This dual occurrence of higher kerogen alteration and higher gasoline yields supports the possibility that diagenesis of the oil-prone organic material first approaches maturity at about 5400 feet in the area of the 25/11-1 well.

Various types of kerogen were recognized (Table II, Fig. 1). A possible organic zonation based on kerogen types is suggested by horizontal dashed lines on the strip log at the right in Fig. 1. These kerogen assemblages do not suggest either an exclusively oil-prone or gas-prone section. The zones that gave cuttings with low values of cyclohexane/methylcyclopentane ratios appear to have kerogen consisting of amorphous, woody and coaly material. Woody and coaly debris is thought to be mainly indicative of gas-prone organic matter, but amorphous kerogen is commonly considered to indicate oil-prone material. This is a subject that requires further investigation.

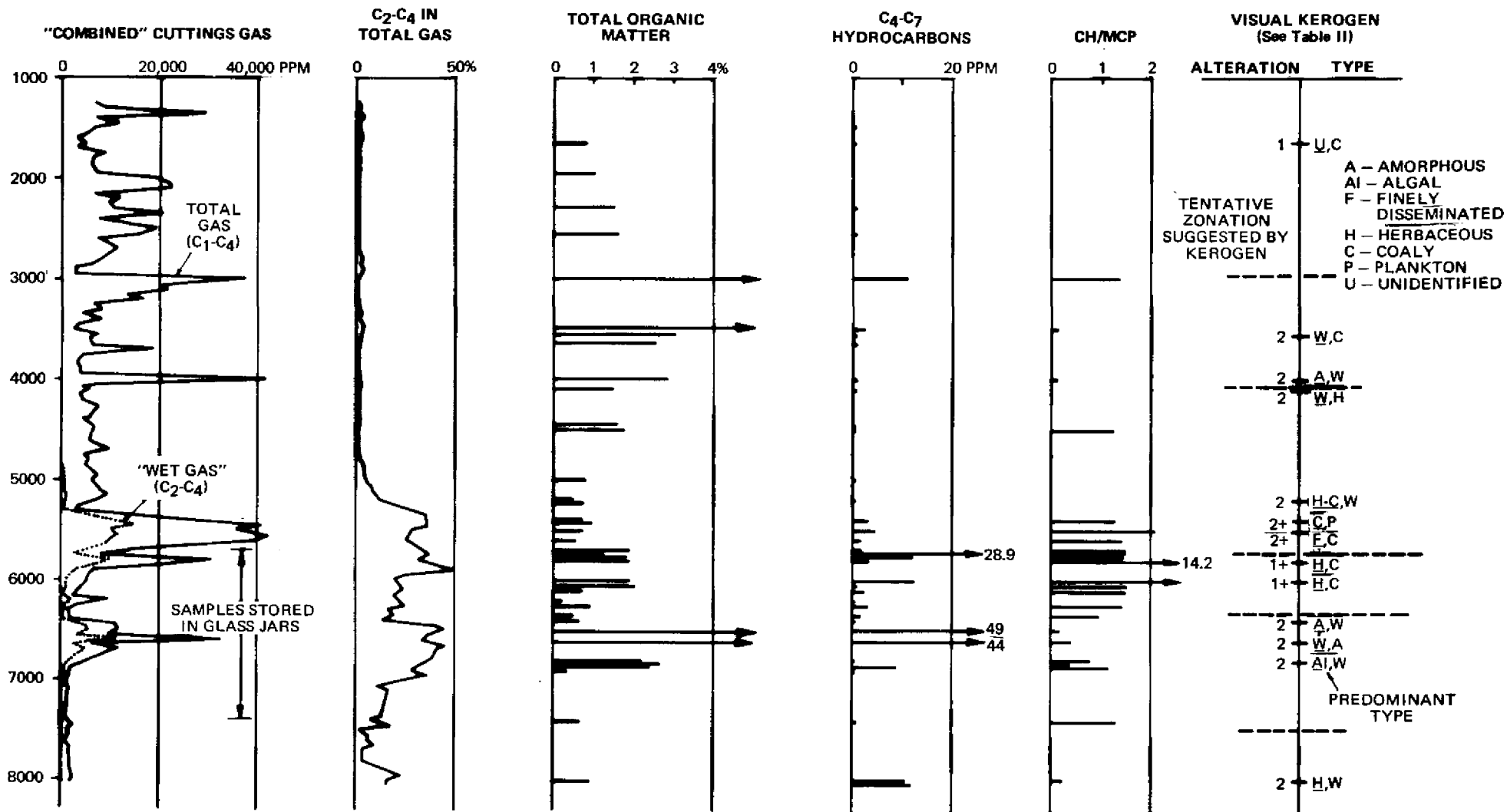


FIG. 1. GEOCHEMICAL PATTERNS, ESSO 25/11-1 WELL, NORWAY.







TABLE II

Sample Descriptions and Results of Total Organic and  
Visual Kerogen Analysis - Esso 25/11-1 Well, Norway  
(Lithologic descriptions by R. E. Hukill except those from mud logs, designated \*)  
(Kerogen by J. L. Morgan)

Sample Depth (Feet)	EPR No.	Lithology of Analyzed Chips	GSA Color Code	Total Organic Matter-%	Kerogen Alteration Index	Types of Kerogen Materials**		
						Predominant	Secondary	Other
1650-	53749-I	Claystone, silty, calcareous	5Y6/1	0.77	1	U	C	A
1950-	53750-A	*Claystone		1.04				
2300-	-H	Claystone, silty, fossiliferous		1.53				
2550-	-M	Claystone, silty, fossiliferous		1.61				
3000-	53751-E	Coal (lignite)		63.7				
3500-	53752-A	*Shale		5.77				
3550-	-B	*Claystone, silty, micaceous	5YR2/1	3.05	2	A	W	C
3625-40	54067-B (Core)	Shale, silty, sl. micaceous and fossiliferous	5YR3/1	2.56				
4000+	-J1	Claystone, silty, micaceous		2.82				
	-J2	Mudstone, silty, calcareous, micaceous, sl. sandy	5YR3/1	1.94	2	A	W	C
4100+	54068-C	Claystone, sl. silty	5Y4/1	1.50	2	W	H	F
4450+	-J	Shale, silty, micaceous, sl. calcareous		1.63				
4500+	54069-A	*Shale, silty		1.76				
5000+	54070-A	*Claystone, silty		.78				
5200+	-E1	*Claystone, silty, glauconitic		.44				
"	-E2	Claystone, trace of pyrite and microfossils	5Y6/1	0.71	2	C, H	W	P
5400+	-I1	Shale, tr. glauconite		0.70				
	-I2	Shale, trace of pyrite	5Y3/1	0.94	2+	C	P	F, W
5500+	54071-A	Shale, sl. silty and pyritic	5Y2/1	0.71	2+	F	C	H, W
5600+	-C	*Shale, sl. glauconitic		0.55				
5700+	54161-A	Shale, sl. silty, very-hard	5Y3/1	1.87				
5714-28	54160 (Core)	Shale, hard, sandy zones	5Y3/1, N4	1.19				
5750-	54161-R	*Shale, sl. sandy		1.83				
5800+	-C	Shale, sl. silty and pyritic	5Y2/1	1.87	1+	H	C	A (Pollen very
6000+	-G	Shale, sl. silty, trace of pyrite	5Y2/1, N4	1.92	1+	H	C	F abundant )

\*\* See footnote on next page.

TABLE II - Page 2

Sample Depth (Feet)	EPR No.	Lithology of Analyzed Chips	GSA Color Code	Total Organic Matter-%	Kerogen Alteration Index	Types of Kerogen Materials*		
						Predominant	Secondary	Other
6050+	-H	Claystone, sl. silty	5Y3/1	2.05				
6100-	-S	*Claystone, sl. silty		.72				
6200+	54161-K	Limestone, foraminiferal	5YR8/1	0.16				
6250-	-T	*Shale, calcareous		0.88				
6350+	-N	Shale, minor silt and pyrite, very hard	5GY4/1	0.46				
6400+	-O	Shale, trace of pyrite and microfossils	5Y4/1	.59	2	A	W	H, C
6500+	-Q	Shale, minor silt and pyrite, abundant plant debris, splintery, very hard	5Y2/1	9.03				
6600+	54162-B	Shale, silty, trace of pyrite and mica	N2	16.7	2	W	A	C
6800+	-F1	Shale, silty, micaceous, very hard	5Y3/1	2.22				
"	-F2	Mudstone, silty; sl. sandy, calcareous and micaceous; trace of pyrite	5Y3/1	2.70	2	Al	W	H, C
6850-	-Q	*Shale, silty		2.43				
6900+	-H	Limestone, soft, glauconitic, silty	5YR7/1	0.31				
7400+	-P	Clay	5YR4/4	0.62				
8000+	54052-K1	Shale ?						
	-K2	Shale ?						
	-K3	Claystone, sl. silty, trace of pyrite	5Y4/1	.87	2	H	W	A (Pollen very abundant)

\* \* Kerogen Types

A - Amorphous	W - Woody
Al- Algal debris	C - Coaly
H - Herbaceous	P - Plankton
F - Finely disseminated material	U - Unidentified

TABLE III

Results of Chemical Analyses of Selected  
Cuttings Chips - Esso 25/11-1 Well, Norway  
(Hydrocarbon analyses by H. M. Fry)

Sample Depth (Feet)	EPR No.	Lithology (See Table II)	Total Organic Matter-%	Total C <sub>4</sub> -C <sub>7</sub> Hydrocarbons ppm	Cyclohexane/ Methylcyclopentane
1500-	53749-F	Claystone	na*	trace	-
1650-	-I	Claystone	0.77	trace	-
1950-	53750-A	Claystone	1.04	na*	na*
2300-	-H	Claystone	1.53	trace	-
2550-	-M	Claystone	1.61	trace	-
3000-	53751-E	Coal	63.7	11.3	1.38
3500-	53752-A	Shale	5.77	2.3	0.08
3550-	-B	Claystone	3.05	trace	-
**3625-40	54067-B	Shale	2.56	trace	-
4000+	-J <sub>1</sub>	Claystone	2.82	trace	-
4000+	-J <sub>2</sub>	Mudstone	1.94	0.7	0.1 ?
4100+	54068-C	Mudstone	1.50	0.3	-
4450+	-J	Shale	1.63	trace	-
4500+	54069-A	Shale	1.76	0.04	1.25
5000+	54070-A	Claystone	.78	trace	-
5200+	-E <sub>1</sub>	Claystone	.44	trace	-
5200+	-E <sub>2</sub>	Claystone	.71	0.2	-
5400+	-I <sub>1</sub>	Shale	.70	3.2	1.31
5400+	-I <sub>2</sub>	Shale	.94	0.2	-
5500+	54071-A	Shale	.71	4.4	2.1
5600+	-C	Shale	.55	1.8	1.41
5700+	54161-A	Shale	1.87	1.7	1.53
**5714-28	54160	Shale	1.19	28.9	1.52
5750-	54161-R	Shale	1.83	12.0	1.45
5800+	-C	Shale	1.87	3.2	14.2
6000+	-G	Shale	1.92	12.3	3.2
6050+	-H	Claystone	2.05	0.7	1.50
6100-	-S	Claystone	.72	2.3	1.51
6200+	-K	Limestone	.16	0.2	-
6250-	-T	Shale	.88	3.0	1.45
6350+	-N	Shale	.46	1.5	.98
6400+	-O	Shale	.59	0.36	-
6500+	-Q	Shale	9.03	49.0	0.19
6600+	54162-B	Shale	16.7	44.4	0.4
6800+	-F <sub>1</sub>	Shale	2.22	0.6	0.83
6800+	-F <sub>2</sub>	Mudstone	2.70	0.3	0.4 ?
6850-	-Q	Shale	2.43	8.9	1.16
6900+	-H	Limestone	0.31	0.02	-
7400+	-P	Clay	0.62	0.7	1.30
8000+	54052-K <sub>1</sub>	Shale ?	-	10.9	0.26
8000+	-K <sub>2</sub>	Shale ?	-	12.2	0.25
8000+	-K <sub>3</sub>	Claystone	0.87	trace	-

\*na - not analyzed

\*\*core sample