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Ecopetrol S.A. (NYSE:EC - Get Rating) saw a significant decrease in short interest in December. As of December 30th, there was short interest totalling 5,480,000 shares, a decrease of 20.5% from the December 15th total of 6,890,000 shares. Based on an average daily trading volume, of 2,390,000 shares, the shortinterest ratio is presently 2.3 days. Approximately 0.3% of the shares of the stock are sold short.

Institutional Trading of Ecopetrol

A number of large investors have recently bought and sold shares of the business. Crossmark Global Holdings Inc. increased its stake in shares of Ecopetrol by 5,979.3% in the 4th quarter. Crossmark Global Holdings Inc. now owns 936,760 shares of the oil and gas company's stock valued at \$9,808,000 after acquiring an additional 921,351 shares in the last quarter. Jenkins Wealth acquired a new position in shares of Ecopetrol during the fourth quarter valued at about \$1,141,000. MADDEN SECURITIES Corp acquired a new position in shares of Ecopetrol during the fourth quarter valued at about \$1,605,000. Toroso Investments LLC boosted its position in shares of Ecopetrol by 85.1% during the 3rd quarter. Toroso Investments LLC now owns 74,175 shares of the oil and gas company's stock worth \$663,000 after purchasing an additional 34,096 shares in the last quarter. Finally, B. Riley Wealth Advisors Inc. grew its stake in shares of Ecopetrol by 95.3% in the 3rd quarter. B. Riley Wealth Advisors Inc. now owns 40,820 shares of the oil and gas company's stock valued at \$365,000 after buying an additional 19,916 shares during the period. 1.30% of the stock is currently owned by institutional investors and hedge funds.

Ecopetrol Trading Up 0.5 %

Shares of Ecopetrol stock traded up \$0.06 during midday trading on Friday, reaching \$11.98. The company had a trading volume of 22,279 shares, compared to its average volume of 2,451,577. The stock has a fifty day moving average price of \$10.13 and a 200 day moving average price of \$10.12. Ecopetrol has a fifty-two week low of \$8.59 and a fifty-two week high of \$19.81. The firm has a market cap of \$24.63 billion, a PE ratio of 3.13, a P/E/G ratio of 0.09 and a beta of 1.48. The company has a debt-to-equity ratio of 0.83, a current ratio of 1.32 and a quick ratio of 1.11.

Ecopetrol (NYSE:EC - Get Rating) last posted its quarterly earnings data on Wednesday, November 9th. The oil and gas company reported \$1.06 EPS for the quarter, missing analysts' consensus estimates of \$1.20 by (\$0.14). Ecopetrol had a net margin of 20.78% and a return on equity of 16.21%. The firm had revenue of \$9.95 billion during the quarter, compared to the consensus estimate of \$9.54 billion. On average, equities analysts anticipate that Ecopetrol will post 3.74 earnings per share for the current year.

Wall Street Analysts Forecast Growth

Several research firms have recently weighed in on EC. StockNews.com cut Ecopetrol from a "buy" rating to a "hold" rating in a report on Friday, December 9th. UBS Group reduced their target price on shares of Ecopetrol from \$14.00 to \$13.00 and set a "buy" rating on the stock in a report on Wednesday, December 21st.

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About Ecopetrol (Get Rating)

Ecopetrol SA engages in the exploration, development, and production of crude oil and natural gas. It operates through the following segments: Exploration and Production, Transportation and Logistics, and Refining and Petrochemicals. The Exploration and Production segment deals with oil and gas exploration and production activities.

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Should you invest \$1,000 in Ecopetrol right now?

Before you consider Ecopetrol, you'll want to hear this.

MarketBeat keeps track of Wall Street's top-rated and best performing research analysts and the stocks they recommend to their clients on a daily basis. MarketBeat has identified the <u>five stocks</u> that top analysts are quietly whispering to their clients to buy now before the broader market catches on... and <u>Ecopetrol</u> wasn't on the list.

While Ecopetrol currently has a "Moderate Buy" rating among analysts, top-rated analysts believe these five stocks are better buys.

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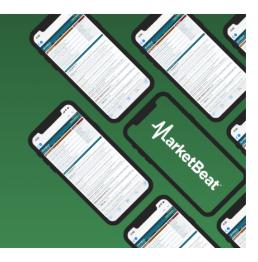
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