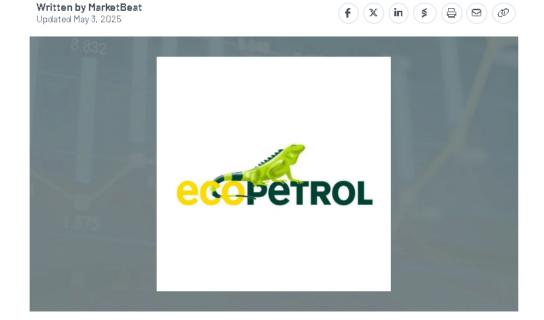
Ecopetrol (NYSE:EC) Trading Down 3.2% - Here's What Happened



Ecopetrol S.A. (<u>NYSE:EC</u> - <u>Get Free Report</u>)'s share price was down 3.2% during mid-day trading on Monday. The company traded as low as \$8.42 and last traded at \$8.49. Approximately 518,302 shares changed hands during mid-day trading, a decline of 78% from the average daily volume of 2,359,741 shares. The stock had previously closed at \$8.77.

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Analyst Upgrades and Downgrades

Several research analysts have recently commented on the stock.

JPMorgan Chase & Co. raised shares of Ecopetrol from an "underweight" rating to a "neutral" rating and raised their target price for the stock from \$7.50 to \$9.50 in a report on Thursday, February 13th. StockNews.com cut shares of Ecopetrol from a "buy" rating to a "hold" rating in a research report on Monday, March 17th. Finally, Citigroup raised shares of Ecopetrol from a "neutral" rating to a "buy" rating and lifted their price objective for the company from \$9.00 to \$14.00 in a research note on Tuesday, February 18th. One investment analyst has rated the stock with a sell rating, three have given a hold rating and one has given a buy rating to the company.

According to MarketBeat, the company currently has an average rating of

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Ecopetrol Trading Up 0.9 %

The company has a current ratio of 1.68, a quick ratio of 1.38 and a debt-toequity ratio of 1.00. The stock has a market capitalization of \$16.71 billion, a P/E ratio of 3.89 and a beta of 0.86. The stock's fifty day moving average price is \$9.42 and its two-hundred day moving average price is \$8.78.

Ecopetrol Cuts Dividend

The business also recently declared an annual dividend, which will be paid on Tuesday, May 6th. Investors of record on Monday, April 28th will be paid a \$0.5202 dividend. This represents a yield of 34.2%. The ex-dividend date of this dividend is Monday, April 28th. Ecopetrol's payout ratio is currently 72.73%.

Hedge Funds Weigh In On Ecopetrol

Institutional investors have recently added to or reduced their stakes in the company. Mirae Asset Global Investments Co. Ltd. bought a new stake in Ecopetrol during the first quarter worth about \$46,000. Lindbrook Capital LLC lifted its stake in Ecopetrol by 317.5% during the 4th quarter. Lindbrook Capital LLC now owns 4,784 shares of the oil and gas company's stock valued at \$38,000 after acquiring an additional 3,638 shares during the period. Platinum Investment Management Ltd. purchased a new stake in shares of Ecopetrol during the 4th quarter valued at about \$44,000. Blue Trust Inc. grew its position in Ecopetrol by 33.5% in the 4th quarter. Blue Trust Inc. now owns 8,480 shares of the oil and gas company's stock worth \$67,000 after purchasing an additional 2,128 shares during the period. Finally, SG Americas Securities LLC bought a new position in Ecopetrol in the fourth quarter valued at about \$86,000.

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Ecopetrol SA operates as an integrated energy company. The company operates through four segments: Exploration and Production; Transport and Logistics; Refining, Petrochemical and Biofuels; and Electric Power Transmission and Toll Roads Concessions. It engages in the exploration and production of oil and gas; transportation of crude oil, motor fuels, fuel oil, and other refined products, including diesel, jet, and biofuels; processing and refining crude oil; distribution of natural gas and LPG; sale of refined and petrochemical products; supplying of electric power transmission services; design, development, construction, operation, and maintenance of road and energy infrastructure projects; and supplying of information technology and telecommunications services.

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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 Hold rating among analysts, top-rated analysts believe these five stocks are better buys.

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