

Angola's oil production to double in three years

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After Nigeria, Angola is the second-largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa, with oil accounting for 40% of the country's GDP. Over the next three years, oil production is forecast to double, reaching 2 MMb/d by 2008.

Angola has announced plans for an offshore licensing round later this year. The round will include seven blocks--1, 5, and 6, which are located on the shelf of the lower Congo and Kwanza basins; blocks 15, 17, and 18 (excluding development areas) in deepwater of the lower Congo basin, and block 26, a deepwater block in the Benguela sub-basin.

Beginning 3Q 2005, Saipem has been awarded an offshore drilling contract for the charter of the drillship *Saipem 10000* by Total Exploration and Production Angola, operator of offshore Angola block 17. The Rosa field is located 200 km offshore Angola, at water depths of up to 1,700 m. The contract will last two years, and Total has the option to extend it for a further two years.

Sociedade Nacional de Combustiveis de Angola (Sonangol), Angolan state oil company, is the block 17 concessionaire. Total's co-venturers in the block are Esso Exploration Angola (block 17) Ltd., BP Exploration (Angola) Ltd., Statoil Angola block 17 AS, and Norsk Hydro.

The Kissanje and Dikanza fields in deepwater offshore Angola started production in July, largely ahead of schedule. The two fields, about 350 km from the capital Luanda, will reach a production of 250,000 b/d by the end of 2005.

Kissanje and Dikanza fields are part of the Kizomba B project and are located in block 15 in water depths of approximately 1,000 m. Partners in the project include Eni (20%), ExxonMobil (operator, 40%), BP (26.67%) and Statoil (13.33%).

Overall investment amounts to \$3.5 billion, and total reserves amounting to 1 Bbbl of oil will be developed.

A fixed platform and subsea wells linked to an FPSO will be employed to develop the project. Oil treatment and storage will be done in the FPSO.

Kizomba B is the third project to be developed in block 15 after Xikomba start-up in 2003 and Kizomba A start-up in 2004. The three projects will allow overall production of approximately 550,000 b/d by the end of 2005.

An eighth discovery was made in early August in block 31 off Angola, which is operated by BP and Sonangol. Licensees in block 31 are BP with 26.67%, ExxonMobil 25%, Sonangol 20%, Statoil 13.33%, Marathon Petroleum 10%, and Total 5%.

The *Astraea-1* wildcat drilled from the *Jack Ryan* drillship to a total measured depth of 3,511 m in 1,496 m of water. The well was tested at a rate of 6,513 b/d.

Astraea lies 10 km southeast of the *Palas* field, found earlier this year. Other discoveries in block 31 are *Plutão*, *Saturno*, *Marte*, *Venus*, *Ceres* and *Juno*.