

ECOFIN AGENCY · GABON · DRILLING

BW Energy halts Dussafu output after rig sinks

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Norway's BW Energy has suspended oil production at its MaBoMo facility in the Dussafu offshore block after the Prospector 5 drilling rig sank on 24 October. The incident triggered an immediate operational shutdown, with the status of the field's production restart timeline not yet confirmed at the time of reporting.

The Prospector 5 was carrying 115 personnel when the accident occurred. Rescue operations recovered 110 people safely, but five individuals remained missing as of the latest update. Search and rescue efforts were ongoing. The human toll makes this one of the more serious offshore incidents in West African waters in recent memory, and the priority of emergency response has understandably preceded any assessment of commercial timelines.

For BW Energy, Dussafu is a core upstream asset offshore Gabon. The MaBoMo facility is a key production unit within that block, and the loss of the Prospector 5 rig — regardless of the eventual cause — represents a significant disruption to the company's operational continuity in the country. Gabon's hydrocarbons sector has been navigating a period of political transition following the military takeover in August 2023, adding regulatory and commercial uncertainty to what is now also an acute operational crisis for BW Energy.

The Prospector 5 incident will draw immediate attention from well services and drilling contractors active in the Gulf of Guinea. Questions around rig integrity, mooring systems, and offshore safety management will be central to any formal investigation. Depending on the findings, the incident could have broader

implications for drilling contractor liability frameworks and safety certification requirements across the region's offshore fleet. BW Energy has not yet indicated which contractor operated the Prospector 5 or what replacement drilling programme, if any, is being considered.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

Norwegian service companies should monitor this situation closely but hold off on procurement outreach — no tenders or replacement contracts have been announced. BW Energy is a Norwegian-linked operator, and as the investigation and recovery phase progresses, needs may emerge in well intervention, subsea inspection, and rig replacement that Norwegian firms with Gulf of Guinea track records are well placed to address. Relationship-level engagement with BW Energy's procurement and operations teams in Oslo or Libreville would be appropriate preparatory steps.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Monitor BW Energy's replacement rig requirements for Dussafu once the incident investigation concludes and operations resume.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** Assess whether the sinking caused seabed or subsea infrastructure damage at MaBoMo that may require inspection or intervention services.
- **Service:** Norwegian well services firms with West Africa experience should track any well integrity or workover requirements that arise once the shutdown is lifted.
- **Service:** Offshore safety and emergency response specialists may find consultancy or audit opportunities as BW Energy and Gabonese authorities conduct their formal investigation.

[Original source: Ecofin Agency →](#)

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