

BUSINESSDAY NIGERIA — ENERGY · NIGERIA

# NNPC reactivates Borno oil exploration after security pledge

Saga deep read · 28 October 2026 · Score 58

Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited has reaffirmed its commitment to resuming oil exploration in Borno State, following a security assurance from Borno State Governor Babagana Zulum. The announcement signals NNPC's intention to return to a basin that has remained largely dormant due to the prolonged insurgency in Nigeria's northeast.

The article does not specify the exact blocks, acreage, or basin structures targeted for reactivation, nor does it detail the timeline or budget earmarked for exploration activities. What is confirmed is that NNPC's renewed interest is directly conditioned on the improved security environment that Governor Zulum has pledged to maintain. The governor's assurance appears to be the primary catalyst that has unlocked this recommitment from Nigeria's national oil company.

Borno State sits within the Chad Basin, a sedimentary province that straddles Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon and has long been considered prospective for hydrocarbons. Exploration activity in the region was significantly curtailed as the Boko Haram insurgency escalated over the past decade, making operational continuity and personnel safety untenable for both national and international operators. A sustained reduction in security incidents, if it holds, could reopen a frontier area that has seen little modern exploration investment.

At this stage, NNPC's reaffirmation constitutes a statement of intent rather than a formal contract award, block allocation, or approved work programme. No field development plan, drilling schedule, or procurement activity has been announced.

The commitment remains at an early-stage political and institutional level, meaning any commercial activity on the ground remains some distance away. Service companies and suppliers should treat this as a market signal to monitor closely rather than an actionable procurement opportunity at this time.

For Norwegian energy service companies tracking West and Central African frontier opportunities, Borno represents a longer-dated prospect. The immediate priority is understanding the exploration geology and the identity of any joint venture partners or independent operators that NNPC may eventually invite into the acreage. If exploration confirms commercial volumes, the development pathway — whether onshore or involving cross-border infrastructure — will determine which service segments become relevant. Companies with experience in remote or conflict-affected operational environments, logistics, and community engagement may find early relationship-building with NNPC's upstream division and the Borno State government worthwhile as a positioning exercise.

### Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

This is an early-stage recommitment with no contract, tender, or formal work programme announced; Norwegian service companies should monitor the situation and track any future licensing activity, JV partner selection, or exploration campaign announcements from NNPC. Relationship-building with NNPC's upstream and frontier exploration divisions is advisable for companies with relevant onshore or remote-operations experience. No procurement outreach is warranted at this stage.

### PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Monitor NNPC's frontier exploration calendar for any Borno drilling campaign that may require specialised onshore rig or well-services contracts in a remote, security-sensitive environment.
- **Service:** Companies with experience in logistics, camp management, or operations in conflict-affected African basins should begin mapping NNPC's exploration supply chain ahead of any formal tender.

- **Pipeline:** If exploration confirms commercial hydrocarbons, cross-border or evacuation pipeline infrastructure through the Chad Basin will be required — track developments for future positioning.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** Not immediately relevant; segment should maintain a watching brief only in case offshore or midstream infrastructure requirements emerge from later-stage development planning.

[Original source: BusinessDay Nigeria — Energy →](#)

---

### Saga Advisory

General: [info@saga-advisory.com](mailto:info@saga-advisory.com) · [saga-advisory.com](https://saga-advisory.com)

*STAVANGER · CAPE TOWN*