

LA PRESSE DE TUNISIE - ECONOMIE (TUNISIA) · TUNISIA · DRILLING

Exxoil wins sole rights to Tunisia El Menzah concession

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Exxoil SA has become the sole holder of the El Menzah hydrocarbon exploitation concession in Tunisia, following authorisation granted by the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy for the full transfer of rights and obligations previously held by the Tunisian Petroleum Activities Company (ETAP) and Ecumed Petroleum Grombalia Limited. The regularisation closes a process that has been pending since 2001, making it one of the longer-running ownership resolutions in North African upstream history.

The transfer was formally authorised by the Tunisian ministry, consolidating all rights and obligations under a single operator. Prior to the decision, the concession was shared between ETAP, Tunisia's national oil company, and Ecumed Petroleum Grombalia Limited. Both parties have now ceded their respective stakes, leaving Exxoil SA in full control of the concession. The article does not specify the concession's location type, production volumes, reserve estimates, or any planned capital expenditure associated with the transfer.

The context matters: a regularisation pending since 2001 signals that the underlying legal and commercial framework for El Menzah had remained unresolved for more than two decades, likely constraining investment decisions over that period. With a clear, sole operator now in place, the concession enters a new phase in which development or appraisal activity becomes structurally more straightforward to plan and finance. Whether Exxoil intends to pursue drilling campaigns, well interventions, or surface infrastructure upgrades has not been disclosed in the source material.

For the broader Tunisian upstream sector, the move is a reminder that legacy title issues — common across North Africa — can eventually be resolved through ministerial action, and that the country's regulatory apparatus remains capable of processing complex multi-party transfers. Tunisia's hydrocarbon sector has faced pressure in recent years from maturing fields and declining production, making operational clarity on existing concessions particularly valuable. A sole-operated structure at El Menzah removes one layer of decision-making complexity and could accelerate any future work programme.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

This is a concession title transfer — an instrument well upstream of any contract award or FID. Norwegian service companies should monitor Exxoil SA's public announcements and the Tunisian Ministry of Industry's licensing activity for any follow-on work programme or drilling tender that may emerge now that sole operatorship is established. Relationship-building with Exxoil SA at this stage is appropriate; procurement outreach is premature until a signed contract or open tender is published.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Monitor Exxoil SA for any well intervention or appraisal drilling campaign at El Menzah once a work programme is announced under the new sole-operator structure.
- **Well Services:** A newly consolidated operator may review existing well stock and commission integrity assessments or workover programmes — worth tracking for early supplier engagement.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** No offshore indicators in this article; relevance is low unless further technical disclosure reveals a marine component to the concession.
- **Pipeline:** Should Exxoil SA announce surface infrastructure development, gathering or export pipeline engineering services could become relevant — monitor for work programme details.

[Original source: La Presse de Tunisie - Economie \(Tunisia\) →](#)

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