O ECONÓMICO (MOÇAMBIQUE) · MOZAMBIQUE · DRILLING

Coral Norte drilling begins; FLNG 72% complete

Saga deep read · 02 November 2026 · Score 100

Eni's Coral Norte LNG project in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, has entered a new operational phase with the arrival of the drillship Saipem 12000 on 25 October, marking the start of a six-well development drilling campaign expected to run for approximately 270 days. The campaign is scheduled to begin in November, with first gas from the floating liquefaction unit still targeted for 2028. The total project investment stands at USD 7.2 billion.

The drilling programme is structured in two phases: four wells in the first phase and two in the second. The Saipem 12000, now positioned offshore Cabo Delgado, will execute the full campaign. This sequencing reflects standard deepwater development practice for a project of this scale and complexity, where well deliverability must be confirmed and aligned with the FLNG unit's processing capacity before first production.

The floating liquefaction unit itself remains under construction in South Korea and has reached 72% completion. The unit is central to the Coral Norte development concept, which pipes gas directly from subsea wells to the floating platform for liquefaction and offloading to LNG carriers at sea — eliminating the need for onshore processing infrastructure. Progress at 72% with a 2028 production target suggests the construction schedule, while tight, remains on track, provided no major disruptions occur in the final fabrication and commissioning phases.

Coral Norte follows the Coral Sul FLNG model, which achieved first LNG in 2022 and reached plateau production in 2023 — demonstrating that the Area 4 development

concept is technically proven in Mozambican deepwater conditions. Coral Norte represents the next tranche of gas monetisation from the same block, building on established subsea and floating infrastructure logic. Eni leads the Coral Norte development as operator.

For Norwegian service companies, the project's current phase — active drilling with a contracted rig on location — signals that the subsea supply chain supporting well completion, umbilicals, risers, and flowlines will be entering an active procurement window in the coming quarters. The FLNG topsides construction in South Korea and eventual marine installation will also require a range of specialised marine and subsea services upon the unit's sail-away and hook-up offshore Mozambique. Companies with deepwater well services, subsea production systems, or FLNG commissioning expertise should be monitoring subcontractor packages closely as the 2028 production target tightens the delivery timeline.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

With Saipem 12000 on location and six development wells now being drilled, subsea production system suppliers and well services companies should be tracking subcontract opportunities linked to wellheads, Christmas trees, umbilicals, and flowlines. The FLNG unit's sail-away from South Korea and subsequent offshore hook-up will require marine, installation, and commissioning services — a window likely to open 12–18 months before the 2028 first-gas target. Norwegian companies with deepwater LNG and subsea credentials should prioritise relationship-building with Eni's supply chain and relevant FLNG fabrication yards now.



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- **Subsea/FPSO:** Subsea production system suppliers should track Eni's subcontract packages for Coral Norte wellheads, Christmas trees, and flowline components as the six-well campaign progresses toward hook-up.
- **Drilling:** With Saipem 12000 committed to the campaign, opportunities lie in drilling fluids, well services, cementing, and directional drilling subcontracts supporting the 270-day programme.
- **LNG:** The FLNG unit's final 28% of construction and subsequent sail-away to Mozambique will require marine installation, hook-up, and pre-commissioning services where Norwegian LNG specialists hold strong credentials.
- **Pipeline:** Subsea flowlines and umbilicals connecting six development wells to the FLNG unit represent procurement opportunities that Norwegian pipeline and flexible pipe suppliers should monitor as engineering matures.
- **Service:** Logistics, marine support, and ROV services to support both the drilling campaign offshore Cabo Delgado and the eventual FLNG installation represent near-term operational opportunities worth tracking.

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