DRILLING CONTRACTOR · MOZAMBIQUE · LNG

# Saipem 12000 drills Coral North FLNG for Eni

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Eni and its Area 4 partners have launched the drilling and completion campaign for the Coral North floating LNG project offshore Mozambique, with the Saipem 12000 drillship now mobilised on location. The operator confirmed the campaign start on 2 November 2026, targeting project startup in 2028. Coral North sits in the northern part of the Coral reservoir within Area 4 of the Rovuma Basin, building on the same prolific acreage that hosts the already-producing Coral South FLNG facility.

The campaign represents a significant step forward for Mozambique's deepwater LNG ambitions. Coral North will be the second FLNG development on Area 4, and its 2028 startup target implies an aggressive but defined execution schedule. With the drillship now active, the project enters its most capital-intensive phase — drilling and completing the subsea wells that will feed the future FLNG vessel. The article does not specify the number of wells planned, contract duration, or FLNG vessel configuration at this stage.

Mozambique's Rovuma Basin has become one of sub-Saharan Africa's most consequential gas provinces. Area 4 is operated by Eni through its affiliate, and the basin holds multi-trillion cubic foot reserves. Coral South, the first FLNG on the block, has demonstrated that deepwater gas monetisation via floating infrastructure is technically and commercially viable in this frontier environment. Coral North follows that template, and the confirmation of an active drilling campaign removes a layer of execution risk that has previously shadowed the project's timeline.

For the broader Mozambique LNG landscape, Coral North's progress matters beyond Area 4. The basin is also home to TotalEnergies' onshore Mozambique LNG project, which has faced prolonged force majeure following a 2021 insurgency. A successful Coral North campaign reinforces that offshore Rovuma assets remain on track even as the security situation onshore continues to complicate investment decisions elsewhere in the province.

Norwegian service companies should monitor this campaign closely. The Saipem 12000 is now active, meaning subcontract and supply opportunities within the drilling programme — wellheads, subsea trees, umbilicals, completion equipment, and associated services — are live or near-live procurement decisions. As the FLNG vessel design and fabrication process advances toward a 2028 target, hook-up, commissioning, and marine systems work will follow. Companies active in subsea completions, well services, and FLNG outfitting should initiate contact with Eni's Area 4 supply chain and with Saipem's procurement teams now.

## Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

The Saipem 12000 is actively drilling, meaning subcontract procurement for well services, subsea equipment, and completion tools is live — Norwegian well services and subsea suppliers should engage Saipem and Eni Area 4 procurement immediately. As the project targets a 2028 FLNG startup, fabrication, marine systems, and hook-up scopes will mature over the next 12-18 months, creating a second wave of opportunity for FPSO/FLNG outfitting and commissioning specialists. Companies without existing relationships on Area 4 should prioritise building them now through Eni's Mozambique supply-chain channels.



YOUR SAGA CONTACT

**Trond Kostveit**

*Partner, Africa Markets & Energy*

## PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Saipem 12000 is on contract and drilling; directional drilling, mud, and cementing subcontracts for the Coral North well campaign are active procurement targets.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** Subsea trees, wellheads, umbilicals, and flowline tie-back equipment for the Coral North wells are in or approaching procurement — engage Eni and Saipem supply chains now.
- **LNG:** The Coral North FLNG vessel design and fabrication will generate hook-up, commissioning, and marine systems scopes ahead of the 2028 startup target.
- **Service:** Well completion, intervention, and inspection services tied to the active drilling campaign represent near-term revenue opportunities for Norwegian well-services firms with deepwater credentials.
- **Pipeline:** Subsea flowline and riser systems connecting Coral North wells to the FLNG unit will require engineering and supply input as detailed design advances toward FID on the vessel.

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**Saga Advisory**

Partner contact: trond@saga-advisory.com · General: info@saga-advisory.com · saga-advisory.com

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