

AFRICAN ENERGY CHAMBER · OFFSHORE

# Eni Secures Deepwater Block A1 Offshore Gambia in MSGBC Basin Push

Saga deep read · 05 June 2026 · Score 66

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Eni has been awarded a deepwater exploration license covering Block A1 offshore Gambia, marking a significant step forward for the country's upstream ambitions. The award is part of the broader exploration momentum building across the Mauritania-Senegal-Guinea Bissau-Conakry (MSGBC) basin, one of West Africa's most active frontier hydrocarbon provinces in recent years.

The Gambia has long been considered an underexplored component of the MSGBC basin, which has attracted considerable international interest following major discoveries in neighboring Senegal and Mauritania. The award of Block A1 to Eni signals renewed confidence in the country's offshore potential and reflects the Italian major's sustained appetite for frontier deepwater acreage across Sub-Saharan Africa. Eni has established a notable track record of early-entry exploration positions across the continent, and the Gambia move follows that strategic pattern.

For The Gambia specifically, the license award represents an important upstream milestone. The country has a limited history of commercial hydrocarbon development, and securing a supermajor operator for deepwater acreage lends credibility to the sector and may catalyze further licensing interest from other international oil companies. National authorities will be hoping that Eni's entry accelerates the pace of seismic acquisition and, ultimately, exploratory drilling in Gambian waters.

The MSGBC basin context is critical here. Discoveries such as Senegal's Sangomar field and the Mauritanian-Senegalese Greater Tortue Ahmeyim LNG project have demonstrated that the basin holds material resources, and operators are now casting

a wider net across the region's less-tested acreage. Block A1's deepwater classification places it within a segment that will require sophisticated subsea infrastructure, specialist drilling capability, and potentially floating production solutions if commercial hydrocarbons are confirmed.

The exploration timeline from license award to any production decision remains long, and Norwegian service companies should calibrate expectations accordingly. However, the entry of a credible operator into Gambian deepwater acreage opens an early-stage commercial watch brief. As Eni moves toward seismic programs and eventual well planning, the supply chain conversation will begin in earnest, and early positioning with the operator's regional procurement teams in Dakar or Luanda can be advantageous.

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

Norwegian service companies with deepwater expertise should open or reinforce direct relationships with Eni's regional teams, as Block A1 will require specialist drilling, subsea, and potentially FPSO capabilities if exploration progresses to appraisal and development. This is a monitor-and-engage phase now, with active bid opportunities likely two to four years out depending on exploration results. Companies already active on Eni projects elsewhere in West Africa are best positioned to be considered early.

#### PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Deepwater exploration drilling on Block A1 will require a semi-submersible or drillship capable of operating in frontier West African conditions — rig owners and well services firms should engage Eni's drilling procurement teams now.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** Any commercial discovery on a deepwater Gambian block will likely require a floating production solution; FPSO designers, subsea tie-back specialists, and umbilical manufacturers should track this license actively.
- **Seismic/Geophysical Services:** Pre-drill seismic acquisition and reprocessing across Block A1 is a near-term requirement — Norwegian geophysical service providers should approach Eni's exploration division directly.

- **Pipeline:** Regional export infrastructure from MSGBC basin assets is an evolving discussion; pipeline engineering firms should monitor whether Gambian discoveries could tie into broader basin export solutions.
- **LNG:** If gas is encountered on Block A1, proximity to the Greater Tortue Ahmeyim LNG infrastructure creates a potential monetization pathway that Norwegian LNG technology and engineering firms should flag for future engagement.

[Original source: African Energy Chamber →](#)

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## Saga Advisory

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