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ExxonMobil's $30bn Rovuma LNG project advances after Mozambique approval

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ExxonMobil's redesigned $30 billion Rovuma LNG project has cleared a critical regulatory hurdle after Mozambique approved the revised development plan, and the project is now reported to be advancing further toward a final investment decision. The approval and subsequent progress signal that the Mozambican government and ExxonMobil's Area 4 consortium are aligned on the revised project configuration, marking meaningful momentum for one of the largest planned liquefied natural gas developments on the African continent.

The Rovuma LNG project is anchored in the Rovuma Basin off northern Mozambique, where substantial offshore gas reserves have been confirmed over the past decade. ExxonMobil leads the Area 4 consortium, which holds the acreage underpinning the development. The redesigned plan reflects adjustments made in response to security challenges in Cabo Delgado province, project cost escalations, and shifting LNG market conditions that complicated progress since the original scheme was first advanced. The $30 billion figure represents the full estimated capital cost of the development as currently configured.

The project envisions an onshore LNG liquefaction facility fed by subsea gas production infrastructure in the Rovuma Basin. If a final investment decision is reached, Rovuma LNG would rank among the most capital-intensive resource projects ever undertaken in sub-Saharan Africa. The timeline to FID has not been formally confirmed, and financing arrangements with lenders and offtakers will need

to be concluded before construction can commence. Nonetheless, the combination of regulatory approval and reported advancement suggests the project is moving through the pre-FID pipeline at a measured pace.

Rovuma LNG's progress comes as the broader Mozambican LNG sector attempts to regain momentum. The TotalEnergies-led Mozambique LNG project at Area 1, also in Cabo Delgado, has remained suspended since 2021 following an insurgency that forced contractor and personnel evacuations. The security environment in the region has shown signs of gradual stabilisation under a regional military presence, though risks remain. ExxonMobil's decision to submit a redesigned plan and continue advancing it indicates sustained long-term commitment to the asset.

The scale of Rovuma LNG, if it proceeds to construction, would generate demand across a broad range of specialist services: subsea production systems, pipeline and riser engineering, LNG plant construction, marine assets, drilling campaigns for development wells, and marine logistics. Procurement processes for major contracts would typically begin one to two years ahead of a construction start, meaning the period following an FID announcement would be the trigger for active supplier engagement. With the project now advancing beyond initial government approval, the industry will watch closely for concrete signals on financing and offtake agreements that would confirm commercial viability and set a credible timeline toward execution.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

The reported advancement of Rovuma LNG beyond regulatory approval narrows the window before active pre-FID engagement begins, making now an appropriate time for Norwegian service companies to initiate contact with ExxonMobil's Area 4 project team and relevant EPC contractors. Subsea, LNG, drilling, and marine logistics firms should finalise capability mapping and identify local content partners in Mozambique ahead of formal tendering. The pace of progress on financing and offtake deals should be monitored as the clearest leading indicator for when procurement outreach will become productive.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Subsea equipment and engineering firms:** Rovuma LNG's subsea production infrastructure will require specialist subsea systems, umbilicals, risers and flowlines; early engagement with ExxonMobil's Area 4 team and prospective EPCI contractors is advisable ahead of formal tender release.
- **LNG plant and process contractors:** The onshore liquefaction facility represents a major EPC opportunity; Norwegian process and module fabrication companies should map their scope relevance and identify consortium partners capable of handling local content requirements.
- **Marine logistics and offshore support vessel operators:** A development of this scale will require sustained marine logistics support through construction and into operations; vessel operators should monitor FID signals and begin dialogue with anticipated prime contractors.
- **Drilling contractors and well services firms:** Development drilling campaigns for Rovuma LNG will require multiple wells; drilling contractors and well services companies should track FID progress and position with ExxonMobil's well delivery organisation.

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