

OFFSHORE TECHNOLOGY · DRILLING

# Shell-QatarEnergy-NAMCOR Strike Oil at Namibia's PEL 0039 with Merlin-1X Well

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Shell, in partnership with QatarEnergy and the Namibian state oil company NAMCOR, has made an oil discovery at Petroleum Exploration Licence 0039 (PEL 0039) offshore Namibia, following the drilling of the Merlin-1X exploration well. The find adds further momentum to Namibia's rapidly emerging status as one of Sub-Saharan Africa's most consequential frontier hydrocarbon provinces.

The Merlin-1X well is the latest in a sequence of exploration results that have positioned offshore Namibia at the forefront of global upstream interest. Shell's operator role at PEL 0039, alongside QatarEnergy's participation and NAMCOR's state equity stake, reflects the tier-one nature of the partnership assembled around this licence. The involvement of QatarEnergy — one of the world's most active international upstream investors — alongside Shell underscores the strategic confidence being placed in Namibia's offshore potential.

For Namibia, this discovery builds on a broader exploration narrative that has attracted sustained attention from major international oil companies. The country's offshore acreage has demonstrated the capacity to host meaningful accumulations, and each successive well result sharpens the commercial picture for both operators and service providers evaluating long-term deployment commitments in the basin. NAMCOR's continued participation ensures that national interests are embedded in the development trajectory from the exploration phase onward.

While the article does not disclose specific resource volumes, reservoir characteristics, or water depth classifications for PEL 0039, the confirmation of oil presence at Merlin-1X will trigger appraisal planning to define the scale and

recoverability of the accumulation. The path from discovery to development in an offshore Namibian context typically involves extended appraisal drilling, subsurface evaluation, and early-stage concept selection — each representing a discrete window for service sector engagement. Norwegian companies with deepwater and technically complex project experience are well-positioned to engage across this timeline.

The broader Namibian offshore story is now generating sufficient discovery density to support a maturing service and supply chain ecosystem. As operators move from exploration toward appraisal and eventual field development planning, demand will grow for the full spectrum of upstream technical services — from well engineering and subsea systems to floating production concepts and marine logistics. For Norwegian service companies monitoring Sub-Saharan Africa, the Merlin-1X result at PEL 0039 is another data point confirming that Namibia warrants active, not passive, strategic attention.

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

Norwegian service companies should move from monitoring to active pre-positioning in Namibia, as the accumulation of discoveries — now including Merlin-1X — signals an appraisal and eventual development pipeline that will require deepwater drilling, subsea, and FPSO expertise. Engagement with Shell and QatarEnergy procurement teams, as well as NAMCOR's local content frameworks, should be initiated now to establish relationships ahead of concept selection phases. Companies without an existing Namibia presence should assess partnership or teaming arrangements with locally active contractors to meet anticipated local content requirements.

#### PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Appraisal drilling at PEL 0039 will require semi-submersible or drillship capacity suited to offshore Namibia conditions — Norwegian drilling contractors and well services firms should register interest with Shell's supply chain.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** As Merlin-1X moves toward appraisal and concept selection, subsea tree, manifold, and FPSO vendors should engage early with Shell's project development teams to influence technical specifications.

- **Service:** Well testing, logging, and reservoir evaluation services will be required during appraisal phases — Norwegian well services companies should ensure they are on approved vendor lists for Shell and QatarEnergy Namibia operations.
- **Pipeline:** Future field development at PEL 0039 may require infield flowline and riser engineering; Norwegian pipeline engineering firms should monitor concept selection milestones closely.
- **LNG:** If associated gas volumes prove material during appraisal, monetisation planning — including potential LNG or gas export infrastructure — could create early advisory and FEED opportunities for Norwegian LNG specialists.

[Original source: Offshore Technology →](#)

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