

AFRICAN ENERGY CHAMBER

# Cameroon's SNH Awards Five Exploration Blocks to Octavia and Murphy West Africa

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Cameroon's national oil company, Société Nationale des Hydrocarbures (SNH), has awarded five oil and gas exploration blocks to two international operators — Octavia Energy Corporation and Murphy West Africa — in a move that signals a deliberate effort to reignite upstream activity in the country. The awards represent one of the more substantive licensing rounds Cameroon has conducted in recent years and reflect a broader regional trend of African hydrocarbon holders seeking fresh capital and technical expertise to unlock stranded or underexplored acreage.

Octavia Energy Corporation, a mid-cap independent with a growing Sub-Saharan footprint, and Murphy West Africa, an affiliate of Murphy Oil Corporation, bring complementary exploration philosophies to the awarded blocks. While SNH has not yet disclosed the precise geographic location of all five blocks or the full contractual terms, the dual-operator structure suggests SNH is deliberately spreading risk and inviting competitive development timelines. Cameroon's upstream sector has historically been dominated by legacy producers such as Perenco and TotalEnergies, meaning these new entrants could materially shift the country's production trajectory if exploration drilling confirms commercial volumes.

Cameroon produces roughly 70,000–80,000 barrels of oil per day, a figure that has declined steadily from peak output, and the government has been vocal about its ambition to reverse that trend through fresh acreage awards and improved fiscal terms. The SNH block awards follow earlier engagement with the African Energy

Chamber and align with Cameroon's stated goal of attracting upstream foreign direct investment ahead of the country's medium-term budget planning cycle. The country also holds significant gas potential, with the Kribi gas processing plant and associated LNG infrastructure offering a downstream pathway for any gas-bearing discoveries made on the new blocks.

For the broader services and equipment ecosystem, new exploration licences translate into an identifiable pipeline of seismic acquisition, well planning, drilling contracts, and eventually subsea or surface development engineering — all within a jurisdiction that already has producing assets, established port infrastructure at Douala and Kribi, and a functional regulatory framework. The pace of activity will depend heavily on how quickly Octavia and Murphy progress from licence award to work programme commitment, but industry precedent suggests first wells could be drilled within three to five years of award, contingent on data room findings and financing.

Norwegian service companies monitoring West and Central Africa should note that Cameroon remains an underserved market relative to its geological prospectivity. The Rio del Rey basin in the southwest and the Douala basin offshore have produced oil for decades, and extensions into deeper water remain largely untested. As Octavia and Murphy build their local operational capacity, early engagement — particularly on HSE consultancy, subsea survey work, and drilling services — could establish commercial relationships ahead of the more competitive tender phase.

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

Norwegian service companies should initiate early contact with Octavia Energy Corporation and Murphy West Africa to position for seismic, drilling, and subsea survey work before formal tender processes are launched. The Kribi LNG infrastructure connection also creates a specific opening for Norwegian LNG process and pipeline specialists. Given Cameroon's established but aging production base, well intervention and integrity services represent an immediate near-term opportunity alongside the longer exploration cycle.

## PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Murphy West Africa and Octavia will require drilling contractors and well services vendors as they progress mandatory work programmes — early pre-qualification engagement is advisable.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** Deepwater extensions of the Rio del Rey and Douala basins are underexplored; Norwegian subsea engineering firms should monitor block locations to assess whether any awards cover offshore acreage requiring subsea production systems.
- **LNG:** Gas discoveries on the new blocks could feed the Kribi processing and LNG facility, creating opportunities for Norwegian LNG process technology and modular compression suppliers.
- **Pipeline:** Onshore and nearshore gas tie-backs to existing Cameroon infrastructure may require pipeline engineering and installation services if commercial gas is confirmed.
- **Service:** Seismic data acquisition and interpretation, HSE management, and logistics support represent near-term entry points before capital-intensive development phases begin.

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

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