

AFRICA OIL+GAS REPORT

Namibia Approves Upstream Local Content Policy In Principle, Signalling Regulatory Shift

Saga deep read · 16 April 2026 · Score 58

Namibia's upstream local content policy has cleared a significant hurdle, receiving approval 'in principle' from authorities in Windhoek. The policy, which has moved beyond the draft phase, signals that the Namibian government is formalising the rules under which foreign operators and service companies must engage local labour, procurement, and enterprise in the country's fast-developing upstream sector. While the policy is not yet finalised or enacted into law, its in-principle approval marks a decisive step toward a structured local content regime.

The timing is critical. Namibia is in the early stages of what could become one of Africa's most significant deepwater oil developments, anchored by TotalEnergies' Venus discovery in the Orange Basin — a resource estimated at over 10 billion barrels of oil equivalent. Shell and other majors also hold acreage offshore. As final investment decisions on major projects edge closer, the government is clearly moving to ensure that the country's nascent regulatory framework keeps pace with commercial momentum, giving operators and their supply chains advance notice of localisation expectations.

Local content policies in Sub-Saharan Africa have historically varied in ambition and enforceability. Some, like Nigeria's NCDMB framework, have teeth and measurable targets. Others remain aspirational. Namibia's policy, now approved in principle by Nuyoma Wagari and the relevant authorities, appears to be tracking toward a more structured model — though the precise thresholds for local procurement, workforce

participation, and technology transfer have yet to be publicly confirmed in final form. What is clear is that any company positioning for contracts in Namibia's upstream will need to begin mapping local content compliance strategies now, ahead of formal enactment.

For international service companies already monitoring Namibia, the window to build local partnerships, joint ventures, and supply chain relationships is open but narrowing. Establishing credible local content credentials before the policy is gazetted will be a competitive differentiator. Companies that wait until the rules are finalised risk being locked out of early contract rounds or facing rushed, superficial compliance arrangements that regulators and operators alike will scrutinise. Norwegian service companies in particular — with experience navigating Norway's own historically demanding local content environment on the NCS — are well-positioned to engage meaningfully with Namibian stakeholders on compliant, substantive partnership models.

The broader investment climate in Namibia remains constructive. The country has maintained political stability, and its Ministry of Mines and Energy has shown increasing sophistication in managing the Venus-era regulatory environment. With NAMCOR, the national oil company, also seeking to build capacity, there are multiple entry points for service companies to engage — both commercially and through capacity-building initiatives that align with local content objectives. Monitoring the finalisation of this policy over the coming months is now a priority action for any firm with Namibia exposure.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

Norwegian service companies should treat this as an active monitoring and positioning signal — the window to establish credible local partnerships ahead of policy enactment is open now. Firms with NCS local content experience have a genuine narrative advantage when engaging NAMCOR and TotalEnergies on Venus-era contracting. Saga recommends initiating or deepening Namibian partner mapping in Q3-Q4 2025 before FID timelines tighten.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Subsea/FPSO:** TotalEnergies' Venus FPSO and subsea scope will be subject to local content rules — Norwegian FPSO and subsea firms should identify Namibian subcontractor and crewing partnerships now to prequalify compliantly.
- **Drilling:** Offshore drilling campaigns in the Orange Basin will require local content plans; Norwegian drilling contractors should assess Namibian workforce training and local supply options before rig mobilisation tenders are issued.
- **Service:** Well services and inspection companies should pursue joint ventures with Namibian entities ahead of policy gazette to ensure compliant, audit-ready local content structures from day one.
- **Pipeline:** Any onshore or nearshore infrastructure tied to Orange Basin development will fall under local content obligations — pipeline contractors should map Namibian fabrication and logistics capacity early.
- **LNG:** If gas monetisation from Venus progresses toward LNG, local content requirements will extend into that value chain — Norwegian LNG technology and engineering firms should begin stakeholder engagement with NAMCOR now.

[Original source: Africa Oil+Gas Report →](#)

Saga Advisory

General: info@saga-advisory.com · saga-advisory.com

STAVANGER · CAPE TOWN