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Murphy Oil Strikes Oil at Bubale-1X Well Offshore Côte d'Ivoire

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US-based energy company Murphy Oil has made an oil discovery at the Bubale-1X exploration well in Block CI-709, located approximately 40 miles off the coast of Côte d'Ivoire. The find adds Côte d'Ivoire to the growing list of West African jurisdictions attracting renewed upstream interest, and signals that Block CI-709 holds commercial hydrocarbon potential worth advancing toward appraisal.

The Bubale-1X well is Murphy Oil's operated exploration commitment in the block. While the article does not specify water depth, reservoir characteristics, or estimated resource volumes, the 40-mile offshore distance places the well in a position consistent with deepwater or ultra-deepwater operations commonly associated with West African Atlantic-margin exploration — though no formal classification has been confirmed at this stage. Further appraisal drilling and technical evaluation will be required before any development concept or timeline can be established.

Côte d'Ivoire has long been regarded as an underexplored frontier relative to neighbouring Ghana, where the Jubilee and TEN fields demonstrated the material scale of the Tano Basin petroleum system. A successful discovery at Bubale-1X could reinvigorate investor appetite for Ivorian acreage and accelerate licensing activity, with the national oil company Petroci and the government likely to leverage this result in future licensing rounds. Regional precedent suggests that a confirmed discovery of meaningful size typically triggers a two-to-four-year appraisal-to-FID timeline, during which service and equipment procurement windows open progressively.

For Norwegian oil and gas service companies, the Bubale-1X discovery represents an early-stage but credible monitoring opportunity. Murphy Oil is an established

independent with a track record of moving discoveries through to development, which reduces the risk of the find stalling at the exploration phase. The next critical milestones to watch are Murphy's appraisal drilling decision, any farm-in or partner announcements, and whether the Ivorian government signals accelerated licensing activity in response to the discovery. Companies with West Africa operational footprints or existing relationships with Murphy Oil or its co-venturers should register early interest, as preferred-supplier positioning is typically established during the appraisal phase rather than at FID.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

Norwegian service companies should log Bubale-1X as an active monitoring opportunity and engage early with Murphy Oil's procurement and technical teams, as preferred-supplier relationships in West Africa are typically secured during appraisal rather than at FID. Firms with relevant offshore West Africa credentials — particularly in subsea systems, drilling services, or FPSO concepts — are best placed to initiate dialogue now. Saga will track appraisal commitments and any partner or farm-in announcements as key trigger events for deeper commercial engagement.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Subsea:** Monitor appraisal well results and early FEED studies to position subsea equipment and umbilical supply ahead of any development sanction.
- **FPSO:** Engage Murphy Oil's development planning teams early, as West African offshore discoveries of this distance from shore frequently favour FPSO-based production solutions.
- **Drilling:** Track Murphy's appraisal drilling programme for rig contracting opportunities, particularly if the operator seeks a West Africa-experienced drilling contractor.
- **Service:** Well integrity, wireline, and fluid sampling service companies should register capability with Murphy Oil's Côte d'Ivoire asset team ahead of appraisal campaign mobilisation.

- **Pipeline:** If appraisal confirms material volumes, subsea tieback and export pipeline concepts will enter early engineering studies — a point of entry for Norwegian pipeline engineering firms.

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