

AFRICA OIL+GAS REPORT · DRILLING

Congo Brazzaville Crosses 300 KBOPD in March Before Output Slips

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The Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville) recorded an average production rate of 307,000 barrels of oil per day in March 2026, crossing the symbolic 300,000 BOPD threshold. The milestone represents a notable uptick in output for a country that has been working to sustain and grow hydrocarbon production as a core pillar of its national economy. However, the recovery proved short-lived, with production subsequently falling back below that level in the period that followed.

The production development has coincided with a political shift at the ministry level, with the country's oil minister being eased out of office. Ministerial changes in hydrocarbon-dependent states such as Congo Brazzaville carry operational significance beyond political optics. The outgoing minister's tenure shaped the regulatory and contractual environment governing upstream activity, and any transition at that level introduces a degree of uncertainty around licensing priorities, operator relations, and the pace of project approvals. How the incoming leadership chooses to position the ministry — particularly regarding production targets, cost recovery frameworks, and new acreage — will be closely monitored by operators and service companies active in the country.

Congo Brazzaville remains one of Sub-Saharan Africa's mid-tier producers, with its offshore and onshore portfolio anchored by mature fields that require ongoing well intervention, infill drilling, and enhanced recovery work to sustain output. The March spike to 307,000 BOPD suggests that some of that remediation activity is yielding results, even if the gains have not yet been consolidated into a stable upward trend.

The subsequent dip underlines the production volatility that characterises ageing field portfolios without sustained capital investment and workover programmes.

For international service companies, the combination of a production uptick and a ministerial transition creates a dual signal. On one hand, operators appear to be drilling and intervening actively enough to push output above 300,000 BOPD. On the other, a change in ministry leadership can delay contracting cycles, shift procurement preferences, and temporarily freeze new work authorisations while incoming officials establish their priorities. Companies with existing frame agreements or ongoing scopes in-country are better insulated from this disruption than those seeking to enter fresh tenders.

Norwegian oil and gas service firms tracking West and Central Africa should register this moment as one requiring close monitoring rather than immediate action. The production data confirms that upstream activity in Congo Brazzaville is real and ongoing, but the ministerial transition warrants a watchful posture until the new minister's policy direction becomes clear. Engagement with operators already active in the country — to understand how contracting pipelines may shift — is a prudent near-term step.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

Norwegian well services and drilling companies should use this period to strengthen relationships with active operators in Congo Brazzaville, as the production uptick signals ongoing workover and infill drilling demand. The ministerial transition creates short-term uncertainty in contracting, making it advisable to monitor rather than bid aggressively until the new ministry's priorities are confirmed. FPSO and subsea specialists should track whether the new minister maintains or adjusts fiscal terms, as this will influence operators' willingness to sanction new offshore developments.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Drilling:** Infill drilling and well intervention activity appears to be driving the production spike, representing a potential workover and completions scope for drilling service providers.

- **Subsea/FPSO:** Sustaining output above 300,000 BOPD on ageing offshore fields will likely require FPSO integrity work and subsea intervention campaigns that Norwegian contractors can bid on once contracting visibility improves.
- **Service:** Monitor the incoming minister's stance on local content and procurement rules, as these frequently shift with ministerial transitions and can open or close doors for foreign service companies.
- **Pipeline:** Any infrastructure investment linked to consolidating higher production levels — including export line maintenance or tie-in work — should be tracked as the new ministry sets its capital programme.

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