

PIPELINE TECHNOLOGY JOURNAL · SUBSEA

EACOP Enters Final Implementation Phase as Tanzania Clears Construction

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The East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) has moved into its definitive implementation phase after the Tanzanian Ministry of Energy formally endorsed the next stage of construction, clearing the way for heavy machinery to begin trenching operations along the project's 1,443-kilometre corridor. The decision marks a significant milestone for what is the largest foreign direct investment in the region's history, valued at approximately \$4 billion.

Construction will run from the Lake Albert basin in Hoima, Uganda, to the Tanzanian port of Tanga. Land acquisition and compensation frameworks are reported to be nearly complete, removing a key administrative bottleneck that had previously slowed ground-level progress. The electrically heated pipeline — a design necessity given the viscous nature of Ugandan crude — is engineered to transport up to 216,000 barrels per day to international export markets.

The project is managed by a consortium led by France's TotalEnergies, which holds a 62% stake, alongside China National Offshore Oil Corporation at 8%, with the state petroleum authorities of Uganda and Tanzania holding the remaining interests. The developers have secured alternative financing arrangements after facing sustained international divestment campaigns and legal challenges from climate advocacy groups, allowing construction timelines to remain intact. Both state officials and project executives have defended the pipeline as an exercise in economic sovereignty, arguing that African nations are entitled to monetise their natural resources as a path out of regional poverty.

The economic case is substantial. The Tanzanian Ministry of Energy estimates construction will generate more than 10,000 direct jobs and tens of thousands of additional positions across local transport, hospitality, and manufacturing sectors. Tanzania additionally expects to collect significant annual revenue from transit tariffs and port fees at Tanga, with government officials earmarking those receipts for national infrastructure investment and debt reduction. Uganda, for its part, gains a credible export route for landlocked crude reserves that have remained commercially stranded for years.

Environmental concerns remain a live issue. Advocacy groups warn the pipeline traverses ecologically sensitive zones, including Murchison Falls National Park and the Lake Victoria water catchment area, and estimate annual carbon emissions associated with the project at 34 million metric tonnes. Project developers counter that advanced mitigation technologies have been deployed to minimise ecological impact, though independent verification of those claims continues to be contested. Regulatory and legal scrutiny is likely to persist as physical construction accelerates.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

With trenching now commencing on a 1,443-kilometre electrically heated pipeline, Norwegian pipeline and associated infrastructure service companies should actively monitor procurement packages as they are released by TotalEnergies and the state authorities. The electrically heated pipe specification is a technically demanding segment where Norwegian expertise in flow assurance and heated pipeline systems is directly applicable. Companies not yet positioned in East Africa should consider establishing local partnerships in Uganda or Tanzania now, ahead of the main construction contracting wave.



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- **Pipeline:** The electrically heated, long-distance pipeline design is a technically complex segment where Norwegian flow assurance and pipe-in-pipe specialists can bid on installation and commissioning scopes as construction contracts are tendered.
- **Service:** Cathodic protection, pipeline inspection, and integrity management service providers should engage TotalEnergies and the state authorities early to position for multi-year operational contracts once the line enters service.
- **Subsea/FPSO:** The Tanga export terminal will require marine loading and offshore transfer infrastructure, representing a potential scope for Norwegian subsea and marine systems suppliers to evaluate as detailed engineering progresses.
- **Drilling:** Upstream field development at the Lake Albert basin underpins pipeline throughput volumes, meaning drilling service companies should track Ugandan licensing and well programme announcements linked to TotalEnergies' Tilenga and CNOOC's Kingfisher assets.
- **LNG:** Tanzania's parallel LNG ambitions and its role as the pipeline's host export country make it a dual-opportunity market; Norwegian LNG equipment and technology firms already engaged in Tanzania's offshore sector should leverage existing relationships to access EACOP-adjacent infrastructure work.

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