

ANP-STP - AGÊNCIA NACIONAL DO PETRÓLEO DE SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE · SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Searcher Geodata wins 3D seismic permit, São Tomé blocks

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São Tomé and Príncipe's national petroleum regulator ANP-STP has issued an environmental licence certificate to Searcher Geodata UK Ltd, authorising a 3D seismic acquisition programme across Blocks 7, 8, 9 and 14 in the country's Exclusive Economic Zone. The certificate represents a reconnaissance-stage regulatory clearance — not a block award or exploration contract — and is a prerequisite for the seismic vessel to begin data acquisition operations in the designated areas.

Searcher Geodata is a specialist in multi-client geophysical data acquisition and licensing. The 3D seismic programme across four blocks signals that fresh subsurface data is being gathered, likely to underpin a future licensing round or to refresh existing block marketing efforts by ANP-STP. São Tomé and Príncipe has long held frontier exploration potential in its deepwater EEZ, sitting within the same Gulf of Guinea hydrocarbon province as producing basins off Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea, though commercial discoveries in São Tomé's waters have yet to materialise at scale.

The environmental licence is the instrument being reported here. Before any seismic vessel can operate in national waters, São Tomé's regulatory framework requires this environmental clearance, and ANP-STP's public notice confirms the certificate has now been issued. The scope covers four named blocks — 7, 8, 9 and 14 — suggesting a relatively broad spatial footprint for the survey, though no timeline, vessel name, or programme duration is specified in the announcement.

For the wider industry, fresh 3D multi-client data in an underexplored Atlantic frontier basin is a meaningful precursor to investor interest. If the data reveals

attractive structural or stratigraphic targets, ANP-STP would be better positioned to attract international operators to a formal licensing round. The Gulf of Guinea's deepwater plays have demonstrated world-class potential elsewhere in the region, and updated seismic coverage is a standard first step in de-risking frontier acreage for potential bidders.

At this stage, the story remains at the earliest point in the exploration cycle. No operator has been awarded a block, no drilling contract is in prospect, and no development investment decision is on the horizon. Norwegian service companies should treat this as a long-lead market signal — an indicator that São Tomé is actively working to attract exploration capital — rather than an immediate commercial opportunity. The value lies in tracking the multi-client data release and any subsequent licensing round announcements from ANP-STP.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

This is a reconnaissance-stage environmental permit for seismic acquisition — no procurement opportunity exists yet. Norwegian service companies with Gulf of Guinea experience should monitor ANP-STP's subsequent licensing round announcements and begin relationship-building with Searcher Geodata and any operators that licence the resulting dataset, positioning themselves early for any future exploration drilling or subsea work that the data may eventually underpin.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Subsea/FPSO:** Monitor the multi-client data release; if 3D results show viable deepwater targets, early engagement with prospective block operators could position subsea suppliers ahead of any exploration drilling campaign.
- **Drilling:** No drilling contract is imminent, but tracking Searcher Geodata's data commercialisation and ANP-STP licensing round timelines will indicate when exploration well planning could begin.
- **Service:** Geophysical support and marine survey service providers should note Searcher Geodata's active presence in São Tomé's EEZ as a potential collaboration or subcontracting entry point for future regional programmes.

- **LNG:** Frontier basin data acquisition is a precursor to any gas discovery appraisal; LNG and gas monetisation specialists should file this as a long-lead watch item for the Gulf of Guinea frontier.

[Original source: ANP-STP - Agência Nacional do Petróleo de São Tomé e Príncipe →](#)

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