

ZPDC - ZANZIBAR PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (TANZANIA) · TANZANIA

ZPDC draws Omani diplomatic interest as South Pemba compensation process advances

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Zanzibar Petroleum Development Company (ZPDC) has begun a formal verification process for communities affected by oil and gas exploration activities in South Pemba Region, accompanied by officials from the Zanzibar Petroleum Regulatory Authority (ZPRA) and RAKgas. The exercise is aimed at identifying and compensating individuals and communities impacted by the exploration programme in the area — a standard but critical milestone in frontier exploration that signals fieldwork, whether seismic acquisition or early drilling operations, has been underway in the block.

The joint verification visit brings together the national upstream vehicle, the regulatory body, and RAKgas — an Emirati energy company acting as operator or partner in the South Pemba work — to ensure affected parties are assessed ahead of any compensation disbursement. The involvement of RAKgas points to active exploration work being conducted in the area, though the block designation, water depth, and precise nature of the activities that generated the community impacts remain unspecified in available reporting. How efficiently this compensation process is completed may influence the pace at which further exploration or appraisal activity can proceed.

Adding a new diplomatic dimension to Zanzibar's upstream story, the Deputy Ambassador of Oman to Zanzibar has held discussions with ZPDC leadership to explore potential collaboration on oil and natural gas exploration activities in the archipelago. The meeting signals that Gulf state interest in Zanzibar's acreage is

broadening beyond the already-present Emirati involvement through RAKgas. Oman, as a mature oil-producing state with significant national technical and commercial expertise, could bring additional capital, operational know-how, or state-to-state partnership frameworks into Zanzibar's developing upstream sector. The outcome of these discussions — whether they lead to a formal agreement, joint study, or acreage award — is not yet known.

South Pemba sits off the northern coast of Tanzania's semi-autonomous Zanzibar archipelago, which has in recent years moved to develop its own upstream governance framework independently of mainland Tanzania. ZPDC serves as the state entity responsible for managing petroleum interests on behalf of Zanzibar, and ZPRA acts as the regulatory counterpart. The accumulation of Gulf state engagement — first Emirati through RAKgas, now Omani at the diplomatic level — suggests ZPDC is actively courting partners from the region and that Zanzibar's acreage is attracting serious international attention.

For Norwegian service companies tracking East African frontier markets, the picture is becoming incrementally more active. Exploration work is live enough to have produced measurable community impacts, and diplomatic momentum is building around potential new entrants. Any escalation from exploration to appraisal or development, whether driven by RAKgas or a future Omani partner, would create demand across the supply chain including drilling services, well services, marine survey support, and subsea engineering.

Why this matters to partners and clients of Saga

The Omani diplomatic engagement with ZPDC adds a new potential partner constellation to monitor alongside the existing RAKgas relationship — Norwegian firms should track whether Oman's interest crystallises into a formal upstream role, as Omani state entities have historically partnered with international service companies on exploration programmes. The South Pemba compensation process remains an early-stage signal, but the convergence of Emirati and Omani Gulf state interest in Zanzibar's acreage suggests the market is gaining credibility. Relationship-building with ZPDC and ZPRA now, and monitoring Omani state energy entities as potential future clients or intermediaries, would position Norwegian firms advantageously.

PARTNER ANGLES

- **Emirati operator (RAKgas):** Already active in South Pemba exploration; a direct engagement target for Norwegian well services, marine survey, and drilling support as exploration advances toward appraisal.
- **Omani state energy entities:** Diplomatic discussions with ZPDC suggest potential future upstream role; Norwegian firms with existing Oman relationships should monitor for joint venture or service contract opportunities if Oman formalises its Zanzibar presence.
- **ZPDC / ZPRA (Zanzibar state):** As the upstream vehicle and regulator, ZPDC and ZPRA will control access and tender processes; early relationship-building and capacity-support engagement positions Norwegian firms ahead of any competitive procurement.

[Original source: ZPDC - Zanzibar Petroleum Development Company \(Tanzania\) →](#)

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