

ENERGY COUNTRY REVIEW

Madagascar

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Country Review Madagascar

OVERVIEW

Madagascar (the Republic of Madagascar), formerly the Malagasy Republic, is an island in the Indian Ocean. The Mozambique Channel forms its west coast. Reunion and Mauritius lie to the east, and the Comoros and Mayotte to the north.

Settlement only began in 350 BC by Austronesians from Borneo who traded with Arabs from the 7th century. Bantus migrated from Africa in 1000 AD, transforming the forested highlands to grassland. Europeans sighted the island in 1500 and France built trading posts in the late 16th century. It became a centre of piracy and slaving until 1793 when the highland kingdom of Imerina expanded, taking full control by 1828 and rapidly modernising. In 1883 France invaded and a French colony was then established with forced imposition of French culture.

During World War 2 it was ruled by Vichy France. Uprisings from 1947 led to independence in 1960 as the Malagasy Republic (to 1975). It remained a puppet of France and the people were suppressed until the government was overthrown in 1972. The new military leaders aligned with the USSR and the economy collapsed. Reforms in the 1980s led to recovery until an uprising in 2009. Elections in 2014 restored democracy but most of the population remain poor.

OIL & GAS

Developing Madagascar's oil and gas resources is a cornerstone of a government plan to liberalise and privatise the country's economy and move towards a free market.

The history of exploration in Madagascar began in the earlier part of this century when two giant exhumed oil fields, Bemolanga and Tsimiroro were discovered. Most of the drilling work was carried out in the years 1945-1965. However, political unrest and a socialist government discouraged exploration activity in the 1970's and 1980's, although some drilling was done by Mobil, Occidental, Agip, Amoco, Shell, BP and Maxus. No commercial discoveries were made but dry gas, wet gas, light oil and heavy oil have been identified along the island's western coastline.

An exploration agreement was signed between the Madagascar government and Triton Energy for the 28,170 square kilometre Ambilobe licence north of Nosy Be as part of a series of offshore permits that Madagascar prepared for sale in early 1995. In 1998, Triton relinquished the western portion of this tract corresponding to 37% of the original allocation. Triton also relinquished its rights to the Cape Sainte Marie region which it had acquired in 1995.

Country Facts

Official name:	Republic of Madagascar
Capital:	Antananarivo
Area:	587,040 Sq km
Population:	26 397 670 (2018)
Government type:	Republic
Currency:	Malagasy franc
Official languages:	Malagasy, French
Calling code:	+261
Religion:	Indigenous beliefs, Christian, Muslim

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In 1997, Gulfstream Resources Canada obtained two licences, Tsiribihina in the Morondova basin and Antonibe Offshore in the Majunga basin covering 26,700 square kilometres and 5,200 square kilometres respectively. Its partner was OMNIS with 18% and 20% interests respectively. Subsequently, International Petroleum Consultants Inc acquired 2% of the OMNIS share in the Antonibe block.

Madagascar Hunt Oil acquired 100% rights to the Bemolanga, Majunga and Tsimoro Blocks under production sharing contracts signed in 1997 and 1998.

In 2001 Chevron Corp. (then Texaco) discovered layers of crude in Morondava and Tulear, in western Madagascar.

Madagascar has 225 offshore exploration blocks, in addition to onshore blocks in the country's onshore basins. The three most important basins in the country are: Ambilobe, Majunga and Morondava. So far the largest oil and gas fields are the Bemolanga and Tsimiroro fields in the onshore Morondova basin. Estimates of the reserves in both fields have been placed as high as 3 billion and 2.5 billion barrels of oil respectively. However, the operators of the field have made far more conservative estimates of around 1 billion and 0.5 billion respectively.

Source: Mbendi.com, Think Security Africa, GlobalShift

HYDROCARBON POTENTIAL

Most of the exploration efforts in Madagascar have been concentrated in the main sedimentary basins: Ambilobe, Majunga and Morondava.

However, the East coast and Cap Sainte Marie basins present some interest too. The prospectivity of the latter basin can be extended to the Plateau of Madagascar, which constitutes the continuation of Madagascar island southward.

The two giant oil fields of Tsimiroro and Bemolanga were sourced by the lagoonal to lacustrine Lower Triassic, wide spread in East Africa.

The Toarcian, the Middle Jurassic condensed series and the Neocomian have been proven to be good sources containing type II and III organic matter and T.O.C. ranging from 2% up to 26%.

Immature oil trapped within the Senonian outcrops leads to presume that the Senonian could act as good source rocks in subsurface and more particularly for offshore prospects.

With respect to reservoir rocks, the Karroo system provides many sandy levels. They could be prospective for shallow targets.

The reservoirs of the Post Karroo System are composed of sands, reefs and dedolomized carbonates for the Dogger, turbidites, deep sea fans and, sandy bodies associated to low stand wedge system deposition.

The structural trapping systems are associated to the main tectonic events, which have affected the sedimentation.

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GEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

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Source: OMNIS

MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND HYDROCARBONS

The Ministry of Energy and Hydrocarbons is responsible for the design, management and implementation of the government's policy for sustainable and sustained development of the country, in energy with the aim of ensuring conditions for economic growth and well-being of the population.

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