

CONGO

The newly established national upstream oil company, SNPC, finished transforming the last of the old exploration contracts into production sharing agreements. Much of the former state oil company, Hydro Congo, will be privatized, retaining only distribution functions.

In the field, TotalFinaElf made a discovery on its Mer Tres Profonde Sud permit offshore Point Noire. Well Andromede Marine 1 was drilled in 6,200-ft waters—Congo's deepest—and flowed 7,000 bopd.

EGYPT

Wells drilled in 1999 totaled 169, about flat with 1998. However, the number of oil wells drilled increased by 45%. Producing oil wells increased by 79 and stood at 2,011 by December 1999. It is forecast the number of wells drilled will stay the same in 2000, including the drilling of 59 offshore wells.

Apache announced a string of discoveries during 1999. Last February saw two discoveries: Akik 1X, which tested 23.4 MMcfd and 1,685 bpd of condensate (bcpd); and Karama 1X, which tested 1,520 bpd of 43 degree API crude and 500 Mcfgd. Apache also announced a discovery in Neath South 1X in Khalda Offset concession. The well tested at a combined rate of 2,778 bopd and 4.5 MMcfd. Apache's discoveries continued in April with the Akik 1X well, where the Lower Cretaceous Alam el Bueib formation flowed at 26 MMcfd and 2,366 bcpd. This doubled the well's previous output to 49.4 MMcfd and 1,051 bcpd.

Last April, TransAtlantic Petroleum announced the discovery and successful appraisal of the Lagia oil and gas field in the Central Sinai concession, Gulf of Suez. The Lagia 6 discovery flowed oil and gas at rates up to 152 bopd and 300 MMcfd.

Other successes include: Novus Petroleum's three oil discoveries in the Khalda concession of the western desert, with combined production of 6,000 bopd, and Tanganyika Oil Company's Hana 1 discovery in the Gulf of Suez.

GABON

In 1999, the tender saw Santa Fe Snyder win an Exploration-Production Sharing Contract (EPSC) for the Agali block in December. The block lies in 200 to 8,000 ft waters off the northern coast. The initial exploration term lasts five years and includes seismic acquisition and drilling of one well.