

Zest WEG gains traction in oil and gas

A buoyant oil and gas sector around Africa is relying increasingly on Zest WEG's extensive electrical equipment range, services and expertise. Zest WEG's Lukas Barnard highlights some exciting projects on the horizon as Africa hastens to meet its energy needs.

Part of the global WEG group, Zest WEG has been actively growing its oil and gas footprint, both in upstream and midstream facilities on the African continent. This has seen WEG products and solutions being applied in countries including South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Gabon, Congo, Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria.

Africa is hungry for electricity, and Zest WEG is seeing growing demand from the oil and gas sector, both in upstream and midstream facilities as nations on the continent look to these commodities to power their economies.

According to Lukas Barnard, Zest WEG's business development specialist for the oil and gas sector in sub Saharan Africa, the trend is towards gas production due to its lower greenhouse gas emission levels. At the same time, the oil sector remains a vital part of many African economies, with WEG product and solutions being applied in both upstream and midstream facilities.

Barnard highlights that Zest WEG – as a fully owned subsidiary of the global WEG group responsible for sub Saharan Africa – has developed a strategic focus on the oil and gas sectors in recent years. This has seen the company engaging with the sector in various southern, central and west African countries.

"Among the exciting projects we are involved in is an oil and gas refinery in Nigeria,

where we have supplied two WEG medium voltage soft starters; an 8.4 MW, 11 kV unit and a 2.1 MW, 6.6 kV unit," says Barnard.

He notes that compressors are critical in the refinery process and explains that WEG soft starters will significantly reduce stress on the compressor at start-up, which will improve the equipment's mechanical life and equipment uptime for higher plant productivity. Soft starters also reduce start-up current.

Following consultation with the customer to clarify certain technical elements of the scope of supply, both soft starters were custom designed and manufactured for this application.

In another project, Zest WEG has supplied eight large WEG motors in a phased contract to a floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) moveable platform off the coast of Ghana. These units are upgrades to previously installed WEG motors that have been operating successfully on this site for over a decade. Zest WEG is also involved in testing and installing the motors.

"In southern Africa, Zest WEG has recently supplied transformers, switchgear and containerised modular substations to an onshore natural gas and helium project in South Africa," he says. "This is the country's first and only helium producer with reportedly world-beating concentrations of helium."

He highlights that there are exciting oil



Lukas Barnard, Zest WEG's business development specialist for the oil and gas sector in sub Saharan Africa.

and hydrogen prospects in Namibia, while massive gas discoveries have been made in Mozambique – where WEG is already involved. Another prospect that bodes well for the sector is a significant crude oil resource at Lake Albert in Uganda.

"It is important to stress that Zest WEG has considerable design and manufacturing capacity in South Africa, which allows us to locally produce a range of equipment for upstream and midstream operations in the oil and gas sector," Barnard says. "This includes transformers, substations, low voltage switchboards and generator sets."

The company's Africa footprint is supported by its value-added resellers in various countries, who are locally based firms operating close to customers and who offer the highest levels of local support in each region, including services and technical capability.

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Left: One of eight large WEG motors supplied to a FPSO off the coast of Ghana. Right: WEG medium voltage soft starters were installed in an oil and gas refinery in Nigeria.

