

Saipem subsea drone for inspection of Shell and Petrobras fields in Brazil

San Donato Milanese (Italy), May 24, 2022 – Saipem has been awarded a contract by Shell and Petrobras for the utilisation of its FlatFish subsea drone in two pilot projects encompassing the inspection campaigns of two ultra-deepwater fields offshore Brazil, operated respectively by the two energy companies.

These two projects with Shell and Petrobras are pilots and fall within the framework of the research and development programme of ANP, the Brazilian National Agency of Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels. The target is to qualify the drone to execute unmanned, vessel-free inspections to support the monitoring and maintenance campaigns of the subsea infrastructures.

In particular, Saipem implemented the FlatFish drone through the industrialization phase with the ultimate objective of unlocking deepwater operations, in over 2,000-meter depth for this particular contract, enhancing its artificial intelligence-based features as well as its navigation and monitoring capabilities.

The activities will be led by Sonsub, Saipem's centre of excellence for underwater technologies and robotics, over a timeframe of approximately 12 months: during the first phase intermediate tests in shallow water will be executed at Saipem's base in Trieste, Italy, with the support of Sonsub's engineering department in Brazil; the second phase will see the drone's deployment within Brazilian waters in the third quarter of 2022.

This contract award confirms Saipem's drive for technological development in subsea robotics and advanced automation and is an important cornerstone of its constant search for low-carbon, competitive and cost-effective solutions, which exemplify Saipem's commitment to sustainability.

FlatFish

FlatFish is a remotely-controlled subsea-resident autonomous underwater drone able to perform complex inspection tasks of a wide range of underwater assets. Since 2018, Shell has entrusted Saipem with the license to develop the FlatFish Technology.

The technology was previously developed by SENAI CIMATEC, a Brazilian research institute, in partnership with DFKI, the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence, and funded by the R&D program of ANP (Brazilian National Agency of Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels) and EMBRAPA (Brazilian Company of Research and Industrial Innovation).



Saipem is an advanced technological and engineering platform for the design, construction and operation of safe and sustainable complex infrastructure and plants. Saipem has always been oriented towards technological innovation and is currently committed, alongside its clients, on the frontline of energy transition with increasingly digitalised tools, technologies and processes that were devised from the outset with environmental sustainability in mind. It is listed on the Milan stock exchange and operates in over 70 countries around the world with 32 thousand employees from 130 different nationalities.

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