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Opening the Taps

Strengthening South Africa's water sector starts with stabilising its infrastructure

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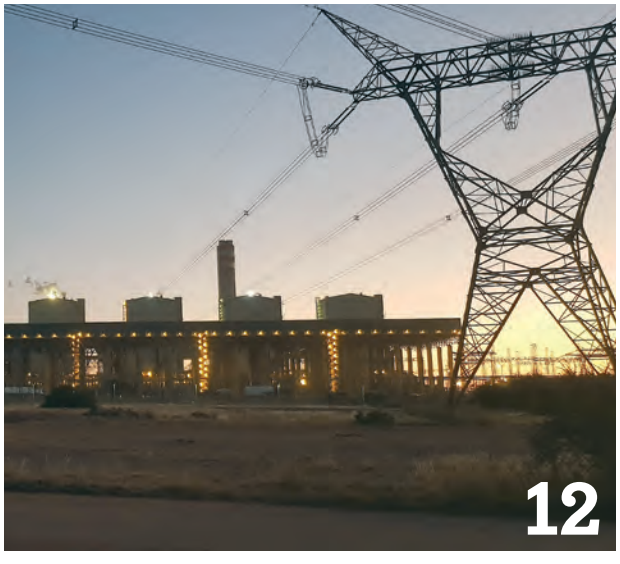
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PUSH PAUSE

Man invented language to satisfy his deep need to complain.





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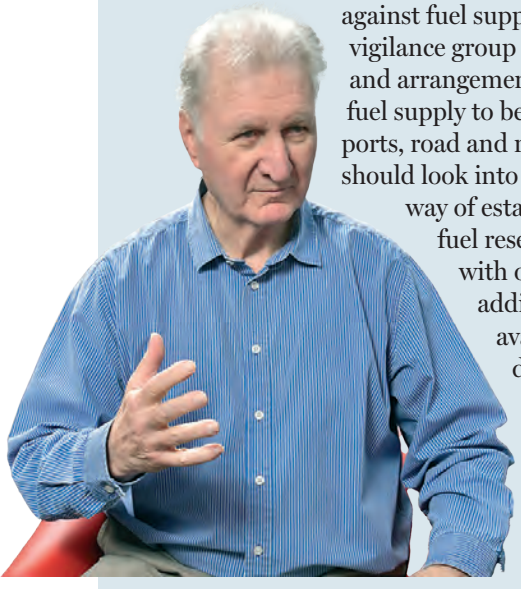
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FIRST WORD

South Africa must hold a fuel security roundtable

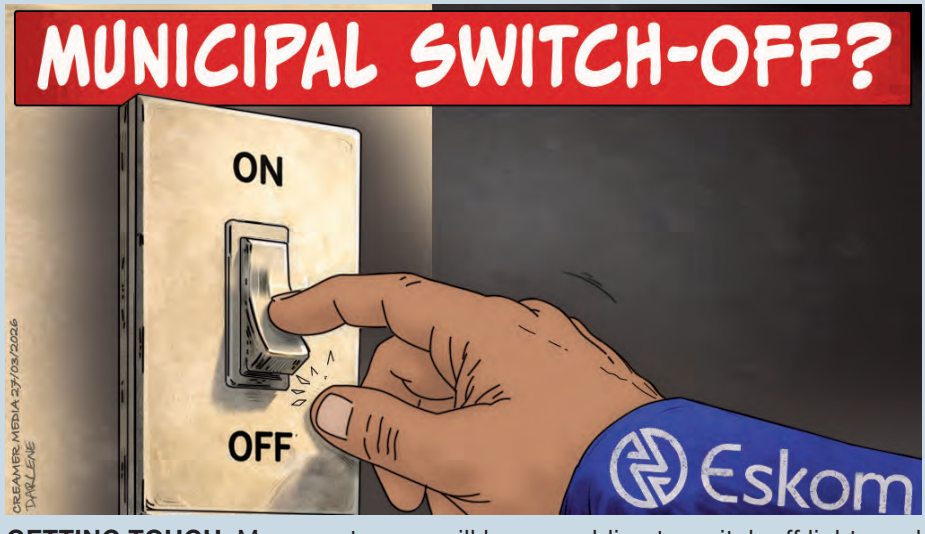
It seems crucial for South Africa to hold a fuel security roundtable to monitor fuel supply chains more intensely during this period of global fuel concern. Government and industry leaders must be brought together to outline alternative supply arrangements to insure against fuel supply disruption. A fuel vigilance group needs to be established and arrangements made for delayed fuel supply to be prioritised through our ports, road and rail routes. South Africa should look into the most economical way of establishing emergency fuel reserves in collaboration with other countries so that additional fuel can be made available in the event of disruption.



Scan to listen to Martin Creamer on SAfm

Martin Creamer | Publishing Editor





GETTING TOUGH: Many customers will be scrambling to switch off lights and appliances after the regulator granted Eskom hikes for this year that are higher than those that were initially approved, owing to a big calculation error by the regulator. But customers in municipalities that owe the utility money now face being cut off entirely, as Eskom moves more assertively to tackle arrear debt that has now breached R110-billion. An initial 14 municipalities have received notices.

This is nothing other than mismanagement. Water is supposed to be self-sustaining in South Africa, with revenue from its sale paying for infrastructure maintenance. Instead, that revenue is being diverted elsewhere, leaving nothing for essential upkeep.

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP SOUTH AFRICA CEO **BUSI MAVUSO**



DESTONING PLANT: Sasol officially opened its destoning plant this month, an investment aimed at improving the quality of coal being used in its gasification process at Secunda. Developed through the conversion of the Twistdraai export plant, the facility removes high-density stone from the run-of-mine coal sourced from the Thubelisha and Bosjesspruit mines.

PUSH PAUSE

Love is like an hourglass, with the heart filling up as the brain empties.

FACTSINFIGURES

50

The estimated amount of imported coal in million tons that India's power plants used in 2025. India's government aims to decrease this by at least 15-million tons this year.

4

The number of ferrochrome smelters, out of 48, which are still operational in South Africa – smelters that are producing about 19% of global ferrochrome, despite the country's holding 72% of global chrome ore reserves.

METRO COUNCILS

Performance focus

THAT MANY OF SOUTH AFRICA'S 257 municipalities are in crisis is not in question. Also painfully clear is that many metropolitan councils, which oversee the country's six largest cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town, eThekwini, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, Nelson Mandela Bay, Buffalo City and Mangaung, are facing governance and delivery problems that were almost unthinkable a few decades ago.

The economic and social consequences of this reality are beyond serious.

Rapid urbanisation over the past few decades means that the overwhelming majority of those who live in South Africa live in urban areas and especially in these cities.

That means that if these six cities are not working, prospects for stimulating growth and job creation and tackling deep-seated poverty and inequality are close to zero.

This is not news to anyone, especially those exposed to the water cuts, potholes and general decay that have come to characterise these areas.

What may be news is that there are several credible initiatives under way that are designed to change the way cities are being managed financially and operationally with the aim of restarting growth engines that have stalled.

One of these is a R54-billion performance-based grant that can be unlocked for water, sanitation, electricity and waste infrastructure services if these six metros meet certain performance targets.

Known as the Metro Trading Services Reform, the incentive was formally launched in mid-March, with the ambitious goal of mobilising more than R100-billion in infrastructure investment over the coming six years – a figure based on the fact that recipient municipalities will be required to match the infrastructure grants with their own revenues and borrowings.

Importantly, particularly from a constitutional perspective, the money is conditional on performance targets that have been set by the metros themselves in relation to their trading services.

However, there are guardrails in which such targets must be set, including that these services be run as integrated businesses, and that revenues from those services be ringfenced and reinvested.

This architecture recognises that many metros are either failing to provide services, collect revenue adequately, or are using the revenue collected to invest in the maintenance and upgrade of the supportive infrastructure.

The reform is being implemented at a time when municipalities are expected to spend R205-billion of the R1-trillion that is budgeted for infrastructure over the coming three years.

It is also coupled to various other reforms, some legislative, that enable national government to move beyond municipal oversight to more active intervention, especially where capacity constraints are blocking infrastructure delivery.



These changes are long overdue, as poor service delivery is not merely an inconvenience, it's an impediment to growth and development, as businesses cannot be expected to invest in an atmosphere of dysfunction, decay and rampant corruption.

That said, these reforms must be about building capacity and not substituting it. In the long run, South Africa's cities will be responsive to the needs of residents and businesses only if they have a direct political mandate from those they are serving.

Terence Creamer | Editor

PLATINUM GROUP METALS

Platinum Promise

ARM's Bokoni platinum project's prospects are continuing to excite

MARTIN CREAMER | CREAMER MEDIA PUBLISHING EDITOR

The definitive feasibility study for the Bokoni platinum group metals (PGM) project is targeted for completion in this half of 2026, followed by an investment decision, African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) CEO **Phillip Tobias** reported during ARM's latest half-year presentation.

Ore reserve development at Bokoni's Middelpunt Hill shaft is progressing to access high-grade stoping, supporting a ramp-up to 120 000 tonnes per month (tpm) of stoping production.

"We're still very excited about the quality of the orebody, the grade that it has, and all that it can bring," Tobias enthused.

An independent value engineering review under way will be followed by a presentation to the board for an investment decision.

For the required narrow-reef-cutting technology,ARM is partnering German tunnel-boring machine company Herrenknecht, and South African reef-boring solutions company Master Drilling of Fochville.

The decline shaft heads directly into upper group two (UG2), the preferred higher-grade reef.

Engineering News & Mining Weekly's request during question time for an update on the Bokoni project elicited this response: "We're making good progress. However, there are some teething challenges because the ground where we are is still quite soft, so we're basically going slowly.

"But in terms of the profile of the excavation that's developing, it really shows that if we sort out those teething issues, it will yield some positive returns. We're just waiting to see consistent grade performance, so that we can report the positive results.

"We've incorporated lessons that we picked up from Mogalakwena and also from Eland and, as a result, we're really looking forward to improved performance," Tobias added.

In response to a question put by Integral Asset Management mining analyst **Bruce Williamson** about when Bokoni would achieve its targeted 120 000 t steady state, Tobias recalled that Bokoni's earlier 60 000 t lower-grade effort had proved unviable and that the new way forward was the chosen higher-grade 120 000 tpm throughput level.

ARM COO **Jacques van der Bijl**'s elaboration on the 120 000 tpm throughput decision included the pointing out that most labour-intensive PGM mines have relatively high fixed costs that require minimum ounce production levels to cover those fixed costs and ensure cash competitiveness.

"However, the benefit that Bokoni has is the high in situ grade," Van der Bijl pointed out.

When Bokoni's grades of 6.5 g/t to 7 g/t are fed into the mill, the number of ounces that can be produced – even at the 120 000 tpm level – are very comparable to what is currently being produced at ARM's Two Rivers and Modikwa PGM mines, which have considerably higher throughput, which, he said, places Bokoni in a "very strong" position to survive the price cycles and be economical over the 20-year lifespan currently being planned for Bokoni. Moreover, the upfront capital required is considerably more moderate.



PHILLIP TOBIAS
Ore reserve development at Bokoni's Middelpunt Hill shaft is progressing to access high-grade stoping

"We're in the process of finalising and just doing third-party value engineering, and we should be able to provide further clarity at the next reporting session," Van der Bijl explained.

The UG2 focus carries with it a mineral resource grade 30% higher than Merensky reef and benefits from lower geological losses.

Ore mining and milling operations were suspended at the end of ARM's 2025 financial year as lower-grade on-reef development, combined with a milling capacity limited to 60 000 t, proved insufficient to offset fixed costs and maintain profitability. This decision allows Bokoni to focus capital and strategic efforts on off-reef ore reserve development.

Looking ahead, Bokoni's future lies in a higher-grade, phased development path. Given the steeper dip of the orebody, the mining method has been revised to a hybrid approach, combining mechanised off-reef development with conventional stoping to maximise ore grade and revenue per tonne while maintaining capital efficiency.

The definitive feasibility study's capital deployment strategy incorporates the new 120 000 tpm concentrator plant capacity and together with selective use of the existing 60 000 tpmconcentrator, enables production to 180 000 tpm.

The narrow-reef-cutting extracts from UG2 reef, which is only 70 cm wide, and the high PGM grades are contained within that very narrow reef. Tunnelling by the mobile tunnel borer is followed by on-reef cutting. The reef cutting system has been custom-designed to suit the UG2 reef layout.

In conventional mining, the typical reef stope height is 120 cm, which introduces additional dilution, resulting in a reduction of the average stoping grades to 6 g/t.

ARM Platinum headline earnings in the six months to December 31 increased by more than 200% to R704-million.



GOLD & COPPER

Golden Residue

Harmony studying high-margin surface gold projects in Free State and West Wits

MARTIN CREAMER | CREAMER MEDIA PUBLISHING EDITOR

Harmony Gold Mining Company is progressing studies to recover the gold from its Free State tailings dams as well as those that span the West Wits area around its Mponeng gold mine.

The Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed company's Free State tailings alone host 5.7-million ounces of surface gold.

"We've not progressed those studies to the full extent yet. We're in the process of doing that, which will firmly fit into the quadrant of our surface production, which is high-margin safe production for the future," Harmony Gold CEO **Beyers Nel** pointed out to *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* following the declaration by Harmony of a record R3.4-billion half-year dividend.

"We are most pleased to return more of the gold-price tailwind upside over the last while to our shareholders while also replacing ounces mined."

In addition to Harmony's investments in the CSA copper mine, which Nel describes as being "phenomenal", and Eva copper project, in Australia, he spoke of South Africa Inc looking up, "and we're also quite positive about investing back into South Africa in order to sustain jobs and to make sure that South Africa's gold mining industry continues to be as strong as it always has been."

Engineering News & Mining Weekly: **During the presentation, you twice used the word 'phenomenal'. The first was about CSA. You said, 'this is a phenomenal orebody'. Can you tell us why you used the word 'phenomenal'?**

Nel: CSA is the highest-grade copper orebody in Australia. It's got a 3% reserve grade and we've got new drill intercepts there, which already indicate potential mine life extension. We're very excited about that orebody, which I think is going to be very valuable going forward. But it's an orebody that, technically, we need to de-constrain, both on the ventilation side and through the creation of the necessary underground flexibility, so that we can have consistent, predictable production coming from the CSA mine.

You also used 'phenomenal' when speaking about Wafi-Golpu in Papua New Guinea. We've been hearing those two words Wafi and Golpu for decades now, but I got the feeling during your presentation that we're getting a bit closer to seeing operational activity there.

Wafi-Golpu's a once-in-a-generation asset and that's why we use the word phenomenal. It's a porphyry, so it will be a big, bulk underground copper/gold mine. Not a narrow tabular or a batching process or an openpit mine, but a big underground block cave mine. Quality gold and quality copper are going to come from Wafi-Golpu. I wouldn't risk saying we're getting closer, but we're certainly progressing the discussions with the Papua New Guinean government, through the Spear Review Team, as well as the State Negotiating Team and our JV partners, to take the mine up the

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THIRD DEGREE
Harmony Gold CEO Beyers Nel (right) being interviewed by *Engineering News & Mining Weekly*'s Martin Creamer

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ECONOMY

Growth Blockade

South Africa urged to ease regulatory burden for companies to boost growth, employment

SABRINA JARDIM | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR ONLINE WRITER

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reported that, while South Africa's economy showed resilience in 2025, growth remains too low to significantly reduce unemployment, which exceeds 30% overall and reaches 60% among young people.

According to its latest country focus report by IMF senior resident representative for South Africa **Tidiane Kinda** and local IMF economist **Nasha Mavee**, fast-tracking ongoing reforms in electricity and logistics under Operation Vulindlela is critical to remove immediate impediments to growth.

To fully unlock South Africa's growth potential, stimulate private investment and boost employment, it notes that additional broad-based reforms are essential to further improve the business environment.

"Indeed, operating a business in South Africa – especially dealing with product-market regulations such as required licensing and permitting – is significantly more burdensome, fragmented and costly than in peer economies.

"These constraints deter investment and stifle innovation. And they are especially challenging for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which have limited resources to cope with red tape while accounting for the lion's share of job creation," the report authors say.

The IMF says its analysis, which is based on South African firm-level data, as well as cross-country data, points to the same conclusion.

It argues that, not only are South African business leaders spending significant time dealing with government regulations, but this extra burden has been increasing over time and is among the highest relative to comparable economies.

"How costly is this burden for firms? We find that firms whose managers devote more time to regulatory compliance experience slower sales growth, weaker employment growth and lower productivity."

For South African firms, it notes that these costs are particularly large – a one percentage point increase in management time spent dealing with regulations is associated with a 1% reduction in job growth.

Moreover, for small South African firms with fewer than 20 employees, these regulatory burdens have nearly twice the impact on productivity compared with the average firm.

These findings indicate that regulatory frictions directly undermine employment creation and especially the ability of SMEs to scale up, innovate and create jobs.

The IMF posits that there is a lot that policymakers can do to alleviate these constraints on the growth of firms and employment.

It notes that the proposed Business Licensing Bill of 2025 offers an opportunity to modernise the current business licensing system, which is decentralised and leads to inconsistent enforcement, duplicative procedures and misaligned fees across jurisdictions.

The IMF argues that establishing a simplified and coherent national licensing and permitting policy could anchor reform efforts around several key principles.

This includes, firstly, a streamlined digital platform that includes clearly delineating responsibilities across levels of government and adopting a single window, or centralised digital platform, for licence applications and tracking, which would reduce duplication, increase transparency and shorten processing times.

• From page 9

value curve. The very next step is getting the mining permit, remembering that a mining permit in Papua New Guinea has got a 40-year tenure. So, yes, it's been taking long. It's been taking maybe longer than anticipated, but with such a long tenure it's important to get it right, and the quality of the asset is so good that it's worth the wait and worth getting the permit conditions 100% right for maximum value for all stakeholders.

Regarding South Africa's cyanide shortage, tell us about the solution you've come up with in briquette form.

Sodium cyanide is the main reagent we use to extract the gold out of the gold-bearing ore. It's a chemical that we use, and we get it in liquid form. We're not manufacturing or developing the cyanide briquettes ourselves. There are other players in the industry that followed the same strategies. This is just flexibility and a supply chain alternative, which is a fixed form called a cyanide briquette that one can import from overseas. But then you have to have infrastructure to be able to dissolve that briquette into liquid, which we use in our processing plant, so, we're just ramping up capacity in Harmony to have more dissolution facilities, more capacity, so that we can procure our liquid cyanide and briquette cyanide, for when there are supply chain disruptions.

During the presentation, when you spoke about the heat of your underground CSA copper mine in Australia, I got the impression that the mine's pretty hot. Is it hotter than we're used to in South Africa and what ventilation plans have you got in place?

It's certainly not hotter than we're used to. We mine the deepest mines in the world in South Africa. Deep mines are hot mines, just on the basis of the virgin rock temperatures that we expose when we excavate at those depths. So, no, it's nothing new to Harmony. It's something that we know. It's something that we grew up with. Deep underground mining is something we've been doing for 75 years. But the ventilation circuit at CSA is constrained. In other words, we don't have an optimal ventilation layout and optimum quantities of ventilation going through the mine, which makes the mine's temperature slightly elevated compared to what it should be. So, our work is to de-bottleneck that, implement the right technical solution to make sure that we can improve the amount of ventilation flow through the mine to bring those temperatures down. That's an area where we think the Harmony skillset, of mining the deepest, hottest underground mines in South Africa, is ideally suited to be exported to this mine in Australia, and to bring value to our shareholders and also our employees and our stakeholders in that area.

Lower Production

During the earlier media roundtable, Nel said in response to *Engineering News & Mining Weekly*'s question on whether Harmony's 9%-lower half-year gold production of 724 000 oz was one-off or structural, that the lower production was the result of an earthquake in Papua New Guinea, which affected Hidden Valley, while South Africa's cyanide force majeure, lower grades and lower metallurgical plant recovery than expected contributed too.

To watch a video in which Harmony Gold CEO Beyers Nel is interviewed by *Engineering News & Mining Weekly*'s Martin Creamer, scan the barcode or visit www.miningweekly.com.

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AIR POLLUTION

Overdue Filing

Eskom says delayed Medupi FGD report to be submitted to Minister in early April

TERENCE CREAMER | CREAMER MEDIA EDITOR

Eskom expects to submit its final benefit-cost analysis (BCA) report on flue gas desulphurisation (FGD) at the Medupi power station, in Limpopo, to Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment Minister **Willie Aucamp** in early April, having released a draft report on the air-pollution reduction technology and six alternatives for public comment on February 24.

The State-owned company acknowledged during a virtual consultation on the draft report this month that the submission had failed to meet the initial six-month deadline set in a directive issued by then Minister Dr **Deon George** on March 31, 2025.

That directive followed Eskom's 2024 application for exemption from the sulphur dioxide (SO_2) minimum emission standards (MES) for Medupi, in which it also questioned the appropriateness of the FGD installation.

This despite it being a condition of a $3.7-billion loan to Eskom approved by the World Bank in 2010.

The exemption was granted until 2030, but the directive stipulated that the BCA for FGD at Medupi be expanded to include an assessment of alternatives to installing FGD, while comparing the cost of complying with SO_2 standards with the human health costs of not complying.

The draft report, thus, includes not only BCA conclusions for the installation of wet, semi-dry and dry FGD technologies, but also six alternative emission-reduction scenarios.

Only the wet FGD solution actually meets South Africa's MES, as set under the country's National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), which the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment is responsible for enforcing.

However, wet FGD is also listed as having the highest upfront capital cost of R56-billion, compared with R48-billion for semi-dry FGD and R15-billion for dry FGD.

The total 45-year project lifetime cost for wet FGD, meanwhile, was outlined as being a nominal R383-billion, the recovery of which would potentially add 4c/kWh to the electricity tariff.

Across all three FGD technologies, the BCA ratios are well below one, suggesting that the monetised value of health benefits is lower than the required capital and operating expenditure for FGD.

Eskom's proposed alternatives are based partly on these costs and the poor BCA ratio, as well as its assessment of the measured ambient air quality across the Waterberg Bonjanala Priority Area between 2022 and 2024, which indicates "general compliance with NAAQS indicating that the airshed is not saturated".

The health benefits of these alternatives were thus focused more on the Highveld rather than in the Waterberg.

The capital costs for the six alternative scenarios in the draft range from R5-billion to R11-billion, and include:

- an air quality offset programme involving the expansion of a clean cooking initiative to 96 000 households in close proximity to coal stations that currently use dirty fuels;
- the retrofit of Arnot, Camden, Grootvlei, Hendrina and Kriel power stations with small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs);
- the building of solar, wind, battery and pumped hydro across six sites;
- the installation of so-called high-efficiency, low-emission (HELE) circulating fluidised bed combustion technology at Hendrina, Grootvlei and Duvha;
- the introduction of coal beneficiation and efficiency improvements at all Eskom's coal stations to reduce emissions; and
- the installation of post-combustion carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) technologies.

The draft report indicates the clean cooking offset programme as having the highest BCA ratio for both particulate emissions and SO_2 reductions, but questions have been raised about the long-term sustainability of such offsets.

Positive health benefits were also indicated for the renewables and SMR alternatives, but these were not fully quantified in the form of a BCA ratio, as the study did not consider the power generation benefits.

Negative ratios were provided for the HELE, coal beneficiation and CCUS alternatives, while the draft report also highlights that several of the technologies that have been considered are pre-commercial in nature.

Various alternative interventions, including substitute technology solutions, were raised during the virtual public consultation process.

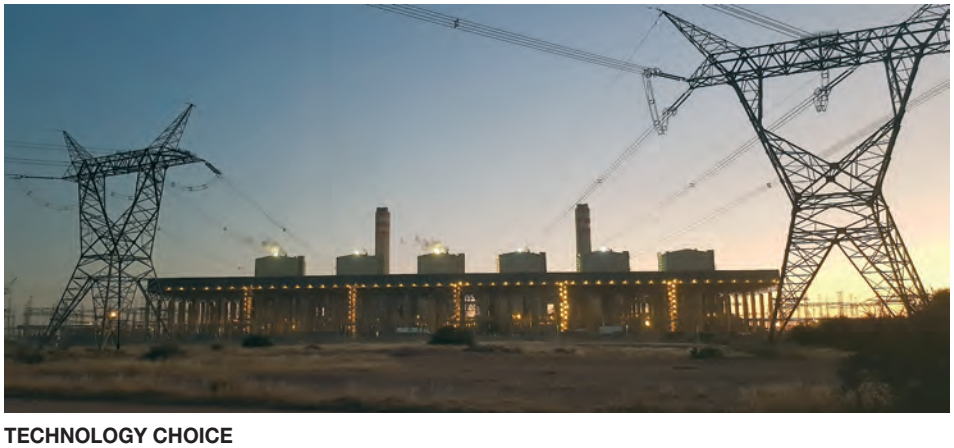
Renew-e managing partner **Etienne Rubbers** argued, for instance, that Eskom must be prepared to invest the capital that it would otherwise need to spend on Medupi's FGD or proceed with the FGD as planned.

"The purpose of the Medupi BCA was not to potentially give Eskom a free pass and not do anything . . . the question is whether there are not better places to spend a portion of the capital to give a better health impact," he said.

Rubbers proposed various alternatives not yet considered, including using the capital to accelerate the strengthening of South Africa's transmission grid to facilitate a higher penetration of renewable energy and enable a reduction in the coal burn, or the earlier retirement of Eskom's more polluting power stations.

Several concerns were also expressed during the session over the fact that none of the alternatives met South Africa's MES requirements, while the current exemptions were having serious health impacts.

Eskom promised to consider these inputs as well as those that would be received in written form ahead of the March 25 closing date for public comment.



TECHNOLOGY CHOICE
A draft benefit-cost analysis by Eskom compares wet, semi-dry and dry flue-gas desulphurisation technologies for Medupi with six alternative measures aimed at reducing emissions



Financial moves that get smarter when advice meets context

The costliest money mistakes are rarely dramatic. They are quiet decisions made on a busy Tuesday, fuelled by a friend's certainty or a confident post online. "Invest aggressively." "Insurance is a waste." "You'll sort retirement out later." It sounds clean, until your life refuses to behave like theirs.

That is the problem with most financial advice: it travels badly. Context is not a footnote, it is the whole story. Advice meets your context, or it does not work. In its second burst, financial services provider Momentum's Advice for Success brings the idea down to the choices people actually make, across retirement, protection and day-to-day cover, where small decisions compound into big outcomes.

We reach for "universal" rules because they reduce anxiety. Markets move. Costs rise. Life surprises. A mantra offers relief. But relief is not the same as a plan. A plan is built on your income, your obligations, your health, your timeline and the risks you can absorb.

Here are four areas where context changes the answer.

Retirement Income: Certainty for the Bills, Flexibility for the Rest

Retirement is not only a savings problem. It is an income problem. What matters is not just what you accumulate, but how reliably it can pay you for decades, through good markets and bad.

A contextual retirement conversation often comes down to a trade-off: certainty versus flexibility. One way to balance that is to blend Momentum's Retirement Income Option (a living annuity approach, where a portion remains invested) with a Guaranteed Annuity Portfolio that can secure some income for life. For many retirees, that "guaranteed" portion becomes the anchor that pays for everyday expenses, while the invested portion is tied to market performance and is most often used for those lifestyle expenses like travel.

Car and Home Cover: "Covered" Is Not Always Protected

Short-term insurance is easy to ignore until the day it is needed. Then underinsurance, unsuitable excess choices and misunderstood cover can become expensive.

Advice matters because it forces practical questions: what assets would derail your finances if you lost them, what can you afford to replace, and what trade-offs fit your budget? Momentum Insure's Safety Returns is built on a simple premise: reward safer everyday behaviour, not only claim-free years, with the potential to earn cash back on premiums over time. Life is not claim-free, but cover should still make sense in your world.

Life Insurance: Pricing is Personal, Not Average

Life insurance is often sold as a simple number: select a cover amount, get a premium, and you are done. However, this traditional "one-size-fits-all" approach ignores the reality that your health profile, lifestyle habits, and unique responsibilities shape both the protection you need and the premium you should pay.

That is the logic behind LifeReturns, which links pricing to individual health risk factors and rewards lower risk with potential premium reductions. The takeaway is not that everyone will pay less. Rather, it is that life insurance should be a precise tool for financial wellness. It should protect you and your dependents at a price point that is appropriate for your specific risk and sustainable for your budget, all built around the actual context of your life.

Critical Illness: When Health Becomes Financial

A serious diagnosis can trigger a second crisis behind the first: time off work, extra care, travel, home adjustments, and costs not fully covered elsewhere. Even families with strong medical aid can find the financial pressure arrives quickly.

Momentum's Critical Illness cover is designed to provide a lump sum if you are diagnosed with a covered condition, buying financial breathing room when choices matter most. The contextual question is not whether illness is "likely". It is what a diagnosis would do to your income, your obligations and your family's stability.

The Better Question

Instead of asking, "What is the best product?", ask, "What does my context require?" A good adviser translates that context into a plan and then into the right mix of solutions, reviewed as life changes.

Advice is never one-size-fits-all. It is personal. Speak to a Momentum accredited financial adviser and make your journey to success work for you, not the other way around.

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WATER

Weeds in Check

Rand Water turns the tide on invasive plants in Vaal River Barrage Reservoir

NATASHA ODENDAAL | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

Bulk water supplier Rand Water's adaptive integrated management strategy is proving successful as it drives down the proliferation of aquatic invasive alien plants (IAPs), such as Pistia stratiotes, or water lettuce, and Pontederia crassipes, more commonly known as water hyacinth, in the Vaal River.

The strategy has led to a significant 190.44% decrease in coverage of the Vaal River Barrage Reservoir (VRBR) from peak infestation of 414 ha, or 31.84% coverage, in 2024, to just 0.46 ha, or 0.03% coverage, as at March 11.

"While conventional control methods are often unsustainable, costly and environmentally harmful, new technologies that include the implementation of an adaptive integrated management strategy have yielded positive results, particularly in the VRBR," the utility says.

The approach, which Rand Water adopted after being contracted by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), combines the use of curtains and chicanes, which are structures used for entrapping IAPs in isolation to avoid movement between sites on the watercourse, along with the physical removal of the plants through machinery like excavators, specialised watercraft and, where needed, manual labour, and the targeted use of approved herbicides such as Kilo Max and Seismic.

This is augmented by the release of biological control agents, including Neohydronomous affinis, Neochetina spp and Megamellus scutellaris.

As part of the adaptive strategy, areas of the VRBR have been identified and targeted for specific interventions, with the total area under management of the contract covering 1 300 ha of water surface of the VRBR.

The implementation of the strategy requires weekly monitoring of the entire system, early detection of new growth and robust quick action to address potential problem areas.

Since the start of the growing season from October 2025 to January 2026, Rand Water has removed 3 855 m^3 of IAPs, introduced about 940 000 various species of biocontrol agents and administered herbicide on about 35 ha all through funding provided by the DWS over a three-year period.

The strategy has to be adaptive in nature to allow for flexibility in implementing control mechanisms – growth of IAPs can be sporadic and irregular over different growing seasons even in the same area – requiring adaptability in the management of the macrophytes.

Rand Water points out that it has been able to maintain less than 10 ha coverage, decreasing coverage from 18.95 ha in the growing season during February last year to 1.94 ha as at February 9 this year. It further highlights other vital aspects that led to its success, including robust public-private partnerships for the establishment of three dedicated local biological rearing stations by community members at their own cost, along with ongoing monitoring programmes in collaboration with government institutions such as the DWS and the departments of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment and Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.

The partnerships enable the implementation of coordinated control, rehabilitation and maintenance interventions, while continuous monitoring programmes provide critical data to track infestation trends, assess the effectiveness of management actions and inform adaptive decision-making.

They are also supported by regular and ongoing community and stakeholder planning and feedback meetings, where project progress, feedback and plans are shared.

However, pollution of the VRBR still presents a significant challenge that is exacerbating the rampant growth of these plants.

"Added to this, seeds are viable for as long as 20 years, which implies that control and management of IAPs must be seen as a long-term project to prevent any future IAP blooms as seen in 2024," Rand Water comments.



MAXIMISING OPTIONS
New technologies that include an adaptive integrated management strategy have yielded positive results



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CRITICAL MINERALS

Emissions Myth

Mining of critical minerals not as big an emissions contributor as many assume – ICMM

MARLENY ARNOLDI | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR ONLINE

Responsible mining organisation ICMM confirms in a new research report that mining for minerals important for the green transition and sustainable development is not a major source of greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions.

Non-coal mining represented just 0.54% of global GHG emissions in 2024.

By comparison, fugitive emissions from coal, which must be phased out to meet global climate goals, accounted for 2.46% of global GHG emissions.

In total, Scope 1 and 2 emissions from mining, which accounted for 3% of global GHG emissions, and metal processing, which accounted for 8% of global GHG emissions, position the mining sector as the sixth-largest source of global GHG emissions.

The sector contributed less GHG emissions than the power generation, transport and agriculture sectors, and about as much as all other industrial processing activities.

Steel and aluminium production, along with coal mining, were the largest sources of GHG emissions in 2024, accounting for 93% of Scope 1 and 2 emissions.

This while demand for steel and aluminium is poised to increase in the coming years. These commodities are equally important for infrastructure that underpins the green transition.

ICMM finds that 80% of the mining sector's global Scope 1 and 2 emissions originate in Asia owing to its concentration of primary mines and processing facilities for most global commodities.

ICMM contracted consultancy Wood Mackenzie to analyse facility-level data from 1 700 facilities across 14 commodities for the 'Global Mining & Metals Greenhouse-Gas Emissions Dataset', which together represent 87% of global production. ICMM modelled emissions using regional commodity-level averages for the remaining 13% of production volumes.

The dataset was designed for high-level sector and regional insights only and is not suitable for benchmarking companies or assets, or for assessing corporate progress against targets.

Rather, ICMM says the dataset offers an industrywide picture, explores regional and commodity-specific emissions profiles and allows comparisons of mining and metals GHG emissions with emissions from other major industries.

The findings offer important context at a time when demand for minerals and metals is rising rapidly to support the global energy transition and the infrastructure and urbanisation needs of a growing population.

As the world progresses towards the goal of tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030, demand for minerals and metals is projected to grow significantly, reflecting the sector's essential role in building clean technologies.

Simultaneously, producing these materials is energy-intensive, which means the mining and metals industry is both a contributor to GHG emissions and a key enabler of the energy transition.



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WATER

Opening the Taps

Strengthening South Africa's water sector starts with stabilising its infrastructure

NATASHA ODENDAAL | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR



EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS
Rand Water has kept its own water losses comparatively low by applying strict asset management practices

As South Africa's water sector continues to deteriorate, strengthening asset management, infrastructure maintenance and institutional reform will be critical, while tackling high levels of nonrevenue water faced by many municipalities will go a long way towards ensuring the country's water security.

Maintenance of municipal water and sanitation infrastructure has been neglected across many municipalities for decades, leaving a "huge" backlog of repairs and refurbishment.

"The situation has been exacerbated by a lack of capacity, organised crime, widespread theft of water infrastructure, corruption, poor billing and revenue management, illegal connections and water leaks," President **Cyril Ramaphosa** said in response to a question in Parliament earlier this month.

Thus, resolving South Africa's water crisis requires a multifaceted approach focused on strengthening the capacity of water service authorities to manage resources, reduce demand and maintain critical systems effectively.

Currently, more than 70% of South Africa's 144 water service providers and municipalities are struggling to provide basic water services, while deteriorating infrastructure – and the excessive water losses it causes – is exacerbating the situation.

Simply plugging leaks could add a million litres of water a day back into the system, says Rand Water operations GM **Simon Xaba**.

Highlighting the current strain on the Integrated Vaal River System, from which Rand Water abstracts raw water to supply municipalities across Gauteng and parts of the North West, Mpumalanga and the Free State, he noted that the utility currently abstracts 17% above its licensed allocation to meet rising demand – including physical losses within municipal networks.

Xaba, who spoke during a high-level discussion hosted by *Creamer Media Webinars* on March 11, said average nonrevenue water levels across municipalities in Gauteng were about 40%, with real or physical losses – primarily from leaks – accounting for roughly 25%.

If municipalities could reduce those physical losses by just 10%, the water saved would amount to roughly 400-megalitres a day, easing supply pressures across the province.

University of the Witwatersrand's Wits: H2O director and founder Professor **Craig Sheridan** pointed out that the City of Johannesburg, for example, had nonrevenue water of about 36%, representing lost revenue that is roughly the same, over ten years, as the capital required to repair the infrastructure.

Rand Water has kept its own water losses comparatively low by applying strict asset management practices. The utility reports nonrevenue water of about 6%, against its 5% target, while its real losses have been reduced to 2%.

Xaba said the organisation's approach is rooted in lifecycle asset management principles.

"It is not a nice-to-have. It is a principle that we adopt, which governs the asset management from cradle to grave," he said, noting that, through continuous condition assessments and preventative maintenance, Rand Water monitors infrastructure performance and addresses problems before they escalate into major failures.

The utility also conducts planned maintenance programmes to ensure its infrastructure can continue to meet demand over the long term.

Committed to assisting municipalities with their water challenges, Rand Water has revived its technical support arm, Rand Water Services, which will work with municipalities through special-purpose vehicles focused on infrastructure planning and management.

Xaba further pointed to the Rand Water Institute, with which municipalities can collaborate for the best technologies and innovations.

Such initiatives could significantly assist municipalities in improving infrastructure planning and management, while reducing water losses.

"Maintenance is not an event. It is an ongoing process," said Pragma chief revenue officer **Bani Kgosana**, noting that there should never be a point at which maintenance is neglected.

Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) director-general Dr **Sean Phillips** agreed, pointing out that, while infrastructure ages all over the world, services do not deteriorate all over the world.

"The underlying problem is a lack of lifecycle asset management in municipalities and proper funding of lifecycle asset management plans."

Phillips added that various technologies are available to detect leaks in the system in real time and enable proactive maintenance.

However, some municipalities lack even the basic capacity to repair leaks once they are identified.

"There is a risk that municipalities might waste money on sophisticated leak detection technologies; however, getting that data on where all the leaks are does not really help if you have not got the ability to go out to fix the leaks in the first place."

Maintenance and operation of municipal infrastructure should be funded through revenue from the sale of water, yet many municipalities are not allocating – or ring-fencing – the required budgets back into the water function.

"It is supposed to be run as a financially self-sustaining function."

Municipalities globally spend far less on infrastructure upkeep than is required and need about 17 times more funding for maintenance than they currently allocate, said Kgosana, highlighting insufficient funding as one of the biggest obstacles to maintaining water infrastructure.

However, he pointed out that effective asset management is also essential for attracting investment.

Phillips noted that many projects, including water reuse, nonrevenue water reduction and sea water desalination, have associated revenue streams, meaning partnerships with the private sector could help bring such projects to life.

> More than 70% of South Africa's 144 water service providers and municipalities are struggling to provide basic water services

Strengthening Legislation

The DWS is working to strengthen the policy and legislative environment to help guide the water sector back to efficiency and further support municipalities.

This includes amending the Water Services Bill to clarify the functions of water services authorities and water service providers, introducing an operating licence for water service providers, and guiding the sector towards a utilities model that would ringfence water revenue.



PLUGGING THE LEAK
Simply plugging leaks could add million litres of water a day back into the system



SEAN PHILLIPS
The department is working to strengthen the policy and legislative environment to help guide the water sector back to efficiency

Phillips noted that, despite municipal water distribution being one of the biggest challenges in South Africa's water sector, national government cannot legally intervene in the functions of municipalities.

Amending the Water Services Bill will enable stronger intervention where a water service provider fails to comply with its licence conditions.

Performance against targets could also be incorporated into national infrastructure grants to municipalities. The National Treasury already does this with the Metropolitan Trading Services Reform programme. The amended legislation could open the water sector to increased public-private partnerships (PPPs).

However, while PPPs may appear increasingly attractive as a solution to municipal capacity constraints, caution will be required and full transparency will be essential.

WaterCAN executive manager Dr **Ferrial Adam** warned that commoditising water and privatisation are not the solution in a country with high levels of inequality.

The private sector has a significant and critical role to play, provided the correct safeguards, including protections against corruption and procurement abuse, are in place to ensure improved services alongside the right of access to clean, safe drinking water and sanitation, she said.

"Any partnerships must be very carefully designed."

She added that more creative approaches were needed to address South Africa's water and sanitation challenges.

In seeking solutions to problems that have developed over 30 years, she warned that the same type of thinking and institutional structures that led to the deterioration cannot be used to reverse the damage.

There is no quick fix, she concluded.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Steel Strain

Struggling steel sector, construction challenges delay N2 bridge projects – Sanral

IRMA VENTER | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR

Construction work on the multibillion-rand Mtentu and Msikaba bridge projects in the Eastern Cape is facing renewed delays, says the South African National Roads Agency Limited (Sanral).

The mega-bridges form part of Sanral's N2 Wild Coast road project, which entails the construction of a 410 km stretch of road from East London to the Mtamvuna river on the border of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

Spokesperson for the State-owned road builder **Lwando Mahlasela** says construction work at the Mtentu site has fallen behind schedule owing to "unforeseen circumstances encountered during the construction of the snaking access roads to all bridge piers on both the northern and southern sides".

These challenges revolve around geotechnical, drainage and slope-stability issues.

The contractor has submitted a formal motivation for the delay, which is under review in accordance with the provisions of the contract, says Mahlasela.

It is not yet clear what the revised date will be for completion of the project.

The Mtentu contract was awarded to the China Communications Construction Company and Mota-Engil Construction South Africa (Mecsa) joint venture on November 1, 2022.



CONSTRUCTION APEX
Once completed, the Mtentu bridge, seen in an artist's rendering here, will be the highest in Africa

Construction of the bridge was anticipated to take 50 months at the time, with an expected conclusion date of end-2027.

This is the second attempt to build the structure, after the Aveng Strabag joint venture walked out on the project in early 2019, following months of violent community protests.

Once completed, the Mtentu bridge will be the highest in Africa and one of the longest main-span balanced cantilever bridges in the world, with a main span of 260 m at a maximum height of about 223 m.

The Msikaba bridge is being built by a partnership between South Africa's Concor and Mecsa.

Announced in 2019, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was originally scheduled for completion by the end of 2022.

The bridge is a 580-m-long cable-stayed road bridge spanning the Msikaba river.

Once completed, the pylon spires of the bridge are set to tower almost 130 m high on each side of the nearly 200-m-deep river gorge.

Mahlasela says construction work is continuing on this project.

"This single-span, cable-stayed bridge, spanning over half a kilometre, is a complex, yet entirely achievable engineering undertaking.

"The contract remains intact and binding, with sufficient budget allocated to continue the works.

"The primary challenges relate to cash flow and production constraints, resulting in slower progress."

Mahlasela tells *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* that the latter is linked largely to the fabrication of deck segments in Mpumalanga's steel sector.

"The project is currently experiencing the impact of the partial collapse of South Africa's steel fabrication sector."

"A motivation for the delay was submitted and subsequently granted," says Mahlasela.

"The specific details of the extension remain a matter between the employer and the contractor for now. Suffice to note that the contract remains intact and binding."

No revised completion date has been made public.

As for the rest of the N2 project, road construction between Lingeni and Msikaba is currently in month five of a 45-month construction programme and is progressing well, says Mahlasela.

The road construction project between the Msikaba and Mtentu bridges has inched over the halfway mark, and is two weeks behind schedule, he adds.

"A recovery plan is in place to regain lost time."

The N2 Wild Coast project – a mix between the construction of new stretches of highway and the upgrading of existing stretches – was, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, slated for completion in 2024.



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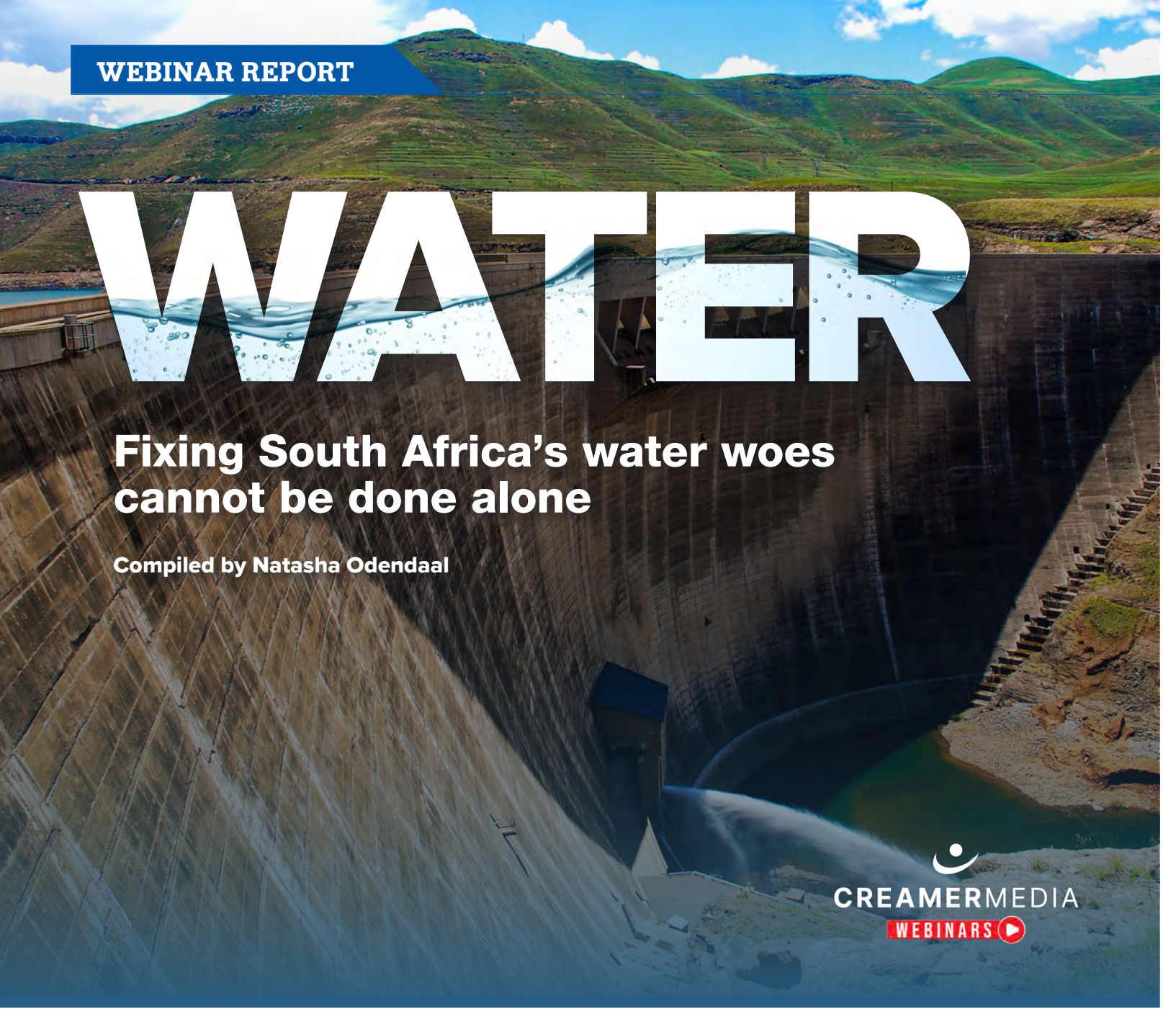


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Fixing South Africa's water woes cannot be done alone

Compiled by Natasha Odendaal

Reversing the extensive deterioration seen in South Africa's water sector and strengthening its water infrastructure and services requires a collaborative effort steered by a wide-ranging series of initiatives across the board, attendees heard during a high-level webinar discussion hosted by *Creamer Media* on March 11.

The webinar was titled 'Strengthening water supply infrastructure and services' and facilitated by Professor **Craig Sheridan**, the director and founder of the University of the Witwatersrand's Wits:H^2O, formerly the Centre in Water Research and Development. The panel comprised key stakeholders: Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) director-general Dr **Sean Phillips**, WaterCAN executive manager Dr **Ferrial Adam**, Pragma chief revenue officer **Bani Kgosana** and Rand Water operations GM **Simon Xaba**.

Phillips said with municipal water distribution being one of the biggest challenges in South Africa's water sector, many are questioning why national government does not just intervene in municipalities.

"In reality, South Africa's Constitution does not allow national government to [interfere with municipal operations]," he said, explaining that despite expectations for national government to step in, it does not have the legal power to provide orders to municipalities.

Many of the municipalities are financially constrained, particularly in terms of capital to invest; however, many projects, such as water reuse, nonrevenue water reduction and sea water desalination have revenue streams associated with them.

Kgosana pointed out that municipalities need about 17 times the amount of funding that they currently spend on infrastructure and maintenance.

One key challenge is that the revenue from the sale of water is not ring-fenced by municipalities for the water function and municipal budgets are not enough to cover what is required – a challenge that the DWS aims to mitigate through amendments to the Water Services Act.

In line with this, public-private partnerships look increasingly attractive as a solution to municipal capacity constraints; however, caution needs to prevail and full transparency will be required.

"We need to think about how we change our systems. Just including business will not actually find solutions," said Adam, pointing to the need to be creative in finding solutions for the water and sanitation challenges in South Africa.

With more than 70% of water service providers or municipalities not coping with the provision of basic water and sanitation services, there is no quick fix and commoditising water and privatisation is not the solution in a country with high inequality.

The private sector has a significant and critical role to play, as long as the correct safeguards, including against corruption and procurement abuse, are in place to ensure an improved service alongside the right to access clean, safe drinking water and sanitation, stressed Adam.

Discussing the aging infrastructure and the need for effective asset management, Xaba commented that a 10% reduction in the physical water losses will add about 400 Mℓ/d of water into Gauteng's water supply system alone.

Sheridan indicated that such plugging of leaks will lead to savings that provide enough funds for the City of Johannesburg's ten-year budget, for example.

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Speaker Highlights



"Johannesburg has about 36% water losses which are nonrevenue . . . and that loss of revenue is roughly the same, over ten years, as the capital requirement of R29-billion that Johannesburg is looking for as per their last budget."

Professor Craig Sheridan – Wits University



"Ideally a municipality should have enough data about its water distribution system to know where the leaks are . . . so they can be strategic in their leak repairs. However, there is a risk where the municipalities do not even have the capacity to repair the leaks. Municipalities might waste money on sophisticated leak detection technologies when getting that data on where all the leaks are but it does not really help if you do not have the ability to go out to fix the leaks in the first place."

Dr Sean Phillips – DWS



"There are concerns on privatisation at the moment, and some people feel like, well, it is a *fait accompli* that government's messed up, so hand it over to private sector. But that does not mean that it is going to be fixed."

Dr Ferrial Adam – WaterCAN



"Just thinking about current events, by the time you feel you have war rooms going, there is a crisis. So just the fact that people are openly speaking about having war rooms indicates that there is a crisis in the water reticulation sector."

"Asset management is not an event. It is a continuous, endless process which puts you in a position where you should not ever be either firefighting or going into war rooms."

Bani Kgosana – Pragma



"Out of the nonrevenue water, which averages about 40% across all our customers, we have a component which is defined as real or physical losses and, for the three major metropolitans, it averages around 25%."

"By implementing effective principles of asset management, you can know the condition of your assets at any given time, and you are able then to respond."

Simon Xaba – Rand Water

Scan the QR code to register for the Tailings webinar on April 8

ENVIRONMENT

Assessment Reset

DFFE launches national consultation on environmental-impact assessment reforms

TASNEEM BULBULIA | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR DEPUTY EDITOR ONLINE

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), in collaboration with the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources, provincial environmental affairs departments and other relevant sector stakeholders, will launch a national stakeholder consultation on proposed reforms to South Africa's Environmental-Impact Assessment (EIA) system.

The multi-sector stakeholder consultation process started on March 11 and will run until April 24, with sessions to be held in each province.

The proposed reforms aim to strengthen the ongoing sector-led initiative to improve the efficacy of the EIA process, allowing flexibility to apply other instruments, and modernise and strengthen the country's environmental governance framework.

EIAs are highlighted as a cornerstone of South Africa's environmental management system.

They give effect to Section 24 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to an environment that is not harmful to health or wellbeing, while promoting sustainable development.

However, the current EIA process has tended to operate independently of complementary environmental instruments, constraining their ability to demonstrate integrated sustainability outcomes, the DFFE points out.

Listed activities automatically determine the type of assessment required, with limited flexibility to respond to the specific environmental risk or sensitivity of a proposed development, it adds.

The environmental sector is now proposing a more flexible, risk-based screening approach.

This screening will assess the nature, scale, and environmental context of a proposed development and determine the appropriate level of assessment required.

This means that projects with significant environmental risk, particularly in sensitive environments, will continue to undergo full EIAs, including specialist studies and public participation; projects with low or insignificant environmental impacts may follow a shorter assessment route or exit the process earlier, where appropriate; and environmental authorities will apply defined criteria and risk-based tools to ensure decisions remain evidence-based, transparent and accountable.

Environmental authorisation requirements, public participation provisions and appeal rights will remain in place.

The proposed reform encourages the broader adoption of environmental management instruments such as norms, standards and environmental management frameworks, where these instruments are better suited to managing specific environmental risks, the department explains.

It says that this supports a more integrated and strategic environmental management system and is aligned with strengthening sustainability outcomes while improving regulatory efficiency.

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BY BEVAN JONES

King coal is dead, long live king coal

In our weekly Energies Briefing to our clients on February 20, 2026, we noted that, "… it would seem that war is imminent, with [US President **Donald**] **Trump** threatening 'really bad things' by the first week of March. Oil markets are already primed for war but are also pricing in some sort of stale-mate, where each side walks away with bruised egos, but essentially the status quo remains".

As the war is now deeply into its third week, we need to revise that to only one side (the US) walking away, while trying to claim some sort of victory, while Israel and Iran will fight to the bitter end. The shockwave that rippled through energy markets after February 28 saw crude up slightly, but natural gas and coal markets soaring through the roof. It was clear to everyone that Qatar Energy would declare force majeure and that happened within the first few days. The shock has also rippled through fuels, chemicals, fertilizer, copper (which needs sulphur), food, and a host of other commodities.

Then Trump uttered some calming words and crude sold off for a bit, creating the much needed 50% retracement, with crude again resurgent and likely to hit $150/bbl fairly soon. Note that the physical expiry for the April West Texas Intermediate crude contract is March 20 and I expect fireworks around that time.

The conflict has disrupted roughly 20% of global crude oil and natural gas supply, with Iranian attacks damaging Gulf facilities and the loss of insurance and appetite effectively closing the Strait of Hormuz to all shipping, other than allies such as Russia and China. The Gulf is rapidly approaching full storage capacity and must then start shuttering its wells. This would be a disaster, with many wells unlikely to ever come back to full production. What is even more pressing, is that the Gulf needs food and humanitarian supplies to come in quickly.

For coal, this geopolitical crisis has proven a stark reminder of its relative security. Unlike oil and gas, most high CV coal originates from stable, proven exporters: the US, Australia, Canada and South Africa. Coal can be stored reliably for extended periods, offering a buffer against sudden disruptions. The war has reinforced coal's role as a secure baseload option, as buyers scramble for alternatives to volatile hydrocarbons.

South African coal stands to benefit significantly. Richards Bay Coal Terminal exports, dominated by high-CV thermal grades, have rallied significantly alongside the chaos, with RB1 soaring from $99/mt pre-invasion to around $117/mt at the time of writing. But gas-to-coal switching is not just happening in Europe, where ARA terminal stocks were already low and LNG tightness already persisted.

SE Asian interest is also pouring in, as buyers pivot from recently limited Indonesian supply, although Russian coal (like with crude oil) offers a slight pressure release valve. India, a key South African market, faces complex dynamics but remains a strong driver. Despite high domestic production and moderating imports, power generation has stayed robust, and the war's gas squeeze is also accelerating thermal coal imports.

Buyers in Asia, including India, are increasingly favouring safer suppliers like South Africa and Australia over riskier origins. South African producers can meanwhile hold firm on pricing while capturing displaced market share, particularly from Russian exports curtailed by sanctions and infrastructure woes. Transnet's ongoing challenges on the coal line persist, frustrating hopes for privatisation-driven efficiencies. However, recent improvements aim to lift capacity back toward 77-million tonnes yearly.



> *"The war has reinforced coal's role as a secure baseload option, as buyers scramble for alternatives to volatile hydrocarbons"*

This infrastructure support will (finally) prove timely if the demand sustains, which we think it will now. Looking toward year-end, the downstream effects hinge on conflict duration, but a lot of the physical and psychological damage has already been done. Higher inflation and energy costs are likely for the remainder of 2026, while many politicians and buyers are softening on their climate agendas. In that regard, higher CO_2 levels are not necessarily bad. What is bad however, is the rate of release of CO_2, with Earth's climate systems unable to adapt quickly enough to a human-level timescale.

European utilities are likely to reactivate dormant coal capacity if gas inventories tighten further. Asian nations are eyeing China's pragmatic approach in its latest five-year plan, which focuses on carbon intensity reductions rather than absolute emissions cuts. This will see coal plateau into 2030 without a firm peak, and is likely to delay plant retirements, with even more potential new builds.

At the same time, global supply tightness from Indonesian quotas, Australian weather risks, and Russian financial woes already points to a persistent structural short. Add the fact that a significant amount of Tier-1 South African coal production is coming to an end in the next five to ten years, and you have all the conditions for a massive global coal shortage.

For South Africa, the upside lies in export premiums, but domestic vulnerabilities also remain. Higher oil prices weaken the Rand, inflate fuel and food costs, and pressure inflation, delaying rate cuts and annoying the stock market. Yet coal's rally can also help offset current account strain through stronger export earnings. Coal's resilience always shines in difficult times, and these are indeed going to be difficult times. As the times and the tide recedes, the market will no doubt reveal even more global vulnerabilities, but South African coal appears well-positioned to ride the wave, locking in longer-term gains if/when the crisis persists into 2027.

● By Bevan Jones, an ex-commodities broker, trader and resources consultant. He lives now as an off-grid homesteader while offering commodity-market strategies to clients at www.africansource.co.za



Alcohol Breathalysers (Pty) Ltd

Digital breathalyser supplier Alcohol Breathalysers was established in 2004 with the aim to make available reliable, affordable and accurate digital breathalysers to ensure that all businesses and individuals can gain access to alcohol testing equipment.

The company offers the widest range of breath alcohol testers available in Africa including professional, industry, law enforcement, small business and personal models. Breathalysers save money, time and lives.

Alcohol Breathalysers is an ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 13485:2016 accredited company and its laboratory is ISO 17025:2017 accredited. The company holds a SAHPRA licence and its Bluetooth models are ICASA approved.

Improve safety in your workplace and business:

- Reduce the risk of alcohol related accidents occurring in your workplace.
- Save the lives of on-site workers and drivers on the roads.

Increase the productivity of your workforce:

- Increase the productivity of your workforce by ensuring that workers are not under the influence of alcohol while on the job.

Cost savings:

- Save money spent ondealing with alcohol related accidents in your workplace.
- Save money lost through lack of productivity and repairing your damaged company assets.

Breathalyser iBlow10 Pro

Alcohol Breathalyser's newest product, the Breathalyser iBlow10 Pro, is the latest no-contact high-speed alcohol tester for testing the breath of motorists at road blocks, drivers in fleets and employees entering workplaces.

The main benefits and features of the iBlow10 Pro:

- Built-in rechargeable LiPO battery
- Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) connectivity compatible with its iSober App
- Suracell Fuel Cell Sensor for ethanol specific testing providing a 12 month calibration cycle
- Built-in magnet for attaching the breathalyser to gates, poles and vehiclebodies for no-touch testing
- Up to 12 breath tests a minute
- Rubberised outer skin supplied as standard
- Operating Temperature from -15 ºC to +55 ºC
- On-board memory storage of the last 5 000 test results, including date and time, downloadable to a Windows PC with SentechView

iBlow10 Pro provides rapid digital display of test results together with green or red bright LED indication based on a pass or fail when breath alcohol is detected based on a pre-set pass / fail limit depending on whether iBlow10 Pro is ordered for workplace or law enforcement use.

What's in the box:

- 1 X iBlow10 Pro Breathalyser with rubber skin
- 1 X operator's manual
- 1 X USB-C charging cable
- 3 x washable blow caps
- 1 x blow kit
- 1 X hand strap
- 1 X 12 month calibration certificate



Alcohol Breathalysers

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TRADE@WORK

Riaan de Lange



Section 301: the US's trade hammer

What do you know about the number 301? Well, it is said to be an 'angel number'. According to https://sacredscribesangelnumbers.blogspot.com/, it indicates that your angels are helping you gain and maintain a positive, optimistic outlook and empower you to walk your chosen path with confidence and grace.

Considering the state of the world, one needs all the help one can get to 'gain and maintain a positive and optimistic outlook' – which brings us to Section 301.

Oh, before I get to that, mathematicians might take issue with that interpretation and point out that 301 is a 'lazy caterer number', meaning it is the maximum number of pieces made by cutting a circle with 24 cuts.

So, Section 301 – have you heard of it? To be precise, this is Section 301 of the US Trade Act of 1974, which was enacted on January 3, 1975, to give the President more power over trade agreements and tariffs. Still nothing? Could it be a trump card, as it were, that is now being played?

Section 301 authorises the US President, currently **Donald J Trump**, to, according to Wikipedia, "take all appropriate action, including tariff-based and non-tariff-based retaliation, to obtain the removal of any act, policy or practice of a foreign government that violates an international trade agreement or is unjustified, unreasonable or discriminatory, and that burdens or restricts US commerce. Section 301 cases can be self-initiated by the US Trade Representative (USTR) or as a result of a petition filed by a firm or industry group.

"If the USTR initiates a Section 301 investigation, it must seek to negotiate a settlement with the foreign country in the form of compensation or elimination of the trade barrier. For cases involving trade agreements, the USTR is required to request formal dispute proceedings under the relevant trade agreement.

> The US Trade Representative has launched a Section 301 investigation into South Africa and 59 other countries to determine whether they are engaging in 'unfair trade'

"The law does not require the US government to wait for authorisation from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) before taking enforcement actions. The US President is increasingly focused on enforcing intellectual property rights (under agreements that may be outside of the WTO) in terms of the 'special' 301 amendments. Still, the US has committed itself to pursuing the resolution of disputes under WTO agreements through the WTO dispute settlement mechanism, which has its own timetable."

On March 16, www.businesstech.co.za reported in a story headlined 'United States launches investigation into South Africa' that the USTR had launched a Section 301 investigation into South Africa and 59 other countries to determine whether they are engaging in 'unfair trade'. Among the other countries on the list of 60 countries are Canada, Mexico, Taiwan (according to the WTO, the official full name of Taiwan is the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, while its official short name is Chinese Taipei), the People's Republic of China, the United Arab Emirates and the UK.

It is understood that the investigation forms part of a broader US push to "level the playing field" between its domestic production and more affordable imports, with a key focus on forced labour. However, it may also include other unfair trade practices. Most importantly, the investigation will not only consider whether countries produce goods through forced labour, but whether they allow these goods to enter their markets.

The question is whether South Africa has taken sufficient steps to prohibit the importation of goods produced using forced labour. The obvious question is: How would South Africa determine or regulate this?

So, what's next? The USTR will seek consultations with the South African government. It is understood that the USTR will hold a hearing on April 28. And what if a resolution cannot be found? Then, unsurprisingly, expect the imposition of a tariff or a fee.

In addition to investigating unfair labour practices, why does the USTR not look more closely at the trade remedies South Africa imposes on US exports of frozen *Gallus domesticus* (chicken) pieces and disodium carbonate, and in turn, the duration of the imposition of these trade remedy duties? 301, here they come.

● *This economic and trade-focused column is written by Riaan de Lange, author of Customs & Excises in One Lesson: The Shortest and Surest Way to Understand Basic Customs & Excises, published by Wolters Kluwer Law. His first column appeared on February 2, 2001. The views expressed here are his own.*

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AFRICA BEAT

Martin Zhuwakinyu



Trump versus the truth

Donald Trump was at it again this month, repeating the lie that Somali-born Minnesota Congresswoman **Ilhan Omar** married her brother to enter the US and describing her country of origin as "a fourth-world nation".

The claim that Omar's former husband is actually her sibling had been widely debunked and repeatedly denied, before Trump cited it again on March 16 in remarks referencing ongoing federal enforcement efforts.

In true Trump style, he did not provide a shred of evidence that Omar committed immigration fraud. At least, when he confronted President **Cyril Ramaphosa** about an ongoing white genocide in South Africa during the South African leader and his delegation's May 2025 White House visit he whipped out photos and played video footage supposedly "corroborating" his claims. Except that some of the photos were actually from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Moreover, one of the videos, an aerial shot of what was passed off as a burial site for genocide victims at some place in KwaZulu-Natal, was subsequently revealed by investigative journalism to exist only in Trump's fertile imagination.

What Trump peddles is what the world has come to know as fake news, a term that he himself popularised in 2016 when he lobbed it at a journalist who had dared to ask him an uncomfortable question while on the campaign trail for his first term as US President.

By the way, fake news comes in three shades. The first is disinformation, or deliberate lies. The second is misinformation – the innocent sharing of incorrect information, often owing to sloppy journalism. The third is mal-information, or the weaponisation of damaging information, which frequently happens in the world of politics when rivals divulge dirt about each other.

One thing about fake news is that it does not end up as just words on a newspaper page or radio or television soundbites, but is a force multiplier for mistrust, division and poor decision-making. When a leader of Trump's stature repeats false claims, such as the baseless allegations about Omar or a white genocide in South Africa, the effects ripple far beyond the headlines.

Claims without evidence make people distrust courts, governments and democratic processes. For example, Trump's repeated allegations about Omar's personal life, despite denials and fact-checks, may cause his supporters to doubt the legitimacy of elections, citizenship processes and refugee programmes.

> Fake news isn't just false news – it's a force multiplier for mistrust, division and poor decision-making

On a societal level, when citizens cannot agree on what is true, polarisation deepens, and dialogue may become impossible.

Fake news about foreign countries may cause diplomatic strain. This is exemplified by the 2025 Ramaphosa-Trump meeting in the Oval Office of the White House, which became tense because of repeated unverified claims that framed South Africa, a veritable democracy, as a failed State.

Such disinformation – I refuse to accept that Trump's claims were innocent misinformation – can sow distrust between nations, leading to harder diplomatic negotiations and misinformed foreign policy. This can only harm international trade, security cooperation and global stability.

For individuals, baseless claims such as those levelled at Omar may stoke harassment, threats and social stigma. What's more, entire communities, such as Somali-Americans or black South African immigrants in the US, may be painted as illegitimate, which contributes to hate crimes, discrimination and social exclusion.

Why does fake news find traction and endure?

The reason, according to our media studies egghead friends, is quite simple. In the main, people don't have to check if it's true – if it fits what they already believe or makes them feel something, it sticks.

This is why Trump's silly lies about Congresswoman Omar or South African farmers keep popping up. Once a story like that gets into people's heads, it's hard to get it out, and it makes it easier for new false stories to take hold.

It is in this same ecosystem of simple, memorable falsehoods that Trump's characterisation of Somalia as a "fourth-world nation" takes root. The phrase is short, striking and easy to repeat, but it ignores the rich, diverse cultures and resilience of the Somali people.

By reducing a complex country into a single negative label, it sticks in the mind more easily than nuanced facts or context ever could.

Like other fake news, it is not meant to inform but to provoke and simplify. And it works.

● *Dr Zhuwakinyu, who holds a PhD in communication (media studies) from the University of South Africa, is Creamer Media senior deputy editor – martinz@engineeringnews.co.za*

AFRICA IN FOCUS

Tara O'Connor



Iran war ripples hit Africa

The chaos that **Donald Trump**'s administration has imposed on the global economy escalated sharply on February 28 as the US and Israel launched the Third Gulf War with a "war of choice" attack on Iran.

The US-Israeli action interrupted US-Iranian nuclear talks and prompted from Iran a well thought-through counterattack – first on the US' key Gulf State allies and then blocking the critical shipping Strait of Hormuz, sending oil prices rocketing to between $90/bl and $100/bl and disrupting supplies ranging from fertiliser for South Africa's wine farmers to helium for cooling the US's huge data centres.

Just as sub-Saharan Africa was emerging from earlier shocks – Covid-19 and Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine – the US's equally illegal attack threatens to curtail the return to robust pre-Covid-like growth. Inflation is spiralling in oil-importing and oil-producing countries alike.

While South Africa has turned a corner economically, its Treasury's most optimistic forecast of 2% growth now looks unlikely with oil as its biggest import item. Morocco, Kenya, Ethiopia and Senegal will be similarly afflicted. Oil producers Algeria, Angola and Nigeria will be winners as oil and gas prices spike. Angola and Nigeria's reforms will see their treasuries benefit but those same reforms mean fewer fuel subsidies and inflation for consumers.

Moreover, Iran's retaliation on the Gulf States risks shrinking these States' massive contribution to Africa's development financing – from replenishing African Development Bank funds with tens of billions of dollars to investing directly in ports, rail and, most recently, mining ventures. They may pull back funds for domestic reconstruction and increased defence spending.

Dragging the Gulf States into the war has also dented the image they have projected to business elites of being stable, low-tax business enclaves in a volatile neighbourhood. It adds to the risk and uncertainty for African and global companies that have become used to managing Africa operations from offshore bases in Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi. That confidence is likely to have shattered for the next decade.

US unilateralism, military and foreign policy chaos continues its wanton undermining of the international community's ability to use strategically imposed and incrementally hurtful sanctions against rogue regimes, rogue individuals and rogue economies. Incremental sanctions were highly effective against apartheid, ultimately costing South Africa its air superiority in its war against Angola.

Although sanctions have failed to make Zimbabwe more democratic, lifting targeted sanctions is the main issue of the ruling party in any rapprochement with donor countries. Iran also insisted on sanctions relief in recent negotiations.

Trump's failure to define US war aims or plan for bad outcomes risks locking the US into a Middle East quagmire with no exit plan. He now "demands" the support of unhappy Western allies while Iran's Revolutionary Guard has less to lose and all to play for.

The Trump administration's unilateral decision to lift sanctions on Russia's shadow fleet deliveries to ease oil prices has incensed Western allies who claim the US did not brief them on plans to attack Iran. Oil prices are unlikely to be affected by the measure, but Russia will be appeased. In January, Russia's oil and gas earnings fell to their lowest since **Vladimir Putin** launched Russia's war against Ukraine. With high oil prices, the US volte-face has made up Russia's shortfall.

The temporary easing of sanctions removes their strategic effectiveness and puts them in the realm of Trump's tariffs – imposed, only to be removed and reimposed, creating a legal and bureaucratic minefield for businesses.

Sanctions have largely prevented Russian companies from expanding their foothold in Africa and also prevented African firms from becoming suppliers to Russian-owned mining oil and gas companies or from servicing Iran's 25-million-strong middle class. Secondary sanctions linked to US dollar trade have increased the cost of trade for African countries dealing with Russia and Iran. Yet with Trump imposing a range of arbitrary de facto sanctions on African countries – the most arbitrary being blanket visa bans on people from 26 African countries in a World Cup year (including qualifiers Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal), more of Africa's governments are pivoting to Russia, the most recent being Madagascar's military leader, **Michael Randrianirina**. Ethiopia, meanwhile, took delivery from Russia of armoured vehicles and military aircraft in February.

What's left of the old order tries to hold the line for the UN Charter, human rights and democratic governance. UN Secretary-General **António Guterres** in mid-March demanded an end to the Middle East War as he visited the almost forgotten UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon. The EU and the UK are maintaining sanctions on Russia's shadow fleet. The EU plans next to ban imports of Russia's platinum group metals and copper and has extended its arms embargo on Zimbabwe until February 2027.

In February, the UK sanctioned six individuals in Sudan for atrocities and warmongering. However, as allegations emerge that the United Arab Emirates is funding and supporting a training camp for some 10 000 fighters of Sudan's rebel militia, the Rapid Support Forces, the need for multilateral, lawful, coordinated and strategic action is urgent.

● *O'Connor is MD of pan-African consulting firm Africa Risk Consulting. She is a University of Cape Town graduate and has spent 25 years assessing Africa's political and business environment – Tara@africariskconsulting.com*

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PEOPLEINCAMERA

INFINITE INDUSTRIES CEO Maggie Infante (left), the winner of the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of Southern Africa's 2025 Environmental Stewardship Award, is committed to spreading the message about taking care of the planet, pointing out how crucial clean air and water are to humanity's survival as well as acknowledging the "responsibility to educate and preserve the planet for future generations". Infinite Industries manufactures boards out of waste, including plastic, aluminium and paper, processing an average of 2.5 t/d of waste material and recycling almost 500 t of waste in 2025. The Infinite Board is an alternative to timber boards, with the advantage of being waterproof, fire retardant and maintenance-free. These boards have a range of applications, including construction, furniture, agriculture, mining, architecture and electrical.





THE MINING QUALIFICATIONS Authority (MQA) recently commemorated its thirtieth anniversary at Gallagher Estate in Midrand, underscoring three decades of advancing skills development in South Africa's mining and minerals sector. The milestone event reflected on the institution's achievements while setting out priorities for a sector facing technological change, energy transition pressures and rising demand for artisanal and technical skills. MQA CEO Dr Thabo Mashongoane (pictured) said the anniversary was not only a celebration but a call to strengthen collaboration across government, industry and training institutions.



THE DEVELOPMENT BANK of Southern Africa, in partnership with the Shoprite Foundation, launched their first jointly funded robotics laboratory at the Siyifunile Secondary School in Dullstroom, Mpumalanga, earlier this month. The lab will provide students with hands-on experience in robotics and digital literacy, supporting future-ready learning across the region. The initiative forms part of a broader effort to expand access to technology-enabled learning in underserved communities and strengthen digital literacy within the schooling system.

PUSH PAUSE

Anger and madness are brothers.
— African proverb

ONTHEMOVE



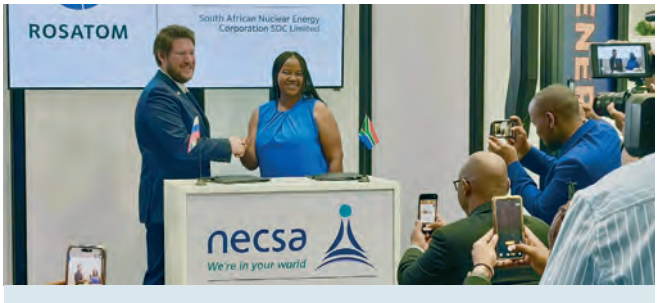
LUKE MORAWITZ

Allianz Trade announced the appointment of **Luke Morawitz** as country manager for Allianz Trade in South Africa. Morawitz assumes the role while retaining his responsibilities as head of credit. He joined Allianz Trade in 2012 as one of the first two analysts in the Credit Assessment team following the establishment of the South African risk office.



STEPHEN KOOPMAN

The South Africa Wind Energy Association elected four new board members at its 2026 AGM, including **Stephen Koopman**, who will be serving as chairperson for a two-year term. Koopman has 32 years of experience in the South African energy sector. He has garnered experience in renewable-energy deployment, policy advocacy and grid infrastructure development.



RUSSIA'S STATE-OWNED nuclear energy company Rosatom and South African Nuclear Energy Corporation signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Human Capital Development, on March 5, on the sidelines of the Africa Energy Indaba conference in Cape Town. The parties agreed to advance their strategic partnership and cooperate on workforce and labour market initiatives. The MoU establishes a long-term framework for cooperation in skills development and knowledge exchange in the nuclear and related technology sectors. Priority areas include joint education and training initiatives, programmes for women and young professionals, short-term employee internships, engineering skills development and professional competitions as well as collaborative research projects.

By Sheila Barradas | Senior Deputy Editor

Kambalda gold and nickel project – Lady Herial gold deposit



Name of the Project
Kambalda gold and nickel project – Lady Herial gold deposit.
Location
Kambalda region, Western Australia.
Project Owner/s
Gold and nickel explorer and developer Lunnon Metals.
Project Description
The shallow, high-grade, thick gold deposit is being evaluated for rapid development as a short mine-life openpit operation.
Initial studies deliver initial ore reserves of 268 250 t at 1.89 g/t gold, containing an estimated 16 270 oz gold for 14 806 oz recovered.
All future production will be delivered to, and processed at, the St Ives gold processing plant, located 7.5 km from the project.
Potential Job Creation
Not stated.
Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return
The updated feasibility study notes that the net present value is not relevant to the Lady Herial deposit, owing to its very short mine life.
Capital Expenditure
Predevelopment, mobilisation/demobilisation and closure costs are estimated at A$2.39-million.
Planned Start/End Date
The updated feasibility study indicates that the deposit can be mined and processed within about eight to ten months.
Latest Developments
The board is positioned to approve a final investment decision to allow for contract execution and the start of mining.
Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants
None disclosed.
Contact Details for Project Information
Lunnon Metals, tel +61 8 6424 8848;

Touquoy restart project



email info@lunnonmetals.com.au.
Name of the Project
Touquoy restart project.
Location
Nova Scotia, Canada.
Project Owner/s
St Barbara Limited (SBM), through its wholly owned subsidiary Atlantic Mining NS Inc.
Project Description
The project is designed as a near-term, low-capital reprocessing operation, which will produce gold bullion through the processing of existing medium- and low-grade stockpiles using the existing Touquoy processing plant.
The restart study indicates a 13-month operating period producing 38 000 oz of gold.
No new mining is planned; the mine plan involves stockpile material rehandling only, with ore transported to the plant and waste rehandled to the tailings management facility for use in reclamation.
The restart plan includes in-pit tailings deposition within the completed Touquoy openpit.
Potential Job Creation
Operations are expected to support an estimated 197 direct, induced and indirect jobs during operation.
Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return
The Touquoy restart study estimates a pretax net present value (NPV), at a 5% discount rate, of C$60.3-million and an internal rate of return (IRR) of 564% at $3 000/oz gold price assumption.
At $4 000/oz, the pretax NPV increases to C$109.3-million and the IRR to 1 428%.
Pretax payback on initial capital is estimated at ten months.
Capital Expenditure
The project has a low initial capital estimate of about C$11.4-million, leveraging the existing Touquoy process plant and new in-pit tailings deposition plan.
Planned Start/End Date
The project has a six-month construction period. Operations are expected to start within six to eight months of receiving permit approval.
Latest Developments
SBM has indicated that the project will proceed to permitting.
Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants
St Barbara and Moose Mountain Technical Services (mine design).
Contact Details for Project Information
SBM Investor relations: GM Business Development & Investor Relations **David Cotterell**, tel +61 3 8660 1959 or email info@stbarbara.com.au.
Sodali & Co media relations, **Paul Ryan/Russell Quinn**, tel +61 409 296 511 / +61 403 322 097.

Douta gold project



Name of the Project
Douta gold project.
Location
Eastern Senegal, within the Birimian rocks of the Kéniéba Inlier.
Project Owner/s
Canadian-listed gold exploration and development company Thor Explorations.
Project Description
Thor Explorations is progressing the Douta gold project following the completion of a prefeasibility study (PFS), an updated mineral resource estimate and a maiden mineral reserve.
The updated mineral resource, constrained within optimised pit shells, comprises an indicated mineral resource of 50.6-million tonnes grading 1.04 g/t gold and an inferred mineral resource of 9.3-million tonnes grading 0.92 g/t gold.
The mineral resource comprises a probable reserve of 36.6-million tonnes grading 1.03 g/t gold.
The PFS is based on conventional openpit mining and a two-phase processing strategy over a 12.6-year life-of-mine (LoM).
During the four-year oxide ore phase, oxide and transitional ore are planned to be processed through a conventional carbon-in-leach (CIL) circuit, delivering average production of about 103 000 oz/y of gold.Total production from oxide and transitional feed is forecast at about 413 000 oz in the first four years.
During the primary ore phase, fresh ore is planned to be mined and processed through the same CIL circuit enhanced by a suspension roaster, with average production of about 61 000 oz/y over a further 7.8 years.
In addition, about 2.3-million tonnes of oxide and transitional material mined during excavation of the primary ore pits are planned to be processed for about seven months at the end of the mine life, yielding about 47 000 oz.
Overall, the PFS outlines a long-life production profile delivering about one-million ounces of gold from 37-million tonnes of mill feed grading an average of 1.03 g/t gold over the LoM.
Potential Job Creation
Not stated.
Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return
The base case shows a pretax net present value, at a 5% discount rate, of $908-million and an internal rate of return of 73%, with a payback of 11 months.
Capital Expenditure
Low initial project capital is estimated at $254-million.
Planned Start/End Date
Conventional openpit mining is scheduled to start at the end of 2027, with plant commissioning and ramp-up during the first quarter of 2028.
Latest Developments
The Ministry of Environment approved the project's environmental- and social-impact assessment in January 2026.
Thor has also signed a binding sale and purchase agreement to acquire its Douta-West permit joint venture partner's remaining 30% interest in the Douta-West permit, positioning the company for 100% ownership of the Douta and Douta-West licences on a 100% equity basis.
The next steps include finalisation of the mining convention with the government of Senegal, the start of detailed design, the ordering of long-lead items and the award of the engineering, procurement and construction contract in the first half of 2026.
Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants
Not stated.
Contact Details for Project Information
Thor Explorations, tel +1 778 658 6391 or email info@thorexpl.com.

IFMIF-DONES – Spain's first nuclear fusion experimentation/research centre



Name of the Project
IFMIF-DONES – Spain's first nuclear fusion experimentation/research centre.

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Location
Escúzar, Granada, Andalusia, Spain.
Project Owner/s
Consorcio IFMIF-DONES España/government of Spain Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities and the regional government of Junta de Andalucía.
Project Description
The International Fusion Materials Irradiation Facility – DEMO Oriented Neutron Source, or IFMIF-DONES project, entails the design and construction of Spain's first nuclear fusion experimentation centre – a research facility intended to simulate the neutron flux produced in a fusion reactor to test and validate structural materials for future fusion power plants.
The facility will house two particle accelerators designed to reproduce fusion-relevant neutron irradiation conditions, allowing for advanced materials research to support European fusion energy programmes, including the development pathway beyond the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor.
Potential Job Creation
Not stated.
Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return
Not stated.
Capital Expenditure
Initial expenditure is estimated at €174-million.
Planned Start/End Date
FCC indicates that the main building is scheduled to begin operations at the end of 2029.
Latest Developments
In January 2026, Ferrovial announced that it had been selected, in consortium with FCC Construcción and local contractor Añil, to lead the design and construction of the IFMIF-DONES centre.
Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants
Ferrovial, FCC Construcción and Añil (design and build consortium:).
Contact Details for Project Information
IFMIF-DONES España,
email contact@ifmif-dones.es

El Fahs Wind Farm



Name of the Project
El Fahs Wind Farm.
Location
Tunisia.
Project Owner/s
Renewable-energy solutions provider Scatec (50%) and Aeolus (50%). Scatec was awarded was a 25-year power purchase agreement with Tunisian State utility Société Tunisienne de l'Electricité et du Gaz for the project in January 2026.
Project Description
The project entails the development of a 75 MW wind power plant.
Potential Job Creation
Not stated.
Capital Expenditure
€100-million, which will be financed by a combination of nonrecourse debt and equity.
Planned Start/End Date
Financial close is expected in first half of 2027.
Latest Developments
None stated.
Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants
None disclosed.
Contact Details for Project Information
Scatec, tel +47 480 85 500 or
email post@scatec.com.

Sunshine silver/ antimony mining and refining project



Name of the Project
Sunshine silver/antimony mining and refining project.
Location
Idaho, US.
Project Owner/s
Private company Sunshine Silver Mining & Refining Company (SSMRC).
Project Description
The Sunshine mine is a primary silver project. SSMRC plans to revive the storied silver mines and build the country's only large-scale, permitted Sunshine Silver US antimony refinery.
The refinery is being upgraded to handle antimony – a mineral essential for US national security and energy resilience.
It could supply 40% of the US's yearly antimony demand by 2028, increasing to as much as 80% by 2031.
In parallel, SSMRC is progressing engineering and feasibility work to restore the mine's hoisting system, surface facilities and water treatment infrastructure.
The mine hosts an indicated resource of 3.3-million tonnes grading 1 067 g/t silver for 112-million ounces, with 165-million ounces in inferred resources. SSMRC plans to produce 6.5-million ounces of silver over 25 years, with production of eight-million ounces a year envisaged in the first six years.
Potential Job Creation
To be confirmed.
Net Present Value/Internal Rate of Return
To be confirmed.
Capital Expenditure
Not stated.
Planned Start/End Date
SSMRC plans to publish a feasibility study for a silver/antimony mining and refining operation at the mine in 2027.
Latest Developments
None stated.
Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants
None disclosed.
Contact Details for Project Information
Sunshine Silver Mining & Refining,
tel +1 208 783 1700 or email info@silveropp.com.

Cold Creek Solar+Storage project



Name of the Project
Cold Creek Solar+Storage project.
Location
Schleicher and Tom Green counties, Texas, in the US.
Project Owner/s
Utility-scale solar and battery storage independent power producer Doral Renewables.
Project Description
The project entails designing and building the Cold Creek Solar+Storage project, expected to generate about 430 MW of clean energy using over 850 000 solar modules.
It will also feature a 340 MWh battery-energy storage system to store excess daytime energy and deliver it to the Texas electricity grid when consumer demand peaks.
Potential Job Creation
At peak construction, project is expected to create more than 500 jobs.
Capital Expenditure
Not stated.
Planned Start/End Date
Commercial operations are expected to start in 2028.
Latest Developments
None stated.
Key Contracts, Suppliers and Consultants
Bechtel (engineering, procurement, and construction services for the solar and storage facilities).
Contact Details for Project Information
Doral Renewables, tel +1 445 447 2900 or email contact@doral-llc.com.

COMING UP

- Renewable-energy solutions provider Scatec has been awarded a 25-year power purchase agreement with Tunisian State utility Société Tunisienne de l'Electricité et du Gaz. The project entails the construction of a 120 MW solar power plant, in Tataouine, Tunisia. The project will support Tunisia's ambitious renewable-energy targets and enhance the country's energy security
- Critical Metals Corp and Tariq Abdel Hadi Abdullah Al-Qahtani & Brothers Company have signed a nonbinding term sheet for the establishment of a 50:50 joint venture to develop a rare earth processing facility, in Saudi Arabia. The proposed facility is intended to process rare earth concentrate into separated rare earth oxides, metals and downstream products.

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COMPILED BY HALIMA FROST

Pilot plant development making headway

HALIMA FROST | CREAMER MEDIA SENIOR WRITER



PROBLEMATIC PAPER
Label backing paper is a product Fibre Circle is pushing companies to recycle

The development of the Kadant Autolab pilot plant is one of many paper and board recycling programmes and initiatives being introduced by paper and paper packaging sector responsibility organisation Fibre Circle.

The in-house recyclability laboratory offers benchtop recyclability assessments and advanced research opportunities.

A combined effort of engineered systems developer Kadant Fiber Processing and Fibre Circle, the autolab uses a rotor and screen design to simulate full-scale mill conditions.

Its core purpose is to test the disintegration of advanced paper, packaging and challenging materials, and will be used for research and development to test fibre recyclability, including wet strength, laminates and coatings.

The recyclability lab is essential to confirming the recyclability of new paper and paper packaging in the local market.

"This is a continued focal point we have observed from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), with a short-term focus to implement the laboratory and garner the required certifications," says Fibre Circle programme and strategy enablement manager **Jandri de la Rey**.

He adds that once the certifications have been granted, Fibre Circle will continue its market mapping initiative to define a clear South African recyclability standard for paper and paper packaging.

Further, in the long term, the laboratory will have the capacity to inform design for recyclability rules and guidelines for the industry.

Other Initiatives

The Fibre Circle liquid board packaging (LBP) campaign – focusing on awareness and collection promotion – will be launched this month. The campaign's core objective is to drive the collection of LBP across South Africa and increase the collection volumes by up to 4 000 t/y.

De la Rey explains the short-term focus of the LBP campaign is on creating buy-back centre awareness regarding the value of used beverage cartons, facilitating quality requirements and route-to-market opportunities.

In the long term, the campaign will significantly increase the volume of LBP diverted to recycling mills and fully use the recycling capacity in the country.

"Another pilot we are working on is our refuse-derived fuel (RDF) pilot project, which focuses on including difficult-to-recycle wastepaper as potential feedstock for RDF for cement kilns," de la Rey adds.

The objective is to develop a high-capacity offtake for difficult-to-recycle wastepaper with good commercial value to support collection costs.

The interim focus of the RDF pilot is to get difficult-to-recycle materials, such as nonrecyclable potato and cement sacks, and multi-layered packaging – such as cupstock, freezer board and label backing paper – approved as feedstocks for RDF.

"The pilot's end-goal is to create a commercialised wastepaper grade that can be traded for use as RDF, with a volume target across all categories of up to 12 000 t/y," explains De la Rey adding that the objectives may expand, depending on technical and commercial feasibility.

De la Rey says the collection and diversion initiatives are in the early stages and will be rolled out during 2026. The RDF pilot is planned for the second quarter of this year, with potential commercialisation towards the end of this year.

Working Together

The DFFE offers support to producer responsibility organisations through the auditing and investigation of noncompliant members and suspected free-riding companies that have not registered.

"This is an important matter to ensure that the pool of fees is maximised and can effectively target all materials using their respective Extended Producer Responsibility funding, as well as a level playing field among all companies," posits De la Ray.

Fibre Circle further relies on provincial and local government departments and municipalities to ensure that its work aligns with broader waste management plans and policies.

Many of the solutions that have been developed over the past four years require active government participation, additional funding from waste generators and support with sorting at source – which includes cleaning and baling of the wastepaper – to streamline and support logistics costs.

The company encourages all companies and employees to actively participate in initiatives such as label-backing paper, as well as cement sack and potato sack recycling.

"Fibre Circle continues to call upon the industry to collaborate on solutions for diverting more material from landfill," concludes De la Rey.

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Heat-sealable paper packaging range launched

Having expanded its range of functional packaging papers in January, sustainable paper, pulp and packaging solutions provider Sappi has launched its full set of heat-sealable solutions designed for converters, printers and brand owners that want fibre-based alternatives to plastics.

The Seal family – Seal Silk, Seal G Silk, Seal Pure Silk, Seal Natural, Seal Light, and Seal Lucent – covers a broad mix of applications and sealing needs while supporting "smooth integration" into existing packaging lines.

With multiple finishes and features – including optical brightening agent- (OBA-) free and translucent options – the portfolio is designed to help customers select a grade that fits their pack format, process and visual requirements.

Many companies are facing pressure from new regulations, including the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, and changing customer expectations which is driving demand for recyclable packaging across global markets. At the same time, companies still need stable sealing results.

Total cost of ownership also plays a role, as paper-based solutions must compete with plastic solutions to make any switch viable.

Sappi notes that the Seal portfolio was developed to address these needs, making it easier to move from plastic and composite structures to a mono-material paper solution.

Flexibility

Each seal grade supports different production setups, print methods, visual requirements and sealing strengths, allowing clients to choose a paper that matches their line, pack format or performance needs.

Sappi notes that the Seal Silk and Seal G Silk are available in weights ranging from 50 gsm to 110 gsm, offer low-to-medium water vapour performance and work with flexo and gravure printing.

Seal Pure Silk, available in 67 gsm, is OBA-free for clients that prefer a "natural look" , while Seal Natural, available in 95 gsm, provides strong sealing strength and hot-tack performance.

Seal Light Gloss and Seal Light Natural come in 54 gsm and 44 gsm respectively and support flexo and gravure printing, with Seal Light Natural being OBA-free and a lightweight option. Seal Lucent is available for applications that benefit from translucency.

"We are seeing brand owners, converters and printers look for reliable ways to change their packaging without adding risk or cost," says Sappi flexible packaging sales director **Michael Bethge**.

He notes that clients need practical choices rather than one fixed solution, along with technical support during this transition. "The Seal range reflects that feedback and gives customers a broad set of options."

Reliable Performance

All Seal papers are designed for consistent sealing and runnability, while their mechanical strength supports stable processing and safe transport. The papers also give accurate print results, helping brands reach a clear and defined visual appearance on the shelf, Sappi states.

The company concludes that, with its scale in speciality papers and its technical support, clients gain a stable and efficient path toward recyclable mono-material packaging.

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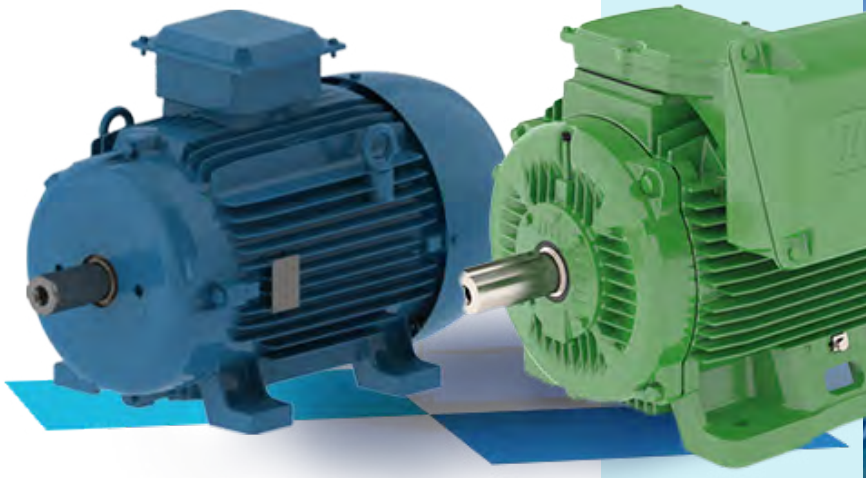
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Driving efficiency and sustainability

Reliable instrumentation key to competitiveness

In South Africa, where local mills must remain competitive in a global industry, reliable instrumentation is vital to ensuring operational efficiency and maintaining product quality, says process instrumentation sensor developer Vega Instruments group marketing manager **Miguel Petersen**.

He explains that the paper manufacturing process is a demanding operation that relies on consistency, precision and control at every stage.

"From the preparation of raw pulp to the continuous operation of bleaching towers and storage systems, each phase presents unique measurement challenges," he adds.

Importantly during stock preparation, pressure screens are tasked with removing contaminants and filtering out usable fibres.

With constant pressure changes, abrasive materials and flow variability, these units require accurate pressure monitoring.

The VEGABAR 82 pressure transmitter is well-suited to these harsh environments, offering a robust ceramic measuring cell that delivers stable readings even in the presence of pressure surges and solids-laden media.

"Maintaining the correct pressure differential across the screen is critical and continuous monitoring helps ensure that only clean, well-prepared stock moves forward in the process," stresses Petersen.



Bleaching

The bleaching stage involves the use of strong oxidising agents such as oxygen, ozone or hydrogen peroxide to remove lignin and whiten the pulp.

These chemicals are introduced into towers that are 25 m high and operate continuously at temperatures close to 95 °C.

"Given their size and operational demands, these towers are never emptied and require continuous level monitoring."

In this application, a combination of Vega's VEGAPULS 6X, VEGABAR 82 and VEGACAP 64 instruments provide reliable measurement data to the operator.

The VEGAPULS 6X, with its radar-based, non-contact level sensing, handles high temperatures and steam-laden environments without loss of accuracy, while the VEGACAP 64 – a capacitive level switch – adds redundancy and ensures safe, reliable operation under variable conditions.

"Together, these instruments allow process engineers to maintain chemical dosing and pulp consistency at optimal levels, avoiding overflows, dry runs or chemical waste," Petersen comments.

No Blockages

Petersen says that at the start of the papermaking process, wastepaper or pulp bales are introduced into the pulper by conveyor belts, where they are combined with process water and broken down by mechanical stirrers.

"The aggressive motion of the stirrers, coupled with possible foreign objects like wires or metal debris, creates a demanding measuring environment," he says, adding that in this instance the VEGAMIP 61 and VEGABAR 82 are critical instruments used to prevent breakdowns.

For these conditions, the VEGAMIP 61, a microwave-based sensor, provides non-intrusive level detection, even through thick vessel walls or turbulent product surfaces, which, when used in conjunction with the VEGABAR 82, allows for accurate detection of water-to-fibre ratios, to maintain fibre consistency.

"Additionally, conveyor monitoring with VEGAMIP ensures that blockages or jams from bale congestion are quickly identified and addressed before they cause downtime," says Petersen.

Once prepared, the stock is stored in large vertical towers with high throughput.

Constant agitation within these towers ensures homogeneity, but also creates turbulent surfaces, foam and steam, all of which interfere with less capable sensors.

Designed for difficult conditions, the VEGAPULS 6X provides accurate, continuous level readings regardless of condensation or agitation.

When paired with VEGABAR 82, which can handle temperature fluctuations and mechanical stress, this setup helps avoid dry running of agitators, ensures consistent material availability and prevents unplanned stoppages in the production line.

Vega Instruments' Input/Output-Link, myVEGA and non-contact radar, meanwhile, keep calibration and diagnostics friction-free.

This connectivity supports more agile operations, where maintenance teams and operators can make process adjustments in real time or access diagnostics without delaying the process, Petersen adds.

With the range of instrumentation offered by Vega Instruments, South African mills are better equipped to meet the demands of both local and global markets.

"These tools support better decision-making, reduce production risks, and enable smarter, more resilient operations from pulp to finished product," concludes Petersen.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E717120

MM



VEGA's winning formula for reliable process control

For over 60 years, VEGA has been at the forefront of level and pressure measurement technology, supporting industries such as chemicals, food, mining, pharmaceuticals, water, oil and gas. Committed to efficiency, safety and sustainability, VEGA is recognised as a reliable supplier, delivering instruments that help operators optimise their processes.

VEGA's diverse product portfolio combines simplicity, intelligence and innovative design to meet a broad range of process needs.

- **Radar level measurement:** The VEGAPULS series offers non-contact, accurate measurement for liquids and solids, even in challenging conditions like high dust or extreme temperatures. Installation is straightforward, minimising downtime and costs.
- **Hydrostatic and ultrasonic sensors:** Ideal for water treatment and small storage systems, these sensors deliver dependable, cost-effective level monitoring.
- **Pressure sensors:** The VEGABAR series ensures stable and accurate pressure measurement for everything from low-pressure to demanding petrochemical and mining environments. Electronic differential pressure solutions replace traditional capillaries, guaranteeing consistent results in changing temperatures.
- **Guided wave radar and point level detection**: Suitable for granular solids, powders and liquids. These instruments provide high precision for the food, beverage, cement and pharmaceutical sectors.

Embracing Industry 4.0, VEGA sensors integrate with IO-Link, Profibus and other protocols, supporting smart factories. Bluetooth and Ethernet-APL enable wireless configuration, high-speed data and seamless digitalisation, improving safety and efficiency.

VEGA's philosophy prioritises simplicity. Instruments feature intuitive interfaces, quick setup and self-diagnostics, reducing the learning curve. With a strong presence in South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, VEGA offers local expertise and tailored support, especially for mining operations.

Ensuring safety and promoting sustainability are essential. VEGA sensors increase process precision, reduce energy use and waste, and ensure compliance. Instruments meet ATEX, IECEx and SIL standards, with fail-safe and self-monitoring features for early issue detection in hazardous environments.



Across Africa, VEGA's technology boosts process reliability, from mining to municipal water plants. By merging robust hardware with smart software, VEGA helps local industries remain globally competitive while addressing challenges like water scarcity.

As industries pursue greater automation, VEGA continues to invest in research and development, delivering smart, connected solutions. For African industries, VEGA is more than a supplier. It is a partner in progress, equipping operators for excellence and future success.

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COAL

Efficiency drive supports colliery through market slump

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER



NAVIGATING VOLATILITY
Reaching steady state operations a few years ago, Khanye Colliery has been able to strategically focus on efficiencies and planning, with production and processing targets remaining at over 200 000 t a month of run-of-mine coal

Operational efficiency, cost discipline and environmental stewardship have enabled coal mining company Canyon Coal's flagship operation – Khanye Colliery, to sustain its performance in 2025 despite challenging market conditions, says Khanye Colliery mine manager **Kgotso Mongalo**.

South Africa's coal sector faced significant headwinds in 2025, with global market volatility and geopolitical disruptions weighing on performance.

As a result, coal prices dipped below 2022 levels, when Russia invaded Ukraine, triggering unprecedented price increases, he says.

Nonetheless, Khanye Colliery continues to play a crucial role in Canyon Coal's strategic vision and, therefore, had to maintain its focus on operational excellence to navigate sector-wide pressures.

"Khanye Colliery reached steady state a few years ago, which then allowed for a strategic focus on efficiencies and planning. Production and processing targets remain at over 200 000 t a month of run-of-mine coal, with the colliery committed to meeting market demand," he adds.

As part of this efficiency drive, the operation transitioned from a two-shift to a three-shift mining cycle, consequently allowing for operations to continue 24/7.

"By optimising processes and leveraging technology, where applicable, the colliery was able to achieve sustainable growth, as it now aims to weather market pressures," says Mongalo.

Despite improvements in rail-to-port logistics systems, South Africa's coal exporters continue to face pressure from low market prices and high operational costs.

"When coal prices were favourable, rail capacity was lacking, and now that logistical constraints are improving, prices have weakened," adds Mongalo.

He notes that renewable-energy transition policies and campaigns driven by environmental nonprofit groups, especially in European markets, continue to deter coal use, placing added pressure on coal producers.

Canyon Coal predominantly exports to Asian markets, with exported volumes improving slightly in the past year. However, the overall trading environment is still challenging, with Mongalo citing tariffs introduced by US President **Donald Trump** and geopolitical events as creating unpredictability.

He anticipates continued coal demand in terms of the future outlook, driven by electricity consumption and population growth in emerging economies.

"While some European countries are moving away from coal, demand trends in Asia differ," he adds.

Mongalo foresees the same for African regions, citing a total volume of 236-million tonnes of coal output for South Africa in 2025 and the direct employment of 97 666 personnel, which he believes indicates the

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importance of coal's role in the domestic energy sector and economy.

Logistics Improvements

Mongalo says State-owned rail company Transnet has materially improved its operationality over the past few years, increasing cargo volumes, reducing transit times and improving customer service.

He refers to comments made at this year's Investing in African Mining Indaba by Minerals Council South Africa CEO **Mzila Mthenjane** who highlighted that rail tonnages fell by 77-million tonnes, to 149-million tonnes in the five years to 2022, before recovering to 160-million tonnes in 2024, with a further 8-million-tonne increase expected in the year to date, ending in March.

"Coal exports through the Richards Bay Coal Terminal have also shown signs of improvement. Transnet Freight Rail CEO **Russell Baatjies** indicated at the Investing in African Mining Indaba that coal exports were expected to increase [even more] by 2029. These developments remain a work in progress, but could create opportunities to increase Khanye's export capacity," notes Mongalo.

However, despite some improvements, he says bulk commodity logistics and marketing teams still need to remain flexible to efficiently navigate market fluctuations.

Meanwhile, Canyon Coal's holding company Menar, has announced the establishment of a train operating company Menar Ports and Rail, which is expected to deliver integrated transport solutions for mineral exporters, with access to major export corridors and terminals, including the Richards Bay Coal Terminal, the Richards Bay Dry Bulk Terminal and the Richards Bay Grindrod Terminal.

Mongalo says Khanye Colliery stands to benefit in this regard, as this may enhance access to global markets, but cautions that vandalism of rail infrastructure and maintenance backlogs continue to pose risks to export growth, despite intensified security measures.

Addressing environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations, Mongalo notes that Khanye has ESG initiatives in place, including robust environmental management practices and ongoing rehabilitation efforts.

In 2025, the colliery became South Africa's first coal mine to attain Bettercoal status – an internationally recognised programme promoting responsible practices in the global coal supply chain.

Bettercoal producers such as Khanye undergo comprehensive assessments across the respective ESG pillars.

"By advancing sustainable mining practices, Khanye Colliery is positioning itself to take advantage of future opportunities in the global coal market," he says.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E716859

> By optimising processes and leveraging technology, where applicable, the colliery was able to achieve sustainable growth, as it now aims to weather market pressures
>
> **Kgotso Mongalo**



Research targets recovery from coal waste

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER



AVHURENGWI NENGOVHELA
Coaltech has approved eight research projects over the past year, five of which focus specifically on investigating how valuable minerals can be recovered from coal mining waste streams

Research programmes investigating how valuable minerals – found in coal discard, brine and coal ash – can be recovered, are being advanced by Johannesburg, South Africa-based coal research organisation Coaltech Research Association.

Coaltech is expanding its leadership in rare earth and critical minerals research, working with researchers from the University of Johannesburg, Wits University, Mintek, the University of South Africa and the University of Cape Town.

"This multi-institutional programme aims to position South Africa as a meaningful supplier of critical minerals needed for electric vehicles, renewable-energy systems and advanced manufacturing," says Coaltech CEO **Avhurengwi Nengovhela**.

The organisation has approved eight new research projects over the past year, with three of these focussing on critical minerals and rare-earth elements, taking the total number of projects focussing on this topic to six.

Other projects that make up the portfolio of projects – cutting across mining, coal processing, environment and future technologies – have clear and demonstrable environmental and socioeconomic benefits. One such project, conducted in collaboration with the University of the Free State, is examining agrivoltaics, which involves installing solar power generation infrastructure on rehabilitated mining land.

Another project with the University of Pretoria involves studying the use of mine-affected water for crop irrigation.

"If we can use [mine-affected water] with minimal treatment, that is a big win for the sector," explains Nengovhela.

Further, Coaltech is collaborating with carbon emissions and climate change advisory Promethium Carbon on a project assessing greenhouse-gas emissions from coal mining operations and identifying opportunities for their reduction.

Competitiveness

While these initiatives form part of Coaltech's current research portfolio, Nengovhela says the organisation's work also focuses on strengthening the competitiveness of the coal sector.

This approach forms part of the organisation's primary mandate, as it was established in 1999 through collaboration between government and coal producers concerned about the long-term availability of coal resources.

Nengovhela adds that while coal and other fossil fuels remain under pressure from an environmental point of view, Coaltech and its members are responding to these realities in 2026 by ensuring parts of their research programme focus on environmental performance, with "... some of our research looking at more sustainable ways to not only mine coal, but [also] to combust coal".

External pressure facing the sector is less about the mining of coal and more about how coal is used once it reaches power stations, he says.

Within its current research programme, the organisation is also emphasising improving mining methods and strengthening operational safety, with "about three active projects that are looking at safer ways of mining coal".

These projects examine improved extraction practices and operational approaches aimed at making coal mining safer while also improving overall efficiency.

Funding

Nengovhela confirms that Coaltech plans to invest about R17-million in research in the upcoming funding cycle to ensure that its projects continue delivering practical outcomes for the sector.

While the organisation's work has historically focused on South Africa, it is expanding its collaboration footprint across the Southern African Development Community, and has started engaging with industry stakeholders in Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, to extend research collaboration across the region over time.

As for the future, Nengovhela says coal will continue to play a role in South Africa's energy system for decades to come: "At the moment, about 80% of our electricity comes from coal."

Coaltech has 32 industry members, in addition to those from academia, research institutions and government, and operates as a platform designed to coordinate research across the sector.

"We are not only a membership-based organisation, but we are a collaborative platform by design," he concludes.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E716872



Service offering upped

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER

Amid the structural stability of South Africa's domestic coal market, mining contractor Zizwe is expanding its presence in the coalfields of Mpumalanga.

With coal remaining a baseload energy commodity, its consistent demand is driven largely by Eskom's power generation requirements, says Zizwe coal opencast department head **Colani Bhiya**.

"Unlike certain export-driven minerals, domestic coal supply benefits from long-term offtake agreements, steady burn rates at power stations and established infrastructure corridors."

Zizwe is also transitioning from coal management services to full-scope opencast mining operations.

"Historically, we have operated as a materials handling and coal management contractor in the Mpumalanga coalfields. The move into full-scope opencast mining forms part of a vertical integration strategy, enabling the business to mine, beneficiate, process and deliver coal that it previously handled as part of downstream services," he adds.

As a result, the shift expands the company's operational accountability across the mining value chain, with the expanded scope now including pit development, overburden and interburden removal, drilling and blasting integration, load-and-haul fleet optimisation, in-pit production scheduling and regulatory compliance reporting.

Zizwe's project scope transition incorporates beneficiation and processing functions, including coal washing and processing plant integration, yield optimisation, dense-medium separation control and product specification management.

"These processes support the delivery of coal that meets contractual specifications for . . . domestic and export clients," he says.

Further operational integration extends to stockpile and product management, run-of-mine and product stockpiles –which Zizwe manages through reconciliation systems – and controlled stacking and reclaiming practices to support grade control, and reduce contamination and dilution.

He also highlights the company's capability to coordinate mine-to-rail logistics, including the coordination of rail load-out integration, train scheduling and the alignment of production output with siding allocations in collaboration with rail operators, such as Transnet.

Where export channels are used, this rail logistics integration can extend to port logistics coordination with the Richards Bay Coal Terminal.

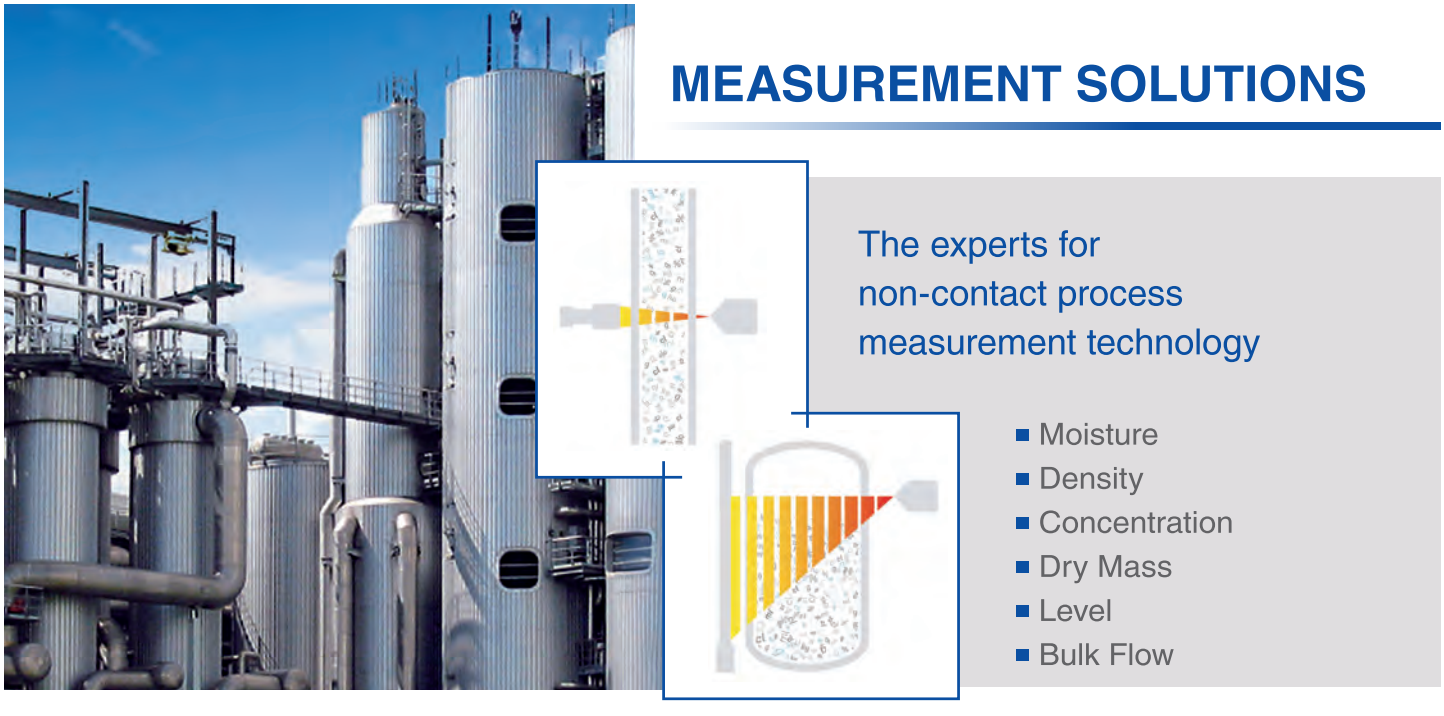
"This involves slot allocation planning, vessel scheduling alignment and export-grade compliance verification to support the movement of coal from pit to port," says Bhiya.

The operational shift also alters the commercial structure of Zizwe's contracts. Coal management contracts have historically been structured around unit-rate handling metrics, while full-scope mining contracts now introduce multi-year agreements that support capital-intensive fleet deployment and production-based performance metrics, he explains.

To support the expansion with physical assets, Bhiya confirms that Zizwe has ordered two 150 t-class Liebherr excavators and a 200 t-class face shovel, paired with 15 new Caterpillar 777 rigid-frame dump trucks.

This fleet configuration is designed to move between 20 000 m^3 and 30 000 m^3 a day, depending on strip ratios and haul distances.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E717009



CONTRACT MINING & SHAFT SINKING

Sector poised to enter defining period – miner

LUMKILE NKOMFE | CREAMER MEDIA WRITER



STRATEGIC SHIFT
Contract mining in Southern Africa is moving from a support function to a central driver of long-term resilience across the region

The contract mining sector in Southern Africa is entering a "defining period" and, as commodity markets stabilise and capital discipline tightens across major mining companies, preference towards an outsourcing model is "no longer simply a cost lever but also . . . a strategic enabler of operational flexibility and long-term resilience", highlights contract miner Zizwe Opencast Mining social responsibility and strategic development director **André Pruis**.

He notes that, over the past decade, mining companies have fundamentally reassessed how capital is deployed, as balance sheet preservation, return on invested capital and operational agility now form the core of board-level decision-making.

Within this context, Pruis says contract mining has evolved from a peripheral support function to a central pillar of project execution.

"Across coal, chrome, platinum group metals (PGMs), gold and emerging base metal projects, we are seeing a structural shift towards contractor-led development and production. Mining houses increasingly prefer to partner with capable contractors who can mobilise quickly, scale efficiently and operate within clearly defined cost parameters."

This approach enables asset owners to reduce upfront capital intensity, manage cyclical exposure and maintain operational flexibility in volatile markets, adds Pruis, noting that execution certainty, cost discipline and safety performance are no longer differentiators but part of baseline expectations.

Beyond South Africa, he highlights that sizable opportunities are taking shape across Namibia, Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique, with the emergence of greenfield and brownfield developments in copper, uranium, gold

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AN

Integrating design, contract mining to fast-track projects

LUMKILE NKOMFE | CREAMER MEDIA WRITER

Integrated project delivery, which spans in-house engineering, shaft sinking and contract mining, is gaining traction as mine owners seek faster, lower-risk routes – from the concept phase to steady-state production, says underground mining contractor Cementation Africa new business director **Graham Chamberlain**.

Cementation Africa's clients are increasingly prioritising expediency and early access to ore, particularly as capital intensity and investor scrutiny rise across deep and complex underground mining projects, he says.

"... from a client's perspective, it's all about expediency – the speed of getting a project from conceptual stage to when you've actually got boots on the ground."

The company's operational model consolidates conceptual design, feasibility input, training and execution under a single delivery structure.

When multiple independent entities are involved, project alignment often requires extended debate and coordination, he highlights.

Therefore, Cementation Africa's consolidation, especially at the project establishment stage, limits mismatched thinking among consultants, contractors and client teams – a common source of delays, cost escalations and risk factor introduction.

In-house design capacity enables Cementation Africa to test what is practically achievable before starting execution, drawing on institutional knowledge and lessons learned from previous mining projects, Chamberlain explains. This results in designs that are matched to underground mining application realities.

Under Cementation Africa's methodical approach to project delivery, underground mining projects move from conceptual design phases, shaft sinking and tunnelling to contract mining and steady-state operations within one accountability framework.

Chamberlain highlights the company's in-house training capability as a key differentiator, which supports operational readiness and performance from the first day of project involvement.

Risk Reduction

Complexity in deep-level and technically challenging underground mining projects is "a real beast on its own, requiring meticulous planning and disciplined execution", says Chamberlain.

He emphasises that risk mitigation starts at the design stage, with a clearly defined end-goal and detailed upfront alignment on development requirements, equipment selection, productivity assumptions and critical path activities.

For applicable projects, Cementation Africa applies a conservative technology philosophy, avoiding untested methods that may result in avoidable uncertainty, relying instead on established technologies that are matched appropriately to project type. Integrated systems – spanning safety, quality, efficiency testing, equipment standards and codes of practice – are brought together within one project management framework.

Further, digital mine design tools are used to simulate practical hypothetical scenarios beyond formal feasibility studies, enabling teams to interrogate variables and stress-test development sequences, thereby supporting early access strategies, which Chamberlain identifies as central to improving internal rates of return.



DO IT IN-HOUSE
In-house engineering and proven technologies enable Cementation Africa to deliver practical, low-risk solutions for complex underground mines

"Mining projects are by nature capital intensive, and the quicker a client gets cash back from their investment, the better for them."

He also notes that early ore-access and disciplined critical path management are designed into the company's underground mining projects from the outset, whether greenfield or brownfield.

Mining mechanisation underpins Cementation Africa's safety and productivity strategy and Chamberlain recounts strategic decisions taken to remove personnel from high-risk contact areas, including eliminating persistent hand-held mining equipment and discontinuing certain legacy shaft-cleaning methods that pose inherent safety risks.

While some traditional mining equipment offers high efficiency, the company rather prioritises safer alternatives and is investigating redesigned solutions that retain productivity without compromising safety.

On the importance of effective underground mining equipment, Chamberlain highlights that productivity rates are a derivative of how personnel use this equipment, adding that linking equipment performance directly to operator competence and structured training remains a key operational priority.

Training is positioned as a commercial and environmental, social and governance differentiator. Cementation Africa trains more than 1 000 individuals a year under the Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) unemployed training scheme, preparing candidates from labour-sending areas by accrediting them with core safety, firefighting and risk training modules, followed by elective artisanal or operator streams.

Cementation Africa's training academy is MQA-certified and has recently secured Quality Council for Trades and Occupations certification, thereby enabling nationally transferable qualifications.

Unlike some international contractors that exit mining projects without transferring embedded skills capacity, the company incorporates local recruitment, procurement and skills transfer into its operating model.

Further, governance compliance remains a focus for the company, with the contractor historically maintaining a Level 1 broad-based black economic-empowerment status and awaiting updated certification following ownership changes.

As for company sustainability, environmental initiatives implemented by Cementation Africa include the installation of a large-scale solar PV plant at its Bentley Park training and warehousing facilities in Carletonville, Gauteng. This plant supplies about 80% of the facility's electrical demand.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E716851

Mpumalanga colliery expansion to create 500 jobs

In line with its planned expansion into dragline mining and underground operations at the Optimum colliery in Mpumalanga, coal mining company Liberty Coal expects to create about 500 new jobs at the mine this year.

The recruitment drive follows the November 2025 appointment of mining contractor Liberty Mine Services (LMS) as the principal independent mining contractor at the colliery.

The appointment of LMS marks an important step in efforts to stabilise and rebuild operations at Optimum Colliery, says Liberty Coal CEO **Hlayiseka Chauke**.

He adds that Liberty Coal aims to work closely with the contractor to improve operational performance and restore the mine's long-term sustainability.

The contractor will undertake a "progressive" recruitment programme this year, as operations are expected to expand within the same year.

To date, Liberty Coal says LMS has completed the onboarding of about 540 employees previously employed by mining-related technical and surveying services company Salaria and its associated companies, which is currently in business rescue. The transfer was undertaken in terms of Section 197 of the Labour Relations Act.

Liberty Coal expects that about 2 000 people will be engaged in work at the mine by the end of 2026.

Local business opportunities are also expected to arise as a result of several capital projects under way at the mine. These projects form part of the broader programme to refurbish Optimum Colliery's infrastructure and facilities.

Liberty Coal also confirms that LMS is using a newly acquired fleet of heavy-duty mining machinery, equipment and vehicles. The first consignment of equipment was delivered in December 2025, while the remaining equipment is expected to be delivered by this month.

Liberty Coal's operations will also include the deployment of a restored Marion 8200 MDO3 dragline, which was refurbished at a cost of more than R400-million. The dragline is expected to start operating this month.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E717039



PROGRESSIVE RECRUITMENT
Liberty Mine Services will undertake a progressive recruitment programme during this year, as operations are expected to expand within the same year

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and bulk commodities gathering increasing momentum.

These jurisdictions are increasingly attractive to mining companies and contract miners, owing to streamlined regulatory frameworks and a renewed focus on mineral development as a key driver of economic growth.

"For Southern Africa contractors, cross-border expansion requires strong governance, stakeholder alignment, local partnerships and disciplined risk management.

"[Related] success will belong to operators who combine operational excellence with regulatory and social credibility," he adds.

Mining mechanisation and digitalisation are also reshaping mining execution as fleet modernisation, predictive maintenance systems and real-time production monitoring are delivering measurable improvements in productivity and cost-per-tonne of material mined, says Pruis.

In this vein and from an operational perspective, alternative mining methods – such as hydraulic ripping and mechanical cutting – are reducing reliance on drilling and blasting in varying geological environments.

Pruis also recommends that technology adopters prioritise solutions that promote sustainable productivity, enhanced safety and disciplined cost management, rather than using technology simply for the sake of modernisation.

Social Licence, Stakeholder Accountability

Near-mine communities, and mining-affiliated regulators and shareholders increasingly expect mining contractors to contribute meaningfully to socioeconomic development, with local employment, small and medium-sized enterprise inclusion, skills transfer and transformation alignment being strategic imperatives in this regard.

"Contractors who integrate stakeholder engagement into their operating model build resilience and continuity [while] those who treat it as an afterthought risk operational disruption and reputational damage," adds Pruis.

Looking ahead to the next decade, contract mining will play an increasingly central role in Africa's mineral development, and mining companies operating on the continent must continue to prioritise flexibility and capital efficiency.

He adds that African governments should seek responsible operators who contribute to economic growth and transformation.

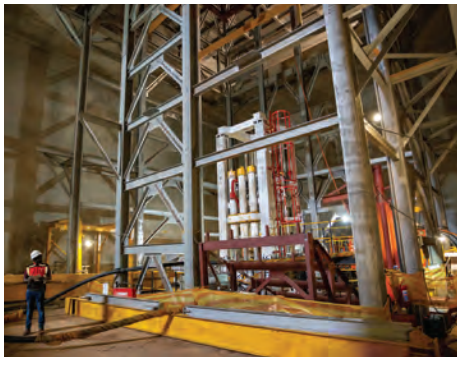
In the evolving African mining landscape, Pruis notes that mining contractors should shift from being a service provider to being a strategic partner, adding that mining and contracting companies will stand a better chance of succeeding if they combine integrated capability, execution precision, improved certainty, disciplined governance and stakeholder alignment.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E716870

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Cementation Africa guides mines safely to steady state production

Transitioning from development to steady state production remains one of the most challenging phases in a mine's lifecycle. Whether it involves a greenfield project, expansion or conversion from opencast to underground, this stage typically includes shaft sinking, raise drilling and mine development, activities that carry significant technical and operational risks.

Underground mining contractor Cementation Africa's specialist expertise in underground mining allows clients to navigate these early stages with confidence. With more than 50 years of experience, the company undertakes the full scope of development work, from shaft and decline establishment to ore reserve expansion and extraction. This capability is particularly valuable for mining companies lacking in-house training, infrastructure or resources to begin operations independently.

The company's approach combines technical depth with robust management systems. Its services extend beyond mine development to include mine design, equipment rebuilds, maintenance programmes and comprehensive handover processes at the transition to steady state production. These systems encompass procurement, warehousing, equipment maintenance, payroll and safety management.

Cementation Africa's experienced executives and managers draw on extensive operational knowledge to manage risk effectively, with safety forming the cornerstone of all activities. Every project detail is meticulously planned and documented, ensuring high standards of quality and integrity.

While embracing innovation, the company takes a measured approach to automation, prioritising safety. Advances such as remote-controlled equipment and digital systems for underground data transmission further enhance operational performance, reinforcing Cementation Africa's role in enabling a safe and efficient progression to steady state production.



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COMPILED BY DEVINA HARIPERSAD

Mining drives technology adoption across Africa



ECONOMIC MOMENTUM
Mining operations across Africa are creating economic momentum for new local markets, contributing to broader social transformation

The mining sector is an important catalyst in fostering intra-Africa trade, as well as opening up value chains in new technologies with significant social benefits, said engineering consultancy SRK Consulting MD **Andrew van Zyl**.

Speaking at the Investing in African Mining Indaba, held in Cape Town in early February, Van Zyl said mining operations across Africa were creating economic momentum for new local markets, contributing to broader social transformation.

"Mines play a vital role, often underestimated, in bringing critical mass to the adoption of valuable technologies that would otherwise struggle to gain a local foothold in communities around Africa. "Decentralised renewable energy is a good example, which can rapidly transform livelihood opportunities, productivity and general standards of living within communities," he noted.

The application of solar PV power installations at mining operations creates demand for local inventories and technical expertise for installation and maintenance of such systems, highlighted Van Zyl.

He added that once mining investment incentivises the establishment of local service providers, communities and small businesses are able to access associated technologies more affordably, thereby opening opportunities to adopt innovations that improve livelihoods.

"These processes can advance transformation even more effectively when a country's relevant legislation, regulations and incentives are aligned with the economic and technological opportunities," added Van Zyl.

Referring to related developments in South Africa, Van Zyl pointed out that the renewable energy licensing exemption threshold for solar and other energy plants increased from 1 MW to 100 MW in 2021, enabling greater levels of private renewable-energy generation.

Local mines have since connected about 3.5 GW of non-grid power projects, within a pipeline that could reach 5 GW by 2030.

Van Zyl says the Investing in African Mining Indaba's focus on collaboration reflects the reality that technological advancement also requires regulatory innovation, with both technical and legal aspects "demanding engagement, courage and scientific rigour".

He added that while investors and project leaders base key decisions on certainty and predictability, the mining sector is still expected to improve continually.

"Innovating is seldom simple, so it does require a commitment from clients, professionals, operations and government bodies to consider new ideas and technologies in the context of lessons learnt. This means reflecting carefully on what has worked in the past or elsewhere and applying innovations with the flexibility to make adaptations whenever necessary.

"We also need to have the courage to share the reasons some innovations have failed as this facilitates progress, helping others avoid making the same mistakes," said Van Zyl.

He also encouraged more discussion on ways to bring in new ideas into the mining ecosystem, at reduced levels of risk.

Developmental Impact

In emphasising the critical role South African mining plays in terms of job creation, Van Zyl reiterated figures shared at the Investing in African Mining Indaba by mining industry employers organisation the Minerals Council South Africa, which show that mining supports nearly 900 000 jobs and the livelihoods of 3.6-million South Africans.

"Minerals Council South Africa CEO **Mzila**

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AN

Innovation focus gains traction

Research, development and innovation are emerging as strategic pillars of South Africa's critical minerals strategy, aimed at strengthening competitiveness and long-term sustainability in the mining sector, says government innovation funding entity Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) board chairperson **Loyiso Tyira**.

The focus areas were conveyed as part of discussions held during the 2026 Investing in African Mining Indaba, specifically from a session on February 9, titled 'Building Critical Minerals Value Chains in South Africa: An Investor Dialogue'.

TIA participated in the dialogue alongside Mineral and Petroleum Resources Minister **Gwede Mantashe**; Transport Minister **Barbara Creecy**; Trade, Industry and Competition Minister **Parks Tau**; Electricity and Energy Deputy Minister **Samantha Graham-Maré**; and Water and Sanitation Minister **Pemmy Majodina**.

The ministerial segment emphasised innovation as a key mechanism for strengthening South Africa's position in global critical minerals value chains and highlighted government's commitment to positioning the country as a reliable supplier and value-adding hub for critical minerals required for the global energy transition, digitalisation and advanced manufacturing.

Going forward, Tyira says innovation must play a central role in unlocking that greater value from South Africa's mineral resources, adding that the "real opportunity" for South Africa lies not only in mining critical minerals, but in beneficiation, advanced processing and technology development.

"Innovation enables the country to move beyond being a raw materials exporter towards becoming a technology-driven, value-adding economy that is globally competitive and locally impactful," he says.

Further, against a backdrop of geopolitical uncertainty, supply-chain disruptions, climate imperatives and rapid technological change, Tyira notes that mining companies face growing operational pressures, including declining productivity, rising costs, safety risks and environmental compliance requirements. Taking these into account, he says African miners must invest in innovation to address these challenges.

In response to these challenges, Tyira reiterates TIA's role in supporting the large-scale deployment of locally developed technologies aimed at addressing industry challenges while unlocking new economic opportunities.

Through targeted investments in strategic innovation programmes and projects across mining, energy, water and the circular economy, TIA supports the derisking of technologies designed to improve extraction and processing efficiencies, enable local manufacturing and strengthen energy transition value chains.

Moreover, Tyira adds that modernising South Africa's mining and critical minerals sector requires closer collaboration between government, mining companies, technology developers, research institutions and investors.

"TIA plays a system-integrator role by bringing these stakeholders together around shared priorities, ensuring that innovation is translated into practical solutions that unlock value, strengthen competitiveness and support inclusive, sustainable growth," he concludes.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E716433



US grant boosts rare earths prefeasibility at Monte Muambe

DEVINA HARIPERSAD | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER

A $1.87-million grant agreement signed with the US Trade and Development Agency for the prefeasibility stage of exploration and development company Altona Rare Earth's Monte Muambe project, based in Mozambique, marks a key development milestone for the project, says company CEO **Cedric Simonet**.

The expression of support was announced during a US critical minerals pre-event, hosted in affiliation with the Investing in African Mining Indaba, held in Cape Town, and formalised in a signing ceremony at the US Embassy in Maputo two weeks later.

Simonet confirms that the grant will be used to fund the metallurgy and process engineering components of the rare earths prefeasibility, including a short drilling campaign to obtain fresh samples, and to update the financial model and valuation.

The US support aligns with Altona Rare Earths' near-term development programme on the Monte Muambe rare earths project.

"This will allow us to focus our resources on the rapid development of the fluorspar project towards construction in 2027," he says.

Simonet also presented updates on the Monte Muambe rare earths project, which forms part of the group's large-scale, long-term development focus, as well as on the smaller, higher-grade fluorspar project and associated gallium potential, which are positioned as nearer-term production opportunities within the same mining licence.

Addressing the sequencing of the projects within the same mining licence, Simonet explains that Monte Muambe's carbonatite deposit hosts multiple mineral commodities, with rare earths, fluorspar and gallium proving to be of specific interest.

He notes that the rare earths mineralisation at Monte Muambe is enriched in the central portion of the 2.5-km-diameter carbonatite intrusion, while high-grade fluorspar, with associated gallium mineralisation, occurs along the edges of the deposit.

"The rare earths project has progressed to prefeasibility stage and involves capital expenditure of more than $200-million and a development timeline of about five years.

"By contrast, the fluorspar project – at scoping study stage and, owing to its smaller scale, higher grade and capital requirement of less than $20-million – is expected to advance more rapidly towards production," explains Simonet.

Because of differences in mineralisation, project dynamics and spatial distribution, the two projects are being advanced at the same time but as separate project streams.

On the rare earths prefeasibility work, Simonet says the immediate focus is on further derisking metallurgy and process engineering.

"Due to the number of minerals and chemical elements involved, metallurgy is always the most challenging aspect of any rare earths project," he explains, adding that ongoing work is expected to unlock cost reductions. The hydrometallurgy component currently represents 50% of operating expenditure and can be reduced through optimisation of the beneficiation component.

Fluorspar, Gallium Interests

Exploration work completed on Monte Muambe's fluorspar and gallium zones in 2025 saw the extension of mineralisation beyond a historical fluorspar resource that covered only a limited portion of the deposit.

"Drilling included both infill holes in previously drilled areas and new holes on fresh targets, with the aim of delivering an updated mineral resource estimate [MRE]," says Simonet.

The 2025 exploration work resulted in the discovery of gallium occurrences closely associated with fluorspar mineralisation.

The forthcoming MRE will therefore cover both fluorspar and gallium, while metallurgical options to extract gallium as a potential by-product remain under review.

In terms of minerals beneficiation, Simonet says Altona Rare Earths plans to produce 50 000 t/y of acid-grade fluorspar.

"Depending on the outcome of the MRE and further drilling planned later this year on undrilled targets, production capacity could increase to closer to 100 000 t/y."

Historical metallurgical work indicates recoveries of about 65% at standard acid-grade fluorspar specifications, while representative ore samples are currently undergoing advanced metallurgical testing in South Africa to confirm the final flow sheet, process parameters and product specifications.

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TECHNICAL WORK
The US support aligns with Altona Rare Earth's near-term programme by funding technical work on the Monte Muambe rare earths project

• From page 48

Mthenjane notes that mining is a powerful multiplier and that growing mining grows the economy and jobs," said Van Zyl.

Strengthening mining's developmental impact also relies on strong international project relationships, he said, adding that with growing involvement of China-based mining companies and financial institutions in Africa's mining sector, SRK Consulting collaborates with colleagues across its practices in China to support project delivery across the continent.

"This kind of technical collaboration is always rewarding – facilitating sound communication and expectations across the project pipeline. This has particularly supported our work in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana and Zambia, but also in a growing selection of other countries around [Africa]," concluded Van Zyl.

COUPON ON PAGE 20 E716444

MineShift 2026 reframing Africa's role in the precious-metals value chain

The future of African mining will not be defined solely by how much the continent can extract, but by what it builds, retains and passes on through value creation, says MetCon MD **Grant Crosse**.

One of the most advanced precious-metals refineries in South Africa, the company recently hosted its annual MineShift event at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba, in Cape Town, which Crosse described as strategic and deliberate.

The event is designed to shape the week's agenda before conversations turn fully to capital allocation, policy direction and upstream production. While Mining Indaba traditionally focuses on extraction and investment flows, MineShift positions beneficiation and downstream participation as foundational – not secondary – to Africa's mining future.

"By convening ahead of the main event, MineShift broadens the dialogue from production volumes to value retention, industrial development and long-term economic resilience. It encourages delegates to consider Africa's role across the full precious-metals value chain," states Crosse.

Originally beneficiation-focused, MineShift has evolved into a cross-value-chain platform. Today it brings together mining companies grappling with declining exploration pipelines, refiners investing in advanced compliance systems, fabricators expanding domestic manufacturing capability, jewellers building brand identity and investors reassessing gold and platinum as strategic monetary assets.

"Gold has reasserted itself not simply as a hedge against inflation but as a core monetary asset in an increasingly unstable global system," advances Crosse.

Against this backdrop, MineShift connects upstream production with downstream fabrication and investment products, reinforcing the view that beneficiation is not a tax on mining, but simply adding value to an already established value chain.

MineShift is intentionally designed to unlock meaningful partnerships, structured as a purposeful networking event that gives participants the space to engage in important, solution-driven conversations. Alignment often emerges between upstream producers and downstream manufacturers seeking shared expansion, mining houses partnering with refiners on locally fabricated products, and regulators and broader market participants working alongside the refining sector to integrate artisanal and small-scale mining into formal supply chains.


Grant Crosse

Leadership is central to this process, with Crosse noting that in his lifetime he hopes to see and to work alongside brave leaders, willing to take risks, to develop something new and to invest ahead of certainty. By convening stakeholders in one forum, MineShift creates space for commercially grounded partnerships built on long-term objectives.

The platform also addresses structural tensions head-on. Constrained new supply, declining exploration and expanding conflict-affected and high-risk area (CAHRA) classifications present real challenges.

"Around 50% of African countries are now regarded as CAHRAs," Crosse notes, warning that excessive friction can have unintended consequences.

"When legitimate routes are blocked or overwhelmed with friction, darker supply chains inevitably fill the gap."

The emphasis, he argues, must be constructive engagement, because "progressive improvement matters far more than exclusion".

While beneficiation across Africa remains uneven, there are signs of progress. Private-sector investment in fabrication is rising, and industry bodies are moving toward progressive-improvement models that encourage inclusion within formal supply chains. Importantly, Crosse cautions against framing beneficiation as a moral obligation or add-on, but rather as adding value.

MineShift contributes to reframing Africa not merely as a source of raw material, but as a centre of refining and manufacturing capability. By showcasing high-purity platinum minting, downstream product development and locally designed jewellery, the platform demonstrates that responsible refining and fabrication are commercially viable within African jurisdictions.

As global interest in gold strengthens, Crosse believes the continent stands at a pivotal moment.

"The world we live in is shifting. MineShift exists to ensure that Africa does not simply observe that shift but actively shapes its role within it – asking not only how much it produces, but how fully it participates."

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AECI champions partnership-led progress at Mining Indaba 2026



Diversified group AECI used its participation at Mining Indaba 2026 to translate conversations into solid outcomes that strengthen mines, communities and the environment, aligning closely with the event's theme, 'Stronger together: Progress through partnership'.

According to the company, the Indaba provides a critical platform to collaborate with like-minded partners across the mining value chain to integrate blasting science, process chemistry and water stewardship into a coordinated approach that enhances resilience across the mining ecosystem.

At its stand, AECI showcased its integrated mining offering, including precision electronic initiation systems, modern bulk explosives and digital blast design tools designed to improve safety and deliver more consistent fragmentation. In the chemicals space, the focus is on targeted reagents and process aids aimed at improving recovery in complex platinum-group metals and copper operations, where ore bodies and processing challenges continue to intensify.

The company believes collaboration is increasingly essential as the mining sector evolves. Growth and sustainable development, it says, depend on strong partnerships between governments, mining companies, investors, communities and technology providers. AECI positions itself as a connector, actively bringing these stakeholders together to address shared priorities such as safety, skills development and sustainability.

Early engagement with regulators is highlighted as a way to unlock value by addressing operational bottlenecks before they escalate, while structured collaborative programmes can support local enterprise development and job creation. At the operational level, close planning with customers ensures that technologies and solutions are designed for on-site realities rather than theoretical applications.

Beyond operations, AECI points to community partnerships as a cornerstone of its strategy, noting that its licence to operate is closely tied to the wellbeing of host communities. The company has moved beyond compliance-driven initiatives to programmes focused on creating lasting social and economic impact.

Flagship initiatives such as Olivers Village and the Level Up Programme combine off-grid infrastructure, renewable energy and local enterprise development to stimulate sustainable livelihoods. These projects support job creation in areas including agri-entrepreneurship, water conservation and community-based baking, while also reducing environmental impact and strengthening local value chains.

Through its Cradle-to-Career Programme, AECI is investing in long-term human capital development by supporting learners from early childhood through tertiary education and into their professional lives, helping to build a pipeline of future-ready talent for the industry.

AECI invites clients to engage with its team to explore how collaborative approaches can help build a stronger, more sustainable mining future – together.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which AECI executive VP for mining Stuart Miller speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

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AMIS supports African mining industry with Certified Reference Materials



AMIS is part of The Particle Group, an ISO-accredited manufacturer and international supplier of matrix-matched Certified Reference Materials (CRMs) for the mining and mineral exploration industry.

Mining Weekly interviewed AMIS group business development manager **Siyanda Gumede** at the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town, where he discussed why collaboration is important in the mining sector to unlock growth opportunities and drive sustainable development.



AMIS holds ISO 9001 certification for quality management, ISO/IEC 17034 accreditation as a CRM producer and ISO/IEC 17043 accreditation as a proficiency testing provider, underscoring its commitment to quality, technical competence and analytical confidence.

Most of AMIS's CRMs are commissioned by mining companies, designed to reflect real-world sample matrices and concentration ranges. The company's CRMs support robust quality assurance and/or quality control programmes, method validation and ongoing analytical performance monitoring.

In addition to CRM production, AMIS provides mineral laboratories with an independent and confidential inter-laboratory testing scheme (proficiency testing) service.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which AMIS, part of The Particle Group, group business development manager Siyanda Gumede speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba.

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BME Metallurgy positioned to better serve African mining industry



BME Metallurgy is the minerals processing division of explosives manufacturer BME, a subsidiary of diversified chemicals group Omnia Holdings. It was previously known as Protea Mining Chemicals (PMC), until Omnia Holdings aligned PMC with BME to form a unified mining segment in 2024.

A mining chemicals supplier for more than 50 years, the company showcased its offering at this year's Investing in African Mining Indaba.

BME Metallurgy's team of expert metallurgists and product specialists deliver advanced solutions across mineral processing, hydrometallurgy, pyrometallurgy and biometallurgy, supporting mines to enhance metal extraction and recovery efficiency. By combining innovation, safety and efficiency, BME Metallurgy offers tailored approaches that address each site's unique minerals recovery challenges.



The company's innovative chemical products and technical expertise assist customers in achieving sustainable and optimised results for their minerals processing operations, redefining resource recovery with solutions that maximise ore value while reducing environmental impact and operational costs.

BME Metallurgy delivers minerals processing solutions in Africa and beyond with a footprint covering 19 countries, including South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Eswatini, Tanzania, Guinea, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal.



Lefa Masiuana

Mining Weekly interviewed BME Mining Chemicals GM **Lefa Masiuana** at the company's Mining Indaba stand about how BME Metallurgy is positioned to better serve the mining industry, especially in Africa.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which BME, a subsidiary of Omnia Holdings, GM Lefa Masiuana speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba.

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Anton Lourens

Booyco Electronics lists imperatives for efficient PDS

Ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba, mine safety original-equipment manufacturer Booyco Electronics emphasised the critical role of collaboration in advancing proximity detection systems (PDS) across Africa.

CEO **Anton Lourens** tells *Mining Weekly* that collaboration among mining companies, manufacturers and technology partners is essential for efficient PDS deployment, particularly for operations that lack comprehensive PDS implementation according to mandatory Level 9 vehicle intervention regulations.

Collaboration helps in identifying the best fit for evolving technologies and integrating them into PDS solutions – without needing to reinvent the wheel.

As a recognised leader in PDS, Booyco Electronics has developed advanced systems capable of seamless integration across diverse mining operations. The greater challenge, however, lies in the mines' ability to integrate PDS effectively within their operational frameworks.

Change management is often a barrier to PDS adoption, Lourens points out, explaining that successful PDS deployments involve staff being part of the adoption and implementation journey. "A structured change management process helps people understand the technology, its limitations and the benefits of PDS."

Lourens mentions another crucial contributor to effective PDS deployment being accurate and up-to-date baseline risk assessments, as well as traffic management plans. These form the foundation for comprehensive PDS interventions.

He suggests that mines embed PDS into their broader risk mitigation strategies, ensuring the technology complements rather than disrupts existing systems and production flows.



"Operational readiness requires leadership commitment, structured change management and extensive communication to foster understanding of system functionality and value."

Lourens concludes that by complementing technical excellence with stakeholder collaboration, Booyco Electronics continues to set the benchmark for safety technology in mining, enabling operations to meet regulatory requirements and achieve genuine advances in collision avoidance.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Booyco Electronics CEO Anton Lourens is interviewed by *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

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Booyco Engineering advancing mine safety and operator health through collaborative innovation





Brenton Spies



Creating safer and healthier working environments is an increasing priority for the global mining industry, particularly as regulatory requirements tighten and operating conditions become more complex. These themes were unpacked when Booyco Engineering MD Brenton Spies was interviewed by *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

Spies discussed how Booyco Engineering works closely with mining companies to improve operator health and safety, and why strong partnerships with customers and industry stakeholders are essential in today's demanding regulatory and operational climate. He reflected on the challenges of achieving ISO 23875 compliance in harsh mining environments and how collaboration with original-equipment manufacturers and mine operators helps to ensure reliable air quality and effective operator protection.

The conversation also focused on the role of innovation driven by collaboration, including Booyco Engineering's partnerships with global technology leaders such as Sy-Klone, which have contributed to advances in environmental control within mining cabs. Spies further explained how real-time air-quality and exposure data is being used in partnership with clients to support proactive health management and strengthen environmental, social and governance reporting.

Spies concluded the conversation by outlining how Booyco Engineering positions itself as a long-term partner – going beyond the supply of heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems to help mines to enhance equipment reliability, reduce downtime and improve overall operational performance.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Booyco Engineering MD Brenton Spies is interviewed by *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

BOOYCO ENGINEERING

www.booyco.co.za

Cementation Africa unpacks the critical transition from mine development to production





Graham Chamberlain

Mining projects face their greatest technical and operational risks during the transition from development into steady state production, a critical phase that can determine long-term performance and value. This challenge was in focus when *Mining Weekly* interviewed underground mining contractor Cementation Africa new business director Graham Chamberlain at the company's stand during the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town in February.

Chamberlain unpacked why this transition phase is often underestimated, despite being one of the most complex stages in a mine's lifecycle. He discussed how schedule pressure, incomplete systems, skills shortages and commissioning challenges can significantly increase risk if not managed correctly.

Cementation Africa's specialist expertise in underground mine development positions the company to support clients through this high-risk period. Chamberlain highlighted the company's role in key development activities, including shaft sinking, decline and infrastructure development, and early operational readiness, all aimed at helping mines achieve safe and sustainable steady state production.

The discussion also explored the management systems and processes Cementation Africa implements to ensure quality, safety and efficiency across projects, as well as how innovation and digital technologies – such as remote-controlled equipment – are being integrated without compromising safety.

Finally, Chamberlain explained why Cementation Africa is a trusted partner for mining companies that lack the in-house capacity to transition from development into operations, offering end-to-end capability, proven systems and deep operational experience across the African mining sector.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Cementation Africa business director Graham Chamberlain speaks to *Mining Weekly* at the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

Cementation
WE BUILD MINES. SAFELY.
www.cementationafrica.com

Donaldson targets integrated filtration partnerships in African mining





Filtration specialist Donaldson Filtration Solutions is strengthening its focus on Africa's mining sector, positioning the continent as a strategic growth region while deepening collaboration across its organisation and partner network.

Donaldson is enhancing its already well-established focus in the African mining sector by bringing greater alignment across its mobile, industrial, and hydraulics filtration capabilities - strengthening how it supports integrated filtration needs on mine sites to help reduce downtime, improve asset availability, and lower total cost of ownership.

"Mining is a priority in Africa for Donaldson. It really is what we built our brand on, and globally, Africa is a strategic growth area for Donaldson," said sales director **Cameron Diesel**.

Through a unified strategic approach, the company is leading the shift away from standalone components towards comprehensive filtration solutions, engineered for long-term performance.

Diesel noted that executive-level engagements at Indaba centred on reducing downtime, improving asset availability and lowering total cost of ownership. "We want to take the strain of dealing with filtration away from them. They operate their mine. We improve their filtration, and they get all of those benefits," he explained.

A key challenge, he added, is the fragmented way filtration is often managed on mines, leading to reactive "firefighting" responses. Donaldson is advocating earlier engagement and collaborative planning to enhance sustainability and operational reliability.

The company's partnership model spans multiple levels: internal collaboration across Donaldson divisions; close cooperation with authorised distributors able to hold inventory and deploy technical personnel on site; and corporate-level partnerships with global mining houses.

Central to this approach is our ambition to deliver a "single interface" model, where one Donaldson representative coordinates the broader technical and commercial ecosystem behind the scenes.

"We want to simplify the way we work, because mining is a complex business, and we want to improve on the solutions we offer, and increase the value we add," Diesel said.

With Africa continuing to attract mining investment, Donaldson intends to build on relationships forged at Mining Indaba and drive innovation and sustainable performance across the sector.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Donaldson Filtration sales director Cameron Diesel speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba.

Donaldson
FILTRATION SOLUTIONS

www.donaldson.com

AN

Dunlop Belting Products expands role as technology partner to mining sector



Dunlop Belting Products' R&D centre conducts pre-process, in-process and post-process testing of compounds, splices and finished belts

South African conveyor belts manufacturer Dunlop Belting Products has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, evolving from a traditional conveyor belt manufacturer into a fully integrated partner to the mining industry.

The company now combines large-scale local manufacturing with research capabilities, advanced testing, and a nationwide service footprint, supporting operations across South Africa's mining provinces.

"Dunlop Belting Products today is completely different from what it was a few years ago. We are no longer just a conveyor belt manufacturer, but a fully integrated, technology-enabled partner to the mining sector," says Dunlop Belting Products CEO **Mbuso Thabethe**.

Mining companies are increasingly prioritising supply certainty and consistent product performance as global supply chains remain exposed to shipping delays, geopolitical instability and inconsistent imported quality.

In response, Dunlop Belting Products has invested more than R300-million in plant, equipment and technology to strengthen local capacity and reduce reliance on imports.

The scale of the operation remains a defining feature. The facility produces more than 3 000 m of conveyor belting daily across seven presses (soon to be nine) and employs over 1 000 skilled South Africans.

"The mining sector can no longer afford the risks associated with delayed shipping and inconsistent imported quality. Local manufacturing at the right scale allows mines to secure a reliable supply within South Africa's borders," Thabethe explains.

Beyond manufacturing, Dunlop Belting Products has placed major emphasis on validation and performance assurance.

The company recently established an advanced research and development centre that conducts pre-process, in-process and post-process testing of compounds, splices and finished belts.

All testing conforms to SABS and SANS standards and is subject to a yearly audit. A large-scale testing unit replicating underground conditions also allows fire-resistant Type F conveyor belts to be evaluated under simulated operating environments before installation.

Complementing its physical capabilities, Dunlop Belting Products has introduced Dunlop Pulse, an AI-based platform designed to manage the full life cycle of a conveyor belt. The system correlates manufacturing measurements with real operating data from the conveyor, creating a digital twin that provides a single operational view of belt condition.

By analysing load, speed, temperature, alignment and visual surface condition, the platform predicts failure probability, identifies defects such as tears or mistracking, and guides maintenance decisions before downtime occurs. This creates a closed-loop feedback system between the mine and the factory, enabling continuous improvement of both belt design and operational performance.

"In mining, safety, uptime and compliance are non-negotiable. Every compound, splice and finished belt is tested and validated before it reaches site," says Thabethe.

While imported products may appear less expensive upfront, Dunlop Belting Products emphasises lifecycle performance over initial purchase price. Reliability, reduced downtime and predictable performance ultimately determine operational cost.

Dunlop Belting Products continues to invest in capacity, technology and materials development, positioning local manufacturing, validated testing and integrated services as key to improving reliability and reducing risk for mining operators across the region.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Dunlop Belting Products CEO Mbuso Thabethe speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

DUNLOP BELTING PRODUCTS

www.dbp.co.za

Enaex Africa's expertise translate into real value for African mining operations

Enaex Africa is a specialist provider of industrial explosives, initiating systems and integrated blasting services to Africa's mining and quarrying sectors.

As part of the global Enaex Group, the company supports surface and underground operations with end-to-end solutions that enhance blast performance, safety and cost efficiency.

With operations across multiple African jurisdictions, Enaex Africa delivers on-site bulk explosive manufacturing, advanced electronic initiation systems and mine-specific blast design and optimisation, supported by experienced technical teams and digital blasting technologies.



Serving major commodities and large-scale mining projects, Enaex Africa partners closely with clients to improve fragmentation, downstream productivity and environmental outcomes, while maintaining strict compliance with local regulations and international safety standards.

Mining Weekly interviewed Enaex Africa CEO **Francisco Baudrand** at the Investing in African Mining Indaba where he discussed the key initiatives that have positioned the company as a technology and innovation leader in Africa.



Francisco Baudrand

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Enaex Africa CEO Francisco Baudrand speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba.

Enaex Africa

www.enaex.co.za

AN

FLS strengthening aftermarket support to unlock long-term mining performance

As mining operations across Africa become more complex, remote and cost-conscious, the role of strong aftermarket and service support is increasingly critical to sustaining performance and reliability. These themes were explored when minerals processing supplier FLS sales and service head for Africa Bernard Kaninda was interviewed by *Mining Weekly* during the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town in February.

Kaninda discussed how FLS is strengthening its aftermarket and service capabilities to better support mining customers across the continent, particularly as operational footprints expand into more challenging environments. He highlighted the importance of lifecycle support – from commissioning through to long-term maintenance – in helping African mines extract greater value, reliability and availability from FLS equipment.

The conversation also focused on how FLS is leveraging digital tools, remote monitoring and data-driven insights to enhance service responsiveness and reduce unplanned downtime. Kaninda explained how these technologies enable faster diagnostics, proactive maintenance and improved decision-making for mine operators.

Finally, Kaninda outlined how FLS is tailoring its aftermarket solutions to help mines improve efficiency and manage operating costs, while continuing to invest in skills development, local partnerships and regional service infrastructure to ensure fast, reliable support wherever customers operate across Africa.





Bernard Kaninda

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which FLS sales and service head for Africa Bernard Kaninda speaks to *Mining Weekly* at the Investing in African Mining Indaba.

FLS

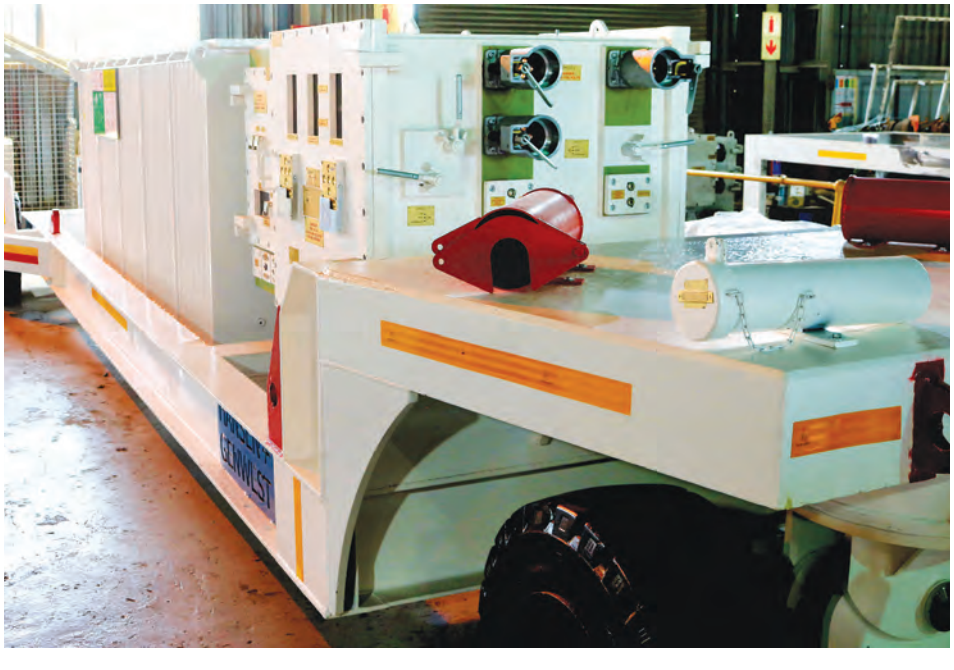
www.fls.com

Hansen + Genwest powers mining, industry for 50 years



Reliable electrical infrastructure remains fundamental to the performance and safety of mining and heavy industrial operations. These issues were in focus when transformer and switchgear manufacturer Hansen + Genwest head of sales Bhavesh Parbhoo was interviewed by *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba hosted in Cape Town.

During the interview, Parbhoo reflected on Hansen + Genwest's 50-year legacy supplying electrical solutions to South Africa's industrial and mining sectors, highlighting the key factors that have underpinned the company's longevity and strong market reputation. He explained the engineering capabilities behind the company's dry-type vacuum-pressure impregnated transformers, switchgear and motors, which have become benchmarks for underground and flameproof applications in demanding mining environments.



The discussion also explored how Hansen + Genwest's 24/7 nationwide service and support model helps customers maintain uptime in critical operations, positioning service as a core differentiator.

Parbhoo further outlined the value of local manufacturing, explaining how producing transformers and electrical solutions in South Africa enhances quality control, reliability and customer confidence.

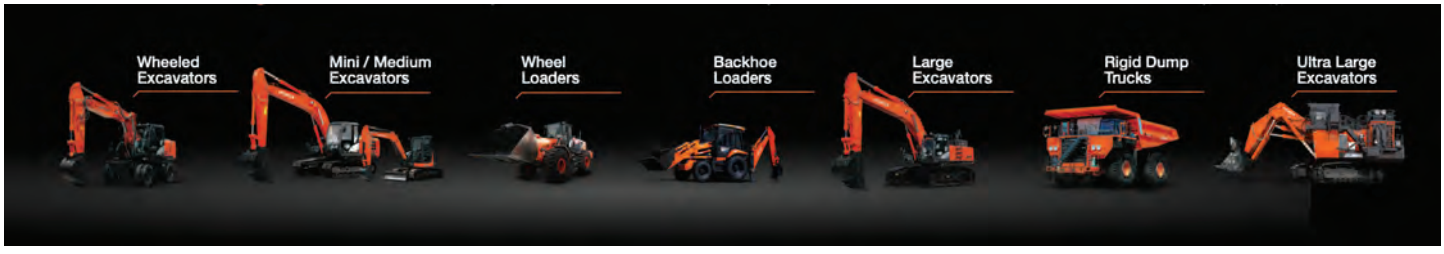
He further shared insights into the strategic opportunities and technological advancements shaping Hansen + Genwest's next chapter, as the company continues to support the evolving needs of mining and heavy industry in the decades to come.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Hansen + Genwest, head of sales Bhavesh Parbhoo is interviewed by *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

HANSEN + GENWEST

www.hansen-genwest.co.za

Hitachi Construction Machinery Africa highlights electric, hybrid haulage at Mining Indaba



At this year's Investing in African Mining Indaba, Hitachi Construction Machinery Africa used its presence to showcase its broad mining equipment range and growing focus on low-carbon and safety-driven solutions for African operations.

Mining equipment sales representative **Kohei Mino** noted that the company supplies machines ranging from small excavators to ultra-large 800 t-class excavators, along with rigid dump trucks with payload capacities from 180 t to 300 t. Beyond supplying equipment, the company positions itself as a solutions partner, offering parts support, manufacturing capability and integrated fleet management systems.

Mino said the event provides an opportunity to engage both existing and new customers at a strategic level, enabling discussions not only around current operations but also longer-term mine planning and technology direction.

A key focus area is decarbonisation. The company recently completed a proof-of-concept trial of a 220 t-class fully battery-electric rigid dump truck at an operating mine in Zambia, running from 2024 into last year. The trial demonstrated the viability of battery haulage in real mining conditions.

However, he stressed that no single technology fits all sites. Because battery trucks typically require trolley catenary infrastructure, the company is also developing a hybrid dump truck solution. A new proof of concept is scheduled to begin next year, with expected carbon emission reductions of about 10% to 15% without requiring major electrical infrastructure.

Regional needs are also shaping solutions. In South Africa, safety systems are a priority, while in Botswana, where skilled labour can be scarce, the company is promoting remote-operated excavators and dig-assist technologies to support productivity with less experienced operators.



Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Hitachi Construction Machinery Africa mining equipment sales representative, Kohei Mino speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba.

HITACHI
Reliable Solutions
Hitachi Construction Machinery Group
LANDCROS
Japanese Excellence—Reliable Solutions
https://www.hitachicm.com/za/en/

Reliable compressed air systems remain critical for mining operations



Hitachi Global Air Power, part of Hitachi Industrial Equipment Systems Co. Ltd., supplies compressed air solutions used in demanding sectors including mining, construction and manufacturing. Its portfolio includes oil-flooded and oil-free compressors, portable compressors and a full range of aftermarket support designed to ensure reliable long-term operation in demanding environments.

Speaking to *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* at the Investing in African Mining Indaba, Hitachi Global Air Power regional sales manager for sub-Saharan Africa **Donald Good** said the event provides an important opportunity to engage directly with the industry and better understand the challenges mining operators are facing across the region.

"Compressed air is a critical utility in many mining processes, so efficiency, reliability and long-term performance are essential," said Good. "Operators are increasingly looking for solutions that help reduce energy consumption while maintaining productivity.

"Mining Indaba brings together customers, partners and industry leaders from across Africa. For us it's about listening, sharing insights and strengthening relationships that support long-term development in the sector."





Donald Good

A key focus for the company is to continue to develop high-efficiency compressed air technologies and connected solutions that support improved operational performance.

Through its network of distributors across Africa, Hitachi Global Air Power works closely with mining operators to provide locally supported compressed air systems designed to meet the specific demands of mining environments.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Hitachi Global Air Power regional sales manager Donald Good speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba.

HITACHI

https://europe.sullair.com/en

Komatsu Mining is creating shared value





The Komatsu Mining group has a storied history in mining, providing solutions to the underground coal mining industry for more than 100 years.

Simon Andrews

The company showcased its offering at this year's Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town, where *Mining Weekly* interviewed Komatsu Mining Soft Rock Africa VP **Simon Andrews**.

Komatsu Mining has been active in the industrial minerals market with its high-quality equipment, specially designed machines and advanced technologies – all with the journey to zero harm in mind.

Its vision is to work as one integrated team in a collaborative, motivated transparent and supportive environment, servicing customers with the highest level of application and technical knowledge. Today, the company has come a long way from where it started.

"We have evolved into a truly global company with a diverse workforce comprised of different nationalities and beliefs. And it's by harnessing the potential of all our different talents and unique perspectives that we push ourselves further."

The company has explored and helped to advance the boundaries of technology, developing smart equipment. In communities across the globe, it finds purpose in creating value through manufacturing and technology innovation to empower a sustainable future where people, business and the planet thrive together.

By harnessing Komatsu Mining collective expertise to go further, the company stays true to its brand promise of creating value together.



Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Komatsu Mining Soft Rock Africa VP Simon Andrews speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba.

KOMATSU

www.komatsu.com/en-za

MacLean Engineering attends this year's Mining Indaba



The EC3 Emulsion Charger in operation at a mine site in Africa

Underground mobile equipment solutions specialist MacLean Engineering offers hard-rock mining experience, multi-discipline engineering capability, unit-of-one manufacturing expertise and worldwide customer service and support.

Mining Weekly interviewed MacLean Engineering GM Africa **John-Paul Theunissen** ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town, where he underlined the company's commitment to engaging with current customers and connecting with new prospects.

The company's product suite includes platform and utility bolters, shotcrete sprayers and transmixers in the ground support category, as well as remote operated blockholer drills, mobile rock breakers and water cannons in the ore flow/secondary reduction category. This is in addition to Mine-Mate scissor lifts, boom lifts, boom trucks, ANFO/emulsion chargers, personnel carriers, fuel/lube trucks, cassette trucks, fan and pipe handlers, and service drills in the utility vehicles and attachments category.

MacLean has been innovating for hard-rock mining mobile equipment safety and productivity for over 50 years, supporting customers worldwide with branches across Canada as well as in Mexico, Peru, Africa, Australia and the US.

The latest chapter in the MacLean innovation story is the introduction of full-fleet electrification, integrating best-in-class battery and electric drive technology to deliver a safe, proven, low-maintenance and data-rich option for diesel-free operations in the underground environment.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which *Mining Weekly* spoke to MacLean Engineering GM Africa John-Paul Theunissen ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

MacLean AFRICA

https://macleanengineering.com/en-za/

DSTI discusses the importance of partnerships, collaboration in driving progress in mining



With the Investing in African Mining Indaba this year rallying participants around the theme "Stronger together: Progress through partnerships," collaboration between the public and private sector came sharply into focus.

Speaking to *Mining Weekly* following the event in Cape Town, Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) Deputy Director-General Dr **Mmboneni Muofhe** emphasised the role of partnerships and collaboration not only between government and the private sector but also those communities surrounding mining operations.

"Collaboration in the mining sector becomes crucial, because there are many players," he highlighted.

One such player is the Mandela Mining Precinct, a public–private partnership between the DSTI, through the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and the mining industry, represented by Minerals Council South Africa.

The precinct acts as an enabler for the development of both technological and people-centred solutions. While its immediate focus is on strengthening South Africa's mining industry, the benefits are intended to extend across the Southern African Development Community and, ultimately, the broader African continent.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Department of Science, Technology and Innovation Deputy Director-General Dr **Mmboneni Muofhe** speaks to *Mining Weekly* following the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

science, technology & innovation
Department:
Science, Technology and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

CSIR
technology innovation AGENCY
SANSA SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SPACE AGENCY
MANDELA MINING PRECINCT MINDS FOR MINES

www.dsti.gov.za

MechProTech engineers the future of modular mineral processing

In an industry defined by vast distances and challenging terrains, the ability to innovate and adapt is paramount. MechProTech is an emerging global player by embracing this very principle, designing and delivering robust, modular processing plants that bring unparalleled flexibility and efficiency to local and international mining operations.

MechProTech's engineering excellence is allowing the company to establish an international footprint. With recent and ongoing projects in Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Canada, the US, and across sub-Saharan Africa, the company has proven its capability to deliver in diverse and demanding environments.

This expanding global presence is being reinforced with new offices in Toronto, Canada, and Brisbane, Australia, ensuring closer collaboration and support for its international clients.

Proven Excellence in Key Projects

The company's reputation for reliability and performance is underscored by landmark orders. MechProTech recently secured its first orders for its largest mills to date, comprising two GDM3065 mills for a major project in Zambia and two for a prominent South African gold mine.

Further, its expertise is being leveraged in specialised reagent plant projects across Canada and the US, highlighting its diverse capabilities in the hydrometallurgy sector.

The Modular Advantage: Mobility and Efficiency

At the heart of MechProTech philosophy is a game-changing approach to plant design. Its modular equipment is engineered to be easily movable, fundamentally shifting the operational paradigm.

"Our core concept is to take the equipment to the orebody, rather than bringing the orebody to the equipment," the company states.

This mobility not only provides unmatched operational flexibility but also significantly reduces civil construction requirements and associated costs, delivering a faster, more economical path to production.

Comprehensive Product Portfolio

MechProTech offers end-to-end solutions across the mineral processing circuit:

- Comminution: A full range of crushers, mills and scrubbers.
- Classification: High-performance rotary barrel screens and vibrating screens.
- Hydrometallurgy: Specialised reagent plants, thickeners, and mixers.
- Materials handling: Integrated systems including feeders, conveyors, and radial stackers.
- Pilot Plants: Custom-designed pilot plants that seamlessly scale to full production facilities.

Innovating for a Sustainable Future

Demonstrating a forward-looking vision, MechProTech has entered a new product category: electronic waste processing equipment and plants.

This strategic expansion into e-waste processing positions the company at the forefront of the circular economy, providing sustainable solutions for the world's growing electronic waste challenge.

Powered by Engineering Expertise

MechProTech's significant growth over the last three years is powered by its greatest asset: its people.

The company has strategically resourced a dedicated team of 25 engineers, encompassing mechanical, electrical, process and civil disciplines.

This multidisciplinary expertise ensures that every project is backed by integrated, world class engineering from concept to completion. Driven by innovation, proven by performance, and powered by expert engineering, MechProTech is not just a supplier but a strategic partner for the future of mining and processing.



Evan Bird

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which MechProTech Director: Group Technical & Business Development Evan Bird speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Mining Indaba.

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MINROM highlights value-driven mining solutions at Mining Indaba

Mineral Resource Management consulting firm MINROM Consulting is positioning itself as a key partner for mining entrepreneurs seeking to unlock greater value from mineral resource assets across Africa, as demand grows for technically robust and economically optimised projects.

Mining Weekly spoke to MINROM Consulting CEO **Oscar van Antwerpen** ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town. During the interview he outlined the company's focus on uncovering hidden project value through scientific investigation and advanced modelling.

Headquartered in South Africa, MINROM operates from Cape Town with remote offices in Namibia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and the Arabian Shield, giving the firm a strong footprint across key African mining jurisdictions. The company specialises in mineral exploration, three-dimensional geological and geometallurgical modelling, and mining engineering, supporting clients from early-stage discovery through to optimised mine planning.

MINROM's core purpose is to harness the untapped potential of mineral assets by identifying opportunities to increase net present value through improved geological understanding, optimal pit design and capital-efficient engineering solutions. By applying innovative exploration techniques, geometalurgical block modelling and advanced modelling technologies, the firm aims to support sustainable extraction strategies that enhance shareholder value.

MINROM has experience across a range of commodities and deposit types, including base metals, industrial minerals, critical metals, battery minerals, precious metals and gemstones. This breadth of expertise has contributed to numerous successful projects globally, reinforcing the firm's role in helping mining developers and investors make informed, value-driven decisions in increasingly complex mineral markets.





Oscar van Antwerpen

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which *Mining Weekly* speaks to MINROM Consulting CEO Oscar van Antwerpen ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

MINROM

https://minrom.com/

Multotec's commitment to innovation in building Africa's mining future

As a leading mineral processing solutions provider, Multotec delivers an extensive portfolio of advanced products that boost efficiency and elevate performance across mining operations.



At Mining Indaba 2026, Multotec focused on forging partnerships that advance sustainability and responsible resource stewardship.

With a clear vision for Africa's mining future, the company is dedicated to delivering solutions that generate lasting environmental and social value.

As a true solutions partner, Multotec helps customers extract maximum value from their investments through comprehensive after-sales support and customised training programs, available both online and on-site.

Multotec's ambition across Africa is clear: to establish itself as the region's go-to innovation partner.

By harnessing local expertise and talent, the company is building sustainable operations that invest in communities, optimise resource efficiency, minimise waste, and reduce environmental impact – creating a legacy of responsible mining for generations to come.

Beyond supplying equipment, Multotec works closely with customers throughout the lifecycle of their operations, from test work and process optimisation to maintenance and ongoing technical support. This collaborative model ensures that mineral processing plants remain optimised as ore bodies, production targets and regulatory requirements evolve. By aligning innovation with practical operational needs, Multotec continues to strengthen its role as a trusted technology partner to the African mining industry.



Peter Mbada

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Multotec MD Peter Mbada speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

MULTOTEC
www.multotec.com

Hybrid crushing gains traction as African market looks to cut costs and carbon





Francois Marais

The arrival of the first Metso LT400J mobile jaw crusher in Africa signals a meaningful shift in how mining and quarrying operators are approaching energy use, cost control and sustainability, says leading quarrying and mining equipment supplier Pilot Crushtec.

In an interview with *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* at Mining Indaba, Pilot Crushtec sales and marketing director **Francois Marais** notes that growing operational pressures, including higher fuel prices, tighter margins and environmental targets, are accelerating interest in hybrid and diesel-electric crushing technology across the region.

He explains that energy has become a strategic cost component rather than simply an operating expense. "Customers are under pressure from multiple sides: fuel price volatility, rising electricity tariffs and stricter sustainability requirements. Hybrid machines give them flexibility and efficiency, which directly addresses these pressures," he says.

Diesel-electric systems such as those used in the Metso LT400J help reduce overall fuel burn while improving power management on site. Instead of running fully hydraulic systems, diesel-electric configurations optimise engine loads and allow integration with external electrical power where available. According to Marais, this materially changes total cost of ownership calculations.

"Customers are no longer looking only at capital cost, they are analysing lifecycle cost. Lower fuel consumption, improved uptime and reduced wear all contribute to a more attractive long-term cost profile," he says.

Sustainability considerations are also increasingly influencing procurement decisions. Marais points out that larger mining groups and established quarry operators are setting carbon-reduction targets that now filter down to fleet selection. Hybrid crushers support these goals by lowering emissions per tonne processed and enabling partial electrification of mobile fleets.

"Greener production is no longer theoretical — it is becoming a measurable requirement in tenders and project approvals," he adds.

The LT400J also features advanced automation, connectivity and remote monitoring capabilities, reflecting what Marais describes as the rise of "smart crushing". These systems provide real-time performance data, predictive maintenance insights and production optimisation tools.

"Data visibility allows operators to make faster, better decisions, from adjusting settings to planning maintenance. That translates into higher throughput and less unplanned downtime," he says.

Looking ahead, Pilot Crushtec expects hybrid and electric crushing solutions to gain steady momentum in Africa as infrastructure improves and energy strategies evolve.

Marais believes early adopters will gain a competitive edge through lower operating costs and stronger environmental performance.

"This is not a passing trend. Hybrid and electric technologies will increasingly shape equipment strategies in the region, and those who adapt early will be best positioned to compete," he concludes.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Pilot Crushtec sales and marketing director Francois Marais speaks to *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba.

PILOT CRUSHTEC®
More than machines, *we build trust.*
www.pilotcrushtec.com

Milestone CPS Level 9 implementation drives tangible safety and productivity gains



IMT announced the successful deployment of Wabtec's Generation 3 Collision Avoidance System (Gen3 CAS) in a Level 9 compliant solution at a Tier 1 mining operation in the Northern Cape.

This milestone deployment was IMT's first fully operational CPS Level 9 site, demonstrating measurable value. Activated in mid-2025, the project had achieved over 99 000 cumulative operational hours without incidents by January, significantly enhancing productivity and safety at the site.

The Gen3 CAS provides advanced safety features, including real-time monitoring and automated intervention capabilities across a fleet of heavy mobile equipment and trackless mobile machines. This deployment shows how advanced safety technologies can coexist with productive mining operations, says IMT group CTO **Marko Kotzè**.

"Wabtec's advanced solution offers South African mines a pathway to regulatory compliance, while also enhancing operational productivity."

The solution has delivered tangible results, including reduced vehicle interaction risks and improved operator confidence. Kotzé says effective change management and operator adoption of Level 9 have been critical contributors to the success of this deployment.

"The system's audio and voice-based alerts provide actionable guidance, enhancing situational awareness and preventing potential incidents. They are effective in reducing alarm fatigue, building trust and changing operator behaviour compared to generic alerts, showing the value of advanced human factors engineering. With guidance, operators at the mine have adapted their driving behaviour."

The system's success shows the power of collaborative innovation. Wabtec provided its innovative Gen3 CAS technology, the core of the collision prevention solution.

NeroSpec Oscon deployed its Trackless Mobile Machine Interface, ensuring seamless integration with the machinery's control systems. As the primary implementation partner, IMT coordinated all planning, integration and execution activities, ensuring alignment across OEM technology, site controls, personnel and operating processes.

The deployment sets a new benchmark in the mining sector. "It shows how integrated technology solutions, when implemented effectively, can achieve compliance, drive productivity, protect valuable assets, and, most importantly, safeguard lives," says Kotzé.



Martin Creamer and Wesley Lynn

Scan the QR code for IMT sales director Wesley Lynn's insights on technologies that are transforming safety and productivity in mining.

Probe IMT
INTEGRATED MINING TECHNOLOGIES

www.imtmining.co.za

AN

Heavy machinery manufacturer supplies products across the African region



International heavy machinery original equipment manufacturer and global leader in the supply of heavy-duty earthmoving equipment, SANY Southern Africa was established in South Africa in 2006 to supply the SANY Group's product range to the construction and mining industries across the region.

Investing 7% of sales revenue into research and development (R&D), the SANY Group has 9 000 engineers dedicated to R&D, ensuring that the company remains at the forefront of heavy-duty machinery development around the globe. Offering 24/7 aftersales service from its country-wide branches, with a spare parts stockholding totalling R250-million, SANY SA's machinery is widely recognised for reliability and excellent performance.

Sany is committed to providing a competitive one-stop-shop solution to the mining, construction, sea port and renewable energy sectors.

At Sany, we believe quality changes the world.





Scan the QR code to watch a video in which SANY operations & marketing manager Hennie Louw is interviewed by *Mining Weekly* at Mining Indaba.

SANY

www.sanysouthafrica.com

Schauenburg Systems highlights collaboration and innovation at Mining Indaba

Mine safety original equipment manufacturer Schauenburg Systems South Africa used its presence at the 2026 Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town to reinforce the importance of collaboration and partnerships in driving safer, more sustainable mining operations across the continent.

Speaking to *Mining Weekly* at the company's stand, CIO **Mark Stevens** said the event provided a valuable platform to strengthen relationships with mining operators, technology providers, potential projects and international partners, while also engaging with peers on emerging industry trends and challenges.

Stevens emphasised that collaboration is critical to unlocking growth and sustainable development in mining, noting that no single organisation can address the sector's complex challenges alone. Through partnerships, Schauenburg Systems South Africa is helping drive progress by deploying advanced underground collision-prevention and real-time worker-location systems at several local mines, improving incident response times and operational efficiency.

He added that the company's training programmes further support long-term sustainability by building local skills and empowering communities, positioning Mining Indaba as a key forum for advancing innovation and shared value in African mining.





Mark Stevens

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Schauenburg Systems CIO Mark Stevens talks to *Mining Weekly* at the Investing in African Mining Indaba.

SCHAUENBURG Systems
Innovation that Saves

www.schauenburg.co.za

SEW-EURODRIVE powering mining performance through partnerships, efficiency and local capability





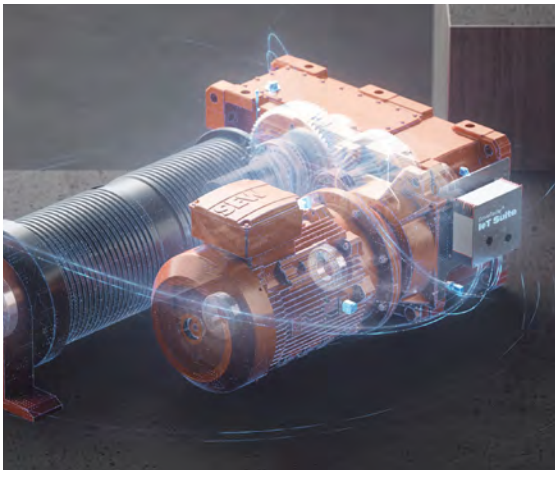
Jonathan McKey

Strong demand across Africa's mining sector has underpinned a standout year for drive and automation specialist SEW-EURODRIVE, highlighting the growing importance of reliable, efficient and locally supported technology. These themes were explored when *Mining Weekly* interviewed SEW-EURODRIVE national sales and marketing manager Jonathan McKey at the company's stand during the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town in February.

McKey reflected on the factors behind SEW-EURODRIVE's milestone performance across copper, coal, platinum and gold projects, including close collaboration with customers and partners across the mining value chain. He discussed how working alongside original-equipment manufacturers; engineering, procurement and construction management contractors; and mine operators from feasibility through to commissioning helps to ensure correctly specified, life-of-mine drive solutions that deliver long-term reliability.

The discussion also focused on how SEW-EURODRIVE is responding to mines' priorities around energy efficiency and reduced downtime. McKey outlined how evolving drive technology, on-site energy surveys and predictive maintenance tools such as DriveRadar are supporting improved performance and availability.

Training and skills development was another key theme, with McKey explaining the role of the company's Drive Academy in upskilling artisans, engineers and SEW-EURODRIVE's own teams. He also highlighted the company's expanded local manufacturing, increased stockholding and advanced repair capabilities, and how these investments are improving responsiveness, turnaround times and long-term value for mining customers.

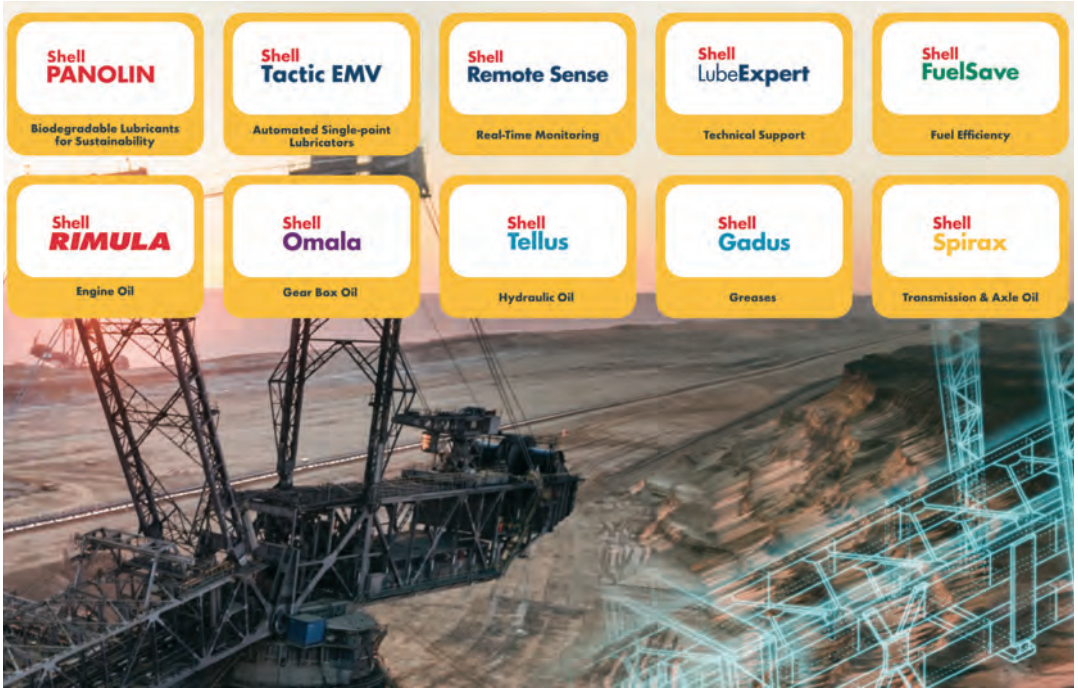


Scan the QR code to watch a video in which SEW-EURODRIVE national sales and marketing manager Jonathan McKey is interviewed by *Mining Weekly* at the Investing in African Mining Indaba.

SEW EURODRIVE

www.sew-sa.com

Shell meeting demand for world's growing energy demand





Mpho Mokwena

Shell Downstream South Africa is a conglomeration of downstream operations marketing and distributing a wide range of petrochemical products for industrial, commercial, and domestic use. The company has a large-scale presence in the south African mining industry through lubricant solutions that balances performance and sustainability

The company showcased its offering at his year's Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town where *Mining Weekly* interviewed Shell technical and services manager **Mpho Mokwena**.

A few businesses make up the Shell South Africa downstream operations and collectively, they move and market a range of products around the country for domestic, industrial and transport use.

Shell Downstream South Africa services multiple sectors within the country with lubricants, including a large presence in the mining sector as well as offering differentiated commercial fuel across multiple customer sectors.

Shell believes that you can have it all – sustainability and performance.



Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Shell technical and services manager Mpho Mokwena speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

SHELL LUBRICANT SOLUTIONS

www.shell.co.za

AN

SLR Consulting is building future-ready mines through integrated sustainability





Picture by Tracy Klückow

Angus Bracken

As sustainability becomes central to long-term mining viability, companies are increasingly taking a holistic, integrated approach that spans the full asset lifecycle.

This shift was explored when sustainability consultancy SLR Consulting Mining & Minerals Sector lead for Middle East and Africa **Angus Bracken** was interviewed by *Mining Weekly* during the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

Bracken shared his perspective on the key drivers behind this evolution, including investor expectations, regulatory pressures and the need for operational resilience in a changing global environment. He discussed how SLR Consulting's integrated technical, environmental and social expertise supports mining companies in planning and delivering resilient, future-ready projects.

The conversation also examined how renewable-energy integration is becoming a core component of sustainability strategies for mining clients across Africa and the Middle East, helping to reduce emissions, manage costs and enhance energy security. In addition, Bracken highlighted how digital tools and data-driven insights are transforming the way mines manage environmental impacts, social performance and closure planning.

Bracken also outlined what distinguishes SLR Consulting's partnership-based approach when working with clients, regulators and communities, and how this collaborative model supports the delivery of credible, long-term sustainability outcomes across the mining value chain.



Scan the QR code to watch a video in which SLR Consulting Mining & Minerals Sector lead for Middle East and Africa Angus Bracken speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

SLR

www.slrconsulting.com

SRK unpacks the importance of collaboration in growing African mining industry



SRK Consulting is an independent, global network of over 45 consulting practices on six continents.



Andrew van Zyl

Its experienced engineers and scientists work with clients in multi-disciplinary teams to deliver integrated, sustainable technical solutions across a range of sectors – mining, water, environment, infrastructure and energy.

Mining Weekly interviewed SRK Consulting South Africa MD **Andrew van Zyl** at the Investing in African Mining Indaba, where the company showcased its offering to the African mining industry.

He discussed why collaboration is important in the mining sector to unlock growth opportunities and drive sustainable development, as well as how the company is helping to drive progress through partnerships in the African mining industry.



Scan the QR code to watch a video in which SRK Consulting MD Andrew van Zyl speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

srk

www.srk.com

AN

TAKRAF highlights partnerships, innovation to drive African mining growth



Global mining equipment supplier TAKRAF is positioning collaboration, innovation and full-flowsheet capability at the centre of its African growth strategy, TAKRAF South Africa MD Richard Späth indicated during an interview at Mining Indaba 2026.

TAKRAF, historically focused on materials handling, has expanded its portfolio to cover a broader portion of the mining value chain. The company now operates across three core product lines — materials handling, comminution and liquid-solid separation — enabling it to supply integrated solutions across large parts of the mining flowsheet. Materials handling remains the largest component of its business.

Späth noted that Mining Indaba provides a key platform to engage customers from across the continent, where TAKRAF is active in countries including Mauritania, Guinea, Gabon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia and Botswana. He added that the event also helps the company align with evolving industry priorities, particularly environmental, social and governance requirements.

He emphasised that partnerships across clients, suppliers and communities are essential to sustainable mining development, as no single participant can operate effectively in isolation. TAKRAF's long operating history — spanning three centuries globally and more than 100 years in Africa — has been built on such collaboration.

Recent innovation includes the MAXGen flotation cell, which is gaining traction in South Africa's platinum-group metals sector, alongside ongoing improvements in client and community engagement models.



Scan the QR code to watch an interview in which TAKRAF South Africa MD Richard Späth speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026

TAKRAF

www.takraf.com

Tontrac's offering tailored to the unique demands of mining industry





William Butler

Weighbridge automation and access control specialist Tontrac System Analytics, headquartered in South Africa, is committed to technological excellence and operational efficiency.

The company's platform comprises cutting-edge systems and "boots on the ground" support, tailored to meet the unique demands of the mining industry.

At the heart of Tontrac's offerings is a sophisticated weighbridge automation system designed to streamline and optimise the weighing processes crucial to mining operations. Leveraging state-of-the-art software and advanced analytics, the company's solutions provide real-time, accurate data for efficient load and logistics management, enhancing overall productivity and efficiency.

Integrated with the weighbridge automation is a cloud-based mine access control system that enhances mine security by limiting unauthorised access to site and placing entry and exit decisions in the hands of the system.

With Tontrac's cloud-based pre-authorisation only authorised drivers and trucks gain access to a site, thus safeguarding high-value stockpiles.

With a dedicated team of expert support, Tontrac prides itself on delivering tailor-made, integrated solutions that align with the specific needs of the mining operation.

As we continue to evolve in tandem with technological advancements, Tontrac remains at the forefront of innovation, empowering mining enterprises across South Africa to operate with precision, security and unparalleled efficiency.



Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Tontrac System Analytics CEO William Butler speaks to *Mining Weekly* at the Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

TONTRAC
Supply Chain Intelligence for Mines

www.tontrac.co.za

Supply chain solutions provider showcases capabilities at Mining Indaba



Integrated logistics and supply chain solutions provider Unitrans used the Investing in African Mining Indaba to highlight the critical role supply chain partners play in enabling mining operations across the continent.

Speaking to *Mining Weekly*, Unitrans executive for agriculture and mining **John Kettlewell** explained that mining companies increasingly require partners who understand the operational realities of mining and can manage complex logistics environments safely and consistently.

"Mining operations depend on well-managed supply chains. Our role is to integrate into our customers' operations and ensure materials, equipment and people move efficiently so that production can continue without disruption," he said.

Unitrans offers end-to-end logistics and operational support, designing tailored solutions for clients, especially in Africa's remote and complex environments.

Operating across a range of industries, Unitrans has developed deep experience in managing supply chains in challenging African markets, including cross-border transport, remote-site logistics, and large-scale operational support.

Kettlewell noted that the company's strength lies in its integrated service model, which enables Unitrans to manage multiple supply chain elements under a single operational framework. This approach helps reduce operational risk and improve efficiency compared with fragmented logistics arrangements.

Safety and reliability remain central to the company's approach. According to Kettlewell, maintaining high operational standards is essential in industries such as mining, where logistics failures can have significant operational consequences.

As mining operations across Africa expand and modernise, demand is growing for logistics partners capable of supporting long-term operational performance.

"Our focus is simple: We support customers in strengthening supply chains so their operations can grow and perform consistently."

Through its deep industry expertise, robust commitment to safety and long-standing presence across the continent, Unitrans continues to position itself as a trusted partner in enabling industrial growth across Africa's mining sector.



John Kettlewell

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Unitrans executive: agriculture & mining John Kettlewell speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026.

UNITRANS

https://www.unitransafrica.com

Virtualscape driving digital transformation and measurable progress in mining





Picture by Tracy Kluckow

Ravi Naidoo

As digitalisation accelerates across the mining sector, the ability to turn data into meaningful operational insight is becoming a critical differentiator.

This theme took centre stage when *Mining Weekly* interviewed industrial automation solutions provider Virtualscape CEO **Ravi Naidoo** at Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town in February.

Naidoo discussed how Virtualscape's automation and data-driven solutions are helping African mining operations bridge the digital divide, delivering measurable improvements in efficiency, safety and overall performance. He explained the importance of contextualising data and how Virtualscape integrates operational, process and personnel data to provide actionable insights for on-site decision-makers.

A key focus of the discussion included Sens Mining, Virtualscape's flagship platform, which enhances real-time visibility and optimises asset use across the mining value chain. Naidoo outlined how the system enables better coordination, improved productivity and informed decision-making in complex mining environments.

The interview also explored how Virtualscape's MESH architecture and platform-agnostic design allow its solutions to be deployed across openpit and underground operations, ensuring flexibility, scalability and future-readiness. Further, Naidoo elaborated on Virtualscape's guiding philosophy of "Progress Beyond Measure", explaining what it means in practical terms for mining companies pursuing digital transformation, smarter operations and more sustainable outcomes.



Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Virtualscape CEO Ravi Naidoo speaks to *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba 2026

virtualscape

www.vsv.co.za

AN

Why optimisation is key to unlocking microgrid decarbonisation

In the global discourse on climate change, the transition to sustainable power is often reduced to a simple formula: "replace fossil fuels with renewables." However, for those responsible for the stability of industrial and utility microgrids, we know that decarbonisation is not a simple game of substitution. It is an intricate engineering challenge of integration and optimisation.

Optimising the Path to Microgrid Decarbonisation

Decarbonisation is often oversimplified as a basic substitution: fossil fuels for renewables. For industrial and utility microgrid operators, however, the reality is a complex engineering challenge centred on integration and optimisation.

While solar and wind provide the foundation, converting that capacity into reliable power and meaningful emission reductions requires a strategy that masters renewable volatility.

Overcoming the ROI Barrier

In Africa, the primary hurdle is not a lack of ambition, but the difficulty of securing a strong return on investment (ROI). This typically stems from unoptimised dispatch within hybrid microgrids. Balancing fluctuating load demand, renewable generation, and reserve requirements in real-time adds high-stakes complexity.

In these dynamic systems, operators must simultaneously manage battery State of Charge, maximise renewable utilisation, and control engine loading. Without coordinated management, systems face curtailment, inefficiency, and instability.

Intelligent Optimisation

Wärtsilä operates as both a technology OEM and a Battery Energy Storage System integrator, with an installed engine capacity of 79 GW and over 130 energy storage systems delivered around the world.

We provide the flexible, dispatchable assets necessary to stabilise systems and enable reliability as renewable penetration grows.

The solution, however, extends beyond hardware. Wärtsilä's lifecycle services drive the long-term performance of our core assets, while our Energy Management System (EMS) provides the intelligence to optimise dispatch across the entire microgrid. As a lifecycle services provider, Wärtsilä focuses on long-term asset performance through an EMS that integrates every microgrid. Intelligent optimisation delivers:

- **Maximised Renewable Utilisation:** Forecast-based dispatch eliminates unnecessary curtailment, prioritising solar and wind.
- **Reduced Opex:** Lower engine runtime and fuel consumption directly reduce emissions and maintenance costs.
- **Dynamic Stability:** Advanced dispatch strategies maintain grid stability by ensuring fluctuating reserve requirements are met in real-time.

Engineering Technical Confidence

In critical infrastructure, decisions cannot rely on assumptions. Techno-economic modelling and dynamic simulations are vital to identifying the most effective asset mix and dispatch strategy.

By stress-testing performance against sudden cloud cover or transmission disruptions, these tools ensure a system is designed where frequency and voltage remain within limits. This technical rigour is what transforms sustainability ambitions into bankable projects.



Ella Teperi

A Lifecycle Partnership

Wärtsilä's Decarbonisation Services Agreement aligns operational targets with customer priorities: cost, reliability, and carbon reduction. This approach links operational decisions to measurable outcomes, ensuring the lowest Levelised Cost of Electricity throughout the lifecycle.

The shift to low-carbon energy is a defining engineering challenge. Success will be measured not by installed capacity, but by the resilience and economic viability of the systems we build. By combining flexible engines, energy storage, and intelligent energy management, we can navigate today's complexity and engineer the integrated energy solutions Africa needs for a sustainable future.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Ella Teperi, GM for Market and Financial Analysis in the Wärtsilä Energy Decarbonisation Services team, is interviewed by *Mining Weekly* at Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

WÄRTSILÄ

www.wartsila.com

WEG highlights commitment to sustainable mining operations across Africa





Rodrigo Cetenareski

At this year's Investing in African Mining Indaba, motor manufacturer WEG sales & marketing executive director Rodrigo Cetenareski highlighted the company's commitment to advancing sustainable mining operations across the continent.

He described WEG as a comprehensive electrical solutions provider, manufacturing electric motors and a full range of electrification equipment, including electrical panels and high-efficiency systems designed to improve operational performance. The company's portfolio also supports renewable-energy integration, positioning mining companies to participate actively in the global energy transition.

"We are focused on equipment with high efficiency and sustainable products that help drive our customers into more efficient operations," he explained, noting that electrification is central to reducing carbon footprints and improving reliability across mining applications.

Mining Indaba, he said, provides a critical platform for engagement, not only with engineering, procurement and construction firms and original-equipment manufacturers (OEMs), but also with governments and end users. Early-stage engagement with all stakeholders is essential to shaping sustainable mining projects from the outset.

Collaboration is fundamental to achieving global sustainability goals, Cetenareski emphasised. Partnerships between technology providers, distributors, OEMs and mining houses ensure that the right technologies are specified and implemented effectively. "Collaboration is the key point for the industry to achieve sustainable growth and carbon-footprint reduction with high technologies and renewable solutions," he said.

WEG has established a strong footprint in Africa through its network of partners and OEM relationships, ensuring continuity of supply and long-term technical support. This local presence gives mining companies confidence that products and services will be supported throughout the lifecycle of their operations.

Rather than simply replacing equipment, WEG focuses on optimisation, ensuring the correct product is installed in the right application. Whether mines are powered by conventional grid electricity, wind or solar energy, Cetenareski underlined the importance of specifying appropriate, high-efficiency solutions to enhance sustainability and operational performance.

He also acknowledged the broader geopolitical and economic context shaping the mining sector. He noted that high gold prices reflect global political instability, but also creates opportunities for mining companies across commodities, including gold, platinum and silver.

Through changing market conditions, WEG is committed to supporting African mining customers with reliable electrification solutions, renewable integration expertise and strong local partnerships that underpin resilient, future-ready operations.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which WEG sales & marketing executive director Rodrigo Cetenareski speaks to *Engineering News & Mining Weekly* at Mining Indaba 2026.

www.weg.net

AN

Weir engineering integrated solutions for Africa's evolving mining landscape



Africa's diverse mining environments demand solutions that are not only robust and efficient, but also adaptable to local operating conditions and sustainability challenges. These issues were the focus of Weir Africa MD Bridget Ledwaba's interview with *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

She reflected on Weir's long-established presence across the continent and how operating in various African mining jurisdictions continues to shape the way the company designs and delivers integrated mining solutions. Ledwaba discussed how close collaboration with customers – ranging from major blue-chip operators to emerging mining projects – plays a central role in guiding technology development and solution engineering.

The discussion also explored how Weir is helping African mines address some of their most pressing operational challenges, including the need to improve energy efficiency while maintaining or increasing throughput and plant performance. With water scarcity affecting many mining regions, Ledwaba outlined how Weir's water-efficient technologies and responsible water-management strategies are supporting more sustainable operations.



Bridget Ledwaba

Finally, Ledwaba highlighted how Weir's portfolio of globally recognised brands – such as Warman, Cavex, Linatex and Motion Metrics – combined with digital innovation, is enabling African mines to operate more safely, productively and sustainably as the industry moves toward a low-carbon future.

Scan the QR code to watch a video in which Weir Africa MD Bridget Ledwaba is Interviewed by *Mining Weekly* ahead of the Investing in African Mining Indaba in Cape Town.

WEIR

www.global.weir

Duane Roothman

Sappi Southern Africa



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Full Name: Duane Roothman

Position and Company Name: VP of the Forestry division at Sappi Southern Africa

Main Activity of the Company: Sappi manufactures wood-fibre-based renewable materials such as pulp, paper, packaging and biomaterials sourced from sustainably managed forests

Date and Place of Birth: January 8, 1972, Polokwane

Schools and Tertiary Education: Matric, Pietersburg Hoërskool; BSc in forestry, specialising in forest engineering and harvesting, Stellenbosch University; MBA (with distinction) in general management, specialising in operational and logistics management, University of the Free State

First Job: Sales assistant at a linen manufacturer

Size of First Pay Packet: I can't remember

Career Path to Date: I have spent the past 31 years at Sappi, during which time I have had 13 role changes and 11 relocations. The journey reflects steady progression through operational and leadership positions within the company, alongside meaningful leadership contributions to the broader South African forestry sector. My career has been shaped by a strong focus on strategic restructuring, operational excellence, stakeholder engagement, people development and environmental stewardship – all centred on unlocking the value of trees

Value of Assets under Your Control: A total of 405 000 ha of sustainably managed forests with a sustainable yearly harvest of 4.3-million tons and a standing asset value of about R9.7-billion

Number of People under Your Leadership: An executive team made up of seven individuals, with 870 direct employees and about 9 500 contractor staff across outsourced operations

Management Style: A coaching and mentoring approach that encourages problem-solving, effective execution and accountability

Personal Best Achievement: Seeing people grow and develop their talent

Person Who Has Had the Biggest Influence on Your Life: It would not do justice to single out just one person

Person Who Has Had the Biggest Influence on Your Career: I have learned something from most of the people I've worked with

Person You Would Most Like to Meet: Warren Buffett

Businessperson Who Has Impressed You Most: There are several individuals whose unique ability to unlock value I greatly admire

Philosophy of Life: Every crisis brings opportunity – the right mindset helps unlock it

Biggest Ever Opportunity: Being interviewed for a bursary at Sappi

Biggest Ever Disappointment: None

Hope for the Future: A thriving economy and a thriving South Africa

Favourite Reading: A wide range of topics, but a standout in business leadership is *Good to Great*, by Jim Collins

Favourite TV Programme: None

Favourite Food/Drink: Coffee

Favourite Music: Music by Bon Jovi, Roger Waters, and Waldo de los Ríos

Favourite Sport: Formula 1 and T20 cricket

Hobbies: DIY projects and reading

Car: Audi Q3

Pets: None at the moment, but we miss our dogs every day

Miscellaneous Dislikes: Poor service and poor service delivery

Married: To Hannelie



Warren Buffett

My philosophy of life is:
Every crisis brings opportunity –
the right mindset helps unlock it

AN

Tailings Webinar

Advancing tailings innovation and responsible land rehabilitation

8th April 2026 at 14:00

- How effectively are tailings retreatment projects driving growth and economic opportunities in South Africa?
- How can safety, risk management and long-term stewardship of tailings and rehabilitated land be strengthened?
- What regulatory, financial, technical or social barriers are slowing rehabilitation progress in South Africa?
- In what ways does effective land rehabilitation improve environmental quality, public health and socioeconomic conditions for nearby communities?
- What indicators demonstrate successful rehabilitation outcomes linked to tailings operations?
- What role do collaboration, technology and transparent reporting play in ensuring sustainable post-mining land use?
- How does responsible tailings management and land rehabilitation influence project bankability, investor confidence and long-term asset value?

Confirmed panel members:



Charles MacRobert
University of Stellenbosch (facilitator)



Jaco Schoeman
DRDGOLD



Henry Gouws
Ergo



Danie Otto
SLR Consulting

To register, scan the QR code or email: shannon@creamermedia.co.za

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