MINING DEVELOPMENTS

June/July 2025 Issue

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World's Leading Copper Mines Powering the Energy Transition

opper stands out as one of the most vital industrial metals due to its extensive application across diverse sectors such as transportation, construction, electronics, and, increasingly, renewable energy. As the push toward global decarbonization gains pace, copper's role is becoming more critical, making it a key component in the transition to cleaner energy systems.

BHP, the world's largest mining firm, has projected a staggering 70% increase in global copper demand by the year 2050. This would require annual production to reach 50 million tonnes—an ambitious figure that will necessitate substantial industry-wide investment. According to BloombergNEF, an estimated \$2.1 trillion in investment may be required by mid-century to meet the raw material demands of a net-zero economy.

As a result, the pressure on mining companies is mounting—not just to discover new copper deposits but also to optimize and expand output from current operations. In this context, the world's largest copper mines are poised to play a central role in ensuring sufficient supply for the clean energy future.

Below are the top 10 copper-producing mines globally in 2024, ranked by output:

Escondida (Chile)



Leading the pack is Escondida, which produced 1.28 million tonnes of copper in 2024—marking a 16% increase from the previous year. Managed by BHP, which holds a 57.5% stake, the mine is also partly owned by Rio Tinto (30%) and a Japanese consortium (12.5%). BHP recently greenlit a \$2 billion concentrator upgrade as part of its broader \$10.8 billion investment plan.

Grasberg (Indonesia)



Jointly held by Freeport McMoRan and Indonesia's state-owned PT Mineral Industri Indonesia, Grasberg produced over 816,000 tonnes, recovering from weather-related setbacks in 2023.

Collahuasi (Chile)



This Glencore-, Anglo American-, and Mitsui-owned mine saw a slight dip in output to 558,636 tonnes, down 2.5% year-over-year.

Kamoa-Kakula (DR Congo)



A joint venture including Ivanhoe Mines and Zijin Mining, Kamoa-Kakula upped its output by 11% to over 437,000 tonnes. It has also earned recognition as one of the lowest carbon-emitting large copper mines globally.

Buenavista (Mexico)



Owned by Grupo Mexico through Southern Copper, this historic operation produced 433,000 tonnes in 2024 and has been in continuous operation since 1899.

Cerro Verde (Peru)



A partnership between Freeport McMoRan, Buenaventura, and Sumitomo, Cerro Verde's production fell slightly to 430,459 tonnes.

Antamina (Peru)



This mine, involving Glencore, BHP, Teck Resources, and Mitsubishi, produced 413,000 tonnes, a modest drop from the previous year.

Tenke Fungurume (DR Congo)



Estimated to have produced 400,000 tonnes in 2024, this mine saw a significant output jump thanks to a \$2.5 billion expansion completed by Chinese firm CMOC and local partner Gécamines.

KGHM Polska Miedz (Poland)



The only European operation on the list, Poland's flagship copper producer remained steady with approximately 395,160 tonnes.

Polar Division (Russia)



Owned by Norilsk Nickel, this mine delivered an estimated 345,000 tonnes, representing a 6.3% increase over 2023.

These top-performing mines are not just economic powerhouses—they are also critical to meeting the increasing global demand for copper, particularly as the world accelerates toward sustainable and energy-efficient technologies.

"South African Leadership Driving Progress on Romanian Copper-Gold Project"



Luro Sun Mining, listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, has made significant progress in advancing one of Europe's major copper and gold projects, thanks in large part to the determination of its South African CEO.

Grant Sboros, a chartered accountant educated at Saheti, the University of South Africa, and the University of Pretoria, has played a key



role in pushing the Rovina Valley project in west-central Romania forward. The project is now one of 47 initiatives recognized under the European Union's Critical Raw Materials Act. "This designation gives us a fast-track path to supplying essential raw materials in line with Europe's strategic goals," said Sboros.

This achievement paves the way for Euro Sun to begin operations at Rovina, which is expected to generate jobs and tax revenue for Romania's Hunedoara region. The deposit could account for nearly 5% of Europe's domestic copper production target by 2030.

Over an initial 17-year period of open-pit mining, the project is expected to produce approximately 389.1 million pounds of copper and 1.4 million ounces of gold.

Sboros credits much of his mining industry experience to former Glencore CEO Ivan Glasenberg. He previously held leadership roles at Glencore's Mopani Copper Mines and Katanga Mining before stepping into his current role as Euro Sun CEO in early 2023.

Euro Sun is committed to making its fully owned Rovina project as environmentally

responsible as possible. The company is focused on producing high-grade copper concentrate with a strong gold component, all while ensuring full regulatory compliance and respecting the surrounding natural landscape—a sparsely populated, forested area with steep terrain.

The plan is to mine the porphyry-style deposit through open-pit methods for 30 to 35 years, with the potential to transition to underground mining thereafter.



Ghana Assumes Control of Gold Fields' Damang Mine Amid Lease Renewal Rejection

he Ghanaian government has taken over operations at the Damang gold mine, formerly managed by South Africa's Gold Fields, after declining the company's request to renew its mining lease. This marks a departure from the country's long-standing practice of routinely renewing such licenses.

Gold Fields, headquartered in Johannesburg, confirmed on Monday that its lease for Damang would expire on April 18 and that it had begun winding down operations. Mining had already ceased in 2023, with the company only processing remaining stockpiles while preparing for a planned exit. According to the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, the decision to reclaim the mine was driven by regulatory and operational concerns. These included Gold Fields' failure to declare credible mineral reserves and the absence of a comprehensive technical plan covering previous and proposed mining activities.





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While a spokesperson for Gold Fields Ghana declined to comment outside of business hours, a source close to the situation indicated that discussions with government officials are scheduled for Friday. However, they noted that optimism is fading due to the escalating nature of the situation.

The government emphasized that bringing Damang back under state control is part of Ghana's broader "economic reset," aimed at ensuring that its gold resources yield greater direct benefits for citizens. Authorities described the move as a break from "neocolonial" practices of automatic license renewals and a pivot toward policies that maximize national value from mineral resources

"We are seeking value-driven proposals that prioritize the national interest," the government stated, while assuring that operations will continue without disruption and that jobs will be protected during the transition.

Damang is the smaller of Gold Fields' two mines in Ghana, producing 135,000 ounces of gold in 2024—about 6% of the company's total 2.15 million-ounce output. Gold Fields has been evaluating the sale of its smaller assets, including Damang and Peru's Cerro Corona mine, to concentrate on larger projects like Chile's Salares Norte and Canada's Windfall project.





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How Rental Partners Enhance Flexibility in Mining Dewatering



Mining operations typically rely on permanent dewatering infrastructure to maintain safety and productivity. However, as mines expand deeper and wider to access richer mineral deposits, and with the added challenges of extreme weather and increased water contamination, the limitations of these fixed systems—both in scope and budget—are becoming more apparent.

Traditionally, addressing these new demands would require significant capital investment to upgrade dewatering systems. Instead, rental equipment offers a more cost-effective and adaptable solution that can support and extend the capacity of existing infrastructure.

Weather and Operational Pressures on **Dewatering**

Dewatering is an inherently expensive process, involving specialized gear like highpowered pumps, filtration systems, and pipelines, alongside continuous maintenance and operational costs due to corrosive and



abrasive water. Mines must select the right equipment and ensure the availability of necessary support infrastructure like piping and power.

These requirements make it challenging to maintain robust dewatering capabilities amid evolving environmental and market conditions.

"Dewatering systems are highly sensitive to changes in site variables," explains Chetan Mistry, strategy and marketing manager at Xylem Africa. "Going deeper into the earth means considering factors like groundwater levels, flow rates, climate variations—especially heavy rain—water quality, and safety measures such as explosion-proof equipment. Open-pit mines often rely on well systems to assist dewatering, but these need careful planning and can incur unplanned expenses when surprises occur."

And surprises are common. A 2019 CDP report titled In Too Deep highlights storms and flooding as the top two factors causing financial disruption in mining, responsible for over one-third of operational interruptions. Upgrading systems reactively is not sustainable. Instead, rental dewatering fleets provide mines the flexibility to refine their long-term strategies without overextending

Rental Fleets Offer Strategic Agility

Renting industrial equipment is a wellestablished practice, with the global rental market valued at over US\$141 billion. As dewatering becomes a more strategic function in mining, the use of rental fleets has grown accordingly.

These rental solutions bring experienced operators and cutting-edge equipment, enabling mining companies to adapt without committing to major capital expenses. Rental providers take on the burden of equipment upkeep and workforce training, distributing costs across their client base.

This model offers mines financial breathing room, allowing them to invest capital more strategically while renting dewatering gear as needed. It also helps them quickly adjust operations to changes in water volume, project demands, or emergencies. Reliable rental partners minimize operational downtime and protect against costly incidents by offering fast deployment and expert solutions when critical issues arise.

Mistry notes that top-tier rental providers often collaborate with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), granting them access to the latest technologies, training, and maintenance tools.

"These rental business models are built to invest in a range of technologies, ensuring that mining clients always have access to efficient and fit-for-purpose solutions tailored to various environments," he says.

Available options include high-capacity centrifugal pumps for large-scale use, submersible borehole pumps for deep water extraction, displacement pumps for handling solid-laden water, floating pumps for surface water, and compact submersible models for tight spaces. Advanced rental companies are also equipped to manage contaminated water with an eye on environmental protection.

Renting Brings Flexibility to Dewatering

Today's mining industry faces increasingly unpredictable weather, fluctuating economic conditions, and evolving operational needs. By using rental agreements, mines gain the ability to scale and adapt their dewatering strategies, gain access to advanced equipment, and better manage budgets and resources. "Mines can customize rental contracts to fit specific needs—whether for exploration, emergencies, or managing tasks like slurry dams and environmental risks," says Mistry. "Rental fleets give mines the control they need to stay efficient and profitable while mitigating water-related challenges.





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Kamoa Copper and CrossBoundary Energy Forge Agreement for Baseload Renewable Energy

Kamoa Copper SA has entered into a power purchase agreement (PPA) with CrossBoundary Energy to provide baseload renewable energy to the Kamoa-Kakula copper mine, one of the largest copper mines globally, located near Kolwezi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Kamoa Copper SA is a joint venture between Ivanhoe Mines, Zijin Mining Group, and the DRC government, which holds a 20% stake in the project. The mining complex is the largest of its kind in Africa, with a copper production capacity of approximately 600,000 tons per year. The new on-site copper smelter is expected to begin operations in the second quarter of 2025.

This solar energy project, the first of its kind in Africa, includes a 222 MWp solar photovoltaic (PV) system and a 123 MVA/526 MWh battery energy storage system (BESS). The plant will provide a reliable 30 MW dispatchable renewable energy supply to the mine, replacing fuel generators and cutting carbon emissions by about 78,750 tons per year. CrossBoundary Energy will own and operate the plant, with Kamoa Copper purchasing the energy it consumes. The plant is expected to generate approximately 300,000 MWh of clean energy annually.

Although solar PV and BESS systems have been integrated into many mining operations, providing a consistent baseload energy supply—ensuring continuous power—is uncommon, as solar and storage are typically seen as intermittent. However, with improvements in solar PV efficiency and the decreasing cost of battery storage, a renewable baseload system has become both viable and more economical than the diesel generators previously powering the mine.

Annebel Oosthuizen, Managing Director of Kamoa Copper, commented:

"This is a significant milestone for Kamoa Copper and the DRC. We are proud to continue setting innovative benchmarks, and this partnership with CrossBoundary Energy marks an important step in that direction. Their dedication to transparency and reliability is commendable, and we are confident this collaboration will yield great results. At Kamoa Copper, we are fully committed to supporting our partners to ensure the success of this project, as excellence is at the heart of all our ventures."









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Marula Mining Hits Gold in Kenya: Discovery of High-Quality Manganese Ore Enhances Kilifi Plant Potential

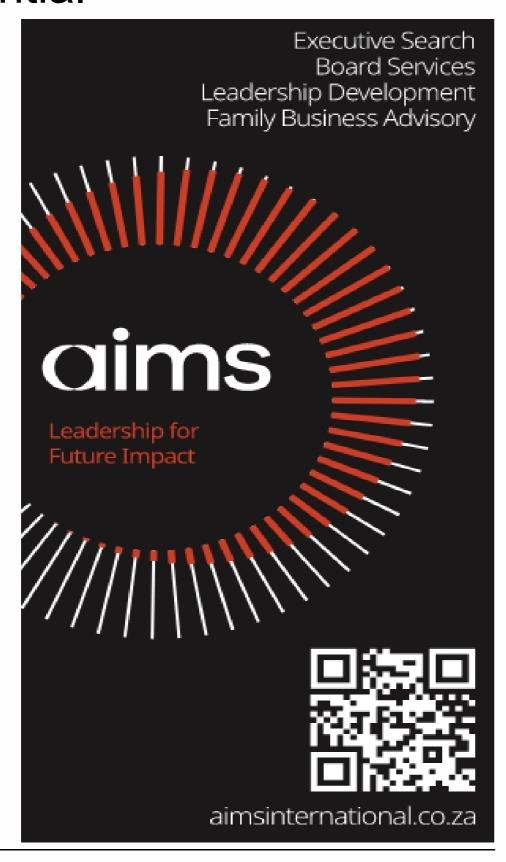
arula Mining, an African mining and development company, has made a remarkable discovery in Kilifi County, Kenya, uncovering a high-grade manganese ore deposit that promises to greatly enhance the profitability of its Kilifi Manganese Processing Plant. The discovery, which occurred in the Ganze region, has shown manganese content levels of up to 71.01%, a significant improvement compared to the typically lower- to medium-grade deposits found in the area.

Channel samples from the region revealed the exceptional quality of the manganese ore, which will be crucial for the Kilifi Plant's operations. Jason Brewer, the CEO of Marula Mining PLC, expressed his enthusiasm over the find, noting that this high-grade mineralization has the potential to substantially improve the economics of the Kilifi project. Brewer also emphasized that the discovery underscores the significant untapped resources in Kilifi County, suggesting a wealth of opportunities for the company in the region.



The discovery comes just as Marula Mining is preparing to begin processing operations at the Kilifi Plant, which is slated to start in September 2024. As part of a supply agreement with Kitmin Holdings Limited, the plant will receive monthly shipments of 10,000 tonnes of manganese ore from the Ganze region. This partnership ensures a steady flow of raw materials to the plant, enabling Marula to ramp up its operations efficiently.





One of the major advantages of this highgrade manganese ore is its versatility in processing. The ore can either be processed on its own to create a premium product or combined with lower-grade ore to produce a higher-value finished product. This flexibility offers Marula Mining significant market advantages, as it can cater to a variety of customer demands and increase the profitability of its products.

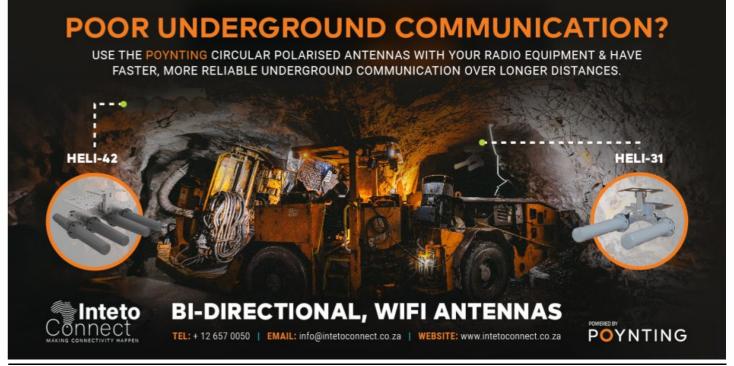
In addition to ramping up production at the Kilifi Plant, Marula Mining is also actively seeking to expand its manganese supply network. The company is in the process of negotiating new supply agreements and exploring potential acquisitions, all aimed at increasing its manganese production capacity. Brewer's statement on the future of the Kilifi Plant highlighted the broader impact that the plant will have not only on Marula's growth but also on Kenya's economy. He expressed confidence that the Kilifi Plant would become

a key contributor to the country's economic development while establishing a strong foundation for Marula's expansion in East

With these developments, Marula Mining is positioning itself as a key player in the manganese industry in East Africa, with strong prospects for growth and profitability in the coming years.







Allied Gold Shifts Gears with C\$80 Million Public Offering After **UAE Investment Deal Falls** Through



Allied Gold Corp. (TSX: AAUC), a growing gold producer focused on West Africa, is moving ahead with a C\$80 million public offering following the cancellation of a major private placement agreement with a United Arab Emirates-based investor. The shift represents a strategic change in how the company plans to fund ongoing expansion and optimization projects at its core assets in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire.

The company will raise the C\$80 million by issuing 15 million common shares at a price of C\$5.35 each, which was in line with the

stock's opening price on the day of the announcement. By market close, shares had climbed slightly to C\$5.40, reflecting investor confidence in Allied's revised approach. The public offering is being led by Canaccord Genuity and National Bank Financial, acting as joint bookrunners.

This move comes just weeks after Allied Gold announced the termination of a high-profile investment arrangement with Ambrosia Investment Holdings, a UAE-based fund led by Ahmed Amer Al Amry. Originally announced in February, the deal would have

seen Ambrosia acquire an 80% stake in Allied's flagship Sadiola mine in Mali, along with a 12% equity stake in the company itself. The transaction was valued at nearly \$500 million and was expected to provide the capital needed to support a phased expansion of the Sadiola operation.

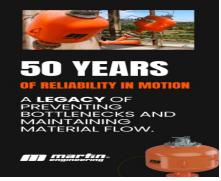
However, Allied stated that the equity placement—estimated at around C\$150 million—would not proceed due to changing market conditions, particularly the rising prices of gold and Allied's own shares. Despite walking away from the financing





component, Allied noted that Ambrosia remains interested in further talks regarding a potential joint venture at the Sadiola mine. The Sadiola project, situated in western Mali, is central to Allied's long-term production plans. The mine boasts an estimated reserve of nearly 7 million ounces of gold and is projected to maintain operations for at least 19 more years. When fully optimized, annual production could reach between 300,000 and 400,000 ounces—positioning Sadiola as one of the region's most significant gold producers.

Alongside Sadiola, Allied is also focusing on advancing its Côte d'Ivoire mine complex, reinforcing its strategic goal of becoming a leading mid-tier African gold producer. The funds raised through the public offering will be instrumental in accelerating growth, improving infrastructure, and delivering value to shareholders in a volatile but opportunityrich gold market.





Key Elements in Designing and **Running Community Trusts**



There's no universal formula for how a community trust should operate, but the choices made in its design and management play a critical role in its impact, reporting, and accountability.

In February, Tshikululu Social Investments led a session on building capacity for effective delivery at the INSPIREd Community Trusts Learning Event, hosted by the Initiative for Social Performance in Renewable Energy (INSPIRE). Drawing from more than 25 years of experience managing social investment trusts—and informed by insights from its Community Trust Benchmarking Report—Tshikululu explored different governance and operational models used by trusts in South Africa. The session also examined important factors to consider when choosing a model and how these decisions affect a trust's ability to deliver meaningful

Community trusts are typically established to hold equity on behalf of local communities in companies like renewable energy projects or mining operations. Their primary role is to ensure that the economic benefits derived from this equity reach a wide range of community members. While certain legal and compliance standards must be met, much of the trust's structure and operation is shaped by decisions made by the trustees and founding

company. These choices should be made with long-term purpose and goals in mind. Tshikululu helps social investors make wellinformed choices by guiding them through several key questions:

1. What is the trust's core purpose? A trust's fundamental objective should guide its governance and operations. It's essential for both the trust and its founding company to define the intended impact, identify beneficiaries, and specify the types of support the trust aims to provide. Focusing on impact rather than merely fulfilling compliance requirements ensures the trust creates meaningful, measurable change. 2. What is the long-term vision or exit

From the beginning, trust creators should consider the end goal: Will the trust conclude

its activities after, say, 20 years? Or will it establish an endowment to sustain long-term impact? A clear exit plan is vital for choosing an appropriate operating structure.

3. What kind of social investor is the trust? Community trusts can function in a variety of ways along what Tshikululu calls the "social investor spectrum," which classifies different investor types based on 15 characteristics. For instance, a trust operating as a philanthropic grantmaker may not require robust monitoring systems, as it primarily responds to emerging needs. In contrast, a trust that aims to drive systemic change would require strategic

planning, rigorous evaluation, and impact

4. Which operating model best suits the trust? Community trusts can operate under different models: outsourcing operations, employing dedicated staff, or receiving administrative support from the founding company. Each approach has its pros and cons, and the right choice depends on factors like available budget, the relationship with the founding company, and where the trust fits on the investor spectrum. Ultimately, the trust's purpose should shape its operational design. Tshikululu currently manages 19 social investment trusts and offers advisory services to a diverse group of social investors. Regardless of the model chosen, aligning operations with a clear strategy, robust governance, and sound monitoring practices greatly enhances a trust's effectiveness. Careful planning from the outset ensures the trust can deliver long-lasting, positive outcomes for its beneficiaries.

As best practices continue to evolve. Tshikululu remains at the forefront, supporting community trusts with tailored advice and strategic insight to help them drive sustainable social impact.

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Tanzania Positions Itself as a Key Player in Critical Minerals



Tanzania is establishing itself as a major force in the global energy transition by showcasing its vast reserves of critical minerals at the Tanzania Mining and Investment Forum 2024. Held at the Julius Nyerere Convention Center, the event attracted over 1,500 global delegates, emphasizing Tanzania's growing importance in the resource extraction sector.

Historically known for its precious minerals, Tanzania shifted focus at this year's forum to its extensive reserves of critical minerals needed for renewable energy technologies. While Tanzanite, diamonds, and gold were less emphasized, minerals like nickel, graphite, and rare earth elements took center stage.

A key plenary session titled "Energy Transition Minerals: Focusing on Midstream and Downstream Value Addition," led by Dr. Mary Stith, President of Pula Group, highlighted Tanzania's aspirations to become a global hub for mineral processing. Representatives from major projects including Tembo Nickel, Helium One, Peak Rare Earths, and Pula Graphite Partners' Ruangwa Graphite Project participated in the discussion

Tembo Nickel, which holds the world's largest nickel deposit, shared plans to develop a refinery and mining center, aligning with Tanzania's "mine to metal" strategy. Peak Rare Earths presented its phased development of the Ngualla Rare Earths Project, noting the importance of rare earths for electric vehicles and wind turbines. Helium One discussed its discovery of helium in Tanzania, a resource with irreplaceable uses across various industries. Pula Graphite Partners presented the potential of its Ruangwa Graphite Project, which is strategically located near a deepwater port and poised to supply high-grade graphite concentrate.

Dr. Stith praised the Tanzanian government's supportive stance and proactive engagement with businesses, citing infrastructure improvements around Pula's graphite assets as

a prime example of its commitment.

"The panel and the conference reflect Tanzania's progress toward becoming a global hub for minerals and processing for the energy transition," Dr. Stith said. "The government is inviting, supportive, and open to dialogue."

Panelists affirmed this view, commending the country's pro-mining policies, political stability, and infrastructure improvements. They highlighted Tanzania's potential to not only provide raw materials but also develop a robust value chain for downstream processing.

Roy Lobow, an investment analyst at DMT Kai Batla, noted that the conference underscored Africa's role in the energy transition. "Africa will be part of the energy transition, but it won't be limited to supplying raw materials. Africa offers more to the world beyond a diversified supply chain," he said.

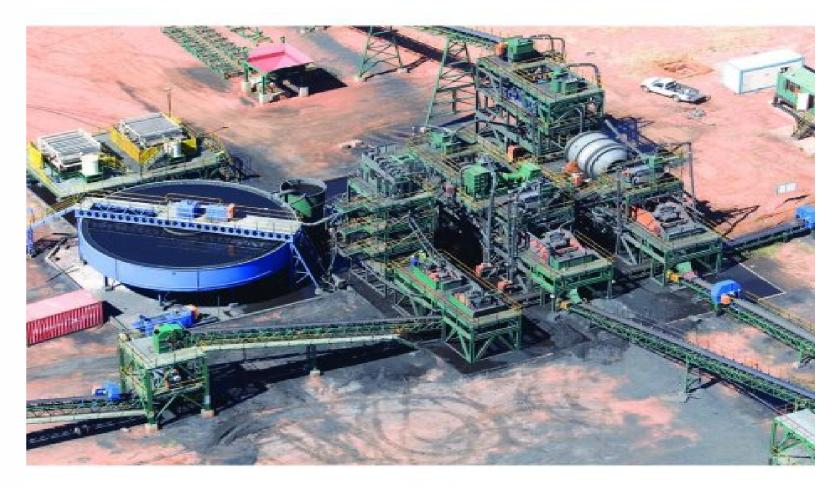
The forum also emphasized the importance of local involvement and beneficiation, with companies like DMT Kai Batla forming joint ventures with Tanzanian partners.

With its strategic location, rich resources, and dedication to value addition, Tanzania is well-positioned to be a leader in the global energy transition. The 2024 forum underscored the country's rising influence and its determination to become a critical minerals powerhouse.





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Rehabilitating Legacy Mines in South Africa: The Role of Paste Technology



South Africa's mining history is long and influential, with global recognition for its expertise in sectors like coal mining. While the industry has driven economic growth and established the country as a continental mining leader, it has also left behind a substantial environmental burden. Many abandoned or inactive mines now pose risks to ecosystems and water sources due to outdated closure practices that didn't account for future changes in development or climate conditions. South Africa's numerous old mine sites-many centuries old-are now vulnerable to issues such as contaminated water seepage, underground drainage, and even structural collapses. These problems share four common traits: they worsen over time, are often managed with short-term fixes, carry escalating risks and liabilities, and eventually lead to significant costs.

A typical solution is water treatment to manage discharge, but this is only a temporary measure. It brings its own complications, including dealing with brine and sludge, both of which create long-term waste management challenges. Ignoring these old mines, however, can result in even more serious and

unexpected consequences.

A recent case study by WSP highlights this issue. A closed coal mine in KwaZulu-Natal, with activity dating back to 1896, has started leaking underground water in unexpected locations. The mine, which was shut down in 2000, spans around 69 km² and reaches depths of 250 meters. With no existing surface infrastructure and incomplete records of its layout, tracing and managing the decant (uncontrolled discharge) is extremely complex. These water leaks appear in areas that were never designed for such discharges, raising serious environmental concerns. This raises an important question: how can legacy mines be rehabilitated in a responsible and effective manner?

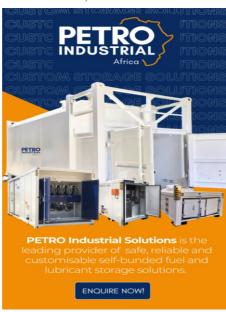
Technological advancements have made it more feasible to address these challenges. One promising solution is paste technology, which creates dense mixtures of solids and water that can be pumped into underground voids. Once in place, these mixtures become stable and help seal off leaking pathways.

Paste technology brings several advantages: it

prevents material separation, improves tailings stability, removes the need for surface ponds, and can cut costs. When mixed with cement to form Cemented Paste Backfill (CPB), it can fill mined-out areas, improving structural support and allowing for more resource

At the KwaZulu-Natal site, WSP considered two approaches. The first involves reinjecting treated brine from the water treatment system back into the mine. While the injection rate is still being finalized, the brine has high levels of salts and other dissolved substances, making this a complex but manageable solution. The second, more promising method, is using paste backfill to seal the underground pathways and stop the leaks.

Initial studies suggest that the underground voids could be used for short-term brine storage, though this carries risks related to space, fluid movement, and chemical reactions. These can be mitigated with appropriate monitoring and safety measures. Currently, the use of paste backfill appears to be the more effective long-term option, as it could reduce or even eliminate the need for ongoing water treatment, which is both expensive and environmentally burdensome. This case underscores that while legacy mines present serious challenges, practical solutions like paste technology are available. South Africa can't erase its mining past, but it can address its environmental consequences. Responsible rehabilitation ensures that future generations are not left to deal with the fallout of historic mining activities. By using innovative technologies today, we can work toward a cleaner, more sustainable tomorrow.



EU Sanctions Threaten Rwanda's Thriving Mining Industry



Rwanda's rapidly growing mining sector—central to its economic growth—has been dealt a serious blow following sanctions imposed by the European Union. Announced on March 17, 2025, the sanctions accuse Rwanda of playing a role in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and engaging in the illegal extraction of Congolese minerals.

Among those targeted are Kigali's Gasabo Gold Refinery and Francis Kamanzi, head of Rwanda's mining regulatory authority. These measures bring renewed attention to longstanding allegations that Rwanda benefits from the illicit trade of minerals originating in eastern DRC, an area plagued by rebel

Mining plays a critical role in Rwanda's economy, accounting for nearly 70% of total exports and 3% of GDP in 2023, with total revenue reaching \$1.1 billion—\$883 million of which came from gold alone. Rwanda's mineral wealth, estimated at \$150 billion, has attracted substantial foreign investment, including a recent collaboration with Rio Tinto. Notably, the EU itself entered into a



strategic minerals agreement with Rwanda earlier in 2024.

Now, however, these advancements face scrutiny due to claims that much of Rwanda's mineral output is actually smuggled from the DRC. The Congolese government and several independent sources allege that Rwanda plays a central role in the illegal trade of resources from conflict zones. Calls have grown louder for the international community to cut ties with President Paul Kagame's administration. A document from the European Commission, signed by Vice-President Kaja Kallas, stated that gold passing through the Gasabo Gold Refinery contributes to Rwanda's role in the illicit movement of conflict minerals. The document also accuses Kamanzi of

capitalizing on DRC instability for personal and national gain through unauthorized mining operations.

The DRC welcomed the EU's actions, calling them "a vital first step in halting Rwanda's exploitation of Congolese mineral resources.' However, it remains to be seen how these sanctions will affect Rwanda's mining future and its appeal to global investors.

While Gasabo has been specifically sanctioned, other Rwandan refineries remain untouched. Doubts also persist about the global system's ability to effectively trace and block conflict minerals from entering the international market.

With its credibility under scrutiny, Rwanda faces pressure to prove its commitment to ethical mineral sourcing. The international community and investors are likely to keep a close eye on developments, as they could significantly shape the future of the country's mining landscape.

Would you like a more concise summary or a version tailored for a specific audience (e.g., investors, students, policymakers)?















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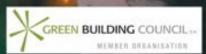
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