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Major Gold Finds in Kakamega: A Turning Point for Kenya's Minerals Sector



The recent announcement by a UK-based company of vast underground gold deposits in Kakamega County, valued at over 5 billion dollars, marks a potentially transformative moment for Kenya's minerals and extractives sector. Long regarded as a country with modest mineral output compared to its regional peers, Kenya is now emerging as a serious player in the global gold market. The discovery has generated significant interest from investors, policymakers, and local communities, positioning mining as a new pillar of economic growth.

Kakamega County has historically been known for small-scale and artisanal gold mining, with activity dating back decades. However, the newly announced deposits differ substantially from previous finds. According to preliminary assessments, the gold lies in extensive underground formations that are commercially viable for large-scale mining. This elevates the discovery from a local mining story to a nationally strategic resource with long-term economic implications.

The valuation of over 5 billion dollars underscores the scale of the opportunity. If developed responsibly, the Kakamega gold deposits could significantly boost Kenya's export earnings, strengthen foreign exchange reserves, and reduce reliance on traditional sectors such as agriculture and tourism. Gold is a globally traded commodity with strong demand, and Kenya's entry into large-scale production would diversify its mineral exports and enhance resilience against external economic shocks.

From an investment perspective, the discovery signals growing confidence in Kenya's geological potential. International mining companies often require extensive exploration data, stable regulatory frameworks, and political predictability before committing capital. A major UK firm announcing such a find suggests that Kenya's mining environment is becoming more attractive, potentially opening the door for further exploration across the country.

The economic impact at the local level could be equally significant. Large-scale mining operations typically create employment opportunities across multiple skill levels, including geologists, engineers, technicians, machine operators, and support staff. In Kakamega County, this could translate into job creation, improved household incomes, and increased demand for local goods and services. Infrastructure such as roads, power, and water systems may also see upgrades to support mining activities, benefiting surrounding communities.

However, the discovery also brings important governance and sustainability considerations. Gold mining, particularly underground operations, requires careful environmental management to prevent land degradation, water contamination, and ecosystem damage. Lessons from other mining regions highlight the importance of strong environmental safeguards, transparent licensing processes, and effective monitoring to ensure that economic benefits do not come at the expense of long-term environmental health.

Community engagement will be critical to the success of the Kakamega gold project. Local communities must be involved in decision-making processes, land access discussions, and benefit-sharing frameworks. Fair compensation, local employment quotas, skills training, and community development programmes can help ensure that mining contributes to inclusive growth rather than social tension. Transparent communication between the government, investors, and residents will play a key role in building trust.

At the national level, the discovery strengthens the case for accelerating reforms in Kenya's mining sector. Clear policies on royalties, taxation, local content, and value addition will be essential to maximise returns from the gold deposits. There is also an opportunity to promote downstream activities such as refining and processing, which would retain more value within the country rather than exporting raw materials.

The Kakamega gold find also has strategic implications for Kenya's long-term development planning. As the country invests in infrastructure, energy, and industrialisation, mineral resources can provide an additional revenue stream to support public investment. If managed prudently, gold revenues could contribute to funding social services, infrastructure projects, and economic diversification efforts. In conclusion, the discovery of major underground gold deposits in Kakamega County represents a potential game-changer for Kenya's minerals sector. Valued at over 5 billion dollars, the find has the

capacity to reshape perceptions of Kenya's resource potential, attract international investment, and deliver meaningful economic benefits. The challenge now lies in ensuring that development of the resource is transparent, environmentally responsible, and inclusive, so that the gold beneath Kakamega becomes a lasting asset for the nation rather than a missed opportunity.



Historic Gold Discovery in Kakamega County

A British mining company, Shanta Gold Limited, has confirmed one of the largest gold deposits Kenya has seen in decades, estimated at over US\$5.28–5.29 billion (roughly KSh 680–683 billion) located in western Kenya's Isulu-Bushiangala area of Kakamega County. The discovery was made through extensive underground exploration and drilling along the Lirhanda mineral corridor — a promising geological belt that stretches through Kakamega and neighbouring Vihiga counties.

The company's West Kenya Gold Project, covering approximately 600 square kilometres, includes multiple licences and prospecting rights acquired originally from Barrick Gold's former Kenyan subsidiary. The project's resource estimates show more than 1.27 million ounces of gold in confirmed deposits, with high-grade ore that is suitable for commercial, underground mining operations.

Economic and Commercial Potential

The scale and quality of the find are significant for several reasons:

- **Revenue and Investment:** Beyond the estimated value of the deposits, the mining investment itself is forecast at tens of billions of Kenyan shillings, with Shanta Gold planning to invest in mine development and processing infrastructure.
- **Government Earnings:** Under Kenya's Mining Act, the state is expected to collect royalties, mineral development levies, and taxes from the operation — with substantial shares earmarked for county development and local community projects.
- **Industrialisation:** The project could catalyse ancillary investments, including a planned gold refinery in Ikolomani, which aims to boost local processing capacity and create hundreds to thousands of jobs in refining and value-addition sectors. [MyGov](#)
- **Mining Sector Growth:** Analysts see this discovery as potentially transformational, moving Kenya beyond small-scale artisanal mining into large-scale, industrial gold production — a space long dominated by countries like Tanzania and Mali in East Africa.

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Job Creation and Economic Impact

Large-scale mining typically brings employment and infrastructure development. The project is expected to:

- Create jobs in mining operations, engineering, logistics, and support services.
- Stimulate local businesses tied to the mining supply chain.
- Boost foreign exchange earnings through gold exports.
- Encourage skills development and potential technology transfer in mining engineering and processing.

Local Community Dynamics and Challenges

Despite the significant economic potential, the discovery has also sparked social and environmental concerns:

- **Community Resistance:** Some local residents and leaders in Kakamega have expressed opposition to plans that might require relocation of households in areas where gold deposits lie. Concerns have centered on land rights, compensation fairness, and the pace of public consultation.
- **Protests and Tensions:** In late 2025, protests over mining plans in the Isulu and Ikolomani regions led to clashes between residents and authorities, resulting in injuries and heightened tensions. These incidents highlight the need for careful, inclusive engagement processes before large-scale operations proceed.

Environmental and Governance Considerations

Gold mining — especially underground operations — requires stringent environmental management to protect water resources, soil quality, and forested areas near mining sites. The company has submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) as part of regulatory compliance, laying out plans for responsible extraction and monitoring. The discovery also underscores the importance of strong governance in minerals management. This includes:

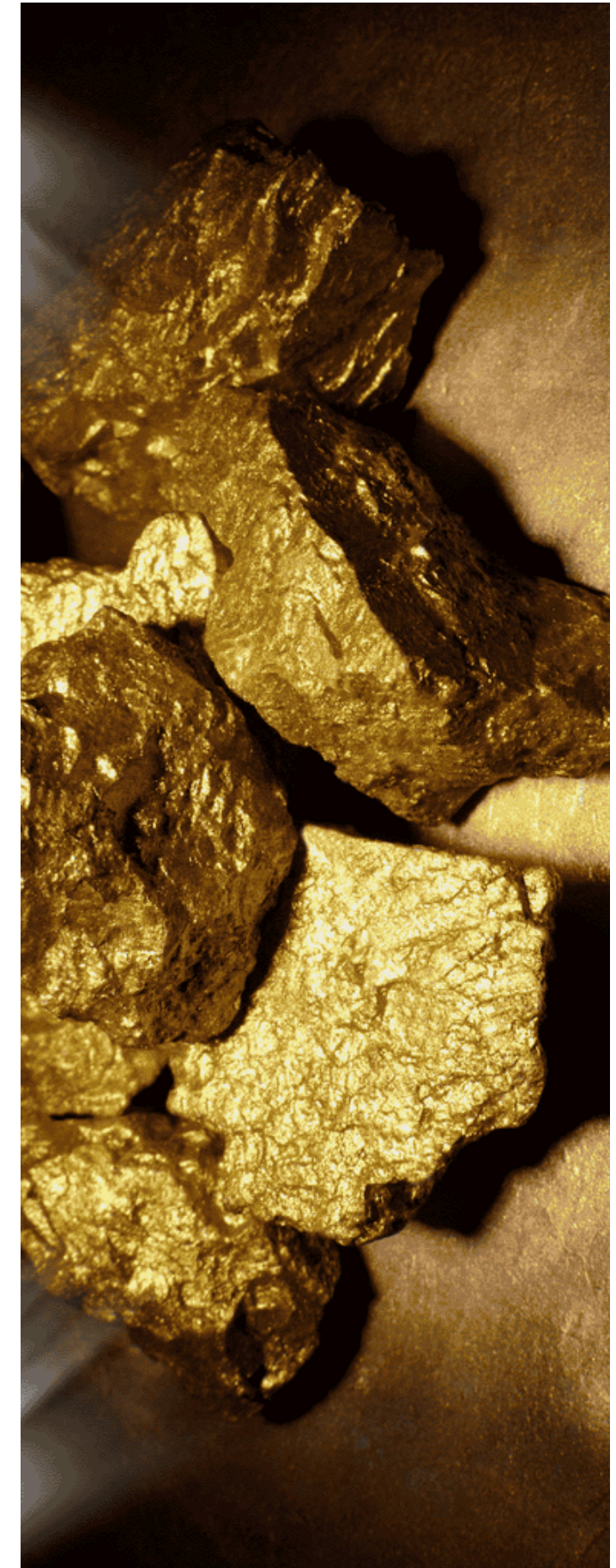
- Transparent licensing and approval processes.
- Clear benefit-sharing frameworks with counties and communities.
- Environmental safeguards aligned with international best practices.

Strategic Implications for Kenya

The Kakamega gold discovery could redefine Kenya's mining landscape by:

- Diversifying national revenue streams beyond agriculture, tourism, and remittances.
- Establishing Kenya as a more significant player in global gold markets.
- Attracting further foreign direct investment into mineral exploration and extraction.
- Stimulating local processing industries and value addition, reducing reliance on raw exports.

In summary, the Kakamega gold finds — led by Shanta Gold's exploration in the Isulu-Bushiangala area — have the potential to be transformative, offering economic opportunity and strategic growth for Kenya's minerals sector. However, turning this potential into sustainable benefit will require responsible governance, strong community participation, and smart environmental stewardship as the project moves toward commercial mining.



Government reforms under CS Hassan Joho

Government reforms in Kenya's mining sector have gained renewed momentum under Cabinet Secretary Hassan Joho, with a strong focus on transparency, inclusivity, and maximising economic returns from natural resources, particularly gold. According to Sacco Review, these reforms represent a deliberate shift away from fragmented, opaque systems toward a more structured and accountable mining framework that benefits both the state and local communities.



One of the central pillars of the reform agenda is cleaner and more transparent licensing. Historically, Kenya's mining sector has faced criticism over unclear licensing processes, overlapping permits, and limited public visibility into who holds mining rights. CS Joho's reforms aim to streamline licensing through digitisation, clearer timelines, and stricter compliance requirements. By reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks and closing loopholes, the government seeks to curb illegal mining, speculative license hoarding, and corruption, while attracting credible local and international investors.

Supporting small-scale and artisanal miners is another major focus of the reform programme. Thousands of Kenyans, especially in regions such as Kakamega, Migori, and Narok, depend on artisanal gold mining for their livelihoods. However, many have operated informally, without access to proper equipment, financing, or legal protections. The new reforms prioritise formalisation of small-scale mining through simplified registration, access to cooperatives and Saccos, technical training, and safer mining practices. This approach not only improves incomes and safety for miners but also enables the government to better regulate production and collect revenues. Economic value addition is also at the heart of the reforms. Instead of exporting raw gold with minimal local benefit, the government is pushing for increased local processing, refining, and value addition. This includes encouraging investment in refineries and mineral processing facilities, which would create skilled jobs, enhance foreign exchange earnings, and strengthen Kenya's position in regional and global gold markets. CS Joho has emphasised that minerals should be a catalyst for industrial growth rather than a missed opportunity through raw exports.

Revenue sharing and community benefits form another critical reform area. The Mining Act provides for royalties to be shared between the national government, county governments, and local communities. However, implementation has often been uneven. The current reform push aims to ensure that communities hosting mining operations see tangible benefits such as improved infrastructure, schools, healthcare facilities, and water projects. This is particularly important in gold-rich regions where expectations are high following major discoveries.

Environmental protection and responsible mining practices have also been elevated under the reform agenda. Gold mining, if poorly managed, can lead to land degradation, water pollution, and long-term ecological damage. The government is strengthening environmental oversight through stricter Environmental Impact Assessments, continuous monitoring, and enforcement of rehabilitation obligations once mining activities end. These measures are intended to balance economic gains with long-term environmental sustainability.



From a broader perspective, these reforms are designed to reposition mining as a strategic contributor to Kenya's economy. By formalising operations, supporting small-scale miners, improving governance, and promoting value addition, the government aims to increase mining's contribution to GDP, create jobs, and diversify national revenue sources. Sacco Review notes that if effectively implemented, the reforms could transform gold mining from a largely informal activity into a well-regulated, wealth-creating sector.

In conclusion, CS Hassan Joho's reform agenda signals a decisive effort to clean up Kenya's mining sector and unlock greater economic value from gold resources. While challenges remain in enforcement, stakeholder engagement, and balancing interests, the reforms lay a foundation for a more transparent, inclusive, and economically impactful mining industry that benefits miners, communities, and the nation as a whole.

CARACAL GOLD LISTING

Caracal Gold Listing



Caracal Gold's planned listing on the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) SME market marks an important milestone for Kenya's mining sector and the continued development of local capital markets. The move by the British-listed gold producer signals growing confidence in Kenya as a viable destination not only for mineral exploration and extraction, but also for raising capital, enhancing transparency, and deepening investor participation in the mining industry.

Caracal Gold, which has operations in Kenya including the Kilimapesa Gold Mine in Narok County, has positioned itself as one of the most active international miners in the country. By seeking a secondary listing on the NSE's Growth Enterprise Market Segment (GEMS), the company aims to tap into local capital, broaden its shareholder base, and align more closely with the Kenyan economy and public. This strategy reflects a shift from the traditional model where mining companies rely almost exclusively on foreign exchanges and offshore investors.

The planned listing is significant for Kenya's capital markets. Historically, the NSE has been dominated by banks, telecommunications firms, and consumer goods companies, with limited representation from extractive industries. Caracal Gold's entry into the SME market could pave the way for other mining and natural resource companies to consider local listings, helping diversify the exchange and introduce new investment opportunities for Kenyan individuals, Saccos, pension funds, and institutional investors. From an investor perspective, the listing offers local investors a chance to directly participate in the growth of Kenya's gold sector. As major discoveries such as those in Kakamega County draw attention to the country's mineral potential, access to mining equities on the NSE allows investors to benefit from value creation within the sector, rather than watching returns flow entirely offshore. This aligns with broader government goals of retaining more economic value within the country.

The listing also supports regulatory transparency and corporate governance. Companies listed on the NSE are subject to disclosure requirements, financial reporting standards, and ongoing regulatory oversight. For the mining sector, which has often faced scrutiny over opacity and speculative licensing, public listings can improve accountability and investor confidence. Caracal Gold's move therefore complements ongoing government reforms aimed at cleaning up licensing processes, formalising operations, and ensuring better economic returns from mineral resources.

In addition, a local listing strengthens linkages between mining companies and host communities. By operating and raising capital within Kenya, companies like Caracal Gold are more visible to the public and policymakers, increasing pressure to deliver on commitments related to employment, community development, and environmental stewardship. This can help foster a more balanced relationship between investors, operators, and local stakeholders.

At a macroeconomic level, the move signals maturing confidence in Kenya's financial infrastructure. A functional SME market that attracts international firms demonstrates that local exchanges can support growth-oriented companies, even in capital-intensive sectors such as mining. Over time, this can enhance Nairobi's position as a regional financial hub for East and Central Africa, particularly for resource-linked investments. In summary, Caracal Gold's plan to list on Nairobi's SME market is more than a corporate financing decision. It represents a vote of confidence in Kenya's mining potential, regulatory environment, and capital markets. If successful, the listing could encourage similar moves by other mining firms, deepen local investor participation, and contribute to a more integrated and transparent mining ecosystem that supports long-term economic growth.



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Caracal Gold's intention to list on the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) SME market represents a deeper strategic shift that goes beyond simple capital raising, reflecting the gradual integration of Kenya's mining sector into the formal financial system. For a British mining company to actively seek local participation signals confidence in Kenya's regulatory, financial, and economic trajectory at a time when the country is positioning mining as a key pillar of growth.

The decision to pursue a listing on the NSE's Growth Enterprise Market Segment (GEMS) allows Caracal Gold to access patient, locally anchored capital while reducing overreliance on foreign markets that are often more volatile and disconnected from on-the-ground operations. For Kenyan investors, this listing opens a rare window into a sector that has traditionally been difficult to access, enabling direct ownership in a producing gold company with assets on Kenyan soil.

The move also aligns with government policy direction that encourages mining firms to deepen local content and participation. By listing locally, Caracal Gold strengthens its relationship with regulators, policymakers, and host communities, while demonstrating long-term commitment to the country. This approach supports ongoing reforms aimed at formalising mining operations, improving compliance, and ensuring that mineral wealth contributes meaningfully to national development.

For the Nairobi Securities Exchange, the listing is equally significant. The SME market was created to support growth-oriented companies, yet uptake has been gradual. A mining firm entering the market introduces a new asset class, potentially increasing market depth, liquidity, and investor interest. It also sets a precedent that the NSE can support capital-intensive sectors such as mining, infrastructure, and energy, which are critical to Kenya's development agenda.

From a transparency and governance standpoint, listing on the NSE requires stricter financial disclosures, independent audits, and continuous reporting. This level of openness is particularly important in the extractives sector, where concerns around speculative licensing, resource valuation, and community impact have historically undermined trust. Public accountability can help improve perceptions of mining and attract more credible investors into the sector.

There are also broader economic implications. A successful listing could encourage Kenyan pension funds, Saccos, and institutional investors to allocate capital to mining ventures, providing long-term funding that supports expansion, exploration, and technology upgrades. This domestic capital mobilisation reduces capital flight and ensures that returns generated from Kenya's mineral resources circulate within the local economy.

In the long term, Caracal Gold's NSE listing could act as a catalyst for the emergence of Nairobi as a regional mining finance hub. As East Africa's mineral potential gains global attention, a strong local exchange capable of hosting mining and resource companies positions Kenya to capture financial, professional, and advisory services linked to the sector.

Overall, Caracal Gold's planned listing is a strategic signal of confidence in Kenya's mining future and financial markets. It reflects a growing alignment between mineral development, capital market growth, and economic reform, and could mark the beginning of a more mature, transparent, and locally integrated mining industry in Kenya.

Today's Market Watch

Security	Bid Quantity	Bid Price	Ask Quantity	Ask Price	Previous Closing	Trade Price	Net Change	Volume
						.61	0.04	300
MPH	10100	0.95	5700	0.61	0.57	3.30	-0.17	8100
Q	500	3.20	5600	3.30	3.47	.37	0.02	100000
SC	121100	0.35	900	0.36	0.35	32.20	-0.30	1900
DC	300	32.10	3100	32.20	32.50	7.50	-0.10	700
AL	100	7.38	47200	7.50	7.60	2.50	0.00	100
EGN	17000	5.92	96000	6.00	6.00	6.00	0.00	14400
HL	1000	2.41	3900	2.50	2.50	11.50	0.00	52
SE	100	11.60	23400	12.00	11.50	40.20	0.20	2900
EN	13800	40.05	8300	40.20	40.00	11.90	-0.05	400
COF	4800	11.90	135400	12.00	11.95			

Soda Ash Expansion: Tata Chemicals Magadi is seeking new mining rights for over 127 square kilometers in Kajiado County

The planned soda ash expansion by Tata Chemicals Magadi represents a major development in Kenya's industrial minerals sector and underscores the long-term strategic importance of Lake Magadi as one of the world's most significant natural trona deposits. By seeking new mining rights covering more than 127 square kilometres in Kajiado County, Tata Chemicals is positioning itself to extend the life, scale, and competitiveness of its soda ash operations well into the future. Tata Chemicals Magadi has operated at Lake Magadi for more than a century, making it one of Kenya's oldest and most established industrial mining operations. The company extracts trona, a naturally occurring sodium carbonate mineral, which is processed into soda ash used in a wide range of industries including glass manufacturing, detergents, chemicals, food processing, and water treatment. Soda ash is a critical industrial input, and global demand continues to grow alongside construction, manufacturing, and urbanisation trends. The request for additional mining rights reflects both the depletion dynamics of existing extraction zones and the company's plans to scale up production capacity. Expanding the licensed mining area allows Tata Chemicals to secure long-term raw material supply, justify further capital investment in processing facilities, and maintain Kenya's position as a key global exporter of natural soda ash. Lake Magadi is particularly valuable because natural soda ash production is generally more energy-efficient and environmentally friendly than synthetic alternatives.



Economically, the expansion could have far-reaching implications. Tata Chemicals Magadi is a major employer in Kajiado County and a significant contributor to Kenya's export earnings. Extending trona operations is expected to safeguard existing jobs while potentially creating new opportunities in mining, processing, logistics, and support services. It also strengthens foreign exchange inflows at a time when Kenya is prioritising export-led growth and industrial development.

The move aligns closely with Kenya's broader mining and industrialisation agenda, which emphasises value addition, local content, and sustainable resource utilisation. Soda ash is one of the few minerals where Kenya already enjoys global competitiveness, and expanding production helps reinforce this advantage. Increased output could support downstream industries, particularly glass manufacturing, which has strong linkages to construction, automotive, and packaging sectors.

However, the expansion also brings environmental and community considerations to the forefront. Lake Magadi lies within a sensitive ecological and cultural landscape, with pastoralist communities relying on surrounding land for livelihoods. Any extension of mining rights requires rigorous environmental impact assessments, water management plans, and community engagement to ensure that economic benefits do not come at the expense of environmental degradation or social disruption. Tata Chemicals has historically operated under strict environmental controls, and future expansion will be closely scrutinised by regulators and stakeholders.

From a policy perspective, the application for new mining rights is also a test case for Kenya's ongoing mining sector reforms. Transparent licensing processes, clear benefit-sharing mechanisms, and strong regulatory oversight will be critical in ensuring that large-scale industrial mining projects deliver inclusive and sustainable outcomes. County governments, local communities, and the national government all have a stake in how the expansion is structured and implemented. In the long term, the soda ash expansion at Lake Magadi reinforces the role of industrial minerals in Kenya's economic transformation. While precious metals such as gold often capture public attention, minerals like trona provide steady, long-term industrial value, employment, and export earnings. Tata Chemicals Magadi's push to secure additional mining rights signals confidence in Kenya's regulatory environment and the enduring global demand for soda ash. Overall, the proposed expansion represents a strategic investment in Kenya's industrial future. If managed responsibly, it has the potential to extend the legacy of Lake Magadi as a globally significant soda ash producer while delivering sustained economic benefits to Kajiado County and the country as a whole.



Mrima Hill Rare Earths



The Mrima Hill rare earths deposit in Kwale County has emerged as one of the most strategically important mineral assets in Africa, with updated estimates placing its value at approximately 62.4 billion US dollars. This extraordinary valuation reflects the exceptionally high concentration of niobium and rare earth elements found within the deposit, materials that are increasingly critical to modern technologies and global industrial supply chains. As a result, Mrima Hill has moved beyond being a national mining prospect to becoming a focal point of international economic and geopolitical interest, particularly from the United States and China.

Mrima Hill is located near Kenya's south coast, not far from the Indian Ocean and key transport corridors. Geologically, it is classified as a carbonatite complex, a type of formation known worldwide for hosting rare earth elements and strategic metals. What sets Mrima Hill apart is the scale and grade of its mineralisation. In addition to rare earths, the deposit contains significant quantities of niobium, a metal essential in the production of high-strength steel alloys used in construction, pipelines, aerospace components, and automotive manufacturing.

Rare earth elements, despite their name, are not necessarily scarce, but economically viable deposits that can be mined at scale are limited and unevenly distributed globally. These elements are indispensable in the manufacture of smartphones, electric vehicles, wind turbines, military hardware, medical imaging equipment, and advanced electronics. As countries race to secure supply chains for clean energy and high-tech industries, control over rare earth resources has become a strategic priority.

The estimated value of 62.4 billion dollars positions Mrima Hill among the most valuable undeveloped mineral deposits in the world. For Kenya, this represents a potential economic game-changer. If developed responsibly, the deposit could significantly boost export earnings, attract large-scale foreign direct investment, and elevate mining's contribution to national GDP. It could also support downstream industries such as mineral processing, refining, and advanced manufacturing, moving Kenya beyond raw material exports toward higher-value economic activity.

Geopolitically, Mrima Hill has attracted strong interest from major global powers, particularly the United States and China. China currently dominates global rare earth mining and processing, controlling a significant share of supply chains. The United States and its allies, on the other hand, are actively seeking to diversify sources of critical minerals to reduce strategic dependence. In this context, Mrima Hill is viewed not just as a commercial asset, but as a potential anchor for alternative supply routes in Africa.

This international interest places Kenya in a delicate but potentially advantageous position. On one hand, competition between global powers can drive investment, technology transfer, and better commercial terms. On the other hand, it raises the stakes around governance, transparency, and national interest. Decisions around licensing, ownership structures, and processing locations will have long-term implications for sovereignty, security, and economic independence.

At the national level, Mrima Hill has also been at the centre of legal, environmental, and community debates. The area is ecologically sensitive and culturally significant, and past attempts to advance mining activities faced opposition over environmental protection, land rights, and consultation processes.

Any renewed push to develop the deposit will require rigorous environmental impact assessments, meaningful community engagement, and clear benefit-sharing mechanisms to ensure that local populations are not marginalised.

Government reforms in the mining sector, including cleaner licensing processes and stronger regulatory oversight, will be critical in shaping the future of Mrima Hill. The project tests Kenya's ability to manage strategic resources in a way that balances economic opportunity with environmental sustainability and social responsibility. It also highlights the importance of building local technical capacity so that Kenya can negotiate from a position of strength with global partners.

In the broader African context, Mrima Hill places Kenya among a small group of countries with globally significant rare earth and strategic mineral resources. As demand for niobium and rare earth elements continues to rise due to energy transition and digitalisation, the deposit's importance is likely to grow further. How Kenya chooses to develop, regulate, and leverage Mrima Hill will influence not only its economic future but also its standing in global mineral diplomacy. In summary, the Mrima Hill rare earths deposit is far more than a mining prospect. Valued at over 62 billion dollars and rich in strategically vital minerals, it represents a convergence of economic potential, technological relevance, and geopolitical interest. If managed wisely, it could become one of Kenya's most transformative natural assets, shaping the country's development trajectory for decades to come.

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Kenya's renewed focus on value addition in the mining sector marks a decisive shift

Kenya's renewed focus on value addition in the mining sector marks a decisive shift in how the country intends to manage and benefit from its natural resources. New policies currently under development seek to restrict the export of raw gold and other minerals, instead prioritising local processing, refining, and manufacturing. The overarching objective is to significantly increase mining's contribution to the national economy, which currently stands at roughly 1 percent of GDP, despite the country's vast and increasingly proven mineral potential.

For decades, Kenya's mining sector has largely operated on an extract-and-export model. Raw gold, industrial minerals, and gemstones have often left the country with minimal local processing, meaning that the most lucrative stages of the value chain—refining, fabrication, and manufacturing—take place elsewhere. This model has limited job creation, reduced tax revenues, and left communities hosting mining activities with fewer tangible benefits. The new value addition policy framework aims to reverse this trend by ensuring that minerals extracted in Kenya generate deeper and more sustainable economic impact.

At the centre of the policy shift is gold, which has gained renewed prominence following major discoveries in regions such as Kakamega, Migori, and Narok. Under the proposed reforms, gold producers would be required, either fully or partially, to process their output locally before export. This includes refining gold to internationally accepted standards within Kenya rather than shipping raw ore or semi-processed material abroad. Such a move would stimulate investment in refineries, assaying facilities, and supporting infrastructure, positioning Kenya as a regional hub for precious metals processing.

Local processing has far-reaching economic implications. Establishing refineries and mineral processing plants creates skilled employment opportunities for engineers, technicians, chemists, and quality assurance professionals. It also generates indirect jobs across logistics, security, equipment supply, maintenance, and professional services. Compared to raw mineral exports, value-added products command higher prices on international markets, leading to increased export earnings and stronger foreign exchange inflows.

Beyond gold, the policy framework targets a broad range of minerals, including rare earth elements, niobium, soda ash, and construction minerals. Strategic deposits such as Mrima Hill underscore the importance of value addition, particularly for critical minerals used in advanced technologies, clean energy systems, and industrial manufacturing. Processing these minerals locally could attract high-tech industries, research facilities, and downstream manufacturing, moving Kenya closer to industrial diversification and technological advancement.

From a fiscal perspective, value addition enhances government revenues through multiple channels. Refined and processed products generate higher taxable income than raw exports, increasing corporate tax collections, royalties, and export levies. In addition, local processing expands the tax base by formalising ancillary businesses and services linked to the mining value chain. These revenues can be reinvested into infrastructure, education, healthcare, and community development, reinforcing the social contract between the state and citizens.



The value addition push also aligns with broader national development strategies such as industrialisation, export diversification, and job creation. Kenya's Vision 2030 and subsequent development plans emphasise the need to move up value chains across sectors. Mining, long considered a marginal contributor to the economy, is now being repositioned as a strategic pillar capable of supporting manufacturing, energy, and infrastructure development.

However, transitioning from raw exports to local processing is not without challenges. Processing facilities require substantial upfront capital, reliable energy supply, skilled labour, and strong regulatory oversight. Investors must be assured of policy consistency, access to infrastructure, and predictable licensing regimes. The government therefore faces the dual task of enforcing value addition requirements while creating an enabling environment that attracts investment rather than discouraging it.

Energy availability is a particularly critical factor. Mineral processing is energy-intensive, and Kenya's push for value addition is closely linked to ongoing investments in power generation, including renewable energy projects and large-scale infrastructure upgrades. Reliable and affordable electricity will be essential for refineries and processing plants to operate competitively on a global scale.

Environmental and social considerations also play a central role in the value addition agenda. Processing minerals locally increases industrial activity, which must be carefully managed to prevent pollution, water contamination, and land degradation. The policy framework emphasises strict environmental standards, continuous monitoring, and rehabilitation obligations to ensure that economic gains do not come at the expense of long-term sustainability. Community engagement and benefit-sharing mechanisms are also being strengthened to ensure that host communities see tangible improvements in livelihoods and public services.

Another key aspect of the value addition policy is support for small-scale and artisanal miners. Many small-scale gold producers lack the capacity to process their output to required standards, making them vulnerable to exploitation by middlemen. By promoting cooperative processing centres, shared refineries, and access to finance through Saccos and development funds, the government aims to integrate small miners into the formal value chain. This not only improves incomes but also enhances traceability, compliance, and safety standards.

Regionally, Kenya's value addition strategy positions the country as a potential processing hub for East and Central Africa. Neighbouring countries with mineral resources but limited processing capacity could use Kenyan facilities, boosting throughput volumes and regional trade. This would strengthen Nairobi's role as an industrial and financial centre while deepening regional economic integration. At the global level, the policy reflects shifting dynamics in resource governance. Countries rich in minerals are increasingly asserting greater control over how their resources are exploited and monetised. By restricting raw exports and promoting local processing, Kenya joins a growing group of nations seeking to capture more value domestically and reduce dependency on volatile commodity markets. In the long term, successful implementation of value addition policies could transform mining from a peripheral activity into a core driver of economic growth. Raising the sector's contribution beyond the current 1 percent of GDP would diversify Kenya's economy, reduce vulnerability to external shocks, and create more resilient sources of income and employment. The multiplier effects of local processing—across manufacturing, services, infrastructure, and skills development—could be substantial.



Restoring local control over mineral resources has become a central pillar of Kenya's evolving mining policy

Restoring local control over mineral resources has become a central pillar of Kenya's evolving mining policy, and recent government action in West Pokot illustrates this shift in a very concrete way. By halting illegal gold mining activities in the region, the government has moved to reassert regulatory authority and ensure that only licensed investors and properly registered artisanal cooperatives are allowed to operate. This intervention reflects a broader effort to bring order, accountability, and long-term economic value to a sector that has often been undermined by informality and exploitation. West Pokot has in recent years emerged as one of Kenya's most active gold-producing areas, attracting a surge of artisanal miners, middlemen, and unregulated operators. While this activity generated short-term income for some locals, it also created serious challenges. Illegal mining sites proliferated, environmental degradation intensified, and the state lost revenue through unreported production and smuggling. In some cases, unsafe mining practices led to injuries and loss of life, highlighting the human cost of operating outside formal systems.

The government's decision to shut down illegal operations is intended to reset the sector in West Pokot and establish a clear framework for lawful mining. Licensed investors are expected to meet strict requirements related to environmental management, worker safety, and community engagement. At the same time, the recognition of registered artisanal cooperatives ensures that local miners are not excluded, but instead integrated into the formal economy where they can operate legally, safely, and profitably.

Formalisation of artisanal mining is particularly significant. Through cooperatives, small-scale miners gain access to training, safer equipment, financing, and official markets for their gold. This reduces dependence on exploitative brokers and enhances transparency in gold trading. Registered cooperatives also make it easier for the government to provide technical support, monitor production, and enforce environmental standards, creating a more balanced and sustainable mining ecosystem. Restoring local control also has important economic implications. By eliminating illegal operators, the government can ensure that gold production is properly recorded and taxed, increasing revenues for both national and county governments. These funds can then be channelled into public services, infrastructure, and development projects in mining regions, helping communities see tangible benefits from the resources extracted from their land.

Environmental protection is another key driver of the crackdown. Unregulated mining in West Pokot had led to land degradation, water pollution, and destruction of agricultural areas. Licensed operations and cooperatives are subject to environmental impact assessments, rehabilitation obligations, and continuous monitoring, reducing long-term ecological damage and safeguarding livelihoods that depend on land and water resources. The move in West Pokot also sends a strong signal nationally. It demonstrates that the government is serious about enforcing mining laws and reclaiming control over mineral-rich areas that have long operated on the margins of regulation. This enforcement supports wider reforms aimed at cleaning up licensing processes, promoting value addition, and improving governance across the mining sector.

At a strategic level, restoring local control helps protect Kenya's mineral wealth from illicit trade and external exploitation. Illegal gold often finds its way into international markets through smuggling networks, depriving the country of revenue and undermining legitimate investors. By tightening oversight and formalising operations, Kenya strengthens its ability to trace production, comply with international standards, and build credibility as a responsible gold producer. In the long run, the success of this approach will depend on consistent enforcement, community engagement, and alternative livelihood support during the transition period. While crackdowns can disrupt incomes in the short term, integrating miners into cooperatives and licensed operations offers a pathway to more stable and dignified livelihoods. Overall, the government's actions in West Pokot mark an important step toward restoring local control and order in Kenya's gold sector. By ensuring that only licensed investors and registered artisanal cooperatives operate, the state is laying the foundation for a safer, more transparent, and more economically beneficial mining industry that serves both local communities and the national interest.





Strategic Minerals for a Green Future: South Africa's 2026 Critical Minerals and Metals Vision

As we stand on the cusp of 2026, the global scramble for the building blocks of the green energy transition has reached a fever pitch. For decades, South Africa's role in the global economy was clearly defined: a powerhouse of extraction, shipping raw ores across oceans to be refined and manufactured elsewhere. However, the 2026 Critical Minerals and Metals Vision represents a fundamental rupture from this colonial-era economic model.



In May 2025, the South African Cabinet approved a landmark strategy that transformed the nation's geological wealth into a blueprint for industrial sovereignty. As we enter 2026, this strategy has moved from legislative debate to site-level execution, aiming to position South Africa not just as a miner, but as a high-tech manufacturer for the electric age.

The "Big Five" of the Green Transition
The 2026 vision identifies 21 essential minerals, but the strategy focuses its heaviest artillery on a core group of "Strategic Anchors." South Africa's dominance in Platinum Group Metals (PGMs) accounting for over 80% of global reserves is being leveraged to lead the hydrogen economy. By 2026, the nation is scaling up the production of hydrogen fuel cells, which rely on platinum as a catalyst to generate clean electricity.

Furthermore, South Africa's Manganese and Vanadium reserves are being prioritized for long-duration energy storage. As the world moves away from volatile lithium-ion prices, South Africa's vanadium redox flow batteries are becoming a cornerstone of the national grid's stabilization, providing a "Made in Africa" solution to the intermittent nature of solar and wind power.

Reforming the Regulatory Landscape
The centerpiece of the 2026 roadmap is the full implementation of the Mineral Resources Development Bill of 2025. For years, investors cited "red tape" as the primary barrier to South African exploration. The 2026 vision addresses this through a "One-Stop-Shop" digital licensing system, which aims to reduce the turnaround time for mining and environmental permits by 50%. To fuel this growth, the government has introduced the Exploration Fund, specifically designed to support junior miners. By 2026, the goal is for South Africa to capture at least 5% of global exploration expenditure, up from less than 1% in early 2023. This is paired with "flow-through" tax incentives, allowing investors in exploration companies to claim tax deductions a move mirrored after successful models in Canada and Australia.

The Industrialization of the South: EVs and Beyond
Perhaps the most ambitious facet of the 2026 vision is the Electric Vehicle (EV) Pivot. Recognizing that the global automotive market is shifting rapidly, the South African government has implemented a 150% tax deduction for capital investment in EV manufacturing facilities. By mid-2026, the first production lines for electric buses and delivery vehicles are expected to be operational in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) like Coega and East London. This isn't just about assembling imported parts; the 2026 strategy mandates a phased "local content" requirement, forcing the development of a domestic supply chain for battery precursors, wire harnesses, and cooling systems.

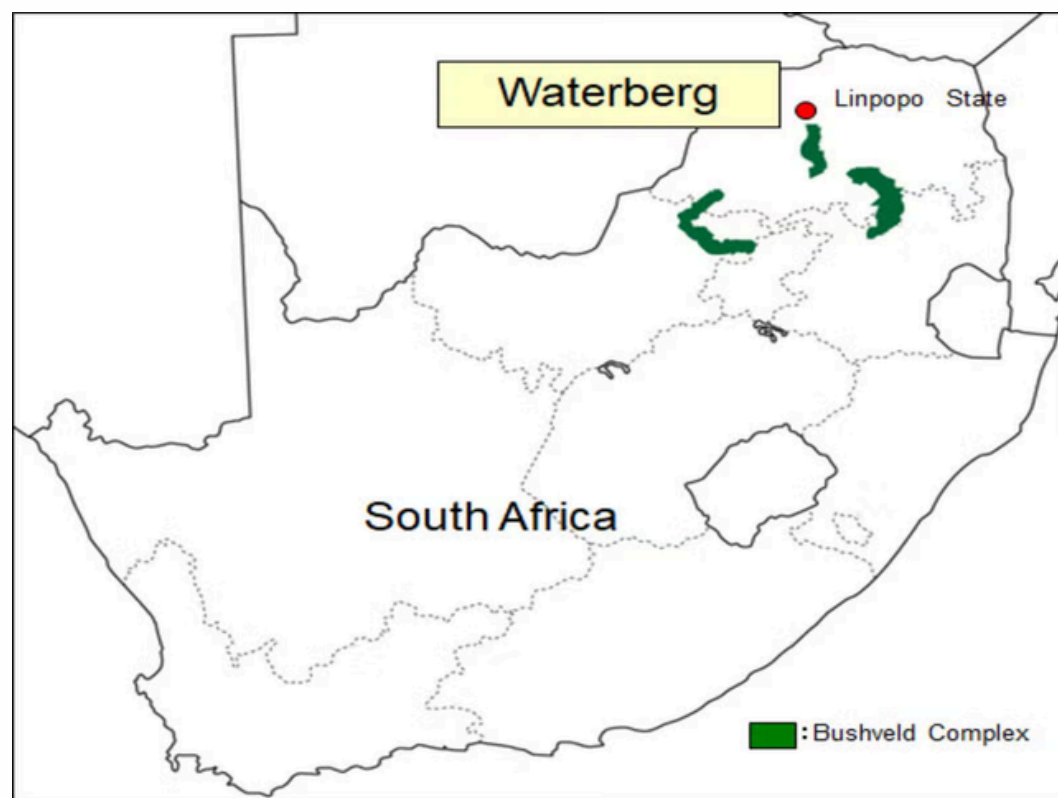
Energy Security: The Coal Contradiction
The 2026 Vision is not without its controversies. In a pragmatic if polarizing move, South Africa continues to classify Coal as a "high-criticality" mineral. While the international community pushes for a rapid exit from fossil fuels, South Africa's 2026 policy treats coal as a strategic bridge to ensure domestic energy security while the green infrastructure scales up. The government argues that "Just Energy Transition" means not abandoning the coal-dependent communities of Mpumalanga, but rather integrating carbon-capture technologies and repurposing old mines for renewable energy hubs.

A Continental Leader: The AfCFTA Integration
South Africa is no longer looking only within its borders. The 2026 vision positions the country as the processing hub for the entire Southern African region. Under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), South Africa is actively pursuing partnerships to refine copper from Zambia, lithium from Zimbabwe, and cobalt from the DRC. By 2026, the goal is to create a "Regional Value Chain" where raw materials from across the SADC region flow into South African refineries, emerging as high-value battery components ready for export to European and American markets.



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Waterberg PGM Project: A Century-Long Mining Vision for South Africa



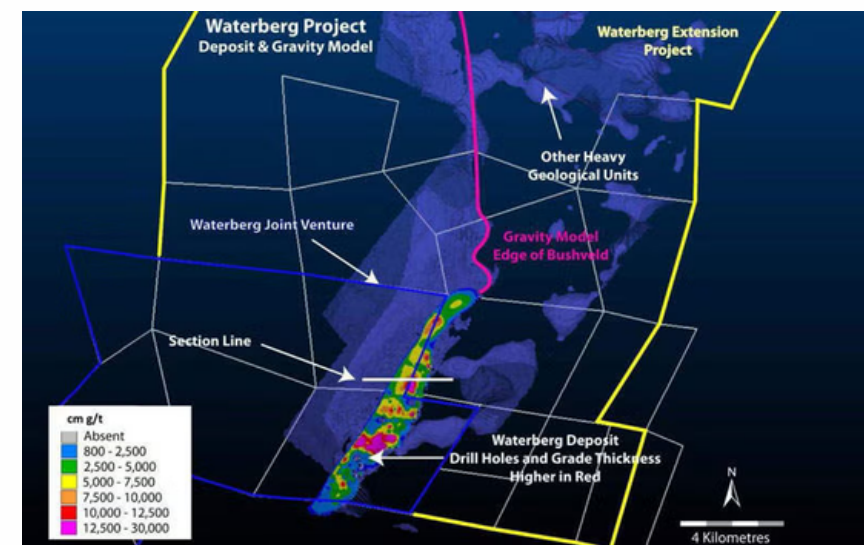
From a strategic perspective, the Waterberg project aligns with South Africa's broader objectives in the mining sector, including value addition, technological advancement, and global competitiveness. PGMs are critical to emerging technologies such as hydrogen fuel cells, which are central to the global clean energy transition. By securing long-term PGM production, South Africa positions itself as a key supplier to international markets that are increasingly pivoting toward green energy and low-emission technologies. Environmental stewardship is a core component of the project's planning. The Waterberg region is ecologically sensitive, requiring careful management of land, water, and biodiversity impacts. Modern mining practices, continuous monitoring, and rehabilitation programs will be integral to ensuring that economic benefits do not come at the expense of environmental sustainability.

The Waterberg Platinum Group Metals (PGM) Project in Limpopo represents one of South Africa's most ambitious and long-term mining initiatives. Construction of the facility is scheduled to commence in December 2025, with initial production expected by 2029. What sets the Waterberg project apart is not only its scale but its extraordinary projected lifespan, which extends all the way to 2081, indicating a strategic commitment to long-term resource utilisation, industrial development, and economic impact. Located in the resource-rich Waterberg region of Limpopo, the project focuses on the extraction and processing of platinum group metals, a critical suite of minerals that includes platinum, palladium, rhodium, and associated by-products. PGMs are globally essential for automotive catalytic converters, hydrogen fuel cells, electronics, and jewellery. The Waterberg facility is expected to be one of the largest PGM operations in the world, leveraging modern mining technology and sustainable practices to maximise efficiency and reduce environmental footprint.

Construction, beginning in late 2025, will be a massive undertaking, involving the development of mining shafts, processing plants, water and energy infrastructure, and associated logistical networks. The project's long-term horizon allows planners to incorporate cutting-edge automation, digital monitoring, and environmentally responsible mining methods, ensuring the operation remains competitive and sustainable for decades. Its projected lifespan of over 50 years, extending to 2081, reflects the scale of the deposit and the confidence in South Africa's PGM reserves in the Waterberg region. The economic impact of the Waterberg project is set to be substantial. During the construction phase, thousands of jobs will be created across multiple skill levels, including engineers, miners, geologists, technicians, and support staff. Once operational, the facility is projected to provide long-term employment opportunities, stimulating regional development in Limpopo through increased demand for housing, services, transport, and ancillary industries. Additionally, the project is expected to contribute significantly to local and national revenue through royalties, taxes, and export earnings, strengthening South Africa's position as a leading PGM producer.

The project also emphasizes corporate social responsibility initiatives, supporting local communities through skills development, education, healthcare, and infrastructure projects. Technologically, the Waterberg project is set to integrate automation, digital mapping, and advanced processing techniques, positioning it as a model for 21st-century mining in South Africa. These innovations not only increase efficiency and safety but also enhance the long-term profitability of the operation, ensuring that the facility can remain productive and globally competitive for decades. Furthermore, the Waterberg PGM Project contributes to national goals of industrialisation and economic diversification. By producing critical metals domestically, South Africa strengthens its supply chain capabilities, supports local manufacturing, and reduces dependency on imported materials for high-tech industries. The long-term horizon also encourages investment in complementary industries, such as refining, chemical processing, and engineering services.

The Waterberg PGM Project is more than a mining operation; it is a strategic national asset with the potential to drive economic, technological, and social development for decades. With construction beginning in December 2025 and first production targeted for 2029, the project promises a century-spanning contribution to South Africa's mining sector, reinforcing the country's position as a global leader in platinum group metals and providing a blueprint for sustainable, long-term resource management.



Makhado Colliery: Securing South Africa's Future in Domestic Steelmaking

The Makhado Colliery project represents a strategically significant development in South Africa's coal and industrial landscape. Backed by a 91 million dollar investment, MC Mining is advancing this flagship project toward production, which is scheduled to begin in early 2026. Once operational, Makhado Colliery will stand out as South Africa's only large-scale producer of hard coking coal dedicated to domestic steelmaking, filling a critical gap in the country's industrial supply chain.

Located in Limpopo Province, the Makhado Colliery is uniquely positioned within South Africa's coal sector. Unlike thermal coal, which is primarily used for power generation, hard coking coal is a specialised input essential for the production of steel through blast furnace processes. Historically, South Africa has relied heavily on imports of high-quality coking coal to support its steel industry. Makhado's development therefore marks a turning point by offering a reliable domestic source of this critical material.

The 91 million dollar investment reflects strong confidence in the project's technical viability and long-term market demand. Funding is being channelled into mine development, processing infrastructure, logistics, and environmental management systems. This capital injection accelerates construction timelines and ensures that the project meets modern operational and regulatory standards as it moves toward commercial production. From an industrial perspective, Makhado Colliery is set to play a vital role in strengthening South Africa's steel value chain. By supplying hard coking coal locally, the project reduces exposure to international supply disruptions, volatile import prices, and foreign exchange pressures. This enhances the competitiveness of domestic steel producers and supports downstream industries such as construction, manufacturing, transport, and infrastructure development.

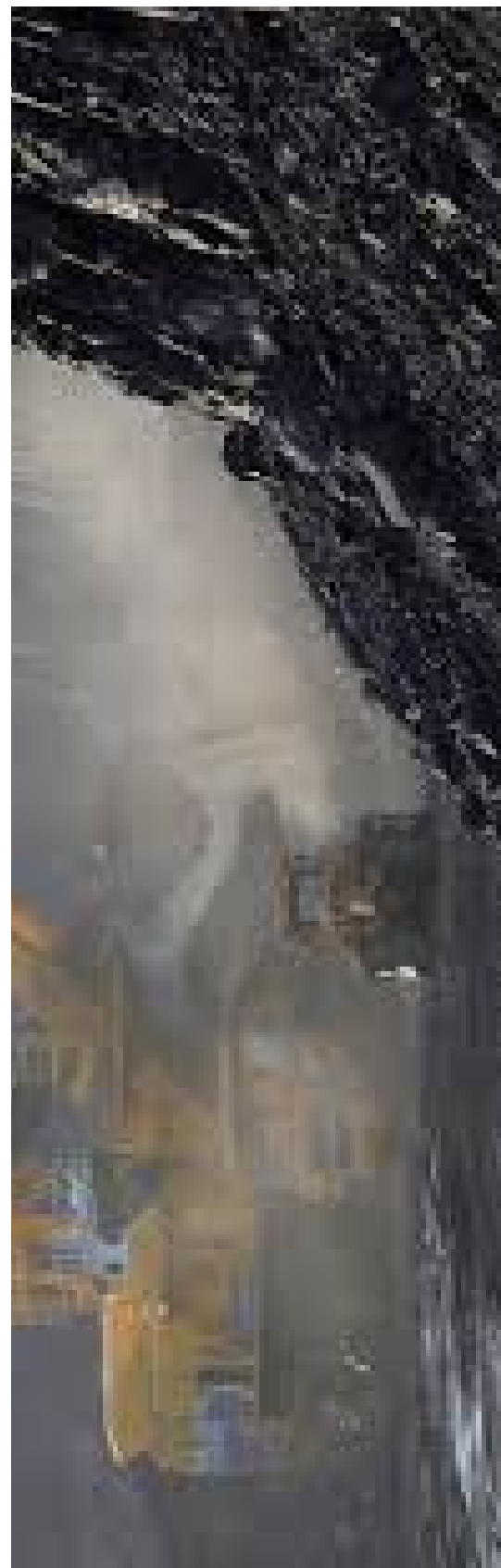


Environmental and regulatory compliance form a core part of the project's advancement. Coal projects in South Africa operate under increasing scrutiny, and MC Mining has committed to meeting strict environmental standards, including land rehabilitation, water management, and emissions control. The company's approach reflects a broader industry shift toward responsible resource development, balancing economic necessity with environmental stewardship.

Strategically, the Makhado Colliery occupies a nuanced position within South Africa's energy and industrial transition. While the country is accelerating its move toward renewable energy, steelmaking remains a foundational industry that currently relies on coking coal. By producing hard coking coal domestically, Makhado supports a more efficient and controlled supply during the transition period, while research into lower-carbon steelmaking technologies continues.

The project also aligns with national objectives to localise industrial inputs and strengthen supply chain resilience. As global markets become more uncertain, the ability to source critical materials locally is increasingly viewed as a strategic advantage. Makhado Colliery's output will contribute to this resilience by anchoring a key segment of the steelmaking process within South Africa.

In summary, the Makhado Colliery is a landmark project for South Africa's mining and industrial sectors. With production scheduled for early 2026 and backed by substantial investment, it is set to become the country's sole large-scale domestic producer of hard coking coal for steelmaking. Its success will not only support the steel industry but also reinforce broader goals of industrial self-sufficiency, economic development, and strategic resource management.



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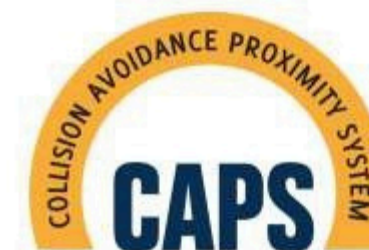
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The Golden Renaissance: Qala Shallows and the New Era of the Witwatersrand



The city of Johannesburg was built on gold, but for the better part of the last two decades, the "City of Gold" has watched its historical lifeblood slowly drain away. Many believed the Central Rand goldfields—the most storied mining district in human history—had finally reached the end of their productive life.

That narrative changed on December 4, 2025. In a landmark ceremony in Roodepoort, Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources Gwede Mantashe officially inaugurated the Qala Shallows Gold Mine. Operated by Australian-listed West Wits Mining, Qala Shallows is not just another mining project; it is the first new underground gold mine to open in South Africa in 15 years.

A Strategic Strike in a Soaring Market

The timing of the opening could hardly be more auspicious. Throughout 2025, global gold prices have shattered records, soaring roughly 60% since January to reach peaks above \$4,300 per ounce. This surge has transformed deposits previously dismissed as uneconomical into highly lucrative strategic assets.

West Wits CEO Rudi Deysel emphasized that the Qala Shallows project demonstrates the potential for developing new underground gold mines in the Central Rand district through thorough geological work, clear planning, and effective collaboration between government and business.

Qala Shallows is the initial phase of the larger Witwatersrand Basin Project (WBP), which contains an estimated resource exceeding 5 million ounces of gold. At its peak, the mine is expected to produce 70,000 ounces per year over 12 years, with a total operational life of 17 years.

Economic Impact and Job Creation

This new mine is poised to significantly benefit the South African economy, contributing around \$1.15 billion (R21.5 billion) throughout its operation.

Its social impact is also substantial:

- **Job Creation:** The project aims to create over 1,000 direct jobs as it reaches full production by Year 3.
- **Community Development:** West Wits is committed to local employment and procurement, seeking to make mining a positive force for development in the surrounding areas.
- **Funding:** The \$44 million development was financed through various sources, including a R902.5 million senior debt facility from Absa and the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC).

Modern Mining: Safety and Technology

Unlike the ultra-deep mines common in the Witwatersrand, Qala Shallows is a shallower operation, reaching 850 meters. This allows for a more efficient and modern mining approach.

The mine employs 100% hydropower handheld drilling, moving away from older, less efficient systems to improve safety and efficiency. Minister Mantashe highlighted the importance of using such technologies to enhance safety in gold mining and work towards a "Zero Harm" goal.

The Road Ahead

The official opening follows a rapid development phase that began in July 2025. The project has already achieved key milestones:

- **First Ore:** Reached the surface in October 2025.
- **Stockpile:** Approximately 30,000 tonnes of ore have been stockpiled.
- **First Gold Pour:** Anticipated in March 2026.

West Wits is also considering a secondary listing on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), reinforcing its presence in South Africa.

The inauguration of Qala Shallows signifies a renewal for the Witwatersrand's gold mining landscape. Minister Mantashe stated that mining remains a vital industry and that Qala Shallows marks a new beginning for both the Witwatersrand and South African gold mining.

Quick Facts: Qala Shallows Gold Mine

- **Location:** Roodepoort, 15km west of Johannesburg CBD.
- **Ownership:** West Wits Mining (74% following a recent buyback).
- **Resource:** Part of a 5.025Moz gold project.
- **Annual Output:** 70,000 oz/year (Steady State).
- **Operational Cost:** AISC projected below \$1,000/oz



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Stronger Together: Africa's Mining Sector Charts a Unified Future in Cape Town



As the global race for critical minerals intensifies, all eyes turn to the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) for the 2026 Investing in African Mining Indaba. Scheduled for February 9–12, 2026, the world's largest mining investment event arrives at a pivotal moment for the continent.

Under the rallying theme, "Stronger Together: Progress through Partnerships," this year's Indaba moves beyond the rhetoric of "potential" to the reality of "production," emphasizing that Africa's mineral wealth can only be unlocked through radical collaboration between governments, investors, and local communities.

A Theme for a New Global Reality

The 2026 theme reflects a maturing African mining landscape. With the global energy transition demanding unprecedented volumes of copper, lithium, cobalt, and rare earth elements, the "Stronger Together" mandate highlights three critical pillars:

1. Public-Private Synergy: Streamlining regulatory frameworks to provide investors with the certainty they crave.
2. Cross-Border Integration: Leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to build regional mineral value chains.
3. Community Sovereignty: Moving past "Social License to Operate" toward genuine equity partnerships with host communities.

The Agenda: Innovation and Industrialization
The 2026 program is designed to tackle the industry's most pressing bottlenecks. A major highlight is the Downstream Buyers Programme, which connects African producers directly with global tech giants and automotive manufacturers seeking secure, ethical supply chains.

Key sessions will also focus on:

- The Critical Minerals Roadmap: Identifying how Africa can move from being a raw material exporter to a hub for mid-stream processing and battery precursor manufacturing.
- Infrastructure & Logistics: With CEOs from Transnet and Eskom confirmed to speak, the focus will be on solving the rail and energy crises that have historically stifled export volumes.
- Disruptive Tech: From AI-driven exploration to the use of hydrogen-powered hauling fleets, the Innovation Stage will showcase how African mines are becoming the most advanced in the world.

A Powerhouse Lineup

The 2026 speaker roster features the "Who's Who" of global mining and African policy. South Africa's Minister of Mineral and Petroleum Resources, Gwede Mantashe, is expected to provide updates on the country's new mineral legislation. He will be joined by industry titans including Duncan Wanblad (Anglo American) and Robert Friedland

(Ivanhoe Mines), whose recent successes in the DRC and South Africa serve as blueprints for modern African mining. The presence of Rohitesh Dhawan (ICMM) further underscores the event's commitment to ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) standards, ensuring that the 2026 Indaba isn't just about profit, but about "mining for a better future."

Why 2026 is Different

Unlike previous years, the 2026 Indaba takes place against a backdrop of record-high commodity prices—specifically gold and platinum—which has flushed the sector with fresh capital. The challenge for delegates this year will be ensuring this "super-cycle" translates into long-term infrastructure and industrialization for African nations. As thousands of delegates descend on the Mother City this February, the message is clear: Africa is no longer just a destination for extraction; it is a partner for global progress.

At a Glance: Mining Indaba 2026

- Dates: February 9–12, 2026
- Venue: CTICC 1 & 2, Cape Town, South Africa
- Expected Attendance: 8,000+ delegates, 900+ investors, 40+ government delegations
- Key Focus: Critical Minerals, Value Addition, and Infrastructure Modernization

The Platinum Pulse: North West Business Summit and Expo Targets Mining Value Chain

On March 26, 2026, the heart of South Africa's "Platinum Province" will converge at the iconic Sun City Resort for the 2nd Annual North West Business Summit and Expo. While the event serves as a multi-sectoral platform, its 2026 edition has placed a definitive spotlight on Mining as the primary engine for regional economic transformation.

The summit arrives at a critical juncture for the North West Province, which currently produces 94% of South Africa's platinum and a quarter of its gold. With global demand for Platinum Group Metals (PGMs) reaching new heights, the event aims to bridge the gap between large-scale extractors and the burgeoning ecosystem of local entrepreneurs. A Platform for Local Inclusion. The 2026 focus is uniquely tailored to the "one-stop destination" for village, township (Kasi), and city-based entrepreneurs. Organizers have designed the summit to explore:

- **Support Services:** Identifying how informal and formal market sectors can integrate into the complex mining supply chain.
- **Challenges & Strategies:** Direct panel discussions addressing the hurdles local businesses face when attempting to secure mining procurement contracts.
- **Innovation & Tech:** Showcasing how technology and engineering can modernize small-scale mining operations and service providers.

Why the North West Matters Now

The province is not just a site for extraction; it is a hub for the Green Economy and Energy sectors. As the world shifts toward sustainable energy, the North West's rich deposits of chrome, vanadium, and PGMs—essential for hydrogen fuel cells and battery technology—have made it a focal point for global investment.

"The focus for the 2026 edition is about creating a value-driven and high-impact event," noted organizers during a recent pre-summit briefing. This includes the inaugural North West Business Awards, which will take place on the second day (March 27) to recognize excellence in mining-related services and community development.

Strategic Networking and Collaboration

For mining executives and investors, the Expo provides a rare opportunity to meet the "people powering the industry" on the ground. Beyond high-level keynotes, the Sun City venue will host:

- **Networking Forums:** Dedicated spaces for small business owners to forge connections with banking, finance, and manufacturing leaders.
- **Exhibition Floor:** A showcase of cutting-edge local engineering and manufacturing solutions designed specifically for the province's unique geological conditions.

As the North West Province drives toward increased local beneficiation and metal fabrication, the March 26 Summit stands as a catalyst for moving the region from a resource-rich area to an industrial powerhouse.

Summit Fact Sheet

- **Date:** Thursday, March 26 – Friday, March 27, 2026
- **Venue:** Sun City Resort, North West Province
- **Primary Focus:** Mining, Energy, Manufacturing, and Engineering
- **Key Feature:** Inaugural North West Business Awards (Day 2)
- **Contact:** nwbizexpo@gmail.com | 083 926 5613



The Green Mandate: Mining Sector Braces for 2026 Carbon Budgets



As the clock ticks toward March 2026, South Africa's mining industry is facing its most significant regulatory evolution since the dawn of the democracy. Under the landmark Climate Change Act, the voluntary era of emissions reporting is coming to an end. In less than three months, mining houses will transition into a regime of legally binding carbon budgets, marking a definitive shift in how the industry accounts for its environmental footprint.

The Enforcement of a New Framework
Starting in March 2026, any mining operation that exceeds its assigned five-year carbon budget will face severe financial penalties. Unlike previous years, where carbon taxes were the primary deterrent, these new budgets act as a "hard ceiling" for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE) has spent late 2025 finalizing these allocations. For the mining sector—an industry traditionally reliant on carbon-intensive electricity and heavy diesel machinery—the pressure is on to de-carbonize operations without sacrificing productivity.

Strategic Adjustments Across the Industry
Mining majors are not waiting for the March deadline to act. Throughout late 2025, we have seen a flurry of activity as companies prepare for compliance:

- **Renewable Energy Integration:** Companies like Anglo American and Sibanye-Stillwater are accelerating the rollout of massive solar and wind farms to reduce their dependence on Eskom's coal-fired grid.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Mines are implementing AI-driven ventilation systems and electric hauling fleets to shave off the final percentage points of their emissions to stay within their assigned budgets.
- **Carbon Offsetting:** There is a surge in interest in verified carbon credits and land restoration projects as a secondary strategy for companies that cannot immediately eliminate all operational emissions.

Economic Implications and the Carbon Tax

The 2026 transition is intrinsically linked to South Africa's Carbon Tax Act. Companies that stay within their allocated budget will benefit from a lower tax rate, while those who fail to comply will be hit with a significantly higher "penalty rate" for every tonne of CO2 equivalent produced above their limit.

Economists warn that while the transition is necessary for global competitiveness particularly as international buyers demand "green minerals"—the short-term capital expenditure for de-carbonization could pressure the margins of mid-tier and artisanal miners.

A Competitive Edge in the Global Market

Despite the regulatory hurdles, industry leaders viewed the 2026 framework at the recent COP30 summits as an opportunity. By adhering to legally binding budgets, South African miners can market their products—especially platinum and manganese—as "low-carbon minerals," a label that is increasingly becoming a requirement for European and North American manufacturing supply chains.

As the March 2026 deadline looms, the South African mining sector is proving that it can be both a pillar of the economy and a leader in the global climate fight.

Fast Facts: The 2026 Carbon Budgets

- **Effective Date:** March 2026.
- **Legal Basis:** South African Climate Change Act.
- **Compliance Cycle:** Five-year mandatory budget periods.
- **Penalty Mechanism:** Higher carbon tax rates and potential administrative fines for exceeding limits.
- **Target:** Aligning South Africa with the Paris Agreement goal of net-zero emissions by 2050.

African Mining Week 2026: October 14 - 16, 2026 (Cape Town)



The global mining community will return to Cape Town from October 14–16, 2026, for the much-anticipated African Mining Week. Positioned as a mid-year check-in following the larger Mining Indaba, this event has carved out a niche as the premier gathering focused on the intersection of digital innovation, operational efficiency, and sustainable practices across the continent.

The 2026 Focus: Tech and ESG Integration African Mining Week 2026 is designed to address the tactical and technological challenges facing mine operators today. The agenda moves beyond policy discussions to practical applications of emerging technologies.

Key themes for the October event include:

- **Digital Transformation:** Showcasing case studies on AI-driven exploration, predictive maintenance, and autonomous vehicles that are revolutionizing safety and productivity.
- **The Future of Energy:** Examining hybrid power solutions, the integration of hydrogen technology in heavy machinery, and the practical application of battery storage on remote mine sites.
- **ESG and the Social Contract:** Deep dives into effective community engagement models, responsible sourcing certification, and aligning operations with the new, stricter South African carbon budgets effective from March 2026.
- **Junior Miner Spotlight:** Dedicated workshops and financing forums specifically tailored to the unique needs of junior and mid-tier exploration companies driving new discoveries across the continent.

A Platform for Practical Solutions

Unlike the broader investment-focused Indaba, African Mining Week offers a more technical, hands-on experience. The event's exhibition floor is a hub for engineers, geologists, and procurement managers to engage directly with service providers and technology pioneers.

"African Mining Week is where the deals get done on the ground," noted an industry analyst. "It's less about shaking hands with ministers and more about finding the vendor who can optimize your flotation circuit or secure your cyber-physical systems."

Key Takeaways for Attendees

For industry professionals heading to Cape Town in October, the 2026 event promises actionable insights into navigating a complex regulatory and technological landscape. The agenda is packed with technical presentations and intimate roundtable discussions aimed at fostering concrete "Progress through Partnerships" a recurring theme in the 2026 African mining calendar.

As the industry pivots to meet the rigorous demands of the global green economy, African Mining Week 2026 provides the essential toolkit for building resilient, efficient, and sustainable mining operations.

Event Snapshot: African Mining Week 2026

- **Dates:** October 14–16, 2026
- **Location:** Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa
- **Target Audience:** Mine Operators, Engineers, Technologists, Geologists, and Service Providers
- **Focus:** Digital Innovation, ESG Compliance, Operational Efficiency, and Junior Miner Finance



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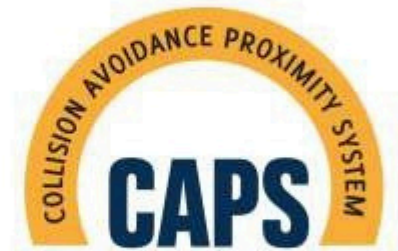
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