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NAMIBIAN MINING NEWS
| January-March 2020

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Let’s utilise the wide opportunities

Andrew Maramwidze (Editor)

NEWS of a local tin mine expected to among the top 10 producers in the world, following an impressive JORC should be celebrated with vigor, as this confirms the country’s mining sector offers a wide range of opportunities to potential investors.

Experts have already announced that the amount of tin, lithium and tantalum is remarkable and the grade is good. Newly AIM-listed Afritin Mining should be applauded for breathing a new life into Uis tin project. Remember Uis tin project was once one of the largest opencast tin mines worldwide, before former owner, then South African State-owned metals company Iscor, stopped mining in the 1980s as a result of declining tin prices.

Currently the developers compare the mine’s opencast to Pitinga, in Brazil and are eager aims to bring Africa up to its past production levels of tin, and to become the primary mover of tin concentrate from the African continent or from a portfolio of tin assets. This show determination and potential that possible most of our minerals have.

It takes many factors to attract the right investors, with so much determination and authorities should always scale up and dangle the right carrots to investors. However, other countries and producers of tin will be eyeing progress at Uis and also making their operations competitive. In Africa, we have Alphamin Resources’ Bisie tin project, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and ASX-listed mineral exploration and development company Kasbah Resources’ Achmachi tin project, in Morocco. We hope our new discovery will not only benefit the project developers to deepen their pockets but will also ignite other opportunities on the economy, including the much needed jobs, inspire entrepreneurs to start companies with services related to the mine’s needs.

Authorities should also give the miner all the necessary support, as they compete to clinch and enjoy an uptick in demand for tin in the semi-conductor and cellphone markets, as traditional producers such as China and Indonesia have cut production while the Latin American producers are running short of reserves.

We say all the best to Uis in the new season, may theirs be a fruitful hunt.

Remember to send your inquiries, letters and comments to drewmara@gmail.com

Enjoy the read!

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Erongo region attracts Antler Gold

Antler Gold has signed an agreement to acquire a 75 percent stake in a gold exploration license adjacent to Navachab and Otjikoto in the Damara Supergroup as well as Osino Resources’ Karibib Gold project and several other smaller deposits.

Once Antler acquires the 75 percent interest in the private company, it has the right to purchase the remaining 25 percent minority interest at the fair market value determined by a professional business valuator selected by Antler.

Meanwhile the transaction for the License which measures 32.7 square kilometers, located west of the town Usakos in the Erongo region is subject to Antler receiving all necessary approvals, including the TSX Venture Exchange approval.

Haib Copper project ascend to development

Deep-South Resources developers of Haib Copper Project are upbeat following results from microbial-assisted column leach amenability tests performed on the mine's stockpile material.

“These results are exceptional. The bio-assisted leaching results combined with grade upgrading mineral sorting results, HPGR and agglomeration are highly promising and demonstrate that we are on the right path to extract the metal at Haib and develop the project ahead,” said John Akwenye, Chairman of Deep-South.

Deep-South is now planning the road map to the development of the project based on the results.

The company has also said the first step will be to update the Preliminary Economic Assessment (PEA) completed in February 2018, at the termination of the current metallurgical test work.

More positives for Reptile Uranium

Deep Yellow’s EPL 3496 exploration drilling program in the Tubas Red Sand and Tubas Calcrete continue to produce optimistic results.

EPL 3496 is held by Reptile Uranium Namibia, a member of the group of companies wholly owned by Deep Yellow.

“It is highly encouraging that the latest exploration result which has extended testing to the west continues to produce positive results delineating further uranium mineralisation. The Tumas palaeochannel is proving to be a highly prospective target with significant upside.

There is a strong expectation that Tumas will reward the Company with additional uranium resources, as we continue to evaluate and test the remaining 55km of the channel system,” said John Borshoff, Deep Yellow, Managing Director.

He said the company’s Namibian project portfolio continues to grow, as the group focus on advancing dual-pillar growth strategy.

New broom at Bannerman Resources

Bannerman Resources Limited recently announced the appointment of Robert Orr as the Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary with effect from January.

The Australian Stock Exchange listed exploration and development company holds 95 percent interest in the Etango Uranium Project.

Orr is a Chartered Accountant with over 30 years’ experience in public practice and commerce. He has worked extensively in the resources industry and has acted as Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary for a number of listed resources companies.

In addition, Orr has acquired deep experience in corporate compliance and governance, the capital markets, mergers and acquisitions, project development, contract negotiation and mining operations.

Orr replaces Rob Dalton, who has served as Company Secretary and Financial Controller for more than five years.

Osino upbeat with Twin Hills Central progress

Twin Hills Central’s first part of in-fill drilling has posted positive results, the developer Osino Resources has revealed.

According to the company, the receipt of assays for eight in-fill holes drilled at Twin Hills Central, confirming mineralization over a strike length of 800m.

“These results provide further confirmation of the significant width and strike extent of the gold mineralization at Twin Hills Central.

“Since the completion of the Phase 1 drill program, our geological team has carried out detailed core logging and structural interpretation which has resulted in an improved understanding of the geometry and controls of the Twin Hills gold system,” said Dave Underwood, Osino’s VP Exploration.

Underwood said the gold mineralization is associated with parasitic folds and limb faults within a meta-greywacke unit, which has been tightly folded into a large syncline – a similar structural setting to B2 Gold’s Otjikoto Gold Mine further northeast along the Damara Belt.

Steady demand for rough diamonds

De Beers Group’s value of rough diamond sales for the tenth sales cycle of 2019 have indicate a positive development in the diamond industry.

“Following continued polished diamond price stability in the lead up to the final sales cycle of the year, we saw further signs of steady demand for rough diamonds during Sight 10,” said Bruce Cleaver, Chief Executive Officer of De Beers Group.

De Beers Group is the world’s leading diamond company with expertise in the exploration, mining and marketing of diamonds.
Tin market bearing green shoots

The maiden JORC resource at Uis of 71.54 Mt of ore at a grade of 0.134 percent tin for 95,539 t of contained tin is expected to spur the mine to the list of the top 10 tin mines in the world.

“Tin market bearing green shoots”

Viljoen adds that there is also the possibility of exploiting other minerals such as feldspar and beryllium.

Uis is coming along at a time when the global tin market is starting to bear green shoots.

“Call it being at the right place at the right time, but we could see a pinch point coming in the tin market. For example, a study by MIT on which metals are critical to the energy revolution puts tin ahead of other energy metals. “It cites an emerging market opportunity for tin in lithium-ion batteries and indium tin oxide for touch screen and display technologies. If fact, the International Tin Association says demand for the metal could triple by 2050,” he states.

Viljoen adds that many may think of tin’s use in consumer goods such as cans etc., but its underlying use is in semi-conductors for electric boards. Granted, this market has slowed down due to geopolitical factors, but Uis is still in good standing because tin is such a unique element with a variety of uses.

“Also, once the US-China trade war ends, we will see an uptick in demand for tin in the semi-conductor and cellphone markets.”

Meanwhile, on the supply side, traditional producers such as China and Indonesia have cut production while the Latin American producers are running short of reserves.

As such, Uis is able to take advantage of market situations as there are not many tin deposits that can be mined on an industrial open cast scale.
Aukam Graphite ready to start beneficiation

Advanced materials company Gratomic has completed construction of the crushing and grinding circuit which has a 50 metric tonnes per hour capacity at its Aukam Graphite Project.

In addition, the company has also completed the installation and setup of the processing plant’s rougher, cleaner and scavenger flotation columns.

“The cumulative capacity of the columns combined with the rougher mixing tank and slurry line is initially 2.8 tonnes per hour,” said Arno Brand, Gratomic Co-chief executive officer.

Brand said the company has put 178 tonnes of product through the existing pilot plant systematically increasing the grade to commercially desirable 95 percent to 97 percent Cg (Carbon in Graphite).

He said it has further indicated that it is able to upgrade this material through air classification to over 99 percent Cg.

Operationally, the company has decided to put on hold an updated drying circuit pending financing of the Company.

“The drying circuit will be shipped to Namibia after the final payment of CAD $75,000 is made and will arrive within 39 days of the payment,” Brand.

On the other hand, the Company has decided to delay this upgrade in the short term in order to preserve available capital and will utilize the existing drying circuit which can manage the material drying requirements in the interim.

Meanwhile in preparation of product sales, a total of 350 tonnes of graphitic material has been stockpiled at the processing site ready for beneficiation.

During the first two months of the LEW-COR contract, the stockpile will be further increased to 5,000 tonnes from available surface mine dumps which contain approximately 23,000 tonnes of graphitic material.

“Management will be curtailing ongoing mining costs by temporarily reducing non-critical staff until the completion of a financing,” Brand said.

The company also sees the development, as a positive means to decrease monthly capital requirements by approximately 75 percent.

However, the company has advised that it has not based its production decision on even the existence of mineral resources let alone on a feasibility study of mineral reserves, demonstrating economic and technical viability, and, as a result, there may be an increased uncertainty of achieving any particular level of recovery of minerals or the cost of such recovery, including increased risks associated with developing a commercially mineable deposit.

Brand said historically such projects have a much higher risk of economic and technical failure.

“There is no guarantee that production will begin as anticipated or at all or that anticipated production costs will be achieved.”

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According to the McKinsey Global Institute Report, copper demand could soar as much as 43 per cent over the next 15 years, as we move towards a low carbon and more sustainable future.

However, over the next two years, copper supply is expected to face sizeable deficits in the face of strong market fundamentals.

Large operating mines are already witnessing resources dwindling and slow production. Africa has strong potential for supplies, but much of that lies in challenging jurisdictions. That’s why quality projects in countries that are friendly to mining and business will command a premium.

“New copper production is assumed to come from Zambia and the Congo. But those are challenging jurisdictions. Trigon focuses instead on business-friendly African jurisdictions, like Namibia and Morocco.”

Trigon Metals, a promising play on copper, carefully chooses where it does business, focusing on places with stable governments, friendly mining laws and a skilled labour force.

The company’s flagship project is the Kombat Mine which is one of the most significant copper mines in Namibia. It originally started producing in 1962, operating until 2008, with total output reaching 12.46 million tonnes of ore grading 2.6 per cent copper on average.

“The Kombat Mine is shovel ready with all environmental permitting in place. Our mining licence is still active, and the renewal application is currently under review by the Ministry of Mines in Namibia. We do not foresee any challenges with the renewal process” said Fanie Müller, VP Operations and Country Manager, Trigon Metals Inc.

The Kombat mine has over USD$100 million worth of usable infrastructure in place. That includes a 1,100 tonne/day mill and headframes.

Current Indicated Resources are Kombat’s open-pit 1.53 million tonnes of 1.14 per cent copper, and an overall total underground Inferred Resource of 5.51 million tonnes, averaging 3.05 per cent copper.

For Phase 1, Trigon has completed a Feasibility Study to restart the Kombat Mine from its open-pit resource. That produced a highly robust Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of 103.4 per cent at $3.10 copper, requiring USD$7.4 million of CapEx.

That should allow for a 3-year mine life, producing 20.5 million lbs. of copper, generating USD$58.7 million at a copper price of USD$3.10/lb for a cash cost of USD$1.95/lb.
New slot: Legal Indaba at Mining Indaba

The nature of African mining requires companies to understand and navigate complex, constantly evolving legal environments.

Legal teams and stakeholders need to stay ahead of the changes in order to capitalise on resource opportunities.

Pan African legal issues can range from local community and employment matters to global compliance obligations.

With this in mind, Mining Indaba has introduced a brand-new stream, The General Counsel Forum – A Legal Indaba, in partnership with Africa Legal.

The General Counsel Forum is a unique platform for law firms and in-house legal teams to network with each other and offers opportunities for operators and international law firms to come together to widen their industry knowledge and develop partnerships.

It is also dedicated to tackling key regional and global legal issues in the mining sector, with three key panel discussions: risk, growth and sustainability.

In addition, its focused on building a culture of compliance across multiple organisational levels and departments, embracing technology to drive risk management and reinforcing the collective responsibility of risk management.

The forum also considers the increasing expectations placed on the mining General Council to effectively explain and manage African legal developments and increasing global regulation and sustainability goals.

This year, the platform will discuss a range of industry-specific discussion topics on a broad range of subjects, ranging from land rights issues to climate change: the legal framework of liability, insurance and sustainability.
Taurus’ lighter mining equipment now on offer

A ustralian Taurus Mining Solutions has managed to lower the weight of its mining buckets, increasing the capacity of the buckets by up to 10 percent while still keeping their durability, this translates into cost savings for customers.

Formed through a joint venture, Taurus Mining Solutions brings together design expertise and substantial experience from manufacturing and aftermarket services. The result is high-quality mining equipment, such as truck trays, excavator buckets, loader buckets and dozer blades.

Taurus aims to increase customers’ production rates, reducing overall operating costs and improving safety.

So it was natural that the company chose Hardox® wear plate and also, in some chosen parts, Strenx® performance steel from SSAB for its buckets.

“It was a good mix because our idea of coming up with innovative products was to have lighter and stronger parts that are hard-wearing,” said Oliver Sabu, one of Taurus’s owners.

The result is a mining bucket that weighs one ton less compared to the previous model. This translates into four loads to fill a mining tray instead of earlier five loads. It also means improved bucket life and decreased downtime.

As an example, a mine site in north Queensland, Australia, is currently using a bucket and tray combination that improves productivity by 10-18 percent.

The Taurus buckets are mainly used for loading and transporting coal and soil. The company’s biggest bucket is for 5600-model excavators, carrying roughly 36 cubic meters of product. For the bucket’s wearing areas, Taurus, a Hardox® In My Body customer program member, mainly uses Hardox® 450 steel.

The sheet sizes vary. Sidewalls are usually around the 25-millimeter range and the cheeks around 80 to 100 millimeters.

“So it was natural that the company chose Hardox® wear plate and also, in some chosen parts, Strenx® performance steel from SSAB for its buckets.”

Some Strenx® performance steel is also used in the bucket, at high-stress points such as the hitch and the torque tube areas, to withstand the weight of the bucket and the operational forces of the machine. The use of Hardox® and Strenx® steels also benefits Taurus’s production process by improved fabrication times and less pre-heating.

“When designed right, and processed right, and all the parameters are maintained, the weldability of Hardox is excellent,” Sabu says. “The strength of the material is without comparison, and it’s always consistent, which are the reason we use SSAB steel in our buckets.”
White Metal divest from DorWit on Kalahari Copperbelt

Canadian junior exploration company, White Metal Resources has sold majority of its shares in Aloe 237, the developers of Dorwit Copper-Silver Property and several exclusive prospecting licences.

White Metal has signed a binding letter of agreement (LOA) with natural resources investor RZJ Capital Management LLC (RZJ) for the company to purchase 70 percent of White Metal's 100 percent owned Aloe 237.

According to prospects of the deal, RZJ and WHM will work towards the signing of a definitive agreement in the near future.

On signing, RZJ will pay WHM a non-refundable CAD$100,000 deposit and shall have a three month exclusive due diligence period from signing of the LOA.

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The Company issued 30,000,000 units at a price of $0.12 per unit for gross proceeds of $3,600,000.

The company intends to use the net proceeds from the offering for reviewing potential strategic acquisition opportunities and for working capital and general corporate purposes.

With its core operations focused on copper resources in Namibia, one of the world’s most prospective copper regions, where it has substantial assets in place with significant upside.

The company continues to hold an 80 percent interest in five mining licences in the Otavi Mountain lands, an area of Namibia particularly known for its high-grade copper deposits.

Furthermore within these licences are three past producing mines including the company’s flagship property, the Kombat Mine.

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“Likewise, we intend to continue developing our strategic plan for copper in Namibia. We anticipate these funds will play a key role in creating value for our shareholders,” said Jed Richardson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Trigon.

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Canadian exploration and development company, Trigon Metals has eyes on the local extractive industry, as the management rolls out its 2020 blueprint.

“In 2020, we look forward to advancing our new copper initiative in mine-friendly Morocco, while also exploring its apparent silver potential.

“Likewise, we intend to continue developing our strategic plan for copper in Namibia. We anticipate these funds will play a key role in creating value for our shareholders,” said Jed Richardson, President and Chief Executive Officer of Trigon.

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Fleet management headaches have been made easy through Vivo Energy’s Shell Fuel Card, a tag that enables businesses of any size to buy petrol, diesel, lubricants and other selected products.

“Whether you a small number of vehicles that deliver locally or fleet of vehicles operating countrywide, or have employees who use their own vehicles and claim mileage, you could enjoy a number of useful benefits including cost reduction, better management of fuel consumption, mileage capture and records, amongst others,” said …

The card can be acquired either as a postpaid or prepaid, depending on the type and size of vehicle you have, where you are based and where your vehicles travel to and your monthly spend. The card application for an individual can be done at any Shell Service Station countrywide or an online request, as the card also come with online tools which allows the creation of fleet reports, alerts and reduction of fleet administration time.

According to information provided by Vivo Namibia, the fuel card has smart technology with a chip and pin for security and control. The card has features to identify and tag the vehicle and the driver and can also be used for point of sales transactions as well as postpaid and prepaid services, amongst other benefits.
Six Mining Indaba tips for getting capital

As one of the world’s largest investment events, Mining Indaba is the place to be for junior mining companies seeking investment opportunities.

Mining Indaba provides a platform for junior miners to promote their projects and raise their profile to global investors and international media; to build relationships amongst a high-profile investment community and gain a better understanding of what investors are looking for, with months’ worth of meetings conducted over four days.

One of the primary goals is to connect junior miners with capital: “We remain dedicated to helping junior mining companies secure funding through various avenues.” Below are some of the advantages and tips that can spring board into mining financing for junior miners.

1. JUNIOR MINING SHOWCASE

Strategically placed next to the Investor Lounge, the showcase brings junior miners close to capital holders, encouraging organic interactions. This space offers maximum visibility to investors through branded booths and an opportunity to showcase exciting projects in Africa.

Restricted morning access for mining executives and investors provides an intimate and private atmosphere to conduct confidential meetings. This year, we have added extra booths, creating additional capacity for junior mining companies.

2. THE JUNIOR MINING FORUM

Through expert discussions with investors, analysts, junior miners and end users, the Junior Mining Forum is dedicated to exploring the factors which drive investment decisions within African mining markets. The insights gained from the forum assist junior miners in thinking about how to appeal to investors. Top sessions at this year’s Mining Indaba include:

- Are we reaching a long-run bull market in gold?
- Are junior gold projects in west Africa attractive to investors?
- Can the SA PGM market turn around?
- What strategy do car manufacturers and battery makers have in place to increase the supply of battery materials?

What practises?

3. THE INVESTOR RELATIONS (IR)

The personalised IR service, which is available to every exhibiting company, helps facilitate investment goals at Mining Indaba. Using in-depth knowledge of mining financial markets, the IR team builds a comprehensive understanding of each company’s investment proposition.

At the point of registration, the investment criteria of over 600 investments are captured to match mining companies with those investors most suited to them. The IR team uses this information to help arrange meetings with only the most suitable investors, financiers and analysts.

4. SPECIAL DELEGATE RATES

Mining Indaba continues to offer junior mining companies one of the lowest rates available, making participation in the event and access to investment opportunities more accessible.

5. THE INVESTMENT BATTLEFIELD

The investment battlefield elevates the profiles of junior mining companies by providing a platform to pitch their projects to the global finance community live on stage. Successful participants benefit from new connections with high-profile investors and international media coverage.

The investor judges also offer direct feedback on how to maximise appeal to attract funding, significantly increasing chances of junior miners securing capital.

6. BUSINESS MATCHMAKING

Mining Indaba’s leading business matchmaking service allows attending companies to quickly and easily filter through over 6000 delegates to find top business matches. This service uses intelligent matchmaking to facilitate meaningful interactions with appropriate financiers.

We are excited to host this year’s junior mining companies and look forward to providing a platform to discuss investment drivers and emerging projects in Africa, and ultimately to help junior miners secure funding by facilitating engagement with investors.

The 2020 event aims to attract more than 600 global investors and corporate development teams, offering limitless opportunities to secure funding.
W ith the growing need for minerals to fuel the transition to a low-carbon future there is potential for substantial growth in the mining sector.

This year, Mining Indaba will host unmissable pioneering insights and genuine thought-leading discussions with industry heavyweights from across the value chain on the subject.

The mining industry is under pressure from all quarters – government, communities, investors, and environmental organisations – to adopt sustainable business practices and reduce the effects that mining has on the environment over the complete lifecycle of the mine.

However, the growth of mining firms will be decided by how they adapt to the growing need for environmentally and socially sustainable mining operations. Access to water is one of the biggest challenges facing mine operators.

In its 2015 report Ernst & Young highlighted the need for a strategic approach to water management that benefits all stakeholders as one of the key business challenges that the industry faces. Strategic water management can reduce risks and benefit local communities.

This was highlighted in a report released last year by the International Council on Mining & Metals (ICMM), which presents case studies of water management from mining companies and highlights some progressive projects.

One prime example that the ICMM report highlighted was the Trekkopje uranium mine in western Namibia. The Trekkopje ore body at the open cast operation covers a surface area of approximately 42 square kilometres, with the main ore-bearing content being present within the upper 15m of the deposit.

During exploration and the pilot testing phases at the mine site, water was supplied from aquifers along the coast.

Yield from these aquifers is limited, and groundwater on the site is saline and used mainly for dust suppression.

The only realistic option was seawater desalination, and mine operator AREVA, constructed a desalination plant, the first one for the country, to meet the water needs of the mine.

A strategy advocated by Nikisi Lesufi, senior executive environment, health and legacies, Minerals Council South Africa is to look to innovative water management technologies.

“We can reduce the volume of waste and the toxicity of waste by using new technology available to us,” he says.

“Our reporting systems are not up to scratch; if we had real-time water management with self-assessment tools to compare ourselves to others in terms of performance status, think of the difference it would make.

“We also need to look at the transition when a mine is closed – how do we use the infrastructure, land and water,” quizzed Lesufi.

He highlighted that the old days of closing and grassing over are unsustainable.

“We need to transition from one form of economic activity directly to another.”

The mining operation involves processing the ore to separate valuable minerals, leaving behind huge volumes of waste tailings.

This presents a triumvirate of challenges to the mine operator in the form of water conservation, cost of tailings and reclamation.

Leading the dialogue on dry tailings and addressing decommissioning of legacy dams will encompass conserving water and ore and reducing adverse impact on surrounding areas of a mine.

“Today, about 70 per cent of the mines operated by the major mining companies are in countries where water scarcity is considered as the major risk,” Gouveia adds.

“Therefore, responsible usage of water is the primary driver for increasing interest in tailings dewatering.

“Mine operators should adopt smart filtration solutions that either help in maximise water recovery thus conserving water intake in a mine or provide an end to end solution for dry stacking.”

A greater imperative is to clean up existing tailings dams and re-process tailings so that they can be used as mine back-fill material.

“This would also help conserving ore, increasing mine life and reducing the volume of tailings to be stored,” Gouveia adds.

“Replacing wet tailing dams by dry stacking lowers the risk of social hazards, saving lives and property and preserving natural water bodies by eliminating contamination and leaking. Safer and more environmental sensitive tailings handling and management also reduces conflicts with local communities and regulatory bodies.”

According to Antoinette Pietersen, stakeholder engagement manager at Golder’s Johannesburg, office effective community partnerships are crucial to sustainable mining operations.

“The relationship between the companies mining the earth’s precious resources and the people who have made their homes upon these treasured lands for time immemorial is evolving into productive partnerships that benefit communities and mining operations,” she says.

“With the task of satisfying the world’s growing need for minerals comes the social responsibility to be a functional partner in the communities in which they operate, and the recognition that sustainable practices are critical to corporate success.”

Successful management of stakeholder expectations begins with thorough and effective communication, and acceptance of accountability as a participant in the community.

“While mines are frequently expected to bring benefits to a community — such as infrastructure improvements, education, and job opportunities — it is essential for the mining company to collaborate with legitimate structures within the community to assess the options best suited to their livelihoods,” Pietersen continues.

“When expectations aren’t met, it can often be traced back to a lack of respect of local customs and values, collaboration within established structures within the community and communication with a community.”

Mining companies that are not yet on board with creating partnerships within the community need to start thinking differently, and many are.

“The old way of doing business was to look only at what the law requires and checks off those boxes without looking at the broader picture, which is that they are operating within a community of people who have social concerns, values and needs that include the environment and infrastructure of their community,” Pietersen concludes.

“Time and again we have seen how poor relationships cause social outrage that could have been avoided.”
BMW Group lobby for industrial-scale mine sites

The Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA) has announced that BMW Group has become its first member in the auto sector.

IRMA is a precedent-setting global certification program for industrial-scale mine sites.

With growing awareness and demand for ecologically and socially-responsible products, jewelers, electronics businesses, auto makers and others have sought assurances that the minerals they purchase are mined responsibly.

As a member of IRMA, the BMW Group will be participating in IRMA programs to transform the industrial mining sector towards more responsible practices.

IRMA measures performance of mine sites against their Standard for Responsible Mining. The Standard seeks to emulate for industrial-scale mine sites what has been done with certification programs in organic agriculture, responsible forestry and sustainable fisheries.

The Standard for Responsible Mining reflects the input from over 100 companies, organizations and individuals worldwide.

Members in IRMA include a variety of stakeholders in the mining supply chain or that are affected by mining, including purchasers of mined materials Microsoft and Tiffany & Co.; labor unions IndustriALL Global Union (that represents more than 50 million workers in mining and manufacturing in 140 countries) and United Steelworkers; non-profit organizations Earthworks and Human Rights Watch; mining companies Anglo American and ArcelorMittal and mining-affected communities. IRMA has been referred to in the work or campaigns of more than 60 non-profit organizations and mining-affected community organizations.

"Sustainability is an important aspect of our corporate strategy and we are fully aware of our responsibility in mineral value chains." said Dr. Andreas Wendt, member of the board of management of BMW AG responsible for Purchasing and Supplier Network.

"For the BMW Group and its stakeholders, it is of utmost importance that environmental and social standards are adhered to throughout the entire value chain. Raw materials form the basis for every industrial production process and our need will continue to grow accordingly," said Wendt.

“We believe that IRMA, with its ambitious certification standard, will contribute to enhancing responsibility in global value chains and improving environmental and social performance.”

The Standard for Responsible Mining is the result of more than ten years of collaboration among groups from the mining industry, organized labor, non-profit organizations, impacted communities, and businesses.

“The auto sector is a powerful purchaser of materials that come from mines. We are happy to have the BMW Group join IRMA and we look forward to supporting their commitment to increasing environmental and social responsibility in their supply chains," said Aimee Boulanger, Executive Director of IRMA.

The Standard for Responsible Mining’s best practice requirements for mining include elements such as health and safety for workers, human rights, community engagement, pollution control, mining in conflict-affected areas, rights of indigenous peoples, transparency in revenue payments from companies to governments, and land reclamation once mining is done.

In addition, the standard is not simply a pass/fail system, instead focused on transparency, where different levels of performance are recognized and continuous improvement is encouraged, but where certification is still available for those industrial-scale mine sites meeting best practice requirements.

Meanwhile the Standard for Responsible Mining is intended to complement, not replace, strong laws and regulations, where policy or regulation is lacking, the IRMA Standard can fill the void to align with and, in some cases, bolster government regulations, helping to increase transparency in the mining sector.

“Sustainability is an important aspect of our corporate strategy and we are fully aware of our responsibility in mineral value chains.”
Forevermark launches in Belgium

De Beers Group’s diamond brand Forevermark has launched in five jewellery stores in Belgium through a partnership with Gautam Diamonds.

Forevermark jewellery will be available in Gautam stores in the historic Grand Place/Grote Markt and Galerie de la Reine or Koninginnegalerij in the city, as well as in three Antwerp Diamonds by Gautam stores in Brussels Airport.

According to the group, the launch brings the total number of countries where Forevermark is available to 34, and further extends the brand’s presence in Europe, following the announcement last year of new retail partnerships in Germany, France and Italy. “Bringing the Forevermark story and brand promise of diamonds that are beautiful, rare and responsibly-sourced to new countries in Europe has been a great success in recent years and we look forward to a bright future in Belgium,” Forevermark Chief Executive Officer, Nancy Liu.

Gautam Diamonds Managing Director Yudhi Gautam said finding a partner like Forevermark that has a respected brand offering resonating with consumers is truly exciting.

“We are delighted to start this journey and look forward to the successes ahead.”
Hexagon acquires Blast Movement Technology

Hexagon AB, a global leader in sensor, software and autonomous solutions has acquired BMT, a pioneer in blast movement monitoring and analysis for open pit mines.

The acquisition of Blast Movement Technology (BMT) will enable Hexagon’s mining customers to better tackle ore loss and dilution.

BMT’s technologies complement Hexagon’s drill and blast solutions with accurate ore location information, enabling customers to extract greater profit from every blast.

Through a combination of sensors and software, BMT’s solution provides customers with accurate blast information that’s used to recover all of a mine’s resources. The solution collects data from blast movement sensors, which move with the blasted material. Software is used to transform the data into actionable insights – from the post-blast location of ore to the outputs of more precise dig lines based on the measured movement.

“The integration of BMT’s solution into our Smart Mine portfolio will be invaluable for mining operations striving to control ore loss, misclassification and dilution,” said Hexagon’s Mining division President, Josh Weiss.

“As well as being integral to our drill and blast solution, it’s an exciting way to begin 2020, which marks the 50th anniversary of our mine planning suite.”

Jacques Janse, Chief Executive Officer of BMT said: “BMT has experienced exceptional growth in the last four years and the business is now robust enough to maximize the opportunity that this next phase under the Hexagon umbrella will present. BMT complements the Hexagon suite of products in the drill and blast space and will ensure that Hexagon remains at the forefront of innovation in the blast movement space.

“Hexagon has the capacity to fast-track improvements to the BMT solution and its expertise in software will enhance the BMT offering, ensuring customers receive valuable information to aid confident decision-making and increase ore yield.”

With offices worldwide, Brisbane-based BMT counts more than 100 customer sites mining nine commodities in nearly 40 countries. BMT will operate within the mining unit of Hexagon’s Geosystems division.
Condra offer fully automated cranes

Condra has announced a fully-automated overhead crane capability, simultaneously revealing details of its first delivery of this type of technologically advanced machine to Lonmin.

An alternative to traditional pendant and remote control, full automation is in line with a general trend away from manual control in industry and mining.

Condra’s managing director, Marc Kleiner, said that the company was making full use of new developments in sensors, controls and software to offer a very precise positioning capability in automated applications.

“This is a capability that we will offer to our customers as an option,” Kleiner said.

“We will mainly but not solely target the copper mines, especially tankhouse and copper-leaching applications where we have extensive experience.”

Condra’s announcement follows the steadily increasing sophistication of its semi-automated installations, which began in 2003 with a grabbing crane installed at a Durban spice company to pick spices and transport them to specific points for release over hoppers servicing the blending and packing operations.

At Lonmin’s Marikana platinum mine, the fully-automated machine just installed is a 16-ton, 16 metre-span double-girder electric overhead travelling grabbing crane, featuring a customer-specified mechanical rope grab in place of the hydraulic alternative to deliver the improved durability of mechanical operation within Markina’s abrasive operating environment.

There are dual hoists in the design; one to raise and lower the load, the other to mechanically close the grab by means of an internal sheave arrangement to overcome the spring-loaded open state.

Variable speed drives are fitted throughout the crane, delivering maximum speeds of 10 metres per minute on the lift, and 20 and 40 metres per minute on the cross-travel and long-travel respectively. Four long-travel motors deliver the materials handling equivalent of four-wheel-drive, enabling automated control of all four wheels for precise crane positioning accurate to within 5 millimetres. The crane is fully automated with a manual override.

Lonmin’s new crane is programmed by an operator from a remotely located control room, where on-screen monitoring is complemented by a visual monitoring capability via closed-circuit television.

Condra’s fully-automated option applies across the company’s product offering of single-girder and double-girder overhead travelling cranes, gantry cranes, bridge cranes and cantilever cranes for markets worldwide.

These machines go up to heavy duty Class 4, with a tight focus on product quality and reliability to the standards of ISO, GOST and other internationally recognised quality control bodies.

Two lines of hoists are manufactured in a number of standard models suited to most mining, industrial and general applications, from 1 to 500 tons. Motors are bought from external suppliers.

Lonmin’s fully automated crane was delivered and commissioned in the last week of November 2019.
Proudly presenting our six fastest DTH hammers.

Every new COP M-series hammer comes as two-in-one. Epiroc introduces a whole new series of DTH hammers and bits. The 6", 7" and 8" hammers are faster, lighter, more service friendly, longer lasting and more flexible than ever before. On top of that, the all new range of solid shank bits are extremely durable. Every hammer is easily adapted to high flow or low flow air supply, making them fit all rigs and climates. For outstanding penetration rate and service life, choose the COP M-series hammers.

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Epiroc introduces the fastest DTH hammers on the market.

The all-new COP M-series DTH hammers are faster, lighter, more service friendly and longer lasting than ever before. On top of that, the new range of DTH bits are designed with a unique solid shank that further enhances penetration rate and durability.

By simply exchanging a few parts, each and every COP M-series hammer can be quickly and easily adjusted to different compressor air pressures and air volumes. This two-in-one feature makes the new DTH hammers fit all rigs and climates.

“One of the key features is a smaller and shorter piston, which allows the hammer to strike the rock at much higher frequency. At the end of the day, much more impact force has hit the rock, more meters have been drilled, and uniquely enough, the equipment has had a much smoother ride. Finally, the hammers are 25 percent more compact and 30 percent lighter, which make them easier and safer to handle.”

The COP M-series hammers come in three sizes: 6”, 7” and 8”. By choosing the right hammer, optimum drilling efficiency can be ensured for the entire range of 165 mm to 254 mm bits.

“All the COP M-series hammers show outstanding improvements in penetration rate and service life. COP M7 is particularly successful, since it bridges a known productivity gap between 6” and 8” hammers”, Fredrik Gransell continues.

The new, patented air cycle of the COP M-series DTH hammers replaces a design that has been dominant on the market for more than 40 years. This innovation enables a considerably faster cycle, resulting in a shorter, lighter and faster hammer than ever before.

One of the key features is a smaller and shorter piston, which allows the hammer to strike the rock at much higher frequency.

At the end of the day, much more impact force has hit the rock, more meters have been drilled, and uniquely enough, the equipment has had a much smoother ride. Finally, the hammers are 25 percent more compact and 30 percent lighter, which make them easier and safer to handle.

The all-new range of DTH bits feature a patented solid shank, a new external airflow system, and special, patented Enduro buttons. As a result, the COP M-series bits drill faster, last longer, and offer longer intervals between regrinds.

“At one gold mining test site, COP M8 bits had a 50 percent longer service life. This is solid proof that our new COP M-series bit technology works even better than expected, says Fredrik Gransell.

Both tests and initial volume production indicate that the COP M-series DTH hammers and bits offer great increases in penetration rate and service life. COP M6, M7 and M8 have proven themselves in all kinds of rock, in all kinds of climates, and with a great variety of drill rigs.

“We are confident that the COP M-series DTH hammers will offer our customers the lowest cost of ownership”, concludes Fredrik Gransell.

Epiroc is a leading productivity partner for the mining, infrastructure and natural resources industries. With cutting-edge technology, Epiroc develops and produces innovative drill rigs, rock excavation and construction equipment, and provides world-class service and consumables.

The company was founded in Stockholm, Sweden, and has passionate people supporting and collaborating with customers in more than 150 countries.

Learn more at www.epiroc.com.

Press release from Epiroc South Africa (Pty) Ltd

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Electronics laboratory using Tektronix solutions opens

Royal Holloway, University of London, has officially opened its new Beatrice Shilling Building which includes state-of-the-art teaching laboratories in partnership with Tektronix, a leading worldwide provider of educational measurement solutions, and Rapid Electronics, one of the UK’s leading distributors of educational test equipment.

The brand-new technology-led electronic engineering facility residing in the £20m Beatrice Shilling Building, named after the pioneering British aeronautical engineer and motor racer, is the home of these new teaching and advanced research laboratories.

Sponsored by Tektronix, the laboratory enables instructors, lab managers and students to focus on gaining the critical hands-on skills they need to excel in the real world.

The new 160 seated stations, across two laboratories, allows first and second year students to perform practical electronics experiments on 80 benches under the supervision of their instructors and lab managers.

Each of the 80 benches is equipped with Tektronix and Keithley products including: basic and mixed domain oscilloscopes, arbitrary function generators, power supplies, digital multimeters (DMMs), source measurement units (SMUs), battery simulators and USB based real-time spectrum analysers.

“We are very excited at the opportunity to work with a prestigious university like Royal Holloway, and to work with Rapid Electronics, in supporting this project,” said Maria Heriz, Vice President, EMEA Commercial Operations at Tektronix.

“We are leading the way in not only supporting better teaching, but also enhancing a full learning experience using real-world leading edge Tektronix solutions.

“This significant investment in new technology and teaching laboratories is providing high quality facilities for our students,” said Professor David Howard, Head of the Department of Electronic Engineering at Royal Holloway, University of London.

“We’re pleased to be able to provide our students with Tektronix and Keithley solutions to support them in their learning.”
Wi-Fi connectivity for Ventis Pro5

Industrial Scientific, global leader in gas detection – has announced a Wi-Fi battery option for the Ventis Pro5 personal gas monitor.

Local representative, Comtest said the connectivity alternative provides safety managers with a way to get real-time location data and alarm events from Ventis Pro gas detectors to cloud-based iNet Now software using Wi-Fi infrastructure.

With iNet Now, supervisors gain instant visibility into their operations, regardless of location. Monitor teams, receive real-time alarm notifications, create compliance reports, and more from the intuitive user interface.

According to the manufacturer, the new Wi-Fi battery will last 16 hours on a single charge and is compatible with existing chargers and DSX Docking Stations. Existing Ventis Pro5 customers can easily convert to wirelessly-connected Wi-Fi monitors by switching the battery.

In addition, there is no need to buy a new instrument or additional gateways and for customers without existing Ventis Pro monitors, the Wi-Fi battery can be configured as part of any new detector.

Another new feature for the Ventis Pro5, is the availability of a hydrocarbon IR sensor, ideal for use in inerting because, unlike a catalytic bead sensor, it does not require oxygen to detect combustible gases. The sensor has a range of zero to 100 percent LEL and a resolution of one percent.
Automated and future-proof

Thanks to intelligent control of compressor load and engine rpm, the SmartROC D65 not only helps to optimise the blasting process with improved fragmentation, it also cuts an already low fuel consumption by a further 20%. The rig offers multifunction joysticks and adjustable-speed tramming to further improve operator comfort and make trailer loading safer and easier. Stronger and more intelligent, the SmartROC D65 was engineered to decrease our customer’s operational costs and boost productivity.

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Drilling at the forefront: the new automated SmartROC D65

*Automation technology is transforming the mining industry and empowering drilling operations across the globe. The updated SmartROC D65 is the latest drill rig from Epiroc to make evolutionary strides. This tried and trusted rig now has Epiroc’s innovative automation-ready platform as its foundation.*

The new SmartROC D65 has the intelligence and power to consistently and efficiently drill high-quality blast holes with accuracy and precision, and is loaded with smart features such as automated drilling and rod handling. The automation-ready platform also includes the new Auto Feed Fold feature. With the press of a button, Auto Feed Fold enables the operator to fold the feed for tramming or position it for drilling. This also comes in handy when operating one or more drill rigs remotely.

“The SmartROC D65 really proves the power of autonomous machinery and brings the future of mining within reach today,” says Mattias Hjerpe, Global Product Manager at Epiroc.

“Automation is revolutionizing the industry, and we want our customers to remain at the forefront to secure the rewards.”

The SmartROC D65 is available in three different feed beam sizes to carry five, six or eight-meter pipes, and has the capacity to drill down to a depth of 56 meters. When using 8-meter pipes, it is possible to drill 16-meter production holes with just one rod adding. The added power of the COP M7 hammer enables the SmartROC D65 to drill holes up to 9 inches (110 to 229 millimeters) in diameter.

Thanks to intelligent control of compressor load and engine rpm, the SmartROC D65 not only helps to optimize the blasting process with improved fragmentation. It also cuts an already low fuel consumption by a further 20% compared to the same size FlexiROC rig model. In addition, the rig offers multifunction joysticks and adjustable-speed tramming to further improve operator comfort and make trailer loading safer and easier.

“The new SmartROC D65 will help our customers to decrease operational costs and boost productivity,” says Hjerpe. “Automation translates to greater efficiency, and efficiency translates to greater profits.”

The operator interacts with the rig’s advanced control system via a responsive, 15-inch touchscreen that presents everything from drilling parameters and diagnostics to real-time Measure While Drilling data (MWD). In addition, the updated SmartROC D65 is equipped with an efficient hydraulic system that reduces fuel burn and works with fewer pumps and hoses than the previous versions.

The new SmartROC D65 uses 300 liters less hydraulic oil than previous versions. As other new features and improvements are released, they can easily be installed via software upgrades to keep the SmartROC D65 up-to-date and on the cutting edge at all times.

Yet another intelligent new rig from Epiroc, the SmartROC D65, has been updated with the new automation-ready platform. This robust and dependable surface drill rig features a shorter boom specially designed for efficient and demanding quarry work.

Ends/

Epiroc is a leading productivity partner for the mining, infrastructure and natural resources industries. With cutting-edge technology, Epiroc develops and produces innovative drill rigs, rock excavation and construction equipment, and provides world-class service and consumables. The company was founded in Stockholm, Sweden, and has passionate people supporting and collaborating with customers in more than 150 countries.

Learn more at www.epiroc.com.

Press release from Epiroc South Africa (Pty) Ltd

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*Automated and future-proof.*

*www.namibianminingnews.com*
Wireless cloud connectivity for hazardous locations now on offer

In addition, through the LENS Wireless instrument-to-instrument mesh communication system, the monitors share gas readings and alarms with one another and the RGX Gateway. The gateway then transmits readings through cell, WIFI, or Ethernet to iNet Now Live Monitoring software, which alerts key team members within seconds of an incident. And the combination of LENS-enabled gas monitors and the gateway enhances the ability to get data to the cloud from complex locations such as confined spaces or plants where a typical wireless connection may be obstructed.

“The RGX is truly designed to go where the work is. With a Class I Div II hazardous classification and an ingress protection rating of IP65, the gateway can be used in hazardous environments as well as most weather conditions,” said Ryan Thompson, associate product manager.

The RGX Gateway can be deployed for permit tasks that last hours, incidents that last days, or projects that last weeks by using the rechargeable 168-hour (7 day) run-time battery. For longer, more permanent applications, the RGX Gateway is also compatible with a variety of external power supplies, allowing it to run indefinitely.
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RMB. Solutionist Thinking.

RMB is committed to exploring each and every opportunity within Namibia’s mining life cycle. From conceptual greenfields thinking, to being the thought leaders in localised ownership and Economic Empowerment transactions, from risk management to mine development and rehabilitation. Solutionist Thinking is our most valuable resource and enables us to explore innovative local solves within ever-changing global challenges.

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