

Driving growth through resources

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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Africa Oil Week held in Cape Town recently was a veritable who's who of oil and gas players on the continent. A ministerial panel gave insight into the aspirations of some of the countries.



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Oil is the main driver of economic growth in Nigeria, producing 85% of its income. But the government is trying to wean the country off its reliance on oil, said Nigeria Petroleum Resources Minister Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu.

“There’s a continuing malaise of dependency as people see oil as the only go-to area, which has not allowed other sectors to grow. Most of the reported corruption is linked to oil, and it has also driven militancy in the resource-rich regions of the country,” he said

On the other hand, Nigeria is pushing to boost its refining capacity. The plan is to refine one-million barrels of oil a day with the additional capacity of proposed new refinery, the minister said. “No matter what we do over the next 25 years oil will remain relevant.”

Although still reliant on neighbouring Nigeria for 80% of its energy, landlocked Niger's hopes of increased production by 90,000 b/d are pinned on the Niger/Benin pipeline due to be completed in 2021-22. This has the potential of increasing the impact of Benin’s huge resources on fiscal revenue from 20% to 50%, said Niger Petroleum Minister Foumakoye Gado.

Niger is planning to export refined products to Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria,

Further down Africa's west coast, Namibia imports up to 50% of its energy needs. It hasn't produced any oil or gas so far, but given the output in neighbouring Angola, the signs are there.

"We had a bit of gas in the 1970s, but we haven't found oil yet, although there's lots of interest," said Mines and Energy Minister Tom Alweendo. "We're hopeful though, and we will be very accommodating to investors."

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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