

# Making mining matter?

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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The governmental mismanagement of the past nine years has impacted on the mining industry. But what would happen if the sector grows? This was the question asked, Roger Baxter, CEO of the Minerals Council, asked at the Investing in African Mining Indaba.



Roger Baxter, CEO: Minerals Council

Things are beginning to turn around. Mining's direct contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) grew to R356bn in 2018 compared to R335bn in 2017. This represents a 7.3% contribution, which Baxter believes could grow to 8%.

"The minister has been engaging with the industry. He is willing to have the robust conversation. And believe, as a former mine worker they are robust," he said.

"Without real leadership collaboration, it is going to be difficult to grow the industry," Baxter said, explaining that there are a number of pillars that need to be in place to succeed.

## **Ethical leadership and good governance**

"A mineral resources endowment is not a curse if you have good governance," Baxter said.

## **Policy and regulatory certainty and competitiveness**

"The law needs to be clear and competitive," he said, although there are still areas that need to be challenged.

Strides are being made in improving community development and improving the number of women in the industry. "Today, there are 53,000 women working in mining, 15% of which are in management positions. It's an improvement, but we have a long way to go," he said.

## **Available, efficient, cost competitive and reliable infrastructure**

Baxter said that the Minerals Council had been following Eskom's request to increase its tariff. If this is granted. It would virtually sink the mining industry.

## Improving productivity and competitiveness

“We are adopting Mining 4.0 through collaborations such as the Mandela Diamond Precinct. In terms of safety we had a bump at the beginning of 2018, there are still too many fatalities.

“Exploration is the lifeblood of the industry, so the council has set up a Junior Miners Desk that allows smaller miners to be mentored by bigger companies.

“We are encouraged that some of the regulations removed about greenfields exploration.

“We are getting the mindset back to growth, Baxter concluded.

## 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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