



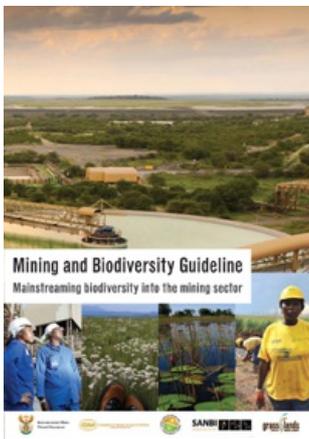
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MINING AND BIODIVERSITY COME TOGETHER TO POWER A GREENER ECONOMY

Posted by Administrator on Friday, 17 May 2013 in Grasslands News 2013



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Our challenge as a nation in a developing state context is to find a balance between economic growth and **environmental** sustainability. Without the integrity of our natural systems, in particular our catchment, rivers and **wetlands** that support water-related services, there can be no sustained long-term economic growth or life.

The mining industry plays a vital role in South Africa's growth and development. But if mining is not strategically planned and carefully implemented, it also has significant negative impacts on **biodiversity** and water. On Wednesday 22 May 2013, Minister Molewa of Water and Environmental Affairs, and Minister Shabangu of Mineral Resources will **jointly launch a guideline** that helps us avoid impacting on our **biodiversity** priority areas, including our critical water resources, through better planning and implementation. The development of the Mining and Biodiversity Guideline (click here to **download**) was initiated by the Chamber of Mines and the South African Mining and Biodiversity Forum (SAMBF) with technical input and coordination by the South African National Biodiversity Institute's (SANBI) Grasslands Programme in collaboration with numerous other mining stakeholders.

At the same time, SANBI will launch the LIFE: State of South Africa's Biodiversity report, which allows us to take stock the exceptional **biodiversity** endowments our country has. Understanding what **biodiversity** we have and where is essential to being proactive and making informed decisions about future land-use planning at various scales for South Africa's optimal growth path. It is because of this knowledge and science that the Mining and Biodiversity Guideline is able to provide a practical user-friendly manual for integrating relevant **biodiversity** information into decision making.

What is the business value proposition of integrating **biodiversity** into the mining sector? Business leaders in the mining sector will explore this question the day after the launch of the Mining and Biodiversity Guideline: **Mainstreaming Biodiversity into the Mining Sector at a breakfast business talk** on Thursday 23 May (click here to download **the invitation**). The Guideline sets out a business value proposition for mining companies of adopting a risk-based approach to mainstreaming **biodiversity** into mining from the earliest stage in the mining cycle. Strategically and fully incorporating **biodiversity** issues into the planning and operations of mines provides an opportunity to reduce risks to **biodiversity**, people and business, as well as improve profitability and the certainty of the business environment.

Bruce Whitfield will facilitate the discussion exploring the business value proposition. Panellists include Mike Teke Vice President of the Chamber of Mines, and CEO of Optimum Coal, John Wallington (CEO of Coal of Africa Limited), Deirdre Lingenfelder (Head of Safety and Sustainable Development at De Beers and Director at National Business Initiative) and Nigel Beck (Head: Environmental in Mining, Energy and Infrastructure Finance at Standard Bank Group).

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