

+ ESG FILE

Energy transition:
GPMCI member companies
are firmly committed to
reducing their carbon footprint

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Moumini BICTOGO

Chairman and CEO
of Lagune Exploration Afrique

NICKEL, CHROME, BAUXITE, BISMUTH...

THESE METALS AND RARE EARTHS, SCARCELY EXPLORED FROM THE IVORIAN SUBSOIL

Contract Mining

SAMA BTP and mining
conquering Ivorian's mining sector

Women In Mining

Pauline TAHI, an unparalleled
source of inspiration



SAMA BTP Sa

SAMA BTP

La meilleure solution logistique
avec plusieurs années de pratique



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- **SAMA TRADING** (Transport et vente d'Hydrocarbures)
- **SAMA TRANSPORT** (Transport Voyageur)



With the acceleration of the energy and digital transition caused by climate change, global demand for rare metals has seen exponential growth in recent years. Like the rest of Africa, Côte d'Ivoire is rich in significant minerals beneath its soil. The Ivorian mining industry, although relatively young, is currently experiencing remarkable expansion. Nickel production reached 1.85 million tons in 2022, with forecasts of 2 million tons for 2023 according to the ministry in charge of mines. These figures reflect the growing importance of this sector for our national economy, as highlighted by the Minister of Mines, Petroleum, and Energy, who stated that *«in line with the government's ambition, the share of Mines in GDP should reach 6% by 2025.»*

By definition, rare metals encompass mineral resources essential for cutting-edge technologies and the global energy transition. They are strategic materials, often available in small quantities, but whose economic and industrial significance is crucial for sectors such as electronics, renewable energies, and electric vehicle batteries. Chrome, for example, is essential in the production of stainless steel, a material that resists corrosion and shines brightly in our kitchens and

industries. Nickel, on the other hand, is a key player in the electric battery revolution, propelling our vehicles toward a greener future. And what about bismuth, this metal with astonishing properties, used in alloys and medicines?

In this new edition of O'Mines Mag, we invite you on a journey into the depths of Ivorian soil, in search of unsuspected treasures. Chrome, nickel, bauxite, bismuth... These metals and rare earths, often unknown to the general public, are nonetheless in the sights of professionals who present them as the cornerstones that will shape the technological and industrial future of the country. You will find expert analyses and insights from mining professionals on the potential and challenges related to their extraction, as well as perspectives on their role in the Ivorian economy and future developments.

As a highlight, we are honored to present an exclusive interview with Mr. Moumini BICTOGO, a pioneer in bauxite mining in Côte d'Ivoire, who shares his vision and unique experience in this field.

We will also meet other key players in the sector to give you a glimpse into the daily life of extracting these metals, the challenges, opportunities, and their impact on the economy.

So, dear readers, as you flip through this issue, let yourself be carried away by the adventure. Discover the secrets of these metals and rare earths and the stakes of their exploitation. And above all, remember that behind every gram of chrome, nickel, or bismuth, there is a story, a passion, and a future to build.

Happy reading, and see you soon for issue 5!

Abdoulaye KONE,
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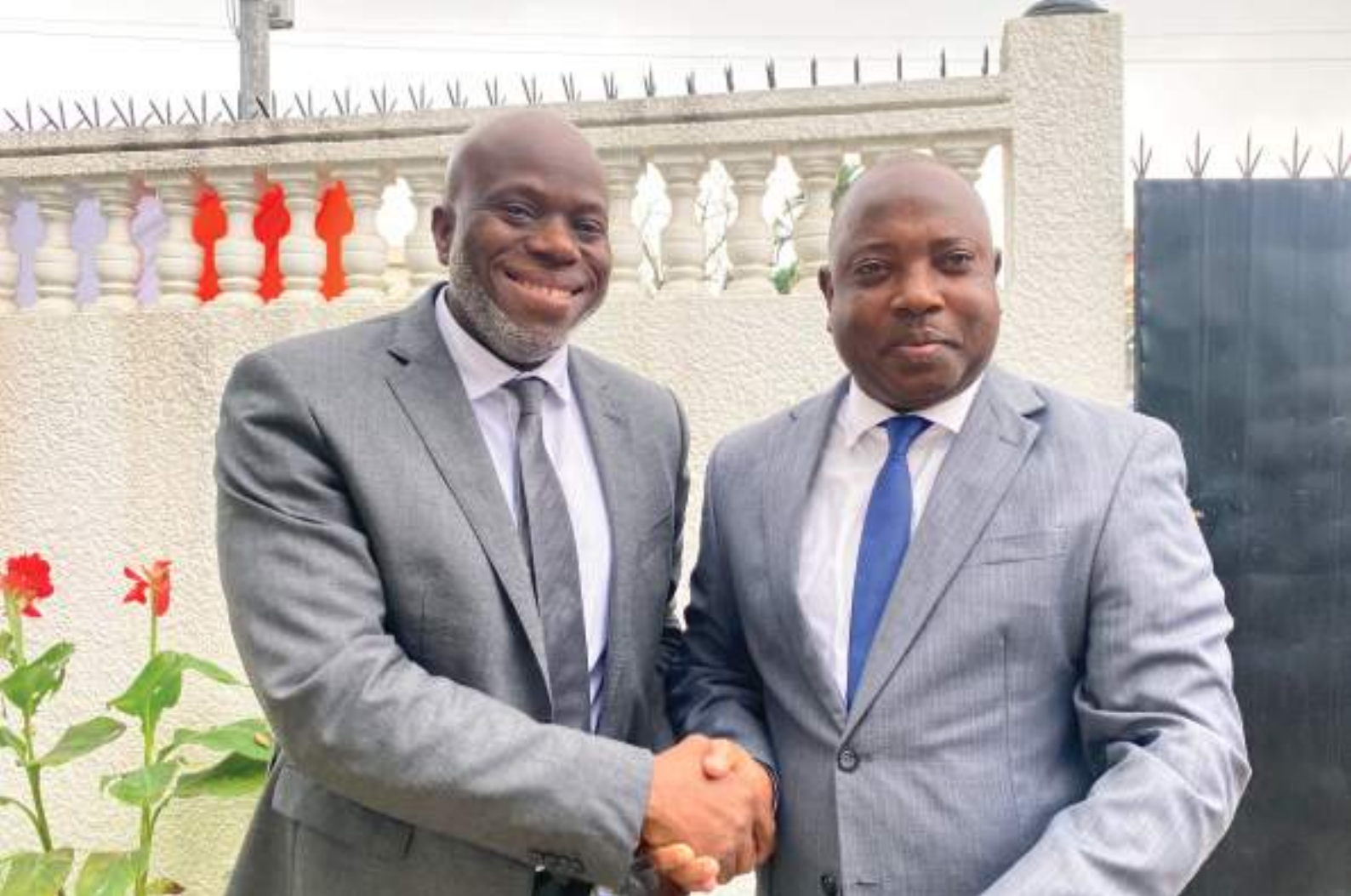
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Our ambition

TO MAKE THE GPMCI A ROBUST, SUSTAINABLE, AND INDISPENSABLE ORGANIZATION

As we begin this new year of 2025, allow me to extend my warmest wishes for success, prosperity, and innovation. May this year be filled with achievements and fruitful collaborations for our sector, and especially for our wonderful organization, the Groupement Professionnel des Miniers de Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI).

The past year marked an important milestone for the Ivorian mining sector, highlighted by the resounding success of the 1st International Extractive Resources Fair (SIREXE), held from November 27 to December 2, 2024. This event showcased the growing importance of our sector in national economic development.

Since assuming the role of Executive Director of GPMCI on July 1, 2024, I have, with the support of the Board of Directors, worked towards achieving key objectives: **improving internal governance, revitalizing our technical committees, and increasing the visibility of our organization.** After six months of hard work with the entire team, it is time to share with you some significant progress.

GPMCI, a dynamic organization serving a sector in full transformation

Creating a business-friendly environment is essential to ensure the sustainable development of our sector. As the main umbrella organization for mining companies and a key partner of the government, GPMCI strives, through its working committees, to play an active role in improving this environment.

To this end, we have placed particular emphasis on revitalizing our working committees, with tangible results, including:

- Organizing a technical seminar on harmonizing practices for monitoring mining waste discharges, resulting in common standards to be proposed.
- Finalizing the correction of the category scale of the Mining and Quarries Collective Agreement for better equity in the sector.
- Holding an emergency meeting on monkeypox, accompanied by the establishment of a team of occupational physicians for

proactive management of health crises.

- Organizing a workshop to present the Mining Investment Fund to stakeholders, thereby strengthening funding opportunities for sector players.

- Preparing for the CSST competition and setting up an emergency management team to improve workplace safety and health.

- Relaunching working group sessions, including organizing the scientific day on the theme «Value Chain of Mining Activities and Employment Opportunities for Youth,» during the 8th edition of the Mining Olympiad held on December 13-14, 2024, which was a great success with the participation of over 700 students.

- Actively participating in the ongoing revision of the 2014 Mining Code.

These actions are just the beginning and reflect our ambition to build a stronger organization capable of meeting the current and future challenges of the mining sector.

GPMCI, a stronger internal organization.

Since July 2024, under the supervision of the Board of Directors, several initiatives have been undertaken to strengthen the internal structure of the Groupement Professionnel des Miniers de Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI). To improve our management tools and practices, we have initiated several key actions, including:

- The development of effective governance tools tailored to the challenges of the sector.
- The establishment of a structured process for adopting an Ethics Charter, a Code of Conduct, and the creation of an ethics committee, to promote a culture of integrity and transparency within the GPMCI.
- The organization of a seminar on the sustainability of the Ivorian mining sector, highlighting environmental, social, and economic issues for responsible development.

Increase the institutional and sectoral visibility of the organization actions

From July to December 2024, the GPMCI carried out several strategic actions to enhance its visibility both nationally and internationally.

► **At the internal level:**

- The O'MINES magazine, a leading platform for the Ivorian mining sector, was successfully relaunched. The special edition, dedicated to the evolution of the Ivorian mining sector, was launched at a prestigious event gathering all stakeholders in the sector, as well as embassies, institutions, and international organizations. Likewise, the current issue addresses the topic of metals and rare earths present in the

Ivorian subsoil, further strengthening the magazine's role as a strategic information tool.

- The organization of the 5th edition of the Green Mine Day in October 2024, on the theme «*Environmental Adaptation and Resilience in the Ivorian Mining Sector: Challenges and Strategies*,» held at the Roxgold site in Séguéla, promoted responsible mining practices and gathered numerous sector actors.

- To strengthen relations with our members and better understand their needs, visits were made to some of them, including LEA, CMB, EPC, Endeavour Mining, Roxgold Sango,



Mr. Yohoua Dit Djibril YEO, Executive Director of the Groupement Professionnel des Miniers de Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI)

and MACS. These ongoing meetings with members will allow us to gather their expectations and offer better-tailored services.

- Initiating work sessions with institutional partners such as GIZ, GIBTP, FDFP, SYN-GPMACI, SFI, and other organizations opened the door to new collaborations and the strengthening of existing partnerships.

- The organization of the 8th edition of the Mining Olympiad 2024, held on December 13th and 14th at INP-HB, brought together over 2,000 participants. This flagship event celebrated excellence in the mining sector and encouraged young talent. On this occasion, a memorandum of understanding was signed between INP-HB and GPMCI, reinforcing our commitment to training and innovation.

- Participation in various member activities to support them.

► At the national level

the GPMCI actively participated in various events, including:

- The 1st International Extractive Resources Fair (SIREXE) from November 27 to December 2, 2024, at the Exhibition Park. During this major event, the GPMCI officially launched the Mining Investment Fund, a first in Côte d'Ivoire, aimed at supporting the development of the extractive sector.

- The consultation workshop on updating the integrated

policy for mineral resources and energy from July 29 to August 2, 2024, at the Onomo Hotel, Abidjan. This initiative, led by the Ministry of Mines, Petroleum, and Energy, helped define a strategy aligned with the current challenges in the sector.

- The sub-regional workshop on sectoral social dialogue, organized by CGECI, strengthened exchanges between sector stakeholders on best practices in social dialogue.

- The 24th edition of the Customs Meeting was organized at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

- The **«Jeudis des Géosciences»** on local content, organized by the UFR STRM of Félix Houphouët-Boigny University, provides an opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities related to integrating local content into Côte d'Ivoire's mining sector.

- The workshop on the results of the study on developing a gender barometer for the mining sector was organized by HeForShe Mines Côte d'Ivoire.

- The training program on energy efficiency in Côte d'Ivoire, organized by GIZ.

- At the Africa Forum on CSR and Health organized by Santé En Entreprise (SEE) on November 7, 2024, with institutional support from the GPMCI.



Workshop on the Gender Barometer Feedback for the Mining Sector, organized by HeForShe Mines Côte d'Ivoire



Mr. YEO with the Minister of Mines at the workshop on updating the integrated policy on mineral and energy resources



Family photo with the GPMCI staff

► At the international level

the GPMCI participated in:

- A study and inspection trip to China from August 19 to 25, 2024, a strategic mission aimed at exploring best practices and technologies in the mining sector, as well as establishing partnerships to strengthen the sector's capacities in Côte d'Ivoire.
- The West Africa Mining Activities Week (SMAO) from August 26 to 28, 2024, in Ouagadougou, a key event for experience sharing, networking, and identifying opportunities for regional cooperation in the mining field.

Perspectives for 2025: Building a more innovative and collaborative Mining Sector

Despite the many advances made, the GPMCI intends to go

even further in 2025. To this end, we plan to:

- Revitalize the working committees to promote better consultation and efficiency in our actions.
- Implement innovative programs tailored to the current and future needs of the Ivorian mining sector.
- Strengthen transparency in governance within our organization.

Dear readers,

We invite you to stay informed by browsing the **O'MINES** magazine, your essential source of news about the sector, and to embrace the GPMCI's vision, because it is together that we can build a sustainable and prosperous future for our industry.

Djibril YEO
Executive Director

LES RÉSIDENCES **ORI-SAFIR** ABATTA



ORIBAT SARL est un aménageur foncier et un promoteur immobilier agréé par l'État de Côte d'Ivoire avec plus de 15 années d'expérience.

Prix d'excellence du meilleur promoteur immobilier : 2023 et 2019;

Prix d'excellence du meilleur aménageur foncier : 2016;

- Plus de 3000 logements construits;
- 12 promotions immobilières;
- 6 programmes d'aménagement foncier;
- Plus de 1500 lots viabilisés.....



29 RÉSIDENCES DE LUXE ET DE HAUT STANDING AVEC VUE SUR LA LAGUNE

- Chambre principale avec Dressing et Jacuzzi dans la salle de bain
- 04 Chambres Autonomes
- Pergolla sur la Dalle
- Salon + Salle à manger
- Cuisine Européenne
- Parking Visiteurs
- Garage de 2 véhicules
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Local Content

THE GPMCI LAUNCHES A REVOLUTIONARY FUND TO STRENGTHEN IVORIAN MINING ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Official presentation of the Mining Investment Fund to the Minister in charge of Mines and FISMECA

The Professional Group of Miners of Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI) officially launched, on Thursday, November 29, 2024, at the Abidjan Exhibition Park, alongside the International Extractive Resources Fair (SIREXE), the very first investment fund dedicated to the Ivorian mining sector. Presided over by Mr. Mamadou SANGAFOWA-COULIBALY, Minister of Mines, Petroleum, and Energy, the ceremony brought together a wide range of stakeholders: mining chambers from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), financial partners, mining companies, and the Ivorian Federation of Mining, Metals, and Quarries Unions (FISMECA).



this fund is not just an investment tool,

Designed as a participatory financial lever, this fund aims to encourage the emergence of national entrepreneurs, support long-term investment, and promote Ivorian participation in the value chain of the mining industry. This is why Mr. Jean-Claude Diplo, president of the Professional Group of Miners of Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI), did not fail to commend the commitment of the technical and financial partners who made this project possible and to specify that *«this fund is a participatory mechanism that will allow employees to fully invest and benefit from the economic returns of our sector.»*

Consultant for this project and managing partner of the First Capital firm, Mr. Serge THIEMELE

specified that this fund aims to mobilize 145 billion FCFA over 10 years through three main sources of funding:

Employees, through a monthly contribution deducted from the complementary health allowance and additional voluntary contributions.

Mining companies and subcontractors, via direct contributions and organized deductions within the relevant sectors, etc.

Pension funds, Additionally, contributions from financial development partners (AFD, KFW, USAID, BOAD, BAD, WB, BEI, Proparco, etc.) and charitable support funds (Donors, Foundations, etc.).

Furthermore, it will have several financial instruments, namely:

- **Equity stakes through** minority stakes in medium and large companies, quasi-equity subscriptions in medium and large companies, subscriptions in local private equity firms, and capital subscriptions in local financial institutions (banks, microfinance, etc.).
- **Direct loans to companies** through medium and long-term debt under favorable conditions (duration, rates, ancillary costs...), direct financing of companies' technical assistance needs under favorable conditions, refinancing mechanisms for company support, and co-financing with financial institutions.
- **Investment grants**; grants for financing technical assistance, etc.

Moreover, this fund will not only finance projects in the mining value chain but also guarantee services such as complementary retirement for employees and the development of innovation tools. This did not go unnoticed by the head of the industry, Mr. Mamadou SANGAFOWA-COULIBALY, who, while congratulating the GPMCI for this important initiative, indicated that *«this fund is not just an investment tool, but a true lever for transformation for our mining industry.»*

It should be noted that the creation of this mining investment fund, the first of its kind, marks an important step in the dynamic transformation of the Ivorian mining sector. By promoting financial autonomy and mobilizing local resources, it opens a new era of opportunities for Ivorian entrepreneurs. An initiative that, according to the speakers, could become a model in the sub-region



The officials during the presentation of the Mining Investment Fund at SIREXE.

8th Edition of the 2024 Mining Olympiads

THE MUST-ATTEND EVENT FOR THE IVORIAN MINING SECTOR !

On December 13th and 14th, 2024, the INP-HB in Yamoussoukro, as tradition dictates, hosted the 8th edition of the Mining Olympiads, the flagship sporting event of the Ivorian mining sector. Under the theme «*embracing cultural diversity*,» this edition brought together over 2,000 participants from 31 mining companies and various institutions within the sector.

In an atmosphere of camaraderie and healthy competition, the Mining Olympiads once again strengthened ties among sector stakeholders while celebrating teamwork and shared values that drive progress in Côte d'Ivoire's mining industry.

Relive the highlights of this memorable edition and discover how this event continues to unite and inspire the Ivorian mining community



Highlights of the 2024 Mining Olympiads

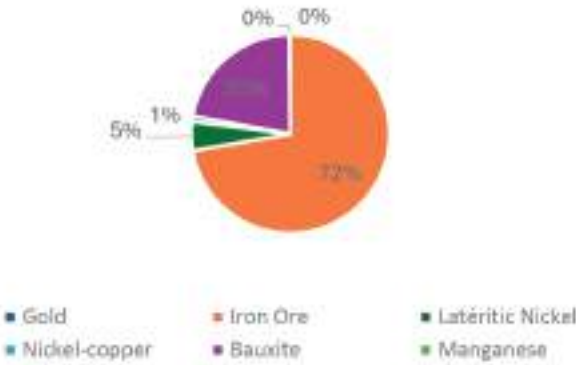
The Ivorian mining sector is an important pillar of the national economy, with continuous growth potential thanks to the country's abundant mineral resources



- 35% of the Birimian gold-rich greenstone belts of West Africa and other raw materials;
- 18.6% of the metal-rich rocks based on the Archean of West Africa

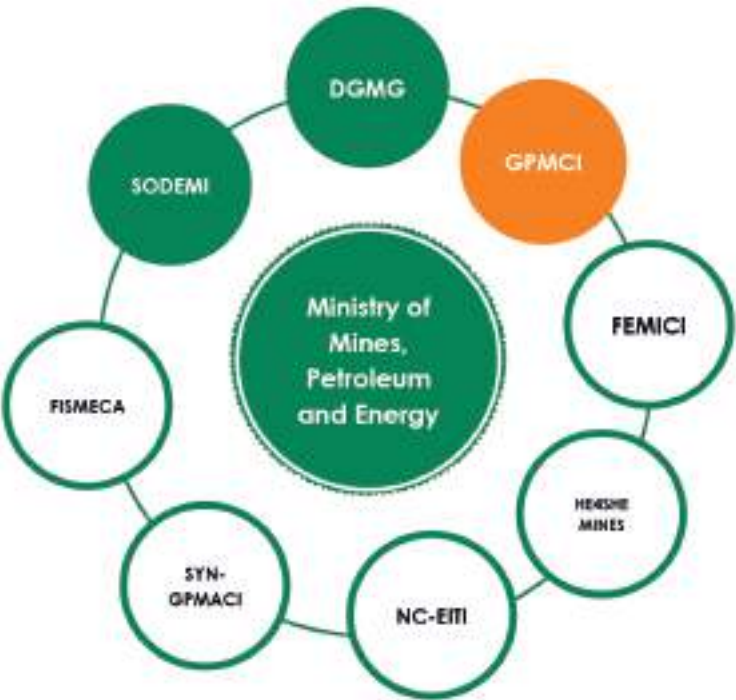


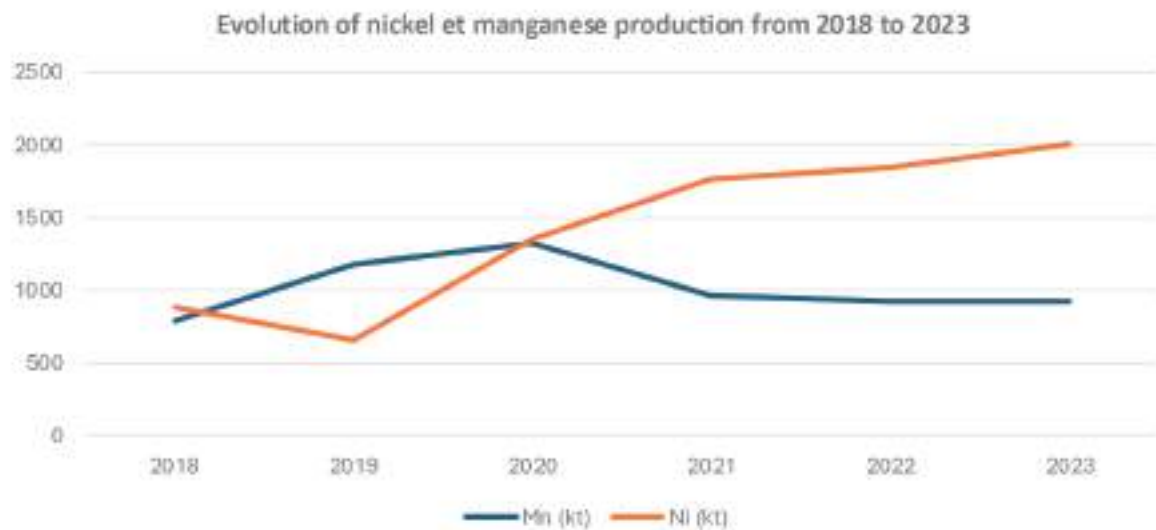
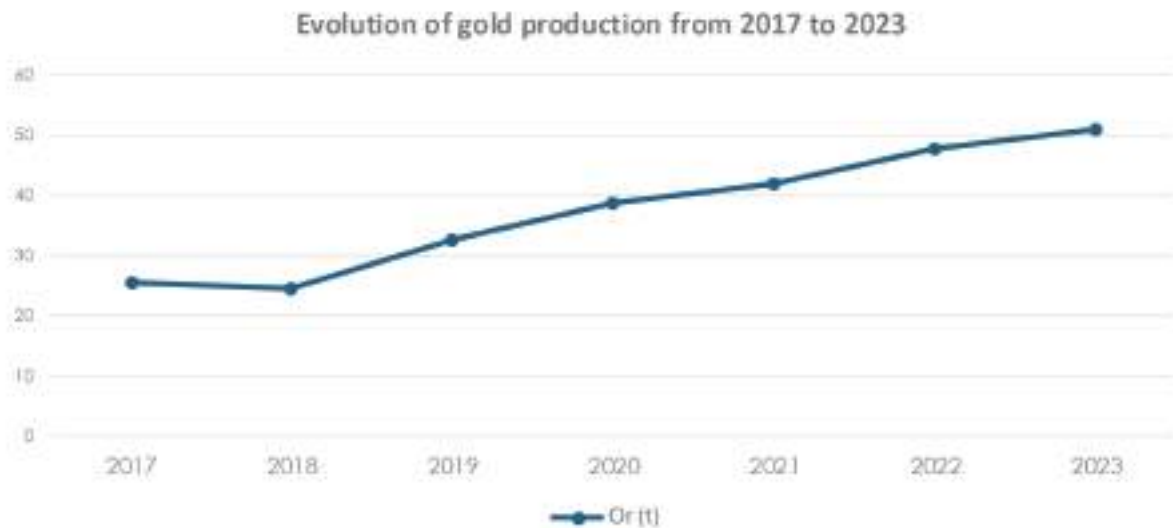
Estimates of mineral resources in tons.



THE KEY PLAYERS IN THE IVORIAN MINING SECTOR

- PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
- PROFESSIONAL GROUP OF MINERS
- OTHER ASSOCIATIONS & UNIONS





CONTRIBUTION OF THE SECTOR TO THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

INDICATORS/YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
TURNOVER (Mds XOF)	385	479,2	483,6	539,8	582,3	762	958,8	1145,4	1314	1758
DIRECT JOB CREATED (000)	NA	6	8,29	10,52	13,32	13,93	14	18	18,13	20
TAX REVENUES (Mds XOF)	10,9	19,5	34	56,4	66,84	94,56	146,67	227,50	250,4	372
COMMUNITY INVESTMENT (Mds XOF)	NA	1,2	2,4	2,64	2,55	3,44	4,29	5,18	5,61	8,4
CONTRIBUTION TO GDP (%)	1,5	1,67	1,69	2,12	2,29	3	4	4	4	4,5
PRIVATE INVESTMENT (Mds XOF)	74	77	105	121	268,11	136,36	NA	241	241	376

*** Forecast figures



OUR SERVICES

1

HDPE LINER-ASQUAL CERTIFIED IVORIAN INSTALLER



- Certified welders
- Calibrated leister welding equipment and accessories
- Distributor of Sotrafa's geosynthetic

Application area

- Mining
- Landfill
- Environnement protection
- Waste containment...

2

IVORIAN SPECIALIST IN PE POLYPIPE WELDING

- +100Km of network installed
- Qualified and trained technician by Société Européenne de formation
- Welding capacity from 32mm to 630mm diameter with approved semi-automatic machines

Application area

- Water sanitation
- Dredging



OUR MEMBERS

SOME FIGURES OF THE
IVORIAN MINING SECTOR

EXPLORE AND UNDERSTAND

Metals and rare earths:
valuable resources for a
sustainable future

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

M. Moumini BICTOGO,
Chairman and CEO Lagune
Exploration Afrique

WOMEN IN MINING

PAULINE TAHI, the first female
metallurgist in Côte d'Ivoire.
an unparalleled source of
inspiration

Metals and Rare earths

VALUABLE RESOURCES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE !

Rare metals, characterized by their low abundance in the Earth's crust and the challenges associated with their extraction, play a central role today in the development of high-tech industries and the global energy transition. Essential for the manufacturing of green and innovative technologies, their significance has never been more critical.

According to forecasts from the International Energy Agency (IEA), global demand for these strategic metals could triple by 2040, a prospect that raises increasing concerns, as highlighted by its Executive Director, Mr. Fatih Birol, who warns that: *«(...) The risk is that this rapid energy transition will depend on the availability of critical metals, in sufficient quantities, at the right time, and an affordable price.»*

To better understand the impact and growing importance of these indispensable metals for the technologies of tomorrow, and to discover the unique potential they represent for Côte d'Ivoire, O'MINES Magazine invites you to delve into the fascinating world of the hidden treasures beneath Ivorian soil.

What are rare metals?

Often referred to as «*rare earths*» or «*strategic metals*,» rare metals encompass elements from the periodic table that, while sometimes present in notable quantities underground, are particularly valuable due to the complexity and high cost of their extraction and purification. Their separation requires cutting-edge technologies, advanced chemical processes, and specialized infrastructures such as railways, dedicated docks, and roads. Among these metals are lithium, nickel, cobalt, bismuth, and others, which are essential for high-tech industries and innovations in renewable energy, electronics, and aerospace.

Some rare metals and their roles in our daily lives

«Rare metals are the cornerstone of modern technologies. Without them, there would be no batteries, no touch screens, and no electric motors. They are the foundation of the industry of the future.»

states Guillaume Pitron, a French journalist and author specializing in the ecological and geopolitical impact of rare metals. Today, they are integral to our daily lives; let us explore below some of these metals, most of which are currently being mined or explored in our country:



• Bismuth



This metal, known for its antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties, is particularly utilized in medicine, notably in compounds such as bismuth subsalicylate for treating gastric disorders, ulcers, and stomach infections.

In industry, it is valued for producing low-melting alloys, which are used in safety devices, fuses, and fire protection systems. Its ability to melt at low temperatures without expanding makes it ideal for these sensitive applications. Additionally, bismuth replaces toxic metals like lead in certain electronic solders, contributing to making electronic devices more environmentally friendly. In the cosmetics industry, it is used for its iridescent effect in products such as powders and lipsticks, providing a safe alternative for the skin.

In Côte d'Ivoire, Lagune Exploration Afrique (LEA) holds a research permit for bismuth in the locality of Gagnoa in the Gôh region.

• Lithium



An essential metal for modern technologies, lithium is primarily used in lithium-ion batteries, which power a wide range of electronic devices: smartphones, laptops, tablets, and especially electric vehicles.

These batteries, offering high energy density and long lifespan, are the preferred choice for portable devices and

green mobility technologies. In the context of the energy transition, lithium is indispensable for energy storage systems, particularly those intended for renewable energy sources. Lithium batteries enable the storage of electricity generated by sources such as solar and wind, ensuring power availability even in the absence of production (at night or during low wind conditions).

Furthermore, it is used in medicine in the form of salts to stabilize mood and treat psychiatric disorders, such as bipolar disorder, due to its well-established stabilizing effects. In industry, lithium is used to strengthen certain metal alloys, particularly aluminum, enhancing their lightness and strength—qualities sought after in the aerospace sector.

Finally, it is added to ceramics and glass to improve their thermal resistance, making it a prized component for products like cooktops and reinforced windows for buildings and vehicles. **In Côte d'Ivoire, Ricca Resources holds the country's first lithium project in the localities of Adzopé, Yakassé-Attobrou, and Agboville. SODEMI also holds a research permit for this metal, granted in 2023.**

• Le Cobalt



An indispensable metal in several high-tech sectors, cobalt is primarily recognized for its role in lithium-ion batteries, where it stabilizes and optimizes energy density. This role is crucial for extending battery life and ensuring safety, particularly in electric vehicles, laptops, and mobile phones.

High-Performance Alloys : Cobalt is essential in the manufacturing of superalloys, which withstand extreme conditions such as high temperatures and intense wear. These superalloys are used in jet engines and power plant turbines, where high strength is required to endure intense performance over the long term, particularly in the aerospace sector.

Catalyst in the Chemical and Petroleum Industry : Cobalt plays a central role as a catalyst in industrial processes, notably in oil refining and the production of chemicals (such as plastics and dyes). It also helps reduce the sulfur content

in fuels, contributing to lower pollutant emissions and the production of cleaner fuels.

Medical Applications : Due to its biocompatibility, cobalt is used in alloys for the manufacture of orthopedic and dental prostheses, minimizing adverse reactions in the human body. It is also utilized in radiotherapy to treat certain cancers, thanks to its controlled radioactive properties.

Blue Pigment : Known for its intense blue color, cobalt is used as a pigment in ceramics, glass, and certain inks. This pigment, referred to as «cobalt blue,» remains popular today in artistic and decorative applications for its unique color and durability.

Thanks to its versatility, cobalt is a strategic and essential metal for various industries, including electronics, healthcare, aerospace, and even the arts. In Côte d'Ivoire, the company LEA holds two exploration permits for this metal in the localities of Béoumi and Méagui, like SODEMI in the locality of Kaniasso.

• Le Nickel



Most of the global nickel is destined for stainless steel production, where it provides significant corrosion resistance and enhances strength. This steel is commonly used in kitchen utensils, infrastructure, and industrial equipment, valued for its durability and low maintenance. Nickel is also a component of superalloys used in aircraft engines, gas turbines, and power plants. These alloys, capable of withstanding extreme temperatures and wear, are essential for the aerospace and energy sectors.

Nickel plays a central role in rechargeable batteries, particularly in lithium-ion and nickel-metal hydride (NiMH) batteries, which power electric and hybrid vehicles as well as various electronic devices. Its ability to increase energy density and durability enhances the range of electric vehicles and portable devices. In the chemical industry, nickel acts as a catalyst in the hydrogenation of certain chemicals and the refining of hydrocarbons. This property makes it a valuable

element to produce margarine and other chemical reactions in the petroleum industry.

In summary, nickel is a strategic metal for modern industry, contributing to the creation of durable materials, the development of renewable energy, and the rise of electric mobility.

With a reserve of 47 million tons (WMT) of nickel, an average content of 2%, and an annual production of 2.5 million metric tons, la compagnie Minière du Bafing (CMB) operates in the locality of Biankouma, the largest DSO (Direct Shipping Ore) nickel project on the African continent.

Other players, such as SODEMI, Sama Nickel, Lagune Exploration Africa, etc., hold exploration permits for nickel in several localities across the country.

• Columbite-Tantalite (Coltan)



Tantalum extracted from coltan, plays an essential role in the manufacturing of high-capacity, small-sized capacitors, which are crucial for modern electronic devices. These capacitors allow for the efficient storage and regulation of energy in mobile phones, laptops, gaming consoles, and cameras. Their compactness and high efficiency make them ideal components for miniaturized electronic devices. Tantalum capacitors have excellent resistance to heat and corrosion, qualities that make them indispensable in demanding sectors such as aerospace and automotive, where components are exposed to extreme conditions.

Corrosion Resistance and Durability : Tantalum stands out for its high resistance to corrosion, making it a material of choice for chemical and acidic environments. Due to this durability, it is used in the manufacturing of medical instruments, particularly for surgical implants, as well as in laboratory equipment and industrial facilities.

Defense Industry and High-Tech Technologies : Coltan is also essential in the defense industry for the manufacturing of military components such as guidance systems and communication equipment. Its ability to operate reliably

in extreme conditions makes it a sought-after material for military technologies and defense systems.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the discovery of this mineral in the locality of Issia is credited to SODEMI. It is the first of its kind for the country.

- **Bauxite**



The main ore used for aluminum production; bauxite is at the heart of many modern industries. It is first refined to extract alumina (aluminum oxide) and then electrolyzed to obtain metallic aluminum. About 90% of the bauxite extracted worldwide is dedicated to this production, allowing for the manufacture of lightweight and durable components for various sectors.

Key Industries : Aluminum derived from bauxite is highly valued in aerospace, automotive, construction, and packaging due to its lightweight, corrosion resistance, and thermal and electrical conductivity. These qualities make it a material of choice for aerospace components, vehicle chassis, building structures, and food packaging, where durability and lightness are essential.

Refractory and Abrasive Materials : Calcined bauxite is used in the manufacture of refractory materials that can withstand high temperatures in furnaces, incinerators, and various industrial equipment. Transformed into high-quality abrasives, bauxite is also used for polishing and sandblasting in sectors such as metal and wood.

Cement Manufacturing : In the construction materials sector, bauxite is an essential ingredient for certain cement, such as alumina cement. With its high strength, this cement is ideal for demanding environments, such as marine settings or chemical facilities, where high durability is important.

In summary, bauxite is a strategic ore, not only for aluminum production but also for specific applications in refractory materials, abrasives, and specialized cements, thus contributing to multiple modern industries.

Lagune Exploitation Bongouanou, whose mine is in Bongouanou, is the first bauxite mine in Côte d'Ivoire. It is also the first 100% Ivorian mine. Additionally, LEA currently holds a research permit in the locality of Méagui.

- **Le Chrome**



Chrome is a versatile metal whose specific properties make it essential in several industries. It is best known for its use in the production of stainless steel, to which it imparts excellent corrosion resistance and great durability.

Approximately 85% of the chrome produced is used in metal alloys, particularly to enhance the rust and oxidation resistance of steel, making it a preferred material for construction equipment, kitchen utensils, and medical devices. In the industrial sector, chrome is also part of the composition of anti-corrosion coatings and decorative finishes, thanks to its distinctive metallic luster. Additionally, chrome coatings are valued in the automotive industry for protecting parts against wear and giving them a shiny, aesthetic appearance.

Furthermore, chrome plays a role in the production of durable pigments and dyes, particularly in industrial paints and textile dyes. In chemistry, some chrome compounds are used as catalysts in various production processes.

Lagune Exploration Afrique (LEA) holds a chrome exploration permit in the locality of Béoumi.

In a global economy where energy transition and electrification are becoming increasingly important, rare metals are at the heart of industrial concerns. From electric cars to solar panels, smartphones to military equipment, these resources are strategic and indispensable. They enable performance levels that cannot be achieved with more common metals.

Major economic powers are investing heavily in the supply and control of rare metal supply chains to secure their high-

tech industries and technological sovereignty. Côte d'Ivoire, thanks to the geological diversity of its subsoil, represents enormous potential for the exploration of these metals.

Metals and Rare earths are a strategic issue for the Ivorian economy.

Since the rise to power of H.E. Alassane OUATTARA, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the country has engaged in a dynamic of economic diversification aimed at reducing its historical dependence on agriculture. In this context, ambitious reforms have been undertaken in many sectors, including the mining sector, which is considered a key driver of growth for the Ivorian economy. The revision of the Mining Code in 2014 has accelerated this development by establishing an attractive regulatory and fiscal framework, intensifying mining research, and diversifying minerals.

This has directly increased the number of exploration and exploitation permits, leading to the construction of new mines for the extraction of these rare and strategic mineral resources of the country. Rare metals, such as lithium, cobalt, nickel, and certain rare earths, represent a major opportunity for economic development for Côte d'Ivoire. Their exploitation potential offers a pathway to transform the economic structure of the country by not only increasing export revenues but also reducing dependence on raw materials. By promoting the local processing of minerals, Côte d'Ivoire can aspire to create value-added chains within its territory, which would strengthen its industrial fabric and generate skilled employment.

A significant socio-economic impact on the country.

The benefits of rare metal exploitation for Côte d'Ivoire are numerous. They include:

The creation of direct and indirect jobs through mines, ancillary services, and related infrastructure.

The increase in tax revenues is thanks to royalties and taxes generated by mining activities.

The improvement of local infrastructure with the creation of roads, mineral wharves, dedicated railways, processing plants for semi-finished or finished products, schools, and health facilities funded by mining taxes.

The development of research and training through the education of local talent to optimally and sustainably exploit these rare resources.

A sub-regional impact and a strengthened leadership position

The development of rare metals in Côte d'Ivoire also has a strategic impact at the sub-regional and African levels. The local production and processing of these resources would strengthen Côte d'Ivoire's energy independence and increase its electricity exports to neighboring countries, thereby consolidating its role as a leader in West Africa.

The expansion of the rare metals industry could also encourage regional economic cooperation by attracting additional investments and developing the necessary transport and processing infrastructure for the distribution of processed metals.

Challenges and Perspectives

The development of rare metal exploitation in Côte d'Ivoire presents challenges. The environmental and social issues related to the extraction of these resources require rigorous management to avoid the degradation of local ecosystems and to ensure ethical working conditions in the mines. Furthermore, the country will need to invest in processing infrastructure and in training a skilled workforce capable of meeting the needs of this emerging industry. By overcoming these challenges, Côte d'Ivoire could make rare metal extraction an important factor in increasing the share of the extractive sector in its economic growth strategy and positioning itself as a sub-regional leader.

EPC CÔTE D'IVOIRE – VOTRE PARTENAIRE DE CHOIX POUR VOS ACTIVITES DE FORAGE/MINAGE

EPC Côte d'Ivoire (EPC CI), est une co-entreprise entre le Groupe EPC et la Société pour le Développement Minier de Côte d'Ivoire (SODEMI).

UNE ENERGIE CONCENTRÉE®



Qui sommes-nous ?

Le Groupe EPC créé en 1893 est l'un des leaders mondiaux dans la fabrication, le stockage et la distribution d'explosifs, notamment dans le secteur du forage-minage.

Fort de plus de 130 ans d'expérience, le Groupe EPC est reconnu pour apporter des solutions efficaces, des innovations technologiques et un haut niveau de qualité services à ses clients. Il est composé d'une cinquantaine de filiales implantées dans une vingtaine de pays sur tous les continents. EPC Côte d'Ivoire (EPC CI), dont les activités ont démarré en 2013, est devenu en une décennie un acteur principal dans le domaine des explosifs civils pour le secteur des Mines et Carrières et des Travaux Publics (TP) grâce aux investissements dans le capital humain, la fabrication locale et l'utilisation de technologies modernes.

Nos services



A ce jour, EPC CI fabrique et commercialise des explosifs vrac et encartouchés, fournit des services de minage, outre aux carrières qu'aux grandes entreprises minières présentes en Côte d'Ivoire que sont Endeavour Mining (ITY), Allied Gold (Bonikro et Agbaou), Perseus Mining (Yaouré et Sissingué) et Tietto Minerals (Abujar).

Au-delà du secteur des mines, nous avons assuré le minage dans des projets d'envergure nationale tels que la construction du barrage de Soubré et de celui de Singrobo, contribuant ainsi à l'accroissement la capacité énergétique de la Côte d'Ivoire.

Etant actifs dans l'un des secteurs les plus rigoureux à l'échelle mondiale, nous sommes conscients que nos clients recherchent des solutions efficaces, sécurisées sur mesure avec une approche de gestion éthique. C'est pourquoi nous accordons une priorité absolue à ces aspects.



Engagement envers la durabilité

Parce que nous sommes soucieux de l'impact de nos activités sur la planète et les communautés proches de nos sites d'opération, nous nous engageons en toute responsabilité à améliorer continuellement nos performances environnementales et à nous aligner voire aller au-delà des meilleures pratiques en matière de développement durable des entreprises.

EPC Côte d'Ivoire se positionne comme un partenaire stratégique de choix pour tous vos besoins en minage. Notre engagement envers l'excellence, la sécurité et l'innovation nous permet de surpasser les attentes de nos clients à toutes les étapes des projets. Avec EPC Côte d'Ivoire, vous avez l'assurance de bénéficier du standard le plus élevé en termes de professionnalisme et de service client.



I ARRIVED LIKE A HAIR ON THE SOUP.

MOUMINI BICTOGO

Chairman and CEO of LAGUNE EXPLORATION AFRIQUE

A graduate in management from the University of Verona in Italy, Moumini BICTOGO ventured into luxury jewelry in the 1980s, where he created a special piece featuring the image of President Félix HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY, which led to him being received several times by the Founding Father for further commissions. A man of action and passionate about the mining sector, Moumini BICTOGO, after significant progress in agriculture and sports, decided to enter the extractive industry. He



«With wisdom, perseverance, and resilience, the impossible becomes possible.»

founded Lagune Exploration Afrique, and one of its major outcomes was the creation in 2018 of Lagune Exploitation Bongouanou, the first Ivorian company specializing in bauxite ore extraction.

An Officer of the National Order of Merit, Moumini BICTOGO has been the 1st Vice-President of the Groupement Professionnel des Miniers de Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI) since 2021, an employers' organization gathering all active mining professionals in Côte d'Ivoire.

Could you tell us about your background and what led you to the mining industry?

Thank you for allowing me to share my professional journey and discuss my commitment to the Ivorian mining sector.

Retracing my path is both simple and complex because I have worked in various fields before transitioning to the mining industry.

After studying economics and commerce, now referred to as management, at the University of Verona in Italy, I chose to return to Côte d'Ivoire in 1982 despite the many opportunities available to me there. Driven by the conviction that I could contribute to the development of my country, I began my career in the luxury jewelry sector, inspired by my Italian mentor, a renowned expert in the field. With courage and determination, I introduced luxury jewelry creations made in Italy to Côte d'Ivoire at a time when the local market was largely dominated by Bijouterie Constant, which held a monopoly.

One of the highlights of this period for me was the creation of a piece of jewelry featuring the likeness of President Félix HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY, which I officially presented during a ceremony where the patroness was Madame Mariétou THIAM. This achievement earned me the honor of being received several times by the late President Félix HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY, moments that I will always cherish.

At that time, for those who remember, receiving the commendations of President HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY and being invited multiple times by him was a testament to the exceptional quality of the work accomplished. It required unwavering determination and remarkable boldness.

My interactions with him further motivated and inspired me to train young Ivorians in this craft, many of whom, I am confident, will recognize

themselves in this story.

After my work in jewelry, I founded the African Trade Company (ATC) in 2004, a trading company specializing in the commercialization of agricultural products, including cashew nuts. To ensure better living and working conditions for our farmer parents, I initiated the federation of cashew nut-producing cooperatives. This initiative, approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Cotton Regulation Authority in 2011, led to the establishment of the Union of Cashew Nut Producers' Cooperatives of Côte d'Ivoire (UCCA-CI). The promotion of this association was carried out across the country, from the East to the West and the North.

Next, I initiated a mining project called LIZETTA, specializing in the extraction of bauxite ore in the Moronou region. This brings me to your question about my entry into the mining sector. In truth, my arrival in this industry happened somewhat by chance. I stumbled into it, as the saying goes, 'like a bolt from the blue.'

I was approached by South African friends and partners. We obtained two exploration permits, but they later withdrew, leaving me alone with these permits. What could I do in such a situation? I decided to take on the challenge, convinced that with perseverance and my past experiences, I could succeed in this sector. Furthermore, I was inspired by the call of His Excellency President Alassane OUATTARA, urging economic operators to make the extractive industry the second pillar of the national economy after agriculture. With determination, I persisted in this project. By the grace of God, I founded the company Lagune Exploitation Bongouanou (LEB) to exploit the Benéné deposit.

Thus, on April 16, 2018, we officially launched the operations of Côte d'Ivoire's very first bauxite mine during a memorable ceremony attended by distinguished guests, including the

late President Henri Konan Bédié, the then Vice President of the Republic, His Excellency Daniel Kablan Duncan, Prime Minister Pascal Affi N'Guessan, the Inspector General of State, Mr. Ahoua N'Doli, the Minister of Industry, Souleymane Diarrassouba, the President of the Moronou Regional Council, Madame Véronique Aka, as well as elected officials, executives, and dignitaries from the Moronou and Iffou regions. It was an immense honor for me to see this project come to fruition on that day, and I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all these individuals and the local population for their support.

Unfortunately, in 2019, the Covid-19 pandemic impacted the development of this project, causing significant setbacks. However, today, the project is progressing well with regular bauxite exports. A new management team now oversees the operations, while I remain a board member and fully committed to the project. Currently, I lead Lagune Exploration Afrique (LEA), a research company that holds several exploration permits for gold, bauxite, chrome, bismuth, and other minerals....

Outside of my professional activities, I am passionate about football. I had the honor of serving as Treasurer of ASEC Mimosas, manager of Agnéby Sport, and advisor to the late Ousseynou DIENG, former President of the Ivorian Football Federation, with whom we won Côte d'Ivoire's first Africa Cup of Nations in 1992. In 1996, I also represented and promoted the sports equipment brand GEM'S in Côte d'Ivoire, sponsoring the national team and all 16 football clubs. Currently, I am an honorary member of ASEC Mimosas.

On the social front, I am committed to the well-being of communities through charitable actions carried out with the Rotary Club, where I am a PHF.

I have also had the honor of receiving several awards in the business world, including:

- The Best Economic Operator Award, presented by the SAFAM Group in 2011.

- The African Prize for the Best Development Artisans received in Gabon in 2012.

- The title of Officer of the National Order of Merit was awarded by the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire in 2016.

This is an overview of my journey, rich in challenges and opportunities, which



reflects its exceptional and atypical nature.

The Ivorian mining sector is primarily dominated by gold exploitation. Why did you choose to venture into bauxite mining? What comparative advantages does this resource offer to the Ivorian economy?

Beyond the personal challenge of proving that I could succeed with these two permits, I chose to pursue this venture for specific strategic reasons. First, bauxite, although less publicized than gold, is a resource of vital importance both economically and industrially. The industrial transformation of this ore plays a key role in sectors such as construction,

aerospace, and automotive industries, all of which are experiencing rapid growth worldwide, and particularly in Africa. Recognizing this potential, I saw in this mineral an opportunity to help position Côte d'Ivoire as a significant player in the aluminum industry, both in Africa and beyond.

Next, I realized that betting on bauxite in Côte d'Ivoire, a resource that had been untapped until then, would be a strategic asset to diversify our mining economy beyond gold. This

would pave the way for the creation of new industrial value chains.

Finally, like other minerals, bauxite offers considerable comparative advantages, with the potential to generate jobs, strengthen our industrial infrastructure, and position Côte d'Ivoire as a leading player in the mining industry in West Africa.

With this vision in mind, I saw bauxite exploitation as an opportunity that had to be seized without

hesitation because, being a labor-intensive activity, it would be beneficial for all stakeholders and would help make the Ivorian extractive industry a true pillar of the national economy.

Your company has been in existence since 2012. Over these 12 years, what have been the major challenges you have faced, both financially, technically, and regulatory-wise, and what has been your strategy to overcome them?

When we launched our venture in 2012, we had to overcome several major challenges in terms of finance, social issues, and logistics, some of which are still relevant today.

The first challenge, undoubtedly the most significant, was financing. The Ivorian mining industry was still in its early stages, and local banks were not familiar with the specifics of this sector and did not offer suitable financing. This hindered the ambitions of many local promoters, forcing us to redouble our efforts to secure the resources necessary for the development of our projects. Banks such as BGFI and BNI, despite the challenges mentioned, did not hesitate to support us in the implementation of our projects.

Currently, positive changes are underway, with banks like AFG and Ecobank CI having recently set up mining «desks» dedicated to the sector, allowing for better attention to Ivorian operators. We hope the government will further support these initiatives to foster the emergence of true national mining champions.

The second challenge was social. Integrating our mining project into the daily life of the host communities proved difficult. Côte d'Ivoire, as a young mining nation, did not yet have a deeply rooted mining culture. This required numerous awareness and consultation meetings to show the local populations the potential benefits of our projects for them.

With twelve (12) years of experience in this sector, our approach has become more mature and inclusive, and we commend the efforts of the Ministry of Mines, which, by establishing departmental and regional offices, now facilitates dialogue with the populations for better acceptance of mining projects.

Finally, we have faced and continue to face technical challenges, particularly in transporting the ore from the mining site to the export port and then to our foreign partners' destinations.

The exploitation of base metals requires significant investments in specific infrastructures, such as mineral terminals, railways, and adapted roads

to facilitate logistics. Therefore, the construction of a dedicated mineral quay is of utmost importance to ensure rapid and efficient export while reducing logistical costs. This necessity inspired our project to create a dedicated mineral quay for base metals in Côte d'Ivoire.

In the end, all these challenges, although complex, turned out to be valuable levers for learning and refining our strategies, enabling us to progress sustainably and constructively in the Ivorian mining sector.

As a pioneer in the exploitation of bauxite and other rare metals, how do you assess the impact of your activities on local and national development, both economically and socially?

I can say without hesitation that we have always been committed to ensuring that our activities benefit local populations while supporting national economic development. In line with the provisions of the 2014 Mining Code, during our management

of Lagune Exploitation Bongouanou, we prioritized the hiring of residents from the 13 villages directly impacted by the Benene mine. This commitment to local employment continues even today with the new management.

Similarly, in a spirit of social support during a crisis, during the Covid-19 pandemic, we organized a ceremony on April 15, 2020, at the Bongouanou prefecture to distribute food and non-food items worth 10 million CFA francs. This gesture aimed to support the most vulnerable families during this challenging time. Let us not forget the numerous discretionary actions we take daily to improve the social well-being of the population.

As an entrepreneur, the issue of youth employability has always been at the heart of my priorities, because I am convinced that access to stable employment is a key lever in the fight against poverty and insecurity. That is why we have taken significant initiatives to promote youth employment and transform local activities. For example, on the 252 km² research permit of LEA

in the Moronou region, we discovered gold indicators. The Directorate General of Mines and Geology (DGMG) wisely permitted us to deepen gold exploration. However, to prevent illegal gold panning activities, I requested the establishment of semi-industrial mines on part of the said area. This request was accepted, and I would like to thank the Ministry of Mines and the DGMG for their support and listening.

This project has a dual objective: to offer sustainable jobs to the youth in the region and actively contribute to the fight against illegal gold panning, which has become an endemic scourge. As we all know, illegal gold panning has numerous negative effects on young people, including exposure to precarious working conditions, various vices, and serious environmental hazards. Through the structured and regulated exploitation of resources like gold, bauxite, etc., we hope to offer viable alternatives and a bright future for our youth.

Through all these actions, I try to contribute sustainably to the country's economic growth while remaining attentive to local social and environmental issues.

What initiatives has your company implemented to promote sustainable and environmentally friendly mining practices?

The implementation of any mining project requires the prior completion of an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) to ensure that the impacts on the environment and local communities are minimized. As part of our project for the first bauxite mine in Côte d'Ivoire, we collaborated with a renowned Canadian consultancy to carry out this comprehensive study. Following the ESIA, an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) was developed, which is regularly audited by the National Environmental Agency to ensure its effective implementation and compliance. Additionally, we have taken



specific measures to minimize noise disturbances associated with mining operations. We opted to use a «surface miner» excavator, which helps reduce noise during extraction and preserves the tranquility of surrounding communities.

Your company currently holds exploration permits for other rare metals such as nickel, cobalt, chrome, bismuth, and manganese. Could you explain the stakes related to the extraction of these so-called strategic or critical metals for Côte d'Ivoire? And their role in the transition to clean energy. ?

First, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Ivorian Government, and especially to His Excellency Mr. Alassane OUATTARA, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, for granting two exploration permits to LEA in the Nawa and Gôh regions. These areas reveal promising indications of the metals you mentioned, and we are honored to contribute to their exploration.

Strategic metals such as nickel, cobalt, chrome, bismuth, and manganese are of paramount importance not only for Côte d'Ivoire but also for the global energy transition. Their extraction could position our country as a major player in the supply chain for green technologies, such as electric vehicle batteries, renewable energy, and energy storage technologies. If our discoveries are confirmed, our goal is to develop an industry capable of producing at least semi-finished materials, to maximize local value-added production.

We therefore aspire to build a strong and sustainable national industry that will benefit future generations. I hope that God will grant me the health and longevity necessary to pursue this goal and leave to the younger generations a reliable industrial infrastructure that holds a promising future for Côte d'Ivoire.

Can you give us an overview of your company's future projects?

- Permit 302, covering 380 km² in the Gbêkê region, Béoumi department, for nickel, cobalt, and chrome.

- Permit 303, extending over 253 km² in the Moronou region, Bongouanou department, for gold and manganese.

- Permit 964, covering 380 km² in the Nawa region, Soubré department, primarily targeting gold and bismuth.

- Permit 962, covering 400 km² in the Gôh region, Gagnoa department, for various resources such as gold, cobalt, copper, nickel, chrome, and bauxite

The first drilling results are currently being evaluated, and we plan to launch, starting in January 2025, a more in-depth research phase to confirm the presence of minerals on each of these permits. Our ambition goes beyond simply acquiring permits: we are firmly committed to developing these sites and advancing beyond raw material extraction. As I mentioned, our long-term vision is to create semi-finished products, thereby adding substantial value to the local and regional economy. With our experience, we are building a network of strategic partners in Côte d'Ivoire and internationally to form a strong mining group focused on innovation and sustainability.

You had the ambition to build a mineral terminal. Where does the project stand today? What added value will it bring to the development of the Ivorian mining sector, and how could it benefit the national economy?

The Ivorian government's vision is to make the mining sector the second-largest source of revenue for the national economy. The regulatory



reforms implemented have created an attractive and conducive environment for the rapid development of the Ivorian mining industry, positioning our Mining Code among the most competitive in the world. However, for the full development of base metal extraction, appropriate port infrastructure, such as deep-water terminals, is essential.

The limited draft of the Port Autonome d'Abidjan (PAA) restricts access for large tonnage vessels, forcing operators to rely on alternative solutions. For instance, SEA INVEST currently uses barges to perform partial loading at the quay, and then complete the process in the lagoon anchorage. While this method partly mitigates the issue, it leads to cargo handling disruptions and incurs additional costs that affect the profit margins of mining companies.

In response to these constraints, we are actively working on the construction of a mineral terminal on the coastline of Jacqueville, near the Vridi Canal. This project plans to create a deep-water quay capable of accommodating large

tonnage vessels, which will reduce logistical costs for exporters and increase the competitiveness of the Ivorian mining sector. An area of fifty hectares has already been identified for this terminal, and we are advancing through the feasibility and financing stages in collaboration with national and international partners under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

This mineral terminal would serve as a key leverage point for the industrialization and export of Ivorian mineral resources, thereby creating significant added value for the national economy. We have initiated discussions with the Ministry of Transport and the management of the PAA, both of whom have expressed interest in this strategic project. We aim to involve all stakeholders interested in this initiative.

We are confident that this dedicated infrastructure for base metals will meet the needs of the sector and attract further mining investments to Côte d'Ivoire, thus contributing to the country's economic development and the achievement of the government's strategic goals.

What is your opinion on the issue of local content in the mining sector? How, in your view, can we promote the involvement of local businesses and encourage the transfer of skills in this sector?

Local content is an important issue for the development of the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire. The current Mining Code of 2014 does not yet contain specific legal provisions on local content, unlike some neighboring countries that have implemented regulatory provisions for companies. However, even in the absence of binding legislation, we are pleased to observe that several mining companies are already applying local content principles. Currently, around 95% of management positions in the country's large gold mining companies are held by Ivorians, which is a testament to the wealth of our local skills. Similarly, companies make efforts

to source locally and employ 90% local labor, which has led many young people to pursue studies in mining, oil, and geology, resulting in the growth of higher education institutions in this field, which were previously rare.

In the same vein, under the leadership of the President of the GPMCI, Mr. Jean-Claude DIPLO, a mining fund, for which I have outlined the key feasibility aspects, is currently being established. This fund aims to provide financial support to Ivorians and anyone wishing to invest in or develop a mining or associated services project. We hope that this fund will also attract support from the financial sector, allowing members to fully benefit from it. Regarding the involvement of local companies and the transfer of skills, we primarily recommend two key actions to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire:

- **The enactment of a specific law on local content, like initiatives launched in Nigeria in 2010 and in Ghana in 2013, to ensure a strong and incentivizing regulatory framework for the integration of local talents.**

- **The establishment of a structure dedicated to overseeing and ensuring compliance with the regulatory provisions on local content, to ensure that these rules are properly followed and that they effectively benefit the local economy.**

I believe these initiatives will help structure the mining sector and strengthen its impact in terms of job creation and the development of national skills.

How do you see the future of the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire in the coming decades, particularly regarding base metals and the energy transition? How can the country maximize the economic benefits of its base metal resources?

The future of the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire is promising, and the coming decades are expected to be decisive,

especially for base metals, which I believe will play a key role in the global energy transition. As global demand for metals such as nickel, copper, cobalt, and lithium continues to rise with the development of renewable energy and green technologies, our country is in a strategic position to fully capitalize on this transformation.

I believe that in Côte d'Ivoire, rare metals have immense potential, and our ambition is to develop a modern, responsible, and sustainable mining sector capable of competing with the world's leading producers. However, to maximize the economic benefits of these resources, it is crucial to establish appropriate infrastructure and strengthen our local capacities, and I emphasize this point. To achieve this, the state must support the creation of port infrastructure, such as our project to build a specialized mineral terminal, to facilitate the export of our minerals while minimizing logistical costs.

Furthermore, investing in training and developing local skills is essential so that our workers can occupy strategic positions in the mining value chain. Moreover, implementing policies that encourage local processing could allow the country not only to export raw materials but also to position itself in the value chain of semi-finished or even finished products for clean technologies. For instance, developing metal refining capacities or factories for producing components for electric batteries could significantly increase the added value of our mining sector.

Finally, the Ivorian State must continue to play an active role by providing a stable and attractive legislative and fiscal framework. I would like to congratulate the Ministry of Mines, Petroleum, and Energy, which is currently revising the 2014 Mining Code and involving all stakeholders, including the GPMCI, in this initiative. For us, the implementation of policies aimed at ensuring local content and skills transfer would be a powerful lever to maximize the economic and

social benefits for our country. In short, I am optimistic because, with a clear vision and the right investments, Côte d'Ivoire has the potential to become a major player in the base metals sector.

You are an example of success in a sector that is heavily dominated by large foreign companies. What advice would you give to young Ivorians wishing to enter this sector?

I would tell them that above all, they need dedication, courage, and an unwavering belief in their potential. With perseverance and determination, they can succeed in this sector, despite the challenges. It is essential to never lose sight of their goals and to believe in their ability to overcome obstacles.

Your final words for our readers

To the readers, I strongly encourage you to closely follow the O'MINES magazine, a valuable resource for gaining a deeper understanding of the Ivorian mining sector and its developments.

To the editorial team, I wish you much success and perseverance in continuing to showcase this key sector of our economy.





LAGUNE EXPLORATION AFRIQUE

UN ACTEUR MAJEUR DANS LA RECHERCHE MINIÈRE EN CÔTE D'IVOIRE DEPUIS 10 ANS

A PROPOS DE LEA

Lagune Exploration Afrique est une société minière au capital de 100 millions de FCFA, fondée par M. Moumouni BICTOGO, promoteur, expert en gestion des ressources extractives et 1er Vice-président de la Chambre des Mines de Côte d'Ivoire.

Forte d'une expérience de plus de dix ans, LEA concentre ses activités sur (1) l'exploration minière, (2) la logistique et (3) l'industrie.

Aujourd'hui, Lagune Exploration Afrique (LEA) est à l'origine d'un grand nombre de projets miniers en Côte d'Ivoire. Lagune Exploitation Afrique se distingue par son expertise en matière d'exploration minière et sa capacité à travailler avec des partenaires stratégiques de premier plan, capables de répondre aux exigences les plus complexes en matière pilotage de projet d'exploration minière.



NOS PROJETS

Industrialisation et innovation du secteur minier, Réduction de la chaîne de transformation de la bauxite brut à l'Alumine AL2O3 avec une plus value cession. En effet le prix de la matière brut oscille entre 28 et 30 USD/t contre 220 à 250 USD/t pour la calcinée.

NOS PERSPECTIVES MAJEURES

- Construction un quai minéralier entre Jacqueville et le Port d'Abidjan
- Installation d'une usine de calcination



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Energy transition

Mining companies members of the GPMCI are firmly committed to reducing their carbon footprint.



signing of partnership between ROXGOLD and TOTAL ENERGIES

Carbon footprint refers to the total amount of greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted into the atmosphere due to human activities. According to the report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), these emissions have a major significant impact on global warming and environmental degradation. As renowned climatologist James Hansen emphasizes: «If we do not rapidly reduce our carbon footprint, we jeopardize life on Earth as we know it.» This includes businesses, which are often seen as major consumers of energy and resources and are responsible for a significant share of global CO₂ emissions.

However, many companies are now recognizing the climate emergency and are actively working to reduce their environmental impact. The mining industry, traditionally seen as one of the most polluting sectors, is increasingly proactive in implementing innovative solutions to reduce its carbon emissions. Among the key initiatives, there is a strong push towards adopting projects that utilize renewable energy, particularly solar power.

Concrete projects supporting the energy transition

Mining companies such as Roxgold Sango (Fortuna Silver) and Endeavour Mining have committed to innovative projects aimed at reducing their carbon footprint. A notable example

is the partnership between Roxgold and Total Energies at the Séguéla gold mine. This atmospheric emissions reduction project aims to decrease Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 15% by 2030, compared to anticipated emissions under a «Business as Usual» scenario. The project, which aligns with efforts to control energy costs and reduce the environmental footprint of mining operations, includes the construction of a 6 MWp solar power plant with an estimated production capacity of approximately 11.7 GWh per year, covering nearly 30% of the Séguéla mine's energy needs.

For its part, Endeavour Mining, has launched the construction of a 37 MWp solar photovoltaic power with an investment of \$55 million. This installation, intended for the Sabodala-Massawa gold complex in Senegal, will annually supply 73 GWh. A 16 MWh battery system will also be installed to store energy for optimal use. Through this project, Endeavour Mining anticipates substantial savings, reducing fuel consumption by 13 million liters per year, which translates to a 22% reduction in electricity costs and a 24% decrease in CO₂ emissions. This initiative also reinforces the site's energy autonomy while supporting global energy transition goals.

These projects demonstrate the commitment and collective awareness of industrial mining companies regarding their role in combating climate change. By adopting sustainable energy solutions and reducing their carbon footprint, they also contribute to environmental preservation. The mining industry has a central role to play in this energy transition, and these initiatives highlight the sector's ability to adapt to contemporary challenges while pursuing its economic objectives. The future of mining undeniable lies in innovation, environmental responsibility, and a strong commitment to sustainability.

PAULINE TAHI, the first female metallurgist in Côte d'Ivoire.

AN UNPARALLELED SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

The mining sector, and more specifically metallurgy, is often perceived as a field reserved for men, a world where the harsh working conditions and physical demands discourage many women from pursuing a career. Yet, despite these prejudices, some bold and determined women dare to challenge them, becoming true pioneers and inspiring future generations. Among them stands Mrs. Pauline TAHI, the first female metallurgist in Côte d'Ivoire, whose exceptional journey is a striking demonstration that talent and perseverance can open all doors, even in the most unexpected environments. Through this interview, we invite you to delve into the story of this exceptional woman, to discover her journey, the challenges she faced, and her advice for all those who wish to follow in her footsteps and build a career in the mining sector.

To begin, could you tell us how you discovered the mining sector and what specifically attracted you to metallurgy?

My entry into the mining sector was the result of a fortunate accident, almost a twist of fate. Initially, I had gone to Morocco to pursue studies in tourism. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, I was unable to access this program due to age limitations. This could have been a setback, but it turned out to be a disguised opportunity.

As one of the first Ivorian students to receive the Ivorian Moroccan cooperation scholarship, I had the chance to choose another field of study. That's when something clicked. While browsing through a brochure on various careers, my attention was drawn to an intriguing field: extractive metallurgy, which involves

transforming raw ore into metal. This concept immediately fascinated me, and I knew at that moment that this was the path I wanted to take, the career I needed.

However, this bold choice wasn't without criticism. My parents, along with other Ivorian students, tried to discourage me, claiming that I had chosen a career destined for unemployment because, at that time (in 1988), Côte d'Ivoire did not yet have any mines in production.

To be honest, their skepticism only strengthened my determination, and my career today proves me right. I can proudly say that this choice was visionary.

Since the end of my studies in 1992, I can assure you that I have never experienced a single period of unemployment. On the contrary, I have had the honor of actively contributing to the startup of most of the mines in Côte d'Ivoire, a rich and exciting career that has far exceeded my initial expectations.

To date, could you tell us about your journey? Who is Mrs. Pauline TAHI?

Pauline TAHI graduated in extractive metallurgy from the Mining Institute of Marrakech, Morocco, with over 32 years of experience.

I have dedicated my career to gold ore processing, managing mineral laboratories, and training the next generation of metallurgists, all marked by a relentless pursuit of innovation and self-improvement.

After completing my studies in Morocco, I returned to Côte d'Ivoire with a strong determination to contribute to the development of my country. It was in this spirit that I began

my career at SOMIAF (Société des Mines d'AFEMA - Eden Rock & Marshall Mineral Corporations), where I had the privilege of working as an Operations Supervisor, Laboratory Assistant, and Environmental Coordinator, thus laying the foundation for a rich and diverse career.

After the closure of SOMIAF, I joined the Mining Company of Africa (CMA), a subsidiary of AREVA, where I worked as a Laboratory Manager for five years. Driven by my passion for the profession and my dedication, I then joined the Société des Mines de Ity (SMI) as Section Head for PRD (Process Study, Research, and Development) Metallurgist of the plant. Later, I joined the CLUFF mine, where I had the great honor of contributing to the casting of the very first gold bar. My journey then led me to the Bonikro mine (under EQUIGOLD, then acquired by LGL), where I worked as a laboratory manager.

In 2010, I played a key role in the commissioning of the Tongon mine, operated by Randgold Resources. The following year, in 2011, I was invited to rejoin the Bonikro mine, now managed by Newcrest Mining, as a metallurgist. This role allowed me to pass on my expertise by training and mentoring young talents, a particularly rewarding experience that lasted three years.

In November 2013, I joined Agbaou Gold Operations (ENDEAVOUR), where I climbed the ranks, from Senior Metallurgist to Metallurgical Superintendent, and eventually to Deputy Director of the processing plant.

Today, I hold the position of Senior Superintendent of Metallurgy at Perseus Mining, where I am responsible for optimizing plant performance

and mentoring young metallurgists. This commitment reflects my passion for innovation and skill development in our sector. Looking back with great pride, I can say that I have contributed to the startup of eight out of the twelve industrial mines currently in operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

My commitment goes beyond the technical aspects of my profession. I have always believed that every young talent deserves to be supported and encouraged. This belief has made mentoring a central focus of my career. Throughout my journey, I have worked to open doors and create opportunities for future leaders in our industry.

It is in this spirit that, in 2015, I actively contributed to the creation of the Women's Network of the Mining Sector of Côte d'Ivoire (FEMICI). This initiative was a major turning point in my career, and I was honored to be elected its first president in March of the same year. This pivotal role remains a precious memory and an unforgettable moment in my career.

In recognition of my dedication and journey, I was recently honored by being included in the prestigious WIM100 global ranking for 2024, organized by Women in Mining UK. This recognition is an honor I share with all those who have supported me along the way. Additionally, the State of Côte d'Ivoire, through the Ministry of Mines, Petroleum, and Energy, has appointed me as Officer of the Order of Merit of Mines during the first edition of the International Extractive Resources Fair (SIREXE), held in Abidjan from November 27 to December 2, 2024.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Mamadou SANGAFOWA-COULIBALY, Minister of Mines, as well as to all the stakeholders in the Ivorian mining sector. Their constant support and encouragement inspire me every day to continue my commitment to the growth of our sector.

What have been the greatest challenges you faced as the first female metallurgist in Côte d'Ivoire? How did you overcome them ?

I would say that the greatest challenge I faced as the first female metallurgist in Côte d'Ivoire was discrimination, particularly in a sector like



mine, where tasks are often seen as being reserved for men.

Working in the mining industry, a field historically dominated by men, presented obstacles far beyond technical challenges. There were preconceived ideas about what women could or could not do, and all too often, my ideas were dismissed without proper consideration, simply because they came from a woman. This was extremely difficult to deal with, as it wasn't just about proving my technical competence but also breaking deeply ingrained stereotypes.

Being a woman in a predominantly male environment requires unwavering resilience. You see, society often tends to define certain jobs as exclusively male, and in the mining sector, this perception is even stronger. It's an environment where physical strength is often emphasized, and where the image of women, particularly in technical roles, remains difficult for some to accept. So, I had to face this discrimination. However, instead of being discouraged by this obstacle, I chose to respond with determination and the quality of my work.

Over the years, through

perseverance, self-confidence, and dedication to excellence in my field, I managed to show that competence has no gender. Over time, I saw mindsets evolve, and today, I'm happy to note that many of these prejudices have disappeared.

My journey has taught me that it's not only important to prove yourself in the field but also to earn respect through excellence, discipline, and integrity. The discrimination I encountered didn't just strengthen my resolve; it also taught me that obstacles can be transformed into stepping stones to success.

Today, what was once seen as a weakness or obstacle has become an asset, and doubts and apprehensions have been replaced by respect and admiration from my colleagues. This journey has convinced me that with perseverance, any woman, no matter her field, can make a difference.

Have you had mentors or role models in your journey? If so, how have they influenced your choices and career ?

I took my first steps in mining in 1992, at a time when the mining sector was still largely unknown to the public. At that time, I did not have a mentor or a specific role model to follow, which made my journey unique and formative. However, from my early years at the Institute of Mines, a deep passion for ore beneficiation techniques developed within me. This passion, coupled with an insatiable curiosity and a constant desire to take on challenging tasks, shaped my career choices and drove me to fully commit to this field.

It is important to note that although I did not have a direct mentor in the sector, my family and my husband played a crucial role in my journey. Their unwavering support, encouragement, and advice were solid pillars that helped me overcome the challenges I faced and move forward with confidence. Their presence was an additional driving force in my commitment to excel and push myself further in a demanding professional environment. Thus, even without a specific mentor figure in the sector, it was these values of support and family solidarity that were decisive in my success.

In your opinion, what are the essential skills and abilities required to succeed in the field of metallurgy?

I believe it is high time to adapt professional training to the needs of the labor market, particularly in key sectors such as metallurgy. Currently, metallurgy is not sufficiently taught locally, which largely explains the lack of local expertise in mineral processing in Côte d'Ivoire.

To succeed in this field, it is essential to have a basic education in metallurgy, ideally in an industrial chemistry program with a specialization in mineral processing or an equivalent field. However, beyond academic qualifications, it is important to develop a strong inclination for fieldwork. A metallurgist must not only be a technical production support but also be physically fit and able to work under

pressure, often in difficult conditions. Discipline, perseverance, and a strong ability to solve complex problems are essential skills to excel in this demanding sector.

Finally, it is also necessary to have a global understanding of processes and the value chain, as metallurgy requires a deep understanding of the entire production cycle, from raw material to final product. Adaptability and the ability to work in teams, often in multicultural and diverse environments, complete the essential skills needed to thrive in this discipline.

Can you share a unique anecdote or experience from your journey that strengthened your passion for this profession?

An anecdote that deeply marked me and reinforced my passion for this profession dates to my introduction to the new CEO of a company where I was working. When my position was presented to him and the moment came for him to shake my hand, the expression on his face betrayed a certain surprise, even doubt. It seemed hard for him to believe that a woman could hold such a position, considered demanding and typically reserved for men.

This moment could have been discouraging, but instead, it motivated me to prove my worth. Within just a few months, and especially thanks to my meticulous work and mastery of technical challenges, this same CEO was singing my praises and no longer made any strategic or budgetary decisions without seeking my opinion. He even affectionately nicknamed me **«My Golden Finger»** in recognition of the positive impact of my work.

This experience taught me an essential lesson: ***no matter the prejudices or doubts we face, we should never back down from challenges. By giving our best, and working with passion and determination, we eventually earn respect and recognition.***

This anecdote remains a source of inspiration for me and serves as a reminder that no obstacle is insurmountable when you believe in your abilities.

What is your analysis of the evolution of women's representation in the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire?

As the first female metallurgist in Côte d'Ivoire, I am pleased to see that the representation of women in the mining sector has made significant progress over the years.

Today, more and more women are entering the mining sector and holding important positions. We can observe inspiring examples such as Naminata KRAMOKO, Country Director of Société Minière de la Lobo subsidiary of Zhaojin Group, Larissa TRAORE, wife of ADINGRA, now manager of the Sissingué mine, or Laetitia GADEGBE KU-OUATTARA, country director and vice-Président Public Affairs in charge of Côte d'Ivoire at Endeavour Mining.

These examples reflect a reality very different from that of 1992 when I first started in this sector. Today, women are present at all levels of the mining industry, a situation that seemed unimaginable at the time.

I am particularly proud to note that all mining companies operating in Côte d'Ivoire have implemented initiatives to encourage and support the professional development of women. This shows that companies have recognized the need to promote diversity and inclusion. Not only does this help improve the competitiveness of their operations, but it also increases the representation of women in areas where they were historically underrepresented.

In this same vein, training programs, mentorship, career support, and the emergence of networks such as the Women in the Mining Sector Network of Côte d'Ivoire (FEMICI) have helped

break stereotypes and offer women opportunities for development that they previously did not have.

Additionally, the joint initiative of HeForShe Mine Côte d'Ivoire and UN Women, which led to the establishment of the first gender barometer for the mining sector, the first of its kind in Africa, represents an important step in better tracking and evaluating the representation of women in our industry. This barometer will be a valuable tool for measuring progress and identifying areas that require continuous improvement to ensure real gender equality advances in the sector.

However, despite these advancements, much still needs to be done to ensure that this progress translates into lasting changes in the culture of the mining industry. Gender parity and equal opportunities must become non-negotiable standards. In summary, while the situation has evolved positively, it is essential to continue working towards a more inclusive and balanced representation of women at all levels of the mining sector. It is also crucial to support them in acquiring skills and responsibilities so they can fully contribute to this industry, which plays a key role in the economic development of our country.

What advice would you give to young women who are hesitant to pursue careers in the mining sector ?

would first like to tell them: don't be afraid to dream big and aim high. The mining sector, once seen as a field reserved for men, now offers many opportunities for women, and it is crucial to seize these chances.

I know the path is not always easy, and many obstacles, including prejudices and stereotypes, may stand in your way. But I encourage you to view them not as insurmountable barriers, but as challenges to overcome. You must believe in your abilities and show perseverance. The key is to have self-

confidence and dare to step out of your comfort zone. The more you commit, the more you will demonstrate that you can meet the demands of this exciting sector.

I also advise them to prepare solidly by choosing quality training programs that align with the demands of the mining sector. Whether it's metallurgy, geology, or other technical fields, a strong academic foundation is essential to make a difference.

Finally, it is important to build a support network, have mentors and role models, and not hesitate to get involved in collective initiatives like the Women's Network of the Mining Sector of Côte d'Ivoire (FEMICI). These organizations offer a platform for exchange, mentorship, and solidarity that can be extremely helpful in the development of your career.

I would tell young women: **the mining industry needs you.** Don't let obstacles discourage you, because with passion, hard work, and perseverance, you can not only succeed but also make a difference for future generations. Your place is here, and you have everything it takes to get there.

After more than 30 years in the mining sector, what is your greatest achievement or your greatest pride to date ?

JMy greatest accomplishment lies in my ability to leave a significant and lasting mark in each of the companies where I have worked. Through my dedication, demand for results, and professional rigor, I have not only contributed to transforming operations but also inspired a new generation of specialists in the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire.

I have had the honor of being part of the commissioning of several plants across the country, a complex process but a key one for the development of the national mining industry. I have also been involved in the establishment of standards and operational procedures.

A moment that will forever be etched in my memory is when I led a plant with a small team for six months during the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic. This time was marked by profound uncertainty and unprecedented challenges. However, by fostering a spirit of solidarity, valuing my team's hard work, and instilling positive energy, we not only overcame these obstacles but also successfully achieved our goals.

What makes me particularly proud is not just what we accomplished operationally, but the human impact this experience had on my team members and on myself. Together, we demonstrated that adversity can be a springboard for excellence.

With the global focus on climate-related issues, we are witnessing a race for critical metals. In Côte d'Ivoire, there is an increase in the number of permits granted for these metals. What is your analysis of this situation? What opportunities do these metals represent for the state ?

The current global trend, focused on climate issues and the energy transition, has indeed led to strong demand for critical and rare metals, which are essential in the production of green technologies such as electric vehicles, solar panels, and energy storage batteries. I believe this situation presents both a challenge and a significant opportunity for our country for several reasons.

First, the increase in permits granted for the exploration and exploitation of rare metals in Côte d'Ivoire reflects the growing recognition of our mining potential in this strategic sector. We have significant natural resources that, if exploited responsibly and sustainably, can propel Côte d'Ivoire onto the global stage as a key player in the energy transition. However, this must be done in compliance with environmental and social standards to ensure long-term benefits for our country and its people. Second, the exploitation of rare metals

offers considerable opportunities for the Ivorian government. These metals can become important levers for diversifying the economy, reducing dependence on traditional raw materials such as cocoa and coffee, and promoting industrialization. Additionally, the revenues generated from their exploitation could support sustainable development projects, infrastructure enhancement, and job creation, especially in highly technical fields.

However, it is imperative that Côte d'Ivoire implements robust strategies to manage this newfound wealth. This includes training a skilled local workforce, building adequate infrastructure, and establishing policies for managing these natural resources, among other things. Furthermore, integrating local businesses into the value chain of these rare metals and developing strategic partnerships with global players can enhance Côte d'Ivoire's competitiveness in this sector.

I believe these rare metals represent a unique opportunity for Côte d'Ivoire to play a major role in the global energy transition while developing its mining sector responsibly. The government must seize this opportunity to establish a long-term vision, a solid regulatory framework, and incentives for sustainable investment so that our country can fully leverage these resources while ensuring shared prosperity for its citizens.

As a female leader in this sector, how have you managed to balance your professional and personal life over the years ?

The mining sector, particularly in technical fields, is demanding with sometimes very strict working hours and frequent travel to remote sites. This presents a difficult balance to achieve, but I have always believed that the key lies in time management, discipline, and strong support around you.

Above all, it is essential to have a passion for what you do because it allows you to overcome obstacles and stay motivated even in the toughest times. My passion for my work helped me stay focused on my professional goals, while also knowing that taking care of myself and my family is just as fundamental. It's a balance I learned to negotiate over the years, ensuring that I never sacrificed either my career or my loved ones.



I believe that by opening these doors, we will see more women take their place and excel in this sector.

I have also been fortunate to have the strong support of my family. As I mentioned earlier, I didn't have a mentor when I started this career, but my family and my husband have always been there for me, encouraging me and providing the necessary support during times when my professional commitments became overwhelming. Their understanding and support were crucial for me. In such situations, having a supportive and understanding partner is indispensable for a woman to succeed in this profession. I take this opportunity to thank him, along with my entire family and friends.

In addition to this, it is important to know how to delegate and surround yourself with the right people. In a demanding sector like ours, it's vital to build a strong team and trust your collaborators. This allows for the distribution of responsibilities and better management of priorities.

Flexibility is also a key element of this balance. I have learned to organize my days more strategically, optimize my schedule, and adapt to the demands of the sector while taking time to recharge. This has allowed me to

continue excelling in my career while staying present for my family and personal commitments.

Today, I can say that balancing professional and personal life is never easy, especially in a sector like ours, but it is entirely possible with passion, support, good organization, and of course, an unwavering determination to succeed in both areas (professional and familial).

Additionally, it should be noted that today the mining sector operates on a rotation system, which is much more favorable for managing time between work and family.

This experience has taught me that balance does not come spontaneously, but rather through constant effort and thoughtful management of time and priorities.

You are now an iconic figure, a model of success in a sector that was once dominated by men. One might wonder what initiatives you have taken and what your future projects are to see more women like you in the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire.

In 32 years, significant progress has been made, but it remains insufficient to achieve true gender parity in the mining sector. However, we continue the fight we started with determination. This involves awareness campaigns, mentoring, and initiatives aimed at strengthening networking and solidarity among women in the sector.

Moreover, it is crucial to involve families and communities more. Through experience sharing, conferences, and seminars, we are working to break the stereotypes surrounding jobs in the mining sector. The goal is to demystify these professions and show that they not only offer numerous career opportunities but also have a significant impact on the development of our country.

Finally, our efforts also focus on guiding young girls in their academic and

professional choices, showing them that technical and scientific careers, including in the mining sector, are accessible and rewarding.

I believe that by opening these doors, we will see more women take their place and excel in this sector.

What are your career prospects and what message would you like to convey to our readers, especially women interested in the mining sector ?

I believe that after decades of a career filled with experiences and challenges, it is now time for me to take a step

back and fully dedicate myself to my consulting firm. This new chapter in my professional career will allow me not only to share my expertise and experience but also to support future generations and companies in overcoming the specific challenges of the mining sector and seizing its opportunities.

To the women considering a career in the mining industry, I have one message: ***the paths have already been paved.*** Embrace the professions in this sector without fear or hesitation. With determination, it is possible to move mountains and break through barriers that sometimes seem insurmountable.

The mining sector, although little known, is an exciting adventure full of opportunities. It offers stimulating challenges and the chance to actively contribute to the economic transformation of our country. Do not let stereotypes or fears hold back your ambitions. This field needs diverse talents, new perspectives, and unwavering determination. You have the power to write your own story and leave your mark on this industry.

Dare to dream big, persevere, and be proud to contribute to the evolution of such a dynamic and strategic sector.

JEAN CLAUDE DIPLO, A VISIONARY LEADER WHO ADVOCATES FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE IVORIAN MINING SECTOR.



In the dynamic and rapidly growing Ivorian mining sector, Jean-Claude DIPLO is a leading figure, combining technical expertise with strategic vision. At the helm of the Bonikro and Agbaou gold mines and the GPMCI, this leader embodies excellence and development in an industry that has become essential to the Ivorian economy.

A CAREER BUILT ON EXCELLENCE

he became Vice President of Stakeholder Relations, in West Africa, at Afrique Gold, further solidifying his position as an influential leader.

He was appointed CEO of Bonikro Gold Mine, Hiré Gold Mine, and Agbaou Gold Operations within the Allied Gold Group in 2019. Under his leadership, these entities experienced significant growth, strengthening their key role in the Ivorian economy. Additionally, as the current President of the Groupement Professionnel des Miniers de Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI), he works to promote excellence and sustainable development in the sector, advocating for corporate social responsibility and the integration of local talent to support the growth of the mining industry.



Jean-Claude DIPLO is an iconic figure in the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire, recognized for his expertise and commitment to transforming the industry.

A graduate with an MBA from HEC Montréal, a certificate in Advanced Management Program (AMP) from Melbourne Business School, and a master's degree in Humanities from the University of Abidjan, he combines a solid academic background with extensive professional experience.

With over twenty years in leadership roles, including about fifteen years in the mining sector, Mr. DIPLO represents the perfect balance between strategic vision and pragmatism. His career, which began in coffee/cocoa trading, took a turn when he became a Commercial Delegate, where he excelled in promoting Canadian investments in West Africa. This successful experience laid the foundation for an impressive career that would lead him to hold strategic positions in the mining industry.

An Impressive Journey in the Mining Sector

Jean-Claude DIPLO first entered the mining industry with LGL (Lihir Gold Limited), then Newcrest Mining Limited – Côte d'Ivoire, as Manager of External Relations. In 2017,

Impact on the Ivorian Mining Sector

Jean-Claude DIPLO is a key player in the transformation of the mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire. He is the principal driving force behind the Mines and Quarries Collective Agreement, a first in the private sector in Côte d'Ivoire and a historic advancement for workers' rights and the promotion of Ivorian executives. Similarly, his strong commitment to promoting Ivorian executives and their development within the industry is well-known. To make the vision of local

content development credible, he, along with other key sector players, led the important initiative of the Mining Investment Fund, primarily benefiting national employees in the mining sector, officially launched at SIREXE 2024. Passionate about community development, he has led his teams in establishing a trusting relationship with the communities surrounding Allied's mines in Côte d'Ivoire, through a strategy that places them at the center of socio-economic development projects and programs, leaving behind a positive legacy.



Signing of the sectoral collective agreement between GPMCI and FISMECA



Jean Claude DIPLO celebrating excellence.

Awards and Distinctions in 2024

The year 2024 is marked by two major events for Jean-Claude DIPLO. He was decorated as an Officer in the National Order of Merit of the Mines of Côte d'Ivoire, an honor presented during the International Mining and Energy Resources Exhibition (SIREXE), in the presence of the Prime Minister and other high-ranking national and international figures.

Additionally, he was named Manager of the Year, Multinational Category, at the CGECI Awards, during the CGECI Academy 2024. This recognition highlights his leadership, stakeholder management, and commitment to community

development and national skills. The award underscores his influence in a highly competitive sector. The prize was awarded following a rigorous process supervised by EY and the National Institute of Statistics and supported by a jury chaired by Mr. Jean-Louis Ekra, the former president of the pan-African bank AFREXIM BANK, honors his exemplary leadership, innovative management of stakeholder relations, and promotion of national talent.

Jean-Claude DIPLO's journey, both nationally and internationally, marked by innovation, respect for human values, and a bold vision, makes him a role model for present and future generations in the mining sector.



Jean Claude DIPLO appointed Officer in the Order of Merit of Mines



Best Manager of the Year 2024 Award at the CGECI Awards

Contract Mining

SAMA BTP & MINING CONQUERING THE IVORIAN MINING SECTOR



CEO Mamadou SANOGO in company of the SAMA BTP staff

With the strong potential of its subsoil (35% of West Africa's Birimian rock) and positive changes in the extractive industry, Côte d'Ivoire is highly sought after for foreign direct investments. To date, the mining sector has 15 industrial mines with continuously growing production. This boom, coupled with the government's desire to create local champions, attracts more and more nationals.

Among this array of players, SAMA BTP & Mining, founded in 2007 by Mr. Mamadou SANOGO, the current CEO.

SAMA BTP & Mining is an Ivorian company that stands out for its expertise in mineral transportation and mining contract management. With a growing presence in the mining industry and its commitment to utilizing and developing local talent, SAMA BTP & Mining is distinguished as a true gem; a model of local content that deserves support to become a national champion.

Diversified and high-quality services at the service of a growing industry

SAMA BTP & Mining is recognized for its ability to manage mining contracts and its proven expertise in mineral transportation, earthworks, and concrete work. Its expertise extends to reverse circulation drilling, boreholes, blasting, loading, hauling, and dumping, as well as stockpile handling and long-distance transportation from satellite pits.

To continually ensure quality in the execution of its missions, the company relies on its impressive fleet of state-of-the-art equipment and a team of dedicated, responsive Ivorian professionals capable of managing unexpected situations.

A recognized and nationally awarded local expertise

This diversity of services and commitment to delivering quality have earned it collaborations



with major mining groups such as Endeavour Mining, Barrick Gold, and Agbaou Gold, among others.

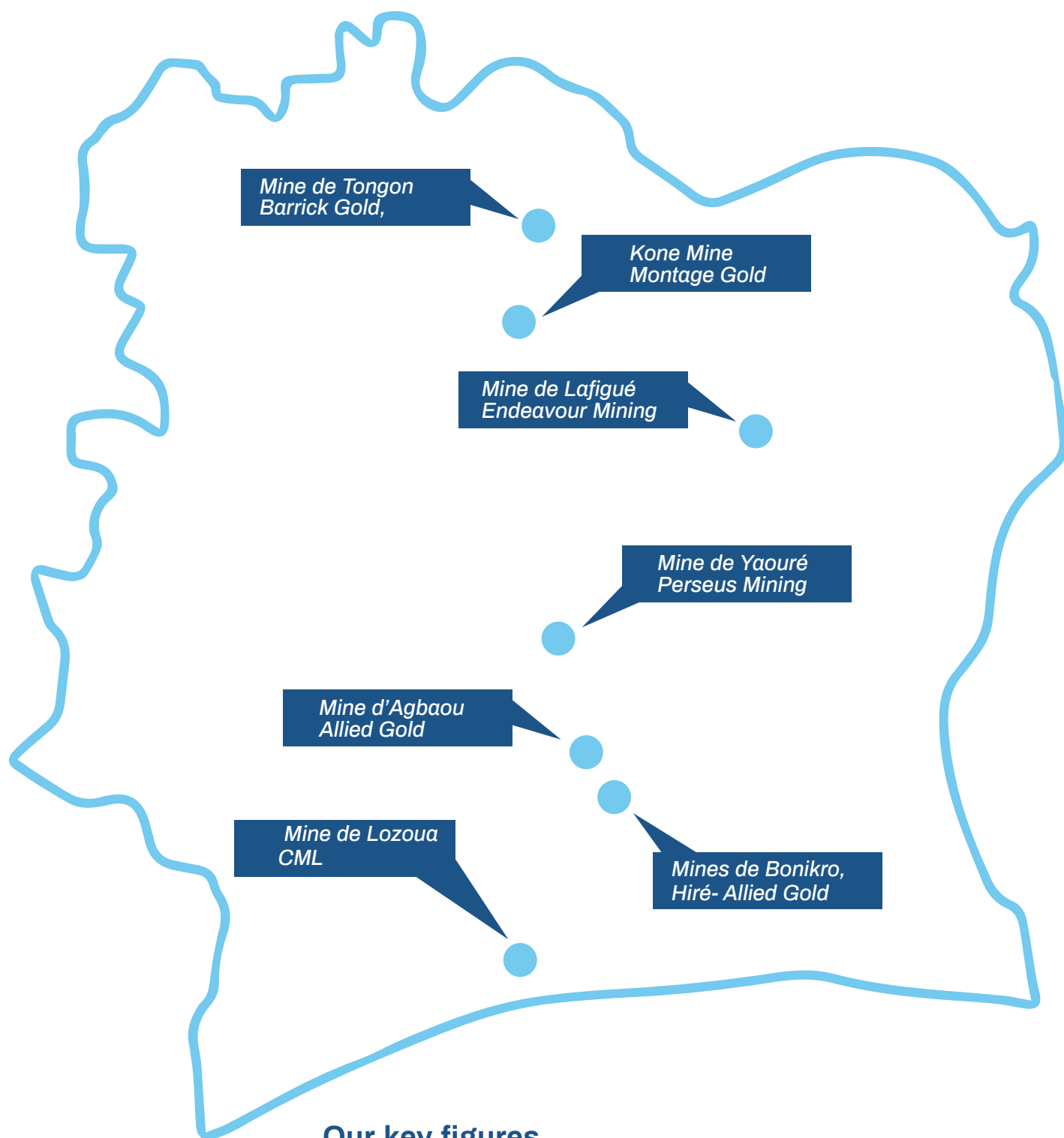
Safety and respect at the heart of its actions

Safety and employee respect are ingrained in the DNA of SAMA BTP & Mining. The company has successfully created and maintained a safe and healthy work environment where every employee is treated with dignity and respect. This inclusive and harmonious corporate culture helps maintain high retention rates and increase employee productivity.

Today, the company has distinguished itself in the mining sector through its expertise, forward-looking vision, and commitment to excellence. This has earned it several awards for excellence, including the Best Goods Road Transport Company in Côte d'Ivoire.

SAMA BTP & Mining embodies the promising future of the Ivorian extractive industry, where local businesses play a central role. However, for small companies like this to emerge and prosper, a favorable legislative framework is essential.

APERÇU DES ACTIVITÉS DE SAMA BTP & MINING EN CÔTE D'IVOIRE



+07 projects
+430 pieces of equipment
(vehicles, machinery)
+ 05 nationalities
100% Ivorian ownership

+ 1000 employees from
local Ivorian communities
+24 billion CFA
francs in revenue in 2024.



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THE IVORIAN MINING SECTOR

FOCUS ON THE NEWS

Metals and Rare earth:
«Specific measures will
be taken to regulate the
exploitation of critical and
strategic minerals in Côte
d'Ivoire.»

FOCUS JOB

Energy Manager:
A Future-oriented profession
in the Mining Sector

MINING EVENTS

FORA*Vie*

INSTRUMENT IDÉAL DE RÉALISATION DE
VOS OBJECTIFS DE **CONTENU LOCAL**

20 ANS D'EXPERTISE
DANS LE FORAGE MINIER EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST

NOS SERVICES:

- Air core (AC) Drilling
- Grade Control (GC) Drilling
- Reverse Circulation (RC) Drilling



GC Drilling



Surveying RC



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METALS AND RARE EARTHS

«Specific measures will be taken to regulate the exploitation of critical and strategic minerals in Côte d'Ivoire.»



Can you introduce yourself? What are your responsibilities within the General Directorate of Mines and Geology ?

I am COULIBALY Seydou, a mining engineer, who graduated from the ENSTP of Yamoussoukro and the Mines schools of Alès and Fontaine bleau in France.

I am the Director General of Mines and Geology. I would like to take this opportunity during your interview to thank Minister Mamadou SANGAFOWA-COULIBALY for the trust he has placed in me by appointing me to this position.

The General Directorate of Mines and Geology (DGMG), which I have the great honor of leading, includes several departments: the Department of Geological Mapping and Prospecting, the Department of Research and Industrial Mining Operations, the Department of Technical Controls, the Department of Mining Cadaster, the Department of Monitoring and Regulation of Mines and Geology, and the Department of Semi-industrial Mining and Quarry Operations.

Our mission is to coordinate the activities of all these central departments by harmonizing mining activities with the private sector and other administrations, as well as promoting the development of the mining sector in line with the vision of His Excellency the President of the Republic

How does Côte d'Ivoire define «rare metals» in its mining policy, and what rare metals are currently being mined in Côte d'Ivoire? And which ones have been identified (in exploration) ?

In this context, I will speak more about strategic and critical minerals that have economic, industrial, and/or military importance for the country, its partners, or future partners.

- The strategic and critical minerals currently being exploited in Côte d'Ivoire are nickel, bauxite, and manganese.
Minerals such as coltan and cobalt will soon be exploited, with the granting of:
A Nickel-Cobalt Exploitation Permit to the Nickel de l'Ouest Côte d'Ivoire (NOCI) company on June 7, 2023, in the Sipilou department.
- A Coltan Exploitation Permit to the Société de Développement Minier de Côte d'Ivoire (SODEMI) on June 24, 2020, in the Issia department.

For exploration, the State of Côte d'Ivoire has granted forty-three (43) research permits for strategic and critical minerals such as nickel, lithium, chromium, molybdenum, some rare earth elements, bauxite, cobalt, iron, copper, manganese, beryllium, ilmenite, tin, and phosphate.

As the ministry in charge of Mines, can you provide us with the current share of these strategic and critical minerals in the overall contribution of the mining sector to the Ivorian economy? What are your projections for the next five (05) years ?

The current share of these minerals remains low, as the total contribution of the mining sector to the Ivorian economy is approximately 3% of GDP.

Projections for the sector's contribution in the coming years are estimated at 6% of GDP, with the exploitation of the latest discoveries of world-class deposits and the implementation of a local content policy in the mining sector.

Today, we all know that strategic and critical minerals are highly sought after worldwide due to their use in pharmaceutical, aerospace, energy, automotive industries, etc. How can these resources be strategic for the country's economic development ?

These resources can be strategic for the country's economic development if we consider processing them locally.

To achieve this, the government plans to:

- Strengthen its energy infrastructure to ensure sufficient and available energy capacity for the industrialization of the sector.
- Promote, through the implementation of incentive measures, the necessary investments for the creation of industries specialized in processing these strategic minerals.
- Develop a local policy for managing these metals.
- Strengthen the capabilities of key players in the sector to ensure a skilled workforce.

Considering the opportunity and importance that these minerals may represent for Côte d'Ivoire, what is the government's policy or strategy to regulate the exploitation of rare metals in Côte d'Ivoire ?

For the management of these minerals, the government plans to:

- Build geo-scientific infrastructure for better knowledge of our underground resources.
- Establish a committee for the management of rare metals, which will be responsible for developing a rational management policy for these metals.
- Implement robust mechanisms to enable the partial or full processing of these minerals.

Does the future Ivorian Mining Code include specific provisions to regulate the exploitation of critical and strategic minerals? If so, could you share some examples of these provisions ?

Certainly, the future Ivorian Mining Code includes specific provisions to regulate the exploitation of critical and strategic minerals, and these provisions will be defined through regulatory means.

Is there a local processing policy in place or being considered to increase the added value of minerals before export ?

Yes, a local processing policy for minerals is being considered to increase their added value before export. This is, of course, in line with the government's policy, which aims to process our mineral resources to generate more revenue.

What are the main initiatives or infrastructures currently underway to support the local processing of minerals ?

The main initiatives or infrastructures currently underway to support the local processing of various minerals include:

- The improvement and expansion of national energy capacity.
- The construction of a mineral terminal at the Port of San Pedro.
- Strengthening the capacities of local actors in this field.

How does the government, through the Ministry of Mines, plan to attract local and foreign investors in the exploitation and value addition of various minerals ?

To make the sector more attractive, the government plans to establish a geo-scientific infrastructure that meets international standards and creates favorable conditions for investment, particularly by encouraging both local and foreign investments. This will, of course, involve adopting specific measures. Additionally, promoting the mining sector through exhibitions like SIREXE can help attract local and foreign investments for projects related to strategic occurrences.

Côte d'Ivoire aims to become a regional leader in the mining sector. What strategies are being considered to achieve this goal? Are there specific measures or plans for the exploitation of rare metals ?

First and foremost, the government, led by His Excellency the President of the Republic, is working to maintain political stability in Côte d'Ivoire, which is the key to any harmonious development. The strategies being considered to achieve this ambition can be summarized through the following actions:

- Adopting a more attractive new Mining Code.
- Developing a detailed geo-scientific infrastructure that meets international standards.
- Encouraging the local processing of mineral resources.

- Building an accredited Geological Analysis and Studies Laboratory.
- Constructing a gold refining plant.
- Strengthening and expanding national energy capacities.
- Promoting the circular economy to ensure better inclusion of communities impacted by projects.

Finally, what are the prospects and objectives of the Ministry of Mines for the various minerals in the coming years ?

For these strategic minerals, the government plans to intensify research to better understand the volumes and spatial distribution of these minerals. Thus, it is projected:

- To build a national geo-scientific infrastructure.
- To construct a Geological Analysis and Studies Laboratory.
- To establish a management committee for strategic and critical minerals.
- To develop a policy for the management and valorization of critical and strategic minerals.
- To strengthen the capacities of mining administration personnel regarding the issues raised by these minerals.



1st Ordinary General Assembly of MAMING



Employment in mines

ENERGY MANAGER A FUTURE-ORIENTED PROFESSION IN THE MINING SECTOR

Considering the growing environmental concerns and the need to reduce energy costs, the role of Energy Manager (or energy efficiency manager) has become a strategic function within companies, particularly in the mining sector. As a guarantor of energy efficiency and a key player in the energy transition, the Energy Manager plays an essential role in optimizing energy resources and ensuring the sustainability of operations.

In this new issue of O'MINES Magazine, let's explore this future-oriented profession, which is indispensable for the evolution of an increasingly energy-intensive mining sector.

Energy Manager: A central role in energy management

The Energy Manager oversees the overall energy management within the company. In an energy-intensive sector like mining, their responsibilities are numerous:

- Conduct energy audits by analyzing the energy consumption of facilities and identifying losses.
- Make strategic proposals by developing action plans to improve energy efficiency and reduce costs.
- Monitor and control by tracking energy expenditures, negotiating contracts with suppliers, and producing detailed performance reports.

- Raise awareness among employees by training them in eco-responsible best practices to instill a culture of sustainability.
- Stay updated on technological and regulatory developments by keeping an eye on technological innovations and new energy laws to ensure compliance and optimize performance.

- Control expenditures by rigorously tracking energy-related costs and negotiating contracts with suppliers.

Within the company, the Energy Manager also serves as a link between various departments, as they must collaborate with technical, financial, and production departments to implement suitable and sustainable energy solutions.

Multidisciplinary Skills

To excel in the role of Energy Manager, several skills and qualities are essential:

- Mastery of energy systems and energy-related technologies.
- Data analysis using energy management software.
- Good knowledge of energy regulations and standards, particularly in the mining context, where requirements are strict.
- The ability to manage complex projects while coordinating the efforts of multiple teams.
- Strong communication skills: the ability to raise awareness and persuade others about environmental issues.
- Leadership skills: the ability to coordinate projects and mobilize teams around common goals.
- A keen sense of pedagogy to educate and train employees.

Proactivity and sensitivity to environmental issues are key qualities for anticipating regulatory and technological changes.

A Future-oriented profession in the mining sector

The expertise of Energy Managers is highly sought after in various sectors, including mining, industry, construction, consulting firms, public administrations, and specialized energy service companies. In the mining sector, where energy optimization and compliance with environmental regulations are priorities, mining companies, eager to reduce their ecological footprint while controlling costs, rely on these experts to tackle challenges such as reducing the energy consumption of mining equipment, integrating renewable energy sources into production processes, and adhering to international environmental standards.

Promising career prospects

With experience, an Energy Manager can advance to positions such as:

- Energy Director, responsible for overseeing global energy strategies.
- Sustainability Manager, a role focused on ecological transition.
- Operations Director, integrating energy management into the company's overall strategy.

Others may specialize, for example, in energy auditing, developing energy efficiency technologies, or managing renewable energy projects.

A profession aligned with current challenges in the mining world

In a context where managing energy resources is crucial, the role of the Energy Manager proves indispensable for mining companies seeking sustainability. By combining technical expertise, strategic vision, and environmental commitment, this profession perfectly embodies the future of responsible practices in the sector.

Written with the contribution of Mr. Youssef FOFANA, Senior Consultant in Energy Efficiency and Education & Training, Trainer of Trainers in Energy at Ipnetp.

SOJUFISC CÔTE D'IVOIRE, FILIALE DU GROUPE SOJUFISC

SOJUFISC (Société de Conseils Juridiques et Fiscaux) est un cabinet de conseil juridique et fiscal composé d'une équipe d'experts et de professionnels spécialisés dans les industries extractives notamment l'activité minière, avec à leur actif une longue et riche expérience dans le domaine de l'expertise et de l'accompagnement juridique et fiscal.

Le Groupe intervient principalement pour assister les entreprises minières dans la négociation des conventions minières et l'obtention de titres miniers, ainsi que dans la formulation des avenants par re-négociation des conventions et le date to date juridique et fiscal.

Le Groupe SOJUFISC est composé de spécialistes en droit fiscal, en droit des contrats et conventions faisant intervenir l'Etat comme partie, en droit des sociétés et en droit des garanties pour le financement des projets miniers.

Bénéficiant de nombreuses années d'intervention auprès de nos clients nationaux et internationaux, SOJUFISC a développé une véritable méthodologie d'intervention pour mieux répondre leurs besoins.

Le Groupe SOJUFISC est présent en Côte d'Ivoire, au Sénégal et au Burkina Faso et compte ouvrir bientôt d'autres filiales en Afrique, en vue d'accroître sa présence dans le continent et dans un premier temps dans la sous-région.



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GPMCI, KEY PARTNER OF THE GOVERNMENT FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND EFFICIENT MINING SECTOR



- Creation: 2008
- employers' organization
- President: Jean-Claude DIPLO
- Key Partner of the du Gov.
- Member of CGECI
- Member of EFEDCOM

We are the **Professional Group of Miners of Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI)**, the main umbrella organization for private mining operators in Côte d'Ivoire.

Our members are legally constituted entities in Côte d'Ivoire to search for or exploit mineral substances other than hydrocarbons or to provide services related to these activities.

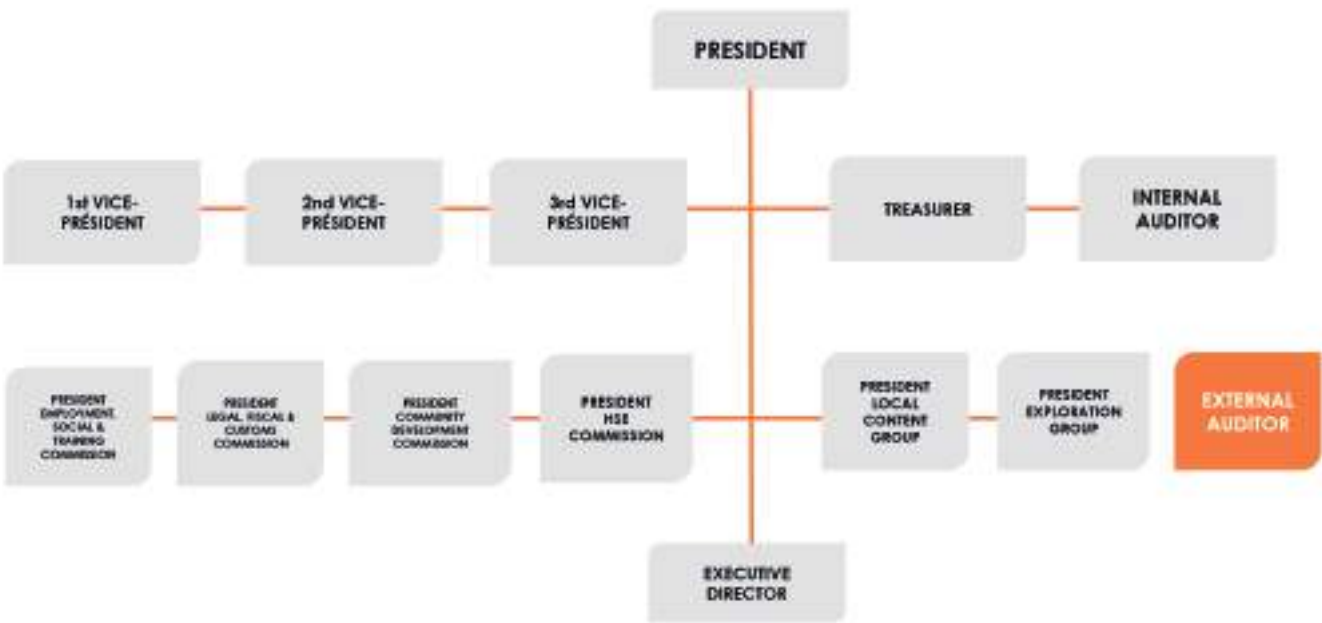
Our Mission: Promote the development of the private mining sector in Côte d'Ivoire

Specific Objectives:

- ✓ Promote investments in the exploration and exploitation of Côte d'Ivoire's mineral resources,
- ✓ Raise awareness, in collaboration with the supervising Ministry, of the national opinion on the socio-economic importance of the mining industry,
- ✓ Promote best practices aimed at the sustainable development of the national economy based on the exploitation of mineral resources,
- ✓ Defend the interests of the members.



GPMCI, A DIVERFIFY AND EXPERIENCED COUNCIL!



OUR
VALUES

#Family

#Commitment

#Excellence

#Diversity

GPMCI, A KEY PLAYER ...



We have 83 members, including 14 out of 15 of the country's industrial mines, and we represent approximately 90% of the mining sector's turnover, with a contribution of 4.5% to Côte d'Ivoire's GDP.

SOME KEY ACTIVITIES

1. Côte d'Ivoire Mining Symposium
2. Mining Olympiads
3. Mining Business Club
4. Green Mining Day
5. Mining Happy Hour

How to register as a member?

1. Adhere to the objectives of the Professional Group of Miners of Côte d'Ivoire (GPMCI);
2. Fill out and return the membership form and other documents by email to abdoulaye@chambredesmines.org and info@chambredesmines.org
3. Application file:
 - A presentation of your company (electronic + paper version);
 - A copy of your legal existence declaration (copy of statutes or DFE);
 - A photocopy of the identity card of the legal representative and the GPMCI focal point of the company;
 - A payment of one million and ten thousand (1,010,000) CFA francs to the order of GPMCI.
4. Upon notification of the registration of your membership application by the General Directorate, you have one (01) month to pay your annual membership fee.



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