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# Ghana promotes local content after discovery



**EKUA NEWMAN** The discovery of abundant reserves of bauxite has attracted interest and the discussion highlights provisions of the regulations that will ensure that the exploration is beneficial to the people of Ghana

2ND APRIL 2021

BY: MC'KYLA NORTJE  
JOURNALIST

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**G**hana's Parliament passed into law the Minerals and Mining Local Content and Local Participation Regulations in December 2020, which is timely following the drive to industrialise the country's economy and, in particular, explore its bauxite reserves.

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equity ownership for the mining industry.

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The regulations apply to applicants or holders of reconnaissance licences, prospecting licences or mining leases; applicants or holders of a licence to export or deal in minerals; as well as to persons who provide mine support services.

ENSafrica Ghana senior associate **Ekua Newman** notes there are an estimated 165-million tons of bauxite in the Atewa forest. The total estimated reserve base of bauxite in Ghana is 900-million tonnes valued at \$50-million in its raw state and at \$400-billion if refined. Ghana is, therefore, eager to focus much attention on exploiting its bauxite reserves, she adds.

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The discovery of abundant reserves of bauxite, an important element in the production of aluminium, has attracted interest and “the discussion, therefore, highlights provisions of the regulations that will help to ensure that the exploration of Ghana’s bauxite reserves is beneficial to the people of Ghana”, she explains.

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industry prioritise local participation and skills transfer.

“We are of the view that, if the requirements are complied with, China (if selected to participate in the bauxite industry value chain) will prioritise local participation and skills transfer to the benefit of the Ghanaian economy.”

According to an agreement between the governments of Ghana and China in November 2019, China will provide a \$10-billion facility for Ghana under a barter arrangement, in exchange for 5% of Ghana's bauxite.

The Ghanaian government also entered into a Master Project Support Agreement with Chinese State-owned hydropower engineering and construction company Sinohydro to undertake priority infrastructure projects, including roads, railways and bridges, valued at \$2-billion.

It is understood that 70% of the projects under the Master Project Support Agreement have been allocated to the Ghanaian Ministry of Roads and Highways for execution.


These projects are being rolled out in phases. It is estimated that 442 km of roads will be constructed in the first phase, valued at about \$647-million.

For example, the Tamale interchange in the Northern region of Ghana, is about 40% complete, while selected roads in the Greater Accra, Eastern, Volta, Oti, Bono, Western and Ashanti regions of Ghana, are being upgraded and rehabilitated, she says.

## Environmental Impact

Environmental interest groups have raised legitimate concerns over the potential impact that the projects will have on the ecosystem of the Atewa forest, in south-eastern Ghana, which forms part of the upper Guinean rainforest.

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were adopted in 1994 and 1999 respectively, have seen little modification to deal with recent [environmental](#) concerns.

However, she explains that, following the havoc caused by illegal small-scale [mining](#) on Ghanaian forests and [water](#) bodies, there is increased awareness of the destructive effects of indiscriminate [mining](#).

Therefore, a conscious effort is being made by government and the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) to ensure that recent [mining](#) activities are completed in accordance with international best practice.

The agency is a statutory body charged with overseeing the implementation of [Ghana's environmental](#) legislation.

Further, the [Ghana Integrated Aluminium Development Corporation \(GIADEC\)](#) is poised to ensure that [mining of Ghana's bauxite reserves](#) is undertaken with as little harm to the [environment](#) as possible, she notes.

“In this regard, as is customary, an [environmental-](#) and social-impact assessment will be carried out, together with all the necessary stakeholder engagements, which must be approved by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) before any [mining activity](#) is approved.”

All necessary approvals and permits required from the Forestry Commission and the [Water Resources Commission](#) for the protection of natural [resources](#), [water](#) bodies, public health and the [environment](#) would be obtained, she adds.

### [Projects in the Pipeline](#)

GIADEC is involved in investor engagement processes with more than 40 companies – Ghanaian and international – interested in bidding to develop various aspects of the [aluminium value chain](#).





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Newman. However, this timeline could not be achieved as GIADEC is yet to complete engagements with investors. The President of [Ghana](#) in his State of the Nation address delivered to Parliament on March 9, 2021 noted that GIADEC is in the final stage of engagement with investors and the selected strategic partners will be announced imminently.

In partnership with selected private investors, GIADEC intends to develop up to four [mining concessions](#) – one in Awaso, two in Nyinahin and one in Kyebi – and establish up to three new refineries, each with a combined capacity of about two-million tonnes of alumina.

Other [projects](#) include the retrofitting of Volta [Aluminium Company](#) to increase its production capacity to 300 000 t/y of [aluminium](#), and for the company to acquire a new smelter with a production capacity of up to 500 000 t/y of [aluminium](#). 

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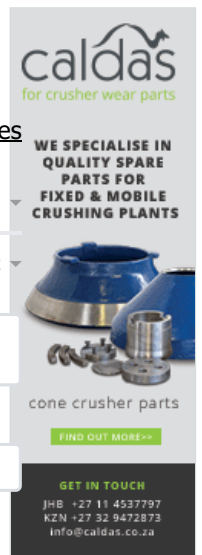
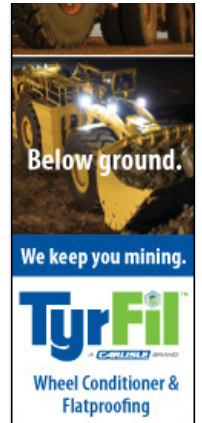
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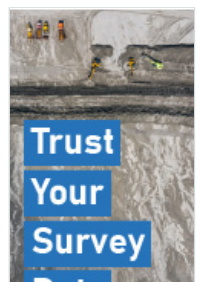
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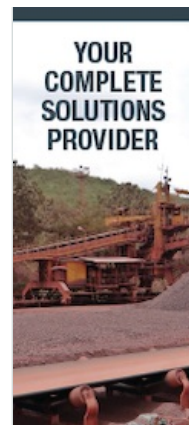
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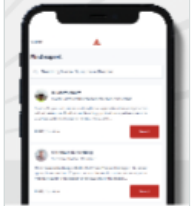
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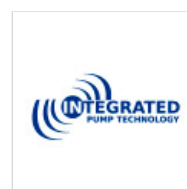
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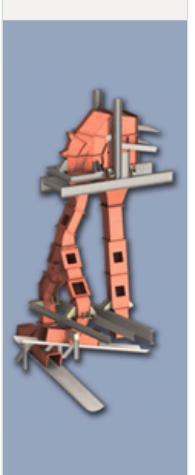
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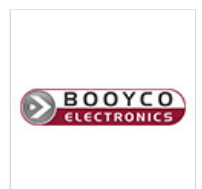
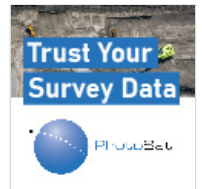
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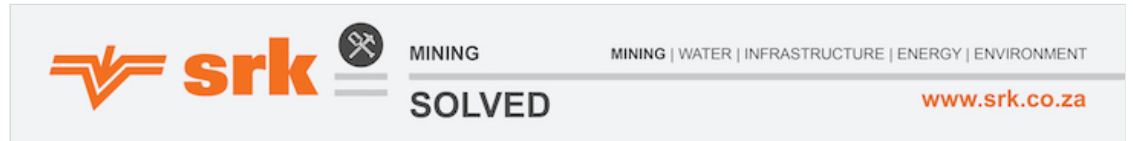
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