

African Business Opportunities Newsletter

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Nigeria: Tomato dealers urge FG to build silos for perishables

By Agency Reporter

Dealers in tomatoes and other perishable commodities in Bauchi State have urged the Federal Government to construct modern silos for the preservation of such agricultural produce. They made the call recently at the Muda Lawal Market, Bauchi, in separate interviews with the News Agency of Nigeria.

NAN reports that most farmers and dealers in the commodities have suffered huge losses due to the absence of modern preservation techniques, coupled with the hot weather condition in the state. Perishable commodities such as tomatoes, pepper, onions, green beans and vegetables are left to rot as the temperature had risen above 35 degrees celsius in recent weeks.

Malam Ahmadu Haruna, a tomato farmer, said that the lack of modern preservation technologies was largely responsible for post harvest losses.



He said that perishable agricultural produce could not be preserved in high temperatures, hence the need for specialised storage facilities. Haruna also called for the establishment of tomato processing plants to reduce wastage and provide market for such produce.

Malam Babangida Musa, another dealer in tomatoes, said the absence of modern preservation technologies was forcing them to sell the commodities at low prices to avoid losses. He said, "The hot weather condition is exposing us to losses. The trend is seriously discouraging and making the trade less attractive."

Source: *The Punch*, (Lagos) Image: assets.kaboose.com

Namibia: Organic Meat Certification

Brigitte Weidlich

BEEF and mutton from Namibia come from free-range cattle and sheep and thus have a good international reputation, but now the meat sector wants to take things further and obtain certification for organic meat production.

The Meat Board of Namibia and the Finnish Embassy to Namibia recently signed an agreement with Finland providing about N\$400 000 for a one-year study on how the meat sector can achieve this coveted certification for beef, mutton, goat meat and venison.

According to Paul Strydom, General Manager of the Meat Board, Namibia is already about 90 per cent compliant with international requirements for organic meat.

“Meat in our country comes from free-ranging animals and they do not get treated with [growth] hormones or any other substances,” Strydom said.



“The study will investigate the different steps that must be undertaken to obtain this. With the international certification Namibia can explore more niche markets locally and internationally since organic meat, free from any substances, is much sought after in the world,” Strydom added.

Finnish Chargé d’Affaires Asko Luukkainen said organic meat production in Namibia could bring additional income to Namibia’s meat industry.

“There is thus a strong need to assess the qualitative and quantitative potential for organic red meat production in Namibia,” Luukkainen said.

Source: *The Namibian* Image: www.thedailygreen.com

Ethiopia: Indian Firms Get 15,000ht for Tea, Bio Fuel

By Wudineh Zenebe

Two Indian firms, Verdanta Harvest Pvh and Shapoorji Pallonji are to sign a contractual agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD) to lease a large plot, reliable sources disclosed.

The land that will be leased is going to be used to grow tea and Pongamia Pinnata, a plant used for biofuel and industrial chemical production. The bio fuel will be used for vehicles, while the chemicals will be used for the textile industry.

The Agricultural Investment Support Directorate, headed by Essayas Kebede, gave 5,000ht of land to Verdanta Harvest Pvh and 10,000ht to Shapoorji Pallonji after examining their business plans. Shapoorji’s request, however, was for 50,000ht.

Verdanta’s plot is around Tepi, in the the Southern Nations and Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) Regional State. Land is being searched for Shapoorji, which is growing a plant never before grown in Ethiopia.



Experts deployed by Shapoorji are in the SNNP Regional State studying the feasibility of the area for the plant, according to Essayas.

The company will also set up a factory to process the production of the biogas and chemicals.

“The two companies are already trying to recruit human resources from Jimma and Haromaya universities,” Essayas said.

The lease period for both companies will not be more than 20 years.

It is expected that both companies are planning to invest 100 million Br each from their own sources.

Source: *Addis Fortune (Addis Ababa)* Image: www.treehugger.com

Namibia: Solar Power Vastly Underestimated in Region

By Absalom Shigwedha

THE southern African region has the highest potential in the world for the use of Solar Thermal Power (STP).

This is one of the lessons learned by some southern African parliamentarians who last year attended a conference for SADC legislators on climate change and energy access for the poor in Maputo, Mozambique.

A report on the hearing was tabled in the National Assembly last week Wednesday by Swapo MP Lucia Basson.



The MPs were told that southern Africa has sunshine 72 per cent of the time.

Namibia has an annual average of 3 876 hours of sunshine and has the largest solar energy potential in the region. Spain, where this technology has been successfully been delivering clean power for many years, has 3 000 hours of sunshine per year.

But despite this huge potential for solar energy use in Southern Africa, there are a number of obstacles to its deployment in the region.

One of this is that solar technology currently does not feature in integrated resources planning.

“Hence, there are no policies to promote its uptake. Besides, solar electricity is usually deemed not viable economically, largely because the environmental and external costs of coal-based electricity are not reflected in the current tariffs,” said the report.

The MPs agreed on the importance of building capacity within southern Africa and stimulating the local production of renewable technologies, such as solar panels, instead of relying on expensive imports.

“Feasibility studies on the potential for solar thermal power should be conducted, especially in countries with the highest solar radiation levels such as Namibia, Botswana and South Africa,” said the report.

The MPs who took part in the hearing were from Namibia, Malawi, Mauritius, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia.

Source: Namibian Image: 3.bp.blogspot.com/

North Africa: Sahara Desert Solar Project Becoming a Reality

by Jana-Mari Smith

Rachel Pollock

Desertec Industrial Initiative (DII), the largest solar energy project, has recently gained the support of the US company First Solar and both the Tunisian and Algerian governments.

The announcement of the Joining of First Solar on 16 March has propelled Desertec into soon becoming a reality providing solar energy, up to 15 percent of Europe’s energy. If completed by the projected date in 2012, this would create a network of sustainable energy regions not only in Europe but in North Africa and the Middle East as well.

Since its launch on 13 July 2009, the \$550 billion initiative has gained a great deal of momentum incorporating countries from the MENA region (Middle East North Africa) as well as the recent addition of five more companies from Morocco, Tunisia, Spain, France and Italy.

Desertec Industrial Initiative was launched by 12 European companies in Munich a year after the Mediterranean Solar-Plan, which was signed on 13 July 2008 at the Union of the Mediterranean Summit. Since the DII was launched, the focus has been in creating demonstration projects in Morocco and working with governments in making sure the laws put in place allow the export of renewable energy.

Founding companies include: Munich Re, TREC, Deutsche Bank, Siemens, ABB, Abengoa Solar, E.ON, HSH Nordbank, Cevital, M&W Zander Holding, Schott Solar, and MAN Solar Millennium. Dr. Bernd Utz, chief technology officer of the Renewable Energy Division of Siemens told MediaGlobal, “The main challenge is the political framework. We need strong political support in Northern Africa, Europe and in the Middle East. In 2012 we want to present a politically approved concept of how this vision can become reality.”



DII uses carefully positioned mirrors in the Sahara desert to boil water and activate turbines. According to the Desertec Foundation,

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the technology of the solar project is based on a concentrated solar power plant (CSP). This works just like a coal steam power plant except that instead of coal, the power plant operates solely on concentrated solar power. The mirrors work to reflect and concentrate solar energy, which are transmitted to Europe and Africa by a super grid of high-voltage direct power cables.

Prof. Udo Ungeheuer, Chairman of the Management Board of SCHOTT AG told MediaGlobal, "Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) technology is a crucial element of the Desertec project. SCHOTT has been involved in this type of solar technology from the very beginning. Today, our receivers form the heart of solar power plants that utilize parabolic trough technology. They can be found in the Nevada Solar One power plant located near Las Vegas as well as the Andasol power plant in Spain, the first commercial power plant of its kind in Europe. We consider ourselves to be the global leaders in terms of both technology and market share with our solar receivers."

Should DII be successful, there are many advantages of the solar energy project. Besides combating climate change, power plants would create jobs and improve the economic development of the local communities. Desertec would also enhance infrastructure, thus, providing electricity to communities, which have previously not had access.

Alexander Mohanty Spokesman of DII-Enabling Desertec in EUMENA told MediaGlobal, "For some countries it can lead to the reversal of capital flows in the energy sector. They will get the opportunity to sell power and to generate income rather than having the need to buy coal, oil or gas. Other countries no longer have to exploit their fossil resources and they have the option of leaving these resources to future generations without loss of income."

Critics of DII have expressed concern over the view that the project may be too ambitious. However, the amount of money that has been raised is astounding. Furthermore, the recent interest in Desertec by prominent leaders and companies outside of Europe suggest that the international community is taking the solar project very seriously. Desertec Industrial Initiative is only valuable granted both the MENA region and Europe mutually benefit. If this happens, the positive contributions to the rest of the world will be significant.

Source: MediaGlobal (New York)

Image: agreenliving.org

Rwanda: MININFRA - Geothermal and Wind Energy

Kigali — Geothermal energy is the natural heat stored within the earth and visible on our earth's surface in the forms of fumaroles, hot springs, steaming grounds and altered grounds.

To extract this energy, wells are drilled to tap steam and water at high temperatures and pressures at a depth of 1-3km.

This steam and very hot water can be used either directly for heating, for example also in greenhouses for agricultural purposes, or for

electricity generation.

Natural geothermal heat or energy is stored inside our planet, but it is only exploitable if it comes close enough to the surface.



In Africa this is mostly the case within the East African Rift Zone which passes through the western branch of Rwanda. That this zone is geothermally active, and that the surface is very thin, was proven during the eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano which destroyed half of the city of Goma in 2002.

These volcanic eruptions bring the stored heat to the surface in an uncontrolled sudden manner. However it is also possible to use this energy in a careful and monitored way.

In Rwanda the Virunga volcanic zones in the Northern part and the area around the hot springs located in the Western part of the country close to Lake Kivu are believed to be potential sites for possible geothermal exploitation.

Geothermal potential

As was mentioned in our preceding articles, Rwanda's current power production equals a total of about 60MW at peak hours that is generated mainly from thermal and hydropower.

Considering, that energy is a prime component of further economic development, that the Rwandan Government is eager to diversify as well as stabilize its energy supply and that the thermal energy currently used is expensive, geothermal energy has to be given its due importance as a potential relevant contribution to our national energy balance.

Geothermal power is an attractive source of energy because it is naturally available, renewable and can be economically viable.

The potential for geothermal power generation in Rwanda is currently estimated at about 170-300 MW.

This estimation is based on observations and surface geochemical work that was carried out at a hydrothermal spring in the Western part of the country by the French Bureau BRGM (Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières).

Ongoing efforts in geothermal development

In 2006, the Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) was given the responsibility to develop the country's geothermal resources for electricity generation.

From that time, several contacts have been established with international companies specialized in geothermal development for Rwanda's geothermal resource assessment.

In this context in November 2006, a preliminary assessment of two geothermal prospects was carried out by the American company Chevron which confirms that the potential indeed exists in Rwanda.

In June 2007, MININFRA submitted an official proposal to the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR) for technical support to Rwanda on geothermal resource assessment.

In collaboration with the German government, an implementation agreement was thence signed in November 2007 between MININFRA, the Ministry of Environment and Natural resources and BGR for Rwanda's geothermal resource assessment and capacity building project which is sponsored by the German government.

This assessment has started and the site under inspection is the area between the Virunga national park and Gisenyi. The geoscientific assessment to determine the exact potential should be completed by December 2008.

Further detailed assessment in other localities will be conducted with the assistance of BGR next year.

Moreover, a proposal for geothermal assessment was submitted by the Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen). The reconnaissance and detailed geo-scientific surveys on a selected site close to Cyangugu are expected to start after signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between KenGen and MININFRA this year.

For the successful and sustainable exploitation of our geothermal resources the Ministry has foreseen to develop local expertise through capacity building.

In November 2007 two engineers already participated in a short term training on surface exploration of geothermal resources which was organized in Kenya by the United Nations University Geothermal Programme (UNU-GTP) in collaboration with KenGen.

Moreover a six months course at the UNU-GTP in Iceland was offered to an engineer this year from April 2008 onwards. Our engineer is currently being trained there, and next year several other geologists and engineers are expected to benefit from the UNU-GTP course.

In November 2008 Rwanda will participate at the African Rift Geothermal Facility (ARGeo) conference which will take place in Entebbe, Uganda.

All East African countries will come together during that conference and cooperate on raising funds for further exploration and drilling.

This will contribute to promoting the Rwandan geothermal sector and help to accelerate geothermal energy investments in our country.

Way forward for the development of geothermal in Rwanda

- Geothermal resource exploration of remaining geothermal sites in the country by hiring competent firms with expertise in geothermal exploration: Geo-scientific surface studies and exploratory drilling, to be conducted in 2009
- Geothermal resource assessment: Drilling of appraisal wells and well testing, will commence in 2009
- Power Plant Development: Drilling of production wells, steam pipelines and Power Plant construction, will start 2010
- Identification of financial partners who are willing to invest in geothermal sector projects, will be identified in 2009
- Capacity building of Rwandan experts in geothermal energy, already started

Source: *The New Times (Kigalia)* Image: www.treehugger.com

Africa: Announcing the Birth of the dot.africa Generation

By Michael Ouma

Nairobi — Organisations and individuals operating in Africa will soon have a variety of Internet domain names to pick from, including ".africa."

This follows a decision by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) board to expand the generic top-level domain space from four -- ".com," ".org," ".net" and ".biz" -- to 21.

DotConnectAfrica, a non-profit organisation will operate the ".africa" top-level domain registry, with help from sponsor organisations and business people.

Sophia Bekele, the executive director of DotConnectAfrica said the project is expected to boost regional integration and benefit the business community.

"Ultimately, we hope that the ".africa" domain will brand Africa and encourage increased participation on the Internet," said Ms Bekele. Profits from the initiative, which is expected to be operational by next year, will be reinvested in socio-technological advancement projects that will benefit the continent.

"With over 900 million Africans, including stakeholders in government, private sector and NGOs operating in the continent, the potential for economic development is enormous," said Ms Bekele, who is also a former elected advisor to Ican.

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Challenges

However, the uptake of the '.africa' domain could prove tricky as a number of people still prefer to use the more generic ".net" and ".com" domains for their online identity.

Kenya's ".ke" domain on the other hand, has registered a paltry 15,000 users to date, due to the high costs involved in acquiring and maintaining top-level domains.



To address low levels of adoption, DotConnectAfrica is considering having second level names to make it affordable for individuals, charge more for corporations and have an exclusive section for government and related identities.

In another strategy to encourage adoption levels, DotConnectAfrica intends to advertise and promote an African identity by working with respective country codes' top-level domain registries such as ".ke," ".ug" or ".tz."

"We will also work with foreign registrars as we promote '.africa' as a one-stop domain, as we aspire to protect and advance their corporate brands and interests across Africa.

These (foreign) domains should become more visible with owners spending more on regional advertising thereby educating the African public and driving local demand," said Ms Bekele.

Ministerial approval

The African Union heads of state recently endorsed the ".africa" initiative at the Addis Ababa Assembly that ended on February 2.

The endorsement followed a similar approval at the November 2009 Ministerial Conference in Johannesburg South Africa, where the Council of African ICT ministers acknowledged its benefits to the continent.

The report of experts stated the need to establish the ".africa" domain as a continental top-level domain for use by organisations, businesses and individuals with guidance from African Internet agencies.

Source: *East African (Nairobi)* Image: www.moneybiz.co.za

Africa: Low Internet Usage the Bane of Africa's Digital Media

Nairobi — Africa has the lowest number of internet users in the world, a problem that has prevented its inhabitants from enjoying the benefits of digital media.

Participants at the Pan African Media Conference heard that the continent's internet penetration was a meager four percent, with the rest of the world taking the lion's share of 96 percent.

Google Kenya Business Development Manager, Isis Nyongó, told a roundtable discussion on new media that there was need to increase Africa's internet penetration to allow more people benefit from the use of internet.

"There is need more investment in technology to make internet affordable and accessible," Ms Nyongó said recently at a session entitled 'The possibilities, limits and risks offered by blogs, short message service and social networks'.

Ms Nyongó said Google's objective was to help increase internet usage by providing products tailored for the African market.

The official cited the translation of data into several African languages like Swahili, Zulu and Afrikaans, as one of the moves by the technology giant aimed at increasing internet penetration.

According to the latest research on the world's internet usage compiled by technology start-up Internet World Stats, there are about 63.4million users, representing 6.8 percent of the total population.

Egypt tops Africa's list of internet users, with about 12.6million of its population hooked on the net, followed by Nigeria with 11 million, Morocco (10.3 million), Sudan (3.8million), Algeria (3.5million) and Kenya (3.5million).

Ms Nyongó said Kenya was ahead in the East African region on internet usage, adding that the media companies had also contributed positively in developing interest on digital media.

The Nation Media group was cited as one of the market leaders in the use of the technology in the region. Apart from establishing websites from its different publications in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the Nation also uses short message service (SMS), Facebook and Twitter in disseminating information.



Nation Television Kenya and Nation Television Uganda can also be accessed on the popular Google-owned video website, You Tube.

Daudi Were, a local based blogger, said the interest in the internet as an alternative form of communication, increased tremendously during and after the infamous post-election violence in 2007.

“Many Kenyans used the internet to express their frustrations and comment on the on-goings in the country, when peace was becoming elusive and after the signing of the National Accord,” said Mr Were who owns the mental acrobatics blog.

Mr Were said bloggers complemented the mainstream media in disseminating information during the post election violence as there were too much rumours and misinformation.

“Bloggers posted information that some of the mainstream media failed to cover or had reservations publicizing because of various reasons,” he added.

Participants, however cautioned internet users not to take all information appearing on blogs as gospel truth, adding that verification was of outmost importance.

Many cited the American case, where the number of blogs owned by extremists, spreading lies and hatred, had increased sharply since Barack Obama became the first African American President of the United States.

“The problem is that some bloggers do not have much respect for media ethics and that is why the public should be cautious about them. Some are only there to propagate hidden agendas,” Mr Were added.

However, he quickly added there were many genuine bloggers who do their work professionally.

Ms Nyongó commended the Kenyan government and investors in the technology industry for encouraging the use of the internet, adding that one can even buy Kenyan products on-line.

Participants also noted that technology, mainly mobile phones, had helped break the generation gap barrier by easing communication between the younger and the older generation.

“It is now common to find grandchildren communicating with their grandparents quite often, a case that was rare in the pre-mobile phone era,” said Were.

The two urged bloggers and the mainstream media to work together in informing, entertaining and educating the public.

“The mainstream media and bloggers are not in competition they are all there for the good of the public,” Mr Were added.

He said social networks like Facebook and Twitter were becoming major tools of communication in Kenya, adding that they could no longer be ignored by players in the media industry.

Source: *Daily Nation on the Web (Nairobi)* Image: imfundo.digitalbrain.com

Nigeria: Telecoms constitutes 4% of GDP says Pyramid Research UK

By Ngozi Sams

Nigeria’s telecommunications sector currently accounts for about four per cent of the country’s total gross domestic product (GDP), with room for growth, according to a survey by Pyramid Research, a United Kingdom based telecommunications research firm.

Delivering the report of the research undertaken in collaboration with the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), in Abuja, Gabriella Baez, Managing Director of Pyramid Research, said Nigeria’s telecoms industry has the potential to double the current growth rate.



“The impact of the telecoms sector on the GDP of Nigeria can be looked at from various points. The most transparent item is just the investment, the second is the revenue that is generated on annual basis by all the players in the industry and that accounts for roughly more than four per cent of the GDP in Nigeria. This is within the range of what we see within the varieties of markets around the world,” she said. “The telecommunications industry can generate anywhere from two to seven per cent and in Nigeria, it is four per cent and it is well within the range that we see in places like Europe, Africa and elsewhere within the developing markets.”

Ms. Baez noted that “the most important part of their finding was the confirmation that mobile phones are fundamental aspects of peoples’ lives and that the impact goes beyond what could be seen in a single communication industry. It spreads into education, health, productivity.”

Impact on Nigerians

Commenting on the report, Ernest Ndukwe, Executive Vice Chairman of the Commission, said telecoms products like mobile phones have made drastic changes in the lives of ordinary Nigerians.

“We are looking beyond the growth of infrastructure to what that

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infrastructure has done for the common man; how it has impacted lives, what are those socio-economic indices that were positively affected by the growth in the national network... So I think that most Nigerians accept the fact that telecoms has been a major source of empowerment to the ordinary man," he said.

Cost reduction

To prompt further growth, Ms. Baez said network providers should work together to help drive down access costs, which inhibit growth in their subscriber bases.

"Once they are affordable, it becomes an investment for many people to buy the phones. We believe greater number of the population will begin to use mobile services," she said. Ms. Baez added that the availability of more applications will attract people to invest in the telecoms sector.

Attraction for investors

Ikra Bilbis, the former Minister State for Information and Communications, said the sector has emerged from the backwaters to become a reference point for positive growth and a major attraction for local and foreign investors.

"The nation has been moved from a position where only a privileged few had analogue phones," he said adding that government wants to sustain the growth, brought about by liberalisation in a sector once dominated by one national carrier. "The federal government is being proactive to ensure that it prepares for the next stage of development in the sector." In this regard, he said a committee has been set up to review the telecoms policies to prepare the nation for the kind of growth being envisaged in the future.

He noted that government is aware of the "digital divide" that exists between the developed and developing nations and that the Universal Service Provision Fund was created to take service to the rural and underserved communities in Nigeria.

Mr. Bilbis maintained that it is a fundamental right for every Nigerian to have access to telecommunication services and modern ICT facilities and that this kind of documentation from the Pyramid Research is for the government to know where it got it right and focus on the direction to improve living standard.

Source: 234Next (Lagos)

Image: www.itp.net

Zambia: Invest in Emerald Mine

Investment Opportunities : Mining & Metals

Zambia's gemstones account for 20% of the world's supply and are ever in high demand in the international market due to their excellent quality. Investors are invited to partner in a venture to mine emeralds.

Nachingwali Enterprises Limited has so far invested seven eighty million Kwacha (K780m) in exploration, core drilling and excavation of trial mining pit.

The mine produced berlys at 8 metres and emerald chips from different levels out of the core drills during the trial mining. Possible production can be done from 16metres to 50metres.

The mine has the potential to produce raw emeralds worth a minimum of US\$ 1.5million per year, although this projected analysis is only for 20% of the concessioned area.

Location of project: Lufwanyama Emerald Restricted Area, Ndola rural plot No. 67, Mitondo South.

Cost of Investment: The owners of the mine are looking for investors to inject a minimum value of US\$5 million in equipment and working capital.

Availability of inputs: There is plenty of locally available labour, while machinery and equipment can either be hired locally or imported.



Infrastructure: Electricity is available 15kms from the mine, and currently there exist a gravel road leading to the site.

Licenses: An Investment Licence will be required. Nachingwali Enterprises Limited however has a gemstone mining licence, an Environmental Impact Report, Exploration Report and a Core Drilling Report.

Fiscal Incentives:

1. Duty free importation of machinery and equipment, including specialized motor vehicles, for use in exploration or mining.
2. Mineral royalty of 5% of gross value for base metals and precious metals.

VAT is 16%.

The Zambian Development Agency (ZDA) facilitates non-fiscal incentives such as:

- Investment guarantees and protection against state nationalization
- Free facilitation for application of immigration permits, secondary licences, land acquisitions and utilities.

Source: TradeInvest Africa

Image: www.topofthailandgems.com

Nigeria is Africa's new mining destination – Investors.

By Agency report

Foreign investors at the 2010 International Convention, Trade Show and Investor's Exchange, recently in Toronto, Canada, described Nigeria as the new mining destination in Africa.

This followed the presentation of the Airborne Geophysical Survey data of the nation to delegates at the convention.

A correspondent of the News Agency of Nigeria covering the conference reported that the survey, which covered two million line kilometres of magnetic gradiometer and radiometric showed the occurrence of new mineralised zones in several parts of the country.

The investors said that having exhausted other parts of Africa, the survey data would encourage them to invest in Nigeria, which they described as a virgin territory, and new destination.

President of the US based Global Exploration and Development Company, Mr. Benbella Ndivi told NAN that the survey data was a national treasure which would ensure the continued development of the sector.

Ndivi said that the occurrence of mineralised areas as indicated by the survey would make investment more attractive, and exploration easier.

"The presentation of the airborne geophysical survey is fundamental to the development of mining and exploration in Nigeria. For over 40 years Nigeria relied on oil and gas, and that led to mining companies investing more in Ghana, Bostwana, but with the data, the geology is unique that will encourage investment in the sector, as explorers will have a better interpretation and understanding of the geology," he said.

Also speaking, Mr Tom Jennemann of the American Metal Market, said that the friendly legislation and policy instituted by the Nigerian government would attract and encourage private sector to invest in the sector.

Jennemann urged the government to go beyond conferences and and conventions to market the sector adding, "with this data, government should carry out wide spread campaign in major international media to create better understanding of the potentialities abound in the sector."

According to him, some countries depend on only one or two minerals as their biggest export" but Nigeria is blessed with many, it should be explored to the maximum".

The Director General of the Nigerian Geological Survey Agency, Prof Siyan Malomo, said the response of the investors had been excellent.

He said the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development decided to



present the data in Canada because the convention was the largest gathering of world stakeholders in the industry.

"We have been collating data in the last two years. We did not have this type of data, and that is what investors need , so we have to come out to showcase what we have

and let them know that we can compete with the countries they go to" he said.

NAN recalls that the survey was carried out in two phases, with phase one covering 44 per cent of the country and phase two covered 56 per cent, and lasted for two years from 2007 to 2009.

Source: Punch (Lagos)

Image: images.stanzapub.com

Soco to drill Congo's first onshore well in 40 yrs

By Katrina Manson

KINSHASA (Reuters) - SOCO International will begin exploring for oil in Democratic Republic of Congo in July in what will be the country's first onshore-only drilling project in 40 years, a company official said on recently.

The project in the Bas-Congo region marks a step forward for the Central African nation's oil sector, which has been virtually paralyzed by decades of corruption and conflict but which is now attracting increased investment interest.

"There has been a 40-year hiatus in onshore-only drilling," Roger Cagle, deputy CEO and chief financial officer told Reuters by telephone. "We believe that we have a pretty high chance of success, in the range of 15 to 30 percent chance, which is about as good as it gets," he said.

The company, which has already spent about \$25 million on the Nganzi block, will drill three wells at a cost of \$50 million to \$60 million, and has put out a tender to erect onshore oil rigs in the country, which has none available.

"It wouldn't be difficult to monetise any finds as we only have to

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build a 60 km pipeline to the terminal which already exists,” said Cagle, adding operating in the west of the country is much cheaper than in Congo’s centre and east because of existing infrastructure and access to a coastline.

New Oil Minister Celestin Mbuyu, back from visiting the site where the company has built an airstrip and new roads, said he was very happy the drilling would start and hoped the company would build a refinery if oil was discovered.



Interest in Congo’s oil potential has risen in recent months after big finds on the Ugandan side of Lake Albert.

Oil majors Total and Eni have recently expressed interest in blocks on Congo’s side of the lake, and several companies including SOCO are jostling for belated presidential decrees to competing licences.

Despite its potential reserves, Congo barely registers among Africa’s oil producers with just 25,000 barrels a day in output, all from French independent Perenco’s operations in the southwest.

Source: Reuters Image: Reuters

Mining and Energy

Botswana: BCL Woos Investors for Acid Plant

Mbongeni Mguni

BCL Mine is hoping the increased number of foreign investor missions coming into the country will result in opportunities for the funding of its proposed P1.9 billion sulphuric acid plant.

Recently, the Selebi-Phikwe mine announced that it had finalised studies into the plant’s viability, confirming research by the European Union indicating that such a plant is the only viable solution to BCL’s sulphur dioxide pollution problem.

With the costs of developing such a plant proving highly prohibitive to BCL, the Mine’s vanguard is looking to investors, such as the German delegation that was on site recently, for possible funding solutions. The 22-member delegation toured BCL Mine, scouring for opportunities such as those presented by the proposed sulphuric acid plant. During the visit, BCL Marketing and Metals Support Divisional Manager, Gerry Ndlovu pitched the idea of funding the sulphuric acid plant to the Germans. Ndlovu explained that BCL produces large amounts of sulphur dioxide which can be captured to produce sulphuric acid.



With an estimated 534,000 tonnes of sulphur dioxide in annual emissions becoming a growing concern, BCL Mine hopes to strike it lucky

with the series of inward investor missions the Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA) has lined up.

Backed by already existing feasibility studies, the targeted investor will need the financial and technical muscle necessary for the mammoth project’s numerous factors. The sulphuric plant will require heavy infrastructural investment, including railway tracks, a turn-in and out, locomotives and associated works, specialised storage facilities and others. Most importantly, the investor will need to have secured robust off-take agreements with time and cost of the plant in Phikwe.

BEDIA Chief Executive Officer, Jacob Nkate recently told Mmegi that more investor interactions, within Botswana and externally, were planned for the year. He said while a planned Russian delegation visit had run into troubles, it was expected that the planned visit would take place soon. “The success or otherwise of

an investment mission is gauged by the number of people in the delegation, which itself shows the level of interest the people have in Botswana. The success can also be judged by the number of follow ups, subsequent to the mission; these people, having come here, do they then go back and make follow ups?

“The German mission was very successful with 22 delegates from different industries, who came and had a comprehensive programme from Gaborone, to Francistown to Selebi-Phikwe,” he said, adding that the investors showed interest in the various opportunities presented to them. Nkate said starting from the 12 of March to 02 April, 2010, BEDIA would embark on outward investment missions which will go to India, Singapore and Russia.

“There’s going to be a lot of activity. We have also drawn up a programme with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where we have selected countries that we plan to travel to during the year.

“The forthcoming outward investment mission is just the one in the short term; there will be more coming,” he said. Among the forthcoming outward missions, India will be of particular interest to BCL Mine, as the Asian giant has a well developed sulphuric acid production industry.

EU researchers believe markets for sulphuric acid can be found locally in mines such as African Copper, Tati Nickel and abroad in South Africa and Namibia. They also believe a sulphuric acid production plant in Phikwe could spur a fertiliser production industry in Botswana, helping economic diversification.

Source: *Mmegi (Botswana)* Image: *us-cdn.creamermedia.co.za*

Sierra Leone: London Mining to spend \$300 mln on project

LUNSAR, Sierra Leone (Reuters) - London Mining will spend \$300 million over four years to develop its Marampa iron ore project in Sierra Leone, and expects first tailings output within 12 months, its CEO said.

The Marampa iron ore deposit is among Africa’s biggest, but had been left largely unexploited for decades in a country still healing from a 1991-2002 civil war.

“First production will be in 12 months,” London Mining CEO Graeme Hossie said at a press conference recently, marking the mine’s official opening. “We expect to invest over \$300 million in the operation over the coming four years.”

London Mining received Sierra Leone’s parliamentary approval for the project, located about 75 km east (45 miles) of the capital Freetown, last month and pledged an initial investment of \$80 million during 2010 to start development of a 1.5 million tonnes per year tailings starter operation.

Primary ore development of 5-8 million tonnes per year is expected by the end of 2013, the company said.

Sierra Leone President Ernest Bai Koroma said at the news conference the project marked an important step in rebuilding the West African nation’s shattered economy.

“As a government, we will continue to do our best to bring back



investors to Sierra Leone,” he said.

London Mining’s Hossie said the project will employ local workers and will have a life span of at least 30 years.

Iron ore was discovered in the Marampa area in 1926, and the deposit contains an estimated 92 million tonnes of primary ore, according to Sierra Leone’s Ministry of Mines.

Source: Reuters Image: Reuters

Africa ripe for investment opportunities, say Shanghai experts

By Wang Ying (China Daily)

SHANGHAI: Inspired by China’s economic growth despite the global financial recession, African countries have reached a consensus to learn and benefit more from the robust economy.

A delegation with representatives from nearly 40 African countries, and two international organizations - the Africa Development Bank and the League of Arab States - attended the Touchroad China-Africa Invest Forum in Shanghai recently. The forum focused on opportunities and challenges of investing in Africa.

Many people stereotype Africa as a piece of underdeveloped land, plagued by poverty, disease and violence, but He Liehui, founder of the forum, objected to such labelings.

“It is far from being the truth if you know enough of the continent. There are lots of misunderstandings there. Not all countries in Africa are poor, and some nations’ GDP per capita is higher than that of China,” he said.

Actually, many Chinese companies have noticed the opportunities in the resource-rich continent and invested extensively there. Chen Jian, vice-minister of commerce, said China has invested in 49 African countries.

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“Since bilateral trade volume exceeded \$10 billion in 2000, the annual growth rate averaged 32 percent, and last year reached a record high of \$106.8 billion,” Chen said.

As one of the most economically active cities in China, Shanghai has apparently sensed its opportunities. Zhao Kangmei, deputy director with Shanghai Municipal Commission of Commerce, said in the first eight months this year, 28 percent of the new overseas projects Shanghai signed came from Africa.

During the forum, several African officials served as spokespeople for their homeland. General Pape Khalilou Fall, ambassador of Senegal, said their country has a healthy and competitive economy.

“Senegal provides good human resources, complete banking service, Internet and telephone service, as well as a good legal framework,” he told China Daily. “We welcome investment in all sectors, telecommunication, infrastructure, fishing and agriculture, etc. But more



importantly, as the Chinese saying goes, ‘Don’t give me a fish, but teach me how to fish,’” he said.

“In addition, Senegal is a gateway to 15 countries in West Africa, so investment there means great opportunities in the other 53 African countries,” he added.

The nonprofit forum of Touchroad China-Africa Invest was first held in March 2008 with 18 nations participating. Many delegation

groups had reached deals on site, He said.

“Sure we will continue the forum next year and build it into a highly efficient Sino-African trade platform, and through the platform we try to boost the friendship and economic ties of the two sides to a new high,” He said

Source: China Daily Image: Image: bp0.blogger.com

Interview of the month

Mo Ibrahim, the Sudanese-born cellphone pioneer who founded the index, sat down with AllAfrica’s editors. Excerpts:

Why did you decide to focus your philanthropy on the governance index and the leadership prize?

There’s no reason for us to be poor or hungry or backward, because Africa is a very rich continent. It is one of the largest continents on the earth. There are only 900 million Africans – two-thirds of India. It’s not like we are overpopulated. And we have all these great natural resources.

The main problem impeding our development is governance – or rather the lack of it. All good things start from good governance; all bad things start from bad governance – and that’s an area that’s rather sensitive for anybody to address. Africans themselves need to sort it out. It isn’t appropriate for others, given commercial and other interests, to be involved. We, as an African foundation, decided to take up this issue.

What is good governance? Is it a lack of corruption? Transparency? Is it democracy, participation, human rights? Is it economic opportunity? Is it women’s and social rights? Is it health? Is it a good education system? Is it jobs for the kids? Actually, it is all of this.

So we embarked on this ambitious project to measure the quality of governance in every African country. This is the third year we are

Viable Nations Depend on Integrating Economies, Says Business Leader Mo Ibrahim



producing the index. It is a living project. It is evolving and improving as we understand more of the issues.

The interesting thing now is the Africanization of the process of producing the index. More and more African institutions are helping to produce this index. This year we have included North Africa, so it is covering all 53 states of the African Union. We also worked more on defining the parameters or the components of the index. Instead of 58 parameters, we are measuring 82 or 83 parameters.

What are the major obstacles you face in compiling the index?

The process threw up a number of interesting issues. For example, take poverty. We could not find any reliable measurements of poverty in Africa – a very important component. We found data to be patchy,

very old and sometimes non-existent. We tried to find how many Africans are living on less than one dollar or less than two dollars [a day]. We had to drop that important indicator, unfortunately.

The problem is that the statistical offices in African countries have been neglected. They sort of vanished or died, and nobody is paying attention to that, neither the governments, the internationals, multi-laterals or the donors. That raises a very important question. How are we going to measure the Millennium Development Goals? How do we measure effectiveness of aid? We throw billions of dollars at the aid industry and yet we are unable to [ascertain] the outcome. This is a major problem that we ask all the stakeholders to pay attention to and try to help us solve.

By compiling this data and publishing the report, are you running the risk that you reinforce negative images of Africa?

No, not at all. The index doesn't say Africa is bad. The index shows countries that are doing well; it shows countries which are doing badly. More importantly it shows the movement of countries, how they're moving over time.

Our index last year showed, for example, that the situation of human rights improved in Africa. This year I think that about 26 or 27 countries have improved in general, so it is not at all meant to denigrate. It's an honest picture of what's going on. It is a mirror. Some of us are good looking; we look beautiful in the mirror. Some of us are ugly and are going to look ugly because the mirror will not lie. Don't blame the mirror!

What does the Index say about the impact of conflict on African countries?

It points out the obvious: the countries which scored very badly all have internal conflicts, civil wars. When we address armed conflicts, we always think of how many people died. But conflict also destroys all other services. It destroys education. How can you have schools running when you have armed conflict? It impedes the delivery of health services. There's no economic activity, so how can you create jobs? It makes it absolutely clear that the first thing we need to address is to stop all these conflicts. They are self-inflicted wounds. We need to actively pursue peace and security on the continent. It is very important to allow the natural development of countries and the delivery of services for our population.

What are the best mechanisms for building peace?

The African Union is getting more active. African elders are playing an increasingly important role – Kofi Annan in Kenya, Graça Machel, who also worked in Kenya and Sudan, [Joaquim] Chissano in Uganda. I also salute the efforts by Thabo Mbeki in Sudan. African civil society has a big role to play. It's really a collective process, but the heart of it is the need for real leadership.

We love President Chissano in the foundation. Essentially what he did was stop the civil war in his country [Mozambique]. Here is a leader who extended his hand to his enemy and said, "Look, I don't like it.

But you are citizens of the country. Instead of fighting each other in the bush and all of these atrocities, come and let's fight peacefully in elections and good luck to everybody." He was able to get those people to Maputo, and they were not harmed or badly treated. He achieved peace in his country. How many lives did he save?

If [Sudanese leader Omar al-Bashir] did this, how many lives would he save? Look at [former South African President Nelson] Mandela. Who thought we were going to see a peaceful transition of power in South Africa? Everybody was expecting a bloodbath in South Africa, but it takes leadership of a man like Mandela to come and help that peaceful transition. The role of African presidents and leaders is immense. We hope African leaders will rise up and ensure an end to conflicts in their countries.

Is that why you decided to create the Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership?

There are a number of reasons why we have this prize. Number one is we genuinely need to celebrate success in African leadership. An effective leadership can save lives, can help development, take people out of poverty, and change the lives of people. When it's done properly, it is a massive achievement and needs to be celebrated.

The second reason is the image of Africa outside of Africa. We have good people but nobody speaks about those people.

Every time I speak in conferences in Europe, I ask the audience: if you know Idi Amin, Mobutu, General Abacha, raise your hands. Everybody raises their hands. If you know Festus Mogae raise your hands. Two or three people raise their hands, yet Festus Mogae is a wonderful leader. Botswana had three great leaders in succession. They hand over and go back to civil society. Big deal. Everybody leaves office with clean hands. [Botswana] is moving up to a middle-income country. This is a great achievement. Why has the story of Botswana not been told? (Mogae received the prize last year and Chissano in 2007.)

When Chissano won his prize, we could not contact him. We went to the press conference and our brother Kofi [Annan] stood and read the citation and then the press started to ask questions. Lo and behold, the third question was what was the reaction of Chissano when you told him? And [Annan] said, "I do not know because I couldn't find him to tell him."

That day in the afternoon somebody in his office ... said, "He's in the bush. He's trying to find [rebel leader Joseph] Kony to procure peace between the Ugandan government and [the Lord's Resistance Army]. He's somewhere on the border between Sudan and Uganda. There's no communication. Please if you reach him, congratulate him - it's his 68th birthday."

He's not a young man, but he's not sitting in his garden around the swimming pool with his friends, having a party, celebrating his birthday. He's in the bush incommunicado, sleeping rough, eating rough, trying to achieve peace in countries that are 3,000 miles away from

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his own. This is African leadership; these are responsible people who do the right thing, away from the lights. There are no TV cameras; he's just doing it quietly.

There are wonderful people in Africa. People knew Mandela because of the situation in South Africa, but we have many Mandelas. It is our duty to honor those people and tell the world about those success stories. When taxpayers here [in the United States] – and I'm grateful to them as an African – reach into their pockets to give money to fight disease or famine, they need to know that Africans themselves are also doing the right thing. That we are not just a bunch of beggars doing nothing, not just waiting for hand outs. All our friends in the west need to know we have leaders like Chissano.

During your prize ceremony in November, you have selected three topics for discussion – food security, climate change and economic integration in Africa. Why these issues?

Seventy percent of African people are involved in agriculture, yet we cannot feed ourselves. The agriculture sector is ineffective, unproductive. We cannot deny the responsibility of African governments themselves.

About seven or eight years ago, African presidents decided that 10 percent of their national budgets would be allocated to the agriculture sector. Two months ago, in Addis Ababa, I checked with the African Union and was shocked to find that only three countries complied with their own decision. Nobody imposed this decision on the African governments. It was their own decision and still they do not honor it. Is that not the responsibility of governments? Does that not raise the issue of governance?

If Africa cannot make food, are we going to make airplanes, are we going to make computers? How are we going to earn our living? It's a scandal. Unless we take responsibility, take ownership ourselves, nothing will happen, and we'll keep coming back to: "Please come and help us; we have a famine here." That is not acceptable.

On the issue of climate change, we [in Africa] are going to suffer more from climate change and from desertification – we've been suffering

already from this – and it's obvious we did not put this carbon [in the air]. How can we adapt and mitigate, how can we develop in a green fashion when our economies have been hit due to the excesses of other developed nations? We want justice, and we need to discuss this.

And regional integration?

In this global economy, in this connected world, how can 53 very small African economies develop and go forward? The numbers look terrible. Four percent of African trade is inter-African trade. Four percent of our trade is among ourselves. How can we survive like this? We have a lot of landlocked countries, and I always wonder how these countries manage. Where does their trade go? Does it jump over the neighboring countries or what?

What we see is a terrible legacy of colonialism. When client countries were seen as extended farms for the mother country, they had only one road leading to the port, taking cotton or maize to the mother country and bringing back some goods, and that's it. Now that is a 50-year-old model. We no longer have mother countries; we no longer have client countries, yet we have not developed a road network between ourselves. We kept our barriers. We've had regional economic institutions in Africa for many years, but we don't really see any progress on the ground.

In Germany or France or Britain, each of them has bigger economy than all of Africa put together. Yet, they formed the European Union to have economic integration and break down barriers. You now drive your goods from Berlin to Scotland non-stop and at no extra cost. No people stopping you every ten miles, asking you to fill forms, to pay a small bribe that delays you. Who do we think we are – 53 little economies trading with God knows whom? The fact is a large number of African countries are not viable. If they were companies, they would have been declared bankrupt. You switch off the light, you say: bye-bye, it doesn't work.

Why do we have this problem with regional projects? We have wonderful rivers to generate clean power, which we can use to light up all of Africa. Yet everybody wants to build their own little stations. Everybody wants to do their own little thing. It doesn't work. The cost per unit becomes too high. Just ask any businessman. You need scale for your business to run, reduce your costs, reduce your prices and make sure you're viable. So we really must address the whole issue here with sanity.

But is there the political will in Africa to do this?

I'm not saying that African countries need to drop their colorful flags or their national anthems. Please, keep it, but integrate your economies! Open your borders, let goods and people move around freely, then we can really move forward.

The sooner we address this, the better. Unless we address this problem, I don't think there is a future.

Source: AllAfrica.com Images: static.guim.co.uk

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Country Stats - Egypt

Capital	Cairo
Area	1,001,000 sq km
Total Population 2008	76.8 Million
Urban Population 2008	42.72%
Female Population 2008	49.96%
GDP 2008	US\$ 166.0 Billion
GNI Per Capita 2007	US\$ 1,580
Inflation Rate 2008	7.62%
Crude Birth Rate (per 1000) 2008	23.89%
Human Development Index (scale 0 to 1) 2006:	0.716
ADB Membership Date:	14/09/1964
Cumulative Approvals (1967-2008):	UA 3 Billion

Source: Africa Development Bank.