

Namdeb ramps up its Long-Term Plan

Mining capacity is being increased by 60%, and treatment capacity is set to grow.

Namibia's oldest diamond miner, Namdeb, is in the process of ramping up operations at its Southern Coastal Mines (SCM) as it makes progress in implementing its long-term plan.

The plan was made possible thanks to a five-year, 5% royalty remission, agreed to by government in 2021.

Justice Mukendwa, Mining Lead & Ramp-up Project Manager for Namdeb's remarkable Southern Coastal Mines, where the company uses accretion to physically push back the mighty Atlantic Ocean to enable onshore mining, shares insights as to what it all means.

Question: What does Namdeb mean by ramping up?

JM: The ramp-up plan refers to the gradual increase in Namdeb's operating scale. At steady-state production, mining capacity would have increased by approximately 60%, while treatment capacity is also set to increase. This increase in scale creates employment for over 300 employees, excluding contractors.

Q: What physical changes are being made in terms of plant and equipment, gear and fleet acquisition?

JM: To support the increase in scale, there is an extension to the main treatment plant called the Alternative Feed Stream (AFS). This is aimed at providing additional feed and clay handling capacity. It includes scrubbing integrated as part of the feed introduction system to avoid potential blockages due to problematic clay-rich mining sites. In addition, a fleet of larger-capacity equipment has also been procured to support the increase in operating scale. This combination allows for the treatment of up to 6.5 million tonnes of diamond-bearing ore per annum.

Q: What new technologies are being implemented, particularly in regards to clean energy, but also throughout the organisation?

JM: At Namdeb, we have a commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030 with scope 1 (fossil fuels) and scope 2 (fossil electricity) emissions. It is, therefore, imperative that we introduce new technology to reduce our carbon footprint. With the recent recapitalisation exercise, we have procured equipment with improved fuel efficiency and increased the capacity of mining trucks to help reduce our emissions intensity. Furthermore, we are currently commissioning battery-electric options for selected heavy commercial vehicles to help reduce fossil fuel usage and associated carbon emissions. These initiatives are in addition to the 34 MW wind farm currently under development.

Q: How does ramping up fit into the Long-Term Plan?

JM: Namdeb's Long-Term Plan was officially approved by the Board of Directors in October 2021, yielding a 20-year life of mine extension. The ramp-up is the initial implementation phase of the Long-Term Plan, referring to the first two years of the 20-year life of



❖ Southern Coastal Mines expanding

An extension to the Southern Coastal Mines main treatment plant, called the Alternative Feed Stream (AFS), will increase treatment capacity. PHOTOS NAMDEB

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**Justice Mukendwa,
Mining Lead & Ramp-up
Project Manager**

mine. It includes the recruitment of new employees, on-boarding of new contractor services, new equipment acquisitions, and the implementation of infrastructure projects to support the increase in mining scale.

Following the two-year ramp-up period, operations are set to reach steady-state production in 2023 Q4.

Q: How has the initial implementation of the Long-Term Plan fared?

JM: The initial implementation of the Long-Term Plan has been quite successful. Phase 1 was successfully concluded in June 2022, yielding a 20% increase in mining capacity.

Phase 2 is currently underway and should be concluded by the end of August 2023. From inception, this would yield a 60%

**Namdeb's Mining
Lead & Ramp-up
Project Manager
for its Southern Coastal
Mines, Justice Mukendwa.**



increase in installed mining capacity. The benefit of the increase in mining capacity will be fully realised with the completion of the Alternative Feed Stream by the end of October 2023. This is an extension to the main treatment plant aimed at providing additional feed and clay handling capacity.

Q: What is next?

JM: The project execution team will be commissioning key infrastructure projects, including earthmoving workshops, a fuel storage facility, the alternative feed stream (AFS), and employee accommodation. With Daberas Mine reaching the end of life after more than 20 years of operation, a key focus in Q3 2023 will be the redeployment of 80 Orange River Mines employees into Southern Coastal Mines.

Q: What is Namdeb's long-term plan for the natural environment where it operates?

JM: Protecting the natural world is a strategic focus for Namdeb. As an organisation, we believe that managing our water resources and mitigating potential impacts on biodiversity is of critical importance. We therefore conserve and rehabilitate areas, in line with our

approved our end-use licence. Furthermore, we conduct scientific studies and monitoring programmes to ensure we do not adversely affect our environment. The aim is to ensure that we have a net positive impact on biodiversity. At the same time, we are looking at opportunities to harness the natural elements such as solar and wind to contribute towards decarbonisation. These opportunities are currently under development.

Q: How are climate change and weather pattern fluctuations dealt with in the plan?

JM: The operation runs a robust weather monitoring programme with coastal modelling capability to anticipate the impact of changes in weather on the mine plan. The models are calibrated frequently to account for changes in weather patterns. The mine design therefore accounts for weather events within acceptable tolerance levels.

Q: How does the current royalty remission help carry out the plan?

JM: The royalty remission reduces the royalty rate from 10% to 5% over the first five years of the Long Term Plan, thus enabling us to re-invest in new equipment and infrastructure projects. This is a key contribution that the Namibian government has made, as a shareholder, to ensure the extension of operations to 2042.

Q: What does the plan require to continue after 2025?

JM: The current plan is feasible until 2042 using current, proven conventional methods. There are opportunities, however, to optimise costs and improve margins with the introduction of new technology. Studies are currently underway to investigate the viability of these technology options.



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