

Africa Down Under conference

29-31 August 2018

Hogan Lovells was an active participant in this year's Africa Down Under conference, attended by partners and other lawyers from our Johannesburg and Australian offices.

Introduction

This year was Africa Down Under's 16th edition. The conference was created to raise awareness of Australia's interests in Africa's mining and energy sectors and has evolved to become the largest African mining-focused event held outside of Africa.

With members of the Hogan Lovells team having attended ADU conferences in the past, this year we were again enthusiastic participants in the conferences and networking events on offer throughout the 3-day period. Our involvement in ADU provided many opportunities to raise our profile and network, both among international clients and key industry players in the mining sector, as well as in the region.

In attendance were Warren Beech and Kevin Pietersen from the Johannesburg office, alongside Scott Harris, Matthew Johnson, Ian Gordon, Christopher Healy, Michael Brady and James Hewer from our Sydney and Perth offices.

Making our Mark: Our Bespoke Event

Separately from the conference, Hogan Lovells partnering with Professional Cost Consultants Australia (PCC) held its own bespoke event at our Perth office, a short distance from the conference venue. The theme of the event played on the opportunities between Australia and Africa and offered attendees an evening that fused the culinary delights of Africa and Australia.

The aim of the event was for a relaxed, intimate affair, providing an opportunity to get away from the conference environs and network whilst enjoying the wonderful views of the Swan River.

Attended by over 50 people, this event was a great success.

No other participant at ADU was able to match the tone or calibre of this event – and accordingly, we had an outstanding turnout. Speakers included our honourable guests Adam McCarthy (High Commissioner to South Africa) together with Kym Fullgrabe (Senior Trade Commissioner- Sub-

Saharan Africa), Warren Beech (Partner, Global mining head, Hogan Lovells Johannesburg), Scott Harris (Partner, Hogan Lovells Australia) and Glyn Williams (Managing Director, Professional Cost Consultants Australia).

Key Themes from ADU

- The event focused on Africa-Australia relations in the resources sector- key themes which emerged from the Africa Down Under conference were:
- This year, Australia will become the biggest international miner on the African continent, doubling its investment to more than \$40 billion over a decade. Equity markets are positive in Australia so there is an appetite for buying African assets, bringing them into Australia and raising capital for greenfield projects.
- The minerals market conditions in South Africa have improved as the market recovers from a decline in performance over the recent years. Generally, there is positive outlook with indications of a commodity boom in the horizon.
- South Africa has faced internal challenges associated with their mining performance- the falling ore grades in gold and platinum group metal sectors as well as rising costs due to deep and difficult operations levels. In addition, South Africa has faced labour-related matters and trust deficit amongst its stakeholders.
- There have been efforts to resolve the impasse on the South African Mining Charter 2017. Minister Gwede Mantashe (South Africa's Mineral Resources Minister) notes that stakeholder relationships with the tripartite partners have been restored to a level of open engagement on the effects on sustainability and competitiveness in the resources sector.
- To provide regulatory certainty, the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act Bill was withdrawn from the South African National Council of Provinces. The South African government has since engaged with the gas and petroleum sector to develop a separate legal framework specifically for this sector.
- South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa announced a stimulus package that aims to lower the costs of doing business, increase policy and regulatory certainty in the South African mining sector, promote growth of the economy by attracting investment and increase exploration spend with proposed tax incentives on exploration projects.

The success of our event was down to the enthusiasm, commitment and energy of our team at Hogan Lovells and our friends at PCC.

A huge thank you to everyone involved in making this an enjoyable evening.

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