



Barplats' Crocodile River Mine, which was mothballed in 1991, is being re-opened. The mine should be operational by January 2001, with mining at the Maroelabult section due to commence in October 2000.

Here, SRK Consulting, facilitates a meeting with Interested and Affected Parties on the re-opening of the mine.

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A final mining plan is being developed for Crocodile River and mining should begin in September 2000.

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Gert Ackerman
Consulting Engineer – Projects

Review by business unit or interest

Barplats

Crocodile River mine to reopen by 2001

Implats holds an 83 per cent stake in JSE-listed Barplats Investments Limited. Barplats, in turn, is the owner of the Crocodile River mine and the Kennedy's Vale project.

Crocodile River mine

In February 2000, the directors of Barplats approved the re-opening of the Crocodile River mine following a detailed feasibility study. The mine had been mothballed since 1991.

One milling circuit of the concentrator is currently being rehabilitated in anticipation of production and should be operational by January 2001. A final mining plan is being developed and mining at the Maroelabult section is expected to start in September 2000 to allow for stripping of the overburden for open cast mining and to build a stockpile to feed the concentrator by the beginning of 2001.

Initial funding requirements for the project are expected to be in the region of R200 million, with an anticipated output of 50 000 ounces of platinum (80 000 ounces pgms) per annum for a period of four years. Preparations for the sinking of a decline shaft have begun, with sinking expected to commence in early 2001. The project team is currently evaluating contractors for running the concentrator and mining at Maroelabult. This process should be completed by September 2000.

Initial bulk sample test work at No 1 shaft has confirmed recoveries of at least 80 per cent. Production from this area utilising bord and pillar mining methods in conjunction with dense media separation techniques can be phased in, increasing the life of mine beyond 10 years. Planning to increase output to 80 000 ounces platinum per annum and to further extend the life of the mine has begun.

Kennedy's Vale

Barplats holds a 100 per cent interest in this previously mothballed operation in the Eastern Bushveld. The existing shafts were designed for a production level of 270 000 tons per month. A vertical shaft system was originally designed to access reserves for six levels, with a decline shaft system planned to access deeper reserves. The vertical shaft system has been developed to 12 Level (some 900 metres below surface). Exploration work is currently in progress to confirm grades and geological structures, as previous work was based on widely-spaced boreholes.

The UG2 ore reserves and resources of the Crocodile River mine (based on the Samrec code) are 0.69 and 14.02 million platinum ounces respectively.