



# Metals & Mining in 2026: are your operations ready?

## The industry is under pressure

After a decade of volatility, metals and mining are entering a new expansion cycle. This time, growth is more disciplined, with sharper focus on execution, productivity, security and auditability.

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Capital projects are back - execution is the constraint

**The data:** Global mining investment reached \$186 billion in 2024 and must rise to ~\$260 billion per year through 2035 to meet demand.

**What's changing:** Funding is no longer the main hurdle: Delays, cost overruns and slow ramp-ups remain the biggest risks. The 2006–2013 boom showed the risks faced by projects delivered late in the cycle, when market conditions have shifted.

**What capabilities matter:** Project digital twins, centralized engineering data and project performance monitoring help detect clashes early, control budgets and integrate commissioning with construction.

**The data:** Between 2019 and 2024, operating costs have increased by 30%, driven by rising energy and offsite costs

**What's changing:** Amid declining ore grades, geological variability and workforce shortages, operators need productivity gains to maintain profitability levels.

**What capabilities matter:** Asset performance management, field digitization and connected operations improve labor productivity. One operator reduced manual data entry by 70% by digitizing shift logs and production reporting.

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An 'intense focus' on the productivity of existing assets

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Cybersecurity becomes a precondition for ai and remote operations

**The data:** Since the landmark data breach at Rio Tinto in 2023, cyberattacks in the mining industry have tripled over a single year. Recent cases at Nucor and Eastern Platinum showed limited disruption to production operations, thanks to the two companies' solid defenses and containment measures.

**What's changing:** As automation and remote operations expand, operational technology and control systems are increasingly exposed, often without proper network segmentation or asset visibility.

**What capabilities matter:** Accurate asset inventories, configuration control and secure data integration help meet new regulatory requirements, such as the EU's NIS2 directive, while avoiding cybersecurity blind spots.

**The data:** 80 countries now have carbon pricing or emissions trading schemes, up from just 10 in 2005. The EU requires steelmakers to cut emissions by 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels.

**What's changing:** 2026 marks the definitive phase of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). At the same time, financial pressure on several green steel projects highlights the gap between ambition and viability.

**What capabilities matter:** A digital thread across operations supports consistent carbon accounting, third-party verification and standards such as ISO 14064, helping companies prioritize emissions reductions that are affordable and effective.

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A reality check for "green" metals and mining

## See what they achieved - and what you can expect

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