

Dr. Gracelin Christina Baskaran

Website: www.gracelinbaskaran.com

Nationality: US

BACKGROUND

Dr. Gracelin Baskaran is an economist with a focus on hard commodities (minerals and metals), climate change and trade. She specializes on the Africa region and spent 7 years living in South Africa.

She was a Fulbright Scholar and holds a doctorate from the University of Cambridge.

CURRENT POSITIONS AND AFFILIATIONS

- 2023-present** **Nonresident Fellow, The Brookings Institution**
Global Economy and Development and Africa Growth Initiative
- 2021-present** **Bye-Fellow in Economics, Lucy Cavendish College, University of Cambridge**
- 2019-present** **Consultant Economist, The World Bank**
Office of the Chief Economist for Africa
Co-authored book, "Africa's Resource Future: Harnessing Oil, Gas, and Minerals for Economic Transformation during the Low-Carbon Transition," and the flagship Africa Pulse report.
Represented the World Bank at the Southern African Development Community (SADC) industrial forums in Tanzania and South Africa to present recommendations and discuss intra-regional trade with high-ranking officials from 16 member countries.
Independent Evaluation Group (IEG)
Authored Chapter 4, "The impact of climate change on long term growth and debt sustainability," in the IEG's 150-page review, "World Bank's Role in and Use of the Low-Income Country Debt Sustainability Framework."
Finance, Competitiveness and Innovation Global Practice
Worked with central banks and ministries of finance on the mainstreaming of climate change considerations in private and financial sector planning in Southern Africa.
Select projects: co-authored diagnostics assessing national and municipal financial preparedness for climate shocks in South Africa and Eswatini, co-designed a \$52.5m project with a component to strengthen financial resilience to climate shocks in Lesotho through risk retention and risk transfer instruments, and provided technical assistance to governments on developing risk financing strategies and instruments to reduce reliance on external debt after climate shocks.

Served as a World Bank technical reviewer on best global public financial management practices for leveraging financial instruments to respond to climate shocks at the national and sub-national levels.

Macroeconomics, Trade and Investment (MTI) Global Practice

Worked on the World Bank MTI portfolio for 8 African countries: South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and co-authored World Bank reports on trade, commodities and climate change. Managed relationships with government counterparts.

- 2020-2021 **Senior Research Fellow, University of Cape Town School of Economics**
- 2017-2018 **Teaching Fellow, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London**
- 2015-2020 **MPhil & PhD Candidate, University of Cambridge**
PhD thesis entitled: "Essays on the economic and financial challenges facing South Africa's commodity sector."
Completed with a full scholarship from the Cambridge Political Economy Trust, awarded to one candidate across the university biennially.
Presented doctoral work at conferences in Austria, South Korea, Zimbabwe, and London.
- 2014 **Fulbright Scholar, US State Department**

EDUCATION

- 2020 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), University of Cambridge
2016 Master of Philosophy (MPhil), University of Cambridge
2013 Bachelor of Science (BSc), the University of Texas at Austin

MEDIA APPEARANCES, CITATIONS AND PODCASTS (SELECTED)

- 2023 Brookings Institution Podcast: [Africa’s global opportunity in rare earth elements](#)
- Financial Mail: [Can we shield South Africa from climate change?](#)
- KYKnet TV interview: [Future of South African mining](#)
- 2022 Voice of America: [In Ethiopia, Guinea and Mali, Fears Rise Over Losing Duty-Free Access to US Market](#)
- South China Morning Post. [Weapons and wheat: Russia and its ‘oversized’ influence in Africa.](#) March 6, 2022.
- South China Morning Post. [China-Africa trade rises in first quarter, though coming months may see a flattening.](#) May 11, 2022.
- 2021 TRT World News TV Interview. [South Africa records worst economic slump in a century](#) | Money Talk.

PUBLICATIONS

Baskaran, G. [Firms’ approach to mitigating risks in the platinum group metals sector.](#) *Mineral Economics* 34, 385–398 (2021)

Baskaran, G. “Unlocking the Mining Sector’s Economic Potential Through Regional Integration and the African Continental Free Trade Area.” In Zeufack, A. and Cust, J eds. forthcoming. “Harnessing Oil, Gas, and Minerals for Economic Transformation during the Low Carbon Transition.” Africa Development Forum series. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Sihlobo, W and **Baskaran, G.** [“Agriculture in South Africa: Policy reforms to stimulate growth and employment.”](#) In Better Choices: Ensuring South Africa’s Future. Pan Macmillan. (2022). ISBN: 9781770107533

Maher, B., Ndlovu, Q., **Baskaran, G.**, Stefan, C., Pietrkiewicz., M. and Mahony, C. [Disaster Risk Financing Diagnostic for South Africa.](#) World Bank. Washington DC. (2022)

Rasagam, G., Rateiwa, R., **Baskaran, G.**, Hommes, M. and Uckat, H. [Creating Markets in Namibia.](#) World Bank Group. Washington DC (2022).

Hernandez Uriz, Z., Chinzara, Z., **Baskaran, G.**, Kwaramba, M., Louw, A., Jolly, L., Nuamah, P., Nxumalo, D., Rateiwa, R., Gopal, R., Moeletsi, W and de Vletter, R. [Creating Markets in Eswatini.](#) World Bank Group. Washington DC. (2022)

Maher, B. Ndlovu, Q., **Baskaran, G.** and Pietrkiewicz., M. [Disaster Risk Financing Diagnostic for Eswatini.](#) World Bank. Washington DC (2022).

Engel, J., Brenton, P., **Baskaran, G** and McKenna, M. Regional Value Chains in Southern Africa. World Bank (2021)

Baskaran, G., Bhorat, H. and Kohler, T. South Africa's Special COVID-19 Grant: A Brief Assessment of Coverage and Expenditure Dynamics. Development Policy Research Unit. University of Cape Town (2020).

Sihlobo, W., Kapuya, T. and **Baskaran, G.** Sub-Saharan Africa's Agriculture and COVID-19: How the Pandemic will (re)Shape Food Markets. South African Institute of International Affairs' (2020).

Baskaran, G. (2020). Essays on the economic and financial challenges facing South Africa's commodity sector (Doctoral thesis). University of Cambridge.

Hanusch, M., Aguilar, J., Bogoev, J, **Baskaran, G.** and Hayman, J. Digging Beneath the Surface An Exploration of the Net Benefits of Mining in Southern Africa. World Bank. Washington DC. (2019)

Foresight Africa 2021. Brookings Institution

Foresight Africa 2023. Brookings Institution

South Africa Country Climate and Development Report. World Bank CCDR Series. Washington, DC. (2022).

ASEAN Development Outlook: Inclusive and Sustainable Development. ASEAN Secretariat. (2021). ISBN 978-602-5798-93-1

Selected media commentary and blogs

Business Day. AGOA shows US has successfully courted Africa. January 26, 2023.

Brookings Institution. Managing the compounding debt and climate crises. March 1, 2023.

Brookings Institution. Could Africa replace China as the world's source of rare earth elements? December 29, 2022

Brookings Institution. Agricultural insurance: The antidote to many economic illnesses. (co-authored with Barry Maher). May 26, 2021.

Brookings Institution. From stimulus to debt: The case of South Africa. (co-authored with Haroon Bhorat). February 2, 2021.

Brookings Institution. US-Africa trade relations: Why is AGOA better than a bilateral free trade agreement? September 24, 2020.

World Bank. Revitalizing the competitiveness of Lesotho's export manufacturing sector. (co-authored with Marie-Francoise Marie Nelly). March 24, 2021

World Bank. Southern Africa: Why risk financing is critically important during COVID-19 recovery. (co-authored with Barry Maher). September 1, 2020.

World Bank. What is the Contribution of the Mining Sector to Southern African Economies? (co-authored with Marek Hanusch). July 29, 2019

Business Day. Climate change will heat up inflation. (picked up by Bloomberg). February 2, 2020.

Business Day. This is why the Fed's biggest rate hike in 28 years is problematic. June 22, 2022.

Business Day. Basel III weathered Covid-19 but now the climate heat is on. Business Day. March 2, 2022.

Business Day. Commodities no longer proving their mettle as global economy struggles. July 6, 2022.

Business Day. South Africa can win in the game of commodities diplomacy. October 26, 2020.

Business Day. The world is beset by climate-driven inflation. August 17, 2022.

Business Day. Intra-African trade the answer to food and fuel shortages. June 8, 2022.

Business Day. Durban's New Orleans moment makes crisis planning vital. April 13, 2022.

Business Day. How climate change undermined South Africa's economic and financial stability on way to junk status. March 8, 2021.

Business Day. Steps to curb an inflation-induced downward spiral. February 16, 2022.

Business Day. South Africa could face carrot-and-stick approach over just energy transition. November 16, 2021.

Business Day. Commodities windfall must be channeled into climate mitigation. October 19, 2021.

Business Day. Long-term perspective needed to turn mining boom into sustainable growth. October 5, 2021.

Business Day. Financial sector faces crunch in the grip of climate change. September 21, 2021.

Business Day. Afghan retreat hands green energy crown to Beijing on a lithium platter. August 24, 2021.

Business Day. Boosting Africa's renewable energy capacity can cut reliance of US and EU on China. June 29, 2021.

Business Day. With the right policies, Zimbabwe could coin it with clean-energy supply chains. (co-authored with Wandile Sihlobo). December 9, 2020.

Business Day. A blueprint for how Africa can play to its strengths. (co-authored with Wandile Sihlobo). November 23, 2020.

Business Day. Generic indicator sets back fight against poverty. February 25, 2020.

Business Day. Are we treating the symptoms rather than the cause of economic malaise? October 25, 2019.