

# Saldanha Bay IDZ to boost economic development

The new Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) along the West Coast of South Africa is expected to boost economic development and facilitate job creation according to President Jacob Zuma



President Jacob Zuma. Image: GCIS

Zuma said government began developing plans for the Industrial Development Zones in 2000 and 2002, adding that the dawn of democracy and opening up of the economy to the world meant that the country had to come up with strategies to reposition itself globally.

He said four other Industrial Development Zones were designated between 2000 and 2002. These were Coega in Port Elizabeth, East London, Richards Bay and OR Tambo International Airport.

The main objective of IDZs is to attract Foreign Direct Investment, export value added products and create jobs.

"Our objective is to develop the Saldanha-Northern Cape linked region in an integrated manner through rail and port expansion as well as back-of-port industrial capacity while strengthening the maritime support to create economic opportunities from the gas and oil mining activities there.

"We also want to expand the iron ore mining production and beneficiation in the Northern Cape," he said.

South Africa has a 3,000km long coastline and seven well-equipped commercial ports which are able to function as a hub for commercial traffic emanating from and destined for Europe, Asia, America as well as the east and west coasts of Africa.

## Job creation

Zuma said there was no doubt that if effectively implemented through a co-ordinated stakeholder mobilisation, the Saldanha Bay IDZ project will have major macroeconomic benefits for both the region. "It will generate income, create jobs, grow the tax base and be a net generator of foreign exchange earnings," he said.

"It is estimated that overall direct and indirect employment creation see about 25 000 jobs being created over a period of 20 years. It is expected to generate around R62bn in foreign exchange. We are determined to turn these forecasts into reality," he said.

The President said Special Economic Zones and the Industrial Development Zones do not function as isolated enclaves as their success was dependent on the backward and forward linkages that they create and foster with companies operating outside of these zones.

The IDZ is co-ordinated centrally through the Presidential Infrastructure Co-ordinating Commission.

The Commission is chaired by the President and includes ministers, deputy ministers, premiers, mayors and representatives from the South African Local Government Association.

Zuma also emphasised that education and skills development will be central to the success of this IDZ.

He said that the Departments of Trade and Industry, Economic Development as well as Higher Education and Training will



The pleasant West Coast town of Saldanha Bay is at the heart of the new industrial development zone. Image: Wiki Images

collaborate to promote skills development in Saldanha Bay and the surrounding areas.

"These departments will respond to the skills requirements of the industries being targeted to invest development zone," he said.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>