

Walvis Bay aims to triple capacity

Namibia's Walvis Bay will begin an upgrade early next year to transform its port into a regional hub that can handle about a million containers a year, according to Namibian Port Authority's chief executive Bisey Uirab.



Walvis Bay is to get a US\$300m upgrade. Image: Wiki Images

Situated on the south western coast of Africa, with access to key shipping routes, Namibia's largest commercial port currently handles a modest 350,000 containers a year.

Uirab said the upgrade would cost about US\$300m, will triple capacity and open a gateway for neighbouring landlocked Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe to export minerals and other goods.

The expansion is expect to start in February 2014 will be largely funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB). In a statement AfDB regional director Ebrima Faal said this project was important for Namibia and for the Southern African Development Community region as a whole.

"It is critical for fulfilling Namibia's aspirations to become a world class logistics hub in the SADC region," Faal said, adding that Namibia and its neighbours are major producers of minerals like copper, platinum and diamonds.

The state-backed China Harbour Engineering has been awarded the upgrading contract.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge