

Green technologies to flourish at Western Cape SEZ

President Cyril Ramaphosa is expected to launch the Atlantis Special Economic Zone (SEZ) this week. The launch of the 124.5ha area is designated for the establishment of a green technologies hub in the Western Cape. This follows the confirmed designation of the Atlantis SEZ status which was approved by cabinet on 8 June 201



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Speaking ahead of Thursday's launch, Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies said the SEZ is designated for the manufacturing of green technologies, alternative waste management, energy efficient technology, alternative building material and many other clean technologies.

"A combined R1.8bn is expected to be invested in the SEZ by 2022, with the creation of 1,200 direct jobs. A total of 24,00 full-time equivalent jobs are also expected to be created in the SEZ's 20-year lifespan. This is in line with our Industrial Policy and will contribute towards the objectives of the National Development Plan," said the minister.

SEZs are geographically designated areas of a country that are set aside for specifically targeted economic activities.

Manufacturing hub for green technologies

In 2011, the Western Cape provincial government, in partnership with the City of Cape Town, established a manufacturing hub for green technologies in Atlantis, which attracted large investors even before the designation was official.

"Four of these investors are already operational, with more expected to take occupancy within the SEZ in future once the facility is fully operational. This development will also allow the people of Atlantis to become involved in economic opportunities right on their doorsteps, and play an integral part in growing their economy," said Davies.

The Atlantis community will be given priority in terms of job opportunities and opportunities for small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs).

Green economic hub

Western Cape Premier Helen Zille said the Western Cape Green Economy Strategic Framework serves as the province's roadmap to becoming the leading green economic hub on the African continent, and the SEZ's official launch is yet another step forward in this regard.

“We have identified the green economy, together with agri-processing and tourism, as key sectors under the Western Cape’s economic strategy, Project Khulisa. It focuses on sectors that prioritise jobs for young people, has a significant job impact in rural areas and opportunities for people with entry-level skills,” she said.

Zille said as a green investment destination, the Western Cape offers an emerging national renewable energy and clean-tech hub; a range of investment incentives in Atlantis Greentech SEZ; as well as major opportunities for investors in, energy services, utility scale solar and wind, waste, water, bio economy and resource efficiency.

Cape Town Mayor Dan Plato said the SEZ will secure major investment into Atlantis and provide solid job opportunities and skills development for surrounding communities for generations to come.

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