

EASTERN CAPE BUSINESS

THE GUIDE TO BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT IN
THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

2025/26 EDITION



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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS & TOURISM



THE EASTERN CAPE



With 170,000 square kilometres lying directly between the subtropical conditions of the province of KwaZulu-Natal and the Mediterranean conditions of the Western Cape province, with unparalleled beauty and a lavish endowment of natural resources and;

- Abundant tourist attractions
- 800 kilometres of pristine coastline.
- World-renowned biodiversity heritage
- World-class manufacturing sector and leading automotive manufacturing hub in South Africa



13.9%
share of SA total
land area



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3 INTERNATIONAL MARINE PORTS

Port of Port Elizabeth
Port of Ngqura
Port of East London



HOME TO 7 GLOBAL AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURERS



BAIC



FAW



Engine Plant



Mercedes-Benz

STELLANTIS

VOLKSWAGEN

GROUP SOUTH AFRICA



4 AIRPORTS

Chief Dawid Stuurman (Gqeberha),
King Phalo (East London), Bulembu and
Mthatha Airport

18 flights per week to Durban
71 flights per week to Johannesburg
26 flights per week to Cape Town





4 UNIVERSITIES

Rhodes University

Nelson Mandela University

University of Fort Hare

Walter Sisulu University

88,000+ university students

18,500 university graduates per year



8 TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) COLLEGES

72,827 TVET college students

67,000+ TVET graduates per year

549 SCHOOLS



11 MAJOR SHOPPING CENTRES

247 restaurants

2 SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES (SEZ)

Coega Special Economic Zone

East London Industrial Development Zone

SEZs

Shared investment incentives & grants

Reduced corporate income tax rate

Customs controlled area

Building allowance

Value Added Tax (VAT) & customs relief



MUNICIPALITIES AND METROS

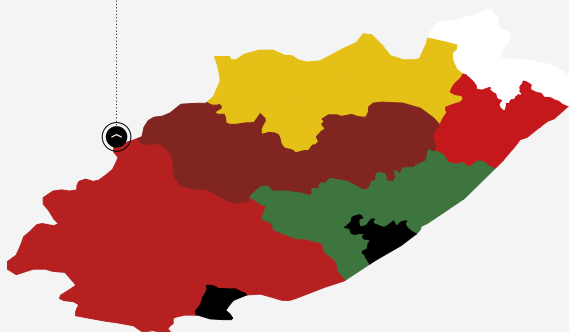
Alfred Nzo	826 331	●
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Sarah Baartman	477 874	●
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OR Tambo	1 505 126	●
Buffalo City	800 089	●
Nelson Mandela Bay	1 207 487	●



2 METROS

Nelson Mandela Bay

Buffalo City Metro



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Eastern Cape Business

A unique guide to business and investment in the Eastern Cape.

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The 2025/26 edition of *Eastern Cape Business* is the 18th edition of this successful publication that, since its launch in 2006, has established itself as the premier business and investment guide for the Eastern Cape.

We welcome the participation of the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) in this edition of the journal, both in providing up-to-date information for editorial use and in sharing information about its activities. It will also distribute the journal through its regular channels and at the annual Eastern Cape Investment Conference.

Key issues pertaining to economic growth underpin two editorial features in this edition. "An engine of growth" surveys the vital automotive sector. Having recently celebrated a century from a Ford plant being established in 1924, the automotive and automotive parts sectors continue to play a critical role in nurturing economic growth and creating jobs. Exports are vital, so how the sector and government respond to whatever new tariff regime is put in place by the US will be critical to the province continuing to prosper. Automotive support body AIDC-EC is gearing up for electric vehicles in response to changing legislation in Europe. The other editorial special feature looks at how infrastructure development is being pursued as part of a broader strategy to attract investment.

Overviews are provided on the other key economic sectors of the province and the potential of the Oceans Economy for this coastal province is examined. The major business chambers in the province have made contributions to the journal as usual and the newest chamber, the Maritime Business Chamber, which has its headquarters a short distance up the hill from the Port of Gqeberha, makes its third appearance in the journal.

To complement the extensive local, national and international distribution of the print edition, the full content can also be viewed online at www.easterncapebusiness.co.za. Updated information on the Eastern Cape is also available through our monthly e-newsletter, which you can subscribe to online at www.gan.co.za, in addition to our complementary business-to-business titles that cover all nine provinces as well as our flagship *South African Business* title. In 2020 the inaugural edition of *The Journal of African Business* was published.

Chris Whales

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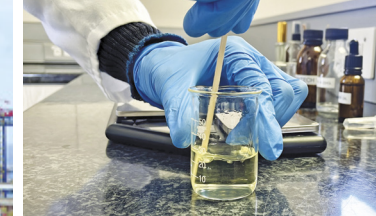
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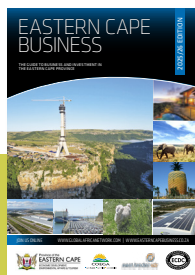
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ABOUT THE COVER: Main image, then clockwise; the Msikaba Bridge being constructed on the N2 is an extremely complex engineering project (Concor); coastal resorts offer luxury accommodation (Oceana Beach and Wildlife Reserve); Pachyderms roam at the Addo Elephant National Park (Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism); Bathurst is home to many kinds of pineapples (NJR ZA/Wikimedia Commons); factory space in East London (ELIDZ); Angora goats are widely bred in the province (John Young); Mercedes-Benz vehicles are an important export product (ELIDZ); the Coega SEZ is adjacent to the Port of Ngqura (ECDC)

A REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE



The Eastern Cape is building bridges at home and hoping to build bridges internationally to maintain access to crucial export markets. New strengths in the renewable energy sector are being further developed with electric vehicles a factor in planning scenarios.

By John Young

The impressive Msikaba Bridge, pictured, will cut travel times between East London and Durban by three hours and open up the economy of the Wild Coast region of the Eastern Cape like never before.

The bridge, which spans the 198m Msikaba River gorge and is part of a larger N2 Wild Coast project of the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL), is being constructed by the CME JV, a partnership between Concor and MECSA, both 100% black-owned Grade 9CE construction companies.

The complex engineering project includes two 127m-high pylons and its length makes it a leader in terms of cable-stayed technology. The projected overall value of the project is expected to exceed R2-billion. Msikaba Bridge will also be, at 192m, the third-highest bridge in Africa, exceeded only

by Bloukrans Bridge on the western border of the province and Mtentu Bridge, another bridge which forms part of the N2 Wild Coast project. At 260m, Mtentu Bridge is one of the longest balanced-cantilever bridges in the world.

The development of infrastructure as a means to attract investment is examined in a separate article elsewhere in this journal.

Tourism will be an obvious beneficiary of the project that will make wonderful landscapes accessible in ways that used to be the preserve of hikers and 4x4 vehicles. Opponents of the idea of mining on the Wild Coast will obviously fear that improved access will make mining in sensitive areas more feasible. The reserves of ilmenite, rutile and zircon that lie under the sand dunes at Xolobeni on the Pondoland coast are not going to go away, and requests for mining licences are likely

to be made again, despite the issue having proved dangerously explosive in the past.

While it is certain that vehicles will be able to move around much more quickly in and around the Eastern Cape in the near future, what is far less certain is whether the province's original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) will be able to export their cars and trucks to the United States.

The East London plant of Mercedes-Benz South Africa (MBSA) exports left-hand-drive C-Class sedans into the US in large numbers and regularly wins awards related to the perceptions of clients buying its vehicles in that country. Together, the MBSA and Daimler Truck Southern Africa plants employ about 2 750 people directly, and are responsible for a large ecosystem of automotive parts manufacturers.

The announcement in July 2025 that MBSA would be pausing production caused commentators to see a link to the machinations of the US government regarding tariff policy. The company did not make that link, stating simply that it was "standard procedure" based on variable production volumes.

However, OEMs and political parties of every kind are guaranteed to be paying attention to the tariff issue as the vehicle industry in the Eastern Cape is really at the centre of the economy. An article elsewhere in this publication examines the role that the automotive industry plays in the province.

Diversification

The diversification that all economies need, and which the Eastern Cape will need to accelerate if automotive exports are affected in any long-term way, has already begun in the sense that the province has earned for itself the title of the country's "Wind Province".

A large proportion of the projects approved in the multiple rounds of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) have been allocated to the Eastern Cape and the province continues to leverage that advantage.

There are 13 wind farms in the Kouga Local Municipality (which includes Jeffreys Bay) so it was logical for Nordex Energy South Africa to choose

Humansdorp as the site of a factory to make concrete tower sections. This will be an important boost for the local economy and presumably improve cost considerations for other developers. Apart from the company's warehouse in Geberha and an involvement in five wind farms in the province (installed capacity of 573MW), Nordex is also in the process of supplying and installing turbines for two wind farms on the northern border of the province for Envusa Energy, a joint venture of EDF Renewables and Anglo American.

The many new wind-power plants that the province now hosts bring power, but they also bring employment and opportunities for local communities where the wind farms are sited. The province's most recent wind-power investment will see a further three 110MW facilities constructed in the Kouga Local Municipality. The Impofu wind farms will supply energy to Sasol and Air Liquide in Mpumalanga. Enel Green Power is building the R9-billion project after a lengthy environmental and public engagement process with about 60 landowners, including the Reebok Rant Workers Trust, a dairy operation near Oyster Bay.

Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are an important part of the province's strategy to attract investors.



The 800 000th Completely Knocked Down (CKD) unit, a Mercedes-Benz Actros 2645LS/33, rolled off the assembly line of Daimler Truck Southern Africa's East London plant in 2024.



The Eastern Cape has natural assets to marvel at.

Regarding renewable energy, both the Coega SEZ, at the Port of Ngqura near Gqeberha, and the East London Industrial Development Zone (ELIDZ) have dedicated renewable energy zones. In addition, the Coega Development Corporation is actively pursuing a big green hydrogen project and has started on its Coega Solar Rooftop Project (CSRP) at the two entities it manages, the SEZ and the Nelson Mandela Bay Logistics Park.

There is a link to the renewable energy sector from other changes in the automotive sector, namely electric vehicles. In 2024 an investor pledged R11.4-billion to build 29 new off-grid charging stations. The AIDC-EC has already begun rolling out charging stations as part of its programme to prepare the way for the new automotive environment. It is also engaged in extensive training programmes.

Tourism

Another of the province's great assets which still has enormous potential to expand, and help the drive to diversify, is tourism, a sector that has been identified by the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) as a priority sector.

The ECDC invested R2-million in attracting the TV series *Survivor South Africa: Immunity Island* and that investment has been shown to pay off both in monetary terms and in showcasing the spectacular Wild Coast to TV audiences. The immediate economic impact of the filming was estimated at R10-million.

The north-eastern segment of the province is the site of a possible future national park, which would bring to five the number of national parks in the province, joining the Addo Elephant, the Camdeboo, Garden Route and Mountain Zebra National Parks. These parks not only look after animals but also protect quite distinct types of vegetation.

If the proposed Grassveld National Park is

established high in the mountains above the village of Rhodes and near to the border with Lesotho, it would be South Africa's 20th. The conservation goal behind the park is to preserve grasslands through agreements with landowners and farmers who would continue to farm the land responsibly. The land of the Batlokoa community is near the famous Naude's Neck Pass.

As a source of clean water, the area is a hugely important resource and worth preserving for that reason too. The water that falls away from the highest point of this proposed park is described by Andrew Weiss of the WWF as "heading towards the Mzimvubu River and the Indian Ocean" while another small stream at the top of the mountain is destined to join the Orange River in the west.

Weiss also described rock paintings of eland and reedbuck "with the unusual addition of dogs and a fat-tailed sheep". The Grassveld National Park project of the South African National Botanical Institute (SANBI) has recorded 1 131 species of plant life on the iNaturalist app.

In addition to national parks, the Eastern Cape has 15 provincial nature reserves and a multitude of luxury private game reserves.

The events sector is another Eastern Cape specialty, with the National Arts Festival and a variety of sporting events such as Iron Man being hosted by the province. Two big new golf events have put the spotlight on the province's tourism offering, the SDC Championship at St Francis Links (jointly hosted by South Africa's Sunshine Tour with the DP World Tour) and the Nelson Mandela Bay Championship, an official DP World Tour event. The South African PGA Championship, one of the Sunshine Tour's marquee events, was hosted for several years by St Francis Links. ■



A UK delegation has attended presentations on the development of green hydrogen at the Coega SEZ.

The industrial parks of the Eastern Cape represent varied and attractive investment propositions, with each of them in varied locations and with unique sector specialisations.

PROMOTING TRANSFORMATION AND GROWTH

Successful Eastern Cape Investment Conferences have shown that investors in manufacturing, media, construction and retail are responding to the opportunities represented by the land of infinite possibilities. The Economic Development Fund is testimony to a commitment to supporting entrepreneurship, stimulating economic growth and creating sustainable employment opportunities.

Sector: Multi-sectoral

Targeted sectors:

- agriculture
- agro-processing
- automotive
- general manufacturing
- clothing and textile

Location:

Blue Crane Route Local Municipality

Project descriptor:

- The proposed Somerset East Multi-Purpose Industrial Park is being developed on Erf 1, Somerset East (Somerset East Airfield), Eastern Cape, South Africa
- The proposed Somerset East Industrial Park is 165 Hectares in extent

Project driver:

Cacadu Development Agency

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PROJECT NAME: BUTTERWORTH INDUSTRIAL PARK

Sector: Multi-sectoral (targeted sectors) – agriculture, agro-processing, automotive, general manufacturing, clothing and textile.

Location: Amathole District Municipality (ADM)

Project descriptor:

- Butterworth Industrial Park has 236 units
- Two investors (national companies) are exploring options for logistics, distribution and warehousing sites.
- An automotive engineering company is considering expanding its operations in Msobomvu

Project driver: Eastern Cape Development Corporation

Masterplan refurbishment cost: \$24,3 million

**\$24,3
million
intervention
required**



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PROJECT NAME: FORT JACKSON INDUSTRIAL PARK

Sector: Multi-sectoral (targeted sectors) - automotive aftermarket, construction, light manufacturing and warehousing/storage.

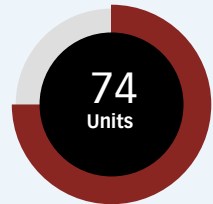
Location: East London

Project descriptor:

- Fort Jackson industrial Park has 74 units
- Strong automotive and transport focus
- Proximity to East London Industrial Development Zone and the Port of East London
- Decent road connectivity on the N2
- Phase 2 expansion investment by automotive component manufacturer - expected to create 600 jobs, but only on confirmation of 2026 manufacturing lines
- Agro-Processing Hub together with development trust and private sector partner – due diligence and market offtake negotiations.

Project driver: Eastern Cape Development Corporation

Masterplan refurbishment cost: \$21,6 million conservative estimate (2023)



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PROJECT NAME: VULINDLELA INDUSTRIAL PARK

Sector: Multi-sectoral (targeted sectors) - automotive aftermarket, construction, light manufacturing and warehousing/storage.

Location: King Sabatha Dalindyebo Local Municipality

Project descriptor:

- Vulindlela Industrial Park has 127 units
- The factory units range from 220sqm to 2,500sqm.
- Most of the tenants are in the SMME range. Service offerings are directed at making them operate at full potential and graduate them into the mainstream economy.
- Substantial number of security services firms as well as automotive repair firms
- Automotive Repair Hub plans in negotiation with the King Sabatha Dalindyebo Local Municipality
- Logistics and distribution investor looking to establish a large warehouse

Project driver: Eastern Cape Development Corporation

Masterplan refurbishment cost: Between \$41,7 million to \$63,9 million

127
Units

\$63,9
million
intervention
required

PROJECT NAME: KOMANI INDUSTRIAL PARK

Sector: Multi-sectoral (targeted sectors) - automotive, food & beverage, agro-processing, digital hub, metal fabrication.

Location: Enoch Mgijima Dalindyebo Local Municipality

Project descriptor:

- The construction and installation of infrastructure has led to a combined investment of \$4,4 million by the Department of Trade and Industry and Competition (thedtic) on fencing and security cameras.
- High mast lights in Phase 1 A&B have been completed.
- Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) is assisting the Chris Hani Development Agency with the second phase application.

Project driver: Chris Hani Development Agency



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PROJECT NAME: DIMBAZA INDUSTRIAL PARK

Sector: Multi-sectoral

Location: Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality

Project descriptor:

- The industrial park has 94 units
- Factory size ranges between 111m² - 13 709m².
- Biofuels Refinery in due diligence with right-of-first refusal
- Animal Feeds investor currently undertaking due diligence assessment

Project driver: Eastern Cape Development Corporation

Repair & refurbishment cost: est. to be over \$55,58 million (2023)

\$55,58
million
Intervention
required



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An engine of growth

The automotive and automotive components sectors have begun a second century of oiling the regional economy.



Following the 2024 celebration of the centenary of the automotive industry in South Africa, the National Association of Automotive Component and Allied Manufacturers (NAACAM) Show 2025 was hosted by the city where it all began, Gqeberha.

Gqeberha, Kariega and East London host major original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) plus a large number of automotive components companies that not only provide employment but generate a significant part of the economic activity of the province. Over the century of its development, the automotive industry has become a strategic asset of the Eastern Cape and South Africa.

Of the 350 944 light vehicles that South Africa exported in 2022, 53.5% originated in the Eastern Cape (NAACAM). The Automotive Business Council reported the automotive industry's contribution to national GDP in 2022 as 4.3%.

Mercedes-Benz South Africa (MBSA) and Daimler Trucks Southern Africa are the key OEMs in East

London, Kariega has been home to Volkswagen South Africa and its precursors since 1947 and Isuzu, FAW trucks and Ford SA (who were the first movers in 1923) are all based in Gqeberha. Ford makes engines in the Eastern Cape and has another plant in Gauteng. The province has 150 companies that make automotive components of various sorts.

Isuzu SA has completed its consolidation project, with truck and bakkie manufacturing now taking place at its new headquarters in Struandale, Gqeberha. Isuzu launched the seventh-generation D-MAX bakkie in 2022, pictured, using for the first time a new body shop at the Struandale manufacturing plant and a new chassis assembly line at the company's Kempston Road facility.

Both the East London Industrial Development Zone (ELIDZ) and the Coega Special Economic Zone have areas dedicated to automotive and automotive components manufacture. The Coega Automotive Zone has attracted auto-component suppliers such as Rehau, Benteler and Hella. In nearby Kariega, the Coega Development

Corporation also operates the Nelson Mandela Bay Logistics Park (NMBLP), which takes advantage of its proximity to the 520 963m² of Volkswagen South Africa, one of four plants worldwide that makes right-hand-drive Polos but the only one in the world that makes the Polo GTI.

BAIC South Africa (Beijing Automotive Industrial Co) has announced that it plans to go into commercial production as a fully fledged OEM at its Coega SEZ site in 2026. It has been engaged in semi-knock-down (SKD) assembly since 2018, where kits are fully imported and assembled.

Stellantis is a newer tenant of the Coega SEZ and it has also targeted 2026 as the first year of the production of its Peugeot Landtrek vehicle.

New trends are having an impact. In 2024, a private investor committed R11.4-billion towards establishing 29 new off-grid electric vehicles charging stations in the next five years. This is in addition to the EV support programmes of the Automotive Industry Development Centre-Eastern Cape (AIDC-EC).

The provincial government has announced that another investment in the ELIDZ and negotiated by the AIDC-EC will bring the manufacture of electric mini-busses to the province. The Chinese company intends investing R4-billion and employing 1 500 people in this venture.

MBSA has begun the rapid expansion of its electric vehicle (EV) charging station infrastructure. Phase 1, which is being rolled out by Chargify, saw R15-million invested in 67 stations in 2024 to be followed by a further R25-million set aside to increase the number of stations to 126 nationally. The partnership with Chargify is part of MBSA's expansion of its Enterprise and Supplier Development (ESD) programme. In 2021, MBSA announced a R13-billion investment to accommodate the production of the latest C-Class vehicle. This included three new assembly lines, a new body shop and more advanced robots.

Training programmes, for example the AIDC's collaborations with various SETAs for artisan training, are an important component of the skills-training landscape in the province. The uYilo programme is a partnership between the AIDC-EC and Nelson Mandela University (NMU) to enhance the tertiary institution's EV capabilities. NMU is the

site of eNtsa, which makes engineering skills, services and training available to SMEs operating in the local manufacturing and automotive sector through the Technology Station Programme (TSP), supported by the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA).

There are several examples of collaborations between the auto industry and academia. These three units at Nelson Mandela University illustrate the point:

- ISUZU Chair in Mechatronics
- VWSA/DAAD International Chair in Automotive Engineering
- Ford Engine Research Unit

A particular focus of the provincial government is to assist small businesses and startups to participate in the automotive industry. The vehicle fleet of the provincial government will be used to facilitate the integration of entrepreneurs who qualify from skills programmes.

An Aftermarket Programme to assist independent mechanics and panelbeaters to get better access to the budgets spent annually by the insurance industry has identified 73 panel beaters in its first year of operation. The intention is to find up to 300 such businesses to link them to the automotive value chain, which includes the insurance industry, estimated to be in the region of R40-billion, and the national government automotive fleet (R100-million). The scheme is run by the AIDC-EC and offers a three-year programme for participants.

The Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape intends partnering with the private sector to establish a Component Supplier Development Fund to expand access to finance for smaller enterprises. ■



Isuzu's homegrown strategy drives a 12-year reign in South Africa's truck market

Empowering the South African economy from the inside out.

In South Africa's commercial vehicle industry, one name has consistently risen above the rest: Isuzu Trucks! For 12 consecutive years, the brand has dominated the MCV and HCV segments, rooted in product quality and entwined with a deliberate and far-reaching localisation strategy.

While technical excellence remains a cornerstone of Isuzu's offering, it is the company's investment in South African people, skills and supply chains that has cemented its market leadership. Supporting the national vision of the South African Automotive Masterplan 2035, Isuzu continues to support the government's localisation efforts and supplier development.

Strategic partnerships with black-owned businesses go far beyond compliance. These collaborations are about building sustainable capabilities within the country, nurturing local expertise and fostering resilience in supply chains. For Isuzu, localisation means empowering the South African economy from the inside out.

Innovation, too, is being driven by these local partnerships. One example is Isuzu's collaboration with Multicranes, resulting in a uniquely engineered waste compactor with an internal screw mechanism. This technology was deployed in a project for the City of Cape Town, blending mechanical ingenuity with municipal needs and is a clear example of localisation solving real-world challenges.

A similar success story comes from Isuzu's ownership of Kanu Commercial Body Construction. This proudly South African firm builds customised truck bodies that address specific industry demands. Kanu's insight into local operating conditions



ensures that every truck rolls out ready for South Africa's rugged roads and regulatory nuances.

What sets Isuzu apart is its understanding that commercial vehicle customers prioritise value. Fleet operators care about durability, service uptime and total cost of ownership – aspects directly improved through localised design and production.

Isuzu Motors South Africa is driving sustainability forward with a growing focus on alternative propulsion solutions. From Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), dual fuel solutions and bringing in an EV truck for customer input, the company is committed to reducing environmental impact without compromising performance.

Isuzu's approach reflects a broader commitment to innovation, sustainability and long-term value for its customers. Isuzu is working with local partners and industry bodies to ensure these technologies are viable within the country's infrastructure and regulatory landscape. The aim is to offer fleet operators future-ready options that align with operational needs and environmental goals.

Ultimately, Isuzu's localisation strategy goes beyond business success. It serves as a model for building a resilient, inclusive and competitive automotive industry and is a key driver behind the brand's continued market leadership. ■

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Isuzu South Africa's ongoing legacy of innovation, partnership and progress

A symbol of utility deeply aligned with the South African ethos.

In the quiet coastal city of Gqeberha, where waves lap against the iron of working docks and diesel-scented air testifies to the country's industrial spirit, a partnership was quietly forged in 1971 that would grow to define South Africa's commercial and utility motoring landscape for decades to come. By July of that year, GM Corporation had acquired a 34.2% stake in Isuzu Motors Ltd.

By 1972, the first vehicle made its way onto South African soil under a different name: the Chevrolet LUV one-ton pickup. It was humble and practical – built not for show, but for the rhythm of real work. Local production began later that year at the Gqeberha plant, and what had started as an imported curiosity began morphing into a symbol of utility deeply aligned with the South African ethos.

In the mid-1970s, Isuzu's diesel-powered revolution began to take shape. The launch of the SBR422 in 1975, with its high-speed direct-injection diesel engine, set new standards in truck performance and economy. These weren't just vehicles; they were beasts of burden for a country whose economy was being pulled forward by the promise of reliable transport.

The introduction of the Isuzu KB40 diesel bakkie in 1978 would become the defining note in a decades-long melody. In 1979, the KB rolled off GM's

Kempston Road line with quiet confidence. South Africa had found its workhorse.

Throughout the 1980s, Isuzu continued to evolve with engineering innovation – rack and pinion steering, independent front suspension, and the expansion of its KB line. These weren't upgrades for novelty's sake; they were born of necessity, responding to the rugged, often unforgiving terrain of South Africa's roads.

By the early 1990s, Isuzu had redefined the work-and-leisure divide through its bakkies. These were no longer just farm trucks or fleet vehicles – they were family companions and symbols of aspiration.

Rise to dominance

The late '90s saw the KB rise to dominance, topping sales charts and fortifying Isuzu's position in both the light and heavy commercial sectors. The 2000s brought engineering evolution, including the bold FVZ1400 and the record-breaking KB250 and KB300 at Gerotek's 72-hour Endurance Challenge – 12 243km of unrelenting speed, heat and perseverance. It wasn't just a win for Isuzu; it was a win for South African engineering.

The last fifth-generation Isuzu KB rolled off the line at the Struandale manufacturing plant in December 2012, while 2013 welcomed the arrival of the first sixth-generation bakkie in February of that year. In





the same year, the Kempston Road assembly plant under-went refurbishment and restructuring for consolidated operations.

The year 2018 marked a seismic shift. Isuzu Motors South Africa was born – a fully-fledged subsidiary, the first outside Japan. A rebirth of sorts. The beloved KB name bowed out to make way for the globally recognised D-MAX badge. It was a symbolic transition: from a brand made for South Africa, to a South African brand making waves across the African continent.

Even in the shadow of global uncertainty, Isuzu surged forward. In 2019, it brought both bakkie and truck operations under one roof in Struandale, echoing a sense of unity and vision. The 2020s brought renewed focus on environmental responsibility, local content and black economic empowerment. Isuzu didn't just assemble trucks and bakkies, it built futures.

In 2022, the seventh-generation D-MAX was launched – designed, built and refined in Africa, for Africa. From Kenya to Namibia, Mozambique to Botswana, Isuzu's influence echoes far beyond the assembly line. It is found in the soil kicked up on long dirt roads, in the laughter of families heading to game reserves and in the quiet pride of a technician fitting the last bolt on a new engine at Gqeberha's plant.

Uplifting and changing lives

Isuzu received the Nelson Mandela University Citizen of the Year Award in 2023 for the business category. This award was conferred in acknowledgement of Isuzu's corporate social investment programmes that have uplifted and changed the lives of many within the Eastern Cape and South Africa as a whole.

In 2024, Isuzu Trucks proudly celebrated its remarkable 12-year reign as the number one top-selling cab-over-chassis brand in both the medium and heavy commercial vehicle segments in South Africa. The success is further exemplified by the NPR 400 and FTR 850 models, which stood out as the top volume-selling model derivatives, showcasing the brand's ability to meet diverse market demands.

Thanks to its strong commitment to employee development, Isuzu was once again recognised in 2024 as a Top Employer in South Africa by the internationally respected Top Employers Institute, marking its second consecutive year receiving the honour.

Isuzu's South African story is a narrative of durability, loyalty and transformation. A brand that began as a distant alliance now beats with a local heart; its ethos intertwined with the ambitions of a country that refuses to be defined by limits.

For decades, Isuzu has done more than build vehicles – it has built trust. Across South Africa, where red dust settles on headlights and diesel engines break the silence of dawn, Isuzu represented reliability and durability. Because at its core, Isuzu moves more than goods or passengers– it moves the world for people. ■





The AIDC-EC Automotive Aftermarket Support Programme

Driving transformation and growth in the Eastern Cape.

The South African automotive aftermarket sector stands as a dynamic and resilient pillar of the country's economy, offering several business opportunities and contributing significantly to the overall growth of the automotive industry. This sector plays a crucial role in maintaining, repairing and enhancing vehicles beyond the specifications of their original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), serving as a lifeline for vehicle owners and a vital component of the automotive ecosystem.

The South African automotive aftermarket sector grew by 7.9% in 2022 to reach a value of \$242-million. The South African sector is forecast to have a value of \$361-million by 2027, an increase of 48.9% from 2022.

The AIDC-EC plays a pivotal role in promoting

a vibrant, inclusive and competitive automotive sector within the province. A cornerstone of its mandate is the Automotive Aftermarket Support Programme, a targeted initiative designed to empower and uplift Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in the critical post-sales segment of the automotive value chain. Recognising the historical disadvantages faced by many local aftermarket businesses, the programme places a strong emphasis on supporting Historically Disadvantaged SMMEs, ensuring their meaningful participation and sustainable growth. The programme is underpinned by the Competition Commission's Guidelines and the Right to Repair Campaign, whose objective is: "To give motorists more choice in where and with whom they can have

their vehicles serviced without their service/ maintenance plan or warranty being compromised and ensure fair competition in the automotive repair supply chain."

Recognising the importance of this industry, the Honourable Premier Oscar Mabuyane announced that: "The AIDC-EC will implement a programme of identifying and supporting 300 Historically Disadvantaged Individual (HDI) SMME service providers over the next three years."

The AIDC-EC responded by designing a programme dedicated to fostering the growth and competitiveness of SMMEs within the automotive aftermarket sector, specifically targeting historically disadvantaged SMMEs, aligning with broader goals of transformation and empowerment.

A fundamental step in the AIDC-EC's approach is the transparent and accessible recruitment of SMMEs. This has primarily been achieved through public calls for Expression of Interest (EOI). These calls have been strategically advertised, including on the AIDC-EC's official website, local media outlets and through partnerships with relevant industry associations and local government economic development units. The EOI invites eligible SMMEs operating in the automotive aftermarket, including workshops, panel beaters, spray painters, parts suppliers, auto electricians and other related services, to submit their applications.

The purpose of the EOI is not merely to identify businesses but to understand their current operational challenges, growth aspirations and specific support needs. A rigorous selection process is followed, often involving a "Gap Analysis" assessment. This assessment, conducted by AIDC-EC engineers, helps to identify the specific areas where an SMME requires intervention, ensuring that the support provided is tailored and impactful. This systematic approach ensures that resources are directed towards businesses with the greatest potential for growth and those most in need of developmental assistance. This process leads to registration in the database. The Aftermarket Support Department aims to achieve the following objectives:



A well-qualified workforce is a prerequisite for the growth of the automotive sector.

- To facilitate the transformation and inclusivity of the aftermarket sector.
- To enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the Aftermarket SMMEs.
- To improve skills of employees of the Aftermarket SMMEs.
- To ensure compliance with industry regulatory and safety standards.
- To promote technological adoption and modernisation.
- To facilitate access to markets and business opportunities.
- To foster job creation and economic growth.
- Provision of technical training support.

As a significant pillar of the AIDC-EC 10-year Master Plan, the Aftermarket Support Programme has designed projects that translate the objectives into tangible support towards SMMEs. These are:

Technical training support

The automotive industry is in a constant state of evolution, driven by rapid technological advancements, new vehicle designs and increasingly complex diagnostic requirements. For many SMMEs, particularly those in underserved areas, access to up-to-date **technical knowledge and skills** is a major barrier to competitiveness. Automotive **technical training support** is crucial for Eastern Cape SMMEs to meet industry standard requirements due to several factors.



This page shows images taken at the Libode Campus of the King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College. Individuals with experience in the motor trades are earmarked to acquire the RedSeal or Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning (ARPL) project implemented by the AIDC-EC Aftermarket Support Programme.

South Africa has **compulsory specifications and standards** administered by the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCs) for vehicle safety, components and repairs. Without up-to-date technical knowledge, SMMEs risk non-compliance, leading to fines, legal issues and ultimately, an inability to operate.

Customers expect safe, reliable repairs. Training ensures SMMEs can meet **quality benchmarks**, preventing faulty work that endangers drivers and passengers. This builds trust and enhances the reputation of the local aftermarket.

Integration into the formal economy necessitates adherence to these standards. Larger vehicle manufacturers, dealerships and even insurance companies require service providers to meet specific technical and quality criteria. Training allows HD SMMEs to access these higher-value supply chains, fostering sustainable growth and reducing informality.

Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning

The AIDC-EC believes that the targeted SMMEs have been working hard to repair vehicles and over time have acquired practical experience without any formal qualifications, hence it is implementing the Artisan Recognition of Prior Learning as one of the technical-training interventions to facilitate the acquisition of formal qualifications.

These training initiatives are through partnerships with accredited training providers, namely Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges. It is the AIDC-EC intention to engage OEMs to ensure that the training is industry-relevant and of high quality. The goal is to equip

SMMEs with the skills necessary to service modern vehicles effectively and efficiently, thereby expanding their service offerings and client base.

Compliance with industry standards and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act

Operating legally and safely is paramount for any business and the AIDC-EC Aftermarket Support

Programme places strong emphasis on compliance with industry standards and the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act. Through the AIDC-EC Occupational Health Safety Audits it has been found that some SMMEs are non-compliant, especially those may lack awareness or resources to meet these critical obligations. The AIDC-EC recognises that non-compliance can lead to severe penalties, unsafe working environments and a loss of customer trust. The AIDC-EC continues to provide targeted assistance in this area, which includes:

- Conducting on-site assessments to identify OHS risks and non-compliance issues.
- Educating SMMEs on their legal obligations under the OHS Act, 1993 (Act No 85 of 1993), including risk assessments, safety protocols and employee training.
- Assisting SMMEs to understand and adopt relevant automotive industry standards.
- Collaborating with Local Economic Development units to guide SMMEs on complying with municipal by-laws related to business permits, waste disposal, zoning and other local regulations.

Facilitation of access to technological advancement through provision of tools, equipment and machinery

Access to new and advanced technology has been a significant hurdle for many HD SMMEs. By providing access to modern technology, the programme helps SMMEs improve service quality, reduce repair times, handle a wider range of vehicle models and ultimately, increase their profitability and competitiveness. The cost of new



or modern equipment, specialised tools and efficient machinery has been prohibitive, limiting their ability to compete with larger, more established players. The AIDC-EC Aftermarket Support Programme actively addresses this by facilitating access to technological advancements through the provision of tools, equipment and machinery.

This facilitation has taken the form of providing for tools, equipment and machinery through funding or grants for the acquisition of such items through a network of credible suppliers.

Creating awareness about opportunities

Beyond direct support, the AIDC-EC Aftermarket Support Programme plays a crucial role in creating awareness about the vast opportunities within the aftermarket industry. Many aspiring entrepreneurs or existing SMMEs may not fully grasp the scope and potential for growth in this sector.

Awareness creation initiatives include:

- Hosting regular workshops and seminars that highlight different segments of the aftermarket industry and opportunities.
- Organising networking events, such as the Automotive Aftermarket Franchise Expo and B2B Indaba, where SMMEs can connect with larger industry players, potential clients, suppliers and even explore franchising opportunities.
- Providing accessible information on market

opportunities and regulatory requirements that impact the aftermarket industry.

- Highlighting successful SMMEs that have benefited from the programme, inspiring others and demonstrating the tangible impact of the provided.
- Engaging with educational institutions and communities to promote opportunities within the aftermarket.

Facilitation of access to markets

The AIDC-EC Automotive Aftermarket Support Programme places a significant emphasis on facilitating access to markets for its participating SMMEs. Prospective markets include:

- The insurance industry.
- Government fleets, provincial and local.
- The broader private-client market.

Facilitation of access to trading facilities

A significant challenge for many SMMEs is the lack of suitable and formal trading facilities. Operating from backyards, makeshift locations or without proper infrastructure is a hindrance to professionalism, limiting growth and deterring potential customers. The AIDC-EC Aftermarket Support Programme addresses this by facilitating access to appropriate trading facilities. This facilitation involves:

- Automotive hubs or industrial parks where SMMEs can lease formal workshop spaces with access to shared amenities, security and sometimes even shared administrative services.
- Strategic partnerships.

The AIDC-EC Automotive Aftermarket Support Programme's success is deeply rooted in its network of strategic partnerships, which create a holistic support system for SMMEs, particularly Historically Disadvantaged SMMEs, supporting their growth and sustainability. The programme currently partners with:

- Banks and financial institutions.
- Educational institutions such as TVETs.
- Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).
- Private sector. ■



**Gladstone Mtyoko, Vice President
Manufacturing, Daimler Truck Southern Africa.**

Delivering value and efficiency

As a certified Top Employer, Daimler Truck Southern Africa is providing training and support for further education for its East London staff. Gladstone Mtyoko, Vice President Manufacturing, says that for DTSA, making customers' lives easier is at the heart of the company's mission.

Which of your brands have the biggest market penetration in South Africa and SADC?

Mercedes-Benz Trucks is one of the leading truck brands in the Extra-Heavy Commercial Vehicle market, boasting the largest market share of all our truck brands. FUSO Trucks on the other hand predominantly caters for the Heavy, Medium and Light Commercial Vehicle market and while not having the same market penetration as Mercedes-Benz Trucks, continues to grow in the Southern Africa region. Mercedes-Benz Buses operates in a completely different market segment and is renowned in the industry for its efficiency, reliability and robustness.

What other services do you offer?

Making our customers' lives easier is at the heart of what we do. We don't just sell trucks; we provide end-to-end solutions to simplify our customers' businesses. Beyond our standard manufacturing

warranty, we offer extended maintenance and service contracts, Mercedes-Benz Uptime, and our in-house telematics systems, FleetBoard and the DTSA Telematics Dashboard, which delivers fleet analytics at the click of a button. Our in-house finance division, Daimler Truck Financial Services, offers flexible and customised finance solutions tailored to our customers' needs. Additionally, when a customer's truck reaches the end of its life, our TruckStore division is ready to buy back the old truck, facilitating the acquisition of new ones. Through our e-commerce channel, Daimler Truck Parts Portal, customers can place orders and either collect parts at their selected dealership or have them delivered to their doorstep within 48 hours. Our latest product offering is Daimler Truck Rental.

Please explain TruckStore and Fleetboard and their usefulness for South African clients.

Our TruckStore division is one of the largest used truck dealers in South Africa, offering customers a diverse selection of trucks, buses and trailers of various brands, ages and types. Although our head office is located in Centurion, TruckStore has agents throughout South Africa to ensure convenient access for all customers. Our services are tailored to help customers achieve their goals, whether through warranty, leasing, financing or various buy-back options.

We recognise that fleet customers have become increasingly sophisticated and finding efficiencies and reducing costs is crucial in fleet management. Our Fleetboard system, an in-house telematics solution, provides customers with comparative data for each freight vehicle in their fleet. This includes an overview of operational performance, fuel levels and consumption, driver grading and evaluations, maintenance and service information and comprehensive driver and vehicle management data such as performance analysis, service and telediagnosis, trip records and mapping. While Fleetboard is included as a standard product, our DTSA Telematics Dashboard is an optional upgrade



The FUSO Canter FE7-136 Limited Edition was launched in 2022 to celebrate 60 years of local assembly by Daimler Truck Southern Africa.

that processes all Fleetboard data and presents it to customers in a state-of-the-art dashboard, accessible at the click of a button.

How many employees from the Buffalo City region does DTSA have?

The DTSA Group employs around 800 people, of which approximately 350 employees work in the Daimler Truck Southern Africa production plant in East London.

What training do you offer employees?

Daimler Truck Southern Africa has proudly been recognised as a certified Top Employer for many years and as the automotive industry leader for the past three consecutive years. This achievement reflects our unwavering commitment to our employees, acknowledging that they are our greatest asset. To support their career growth, we provide access to various training modules tailored to their career paths. Additionally, we offer support for employees who wish to further their tertiary education.

Do other businesses and SMMEs benefit from DTSA operations?

Yes, parts are sourced from global Daimler Truck source plants and local parts suppliers. In addition, DTSA has specific key performance indicators (KPIs) when it comes to enterprise and supplier development to enhance localisation and industrialisation of the automotive ecosystem and supplier value chain.

Please explain the concept of “Completely Knocked Down” (CKD) in the automotive sector?

In the automotive sector, “Completely Knocked Down” (CKD) refers to the process of shipping a

DAIMLER TRUCK Southern Africa

vehicle or vehicle parts in a disassembled state to a foreign market for local assembly. Rather than exporting fully assembled vehicles, manufacturers send all the necessary components (such as the chassis, engine, body parts and interior) in individual pieces, and these components are then assembled in the destination country.

DTSA sources its parts from several plants: which are those and does that make the assembly process more complex?

The DTSA assembly process exemplifies the intricate nature of modern automotive production. We source parts from multiple global locations, including Brazil, Germany, India and Japan. Coordinating this multifaceted supply chain is a sophisticated endeavour, requiring meticulous planning and seamless execution. This complexity underscores our expertise and commitment to delivering high-quality vehicles.

Are there South African components in the mix?

The majority of our components are sourced locally, primarily within the Eastern Cape region to leverage the proximity of our manufacturing plant in East London. Because we are fully committed to enterprise and supplier development, we have programmes in place to further grow local suppliers in the Eastern Cape region as well as other regions in South Africa.

Have there been any market shifts in the commercial vehicle industry in recent times?

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the commercial vehicle industry experienced record-high sales numbers. Over the past two years, the market has stabilised from a sales perspective. In addition, the industry welcomed numerous new entrants, significantly altering the industry dynamics. While the shift means a more competitive commercial vehicle market, DTSA sees the opportunity to reflect on our business practices, enhance efficiency and deliver greater value to our customers. ■

Building for investment

The Eastern Cape is expanding and improving existing infrastructure, and adding new facilities in every sphere.



The East London Industrial Development Zone hosts an ICT Hub and a Science and Technology Park.

Well-maintained infrastructure is a key element in attracting investment. The Eastern Cape is the site of several projects that seek either to improve what already exists or to establish new infrastructure.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has pledged national government to the expenditure of R940-billion on infrastructure development. Infrastructure South Africa (ISA), a national body that reports to the Presidential Coordinating Commission, has identified 12 priority projects across the nation. Five of these are located in the Eastern Cape:

- Ngqura Port Liquefied Natural Gas facility, R1.2-billion
- Project Ukuvuselela (high-capacity rail corridor

for the automotive sector), R7-billion

- Amatola Bulk Water Augmentation, R6.8-billion
- Education Infrastructure Programme, R9.1-billion in Northern Cape and Eastern Cape
- Healthcare Infrastructure Programme, national programme, no detailed budget available

In addition, ISA and the World Bank Group are engaged in projects to develop 10 irrigation schemes covering 10 000ha in the Amathole, Chris Hani and OR Tambo Districts.

For its part, the Eastern Cape Provincial Government has identified six “mega” infrastructure projects on which to focus: N2 Wild Coast Highway, Mzimvubu Water Project, Transnet initiatives within the province, N2 Nodal Development, undersea cables and the Wild Coast SEZ.

Major planks in the province’s drive to attract investors are the province’s two Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Dedicated sections of the SEZs provide for a cluster approach, something which automotive suppliers and logistics firms have

taken advantage of, and both SEZs are alive to opportunities in the renewable energy field.

Both Coega SEZ and the East London Industrial Zone (ELIDZ) have been attracting a mix of investors. The Coega Business Process Outsourcing Park has created more than 1 500 jobs while ELIDZ's ICT Hub caters to call centres (such as recent investor Callzilla), an ICT training facility and two data centres. A Science and Technology Park serves as an incubator and resource (with laboratories) for startups in the knowledge and technology sectors.

The Coega SEZ has 14 zones, which include Metals/Metallurgical, Automotive, Chemicals, Agro-processing, Logistics, Trade Solutions, Energy and Maritime. In 2024 Coega SEZ welcomed a R490-million investment from San Miguel, a lemon processing and extraction plant that exports to 50 countries which has created 120 permanent jobs.

At the end of 2024, Coega Development Corporation (CDC), which runs the SEZ, reported that over its lifetime, "60 operational investors have to date contributed a combined investment value of R12.3-billion".

Notable 2023/24 investments included the Stellantis Group, an automotive company which invested R3-billion, the completion of the Orion Engineered Carbons Tank Farm and the expansion of the Discovery Health facility in the BPO Park.

In the five years to the start of 2025, the ELIDZ attracted about R9-billion in investments from 23 investors. A satellite facility is to be set up at Ntabozuko (Berlin) to where infrastructure will be provided to allow for activities in agro-processing, manufacturing and the automotive sector.

A third SEZ, the Wild Coast SEZ, is in the early stages of development adjacent to Mthatha Airport. Promoted and administered by the Coega Development Corporation (CDC), the intention is to provide infrastructure to stimulate growth in manufacturing and industry. Fencing of the 226ha site has commenced and the zone is well located with regard to major transport routes and three district municipalities. Investors in agro-processing, poultry processing and the manufacturing of beverages and starches have been signed up.

The province's industrial parks are the focus of support programmes by the Provincial Government. Since 2019, some R495-million has been invested

in infrastructure upgrades at the industrial park complexes at Dimbaza, Fort Jackson, Vulindlela, Butterworth and Komani. More than 2 000 people are employed across the parks and investors such as the Chemin Chemical Technology Incubator, based in Fort Jackson, further support the development of entrepreneurs. The Butterworth park is focussed on after-market automotive initiatives and both King Hintsa and Lovedale TVET Colleges will use the industrial parks for training and development of practical skills for students.

Vodacom and MTN are continuing to invest in telecommunications infrastructure. A project to connect 23 rural villages was completed by Vodacom at a cost of R34-million; a further R71-million will be spent on connecting another 86 villages. MTN allocated R600-million to protect its network and has rolled out an extensive programme of battery and generator support.

With three ports and two large airports, the Eastern Cape is well suited to logistics activity.

Infrastructure to support the Oceans Economy includes the process to gazette Hamburg and Mbizana as official small harbours. Port St Johns Small Harbour has been proclaimed as a fishing harbour.

The provinces three large ports have all recently received upgrades or have extensions planned:

- Port of East London
- Port of Gqeberha
- Port of Ngqura (part of Coega SEZ)



SA Army Engineers are building sturdy steel structures as part of the Welisizwe Bridges Programme.

Planned projects include the Ngqura Manganese Export Terminal, a Liquefied Natural Gas Import Terminal and the deepening of the Port of East London.

The Port of Ngqura is located within the Coega SEZ, just north of the city of Gqeberha. It was primarily designed as a container terminal but additional capabilities are being added. The CDC has been tasked with finding a developer for a new Liquid Bulk Terminal and for a new manganese terminal.

Transnet has agreed that the tank farm and manganese storage facility at the Port of Gqeberha is to be moved to the Port of Ngqura. If and when that happens, opportunities for the creation of a tourist-friendly waterfront within the Port of Gqeberha will open up.

Developments and investments by Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) at the province's main airports include Chief Dawid Stuurman International (Gqeberha, R6.4-billion) and King Phalo (East London, R213-million). The provincial government intends making Bhisho Airport a cargo hub.

Regarding road infrastructure, SANRAL will spend R50-billion in the province over five years including

major projects such as bridges at Msikaba Bridge, Mtentu and the Ndabakazi Interchange.

Construction of the massive and technically complex Msikaba Bridge under construction in the OR Tambo District is on track. This will transform travel in what used to be the Transkei and open up the Wild Coast for tourism. Work on the Mtentu Bridge in the Alfred Nzo District resumed in December 2023 and is scheduled for completion in 2027. Seven of the roads that lead to these bridges will be upgraded from gravel to tar as part of the broader project.

The national Welisizwe Bridges Programme has the less grand but very noble goal of connecting rural communities via strong but simple bridges that can be quickly constructed. The SA Army Engineers, through 1 Construction Regiment, are responsible for the modular steel bridges and the programme is supported by the national Public Works and Infrastructure, provincial Transport Departments and some work is allocated to participants in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

Within the Eastern Cape 12 of 19 planned bridges had been completed as of February 2025 and in the 2025/26 financial year, a further 17 bridges will be constructed across the province. ■



The new Ndabakazi Interchange on the N2 in the Mnquma Local Municipality near Gcuwa (Butterworth) greatly enhances the safety of users.

10 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD INVEST IN SOUTH AFRICA



01. HOT EMERGING MARKET
Growing middle class, affluent consumer base, excellent returns on investment.

02. MOST DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY IN AFRICA
South Africa (SA) has the most industrialised economy in Africa. It is the region's principal manufacturing hub and a leading services destination.

LARGEST PRESENCE OF MULTINATIONALS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

SA is the location of choice of multinationals in Africa. Global corporates reap the benefits of doing business in SA, which has a supportive and growing ecosystem as a hub for innovation, technology and fintech.

03. PROGRESSIVE CONSTITUTION & INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY

SA has a progressive Constitution and an independent judiciary. The country has a mature and accessible legal system, providing certainty and respect for the rule of law. It is ranked number one in Africa for the protection of investments and minority investors.

05. FAVOURABLE ACCESS TO GLOBAL MARKETS
The African Continental Free Trade Area will boost intra-African trade and create a market of over one billion people and a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of USD2.2-trillion that will unlock industrial development. SA has several trade agreements in place as an export platform into global markets.

06. ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES
SA is endowed with an abundance of natural resources. It is the leading producer of platinum-group metals (PGMs) globally. Numerous listed mining companies operate in SA, which also has world-renowned underground mining expertise.

ADVANCED FINANCIAL SERVICES & BANKING SECTOR

SA has a sophisticated banking sector with a major footprint in Africa. It is the continent's financial hub, with the JSE being Africa's largest stock exchange by market capitalisation.

08. WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

A massive governmental investment programme in infrastructure development has been under way for several years. SA has the largest air, ports and logistics networks in Africa, and is ranked number one in Africa in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index.

YOUNG, EAGER LABOUR FORCE

SA has a number of world-class universities and colleges producing a skilled, talented and capable workforce. It boasts a diversified skills set, emerging talent, a large pool of prospective workers and government support for training and skills development.

09. 10. EXCELLENT QUALITY OF LIFE

SA offers a favourable cost of living, with a diversified cultural, cuisine and sports offering all year round and a world-renowned hospitality sector.



INVEST IN THE ELIDZ ECOSYSTEM: **INNOVATION, IMPACT, AND INCLUSION**

South Africa's industrial development landscape is becoming increasingly complex, shaped by global tariff shifts and evolving trade dynamics. The East London Industrial Development Zone (ELIDZ) is responding with strategic intent and resilience. Located in the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, ELIDZ is one of the country's most established Special Economic Zones, offering a robust platform for export-oriented manufacturing, innovation, and inclusive growth.

With the launch of its Vision 2030 Strategic Plan, ELIDZ is charting a focused course for the next five years. This strategy aims to strengthen the zone's industrial footprint, deepen local industrial capability, and reinforce organisational sustainability. It is aligned with national and provincial priorities and is responsive to global investment trends and the evolving needs of industry.

At the core of this strategy is a sharpened focus on seven high-impact sectors: automotive, agri-industries, digital economy, sustainable energy, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and aquaculture. These sectors are positioned to drive industrialisation, generate employment, and elevate the Eastern Cape's competitiveness.

Strategic Sectors and Focus Areas



Automotive:

Internal combustion and new energy vehicle production, suppliers, and related technologies



Agri-Industry:

Beneficiation and processing of agricultural produce, refrigeration, storage, and packaging



Digital Economy:

Data centres, undersea cables, digital services, and business process outsourcing



Sustainable Energy:

Green hydrogen, biogas, biofuels, and renewable energy component manufacturing



Advanced Manufacturing:

Plastics, electronics, pharmaceuticals, aviation, and robotics



Logistics:

Infrastructure, warehousing, distribution, and logistics technology



Aquaculture:

Abalone and finfish, with a focus on targeted species



Value Proposition

Strategically located just minutes from the Port of East London (9 km), East London Airport (2 km), and the N2 highway, ELIDZ offers seamless access to domestic and international markets. This makes it an ideal base for export-oriented operations.

More than a well-placed industrial park, ELIDZ is a technology-enabled ecosystem. It features high-speed internet, a state-of-the-art data centre, and growing digital infrastructure that supports smart city development and emerging technologies.

At the heart of its innovation drive is the Science and Technology Park (STP)—the only one of its kind within a South African SEZ. The STP supports research and development, prototyping, technology transfer, enterprise development, and skills training in partnership with local TVET colleges and universities.

To complement its infrastructure and innovation assets, ELIDZ offers a robust suite of investor incentives:

- **Preferential 15% corporate tax rate for qualifying SEZ-based companies**
- **VAT exemptions, customs duty rebates, and access to the Employment Tax Incentive (ETI)**
- **The 12i Tax Incentive for capital investment and training support**

Competitive Advantages

Beyond its foundational strengths, the ELIDZ offers distinct competitive advantages that differentiate it from other SEZs and industrial zones:

Operational Excellence: Nine consecutive clean audits reflect a culture of good governance and financial integrity.

Eco-Industrial Leadership: Recognised by UNIDO as Africa's leading Eco-Industrial Park.

Sector Diversification: A balanced portfolio across seven strategic sectors reduces investor risk and enhances resilience.

Investor Retention: Tailored support programmes and aftercare services ensure long-term investor satisfaction.

Transformation Commitment: BBBEE Level 3 status, with significant procurement spend directed to SMMEs and women-empowered businesses.

These strengths enable the ELIDZ to attract, retain, and support investors while advancing inclusive economic participation.



east london idz
business streamlined

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10 REASONS TO INVEST IN THE ELIDZ

Partner with the ELIDZ and unlock access to world-class infrastructure, strategic incentives, and a thriving ecosystem of opportunity.

01. Strategic Location for Export-Oriented Industry

Located in Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, the ELIDZ is one of South Africa's pioneering industrial development zones (IDZs). It offers a prime location for export-oriented manufacturing and processing, benefiting from its close proximity to key transportation routes.

02. Global Market Connectivity

Proximity to the Port of East London (9 km), East London Airport (2 km), and the N2 highway ensures efficient logistics and access to international markets. The ELIDZ ensures timely delivery of products to global customers, thereby enhancing competitiveness.

03. World-Class Infrastructure

Over 400 hectares of fully serviced sub-zones tailored to specific manufacturing requirements, with UNIDO recognition as a leading Eco-Industrial Park.

04. Strong Government Support and Incentives

The South African government provides strong support for the ELIDZ through various initiatives, policies, and funding programmes. Investors can take advantage of a favorable regulatory environment that encourages and facilitates business growth.

Investors in the ELIDZ have access to various grants and incentives, including income tax allowances, VAT exemptions, and customs duty rebates. These incentives can significantly reduce the overall tax burden, improving profitability for investors.

05. Access to a Skilled Workforce

The Eastern Cape offers a deep pool of skilled labour to support high-quality production and innovation.

06. ICT and Digital Infrastructure

The ELIDZ is developing robust ICT infrastructure, including high-speed internet, data centre, and support for emerging technologies. This development makes the Zone an attractive destination for tech companies and digital enterprises, fostering innovation and growth.



07. **Comprehensive Support Services**

ELIDZ provides soft-landing support and business streamlining services to facilitate investor setup and operations.

08. **Innovation and research ecosystem**

Through the ELIDZ Science and Technology Park (STP), the zone offers engineered solutions to streamline business operations and enhance competitiveness. It supports industrial research and development, technology incubation, knowledge transfer, and the growth of emerging technology industries.

09. **SMME Development Programmes**

The ELIDZ actively promotes the development of Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) through various programmes. Investors can partner with SMMEs to enhance their supply chains and benefit from local expertise and innovation.

10. **Proximity to academic institutions**

The Zone is close to leading academic institutions, including universities and technical colleges. This proximity facilitates collaboration, access to research, and a steady supply of skilled graduates.



east london idz
business streamlined



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Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber

A catalyst for retaining and attracting investment and employment.



The busy Port of Gqeberha with the historic Campanile in the foreground.

With around 700 member businesses and over 160 years of rich heritage, the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber (NMBBC) is the most trusted, respected and authoritative voice on matters relating to local business and the economy. As a non-profit organisation, it represents a broad spectrum of businesses and holds a Level 3 B-BBEE accreditation.

The environment is changing at a rapid pace and as such, the Chamber has adopted an activist, collaborative and action-orientated approach in pursuing its vision of being the leading catalyst for Nelson Mandela Bay to retain and attract investment and employment.

NMBBC's interventions to revitalise the Bay

include 11 geographic clusters where businesses have been mobilised together to achieve common outcomes, a Risk Management Desk, a Disaster Management Desk and Task Teams focusing on Water and Sanitation, Electricity, Safety and Security, Transport and Logistics and Business Enablement (ease of doing business).

The Chamber believes in the potential of the metro and is actively promoting the retention and attraction of investments to the Bay of Opportunity, a two-port city which is anchored by a strong manufacturing sector. This is supported through the Chamber's action arms, which include an Entrepreneurship Desk, a Trade and Investment Desk and a Skills Development Desk.

In response to the shifting global trade landscape, the Chamber has also established a Local Economy Reinvention Think Tank, with a Projects Desk soon to be launched, both of which are critical in adapting to the evolving world trade order.

The Chamber's vision and mission is supported by various corporate partner members and action partners.

Vision

To be a leading catalyst for Nelson Mandela Bay to retain and attract business.

Mission

Our mission is to collaborate with key stakeholders to develop solutions which foster an enabling environment and promote sustainable economic development through various Chamber strategic initiatives action arms.



BAY OF OPPORTUNITY

Nelson Mandela Bay is a region of striking natural beauty, underpinned by a rich industrial heritage, most notably as a hub for South Africa's automotive manufacturing sector. The metro's economy is further strengthened by the Coega Special Economic Zone that hosts a diverse range of industries, including Energy and Gas, Automotive, Agro-processing, Metals and Metallurgical, Chemicals, Logistics, General Manufacturing, Business Process Outsourcing, Trade Solutions, Training and Maritime services.

With abundant wind and sunshine hours, the Bay is an ideal destination for renewable energy investments. Coupled with a robust education system, a temperate climate, pristine beaches, and eco-diversity of five biomes and nine nature reserves, all within what has become known as "the 15-minute city", Nelson Mandela Bay offers a compelling mix of lifestyle, opportunity and economic potential, truly embodying a Bay of Opportunity.

It is against this backdrop that the Chamber has established various action arms and interventions targeted at attracting and retaining investments and jobs in the Bay of Opportunity.

Bay of Opportunity Action Arms:

Entrepreneurship Desk

The Desk acts as a single contact where Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) business growth and sustainability interventions are housed. These include pro bono one-on-one advisory support; access to markets; entrepreneurial skills development; access to finance; business-to-business linkages, among others. More than just a traditional entrepreneurial development initiative, the Desk has positioned itself as a comprehensive one-stop shop support

hub dedicated to advancing the growth and sustainability of MSMEs.

Skills Development Desk

The Desk is a strategic initiative designed to tackle one of the metro's most pressing economic challenges, the severe shortage of technical skills, particularly in the manufacturing sector. This shortage not only limits business productivity and growth but also prevents many unemployed individuals, especially youth, from accessing available work opportunities. The Desk adopts a demand-led, industry-driven approach to bridge this gap, aligning workforce skills with the real-time needs of local industry.

Trade and Investment Desk

The primary objective of the Trade and Investment Desk is the promotion of the Bay's strategic trade advantages that enable it to be the investment destination of choice. Its core mission is to cultivate a business-friendly environment that not only attracts new investment but also supports the retention and expansion of existing businesses, thereby stimulating job creation and sustained economic growth.

The Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber continues to play a pivotal role in transforming the local economy through focused collaboration, strategic partnerships and decisive action, all aimed at positioning Nelson Mandela Bay as a thriving, inclusive and investment-ready metro. ■

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“Border-Kei Chamber of Business provides key services to over 650 member organisations, and aims to be the “voice of business” in the region.”

VALUE PROPOSITION

To be the “voice of business” promoting an environment for growth and sustainability through maintaining strong, proactive relations with both internal and external stakeholders, including provincial and local government, member companies, other business organisations and organised labour.

Border-Kei Chamber of Business (BKCOB) has offices in East London and Queenstown (Komani), which serve the greater Border-Kei region.

SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO MEMBERS

BKCOB offers the following key services:

Member listing: After joining, members are added to the website directory and receive their proud member logo to add to their signature as part of their package.

Membership certificate: Monthly new members' induction and networking functions – the Chamber holds monthly new members' induction and networking events, and these provide a valuable informal but structured opportunity to meet a broad range of businesspeople.

Letters of support: The Chamber offers letters of support to members who are in good

standing for their submissions for government tenders as well as letters of introduction to members who are looking to increase the scope of their businesses.

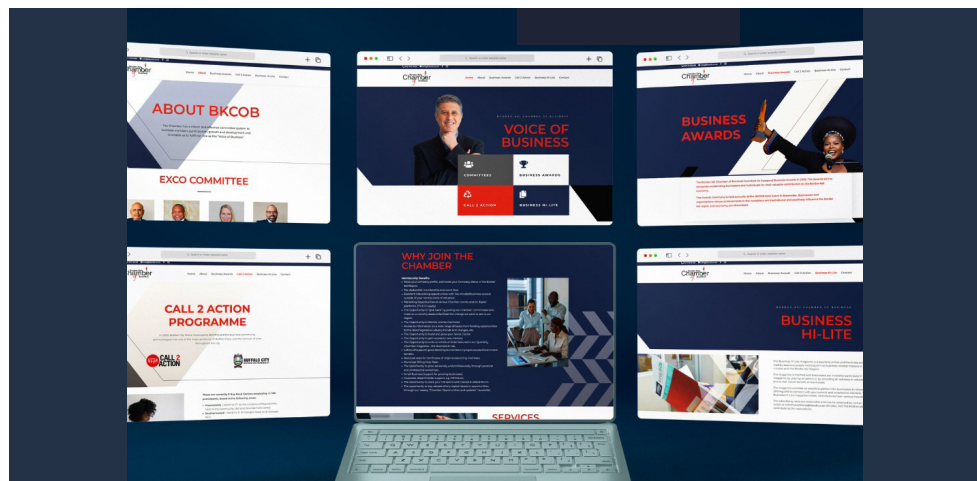
Business Hi-Lite magazine: This glossy B2B magazine is now in-house and produced quarterly, with set themes for each edition, adding relevant topics and information/news of what's happening. It also features Chamber activities and developments in the area.

Trade and information: Aside from trade assistance and information, the Chamber is also certified to issue Certificates of Origin to exporting companies.

Committees: The Chamber has a robust and effective committee structure to facilitate members' participation and to enable the Chamber to fulfil its role as the “voice of business”. Over 120 voluntary business professionals participate.

TURNOVER

BKCOB represents over 650 member organisations that generate an estimated annual turnover of R73-billion, and that employ some 58 000 people who earn an estimated annual income of R19-billion in total.



www.bkcob.co.za

Chamber Focus

PROMOTING BUSINESS IN THE REGION

The Chamber has built a relationship with the metro and various stakeholders to ensure we create an enabling environment within which businesses thrive. To this end, the Chamber has created initiatives to actively attract investment into our city.

Our mandate as a Chamber is investor attraction, investor retention, stimulating the economy and business support services and recognition.

The Chamber has various committees to realise this mandate, namely:

- Technology and Innovation
- Safety and Security
- Agriculture and Agro-processing
- Good Deeds
- Youth Desk
- Infrastructure
- Waste and Environmental Management (WEMAC): sub-committees Call-2-Action and Tidy Towns
- Tourism
- Manufacturing, Economic Affairs and Trade with sub-committees
- Komani
- Small Business Desk
- Women's Forum
- Employment Relations Forum

The Border-Kei Chamber of Business is a business support organisation serving the Border-Kei region since 1877. Through collaborations and communication with diverse stakeholders, we will keep working to serve the interests of business in the Border-Kei region. It has now been 21 years since we also established our Komani Branch, dedicated to supporting the Enoch Mgijima and Chris Hani municipal areas.

East London

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Komani

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Lizelle Maurice

“ Biography

Lizelle Maurice is a child of the Eastern Cape soil. She did several tertiary courses through Coronation Nursing College, Unisa, Damelin and UCT.

She owns Park Place Boutique Guest House, which has won her National Tourism Department's Lilizela Awards in the Emerging Tourism Entrepreneur of the Year category. She was appointed as the BKCOB's Executive Director in 2021.

KEY SECTORS

Overviews of the main economic sectors of the Eastern Cape

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Toasting a century of roasting. James Fraser Masterton and Ryler Masterton are second- and third-generation owners of Mastertons Coffee and Tea Specialists, a Gqeberha icon that has developed a national footprint. In 2024 Standard Bank, another institution with its roots in the city, celebrated a 100-year relationship with the coffee experts, noting that the bank had been with the company through wars, the Great Depression and Covid-19, also supporting a move to new premises, expansion and the establishment of a training centre.



Agriculture and agro-processing

A new Vet School will boost agriculture.



The Fort Hare Dairy Trust is part of the university's agricultural portfolio.

The Department of Higher Education and Training has approved the establishment of a Faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Fort Hare. This will be South Africa's second such school, after the Onderspoort campus of the University of Pretoria.

Livestock genetics, quality and disease control will all fall under the ambit of the unit, potentially boosting provincial production and making products more competitive.

Fort Hare is the logical site for such a faculty, as the university's Faculty of Agriculture and Science is well-established and highly regarded. The faculty recently launched the AngloGold Ashanti Research Chair in Dairy Science and Technology, made possible by a R12.5-million endowment from AngloGold Ashanti.

The Fort Hare Dairy Trust, a partnership between the university and Amadlelo Agri, continues as an economically viable entity decades after it was founded in 2007. The university also efficiently runs a piggery. The new faculty, to be located on the Honeydale Farm of the Alice campus, will welcome 30 students in the 2027/28 academic year.

The Coega SEZ Biofibre Hub Project has been established with the support of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The project will investigate viable industrial applications for plant-based fibres to support the global competitiveness of the automotive sector, promote the greening of manufacturing chains and foster the creation of sustainable jobs in rural areas.

In the automotive sector, flax, hemp and kenaf are used to make woven and non-woven composites for components such as parcel trays, interior door linings and panels. Leaf fibre, which the project will obtain from the pineapples that already come into the Coega SEZ for

SECTOR INSIGHT

Coega SEZ is to host a Biofibre Hub Project.

food manufacturing by Dynamic Commodities, as well as cactus species from the nearby Karoo area, will be used to create a plant leather for high-end vehicles.

Medigrow is pursuing the idea of cultivating hemp and indoor medicinal cannabis strains. In 2025, 26 Eastern Cape farmers received hemp seeds as part of a R100-million investment in an indoor cannabis cultivation project. Outgrowers will be properly licensed to grow the cannabis plant. Once mature, the plant will be sent to the Medigrow facility where it will be processed and transformed into finished products for export. The aim is become the hub of the country's cannabis industry.

Coega SEZ has marked another agricultural milestone with the development of the Aquaculture Development Zone (ADZ) in Zone 10, which puts life into the provincial Oceans Economy Master Plan. Funding of R206-million from the Department of Economic Development, Environment Affairs and Tourism will see infrastructure built once environmental authorisation is granted. The infrastructure development investment by the province created 500 construction jobs and 900 operational jobs.

Infrastructure South Africa and the World Bank Group are working with the Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape to develop 10 irrigation schemes that will cover 10 000 hectares in three district municipalities, Amathole, Chris Hani and OR Tambo. The hope is that larger volumes of production will allow value to be added to agricultural produce.

National assets

Commercial wool and mohair operations in the province are mainstays of the agricultural economy. The National Woolgrowers' Association of SA (NWGA), with a membership base of 4 500 commercial and 20 000 communal members, is based in Gqeberha, as is Cape Wool SA. South Africa produces about 54% of the world's mohair and Gqeberha is the mohair capital of the world. Farms around the small towns that dot the open plains south of Graaff-Reinet, Aberdeen, Somerset East, Jansenville and Willowmore are ideally suited to the Angora goat, pictured, which produces the prized fibre.

These areas routinely produce nearly half of South Africa's production. The office of the South African Mohair Growers Association (SAMGA) is in Jansenville.



The rich natural grasslands of the Eastern Cape have the potential to produce high-value organic meat, a product that is increasingly popular in health-conscious international markets.

Deciduous fruits such as apples, pears and apricots are grown primarily in the Langkloof Valley. Another crop in which the Eastern

ONLINE RESOURCES

Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa: www.cga.co.za
 Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency (ECRDA): www.ecrda.co.za
 Milk Producers Organisation: www.mpo.co.za
 South African Mohair Growers Association (SAMGA):
www.angoras.co.za

Cape leads national production is chicory. The province's pineapple crop is grown in the same part of the Sunshine Coast that produces chicory.

The Eastern Cape holds 21% of the country's cattle (about 3.2-million), 28% of its sheep (seven-million) and 46% of its goats, making it the largest livestock province by some margin.

The Sundays River Valley is South Africa's biggest citrus producer from a defined area. The valley's harvest in 2021 was 30.5-million cartons and this is anticipated to increase to 40-million by 2026. The province as a whole is the country's second-largest cultivator of citrus. Citrus export earnings from the Eastern Cape rose to R4.7-billion in 2022.

More than 4 000 people are employed in citrus in the Sundays River area, with that figure more than doubling in the picking and packing season. Further west, there is about 6 600ha of land under citrus in the Gamtoos Valley, which exports about nine-million cartons every year.

The Eastern Cape provides approximately a quarter of South Africa's milk and the industry is further expanding as producers are favouring high-rainfall coastal areas such as the Tsitsikamma region.

There are about 70 000 people employed on commercial farms across the Eastern Cape, with a further 436 000 people dependent on smaller farms, mostly in the east. ■

Energy

Transporting turbines is a logistical challenge.

There are about 550km between the Port of Ngqura and the Koruson 2 wind-farm cluster on the border of the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape provinces.

After delivery to the port, every part of the 50 huge wind turbines (including 81-metre turbine blades, tower sections, nacelles and hubs) had to be delivered to this somewhat remote destination. Depending on load dimensions, including height, weight and length, Nordex Energy South Africa routed components either along the N9 via Cradock to Middelburg or the N10 through Graaff-Reinet. At the peak of the operation, more than 60 specialists in logistics and transportation were involved. Adding to the complications were the need to operate only on weekdays and police-escorting requirements.

The Umsobomvu and Hartebeesthoek wind farms make up the Koruson 2 cluster, which is owned by Envusa Energy, a joint venture of EDF Renewables and Anglo American. Electricity will be delivered to Anglo mines in three provinces via wheeling. The cluster's total capacity will be 295MW and Nordex will maintain the turbines for 20 years.

Nordex is also increasing its involvement beyond selling, delivering and maintaining turbines. In March 2024, the company announced that it is to start making concrete tower sections at a manufacturing facility in Humansdorp. The greater Humansdorp Jeffreys Bay area hosts no fewer than 13 wind farms.

Up to 300 jobs will be created. Having invested in the Eastern Cape since 2013, Nordex Energy South Africa boasts a significant footprint in the province, including a warehouse in Gqeberha and 573MW of installed capacity across five wind-power plants.

SECTOR INSIGHT

The ELIDZ has attracted big renewable energy investments.

Special Economic Zones

Both the Coega Special Economic Zone (SEZ), which is located at the Port of Ngqura just outside the city of Gqeberha, and the East London Industrial Development Zone (ELIDZ) have dedicated zones within their precincts for renewable energy projects.

The ELIDZ has been recognised by Global Africa Eco-Parks, a United Nations Industrial Development Organization initiative, for its environmental stewardship.

In 2024, the East London Industrial Development Zone unveiled significant investments in its renewable-energy zone. Collectively the investments are valued at approximately R1.3-billion and are expected to generate approximately 1 134 new employment opportunities.

The two notable investors are Bushveld Electrolyte Company, a local manufacturer of vanadium-based electrolyte. The East London initiative, a joint venture between Bushveld and the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) is valued at R400-million with the goal of supplying product to the global Vanadium Redox Flow Battery (VRFB) market and supply chain. If the target of eight-million litres is reached, it will be the largest plant of its kind outside of China.



Components of 50 Nordex turbines on the long trek between port and wind farm location



Solar panels being installed at Dairy Group SA

A 50MW PV solar plant is the project being pursued by Thezi Langa within the ELIDZ, with the aim of creating independent energy generation capacity within the Eastern Cape and providing renewable energy to local businesses and factories. The investment is valued at R920-million.

Coega Special Economic Zone has begun implementing the Coega Solar Rooftop Project (CSRP). The CSRP is accelerating the green vision of the Coega Development Corporation, which runs the SEZ and the Nelson Mandela Bay Logistics Park (NMBLP) buildings. The initial phase will see the implementation of 4.5MW PV systems on rooftops in five buildings.

Many of the buildings within the Coega SEZ have independently added rooftop panels. The installation at Dairy Group SA of 3 254 solar panels and 16 inverters will save approximately 1 749 metric tons of CO₂ per year. The company responsible for the Dairy Group SA project, Genergy, is active in the Nelson Mandela Bay area and beyond. Its projects include the South End Fire Station, PE Cold Storage and two schools, Muir College and Woodridge College. In the Western Cape, Genergy is involved in the Huawei Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) that has been installed on a farm near Montagu. BESS is an important component of the future of greener energy systems.

The Coega SEZ has been chosen by Hive Hydrogen SA as the location of a Green Hydrogen project which will be fully operational. The project will see a green ammonia plant constructed, valued at approximately \$4.6-billion. The main development partners are BuiltAfrica and Hive Energy of the UK who have formed Hive

Hydrogen SA but various other partners are involved.

Local salt manufacturer Cerebos, who own the famous salt works on the Coega River, will supply desalinated water to the project. The hydrogen will be separated from the oxygen by an electrolyser, and hydrogen and nitrogen will be combined to form green ammonia which will be stored in liquid form at a tank at the Port of Ngqura, from where it can be exported around the world. Gas company Afrox is another partner, although there is no intention currently to convert the oxygen to pharmaceutical-grade product as that market is currently well served.

Gas potential

According to Premier Oscar Mabuayane in his 2025 State of the Province Address, “preliminary research findings indicate that the Eastern Cape has a resource base that can generate 3000MW of gas-to-power”. He called on his listeners to “embrace these opportunities with both innovation and responsibility” with the intention of transforming the province into a key player in the national and regional energy landscape.

Research on shale gas resources is being undertaken by Petroleum Agency South Africa, after gazetting by the Department of Minerals and Petroleum Resources. The resource lying underneath the Karoo within the district municipalities of Sarah Baartman, Amathole and Chris Hani is estimated at 200-trillion cubic feet. ■

ONLINE RESOURCES

Coega SEZ: www.coega.co.za

East London IDZ: www.elidz.co.za

South African Renewable Energy Technology Centre:
www.saratec.org.za

Manufacturing

InnoVenton celebrates 20 years.

InnoVenton, a research institute at Nelson Mandela University, celebrated its 20th birthday in 2025. Products and process development are the main areas of focus of the institute, which also incorporates the Downstream Chemicals Technology Station (DCTS), pictured, which in turn is part the Technology Station Programme (TSP). TSP is led by the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), an entity of the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation.



in South Africa.

A small production unit to produce green hydrogen is currently under construction at InnoVenton, arising from years of electrocatalysis research contributions by MSc and BSc honours students. Funding was awarded from the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) and the National Research Foundation.

The province's industrial parks are the focus of support programmes by the Provincial Government. They are also engaged in training which is relevant to manufacturing.

In the five years to 2025, the East London IDZ Science and Technology Park has trained more than 983 people in various skills including automotive manufacturing assembly, renewable energy, digital forensics, cloud computing and additive manufacturing.

The East London Industrial Development Zone exported products worth more than R3-billion in 2023. In the same period, the Coega Special Economic Zone attracted a variety of investments from manufacturing.

SECTOR INSIGHT

Green hydrogen is under the microscope.

Since 2019, some R495-million has been invested in infrastructure upgrades at Dimbaza, Fort Jackson, Vulindlela, Butterworth and Komani. More than 2 000 people are employed across the parks and investors such as the Chemin Chemical Technology Incubator, based in Fort Jackson, further support the development of entrepreneurs. The Butterworth park is focussed on after-market automotive initiatives and both King Hintsa and Lovedale TVET Colleges will use the industrial parks for training and development of practical skills for students.

Montego Pet Nutrition, Graaff-Reinet's biggest private employer, has been investing in both expanded capacity and in power generation.

First National Battery, a Metair Group company, has one factory at Fort Jackson and two factories in East London. Mpact runs two corrugated packaging convertor facilities in the Eastern Cape, at Deal Party in Gqeberha and Gately Township, East London.

Bodene, a subsidiary of Fresenius Kabi, makes intravenous medicine in Gqeberha. East London hosts Johnson & Johnson's finance, operations and research and development divisions.

Aspen Pharmacare's East London and Gqeberha manufacturing facilities make a wide variety of product types including steriles, oral solid dose, liquids, semi-solids and active pharmaceutical ingredients. ■

ONLINE RESOURCES

Coega Development Corporation: www.coega.co.za
 Eastern Cape Development Corporation:
www.ecdc.co.za
 East London Industrial Development Zone:
www.elidz.co.za
 InnoVenton: www.innoventondcts.mandela.ac.za

The SAIEE calls on Engineering Practitioners in the Eastern Cape

Formed in 1909, the South African Institute of Electrical Engineering (SAIEE) has a long-standing tradition of supporting and promoting excellence in electrical engineering. As we continue to grow and expand our reach, we call on all Eastern Cape engineering practitioners to join us and collaborate with the SAIEE Eastern Cape Centre.

Becoming a SAIEE member gives you access to a wide range of benefits and opportunities to further your career and professional development. Our 9 Centres nationwide provide a platform for members to network with industry experts, participate in monthly lectures, and access career development tools to enhance their skills and knowledge.

One key advantage of being a SAIEE member is the opportunity to participate in CPD-accredited site visits, which can provide valuable insights and practical knowledge to help you stay ahead in the rapidly evolving field of electrical engineering. Additionally, our Centres are vital in promoting engineering studies to school leavers, mentoring students through our student chapters, and offering access to the industry's most essential technical information in English.

By joining forces and building a strong community of engineering practitioners in the Eastern Cape province, we can make a real impact and drive positive change in our industry. We invite you to join the SAIEE family and help us shape the future of electrical engineering in South Africa. Join us today and be a part of something great!

For more info, email ecc@saiee.org.za

JOIN US TODAY!



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Tourism

Airport upgrades will improve access.



Runway access at King Phalo Airport in East London, pictured, is being improved. Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) will spend R213-million over three years on this project. A further R4.6-billion will be spent by ACSA at the Dawid Stuurman International Airport in Gqeberha for runway rehabilitation.

The Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape is also trying to make Bhisho Airport a destination for international cargo transportation.

Improved access to the eastern parts of the province, and within that region via improved roads and bridges, will open up the pristine Wild Coast, pictured, to a larger number of tourists, domestic and international. This possibility obviously holds both great promise (of jobs and economic growth) and significant danger (that unfettered access will degrade the very thing that is most attractive about the area).

According to the Tourism Performance Report for the fourth quarter of 2024 issued by South African Tourism, international visitors to the Eastern Cape stayed for more nights than in any other province in the country, 14 on average. This somewhat compensates for the relatively low number of international visitors, a number which in Q4 2024 was 90 629. The Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) noted that international numbers for the first quarter

SECTOR INSIGHT

Sustainability training is on offer.

of that year were 11.9% up on the previous year's figures. The top inbound markets for the four months covered by the SA Tourism report were as follows: Zimbabwe, Germany, UK, Lesotho, US and Netherlands. Figures for domestic trips into the Eastern Cape for 2022 showed that there were 5.8-million visits during that year, and the estimated economic impact was over R8-billion.

ECPTA runs 15 nature reserves as part of its mandate, including the Mkambati Nature Reserve in north-eastern Pondoland, which has been described as "an African coastal paradise". A waterfall that falls directly into the sea is a rare delight and varied landscapes include outposts of indigenous forest and densely-forested riverine gorges. The largest part of

ONLINE RESOURCES

Buffalo City Tourism: www.buffalocitytourism.co.za
Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency: www.visiteasterncape.co.za
Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism: www.nmbt.co.za

the reserve comprises grassland which supports Blesbuck, Gemsbok, Blue Wildebeest, Red Hartebeest and Eland.

The Black Rhino Range Expansion Project (BRREP) translocated its 250th rhinoceros in 2023. The BRREP has been moving rhinos to protect them for 20 years and the latest batch of 20 were taken from a reserve managed by the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency. In six years to 2023, 40 rhinos were moved into the custodianship of the ECPTA.

This effort has been recognised by the World Bank, which is putting R65-million from its Global Environment Facility (GEF) towards efforts in the province to protect biodiversity, in particular in the Addo Elephant National Park and the Great Fish Nature Reserve. Several private game reserves have gone to great lengths to protect their rhino populations.

The ECPTA is partnering with the sector-training authority responsible for banking, BANKSETA, to train women in the tourism sector to reduce expenditure in their businesses by using resources sustainably.

The marketing of the province by ECPTA is paying off, something that the Provincial Premier has attributed to the SMART strategy adopted. This refers to a campaign that is specific, measurable, actionable, relevant and time-bound. The Agency is in the process of identifying potential markets in the other parts of the African continent, BRICS and G20 countries.

Part of the marketing plan has been about getting the province on to film and television screens. Supporting the hosting of golf tournaments was another success. In addition to hosting the South African PGA for the third time in 2023 at St Francis Links, a new, DP World Tour-sanctioned event, the SDC Championship, was added to the calendar and played on the Jack Nicklaus-designed course in 2023 and 2024. Gqeberha also hosted a new tournament, and in 2023 the metropolitan municipality put its weight behind the effort to market the city through the tournament. The Nelson Mandela Bay Championship was played for the first time in 2023, and again in 2024 as part of the DP World Tour at Humewood Golf Club and attracted considerable media attention.

Reserves and hotels

The interior of the Eastern Cape is home to several high-end private game reserves such as Shamwari, Mount Camdeboo and Kariega Game Reserve. Some luxury game lodges

are located within national parks, such as the Gorah Elephant Camp, which is run by Hunter Hotels and forms part of the Addo Elephant National Park.

Premier Hotels has two hotels in East London, the Mpanga Private Game Reserve and it manages the East London International Convention Centre. Tsogo Sun runs Hemingways Hotel and Casino in East London.

Southern Sun has five Eastern Cape properties, including three in Gqeberha, Southern Sun The Marine, Garden Court Kings Beach and SUN1 Port Elizabeth. The Radisson Blu in Port Elizabeth offers five-star luxury overlooking Pollock Beach.

The City Lodge Group offers the Courtyard Hotel, City Lodge Hotel, Town Lodge and Road Lodge close to one another on Gqeberha's beachfront, which allows the group to cater to four distinct markets with a total of 533 rooms. East London has a Road Lodge. ■



Film

Film Expo offers exposure.



The Eastern Cape Film Expo is becoming a regular and popular part of the National Arts Festival held every year in July in the cathedral city of Makhandla (formerly Grahamstown), pictured. Hosted by the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) since 2022, the Expo is helping to position the province as a film and television destination by attracting local and international film productions and investors. Over and above the programme of film screenings, the Expo allows for collaboration and networking among professionals in different disciplines.

The Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape announced in 2025 that it was setting aside a sum of R30-million to fund emerging artists and film development. Producers and broadcasters have been encouraged to submit expressions of interest to gain access to grants.

Since 2018, the Provincial Government, through the ECDC and various film funds, has invested R39-million in 25 film projects. This has attracted an investment revenue of R499-million, created employment for more than 8 400 people and boosted 690 small businesses. Another big financial supporter of film projects is the National Empowerment Fund.

The film sector is one of the best in terms of investment returns, especially in social terms such as employment and local economic development. The Economic Impact Report of the National Film and Video Foundation in 2021 concluded that the film industry is one of the sectors with the greatest potential for growth in South Africa.

Skills transfer to young people has also accelerated with the

SECTOR INSIGHT

R30-million is available in grants.

investments taking place in four of the province's district or metropolitan municipalities. There is also potential for the growth and development of a thriving film industry to have a positive impact on other sectors such as communication, media and entertainment. The industry, through its products, further promotes cultural knowledge and attracts international interest to the region.

The ECDC's Eastern Cape Investment Film Fund is available to most production categories, from animation to feature films with TV series and telenovelas and documentaries in between and ranges from R1-million to R3-million. The funding is restricted to productions that plan to shoot their projects in the Eastern Cape.

Tourism, one of the best sectors for creating employment, was boosted by two series of the popular *Survivor* series. *Survivor: Immunity Island*, which was aired in 2021, showed off the glories of the Wild Coast landscape, one of the jewels in the crown of the province's tourism offering. Local municipalities are seeing the benefits of hosting film shoots, as witnessed by the efforts of both the Sarah Baartman District Municipality and the Dr Beyers Naude Local Municipality when filming came to Graaff-Reinet. ■

ONLINE RESOURCES

Department of Trade, Industry and Competition: www.thedtic.gov.za
Eastern Cape Development Corporation: www.ecdc.co.za
National Film and Video Foundation: www.nfvf.co.za

Business Process Outsourcing

The sector is growing.

Discovery Health expanded its call centre facility at the Business Process Outsourcing Park in Zone 4 of the Coega Special Economic Zone by 542m² in the course of the 2024/25 financial year.

The same facility became one of the first buildings within the Coega SEZ to have its roof covered in solar panels, pictured, as part of the Coega Solar Rooftop Project being rolled out by the Coega Development Corporation, the entity that manages the SEZ. Uninterrupted power supply to the BPO park is among the reasons that it has attracted a combined investment value of R18.1-million. The park has so far created a total of 1 529 jobs.



South Africa's GBS sector, which includes BPO and Shared Services, is growing twice as fast as the world's and three times faster than India and the Philippines. The Eastern Cape has four universities and eight TVET colleges, high-speed connectivity and an attractive lifestyle. Other factors in favour of the area are the relatively neutral accents, good financial and telecommunications infrastructure and the time zone being the same or close to Europe's.

Better connectivity as promised by the landing of the EC Africa2Cable could be the platform for further investments and job opportunities.

Callzilla, a call centre servicing the US market, has chosen to locate its latest office in East London. Citing reports that South Africa is ranked third in the world among English-speaking destinations,

SECTOR INSIGHT

Incentives are available.

Callzilla notes that 90% of services delivered from South Africa are related to customer experience (CX) and contact centre services. The investment in East London has created happy customers in the US, according to Callzilla.

The GBS Incentive Scheme of the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) provides investment-funding support for financially viable propositions that create youth employment opportunities. There are three tiers of support available, depending on the size of the investment and how many jobs and opportunities for local SMMEs are created. For a R50-million project over three years, a maximum sum of R400 000 is available while a contract between R201-million and R500-million might attract up to R1.2-million in support.

The East London Industrial Development Zone (ELIDZ) has an ICT strategy that focusses on an ICT Hub which will include a dedicated GBS facility, a scalable data centre and a 1 000-seat business continuity and ICT training facility. The ELIDZ currently operates two data centres with ISO27001 accreditation and has obtained approval for the concept development of an 800-seater BPO/GBS Park in conjunction with an interested party. ■

ONLINE RESOURCES

Business Process enabling South Africa (BPesa): www.bpesa.org.za
Coega SEZ: www.coega.co.za
Eastern Cape Development Corporation: www.ecdc.co.za
East London Industrial Development Zone: www.elidz.co.za

Development finance and SMME support

The power of sewing.

A sewing and laundry enterprise in the small town of Adelaide has grown to the point where six people other than the founder are employed.

D'Bongs Trading, created by Ntombodidi Dilima, pictured, in 2014, achieved a breakthrough when Mercedes-Benz South Africa signed a five-year contract for protective covers for parts in transit. The funding of new sewing and embroidery machines by Enel Green Power, which has invested in several renewable energy plants in the province, made it possible for the small business to win the contract. Revenue has increased by 50% with other jobs such as school uniforms, outfits for local church members and tracksuits for school sports days all contributing to growth. Enel also provides training.

In the five years to 2025, Eastern Cape businesses did business with the provincial authorities to the tune of R43.8-billion. The Eastern Cape Provincial Government has been working on paying small businesses in a more timely manner, as this was identified as a major barrier to the sustainability of some startups dependent on government contracts. As of February 2025, all of the province's departments (with the exception of Health) were paying by 17 days.

The Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT) is working with the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) to increase the support of SMMEs. This is done by helping SMMEs gain access to finance and markets, as well as ensuring that provincial government contracts are accessible to small businesses. Provincial government departments are encouraged to buy from SMMEs.

Three of the ECDC's four business units are devoted to small business: Rural, Enterprise Finance and Business Support; Investment Management, Trade and Investment Promotion; and Economic Development Coordination and Sector Support. The ECDC has several financial and non-financial products tailored to SMMEs through various programmes offered by these business units.

In his 2025 State of the Province address, Premier Oscar Mabuyane declared himself, "proud of Isiqlalo Youth Fund beneficiaries who are growing their businesses". These include KwaKuhle African Cuisine in East London, a hospitality business which won the Emerging Entrepreneur Award at the Border Kei Chamber of Business Awards,

SECTOR INSIGHT

The Isiqlalo Youth Fund supports startups.

and Mvolo Heights in Eliot which has graduated to export its maize production to Botswana and Mozambique. The fund will spend R168-million to 2027 in supporting youth-owned enterprises.

Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA) has a project called Ntinga ("to soar" in Xhosa) whereby suppliers receive training and are mentored for 18 months. As part of its Enterprise Development programme, the Wild Coast Sun runs an Academy where SMME business courses are offered. The resort aims to achieve 90% procurement of all goods and services from BBBEE level 1 suppliers within five years. ■



ONLINE RESOURCES

Eastern Cape Development Corporation: www.ecdc.co.za

Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency: www.ecrda.co.za

Water

Major schemes are set for completion.

The Lubisi Water Treatment Works that will bring a steady water supply to 92 villages was handed over to the local authority by National Water and Sanitation Minister Pemmy Majodina, pictured, in February 2025.

The multimillion-rand project, which falls under the department's Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and is part of the broader Cluster 4 Bulk Water Supply Project, will serve more than 90 000 people in the Chris Hani District Municipality.



Another national government disbursement, the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, will see R3.5-billion allocated directly to municipalities to improve water infrastructure. The Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape has set a target of 90% by 2030 for the percentage of households having access to piped water. One of the great achievements of the democratic era (post 1994) has been the improvement of services but water has been one of the most difficult to install, maintain and pay for.

Various regional bulk water and sanitation infrastructure projects have been undertaken by the Provincial Government. In the 2025 SOPA, the Premier pledged that 11 regional bulk infrastructure projects currently under construction would be completed by the end of his term of office, in five years. These include the Ndlambe Bulk Water Supply, the Sterkspruit Regional Wastewater

SECTOR INSIGHT

90% is the new target for piped-water access.

Treatment Works and the Greater Mbizana Regional Bulk Water Scheme. If these are indeed completed, the likelihood of being able to have a reliable supply of water would greatly increase.

The National Department of Water and Sanitation has restarted the Mzimvubu Water Project, albeit on a less grand scale than was originally planned. The estimated R8-billion that will now be spent, starting with the Ntabelanga Dam project, will create water infrastructure to serve more than 140 000 households in the district municipalities of Alfred Nzo, OR Tambo and Joe Gqabi, areas that are mostly rural and include the popular tourist section of the coast known as the Wild Coast.

The Mzimvubu River, regarded as the only major river in South Africa not to be treated as a resource, is intended to supply water to support poverty alleviation and development initiatives. Construction of the dam was expected to start in 2024 and many of the access roads to the site have been completed. However, in 2025 some community grievances regarding land that would be alienated needed to be addressed.

The Nelson Mandela Bay metropole currently gets its water from 10 dams, six of which are owned by the municipality. Water services are provided to the citizens of the Eastern Cape by 17 water service authorities which oversee 163 drinking water supply systems. Municipalities and Amatola Water are the primary providers of services. ■

ONLINE RESOURCES

Institute for Water Research, Rhodes University:
www.ru.ac.za/iwr
 National Department of Water and Sanitation:
www.dws.gov.za
 Water Institute of South Africa: www.wisa.org.za

Education and training

A school of aviation has been launched.

CHIETA, the Sector Education Training Authority that oversees the chemicals sector, has established a SMART Skills Centre on the Iqhayiya campus of the Port Elizabeth TVET College in Gqeberha.

The centre is located to ensure accessibility for the previously underserved communities and surrounding schools of New Brighton. Users have access to computers and the Internet, a boardroom, a welding simulator, augmented and virtual reality, pictured, Java programming, cloud computing and robotics.



CHIETA intends for every province to have such a centre to improve access to the digital economy.

Several other SETAs are involved in presenting training programmes in partnership with the Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape, aiming to benefit more than 37 000 young people. Programmes include Artisan Development, Emerging Contractors Development, Youth Brigades, Agricultural Entrepreneurship skills and

Graduate Incubation.

MerSETA (manufacturing, engineering and related services) is partnering with the Office of the Premier in targeting 10 000 youth in the Mega Skills Project. In addition, the same partners have allocated R70-million towards clearing historical debt held by students at tertiary institutions.

43 Air School in Port Alfred was founded to train bombardiers, gunners and navigators to contribute to the Allied effort in World War II. Training for a variety of licences is still available for adults, but a new initiative has seen the launch of a high school that will produce pilots, engineers and air-traffic controllers. The Eastern Cape Provincial Government is investing R35-million in the first group of 25 pupils who have enrolled at the school.

Expenditure of R7.4-billion to 2030 will pay for the building and

SECTOR INSIGHT

Digital access is expanding.

refurbishment of 138 schools across the province.

The Eastern Cape has eight Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) colleges, most of which have more than one campus: Buffalo City, Port Elizabeth, Lovedale, King Hintsa, Ingwe, King Sabata Dalinyebo, Ikhalala and Eastcape Midlands College.

Rhodes University, which held year-long celebrations of its 120th anniversary in 2024, has a strong reputation for research, which has been enhanced by the addition of the Biotechnology Innovation Centre. The University of Fort Hare is leading three innovative studies into biogas, including a project investigating compressed biogas for public transport. Nelson Mandela University's Missionvale Campus now offers the MBChB (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery) qualification.

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) is the other academic medical facility in the province. A R50-million science centre, named after Albertina Nontsikelelo Sisulu, has been built in Cofimvaba. WSU has done important research and skills development in the vaccine programme headed by Professor Markus Depfenhart, which also included North-West University. WSU and the University of South Africa (Unisa) offer vocational training (diplomas) and academic programmes (degrees). ■

ONLINE RESOURCES

Eastern Cape Department of Education: www.ecdoe.gov.za
MerSETA: www.merseta.org.za
Technology Innovation Agency: www.tia.org.za

ICT

Training is readily available.

The third cohort of students graduated from the Samsung Innovation Campus at Walter Sisulu University in 2025, pictured. Operated by the Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubators (CFERI), the aim is to transfer IT skills and help graduates start their own businesses. Courses are offered on basic coding, programming, artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things.

The Bridging the Digital Divide for an Inclusive Digital Economy project is making an impact in the Eastern Cape. A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) initiative, this programme has the support of the Japanese government and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and has been rolled out to more than 3 000 unemployed young graduates in three provinces including the Eastern Cape since its inception in 2022. The programme also links trainees to internships and employment opportunities.

Liquid Intelligent Technologies has opened an office in East London. The company has invested more than R300-million into extending its operations in the region, connecting more than 900 government buildings in the process. Liquid provides services and products such as connectivity, voice, cloud, cybersecurity and managed-service offerings to the private and public sector.

In 2021, Liquid opened a Digital Learning Centre in Mthatha catering to school pupils and unemployed young people. Parent company Cassava Technologies offers services in more than 30 markets in Africa, the Middle East, India and Latin America.

Access to services has been one of the great achievements of the democratic era. The path has not always been easy or even but in the Eastern Cape the rise in the number of households having access to the Internet has been notable. The figure rose to 65% in 2024. Programmes to connect schools, health facilities and libraries have been undertaken regularly over the years.

The East London IDZ Science and Technology Park is a provincial hub for digital technology and training. In five years to 2025 the

SECTOR INSIGHT

Liquid Intelligent Technologies has a new office in East London.

Science Park has trained more than 983 people in a variety of fields including digital forensics, cloud computing and training entrepreneurs to trade in information, so-called "infopreneurships".

The SABC is contributing to digital education through a



programme coordinated by radio station Tru FM to donate laptops to schools. In February 2025, 20 laptops were handed over to Mzokhanyo High School in East London.

Nelson Mandela University's School of Information Technology offers several diplomas, degrees and shorter programmes. The school comprises the CISCO Academy Support Centre, the Centre for Research in Information and Cyber Security (CRICS) and the Centre for Community Technology. ■

ONLINE RESOURCES

East London IDZ Science and Technology Park www.elidz.co.za
 NMU School of IT: www.soit.mandela.ac.za
 Samsung WSU Innovation Campus: www.wsu.ac.za

Oceans economy

A World Bank fund is supporting research.



Mzimvubu River Mouth, Port St Johns

Recent investment into upgrades at the Port of Gqeberha have cost R334-million and created 349 jobs. Two projects are also underway at the Port of East London as the Eastern Cape strives to put meat on an Oceans Economy strategy that seeks to unlock value from aspects of a sector that holds huge potential. Beyond harbours and fishing, sectors such as maritime repair and maintenance, and oil and gas exploration could spark economic growth and generate many jobs.

The Eastern Cape Integrated Aquaculture and Fisheries Strategy of the Provincial Government was implemented in the 2024/25 financial year. Presentation of this strategy to World Bank officials resulted in PROBLUE, an umbrella multi-donor trust fund administered by the World Bank, putting R10-million into identifying value chains and market channels for seaweed, abalone and finfish farming. Visits to Greece and Italy are planned to attract investors in the Eastern Cape's nascent Oceans Economy.

Smaller projects that seek to incorporate elements of the Oceans Economy that were previously neglected include the planned proclamation of Port St Johns as a fishing Small Harbour. Related to this development are plans for Hamburg and Mbizana to be developed as "secondary sites", thus bringing more subsectors into the anticipated expansion of opportunities. Small-scale fishers are being supported

ONLINE RESOURCES

Maritime Business Chamber: www.maritimechamber.co.za
Ocean Sciences Campus (NMU): <https://oceansciences.mandela.ac.za>
South African International Maritime Institute: www.saimi.co.za

SECTOR INSIGHT

Port St Johns is set to be proclaimed a fishing harbour.

by the Provincial Government of the Eastern Cape in infrastructure such as cages and boats.

The focus of an expanded aquaculture sector is at Mbashe, Coega Special Economic Zone and the East London IDZ. The Coega Development Corporation (CDC) has set out a 440ha zone inside the Coega SEZ adjacent to the deepwater Port of Ngqura.

Many officials in the Eastern Cape are concerned that new national regulations relating to bunkering will have a negative effect on Nelson Mandela Bay's economy and representations are being made in this regard

The Port of East London is best known as the conduit for the export of Mercedes-Benz vehicles and agricultural produce. It is set to become an alternate destination for manganese exports but the bulk of exports will go through a new dedicated manganese export facility with a capacity of 16-million tons to be built at Ngqura. This development will free up space within the Port of Gqeberha for leisure craft and ensure that Kings Beach will remain a sought-after holiday destination.

Another development within the Port of Ngqura will see the Mediterranean Shipping Company establish an additional export-cargo service for agricultural products such as the citrus from the Sundays River Valley. National government has named the Coega SEZ as the site of a potential liquified natural gas (LNG) plant. ■

Maritime for Us All – The Eastern Cape's Gateway to Africa's Blue Economy



MBC

MARITIME BUSINESS CHAMBER

The Maritime Business Chamber (MBC) stands as the anchor and place of refuge for the Maritime industry – driving transformation, facilitating economic participation and promoting sustainable growth across the oceans economy.

Our vision is clear: to be a leading, inclusive, progressive and transformative Chamber for the development of competent and sustainable Maritime enterprises.

Our mission is simple yet powerful – Maritime for Us All – anchoring opportunities for all, especially historically disadvantaged communities, to participate meaningfully in the Maritime value chain.

Driving Strategic Impact

From 2025-2030, the Chamber's strategic focus will leverage Africa's largely untapped Maritime potential. MBC identifies the following as priority sectors: Shipping, Ports, Marine Engineering, Offshore Energy, Fisheries, Aquaculture and Maritime Research with the aim to:

- Advocate for policies that remove barriers to entry and ensure fair participation.
- Facilitate access to finance, partnerships and market opportunities.
- Build global competitiveness through regional integration and benchmarking.
- Strengthen enterprise development, leadership capacity and compliance readiness.
- Foster collaboration in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Revised Africa Maritime Transport Charter.

At the Continental heart of MBC's mission is Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME) development – creating sustainable jobs, building skills and ensuring that Maritime truly works for everyone. The Chamber acts as a bridge between



Unathi Sonti, MBC Executive Chairperson greets Wamkele Keabetswe Mene, Secretary-General of the African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat.

small players and major industry stakeholders, enabling partnerships that drive transformation, innovation and competitiveness.

Unity, Purpose and Innovation

Guided by the Seven Kwanzaa Principles – Unity, Self-Determination, Cooperation, Collective Work, Purpose, Creativity and Faith – MBC operates with a values-driven approach, ensuring that every initiative reflects commitment to business community upliftment, economic growth and Maritime excellence.

Call to Action

As we navigate towards a more inclusive and competitive Maritime industry, the Maritime Business Chamber stands ready to lead the collaborative way. We invite Maritime stakeholders – whether in Shipping, Ports, Offshore Industries, Fisheries, Leisure or Maritime Technologies – to join us in shaping Africa's future at sea.

MBC ke Ankora le Sebaka sa Setšabelo sa Indasteri ea Maoatle!

Maritime with Us All.

Your business-friendly investment destination of choice

The InvestSA One Stop Shop Eastern Cape serves as a focal point of contact for all investor inquiries in the Eastern Cape.

It provides a variety of support services to both existing and new investors through a streamlined service offering ranging from investment facilitation, investment unblocking and business regulatory applications.

To effectively deliver on its mandate, it has formed partnerships with regulatory bodies and other government departments. Some of the participating partners include the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission for company registrations, South African Revenue Service for customs, Department of Home Affairs for visa applications, Eskom for special power-grid applications, the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications, Environmental Affairs Department for Environmental Impact Assessments and the ECDC for export and trade promotion and investment facilitation.

The One Stop Shop is committed to providing integrated investment promotion services to help investors throughout the investment value chain, and to make the process as seamless as possible. These key services include:

- **Information services:** Information and network opportunities on trade and investment in the Eastern Cape, South Africa and Africa.
- **Intellectual property:** Includes intellectual property protection, applications for national and local incentives, applications for work visas.
- **Regulatory requirements:** Temporary and permanent residence, registration for tax purposes, and any other requirements (licences, authorisations, registrations, etc) to do business in the Eastern Cape.
- **Lead tracking:** A lead-tracking system to ensure that prospective investors receive quality services until their respective projects reach the point of commercialisation.
- **Pre-approval information:** The provision of pre-approval information to investors (ie market data, costs, incentives, project approval, visits, local partners, etc).
- **Facilitation services:** The provision of facilitation services to investors (ie permits, approvals, import equipment and raw materials, work permits).

Enquiries can be directed to  Email: info.investsaec@ecdc.co.za |  Call: +27 87 131 1450



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