

R7bn set aside for new port facilities

PRETORIA: Transnet National Ports Authority has allocated R7bn to build new port facilities to grow South Africa's ocean economy.



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Two hundred jobs have already been created in new port facilities. Over the last 12 months, existing ports were refurbished and maintained, the Economic Sectors, Employment and Infrastructure Development cluster said in a statement on Tuesday, 8 March.

The cluster held a media briefing in Cape Town, which was chaired by Rural Development and Land Reform Minister Gugile Nkwinti. The cluster said work to grow the ocean economy is gaining momentum.

“Through the public-private partnership to establish Saldanha Bay as an oil and gas hub, an investment of R9.2bn has been realised, which will be utilised over the next five years.

“With 14 licences issued for oil and gas exploration, drilling of two exploration wells for potential oil and gas finds will take place along the South African coast. The investment in gas infrastructure has commenced and will contribute to the energy security,” said the cluster.

Work on the offshore supply base has already commenced, which will see Saldanha Bay attracting oil rigs for maintenance

and repair. This will create secondary job opportunities for surrounding communities.

According to the cluster, the boat building sector has been revitalised, leading to 500 direct jobs and 3,000 indirect jobs.

“An amount of R353m over the next three years has already been unlocked in the ports of Durban and Cape Town for boatbuilding infrastructure through incentives provided by government.

“Further investments in boat building - catamaran production, workboat ferries for the navy, two offshore mining vessels and tugboats for the ports authority - and a fuel storage facility amount to approximately R3.6bn,” the Economic Cluster said.

For the 2016/17 financial year, R80m has been allocated for the rehabilitation and maintenance of proclaimed harbours in Gansbaai, Saldanha Bay, Struisbaai, Gordons Bay and Lamberts Bay, as well the establishment of three new harbours in Boegoebaai in the Northern Cape, Port St Johns in Eastern Cape and Hibberdene in KwaZulu-Natal. This will provide opportunities for local and rural economic development.

The aquaculture sector has unlocked investments of more than R400m across 10 aquaculture farms, which are already in production.

The community of Hamburg in the Eastern Cape has seen its first harvest of dusky kob (kabeljou) and the Siyazama Aquaculture Cooperative in Hamburg has sold its first harvest of dusky kob to the Cape Town Fish Market at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town.

The cluster said the expansion of aquaculture projects to inland and other coastal areas in support of SMMEs will create 3,200 jobs and contribute R500m to the gross domestic product (GDP) over the next year.

The first two bulk carrier vessels have been registered in Port Elizabeth, and a third tanker in Cape Town, providing opportunities for South African Cadets (trainees) boarding these vessels.

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