

Mining and Quarrying

Mining contributes around 6.5% of South Africa's GDP and is the country's largest single private employer (500 000 people), with small-scale mining operations making a significant contribution to job creation. Mintec has done a research report on Minerals in KwaZulu-Natal.

Ilmenite, rutile and zircon are mined on a large scale for their titanium and zirconium contents from aeolian beach dunes in the northern areas of KwaZulu-Natal. Large ore reserves are held by Richards Bay Minerals, a leading producer of the heavy minerals, which mines the 17 km stretch of land along a 2 km strip of coastline north of Richards Bay (the City of uMhlatuze). Richards Bay Minerals meets about a quarter of the world's demands for these products, generating billions of rands in foreign currency. The region is rich in other minerals such as aluminium, anthracite and calcitic marbles. Ticor South Africa, launched in 2001, is also situated in the Richards Bay/ Empangeni area and represents an investment of R3 billion in the production of titanium slag.



In the northern interior district of Newcastle-Vryheid and in the Nongoma area, the coal consists mainly of anthracite. Much of the anthracite is railed to the coal terminal at Richards Bay, from where it is exported. Richards Bay Coal Terminal is the world's largest coal exporting terminal.



Hillside and Bayside house world-class smelters and impressive complexes for the production of high-quality aluminium for export. KwaZulu-Natal is also home to the recently reopened Klipwal gold mines, which will produce gold on a small scale, relative to the far larger production capacity of the other minerals in the region.

The aluminium smelting facilities have generated significant overseas interest with Canadian-based Consolidates Trillion Resources (CTR) entering into an exclusive agreement with Goswell Developments in South Africa to market and utilise technologies already in use. This venture aims to increase production from the current 22-million pounds of aluminium ingot per annum to 40-million pounds. There remains scope to increase take up for extruded products but capital investment is high and margins are

low with competition from scale operations.

KZN has strong engineering sector with sound export profile and presence of related metals producers to allow for value-added product cross-overs (e.g. Duys engineering anode manufacture, Kumba-Ticor alloys). Investment in new capacity (Tata) and recovery of old capacity (Mittal in Newcastle) does offer opportunities

The social and environmental impact of the mining industry in KwaZulu-Natal is as spectacular as its economic success. Richard Bay Mineral's social investment initiatives have benefited the surrounding areas, transforming them into a thriving community. The company employs some 2 100 permanent staff and 2 000 contractors in various positions, providing jobs and training for the local population, while also building skills and developing a sense of community and achievement within