

Developing Eastern Cape Industrialists

Eastern Cape's ports represent a powerhouse of manufacturing resources and potential for South Africa's manufacturing sector and economy at large

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Johannesburg, 26 August 2019; The recurring success of both **Manufacturing Indabas** hosted in Johannesburg and Kwa-Zulu Natal have set high expectations for the upcoming conference to be held in the Eastern Cape on the 3rd – 4th October 2019. The event will assemble stakeholders of the nation's manufacturing arena to network with industry specialists and showcase their products and services in an endeavour to further develop the region's manufacturing industry.

The **Eastern Cape Manufacturing Indaba** has announced its agenda which includes a dynamic offering of interactive sessions covering an extensive range of thought-provoking topics, conveyed through extensive panel discussions. Such dialogues will be led by industry experts, investors, policy makers and government representatives. These engaging and collaborative discussions are set to reveal significant insights that will conclusively set forth a more progressive and globally competitive manufacturing realm, not only across the Eastern Cape province but South Africa in its entirety.

The Eastern Cape has proven its potential to unleash its industrial proficiency, by leveraging off its three active ports in Port Elizabeth, East London and Ngqura as drivers of economic development. This trio of ports represent a powerhouse of maritime resources and potential for the nation. Each of the ports has a predetermined function to serve the region and connect South Africa to the global economy. Serving unique purposes, all three ports are fundamental to the country's trade strategy, with the objective of attracting and retaining both local and foreign investment.

General manufacturing contributes a significant portion to the provincial economy and is predominantly driven by the needs of the automotive sector, which represents the biggest manufacturing sector in the Eastern Cape. The province boasts four of the seven OEMs operating in South Africa and up to 100 major component manufacturers.

South Africa's automotive sector is the cornerstone of the national manufacturing base and accounts for 6.8% of GDP. With that said, the Eastern Cape is home to the manufacturing

facilities of international vehicle assemblers **Volkswagen South Africa** in Uitenhage and **Mercedes-Benz South Africa** in East London, as well as **Isuzu** and **Ford Motors**. The province manufactures half of the country's passenger vehicles and provides 51% of South Africa's vehicle exports. Following its two consecutive years of decline, motor vehicle production rebounded in 2018, observing a 3,5% growth rate. This undoubtedly fared well for automotive manufacturers based primarily in the Eastern Cape. These statistics attest to the region's momentous impact on South Africa's manufacturing sector, consequently emphasising the implication of investing in and developing manufacturers of the invaluable Eastern Cape province.

Industry leaders will impart their expert knowledge on how to proactively manage Industry 4.0 and IoT in seeking to stay ahead of the curve. In light of this disruptive technological revolution, the event plans to respond to increasing concerns of industry players relating to their job-security and career paths in the event of embracing progressive manufacturing methodologies. Manufacturing experts will discuss how adopting innovation can positively impact job creation through establishing new career alternatives and economic diversification opportunities.

In its quest to further develop manufacturers within the province, the conference will host informative dialogues led by industry luminaries who will reveal how the government and private sector plan to collaborate to review policies concerning the core training of employees by both up-skilling and re-skilling the Sub-Saharan African workforce to fully capitalise on imminent technological revolutions. Moreover, accomplished industrialists will share their expertise on opportunity development and management of impending threats facing the province whilst productively devising and executing approaches to safeguard its competitive advantage and boost provincial profits through the digitalisation of manufacturing innovations.

In addition, demographic restoration of industrial asset ownership, industrial inclusion and racially equitable enterprise the Eastern Cape's manufacturing sector, whilst simultaneously increasing black and female industrialist participation to ensure an equal, competitive and successful industrial climate.

The conference will host forums on providing funding for the province's manufacturing sector. Discussions will unpack how industry players can access capital and secure finance to advance their businesses. These discussions will review funding options to promote investment in the region's manufacturing entities, consequently assisting them to initiate and implement potential projects. Various stipulations must be met by applicants in order for businesses to acquire access to these funding initiatives and such discerning forums will serve as platforms to inform potential candidates thereof.

The Eastern Cape's strategic location considerably simplifies logistical issues for both domestic and foreign markets. Exemplary manufacturing and transshipment locations, availability of skilled and trained workforce, vast natural resources, along with world-class airports and developing infrastructures renders the province successful in the growth of export-oriented industries that have ultimately contributed to accelerated regional economic development. With this said, the upcoming **Eastern Cape Manufacturing Indaba** is anticipated to make a sustainable and positive impact on provincial manufacturing communities by enabling attendees to identify significant participants, speakers, financiers, influencers and leaders, thereby giving them the means to not only survive, but thrive in this intensely competitive sector. Attending this event affords attendants with superior knowledge to develop advanced solutions and business models to grow competitive and sustainable manufacturing businesses within the Eastern Cape, ultimately contributing to the nation's economic growth.

Press Release Ends

MORE ABOUT THE MANUFACTURING INDABA

The annual Eastern Cape Manufacturing Indaba will be hosted at Boardwalk Conference, Port Elizabeth on the 3rd – 4th October 2019. The aim of the Manufacturing Indaba 2019 and its provincial roadshows is to focus on and boost the growth potential of key industry sectors, namely: automotive, construction, metals, forestry, paper & packaging, chemicals, aerospace & defence, industry products and services, and to provide a platform for informative and interactive sessions with the prime movers of the nation's manufacturing sectors.

For more information on the event, please visit: <https://manufacturingindaba.co.za/mi-kzn/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/manufacturingindaba/>

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Hashtag: #MFGIndaba

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Issued by: Siyenza Management

For media enquiries contact: Thembisa Bambathi: Thembisa@siyenzaevents.co.za or 073 788 6044 or 011 463-9184

