



public works  
& infrastructure  
Department:  
Public Works and Infrastructure  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **DEPUTY MINISTER SIHLE ZIKALALA LAUNCHES PHASE ONE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST NEW SMALL HARBOURS SINCE DEMOCRACY**

Public Works and Infrastructure Deputy Minister, Sihle Zikalala, today announced and launched the first phase of a landmark programme to build new small harbours in neglected coastal towns.

This bold, inclusive infrastructure initiative launched in Port Shepstone in the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal, marks a watershed moment—the first small harbours to be built by a democratic government in post-apartheid South Africa.

Across the country, existing harbours were built before 1994, with many located in the Western Cape. The new programme redefines coastal access and economic opportunity for underserved communities.

Deputy Minister Zikalala handed over the Spatial Economic Development Frameworks (SEDFs), designating areas and sites for this expansive port infrastructure investment and signalling a turning point for inclusive and sustainable economic development for coastal communities. The framework recommends that the first new small harbour should be constructed in Port Shepstone. Two other sites identified to have an economic impact are in Port Edward and Hiberdene. The Department has already submitted the SEDF for Port St. Johns in the Eastern Cape. Port Nolloth in the Northern Cape will be next to receive its SEDF.

The Port Shepstone harbour site is located less than 1 km southeast of the town's central business district and the Oribi Plaza shopping centre, placing it at the heart of local commerce and transport networks.

The implementation will follow a triple -stage delivery framework which includes a:

- **Pre-implementation: Feasibility study**
- **Planning and concept stage**
- **Design and construction stage**

The Economic impact during construction will add approximately R4.41 billion in added business sales. Approximately R1.85 billion in added GDP and around 5,808 jobs anticipated within the KwaZulu-Natal economy.

## **A BRIGHTER DAY FOR UGU AND PORT SHEPSTONE**

This phase-one launch signals a turning point for the people of Ugu and Port Shepstone, underscoring government commitments to job creation, regional economic development, and inclusive access to maritime infrastructure

The initiative aligns with national priorities to redress past inequities through tangible, investment in infrastructure in neglected towns and cities. It complements broader coastal development efforts, including the Smart City Development and demonstrates a sustained commitment to inclusive growth and sustainable coastal economies.

**ENDS**

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