

## R1.5bn plant nears completion at Richards Bay IDZ

Efforts are in progress to secure additional land, fostering local community participation in producing essential raw materials for the Wilmar Palm Oil refinery plant in Richards Bay.



Source: Supplied. Siboniso Duma, MEC for economic development, tourism and environmental affairs.

This is according to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA).

Speaking during a tour of the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone, acting head of the department, Thandeka Ellenson, who was representing MEC Siboniso Duma, expressed her appreciation to the IDZ Board for the amazing work that has been done by the management and all categories of staff.

“MEC Siboniso Duma is encouraged by the fact that the construction of Wilmar Palm Oil, originally from Singapore, is nearing completion. About R1.5bn has been invested to produce margarine and other edible oils,” Ellenson said.

Ellenson said plans are underway to ensure that more land is acquired to enable local communities to be involved in the production of the raw material required by the plant.

Wilmar has been successfully convinced to ensure the optimisation of local content, whereby sunflower and soya beans could add into raw input that could be sourced locally.

“To achieve this, a cluster for local content will be developed to do an operation to crush sunflower oil. This is done to ensure sustained access to jobs and economic opportunities for local communities in the land under Amakhosi,” Ellenson said.

Richards Bay IDZ Board chairperson Bheki Mbili emphasised the need for the board to continue to play a strong oversight role over management and all categories of staff.

“This would ensure that the vision of the entity is realised for the benefit of millions of unemployed people who are waiting impatiently for jobs and access to economic opportunities,” Mbili said.

The Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone has the responsibility of encouraging international export competitiveness.

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