



Land and its people



**SOUTH
AFRICA**
YEARBOOK
2011/12

South Africa is a country where various cultures merge to form a unique nation, proud of its heritage. The country boasts some of the world's most breathtaking scenery and features an amazing display of bird- and wildlife species, which include the well-known Big Five (lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhino). South Africa's biggest asset is its people – a rainbow nation with rich and diverse cultures.

South Africa is often called “the cradle of humankind”, for this is where archaeologists discovered 2,5-million-year-old fossils of our earliest ancestors, as well as 100 000-year-old remains of modern man.

The land

South Africa occupies the southernmost tip of Africa. The country stretches latitudinally from 22° to 35° S and longitudinally from 17° to 33° E. Its surface area is 1 219 090 km².

The country has common boundaries with Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, while Mozambique and Swaziland lie to the north-east. Completely enclosed by South African territory in the south-east is the mountain kingdom of Lesotho.

To the west, south and east, South Africa borders on the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Isolated, some 1 920 km south-east of Cape Town in the Atlantic, lie the Prince Edward and Marion islands, annexed by South Africa in 1947.

The country's physical features range from bushveld through deserts and forests, up ma-

jestic mountain peaks and down to wide unspoilt beaches and coastal wetlands.

The oceans

South Africa's largest neighbours are the Atlantic and Indian oceans, which meet at the south-western corner of the continent.

The warm Mozambique-Agulhas Current skirts the east and south coasts as far as Cape Agulhas, while the cold Benguela Current flows northwards along the west coast as far as southern Angola. The contrast in temperature between these two currents partly accounts for important differences in climate and vegetation between the east and west coasts of South Africa.

It also accounts for the differences in marine life. The cold waters of the west coast are much richer in oxygen, nitrates, phosphates and plankton than those of the east coast. Consequently, the South African fishing industry is centred on the west coast.

The coasts

The coastline stretches more than 3 000 km and is an even, closed one with few bays or indentations naturally suitable for harbours.

The only ideal natural harbour along the coastline is Saldanha Bay on the west coast. However, the area lacks fresh water and does not offer natural lines of penetration to the interior.

Rivers and lakes

Most river mouths are unsuitable as harbours because large sandbanks block entry for most of the year. These bars are formed by the action of waves and currents and by the intermittent flow, heavy sediment load and steep gradients of most South African rivers. The country has no commercially navigable rivers and no significant natural lakes. Several artificial lakes are used mostly for agricultural irrigation.

The Orange River is South Africa's largest river. It rises in the Drakensberg mountains, traverses through the Lesotho highlands and joins the Caledon River between the Eastern Cape and the Free State. Before it empties into the Atlantic Ocean, it forms the border with Namibia.

Other major rivers include the Vaal, Breede, Komati, Lepelle (previously Olifants), Tugela, Umzimvubu, Limpopo and the Molopo.

Relief features

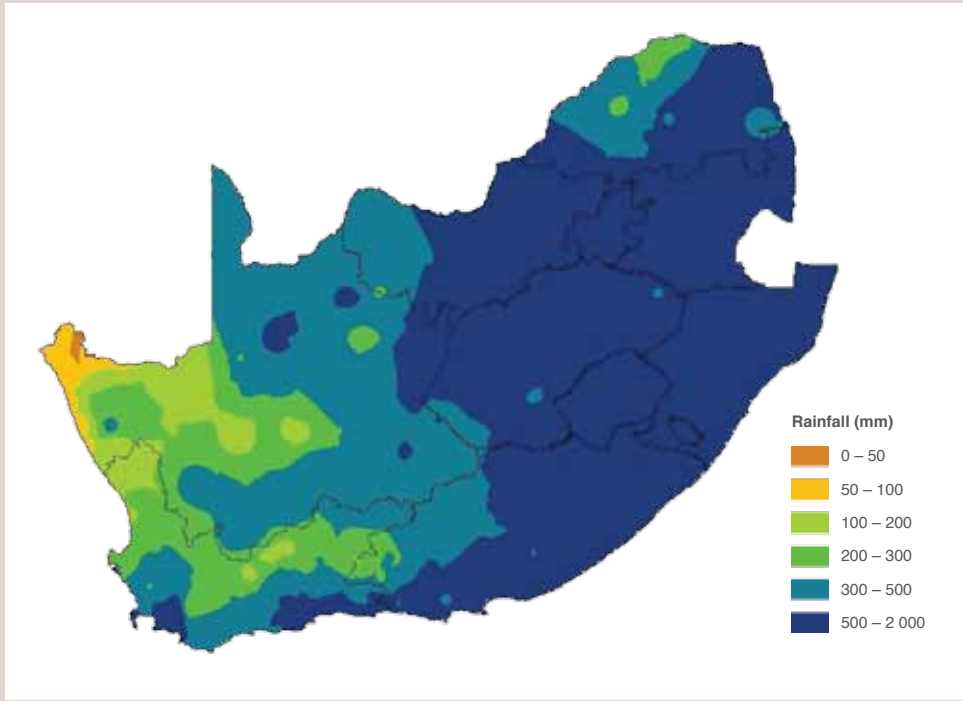
South Africa's surface area falls into two major

According to the South African Weather Service:

- The hottest place in South Africa is Letaba (Limpopo), with a mean annual temperature of 23,3° C and an average annual maximum temperature of 35° C.
- The coldest place in South Africa is Buffelsfontein near Molteno (Eastern Cape), with a mean annual temperature of 11,3° C and an average annual minimum temperature of 2,8° C.
- The highest ever rainfall in one year was measured at Jonkershoek in the Western Cape (3 874 mm in 1950). The wettest place in South Africa is Matiwa, with an average annual rainfall of 2 004 mm (calculated over a 60-year period). The driest place in South Africa is Alexander Bay in the Northern Cape, with an average annual rainfall of only 46 mm.
- The windiest place in South Africa is Cape Point (Western Cape), which experiences only 2% of all hours in the year with calm conditions. The annual average wind speed is 14,1 m/s, with 42,1% of the wind speeds greater than 8 m/s. The strongest wind gust ever in South Africa occurred at Beaufort West (Western Cape) on 16 May 1984 and measured 186 km/h.

Rainfall (mm) for the season July 2010 to June 2011

(Based on preliminary data. The number of stations used may vary depending on data availability)



physiographic categories: the interior plateau and the land between the plateau and the coast. Forming the boundary between these two areas is the Great Escarpment, the most prominent and continuous relief feature of the country. Its height above sea level varies from about 1 500 m in the dolerite-capped Roggeveld scarp in the south-west, to 3 482 m in the KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg.

Inland from the escarpment lies the interior plateau, which is the southern continuation of the great African plateau stretching north to the Sahara Desert. The plateau itself is characterised by wide plains with an average height of 1 200 m above sea level. The dissected Lesotho plateau, which is more than 3 000 m above sea level, is the most prominent. In general, the escarpment forms the highest parts of the plateau.

Between the Great Escarpment and the coast lies an area which varies in width from 80 km to 240 km in the east and south, and 60 km to 80 km in the west.

At least three major subdivisions are recognised: the eastern plateau slopes, the Cape folded belt and adjacent regions, and the western plateau slopes.

Climatic features

Although the country is classified as semi-arid, it has considerable variation in climate.

The subtropical location, on either side of 30° S, accounts for the warm temperate conditions so typical of South Africa, making it a popular destination for foreign tourists. Being in the southern hemisphere, the seasons in South Africa are opposite to those of Europe and North America.

The country also falls squarely within the subtropical belt of high pressure, making it dry with an abundance of sunshine.

Although Durban (east coast) and Port Nolloth (west coast) lie more or less on the same latitude, there is a difference of at least 6° C in their mean annual temperatures.

Average temperatures (° C) in South Africa

City	Summer		Winter	
	Max	Min	Max	Min
Bloemfontein	31	15	17	-2
Cape Town	26	16	18	7
Durban	28	21	23	11
East London	26	18	21	10
George	25	15	19	7
Johannesburg	26	15	17	4
Kimberley	33	18	19	3
Mthatha	27	16	21	4
Musina	34	21	25	7
Nelspruit	29	19	23	6
Pietermaritzburg	28	18	23	3
Polokwane	28	17	20	4
Port Elizabeth	25	18	20	9
Pretoria	29	18	20	5
Richards Bay	29	21	23	12
Skukuza	33	21	26	6
Thohoyandou	31	20	24	10
Upington	36	20	21	4

Source: South African Weather Service

Coastal gale-force winds are frequent, especially in the south-western and southern areas.

Rainfall

South Africa has an average annual rainfall of 450 mm, compared with a world average of 860 mm. About 65% of the country receives less than 500 mm per year, which is generally accepted as the minimum amount required for successful dry-land farming.

South Africa's rainfall is unreliable and unpredictable. Large fluctuations in the average annual rainfall are the rule rather than the exception in most areas.

About 21% of the country, mainly the arid west, receives less than 200 mm per year. Below-average annual rainfall is more often recorded than above-average total annual rainfall. South Africa is periodically afflicted by drastic and prolonged droughts, which often end in severe floods.

In Cape Town, the capital city of the Western Cape, the average rainfall is highest in the winter months, while in the capital cities of the other eight provinces, the average rainfall is highest during summer.

Temperatures

Temperature conditions in South Africa are characterised by three main features: they tend to be lower than in other regions at similar latitudes, for example, Australia, due primarily to the greater elevation of the subcontinent above sea level; despite a latitudinal span of 13°, average annual temperatures are remarkably uniform throughout the country; and there is a striking contrast between temperatures on the east and west coasts.

Owing to the increase in the height of the plateau towards the north-east, there is hardly any increase in temperature from south to north.

Temperatures above 32° C are fairly common in summer, and frequently exceed 38° C in the lower Orange River Valley and the Mpumalanga Lowveld.

Frost, humidity and fog

Frost often occurs on the interior plateau during cold, clear, winter nights with ice forming on still pools and in water pipes. The frost season (April to October) is longest over the eastern and southern plateau areas bordering the escarpment. Frost decreases to the north, while the coast is virtually frost-free.

Along the coast, the humidity is much higher than inland and at times may rise to 85%. Low stratus clouds and fog frequently occur over the cool west coast, particularly during summer. The only other area that commonly experiences fog is the "mist belt" along the eastern foothills of the escarpment.

The people

According to Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) *Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011*, released in July 2011, there were 50,59 million people living in South Africa, of whom 79,5% were African, 9% coloured, 2,5% Indian and 9% white. Approximately 52% of the population is female.

Nearly one third (31,3%) of the population was aged younger than 15 years and approximately 7,7% (3,9 million) 60 years or older. Of those younger than 15 years, approximately 23% (3,66 million) lived in KwaZulu-Natal and 19,4% (3,07 million) lived in Gauteng.

Languages

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, everyone has the right to use the language and participate in the cultural life of his or her choice, but no one may do so in a

Languages according to mother tongue

Language	Percentage	Language	Percentage
isiZulu	23,8%	isiNdebele	1,6%
isiXhosa	17,6%	siSwati	2,7%
Afrikaans	13,3%	Tshivenda	2,3%
Sesotho sa Leboa	9,4%	Xitsonga	4,4%
English	8,2%	Sesotho	8%
Setswana	8,2%	Other	0,5%

Source: Statistics South Africa (*Census 2001*)

manner that is inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights.

Each person has the right to instruction in his or her language of choice, where this is reasonably practicable.

Official languages

The diversity of the unique cultures of South Africa means that there are 11 official languages. Although English is the mother tongue of only 8,2% of the population, it is the language most widely understood, and the second language of the majority of South Africans. However, government is committed to promoting all the official languages, including the Khoi, Nama and San languages, as well as Sign Language.

Religion

According to the Constitution, everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion.

Almost 80% of South Africa's population follows the Christian faith. Other major religious groups are the Hindus, Muslims, Jews and Buddhists. A minority of South Africa's population do not belong to any of the major religions, but regard themselves as traditionalists of no specific religious affiliation.

The provinces

South Africa is divided into nine provinces, each with its own legislature, premier and executive councils. The provinces, each with its own distinctive landscape, vegetation and climate, are the Western Cape, the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, the Northern Cape, Free State, North West, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape, lying on the south-eastern

Number of individuals by church

Churches	Number
Dutch Reformed	3 005 698
Zion Christian	4 971 932
Roman Catholic	3 181 336
Methodist	3 305 404
Pentecostal/Charismatic	3 422 749
Anglican	1 722 076
Apostolic Faith Mission	246 190
Lutheran	1 130 987
Presbyterian	832 495
Bandla Lama Nazaretha	248 824
Baptist	691 237
Congregational	508 825
Orthodox	42 251
Other Apostolic churches	5 609 070
Other Zionist churches	1 887 147
Ethiopian type churches	880 414
Other Reformed churches	226 495
Other African independent churches	656 644
Other Christian churches	3 195 477
African Traditional Belief	125 903
Judaism	75 555
Hinduism	551 669
Islam	654 064
Other beliefs	269 200
No religion	6 767 165
Undetermined	610 971
Total	44 819 778

Source: Statistics South Africa (*Census 2001*)

South African coast, is a region of great natural beauty, particularly the rugged cliffs, rough seas and dense green bush of the stretch known as the Wild Coast. At 169 580 km², the Eastern Cape is roughly the size of Uruguay. It is the country's second-largest province after the Northern Cape, taking up 13,9% of South Africa's land area.

Eastern Cape

Capital: Bhisho

Principal languages:

isiXhosa 83,4%

Afrikaans 9,3%

English 3,6%

Population: 6 829 958

(*Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011*)

Percentage share of the total population: 13,5%

Area: 169 580 km²



In 2011, the Eastern Cape partnered with higher education institutions to develop two science and techno parks in East London and the Nelson Mandela Metro. These parks will drive innovation and technology development to ensure that the province has a globally competitive industry and offers sustainable jobs.

The region boasts remarkable natural diversity, ranging from the dry, desolate Great Karoo to the lush forests of the Wild Coast and the Keiskamma Valley; the fertile Langkloof Valley, renowned for its rich apple harvests; and the mountainous southern Drakensberg region at Elliot.

The province is serviced by airports in Port Elizabeth, East London, Mthatha and Bhisho.

In the Eastern Cape, various floral habitats meet. Along the coast, the northern tropical forests intermingle with the more temperate woods of the south.

The province is home to a number of higher education institutions, including the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, the University of Fort Hare and the Walter Sisulu University of Technology.

The people

The Eastern Cape has a population of more than 6,8 million people, the majority of whom speak isiXhosa, followed by Afrikaans and English.

Agriculture, fishing and forestry

Agriculture is important in the Eastern Cape. The fertile Langkloof Valley in the south-west has enormous deciduous fruit orchards, while sheep farming predominates in the Karoo.

The Alexandria-Grahamstown area produces pineapples, chicory and dairy products, while coffee and tea are cultivated at Magwa. People in the former Transkei region are dependent on cattle, maize and sorghum farming. An olive nursery has been developed in collaboration with the University of Fort Hare to form a nucleus of olive production in the Eastern Cape.

There is excellent potential for forestry – the coastal areas receive good summer rainfall and have a moderate climate, becoming more subtropical to the north-west. The Tsitsikamma National Park on the southern border is home to dense indigenous forests.

The basis of the province's fishing industry is squid, some recreational and commercial fishing

for line fish, the collection of marine resources, and access to line-catches of hake.

Industry

With two harbours and four airports offering direct flights to the main centres and an excellent road and rail infrastructure, the province has been earmarked as a key area for growth and economic development.

The Provincial Industrial Development Strategy identified the sectors that can create jobs and diversify the economy. These are aligned with the sectors that are being prioritised by government and include the following:

- automotive and components sector, in which the province has had significant new investments in recent years
- renewables and the green industries
- agriculture and agroprocessing
- forestry and timber processing
- pharmaceuticals
- plastics and petrochemicals
- capital goods
- tourism.

The East London Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) has attracted new investments, which will provide approximately 600 direct and more than 1 000 indirect jobs. The Coega IDZ has also secured, among other things, the Cape Concentrates Tomato Paste Project, which will create 180 direct jobs and 3 000 jobs on farms.

New investments have also been made in the auto and components sector. Daimler AG has awarded sole rights to Daimler Benz to produce the new C-Class model, the W205. The investment of R2 billion will result in the creation of

In September 2011, President Jacob Zuma visited the General Motors South Africa (GMSA) plant in Port Elizabeth, and the Volkswagen Group South Africa (VWSA) plant in Uitenhage.

The GMSA's three new vehicle assembly programmes represent an investment of R1 billion into new facilities and equipment.

GMSA invested R158 million in education and community-support programmes and a further R101 million in the education of its employees and their children from 2004 to 2010. The company also reduced its water consumption by 39% and electricity consumption by 13% in 2010.

President Zuma visited the construction site of VWSA's new R500-million press shop, production lines as well as the paint shop. He also toured the company's employee learning academies.

VWSA has invested more than R5 billion in plant and facilities over the last few years.

2 000 jobs during the training and preparation phase.

During 2011, government and state-owned enterprises supported key strategic projects in the province, which included the Umthombo PetroSA Project in the Coega IDZ, Emalahleni Coal in Lady Frere, Langa Solar PV Park in Berlin, East London, and the Gehrlicher-Ikhwezi Pilot PV Park in the East London IDZ.

Unemployment started to decrease from 30% in 2009 to 27,2% at the end of 2010. Critical interventions that enabled this decrease include the Expanded Public Works Programme through which 72 339 job opportunities were created by 2011, far above the target of 68 591 jobs. Of these, 28 089 jobs benefited young people, while 28 336 women and 424 people with disabilities benefited.

This was a total of over 180 000 jobs between 2009 and 2010 against the target of 132 786, with the infrastructure and “non-state” being the top two performing sectors.

Free State

The Free State, a province of wide horizons and blue skies, farmland, mountains, goldfields and widely dispersed towns, lies in the heart of South Africa, with Lesotho nestling in the hollow of its bean-like shape. Between the Vaal River in the north and the Orange River in the south, this immense rolling prairie stretches as far as the eye can see.

In May 2011, Manguang, comprising Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu, became South Africa’s newest metropolitan authority. It has an established institutional, educational and administrative infrastructure, and houses the Supreme Court of Appeal.

Important towns include Welkom, Sasolburg, Odendaalsrus, Kroonstad, Parys, Phuthaditjhaba and Bethlehem, the gateway to the eastern highlands of the Free State. The N1, which is the

artery between Gauteng and the Western and Eastern Cape, passes through the middle of the Free State.

Some of South Africa’s most valued San rock art can be found in the Free State. Other key tourist attractions in the province include the annual air show in Bethlehem, the Cherry Festival in Ficksburg, the Phakisa-Nascar event in Welkom, and the Fauresmith International Endurance Ride equestrian event.

The annual Mangaung African Cultural Festival, known as Macufe, is hosted in partnership with the Tourism Authority and the Performing Arts Centre of the Free State.

The Vredefort Dome, 10 km in diameter, about 100 km south-west of Johannesburg, was voted South Africa’s seventh World Heritage Site in 2005.

The people

According to the *Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011*, there were over 2,7 million people in the Free State on about 129 480 km² of land. The main languages spoken are Sesotho, Afrikaans and isiXhosa.

Agriculture

Agriculture dominates the Free State landscape, with cultivated land covering 32 000 km² and natural veld and grazing a further 87 000 km² of the province.



Field crops yield almost two thirds of the gross agricultural income of the province. Animal products contribute a further 30%, with the balance generated by horticulture.

The Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme seeks to support smallholder farmers – both subsistence and commercial – as well as the beneficiaries of land-reform programmes. To this end, the Free State received R102,9 million in 2011 from government

The Free State is a summer rainfall region that can be extremely cold during winter, especially towards the eastern mountainous regions. The western and southern areas are semi-desert.

Known as the “bread basket” of South Africa, about 90% of the province is under cultivation for crop production. It produces about 45% of the country’s sunflower crop, 34% of the total maize crop, 37% of wheat, 53% of sorghum, 33% of potatoes, and almost all of its cherries (90%). Red meat and dairy are also important products and game hunting is a fast-growing industry.

Free State

Capital: Bloemfontein		
Principal languages:		
Sesotho 64,4%		
Afrikaans 11,9%		
isiXhosa 9,1%		
Population: 2 759 644 (<i>Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011</i>)		
Percentage share of the total population: 5,46%		
Area: 129 480 km ²		

Mining

Mining is the Free State's major employer. A gold reef over 400 km long stretches across Gauteng and the Free State. South Africa is the world's largest gold producer, and the country's largest gold-mining complex is Free State Consolidated Goldfields, with an area of 330 km².

The province has 12 gold mines, producing 30% of South Africa's output and making it the fifth-largest producer of gold in the world. Gold mines in the Free State also supply a substantial portion of the total silver produced in the country. Uranium occurring in the gold-bearing conglomerates of the goldfields is extracted as a by-product.

Bituminous coal is mined and converted to petrochemicals at Sasolburg.

The Free State also produces high-quality diamonds from its kimberlite pipes and fissures, and the country's largest deposit of bentonite is found in the Koppies district.

Manufacturing and industry

The Free State economy is changing. Where before it was very reliant on primary sectors such as agriculture and mining, it is increasingly growing its manufacturing sector, which now accounts for 14% of the provincial gross domestic product (GDP).

The most important manufacturing subsectors, besides chemicals, are food and beverages, textiles, furniture, agriprocessing, jewellery and engineering products.

Nearly 20% of the province's manufacturing sites are devoted to food and beverages.

In 2011, the Provincial Government announced the establishment of three manufacturing facilities designed to create jobs:

- a tyre-recycling plant in Sasolburg
- a potato-chip plant in Industriqwa in QwaQwa
- a Kraft paper plant in Frankfort.

In 2011, the Free State Development Corporation was active in attracting new investments and signed a memorandum of understanding with the South Africa-Netherlands Chamber of Commerce with the aim of increasing bilateral trade.

Gauteng

Gauteng is the economic centre of South Africa and the continent, responsible for over 34,8% of the country's and 10% of the entire continent's GDP. Although it is the smallest of South Africa's nine provinces, Gauteng is Africa's financial-services capital.

Financial and business services, logistics, manufacturing, property, telecommunications and trade are some of the province's most important economic sectors.

Most overseas visitors enter South Africa via OR Tambo International Airport.

Johannesburg, nicknamed "Egoli" (Place of Gold), is the capital of the province and a city of contrasts. South of Johannesburg is Soweto.



Some 50 km north of Johannesburg lies Pretoria, the administrative capital of South Africa and home to the Union Buildings.

The industrial area of Rosslyn and the townships of Soshanguve and GaRankuwa are situated north of Pretoria. Cullinan, which is well known for its diamonds, and Mamelodi lie to the east. To the west lies Atteridgeville. Other important Gauteng towns include Krugersdorp and Roodepoort on the West Rand; and Germiston, Springs, Boksburg, Benoni, Brakpan and Kempton Park on the East Rand. Vanderbijlpark and Vereeniging in the south of the province are major industrial centres, while Heidelberg, Nigel and Bronkhorstspuit, to the east, are of agricultural importance.

The province houses some of the most important educational and health centres in the country. The University of Pretoria is the largest residential university in South Africa, while the University of South Africa, known as Unisa, is believed to be the largest correspondence university in the world. Other universities include the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Johannesburg. There are also several teacher-training colleges, technical colleges and universities of technology in the province.

Gauteng is home to leading research institutions such as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the Agricultural Research Council, the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute and the Human Sciences Research Council.

Gauteng

Capital: Johannesburg		
Principal languages:		
isiZulu	21,5%	
Afrikaans	14,4%	
Sesotho	13,1%	
English	12,5%	
Population: 11 328 203		
<i>(Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011)</i>		
Percentage share of the total population: 22,39%		
Area: 17 010 km ²		

The people

More than 11 million people live in Gauteng. The people of Gauteng have the highest per-capita income level in the country. The province blends cultures, colours and first- and third-world traditions in a spirited mix, flavoured by a number of foreign influences.

Mining and manufacturing

Manufacturing includes basic iron and steel, fabricated and metal products, food, machinery, electrical machinery, appliances and electrical supplies, vehicle parts and accessories, and chemical products.

The major gold and diamond mining houses all have their headquarters in Johannesburg, the biggest being Anglo American and De Beers.

There are 159 mines – 44 of them gold mines – in Gauteng, that together account for a quarter of South Africa's total mineral production. Most of the mining is for gold – 80% of Gauteng's output.

Although gold mining and ancillary industries provide thousands of jobs, the importance of mining is declining compared to the manufacturing and financial sectors. Mining produces only 6% of Gauteng's total income and 31% of export earnings.

Technology

Over 60% of South Africa's research and development is done in Gauteng.

The Innovation Hub in Pretoria is Africa's first internationally accredited science park and a full member of the International Association of Science Parks. Its community has become a regional centre of innovation and knowledge creation, linked to the fast-moving world of global interconnectivity, and made up of small, medium and micro-enterprises and multinational companies, employing over 1 000 people.

Linked to the building of the broadband network infrastructure is a multifaceted information and communications technology (ICT) strategy that the Department of Communications plans to roll out. Key to the strategy is the establishment of a "Gauteng Silicon" to be modelled on Silicon Valley in the United States of America. The Gauteng Silicon will be attached to the Innovation Hub and will drive a structured programme of information technology business incubation; start-up business support; and ICT skills training with a focus on software development, design, and innovation in ICT.

Agriculture and industry

A large area of Gauteng falls within the so-called "Maize Triangle". The province is an integrated industrial complex with major areas of economic activity in three subregional areas, namely the Vaal Triangle; the East, West and Central Rand; and Pretoria. Johannesburg houses the JSE Limited, the largest securities exchange in Africa.

Over the next three years, the Gauteng Provincial Government plans to spend R34 billion on infrastructure development to boost the province's industrial activity.

KwaZulu-Natal

KwaZulu-Natal is one of the country's most popular holiday destinations. This verdant region includes South Africa's lush subtropical east coast. Washed by the warm Indian Ocean, it stretches from Port Edward in the south to the Mozambique boundary in the north.

In addition to the magnificent coastline, the province has sweeping savanna in the east and the majestic Drakensberg mountain range in the west.

Visitors can enter KwaZulu-Natal through the King Shaka International Airport, at La Mercy, north of Durban. Alternatively, they can use the extensive national road network.

The ports of Durban and Richards Bay are among the busiest in South Africa. Richards Bay is an important coal-export harbour.

The province is also well known for its active conservation activities. There are several reserves in the province such as the Royal Natal National Park, Giant's Castle and the Kamberg Nature Reserve.

The province boasts several universities of technology, universities and other educational institutions, including the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the Durban Institute of Technology.

KwaZulu-Natal is the only province with a monarchy specifically provided for in the Constitution.



The people

KwaZulu-Natal has more than 10 million people living on 92 100 km² of land (*Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011*). The principal language is isiZulu.

Industry and agriculture

Richards Bay is the centre of operations for South Africa's aluminium industry. In 2010, R56,9 million was set aside to help the Richards Bay IDZ fulfil

KwaZulu-Natal

Capital: Pietermaritzburg		
Principal languages:		
isiZulu	80,9%	
English	13,6%	
Afrikaans	1,5%	
Population: 10 819 130		
<i>(Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011)</i>		
Percentage share of the total population: 21,39%		
Area: 92 100 km ²		

its strategic mandate of positioning the town as a preferred investment location with unparalleled opportunities enhanced by its strategic business location. With the Richards Bay IDZ having been granted an operator's permit, it is expected that investors will seize the opportunities it offers.

The Richards Bay Coal Terminal is instrumental in securing the country's position as the world's second-largest exporter of steam coal.

Richards Bay Minerals is the largest sand-mining and mineral-processing operation in the world.

The province has undergone rapid industrialisation owing to its abundant water supply and labour resources.

Industries are also found in Newcastle, Lady-smith, Dundee, Durban, Hammarsdale, Richmond, Pietermaritzburg and Mandeni.

The sugar-cane plantations along the Indian Ocean coastal belt form the mainstay of the region's economy and agriculture.

The coastal belt is also a large producer of subtropical fruit and sugar, while the farmers in the hinterland concentrate on vegetables, and dairy and stock farming.

Another major source of income is forestry in the areas around Vryheid, Eshowe, Richmond, Harding and Ngome, which is also known for its tea plantations.

The summer-rainfall coastal regions of this province are hot and humid, with a subtropical climate.

The KwaZulu-Natal Midlands between the coastal strip and the southern Drakensberg escarpment is drier, with extremely cold conditions in winter and snow on the high-lying ground.

In the north, the subtropical strip extends around Swaziland to the edge of the escarpment.

Limpopo

Limpopo, South Africa's northernmost province, borders on Mozambique, Zimbabwe and

Botswana, making it the ideal gateway to Africa. Named after the Limpopo River that flows along its northern border, the province is rich in wildlife, spectacular scenery and a wealth of historical and cultural treasures.

The province is linked to the Maputo Development Corridor through the Phalaborwa Spatial Development Initiative, which is a network of rail and road corridors connected to the major seaports, opening up Limpopo for trade and investment. This is complemented by the presence of smaller airports in centres such as Phalaborwa and Musina, as well as the Gateway International Airport in Polokwane, the capital city, which lies strategically in the centre of the province.



The Great North Road, running through the centre of the province, strings together a series of interesting towns such as Bela-Bela, with its popular mineral spa; Modimolle, with its beautiful Waterberg mountain range; Mokopane; Polokwane; Makhado, at the foot of the Soutpansberg mountain range; and Musina, with its thick-set baobab trees. The crossing into Zimbabwe is at Beit Bridge.

Other important Limpopo towns include the major mining centres of Phalaborwa and Thabazimbi; and Tzaneen, producer of tea, forestry products and tropical fruits.

The province is in the Savanna Biome, an area of mixed grassland and trees, generally known as bushveld. The province's natural resources include more than 50 provincial nature reserves and several private game reserves. The largest section of the Kruger National Park is along Limpopo's eastern boundary, which borders on Mozambique.

Several museums and national monuments bear testimony to the ancient people and fearless pioneers who braved the unknown. Living museums include the Bakone Malapa Museum near Polokwane, where Bapedi tribespeople practise age-old skills for the benefit of visitors; and the

Limpopo

Capital: Polokwane		
Principal languages:		
Sesotho sa Leboa	52,1%	
Tshivenda	15,9%	
Xitsonga	2,4%	
Population: 5 554 657		
<i>(Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011)</i>		
Percentage share of the total population: 10,98%		
Area: 123 910 km ²		

Tsonga Open-Air Museum near Tzaneen. Mapungubwe (“Place of The Jackal”) Hill, some 75 km from Musina, is a world heritage site. It served as a natural fortress for its inhabitants from about 950 to 1200 AD.

The people

According to the *Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011*, over 5,5 million people live on about 123 910 km² of land in Limpopo.

Agriculture

In terms of agriculture, Limpopo could be described as the garden of South Africa, or even that of the whole continent, given its rich fruit and vegetable production. It produces 75% of the country’s mangoes; 65% of its papayas; 36% of its tea; 25% of its citrus, bananas, and litchis; 60% of its avocados; two thirds of its tomatoes; and 285 000 tons of potatoes. Other products include coffee, nuts, guavas, sisal, cotton and tobacco. Over 170 plantations produce timber. In addition, cotton, sunflower, maize, wheat cultivation and grapes are produced. Most of the higher-lying areas are devoted to cattle and game ranching, earning a reputation for quality biltong (salted, dried meat), which is a popular South African delicacy.

Industry and mining

Limpopo also has abundant mineral resources, making mining the critical sector of the province’s economy by contributing 22% of the gross geographic product. The platinum group metals include platinum, chromium, nickel, cobalt, vanadium, tin, limestone and uranium clay. Other reserves include antimony, phosphates, fluorspar, gold, diamonds, copper, emeralds, scheelites, magnetite, vermiculite, silicon, mica, black granite, corundum, feldspar and salt.

Mpumalanga

Mpumalanga means “Place Where the Sun Rises”. The province’s spectacular scenic beauty and abundance of wildlife make it one of South Africa’s major tourist destinations.

With a surface area of only 79 490 km², it is the second-smallest province after Gauteng, yet has the fourth-largest economy in South Africa.

Bordered by Mozambique and Swaziland in the east, and Gauteng in the west, it is situated mainly on the high plateau grasslands of the Middleveld, which roll eastwards for hundreds of kilometres.

In the north-east, it rises towards mountain peaks and terminates in an immense escarpment. In some places, this escarpment plunges hundreds of metres down to the low-lying area known as the Lowveld.

The area has a network of excellent roads and railway connections, making it highly accessible. Because of its popularity as a tourist destination, Mpumalanga is also served by a number of small airports, including the Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport.

Mbombela (previously Nelspruit) is the capital of the province and the administrative and business centre of the Lowveld. Other important towns are eMalahleni (previously Witbank), Standerton, Piet Retief, Malelane, Ermelo, Barberton and Sabie.

Mpumalanga lies mainly within the Grassland Biome. The escarpment and the Lowveld form a transitional zone between this grassland area and the Savanna Biome.

The Maputo Corridor, which links the province with Gauteng, and Maputo in Mozambique, generates economic development and growth for the region.

The people

Mpumalanga is home to just over 3,6 million people, according to Stats SA’s *Mid-year Population Estimates, 2011*. The principal languages are isiSwati and isiZulu.

Agriculture and forestry

Mpumalanga is a summer-rainfall area divided by the escarpment into the Highveld region with cold frosty winters and the Lowveld region with mild winters and a subtropical climate.

The escarpment area sometimes experiences snow on high ground. Thick mist is common during the hot, humid summers.



An abundance of citrus fruit and many other subtropical fruit – mangoes, avocados, litchis, bananas, papayas, granadillas, guavas – as well as nuts and a variety of vegetables are produced here.

Mbombela is the second-largest citrus-producing area in South Africa and is responsible for one third of the country’s export in oranges.

The Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops is situated in Mbombela.

Groblersdal is an important irrigation area, which yields a wide variety of products such as citrus fruit, cotton, tobacco, wheat and veget-

Mpumalanga

Capital: Nelspruit		
Principal languages:		
isiSwati	30,8%	
isiZulu	26,4%	
isiNdebele	12,1%	
Population: 3 657 181		
<i>(Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011)</i>		
Percentage share of the total population: 7,23%		
Area: 79 490 km ²		

ables. Carolina-Bethal-Ermelo is mainly a sheep-farming area, but potatoes, sunflowers, maize and peanuts are also produced in this region.

Industry and manufacturing

Most of the manufacturing production in Mpumalanga occurs in the southern Highveld region; especially in Highveld Ridge, where large petrochemical plants such as Sasol II and III are located.

Large-scale manufacturing occurs especially in the northern Highveld area, in particular chrome-alloy and steel manufacturing.

In the Lowveld subregion, industries concentrate on manufacturing products from agricultural and raw forestry material. The growth in demand for goods and services for export via Maputo will stimulate manufacturing in the province.

Mpumalanga is rich in coal reserves. The country's major power stations, including the three largest power plants in the southern hemisphere, are situated in this province.

One of the country's largest paper mills is situated at Ngodwana, close to its timber source. Middelburg produces steel and vanadium, while eMalahleni is the biggest coal producer in Africa.

Northern Cape

The Northern Cape is the largest province in South Africa – slightly bigger than Germany – taking up almost a third of the country's total land area.

The province lies to the south of its most important asset, the mighty Orange River, which provides the basis for a healthy agricultural industry.

The Northern Cape is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and Namibia and Botswana to the north-west and north respectively. It is fringed by the Swartberg mountain range on its southern border with the Western Cape in the Calvinia district.

Its major airports are Kimberley and Upington. The province has an excellent road network, which makes its interior easily accessible from South Africa's major cities, harbours and airports.

Sutherland hosts the southern hemisphere's largest astronomical observatory, the multinational-sponsored Southern African Large Telescope.

The Northern Cape has been shortlisted as one of two sites to host the Square Kilometre Array, a giant next-generation radio telescope being developed by scientists from 17 countries.

The province has several national parks and conservation areas, namely the:

- Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park
- Ai-Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Conservation Park
- Augrabies Falls National Park.

The largest part of the province lies in the Nama-Karoo Biome, with low shrubland and grass vegetation, and trees limited to water courses. The area is known worldwide for its spectacular annual explosion of spring flowers, which attract thousands of tourists. This biome contains a number of fascinating plants, including the elephant's trunk ("halfmens" or half-man), tree aloe ("kokerboom" or quiver tree) and a variety of succulents.

The people

The Northern Cape is sparsely populated and houses almost 1,1 million people on 361 830 km² of land (*Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011*).

About 68% of the population speaks Afrikaans. Other languages spoken widely in the province are Setswana, isiXhosa and English.

The last remaining true San (Bushman) people live in the Kalahari area of the Northern Cape. The area, especially along the Orange and Vaal rivers, is rich in fossils and San rock engravings. A good collection can be seen at the McGregor Museum in Kimberley.

Agriculture and industry

The economy of a large part of the Northern Cape, the interior Karoo, depends on sheep farming, while the karakul-pelt industry is one of the most important in the Gordonia district of Upington.

The province has fertile agricultural land. In the Orange River Valley, especially at Upington, Kakamas and Keimoes, grapes and fruit are cultivated intensively. Wheat, fruit, peanuts, maize and cotton are produced at the Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme near Warrenton.

Northern Cape

Capital: Kimberley
Principal languages:
Afrikaans 68%
Setswana 20,8%
Population: 1 096 731
(Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011)
Percentage share of the total population: 2,17%
Area: 361 830 km²



Mining

Mining contributes 27,6% to the gross regional domestic product. Iron-ore mining in the north-eastern corner of the province has been expanding despite the global recession, driven largely by a demand for steel from China. Sishen is the biggest iron-ore mine in the country and its owner, Kumba Iron Ore, is engaging in a new project at Kolomela (previously known as South Sishen). New manganese projects are also underway.

Diamond mining, in contrast, has seen volumes and jobs lost. Diamond mining is increasingly moving away from the older mines to alluvial mining along the Orange River and its tributaries and in the Atlantic Ocean.

The Northern Cape also has copper, asbestos, fluorspar, semi-precious stones and marble.

North West

North West lies in the north of South Africa, on the Botswana border, fringed by the Kalahari desert in the west, Gauteng to the east, and the Free State to the south. It is known as the "Platinum Province" for the wealth of metal it has underground.

Mahikeng (previously Mafeking) is the capital, and best known for the famous siege during the Anglo-Boer/South African War.

The city lies near the Botswana border and forms a single urban area with its neighbouring town, Mmabatho. Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp are the biggest cities in the province; other main towns are Brits and Rustenburg.

Most economic activity is concentrated in the southern region between Potchefstroom and Klerksdorp, as well as Rustenburg and the eastern region, where more than 83,3% of the province's economic activity takes place.

North West has a number of major tourist attractions, including Sun City and the Palace of the Lost City, the Pilanesberg National Park,

the Madikwe Game Reserve and the Rustenburg Nature Reserve.

The people

More than 3,2 million people live in the North West. Setswana is spoken by 65,4% of the population.

Mining

Mining contributes 23,3% to the North West's economy, and makes up 22,5% of the South African mining industry as a whole. The Rustenburg and Brits districts produce 94% of the country's platinum, which is more than any other single area in the world. North West also produces a quarter of South Africa's gold, as well as granite, marble, fluorspar and diamonds. Employment along the Platinum Corridor, from Pretoria to eastern Botswana, accounts for over a third of total employment in North West.

Manufacturing

North West aims to achieve the development and growth of a well-coordinated, vibrant, diversified and sustainable economy that will create jobs and eradicate unemployment.

North West's manufacturing sector is centred at the municipalities of Brits, Rustenburg, Potchefstroom, Klerksdorp and Mahikeng, which account for more than 50% of total manufacturing production in the province.

The industries in Brits concentrate on manufacturing and construction, while those in Klerksdorp are geared towards the mining industry, and those at Vryburg and Brits towards agriculture. In the manufacturing arena, automotive parts, electrical machinery, electronic and audio, and medical equipment are manufactured in the province using local material and resources.

Agriculture

Some of the largest cattle herds in the world are

North West

Capital: Mahikeng
Principal languages:
Setswana 65,4%
Afrikaans 7,5%
isiXhosa 5,8%
Population: 3 253 390
(Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011)
Percentage share of the total population: 6,43%
Area: 116 320 km²



found at Stellaland near Vryburg, which explains why this area is often referred to as the “Texas” of South Africa. Marico is also cattle country. The areas around Rustenburg and Brits are fertile, mixed-crops farming land. The province is an important food producer. Maize and sunflowers are the most important crops, with North West as the major producer of white maize in the country.

Western Cape

The Western Cape’s natural beauty, complemented by its hospitality, cultural diversity, excellent wine and colourful cuisine, make the province one of the world’s greatest tourist attractions.

The cold Atlantic Ocean along the West Coast is a rich fishing area, while the warmer Indian Ocean skirts the province’s southern beaches.

The Western Cape lies on the southern tip of Africa. The most southern point is not, as some maps suggest, at Cape Point; it is in fact at Cape Agulhas, some 200 km east of Cape Town.

Cape Town houses Parliament and is the country’s legislative capital. Visitors to the Western Cape can disembark at Cape Town International Airport, George Airport or at the ports of Cape Town, Mossel Bay or Saldanha. A network of roads also leads to Cape Town, fondly known as the “Mother City”.

Covering an area of more than 553 000 ha, the Cape Floristic Region World Heritage Site comprises eight separate protected areas stretching from the Cape Peninsula to the Eastern Cape.

The people

More than 5,2 million people live in the Western Cape on 129 370 km² of land (*Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011*). Afrikaans is spoken by the majority, with isiXhosa and English being the other main languages.

Agriculture and marine fisheries

Agriculture brings in 40% of all export

revenue and employs 200 000 people in the Western Cape.

The Western Cape is rich in agriculture and fisheries. The sheltered valleys between the mountains provide ideal conditions for the cultivation of top-grade fruits, such as apples, table grapes, olives, peaches and oranges.

In the eastern part of the Western Cape, a great variety of vegetables is cultivated. The area around the Cape Peninsula and the Boland, further inland, is a winter-rainfall region with sunny, dry summers.

The Western Cape is known as one of the world’s finest grape-growing regions. Many of its wines have received the highest accolades at international shows.

The inland Karoo region (around Beaufort West) and the Overberg district (around Bredasdorp) produce wool and mutton, and pedigree Merino breeding stock.

Other animal products include broiler chickens, eggs, dairy products, beef and pork. The Western Cape is the only province with an outlet for the export of horses. This earns the country millions of rand in foreign revenue.

In addition to meat and fine leatherware, the province is also a leader in the export of ostrich meat to Europe, with its abattoirs turning out R1 billion in export products every year.



The West Coast is considered one of the world’s richest fishing grounds and is protected from overfishing by foreign vessels by means of a 200-km commercial fishing zone and a strict quota system.

A local environmental and new-energy technology fund, Inspired Evolution, invested R52,5 million in a Western Cape-based abalone farm, Abagold. The Hermanus farm is the country’s largest exporter and international competitor in the hatching, rearing, processing and exporting of local abalone.

Industry

The Western Cape economy contributes roughly 14,5% to South Africa’s GDP, growing at an average of 3,2% a year. More sophisticated sec-

Western Cape

Capital: Cape Town			
Principal languages:			
Afrikaans	55,3%		
isiXhosa	23,7%		
English	19,3%		
Population:			
5 287 863 (<i>Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2011</i>)			
Percentage share of the total population: 10,45%			
Area: 129 370 km ²			

George is South Africa’s sixth-oldest town. It was established in the early 1800s as an outpost for woodcutters employed by the Dutch East India Company. The town was proclaimed on 23 April 1811 and it was named after the British Monarch of the time, King George III.

tors such as finance, real estate, ICT, retail and tourism have shown substantial growth, and are the main contributors to the regional economy. The value of residential property has increased significantly.

Many of South Africa's major insurance companies and banks are based in the Western Cape. Most of the country's petroleum companies and the largest segment of the printing and publishing industry are found in Cape Town.

After Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape's manufacturing sector is the third-largest contributor to the national manufacturing sector. The clothing and textile industry remains the most significant industrial source of employment in the province.

Cape Town remains the economic hub of the province, encompassing industrial areas such as Epping, Montague Gardens, Parow and Retreat.

Acknowledgements

Original text by Theuns and Heila van Rensburg
Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism of the Western
Cape Provincial Government
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