

Vodacom lands 2Africa, the world's largest subsea cable, in EC

Vodacom has landed the world's largest subsea cable system, 2Africa, at its network facility in Gqeberha. This is the first submarine cable landing in the Eastern Cape region, 'promising greater internet capacity and acceleration of connectivity across the province and supporting South Africa's growing digital economy'.



Source: Supplied

The 2Africa Consortium includes eight international partners, China Mobile International, Meta (Facebook), MTN GlobalConnect, Orange, center3 (STC), Telecom Egypt, Vodafone/Vodacom and Wiicc, who have partnered to build 2Africa.

Launched in May 2022, the subsea cable project aims to significantly increase the capacity, quality, and availability of internet connectivity between Africa and the rest of the world.

The Gqeberha landing is the 2Africa project's third on the coast of South Africa, following two recent landings in the Western Cape by MTN GlobalConnect, Vodacom is the designated landing partner, providing facilities for the cable's installation at an existing site in the Summerstrand area.



MTN SA lands world's longest undersea cable 2Africa in Western Cape

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"The cable system's landing in the Eastern Cape will also offer the potential for much-needed regional job creation in sectors that rely on direct international connectivity, such as data centres, call centres and software development. This employment opportunity can help contribute to local and national socio-economic development," Vodacom said.

In an [RTI study](#), 2Africa is predicted to spur economic impact worth \$26.2bn to \$36.9bn, equivalent to 0.42-0.58% of Africa's GDP, within two to three years of becoming operational.

Alcatel Submarine Networks (ASN) is responsible for manufacturing and deploying the 2Africa cable, due for completion in 2024. The cable system, measuring 45,000kms in length with a design capacity of 180tbps, will interconnect Europe (eastward via Egypt), the Middle East (via Saudi Arabia) and Africa.

Essentially, 2Africa will connect 19 countries in Africa and 33 countries in total. The system has four landings in South Africa and two each in Mozambique, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia and Egypt, so a total of 27 landings in Africa and 46 landings in total.

Delivering more than the total combined capacity of all subsea cables serving Africa today, 2Africa will provide much-needed internet capacity and reliability across much of the Middle East, India, Pakistan and Africa, supporting the growth of 4G, 5G, and fixed broadband access for hundreds of millions of people.

The 2Africa East cable system, of which the Gqeberha branch is part of, will go live by and be ready for service by the fourth quarter of 2023.

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