

\$400m investment into the Gamsberg mine in Northern Cape, CNN reports

New investments by global mining group, Vedanta, might see the South Africa's zinc potential finally unearthed.



An estimated 215m tonnes of zinc lay untouched in a remote area of South Africa in the Northern Cape. Now, with an investment of \$400m into the Gamsberg mine by Indian resource company, Vedanta. "This is going to be one of the world's best mines," founder Anil Agarwal tells Eleni Giokos on CNN's *Marketplace Africa*.

For South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, the investment is significant in a country which has seen a decline in mining activity. The president explains: "We're particularly proud because this facility, this operation rather is one of the most important investment drives that we've been on to, to bring in investments to our country and particularly here to the Northern Cape."

The Gamsberg mine sits on one of the largest zinc deposits in the world and Vedanta expects to produce 4-million tonnes of ore and 250,000 tonnes of concentrate per year.

Hazvinel Munjoma, regional director of the International Zinc Association tells CNN how this will dramatically increase Africa's production of zinc: "At the moment our zinc mine production in Africa is only sitting at 3.4%, but with the Gamsberg mine coming online, our zinc mine production will rise to slightly over 5% of global zinc mine production."

Despite zinc being mined in Africa most is processed outside the continent. Vedanta Zinc International's Project Kumar believes this will change: "The Gamsberg concentrate goes into Europe, as well other parts of Asia, like Korea zinc... And that's the reason we plan to develop a smelter here so that we can then produce metal here and satisfy the demands of South Africa. South Africa needs around 100,000 tonnes of metal and we can very well easily cater to that demand."

As the demand for steel increases so will the demand for zinc which is used to galvanize steel, giving it a layer of protection from corrosion.

Munjoma tells *Marketplace Africa*: "The galvanised steel is used in infrastructure projects. So Africa as a continent [has] many infrastructure projects that are in progress, and we hope that most of these infrastructure projects will be using galvanised steel."

Marketplace Africa airs at 17.15 SAST on Friday 24 May on CNN International.

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