

[Mining to increase power demand](#)

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HARARE - Zimbabwe's power demand is expected to increase significantly in 2012 on the back of industrial growth particularly in the energy intensive mining sector, Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC) says.

This will put more pressure on Zimbabwe, which currently imports 35 percent of its electricity from Mozambique, South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo to plug a 30 percent gap between national demand and supply — currently at 1 800 MW and 1 200MW respectively.

ZETDC is Zesa's power distribution arm.

The power utility's recent presentation to the Energy ministry, on the state and future of energy in the country, revealed that electricity load demand in the mining sector is set to grow by an average 29 percent in 2012, up from 6,2 percent in 2011.

The survey was divided into the northern, southern, eastern, western and Harare regions and customers were put in four categories- mining, industrial, farming, commercial and institutions.

Findings on the mining sector were weighed down by the Harare region which recorded no change in power demand in the extractive industry for 2011 and 2012. The average change, excluding Harare, stands at 7,8 percent and 36,2 percent in turn.

The Northern region will see the mining sector grow by 22 percent in 2012 whilst industrial sector and farming will grow by 55 percent and 33 percent respectively.

“Developments in the mining sector include Maranatha Ferrochrome at 13 Megavolt-Ampere (MVA), Mazoe Gold Mine at 5,5MVA and Riozim at 5MVA,” Zesa said in a report.

“Future load growth in the Southern region will be determined mainly by developments in mining, Mimosa and Wel Mining companies are planning to bring in 15 MVA and 5MVA respectively by 2013 (whilst) Sino Zimbabwe is planning to have an additional 6 MVA by December 2011,” added Zesa.

Small developments are also expected at Midlands State University, Steel Makers (Kwekwe) and Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation's Jena mines to add to the southern power consumption toll.

The average load growth due to expansion in the Eastern area to 2016 is expected to be 16 percent.

“The largest energy increase in the area is anticipated in the next few years due to developments at Dorowa minerals translating to an additional 10 MVA, 4 Brigade Masvingo at 5, 5 MVA, Red Wing Mine 5MVA and Lennox Mine 5 MVA.”

Diamond operations in the Marange area are expected to gobble 100 MVA in 2012 after the Kimberly process certified Anjin China, Marange Resources and Mbada Diamonds exports, whilst Essar will consume 45 MVA at its steel production and mining units.

Consumption at Zimplats and Zimasco is expected to hit a combined 51 MVA in 2012.

Smallscale mining, which contributed more than 50 percent of Zimbabwe’s gold production in 2012, is also set to grow in 2012 after the Mines ministry completes distribution of \$1 million worth of mining equipment to small scale miners across the country.

The machinery —which include air pumps, ball mills, compressors, generator sets, stamp mills as well as water pumps- was procured from China using allocations from the Mining Loan Fund.

Mining remains key to Zimbabwe’s economic recovery process, contributing 65 percent of national exports in 2010 and is projected to contribute at least 50 percent of the \$4,2 billion projected for 2011.

It also amounted to 11,2 percent of GDP in 2010 and around 13 percent in 2011. COMZ projects a contribution of 22 percent by 2014.