

Somalia plans to open in October a new [deep-water port in Gara'ad](#) , a coastal city in the Puntland State close to the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, one of the most important sea crossing points in the world. Currently, there are four major operational ports in Somalia, i.e. Mogadishu, Berbera, Kismayo and Bosasso. The Gara'ad port is part of a \$531 million investment plan aimed at opening up a hub in central Somalia to facilitate the import of food supplies into a region which is chronically plagued by droughts, desert locust infestations, flooding and conflict, in an attempt to enhance food security in the whole Federation. The Gara'ad port also aims at offering to the eastern regions of landlocked Ethiopia an additional access to the sea (particularly for trade with the Arabian Gulf countries and Asia), in line with the [port diversification strategy](#) launched by the government of this country less than a decade ago to reduce its dependence on the Djibouti port, that currently handles the lion's share of Ethiopian trade.

The International Chamber of Shipping, together with other representatives of the worldwide shipping industry in the end of August 2022 [acknowledged](#) a reduction of threats to shipping security in the Gulf of Aden, submitting a request to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to remove this waters from the list of the piracy hotspots. This decision, once adopted, will lead to significant reductions of insurance and other security costs for vessels transiting in the Horn of Africa waters, attracting new traffic to the Somali ports.

The first two deep-water berths of the port, currently under construction, will be capable of docking 40,000-ton container ships and provide services such as modern loading equipment, refrigerated storage facilities and feeding grounds for animals. Another two berths, which will be deeper and wider, are planned for completion [by the end of 2024](#) .

A 305km road will link the seaport to Goldogob, at the border with Ethiopia, via Galkacyo. However, the problem still remains the poor connectivity from the Ethiopian border to the interior of the country, as described in a [Transport Sector Needs Assessment study](#) conducted by the African Development Bank in 2016. The Garacad–Galkayo–Galdogob road feasibility study has however [already been completed](#) , and construction works are expected to begin soon.

# New Somali port enters into the East Africa port competition arena

Saturday, 10 September 2022 07:09

