

# Local Heroes

*Inspirational stories about remarkable South Africans.*

## BUILDING STRONG NEW BRIDGES

One of the most prominent events affecting tourism and trade in our region is the inauguration of Africa's newest and largest suspension bridge, the Maputo-Katembe Bridge, in November last year. The four-lane, three-kilometre-long bridge is also the greatest engineering feat, extending 680 metres over Maputo Bay.

Dean Swanepoel of GAUFF Engineering has been the quality manager and senior materials engineer for the groundbreaking project since day one back in 2014. "Besides the suspension bridge, we also constructed 3 300 metres of concrete bridges which connect the bridge to the

existing road network of Maputo and across the Bay to Katembe, and down to the Kosi Bay border and the famous Ponta Do Ouro," says Dean. The 'East3Route' trade route has been developed in conjunction with the South African, Mozambican and Swaziland governments.

"I was fortunate to have one of my ex-students, Lawrence Greene from NMMU, working with me as the senior roads engineer. Previously we supervised the construction of approximately 1 000 kilometres of roads all across northern Angola towards and connecting to the DRC border."

"I've written a few papers about the quality of the bridge in relation to the concrete which has been tested in SA and reported that it's the most durable site-batched concrete ever tested. These have been presented or accepted around the world in countries such as Croatia, India, The Netherlands, South Africa and the UK."

While the bridge has many positive implications, Dean notes that readers going up that way should be aware that with the progress come larger volumes of people at local beaches, infrastructure inadequacies and an anticipated increase in crime – issues that need to be addressed in time.

Image courtesy of Nuno Rosario



Maputo, Katembe Bridge

onRoute



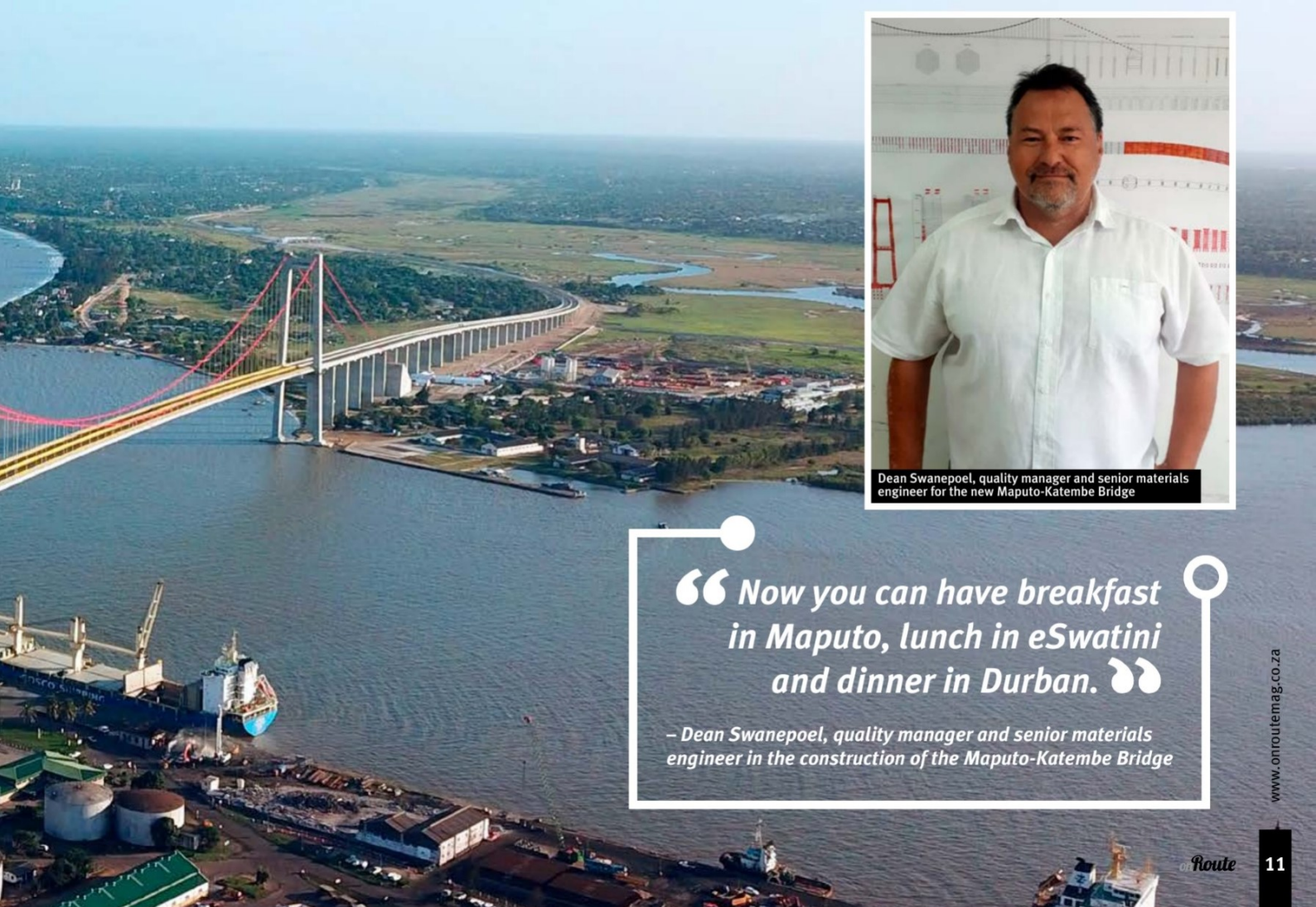
## DID YOU KNOW?

- The Maputo-Katembe Bridge cuts the driving time from six hours – 90 kilometres in a 4x4 because the roads are so bad – to 90 minutes.
- The project stands a very good chance of winning the 2019 Fulton Award as the team achieved a commendation, second place, in 2017 on the structure that was only 30% complete.
- A total project value, including the southern link roads, is approximately US\$750 million.
- The toll gate at the bridge costs about 160MZN, which equates to around R38.



Katembe Bridge skyline, Maputo

Image courtesy of Shutterstock



Dean Swanepoel, quality manager and senior materials engineer for the new Maputo-Katembe Bridge

“ Now you can have breakfast in Maputo, lunch in eSwatini and dinner in Durban. ”

– Dean Swanepoel, quality manager and senior materials engineer in the construction of the Maputo-Katembe Bridge