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SIFC Explained: How Pakistan's Investment Facilitation Council Works in 2026

What SIFC is, what it can and cannot do, how its five-step process works, which projects are moving, and how a foreign investor should engage in 2026.

Pakistan Market Guide

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SIFC is the first acronym a foreign investor hears in Pakistan in 2026, and the most misunderstood. It is a coordination council, not a regulator. It can convene the Prime Minister, provincial chief ministers, federal secretaries and the army leadership, but it cannot itself incorporate a company, issue a tax exemption, allot land, grant a mining lease or approve a tariff. Its value is in sequencing, escalation and follow-through. This guide explains the mandate, the five-step engagement process, the sectors and projects that are actually moving, the approvals SIFC cannot replace, and the red flags to check before committing capital.

The guide separates four things that are often confused in public announcements: a memorandum of understanding, a project approval, a financial close and money actually invested. It is an orientation for investors and advisers, not legal, tax or security advice.

1. What SIFC is

The Special Investment Facilitation Council was constituted by the Prime Minister in June 2023 under the government's Economic Revival Plan. Its stated purpose is to act as a single window for investment, coordinate federal and provincial departments, remove inter-agency bottlenecks and move priority projects faster (Board of Investment, SIFC). Its original outreach focus was the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), but its mandate and pipeline now cover a wider set of friendly countries and sectors.

SIFC is chaired by the Prime Minister. The Chief of the Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces sits on the Apex Committee, and the military provides facilitation support. That composition is unusual by international standards and is central to how SIFC works: it can put a federal ministry, a provincial chief minister, a regulator and a security agency in the same room. It is also a reminder that SIFC is a political and administrative coordination body, not an independent court or regulator.

The current Secretary of SIFC is Jamil Ahmad Qureshi. The official contact point for investment proposals is invest@sifc.gov.pk. The Council's public material describes a five-step process: initiate contact, proposal evaluation, personalised engagement, follow-up with relevant stakeholders, and hand-holding through implementation.

2. The legal mandate, and why it matters

SIFC's legal footing is Chapter IIA of the Board of Investment Ordinance, 2001, sections 10A to 10C. The chapter establishes the Council, makes the Prime Minister its President, provides for a Secretary who is also the principal accounting officer, and sets out its scope and functions. The relevant fields named in the law include defence, agriculture, infrastructure development, strategic initiatives, logistics, minerals, information technology, telecommunications and energy. The federal government can notify additional sectors, industries or projects.

The functions are facilitative rather than regulatory. SIFC is to act as a single window for multi-domain cooperation, in particular with GCC countries, and to take measures to establish, facilitate, encourage and promote investment. A provincial government or an authorised entity can refer a sector, industry or project to SIFC. The Council can co-opt members and call in officials by special invitation.

A separate Cabinet Committee, the SIFC-CC, was notified in May 2024 to dispose of cases that fall within the Cabinet's purview. Its terms of reference track the SIFC's, and its decisions are placed before the federal cabinet for ratification (Cabinet Division notification, 27 May 2024). This matters to investors

because it shows where SIFC sits in the decision chain: it can coordinate and recommend, but the legal power to approve a tax change, a tariff, a lease or a licence usually sits with the Cabinet, a regulator, a provincial government or a court.

Instrument	What it does	Why an investor should care
Board of Investment Ordinance 2001, Chapter IIA	Creates SIFC and defines its scope and functions	Establishes SIFC as a facilitator, not a regulator
SIFC Cabinet Committee notification, May 2024	Sets up SIFC-CC for cases within Cabinet purview; decisions go to the federal cabinet	Explains why some decisions still need Cabinet or cabinet committee approval
Investment Policy 2023	Sets the general treatment of foreign investment, repatriation and dispute resolution	Provides the policy baseline that SIFC cannot override
Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Act 2012 and zone regulations	Govern special economic zones, developers and zone enterprises	Fiscal and land incentives usually come from the zone regime, not SIFC
Sector laws and regulators	Mining, power, telecom, pharmaceuticals, banking, Defence production	Each approval still runs through the relevant regulator

3. How it is organised

SIFC operates through three committees and a set of sectoral working groups. The official description is an inclusive structure representing federal and provincial stakeholders at all tiers, with facilitation support from the military.

Body	Role	What it means for an investor
Apex Committee	Chaired by the Prime Minister, with federal ministers, provincial chief ministers, the Chief of the Army Staff and the National Coordinator	Strategic decisions, cross-provincial deadlocks and issues that need political authority
Executive Committee	Chaired by the Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, with federal and provincial officials	Project review, policy coordination and follow-up on sectoral bottlenecks
Implementation Committee	Senior officials and the SIFC secretariat, working with sector desks	Day-to-day tracking, information requests and resolution of administrative blocks
Sectoral Working Groups	Line ministries, regulators, provinces and private-sector representatives	Technical work on sector policy, project pipelines and approvals

The committee structure is not a courtroom or a tender committee. It does not replace the SECP, the FBR, the State Bank, the provincial revenue department, the environmental protection agency or a sector regulator. Its leverage is that it can ask all of them, in one forum, to explain a delay and commit to a date.

In 2024 and 2025 the Council also brought in external capacity. It engaged A.T. Kearney for sector diagnostics, investment strategies and pre-feasibility work, and signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Public Private Partnership Authority for the "Invest Pakistan" project. The 11th Apex Committee in January 2025 approved an action plan to optimise special economic zones and reviewed a National Minerals Harmonisation Framework. These are process reforms, not individual investment approvals.

4. What SIFC actually does

The most useful way to understand SIFC is through its own five-step process.

1. **Initiate contact.** Send a business proposal to invest@sifc.gov.pk. The proposal should be specific enough to evaluate: investor, sector, location, investment size, structure, financing, land and utility needs, jobs, technology, export plan and the decisions you need.
2. **Proposal evaluation.** The SIFC team assesses investment potential, readiness and fit with the priority pipeline. A vague Expression of Interest is unlikely to move; a project with a sponsor, a site, a capital plan and a clear approval map is more likely to be taken up.
3. **Personalised engagement.** If the proposal passes, SIFC arranges meetings with the relevant ministries, provinces, regulators and, where appropriate, the project's counterparties.
4. **Follow-up with stakeholders.** If the initial engagement is positive, SIFC convenes follow-up meetings to resolve specific blockers and assign responsibilities.
5. **Hand-holding.** SIFC describes support through each step, including coordination with implementing agencies. This is facilitation, not a guarantee that an approval will be granted.

In practice, SIFC's work falls into six buckets:

- **Convening.** Bringing federal ministries, provinces, regulators and investors together, often at short notice.
- **Escalation.** Moving a stalled file to a committee that can direct a department to respond.
- **Pipeline development.** Working with consultants and line ministries to turn sector opportunities into investable projects with pre-feasibility work.
- **Investor outreach.** Hosting foreign delegations and organising business-to-business (B2B) and government-to-government (G2G) meetings, as it did with US, Gulf, Chinese, Turkish and other business delegations in 2024 to 2026.
- **Policy coordination.** Feeding cross-cutting problems, such as SEZ optimisation, minerals harmonisation or business-community complaints, into the policy process.
- **Visa and travel facilitation.** Operating SIFC-specific business and investor visa routes through the NADRA visa portal.

5. What SIFC does not do

Five limits are worth stating plainly, because intermediaries often blur them.

- **It is not a regulator.** It cannot issue a licence, a tariff determination, a mining lease, an environmental approval or a banking licence. Those decisions remain with the statutory regulator or the province.
- **It is not the tax authority.** It cannot grant an income tax holiday, a customs exemption or a sales tax concession. Those come from the Finance Act, the Investment Policy, the SEZ regime or a sector-specific policy, and are administered by the FBR or the relevant authority.
- **It is not a land allotment body.** Land is provincial, district or zone-specific. SIFC can help unblock a land issue, but it cannot override title, land-use rules or a provincial lease process.
- **It does not guarantee approvals or returns.** A meeting at SIFC, an MoU or a photo opportunity is not a permit, a sovereign guarantee or an enforceable commitment to buy, fund or offtake.

- **It does not replace due diligence.** Political access is not a substitute for title checks, environmental assessment, counterparty verification, sanctions and AML screening, or legal advice on enforceability.

SIFC also does not publish a statutory decision clock. Unlike the State Bank's five-day account-opening rule, there is no published legal deadline for SIFC to evaluate a proposal or convene a meeting. Timelines depend on project readiness, the number of approvals and the willingness of the relevant departments to engage. A realistic sponsor plans in months, not weeks.

6. SIFC, BOI, provinces and regulators: who does what

Body	What it decides or delivers	What SIFC can add
SIFC	Coordination, escalation, project pipeline, investor facilitation and follow-up	Convenes the relevant departments and tracks commitments
Board of Investment	Investment policy, branch and liaison office permission, SEZ policy, investment promotion	Works with BOI; SIFC does not replace BOI's statutory functions
Provincial boards of investment	Provincial land, zone and investment facilitation; provincial incentives	Connects the project to the chief minister's office and provincial departments
SECP	Company incorporation, filings, corporate approvals	Can help resolve inter-agency sequencing, not the incorporation decision
FBR	Tax registration, customs, sales tax, withholding	Can convene FBR and the investor to resolve a specific tax or customs bottleneck
State Bank of Pakistan	Foreign exchange, bank accounts, repatriation, share registration	Can help with inter-agency issues; SBP rules still apply
Sector regulator	NEPRA (power), OGRA (oil and gas), PTA (telecom), DRAP (medicines), SECP, provincial mining and environment authorities	Can escalate a delay, not substitute its technical judgment
Cabinet and SIFC-CC	Policy decisions, incentives, approvals that sit at Cabinet level	Prepares and routes the case; the Cabinet decides

7. Priority sectors and the 2026 pipeline

The law names defence, agriculture, infrastructure, strategic initiatives, logistics, minerals, information technology, telecommunications and energy. SIFC's public material has emphasised agriculture and livestock, minerals and mining, IT and telecom, energy and defence production, with tourism, industry, health and logistics appearing in later pipelines. The table below translates the priority list into what a foreign investor can actually examine.

Sector	What is being pitched	Entry route and main approvals	Diligence focus
Agriculture and livestock	Corporate farming, dairy, meat processing, seed, storage and export value chains	Provincial land and agriculture departments, livestock department, PARC, EPA, local government	Land title and water rights, offtake, veterinary and food-safety rules, logistics
Minerals and mining	Exploration, mining, processing and export of minerals, including the Khuzdar barite-lead-zinc project	Provincial mining department, lease and environmental approvals, federal minerals coordination	Lease security, reserves, royalties, community agreements, export logistics

Sector	What is being pitched	Entry route and main approvals	Diligence focus
IT and telecom	IT parks, data centres, software and BPO, telecom infrastructure, digital payments	PTA, PSEB, SECP, SBP for payments, provincial land and power	Connectivity, power reliability, data rules, tax treatment, talent
Energy	Generation, transmission, distribution, renewables, LNG, refining and grid infrastructure	NEPRA, Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA), Power Division, OGRA, provincial EPA	Tariff and payment security, curtailment, fuel supply, grid access
Defence production	Defence manufacturing, offsets and dual-use industrial partnerships	Ministry of Defence Production, security clearances, export controls	Security, end-use, technology transfer, procurement rules
Infrastructure and logistics	Ports, railways, roads, freight corridors, multimodal logistics and warehouses	Public Private Partnership Authority (P3A), National Highway Authority (NHA), Pakistan Railways, ports and provincial authorities	Concession terms, land, traffic risk, construction cost, payment mechanism
Industry and SEZs	Export manufacturing, textiles, pharmaceuticals, EVs, cement and industrial parks	SEZ authority, BOI, provincial industry department, EPA, utilities	Zone incentives, land, power and gas, customs treatment, labour
Tourism and health	Hospitality, medical tourism and healthcare services	Provincial tourism and health departments, DRAP for medicines, local permits	Land, security, demand, licensing and insurance

The current pipeline is broader than the original five sectors. In September 2026 SIFC's Secretary told a National Assembly committee that the Council had developed an investment pipeline of about **$40 billion** across industry and production, oil and gas, railways, roads and infrastructure, power, telecommunications and IT, pharmaceuticals, tourism and food security and agriculture (Profit, 22 September 2026). That is a pipeline, not $40 billion of disbursed foreign direct investment (FDI). The distinction matters for any board paper.

8. What is actually moving

Four recent examples show the difference between a headline and an implemented project.

Khuzdar barite-lead-zinc

In August 2026 SIFC said it had resolved long-standing lease issues for a $200 million barite-lead-zinc project in Khuzdar, Balochistan, developed by Pakistan Petroleum Limited with Bolan Mining Enterprises. PPL is the operator with a 50 percent working interest. The project is reported to have reserves of 69 million tonnes, a 34-year mine life and expected annual revenue of $150 million to $230 million. The operational agreement was signed at the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2025 (Profit, 4 August 2026). The lesson is not that mining is easy. It is that a project can sit on SIFC's agenda for years while a lease, a joint-venture term or a provincial approval is unresolved.

Challenge Special Economic Zone, Lahore

In July 2026 SIFC facilitated the signing of financing agreements for Phase I of the Challenge Special Economic Zone in Lahore, developed by Challenge Fashion. The financing involved the Bank of Punjab, Pak China Investment Company, Habib Metropolitan Bank, Bank of Khyber, BankIslami and Pak Libya Holding. SIFC described the transaction as a financial close and a step toward export-oriented manufacturing (SIFC press release, 30 July 2026). Financial close is a stronger milestone than an MoU, but it is still not the same as full operations.

DP World freight corridor

DP World and Pakistan Railways signed a term sheet in January 2025 for a dedicated freight corridor from Karachi Port to Pipri and a multimodal logistics park, following a framework agreement in January 2024. SIFC convened DP World, Pakistan Railways and the National Logistics Corporation. The project is designed to move freight by rail and reduce pressure on Karachi's roads (SIFC press release, 10 January 2025). A term sheet is a framework; construction and financing terms still have to be completed.

Delegations and business-to-business work

In August 2026 SIFC facilitated a US business delegation across Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore, with meetings at the Sindh and Punjab chief minister offices, the Bin Qasim and Karachi industrial parks, the Karachi Port Trust and business councils. The delegation discussed IT, AI, healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing, infrastructure, minerals, SEZs and maritime investment (SIFC press releases, 1 and 2 August 2026). A delegation is not a commitment. Its value is in the introductions and the follow-up, which is where most investment promotion fails.

Other current facilitation claims should be read with the same discipline. In May 2026 the Secretary of the Apex Committee said SIFC had facilitated seven new cement factories, was working on the M-12 motorway and had launched a medical tourism initiative (Radio Pakistan, 7 May 2026). The government has also cited about $2.3 billion in foreign investment inflows in the first year after SIFC's creation, and about $148 million in mergers and acquisitions in the first eight months of FY2024-25, alongside a 41 percent rise in FDI to $1.618 billion over the same period (Profit, 20 May 2025; Profit, 15 April 2025). These are economy-wide or government-reported figures, not a SIFC-only scorecard.

9. Incentives: what SIFC can and cannot deliver

SIFC is not the source of tax, customs or land incentives. The baseline is the Investment Policy 2023, which sets out the general treatment of foreign investment, including repatriation and dispute resolution. Sector-specific incentives sit in the SEZ Act 2012 and zone regulations, the renewable energy and refinery policies, the IT and telecom policies, provincial industrial policies and the annual Finance Act. SIFC can help an investor understand which regime applies and can escalate an implementation problem, but it cannot create an entitlement that the law does not provide.

Instrument	What it can offer	Where to confirm
Investment Policy 2023	General treatment, repatriation principles and dispute-resolution framework	Board of Investment and the published policy
SEZ Act 2012 and zone rules	Fiscal and procedural package for zone developers and enterprises	BOI, the relevant SEZ authority and the zone developer
Sector policies	Renewable energy, refinery, EV, IT, agriculture and other sector-specific terms	The line ministry and regulator

Instrument	What it can offer	Where to confirm
Finance Act and FBR rules	Tax rates, customs duties, exemptions and withholding	FBR and the current Finance Act
State Bank foreign exchange rules	Repatriation, share registration and bank accounts	State Bank and the authorised dealer
Provincial incentives	Land, stamp duty, utility connections and provincial tax treatment	Provincial board of investment and finance department

For the tax and customs baseline, see PIVRA's guide to taxes for foreign companies and customs tariff guide. For repatriation, see the profit repatriation guide and the corporate bank account guide. SIFC facilitation does not change those rules.

10. The approval map

A project that reaches SIFC still needs the ordinary approvals. The map below is a starting point, not a substitute for a project-specific legal and regulatory review.

Stage	Typical authority	What can go wrong
Entity and ownership	SECP, Board of Investment for branch or liaison office	Structure chosen before tax and repatriation advice; foreign shareholder documents incomplete
Tax and customs	FBR, provincial revenue authority	Registration after the investment; incorrect HS classification; missing withholding set-up
Land and site	Provincial revenue, industrial development authority, SEZ authority, local government	Title or lease not clean; land-use change; encroachment; utility easements
Environmental and social	Provincial EPA, forest and wildlife departments	Category of assessment underestimated; community consultation left late
Sector licence	NEPRA, OGRA, PTA, DRAP, mining department, Defence Production	Technical application incomplete; security clearance; tariff or licensing conditions
Foreign exchange and banking	State Bank, authorised dealer	Capital injection not documented; share registration missed; repatriation blocked later
Construction and utilities	Development authority, utility companies, NHA, ports and railways	Power and gas connection delays; right of way; construction permits
Operations	Labour, social security, Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI), provincial inspectors	Employer registrations, contributions and inspections after start-up

For a large project, the realistic sequence is concept, pre-feasibility, site control, environmental screening, regulatory pre-application, financial structuring, approval, financial close and construction. SIFC can compress the coordination time between those steps, but it cannot compress the technical work, the statutory consultation or the financing.

11. How to engage: a proposal that can survive scrutiny

SIFC's official channel is email. A useful first submission is ten to fifteen pages, not a hundred-slide deck. It should answer the questions a ministry, a province and a lender will ask.

1. **Investor.** Legal name, ownership, ultimate beneficial owners, track record, balance sheet and the entity that will invest.

2. **Project.** What will be built or operated, where, at what capacity and for which customers.
3. **Sector fit.** Which priority sector or notified field the project falls under, and why it is strategic.
4. **Capital.** Total investment, debt-equity split, sources of equity, lenders in discussion and foreign exchange plan.
5. **Land and utilities.** Site status, title or lease, water, power, gas, access and any provincial support requested.
6. **Approvals.** The licences and registrations needed, the authority responsible and the expected sequence.
7. **Economic impact.** Jobs, exports, import substitution, technology transfer, local procurement and tax contribution. Use defensible numbers, not multipliers.
8. **Timeline.** A realistic schedule with decision points, construction period and first revenue.
9. **Risks.** The top five project risks and how they will be mitigated.
10. **Ask.** The specific decisions or introductions requested from SIFC. "Support" is not an ask; "resolve the lease transfer at X" is.

Send the proposal to invest@sifc.gov.pk and copy the relevant ministry, provincial board of investment or regulator where appropriate. Keep a record of every submission and meeting. Do not send original title deeds, passports or bank documents by email; share sensitive documents through a secure channel after the counterparty is verified.

Expect SIFC to route a smaller or purely commercial project to the Board of Investment, a provincial board of investment or the sector ministry. SIFC's comparative advantage is a project with a cross-agency blockage, a strategic investor or a government-to-government dimension. A small retail or service business may get a faster answer from the provincial one-window facility.

12. Visas and travel

SIFC operates two visa routes through the NADRA visa portal. The business visa is for people seeking to establish or expand a business in Pakistan. The investor visa is for people looking to invest in Pakistan's priority sectors. The official SIFC page lists the following terms, which should be confirmed with SIFC and NADRA before travel.

Route	Duration and validity	Processing time listed by SIFC	Core documents
Business visa, short term	6 months, single entry	24 hours	Passport, photograph, SIFC recommendation letter or email
Business visa, long term	2 years, multiple entries, 5-year validity	24 hours	Same, plus the business case
Investor visa, short term	3 years, multiple entries	24 hours	Passport, photograph, SIFC recommendation
Investor visa, long term	5 years, multiple entries	10 days	Same, plus investment evidence

The visa is a travel document, not an investment approval. Security clearance and the underlying project approvals are separate. For business visitors from countries on Pakistan's business visa list, the NADRA portal is the starting point; for others, confirm the route with SIFC before buying a ticket.

13. Due diligence and red flags

SIFC's convening power is real, and so is the risk of people claiming to represent it. The following checks are basic.

- "**SIFC approved**" **is not a legal status.** Ask for the written approval, the authority that issued it and the condition sheet. A meeting, an MoU or a letter of support is not an approval.
- **Verify the intermediary.** SIFC's official contact is invest@sifc.gov.pk. Confirm any adviser's mandate in writing and check whether they are registered with the SECP or a professional body. Do not pay a success fee for "access" before the work is defined.
- **Separate announcement, MoU, financial close and disbursement.** Ask for the date, the signatories, the amount, the conditions and the evidence of funds. A press release is not a closing.
- **Check the land.** Confirm title, lease term, land use, encumbrances and provincial approvals. A federal facilitation letter does not cure a defective title.
- **Check the counterparty.** Beneficial ownership, litigation, sanctions, past projects and related-party transactions. SIFC is not a substitute for KYC.
- **Check the environmental and social file.** Category, terms of reference, public consultation, resettlement and community commitments. These are often the longest lead items.
- **Check the offtake and payment security.** For power, infrastructure and mining, the tariff, the payment mechanism and the sovereign or corporate credit behind it matter more than the launch event.
- **Check the security and political risk.** Project location, travel, site security, local political agreements and the possibility of policy change. Use a specialist security adviser for high-risk districts.
- **Check the exit.** Repatriation, dividend, share transfer, arbitration and tax on exit. A project that cannot return capital is not an investment.
- **Check the numbers.** Independent technical, market, financial and legal due diligence. A government facilitation platform does not validate a feasibility study.

14. Investor checklist

- Project note with investor, capital, site, approvals, timeline and a specific ask.
- Written confirmation of the SIFC, BOI or provincial contact and the meeting record.
- Legal structure and tax plan reviewed before the first commitment.
- Land title, lease and land-use verification.
- Environmental and social screening and the regulator's category.
- Sector licence pre-application and a named case officer.
- Financing plan with lenders, security and foreign exchange route.
- Counterparty, beneficial ownership and sanctions checks.
- Security assessment and site visit.
- Repatriation and exit plan, including share registration.
- Independent technical, market and financial due diligence.
- A decision log that distinguishes announcement, MoU, approval, financial close and disbursement.

15. How PIVRA can help

PIVRA works on investment facilitation and agency liaison: preparing the project note, mapping the approvals, arranging official introductions, preparing for meetings and following up with the relevant departments, with the client present at every meeting. We do not promise approvals, and we do not pay or accept success fees for access. We also provide market entry, investment due diligence and registration and licensing support.

If you want a second opinion on an SIFC-linked proposal, send the project note and the approval trail. We will tell you what is missing before you commit capital.

Sources

All sources were accessed on 24 October 2026. Where a figure is a government or company claim, the text says so; a pipeline figure is not disbursed investment.

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NADRA, SIFC investor visa and business visa list, accessed 24 October 2026.

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Questions and answers

What is the SIFC in Pakistan?

The Special Investment Facilitation Council is a federal coordination body created in June 2023 to act as a single window for investment, convene federal and provincial departments, and move priority projects faster. Its legal mandate sits in Chapter IIA of the Board of Investment Ordinance 2001. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and supported by a secretariat in Islamabad.

Is SIFC a regulator or a one-stop approval authority?

No. SIFC coordinates and escalates; it does not issue company registrations, tax exemptions, mining leases, environmental approvals, tariffs or banking licences. Those decisions remain with the SECP, FBR, State Bank, provincial governments and sector regulators. SIFC can put the relevant officials in one room and track commitments, but it cannot substitute their legal authority.

Does SIFC give tax or customs incentives?

No. SIFC is not the legal source of tax, customs or land incentives. Those come from the Investment Policy 2023, the SEZ Act 2012 and zone rules, sector policies and the annual Finance Act. SIFC can help identify the applicable regime and resolve an implementation blockage, but it cannot create an entitlement that the law does not provide.

Which sectors does SIFC prioritise?

The law names defence, agriculture, infrastructure, strategic initiatives, logistics, minerals, IT, telecom and energy. SIFC's public material has emphasised agriculture and livestock, minerals and mining, IT and telecom, energy and defence production, with industry, tourism, health and logistics appearing in later pipelines. The current pipeline is broader than the original five sectors.

How does a foreign investor approach SIFC?

Send a specific project proposal to invest@sifc.gov.pk. SIFC describes a five-step process: initiate contact, proposal evaluation, personalised engagement, follow-up with relevant stakeholders, and hand-holding. A proposal that identifies the investor, capital, site, approvals, timeline and a specific ask is more likely to move than a general expression of interest.

What should the first proposal include?

Ten to fifteen pages covering the investor and beneficial owners, the project and location, sector fit, capital structure and financing, land and utilities, approvals needed, jobs and exports, timeline, top risks and the specific decisions requested. Avoid sending original title deeds, passports or bank documents by email.

How long does SIFC take?

There is no published statutory decision clock. Timelines depend on project readiness, the number of approvals and the responsiveness of the relevant departments. A sponsor should plan in months, not weeks, and should not treat a meeting or an MoU as an approval.

Does SIFC replace the Board of Investment, SECP or State Bank?

No. The Board of Investment remains the statutory investment promotion agency and handles investment policy, branch and liaison office permission and SEZ policy. The SECP incorporates companies, the FBR handles tax and customs, and the State Bank regulates foreign exchange and repatriation. SIFC works across them; it does not replace them.

Can a smaller investor use SIFC?

SIFC is designed for strategic, cross-agency and government-to-government projects. A smaller commercial project may be routed to the Board of Investment, a provincial board of investment or the sector ministry. The official email is still the right starting point, but expectations should match the project's scale and readiness.

Is an SIFC MoU or meeting a guarantee?

No. An MoU, a term sheet, a letter of support or a meeting is not a permit, a sovereign guarantee, a funding commitment or an offtake contract. Ask for the signatories, the amount, the conditions, the approving authority and evidence of funds. Separate announcement, MoU, financial close, construction and operation.

What is the SIFC visa?

SIFC operates business and investor visa routes through the NADRA portal. The official page lists a short-term business visa of six months single entry, a long-term business visa of two years multiple entry, a three-year investor visa and a five-year investor visa, with a SIFC recommendation letter or email among the documents. Confirm current terms with SIFC and NADRA before travel.

How can I verify an SIFC-linked claim?

Use the official SIFC website and invest@sifc.gov.pk, ask for the written approval and the issuing authority, check the SECP registration of the adviser, and verify the land, counterparty, sanctions and environmental file independently. Do not pay a success fee for access before the scope of work is defined.