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Denmark blows some power into SA's wind industry



BY [JIM CLOETE](#)

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Denmark, which is working closely with South Africa on its wind energy programme, believes the African country can become the hub of wind power in Africa.

South Africa's wind energy industry is rapidly gaining momentum, with numerous wind farms being developed and 250 turbines currently under construction in the country.

Danish Ambassador to South Africa **Rene Dinesen** told *Engineering News Online* that South Africa had the potential to be a major player on the continent and that Denmark would be there to lend its support.

Denmark is a frontrunner on wind energy, with 30 years of experience in the industry and on- and offshore wind turbines providing more than 28% of its electricity needs.

It has also invested a substantial amount of money in research and development over the years.

The European country is sharing its expertise with South Africa by providing technical assistance to the Department of Energy (DoE). Denmark has been helping the department with policy and strategy development in the field of renewable energy, particularly wind energy.

"We want to help South Africa reduce its carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and create jobs," said Dinesen at the sidelines of the WINDaba conference, which has drawn leaders in wind energy and companies from 17 countries to Cape Town.

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As part of its cooperation with South Africa, Denmark has developed the Wind Atlas for South Africa, which includes new measuring masts covering large parts of the country. The mapping is also used as input to the DoE for strategic energy planning.

Danish companies have made a strong mark at the WINDaba, with representatives from 40 Danish firms descending on Cape Town.

Among them is wind turbine manufacturer Vestas, which is supplying and installing wind turbines to several wind power plants in South Africa, including Chaba, Waainek and Grassridge in the Eastern Cape, as well as Hopefield in the Western Cape.

Danish Wind Industry Association CEO **Jan Hylleberg** said Denmark had set a goal for wind power to account for half of Denmark's energy consumption by 2020.

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Global wind energy powers ahead

Tsitsikamma community wind farm project, South Africa

Vestas expects to commission 93 MW E Cape wind farm in early 2016

The long-term goals are to shift the entire energy system to renewable energy by 2035 and to phase out oil, gas and coal entirely by 2050. Denmark has rallied global and local support through its State of Green Consortium, the organisation behind the official green brand for Denmark.

South Africa has ambitious targets for renewable energy and aims to slash the country's CO₂ emissions by 42% by 2025.

Global Wind Energy Council secretary general **Steve Sawyer** told the conference that the drop in the global price of wind energy had made it an increasingly viable alternative for South Africa, but this could be a very real threat to the fossil fuel lobby.

"Both wind and solar have become far more competitive, with much lower prices than the government had expected. This could create dissension within the government," he said.

The anticipated price of electricity from the Medupi and Kusile coal-fired power stations, which are still under construction, was now 30% higher than wind power, said South African Wind Energy Association CE **Johan van den Berg**.

Edited by: Chanel de Bruyn

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