

WIND POWER AN ALTERNATIVE

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As Eskom proposes to increase the electricity tariff by 16% over the next five years, the Department of Energy and the Danish Embassy have partnered to educate the public of wind power since it is safer and more affordable. According to the Danish Ambassador to South Africa, Rene Rosager Denesen, they have established the second phase of the South African Wind Energy Campaign, which is the first campaign that attempts to create awareness around wind energy.

“Renewable energy, including wind, is crucial not only for the environment but also for economic development. Wind creates jobs and is a cost-competitive source of energy,” Denesen told journalists the launch on Monday evening. He believes the green economy holds promise for economic growth as the prices for basic resources and oil sky rockets. Denmark and South Africa are planning to strengthen cooperation by promoting energy efficiency and use of renewable energy.

The Wind Awareness campaign was officially introduced at last year’s COP17 in Durban, Kwazulu/Natal by the South African Minister for Energy, Dipuo Peters and Danish Minister for Climate, Energy and Building, Martin Lidegaard Denesen said the campaign targets various groups like civil servants, businesses, local communities, schools and NGO’s in the Western and Eastern Cape.

“In order to maximise awareness in each group, specific materials and elements have been developed. For example, for primary school children, comprehensive workbooks have been created by a team of experts. It will be disseminated in hard copy with smart tags embedded as well as electronically to those schools that have the access capability,” he added.

With the smart tagging, pupils and teachers will also gain access to the online portal which will include specifically developed lesson plans, quizzes and other fun interactive ways to learn more about the power of wind, he continued. He highlighted that over 60 000 people are employed with renewable energy in Denmark and believes it can create jobs in South Africa.

Denesen said they have promised to invest 1 million Danish Krone to distribute awareness material to areas in the Western Cape. “SA has an abundance of wind and it should be harnessed and utilised. We have chosen to demonstrate its benefits through a wind campaign to reach the population in an exciting and informative manner,” he concluded. VOC (Tashneem Abrahams)