

# Biggest windfarm in Africa slated for Kenya

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A 300 megawatt windfarm, coined the Lake Turkana Wind Power Project, is being developed in Kenya in the hope of decreasing the country's greenhouse gas emissions. A total of 365 wind turbines are slated for installation in northern Kenya.

Damaris Mungai, program associate for the United Nation Environmental Program's Kenya Country Program, told MediaGlobal, "The choice to develop the windfarm was actually made by Kenya in a bid to diversify sources of generation as a way of improving security of supply."

At the moment, hydro-generation supplies over 60% of Kenya's electricity, according to Mungai. Due to recent rises in unpredictable rainfall patterns over the last decade, this form of energy has become less reliable. Similarly, less predictable oil prices have caused thermal generated energy costs to vary considerably.

Mungai said this method has become "more expensive than renewable energy." This being the case, he continued, "Investing in wind energy means that we are in control of the price of electricity once the windfarm is developed." The clean nature of wind energy aids Kenya's goal of reducing their emission levels as set out in the Kyoto Protocol.

Mungai explained, "Kenya has excellent wind speeds in different parts of the country sufficient to support profitable commercial generation of electricity." Mungai noted four areas that will benefit from the creation of the wind farm: climate change, energy security, economy, and safety.

"Wind energy is green and pollution free," he said. "[It] is a free energy resource, widely available and will never run out. Wind energy creates jobs [and it] is one of the safest energy technologies, [enjoying] an outstanding health and safety record." Work has already begun on the \$891 million project, funded by KenGen and KBC Bank NV of Belgium. Completion of the windfarm is expected by 30 September 2012.

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