

Renewables top the agenda in Radebe's speech

By  Nicci Botha

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Energy minister, Jeff Radebe, did not once mention nuclear as an option for future energy provision, instead he sang the praises of the country's successful Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) in his keynote address at Africa Utility Week, being held in Cape Town.



Energy Minister, Jeff Radebe

His speech reiterated the signals the government has been giving out since President Cyril Ramaphosa's comments at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in January, where he said [South Africa could not afford a nuclear deal](#). The government's commitment to renewables was further cemented when Radebe signed the long-delayed power purchase agreements for the sector in May.



PPA signing re-energises renewables programme

5 Apr 2018



Applauded globally

"To date, the REIPPPP has concluded 91 projects with a capacity 6,300MW. Of these, 62 projects with a combined capacity of 3,800MW have already connected to the grid. This highly successful programme is applauded globally as the most effective and transparent public procurement initiatives by organisations such as the World Bank," Radebe said.

"Independent analysis indicates that on average, 15% of this energy was delivered to the power system during system peak periods which is positive and goes a long way in demystifying the contribution of renewable energy into the grid during peak periods.

“The following statistics are worth mentioning regarding this programme since its launch. We have seen a significant decline in cost of about 55% for wind and 76% for solar PV; about R136bn has been invested in the South African economy, with another R58bn to be invested over the next three to five years when construction of the 27 projects signed in May has commenced.

“In addition, 39,000 job years of employment opportunities have been created for South African citizens during construction, mostly for the youth around the projects; and we have achieved close to 23-million tons of carbon dioxide reduction and saved a substantial amount of water in a water scarce country.

“Using the lessons from the renewable energy procurement programme, we will continue to rollout other programmes in area of gas,” Radebe said.

The minister also committed to have the updated Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) finalised by mid-August.

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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