



VISION STATEMENT ON THE CREATION OF A SOUTH AFRICAN RENEWABLE ENERGY COUNCIL

Introduction

It is the firm conviction of the Renewable Energy Community in South Africa that the renewables industry in our country is on the threshold of a significant expansion that if coordinated well could yield multiple benefits to the environment and the economy of the country.

In the belief that optimal coordination and alignment between important stakeholders in renewable energy does not exist as yet, the following organisations have come together to promote, in the pursuance of international best practice, an umbrella body provisionally called the South African Renewable Energy Council:

- Sustainable Energy Society of Southern Africa (SESSA)
- The South African Solar Thermal Industry Association (SASTELA)
- The South African Photovoltaic Industry Association (SAPVIA)
- The South African Wind Energy Association (SAWEA)

Background

During 2011, the South African Government articulated and communicated a comprehensive, ambitious vision regarding the creation of a Green Economy. This was done through the NEDLAC structures and led to multi-lateral conversations between Government, Business (BUSA), Labour and Communities. The renewable energy community took part in these conversations and assisted in the development of the Green Economy Accord, which was signed in November 2011.

A copy is available at <http://www.economic.gov.za/publications/new-growth-path-series/123-accord-4-green-economy-accord>.

On page 19 of the Green Economy Accord, the following is said:

“establish an organisation that will facilitate the renewable energy sector working in partnership with other social partners in the development of the sector.”

Subsequent to the above and after indications of support from government actors, the four mentioned industry associations issued a press release during which the intention to proceed was stressed and the outlines of the vision were given. News reports of the press release can be seen here:

- <http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/sa-renewable-energy-associations-to-launch-umbrella-body-2011-12-15>;
- <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-12-09-umbrella-body-becomes-sas-voice-on-renewable-energy>;
- <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2011/12/15/renewable-energy-sector-to-get-new-umbrella-body>;
- <http://www.esi-africa.com/Umbrella/body/SA/renewable/energy/associations>

Progress

The four industry associations have met weekly in 2012 to progress the initiative. Three representatives of each association have been nominated to serve on the steering committee. The target date for the formal creation of the South African Renewable Energy Council has been June 2012.

On 14 May 2012, a workshop was held with the aim to bring together the steering committee, Government, NERSA and Eskom.

Representatives of the following Departments and bodies were invited:

- DOE
- DST
- DEA
- DED
- DTI
- National Treasury
- NERSA
- Eskom

The minutes of the meeting are attached.

The resolutions of the meeting were the following:

- That the South African Renewable Energy Council should be a standing Working Group that could at the appropriate time be infused with statutory status, should it be required;
- That Minister Ibrahim Patel as the facilitator of the Green Economy Accord in NEDLAC should be approached and requested to convene a first meeting between all stakeholders;
- That the stakeholders, in the opinion of the meeting, include. but are not restricted to, the following:
 - DOE; DTI; DED; DEA; SAIPPA; IRP Task team; IEP team; Labour; PPC.E; Eskom;
 - DST; NERSA; DAFF; BUSA; NGO's; SANEDI
 - The Presidency; the Planning Commission; GIZ; SARI; IDC; Banking Council of SA; EIUG; NEDLAC; UNIDO; CEF; SALGA; SETA's/Academia

Goals

It is suggested by the Industry Bodies as promoters of the South African Renewable Energy Council that the Council should provisionally have the following goals:

- To act as a collective custodian and voice for the renewable energy industry in South Africa;
- To work collectively towards optimising the regulatory and policy framework for renewables within the broader context of the best interests of the country;
- To collectively remove barriers to entry for renewable energy in South Africa;
- To provide expert resources that Government can draw on in the formulation and execution of energy policy;
- To liaise where required between international agencies promoting renewable energy and addressing climate change and the South African Government
- To promote public and private sector coordination towards the cost optimisation of renewable energy generation and the localisation of the renewable energy industry -including manufacturing, technology development and other components of the industry.

Operation

It is a founding principle of the South African Renewable Energy Council that it will undertake the essential levels of activities as are required for the collective actions of its members. In principle the activities of member organisations will not be duplicated nor will the Council service the members of the member organisations. Each member organisation will continue executing its mandate as before. The aim is to have a lean, efficient and affordable Council.

Funding and support

GIZ has been approached about funding and has indicated a willingness to consider same and also to provide access to human resources experienced in this field in Germany. GIZ now needs to be re-engaged to establish how the resolutions of the meeting will influence an application for funding and support

Signed:



On behalf of SAWEA



On behalf of SASTELA



On behalf of SESSA



On behalf of SAPVIA