

Renewables in South Africa's Mining Region Support a Just Energy Transition

ENERTRAG South Africa is in the process of installing a wind measurement mast near the Hendrina Power Station located in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality in Mpumalanga. The measurement mast which will collect a minimum of 12 months of meteorological data is the first step of developing a large, utility-scale wind farm in the area. The wind farm will provide jobs and industrialization potential to help ease the effects of ramping down the coal-fired Hendrina Power Station. Hendrina has a total capacity of 2,000 MW consisting of ten 200-MW units, three of which are no longer contributing to energy supply.

This is the first tangible step in a renewable industry initiative to create jobs in the mining regions of South Africa. It presents mining workers that face imminent job losses with an opportunity, to give them hope and to become part of the future clean energy infrastructure. The intention by ENERTRAG South Africa is to make it possible for mining companies and workers to take equity in the wind farm.

Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Mr Gwede Mantashe recently announced at the 2019 Windaba Conference the imminent promulgation of the updated Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) and reiterated the potential for wind technologies to not only create much-needed jobs but to also ensure the inclusion of the black majority in ownership and supply throughout the wind technology value chain.



Site visit at the Hendrina location where measurement mast is being erected

ENERTRAG's approach resonates with the recent announcement of the Emalahleni region as one of three new renewable energy development zones (REDZs) by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF). This exercise was conducted by DEFF and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and involves the scoping of environmental risks in the designated areas (see article [here](#)). It is also aligned with the Public Private Growth Initiative (PPGI), which outlines a transition roadmap including employment and industrialisation from renewables for areas where coal and gold mining are in decline.

The trend towards climate-neutral and sustainable forms of economy and energy generation leads to structural changes in many regions around the globe. Therein lies a major opportunity for the renewables industry to take the lead in order to secure long-term value creation and attractive employment in this region.

ENERTRAG has significant experience in executing collaborative projects in coal regions. The company is implementing a renewables- and hydrogen-based power plant together with the owner and operator of coal-fired power stations in Lusatia, Germany, to secure local energy jobs in the long term through technological change (see [RefLau press release](#) and the [Lusatia memorandum](#)).

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ENERTRAG provides all services related to renewable energy. We efficiently bring together electricity, heat and mobility for all areas of life. As an energy producer with an annual production of 1.5 million MWh and a service network with over 1120 wind turbines, we know from personal experience what is important for our customers. ENERTRAG entered the South African renewable energy market in 2016 and has established itself as an important player in the renewable energy industry with a pipeline of more than 2GW of wind and solar projects under development, plus green hydrogen projects to provide innovative transport solutions. A 100% subsidiary of ENERTRAG AG, ENERTRAG South Africa is committed to delivering reliable electricity supply and inclusive and innovative renewable energy development to South Africa and beyond.