

Wind Power

Thursday 06 May 2021



S.Africa: Golden Valley Wind Energy project reaches commercial operation

06 May 2021 by esi-africa.com



Renewable power developer BioTherm Energy has completed all four of its projects in South Africa, with the latest, the Golden Valley Wind Energy Facility, having come on stream in the Eastern Cape.



Golden Valley Wind Energy Facility. Source BioTherm Energy

The company's R6.5bn (\$449.6m) investment, connects 284MW into South Africa's national grid and is partnered by Thebe Investment Corporation (TIC), which has a 37.5% stake in all four projects.

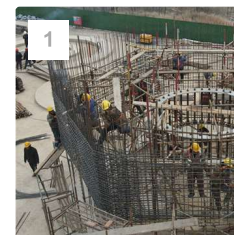
The 123MW Golden Valley Wind Energy Facility reached commercial operations 1 May 2021 and is expected to generate over 477GWh of renewable power each year, equivalent to the energy needs of approximately 120,000 households.

It joins 33MW Excelsior Wind Energy Facility, in the Western Cape; and two solar PV projects in the Northern Cape, namely 46MW Aggeneys Solar and its sister plant 86MW Konkoonies II Solar. All the projects form part of the government's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme's fourth bid round.

Sunil Ramkillawan, CEO of Thebe Energy and Resources, commented: "We are delighted that the Golden Valley project has achieved COD. Thebe's investment, alongside BioTherm Energy, demonstrates a commitment to growing our portfolio of renewable energy assets and to contribute positively to our country, and deliver on our mandate of 'building communities' to make a significant economic impact in South Africa."

BioTherm Energy's portfolio extends across South Africa's borders into Kenya, where its fifth renewable energy asset is nearing operations, increasing this pan-African renewable power producer's portfolio close to 400MW.

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Robert Skjodt, CEO of BioTherm Energy, which is majority-owned by emerging markets investor Actis, commented: "Bringing four IPPs into operation in South Africa, over the last nine months under challenging circumstances, has been a proud achievement for us.

"Our Kenyan wind energy project, southwest of Nairobi, is already connected to the country's national grid and energised, so we expect to have our current portfolio fully operational before the close of this quarter."

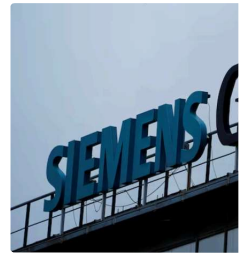
Golden Valley wind energy community commitment

Golden Valley Wind Energy Facility is located approximately 5km from Cookhouse, on 9,000 hectares of farmland. It is connected to the grid through an on-site substation and a dedicated 132kV power line connecting to the Kopleegte substation.

Construction commenced two years ago and provided jobs to circa 500 workers, the majority of which came from its surrounding beneficiary communities within the Blue Crane Route Local Municipal area.

These are the same communities that will continue to benefit from economic development programmes, during the 20-year operations period. The focus will be on education, skills development, healthcare and local enterprise addressed through collaboration and partnership with local stakeholders and members of the community.

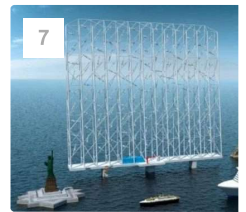
"Golden Valley has committed a percentage of revenue earned to the community in the form of socio-economic and enterprise development investments. We are also in the process of establishing a Community Trust, which will belong to the community themselves. Through these initiatives, we are deeply committed to investing in areas of real need, and which result in long term sustainable impact in our communities," concluded Skjodt.



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