

Seriti to build wind farm to power its coal mines

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Top thermal coal supplier to struggling state power utility Eskom, Seriti Resources, is investing in wind power in the latest move by industry to wean itself off a national grid plagued by power cuts.



Source: Reuters/Mike Hutchings

Seriti on Thursday, 2 February, said it would build a 155MW wind farm over the next two years that will be able to supply 75% of the power required by its coal mines in Mpumalanga.

It raises the prospect that mines powered mostly by wind would produce coal for Eskom's power plants to burn to produce electricity.

The move by Seriti is a stark illustration of the switch to renewables being hastened by Eskom's inability to meet demand and implementation of load shedding which has reached record levels.

"There are short-term solutions to alleviate some stages of load shedding, but the only long-term solution is new generation,"

said Peter Venn, chief executive officer of Seriti's renewable energy subsidiary Seriti Green.

The R4bn wind farm will be the first step in 900MW of renewable energy projects planned by Seriti, saying these will help ease rolling power cuts in Africa's most advanced economy.



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Wind farm operational from 2025

Seriti last August launched its foray into renewable energy with the acquisition of Windlab Africa's wind and solar energy assets.

Seriti Resources chief executive Mike Teke said the wind farm is expected to feed power into the national grid from 2025.

"We felt that it's important that we take our responsibility and consider investing in renewable energy because we believe climate change is reality, we believe carbon neutrality is important and we have to make sure that we participate," said Teke.

Sasol last month announced it had signed three 229MW wind power purchase deals as it shifts towards renewable energy to meet its carbon emissions targets.

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