



Press Release
Sustainable Energy Africa and Royal Danish Embassy
26 February 2010

THE EMBASSY OF DENMARK AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AFRICA CELEBRATE 12 YEARS OF ESTABLISHING SUSTAINABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY IN SOUTH AFRICAN CITIES

The Sustainable Energy and Environment for Development programme, the national capacity building initiative developed by Sustainable Energy Africa celebrated twelve years of proactively tackling the need for sustainable energy in the country's urban areas on Thursday, 25 February 2010.

Key to the programme's success, which has had four phases of implementation, has been the ongoing support of the Embassy of Denmark to South Africa. Throughout the 12 years, the Embassy has continuously supported the programme's holistic efforts to develop and establish cities that offer clean energy services and run efficiently while also positively contributing to poverty alleviation in the cities.

The overall Sustainable Energy and Environment for Development programme has been funded to an amount of R14,8 million over the 12 year period.

The overall Urban Environmental Management programme received funding of R300 million from 2006 to 2010 that was shared between eight local partners – national, provincial, local government and non-governmental organisations.

Megan Euston-Brown, Programme Manager at Sustainable Energy Africa comments:
"The Danish government has been a major funder and supporter from the start and has been instrumental in allowing us to move forward with critical goals and strategic phases

set by our programme. We would like to thank them for their invaluable contribution and look forward to the coming years of promoting sustainable, low carbon urban futures.”

Dan E. Frederiksen, Ambassador of Denmark to South Africa adds: “The strides made by the programme are considerable; it has created critical awareness amongst energy decision- makers at local level on the importance of integrating sustainable approaches into urban development.

“Moreover, Sustainable Energy Africa has not only provided guidance but workable strategies on how to overcome barriers that now see us at the implementation phase of this ambitious and noteworthy project.”

Amongst its findings, the programme has determined that the energy consumption in SA’s major cities is on a par with Berlin, London and Paris while development levels remain far lower. Almost 100% of energy consumption is fossil-fuel based. The indicative modelling shows that without intervention, energy consumption will double within twenty years.

One of the key highlights in the first phase of the programme was the successful deployment of energy advisors within local government with a focus on integrating energy efficiency in the housing sector.

The second phase integrated energy data collection and planning processes. The studies revealed that 50% of national consumption takes place in South Africa’s major cities. This affirmed the programme’s objective of building city energy management capacity. This led to the pioneering of integrated city energy and climate change strategies. These now actively guide city development in some eight South African cities, including all metro cities.

During the third phase the programme established that energy efficiency and solar water heater implementation could reduce city energy consumption by as much as 25% and to this end are supporting the mechanisms for mass implementation in these areas.

Phase four of the programme continues to grow with knowledge-sharing networks to support sustainable urban resilience for South African cities. The focus is reconceptualising the structural underpinnings of our cities – spatial, transport and infrastructure planning.

The 12-year celebratory event play host to the launch of *Tomorrow's Cities*, an inspiring short film. Through the use of animation, the film depicts the critical urban environmental resource challenges and inspires new approaches towards meeting these, as continuously explored through the SEED programme.

Furthermore, the event will showcase the exhibition ‘South African City Solutions to Climate Change,’ which was recently exhibited at COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The South African entry at the COP15 was funded by the Embassy of Denmark under the so-called Urban Environmental Management Programme - the biggest energy/environmental initiatives funded by the Danish government for South African urban areas.

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About Sustainable Energy Africa:

Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA) promotes sustainable energy approaches and practices in the development of South Africa and Africa. We do this through research, capacity building, information dissemination, project implementation, lobbying and networking. Our skills and experience cover urban and regional planning, engineering, environmental science and education.

- Capacity Building
- Policy & Planning
- City Energy Strategy
- Transport
- Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency
- Cleaner Production
- Climate Change

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Notes to editors:

SEA milestones:

- *2000 Publication of The Energy Book – a comprehensive urban-focused energy development book*
- *2003 First African City Energy Strategy pioneered in Cape Town*
- *2003 City Energy Strategies Conference held in South Africa and mayoral declaration on local sustainable energy commitments.*
- *2006 City Energy Strategies adopted in Cape Town, Tshwane, and Ekurhuleni.*
- *2007 Publication of the State of Energy in South African Cities, 2006 – an initial baseline of energy data across South African cities.*
- *2008 British High Commission funded National City Energy Support Unit established, growing out of the SEED Programme.*
- *2008 and 2009 Masters-level city energy planning courses developed by SEED in partnership with University of Stellenbosch, Sustainability Institute and University of Cape Town, Energy Research Centre.*
- *2008 and 2009 Cities pioneer renewable energy development in the country: Cape Town signs Power Purchase Agreement with Darling wind farm; eThekweni develop first commercial landfill gas to energy plant; Nelson Mandela Bay Metro commission wind farm development.*
- *2009 South Africa's First low carbon urban planning conference hosted by the City of Cape Town.*
- *2009 City Energy Strategies adopted in Cape Town, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, Buffalo City, Sol Plaatje, Nelson Mandela Bay, Johannesburg, Hessequa and eThekweni.*
- *2009 Cities initiate mass solar water heater rollout interventions and energy efficiency programmes.*
- *2009 Energy management institutionalised in the cities of Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, Sol Plaatje, Nelson Mandela Bay and eThekweni with the establishment of dedicated energy personnel positions and units.*