



Press release - FINAL

Energy Sector Leader Identifies Key Challenges

Energy sector leader Lethabo Manamela has identified at least three issues she believes South Africans should tackle with greater urgency.

Assessing key trends and issues in 2022, Manamela, Interim CEO of the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI) and winner of the SA National Energy Association (SANEA) award as the energy sector's 2021 Shapeshifter, has identified energy efficiency, a Just Energy Transition and development of a green hydrogen industry as issues that are beginning to assert themselves and demand greater attention.

Among key challenges facing the energy sector she has identified:

Energy Efficiency

The need to promote greater energy efficiency as a highly effective, least-cost means to take pressure off the national electricity grid. This would enable Eskom to ease loadshedding and provide a more consistent supply of energy.

In order to develop South Africa's capacity to undertake large-scale energy efficiency initiatives, SANEDI, in collaboration with the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE, is supporting a major new study with funding from the World Bank. The study, which will be undertaken by international experts, will assess ways in which South Africa can develop a nationwide cohort of well qualified Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) that specialise in energy efficiency and can provide a full range of services to support measures companies can take to save electricity.

Another major energy efficiency drive focuses on encouraging owners of four categories of buildings to obtain by the end of 2022 Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). An EPC gives a building a rating based on the amount of energy consumed per square metre. The categories are office buildings, buildings accommodating entertainment facilities, educational institution buildings, and places of public assembly such as sporting facilities and community centres. Estimates of the number of buildings in these categories vary between 150,000 and 250,000.

An EPC rates buildings on a scale of A to G in a similar way to how appliances are rated for their energy efficiency. An A-rated building is the most energy efficient and typically will consume up to 115 kilowatt hours per sq. metre per annum. A D-rating is the benchmark rating which is in line with national building regulations. An EPC must be prominently displayed in the foyer of a building.

A Just Energy Transition

Manamela believes that the country needs to apply greater attention to making as inclusive as possible a Just Energy Transition from a fossil fuel-based to a low-carbon economy.

Achieving a Just Energy Transition is central to the work of the Presidential Climate Commission (PCC) which aims to ensure that the lives and communities that are tied to high-emitting energy industries are not left behind in the shift towards a low emissions economy. The PCC believes a well-managed Just Energy Transition can be a strong driver for new and better jobs, social justice, and poverty eradication.

Developing a Green Hydrogen Economy

Manamela urges strong support for development of a green hydrogen industry as outlined in the recently released *South Africa Hydrogen Valley Report* commissioned by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) in partnership with Anglo-American, Bambili Energy and ENGIE and in which SANEDI played a supporting role.

The report envisages the establishment of three hydrogen hubs -- in Johannesburg, Durban/Richards Bay, and Mogalakwena/Limpopo – that would host pilot projects and contribute to the launch of a hydrogen economy.

Formerly the Chief Financial Officer of SANEDI, Manamela was appointed interim CEO just as South Africa entered its lockdown in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

In awarding her its premier award as the energy sector's 2021 Shapeshifter, SANEA noted that under her leadership, SANEDI achieved 97% of its annual targets, despite the ongoing pandemic, which placed severe restrictions on funding and logistical rollout of initiatives. SANEDI has also achieved two years of clean audits. In addition, SANEDI also received the AEE 2021 Sub-Saharan Africa Region Institutional Energy Management Award.

ENDS

About SANEDI: The South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI), established by the Government, directs, monitors, and conducts applied energy research to develop innovative, integrated solutions to catalyse growth and prosperity in the green economy. It drives scientific, evidence-driven ventures that contribute to youth empowerment, gender equity, environmental sustainability, and the 4th Industrial Revolution, within the National Development Plan, through consultative, sustainable energy projects. For more information, go to www.sanedi.org.za.

Issued on behalf of SANEDI by One Union:

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