
Renewables Rising: SADC region now with over 21,000 MW of installed renewable energy capacity but more is needed

By mid-2018, the SADC region had 21,760 MW of installed renewable energy capacity with another 17,361 MW of renewables capacity reaching financial closure and awaiting commissioning, according to the newly released *SADC Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Status Report*.

Produced by REN21/SACREEE/UNIDO, the report notes that the majority of this installed and anticipated capacity is in the power sector. While this is an encouraging development the uptake of renewables in the transport and heating/cooking sectors continues to lag. It is important that these sectors are addressed considering the projected population growth in region and the persistently, high rate of unsustainable consumption of biomass. These trends are reflected across the Sub-Saharan region where between 2010 and 2016 access to electricity declined 1% and population increased by 18%.

Since 2015 the SADC region has seen an **increase in the number and quality of its renewable energy and energy efficiency policies**, demonstrating a growing commitment to renewable energy and energy efficiency. Progress, however, is undermined by the continued development of traditional, nonrenewable energy sources such as coal to satisfy rapidly increasing demand for electricity.

Investment flows in the region have decreased since 2015, in part due to the global decline in capital costs for renewable energy technologies, particularly in PV solar and wind. Delays in policy implementation and financial closure of large projects in several Member States have also affected overall investment levels in the region.

This latest *SADC Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Status Report* clearly documents the **untapped potential of the region to meet its energy needs with renewables**. Consolidating data and knowledge about what is happening on the ground and across the region would support the development of strong policies and hard targets. “A continuous data collection process informs energy planning, policy development and market design, helping in turn to direct policy and investment”, notes Rana Adib Executive Secretary, REN21. “A multi-stakeholder approach to data collection, through organisations such as SACREEE, can help advance the energy transition, making the SADC region a leader for the continent.”

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About the Report:

The *2018 SADC Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Status Report* builds on the initial status report for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) issued by REN21 in 2015. The 2018 report provides an updated review of renewable energy and energy efficiency developments in the

SADC region, including market trends and related activities, achievements in renewable energy on- and off-grid, achievements in energy efficiency, evolving policy landscapes and investment flows.

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