

MTN launches wind and solar hybrid projects amid load shedding woes

MTN South Africa has launched the first in a series of projects in an integrated wind and solar renewable energy generation rollout as part of its Net Zero efforts.



Charles Mblapisi, CEO of MTN SA | image supplied

Hybrid renewable energy systems provide green energy to power assets sustainably, reducing reliance on unstable grids and the carbon-emitting fuels that are driving global warming.

The launch forms part of a six-month plan with completion targeted for the third quarter of the year, with a small-scale field trial in Worcester in the Western Cape. It will be followed by a series of projects in the Eastern Cape, which is a proven geographic destination for wind energy.

The solution avoids the need to work with complicated masts, guy wires, or towers and the windmills being used can be installed at various levels of a cell tower to harness more wind energy.

By substituting fossil fuel-fed run time with alternative energy, a further benefit is that there will be a reduction in the amount of diesel burnt per site by reducing generator run hours. It also increases power security per site, mitigating the effects of load shedding in line with MTN's plans to bolster network resilience, with properly sized hybrid, wind, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, and battery arrays.

Among other innovations, MTN SA is also exploring the feasibility of wind generation and the probability of the various required proof of concept projects. There will be no interference with communication equipment, and these systems are modularly designed based on the power requirement at any given time.

Net Zero goal

MTN has set out to achieve Net Zero GHG emissions by 2040, 10 years earlier than the sector pathway as set out by the GSMA, the global telecommunications industry body.

Including South Africa, the Group achieved 9.85% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 due to the challenges associated with load shedding in MTN SA.

Under Project Zero, MTN SA is concentrating its efforts on decreasing GHG emissions across our footprint and in so doing, enhancing operational efficiencies, extending the lifecycle of network equipment, reducing energy use, and investing in renewable energy sources.

“MTN is firmly on track to deliver broad, deep-rooted and beneficial alternative energy projects that make a difference to the planet while ensuring we deliver network stability and excellence to our customers. Everyone deserves the benefit of a modern connected life, and innovation cannot stop as we work to deliver against this promise,” concludes Charles Molapisi, CEO of MTN SA.

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