



PRESS RELEASE - DRAFT

SANEDI AND UNIVERSITY OF VENDA PARTNER TO BOOST ENERGY RESEARCH IN RURAL LIMPOPO

The South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI) will embark on a two-day visit to the University of Venda as they join forces to address the energy needs facing rural Limpopo through renewable power and hydrogen research.

The visit, hosted by the University of Venda's Vice Chancellor, Dr Bernard Nthambeleni, will take place between 02 May to 03 May. It follows an unsolicited proposal by the University, focused on research centered on the infrastructure installed by the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) in collaboration with SANEDI at the Masia Multipurpose Community Centre.

The collaboration aims to integrate systems and the various technologies fitted at the multipurpose centre deployed by the DSI, including a 5-kilowatt hydrogen fuel cell with an on-site electrolyser for hydrogen production. It also features a 20 kWp solar PV system, a 2.5 kW solar bryton cycle technology to power the community centre, as well as agricultural activities like vegetable, field, and fruit tree nurseries. The system also powers the borehole pump, ensuring water provision.

Head of SANEDI's Energy Secretariat and research lead, Professor Sampson Mamphweli, said the proposal was approved as it aligns with the national research priorities of South Africa's Hydrogen Society roadmap, while simultaneously expanding on the work the DSI has already begun with the Energy Secretariat at SANEDI.

The research will assist in establishing the best technical integration of the various energy systems and the feasibility of projects under study for rollout at the national level, Maphweli explains.

We plan to record the outcomes and use them to inform policy and the national rollout of renewable energy technologies in the water, food and energy nexus projects for stimulation of local economic development in rural South Africa," Mamphweli says of how the outcomes may be implemented.

The first day of the visit on 02 May, the VC will hold discussions at a dinner, on the research in preparation for the engagements the next day.

The discussions will be held with SANEDI's delegation and the University's researchers, to determine areas of collaboration and scale up potential of the research.

Professor Mamphweli will deliver a public lecture on South Africa's energy challenges on the second day on 03 May, focusing on solutions the government and SANEDI are working on to help the country escape its power crisis.

SANEDI's CEO, Dr Titus Mathe, will give a speech and present possible collaborative areas. A signing ceremony for an initial R1 million collaboration between the VC and SANEDI's CEO will conclude the visit, after which the VC will formally end with closing remarks.

Maphweli said the research is targeted at enterprise development, to be achieved through powering the agricultural activities conducted by young people who are TVET college graduates.

This would aid job creation while equipping young people with the training they need in burgeoning renewable energy systems and modern solutions.

The centre is also used for public awareness of renewable energy and hydrogen technologies and for research purposes. The site is open to the public, allowing the community in the Vhembe region to use the site to learn about the systems deployed," Mamphweli says.

"We envisage that the research will lead to higher levels of awareness of renewable energy and the widespread adoption of renewable energy technologies by society," he said.

SANEDI will also seek further areas of collaboration during the visit.

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 (NDP), 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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