RENEWABLE ENERGY & ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN
for the Southern African Development Community

An energy transition is underway globally to increase the use of clean energy sources and to develop innovative ways of using less energy to drive sustainable development. To support a coherent commitment towards wider use of cleaner energy sources and technologies, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has developed a Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan (REEESAP). This Policy Brief highlights some of the key interventions and strategies proposed by the REEESAP to assist SADC to harness its renewable energy resources as well as develop innovative ways of using less energy.

What is Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency?

Renewable Energy (RE) is energy collected from sources which are naturally replenished on a human timescale, such as solar, wind, geothermal, hydro, ocean and biomass. Energy Efficiency (EE) is the goal to reduce the amount of energy required to provide products and services. For example, insulating a home or allowing natural ventilation allows a building to use less cooling and heating energy to achieve and maintain a comfortable temperature. Installing energy-efficient lights also reduces the amount of energy required to attain the same level of illumination compared with using traditional incandescent light bulbs.

Unpacking the REEESAP

SADC Energy Ministers adopted the REEESAP in July 2017 in Ezulwini, the Kingdom of Swaziland. The strategy and action plan, which spans the period 2016-2030, aims to provide a framework for SADC Member States to develop their own renewable energy strategies, leading to greater uptake of RE resources as well as mobilization of financial resources for the sector.

The main strategic objectives for the REEESAP are to:

- achieve energy security by closing the current supply/demand deficit largely in the power sector and enabling future economic growth and industrialization;
- increase availability, accessibility and affordability of modern energy services particularly to the poor that largely depend on inefficient traditional forms of energy in order to enhance their socio-economic status and alleviate poverty;
- offset the risk associated with energy imports in the form of large import bills and uncertainty of supply aggravated by the impact of currency fluctuations;
- mobilise financial resources for investment for both RE/EE projects and manufacturing of RE/EE equipment in the SADC region, the latter contributing to industrialization agenda of SADC; and
- achieve low carbon development paths and climate resilient energy systems in MS and hence the region.

The SADC region has an abundance of RE sources that include hydro, wind and solar. Hence, the implementation of REEESAP has the capacity to change the energy landscape in SADC.

To ensure the success of the REEESAP, SADC energy ministers have urged Member States to use the strategy and action plan as a point of reference for developing national RE and EE strategies, as well as implement all strategic interventions and national level action plans. Furthermore, the ministers have directed the newly operational SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) to work closely with the SADC Secretariat to monitor the implementation of the REEESAP and report progress to the Ministers on a biannual basis.

Potential of Renewable Energy Sources

RE Source	Potential	Total Installed Capacity
Hydropower	40,874 MW	12,000 MW
Solar	20,000 TWh/year	1% solar generated electricity
Wind	800 TWh (/year)	Less than 1% wind generated electricity
Biomass generated electricity	9,500 MW (based on agricultural waste alone)	2,500 MW biomass generated electricity
Geothermal	4,000 MW	

Source REEESAP

Proposed Interventions to Increase the Use of RE and EE Technologies

A number of strategic interventions and actions are proposed by the REEESAP to enable SADC countries to increase the uptake of cleaner and alternative energy sources, and develop innovative ways of using less energy to power the development agenda. Some key strategic interventions are:

- Strengthen all SADC agencies and national institutions in charge of energy to adopt and implement RE/EE projects. The division of tasks between these various market enablers should be efficient, in order to avoid duplications, capitalize on the existing and create synergies;
- Create policies, strategies, plans and other frameworks to ensure an enabling environment for RE/EE investments;
- Develop appropriate regulation and standardization frameworks for RE/EE projects and investments;
- Attract private sector participation in investments for RE and EE;
- Build capacity to design, develop, build, implement and maintain RE/EE projects;
- Avail financing for RE/EE projects;
- Develop projects, technologies and transfer of expertise to meet demand targets;
- Consider cross-sectoral and crosscutting issues when implementing RE/EE projects, and;
- Promote adoption of RE/EE through information, advocacy and awareness.

Success Story -- Communicating Energy in Southern Africa

The Communicating Energy in Southern Africa Project has made significant progress in communicating energy-related issues to the regional community through multiple and varied communication tools. These include the SADC Energy Monitor, the SADC Investment Yearbook, the SADC Energy Thematic Group (ETG) Bulletin, as well as the bi-monthly regional newsletter Southern Africa Today and its related weekly news service, Southern African News Features (SANF). The SANF publishes at least two news features per month on energy issues and related developments in southern Africa. SANF articles are circulated to a list of influential recipients in the region and are widely reproduced by the media and elsewhere, demonstrating the appetite for energy news in SADC.

The project is implemented by the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) through its Regional Economic Development Institute (REDI) in partnership with the Energy Division at the SADC Secretariat, with support from the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)/Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC).

Proposed Implementation Framework for REEESAP

The success of the REEESAP hinges on a variety of factors, key among them being the availability of resources, particularly financial resources. Member States should also domesticate the REEESAP as well as implement actions, at both the national and regional levels. The SADC Secretariat, through SACREEE, should take a leading role in coordinating resource mobilization for REEESAP actions.

The table shows some of the guiding principles for implementation of the REEESAP. The principles are adapted from SADC policy directives.

REEESAP Implementation Guiding Principles

Responsibility	Member States have the responsibility to choose and implement those actions of REEESAP that are of priority to their countries.
Subsidiarity	REEESAP will be implemented at the most appropriate levels by relevant agencies in the region and in Member States.
Additionality	Institutions other than the SADC Secretariat and its agencies can implement REEESAP interventions. These include the private sector, civil society, the academia and development partners.
Prioritisation	REEESAP interventions are based on SADC development priorities and Member States will have the liberty to prioritise those actions most important to their development priorities.
Rationalisation	REEESAP will promote coherence and alignment of national, regional and global initiatives, objectives and goals.
Coordination	REEESAP will promote crosssectoral and crosscutting planning.
Flexibility	REEESAP is open to amendments and reviews in the course of its implementation to best respond to the highly changing environment.
Variable Geometry	Certain Member States can move faster with the implementation of certain activities where they have comparative advantage.
Best Practices	REEESAP Strategic Actions will be executed, based on best practices and sharing of lessons learnt among Member States.
Participatory	Relevant stakeholders will be informed, consulted and involved throughout the implementation of REEESAP, and the development of Member State action plans.
Sustainability	REEESAP promotes local ownership, awareness, capacity building and institutional development, and is anchored on participation of the Member States.
Optimisation	REEESAP will make the best use of available financial resources, prioritizing "high impact/low cost" solutions and match-making actions with most appropriate funding mechanisms..

Conclusion

The adoption of the REEESAP has the capacity to change the landscape of renewable energy development in SADC, and is essential to guiding the region to adopt innovative ways of using less energy to support development initiatives. This is made possibly by the vast renewable energy sources occurring in the SADC region. Therefore, the approval of the REEESAP is a welcome development that will attract significant investment into the SADC renewable energy sector, allowing the region to increase energy access and availability, as well as to promote technological innovation in the sector that will ensure that the region uses less energy to provide the same service. Implementation of such energy efficiency measures in southern Africa has already resulted in savings of about 4,561MW of electricity between 2009 and 2015. The SADC region is expected to save more than 6,000MW by 2018 if such initiatives are implemented according to plan.

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