

New energy solutions

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Green buildings are increasingly in demand in the face of concerns around Eskom's ability to sustainably supply power.

At the recent African Utility Week conference, Energy Minister Jeff Radebe said "Eskom alone cannot meet our power capacity requirements, because we estimate that the capacity extension under the integrated resource plan (IRP) will cost in excess of R1 trillion in the period up to 2030, including the new power plants plus the requisite transmission and distribution infrastructure".

Renewable energy interventions a growth area

Property company Redefine recently commented that installing renewable energy interventions is an area with scope for growth, notably to alleviate some of the pressure caused by Eskom blackouts and tariff increases.

For the six months to February 2019, Redefine saw total solar photovoltaics (PV) capacity increase to 23.5 megawatt peak across its property portfolios.

Global move towards renewable energy solutions

Total launched a programme two years ago to equip about 5 000 of its service stations globally with solar power by 2021.

There are currently about 53 Total service stations in South Africa which run on solar energy.

The fourth-largest gas and oil company, Total also operates three solar farms in the Karoo and has plans to expand solar production footprint in South Africa.

Microgrid solution

Marco Rahner, Siemens country manager for Kenya and East Africa, says the company launched a microgrid solution last year, which won an award for the Digital Solution of the Year.

"Distributed Energy Systems (DES) technologies offer building owners and energy consumers opportunities to reduce cost, improve reliability and secure additional revenue," says Rahner.

"Siemens is able to offer an end-to-end solution looking at making buildings greener, while also assessing the clients' power requirements and installing a microgrid solution."

Locally, the Siemens pilot project in DES solutions at its Midrand headquarters consists of one megawatt PV-solar plant on the campus buildings and parking area, that is integrated with the diesel generator and a 140 kilowatts energy storage system via a Siemens microgrid controller.