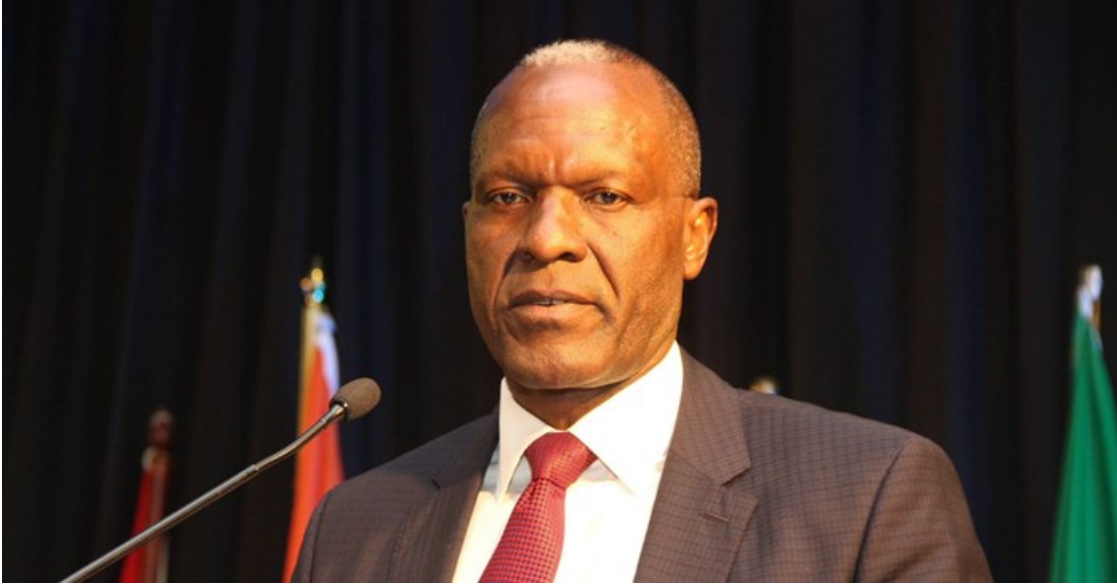


Namibia's plans for greater energy security

By  Nicci Botha

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To improve its energy security, Namibia is planning to grow its upstream industry by reviewing its policies in a bid to court private sector investors. Namibia is heavily reliant at present on electricity imports from the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), which is increasingly under pressure from growing demand in the region.



Tom Alweendo, Namibia's minister of mines and energy.

"There are very positive and encouraging signs when we talk about the hydrocarbons sector. We have had a couple of investors that are keen on entering the market and potentially finding something," said Tom Alweendo, Namibia's minister of mines and energy during a webinar hosted by the African Energy Chamber in partnership with Africa Oil & Power.

"On the renewable energy sector, we have been able to introduce some reforms that have made it possible for independent power producers to come into the sector and produce clean energy, especially through solar and wind," he said.

The country's National Integrated Resource Plan envisages increasing local generation and transmission capacity to 755MW, and aims to provide access to electricity for half the population by 2022. The state utility, NamPower, wants to add 150MW of new generation capacity to its portfolio through 20MW of solar, 40MW each of biomass and wind and 50MW of guaranteed 'firm' electricity output. The utility said it will also acquire a further 70MW of generation capacity – 20MW from solar and 50MW wind.

Last year, NamPower announced the NAD500m 20MW Omburu PV Power Project will be built near Omaruru in the Erongo region in the northwest of the country. A second 20MW solar project, which will be assigned to an independent power producer through a procurement exercise, will be built near Gobabis and Rehoboth town, in central Namibia, for around NAD400m and is planned to come online in 2021.

Other projects

- The 37,500 bpd barge-mounted refinery in Walvis Bay, which was due to be finalised in March, has been deferred by the pandemic. But, the ministry is exploring other avenues to get the \$370m project completed by the end of 2020.
- The Angola-Namibia cross-border Baynes hydroelectric dam is currently undergoing feasibility studies and is planned to commence with construction in June this year. The 600MW output will be split equally between the two countries.
- The ministry is reviewing the Kudu gas project's business model.

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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