

South Africa gets \$250mn loan for wind, solar power

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South Africa signed a \$250-million (183-million-euro) loan deal with the World Bank on Monday aimed at adding 200 Megawatts of solar and wind power to the coal-dependent country's grid.

The loan will help fund what the World Bank described as two of the largest renewable energy projects in Africa -- the massive Upington [solar park](#) in arid Northern Cape province and the Sere wind farm in Western Cape province, 300 kilometres (185 miles) north of Cape Town.

"The agreement signed today is about accelerating development of large-scale renewable energy [generation capacity](#) in South Africa. We are proud to be a partner in supporting South Africa's progress toward a clean energy future," World Bank country director Ruth Kagia said in a statement.

Each project will add 100 Megawatts to the grid, the World Bank said.

State electric utility Eskom currently relies on coal for 35,500 Megawatts -- more than 90 percent of its power generation.

South Africa has pledged to cut that to 65 percent by 2030 by investing in [nuclear plants](#) and renewable energy.

But the World Bank came in for criticism last year for lending more than \$3.0 billion for a new 4,800 Megawatt coal-fired power plant.

Monday's loan comes from the Bank's [clean technology](#) fund.

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