



Partners in Aurora Wind Power (the company that developed West Coast 1 windfarm) are, from left: Setlogane Manchidi (Head of Corporate Social Investment at Investec), Kgaugelo Legoabe-Kgomari (Investment Director at KTH), Willem van Twembeke (CEO: ENGIE International) and Tristan Bosser (CEO: Aurora Wind Power).

PHOTOS: EMIL BOSCH

Carole Podetti-Ngono, founder of Valued Citizens Initiative NPO in 2002, and the children of Masiphatisane Primary.



West Coast 1 inaugurated in style

On Friday 27 November French and local dignitaries attended the official inauguration of West Coast 1, the 94 MW wind farm near Vredenburg.

The events of the day kicked off with a musical performance by learners of Masiphatisane Primary.

The school is one of 10 schools in the West Coast District participating in the Valued Citizens Initiative, a national life-skills programme for teachers and learners.

This is the first time the Valued Citizens programme was launched in the Western Cape, and it was done in partnership with Aurora Wind Power and various govern-

ment departments.

Aurora Wind Power, a venture of ENGIE (formerly GDF SUEZ, France), Investec Bank (South Africa) and KTH (South Africa), developed the wind farm. The project is part of South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement (REIPPP) programme to help curb its reliance on coal for electricity and contribute towards carbon emission reduction objectives. To date, the country has procured more than 5 000 MW from solar and wind projects from the 7 000 MW of renewable energy projects initially planned by the end of 2016. ENGIE holds a 43% equity stake in the project, while Investec Bank (Investec)

holds 34,5% and Kagiso Tiso Holdings 20%. The remaining 2,5% has been allocated to a Community Trust, with the purpose of developing and sustaining the surrounding community.

Vestas supplied the 472 MW wind turbines, and will also be charged with the long-term servicing of the facility. The construction of the wind farm, which started in June 2013, has created more than 600 jobs, 450 of which were from surrounding communities. The influx of capital and developments associated with such a project, over a projected 20-year period, will see an estimated 24 permanent jobs created, almost all of them located in the area surrounding the wind

farm.

Tristan Bosser, CEO of Aurora Wind Power, described the West Coast 1 wind farm as yet another success story of South Africa's Renewable Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme.

"We have built this wind farm with the utmost respect for economic development objectives," he said, "and we have been able to engage with the local communities, notably through long-term partnerships with NGOs such as the Valued Citizens Initiative, Soul City Health and Development, Study Trust and Tiso Foundation. I sincerely thank the local and national authorities, our partners and all the teams involved."