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MOEA

The official newsletter of Hirundo Energy and the Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm Project.

**PARTNERSHIPS,
PROGRESS &
PREPARATION**

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to MOEA

The Hirundo Energy Newsletter

Lumela, and welcome to the first edition of MOEA—the Hirundo Energy Newsletter.

"Moea" is the Sesotho word for wind. It is also a reminder of the natural resource at the heart of our work and the opportunity it presents for Lesotho's renewable energy future.

Through this quarterly publication, we invite you behind the scenes of the Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm project to share the partnerships, people, and progress shaping what will become Lesotho's first utility-scale wind farm.

Renewable energy projects are often measured in megawatts, technical studies, and milestones. Yet behind every project are the people, partnerships, and conversations that make progress possible.

Through MOEA, we hope to bring you closer to that journey—sharing updates from the field, introducing the people behind the project, and explaining the processes that transform an idea into reality.

Whether you are a community member, government partner, investor, researcher, or simply interested in Lesotho's energy future, thank you for joining us on this journey. We hope each edition leaves you a little more informed, a little more inspired, and a little more connected to the work we're doing together.

Happy reading!

Limpheo Thoahlane

Editor, MOEA



MOEA Newsletter





Project Updates: Walking the Future Wind Farm Site Together

Developing a renewable energy project begins long before construction. It starts by understanding the land, listening to the people who know it best, and ensuring that every step forward is informed by collaboration.

In July, Hirundo Lesotho welcomed community representatives, government officials and development partners to the proposed wind farm site in Likoeneng, Mohale's Hoek, for a joint site visit. The visit was attended by EU Ambassador to Lesotho, Mette Sunnergren, European External Action Service (EEAS) Head of Division for Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean, Carolina Cordeiro, and Belgian Ambassador to Lesotho, Paul Jansen, alongside representatives from GIZ Lesotho, ElectriFI, the Office of the Commissioner of Lands, the Department of Energy, the four project councils and members of the Likoeneng community.

Rather than discussing maps around a meeting table, participants walked the proposed site together. The visit provided an opportunity to better understand the terrain, discuss site access and identify the proposed locations for the meteorological (met) masts that will soon be installed to measure the area's wind resource.

One of the most encouraging moments of the day came unexpectedly. Although the winter morning was cold and we had anticipated that only a few community members might join the walk, several residents asked if they could accompany the group up the mountain. Their enthusiasm reflected a genuine interest in the project and created valuable opportunities for conversation along the way.

For many community members, this was also the first opportunity to receive a detailed explanation of the SODAR equipment that has already been deployed on the site. While some had seen the equipment before, they had never had the chance to learn how it works or why it is there. Standing beside the equipment allowed our team to explain how wind measurements are collected and **why these data are essential to confirm that the site is suitable for a utility-scale wind farm.**

The visit also introduced discussions around the upcoming installation of the met masts. These structures will provide additional wind measurements over an extended period and represent an important next step in assessing the site's renewable energy potential.

Hirundo will continue engaging with local communities to explain the purpose of the masts, discuss safety considerations, and answer any questions residents may have.

(continue reading on page 6)

SODAR, a remote sensing system used to measure wind conditions.





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Site visits such as these are more than technical exercises. They strengthen relationships, create space for open dialogue, and help ensure that local knowledge informs project development from the earliest stages. Community members understand the landscape in ways that maps and reports cannot capture, while stakeholders gain a shared understanding of both the opportunities and the practical realities on the ground.

As the project progresses, Hirundo remains committed to transparent communication and meaningful stakeholder engagement. By bringing communities, government institutions and development partners together in the field, we continue building the strong foundations needed for what will become Lesotho's first utility-scale wind farm.

From Commitment to Action

Strengthening Partnerships with LEC

One of the highlights of this year's Lesotho Energy Access Dialogue (LEAD) Conference was the formal handover of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Hirundo Energy and the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) to the newly appointed Minister of Energy and Mining, Hon. Lejone Mptjoane.

While the signing took place during LEAD 2026, the agreement represents months of engagement and collaboration between Hirundo and LEC. More importantly, it marks another step forward in the development of Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm.

The MOU establishes a framework for continued cooperation as both parties work towards finalizing the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) — the agreement that will set out the terms under which electricity generated by the wind farm will be sold to LEC. This is a key milestone in the development of any utility-scale renewable energy project.

Partnership with the national utility is essential. Renewable energy projects do not operate in isolation; the electricity they generate must be integrated into the national grid so that it can reach homes, businesses, and public institutions. Working closely with LEC ensures that technical, commercial, and operational considerations are addressed early, creating a strong foundation for the project's long-term success.

Beyond the project itself, the agreement reflects a shared commitment to expanding renewable energy generation and strengthening Lesotho's energy security. By working together, the public and private sectors can help diversify the country's electricity supply, reduce dependence on imported power, and create a more resilient energy system for future generations.

Hirundo Energy extends its sincere appreciation to LEC for its collaboration and partnership throughout this process. We also acknowledge GIZ, the European Union Delegation to Lesotho, and the organizers of the LEAD Conference for providing a platform that continues to bring together government, utilities, development partners, and the private sector to advance Lesotho's energy future.

As work continues towards the Power Purchase Agreement and other project milestones, partnerships such as these remain central to turning shared ambition into lasting progress.

Understanding the Agreements

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): An MOU is an agreement that outlines how two organizations will work together towards a shared objective. It establishes cooperation and commitment before detailed contractual agreements are concluded.

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA): A PPA is the formal contract that sets out how electricity generated by the wind farm will be sold to the utility, including the commercial, legal and technical terms of the sale.

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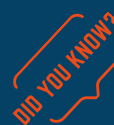
Watt's Happening?

For the Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm, finalising the sublease agreement is an important milestone. It demonstrates the progress made through ongoing engagement with landowners, community representatives, and government stakeholders, and sets out the foundation for the next stages of project development.

What is a Sublease Agreement?

A sublease agreement is a legal agreement that gives Hirundo's project company the right to use specific areas of land for the development and operation of the proposed wind farm, while ownership of the land remains unchanged.

The agreement sets out the rights and responsibilities of all parties involved, including how the land may be used, the duration of the agreement, and the commitments made by each party. It provides the legal certainty needed for project activities such as wind monitoring, construction, and, if the project proceeds, the operation of the wind farm.



A **sublease** agreement does not transfer ownership of the land. It simply gives the project developer the legal right to use the land for an agreed purpose and period, while ownership remains with the original landowner.

What is a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)?

A Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is a long-term contract between an electricity generator and a buyer of electricity. It sets out the terms under which electricity generated by a power project will be sold and purchased.

For the Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm, the PPA will be concluded between Hirundo's project company and the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC). The agreement will define key aspects of the project, including how much electricity will be supplied, how it will be delivered to the national grid and the commercial terms that make the project financially viable.

A signed PPA is one of the most significant milestones in developing a utility-scale renewable energy project. It provides certainty for the project developer, the electricity utility and potential investors, helping pave the way towards financing, construction and ultimately the delivery of clean, locally generated electricity for Lesotho.

Community Corner

District Council Stakeholder Session.

As part of Hirundo Energy's ongoing stakeholder engagement programme, which brings together communities, government institutions and other key stakeholders throughout the development of the proposed wind farm, the team recently hosted a dedicated session for members of the Mohale's Hoek District Council.

The session began with an overview of the project and the development process, including discussions on wind energy, the role of the proposed wind farm and the key milestones that lie ahead. Participants also learned about Virtual Reality (VR) technology and how it is being used by Hirundo as an innovative tool for stakeholder engagement.



Using VR headsets, council members were able to experience a virtual tour of a wind farm, allowing them to explore both the exterior and interior of a wind turbine. The immersive experience helped transform technical concepts into something tangible, giving participants a clearer understanding of the scale of modern wind turbines and how they operate.

The discussion also explored the practical realities of wind farm development, including the size of turbine components and the specialised transport required to deliver them safely to site. These conversations provided valuable context for understanding the infrastructure and planning needed to develop a utility-scale renewable energy project.

At Hirundo, we believe that meaningful engagement goes beyond presentations. By combining dialogue with innovative visual tools, we aim to make renewable energy more accessible, encourage informed participation and ensure that stakeholders can engage with the project long before construction begins.



From the Classroom to the Wind Farm: Mosa's Journey into Lesotho's Renewable Energy Future

When Mosa Sekatle enrolled in the Master of Science in Sustainable Energy programme at the National University of Lesotho (NUL), she was preparing for a career that would contribute to the country's energy future. Today, she is doing exactly that as a Project Engineer at Hirundo Energy, helping advance what will be Lesotho's first utility-scale wind farm.

Launched in 2018, the MSc in Sustainable Energy was established to strengthen local expertise and equip Basotho professionals with the technical knowledge needed to contribute to the country's evolving energy sector. The programme covers a range of topics, including renewable energy technologies such as wind energy, giving students a foundation in the principles and applications of sustainable energy.

For Mosa, the connection between the classroom and the workplace is particularly meaningful. During her studies, some of the programme's wind energy lectures were delivered by Hirundo Energy's directors, Jacob and Chris, who shared their experience in renewable energy development. A few years later, Mosa joined the very team that had helped introduce her to the field. Her experience also reflects the wider opportunities available to students through NUL's Energy Research Centre.

Today, Mosa's work at Hirundo Energy contributes to project planning, stakeholder engagement, and the technical development of the Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm. Her journey from the university classroom into renewable energy project development illustrates how investment in local education and practical exposure can translate into professional opportunities within Lesotho's emerging energy sector.

As Lesotho works to strengthen its energy security and expand renewable energy generation, building local capacity will be just as important as building new infrastructure. Mosa's journey is one example of how the knowledge, relationships and opportunities developed through local institutions can help equip a new generation of Basotho professionals to play a leading role in the country's energy transition



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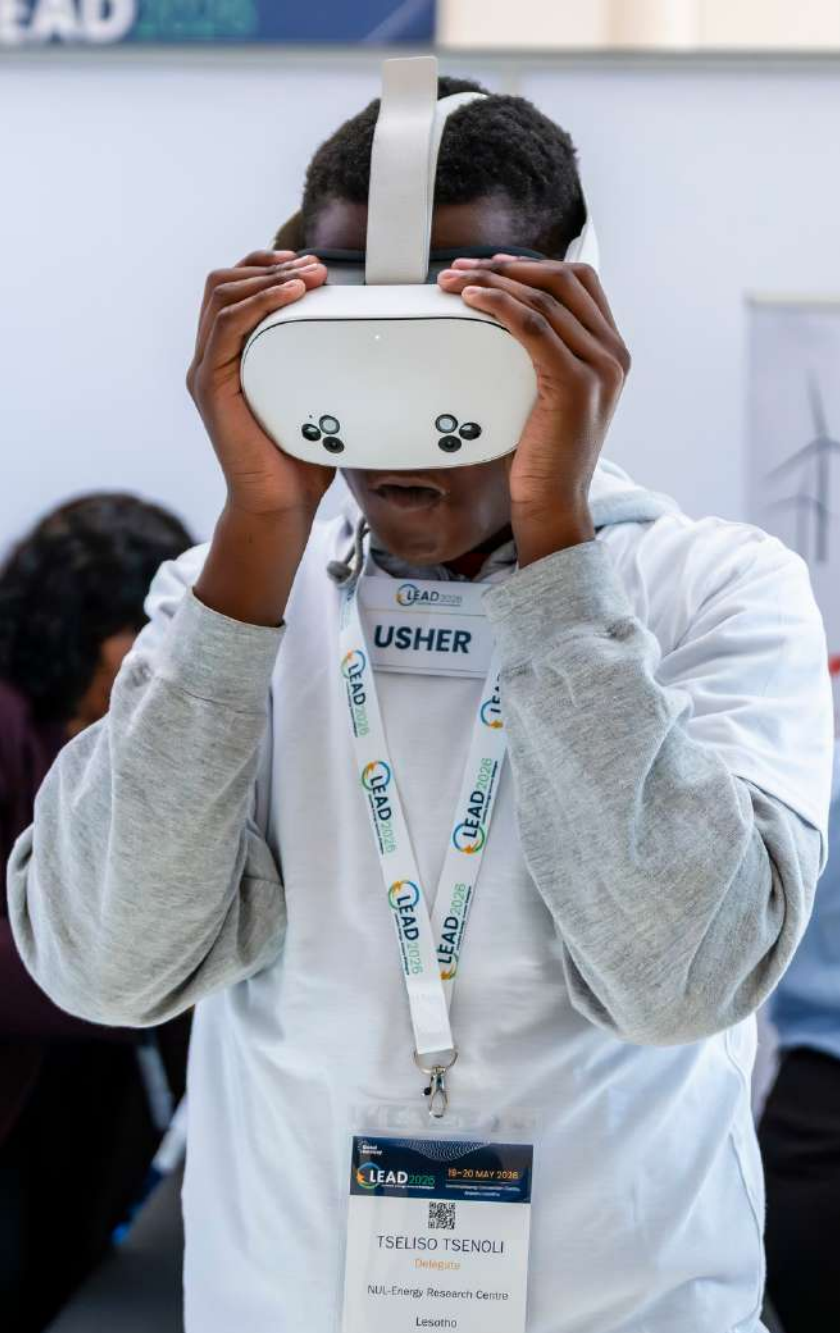
Mosa Sekatle
Project Engineer

“

The MSc in Sustainable Energy effectively bridged the gap between theory and practice, enabling me to approach energy challenges from both a technical engineering perspective and a practical development standpoint. The programme strengthened my skills in renewable energy assessment, project planning, data analysis, and stakeholder engagement, competencies that are central to my role today. Looking back, it provided a strong foundation for my career as a Project Engineer and continues to support my contribution to Lesotho's renewable energy transition.

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Behind the Turbines: Why Does Developing a Wind Farm Take Years?

By Chris Derde

One of the questions we are asked most often is: **"Why does it take so many years to develop a wind farm?"**. The simple answer is that developing a utility-scale renewable energy project is a complex process. Long before construction can begin, years of technical studies, environmental assessments, stakeholder engagement and legal processes are required to ensure that the project is technically feasible, environmentally responsible and beneficial for the country and surrounding communities.

Finding the Right Location

Every wind farm begins with finding a location that has a strong and consistent wind resource. Tools such as the Global Wind Atlas provide an excellent starting point for identifying areas with good wind potential. In Lesotho, the mountain ridges in the eastern highlands and the south of the country stand out as particularly promising. However, good wind alone is not enough. Modern wind turbines are enormous structures. Turbine blades can be up to 85 metres long, while components such as the nacelle and tower sections can weigh more than 70 tonnes. This means that road access, bridges and transport routes all need to be carefully assessed to determine whether these components can safely reach the project site.

Connecting to the National Grid

A wind farm also needs to be connected to the national electricity network. In Lesotho, the highest-voltage transmission lines operate at 132 kV, running from the Muela Hydropower Station through Maseru and onwards to Maseru's Hoek. Developing a wind farm close to this infrastructure significantly reduces the cost of connecting renewable energy to the grid. Equally important is ensuring that the national grid can accommodate the additional electricity generation. Studies undertaken by the National University of Lesotho's Energy Research Centre have shown that the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) network has the capacity to integrate a utility-scale wind farm.

Understanding Environmental and Social Impacts

Responsible renewable energy development also requires careful consideration of environmental and social factors. Potential impacts on birds and bats, aviation, biodiversity and surrounding communities must all be assessed before development can proceed. For this reason, Hirundo began the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process in 2020. The assessment involved extensive field studies, consultations with local communities, traditional leaders, councils and government institutions, as well as detailed technical investigations. Following this comprehensive process, environmental clearance for the project was granted in September 2024.



Working with Communities

Community engagement is one of the most important aspects of project development. From the earliest stages, Hirundo has worked closely with local communities, councils and government authorities to ensure that stakeholders understand the project, have opportunities to ask questions and can contribute their local knowledge to the planning process. These engagements continue throughout the project's development and help ensure that decisions are informed by both technical expertise and the experience of those who know the area best.

Securing Land Access

Obtaining the legal right to develop infrastructure on community land is another significant milestone. As the Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm is the first utility-scale wind project in Lesotho, government institutions and project partners worked together to establish the most appropriate legal structure for securing land access. Following detailed surveying of the proposed turbine locations and supporting infrastructure, the Lesotho Land Administration Authority (LAA) issued registered leases to the four participating councils. These councils subsequently agreed to sublease the required land to Hirundo's project company. From the first discussions to the completion of the process, securing these land rights took approximately four years.

Turning Wind into Electricity

The proposed Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm has the potential to generate enough electricity to supply approximately **15% of Lesotho's current electricity demand**. As Lesotho's national electricity utility, the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) will purchase the electricity generated by the wind farm through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Before progressing with this agreement, LEC required greater certainty regarding both the available wind resource and the project's land access arrangements. To support this process, Hirundo installed a SODAR wind measurement device in August 2024. After a year of monitoring, the measured wind data confirmed—and even exceeded—the earlier desktop predictions based on satellite modelling, providing increased confidence in the site's potential. With these important milestones achieved, Hirundo and LEC reached agreement on a Power Purchase Agreement, which is currently progressing through LEC's internal approval processes.

Preparing for Construction

Although construction has not yet begun, years of preparation have brought the project significantly closer to reality. The next major milestone is securing the investment required to construct the approximately **M1.8 billion** wind farm. As with every stage of development, financing depends on the confidence that the technical studies, environmental assessments, land agreements and commercial arrangements have all been carefully completed. Developing a wind farm takes time because every step matters. From measuring the wind and protecting biodiversity to engaging communities and strengthening partnerships, each milestone helps build a project that is technically sound, environmentally responsible and capable of providing clean, locally generated electricity for Lesotho for decades to come.



Looking Ahead

Looking Ahead: Preparing for the Next Phase

Geert Groessens

With several important milestones achieved during the past quarter, Hirundo Energy now looks ahead to the next phase of the Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm's development. One of the key upcoming activities will be the **installation of two meteorological (met) masts**. The campaign will collect detailed information on wind speed, wind direction and other atmospheric conditions, contributing to a better understanding of Lesotho's wind resource and supporting future renewable energy development.

In parallel, Hirundo is preparing to appoint specialist consultants to **advance the project's civil and electrical design**. These studies will help refine the technical aspects of the proposed wind farm and ensure that the supporting infrastructure is carefully planned. A **complementary Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)** will also be undertaken to assess these design elements and ensure they are developed in line with national requirements and international good practice.

Alongside the technical work, Hirundo will continue advancing several important project processes, including the finalisation of land title arrangements, the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Department of Energy, and continued engagement with the Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) towards concluding the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA).

Each of these milestones represents an important step in the development journey. Together, they strengthen the technical, legal and institutional foundations needed to move the proposed Mohale's Hoek Wind Farm closer to implementation.

As these activities progress, Hirundo remains committed to transparent communication and meaningful stakeholder engagement. We look forward to sharing updates as we continue working with our partners, government institutions and local communities to support Lesotho's renewable energy future.



Photo by Wind Hunter Africa



Photo by Wind Hunter Africa



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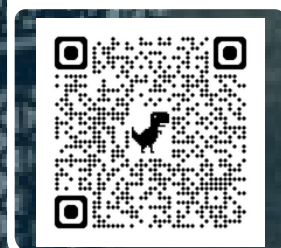


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