

# Business teams up for ground-breaking solar energy project

## Network Reporter

DEVELOPERS of the landmark Lincoln on Lake development in uMhlanga Ridge have installed a multimillion-rand rooftop photovoltaic (solar panel) power system.

The project is being featured at UN climate change talks as an example of how the private sector can work with the government in providing renewable energy projects and highlighting the nascent "green" building sector in South Africa.

The Lincoln on Lake Rooftop Solar Project represents a partnership between Growthpoint Properties and Eskom.

Growthpoint, which owns the building, has undertaken the project with solar power solutions company Hudu and Suntech Power, one of the world's largest photovoltaic (solar panel) manufacturers.

Essop Basha, who heads Growthpoint's utilities management division, said: "Leading the drive for clean energy in SA, we have combined forces in this ground-breaking energy-saving pilot project. And we have chosen SA's sunny city, Durban, to harness the

power of solar energy."

He said the project was driven by a common desire for clean energy, saving energy and reducing demand on the national grid.

Growthpoint Properties had provided the building on top of which the project is being undertaken. Suntech and Hudu provided the solar panels and installation, while Eskom shared in the costs as part of its first joint venture for a commercial building photovoltaic installation.

Growthpoint is expecting remarkable results.

According to the company, the project is the largest photovoltaic installation to an office building in KwaZulu-Natal and represents a potential saving of 44 kilowatts, which equates to about 87 000 kilowatt-hours a year.

"It is anticipated to achieve a minimum carbon saving of 89 610kg carbon dioxide a year and certified emissions reductions of 89.61 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> a year. This equates to saving nearly 240 trees a year, or removing about 40 cars from our roads each year," said Growthpoint.

Basha said energy-efficient ini-



The Lincoln on Lake building overlooking Chris Saunders Park in uMhlanga Ridge. A multimillion-rand photovoltaic solar power system has been installed on its roof and the building is set to secure a Green Star rating from the Green Building Council of SA.

tiatives and alternative energy sources for commercial properties were without doubt the way of the future. "Having a local project to showcase during COP17 (UN climate conference) shows delegates from all over the world the forward-thinking approach SA business takes to energy-saving through the use of clean energy sources."

Martin Viljoen, the managing director of Hudu, said: "We are excited to be part of this resourceful project and to be a participant in

the solar energy revolution that that is taking hold in SA."

Steve Lennon, the Eskom divisional executive overseeing the power parastatal's involvement in climate talks, said renewable energy was the way of the future.

"Eskom is committed to developing large-scale renewable energy projects as well as supporting our customers in the development of smaller-scale projects as with Lincoln on the Lake. The investment is part of our 49 million cam-

paign which encourages the responsible use of electricity by all South Africans," he said.

The Lincoln on Lake Rooftop Solar Project would be monitored to evaluate the building's energy savings.

Basha said: "The objective of the pilot project is to evaluate the technology and the opportunity it represents for application in buildings in SA. The project will benefit not only the pilot study partners, but the whole country."