

**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****AFREC AND DENMARK LAUNCH “EFFICIENCY FIRST” TO PROMOTE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN AFRICA**

13 February 2025, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: The African Energy Commission (AFREC) and the Government of Denmark are proud to announce their collaboration dubbed “*Efficiency First: Powering Africa’s Sustainable Development*”, a comprehensive programme designed to promote energy efficiency and sustainable development across African Union (AU) Member States.

The four-year programme, officially launched this week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, will be implemented by AFREC with the aim to build capacity and implement energy efficiency measures to support Africa’s growing energy needs while reducing environmental impact.

Through Denmark’s Africa Partnership for Peace and Sustainability initiative, the project aligns with the global sustainable development goals including Africa’s Agenda 2063 which envisions an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa. Moreover, the project is line with the global commitment to triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency by 2030. Energy efficiency, notably, forms one of the main pillars of the vision to achieve access to clean, affordable and sustainable energy for all.

The Efficiency First Denmark-backed project targets to establish at least 15 Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for lighting and electrical appliances whose development, adoption and enforcement in the AU Member states would contribute to improved access to modern, reliable, and affordable energy services across Africa. Currently, 18 AU Member States have adopted policies on MEPS for select appliances with 12 AU Member States also adopting policies on energy efficiency.

This partnership programme also targets to support reduction of technical losses in distribution grids to strengthen the capacity of national utilities to provide energy services. The project further aims to monitor and evaluate energy efficiency policy instruments to enable effective tracking of progress on energy efficiency goals and inform evidence-based decision making.

The Efficiency First: Powering Africa's Sustainable Development project's launch event brought together key stakeholders from AU Member States, industry, and development organisations to discuss the strategic role of energy efficiency in Africa's development growth. The gathering was addressed by H.E. Sune Krogstrup, Ambassador of Denmark to the African Union, Mr Rashid Ali Abdallah, the AFREC Executive Director, Zewge Worku, Director of Energy Efficiency and Conservation at the Petroleum and Energy Authority of Ethiopia, and Mikael Togeby, the Energy Sector Counsellor at the Danish Embassy in Addis Ababa.

During opening remarks, H.E Ambassador Sune Krogstrup emphasised Denmark's commitment to supporting Africa's energy transition. *"Energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective ways to meet Africa's energy demands while mitigating climate change. Through this collaboration, we aim to support AU member states in integrating energy efficiency as a core principle in their energy strategies."*

Mr. Rashid Ali Abdallah, AFREC Executive Director, highlighted the critical role energy efficiency plays in ensuring a sustainable and resilient energy sector across Africa. *"Energy efficiency is central to Africa's efforts to enhance energy access, reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), lower energy costs, and foster a clean energy transition. For this reason, we are proud to form partnerships to implement the African Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan where we aim to triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency by 2030 as well as enhance Africa's energy productivity by 50% by 2050 and 70% by 2063."*

Notes to the Editor:

Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for electrical appliances secure a good efficiency for all covered new appliances. ECOWAS, the Regional Economic Community (REC) of West African States, has adopted five policies regarding MEPS and three policies regarding energy labelling, leading the way for other RECs to follow suit. The five regional Centres for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency are developing regional strategies and policies and offer support to their Member States for advancing MEPS and energy labelling initiatives.

Over 40% of AU Member States have electricity network losses above 20%, compared to 6-10% in developed countries, indicating the need for investment in more efficient infrastructure. The technical and non-technical transmission and distribution losses in worst performing AU Member States are as high as 60%.

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