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Source: Ford



Dr Casper Kruger

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AFRICAN UTILITY WEEK PREVIEW

Compiled by MELISSA ZISENGWE

Exclusive CEO Forum to discuss utilities transformation at AUW

MELISSA ZISENGWE | CREAMER MEDIA REPORTER

UTILITY CEO FORUM

About 40 CEOs from the continent are expected to attend

CEOs from Africa will meet at the Pan-African Utility CEO Forum to discuss pertinent issues affecting the power, energy and water sectors.

The forum at African Utility Week (AUW), taking place from May 15 to 17, is the largest of the five forums and is the meeting place for CEOs from across the continent. Attendance for the forum is by invitation only where CEOs can discuss topics freely and openly, says Utility CEO Forum event manager **Marie Sachet**.

She says CEOs from Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Ghana, Malawi, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Zambia, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Niger, Namibia and South Sudan have confirmed their attendance for AUW, with more expected

to confirm attendance in the coming weeks.

The forum is divided into the power and the water sectors. Each sector will have morning and afternoon sessions for the first two days; the two sectors will meet on the third day.

“We are expecting about 25 CEOs for the power and energy sessions, and 15 for the water sessions,” she points out.

Power Sessions

The Power CEO forum will start with an official opening by host utility State-owned power utility Eskom. Thereafter, the discussion will centre around financial viability and the ways in which new regulations and laws affect utilities.

On the second day, Sachet mentions

that the morning session will have roundtable discussions on renewable energy where CEOs will be focusing on technologies and energy integration. The afternoon’s main theme is managing change, where CEOs will deliberate on how to manage resistance to change both internally and externally.

Water Sessions

The Water CEO forum will open with a session on how to adapt to climate change and strategic solutions using technology such as water-treatment processes. The afternoon session will be led by a World Bank expert presenting a report on the performance of water utilities in Africa.

The morning session of day two will

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comprise discussions on sustainable financing of utilities, as well as new ideas and models to expand access to water.

Water and power utilities share common challenges and objectives, consequently, on the last day, both sectors will discuss scenario planning as well as possible collaborations between countries and utilities.

Sachet adds that the purpose of the Utility CEO Forum is to develop solutions to the strategic and daily challenges faced by utility CEOs in Africa; share best practices and introduce new strategies;

fuel collaboration between utility CEOs in Africa and facilitate personal leadership development for utility CEOs. She is also hopeful that the forums will lead to some of the ideas discussed being implemented by the CEOs. “The ideas shared during the CEO Forum should assist CEOs in fulfilling their mission. Their mission is to provide access to a sustainable supply of water and electricity; it is a very important mission and it is key to the development of the continent. We are proud to support them in any way we can with the Utility CEO Forum,” Sachet concludes. ■

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