



The Energy Council aims to enable a unified strategy and vision for a South African energy transition pathway that will support clean industrialisation and global competitiveness, address our economic and social deficits and importantly contribute to a sustainable environment. This is an exciting time full of opportunity with the potential for South Africa to become a global role model as an emerging market leader through the energy transition.



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

I've just returned from Enlit, Europe's largest energy conference that showcases the latest innovations and trends in sustainable energy, decarbonisation and digitalisation. It took place in the fashion capital Milan and was attended by over 15,000 energy experts and practitioners.

This is the 2nd year I have been fortunate to attend, with special thanks to Enlit Africa and Vuka Group who annually send a team to Europe for inspiration and ideas for the Africa event.



Reflecting on 2023, the discussions revolved around climate change and sustainability concerns, understandable following the Ukraine war global supply chain disruptions with key themes focused on unlocking the supply side through exponential grid and renewables build rates.

2024 in contrast had a more confident backdrop and a clear focus on innovation, competitiveness and demand-side. Hot topics around the conference included AI and digital-driven energy systems as well as the need for flexibility and end-to-end integration. A stark difference to our tentative South African approach and fixation on supply side technology debates. We need all technologies, many still under development, but the key question is: how do we accelerate our implementation by learning from advanced economies in order to deliver an optimal energy transition pathway, tailored for the South African context?

Europe still needs to double its grid expansion pace but an important difference is that their focus now looks beyond the power sector to decarbonise the transport and industrial sectors, and this is all about new demand through electrification. Europe is forecasting a 60% increase in demand in less than a decade as new transport and industrial customers rapidly switch to electricity-based energy.

This growing pace of decarbonisation through electrification is redefining service delivery, prompting providers to compete by offering more flexible yet seamless services. Distribution System Operators must compete, not only on energy supply and price but also through digital integration, flexible connection contracting practices, and innovation.





Turning back to SA, we are facing significant system cost increases, while trying to play "catch up" on structural reforms. Europe also suffered major cost increases, well-above global averages but through competition and innovation, there is a growing confidence that overall system prices will become more globally competitive. Some bold statements made at Enlit highlighted significant decreases in renewable energy prices, particularly in the UK and how this is benefiting the system as a whole.

The improving confidence and shift in focus has also highlighted the importance of the people aspect of the transition. While the scale of required new skills and thinking appears to be an insurmountable challenge at times (Europe requires another 1 million solar workers by 2030) an insightful comment I heard was, "The Energy Transition will only happen because everyday people are skilled in what needs to be done and are taking action". This triggered two ideas for me; firstly that it is not only technical competency but also innovative thinking, proficiency in digital and AI technologies and an entrepreneurial attitude that is needed but secondly, that we all need to bring more youth into clean tech industries, so they can learn and grow.

A final takeaway for me was that while South Africans are still somewhat ambivalent about the Energy Transition and Net Zero, the European narrative is one of full commitment; not negotiable. They have embraced the idea that the Energy Transition is essential and an opportunity.



EC MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

 <p>Mainstream Renewable Power has reached financial close on its 50 MW Ilukwa solar PV plant</p> <p>Construction of the plant, located in the Free State, has already started and it is expected to reach commercial operation in early 2026.</p> Read More	 <p>SA's first commercial IPP wind farm starts delivering – to Sasol</p> <p>South Africa's renewable energy industry reached a new milestone recently when the 69MW Msenge Emoyeni Wind Farm became the first independent Power Producer (IPP) using wind technology and selling to a private off-taker to come into operation.</p> Read More	 <p>First two private utility-scale battery projects reach commercial close</p> <p>Two projects selected as preferred bidders under South Africa's inaugural Battery Energy Storage Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (BESIPPPP) bidding round have advanced to commercial close and will now enter construction.</p> Read More	 <p>Nersa approves cross-border electricity trading</p> <p>Energy regulator Nersa on Tuesday approved four new electricity trading licences in addition to the current six, as well as an import/export licence that will allow licensee Greenco Power Services (Africa GreenCo) to trade electricity across country borders within the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP).</p> Read More
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19 November – EIU Conference 19 & 20 November – C&I Solar and Storage Summit	25 & 26 November - Africa Renewables Investment Summit 28 November - Energy Council NECOMB2B feedback
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SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNICATIONS

A national energy communications campaign at a critical time in our journey towards sustainability, inclusive growth and a thriving economy



Energise Mzansi
A Communications Strategy

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#EnergiseMzansi – a national energy communications campaign at a critical time in our journey towards sustainability, inclusive growth and a thriving economy

In November, the Energy Council of South Africa will be launching a comprehensive national media and communications campaign to support South Africa's Energy Transition.

Our energy narrative has long been characterised by highly polarised views on technology choices and too often, ideologically opposed debate. This continues to undermine societal confidence in our readiness as an economy to take advantage of our Energy Transition.

Furthermore, energy topics are highly complex and technical, often filled with jargon and acronyms which confuses and alienates.

