

Africa's first hydrogen power plant expected to produce electricity from 2024

French independent power producer HDF Energy expects its green hydrogen power plant in Namibia, Africa's first, to start producing electricity by 2024, a senior company executive said on Monday, 12 September.



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Once operational, the N\$3.1bn Swakopmund project will supply clean electricity, 24 hours a day, all-year round, boosting power supply in the southern African nation that imports around 40% of its energy from neighbouring South Africa.

Namibia, one of the world's sunniest and least densely populated countries, wants to harness its vast potential for solar and wind energy to produce green hydrogen and position the country as a renewable energy hub in Africa.

Hydrogen is categorised "green" when it is made with renewable power, and is seen as key to help decarbonise industry, though the technology remains immature and relatively costly.

The project will see 85MW of solar panels powering electrolyzers to produce hydrogen that can be stored.

"Yearly, we can produce 142-gigawatt hours, enough for 142,000 inhabitants, and that is conservative," said Nicolas Lecomte, HDF Energy director for southern Africa.

HDF Energy is also eyeing new projects across Africa and other parts of the world.

"Soon after southern Africa, you will see HDF developing projects in east Africa," Lecomte told Reuters.



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Reducing dependence on Russian energy

The European Union also plans a deal with Namibia to support the country's nascent green hydrogen sector and boost its own imports of the fuel, EU and Namibian officials said, as the bloc works to reduce its dependence on Russian energy.

Another company, Namibian-registered Hyphen Hydrogen Energy, is in talks with the country's government to secure an implementation agreement for its planned \$10bn green hydrogen project that will produce some 350,000 tonnes of green hydrogen a year before 2030 for global and regional markets.

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