

Green hydrogen is helping to build SA's construction industry. Here's why

The emphasis that South Africa places on green hydrogen as an eco-friendly energy source and a purer fuel for businesses are highly significant to parties concerned with the construction sector. This not only showcases the nation's dedication to addressing



Source: [Pexels](#)

CEO of Databuild, Morag Evans says there is a lot of news about the government's eagerness to progress with Strategic Integration Projects, including the Green Hydrogen National Plan.

In December 2022, [Business Tech](#) reported that the then Minister of public works and infrastructure Patricia de Lille had gazetted nine infrastructure projects with Infrastructure South Africa.

These projects include those in the green hydrogen field, will be driven through Strategic Integration Projects (Sips).

PwC South Africa released a [report](#), Unlocking South Africa's hydrogen potential, in which it stated that the country "is in an extraordinary position to revolutionise its own economy and supply green hydrogen to the world."

It adds, "The future outlook for the global energy sector will see wind, solar and hydro accounting for an ever-increasing proportion of our energy needs. It is estimated that by 2050, 85% of global electricity production will be sourced from renewables."

Evans emphasises the strategic importance of these projects in contributing to the construction industry.

“We have seen how countries like China, Finland and the UK have taken a proactive approach to the construction of infrastructure to support the commercial rollout of green hydrogen. That is what we aspire to in South Africa. The projects that the government has identified are significant and encompass construction, which can only benefit the industry in terms of growth and investment in labour and materials.”



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Yershen Pillay 27 Mar 2023



According to a [report by hydrogeninsight.com](#), in February this year Chinese refining company Sinopec advanced with a project in Inner Mongolia touted as “the biggest renewable H2 project under construction in the world.” Once built, the \$831mdollar project will produce around 30,000 tonnes of green hydrogen annually.

Databuild points to an interesting article published by [Constructionmanagement.co.uk](#) which outlines how construction professionals should prepare for green hydrogen energy.

The article makes a sound argument that while there are benefits to hydrogen power generation technology, such as not being susceptible to weather-related availability issues, there are some pitfalls – most notably that the technology is not as mature as conventional solutions.

“Ultimately, there are pros and cons to any technology investment, but we are confident that green hydrogen is a boost for South Africa’s construction industry. The general consensus is that this technology could very well be the catalyst for new projects and this means more work, which will be a significant contribution to South Africa’s construction labour force. It will also help cement compliance with the fundamentals of eco-conscious commercial building and construction,” Evans concludes.

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