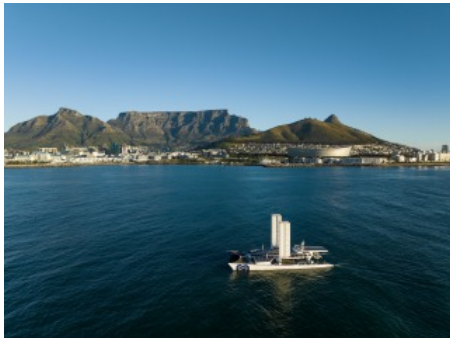




Communiqué de presse - South Africa's energy transition at the heart of Energy Observer's stopover in Cape Town

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After 33 days of sailing and 2,300 nautical miles covered, the laboratory vessel rounded the mythical Cape of Good Hope before reaching her final destination in South Africa: Cape Town, a mythic port for sailors, the economic heart of the country and the scene of a major African stopover for the laboratory vessel.

This was a particularly difficult journey for the crew, with four sheltered stops between Mayotte and Cape Town due to harsh weather conditions, including strong winds and heavy seas. This 80th stopover will gather a host of institutional, industrial, and academic players committed to working with Energy Observer to make the energy transition a reality accessible to all.

The laboratory vessel is docked at Cape Town's V&A Waterfront from June 12th to 20th next to her pedagogical exhibition open to the public in order to raise public awareness of the energy and ecological transition's challenges.

For Kadri Nassiep, Executive Director of Energy at the City of Cape Town: *"The City of Cape Town is a keen supporter of technology and solutions that promote a safer and more sustainable energy future. Energy Observer is a powerful platform to showcase the solutions that will hopefully power not just our seafaring vessels, but towns and cities in the future. Innovation and resilience are the cornerstones of our energy future".*



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Mobilization against a backdrop of major energy challenges

South Africa is going through the largest energy crisis in its history, with numerous daily scheduled power cuts to cope with a situation of energy shortages that is having a crucial impact on the population, businesses and public structures, hampering economic development. The challenge? To accompany the shift from coal with a Just Energy Transition that is the country's roadmap for achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

The roadmap focuses on three strategic areas: the energy sector, with the development of renewable energies, green hydrogen as a means of storing and decarbonizing industry, and the development of electric vehicles.

Green hydrogen: means of storage and vector for decarbonizing industry

Like Energy Observer, where onboard-produced hydrogen enables the storage of surplus production from renewable energies, green hydrogen could allow South Africa to manage the intermittency of its renewable production, which is already booming, particularly in solar energy (imports of solar panels tripled in the first half of 2023, and 13 GW are under development in the private sector). Green hydrogen has the potential to play a crucial role in South Africa's energy transition, accelerating the adoption of renewable energies, decarbonizing the industrial sector, particularly the carbon-intensive mining and manufacturing sectors, and representing a commodity exportable to international markets.



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While the country is committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and gradually phasing out coal, the challenge is considerable, given that this resource remains a principal source of energy, revenue, and employment, accounting for 85% of electricity production, around 24 billion euros of GDP and between 150 and 200,000 jobs.

South Africa's energy transition is an economic, social, and public health issue. It demonstrates the importance of supporting a transition that leaves no one behind while responding to the climate emergency.

Celebrating youth and science

Industrial, institutional and academic players committed to green hydrogen and renewable energy development will be present during the laboratory vessel's stopover. Dr. Blade Nzimande, Minister of Education, Science, and Technology, will also be present during the inauguration.

"The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) welcomes efforts by Air Liquide and the Energy Observer initiative that aims to highlight the need to transition to a carbon free environment. As part of a national drive to create a clean, affordable and sustainable energy future for South Africa, the South African government through my Department has developed the Hydrogen Society Roadmap (HSRM) in 2021. Not only will green hydrogen valleys ensure the move away from fossil fuels, but it would create jobs, attract investment, bring development to rural provinces and support. Through the HSRM, the Department is also ensuring that hydrogen can be utilized as lever for social justice in the context of South Africa's transition to cleaner energy sources."



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Education will be honored for National Youth Day on June 16, when Mr. Buti Manamela, Deputy Minister for Higher Education, Science, and Innovation, will take part in the opening of the "Youth in Innovation" exhibition organized by Sasol, event partner of Energy Observer in Cape Town.

"We are proud to support Energy Observer in its mission to promote renewable energy deployment. This partnership aligns with our commitment to sustainability and reflects our belief in the power of technology and partnerships to address climate change. By working together, we can drive positive change and accelerate the transition to a more sustainable future."

Dr Thembakazi Mali, Sasol Senior Vice President for Research and Technology at Sasol.

Finally, a round table on the state of research and green hydrogen in the Southern African context will be organized on June 17 by Energy Observer and the University of Cape Town's Energy Systems Research Group.



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An audiovisual production embodied by Victorien Erussard

The project's founder traveled to South Africa before the vessel's arrival, to film unprecedented footage of the local energy context, from the townships of Cape Town to the coal-fired power plants of Mpumalanga, the region with the highest concentration of greenhouse gases and fine particles (NOx and SOx) in electricity production in the world.

In Cape Town, he will present a two-part film at the heart of South Africa's energy transition to identify promising solutions to support the gradual phase-out of coal, enabling the country to grow considerably over the past few decades.

"For Energy Observer, this stopover in South Africa is fundamental to understanding the issues facing the BRICS countries as they move towards decarbonized energy production. Exploding energy demand, growing demographics and dependence on fossil fuels: these are the components of an equation that requires to rethink not only energy systems that have taken decades to build, but the very structure of society and the economy." Victorien Erussard, Captain and Founder of Energy Observer.

The production will be broadcast exclusively in Energy Observer's educational exhibition village and across the Odyssey's social networks.



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Meeting the transition's key players

As part of the Energy Observer Foundation's educational and awareness-raising missions, school visits will be conducted onboard the vessel and in the educational exhibition village.

Local NGOs and associations such as Green Cape, Sustainable Ocean Alliance, Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation, I am Water, Ocean Pledge, and Project 90 by 2030 will come and meet the crew, as World Ocean Day was celebrated a few days before the vessel's arrival.

This is a highly strategic stage for Energy Observer's Odyssey across Africa, as it raises awareness of these challenges, which are essential to preserving our environment (SDG 13, 14, 15), our sovereignty, and access to sustainable, affordable energy for all (SDG 7). It resonates with its role as First French Ambassador for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



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They said :

David Martinon, Ambassador of France Designate to South Africa

"The arrival of Energy Observer to South Africa - the first vessel in the world capable of producing decarbonized hydrogen on board from sea water and using an energy mix relying on renewable energies - points to France's commitment on the African continent in advancing a durable energy transition. Indeed, France continues to support South Africa by mobilizing a total of €1 billion for its Just Energy Transition, which will pave way for other African countries to follow suit and strengthen the cooperation between Africa and the EU through mutually beneficial projects, aimed at ensuring a safer planet and brighter future."

David Green, Chief Executive Officer of the V&A Waterfront, host partner of the stopover

"As the oldest working harbour in the southern hemisphere, the ocean is an integral part of our business and we have adopted the mutually reinforcing goals of growing the opportunities relating to the ocean economy, while developing and exercising best-practice ocean stewardship. With our location at the gateway to the Southern Oceans, the Waterfront is home to the Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation who carries out conservation, animal welfare and research work for the good of the environment; the Department of Environmental Affairs, Antarctic Research vessel the S.A. Agulhas II, and a traditional fishing industry that's called it home for many years. The climate emergency is real, and it calls for business to respond accordingly. We look forward to the interactions and conversations with the team aboard the vessel."

Ronnie Chalmers, VP Africa Middle East and India - Air Liquide

"Air Liquide has made a strong commitment to help South Africa decarbonize its economy. In June 2021, when the Group acquired the biggest oxygen production site in the world, located in Secunda, it committed to a plan to reduce by 30 % to 40 % the CO2 emissions arising from the oxygen production. To do so, Air Liquide launched a multi-year investment and modernization plan which encompasses massive long-term renewable power purchase agreements. By doing so, Air Liquide is actively supporting the development of renewable energies, for the benefit of the South African electrical power system and the fight against global warming. This will also contribute to the South African social transformation and a "Just Transition", and more generally to South Africa's economy and environment."

Noriyuki Tanaka - Manager South Africa Group Toyota Tsusho Corp, Project General Manager Africa Support Div Toyota

"Toyota is accelerating its global plans towards Carbon Neutrality, doing so in a very responsible manner by adopting a 'Multi-Pathway' approach. This ensures that Toyota has practical CN mobility solutions to suit each market's diverse needs. These solutions will include amongst others Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles [FCEV]. As a pioneer in this technology, Toyota aims to be a leading partner in the creation of a H2 society under the philosophy of "producing happiness for Africa" in the spirit of "With Africa, For Africa". Energy Observer is one of these important partners for Toyota to demonstrate the capability and potential of its FC system."



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Practical information

Dates: From June 12 to 20

Exhibition village : Open to the public from June 12 to 18, from 10 am to 6 pm.

Free admission

Address docking vessel and village: Jetty 2, Victoria and Alfred Waterfront - Cape Town, 8001, South Africa

**The vessel will be visible but cannot be visited by the general public.*

Event Partner



Host Partner



With the support of



About:

Energy Observer is the name of the first hydrogen-powered, zero-emission vessel to be self-sufficient in energy, advocating and serving as a laboratory for ecological transition. The development of reliable, sustainable, emission-free, and economically accessible energy solutions is at the heart of our odyssey and our industrial subsidiary EODEV. We have been sailing around the world for 7 years, stopping in iconic cities to meet pioneers who devote their energy to the development of sustainable solutions that respect the planet.

As the first French ambassador for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN, our mission - reinforced by our endowment fund Energy Observer Foundation - is to raise awareness of the ecological transition issues and explore solutions that prove that another energy future is possible.

Energy Observer has received the High Patronage of Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic. It has the official support of the Ministry of Ecological Transition, UNESCO, the European Union, Irena, and Ademe.

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