

Event: **Africa Green Hydrogen Summit 2026**
Venue: **CTICC**
Date: **Tuesday, 15 September 2026**
Address by: **Tertuis Simmers, Western Cape Minister of Infrastructure**

Programme Director,

His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa,

Honourable Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity and Energy,

Fellow members of government,

Esteemed dignitaries,

Leaders from business and industry,

Investors, developers, financiers and innovators,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. Goeiemôre. Molweni.

On behalf of the Western Cape Government and the people of our province, it is my privilege to welcome you to Cape Town and the Western Cape.

We gather at an important moment.

For several years, the global conversation about green hydrogen has centred on potential.

We have spoken about Africa's extraordinary renewable-energy resources, our strategic location, growing global demand for cleaner fuels, and the opportunity presented by green hydrogen.

But the conversation must now move beyond potential.

The question is no longer whether Africa can become a major player in the global green hydrogen economy.

We know that we can.

The question is:

Can we build the infrastructure, institutions and investment environment required to turn that potential into projects?

Because green hydrogen will not be built through strategies and presentations alone.

It requires renewable-energy generation and transmission capacity. It requires water, roads, ports, logistics and industrial capability. It requires technology, skills, finance and capable institutions.

In other words:

The green hydrogen transition is also an infrastructure, investment and economic-development challenge.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Africa represents one of the most significant growth opportunities in the world.

Our population is expected to grow from approximately 1.3 billion people to around 2.4 billion by 2050. Urbanisation is accelerating, economic activity is expanding, and demand for reliable energy will increase substantially.

At the same time, the global economy is undergoing one of the most significant energy transitions in generations.

Africa's opportunity cannot simply be to consume the technologies of that transition.

Our opportunity must be to build, manufacture, innovate and export.

We must ask how much of this new value chain can be located here. How many components can be manufactured here? How many African businesses can participate?

And ultimately:

How many jobs can we create?

Because the energy transition must also become an economic transition.

That is how we see the opportunity in the Western Cape.

Our province is one of South Africa's leading regional economies, characterised by institutional stability, trusted governance, a modern economy and a culture of innovation.

We have also established ourselves as a leading green-economy hub, with growing investment in renewable energy, clean technologies and sustainable industrial development.

Across this value chain, opportunities include renewable-energy generation, energy trading, electric mobility, battery storage, charging infrastructure, grid expansion and green hydrogen.

International companies are already investing and operating here.

Their presence demonstrates something important:
Investment follows confidence.

Investors need more than ambition. They need policy certainty, infrastructure, functioning institutions and projects capable of moving from concept and financing into construction.

Our responsibility as government is to help create those conditions.

Our Energy Resilience Programme is an important part of this approach.

It responds to energy security, affordability, decarbonisation and the changing structure of South Africa's electricity sector.

Our renewable-energy ambitions are substantial.

We aimed to bank between 500 and 750 megawatts by 2025, increase capacity towards 1,800 megawatts by 2027, and ultimately reach 5,700 megawatts by 2035.

But renewable generation alone is not enough.

Green hydrogen at scale requires an entire infrastructure ecosystem.

Energy must connect with transport. Transport must connect with logistics and ports. Industrial development must connect with skills.

And all of it must connect with investment.

Because a hydrogen facility without the infrastructure surrounding it remains a project on paper.

And South Africa cannot afford projects that remain on paper.

Which brings me to a phrase that captures the challenge before us:

We must move from PowerPoints to Gigawatts.

More than 20 green hydrogen projects have been announced nationally.

That demonstrates significant ambition and investor interest.

But announcements cannot be our ultimate measure of success.

Construction is. Investment is. Production is. Exports are. And jobs are.

Moving from ambition to execution requires effective project preparation, streamlined approvals, investment readiness, infrastructure coordination and grid connections.

It also requires governments to work together.

That is why the Western Cape, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape form part of the Three Capes value proposition.

Green hydrogen does not recognise provincial boundaries.

Neither should our infrastructure planning.

The Three Capes proposition connects renewable resources, production opportunities, infrastructure, ports, export markets and industrial development across a much larger economic geography.

There will always be political differences.

But infrastructure, investment and jobs require us to find common ground.

Within the Western Cape, our Green Hydrogen Strategy provides a clear direction towards 2035.

Our ambition is to facilitate the generation and supply of up to 15 gigawatts of renewable energy required for green hydrogen production.

We seek to support local consumption while enabling exports of between 300,000 and 420,000 tonnes of green hydrogen and its derivatives.

The opportunity extends into marine fuel supply, aviation, industrial decarbonisation, manufacturing and international trade.

Our strategy rests on three pillars:

First, creating an enabling environment through institutional capacity, investment promotion, skills, innovation and better coordination.

Second, building the infrastructure and industrial capability these projects require.

And third, supporting scale through collaboration, hydrogen hubs, export development and industry growth.

But our ambition cannot simply be to export green molecules.

We must export value – and retain as much of that value as possible here in South Africa and Africa.

The real prize is the industrial ecosystem around green hydrogen:

Engineers and artisans.

Technicians and construction companies.

Manufacturers and technology providers.

Transport and logistics businesses.

Researchers, innovators and small enterprises entering new supply chains.

And young people acquiring skills for industries that can sustain livelihoods for decades.

Government cannot measure success only in megawatts, gigawatts or tonnes.

We must also measure it in investment, industrialisation, jobs and opportunity.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Western Cape already has a pipeline of green hydrogen projects open to investment, partnership and collaboration.

So let me speak directly to the investors, financiers, developers and technology partners gathered here.

Come and build with us.

Bring your technology.

Bring your expertise.

Bring your innovation.

Bring your capital.

And partner with us in building an industry capable of serving South Africa, Africa and the world.

As Acting Premier, my message is simple:

The Western Cape is open for investment, ready for partnership and determined to turn opportunity into delivery.

Government cannot and should not build this industry alone.

Our responsibility is to create the environment in which you can build.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The energy transition will not be won by the jurisdictions with the best PowerPoints.

It will be won by those that can turn:

Megawatts into molecules.

Infrastructure into investment.

And investment into jobs.

Through the Three Capes partnership, we recognise that this opportunity is bigger than any one province.

It is a Western Cape opportunity.

It is a South African opportunity.

And it is an African opportunity.

So let us move beyond potential.

Let us move beyond announcements.

Let us move from PowerPoints to Gigawatts.

And together, let us turn Africa's green-energy potential into infrastructure, industrialisation, investment, jobs and prosperity.

The Western Cape is ready.

We are ready to partner.

And we are ready to build.

Thank you.