



EFF STATEMENT ON EU GREEN HYDROGEN GRANTS TO SOUTH AFRICA

Tuesday, 10 September 2024.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) rejects the recent grants extended by the European Union (EU) to South Africa, totalling over R630 million. These grants, touted as support for the development of green hydrogen and to aid Transnet in achieving net-zero emissions, are yet another trap set by neocolonial interests.

The first grant of €7 million (about R140 million) is earmarked for Transnet to establish a "green hydrogen ecosystem," while the second grant of €25 million (around R490 million) is intended to expand the country's green hydrogen sector and its associated value chains. These funds are part of a broader strategy to pivot South Africa towards a green energy future, aligned with European climate objectives, rather than addressing our own urgent energy needs.

These grants come despite South Africa already being involved in the Just Energy Transition Partnership with international partners, which seeks to force the decommissioning of coal plants and rollout of renewable energy sources. The DA-ANC coalition is willingly allowing itself to be manipulated into fulfilling the energy goals of Europe, while abandoning our own national interests. South Africa's energy trajectory must not be dictated by foreign powers whose primary concern is their own environmental policies, and the EFF stands firm in resisting this submission.

The hypocrisy of the EU in this matter is staggering. Africa as a whole accounts for only 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions, yet we are the ones being forced to shoulder the burden of global decarbonisation, while Europe continues to pollute with impunity. Germany and the UK, who position themselves as the self-proclaimed climate champions of the EU, each have nine coal-fired power plants listed among the top 30 CO₂-polluting thermal plants.

Germany, in fact, uses more coal to generate electricity than any other EU country, and the UK ranks third in coal consumption for power generation, behind only Poland. So, while they continue to rely heavily on coal, they impose conditions on us to serve their own interests under the guise of fighting climate change.

It is worth noting that the production of green hydrogen requires large amounts of water, a resource already scarce in South Africa. The suggestion that coastal projects will use seawater ignores the broader ecological and infrastructural challenges this poses. South Africa is simply not suited to become a global supplier of green hydrogen when our energy needs remain unmet, and our natural resources are already stretched thin. This green agenda is nothing but a facade for economic subjugation, forcing us into energy dependence on Europe while they continue to exploit fossil fuels without consequence.

Additionally, this is the second form of funding forwarded to Transnet, that just received and R18,5 Billion loan from the African Development Bank. Transnet's fundamental needs point to a different direction—rather than accumulating foreign debts and grants that come with strings attached, what Transnet truly requires is robust re-investment from the state. This state-led investment would focus on reinforcing and expanding its operational capabilities without the conditionalities imposed by external funders.

It is evident that continual reliance on grants and loans undermines our autonomy and diverts attention from sustainable development tailored to our national context. Transnet's operations could be more effectively realised with focused, direct investment in infrastructure and technology upgrades, which would ensure long-term benefits without the reliance on or interference from foreign entities with their own agendas.

The EFF has consistently maintained that South Africa possesses sufficient coal reserves to produce the energy we need to drive industrialisation and economic growth. The EFF recommends a policy that invests in clean coal technologies to ensure energy security for the next 20 years. Once this has been achieved, we can

explore alternative energies on our own terms, through state-led initiatives, from research and invention to implementation.

We do not need handouts from Europe that compromise our sovereignty and economic future. South Africa must take control of its energy production in a way that prioritises the needs of its people, not the demands of European climate goals.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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