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Trends in South Africa

Facts from the *Renewables 2021 Global Status Report*

South Africa's Top Highlights in 2020

- South Africa ranks first among African countries for the largest cumulative power capacity for both solar PV ¹(3.8 GW) and wind power (2.5 GW). It accounted for nearly 63% of the wind power additions in the region in 2020.
- South Africa's public utility Eskom announced plans to expand its electricity grid, in part to connect 30 GW of additional power capacity, much of it expected to come from renewable energy projects.
- It became harder for fossil fuel companies to develop new projects in South Africa in 2020, due to the restrictive lending policies of Standard Bank and First Rand, which increased the cost of capital for fossil fuel projects.²

Where does South Africa stand compared to G20 countries?

The figure below shows that renewable energy made up around 6% of South Africa's total final energy consumption (TFEC), ahead of G20 countries Republic of Korea, Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia but trailing the world's largest economies in the European Union and in the Americas. South Africa did not set a target for the share of renewables by 2020.

As seen in the figure below, only five of the world's largest member economies in the G20 – the EU-27, France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom – had set 2020 targets to achieve a certain share of renewables in final energy use.

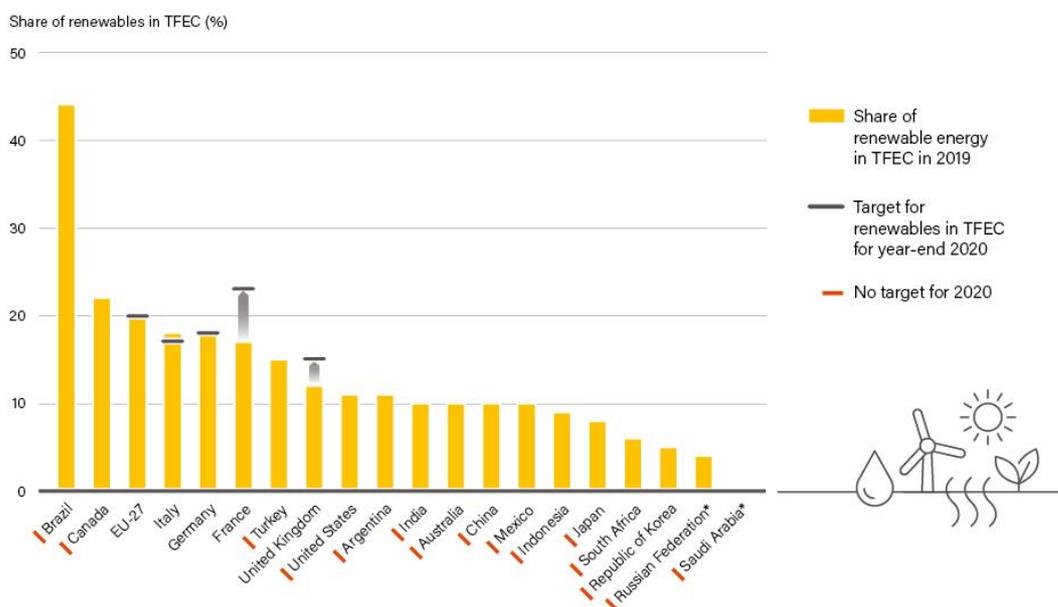
Do net zero targets³ or targets for renewable shares actually support the uptake of renewables? Targets are needed, as they are binding objectives that can be used to hold countries accountable. Setting net zero targets alone does not necessarily lead to greater attention to renewables or to success in meeting renewable energy targets. Alongside any kind of target, robust policies and regulations are needed to ensure these targets are met.

¹ Solar PV capacity data are provided in direct current (DC).

² Energy Monitor, "Still banking on fossil fuels", 25 September 2020, <https://energymonitor.ai/finance/sustainable-finance/still-banking-on-fossil-fuels>.

³Click here to read REN21's brief overview of net zero targets: <https://www.ren21.net/net-zero-basics/>

Renewable Energy Shares and Targets, G20 Countries, 2019 and 2020



REN21 RENEWABLES 2021 GLOBAL STATUS REPORT

Global rankings

Total renewable power capacity, end-2020 (Gigawatts)

1. China (908)
2. United States (313)
3. Brazil (150)
4. India (142)
5. Germany (132)
- ...42. **South Africa (7.8)**

Renewable power capacity per person, not including hydropower, end-2020, (kilowatts per person)

1. Iceland (2.1)
2. Denmark (1.7)
3. Sweden (1.6)
4. Germany (1.5)
5. Australia (1.1)
- ...47. **South Africa (0.1)**

Solar PV installed capacity, African countries, 2020 (Gigawatts)

1. **South Africa (3.8)**
2. Egypt (2.0)
3. Algeria (0.5)
4. Morocco (0.2)
5. Senegal (0.2)
6. Namibia (0.1)

The *Renewables 2021 Global Status Report* material is available here: <https://www.ren21.net/gsr>

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