

Eskom has 'fruitful' talks with Western climate envoys - CEO

By [Alexander Winning](#)

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Eskom, which is seeking funding to move away from coal-fired power, held "fruitful discussions" with Western climate envoys recently, the state power utility's chief executive said on Friday, 22 October.



Source: Reuters/Siphwe Sibeko

Climate envoys from Britain, the United States, Germany and France visited South Africa several weeks ago and held talks about ways to support the country's move to cleaner energy sources.

South Africa, the world's 12th biggest carbon emitter, said at the time that it needed major financial support from wealthy nations to accelerate its shift away from coal and that it wanted an "irrevocable agreement" that could be signed at the United Nations COP26 climate summit next month.

"We look forward to announcements at COP that will give additional impetus to South Africa's decarbonisation plans and green energy ambitions," Eskom CEO Andre de Ruyter told a local energy conference.

Eskom supplies more than 90% of the electricity in Africa's most industrialised nation, chiefly by burning coal at its 15 coal-fired power stations.



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'Repower and repurpose'

But it wants to "repower and repurpose" coal plants that are reaching the end of their operating life with low-carbon technology, including solar power generation and battery storage.

De Ruyter said on Friday that Eskom would be shutting down up to 12,000MW of coal units over the next decade, rising to about 22,000MW by 2035, and that this represented an opportunity.

"Eskom (is) a desirable counterparty for developmental financing institutions and lenders who are keen to engage with a single entity rather than with multiple partners to achieve a meaningful reduction in carbon emissions," he said.

Although Eskom will seek a share of the renewable energy allocation in the South African government's energy plan, it will not seek to corner the local market, De Ruyter added.

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