ACEEE'S 2025 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCORECARD

SOUTH AFRICA

RANK 18/25

POINTS 36.25/100

Notable Strengths

- Offers loans and tax incentives to encourage energy efficiency in multiple sectors
- Has comprehensive, mandatory building codes for residential and commercial buildings
- Requires categorical labels for energy-efficient appliances
- Offers financial incentives for manufacturers to make energy efficiency improvements

Actions To Take

- Make more energy efficiency data publicly available
- Increase electricity generation from renewable sources
- Reduce energy intensity from the industrial sector
- Enact fuel economy/emissions standards for pasenger vehicles and heavy-duty vehicles

National Efforts

South Africa ranked 24th in the national efforts chapter. The country does not have data available for total energy efficiency research and development spending in 2023 prices. The country has substantial room for improvement with electric power generation, as it has 10.2% in transmission and distribution losses and only generates 8.5% of electricity from renewable sources. South Africa does offer both tax incentives and loan programs encouraging energy efficiency investment in the manufacturing, tourism, and commercial business sectors. To improve its score, South Africa could make more of its data publicly available, as it had data available for only 77% of the metrics studied across the scorecard.

Buildings

South Africa performed well in the buildings chapter. South Africa is one of six countries requiring residential and commercial building codes that fully address the technical requirements needed to maximize energy savings. The country also has mandatory, categorical labeling for appliances; categorical labels have been proven to be better understood and more motivating than continuous labels. South Africa reported lower-than-average energy intensity from residential buildings but has higher-than-average energy intensity from commercial buildings.

Industry

South Africa has great potential for improving its industrial energy efficiency. The country reported the fourth-highest industrial energy intensity, with a value of roughly 23.67 kBtus per 2023 U.S. dollar. South Africa currently has incentives for manufacturers to participate in energy efficiency improvements and should consider implementing a mandate for energy managers or mandatory energy audits of large facilities. The country should also consider adding an electrification target to supplement its national commitment to industrial decarbonization.

Transportation

South Africa ranked 21st in the transportation chapter. The country lacks standards for limiting carbon dioxide emissions from passenger vehicles and for reducing carbon dioxide emissions from heavy-duty tractor trailer trucks. In 2024, electric vehicles only made up 0.61% of passenger vehicle sales in South Africa while commercial vans, commercial trucks, and buses also reported low sales share of EVs. But South Africa has a national strategy aimed at encouraging walking and cycling.