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## **UCT signs renewable energy agreement with Discovery Green**

The University of Cape Town (UCT) has signed a groundbreaking long-term renewable electricity supply agreement with Discovery Green as part of a broader strategic partnership focused on advancing sustainable energy and skills development.

The agreement represents the first long-term power purchase agreement (PPA) concluded between an energy trader and a public institution of higher education in South Africa, marking a significant milestone in how large public institutions can participate in the country's energy transition.

Through this partnership, UCT joins more than 50 organisations whose wheeled renewable energy supply is managed by Discovery Green.

Under the agreement, Discovery Green will convert 70–90% of the electricity consumption of UCT's main and health sciences campuses to renewable energy for just under 10 years, starting in the third quarter of 2027. This is expected to reduce the university's carbon emissions by an estimated 33 200 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent each year. The PPA follows a successful pilot, with renewable energy supplied through Ampli Energy, a joint venture established by Discovery Green and Sasol in April 2025.

### **Long-term renewable electricity supply to support UCT's sustainability objectives**

By replacing the majority of electricity demand across these campuses, the agreement makes a material contribution to UCT's climate and sustainability objectives. It supports the reduction of Scope 2 emissions associated with electricity consumption and aligns with the university's long-term environmental sustainability strategy.

UCT Vice-Chancellor Professor Mosa Moshabela said: "UCT is thrilled to have entered this groundbreaking agreement with Discovery Green to wheel renewable energy. This will support the university's strategic plan to reduce its carbon footprint over the 10-year period.

"For UCT, securing renewable electricity at scale is an important step in reducing our environmental impact. At the same time, collaboration that supports research and skills

development strengthens our ability to contribute meaningfully to South Africa's long-term sustainability goals."

### **Supporting long-term planning in a constrained energy environment**

Andre Nepgen, CEO of Discovery Green, stated that energy procurement has shifted from a purely operational consideration to a longer-term strategic priority.

"For large organisations such as universities, operating in an increasingly complex energy environment – characterised by electricity supply constraints, rising costs and the need to balance environmental impact – this shift is essential. Our platform is built for energy complexity and scale, suitable to address the university's current challenges and offer superior long-term value."

The agreement demonstrates how public institutions can use long-term renewable energy procurement to address energy constraints, cost volatility and decarbonisation objectives within South Africa's current electricity framework.

Manfred Braune, UCT's Director for Environmental Sustainability, notes: "With the many old heritage buildings on most of its campuses, UCT has limited roof space that it can add solar PV onto, meaning that we have to look off-campus to increase our purchase of renewable energy. This wheeling agreement allows us to purchase a substantial amount of renewable energy from various solar and wind farms across the country via Discovery Green, who are registered energy traders that pool these various renewable energy resources."

Braune adds: "How it works is that the physical electrons from those solar and wind farms do not necessarily arrive at UCT's campuses, but the energy is injected into the grid from Discovery Green's wind and solar farms which are contributing to the national pool of green energy produced. UCT receives a financial credit each month equivalent to the saving achieved on renewable energy purchased from Discovery's renewable energy plants versus the Eskom price."

### **A partnership extending beyond energy supply**

In addition to the renewable electricity agreement, UCT and Discovery Green will collaborate on initiatives aimed at supporting skills development, research and knowledge creation in the fields of energy, engineering and sustainability.

This includes Discovery Green's involvement in supporting selected scholarships within UCT's engineering and actuarial science departments, contributing to the development of specialised skills needed to support South Africa's energy transition.

Moshabela said: "We are also very excited that this relationship extends beyond the wheeling agreement and includes the annual funding of energy-related research as well as an undergraduate scholarship."

Nepgen expressed a similar sentiment. "We believe that effective energy transition requires both reliable renewable energy supply at scale and the development of skills and knowledge to sustain it over time," he said.

As the first PPA of its kind between an energy trader and a public university, the agreement sets an important precedent for how other large public sector institutions can participate in South Africa's energy transition while maintaining operational certainty.

It also reflects Discovery Green's broader role in supporting organisations across both the public and private sectors with structured, long-term solutions that address energy security, sustainability and system resilience.

### **About Discovery Green**

Discovery Green, backed by the scale and actuarial expertise of the Discovery Group, is a licensed energy trader operating a proprietary renewable energy platform for South African businesses. The platform applies actuarial modelling to design and optimise diversified wind and solar portfolios, replacing on average 90% of a client's electricity demand with cost-effective, price-certain renewable energy. Through long-term power purchase agreements with some of the country's largest renewable energy plants, Discovery Green aggregates supply, optimises coverage against client load profiles, and delivers long-term price certainty, regulatory compliance and measurable decarbonisation at scale.

### **About UCT**

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is a community of exceptionally talented students, teachers, researchers and professional support staff committed to helping change the world for the better. UCT's vision is to be an inclusive, engaged and research-intensive African university characterised by cutting-edge teaching, research and innovation. UCT has a proud tradition of academic excellence and is currently the top-rated university in Africa. The university's researchers continue creating African-based solutions to global problems, while UCT encourages students to build leadership and service skills within a vibrant, diverse, cosmopolitan community from more than 100 countries. Learn more [online](#).

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