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Mauritania Just Became Africa's Hydrogen Superpower. Sudan Isn't Even in the Race.

Analytical Article · Climate & Energy

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Research Team

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A new survey shows Mauritania hosting three of the Arab world's ten largest hydrogen projects, worth \$77.5 billion combined. Sudan, with comparable solar resources, hosts none.

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The Hook

A survey published today by the Washington-based Energy Platform, carried by Attaqa (3 August 2026), ranks the ten largest hydrogen and ammonia projects in the Arab world. Look past the headline names — Saudi Arabia's NEOM, Qatar's blue ammonia plant — and one country dominates the list by sheer capital committed: Mauritania, population 4.9 million, hosts three of the ten projects, worth a combined \$77.5 billion. Sudan, sitting on solar resources that rival or exceed Mauritania's, hosts none.

That gap is not a rounding error. It is a preview of who gets to sell the world's next major export fuel, and who gets left waiting at the dock.

The Argument

Mauritania's triple bet. Attaqa's survey (3 August 2026) details three Mauritanian megaprojects. Project Aman, developed by CWP Global, targets 1.7 million tonnes of green hydrogen (or 10 million tonnes of green ammonia) a year from 30 gigawatts of solar and wind capacity, at a cost of roughly \$40 billion; a Green Hydrogen Organisation update (accessed 3 August 2026) confirms the project is now in advanced host-government-agreement negotiations rather than still at the memorandum-of-understanding stage, with first hydrogen targeted as early as 2027. A second project, led by a German-Egyptian-Emirati alliance of Conjuncta, Infinity, and Masdar, is budgeted at \$34 billion across 8,600 square kilometres of land and sea, targeting 8 million tonnes of green ammonia a year from its first phase in 2028. A third, Project Nour, run by the UK's Chariot, aims to produce Africa's cheapest green hydrogen for European markets from 10 gigawatts of capacity at a comparatively modest \$3.5 billion. No other Arab state hosts more than two projects on the list; Mauritania's combined commitment is roughly double Egypt's, the next-largest recipient.

Sudan's absence is structural, not accidental. Sudan is a Sunbelt country with more than 300 days of sunshine a year and solar irradiance of 5.5 to 7.5 kWh per square metre per day — figures broadly comparable to the Mauritanian and Egyptian sites now attracting tens of billions in hydrogen investment. Yet renewables outside hydropower supply under 1% of Sudan's grid, and the country's only significant solar plant remains a 10-megawatt facility. Research on Sudan's renewable-energy sector (Al-Rikabi et al., Engineering Reports, 2025) attributes this directly to the



conflict: projects near active fighting have been suspended or delayed outright, while those in more stable states struggle with weak grid infrastructure, thin investment protections, and no clear regulatory framework for large-scale renewable or hydrogen developers to enter against. Investors chasing 2027–2028 first-hydrogen dates are not going to wait for Sudan's war to end before locking in offtake agreements elsewhere — they already have.

The window is closing, not staying open. Green hydrogen export corridors are being built around fixed infrastructure — pipelines, ports, transmission interconnects to Europe — that take a decade or more to site and finance. Attaqa's broader survey shows the same pattern beyond Mauritania: Egypt's Suez Canal Economic Zone alone has attracted more than \$31 billion in agreements and now accounts for 85% of the country's hydrogen pipeline, while Oman's Green Energy Oman project is negotiating a final investment decision on 25 gigawatts of renewable capacity. Once Mauritania, Egypt, and Oman lock in the host-government agreements, offtake contracts, and pipeline routes now under negotiation, the corridor map for the 2030s is effectively drawn. Sudan is not competing for a slower share of the same opportunity; it is at risk of missing the infrastructure-siting window entirely, which would foreclose participation for a generation regardless of how quickly the country stabilizes politically. The precedent elsewhere in the region is not encouraging on timelines: Qatar's blue-ammonia plant, also on Attaqa's list, was originally due online in the second quarter of 2026 and has now been postponed indefinitely because of the war affecting the wider region — a reminder that even well-capitalized projects lose years to instability, and that Sudan is starting that clock later than everyone else on the list.

Why It Matters to the Reader

If you work in Sudanese economic policy, humanitarian transition planning, or donor coordination, the temptation is to treat energy-sector investment as a post-conflict problem — something to address once the guns are quiet. This survey argues that framing gets the sequencing backwards. The capital currently flowing into Mauritania and Egypt is not waiting for regional stability; it is actively being allocated on a first-mover basis, right now, in 2026. A transitional or future Sudanese government that waits until full stabilization to begin building a hydrogen-ready regulatory and investment framework will find the region's most attractive corridors, partners, and financing already spoken for.

Close

Sudan does not need to match Mauritania's \$77.5 billion commitment to stay in this race — it needs a credible regulatory signal, sent now, that a post-conflict Sudan will be investment-ready for renewable and hydrogen capital the moment conditions allow. That means drafting the legal and licensing framework in parallel with the political transition, not after it, and using diplomatic channels to signal to hydrogen developers already scouting East African and Red Sea sites that



Sudan intends to be a destination, not an afterthought. The alternative is a decade spent watching neighbors close deals that Sudan's own geography was equally suited to win.

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Sources: Attaqa, "3 ", () 10 August 2026; Green Hydrogen Organisation, Mauritania country page, accessed 3 August 2026; Al-Rikabi et al., "Renewable Energy in Sudan: Current Status and Future Prospects," Engineering Reports, 2025; Energy Capital & Power, "Mauritania, CWP Global sign deal for green hydrogen project," accessed 3 August 2026.