



Jason van der Poel

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Q *How long have you focused on energy law?*

A Since about 2010. I started my career in law in M&A and studied my Masters in banking and finance law at University College, London, where I was inspired by the concept of using finance to achieve developmental outcomes. After I completed my articles, I worked for Allen & Overy in the Netherlands before returning to South Africa, and Webber Wentzel, in 2005. Having spent some years working on PPP projects, in 2010 we received a mandate to help government with the REIPPP Programme and I started to learn about energy law and regulation. In 2011, because we had experience advising government on the REIPPP, and there were too few law firms to advise all the private sector parties looking to bid, we were permitted to set up a separate ring-fenced team to advise private parties. I headed that team. To date, we have worked on about 60 private projects. Since the August 2021 lifting of the 1MW cap on private power generation, we have seen an avalanche of private procurement.

Q *Why do you enjoy this specialty?*

A My main motivation is to do work that has an impact on global sustainability. As a father and family person, I want to be able to look my children in the eye and say I help to bring about positive outcomes. That doesn't get more central than the generation of clean energy to grow the economy and for climate sustainability.

Q *Do you participate in any sports activities?*

A I really enjoy endurance sports. I have run ten Two Oceans Ultras, two Comrades Marathons, and have run in various marathons and half-marathons in South Africa and other countries. Sport is something we all do as a family – my wife, who is from the Netherlands, is a keen hockey player and she co-ordinates the youth section of Wanderers Hockey Club. Our daughter plays hockey and our son plays water polo.

Q *Do you think this area of expertise requires any special attributes and if so, what would you say they are?*

A Dedication to good outcomes and endurance. I have an incredible team working with me and am very grateful to them, and very grateful to Webber Wentzel for the opportunity to work in this exciting field.

Q *Why is this an exciting sector to work in?*

A Because it is a very meaningful area that creates positive outcomes. You just have to look at the quality of life and opportunity of someone who has access to cheap electricity compared to someone who doesn't. It has a big multiplier effect on people's lives. Being part of the solution to South Africa's energy crisis makes me feel I am adding something to SA, rather than just complaining about it. ♻️

