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Date 26 January 2026
Re Final Memorandum on Scope and Details for the
construction of new nuclear power plants

Decision

Final Memorandum on Scope and Details for the construction of new nuclear power plants

Why new nuclear power plants?

The Dutch government is aiming for the Netherlands to be climate-neutral by 2050. The pathway towards that target requires the Netherlands to reduce its carbon emissions by between 55% and 60% by 2030, and to make its energy system more sustainable, with electricity as the main energy carrier.

Various energy sources are available in the Netherlands that can contribute to achieving climate neutrality, as they are virtually carbon-neutral when used to generate electricity. These are wind energy, solar energy, nuclear energy, and biomass and gas-fired power plants equipped with carbon capture technology. Nuclear energy has the advantage that it is not dependent on weather conditions, offering both a certain degree of flexibility and the ability to consistently and reliably produce a certain amount of electricity. Nuclear energy complements wind and solar energy, which will be the biggest source of the Netherlands' electricity in the future. The addition of nuclear energy to the electricity system also contributes to more stable electricity prices. Given the urgency of the climate problem, the Netherlands does not have the luxury of excluding certain carbon-neutral energy sources. Electrification is the most efficient route to sustainability for many applications. The government is aiming for domestic electricity generation to be high enough by 2050 to meet direct demand for electricity in the various end-user sectors (which by then will be far greater).

The government has therefore decided to initiate preparations for the construction of two large nuclear power plants at a single site in the Netherlands. The proposed plants will be based on a proven design (Generation III+) and will each have a capacity of more than 1,000 megawatts (MW).

The government's ambition to build two additional nuclear power plants, as well as the possibility of several smaller plants, falls outside the scope of this project procedure. DGKE / 44441991

About the procedure

Under the Electricity Act, the construction of a nuclear power plant is classified as a project of national importance. As such, it is subject to the project procedure set out in the Environment and Planning Act. This means that the Minister of Climate Policy and Green Growth coordinates the decision-making process. Together with the Minister of Housing and Spatial Planning, this minister determines the spatial planning integration of the nuclear power plants, including where and under what conditions they will be constructed. A preferred decision is made at the end of the exploratory phase setting out the preferred option, while the project decision lays down the final choice of site at the end of the plan development phase. To support decisions on nuclear power plants, it is mandatory to complete the environmental assessment procedure.

Where are we now?

The first step in the project procedure was the announcement of the project. In early 2024 we published the notification of intent and proposal for public participation, in which we explained that we want to build two new nuclear power plants and that we need to find a suitable site for them. A total of 1,374 views were received. We incorporated this valuable input into the draft Memorandum on Scope and Details (NRD), which described the studies to be carried out and the sites to be investigated further. It also explained how these sites were chosen. We are looking at sites in four areas: the Sloe area (Borssele and Vlissingen), Terneuzen, Maasvlakte II and Eemshaven. The NRD also outlines the potential effects of two new nuclear power plants that we are assessing, including their environmental impact.

The draft NRD was available for inspection from 16 May to 26 June 2025. We received 537 views. A memorandum of response was drawn up to address these views. The views received were taken into account in drawing up the final NRD.

Public participation and advisory opinion

The Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth greatly values public participation. The matters on which you can contribute your views, and how to do this, are explained in the participation and communication plan. The participation plan was published on 16 May 2025.

Advice from the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment

DGKE / 44441991

At the request of the Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth, the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment issued its advisory opinion on the draft NRD on 25 September 2025. This is part of the standard procedure. The Commission's recommendations have largely been adopted. The Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth will respond to the substance of the Commission's recommendations in the strategic environmental assessment (SEA). In addition to an explanation of this in the NRD, the memorandum of response includes a summary in table form of the Commission's recommendations and how they will be addressed in the studies.

Memorandum on Scope and Details (NRD) is now final

The NRD describes the studies that will be carried out for the SEA. In response to the views submitted on the draft NRD and the recommendations of the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment, the final NRD contains a number of textual refinements and clarifications.

Next steps

In addition to the SEA, an integrated impact assessment (IIA) will also be compiled. The IIA maps out the effects of the various options on multiple issues. The IIA looks beyond environmental factors alone and also brings together information about the surrounding area, costs, technology and the extent to which the project is future-proof. All the findings together provide an overall picture. The Minister of Climate Policy and Green Growth, in agreement with the Minister of Housing and Spatial Planning, will select a preferred option.

This preferred option will be published in a draft preferred decision, on which it will again be possible to submit views. At this stage, the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment will also be asked to issue an advisory opinion with regard to the strategic environmental assessment (SEA). The preferred option will then be definitively established in a preferred decision. An environmental impact assessment (EIA) will be carried out for the chosen preferred option. To conclude the process, the draft and subsequently the final project decision will be published.

The Memorandum on Scope and Details of the strategic environmental assessment for the construction of new nuclear power plants is hereby adopted.

The Hague, 26 January 2026

Sophie Hermans
Minister of Climate Policy and Green Growth