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The Speaker of the House of Representatives  
of the States General  
Prinses Irenestraat 6  
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Date 8 June 2023  
Subject Adapted grid planning and tender IJmuiden Ver Alpha and Beta

Dear President,

In June 2022, I informed the House about the doubling of the ambition for offshore wind and the associated Additional Offshore Wind Energy Roadmap (hereinafter: Roadmap)<sup>1</sup> for the period up to and including 2031. This Roadmap contains a schedule that indicates when the various wind farm sites will be licensed and the expected commissioning year of the offshore wind farms. The 'Alpha' and 'Beta' sites (both with space for approximately 2 gigawatts (GW)) in the IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Zone are the next wind farm sites to be licensed<sup>2</sup>. These are the first wind farms in the Netherlands to be connected with a direct current connection. I informed the House on 4 November 2022<sup>3</sup> about the structure of the tenders and I published the associated draft Ministerial Orders on 31 March 2023 for consultation<sup>4</sup>.

In the Roadmap, I indicated that its planning and execution are subject to a number of factors, including supply chain congestion. Now that it is almost a year since the Roadmap was published, there is more insight into planning for the construction of the offshore grid (the connections between the offshore wind farms and the mainland). In recent months, TenneT has completed its negotiations and concluded framework contracts for the construction and delivery of all offshore substation platforms, cables and onshore stations required up to and including 2031.

As I have promised<sup>5</sup>, I will inform the House extensively about progress on the Roadmap after the summer. In anticipation of this, I would now like to inform the House about developments in the preparation and construction of the IJmuiden Ver Alpha and Beta offshore grid connections, the consequences for the intended delivery thereof and for the timetable for the permit procedures for the wind farm sites. I will also include developments in the Wind Farm Site Decisions. Given the

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<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Paper 33561, no. 53.

<sup>2</sup> The IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Sites I and II mentioned in the Roadmap have been combined into IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Site Alpha and IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Sites III and IV have been combined into IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Site Beta.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary Paper 35092, no. 33.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.rvo.nl/onderwerpen/windenergie-op-zee/ijmuiden-ver>

<sup>5</sup> During the Commission debate Electricity grid, energy infrastructure and RES on 9 March 2023.

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importance of this information for all parties, I would like to inform the House and wind farm developers about this as soon as possible. After all, the wind farm developers have already started preparations for their tender applications on the basis of the draft Ministerial Orders that have been consulted on. In addition, this information about the availability of electricity from offshore wind farms is important in terms of making industry more sustainable.

### **Commissioning of IJmuiden Ver Beta Wind Farm delayed by about a year**

During the final phase of negotiations between TenneT, suppliers of direct current platforms and the yards where they are being constructed, it turned out that commissioning the IJmuiden Ver Beta offshore grid in 2028, as planned in the Roadmap, is not feasible for suppliers. Despite the compelling interests of delivery according to the Roadmap schedule, TenneT still had to agree to a later delivery period.

The main reason is that the original estimate, based on experience with previous German projects for 900 MW direct current platforms, assumed a total construction time of six years. For a 2 GW direct current platform, this now appears to be one year longer (i.e. seven years). Platforms of this size and complexity are new. Those for the IJmuiden Ver Alpha and Beta offshore grids are the first in a series of almost identical platforms for subsequent projects. The required construction time of seven years is not unique to the offshore grid TenneT is constructing in our country. For example, German grid operator Amprion, which signed a contract with a supplier in December 2022 for two German 2 GW projects, will also receive their platforms in 2029.

As a result, one of the connections of the IJmuiden Ver offshore grid, namely the one for the IJmuiden Ver Beta Wind Farm Site with a connection to the Maasvlakte, will not be completed at the end of 2028, but about a year later instead. This means the IJmuiden Ver Beta offshore grid will be available almost simultaneously with the completion of the connection for the IJmuiden Ver Alpha Wind Farm Site (with connection in Borssele), which was already planned for the end of 2029 and has not been delayed.

This revised schedule is part of a sensible strategy in which a more cautious approach is taken for the first project, especially for the period when detailed engineering takes place. The expectation is that for the following identical projects there will be more pressure on accelerating construction time because lessons learned from previous projects can be applied ("Design one, build many"). Therefore, subsequent projects landing at the Maasvlakte<sup>6</sup>, namely IJmuiden Ver Gamma and Nederwiek 2 (both 2 GW), will also be delayed, but for less than a year.

I am still consulting with TenneT to determine the precise planning schedule for the IJmuiden Ver Alpha and Beta offshore grids. I am also in talks with wind farm developers about the feasibility of the various milestones of this schedule. In doing so, I am looking for a balance between an expeditious implementation of the Roadmap and avoiding setting an unrealistic schedule in advance. After the summer, I will set the final delivery dates in the Offshore Wind Energy Development Framework, which I will send to the House together with the letter

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<sup>6</sup> By landing, here we mean bringing the electricity cables from the offshore grid ashore.

about progress on the Offshore Wind Energy Roadmap.

Partly at my request, TenneT has agreed, with its contractors, to investigate acceleration measures soon for the offshore grid connections to the Maasvlakte that will follow after the IJmuiden Ver Alpha and Beta offshore grids in the longer term. A more accurate picture will be available in about six months. Then, I will also inform the House about this and indicate consequences for further planning of the Roadmap. That will probably be early 2024. At the moment, the outlook is that the Roadmap schedule to realise 21 GW by the end of 2031 is still feasible.

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Due to the delay, electricity from IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Site Beta will land at the Maasvlakte about a year later than planned. As I indicated earlier, subsequent connections that land at the Maasvlakte will also experience (albeit more limited) delays. This may have consequences for the sustainability of industry and scarcity of transmission capacity on the high-voltage grid.

I will come back to the exact consequences later. I would also like to note that this year the landing of electricity from more than 1.5 GW of wind capacity from Hollandse Kust (zuid) on the Maasvlakte will be completed.

Finally, I would like to say that despite these delays, I am pleased that TenneT has been able to secure contracts in this tight international market for the first eight 2 GW direct current connections<sup>7</sup> that it will build in the coming years. The long term planning with the Offshore Wind Energy Development Framework and the Roadmap ultimately provides more certainty in the implementation phase.

### **Tenders for IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Sites Alpha and Beta to close three months later**

The later delivery of the IJmuiden Ver Beta offshore grid means there is more time for the preparation of the associated offshore wind farm. This also meets concerns raised by wind farm developers during the consultation on the draft Ministerial Orders that the delivery of a 2 GW wind farm in 2028 is too ambitious.

I need part of that extra time for the ecological-legal substantiation of the draft Wind Farm Site Decisions yet to be taken. This is done in coordination with the Minister for Nature and Nitrogen. Once completed, I will publish the draft Wind Farm Site Decisions and make them available for consultation. If the ecological-legal substantiation is sufficient, I expect to be able to publish the draft Wind Farm Site Decisions in July. After processing any feedback, I will then adopt the final Wind Farm Site Decisions together with the ministers involved.

The later delivery of the IJmuiden Ver Beta offshore grid also gives me more time to carefully shape the permit procedures for the IJmuiden Ver Alpha and Beta Wind Farm Sites in conjunction with the Wind Farm Site Decisions. To give wind farm developers sufficient time to prepare their applications – also based on the available information from the draft Wind Farm Site Decisions – I will close these tenders three months later than previously planned, namely at the end of March

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<sup>7</sup> This concerns the IJmuiden Ver Alpha, Beta and Gamma, Nederwiek 1, 2 and 3 and Doordewind 1 and 2 offshore grids. As indicated in the letter on the Additional Offshore Wind Energy Roadmap, either Nederwiek 3 or one of the Doordewind offshore grids in the period after 2031.

2024. This is in line with requests I have received from wind farm developers during the consultation of the draft Ministerial Orders to close the tenders later. The postponement of the tender closing date does not cause additional delays in the completion of the wind farms.

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**Permits for Hollandse Kust (west) are irrevocable**

Finally, I can report that the objection that was lodged against the permit for Wind Farm Site VI following the most recent tender for the Hollandse Kust (west) Wind Farm Zone has been withdrawn. As a result, both permits (for Hollandse Kust (west) Wind Farm Sites VI and VII) are now irrevocable and the realisation of the wind farms envisaged in this wind farm zone can start.

R.A.A. Jetten  
Minister for Climate and Energy