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Date

Subject Developments regarding tenders for IJmuiden Ver Gamma and
Nederwiek I-A offshore wind farm sites

Our reference

DGKE-DRE / 97628620

Dear Mr Speaker,

Offshore wind energy is essential to achieving the Dutch task for green growth and sustainability and to offer the Netherlands energy security and resilience now and in the future. That is why the Government is committed to realising the 21 GW Roadmap and the further roll-out of offshore wind energy thereafter. When determining the roadmap in 2022, several risks and challenges were identified, such as the risks that the pace of supply and demand development does not match well and that there is scarce production capacity. The Government sees that these risks have become reality, now that, among other things, costs for wind farm developers have increased and large-scale demand for wind energy is lagging due to challenges in the electrification of, among other things, our industry. This means there is a mismatch between supply and demand developments in the short term. This situation is occurring in several countries within the European Union and is a normal phase in the energy transition in which electricity supply consists of an increasing share of renewable energy.¹

This requires a government that helps the market through this phase, so that the Netherlands will soon have the necessary energy available to keep our economy running and increase our resilience. The Government is therefore working hard on an action plan for offshore wind energy that can improve the investment climate for offshore wind and at the same time the investment climate for sustainability. This plan looks at supporting the construction of wind farms, stimulating demand for electricity and phasing the roll-out of offshore wind farms, so that they can be realised when demand also develops. Contrary to an earlier commitment, the Government is sending this action plan to the House after the summer so that a thorough decision-making process on possible measures can take place. In the action plan, the Government also discusses support mechanisms, such as *Contracts for Difference* (CfDs). In that action plan, the Government also further

² For example, see research by the International Energy Agency, <https://www.iea.org/reports/integrating-solar-and-wind/infographic-six-phases-of-variable-renewables-integration>.

¹ Kamerstukken II 2021/2022, 33561, nr. 53.

elaborates on the motions of Member Postma et al.² and Member Grinwis et al.³. In this Letter to Parliament, the Government partially dismisses the motions by taking a number of concrete measures to make the upcoming tender round more attractive and increase its chance of success.

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Phasing of IJmuiden Ver Wind Farm Sites Gamma-A and Gamma-B (2 GW)

Due to deteriorating market conditions and the lagging demand for electricity, the Government does not consider it realistic to grant permits for the planned 3 GW of offshore wind farms this year. During consultations with wind farm developers, several of them indicated that they would not submit a bid for a tender in current market conditions. That is why the Government has decided to phase the tenders for IJmuiden Ver Gamma-A and Gamma-B (2x1 GW). This will lead to delays in these sites and therefore additional costs for TenneT, which are expected to be reflected in the grid tariffs. The Government regrets that the Netherlands is not adhering to the predictability of the Offshore Wind Energy Roadmap, but considers it more desirable to proactively take control. Taking this mitigating measure offers TenneT, market parties and the Government the opportunity to anticipate and limit possible consequential costs of a phased approach. In addition, it ensures less competition in the electricity market, which means that wind farm developers that have already been granted permits have more opportunities to conclude power purchase agreements. The Government will inform the House about the new timetable for the IJmuiden Ver Gamma-A and Gamma-B sites and the financial consequences thereof later this year.

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The tender for Site Nederwiek I-A (1 GW) will still open in September 2025, as planned. There are still a number of wind farm developers interested in submitting a bid. The electricity from this wind farm will contribute to energy independence and there are no obstacles in terms of grid congestion to landing the electricity.

Risk reduction measures within the current tender system

In the short term, the Government has taken three measures to improve the business case for offshore wind farms and to make the upcoming tender more attractive:

1. Site size: the Government has reduced the site size from 2 GW to 1 GW.⁴ This reduces the investment required per site, which reduces the (financial) risks for wind farm developers, making it possible for more parties to invest.
2. Penalty payment limit: the Government has decided to introduce a penalty payment limit for the first two years of the permit. After a wind farm developer has been granted a permit, this party must still conclude contracts with both suppliers and customers. It is possible that market conditions could deteriorate in the period leading up to the final investment decision, which means the business case can no longer be made. By imposing a temporary penalty payment limit, a permit holder can in that case request to have the permit withdrawn against **payment of the bank guarantee of €100 million**. Setting such a limit helps wind farm developers to better price the risks when submitting an application, which can make it more attractive to bid. Previously, this was not sufficiently clarified in the regulations, which meant that wind farm developers could not properly weigh this risk in the business case.

² Parliamentary Paper 33561, No. 73.

³ Parliamentary Paper 33561, No. 71.

⁴ Parliamentary Paper 33561, No. 66

3. Simplified ranking criteria: the upcoming tender procedure for the wind farm at Nederwiek I-A will take the form of a comparative evaluation with a financial bid. In this procedure, parties are encouraged to come up with innovative solutions for social goals, such as ecology, that contribute to the further growth of offshore wind energy. The Government has simplified the ranking criteria in the tender. Although meeting these criteria is voluntary and wind farm developers can take the business case into account themselves, the incentive effect of this can increase costs. A concrete example of a measure taken to make the criteria attractive is that the financial bid does not have to be paid until the wind farm has been realised. As a result, if a financial bid is made – these costs do not have to be pre-financed. In addition, voluntary criteria for circularity have been simplified and clarified.

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Offshore wind energy action plan

As announced in the committee debate on the Climate and Energy Outlook on 11 March 2025, and in accordance with the Postma et al. motion⁵, the Government will send the House an action plan for offshore wind energy after the summer. The action plan will contain possible measures to improve the business case for offshore wind. This plan looks at supporting construction of wind farms, stimulating electricity demand and phasing the roll-out of offshore wind farms, so that they are delivered when demand also develops. In the Letter to Parliament accompanying the action plan, the Government will return to the procedural choice and/or the consequences for the tenders for Sites Nederwiek I-B, II and III (5 GW), appropriate to current market conditions.

In the same period, the Government will also send an electrification action agenda to the House containing policy actions to promote electrification in industry. This was announced in the Letter to Parliament on progress in making industry more sustainable.⁶

Support mechanisms

It is possible that temporary support for offshore wind will be needed to ensure a proper timely match between supply, demand and infrastructure. An important precondition for this is that support on the supply side goes hand in hand with demand development. The Government is cautious about introducing such support measures, because this can have a disruptive effect on the market and thus undermine already permitted offshore wind farms. It can lead to lower electricity prices, which will reduce the interest in electricity contracts. The Government will therefore continue with the comparative evaluation with financial bid in the upcoming permit tender procedure, with the financial bid being voluntary.

In the short term (up to 2027), the only support possible will be in the form of a subsidy with a yield threshold. In this way, wind farm operators would receive a subsidy if the electricity price is low and excess profits could be reclaimed by the Government, up to a maximum of the total subsidy amount paid out. This is the same methodology currently used for the SDE++ scheme. A two-way *Contract for Difference* (CfD) can stimulate long-term investments in wind farms because it provides a stable and predictable source of income for wind farm developers. With a CfD, the Government takes over part of the risk from the market by compensating developers when electricity prices are low, but financially benefits from high electricity prices. It is expected that the use of CfDs as a price certainty mechanism for offshore wind will be legally possible from 2027. When deploying

⁵ Parliamentary Paper 32813, No. 1487

⁶ Parliamentary Paper 29826, No. 234

support, the Government will take into account the scaling up of electrolysis, given European requirements that unsubsidised electricity is used for the production of renewable hydrogen.

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Given the market-distorting effect on licensed wind farms and the unavailable resources in the national budget, the Government has decided not to use a subsidy with a yield threshold or CfD this year. The Government is preparing an amendment to Decision on the Stimulation of Sustainable Energy Production and Climate Transition (SDEK) and is working on a bill for CfDs. This will make it legally possible to use these support mechanisms, should the Government decide to licence wind farms with a support mechanism in the future. The Government will discuss CfDs for offshore wind in more details in the offshore wind energy action plan.

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Landfall route through area jointly managed with Germany

Following the Wadden Committee debate, the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management has promised to inform the House in writing about Germany's 'no' regarding a possible route to land wind energy in the Northern Netherlands.⁷ All options for landing wind energy in the Northern Netherlands have been explored in the Offshore Wind Energy Connection Programme – Eemshaven (PAWOZ – Eemshaven). One of the possible routes runs through the Eems-Dollard Treaty Area, for which agreements have been made for joint management between the Netherlands and Germany. Germany is the competent authority for water management in this area, and is therefore responsible for issuing the required shipping safety permit for the construction of energy infrastructure. The Prime Minister and I have been in contact with the German authorities about this on several occasions.

The outcome of this is that the German authorities, despite solutions proposed by the Netherlands, are of the opinion that the risks to constructing the route are too great for shipping safety and they will therefore not issue a permit.⁸

Mutual spatial integration with gas extraction

To increase our energy independence, the Government wants to realise both offshore wind energy and gas extraction projects in the North Sea. Customisation offers opportunities to optimise the use of the limited space, and is always the first option to be investigated.⁹ The Government has now achieved two customisation successes.

Nederwiek I-A

Near the future wind farm Nederwiek I-A (1 GW) is the existing gas wellhead platform K13-A. From 2028, the British wind farm Norfolk Boreas will also be located in the vicinity of K13-A. Safe access to the drilling platform close to these wind farms is a precondition. To the operator, Wintershall Noordzee B.V., this means that accessibility may be reduced by no more than 10% compared to the current accessibility level. The ability to plan flights is important to be able to conduct operations on platform K13-A as safely as possible. This has been investigated in a customised process, including a flight safety study. This shows that the Norfolk Boreas and Nederwiek I-A wind farms allow sufficient space for the aviation procedures required for K13-A. In this process, the Government and

⁷TZ202503-020.

⁸ <https://www.rvo.nl/sites/default/files/2025-02/Inspanningen-routes-door-het-Eems-Dollard-Verdragsgebied-PAWOZ-Eemshaven-Ontwerpprogramma.pdf>.

⁹ Parliamentary Paper 34682, No. 161

Wintershall Noordzee B.V. reached agreement on the following package of measures needed to limit the decline in accessibility to 4-6%.

Firstly, the Government has added a requirement to the Nederwiek I-A Wind Farm Site Decision that new turbines be reported to the Environment and Transport Inspectorate, so that updated flight plans can be issued. Secondly, all offshore operators (of wind farms, drilling installations and TenneT) must use the available procedure to report changes in obstacles. Finally, offshore helicopter operators must adjust procedures and train their pilots for the changing environment, prior to the construction of the wind farm. The Government is committed to these measures and will discuss them with the relevant parties to ensure these measures are taken before construction of the Nederwiek I-A wind farm.

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By taking these steps, the risks can be sufficiently mitigated to ensure safe accessibility of the K13-A platform and a first customised process for the spatial integration of wind farms and drilling platforms in the North Sea will be successfully completed with the help of all parties involved.

IJmuiden Ver Gamma-B

Gas extraction activities may be developed in and around the IJmuiden Ver Gamma-B site. Since the original permit holder NAM Offshore BV and its current owner TENAZ Energy recently indicated that they have new plans for this, the Government has had discussions with them in recent months to integrate these developments spatially. We have reached a positive outcome together, whereby through smart and space-saving solutions, NAM/TENAZ retains the option of exploiting new gas reserves in its extraction licence while, at the same time, the energy production of the wind farm is expected to be higher than without this custom solution. This shows that by working together, a win-win situation can be created.

The Government is pleased that it has succeeded in delivering these solutions for gas extraction and offshore wind energy, which safeguard both national interests. Later this year, I will provide a more detailed update on the combined spatial integration of offshore wind energy and drilling activities.

Sophie Hermans
Minister of Climate Policy and Green Growth

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