The Agreement on Energy for Sustainable Growth: a policy in practice
FILLER 1 ENERGY SAVINGS IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Objectives
To achieve substantial reductions in total energy use in the built environment by 2020.
By 2020, building energy use by the Dutch population should be 20% lower compared to 2010.
To contribute substantially to the total energy saving by 2020.

Approach
• To step up the number of dwellings zero-energy ready at the time of energy performance contracting.
• To improve existing buildings.

FILLER 2 ENERGY SAVINGS IN INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE

Objectives
To increase the share of renewable energy production to 14% of total energy consumption by 2020 (291 PJ) and 16% by 2023 (333 PJ).

Approach
• To contribute substantially to the total energy saving by 2020.
• To completely eliminate the emission of CO2 from the energy supply sector.

FILLER 3 SCALING-UP RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCTION

Objectives
To increase the share of renewable energy generation to 50% of total energy consumption by 2050 (861 PJ) and 60% by 2030 (1141 PJ).

Approach
• To reduce the use of non-renewable energy sources.
• To reduce the use of non-renewable energy generation by 80% compared to 1990 levels.
• To ensure that a considerable share of new generation capacity is used for heat production.

FILLER 4 DECENTRALISED RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

Objectives
By 2020, to generate approximately 15% of the total electricity consumption from decentralized renewable energy sources.
By 2030, to generate 40% of the total electricity consumption from decentralized renewable energy sources.

Approach
• To support the installation of decentralized renewable energy projects.
• To promote the use of renewable energy sources in rural areas.

FILLER 5 CENTRALISED ENERGY TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

Objectives
To transmit electricity and heat energy via efficient and flexible centralised energy networks.
To increase the efficiency of energy transport systems.

Approach
• To improve the efficiency of energy transport systems.
• To develop new technologies and innovations.

FILLER 6 EUROPEAN ENERGY TRANSMITTING SITES

Objectives
• To increase the efficiency of European energy transmission systems.
• To develop new technologies and innovations.

Approach
• To improve the efficiency of European energy transmission systems.
• To increase the capacity of energy transmission systems.

FILLER 7 COAL POWER PLANTS AND CCS

Objectives
To develop new technologies and innovations.
To develop new technologies and innovations.

Approach
• To reduce the use of non-renewable energy sources.
• To reduce the use of non-renewable energy generation by 80% compared to 1990 levels.

FILLER 8 TRANSPORT SECTOR

Objectives
To increase the energy efficiency of the transport sector.
To increase the use of clean and efficient transport modes.

Approach
• To promote the use of clean and efficient transport modes.
• To increase the use of clean and efficient transport modes.

FILLER 9 EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Objectives
To create an average of 50,000 new jobs each year in the energy sector between 2014 and 2020.

Approach
• To support the creation of new jobs.
• To increase the number of new jobs.

FILLER 10 COMMERCIALISATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EXPORT

Objectives
• To increase the number of new technologies.
• To increase the number of new technologies.

Approach
• To support the commercialisation of new technologies.
• To increase the number of new technologies.

FILLER 11 FINANCING INVESTMENTS

Objectives
To increase the availability of finance.
To increase the availability of finance.

Approach
• To promote the availability of finance.
• To increase the availability of finance.

FILLER 12 HEAT

Objectives
To achieve the energy savings potential of the Dutch heat sector.
To increase the energy efficiency of the heat sector.

Approach
• To promote the energy efficiency of the heat sector.
• To increase the energy efficiency of the heat sector.

In principle, initiatives are taken within the framework of the Action Plan Sustainable Energy Supply 2030, the Environmental Impact Assessment, and the Dutch Development Assistance Program. Where necessary, initiatives are taken within the framework of the Environmental Impact Assessment of Energy Projects.
On 6 September 2013, the Netherlands took a bold step towards a sustainable future. After an eight-month negotiation process, forty-seven organisations signed the *Agreement on Energy for Sustainable Growth*. The Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER) facilitated this process.

**What are the Agreement’s objectives?**

Signatories to the Agreement share responsibility and commitment to achieve four overarching objectives:

- An average energy efficiency saving of 1.5% per year (adding up to a reduction of 100 PJ by 2020).

- 14% share of renewable energy in the Netherlands’ total consumption of energy by 2020.

- And 16% by 2023 (4.5% in 2013).

- Creating at least 15,000 additional jobs by 2020, of which a significant number to be created in the next years.

In addition, signatories have committed themselves to several other, long-term actions.
Why an Agreement on Energy?

Investments in energy saving and renewable energy production make the Netherlands less dependent on fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas), with volatile prices. Also, a more sustainable energy system reduces the negative effects of climate change. Moreover, as a result of more investments in energy saving measures, the transition is expected to lower energy bills and to create jobs in fields such as engineering, manufacturing and construction.

In addition to all that, there were several other important factors to reach and sign the Agreement: lack of consistency in policy making, EU commitments, and stakeholder involvement.

Lack of consistency in policy making

Despite significant efforts of several coalition governments, by 2011 the transition to a more sustainable energy system had stagnated. With a share of 4.5% of renewable energy sources (in 2013) in total energy consumption, The Netherlands performs poorly compared to other European countries. For a part this can be explained by the fact that since the 2000s, not one of the successive coalition governments has succeeded in completing its term. As a result, energy policy frequently changed, which negatively affected the policy’s effectiveness. Especially in the energy sector, stability and predictability are fundamental to secure the investments required for the coming decades. Therefore, consistency in policy making is much needed.

Energy in the Netherlands

The Netherlands has a high per capita energy consumption. Energy intensive sectors such as petrochemicals, greenhouse horticulture, and transport contribute to a major share of the Dutch economy. The Netherlands imports a considerable amount of energy, and consumes only about a third of those imports. Most of the imported energy, is exported in the form of crude oil and oil products. Compared to many European countries, the Netherlands has relatively large reserves of fossil energy carriers. At current production levels, the Netherlands has approximately ten to fifteen years worth of reserves in its gas fields to meet demand at the present rate of consumption.

Meeting EU objectives
The Netherlands is committed to EU obligations to increase its share of renewable energy consumption to 14% by 2020. Furthermore, massive efforts are necessary to realise the required saving in final energy consumption (100 PJ in 2020) to meet the EU Energy Efficiency Directive. 100 PJ equals the annual energy consumption of approximately 1.5 million Dutch households.

Stakeholder involvement
Given the above-mentioned context, there was wide support in civil society and politics for a different approach to the transition to a sustainable energy system. An approach in which all relevant stakeholders, (local) governments, employers’ associations and unions, environmental organisations etcetera, take responsibility was considered appropriate. This approach would not only negotiate environmental and climate related objectives, but also take into account both economic challenges and opportunities presented by the transition. After all, the transition to sustainable energy is part of a global development, with growing, international CleanTech markets and many opportunities for innovative businesses.

How did the Agreement come about?
Representatives of (local) governments, employers’ associations and unions, environmental organisations, financial institutions, NGOs and other stakeholders participated in negotiation table meetings. At four different tables, independent chairs led discussions on the four major themes of the Agreement: energy saving, renewable energy, innovation and the transport sector. The negotiations involved in total approximately one hundred participants representing forty-seven organisations. The results of these negotiation table meetings were used as input for the widely supported Agreement on Energy for Sustainable Growth.

During the negotiations, independent research institutions, the Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands and the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, played an important role. They scientifically estimated the effects of the proposed actions. As a result, participating organisations are confident that the proposed actions can meet national and EU objectives.
Is this a unique Agreement?

The Netherlands has a tradition of striving for consensus on the objectives and means of social and economic policy through consultation between various parties. Representatives of employers’ and employees’ organisations are used to holding each other accountable for their respective tasks. To discuss socioeconomic topics, they meet in the Social and Economic Council, the main advisory body to the Dutch government and parliament on national and international socioeconomic issues (for more information visit http://www.ser.nl/en/).

For the development of a widely supported, long-term vision and policy on energy, the consultative approach was a logical step. The Agreement’s ‘life span’ is much longer than the four-year terms of government and parliament, because its objectives cannot be realised within four years. Parliament supports this rationale.

What is in the Agreement?

The Agreement consists of twelve pillars. Each pillar has its own objectives and approach: For a detailed description of all pillars, see the back cover of this booklet.

1 Energy saving in the built environment
2 Energy saving in industry and agriculture
3 Scaling-up renewable energy production
4 Decentralised renewable energy generation
5 Centralised energy transportation networks
6 European Emission Trading System
7 Coal power plants and CCS
8 Transport sector
9 Employment and training
10 Commercialisation of new technologies for economic growth and export
11 Financing investments
12 Heat
What has happened since the Agreement has been signed?

- After signing the Agreement, signatory parties have begun to implement actions. Cooperating parties have defined their roles, concretised actions, and designed action plans. By now, the first results have become visible.
- In accordance with the Agreement, in 2013 a committee was set up in the Social and Economic Council to keep the implementation of the Agreement under continuous review.

What is the Standing Committee?
The Standing Committee is the main governing body of the Agreement. It comprises all parties to the Agreement and is chaired by Mr. Ed Nijpels, a former Minister for the Environment. The committee meets approximately four times a year to exchange experiences, discuss progress and address any obstacles.

Principles for monitoring:
- Signatories to the Agreement are responsible for implementing the described actions, particularly for those actions assigned to them.
- Signatories to the Agreement have a common obligation to successfully implement the Agreement.

Tasks of the Committee
The Standing Committee to the Agreement on Energy for Sustainable Growth:
- monitors the progress of the Agreement;
- directs activities when delays become apparent;
- keeps under review the need for amending (parts of) the Agreement in order to meet its objectives;
- develops an agenda that goes beyond the Agreement’s validity.
How does implementation work in practice?
Each pillar of the Agreement consists of actions (an overview of all pillars can be found on the last page). Each action has been assigned to a representative of one of the signatory parties to the Agreement, who has the lead on this specific topic. He or she is responsible to implement this action, usually with representatives of other stakeholders.

Every pillar has one or two coordinators, who are representatives of the organisations that signed the Agreement. The coordinator overviews the progress (of actions) within a pillar. He or she is also the first person to contact whenever problems arise.

The Standing Committee discusses the general progress during its meetings. When a coordinator is unable to solve problems, he or she can approach the chair of the Committee. The chair of the Committee regularly organises meetings to discuss progress in more detail. In addition, the Committee organises conferences to exchange and deepen relevant knowledge and expertise.

Organization of the Committee
How to follow the Agreement’s progress?

Transparency in monitoring is fundamental to the tasks of the Standing Committee. Several tools (in Dutch only) provide insight in the progress of the Agreement:

- A monitor (dashboard) is available to keep track of the progress of actions, results and (expected) effects. (For more information, see: [http://afsprakengestart.energieakkoordser.nl](http://afsprakengestart.energieakkoordser.nl));
- An annual progress report of the Agreement on Energy. The first report was published on 20 June, 2014. (For more information, see: [http://www.energieakkoordser.nl/publicaties/voortgangsrapportage-2014.aspx](http://www.energieakkoordser.nl/publicaties/voortgangsrapportage-2014.aspx));
- Annual analyses in the Dutch National Energy Report, published for the first time in October 2014. (For more information, see: [https://www.ecn.nl/news/item/energietransitie-nederland-wordt-zichtbaar/](https://www.ecn.nl/news/item/energietransitie-nederland-wordt-zichtbaar)).
- In 2016, the Agreement and the Committee’s operations will be evaluated.

More information

More information on the monitoring of the Agreement can be found on the Agreement’s website: [www.energieakkoordser.nl](http://www.energieakkoordser.nl).
The Agreement on Energy for Sustainable Growth (in Dutch) can be downloaded free of charge from the abovementioned website.

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Objectives
To increase the share of renewable energy generation to 14% of total energy consumption by 2020 (291 PJ) and 16% by 2023 (333 PJ).

Objectives
By 2020, generate approximately 40 PJ renewable energy at a local scale through decentralised generation units.

Objectives
By 2020, at least one million households and/or small and medium-sized enterprises use a substantial share of decentralised generated renewable energy.

Approach
In principle, individuals and organisations take responsibility for and benefit from energy saving efficiency measures. Well coordinated (financial) support systems, educational and awareness raising campaigns are crucial to meet the energy savings objective.

Approach
In principle, private sector companies take responsibility for and benefit from energy efficiency measures. Technical support and supportive facilities from national and local governments are available.

Approach
In principle, municipalities, provincial governments and central government support local initiatives. Also, electrical utility providers and distribution network operators contribute, for example by providing Open Data. Furthermore, parties focus on innovation and amending legislation and regulations where necessary.
Objectives

The transmission and distribution energy infrastructure has to be adapted or built to allow the operation of significant quantities of renewable sources of energy.

Approach

In 2015, the commission of energy network operators on the backbone infrastructure published a study, which outlined how existing electricity infrastructure has to be changed in order to facilitate the transition to sustainable energy. A power grid at sea to connect offshore wind energy sources to the national transmission grid is key to the energy transition.

Objectives

By 2050: to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% compared to 1990 levels.

Approach

By 2020, an emission reduction per worker by 80-95% compared to 1990 levels.

By 2021, a plan for a 10% higher emission reduction per worker in energy-intensive industries.

Objectives

• To phase out the capacity of five 1980s coal power plants in the Netherlands.
• To develop a long-term vision for carbon capture and storage in the transition to a sustainable energy supply.

Approach

• The Ministry of Economic Affairs has introduced higher efficiency requirements for coal power plants.
• The Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment have started to develop a vision for carbon capture and storage in the energy transition.

Objectives

• To emit no more than 25 Mton CO2 by 2030. This is 17% less than in 1990. For 2050, parties agreed on a CO2 reduction of 60%.
• To contribute to energy savings of 15-20 PJ by 2020 compared to 2012 baseline studies by the Energy Research Centre of the Netherlands and the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency.

Approach

• The Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment have agreed on an agenda with short-term and long-term measures. These measures address topics like technology, mobility behaviour, logistics and infrastructure (charging points for electrical vehicles).

PILLAR 5

CENTRALISED ENERGY TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

Objectives

Approach

In 2013, the Association of Energy Network Operators in the Netherlands published the Action Plan Sustainable Energy Supply 2030, which outlines how existing electricity infrastructure has to be changed in order to facilitate the transition to sustainable energy. A power grid at sea to connect offshore wind energy sources to the national transmission grid is key to the energy transition.

PILLAR 6

EUROPEAN EMISSION TRADING SYSTEM

Objectives

Approach

Government, private sector and environmental organisations have set up a lobbying group on the reform of the ETS. Based on the results of the lobbying, a strategy will be developed to join lobbying efforts in the European Union.

PILLAR 7

COAL POWER PLANTS AND CCS

Objectives

Approach

During negotiations of the Agreement, stakeholders of the transport sector signed an agenda with short-term and long-term measures addressing topics like technology, mobility behaviour, logistics and infrastructure (charging points for electrical vehicles).

PILLAR 8

TRANSPORT SECTOR

Objectives

Approach

In 2013, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment have started to develop a vision for carbon capture and storage in the energy transition.
Objectives

To create on average up to 15,000 extra fulltime jobs between 2014 and 2020 (this means creating 90,000 years of tenure between 2014 and 2020), of which a significant number to be created in the next years.

Approach

Effective work together on policies and programs to make young people and workers more attractive as candidates for new jobs. Their careers with the ability to learn the skills required for adopting new technologies, creating new environmental regulations and shifting to renewable sources of energy.

Objectives

To reduce and overcome financing barriers for banks, pension funds, and insurance companies in order to make investing in energy efficiency measures and renewable energy sources more attractive.

Approach

Effective work together on policies and programs to make young people and workers more attractive as candidates for new jobs. Their careers with the ability to learn the skills required for adopting new technologies, creating new environmental regulations and shifting to renewable sources of energy.

Objectives

To effectively use the energy savings potential of the Dutch to reach the climate and energy targets (in the presence of adequate legislation and regulations for SMEs and for financial management standardisation of small-scale renewable energy generating projects).

Approach

Effective work together on policies and programs to make young people and workers more attractive as candidates for new jobs. Their careers with the ability to learn the skills required for adopting new technologies, creating new environmental regulations and shifting to renewable sources of energy.

Objectives

The Dutch CleanTech sector aims to be part of the top ten in the global CleanTech ranking by 2020. It quadruples the economic value of the CleanTech capital value chain by 2030 compared to 2030.

Approach

Government will launch its vision for heat and elaborate on making the heating system more sustainable (forthcoming 2014).

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Forty-seven parties signed the Agreement on Energy for Sustainable Growth.