

32,645

Nuclear energy

No. 161

GROWTH

LETTER FROM THE MINISTER FOR CLIMATE AND GREEN

To the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the States

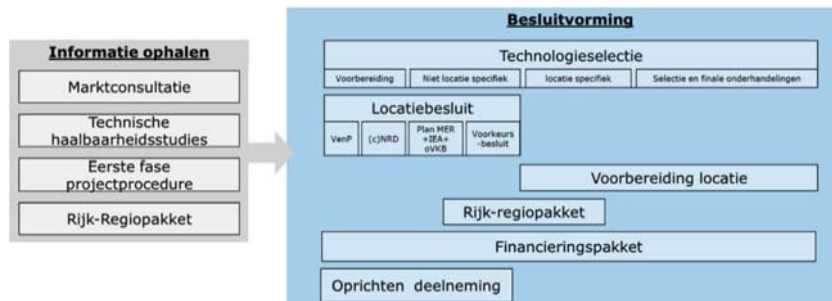
General, The Hague, 17 October 2025

The Government has made a clear commitment to increasing the share of nuclear energy in the electricity mix in order to diversify CO₂-free electricity generation and make it less dependent on weather conditions. In doing so, the Government is opting for a robust energy system comprising a mix of (among other things) nuclear energy, wind energy and solar PV, thereby enhancing the Netherlands’ strategic independence.

In this progress letter, the government updates the House on the progress it has made in recent months regarding the new nuclear power programme. This letter reports on the findings of the analysis carried out by TNO into the impact on energy system costs of adding nuclear energy to the energy mix. This letter also sets out a proposal for a financing structure, including the role of the Dutch State within it in the form of a *Government Support Package* (GSP). Finally, this letter discusses the progress of the procurement procedure and the Central Government–Regional Authorities Package.

The figure below illustrates the various work streams and arranges them in order to show how they are interrelated. With this progress letter, the phase of gathering information and preparing for decision-making shifts to the phase of decision-making and implementation.

Figure 1: Outline of the main work streams



This letter to Parliament concerns the programme for the construction of large-scale nuclear power stations. At the same time, Parliament is being informed about:

- **Establishment of a policy-oriented entity:** the proposed establishment of the policy-oriented entity NEO NL and the associated capital injection;
- **Amendment to the Nuclear Energy Act:** the tabling of the proposal to amend the Nuclear Energy Act. The bill will enable the licence holder of the Borssele nuclear power station to submit an application to the Authority for Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection (hereinafter: ANVS) to amend the licence, as referred to in Article 15(b) of the Nuclear Energy Act, in order to continue generating nuclear energy at the Borssele nuclear power station after 2033, thereby implementing the Agnes Mulder and Harbers motion¹; and
- **SMR strategy:** with its strategy for small modular reactors (SMRs), the Government is setting the direction for the development of SMRs in the Netherlands.

Progress on preparations for the construction of the first nuclear power stations

The following sections provide an update on the key progress and results for each work stream. They also look ahead to the coming period.

1. Funding

1.1 Objective

With this letter, the government is publishing the system-cost study carried out by TNO. This study provides insight into the impact on system costs resulting from the commissioning of new nuclear power stations. Among other things, the study examined the relationship with flexibility requirements and investments in infrastructure. This analysis is in line with the call for impact and optimisation studies expressed by the Houses on various occasions, for example in the recent committee debate on grid tariffs² with contributions from Member Bontenbal, and in the motion tabled by Member Erkens³ in which the Government was asked to investigate the optimal percentage of nuclear energy by 2050. With this letter, the Government is responding to this motion.

In addition, the Government sets out in this letter a proposal for the GSP deemed most appropriate for the Netherlands. This GSP will be further developed in the coming period in the run-up to the investment decision.

¹ Parliamentary Paper 32 813, No. 511

² Parliamentary Paper 29 023, No. 571.

³ Parliamentary Paper 32 813, No. 1358.

1.2 Current status

Results of the system costs study

The study calculates the system costs for the future Dutch energy system based on realistic assumptions and the most up-to-date insights. It compares a scenario involving investment in two or four large-scale nuclear power stations with a scenario without nuclear power stations. In order to make a robust assessment of the added value of nuclear energy, the study examined various future scenarios in which Dutch energy demand is met in different ways, with the constant that net climate neutrality is achieved by 2050. The scenarios describe visions of the energy system that vary in terms of the behaviour of citizens and businesses, economic structure, the degree of electrification (low to high) and the scale of industrial development (from contraction to limited growth).

The main conclusion is that an energy system comprising two or four nuclear power stations, with a total generation capacity of up to 6 GW, has comparable system costs to a system in which this generation capacity is met by an additional 9.5 GW of offshore wind power and the necessary flexibility technologies. This study has therefore deliberately developed a scenario involving (a limited degree of) competition between these two generation technologies. If competition between the generation technologies is disregarded – and there is therefore both more wind and more nuclear energy with sufficient electricity demand (from industry, amongst others) – this can lead to lower system costs than when competition is present.

In a scenario with significantly lower energy demand (primarily caused by lower industrial demand), there is less demand for the required generation capacity from both nuclear energy and offshore wind. If, in this low-demand scenario, 6 GW of nuclear energy is nevertheless added to the system, this results, according to the model outcomes, in approximately 0.7% higher system costs.

When interpreting the results, it should be noted that in the current calculations, the costs of electricity infrastructure – both onshore and offshore – are still taken into account in a too limited and simplified manner and are therefore underestimated. Taking infrastructure costs into account more accurately could lead to a different optimum, in which offshore wind is necessary in all cases to achieve an optimal system and meet energy demand.

It also follows that the use of nuclear energy results in a different breakdown of system costs. Nuclear energy leads to higher investment costs in generation capacity; however, these are largely or entirely offset by lower costs in areas such as grid reinforcement, flexibility, electrification, energy savings and the need to import electricity and hydrogen. The addition of nuclear energy also has a stabilising effect on electricity prices, as it involves weather-independent generation.

Environmental impact analysis of nuclear energy in the Dutch energy mix

On the advice of the MER Commission, further research was carried out by Pondera and CE Delft into the environmental impact of nuclear energy. This study also shows that nuclear energy, wind energy and solar PV can coexist very well. Indeed, no energy source is without some

environmental impact, and diversification offers advantages in reducing the overall impact. The study also concludes that nuclear energy, wind and solar PV all three perform better and are cleaner than fossil fuels across the board.

Conclusion

The government concludes that nuclear energy is a responsible choice, including from the perspective of system costs and environmental impact. Given the breadth of the sensitivity analyses carried out by TNO, the government also considers this conclusion to be robust under a variety of circumstances. The decisive reason for the government to expand the role of nuclear energy is that it contributes to security of supply and is a stable, CO₂-free source that is not dependent on the sun or wind. Furthermore, it ensures strategic independence through the diversification of technology and supply chains, which enhances the resilience of the energy system. Furthermore, nuclear energy is a robust investment with a long lifespan, a limited footprint and opportunities for the Dutch economy through knowledge development, employment and business involvement.

Continued

The findings of these studies will be incorporated into the proposed financing structure, the preparation of the investment decision and the preparations for the update of the National Energy System Plan (NPE) 2026. This is in line with the policy direction set out in the Climate and Energy Memorandum 2025. In the update to the NPE, the government will also further clarify the relationship between nuclear energy and other means of generation, such as offshore wind energy.

Financing of the new nuclear power stations

The letter to Parliament of May 2025⁴ sets out an initial range for the total investment required for the new nuclear power stations (€20–30 billion, excluding financing costs) based on the technical feasibility studies. Below, the Government provides an explanation of the forms of financing and a proposal for the role of the Government via the GSP. The conclusions are based on the preparatory processes and studies of recent years, including the market consultations, the assessment framework and the recent calculations of the financial model.⁵ The final investment volume will, of course, depend on the choice of technology, supplier and location, as well as the progress of the project.

⁴ Parliamentary Document 32 645, No. 156.

⁵ KPMG has drawn up a financial model to support a cost analysis based on initial estimates of parameters relating to the investment, operation and potential financing.



During the development and construction phase, the financing of the investment is central. In the operational phase, these funds must be recouped. The government can also play a role in this phase. It is important that the measures in the various phases are collectively regarded as a GSP.

KPMG has carried out a cost analysis of three GSP variants:

1. In addition to public funding, a maximum effort to attract private funding from both export credit (through *Export Credit Agencies*, ECAs) and the wider capital market;
2. Only an ECA contribution to the project, alongside public funding; and;
3. Public funding only.

KPMG has assessed these GSP variants against the criteria set out in the assessment framework. Based on the assessment framework, they conclude that affordability is the most distinguishing factor, and that other elements, such as feasibility, risk sharing, government control and the impact

EMU balance and EMU debt, are less decisive in the various scenarios. In the cost analysis, the impact of the GSP variant on affordability is assessed using the *Levelised Cost of Energy* (LCOE), including financing costs. The LCOE provides an indication of the average cost per unit of electricity generated (e.g. kWh) over the entire lifetime of a nuclear power station.

Affordability of the various GSP variants

Private financing may offer a number of advantages over public financing, provided that the risks associated with the financing are borne by the private financier. For example, this could result in less impact on Dutch public finances and potentially additional oversight to ensure that the new nuclear power stations are built as efficiently as possible. On the other hand, any form of private financing will make the project considerably more expensive, due to higher financing costs or required rates of return.

Thanks to its high credit rating, the Netherlands can borrow more cheaply than market participants and virtually all other countries with a new nuclear power programme. Furthermore, it can be concluded from previous reports and examples from other countries, such as the United Kingdom and Poland, that private financing (during the development and construction phases) is only attracted if this is accompanied by a transfer of risk to the state. In practical terms, this means that private parties assume no, or only very limited, financial risks. At the same time, the project's financing costs rise, as private financiers charge a higher interest rate for their funding, which has a negative impact on affordability.

The impact of higher financing costs on the total cost of the project is significant in the case of nuclear projects, particularly due to the long construction period. During this long construction period, no interest can be paid and no loans can be repaid, as there are as yet no revenues. During construction, the interest is therefore added to the loan, and in subsequent years interest is also payable on that capitalised interest. For example, KPMG demonstrates in its indicative analysis that, in a scenario where the project also involves ECA financing and private debt financing, the financing costs are significantly higher than in a scenario involving only public financing for the project. These higher financing costs apply to both private financing from market participants and from ECAs.

Conversely, public financing of the construction does not mean that there is no risk-sharing at all, as risks can be shared between the state (through the policy-owned entity to be established) and the project contractor in the contractual arrangements with the contractor. For example, through fixed-price agreements.

Full public funding of the project is a significantly better option in terms of social affordability and results in the lowest LCOE for the project.

Details of full public funding

The proposal to opt for full public funding (and thus a substantial GSP) during the development and construction phases will be further elaborated in the coming period. A few directions can already be outlined, as these too lead to the lowest possible social costs.

Door open to private funding

Private funding (such as from banks, insurers or pension funds) is unlikely for the initial phases of the project, but private funding through equity participation may well be possible in these earlier phases. An external party would thereby become a co-owner of the project. The most logical candidates for this are the potential contractors for the project. The proportion of private funding via a potential stake in the policy partnership is likely to be relatively limited compared with the total costs. At a later stage, for example following the construction of the new nuclear power stations, it may be possible to attract private funding. This could then be used to 'refinance' part of the public funding. This possibility is retained in the detailed plan for the GSP.

Equity and loans

Public funding during construction can take the form of either an equity injection into the government-owned company building the nuclear power station or debt financing (a loan to the company). Both instruments constitute investments. An equity injection is expected to yield a return in the form of dividends, whilst debt financing entails debt obligations in terms of repayment and interest. The KPMG report shows that a ratio of 40% equity and 60% loan results in the most efficient financing structure (lowest project LCOE), and consequently a (significantly) reduced need for price support during operation. Solvency issues were also considered for this ratio of equity to loan. It is also desirable to focus on the possibility of repaying the loan from electricity revenues, without

is expected to require government price support. This prevents the unnecessary circulation of funds between the state and the joint venture to be established.

Interest

Lower financing costs can be achieved by not charging interest on the government loan during construction, thereby avoiding the effect of capitalised interest combined with a long construction period. There is a precedent for this approach in the Czech new-build programme, which has been approved by the European Commission in relation to state aid, and it may also be applicable to the Dutch GSP. Interest may, however, be charged on the government loan once construction is complete. In its calculations, KPMG has assumed the interest rate on government bonds plus 1 percentage point; this is also in line with the Czech case.

Impact on public debt and budget balance

Furthermore, as the GSP is further developed, it is important to monitor the impact of the various scenarios on the EMU balance and the government's EMU debt. The relevance to the balance and debt depends on the exact structuring of the financing. For example, it is possible that the impact of a capital injection differs from that of debt financing; whilst both affect EMU debt, there is a varying effect on the EMU balance, depending on the business case and the final structuring of the GSP. The final assessment of this rests with CBS/Eurostat. The impact on the EMU balance and debt is not an end in itself, but may be relevant in further considerations.

Contract for Difference

A reasonable return from the policy-based investment to be established is required in the long term so that it can meet its financial obligations. For this reason, it is desirable to have a price support instrument in reserve during the operational phase. This will take the form of a *Contract for Difference* (CfD).

With a CfD, a *strike price* is agreed; if the electricity price falls below this *strike price*, the difference is made up by the government. If the electricity price rises above this *strike price*, the difference is capped. This also prevents windfall profits. With a ratio of 40% equity and 60% debt, the KPMG report shows that, due to the relatively low financing costs, no expenditure is required under the CfD. Naturally, this depends on (very) long-term expectations, which may change in practice.

Decommissioning

The licence holder is responsible for decommissioning the reactor and for financing this process. In most cases, the decommissioning of nuclear power stations is funded by a decommissioning fund which the licence holder must build up during the operational phase of a nuclear power station. As this fund will not be fully built up during the initial period, the licence holder must set aside an additional provision in case decommissioning takes place earlier than anticipated. The details of such a provision will form an integral part of the elaboration of the GSP.

Conclusion

The government is proposing a GSP based on full public funding in the first phase of the project, whilst not ruling out the option of private funding (from the capital market or from the project contractor) at a later stage. In the further elaboration, based on the conclusions of the KPMG report, the assumption is made of an equity contribution of 40 per cent of the investment costs and a government loan covering 60 per cent of the investment costs. The guiding principles here are the continuity of the investment and keeping the interest rate on the government loan as low as possible, so as not to drive up project costs unnecessarily. In addition, a *Contract for Difference* will be drawn up, even if this serves merely as a safety net and no price-supporting expenditure is envisaged. The principle of a government guarantee in the event of any premature decommissioning will also be further elaborated.

1.3 Planning and risks

The proposal for the GSP described above is not the same as the investment decision. The investment decision is expected upon signing the contract for the construction of the nuclear power stations. This proposal for the GSP marks the starting point for further elaboration, running in parallel with and in interaction with the procurement process and the state aid procedure with the European Commission. By setting the direction now for the further elaboration of the GSP, progress is maintained in the state aid process with the European Commission. Approval from the European Commission regarding the state aid aspects of the GSP is necessary before a final investment decision can be taken. Maintaining progress is desirable given the support and stance of the House of Representatives regarding the construction of the nuclear power stations as quickly as possible.

2. Werkspoor procurement process

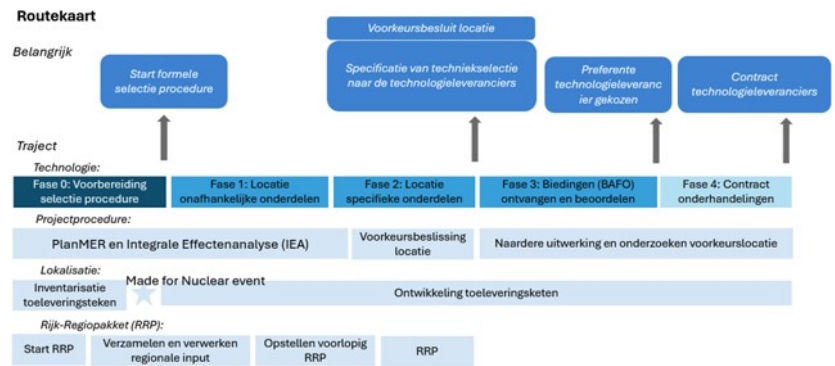
2.1 Objective

The Government envisages a procurement process to select a contractor for the project. This procurement process encompasses much more than the product itself – the two nuclear power stations. The contractor will also act as the project developer who, together with the policy-led joint venture NEO NL to be established, will carry out the construction and remain a partner throughout the entire lifetime of the power station. The government is therefore seeking a contractor who will jointly manage the uncertainties and risks during construction, provide support during the operational phase (for at least 60 years) and subsequently assist with the safe decommissioning of the nuclear power stations. This is a very extensive, long-term commitment which the government does not wish to enter into lightly.

It is therefore vital to structure the procurement process carefully in order to identify the right partner for the Netherlands.

2.2 Overlap with parallel work streams

The coordination between the procurement process and the other initiatives, such as site selection, the Central Government–Regional Authorities Package and financing (including the GSP), is currently envisaged as follows:



2.3 Current status of the procurement process design

In designing the procurement procedure, the Government aims to maintain speed whilst taking risk mitigation into account. The Government therefore envisages a procurement procedure that is competitive, phased and flexible. The government also envisages a procurement procedure in which it is possible to work collaboratively with participants on the contract and the conditions to be set for it, to identify and mitigate project-specific risks at an early stage, and thus to maintain the momentum achieved. In this way, the government is preventing a situation where participants are ultimately unable to meet the conditions set by the state, even though alternatives might have been possible. The government is therefore opting for a phased approach, whereby the procurement procedure is launched whilst the site selection process is being finalised in parallel. To ascertain whether the participants can agree to the proposed structure of the procurement procedure, the state is organising a closed market consultation with them.

Phasing

The proposed procurement procedure is characterised, amongst other things, by the following aspects:

- *Dialogue*: during the planned consultations with the participants, the initial terms and conditions of the contract will be discussed before they are finally set out in a specification. The aim is to identify specific risks and requirements throughout the process so that the procurement process can be as successful as possible and none of the participants will be inadvertently excluded.
- *Phased approach*: the procurement procedure will be structured in phases. In parallel, the site assessment will be finalised and a decision made on the final location. Sub-topics will be addressed in phases within the procurement process. This means there is no need to wait until everything is ready, allowing the procurement procedure to be completed more quickly.
- *Interaction*: in parallel with the procurement process, a site decision, a Central Government–Regional Authority Package and the GSP are being prepared. At various stages, these processes may interact with the procurement process.

The phased approach is currently being further developed, with the Cabinet now working on finalising this strategy and drawing up the associated programme of requirements and award criteria. The Cabinet will return to this in the next progress letter.

To date, the procurement process has been structured around the construction of two new large-scale nuclear power stations in the Netherlands. However, the Government's intention is ultimately to build four nuclear power stations. The government therefore proposes to include an option in this procurement process for the construction of two additional nuclear power stations. If a second site is identified in the future, the third and fourth large-scale nuclear power stations can be built by extending the current procurement process. This has several advantages. For instance, there is no need to launch a new procurement process, which saves time. Furthermore, including the option for two additional power stations also presents an opportunity to negotiate a better price across the board, including for the first two power stations. The government will use the coming period to carry out (legal) analyses to determine how this can best be incorporated into the procurement process.

2.3 Timetable and risks

To date, and in organising the follow-up process, the government has consistently kept the pace of the process in mind. Naturally, this has been done whilst taking into account the risks and costs involved in the process. For example, the government previously decided to carry out the technical feasibility studies in advance of the site selection. The timetables that have been drawn up and are to be drawn up are based on the use of potential acceleration options (which will need to be confirmed at a later stage) in order to keep to the current timeline.

For example, the government anticipates that, prior to the granting of the final licence, reversible works (such as raising the platform height and excavating the construction pit) can be carried out at the site. In addition, the government may consider ordering the reactor vessels and other complex products (so-called *long-lead items*) ahead of the final investment decision. The government will continue to adopt this approach throughout the subsequent process. A clear example of this is the decision to implement the procurement procedure in phases to achieve a faster turnaround time, as described above. The letter to Parliament dated 16 May 2025⁶ a number of further examples were cited of options for acceleration which, based on the knowledge available at that time, were also being considered.

Site investigations

In order to submit a sound bid, participants rely on site-specific information. For some sites, such as the Borssele site, specific information is already available from previous studies. This is not the case for all sites. Some of this information can be obtained through the ground investigations that must be carried out on site. These ground investigations are not required for the site selection process and normally take place later, after the site has been selected.

Carrying out the ground investigations earlier can save time. A decision to do so may mean that the investigations have to be carried out for several sites and that the investigations carried out at the sites that are subsequently ruled out will not be used for the new nuclear power project. The first step is to analyse the information already available for each site and then assess whether it is useful to obtain additional information through ground investigations at an early stage. Based on this analysis, a careful process involving all

⁶ Parliamentary Document 32 645, No. 156.

stakeholders, including, as a minimum, landowners and local authorities, in order to make the appropriate assessments. A decision will then be taken on whether or not to carry out these ground investigations before the site selection is finalised.

3. Site selection

3.1 Objective

As part of the project procedure, preparations are underway for the (draft) Preferred Option Decision. To this end, a planning EIA and an Integrated Impact Assessment (IEA) are being drawn up.

3.2 Current status

The government is continuing to work on the project procedure for the site selection. The areas under consideration are Eemshaven, Maasvlakte II, the Sloe area and Terneuzen. Work is currently underway to process the findings from the previous phase. Over 500 responses have been received regarding the draft Scope and Level of Detail Memorandum (cNRD). These responses come from both supporters and opponents of nuclear energy, as well as from a broad cross-section of the public and various organisations, both national and international. A Response Memorandum to the cNRD is currently being drafted, which will address the advice and responses received. This Response Memorandum will be published alongside the final NRD. In addition, an advisory opinion on the cNRD was received from the EIA Commission in September 2025. We will explain in the final NRD how the EIA Commission's recommendations, as well as the responses to the cNRD, will be taken into account and incorporated. In parallel with the processing of these responses and recommendations, the site investigation has commenced.

In addition, all relevant studies for the planning EIA and the Integrated Impact Analysis are currently being carried out. The insights gained from the responses to the draft NRD and from the EIA Commission have helped to refine our research questions and objectives. Once the studies have been completed, the House will be informed of the results.

3.3 Planning and risks

The Government is currently working towards two deadlines:

- The final NRD: the aim is to have this ready by December 2025.
- The draft preferred decision, including the plan-EIA and IEA: the aim is to have this ready by mid-2026, so that the draft preferred decision can be made available for public inspection immediately after the summer.

4. Central Government–Regional Package

4.1 Objective

Given the significant and long-term impact of the construction of nuclear power stations, the Government, in collaboration with the province and local authorities, is working towards a package of measures for the region in which the nuclear power stations are being built.

4.2 Current situation

On 28 July, Mr Knops issued his second report since his appointment as Regional Liaison Officer for Nuclear Energy in Zeeland. This report builds on his earlier findings from December 2024, about which the House of Representatives was informed on 29 January 2025⁷. His second advisory report contains recommendations which the Cabinet, the municipalities of Borsele, Terneuzen and Vlissingen, and the province of Zeeland consider to be sound and which will be developed jointly. These recommendations are:

1. *Informing regional (public) parties not yet (directly) involved.*

The parties consider it important that all municipalities likely to be affected by the construction are involved in the site selection process and the Central Government–Regional Package. As soon as the final location for the nuclear power stations becomes clear, consideration will be given to whether the composition of the core team for the Central Government–Regional Package needs to be adjusted. In the site selection process for the new nuclear power stations, the government is taking a broader view of where impacts are anticipated. To share and coordinate these findings, the Ministry of Climate and Green Growth is therefore also organising consultations involving a wider range of regional and national authorities.

2. *Establishing a common information base to inform the Central Government–Regional Package process.*

The Central Government–Regional Package process and the public engagement processes run (partly) in parallel with the project procedure and the procurement procedure. Together with the parties from the core team, the timelines of the various tracks are being compared side by side to create a shared understanding of what information is available at what point in time.

Naturally, discussions will also cover how this information can be shared with all stakeholders, whilst taking into account the interests of the region and central government.

3. *Aligning the participation processes and associated expectations.*

Various participation processes with specific objectives are currently underway. The central government is in dialogue with all regional and local authorities being assessed as part of the project procedure. In this way, the information gathered can be taken into account when weighing up the options for the draft preferred decision. The local authorities in Zeeland are undertaking a participation process to identify opportunities and conditions which, should the nuclear power stations be built in Zeeland, will be used as input for the Central Government–Region Package.

Mr Knops also looks back on his initial advice and the four recommendations set out therein. The Government has undertaken to explain how it will implement the advice to establish a joint central government and regional steering group, in order to ensure coherence at central government level. In the letter to Parliament dated 29 January, it was stated that the guiding principle here is to make use of existing consultation structures in order to avoid creating additional administrative burdens. In doing so, the Government has acted on the Grinwis motion⁸.

The need for coherent decision-making is widely endorsed and relates to three areas:

- The spatial puzzle of projects: at project level, different initiatives potentially compete for the same physical and environmental space. Led by the Province of Zeeland, various spatial workshops have been held in which all projects have been mapped out

⁷ Parliamentary Document 32 645, No. 134

⁸ Parliamentary Paper 32 645, No. 109

. Decision-making takes place on the basis of integrated assessments. For projects where spatial integration falls within the remit of the Minister for Infrastructure and the Environment, decisions are prepared in a coordinated manner. This applies, for example, to projects involving the construction of new nuclear power stations, the VAWOZ programme and the 380 kV Zeeuws-Vlaanderen project. If conflicts between options arise, the administrative bodies involved will consult with one another on the matter.

- Central Government–Regional Package. It is important for the region to reach broad agreements with central government on the conditions under which nuclear power stations may be built and on ensuring compliance with these conditions in the years leading up to construction. This covers many policy areas, such as housing, safety, education and healthcare. That is why, as part of the Central Government–Regional Package, we are setting out the framework for holding central government fully accountable. A working group has also been set up within the central government’s broad nuclear consultation structure to develop the Central Government–Region Package, thereby enabling cabinet-wide agreements. The Administrative Consultation on Large-Scale Energy Transition and Quality of Life in Zeeland (BO GELZ) thus functions as the designated steering group for the Central Government–Region Package.
- Zeeland 2050 Vision: the province of Zeeland has taken the initiative to develop a vision for Zeeland in 2050. To this end, Zeeland has set up an informal working group in which departments and authorities are coordinating their efforts to flesh out and implement this vision. This provides an opportunity to align the agreements on the conditions under which nuclear power stations may be built with the broader socio-economic policy developments for Zeeland.

3.3 Planning and risks

On 4 September, the government presented the region with an initial substantive response to the Borsele and provincial conditions. The Zeeland authorities are using this response in the ongoing public engagement processes to draw up or refine conditions for the construction of the nuclear power stations. At the end of this year, the regional liaison officer will take stock of all the information and discussions that have taken place regarding these conditions.

In parallel with preparing the preferred decision (site decision), the authorities are drawing up a provisional central government–regional package for Zeeland, should the preferred site be located in Zeeland. If a location other than one in Zeeland is designated, more time will be needed to finalise a central government–regional package. The other regions besides Zeeland are now also being supported to build up knowledge about the possible arrival of the nuclear power stations and to contribute local and regional expertise to ensure a sound and careful public participation process.

5. Next steps

By finalising the outline of the *Government Support Package*, the government is taking a significant step towards the realisation of the new nuclear power stations. Ultimately, this step will help to make the energy system more robust and increase the Netherlands’ strategic independence. The next milestones in the preparations for the construction of the nuclear power stations are the establishment of the policy-driven entity NEO NL, the start of the ‘location-independent’ phase of the procurement process, and the publication of the Scope and Level of Detail memorandum (as the next step towards reaching a preferred

for the site). Progress on these aspects and the status of the state aid process with the European Commission are central to the next Progress Report on New Nuclear Power Plant Construction.

The Minister for Climate and Green Growth,
S.Th.M. Hermans