

**Report of the Advisory Division of the Council of State on the Dutch government's draft 2022 Climate Memorandum**

**Summary**

The newly appointed government has launched an ambitious climate policy and stricter climate targets. The figures available from the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) show that the gap between the level of ambition and the forecast of the effects of the calculated policy is still considerable: there will be a reduction of between 39 and 50 per cent if policies remain unchanged.<sup>1</sup> There is still a major difference between the estimated emission reduction and the legal target. The government also recognises this.

**Additional steps are needed**

With just over seven years to go until 2030, it is therefore essential that maximum efforts are made to convert existing policy intentions into specific implementation agendas. Additional steps are needed to get us on track. In part, this involves fleshing out the intentions from the draft Policy Programme and the draft Climate Memorandum 2022. The draft Climate Policy Programme, an elaboration of the Coalition Agreement, shows great ambition through the number of policies, programmes and instruments it outlines. However, it provides insufficient insight into what will actually happen in the short and long term.

**Not everything can be done at the same time**

In taking concrete decisions, priorities must be established to achieve the objectives. Not everything can be brought to fruition at once. This is partly due to the labour market being extremely tight and the scarcity of materials. Therefore, it is important to first work on the measures necessary to trigger other measures, such as the creation of adequate renewable energy infrastructure. Above all, climate policy needs to be implemented in the right order to maximise the chances of meeting the targets. To this end, decisions must be taken and bottlenecks eliminated. All this requires effective administrative management.

**Geopolitical**

The Advisory Division considers the task facing the government partly in light of the international, geopolitical situation. The war in Ukraine, high energy prices and Europe's commitment to become independent of fossil fuel from Russia make the task of phasing out fossil fuel use all the more urgent.

---

<sup>1</sup> PBL press release 20 September 2022, Preliminary forecast of greenhouse gas emissions in 2030 from the Climate and Energy Outlook 2022.

**Urgent issues**

The Advisory Division is aware that the government has to operate in a complex field of tension, in which several urgent issues demand attention. The government is right to address the financial concerns of many households in relation to rising (energy) prices. At the same time, this has resulted in the urgency to accelerate matters. Prioritising energy-saving measures and alternative energy sources can both accelerate the energy transition and reduce consumers' energy bills.

**System transformations**

Lastly, in order to achieve a consistent climate policy, the Advisory Division considers it important to outline the system transformations that will lead to a climate-neutral Netherlands by 2050. This also allows short-term policy choices to be linked more effectively to and measured against long-term prospects.