

# Netherlands stops Shell's CO<sub>2</sub> storage project

November 4 2010

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The Shell logo. The Dutch government said Thursday it will not allow oil giant Shell to store millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide in a depleted gas reservoir under a small town, upholding the fears of townspeople.

The Dutch government said Thursday it will not allow oil giant Shell to store millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide in a depleted gas reservoir under a small town, upholding the fears of townspeople.

"The CO<sub>2</sub> storage project in (the western town of) Barendrecht is not going ahead," the ministry of economy, agriculture, and environment said in a statement.

A "total lack of local support" was one of the main reasons for the decision, it quoted minister Maxime Verhagen as saying in a letter to parliament.

The previous Dutch government last November provisionally authorised

Anglo-Dutch Shell to undertake a project to store some of the 5.0 megatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted each year by the company's refinery in Pernis, Europe's largest, about 15 kilometres (10 miles) from Barendrecht.

But it said it would leave the final decision to the next government elected in June, a ministry spokesman explained.

Under the scheme, set to have started in 2012, the CO<sub>2</sub> was to be carried by a pipeline, compressed, and injected into a depleted gas reservoir 1,800 metres (5,900 feet) under ground.

Shell, which planned to store more than 300,000 tons of carbon dioxide a year for 30 years at Barendrecht, has said the CO<sub>2</sub> will dissolve or form minerals over time.

Residents and local officials of the 50,000-strong town, however, vehemently opposed the project and threatened legal action.

The ministry statement said CO<sub>2</sub> storage was key to reducing the Netherlands' [greenhouse gas emissions](#), and insisted it was "safe".

The country emitted about 170 megatonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2009. It has no underground CO<sub>2</sub> storage facility, but is planning a large project in depleted gas reservoirs that lie mainly under grazing land in the northern provinces of Groningen, Friesland and Drente.

Shell spokesman Wendel Broere lamented the government's decision on Barendrecht, but said "we hope that other projects will still be able to go ahead".

Activist group [Greenpeace](#) welcomed the move.

"Now that CO<sub>2</sub> dumping is disappearing from the political agenda, space is being made for investment in energy saving and clean energy," it said in a statement.

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