

Dutch judge orders government to do more on air pollution

September 7 2017, by Mike Corder

A Dutch judge on Thursday ordered the government to do more to rein in air pollution, a victory for activists who filed a civil case seeking measures to ensure cleaner air.

According to a written summary of the decision, the civil judge in The Hague ordered the [government](#) to draw up a plan to ensure that Dutch air quality meets European Union standards "in the shortest possible time." The ruling also banned the government from taking any measures that could lead to new breaches of air quality guidelines.

Anne Knol of the Dutch arm of Friends of the Earth called the decision "a genuine breakthrough for healthy air."

"We're happy that the judge is forcing the government to better protect the health of citizens," Knol said. "Air pollution in the Netherlands must now be tackled so that fewer people get sick or die because of pollution."

The government had argued in court that it was already taking measures to clean up the air and is working with local authorities to tackle problem areas, which are mainly in large cities with heavy traffic and industry.

Dutch Minister for the Environment Sharon Dijksma said she would intensify that cooperation to speed up moves to improve [air quality](#).

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Citation: Dutch judge orders government to do more on air pollution (2017, September 7)
retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-09-dutch-air-pollution.html>

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