

Sturing & Beleid

European Commission
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Subject: Position on unconventional fossil fuels (e.g. shale gas)

Dear Commissioner,

With this letter we would like to inform you about the position of the municipality of Ridderkerk (the Netherlands) on shale gas.

Shale gas resolution

A majority of our council has declared, on the 7th of November 2013, that:

- the city of Ridderkerk is negative towards shale and coal gas;
- the development of renewable forms of energy should be strongly promoted.

Considerations

It is considered that:

- a. shale gas is a fossil fuel. An increase in the supply of fossil fuels will mean that the development of renewable energy, such as solar and wind power, could stagnate;
- b. the extraction of shale and coal gas does not fit into the sustainability policy of the city of Ridderkerk;
- c. the extraction of shale and coal gas is not in accordance with our sustainability policy, because allowing shale and coal gas drilling is an obstacle to a rapid transition to renewable energy and affects the landscape and the quality of life;
- d. the extraction of shale gas will lead to inconvenience for local residents;
- e. there is no public support for drilling and extraction of shale gas;
- f. an exploratory drilling for shale gas extraction entails possible risks, for example, for our water supplies. These risks are still insufficiently investigated;
- g. the current methods of extraction (several chemicals will be placed into the soil) can have serious effects on groundwater and can cause security risks such as subsidence;
- h. the municipality of Ridderkerk has to provide the permission which could be needed for an exploratory drilling;
- i. your Commission held a consultation this spring about the desirability of shale gas in the European Union and asked for the views of local authorities;

