



TINNE VAN DER STRAETEN
MINISTER OF ENERGY

Brussels, 30. 06. 2022

To whom it may concern

O.ref.: TVdS/JC/PT-220628/Out 1240

Notification of a proposed activity in relation to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context ("Espoo" Convention) and the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters ("Aarhus" Convention)

Dear Madam,
Dear Sir,

In view of the problems with the supply of electricity from neighboring countries, the heavy dependence on fossil fuels, the acceleration of the energy transition, and the geopolitical tensions that make prices very volatile and put the supply of natural gas under pressure, the Belgian government took the decision on 18 March 2022 to take the necessary measures to extend the operation of nuclear reactors Doel 4 and Tihange 3 for a period of ten years. This decision is in line with the European Commission's policy of increased independence from fossil fuels and diversified energy supply.

On 1 April 2022, the Belgian government approved, in first reading, a draft bill to allow the continued operation of the Doel 4 and Tihange 3 nuclear reactors for another 10 years.

This draft bill and the work necessary for this extension of their operation must now be submitted to an environmental impact assessment, public consultation, consultation of the relevant national authorities and a transboundary consultation in accordance with the ruling with reference 34/2020 of the Belgian Constitutional Court of 5 March 2020 and in accordance with our obligations under the Espoo Convention and Aarhus Conventions and the EIA Directives. As was the case for the extension of the Doel 1 and Doel 2 reactors, countries within a 1000 km radius of these nuclear power plants will be consulted. Your country will therefore also be consulted in due time.

The DG Energy of the Federal Public Service Economy, SMEs, Self-employed and Energy has been entrusted with the task of carrying out this consultation. The preparation of this consultation is underway and is planned for the first half of 2023.

2. Proposed Project

The proposed Project consists of the 10 years extension of the operation of Doel 4 and Tihange 3 reactors and the nuclear safety-related improvement works related to that extension. The proposed Project will be submitted to an environmental impact assessment in Belgium.

The Belgian government considers that the proposed Project plays a vital role in securing its supply of electricity until 2035. The project is also in line with the policy that the European Commission wishes to pursue for increased independence from fossil fuels and diversified energy supply.

Currently available information upon the long-term exploitation of the Belgian nuclear power plants can be found in French on the following webpage:

<https://afcn.fgov.be/fr/dossiers/centrales-nucleaires-en-belgique/exploitation-long-terme-lto-des-centrales-nucleaires>

and in Dutch on the following webpage:

<https://fanc.fgov.be/nl/dossiers/kerncentrales-belgie/langetermijnuitbating-lto-van-de-belgische-kerncentrales>

3. Transboundary screening

The Nuclear Power Plant of Doel is located in the Port of Antwerp, on the river Scheldt, approximately 6 km from the border between Belgium and the Netherlands. This NPP is in operation since 1974, and the reactor Doel 4 is in operation since 1985.

The Nuclear Power Plant of Tihange is located on the bank of the Meuse river, near the village of Tihange in the Walloon province of Liège, approximately 40 km from the border between Belgium and the Netherlands and approximately 65 km from the border with Germany and Luxemburg. This NPP is in operation since 1975, and the reactor Tihange 3 is in operations since 1985.

4. EIA participation and consultation

The present notification is sent to you as soon as possible, in accordance with article 7.1 of the Directive 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.

We kindly ask you to confirm your interest in taking part to this transboundary consultation before 30 September 2022.

The countries that expressed their interest to participate in this transboundary consultation will be consulted in the first quarter of 2023 and have the opportunity to provide the opinions of your public and its relevant authorities on the Proposed Project.

The participating countries will be kindly requested to summarize the results of their consultation in a written response to the Directorate General for Energy of the FPS Economy, SME's, Self-Employed and Energy, coordinator of the activities related to the EIA.

5. Information about the decision-making timetable

The Proposed Project is now at pre-examination stage. The remaining stages are:

- Finalization of the environmental impact assessment report
- Public and Transboundary consultation (60 days for the National consultation and 90 days for the Transboundary consultation)
- Law proposal to the Belgian Parliament
- Law adoption by the Belgian Parliament (estimated date 31 December 2023)

The environmental impact assessment report and its non-technical summary will be published in Dutch, French and German during the first quarter of 2023, on the website of FPS Economy, S.M.E.s, Self-employed and Energy:

<https://economie.fgov.be/fr/Doel4etTihange3>

<https://economie.fgov.be/nl/Doel4enTihange3>

<https://economie.fgov.be/de/Doel4undTihange3>

6. Timeframe for Registration to the Transboundary consultation

Your country is now being notified of our intention to perform a Transboundary consultation once the full information about the EIA is available.

We kindly ask you to confirm your interest in taking part to this Transboundary consultation before 30 September 2022.

7. Responding to this letter

We would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this letter. All communication and questions related to the present notification should be addressed to my administration:

FPS Economy, SME's, Self-Employed and Energy
Directorate-General Energy
Division « Nuclear Applications »
Koning Albert II-laan, 16
1000 Brussel
nuclear@economie.fgov.be

Sincerely,



Tinne Van der Straeten, Minister of Energy