

## Contract extension for largest coal transshipment of Europe to 2043 shaky after municipal vote

ROTTERDAM, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – **The municipal executive committee of Rotterdam and the Port of Rotterdam are forced to make a strategy to stop the transshipment of coal in the port at a pace that is in line with the climate agreement of Paris. This has been decided by a majority vote of the Rotterdam city council last night.**

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the lease contract expires between the port and the *Europese Massagoed Overslagbedrijf* (EMO), the largest terminal for coal and iron ore in Europe. The parties were about to extend the lease contract for the largest coal transshipment of Europe by 25 years, until 2043. But now that the city council wants to say goodbye to coal transshipment, it is doubtful whether the planned contract extension with EMO will go through as expected previously. The motion '[Farewell to Coal](#)' was submitted by Groenlinks, SP, Nida, CDA, PvdA and supported by D66, PvdD and CU-SGP and approved by a 29-to-16 vote.

Vatan Hüzeir, spokesman for the *Rotterdams Klimaat Initiatief*, a citizen movement concerned about climate change: "The vote means the definitive starting shot for a Rotterdam *Kohlenausstieg*. The globe is warming quickly and dangerously. In order to meet the Paris climate agreement, by 2025 coal must have been phased out in Europe. Making the port free of coal makes way for a truly sustainable city. If EMO cannot go along with this transition, there will be no place for this company."

The *Rotterdams Klimaat Initiatief* was one of the signatories of a call to the council to phase out coal in the port.<sup>1</sup> Last year October, after pressure from the movement, Pex Langenberg, alderman on sustainability, cancelled plans to connect the coal-fired power plants on the Maasvlakte to the Rotterdam city heating network.<sup>2</sup>

The port of Rotterdam houses the largest coal transshipment in Europe. Some of the coal that is transported is burned in the coal-fired power plants on the Maasvlakte in Rotterdam, another part in the power plants in Germany. Research shows that these coal-fired power plants have to be closed within 4 and 8 years<sup>3</sup> to reach the Paris climate agreement.<sup>3</sup>

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More information: [www.rotterdamsklimaatinitiatief.nl](http://www.rotterdamsklimaatinitiatief.nl)

See the municipal council meeting of 14-11-2017 for more context:

[https://rotterdam.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/449598/Gemeenteraad%2014-11-2017#ai\\_3707658](https://rotterdam.raadsinformatie.nl/vergadering/449598/Gemeenteraad%2014-11-2017#ai_3707658)

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<sup>1</sup> See (in Dutch): <https://nos.nl/artikel/2201054-milieuclubs-eisen-stop-op-handel-in-steenkool.html>

<sup>2</sup> See (in Dutch): <https://versbeton.nl/2016/12/dit-zijn-de-volgende-stappen-naar-een-fossielvrij-rotterdam/>

<sup>3</sup> See, respectively:

[http://m.greenpeace.nl/Global/nederland/2014/Persberichten/Paris%20Agreement%20for%20NL%202016%2029%2009\\_NewClimate%20\(1\).pdf](http://m.greenpeace.nl/Global/nederland/2014/Persberichten/Paris%20Agreement%20for%20NL%202016%2029%2009_NewClimate%20(1).pdf), <https://newclimate.org/2016/02/23/what-does-the-paris-agreement-mean-for-climate-protection-in-germany/>