



Graanmarkt 2, 2000 Antwerp
Belgium

Industry priorities to achieve 2030 targets and Net Zero by 2050

Objective

Interconnection of all industrial clusters in the Benelux region and in particular in The Netherlands and Belgium to assure optimal use of limited resources and achieve maximum financial, economic and social return on investment.

An integrated CO₂, H₂ and energy network will:

- Accelerate the energy transition and improve the competitiveness of the industrial network in the Netherlands, Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels region and Luxembourg,
- unlock the full potential of the largest sea-port system in Europe and its sophisticated logistical and transportation know-how and experience,
- increase its role as gateway to Europe thanks to export of CO₂ and import/transport of renewables and sustainable molecules (low carbon H₂, ammonia....), on an ever increasing scale,
- export know-how and expertise.

This should allow for solid and sustainable business models.

Where are we now?

1. As one of the most industrialized regions in the world with a carbon density per km² of 2,5 times the EU average, the Benelux region is faced with the risk of lagging behind in reaching targets and thus competitiveness. The increased competition coming from neighbor countries and geopolitical movements, will only exacerbate this.
2. Without infrastructure for transport of CO₂, H₂ and sustainable molecules nothing will happen and we will not reach the 2030 targets and Net Zero by 2050,
3. Most infrastructural projects are *works in progress* and still face technical, financial and regulatory hurdles before FID can be taken, but they illustrate both the ambition and the urgent need of the industry & power sector for **large scale and cross border** infrastructure projects.

4. The combined climate and energy crisis forces accelerated implementation of commitments. This requires intensified collaboration between stakeholders. Lack of visibility on the national, regional, European and global rule book and support schemes further delays FID's

What do we need?

1. A guaranteed date for removal of all hurdles under control of public authorities to a non-discriminatory and unbundled open-access cross-border CO₂ and H₂ /sustainable molecules infrastructure.
2. Joint cross border infrastructure planning and development.
3. Rapid conclusion of a bilateral arrangement between Belgium/Flanders/Wallonia and the Netherlands for the im/export of CO₂ (cfr. the bilateral arrangement between Belgium and Denmark)
4. Regulatory framework to allow for cross border build out and transport of CO₂ and H₂ and sustainable molecules.
5. Accelerated process to obtain required permits for carbon abatement infrastructure/initiatives (e.g., CO₂ and H₂ pipelines, import/export infrastructure, RES etc.)
6. Strengthened electricity grid connections to ensure sufficient capacity for exponential rise in electricity consumption
7. A joint position with regard to the upcoming EU-directive on harmonization of permitting rules
8. (Green) financing and funding to enable the transition/infrastructure build out through joint application of EU funding under the various programs.

The way forward

We propose a meeting between governments and industry to discuss the most appropriate way to develop an integrated cross border CO₂, H₂ and energy infrastructure, **including the creation of a public private task force** mandated by the highest levels of governments.

Eric ter Hark,
executive chairman BBR

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