

Amsterdam citizens urge Sweden to put an end to Vattenfalls catastrophic plans.

Over 5,500 local residents, in a village of less than 30,000, and citizens of nearby situated Amsterdam city districts have signed a petition against building the largest biomass heating plant in The Netherlands. The local population does not want a polluting biomass-energyplant imposed on their community. The emission of harmful particulate matter will affect mostly young children, the elderly and people with asthma and other chronic health conditions. The plant will also emit enormous amounts of CO₂ directly into the atmosphere, even more CO₂ than burning coal.

In July of this year, hundreds of children marched in protest from Amsterdam to nearby Diemen, where the biomass-plant is proposed to be built. The children have urged Vattenfall and policymakers to listen. They and future generations will be the generation most affected by the global climate change disaster as well as local air pollution. As Joep Sanders, a 12 year old protester explains to local media: *"When I read in the newspaper that this plant is going to burn 25 trucks worth of wood every day, I thought: something is not right here."*

Protesters are backed by many climate experts and professors that have been on national radio and television to express their concerns about the increase of wooden biomass burning. *"Focusing on more biomass and fewer gas plants: an incomprehensible error on the part of the government"* say professors Louise Vet and Klaas van Egmond. *"In this way we are going to emit more, instead of emitting less CO₂."*

However Vattenfall continues to make bland promises about sourcing 'sustainable biomass'. This cannot be taken at face value when the company admits it has no credible idea where its wood pellets will actually be sourced from. Large biomass plants elsewhere have ended up burning pellets sourced from the clearcutting of highly biodiverse forests in the Southern US, British Colombia and elsewhere. Adding just another argument to a growing list of reasons why the biomass-powerplant is a terrible idea.

Local politicians have publicly stated that they do not want the plant to be built. However, the fear for legal action prevents them from withholding a permit. Vattenfall can potentially sue Diemen for hundreds of millions. *"We are very concerned, especially about air pollution, we don't want it!"* says Hilda van't Riet, Council member for the Diemen 'Green Left' Party. Unfortunately, according to her party there is no legal reason to refuse the plant.

The GreenLeft voted *for* going through with the permit procedure. *"With pain in my heart"* the Council member adds.

Meanwhile the Amsterdam City council wrote a letter to the Eric Wiebes, Minister for economic affairs, expressing concerns about the billions of national subsidies reserved for burning biomass. There seems to be almost zero political and popular support for burning biomass. However Vattenfall is determined to push through and continue to apply for the permit and the necessary subsidies required for the construction of the plant.

Behind the guise of Vattenfall's slick greenwashing campaigns and promises of a 'fossil free future' hides the ugly face of a profit driven energy goliath, for whom making a profit is more important than the health and wellbeing people and the environment. Contrary to other multinational fossil energy companies Vattenfall is 100% owned by the Swedish

Government and thus their citizens. This enables Sweden to use their influence as shareholder to stop Vattenfall from going through with their plans.

The residents of Diemen and Amsterdam urge that the Swedish government - but also the Swedish people - help in the fight against biomass. Together we still have a chance to stop this disaster and make a transition to clean energy that benefits us all.

—VIDEO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrU4kGTxYV4><https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/editien/laatste-videos-editien/video/4767646/kind-als-protestmiddel>

RADIO:

<https://www.nporadio1.nl/nos-radio-1-journaal/onderwerpen/506530-kindermars-voor-schone-lucht>

NEWSPAPERS: <https://www.parool.nl/amsterdam/hoge-subsidies-maken-bouw-biomassacentrales-te-aantrekkelijk~b4b82438/>
<https://zembla.bnnvara.nl/nieuws/strijden-tegen-biomassacentrale-diemen-ons-geld-wordt-verbrand-in-de-oven><https://globalforestcoalition.org/diemen-biomass/> <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2019/07/10/kan-diemen-onder-biomassa-uit-a3966725> <https://www.parool.nl/amsterdam/kindermars-tegen-biomassacentrale-het-is-toch-een-beetje-gemeen~bb27f141/>