

# The Netherlands in negative annual growth forecast

Decommissioning to outstrip single build capacity injection for 2026, writes Karolin Schaps

For the first time ever, the Dutch onshore wind market will this year see negative annual capacity growth as a large decommissioning project in Flevoland will outstrip the slim pickings of new turbine capacity entering the market.

Difficulties around permitting due to local opposition, weak power prices and uncertainty around new turbine norms continue to dampen investor appetite in new Dutch projects.

"It is tough at the moment. There is the realisation that the Dutch market is losing its attractiveness compared to other markets," Vattenfall head of market development for onshore wind in the Netherlands Gerard van Oostveen told reNEWS.

This year only one wind farm, the 75MW Ze-Bra project on the border between Zeeland and North Brabant, will complete construction. The same period will see the decommissioning of 160 turbines totalling around 150MW at the Zeewolde farm in Flevoland following the repowering of the site.

"For the first time in Dutch history, installed wind power capacity will shrink," said Zeewolde wind farm managing director Maarten de Keijzer.

Mechanical installation at Eneco, Zeeuwind and Lindewind's Ze-Bra site is due to finish by the end of September this year. Turbine installation and decommissioning work will simultaneously commence in April as 19 old turbines will make way for 15 new Enercon machines: seven E160 and eight E138 units.

"The foundation work is progressing nicely, which means we are still on track to start placing the new turbines in April," said a spokesman for Eneco, adding the wind farm will be fully operational at the start of 2027.

Given current challenges in the Dutch market, repowering remains one of the main drivers for new onshore wind capacity as space and grid connections have become scarce commodities. Other recently-completed repowering projects in the Netherlands include Zeeuwind's 18MW Willem-Annepolder 2 site and RWE's 19MW Karolinapolder site.

"A lot of projects that started 15 to 20 years ago are coming to an end, and that is why repowering is a theme that is being focused on a lot more at the moment," said Dutch wind association NedZero onshore wind expert Paul Stockman.



FIRST BASE: Piling at the 75MW Ze-Bra wind farm  
Photo: Zeeuwind

Repowering efforts are, however, encountering ever-larger stumbling blocks. The lack of clarity over national turbine regulations beyond 2026, market availability of smaller turbines, access to upgraded grid connections and the increasing frequency of negative power prices are all adding to developers growing more hesitant about future repowering.

"It is a lot of work, and it is not always a given that repowering is successful because new agreements are needed on almost everything, like financing and a new grid connection permit. Repowering sounds very effective, but it is not that easily done," said Stockman.

Onshore wind projects slated to begin construction this year in the Netherlands include Renewable Energy Factory's (REF) 23MW De Pals wind farm close to the Belgian border and its 16MW Veghel project in North Brabant. Financing for both sites is due to conclude in March.

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## New Enercon turbine picked for Rotterdam harbour site

A single-turbine project in the Rotterdam harbour has become the first in the EU to pick Enercon's new E-175 EP5 E2 turbine. The 7MW machine will be installed at the end of 2027 if the final permit from the Council of State is granted soon, said Björn Konink, project manager at Pronewable, which is developing the Landtong Rozenburg wind farm alongside Rebel and Enercon itself.

The 175-metre-high turbine will be located on a stretch of land in the harbour just east of Eneco's existing 34MW wind farm with the same name.

The German OEM has also sold 10 of its new machines to Turkey's Reges Elektrik to be installed at the 70MW Demirli onshore wind farm, it said in January. ■



ON A ROLL: Cable-laying at the Ze-Bra site  
Photo: Zeeuwind

**27** The financing process took longer than usual due to “high interest rates, high costs and not very high energy prices”, REF partner Jeroen Dooper told reNEWS.

An additional issue which made the business case of the Veghel wind farm more complex was a height restriction on the site due to its proximity to a military airport. The chosen turbines, with a rotor diameter of only 140 metres, mean lower electricity output, decreasing the project’s revenue forecast.

Building works at the two sites will begin later this year, with turbine

installation at both wind farms expected in the first half of 2027. “This year is more about working on the foundations, the hardstands for the crane, the grid connection. Turbines will arrive on site at the beginning of next year,” Dooper said.

As part of its quest to bring the Veghel and De Pals projects to financial close, REF decided to co-locate the wind farms with battery energy storage systems (BESS) and electric truck charging facilities.

A 12MW battery system will be placed at the Veghel wind farm, while the De Pals project will host a 15MW BESS. ■



**CAPACITY LIFT:** Zeeuwind recently completed its 18MW Willem-Annapolder 2 repowering project

Photo: Zeeuwind

**DUTCH DELIVERY TIMETABLE**

Online in 2026		
Project, location	MW	Developer
Ze-Bra repowering	75	Eneco, Zeeuwind, Lindewind (repowering)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>75MW</b>	
Due in 2027		
Agro-Wind Reusel	50	Vereniging High Tech Agro Campus
De Pals	23	Renewable Energy Factory, Force Renewable Energy
Landtong Rozenburg	7	Pronewable, Enercon, Rebel
Veghel Win(d)t	16	Renewable Energy Factory, Mars, Kuehne+Nagel, Friesland Campina and Vanderlande
<b>Total:</b>	<b>96MW</b>	
Expected in 2028		
Caprice	14	Renewable Energy Factory
Hartel III	11	Pronewable, Rebel
<b>Total:</b>	<b>25MW</b>	
Projects in development		
Echteld Lienden repowering	50	Vattenfall
Eemshaven West	160	Vattenfall, Stichting Eemswind.Drei Meulen Wind, ECOO
Energielandgoed Wells Meer	26	Gemeente Bergen
Energiepark Valburg	24	Renewable Energy Factory
Haringvlietdam repowering	12	E-Connection
Kapelle-Schore repowering	8	Windforce-11, Zeeuwind, E-Connection
Windenergie op IJssel	16	Renewable Energy Factory, Energiecooperatie Soesterwijk Wiek
<b>Total:</b>	<b>296MW</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>492MW</b>	

**Bucketloads of uncertainties drain pipeline confidence**

The Dutch onshore wind development pipeline is thinning out as projects continue to encounter headwinds from local opposition, low power prices, grid constraints and uncertainty about turbine noise and shadow flicker regulations.

Even the government’s promise to overhaul its renewable energy subsidy scheme to offer two-sided Contracts for Difference from the middle of 2027 has failed to inject new life.

“The business case for onshore wind is difficult, but the main difficulty is getting the permits,” said independent onshore wind expert Paul van Egmond.

The Netherlands will only reach its target of generating 35 terrawatt-hours of renewable electricity by 2030 if all projects in the current pipeline are completed by then, a report by the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency said.

“Everything that is not permitted by now is expected not to be operational by 2030,” said van Egmond.

Some developers have started to pull out of projects or quit the Dutch market altogether. In October, Dutch company Pure Energie announced that it would put an end to the development of Windpark N34, a

five-turbine project in Emmen in the northern province of Drenthe. It said the business case was no longer attractive enough due to lower power prices, and that it saw a high risk in the availability of the project’s needed 150-metre turbines at the point of construction. “No external financiers are willing to invest in the wind farm,” the company said at the time.

In August, Norway’s Statkraft announced the sale of its operations in the Netherlands – which included a wind and solar development pipeline – to Dutch renewable energy company Greenchoice.

“Some developers are getting tired of waiting for the potential of the market to mature,” said Vattenfall’s van Oostveen. However, he remains optimistic about his own onshore wind projects as well as the country’s development pipeline, which he says still contains “many good locations”.

Vattenfall and two local partners are in the permitting phase of developing one of the country’s largest farms of between 150MW to 160MW in the northern harbour town of Eemshaven. The 23-turbine project is in the process of obtaining an irrevocable permit and the partners have started the procurement phase.

Vattenfall’s 50MW repowering project at Echteld Lienden in the centre of the country has received a planning permit, but is now going through an appeals procedure which van Oostveen said could take one or two years. The revamped wind farm is expected to be developed as part of an energy park that will also include a solar farm and, potentially, a battery storage facility.

The energy cooperative behind Windpark Agro-Wind Reusel, an 11-turbine project of 50MW close to the Belgian border, launched procurement for turbines, civil and electric works last year and is hoping to complete financing in the summer, according to Lighthouse Projects project manager Matthijs Jansen.

“The last wind turbines will be installed at the end of 2027 and the entire park will be completed in the first quarter of 2028,” he added.

Renewable Energy Factory (REF) is also pressing ahead with a number of projects. Its two-turbine 14MW Caprice farm on the site of energy-intensive brickworks Huissenswaard in the province of Gelderland, is expected to receive an irrevocable permit shortly, setting the start of construction up for the second half of

2028, according to REF’s Dooper. The 16MW IJssel project in the province of Utrecht, with two turbines with 245-metre tips, is set for a 2030 start date following the submission of its permit in recent weeks.

Hanging over the Dutch onshore wind development pipeline is uncertainty about norms around noise and shadow flicker of future turbines. The government has been delaying a decision, but current rules remain in effect until the year end.

“The level of uncertainty is affecting the realisation of projects. It makes the market environment really difficult,” said NedZero’s Stockmann.

Alongside clarity on turbine regulation, some developers are also calling for a more centralised planning regime that would help with development timelines and confidence in political support.

“At the moment it is almost like a ketchup bottle effect, where we have a big splash and then we have nothing. We need to have a clear roadmap, like you see in offshore wind.

“Developing a wind farm takes five to 10 years, so having a three- to five-year horizon does not really help us,” said Vattenfall’s van Oostveen. ■