

Sustainable chemistry as a basis for a sustainable Netherlands

Four recommendations towards 2050

Clean water, medicines, batteries, laundry detergents and your mobile phone. We are not always talking about it, but we use products that can be made every day thanks to the chemical industry. It is precisely in the Netherlands that we have a strong chemical industry that wants to make it more sustainable. Investing in innovation and new technologies, for example by making plastic sugar and developing recyclable wind blades.

We want it and we can do it. Together with a government that creates framework conditions to enable the transition to a sustainable future. We call for the election programmes to focus on four concrete recommendations towards 2050. A future with a common end goal: climate neutral, circular, safe and sustainable.



1. Make sustainability possible through the construction of infrastructure for electricity, hydrogen and transport and storage of CO₂. Implement tailor-made arrangements among companies where this can lead to acceleration and

2. Focus on alternative materials to replace fossil raw materials.



3. Promote the safe and sustainable use of chemicals without undesirable effects on humans and the environment.

ensure targeted support for the achievement of climate goals.

4. Focuses on a business environment that contributes to broad prosperity, a sustainable future, new jobs, open strategic autonomy and future earning capacity in the Netherlands.



1. Climate neutral

Make sustainability possible through the construction of infrastructure for electricity, hydrogen and transport and storage of CO₂. Implement tailor-made arrangements among companies where this can lead to acceleration and ensure targeted support for the achievement of climate goals.

Chemical processes require a lot of energy and be sustainable. This brings CO₂ emissions to zero in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement. The chemical companies do this by investing in electrification and by focusing on the use of sustainable hydrogen, green energy and CO₂ capture and capture. And of course by investing in efficiency, because energy that you do not need is the most sustainable.

**Climate
neutral**

How can the new government accelerate the energy transition?

By giving the highest priority to the construction of infrastructure such as cables, lines, rail connections and the necessary authorisations. The success of the climate transition depends on the speed with which the current energy system is transformed.

By ensuring that sufficient renewable energy is available in the Netherlands in good time.

By continuing to implement the VTH system reinforcement programme. This strengthens and accelerates the entire chain of licensing, supervision and enforcement. By continuing to make and implement tailor-made arrangements with companies. This gives the necessary acceleration to complex pathways for the sustainability and flexibility of energy-intensive industry, where the biggest reduction potential lies in CO₂. Shared responsibility and joint approaches between public authorities, industry and network companies is key to making the transition a success. The tailor-made approach to making industry more sustainable is the appropriate instrument for this.

By implementing the industrial action plan in the region (Cluster 6) with full speed and sufficient resources. The trading perspective for chemical companies outside the industrial clusters is often limited, while the challenges of saving and greening energy are similar. The Action Plan provides an opportunity for a targeted approach also for these parties.

By continuing an integrated approach, such as the National Industry Sustainability Programme (NPVI) and its Industry Sustainability Roadmap. This ensures greater control and coherence between the different initiatives. This approach gives speed and it is important to continue it in the new term of office.

Maximising the green hydrogen ambition through, inter alia, clarity on hydrogen backbone, certification for import, deployment and landing of offshore wind and developing market incentives, for example through the refinery route.

authorisation, supervision and enforcement

2. Circular

Focus on alternative materials to replace fossil raw materials.

Chemistry delivers the molecules and materials used to produce products further down the value chains

are made which we all use on a daily basis. From medicines to solar panels. We want to make these products more sustainable by using alternative carbon sources. Consider bio-raw materials, waste streams and CO₂_{reuse}. This is called the material transition, a path towards less fossil raw materials, with policies that support the growth of alternative raw materials. This is an incredibly complex puzzle that we can only put together with the government.



How can the new government accelerate the material transition?

By supporting the whole 'chain of materials': from the availability of alternative raw materials and the collection of plastics to encouraging the purchase of products that have been made sustainable.

By creating a European market for products with a share of non-fossil raw materials, these are international product chains. A concrete national example is the standardisation of a minimum share of recycling and bio-raw materials in plastics from the Spring Paper. It is important to further develop it with stakeholders from the entire plastic chain and to ensure that a national leadership is in line with European approaches and does not lead to undue carbon leakage.

By ensuring that alternatives to fossil raw materials are available: a build-up scenario of non-fossil raw materials that can be quickly applied. Standards are adapted to the availability of alternative raw materials.

By setting up a governance model for the material transition in which both public and private parties are represented to align the implementation of measures and maintain control over implementation.

By supporting the approach to the material transition through its own toolbox and funding opportunities. The cost of producing materials from alternative carbon sources is even higher than for the usual products. The transition must be affordable for businesses and consumers alike.

For the potential significant contribution of the material transition to the climate transition, the reduction of scope 3 emissions (chain emissions) should also be measurable and valued so that companies are rewarded for this contribution, as in scope 1 and 2 emission reductions.

Investment comfort is accompanied by long-term security of supply for these durable materials. It is therefore important to have a clear policy framework for raw materials, both for the fossil materials to be phased out and for the alternative raw materials that are being built.

3. Safe

Promote the safe and sustainable use of chemicals without undesirable effects on humans and the environment.

Safe and sustainable molecules and materials are essential for achieving environmental, biodiversity, climate and circularity goals. For all these goals, the EU has established a Transition Pathway for the Chemical Industry. We call for a national definition of the transition path for the chemical sector in the Netherlands.

The Safe and Sustainable by Design (SSbD) concept is being developed from the Netherlands and Europe. The aim is to ensure that substances and materials are safe and sustainable during production, processing, use and end-of-life. SSbD calls for innovation and cooperation throughout the chain. Here too, public authorities and businesses are working together in (European) policies and (local) implementation.

Safe

How can the new government promote safe and sustainable uses of substances?

By establishing a national transition path for the chemical industry, the government provides a comprehensive and coherent framework within which chemicals can drive innovation of substances, products and materials in line with the Safe and Sustainable by Design principle. This transition path also supports the transitions to climate neutral and circular.

By continuing cooperation in the PFAS National Action Programme as public authorities, knowledge institutions and industry, thus contributing to the availability of alternatives and solutions.

By supporting innovation in the development of safe and sustainable alternatives to substances of concern.

By ensuring proper enforcement of (European) laws and regulations, preventing products that are not safe and sustainable from entering the European market.

By contributing to understandable and transparent communication on the usefulness, necessity and risks of chemicals through initiatives such as What is there? This is important to address citizens' concerns about chemicals.

4. Sustainable

Focuses on a business environment that contributes to broad prosperity, a sustainable future, new jobs, open strategic autonomy and future earning capacity in the Netherlands.

A healthy sustainable industry brings prosperity and well-being in the Netherlands. We need industrial materials and products every day, but production will be very different in the future. Our own basic industry also means that we are less dependent on other countries. The chemical industry is at the heart of the energy and material transition, we have the mass, knowledge and ambition to achieve this. We are at the forefront and ensure that companies can get involved in their own sustainability.

Sustainabl

How can the new government contribute to a good business environment?

Through reliable and stable policies. Workers in the chemical industry are working on a daily basis to meet climate and circularity targets. A good establishment environment is very important for the realisation of climate and circularity investments and strategic autonomy in the Netherlands.

By ensuring that the Dutch industry also has equal financial opportunities in Europe, for example by adopting the same financial and tax measures.

By investing in innovation.

By encouraging a sufficient number of well-trained technical professionals. A job in the chemical industry offers both the current generation of workers and the younger generations a good perspective. Together with the government, we are committed to strengthening engineering education and encouraging transitions from work to work or from benefit to work.



The Royal VNCI connects, strengthens and represents the chemical industry in the Netherlands so that our members can contribute safely, efficiently and innovatively to a sustainable and prosperous society. www.vnci.nl