



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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More sustainable energy

According to figures from Statistics Netherlands and the energy and environment centre NOVEM, 1.2% of the Dutch energy supply came from sustainable energy sources in 2000. In terms of natural gas equivalents, the production of sustainable energy meant a saving of 1.2 billion m³ in 2000, up from 0.5 billion m³ in 1990. The amount of energy produced by sustainable sources is enough to provide nearly 9% of Dutch households with heat and light. However, although the total amount of sustainable energy produced in the Netherlands was 12% higher than in 1999, its share in the total energy output is still only modest.

The use of sustainable energy sources contributes to a reduction in the use of primary fuels such as natural gas and coal, and in the emission of greenhouse gases and other polluting gases. In 2000 it prevented the emission of 2.4 megatons of CO₂ in 2000.

Increase in wind and solar energy

The production of wind energy increased fifteenfold between 1990 and 2000. In 2000 more than 18% of total sustainable energy production was generated by wind turbines. With 442 megawatts, the total energy potential of Dutch wind turbines is nearly eight times that in 1990. The use of solar energy also increased. The number of solar boiler systems installed, for example, rose from just over 2,000 in 1990 to nearly 50,000 in 2000. And there were sixteen times as many solar panels which generate electricity under the influence of sunlight in 2000 as in 1990. However, the share of solar energy in the total amount of sustainable energy remains modest at 1.3%.

The amount of wind and solar energy rose substantially in 2000 compared with 1999, by 29% and 19% respectively. Most remarkable was the substantial increase in energy from hydropower, which rose by 59%, a consequence of a very wet 2000. The utilisation of heat already present by the use of heat pumps and the storage of heat and cold has increased steadily in recent years. In 2000 this was 22% up on 1999.

These growth rates are relatively high because the production of sustainable energy is a relatively new and growing phenomenon.

The share of wind and solar energy and hydropower and the use of heat already present in the total amount of sustainable energy are rising continually. In 1990 these sources accounted for only 8% of sustainable energy, while this had increased to 26% in 2000.

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Share of bioenergy still large

Bioenergy is energy generated from the combustion of organic waste or biomass and the fermentation of biomass. In 2000 the total amount of bioenergy produced in the Netherlands rose by 7% on 1999, accounting for 74% of total sustainable energy. In 1990 this was still 92%.

In recent years the production of sustainable energy by the combustion of biomass has increased sharply. One reason for this is the realisation of new projects which have expanded the capacity to combust biomass. Another cause is that more wood has been used as fuel in the manufacturing industry and more and more electricity plants are also burning biomass to generate electricity.

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