

To: ens@ens.dk and ksc@ens.dk
Danish Energy Agency
Carsten Niebuhrs Gade 43, 1577
Copenhagen V, Denmark

July 9, 2019

Subject: Comments regarding the assessment of Nord Stream 2 application

Dear Mrs. Scharmman,

With this letter we, the undersigned civil society organisations, would like to thank you for the opportunity to share our comments concerning the environmental, economical and social assessment of expected impacts caused by the Nord Stream 2 project.

Before going into our specific concerns of the pipeline, we would like to stress that studies show that Europe's existing gas system is already resilient enough to handle a wide range of demand futures and extreme supply disruption cases, including an accelerated coal phase-out, without new infrastructure investments [1] [2]. The NS2 pipeline is a clearly politically motivated project. In high level discussions, newspapers, public opinion etc, the social, environmental and climate concerns of the project are not mentioned. As these concerns are critical, we hope they are at the center of the discussion in Denmark.

Below we provide an overview of our environmental and social concerns.

Impact on ecosystems

1. The pipeline will pass through five Natura 2000 sites in the Baltic Sea as well as the Kurgalsky Nature Reserve in Russia. The construction of the pipeline in sensitive and already damaged ecosystems represents serious and irreversible threats to wildlife.
2. The EIA (Espoo Materials) is in violation of Article 4 of the Espoo Convention. Nord Stream 2 AG presents an incomplete and unreliable description of the elements of the environment that are likely to be significantly impacted by the proposed activity or its alternatives, as well as a description of the possible types of environmental impacts of the proposed activity and its alternatives, and an estimation of impact scale.[3]

Russia

3. The pipeline is affecting the Kurgalsky nature reserve and its rare species.[4] [5] Red Book species and animals like the White-tailed Eagle are impacted. Efforts of NS2 to mitigate the impacts, like transplanting plants, is contested by experts and Greenpeace Russia.[6]

4. Work without any permits was carried out in Kurgalsky reserve, as a result of which hundreds of rare plants were destroyed.[7]

5. The pipeline is powered by one of the most powerful compressor stations in the world, the Slavyanskaya Compressor Station, with 352 MW of installed capacity at the very border of the Kurgalsky Nature Reserve.[8] There are no data on the noise levels in the vicinity of working gas turbines.

6. In 2017, Nord Stream 2 AG, Gazprom and the Russian government reduced the protected area of the Kurgalsky reserve from 59,950 to 49,830 hectares, without any satisfactory explanation. Data about rare species were excluded from the new maps of the reserve. Even biologists who took part in the preparation of new documents were shocked to know that most of their findings, confirming environmental significance of the reserve, were deliberately excluded from the final version of the document. [9] [10] [11]

7. Nord Stream 2 on its own website says there is no substantial information on the behavior of Baltic Ringed Seals.[12] Only when the pipeline is built will they be able to see the impact on the already endangered animals.

8. Nord Stream 2 contradicts the obligations of Russia under two international conventions: the Espoo Convention and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Russia, as a Party to the Convention, did not inform the Bureau of the Convention on the planned ecological changes in the Kurgalsky Peninsula wetland as a result of the construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline prior to the start of the international consultation procedure.[13]

Germany

9. Germany's coastal waters and exclusive economic zone alone, more than seventy kilometres of 9. In the pipeline will intersect five sea zones that are protected under the EU's Habitats and Birds Directives. Habitats that enjoy stringent protections, such as seagrass meadows and marl reefs, will be destroyed over a broad area of up to 80 meters wide, and rare animal species such as harbour porpoises and sea ducks will be driven from important habitats. The project is thus directly opposed to a declared goal of European marine protection legislation - namely, to rehabilitate the marine environment of the Baltic Sea.[14]

10. Based on the available knowledge, it is impossible to predict that harbor porpoises will remain unaffected by Nord Stream 2 construction. As they are currently threatened with extinction,[15] driving these animals away from important habitats is directly opposed to the declared goals of German and European marine protection legislation – namely, to rehabilitate the marine environment of the Baltic Sea.[16]

11. The German environmental organisation NABU filed a complaint against the Nord Stream 2 pipeline about the environmental impacts at the High Administrative Court (OVG) and after this didn't lead to a stop of the building activities, NABU has appealed against the construction license in the economic zone.[17]

Social impacts in Russia

12. Public meetings organized by Nord Stream 2 AG took place in Kingisepp, Leningrad Oblast, Russia.[18] Contrary to what the Nord Stream 2 AG and local officials argue, residents who attended public meetings did not express support for the Nord Stream 2 project. Representatives of environmental NGOs warned about falsifications in the EIA documentation of the project - which is reflected in the minutes of the meeting.[19]

13. When asked to come to Kingisepp for the meeting, some of the locals did not know the purpose of the meeting. Many local residents were also not informed about the public meetings, so they could not join - as they pointed out in an open letter to Vladimir Putin.[20] They asked to stop Nord Stream 2 pipeline and spare Kurgalsky reserve. Therefore, the project has neglected crucial interaction with local stakeholders.

14. Some residents in the Kurgalsky region identify themselves[21] as indigenous people; Izhora, Ingermanlanders, and Vod. [22] [23] [24] According to the ILO 169 standard [25] these people fall under the protection of Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). As these people have not been properly informed or consulted, FPIC is not implemented.

15. Gas for the Nord Stream 2 project will be produced on the territory of Yamal, inhabited by indigenous peoples, leading a nomadic lifestyle. As a result of gas production, indigenous peoples lose grazing land for livestock grazing, which violates their traditional nomadic way of life. In line with the OECD guidelines and UNGP's chain responsibility, social and environmental impacts of the indigenous people in Yamal should be but are not studied in relation to NS2.

Climate impacts

16. Exploiting new fossil fuels reserves and building new fossil fuel infrastructure is impossible to reconcile with the goal of keeping global warming well below 2°C, or aiming for 1,5°C.[26] If completed, this pipeline will be the largest fossil fuel project in Europe and when in operation will be responsible for thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere.

17. Nord Stream 2 is dimensioned to be in function for at least the next 50 years. Breaking down the use of gas in each of the eight scenarios of the long-term strategic visions for reducing GHG emissions with 80-100 % in the EU before 2050 from the European Commission (COMMUNICATION COM(2018) 773) shows that the Nord Stream 2 is to close down already a few years after it has started. Nord Stream 2 will therefore be a "stranded asset" for the companies behind the investment and it will entail negative socio-economic impacts for the EU and the countries involved with the pipe. The present EU target is 80-95 % reduction of GHG emissions in 2050. These target range is not assessed specifically in the EIA. We ask for an assessment of the fate of NS2 if the official climate target is enforced in both ends of the range and we ask the EIA to elaborate a full action plan on when and how to abandon the pipeline if the targets are enforced, including a description of the indicators which will be used to take the decision of closing down the pipe.

Other relevant information

18. Client Earth has filed court cases in Finland[27] and Sweden[28] arguing that the construction documents are incomplete and inaccurate, as they fail to consider the pipeline's impact on marine wildlife in the Baltic Sea. They also argue that the project may have a significant adverse impact on the Polish environment.

19. Non-governmental organisations as well as internationally known activists and experts from Armenia, Austria have therefore expressed their concerns regarding the pipeline to potentially involved export credit agencies.

We hope our letter is of help in your assessment.

Kind regards,

Both ENDS, The Netherlands

Evgeniya Chirikova, Russian environmental activist (currently based in Estonia)

Thomas Wenidoppler, Finance & Trade Watch, Austria

Urgewald, Germany

Milieudefensie, Netherlands

Det Fælles Bedste - netværk af grønne foreninger, Denmark

Velkommen til Vendsyssel Energi – og Miljøforening, Denmark

NOAH - Friends of the Earth Denmark, Denmark

[1] Energy Union Choices. 2016. [www.agora-energiewende.de/fileadmin/Projekte/2016/Energy Union Choices Gas/EUC Full Technical Report E mbargoed 10.00 CET 3 March 1 2 .pdf](http://www.agora-energiewende.de/fileadmin/Projekte/2016/Energy_Union_Choices_Gas/EUC_Full_Technical_Report_Embargoed_10.00_CET_3_March_1_2_.pdf)

[2] Study by NABU, Germany:

https://www.nabu.de/imperia/md/content/nabude/meeresschutz/180703_gutachten_nordstream2_neumann.pdf

[3] See the analysis of Greenpeace Russia attached as Annex 1.

[4] <http://activatica.org/blogs/view/id/5494/title/v-kurgalskiy-zakaznik-vyshli-buldozery>

[5] <https://bit.ly/2VEboXg>

[6] <http://activatica.org/blogs/view/id/5494/title/v-kurgalskiy-zakaznik-vyshli-buldozery>

[7] <http://activatica.org/blogs/view/id/2580/title/v-kurgalskom-zakaznike-nachalis-nezakonnye-raboty-po-proektu-nord-stream-2>

[8] <http://www.ooosgm.com/press/news/installation-of-gas-pumping-units-began-at-slavyanskaya-cs/>

[9] <http://www.greenpeace.org/austria/de/News/Aktuelle-Meldungen/Greenpeace-News/2017/Geheimakte-Nord-Stream-2/>

[10] <https://frontnews.eu/news/en/2638>

- [11] <http://activatica.org/blogs/view/id/3266/title/kurgalskiy-zakaznik-v-krivom-zerkale-administracii-ili-pochemu-nado-hodit-na-obshchestvennye-slushaniya>
- [12] <https://kurgalsky.nord-stream2.com/telemetry-studies-of-the-ringed-seals>
- [13] See the analysis of Greenpeace Russia attached as Annex 1.
- [14] <https://www.nabu.de/natur-und-landschaft/meere/lebensraum-meer/gefahren/23740.html>
- [15] <https://en.nabu.de/issues/habitats/nordstream2.html>
- [16] https://en.nabu.de/imperia/md/content/nabude/naturschutz/meeresschutz/180118-nabu-protest_mail_nordstream.pdf
- [17] <https://www.nabu.de/natur-und-landschaft/meere/lebensraum-meer/gefahren/23740.html>
- [18] <http://activatica.org/blogs/view/id/3653/title/pryamaya-translyaciya-v-lenoblasti-nachalis-slushaniya-po-megaproektu-gazproma>
- [19] http://www.ccb.se/Evidence2017/NS2/Protokol_Espoo_public_Kingisepp.pdf
- [20] <http://www.greenpeace.org/russia/ru/news/2017/12-09-2017-KorennieZhitelyProtivNordStream2/>
- [21] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf
- [22] <http://www.greenpeace.org/russia/ru/news/2017/12-09-2017-KorennieZhitelyProtivNordStream2/>
- [23] <http://activatica.org/blogs/view/id/3799/title/biznes-vlast-i-korennye-narody-vozmozhen-li-mir-na-beregu-finskogo-zaliva>
- [24] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf
- [25] http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169
- [26] Oil Change International. 2016.
www.priceofoil.org/content/uploads/2016/09/OCI_the_skys_limit_2016_FINAL_2.pdf
- [27] <https://www.clientearth.org/clientearth-takes-legal-action-against-construction-of-gas-pipeline-nord-stream-2-in-finland/>
- [28] <https://www.clientearth.org/clientearth-moves-to-block-construction-of-nord-stream-2-pipeline-in-sweden/>