

## Holland ordered to cut greenhouse gases

27<sup>th</sup> June, 2015



A court in Holland has ordered the Dutch government to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least a quarter by 2020. Three judges said the decision was, "to ensure that the

Dutch emissions in the year 2020 will be at least 25 per cent lower than those in 1990." Environmentalists hope others around the world will follow Holland's lead in a global drive to reduce emissions. Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, a Dutch member of the European Parliament, echoed this sentiment, saying: "This historic ruling will have far reaching consequences in the Netherlands, Europe and the rest of the world." Bill Hare of Climate Analytics agreed. He said: "This could be the first judicial warning shot to governments around the world."

The judges' ruling came after 900 Dutch citizens took legal action against the Dutch government to get it to comply with international regulations. Holland was far behind many other countries in reducing carbon emissions. It was on target for a 14 to 17 per cent reduction by 2020. The Dutch court decided this was unacceptable for a country as developed and progressive as Holland. It also said that hitting a target of just 17 per cent would cause huge embarrassment for the Dutch. The Dutch government must now accelerate existing plans to close coal plants, increase the use of windmills, solar energy and other renewables, and drastically cut the amount of gas it takes out of the ground.

Sources: *BBC / CleanTechnica / UPI*

## Writing

All fossil fuels should be phased out within a decade. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*court / greenhouse / decision / environmentalists / global / drive / member / sentiment / legal action / regulations / target / unacceptable / progressive / accelerate / ground*

## True / False

- A Dutch court ordered the Dutch government to cut emissions. T / F
- Dutch emissions must be 25% lower than they were in 1990. T / F
- A member of the European Parliament said the ruling was not historic. T / F
- A man said the ruling would lead to shootings around the world. T / F
- The ruling was because 900 citizens took the government to court. T / F
- Holland was well ahead of other countries in meeting targets. T / F
- The Dutch court said Holland's targets would have been embarrassing. T / F
- Holland will now work more slowly in closing coal plants. T / F

## Synonym Match

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. ordered     | a. obey           |
| 2. at least    | b. significant    |
| 3. sentiment   | c. very big       |
| 4. historic    | d. instructed     |
| 5. agreed      | e. decision       |
| 6. ruling      | f. point of view  |
| 7. comply      | g. concurred      |
| 8. progressive | h. volume         |
| 9. huge        | i. at the minimum |
| 10. amount     | j. modern         |

## Discussion – Student A

- How are greenhouse gases in your country?
- What do you do to help the environment?
- What do you think of the decision of the Dutch court?
- Why are countries so slow to act to reduce emissions?
- How likely do you think it is that other countries will follow Holland's example?
- What is the most important job of an environmentalist?
- What 'far-reaching consequences' might the ruling have?
- Why have people kind of forgotten to act on climate change?

## Phrase Match

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. by at least                 | a. to reduce emissions |
| 2. the world will follow       | b. other countries     |
| 3. a global drive              | c. other renewables    |
| 4. have far reaching           | d. shot to governments |
| 5. the first judicial warning  | e. amount of gas       |
| 6. citizens took               | f. a quarter           |
| 7. Holland was far behind many | g. of just 17%         |
| 8. hitting a target            | h. consequences        |
| 9. solar energy and            | i. legal action        |
| 10. drastically cut the        | j. Holland's lead      |

## Discussion – Student B

- Why do you think Holland had fallen behind?
- What signs of climate change can you see in your country?
- What is the biggest problem posed by climate change?
- How embarrassing would the old targets have been for Holland?
- What renewables are there in your country?
- What do you know about climate change?
- What will the climate be like in one hundred years from now?
- What questions would you like to ask Holland's leader?

## Spelling

- by at least a rerutag
- Three dgesju
- a global drive to reduce smiiesons
- eedohc this sentiment
- have far reaching nesecncsqueo
- the first iuadcjli warning shot to governments
- 900 Dutch iestcizn
- international reilusgonat
- as developed and rveoispsgre as Holland
- lcraceeaet existing plans
- solar energy and other rnslwaeebe
- atalsrdilyc cut the amount of gas

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. i	3. f	4. b	5. g
6. e	7. a	8. j	9. c	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Carpooling

You think carpooling is the best way to reduce carbon emissions. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their ways aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): using the stairs, buying local produce or walking everywhere.

### Role B – Using the stairs

You think using the stairs is the best way to reduce carbon emissions. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their ways aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): carpooling, buying local produce or walking everywhere.

### Role C – Buying local produce

You think buying local produce is the best way to reduce carbon emissions. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their ways aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): using the stairs, carpooling or walking everywhere.

### Role D – Walking everywhere

You think walking everywhere is the best way to reduce carbon emissions. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their ways aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the least effective of these (and why): using the stairs, buying local produce or carpooling.

## Speaking – Emissions

Rank these with your partner. Put the best ways of cutting emissions at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| • save water        | • hydrogen fuel cars |
| • buy local produce | • carpool            |
| • walk              | • turn off lights    |
| • recycle           | • use the stairs     |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.