



10 January 2018

Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany
and Chairwoman of the Christian Democratic Union
Dr. Angela Merkel
Klingelhöferstraße 8
10785 Berlin

Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Germany
Martin Schulz
Willy-Brandt-Haus
Wilhelmstr. 141
10963 Berlin

Bavarian Minister President and
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Horst Seehofer
Franz Josef Strauß-Haus
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An Open Letter: Stop the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline

Dear Chancellor Merkel, Chairman Seehofer, and Chairman Schulz,

Against the backdrop of the coalition talks underway for the formation of Germany's next government, we would like to appeal to you directly in order to express our concerns about the credibility of German climate policy, specifically with regard to the impending approval and realization of the Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline project. This project will expand the Nord Stream 1 pipeline that was completed in 2011 by laying two additional lines for transporting natural gas from Russia.

Dear Chancellor Merkel, Chairman Seehofer, and Chairman Schulz: Please put a stop to the Nord Stream 2 project. In the opinion of NABU and WWF, the Nord Stream 2 project is a bad deal for climate policy, will threaten the fragile ecosystem of the Baltic Sea, and undermine solidarity and trust in the European Union. Beyond this, there are other serious problems with the project: procedural errors appear to have been made in the planning process, the public was not adequately involved, and the cosy relations between involved business and government actors give serious cause for concern. All of these factors threaten the credibility of the German government by promoting the sense among the public that the government is not responsive to its concerns.

By supporting the Nord Stream 2 project, Germany is heading down a path that will jeopardize its role as a vanguard in climate and marine protection. The Nord Stream 2 project also risks Germany's reputation as a champion of Europe's democratic development. The announced US withdrawal from the Paris agreement has placed additional responsibilities on Germany to advance the cause of climate protection. Against this backdrop, a devastating signal has been sent by the announcement that the coalition partners are considering abandoning Germany's climate targets for 2020. Rather than abandon the targets, Germany's new government should adopt an immediate action plan to ensure the carbon reduction goals for 2020 are met. The failure of a robust effort to phase out coal and other fossil fuels stands in direct contradiction to the adopted goals for 2020 - much like the Nord Stream 2 project.

Nord Stream 2 endangers the goals of the Paris agreement

Nord Stream 2 has a planned operational lifespan of 50 years, which directly opposes the goal of the Paris agreement to completely phase out fossil fuels by 2050. Nord Stream 2 will not diversify transport routes, suppliers, or sources of energy. Rather, it will cement long-term dependency on Russian natural gas, and thus undermine the effort to transition to renewables. Germany's natural-gas transport and storage capacities already exceed demand by a factor of three. Furthermore, only 80% of the capacity of Nord Stream 1 is being used, as experts have systematically overestimated future natural gas consumption in Europe.

Nord Stream 2 endangers the goals of Natura 2000

More than seventy kilometers of the pipeline will intersect five sea zones that are protected under the EU's Habitats and Birds Directives in German coastal waters and the exclusive economic zone of the Baltic Sea. 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 the declared goals of German and European marine protection legislation - namely, to rehabilitate the marine environment of the Baltic Sea.

Nord Stream 2 endangers European principles

The project will divide Europe and isolate Germany from its direct neighbors. Indeed, resistance to the project has been voiced by Poland, the Baltic states, Scandinavian countries, and the European Commission. Denmark recently reformed its environmental laws in order to prevent the pipeline from entering its coastal waters. Nord Stream 2 thus stands in contradiction to the EU's Ten-Year Network Development Plan, which does not list Nord Stream 2 as a priority project (as of November 2017).

Dear Chancellor Merkel, Chairman Seehofer, and Chairman Schulz: The roles played by former and current German policymakers in the development of the Nord Stream 2 project were unfortunately not particularly impartial or transparent. NABU and WWF see the coalition talks as an excellent opportunity to start fresh and change course with regard to the Nord Stream 2 project. We ask you to distance yourself from the project and collectively call for an independent, critical review of the approval process.

We also ask you to empower the European Commission to enter into negotiations regarding the project so that the consistency of Europe's energy policy can be assured. Ultimately, we appeal to you to make a credible decision regarding the project, one that is in alignment with European principles and Germany's environmental and climate protection goals.

Best regards,



Olaf Tschimpke
President
NABU



Eberhard Brandes
Managing Director
WWF Deutschland