



PICS: Farmers Defy Tractor Ban, Descend on Dutch Capitol to Protest Green Agenda Cull

Description

NETHERLANDS: Farmers drove tractors toward The Hague early Saturday in defiance of a ban on the heavy vehicles imposed ahead of a protest against the government's plan to reduce nitrate emissions, with some calling for a Nexit (Dutch exit from the European Union).

While Amsterdam is the official capital of the Netherlands, The Hague is its administrative *capitol*, hosting its executive, legislature, and highest court, as well as the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

The municipal government imposed an emergency order in the city on a day when thousands of farmers were set to gather in a park and climate activists from the Extinction Rebellion group were also planning a protest action on a major road. Authorities placed army trucks near some crossroads ready to block the streets if tractors tried to drive into the city centre.

The demonstrations come days before Dutch voters go to the polls in provincial elections Wednesday that indirectly also elect the national parliament's upper house and could have an effect on proposals for reducing nitrate use, driven by European Union diktats and likely to inflict a heavy blow on farmers or force them out of business altogether.

The farmers also are protesting government policies on child welfare benefits and the treatment of residents in the northern province of Groningen whose homes have been damaged by earthquakes caused by decades of natural gas extraction.

Rotterdam broadcaster Rijnmond showed video of a convoy of tractors crossing the city's Erasmus Bridge early Saturday, apparently on their way to The Hague. One of the tractors was emblazoned with a banner saying in Dutch "#proudothefarmer."

Police in The Hague said they stopped a group of tractors near the city and told their drivers to park in a nearby village and take the bus to the protest. The city's mayor said this week he would allow just two tractors to park at the event.



Netherlands flags fly upside-down in protest with one reading NEXIT, referring to a Netherlands Exit of the EU, as thousands of demonstrators joined an anti-government protest by farmers' organizations in The Hague, Netherlands, Saturday, March 11th, 2023. The protest comes days before Dutch provincial elections on March 15th, in which a party representing farmers' interests is expected to perform well. (AP Photo/Peter Dejong)

Anger at moves to cut nitrate use has spread from the Netherlands to other European nations, with

there being a widespread perception that the policies are being driven by the European Union.

Just over a week ago, farmers drove hundreds of tractors into the heart of the Belgian capital of Brussels, which also serves as the EU's main seat of power, snarling traffic.

"We see tractors on their way to The Hague from various locations," police in the city tweeted. "We are monitoring the roads and telling drivers of these vehicles not to enter The Hague."

The city banned tractors, citing safety concerns. At protests in recent years, farmers have driven hundreds of tractors into the centre of The Hague.

The government has said that nitrate emissions, which are produced by livestock, transport, and industry, must be drastically reduced close to nature areas that are part of a network of protected habitats for endangered plants and wildlife stretching across the 27-member European Union.



Members and supporters of the Farmers Defence Force (FDF) demonstrate against the government's nitrogen policy in the Zuiderpark in The Hague, the Netherlands, on March 11th, 2023. (Photo by ROBIN UTRECHT/ANP/AFP/Netherlands OUT via Getty Images)

The governing coalition wants to cut emissions of pollutants, predominantly nitrates, by 50 per cent nationwide by 2030. Ministers call the proposal an “unavoidable transition” that aims to improve air, land, and water quality, and have warned that it will mean “that not all farmers can continue their business.”

“Farms that have existed for generations now have to close down,” said Tom Vandendriessche, a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) from the Vlaams Belang party in Belgium, in [recent comments](#) to Breitbart Europe.

“Not coincidentally, Stalin, Mao, and Pol Pot all waged war against farmers, their independence and self-determination,” he added, accusing the EU of “pursue[ing] extremist climate policies that are bad for ordinary people.”

“Meat they want to replace with insects. Cars they want to ban. Freedom surveilled by QR codes. This EU is increasingly becoming an EUSSR,” he said, alluding to the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).



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As the Dutch farmers carry out their protest, Extinction Rebellion activists are demanding an end to what they call government support for fossil fuel companies.

Authorities erected black barriers along a road into The Hague that the group said it was planning to block later Saturday.

Hundreds of demonstrators from the radical environmental group were detained at a similar protest in late January.



Police stop climate activists from Extinction Rebellion (XR) who try to block the A12 between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate and the temporary House of Representatives in The Hague, the Netherlands, on March 11th, 2023. (Photo by PHIL NIJHUIS/ANP/AFP/Netherlands OUT via Getty Images)

by JACK MONTGOMERY

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