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Contents

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Groningen's decline: The risks and the alternatives

The crown jewel of the Dutch gas industry and for years Europe's lifeline during peak demand periods, the Groningen field is entering its autumn years. In an effort to seek a balance between public appeasement over earthquakes (related to gas extraction and the exacerbation of subsurface stress) and security of supply, the Dutch government in September announced the latest in a series of production cutbacks. This time, output was slashed to 24 Bcm/year – less than half of that produced in 2013. But public discontent endures, which begs the question of what impact further cutbacks might have on local markets. The ongoing battle has also raised concerns over the field's role as a sound financial asset for operator NAM, and a reliable enough source for offtaker GasTerra to honour its existing customers. Gas Matters examines what risks and alternatives lie ahead for all parties concerned.



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