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**mouvement  
écologique**

## **Google data centre in Bissen: Mouvement Ecologique calls for full transparency and stricter environmental regulations from the Ministry of the Environment**

Already during the public consultation on the data centre in Bissen, Mouvement Ecologique highlighted fundamental problems associated with the Google facility in a 31-page letter. One key point was that Google plans to build a centre in Luxembourg that is far less efficient than its own standards (!) and what is technically feasible. The energy consumption of the data centre in Bissen would ultimately be equivalent to that of all private households in Luxembourg combined... Yet the list of shortcomings is far longer: the use of environmentally harmful and extremely noisy diesel engines instead of batteries; no utilisation of waste heat; only very marginal production of solar energy, and so on.

It is currently unclear how the matter will proceed. To demand greater transparency, the lawyer for Mouvement Ecologique has now sent a comprehensive letter to the Minister for the Environment.

### **Google's confidentiality clause is not legally permissible**

The 'confidentiality' of certain data – particularly regarding the energy and carbon footprint – which the company is claiming as part of the public consultation process, contravenes applicable law according to the expert analysis. This is because the confidentiality clause demanded by Google covers precisely the information that is crucial for the public assessment of the project: energy requirements, emissions, and calculations regarding the carbon footprint. Such data must not be classified as trade secrets, but are of significant public interest.

Under Luxembourg law, including that governing access to environmental information, a confidentiality clause must not, in fact, be used to withhold significant environmental impacts of a project from the public. Yet this has been the case to date, as it was precisely these documents that were not made available during the public consultation! This shortcoming must be rectified by the Ministry. For this reason, the Mouvement Ecologique has called for the public consultation procedure to be annulled.

### **Disclosure of all comments from authorities**

Furthermore, the Mouvement Ecologique is calling for the disclosure of all statements from ministries and administrative bodies submitted as part of the environmental assessment procedure. Only in this way can it be understood which risks have been identified by the state, what concerns

exist and what conditions are being discussed. These documents are also subject to the publication requirement enshrined in various laws.

## **Utilising heat rather than harming the climate**

Under current plans, Google would release significant amounts of waste heat into the air instead of putting it to good use. Modern data centres, however, already feed their waste heat into district heating networks, thereby supplying residential areas, public buildings or industrial facilities.

The waste heat generated by Google in Bissen could be used to supply Ettelbrück, Diekirch and neighbouring businesses. Simply releasing this valuable energy into the environment – and thereby contributing to climate catastrophe – instead of putting it to good use is utterly absurd.

Officials do not dispute that the use of waste heat would be important and sensible. However, it is argued that Google cannot be required to use it, as Luxembourg does not yet have a heating law that would explicitly regulate this. The lawyer for the Mouvement Ecologique now contradicts this in a letter to the minister. Existing legislation currently even stipulates that such requirements must be imposed within the framework of the ‘best available technology’ standard. According to Mouvement Ecologique, the obligation to recover waste heat and use it efficiently therefore exists, in line with a modern and responsible energy policy.

In view of rising energy prices and a worsening climate crisis, as well as Luxembourg’s international commitments, it would no longer be justifiable to release large quantities of heat into the environment without utilising it. A corporation such as Google, in particular, must meet the highest standards in the areas of energy efficiency and sustainability.

## **Make the Ministry of the Environment’s handling of objections public**

The Ministry of the Environment is currently analysing the objections submitted as part of the public consultation on the strategic environmental assessment. Google will then be informed whether or not they need to make improvements to the facility or the application, and if so, what these are. This analysis by the Ministry of the Environment is, of course, central to the further development of the application. It must be sent to Google no later than 80 days after the end of the public consultation (which was on 27 March). As this is a public document, its disclosure was also requested in the letter from the Mouvement Ecologique’s lawyer.

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**From the perspective of Mouvement Ecologique, the project in Bissen therefore represents a fundamental turning point for Luxembourg. The decision will show whether the country is prepared to consistently prioritise transparency, energy efficiency and climate protection when attracting large technology companies. Mouvement Écologique is therefore calling for a comprehensive public debate and a transparent, scientifically sound assessment of all climate and environmental impacts before final approval is granted. We look forward to the Environment Minister’s response.**