INTEGRAL LANDSCAPE PLANNING IN THE NETHERLANDS: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE INTENTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

ALEXANDRA TISMA & JOHAN MEIJER
Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency PBL, The Netherlands

ABSTRACT

Landscape is considered an important element in the long history of spatial planning in The Netherlands. It has been seen as a common good, a living, dynamic heritage that needs to be taken into account when the scarce amount of space in this small country comes under pressure of multiple spatial claims. Therefore, a holistic approach is suggested, where landscape is considered as a setting in which the various "sectoral" actors should become aware of and respect other sectors to jointly improve the quality and sustainability of the areas in which they are located. Over the course of time, approaches to landscape planning in The Netherlands have changed from protection and conservation, through government-led development approach, to new forms of participative initiatives. Each of the policy styles has left remarkable traces on the landscape, with the National Ecological Network (EHS), State buffer zones and the Green Heart of the Randstad as the largest and best-known examples. This paper discusses various Dutch planning concepts and the lessons that can be learned from the past which could be useful for the future. The paper also connects these lessons to the latest ideas about integrated landscape planning as the most promising for future landscape development – not only in The Netherlands but also globally.

Keywords: integrated landscape management, landscape planning, spatial policy, Green Heart, sustainability.

1 INTRODUCTION

During a more than hundred-year-long tradition, spatial planning in The Netherlands has undergone various stages and planning styles. The Netherlands became known for its knowledge and technical skills in coping with complex spatial problems, and planning has always been seen as a convenient instrument to deal with this complexity.

In the years after the Second World War, planning involved a top-down perspective with a focus on government-led land-use planning. The Netherlands, both currently and at the time, had three levels of government: national government, provinces and municipalities. In the area of spatial planning, each of these levels involved specific tasks. One of the most important planning instruments was land-use planning. It made use of the zoning maps and land-use regulations that offered the government the possibility of prohibiting undesired forms of land use. This form of planning, which uses prohibitions, is called development control planning, with an emphasis on control [1]. Most government administrations in The Netherlands, at that time, were organised according to individual sectors (e.g., agriculture, environment, rural development, water, etc.) and jurisdictions. Multifunctional land-use planning could not start until after 1985, and had to do with the power relationship between the ministries [2]. In 1985, for instance, landscape planning referred to the rural area and was under the jurisdiction of the former Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery; nature and recreation were under the former Ministry of Culture, Recreation and Social affairs, while spatial planning was under the former Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment (VROM). This led to many problems, and spatial planning as an interdisciplinary science has been trying to overcome this situation by working cross-sectoral. In the ensuing years, it became clear that cooperation between the ministries was necessary. This finally led to the,

WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment, Vol 217, © 2019 WIT Press
www.witpress.com, ISSN 1743-3541 (on-line)
doi:10.2495/SDP180251

at that time, new National Spatial Planning Document (*Nota Ruimte,* published in 2006) which was brought out by four ministries. The most important large-scale achievements of landscape planning and nature conservation (most of them still in place) – National Ecological Network (*Ecologische Hoofdstructuur, EHS*), State Buffer Zones, and National Landscapes – were established in that period. At the time, it seemed that landscape planning had been formally and firmly integrated in spatial planning policy, but this did not last for long. Already the end of the 1980s it was clear that traditional practices of government-led land-use planning no longer provided a remedy against the potentially destructive forces of the contemporary fluid and extreme mobile network society. But by the end of 1990s, development control planning encountered growing resistance from the civil society, which led to some of the prohibitions being accompanied by financial compensation. The more recent counterpart of development control planning is development planning, meaning taking into account the dynamics within society, decentralised implementation, attention for economics, citizen participation, more attention for concrete projects than for abstract plans, and the cooperation between public and private actors [1]. Simultaneously, policy also evolved towards more integral approach.

Currently, The Netherlands is in a period of decentralisation of most of its national spatial planning policies. Landscape planning, with the exception of cultural heritage, is deregulated and let to provincial and municipal authorities to decide about the way they will handle it. At the same time, large spatial transformations are expected due to spatial claims arising, for example, from energy transition, climate change adaptation, urbanisation, and growing mobility. Lack of national involvement in the spatial claims that exceeds regional levels leads to uncertainties and worries about the future of the landscape in The Netherlands.

This paper discusses the landscape planning policy and practice of the last three decades, since its approach shifted from sectoral to more integral. It zooms in on the Green Heart region to see how these changes have influenced this region. By underlying the successes as well as failures in the Dutch spatial planning practice, the paper shares a number of lessons that could support integral landscape planning initiatives, globally. It is not the goal of this paper to provide a blue print for spatial planning across the world, but rather to present some insights into key moments and policy changes over the past decades, and to reflect on the challenges ahead.

2 LANDSCAPES ARE SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS

Since the end of 1980s, when the landscape planning policy became more integral, formerly strongly protected nature areas very gradually opening to recreational needs of the citizens, and the nature protection broadened to cultural landscape development. In the years to come the tension between preserving and developing landscapes is being acknowledged as a social and physical problem which requires policy and practice to work together.

The term landscape can have many different meanings (as it will be presented in the next two sections) here to summarise two extremes: (1) spatial–perceptual meaning used by landscape planners and (2) landscape as multi-stakeholder driven approach to territorial organisation, used by nature protection organisations. The way that landscape is treated in spatial planning policy and in practice, therefore, is twofold: it is an object and it is an approach, but however it is confusing those two concepts form an inseparable unity.

2.1 Man-made landscape

There are two words originating from the Dutch language adopted internationally: polder and landscape. Both words actually reflect Dutch approach to the physical and social aspects of planning and management of the land.

The word “polder” is a Dutch contribution to many languages of the world. Literally, the word polder means land reclaimed from water but in the common policy practice in The Netherlands it also has got a metaphoric meaning. The abundance of land units for agriculture forced people in the low parts of The Netherlands to create new polders. To build a polder is a complex task which requires cooperation, negotiation, tolerance and constant maintenance which is only possible if all the parties living in the polder agree to do it together. That is why so-called “polder model” became a symbol of the negotiation culture present in this country.

Curiously enough the word “landscape” also originates from the Dutch language. It entered the English language in the late 16th century, derived from the Middle Dutch word “landschap” denoting a picture of natural scenery [3]. In the five centuries that followed the paradigm landscape got many meanings: physical, spatial, social, cultural, historical, aesthetic and/or perceptual. In many languages landscape has dual interpretation, meaning “land, area or region” as well as the “visual picture of view” [4]. From an ecological network perspective, landscape is regarded as a coherent system of natural and/or semi-natural elements, that is configured and managed with the objective of maintaining or restoring ecological functions as a means to conserve biodiversity while also providing appropriate opportunities for the sustainable use of natural resources [5].

In the recent years though the word landscape is getting yet another meaning: it is a term often used by the nature protection organisations to name their integral and multi-actor approach to development and management of an area. The word landscape is in that case used as a metaphor to describe “a socio-ecological system that consists of natural and/or human-modified ecosystems, and which is influenced by distinct ecological, historical, economic and socio-cultural processes and activities” [6]. In The Netherlands current discussions about landscape planning policy are underlying the dilemma of landscape as a consequence or as a guiding principle for the spatial developments.

In the European Landscape Convention (ELC) landscape is defined as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”. One can argue that in the ELC “landscape” is almost the same as “space” in spatial planning [7]. Landscape “planning” in the ELC “means a strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes“ (Article 1f). “Planning” is seen as one of the three governmental measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes. As such, it applies to larger scale interventions in space, such as land allocation or land consolidation, intensive agriculture or nature development or reconstruction. No surprise that landscape planning is often considered to be at the crossroads of spatial and land use planning. Some would argue that a landscape approach provides spatial planning with the human dimension [4]. Similar to spatial planning, from which it derives a part of theoretical background, landscape planning involves integral and long term thinking and acting in favour of the public domain [8].

Landscape is also considered as “the field where humans and nature joust for a time” [9] and “where we speed up or retard, divert the cosmic program and impose our own” [10]. The consequences of human actions are visible all around and can have impact from local to global scale as the idea of landscape protection has been cherished for a long time. Nevertheless, the paradigm of protection is nowadays shifting towards the management of future change, rather than simply the protection of the fabric of the past [11]. For many people, the smells and colours of a landscape are an important part of their most cherished childhood memories. These days, the landscape is an important selling point in the economic sectors of recreation, tourism and the housing market.

All these definitions show different meanings that word landscape can have. To summarise: landscape is the interface between nature and culture and can be seen as physical object, as a perceived image, an approach, or a principle. As we will see in the text to follow, all these meanings were related to the period in the history of landscape planning development, planning styles as well as political and social trends and sometimes even a fashion.

2.2 Landscapes of The Netherlands

The Netherlands is mainly flat land. Apart from regions in the eastern and southern extremities which are a bit higher the majority of the territory is lying between –6 and 20 meters above the sea level. Since the beginning of the last millennium, settlers, farmers, city dwellers and engineers have created a system of dykes, barriers and locks defending the low parts of the land from the water. As Voltaire (1694–1778) said: "God shaped the world, except The Netherlands. That he left to the Dutch themselves."

Landscapes in The Netherlands are all man-made, cultural landscapes and are often considered to represent important public goods and are seen as a living, dynamic heritage [3], [12], [13].

There are many features of the Dutch landscape illustrated by the picture on the Fig. 1: a typical lowlands landscape, with the prevalence of agricultural land, the village of Kleine Sluis somewhere in the distance, a canal in the middle, as well as a mixture of crop fields, pastures and colourful flower production fields for which this country is renown worldwide. This image perfectly illustrates the four rules of Dutch spatial planning school [14]: purpose of usefulness, economy of resources, meaning of the place and clarity of form. Everything is obviously in perfect order with clear boundaries between urban and rural, neat and beautiful. But behind this achievement there is a labyrinth of rules and regulations, policy instruments and subsidies. To create this perfection is not simple and there have been made many successes and failures. We will illustrate these by showing the case of the Green Heart, a predominantly rural landscape between the four largest cities (Amsterdam, The Hague,

Figure 1: Anna Paulownapolder in the province of North Holland dating from 1846. *(Source: Paul Paris.)*

Rotterdam and Utrecht) in the western part of The Netherlands. We will underline the differences in landscape approach affecting the Green Heart during the two planning styles: development control planning and development planning.

3 THE GREEN HEART OF THE RANDSTAD

The term "Randstad" was probably used for the first time around 1930 by aviation pioneer and first director of KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Albert Plesman. From the air he noticed a semicircle of towns in green surroundings. This green and open space within the city ring got the name "Green Heart" and was officialised in 1958 in a number of reports, starting with "*Ontwikkeling in het westen des lands"* (development in the west of the country).

The Green Heart, therefore, is seen as an important contribution to the quality of living in the densely populated urban fringe. Today the agricultural sector uses around 67 percent of the land surface of the Green Heart and earns its money mainly from the production of dairy, tree and horticultural products, the latter mainly concentrated in and around Boskoop. Next to its agricultural use, the Green Heart is a place for recreation of the citizens in the Randstad and it helps preserving image of green open space so characteristic for the Dutch polder landscape.

The Green Heart, like the rest of The Netherlands, is a man-made cultural landscape, mostly consisting of polders, below sea level. Seen from the sky, and if we exclude cities and urban fringes, it looks like a large pasture, interwoven with larger or smaller waterways and scattered small cities and villages. Looking closer it shows heterogeneity, made up of very different relatively old landscape types, the oldest of which date back to the medieval times (around 1100 AD). The Green Heart is still rich in monuments of cultural heritage. Especially in the peat cultivation areas and along the river dikes, where historical strip settlements (road or dike based) are abundant, we can still find hundreds of well-preserved historic farmhouses. Windmills, sometimes grouped in clusters of three or more, arguably make up the most striking landmarks in the Green Heart, in spite of the fact that, by now, all of them have lost their original function as pumping engines (Fig. 2).

Figure 2: Landscapes of the Green Heart.

3.1 Green Heart during the development control planning period

The reasons why the Green Heart was pronounced an iconic Dutch landscape are only partly historical. Since the concept appeared, policymakers were eager to protect the region as a green open space for agriculture and recreation and to prevent its further urbanisation. The report *Ontwikkelingsprogramma nationaal landschap Groene Hart*, published in 1999, reveals an idyllic future of the Green Heart in which agriculture, nature, recreation and culture are in harmony and reinforce each other. The National Ecological Network (EHS/NNN) is also incorporated in it and construction in the fringe areas would be halted completely. Although the research about the citizens landscape appreciation and number of recreation activities in the open landscape of the Green Heart has shown to be the lowest compared to other areas in the country [15], protection of landscape openness in the Green Heart received a prominent place in the spatial planning strategies. In 2005 The Council for the Rural Area (*De Raad voor het Landelijk Gebied*) which advised the government, placed the Green Heart along with eight other areas in the premier league of national landscapes because of its unique character and importance for the national identity. As we will see in the following section, this persistent national policy had positive effects on the appreciation of the Green Heart in public opinion and by the organisations involved.

Over the course of time, economic development inevitably led to the expansion of urbanisation, and threatened to fragment the landscape of the Green Heart. To prevent that, a series of national policies would lead to a seemingly vague delimitation of the area allocated for urbanisation. In this period, in order to keep the Green Heart open, the official Dutch policy was threefold: impose restrictions on residential and industrial developments within the area; provide alternative space for development in new towns and urban expansion outside the region; improve the quality of landscape and nature within the area itself. The boundaries of the Green Heart (Fig. 3) were defined for the first time in 1990, in the *Vierde Nota over de Ruimtelijke Ordening Extra,Vinex)* – the Supplement to the Fourth National Policy Document on Spatial Planning) – and elaborated in the *Structuurschema Groene Ruimte* from 1992 [16].

Nevertheless, the policy to protect the Green Heart as the ultimate symbol of the beauty of the Dutch polder landscape only existed for 10 years. The combined policy, in which restrictions go together with development measures, has for many decades been a successful approach for this vulnerable area. However, over the course of time, the general tendency changed towards deregulation, decentralisation and privatisation. As a consequence, in 2012,

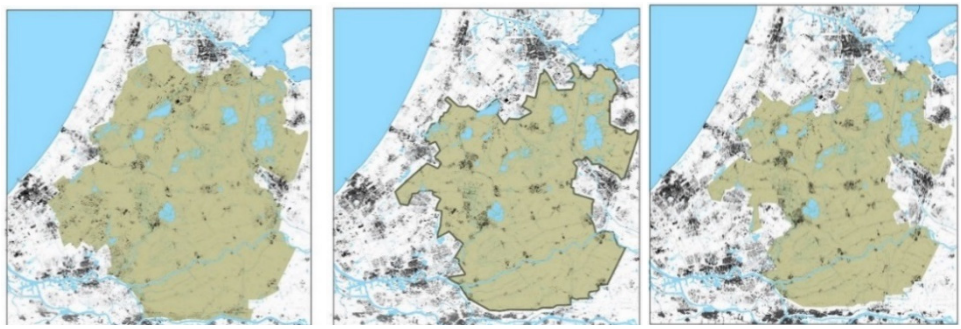

Figure 3: Changing the boundaries of the Green Heart. (a) Indicative boundary; (b) Delineated boundary in 1990; (c) Indicative boundary in 2017.

with the National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning (*Structuurvisie infrastructuur en ruimte, SVIR),* national government dismissed the landscape protection policy and delegated those tasks to the provinces. The provinces became responsible for the future development of their territories and, with the exception of the EHS, were not obliged to follow former rules and regulations. This change threatened to reduce the Green Heart to what it had been before 1960 – the hinterland of a number of individual cities and towns, each of which with its own development plans.

Nowadays, about 730,000 residents live in the 40 Green Heart municipalities, which is a tenth of the number of inhabitants of the metropolitan part of the Randstad area. The average population density of the Green Heart is 475 inhabitants/km^2, certainly not a figure that seems in line with the area's image of a non-urban, open landscape. The rapid growth of the surrounding new towns, however, suggests that the outcome could have been a lot worse if there was no policy at all [17]. As this experience shows, landscape reconstruction, nature conservation and heritage protection could only work within the framework of a consistent, long-term policy and financial support at a high administrative level. Unfortunately, these ideal conditions only lasted for a certain period of time, and the changes in context called for new ways of dealing with the problem.

3.2 Green Heart policy during the development planning period

Since the beginning of this millennium, spatial policy has been shifting from controlling and restricting to stimulating and supporting. Nowadays, coalitions between various government levels and a number of other actors are engaged in a large number of landscape projects (for example the "Room for the river Programme"). A growing number of bottom-up initiatives emerged, promoting and applying an integrated participatory landscape development on both larger and smaller scales.

In this new situation, the Green Heart region had to restructure its forces and find a new way of protecting and promoting the region. Branding became the key word, raising the economic importance by attracting visitors and offering tourist attractions and local agricultural products. The multi-stakeholder platform, a coalition between entrepreneurs, societal organisations and government, was formed. This steering committee includes representatives from the three provinces (South Holland, North Holland and Utrecht), a regional water board, an alderman and a mayor. It focuses on achieving concrete results with 10 core projects on topics such as ground subsidence, spatial quality, and recreation. The steering committee supports the municipalities that take the lead in the promotion, for example when drawing up plans for the future generally by knowledge sharing, but sometimes also through financial means.

Another organisation, called The Green Heart Foundation, has been committed to preserve the character of the Green Heart, with all of its culture, landscape and nature values. Together with the private sector, NGOs, residents and local governments, the foundation counts 250 active rural entrepreneurs and more than 2,500 friends of the Green Heart. The foundation actively works on marketing and promoting the Green Heart. Through the *"Kwaliteitsatlas Groen Hart"* (quality atlas of the Green Heart), the foundation monitors the core qualities of the Green Heart. The multi-stakeholder platform Green Heart functions as an additional layer of governance in the management of the region.

4 RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN NATIONAL SPATIAL PLANNING

As it can be seen from the previous sections, each spatial planning strategy in The Netherlands had its own high time, and followed and adjusted to political, economic and

societal context. The welfare state with a centralised spatial planning system supported by "hard" (financial and regulation) instruments gradually transformed into a decentralised planning system with "soft" (guidelines and stewardship) planning instruments. In the example of the Green Heart, we have seen how the changes in policy influenced that region. Looking at The Netherlands as a whole, the traces that past planning strategies have left on the landscape can still be seen (for instance EHS and State Buffer Zones). Although it is still too early to evaluate the consequences of the most recent policy changes on landscape, the comparative maps presented in Fig. 4 provide an indication of potential future impacts.

In the "glory days" of National landscape protection in 2008, 160 Natura 2000 areas (EU nature policy), EHS, 20 National parks, 20 National Landscapes and 10 State buffer zones were delineated and strongly protected, and 9 national highway panoramas were roughly indicated. In 2018, Natura 2000, Nature Network Netherlands, 20 National parks remained under national protection, the rest of the national landscape protection policies have been deregulated. Each of the 12 provinces created its own spatial development vision (*Provinciale ruimtelijke structuurvisies*) which all very much differ in their approaches.

The last still valid national spatial planning document, implemented in 2012, is National Policy Strategy for Infrastructure and Spatial Planning (SVIR). This document marks the final moment of a long period of the national government involvement in landscape planning. In the SVIR, the central government took infrastructure, logistics and competitiveness as the main own responsibilities and delegated urbanisation and landscape policy to the provinces and municipalities.

4.1 Nature protection

While the landscape policy is completely deregulated, the government's role in nature conservation remains undiminished: the legal nature conservation framework is still under the national government's responsibility, putting in place an effective legal framework for nature conservation and making sound international agreements. Central government and the provincial authorities are jointly investing in the development of the NNN.

(a) (b)

Figure 4: Landscapes of national importance. (a) In 2009; (b) In 2017.

The latest national nature conservation policy is presented in the document "The Natural Way Forward: Government Vision 2014". In this document, the government has sketched its new strategy on managing the natural environment up to 2025. Although the presented approach broadens the concept of "nature" and brings it closer to the meaning of landscape, the problem is that its focus is on the areas where nature is protected, rather than the landscape as a whole. The key aim of the vision is to bring about a change in thinking: nature should not be confined to nature reserves, but should be at the heart of society. Accordingly, people should care about nature in protected areas, but also about natural surroundings closer to home. The government also presents some ideas of how this could be realised: farmers may create wild-flower margins around fields; more urban buildings could be designed with "green roofs"; ecological noise barriers could be erected along motorways; local residents could maintain communal gardens or local nature areas; nature could be provided with the opportunity to flourish along rivers, which would also protect the surrounding area against flooding; groups of farmers and locals could join forces to preserve valuable landscapes; multinationals could reduce their products' ecological footprint; tourist organisations could work on conservation projects with nature conservation organisations.

In the past, nature policy has traditionally focused on protecting nature from society, while this new vision aims to recruit society to strengthen natural assets. According to the Government's vision, the interests of nature and the economy can be complementary and serving one may benefit the other. "Second Nature" is a programme that invites civil society organisations and private individuals to share their ideas on environmental stewardship: combining conservation with responsible social and economic use.

4.2 Spatial planning "new style"

Environmental legislation as it currently stands is scattered and spread over numerous other laws. There are separate laws relating to soil, construction, noise, infrastructure, mining, environment, preservation of historic buildings and sites, the natural environment, spatial planning and water management. This scattering of legislation gives rise to agreement and coordination issues, as well as reduced accessibility and usability for all users. To simplify this situation National government currently works on the new Environment and Planning Act (Wro), expected to enter into force in 2019) and National Environmental and Planning Vision (NOVI, to be completed after the Act and would replace SVIR). The Environment and Planning Act (Wro) sets down how the spatial plans of the state, provinces and municipalities are to be effected. This new Act seeks to modernise, harmonise and simplify currently distributed rules and integrate them into one legal framework. Land-use planning, environmental protection, nature conservation, construction of buildings, protection of cultural heritage, water management, urban and rural redevelopment, development of major public and private works and mining and earth removal will all be brought under one act.

The new Wro obliges national, provincial and sometimes municipal governments to develop an environmental strategy, an integrated and coherent plan for their physical territory. By integrating strategic planning instruments into the environmental strategy, by agreeing on multi-sectoral programmes with more implementation-focused policy tasks, and by coordinating implementation, the government hopes to improve the efficiency of the planning process. The intention is to achieve a balance between continuity and certainty on the one hand and flexibility on the other.

The National Environmental and Planning Vision is one of the six core instruments of the Environment and Planning Act. The vision promotes the coherence of policy for the physical environment. As a result, vision-forming on various sectoral areas – water, environment,

nature, use of natural resources, cultural heritage, and traffic and transport – is combined and connected.

The first part of the National Environmental and Planning Vision (NOVI, published in 2017) is quite different from its predecessors (national spatial plans such as the National Policy Documents on Spatial Planning (*Nota's Ruimtelijke Ordening and Nota Ruimte*). The document presents thirteen layers of the physical environment and selects the priorities that national government should focus on, in the form of four strategic policy tasks: towards a sustainable and concurrent economy; towards a climate-resilient and climate-neutral society; towards an accessible housing and working environment; and towards a valuable living environment.

In the NOVI approach, the layers of the physical environment are not shown on maps, as was the case in previous national planning documents. Instead, they are shown on a hypothetical area (Fig. 5). The possible choices are visualised in the form of scales where one can move into various directions and see how that would affect the physical space.

As the NOVI suggests, it is up to stakeholders to decide in which direction they would move the scale and the model would show the spatial consequences of their choices (see for instance the animation on https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/omgevingswet/nationale-omgevingsvisie).

In the NOVI, the landscape is part of the fourth strategic policy task and is also mentioned often as an important part of the other three assignments. So, both the NOVI and the government vision 2014 (The Natural Way Forward) consider the landscape level as an important scale for planning and negotiation on spatial developments. But, although being integral and multilevel, the NOVI model approach is currently causing many discussions in the professional and political circles that are used as formal planning tools for mapping and calculation. Considering landscape a common good may be positive, but also creates uncertainty about who is responsible for it. Therefore, concerns about the future of Dutch landscapes are rising, putting it again on the national political agenda.

Four choices:

1 Nature – too little or too much.

2 Agriculture – food production with circumstances or solutions for societal needs.

3 Landscape development – landscape as a starting point or landscape as a result.

4 Peat bog areas – increasing the water level or keeping the current agriculture on the same level.

Figure 5: National Environmental and Planning Vision (NOVI): strategic task "towards a valuable living environment".

5 CONCLUSIONS: SHARED SOLUTIONS WITH LANDSCAPE IN MIND

In the long tradition of spatial planning in The Netherlands, landscape planning has been playing an inseparable and important role. Landscape has been seen as a common good, a socio-ecological system that consists of natural and/or human-modified ecosystems, as an object and as an approach. Over the course of time, landscape planning has been going through several transformations; in this process, there were successes and failures, adaptations and changes, which we shared in this paper.

In the beginning of the 1980s, spatial planning in The Netherlands entered its "integral" phase. During the development control planning period, the fundaments of large-scale landscape protection and nature development were established: EHS/NNN, State Buffer Zones and the Green Heart national landscape became examples of the "icons" of Dutch spatial planning (former Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 2013). These areas, nowadays, still resemble Dutch rural landscapes, are multifunctional in terms of land use and exploitation, and are protected against extensive urbanisation. As the example of the Green Heart shows, long-term conservation policy also raised awareness about the value of landscape among citizens and entrepreneurs. Even after the national landscape conservation policy had been abandoned, regional authorities and stakeholders continued taking care of the landscape in these areas. During the development planning period economic viability became an important factor that needed to be incorporated in landscape planning policy. Protected areas were opening for recreation and tourism, and marketing and "branding" became the strategies to promote regions.

Following deregulation and decentralisation, nowadays there is a lack of clarity around the roles and responsibilities of government authorities at different levels. It is assumed that landscape conservation implies societal "governance", the ubiquitous label for alternative models of political engagement in society. Regional and local authorities are still the crucial actors to initiate and support coalitions between private and public stakeholders. The role of the national government became reduced to "system responsibility" meaning facilitating this process by making rules and regulations transparent and simple, and by providing necessary knowledge.

During the last three decades, there has been a continuous shift in paradigms in spatial and landscape planning policy and practice in The Netherlands: from sectoral to integral; from prohibiting to utilising opportunities; from physical space to quality of living; from centralised, blue-print planning to a participative, multi-actor approach; and, finally, from government-led to society-driven. Accordingly, landscape has become a confusing term, referring to a physical space, a social and perceptual concept, as well as a metaphor for an integrated approach.

Permanent changes in the long term tend to create uncertainty. It is acknowledged that people oppose change and long for certainty and continuity. Hence, there is a need for a balance between continuity and transformation in landscape planning policy, not only because it is important for maintaining landscape quality, but also for entrepreneurs and citizens to feel comfortable and economically safe. Whether the spatial planning "new style" will achieve this balance still remains to be seen.

REFERENCES

[1] van der Valk, A.J.J., Planning the past. Lessons to be learned from "Protecting and Developing the Dutch Archaeological-Historical Landscape" (PDL/BBO). *The Cultural Landscape and Heritage Paradox; Protection and Development of the Dutch Archaeological-Historical Landscape and Its European Dimension, Landscape and*

Heritage Studies (LHS), eds J.H.F. Bloemers, H. Kars, A.J.J. van der Valk & M.H. Wijnen, Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam, pp. 21–52, 2010.
[2] Witsen, P.P. & Van der Wouden, R., *De ruimtelijke metamorfose van Nederland 1988-2015: het tijdperk van de Vierde Nota*, nai010: Rotterdam, 2015.
[3] Lörzing, H., *The Nature of Landscape: A Personal Quest*, 010 Publishers, 2001.
[4] de Jonge, J.M., *Landscape Architecture Between Politics and Science: An Integrative Perspective on Landscape Planning and Design in the Network Society*, WUR: Wageningen, 2009.
[5] Bennet, G., Conserving Europe's Natural Heritage: Towards a European Ecological Network. *Proceedings of the International Conference Held in Maastricht, 9–12 November 1993/Edited by Graham Bennett*, Graham & Trotman: Martinus Nijhoff, London; Boston, 1994.
[6] Denier, L., Scherr, S., Shames, S., Chatterton, P., Hovani, L. & Stam, N., *The Little Sustainable Landscapes Book*, Oxford, 2015.
[7] Schröder, R.R.G., Wascher, D., Odell, S. & Smith, C., *Comparing Landscape Planning in England, Germany and The Netherlands: Policy Contexts and Three Case Study Plans*, 2010.
[8] Friedmann, J., *Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1987.
[9] Nassauer, J.I., Landscape as medium and method for synthesis in urban ecological design. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, **106**(3), pp. 221–229, 2012.
[10] Jackson, J.B., Discovering the vernacular landscape. *Landscape Journal*, **4**(1), pp. 57–60, 1985.
[11] Fairclough, G., New heritage, an introductory essay—people, landscape and change. *The Heritage Reader*, 297–312, 2008.
[12] Janssen, J., Pieterse, N. & van den Broek, L., *Nationale Landschappen. Beleidsdilemma's in de praktijk*, NAi uitgevers: Rotterdam, 2007.
[13] Pedroli, G.B.M., Doorn, A.M., van de Blust, G., Wascher, D.M. & Bunce, F., *Europe's Living Landscapes, Essays Exploring Our Identity in the Countryside*, KNNV Publishing: Zeist, 2007.
[14] Reh, W., Steenbergen, C.M. & Aten, D., *Sea of Land: The Polder as an Experimental Atlas of Dutch Landscape Architecture*, Architectura & Natura, 2007.
[15] Goossen, C.M., *Monitoring recreatiegedrag van Nederlanders in landelijke gebieden: jaar 2006/2007*, Wettelijke Onderzoekstaken Natuur & Milieu: Wageningen, 2009.
[16] Kooij, P., How The Netherlands got a green heart and lost it again. *Historia Agriculturae*, **42**, pp. 196–208, 2010.
[17] Lörzing, H., Planning system and landscape: a Dutch example. *Landscape Research*, **29**(4), pp. 357–369, 2004.