

Appendix A – Overview of Spatial Planning in the Netherlands

In this appendix we provide a short overview of planning instruments and the organisation of official Dutch spatial planning, in order to place some described policies in perspective. A short reference to the upcoming new spatial planning act is also made

Different Types of Interventions

As Voogd says, spatial planning is occupied with interventions in spatial structure and the organisation of these interventions. Here, we will look further into the types of intervention that are possible, also named policy tools or instruments, used by the different actors in the policy field. These are: laws and regulations, taxes and subsidies and planning concepts (see Spit and Zoete, 2002). De Roo and Voogd (2004-95) categorise these by more abstract terms in legal, financial, and communicative instruments. They add to this the tangible development projects, which a government can initiate. Obviously, there is some overlap between the categories, as a financial instrument cannot exist without law in most cases. We can, however, mark those instruments as steering directly, indirectly or even self steering (see figure A.1). This forms a spectrum from top-down to bottom-up planning. The spectrum makes it possible to position the various instruments in comparison with each other.



Figure A.1 Different types of steering on a spectrum. Source: De Roo and Voogd, 2004.

We will now discuss the types of intervention and relate the interventions to the governmental layers that make use of the interventions. The first type is legal instruments or laws and regulations, which mainly are a form of direct interventions. Laws and regulation allow certain developments and prevent others from happening. More indirect laws and regulations are, for example, environmental laws, which set limits to pollution. This has an indirect effect on spatial planning, because the environmental law prevents certain functions from being close to each other. Making laws is an exclusive task of the national government and is, therefore, a top-down approach.

Financial instruments form the second group of interventions and include taxes and subsidies. These can be identified as indirect interventions, because by stimulating wanted developments by means of subsidies and discouraging unwanted developments by means of taxes, the effect is predictable; the subsidised developments will be more attractive. However, the developments, for which taxes need to be paid, are not prohibited and are only prevented by making them less attractive. Taxes are collected by the national government in the first place, but also by the municipalities and water boards, and, to a lesser extent, by the provinces. Subsidies can be provided by all official governmental institutions.

The Dutch field of spatial planning, both in theory and in practice, is filled with the use of planning concepts, which forms the third group of interventions, also named communicative instruments. The *Compact City*, *Central Place Concept*, *Corridor*, *National Ecological Network* (Ecologische Hoofdstructuur) and *Space for Water* (Ruimte voor Water) are only a few of those. One of the explanations for the conceptualisation within planning is the assumption that through these concepts spatial developments can be influenced (Zonneveld and Verwest, 2005). This is a basic assumption that goes back to the roots of spatial planning, as discussed above. Concepts are used in spatial planning with the purpose of contributing to the spatial quality of the physical environment. Through words and images, a planning concept provides a concise overview of the vision of a planner about the desired development of the spatial structure, as well as the interventions that are thought to be required (Zonneveld, 1991-21). There are a few different types of planning concepts: structural/relational, design, and positioning concepts. We will not go into further detail about this. A planning concept is both strategic and practical at the same time, because it connects a long-term vision to concrete short-term interventions (Spit and Zoete, 2002). We can regard planning concepts as a form of indirect or self steering, because they can be developed through a bottom-up approach and usually have no legal basis in the first stages of development. Further on in their development and application, it is possible that they will be supported by law, if necessary, but still the concept is mainly communicative and indirect, therefore.

The final group that has been mentioned above is the one of tangible development projects. In these projects, the government takes up the task of implementation. This is a direct and top-down form of steering. In Infrastructure planning on, for example, the municipal level, this form of planning is often used (De Roo and Voogd, 2004). On a national level of scale, there are examples such as the high speed rail connection to the south or the freight railway from Rotterdam to Germany.

Organisation of Policy and Interventions

Here, we shortly describe the policy networks, or the organisation of interventions, in Voogd's words. Official governmental institutions and also nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) are part of the policy networks. These networks can have different levels of scale, from (inter)national to local, and also different fields of attentions, i.e. either a sectoral or integral approach. A sectoral approach refers to policy specified to one theme or issue, whereas an integral approach attempts to incorporate several themes into one overall policy. The term 'region' is a suitable concept to further explain this difference.

The region is not an official governmental layer, but, if used, often forms a cooperation between several governmental layers. It is difficult to define a region exactly; it could be quite centralized, if it concerns a cooperation above the provincial or even national scale, but it can also be a cooperation between a few local governments. It is most likely that on a high level of scale, the cooperation in a region is limited to a sector. For example, the Water Framework Directive and the Trans-European Networks function on a European scale, accompanied by national interpretations of these policies (European Commission, 2007). This is a centralized approach and each form of cooperation is limited to one sector, in this case water and transport. The opposite is true as well. On a smaller scale, in a region, which crosses provincial borders, and incorporates a few municipalities, we are likely to see a more integral approach. An example is the Region Groningen-Assen, which puts the integral qualities of its region at the centre of its plans; the combination of urban and rural, with diversity in landscapes and working and living environments (Regio Groningen-Assen, 2007).

Each governmental layer has a different role or position in the planning process and makes use of different planning documents. The Dutch *Spatial Planning Act* (*Wet op de Ruimtelijke Ordening*⁸) is the official document, which regulates the responsibilities and obligations of the various governmental bodies. Each body makes use of a different kind of planning document, in which it provides a vision on the (possible) future developments of the spatial structure (Voogd, 2001). The most important planning documents currently are (Spit and Zoete, 2002 and Voogd, 2001):

1. The *key planning decision* (planologische kernbeslissing) on the national level appears in different formats, but all go through the same procedure, in which structured consultation of lower-level governments and citizens takes places. The key planning decision is characterised by strategic (national) importance and boundary setting for lower-level governments.
2. The *regional plan* (streekplan) on the provincial level is also a strategic, boundary setting document, which integrates policies from different sectors and governmental levels and also examines the municipal spatial policies.

⁸ The original Dutch name of a law or planning document is provided between brackets.

3. The *spatial plan* (structuurplan) on the municipal level provides an overview of the desirable spatial developments in a municipality. The *binding local land use plan* (bestemmingsplan) is more detailed and describes the allowed land uses for (a part of) the municipality. This is the only plan, which legally binds citizens directly to spatial planning.

The Dutch spatial planning act is expected to be replaced in 2008 (Wet ruimtelijke ordening, 2006). The new act incorporates a number of major changes, which we will not discuss in detail. Some of these changes, however, are quite important as a reflection upon the abovementioned planning documents. The key planning decision, the regional plan, and the spatial plan will disappear and instead the national and provincial governments will be able to make binding local land use plans (which are obligatory for a municipality). This increases the possibility for a higher government to influence spatial developments on a lower level. Besides, on all three governmental layers it becomes obligatory to make a spatial vision (structuurvisie) (Wet ruimtelijke ordening, 2006 and Needham, 2007). In the next section, we will shortly discuss the more theoretical background of the changes in the practice of planning, which is still becoming more decentralized.

Overall, we can state that public administration in the Netherlands is designed as a 'decentralized unitary state' (Needham, 2007). There are three levels of government, each with some power, but their actions should always be in line with the other levels. A final remark that should be made here regards the influence of the European Union (EU). The amount of regulations and directives drawn up by the EU is increasing and affect even local spatial planning. This can be seen as a counter development, because it centralizes certain parts of spatial planning as opposed to the trend of decentralization.

Appendix B – Special Meetings and Interviews

The following meetings/conferences/workshops about energy and spatial planning have been attended (with active involvement) in order to support the research:

- May 25, 2007: Fryseps Presentation and Debate (Leewarden)
- June 14, 2007: Keuningcongres (Groningen)
- June 26, 2007: Workshop South Limburg (Sweikhuizen)
- September 11, 2007: Stadsdebat Groningen (City debate Groningen)
- September 20 and 21, 2007: Charrette Quatrebras, Tytsjerksteradiel (a two-day design studio)
- November 19, 20, and 21, 2007: Energy Delta Convention Groningen

Conversations with the following persons provided more insight into the cases, which are studied in the research:

- De heer R. uit de Bosch – Friese Milieufederatie
- Mevrouw H. Rijpstra – Wethouder Gemeente Tytsjerksteradiel
- De heer B.R. Bakker – Wethouder Gemeente Tytsjerksteradiel
- De heer S. Ruddijs – Afdelingsmanager Ruimte, Gemeente Tytsjerksteradiel
- Mevrouw J. Zijlstra – Beleidsmedewerker Afdeling Ruimte, Gemeente Tytsjerksteradiel
- Mevrouw Y. Hiemstra - Beleidsmedewerker Afdeling Milieu, Bouw en Beheer en Coördinator Duurzaamheid, Gemeente Tytsjerksteradiel
- De heer K. Boelstra – Beleidsmedewerker Afdeling Milieu, Bouw en Beheer, Gemeente Tytsjerksteradiel
- De heer A. Muis – Afdelingshoofd Ruimtelijke Plannen, Gemeente Groningen
- Mevrouw A. Beuling – Beleidsmedewerker Ruimtelijke Plannen, Gemeente Groningen

Appendix C – Interview Questions

The questions, which are provided in this appendix, are meant as examples and do not necessarily represent the questions actually asked during the interviews.

General Questions

- What does your municipality in general do in terms of the themes energy and sustainability?
- What is the immediate cause for incorporating energy/sustainability objectives in local plans and policies?
- Is there enough knowledge available within your organisation to address new challenges in the field of energy?
- Which activities and interventions would you regard as spatial? In other words: in which policies or projects is energy being addressed in combination with spatial planning?

Policies

- How is the theme of energy visible in your organisation and policies?
- Which role should energy have in the various municipal policies and specifically the spatial policies, such as the spatial vision?
- Does your municipality have a strategic long term vision in the field of energy and spatial planning (or is this being developed)?
- Is this strategic vision translated to concrete actions in the present (or are these being developed)?
- How does your organisation cope with the uncertainty that comes along with the development of strategic long term policies? Specifically in relation to energy, in which technological innovation seems to be increasing rapidly. *For example, is stimulating multiple forms of energy being done, in order to increase the future security of energy supply?*
- What is the role of the municipality in the field of energy and/or what should this role be? *Rule-setting, guiding or facilitating? And is there a societal task for the municipality in this?*

Collaboration

- What is the role of other stakeholders, such as the Province, companies, non-governmental organisations and private parties? *Think of collaboration agreements and participation.*
- Would you like to see these roles differently and why?

Tasks of various governments

- The Dutch national government states that there is a clear role of the European Union in law and rule making. The national government puts her effort mostly into development of knowledge and technological innovation. Is this a sensible choice according to you or should the national government take a different attitude?
- Multiple municipalities in the Netherlands take initiative in formulating ambitious objective in the field of energy and sustainability (e.g. Apeldoorn, Breda, and Heerhugowaard) and abroad there are also numerous examples. Does your municipality follow these developments and is there any kind of collaboration or information exchange with these municipalities?

Municipality of Tytsjerksteradiel –Residential Area It Súd/Business Park Quatrebras

- What are the reasons to incorporate energy/sustainability into the development projects?
- How is energy being addressed within the project and in which stages of the planning does energy play a role?
- Is energy a guiding element of the design and planning processes?

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- Groningen introduced an ambitious energy plan, but what has happened since then within the municipality in terms of translating these ambitious into workable policies?
- Are there any forms of collaboration with other stakeholders or does the municipality have a different role in this?
- Does the municipality make use of the experiences at other municipalities, which are also working on energy objectives?

