

Coalition building and place leadership in the area of Allardsoog

A pathway towards sustainable place-based development



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Abstract

Communities and localities within rural areas have been affected by several transformations and are facing complex economic, ecological and social challenges. Dealing with these challenges requires the cooperation of various actors such as citizens, institutions and entrepreneurs. Coalitions enable autonomous actors to develop actions and arrangements based on their shared ambitions. In doing so, coalition planning offers a tool for bridging different views and values and for combining the various perspectives of the actors involved. Coalitions can be considered a step in the spiralling process towards sustainable and place-based development. The aim of this study is identify coalitions to support sustainable development in the area around Allardsoog in the North of the Netherlands and to analyse the role of place leadership. This research is conducted in the context of the Radius project started by the theatre group The PeerGroup and the activities organized within this project are part of the data collection. In addition, semi-structured in-depth interviews are conducted with the local governments and other organisations in the area. The findings indicate that if leadership roles are not taken up by local actors, an external actor can initiate actions by performing place leadership and contribute to a joint spirit within the area. This is not without risk, if collective agency is not established among local actors there is no sense of responsibility or ownership to develop actions. Art and culture contribute to processes of place shaping and meaning making through visualisation and raising awareness. Therefore, art and culture play an important role in place leadership and shaping coalitions. In order to support coalition building within an area across borders it is crucial that the actors involved look beyond the geographical and sectoral borders and seek collaboration.

Key words: Coalition planning, place leadership, sustainable development, place-based development, the Netherlands

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Within the last decades several transformations have had an influence on rural areas within the Netherlands. These transformations include urbanisation, large scale agriculture, the transition from production to consumption, an ageing population and the out migration of youth to urban areas. The drivers of these trends are an increase in automobile dependency, an increase in income, higher levels of education and individualisation (Steenbekkers & Vermeij, 2013; Thissen & Loopmans, 2013). In addition, Steenbekkers and Vermeij (2013) discuss that within the last decade as a result of the financial crisis the labour and housing market experienced stagnations. In line with the change in function the economic structure of rural areas has changed as a result of decentralisation of the urban economy, which has contributed to job opportunities within the service sector, and a decrease in jobs within the agriculture sector (Steenbekkers & Vermeij, 2013). Considering this it can be argued that rural areas are changing from production to multifunctional areas (Farjon & Arnouts, 2013).

The 11th OECD Rural Development Conference held in April 2018, has highlighted the importance of rural development in targeting sustainable and inclusive growth. It is argued that the geographical context is vital in this process and that policies should adopt a place-based approach which recognizes the capacities and capabilities of communities within rural areas (OECD, 2018). Moreover, a place-based approach can be considered a necessary step towards sustainable development (Horlings, 2018; Pugalis & Bentley, 2014). The challenge that arises with regard to sustainable development is to make activities and the production sustainable in terms of ecological value, society and the economy (Farjon & Arnouts, 2013).

All the transformations discussed above create challenges for rural areas and to tackle these challenges it is argued that actors have to cooperate. Within a dynamic, complex and interconnected world it is more difficult for actors to tackle problems individually and to achieve their goals independently. Through coalitions different actors try to find ways how to create a sustainable future for their area. In this way, problems can be addressed from various perspectives and this could lead to new solutions for complex problems (de Jong, 2016; Farjon & Arnouts, 2013).

1.1.1 Context

This study is conducted in the context of the Radius project 2017-2018 which is a location theatre project in the North of the Netherlands. In this project science, art, theatre and the community are connected in an innovative way in order to examine the area around Allardsoog from different perspectives. The aim of the project is to contribute to a sustainable society. In light of this, it is believed that through combining different perspectives from various actors a step towards sustainable development around the area of Allardsoog can be taken. The inspiration of this project comes from the study of Prof. Schaminée entitled 'Venster op Dreischor'. Within this research the area of Dreischor is examined from different angles. Themes related to life in rural areas and the environment are addressed from different perspectives of the residents and the researchers and this offers new insights into the area. The way the area is analysed from various angles and in relation to processes outside of the area serves as a source of inspiration for the Radius project. Within the Radius project an area of five kilometres around Allardsoog is examined. The decision to conduct the project around Allardsoog is related to the nomination of Leeuwarden as one of the Cultural Capitals of Europe in 2018 and the start of the cultural programme called 'We are the North' in 2017. In light of this, the decision has been made to conduct the project on the borders of the three Northern provinces in order to contribute to cultural development

within the region. The method used in this project can be characterised as ‘dig where you stand’. The project is conducted over two years and by being present for a longer period within the area it is believed that something will come up such as stories and events. The project aims to identify and analyse the themes that emerge from the area and is seeking to establish new connections. For instance, when looking at the history of the area the project came across the Volkshogeschool Allardsoog and the research ‘Het Noorden Nu voor Later’ conducted by the Volkshogeschool 50 years ago (Smidt, 2017). The first Volkshogeschool within the Netherlands was established in Allardsoog in 1932 following Danish examples. Jarig van der Wielen, who moved to the area around Allardsoog for the reclamation of peat, has as a former alderman of Opsterland played a profound role within the establishment of the first Volkshogeschool. The area was poor and the unemployment rates were high and the reasoning behind the establishment of the Volkshogeschool was to develop and empower the area. Through sharing knowledge and skills the programmes of the Volkshogeschool sought to contribute to the development of youth and adults and to decrease unemployment. Through the programmes the interaction between different groups was stimulated. The Volkshogeschool played an important role in the empowerment of vulnerable groups such as unemployed workers and women. In addition, the conferences organized at the Volkshogeschool aimed to stimulate discussion on topics related to rural development, society and politics. Over time 15 additional Volkshogescholen have been established in the Netherlands. During the 1990’s, 15 Volkshogescholen of which the Volkshogeschool Allardsoog had to close down because of cuts in subsidies (van der Linde & Frieswijk, 2013). The stories of the Volkshogeschool Allardsoog and the research ‘Het Noorden Nu voor Later’ fit with the aim of the Radius project to contribute to a sustainable society.

1.2 Research problem

Considering the current complex challenges communities in rural areas are facing it is believed that place leadership can play a vital role in the development of a place-based approach (Beer, 2014; Beer & Clower, 2014; Horlings et al, 2018). Although place leadership is receiving greater attention within research, Beer (2014) and Horlings et al. (2018) argue that this is not enough and place leadership in the context of rural development requires more attention from researchers. This study examines how an external actor can take the lead and take actions towards sustainable place-based development in the area of Allardsoog. In light of this, the role of art and culture in place leadership is examined. In addition, this research builds on theories about coalition planning by de Jong (2016). According to de Jong (2016), further research is necessary to identify the conditions of success for all three types of coalitions. This study provides an understanding of the process and the value of creating coalitions between various actors in order to support sustainable development in the area of Allardsoog. The results of the case study can be valuable for rural areas within the Netherlands with similar challenges as the area surrounding Allardsoog.

The aim of this study is to identify effective coalitions to support sustainable development in the area of Allardsoog. In addition, this research aims to analyse what the role of place leadership is in place-based development. In order to examine this the following research question is formulated: ‘In what ways can place leadership contribute to coalition building for sustainable development in the area of Allardsoog?’

The following sub questions will help to answer the research question:

- What are the key stakeholders in the area and what kind of possibilities do they see?
- How is sustainable development perceived according to the actors involved?
- What is the role of place leadership in place-based development?
- What is the role of coalitions in sustainable development?
- How can coalitions be created in the area of Allardsoog?
- What are conditions and next steps to realize coalitions?

1.3 Structure thesis

After the introduction, the theoretical framework and the conceptual model are presented. Within the theoretical framework theories on sustainable development, the place-based approach, place leadership and coalition planning are discussed. This chapter includes the conceptual model which illustrates the relations between the concepts that are examined within this study. Following the theoretical framework the methodology section elaborates on the research design, instrument, data collection process, data analysis and the ethical considerations. The findings of the data analysis are presented in the results section. The discussion relates the findings to the existing scholarship discussed in the theoretical framework. An answer to the research questions and the limitations of this study are included in the conclusion. In addition, this section provides recommendations for future research.

2. Theoretical framework

In the introduction the objective and research questions of this thesis are addressed. This chapter provides an overview on the debate around sustainable development and includes paragraphs about the place-based approach, place leadership and coalition planning. In addition, this section presents the conceptual model which includes the relations between the different concepts and theories discussed.

2.1 Theories on sustainable development

2.1.1 Sustainable development: the concept

To understand the relation between coalitions and sustainable development it is important to elaborate on the different debates about sustainable development. After the publication of the Brundtland report entitled *Our Common Future* in 1987 (WCED, 1987) sustainable development as a concept has received more international attention (Böstrom, 2012; Quental et al., 2011). In this report sustainable development is defined as “*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs*” (WCED, 1987, p. 43). Hopwood et al. (2005) describe that sustainable development in this definition is defined from an anthropocentric perspective with a focus on the availability of natural resources and the relation between the economy, society and the natural environment. Moreover, sustainable development is considered to be a key aspect within policies. For instance, the United Nations have developed several sustainable development goals and targets in their 2030 agenda and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth are the central focus of the 2020 strategy of the European Union (European Union, 2017; UNGA, 2015).

According to some authors (Boström et al., 2012; Hugé et al., 2013; Robinson, 2004; Waas et al., 2011) sustainable development is an ambiguous concept. Robinson (2004) and Waas et al. (2011) discuss that within the literature on sustainability occasionally a distinction is made between ‘sustainable development’ and ‘sustainability’. Whereas sustainable development can be seen as a process, sustainability refers more often to an end goal (Waas et al., 2011). Although both concepts can be used separately, some scholars (Hugé et al., 2013; Waas et al., 2011) make the decision to use sustainable development and sustainability interchangeably. A distinction between the two terms could cause confusion and in addition much of the debate is centred on sustainable development (Robinson, 2004; Waas et al., 2011). Böstrom (2012) and Hugé et al. (2013) argue that the ambiguity of the concept contributes to the concept’s popularity. As a result of a lack of definition a variety of interpretations exist. In a similar way, Hopwood et al. (2005) state that there is no clear consensus among supporters of sustainable development about what sustainable development exactly entails and in what way it should be realised. As Hopwood et al. (2005) conclude ‘there is no sustainable development ‘ism’ (p. 47). The debates around sustainable development are often framed within existing discourses. Considering this, Robinson (2004) argues that providing a clear definition for a concept such as sustainable development will lead to the exclusion of discourses that are not expressed within the definition.

2.1.2 Sustainable development: debates and contrasting views

Within the existing scholarship on sustainable development there are several debates that can be distinguished. For instance, the debate on sustainability includes the discrepancy between ecology and economic growth. The discussions within this debate are mainly focused on to what extent economic growth can be combined with sustainability and whether economic growth could be sustainable at all (Robinson, 2004). Hopwood et al. (2005) and Robinson (2004) discuss that in this debate various opposing views on sustainability coexist. Sustainability is often viewed in the context of preservation in

particular with regard to the natural environment (Bonevac, 2010). From this perspective the main focus is on preserving natural resources and ecological systems for future generations (Littig & Grießler, 2005). On the other hand, from an ecological modernist view it could be argued that through technological efficiency economic growth and sustainability can both be realised. It is believed that through technological solutions the use of natural resources could be reduced and in this way the natural environment can be preserved without hampering economic growth. On the contrary, a transformative approach recognises that problems related to unsustainability are rooted in society itself. Therefore, it is believed that a change in value systems and behaviour at the individual level is needed in order to avert problems associated with unsustainable behaviour (Hopwood et al., 2005; Redclift & Woodgate, 2013; Robinson, 2004).

Böstrom (2012) and Littig and Grießler (2005) describe that sustainable development is often approached from a three pillar or dimension model that includes the social, environmental and economic pillars. This is also described as the three P's 'People, Planet, Profit' (Böstrom, 2012). The reasoning behind the model is that all the pillars should be in balance and that a priority on one of the pillars could be at the expense of the others (Littig & Grießler, 2005). Although there has been a shift in the way sustainable development is approached (Quental, 2011), in reality less attention is given to the social pillar (Cuthill, 2010; Littig & Grießler, 2005; Murphy, 2012). According to Littig and Grießler (2005) sustainable development should not solely be understood from an environmental perspective and more attention should be given to the role of social processes. Based on a literature review on social sustainability and sustainable development indicators, Murphy (2012) concludes that equity, awareness for sustainability, participation and social cohesion are important concepts related to social sustainability. Littig and Grießler (2005) put forward another point of critique on the model which relates to the dimensions reflected in the model. The authors argue that the model is restricted to three pillars and does not include other dimensions such as a cultural or institutional pillar. Asikainen et al. (2017) describe that within the debate about sustainable development less attention has been paid to the cultural dimension and a three pillar approach is usually considered in order to describe and realise sustainable development. Within the existing academic scholarship on sustainable development culture is often perceived to be part of the social pillar also referred to as the social-cultural dimension. Furthermore, in some instances culture is also considered as a separate fourth pillar (Soini & Birkeland, 2014). Soini and Birkeland (2014) state that while the social pillar could be related to culture, this does not imply that culture is in definition part of the social pillar. On the contrary, culture could be perceived as a condition for the environmental, social and economic pillar. In this view culture is not understood as a separate pillar but rather as an overarching dimension (Soini & Birkeland, 2014; Soini & Dessein, 2016). Hence, there are several representations on the relation between culture and sustainability that can coexist and do not have to be exclusive (Soini & Dessein, 2016).

In their study Quental et al. (2011) have made a comparison between various approaches to sustainability in time. Their findings show that sustainability is no longer approached as a static concept but rather as dynamic by which the different dimensions of sustainability are integrated. In addition, the focus of attention has shifted from a mere focus on the environmental pillar towards more attention for including social values and sustainability is considered to be a transition process.

Sustainable development could be understood as a normative concept, because values and ideas related to sustainability are socially constructed (Horlings & Padt, 2013; Littig & Grießler, 2005). In this regard, it is necessary to look beyond the objective dimensions and include subjective dimensions of sustainability. The inner dimension of sustainability includes intrinsic values and it is argued from a transformative perspective that a change in these values is needed in order to strive towards

sustainability. Values are related to intentions and perceptions, are context dependent and vary between cultures (Horlings, 2015). O'Brien and Wolf (2010) argue that such an approach recognises the different values that are existent within communities and in this way a 'change from the inside out' could emerge. In addition, the inner dimension reflects the motives and ambitions of people and could therefore provide a better understanding on how individual and collective actions have an impact on the environment. Considering this it could be argued that the human aspect in sustainable development receives more attention within this approach (Horlings, 2015; O'Brien & Wolf, 2010).

This paragraph discussed the concept of sustainable development and the existing debates within the academic scholarship on sustainability. The next paragraph illustrates how a place-based approach can be considered a pathway towards sustainable development.

2.2 A place-based approach: a pathway towards sustainable development

2.2.1 The emergence of a place-based approach

Within the existing scholarship it has been argued that adopting a place-based approach is a necessary step towards sustainable development (Horlings, 2018; Pugalis & Bentley, 2014). The decentralization of governments has led to a growing interest for implementing a place-based approach within policies for regional and rural development (European Union, 2011; Horlings et al., 2018; Pugalis and Bentley, 2014; OECD, 2018). More specifically, in contrast with a top-down and outcome-oriented approach, a place-based approach is more considerate towards the integration of several policy domains and bottom-up development (OECD, 2018). Barca et al. (2012) argue that within the context of globalisation the unique characteristics and distinctiveness of places and the geographical context have become more significant. The two main aspects that can be identified for a place-based approach are the geographical context and knowledge in policy interventions. The social, cultural and institutional characteristics embedded within space have an influence on the way places are shaped and for this reason the local context is essential for a place-based approach as opposed to space neutral policies (Barca et al., 2012). Horlings (2018) describes that the material and immaterial aspects of places and the capacities of local communities are the foundation for place-based development. With regard to governance Barca et al. (2012) argue that multi-governance focused on vertical collaboration between different levels of governments (national, regional, local) and horizontal partnerships beyond the administrative borders is needed in order to implement place-based policies.

In their article Bentley and Pugalis (2014) explain that the increasing interest in the place-based approach arose from critiques on earlier approaches such as people-centred and space-neutral policies. Some points of criticism that are expressed are the absence of an integral approach, lack of vertical and horizontal collaboration and less attention towards local capacities (Bentley & Pugalis, 2014). However, the authors highlight that the place-based approach itself is also subject to criticism as the approach is criticised for having an ambiguous definition, risks the 'policy capture' by a specific group of people and strategies tend to put emphasis on the mechanisms within places and to a lesser extent on mechanisms from the outside (Bentley & Pugalis, 2014; Celata & Coletti, 2014). Pugalis and Bentley (2014) state that in order to successfully adopt a place-based approach the geographical context should be taken into consideration. In relation to this it is important to recognise the institutional, economic, social and cultural processes that have shaped and are shaping places in the past, present and future (Pugalis & Bentley, 2014). To add to this debate, Salvia and Quaranta (2017) discuss that the capacity of local communities to take action has a significant impact on the implementation of place-based strategies towards rural and sustainable development. In addition, local capacities, social networks and the institutional environment could determine the success of such strategies (Salvia & Quaranta, 2017).

Place-based development considers the endogenous capacities and capabilities such as local initiatives and in this way the capacities of individuals and the community are acknowledged and strengthened (Horlings, 2018). Within place-based strategies the process is of greater importance in comparison to the outcome and therefore it can be argued that it is essential to take a process perspective 'rooted in how people shape their places' into consideration when adopting a place-based approach (Horlings, 2018, p. 318).

2.2.2 Place-based development: the role of place leadership

Several scholars argue that place leadership or local leadership is a key aspect for implementing a place-based approach. This is especially necessary in the light of current complex economic, ecological and social challenges that local communities are facing (Beer, 2014; Beer & Clower, 2014; Horlings et al, 2018). Within the literature there are various topics discussed in relation to place leadership. For instance, Beer (2014), Collinge and Gibney (2010) and Sotarauta and Beer (2017) discuss the relationship between governance and place leadership and how the institutional setting has an effect on the emergence of local leadership. Furthermore, Collinge and Gibney (2010) elaborate on the notion of local leadership as a 'relational phenomenon' (p. 486). The link between place leadership and a relational approach is also discussed by Horlings et al. (2018). In addition, Horlings et al. (2018) and Roep et al. (2015) propose a framework of 'spiralling' development through which the role of local leadership can be understood in building new institutional arrangements. Other articles reflect on capacity building (Davies, 2009) and the role of place leadership in sustainable development (Sotarauta et al., 2012).

According to Beer and Clower (2014) place leadership is vital in understanding how various actors within a community could take action in order for opportunities to flourish which could lead to the development of places. Local leadership is focused on development and the capabilities of local communities and can be characterized by collaboration between different actors such as individuals, organisations and institutions (Beer and Clower, 2014). Sotarauta et al. (2012) explain that the formal dimension of place leadership is often recognised. The formal dimension refers to leadership within institutions and organisations and can be regarded as hierarchical. However, Sotarauta et al. (2012) propose a different conceptualisation of leadership whereby an emphasis is placed on the informal dimension. In this regard leaders are not bounded by administrative borders of the community in which they operate. It is essential for leaders to look beyond their own borders in order to seek collaboration with other organisations and communities. In this process the goals and division of roles might not always be clearly defined (Sotarauta et al., 2012). Rodríguez-Pose (2013) argues that a balance between formal and informal institutions is necessary to enable regional development. Moreover, in order to be effective institutions need to be embedded within the region and strategies should be place-based using a 'tailor made' approach (Rodríguez-Pose, 2013).

Davies (2009) stresses the importance of the role of place leadership in capacity building within local communities. Through place leadership communities can be empowered and might therefore be more resilient able to adapt to future challenges. Community resilience can be understood as the way communities respond and are able to adapt to challenges (Salvia & Quaranta, 2017). In addition, Davies (2009) states that within policies the focus is more often on the resilience of communities and the responsibility for communities to take matters in their own hands. This is related to decreased government support. Governments acknowledge that they have a role within this process and could potentially stimulate capacity building within communities (Davies, 2009). This is in line with Collinge et al. (2010), who argue that the effect of place leadership is visible and could provide an understanding

on why particular communities possess capacities to take action and are able to adapt to future challenges while other communities do not. Beer and Clower (2014) explain that places are indeed prone to the risk of a lack of place leadership which has according to the authors a greater impact on places in comparison to poor leadership. Also, the institutional setting has an influence on the likelihood whether place leadership will emerge because governments are able to provide the conditions and means necessary for leadership to flourish. For instance, place leadership is less likely to emerge within the context of a centralized government as the development of core regions is more stimulated. This is one of the reasons why place leadership is of great importance for local communities as opposed to larger cities (Beer & Clower, 2014).

In discussions about place leadership the impact of human actions the so called ‘human factor’ receives more attention (Sotarauta et al., 2012; Sotarauta & Beer, 2017). Place leadership can enable a joint spirit and collective agency to undertake action. This process could be encouraged by joint reflexivity and collaborative activities (Roep et al., 2015). In their study on place leadership and rural development in the Westerkwartier in Groningen, Horlings et al. (2018) and Roep et al. (2015) discuss how place leadership can be understood as a vital aspect in spiralling development illustrated in figure 1. Place leadership can stimulate the emergence of a joint spirit through inspiration, visioning, bridging different perspectives of the actors involved and collaboration. Combined with joint reflexivity this could result in collective agency and the possibility to develop actions for the area. During the process various actors can be involved in collaborative activities. This process can be considered as an opportunity for joint learning, knowledge sharing and new coalitions can be shaped. Eventually, it is believed that together the different processes will result in new institutional arrangements (Horlings et al., 2018; Roep et al., 2015). The new institutional arrangements that arise through local leadership takes into account the place specific characteristics and capacities of the area and can therefore be considered as a place-based approach for rural development (Horlings et al., 2018).

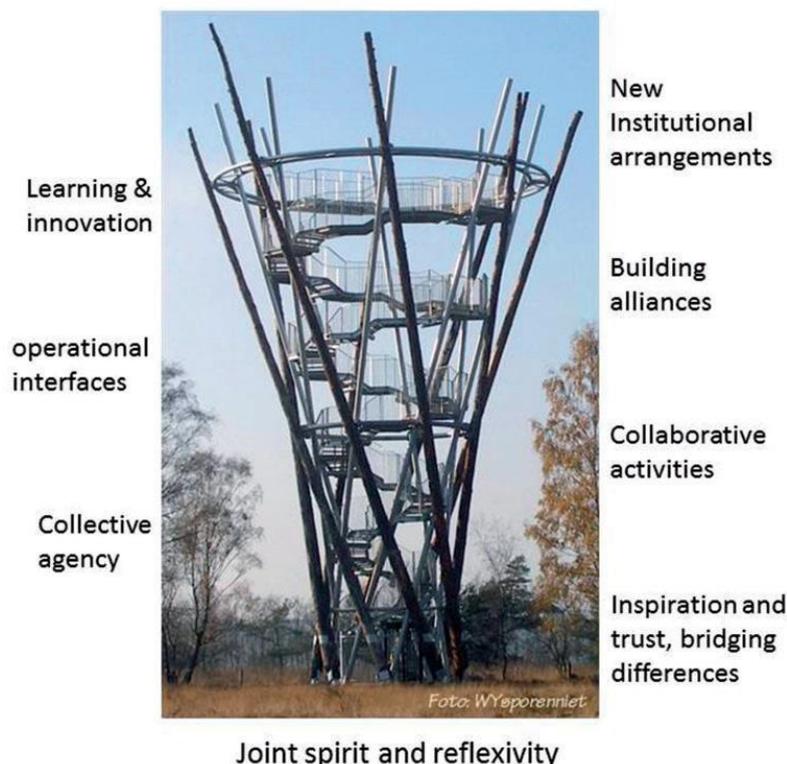


Figure 1 Spiralling development (Horlings et al., 2018, p. 261)

2.3 Coalition Planning

The previous paragraph has discussed how place leadership can stimulate the process of coalition building (Horlings et al., 2018). This section discusses how coalitions for sustainable development can be shaped through coalition planning. The perceptions and ideas about planning are shifting as the world is changing and becoming more dynamic and complex (de Jong, 2016; Innes & Booher, 2010). Within the scholarship on spatial planning there has been a shift from a traditional approach characterized as top-down, linear and focused on expert knowledge towards a collaborative approach based on non-linearity, meanings, values and involving multiple stakeholders (Innes & Booher, 2010). According to Healey (2003) and Innes and Booher (2010) collaborative planning is an interactive process whereby several stakeholders with different perspectives share their perceptions and discuss problems they commonly face in relation to space. The objective is to reach consensus. Boonstra and Boelens (2011) criticise the collaborative approach put forward by Healey and Innes as idealistic. In reality not all the interests of the stakeholders are met and often the government plays a dominant role in the planning process (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). As an alternative view, Boonstra and Boelens (2011) propose the concept of self-organisation in order to understand the motives behind citizen involvement in urban development. Self-organisation can be defined as initiatives that arise from civil society itself. Within society there are many interrelations and interactions between people, places and institutions and therefore society is highly complex. Initiatives are arising from bottom-up in a spontaneous way without government control (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). De Jong (2016) discusses that over the last decades governments in Western Europe sought to have authority and control over interferences in public space and policy. There has been a change within this perspective as governments have come to recognise that within a complex world there is a need to take uncertainties into account and that their power to control interventions is relative (de Jong, 2016).

According to de Jong (2016), problems should be addressed from different perspectives and this can be achieved through coalition planning. Coalitions can be created within an arena whereby autonomous actors such as individuals, groups and institutions with different backgrounds have shared ambitions that form an important drive for creating a better place for the future. Coalitions enable autonomous actors to develop actions and arrangements based on their shared ambitions. In this way, coalitions try to bridge different values, ideas, perceptions and worldviews and try to combine various perspectives. Within coalitions every actor is considered to have equal power and by combining institutional, business and civic actors together new solutions for complex problems can be found (de Jong, 2016). In her study, de Jong (2016) has identified three types of coalitions: directive, collective and connective coalitions. Within each coalition the role of the actors, the arena and the institutional role differs. The arena in a directive coalition is already established and the desire is related to the ambition of one specific actor who acts as a director. Within collective coalitions the arena is created and the stakeholders form the ambition together where each actor contributes and benefits. The main drive for actors within connective coalitions are personal motivations and based on this actors can facilitate a movement within a spontaneous arena. Figure 2 presents an overview of the three coalitions (de Jong, 2016). This section has attempted to give a brief overview on the process of coalition planning. This helps to examine what the possibilities and conditions for coalitions are in relation to place-based development in the area of Allardsoog.

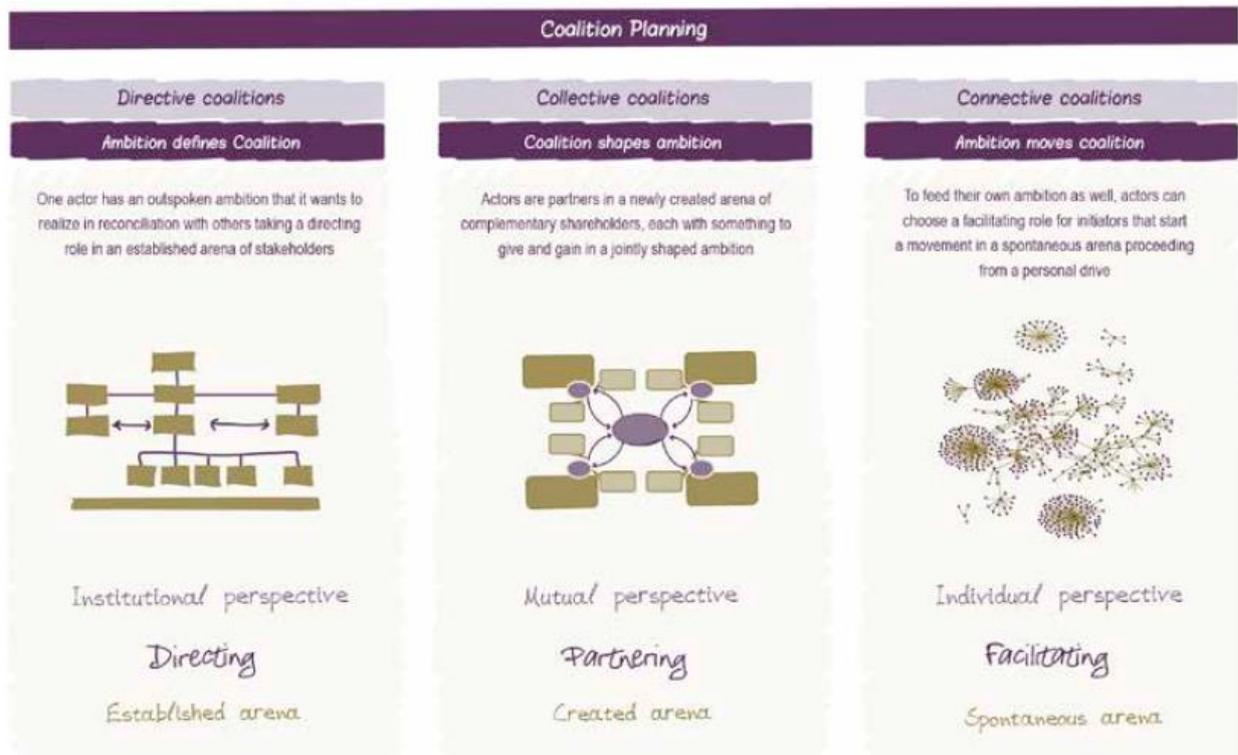


Figure 2 Types of Coalitions (de Jong, 2016, p. 289)

2.4 Conceptual model

Thus far, the existing literature and theories on sustainable development, the place-based approach, place leadership and coalition planning are discussed. In light of this, the conceptual model is presented in figure 3 and relates all the concepts and theories together. This framework is based on the spiralling development model of Horlings et al. (2018) and the coalition spectrum of de Jong (2016).

The idea that ‘place matters’ has gained importance within policies for rural development. Additionally, there is an agreement within policy and the academic scholarship that the implementation of a place-based approach is a crucial step towards sustainability (Horlings, 2018; Pugalis & Bentley, 2014; OECD, 2018). Bentley and Pugalis (2014) argue that a place-based approach is context dependent, takes into consideration the distinctiveness and capabilities of places and can be effectively implemented through multi-level governance and collaboration within a supportive institutional framework. Despite the focus on place-based assets, Pugalis and Bentley (2014) argue that it remains unclear in what way the capacities and capabilities of localities can be mobilised. Place leadership could potentially be considered a key aspect in this process. With regard to the development of localities place leadership is seen to be a crucial element and could facilitate the implementation of a place-based approach (Collinge et al., 2010; Horlings et al., 2018). In a similar way, place leadership highlights the importance of the human factor in development as it is focused on individual and collective agency (Sotarauta & Beer, 2017; Horlings et al., 2018). Horlings (2018) explains that individuals can actively shape their places and should not be regarded as ‘passive victims of hegemonic processes affecting their place’ (Horlings, 2018, p. 308).

Place leadership could be considered a condition for spiral development. Through the process of local leadership a joint spirit and reflexivity among actors can be created. This process is initiated by

collaborative activities whereby actors reflect on their own actions, capabilities and opportunities for the area and through storylines a shared ambition or joint spirit can be shaped. Also, collaborative activities stimulate the process of ‘learning by doing’ and combined with a joint spirit and reflexivity this could lead to collective agency. It is argued that collective agency is vital for creating collective capacities and resilience within communities (Horlings et al., 2018; Roep et al., 2015). Place leadership enables the creation of coalitions through collaboration with different stakeholders and by creating new connections (Horlings et al., 2018). According to de Jong (2016) problems are traditionally addressed from a specific perspective or sector and as a result problems are not fully addressed. Coalition building offers a way to bridge the different values and encourage collaboration between different actors. In this way, together actors are able to realize their ambitions and address problems that could not have been solved without collaboration. Within coalitions every stakeholder can take the lead and multiple roles and responsibilities could exist within the different types of coalitions. As de Jong (2016) argues ‘Coalition planning is about supporting deliberate choices for roles, rules and responsibilities seen from various perspectives and situations to be able to switch, bridge and mix between different types of coalitions in order to reinforce established institutions and individual aspirations’ (de Jong, 2016, p. 263). The three different coalitions identified by de Jong (2016) can coexist and are not mutually exclusive. Within each arena the ambition that drives the coalition is shaped through interacting (process) referring to values, desires and interests and meaning-making (content) which involves aspects such as knowledge, creativity and learning (de Jong, 2016). Together a joint spirit, collective agency and the creation of coalitions enabled by place leadership can result in building new institutional arrangements. This process can be understood as spiral development and could empower local communities and make localities more resilient. It is important to note that the process of spiral development is context dependent and therefore the existing cultural, social, economic and institutional context should be considered. The spiral process can be considered a place-based approach and a pathway towards sustainability (Horlings et al., 2018; Roep et al., 2015).

Sustainable place based development

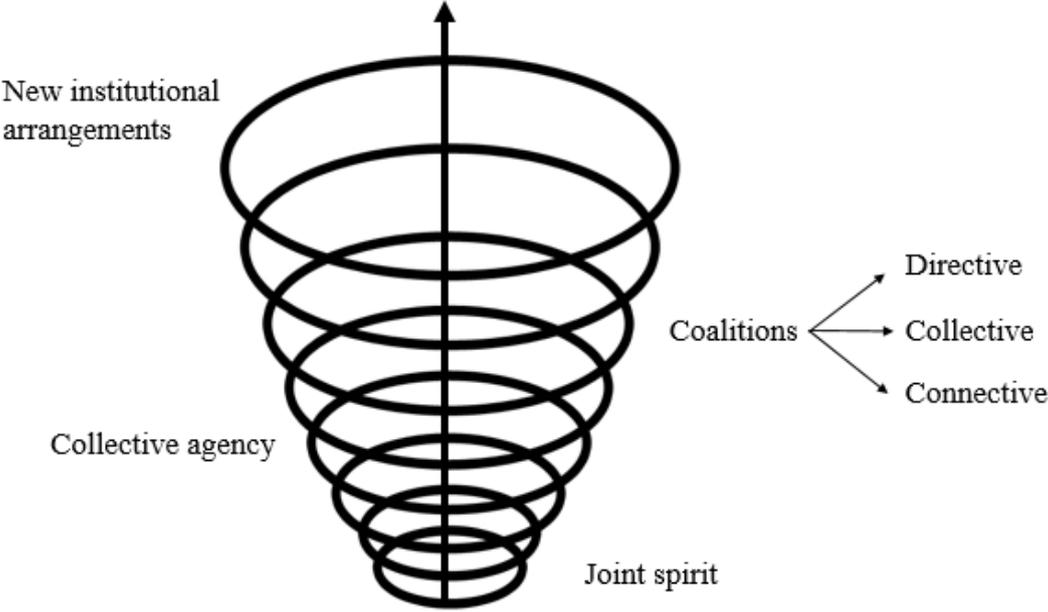


Figure 3 Conceptual model adapted from Horlings et al. (2018, p. 261) and de Jong (2016, p. 289)

3. Methodology

The theories and concepts that are used to analyse the possibilities for coalitions for sustainable development in the area of Allardsoog are discussed in the previous section. The following section presents the methodology used in this study. A detailed description of the study design, research context, data instrument, participant recruitment, data analysis and ethical considerations is provided.

3.1 Study design

A qualitative explanatory study is conducted and an interpretative paradigm is adopted as the underlying approach of this study. According to Hennink et al. (2011), qualitative research provides an insight into the experiences of the participants and therefore allows to gain a deeper understanding on for instance people's beliefs, behaviour and the identification of processes. An interpretative paradigm is concerned with the experiences and perceptions of the participants and often associated with a qualitative research design. (Hennink et al., 2011). Saldaña (2011) describes that an interpretative approach is embedded within a postmodern perspective. In contrast with a positivist perspective, the notion of an absolute truth based on facts is rejected within a postmodern perspective. This perspective assumes that knowledge is socially constructed and multiple perspectives can coexist. In a similar way, Hennink et al. (2011) discuss that the interpretative paradigm allows to understand the experiences and interpretations from the perspective of the participant this is also referred to as an insider's or emic perspective. Moreover, the interpretative paradigm recognizes subjectivity of the participants and the researcher. The worldviews, values and beliefs of the participants are reflected in their interpretations and perceptions. Also, the background of the researcher influences the data and research process (Hennink et al., 2011). A qualitative research design is adopted in this study because the perceptions and experiences of the participants are the central focus. In order to analyse what the possibilities for coalition building are it is important to have an understanding of the perceptions of the participants.

The concepts and theories used in this study are derived from the data collected from the Radius project and the semi-structured in depth interviews with other stakeholders. The initial idea before the data collection was to conduct research about coalitions and sustainable development for the area of Allardsoog. After the data collection process the decision was made to include theories on the place-based approach and place leadership. In this regard this research can be considered both deductive and inductive (Hennink et al., 2011).

3.2 Research context

This study is conducted in the context of the Radius of Allardsoog project started in of the Radius Team consisting of the project's initiators Sjoerd Wagenaar (artistic director), Gea Smidt (artistic mediator between art, science and community) and Jos van der Werff (project manager) and other people that are involved in the project: Prof. Theo Spek (Landscape History at the University of Groningen), Prof. Joop Schaminée (Community Ecology at Wageningen University and Radboud University Nijmegen), Anne Wolff (project leader centre for Landscape Studies) and Prof. Ina Horlings (Socio-spatial Planning at the University of Groningen) and some of the residents identified as key actors within the area. It is important to note that the project was initially part of the PeerGroup a location theatre group in the North of the Netherlands. The PeerGroup received funding from the Performing Arts fund and the province of Drenthe for this project. During the project the PeerGroup withdrew itself from the project because the project did not produce enough theatre productions for large audiences. This and the difficulty of getting funds from other local governments has affected the initial plans of the project.

The study site consists of five villages (Een-West, Bakkeveen, Zevenhuizen, Een and Haulerwijk) within a range of five kilometres surrounding Allardsoog. The villages are situated close to the border of the three Northern provinces Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe and four municipalities Leek, Noordenveld, Ooststellingwerf and Opsterland. The study site is determined on the basis of the five kilometre range and the boundaries overlap with the boundaries of the villages. Both the effect of processes within and outside the area are examined. Coalitions can exceed beyond the boundaries of the study site. Therefore, the stakeholders outside the area that are of importance are included. Figure 4 shows a map of the study area and the administrative borders of the three provinces. The map illustrates how the villages within this study are located across borders.



Figure 4 Map study area (Esri, 2018)

3.3 Method data collection

A part of this study is conducted by adopting elements of a participatory action research approach which allows to involve residents within the research process (Hennink et al., 2011). The data collected from the meetings with the residents in the villages and during the research project ‘Nu voor Later’ by the Radius team in December and November is of a more participatory nature. Within participatory action research the researcher collaborates with people and this differs from other research methods where research is primarily conducted on people. The participants are involved in the data collection and through meetings and workshops the researcher and the participants interact and learn from each other (Hennink et al., 2011). According to Hennink et al. (2011) within participatory action research the researcher acts as a facilitator and the aim is to use research as a tool to improve a specific situation. This approach differs from other research approaches because it seeks to initiate a process of change during and after the research process (Flick, 2015; Hennink et al., 2011). For this reason, participants are engaged within the research process in which the aim of the study is formulated together with the community members involved and data is co-generated. In addition, the results of the study are meant to be used in order to improve the lives of the participants involved in the process (Breitbart, 2010). Reason and Bradbury (2008) explain that participatory action research is about initiating a process of change with the participants. The Radius project tries to initiate a process of change within the

community that will last after the project finishes. Together with the participants important themes for the area were identified. Through discussions and a workshop, the participants were actively engaged in framing the capacities and challenges for the area and in setting the agenda for local governments. This process is further described below and in the results section. These actions can be considered aspects of participatory action research because through this process the issues within the area are identified collectively. Moreover, the collaborative activities such as the workshop and the discussions during the project 'Nu voor Later', can be seen as 'communicative spaces' in which discussions are encouraged (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 3). Nevertheless, the Radius project itself cannot be regarded as participatory action research. The inspiration and ambition of the Radius project are framed by the initiators. The participants were not involved in this process. One of the key aspects in participatory action research is formulating the aim of the project with the community involved. Also, the activities and actions develop over time and cannot be predetermined. The community members are seen as co-researchers who are learning and gaining a deeper understanding of the aspects they want to address within their community. This is a process which develops over time (Breitbart, 2010; Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

The Radius project is aimed to initiate a process of change within the community and involves the residents to think about a future of their place and how they could contribute to this. Residents are involved in the project through activities such as a theatrical walk and a theatre performance. Furthermore, during these activities residents were asked what they would like to change about their place and this provided further input for the research project 'Nu voor Later'. In November and December for a period of five weeks the Radius Team has organised meetings in every village. This research project 'Nu voor Later' is inspired on a research from the Volkshogeschool Allardsoog 50 years ago on liveability in the Northern parts of the Netherlands entitled 'Het Noorden Nu voor Later'. The idea behind 'Nu voor Later' was to conduct a similar research on liveability and the experiences of the residents living in the selected villages. People who were involved in the project are the initiators of the Radius team, Erik Alkema (documentary producer), Kirsten Heshusius (performance artist), Tara Hoorweg (intern from the Design Academy Eindhoven) and myself. In each of the villages an empty store or community house was transformed into a meeting place. Some members of the team were staying in each of the villages from Tuesday until Friday and during these days residents could visit the meeting place between 11am and 5pm. Every Friday evening a final meeting was organised to discuss the findings with the residents. Also, during this period members of the team approached people on the street to ask how them about themes related to liveability in the villages. The number of residents who visited the meeting place and the end discussions differs between the villages. In the first three weeks Tara Hoorweg participated in the project and she conducted approximately eight short interviews in Allardsoog/Een-West and nine in Bakkeveen. Some of these short interviews were held at the home of the participants others at the meeting place. In the remaining weeks no short interviews during the week were conducted but the team members did talk with the residents who visited the meeting place which were on average 15-20 people per week. Every Friday Gea Smidt and I visited the meeting place to talk to the residents and to participate within the final discussion. In Allardsoog/Een-West approximately twelve people were present during the final discussion, in Bakkeveen approximately ten (+one short interview during the day), in Een four (during the day we talked to seven people), and in Zevenhuizen and Haulerwijk three (+ 2 short interviews during the day).

Some of the findings that were collected thus far were discussed with residents from the other villages. This provided an opportunity for residents to reflect on the issues raised in the other villages

and whether or not they could recognise themselves in this. To further encourage dialogue with the residents and between residents during the meetings some of the following questions were asked:

- What do you appreciate about the place you live in?
- What means happiness to you?
- What makes you happy?
- What is your view on current global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity and migration?
- If you had the chance to change something within your environment what would this be?
- How could you contribute to this?
- What kind of help would you need from others?

Apart from these questions the residents stimulated the discussions themselves through sharing their opinions and views. After every meeting on Friday evening the findings were discussed with Gea Smidt and a short video was recorded and posted on the project's Facebook group in order to disseminate some of the findings to the residents. From the meetings and discussions main themes could be identified. The capacities and challenges for the area could be derived from the themes. Besides this project, the meetings with the key actors provided input for this study. The project was introduced to the key actors at a meeting and most of the identified key actors showed up at organised events and meetings. During the meetings the main findings from the project 'Nu voor Later' were shared with the key stakeholders, discussions were held about what to do next and a workshop to develop storylines was organised. Both the data collected from the research project 'Nu voor Later' and the meetings with the key actors organised between January and May 2018 provide input for this study. The researcher has been involved in the project from November 2017 onwards and therefore data collected during the meetings from November until May are included within this study. Figure 5 illustrates a timeline of the main activities during the Radius project. The meetings with the key actors before November 2017 are not included in the timeline as they are not discussed in this thesis.

Within this study both participatory observations and semi-structured interviews are used as data collection instruments. The participatory observations are conducted during the project 'Nu voor Later' and the meetings with the key actors. Hennink et al. (2011) describe that participatory observation is a method in which the researcher participates in the daily life activities of the participants. Within this process the researcher acts according to a certain role (Hennink et al., 2011). The researcher in this project is a master student Socio-Spatial Planning who participates within the project. The meetings and discussions are observed through a specific lens related to the background of the researcher and the aim of the study. The observations are interpreted in the context of theories and concepts related to spatial planning such coalition planning. The aim of this study is to examine the possibilities for coalitions for sustainable development. In light of this the observations are made. The observations of the meetings were documented in field notes and discussed with Gea Smidt in order to validate the findings.

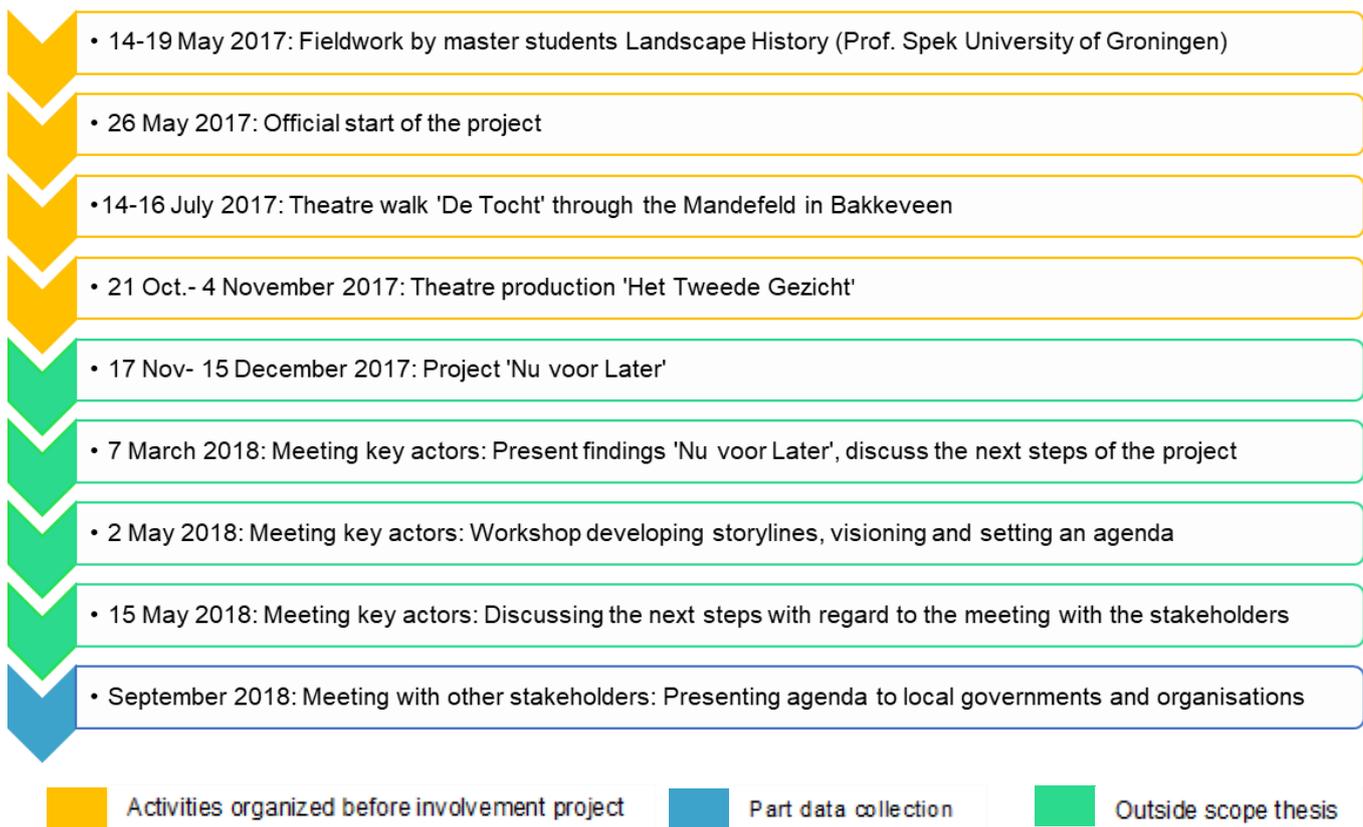


Figure 5 Timeline activities Radius project 2017-2018

In addition to participatory observations 14 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with local governments (four municipalities and three provinces), water boards, State Forestry, the nature organisation It Fryske Gea, a recreational organisation and a farmers' association LTO Noord (see table 1 in paragraph 3.4 for the participant profile). Four group interviews and ten individual interviews were conducted. Some of the participants suggested to do a group interview with other colleagues in order to provide more insight. Semi-structured in depth interviews allow to discuss particular topics related to the study in depth. In this way, a deeper understanding about specific processes, experiences or other issues can be gained from the perspectives of an individual or group (Hennink et al., 2011; Saldaña, 2011). A semi-structured interview guide was prepared based on the main topics of the research. At this time, the main topics that were identified were related to capacities of the area, sustainable development and coalition planning. The interview guide consists of open questions intended to stimulate a dialogue between the researcher and the participants. This allows the guidance of the conversation and at the same time the possibility is provided for the participants to share their own views and experiences (Flick, 2015). The interviews were conducted in Dutch as this is the native language of the participants and the quotes presented in section 4 are translated. The initial interview guide has been slightly revised after the first three interviews. Within the initial interview guide participants were asked to position themselves and the other possible stakeholders on a figure according to interest and influence. This was perceived as quite difficult and the participants could not precisely indicate the position of the other stakeholders. This is most likely related to the hypothetical nature of the question since it is about possible coalitions across geographical borders and not about coalitions that are already established. Therefore, this question was revised and the participants were asked about their own position and role and to identify other stakeholders and their roles without referring to the figure. There was no reason to revise the other questions in the interview guide. After conducting all the interviews with the local

governments the interview guide was slightly adjusted for the interviews with the organisations. Some of the questions related to policy were replaced by questions asking about visions and trends for the future. In addition, two interviews were conducted with municipality A. The interview guide was pilot tested within the actual research setting during the interview with municipality A. For this reason and because the participants suggested to talk to other colleagues a second interview was conducted with municipality A. The interview guide is included in appendix 1.1.

A method that is not used but could have been considered in this study is focus group discussions. Hennink et al. (2011) explain that focus group discussions are a valuable method to gain insights into various perspectives related to the research topic. The nature of this method is interactive and it allows for discussion between the participants. Focus group discussions could be conducted when the topic of the research is not sensitive and there are no issues with confidentiality of the participants (Hennink et al., 2011). Focus group discussions could have been conducted within this study because the topic is not sensitive and it would have been interesting to have different actors discuss about the research topic in the same setting. In particular, a discussion between different actors would be valuable for examining the opportunities for coalitions. Such a discussion would provide an insight in the different perspectives and the group dynamic will enhance discussions that are not possible in the setting of a semi-structured in-depth interview. Due to time constraints and scheduling the interviews it is decided to only conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews.

3.4 Recruitment method participants

The key actors were identified by the initiators of the project at the start of the project in 2017. This was done by reaching out to associations within the villages and by walking through the area and looking for people who are active within the community. The residents were informed about the project 'Nu voor Later' through the theatre performance, social media, advertisements in local media and letters. It should be noted that the residents who did visit the meeting place are not representative for the entire community. Most of the residents were older and active within the villages and others were curious about the project. This is also true for the key actors.

For the semi structured in-depth interviews a stakeholder analysis is used to identify the important actors and to position the actors according to interests and influence. Chevalier and Buckles (2008) argue that stakeholder identification allows for the identification of the different actors involved and the positioning of the differences between the actors. Several steps and techniques for stakeholder identification are proposed by Chevalier and Buckles (2008). The first step is to state the problem or action for which different actors need to be identified. Secondly, a method for identification has to be chosen. In this study the methods identification by experts and identification by other stakeholders are used. The identification by experts allows local people to identify the main actors (Chevalier & Buckles, 2008). This process is conducted during the meetings in the villages organised by the Radius team in the time period of November and December 2017 and meetings with the key actors. Chevalier and Buckles (2008) explain that through identification by other stakeholders, actors themselves can identify other stakeholders with similar or opposing perceptions. During the semi-structured in-depth interviews the participants are asked to identify other stakeholders. At first, based on the input from residents the decision was made to conduct interviews with the municipalities and provinces to gain insight into the possibilities for coalitions. A list with contacts was provided by the Radius team and this document was used to contact policy makers and an alderman working at the municipalities and provinces. The participants were contacted by phone and email and an information letter (appendix 1.2) was provided

in which the aim of the study was stated and how the data is used. Some of the people who were contacted referred to other colleagues who had more knowledge about the topic. A total of five interviews were conducted with the municipalities Leek, Noordenveld, Ooststellingwerf en Opsterland and three interviews with the provinces Drenthe, Friesland and Groningen. The interviews were conducted from March until the beginning of May 2018 at the town and province halls as this was preferred by the participants, and the average length of the interviews is about 30 to 45 minutes. Based on identification by other stakeholders during the interviews several organisations were identified. Due to time constraints it was not possible to conduct interviews with all the stakeholders identified and a selection of organisations was made representing different sectors. In this way, the water boards, State Forestry, the recreational, nature and agricultural sector were included within this study. Some of the participants were recruited using the contact list provided by the Radius team and a few participants were recruited through the snowballing method. Hennink et al. (2011) explain that the snowballing method allows to select participants with specific characteristics. After the interview participants are asked whether they know someone else who might be willing to participate within the study. This person is interviewed by the researcher and is asked the same question. The snowballing method is applied for the recruitment of participants that were initially difficult to find. For instance, the document of the Radius team did not include contact details for every organisation. It was more difficult to contact organisations without having an initial contact person. In these cases, participants of the local governments and other organisations were asked whether they knew someone who would be willing to participate in this study. Six semi-structured in depth interviews were conducted with the organisations between May and mid-July 2018. The interviews were held at the preferred location of the participant which was often the place where they worked. The average length of the interviews is around 30 minutes. Table 1 provides an overview of the participants.

Institution/ Organisation	Number of participants	Function	Date interview
Municipality A	7	Policy makers from social and spatial domain	01-03-2018 25-04-2018
Municipality B	1	Policy maker spatial domain	09-03-2018
Municipality C	1	Alderman	18-04-2018
Municipality D	2	Project manager and policymaker social domain	02-05-2018
Province 1	1	Senior policy adviser social domain	05-03-2018
Province 2	2	Junior and senior policymakers social domain	23-04-2018
Province 3	1	Trainee project leader	26-04-2018
Water board 1	1	Field Coordinator	08-05-2018
Water board 2	1	Field Coordinator	14-06-2018
State Forestry	1	Forester	20-06-2018
Recreational organisation	1	Secretary	07-05-2018
It Fryske Gea	1	Deputy director	01-06-2018
LTO Noord	1	Board member	24-05-2018

Table 1 Overview Participants

3.5 Data analysis

Within this study the content and thematic approach are adopted for the data analysis. The content analysis could be considered as a deductive way of analysing data which allows the use of concepts and theories. On the contrary, a thematic approach enables the search for themes and patterns within the data and is therefore an inductive approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Flick, 2015). The interviews are transcribed verbatim, anonymised and analysed by using the software program Atlas.ti. According to Cope (2016) there are different ways to make sense of the data for instance through memos, concept mapping and coding. In this study the data is analysed through coding because this method enables the reduction of the data by themes, organisation of the data and analysis (Cope, 2016).

Several coding methods were applied such as descriptive coding, In Vivo coding and analytical codes. Through descriptive coding topics are assigned to the data in order to summarize the content of the selected paragraph (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2011). For instance, the code ‘capacities of the area’ was assigned to paragraphs where the participants referred to the capabilities and capacities of the community. This code emerged as a central theme for the selected passages. In vivo coding refers to the actual words or sentences used by the participants. If something stands out from the paragraph this can be coded as an In Vivo code (Saldaña, 2011). An example of an In Vivo code is ‘Naoberschap’. In the data one of the participants talks about ‘Naoberschap’ which refers to social cohesion within the community. Analytical codes can both reflect deductive and inductive codes through which a deeper insight into the context of the sentences and the text passages can be gained. It can be understood as deductive when codes are related to the theoretical framework and concepts, theories and questions of the interview guide (Cope, 2016). For example, the participants were asked about conditions for possible coalitions and ‘conditions for coalitions’ was applied as a code. An example of an inductive code is ‘distant area’ which appeared from the data. This code was applied to other passages within the data and in this way other cases could be identified (Cope, 2016).

After the initial coding process the transcripts were recoded and codes were merged in order to organise the data. Codes were categorized into code families based on themes, similarities and conceptual links. For instance, the code family place-based development includes codes related to this theme such as capacities and challenges for the area. This process can be referred to as the coding structure (Cope, 2016). The code tree which consists of the code families and corresponding codes is included in appendix 1.4. The output of the code families was analysed in order to look for patterns and themes within the data. The coded passages include the questions asked by the interviewer in order to check whether the interviewer made interferences and if this influenced the answers of the participants.

3.6 Ethical considerations

It is important to elaborate on the ethical considerations because conducting research affects the people involved within the study (Dowling, 2016). Before each of the interviews the participants were informed about the research through an information letter and also at the beginning of the interview. The participants were asked to sign an informed consent form in which the participant declared to be fully informed about the aim of this study, how personal information will be treated and agreed to record the interview for the purpose of transcribing. Also, the informed consent states that participation within this study is voluntarily and if the participant wishes to withdraw from the interview this is possible at any time without having to provide a reason for this. In addition, the researcher assures confidentiality and agrees to anonymize the data and only use the data for the purposes of this study (see Flick 2015; Miles et al., 2014). The informed consent form is included in appendix 1.3. In order to anonymise the

data personal information such as names are deleted from the transcripts. In this way, it cannot be traced back who participated within this study (Flick et al., 2015).

Other important aspects that should be taken into consideration are critical reflexivity and power relations (Dowling, 2016). Critical reflexivity refers to subjectivity of the researcher and is the process in which the researcher reflects on his or her role in the project and in what way personal characteristics can have an influence on the participants and the data (Dowling, 2016). For instance, in this study the researcher is a young female who grew up in a small town in the province of Groningen. In addition, the researcher was partly involved in the Radius project, interacted with residents in the villages and interviews with local governments were conducted. The stories of the residents and the local governments might be contrasting and it is therefore important to be objective. In addition to being objective it is important to acknowledge subjectivity and how this influences the data (Dowling, 2016). Therefore, the findings from the Radius project and the Radius method were discussed with Gea Smidt one of the initiators of the project. This discussion is valuable for validating the results. In a similar way, it is important to be aware of power relations within the process of analysing and interpreting the data and in reporting the results. For instance, the decision about which quotes to present can influence the way the findings are reflected and can change the way the participants are perceived by others. Therefore, the power of knowledge should be taken into account during the research process and when presenting the findings (Dowling, 2016).

4. Results

The previous sections have provided an insight into the existing scholarship on sustainable development, the place-based approach, place leadership and coalition planning. In addition, the methodology of this study and the ethical considerations have been discussed. This section presents the findings of the data analysis. Paragraph 4.1 reflects on the ways sustainable development is understood by the participants, how sustainability is framed within the Radius project and how this differs from the three pillar model discussed in the theoretical framework. Subsequently paragraph 4.2 addresses the capacities and challenges for the area and the institutional context and how this can be viewed in light of a place-based approach. In addition, this paragraph discusses the Radius approach and the potential for place leadership considering spiralling development. Finally, the possibilities for coalitions are addressed in paragraph 4.3.

4.1 Sustainable development

In paragraph 2.1.2 it is discussed that sustainability can be approached from several angles. This is also reflected in the way the participants perceive sustainable development in particular with regard to rural areas. Sustainability is understood from multiple perspectives and often related to the ecological and social dimension. From the data it appears that ideas about sustainability among the participants can be related to the three pillar model. In addition, the way sustainability is approached within the Radius project resembles the transformative approach.

4.1.1 Sustainability: People, Planet, Profit?

A majority of the participants discusses sustainability in relation to the ecological and the social dimension. With regard to the ecological pillar some of the participants talk about the availability of natural resources and preservation of nature. For instance, part of the discussion on sustainability in municipality A was about how the monotonous cultivation of crops leads to soil depletion. This municipality is thinking about these issues within the context of the P10 partnership consisting of different municipalities from rural regions and other organisations within the Netherlands. Within this partnership several topics related to rural areas such as the challenges rural areas are facing and the relation between rural areas and cities are discussed. In this context the participants argued that it is important to think about soil depletion and how this can be prevented in the future. In addition, the participants from State Forestry and It Fryske Gea expressed sustainability in terms of long term development. The representative of It Fryske Gea describes:

“Sustainability contains the word long term. Which is about both nature and the environment as well as about human beings. For us there is a harmony between the way people use it and the area itself... in addition you have the ecological interpretation, what we are also working on is what is your environmental footprint is outside of the area.... For instance, if we make adjustments to buildings we try to make it energy neutral.” (Participant It Fryske Gea)

This relation between people and nature is also expressed by the employee of State Forestry. He argues that State Forestry works according to the principles of protecting, experiencing and utilisation. Protecting nature is considered to be the most important aspect followed by the way people experience nature through recreation and finally how natural resources such as trees and grass are used in products. The participant argues that with regard to developing the area it is important to consider the future and

to make long term decisions. One of the participants argues that although sustainability includes a long term perspective, this does not necessarily imply preservation. This is illustrated in the following quote:

“Sustainability means for the long term but that does not mean that everything should be... it is in definition not conservative in the sense of preservation.” (Participant municipality C)

Also, the participant explains that within municipality C sustainability means that the development should be sustainable. This is in line with Waas et al. (2011) who describe that sustainable development reflects a process and not an end goal. With regard to sustainability numerous participants from the local governments and water boards refer to the energy transition and the aim of the national government to be energy neutral in 2050. In this relation the adjusting the housing stock and several ways to generate energy are discussed such as solar panels and parks, wind farms and biodigester energy. Within the discussion about the energy transition the scale of the solar parks and windfarms appeared to be an important aspect. For instance, one of the participants explains that the value of the landscape is important and that in this context it is not desirable for the municipality to place high windmills. This will have an impact on the landscape and the way the landscape is perceived by the residents. Therefore, the municipality believes that sustainable energy generation should be small scale and fit within the landscape. This is also expressed by other participants. The water boards perceive sustainability primarily in terms of climate adaptation, water quality and water safety and mention that climate change is one of the biggest challenges they are facing.

The way sustainability is perceived in relation to the ecological dimension reflects ideas about preservation of natural resources and the landscape for future generations. This is similar to the way sustainability is often viewed (Bonevac, 2010; Littig & Grießler, 2005). Nevertheless, sustainability is not solely understood from the ecological perspective as the participants acknowledge the existence of other dimensions. In both interviews conducted with municipality A the participants refer to sustainability with regard to ageing in place and the organisation of facilities within villages. This is related to the demographic challenges rural areas are facing. The population composition within the municipalities is changing as the population is ageing and youth is moving to nearby cities or other places for education and job opportunities. In relation to policies that require people to live independently within their homes for as long as possible, the participants discussed that it is important to think about how people can age within their homes. According to the participants this includes loneliness and the way facilities are organised for example groceries delivering services. As one of the participants phrases:

“... how do you ensure in a sustainable way that together you can live and do recreational activities and more without people losing connection on social or economic/ financial level... how do you make sure everyone is able to participate and keeps participating.” (Participant 5, municipality A)

In this regard, the participants also refer that sustainability is about the way costs and benefits are divided. In addition, a few participants mention sustainability in association with collaboration. The participants of municipality C, LTO Noord and the State Forestry referred to collaboration when asked about what sustainability means in the context of the rural areas. For instance, the participant from State Forestry states that sustainability is also about working together with other actors and to look for ways how something can be realized for the area by working together. In a similar way, the participant of LTO Noord explains that with regard to sustainable development it is essential to let go of the clear

demarcation lines between organisations and establish new connections in order to cooperate. This is also related in the way nature and agriculture are often portrayed as contradictory rather than cooperative.

In contrast to the ecological and social pillar, none of the participants explicitly refers to the economic pillar when talking about sustainability. The discussions on agriculture and nature could implicitly be linked to the economic pillar. For example, a participant of municipality B explains that nature areas are to a certain extent perceived differently within the provinces. He states that the Natura 2000 areas are perceived as a threat for agriculture in Friesland. Whereas in Drenthe they talk about the ‘pearls of Drenthe’ when referring to the Natura 2000 areas. The opposing perceptions on nature and agriculture are also reflected in the way nature and agriculture are portrayed. According to the participant of LTO Noord, the differences between agriculture and nature are often highlighted. Whereas in her opinion this is not the case and agriculture and nature are not against one another. Additionally, one of the participants of municipality D expresses that for their municipality the landscape is very important and that agriculture plays an important role in preserving the landscape. This is in particular the case in areas where agricultural land and nature areas border. According to the participant it is important to ensure that there is biodiversity within the agricultural land and that the trees on the border with the nature areas are not removed. Multiple participants recognize that the agricultural sector is nowadays more focused on downscaling and biodiversity. The participants from It Fryske Gea and State Forestry discuss that there are two sides to every story and understand that from the position of the farmer it is not necessarily that they do not want to be more nature inclusive and that they are tied to legislation and have to make a living. The participants are glad to see that more farmers are willing to invest in nature inclusive agriculture and believe it is better to work together than against each other. This view is also shared by the participant of LTO Noord:

“... I believe that this is also sustainability [talking about collaboration beyond borders] that it enables a continuous change and that there are more possibilities within an area. Because in an area where there are only contradictions and people do not collaborate it would not be a nice area to live.”
(Participant LTO Noord)

The discrepancy between economic growth and the environment discussed in paragraph 2.1.2 is to a certain extent evident within the debates about agriculture and nature. This is especially related to scale. The participants describe that over the last decades the agricultural sector has transformed and that the number of farms has declined. The agricultural sector is quite large within the study area and is particularly focused on dairy production. In addition, the area is characterised by nature areas and within some surroundings the nature and agricultural areas are next to each other. The ‘contradiction’ between nature and agriculture is talked about in the context of large scale farms because according to a few participants this could potentially do harm to nature for example to biodiversity. As is discussed above the participants believe that farmers are increasingly aware of the impact agriculture has on nature and are more willing to become nature inclusive.

It appears from the data that the participants perceive sustainability in a similar way as the often used three pillar model discussed in paragraph 2.1.2. A majority of the participants mentions sustainability in relation to the ecological and social dimension and to a lesser extent the economic pillar is discussed. Also, a majority of the participants of the local governments, nature organisations and LTO Noord talked about both the ecological and the social dimension of sustainability. The main topics that were discussed in relation to sustainability are demographic challenges, the energy transition, citizens’ initiatives,

nature, agriculture and collaboration. The water boards referred more to climate adaptation, water safety and the energy transition. From the perspectives of the participants on sustainability it can be argued that the participants perceive sustainability as dynamic and acknowledge that sustainability has multiple aspects. The environmental interpretation on sustainability is discussed in relation to preservation and the future. However, this does not mean that other dimensions are not recognized by these participants. The ecological dimension is often introduced by the participants in relation to the social dimension. The focus is not solely on the environmental pillar and social values are included in the perceptions on sustainability. This is in line with Quental et al. (2011), who have discussed the shift in perceptions on sustainability. Although a few of the participants express the importance to look for new ways of collaboration, which can be associated with change in values and doing things differently as they are now, sustainability is not understood from either an ecological modernist view nor from a transformative perspective.

4.1.2 The Radius project: ‘A change from the inside out’

The Radius project adopts a different approach to sustainability than the often used three pillar People, Planet, Profit model. The idea behind the project is to contribute to a sustainable society and sustainability is understood from an emotional, landscape and social perspective. The emotional dimension is embedded in happiness and includes aspects related to what makes people happy. The landscape dimension is reflected in thinking about biodiversity and the unique characteristics of the landscape. Also, this dimension is about how communities within the localities can adapt to possible future challenges such as climate change and a changing population composition. The social perspective is associated with liveability and it includes the relation people have with the places they live in. This different perspective on sustainability is reflected in the discussion within the project ‘Nu voor later’ and the meetings with the key actors. For instance, during the project ‘Nu voor Later’ performance artist Kirsten Heshusius created interventions within each of the villages to make people aware and trigger people to think about societal issues such as sustainability. Within some of the interventions litter from the streets was used in a piece of art see figure 6. In this way, people were made more aware about littering on the streets but also the influence of consumerism within society by seeing all the familiar wrappers and packages from multinational concerns. The intention of the interventions is to let them speak for itself in order for people to think about it themselves. In addition, the different perspectives on sustainability are reflected in the questions asked to residents see paragraph 3.3. Within the meetings organised for the key actors discussions included visioning storylines for a sustainable future for the area. Aspects related to what makes people happy living in the area, liveability, social connection, the characteristics of the landscape and people’s own thoughts and opinions were reflected in this process. By including different aspects of sustainability as opposed to only approaching sustainability from the social, economic and environmental side provided new insights and new perspectives. By offering new perspectives residents tended to look differently to their area.



Figure 6 Art performance by Kirsten Heshusius in Allardssoog (Radius team, 2017)

The way sustainability is perceived within the Radius project fits with some of the ideas of the transformative perspective discussed by Hopwood et al. (2005) and Robinson (2004). Residents are confronted with unsustainable behaviour within society and people are given new insights and perspectives. It fits within the idea that in order to tackle sustainability a change in value systems is needed. The emotional, social and landscape perspective on sustainability include individual and collective values about happiness, the way people live within the area and how the landscape is valued. Ideas about sustainability are reflected in the values of the residents and by providing new insights and perspective the Radius project potentially contributes to a value change. Nevertheless, a transformative approach includes an actual value change and changes in attitudes and behaviours. The transformative perspective includes deeper underlying meanings of equity and power structures in society and politics. In addition, it is about the extent to which a process of change is initiated (Hopwood et al., 2005; Robinson, 2004). In light of this, the Radius project aims to contribute to a change from the inside out but the extent to which this process is initiated is limited. Only a small share of the population living in the villages is reached and engaged within the project. Through the organized activities awareness about the impact of unsustainable behaviour on the environment and society is raised. Within the discussions organized for the key actors ideas about a sustainable future for the area are discussed. It is debatable whether a real value change is initiated by the project because a small share of the residents is involved in the project and the deeper underlying meanings of the transformative perspective are less reflected upon in the approach.

This paragraph has attempted to give an insight in the perceptions of the participants on sustainability and the way sustainability is approached within the Radius project. The next paragraph discusses the capacities and challenges of the area and the role of leadership for place-based development within the area of Allardssoog.

4.2 Place-based development

The previous paragraph has given an insight in the way sustainability is perceived by the participants and how sustainability is approached within the Radius project. In paragraph 2.2.1 it is argued that a

place-based approach takes into consideration the tangible and intangible capacities of localities and the capabilities of communities. Therefore, an insight into the capacities and challenges of the area around Allardsoog is given. Also, it has been discussed in the theoretical section that the institutional framework has an influence on the implementation of a place-based approach and on the emergence of place leadership. This section addresses the institutional setting within the area and whether it provides conditions for local leadership. Finally, the last paragraph elaborates on the Radius method with regard to spiralling development.

4.2.1 Capacities and challenges of the area

This paragraph discusses the capacities and challenges for the area based on the findings from ‘Nu voor Later’, the meetings with the key actors and the interviews. From the findings it appeared that the history of the area, the landscape, the community and self-organisation can be identified as the core qualities of the area. In addition, challenges related to infrastructure, a balance between nature and agriculture, the energy transition and the changing composition of the population were mentioned by the residents and the participants from the local governments and other organisations.

Capacities of the area

From the conversations and meetings with the residents it appears that they feel attached to the area because of the shared history. The history is still visible within the landscape and is part of the identity of the area. For instance, some fortress from the Dutch war of Independence (Eighty Years’ War) such as the Zwartendijksterschans are still visible see figure 7. These fortresses were built to protect Friesland from the Spanish troops. Also, the area is formed and shaped by the reclamation of peat during the 17th-19th centuries. As a result of the different periods in time and the various parts of the area that have undergone peat reclamation the landscape is mixed. In the beginning of the project the initiators had a conversation with Prof. Spek and drs. Kuipers (Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot) about the landscape of the area. From these conversations it appeared that the landscape can be characterized as a mixed landscape of peat which flows over into sand and clay (Smidt, 2017). The identity of the villages is related to the soil. For instance, some of the participants of municipality A indicate that the history of peat reclamation has shaped the identity of Haulerwijk, which is originally established through peat reclamation and this process has led to soil depletion and poverty in the area. In the reasoning of the participants the residents are used to work hard and work together in order to combat poverty. This collective way of thinking is nowadays reflected in the large number of volunteers active within the community. For example, the public pool in the village is fully managed by volunteers. Another way history is important for the area is through the Volkshogeschool Allardsoog which can be considered a part of the areas’ identity and forms a connection between the villages and the residents. According to the participants of ‘Nu voor Later’ and the key actors, the Volkshogeschool used to be a platform to discuss and think about certain topics. The ideas of the Volkshogeschool and Jarig van der Wielen and the way the Volkshogeschool has contributed to the development of the area and the empowerment of the people are still alive among a certain generation. For these residents it is of great importance that the ideas of the Volkshogeschool are not forgotten and that younger residents and visitors are familiar with the history of the area.



Figure 8 Zwartendijksterschans copyright Eric Kieboom (PeerGroup, 2017)



Figure 7 Nivon huis Allardssoog (Radius team, 2017)

The findings of the project ‘Nu voor Later’ show that the landscape and nature are valuable for the participants and contribute to their sense of place. The participants appreciate that they are living in a green, quiet and spacious area. This was also indicated by the key actors during the meetings. The villages are located near the Mandefeld Bakkeveen which is a Natura 2000 area see figures 9 and 10 for impressions of the landscape. Within the summer a lot of tourists visit Bakkeveen. Some of the participants of the project and the key actors believe it would be better if tourism and recreation is focused on slow tourism as this will fit better with the area. In addition, they believe it would be beneficial if the tourists are spread over the different villages and are not only concentrated in Bakkeveen. The reason behind this is to ensure tourists are not a burden for Bakkeveen and the other villages can benefit from tourists. The participant of the recreational organisation argues that tourism is very important for Bakkeveen and although in the summer it might be crowded without the tourists facilities such as the local supermarket would not exist.



Figure 9 Area around Allardssoog and Bakkeveen (Radius team, 2017)



Figure 10 Mandefeld Bakkeveen (It Fryske Gea, 2018)

The residents might be attached to area because of the shared history and the landscape, but this does not necessarily mean that the residents from the different villages are connected with each other. A sense of community is differently experienced by the residents who participated within the project ‘Nu voor Later’ and within some of the villages there is a stronger sense of social cohesion as compared to others. For instance, in Een, Zevenhuizen and Haulerwijk the participants experience a greater sense of community. In Een the residents started an initiative to merge the public and Christian primary schools. This was done successfully and within the new building a school and a village centre are located. This building (de Schans) functions as a meeting place for the residents and in this way the primary school can still exist within the village. In Een-west and Allardsoog the residents feel less connected to each other. This is related to the fact that the villages are thinly populated and more expanded. The participants wish to have more contact with other residents. There are several citizens’ initiatives within the villages. As is discussed in paragraph 2.2.1 the emergence of citizens’ initiatives is becoming more important in light of decentralisation of governments and the focus on bottom-up initiatives. Examples of initiatives are an energy cooperation and initiatives for the realisation of fibre optic cable in villages across the geographical borders of the provinces. Also, as is mentioned above volunteers play an important role in these initiatives. For instance, in figure 8 the Nivon huis is illustrated this is a ‘do-it-yourself’ hotel which is fully run by volunteers. The participants and a few participants from the local governments indicate that the majority of the volunteers and board members are older and there are less young new volunteers active. It is more difficult to recruit board members because most people are too busy with their jobs and families. Additionally, the changing population composition plays a role in this. The demographic challenge and other challenges are discussed in the next paragraph.

Challenges of the area

The composition of the population in the villages is changing due to the process of ageing and the migration of youth to different cities and regions for education and jobs. This has an impact on the liveability as the number of services is declining and schools might have to close down. The majority of the villages (Allardsoog, Een-West, Haulerwijk en Zevenhuizen) is experiencing out migration of youth to other cities. This is related to the job opportunities, accessibility, services and housing prices. For example, a few residents indicate that the house prices are too high for first time house buyers. Some of the residents in Een and Bakkeveen describe that young families are moving to these villages as they are located near the cities and to nature. Additionally, the absence of facilities is not always experienced

to be a problem, because residents take this into account and adjust their daily life pattern to this and pick up groceries on the way. However, some of the participants are concerned for the older people and mention that this can be an obstacle for older residents as they have to age in place.

The balance between nature and agriculture and the energy transition have been discussed in paragraph 4.1.1. To add to these discussions some of the participants believe that new ways of generating energy should fit the landscape and should be small scale. In addition, in the context of the project 'Nu voor Later' some of the residents in Bakkeveen discussed that apart from generating neutral energy a shift in peoples mind set and behaviour is needed in order to realize the ambition to become energy neutral in 2050. Another much debated topic by the participants in the project is infrastructure. The participants believe that that there is too much traffic speeding in the centre of the villages. In addition, the bicycle lanes are not connected and stop at the borders. The residents believe it would be better for the area if the bicycle lanes do not abruptly end and in this way the villages are more connected. Accessibility is another theme related to infrastructure. This both entails the physical accessibility by public transport and digital accessibility. Some of the participants of the municipalities and provinces discussed that in light of decreasing facilities people should have access to internet. This is also important for local entrepreneurs so that they can be located within the area.

As is mentioned earlier a place-based approach is focused on the local context and on the capabilities of local communities (Barca et al., 2012; Horlings, 2018). This paragraph has elaborated on the capacities and challenges of the area from the perspectives of the residents, local governments and other organisations. These findings should be interpreted within the context of a place-based approach. In order to think about possibilities for coalitions it is important to understand the capacities and challenges of the area from the perspectives of the residents and other actors involved. The next paragraph discusses the institutional context which could have an effect on the implementation of a place-based approach.

4.2.2 The institutional context & citizen participation

As is illustrated in the theoretical framework section 2.2.2, several authors (Beer & Clower, 2014; Rodríguez-Pose, 2013) discuss that the institutional framework has an influence on the implementation of a place-based approach and the emergence of place leadership. The Dutch institutional framework can be characterised as decentralised where the tasks that were previously the responsibility of the national government are divided to local governments. Within the context of the retreat of the national government local governments are asked to be more participative and more responsibility has been placed on citizens who are expected to be more proactive and resilient (Van der Steen et al., 2014). The participants of the municipalities and provinces in this study indicate that the municipalities are the closest government to the citizens and can be seen as the 'first' government for citizens. In addition, the participants of the municipalities talk about their changing role in relation to the shift from citizen to government participation. Van der Steen et al. (2014) explain that this shift involves a change whereby the ideas and initiatives from residents no longer have to fit within the existing policy frames shaped by the governments but can be framed outside of these existing frames. There is a shift in perspective from the local governments as the initiator and citizens as participants towards citizens as the initiators and local governments as facilitators. Moreover, within government participation the citizens are expected to take the initiative because it is believed that citizens have their own ambitions that they want to realize. The reasoning behind government participation is to look at the possibilities and not from the perspective of to solve policy problems (Van der Steen et al., 2014). It appears from the findings that local governments are asked to adopt a more participative role but because of laws and legislation the municipalities and provinces often have the final decision and therefore the participants question what

this means for participation. For instance, a few participants argue that the reasoning behind government participation is that local governments and citizens are seen as equal partners. However, they indicate that in reality this is often not the case and there is an imbalance in power. Local governments often have the final say about the decision that is made and are bound to legislation and zoning plans. Additionally, a majority of the participants state that they are searching for their role within the context of government participation. For example, some of the participants describe the shift towards government participation is still in progress and that the local governments are still thinking about how to fulfil their new role. The local governments are asked to adopt a facilitating role in this process whereby they can realize the conditions for communities to become more resilient. In what ways the local governments can provide the conditions and to what extent they should facilitate plans presented by residents is still under discussion. Some of the participants indicate that in order to encourage the emergence of citizens' initiatives they try to have as little requirements as possible. Two of the participants indicate that the municipality is reviewing potential initiatives according to the notion yes unless. This notion implicates that the initiatives do not have to meet a list of requirements and are approved if there are no objections. The following quote illustrates the role of municipalities in relation to citizen initiatives:

“You see things are emerging [initiatives] and that it is actually very good that the municipality for example does not interfere or only has an advising role. For instance, the energy cooperation which has been started from the residents themselves. These are great initiatives and you should not interfere with that.... that you facilitate and support but not take over or direct.” (Participants 2, 3, municipality A)

One of the identified issues expressed by a few participants is how to make residents owner and how to encourage participation and the emergence of initiatives. There are differences between villages and communities and some take the initiatives and others do not. Some of the participants describe that they are in a conflicting situation. As the participant of province A expresses:

“You see that some villages are very active and they get optical fibre and other villages don't do anything about it. As government should you assist? These are discussions that we cannot fully answer right now... If no one is taking the lead should you do it? Will you not achieve the opposite that people are taking their hands of. These are the kind of discussions we are having also with municipalities.” (Participant, Province A)

The quote shows that on the one hand local governments want citizens to participate and take ownership over certain issues such as the maintenance of facilities. On the other hand, this quote illustrates that some villages are less active and there are less initiatives and actions taken. Some participants are questioning to what extent the municipality should facilitate these communities. It is argued that if municipalities support one village other villages could also expect support. The question is whether this is possible. In addition, the participants indicate the representation of residents as a matter that should be considered. For instance, the association of village interests do not cover all the interests of the residents and this should be taken into account when making decisions. For the municipalities the local knowledge and experiences of the residents are important but this also occasionally leads to 'over-asking' the residents. Residents and village associations are asked to give their opinion on for instance the liveability of the place they live in. Based on monitoring and questionnaires reports on the situation within the villages are developed. In a way the role of local governments can be characterised as reactive.

The municipalities and provinces have different roles. The province has less direct contact with residents as this is the role of the municipalities. All the participants of the province express that besides

having a facilitating role they see themselves as connective and disseminating knowledge. For instance, knowledge is transmitted through good examples from one municipality to other municipalities. Also, when provinces cannot grant certain subsidies they like to think along with the applicant what they could do. Indeed, a few of the participants of the local governments indicate that they have a more reactive as opposed to a proactive role. Additionally, the influence of politics should be taken into account. As a result of the political nature of the institutions plans are adapted every term and money is divided differently, depending on the dominant political party.

Besides the municipalities and the provinces, the water boards are also increasingly adopting a more participative attitude. The participants of the water boards indicate that for them it is important to involve citizens and other organisations in their plans because of their local knowledge and the plans have to be supported. For instance, the participants explain that once a while meetings with other stakeholders are organised to discuss the outlines of the plans. Considering this, the participants perceive the water boards as a connector. It is acknowledged that participation and involvement of citizens is important to gain trust. One of the participants argues that in the past citizens were less involved and that the water board has learned from this experience and is more actively seeking for participation.

When asked about plans for the area it appeared that the local governments do not have specific plans for the area around Allardsoog. The participants mentioned plans in relation to liveability which could have an impact on the villages in this study. However, concrete plans to develop the area are missing. A few of the participants suggest that if there were any plans for this area it would be mainly focused on preservation. This was argued in the context of the qualities of the area that any development should fit the character of the place and in relation to the way the villages are located near the borders of the municipality.

From the findings it can be interpreted that the institutional context offers to a certain extent possibilities for encouraging citizen participation. The local governments act as a facilitator and in some occasions as a connector and the involvement of citizens is encouraged. In this regard, the governments are willing to provide the conditions necessary for the emergence of local leadership (Beer & Clower, 2014). Having said this, the findings indicate that the local governments try to encourage citizen participation but adopt a more reactive role. It is argued by the participants that they are willing to participate and look at the possibilities but the initiative has to come from bottom-up. If citizens take the initiative the local governments evaluate the possibilities for facilitation. The next paragraph will elaborate more in depth on place leadership in the context of the Radius project.

4.2.3 Place leadership: towards spiralling development

In the foregoing paragraphs the capacities and challenges of the area and the institutional context are discussed. In order to analyse the role of place leadership in place-based development for a sustainable area it is important to reflect on the Radius project in the light of spiralling development. The first subparagraph elaborates on the Radius method and in the second subparagraph the Radius method is compared with the case of the Westerkwartier. In this way, it is analysed to what extent spiralling development has emerged from the Radius project. The results presented in this paragraph are based on own observations and conversations with Gea Smidt about the Radius method.

The Radius method

As is mentioned in the introduction the aim of the Radius project is to connect art, science and the community in order to contribute to a sustainable society. Artists, scientists and residents possess different knowledge and can provide various perspectives. In this project the multiple perspectives are

combined which according to the project is necessary to realize a sustainable society. The way sustainability is approached is described in paragraph 4.1.2. From this point of view it is believed that if actors work together the steps towards sustainability can be realized faster in comparison with actors working independently. Art plays a valuable role in this process as it can be seen as a way to connect people, bridge perspectives, imagining a future for the area and it tend to affect people emotionally. In this way, people might get inspired and want to join the activities organised by the project. For instance, during the end discussion in Zevenhuizen in the context of the project 'Nu voor Later' performance artist Kirsten Heshusius symbolised the social connections in the village through art. The participants mentioned that a lot of residents are active within associations but that there is less interaction between residents from different associations. Some of the participants feel there is a bit of a division within the community. Figure 11 shows the art performance by Kirsten Heshusius which symbolises the social connections within the village. At the end of her performance Kirsten wrapped the residents who were present at the meeting in plastic. The art performance visualises what is happening in the community in this case a reference is made to social cohesion and this affects people emotionally. Through visualisation the participants could reflect on social cohesion within the village and on creating new connections and it provides new perspectives. In this way, art connects people and bring them together. Additionally, in paragraph 4.1.2 it is showed how art can be used to raise awareness about societal issues. People might think about the impact of unsustainable behaviour on the environment but by for instance showing all the litter found on the street in performance artwork people actually see it in front of them. Through visualisation people are confronted with in this case unsustainable behaviour.



Figure 11 Art performance Kirsten Heshusius in Zevenhuizen (Radius team, 2017)

The Radius project aims to contribute to development of the area from bottom-up. Figure 12 shows a drawing of the outline of the Radius project at the start of the project in 2017 by Gea Smidt. The drawing illustrates the initial thoughts of the Radius project will result in sustainable development. The Radius project is placed at the centre of the circle surrounded by art, science and the community and at the outside of the circle the different actors such as governments, local organisations and entrepreneurs

are placed. The intention of the Radius project is to over time reach, involve and mobilize more people during the project and make the circle bigger. This is illustrated with a large arrow starting in the middle of the circle. People can take individual and collective actions that serve the aim of creating a sustainable society. In the figure this is illustrated by the arrows starting from the three domains art, science and community. Interventions such as the theatre walk and theatre performance are set at specific times. This is to visualise the findings at that point in order to reflect and engage people in the project. Over time the aim is to think together with the residents and other actors involved about themes that are important for sustainable development for the area. This is the foundation of setting the agenda with the local governments. In the corner of figure 12 the seven V's which reflect the method of the Radius project are illustrated. This includes collecting, expressing, connecting, visualising, showing, assessing the impact and to continue. In the beginning of the project information about the area is collected and this information is expressed in an artistic concept for the project. Connections are made between artists, scientists and community members during the project. The information collected is visualised through interventions and these are shown to the residents of the community. The impact of the interventions is examined and reflected upon. Together with the community each of the projects will be discussed and this discussion includes to think about the next steps. This can be seen as an overview of the project outline at the start of the project.

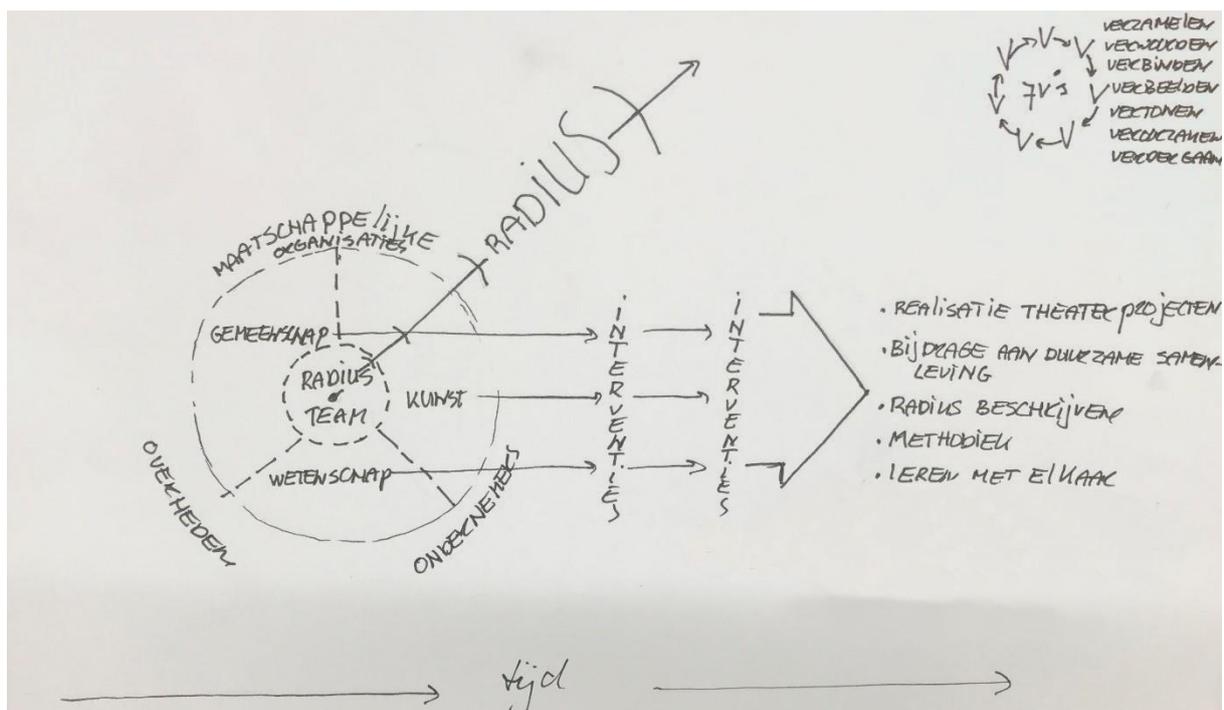


Figure 12 Initial outline Radius project

Based on conversations about the Radius method with Gea Smidt several steps of the Radius method can be identified which are illustrated in figure 13. The reasoning behind the Radius project is that this approach can be conducted at any place. In addition, before the start of the project it was argued by one of the initiators that it is not necessary to do preliminary research beforehand. The method is based on the notion ‘dig where you stand’ meaning being present in the area for a longer time and observing what emerges from the area. The first step in figure 13 can be described as looking into the history, stories and events that have occurred within the area. By doing this it can be examined how the past has shaped the area and what stories are alive among the residents. Looking at the history and stories of the area the

history of the Volkshogeschool Allardsoog and the research ‘Het Noorden Nu voor Later’ appeared. This formed a point of departure for the project as the ideas about development and empowerment of the Volkshogeschool Allardsoog and the research about liveability in the North of the Netherlands suit with the aim of contributing to a sustainable society. The decision was therefore made to conduct a research on smaller scale in line with ‘Het Noorden Nu voor Later’ in November and December 2017. With this research project the aim was to examine how people feel about their place and what they would like to be different. In this regard, the discussion included debates about future and current challenges the area is facing such as demographic challenges and climate change. Residents were asked to think about their place and how they can be part of a process of change towards a sustainable society.

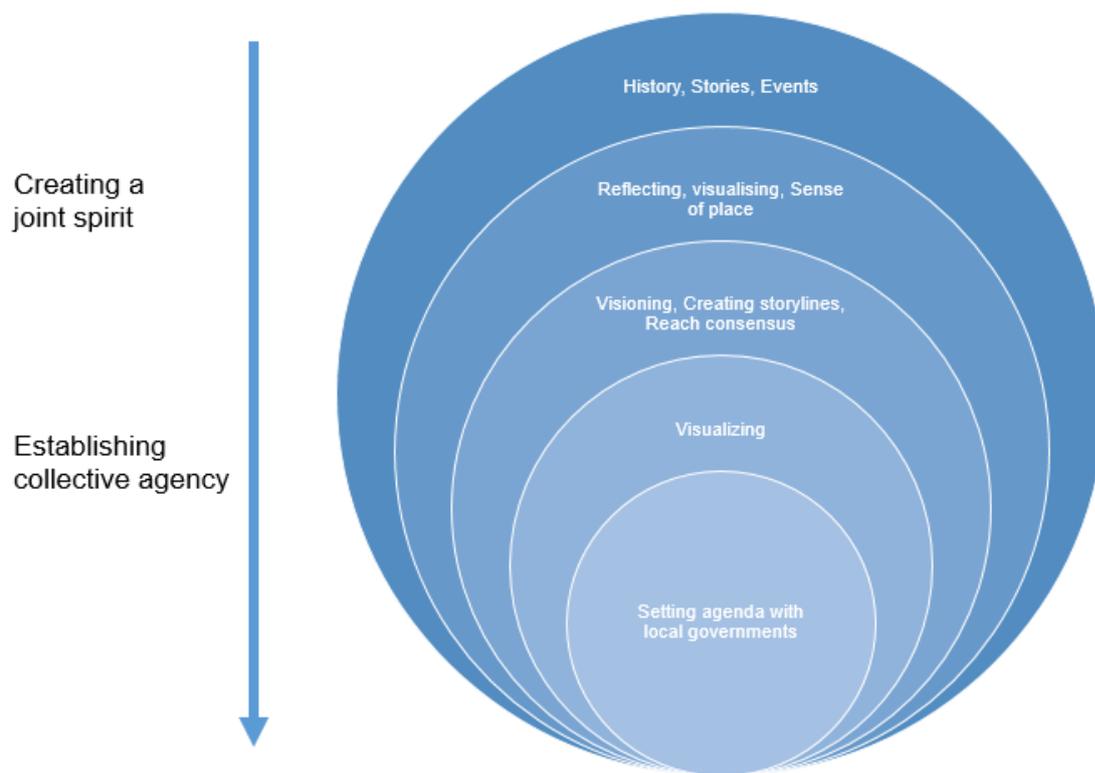


Figure 13 Steps Radius method based on model Gea Smidt

The second step that can be identified is related to reflecting, visualising and a sense of place. At the start of the project students Landscape History under supervision of Prof. Spek of the University of Groningen conducted research about the history of the landscape and the borders of the area during a fieldwork trip in May 2017. This and other information collected formed input for the theatre walk ‘De Tocht’ through the Mandefeld in July 2017. The findings were presented through a video, storytelling and by letting people discovering the area themselves. For instance, during the theatre walk an artist made a scale model of the area through which people could walk and the opportunity was given to residents to add their local knowledge to the scale model. During the theatre walk different stories of residents, researchers and artists about the area, its history and the present were shared. The residents could experience the area in a different way as they normally would because they are given different insights on the area. In November 2017, the theatre production ‘Het Tweede Gezicht’ about the

establishment of the Volkshogeschool and one of the important figures in this process Jarig van der Wielen was performed in each of the five villages. After the performance residents were asked to write down what needs attention in the area. These boards were used as input for the research 'Nu voor Later' in November and December 2017. During the project 'Nu voor Later' some of the findings were visualised through drawings on boards by Tara Hoorweg see figure 14. The drawings in figure 14 reflect the need for a meeting place in the Allardsoog/ Een-West and the importance of sharing the history of the area and in particular de Volkshogeschool Allardsoog. The residents had the opportunity to look at the boards and discuss them. Through these discussions it could be interpreted whether the participants felt the same about the issues raised by other participants. This is an example of how the findings were visualised during the project. After the final discussions on Friday a short video including the main findings of the week was recorded. Through social media and the website of the PeerGroup the video was shared. In this way, the findings of the project were shared with the residents.



Figure 14 Board presenting some of the findings 'Nu voor Later' by Tara Hoorweg (Radius team, 2017)

All the activities discussed above reflect on the history and stories of the area, how people live and what they want for the future of their area. In doing this, the residents get more involved and engaged in the project. Also, by presenting the findings through art, the Radius project tries to make residents aware of the environment they are living in relation to the future and sustainability. In this way, the Radius method is focused on creating connections between residents from the different villages and to provide new insight and perspectives for the future. From the discussion it appears that some of the participants tend to look differently at their environment and themselves and become more aware about their impact on the area. The Radius project can be considered as a platform by which people are connected, different perspectives are bridged and new insights are provided. The capacities of the area are central to the approach as the project aims to contribute to sustainable development of the area from bottom-up. The first two steps can be associated with creating a joint spirit. Through the activities and



Figure 16 Collages: new history and new connections (Radius team, 2018)

The next step would be to visualize the findings in a theatre performance. As is discussed earlier the PeerGroup withdrew itself from the project and therefore there was not enough money to make a new theatre production in the beginning of September 2018. Instead of this a meeting with the different stakeholders such as the local governments, nature organisations, farmer associations, recreational organisation and the key actors will be organised in September 2018 to discuss the agenda set by the key actors. The aim is to make concrete plans together with the stakeholders for the area. This is beyond the scope of this thesis project. The Radius project aims to trigger a change from the inside and contribute to a continuing process of change which will be meant last after the project is finished.

The Radius method: in light of place leadership

From the findings of the interviews it appeared that the local governments are not actively taking the lead for place-based development in the area around Allardsoog. There are no specific plans for development for the area. The geographical location of the area across the borders of the three provinces has an influence on this. The area is perceived by the local governments as peripheral and close to the borders of other municipalities and provinces. Therefore, there seems to be no sense of urgency to actively take action in light of development for the area. The local governments in this case adopt a reactive role in which the initiative has to come from bottom-up. Additionally, the findings of the meetings with the key actors show that there is an absence of local leadership. The residents in the area are not taking the lead and the administrative borders seem to have an influence on this. From the findings of ‘Nu voor Later’ it appears that there is a lack of social cohesion between the residents from the different villages. The geographical, emotional and cultural borders are still present. Although the

participants express a strong sense of place, there seems to be little interaction between the residents of the different villages. As a result no collective action is taken to do something for the area. In this case the Radius project can be seen as an external party taking the lead who can transcend geographical but also institutional and sectoral borders. As is discussed above the Radius project tries to contribute to a sustainable society by providing new perspectives and insights and trigger a process of change from the inside. Culture in this context is an added value because it contributes to place and meaning making. Through art societal issues can be visualised in a different way and new narratives for the future can be created (Horlings, 2017). In light of place-based development, art can be valuable for providing an insight into the individual and collective values of people and communities. From this process it can be interpreted to what extent people are or willing to be committed to their place in light of spatial transformation (Horlings, 2017). The interface between art, science and community in the Radius project offers the opportunity to share knowledge and look at the area from different perspectives. The artists can be seen as the mediators in this process. Through art and culture, science and the community come together and are connected in this project. The Radius project tries to contribute to bottom-development and the capacities and capabilities of the community play a central role in this. All the activities organised within the project are centred on the history, events, stories, the landscape and lives of the residents. Through reflecting, visualising and storytelling the Radius project creates awareness about a sustainable society in light of current economic, environment and social challenges. These issues and the experiences and stories of the residents, scientists and artists are visualised through the theatre walk, theatre production and art performances during the project 'Nu voor Later'. In this way, the artistic expressions encourage people to reflect on their place from a different perspective. Therefore, the project can potentially contribute to a stronger sense of place of the residents. In addition, through visioning potential storylines for the future of the area with the community and scientists, the project offers new narratives for the future.

Looking at the project and whether a spiralling development can be witnessed, it is useful to compare the project with the case of the Westerkwartier. Within the Westerkwartier place leadership was stimulated through collaboration between regional stakeholders such as grassroots initiatives, State Forestry, an agriculture nature organisation, Wageningen University and the Van Hall-Larenstein University of Applied Sciences. This collaboration was initiated by the five year project 'Bridge the Future' in 2002 which sought to connect science and regional stakeholders in light of rural development. The aim of the project was to contribute to place-based development in the area as the Westerkwartier was experiencing issues related to development in relation to nature, agriculture and liveability. The project offered opportunities for students to conduct assignments for one of the grassroots initiatives. During a regional event the results of the different projects were presented which stimulated further discussion. In addition, a joint spirit and joint reflexivity was created among the stakeholders (Horlings et al., 2018; Sol, 2018). The involvement of the students and the participative nature of the project had an effect on the self-awareness among the actors about their local culture and the identity of the area. This self-awareness enhanced establishing connections among various actors within the region (Sol, 2018). Based on the joint spirit and collective ambition an initiative for the area focused on tourism, nature and landscape was established. Leadership within this initiative can be regarded as informal where the leaders function as mediators between the different stakeholders. The initiative took the lead in place-based development for the area and this has encouraged collaboration within the Westerkwartier. Indeed, different coalitions were formed such as the Westerkwartier cooperative for entrepreneurs. The establishment of these coalitions can be considered as the emergence of new formal and informal institutions. Through operational interfaces between the different initiatives, local

governments and educational institutes different stakeholders are coming together and this provides the opportunity to share knowledge. Place leadership in this case was valuable in the emergence of spiralling development through inspiring and mediating between regional stakeholders and for stimulating new institutional settings (Horlings et al., 2018).

A similarity between the case of the Westerkwartier and the Radius project is that in both cases the local community and science are connected. Providing the opportunity for students to conduct research in the area new information and insight are given. It can be argued that within the Radius project the first step of creating a joint spirit and joint reflexivity is realized among some of the residents. The nature of the activities that were organised was participative and the residents actively reflected on their place and got engaged in the project. A joint spirit is created among the key actors through culture, awareness, visioning and new insights. A difference between the case Westerkwartier and the Radius project is that joint reflexivity and a joint spirit among the key actors are created through art. The history, stories and experiences of the area are expressed and visualised through art. The activities such as the theatre walk, theatre production and the project 'Nu voor Later' and the meetings contributed to the commitment of the key actors to the project. Through the organized activities and meetings the key actors were motivated to reflect on their place, the possibilities for the future of their area and to what extent they would like to contribute to this. In the meetings with the key actors the possibilities for the future of the area were imagined through visioning. This in addition to the other activities has contributed to a joint spirit to take collective action and responsibility for the future of the area among the key actors.

Despite the willingness of the key actors to take action and the attempts of the project to make the residents take ownership the project only partly succeeded in establishing collective agency. In the last few months of the project there were no activities for the residents organised because of a lack of funding. Initial plans to work with students and to produce a theatre production were cancelled. The Radius team was less present in the area and only meetings with the key actors to talk about the project and the agenda were organised. So far, no plans for collective actions are undertaken by the key actors themselves. This highlights the risk when leadership is enacted by an external actor. Residents become dependent on the external actor and if the external party is less present in the area and less activities are organised nothing is happening. In the case of the Westerkwartier grassroots initiatives and other organisations were involved in the project. A clear ambition was formulated and the regional stakeholders were motivated to take collective action and start new initiatives (Horlings et al., 2018). The Radius project has attempted to make the residents responsible for the future of their area but this has failed. In order to initiate spiral development more effectively the community and local organisations should have been more involved. For instance, before the start of the project the key actors and local organisations could have been involved in formulating the aim of the project. In this way, the key actors and local organisations would have been committed to the project from the start. This early commitment could have had an effect on mobilising other residents as it might be easier to engage people if others have already showed their commitment to the project. At the start of the project activities for the residents were organized but as the project continued less activities took place and less residents were engaged. Some of the residents in the villages are not familiar with the project and therefore are not involved.

Looking at the project's design it might have been better if preliminary research within the area was conducted in order to make a decision on the size of the study area and what villages to include. By doing this it could be examined to what extent the residents of the villages see the area as one area. The study area chosen for this project appeared to be too large and it was difficult to make the residents committed to the project. More commitment might have been reached if the study area was smaller and

the villages of which the residents do feel connected were included in the study. Besides, in the two years of the project the Radius team is not enough present in the area. For instance, during the project 'Nu voor Later' the team members were not present for a full week in the area. Being more present in the area might have an influence on the involvement and commitment of the residents to the project. In addition, several organisations and local governments were approached to join a meeting in Allardsoog to talk about future development for the area and what possible coalitions could be formed. This has not been successful as there were not enough actors who could join the meeting. The meeting was scheduled close to the summer vacation and the short notification potentially influenced the attendance of actors. In May and Perhaps involving local organisations and local governments earlier in the project would have helped in the process of creating collective agency. Within the Westerkwartier leadership can be considered as a connecting factor in shaping a collective ambition and collective agency. A vital aspect in this is that someone has to take the lead. From the Radius project it can be observed that if the community itself and the local governments are not taking the lead an external partner can take the lead. In particular, an external actor can take the lead within the initiating phase by creating a joint spirit through collaborative activities. In addition, an external actor can create awareness about place and through this could potentially contribute to a stronger sense of place. However, it is important that the community and local actors are made owner of the process and take collective action. If ownership is not taken by either the local governments, community or other regional actors place leadership has less chance to flourish.

4.3 Possibilities for coalitions

Thus far the prior sections have provided an insight into the ways sustainable development are perceived among the participants and within the project, what the capacities and challenges are for the area and the role of place leadership in spiralling development in the context of the radius project. This final section elaborates on the possibilities and conditions for building coalitions for sustainable development in the area around Allardsoog. The following paragraph discusses collaboration across local borders and the second paragraph illustrates the possibilities for a coalition and the conditions.

4.3.1 Collaboration across borders

In order to analyse the possibilities for coalitions for sustainable development it is important to first examine to what extent the stakeholders collaborate across geographical borders. All the participants of the municipalities mention that the area is situated at the edge of their administrative borders. The area is referred to as distant, peripheral and as a bit of a forgotten area. the following quote shows that the area seems to be at the outskirts for the municipality:

'It is actually a bit of a forgotten area... Appelscha is well-known but in the area around Bakkeveen than it is also Bakkeveen you do not hear Haulerwijk or Een, Een-west.' (Participant 3, Municipality A)

A few of the participants of the municipalities acknowledge that more emphasis is placed on larger villages and towns. This is associated with the function of the villages. For instance, some towns have a recreational function and attract a lot of visitors. The participant of the recreational organization mentions that that a lot of money is going to one of the towns within the municipality and she feels that this money should be more equally divided. The participant expresses that Bakkeveen is a recreational area and that people in Bakkeveen are also paying tourist taxes than it might as well be spend here.

During the interviews some participants stated that the area in this study as a whole could be given some more attention. One of the participants indicates why it is an interesting area:

'It is like the middle of nowhere... that's the feeling I have... It is an interesting area because there are multiple languages spoken; Frisian, Drents, Stellingwerfs, Dutch, it is very interesting. It is an area around borders that is always interesting. But it also resembles the real countryside.' (Participant 2, Municipality D)

In addition this quote highlights that the area is not only situated across physical borders but also across language and cultural borders. According to the participant this makes the area interesting. Despite the fact that it is recognized that the area deserves more attention it was still stressed that there is less priority to do so because the provinces and municipalities are focused on the places within their borders. Although, there is a more internal focus this does not imply the municipalities and provinces are not collaborating across local borders. There are different views among the participants on the extent to which the local governments collaborate across borders. For instance, one of the participants phrases:

"You have to imagine that we as a municipality are facing our area with our backs. With our backs to the other municipalities [across from the province border]. There is no cooperation or coalition nothing at all. So for us it is the end of our municipality and we are looking the other way." (Participant, Municipality B)

This quote illustrates that there is limited collaboration with other municipalities across the border of the provinces. Also, the quote reflects that the position of the area as it is close to the borders. Others participants argue that they are collaborating with other municipalities or provinces and are looking beyond their own borders. The local governments often collaborate around particular themes such as tourism, nature and combatting poverty in the peat colonies. The next quote illustrates this:

"We are already looking over it. An example is recreation, Ooststellingwerf is also part of it because it is actually a part of Drenthe." (Participant 1, Municipality D)

There is a willingness to look beyond the borders but in practice this is not always the case and from the interviews it appeared that the institutional borders are very present. Every province has its own identity and this also has an effect on collaboration. In the context of collaborating across local borders one of the participants describes:

"It is good to realize if you work together. There are various borders that are being crossed also cultural borders and ways of working together." (Participant, Municipality C)

The participant of LTO Noord also explains that the administrative borders are very present and that there is less cooperation with the other divisions of LTO Noord in the other provinces. The divisions are more internally focused. One of the participants of the water boards mentions that the priority is their own area but because waterways do not end at the borders they look beyond their borders. The same reasoning was given by the participants of It Fryske Gea and State Forestry nature does not stop at the borders. The participant of the recreational organisation said that they were looking to collaborate with other recreational organisations and that this would be beneficial as the organisations can learn from each other.

Overall, from the perspectives of the local governments there is not an immediate need to take action for the area at the moment. There should be a reason to actively engage which could be for example when residents decide to do a project or start an initiative for the area. The motivation has to come from bottom-up and if this is the case the participants indicate that they are willing to look at the possibilities for providing conditions to do so.

4.3.2 Potential coalitions and conditions

The previous paragraph has discussed to what extent the local governments and organizations collaborate across borders. This paragraph reviews the possibilities and condition for building coalitions. The main stakeholders identified by the participants are the municipalities, provinces, water boards, State Forestry, nature organisations: It Fryske Gea and Natuurmonumenten, LTO Noord, local entrepreneurs, recreational organisations, the association of village interests and the residents. According to a few participants the actor who has the greatest interest will lead the coalition. Some of the participants mention that the residents probably have the greatest interest but also have less power.

All the participants express that if there would be a coalition they would have an interest to participate. Nevertheless, their roles and the extent of participation differs. The participants of the municipalities recognize that they have influence within the area and that they have an interest because the villages are situated within their administrative borders. The participants of the municipalities state that they will not have a directing role and see themselves more as facilitators and connectors. Also, the municipalities are likely to participate if there is a reason to do so. If from bottom-up plans or projects are initiated the municipalities are willing to have a look at the possibilities for providing the necessary conditions. This fits with the current role the municipalities adopt. The municipalities are unlikely to take actively actions themselves as they do not perceive the need to look at the area as a whole at the moment. Additionally, some of the participants of the provinces indicate that the municipalities have more influence and probably a higher interest as compared to the provinces. According to these participants the municipality is the first government for citizens and themes related to rural development are usually embedded within the policy domains of the municipalities. A possible coalition across different municipality requires the involvement of the provinces. The provinces are most likely to take a supervision role as they indicate to have less influence as compared to the municipalities. In line with their current role the provinces are in addition most likely to take up a role as knowledge sharer. The participants of the water boards and State Forestry express that they would have an interest in participating but there are not likely to move the coalition. Rather they will adopt a role as connector and providing input and knowledge. The other organisations mention that they are actively seeking for collaboration. Depending on the theme of the coalition these organisations will participate.

From the findings it appears that the residents are the party with the most interest and they are the ones who are likely to move the coalition. Based on the output of the workshop with the key actors discussed in paragraph 4.2.3 the potential coalitions are probably focused on themes related to recreation and tourism, nature-culture, energy transition and infrastructure. The capacities and challenges of the area are reflected within these themes. Before going deeper into the possibilities for coalitions it should be stated that none of the participants indicated that they would lead the coalition or have a directing role. The possibilities of coalitions are therefore based on the current roles and the level of interest an actor would have. For instance, a coalition around recreation and tourism is likely to include the following actors: municipalities, provinces, local recreational organisations, entrepreneurs (recreational, restaurants), nature organisations, State Forestry and residents. The municipalities and provinces will participate because the coalition is shaped across geographical and administrative borders. The local

recreational organisations and entrepreneurs could benefit from tourism and therefore have a high interest to participate. The nature organisations and State Forestry will be involved because tourism around the area is primarily focused on nature. In this coalition, the local recreational organisations and entrepreneurs are likely to take the lead because they have the highest interest. The local governments will have a facilitating role, the nature organisation provide knowledge and input and the residents could provide knowledge and experiences. Potential actors in the coalition on nature-culture are: municipalities, provinces, nature organisations, water boards, State Forestry, residents, LTO Noord, recreational organisations and local entrepreneurs. Within this coalition the local organisations are likely to lead the coalition. The local governments will adopt a facilitating role by evaluating whether they could provide the conditions and disseminate knowledge. The Water Boards are likely to participate because of the different waterways that are present within the area. Looking at their current role they will not lead the coalition but will participate, disseminate knowledge and connect different actors together. If State Forestry owns part of the area that is included they would participate and provide input and knowledge. Potentially LTO Noord could be a member of this coalition. The participant of LTO Noord expresses the importance that agriculture and nature should not be seen as opposing. Also, she highlights that agriculture plays a vital role in how the landscape is shaped. The residents can share their local knowledge about the area. A coalition around sustainable energy would include residents, entrepreneurs, local organisations and local governments. These local organisations and residents are likely to move the coalition together. During the process other actors could be involved for instance actors who already have experience starting an energy cooperation and could share their knowledge. Finally, a coalition around infrastructure is likely to include municipalities, provinces, transport companies within the area and residents. The local governments are responsible for the local infrastructure and are therefore likely to take the lead. Within the project 'Nu voor Later' some of the participants explained that they are experiencing nuisance from heavy traffic and trucks because of the speeding and the damaging of the roadsides. Including transport companies within the coalition might be valuable for searching for solutions. The residents could share their experiences and this could provide input. Within each of the coalitions identified the potential list of actors is not conclusive and other actors could join as well.

Looking at the three types of coalitions identified by de Jong (2016), in this case a potential coalition will have a connective character. Within a connective coalition the ambition of an individual or a small group of people drives the coalition (de Jong, 2016). In this case the ambition of the residents will most likely drive the coalition but other local organisations and actors could also initiate the coalition. As is mentioned earlier the local governments are not taking the lead in this area. This is related to the fact that the area is situated across multiple administrative borders, governments are adopting a more reactive attitude and a sense of urgency is missing. The municipalities are considered to be the first government for citizens and from this perspective it could be argued that they might have a role in initiating possibilities for a potential coalition. Nevertheless, it was clearly stated by the participants of the municipalities that they adopt a facilitating role and not a directing role. The ambition of a few residents might potentially move the coalition and depending on the themes different actors will be involved and the role of the actors might differ over time. As de Jong (2016) describes this type of coalition can be characterized as an informal structure consisting of strong and more loose connections which are changing over time. Connective coalitions can be associated with bottom-up and personal initiatives through which actors are mobilized. The ambition is shaped by the initiators and therefore there is not a common ambition among all the actors involved (de Jong, 2016). In a potential coalition within this area the residents and local organisations can take the lead and shape the ambition around the themes they

expressed as important for the area. The local governments can act as facilitators by providing for instance financial means, contacts and expertise. The organisations could provide input by sharing their knowledge and connect the members of the coalition to other actors. In this way, the members of the coalition can learn from each other as they have different backgrounds.

Analysing the possibilities for coalitions it is important to look at examples within the area. The participants of LTO Noord and State Forestry mention that within municipality D there is a coalition called Noaberschap consultation. The ambition is shaped around creating a more sustainable landscape in the area of the Norger esdorpen landscape in Drenthe. Different actors such as Natuurmonumenten, State Forestry, LTO Noord, water board Noorderzijlvest, municipality Noordenveld etc. are involved within this coalition. The participant of State Forestry states that together the actors have thought about important themes for the area. Every theme is targeted by a project group consisting of multiple actors. The decision has been made to divide the themes into smaller project groups in order to actually realize something and to keep actors enthusiastic about the project. It is believed by both the participants of State Forestry and LTO Noord that the division into smaller project groups leads to results because the projects are small scale. According to their understanding large projects take more time because it takes more time to agree on something. Although, this is an example within an area that is not situated across borders it still provides insights of how to realize a potential coalition. In the case of the area around Allardsoog small project groups can be formed within the coalitions. Each group comprises several actors with different backgrounds and the same actors might be involved in different project groups.

In order for to realise a potential coalition within this area it is of great importance that the actors involved collaborate and think across borders. As is mentioned in the previous paragraph the actors collaborate and think beyond the local borders but have an internal focus. For this area it is important to have an external focus and look the area as a whole. From the findings of the interviews with the local governments and organisations it appears that motivation and attitude, trust, sharing information, communication, commitment and consensus are considered to be important conditions for realising a coalition. Having the same attitude is believed to be important for a coalition to reach consensus. Also, it is of importance that the members of a coalition can trust each other. Trust can be regarded as the basis because if there is no mutual trust the coalition will not work. Some of the participants argue that some residents do not trust governments as a result of past experiences and that it is difficult to reach something together if one party does not trust the other. In relation to this sharing information can be considered crucial. Transparency and no hidden agendas are key aspects in earning trust. Some participants believe that in order to collaborate it is important to clearly communicate about for example what the interests are. One of the participants states that creating commitment and consensus are vital for building coalitions. Through creating commitment people are more enthusiastic to work on the project and a certain level of consensus has to be reached in order to make decisions. Collaborative activities could help to gain each other's trust and to become committed to the project. Also, making clear rules and indicate what the interests are of every actor could encourage an open and pleasant work environment. Every actor knows where they stand and the position of the other actors. This could potentially prevent hiding agenda's and making decisions without informing the other actors.

To sum up, the potential coalitions for the area around Allardsoog can be characterised as connective in which the residents or local organisations shape the ambition that moves the coalition. The coalitions are likely to be shaped around the following themes: recreation and tourism, nature-culture, energy transition and infrastructure. Each of these themes can be addressed within different coalitions consisting of various actors with different backgrounds. In this way, the theme is approached from multiple perspectives and solutions to complex problems might be found. In order to establish the coalition it is

crucial that the actors work across borders, trust each other, share information, communicate clearly and are committed to the ambition set by the initiators.

5. Discussion

This study was conducted in order to gain an insight into the possibilities of building coalitions for sustainable development in the area around Allardsoog. The previous section has presented the findings of this study. In this section a comparison is made between the findings and the existing academic scholarship discussed in the theoretical framework in section 2. In addition, this section reflects on the research process and limitations of this study.

The results showed that the participants perceive sustainability according to the commonly used three pillar model People, Planet, Profit. In particular, an emphasis was placed on the ecological and the social pillar. The ecological pillar was predominantly related to nature preservation, long term development and small scale development. Whereas the participants discussed ageing in place, liveability of rural areas, participation and collaboration with regard to social sustainability. These aspects can be linked to the concepts of participation and social cohesion Murphy (2012) identified in relation to social sustainability. No explicit reference is made to the economic pillar by the participants. The economic pillar is implicitly referred to in relation to agriculture and scale of development. In contrast to the literature and the views of the participants sustainability within the Radius project is perceived from an emotional, social and landscape perspective. The value of approaching sustainability in this way is that it contributes to the process of making meaning of the place people live in. The residents are triggered to think about their place when asked about what contributes to their happiness, the liveability and the value of the landscape. This could potentially result in a stronger sense of place. In line with Horlings (2015) and O'Brien and Wolf (2010) the project reflects the inner subjective dimension of sustainability. The individual and collective values are central within the Radius project and through art awareness about sustainability is created among the residents. The Radius project recognizes that in order to realize a sustainable society a change in individual and collective value systems is needed. Although the Radius project aims to realise a process of change through the project it cannot be regarded as a transformative approach. The project only reached a small part of the residents within the area and only a few key actors got engaged and committed to the project. In order to realise a process of change more residents should have been involved and engaged in the project. In addition, a transformative approach involves underlying meanings related to equity, power structures in society and consumerism which reflect a deeper transformation and includes a change in perceptions and consuming behaviours (Hopwood et al., 2005; Robinson, 2004). This is not reflected in the Radius approach.

In contrast with studies that analyse the emergence of place leadership initiated by local and regional actors (e.g. Beer, 2014) this study has concentrated on what happens if an external actor takes the lead. Although the institutional context could be perceived as providing the necessary conditions for place leadership to emerge (see Beer & Clower, 2014) the local governments in this study are not sufficiently taking the lead in place-based development for the area around Allardsoog. The decentralization of governments and the shift from citizens to government participation have influenced the role of the local governments with regard to citizens' participation. A more participative attitude is expected from the local governments and they are often adopting a facilitative role whereby they evaluate the possibilities for providing the conditions necessary. Nevertheless, the local governments can be considered more reactive as opposed to proactive and there are no plans for development for the area. The results show that there is no sense of urgency for the local governments to look at the area and there should be a reason in order to look beyond the borders and this has to come from bottom-up. In a similar way, the residents are also not taking the lead for the area. In light of this, the Radius team can be considered to take the lead for sustainable development in the area around Allardsoog.

The steps of the Radius method are identified and illustrate the connection between art, science and the community. This combination is valuable for approaching sustainable development for the area from different angles and perspectives. Considering various perspectives new insights emerge and the residents and the Radius team itself are triggered to look through another lens at the area. A difficulty in combining the three different domains are the different views on the project itself and the language that is used. This could lead to misunderstandings. For instance, during the meeting for the key actors one of the initiators talked about the importance of the process and less about the outcome. This was experienced as confusing by the key actors as they want to know what the next steps would be and what their role could be after the project finishes. In order for the domains to be connected it is important to share a common view and language.

In particular, this study has showed in what way the role of art and culture is valuable for creating a joint spirit among the actors involved in the project. The art performances enhance processes of place shaping and meaning making and in addition potentially contribute to a stronger sense of place. Through the visualisation of societal issues the art performances affect people emotionally and in this way the participants are encouraged to reflect on the place they live in and some of the issues the community is facing. In this project art played a valuable role through visualisation, raising awareness for societal issues related to sustainability, bridging different perspectives, providing new insights, visioning a future for the area and is used as a participatory tool to engage people in the project. Artists in this project can be considered as mediators operating within the interface of art, science and community. In light of place-based development art could potentially have had a role in contributing to a change in mind set (Horlings, 2017) and creating collective agency. Although the project has tried to create collective agency this has only to some extent succeeded. This study highlights the risks if an external party takes the lead in place-based development. Local actors become dependent on the external actor and therefore do not take actions themselves. If the external actor is less present in the area the leadership role will not automatically be taken up by the local actors.

From this experience it can be learned that it is important that the local actors take ownership and that the responsibility over time shifts from the external to the local actors. In this way, the local actors feel more responsible and might be more triggered to take collective action. Collective agency is vital for this process otherwise no actions will be taken. In relation to this it is important to shape a collective ambition and to involve different actors such as citizens' initiatives and other organisations from the beginning as was done in the case of the Westerkwartier. In addition, in the case of the Westerkwartier a cooperative has been established which includes the involvement of residents, local governments, entrepreneurs and organisations (Sol, 2018; Horlings et al., 2018). From the findings of the interviews and the observations it appears that at the moment the sense of urgency is not strong enough to establish a cooperation for the area. There is no sense of urgency for the local governments to actively take actions within the area. Also, from the findings of the project 'Nu voor Later' there is no sense of urgency among all the participants to look at the area as a whole. A majority of the participants is more focused on their own village. From the discussion it seems that there is a greater sense of urgency among the key actors from Bakkeveen and Allardsoog/ Een-West to collectively take action for the area. As a result of limited collective agency and the struggles during the project it is more difficult to keep the people who are involved engaged in the project. A lesson that can be derived from the project is that it is important to do preliminary research within the area before making a decision about where to conduct the project. In this case the study area appeared to be too large to engage and mobilize citizens. A project like the Radius project should start small scale and over time more villages and citizens can be involved. The results show that it is important to search for energy and people who are willing to commit to the

project. The way the community experiences the urgency of the challenges could potentially influence their commitment. The findings of the project 'Nu voor Later' indicate that some of the residents do not experience the challenges as urgent. This research indicates that spiralling development can be initiated by an external actor but in the end if local actors do not take the lead it will not emerge.

From the findings it appears that a potential coalition within the area will have a connective character. Given that initiative has to come from bottom-up it is most likely that the ambition of the coalition is shaped by a group of residents. During the process of coalition building other actors such as organisations and the local governments can join the coalition. A connective coalition can be typified by close and loose connections (de Jong, 2016) this could make it more attractive for actors to become a member of the coalition. Based on the results it can be argued that the capacities and challenges of the area are likely to be reflected in the ambitions shaped by the residents and that they are associated with recreation and tourism, nature-culture, energy transition and infrastructure. Several coalitions can be built around these themes. For instance, by dividing the themes in several coalitions more direct arrangements and actions can be created. Depending on the theme actors can decide whether they want to participate and what role they would have within the coalition. Local governments are likely to adopt a facilitative role where they provide the conditions and share their knowledge and contacts. The organisations can provide their input and knowledge in relation to a particular topic. Over time the coalitions could stimulate new institutional arrangements. In order to create coalitions within the area around Allardsoog it is vital for the actors to look beyond geographical and sectoral borders and to actively seek collaboration outside of the administrative boundaries. Other conditions that are important include establishing trust, information sharing, clear communication and commitment.

A first step in realising coalitions is to determine the range of the coalition. Based on inspiration the decision was made to conduct the Radius project within a range of five kilometres around Allardsoog. The question remains whether coalitions should be established for the whole area or only within the villages where there is energy and commitment. As is mentioned above the key actors living in Allardsoog/ Een-West and Bakkeveen are willing and committed to take collective action. It could be an idea to start a coalition within these villages and as the coalition develops over time include more actors and potentially more villages. This decision has to be made first. After this, it is important to create collective agency and that the residents take ownership and responsibility. There are plans for a meeting with other actors in the area. During this meeting the agenda based on the workshop will be presented. In addition, this meeting provides the opportunity for the different actors to talk about the area and to develop more concrete plans. This meeting could provide input for the actors to come up with actions and arrangements for the area. During this process new initiatives might be developed and different stakeholders can be involved. Over time new informal arrangements could be developed. In order to shape the ambitions for the coalitions it becomes evident from this study that within an area across borders it is important to look at what the area unites not divides.

Reflecting on the research process it was interesting to see and learn how art can be used as a participatory tool in research. Also, being part of the Radius project has broadened my perspective as the project is conducted on the interface between art, science and the community. From this experience I have learned to approach and look from a different perspective to the relation between theory and practice. Conducting in-depth interviews with the stakeholders has provided more insights in the perspectives of the different actors on sustainability and collaboration across borders. Another method that could have been used in this study is focus group discussions. In this way, an insight into a variety of topics related to the research questions could be given. In addition, it would be interesting to observe the group dynamic and discussions between the different actors. It would have been valuable for this

study if interviews with the key actors were conducted on the impact of the project with a specific reference to art and culture. In this study the participatory observations were made during a part of the project and in order to gain more insight into the impact of the project, interviews with the key actors should have been conducted. Not being part of the project from the start made it sometimes difficult to analyse the role of art and culture in the project. In the beginning of the project two creative interferences (the theatre walk, theatre production) were made and after 'Nu voor Later' there were no creative productions performed for the residents in the villages. Nevertheless, from the stories of the participants and initiators, observations during the project 'Nu voor Later' and the meetings with the key actors the role of art and culture could be examined.

There are some limitations in this study related to both the design of this study and the project. First, due to time constraints it was not possible to conduct interviews with all the potential stakeholders identified by the participants. This study only reflects the experience, perceptions and opinions of the stakeholders who participated in this research. It has been tried to keep a balance between the number of organisations and the places they are located in. Nevertheless, the participants recruited through snowballing sometimes work within the same province or municipality. Therefore, slightly more participants work in Drenthe and Friesland. With regard to the interviews some participants had difficulties answering questions about potential coalitions as these questions were more hypothetical in nature. In these cases it has been tried to frame the questions differently. It is important to note the subjectivity of the researcher as this research was conducted in the context of the project and the researcher participated within the project. The researcher has tried to distance herself from the project in order to critically reflect on the process. In reference to the project, the representation of residents can be identified as a limitation. Residents who participated in the project 'Nu voor later' and the key actors are active residents and are on average 40 years and older. The study area of the project is too large and this resulted in low levels of participation among residents from a few villages. Some villages were overrepresented during the meetings and discussion whereas from other villages no one showed up. This has an influence on the data collected and what can be identified as the capacities and challenges of the area.

6. Conclusion

This study has given deeper insights in the ways place leadership contributes to coalition building in the context of sustainable and place-based development in the area around Allardsoog. Art can be considered as a valuable tool to enhance place leadership. Through art performances and culture topics and themes related to sustainability can be framed and visualised in different ways. Throughout this process, awareness for sustainable development for the future of the area is created and residents are mobilised. Furthermore, art contributes to processes of place shaping and potentially enhances a sense of place. The Radius project has created an interesting interface between art, science and the community through which the area can be examined from various angles and perspectives. This process can be considered valuable for the pathway towards sustainable development in rural areas.

With regard to the first research question: ‘What are the key stakeholders in the area and what kind of possibilities do they see?’ the following key stakeholders can be identified: the municipalities, provinces, water boards, State Forestry, nature organisations: It Fryske Gea and Natuurmonumenten, LTO Noord, local entrepreneurs, recreational organisations, the association of village interests and the residents. From the perspective of the local governments there is no sense of urgency to develop the area and therefore there are no specific plans. It appears that the internal focus within the administrative borders, institutional fragmentation, lack of a sense of urgency and the reactive role of governments influences the extent to which local governments look beyond their borders within this area. The local governments and organisations do state that if there would be a coalition they are open to participate.

Sustainability is predominantly perceived from an ecological and social perspective. In relation to this, nature, value of the landscape, the energy transition, ageing in place, liveability, participation and collaboration are important themes. The way sustainability is viewed by the stakeholders reflects the three pillar model People, Planet, Profit. Nevertheless, less emphasis is placed on the economic pillar. The Radius project approaches sustainability from an emotional, landscape and social perspective. The added value of this approach is that it includes the subjective intrinsic dimension of sustainability. The approach is focused on individual and collective values and aims to contribute to a change from the inside out in relation to a sustainable society.

This study has illustrated how place leadership can be initiated by an external actor if local actors are not taking the lead. Place leadership is a vital aspect in spiralling development within rural areas (Horlings et al., 2018). Place leadership encourages the emergence of a joint spirit and collective agency among the actors involved. This study shows how the different steps of the Radius method contribute to creating a joint spirit and collective agency among the key actors within the area. Searching for connections within the interface of art, science and community and providing new insights are vital within this process. In addition, this research has shown the risks related with an external actor taking the lead in place-based development. Local actors in this case the residents tend to be reliant on the external actor. The project did not fully succeed in establishing collective agency among the key actors and therefore no responsibility was taken to establish actions and arrangements when the project was struggling. This shows the importance of establishing collective agency in the process of spiralling development. This case highlights that place leadership can be initiated by an external actor but collective agency will only be established if the responsibility shifts from the external to the local actors.

Potential coalitions within the area of Allardsoog can be shaped around themes which reflect the capacities and capabilities of the area. The coalitions will have a connective nature as it is indicated that the initiative has to come from bottom-up. The ambitions of the residents relate to recreation and tourism, nature-culture, energy transition and infrastructure and the coalitions are likely to be shaped

around these themes. In order to develop actions and arrangements it is more beneficial to divide the themes over several coalitions. In this way, the process of decision making is more efficient. Different actors can be involved in the coalitions. For instance, in a coalition around recreation and tourism stakeholders such as entrepreneurs, recreational organisations, nature organisations, residents and the municipalities can be involved. Within the coalitions the local governments could review the opportunities for providing the conditions and share their expertise. In addition, the organisations can share their knowledge related to particular subjects and think about possibilities. Several conditions can be identified to establish coalitions across administrative borders. First, the stakeholders have to look beyond their borders and seek active collaboration. Establishing coalitions across borders requires the different actors to collaborate and have an external focus. Although, the stakeholders are collaborating across borders they do not consider the area as a whole and this perception has to change in order to build coalitions. Other conditions that can be identified are trust, transparency and no hidden agendas, clear communication and commitment to the project.

This study contributes to planning theory and practice as it provides an understanding on how spiralling development can enable sustainable and place-based development within rural areas. In addition, this study highlights how an external party can take the lead in place-based development when leadership is lacking within the area. A joint spirit and collective agency which can be enhanced by place leadership are crucial to set spiralling development in motion. This study showed that art plays a valuable role in this process. Through visualisation, creating awareness, bridging perspectives, offering new insights and visioning, art contributes to meaning and place making and can be used as a participatory tool to mobilise people. If collective agency is created coalitions can be shaped according to the capacities and challenges of the area. Connective coalitions are likely to be built where the ambition of a small group of people drives the coalition. Over time new coalitions and initiatives might emerge and new institutional arrangements are created. Through connecting art, science and the community new interfaces are created allowing various perspectives to exist and in combination steps towards a sustainable society can be taken.

Future research is needed on the role of art and culture in realising a process of change towards sustainable place-based development and how ownership among local actors can be achieved. Communities in rural areas are facing complex problems in relation to sustainable development and in order to tackle these problems interfaces including various actors should be created. Further research into coalition building is therefore needed in particular within areas that are situated across geographical and cultural borders. It is valuable to examine how different types of coalitions could coexist and how this contributes to place-based development for rural areas. With regard to policy implications and recommendations this study has shown the importance of the geographical context, cross border collaboration and the role of place leadership in coalition building. Policies should address problems from different angles and adopt a place-based approach. It is important to adopt a proactive role in order to establish trust and look beyond the existing geographical and sectoral borders. In addition, art can be used as a participatory tool through creating awareness, visualising, bridging perspectives, creating connections and providing new narratives and could be valuable for implementing a place-based approach.

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Appendix

1.1 Interview guide

Local governments

Introductie onderzoeker:

- Introductie onderzoek + gebied
- Data wordt vertrouwelijk behandeld en geanonimiseerd.
- Toestemming opnemen interview
- Toestemmingsformulier ondertekenen
- Indicatie tijdsduur

Achtergrond:

1. Zou u iets kunnen vertellen over uw functie binnen de gemeente?

Leefbaarheid en duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling:

2. Wat zijn de kernkwaliteiten van het gebied met betrekking tot de bebouwing (rood) en de natuur (groen)?
3. Wat zijn belangrijke verschillen binnen het gebied?
4. Wat betekent een duurzaam platteland voor de gemeente?
5. Wat zijn belangrijke thema's met betrekking tot leefbaarheid op het platteland?
6. Wat is het huidige beleid van de gemeente met betrekking tot leefbaarheid en duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling?
(Geïntegreerde aanpak)
7. Wat voor mogelijkheden ziet de gemeente voor een duurzaam platteland in de toekomst?
8. Welke actoren spelen een belangrijke rol en hoe?
9. In welke mate kan/ wil de gemeente deze condities realiseren?

Identificeren stakeholders

10. Kijkend naar het belang om samenwerkingsverbanden aan te gaan en de invloed die de gemeente heeft in het gebied. Waar zou u de gemeente positioneren?
(waarom op deze plek)

11. Waar zou u de andere belangrijke stakeholders in het gebied positioneren?

Samenwerkingsverbanden verschillende actoren: overheid, burgers, bedrijven, organisaties

In de laatste jaren hebben een aantal verschuivingen plaatsgevonden van centralisatie naar decentralisatie, van burgerparticipatie naar overheidsparticipatie en burgers die meer proactief zijn en die zich zelf organiseren om bepaalde doelen te bereiken. Om complexe uitdagingen op te lossen is het van belang dat verschillende actoren zoals burgers, overheid en bedrijven samenwerken.

12. Hoe kijkt de gemeente hier tegen aan?

13. In hoeverre werkt de gemeente samen met eerder genoemde actoren?
(belang, welke thema's)

14. Wat is hierbij de rol van de gemeente?
(op welke manier (sturend, faciliterend, verbindend))

15. In welke mate ziet de gemeente een rol voor zich zelf om de betrokkenheid van burgers te stimuleren?
(waarom belangrijk, welke thema's)

16. Op wat voor manier wordt de betrokkenheid van burgers gestimuleerd?
(verwachtingen)

17. Wat is de visie op ontwikkelingen en rol van actoren in de toekomst?

18. Wat betekent dit voor samenwerking en de rol van de gemeente?

19. In hoeverre wil de gemeente samenwerkingsverbanden faciliteren?

20. Op wat voor manier zou de gemeente samenwerkingsverbanden kunnen faciliteren?
(subsidies, beleid)

Afsluiting

21. Zijn er nog onderwerpen waarvan u had verwacht dat ze aanbod zouden komen of andere zaken die u graag kwijt wilt?

Organisations

Introductie onderzoeker:

- Introductie onderzoek + gebied
- Data wordt vertrouwelijk behandeld en geanonimiseerd.
- Toestemming opnemen interview
- Toestemmingsformulier ondertekenen
- Indicatie tijdsduur

Achtergrond:

1. Zou u iets kunnen vertellen over uw functie binnen de organisatie?

Leefbaarheid en duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling:

2. Wat zijn de kernkwaliteiten van het gebied met betrekking tot de bebouwing (rood) en de natuur (groen)?
3. Wat zijn belangrijke verschillen binnen het gebied?
4. Wat betekent duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling voor de organisatie?
5. Wat is de ontwikkelingsvisie van de organisatie met betrekking tot het gebied?
(huidige trends, missie, wat voor manier realiseren)
6. Wat zijn uitdagingen richting de toekomst?
(trends, ontwikkelingen, hoe wordt hier op ingespeeld)
7. Wat voor betekenis heeft dit voor het gebied?
(visie, inrichting, duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling)

Samenwerkingsverbanden

In de laatste jaren hebben een aantal verschuivingen plaatsgevonden van centralisatie naar decentralisatie, van burgerparticipatie naar overheidsparticipatie en burgers die meer proactief zijn en die zich zelf organiseren om bepaalde doelen te bereiken. Om complexe uitdagingen op te lossen is het van belang dat verschillende actoren zoals burgers, overheid en bedrijven samenwerken.

8. Hoe kijkt de organisatie hier tegenaan?
9. Met welke actoren werkt de organisatie samen?
(op welke thema's)

10. Wat is hierbij de rol van de organisatie?
(op welke manier (sturend, faciliterend, verbindend))
11. Op wat voor manier wordt de betrokkenheid van burgers gestimuleerd?
12. Met oog op de toekomst en ontwikkelingen/ trends die zich nu voortdoen wat voor nieuwe verbindingen kunnen worden gemaakt?
(over grenzen heen kijken, is dit een mogelijkheid)
13. Wat zou de rol van de organisatie hierin zijn?
(proactief, reactief, faciliterend, verbindend)
14. Welke actoren spelen een belangrijke rol?
(wat is de rol overheid, andere partijen)
15. Wat zijn de voorwaarden om een samenwerkingsverband te kunnen realiseren?
(wat is hier voor nodig, condities, op wat voor manier)

Afsluiting

16. Zijn er nog onderwerpen waarvan u had verwacht dat ze aanbod zouden komen of andere zaken die u graag kwijt wilt?

1.2 Information letter

Informatiebrief voor het onderzoek ‘Coalities voor duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling rondom Allardsoog’

Geachte heer/mevrouw,

Doormiddel van deze informatiebrief wil ik u op de hoogte stellen en uw medewerking vragen voor mijn afstudeeronderzoek naar effectieve samenwerkingsverbanden voor duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling in het gebied rondom Allardsoog. Mijn naam is Marleen Fluit en ik studeer Sociale Planologie aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Dit onderzoek is onderdeel van mijn afstudeerscriptie en het Radius project van de PeerGroup. In 2017 is de PeerGroup begonnen met het Project de Radius van Allardsoog waarbij wetenschap, kunst en de gemeenschap op een innovatieve wijze bij elkaar worden gebracht. Het doel van dit project is om mensen bewust te maken van het gebied waar ze wonen en de mogelijkheden voor een duurzame toekomst van het gebied te onderzoeken.

In de laatste decennia heeft het platteland in Nederland verscheidende ontwikkelingen doorgemaakt die van invloed zijn op de leefbaarheid. Uitdagingen die hierbij zijn ontstaan vergen samenwerking tussen verschillende actoren zoals burgers, de overheid, bedrijven en andere organisaties. Het doel van dit onderzoek is om te analyseren wat effectieve samenwerkingsverbanden zouden kunnen zijn en op wat voor manier deze bij kunnen dragen aan duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling. Het onderzoeksgebied bestaat uit de dorpen Allardsoog, Een-West, Bakkeveen, Haulerwijk, Een en Zevenhuizen. Deze dorpen liggen rondom het drie-provinciën punt bij Allardsoog.

In een eerder traject van november tot en met december 2017 zijn gesprekken met bewoners in alle dropen gehouden om verschillende thema's aan te duiden die namens de bewoners belangrijk zijn voor het gebied. Hierbij is gebruik gemaakt van een participatieve benadering waarbij de bewoners bij het onderzoeksproces worden betrokken. Voor het volgende traject is het doel om de verschillende actoren te identificeren doormiddel van interviews. De betrokken actoren worden benaderd om op deze manier een beeld te kunnen schetsen wat eventuele effectieve samenwerkingsverbanden kunnen zijn. De interviews worden mits er toestemming is gegeven opgenomen en uitgewerkt. De informatie wordt vertrouwelijk behandeld en zijn geanonimiseerd. Mits u toestemming geeft kan de naam van de overheidsinstelling worden gebruikt in de resultaten. Mijn supervisor Prof. L.G. Horlings heeft toegang tot de transcripten. Verder is de medewerking aan het interview geheel vrijwillig en op elk moment kan er worden gestopt met het interview en het onderzoek. Hier is geen reden voor nodig. De data wordt opgeslagen op een beveiligde schijf van de RUG en na afloop van het onderzoek wordt dit verwijderd. De resultaten van het onderzoek worden gepresenteerd in mijn afstudeerscriptie en kunnen worden gebruikt voor publicatie in kader van het Radius Project van de PeerGroup. Als u geïnteresseerd bent in de resultaten kunnen deze worden gedeeld. Voor vragen kunt u altijd contact opnemen.

Uw medewerking zal een grote bijdrage leveren aan mijn onderzoek.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Marleen Fluit

Contact: Marleen Fluit: m.fluit@student.rug.nl 06-50217975

1.3 Informed Consent form

Informed consent formulier voor het onderzoek ‘Coalities voor duurzame gebiedsontwikkeling rondom Allardsoog’

Met het ondertekenen van dit formulier verklaart u voldoende te zijn geïnformeerd over het doel en de methode van het onderzoek. Het interview wordt opgenomen en de gegevens worden vertrouwelijk behandeld en geanonimiseerd. Hieronder kunt u aangeven of u instemt met het opnemen van het interview.

Ik geef toestemming voor het opnemen en het uitwerken van het interview:

Ja/ nee

Ik ben ervan bewust dat deelname aan het interview en onderzoek vrijwillig is en dat ik het recht heb om op elk moment te stoppen met het interview en het onderzoek. Hierbij hoeft geen reden worden vermeld.

Naam deelnemer:

Handtekening:

Datum: __ / __ /2018

.....

Hierbij verklaar ik de deelnemer volledig te hebben geïnformeerd over het onderzoek en alle vragen heb beantwoord. De informatie uit de interviews wordt vertrouwelijk en anoniem behandeld. Deelname aan het interview en onderzoek kan op ieder moment worden beëindigd. Als er tijdens het onderzoek informatie bekend wordt dat van invloed kan zijn op de toestemming van de deelnemer, wordt de deelnemer hiervan tijdig op de hoogte gebracht.

Naam onderzoeker: Marleen Fluit

Handtekening:

Datum: __ / __ /2018

.....

1.4 Code tree

Sustainable development	Sustainability	Agriculture	
		Biodiversity	
		Ecology	
		Energy transition	
		Long term	
		Nature vs. Agriculture	
		Other	
		Process	
		Scale	
		Social	
Challenges	Climate change		
	Demographic challenges		
	Other		
Thinking beyond borders	Area	Border area	
		Cultural borders	
		Distant area	
		Priority other areas	
		Priority own area (within borders)	
	Collaboration	Collaboration across borders	
		Connecting	
		Thinking beyond borders	
	Institutional context	Current role	Changing role government
			Municipality
Province			
Water boards			

	Participation of citizens	Engaging citizens
		Governance participation
		Representation of citizens
		Tension between citizens and governments
	Institutional structure	Influence politics
		Omgevingswet
		Outcome and process
		Projects/programmes
		Regulation
Liveability	Facilities/ services	Amenities
		Digital accessibility
		Liveability-general
		Recreation
		‘Self-supporting’
	Community	‘Naoberschap’
		Community feeling
	Challenges	Climate change
		Demographic challenges
		Other
Place-based development/ Place leadership	Place-based development	Capacities area
		Challenges other
		Climate change
		Context specific
		Demographic challenges

		Differences area
		Rural development
		Scale
		Value landscape
		Vision for the area
	Place leadership	Bottom-up
		Citizens initiatives
		Inner motivation/ passion
		Local knowledge
Coalition	Stakeholders	Collaboration with other actors
		Identifying stakeholders
		Own position- interest and influence
		Position other stakeholders
		Role actors within coalition
	Aspects	Conditions
		Inner motivation/ passion
		Potential coalition
		Shared ambition
		Sharing knowledge