NATURE POLICY IN A DISCURSIVE STRUGGLE:

In Search of New Symbols, Stories and Coalitions

Understanding the recent Political Changes and its Implications for Conservation Practices

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Natuur wordt ov

15/02/11, 00:00

Het plan voor drie grote natuurparker
in vinden, is modieuze warhoofderij

Bleker schoffeert de natuurbeschem

en megalomanen

Dolf Logemann, ecoloog bij het adviesbureau Arcadis – 08/05

'Handen af v

Hans Marijnissen – 19/05/11

INTERVIEW | Ed d'Ho
landbouw om Staats
Twee jaar later is ju

G – Het Rijk vs. de rest

'Kwaliteit natuur en landschappen dalen

16/02/11, 13:58

De voorgenomen bezuinigingen van het Rijk op het natuur- en
landschapsbeleid zullen leiden tot een verdere verslechtering van de
natuurkwaliteit en de leefomstandigheden voor planten- en diersoorten Dat
concludeert het Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving (PBL).

Das&Boom nieuw leven ingeblazen!

De huidige voornemens van het kabinet om te bezuinigen hebben
Das&Boom genoodzaakt haar activiteiten weer over de volle breedte
uit te breiden. Das&Boom is gestart met de juridische toetsing van het
kabinet Rutte. Deze activi kosten veel geld.

'Bezuinigen op natuur juridisch onm

Hans Marijnissen – 17/04/11, 10:26

VERU
Redactie – 08

Flevoland trotseert met natuurzone kabinet

Hans Marijnissen – 10/05/11, 08:20

RBRIEF

Natuurmonumenten

Natuurdoelen naar beneden bijstelle

Ingrid Weel – 18/02/11, 00:00

den haag – Staatssecretaris Bleker (landbouw) wil de Europese natuurdoelen
bijstellen. Hiervoor heeft hij naar eigen zeggen al steun gevonden bij Oostenrijk
en Hongarije. Bleker vermoedt namelijk dat er internationaal te hoge ecologische
doelen zijn gesteld. „Daar wil ik opnieuw naar kijken. Dat noem ik realistisch
idealisme."

Meer o

Nieuws

Oktober 2010

!
!
!
!
!

Petitie voor de natuur

▶ Laat uw stem horen!

De plannen van het kabinet-Rutte voorzien niet veel goeds voor de natuur.
Aan het verbinden van natuurgebieden komt abrupt een einde. Planten,
dieren en mensen krijgen niet de ruimte die nodig is. En dat terwijl natuur
het welzijn van ons allemaal. Vindt u dat het debat
nu uw stem

Algemeen

Afmelden of **adres
wijzigen**

**Stuur deze
Natuurbrief door**
naar een natuur-
vriend(in).

CBF

Provincies wijzen Bleker op plichten

Ingrid Weel – 11/02/11, 00:00

den haag – Dat er wordt bezuinigd op natuur, begrijpen de gedeputeerden van
de verschillende provincies. Maar de manier waarop, leidt tot veel onrust. De
provinciale bestuurders spreken van een onbetrouwbare overheid.

).

TE KOOP gevraagd:
grote partij bieslaarzen en klamboe

WEL RUIMTE VOOR DE
RIVIER !!!—WAAR IS ER
RUIMTE VOOR ONS??

STOP DE
KOLDER
GEEN
MOERAS
IN ONZE
POLDER

VIJ WILLEN BLIJVEN BESTAAN OOK
ALS HET WATER HIER MOET GAAN!

geen moeras
maar GRAS !

SCHIJT AAN DE
ROBUUSTE ZONE !

Preface

In October 2010 I attended a meeting of the local committee of the Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden with CLM. I was triggered by the desire and ambition of people to organise the Robust Corridor in an alternative way with smart combinations and different functions. I wondered what was happening? How can this phenomenon be understood in times of sever budget costs and a polarizing atmosphere between agriculture and nature? Is there still hope for nature management I wondered? The last two years have been dynamic for nature policy and management. At the beginning, there was chaos and everyone was wondering and asking the same questions: how and why could this have happened? Around that time, the PBL came with their request for a Master research that would analyse the current turmoil in Dutch nature policy, particularly an analysis of the social and political backgrounds behind the current situation. We came up with a research cooperation between PBL and CLM as both organisations were interested in the backgrounds of the turmoil in nature policy, but also what this would and could mean for the future in nature policy and management. The thesis was a challenging and inspiring project that had both its drawbacks and bright sides. I certainly hope the thesis renders insight for readers in the dynamics of social change and what has happened within nature policy lately.

I am very grateful to my three supervisors from PBL, CLM and WUR for supporting me in this challenging and inspiring period. I want to thank Rijk van Oostenbrugge from PBL for his support, positive attitude and willingness to help wherever possible. The cooperation with PBL proved very useful especially for granting access to people for the helicopter interviews and attending several conferences relevant for this thesis. A great opportunity was to already publish an article in the journal 'Landschap' before even finishing my thesis. I also want to thank Wim Dijkman from CLM for his enthusiasm, support and our vivid discussions along the road. With CLM I had the opportunity to attend many project settings and to enter into contact with a diverse set of people, which made it possible for me to get more insight into the processes behind the turmoil in nature policy. At the same time, working with Wim Dijkman and CLM, was a pleasant professional learning experience. At last, I want to thank Esther Turnhout from FNP (WUR). Our cooperation was very pleasant and I want to thank Esther for her loyalty, supportive attitude and sharp analytical gaze. Especially during the writing phase her support proved helpful as she could structure my thoughts which helped putting them on paper in a more consistent and clear way.

Apart from my supervisors I would like to thank all the helicopter interviewees for their willingness to talk with me and our interesting conversations. Many thanks goes to Chris Kalden (Staatsbosbeheer), Barto Piersma (EL&I), Jan Heijkoop (LTO), Maarten Hajer (PBL), Bart Krol (Province Utrecht), Joseph Keulartz (WUR) and Jos Jansen (Bosschap). Also I would like to express my gratitude to all the people I have worked with during the participant observations. Without them and their enthusiasm, passion and ambitions this research would not have been possible. Special thanks goes to Judith Zengers from ZLTO and Ad de Schutter (Staatsbosbeheer) with whom I had the opportunity to be part of the Green Deal team. Last, but not least, I would like to thank my family, my parents, sister and boyfriend for their support and understanding. Special thanks goes to Miguel Angel Rosado Garcia, who was very supportive and helpful in the entire thesis process. This thesis means an ending to my Wageningen period. I had a great time, learned a lot, and made great friends with whom I had fun and who were also supportive in the thesis process. This thesis also means a new period in my life, a period where I have to look for a job, a period I am very much looking forward to. So thank you Wageningen what you have brought me.

25 June 2012

Elisa Berber de Lijster

List with Figures

List of Acronyms

AGD	Agrarisch Dagblad	Agricultural Newspaper
ANV	Agrarische Natuurvereniging	Agricultural-Nature Collaborative group
ANWB	Algemene Nederlandse Wielrijders-Bond	General Dutch Cycling Federation
CAP	Gemeenschappelijk Landbouwbeleid	Common Agricultural Policy
CC	Contact Commissie voor Natuur en Landschaps-bescherming	Contact Commission on Nature and Landscape Protection
CDA	Christen-Democratisch Appel	Christian Democratic Party
CLM	Centrum Landbouw en Milieu	Centre Agriculture and Environment
CRM	Cultuur Recreatie en Maatschappelijk Werk	Culture, Recreation and Social Work
DIY	Doe-Het-Zelf	Do-It-Yourself
EL&I	Economie, Landbouw en Innovatie	Economics, Agriculture and Innovation
EU	Europese Unie	European Union
IBB	Initiatief Bewust Bodemgebruik	Initiative Responsible Soil use
IPO	Interprovinciaal Overleg	Inter Provincial Meeting
LEI	Landbouweconomisch Instituut	Agricultural Economics Institute
LNV	Landbouw Natuur Visserij	Agriculture, Nature, Fisheries
LTO	Land- en Tuinbouw Organisatie	Agricultural and Horticulture Organisation
MNP	Milieu en Natuur Planbureau	Environmental and Nature Assessment Agency
NEN	Ecologische Hoofdstructuur	National Ecological Network
NDTs	Natuur DoelTypen	Nature Target Types
NOS	Nederlandse Omroep Stichting	Dutch Broadcasting Association
PBL	Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving	The Dutch Environmental Assessement Agency
PVV	Partij voor de Vrijheid	Party for Freedom
RLG	Raad voor Landelijke Gebied	Board for Rural Area
SP	Socialistische Partij	Socialist Party
VVD	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	Party for Freedom and Democracy
WUR	Wageningen Universiteit en Research Centre	Wageningen University and Research Centre
ZLTO	Zuidelijke Land en Tuinbouworganisatie	Southern Agriculture and Horticulture Organisation
WRR	Wetenschappelijke Raad voor Regeringsbeleid	Scientific Board for Governmental Policy
WILG	Wet Investeringsbudget Landelijk Gebied	Law Investment Budget Rural Area
UVW	Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden	Utrecht Vecht and Weiden

Summary

This research addressed the current turmoil experienced the last two years in nature policy in the Netherlands. In the autumn of 2010, the Cabinet pronounced severe cutbacks in nature policy, that included erasing the robust corridors, budget cuts of approx. 60% in nature management and an official Review of the National Ecological Network. These political decisions triggered a discursive debate among society, that could be traced back in numerous discussions in different media. Many stakeholders experienced the governmental decisions as a rupture with the twenty years of relative continuity in nature policy. However, the study also identified actors that regarded the policy changes as positive or as no rupture at all. The unrest, disbelief and discontent that followed after the political decisions in nature policy, and the differentiated views of actors on the matter, were reason to investigate this further in a master thesis.

Problem Statement

From a discourse-theoretical perspective, a discursive struggle seems on-going in nature policy as ideas, concepts and categories within nature policy are rearticulated. The National Ecological Network (NEN) used to be a relatively dominant and legitimate concept, nonetheless never uncontested. The idea of developing nature and constructing corridors between different nature areas is currently reframed through articulatory practices in such a way that the NEN appears to be more of a problem than a solution. In other words, the legitimacy of the NEN and its related discourse are at stake. The dominant discursive structure causing for relative stability in nature policy seems to be challenged by a counter-discourse, which is causing for the current uproar and turmoil in Dutch society, especially within the prominent coalitions of nature policy and the conservancy movement. After several years of relative stability, the dominant nature discourse in nature policy seems to be dislocated. A discursive dislocation goes together with articulatory practices of hegemonic struggles that, in the gap opened by the dislocated structure, seek to construct the identity of subjects. By offering such identity, a new discursive structure is rearticulated. As we now appear to be in a momentum of dislocation, we find ourselves in a chaotic situation with diverse articulatory practices adhering to different discourses. This study aims to shed light on possible directions in nature policy by illuminating the power struggles of different discourses and the way subjects identify themselves through acts of identifications with certain discourses. The research question is as follows: *"How can the current nature policy changes be understood from a discursive perspective and how will these changes affect concrete nature planning practices?"*

Theoretical Concepts and Research Design

This study is grounded in poststructuralist discourse theory and can be regarded as a Foucauldian discursive study complemented with elements of Laclau & Mouffe and Hajer. Taking a discursive perspective allows one to understand social processes of change, in this case how processes within nature policy evolved in a certain way and what discourse gained dominance in a certain moment of time. Discourse theory takes a critical perspective, addressing power struggles, struggles over meanings, in- and exclusion of meanings and their very materialization in practice when entering in a moment of dominance. To understand the current situation – the so-called dislocation in nature policy – genealogy of Foucault is used as a theoretical approach. Genealogy aims to deconstruct discourses, illuminating the underlying assumptions, power struggles and knowledge systems. Using genealogy as an overarching approach places historical and present events in a discursive context. The approach is supplemented with theoretical concepts as dislocation, domestication, structuration, institutionalisation, articulation and identification, that allow the study to analyse the content of discourses as well as the dynamics of change and continuity over time. Discourses are identified through articulatory practices emphasising discursive elements: symbols, heroes, structuring principles and constitutive and dystopian myths. These discursive elements were able to structure along particular fields of openings as the first part of the research demonstrates. The first part of the research considers a historical genealogical analysis of dominant nature discourses in nature policy, which draws on literature review, helicopter interviews and content analysis. The second part of the research addresses the current dislocation in nature policy, using content analysis, semi-structured interviews and participant observation as methods to identify the articulatory practices of the hegemonic struggles and acts of identification of actors with certain discourses.

Genealogical Analysis: Deconstructing of the Nature Development Discourse

The genealogical analysis distinguished two dominant discourses in nature policy: the nature conservation discourse and the nature development discourse. Agriculture functioned as the *constitutive outside* for both discourses. Along several *fields of opening* (e.g. agricultural consolidation and restructuration) the nature conservation discourse was able to structure and gain dominance in the nature policy domain in the Green Policy Documents. The main *structuring principle* used to be plant sociology with its characteristic typology of half-nature, structuring thoughts and practices in nature protection. Nature protection occurred through purchasing lands which subsequently were declared Natuurmonumenten (*symbol*). The nature development discourse was able to emerge because of new theoretical insights on ecosystems, metapopulation and islands biography that weakened the *structuring principle* of plant sociology in the nature conservation discourse. The nature development discourse emphasised natural processes and large robust connected nature areas. Several events, e.g.the forestry storms and Oostvaardersplassen functioned as *dystopian* and *constitutive myths* that helped to structure and institutionalise the nature development discourse. The NEN was the central *symbol* in the nature development discourse. In order to be controllable and manageable, the NEN was quantified in hectares and nature target types, enhancing the technocratic and makeable character of the discourse in question. The genealogical analysis shows that both discourses were subject to similar critiques directed at common discursive elements: top-down planning and spatial segregation. The nature development discourse tried to domesticate these social demands with the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy document. As the genealogical analysis shows this domestication succeeded only partly because of implementation problems around Natura 2000 and failed attempts at participation for creation of public support. The genealogical analysis shows how contingently both discourses came into being, through certain fields of openings, spontaneous events and the creation of dystopian and constitutive myths. The analysis also illuminated particular sources of discontent and social demands towards both discourses, that intensified over time.

Dislocation and Acts of Identification

The genealogical analysis provides the context from which the discursive dislocation has sprung. The political conjuncture and economic crisis functioned as *fields of openings* along which the sources of discontent were able to unite in a coherent counter-discourse to the nature development discourse. Chapter five shows how elements of the nature development discourse are *articulated* in such a way that the meaning of the elements is transformed which entails that the nature development discourse loses strength and legitimacy. Three *articulatory practices* were identified that problematize the elements of the nature development discourse while emphasising other discursive elements, i.e. the right of local people to take charge of their own environment, regional responsibility, local knowledge, ordinary nature, integration of functions, landscape use management and nature management by farmers and private initiatives. The discursive elements of the three articulatory practices make up a new discourse, called the Do-It-Yourself (DIY)Nature discourse. DIY embraces all discursive elements of the three articulatory practices such as that people want to undertake nature management by themselves, in mutual cooperation, integration of multiple functions and including diverse nature visions. In various settings the articulatory practices of actors were investigated to see which discursive elements could be recognised and which discourses actors identify with. In conclusion, although elements of the nature development discourse are still articulated, the actors primarily identify with the DIY-Nature discourse.

Conclusions and Discussion

As shown in the genealogical analysis, the dominant discourse until recently used to be the nature development discourse. Sources of discontent directed to the nature conservation discourse and the nature development discourse were identified, criticising the top-down implementation and spatial segregation of both discourses. The economic crisis and the political conjuncture functioned as fields of openings for a new discourse to emerge: The Do-It-Yourself Nature discourse. In the field, actors primarily identify with the DIY-Nature discourse. However it is too early to conclude that the discourse is hegemonic in the domain of nature policy, as the DIY-Nature discourse is still too much of a counter-discourse. In order to be successful, the DIY- Nature discourse needs to have its own symbols and stories that assert nature and give all kinds of nature, including ecological nature, a place in the DIY-Nature discourse. The discussion focuses on the potential future of the DIY-Nature discourse, how it can grow stronger, while mediating between the nature development discourse and the underexposed discourse in this research: the agro-industrial discourse.

Samenvatting

Dit onderzoek gaat over de huidige beroering en dynamiek in het natuurbeleid van de afgelopen twee jaar. In de herfst van 2010 kondigde het Kabinet bezuinigingen aan in het natuurbeleid. Deze bezuinigingen hielden in: het afschaffen van de robuuste verbindingen, 60% bezuiniging op het natuurbeheer en een officiële herijking van de Ecologische Hoofdstructuur. Deze politieke wijzigingen leidden tot een heftig discursief debat in de samenleving, dat breed werd uitgemeten in verschillende media. Voor veel mensen betekenden de politieke besluiten een harde breuk met het twintig jaar relatief stabiele en continue natuurbeleid. Echter, er klonken ook positieve geluiden en sommige actoren ervoeren de wijzigingen als geen scherpe breuk. Kortom, de onrust, het ongeloof en de onvrede die volgden na de politieke wijzigingen in het natuurbeleid en de verschillende perspectieven van actoren waren reden dit verder te onderzoeken in een Master scriptie.

Probleemstelling

Vanuit een discursief-theoretisch perspectief lijkt er een discursieve strijd plaats te vinden in het natuurbeleid. De EHS was een dominant en legitiem beleidsconcept, desondanks nooit helemaal geaccepteerd. De idee van natuurontwikkeling en het construeren van verbindingszones tussen natuurgebieden wordt zodanig gearticuleerd dat de EHS meer een probleem lijkt dan een oplossing. Met andere woorden, de legitimiteit van de EHS en het gerelateerde discours staat op het spel. Het dominante discours dat zorgde voor jarenlange stabiliteit in het natuurbeleid lijkt te worden uitgedaagd door een tegendiscours. Dit zorgt voor de huidige beroering en chaos in het natuurbeleid, vooral onder coalities van natuurbeschermers en beleidsmakers, i.e. het discours is gedislokeerd. Een discursieve dislocatie gaat samen met machtsworstelingen tussen verscheidene discoursen die de identiteit van actoren proberen te reconstrueren d.m.v. verschillende articulaties. Deze studie probeert mogelijke nieuwe richtingen in het natuurbeleid te duiden door het ontrafelen van deze discursieve machtsworstelingen en hoe actoren zich vereenzelvigen met bepaalde discoursen. De onderzoeksvraag luidt als volgt: '*Hoe kunnen de wijzigingen in het natuurbeleid begrepen worden vanuit een discursief perspectief en welke invloed hebben die op natuurbeschermingspraktijken*?'

Theoretische concepten en Onderzoeksopzet

Deze studie heeft een poststructuralistisch discourstheoretisch perspectief gebruikt met elementen van Laclau & Mouffe en Hajer. Discoursen zijn systemen van betekenisgeving die de sociale werkelijkheid vormgeven. Een discursief perspectief geeft de mogelijkheid om sociale veranderingsprocessen nader te duiden, in dit geval hoe processen in het natuurbeleid zich op een bepaalde manier ontwikkelen en welk discours op een bepaald moment dominant is. Binnen een discourstheoretisch perspectief is het concept dislocatie het uitgangspunt voor het analyseren van processen van continuïteit en verandering. Dislocatie verwijst naar de destabilisatie van een discours door het optreden van externe gebeurtenissen die een discourse niet kan verklaren, representeren of domesticeren. Om de huidige situatie te begrijpen – de zogenoemde dislocatie in het natuurbeleid – is genealogie van Foucault gebruikt als theoretische benadering. De bedoeling van genealogie is om discoursen te deconstrueren door de onderliggende veronderstellingen, machtsworstelingen en kennissystemen bloot te leggen. Genealogie plaatst aldus de historische en hedendaagse gebeurtenissen in een discursieve context. Deze benadering is aangevuld met theoretische concepten als dislocatie, domesticatie, structurering, institutionalisering, articulatie en identificatie, waardoor het mogelijk wordt om zowel de inhoud van discoursen als de dynamiek van verandering en continuïteit over tijd te analyseren. In deze thesis worden discoursen geïdentificeerd in praktijken van articulaties die bepaalde elementen benadrukken: symbolen, helden, structurerende principes en scheppende en dystopische mythen. Deze discursieve elementen werden langs bepaalde openingslijnen vormgegeven zoals de genealogische analysis duidelijk maakt. Het eerste deel van het onderzoek is een historische genealogische analyse van dominante natuurdiscoursen in het natuurbeleid. Hiervoor zijn literatuuronderzoek, helikopterinterviews en tekstuele analyse gebruikt. Het tweede onderzoeksdeel gaat over de huidige dislocatie in het natuurbeleid en gebruikt naast tekstuele analyse, semigestructureerde interviews en participatieve observatie als methoden om verschillende articulaties en praktijken van identificatie te identificeren.

Genealogische Analyse: Deconstructurering van het Natuurontwikkelingsdiscours

De genealogische analyse onderscheidde twee dominante discoursen: het natuurbeschermingsdiscours (1900-1970) en het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours (1970 – nu). De landbouw functioneerde als de *scheppende buitenmacht* voor beide discoursen. Langs verschillende *openingslijnen* (zoals agrarische ruilverkaveling en herstructurering) kon het natuurbeschermingsdiscours zich structureren en vestigen in het natuurbeleid in de Groene Beleidsnota's. Het *structurerende principe* van het natuurbeschermingsdiscours was plantsociologie met de karakteristieke typologie van half-natuur die de gedachten en praktijken binnen natuurbescherming structureerden. Natuur werd beschermd door het aankopen van gebieden die vervolgens als Natuurmonumenten (*symbool*) werden betiteld. Het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours kreeg mogelijkheid zich te ontwikkelen toen er nieuwe theoretische inzichten in de ecologie ontstonden op ecosystemen, metapopulaties en eilandenbiografie. Deze nieuwe inzichten zwakte *het structurerende principe* van plantsociologie af, waardoor het natuurontwikkelingsdiscourse kans kreeg zich te vestigen. Het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours benadrukt natuurlijk processen en grote robuuste verbonden natuurgebieden. Verscheidende gebeurtenissen, zoals de bosstormen en de Oostvaardersplassen, functioneerden als een *dystopische en scheppende mythen* die hielpen om het natuurontwikkelingsdiscourse te structureren en institutionaliseren. De EHS was het centrale *symbool* van het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours. Om controleerbaar en beheersbaar te worden, werd de EHS gekwantificeerd in hectares en in natuurdoeltypen, waarbij het technocratische en maakbare karakter van het discours versterkt werd. De genealogische analyse laat zien dat beide discoursen in de geschiedenis kritiek te verduren kregen gericht op hun top-down karakter en de ruimtelijke scheiding van andere functies. Het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours heeft getracht deze sociale kritiek te *domesticeren* met het 'Natuur voor Mensen, Mensen voor Natuur' beleidsdocument. Deze domesticatie slaagde echter gedeeltelijk vanwege implementatieproblemen rondom Natura 2000 en de instrumentele participatiepogingen die maatschappelijk draagvlak beoogden.

Dislocatie en Praktijken van Identificatie

De genealogische analyse legde de context bloot waaruit de dislocatie is ontsprongen. De specifieke politieke conjunctuur samen met de economische crisis konden als *openingslijnen* functioneren waarlangs de bronnen van onvrede zich konden verenigingen in een coherent tegendiscours. Hoofdstuk vijf toont hoe de elementen van het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours op zodanige wijze werden gearticuleerd dat de betekenis veranderde en het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours aan legitimiteit en kracht inboette. Drie praktijken van articulaties konden ontdekt worden die de elementen van het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours problematiseerden terwijl andere discursieve elementen benadrukt werden: zeggenschap van lokale mensen over natuurbeheer, regionale verantwoordelijkheid, lokale kennis en gewone natuur, samenwerkingsvormen, integratie van meerdere functies, multifunctioneel landschapsgebruik en natuurbeheer door private initiatieven en boeren. Deze discursieve elementen maken deel uit van een nieuw discours: het Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Natuurdiscours. DIY staat voor alle discursieve elementen van de drie praktijken van articulaties, i.e. mensen willen zelf natuurbeheer ondernemen, op een integrale manier, met verweving van functies, inclusief meerdere natuurvisies. In verschillende settings zijn praktijken van articulaties onderzocht bij actoren om te zien welke discursieve elementen herkend konden worden en met welke discoursen actoren zich identificeren. Hoewel elementen van het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours gearticuleerd worden, identificeren actoren zich voornamelijk met het DIY-Natuurdiscours.

Conclusies en Discussie

Zoals bleek uit de genealogische analyse was het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours het dominante discours tot heden in het natuurbeleid. Bronnen van onvrede konden ook in de genealogische analyse ontdekt worden, die voornamelijk op de top-down implementatie en ruimtelijke scheiding gericht waren. De economische crisis en de politieke conjunctuur werkten als openingslijnen waarlangs een nieuw discours zich kon formeren: het DIY-Natuurdiscours. Ondanks dat in het veld de meeste actoren zich met dit discours identificeerden, is het te vroeg te veronderstellen dat het DIY-Natuurdiscours dominant is. Het DIY-Natuurdiscours is nog te veel een tegendiscours en het mist eigen, krachtige symbolen, verhalen en mythen. Om succesvol te worden zal het DIY-Natuurdiscours naast eigen symbolen en verhalen, ook verscheidende soorten natuur moeten omarmen, waaronder de ecologische natuur. De discussie focust op de mogelijke toekomst van het DIY-Natuurdiscours, hoe het sterker kan groeien terwijl het tegelijkertijd als een bemiddelingsdiscours kan functioneren tussen het natuurontwikkelingsdiscours en het agro-industriële discours dat in deze thesis onderbelicht is geblevenomt nog

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Chapter 1. Introduction

"Stakeholders in nature policy and management would hardly ever be so startled as by the renowned October letter of State Secretary Bleker about the new Nature Policy of the central government. This letter did not yet have the impact of a bombardment, but the nature organisations were shacking on their foundations and they were not alone. Nobody would deny that cutbacks are necessary in view of the current governmental financial situation, also in Nature Policy. But this financial cut was even in the view of some agricultural organisations disproportional and dysfunctional. And there was surprise for many. Is nature in our country not in the interest of us all and does that not deserve a substantial financial input for the greater good? And what about the international obligations that we have committed ourselves to? Can we just like that get away with it?" (Vogelenzang (LEI[1]), 2011) (own translation)

Nature policy in the Netherlands finds itself in turbulent waters. In the autumn of 2010, the newly installed Cabinet pronounced severe cutbacks in numerous policy programmes. These cutbacks affected nature policy severely as approximately 60% of the former budget was cut down. In addition the Cabinet, as stated in their Governmental Agreement, decided to erase the 'Robust Corridors' of the so-called National Ecological Network (NEN; in Dutch: *Ecologische Hoofdstructuur*). This proclamation was made in the Governmental Agreement and was decided upon prior to the pronounced 'Review of the NEN'. As stated in the Governmental Agreement: "*The NEN will be realised in a reformed manner by 2018. Prior to the Review the robust corridors will be cut*" (Governmental Agreement, 2010:13, translated from Dutch to English). The Review of the NEN was meant to determine an overall future direction to the NEN and nature policy in general. The governmental decision regard the 'Robust Corridors' was excluded as an option from the official 'Review of the NEN'. As the decision of erasing the Robust Corridors did not involve any other societal stakeholders in nature policy or management, the decision can be considered as fairly political which indicates a turn in the political discourse regards nature and its policy.

The changes as specified above and the related political statements triggered a discursive debate in society on nature and its policy. This chapter presents the debate briefly, illuminating central arguments of stakeholders, before going to the problem statement, research questions and aims of the research. As the research considers a research cooperation with CLM and PBL, the chapter dedicates a special account on this matter in 1.3.

1.1. The Discursive Debate

The political decisions and policy changes in nature policy are experienced by many stakeholders as a rupture with the twenty years of relative continuity in the policy domain of Nature Policy in the Netherlands. Accordingly, the governmental decisions initiated much upheaval among nature practitioners, which could be traced back in the numerous discussions in different media such as newspapers, journals and Internet blogs. Even public petitions and lawsuits were organised by nature organisations such as 'Das&Boom' and Natuurmonumenten[2] to moderate or reverse the intended policy changes. For several people the changes in Nature Policy came as a big surprise, which was apart from that, difficult to understand for many. The surprise was clearly vented during a Capita Selecta Series I attended in the autumn of 2010 at the Wageningen University. The Capita Selecta was organised by the FNP chair group in cooperation with the Forest Union (*het Bosschap*) and addressed the topic: '*Twenty years of Nature Policy*'. The audience existed of a fusion of students, academics and nature conservation professionals from organisations, e.g. Bird Protection (*Vogelbescherming*), the Forest Union (*het Bosschap*) and Provincial Landscapes (*Provinciale Landschappen*). People were wondering what had gone wrong for the situation to turn out the

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[1] Vogelenzang, T (25/05/2011), 'Schok van het nieuwe natuurbeleid trilt nog na.(www.lei.wur.nl)
[2] Natuurmonumenten, literally Nature Monuments is an association with more than 730.000 members (2012) and manages more than 100.000 hectares of nature areas.

way it did for Nature Policy: *How is this possible? What have we done wrong? What are the underlying reasons?*

Incomprehension, disbelief and bewilderment were also expressed in newspaper headlines, journals, other media and until today the turn in nature policy is a theme of high social and political debate as illustrated by the following citations:

"*With this, one does not only cut back, one also says farewell to Nature Policy*" (Robbert Hijdra, coordinator Natuurmonumenten in de Pers, 2011[3]).

"*Why is everyone suddenly so negative about Nature Management*?" (Johan van den Gronden, Director WFF[4])

"*I am not really against these cutbacks, even if they are draconian. But the atmosphere that prevails in the Cabinet makes me sad. Nowhere I hear any appreciation..that Nature Management is worthwhile.*" (Jan Jaap de Graeff, Natuurmonumenten in de Trouw, 2010[5])

"*You do not protect nature while undermining a twenty years effort with draconian cutbacks and with unfair accuses, antagonising the whole Nature Protection Movement collectively*." (Dolf Logemann, ecologist advise agency Arcadis in Trouw, 2011[6])

The critiques do not only come from nature organisations or ecologists. Critical notes and comments are also received from the academic and public administrative level. The Provinces for instance point to the fact that they have to take into account the liabilities and on-going investments made:

"*Because of committed legal obligations, expenses will be necessary in the coming period for Rods (Recreation around the city) and the Robust Corridors. Not accomplishing, will lead to damage claims that the Provinces will not take for account. This responsibility should count for the national government. Ending these projects will lead to a further stagnation of bottom-up processes. This has great consequences. This does not only lead to disinvestments, but also to less acceptance and support among the people in those areas. Agreements between municipality, water associations, diverse social organisations, nature managements, farmers and citizens are being violated. We do consider this as highly undesirable".* (IPO, 2010:2)

The Province of Flevoland decided that, despite the decision of the National Government, to continue with the construction of the planned Robust Corridor between Oostvaardensplassen and Horsterwold. It plans to realise the corridor at own initiative with support of private investments:

"*The recent Cabinet decided at 20th of October 2010 to cease with any further development of the area. We are willing to take our new responsibility on the base of the new Cabinet Policy. Within the current legitimate agreements between national government and the Province of Flevoland, we see possibilities to further develop the OostvaardersWold in cooperation with social and private initiatives.*" (Bestuursakkoord Province Flevoland, 2010).

In April 2011, no less than 78 professors of Dutch universities wrote an open letter to the Cabinet considering the changes in Nature Policy. They declared their concern for the taken course of the Cabinet:

"*The draconian cutbacks on nature lead to what has been built up for decennia, is lost in a very short term. We want to protest with emphasis to this assault on nature in the Netherlands, taking into account that short-term cut backs will lead to long-term problems. We criticize the government for a lack of vision on*

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[3] De Pers, 2011 'Boze Boswachters Schreeuwen Niet.
[4] Trouw, 10/02/2011, Natuurbehoud?, we moeten verder!.
[5] Trouw, 20/12/2010. We moeten scherper zijn
[6] Trouw 08/05/11, Bleker schoffeert de natuurbeschermers

fragile nature in our country, on the quality of the living environment and on the future design of our country".

Also the political opposition is sceptical with regard to the intended changes and course set in Nature Policy as highlighted by a newspaper article in Trouw[7]:

"„This State Secretary makes a mess of Nature Policy", grumbled Groenlinks (Green Party) yesterday in a debate on the NEN. „What do we actually have to discuss with this Cabinet that does nothing to protect ecology", wondered Partij van de Dieren (Party of the Animals). „The onesided and swift agreements of the State Secretary work paralysing", blamed the ChristenUnie (Christen Union)."

The arguments that the aforementioned actors mention considering the political decisions in nature policy are approximately as follows: committed contracts, no long-term vision of the Cabinet, disinvestment in bottom-up processes, degradation of nature quality, and negative attitude towards nature management. There seems to be much uproar and turmoil going on caused by this particular political decision to change certain plans in nature policy. The policy changes are experienced as a radical rupture to the twenty year of continuity in nature policy and as an attack towards nature itself. However, there are also actors who hold different opinions and viewpoints as regards the considered policy changes. Some do not perceive the changes in nature policy as radical or a rupture while others do perceive it as a radical rupture, but as a welcome one. Alterative accounts can be identified with actors from farmer organisations, but also from within nature organisations. These accounts represent alternative views and perspectives to nature, its policy and preceding practices. Furthermore, actors from the political parties of the current Cabinet (CDA, VVD and PVV) have a particular reason for the changes in nature policy as pronounced in the Governmental Agreement, which indicates that other world views underlie the reason behind the budget costs.

Ger Koopmans from the CDA Party for instance seems not to experience the particular policy changes as a rupture, as the following citation illustrates: "*The way the NEN has been designed will continue. The idea for Robust Corridors was added later to the concept, but there was never money for budgeted. None of the other parties budgeted any money for them in their election programmes.*" (Koopmans, CDA (Christen Democrats))[8]. This citation emphasises that the first and original idea of the NEN was not including the 'Robust Corridors'. Helma Lodders from the VVD Party supports a similar account, however frames the situation more as a problem as illustrated by the next citation: *"The NEN has always been criticised by the VVD. The NEN, desired by some parties, has grown totally out of proportion in our view. The State Secretary is at this moment busy with the Review. On behalf of the VVD, I indicated before that we find it of importance that the Review will take place on basis of quality and not quantity."* (Lodders, VVD (Neoliberal Political Party)[9]. According to this citation, the NEN has grown totally out of proportion with an over-focus on quantity, i.e. purchasing land for nature, than on quality of nature management. Richard Moss of the PVV (Right Wing Party) envisions something totally different with nature in Dutch Society as is indicated by the following citation in the Trouw Newspaper[10]: "*Richard Moss (PVV) has especially attention for nature in the big cities. He shows up with a plan for school education. "We see more in a Central Park concept: recreation and green together. Today it is crisis and nature and the environment cost a lot of money. To release some oxen and then call it nature. Well, no.*" The latter account reveals another vision on nature, but also on the use of nature as his articulation shows: 'the type of desired nature that used to prevail, has cost society a lot of money, therefore another type of nature should prevail, which is to be made relevant to people in a recreational form close to the cities.'

Farmer organisations are divided on the changes in nature policy. Especially, farmers that are in the middle of negotiation processes for their land being transformed to nature have mixed feelings as due to the

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[7]Trouw, 18/2/2011, Bleker natuurdoelen naar beneden bijstellen

[8] Trouw, 07/11/2010, CDA: Natuurcompensatie voortaan binnen de EHS

[9] See footnote 6

[10] See footnote 6

policy changes they are in an uncertain situation. Albert Hooijer (vice-chair LTO North-Holland) reflects upon the situation as follows: "*We can conclude that due to the current uncertainties in nature policy, bottom-up processes are forced to stand-still. A stand-still is to move back and this especially counts for the agrarian sector. Also due to the current status quo, opportunities are not taken up which affects other areas outside the NEN as well*". This is also been heard in the political debate as put forward by Henk van Gerven (SP): "*We concluded already last year that bottom-up processes came to a stand-still due to the letter of the State Secretary in October last year. Due to this, land-reform projects could not continue. Now, a year later, it is as bad that the LTO is complaining.*" The current situation is being experienced as uncertain and therefore as a stand-still, also for farmers. On the other hand, different viewpoints can be identified from the agrarian side: "*The government has to analyse if there is not a cheaper way, in such a manner the realisation of the NEN does not have impact on agricultural lands*" says Arie Verhorst LTO South-Holland [11]. This view was already heard a few years before as is illustrated by the next citations: "*The Netherlands have to stop sacrificing agricultural land for nature", says Beishuizen (director of LTO Noord Farmer and Horticulture Organisation). The plans for the NEN and Nature 2000 are backwards and the situation in agriculture has changed in such a way that land is necessary for food production*" (AGD, 2008[12]). In the recent era, Beishuizen is talking about economizing nature as the solution for the crisis in Nature Management and Policy: "*Call it economizing nature, because that is what is so needed in the NEN. I mean nature management by farmers, smart combinations between recreation and house-building and sort-like private money streams. It is okay to earn money from nature. More economy in Nature Policy asks for a clear legalisation in Nature Policy that puts emphasis on protecting nature through the stimulating of development*" (LTO Nederland, 2010, Tammo Beishuizen (portefeuille ruimtelijke ordening)[13] Economising nature is also a view supported by the State Secretary Bleker, in a reaction to the proposed nature law: "*The complete package should bring more balance between ecology and economy. Nature is beautiful, but it should fit in economic activities.*"[14]

Apart from political parties belonging to the Cabinet and farmers organisations, there are also critical sounds regarding the NEN and its practices from within nature conservancy organisations. Take for instance Seger baron Van Voorst tot Voorst, director of the National Park 'Hoge Veluwe': "*the acquisition of land [for nature] did not add to anything. No more than the construction of those megalomane ecoducts for deer.*" As becomes clear in a news article in 'de Telegraaf'[15] he sees the destruction of good agricultural land as fatal for the food supply of birds and animals who nature conservations aim to protect: "*Animals have to eat. Then you do not buy off a farmer and remove the fertile top layer of the soil with a bulldozer. Crop cultivation and grasslands, combined with forests are indispensable.*"

The aforementioned arguments from the latter viewpoints can be summarized briefly as follows: the NEN costs too much money, it is economic crisis, it is about quality, not quantity (how it used to be), first good management in existing nature areas then further expansion and rural nature is also nature. Furthermore, the arguments can be considered to be differentiated in nature. Some articulations, as from the Koopmans of the CDA, do not conceive the policy changes as a rupture, and others like Beishuizen do, however are rather positive about it.

Summarizing…

What the above overview illustrates is that nature protection and policy are not as straight forward as they seem in the first place. The political decision to erase the Robust Corridors from the NEN with the

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[11]Nieuwe Oogst, 07/10/2010. De EHS goedkoper en kleiner
[12] AGD, 5/03/2008, LTO wilt politieke heroverweging natuurbeleid
[13] LTO Nederland, 26/04/2010, Bedrijfsontwikkeling en economie voorwaarden voor een betere natuur

[14] AGD, 2011, Overheid laat boer opdraaien voor falend natuurbeleid

[15] De Telegraaf, 13/01/2011, Stop de verspreiding herten in ons land!

pronounced 'Review on the NEN' and 60% budget cutbacks in nature management caused for much turmoil in Dutch society, especially among actors within nature conservancy. However, the political decisions are experienced differently. Some actors experience the policy changes in nature policy as a radical rupture with continuity in Nature Policy and as an attack on nature, while others do not perceive such a rupture or they do experience it as a rupture, but are rather positive about it. It seem that we are today witness of a heated debate in society, that includes different viewpoints and meanings attached to nature and its policy. The unrest, disbelief and discontent that followed after the political decision concerning nature policy, and the differentiated views of actors on the matter itself, are accordingly a reason to investigate this further in a master thesis.

1.2. Problem Statement: Research Puzzle

One might be wondering what the underlying reasons are for the current policy modifications within nature policy. Do the changes in Nature Policy only have to do with the economic crisis which make financial cuts necessary or has this to do with something else, such as differing points of view, interests, positions? The latter seems to be most likely, as stated by the state-secretary Bleker in the Trouw newspaper: "*Even if I did not need to makes cut-downs, I would still have come with the same plans. Time has come*" (Trouw, 22 March 2011) From a discourse-theoretical point of view, it seems that a discursive struggle is currently taking place in Dutch society about the nature of nature, the priority and place of nature in society and the role mankind ought to play within nature conservancy and management. Ideas, concepts and categories within nature policy are now being rearticulated in such a way that the dominant discourse in nature policy loses grounds. The National Ecological Network (NEN) used to be a relatively dominant and legitimate concept (van den Windt, 1995), nonetheless never uncontested (Keulartz, 1999). However, the idea of developing nature and constructing corridors between different nature areas is now being reframed through other articulatory practices in such a way that the NEN appears to be more of a problem than a solution. The legitimacy of the NEN and its related discourse are at stake. The very act to change the name of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries into the Ministry of Economy, Agriculture and Infrastructure also demonstrates the downgrading of nature in the political domain. Nature is no longer perceived as a state-responsibility, but responsibility for nature is decentralised to the Provinces.

As stated by Feindt and Oels (2005) "the articulation of an environmental phenomena shapes if and how it will be dealt with". The different uses of language witnessed in diverse media and discussions are shaping the current debate on Nature Policy, as it concerns different ways of articulations about the same physical phenomena, in this case nature and the way how to treat it. People assign different meanings to nature, hence nature and the environment have always been contested concepts (Feindt and Oels, 2005). The discursive struggle now taking place seems to be nurtured by alternative ideas, concepts and categories that until recently were never heard completely - as these were domesticated within the dominant nature discourse - and consequently not enacted upon fully. Or to put it in Keulartz words, alternative views, ideas and concepts were "smothered in the social dispute about what kind of nature and what kind of landscape we want, with scientific argumentation" of the dominant nature development discourse (Keulartz, 1999:99).

After several years of relative stability, the dominant nature discourse in nature policy seems to be destabilised. To talk in Torfing and Howarth (1999, 2004 in van den Brink, 2009) terms: the discourse is being dislocated. The dominant discursive structure causing for relative stability in nature policy seems to be challenged by a counter-discourse, which is causing for the current uproar and turmoil in Dutch society, especially within the prominent coalitions of nature policy and the conservancy movement. A discursive dislocation goes together with articulatory practices of hegemonic struggles that, in the gap opened by the dislocated or destabilised structure, seek to construct the identity of subjects and by offering such identity, a new discursive structure is rearticulated (van den Brink:32). As we now appear to be in a momentum of dislocation, we find ourselves in a chaotic situation with diverse articulatory practices adhering to differ-

ent discourses. No one really knows the way or direction Nature Policy will take. Will the previous dominant discourse regain its power, will it be in the same or in different format or will another discourse prevail within Nature Policy? Though, this research does not pretend to find a complete answer to this question - due to the current character of the situation this would be an unrealistic aim - a discourse analysis can shed light on the current chaotic situation by analysing the different social constructions, articulations on nature and its policy and their related discourses underneath the current debate regards nature policy. These insights enable us to understand the way policies and social processes transform, with continuity and change. As well, a discourse analysis has ability to give insights in possible directions of nature policy by illuminating the power struggles of different discourses and the way subjects identify themselves through acts of identifications within certain discourses.

1.3. Research in cooperation with PBL and CLM

This research is conducted in cooperation with the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (*'Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving'*) and the Centre for Agriculture and Environment *('Centrum voor Landbouw en Milieu'*). A brief sketch about the organisations and their interest in this specific research cooperation is outlined below.

The Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (which I refer to by its Dutch acronym PBL) is the planning bureau for environmental issues to the Dutch Ministries. Their work includes the publication of annual Nature and Environmental accounts, documents which include assessments of the state of nature and the environment and of policy progress in these fields. Every four years, the PBL produces so-called Nature and Environmental Outlooks. These reports explore different policy scenarios and their consequences for the future state of nature and the environment. At the start of the research, the PBL was about to produce a new Nature Outlook, addressing the future state and trends of nature in the Netherlands. The current turmoil in nature policy is explicitly addressed in this Outlook. The PBL considers multiple perspectives to nature apart from the dominant nature discourse. The PBL has developed four specific viewpoints on nature and landscape: vital nature, experiencing nature, fitting-in nature and functional nature. Underneath the four viewpoints one can recognize different ideas to nature. Under vital nature, the conservation of biodiversity and natural processes take central point, while with the variant of experiencing nature the recreational value of nature to human society takes central stage. With the fitting-in nature version, economic considerations take a lead, such as building construction in green areas, where one uses nature for economic benefits. The functional nature variant sees nature as the basis of a sustainable economy and ecosystem services take a central place. The four viewpoints are meant to consider multipartite thinking on the future of nature policy and to anticipate on the developments heading towards nature policy (Petra van Egmond and Rijk van Oostenbrugge, *pers. comm*.). The very act of addressing different viewpoints in nature policy reveals that people are considering and anticipating on the discursive debate in nature policy. Within this context the PBL searched for a MSc student that would undertake more research on the current turmoil in Dutch nature policy, especially investigating the social and political backgrounds behind the current situation in order to render insights in how to better shape future policy on forests, nature and landscapes in the Netherlands.

The Centre for Agriculture and Environment (which I refer to by its Dutch acronym CLM) is a research and advisory bureau that stands for a vital country side with sustainable agriculture and scope for nature. The organisation was set up in the '80s, binding together critical biologists, farmers and nature practitioners while pleading for more integration in nature policy and management between agriculture and nature reserves (Van der Windt, 1995). CLM nowadays is active on different themes such as climate mitigation, healthy food, organic farming, rural development, a vital rural economy and attractive countryside. One theme that is relevant for this research is their involvement in landscape planning and bottom-up processes between farmers, nature practitioners and governmental administrators. CLM has been involved for many years in several NEN planning projects, aiming to facilitate meetings and strategic thinking on

the project, taking into account multiple functions of the area such as nature, biodiversity, landscape, agricultural farming, economic opportunities and recreation. The current turmoil in Nature Policy triggered considerations and thoughts on how future nature planning projects would go about and what kind of thinking at the actor level will prevail in nature planning processes. When taking into account that many NEN planning projects are still incomplete and at this moment at a stand-still due to the policy changes, these type of questions become more pressing. For CLM a reason to support a MSc research that studies how nature planning practices will continue in which way and format.

1.4. Research aim and questions

Taking into account the problem statement and the questions of the PBL and CLM, the aim of this research can be considered as follows:

> *Research Aim: to get an understanding of the social and political backgrounds behind the current turmoil in Nature Policy through a discursive perspective and to render insights in the future course of Nature Policy by investigating what kind of discourse is possibly able to (re)gain dominance in the domain of nature policy.*

The first part of the research aim is investigated with a discursive historical perspective, while the second part, i.e. the future course of nature policy, is studied by going into the field, examining the articulatory practices of actors in concrete nature planning projects. Following the research aim, the main research question will be as follows:

"How can the current nature policy changes be understood from a discursive perspective and how will these changes affect concrete nature planning practices?"

This main research question is answered with support of the following sub-questions:

1. *What has been the leading, dominant discourse in Nature Policy until recently?*

2. *How did this dominant discourse evolve throughout history?*

3. *Which sources of discontent/alternative discourses can be identified to the dominant Nature Discourse? How were these sources of discontent/alternative discourses 'domesticated' by the dominant discourse?*

4. *What articulatory practices can be identified seeking to reconstruct a coherent discourse of nature within the momentum of dislocation?*

5. *Which articulatory practices resonate with actors (seeking to reconstruct their identity) at the practical level?*

6. *How do actors position themselves with the articulatory practices in the aftermath of the dislocated structure in Nature Policy?*

1.5. Discursive approach

Taking a discursive perspective allows one to understand social processes of change, in this case how processes within nature policy evolved in a certain way and what discourse gained dominance in a certain moment in time. Discourse analysis can illuminate how nature and the environment are continuously (re)produced as different meanings are assigned to these concepts. Discourses produce the illusion of a singular meaning and to properly understand these meanings it is necessary to deconstruct the assumptions and knowledge systems within the discursive structure. Discourse analysis investigates "the boundaries between the clean and the dirty, the moral and efficient, or how a particular framing of the discussion makes certain elements appear as fixed or appropriate while other elements appear problematic" (Hajer, 1997: 54). Discourse theory takes a critical perspective, addressing power struggles, struggles over meanings, in- and exclusion of meanings and their very materialization in practice when entered in a moment of dominance. As stated by Hajer "discourse analysis illuminates a particular discursive structure, that might not be immediately obvious to the people that contribute to the debate" (Hajer and Versteeg, 2005: 176).

For us to understand the current situation – the so-called dislocation – it is necessary to first make a historical analysis of the (re)creation and (re)production of the dominant discourse in nature policy within the Netherlands. In that way, a dominant discourse can be deconstructed, illuminating the underlying assumptions, power struggles and knowledge systems. For this deconstruction, genealogy from Foucault is used as approach, supplemented with theoretical concepts, i.e. domestication and dislocation, from Laclau and Mouffe. In order to get more insight into the future course of nature policy, the current situation is studied, that is, how actors are trying to cope with the 'new' not yet established situation. Theoretical concepts from poststructuralist discourse theory are used such as the constitution of identity through discourses. As the theory goes, in crisis situations, such as this dislocation in nature policy, the dominant discourse fails to offer identity and actors seek to reconstruct their identity with new political projects and with the discourses these articulate (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, 1990). The practice of articulation as proposed by van den Brink (2009) can be considered from a discursive perspective as the concept of agency. Above all, finding the appropriate set of articulations is an important form of agency (Hajer, 1997) as these are shaping discourses and re-orders our understandings. Within chapter two: theoretical framework, more detail on discourse theory and theoretical concepts is given.

1.6. Organisation of Chapters

This thesis is organised in two parts: The first part begins with this introductory chapter and continues with two chapters on theoretical framework and methodological research design that have guided the research and writing process. The second part consists of two empirical chapters and the concomitant conclusions and discussion.

The introductory chapter displays the current discursive debate within nature policy and the chaotic articulations in the momentum of dislocation. After the introductory chapter, chapter two presents the theoretical framework to this thesis, revealing the anti-essentialist foundation wherein nature is no longer considered in opposition or exclusion of society, but as socially constructed and actively shaped by competing discourses. Chapter three addresses the genealogical approach to the thesis, and explicates the necessity for a historical analysis to understand the present discursive struggle. Apart from the approach, chapter three addresses the methodology used to conduct the empirical research.

Part two of this dissertation consist of two empirical chapters, conclusions and discussions. The first empirical chapter – chapter four: 'Deconstructing the Nature Development Discourse' – entails a deconstruction of the dominant discourse in nature policy. The chapter shows a discursive genealogy of nature protection in the Netherlands and illuminates how particular discourses were able to evolve through specific

fields of openings, constitutive and dystopian myths. The genealogical analysis in chapter four demonstrates the dynamics in the discursive field within nature policy, and illuminates how specific discourses could establish, change and had to domesticate certain opposing critiques in order to restabilise. The genealogical analysis also makes the current dislocation comprehensible, and gives input to the subsequent chapter that addresses the dislocation. Chapter five - 'Dislocation in the nature policy domain: in search for a new identity' – illuminates a counter-discourse to the previously dominant discourse in nature policy, and studies the way actors in nature management seek to establish a new identity through various articulatory practices within the discursive struggle. The conclusions wrap up the empirical results of this study with theoretical reflections and places the findings of the study in a broader context.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter highlights the epistemological and ontological foundations in which this thesis is rooted. The first section of the theoretical framework discusses poststructuralists Foucauldian theories on discourse. The goal is not to summarise discourse theory, so it does not assume completeness, however section 2.1. offers some essential insights in poststructuralist Foucauldian discourse theories that focus on power struggles, governmentality, singular truth-making and in-and exclusion of subject positions. Apart from functioning as a broader framework to this thesis, the discussed theories in 2.1. provide useful concepts to this study which are presented in the section 2.2. of this chapter: the conceptual framework.

2.1. Poststructuralist and Foucauldian Discourse Theories

This thesis is grounded in the poststructuralist school of thought. Poststructuralists emphasise the importance of language and its ability to constitute reality (Calhoun et al., 2009). Poststructuralism was a response to the growing dissatisfaction with mainstream positivist, behaviouralist and structural approaches to the social sciences (van den Brink, 2009). These latter approaches concentrate on observable facts and actions and search for their causal mechanisms, thereby disregarding everyday social meanings (van den Brink, 2009). Within the post-structuralist approach to discourse theory, "the concept of discourse tends to substitute for the traditional concept of structure" (Torfing, 1999 in van den Brink, 2009: 26). Poststructuralism especially critiqued structuralism for its emphasis on closed and centred structures ordering the world. Posts-structuralist such as Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan raised questions about the historical constructions of systems (van den Brink, 2009), arguing that systems and structures are dynamic and temporal in nature and that interpretations of these systems and structures vary given a particular context. A post-structuralist approach to discourse theory emphasises the absence of a fixed centre since complete closure of a discourse or the ultimately fixity of meaning is impossible. A discourse always invokes a temporary closure: it fixes meaning in a particular way, but it does not imply the meaning to be fixed in that specific way forever. Hence, Michel Foucault, a renowned poststructuralist theorist, considers discourses as historical constructions (Foucault, 1985).

2.1.1. Social construction of realities

Poststructuralists argue that it is in concrete language use that the system of language is created, reproduced and changed (van den Brink, 2009). The growing emphasis on language led, according to Torfing (1999), straight to the notion of discourse. Language is, in this school of thought, not structured in just one general closed system of meaning, as in Saussurian structuralism, but in several contextual patterns or discourses, whereby meanings change from discourse to discourse. Poststructuralists take social constructionism as epistemological position; they perceive realities and all types of knowledge as socially constructed – people assign different meanings to social and physical phenomena in order to make sense of the world. The social construction of reality is an ongoing, dynamic process that is (re)produced by people acting on their interpretations and knowledge – or to say it discursively: acting on the discourses people are embedded in. The analysis of discourse thus can be positioned in the interpretative and social-constructionist epistemological tradition in the social sciences (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). This tradition assumes the existence of multiple socially constructed realities instead of one single reality and has therefore an anti-essentialist ontology (Hajer and Versteeg, 2005). In this view, there is not one single 'truth' out there, waiting to be discovered as is assumed by the more positivist and realist traditions of science (Green & Thorogood, 2009; Hajer, 1993). Accounts of 'truth' are created and maintained through social interaction and depend upon the specific historical and cultural context in which they arise. Different accounts of 'truths' imply that people interpret the world differently in order to make sense of the world.

Characteristically, discourse theory takes a critical stance towards "truth" and emphasise articulatory practices through which knowledge is exchanged (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005).

2.1.2. Discourses – Sense Making of Reality

According to Howarth (2006) the kernel of discourse theory is the idea that all objects and practices are meaningful, and that social meanings are contextual, relational and contingent. Van den Brink (2009) defines discourses as "systems of meaning through which social reality is produced and made real, [whereby] social interactions can only be understood fully in terms of the discourses that give them meaning" (van den Brink, 2009:26). Through discourse, meaning is given to social and environmental phenomena. The key assumption of discourse is that "language profoundly shape's one view of the world and reality, instead of being only a neutral medium mirroring it" (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005:176). As reality is seen as socially constructed, the analysis of meaning becomes central in discourse analysis. Hajer sees discourses as a "specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorizations that are reproduced, produced and transformed in a particular set of practices through which meaning is given to physical and social realities" (Hajer, 1997: 44). For social constructionist and poststructuralist discourse analysis, it is not the social or physical phenomena that is important, but the way in which society or different groups in society make sense of this phenomenon and the changing, different interpretations of this phenomenon over the years and at different places (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; van den Brink, 2009). For instance with the physical phenomena of nature: nature conservationists in the Netherlands make sense of nature as fragile which needs protection from industrial and modern progressive processes (Keulartz, 1999, Van den Windt, 1995). This social construction solidified into certain practices, e.g. the creation of nature reserves and extended throughout the years into the concept of the National Ecological Network. However, this is one reality, one discourse on nature, although it has been dominant over the years considering its firm institutionalisation in Nature Policy. Hajer & Versteeg (2005) argue that as reality is considered as socially constructed, attention should also be placed at the specific situational logic; the historical, cultural and political context in which a particular account of 'truth' arises. This corresponds with the genealogy approach from Michel Foucault (see chapter 3) which illuminates discourses through historical deconstruction.

2.1.3. The power and governing effects of discourses

The work of Michel Foucault (1926-1984), a French philosopher, social theorist and historian, had a prominent influence on the social sciences, especially on discourse theory, by paying attention to the rules and power relations governing the production of statements and practices (Feindt & Oels, 2005; Van den Brink, 2009). Foucault defines discourse as an ensemble of statements "which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing knowledge about – a particular topic at a specific moment in time" (Foucault in Hall, 1992:291). A Foucauldian perspective is more interested in knowledge, its power relations and its governing impact than on sole language (Feindt & Oels, 2005), as Foucault argues: "all power relations are based on a field of knowledge that sustains them and vice versa" (Oels, 2005: 186). Foucault's work (1965, 1973, 1990) on the analysis of discourses of medicine and psychiatry showed for instance the importance of discourses constructing and maintaining social norms, which in turn shaped individual identities by delimiting and condition thoughts and actions. The control of discourses – enabling and delimiting thoughts and actions – was Foucalt's main concern as is clearly shown by his concept of governmentality. Thus, for Foucault, our thoughts and actions are influenced, regulated and to some extent controlled by different discourses (Danaher et al., 2004). Fairclough (1992; 1995) who builds upon the work of Foucault, introduced critical discourse analysis (van den Brink, 2009) thereby aiming to illustrate the power effects of discourses through the analysis of the causal relation between language and political power struggles. In the introduction to their thematic issue on discourse, Feindt & Oels (2005) present four characteristics of a Foucauldian perspective on discourse:

1. The focus of a Foucauldian discursive perspective is on the **productive function of discourses**. A discourse is constitutive of reality in that it physically shapes reality. A discourse establishes what is true based on socially accepted modes of knowledge production. But, as Foucault says, it is "in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (Foucault, 1998:100). A discursive structure delineates legitimate forms of 'truth' production from illegitimate ones thereby empowering and disempowering subject positions.

2. From a Foucauldian perspective **power relations** are present in all forms of social interactions. "Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault, 1998:93). A Foucauldian understanding of discourse implies a conception of power as constitutive and productive and not limited to repressive effects (Foucault, 1998).

3. Foucault perceives discourse as a **strategic situation that is formative of actors**, that enables and constraints them by shaping their fields of opportunities and by limiting their freedom. Comprehensive systems of power relations are constituted by the behaviour of actors, "and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them" (Foucault, 1998:95). Often the strategic situation is the outcome of millions of unintended outcome of millions of intentional actions (Oels, 2005). Discourses for Foucault stand for locations of tensions and struggles.

4. The realm of power relations extends to the **construction of subjectivity**. The term subject refers at the same time to an actor capable of initiating action and to being subjected by power (Foucault, 1982:212). Consequently, actors are never fully determined by a strategic situation and there is always scope for resistance left and thereby transformation of the strategic field. Resistance refers to the possibility of ignoring or rejecting the social demands and expectations that certain subject-positions direct at those filling them. For Foucault, the very act of resistance constitutes an exercise of power (Oels, 2005).

2.1.4. There is no meaning outside discourses

The most post-structuralist and post-Marxists theory on discourse can be considered the strand developed primarily by the political theorists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985). Apart from Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe were inspired by Antonio Gramsci (especially his '*Prison Books'*), renowned for his concept of hegemony. Laclau and Mouffe take an *overall* discursive perspective, as they discard the distinction between discursive and non-discursive phenomena, and can be positioned in the camp of 'strong' social-constructionism (van den Brink, 2009: 43). They argue that non-discursive phenomena, such as institutions or technology, are constructed in and through discourses. In the end, discourse is practice and discourses are constructed, maintained and transformed through political struggles. While rebutting the critique of Geras (1990) that their discourse theory denies the independent existent of the world, Laclau and Mouffe state that objects do exists, but do not have a meaning outside discourse (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:108). It is meaning and meaning-making processes that play a central role in their approach. Moreover, it is the material, rather than the mental character of discourse that gets their prominent emphasis. Discourses in their view are not confined to the realm of mental phenomena only, but are embedded into material phenomena as well. Accordingly, language is a representation of physical and material phenomena. As the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe extends the concept of discourse to all social phenomena and practices, institutions are viewed as sedimented discourses, which are social, historical and intrinsically political constructions that have become relatively permanent and durable. In this far-stretching poststructuralist discourse-theoretical perspective, there is no meaning outside discourse.

2.1.5. Actor positioning : in- and exclusion through discursive struggles

Maarten Hajer played an important role in establishing discourse analysis in the field of environmental policy studies (Feindt and Oels, 2005). Hajer takes Foucault's terminology of discourse as point of departure, but diverges from Foucault in some considerable aspects (Feindt and Oels, 2005). Divergent from the Foucauldian and poststructuralists theories on discourse, Hajer made an attempt to 're-centre' the subject in discourse analysis, as his approach to discourse emphases actor coalitions and their formation around different storylines in a specific policy domain (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; Feindt & Oels, 2005). Hajer bases part of his argumentative approach on the social-interactionists' strand of discourse theory with authors as Harre or Billig, that conceived human interaction as an exchange of arguments (Hajer, 1997). This argumentative approach to discourse theory proposes to look at the argumentative rhetorics of discourse: "One should also consider the positions which are become criticised, or against which a justification is being mounted. Without knowing these counter-positions, the argumentative meaning will be lost" (Billig, 1989: 91 in Hajer, 1997). Environmental politics in this view becomes "an argumentative struggle in which actors not only try to make others see the problems according to their view, but also seek to position other actors in a specific way" (Hajer, 1997: 53). Thus, argumentative interaction is a key moment in discourse formation, where change and permanence are seen to be depended on active discursive reproduction and where actors are holders of specific positions entangled in a web of meaning. The argumentative approach of Hajer focuses on the constitutive role of discourse in political processes and allocates a central role to the discoursing subjects (Hajer, 1997:58).

2.1.6. Foucauldian perspective to this thesis

The above sections described several discursive approaches in poststructural, critical Foucauldian discourse theory. This research takes a Foucauldian perspective on discourse, which is about exclusion and inclusion of subject positions in and by certain discourses, a view of social change shaped by power, where different systems of meaning – discourses – compete for dominance, and which is formative of actors, shaping the fields of opportunities and structuring the actions and thoughts of actors through discourse (Feindt & Oels, 2005; Sharp & Richardson, 2001). This particular perspective is nurtured with ideas and concepts of Laclau and Mouffe on the all-inclusiveness of discourses, the material expression of discourse in institutions and policies and the political character/struggles of and between discourses. Policies, as institutions, are conceived as sedimented discourses, which are socially, historically and politically constructed. As this thesis concerns a specific policy domain in society with actors moving and positioning themselves in a dislocated structure, the argumentative interactive approach in discourse analysis of Maarten Hajer is used during the participant observation and analysis of the research which focuses more on discursive interactions between actors.

Section 2.2. discusses the conceptual framework where it is made explicit which concepts from the above theoretical strands are used in this thesis. Before discussing this, it is necessary to specify how nature is conceived in this specific discursive perspective as the central focus of this thesis is discursive practices around on nature. The text below gives a brief description on nature in a critical, discursive perspective.

Nature as a social-constructed and contested concept

From a discourse-theoretical perspective, nature is considered a discursive concept; hence it is interpreted as a social construction constituted within different discourses (Dingler, 2005). As argued by Feindt and Oels (2005) basic concepts such as 'nature', 'progress' and 'sustainability' are contested by their very nature since multiple meanings about these concepts exists, which are culturally (re)invented. Van Koppen (2000) presents an analysis of different concepts of nature: one focusing on the sustainable use of nature as a resource, one focusing on an arcadian interpretation of nature, and one focusing on the social construction of nature. Van Koppen (2000) shows that multiple contested interpretations of nature exists,

and consequently the articulation of certain events in terms of one of these discourses shapes if and how the event is dealt with (Feindt & Oels, 2005; Magnaghten & Urry, 1998).

Power relations and social practices

As stated in Hajer & Versteeg (2005) "[n]ature is not something 'out there', but a culturally appropriated concept, a norm, a counter-image, a memory, a Utopia. When someone talks about nature, the question is 'which nature' (Beck, 1995:36-38) – and, it might be added, 'whose' nature?" (Hajer & Versteeg,. 2005: 178). This view is also supported by social scientists such as Macbaghten and Urry (1998) while discussing the diversity of contested natures, constituted through a variety of socio-cultural processes. In their view, it is in social practices which produce, reproduce and transform different natures and values.

Discursive practice: conceptualizing nature

As nature enters the discursive sphere at the very moment it is conceptualised, it is impossible to make any statements about what nature is without reference to the discourse in which the statement is made (Dingler, 2005:214). Poststructuralist discourse theory "does not deny the existence of reality, rather it challenges the possibility of non-discursive access to that reality"(Dingler, 2005:215). Accordingly, nature does exist independently of human beings, however the perception of nature always takes places within a certain discursive framework. Thus, natural processes do take place without human influence, but the observation and the social acknowledgement of these processes can be perceived only within a discourse. Since knowledge claims are necessarily raised within a discourse, it is impossible, in principle, to make any statement of how nature is independent of discursive constructions (Dingler, 2005).

Nature as politics

As stated in Hajer & Versteeg (2005) the reading of nature as a discursive concept means a replacement of 'naïve realism' to 'the politics of nature' as employed by Latour (2004). "Latour abandons the notion of nature as independent entity obeying its own laws and the privileged authority of scientists and experts to represent this entity. He claims that the representation of nature as an external object, understandable only for experts, has served as a dogma, thereby limiting the options for human action. In the new post-modern metaphysics that Latour pleads for, facts and values, morality and reality, science and politics should be seen as inseparable. Nature would then become an essentially negotiated concept, that can be represented not only by scientists, but also by poets, architects, farmers and laymen"(Hajer & Versteeg, 2005:178). As discourse and power are inseparable (Dingler, 2005; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005; Feindt & Oels, 2005) nature is constructed within relations of power, and therefore "becomes a social category which is linked to the sphere of politics"(Dingler, 2005:210). Since constructions of nature are contingent and the concept of nature is a discursive product of power, it follows that the construction of nature takes place in the realm of the political. Through conflictual negotiations, cultural debates or discursive clashes, the meaning of nature in a specific discourse becomes discursively fixed (Dingler, 2005:214).

Following the above discussion, nurtured with ideas and theories of Foucault, Latour, Hajer and Laclau & Mouffe, this thesis opts for a concept of nature as discursive and contested, as a struggle between different discourses aiming for dominance in the field of nature policy, management and implementation. When a certain nature discourse reaches dominance, its particular view on nature will be institutionalised in policies and management; hence the sedimentation of discourses.

2.2. Theoretical Concepts and Conceptual Framework

This section highlights the theoretical concepts used in this thesis stemming from poststructuralist discourse theory and social constructionism. This thesis is rooted in Foucauldian discourse analysis and emphasises power relations and struggles between discourses. Theoretical concepts of Laclau and Mouffe are

used to understand how a discourse is constituted, maintained and becomes dislocated, offering room for multiple articulatory practices struggling for hegemony in the nature policy domain. Theoretical concepts of Hajer are used addressing the hegemony of a discourse in a certain policy domain; i.e. discourse structuration and institutionalisation. The conceptual framework should accordingly be read as a combination of concepts stemming from the discursive theorists Laclau & Mouffe, Foucault and Hajer. The three sections below discuss the basic theoretical concepts of this research, i.e. articulation, discourse structuration, institutionalisation, domestication, dislocation, and acts of identification.

2.1.1. Constitution of Discourse and Articulations

Discourses are "specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorizations that are reproduced, produced and transformed in a particular set of practices [articulations] through which meaning is given to physical and social realities." (Hajer, 1997:44). Discourses are constructed through the (re)articulation of certain elements into necessary moments which results in partial fixation of meaning (van den Brink, 2009). Within these structured totalities, social identity emerges. The practice of articulation refers to "the creation of something new out of a dispersion of elements" (van den Brink, 2009). Discourses are in constant transformation and can never be fully fixed, as long as the process of articulation continues (Howarth, 2000, Laclau, 1983). Accordingly, the job of the discourse analysis is to study processes of articulations (which are revealed in narratives, metaphors, rhetorical strategies and so forth) in order to understand the conditions that make a particular discourse possible, viable and/or appealing. Discourses are thus constructed through articulations that are produced within articulatory practices while these practices are simultaneously created by discourse. In this study a discourse is identified by several discursive elements: dystopian and constitutive myths, symbols (powerful metaphors) and structuring principles/binding concepts. Articulations often carry metaphors: "linguistic devices that convey understanding through comparison" (Hajer, 2003:105) and thereby reduce discursive complexity, allowing people to communicate over complex policy issues. Some metaphors contain a formative power that structure understanding of reality which enables to make a normative jump from 'what is' to 'what out to be' (Keulartz, 2005; Mert, 2012). Such powerful metaphors normally have an epistemic quality which refers to a regularity in the thinking of a certain period, structuring the understanding of reality without actors being necessarily aware of it. It concerns a certain 'state of mind', or as Foucault puts it: "a positive unconsciousness of knowledge": certain rules of formation that underpin theories and policies, however not formulated in their own right (Hajer, 2003). Such metaphors are identified as the *symbol* of a particular discourse. The metaphor of network in the case of nature development shows for instance such formative power: instead of protecting the remaining islands of natural beauty, nature policy became a matter of creating a network by linking the isolated islands of nature through ecological corridors (Hajer, 2003). The National Ecological Network became the visualisation, i.e. the symbol for the nature development discourse. The structuration of a discourse is facilitated by myth which brings coherence through explaining why things cohere (Mert, 2012; Hajer, 2003). Hajer (2003) distinguishes two type of myths: a *constitutive myth* is a narrative that explains cohesion by narrating a foundational event, a *dystopian myth* is a narrative that makes people cohere to avoid a catastrophe. Within the structuration of discourses, several constitutive and dystopian myth can be identified, facilitating the rise of other meanings and the dominance of a discourse in the discursive field. With these constitutive myths, also *heroes* can be identified, which are people that embody and stand for the narrative and actively disseminate the message of the constitutive myth. *Structuring principles* of discourses are articulatory practices that shape and delimit thoughts and actions around a certain social and physical phenomena and often consist of metaphors and symbols. Articulatory practices can be regarded as generative statements that bring together previously unrelated elements in a discourse which allows for understandings and creates new meanings. The function of articulations is to stabilize a particular discourse as discursive complexity through metaphors, symbols and myths is concealed. People draw on articulations in conversations assuming that the other will understand what they mean. This assumption of mutual understanding is concealing the discursive complexity, as actors – even while sharing a specific set of articulations – might interpret the meaning of a storyline

differently (Hajer, 1995). In discourses some linguistics terms can be identified that conceal the diversity, which are assigned a certain binding function: the *binding concepts*. As argued by Hajer, exactly the effect of misunderstanding due to multi-interpretability, can be very functional for creating a political coalition (Hajer, 1995). *A discourse-coalition* refers to a group of actors that, in the context of an identifiable set of practices, shares the usage of a particular set of articulations over a particular period of time (Hajer, 2005:302). Thus, it is through articulatory practices that a discourse achieves a discursive 'closure' as much as possible.

2.2.2. Discourse Structuration and Hegemony

The poststructuralist approach to discourse underlines the occurrence and context of social identity and the partial fixation of meaning (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). Complete closure of a discourse or the ultimate fixation of meaning is conceived as impossible (van den Brink, 2009). This impossibility implies that there are partial fixations of meaning, which together produce a 'surplus of meaning'. Laclau and Mouffe call this 'surplus of meaning' the 'field of discursivity' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:111). As a result, any discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity and to construct a centre (van den Brink, 2009: 27), which because of the impossibility to construct a complete closure are always temporal fixations of meaning. As meaning can never be fixed, there is always room for struggles over what reality should look like and which definitions of identity and society should prevail.

Discourses are created and maintained through social interaction, political struggles and depend upon the specific historical and cultural context in which they arise. To have insights in the historical context, the genealogical approach of Foucault is used to analyse how and when certain discourses arise and transform. Genealogy does not treat history as something that works through linearity or pure temporality, not as a force moving through time, but as a "field of openings, - faults, fractures and fissures, which opens a space for political possibility by disrupting the patterns of the past" (Moss, 1998). Genealogy is used as methodological approach to this thesis and therefore further described in chapter 3. What matters here is that through certain fields of openings, the discursive context changes, which accordingly opens up spaces for other articulatory practices to arise and cohere in a discourse. Differently put: political change can take place through the emergence of new articulations that re-order understandings (Hajer, 1997).

Politics refer to the practice of the discursive structuring of social relations, that is, the acts of articulation and the ordering of differences (van den Brink, 2009: 28). Politics thus refers to the actual structuring of articulations and is envisioned in terms of hegemony. Hegemony is generally referred to as "the political creation of order out of disorder, that is, the construction of a predominant discursive formation" (van den Brink, 2009:28). Hegemonic practices determine the dominant rules that structure the identities of discourses and social formations (Howard, 1995). Hajer (2005, 2006) refers to the dominance of policy discourse in a given political realm when it passes from the phase of 'discourse structuration' towards 'discourse institutionalisation'. Discourse structuration is when a discourse starts to dominate the way a society conceptualises the world. If successful – so when many people use the discourse to conceptualise the world – 'discourse institutionalisation' will occur: the discourse solidifies into particular institutional arrangements. This is what Laclau & Mouffe call: sedimented discourses (van den Brink, 2009; Mert, 2012). 'Discourse institutionalisation' is after discourse structuration the second condition for a discourse to reach hegemony in a policy domain.

For a certain discourse to reach and maintain the stage of dominance – that is discourse institutionalisation – requires as argued by Torfing (1999) a 'threatening Otherness' to the discourse. For Torfing (1999) the concept of hegemony emphasises the construction, maintenance or transformation of identity in and through political or hegemonic struggles. These hegemonic struggles take place in the context of social antagonism which involves the construction of 'a threatening Otherness' that stabilises the discursive system while, at the same time, is preventing its ultimate closure' (Torfing, 2005: 15). A discourse then needs a 'constitutive outside' to constitute itself. This 'constitutive outside' or 'the enemy' is discursively

constructed through the exclusion of a series of identities, meanings and practices. This process of in- and exclusion is called demarcation practice. If a discourse successfully performs demarcation practice than the discourse is able to expand and structure further in a certain policy domain. As mentioned in chapter one, a particular way of perceiving nature is viewing nature as fragile, which needs protection from human and industrial processes (hence: the constitutive outside). The necessity of a 'constitutive outside' has two implications: on the one hand it has a stabilising function as it constitutes and sustains social identity embedded in a particular discourse, on the other hand it poses a threat to this same identity being a source of destabilisation and dislocation. Following this logic, "a political project of a discourse might be dominating a discursive field, but it can never completely articulate all elements as there are forces against which it is defined" (Howarth, 2000:103). Precisely, this failure to domesticate all excluded elements can result into a destabilization or dislocation of a dominant discourse. As a discourse is always constituted in relation to an outside, it is always in danger of being undermined by it (Howarth, 2000).

2.2.3. On Discourse Dislocation / Domestication and Acts of Identification

Discourses have different structurations that change over time as they can never accomplish full closure due to the necessity of a constitutive outside as discussed in the previous section. To understand the historical formation and current transformation of Dutch Nature Policy, it is crucial for this thesis to understand the processes of continuity and change of discourses, which is done through a genealogical approach (ch.3). Continuity entails articulating hegemonic practices and ideas, solidifying into institutional arrangements while delimiting alternative thoughts and elements through domestication into the dominant discourse (van den Brink, 2009). However, in this current context of change it is also essential to understand how a certain continuity of a dominant discourse can be undermined, that is, how and why it is being dislocated. The concept of dislocation is generally referred to as the disruption or destabilization of a discourse. Howarth (2004) refers to dislocations as "the disruption of symbolic orders and their concomitant identities" which opens up "spaces within which creative political subjects emerge to identify with new discourses" (Howarth, 2004: 261). Dislocation is in other words the *sine qua non* for hegemonic articulation taking place (van den Brink, 2009) which results from "events and crises that cannot be represented by an existing discursive order". The hegemonic discourse becomes dislocated until or unless it finds a way to represent the events or demands.

For Laclau, the basis unit of politics is a social demand, an articulation of an unfulfilled request or desire. When a group of people feel frustrated about a certain desire they have, their articulation of frustration turns into a demand from the existing power structure, i.e. the hegemonic discourse, or eventually claims of a change of the political regime (Mert, 2012). When the social demands become numerous, which the hegemonic discourse cannot explain or represent any longer, the hegemonic discourse tries to domesticate these social demands in order to maintain its dominant position. 'Domestication' refers to the "incorporation, symbolisation and integration of elements and practices of the destabilising [and previously excluded] systems of meaning and external events into the discourse in question" (van den Brink, 2009: 30). Gradual changes through domestication involve both the incorporation of concepts and notions in the discourse, and the institutionalisation of these concepts and notions into concrete policy programmes and practices. Domestication has a restabilisation function for a discourse to keep its dominant position. However, at the same time the practice of domesticating can also lead to its dislocation, in case it is not possible to reconcile the current and dominant identity with new elements and practices. Within a dislocation, the social demands are united in articulatory practices of a counter-discourse through logics of equivalence: establishing discursive unity between social demands against an antagonistic 'other', in this case the nature development discourse, (Mert, 2012). As stated by Mert (2012:70) "[t]he logic of equivalence is typically a strategy of a resistance movement against the establishment", i.e. the hegemonic discourse. It is an attempt to polarise the political space between 'us' and 'them'. I use the terms social demands and sources of discontent simultaneously throughout the thesis.

When a hegemonic discourse is dislocated it fails to constitute identity. The subject, normally structured by and embedded within positions of different discourses, will attempt to reconstruct its identity through acts of identification. Laclau (1990) uses the theoretical concept of 'political subjectivity' to account for this phenomenon (van den Brink, 2009). 'Political subjectivity' entails that when social identities are in crisis and structures need to be recreated – i.e. a dislocation occurs – subjects become political agents: "they are forced to take decisions about novel forms or to recapture the illusion of a full identity, in other words they are forced to construct and identify with new political projects and with the discourses these articulate and the promise of fullness offered by them" (van den Brink, 2009: 32). The gap opened by the dislocated or destabilised structure can be considered a vacuum, where hegemonic articulations struggle to get hold of the dominant discursive structure. Therefore, these hegemonic struggles have to offer ways of articulating the different points of identification into a more or less coherent discourse as such that it offers a fullness that can constitute identity. In the momentum of dislocation, hegemonic projects emerge that through articulatory practices aim to reconstruct the identity of the subject and a temporary fixation of meaning. As argued by van den Brink, articulatory practices can be considered the discourse-theoretical concept of agency which within poststructuralist discourse theory can only be considered an empirical issue and phenomenon (van den Brink, 2009).

Dutch nature policy finds itself currently in a dislocation, considering the political changes made in nature policy – i.e. elimination of the robust corridors, review of NEN and budget costs in nature management – which were concepts and practices aligned with the former dominant nature discourse. Consequently, actors are forced to make novel decisions and try to deal with the dislocation through acts of identification with articulatory practices of several discourses. During participant observation, the research focused on the kind of articulations people utter to identify with the current shift in nature policy and to make legitimate and sounds decisions in order for continuity and stability. In this way, the research analyses the way actors try to fill the gap in the dislocated structure through acts of identification with articulatory practices, and thus temporarily aim to fix meaning.

2.2.4. Connecting the concepts...

The previous sections addressed five theoretical concepts that are central to this thesis: discourse structuration, hegemony, domestication, dislocation, acts of identification and articulation. The combination of these concepts allows for an understanding of discursive processes in continuity and change. On the one hand, this specific combination of concepts shows how and why a discourse institutionalises, that is, through fields of openings, discursive struggles, articulatory practices and domestication of rival and alternative articulatory practices. On the other hand, it gives an understanding of how and why a discourse loses dominance, thus when it gets destabilised or dislocated. Simultaneously, this offers room for other discourses to emerge. This last section of the Theoretical Framework gives an overview of the theoretical concepts:

- Discourse Structuration is considered using the genealogy approach from Foucault (see chapter 3) and the discursive elements that make up a discourse: dystopian, constitutive myth, symbol, a constitutive outside and structuring principles. Articulatory practices combine these elements into new meanings and understandings. Discourse structuration thus depends on the contextual environment (constitutive outside, fields of opening) and articulatory practices of a discourse.
- Hegemony is considered taking discourse institutionalisation of Hajer into account. A discourse structures and shapes thoughts and reality and reaches hegemony when it institutionalises in the policy domain.
- Domestication: While a discourse becomes structured and institutionalised, it encounters alternative viewpoints that are embedded in other discourses, which it needs to domesticate in order to maintain its dominance and define its boundary (or in poststructuralists terms: to keep its cen-

tre). Domestication is a way of including the opposing elements into its own discourse while on the same time it holds a threat of dislocation.

- Dislocation: A dislocation of a hegemonic discourse can occur when some alternative views, ideas, concept are not successfully domesticated and these can easily be recaptured and reformulated by other discourses in changing contexts. A dislocation thus is a moment par excellence for hegemonic struggles to take place.

- Acts of identification: Hegemonic struggles go together with articulatory practices that rearticulate new and old elements into new meanings, aiming to constitute a new, coherent social identity while subsequently constituting another or transformed dominant discourse.

The analytical concept in this thesis is articulation. Through the analysis of articulatory practices it is possible to identify discourses, i.e. the discursive elements (constitutive myth, symbols and structuring principles) and to identify when the meaning of these elements change because of moments of domestication or dislocation. Fig. 1 presents the conceptual framework that is used in this thesis. The conceptual framework indicates that for this research a discourse is identified by its myths, symbols and structuring principles while the dynamics are researched through genealogy and articulatory practices. Genealogy of Foucault is the binding theoretical approach that connects the theoretical concepts with the research questions and the research design. The genealogical approach, the research design and related methodology are discussed in the next chapter: Chapter 3 - Theoretical Approach, Research Design and Methodology.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework to identify discourses within continuity and change

Chapter 3. Theoretical Approach, Research Design and Methodology

This chapter elaborates on the theoretical approach of genealogy to this research, the research design and methodology to the research. The study consist of two research parts. First, a literature review is conducted that explored the historical trajectory of the predominant discourses in nature policy – including its struggles and exclusionary character to alternative nature discourses. This analysis is undertaken in order to understand the present occurrence of dislocation in the nature policy domain. The literature review is complemented with so-called helicopter interviews and content analysis of policy documents. The first part of the research serves the second part of the research as it gives a contextual basis. The second research part consists of participant observation at conferences, projects and nature sites and explores the various articulatory practices of actors in concrete nature planning practices. This exploration gives insight in the transformation of discourses. Subsequently, the study illuminates the discourses actors in nature planning practices are embedded in and renders insight in the future course of nature policy.

Genealogy from Foucault is chosen as an overall discursive approach to the research, connecting the two parts of the research, as the study aims to understand the present through a historical discursive analysis. This chapter first explains genealogy as theoretical approach to the research before going to the research design and methodology.

3.1. Genealogy as theoretical discursive approach

"*The genealogist needs history to dispel the chimeras of the origin*" Michel Foucault[16]

Both genealogy and archaeology were creatively employed by Foucault as analytical tools (Calhoun et al., 2009; Danaher et al., 2004, Moss, 1998). Archaeology for Foucault is about examining the discursive traces and orders left by the past in order to write a history of the present. To put it differently: archaeology is about looking at history as a way of understanding the processes that have led to what we are today. Genealogy differs from archaeology in that it is deployed to distinguish the grounds of the 'true' and the 'false' via mechanisms of power (O'Farrell, 1997). Foucault's genealogy is inspired by the work of the German philosopher Nietzsche: "Genealogy, for Nietzsche, involved investigating the historical origins of powerful institutions and discourses which is claimed to be universal and eternal"(Danaher et al., 2000:24). Nietzsche once suggested that where there is meaning, it is possible to trace the struggles, battles and violence that reproduced it (Danaher et al., 2004). Accordingly, the development of dominant disciplines and discourses and the knowledge and truth they (re)produce are conceived as the result of power struggles in which they triumphed over other disciplines and knowledge. Part of the tactics of such struggles is to claim a universal and eternal truth for a discipline or knowledge (Danaher et al., 2004). One of the aims of genealogy is therefore to reveal this constructed character of the present (Brown, 1998) through "calling into question the most heavily naturalised features and encrusted relations of the present and exposing [these] as a consequence of power what is ordinarily perceived as divinely or naturally ordained"(Brown,1998:46).

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[16] Michel Foucault, Nietsche, geneology, history, in Rabinow (ed.) *Foucault Readen*: 80

3.1.1. History as faults, fractures and fissures

"*No one is responsible for an emergence; no one can glory in it, since it always occurs in the interstice*" Michel Foucault[17]

Genealogy contests a linear, progressive historical narrative (Brown, 1998). Foucault argues that there is no necessary connection between periods: "that there is no natural linkage between, and movement from, one episteme to another"(Danaher et al., 2004: 21). With archaeology and genealogy Foucault contrasts the inevitable progression of civilisation' towards a certain point as generally assumed in conventional and traditional history (Brown, 1998; Danaher et al., 2004). One of the important aims of genealogy is to expose what appears to be as a given through revealing how contingently it came into being, how non-inevitable its existence is. It treats the present as the accidental production of the contingent past, rather than treating the past as the sure and necessary road to the inevitable present (Brown, 1998). According-ly, "[t]he point of a genealogical analysis is to show that a given system of thought was the result of contin-gent turns of history, not the outcome of rationally inevitable trends" (Stanford Encyclopaedia[18]). Geneal-ogy does not treat history as something that works through linearity or pure temporality, not as a force moving through time, but as a "field of openings, - faults, fractures and fissures, which opens a space for political possibility by disrupting the patterns of the past" (Moss, 1998). Thus, characteristically, genealo-gy disrupts conventional accounts, where there is continuity or narrative logic, genealogy assaults with the introduction of counterforces and relations of discontinuity (Brown, 1998).

3.1.2. Understanding the presence through the past

Genealogy or 'effective history' Foucault argues 'differs from traditional history in being without con-stants'. Foucault reveals the present to be the consequence of a history fraught with accidents, haphazard conflicts and unrelated events, which are themselves singularly random and nothing more than the rever-sal of a relationship of forces. Genealogy seeks to document confrontations or battles where contestants fight to bring into being an order. It documents "the entry of forces…their eruption, the leap from the wings to centre stage" (Foucault, 1988). Part of what must be documented in order to disrupt a narrative that essentializes historical forces is 'substitutions, displacements, disguised conquests and systemic re-versals' (Foucault, 1988). Rather than promising a certain future, as progressive history does, genealogy deploys to incite possible futures. Openings along fault lines, and incitements from destabilised configura-tions of the present compromise the stage of political possibility. The current dislocation of the predomi-nant nature discourse gives openings to different political possibilities; linked to different discourses. As histories of emergent phenomena are conceived as tales of conflict and accidents, genealogy treats these phenomena as episodes, not culminations.

3.1.3. Illuminating the discursive hegemony of today

Foucault argues that historical events determine the discursive hegemony of today. Accordingly, focusing upon these events through a genealogical analysis can illuminate the current discursive hegemony. Ra-tionality refers to episteme or what Foucault later named discourse. Rationality designates the legitimat-ing discursive structure of any political order. Therefore, political rationality is a mode of governance; a modality of power (Brown, 1998). Foucault deploys the term political rationality to call attention to the limited effect of any resistance or critique that attacks the effects of a particular rationality. Political ra-tionalities are orders of reason, and what must be captured for them to be subject to critique is their con-tingent nature, a contingency that can only be articulated through genealogy (Brown, 1998). Genealogical critiques aims to reveal the various rationalities as the one in which we live, to articulate them as particu-

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[17] Foucault in 'The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom' in J. Bernauer and D. Rasmussen (eds), 'The Final Foucault' (MIT Press, Boston, MA, 1988), p. 19.
[18] http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/foucault/

lar forms of rationality. This articulation allows us to call into question certain certitudes and dogmatism, as Foucault remarks: "the history of various forms of rationality is sometimes more effective in unsettling our certitudes and dogmatism than is abstract criticism". (Foucault, in Brown, 1998). With genealogy Foucault reconfigures the relationship between the history of the present, the nature of the present and the political possibilities in the present. Put another way, Foucault tries to interrupt analyses of transformation of discourse in the vocabulary of time with a geography of power. The political value of genealogy is its effect of calling into question the most heavily naturalised features and encrusted relations of the present, its effect in exposing as a consequence of power what is ordinarily perceived as divinely or naturally ordained (Brown, 1998:46).

3.1.4. Genealogy as approach to this thesis

Summarizing the above indicates that genealogy exposes what appears to be as a given through revealing how contingently it came into being, how non-inevitable its existence is. Conventional accounts are disrupted since the constructed character of a rationality is revealed as a consequence of power struggles and contingent turns in history. In this way, through a genealogical analysis, certain certitudes and dogmatism which are embedded in particular hegemonic discourses and which are perceived as divinely and naturally ordained, are deconstructed and subsequently unsettled.

Using genealogy as an overarching approach places historical and present events in a discursive context. To put it differently: genealogy is the 'glue' between the presence and the past. According to genealogy, to understand the presence one has to dive into history.

The first part of the research therefore aims for a historical reconstruction of the predominant discourse in nature policy emphasising its hegemonic struggles, fields of openings, domestication practices and discursive institutionalisation. This historical part contextualizes the current situation, which enables to regard the current situation as a discursive dislocation.

The second part of the research concerns the presence: the dislocated structure in nature policy and the openings along which the dislocated structure is giving room to hegemonic struggles. Genealogy treats the presence as the accidental production of the contingent past where political possibilities are bounded by these histories of the present. However, these histories of the present offer openings for disturbances, as they themselves are tales of conflict and power struggles. The dislocated structure in nature policy thus finds itself in a so-called 'power vacuum' where openings unfold along the dislocation shaping political possibilities through hegemonic struggles. At that particular moment, actors try to identify themselves with different articulatory practices. Depending on the successfulness of certain articulations to structure the discourse – i.e. more people identify with a similar set of articulations to conceptualise nature policy – the discourse enters in the stage of institutionalisation and subsequently constitutes the political possibility.

I have tried to visualise the aforementioned theoretical account in fig.2 which represents the discursive process in the nature policy domain. Fig. 2 is a visualisation which does not do justice to the dynamics and discursive struggles over time. However, fig. 2. gives an overview encompassing the theoretical concepts of discourse hegemony, domestication, articulation and dislocation and places these in the overarching genealogical approach to the research. The green line represents the continuity of the predominant nature discourse over time along with its discursive struggles, domesticating and excluding different viewpoints. The discursive struggles are represented by the small explosion figures (⚡) which implies moments of destabilisation and accordingly domestication. Domestication goes together with incorporating different viewpoints of alternative discourses into policy documents and practices, that is, in the discourse institutionalisation. Currently however, due to changing circumstances, some domesticated elements are rearticulated. The present dislocation is open to different articulations of rival discourses that are offering the 'promise' of full social identity to actors seeking for a new identity. The first part of the research ex-

amines the historical transformation of the predominant nature discourse which entails a deconstruction of certain political rationalities, while research part two considers the current shift in nature policy illuminating different political possibilities .

Genealogical approach: connecting two parts

Different
Articulations

Political
possibilities

Dominant discursive structure

dislocation

Part 1: historical reconstruction: dominance, struggles, articulations and domestication	Part 2: present: current dislocation: articulatory practices of hegemonic struggles
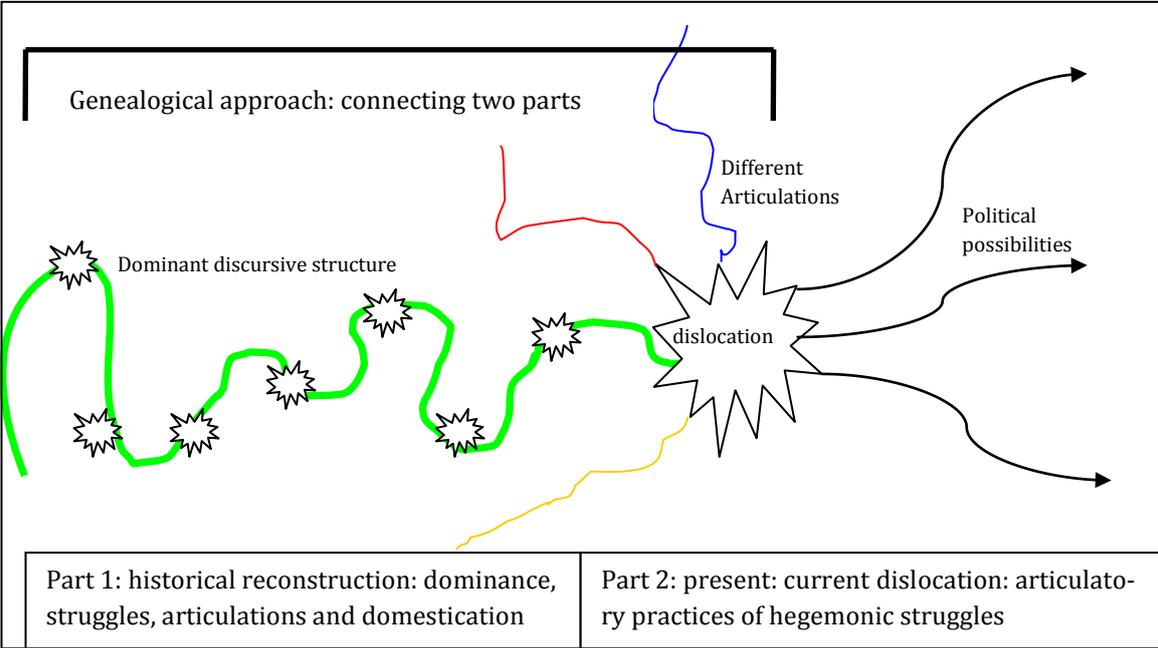
Figure 2 discursive processes in domain nature policy

3.2. Research Design and Methodology

As became clear from the previous section the research consists of two parts, one which is more historically oriented while the other concerns the present situation in Nature Policy. The first part consists of a literature review and helicopter interviewing in order to illuminate the dominant discourse in nature policy and how it has been exclusionary through domesticating alternative views and how it has reached institutionalisation in nature policy and practices. As in genealogy, the analysis aims to deconstruct the dominant nature discourse in order to provide context to the current situation, which simultaneously gives us more understanding about the discursive dislocation. This part then answers the first part of the main research question: *'How can the current changes in nature policy be understood from a discursive perspective?'* The second part of the research consists of participant observation in order to get insight in the specific articulations actors utter and identify themselves with, and which set of articulations seems to comprise the political possibility for nature policy. The latter part then answers the second part of the main research question: '*how will these changes affect concrete planning practices*?'

Section 3.2. elaborates on the methodology and research techniques for part 1 and 2 of the research, and presents an analytical framework and that includes the theoretical concepts discussed in chapter two.

3.2.1. Analytical Framework to the Research

To answer the research questions and identify how discourses change and transform over time, the analytical framework that includes the theoretical concepts discussed in chapter 2 is again presented in this section. In this section a connection is made to the research questions (Q1 - Q6) as presented in chapter 1.

To understand the historical formation and current transformation of Dutch nature policy, it is crucial for this thesis to understand the processes of continuity and change of discourses. A discourse consist of several discursive elements that function as structuring principles, constitutive myths and symbols. To know what has been the leading dominant discourse (Q1), how it did evolve (Q2) and which opposing discursive elements had to be domesticated (Q3) the research has to identify the discursive elements in the historical context, i.e. how it structured, along which fault lines and fields of openings and how discourses became destabilised through a change in context or rearticulation of discursive elements. The analytical term in this study is the theoretical concept of articulation. Articulations stabilize the discursive meaning of a discourse, but also change the meaning of discursive elements and hence transform discourses. To understand the present, a historical deconstruction of discursive history in nature policy is undertaken with genealogy as methodological approach. To study the present discursive situation and know which articulatory practices seek to reconstruct a coherent discourse (Q4), which articulatory practices resonate with actors at the practical level (Q5) and how actors position themselves (Q6) the research has to identify articulatory practices and discursive elements that re-order understandings, change meaning of previous discourses and observe argumentative interactions, i.e. which articulations and acts of identification can be identified at the practical level. Several research methods are used in order to be able to gather data, which are analysed according to the analytical framework above.

3.2.2. Methods for Part 1: Historical narrative to deconstruct the nature discourse.

To be able to write a historical discursive narrative of the predominant nature discourse in Nature Policy, several methods and techniques are used which are briefly described below. In this research I consider language as both method and data (Green and Thorogood, 2009). Through language I can get access to information (method), but also to the interpretations and meanings of people (data).

Literature Review

First of all, a literature study is conducted to analyse the structuration of the predominant nature discourses in nature policy over time. For this purpose, secondary scientific literature is used that described the historical context of dominant ideas in nature conservation and policy. Actively was sought for the discursive dynamics in structuration, along which constitutive outsides the discourse was constituted, which fields of openings and constitutive myths could be identified, and how the discourse was able to institutionalise. Examples of secondary academic literature that has been used are:

- Keulartz, (1999) - '*Living with Nature'* that discusses the predominant nature development discourse in the Netherlands, smothering alternative views in nature development and management.
- Van der Windt (1995) - '*What is left of nature in this country?'* which gives an overview of the history of the Dutch Nature Conservancy Movement, describing its transformation, struggles and influencing ideas.
- Hajer (2003) - '*A Frame in the Fields: Policymaking and the reinvention of Politics'* that identifies the formation of new political identities as response to the implementation of the National Ecological Network.

These academic accounts gave profound insight in the historical discursive transformation in the nature policy domain and allowed to analyse the vast information with the theoretical concepts discussed in Chapter 2. In addition to the literature above, I also extensively searched in literature that was promoting ertain dominant ideas and structuring principles of dominant discourses, e.g. the idea of wilderness, such as literature from Frans Vera or the work of Harm van den Veen on 'Veluwe natuurlijk'. To analyse the latter, used a coding technique that enabled a systematic analysis. These codes are linked to aspects such as: view on nature, practice of nature conservation, the role of humankind in nature, and consequently how these views exclude and legitimize certain practices.

Helicopter Interviewing

Apart from the literature review, I conducted six helicopter interviews which are interviews with actors that have a broad overview on the field of the development in nature policy (Hajer, 2006). These interviews are qualitative of nature, and are intended to complement the information on discourse structuration and institutionalisation of nature policy from a genealogical perspective. The interview guide for the helicopter interviews is to located in annex 1. The interviews are qualitative of nature and semi-structured in their design as this design is the most appropriate following the problem definition, research puzzle and my epistemological position as researcher; interpretative and social constructionist (Mason, 2002). Semi-structured interviews are in-depth conversations where the researcher has an interview guide with different topics to be discussed. I have opted for a semi-structured interview as I aim to know more about certain topics: history of nature conservancy, history of nature policy, nature conservation practices, prominent ideas in nature conservation/management, struggles between different actors and discourses. However, I prefer to leave enough room during the interview for the interviewee to express his/her ideas and arguments as these can contain rich information as well.

The helicopter interviews are dual in their purpose. First of all, they have an informative function. For that matter, I selected people who have a long history with nature policy in their professional career. However, the way people conceptualize and interpret reality colours the information. This can to a certain extent be compensation for with the selection of the informants, by first, selecting people that have a reflective ability – mirroring gaze – in their field of expertise and secondly, selecting people from different backgrounds: agriculture, policy, nature and science to 'compensate' for the different positions people have. However, as from a social constructionist point of view it is impossible to obtain neutral 'objective' data, the second purpose of the interviews is to use the points of view expressed in the interviews as data as well while writing the historical genealogy of nature policy. Their information is then regarded as social construc-

tions and the arguments put forward indicate where these actors position themselves in the past and current debate. The helicopter interviews then already start to serve the second part of the research.

To gain access to the actors as a researcher I need, as Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) formulate, 'a gatekeeper'. Prominent gatekeepers in this research are the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency ('*Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving*') and the Centre for Agriculture and Environment ('*Centrum voor Landbouw en Milieu*'). Both organisations have a renowned status and know certain people personally and/or professionally. Access in that way can be facilitated. After several brainstorm meetings with my supervisors Rijk van Oostenbrugge (PBL), Esther Turnhout (WUR) and Wim Dijkman (CLM), a few names of people came up who would have a good overview on the development processes of nature policy, and simultaneously were able to look at these processes from a certain 'distance'. The interviewed people are as follows:

1. Jan Heijkoop (Deputy South-Holland / LTO Noord / National Park Biesbosch)
2. Barto Piersma (EL&I)
3. Chris Kalden (Staatsbosbeheer)
4. Jos Jansen (Bosschap)
5. Maarten Hajer (PBL)
6. Josef Keulartz (WUR)
7. Bart Krol (Deputy of Province Utrecht)

Before starting the interview, permission was asked to record the conversation. This in order to have the data at hand during the analysis and writing of the genealogical narrative. I also asked every interviewee if to them it was acceptable for their names to be mentioned in the report or if they would like to stay anonymous. As compensation to the latter, I proposed to send each interviewee the transcript of the interview, after which they could send me a revised version which stands for a written consent.

Content Analysis Policy Documents

This step is undertaken after the literature review and helicopter interviews as these gave me insights which moments were crucial for the changes and adjustments in nature discourse. Having insights in these moments, gave me a lead where and what to search for in policy documents of nature policy. I analysed six policy documents: 'The Background Document 'Nature Development' (1989), 'The Nature Policy Plan' (1990), 'the Nota Dynamics and Innovation (1995)', 'the Handbook for Nature Target Types' (1995), The 'Nature for People, People for Nature' plan (2000) and 'Natuurlijk Lukt Het' (2007). These documents revealed how and with which arguments, changes have been made to nature policy and the National Ecological Network. The content analysis complemented the genealogical analysis of nature policy.

Accordingly……

The combination of the aforementioned techniques of literature review, helicopter interviewing and content analysis – triangulation – gave a profound and deep insight on the formation and transformation of predominant discourses within nature policy, the social and political processes in which the discourses were embedded including the struggles and the alternative, smothered views. This insight gave subsequently an understanding of the current dislocation in nature policy.

The box below summarizes the three research methods used in the first research part:
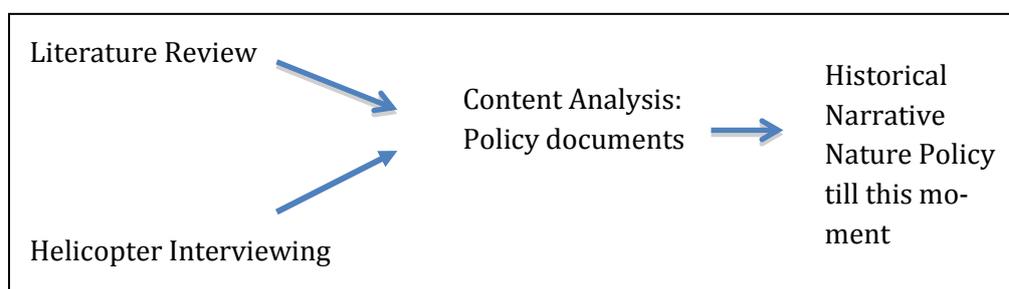
3.2.3. Methods for Part 2: Illumination of Articulatory Practices in the Current Dislocation

To analyse the current articulations that actors utter in the moment of this particular dislocation in nature policy it is necessary to go into the field. Prior to the political decision to erase the Robust Corridors and to limit the management budget, the goals were clear to many people (however not fully agreed upon by everyone as became clear from part 1). Many projects aiming to realize the National Ecological Network were on-going. Currently, the situation is messy and policy goals are uncertain. People are seeking to find and try new ways in the dislocated discursive structure, which at the moment is failing to constitute identity. These new ways and ideas are the expression of seeking to constitute a new identity within the subject position of nature policy. As stated by van den Brink (2009): a dislocation is the *sine qua non* for hegemonic struggles. Exactly at that moment, people, seeking for a 'full' identity, are more open to new ideas, concepts and categories, in other words to other discourses. To get a full understanding and insight into this situation, one has to analyse the acts of identification of people involved in nature planning practices through the articulations they utter and from there try to see how these articulations differ from previous practices and understandings.

 Part two of this research consists of the methods: participant observation at case sites and informal/semi-structured interviews. I opted for these methods, because they are able to study the empirical character of the current situation and accordingly give insight in the temporal and current manifestations of discursive articulatory practices (Green and Thorogood, 2009). As well, participant observation enables to contextualise the situation, as the observation is done on the level of concrete practices and how people go about these practices within a changed context. This method corresponds how Foucault sought to illustrate the dominance of institutional systems: Foucault broke hegemonic discourse down in the multiplicity of discourses through analysing the smaller, often less conspicuous practices, techniques and mechanisms. Foucault emphasised the need to study the micro-powers that brought about transformations (Foucault in Hajer, 1997). So it is exactly at the level of smaller practices one can illuminate the dynamics of other discourses and get insight in the process of transformation. Participant observation also matches with the argumentative interactionist approach of Hajer where it is argued that interpersonal communication reveals and illuminates the argumentative rhetorics of discourse, what counter-positions are criticized and and what new meanings are articulated? Participant observation was conducted at several levels and locations. A brief outline to the locations is given below. Chapter four gives some more background information to the locations and cases during the analysis.

General conferences:

1. National Forest Day
2. Initatief Bewust Bodemgebruik: Productive Landscape
3. Water and Land Network: the new business plan of Staatsbosbeheer[19]

Envisioned Project by LTO and Staatsbosbeheer

1. The Green Deal: Productive Landscape
2. ZLTO: realization of the NEN
3. Staatsbosbeheer: In search for a Strategy with Cooperation of Agriculture

Case sites: Nature Planning Sites

1. Oldematen (Natura 2000 in Overijssel)
2. Westerkwartier (former NEN, Robust Corridor in Groningen)

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[19] *Staatsbosbeheer: literally State Forestry Service, manages 250.000 hectares of nature areas of forests*

3. Westelijke Langstraat (former NEN, Natura 2000 in Brabant)
4. Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden (former Robust Corridor in Utrecht)
5. Krimpenerwaard (former Robust Corridor in South-Holland)

The case sites: nature planning projects have in common that prior to the policy change, concrete plans existed for constructing a Robust Corridor or the NEN, with the planning process already on-going, that is, the negotiation processes and/or implementation phase was already started. In addition, all planning projects involve a diverse set of actors, such as farmers, citizens, country estates, agricultural nature associations, policy and decision makers and nature organisations (Staatsbosbeheer, Natuurmonumenten and Provincial Landscapes). Several research methods have been used to gather data from these sites and locations. These methods are discussed below.

Participant Observation

Participant observation is an observational method where the researcher is present in the field studied to a certain extent. Participant observation provides data on phenomena (such as behaviour) as well as on people's accounts of those phenomena (Green and Thorogood, 2009). An advantage of participant observation is that the researcher "attempts to maintain a self-conscious awareness of what is learned, how it has been learned and the social transactions that inform the production of such knowledge". The role I opt to take is the one of 'overt' research, that it is known to participants that I am a researcher interested in nature policy and its processes. As stated by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) " decision about the sort role to try to adopt in a setting will depend on the purposes of the research and the nature of the setting". The reason for the 'overt' role is opted from an ethical point of view: I consider that it is a right of people to know that I am a researcher interested in the current changes in nature policy. To compensate for possible 'false' or 'desirable' acts or statements, I conducted a deep participatory participant observation, so that I was perceived to be part of the team. The type of participant is however not being a 'complete' participant, but an observer-as-participant (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Green and Thorogood, 2009) as I participated in meetings, workshops, and excursions in order to be able to observe discussions and practices. What has been observed are the regularities in social behaviour and statements made considering the changes in nature policies, i.e. the articulations people utter and acts of identification related to specific discourses.

Semi-structured interviews

In addition to participant observation, several qualitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted on the changes in Nature Policy with involved actors and the way they perceive and foresee the future generally for Nature Policy and specifically for their planning project. Most interviews were held on familiar settings, i.e. homes or work places, as interviewing people on their own territory, allows them to relax much more than they would in less familiar settings (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The accounts generated by these interviews gave insight in the phenomena to which they refer and served to identify the perspectives people imply and the discursive strategies people employ. The combination of participant observation with interviews is advantageous as the data from the former can complement the other and vice versa. For instance after conducting some interviews, certain practices and statements observed in meetings are clarified, or one can use data observed in participant observation in some interviews. The interviews are meant to illuminate the ideas that are floating around on nature conservancy, the construction of an ecological/robust corridor and the recent political turn in Nature Policy. Consequently, identifying linguistic regularities (articulations) illuminate the discursive elements of other discourses. The aim of the interview is to illuminate how much the recent articulations differ from the 'old meanings' assigned to nature policy and management. The interview guide for these interviews can be find in annex 2.

Textual discourse analysis of case study documents

During participant observation I was able to gain access to several documents and messages of people that concerned different articulations of people regards nature policy and management. With this method it is important to realize that what has been considered to be of importance to record and what has been left out or given less importance. Also newspaper articles on the project can be analysed in order to see how issues are framed and what messages they (un)intendedly convey, while leaving out others.

Accordingly…..

The research design of part two consisted mainly of participant observation, and some textual analysis with semi-structured interviews. The research design of part two entailed like part one a triangulation of methods. Conducting all steps allowed to make a consistent analysis of combining the information obtained from the different methods. The analysis and writing of part 2 then adds contextual and empirical insight to the current discursive dislocation and answers the second part of the main research question: "*How will these changes affect concrete planning practices*?" The box below summarizes the methods used in the second part of the research. The part started with some participant observation, followed by textual analysis and semi structured interviews. At the end, triangulation of methods, brought a contextual insight to the current dynamics regarding the changes in Nature Policy.
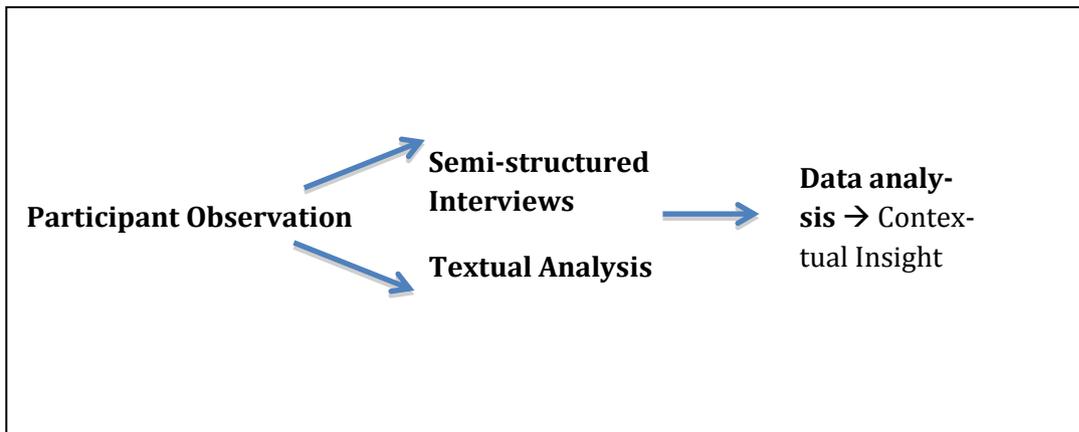
Chapter 4. Deconstructing the Nature Development Discourse

This chapter unfolds the discursive formation of the nature development discourse in nature policy; that is, its structuration and institutionalisation. It starts off with a historical genealogy to illustrate the discursive context in which the nature development discourse was able to structure and institutionalise. The study concerns a retrospective analysis, as the discourse in question emerged and gained dominance in the past. Such an analysis enables us to understand the present as constructed, as a result of power struggles, contingencies and fields of openings.

The genealogical analysis illustrates that diverse meanings have been assigned to nature by different discursive structures and could identify two dominant discourses in nature protection. The chapter will demonstrate that at the beginning of the twentieth century the nature conservation discourse structured thoughts and practices in nature protection. From the '70s onwards nature protection shifted from conserving *existing* nature to producing *new* nature. The discourse of nature development started to structure the conceptualisation of nature protection. As I discuss in more detail in 4.2. this new form of nature protection has come to known as nature development , which as Fisher and Hajer (1999) point out can be seen as a new form of environmental engineering. This chapter addresses the discursive dynamics of continuity and change of both discourses in the domain of nature policy over time in order to shed light on the present discursive dynamics in nature policy. As I discuss in more detail in 4.1. the structuration of the nature conservation discourse was characterised by struggles and conflicts. The nature conservation discourse was able to grow and institutionalise because of some specific fields of opening. At the end of 4.1. the discursive elements that make up the nature conservation discourse are presented. Around the '70s new scientific insights in ecology weakened the structuring principle of the nature conservation discourse, which allowed for the emergence of the nature development discourse. Section 4.2. addresses the discursive dynamics around the structuration of the nature development discourse. The chapter shows that similarly with the nature conservation discourse, the nature development discourse was able to structure and expand due to several fields of openings and myths. As illustrated in 4.2.9. alternative views and identities (social demands) were formed as a reaction to the growing influence of the nature development discourse in nature policy. The nature development discourse tried to domesticate these sources of discontent with a new policy initiative: the Nature for People, People for Nature policy document. At the end of 4.2. the discursive elements of the nature development discourse are presented. The first section begins with a genealogical analysis of the nature conservation discourse.

4.1. The Nature Conservation Discourse 1900 – 1970

As elaborately described in Van der Windt (1995), Dekker (2002) and van Koppen (2002), nature discourse knows a dynamic history with continuity and change around its central notion 'primeval nature'. Two ideas around 'primeval nature' kept inspiring the thinking on nature: nature is beautiful and vulnerable (Van der Windt, 1995), hence it is in need of protection. The notion of 'primeval nature' - the pivot on which the nature movement hinges - has seen different conceptualisations over time, depending on the discursive context. Biologists and later ecologists have played a dominant role in nature discourse (Van der Windt, 1995; Jos Jansen interview, Barto Piersma interview). For instance the Commission of the Association of the Conservation of Natuurmonumenten (Vereeniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten) did exist of mainly biologists (Van der Windt, 1995). At first, their role was foremost to legitimate and determine general objectives. However, over time this role changed into a more prominent one, as theoretical concepts in ecology were deliberately used and developed for nature policy concepts and programmes (Van der Windt, 1995). As shown by Van der Windt (1995) the realization of the concept 'primeval nature' changed from a romantic ideal, via scientific concepts to technological practices. As argued by genealogy, in order to understand the emergence and discursive dynamics of the nature development

discourse, the discursive context of nature protection needs to be placed in a historical perspective. This section elaborates on the preceding nature discourse: the nature conservation discourse, how it was structured, with different conceptualizations and particular fields of opening and myths, enabling the discourse to expand.

4.1.1. Nature Monument as symbol

At the turn of the twentieth century, there was a growing awareness among certain groups in society that nature was disappearing due to increasing industrial and agricultural developments (Kleijn, 2011). Hence, nature was conceived of being threatened and therefore in need of protection. The *articulations* on vulnerable and beautiful nature in need of protection furthered in specific nature practices as illustrated below.

Salient incidents like the one around the 'Naardermeer' - the municipality of Amsterdam planned to throw their garbage into a species-rich lake - functioned as a so-called *dystopian myth* to the nature conservation discourse. Myth brings coherence by explaining why things cohere: a dystopian myth makes people cohere to avoid a catastrophe while a constitutive myth explains cohesion by narrating a foundational event (Hajer, 2003). Using the lake Naardermeer as a garbage belt was seen as an undesirable act - a threat to nature - by certain groups in society: 'a beautiful nature lake would be contaminated!'. In order to protect the lake, the lake was bought with multifarious financial means and declared as a Nature Monument (van Koppen, 2002; Van der Windt, 1995). The act of buying the lake served as a *constitutive myth* to the nature conservation discourse. The story that nature could be protected through buying of land stimulated similar nature practices. The following articulation became part of the nature conservation discourse: 'through purchasing of land it is possible to protect nature from external developments'. Jacques P. Thijsse – an Amsterdam schoolteacher – was one of the leading figures in this constitutive act of buying the Naardermeer. During the structuration of the discourse he played a prominent role in nature conservation. His name became related to nature conservation and in that regard J.P. Thijsse can be conceived as the *hero* of the nature conservation discourse.

The notion of Nature Monument plays a crucial role in the nature conservation discourse. A 'Nature Monument' was understood as a place reserved for beautiful and vulnerable nature: "all peculiar parts of the Netherlands, with remarkable animals, plants or cultural historical remnants that are threatened to disappear by means of cultural expansion" (Van Koppen, 151-152; Van der Windt, 1995: 57). The motives to protect nature in a 'Nature Monument' were manifold that consisted of aesthetical, recreational, cultural-historical and scientific arguments (Van der Windt, 1995). These motives came together in the term 'Natural Beauty' ('Natuurschoon') which was plastic enough to bind the several interests and motives (Van Koppen, 2002). The *articulation* to protect nature developed into: "Natural Beauty is to be protected in a Nature Monument". A Nature Monument was thus <u>the</u> way to protect natural beauty, and therefore all motives to protect nature came together in the Nature Monument. 'Nature Monument', in other words, became the embodiment of beautiful and vulnerable natural beauty (Van der Windt, 1995) and functioned as a powerful *symbol* to the nature conservation discourse. The symbol 'Nature Monument' was one of the first concepts that was able to bind different groups in society; scientists, artists, landowners, affluent middle classes, biologists and land planners. In Hajer's terms, the term 'Nature Monument' can be said to be a *metaphor*; a vehicle that reduces the discursive complexity (Hajer, 1997; 2003) enabling people to communicate over complex issues. The stabilisation of the idea to protect natural beauty in a nature monument facilitated a process of group formation, leading to the creation of the Association of the Conservation of Nature Monuments (*Vereeniging tot Behoud van Natuurmonumenten*). The discourse coalition of that time was formed by an alliance of scientists, mainly biologists with the wish to safeguard nature for studying purposes, artists that celebrated the beauty of nature and the affluent middle classes, with need for recreation and hunting expeditions, providing the financial assets for buying land (Jos Jansen, interview).

The structuration of the nature conservation discourse had a widespread consequence for the practice of nature protection, namely in order to protect nature, one had to buy land and proclaim it as a Nature Monument. The nature conservation discourse thus facilitated *a demarcating practice* between the areas reserved for nature; the 'Nature Monument' and the rest of the rural area. Reserving areas for the purpose of nature protection by means of buying land or land planning became a common practice in the nature conservation discourse. This spatial segregation can be considered *a structuring principle* in the nature conservation discourse that continuously extended as becomes clear in the following sections. At first aesthetical, recreational, scientific and cultural-historical arguments were of equal importance to assign a 'Nature Monument', however over time the fear that rare plant and animal species would disappear got the upper hand and scientific motivations started to dominate (Van der Windt,1995), especially with the emergence of plant sociology as *structuring principle* (see 4.1.2.). The relationship with official policy and government was in this time still modest in nature, and in most cases took the shape of informal lobby efforts rather than explicit policy formation (Van Koppen, 2002). This changed in the context of land reclamation and consolidation (4.1.3., 4.1.4 and 4.1.5)

4.1.2. Plant Sociology and the Emergence of Half-Nature

Around the 1930's – 1940s, after some decennia that focused on the purchasing of Nature Monuments, two developments caused for a discursive change around the conceptualisation of nature and nature protection. An internal dispute about the kind of nature management within the nature conservancy movement changed the conceptualisation of nature, natural beauty and Nature Monuments, bringing on stage ecological concepts as living community (*levensgemeenschap*), nature technique (*natuurtechniek*) and half nature (*half natuur*). Furthermore, external developments in especially the agricultural sector triggered the discursive change as will be illustrated in more detail in 4.1.3. This section elaborates on the first development that reconciled an internal conflict which the nature conservation discourse had to domesticate.

After several years of nature protection, it turned out that the ideals of wild and diverse nature could not always be combined in one Nature Monument. In order to safeguard certain species from extinction it was deemed necessary to intervene to a certain extent. The question arose how this intervention practice could be reconciled with the ideal of wild, primeval nature: letting nature flourish by itself, without any human intervention, inside Nature Monuments. Apart from this dilemma, most economic activities were difficult to combine with both ideals of diverse and wild nature. The answer to this debate came from a specific discipline in ecology: plant sociology. Plant sociology is the study of the relations between different plant species. The idea developed that plant sociology could indicate which areas where valuable for climax-stadia and which areas where valuable because of different succession stadia, "as plant sociology gives insight into the structure of the vegetation...a main character of a landscape type" (Diemont, 1937 in Van der Windt, 1995:82). Connections were made between different succession stadia and the type of management and human intervention needed. In climax-stadia, seen as the ultimate and most complete stadium, no intervention was deemed necessary. However, in other landscapes, such as semi-agricultural landscapes, the vegetation found itself in other succession stadia with other valuable species, that in order to be saved were in need to be managed. Hence: here human intervention was necessary. As a consequence, plant sociology became indispensable as the main discipline that held the knowledge to classify types of Nature Monuments and corresponding types of management (Van der Windt, 1995). In other words, the inclusion of managed areas in the nature conservation discourse was facilitated by a scientific typology of semi-natural landscapes (Van Koppen, 2002).

Both, the interventionist en the non-interventionist schools in nature protection were domesticated in the nature conservation discourse through a successful *articulation* of combining the elements of non-intervention and intervention into a new binding concept of 'half-nature'. Plant sociology became *the structuring principle* in the nature conservation discourse. Hence, nature was given another meaning:

Nature came to be understood as 'living communities in different succession stadia'. As stated by Van der Windt (1995) the ideal of 'primeval nature' was in this time conceptualised in the form of 'natural living communities' (: 210). 'Nature Monuments' were conceived to harbour different states of vegetation, demanding distinctive management types and with a difference in the intensity of economic activities. Nature conservation practices now evolved around safeguarding these different succession stadia. In addition, as it was 'known' which plant species, numbers and ratio's belonged to which living communities, it could also be identified which species did not belong to a certain living community. In that sense the categorisation of plant sociology was a normative, as it prescribed which species belonged and deserved protection, while excluding other species. In the forestry sector this structuration of ideas initiated a discussion around the modification of the tree composition, especially the presence of certain exotic tree species was questioned. Another consequence of the scientific classification, hence understanding of nature and how one ought to be dealt with it, was the broadening interest of the nature conservation discourse towards agricultural landscapes. The following section discusses this development in more detail.

4.1.3. Extending the Boundaries of Nature Monument

Plant sociology was able to categorize nature along a typology of climax stadia to half nature, and became *the structuring principle* in the nature conservation discourse. In the context of land reclamation, the nature conservation discourse transformed. From the 1930's land conflicts became more stringent due to accelerating rates of land reclamation activities and due to increasingly intense confrontations between agricultural organisations and nature conservationists around the remaining uncultivated parts of land. Nature conservationists wanted to protect these parts while agriculturalists wanted to cultivate them for agricultural purposes. The urgency of the situation triggered the establishment of a new organisation, the Contact Commission on Nature Protection (CC) that focused on influencing the government in mainstreaming thoughts and influencing activities on governmental level (Van der Windt, 1995; Van Koppen, 2002, Gorter, 1986). The context of accelerating land reclamation forced the nature conservation discourse to integrate the concept of landscape in its discourse as the category of half-nature. Valuable nature was conceived as the terrains that were threatened by land reclamation activities. Different landscapes became more appreciated for their natural values (Van der Windt, 1995). As consequence, the conceptualisation of nature within the nature conservation discourse was broadened with the concept of landscape. Nature Monuments started to include different landscape types that were conceived to be in need of protection. The nature conservation discourse thus started to claim more land for nature protection.

As reaction to the land reclamation activities, nature conservation practices broadened with the making of landscape plans and spatial protection (Van der Windt, 1995). The CC started to make lists of valuable nature and landscape areas that were seen to be in need of protection. The CC aimed to protect the listed areas by means of establishing reserves and through spatial planning (Van der Windt, 1995). These demarcation practices of the nature conservation discourse can be regarded as an expansion of spatial segregation between nature (including the landscapes) and agriculture. The lists served as powerful tools for the nature conservation discourse in the negotiation processes with the government and the agricultural sector in order to protect unclaimed land and existing nature areas. Science was able to develop clear criteria through plant sociology that were convincing and legitimising in the eyes of government and later also for agriculture (Van der Windt, 1995). As a consequence, scientific arguments gained dominance over cultural-historical, aesthetical and recreational arguments in the nature conservation discourse. And the nature conservation discourse became *ecologised*. The relevance of Nature Monuments was reinforced by assigning its importance to the outer rural area. Actors in the nature conservation discourse articulated that nature, which are the living communities in Nature Monuments, could serve to prevent plagues and diseases in cultural areas and function as a genetic reservoir (Westhoff, 1951). This message holds that it is worthwhile to protect nature in a nature monument as it can have a functional role (prevention of diseases), and be an enabling source for production purposes (genetic variety stimulating production). Making Nature Monuments more relevant and functional to the outer rural area strengthened the spatial claim

for more Nature Monuments and the position of the nature conservation discourse in the nature policy domain.

The first list '*Het voornaamste Natuurschoon in Nederland*' (1939) made by the CC consisted mainly of existing nature. Later lists comprised several landscape types (see 4.1.4.) such as hedgerows valued for the characteristic natural diversity of plant and animal specifies. At the beginning, the first list was not widely dispersed due to the fear that farmers would purposely cultivate the valuable nature areas assigned on the map (Van der Windt, 1995). This says something about the tense relation between agriculture and nature at that time. The agricultural organisations were indeed not amused about the attempts to stop the land reclamation activities. They depicted the nature protectionists as a small group of unknown citizens that want to stop all changes and perceive the rural population as nothing more than a furnishing of the landscape (Van der Windt, 1995:106). The first list was however sent to all institutions relevant to nature such as Staatsbosbeheer and the Cultural Technical Service ('*Cultuurtechnische Dienst*'). The CC hoped that the Cultural Technical Service would take these nature areas into account in future planning activities. The list appeared a successful move as it was taken up in official policies as the policy concept National Plan and by government institutions such as Rijkswaterstaat (Van der Windt, 1995). The government also raised the amount of financial means to purchase more land for nature purposes to Staatsbosbeheer and the Foundation of Natuurmonumenten. In 1955, the Ministry of OKW honoured the claim of 50.050 ha of nature by the nature conservancy movement with the proposal to purchase these lands over 10 years' time and to reserve for that purpose an overall amount of 30 million guilders. (Van der Windt, 1995)

Plant sociology thus not only enabled to solve an internal conflict, it also reinforced the negotiating position of the nature conservation discourse with scientific arguments. The urgency of the land reclamation activities allowed science to step in and take the lead in the political struggle for more nature areas. As a consequence, the nature conservation discourse became *ecologised*. The structuring typology of half-nature resulted in the incorporation of landscape in the nature conservation discourse. Accordingly the conceptualisation of nature was broadened, which also enlarged the land claims for nature protection. As plant sociology was able to visualize nature areas and make nature claims concrete, the negotiation position with the government reinforced. The first list was taken up in policy programmes which indicates that the nature conservation discourse reached institutionalisation. However, due to some specific fields of opening, the nature conservation discourse was really able to get a more prominent position and institutionalise further in the nature policy domain as is illustrated in the next section.

4.1.4. Field of opening: Agricultural Overproduction and Restructuration

At the end of the 50's and beginning of the '60s, the agricultural position weakened because of the phenomenon of overproduction. Due to this changing context, the CC was able to adjust their strategy to a more pro-active approach – hence: *a field of opening* presented itself. The CC claimed that land reclamation was nowadays an unnecessary practice, as this would stimulate even more overproduction. (Van der Windt, 1995) The CC articulated successfully the redundancy of land reclamation by coupling this to the problem in the agricultural sector: overproduction and the subsequent weakening of agriculture's economic profitability. Therefore the CC's argument to require less land for intensive agriculture, leaving more space for nature could make sense to and be heard by other actors in society. After several negotiations with government, the land reclamation activities did indeed stop. (Van der Windt, 1995) This act is another sign of the growing influence of the nature conservation discourse, as the previous policy programme for land reclamation was successfully halted.

Although, land reclamation was successfully stopped, another perceived threat to nature came in, that especially endangered nature in agricultural landscapes: the increasing velocity of the land consolidation activities ('*ruilverkaveling*'). Land consolidation was perceived a threat to specific natural values which depend upon the landscape structures in agricultural areas. As landscape was conceived as some form of

nature (see 4.1.3) it was conceived necessary to protect these endangered landscapes. In order to protect these natural values, different *articulations* originated within the nature conservation discourse, linking recreational needs and high natural scientific values to agricultural landscapes. At the end of the 1960s, Euro-Commissioner Mansholt pronounced his plan for a radical agricultural restructuration that made it necessary to take numerous agricultural ha´s out of production. (Van der Windt, 1995) This functioned as a policy window of opportunity – or in Foucauldian terms: *a field of opening* – for the CC to claim more ha's for nature purposes. In different working groups, the CC came up with a plan '*The landscape of tomorrow'* that contained a new spatial typology for the Netherlands that divided nature from agriculture: In the green areas (nature areas) there is no space for agriculture, in the yellow and red/pink areas (landscape reserves) there is space, but under certain conditions. The remaining white areas were reserved for agriculture or other purposes (Van der Windt, 1995). Each types – nature, red and pink requested a different protection regime. Together the green, red and pink areas would form the green infrastructure of the Netherlands (Van der Windt, 1995). These list and maps were made (top-down planning) based on the plant sociology typology (science) and were a visual representation of nature reserves and monuments, separating them from spatial functions (spatial segregation). Plant sociology was still dominant in structuring ideas and practices around nature. This visual representation of nature facilitated negotiation with the government and the proposed spatial typology (green, red and pink areas) by the CC was taken up in official reports. The report published by the governmental working group under CRM holds for instance a similar map as the one of '*The landscape of tomorrow'* (van der Windt, 1995).

The nature conservation discourse obviously gained in dominance, leaving evident footprints in nature policy documents and programmes. The term 'natural value' functioned as a bridge between the spatial segregation of nature and agricultural areas as 'natural value' can be applied to both 'real' nature areas and to nature in agricultural landscapes. In that sense, it fitted perfectly the classification of plant sociology and was able to bind the interventionists and non-interventionists schools within the nature conservation discourse. The broadened conceptualisation of nature implied that a stronger claim could be made outside the typical Nature Monuments in terms of hectares and kind of nature. As a consequence, certain forms of extensive agriculture - the red/pink areas on the CC-map - became assimilated within the nature conservation discourse. The dominant yardstick for the assessment of naturalness were the natural values. The symbol of Nature Monuments was thus extended to other nature protection areas where natural values were perceived to be protected. The produced map by the CC and later the CRM working group contributed to the expansion of spatial segregation, because the segregation was extended with extensively managed agricultural areas versus intensive agricultural areas (Van der Windt, 1995). This segregation was based on the classification and typology of plant sociology. The binding concept between the diversity and different scales of nature in nature areas became natural value. The dominant practice of the nature conservation discourse continued to conserving different succession stadia and characteristic plant and animal species in nature and extensive agricultural areas. The elements of the nature conservation discourse institutionalised in the green policy document (4.1.5.) as natural values were to be conserved in national parks (green areas), landscape parks (yellow areas), nature reserve areas and management areas (red/pink areas).

4.1.5. The Green Policy Documents: Institutionalisation of the Nature Conservation Discourse

In between 1966 and 1975, two ideas that reinforced the spatial typology were developed in dialogue with the CC and government representatives (Van der Windt, 1995). One idea was a system of national parks and national landscape parks, which came back in the two of the three green policy documents. In the national parks policy document, the aim is laid down to establish 21 national parks. The proposed areas in this policy document coincide remarkably with almost all the green areas on the CC-map (Van der Windt, 1995). Also the proposed 20 national landscape parks in the policy document on national landscape parks coincided with most of the yellow coloured areas of the CC-map (Van der Windt, 1995). This

practice can be considered once more a furthering of the spatial segregation practice of the nature conservation discourse. The second idea was to establish contracts with farmers for a specific kind of nature management that would benefit nature (Van der Windt, 1995). The third green policy document laid emphasis on the relation between agriculture and nature protection: the Relation policy document ('*de Relatie Nota'*). This policy document highlighted the relevance of an integrated approach that would deal with problems for both agriculture and nature. An important *articulation* by then was that small farmers in especially small-scale landscapes were in danger as they "could not keep pace with the agricultural restructuration programme to grow and increase in productivity" (Van Nes, 1975). Still today these farmers are situated in so-called: 'Least Favoured Areas', which indicates that farmers in these areas are in both agricultural and nature discourse positioned in a less favourable economic position. In order to 'solve' the agricultural problems, the relation-document proposed a financial agreement to support farmers' income in exchange for protecting and enhancing natural values in the agricultural landscape (van der Windt, 1995). The latter can be considered an incorporation of agriculture (and spatial area) into the nature conservation discourse as agriculture became conditionalised to the nature conservation discourse. The Relation-document made a division of two types of areas: the nature reserves and the nature management areas. Reserve areas were destined as refuges for nature, especially animals, in agricultural area, i.e. meadow birds reserves, geese reserves (Tromp, 2001). A stringent management regime with a focus on natural values prevailed over agricultural land use in the reserves: reserves refer to "situations that because of their high quality and great vulnerability are in need of a focused nature and landscape management and agricultural practice as usual is, because of a stringent management, not considered realistic any longer in the future" (Relatienota, 1975: 37). In management areas it was foreseen that farmers could still practice a certain kind of agriculture, however under certain conditions. The government proposed to purchase 100.000 acres for each type of relation-area, in total 200.000 acres for the purpose of nature and landscape protection at agricultural land. Most of the relation-areas coincided with the former yellow and red areas of the CC-map (Van der Windt, 1995). As stated by Van der Windt (1995: 140) "the policy document determined how agricultural areas with a so-called high natural value are separated from other agricultural areas". It was an incorporation of agricultural areas into the nature conservation discourse. At that time, the spatial claim for nature conservation expanded from 1-2% of the total Dutch surface around the Second World War to 15% based on the CC-map of 1969 (Van der Windt, 1995). The incorporation of agricultural land for nature purposes was reinforced with a stronger articulation of the importance of cultural landscapes and Nature Monuments for recreational needs. These articulations created discourse coalitions with the recreational sector that also started to articulate the importance of agricultural landscapes for recreational purposes. This alliance with the recreational sector resulted in having a representative of the ANWB taking part in the CC board together with a governmental representative (Van der Windt, 1995). This increasing and reinforcing discourse coalition, together with the weakening position of the agricultural sector, made it possible for the nature conservation discourse to enlarge its nature claims, and to get these institutionalised in the green policy documents.

The genealogical analysis (4.1.1. – 4.1.5) has demonstrated how the nature conservation discourse was able to expand and structure thoughts and practices around nature protection. It also showed the different fields of openings and the consequences this had for the conceptualisation of nature and broadening of nature practices. Section 1.6. recapitulates and presents the discursive elements of the nature conservation discourse that were illuminated by the genealogical analysis.

4.1.6. The elements of the nature conservation discourse

One sees that around the 1970s, institutionally, politically, and socially, the nature conservation discourse gained remarkable influence. Ideas to protect different nature types (national park, landscape parks, reserve and management areas) through spatial planning were proposed to the government and were taken up in official policy plans. The nature conservation discourse became hegemonic in the nature policy domain. Contextual changes functioned as *fields of opening*, such as the difficult position of the agricultural

sector due to overproduction and subsequently the Mansholt plan. This field of opening enabled the nature conservation discourse to institutionalise its concepts and meanings in the domain of nature policy. The scientific discipline of plant sociology was a dominant *structuring principle* in the nature conservation discourse, i.e. structuring the thinking and practices of nature conservation. Due accelerating rates of land reclamation and consolidation, landscape was incorporated into the nature conservation discourse with support of the scientific typology of semi-natural landscapes. This broadening understanding of nature also extended the symbol of Nature Monuments towards various nature reserves, i.e. national parks, national landscape parks, reserve areas and management areas. The concept of natural value was binding the different nature areas together, e.g. different natural values exist in agricultural landscapes than in forests and both need protection. The practice of the nature conservation discourse still remained a purchasing policy. The symbol of Nature Monument was broadened and reinforced with other policy concepts and more emphasis was given on the spatial planning and protection regime. The nature conservation discourse transformed from purchasing Nature Monuments for cultural, recreational, aesthetic and scientific values to reserve strategies aiming to protect nature and landscape values from a scientific point of view.

Following the above, and after the genealogical analysis of sections 4.1.1. – 4.1.5. the nature conservation discourse can be said to consist of the following elements:

Elements/Discourse	Nature Conservation Discourse
Dystopian Myth	Contamination of Naardermeer
Constitutive Myth	Buying of Naardermeer
Symbol	Nature Monument
Hero	Jac P. Thijsse
Constitutive Outside	Agriculture
Structuring Principles	Plant Sociology
	Typology: semi-natural - natural
	Human involvement as preservation strategy
	Preservation: existing nature and landscape (reserve strategy) - natural beauty and values
	Top down planning
	Spatial segregation

Figure 3 Discursive elements of the Nature Conservation Discourse

Nature protection started with the purchasing of nature areas with private financial means to counter the *dystopian myth* of the undesirable contamination of the Naardermeer. The *constitutive myth* of buying the Naardermeer stimulated nature practices that evolved around buying of land for nature protection. In the beginning different points of view around nature, i.e. aesthetical, recreational, scientific and cultural-history, merged together in order to purchase nature threatened by external developments. The concept of 'natural beauty' shielded this multiplicity of arguments and is regarded as one of the *structuring principles* of the nature conservation discourse. The articulatory practice became that 'nature had to be protected in a Nature Monument'. Nature Monument functioned as a metaphor to the nature conservation discourse as it contains the message of *conserving* and thus protecting existing nature. For the nature conservation discourse Nature Monument functioned as a powerful *symbol* as it stood for the protection of nature. Through plant sociology the nature conservation discourse was able to categorise nature domesticating an internal discussion around wild and primeval nature and at the same time countering an external threat, i.e. landscape reclamation and consolidation. Nature protection became focused on species richness at different succession stadia in diverse vegetation types (living-communities). Plant sociology can

be regarded as a *structuring principles* of the nature conservation discourse. Plant sociology categorized nature along a semi-natural line. Accordingly, the strategy to purchase land for nature expanded to include semi-natural landscapes. The concept of 'natural value' served as a *binding concept*, as natural values could be encountered in both 'real' nature areas and agricultural landscapes. Together with the scientific typology on nature, natural value can be identified as another *structuring principle* of the nature conservation discourse. During the structuration of the nature conservation discourse, demarcation practices such as spatial segregation (excluding nature from agriculture) and incorporation of agricultural land into the nature discourse (spatial claim) happened through the listing and mapping of nature and landscape reserves (top-down planning). The listing and mapping functioned as powerful tools in the negotiation with government and agriculture. As a consequence, the nature conservation practice of land purchasing was extended with the spatial planning regime and accordingly furthered and stimulated the practice of spatial segregation and top-down planning. The above story is visualised in fig. 4. The articulation of nature protection evolved along the purchasing of Nature Monuments that could protect nature (natural beauty, landscapes and natural values) from external developments. As these external developments expanded through land reclamation and consolidation, it was necessary to protect more Nature Monuments, that included agricultural landscapes and which became concretised in national parks, landscape parks, management areas and reserve areas. The common practice was through purchasing of land, spatially segregated from other functions through a top-down planning (maps).
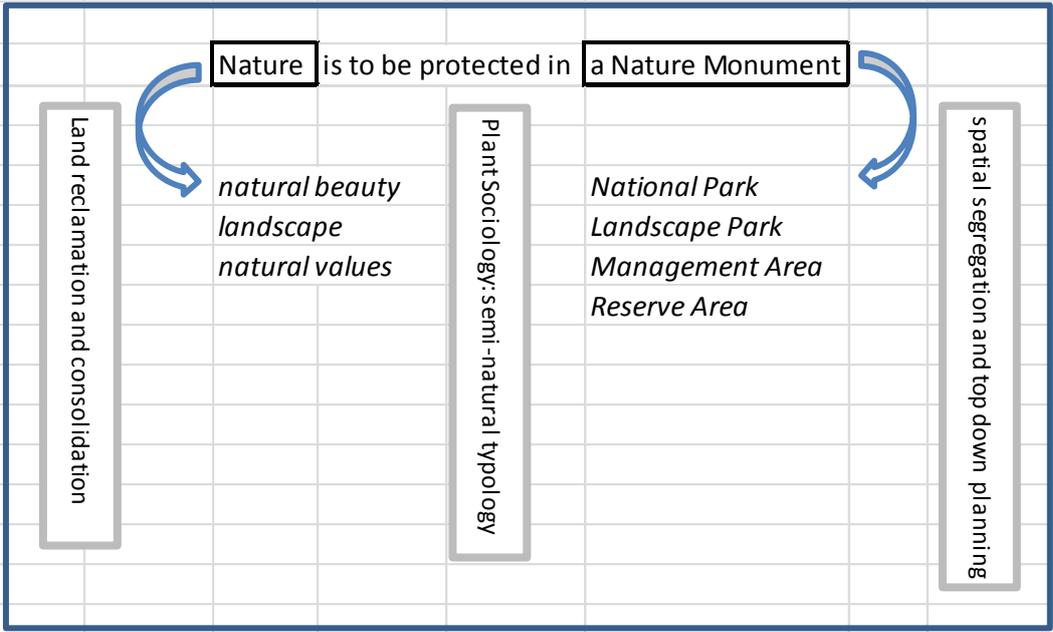
Figure 4 Changing conceptualisations of Nature and Nature Monument by external developments, structuring principles and fields of openings

4.1.7. Fissures on two fronts

The nature conservation discourse reached hegemony in the nature policy domain with the Green Policy documents. The envisioned nature and landscape areas on the CC-maps were declared as national park, landscape park, management and reserve area. However, from the 1970s, the nature conservation discourse showed some fissures at two fronts that undermined the dominant position of the nature conservation discourse. Two types of social demands started to criticize the static ecological concepts from plant

sociology and the top-down practices in the nature conservation discourse. The angle of critique was however different, and one social demand was able to dislocate the nature conservation discourse.

The first social demand was a critique on the spatial segregation and top down practice of the nature conservation discourse, that demanded a more integrative approach on nature protection entailing a combination of multiple functions. Although the Relation-policy document aimed for an integrative approach to address problems of nature and agriculture in order to prevent any future conflicts , the practice of purchasing the areas assigned under the Relation – policy document was met with severe resistance among farmers (Van der Windt, 1995, Bleunink et al, 2011). The farmers were not fond of the new so-called integration policy. They did not perceive it as integration, but rather as an incorporation, as a claim and limitation to their modern farming technique, a stand in the way to progress (Bleunink et al., 2011). The protests, plus a lack of financial means, meant that after 10 years only a quarter of the 100.000 acres was designated, of which only half was demarcated (Van der Windt, 1995). Within this context several critical groups emerged, stemming from both the agricultural and ecological side, e.g. '*Boerengroep'*, '*Werkgroep Kritische Biologen'*, '*Werkgroep Milieubeheer Leiden'*. These critical groups criticised the top down undemocratic planning, the static ecological concepts and the reserve/monument strategy of the nature conservation discourse. To assign certain areas as nature was conceived a top-down planning and to reserve areas for nature was seen as a separation of the rest of the rural area. Nature protection as it was pleaded had to focus on the entire rural area instead to only some parts of land (Van der Windt, 1995). Apart from criticising nature conservation, these critical groups as well disagreed with the practice of intensifying agriculture, the suppressed position of the farmer and the accelerated scaling-up and increasing production putting pressure on the environment. Both agricultural and biological groups addressed similar topics that aimed for alternative ways to arrange nature and agricultural management, which formed a *chain of equivalence*[20] among them. After a while groups from both sides formed the organisation Centre of Agriculture and Environment, that stands for an integration of agriculture and nature (Van der Windt, 1995). In short, this social demand criticised the segregative and top-down planning practice of the nature conservation discourse.

The second social demand was also a critique to the static ecological concepts of plant sociology, but questioned the accepted human intervention in nature conservation and held a rather different plea that came down to a furthering of the spatial segregation. This second critique caused for a discursive shift because the ecological theory of plant sociology – which had a structuring and stabilising function to the nature conservation discourse – became replaced with another ecological theory: the ecosystem theory. This discursive shift enhanced the development of another discourse: the nature development discourse. As we will see in 4.2. spatial segregation and top-down planning continued to be dominant discursive elements within the nature development discourse. As a matter of fact, the articulation of segregation even reinforced within the structuration phase of the nature development discourse. As will be documented in detail in 4.2. the nature development discourse had to domesticate the other aforementioned social demand. This was mainly done through the incorporation of agricultural nature management in the National Ecological Network, and later through the establishment of the policy document of 'Nature for People, People for Nature'. Section 4.2. will demonstrate that the emergence of the nature development discourse was accompanied with several discursive dynamics and fields of openings. How this went and which elements make up the nature development discourse is illustrated in 4.2.

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[20] See chapter 2: logics of equivalence. A chain of equivalence unites the social demands, as they are articulated as equivalent (Mert, 2012).

4.2. The Nature Development Discourse and the National Ecological Network

As illustrated by Hajer (2003) and Keulzartz (in Fischer and Hajer, 1999) a notable development has taken place in nature discourse the past decades as it has shifted from conserving *existing* nature to producing *new* nature. This production of *new* nature has come to known as nature development, which as Fischer and Hajer (1999) point out, can be seen as a new form of environmental engineering. From the 1970s the position of plant sociology weakened due to new theoretical understandings in ecology, i.e. the ecosystem theory and two specific theoretical notions: island and metapopulation theory. These theories started to structure nature discourse in such a way that it was the start of something new: the nature development discourse. The National Ecological Network (NEN) became the *symbol* of the nature development discourse. The nature development discourse became institutionalised with the launch of the Nature Policy Plan (1990) that gave officially birth to the NEN. Prior to the plan's publication, the nature development discourse could already be identified in the ways nature and the relationships between humans and nature were conceptualized. Section 4.2. will address this structuration of the nature development discourse and how it was accompanied with several fields of opening. Section 4.2. concludes like 4.1. with a presentation of the discursive elements of the nature development discourse.

4.2.1. Fields of opening: The forest storms, environmental pollution and ecosystem theory

From the 70's nature saw different conceptualisations due to several fields of openings in the forestry and agricultural sector together with the development of new structuring theoretical understandings in ecology. In 1972 and 1973, two storms caused substantial damage in the Dutch forest, which was considered a catastrophe. The forest storms triggered a discussion around the common practice of coniferous mono-culture in the forestry sector. According to some critical actors mono-cultures furthered the vulnerability and instability of forests for insect plagues, fires and storms. These actors favoured a different, more mixed and natural composition of the forest, without the exotic coniferous trees. The forest was to be conceived as a complete ecosystem with on-going natural processes. Accordingly, such a natural forest would be more persistent and stable in its being, with a lower vulnerability and on top of that harbour more species variety. (Van der Windt, 1995) The forest storms functioned as a *dystopian myth*: people were seeking for a solution in order to avoid a similar future situation. The answer was provided by ecosystem theory and the articulatory practice that complete ecosystems were robust, stable and lowered the vulnerability of forests (Van der Windt, 1995). What also facilitated the influence of the articulatory practices, was that by that time, the forestry sector found itself in a harsh economic position, and this gave room to other articulations. Apart from the forest storms, another development reinforced the importance of the articulatory practices of ecosystem theory in the nature development discourse. Certain environmental tragedies, e.g. collapses of birds of prey, occurred due to the increased use of chemical pollutants in agriculture in the 1970s (Van der Windt, 1995). Both events, i.e. forests storms and collapses of bird of prey, attracted attention to the interactive relation between the abiotic and biotic environment, and strengthened the conceptualisation of nature and nature protection as interconnected abiotic and biotic elements and processes in a circular course, in which the ecosystem concept could give berth (van der Windt, 1995). This conceptualisation also implied that the conserving strategy of nature in monuments by the nature conservation discourse was not enough. The critics criticized nature conservation on its static monumental management and dependence on human use. Within the view of the critics, also known as the wilderness movement (Turnhout, 2003), nature protectionists were scornfully considered as gardeners and glorified farmers (Van der Windt, 1995) "conserving living communities that were dependent upon human interference"(van Veen, 1975:13). Hence, the term monument, which was the central symbol of the nature conservation discourse, received a negative connotation in the language of the wilderness movement.

According to the wilderness movement, nature protection and management should not focus on the static situation of succession stadia, but on safeguarding and creating the appropriate conditions for natural processes to go their own way (Van der Windt, 1995). Nature had to be conceived as an ecosystem, a complete system of different trophic levels – producers, consumers and reducers – that would self-regulate without any human influence. The assumption was that a '*complete ecosystem*' would be stable and could harbour more species variety, thus protect a lot of natural values (Van der Windt, 1995). This articulatory practice connected to the overall aim of nature protection, i.e. to protect as many plant and animal species as possible (Van der Windt, 1995). In other words, the articulation had a structuring effect as it was successful in conceptualising thoughts and actions around nature protection. Subsequently, nature started to be conceived increasingly as an interrelated (a)biotic system of trophic levels: producers, consumers and reducers (Van der Windt, 1995). Another complementing, and attractive articulation by the wilderness movement was that natural processes had been doing their job already for millions of years for free (Van de Veen, 1975:44). 'Natural management', which is restoration of natural processes to obtain complete ecosystems , would be more cost effective than 'classical' nature management which depends on continuous human intervention, or the by then economically inefficient forestry sector (van der Windt, 1995). This articulation reinforced the influence of the nature development discourse and opened up opportunities for economic development as exemplified by the emergence of a discourse coalition consisting of nature policy makers, nature organisations, and the building industry (see section 4.2.6).

The ecosystem theory weakened the position of plant sociology as more emphasis was given to the functional role of species in an ecosystem, than to the specific species composition of plant communities (van der Windt, 1995). The group of species fulfilling the same role and function became more important, enabling to substitute for a disappeared species (Van der Windt, 1995). Harm van de Veen (1975), used the term ecosystem in his ground-breaking work '*De Veluwe, Natuurlijk?*'. Harm van de Veen was part of the critical group *'Landelijke Werkgroep Kritisch Bosbeheer'* that advocated for a more natural approach to protect nature and forests instead of the conservative approach of "*monument management aimed to conserve cultural historical elements dependent upon human interference*" (Van de Veen, 1975: 13). According to van de Veen (1975:53) "*safeguarding a scenic landscape is but a poor substitute for maintaining complete ecosystems in their proper state*". Van de Veen (1975:53) argues that "*by gradually reducing disturbing human interference in natural processes, their natural potential can be developed to such an extent that a self-regulatory and in essence complete terrestrial ecosystem can be restored*". As an ecosystem is about the presence of natural processes and the relations and connections between different trophic levels, van de Veen (1975) proposed to reintroduce certain species that could fulfil certain functions in the terrestrial ecosystem at the Veluwe, allowing natural processes to go their own way: "[*V*]ital to this restoration into an intact terrestrial ecosystem will be the reintroduction of the wolf, while the level of secondary production can be strongly enhanced by the reintroduction of the European bison*" (53). The notions of self-regulation and natural processes came together in the concept of ecosystem. In this view, obstacles such as fences had to be removed so that natural processes could go their own way, unhindered by any defragmentation. Also the forest should be able to renew itself naturally, and evolutionary processes should go their way. Dead wood should therefore not be removed, as it functions as a nutritious source for reducers, being a vital part of a complete, undisturbed ecosystem. (van de Veen, 1975) Animal and plant species have a functional role in the entire system, the ecosystem concept is in that sense used in "a very instrumental way, as a kind of blue print" (Van de Windt, 1995: 188).

With the emergence of ecosystem theory as structuring principle, nature became conceptualised as an ecosystem which, in order to function well, needed to be complete as possible, including representatives of the different trophic levels, the necessary relations between biotic and a-biotic elements, and uninterrupted natural processes. Ecosystem theory thus can be regarded as one of the *structuring principles* of the nature development discourse. The articulation in this case can be read as follows: with a complete ecosystem, more species variety can be secured, the system will be more robust and the management will be more cost effective. The above ideas and articulations were structuring thoughts and ideas around nature.

On a small scale Natuurmonumenten, Staatsbosbeheer, and other land owners started to practice certain forms of natural management, such as leaving dead wood in selected part of the forests or managing a natural system in a specific area with the grazing of specific herbivores (van der Windt, 1995). Also an increase in the area with natural forest management was aimed for in the policy programme '*Meerjaren-plan Bosbouw* (1984). The need for more natural management was thus recognised as nature organisations started with several wilderness and grazing experiments. However, nature organisations did not fully implement (yet) the natural management views in their policy goals, but elements were added to the existing goals for classic nature conservation (van der Windt, 1995). The nature development discourse was in need of a *constitutive myth* for a discursive shift to take place. The creation of the Oostvaardersplassen facilitated this discursive change, especially amongst policy makers that reinforced the nature development discourse and enhanced its policy adoption (Hajer, 2003). Section 4.2.2. will address this topic in further detail.

4.2.2. Background Document to Nature Policy Plan and the Oostvaardersplassen

The Nature Policy Plan, created in 1990, was amongst others based on the background document called '*Nature Development*' written by Frans Baerselman and Frans Vera. An important element of the background document on nature development was the proposal for the establishment of an ecological infrastructure in the Netherlands. Frans Vera is often mentioned as one of the founding fathers of the idea of nature development (Windt, 1995, Hajer, *interview*, Jansen, *interview*, Keulartz, *interview*) and is identified as the *hero* of the nature development discourse. Both Frans Vera and Frans Baerselman were schooled in animal geography and ecosystem ecology, had strategic positions at the Ministry of LNV and in line with Harm van de Veen advocated a more pro-active approach to nature conservation. This pro-active approach materialized in the National Ecological Network; a network of interconnected areas that were to be 'given back to nature' (Van der Windt, 1995, Hajer, 2003). Frans Vera mobilised the Oostvaardersplassen as a showcase for nature development (van der Windt, 1995; Vera, 1988, Vera and Baerselman, 1989) pointing to the unique ecological value of the area and the natural occurrence of ecosystem processes without any human influence: "*The Oostvaardersplassen became what they are because never any form of human use was present*" (Vera, 1988: 11). The creation of the Oostvaardersplassen had a paradigmatic influence on the new ecological ideas on nature (Van der Windt, 1995), or as Hajer puts it: it functioned as *a constitutive myth* which facilitated the structuration and institutionalisation of the nature development discourse (Hajer, 2003). As stated in the Background document 'Nature Development' (Vera and Baerselmans, 1989; 1995) the '*Oostvaardersplassen*' is "*the best known example on an international scale of the development of a large (new) wildlife area…where the development towards a complete ecosystem demonstrate that mother nature can manage on her own – certainly in large areas with less human management than was though possible until recently*"(Vera and Baerselmans, 1995: 8-9). The story of the 'Oostvaardersplassen' became a powerful *constitutive myth* to the nature development discourse. The endlessly reiterated story of this particular area demonstrated that nature was able to regenerate itself and caused for a discursive shift, especially under policy makers as it is actually possible to *create* nature which meant that one does not need to restrict oneself to conserving 'what is left' of nature (Hajer 2003; Van der Windt, 1995). This recognition opened up plenty of possibilities for *developing* suitable conditions to let nature *develop* by itself through natural processes in order to protect as many natural values as possible. The *constitutive myth* of the 'Oostvaardersplassen' thus functioned as *a field of opening* for the nature development discourse to structure thoughts and ideas on nature further and to gain in influence.

Apart from the constitutive myth of the 'Oostvaardersplassen', the structuration of the nature development discourse was facilitated by another *dystopian myth* that addressed the accelerated decline in biodiversity and the miserable state of nature worldwide, despite previous policy efforts. The Nature Policy Plan (1990) acknowledges this concern:

"*The area of high ecological value and natural elements is still declining, new barriers contribute to the fragmentation of the habitats which endangers their continued existence, the increasing impact of pollutants on areas of high ecological value via water, soil and air is a great matter of concern, these influences pose a threat to areas of high ecological value and the natural environment in general. Also the landscape is subject to deterioration. It is becoming more uniform. The main cause is the great change in land use and the effects of this on the landscape.*" (LNV, 1990).

The urgency of the dystopia was felt worldwide, as is shown by the signing of the convention on biological diversity (1992) and the widespread support of the notion of 'sustainable development' after the declaration of Rio at the Earth Summit (1992). In the Netherlands, this urgency was made visible through the articulatory practices of the nature development discourse around the vanishing otter. The disappearance of the otter from the Netherlands came to represent the wider problem of the decline in biodiversity and the problem around nature conservation (Hajer, 2003). It became a *dystopian myth* within the nature development discourse. Accordingly, the solution of how the otter (and the rest of biodiversity) could be saved was offered by the *constitutive myth* of the Oostvaardersplassen: as nature was able to regenerate itself, human kind could facilitate this development of nature, by developing the appropriate conditions, and hence it would be possible to halt the decelerating trend in nature. An example is the way how the role of ecological corridors was articulated: the corridors had to make way for the otter to re-inhabit the Netherlands! The *constitutive myth* of the Oostvaarderplassen fitted well with the ideas of the wilderness movement presented in 4.2.1., particularly the ideas on ecosystem, completeness and natural processes. Within the Background document, the Oostvaardersplassen was presented as an area that was developing "*more and more as a <u>coherent whole</u>: an <u>ecosystem</u>. The more <u>complete</u> an ecosystem, the <u>less human influence</u> is needed in the form of management to let the plant and animal species flourish*" (Vera, 1988: 12). The ecosystem theory and wilderness elements are coming back in this background document, as it is proposed that "*an attempt must be made to develop <u>ecosystems</u> based as far as possible on <u>natural processes</u>".* In addition to ecosystem, completeness and natural processes, two other elements were introduced to the nature development discourse based on the theory of island biography (Mc Arthur and Wilson, 1967) and the metapopulation theory (Hanski and Gilpin, 1997): connectivity and robustness. Connected and robust areas were seen important for natural processes to run properly in order for ecosystems to function completely. The fragmentary landscape in the Netherlands was therefore conceived as problematic, and the notion of connectivity started to play a structuring role in the nature development discourse. Island theory states that the total species diversity on an island depends on the distance to the source area and the size of the island. The larger the island, and the closer to the source area, a higher species diversity is foreseen. Metapopulation theory states that the genetic diversity of a species is higher when it has chance to migrate from one subpopulation to the other. Thus, ecological corridors are seen as an important contributor for the survival of the metapopulation (Opdam & Wasscher, 2003) as they enable migration that can stop processes of population decline and sustain interaction between species. Inspired by these theoretical insights, the Dutch nature areas were conceptualised as (small) islands in a sea of cultivated landscape (Vera and Baerselman, 1989, LNV, 1990) which was perceived as threatening the survival of species. Therefore nature areas had to expanded (create bigger islands) and connected (through ecological corridors). These ecological ideas came back in the Background Document '*Nature Development*', which advocated that a spatial structure was required with "*a certain amount of robustness on the outside, to be able to withstand external influences...for preserving more vulnerable elements on the 'inside'* (Vera and Baerselman, 1989,1995:42). Within this structure "*<u>distribution processes</u> in and between wildlife areas are allowed to proceed as much as possible without being disturbed*" (Vera and Baerselman, 1989, 1995: 40). Hence, this sentence refers to natural processes, self-regulation, connectivity and no human interference, which resembles with ideas of the wilderness movement. The Background Document proposes a further spatial segregation between functions: "*if <u>functions</u> are <u>drastically segregated</u>, it becomes possible in a number of core areas to develop ecosystems that are as complete and self-regulating as possible with the ecological reference for that particular area*" (Vera and Baerselman, 1989, 1995: 42). Similarly to the nature conservation discourse, agricultural land use, and other economic activities were perceived as a

threat to nature, and had to be separated even further. According to Van der Windt (1995), the aversion against the integration of nature and other functions is even more outspoken in the draft nota (1987) than the background document. This spatial segregation of functions in the landscape can also be traced back in the launched 'casco'-concept in the Nota Landscape (Balduk et al. 2002; Keulartz, 1997), in which a distinction is made between low and high dynamism functions. Low dynamism functions mainly concern ecological processes, which require a stable environment for sustainable development, whereas high dynamism functions relate primarily to economic processes, which require a high degree of flexibility. In essence, the casco concept prescribes the spatial segregation of two functions: the low dynamism functions are to be clustered in a landscape framework: the National Ecological Network and the high dynamism functions are to be clustered in the 'utility-space'. In order to prevent the fast-turning wheel of economy from one day crushing the slow-turning wheel of ecology, the Dutch landscape is to be converted into a 'two-speed landscape' (Keulartz, 1999). In that sense the Nota Landscape (1992) resembles the Nature Policy Plan (1990) as observed by Balduk et al. (2002).

Figure 5 Visualisation of the NEN (Cahiers Bio Wetenschappen, 1992, no.15)

Accordingly, nature had to be protected from any form of human use. Though, in order to achieve a natural development, humans were perceived able to offer a helping hand: "*by creating the appropriate conditions and introducing species, such as oxen, red deer, eland and the horse, that can execute management tasks in a natural way"(*Vera, 1988: 12). The type of nature that was foreseen was based on an 'ecological reference'. This reference was a construction of nature, including its natural processes and was based on pre-historical data from a particular space in time that was considered devoid of any human influence (Windt, 1995; Keulartz, 1997,1999): "*The reference is not 'precisely' placed in time but gives an indication of how nature in the Netherlands might be under the present climatological and biogeographical conditions, if ecosystems were not affected by all kinds of cultivation measures*"(Vera and Baerselman, 1989 1995: 23).

In short, "[c]onditions will have to be created once more to ensure that the ecosystem concerned develops as naturally and completely as possible."(Vera and Baerselman, 1989, 1995:40)

The background document advised to implement the three main principles of the nature development discourse - the idea of complete ecosystems with undisturbed natural processes, the spatial structure to ensure connectivity of ecosystems and the notion of the ecological reference - in the 1990 Nature Policy Plan. They envisioned a type of network: "the network is built up of (and between) the different ecosystems that emerge from the ecological reference" and "the structure must be spatially 'stable' to a considerable extent in order to give a variety of natural developments the space and the time they require"(Baerselman and Vera, 1989, 1995: 43).

The ideas about nature development of the wilderness movement have been very influential during the structuration of the nature development discourse. However, as we will see in the next section, it transformed during its institutionalisation because it had to connect with policy administration and form discourse coalitions with other sectors.

4.2.3. The launch of the Nature Policy Plan

With the launch of the Nature Policy Plan, the nature development discourse institutionalised and reached hegemony in the nature policy domain. Theoretical notions and ecological ideas as regards nature development were translated into concrete policies and institutional arrangements (Hajer, 1997). Elements of the nature development discourse, i.e. self-regulation, completeness, intactness and ecosystems, were given a prominent place in the Nature Policy Plan,: "central to this view are self-regulation, naturalness of processes and completeness of ecosystems and communities. Natural values are in this view independent of cultural values and are related to an evolutionary frame of reference, minimization of human influence is seen as conditional for the maximization of natural values" (LNV, 1990). The nature policy domain became again 'ecologised' the first time was through plant sociology, this time it was with the structuring principles of ecosystem theory and consequently led to an influx of ecologists (Van der Windt, 1995). Subsequently, the language used by nature conservationists, policy makers, land architects and planners became imbued with ecological concepts. Ecological notions were structuring the conceptualisation of nature, how it was seen, presented, thought of and how it was enacted upon (Van der Windt, 1995). In that sense ecology defined the boundaries of the nature development discourse, and excluded perceptions from aesthetics, cultural history and art (Keulartz, 1999 Barto Piersma, interview, Maarten Hajer, interview). The interlinkages between research and policymaking were very important in the structuration and institutionalisation of the nature development discourse. Ecologists can be seen as effective coproducers of the policy vocabulary of nature development and the national ecological network (Hajer, 2003, Van der Windt, 1995). According to Hajer (2003) "this direct link between science and policy facilitated a swift discourse institutionalisation" (:108). The Nature Policy Plan is characterised by a dominance of ecological science (Turnhout, 2003). The proposed spatial structure from

Figure 6 Visualisation of the NEN with ecological corridors (black arrows) (LNV, 1990)

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the Background Document 'Nature Development' was adopted, known as the National Ecological Network (fig. 6): *"Of primary importance in the Nature Policy Plan is the realization of a national ecological network. The National Ecological Network is a coherent network of core areas, nature development areas and ecological corridors"* with *"a buffer policy aimed at removing or minimizing negative external influences on the core areas"* (LNV, 1990, Oostenbrugge et al., 2011:159). The NEN became the backbone of Nature Policy.

The widespread political support for the notion of 'sustainable development' including the ratification of the convention on biological diversity in 1992 served as a stimulating environment for the nature development discourse to consolidate and solidify in the policy domain (Hajer, 2003; LNV, 1990). In that sense, this contextual environment functioned as *fields of opening*. The Nature Policy Plan explicitly states that the reason to publish the Nature Policy Plan was because "[*t*]*he sustainability of ecological and landscape values is not ensured"* and that *"the decline in the populations of plans and animals is still continuing in spite of the policy efforts in the past years"*. In these quotes, the *dystopian myth* of biodiversity decline can be recognised. The Nature Policy Plan dedicates a separate chapter (chapter 2) to outlining the deteriorating state of nature in the Netherlands and worldwide. The main objective of the Nature Policy Plan is therefore *"the sustainable development and sustainable restoration of ecological and landscape value*s (LNV, 1990). As stated in chapter 5 'Policy Mainlines' (LNV, 1990:78) *"sustainability is best assured if nature policy focuses on the concentration of several significant ecosystems in a spatially robust and interconnected ecological main structure"*.

4.2.4. The National Ecological Network as symbol

Within the nature development discourse nature was articulated as: 'the best way to take care of nature is by creating a network of nature' (Hajer, 2003). 'Network' is a metaphor that helped to reduce discursive complexity and convey understanding among people.

"Who talked of nature before in terms of a network? It is a concept from the energy and transport sector. A successful policy strategy was transported from the hard, steal world to nature, everyone immediately recognises this idea, so in that sense it is a metaphor."(Hajer, *interview*).

The term 'network' could function as a metaphor in the nature development discourse because of the underlying theories: island and metapopulation theory. Asking about the essence of the NEN in the Nature Policy Plan, most helicopter interviewees referred to the island theory, the necessity of migration and connectivity:

"The line of thought can be traced back to the island theory. If small islands are not connected, than you get only a development on the island and not in between. As especially in Western circumstances nature areas are isolated, the argumentation was that one had to connect them. One of the concrete examples was the Plan Ooijevaar, which aimed to connect the river forelands." (Chris Kalden, interview).

"Yes, of course you need these corridors. Since there is less space for nature, you need to have them. As nature areas get smaller, then connections become more important" (Keulartz, interview).

"In the 1970s – 80s there was a discussion about a national approach for nature. Ecologists in particular elaborated on this national approach with the idea of stepping stones, how to connect nature areas, how to safeguard nature with ecology, where one thinks in structures and not in locations. These ideas were laid down in the Nature Policy Plan as the NEN" (Jansen, interview).

The island, metapopulation and ecosystem theories laid the foundational basis for 'connectivity' and 'network' to become structuring principles in the nature development discourse. Within the nature development discourse the term 'network' has an epistemic quality (Hajer, 2003). As explained in chapter 2, an epistemic quality refers to a regularity in the thinking of a certain period, structuring the understanding of reality without actors being necessarily aware of it. Network has such an epistemic quality as it triggered

the move from nature conservation to nature development: nature policy became a matter of creating a network by linking the isolated islands of nature through ecological corridors, so that species could once again migrate and nature could restore itself so natural processes could run as completely as possible. As comes back in the Nature Policy Plan: "*The national ecological network is a coherent network of areas which will form a durable basis for the ecosystems and species considered important.*" (LNV, 1990). Thus, the National Ecological Network can be regarded as the central symbol of the nature development discourse.

4.2.5. Network stimulating spatial segregation and demarcation practice

According to the nature development discourse, the NEN (fig 6) had to protect nature from external influences in order to let nature flourish again. For that purpose, '*new nature'* had to be produced, the so-called nature development areas, ecological corridors had to be established and a buffer policy was necessary to remove or to minimize negative external influences:

"*The nature development areas are spatially related to the core areas of the NEN, which can be developed to nature core areas. The development of the natural development areas brings, inter alia, a network of wetlands of high ecological value within reach. The ecological corridors are areas or structures enabling the distribution, migration and exchange of species between the various core areas. The buffer policy aims to create structural sustainable conditions outside the NEN in order to conserve or develop the desired nature values inside the NEN*" (LNV, 1990: 84, 87, 88).

In order to achieve the above goals, additional agricultural land had to be bought and restyled to become nature. As articulated by Frank Berendse in Hoog (2012) "*the original ecological network has largely disappeared due to roads, cities and agriculture. There are many isolated populations which are at the long term doomed to death. Only if you restore the network, by for instance buying of agricultural lands, one can restore again. It means if you are not quick enough with the implementation of the NEN, there is a chance that species meanwhile will disappear*". This quote is a typically articulation of the nature development discourse, it holds *the dystopian myth* of species disappearing and uses the *constitutive myth* of the Oostvaardersplassen to underpin the belief in the possibility to create new nature. Although different threats to nature are mentioned in the quote, i.e. cities, roads and agriculture, only agriculture is mentioned as a solution to extending and restoring the network.

In order to realize the NEN, a considerable amount of space (7285000 ha) is claimed in the Nature Policy Plan (LNV, 1990, 2007, Keulartz, 2009) with 275000 hectares of envisioned new nature. The 275000 hectares consist of 130.000 hectares of new nature that needs to be purchased. After restoration and construction these areas need to be managed by nature organisations. The other 140.000 acres is divided in agricultural management by farmers (110.000) and private nature management (43.000 acres) (LNV, 2007, MNP, 2007).

The realization of the NEN would be supported with several policy instruments as is mentioned in the Nature Policy Plan:

- Systematic application of the Nature Conservancy Act in existing areas of high ecological value in the National Ecological Network
- Completion of the ecological network by means of the acquisition of areas of high ecological value, forests and land estates (40 000 ha)
- Acquisition of land for nature development (50 000 ha)
- Expansion of the environmental sensitive areas by another 100 000h ha (present area is 100 000 ha)
- Expansion of the area covered by the Regulation on farmers in hilly and mountainous areas
- Further realization of a system of National Parks in the large areas of high

ecological value in the National Ecological Network

As one can see from the list above, most policy instruments implied a further acquisition of land with the aim to be added to the NEN. Apart from areas with high ecological value, land for nature development and land for the expansion of environmental sensitive areas needed to be acquired. The NEN thus implied a further acquisition of agricultural land to be converted into nature compared to the Green Policy Documents. The spatial claim of the nature development discourse is therefore larger than the nature conservation discourse. This of course has to do with the fundamental difference between the two discourses: within the nature development discourse it is actually possible to create '*new nature'*, which accordingly increases the demand for land.

The sketch of the NEN at the map of the Netherlands is an evident practice of demarcation; separating agriculture and nature spatially. The map can be seen as a materialisation of the discourse's hegemony in the nature policy domain. In words of Laclau and Mouffe, the nature development discourse materialized at the moment the NEN was drawn on the map. This demarcation practice had a stabilising function to the nature development discourse, as it could steer future actions and practices on nature protection. According to a former civil servant of LNV, the map was necessary because it made the ideas concrete and accordingly served as a convincing tool to the minister: "*A vague concept was made concrete with a map, and that map was shown to the minister and he said "yes, we are going to do this"*. (Turnhout, 2009: 61). The map made clear which areas to purchase for nature protection, and was very much based on the casco-idea on landscape and segregation of functions:

"*In the past the reasoning was based on a kind of separation between nature areas which were developed technologically and optimal agrarian development"* (Heijkoop, interview)

"*The NEN is based on administrative segregation. In specific areas nature can go its own way, and outside all the other functions have priority. It is a concept designed by experts and an authoritarian system, about which no decent debate has taken place "* (Van der Ploeg, 2011, Groene Golflengte)

Although the map served to stabilize the nature development discourse, several studies reveal (Hajer, 2003; Keulartz, 1999, 2005; Turnhout 2003) that this demarcation practice, together with a technocratic implementation (4.2.7.) stimulated numerous forms of protests at local level. The nature development discourse had to domesticate these protests into the discourse in order to keep its dominance and hegemonic position. This domestication succeeded with another policy initiative (see section: 4.2.8). First, the attractiveness of the nature development discourse is discussed in 4.2.5. what resulted in strong discourse coalitions and stability in the policy domain.

4.2.6. Ambivalence and Discourse Coalition

One of the *structuring principles* of the nature development discourse as we have seen segregation. The aim is to shield nature from human interference, so that it can go its own way. Yet achieving this in the existing situation in the Netherlands requires large-scale human intervention, and this is one of the ambivalent characteristics of the nature development discourse. Ambiguity and ambivalence allow for multi-interpretability and are important characteristics of dominant discourses (Van der Windt, 1995, Turnhout, 2005, 2009, Hajer, 1997). The attractiveness and political power of nature development can be assigned to its multi-interpretability (Hajer, 1997, *interview*). Nature development can be interpreted as both *genitivus subjectivus* and *genitivus objectivus* (Keulartz, 1999). On the one hand, nature development is about nature as supreme *subject* – primeval nature – that needs protection, on the other hand as a manipulable *object* that can be developed, that is engineered nature. Precisely, this ambivalence gave the nature development discourse its strength and political power and has allowed it to become a dominant discourse able to connect a wide diversity of social actors with diverging and often conflicting interests (Keulartz, 1999; Hajer, 1997; 2003). The nature development discourse allowed nature to be steered in a

certain desired direction. Although in general the attitude of the wilderness movement towards human interference was negative, a certain kind of human interference in the case of nature development was considered acceptable. In order to achieve the favourable starting conditions for nature development, active human practices such as removing of top soil, raising of water tables and re-introducing of large herbivores were conceived acceptable. These practices contained various technocratic, mechanistic and instrumental elements (Turnhout, 2003, Keulartz, 1999) as can be recognized for instance with the comparison of large herbivores being mowing machines that were able to steer nature in the right direction with adjustable grazing pressures (see for instance Vera and Baerselman, 1989, 1995). This steering aspect of the nature development discourse was specified in further policy development with the creation of the Nature Target Types Framework (see section 4.2.7.). The nature development discourse thus allowed for multiple interpretations and another articulation was created: 'in order to achieve 'pristine nature' (wilderness view), several human practices were conceived necessary (technocratic elements)'. This latter articulation combined technocratic and wilderness elements and subsequently offered room for a discourse coalition between nature protection and economic development. The above discussed ambiguities triggered the emergence of a discourse coalition between policy makers, scientists, and economic actors.

The technocratic aspect of nature development turned out to be attractive for new economic actors. Since the beginning of its structuration, the nature development discourse has articulated nature development as a cost-effective strategy because natural processes have been running already for millions of years for free. Consequently, creating a large nature network with good natural processes would mean a downsizing and cost reduction in nature conservation management. Apart from the articulation that nature development is cost-effective, the practice of creating '*new nature'* became attractive for economic development. During the creation of the nature development areas in the NEN, an alliance was settled between nature protection and the building industry (Hajer, 2003). The activity of digging up gravel and clay was considered as an act of creating new nature. As a sign at the '*Millingerwaard'*, a nature development area demonstrates: '*Every dumper that leaves the area helps to create more nature'*. Thus, economic development was helping nature development and vice versa. As argued by Hajer (2003) the act of linking a 'weak' policy field, like nature, to a 'strong' one, like building, was seen as a major impulse for the nature policy programme and for nature development to take off. The same can be argued for the building industry that faced several image problems, like for instance in Limburg, where the community was fed up with the numerous craters digged and destroying their typical landscape (Peters and Kurtsjens, 2006). Thus, connecting the building industry with nature protection did not only entail the access to various essential resources, it also improved the image of the building industry as they were contributing to something good, i.e. nature development. As nature can be created establishing favourable starting conditions, it became also in vogue to talk about '*green compensation'* for investments in more traditional infrastructure elsewhere (Hajer, 2003). Especially, after Natura2000 (discussed later in this chapter) it became obligatory to compensate for nature loss with large infrastructural projects. An example is the Maasvlakte 2, which is an industrial area situated near the port of Rotterdam in a protected nature reserve. As stated on the website of Maasvlakte2[21]*: "The transformation of 2,000 ha of seabed into a new port and industrial area will obviously have consequences for the plants and animals living in this area. Lost nature areas will be compensated for through the establishment of a sea bed protection area and the construction of a new dune area near Delfland".* The practice of nature compensation hinged on the idea of the possibility to pro-actively create 'new nature' somewhere else as nature is able to regenerate itself with the creation of favourable conditions. Thus, the practice of nature development was not only attractive to economic development (resources for the building industry), it was also possible to continue with economic activities while moving nature to other places. In short, the discourse coalition of nature protection with the building industry was based upon the idea that nature development could go hand in hand with economic development as it provided essential resources, it was cost-effective in nature management with good running natural pro-

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[21] http://www.maasvlakte2.com/nl/index/ (seen 2012)

cesses and it would not be a barrier for economic development as nature could be created elsewhere. This opened up lot of opportunities and possibilities! The nature development discourse coalition thus linked two previously unconnected and often conflicting policy domains: nature protection and economic development (Hajer, 2003). The ambivalent interpretation of nature development reconciled this latent tension between economic development and nature protection, and hence nature development could function as a binding concept.

4.2.7. The NEN supported by agricultural representatives

Within the nature development discourse agriculture functioned as the constitutive outside, and the NEN can be conceived as a form of boundary work to agriculture. As shown in 4.2.1. agriculture was positioned as a significant polluter using pesticides and contaminating the environment in the 1970s (Van der Windt, 1995). Common environmental problems were eutrophication, nitrification, acidification and desiccation. These environmental problems are also mentioned in the Nature Policy Plan as the main problems for nature protection. Accordingly, the NEN had to become the buffer to shield nature from these particular problems. The spatial segregation and the casco-concept were thus seen as a solution to protect nature. By means of the NEN, nature is demarcated from agriculture, as it excludes especially intensive forms of agriculture. This form of demarcation was accepted by political representatives of agriculture, LTO, as "*the NEN was seen as an important national macro deal that implied that the NEN would be destined for nature, and that the rest would keep its agricultural destinatio*n" (Heijkoop, interview). In that sense, the spatial segregation inherent in the nature development discourse was supported by the political representatives of the agricultural sector. This political support thus reinforced the dominance of the nature development discourse in the nature policy domain. Also from the interview with Jan Heijkoop it becomes clear that the NEN was seen as a deal that would give clarity to the agricultural sector at which places there would be space for agricultural development and that by accepting the NEN a furthering of the spatial claim of nature protection on agriculture would be halted. Apart from the political support for the spatial segregation, it was negotiated that the conversion of agricultural land to nature would be based on voluntarism, with the underlying thought that in this way only marginal agricultural lands would be purchased. Those marginal agricultural lands were from an economic and agricultural perspective not useful for several reasons, e.g. small spatial size, bad geographical structure like soil quality or high moisture level. For nature purposes those marginal agricultural lands could potentially be of high nature value, and so were attractive for nature purposes. In this context both constitutive outsides reinforced each other. Thus, on a political level, the agricultural sector accepted the exclusionary practices by the NEN, anticipating that outside the NEN agricultural development could intensify and that only marginal agricultural lands would be purchased. For both discourses this was a field of opening as the nature development discourse was in need of more land, while the agro-industrial discourse needed the disposal of marginal agricultural lands and a boost in agricultural restructuration. The aforementioned thoughts and considerations connected the agro-industrial discourse with the nature development discourse. As a consequence, this reinforced the dominance of the nature development discourse in the nature policy domain. At the same time, however, there was a mismatch between the political level of agriculture and farmers at local levels (see section 4.2.9) which meant that social demands and identities were created that were unsatisfied with both the agro-industrial and nature development discourse. In particular during the technocratic implementation, social demands and sources of discontent were created.

4.2.8. Technocracy and Makeability: Nature Target Types Framework

The nature development discourse was attractive for policy makers as it held the promise to actively protect nature by creating new nature. In order to connect with the policy domain, the nature development discourse had to unite with policy vocabulary and take into account the needs and concerns of policymakers (Hajer, 2003). The nature development discourse could get a prominent place in the policy domain, by incorporating controllable and manageable elements in the discourse, catering for the wish of policy mak-

ers to monitor the effectiveness of policy interventions (Turnhout, 2003). From the beginning the spatial approach of the NEN was very appealing to the necessity of policy officials to control, monitor and evaluate (Van der Windt, 1995; Turnhout, 2003; Hajer, 2003): "*You could say: it has to be 700.000 acres, and that you could continuously monitor in order to evaluate the realization. In that sense it is something totally different than a vague spatial quality. It is very measurable and for the Chamber very controllable*." (Hajer, interview). The quantitative objective justified the purchasing of additional agricultural land, which subsequently had to be converted into a certain standard of nature quality. However, the spatial approach did not entail a qualitative control or monitoring system. This lack became evident in a mid-term review of the NEN (1994) that concluded that Nature Policy Plan was in need of more concrete policy goals regard nature quality, complementing the quantitative objective. The policy document '*Dynamics and Innovation'* (1995) emphasised a direction of more output steering in nature management (LNV, 1995, Turnhout, 2003). For output steering to be possible, nature had to be classified, defined and divided into identifiable and measurable units. The nature development discourse became more technocratic with the development of the Nature Target Types (NDTs '*natuurdoeltypen'*) in the Handbook of Nature Target Types (1995) by the Ministry of LNV. Apart from the need to control progress in nature policy and to set a certain standard for nature quality, the international discussions on biodiversity protection had a large influence on the way the nature target types were developed (de Boer et al., 2008). The Handbook presented a framework of 132 NDTs, with each NDT standing for a supposedly homogenous unit of nature, more or less identifiable in the field. Each NDT was composed of two criteria: 1. the dominant vegetation cover and/or abiotic components and 2. the species belonging to the vegetation cover, the so-called target species. This latter category functioned as the 'measurable' component of the NDT and determined whether or not the nature target type could be considered to be realised (Turnhout, 2003). Due to the specific selection criteria of international importance, abundance and rarity, target species resulted in the selection of relatively rare species, instead of species characteristic for the NDT (Turnhout, 2003). This implied that the focus on makeability, combined with a technocratic approach to nature also aligned with and was reinforced by the international biodiversity discourse on species protection (de Boer et al., 2008). The NEN came to exist of several NDTs: *"[t]he NEN is a network of nature areas….and everywhere in the NEN nature target types with target species will be realised*" (IKC, 1993: 39) Accordingly, nature was reduced to specific target species and processes that assume manageability (Windt, 1995). Or as Jos Jansen mentioned during the helicopter interview: "*the primary and sole objective became to realize the nature target types*". The different NDTs were divided into four groups based on the amount of nature management necessary to realise the NDT. Here once again the technocratic aspect of the nature development discourse can be recognized. Two groups were based more or less on the wilderness view of natural processes, the other two groups required more specific management, while steering nature into a right direction. Both types of groups require a certain degree of human interference and are based on the idea of manageability of nature.

With the development of the Nature Target Types Framework the aspects of technocracy and manageability became more prominent in the nature development discourse. The nature target types were rolled out over the NEN as blue prints prescribing the kind of nature intended after constructing (*inrichting*) activities (Van der Windt, 1995). In other words, nature was placed in a technical jargon, co-produced by ecologists employed at the Ministry. In that sense "*[e]cologists did not merely act as scientists, they were effectively çoproducers' of policy"*(Hajer, 2003: 108). Hence, nature development came to be understood in terms of the realization of nature target types that was facilitated by technical measures aimed at creating the suitable starting conditions for nature to develop. As the nature development discourse had to connect with policy and bureaucracy, the elements of technocracy and manageability became more prominent characters of the nature development discourse. These elements fed into the economic discourse coalition, were economic practices offered the tools of 'makeability' to nature development. Initially, the nature target types were meant as a tool that would help control and assess the progress of the realization of the NEN. However, over time the nature target types became a goal in themselves as Chris Kalden, director of Staatsbosbeheer recently recalled: "*The nature target types were meant as an instrument for the NEN, but*

for biologists and ecologists these target types became an almost divine ambition. All and everyone had to make way for it." (Kalden, 2011, Groene Golflengte). Nature Target Types functioned as an anchor to the practice of nature development as through the realization of nature target types the progress on nature protection was shown. So the articulation turned into: 'in order to protect nature, nature target types have to be realized'. In short, Nature Target Types became synonym for nature quality, and subsequently excluded alternative ways to protect nature. The dominance of the nature targets in the nature development discourse also became evident when an PBL-official mentioned that he was worried about what the downsizing in nature policy would mean for the quality of the nature target types. The divine ambition of the nature development discourse to realize nature target types as mentioned by Chris Kalden was technocratic in character, and detached from local knowledge and specific situations, hindering any flexibility or room for alternatives (see fig 7 for anecdotes).

Figure 8 Examples of a technocratic way to make nature (own picture)

> **Mismatch technocracy and local situation**
>
> Anecdote Wim Dijkman, ecologist at CLM: '*Once I talked with an official from Natuurmonumenten. They were managing the project 'Room for the River' at the river Vecht. This implies that the river frequently runs over the banks, enriching the soil with clay solids. However, in the provincial nature plan, the location was destined to be the nature target type: 'nutrient poor grassland'. How would this be possible, and how could this nature target type be reached*?
>
> Another example is my own observation from a project in Overijssel. "*The Province and DLG decided to locate the nature target type: meadow bird protection at a spot that ecologically was unsuitable for meadow birds, because of a fixed low water level and of a high density of trees with predator birds.*"

Figure 7 Anecdotes Mismatch Technocracy and Practice

4.2.9. Domestication of social demands: 'Nature for People, People for Nature'

During the implementation phase of the NEN, local protests impeded a smooth realization (Keulartz, 1999, Hajer, 2003, RLG, 1998, Aarts, 1998). Famous examples are farmers from Gaasterland who protested against the nature development plans in their area by placing a frame in a corn field emphasising the beauty of the area and their history with the land. Landscape turned out to be loaded with meaning and signifiers, stories and achievements, which local actors felt were denied by the plans of the NEN to convert their agricultural land into nature. The plans of the NEN were so to speak a 'devaluation of their lived environment' (MacNaghten and Urry, 1998) and hence a denial of their identity (Hajer, 2003). The ecological problems and policy measures of the Nature Policy Plan were, as shown by Aarts (1998), neither recognized or accepted by farmers. From the point of view of farmers, nature is perceived as 'everything that grows, blossoms and lives', and accordingly to them nature is doing well (Aarts, 1998). Especially at the beginning of the implementation phase of the NEN, farmers conceived governmental decisions as having detrimental consequences on their livelihoods, and the government was perceived as unreliable and as an enemy (Aarts, 1998, Keulartz, 1999, Hajer, 2003).

The erection of the frame in the fields, and the various protests that followed in various locations caught policymakers by surprise (Hajer, 2003, Kuindersma et al., 2007). Up to that moment, the policy formation of the NEN had been a smooth process, with experts, policymakers and interest groups agreeing on the need to move beyond mere nature conservation, and pro-actively create nature. However, as the Nature Policy Plan and the NEN were part of a classical-modernist form of policy making, with strong neo-corporate links, the master plans conflicted with society and social reality on the ground (Hajer, 2003, WRR, 1998, Turnhout and van der Zouwen, 2010):

The idea of the NEN was strongly influenced by policymakers and scientists. It is a beautiful scientific model, which fits in the time of Modernism: the makeable society, were concepts are developed that are smoothly implemented and rolled out. So those blue prints and master plans were particularly of that time." (Barto Piersma, interview).

"[T]he realization of the NEN is a classic example of top-down planning. Knowledge about ecosystems and conditions under which these can survives were the starting point. This knowledge was translated in the so-called nature target types that on blueprints indicated on which locations nature should be developed or improved" (WRR, 1998: 137).

Several evaluations and studies signalled the poor implementation record of the NEN, the top down character, the ecological dominance and the lack of societal support for nature policy and the NEN (LNV, 1994, LNV and IPO, 1999, WRR, 1998, RLG, 1998, Metz, 1998, Mak, 199). In order to keep its dominant position, the nature development discourse had to articulate the destabilising elements – local protests – in such a way that the elements could be neutralized and incorporated into the nature development discourse. Following the various studies, strong criticisms and local protests, the government changed strategy by developing a new nature policy plan '*Nature for People, People for Nature'* that would focus on an interactive and participatory approach to nature policy and would take into account a broad vision on nature (LNV, 2000). From a discourse theoretical perspective the new policy programme and programmes that followed, can be regarded as an attempt by the nature development discourse to domesticate the opposing discursive elements by incorporating them into the nature development discourse. Several elements of this domestication attempt are addressed below.

In the policy plan '*Nature for People, People for Nature'* mutual cooperation and the importance of multiple visions on nature are emphasised. This was amongst others done by giving private and agricultural nature management a more prominent role in the realization of the NEN (LNV, 2000; MNP, 2007). This role be-

came already evident in the policy document '*Dynamiek en Innovatie' (1995)* and was, after the '*Nature for People, People for Nature*' policy document, reinforced in several other policy documents and covenants, i.e. '*Beleidskader omslag van minder verwerving naar meer beheer' (2005) 'Verklaring van Linschoten' (2007).* The new articulation was that with own effort and responsibility, land owners and farmers would start to appreciate nature and nature policy more (LNV, 2000; 2005): "[T]*he change lies especially in the broadening of the societal support for nature and nature policy by anticipating on people's wishes and realizing a high quality multiform living environment. This implies space for people to shape their own living environment"* and *"to address own responsibility for nature and landscape"* as *"nature is explicitly the responsibility of the entire society and needs to be broadly rooted in society",* which can only be the case *"with mutual cooperation: governmental and social partners, business and citizens"* (LNV, 2000: 14, 16, 17). Thus, as was argued: societal support for nature policy could be enhanced by giving people own responsibility to shape their living environment, which includes the protection of nature. This attempt of the nature development discourse was directed to incorporate the social demands for own responsibility. Apart from own responsibility, also other accounts on nature were stated to be of importance in nature policy: *"With 'nature for people' is meant that nature should align with people's wishes and be reachable, accessible and usable. We consider the concept of 'nature' very broadly. It is nature from the front door to the Waddensee. This aligns with the perception of most people, for whom the difference between nature, biodiversity, forest and landscape is relative."* (LNV, 2000: 9). The robust corridors that were added to the NEN, were articulated as having wider interests for society than ecological values only: "*These robust corridors contain more than only ecological value and contribute to the scenic and cultural historical identity, more nature nearby cities, a sustainable water management and improved recreation facilities*"(:36). This attempt of the nature development discourse was directed at the social demand for a broader nature vision. Moreover, with the decentralisation of the implementation of nature policy to the provinces a more 'area-oriented' and interactive approach for the NEN was foreseen (MNP, 2007), that would smoothen the implementation processes. The 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy plan states that "*societal involvement will be reinforced by investing in a goal-oriented cooperation during the implementation of nature policy. [O]ther parties are able to shape implementation of the policy"* (LNV, 2000: P-2). The national government and the provinces made general agreements in 1999 how to steer and execute policy for the rural area. Transfer of implementation responsibilities happened during the decentralisation in 2007, with the Law on Design of the Rural Area (WILG: '*Wet Inrichting Landelijk Gebied'*). The WILG was the successor of the land consolidation law, and "*the NEN was paid out of the WILG, being the motor for area-oriented development*" (Barto Piersma, interview). Thus, land consolidation was no longer approached from mainly an agricultural point of view as used to be the dominant practice (see section 4.1.4), but approached from the NEN perspective.

4.2.10. Domestication Failure: Instrumental Participation and Natura 2000

Altogether, the 'People for Nature, Nature for People' policy plan emphasised the importance of participatory processes, mutual cooperation, own responsibility and a broader vision on nature. This people-oriented part of the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy plan can be regarded as a domestication attempt of the nature development discourse to incorporate the local protests and strong criticisms on the previous nature policy plan into the nature development discourse. The domestication would imply that nature policy would be conceived less top-down, less spatially segregated, less authoritarian and more inclusive in broader nature visions and multiple functions. However, having a closer look at the 'People for Nature, Nature for People' policy plan, it appears that the essence of the new nature policy is still very much ecologically oriented, with a strong focus on completing the NEN and on meeting international commitments on biodiversity protection. The proposed intentions on knowledge supply, participatory processes, mutual cooperation and own responsibility, seem to serve a better and smoother implementation of nature policy as demonstrated by the following quote: "*the underlying causes of a deterioration of nature and landscape is often at the heart of human actions. Therefore it is good to focus policy more on mobilising involvement and responsibility for nature in all layers of society*" (LNV, 2000: 28). The citation

illustrated that participation is intended to be used in a more instrumental way, i.e. to improve the deteriorating state of nature, instead of being a goal in itself. The instrumental use of participation to enhance societal support in order to circumvent protests and to realize own goals in a more efficient and effective way is demonstrated by numerous studies (Leroy & Gersie, 2004; Duineveld & Beunen, 2006). The Nature for People, People for Nature document mentions knowledge supply and awareness raising as tools to reinforce the realization of the NEN: "*the societal support for nature policy is enhanced by knowledge on nature and by enlarging awareness about the importance of nature*" (LNV, 2000: 18). This quote reflects the assumption that knowledge gaps are reason to fail in taking effective action in nature protection and accordingly hinders the completion of the NEN. The increase of knowledge and awareness raising are the only participatory and people-oriented aspects mentioned in the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' document while addressing the reinforcement of the NEN (LNV, 2000: 18). Knowledge supply and awareness raising can be regarded as low and passive forms of participation, that fit with the 'passive' concept of societal support which implies a supporting and serving role for people (Elands and Turnhout, 2009). Thus, the Nature for People, People for Nature document assumes a linear relation between participation and societal support for nature policy. The shift towards a more participatory and inclusive approach as mentioned in the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' document appears to be inspired by the dystopian myth on nature and biodiversity decline and the difficulties in implementation. Participation is put forward as the solution to realize the nature goals as it would facilitate the implementation of the NEN. Nature policy and the implementation of the NEN seem to be still ecological dominant within the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' document. This latter observation is also supported by the helicopter interviews:

"*To be honest with you, the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' document wrote indeed wonderfully about more recreation and participation, however if I look critically how it went in practice, then it continued to be a national ecological network of ecology*" (Barto Piersma, interview).

"*After the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' document, the thinking was more on participatory processes, but what's in a name? Ecological Network?! You do not read in that term that people have appreciation for your type of landscape. You read a certain action of The Hague: your environment should be different*!"(Hajer, interview).

Indeed, one of the central aspects of the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy document for nature protection is to reinforce the implementation of the NEN and improve spatial consistency and environmental quality (LNV, 2000). Although the robust corridors were articulated to serve multiple functions and objectives, the main reason for the creation of the robust corridors was because several studies, e.g. MNP 1999, revealed that the spatial consistency of nature areas was still fragmented, environmental conditions were getting worse due to continuing problems on acidification, desiccation and nitrification, and because of a low implementation rate on the ecological corridors (LNV, 2000). The buffer policy and the notion of connectivity – i.e. structuring principles of the nature development discourse – were combined in the robust corridors: "*The robustness entails that _enlarging_ and _connecting_ occurs simultaneously. Systems are mutually connected and enlarged*" (LNV, 2000: 18, own emphasis). The articulation held that the robustness could simultaneously work for more functions. As stated by Chris Kalden (interview): "*The department of LNV was in search for both a more education and people-oriented nature policy and an impulse on the nature side. Robust corridors were the only addition on the nature side they came up with. That was probably also driven by the fact that between 1990 and 2000 little had been done with the corridors in the original NEN and that they wanted to give a policy impulse with a heavier character, which included the spatial protection regime*". In other words, the robust corridors were an answer to the stagnated process in the ecological corridors. In order to maintain societal support, they were articulated as multifunctional units in the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' document. However, in practice societal support did not improve as the fierce protests of farmers in the robust corridor of the Oostvaarderswold demonstrated (de Lijster et al., 2009). Also it appeared that not all robust corridors were integrating all multiple func-

tions as shown by the obstinate attitude of nature protectionists in the Oostvaarderswold to explore possibilities for integrating multiple functions in cooperation with farmers (de Lijster et al., 2009). Although the robust corridors were to be purchased on voluntarily basis, voluntarism in practice did not exists, as large areas were designated to become robust corridors and due to the robustness "*one had to go from A to B*" (Wim Dijkman, *personal communication*). As Chris Kalden pointed out: "*the concept of robust corridors is seen as an additional spatial claim on top of the NEN. And that kept irritating and has been enlarged by discussions on Natura 2000*". This observation is also supported by Bart Krol, Deputy of the Province of Utrecht(interview): "*I think the agricultural sector by that time thought to accept the NEN and understand that a part of the Netherlands will be nature. But they wanted to make one agreement on this matter by that time [1990] and after that everything should clear. I believe the agricultural sector felt uncomfortable with the adding of the robust corridors, and especially with Natura 2000 which came across again. So they felt deceived: we agreed upon the NEN and now we get these robust corridors again, also without any consultation.*" The robust corridors, based on the connectivity principle and buffer policy, implied an additional spatial claim to the NEN (Kuindersma et al. 2007). The instrumental participation and the 'masked' intention of the robust corridors reveals that the nature development discourse domesticated the social demands in a very limited way. Participation in the Nature for People, People for Nature document was believed to increase societal support which would smoothen the implementation of the nature goals. However, several studies show that participatory practices in nature protection caused for discrepancies and even enhanced conflict situations. Site managers and nature organisations still have main focus on ecology, not taking into account other views and wishes of local actors (see Buijs, 2009; Kuindersma et al., 2007, Schuurmans, 2010). Participatory processes at the Veluwezoom for instance lost societal support because of the participation style of 'manipulation', which is to educate people and cure alternative views and ideas. Low forms of participation, e.g. 'informing', are usually perceived as less legitimate in the eyes of local residents, whom were affected by policy interventions. People feel to have little influence on decision making (Hissink, 2008, Santegoets, 2011). Buijs (2009) demonstrates that in some cases of nature protection, site managers do not take into account the appropriation value of local actors – claims about physiological ownership and personal bonding with an area – which results in a depiction of site managers as 'arrogant' and as 'outsiders'. This is also the case because people talk in different languages as they are embedded in different discourses. The participatory processes in general in nature protection were hindered by complex regulation, inconsistencies in regional planning practices and external effects (Kuindersma, et al. 2007). All in all, the participatory processes that the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' aimed for have not been perfect as is argued by Keulartz (interview): "*One can place a lot of question marks on the way participation and democratisation in nature policy have occurred for the last 10 years. Nature which is a collective good can be hijacked by local politics who determine how nature is going to look like. Until now, the whole participation process was for the greatest deal kind of fake. It was all fixed beforehand, and why bother people on implementation if all plans are already prepared? That is at the end-of-the-pipe, people will not be motivated. In that sense a lot has gone wrong, so if you would involve people more from the beginning or give more responsibilities for municipalities, provinces and the people themselves, it could work out.*" The instrumental participation in the nature development discourse also comes back in a study of the MNP in 2007 discussing the involvement of farmers in nature management: '*an important condition is that the nature targets are not under discussion. Differently said: the nature manager changes, but the nature targets will be maintained*" (MNP, 2007:13). One starts to wonder what kind of participation and room for bottom-up initiatives was foreseen in the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy document when reading the sentence: "*Starting point is that 'frameworks from above' will be in balance with 'the room for own realization from bottom-up'* (LNV, 2000: P-1). It seems that the 'frameworks from above' determine the possibilities for bottom-up processes. In view of that, it does not seem a big surprise that, despite the decentralisation efforts of the nature targets, governmental decisions and plans were still perceived as imposing on the local situations (Kuindersma et al, 2007). The '*Algemene Rekenkamer'* concluded that the continuity of the realization of the NEN was at stake, amongst others because of the voluntarily principle (Algemene Rekenkamer, 2006; 2009). This made some studies advise to use the instrument of expropriation in order to accelerate the implementation of the NEN (Algemene Rekenkamer 2006), which

is contradictionary to what the Nature for People, People for Nature document foresaw. Apart from several practical problems and issues on participation itself, the mutual cooperation and participatory processes were hindered by severe discussions and resistance concerning the designation of Natura 2000 (Beunen and van Ark, 2007, Beunen, 2006, Van den Bosch, 2007; Kuindersma et al., 2007, Arnouts and Kistenkas, 2011). Natura 2000 is an European policy concept that came into force during the Dutch chairmanship at the European Commission at the same year of the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy plan. Around half of the NEN came to exist of Natura 2000. The designation of the areas was done by the Ministry of LNV, in cooperation with a small group of parties, mainly nature clubs, and exclusively on the basis of ecological knowledge (Arnouts and Kistenkas, 2011). The designation of Natura 2000 resembles the top-down planning process with an exclusive focus on ecological knowledge that is characteristic for the nature development discourse. Natura 2000 also presumes that can be demonstrated what effects economic activities have on nature which demonstrates the makeability idea of nature. Arnouts and Kistenkas (2011) point to a misfit between legal rules and practice, as in practice complex ecosystems are difficult to understand, let alone predict with certainty the effects of particular economic activities on nature and environmental conditions. In the Netherlands, Natura 2000 has been associated with a strict spatial planning regime, uncertainties about plans and activities and conflicts and several lawsuits over new and existing land use activities (Beunen, 2006, Arnouts and Kistenkas, 2011). Within society, the idea became widespread that nature protection restricts people's activities, and that the Netherlands would be 'locked' for further (economic) developments (Beunen 2006, Arnouts and Kistenkas, 2011). The opposite effect that was aimed for with the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy document! As stated by Jan Heijkoop, despite the participatory attempt after the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' document "*the emphasis was put on the process of Natura 2000, that frustrated people because of long term uncertainties, delays and spatial claims*". The uncertainties and associated negative effects of Natura 2000 contributed to the failure of domestication in practice. As became clear from the helicopter interviews, the designation and implementation processes around Natura 2000 functioned deconstructive for the societal support for nature policy and the NEN:

"*the legalisation of nature policy and the perceived effects of Natura 2000 have led to an intoxicated relation between nature and agriculture*" (Chris Kalden, interview)

"*the number of people in society that in legal way have been confronted with the NEN for the last twenty years, has grown so much that one can state that the societal support for nature has become very small.*" (Jan Heijkoop, interview)

During the planning and decision-making processes of Natura 2000, the ample uncertainties around legal rules on activities and developments in and around the protected nature sites, frustrated bottom-up processes and societal support: "*the implementation of Natura 2000 has been very irksome. I experienced that myself when I had to locate Bird-Directive Areas. There were many questions coming from entrepreneurs about the consequences of Natura 2000 for their business. For instance a yacht-club owner asked: 'what does the Bird-Directive mean for my business? Am I allowed to have more boats, can I expand my business in the future?' We did not have an answer to that. Governmental jurists said: jurisprudence has to deal with that. I find it weak that as legislator we did not think about the consequences, and that the judge had to find it out for himself.*" (Jos Jansen, interview). As a result of unclear national rules, bureaucratic and legal aspects of the European directives became to dominate in the planning processes of Natura 2000 (Beunen, 2006). Consulting companies and legal advisers have been hired to make sure that the decision-making process meets all of the directives' formal requirements. Development activities are allowed to start only when obtaining the exemption permits released by bureau LASER of the ministry of LNV. Granting of these permits is based on inventory and expert judgement of ecologists says Henkens, landscape ecologist at Alterra (Van het Hoog, 2004). Because of the emphasis on formal compliance with nature conservation laws, this way of decision-making delayed many decision-making processes, and frustrated bottom-up process-

es:

"What absolutely did not help for societal support was every small animal or plant species that halted devel-opment. The Betuwelijn was halted because of a few Cobitidae species. Even more striking: a few trucks of Defence could not be moved because a special type of fern started to grown there. Those are not the most convenient examples for the nature protection movement. At some point the scales have been tipped, and some parties in the nature protection field have used that. Das & Boom have called into question certain ac-tivities for instance with the badger and the Vertigo moulinsiana. I am not sure if it was always worthwhile and wise to use this juridical instrument and seek legal redress for the image of nature protection. As a con-sequence, nature protection is portrayed as being unworldly" (Jos Jansen, interview).

Due to the emphasis that has been put on lawsuits, combined with all sorts of the publicity, and the in-strumental participation resulted in a higher social demand than before among local authorities, entre-preneurs and farmers (Beunen, 2006; Van den Bosch, 2007, Jos Jansen, Barto Piersma, Chris Kalden, Jan Heijkoop, interviews). In short, the problems around Natura 2000 have to do with a misfit between legal rules and practice, a top down planning, strict spatial planning regime, uncertainties causing for delays in decision-making processes and jurisdiction of nature. It can be concluded that the domestication attempt of the nature development discourse was already limited from the beginning and that it failed in practice. Social demands even increased because of instrumental participation attempts and the dreadful imple-mentation processes around Natura 2000. Thus, in the autumn of 2010 social demands were high and demanding for a change, which as chapter 5 demonstrates were ready-to-use and taken up by several counter articulatory practices.

4.2.11. The elements of the nature development discourse

Section 4.2. has demonstrated the discursive dynamics of the nature development discourse. Because of new scientific insights, i.e. systems ecology, metapopulation and island theory, the nature development discourse was able to structure thoughts and actions regard nature protection. Consequently, these theo-retical insights weakened the structuring principle of plant sociology of the nature conservation discourse. It can be concluded that the nature conservation discourse became destabilised by the nature develop-ment discourse. The wilderness movement played a prominent role during the structuration of the nature development discourse. This movement emphasised elements such as natural processes, ecosystems, self-regulation. Several events, i.e. forest storms and disappearing otter, worked as a *dystopian myth* to the nature development discourse which urged for new answers in nature protection to counter the down-wards trend in biodiversity. The creation of the Oostvaarderplassen served as a *constitutive myth* to the nature development discourse as this area showed that nature was able to regenerate itself. This story together with the theoretical insights caused for a discursive shift in nature protection as it was actually perceived possible to create nature instead of only conserving it! Based on the aforementioned theoretical insights the National Ecological Network became a *structuring principle* in the nature development dis-course. Due to its epistemic notion, it can be regarded as a powerful *symbol* to the discourse structuring thoughts and actions. Because of its ambivalent character the nature development discourse allowed for multi-interpretability, and was therefore attractive to numerous groups in society to form an economic discourse coalition. During its institutionalisation, the nature development discourse had to connect with bureaucracy and governmental speech, which resulted in the incorporation of controllable, measurable and identifiable aspects of nature. With the nature target type framework, the nature development dis-course became more technocratic in nature. Technocracy and makeability are two other *structuring prin-ciples* of the nature development discourse. The nature target types have been designed based on ecologi-cal and biological research. The interlinkages between research and policymaking were very important in the nature development discourse, and ecologists can be seen as effective co-producers of the policy vo-cabulary of nature development and the national ecological network (Hajer, 2003, Windt, 1995). Apart

from the technocracy elements, the nature development discourse also applied a top-down planning and spatial segregation, two *structuring principles* of the nature development discourse. The NEN had a quantitative objective, which entailed a larger spatial claim on land, especially agricultural land, than the nature conservation discourse. Fig 10 lists the discursive elements of the nature development discourse. As demonstrated in 4.2.9. and 4.2.10, the implementation processes of the NEN caused severe resistance and critique, which the nature development discourse aimed to domesticate with the Nature for People, People for Nature document. As the domestication was limited, the participatory elements cannot be regarded as constituting the nature development discourse, and are therefore not listed in fig 10.

The genealogical analysis illuminated the discursive dynamics in the nature policy domain, identifying two main discourses: the nature conservation and nature development discourse. The genealogical analysis showed how contingently the discourses came into being, as reactions, struggles, through contingent events, and dependent on particular fields of openings. Both discourses had the same constitutive outside: agriculture, and shared common elements such as the top-down planning and spatial segregation. As 4.1.7 showed the nature conservation discourse showed fissures on two fronts during its institutionalisation. One front entailed a critique on the top down and spatial segregation, which were social demands that the nature development discourse had to deal with. The nature development discourse even reinforced the social demands as the spatial claim and segregation were enlarged within the nature development discourse. The genealogical analysis thus illuminated discursive elements and characteristic practices of the dominant discourse in nature policy. It also made comprehensible the social demands that still in autumn 2010 were in an answer or change. Chapter 5 elaborated on the dislocation in the nature policy discourse in more detail.

Elements/Discourse	Nature Development Discourse
Dystopian Myth	Disappearing Otter - Forest storms
Constitutive Myth	Creation of Oostvaardersplassen
Symbol	National Ecological Network
Hero	Frans Vera
Constitutive Outside	Agriculture
Structuring Principles	Ecoystem Ecology, Island and Metapopulation
	Connectivity: ecological and robust corridors
	Natural Processes: robustness
	Makeability: developing *new* nature (Nature Type) (NEN strategy)
	Top down planning
	Spatial segregation / Purchasing Agricultural Land

Figure 10 discursive elements of the Nature Development Discourse

Chapter 5. Dislocation in the nature policy domain: in search for a new identity

As described in chapter two, a dislocation refers to a disruption or destabilisation of a discourse in a policy domain, which entails a disruption of symbolic orders and their concomitant identities. Consequently this opens up spaces within which creative political subjects emerge to identify with new discourses (Howarth, 2004). Chapter five addresses the present dislocated situation in the nature policy domain, and aims to answer the second part of the research question:

"*How will the change in nature policy affect concrete nature planning practices*?"

To answer this question, it is first necessary to know what the change in nature policy consists of, that is, what is dislocated by what and how could the dislocation have happened? The first section gives insight into this dislocation, by addressing reflective observations of the helicopter interviews and an analysis of the articulatory practices that are problematizing the nature development discourse. As this chapter demonstrates, it appears that the sources of discontent that the nature development discourse aimed to domesticate with the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy document, found a field of opening with the political conjuncture and the economic crisis to cohere into a counter-discourse.

As a dislocated discourse fails to constitute a strong identity in a given policy domain, the second section illustrates how people in concrete nature planning practices deal with the changes in nature policy and how they envision future activities in nature protection. The analysis consists of participant observation at several conferences, projects and nature planning sites and of informal interviews with stakeholders working in the nature policy field. As a result of the participant observation, articulatory practices of people in the field are illuminated. These are then analysed with the aim to assess how they identify with the counter discourse and how this counter discourse resonates with the changed contextual environment. Hence, the findings indicate a future direction and focus of nature management in the nature policy domain.

5.1. Dislocation of the Nature Development Discourse

The nature development discourse that dominated the nature policy domain in the Netherlands seems to be dislocated. The government (2011-2012) decided to decrease the nature management budget with 60%, to erase the planned robust corridors and to reduce the planned size of the NEN. Policy concepts embedded and created by the dominance of the nature development discourse are now restructured, which implies a disruption of the hegemonic position of the nature development discourse in the nature policy domain. The political decisions regard the nature policy reform triggered a discursive debate on nature policy and management as elaborately described in chapter one. Some people perceive this as an unacceptable rupture to nature policy, other do not perceive it as a rupture, and some others perceive it as a welcome and positive rupture. Hence, it seems that the discursive field is moving with articulatory practices with struggles over meaning in order to dominate the discursive field in nature policy.

As we have seen in chapter 4, the nature development discourse tried to domesticate sources of discontent directed to the top-down implementation, ecological focus and spatial segregation of the NEN with a new and more participatory-oriented policy initiative. As the implementation of Natura 2000 and the failed attempts at participation for creation of public support demonstrate, this domestication succeeded only partly. In the context of the current political conjuncture and economic crisis, the sources of discontent were able to cohere into a counter-discourse to the nature development discourse. In other words, the economic crisis and political conjuncture served as a field of opening to the sources of discontent to cohere into a discourse capable to weaken the hegemonic position of the nature development discourse.

The elements of the nature development discourse are now articulated in such a way that the nature development discourse is problematized, and this justifies practices and decisions in the nature policy domain, such as erasing the robust corridors, downsizing the NEN, 60% cut downs in nature management and the decentralising nature management to the Provinces.

The following paragraphs highlight various articulatory practices around the discursive elements of the nature development discourse. In these articulatory practices, the meaning of these discursive elements is changed in such a way that they do not fit well with the nature development discourse in which they used to be articulated. These new articulations of 'old' discursive elements can be regarded as responses to and criticisms against the nature development discourse and its focus on ecology and technocracy, spatial segregation, top-down planning, makeability, instrumental participation and exclusion of multiple nature visions. By changing the meaning of these elements and concepts, these new articulations affect the dominance of the nature development discourse.

5.1.1. Articulatory practice around ecological focus and scientific knowledge

As shown in chapter four the nature development discourse had a strong focus on ecological values and scientific concepts from ecological theories, i.e. ecosystem, metapopulation and island theory. The concept of network for nature gained its epistemic quality thanks to the structuring power of these theories. During the implementation of this ecological network, other views and appreciations around nature were not taken into account as expressed by the helicopter interviews:

> "*The scientific ecological basis of the NEN was adding the nail to its own coffin. They have insufficiently integrated things such as landscape, and appreciation for cultural history. With Belvedere, it actually kept staying apart from the NEN* "(Hajer, *interview*).

> "*People feel threatened by certain activities of the NEN, because people feel that nature, ecology, is prioritised. So if we implement the NEN according to EU regulations, which happened these last years, people conceived it as something that is imposed and which impedes activities; a farmer cannot farm anymore, or you cannot motor-cross any longer, or ....you cannot this, you cannot that. Than you see that the NEN did not become something of society. So at a given moment an enemy image between agriculture and nature arose, and this is what we now see happening*"(Piersma, *interview*)

The ecological focus of the nature development discourse is currently contested, which affects the dominance of this discursive element. The State Secretary of Nature Bleker regularly calls on 'nature one needs to have studied for': "*There is just a small elite that gets a kick out of the exceptional nature that one should be able to find in Natura 2000 areas. One has to almost study for that, in order to enjoy that kind of nature*" (de Boerderij, 2011). This citation illustrates that the specific kind of nature foreseen in Natura 2000 and the NEN is problematized as being reserved for a small group of people which is perceived inaccessible to other people. An underlying accusation can be read between the lines of this citation: 'a small group of people has expropriated nature from being a common good to society'. A consequence of portraying the nature of the NEN and Natura 2000 as elitist is that a division is created between scientific nature and other nature, which subsequently positions scientific nature to the outside. The articulatory practices emphasise ordinary nature instead of 'the inaccessible, scientific nature': "*Nature should not be something complicated. Citizens find pleasure in a beautiful meadow or some brushwood and structural diversity with arable and meadow birds. Even a potato field most people find wonderful.*" (Bleker, de Boerderij, 2011). This citation underscores that scientific nature is complicated while it is articulated that nature should not be so complicated as what matters is ordinary nature. The State Secretary Bleker also stresses the higher significance that should be put on ordinary nature: "*I am enthusiastic about another kind of nature than the one the Netherlands has invested in for years. I am a fan of ordinary nature, and a proponent to restore and*

reinforce the landscape that disappeared after the land consolidation" (Trouw[22], 2011). This articulation expresses that the focus of nature protection should be on another kind of nature: ordinary nature which is to be found in landscapes shaped and moulded by human presence. In short, scientific nature is devalued in these articulatory practices while ordinary nature is emphasised. Also, science-based policy concepts like the NEN, robust corridors and Natura 2000 – including the scientific knowledge and technocratic practices, are no longer taken as self-evident as is illustrated by the following citation:

> "*Ten years ago I was not convinced by the added value of the robust corridors that connects big nature areas. People that watch these animals move, most of the time farmers, show that with a stepping stone and some shrubs it is also possible* (Bleker, Trouw[23])

The above citation stresses that farmers obtain local knowledge and know how nature functions: farmers indicate that a stepping stone and some shrubs also suffice for animals to migrate. The large robust corridors in other words are not needed. A dispute between different types of knowledge can be identified in the citation. The nature development discourse emphasises robust corridors that are based on ecological, scientific knowledge, while this articulatory practice emphasises local and practical knowledge from farmers and inhabitants. This articulatory practice weakens the credibility of ecological knowledge by emphasising that local knowledge knows alternative ways to achieve connectivity. Hence, the articulatory practice weakens the legitimacy of scientific knowledge and makes the robust corridors redundant. The relevance of robust is also questioned by emphasising the undesirable act expropriation as the following citation illustrates:

> *With robust corridors a heavy instrument needs to be used, the one of expropriation. Private ownership is something very essential. With expropriation a government should have a damn good story about an evidently social interest. In case of safety, expropriation should not be any point, than the social interest gets priority. But with nature? If it can be solved in another way*?" (Bleker, Trouw, 2011[24])

This citation emphases expropriation as an inappropriate practice of the nature development discourse as local knowledge shows that nature protection can be done differently, namely with landscape elements and corridors on farmland. Expropriation for the creation of robust corridors is thus not needed.

This articulatory practices emphasise local knowledge instead of scientific knowledge and ordinary nature instead of ecological nature. Apart from the emphasis on local knowledge and ordinary nature, a normative articulation can be identified in this articulatory practice. This articulatory practice emphasises the moral plight to take care of nature, as is illustrated with the articulations around the Oostvaardersplassen. The Oostvaardersplassen were a powerful symbol to the nature development discourse, as it exemplified what natural processes could achieve: a beautiful unexpected wetland area. In line with the ecosystems approach, large herbivores were introduced who were used as tools to keep the area open and increase structural diversity. The herbivores made the picture of the Oostvaardersplassen complete for natural processes to run smoothly and to manage the area in a natural way. For few years however, public support staggered regard this type of natural management in the Oostvaardersplassen, especially during harsh winters where big grazers were starving to death. These sources of discontent are now articulated in such a way that the Oostvaardersplassen changed from a celebrated symbol in the nature development discourse to a dystopian myth of starvation and death. Accordingly, the symbol of the nature development discourses lost its constitutive power as it gained another meaning which does not fit well with the nature development discourse. As a consequence, the natural management inspired by ecological theories is conceived as less legitimate, and the discourse in question calls for the moral duty to take care

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[22]De Trouw, 02/03/2011, 'Ik wil de natuur weer streekgebonden maken.
[23] See footnote 19

[24] See footnote 19

of these animals. The following citation of State Secretary Bleker supports the observation that this articulatory practice emphasises a moral duty to take care of the animals, instead of natural management:

"*I find it socially and morally unacceptable and I find it a great danger for societal support for nature management in general. One has to give fodder to these animals and if there are too much, one has to shoot them.*" (NOS 2010[25])

The State Secretary decided to take on measures that implies a change in the way nature management in the Oostvaarderplassen used to be organised. As stated at the government website[26]:

"*Staatsbosbeheer has to arrange as soon as possible that animals get sufficient shelter during the winter. Adjacent forests should be opened up for the animals. In that way animals have more fodder and shelter. The State Secretary will ask to change the protocol so that the animals can be shot earlier if necessary*".

This articulatory practice thus disagrees with the way the animals in the Oostvaardersplassen have been treated, questioning the moral and ethical consequences of the nature development discourse and the ecological knowledge on which this practice was based. Within this articulatory practice, the Oostvaardersplassen gained another meaning which does not fit the nature development discourse any longer.

Recapitulating, this articulatory practice criticises the scientific underpinning of nature policy and its concomitant policy concepts (i.e. the NEN and Natura 2000) and the nature organisations for being elitist, while ordinary nature, local knowledge and a moral way of nature management is emphasised. The motive for this articulatory practice to emerge lies in social ownership and attachment people feel for their environment which they felt was hijacked by an one-sided ecological gaze and accordingly top-down implementation. As people experienced that other nature visions and stewardship principles were not taking into account, the particular kind of nature from the nature development discourse was not internalised. This articulatory practice unites these sources of discontent by emphasising own, local knowledge and direct visible (ordinary) nature, which as a consequence demarcates the articulatory practice from the nature development discourse.

5.1.2. Articulatory practice on top-down implementation – makeability and technocracy

Apart from the ecological scientific focus, the NEN and Natura 2000 were perceived as concepts that were implemented in a top-down and technocratic manner, with strong notions about the makeability of nature and society. The technocratic implementation of these policies and the concomitant burdensome bureaucratic rules triggered protests among people affected.

"*However innovative the idea of nature development might have been, and however well-tuned to the demands of policymakers, institutionally it had strong overtones of traditional top-down policy planning. Having gained official policy status, it had to be implemented on the regional level. Local communities however had difficulty with the superimposition of new nature on their lived environments*" (Hajer, 2003:109).

"*Apart from the jurisdiction issue, there is of course the entire bureaucratic complex around nature policy, which is enormous. The way municipalities and provinces dealt with certain matters is questionable; the procedures are complicated and time consuming. There is too much concentration and inclination for rules, not only on nature, but also on spatial planning, constructing activities, etc. that all come together and cause these tremendous delays*" (Kalden, *interview*)

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[25] NOS, 2010: Bleker grazers mogen niet verhongeren
[26] ELI, 2010: Bleker snel maatregelen voor grote grazers Oostvaarderplassen.

"The NEN presumed a certain quantity. The unpleasant part is when you look at the previous 4 years of the ILG, then we purchased a lot of land, but little has been developed or passed on. So people– our own state secretary is one of them – see that the piece of land is not of the farmer any longer, but of 'Natuurmonumenten', however it has not been developed properly. They see that farmers through farming leases are still managing the land. So there is a lot of incomprehension." (Piersma, *interview*).

Thus, the way the implementation processes of both the NEN (including the robust corridors) and Natura 2000 areas occurred resulted in considerable incomprehension and frustration among people affected by them. These experiences and perceptions are now articulated in such a way that they contest the technocratic and top-down way of the nature development discourse. In particular, these articulations emphasize that farmers and private individuals are able to manage nature and that nature management by farmers is cheaper than by nature organisations. The state secretary Bleker uses the example of Reiderwolde to show that private initiatives and farmers are indeed able to manage nature as is stated in a parliamentary letter:

"Where normally these nature development projects were handed over to nature organisations, Reiderwolde shows to me that private initiatives …can execute a similar project. This Cabinet wants to stimulate nature development and management by private individuals. By now, we have much more experience than before the development of the Reiderwolde plans, and we know with certainty that inhabitants and entrepreneurs can really mean something for nature " (Kamerbrief Reiderwolde, 2012[27]).

This citation focuses on the ability of farmers to manage nature and provides an argument to use the Greening of the CAP-post 2013 to enhance nature management by farmers: "*the government wants to use the new CAP for adding nature and landscape elements to the agricultural production landscape….[and] to reward also the high-tech agrarian entrepreneurs with delivering green and blue services"[28].* Between the lines of the State Secretary's description of the Reiderwolde example, an issue of injustice can be read: 'normally it were the big nature organisations and not the local people having a say in nature management'. This is also illustrated by another citation:

"The big organisations are not enthusiast, but new societal support is created for nature management, namely on the country side. I want to connect nature again to the region. The last years it has become something of politics, government and big organisations such as Staatsbosbeheer and Natuurmonumenten. Nature should become again from the people." (Bleker, Trouw[29])

The above citation suggests that societal support has been low for nature management because people felt they had no right of say in the practice of nature management. To counter this, it is articulated that people should be again made responsible. This articulatory practice therefore emphasises to return the power and responsibility to the people. To reinforce the articulation of private responsibility for nature management, not only the ability of farmers is stressed, also the disability of nature organisations to manage nature is emphasised as the following citation illustrates:

"Staatsbosbeheer and Natuurmonumenten have purchased a lot of land, however little has been restored. That is half work!" (Bleker, Trouw[30]). In another interview Bleker gives the following example (Trouw[31]):

"Do not forget that with a lot of nature protectionists a growing irritation existed about areas that were purchased for nature development, but subsequently the areas were not restored. We have made a number of mistakes on this subject. The area were we are walking right now is a great example. At the left there is the

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[27] Kamerbrief over Reiderwolde (kenmerk 254212) 13/01/2012
[28] Kamerdebat, 2011: Voorzetting beleidsdebat over het natuurbeleid (www.rijksbegroting.nl)
[29] De Trouw, 09/05/2011, Staatssecretaris Bleker zet de wereld op zijn kop
[30] See footnote 26

[31] See footnote 19

arable field of Nature Monument, leased to a farmer, because there are no concrete plans or money is missing. That is an enormous destruction of capital. Last week it was ploughed. Do you see that hawk ? It prefers my land above that from the neighbours, because there is no mice at all."

This citation argues that land managed by farmers is more attractive for nature than land managed with a nature management regime. The articulatory practice revolves around the capability of farmers to manage nature, and the incapability of nature management to protect nature. Through these articulations, the way nature organisations have (not) managed nature is made questionable and the nature organisations are portrayed as if they have not done their job right, ergo farmers and local people can do it better. Not only the mismanagement by nature organisations is used as an argument, also the technocratic approach to nature development is criticised as being abnormal and expensive. This is further illustrated by the following quote of State Secretary Bleker about the recently converted nature area Vossenbroek owned by nature organisation 'Gelders Landschap': "*This type of money-wasting and in my eyes idiotic activities belong to the past[32].*" The criticism is not only directed on the technocratic aspect of nature production, the financial costs also matter as illustrated by the following citation: "*I do not like to lay responsibility ... at expensive institutes and organisations with paid committees, but at the farmers and people from the area itself*" (Bleker, de Boerderij, 2011). This citation illustrates that local people and farmers should be given the opportunity to take responsibility for nature management, which as articulated implicitly they will do better and cheaper. Also a smaller NEN contains less hectares, which make it less expensive and thus more manageable according to Bleker: "*It is possible. With a more compact and clever NEN, which we do not have to be ashamed of*"(Trouw[33], 2011). "*With these cut-backs in place the NEN becomes a mission possible*" said Bleker during a presentation for several farmers and citizens (Nieuwe Oogst – 31 March, 2012). The latter citation hints that the former NEN was too big, too expensive, and perceived as an inappropriate spatial claim on agricultural land. Especially when taking into account that during that same presentation Bleker was emphasising room and space for entrepreneurship and farmers: "*my objective is to offer space to entrepreneurship. The most important what the government can do is not to be a stand-in-the-way to farmers".*

Apart from the emphasis on the ability of private actors to manage nature better and less costly, also a normative articulation can be identified in this articulatory practise. The articulation emphasizes the right of local actors to take charge about their own environment, hence responsibility for nature management should go to the region. This articulatory practice is fed by the top-down implementation of the NEN/Natura 2000 and the ways participatory practices were experienced:

"*The NEN was adopted in parliament, and subsequently it all had to be implemented regionally. And well, those citizens did of course not follow those parliamentary debates. So struggles emerged at the implementation level. Currently, the legitimacy of the NEN is at stake. Also because for a lot of people the choices were not acceptable. So why does that little farm have to make place for that marshy swamp? So not including people in the reasoning or the imposing character rankled many people. In the recent political conjuncture, there is much more space for anti-government sentiments, which can be traced back in nature policy.*" (Hajer, *interview*).

This articulatory practice aims to give local people a stronger voice and advocates for their active participation in nature management as these two following quotes illustrate:

"*It is a big progress that the entire responsibility for nature is given to a managing body that stands closer to the people. Nature is pre-eminently something for the region*" (Bleker in Trouw[34]).

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[32] See footnote 19
[33] De Trouw, 17/02/2011, Bleker: Minder kwantiteit, meer kwaliteit
[34] De Trouw, 17/02/2012: Bleker zelf is volstrekt tevreden

"*Nature has become something of politics and from big organisations as Staatsbosbeheer or Natuurmonumenten. Nature should again become more of the people.*" (Bleker, Trouw[35])

The last citation makes a sharp division between local people and big organisations with the policy domain. The citation hints that policy and nature organisations have appropriated nature and taken it away from ordinary people. The articulatory practice emphasises that this situation needs to be rectified and that nature should <u>again</u> become of people. According to Bleker, policymakers, scientists and nature organisations have been blind to the upcoming undercurrent at the country side:

"*This elite…has walked for twenty years with blinders and did not noticed that for years there is an undercurrent at the countryside that wants to go another way*" (Bleker, de Trouw [36]).

"*The elite has been ignoring for years the critique on nature management. Staatsbosbeheer was even worse than the big land lords of the 1930s.*" (Bleker, de Trouw).

Like in the previous articulatory practice, the nature organisations are portrayed as elitist and inaccessible, which divides them from local people with their wishes to organise nature differently.

Overall, this articulatory practice is a reaction to the top-down and technocratic character of the nature development discourse. The articulatory practice emphasises the regional responsibility people have to take charge of their environment, the ability and cost-effectiveness of farmers and private entrepreneurs in nature management.

5.1.3. Articulatory practice around the spatial segregation and mono-functionality

As became clear from chapter 4, the nature development discourse includes a strict spatial segregation between nature and agriculture. The demarcation of nature from other functions is being contested in this articulatory practice, as is illustrated by the following citation:

"*It is important to recognize that we have nature areas that came into existence because of interaction with human interference. The government desperately wants to get rid of the abrasive separation between nature and agricultural areas that we made in the '80s. ……..The answer should not be that we keep on reasoning in line with the separation. I find that existing nature areas and nature areas in development should be able to function in an agricultural production landscape that is not contrasting, but can be supporting.*" (Bleker, Chamber[37])

What this articulation implies is that nature protection can be based on an integration of multiple functions that support each other, and that human kind has an active role to play in the organisation of nature management. Making space for nature has gone too far is argued: "*we have tipped the balance too much with making space for nature in the '90s.*"(Bleker, Trouw[38]). It is agriculture that takes centre stage in this articulatory practice in order to undertake nature protection and management, as becomes clear in the following citations:

"*The government has the ambition to reinforce nature and landscape values in the agricultural production landscape for the coming ten years. In that framework, the NEN and Natura 2000 should be placed.*" (Chamber[39], 2011)

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[35]De Trouw, 22/03/2011, CDA wil als jaren een draai geven aan het Nederlands natuurbeleid
[36] De Trouw, 21/04/2012, Bleker, Elite keek te lang weg van kritiek natuurbeheer

[37] See footnote 25
[38] See footnote 32
[39] See footnote 25

"The big challenge is to provide the agricultural production landscape with ecological and landscape plusses via the new common agricultural policy. In there the discussion is about how to deal with Natura 2000 and NEN areas." (Bleker, Chamber letter [40])

Following the above articulations, it is emphasised that agriculture and nature can go together and support each other. In other words, the spatial segregation by the nature development discourse is disputed as agricultural land can go together with nature protection (i.e. integration of functions). Making agriculture more important for nature protection also justifies the downsizing of the NEN and erasing of the robust corridors, as these concepts are perceived less important for nature protection than they used to be, because agriculture has a role to play in nature management and protection. The robust corridors that aim to connect nature areas are replaced by agricultural land which can offer the connection. Placing agriculture more central is also done by emphasising other roles agriculture has to play for instance in food insecurity:

"The strict European nature rules which are bothering the Netherlands quite often, is thanks to the effort of the Netherlands themselves. Those rules belong to another era. Agriculture has a much higher priority by now because of higher food insecurity." (Bleker, Trouw[41])

This citation shows the Netherlands has a duty to sustain food security (another function) and hence the strict nature rules should be revised. As the articulatory practice emphasise natural values in the agricultural landscape, the strict nature rules are perceived less important, because: why sustain strict rules that result in problems of societal support if nature can be organised differently in the agricultural landscape, which above all can be stimulated by opportunities of the CAP-reform? The articulatory practice therefore seeks for flexibility in European nature rules, such as the recent attempt to erase several Natura 2000 areas:

"It is not easy to erase Natura 2000 areas in Brussels. It requires an accurate ecological argumentation. I want to plead at the European Commission to erase those areas that have lot of external effect for the surrounding agricultural companies and that cause for societal support problems." (Bleker in parliamentary letter 'Aanpak Natura 2000').

Instead of the spatial segregation of the NEN and Natura 2000, more multifunctional landscape use is emphasised as becomes also clear in the recent published policy document: 'Entrepreneuring with landscape services' where the State Secretary emphasises:

"This document supports my aim to give natural landscape elements back to the region and citizens. I want to focus on the advantages that functional landscape elements offer for different parties. A natural-grown arable edge is for passers-by beautiful to see, contributes to natural pest control and offers room to different plant and animal species. A natural bank enlarges the water retention and decrease the negative effects of pesticides on surface water. A hedgerow is beautiful to see, offers shadow to cattle and can be a corridor to adjacent nature. These are examples that have a function for their environment".

Thus, the articulatory practice emphasises that the agricultural area can have more functions with different elements. Parties that benefit the service should link up with the party delivering the service, which makes cooperation indispensable:

"Parties that benefit from those landscape services should contribute to the costs. Because different parties have advantage of these services, cooperation between these parties and the parties that offer the green service is needed. The latter can be manifold, because everyone that owns land can deliver a landscape service. But something concrete is happening, if these parties find each other".

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[40] See footnote 25
[41] See footnote 32

The articulatory practice in other words favours a fine-maze network of green and blue elements through agricultural land that can harbour multiple functions, i.e. agricultural production, nature, water and environmental conditions, recreation. For these multiple functions to flourish, cooperation is needed. According to the policy letter, this initiative "*offers concrete opportunities for entrepreneurs in an energetic society. The initiative taker that links both supplier and receiving party has an important role.*" The plan to undertake landscape services is also perceived to support the governmental policy programme biodiversity. Again it is stated that landscape services and agricultural land can contribute to biodiversity protection and nature management. It is explicitly stressed that the landscape-plan is a guide and not a fixed top-down plan as "*this would be inappropriate as the starting point is that the region has most responsibility for the landscape. The possibilities will be enlarged through the Common Agricultural Policy (2014 – 2020) and especially the opportunities offered by the ecological focus areas.*"

Altogether, this articulatory practice disputes the spatial separation of nature with other functions by making agriculture more important for multiple functions of which nature is made part of. Landscape services combining multiple functions are emphasised in combination with the upcoming CAP-reforms. Also an appeal is made on regional cooperation initiatives between the delivering party and the party using the service.

5.1.4. The Rise of the Do-It-Yourself Nature Discourse

The articulatory practices discussed in the previous sections can be regarded as reactions to the discursive elements and practices of the nature development discourse. These articulatory practices found a current field of opening in the economic crisis and a political conjuncture that favoured private initiatives, entrepreneur- and stewardship[42]. This changed context enabled the sources of discontent to cohere in a counter discourse that constituted itself in opposition with the nature development discourse (thus using it as a constitutive outside). This demarcation practice can also be recognized in the articulatory practices that problematized the discursive elements of the nature development discourse. Discursive elements such as symbol of the NEN and the myth of the Oostvaardersplassen were devalued or transformed in meaning. The counter-discourse positioned the nature development discourse is such a way that its policy programmes and practices were perceived as eccentric and unconventional, expensive, elitists, ecology centred and too much focussing on top down planning and segregation. Through this problematisation in these articulatory practices, the counter-discourse destabilised the legitimacy of the nature development discourse and emphasised opposing discursive elements that fit the contextual environment. These elements included: regional responsibility, ordinary nature, multifunctionality, integration of functions, cooperation, landscape, nature management by local people, farmers and private initiatives. Fig. 11 outlines the articulatory practices of the counter-discourse that are a reaction to the dominance of the nature development discourse. The discursive elements of the nature development discourse are now differently articulated through problematisation and emphasising of other meanings by articulatory practices of the counter-discourse. The driving force of the articulatory practices seem to be on the empowerment of local people to organise nature management in another way (i.e. local responsibility and knowledge, multifunctionality, multiple visions). Taken these characteristics into account, and that the articulatory practices were able to unite into a coherent discourse in the current fields of openings, the counter-discourse is called: the Do-It-Yourself Nature Discourse (from now on: DIY-Nature discourse). The reason to opt for the label DIY is that it embraces all discursive elements of the articulatory practices such as that people want to undertake nature management by themselves, in their fashion, integration multiple functions and including diverse nature visions.

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[42] Consider the title of the governmental agreement 'Freedom and Responsibility'.

discursive elements nature development discourse		ecological focus scientific nature ecological concepts	top down implementation technocracy responsibility nature organisation	spatial segregation mono-functionality
articulatory practices 'DIY - Nature discourse'	*problimatisation*	elite nature starvation animals OVP	expensive practice elitist nature organisation disability nature organisation	mono-functional no room for other functions hindrance to ec. Developments
	emphasis	ordinary nature local knowledge moral plight take care nature stewardship	cost-effective by farmers regional responsibility ability farmers and private actors ownership self-efficacy	multifunctionality landscape services functional character entrepreneurship cooperation
Constitutive Outside: Nature Development		**landscape/environment**	**regional responsibility**	**integration functions**
		EMPOWERMENT		

Figure 11 Problematisation of Discursive Elements of Nature Development Discourse and Identification of Discursive Elements of DIY-Nature Discourse

It is good to realize that parts of this discourse have a long history. Since the rise of the nature conservation discourse and the nature development discourse, there were alternative views and critiques on the way nature protection was dealt with and managed (as shown in chapter 4). Already then, there were voices and signals of self-efficacy, broader nature vision, ownership and regional bottom-up processes. These identities were formed and activated after and as a reaction to the nature policy interventions of the Relation areas, the NEN and Natura2000 as is demonstrated in chapter four. Before the moment of dislocation, elements of the discourse went back and forth between discourse institutionalisation, e.g. policy programmes of agricultural nature management, while struggling against the dominance of the nature development discourse. As shown in chapter four, there were moments that elements of the DIY-Nature discourse entered into the institutionalisation phase; namely during the domestication attempts of the nature development discourse. Since that moment, more reports and policy documents have been written about bottom-up processes and involvement of local people and farmers in nature management. An example is the publication of the former Ministry of LNV with the LTO '*Natuurlijk lukt het, Natuurlijk doen!*' which emphasises the role of farmers in nature management and a new perspective on nature development. Part of the publication presents farmers that were successful in integrating their agricultural production with nature management. However, these elements were not able to cohere in a discourse and articulate a strong identity by that time. In the current field of opening, the nature development discourse is being positioned away from its dominant centre and this opened up space for the elements of resistance against the nature development discourse to cohere in the DIY-Nature discourse. This discourse gained influence: it was able to restructure nature policy plans (review NEN, downsizing budget, erasing of robust corridors) and put forward new ideas for policy development on nature protection (hunting rights, landscape services, decentralisation to provincial level, less protected species list, less Natura 2000 areas). The next section elaborates on the acts of identification that emerged in the hegemonic struggles between the DIY-Nature discourse and the nature development discourse.

5.2. Acts of Identification in the Field

In a situation of discursive dislocation, new ideas, concepts and categories can emerge and new discourses can be created. The hegemonic struggles in such situations offer ways of articulating different elements into a coherent discourse and of constituting new identities. People attempt to reconstruct a new identity through acts of identification in the hegemonic struggles between discourses in the nature policy domain. This section analyses the different articulations uttered by people involved in nature planning practices, and the actions they prefer for future nature management. The analysis was done while doing participant observation at several conferences and meetings concerning nature planning sites (i.e. '*Utrechtse Vecht en*

Weiden', 'Krimpenerwaard', 'Oldematen', 'het Westerkwartier' and *'the Westelijke Langstraat'*) and by hold-ing informal and semi-structured interviews with actors from Natuurmonumenten, Staatsbosbeheer, LTO and Provincial Officials. The participant observation and informal interviews gave insight in the current acts of identification in the field with articulatory practices of several discourses. The findings indicate a future direction and focus of nature management in the nature policy domain.

5.2.1. Forest Management Day – September 2011

In September 2011, a Forest Management Day was organised by several nature organisations; '*de Unie van Bosgroepen*;', '*het Bosschap'*, '*the 12Landschappen'* and *'Landschapsbeheer Nederland.'* The day was meant for nature managers to meet and discuss how to deal with the expected budget cuts in nature policy and the upcoming changes in the nature law. The meeting offered opportunities to observe which articulations people utter and how they perceive to go about the change in nature policy, hence the dislocation.

The director of the Union of Forest Groups opened the meeting by emphasising that in these uncertain times of cut downs there is a need to cooperate and to make use of clever combinations to continue with nature management: "*a day like this brings people together, enhances exchange and generates creativity. Above all it generates energy with people to keep putting effort in the sustainable management of forest and nature with an eye for quality*". After the introductory talks, several workshops were organised. I attended two workshops: 1. Cost-covering management and 2. Biomass. At the cost-covering management work-shop Jan Baan from '*Brabants Landschap'* hold a speech. He emphasised that despite the cut downs, the NEN could be realized with cooperation of several parties that include nature organisations and farmers. As Jan Baan stated "*It is about integration of functions. People can realize the NEN with their own talent and position.*" The essence of his speech was that now is time to go and look for other creative earning models and financial arrangements to organise nature management. Several examples were discussed. One exam-ple was the '*Groene Woud'* area where companies and private individuals cooperate in order to contribute to nature and landscape management. Other examples included the harvesting of wood and the use of recreational facilities such as restaurants, which could generate revenues that could be used to cover the costs of nature management. Finally, the workshop explored possibilities to create new arrangements with industry and commerce. The message was that regional actors need to have a common vision on rural and nature development. Jan Baan stated: "*it is a dynamic time, and cooperative bundling of forces in these times is important*". For that reason '*Brabants Landschap'* has made a manifest with the regional partners: ZLTO, Water Boards, Natuurmonumenten, Staatsbosbeheer and ANWB that entailed a common vision about how to organise the rural area with multiple functions, i.e. nature, water, recreation and agri-culture.

The Biomass workshop was organised by an expert from the State Forest Service. As stated, the core busi-ness of Staatsbosbeheer is to offer nature quality and manage nature. However, "*the current zeitgeist re-quired a better analysis of timber harvesting and related markets for State Forest Service*". For smaller for-est owners, as was explained at the workshop, this could be a chance to work together and collectively see how they can market their timber in the Netherlands. Also it was discussed that nowadays there are more opportunities to recycle timber and biomass locally in the field for energy or soil fertility. Altogether, the essence of this workshop was to search for new combinations and cooperations with potential partners to organise nature management in a different way.

Although most people were shocked and felt indignant about the political changes in nature policy, in general people at the conference talked about cooperation, bundling of forces and finding smart combina-tions in order to deal with the changes and somehow continue with nature management practices. What became clear at the conference was that use of biomass or wood production for financial means in order to organise nature management is no longer out of bounds. Within the nature development discourse the

use of nature was not articulated as such, as dead wood had a functional value for biodiversity increase instead of energy production.

5.2.2. Water and Land Network: the new business plan of Staatsbosbeheer

The Water and Land Network connects people who are active in achieving a sustainable green and blue living environment and stimulates debate about spatial developments. In January 2012, I attended the winter lecture of this network hosted by Chris Kalden, director of the Staatsbosbeheer. Chris Kalden delivered a lecture on the new business plan of Staatsbosbeheer. The new business plan of the Staatsbosbeheer emphasizes two pillars: '*at home in the region*' and '*entrepreneurship*'. '*At home in the region'* means that the Staatsbosbeheer wants to connect with what is happening in the region**,** particularly at sites with high cultural and historical values that deliver recreational, agricultural, safety and water services.. The pillar 'at home in the region' also entails that the Staatsbosbeheer hands over some of the management responsibilities to actors in the region. Giving more responsibility for nature management to the region is already happening for instance in the Natura 2000 area Oldematen (see section 5.2.7.). More 'entrepreneurship' means that Staatsbosbeheer will raise its income from different sources i.e. recreation, agriculture, biomass, wind energy, etc. The intention is to explore smart combinations of the entrepreneurial pillar with the 'at home in the region' pillar. The business plan of Staatsbosbeheer was already in development before the political turn in Nature Policy, however because of the changed context the plan became more urgent and essential. Some land will be placed outside the NEN because of the NEN review and has to be sold, other land will be handed over to the region and for other land entrance fees will be charged. An example of the latter action is given in the Volkskrant of 20th February 2012 (see fig 12): '*Out of Africa, into the Polder*'. The idea is to charge fees for exclusive excursions from April until December into the closed parts of the Oostvaardersplassen. An excursion of about two hours for 5 persons will cost around €300,- . According to Staatsbosbeheer "*the time is ripe, there is always demand for alternative excursions*". Another state forest official informed us that, because of the budget cuts, "*it is necessary for Staatsbosbeheer to be more selective what parts to safeguard and from which parts we have to say goodbye*". As the official told us, there will be a division made between large, robust systems that will be kept and responsibility for cultural historical land such as meadow bird grasslands or culture historical landscapes is handed over to other actors. At the water and land network meeting Chris Kalden stressed that State Forest Service should not be regarded as pitiful because of the financial cut downs, but that Staatsbosbeheer has to adapt and adopt a different working strategy that focuses on regional responsibility and involvement and entrepreneurship in their nature areas. The changed working strategy reveals discursive elements of the DIY-nature discourse such as cooperation, regional responsibility, entrepreneuring in and with nature areas/ landscape elements. In light of their new business plan, Staatsbosbeheer felt the need for a strategic advice on their working relation with agriculture. The next section elaborates on this strategic advice.

Figure 12 Impression: The Oostvaardersplassen with Wind Mill (other function) and Sale of Excursions: Safaris (Volkskrant February 20th 2012)

5.2.3. Strategic Advise Staatsbosbeheer and Agriculture

In May 2011, Wim Dijkman and I had an exploratory conversion with Henk van de Brandt at the Staatsbosbeheer Headquarters about the impact of the new nature policy for State Forest Service. Henk van de Brandt was seconded from the Ministry of EL&I to State Forest Service to strategically advise about how Staatsbosbeheer could cooperate more and better with agriculture and farmers. Henk van de Brandt told

us that State Forest Service has around 3000 contracts with farmers for 50.000 hectares of nature area. At the moment of conversation, State Forest Services was developing three main strategic lines as regards cooperation with the agricultural sector:

- Cooperation with agri-environmental collaborative groups ('*agrarische natuurverenigingen*'). This strategy would enhance professionalism in the ANVs, create ownership and better cooperation as well as reduce overhead costs for State Forest Service because of less contracts.
- Cooperation with farmers that opt for nature management as their profession, and undertake less activities with farmers that perceive nature management as something 'on-the-side'.
- Cooperation with 'Associations of Owners' or 'Regional Cooperatives' that together take responsibility for nature management and maintenance. State Forest Service was by that time looking for several pilot- areas.

These above strategies come back in the Green Deal (section 5.2.6.) in which Staatsbosbeheer participates and in their new business plan. In order to realize a smooth uptake of their working structure, State Forest Service wants to have insight in the ways the organisation can work better and more cooperatively with the agricultural sector. Apart from that, State Forest Service wants to have more insight and being up-to-date about dynamics and movements from the agricultural sector. This interest of State Forest Service arose because of the turn in nature policy, but also due to developments around the greening of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). People of Staatsbosbeheer wondered how to interpret the greening of the CAP: "*Can the CAP-reforms be regarded as a chance or threat in the cooperation with farmers regards nature management? And how to deal with the changed context as an organisation?*" Because of all these dynamics and uncertainties, State Forest Service felt the need to have better insight in possible strategies regarding agriculture at various working levels. State Forest Service asked CLM to prepare a strategic advice[43] on the relationship of State Forest Service with agriculture at different working levels, i.e. site manager, district manager, management team and their expert pool. The project has the aim to reinforce and deepen the relationship with farmers and agriculture. Therefore Staatsbosbeheer wants to have insights in the motives and attitudes of their own staff regarding agriculture. As one official told us at the work meeting:

"*One looks at agriculture from a certain point of view. Even people that come to work here with an agricultural education, somehow gradually get greener. Therefore it is difficult to get good insight what moves and drives the agricultural sector regarding our work of nature management. Apart from that, cooperation with the agricultural sector depends on how ambitious and involved people of State Forest Service are with agriculture.*" As another official told us: "*there are proponents and opponents within State Forest Service regarding agriculture. Chris Kalden, the director, can be placed as an proponent. He looks where and how to integrate agriculture, which was not such a common practice in the past. There exists still plenty of enemy images on both sides.*"

The practice of State Forest Service to get to understand agriculture - the constitutive outside of the nature development discourse - better, indicates that the discursive field is moving and that actors, here Staatsbosbeheer, are seeking for a new identity. This new identity emphasises cooperation with farmers and people in the region which are discursive elements of the DIY-discourse as presented in 5.1. Keywords are is cooperation, self-control and regional responsibility.

5.2.4. ZLTO: a proposal to implement the NEN in the Province of North-Brabant

In March 2012, I attended a work meeting with CLM and ZLTO. ZLTO invited CLM to give advice in an

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[43] The project consists of a contextual analysis on the different working levels within State Forest Service and with agriculture. This entails that in several focus groups the relationship with agriculture is analysed and several bottle necks and successes are distilled. After that, interviews with different agricultural actors at various levels (i.e. farmer, a foreman, a policy maker) about their viewpoints at different topics concerning their relationship with State Forest Service. These interviews and conversations will give valuable information on the articulations of the actors from nature and agriculture. Unfortunately, the focus group sessions were held after the submission of the thesis, so the results could not be taken into account.

exploratory study that aimed to find several opportunities for implementing the remaining part of the NEN in the Province of North-Brabant. ZLTO aims to create a proposal to the Province North Brabant that would contain smart strategies to manage nature with more integration of daily agricultural practices which at the same time should be cheaper and less dependent on governmental subsidies to maintain nature quality. During the meeting, actors were stressing that within nature management one had to look for different financial arrangements and innovative strategies that would support nature management. Herman van de Ham (ZLTO) elaborated on several smart combinations. He mentioned that there are insurance companies or businesses that like to invest in nature in order to create a healthy green living environment for their clients and employees. Also the agricultural sector - as farmers are the main users of rural lands - has something to offer for nature he said, and also the other way around. The agricultural sector has to deal with another social context as it has to deal with different social demands directed at their performance; i.e. the market requires more and better sustainable practices and society appreciates different social and environmental services undertaken by farmers, e.g. water quality, organic production, animal welfare, nature and landscape management (de Lijster, 2011). Like in the rest of the Netherlands, farmers in North-Brabant are united in agri-environmental collaboratives (*'Agrarische Natuurverenigingen'*), which as Jan Heijkoop mentioned during the helicopter interview, this "*has created a positive attitude towards nature among farmers".* Another ZLTO official stated during the meeting: "*there is a diverse spectrum of farmers and there is increasing support among farmers to undertake something with nature, however it should be possible to combine nature management activities with agricultural practices".*

Thus, ZLTO wants to explore different ways to realize the part of the NEN that due the Review will fall outside the scope of the new NEN. In order to prepare the offer to the Province, CLM and ZLTO discussed several innovative land use scenario's for which they wanted input from farmers. The offer entails to realise the NEN in different ways with smart strategies, as is stated in the invitation:

> "*An offer that has eye for social needs. An offer that is about entrepreneurship for the realisation and management of the NEN. An offer that does not discuss the goals of the NEN (stimulation of biodiversity and maintenance of the landscape), but which is realistic and cost-effective. In short, a redesigned NEN with societal support and a strong economic basis*".

CLM had to design several out-of-the-box strategies that would connect ecology and economy together with a multifunctional land use approach. These strategies were discussed in two focus group sessions with farmers, nature organisations and the water boards in May 2012. I was able to attend one of these focus group sessions.

At the focus group meeting, a ZLTO official introduced the project to the farmers, nature organisations and water boards and said: "*Of course we discussed if we as ZLTO wanted to pro-actively attempt to realise the NEN. There are however different farmers. There are farmers that are happy that so little of the NEN remains. There are also farmers that want something with nature and like to integrate nature into their type of agricultural business. The Board reconsidered that we need to take into account our environment, to make the sector sustainable and invest in biodiversity and landscape. So we consider it is better to have a pro-active and entrepreneurial attitude*"

One farmer reacted as he said: "*indeed the time that we looked at another, and blame the other, that time has passed.*" In other words it is time to react pro-actively and seek for cooperation. A water board official responded that the water boards are exploring for ways "*how to organise our water goals together with other partners. We would like to invest in solutions where there is energy and cooperation. In a stream valley there are good possibilities to work together in nature development and water management. To keep more water into the system is also in interest for agriculture, because this spring we never had such an early spray irrigation ban.*" One of the farmer confirmed as he stated: *"So it is about synergy, how to reinforce agriculture with water and nature development*".

At the meeting, it appeared that the farmers were in favour to do something in nature protection with creative solutions instead of the imposing conditions how nature protection used to be experienced. During the interactive session, a group of farmers said that they were in favour of not harvesting or mowing as a measure to enhance biodiversity. However, they experienced the fixed mowing dates as irksome and rigid. They said: *"you do not know when it will be wet or dry. Seasons change. It is much better if we can decide locally with someone from the nature organisations when is a good time to mow, from both an agricultural and nature perspective"*. This citation reveals that people like to have self-control or a good cooperation locally in order to undertake nature management. The citation also says something about how farmers perceive nature: Not makeable, but spontaneous and having surprising effects. Farmers argued at the evening that certain rules should be open for discussion at the moment the natural system is different as expected. In general, farmers were in favour of other arrangements to organise nature management as it would give them more power of self-control and it would enable a tailored regional nature protection in cooperation with parties. For some farmers, however, it was still difficult to think creatively out-of-the-box as was illustrated by some farmers who requested to be paid for nature management with governmental subsidies. In other words, they made themselves dependent on governmental subsidy streams instead of focusing on smart entrepreneurial combinations and possible cooperation between social parties in order to earn money for nature management.

In general, the practice of the ZLTO to offer another, more entrepreneurial NEN can be read as an act of identification with the DIY-Nature discourse. With the offer the ZLTO wants to realize a new innovative way of nature protection, i.e. with multifunctionality, entrepreneurship and cooperation with other parties, in order to retain self-control and organisation in the region and with the people in the region.

5.2.5. 'The Responsible Soil Initiative' (IBB): 'Productive Landscape'

The 'Responsible Soil Initiative' ('*Initiatief Bewust Bodemgebruik*', hereafter IBB) is an initiative that aims to stimulate conscious and sustainable soil practices. The initiative is built around so-called 12 ambassadors from different disciplines who come together approximately 2 times a year to discuss inspirational topics. I attended a workshop at the IBB conference in October 2011. The workshop addressed the changes in nature policy and how nature and agriculture could deal with this.

Both the ambassador for nature Nel Sangers (Staatsbosbeheer) and the ambassador for agriculture Hans Huijbers (ZLTO) were present at the workshop. The actors at the workshop were motivated to search for new arrangements to cooperate together and organise multifunctional land use. One of the conclusion of the workshop was that both agriculture and nature would have to let go of the strict spatial segregation and look beyond the spatial borders of their properties for opportunities. As formulated by Nel Sangers (State Forest Service): "*The essence is to go back and look at nature and landscape as part of the environment. I aim to create a conducive environment for such a perspective together with other partners. So let's step out of our roles as owners and managers, and look the landscape, who can do what and where, and who needs what?"* Hans Huijbers (ZLTO) stressed that "*agriculture and nature are no opponents, but allies in the rural area. It is about value and values. One has to realise that rigid functional separation has led to an higher decrease in biodiversity. We need to uphold a few basic values, and simultaneously look for financial carriers. We need to protect Natura 2000 sites but let us look for ways in which these sites can maintain themselves, with a significant recreational function for instance, or the subtraction of warming and cooling processes from the soil. So how do we create profit, not as a goal in itself, but to support nature management.*"

The workshop stressed that society had to organise itself in order to get a balanced nature management and that we have to look at a landscape from an integrative viewpoint, recognizing the services it produces for humans and the responsibility of humans to take care of the landscape. In that sense we should as stated by Hans Huibers "*move away from the defensive spatial planning practices and focus on development-oriented spatial planning. We have to discuss an innovative strategy in cohesion with the environment, the people and nature.*"

The workshop agreed that the organisation of the rural area is at the crossroads and that it is time to look at the landscape in its totality, and not at the small separate pieces that make up the landscape. At this workshop discursive elements of the DIY-nature discourse can be recognised such as: landscape, mutual services, cooperation, smart combinations. This workshop was the inspiration for the creation of the Green Deal 'Productive Landscape' (next section: 5.2.6).

5.2.6. The Green Deal Biodiversity: Productive Landscape

The ministry of EL&I made 59 Green Deals with societal , business and public organisations in order to stimulate bottom-up processes from civil society around sustainability. Barto Piersma (helicopter interview) from the Ministry of EL&I comments on the Green Deals as follows:

"*Those that believe in the makeable society find it terrible. The Green Deals are initiatives that just bubble up and no one knows if the total realizes what we all want to achieve. While at the same time all those big reports and plans did not contribute per definition to the realization of those goals. You see two worlds. The interesting part is that the NEN makes still part of the world of makeability, and now during this big turn, we say no to big master plans, which is a kind of liberal idea: that individuals have to take their responsibility, actually to have their freedom. Responsibility is more CDA-like .*"

The phenomenon of the Green Deals can be placed in light of a neoconservative - liberal Cabinet that wants to stimulate more entrepreneurship and social responsibility within civil society. As stated at the government website, the Cabinet wants to be partner in social and sustainable issues which due to multiple reasons were difficult to solve. The Green Deal therefore seeks creativity and urgency in civil society to solve unresolved matters. The Green Deal I was involved in for my research, was made between EL&I, Staatsbosbeheer and LTO. The idea of the Green Deal 'Productive Landscape' was born at the workshop at the initiative IBB with the ambassadors Nel Sangers from Staatsbosbeheer and Hans Huibers from ZLTO. With CLM, I had the opportunity to be become part of the project team and in that way observe the articulations of people around future nature management activities.

The objective of the Green Deal 'Productive Landscape' is to integrate nature into regional bottom-up processes from a systems perspective. The systems perspective in this case is not the same as is meant with the ecosystem theory but includes the entire landscape, including the social, economic and geophysical aspects. With the Green Deal it is envisioned that people look for connections to integrate these aspects and make 'smart' combinations. At one of the first project team meetings, an official from ZLTO, told us that "*LTO wants to support the line of thought of the NEN, but not per definition its form*". This articulation emphasises the importance of connectivity, but also that this can be realised in a different way. In other words, the Green Deal wants to stimulate integral land use with multiple functions from a systems approach. And it wants to do this outside of the formal spatial planning regime because "*when dynamics is*

Smart combination (Jan Heijkoop)

"It is about an extra step in the implementation process, a deepening of transition. An example is polder Oukoop. The classic method would entail that you rise the water table and with some leasing contract to an ANV try to make nature. Another way is a combination of nature development, agricultural use and recreation: From the ditches to three meters inland you start to create conditions for nature quality. At the meadow cows graze and agricultural practice can continue. In that way one creates a landscape where around the ditches there is a huge diversity of nature, that has many connections, as the ditches are all connected. The landscape thus maintains

Figure 13 Example of Smart Combinations as told by Jan Heijkoop (helicopter interview)

And then with some recreational routes, so that people can explore and enjoy the countryside. That is a smart combination of functionality. This design started taking into account the two different perspectives: agriculture and nature, which is a totally different approach than before. Before it was: we make nature and then look which farmers want to manage nature. Now the farmer's responsibility goes a step further. Previously it was a form of outsourcing, now it is a principal different matter of mutual responsibility: a creative process of farmers, ecologist and advisors.

laid in official plans, all movement stagnates" (Wim Dijkman, CLM). As an official from Agentschap stated "*it is necessary to look beyond ownership and boundaries and look how all the functions and services can be integrated in one landscape*". The Green Deal aims to accelerate such cooperation between agriculture and nature by investigating and supporting different bottom-up processes around several themes and subsequently expand these lessons nationally in forms of workshops and study clubs. The Green Deal wants to work along three common themes:

1. Land use at the interface of nature and agriculture

Instead of presuming makeability and spatial separation, the Green Deal envisions to look at the physical environment (the water- and soil system) and from that starting point investigate what type of multifunctional land use can serve the natural and agricultural values.

2. Organising cooperation

Nature management and a multifunctional landscape is of interest to all the people in the surrounding. The Green Deal wants to support the organisation of local collaborations that are able and motivated to have a role in managing the landscape in an integral way.

3. Financial arrangements with cooperation

Cooperation in a nature area also entails that it should be clear which services have a cost and benefit component. The aim is to connect these services and see whether smart combinations can be made.

To begin with, four case study sites (Westerkwartier, Oldematen, Westelijke Langstraat and Eilandpolder) were selected that show energy and willingness to make progress in multifunctional land use and cooperation. Together with the project team, I made exploratory field visits to three case study sites in order to analyse the ambitions, bottle necks, the need of the people in the area and added value of the Green Deal. The analysis of these field visits is discussed in the following three sections: 5.2.7, 5.2.8 and 5.2.9. In general, the Green Deal talks in articulations that are part of the DIY-nature discourse: multifunctionality, landscape, cooperation, smart combinations and entrepreneurship.

5.2.7. Oldematen: Natura 2000 site in Overijssel

The Oldematen is a nature development area (mainly Natura 2000) in the Province of Overijssel. State Forest Service is the owner of the area and wants to delegate responsibility of the lease contracts to the recently established agri-environmental group Horst & Maten. This action coheres with the business plan of Staatsbosbeheer and strategies to give more responsibility to the region. The Province of Overijssel aims to stimulate more private nature management in their new coalition agreement, which also coheres with the political ambition of decentralisation, local responsibility and entrepreneurship of the national government. The three parties, ANV, Staatsbosbeheer and Province, requested a mediator that would support the process of exploring and creating a new system for the nature management of the Oldematen. CLM was chosen to support the process.

Figure 14 Frame in the Field: transformed nature area Oldematen, the symbol of the frame (first for agricultural landscape, now for redesigned nature)

From January till April 2012, I was actively engaged in the process of creating a new management system for the Oldematen-area with Staatsbosbeheer, the ANV Horst and Maten, and the Province of Overijssel. My involvement meant that I could get in-depth insight into the life worlds of the actors of the Oldematen

and how actors perceived to go about nature management in their region. The first conversations were individual conversations with the ANV, State Forest Service and the Province of Overijssel. This step in the research would allow to get insights into the acts of identification of the actors in the field regards nature management and protection. The observed acts of identifications around articulatory practices are outlined below for each party: Province, the ANV Horst & Maten and Staatsbosbeheer.

The first visit was to the Province of Overijssel with the objective to explore the ambitions, wishes and perceived bottlenecks in the collaborative process with Staatsbosbeheer and the ANV Horst & Maten concerning the nature management of the Natura 2000 site Oldematen. When we asked about their interest participating in this project the following answer was given:

"*The Province has a new role in nature management. Oldematen is a large area with Natura 2000 goals. We see chances to do something different as regards nature management; with the ANV and farmers, to give them a role and to do something at the same time with the expenses and finding cooperation in management*".

The reason for the participation of the Province in the project is to enhance and stimulate innovative management practices, which in this perspective means to give local farmers responsibility over a Natura 2000 area. During the conversation some more articulations were illuminated that concerned financial expenses and societal support:

"*We have the hope that we can decrease nature management subsidies with at least 25%. We want to undertake nature management with the farmers, which will be cheaper. The project is about the product in combination with the management costs. We would like to investigate alternative ways that will decrease management costs.*"

"*Overall in Staphorst, Natura 2000 and nature in general is a sensitive topic with the agricultural sector. We want to keep the agricultural sector content. And with innovative projects such as Oldematen we would like to make a good cheer. On top of that, because the ANV will take charge in the nature management, it causes more trust and acceptance around nature in the region*".

Thus, for the Province it is about innovative management practices that would result in less financial expenses and increased societal support as farmers would undertake nature management. When talking about the nature goals in the Natura 2000 area, it became clear that the Province would remain the authoritative decision-making body in the nature goals including for their spatial distribution. In the new cooperative construction with Staatsbosbeheer and the ANV, the Province perceived that Staatsbosbeheer was the responsible party to check whether the nature goals had been achieved. In other words, there was not an ambition at first to change nature goals or cooperate in the planning process with farmers regard this topic. However, it also became evident that the design of the area – how it should look like with what kind of nature – was still under construction and under discussion. During the intensive cooperative process of several months, farmers frequently mentioned the discrepancy of the nature goals with their environment. A farmer for instance told: "*I do not get it why at this location there should come meadow bird protection. This is not a good location, because of all those trees and shrubs with many birds of prey*". The design of the area was still very much approached from a technocratic and makeable perspective, i.e. the nature development discourse. At the end of the process the ANV managed to join the negotiation table to discuss certain nature types and their spatial distribution, which entailed that certain nature types would be distributed according to the DIY-Nature discourse: from a landscape perspective. The mutual process in cooperation resulted that farmers were perceived as equal partners, and they were invited to join the design table. This is an articulatory practice were equality and having the right of say is incorporated in the planning practice. In other words, it seems that the people moved towards acts of identification with the DIY-discourse discourse.

After the visit to the Province, we went to the ANV Horst & Maten for a first acquaintance. The answers farmers gave us when we asked why the ANV wanted to undertake this particular project were:

- "*Then we have more right of say in nature management, which goes in dialogue, being more a direct partner of the total*" (self-control)
- "*It fits with the objectives of an ANV; it is about management of nature and farming* (multiple functions)
- "*We can manage the area better and cheaper*" (ability and economy)

The main reason for the ANV to take part in the project is because of wishes for self-control, attachment to the area, their view that farming and nature go together and because they feel skilled and equipped to undertake the management tasks. In other words: it is their area for which they feel ownership. These articulations are all acts of identification with the DIY-Nature discourse. The farmers feel attached to the Oldematen area, as became clear when one farmer explicated that costs do not matter at all:

"*I do not care about how many it costs me to manage the area. We are born and raised here, and we are till our knees in the peat. Our parents have worked themselves to the bones. My father always said: Kiddo, we made this area!*"

Figure 15 meeting room at the ANV - above the stable

Bottom-line: farmers feel attached to their environment and want to have self-control. As stated by another farmer in the case they would have responsibility for the Oldematen area: "*Then it is our own garden, with own rules. We cannot say anything to another person if it is not our own garden. So it is in our interest to want this.*" The farmers perceive the area in its totality. The first idea was that the ANV would coordinate the lease contracts for grassland management, but already in our first meeting it became clear that the farmers had the aspiration to undertake management in an integral way, based on the totality of the landscape:

- "*If we manage the grasslands, then we also have a right of say in management of the ditches and the hedgerows*"

- "*One should not want to separate the management of grasslands and ditches*"

During an excursion, some farmers mentioned that they perceived to manage the area in such a way that they could use biomass (peat and timber from the hedges) for bio-energy purposes. As the chairmen of the ANV explained: "*There is huge potential in this area. We want to integrally manage it, and for the rest-products we need to find an efficient way to use it for other purposes such as bio-energy*". This articulation is about multifunctional landscape use. Later in the process, this aspect of integral and full responsibility by farmers was illustrated in an interactive participatory exercise in a setting of focus groups with actors from Staatsbosbeheer, The Province and The ANV (see figure 16). Figure 16 shows an interactive game of

first (yellow) and second (orange) responsibilities in nature management of Oldematen. The flap-over of the ANV (left figure) consist mainly of first responsibilities while the middle figure of State Forest Service contains in general of second responsibilities. This meant that although the ANV would have first responsibility, they could still contact and make use of advice from Staatsbosbeheer. The right figure concerns the Province. As one governmental official expressed at the end of the interactive exercise this was exactly the result he was aiming for: less work and financial expenses for the Province.

At the ANV meeting we also discussed different nature types, and farmers indicated that one could do their best in management, however nature can be unpredictable:

"*Also another management type can develop than one thought of before. Then you managed a management type for 6 years, and according to the type it needs to have yellow flowers, but after 5 years there are only purple and white flowers.*"

"*Sometimes it is just impossible to bring that one flower back. Therefore we can put utmost exertion into management, but we should not be punished if we do not deliver on the result*"
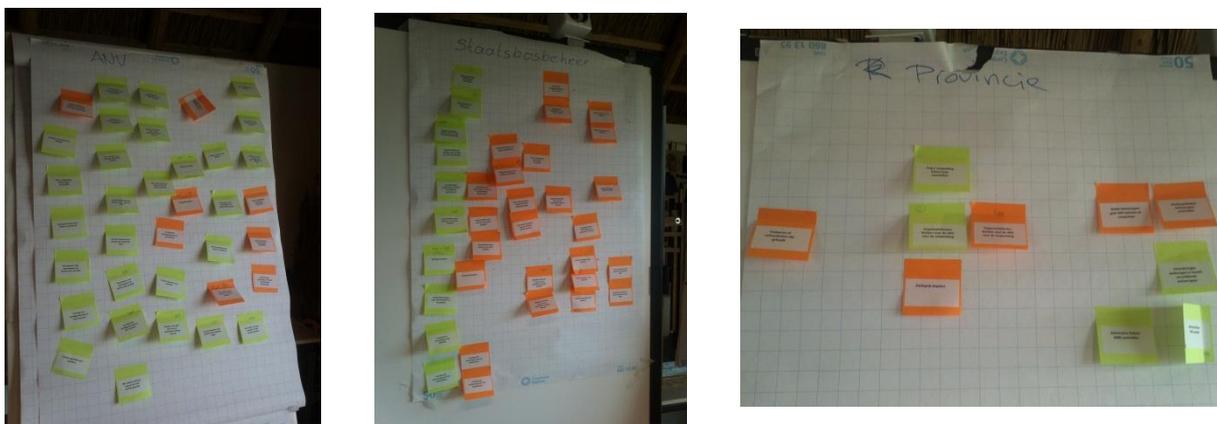

Figure 16 Interactive excercice with first and second responsibilities for the nature management in Oldematen: left ANV, middle State Forest Service and right Province

These articulations are directed to the makeability of nature, which according to their view is not entirely possible, as nature is spontaneous and dynamic. Hence, another act of identification with the articulatory practices of the DIY-nature discourse.In short, famers indicated that they like to have self-control over the area as they feel attached to and know the area best, they perceive the area in its totality and multiple functions, and aim to do their best in nature management while taking into account that nature cannot always be steered in the right direction.

After the two visits to the Province and ANV, we visited Staatsbosbeheer. Staatsbosbeheer was fond of the idea to explore if nature management done by an ANV would raise societal support and simultaneously achieve a good nature management, that is reaching a high nature quality. What Staatsbosbeheer wants to achieve with this project is to connect more with farmers, cooperate together with people in the region, arrange local responsibility, and have one contact point in the region. As the district head of Staatsbosbeheer said: "*through social anchoring of nature management in the region, responsibility and ownership are created. In that sense, it does not matter who is more cheaper, but who can and undertakes nature management the best.*" Staatsbosbeheer stated that they wanted to organise everything in a good order, because at the end they are the one responsible for a good nature quality. Therefore, a good and open control system had to be arranged, so that there would be knowledge on how nature quality was progressing. In their view, this control was not necessarily to be undertaken by Staatsbosbeheer, but it could also be

done by another party or the ANV. *"It is just a matter of good organising"* said the district head of Staatsbosbeheer. The project in their point of view would be a process in time, as they could transfer more knowledge of nature management to the ANV: "*It will be a process of mutual learning, as we have a lot of ecological knowledge which the ANV should have as well*". One of the other strategies of State Forest Service as discussed in section 5.2.3. is to safeguard nature quality through cooperating more with farmers that have heart and passion for nature. In this case, Staatsbosbeheertate Forestry aimed to find these type of farmers in the agri-environmental group ANV Horst and Maten. Staatsbosbeheer is identifying with articulatory practices of the DIY-nature discourse.

In general, the process of the Oldematen can be typified with the keywords of local responsibility, innovative management, multiple functions. Although there are still some details that need to be figured out, there is willingness among all three parties to collaborate and make nature management again responsible to the people in the region. This entire process can be regarded as an act of identification with articulatory practices of the DIY-nature discourse.

Oldematen	
categories	articulations
organisation	*new role*
organisation	*something different*
organisation	*innovative management*
organisation	*regional responsibility*
organisation	*local farmers*
financial	*cheaper*
financial	*alternative ways*
social	*societal support*
social	*self-efficacy*
social	*self-control*
local knowledge	*skilled*
integration	*totality*
integration	*multicuntional landscape*

5.2.8.   Westerkwartier: part of former NEN / wet axis in Groningen

Westerkwartier is a small-scale landscape and a former NEN area in the Province of Groningen. The Westerkwartier belongs to the former wet axis, the Northern robust corridor that aims to connect various nature areas. During the time of the research, it was still unclear if the Westerkwartier would become part of the new NEN. This implied that there were still many uncertainties about financial revenues and opportunities among the local people in the area. How would people deal which such a change?

Figure 17 Location of Westerkwartier near the City of Groningen

In light of the Green Deal *'Productive Landscape'* I went with the project team to Westerkwartier for a first exploratory visit. We met with a group of people from Staatsbosbeheer, agri-environmental groups, educational representatives and municipalities. They told us that in the past agricultural lands had to be converted to nature which they was felt happened in a top-down way. People in the region did not accept that, as one farmer told us: "*in*

the past, land had to be bought which had to be converted into nature. Together with the people in the region we decided to organise this in another joint way. In 2011 we came up with the idea to create a green cooperation. Our ambition is to have self-control and steer the area together in the form of a cooperation". The group of people has plans to unite in a cooperation, with the principle that everyone who wants to cooperate has to <u>bring</u> something in order to <u>get</u> something. As the District head of Staatsbosbeheer explained: *"the idea is that we as Staatsbosbeheer have to bring in our knowledge and nature management funds into the cooperation. That is for Staatsbosbeheer an unorthodox way of organising. You get weird reactions such as: Hey, there are farmers there too! But the idea is to do this together, which makes it most powerful: collective values and common causes*". Although an unorthodox practice for Staatsbosbeheer, the act of actually joining this cooperation, connects more to the call for self-efficacy and empowerment. Through this act of identification, Staatsbosbeheer is taken up in the DIY-nature discourse instead of being positioned as an outsider. The ambition of the people from Westerkwartier is to jointly manage the area with several parties and multiple functions. Some practices are already on-going. An example is a primary school that manages a nature area of Staatsbosbeheer. In return, the school is able to give their pupils a grass-root education on nature and nature management. As well, farmers and nature organisations work together in nature management as the site manager of Staatsbosbeheer stated: "*We reason without looking at ownership boundaries. We think: who is best in managing this type of nature? Than it is that person or entity that will undertake the management. It is about taking care of our landscape and living environment and for that we need to collaborate as partners.*" This citation illustrates that people have ownership and attachment to the area, and that through the articulatory practice emphasising collective values such as landscape or living environment, people start to collaborate as partners. The people in the Westerkwartier still experienced one bottle neck slowing down their cooperation: the Province. It appeared to be difficult to get credibility from the Province for their idea and ambition to manage the area in a joint way. As a representative of the municipality stated: "*We like to get a position with the Province, so that they give us space to cooperate and act*". In order to make any steps in this process, the people of Westerkwartier considered help and support of the Green Deal would be effective in getting more credits at the Provincial level. The focus of the Cooperation in the Westerkwartier is laid on collective values which according to their memorandum of cooperation are the people (i.e. cooperation, entrepreneurship, social solidarity) and the landscape (i.e. small-scale character, enjoyable living environment, rich cultural history and valuable for biodiversity and ecology). The concept of landscape appears to bind people and nature together as landscape stands nearby people and people like to take care of their environment. The people of Westerkwartier wanted, like the NEN ZLTO offer (see section 5.2.4.), to offer new ways to organise the NEN in their area. It appears that there is an energetic willingness among people to take charge of their living environment and organise nature management in mutual cooperation. This willingness also came back in the Green Manifest that social parties of agriculture and nature organisations recently signed for the Province of Groningen. The manifest states that nature and agriculture can reinforce each other: "*There where nature and agriculture border each other, parties have to seek jointly for possibilities to mutual reinforce each other. For example through have cattle on nature areas and that farmers on adjacent land will conduct nature management.*" The document talks about so-called coupling chances: "*Where there are areas with a sectorial assignment for water, agriculture, landscape/nature, energy or recreation, and there are chances to couple multiple functions through a bottom-up process*".

In general, people in this area have energy to work together and to take care of their environment. Both farmers and State Forest Service request for self-control of the government to get space for organising nature management in the Westerkwartier in a collaborative and multifunctional way, based on an integral view of landscape. This is exemplified by fig18: farmers and forestry services start to cooperate (blue arrows) and ask the government for space (red arrows) in order to organise their living environment. These are acts of identification with articulatory practices of the DIY-nature discourse. The keywords of this process are: self-control, joint organisation, multiple functions.
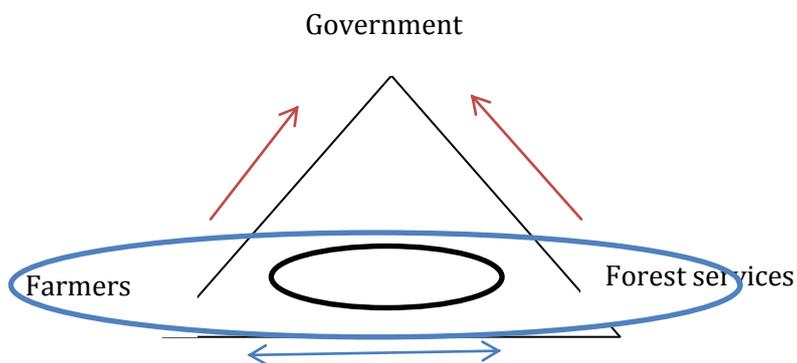
Figure 18 start of collaborative partnership between farmers and nature organisations asking for space from the government

Westerkwartier	
categories	articulations
organisation	*another joint way*
organisation	*green cooperation*
organisation	*self-control*
cooperation	*jointly managing*
integration	*landscape*
integration	*living environment*
attachment	*take care*
cooperation	*collaborate as partners*
integration	*collective values*
integration	*people - landscape*

5.2.9. Westelijke Langstraat: Natura 2000 site in Brabant

The Westelijke Langstraat is an area in the Province of North Brabant that was part of the NEN and which is in the current political conjuncture still a Natura 2000 site. CLM has some history in the area, as a few years ago (2008 -2009) there were participation problems with the farmers in the area around the design of the Westelijke Langstraat. The previous design revealed that a substantial amount of the top soil layers (around half a meter) had to be removed of the agricultural lands, and that accordingly these lands had to be converted into nature through private nature management or through selling agricultural lands to the government. With the latter option, State Forest Services would become responsible for nature management. However, according to the previous land-design (Arcadis, 2008) there would be limited opportunities for private nature management, as is illustrated by the following citation:

"*there will not be any room for normal agricultural practices in the future and it will not be possible to undertake any form of agricultural nature management. There are limited opportunities for private nature management.*"

Put it differently, this plan did not take into account any local agricultural interests or other land use options that could serve nature goals. The design used to be embedded in the nature development discourse, i.e. aspects of makebility, top-down, ecological objectives first, opting for several technocratic construction activities in order to create the natural conditions for nature development. The design also assumed that all agricultural land in the area had to be converted to nature in line with the spatial planning regime. The first map (fig 19) considers the desired nature target types of the Westelijk Langstraat, which concerns a mix of marshes, humid nutrient poor grasslands, flower rich and marsh marigold grasslands, water, and several types of forests. The second map (fig. 20) concerns the manifold ownership titles. The green colour is land belonging to Staatsbosbeheer and the blue colour considers agricultural land. There was a request of government to convert these blue agricultural lands to the nature via private nature management practices.

However, as the options were perceived one-sided and not flexible, the farmers disagreed with the plans and left the negotiation table. According to the chairman of the ANV Slagenland (informal interview): "*there was nothing possible in the area any longer according to the Arcadis plan. And then the absurd idea to remove the top soil, after all these years of investment! We did not agree with that, so we left the working group.*" The plan and planning process did not take into account the ownership and attachment people experience with the area, and that they felt the technocratic practices were perceived as a threat to their identity. As a consequence, CLM was called in to investigate under which conditions the farmers wanted to participate. With support of CLM, the farmers came up with an alternative plan (CLM, 2009) that stressed a different land use system of crops (lupine, chicory and clover) that would decrease the phosphate level in the soil. The extensive land use system would serve the water quality for the Natura 2000 goals. From this research (CLM, 2009) it became evident that farmers preferred to undertake nature management on agricultural land instead of converting land into nature as regards the spatial planning regime. However, if there would be land available somewhere else which could be used for agricultural production, farmers would consider converting their land to nature for private nature management. The next step was to discuss and negotiate this alternative plan with the Province and State Forest Service. This process came nevertheless to a standstill due to uncertainties created by the governmental decisions on nature policy.

Current visits to the ANV and Staatsbosbeheer

Within the Green Deal 'Productive Landscape' the bottom-up idea of the farmers was taken up as one of the case studies that needed further elaboration and support. At the conference of IBB where the idea for productive landscape was born, also a farmer of the Westelijke Langstraat was present. The farmer expressed his dream: "*I would very much like to manage the entire area [Westelijke Langstraat] including the orchids combined with my agricultural practices. If I think economically I should have left and go farm*

somewhere else, but I do not like to go away, and therefore I will organise myself in line with the changing environment". This citation reveals a motive to self-organise the environment of the Westelijke Langstraat that includes natural values and agricultural practices, and which reveals a deep attachment with the area. To explore the current state of mind, I conducted several visits to the Westelijke Langstraat which included individual visits to the ANV, State Forest Service and focus group sessions with both groups. These visits made clear that the ANV and farmers were still up for the alternative plan, however they indicated to experience a certain project tiredness: "*This is already the fourth or fifth time that we start all over again. We started in 1994. We have a great plan, and then when there are no euro's, it is bye bye. We have started with enthusiasm and passion, with the plan 'Boeren aan zet' there was societal support. If this time it does not succeed again, we request to have peace for at least 15 years*". This kind of project tiredness of local people was characteristic for many nature development projects, as these used to be very bureaucratic and technocratic in character, causing for delays which would kill societal support for nature and nature management (see also chapter four). Staatsbosbeheer was also very much interested in a collective management plan as proposed by the farmers. On the focus group evening, the district head of Staatsbosbeheer told us that State Forest Service and the farmers "*have a mutual burden in this time. The challenge is to make such a proposal together that the Province cannot reject it*". From both sides there was willingness and interest to make a collective management plan as a local offer to the Province. Like the Westerkwartier, both State Forest Service and farmers aimed to jointly undertake the management of the area and to create an offer to the Province which would result in space in the Westelijke Langstraat to organise nature management in a different way. Hence, there is a bottom-up request for room to collectively organise nature management in a different way. The focus group evening also functioned as a social bonding, as it enabled farmers and Staatsbosbeheer to get to know each other better and understand each other's points of view. The evening also revealed that State Forest Service in general is much more open to ideas and alternatives than a few years ago. The district head of Staatsbosbeheer stated:

"State Forest Service has been a dark green organisation for the last 15 to 20 years. If the rule was: not mowing before the 15th of June, then no-one could mow before the 15th of June, despite the goals. In that sense, State Forest Service has been a rigid organisation. Now there is a transition going on. From the viewpoint of the farmer and of a nature organisation we have to enter into dialogue. There is of course for everyone juridification, but while taking that into account, a lot is possible."

The evening continued discussing several issues around uncertainties in management of State Forest Service and contracts, such as in what stage manure would be possible, how the lease renting of the ground would transfer with the fertility of the ground, etc.. State Forest Service turned out to be proponent of a collaboration with the farmers in the Westelijke Langstraat, as they do not foresee any real discrepancies, which illustrates the following citation:

 "*It is about understanding the water system. It is about the quality of the water, more than the quantity per se. We need to know at what times of the year we need water. We need different amounts of seepage water in summer than in winter. It is very easy to think immediately in contrasts and contradiction. But with less water of good quality that fits with land use management, than you do not have to stand in each other's way*".

Other issues that were discussed, for example the extensive land use in relation with agricultural potential. Normally lease prices stay the same while the agricultural potential decreases. Indeed, State Forest Service admitted that "*there is a discrepancy. Those terrains that we manage need to harbour special kind of vegetation. The way to reach that is attenuation. That means useful grass for agricultural purposes is decreasing over time. This of course is a confirmation of successful management for nature purposes. To discuss this so easy and frank would not have been possible 10 years ago. We have to see and explore how we can deal with this issue, in such a way that it makes sense for both parties*" People take each other's interests more into account which creates openness and understanding for each other and more willingness to search for creative solutions. Both parties were identifying with articulatory practices of the DIY-nature

discourse. During the evening one farmer suddenly said*: Why have we not done this [conversation] much earlier?"* expressing a general feeling that the evening facilitated a mutual understanding for each other. Apparently, it takes an open attitude and room for each other's interests, to come closer together. At the end of the evening, both parties agreed that the conversation has been open en transparent. Farmers stated that they were "*happy that State Forest Service became more accessible, as 10 years ago it was a thick wall*". Everyone supported the idea to develop a collective management plan together, which both parties would mutually hand over to the Province.

It seems that the process of the Westelijke Langstraat is about to enter a stage of innovative land use management in collective responsibility taking into account interests of both parties. The identify with articulatory practices of the DIY-nature discourse. Societal actors move and request space to the government to explore opportunities for this collective management plan like in the Westerkwartier and Oldematen.

Westelijke Langstraat	
categories	articulations
integration	*landuse system*
organisation	*self-organisation*
organisation	*collective management plan*
organisation	*collaboration*
organisation	*space for experiment*
organisation	*collective responsibility*
integration	*multifunctions*

Keywords for this case studies would be: cooperation, collective responsibility and different land use system serving multiple functions (nature and agriculture).

Figure 21 Westelijke Langstraat (own picture)

5.2.10. Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden: former robust corridor in the Province Utrecht

Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden (UVW) is a peat meadow area that was designed to be a robust corridor called the wet axis, which later was translated into the Green Spine with the aim to integrate agriculture, nature, water and recreation. The location of the Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden lies in between two big nature areas, and therefore functions as an important ecological corridor. CLM had the assignment to investigate with local farmers which way the Green Spine could be integrated into the area. However, due to the governmental decisions in 2010, this process came to a standstill.

From former reports[44], it became clear that farmers were not amused about the Green Spine plan in the area, as the following citation illustrates: "*Again a new claim is been put on their land, which entails less space for agriculture and that space is already small. This plan is been perceived as a huge threat*". The plan was perceived as too much nature-oriented, not taking into account other functions. As Bart Krol (Deputy Head of the Province of Utrecht) in an interview stated:

Figure 22 The UVW Robust Corridor divided in part 1 (green), part 2 (yellow - Green Contour) (Akkoord van Utrecht, 2012)

"*The term Green Spine is too limited if you want to address multiple functions such as agriculture, nature, soil and water. With the Green Spine something nature-oriented is suggested. Today, I would not call it that way, because it creates protests. One should go from 1. the Green Spine to 2. the Green Contour to 3. the problems of the peat meadows that addresses all the questions of water, soil, nature and agriculture.*"

The implementation of the Green Spine came to a standstill when the government decided to erase the robust corridors in 2010. As a response, the local committee[45] came together to discuss different strategies to realize the corridor-idea in alternative ways. I had the opportunity to attend that meeting. At the meeting several strategies were discussed that were thought of as good options to realize a kind of ecological connectivity: 1.shift the borders of the NEN, 2.smart combinations, 3. agricultural 4.nature management, 5.differently realization of goals, 6.developing of land estates, 7. agreement between governments with land exchange. All these strategies were alternative ways of realizing the NEN instead of purchasing land and convert that into marshy nature. The local committee that consisted of interest groups had a desire to continue with the connection because so much has already been invested. However, new in this articulation was the way people perceived a connection could be achieved. These can be regarded as acts of identification with articulatory practices of DIY-nature discourse.

Figure 23 work in progress: different strategies on the UVW to realize a form of connectivity (own picture)
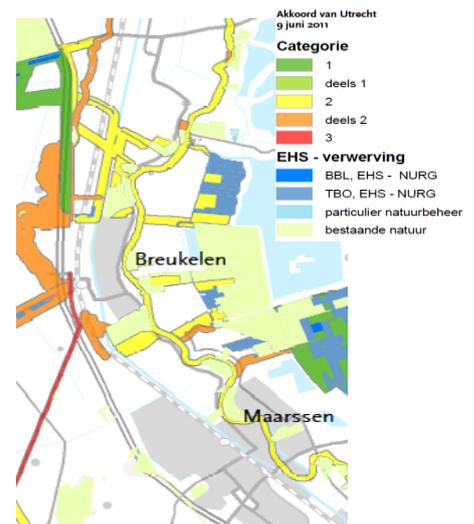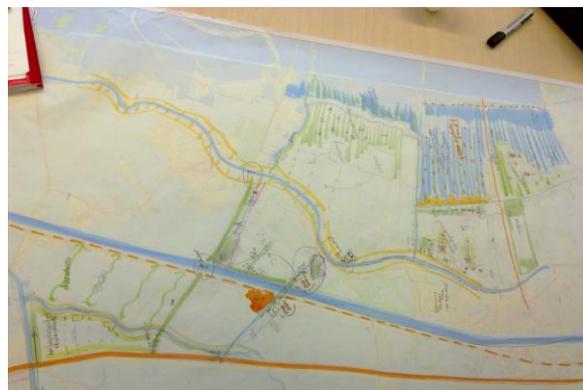

[44] Procesverslag Groene Ruggengraat Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden, 2010
[45] This local commitee was created in 2009 and consisted of local interest groups (polder model:) municipalities, waterboards, LTO, ANVs, State Forest Service, Nature Federation, Cultural History, provincies.

The process of re-thinking the realization of a robust corridor in different ways by the local committee fed into the provincial NEN-review discussion, which ended into the 'Agreement of Utrecht'. The Agreement of Utrecht entails a reshuffling of the former NEN into three categories:

> 1. 1500 hectares of priority areas - predominantly Natura 2000 areas
>
> 2. 3000 hectares of Green Countour - areas important for the former NEN, but the government has no financial means for realization. Agriculture and nature can be developed inspired by private initiatives. No spatial shadows, development is possible, however no big infrastructural or building constructions.
>
> 3. 1500 acres for which the NEN destination does not count any longer.

The Green Spine which used to be part of the NEN, was erased by the national government and subsequently placed in the Green Contour by the Province of Utrecht (see fig 21, category 2 yellow). Bart Krol (Deputy of the Province of Utrecht) assigned the task to the local committee to find out what creativity, ambitions and needs were present with the inhabitants of the Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden to contribute to a coherent vision on nature quality, agriculture, water and recreation.

I had the opportunity to participate in the various meetings where CLM was inquiring about the needs, wishes and ambitions of the people in the changed context. There were in total four focus group sessions with local actors based on different sub-areas: Ark, Vecht, Polder Mijnden and Proosdij. Fig 24 presents the four subareas and the new Green Contour after bottom-up processes. A brief review of the meetings is given below.
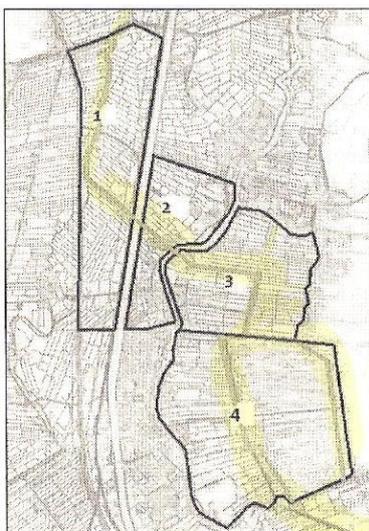
Figuur 1. Verschillende deelgebieden (rood) waardoor het traject van de Groene Ruggengraat (groen) loopt

Figure 24 left the four subareas, right the new designed Green Contour using landscape elements

1. Ark

This area lays in between two infrastructural bodies: the A2 highway and the Amsterdam Rijnkanaal. The area is important for its strategic location connecting to the adjacent nature area. At the meeting it was envisioned that some smart combinations could be made with agriculture for a higher nature potential. In the Angstel river there are still some banks that have potential for wet grasslands and marshy nature. Some farmers are interested in undertaking agricultural nature management in the ditches to enhance marshy nature if something can be done with land consolidation to improve their agricultural structure. This is an example of exchange of services which appeared to be much more appreciated than "*being dependent of government*" as a farmer said. The old railway crossing the area, and formerly over the A2 high way, was also thought of being a good opportunity to create wet nature along the ditches. This is an example of making use of old landscape structures (compared to the former plan of the Green Spine, this landscape element was not used). The proposal would consist of several wet banks, nature quality in the ditches and smart use of the old railroad. Using the existing landscape structures, the area would look like fig 24 instead of the 140 hectares of marsh and wet grasslands as was aimed for in the former design.

2. Vecht

This area has several farms and new and old land estates from the 17th and 18th century. The owners of the land estates said to be interested in some wet nature development at the end of their land and along the ditches if they were able to gain some development space for construction. The famous 'red for green' approach. This location also fits well with the connection of the old rail road in area Ark. Compared to the old design, the area stays in hands of the owner, existing structures are used to realize nature quality and some other financial means; space for construction, is searched for in order for realization. This strategy is making use of the landscape and involvement of local people is searched for to realize nature goals. It seems that here again people are willing to contribute if they can get something in return: exchange of services. Instead of a large marshy area (75 ha) the same nature goals would be realised with using landscape structures (wet banks) and people in the area (old estates) willing to undertake private nature management (marshes for 5 ha).

3. Polder Mijnden

This area has a western part with agriculture and eastern part of nature, which belonged to the NEN. The eastern part area is owned by State Forest Service and the area is aimed to be a wet grassland (a big steppingstone in terms of the NEN). At the meeting, farmers said to have a shortage of land for a secure future continuity of their agricultural practices. Two options were presented and discussed at the meeting: 1. exchange of land from outside the area to the inside and 2. further cooperation with State Forest Service. The cooperation with State Forest Service entailed that lands could be exchanged so that the eastern part would entirely become nature or that farmers would integrate a wet nature type into their ditches and that they could manage the adjacent grasslands of State Forest Service. The first option to exchange lands would be rather difficult because of the high demand for land in the area, there is no land available. The cooperation of farmers with land of State Forest Service would be interesting as they could get more space (use the grasslands of Staatsbosbeheer), while for State Forest Service this would be interesting as nature quality could still be realized in the wetter parts without necessarily a removal of the top soil layer (which is also much more expensive practice) plus enhancing a natural connection in the area: through the ditches. This example is taking both needs of farmers and Staatsbosbeheer into account, which creates willingness among people to reconsider this option. The atmosphere at the meeting was however heated, as some farmers feared that the Green Contour would be a hidden NEN as the following citation illustrates:

"*The Green Contour is still green, again it is the NEN. But the Green Contour is based on voluntary principles, so we can all stop with another attempt of redesigning the polder*".

It became clear that the farmers were afraid of new spatial claims and hindrances for their agricultural expansion and development. However, another farmer said:

"*Somehow we need to organise this connection in such a way that there is a connection for nature, but that also agriculture can benefit from it.*"

State Forest Service was in favour of looking jointly for new ways and cooperation to realize a connection of wet nature that would simultaneously improve agricultural structure. Despite the heated atmosphere at the meeting, some farmers called after the meeting confirming their interest for the cooperation model as explained at the meeting. mutual servicing, with more connectivity of the wet nature and more space for agricultural practice.

4. *Polder Proosdij*

This area has a northern agricultural part and an southern nature part. The northern part has a high recreational value. To make a connection with polder Mijnden, some nature development along the water supply pipe is searched for. Again a link is made with existing landscape structures. Because of the water supply function, farmers already have a responsibility to use a certain part of their area in an extensive way. This is 1 + 1 = 3 approach; aiming to address multiple functions and goals.

In conclusion, in every sub-area of the UVW something around nature development seems to be possible, when looking smart at the landscape, talk with local people and taking into account more functions than only nature. The ambition for a robust corridor is transformed into a green and blue network running through agricultural land while addressing other themes such as agricultural structure and water quality. These ideas are acts of identification with the DIY-nature discourse.

5.2.11. Krimpenerwaard (former wet axis in South-Holland)

In October 2011, I visited people of the Province in the Krimpenerwaard, a peat meadow land in the Province of South Holland. The area used to lay in the wet axis, one of the robust corridors of the NEN, like the 'Utrechtse Vecht en Weiden' and 'Westerkwartier'. The province officials told me about the problems of realizing the wet axis, because not all the land was purchased yet. This impeded to raise the water level, and so hindered nature development to take place. The provincial officials also told they were considering to give a group of farmers responsibility over a nature area in the Krimpenerwaard. At that meeting I was invited to attend a provincial meeting a few weeks later with people active in land planning and design in the Province of South-Holland. At this provincial meeting, two policy programmes were discussed in light of the turn in Nature Policy: 'Deltanatuur' and 'Krimpenerwaard'. A short review about both programmes and how policy officials aimed to deal with these in light of the turn in nature policy.

'Deltanatuur' is a programme of the Province of South Holland that aims to bring back the dynamical tides in the Delta. The programme is a characteristic example of creating optimal conditions to enhance natural processes. One person asked at the meeting*: Why should we want to do this?* The head of the Delta programme responded: "*Because this type of nature is unique in the Netherlands, we should want to have more of it. The Netherlands is a delta country. It is better as well to not close of the water streams, because them you prevent a lot of problems such as blue algae and mud heaps.*" The provincial official said that not all hectares were purchased yet, and that due to the governmental decisions the programme was now under discussion. There was still uncertainty if the purchased, but not yet redesigned land would have to be sold or not. In order to keep the programme running and attractive for the Province South-Holland, people thought about changing the accents of the programme into the name: 'Projects in the Delta'. The aim of the new programme would be to make it more attractive for people out of the cities to recreate in the Delta area. Accents would in other words be laid down on recreational needs from citizens. Also was explicitly stated that the term 'nature' would not be in the project title or in project applications any longer as an

official stated: *"the term nature is nowadays contaminated"*. This articulation is changing the meaning of the delta programme, the focus is not on nature any longer, but on projects emphasising the delta as a valuable living environment. This latter articulation indicates that with these ideas and envisioned practices an act of identification is attempted with the DIY-Nature development discourse.

After the Delta-programme, the Krimpenerwaard programme was discussed. The Krimpenerwaard area is a polder area in the province of South-Holland. Already since 1999 the area is subject to land-use development plans. The Krimpenerwaard lays in the lower parts of the Netherlands and exists mainly of meadow peat lands. As was presented, due to agricultural needs, the water level has been lowered over the years, which stimulated soil subsidence of 5 to > 10 mm per year. The Veenweidepact is an agreement between governments, water boards, agricultural, nature and recreation organisations that considers land-use development in the Krimpenerwaard. The plan aims to develop new nature (2450 hectares), and at the same time withhold soil subsidence and improve the agricultural structure. Hence: at first sight a multifunctional plan. In previous plans, nature development was planned in the southern part of the Krimpenerwaard which means removal of the top soil layer of agricultural lands that did not have a high soil subsidence speed. Since 2005, the nature development areas were transposed to the northern part of the Krimpenerwaard that had to deal with heavy soil subsidence. The new nature would be a kind of marshy nature of around 800 hectares, as this would slow down the soil subsidence speed. The new nature would also be part of the connectivity principle as used to be placed in the wet axis, called 'the Green Spine'. The otter used to be the characteristic species for the type of wet nature foreseen, *a dystopian myth* for the nature development discourse. Apart from the marshy nature, also botanical grassland and meadow birds nature was aimed for. As told at that meeting, the province had purchased a bit more than half of the hectares (1500 hectares) over 7 years. This implied that not everything of the wet nature was realized, as not all lands were purchased, which impeded to raise the water tables. At the provincial meeting we also watched a short movie, where several actors told about the Krimpenerwaard, amongst which some farmers. After the movie, a biking tour in the Krimpenerwaard and further internet search, it became clear that although the Veenweidepct was an agreement between all parties at institutional level, it has not been without its protests locally. As one farmer said in the movie: "*I just think that the nature claim of a quarter of the Krimpenerwaard is just too heavy. If it would have been only 10%, than it is possible to arrange everything in one generation. Now it considers an entire mass migration*". As stated by the advisory board of the Veenweidepact: "*Indeed we have insufficiently considered what it means for farmers to transpose their entire family and agricultural business*". Another farmer said: "*I consciously decided to become a*

Figure 25 local protest in the Krimpenerwaard (own picture)

2

farmer, over the years I got more affinity with the area, so I would like to do everything in order to stay and continue farming". It appears that the Veenweidepact insufficiently integrated the needs and attachment of local people in the Krimpenerwaard, as is illustrated by fig 25 saying: 'Veenweidepact you have bad luck, because we do not want to go away'.

Despite the protests, there were some farmers who regarded the aspired new nature as an inspiring challenge: "*I would be very interested in managing such a piece of nature land. I also considered of converting my own land adjacent to the nature area into private nature management.*" The farmer however also pointed out that the administrative borders have been very rigid over the years which implies he has two options: to wait patiently or modify his plans. In the area also a group initiative of farmers was formed who said to have interest of managing a nature area of 500 hectares in the Krimpenerwaard. These farmers called themselves: the nature cooperation. The motive was to become more involved in the process, as one farmer told in the movie: "*I can imagine to involve farmers more into the process, apart from private nature management, there are other opportunities such as nature cooperations. Such initiatives have been under-exposed so far*". Although the Province of South-Holland aims to stimulate private initiatives of nature management, it was still in 2011 difficult for the nature cooperation to get land for nature management or permission for a pilot project: "*This is frustrating. It is something that we have dealt with since our formation. The Province encourages private initiatives from the region, however does not convert that into their policy[46]*". The above story indicated that the process of Veenweidepact has not been smooth process as there were perceptions of an inappropriate nature claim, people that did not want to move, nature-oriented farmers that got frustrated because of administrative rigid rules and delays. The change in nature policy, as said at the provincial meeting, implied that the nature ambition of the Krimpenerwaard would change. Less areas would be purchased and the nature areas of the wet axis would become less wet. As articulated by a provincial official: "*Instead of 'from black-tailed godwit to otter' the slogan will entail: 'from black-tailed godwit to dotter (marsh marigold)'*". The otter was said, needs to arrive by itself, and now nature with the characteristic marsh marigold species would be sufficient plus less expensive to realize. In that sense, the otter which was a symbol of the nature development discourse has lost the power of being a dystopian myth. Articulation above reveal that people are searching for new ways: lowering nature ambitions, more in cooperation with local people, etc. These searches indicate of acts of identification with articulatory practices between the nature development and the DIY-Nature discourse. As said by the municipal councillor of Oudekerk: "*One can choose to realize more meadow bird grasslands instead of wet nature. So no more place for the otter, but for the meadow bird. This design would cohere much more with the existing situation. On top of that, this variant could get more support from the opponents of the pact[47]*". Another component would be to involve more private initiatives such as management by farmers. At the provincial meeting the nature cooperation was mentioned as an example. The Strategy group of the Krimpenerwaard already supported this idea in 2010, when it became clear that the Province did not calculate the budget costs well: "*the farmers would take care of the development on particular pieces of land. Otherwise the Province would purchase this land[48]*".

The change in nature policy thus triggered a transition of lowering in nature ambitions, with the otter losing its dystopian power, more linked to the existing landscape structures and physics and involvement of farmers into the process. These are acts of identification with the DIY-nature discourse. Keywords of this nature planning site are: lowering nature ambition, no otter, but dotter, more involvement of farmers, self-control, ownership.

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[46] Het Kontakt, 04/01/2012 Cooperatie nog steeds zonder gronden
[47] Het Kontakt,21/02/2011, Geen plek voor otter, wel voor weidevogel
[48] De Lekstreek, 21/11/2010, Mes in pact veenweide

5.3. Conclusion

This chapter started with analysing the dislocation in the nature policy domain. The political conjuncture and economic crisis changed the contextual environment and functioned as a field of opening to the sources of discontent (as described in chapter four) to cohere into a discourse able to restructure nature policy programmes and dislocate the nature development discourse. During this field of opening, the discursive elements of the nature development discourse were articulated in such a way that they did not fit well with the nature development discourse. The chapter identified three such articulatory practices that cohered in a new counter discourse called the DIY-Nature discourse. This DIY-Nature discourse emphasises regional responsibility of local actors to take charge of their environment, perceives the environment in a multifunctional, integral way and emphasises local knowledge and stewardship of the surroundings. Fig. 26 shows the discursive elements of the nature development discourse which are now being rearticulated and transformed in meaning through articulatory practices of the DIY-Nature discourse, while elements with another meaning are emphasised, i.e. it is not the elite, but the local people and farmers that have to manage nature, it is not separation of functions, but it is about multifunctional landscape use, it is not only about ecological elite nature, but about multiple nature visions, and it is about integrating nature management into the region.

discursive elements nature development discourse		ecological focus scientific nature ecological concepts	top down implementation technocracy responsibility nature organisation	spatial segregation mono-functionality
articulatory practices 'DIY - Nature discourse'	*problimat isation*	elite nature starvation animals OVP	expensive practice elitist nature organisation disability nature organisation	mono-functional no room for other functions hindrance to ec. Developments
	emphasis	ordinary nature local knowledge moral plight take care nature stewardship	cost-effective by farmers regional responsibility ability farmers and private actors ownership self-efficacy	multifunctionality landscape services functional character entrepreneurship cooperation
Constitutive Outside: Nature Development		**landscape/environment**	**regional responsibility**	**integration functions**
		EMPOWERMENT		

Figure 26 problematisation of the nature development discourse and structuring principles of the DIY-Nature discourse

As the nature development discourse is dislocated from its dominant centre, the nature policy domain finds itself in dislocation which is attended with hegemonic struggles of discourses that seek to recapture the dominant position within the nature policy domain and actors that are seeking a stable identity. In order to get more insight into the process of identification, participant observation was undertaken at several conferences, projects and nature planning sites to observe which articulations people utter, and which acts of identification could be observed.

From the participant observation it became clear that people are looking for new ways to organise nature management. Most case studies demonstrate that people talk in terms of cooperation, multifunctionality, smart combinations and private initiatives. Fig 27. summarizes these articulations in a few keywords and points that refer to acts of identification with the DIY-nature discourse.

General conferences	National Forest Day	Initiatief Bewust Bodemgebruik	Water and Land Network
Keywords	Cooperation	Cooperation	Regional Societal Support
	Economising	Integration of Services	Economising
Projects ZLTO / State Forest Service	**Green Deal**	**ZLTO - EHS**	**Strategic Advise SBB - agriculture**
Keywords	Cooperation	Cooperation	Cooperation
	Integration	Multifunctional Land use	Regional Responsibility
	Land Use	Smart Combinations	
	Multifunctional	Entrepreneurship	
	Smart Combinations		

nature planning site	Oldematen	Westerkwartier	W. Langstraat	UVW	Krimpenerwaard
nature policy regime	*Natura 2000*	*NEN*	*Natura 2000 / NEN*	*Robust Corridor*	*Robust Corridor*
keywords	local responsibiliy	self-control	innovative land use	creativity	lower nature ambitions
	innovative nature management	joint organisation	collective responsibility	smart combinations	involvement farmers
	multiple functions	multiple land use	cooperation	local involvement	nature cooperation
	ownership	landscape	self-organisation	exchange of services	local responsibility
	self-control	collaboration	multiple functions	mutual servicing	private initiatives
	cost-effective	collective values		landscape structures	multifunctions

Figure 27 Acts of Identification from actors in the field

From the participant observations, it can be concluded that actors seek for new ways to organise nature management, e.g. they search for new functions like biomass production, cooperation with other parties, integration of services and stimulation of regional responsibility. New collaborative ways to organise nature management are thus sought and during conversations acts of identification with discursive elements of the DIY-Nature discourse were identified, i.e. bottom-up processes, landscape, smart combinations, entrepreneurship with nature, regional responsibility, multifunctionality. The several attempts and initiatives of both State Forest Service and LTO around exploring and stimulating innovative collaborative ways of organising nature management is a sign that the articulatory practices of the DIY-Nature discourse are offering identity to actors in the nature policy domain. People feel and experience that they need to organise nature management in a more multifunctional and integral way with bottom-up initiatives from the region. The farmers and Staatsbosbeheer of the first three nature planning sites, Oldematen, Westerkwartier and Westelijke Langstraat, all explicitly request the Provinces for space to organise nature management in a collaborative and integral way, with multifunctional landscape use as basis. In the Oldematen, the Province, farmers and Staatsbosbeheer have been working together to realise a collective management plan. Such a plan is also aspired by the other two nature planning sites Westerkwartier and Westelijke Langstraat, however it is still unknown what the position of the Province is in this case. What can be deducted however from current policy documents is that the Provinces are willing to stimulate private collaborative initiatives from the region.

The above articulatory practices illustrate that people seek for a new identity in the nature policy domain. Acts of identification with the DIY-Nature discourse could be illuminated during participant observation. This however does not have to say that the nature development discourse does not exists any longer. The dislocation weakened the coherence of the discursive elements of the nature development discourse, which allowed for new meanings of these 'old' discursive elements. This has been observed during participant observation. People still talk about the NEN and about realizing a kind of nature connection, alt-

hough in a different way; more landscape oriented. An example is the ZLTO officer stating to support the idea of the NEN, however not its content, by which she means the technocratic process of top-down implementation. Also farmers in several nature sites agree that a certain kind of connection needs to be established, for which they aim to use their ditches or landscape elements. The idea of makeability is thus not entirely gone, as landscape elements can be created and mankind can actively transform its surroundings. Ambitions about the kind of nature can thus be made, however not in a rigid corsage as it used to be in the nature development discourse, but with an integral and flexible gaze. People as well reckon that nature need good conditions to flourish, such as good water quality. However, this is not envisioned through purchasing land per se, but other options are searched for, such as through supportive agricultural land use. These examples show that the 'old' discursive elements of the nature development discourse are reconstructed into different meanings. In order to connect to this changed context the nature development discourse needs to begin articulating this meanings within its discursive elements.

In conclusion, what has been observed in the field were mostly acts of identification with discursive elements of the DIY-Nature discourse. Within articulatory practices some 'old' discursive elements of the nature development discourse can be recognised, that are still structuring thought and actions, however with a different content. The DIY-Nature discourse was able to cohere into a discourse, gain influence in the nature policy domain and structure thoughts and actions as demonstrated by the several acts of identification. However, as inevitable inherent in discourse analysis, this conclusion is just a temporary snapshot in time. With the fall of the Cabinet (2011), the contextual environment transformed again, so it seems that the hegemonic struggles are still on-going. What has changed however is that the social demands were united in a coherent discourse, which is still in place. This means that the nature policy domain has several discourses to deal with as they exists alongside each other. In other words, there seems not to be a hegemonic discourse (yet).

Ch. 6. Conclusion: towards a new nature management?

The research started with a description of the current turmoil in nature policy. The new Cabinet announced severe cutbacks in nature policy on nature management and on the realization of the National Ecological Network (NEN). The cutbacks implied a reconsideration of the ambitions of the NEN including the intended surface area. The national government decided to prioritise Natura 2000 areas and international commitments while in the meantime responsibility for nature management in the NEN was decentralised to the Provinces. The prioritisation on Natura 2000 and international commitments indicated that the NEN would become smaller in surface than previously meant. Prior to the Review of the NEN, the national government decided to erase the robust corridors as an official policy concept. These decisions came as a shock for most actors active in the nature policy field. However, there were also positive sounds and reactions as is elaborately described in the introductory chapter. This begged questions such as: What was going on? Why was this happening? This research aimed to investigate the underlying causes and the current turmoil in the nature policy domain through a discursive perspective:

> Research aim: to get an understanding of the social and political backgrounds behind the current turmoil in Nature Policy through a discursive perspective and to render insights in the future course of Nature Policy by investigating what kind of articulatory practices and acts of identification can be identified.

Following this aim, the main research question was formulated as follows:

"How can the current nature policy changes be understood from a discursive perspective and how will these changes affect concrete nature planning practices?"

To render insight into this main research question, the research was divided into two parts:

1. A genealogical analysis of discursive transformations in Dutch nature policy
2. A discursive analysis of the current dislocation and acts of identification of actors active in nature planning practices.

The two research parts were earlier presented in the theoretical framework as visualised in fig. 28The research investigated the discursive dynamics in the nature policy domain with the theoretical concepts discourse structuration, institutionalisation, dislocation, acts of identification with the help of articulatory practices and a genealogical approach in order to understand the current discursive dynamics (dislocation) in nature policy.
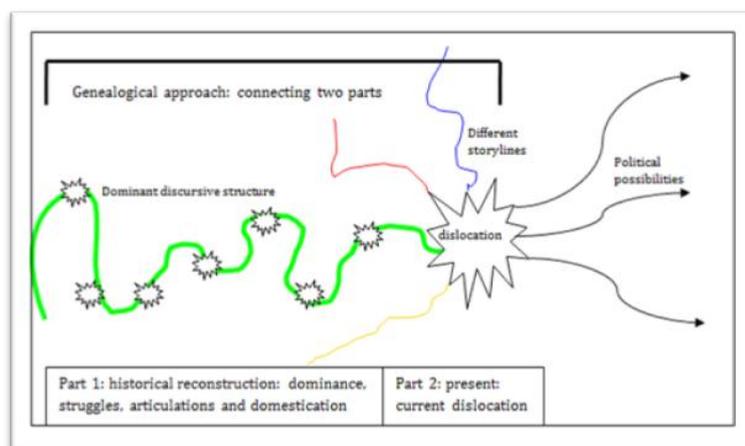

Figure 28 theoretical framework

The analytical frame (fig x) indicates the way the theoretical concepts were used to identify multiple discourses and discursive change in the genealogical analysis (part 1) and during the participatory observation (part 2).

Part one of the research entailed a historical analysis from a discursive perspective that implied a deconstruction of the dominant discourses in the nature policy domain. As a result, the discursive genealogy provided insight into the current shift in nature policy. Part two of the research elaborated on this current shift in nature policy by analysing various articulatory practices that changed the meaning of the discursive elements of the nature development discourse in such a way that they no longer fitted well with the nature development discourse. These articulatory practices cohered in a new counter discourse called the DIY-nature discourse. As a consequence, the nature development discourse was dislocated from its dominant position in the nature policy domain. The dislocation in the nature policy domain was followed by acts of identification of people in the field as people tried to reconstruct a new social identity in the nature policy domain. The following sections present the conclusions of both research parts and give answer to the research questions.

6.1. Deconstruction of the Nature Development Discourse

The first part of the research was undertaken through literature review, helicopter interviewing and content analysis of policy documents. This section aims to give answer to the first two sub-research questions:

1. *a. What has been the leading, dominant discourse in Nature Policy until recently?*
   b. How did this dominant discourse evolve throughout history?

2. *a. Which sources of discontent/alternative discourses can be identified to the dominant nature discourse?*
   b. How were these sources of discontent/alternative discourses 'domesticated' by the dominant discourse?

As becomes clear from the genealogical analysis presented in chapter four, the discursive structurations in nature protection shows a dynamic history with continuity and change. The genealogical analysis could distinguish two main discourses in the history of nature protection: the nature conservation and nature development discourse. Agriculture and its concomitant practices functioned as the *constitutive outside* for

both discourses. Both discourses had two discursive elements in common: spatial segregation and top down implementation. Due to a change in the *structuring principle* of the nature conservation discourse, the nature development discourse was able to emerge and shape itself while gaining influence in the institutional domain. In order to get insight into the dynamic evolvement of the nature development discourse, i.e. how it was structured, with different conceptualizations and particular *fields of opening,* it was necessary to illuminate the discursive genealogy around nature, that started with the nature conservation discourse. The next two paragraphs (6.1.1. and 6.1.2.) briefly summarize the findings of chapter four, while the last paragraph (6.1.3.) answers the first two research questions.

6.1.1. The emergence and structuration of the Nature Conservation Discourse

The nature conservation discourse dominated nature protection practices and policy formation from the 19th century up to around the 1970s. Nature was seen as fragile that was endangered by external developments such as land reclamation and consolidation practices. Incidents like the threat of dumping garbage in the Naardermeer functioned as a *dystopian myth* to the nature conservation discourse: a beautiful lake would be contaminated! The act of buying the Naardermeer area with private means served as a *constitutive myth* to the nature conservation discourse. The following *articulation* became part of the nature conservation discourse: 'through purchasing of land it is possible to protect nature from external developments'. These purchased lands were declared the status of a 'Nature Monument': a place reserved for beautiful and vulnerable nature. This practice resulted in another characteristic *articulation* of the nature conservation discourse: 'Beautiful nature is to be protected in a Nature Monument'. The concept of Nature Monument became the central *symbol* in the nature conservation discourse. Nature protection practices focused around buying of land and declaring the lands to be Nature Monuments. In a later stage, the concept of nature monument was taken up in national legislation and also the spatial protection regime came into force which implied that it was not necessarily to buy land for nature protection as it could be protected with the spatial regime. Plant sociology functioned as *the structuring principle* to the nature conservation discourse. Plant sociology was able to bind two groups in nature protection: the interventionists camp (rural view) and non-interventionist camp (wilderness view) through the categorisation of nature along a semi-natural typology. Because of this structuring typology, also agricultural landscapes became interesting for nature protection purposes as they were perceive as half-natural landscapes. The protection of agricultural landscapes was also enhanced due to the context of the accelerating land reclamation practices: valuable nature areas we now considered to be those terrains that were threatened by land reclamation activities. In the '50s the agricultural position weakened due to problems of overproduction. The weaker agricultural position and the Mansholt Plan for agricultural restructuration functioned as *field of opening* for the nature conservation discourse to grow stronger. Several spatial maps were created that separated nature and agricultural areas along the semi-natural typology of plant sociology with new concepts: national parks, landscape parks, the reserve and management areas. In the Green Policy Documents, the proposed spatial structure with the new concepts of the CC was included, and the nature conservation discourse reached *institutionalisation*. Although the Relation-policy document aimed for an integrative approach to address future problems and prevent conflicts around nature and agriculture, the practice of purchasing reserve areas assigned under the Relation – policy document and signing of management agreements in the management areas was met with severe resistance by farmers. Several critical groups criticised the top-down planning and reserve strategy of the nature conservation discourse as nature protection in the nature conservation discourse was seen as a spatial separation of the rest of the rural area, excluding other functions and local people. The critical groups argued that nature protection had to focus on the entire rural area instead to only some parts of land, i.e. the critics favoured the integration of functions. The nature conservation discourse was also criticised by another line of thought, i.e. the wilderness view, which after some *constitutive* and *dystopian myths* resulted in the hegemonic nature development discourse.

6.1.2. The emergence and structuration of the Nature Development Discourse

From the 70's 'nature' saw different conceptualisations due to several *fields of openings* in the forestry and agricultural sector combined with new structuring theoretical understandings in ecology in particular, ecosystems theory, island biogeography theory and metapopulation theory. As a consequence these new ecological concepts weakened the position of plant sociology and its typology as a *structuring principle* for nature protection. The new theoretical understandings successfully articulated certain elements into a new *articulatory practice*: instead of <u>conserving</u> <u>existing</u> nature, it is possible to protect nature by <u>developing</u> <u>new</u> nature. The formation of the nature development discourse was reinforced by particular *fields of openings*, such as the forest storms in 1972 and 1973 and later the 'spontaneous' creation of the '*Oostvaardersplassen*' in the Flevopolder. The forestry storms functioned as a *dystopian myth*, which triggered a debate about the mono-culture production and the related vulnerability and instability of forests for insect plagues, fires and storms. The nature development discourse favoured another, more mixed and natural composition of the forest, without the exotic coniferous trees. The forest, in other words, was conceived as a complete ecosystem with on-going natural processes. Accordingly, such a natural forest would be more persistent and stable in its being, with a lower vulnerability and on top of that harbour more species variety. The creation of the Oostvaardersplassen functioned as a *constitutive myth* (Hajer, 2003) to the structuration of the nature development discourse. The endlessly reiterated story of this particular area in which nature regenerated itself, caused for a discursive shift, especially under policy makers as they started to recognize that is was actually possible to *create* nature. This means that one did not need to restrict oneself to conserving 'what is left' of nature. The constitutive character of the 'Oostvaardersplassen' thus functioned as a *field of opening* for the nature development discourse to expand and structure thoughts and ideas on nature further. Facilitated by these *constitutive* and *dystopian myths*, and based on the new theoretical insights in ecology, the notions of connectivity, natural processes and robustness became *structuring principles* in the nature development discourse: 'Nature had to be connected, natural processes had to be stimulated and nature needed some form of robustness to keep out undesirable environmental effects'. These ecological notions came back in the policy concept National Ecological Network (NEN). The NEN became the central *symbol* of the nature development discourse, which was officially launched in the Nature Policy Plan (1990). The concept of Network structured the thoughts and practices of nature protection as it was perceived necessary to connect nature through corridors in order to survive and for natural processes to run smoothly. The central *articulation* in the nature development discourse became: 'the best way to take care of nature is by creating a network of nature'. The attractiveness and political power of nature development can be assigned to its multi-interpretability. On the one hand, nature development is about nature as supreme subject – primeval nature – that needs protection, on the other hand as a manipulable object that can be developed, that is the engineering of nature. Precisely, this ambivalence gave the nature development discourse its strength and political power and has allowed it to become a dominant discourse able to connect a wide diversity of social actors with diverging and often conflicting interests. The map of the NEN can be seen as a materialisation of the discourse's hegemony in the nature policy domain. The map spatially separated agriculture and nature, which can be regarded as a demarcation practice of the nature development discourse. This demarcation practice stabilised the nature development discourse, as it could steer future actions and practices on nature protection. Spatial segregation and top-down planning became *structuring principles* of the nature development discourse. The function of the NEN was to protect nature from external influences and connect nature areas in order to let nature flourish again. For that purpose, '*new nature'* had to be produced, the so-called nature development areas, ecological corridors had to be established and a buffer policy had to minimize negative external influences. In order to achieve the above goals, additional agricultural land had to be bought and restyled to nature. As an effect of spatial segregation, the purchasing of agricultural land for nature development became a characteristic practice of the nature development discourse, and can be regarded as another *structuring principle.* A quantitative objective was attached to this structuring principle of purchasing land: 728.000 hectares of land had to become part of the nature network. Apart from the quantitative objective, the NEN was made controllable and manageable in qualitative aspects with the

Handbook of Nature Target Types. A new *articulation* joined the nature development discourse: 'in order to protect nature, nature target types have to be realized'. However, with the use of nature target types, the nature development discourse became also more technocratic in nature. The top-down planning and technocratic implementation triggered several forms of local protests at the implementation level of the NEN which the nature development discourse aimed to *domesticate* later with the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy document in 2000. This policy document aims for a participatory and inclusive approach of nature management that entailed bottom-up processes and local involvement. However, because of participatory failures and the stringent interpretation of Natura 2000, this *domestication* only succeeded partially.

6.1.3. Conclusions to the first and second research question

The dominant discourse in nature policy until recently has been the nature development discourse. The discourse in question evolved from a critique on the rigid preservation strategy of the nature conservation discourse. It favoured a focus on natural processes and large robust connected nature areas. New theoretical insights in ecology changed the context and *structuring principles* of the nature conservation discourse. Several events, such as the forestry storms and Oostvaardersplassen functioned as *dystopian* and *constitutive myths* that helped to structure and institutionalise the nature development discourse. The NEN was the central *symbol* in the nature development discourse. In order to be controllable and manageable, the NEN was quantified in hectares and nature target types, enhancing the technocratic and makeable character of the discourse in question. The discursive elements of the nature conservation and development discourse are listed in fig. 29.

Elements/Discourse	Nature Conservation Discourse	Nature Development Discourse
Dystopian Myth	Contamination of Naardermeer	Disappearing Otter - Forest storms
Constitutive Myth	Buying of Naardermeer	Creation of Oostvaardersplassen
Symbol	Nature Monument	National Ecological Network
Hero	Jac P. Thijsse	Frans Vera
Constitutive Outside	Agriculture	Agriculture
Structuring Principles	Plant Sociology	System Ecology, Island and Metapopulation
	Typology: semi-natural - natural	Connectivity: ecological and robust corridors
	Human involvement as preservation strategy	Natural Processes: robustness
	Preservation: existing nature and landscape (reserve strategy)	Makeability: developing new nature (Nature Type) (NEN strategy)
	Top down planning	Top down planning
	Spatial segregation	Spatial segregation / Purchasing Agricultural Land

Figure 29 the discursive elements of the nature conservation discourse and the nature development discourse

The sources of discontent have been mainly local citizens and farmers that ascended during the top-down implementation level of the NEN, and later Natura 2000. These sources of discontent were already present during the hegemony of the nature conservation discourse as protests were directed at discursive commonalities (see fig.29): Both the nature conservation and development discourse entail a top-down planning and spatial segregation practice, excluding agriculture from nature. Already during the implementation of the reserve and nature management areas of the Relation Policy Document there were protests and critiques that addressed the way nature protection was envisioned to go about, i.e. reserve strategy and separation of other functions. The various protests that critiqued the nature development discourse during the implementation of the NEN and later Natura 2000 were from a similar character; they critiqued the top down planning, technocratic/ecological focus and spatial segregation. Local inhabitants felt the implementation practices as a takeover of their lived environment, without taking into account their values and perspectives and therefore as inappropriate claims to their surroundings. Although, the nature

development discourse aimed to domesticate these with the 'Nature for People, People for Nature' policy document, the implementation of Natura 2000 and the failed attempts at participation for creation of public support demonstrate that this domestication succeeded only partly.

6.2. The current dislocation and articulatory practices in the field

The second part of the research was undertaken by participant observation and semi-structured, informal interviewing. This section aims to answer the last sub-research questions:

3. *What articulatory practices can be identified seeking to reconstruct a coherent discourse of nature within the momentum of dislocation?*

4. *Which articulatory practices resonate with actors (seeking to reconstruct their identity) at the practical level?*

5. *How do actors position themselves with the articulatory practices in the aftermath of the dislocated structure in Nature Policy?*

Paragraph 6.2.1. answers research question 3 by addressing the dislocation and the identified articulatory practices destabilising the nature development discourse while cohering in a counter discourse. Paragraph 6.2.2. answers research question 4 and 5 by addressing the observed acts of identification in the field indicating which articulatory practice resonate with actors in the field and how actors position themselves in the dislocated situation in the nature policy domain.

6.2.1. The dislocation in the Nature Policy Domain

In the changed context of the current political conjuncture and economic crisis, the sources of discontent as identified in chapter four (see also 6.1.3.) were united in a counter discourse to the nature development discourse. This changed context (political conjuncture – economic crisis) can be regarded as a *field of opening* during which the sources of discontent could make themselves heard at the political stage. This counter discourse used the nature development discourse as its *constitutive outside*. The counter-discourse positions the nature development discourse is such a way that its policy programmes and practices are perceived as illegitimate and unconventional, which are expensive, exclusively meant for elite, and solely focused on ecology causing for a spatial segregation for other functions. It does so by means of the following three main *articulatory practices*:

1. Articulatory practice around ecological focus and scientific knowledge

This *articulatory practice* criticises the scientific and ecological underpinning of the nature development discourse. Nature is presented as being hijacked by science and other elites, buried in scientific, bureaucratic concepts like Natura 2000 and the NEN. This *articulation* emphasises that nature has become inaccessible to local people. Nature organisations, such as State Forest Service and Natuurmonumenten are positioned as contributing to this elite nature. As alternative, this *articulatory practice* articulates the importance of ordinary nature and local knowledge, which as a consequence affects science, i.e. *the structuring principle* of the nature development discourse. The management practices in the Oostvaardersplassen were for instance problematized which transformed the Oostvaardersplassen from a *celebrated symbol* in the nature development discourse to a *dystopian myth* of starvation and death. In order to solve this problematic situation, *the articulatory practice* emphasises the moral plight of humankind to take care of animals and of nature in general. As a consequence of this *articulatory practice*, the *symbol* of the nature development discourses lost its *constitutive power* as it gained another meaning which did not fit well with the nature development discourse. Therefore, nature management practices inspired by ecological theories are conceived as less legitimate and desirable in the Oostvaardersplassen while active human involvement (searching shelter, feeding, etc.) was promoted. All in all, through this articulatory practice,

science and nature organisations are positioned as outsiders, which demarcates this articulatory practice from the nature development discourse.

2. Articulatory practice around top-down implementation – makeability and technocracy

This *articulatory practice* criticises the technocratic and top-down *structuring principles* of the nature development discourse. The *articulatory practice* is fed by the incomprehension and frustration among people affected by the technocratic and top-down way of the implementation processes of both the NEN (including the robust corridors) and Natura 2000 areas. This *articulatory practice* articulates that the technocratic practice of buying and converting land to nature is too expensive, and that instead farmers can manage nature better and more cheaply. The *articulatory practice* emphasises private initiatives and the capacities of farmers to manage nature while stressing the failure of nature organisations. Through these *articulations*, the way nature organisations have (not) managed nature is made questionable and the nature organisations are portrayed as if they have not done their job right, ergo farmers and local people can do it better. Apart from the emphasis on the ability of private actors to manage nature better and less costly, also a normative *articulation* can be identified in the *articulatory practise*. The *articulation* emphasizes the right of local actors to take charge of and responsibility for their own environment, hence the responsibility for nature management should no stay in hands of nature organisations but go to the region.

3. Articulatory practice around the spatial segregation and mono-functionality

This *articulatory practice* criticises the spatial segregation and mono-functionality of the nature development discourse. The *articulatory practice* stresses that nature management does not need to take place only in demarcated areas, shielded away from other functions, but nature management can go together with other functions in the rural area. Agriculture is made more important by stressing the social function it has for food security, but also for other functions such as biomass and nature protection. As agriculture has a role to play in nature management and protection, erasing the robust corridors and downsizing of the NEN is perceived as acceptable. Because, as is argued, agriculture can offer the connectivity that the robust corridors aimed to realize between nature areas. This is illustrated by the emphasis put on multi-functional landscape use by this *articulatory practice* as landscape implies an integral view that contains multiple functions, including nature. The landscape services that are promoted by the national government make use of existing landscape structures that are articulated to be good for multiple functions; i.e. environmental conditions, nature protection, agricultural production, climate mitigation, water quality/storage, energy generation and recreational values. Another element in this *articulatory practice* is cooperation. Cooperation between different parties is needed in order to achieve a good synchronisation between the parties that benefit from the service with the parties delivering the service. In conclusion, the *articulatory practice* emphasises multifunctional landscape use where nature protection makes part of, which therefore entails that the spatial segregation and claim of the policy concept the NEN is no longer needed.

6.2.2. The Emergence of the Do-It-Yourself Nature Discourse

The *articulatory practices* discussed in 6.2.1. problematize *discursive elements* of the nature development discourse, thereby affecting the meaning of the elements and dominant position of the nature development discourse. Within these articulatory practices also other discursive elements can be identified that make up another discourse, called the Do-It-Yourself Nature discourse:

Within the articulatory practice that problematizes the scientific and ecological underpinning of the nature development discourse, four discursive elements of the DIY-Nature discourse can be identified:

- 'Nature should be accessible to everyone'

- 'Nature management is about ordinary nature'
- 'Local knowledge is important to undertake good nature management'
- 'Humankind has the moral and ethical plight to take care of nature'

Within the articulatory practice that problematizes the technocratic and top-down practices of the nature development discourse, four discursive elements of the DIY-Nature discourse can be identified:

- 'The region should have responsibility over nature management'
- 'It is our area, so we (local people) need to manage the area'
- 'Farmers and private initiatives can manage nature better'
- 'Farmers can manage nature cheaper'.

Within the articulatory practice problematizing the spatial segregation and mono-functionality of the nature development discourse, three discursive elements of the DIY-Nature discourse can be identified:

- Multifunctionality: 'Nature and agriculture can go together'
- Landscape: 'Nature can be protected in the rural area'
- Agriculture: 'Agriculture can play a role in nature protection'

Fig. 30 outlines the articulatory practices of the DIY-Nature discourse that problematize the discursive elements of the nature development discourse and emphasises at the same time other discursive elements with other meanings.

discursive elements nature development discourse		ecological focus scientific nature ecological concepts	top down implementation technocracy responsibility nature organisation	spatial segregation mono-functionality
articulatory practices 'DIY - Nature discourse'	*problimat isation*	elite nature starvation animals OVP	expensive practice elitist nature organisation disability nature organisation	mono-functional no room for other functions hindrance to ec. Developments
	emphasis	ordinary nature local knowledge moral plight take care nature stewardship	cost-effective by farmers regional responsibility ability farmers and private actors ownership self-efficacy	multifunctionality landscape services functional character entrepreneurship cooperation
Constitutive Outside: Nature Development		**landscape/environment**	**regional responsibility**	**integration functions**
		EMPOWERMENT		

Figure 30 problematisation of discursive elements of the nature develop discourse and structuring principles of the DIY-Nature discourse

The driving force of the DIY-Nature discourse seems to be the empowerment of local people in nature management. Parts of this discourse have a long history. Since the rise of the nature conservation discourse and the nature development discourse, there were alternative views and critiques on the way nature protection was dealt with and managed. In this current field of opening, the DIY-Nature discourse was able to unite these sources of discontent through articulatory practices emphasising elements such as regional responsibility, the all-encompassing value of nature, the integration of functions, nature management by local people, farmers and private initiatives. These elements make up the identity of the discourse, however, a strong symbol or myth to the DIY-Nature discourse like with the nature conservation and development discourse could not be identified (yet). It might be too early in time to identify such a symbol or myth, and it might still be in development transcending the scope and time of this thesis, as the DIY-Nature discourse very recently could unite the sources of discontent in a coherent discourse. The next section elaborates on the acts of identification that emerged in the hegemonic struggles between the DIY-Nature discourse and the nature development discourse.

6.2.3. Acts of Identification in the Field

The rise of the DIY-Nature discourse took place in a context of dislocation in the nature policy domain. Through articulatory practices the nature development discourse has been positioned away from its dominant centre, hence it is dislocated and fails to constitute identity in the nature policy domain. As described in chapter 2, in the context of dislocation, actors seek to reconstruct their identity, and therefore people are more accessible to new ideas, concepts and categories, in other words to different discourses. In order to get insight into the articulatory practices that resonate with actors in the field, the research undertook participant observation at general conferences, several nature planning projects and hold informal, semi-structured interviews with local actors active in nature management and planning practices.

From the several moments of participant observation, it can be concluded that people are searching for new ways to organise nature management in the Netherlands. The nature planning sites and projects by State Forest Service and (Z)LTO show that people seek for collaborative partnerships and new, innovative land(scape) use arrangements for nature management. The Green Deal took landscape and mutual servicing as the starting point for new ways of cooperation between agriculture and landscape. People in the nature planning sites requested for self-organisation and -control to organise nature management as an integral part of their landscape. In the field and at the institutional level, collaborations between nature organisations, farmers and government can be identified aiming to organise nature in a different way. In most moments of participant observation, actors were talking and acting upon the discursive elements of the DIY-nature discourse (see fig 30). These quests can be regarded as acts of identification with the DIY-nature discourse. However, still 'old' discursive elements could be identified in articulatory practices in the field: Actors talk about the NEN, a connection, nature quality and makeability. People seek to reconstruct a new identity by combining 'old' discursive elements with new meanings. The idea of the NEN is not contested, but for instance the way it has to be realised is.

It seems that the hegemonic struggles over meaning in the nature policy domain are still on-going. The DIY-Nature discourse was able to cohere into a discourse, gain influence in the nature policy domain and structure thoughts and actions as demonstrated by the several acts of identification. However, it is too early to say whether the DIY-nature discourse is hegemonic in the nature policy domain. As shown by the genealogical analysis in chapter 4 every dominant discourse has a symbol, constitutive myths and heroes. Although Bleker could be said to be a hero of the DIY-nature discourse, the discourse still lacks a strong identity. The identity of the discourse is still too much of a counter-discourse to the nature development discourse than a constructive discourse able to grow and expand its ideas with symbols and constitutive and dystopian myths further in the nature policy domain. In order to be successful, the DIY- Nature discourse needs to have symbols and stories that claim nature and give all kinds of nature, including the ecological nature, a place in the DIY-Nature discourse. In other words, it has to domesticate elements of the nature development discourse instead of making such a sharp polarisation between the discursive elements. In that way, the DIY-Nature discourse has a chance to broaden its structuration by offering an identity to more people than only local people and to sediment firmer into policy programmes and institutions. After having said this, it seems more plausible that at this moment in time (spring 2012) both discourses exists along each other, continuing in a struggle over meanings for dominance in the nature policy domain.

Chapter 7. Discussion

The previous chapter entailed the conclusions of this study. This chapter provides the discussion which critically reflects on the conclusions (7.1.), research design and methods (7.2.) and theoretical concepts used (7.3.) theories in light of the undertaken research.

7.1. Reflection on Conclusions

The research concluded that the DIY-Nature discourse exists alongside the nature development discourse and that it still lacks a strong identity. This section elaborates on these conclusions through critical reflecting on the research scope and placing the conclusions in a broader perspective considering some recommendations from scientific literature.

7.1.1. The DIY-Nature discourse: a middle-position between two discourses

To start with a critical reflection on the conclusions: It seems that the DIY-Nature discourse does not only exists alongside the nature development discourse, but that another discourse, i.e. the agro-industrial discourse, is in place, which has shaped the DIY-Nature discourse. However, due to the focus of analysis (i.e. discursive structuration in nature policy) this discourse has remained underexposed. Despite the lack of focused analytical attention, the research does provide several indications for the presence and importance of this discourse. First of all, the genealogical analysis in chapter four illuminated that the nature conservation and development discourses were a reaction to agricultural land consolidation and industrialisation processes. Underlying these high land consolidation and industrialisation rates lies a motive to produce efficiently with a high production rate. Both the nature conservation and development discourse perceived these efforts as threats to nature and landscape which needed to be halted. Within chapter four it becomes clear that during their structuration both nature discourses were subject to critique of the agro-industrial discourse and vice versa, hence they were each other's constitutive outside. Attempts of the nature conservation discourse to demarcate nature areas and landscape as nature were perceived as taking opportunities away for agricultural production and expansion. An example is given in chapter four with the first CC lists of demarcated nature areas. The first CC lists were not widely dispersed, because of the fear that farmers would purposely cultivate the valuable nature areas assigned on the map. Chapter four also reveals that in the '50s and '60s the agricultural sector had to restructure due to successfulness of the agro-industrial discourse: there was overproduction of food. As a consequence, lands had to be taken out of production. As explained in chapter four, this context functioned as a field of opening to the nature conservation discourse. Marginal agricultural lands which were less attractive and unbeneficial in terms of economic value for efficient agricultural production were 'given' to the Relation-areas. The Relation-policy document was an agreement between the representatives of government, nature and agricultural organisations. Seen from the agro-industrial discourse, the Relation areas are not attractive for a high agricultural production due to the small-scale landscape structure or other inconvenient production circumstances. Also with the NEN it was envisioned by the agro-industrial discourse that marginal agricultural lands would be purchased on the basis of voluntarism as these lands were economically less attractive for an intensive agricultural practice. In other words, the agro-industrial discourse accepted the discursive incorporation of agricultural lands to nature as the agricultural structure had to be reorganized and these lands were perceived an unattractive for future farming. With the robust corridors and Natura 2000 this alliance cracked open, because fertile agricultural land, good for agricultural production, had to be converted into nature (regard the OostvaardersWold in the Flevopolder which is entails fertile land) and Natura 2000 had external effects and consequences for economic development for surrounding agricultural companies. All in all, illuminating the discursive dynamics of the agro-industrial discourse in relation to the nature development discourse would have enriched our understanding of discursive dynamics

in nature protection and in the emergence of DIY-Nature discourse. It appears that the DIY-Nature discourse finds itself in a middle position between the nature development discourse and the agro-industrial discourse. In other words, the nature development discourse and the agro-industrial discourse are the constitutive outsides of the DIY-Nature discourse. Chapter four already gave some indications of articulatory practices that criticised the agro-industrial discourse. In the '70s, critical groups arose that criticised both the nature development and agro-industrial discourse. They criticised the agro-industrial discourse for its focus on intensifying agriculture, the accelerated scaling-up with high production pressure on the environment and neglecting the suppressed position of the farmer in the world market. Especially farmers located in the areas affected by the top-down decisions on the Relation-areas and the NEN, were discontent with the decisions of their agricultural representatives (LTO). Gaasterland is such an example that passed the review in chapter four. The LTO agreed to the plan for the NEN in Gaasterland, but the local farmers did not agree with that decision, and subsequently protests arose. Also the widespread emergence of ANVs in the Netherlands can be regarded as reactions of discontent farmers in relation to their LTO-representatives on the one-sided focus of mass agricultural production and the lack of attention for nature and the living environment (Jan Heijkoop, interview, Wim Dijkman, pers. com). Although the thesis gives some indications on the discursive dynamics between the agro-industrial and DIY-nature discourse, this was not part of the analytical research focus. It would be interesting for a follow-up study to get more insight into the articulatory practices of the DIY-Nature discourse regards the agro-industrial discourse, and what this means for the further structuration of the DIY-Nature discourse in the nature policy domain.

7.1.2. The DIY-Nature discourse: in need of constitutive myths and symbols

The conclusions also ended that the DIY-Nature discourse lacks a strong identity and stays (at this moment) too much of a counter-discourse. The genealogical analysis in chapter four revealed that both the nature conservation discourse and the nature development discourse consisted of symbols, heroes and constitutive and dystopian myths that facilitated its structuration and dominance in the nature policy domain. Symbols have a prescriptive and productive effect (Keulartz 2005). Differently put, they have the capacity to structure our thoughts and actions. For the nature conservation discourse the structuring symbol was Nature Monument, which entailed a conservative attitude and strategy for nature protection. For the nature development discourse this was Network, which entailed a pro-actively way to protect nature through connectivity. Myth brings coherence by explaining why things cohere. Hajer (2003) distinguishes two type of myths: a constitutive myth explains cohesion by narrating a foundational event, a dystopian myth makes people to cohere to avoid a catastrophe. For the nature conservation discourse the dystopian myth used to be the threat of the contamination of the Naardermeer and the constitutive myth was the actual act of buying the Naardermeer with private means. For the nature development discourse the disappearing otter and the forest storms functioned as dystopian myth emphasising that nature was in bad shape which required some sort of action. The Oostvaardersplassen were an answer to the dystopian myth and functioned therefore as a constitutive myth to protect nature by constructing it. It seems too early to ascertain any symbols or myths belonging to the DIY-Nature discourse. The discourse very recently was able to cohere the sources of discontent into strong articulatory practices due to a changed political and economic context. The DIY-Nature discourse is in need of strong symbols and myths that mediate between its two constitutive outsides, thereby reinforcing its identity and so its chances for institutionalisation. Constitutive myths and symbols in the case of the DIY-Nature discourse need to tell about the possibility of nature protection with multifunctional landscape use through self-organisation by local people. Initiatives such as the Green Deal have the possibilities to become such a constitutive myth by retelling constantly why certain nature planning projects are working between farmers, nature organisations and provinces. Images and metaphors facilitate cooperation in public and political deliberations of dualistic conflict situations (Keulartz, 2005). Thus, metaphors and powerful images could help the DIY-Nature discourse to expand and structure the discursive field of nature policy. Despite its difficult middle-position, the DIY-Nature discourse has opportunity to grow from a mere counter-discourse to a mediating dis-

course by findings myths and symbols that link elements of both agro-industrial and nature development discourse in its own discourse as is discussed in 7.1.3.

7.1.3. The DIY- Nature discourse: from counter discourse to mediating discourse?

The DIY-Nature discourse has the characteristics of a counter-discourse, as it still shows a polarising logic of equivalence: establishing discursive unity between social demands against an antagonistic 'other', in this case the nature development discourse (Mert, 2012). Social demands, as explained in chapter two are articulations of an unfilled request or desire which can turn into a demand from the hegemonic discourse or eventually claims of change of the hegemonic discourse. As stated by Mert (2012:70) "[t]he logic of equivalence is typically a strategy of a resistance movement against the establishment", i.e. the hegemonic discourse. The articulatory practices of the DIY-Nature discourse are indeed directed to an antagonistic other, which in this case is the nature development discourse with its representatives: ecologist scientists and nature organisations. In the field however it was demonstrated that people in their acts of identification find common grounds to cooperate and thus are able to bridge these polarizing effects. The DIY-Nature discourse shows room to move away from the challenge posed against the nature development discourse towards a mediating discourse. It is therefore necessary to construct powerful symbols and metaphors appealing to a bigger group of people than the discourse in question is currently representing (Keulartz, 2005; Mert, 2012). These symbols and metaphors can help to bridge and incorporate elements of the nature development and agro-industrial discourse into the DIY-Nature discourse in order for the discourse to have a mediating effect. Having a middle-position can imply that it is easier for the DIY-Nature discourse to become a mediating discourse, as it is standing in the middle of two discourses that are each other's constitutive outside. One way of bridging the antagonistic arguments between for instance nature and culture is by gradualising multiple tones of nature (Keulartz, 2005). As these multiple kinds of nature fulfil different functions, it might makes it attractive for actors embedded in the agro-industrial and nature development discourse to join a constructive debate. The DIY-Nature discourse however needs to keep an eye on representing the social demands, i.e. the sources of discontent that requested social justice and self-control in nature management. A possible way to circumvent this is by creating a new problem definition (Keulartz, 2005) so that elements and connections of existing stories from the nature development discourse and the agro-industrial discourse are incorporated without diluting the internal coherence of DIY-Nature discourse (Keulartz, 2005, Mertz, 2012). The DIY-Nature discourse could for instance create a new problem definition that emphasises a cooperation inclusive of multiple kinds of nature and functions combined with self-control and self-organisation aspects. Again, a metaphor or symbol that exemplifies this new problem definition could help reinforcing the cooperative story and have accelerating effects in extending the discourse further. The term 'Productive Landscape' would be an interesting binding concept for the DIY-Nature discourse as it is interesting for diverse set of groups to identify with as their needs and desires can be accommodated due to its multi-interpretability (Keulartz, 2005, Hajer, 2003). The term 'Productive Landscape' entails productivity (agro-industrial discourse) and offering a place to 'real' nature in the landscape (nature development discourse), while the social demands of self-control and organisation remain represented as people can take charge of landscape management in collective groups and partnerships. To put this in the words of Laclau & Mouffe, the landscape can function as an empty signifier: representing different elements and becoming the nodal point that binds other particular points into a discursive formation. For the moment 'nature' (signifier) in the Netherlands still refers and corresponds to the 'spatial regime and the NEN' (signified). As empty signifier the landscape can start to represent the nature of the nature development discourse and the productivity of the agro-industrial discourse. In that sense, it would change the meaning of nature gradually by articulating it through landscape. That the DIY-Nature discourse has this potential is shown by two recent newspaper headings (see pictures below for impression), after the fall of the Cabinet, that indicate that it is structuring thoughts and actions in nature protection.

INTERVIEW HANS WIJERS, VOORZITTER VAN NATUURMONUMENTEN

'Meer natuur voor minder euro's, dat moet volgens mij kunnen'

Weg van de beleidsnota's, terug naar de natuur. Maar wel pragmatisch, is de boodschap van Hans Wijers. Door **Rik Nijland**

'Mensen moeten weer emoties voelen bij natuur; weg met al dat gepraat over de ecologische hoofdstructuur, Natura2000 en meer van dat beleidsjargon. Dat doet geen recht aan de fascinatie bij een mooi landschap of het zonlicht door de bomen. We moeten terug naar de basis.' Vandaag treedt Hans Wijers (61), opvolger van Cees Veerman, voor het eerst naar buiten als voorzitter van Na-

> Mensen bereik je niet met de zoveelste beleidsnota

> Soms moet je kiezen voor de natuur, soms voor aanpak

Schiermonnikoog Foto Aviodrome

Park de Hoge Veluwe Foto Walter Herfst

Het Groene Hart: Oude Leede Foto Walter Herfst

De Drentsche Aa bij Anderen Foto Sake Elzinga

5

De natuurbeweging moet

De natuurbeweging in Nederland is de laatste jaren steeds meer in het defensief gedrongen. Gaat het nog wel over mooie natuur, of alleen nog maar over abstracte Europese richtlijnen?

op zoek naar nieuwe vrienden

...ntwikkeling ...natuurbeleid is te lang ...door een chagrijnige ...van regels. Er mochten vooral heel veel dingen niet. Natuur is op zichzelf leuk, maar kreeg daardoor een negatieve bijsmaak. Het was wachten op het moment dat het vast zou lopen.'

De natuurbeweging was misschien ook te dicht tegen de overheid aan gaan schurken. De Zeeuw: 'Veel natuurclubs waren afhankelijk van overheidssubsidies. Die subsidies zijn verlaagd. Bleker ging daarbij wat mij betreft té pittig tekeer, want hij bracht door zijn bezuinigingen de continuïteit van het natuurbeheer in gevaar. Het was cold turkey. Maar de afhankelijkheid van die subsidies was inderdaad te groot.'

De behoefte aan zelfreflectie is groot, bij de natuurclubs. Vereniging Natuurmonumenten, de grootste

...leven maken deel van uitmaken.

De natuurbeweging speculeert druk over de te volgen tactiek om de harten en de geesten terug te winnen.

Misschien is de weerzin begonnen met de korenwolf

nen. Ecoloog Henny van der Windt denkt dat de natuurbeweging onder meer moet appelleren aan de „trots" op het nationaal erfgoed, net als in Engeland, en meer „los van de overheid" het „verhaal van de natuur" moet vertellen. Friso de Zeeuw denkt dat nieuwe vrienden wer-

Met het aantreden van Henk Bleker was de tijd rijp voor ressentiment

„Meer moet natuur zijn", schreef onlangs ecoloog Henny van der Windt, universitair hoofddocent aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. „Meer en meer werd het een doelstelling op zichzelf. Het ging niet meer over een landschap dat mensen mooi vinden, niet meer over een mooie specht, maar over hectaren, beleid, Europese kaderrichtlijnen, doeltypen en na-

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7.2. Reflection on Research Design and Methods

The design of this research consisted of two parts: the genealogical historical analysis and the current participatory observation analysis. This section elaborates on the chosen research methods and approach in relation to the findings of the research.

The first part of the research entailed a historical analysis. For that reason I was largely dependent on secondary scientific literature that addressed history in nature protection with enough detail in dynamics and processes relevant for my analysis. The findings of this research are mainly derived from authoritative academic accounts of nature conservation in the Netherlands, to mention a few: Van der Windt, (1995) Keulartz, (1999) Hajer,(2003) van Koppen (2002). There was limited time to read and search for more academic accounts addressing history of nature conservation in the Netherlands. To compensate for this 'time gap' and lack of potential data, I combined the literature review with some helicopter interviews that had a good overview of some parts of Dutch history. This worked well, especially for the time period 1990s onwards. Combining the literature review and helicopter interview with content analysis of policy programmes (triangulation of methods) helped to connect the data, deduct similarities and identify episodes of change.

Genealogy helped identifying crucial moments of change and consequently made it easier to categorize the data into a comprehensive story of discursive dynamics. The historical analysis proved very useful to understand the present situation in nature policy. Without such a historical analysis it was very difficult, if not impossible to identify for instance the long roots the sources of discontent have in history and how and why they emerged in this particular field of opening. In other words, the thesis would not have been able to demonstrate a complete picture. Although the story is never complete and always subject to change, genealogy gives a good grip to understand the presence through a deconstruction of the past. As the findings could be placed in a historical discursive context more body and legitimacy can be ascribed to the findings.

The way the cases have been selected went very organically and not as systematic as could have been. There were of course some criteria as discussed in chapter 3, i.e. the cases had to consider the relationship agriculture – nature, it had be a nature planning project and consider a policy concept such as Natura 2000, Robust Corridor or the NEN. PBL and CLM functioned as gatekeepers in the research, giving me access to the research subjects which proved very useful. The organic selection of cases for participant observation resulted in cases scattered over the country at different levels, i.e. practical planning level, institutional level and conference level. For a discourse-theoretical perspective this is however not so much of a problem, as the creation of new discourses and acts of identification are contingently coming into being everywhere. The abundance of empirical material illuminated the links and connections which resulted in consistent findings.

During participant observation the articulations of the actors were observed and linked to acts of identification drawing to the discourses offering a promising identity. The argumentative interactionists approach of Hajer proved useful during participant observation as this approach emphasises the analysis of interpersonal communication in order to be able to explain the prevalence of certain discursive constructions and the creation of new meanings and identities (Hajer, 2005). Analysis of interpersonal communication reveals which counter-positions are criticized and which new identities and meanings are constructed. Therefore participant observation provided a good method as it allows to observe interaction in a natural way, which reveals linguistic regularities in interactive debate, considering the counter-positions and positions criticized. Difficult proved however to grasps these linguistic regularities and categorize them and link them to a specific discourse. Discourse theory is a very open-ended theory, which does not provide ready-to-use methods or fixed categories to fill-in with available data. It is up to the researcher to detect patterns and regularities from the observations and data. In that sense it is a very inductive way of

conducting research and a matter of Do-It-Yourself. On top of that it appears that boundaries are not that sharp, and that, especially during a dislocation, people adhere to a mix of articulatory practices of a variety of discourses. It was a hard time defining the boundaries of concepts, episodes and categories. On the other hand, discourse theory offers a lot of flexibility, allowing to make discourse-analysis context-specific, able to read between and under the lines and phrases that people utter and write down. Indeed, to get a grasp of understanding and insight, discourse analysis needs to undertake extensive research, at many places and with many people, so that the categories become evident by themselves.

7.3. Reflection on discourse theory

Discourse theory and genealogy were used as theories for this study. Discourse analysis is frequently used as an approach to identify existing discourses and/or dominant discourses. To find theoretical literature that addresses discursive dynamics of continuity and change proved more difficult. Van den Brink, Mert and Lauclau & Mouffe provided some essential insights on dislocation and domestication, which was complemented with the two concepts of Hajer: discourse structuration and institutionalisation. Genealogy was added to provide more historical context to the research, make connections between different time periods in nature protection, and in that way provide context to the current situation in nature policy. During the genealogical analysis it proved difficult to define when a discourse could be considered to be institutionalised. The nature development discourse was institutionalised in the Nature Policy Plan, however its structuration continued as it had to change and transform in order to be more controllable and measurable. Thus, after institutionalisation it became more technocratic. After the Nature for People and People for Nature policy document, the nature development discourse changed as well with more participatory elements. Thus, although the nature development discourse was institutionalised, the discourse in question was still subject to change. The boundaries between the structuration and institutionalisation phase of a discourse are in other words not that sharp and static as suggested by Hajer, but can be considered more fluid. The genealogical analysis of the thesis shows that discourses are continuously in movement, as the articulatory practices that are shaped by the discourse simultaneously create it. Articulations have in short a constitutive and transformative power. This became particularly clear when considering the changing meanings of the discursive elements of the nature development discourse by articulatory practices in the dislocation. Thus, continuity and change are processes that are more entangled than that the concepts of structuration and institutionalisation suggest. In that sense, articulations are a better way to analyse discursive dynamics of continuity and change than to place discourses in a sharp phase of structuration and institutionalisation. However, institutionalisation still provides a useful tool indicating when a discourse reaches dominance in a given policy domain. It should however be treated as a moment, always subject to change. Especially during a genealogical analysis it is useful to define certain episodes or moments in time when a discourse is taken up in policy programmes indicating that it reached a dominant position. What the domestication concept of Laclau & Mouffe makes so attractive is that it allows to analyse discursive continuity and change also after institutionalisation. Domestication implies a more fluid concept as it explicitly addresses the discursive processes of continuity and change, making the boundaries between structuration and institutionalisation more blurred and strugglish. Domestication can be on the one hand an attempt to keep dominance, on the other hand it can mean a weakening of the discourse which is followed by change in discourse. This is what the genealogical analysis showed: for the nature development discourse, the Nature for People, People for Nature policy document was an attempt to incorporate certain elements of critique into a participatory approach while for the sources of discontent it meant a further step in the structuration of the DIY-Nature discourse. Domestication can be seen as two sides of the same coin: maintaining dominance (hegemonic discourse) and gaining dominance (counter-discourse) which does more right to the dynamic nature of discourse structuration.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Interview Guide Helicopter Interview

Annex 2: Interview Guide Case Studies

Interview guide (English)

Part 1 – Helicopter Interviewing

Goal: Historical overview - to get to know more about moments of transformation in the course (development) of Nature Policy, specifically on the NEN.

Consider following aspects:

- History Nature Policy and Conservancy
- Central actors: Research? Practitioners?
- Discourse – dominant ideas in nature conservation?
- Struggle? Exclusion of whom and which ideas?
- Moments of struggle and adjustments– when?
- Which policy documents can I look up – output: list of policy documents

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Introduction researcher: I am Elisa de Lijster, MSc student in Forest and Nature Conservation. Doing at the moment a graduation project in Nature Policy at the FNP chair group in cooperation with CLM and PBL. The research is about the current changes in Nature Policy with a focus on the NEN and how to situate these in a historical perspective. That is also the reason I am here to interview you, due to your long involvement with Nature Policy and Management. At the end of this conversation, I hope to have a historical overview of Nature Policy/Management with its associated ups and downs.

Semi-structured list of questions:

Own background - introduction

1. Could you tell me something about yourself and your background in Nature Conservancy, Policy and the NEN?

Historical overview

Could you tell me what has happened with the NEN in the last 20 years? How was the idea/concept created? How did it become institutionalised? How has the initial idea of EHS been transformed during the years?

TOPICS:

Prominent Ideas:

2. What are the prominent ideas and driving forces behind the NEN according to you? Why do you believe so?

Influencing actors:

3. Actors: Which actors/coalitions had/have most influence on the design and implementation of the NEN? (research, nature conservationist, public administrators)
   a. Are there actors/parties that have been excluded in this process? Seen as less important/relevant to be involved?

Implementation:

4. How do you experience the way the NEN has been institutionalised and implemented?

Struggles:

5. Where there struggles, adjustments that led to practical changes in nature policy?
   a. Between whom? Which moments?
   b. At which level did most struggles occur? Policy or implementation level?
   c. Which policy documents are linked to that as outcome?

Own Perspective - Opinion

6. How do you perceive the Nature Conservancy in the Netherlands as such?
7. What is your own perspective on the NEN?

Future course Nature Policy

8. How do you perceive the current situation?
9. What direction you believe Nature Policy will turn into?

Ending the interview

Thanking for cooperation, informing on handling procedure of data (sending transcript and in later stage the report) and giving opportunity for keeping anonymity.

Interview Gids Helikopter Interviews (Nederlands)

Deel 1: Helikopter Interview

Doel: Historisch overzicht – om meer te weten te komen over de veranderingen in het Natuurbeleid sinds het ontstaan daarvan, specifiek gericht op de EHS.

Let op volgende aspecten:

- Geschiedenis Natuurbeleid en Beheer – EHS
- Centrale, invloedrijke actoren (onderzoek?, beleid?)
- Discourse: dominante ideeën in natuurbescherming/EHS
- Strijd? Conflicten? Buitensluiting van bepaalde ideeën/actoren?
- Momenten van strijd → verandering in natuurbeleid/beheer?
- Welke beleidsdocumenten kan ik opzoeken ter verificatie.

Introductie onderzoeker:
Ik ben Elisa de Lijster, MSc studente Bos- en Natuurbeheer. Ik doe momenteel mijn afstudeervak in Natuurbeleid bij de leerstoelgroep FNP in samenwerking met het CLM en PBL. Het onderzoek gaat over de huidige veranderingen in het natuurbeleid, met een focus op de EHS en hoe deze vanuit een historisch perspectief te plaatsen zijn. Dat is dan ook de reden dat ik u wil interviewen, vanwege uw lange betrokkenheid in het natuurbeleid en beheer. Ik hoop dat ik aan het einde van dit gesprek een historisch overzicht heb met de hoogtepunten en dalen in het Natuurbeleid.

Semi-gestructureerde lijst van vragen:

Eigen achtergrond

1. Kunt u mij iets meer vertellen over uzelf en achtergrond in de natuurbescherming en het beleid, ook met betrekking tot de EHS?

Historisch overzicht

Kunt u mij vertellen wat er de afgelopen 20 jaar met de EHS gebeurd is? Hoe kwam het idee op poten? Hoe heeft zich dat in het beleid kunnen verankeren? Hoe is de EHS door de jaren heen veranderd?

TOPICS:

Prominente Ideeën:

2. Welke prominent ideeën zijn er achter de EHS te vinden? Wat is de drijfveer achter de EHS?

Invloedrijke actoren:

3. Welke actoren hadden/hebben een belangrijke invloed gehad op het ontwerp van de EHS en de uitvoering daarin?

a. Zijn er partijen hierin buitengesloten denkt u?

Uitvoering:

4. Hoe heeft de algehele institutionalisering en uitvoering van de EHS plaatsgevonden?

Strijd/Conflict:

5. Zijn er momenten van strijd of conflict geweest die te maken hebben met de EHS? Tussen wie vond dat plaats?

a. Op welk niveau was er vaak sprake van strijd/conflicten met de EHS? Op beleidsniveau en/of uitvoeringsniveau?

b. Welke momenten waren er die gezorgd hebben voor praktische veranderingen in het Natuur-beleid, cq. EHS?

Eigen perspectief – Mening

6. Hoe heeft de Natuurbescherming zich volgens u in Nederland ontwikkeld?

7. Wat is gezichtspunt, mening over de EHS?

Toekomst Natuurbeleid

8. Hoe ziet u de huidige situatie?

9. Welke richting verwacht u dat het Natuurbeleid in Nederland op zal gaan?

Afsluiting

Bedanken voor medewerking en toelichting behandeling data (toesturen transcript en in later stadium het gehele rapport) en mogelijkheid bieden tot anonimiteit.

Interview Guide Cases (English) – Part 2

Goal: to illuminate which ideas prevail as regards Nature Policy and the NEN, in order to find out which discourses offer the fullest social identity.

Consider following aspects:
- History/Background
- Changes Nature Policy/NEN
- Central idea NEN
- Other ideas NEN
- Implementation progress project
- Future course project
- Challenges project

Introduction researcher: I am Elisa de Lijster, MSc student in Forest and Nature Conservation. Doing at the moment a graduation project in Nature Policy at the FNP chair group in cooperation with CLM and PBL. The research is about the current changes in Nature Policy with a focus on the NEN and how to situate these in the current context. As you are involved in a planning project, I would like to know how you perceive the total situation from your perspective and the area perspective. At the end of the conversation I hope to have insight which direction Nature Policy and the NEN are heading to.

Semi structured question list:

History/Background

1. Could you tell me something about yourself (background) and your involvement in the planning project?

2. Could you tell me something about the project, its history and aims? The current situation. How do you perceive this?

Changes Nature Policy/NEN

3. How do you perceive the current changes made in Nature Policy and the NEN?
   a. Does that affect you in some way, the project or the area?

4. Why do you believe these changes were made today?

Central idea NEN

5. What do you think is the central idea behind the NEN?
   a. How do you perceive the NEN?
   b. What would you like to be different?

Project implementation

6. What do you think about how the implementation of the project was going?

Future course

7. Which direction you believe the project will go to?

8. What are the main challenges for the project to handle?

Ending the interview

Thanking for cooperation, informing on handling procedure of data (sending transcript and in later stage the report) and giving opportunity for keeping anonymity.

Interview casus (Nederlands) – Deel 2

Doel: erachter komen welke ideeën er op dit moment heersen omtrent het natuurbeleid en EHS, om zo erachter te komen welk discourse de grootste sociale identiteit biedt. [49]

Let op volgende aspecten:
- Achtergrond/Geschiedenis
- Wijzigingen in Natuurbeleid/EHS
- Centrale idee
- Andere opties?
- Uitvoering project
- Toekomst
- Uitdagingen

Introductie Onderzoekster: Ik ben Elisa de Lijster, MSc studente aan de WUR. Momenteel bezig met een afstudeeronderzoek over de ontwikkelingen rondom het natuurbeleid. Het gaat vooral over de impact die de omwenteling in het natuurbeleid, zoals rondom de EHS, hebben op de praktijk en uitvoering. Om die reden ben ik hier, aangezien u betrokken bent bij een EHS project. Aan het einde van het gesprek hoop ik meer inzicht te hebben welke ideeën over de verdere ontwikkeling/realisatie van de EHS er spelen. Wellicht geeft dit meer inzicht in de richting die het natuurbeleid zal opgaan in de toekomst.

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[49] What ideas are floating around? Semi-structured interviews ……. How much does this differ from the old 'thought' or system of meaning of the Wildenness discourse? And which discursive elements can be recognised in these ideas?

Semi-gestructureerde vragen:

Achtergrond/Geschiedenis

1. Kunt u mij iets vertellen over uw achtergrond en betrokkenheid in het project?

2. Kunt u mij ook iets meer over het project zelf en de geschiedenis daarover vertellen?

Wijziging EHS/Natuurbeleid

3. Wat vind u van de algehele wijziging in het Natuurbeleid?

    a. Raakt dat de plannen van u en het gebied op een of andene manier?

4. Waarom denkt u dat deze wijzigingen nu gebeuren?

Centrale idee

5. Wat is volgens u het idee achter de EHS?

    a. Hoe kijkt u daar zelf tegen aan?

    b. Zou u het graag anders willen?

Uitvoering

6. Hoe kijkt u tegen de hele uitvoering van het UVW project aan?

Toekomst

7. Welke kant denkt u dat het met het UVW project uitgaat? Ziet u er toekomst in?

8. Welke uitdagingen denkt u dat het project mee zal moeten dealen in de toekomst?

Einde interview

Bedanking voor medewerking, informeren op het behandelen van de data, mogelijkheid geven tot anonimiteit.