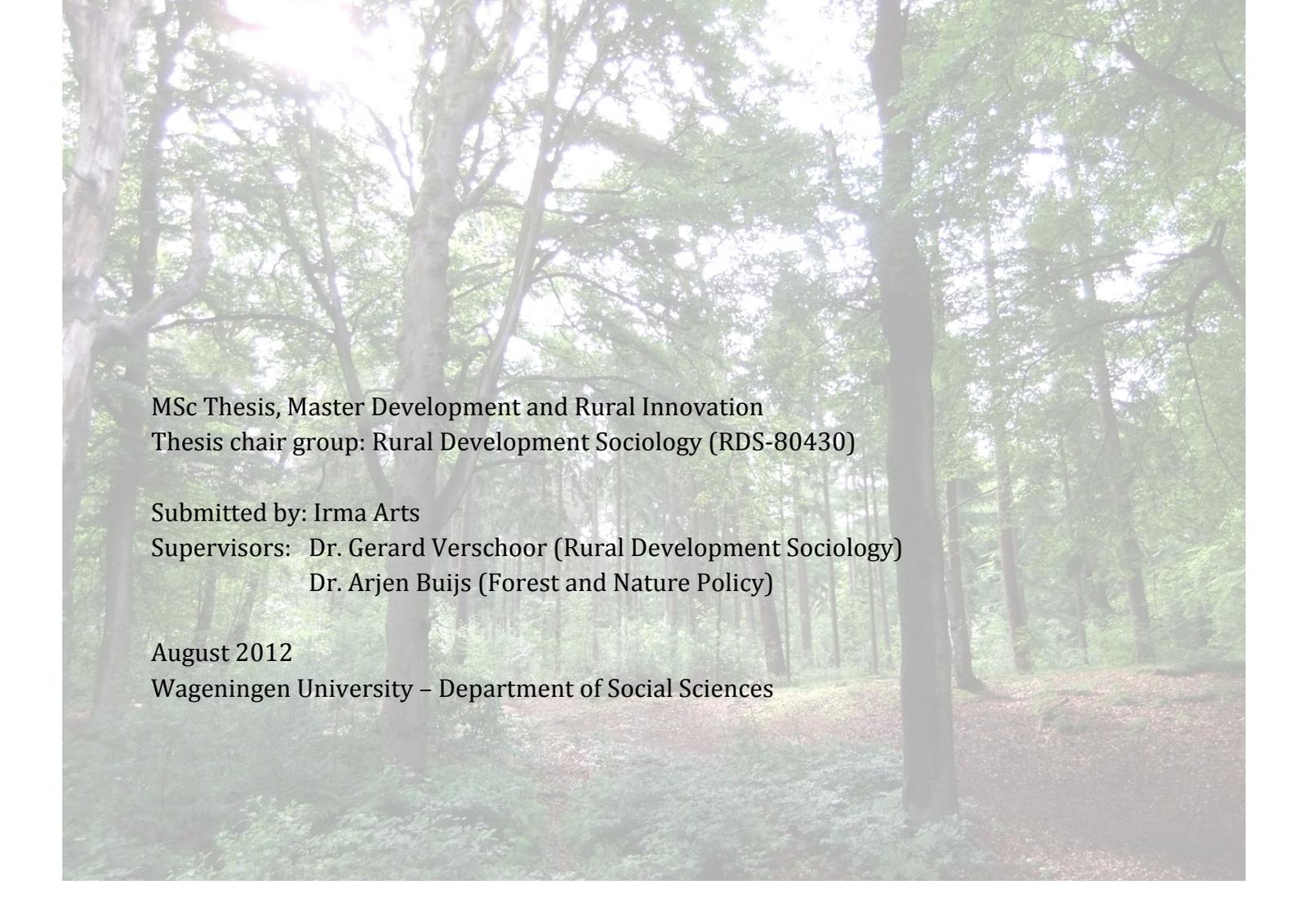# Protesting citizens and discussions on nature areas: legitimizing involvement and the exploration of possible worlds

Two case studies in the Netherlands

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Protesting citizens and discussions on nature areas: legitimizing involvement and the exploration of possible worlds.

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Acknowledgements

I started this research with a mixture of curiosity and doubts. I would finally be able to design and implement a research myself. Here all those years of studying theory and research methods would pay off. But what to research, what to expect, how to actually select cases, would people talk...
I am grateful to have seen my doubts change and curiosity grow during the process. For this I would like, first of all, to give a large thanks to all participants. I have greatly enjoyed the conversations we had, talking about your experiences.

Taking the first step to actually start and develop this research has been my main struggle. Everything was interesting, so where to begin, and what questions to ask. When finally armed with research questions it turned out that my job as a researcher, listening to people and gathering their point of view was an enjoyable journey. But it did not end there. The actual 'tricky' part had not yet started: the part in which I was supposed to make sense of it all. Now after some months of writing I am able (and proud) to present the result. This would not have been possible without the help and guidance of my supervisors Arjen Buijs and Gerard Verschoor to whom I would like to express my gratitude.

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Once again thank you all

Irma Arts
Wageningen, August 2012

Summary

This research explores conflicts on nature areas between residents, nature organisation, municipality and other possible actors involved. Transformation in natural and recreational areas can be a sensitive issues that encourage citizens to join together to argue for their input. The shift in society that has been described as a shift from 'government' to 'governance' has opened doors for citizens to become involved in policy processes. Participation having become a popular concept, protests of citizens have opened the possibility to work towards a cooperation between citizens, nature organisations and governmental bodies.

In this thesis I will discuss two cases, one in Baarn where some resident initiated a protest against planned logging by the national forest agencey ('Staatsbosbeheer'). Together these residents and Staatsbosbeheer have been able to arrive at a cooperation in which plans are presented to the residents on beforehand so they can voice their opinion on them. The other case will focus at the discussion in Maastricht on the replacement of the dog-area on the Sint Pietersberg. Municipality and nature organisation Natuurmonumenten, the owner of a large part of this hill, designed a plan for the transformation of the entrance and plateau of the Sint Pietersberg. On this plateau a dog-area was situated where dog-owners were able to let their dogs run free. In the new plan this area would disappear and move to a smaller plot at the foot of the hill. This would allow for the development of nardus grassland on the plateau. Protest arose and dog-owners established a foundation. Meetings were initiated between the different groups involved and the citizens were able to negotiate the use of the area.

These cases are viewed as hybrid forums, where different actors are joined together in a controversy, which opens the possibility to explore their different imagined future worlds. In including citizens in the debate on nature I have looked at the legitimation process that played a role, to reflect on the procedure established in the hybrid forum. It shows legitimacy as situated in local context and constructed out of the discussion in the hybrid forum, while at the same time influencing it. In both cases the protest starts by questioning the legitimacy of the established nature organisations. Within the hybrid forum a new construct was made were legitimacy is based on involvement of those with an interest in the area and decisions are taken by balancing these interests. Opinions are heard and plans can be changed on the basis of this new acquired inclusion.

However there are restrictions found. Not all involvement and ideas could establish legitimacy in the forum. In Maastricht boundaries are set by the Natura2000 policy and the view on the area as rare and biodiverse nature, which argues for the development of nardus grassland on the hill. In Baarn the boundary is created by the view of Staatsbosbeheer to integrate nature, culture, recreation and production forest, which argues for a park-like structure that requires maintenance and restoration. Although questioned by the protest-groups whether this should be so, in our cases we have not seen this legitimacy changed. The discussions therefore did revolve around the actual use of the area, but not so much on the different underlying visions on both the distribution of power as well as the different natures practiced.

Keywords: citizen protest, hybrid forum, situated legitimacy, nature management, participation

Content

List of Tables

List of Figures

1 Introduction

"The forest is finished", this is what the residents protested against the logging of the forest in Baarn. The "Baarnse Bos" is a 86 hectares patch of forest directly adjacent to the village of Baarn in the province of Utrecht. A village surrounded by green spaces such as parks and nature areas. The forest however is closest nature area to the village and consequently many residents walk there, especially those with dogs. Walking from the village through the forest you walk on old lanes that can direct you to the palace of Soestdijk, where members of the royal family used to live. This forest had been part of the grounds of Soestdijk, architectural enlightened with for example lanes, ponds and 'berceaus'. In time the forest grew more 'wild and adventurous' as residents described it and when you now leave the lanes, you can stroll along little paths through the trees and ferns.

This forest is since 1981 managed by the national forest agency: Staatsbosbeheer. It is managed as a multifunctional forest, where a combination is made between wood-production, nature and recreation. Every five years Staatsbosbeheer will inspect the forest and see whether maintenance is needed. They will fell trees for rejuvenation of the forest; creating light so new trees can grow. Wood is sold, for example for the manufacturing of paper. However felling trees is no longer simply accepted by the residents who live there. In 2010, when a new maintenance was planned residents protested against in their view the excessive logging of the forest. Some residents joined together and wrote a letter to the municipal council explaining their arguments against and went to the press to make their concerns clear. This led to a discussion between the residents and Staatsbosbeheer, initially a heated debate, but now developed into cooperation, where the two residents can voice the opinion of the regular walkers to Staatsbosbeheer. Although the discussion on the logging has been closed a new discussion arose, because is this a forest or a park? Staatsbosbeheer draw, together with an advisory committee and landscape architect, a plan for the restoration of the historical elements of the forest. The first project to start was the restoring of the big pond: ' Grote Kom' . But those regularly walking in the forest see it as an unwanted change as it does not fit the character of the forest as a natural and wild space.

A discussion such as the one in Baarn can be found in several places in the Netherlands. Changing an area and its function, especially those linked to cities and villages, often result in a discussion where residents argue for more involvement. In the city of Maasticht a recent debate on the Sint Pietersberg (the hill of Saint Peter) included nature organisation Natuurmonumenten, municipality, dog-owners and residents of Sint Pieter, the neigbourhood adjacent to the hill. This hill is described by the residents as the 'living room' of the people of Maastricht. It is a large green space where they are able to 'escape' the city. For dog-owners this is an area where they can let their dogs run. In 1995 Natuurmonumenten acquired a large part of the hill by buying it from the province of Limburg for one guilder. They would develop the site as a nature area. Consequently Natuurmonumenten introduced some rules, including that dogs had to be leashed. However to compensate the dog-owners Natuurmonumenten gave them an area on the plateau of the hill, fenced so it would be able for their dogs to run. It is a popular area where dogs can always find a play-mate and dog-owners meet and have a chat.

But this part of the hill also consists of a habitat-type rare in this part of the Netherlands: nardus grassland ('heischraal grasland'). This grassland grows on dry, acid, nutrient poor soil. It can be found on the plateau and a small part of the slope. However the soil of the part that was made into a dog-area, which at that time included nardus grassland, was enriched, which led to eutrophication. To

protect the nature on the hill Natuurmonumenten wanted to recover this loss of nardus grassland. Moreover this area has been assigned a Natura2000 area by the province. This EU regulation includes the assignment of habitats and species to be protected and developed. On the Sint Pietersberg nardus grassland got appointed by the province to be developed further.

In 2004 the municipality of Maastricht and Natuurmonumenten decided to work together on a plan to upgrade the Sint Pietersberg, especially the entrance, where a new parking space would be developed and the 18th century fortress on the hill would be restored. The idea was to concentrate the more intensive forms of recreation on the slopes, which would allow for more quiet recreation on the plateau and the possibility to develop nature. This meant removing the dog-area which would be replaced by a small area at the foot of the hill. When consulting the residents at that time not much attention was giving to this change. However in 2010 when the plans were picked up again, dog-owners started to protest and organised themselves in a foundation: de 'Gebete Hoond'. This foundation sought contact with the municipality to make their concern clear. The municipality has asked the parties to sit together and see whether in consultation a compromise could be found. After several meetings an alternative plan was drawn. However several dog-owners felt they could not approve with this plan. These dog-owners had started a citizen initiative, gathering signatures to put the issue back on the agenda of the municipal council. A rather heated evening brought forward that the foundation could not come to a decision whether or not to accept the plan. The municipal council, discussing the citizen initiative decided that another meeting was required where the dog-owners starting this initiative would also be taking part. In this last meeting the alternative plan that was drawn by Natuurmonumenten, the municipality and the foundation was adjusted and this final plan will now be implemented. It includes the removal of a plot of land from the dog-area with high potential to develop nardus grassland. This land is compensated by adding part of the slope to the dog-area. It was agreed that a management group would be established including Natuurmonumenten, municipality, foundation Gebete Hoond and one of the dog-owners initiating the citizen initiative. They will also draw an agreement on the future use of the area, to prevent that the dog-owners will have to move again.

We will see that both discussions are discussions on participation and nature. A discussion where people construct different 'natures' as well as legitimacy for their involvement. Following this process will enlighten the opportunities and obstacles these different claims and constructs can bring in the debate. It will lead to the argument that to progress in such the discussion both these constructs need to be taken into account. Moreover it shows that although the discussion can start as a conflict it may lead to cooperation. Let me start by placing the two examples above in a bigger picture.

1.1   Background

Nature conservation in the Netherlands, a brief history

Since the beginning of the twentieth century nature preservation became an issue in the Netherlands, taken up by non-governmental organisations. While the government's main focus was the creation and protection of farmland, new organisation rose to the protection of those nature areas that were left in the Netherlands (Arnouts 2010). These organisations would acquire land for the protection and preservation of its flora and fauna. Over the years the organisations became more and more involved and up until today they play a large role in the protection and management of nature.

In the 1990s it was the government that started to claim a larger role in nature conservation. Although nature organisations still play a large and very significant role in nature conservation, since the 1990s a more state centred approach can be found, starting with the writing of the first nature policy plan. The main focus of this plan was the realization of a National ecological network (EHS, 'Ecologische Hoofdstructuur'). The EHS focuses on the establishment of nature areas linked to each other by green corridors. The formulation of regulations and the assignment of the areas was conducted by the government (or government appointed institutions) and was based on scientific ecological expertise, much as the Natura2000 network of the EU. The policy was not only focussed on nature protection but also on the actively creating of new nature. To implement the EHS existing nature areas would be linked and new ones would be created. The government would provide funding to buy the areas for this "engineered nature" (Van den Belt 2004). Nature organisations would be involved in the implementation and management of the areas, just as farmers and other private landowners who would be encouraged to protect nature on their own land (Arnouts 2010). With this approach to creating new nature the dominant discourse in nature conservation became that of 'nature development' (de Lijster 2011). The basis of this discourse, found in policy and projects, is the interest in 'primeval' nature as reference for the newly created nature. This nature would be 'free' to develop and human intervention would only be needed there where this nature is threatened (de Lijster 2011). Not only the government designing the policy but also nature organisations, such as 'Staatsbosbeheer' and 'Natuurmonumenten', underline the 'nature development' discourse and are with their well-developed (scientific) expertise major players in this field.

In the beginning of the 2000s the emphasis in nature policy shifts towards more public involvement and participation (Arnouts 2010). These themes are mentioned in a new governmental policy plan: "Nature for People, People for Nature". In this policy plan individual preferences and perspectives on nature are given more emphasis (Turnhout and van der Zouwen 2010). The government still views EHS as the main project to realize, but acknowledges that nature has broader social values for people than those formulated in the ecological criteria set by the government (guiding the EHS policy). There is therefore a shift towards a more integral approach in which both general public as well as non-governmental organisations can become more involved (Arnouts 2010). This approach in granting a larger role for private parties' involvement can also be found in the new nature law currently under construction. The government focuses more on the realization of nature conservation by citizens themselves such as management by farmers and other private parties and the establishing of citizen initiatives in nature conservation, environment and sustainability. Nowadays citizen initiatives and citizen participation can be found in nature conservation practices and can take many forms, from sharing information and opinions to self-organization (Salverda and van Dam 2008).

Nature policy: from government to governance and citizen initiatives

We see that currently there is a shift to more citizen involvement in nature conservation. Government and organisations try to develop new ways of involving local residents in their policies and projects and citizens claim with protest or their own projects a voice in the conservation of nature. Van Dam et al (2008) identify several trends in the Netherlands that can be seen influencing this current emphasis on larger involvement of citizens. First of all there is the individualization of society, which goes hand in hand with a new search for identity. Van Dam et al (2008) argue that to be able to organise something by yourself has become a value in itself. Traditional roles on which identities were based seem to fade; identity is something that has to be formed and written by every individual themselves (van Dam et al 2008). The fading of the more traditional society gives new possibilities for creating identity, but also insecurities. Nature or the landscape can secure a connection with the society as well as create a sense of belonging (van Dam et al 2008).

This individualisation and the new construction of identity can lead to the organisation of citizens in local/small groups to look after their interests themselves. It is what you can see in the area of nature conservation where more and more measurements taken by government and nature organisations are no longer taken for granted but opposed by small groups of citizens. It is what initiated the protests in Baarn and Maastricht, but can for example also be found in the discussion on the flooding of the Hedwigespolder or in the plans of nature organisations to extend heathland in several forests. Here protest is often established by local protest-groups that argue against a proposed transformation plan. Although established as a protest-group they can also show the possibility for cooperation as the group often shows a large attachment to and involvement in the area (Duineveld et al 2010).

Apart from this societal trend that underlies the involvement of citizens in their local environment, another trend can be found in the manner of governing. Over the last decades a shift took place from 'government' to 'governance'. This shift refers to a change in the process of governing, in which governance "refers to the development of governing styles in which boundaries between and within public and private sectors have become blurred" (Stoker 1998). The process of governing is no longer exclusively linked to the state but a range of stakeholders can become involved. It can therefore be seen as shift from state centred governing to society centred governing (Arnouts 2010). This shift can also be identified in the area of nature conservation (e.g. Engelen et al 2008, van Dam et al 2008, Wurzel 2008). This 'new' way of governing aims for the inclusion of citizens in the design and implementation of policies. This includes both participatory processes, where government or organisations ask citizens to become involved in decision-making processes and initiatives by citizens themselves, starting their own project or becoming involved in decisions made in their neighbourhood.

This involvement became crucial, as it became clear that implementation of policies drawn by the state or experts was not always welcomed by the local residents touched by the policy. An example here is the implementation of the Natura2000 policy of the European Union. Natura2000 is the overarching nature policy of the European Union to be implemented in every member state. It consists of two Directives: the Bird Directive and the Habitat Directive. Together they regulate the protection of species and their natural environment and require member states to designate Natura2000 protected areas. The formulation of the Directives has been handled by experts, basing it on scientific knowledge emphasizing the ecological value and biodiversity of protected areas. The implementation however showed in most countries some difficulties, among others because of the

conflicts that arose between local residents and the administration on the assignment of the area and their management. As Engelen et al (2008) observe : "...the scientific ecological concepts underlying Natura2000 seem to invite a technocratic, top-down mode of policy-making that is increasingly being rejected by local constituencies as too insensitive to local interests, too paternalistic for modern tastes and too elitist for modern democracies" (Engelen et al 2008, p.5).

To increase the acceptance and effectiveness of policies -and the projects derived from them- there was a need to design new governance approaches to include the opinion of citizens. What has become popular are participatory forms of decision-making, in which citizens are involved in processes of implementation and/or formulation of the projects and practices in nature conservation (Rauschmayer et al 2009). These participatory processes have many forms such as citizen juries, joint management and multi-stakeholder platforms. However, they do not always deliver the desired process or outcome: they can for example reinforce existing inequities, exclude actors and lead to an outcome based on the view of a few (see for example Turnhout et al 2010, Cleaver 2001). Moreover Rauschmayer et al (2009) also identify a "big gap between the rhetoric on participation that is present in political discourses, and even legal texts, and the real-life implementation of participatory processes" (Rauschmayer et al 2009, p.55). In their book Cooke and Kothari (2001) go even further to problematize the participatory approach in itself and take a look at some fundamental problems: "(…) those[fundamental problems] that are most apparent to us are the naivety of assumptions about the authenticity of motivations and behaviour in participatory processes; how the language of empowerment masks a real concern for managerialist effectiveness; the quasi-religious associations of participatory rhetoric and practice; and how an emphasis on the micro level of intervention can obscure, and indeed sustain, broader macro-level inequalities and injustices" (Cook and Kothari 2001, p. 14). Participation thus does not indiscriminately guarantee a broader acceptance of a policy, or the absence of protest. We can therefore also see processes of participation organised by citizens themselves. In nature conservation groups of citizens establish their own projects to take part in the conservation of nature, or establish action-groups to argue for their input in management plans (for examples see Salverda and van Dam 2008). Being able to take their own interests at heart and claim a voice in the construction of nature citizens show themselves as new actors in the decision-making process on the conservation of nature. We will see this can be described in a hybrid forum, where current means of involvement become 'leaky' and makes new groups argue to enter the debate.

Governance and Legitimacy
The search for participation by citizens involves a different way of organising the decision-making process. The 'old' way of designing policies and projects in a 'top-down' manner is no longer seen as legitimate. New actors want to become involved and new ways of organising are asked for. Legitimacy can be descried here as: "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable , proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions" (Suchman 1995, p. 574). Citizens actively search to become more involved in nature conservation in which they bring forward different underlying norms, values, beliefs and definitions on which they would like to see nature management based. As the quote of Engelen et al (2008) mentioned above shows, 'top-down' policy was argued to be too insensitive and too elitists, which makes it no longer in line with citizens' constructed system of norms and no longer being proper, desirable or appropriate. The legitimacy of the state or nature organisation in designing a nature projects is thus no longer taken for granted. A legitimate project will have to be constructed in other ways. The new governance approach, in which participation is central, is

proposed to provide this space for citizen involvement and the building of consensus on policy formation and/or implementation. In interaction different actors, with different ideas and claims, can enter a participatory process which aims to provide an outcome legitimate to all actors involved.

However, in literature on the legitimacy of these new governance processes questions are raised about how legitimacy can be produced. No longer just dependent on representation by elections, these processes open the discussion on what basis legitimacy can be claimed in these new governance processes where "there are no pre-given rules that determine the responsibility, authority or accountability of complex processes" (Hajer and Wagenaar in Leino and Peltomaa 2012, p. 160). This discussion includes the providing of normative argumentations on how this 'new' legitimacy should be produced. Many of the new decision-making process are based on theories of deliberation. A deliberative process is not guided by bargaining of interest but by interpersonal reasoning. The force of the better argument will determine the outcome. This debate is a public one and to be legitimate should ideally include all those touched by the subject (Parkinson 2003). Starting from this point of view conditions on how legitimacy should be produced can be described in theory. There is however also the possibility to look at legitimacy from a different angle: legitimacy as situated and continuously debated by all actors involved in a governance process. Questions of legitimacy are basic to the formation and operations of such a process (Haïkïo 2007). Dependent on the actors involved legitimacy is constructed in the process, bringing together the different perceptions on what is proper, desirable and appropriate. We can speak of situated legitimacy (Connelly et al 2006), where people ask themselves "do we accept this process as an appropriate way to make policy here and now?" (Connelly et al 2006, p. 270). When this question is answered with no by the local residents we can expect the formation of protest and the arguing for involvement and new processes to define nature and its management. In the theoretical framework I will come back to this and introduce this process of protest and discussion as a hybrid forum in which new dimensions to the problem are discussed and legitimacy plays an important role.

To summarize we have over the last decades seen that implementing nature conservation projects can give rise to much resistance. New voices emerged, questioning the decisions made and management proposed. More inclusive ways of designing and implementing projects were therefore sought in the area of nature conservation. To overcome this resistance more participation of the local residents was seen as a solution. Citizens are given a larger role, but are themselves also searching to establish their own projects and claim a voice in decisions concerning the environment around them. It is here where local controversies can arise and legitimacy of established actors is questioned.

1.2 Research Objective

This research will focus on the construction of nature and legitimacy in contested local nature projects in the Netherlands. The aim will be to provide insights on the questions how nature and legitimacy is questioned and constructed by actors involved in a controversy. These controversies can be viewed as opening a hybrid forum where these construct can interact in the discussion that unfolds.

Focussing on local practices involved in nature conservation plans it will add to the body of knowledge concerned with the participation in nature conservation as well as on the construction of legitimacy. Using the concept of hybrid forum and situated legitimacy I will look at the development

of the forum and its constructions of both legitimacy and nature to search for insights in the dynamics of citizen protest and participatory practices. We have seen a focus in the literature on both different constructions of nature in the Netherlands as well as on citizen initiative and their strategies. This will be linked to follow the relation between participation, nature and legitimacy in a local practice. Showing the construction of nature and legitimacy can help to show why certain people or arguments may be less heard than others. I will try to untangle these constructions, and the opportunities and constraints that play a role in their discussion.

The next chapter will provide a discussion of the theory used to come to an understanding of the conflicts on nature areas. I will introduce the concept of a hybrid forum to show the possibility a controversy can open to work towards participation, but will also emphasize the boundaries that might be there. This will include the process of legitimation that will be explained elaborately in the second section of the chapter. This theoretical framework will lead to my research questions and methodology, after which in chapter five and six the cases are explored. In chapter seven both cases are discussed and analysed and a comparison made. I will end with a conclusion in chapter eight, reflecting on my objective and answering the research questions.

2 Theoretical Framework

Contested issues of nature management and conservation are more and more debated in an interaction between experts and the public. We can see that citizens claim a say in what they view as illegitimate policies. This debate can offer the opportunity to work towards cooperation between government bodies, nature organisations and citizens in the establishment of nature policies and practices. This research will focus on following controversies on nature areas, from conflict towards participation, to understand the claims people can make and their interaction. I will base my analysis on the concepts of hybrid forum and situated legitimacy. A hybrid forum will allow for a description of process and dynamics, as well as a critical reflection on the outcome, while situated legitimacy will allow showing both actors' own claims on the controversy, and what justifications are taken into account. It shows what boundaries are shaped in the hybrid forum. In the following sections the concept of a hybrid forum is first explained after which I will introduce and integrate the concept of situated legitimacy.

2.1   Creating a hybrid forum

Protests seem to have a negative connotation to them; controversies are rather inconvenient than anything else. They can be seen as obstructing transformation and development and be referred to as nimby ('not in my backyard') groups. However as Duineveld et al (2010) argue there is more to these groups or protest. Protest asks for a reorientation in planning processes when asking the question "why do we want this? why here in this way?" (Duineveld et al 2010, p. 28). This argues for an analysis of protest and the controversy it reveals as a process of possibility: the possibility to come to an understanding of the different 'worlds' included.

This research will begin with a controversy; a controversy that can show a questioning of current procedures. It is not a predesigned participatory process but the controversy that opens a debate including new voices and multiple meanings. A protest can be seen as an 'overflow', showing definitions, problems, views and solutions outside of the frame set by the plan established (Callon 1998). The controversy shows that "the general procedures which were developed over time to enable citizens to speak tend to become leaky everywhere" (Callon et al 2009, p. 118).

When a plan is established Callon et al (2009) explain: "all, specialist included, think they have clearly defined the parameters of the proposed solutions, reckon they have established sound knowledge and know-how, and are convinced they have clearly identified the groups concerned and their expectations. And then disconcerting events occur" (Callon et al 2009, p. 28). These disconcerting events, for example a protest, show different actors who are actually also concerned with the issue, who bring forward different views they also want to have taken into account. The space opened up by this controversy can be called a hybrid forum. Forum meaning an open space where groups come together, while hybrid refers to the fact that these groups are heterogeneous and the discussion takes place at different levels and in different domains (Callon et al 2009). In this forum different actors give different descriptions of "future world states" that can be incompatible and debated (Callon 1998). It is this debate that shows the possibility of a hybrid forum when analysing a protest. We can "follow actors and their work on the elaboration and implementation of new procedures" (Callon et al 2009, p.35).

Callon et al (2009) introduce the concept of hybrid forums in the context of socio-technical problems, such as nuclear energy (and waste). These socio-technical problems and their proposed solutions often bring uncertainties with them. Addressing these uncertainties a controversy can unfold. It is

here that a hybrid forum can be created to debate this controversy (Callon et al 2009). Controversies can therefore be seen as a space for exploration as they allow "an inventory to be made of the different dimensions of what is at stake in a project" (Callon et al 2009, p. 29). New and different actors become involved and show other sides to an issue than the ones predefined by experts and policy-makers. 'Lay-persons' or 'citizens' can come to claim a voice in the production of knowledge as well as in the representation of their own concerns (Callon et al 2009).

Although nature conservation is not a technological problem in the sense discussed by Callon et al, I would argue that controversies in nature conservation can also lead to the formation of hybrid forums. Nature conservation policy has long been seen as an issue for experts, drawing on scientific knowledge. This removed it from the public debate. However, the debates that are now initiated by citizens show the social dimension to issues of nature. This is where a hybrid forum can be established, bringing the issue back to a public debate (Callon et al 2009).

The hybridity of a forum can therefore be found in both opening up the production of knowledge, now the domain of scientists, and the procedures of representation, now based on elections and representation by established organisations. Science is questioned in providing the truth on the matter, as the problem involves uncertainties, and persons directly involved or attached to an issue bring in their own situated knowledge. Representation by elected representatives is complemented with or replaced by representation of emergent groups including, as well as experts and government, also citizens themselves. Citizens that start a protest show that they no longer feel represented. This misrepresentation as well as the multiplicity of understandings of an issue can be the trigger for citizens to become involved. In our case we can speak of multiple natures that are brought into the discussion as well as multiple claims of legitimacy, arguing for different content of the plans made as well as different decision-making procedures. A hybrid forum shows a possible way forward in thinking about these discussions, where a controversy can be used to work towards an inclusion of the different dimensions an issue can present.

The unfolding discussion in a hybrid forum

A controversy thus argues for a break with the 'business as usual' in the production of knowledge as well as the representation of different groups. Both can be the issues under discussion, however the emphasis in a discussion may be more on one than the other. Callon et al (2009) describe this as the independence of the two axes: the exploration of possible worlds (knowledge production) and the composition of the collective (inclusion of groups). In a controversy groups may argue for the exploration of possible worlds, but be satisfied with the established representation. Or they may feel representation is lacking while they do not necessarily need to go into the collective production of knowledge. "This independence explains the plurality of the possible configurations of hybrid forums or dialogic democracy, since it opens up a space of combination that allows for a great variety of forms of organization and trajectories of development" (Callon et al 2009, p. 139)

However, these two axes can become entangled. It is possible "in order to pursue the exploration on one of the axes, actors change level and reopen the discussion by moving on to the other axis" (Callon et al 2009, p. 139). When the exploration of possible worlds is blocked, for example, it is possible to argue first for the representation of emergent voices, before coming to the exploration of their future worlds. The development of a discussion is therefore unique and hybrid forums multiple in their outcome. It can be seen as a search for a procedure which allows for the open and inclusive

search for a common world. To understand what our hybrid forum will look like, the representation of groups and exploration of possible worlds are our point of analysis.

Hybridity of the forum: multiple future world states

In our hybrid forum the 'hybridity' of the discussion can be found in several different imagined 'future worlds' that come together. Our controversies revolves around nature areas and in this discussion hybridity will show in different 'natures' presented in the debate.

Nature here is seen as a social construct: it is not a given but related to and shaped by society (Van Koppen 2000). Arguing for a construction of nature is nothing new within sociological views on nature, however several different varieties can be found. Although I feel this thesis is not the place to enter into the debate on these varieties and their critiques (but see Demeritt 2002 for a good overview) I would like to argue shortly for some general points of constructivist thinking on nature that will be important in the discussions described here. Social constructivist thinking on nature shows how meaning and use of nature "can be questioned and explained in terms of social processes" (Van Koppen 2002, p. 307). This argues for a critical stand against the view that nature is 'given' and the 'truth claims' (objective) scientific knowledge can inscribe to it. Constructivism argues "that what we had once accepted as self-evidently pre-ordained and inevitable is in fact contingent and might conceivably be remade in some other way" (Demeritt 2002, p.776). Entering a debate on the different constructs of nature argues thus for a view on nature and knowledge as multiple and situated. This means that "the way nature is viewed, understood, made sense of, written about, pictured and used in part result of the position or place within which viewers find themselves" (Hinchliffe 2007, p. 15). It makes that nature is not a matter of fact, or an 'indisputable reality' (Hinchliffe 2007, p. 38). Rather it can be seen as in the making, where nature can be different, depending on who we listen to.

Recent studies in the Netherlands have shown these differences in how people view nature (e.g. Buijs et al 2011, Buijs 2009, Van Koppen 2002). These studies established different images of nature that are created based on different cognitive, normative and aesthetic (or expressive) views. The cognitive dimension relates to how people conceptualize nature, where the normative dimension looks at the values that are attached to nature and the expressive dimension consists of the emotions evoked by nature (Buijs et al 2011, Buijs 2009). In their research on a conflict on a nature park in the Netherlands Buijs et al (2011) show that there is a difference in these dimensions between residents and nature organisations. The different groups had different overall images of nature. A difference that for example showed was that while nature organisations refer much more to the cognitive dimension in the debate, residents used normative and expressive evaluations to underpin their argument (Buijs et al 2011). It makes it clear that in this case two 'natures' entered the debate.

Van Koppen (2002) refers to the lifeworld that includes the nature image of people, as opposed to 'system-nature', that is nature described by science. The experience of nature is influenced by the everyday lifeworld. An important influence according to van Koppen (2002) is the ideal of 'arcadian nature'. The tradition of nature conservation is based on this image of nature, which argues for nature as wild and pristine. However the lifeworld of citizens seems to be broader than this image. Studies show they have a broader interpretation of nature, where gardens and pets for example are also included. The emphasis seems also no so much on the pureness of nature as the arcadian ideal

shows, but more on the spontaneous character of nature, including for example weed and flowers near croplands and birds in the city (Van Koppen 2002).

This lifeworld of citizens cannot yet be found in the debates on nature. Van Koppen (2000) argues that there is the widespread conviction that rational societal debate is only possible on the bases of scientific facts and realistic interests. This leaves moral and aesthetical dimensions of the lifeworld, what can be framed as emotions, out of the political arena. But when natures are enacted by different actors in different ways, these dimensions do play a role. Allowing for multiple natures thus allows for bringing back the issue of nature conservation into politics, because "if the end [nature] justifies the means [management], only debate can justify the end" (Callon et al 2009, p.109). In a hybrid forum the debate is opened to explore these construct of nature with which it is involved, and search for the composition of a collective, where these "singularities are asserted and claimed, instead of being erased, and affirmation of their content constitutes the very substance of political debate" (Callon et al 2009. p.133).

Including emergent voices: the three stages of a hybrid forum

A controversy that enters a hybrid forum can be seen as consisting of several spaces allowing actors to enter the debate. In these spaces actors can enter the search of a composition of the collective. This collective is not an aggregation of individual wills, determined by the statistical outcome of voting, but is negotiated by all 'established' and 'emergent' groups in the forum (Callon et al 2009). A hybrid forum "place uncertainties concerning the composition of the collective at the centre of debate instead of relegating them to the enclosures of parliaments and assemblies" (Callon et al 2009, p. 128). This means the need for an (constant) inclusion of new groups and allowing them to explore the different future worlds they see.

The process will start with the searching for and establishment of an emergent group's identity. This formation of a group-identity is a first stage in a hybrid forum that may lead to the composition of a collective decision (Callon et al 2009). We see that in this stage "what matters is that they [the emergent groups] are heard and not that they listen" (Callon et al 2009, p.129). Citizens feel that in the proposed plan their view is not represented and therefore start to voice their concern. At a certain point however the groups might no longer be satisfied by repeating their concern but express "a willingness to establish dialogue and discussion with other emergent or constituted identities, with other exacerbated singularities, and other groups in the process of formation" (Callon et al 2009, p. 129). The actors are "prepared to listen to other groups and perceive their discourse, prepared, in short to recognize their existence and identity" (Callon et al 2009, p. 130).

Once these multiple actors and views are brought to the forefront the question is *"how to integrate the different dimensions of the debate in order to arrive at a 'robust' solution"* (Callon et al 2009, p. 32). The willingness to negotiate can lead to the third stage, where the different identities or constructs will "gradually lead to their composition" (Callon et al 2009, p. 130). The groups are included and willing to explore each other's identity and let it be negotiated. Taking the multiple views into account can lead to a process of negotiation, which may end in the reaching of a compromise (Callon et al 2009). A hybrid forum can thus more broadly be described as "the dialogical space that allows for the exploration and transformation of knowledge and identities" (Dusyk 2011, p. 874). In the participatory spaces opened possible futures are explored and brought together.

A hybrid forum is thus established with the possibility to explore the multiple natures as well as bring together different groups that are concerned by the issue and their identities that are at stake. Callon et al (2009) explain that this is not possible in the current delegative democracy and asks for a change to what they call a dialogic democracy. This dialogic democracy is formed when it allows for "the exploration of problems, identities and the collective" (Callon et al 2009, p.151). Conflicts on nature management, focussed towards a search for cooperation, could fit in this space. However, it is important to remember that this is only one of the possible and as Callon et al argue preferable, outcome of a hybrid forum. When a hybrid forum is opened, the process is not set and could therefore also lead to a different outcome, such as the emergent voices being taken up by already established policies and procedures. The context of the forum and its boundaries are therefore important to take into account.

The context of a hybrid forum

To explore the boundaries that outline a hybrid forum, or the spaces a forum opens, we can draw upon literature describing policy processes and participation. Spaces are described here not as neutral, but with a history and context to be taken into account (Cornwall 2004a, McGee 2004). Important in the process of a hybrid forum is to acknowledge that the boundaries of the spaces a forum consist of can play a role in establishing whose rationales are taken into account. The 'meetings' in a hybrid forum are neither neutral nor value free (Dusyk 2011) and therefore the interactions between actors do not automatically lead to consensus. Dominant discourses and vision may determine what is said and who are included: "For no matter how equitable the intentions that inform the creation of an arena for participation might be, existing relationships, and of previous experiences in other spaces, continue to exert an influence on what is said and what is sayable, within any given space" (Cornwall 2004a, p.80)
This is what you can also see in reality with participatory processes. They may lead to consensus, learning and empowerment (that what is whished for in participation), but can also reinforce existing inequities, exclude actors and lead to an outcome based on the view of a few (e.g. Turnhout et al 2010, Cleaver 2001).

What plays a role is how and by whom the spaces in a hybrid forum are created, how the boundaries are set. In participation literature we find the distinction between spaces that are created by institutions and spaces created by citizens. The first can be call 'invited' spaces where opportunities for dialogue are created by government or organisations (Cornwall 2004a, Gaventa 2004). It is a "mechanism for enabling public engagement in governance" (Cornwall 2004b, p. 76). The second can be called a 'claimed' or 'popular' space where people join together (Cornwall 2004a, Gaventa 2004). These are spaces in which the 'new' actors, such as citizens, create a platform to express their concern or work towards a common interest (Gaventa 2004): "participation comes to mean more than taking up invitations to participate, extending to autonomous forms of action through which citizens create their own opportunities and terms for engagement" (Cornwall 2002, p.50). However, the boundaries of such distinction are unstable and 'mutable, rather than fixed' (Cornwall 2004a, p. 2). A hybrid forum can consist of more spaces were actors come together, such as invited meetings organised by municipality or popular spaces where citizens come together to establish their voice and identity. The media can also be a particular space where people can voice their opinion. These spaces, and the actors within them can at a certain point come together in on forum to negotiate and explore definitions of the future world.

Although all actors can be involved in either space the difference lies in who 'opens' the space. Relations of power in these spaces can determine "what is possible within them, and who may enter, with which identities, discourses and interests" (Gaventa 2004, p.35). This power can be defined in interaction and "is part of all social relations, dispersed trough the network of normalizing discourses and practices which construct boundaries of possibility around thought and action" (Jones in McGee 2004, p. 24). It does not mean that one group always has power over the other as "those who are powerful in one space may in fact be less powerful in another" (Gaventa 2004, p. 35). A hybrid forum shows a possibility to act upon these boundaries to reshape them, while at the same time is influenced by them, where it can determine what is discussed and who has access.

Turnhout et al (2010) argue in their case on participation in a multi-stakeholder platform in the Netherlands that these participatory practices created will always be restricted in one way or another. According to Turnhout et al (2010) participatory practices will inevitably require 'acting, choosing and selecting' (Turnhout et al 2010, p. 37). Participation is then 'performed' and citizens 'made' by the boundaries set by the spaces opened. The platform in their case was created to discuss different interests involved. By framing it as a discussion between interests, citizens are 'created' that need to be "willing to represent their interests, balance the different interests and reach compromise" (Turnhout et al 2010, p. 32). Moreover their negotiation had to take place within the set policies, which restricted their behaviour and scope of debate (Turnhout et al 2010). Participation may therefore give unintended consequences and be inevitably exclusive in some way. It is therefore important to critically reflect on which restrictions on assumptions and expectations are present and how they affect involvement (Turnhout et al 2010). What is important then is to view "how participation is exclusive, selective and restricted. Not just in terms of who is in and who is out, but also in terms of the identities, perspectives and views that can legitimately be included in participation" (Turnhout et al 2010, p. 29). What arguments can be made and which actors can enter can be analysed by the legitimacy claimed by these actors. The process of legitimation will establish legitimacy, and with it authority, for specific justifications, while delegitimizing others. How this legitimation process plays out will therefore provide insight in the discussion 'performed' in a hybrid forum.

2.2   Constructing legitimacy

As we have seen a hybrid forum is a space created for the interaction of different worlds, in our case natures, where current practices can be debated and people are in search for a common solution, although constructing this is never final. This forum includes the input of different (opposing) views on practices in nature and landscape conservation. It allows for the search for a procedure in which these different views can all play a role in creating a common practice. But what is first needed is the establishment of legitimacy for actors and their practice, to be able to establish a new decision-making procedure.

Debating these nature and landscape conservation practices in a hybrid forum includes thus questions of legitimacy: whether actors taking the decisions are actually legitimate to do so, what outcome should be aimed for and which procedure should be established. A hybrid forum opens the possibility to address these questions and allow for a new procedure to be developed. It includes the process of legitimation and understanding thereof can therefore deepen the understanding of the process in a hybrid forum.

Situated legitimacy

Legitimacy can be broadly defined as: "a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable , proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions" (Suchman 1995). Actions are legitimate in the eyes of the actors involved when there is a shared rationale on what this action should look like. But legitimacy is not just the perception that something is appropriate. It also involves the assignment of a certain authority to those who are deemed fit to make decisions, be involved and take action. Legitimacy is thus also "a measure of the consent of citizens to the exercise of power" (Wallington et al 2008, p. 11).

Current literature on legitimacy of a participatory (new governance) process can broadly be divided in focusing on two different aspects: a normative argumentation of what new governance process should look like to be legitimate, and an analytical point of view that looks at legitimacy as constructed by actors involved in the governance process. In this research I will follow the latter way of looking at legitimacy. New participatory processes are often built upon the concept of deliberation and deliberative democratic theory. It shows the idea that there should be a shift from current planning processes to planning in which all actors touch by the issue are involved. This defines conditions for an action or actor to be considered legitimate or not. Legitimacy is here defined in accordance with theories on democracy, providing different criteria to evaluate the process upon. But the question remains how these norms and rationales provided by theory play out in practices. As Connelly et al (2006) argue before normative judgements can be made it is good to understand how legitimacy is situated.

We established a hybrid forum as the possibility to establish new procedures. In this search a participatory process might take shape but its outcome will be unique. A hybrid forum is not 'built' upon a concept of participation and its legitimacy, but shows a process enacted by all actors involved, who 'make' their legitimizing claims along the way (Leino and Peltomaa 2012, Connelly et al 2006). The legitimacy of the actions and actors involved are established in the process that takes shape. It is not a taken-for-granted quality but "a property constructed in and through specific processes of governance" (Connelly 2011 p. 930, after Beetham 1991). I will therefore take the approach of Connelly et al (2006) to look at legitimacy as situated in (local) context and look more closely at "how it is constructed in and through specific policy deliberations, how it is defined and used in their own contexts by actors in the rural governance and those affected by their deliberations" (Connelly et al 2006, p. 267). Legitimacy is thus a construction by actors on the basis of their own norms, beliefs, rationales. Instead of using predefined conditions to argue for or against the legitimacy of an action this view will enable to let actors show their own definitions. It gives the possibility to zoom in on the discussion between different actors on the appropriate way of designing and managing plans for this area.

To construct a legitimate action it is needed to create an understanding by the other actors involved that the action is desirable, proper and appropriate but also to have consent that you are the one able to make the decisions. This understanding is created in the process of legitimation. This process occurs "in situations where someone feels it is necessary to legitimate their own position and action, or where someone contests the grounds of legitimacy of other parties" (Haïkïo 2007, p.2150). In discussions on nature areas legitimacy of the 'traditional' actors, deciding on plans made, is questioned by emergent voices of citizens who also claim a say in the decision-making process. What we see in the negotiation in a hybrid forum is therefore also a process of legitimation.

The process of legitimation

What it means to be legitimate as an actor is that you conform to a set of 'rules of the game' that are seen as legitimate (Moug 2011). This can be either formal rules, or customs and conventions (Moug 2011). However, whether these rules are seen as legitimate must first be established and can always be debated. When citizens claim their own voice in a decision making process, the 'traditional' rules of a representative democracy do not comply any more. In a hybrid forum the 'rules of the game' are opened for discussion. They are therefore not (yet) set and constructed in the process itself. This construction is made by the interaction of the different justifications actors bring; the process of legitimation. Actors will come to construct justifications to questions such as "who should be 'in charge', what is the object of decision-making and the effectiveness and usefulness of the decision itself" (Moug 2011, p. 132). To justify their arguments actors will refer to shared beliefs (Connelly et al 2006). These views are multiple as groups in a hybrid forum do not share the same 'imagined future world' on what is desirable, proper and appropriate. They will refer to different socially constructed systems with different underlying beliefs, norms, values and definitions. Connelly et al (2006) argue: "There is no reason to expect that in practice all actors will agree locally on what constitutes a legitimate structure, since democratic traditions provide many different rules and norms which can be called on in a debate on legitimacy and legitimate forms of governance" (Connelly et al 2006, p.269).

Actors thus use different rationales to legitimize their own point of view and to delegitimize others, both on the issues covered as well as about themselves and others. Discussing the legitimacy processes of the Natura2000 implementation in Germany, Korthals shows that although protest can be seen as arguing against unjust distribution of power, they can often also be "framed as conflict over *deep-seated views on nature*" (Korthals 2008, p. 252). Conflicts involving nature areas can thus be seen as conflicts both over distributive power: the legitimacy of actors as well as over views on nature: legitimacy of different natures. The actors will discuss and give different justifications for both the questions who can be involved and have a voice as well as what the area should look like. In their research both Connelly et al (2006) and Häikiö (2007) found that justifications consistent with several different discourses can play a role in the construction of legitimacy. In her research Häikïo (2007) refers to legitimation based on representation, expertise and the common good, while Connelly et al (2009) focussed on discourses of representation, deliberation and expertise. Representation, expertise and the common good can be seen as discourses on which the traditional way of governing has based its legitimacy. New governance processes often justify the process by referring to the theory of deliberation. However Connelly et al (2006) found that all discourses can play a role in new established participatory processes. On the following pages all four discourses are explained in more detail.

Representation

Representation is "a central aspect of the process of acceptance" (Häikïo 2007, p. 2154) as "legitimacy is about the right to speak on behalf of the people" (Häikïo 2007, p.2156). Representation is traditionally an important norm to argue for involvement in the discussion. Claiming a role in the process on basis of representation means that actors identify themselves as the representative of others. Often underlying procedures are those of voting. This is the traditional discourse in representative democracy and can therefore play a large role in new governance processes as well; it is "the accepted repertoire of how the government guides actions" (Häikiö 2007, p. 2154).

Haïkïo (2007) analyses a case on the development of a participatory process for the planning of sustainable development in Tampere, Finland. In this case she shows that there is a difference between local politicians who see representation as executed through elections and citizens who argue for representation of "interests, thoughts, stages of life and associations" (Haïkïo 2007, p. 2156). In a hybrid forum where more groups become involved without the procedure of elections, this second vision on representation may become important to justify actor's claim on a voice in the protest. We can see this also for example in Buijs et al's (2011) case on a conflict in a nature park in the Netherlands between nature organisation and citizens. The citizens indeed argued for their influence as being representatives of the local interest. At the same time not being able to represent some followers or a specific interest can also be used for delegitimizing someone's involvement. Representation of interest should also refer to a common and shared interest as we can see in the case of Finland where "citizen participants consider individualism an illegitimate position in the governance network. They associate it with private interest and the personal good" (Haïkïo 2007, p. 2157). Representation can therefore be linked to justifications both on the common good (serving the general interest) and deliberation (involvement on interest and association).

Deliberation
Justifications based on the discourse of deliberation refer to ideas of new governance and participation. New governance processes are often referred to as deliberative processes. Deliberative theory suggests that all those who are touched by the decisions made should be able to participate in the decision-making process. This decision-making process should then unfold not as a bargaining of interest, but as 'interpersonal reasoning' (Parkinson 2003). The process of decision-making would thus drastically differ from more traditional ways of governing, where for example in nature conservation government as well as nature organisations design and implement policies. Representation is then no longer by election but by all emergent voices touched by the issue; by bringing your interest to the process through actual presence.

The common good
That you should be involved or that your point of view should be taken into account can also be justified by referring to the common good. Representing the common good means you are representing a view that is needed for or will benefit the general public. It is for example suggested that nature policy can rely on public support and therefore is in accordance with the general interest (Dubbink 2008). From this point of view a strong case can be made against participatory processes as they might lead to too much focus on specific local interests. Dubbink argues (2008) a policy can lose its legitimacy in this case because only a small fraction will be listen to: "This will be the case when a policy approved by a democratically chosen government and supported by the public, is frustrated by a few people" (Dubbink 2008, p. 50). Goodwin (1998) shows that nature organisation indeed fear this focus on too much self-interest. However he argues that although local residents may speak from self-interest they can also be seen speaking from a "collective and shared experience of place" (Goodwin 1998, p. 494).
What can differ here is thus not the reference to the common good, but what represents support for the common good. All actors in Haïkïo's study (2007) for example referred to the common good when justifying their actions. However she shows that her actors "have mutually different understandings of the definition of the common good and the desirable future. They also differ in their views as to who has legitimacy to strive for the common good" (Haïkïo 2007, p.2157). Although legitimacy can be obtained by referring to the common good, whether your view is actually referring

to a general interest and not a self-interest can be debated by the other actors involved. As with all of the discourses mentioned here it is thus simultaneously a way of legitimation as well as delegitimation.

Expertise

A last very important discourse on which legitimizing claims can be made is that of expertise. Traditionally expertise has been used as a basis for the formulation of nature policy and practices. Advisors for policies or plans were therefore granted legitimacy based on their expertise (Connelly et al 2006). In Haïkïo's case (2007) we see that the civil servants indeed invoked expertise as a component of their legitimate position. However citizens also called themselves experts as they felt they possessed both scientific knowledge as well as a professional expertise (Haïkïo 2007). Haïkïo suggests this makes clear that according to the citizens the position of just any lay-person would not be seen as legitimate. Expertise can therefore be a powerful justification in legitimizing you position or delegitimizing those of others. This was also seen in Tampere where a distinction was made between 'rational experts' and 'idealist utopians' among citizens (Haïkïo 2007, p. 2153). Local politicians and civil servants used the expert discourse to delegtimize citizens by stereotyping them as environmental activist, where "in this context, 'the environmental activist' does not refer to knowledge or expertise, but to actors campaigning against economic city development and mainstream policy-making, and to the unrealistic goals of environmentalism" (Haïkïo 2007, p. 2153). This questioned the position of citizens as a serious group that can influence the debate: "citizens were a party whose voice had to be heard, but any more active positions were regarded as illegitimate for them" (Haïkïo 2007, p. 2154).

Knowledge or expertise is in this case based on rational and often scientific knowledge. Policies, as McGee (2004) argues, now derive their legitimacy from being portrayed as technical implementations of rational solutions. In the case of nature conservation plans this can for example exclude more normative and expressive (or emotional) arguments on nature. However the attachment citizens can claim with an area and described in the previous section can argue for an inclusion in the production of knowledge (Goodwin 1998). The collective experience establishes a (shared) sense of identity and according to Goodwin "legitimates a new source of subjectivity of an emotional relationship between people and their environment" (Goodwin 1998, p. 494). This creates their own knowledge which may challenge 'tradition' conservation expertise (Goodwin 1998). The legitimacy of this knowledge "lies outside the scope of expertise, coming as it does from its relationship with locality, and with the authority of those who wield it rooted in their intimate involvement in local practices" (Goodwin 1998, p. 494). This means that what expertise and 'the proper knowledge' is, can be debated. But when different knowledges encounter each other "the crucial determinant of the outcomes (...) is the degree of legitimacy attached to, or bestowed upon, different kinds of knowledge" (McGee 2004, p. 14)

2.3   Summarizing the framework

A controversy is established when citizens protest against transformation plans of nature areas. I will view this controversy as a hybrid forum with the development of procedures towards the inclusion of emergent voices and multiple dimensions. Citizen protest can open the forum where different actors with different views are able to come together. This forum can show the possibility to allow for the exploration of multiple worlds as well as the representation of emergent voices.

But in this process the context and boundaries of a space will play a role. The legitimacy of a new procedure will have to be established, and can be questioned by the actors involved. There is a potential for conflict between the different justifications actors will have for their involvement and actions. Whether someone is a representative, where this should be based upon; whether the common good is represented, who can represent it; what role expertise can play and which expertise this should be, are all negotiable questions. This process of simultaneously legitimizing yourself and delegitimizing others will influence the hybrid forum. Constructing legitimacy does not just mean that actors have different underlying rationales, but also that these will interact in the course of the process itself. A hybrid forum can create room for involvement as long as the legitimacy of the actors and their arguments is accepted.

In this thesis the analysis will thus focus on the hybrid forum and its dynamic and the legitimation process that is part of it. This allows for an analysis that looks at both the possibilities a conflict can open, as well as the constraints that might be found along the way. The possibilities are shown in the exploration of different worlds (or natures) and the inclusion of new actors, but whether they can claim legitimacy will have to be analysed in practice. For a hybrid forum to evolve towards a dialogic democracy with multiple knowledges and voices, legitimacy has to be constructed. Whether this will happen in practice is the focus of this research.

In the next chapter I will present the research questions this research built upon, where both concepts of hybrid forum and situated legitimacy are integrated in the research. Chapter four will show how the methodology used to collect the data to answer these questions and reflect upon legitimacy in a hybrid forum.

3 Research Questions

I will look at discussions on local nature management and conservation practices and the *construction* of legitimacy involved. These practices are defined in a hybrid forum, including different actors such as non-governmental organisations, citizens and local government. These actors bring different views on the practice and its process to the table. With these arguments actors construct what they feel is a legitimate practice, or in other words what is desirable, proper and appropriate. Interaction of these arguments takes place in a hybrid forum while at the same time defining it. In debating these characteristics actors together may come to a joint legitimate practice. However, whether this is reached depends on the dynamic in and boundaries of the space opened. The starting point of this research is how the practice negotiated in a hybrid forum is discussed and how its legitimacy influences this discussion in the hybrid forum. What I will focus on is:

1. *How does the hybrid forum develop?*

This includes the questions which actors are involved, who can create space and what different identities will enter the process. It will include establishing the hybrid forum and opening spaces, the representation of the actors, as well as the exploration of the possible worlds presented by the actors. Does the discussion show this multiplicity and is it explored? It involves decisions made and views explored. This will not be static and might change during the process.

2. *In what way is the legitimacy of actors and proposed actions questioned and constructed in a hybrid forum?*

An important influence on the development of the forum will be the legitimacy actors can establish. Legitimation is done by providing justifications for one's own values, beliefs, norms and definitions on what is desirable, proper and appropriate, but also critically review and undermine other possible perception (delegitimize others). It will involve the question how actors legitimize their own involvement as well as the process that unfolds and possibly delegitimize other actors and ways to organise the process. This process of legitimation can take place on the following issues:

- actors involved: legitimation and/or delegitimation of their own role and those of others
- procedure: legitimation and/or delegitimation of the organisation of the project
- practice: legitimation and/or delegitimation of the definition of the issue: what should be focused on and what is at stake; and proposed solutions: what should be aimed for and which measures should be taken

4 Research Methodology

4.1 Research set-up

This qualitative research will give an empirical account of a hybrid forum and the construction of legitimacy that comes along with it. A hybrid forum includes multiple actors with multiple views and as we saw in the theoretical framework different legitimizing claims. A qualitative research makes it possible to provide an in-depth analysis of these views and claims made. The value of a qualitative research design lies in the critical approach to subjective accounts it provides (Green and Thorogood 2009). This design will therefore enable to provide insights in the justifications made by the different actors that come together in a hybrid forum. It is to show the complexity of the formation of a nature conservation practice, the multiple worlds that come together and its process of legitimation. The focus will lie on both the process of design and implementation and the content of proposed transformation plans. It is this complexity that asks for an in-depth account on actors, their reasoning and the discussion.

I thus give an analysis of the trajectory of a hybrid forum, in which a protest evolves to participation and different groups will play an important role. A case study will be able to show the construction of this forum and its question on legitimacy in practice. It allows for the identification of both the different justifications of actors and the interactions between these. The choice of a case study involving different groups of (nature)organisations, citizens and local government bodies allows for an in-depth exploration of all different point of view as well as the context in which the interaction takes place.

Much of the literature focusing on legitimacy of new governance processes look at processes designed and implemented by initiative of the government or government related bodies. For example in "Legitimacy in European nature conservation policy" (Keulartz and Leistra 2008) several authors focus on the design and implementation of the Natura2000 policy measure of the European Union. Although different authors take different angles and levels of analysis the starting point here are processes designed by (supra)national governments. Connelly et al (2006) discuss partnerships in rural governance in England, where a policy is implemented that brings stakeholders together in partnerships, to discuss the development of the rural area. This is an example of a so called 'new governance processes' (focused on participation and bottom-up implementation of a policy) and the design originated from government levels.

In recent years however citizens have started to design their own nature conservation (or rural development) projects to implement it together with organisations, other citizen groups and local (or provincial) government. Moreover they are much involved in claiming a say in proposed transformation plans. The introduction showed that plans in nature areas receive much attention of citizens which may lead to the establishment of protests. In terms of the construction of legitimacy these processes have not yet received much attention. However this can be interesting because it does not originate from 'traditional' ways of governing with a more established authority and legitimacy in decision-making. The process I look at therefore involves active citizens who claim their own role in the design and implementation of a nature project.

For this exploration two cases are chosen. Every hybrid forum will have its own unique process, but there might be some similarities that show the possibilities and constraints that can be encountered

when searching for a new procedure to discuss controversies. The research does not opt for generalisation to any other protest, but provides a possibility for the description of a hybrid forum and the testing of its process and the boundaries describe in the theoretical framework. When testing theory the comparative method is suggested to provide insight in the applicability of proposed ideas in several contexts (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Although time constrains did not allow for an in-depth research of several cases, a first step is taken with the exploration and comparison of the two cases in this research. It is a first attempt to research the possibility that protest can open towards participation drawing upon hybrid forum and legitimation to explain the process. In this research possible similarities found can show the construction of a hybrid forum in practice and its integration with the legitimation process, and consequently contribute to the development of the new governance processes.

The cases were sought by consulting employees of nature organisations to suggest possible protest that have led to cooperation. The case in Baarn was thus suggested to me. The case in Maastricht I had seen in the local papers which drew my attention and consequently I contacted the actors myself. The criteria to select the cases included an initial protest, controversy, on a nature area but one that had developed towards cooperation. Due to the limited time for my data collection I have not been able to 'case' some setting as Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) describe it: to look at the feasibility of carrying out the research there. After the first two interviews I found both cases showing potential for looking at the controversy as a hybrid forum and I built from there.

4.2 Case description

Both cases introduced in the introduction are analysed in this research. As the process is already described in the introduction I will stick in this section only to a short overview of the nature area and actors involved. In the findings the debate and the arguments of the actors will be described in detail.

Baarn

Baarn is a village of around 24000 residents (website CBS) in the province of Utrecht (Figure 4.1). The Baarnse Bos is around 86 hectares and a mixed forest, with both deciduous trees such as beech and large conifers such as the Douglas fir. It has historical elements and a park-like structure as it belonged once to the palace of Soestdijk. However some patches can be seen as more wild and rough (Figure 4.2).
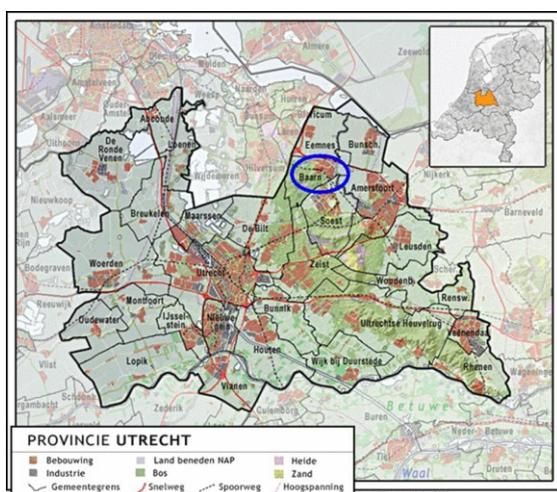

Figure 4.1: the province of Utrecht with in the blue circle the village of Baarn

Figure 4.2: Impression of the forest in Baarn, a mixed forest (firs and deciduous trees) with both lanes and more dense forest

In this case we see three groups playing a main role in the debate about the management of the forest: Staatsbosbeheer, the residents and the advisory committee of Staatsbosbeheer. I will shortly introduce all of them. In box 4.1 a timeline is given to present an overview of the process.

Staatsbosbeheer: Is the state forest agency and was founded in 1899 to expand the forest, for production and the prevention of sand drift. Nowadays it manages, commissioned by the government, 260000 hectares of nature. It focuses on the conservation and management of different landscapes and ecosystems and includes recreation and activities for the public in its areas (website Staatsbosbeheer).

In Baarn the forest is owned by Staatsbosbeheer and managed as a multifunctional forest and park-forest, meaning that the forest has multiple purposes: production, nature, recreation and culture. As a multifunctional forest it receives, when necessary, maintenance every 5 years. This includes the felling of trees for rejuvenation and production.

Staatsbosbeheer has also drawn a plan for the forest in Baarn to restore the park-like structure of the forest. This was done together with a landscape architect and an advisory committee. The plan includes a description of the environment and its history and 17 possible projects to be fulfilled.

Advisory Committee ('stuurgroep'): When it became clear for Staatsbosbeheer that changes in the nature areas in Baarn inspired a lot of discussion they invited residents to join in an advisory committee. The first committee was initiated to become involved in the management of the estate of Groeneveld, but expanded to advising on the management of the forest in Baarn as well. Within this group, however, insuperable differences made cooperation hard and eventually this group fell apart.

When Staatsbosbeheer started with the new plans for the restoration of the cultural elements in the forest they decided to initiate a new advisory group. This time they themselves brought different actors together. They choose to include people who could create a support for this plan in society. The committee includes people of the province, the palace, the local paper and television, a forest expert, someone of the group 'mooi Baarn' (beautiful Baarn) focused on the cultural history of Baarn and someone of the cultural heritage agency. It is their function to debate the implementation of the new restoration plan. It involves a discussion on which elements to restore in what way, and usually focusses on the possibilities to combine nature and culture.

The residents-group: When I refer to the residents-group of Baarn I will refer to those residents involved in the discussion on the logging in the forest. They are now the discussion partner of Staatsbosbeheer. This group is led by two women both living in Baarn, also called the 'green knights' by Staatsbosbeheer. They had the support of around 500 residents also (regularly) walking in this forest. Their involvement started with gathering the signatures and involving the press. Together with another resident they wrote a letter to the municipal council including their arguments against the logging. When Staatsbosbeheer organised an excursion to explain their arguments for the maintenance they went along. As we will see in the findings in the beginning this led to a rather heated discussion. However they have now established a good relationship with Staatsbosbeheer and are seen as the residents that voice the opinion of the users of the forest to Staatsbosbeheer.

Box 4.1: Timeline Baarn

Autumn 2010: protest arose when dots appeared on trees that were going to be felled; signatures were gathered to initiate a protest
November 2010: Staatsbosbeheer organises excursions to explain the plans for the logging to the residents
December 2010: Questions are raised in the national parliament on the practices of logging, among others, also in the forest of Baarn
Residents send a letter to the municipality and inform the paper on their point of view
February 2011: residents-group corresponds with Staatsbosbeheer on the questions they have. They are invited for a meeting with forester and manager of the area and district
From 2011 onwards: talks were established between Staatsbosbeheer and the residents concerned with the logging. Compromises were sought. Some trees were not felled, or felled within a larger period of time. The residents become an established discussion partner of Staatsbosbeheer

Next to these events a second line of events can be found:
A restoration plan is established along with an advisory committee on the vision and implementation of this plan.
In **2007** the plan is launched and a book published with the forest history and proposed plans. Funding is sought to support the first projects, which is started in **2010**. The advisory committee decides on the reconstruction of the 'Grote Kom' to be the first project.
In **May 2012** the first restoration project is realised. Among residents the project is questioned for its costs and its suitability in the forest.

Sint Pietersberg

The Sint Pietersberg (hill of Saint Peter) is a hill of about a hundred metres high next to the neighbourhood of 'Sint Pieter', a neighbourhood of the city of Maastricht (figure 4.3). The city of Maastricht is the capital city of the province of Limburg and has about 120000 residents (website CBS). The Sint Pietersberg is an important hill for the people of Maastricht and especially the residents of the neighbourhood 'Sint Pieter'. It is also a tourist attraction as below the hill there are the marl-caves, originated from the long-time excavation of marl by humans. Part of the hill is still excavated although this will end before 2020 after which a large part of this quarry will be given to

Natuurmonumenten, a nature organisation that already owns a large part of the hill. The top of the hill you can find the 18th century fortress which is now restored by the municipality and Natuurmonumenten (figure 4.4). On this plateau you also see nardus grassland which is managed by Natuurmonumenten and which they need, according to the Natura2000 regulation, to develop. In Limburg nardus grassland can only be found on a small number of places, including the Sint Pietersberg. It grows where the top-layer of loess is removed and dry, acid, nutrient poor soil is exposed. Part of the plateau was in 1995 established as a dog-area. Here Natuurmonumenten saw the nardus grassland species declining. In box 4.2 an overview is given on the unfolding discussion on the dog-area.
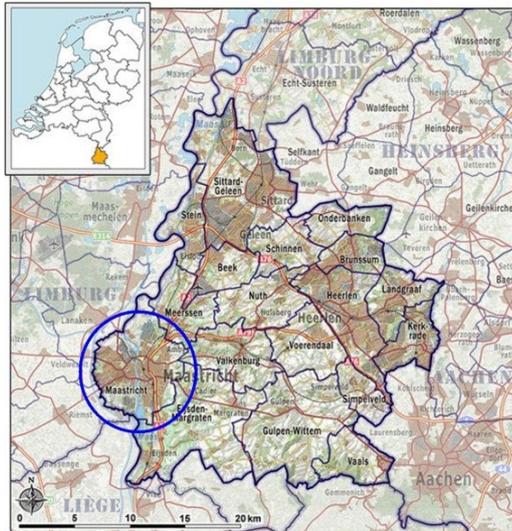

Figure 4.3: the city of Maastricht in the blue circle, in the south of the province of Limburg

Figure 4.4: Impression of the Sint Pietersberg, with the fortress, the plateau and the quarry

In this case several different actors and groups were involved:

Natuurmonumenten: Natuurmonumenten is a nature organisation that was founded in 1905. It is an association with 730000 members and has 355 nature areas, together around 100000 hectares, in its possession (website Natuurmonumenten). In these areas nature is protected, managed and developed. The Sint Pietersberg is partly in their possession since 1995, including the plateau. In a plan established in 2004 together with the municipality they decided that the dog-area on the plateau would be removed to the foot of the hill. When in 2010 discussion started about this plan Natuurmonumenten was asked by the municipality to discuss the possibilities for keeping the dog-area with the foundation 'Gebete Hoond'.

Municipality: The municipality has actually played a role in several ways. First of all the executive body of the municipality has in 2004 put together, in cooperation with Natuurmonumenten, a transformation plan for the entrance of the hill. In this plan the dog-area was removed from the plateau to make room for nardus grassland and quieter forms of recreation. In the municipality there is a procedure for consultation and in 2004 this plan was introduced to the residents. At that time there were some comments but in general it was received well. The plan was approved by the municipal council. However it could not yet be put into practice as there was still a contract with a restaurant holder at the fortress.

In 2010 the municipality wanted to put this plan into action, but when it was introduced again protest arose among the residents and dog-owners. The new municipal council also felt that they had not been well informed and wondered who could actually take the decision on this area. It became clear that legally Natuurmonumenten has the right to make the decisions. However the municipal council felt that the municipal executive councillor needed to try to preserve the dog-area on the plateau. The councillor therefore initiated a meeting between the different groups. Here the discussion developed and a new plan was made.

This alternative plan was not supported by some of the dog-owners, who submitted a citizen initiative. This citizen initiative was discussed in the municipal council and there it was decided that another meeting had to be held to allow for the input of the dog-owners starting this citizen initiative.

Foundation 'Gebete Hoond': This is the foundation of the dog-owners. When the dog-owners heard that their area would disappear they decided to establish a foundation. They chose for a foundation and not an association because they felt this would make them more decisive as you would not constantly have to involve all your members. Four board members were selected who would represent the foundation in the meetings. They were 'send' with the message to keep the dog-area in the same size on the same place.

To keep the connection between the board and supporters they would include a second 'circle' which included dog-owners very involved with the issue. However the board felt that with the constant debate in the second 'circle' on which measure to take, they were actually not decisive. They decided that they would first establish a plan with Natuurmonumenten and the municipality before the dog-owners were asked again for their opinion. This gave a break between some of the dog-owners and the foundation.

The foundation is now seen as a partner for the municipality on issues involving dogs.

Dog-owners starting a citizen initiative: While the foundation was talking with Natuurmonumenten and the municipality some of the dog-owners started a citizen initiative. A citizen initiative is a procedure which allows citizens to put an issue on the agenda of the municipal council. What is required is the gathering of signatures to show it is an issue which concerns a good portion of the residents of municipality. These signatures were gathered and the municipal council took the initiative in consideration. However the council had no legal powers to change anything, but they could ask for another meeting to be arranged. In this meeting the dog-owners starting the citizen initiative had to be involved.

These dog-owners felt no longer represented by the foundation and were in the end also not satisfied by the outcome of the process.

The neighbourhood council: A neighbourhood council in Maastricht is initiated by the municipal council as an extra representative of the neighbourhood. Their opinion is asked on plans affecting the neighbourhood. They are also involved in complex issues such as the discussion on the Sint Pietersberg. The council is not democratically chosen but when a new member is needed people can apply and will be chosen by the already existing members of the council. Each member represents expertise on some issues concerning the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood of Sint Pieter is an active one, and residents know how to find the council with their concerns. The neighbourhood

council has taken part in the meetings on the dog-area as well as in other meeting on the development of the hill.

The provincial government: In this research not much emphasis is given to the provincial government, but they did have an influence on the discussion. The province is the one who decides on the Natura2000 areas in the Netherlands and develop its management-plan. The Sint Pietersberg has up until now only a concept version of the management plan as it still needs to be approved by the ministry of economics, agriculture and innovation. Although it is a concept version in new plans and activities proposed for the area it is already taken into account. The provincial government was involved in the meetings insofar that they would explain the regulations and management plan for this area.

Box 4.2: Timeline Maastricht

1995: Natuurmonumenten becomes owner of parts of the hill, previously owned by the province. A dog-area is established where dogs can run free

2004: a plan is established for the restoration of the fortress on the hill, a new parking space and the removal of the dog-area to a smaller area at the foot of the hill. A consultation took place with the residents, not much critique was given

2010: taking up the above mentioned plan. In the summer an information meeting was initiated to (re)inform the residents about this plan. Among the residents protest arose, especially against the removal of the dog-area

Dog-owners come together in a meeting and decide to start foundation 'Gebete Hoond'.

End 2010 until end of 2011: meetings between municipality, Natuurmonumenten, foundation 'Gebete Hoond', neighbourhood council and province take place.

September 2011: citizen initiative is handed over to the municipal council; in November 2011 the council will discuss the initiative that argues for the preservation of the dog-area

November 2011: a plan drawn out of the meetings is presented to the supporters of the foundation. A group of dog-owners show their discontent at this meeting and cannot approve with it. The municipal council argues for another meeting, this time also including the dog-owners starting the citizen initiative.

January 2012: meeting between municipality, Natuurmonumenten, foundation 'Gebete Hoond', dog-owners involved in the citizen initiative, neighbourhood council and province, to draw a final plan. The previous plan prosed by Natuurmonumenten, Foundation 'Gebte Hoond' and municipality was used as a starting point.

From January onwards: the alternative plan is presented and approved. A part of the original dog-area will be used for nardus grassland. This area is compensated with new space for the dog-area on the slope of the hill. A management-group is established to discuss the implementation of the plan

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In both cases I have, next to the main actors described above, talked with some residents; regular walkers in Baarn and dog-owners and residents in Maastricht. In these open conversations the main point of view of the residents starting the protest in Baarn and the residents starting a citizen initiative in Maastricht were underlined.

4.3   Research methods

The main method I used to collect my data is semi-structured interviews. Interviews as method provide the researcher with the possibility to get to know the interpretations of participants on an issue. As described above my research will focus specifically on actors own accounts of nature and legitimacy of the decision-making process, which makes interviews a suitable method to explore these. In a semi-structured interview "the researcher sets the agenda in terms of the topics covered, but the interviewee's responses determine the kinds of information produced about those topics, and the relative importance of each of them" (Green and Thorogood p.95). It provided me with the possibility to gather insights specific on the topic of legitimacy (divided in the dimensions of decision-making process and nature that is aimed for) but does not set presupposed categories of answers. It allows the participant to elaborate on topics of interest and show the (non-)relevance of them according to her/his view. This allows for an in-depth exploration of people's own accounts while remaining within the boundaries of the research objective. Apart from the topic of legitimacy every respondent was asked to describe the process to gather information on the development of the hybrid forum. Appendix I shows an overview of the topics that guided the interview. Although specific questions were formulated about these topics, these can be seen as guidelines; not all questions were asked in every interview, or were asked in different ways. The stories told in the interviews were mainly guided by the respondents themselves.

For this research I have conducted six in-depth interviews in Baarn:
Two employees of Staatsbosbeheer, the three residents most involved in the protest (one of which was interview over the phone), and one member of the advisory committee.
In Maastricht I have held seven in-depth interviews, where two interviews were held with two people at the same time. Included in the interviews were:
Three employees of Natuurmonumenten, two employees of the municipality, two residents involved in the citizen initiative, member of the foundation Gebete Hoond and member of the citizen council.
Next to the in-depth interviews I had informal talks (and walks) with several residents in both Baarn and Maastricht (eight informal talks in Baarn, all while walking and three talks in Maastricht while walking and two by phone).

The media also played an important role, especially in initiating the debate. Moreover newsletters as well as official documents were released during the process. I used these articles and documents published as another source of data. This included around ten articles, some e-mails and the restoration plan in Baarn and around twenty documents (articles, newsletters and official documents), an internet blog and facebook-page in Maastricht.
Articles were published in the local and regional papers (in Baarn: de Gooi- en Eemlander and Baarnse courant and in Maastricht: Dagblad de Limburger, de Ster, Maaspost) and on the internet (e.g. Maastricht aktueel.nl and sintpietersbergmaastricht.nl). In the case in Maastricht social media and the internet were used by dog-owners to keep each other informed and discuss the outcome. Here I used the blog: hondenloslopgebiedpietersberg.punt.nl and their Facebook-page (hondenloslopgebied Sint Pietersberg). Reviewing the documents provided me with the possibility to gather, next to the retrospective accounts on the process given in the interviews, also opinions produced at the time of the discussion.

Methods of recording and analysing

Conducting the interviews I started by recording (when given permission) and transcribed them. During the data collection I switch to making notes due to the quite formal atmosphere a recorder can create. Moreover some interviews were held while walking through the forest or on the hill, which presented a challenge for my recorder and were therefore summarized based on my notes.

In the analysis I first focussed on the discussion itself, to understand the possible creation of a hybrid forum. I looked at both axis of a hybrid forum: the representation and inclusion of emergent voices and the inventory made and exploration of the multiple worlds. This included putting together a detailed description on the discussion as possible, looking at which actors were involved and which spaces were opened. I analysed the accounts on the interaction between the actors and how they could (or could not) create space for themselves. Moreover I included an analysis on the different constructions of nature, by reviewing actor's account on the area.

The second part of the analysis focused on the construction of legitimacy. I looked for the justifications given by the actors for their role and view in the process and justification on the management and image of nature. Although informed by the literature study done prior to the data collection and theoretical framework developed beforehand, I took an open approach. During the progression of my fieldwork I established themes that were mentioned by several actors. Keeping in mind that research is a reflexive and iterative process I developed a coding scheme for my data along the way. I used the discourses found in previous research (see theoretical framework) as a starting point, but searched for other emerging common views and patterns throughout the research process. As the grounded theory approach to data analysis suggest: "there should be constant interplay between data and ideas throughout the research process. Ideas are emergent from one's experience in the field, and from one's preliminary analytical reflections on the data" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p.159). My data analysis thus started when my fieldwork started. Moreover during the gathering and analysing of the data I critically reviewed whether these theories and concepts introduced in the theoretical framework were actually covering my data or that my focus needed some addition or revision. I will come back to this in the discussion on my research in chapter seven.

In the following two chapters I will present my data. The first chapter will focus on the case in Baarn. I will start with outlining the initial situation when protest arose and follow the discussion as it unfolds. After a description of the discussion I will point to some important themes that were involved in the conflict: the different views on nature and its management, on involvement and on expertise. The second chapter on the case in Maastricht will be structured in a similar way. Both chapters present the story of the actors involved in the discussions. My analysis and reflection will follow in the discussion.

5 Logging and restoration in the forest of Baarn

The forest in Baarn is used daily by walkers, cyclist and dog-owners walking their dog. The forest has been part of the palace grounds of 'Soestdijk' , but Staatsbosbeheer already maintains the forest since the 1980s. In 2010 some of the residents became concerned about this management when trees in the forest were marked to be felled. The residents felt that in such a small forest the number of marked trees was far too high and the forest was not yet recovered from the previous maintenance. This concern let one resident to take the lead and gather signatures to prevent the felling. In this chapter we will see how this concern develops initially in a struggle with Staatsbosbeheer to let their voice be heard, but has now established itself as a partnership in which the concerned residents are actively involved to give their opinion on plans for the forest.
Apart from the maintenance Staatsbosbeheer implements, a restoration plan for the historical elements in the forest was designed. Staatsbosbeheer initiated an advisory committee to debate the proposed vision and plans. The first plan that was implemented was the restoration of the 'Grote Kom', a pond that can be seen as the centre of the forest. This research started when this restoration was just finished and a new discussion arose. The residents-group now in contact with Staatsbosbeheer questioned the restoration and mainly its integration in the forest. Looking at this discussion we can outline the different natures and their legitimacy that are constructed. But let us first go back to 2010 when the dots appeared and the first protest of the residents arose.

5.1   Outlining the situation

In the Baarnse bos dots appeared as the National Forest Agency, Staatsbosbeheer, managing the forest argued that trees needed to be felled to increase the light that would enter the forest and allow for rejuvenation of the forest. Moreover the forest is used as production forest, in which some trees are felled and the timber is sold. While managing forests, Staatsbosbeheer implements a five year maintenance- cycle. Every five years forests are inspected and activities for their maintenance are planned. In 2010 the forest of Baarn was due for a new check-up:

"Every five years we look at the forest and see what state it is in. The forest itself indicates if and what needs to happen. When we need to log, the trees will be marked with dots." (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

It was decided that trees had to be felled for rejuvenation:
"We carefully looked at which trees still have a future, and which ones are in the way. The trees to be felled are carefully selected. This is based on our experience and expertise, we have done this before (...) we make room for natural rejuvenation, and this goes faster than you think" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer in local paper)

The foresters had learned from previous situations that these dots could raise questions among users of the forest. Therefore they included a sign in the forest with explanations on these dots and wrote information about the five-yearly maintenance on their website. However the residents of Baarn frequently walking in the forest did not feel they received clear and enough information on what was happening:

"There were dots on the trees but nobody could figure out what these meant. There was a sign at the entrance of the forest, but this had totally different colours than those on the trees." (respondent residents-group)

This brought perturbation among the residents of Baarn walking in the forest. One of them decided to contact Staatsbosbeheer to see what would happen with these trees. When she learned that the trees with these dots where marked to be felled, she started a petition. She posted papers on trees in the forest and contacted a local paper. For the residents-group the initial alarm lay in the frequency of which the maintenance was executed. Staatsbosbeheer argued they assume a five year cycle. However the residents concerned with the logging remembered the previous logging, which was not yet five years ago. Therefore *"the direct cause was that there was said that the logging would happen every five years, but it had not yet been five years ago"* (respondent residents)

The local paper reported on the planned felling and the protest that was started. The resident felt she was not taking seriously by Staatsbosbeheer and felt by engaging the papers they would generate attention to the problems the residents saw with this felling:

"I thought: I don't get answers, so I will go to the press, that always helps" (respondent residents-group)

Staatsbosbeheer reacted on the concern of the residents in the paper and invited the users of the forest to join for an excursion in which the planned maintenance would be explained. A respondent of Staatsbosbeheer argued that these were mainly user-arguments that were brought forward, that it would give a lot of nuisance and would for example make paths no longer usable.

The initiator of the petition was joined by two other residents of Baarn to help her with her case and together they joined the excursion. For them the explanation was not satisfying:

"We got an explanation and walked passed all the dots, but we absolutely did not get a good feeling about it" (respondent residents)

The residents-group sent a letter to the municipality with an explanation of their points of view and one to the local paper on their view of the excursion. The municipality directed them to Staatsbosbeheer, as they owned the forests and the municipality did therefore not have a say in the management of it.

In the meantime the discussion on logging was also brought to the national government. One of the political parties asked questions about the activities of Staatsbosbeheer in several forests in the Netherlands, including Baarn. Staatsbosbeheer was asked to give a reaction on them and according to the minister stating the answers in parliament, the residents were enough involved and was the expertise of Staatsbosbeheer appropriate to decide on this nature development.

Both Staatsbosbeheer and the residents of Baarn starting the petition experienced this initial period of protest as one of struggle and unpleasant communication:

"When it started there was quite a struggle. The communication was not nice, it was more fighting than that it was communicating" (respondent residents-group)

"In the beginning we were directly opposite to each other. There was a moment when we said: what is this really about" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

Staatsbosbeheer sought contact again and asked for a meeting with the two residents taking the lead in the discussion, which they later came to call the 'green knights'. The residents agreed to have a talk with the district manager, the manager of the forest in Baarn and one of the foresters. This was the start of talks between Staatsbosbeheer and the users of the forests (represented by the two residents of Baarn) that lead to a good cooperation. Staatsbosbeheer and the two residents met to walk through the forest and listen to each other's arguments. The initial question of Staatsbosbeheer was whether the residents would position themselves as an action-group only defending their interest. However they agreed that they would not necessarily have to agree with each other, but that there was a need to listen to each other's explanation:

"In the beginning of the conversation he [manager of Staatsbosbeheer] asked: What are you really, activists? During the conversation he found out that we really had some serious concerns and we are not some kind of environmental activists. This lead to constructive talks. We discussed several areas. Sometimes we got what we wanted, sometimes they got what they wanted and sometimes we came to a compromise." (respondent residents-group)

To be able to build constructive talks made them able to agree on further involvement. There is now a mutual contact that enables Staatsbosbeheer to involve the residents more and enables the residents to let Staatsbosbeheer know what is discussed among the users of the forest:

"We also agreed with each other that we will listen to each other. (...) And what I do now, when we need to do something new in the forest, I present it to them [the residents]: these are our plans, what do you think of it?" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

The residents-group sees a definite improvement in the communication. Suggestions they have made are taken up by Staatsbosbeheer and they are able to contact them when there are questions or when something happens in the forest. For example it had been decided that one plot would needed to be felled completely. Apart from wondering what reasons there would be for felling so many trees (described in the next section), the residents also argued that it did not needed to be felled all at once. They suggested to fell half of it, let it recover and then fell the other half. This was agreed upon with Staatsbosbeheer. However, when the logging was about to start far more than half of the trees were marked. One of the residents contacted Staatsbosbeheer and they immediately rectified this.

But communication did not always run smoothly. For example the restoration plan had in the beginning not been mentioned to the residents-group. Now they are involved, but they had to initiate this themselves. Moreover the users of the forest had little idea of the restoration plans. It needed a lot of determination to reach the level of involvement the residents-group has now:

"Then I think, on the other hand, had I not involved the press and had I not been so engaged, nothing would have happened. It would have gone just as usual...The press has had a lot of influence, together with my determination." (respondent residents-group)

This especially played a role in the beginning of the process. Currently they have well established contact and although they do not always agree the feeling is that the communication and the contact is good. It was a lack of communication as well as missing the representation of their point of views that made the residents-group argue for involvement. This discussion and the procedure established can be seen as a discussion on the first axis in a hybrid forum: establishing emergent voices in the debate, opening up representation.
But this does not mean that there are no difficulties or differences involved. Firstly we can see a large difference in how the management is perceived. It is the second axis in a hybrid forum that show the possibility a controversy can open for the inclusion of different imagined future worlds. The perception on management will depend on the different worlds, and justified accordingly. Moreover talking about the process difference can be found on the right to be involved and have a say in the process. Here the process of legitimation plays a role. I will first show the discussion possible worlds: what nature was constructed and which views were expressed on the management proposed. This will be followed by outlining the different justifications for involvement and expertise being part of the legitimation process. In the last section I will come back to the ideas of communication, how this developed within Staatsbosbeheer and how the residents perceived it.

5.2   Managing nature

The protest started as some of the regular visitors spotted the dots on the trees. When they learned this meant that those trees needed to be felled they turned to Staatsbosbeheer to discuss their activities. The remembrance of the logging some years earlier also made the residents-group doubt whether the forest would recover from another logging. They feared for devastating effect as too many trees would be cleared and the forest would become less dense:

"The worst is, that a few years ago they already felled a lot of trees. (…) You never used to see the cars at the Amsterdamsestraatweg, but now you can see them. And at the other side, near restaurant De Generaal, you see the trains now. There is so much cleared and they don't replant. There is no rabbit or deer to be found anymore. And now there will be another clearcut" (resident in the local paper)

The trouble here was partly seen in the difficulty to include nature, recreation and production. Baarn is a multifunctional forest where these tree pillars are all included. That the integration can be difficult sometimes was acknowledged by both people from Staatsbosbeheer as residents involved in the protest. As one of the residents put forward:

"It is part of the problem, that Staatsbosbeheer wants to include too many pillars: nature, recreation and production-forest" (respondent residents-group)

The problem described here by the resident refers not only to the felling of too many trees, but also of the lack of clarity of the arguments given to explain the need for the maintenance. The reasons Staatsbosbeheer gave for the need for this maintenance were not seen as accurate and sometimes even contradictory. Lack of clarity and contradiction in the reasoning could be found in the representation of logging as maintenance. The residents did not feel that for maintenance 1000 trees need to be felled in such a small forest as the one in Baarn:

"They [Staatsbosbeheer] call it maintenance. But that is definitely not the case. You do not need to fell a whole plot for maintenance. You clear a few trees so the others get some air" (respondent residents-group)

Because so many trees needed to be felled, which would for them not fit the explanation of rejuvenation, the residents-group felt that the actual reasoning was based on money:

"They clear a plot here, one there. Suddenly all the trees are gone. And then it is suddenly production forest… (…) They clearly needed money" (respondent residents-group)

"I understand that Staatsbosbeheer, because of cutbacks, rather fells more trees than fires people, but at least be open about this" (resident in local paper)

A respondent of Staatsbosbeheer argued that when they first got in contact with the residents they felt there were a lot of assumptions already among the residents about the management, such as that it was based on economic reasons.

The residents-group referred to what they saw and heard in building this argument. They saw a lot of trees being marked with dots. They sometimes heard the argumentation given for felling as needed for the rejuvenation of the forest, and at other times referring to the forest being production forest. They also realised that there is an economic crisis and knew Staatsbosbeheer received fewer subsidies. Moreover they saw that mainly large trees were marked to be felled, which they argued would generate more money. Adding this up it seemed clear to them that Staatsbosbeheer mainly was going to fell this many trees to generate income. They felt that during the discussion the reason for logging was pictured in a contradictory manner:

"It is a good philosophy that you want to make nature more diverse, but at the same time they told us it is production forest. That obviously does not really go well together" (respondent residents-group)

Although they do understand the need for production-forest, they wonder whether the forest in Baarn would be the best option for more logging. They fear it will change the forest character and leave it with a lot of open space. Here we come at the heart of the discussion as the users of the forest see themselves differ fundamentally on the subject of nature conservation from Staatsbosbeheer.

Nature conservation: to manage or to do nothing?

For Staatsbosbeheer it is clear that a forest needs management, to keep it healthy for next generations, as well as to fulfil the production targets of the government. They see their expertise and experience in the management of forest as leading. It allows them to "*envision an image for the future*" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer) where management can be based upon. This includes the point of view that management is needed, otherwise *"the forest will stop developing in some places"* (respondent Staatsbosbeheer):

"If we do nothing there will develop a very dark forest, which is completely closed. We do this [maintenance] also for the next generations. By opening up space, the top of the tree can grow. This will make its stem bigger" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer in local paper)

Although it would be possible to let the forest just grow, in which after a long time natural process would create a diverse forest. In Baarn Staatsbosbeheer does not see this as an option, as it does not fit the "landscape structure of a planted park-forest" (letter from Staatsbosbeheer to residents). The residents however seem to take quite the opposite stance:

"There has been, in our point of view, more than enough growing space created in the past decennia. The forest is 'finished'." (letter of the residents to the municipality)

They agree with the idea that it is sometimes good to have some maintenance in the forest and that felling some trees to allow for more light in the forest can benefit the forest. But in Baarn they feel this is done enough already. It is the scale and the period of time in which the logging occurs that make them doubt the management:

"They say that it is for the care of the forest and that thinning is good for the forest. I can picture this completely, but I could not imagine it would be so many trees, and in such a short period. Normally it is once every five years and now it was within five years" (respondent residents-group)

The large scale and short period asks for, according to the residents-group, the re-planting of trees. Staatsbosbeheer argues that natural rejuvenation will occur, so trees do not have to be planted. The residents argue however that the capacity of the forest is exceeded. More trees are removed then there will be able to grow back in the five year period of time, in their point of view.
Moreover some of the residents fundamentally doubt the management of nature. The idea that a forest needs constant care is not seen as a valid argument:

"Since we interfered with nature it has become a mess. Nature is much smarter, it will find her own way" (respondent residents-group)

"I wonder whether something would happen if there was no logging. You should do nothing for twenty years and then see what the forest looks like." (respondent residents-group)

A forest or a park?
The maintenances of the forest proposed are thus opposites: to manage or not to manage. The discussion on what the management should look like is linked to the ideas on what the forest should actually be. It is this difference that presents two different imagined future worlds. We see these future worlds clearly in the discussion on the restoration of historical elements in the forest.
After the initial discussion on the maintenance and logging in the Baarnse Bos a new discussion has arisen. The forest of Baarn used to be part of the palace of Soestdijk. In the 1970s it became property of the state, and the forest is since 1981 property of Staatsbosbeheer. Being part of the palace grounds the forest was designed as a park-like walking area for the royals and their visitors. This means that there are several cultural and historical elements in the forest that refer back to this time, such as ponds and lanes. The current manager of the forest felt that those elements where in decay; in forest management they were not taken into account:

"I saw all kinds of historical elements in the forest, on several places. And I kept saying....I have to manage it as a forest... we will destroy our history" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer).

The new plans or vision for the forest include a reconstruction of these cultural elements. It is described in seventeen projects of elements that need restoration. The first project is just finished and included the restoration of the 'Grote Kom' a pond in the centre of the forest; most of the lanes meet at this pond. Over the years the shape had changed and the historical elements like the row of trees alongside the sides of pond and the edges and stairs had partly disappeared. The restoration consisted of dredging the pond, bringing back its shape, giving it new stone edges and stairs and planting a row of lime trees alongside of it. This new pond was opened in May and sparked quite some reactions in the users of the forests. This transformation of the 'Grote Kom' shows for them a change from forest to a more park-like structure. And this they felt not necessary or rather unwanted. They feel that the 'Grote Kom' does not really fit their image of the forest anymore. They understood the historical connection to the palace but preferred the forest to stay more wild and rough, to be able to experience it as a forest. Regular walkers did not feel that the 'Grote Kom' was

really neglected. It indeed needed some dredging, but it was beautiful as it was old and fitted in its surroundings. In Baarn there are already a lot of parks and the argument was given that it was good to keep this piece of 'real' forest:

"The changes at the 'Grote Kom' are unfortunate. Eventually it will certainly be beautiful, but is does not fit the rest of the forest." (regular walker in the forest)

"I want a forest. And it is no problem for a forest to be a bit overgrown. I want a forest to be at peace, a space where time disappears for a while" (blog ' baarnse onafhankelijke partij', opinion resident Baarn)

"This [change to park] has already happened at 'Groeneveld'. There we also had forest, but now they changed it into a park. It was a very exciting forest, now it is a boring park. That is fine, but we already got one park now, so why make a second one? While we did not even wanted the first one. And there are only a few forests left in the Netherlands" (respondent residents-group)

This last quote also refers to the feeling of some residents that we do not have a lot of nature left in the Netherlands. Those little bits of rougher places we have are therefore worth keeping, as 'wild' nature and not as a park. Although there is respect for the history of the place not all agree with the argument that you need to contain it. As someone said *"you need to accept that the past is the past"* (respondent residents)

In terms of management the residents-group agreed that a park will need to have more maintenance. But for them it should be a forest, and therefore large scale maintenance is not needed:
"We are saying the forest is 'finished'. You need to maintain it a little bit, but that is something different than felling a thousand threes. Staatsbosbeheer sees it as a park-forest, and it more and more changes into park. Then it is something different, for maintenance." (respondent residents)

5.3   Decision making: Involvement and expertise

The above displayed discussion shows the different 'worlds' included in a controversy. What also played a role in the discussion is the difference actors show in legitimating who can be involved and make decisions. The two important themes that could be found, involvement and the rationality of the debate, are outlined below.

Involvement: Staatsbosbeheer, advisory committee and residents

Part of the debate for the residents consists of the feeling that they know the forest better than those making the plans. This is especially the case with the new plans for the restoration of the historical elements. These plans were designed by Staatsbosbeheer together with a landscape architect and an advise-group, the 'stuurgroep' , including people of the province, the palace, the local paper and television, a forest expert, someone of the group 'mooi Baarn' and someone of the cultural heritage agency. This group of people advised Staatsbosbeheer in the development of the new plans and eventually also chose the first element to be reconstructed: the 'Grote Kom'. The 'stuurgroep' is brought together by Staatsbosbeheer. They selected people they felt represented enough support and would enable good communication to the residents of Baarn:

"We discussed together which groups you would need to create support. Because you are going to have to fell about 150 trees. You will make a mess before you can make it nice. And when the communication is not good, you will get a lot of complaints, because you disturb nature" (respondent 'stuurgroep')

Part of the consideration was to include people who will engage in constructive talks, rather than activists or people with a one sided interest:
"We have carefully considered whom to ask and whom not to ask. But for sure no action-group. Otherwise you will have trouble" (respondent 'stuurgroep')

The experience of Staatsbosbeheer with a previous advice group was that when you invite anyone to join, you end up with a diverse group with different interests, who "all will lean in a different direction, which is a bit difficult" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer).
The new group advisory group did therefore included groups invited by Staatsbosbeheer, but did not include any of the residents of the neighbourhoods surrounding the forest, as the question the chairman asked himself was: from which neighbourhood? Moreover "*you need to have someone with some sort of followers, not just 'lone' people, so to speak*" (respondent 'stuurgroep')
However that no residents were included was taken amiss by the users of the forest. The residents-group felt that these plans represented by the 'stuurgroep' did not represent how people actually use and think about the forest:

"The only thing they want is to implement the plan they have imagined without any consideration of the people walking in the forest. They don't know the people walking in the forest. These people never walk in the forest twice a day themselves" (respondent residents-group)

That plans are drawn behind desks by people who do not have this attachment to the forest did not feel right to the residents:

"We walk far more often in the forest than the foresters. We know the forests better. And that grates sometimes. It is understandable that foresters are busy, they need to do a lot of administrative work, but it is a bit annoying that they are the ones who make the plan. (...) When the World Wildlife Fund starts a project in Indonesia they always do this together with local residents. And why? Because they know that you cannot make something behind a desk. But the province does want to make plans for our forest from [the office in] Utrecht." (respondent residents-group)

At the moment the residents active in the protest against the logging are also asked for their input in the restoration plans. Although they could no longer influence the vision that was made for the forest, they were asked to give their opinion on the execution of the first project of the 'Grote Kom' and their insights in further projects. Initially they were asked to join the 'stuurgroep'. However they declined this offer:

"They [Staatbosbeheer] also have an advice-group for the forest. They have asked whether we would like to join, but we do not want that. We understand their tactic, to get the loudest protesters on board and then they will shut up by themselves. We do not wish to come on board, we wish to share

our own opinion, or not our own, but those of the users of the forest. And to discuss this with them, what we think of it." (respondent residents-group)

For the residents taking part in the 'stuurgroep' means conforming to its vision. To choose not to participate in the 'stuurgroep' means that they are able to bring forward their own (and the users') critiques on the plans. However this also means that the 'stuurgroep' take their input in consideration but always test it against the vision they have set:

"We hear their advices through the forest manager. Sometimes you take it into account and sometimes you say no. We need to take several things into account, such as budget and vision. That is what we stand for, you should not detract things from it. When you think, just let the forest grow, you should not be in such an advice-group." (respondent 'stuurgroep')

Taking part in the hybrid forum is thus based on different justifications. Legitimizing their own involvement the residents-group argue that their local interest and insight should play a role. The 'stuurgroep' on the other hand refers to support and a mind-set to compromise that legitimates participation. In the end all actors were involved, but then another question can be asked: what are legitimate arguments actors can make?

What can be said: Emotions and expertise

The input of the different actors is not only tested against the bigger vision drawn for the forest, but also to the possibilities Staatsbosbeheer sees in the management. These possibilities are based on the expertise and technical knowledge of the foresters involved in the management. This means that the different view on management of the residents and Staatsbosbeheer lead to a discussion that challenges the profession and the expertise of the foresters:

"It is the work of Staatsbosbeheer, they do what they see fit. It is not that they make a mess of it because they like it. But we say this work is not necessary. You doubt the work of some people. This can make people feel threatened." (respondent residents-group)

The residents see this mainly as a discussion about management and the proper way to see nature. They searched for expertise by for example talking with a scientist as well as arguing for a second opinion on the proposed management. Staatsbosbeheer however also sees a difference in their arguments made by technical expertise and the arguments of the residents, which they feel are based on emotions:

"People think, because of the media, that they have a lot of knowledge about forest management. And this is where you need to make a switch. It is not about having knowledge of trees, but about emotions." (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

There was an understanding for the existence of these emotions and Staatsbosbeheer understood that this gave the residents a voice that needed to be heard. This would be an argument for involvement, but it was seen including a debate on emotional bonding with the forest. An understanding of the measures taken for management was mainly seen as a lacking with the residents. These measures are based on the technical expertise of the forester:

"You can easily say what needs to be done until the moment you have to make the decision yourself: do I remove it [the tree] or not. To make that choice, it will involve emotion and then they [the residents] will lack the technique and knowledge. Because they have to think why... we [foresters] do it more as an automatism, but we use this technical knowledge." (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

Staatsbosbeheer made a difference between the 'stuurgroep' and the residents in the purpose of the debate:

"The one group ['stuurgroep'] you judge from their followers point of view, the technique and finances and the other group [residents] is actually hundred per cent emotion, how sensitive it is." (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

Eventually Staatsbosbeheer feels it is their task to take the emotions of the residents into account while managing the forest:

"And then it is the trick to really listen to them and try to search for some sort of compromise between what fits and does not fit. And this asks a lot of you. Because these people speak from emotion and you speak from you professional and technical knowledge" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

This also includes management for future generations. One of the foresters referred to the argument that current management will allow future generations to also enjoy the forest. To take this generation into account foresters are skilled to envision a future vision for the forest, they will think on a long term:

"You have to be clear in what your framework is, and show that there are people working who know what they are doing. These people can look in the future; have the expertise to create a vision for the future " (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

5.4   Changing practice

"We [Staatsbosbeheer] always want to contribute something to the people, because we work for the Dutch society" (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

The previous sections showed the findings on the actors' different views on who could participate and with what contribution. An important aspect that came forward and to take into account, is the status of Staatsbosbeheer, what they should or could do. The quote shows that Staatsbosbeheer feels an obligation to society. They are a governmental organisation and as such are part of all the people, the whole society. Their forest can therefore also be seen as common good. For some of the residents in Baarn this also means that it does not give Staatsbosbeheer an unlimited say over the forest, because it belongs to everyone:

"The idea you often get from people working for the government is that the money they work with is theirs. But it is not, it is our money. This sometimes gives them the idea of an excessive say. And this also included the forest. The forest is also from you and me. " (respondent residents-group)

The idea that people are able to and should have a say in the discussion of forests is an idea still in development in Staatsbosbeheer:

"In the past we were not free from some arrogance. We said, we are the professionals, we have the professional expertise to manage the forest; that is what we came for; that is why we made this organisation, so public: enjoy... (...) There has been a change in the society. Society has made people vocal, makes people want to talk, to have an opinion. People have an opinion on management. (...) This change in society means that those standing on the other side, the forest managers, need to change as well." (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

This change in society, for citizens to claim a say in debates, makes that Staatsbosbeheer tries to change with them. However this does not happen overnight. Discussions with residents such as in Baarn are viewed as a help to make this change. What happens is that Staatsbosbeheer tries to find a way to incorporate the opinion of the residents. Communication is found important here. As described above Staatsbosbeheer more and more feels the need to explain their plans more elaborately. The change is for example described by the manager of the forest in Baarn. He remembered the process in 'Groeneveld', a park close to Baarn. Here they started with just implementing their plans. The media came to ask them whether they would explain what the plans were. They agreed to this. During the process the media asked whether they could not inform them beforehand when something would happen. Eventually this went even further and they started to present the plans to the residents before implementing them, so they could discuss it. Plans are now seen as something changeable and something that needs to be communicated. However, Staatsbosbeheer feel it is important to state their boundaries, what can and cannot happen in a forest. Discussion is possible but will be weighed against the knowledge of the managers:

"When people really disagree, it is always possible to talk about it. You lay it next to the expertise of the forest managers. But it is not possible that nothing happens." (respondent Staatsbosbeheer)

Although the residents in Baarn agree that there is an improvement in communication with Staatsbosbeheer they also feel that sometimes the key points of their argument are not really discussed. What is left is making small changes in details (for example accomplishing the prevention of a characteristic tree to be felled), but the fundamental differences are still there and not much discussed:

"You get an explanation, why they do it [logging]. That we only have a top-layer now with nothing beneath it, and that you create room and light for it with logging. But the question is, what goes wrong when you do nothing? Then they say, it will go totally wrong, but what? We did not get an answer to this. It is a discussion without an end. (...) They [Staatsbosbeheer] tell their story. But in essence nothing changes. We remain on another wavelength in the bigger picture. You can change some details that they fell fewer trees somewhere, but it remains a fundamental difference."
(respondent residents-group)

But the willingness to change and tackle communication and involvement is in general acknowledged:

"It took some effort, but the willingness to listen is there. They [Staatsbosbeheer] don't act like they are in an ivory tower, which they have been for a long time" (respondent 'stuurgroep')

So involvement is more and more becoming an important aspect in the practice of Staatsbosbeheer. But different perceptions are taken when it comes to what legitimate involvement is and what role actors can take. Although the residents-group is satisfied by the improvement of communication we can see that a difference remains in their 'nature' and that of Staatsbosbeheer. Moreover part of explanation Staatsbosbeheer gives for the maintenance and management of the forest was found to be unclear and inconsistent. The residents-groups therefore questioned whether the management was based on proper arguments. But the ownership and their rational expertise grants Staatsbosbeheer legitimacy to take decisions. Although acknowledge by the residents-group they do argue for inclusion of local insights and knowledge as well.

6 Dogs and nature at the 'Sint Pietersberg'

In 1995 Natuurmonumenten and the provincial council agreed on the transfer of part of the Sint Pietersberg in Maastricht to the property of Natuurmonumenten. Natuurmonumenten is from that moment on the owner of a large area of the hill and responsible for its nature management. After the transfer Natuurmonumenten now manages it as a nature area conform their own policies and Natura2000 regulations. One of the policies of Natuurmonumenten is to allow dogs only when they are leashed. However, because this area was used by many of the residents of the surrounding neighbourhoods for walking their dogs, Natuurmonumenten established a 'dog-area' where dogs were allowed to run free.

In 2004 the municipality of Maastricht and Natuurmonumenten together drew up new plans for the hill. These plans were based on the idea that the hill could use a more distinct entrance. Moreover the idea was to allow 'silent recreation' on the plateau of the hill and the more intensive recreation on the slopes. The dog-area established in 1995 on the plateau of the hill would in the new plans be moved to the foot of the hill. This would make room on the plateau to conserve nardus grassland ('heischraal grassland'). This habitat-type was designated as a target habitat ('natuurdoeltype') for this area. The plan also included the restoration of the fortress, based on the plateau of the Sint Pietersberg and the creation of a new parking space at the entrance. It is with this plan that our controversy starts.

6.1   Outlining the situation

The plan proposing a change in the dog-area was presented in 2004. At that time the residents were consulted on this transformation plan for the entrance of the hill. The plan included the removal of the dog-area. However, the most attention was given to the fortress and the new parking:

"The cooperation [between Natuurmonumenten and municipality] had been in consultation, but the emphasis lay mostly on the restoration of the Fortress. It was said that the dog-area would be moved, but it was not emphasized, not in the press either. When you look for it now you will not find anything written about it back then" (respondent municipality)

At that stage there was some protest from the residents, but the plan was in general viewed positively and agreed upon by the municipal council. However it could not be implemented right away as the restaurant of the fortress, which would be removed in the new plans, still had a contract running. In 2010 the municipality decided take up the plan and started to prepare for the implementation. When the plans were presented to the residents again, protest arose:

"Because some things where never executed but would be taken up now, and had been decided upon already, it was a trigger for the neighbourhood, to let's say, wake up. In July or August 2010 we held a meeting in the neighbourhood about the development plan, we said 'there will not be many new things happening', but you could see an enormous resistance." (respondent municipality)

Dog-owners walking on the hill spoke with each other about the announced plans. A group decided to arrange a meeting to discuss what they could do:

"It was talked about on the hill, when it became known that it [the dog walking area] had to disappear. That it would disappear and that we should do something about it. Eventually some people took action. We deliberated on the best way to get what we wanted. We thought a foundation would be more decisive than an association, where you have to consult your members with every decision. But it would be a foundation with a second line. These are the people closely involved with the area and the protest and who could therefore give their opinion." (respondent 'Gebete Hoond')

The foundation they established became the partner in the meetings that followed to discuss the plans on the moving of the dog-area. The discussion was taken up by the municipal council. They agreed on a resolution that the dog-area had to stay. However legally they did not have any rights over the decisions in this area as it is property of Natuurmonumenten. The only thing the municipal executive councillor could do was arrange a meeting with all the groups to talk about their points of view and find a possible alternative. These meetings included the municipality, Natuurmonumenten, the foundation 'Gebete Hoond', the neighbourhood council as a representative body of the neighbourhood to the municipality, and in a later stage dog-owners who started a 'citizen initiative'.

The municipality initiated the meeting with both Natuurmonumenten and the foundation 'Gebete Hoond' to see whether they could find a compromise. The province and neighbourhood council were also involved to give input on the regulations and management set by the province and the opinion

of in the neighbourhood. In the first meeting the municipality asked all the parties to join in a constructive talk to search for a compromise:

"The municipal executive councillor gathers everyone for a meeting. Natuurmonumenten joins and was told to somehow make some room for the dog-owners. That there was a real pressure and an assignment from the municipal council, so it was necessary to talk. On the other hand he told the dog-owners, I understand your point of view, but it cannot stay as it is right now. The land is owned by Natuurmonumenten so if we keep a firm stand they will be the ones to decide." (respondent municipality)

Initially both Natuurmonumenten and the dog-owners were quite firm in their point of view. Natuurmonumenten wished to use the whole area for nature development and the dog-owners wished that the whole area would remain a dog-area. It was in the process that an understanding towards each other's points of view was created:

"You could see that initially people take a firm stand. But when you see each other several times then you somehow develop a mutual understanding (...) you do not agree with each other, but you get respect for each other's point of view." (respondent municipality)

"Natuurmonumenten wanted to protect the natural values. They told us that if you do nothing the Netherlands would only have forests. But the other areas also have a value they want to protect. So you develop a mutual understanding (...) Natuurmonumenten wanted initially to remove all the dogs from the hill. Gradually they also understood our point of view. That a lot of people have a connection to this piece of land." (respondent foundation 'Gebete Hoond')

They joined each other for a walk in the area. Here Natuurmonumenten could show and explain what the potential for the area in terms of nardus grassland was. Part of the dog-area had a high potential to develop the grassland and it was decided that this part would be taken out. A compromise was sought by compensating this area with another plot to be connected to the area. This alternative plan was drawn.
In these meetings the board of the foundation had been present to represent the dog-owners' point of view. Before they agreed on the compromise they wanted to gather the dog-owners, present the plan and ask for their opinion. In this meeting protest rose again among several dog-owners as they felt that the plan would eat up too much of the area and would not be as suitable and well-organised as the current dog-area. Some of them wondered how it was possible that the board could have spoken in favour of this plan as they felt they had good counter-arguments and the pressure of 3000 dog-owners wanting to keep the area. They guessed that there was pressure of Natuurmonumenten and municipality involved and they did not feel well represented:

"In the negotiations the four people [of the foundation] agreed to the plan and their followers were not heard. (...) Four people have agreed to the compromise by pressure of the municipality. They were told we will only talk when you want to reach a compromise and then it was said it is this or nothing. (...) It was a foundation with participation of its grassroots. Now four people have spoken for 3000." (respondent citizen initiative)

A respondent of the municipality understood this break between the foundation and some of its grassroots as an effect of the process:

"You see that the 3000 people who stand behind the 'Gebete Hoond' are not taken along in the process in which the foundation is involved. This is almost inevitable. These people [of the foundation] become more nuanced because they participate in this process, but as dog-owner you have no connection with this. You will say: you are not representing our rights. So you will see a break between the grassroots and the foundation." (respondent municipality)

In the meantime some of the dog-owners had started a citizen initiative. By gathering signatures of people in favour of keeping the area as it is, they were able to put it back on the agenda of the municipal council. There it was discussed again to see whether the area could be preserved. However as previously described the area is not owned by the municipality. The council therefore does not have a direct say in the development of the area. What they could do was to decide to try for another meeting bringing together all groups, this time including the dog-owners that started the citizen initiative. The actors were asked to come together anew, but the municipal executive councillor indicated that it was not possible to start the whole process again. It had taken a long time already and a final compromise needed to be reached now.
The people of the citizen initiative however wanted to start the process from the beginning; they could not find themselves in the current plan. They had drawn alternative plans themselves and discussed these with other dog-owners. But to start the process again was not seen as doable by the other groups and the discussion concentrated around the improvement of the current alternative. The attitude of the people of the citizen initiative was seen as too rigid as the others felt they were not willing to look for a compromise. This rigid position was explained by the dog-owners of the citizen initiative themselves in terms of the earlier compromise from their side:

"What they [Natuurmonumenten] forgot, why they find us rigid, why we do not want to compromise is that we already compromised as dog-owners when the hill was transferred. And we were no longer allowed to walk on the entire hill, but had to confine ourselves to the dog-area." (respondent citizen initiative)

In the meeting the alternative plan was discussed and eventually agreed upon. This included not only a new dog-area but also an agreement on user rights and the establishment of a management group, where the foundation and a dog-owner of the citizen initiative together with Natuurmonumenten and the municipality will discuss the management of the area. This will keep the discussion on the different points of view going and ensures a say of the dog-owners in their own area. Although Natuurmonumenten, the municipality and the foundation feel they all had to give in something, they agree that the current plan is a good compromise, weighing all interests:

"The discussion on what the area will look like has now ended. A good piece will be taken out to develop nardus grassland. It is not everything we wanted, but it is a compromise. What remains [for the dog-owners] is a nice plot, which even will be expanded. It is a unique piece with a view and everything." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

"We have laid down the different interests and searched for a good solution. And I think we found that. It remains a compromise. The dog-lovers have had to give in a bit, but so has nature." (respondent municipality)

However, both the neighbourhood council and dog-owners involved in the citizen initiative did not feel this was an ideal solution. The neighbourhood council could see that the process had been a good and constructive one. But in the end they did not feel they had any power to push for an alternative. They felt that they had to negotiate with 'a knife to the throat'; that is was to accept the plan or have nothing (neighbourhood council in local paper). Legally Natuurmonumenten had the right to make the decision about the development of the area and the only option was to engage in the discussion:

"We ourselves do not agree with the plan, but we have zero rights. This hill is our garden to us, but you need to see the bigger picture and weigh all interests, including the legal basis (...) and Natuurmonumenten did allow for a discussion, which they didn't have to do. You have to give credit to them for that." (respondent neighbourhood council)

The people involved in the citizen initiative felt that they had not been able to really participate. They felt that they weren't really heard in the process and that it was more a one-way communication than an actual discussion where different opinions were taken into account. This feeling had been there among some of the users of the area from the beginning and some felt that the outcome showed that what they had expected also happened:

"Even when we established the foundation people predicted that nothing would be achieved anyway. The general feeling was that nothing would be done with our point of view. I still wanted to do something, but eventually it became clear that the others had been right. We weren't really heard." (dog-owner)

The process of this unfolding discussion has been a long one. We can see that the controversy opened the possibility for new voices to become involved. However their representation is questioned during the process and another group of dog-owners is established to take part in the debate. But for them the involvement still remains debatable, they themselves felt they were not heard, while others found them too rigid to participate. The hybrid forum opened here has been questionable in the possibility to involve all groups.

Now we know how the discussion developed let us turn to the issues that have been under discussion: the transformation of the area as well as the involvement in and arguments made about the decision-making process. The first presenting the different imagined future worlds, including different natures, which a controversy can bring together in a hybrid forum. The second showing a legitimation process where different justifications are put to the forefront. In this process legitimacy is constructed, determining what involvement means and what arguments can be taken into account.

In the next section a description of the discussion on the management of the area is given, after which the arguments on the decision-making process are presented. I will end with the view of the actors on the communication of the process and the role of the already established groups: Natuurmonumenten and municipality.

6.2 Managing nature

Part of the discussion on the replacement of the dog-area was on the establishment of nardus grassland. Nardus grassland is one of the target habitats of this area. In the Natura2000 concept-management plan it is mentioned as a habitat to be protected. The grassland is found on the plateau, partly in the dog-area, because here sand and gravel have become exposed. The biotic and a-biotic conditions made it a suitable place for this type of grassland (respondent Natuurmonumenten). The specific type of nardus grassland that can be found on the Sint Pietersberg is also found to be a rare one in the Netherlands:

"You can find nardus grassland and chalk grassland here. Nardus grassland you can also find on sandy soils in the Netherlands. But you also have nardus grassland on loess soil, and on more gravelly soil. Especially on the plateau of the hill you have the specific place where gravel is exposed, in particular where the dog area now is situated. That is why it is such a special place to realise this nature." (respondent municipality)

In part of the dog-area you can find this nardus grassland, but is was seen to be disappearing:

"You can wonder, this nardus grassland has already been there for years, why do the dogs have to leave now? That is because of the more intensive use, more and more people are using the dog area, and this gives eutrophication. Moreover Natuurmonumenten could not optimally manage this area, like they wanted it. So they actually had to strain every nerve to reach this habitat-target and it was going downhill." (respondent municipality)

Next to this area there is already an area managed as nardus grassland, but *"the European Union has targeted this habitat-type for expansion. It can already be found on the hill, but only on a small plot. The plants that grow there are this rare that the government and European Union felt that the area to conserve these plants is too small at the moment. For the vegetation to survive, in tougher times as well, it needs to be expanded; there has to be a larger seed-bank."* (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

But whether this nardus grassland would be needed to be developed here was questioned by some of the dog-owners and neighbourhood council. In discussing this management the discussion seems to carry a deeper, fundamental difference: that of the value of nature and what is beautiful.

Nature for nature or nature for people

Among the different actors we can find broadly three distinctive ways of looking at the presence of nature and people. As Natuurmonumenten argues:

"Leading for us is nature, we are a nature organisation and nature is what we stand for (…) that is our core business. Recreation is allowed, but only when there is no damage done to the nature (…) but it is of course a very flexible term, what is recreation, what is damage. It is of course not tangible, what is nature, what is vulnerable. This is also the difficulty we are faced with. We are always put in a certain corner, because we have to prove that something is rare or special, just to have an argument." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

Natuurmonumenten views the area as a unique area with a high natural value. Although they allow recreation, and feel that people should be able to enjoy nature they argue that nature should not completely serve humans. The Sint Pietersberg is not a recreational area, but a nature area with recreational use (respondent Natuurmonumenten). This argument is of course linked to the primary goal of the organisation: to protect nature. This is also a goal that is supported by the EU and governmental regulations. A similar thought on nature could also be found in the municipality, where one respondent argued that you should view the Sint Pietersberg as a nature area, one in which you are a guest.

Another point of view that came forward values the area from, as the neighbourhood council calls it, a 'garden-perspective':

"During development we look at the hill as a garden. Human use is seen as most important. It is about nature and culture. In the memory of the people the hill was rural area with horticulture. And before that was a meadow. Who knows what it was before that. Nobody talks about nature, this area was made by humans. The idea of an open character is seen as a bit strange (…) The use of the hill should not be subordinate to some grasses (…) We will give humans priority over nature, but with respect for nature of course" (respondent neighbourhood council)

Residents also refer to the use of the Sint Pietersberg, as it has always been 'their' hill, and 'served' them well (resident in local paper).

A last view questions whether you should see nature as something to be managed at all. To focus on specific target habitats, some argue, may be a very narrow look at what nature is:

"What you see is nature, when you walk on the hill. What Natuurmonumenten is doing…creating nardus grassland with certain plants and other plants are no longer allowed. What grows naturally, for example the forest behind the fortress is not allowed. You are working against nature, as to create nature? (…) All the nature I already have seen destroyed, something was taken from me, destroyed. I think it is also without respect towards nature. It is often thought: I want to realise this and that, and then humans think they are better than nature. And one thinks it will be realised with just a few small interferences." (respondent citizen initiative)

The role that Natuurmonumenten plays in the decision on what nature should be established is questioned. Residents saw a lot of trees disappearing on the hill, while they were highly valued. In their view the hill used to be 'greener, denser and brighter' (comment resident on blog). They wondered why you decide to make certain nature, while removing other. They speak of a sort of 'design-nature', fitting a model that Natuurmonumenten has in mind:

"(…) Not to speak of the enormous clearing of trees Natuurmonumenten carried out on our beautiful Sint Pietersberg! There is barely a tree left, while everyone knows how very important trees are for the environment and air quality. And the citizens of Maastricht? They will have to buy a ticket to walk on the tight, fenced path over the arid design-grassland!" (residents opinion in local paper)

This overview shows that different 'natures' are presented that argue for a different use and function of the hill. The current nature 'practiced' is that represented by Natuurmonumenten and the Natura2000 policy: the hill as a protected nature area and a potential for nardus grassland.

6.3   Decision making: Involvement and expertise

While the process unfolded not only different worlds become apparent. In the last two quotes we saw that arguments on involvement, decision-making and legal rights are also part of the discussion. Different justifications for involvement and the design of a decision-making process are shown in the legitimation process. Two main issues that were raised are: where should involvement be based upon and what argument can count in the decision-making.

Involvement and attachment

"Everyone who knows the history knows it is intuitive our hill. And our love for him is big. This big that we call the plateau our living room of Maastricht" (residents in local newspaper)

What became apparent for Natuurmonumenten and municipality during the process was that the Sint Pietersberg is a very sensitive issue in the neighbourhood. As a respondent from the municipality argued:

"(...) as governments we forgot, when you look back now, that the Sint Pietersberg is a very sensitive issue. It is sensitive because it is a place of which people feel it is theirs. It is a public park that belongs to no-one, which also should belong to no-one." (respondent municipality)

Because the hill belongs to no-one, or so it the feeling, the residents feel that the hill has been taken away from them as they no longer have any (legal) rights to influence what happens. The connection people of Maastricht feel with the hill makes for a large involvement with the area and the issues concerning this area. In decisions it is felt this needs to be taken into account. The area is however in ownership of Natuurmonumenten and the neighbourhood council, as we already saw, as well as the municipality and the foundation 'Gebete Hoond' argue that this justifies Natuurmonumenten to take the decision. The involvement they can only argue for is that of talk and finding a compromise:

"This piece of land is owned by Natuurmonumenten, who am I to make a decision about it. And now we get a lot in return, which they did not have to give" (respondent 'Gebete Hoond')

It meant for them that you should be humble in your demands as well as strive to compromise. But the foundation also agrees that the connection the people of Maastricht feel with the hill gives them a right to express their opinion. This is also felt by the people involved in the citizen initiative.
The discussion also includes the EU regulations that set boundaries as to what is possible. These boundaries as well as the high influence of Natuurmonumenten are questioned, especially by the dog-owners and neighbourhood council:

"Emotionally the hill is ours, but we do not have a leg to stand on. Legally the situation is clear; the hill was ours, but was sold for one guilder. To us this does not mean that they [Natuurmonumenten] can do anything they want, but legally they can." (respondent neighbourhood council)

"The point is that it used to be provincial land, meaning it belonged to all of us, it was collective land. This has been transferred without taking the user-rights into account. This is where it went wrong. You set the users aside without any rights." (respondent citizen initiative)

"The decision in 1995 has been the biggest misstep of the municipality. They have not foreseen all the consequences. They gave all their rights away. This gave Natuurmonumenten too much power" (respondent 'Gebete Hoond')

Although more involvement is argued for, to some it also means a more difficult process:
"During the meetings [of the foundation] you will have fourteen different opinions. Sometimes the meeting would take to half past midnight and we still had no agreement. We were not decisive and it created a lot of negative energy." (respondent 'Gebete Hoond')

This leads to the understanding that it is needed to talk to representatives, not just individual people. Both the foundation and the residents starting the citizen initiative mentioned the large number of people supporting them. However at the same time, as we saw, this representation was the start of the discussion. The dog-owners did not feel represented when the debate started and therefore established the foundation. Not all dog-owners felt the foundation was representing them and a second group was formed around the citizen initiative.

In this discussion on involvement it was also mentioned that people with other interests, such as walkers and nature-lovers, were not really heard. The general importance of the issue could therefore be overrated according to some:
"The protest is very much magnified. When you look at the social media there are five people that shout really loudly. This is also the difficulty, on the one hand you want participation, but everyone has its own interests. You cannot do everything everyone wants. You have to look for compromises. There are so many different interests. But it is important to look at the possibilities." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

It was mentioned that in this process only those who 'shouted the loudest' were heard. For example there were also dog-owners who did feel that the alternative plan that was drawn was a good compromise, but on the evening the foundation organised to present the plan, only the negative reactions were heard:

"There were also a lot of dog-owners who agreed with the compromise. After the meeting, for example, a lot of people came to tell us this personally. (...) It would have been just if they had also been heard" (respondent 'Gebete Hoond')

Moreover apart from the involvement emotions can also create a lot of anger with plans that are drawn without participation. This anger, although maybe justified, can create a difficult process as it may hinder people to listen to each other. We can see this also in the use of the media. What is said in media, especially social media, often lacks nuances and can become very personal. This was also recognized by the different groups involved in the discussion on the dog-area.

Expertise and emotion

Apart from who can claim a say in the process, claims were also made about the question where decisions should be based upon. In the previous section it was mentioned that too much emotions in the process was seen to have a negative influence on the decision making process. Decisions are made based on expertise, providing rational choices. Natuurmonumenten for example mentioned the knowledge on the ecosystem and on regulations they had to take into account. Management is based on the proper functioning of the rare ecosystem that can be found on the hill. Natuurmonumenten and the municipality perceived that there was a lot unknown about the habitat-type, and that it was a difficult task to explain the exact reasoning to create nardus grassland here:

"There is a lack of understanding, people wonder how the protection of some grasses can be more important than the use by humans. That is difficult to explain, it is abstract." (respondent municipality)

"The difficulty is to show why something is important. To me nardus grassland is very beautiful and important, but for the average visitor it does not mean anything. (…) It is difficult to explain why it is here. It is because of a combination of biotic and a-biotic factors. You cannot just copy it and put is somewhere else. This you can do with a dog-area for example. But then you still have the experience of course, of what is beautiful." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

The idea presented by Natuurmonumenten was that to develop nardus grassland you need very specific environmental conditions, which happen to occur on the plateau. A dog-area however could be placed anywhere. But this is not how it felt to the residents. First of all they feel a special attachment to the hill. Moreover some dog-owners argued that this place was ideal as it could combine their love of walking in nature with that of walking their dog:

"Finally an area where you can show yourself both as nature-lover and dog-lover. Often these two preferences are wrongly seen as conflicting." (argument on blog)

Part of the discussion lays not only the function of nature but also the experience it gives. It is recognised that some habitats and species have a higher emotional value than others. Natuurmonument found that the emotions expressed were good to understand; however management was based upon the ecological value:

"Resistance [to for example the felling of trees] is more based on emotion than that people know the background of it. Forest is nature, but heathland is also nature. Heathland, just as grassland, is home to different plants and animals. Often they are even richer in natural value than a forest. But it is the emotional value that plays a role." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

"Take for example an acacia. An acacia is in itself very beautiful. But when it grows in a rare piece of land you do not want it there. While for a lot of people a beautiful fragrant acacia has a lot of emotional value. But it is not the right experience. I rather choose a lime-tree then. For the average person it does not matter whether there grows an acacia or a lime tree, maybe that the acacia gives even more value, experience. But in terms of natural value we would say, we choose the lime-tree. This seems a small thing for a visitor [of the area] but to us it is crucial." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

However among the dog-owners there were questions about the situation and its possibility to establish the habitat of nardus grassland. Some dog-owners had searched for articles about this habitat-type and found that usually the grassland is established at the slopes and that it is not a rare habitat-type in the Netherlands:

"We are not unreasonable, we understand that you cannot do everything and that nature is important. But this grassland will never grow here and could be developed elsewhere. We looked for articles (…) Moreover a lot of species of this grassland are already here [in the dog walking area]" (dog-owner).

The foundation 'Gebete Hoond' did not always agree with the point of view of Natuurmonumenten either, but in the process they felt they could develop an understanding of it. Moreover they felt they were not the people to challenge Natuurmonumenten's knowledge:

"To be honest I do have my doubt sometimes [about the management], but I am not an ecologist, so I will not argue with it." (respondent 'Gebete Hoond')

The dog-owners involved in the citizen initiative also felt that nardus grassland was a very vague term, and while searching some of the dog-owners noticed that different plants were mentioned on different occasions. This made them doubt the argument given by Natuurmonumenten and suspect that there was money involved. Moreover they had counter-arguments based on the articles about nardus grassland, but they felt those were not discussed or taken into account.
Apart from the information they could find on the grassland itself dog-owners also wondered about the information they received on the Natura2000 regulations. There is still only a concept-version of the management plan, but in the plans there is already referred to this; the dog-owners wondered how this could be when it is only a concept. Secondly they doubted whether the regulations are really this strict. In the discussion it was told that when not reaching the habitat-target the government could be fined by the European Union. The dog-owners however doubted whether the European Union would really look at such a small area:

"Natuurmonumenten owns 290 hectares on the hill and the discussion is about 2 hectares, that is unbelievable (…) I do not think the EU-regulation will mind such a small plot" (respondent citizen-initiative)

6.4   Changing practice
"So many different opinions suggest how sensitive this issue is. As executive board of the municipality we need to be more aware of that. How, I do not know yet" (municipal executive councillor in local paper)

For the municipality it had been an eye opener that the involvement in the issue was this high. The opinion of the dog-owners had not been considered well enough in the beginning of the process. The municipality saw a point of improvement in the communication to the residents and dog-owners and considered the building of trust as an important aspect. The plans to move the dog area had been made in 2004, after which people did not hear about it for a long time. When it was picked up in

2010 people felt they had never known this was going on in the area. Moreover over the years the municipality had not always been reliable about their plans the hill:

"We, as governments, have allowed for a long time for the hill to be excavated (…) Two generations have grown up seeing the hill become smaller and smaller (…) we have made promises, which we did not keep. It is not strange that people have a certain feeling about this." (respondent municipality)

Natuurmonumenten wondered whether their communication had been clear in the beginning. They also felt this was a process they should have started earlier. This reflects a change in the organisation. Communication and involvement have become more prominent. This requires a change in process:

"It is only since recently that we also take communication into account, that you explain why you do something. For example when a tree needs to be felled; that you explain why you do this. This is something rather new (…) that you show as organisation why you do something. To show what your value is." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

"Communication is now integrated early in the process. But sometimes it is still, oh right, communication. That is often reality. I just look to the practical issues on how to fell a tree. But you do not want to make the papers, so that would be a reason to communicate. While it actually needs to be the other way round; that you just tell the people what you are doing and not think from a negative perspective. It has to be a positive drive; that you are proud on what you do and proud to tell something about it." (respondent Natuurmonumenten)

Others see the change with Natuurmonumenten but feel also that there is still room for improvement:

"To my taste there is too little feedback to the neighbourhood about the activities of Natuurmonumenten. They are trying very well, they for example have and advice-committee, but it could be handled more professionally." (respondent neighbourhood council)

"Natuurmonumenten has not handled it well (...) Natuurmonumenten should write down the different steps: what their goal is, what they want to achieve, which reasons there are for this and how to get there. (...) Natuurmonumenten does want the best for the hill. But people are upset because after thirty years it seems like there are refused entrance." (respondent 'Gebete Hoond')

This shows again that involvement and attachment play a large role. People feel a bond with the hill, and they like to be involved in what will happen to it. This involvement grew out of the protest established by the dog-owners. But understanding of what involvement actually involves differed. Natuurmonumenten and municipality wondered about the knowledge of their plans and feel this is due to a lack of communication. But the discussion also questions whether involvement should be more. Some dog-owners argue for a view on the hill not only as property of Natuurmonumenten, but as common good, which should include a say for the users on the hill as well. In the next chapter I will discuss the implications of these differences found between actors.

7 Discussing the hybrid forum and legitimation process in Baarn and Maastricht

In the previous two chapters I have described the controversies in both Baarn and Maastricht. Nature organisation and municipality argued for the improvement of communication when handling the protests that arose against plans made. We can see that communication indeed played an important role, as residents argue that often it is unclear what is going on and they feel they received incomplete and inconsistent information. However where the discussions also revolved around is involvement, or in other words participation. Both in Baarn and Maastricht a hybrid forum is opened to change this inclusion of new groups. It opens the possibility to bring in the different natures represented by the different actors and the negotiation of their 'possible worlds'.

In this chapter the dynamics of the forums will be analysed, based on what processes developed and how the forums were shaped, especially by the process of legitimation. I will first discuss the forum in Baarn, and then continue to the discussion in Maastricht. In the third section both analysis are brought together and differences and similarities described. After the discussion on both cases I will reflect on the research in general and the theory used.

7.1 The hybrid forum in Baarn

In Baarn we can see a hybrid forum taking shape when the residents take action when the dots on the trees appear. These dots raise questions and residents felt the meaning of the dots was not properly explained. A resident therefore decides to open a space for the discussion of these dots; a claimed space, where the residents can construct their opinion. Together with two other residents a group is formed to ask for clarification. First the municipality is asked for an explanation and to interfere. However the residents receive the answer that it is not property of the municipality and therefore outside their jurisdiction. A new space needs therefore to be opened, one that includes involvement with the practices of Staatsbosbeheer.

The first stage of the hybrid forum is opened and the residents-group argues to be heard. They gather signatures and contact Staatsbosbeheer. The media plays an important role, to open the discussion and show the residents' concern to the other parties involved. We can see this clearly as the protest initiator argues: *"I thought: I don't get answers, so I will go to the press, that always helps"*.

That it is not always easy to open this space can be seen in the comment of the initiator of the process, who argued *"on the other hand, had I not involved the press and had I not been so engaged, nothing would have happened. It would have gone just as usual...The press has had a lot of influence, together with my determination"*. This is similar to what Turnhout et al (2010) describe in their multi-stakeholder process: to become involved citizens had to be persistent in expressing their interest. Initially the residents felt they were not really heard or listen to. The first excursion organised by Staatsbosbeheer did not leave the residents with 'a good feeling'. Their view seemed not yet to have taken root with Staatsbosbeheer.

The voicing of their concerns can create some initial tension between the already established group, Staatsbosbeheer, and their emergent voice, as the 'business as usual' and the legitimacy of the established group is questioned. What is questioned are the rules on which current decision-making is based and whether actors are legitimate to become more involved.

Involvement and establishing a voice in the debate

Staatsbosbeheer perceives the need to change from a somewhat closed organisation to a more open one that argues for involvement of different actors in the planning of their activities. One of the respondents of Staatsbosbeheer describes a change in society, where people are more vocal and where the organisation needs to respond to. He felt that in the past the organisation has had a too arrogant view sometimes on their own practice and vision. The difference in opinion with local residents on nature management often created a lot of tension and conflict in the nature areas. To prevent this and take these views into account Staatsbosbeheer argued for more inclusion of all actors involved. The residents-group also argues for a more open process, where those using and enjoying the forest are granted a say in the process. Involvement of actors touched by the plans can thus claim legitimacy and justify opening the hybrid forum, whereby arguing for the inclusion of citizens voice.

But involvement is not unlimited. All actors do need to represent a certain interest in the area, or a certain support. We can see that residents-group adapt to this as they present themselves as people with 'supporters', representing the local interest. They mention several times that they had at least 500 endorsements; that they were not the only ones concerned with the logging.
Another group that is involved in reviewing the plans for the forest is the advisory committee. This group is established by Staatsbosbeheer to advise them on plans made, especially those on the restoration of the historical elements. We can see in the arguments of the advisory committee that the representation of support is important for them as well. The advisory committee has established this support by including both actors representing 'natures interest' as well as the 'cultural interest' of the forest. However it is worth mentioning that no residents were part of the group. The representation of the advisory committee was therefore questioned by the residents-group. They saw the advisory committee as 'outsiders' who do not have a representation in the town. The committee does not know the local issues and the forest as well as residents do. Involvement in plans made should, according to the residents-group, be based on local insights in the forest.
On the other hand the advisory committee questions representation done by single residents, because it is questionable they represent a support. As one of the members of the advisory committee argued: who would you have to choose then? Just a resident does not represent the whole neighbourhood.

Involvement in the actual decision-making can be seen here as based upon the representation of the common good. The area is a common good, where decisions should not be taken on self-interest, but by in the general interest of the society. This makes that the groups involved should be able to take this general interest into account and not be too one-sided. The advisory committee in Baarn addresses this issue, as the respondent of the committee described their tasked as one of balancing interest, mainly between culture and nature. This legitimizes the involvement of the advisory committee but also de-legitimize action-groups by referring to their one-sided view on an issue. The respondent of the advisory committee states that activists are often people with a narrow view who have difficulties in searching for a compromise or agreement. This view on an activists was also observed by Haïkïo (2007), where in her case activist were stereotyped as people who have unrealistic goals and campaign against economic development. The involvement of activists of action-groups is therefore viewed negatively and avoided by the advisory committee in Baarn. The position of activist is also clearly avoided by residents that would like to take part in the discussion.

As a resident explicitly stated 'we are not some kind of environmental activist' but 'reasonable people'. Not being an activist means being open for talk and compromise, not just defending your own interest. This legitimates involvement because the process argues for negotiation and compromise.

The above described discussion shows the processes of legitimation and delegitimation at work. Both residents and advisory committee ask questions about the involvement of the other. Staatsbosbeheer however sees both as legitimate actors to be involved, although with a different role to play. Staatsbosbeheer refers to the role of the residents mainly as a representation of emotional interest. The involvement of the residents according to Staatsbosbeheer is mainly based on the emotional arguments given by them. For them the residents represent emotional bonds with the area. The advisory committee on the other hand represents support and knowledge. Their own representation is that of expertise and care for the common good. Being a government agency Staatsbosbeheer feel they have to manage the area for all people of the Netherlands, including next generations. It is their professional expertise that will guide the plans to balance all interests and establish a plan including local interest and recreation, wood production, nature and culture in the forest.

In short all the groups, Staatsbosbeheer, advisory committee and residents, have been able to establish their involvement in debating plans for the forest. There are some questions raised between advisory committee and residents on each other's involvement, but both are able to voice their opinion and talk with Staatsbosbeheer. It is thus Staatsbosbeheer that has been able to invite both groups to a space for talk. However the legitimate claims that can be made and the process that takes place differs in those two spaces.

Decision making: providing knowledge or emotions

Two spaces have been developed, one in which Staatsbosbeheer and the advisory committee debate their plans and one in which Staatsbosbeheer put these plans forward to the residents-group. What differ in these spaces are the roles the actors can take. They are both invited spaces and their boundaries set by the constructed legitimacy of Staatsbosbeheer. The one including the advisory committee shows a process of debating the interest of nature and culture and is based on the support and expertise the committee supplies. It adheres to the larger vision on the forest drawn by Staatsbosbeheer. The other space, including the residents-group, can debate the local opinion on the plans, framed by Staatsbosbeheer as a discussion on how sensitive the plan is; which emotions are involved. Next to these emotions they also see that the discussion on the management of the forests as one revolving around the practical use of the forests. One of the respondents pointed out that arguments heard against the planning were mainly 'user'-arguments where the logging would for example obstruct walking paths, and emotional arguments where specific trees can for example claim a lot of value.

Viewing one group as representing emotions and the other expertise will have an impact on the claims these different groups can make in the process. In the theoretical framework I have argued that the space opened in the forum is not neutral and determined by its history, power relations and also its constructed legitimacy. Staatsbosbeheer opens the space in the forum and therefore can be seen as largely determining the dynamics within it. Moreover they can claim decision-making power

as they are the owners of the forest and are the one that possess the expertise on forest management.

Expertise is here an important discourse to claim legitimacy for your arguments. What nature organisations can claim is a high expertise in nature management issues. Traditionally this expertise has been used as a basis for nature policy and practices. Advisors for policies or plans were granted legitimacy based on their expertise (Connelly et al 2006). We see that Staatsbosbeheer constructs its legitimacy based on this expertise. In contrast they argue that the residents do not possess this level of knowledge on nature management. They feel that there is a lack of understanding of the ecological processes and argue that the interference of residents is mainly based on emotions and user friendliness. That residents have an emotional bond with the area is understood and accepted. It shows the sensitivity of the plans made. But legitimate management of the area is based on the rational decisions taken by professionals.

To be taken seriously in the debate residents also refer to their expertise and questioned that of Staatsbosbeheer. Questioning Staatsbosbeheer's knowledge delegitimize the position as experts the organisation hold. To make their point clear the residents-group refer to the inconsistencies they found in the arguments of Staatsbosbeheer. The arguments for maintenance referred sometimes to the natural rejuvenation of the forest and other times to the forest being a production forest. This was seen as a contradictory view on the forest. The residents-group wondered whether it was really about the ecological considerations or that in fact money was involved.
But it can be very hard for the residents to establish themselves as more than just 'lay-persons'. As a respondent of Staatsbosbeheer argued: "*people think they have knowledge about forest management, but it is not about having knowledge but about emotions*". This means that in a way the residents are automatically placed in a role that does not include that of an expert. Staatsbosbeheer reframed the debate between them and the residents to one of emotional attachment and use. This allows residents to show places in the forest they feel particularly attached to, but the debate will not go further into fundamental differences on the views of nature and management.

Exploring possible worlds

When involvement is reached and the residents-group has been able to establish themselves as legitimate actors in the discussion, although maybe in a 'limited' form, we saw that the actors enter a second stage of a hybrid forum: a willingness to negotiate their point of view with others (Callon et al 2009). This process developed after a meeting where the residents and Staatsbosbeheer had been able to discuss their different points of view. An important condition for this second stage it thus that the group has found itself being heard, so that it now can listen (Callon et al 2009). Staatsbosbeheer and the residents listen to each other's point of view to arrive at the third stage of the forum: the searching for and reaching of compromises. The residents-group showed their satisfaction that they are now seen as a group to be taken into account. They have been able to establish their involvement and are now regularly consulted on the plans made by Staatsbosbeheer. The logging was influence and fewer trees were cut.
Once established as a discussion partner the residents were also able to give input on the restoration plan of the 'Grote Kom'. However the plan itself was already established and this space for negotiation was sealed off. It is here where underlying differences on the way the forest is defined become clear. The residents-group refers to this as the fundamental difference that underlies the

debate. It is this fundamental difference that can be seen as the exploration of possible worlds, the second axes in Callons et al (2009) description of a hybrid forum. But the process in Baarn has mainly been concerned with establishing a debate where a new voice was included, not with the exploration of underlying natures.

In the theoretical framework I have argued for a view on nature as multiple. Nature is practiced in more than one way, dependent on the images of nature people have. In the discussion different conflicting natures can be described by the different actors involved. The residents-group argue for a forest as wild and adventurous and Staatsbosbeheer together with the advisory committee look at this forest more as cultural heritage, a park. Both views involve different ideas on the value of the forest, its functioning as well as its aesthetic dimension.

Staatsbosbeheer argues that the value of this forest is multifunctional. Nature is viewed in its diversity and healthy functioning as an ecosystem, which according to Staatsbosbeheer needs rejuvenation. But the forest has also a a functional value, where the forest can be used for the production of wood and for recreation. Thirdly it has a high cultural value which argues for the restoration of historical elements and a forest the way it looked in the past. In the new restoration plan the emphasis especially underlines the cultural value, which is also emphasized by the advisory committee.

Both the multifunctionality as well as viewing the forest as a park is something that is questioned by the residents-group. The residents view the forest as wild and adventurous and argue for the value of the individual species in the forest and the ability of nature to take care of itself. They question the multiple use of the forests as they feel it is not possible to combine all functions in a forests so small as the one in Baarn. This mainly includes the function of production forests. An argument against the cultural value of the forests is that they see it mainly as nature, and there is so little real forests left that they would like to protect its naturalness here.

These different 'natures' will be enacted through different practices and ideas on management. As described by one of the residents: a park-forest will argue for more management than their 'wild' forest.

Although these differences are there the question remains whether they have been part of the discussion. They definitely are part of the motivation to enter a hybrid forum as the view on the forest as rough and wild as opposing to the forest as a park is one of the reasons for the residents to protest. But are they discussed in the debate?

In the arguments discussed on the maintenance of the forest a respondent of Staatsbosbeheer already argued that it is mainly functional or user arguments that were discussed in the debate. Here the residents-group has been able to claim a voice and be heard: paths are for example restored and the patches of forest are felled more gradually. But the larger vision of the forest as stated in the restoration plan set the boundaries of the space. As a respondent of the advisory committee argues they all endorse this vision, which outlines the scope of the proposed plans. By not entering the advisory committee the residents-group were able to establish a new space for negotiation with Staatsbosbeheer, that does not have to underline this vision. Although not confirming this vision the new space opened also has not been able to opened the discussion on the different worlds or natures involved.

As a resident of Baarn said: "*They [Staatsbosbeheer] tell their story. But in essence nothing changes. We remain on another wavelength in the bigger picture. You can change some details that they fell*

fewer trees somewhere, but it remains a fundamental difference." Although they are happy with the fact that they have been able to establish a good process and working relationship with Staatsbosbeheer, the residents-group did show that when there was an 'exploration' in the hybrid forum it remained on the level of smaller elements, such as individual trees. The larger vision (a park-forest) was not debated.

The residents argue therefore for a decision-making procedure that is based on attachment. They feel they have specific knowledge that should play a role in the discussion. In their view being the ones walking in the forest every day gave them better insight in the forest: *"We walk far more often in the forest than the foresters. We know the forests better. And that grates sometimes. It is understandable that foresters are busy, they need to do a lot of administrative work, but it is a bit annoying that they are the ones who make the plan."* One of the residents referred to the practices in developing countries, where in projects local knowledge is now an important factor to be taken into account. However it seems that here in the Netherlands, according to her, this local bond with and knowledge on the forest does not make for a legitimate claim. She would argue for the same kind of involvement as residents here also have this large attachment to the forest.
The residents-group feel their bond with the forest gives them a legitimate claim in the deciding what this area should look like. They argue against plans made 'somewhere in an office' by people not as involved with the forest or hill as those 'using' it. This argues for knowledge based on locality and as Goodwin argued (1998) and described in the theoretical framework, its legitimacy is found in the relationship with local practices.

To summarize, Staatsbosbeheer has opened two spaces for discussing their management plans. One involves the advisory committee and has established a vision on the forest and discusses its management based on their expertise, support and the possibility to balance 'nature' and 'culture'. The other involves the residents-group and according to Staatsbosbeheer involves emotions and the practical use of the forest. The residents can show how sensitive issues and places in the forest are and how use friendly plans made are. The boundaries of the spaces opened fix what role can be claimed and these are robust in framing the debate on to use and emotions and away from the different imagined 'future worlds'. What is not discussed, but does exist in this space is the fundamental difference between the 'forests' of Staatsbosbeheer and the residents-group. What can be discussed in these spaces is linked to the legitimacy that is constructed in the space. Table 7.1 shows an overview of the justifications that are used in the legitimation process.

	Staatsbosbeheer	Residents	Advisory committee
Staatsbosbeheer	**+** Expertise **+** Owner **+** Common good (working for all the Dutch)	**+** interest (emotions and use, to show sensitivity plan) **-** lack of knowledge (emotions in a rational debate)	**+** Representation **+** Expertise
Residents	**+** Expertise **+** Owner **-** Conflicting arguments and goals **-** 'Outsider' making plans	**+** Representation **+** Attachment **+** (practical)Expertise	**-** Questionable representation (self-interest) **-** 'Outsider'
Advisory committee	**+** Expertise **+** Owner	**-** Action-group **-** Questionable representation	**+** Representation **+** Expertise

Tabel 7.1: Legitimation and delegitimation of the actors in Baarn. Legitimizing claims for their own role and that of the other actors are presented with a **+**, delegitimizing by a **-**. The left column shows the group 'doing' the (de)legitimation, the upper row shows the group being (de)legitimized.

7.2   The hybrid forum in Maastricht

Just as in Baarn in Maastricht the hybrid forum is also established by citizens initiating a protest. The dog-owners feel that they had not been heard when the plan was drafted to remove the dog-area and start a process to argue for their input. They came together in a meeting to establish a foundation, which could represent their interest to the municipality. They start to argue for the preservation of the dog area in the same size and on the same place.

The municipality hears the concerns of the dog-owners and argue for a change of the existing plan. As they themselves are not able to decide on a new plan they ask for a meeting to be arranged between the different parties. Where the dog-owners opened the first space to let themselves be heard, in this second space they are invited by the municipality, together with Natuurmonumenten, to discuss their points of view. Initially the actors hold opposite position. As a respondent of the municipality reflected, in the first meeting both foundation and Natuurmonumenten rather stuck to their own point of view. However when the meetings developed the actors were prepared to listen to other groups and develop an understanding for each other's views. This is the second stage of a forum, where a space is opened for negotiation (Callon et al 2009). When the foundation is established the board argues that their view has to be negotiable to achieve a change in the current plan. This negotiation leads to a compromise that has been able to change the initial plan made. The dog-area will remain although not completely on the same place. A part is removed for the development of nardus grassland, and this area is compensated by adding two meadows to the dog-area. Although it is not the preferred outcome by any of the groups involved most of them share the view that it is a good outcome and compromise as their voices have been heard and considered.

This is not shared by everyone, because during the process a new discussion arises, a group of dog-owners show that they feel that they have not been heard. They felt they were emerged in the 'business as usual', while their voice had not been taken into account. As a consequence a new group emerged; some dog-owners took up a citizen initiative. This citizen initiative was discussed by the municipal council who argued for their entrance in the debate, thus opening the negotiation space for those residents. But they entered a space where the other groups had already established a

collective compromise. Instead of being able to open a new space for the 'composition of the collective', this compromise was set as the margins in which the new group of dog-owners could negotiate their input. The boundary that defines the hybrid forum was thus set by already existing regulations and the plan made in the first process of negotiation. The dog-owners starting the citizen initiative therefore felt it was rather an excluding practice; they had not been able to make their voice count. This is something that is also described by Turnhout et al (2010) where in a multi-stakeholder process, because of the dominance of the existing policies, little negotiating space was allowed for which triggered a strong reactions from those participants with a different view on the area (Turnhout et al 2010).

The boundaries of a space indicate that specific ideas on involvement and the development of the process are taken into account. We can see that who could be involved and who should made the decisions was met with conflicting views in this case.

Involvement and establishing a voice in the debate
In the case of Baarn we saw that the participation discourse could argue for more involvement for the residents. In Maastricht we see that this discourse provides the same opportunity. With participation having become a popular concept in governance it establishes a change in the perception of who can be involved in the planning of the transformation of an area. But as not everyone can be involved, it also argues for representation of groups with a common interest. The foundation is such a group and show in the process a support of around 3000 people.
We see the legitimacy of 'representation trough support' also in the official procedures citizens can follow to put an issue on the agenda. A citizen initiative as initiated by the dog-owners in Maastricht is an official procedure, where by gathering support (by means of signatures) you can put you concern or issue on the municipal council's agenda. The dog-owners felt that the municipal council should be the representative of their concern and opinion and presented this concern through the citizen initiative. However they felt let down when nothing seemed to change about the plan.
In a hybrid forum this is the break that can be described between representatives (chosen through election) and represented. This will make that the residents feel they have to argue for their voice being taken into account themselves. The dog-owners enter the decision-making as a new emergent group.

But in Maastricht the representation of the dog-owners was also questioned as they are represented by different representatives. The dog-owners involved in the citizen initiative were often referred to by the other parties as the 'hard core' dog-owners, only a 'small group that shouts loud'. The foundation suggested that although those few dog-owners starting the initiative were the ones that were being heard by the council, but that they were not necessarily voicing the opinion of all dog-owners. They mentioned that they received a lot of support in favour of the alternative plan, but that those people were not the ones who would speak up in public. Although the dog-owners starting the citizen initiative were able to enter the hybrid forum they were not directly seen as legitimate to speak for all dog-owners or in taking a role in the decision making.
However the foundation's representation was also debated. During the process the dog-owners starting the citizen initiative no longer felt represented by the foundation they help to establish. The foundation 'Gebete Hoond' decided to aim for more decisiveness and therefore to go along in the process and only later bring the result back to the dog-owners. Some of the represented dog-owners

felt this was not a legitimate role to take. They argued for a continuous involvement in the process and for the foundation to consult their support during the process. A lack of feedback can develop in a feeling that their voice is not involved in the process. Turnhout et al (2010) describe this conflicting view as a paradox within a participatory process as those invited are invited because of their different interests, but will have to allow them to be negotiable to make the process a success.

Although it was thus important for the dog-owners to have some support, in this case the representation was mainly framed as being able to represent an interest. Natuurmonumenten frames the debate as on that has different interests involved and instead of mobilizing their own support, focus on the negotiation of these interests. The interest they refer to are mainly functional interest in the areas, such as the use of the area by the dog-owners and by entrepreneurs in recreation.

In short it was the initial conflict on representation of different views and the inclusion of voices that started the discussion. But legitimacy is established for involvement of the foundation as they are invited to participate. It opens a hybrid forum where this new voice is included.
But a second conflict arose as some dog-owners do not feel represented. They question the process and argue that their voice is not really included. They argue for involvement on not only function interest, but also the attachment (or emotional interest) they have to the hill. During the process some of the dog-owners mentioned that they had the feeling involvement was translated in giving information or 'one-sided communication' by nature organisations and the municipality. Moreover as a resident of Maastricht mentioned a lot of people felt that everything was already settled and their voice would not really count in the decision: *"Even when we established the foundation people predicted that nothing would be achieved anyway. The general feeling was that nothing would be done with our point of view. I still wanted to do something, but eventually it became clear that the others had been right. We weren't really heard."* This (perceived) limitation in space is something that has been observed more often when analysing participatory practices (e.g. Turnhout et al 2010). We could reformulate this to a conflict no longer on the inclusion in the debate but on the legitimacy of the decision-making process itself.

Decision making: balancing of interests
Natuurmonumenten points out that on the hill there are many interests that play a role. To handle these it is necessary to be able to take them all into account and weigh them, so a compromise can be reached. In our hybrid forum Natuurmonumenten and the foundation 'Gebete Hoond' enter this process of balancing interest. They establish a mutual understanding in each other's knowledge and competence and allow their point of view to be negotiable. In this discussion the interest of the dog-owners only represents one interest. As a respondent of Natuurmonumenten argues there are many more interests that play a part on this hill, but in the discussion they were not really brought forward. Natuurmonumenten feels that they need to take all of them into account, and balance them against their goal which is the protection of this nature. This focus on the willingness to balance each interest is something that was valued by Natuurmonumenten, municipality and foundation in the process. At the same time this view on the process also questions the input of the dog-owners involved in the citizen initiative, as they were seen as too rigid and unwilling to compromise.

But what also played a role were the more emotional interests, expressed for example in the view that the hill was the living room of Maastricht. It makes that the residents felt it belongs not only to

Natuurmonumenten but also the citizens of Maastricht and argue therefore for their input in the plans, or at least for the municipality to represent their opinion. The plan could be delegitimized by the dog-owners based on too little involvement of the actual residents touched by the issue. As a respondent of Natuurmonumenten acknowledged that although she saw a good involvement in the end being established, she felt the dog-owners might have been included earlier, when the plans were established to remove the dog-area.

This attachment to the hill by the citizens of Maastricht made them not only argue for input in the plan but also that decisions are taken by those representing the common good. As we saw in the findings the dog-owners taking the citizen initiative argued that when Natuurmonumenten took over the ground it changed from common ground to private land. It put as the residents argued Natuurmonumenten in a too powerful position, as the users of the area no longer had a say in 'their' hill: *"Emotionally the hill is ours, but we do not have a leg to stand on. Legally the situation is clear; the hill was ours, but was sold for one guilder. To us this does not mean that they [Natuurmonumenten] can do anything they want, but legally they can."* The right to decide on the common good is given way, and as the residents argued it set aside those with an interest and bond with this common good. For them, being a common good, every voice should be included, which makes the position of one dominant party illegitimate in the eyes of the dog-owners.

The hybrid forum established here opened the possibility for input on this use of the common good. However the decisions taken are weight against the view of Natuurmonumenten and the underlying policies and regulations they have to comply with. It means that the broader vision that was set for this area, mainly in the Natura2000 management plan, is not really open to argue with. There seems to be a dominant vision in plans made on the area as nature to be protected. However this is something that a discussion in a hybrid forum can question, as more than one possible world will be included.

Exploring possible worlds

When discussing the common good it includes a discussion on the underlying assumptions of what the area should look like. But when questioning this, actors may fail to establish legitimacy. At first glance it seems that there is no debate about nature or its representation, and Natuurmonumenten is accepted by municipality and foundation 'Gebete Hoond' as the one to represent nature and its expertise to design the plans for its management. The discussion focusses on the use of the area with an established underlying vision.

But the findings show that it is not only the use, but also the underlying assumptions on what the area should look like that differ. Natuurmonumenten construct the hill as a (bio)diverse area with a high potential for rare species, while the neighbourhood council sees the hill as nature for the (recreational) use of people and the dog-owners involved in the citizen initiative argue for a very inclusive concept of nature, where all plants and animals are included in being nature. Based on these different views the use and management of the area will also differ. Some of the dog-owners feel that the rural landscape is also nature, which does not necessarily include the management of diversity of species and habitats that Natuurmonumenten (and the Natura2000 regulation) argues for. The underlying the discussion thus questions what this area actually should look like and whether the current vision should account as the main vision to base the plans on. But to question this vision is difficult.

The existing Natura2000 policy set the boundaries of what can be discussed and the ownership of Natuurmonumenten give them the legal right to make the decisions on this area. In consequence the normative and aesthetic dimensions of nature delegitimize your input. First of all these dimensions can be seen as not rational and it is this rational expertise that forms the basis of nature conservation. Natuurmonumenten and the municipality therefore also argue that there is a current lack of understanding of the ecological processes, which made it according to them hard to show the 'why' of the conservation. Entering the debate the dog-owners starting the citizen initiative questions this expertise based on information gathered from scientific articles. They provide rational counter-arguments and show inconsistencies about nardus grassland, what habitat it actually is and where it should grow. Secondly apart from emotions being irrational and therefore illegitimate referring to more normative values also falls outside the scope of the rational debate. It means for example that the value the residents attribute to the dog-area and the trees on the hill could not really be discussed, but was also mentioned by Natuurmonumenten as they felt they could not argue for conservation, 'just for nature's sake'. Instead it needs to be 'proved' as a rare and threatened habitat. In designing policies and plans, I described in the theoretical framework that what is often not taken into account are the normative and aesthetic values of an area included in the experience of the lifeworlds of the actors (Van Koppen 2002).

In short the discussion established on the use of the area. There is a search for a compromise based on a rational debate, excluding the more expressive and normative accounts of the area. The vision of the area has been based on established rules and regulations which makes it hard to argue for another vision of the area. Therefore what remains a question in the debate is who can actually decide on this vision, or more broadly on the common good. The residents now perceive that one organisation has become too powerful. A short overview of the justifications that play a role in the process of establishing involvement and decision-making is presented in table 7.2.

	NM	Municipality	Foundation GB	Citizen initiative	NC
NM	+ Expertise + Owner + Regulations + Representing nature	+ Representing common good	+Representing Interest - only one interest	+ Representing interest - only one interest - lack of understanding - unwilling to compromise	
Municipality	+ Expertise (on nature) + Owner + Regulations	+ Representing common good	+ Representing interest	+ Representing interest - lack of understanding - unwilling to compromise	+ local Representation
Foundation GB	+Expertise (on nature) + Owner + Regulations - Too much power	+ Representing common good	+ Expertise (dogs) + Representing interest	- unwilling to compromise - only few voices	
Citizen initiative	+ Representing interest - 'Outsider' - Too much power - Excluding voices	+ Initially representation - inability to represent - Excluding voices	- Questionable representation	+Local representation + Attachment	+ Local representation
NC	+ Owner + Regulations - Too much power	+ Representing common good	+ Representing interest	+ Representing interest	+ Local representation + Local expertise

Tabel 7.2: Legitimation and delegitimation of the actors in Maastricht. Legitimizing claims for their own role and that of the other actors are presented with a **+**, delegitimizing by a **-**. The left column shows the group 'doing' the (de)legitimation, the upper row shows the group being (de)legitimized (NM= Natuurmonumenten, GB= Gebete Hoond and NC= Neighbourhood Council)

7.3   Bringing the cases together: Questions on the common good

In both cases the residents are able to establish a process to discuss their opinions. We see that involvement starts to play a larger role. The practices of nature organisations are seen to be changing as both Staatsbosbeheer as well as Natuurmonumenten argued for a more prominent role for the residents in discussing their plans. This can evolve towards cooperation, in Baarn between residents and Staatsbosbeheer and in Maastricht in the form of debating an alternative plan by Natuurmonumenten, municipality, foundation 'Gebete Hoond' and the dog-owners starting the citizen initiative. Involvement of those touched by an issue has thus become an important concept to be granted a voice in the discussion. It is the deliberation discourse mentioned in the theoretical framework that can be seen to underline this justification for involvement.

But involvement is not understood in the same way by all participants. Representation is still important as not everyone is seen as legitimate to talk or only in a limited way. In our cases the focus of nature organisations and the municipality appears to be mainly on the improvement of the communication and understanding of the planned practices. But in the discussion we have for example seen that some dog-owners argued that this communication remained too one-sided and they would like to see more involvement in the decision-making process.

In the hybrid forums two distinct processes are developed. In Baarn talks are developed between residents and Staatsbosbeheer and grow to discuss the management of the forest. The debate between Staatsbosbeheer and the residents is mainly constructed by Staatsbosbeheer as a debate about emotional and user arguments. The legitimacy of the residents-group lies in the possibility to show the sensitive topics. In analysing this process it appears that the protest is opened when the residents ask themselves the why of the planned maintenance. They argue for proper communication on these issues as well as involvement when these plans are expressed. Here Staatsbosbeheer is seen to manage the forest for the whole Dutch society. Staatsbosbeheer being a governmental agency and the forest common good, the residents argue that the forest is not just owned by Staatsbosbeheer but belongs to the residents as well. Local use and attachment therefore plays a large role for the residents' justification of their involvement.

In Maastricht the protest is started by a specific group of residents, the dog-owners. Natuurmonumenten, Maastricht municipality and the foundation mainly refer to the functional interest dog-owners represent. But this is only one of the interests that people claim on the hill. The decision-making process is seen as one that involves all interests on the hill, to be taken into account and balanced to come to a proper decision. The hill is owned by Natuurmonumenten and consequently they are able to make the final decision.

But apart from claiming use of the hill, the discussion can also be viewed as a discussion against the little influence residents have on something that they feel belongs to all citizens of Maastricht. The hill has been a topic of discussion for a long time, and residents have always been concerned by the changes made. This resulted already in compensation for the dog-owners when the hill was given to Natuurmonumenten by the province. The discussion on the dog-area develops out of this context and can be viewed as showing more than just a protest against the removal of the dog-area. There is a feeling among residents that 'their' hill has been given away. When talking about the discussion some dog-owners and residents brought forward that 'their' rights as users of the common good were given away to one organisation. The controversy seems to not only revolve around the direct use of the area but also on the underlying constraints of current rules and regulations.

Although the actors and discussions differ in the two cases, the process of legitimation plays a large role in both processes. What can be discussed and how it is discussed is constructed in the process of legitimation. Our processes show that the inclusion of new voices in a hybrid forum is opened, but with restriction; not all actors, the roles they can take and arguments they can make are viewed as legitimate. The residents are seen as sharing an interest and can put this interest forward, but this is just one of the interests in the area. The nature organisations argue for their role in balancing these interests to arrive at proper management. The proper procedure is therefore a willingness to talk and compromise. However the underlying vision against which these interests are tested already exist and are based upon the vision the organisations and government have established for the area. The existing policies and regulations can be seen to bind what negotiation-space can be open. As owners of the land the nature organisations are entitled to design the plans for this piece of land. In both cases they open a space, 'invite' the residents to talk, but with a specific role for the actors in mind. There are boundaries, legitimizing some actors and arguments, while delegitimizing others. As Tunhout et al (2010) have shown, the forum does not simply include citizens but in a way also 'makes' them. The space they enter is not neutral but pre-formed by existing policies as well as ideas on who can enter and what the process should look like, established by those opening the space. To

be able to take part in the forum actors are required to perform their participation in a specific way, set by those pre-formed ideas

Both cases thus show the boundaries to the hybrid forum and are comparable in the eventual questions that are asked by the residents on the underlying decision-making procedures.
They argue for involvement in determining what the common good should look like, as well as in who can make decisions about it. In Baarn the residents and Staatsbosbeheer have been able to establish an inclusive process where the residents are asked for their opinion on new plans. But although involvement is established there are some differences between residents and Staatsbosbeheer that do not surface in the discussion. A point of contestation remains the vision on the area. The residents argue for a revision of the forest, that it should not be a park but a forest, but this discussion seems to be sealed off. The legitimacy of the residents lies in their possibility to show the sensitivity of the plans in terms of use and emotional attachment to the forest, but not in establishing these plans.
In Maastricht the discussion is allowed to negotiate different (functional) interests but when arguing for a discussion too far of the already established view on the area, actors lose their legitimacy. The legal rights and regulations as well as the argument that the common good is taken into account states that the dog-owners can negotiate for their interest among all other interest, but cannot question or influence the fact that the area is a target area for nardus grassland.
In both these cases nature management is established on the basis of rational decision-making, excluding a discussion on more normative and aesthetic dimensions a nature area entails. Although all actors show understanding in the existence of these dimensions -emotions are for example seen to be involved in the area, as well as normative assumptions on the protection of nature- these dimensions cannot claim legitimacy in the formulation of conservation practice.
A debate is opened on the use of the area in Maastricht, and on the conservation of element in the forest in Baarn, what remains contested is the representation of the common good: What is in the public interest (what should the area look like) and whether this common good can belong to someone (who should make the decisions). We see, as Korthals (2008) already mentioned, an underlying controversy that in the end questions both the distribution of power (those able to decide on the common good) and the representation of nature. In both cases actors' direct representation is changed and new emergent voices are included, but the discussion remains which 'worlds' are (can be) explored.

7.4 Reflection on the research

In the previous sections I have discussed the hybrid forum and its constructs of legitimacy established in both cases researched. But how should we view these results in relation to other discussions on nature management? I have reasoned from a constructivist point of view that knowledge, nature and legitimacy are situated. This means that the practice of research should focus on local practices of participation and how the constructs play out in practical discussions. The results shown above are therefore necessarily not generalizable to any other process. However as we have seen it does show some larger theoretical linkages: To the four discourses on legitimacy derived from Haïkïo (2007) and Connelly et al (2006) as well as the creation of space in and performance of participation as mentioned by Cornwall (2004b) and Turnhout et al (2010). It shows that discussion on nature can be viewed as a hybrid forum, where new voices try to establish new procedures and ask for the

exploration and negotiation of all (group)identities involved. This includes the idea that every process opened will be a unique one.

A small addition can be made here on the discourses of legitimation as well as on the concept of a hybrid forum. The boundaries of a hybrid forum, or in other words the question on what is legitimate in a hybrid forum, are an important aspect to take into account. Although a hybrid forum is described as opening the possibility for the inclusion of emergent voices and the negotiation of possible worlds, the question remains how this process is shaped. It asks for an inclusion of a view on power not yet elaborately explored in this research. For future use of the concept of a hybrid forum in viewing protests it is an important aspect to take into account. Relations of power are inscribed in the spaces that make up the hybrid forum. They influence the construction of legitimacy determining who can be involved and what can be said. Using a hybrid forum as analytical tool this should be part of the analysis. Moreover a hybrid forum is developed to show a step forward in the possibility to develop new procedures of decision-making. To shape this process towards the dialogic democracy described by Callon et al (2009) and the possibilities this can give it is important to take the power relations involved in this shaping into account.

What we have seen in our cases is that the process of legitimation also is included in a hybrid forum. The justifications made to (de)legitimize actors and actions are however not really made on separate discourses but they are intertwined. A controversy on a nature area can be viewed as a controversy on the common good. It can be brought down to a discussion on the interpretation of the common good. Questions on the common good are then questions of representation (who can represent the common good) as well as questions of expertise (who can define the common good). To be able to show representation will show legitimacy in talking about a common good, as it refers not only to self-interest but to a shared more general interest in the area. To show expertise you will be able to legitimize your vision of the area and the management that is in accordance with it. In this discussion on representation and expertise several legitimizing discourses are used. These discourses are similar to the once mentioned by Haïkïo (2007) and Connelly et al (2006), but I would like to make some additions here. Haïkïo (2007) describes a discourse based on representation, where actors are legitimized by the support they present. In her case she describes it as a 'traditional' discourse that is based on the process of voting and legitimizes politicians being representatives of their constituency. In our cases we have seen that representation can be grounded in more than being elected. Deliberation and representation are here two sides of the same coin. Deliberation argues for a 'different kind of representation' than that of representation by election or support. Apart from representation by support or interest (deliberation) we also saw the resident draw upon a different justification: that of representation of locality, where local insights, knowledge and use of the area should count in the decisions made on the area. Legitimacy in the representation will lie in the shared experience of a place as Goodwin (1998) argued.

The deliberation discourse seems to have become an important one to establish a hybrid forum and the inclusion of new voices. But 'traditional' discourses as mentioned by Haïkïo (2007) are still present as well. Especially expertise plays an important role in justifying management. However the norm what expertise is or should be can be different. I would like to make a differentiation between the current view on expertise as knowledge based upon objective science and expertise based on situated knowledge. Policies and plans are traditionally, and in our cases as well, based on scientifically and rationally determined standards. This is based on the view that science is able to provide an objective account in the area. However, as described in the theoretical framework, this

view is questioned when arguing for the construction of knowledge, as well as nature. Although this would grant legitimacy to the exploration of different natures we have seen in our discussions that arguments were mainly made on the view of expertise as objective and rational. To be able to allow for the exploration of different worlds legitimacy will need to be granted to the idea that different constructions of knowledge are possible.

The controversies described are complex ones and therefore my presentation here is necessarily a simplification. I have only focused on the talks concerned about claiming and questioning legitimacy which might have left out other equally interesting views on the process. Moreover I have presented the views of the residents and nature organisations mainly as homogenous ones. This presents the danger to downplay actor's differences. Although there are of course personal differences I felt the similarities between the actors of the same group were larger than the differences on the accounts of the process and its legitimacy. To be able to take part in the process it was also important for the groups themselves to speak with one voice. Moreover to describe the arguments and the dynamic of the process in a clear way these differences are put into the background.

This research has been a retrospective one as both discussions have more or less come to an end. This made it possible to look at and ask about the development of the whole process in the short time granted for this Master research. But it also made it impossible to directly observe the process or any of the arguments made during the discussion. The claims made and presented here are therefore reflections afterwards and may be, due to recall problems or change of personal perspective, not always those that have been played out in the process. However the recordings by the media present claims made during the process.
Adding to this is the fact that there are always many people present in such a process and this research has only been able to let some of them do the talking. The number of respondents is not particularly high and some voices remain therefore in the background. But those that were heard in both cases can be seen as the key-actors in the process. It is not to forget that the scope of the research has been limited by time and for a richer description of such discussions, which involve many actors, opinions and can generally stretch out over a long period of time, a longer study would be asked for.

8 Conclusion

In the Netherlands we can see citizens becoming more and more involved in the management of nature areas. They establish their own initiative or protest against planned change; involvement is claimed in issues concerning 'their' local nature areas. With the shift from government to governance and an increasing search for participation, involvement of citizens is also argued for by government and nature organisations. This gives an interesting mixture of actors joined together to look at the management of an area. Together it shows a composition of views, claims and justifications which has been brought to the forefront in this research. To do this the concept of hybrid forum has been used to show the possibility a controversy can bring. The objective was to reconstruct the development of this forum and the relation between views (on nature) actors have, claims they make (providing legitimacy) and participation that can be developed. In this research I asked myself the questions: *How does the hybrid forum develop?* and being part of the development in the forum: *In what way is the legitimacy of actors and proposed actions questioned and constructed in a hybrid forum?*

I will end here by answering these questions, while showing the importance of the concepts used and placing it in the broader context of participatory governance.

Hybrid forum

Controversies on nature areas can be viewed as hybrid forums. This forum develops when a controversy can bring citizens to question both the current knowledge on which policies and plans are based as well as the representation of their voice in designing the plan. It can be seen as a way forward in the development of new procedures in which new voices and multiple views are taken into account. In this research I have asked the question *how we can see a hybrid forum develop* out of the protests initiated in Baarn and Maastricht. A hybrid forum in the sense that multiple actors showing multiple dimensions to a problem come to together to discuss these.

We start from the idea that a forum is established when protest rises and a controversy is shown on an issue. This issue has previously been handled by experts and decided upon by elected representatives. But it carries more dimensions than those taken into account by this procedure. The procedure does not seem to be able to represent all actors' views and it becomes 'leaky'. Those that do not feel represented claim a voice in the debate.

We have seen that in both cases citizens opened a claimed space to show their concern and opinion on the proposed plans. Representation by municipality was in our cases perceived as unsatisfying as the municipality did not have the decision-making power on the areas under discussion. A direct voice in the design of the area was therefore sought and established by the residents. The procedure had indeed become 'leaky' and the issue brought back to public debate; a hybrid forum therefore establishes. It was this first opening of the forum that triggered the creation of an invited space where Staatsbosbeheer in Baarn and the municipality in Maastricht invited the actors touched by the plans to sit together and explore each other's views. We see thus the multiple actors coming together. But with involvement established what becomes important is the opportunity it opens for new procedure to develop.

An important aspect for the forum to develop further is the multiple dimensions coming together. The procedure is not only 'leaky' in terms of the voices included, but also in terms of the dimensions of the issue that are explored. This second axis of a forum includes the question on problems defined and knowledge used. It is here where a hybrid forum can open the inventory and exploration of

multiple worlds. In our debate on nature it can be reframed to the question what 'nature' is practiced, in which multiple 'natures' are put forward. In Baarn we saw forests as wild and autonomous or forest as harbouring cultural heritage. In Maastricht the plateau of the hill was described as rare and biodiverse as well as a common green space to escape the city and walk your dog. It are these different views, based upon different cognitive, normative and aesthetic assumptions that are part of the hybrid forum.

What is asked is that the issue is looked at from different definitions showing different problems and solutions. In theory the forum thus presents not only the ability to bring together different actors, but also these different 'future world states' to include them all in the process of formulating new plans. This research shows that the controversies indeed do include different possible worlds; however what the analysis does not show is the inclusion of these worlds in the discussion. This study has been an analysis of the conflicts in retrospect so the complete dynamic of the forum has remained closed for me. Additional research for on the exploration of possible words (natures) in discussions on nature management that follows the actors during this discussion can provide more insights.

But what our controversies do show is the potential in bringing together these worlds. Both protests establish a process in which the citizens are included to present their concerns. However for a controversy to argue for different ways of representation and different knowledges to be included legitimacy needs to be established. Although our controversies showed both new actors and their different definitions of the area, I have argued in this research that the different justifications of actors and the legitimacy these can claim come to play an important role. This research used the concept of a hybrid forum not just to analyse the procedure that is established but questions how the actors were involved when 'making' it. A hybrid forum is dynamic and inclusion not simply established but managed through a process of legitimation. Our cases show that legitimacy constructed in the cases will have influence on the new procedure established and is able to show boundaries that can limit the possibilities of these procedures.

Legitimacy

The hybridity of the forum can be found in the issue at stake, the actors involved, as well as the spaces opened. This research has argued that how this process will be established, is influenced by the legitimation process and situated legitimacy that can be claimed. It is the context that binds the spaces in a hybrid forum. Every discussion will differ in the "conventions, commitments, physical obstacles, normative beliefs, procedures and rules" that need to be taken into account (Leino and Peltomaa 2012, p. 161). The second research question therefore focused on the construction of legitimacy and asked: *In what way is legitimacy of actors and proposed actions questioned and constructed in a hybrid forum?*

In constructing different worlds or natures the idea on what is desirable, proper and appropriate will differ. The discussion on the controversy in our cases opens therefore also a discussion on the existing legitimacy of the plan and its actors involved. When legitimacy is questioned every actor enters a process of legitimation where they construct the justification of their voice. These justifications can be seen drawing upon different discourses each underlining its own constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions. We have seen that some are shared by all, while others are opposed by different views on proper actions.

Deliberation was a discourse all our actors drew upon. It argues for the inclusion of actors that are touched by the plans. A view on the desirability of actors to become involved was shared, which enabled the residents and dog-owners to establish themselves as a new group. Representation has, with the inclusion of the concept deliberation, now become more than giving support by voting. Citizens and organisations can claim representation based on their interest in the proposed action. To be able to argue for this opens the first opportunity to establish a hybrid forum. With the concept of participation becoming popular it also seems a generally accepted one. What remains is the question what role actors can assume when included. Here different discourses were included where legitimacy was argued for be referring to interests that need to be balanced, expertise and rationality to determine management or locality to show local attachment. What a legitimation process can show is that these different justifications are differently integrated in the process.

When it comes to the role an actor can take in the process we come to the heart of the discussion: it is here where opposing views on what is desirable and proper are shown. Our discussions seemed in the end not only to revolve around the specific use of the area but also on the underlying question of who can represent and define the common good. Representation of interests, emotional or functional, was important justifications to become involved in the process. In Maastricht Natuurmonumenten argues for the balancing of interest and Staatsbosbeheer in Baarn views local interest as important to take into account. Both are the owners of the area and are therefore able to set the larger vision against which all interests are weighted. The larger vision that is established for the areas is based on a specific image of the area and its nature. Management of this area follows from this vision and is argued to be based on rational choices by those with expertise on issues of nature management and conservation. Expertise was viewed as allowing for rational arguments on which plans and policies are based. Legitimacy of an actor's voice is therefore found in the 'traditional' discourse of (scientific) expertise.

But this is not taken for granted by the residents involved. They react against the - in their view- too powerful claim on the area made by the nature organisations. Current plans made where viewed as made by 'outsiders' somewhere in an office and not by those living close to the area. They argued for what Goodwin (1998) calls legitimacy based on locality.

The process of legitimation shows a struggle of the actors to establish their own involvement, their decision-making power as well as their construct of nature. The first is established, while the second and third still remain questioned by some of the citizens involved. We could see that the already established rules and regulation, including the voice of nature organisation and municipality, were able to largely shape who can be involved, what can be said and which procedure is followed. The hybrid forums opened are not neutral as constructs of legitimacy can argue for the in- or exclusion of voices. The plurality of natures is not yet able to claim legitimacy in the debate. Although a hybrid forum opens the possibility to include new possible worlds, when failing to gain legitimacy some worlds are excluded from exploration as they do not fit the current construction of legitimacy and the rules and regulations it sets. The opportunity the hybrid forum encloses for the exploration of future worlds is not reached.

Participation in nature management

A hybrid forum shows the exploration of new voices and views a protest can open. It is the process of legitimation that can show possible constraints for this exploration to be reached. What, then, does this say about participatory (new governance) processes?

A hybrid forum suggests that the emphasis on the multiplicity of views, in our case natures, and the exploration of them can establish plans that are 'robust'. It is a way of viewing the building of inclusive new governance processes. But a hybrid forum, just as participatory processes viewed in current literature and described in the introduction of this thesis, encounter constraints. There can be a limited legitimate role new actors can claim. Some of the 'traditional' legitimizing justifications can constrain the exploration of possible worlds. Basing policy on expertise and rationality will obstruct normative and expressive views that play an important role in the construction of nature. The representation based on locality argued for by residents is for example not able to establish legitimacy as the formulation of plans is based on scientific, rational arguments. It can be argued that the inclusion of protest-groups will represent only the opinion of a few people, while overlooking the general interest and opinion (Dubbink 2008). But this ignores the possibility of different understandings on conservation. Plans are now supposed to be based upon technical and scientific (rational) knowledge, but when viewing nature as constructed there is more to it then this knowledge. A hybrid forum includes a change in the view that the general interest in socio-technical problems, as well as nature, can be determined only by traditional representation by support and scientific disciplines; this procedure will become 'leaky'. It will end in a controversy where it will be supplemented by different definitions and understandings of an issue. We have to look at knowledge and nature as multiple and situated to argue for the inclusion of knowledge beyond scientific expertise. Nature (and its conservation) it can therefore be argued, just as the socio-technical problems Callon et al (2009) describe, needs to be brought back to the public debate.

At the same time Staatsbosbeheer and Natuurmonumenten are changing their practices towards more involvement. Although in our cases the residents are initially unaware of the plans and feel uninvolved, both nature organisations open a space when the conflict becomes clear. Residents and dog-owners are invited to express their concern. It shows the opportunity to establish a hybrid forum that can work towards new procedures. This involvement opens possibilities for the exploration of possible worlds. At the moment there seems to be a focus on the improvement of communication. This can be seen as a first step in the inclusion of new voices, as in our cases the residents indicated they felt rather uninformed. However the residents also argued for more inclusion in decision-making. The residents were able to talk about changes in the proposed plans, but current boundaries to the space, such as regulations and policies are more difficult to discuss. Ideas on what involvement actually should include thus differed and was used in a diverse way when legitimizing your actions. It also means that because of this diversity there can remain a gap between nature organisations and citizens when talking about involvement.

I join here Turnhout et al (2010) to argue that spaces for participation are never completely inclusive. Spaces will be constraint and influenced by the context that sets them. The margins of what is discussed are set by the already established policies and legal regulations. What could not be discussed in Baarn and Maastricht were previous arrangements such as ownership, policy plans and larger vision on the area. Even though the involvement in the process might become better established, the actual content remains in both cases a point of dispute. In Baarn this is the

difference between the forest as wild or as a park and in Maastricht the difference between decisions made for nature or for those attached to the hill. What did not really seem to be explored was *what nature do we 'make'*. This touches upon power dynamics integrated in the legitimation process. Setting the space for a hybrid forum therefore involves determining who can enter the forum, what procedure should be established and what claims can be made. Local participation would need, as argued by Goodwin (1998), a shift in the balance of power. Adding a focus on power to the construction of legitimacy can provide a useful addition to this research.

We have seen that in the eyes of the residents the processes can come with constraints for involvement as the spaces for participation carry preformed ideas on legitimacy of actors and procedures involved. It makes it important to reflect on the underlying assumptions and situated legitimacy claims that are made during the development of the process in a hybrid forum. To establish new procedures it is important to be able to establish new legitimate views on actors and their arguments. Participation is not only the opening of a forum, but allowing new systems of norms, values, beliefs and definitions to enter the debate as well. It is then that a hybrid forum opens the possibility for the exploration of worlds and transformation of knowledge and identities.

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Appendix I – Interview guide

The term already says enough: it is a guide, not a questionnaire. The main subjects will be addressed in all interviews, but the specific questions and the order is determined during the course of the interview itself. The interviewee takes the lead in the story and how it develops, the interviewer will guide so all subjects will be addressed. The main questions that I kept in mind while interviewing the actors have been: according to the actors what is the problem, what is the solution, how should this be reached and who should be part of this process

To help me to keep to my subjects I have taken the following points to guide me in my interviews:

Personal background
Personal background
Involvement in discussion
> *How did you become involved in the discussion?*

Description of the discussion
Initiating the discussion
> *How was the discussion initiated?*
> *Who was involved in the discussion? (important actors)*
> *How was the discussion organised?*
> *What was your goal in the discussion?*
> *How did you wanted to realize this goal?*

Involvement in discussion
> *Who could do and say what in the discussion?*
> *Which positions did the different actors take?*

Development of the discussion
> *Can you describe different phases in the development of the discussion?*
> *Could you see a change in goals and vision in the discussion?*
> *Has the involvement of the different actors changed? How?*
> *How do you view the current outcome of the discussion?*

Conflict and cooperation
> *What were the different ideas and views that played a role in the discussion?*

Development of cooperation
> *How did the cooperation develop? In what way and on which issues was cooperation sought?*
> *Who took the initiative?*
> *Are you satisfied with the cooperation? (how do you define good cooperation?)*
> *How do you perceive the other actors in the cooperation?*

Are there changes in the cooperation?

Image of area and nature
Management of the area
> *How do you perceive the current management?*
> *Do you feel there is a appropriate outcome? Why?*
> *What changes would you like to see in the current management? Who should take part in its implementation?*

Legitimacy in process

Development process

> *Is there an appropriate process found? What would a proper/desirable process look like?*
>
> *Has there been or should there be a discussion, in your point of view, about the decision-making process?*

Decision-making

> *How are decisions taken?*
>
> *What is the quality of these decisions? (What makes a good decision?)*
>
> *Have all views been taken into account?*
>
> *Is there a difference in decision-making power? Is this a just distribution?*
>
> *Which opinions did you weigh in the process?*

Actors involved

> *Who should be involved in the process?*
>
> *Are you satisfied with the role you could take in the process?*

Have there been any changes in above description during the process?

Future

How do you see the discussion and its cooperation develop further?