

Linking Water management to Spatial Development from EU to local level.

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The cooperation between water managers and spatial planners depends heavily on its basic element: competing interests. Aspects that shapes the cooperation and define its effectiveness are language (discipline related jargon), contracts, trust, personal competences, policy tuning & policy instruments, institutional innovations, instrumental innovations and mental innovations. The cooperation is mainly informal of character. These aspects will be discussed based on a comparison of two case studies around water management and spatial planning. Recent evaluations of the European Commission show that implementation of environmental directives proves to be a challenging task for the responsible authorities. This paper discusses also the relation between the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the Birds and Habitats Directives in the Netherlands. Studies show that legal and procedural aspects of planning and decision making gain the most attention at the EU level (the formal side) and that environmental goals are fading into the background, especially on the EU level. The difficulties that arise in the implementation process on a local and regional level are discussed and also the integration of both directives from a policy and practice perspective are studied.