A study of the regional implementation of the innovative Room for the River policy.

A case study of the interaction of different objectives in the implementation of Room for the River in the IJsseldelta region (in the Netherlands).

River IJssel through Kampen, the Netherlands

In time and with water, everything changes ~ Leonardo da Vinci

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Abstract

With Room for the River the Netherlands has responded to near floods. They designed this policy programme with an innovative approach, making room for the river. This approach could also face a number of challenges, of which 1) how it deals with its double objective, 2) the decentralized implementation and 3) how it interacts with other existing policies. This research makes use of a case study approach, the IJsseldelta region, to study the role of these challenges. The main question that follows is how the objectives of that IJsseldelta region interact with the objectives of Room for the River. To find the answer this study makes use of policy theory, more specifically the five stream framework as presented by Howlett et al. (2015). The theory combined with interviewing Room for the River and IJsseldelta actors, resulted in a reconstructed policy process. The analysis of that reconstructed policy process resulted in insights in how the governing levels interacted and how the challenges played a role. The main conclusion is that in this particular case the challenges did play a role. The role of the double objective was shaped by the fact that water safety could not be compromised by spatial quality measures. Also decentralization instruments were identified. However overall, the role of decentralized implementation and other existing policies can be characterized as challenging until, due to coincidental external circumstances, the different objectives came together. The challenges remain to be playing a role in this type of innovative approach.

Keywords: Room for the River – IJsseldelta – Five stream model – policy (theory).

Figure frontpage: (Joop van Houdt & Rijkswaterstaat 2009)

Acknowledgements

The thesis you are reading here started off with a really broad interest in people living with water and floods. The focus of my research slowly became more and more specific. Regarding the topic and where to focus geographically to choosing between the coasts or rivers, findings a case. Also the scientific approach and angle for a policy science perspective needed more focus. I came across many policy making and policy change theories. In that process I learned about the many different choices you have to make in each step of the research project up until this final version of my report. The process was often challenging but that makes it all the more satisfying to have the report in my hand.

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I hope you enjoy reading this report and I look forward to any questions or remarks!

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	English	Dutch
DGRW	Directorate-General for Spatial Development and Water Affairs	Directoraat- Generaal Ruimte en Water
Min of I&M	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment	Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu
PKB	Spatial Planning Key-decision	Planologische Kern Beslissing
RftR	Room for the River	Ruimte voor de Rivier
RWS	Rijkswaterstaat	Rijkswaterstaat

List translated Dutch concepts

English	Dutch
Council of State	Raad van State
Development plan	Bestemmingsplan
Environmental bill	Nota Ruimte
Exchange measure	Omwissel besluit

1 Introduction

The report you are about to read describes the entire research of studying a water policy that was implemented in the Netherlands called Room for the River. Room for the River is an extensive water policy programme designed to deal with water safety around the Dutch main rivers. Furthermore it is described as having an innovative approach and that it is breaking with the long standing trend of figthing the water by moving towards accommodating the water. Therefore, the implementation process of this policy programme will be studied. Since it would be interesting and possibly necessary to find out how the implementation of a new approach played out for those affected by it. And whether lessons can be learned for similar or other policy innovations.

The policy programme Room for the River is a national programme that was implemented by the use of more than 30 projects along the main rivers. With those projects numerous actors were involved, from national to regional government bodies to more local action groups and local residents of those regions, thus all potentially play a role in the implementation. Therefore the study was done by the use of case study, one of those projects.

In this introducing chapter this topic will be more elaborated which leads up to the relevance of studying the policy as well as what exactly are the justifications and boundaries for the research, in other words, the problem statement and the research objective. However first the chapter continues with the cause for the Room for the River programme.

1.1 Background Room for the River

This section starts with a brief chronological history of Dutch (near) flooding events and how the Dutch government responded, this will help to learn about the cause for Room for the River. Then some more context of the time in which the programme is developed will be described which will help to understand the characteristics of this (new) approach. After a critical note to the new approach, the programme will be described into more detail followed by a section where it will all be put into a scientific literature perspective. All of that leads up to the aim of this specific study.

Going back in time to 1953, history shows the biggest natural disaster for the Netherlands in the flooding of the Dutch delta. At the time the government responded to the event by establishing a delta commission, this commission developed a delta plan which in its turn resulted in the Delta works, major flood defences to improve flood safety. These Delta works illustrate a traditional response of fighting the water with engineering. This type of response also illustrates a paradigm of fighting the water and safeguarding the Dutch for high water by building higher and stronger defences (OECD 2014). More recent high water events in 1993 and 1995 marked another moment for the Dutch government to respond urgently to water safety issues. Even though the events were characterized as near floods, it caused to the Dutch to reconsider their approach to water safety.

The response to these events resulted in the Room for the River programme years later. Thus, what is so innovative about the programme and why is it explained as a discourse shift? To understand that, the why and how the government responded to the event in this way, four characteristics of that time will be described now.

Firstly, regarding the environment, around that time awareness of climate change rose. Climate change indicated, among other things, that (sea) water levels were expected to rise as well as increased river (peak) discharges (IMRO 2006). Secondly, the Dutch government had a vision for a change in organizing power which was unfolding at the time. That vision for change was to have decentralization in the implementation of national policy. This aim for decentralization was first reflected in the instrument they used to implement the Environmental bill (Nota Ruimte) in 2004. With the instrument they asked the provinces to create an 'integrated environmental development' plan (Staten-Generaal 2004). Besides these two changes, also old and not used ideas for environmental planning in the Netherlands regained attention. One of these never developed ideas is the plan to give more space (back) to nature, water and environmental quality. The plan was originally formulated in 1986 as Plan Stork (de Bruin et al. 1987). As a fourth, the Dutch Water Act is a factor that shaped the response of the government. First and foremost it gives the legal cause to come up with a response to the near floods as the Water Act describes the Dutch *flood defence safety standards* (Water Act section 2.2) (van Rijswick & Havekes 2012). These water safety standards know leading principles that are defined in certain discharges and high-water levels which need to be met. It is with meeting these principles that the water act shapes the objectives of the Room for the River programme, since Room for the River aims to avoid a rise of the high-water levels, and at the same time achieve and maintain the safety standards (IMRO 2006). In order to achieve those aims while at the same time considering climate change and the rising water levels it is expected to cause, the water and the rivers needed to be given more room. Creating more room for the water is the break with the trend according to those developing the programme (IMRO 2006). So these historic aspects explain the characteristics of the Room for the River programme.

However this change in water management has been met with several critical notes. Firstly, by Wiering & Arts (2006) about whether the new approach is actually a real shift. They explain this shift in approach by referring to water managers that became aware of the control paradox of the traditional approach, which adds to the explanation of this shift. However, their critique is in that they also say Room for the River can be seen as an aim for this new approach, though it is yet to be seen whether it is more than just 'policy talk' (Wiering & Arts 2006). At least the new approach opened ways to more and new possibilities besides fighting water. That is also recognized by the OECD that describe the new approach as paradigm shift as well (OECD 2014).

Without looking for an answer to whether or not it is a real shift, this research will move more towards the characteristics of the programme and the implementation that followed. Therefor the programme will now be described in more detail. Initially Room for the River was developed to increase the water safety along the main rivers of the Netherlands though ultimately the programme has two objectives, creating water safety and improving spatial quality. The programme is then designed in such a way that at specific places along the river measures need to be taken to improve the water safety. The second objective is then addressed at those specific places in cooperation with regional actors and not merely the Dutch government (IMRO 2006). The first objective water safety is operationalized by increasing the capacity of the river Rhine. It will have to deal with 16.000 m^3/s entering the Netherlands at Lobith. This number, 16.000 m^3/s, taking climate change into account, is the expected short term future discharge. The short term was by the year 2015, showing how the Room for the River programme was developed to meet water safety objectives that had to be met by 2015. Although, the programme does also consider even higher

future discharges by avoiding unnecessary measures that would hinder future measures. To achieve the 16.000 m^3/s objective the number is further operationalized to specific discharges for each river arm. Those discharges demands are translated to certain water level reductions along the rivers. To meet those reductions more than 30 individual project along the rivers know specific water level demands which could me met with specific (preferable) solutions. The geographical locations for the individual projects can be seen in Figure 1, the measures at each projects are described in red and only in Dutch (IMRO 2006).

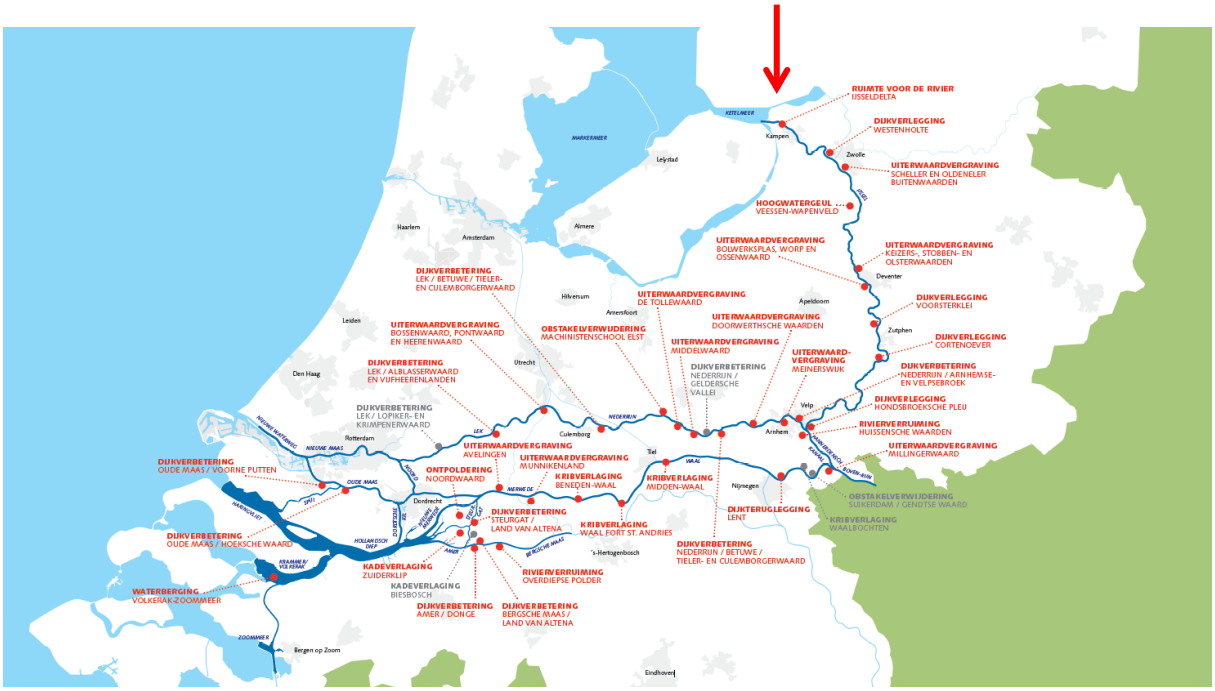


Figure 1 More than 30 projects and measures of the Room for the River programme (Ruimte voor de Rivier, 2017)

The second objective aims at improving the spatial quality and is also the objective in which the decentralization vision of the government is reflected. Decentralization is seen in how regional authorities are involved in improving the spatial quality by creating a regional advice. The 'regional advice' includes preferred water safety measures which can be best combined with improving the spatial quality. When combining these objectives the water safety standards cannot be compromised. The regional authorities can also initiate and carry responsibility over a project. Accordingly, the spatial quality objective is not operationalized in the policy programme (PKB)[1] and with including the regions in operationalizing and achieving that objective the policymakers aim to increase support in the regions for Room for the River (IMRO 2006). The final responsibility of Room for the River remains with the government, more specifically the ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (Ministry of I&M). They are responsible for the programme approach, making

[1] This PKB, Spatial Planning Key Decision will be explained in more detail later. The PKB is the procedure used for Room for the River, however the procedure is no longer used as it was part of the law spatial planning (wRO) which has been abolished (Staten-Generaal 2017).

sure that all projects together meet the need and together secure water safety for the Netherlands along the rivers.

One of the more than 30 projects is the IJsseldelta project which can be seen in Figure 1 at the red arrow. When Room for the River was being developed the IJsseldelta region was already considered, however regional actors were also developing regional development plans for the same area (IMRO 2006; Province Overijssel 2006). The IJsseldelta region was also already selected to be used for an example project for the Environmental bill. In that example project the region integrated all the environmental development plans it had at the time. In the methodology a case selection for the IJsseldelta will follow, also more detail of the case will follow right before the findings, describing the regions tasks. Now a section on involved actors will follow as the project approach of Room for the River causes many new actors to become involved and forming new interactions with new actors. This is also addressed by Van Den Brink & Meijerink (2006) as a challenge later on, though for now these actors, as also interviewed later one, will be described in general as well as their official responsibilities (Van Den Brink & Meijerink 2006).

1.2 Actors

Many different stakeholders have played a role in initiating and developing these IJsseldelta plans. For this research six actors will be introduced and of the first five their formal responsibilities are briefly described as found to be relevant for this research (Breeman et al. 2016). In this case governmental actors of three different levels are found. First the national (state) government, of which in this case the ministry of infrastructure and environment (Ministry of I&M) is most prominent, then of the middle government the province and the water board are present, the province of Overijssel and the water board WDOdelta. The third, the local government is the municipality Kampen. The first, the ministry also has an executive branch which is Rijkswaterstaat (RWS). Furthermore, local political parties are involved in the IJsseldelta case, in this research GBKampen a local political party, is highlighted. At last there is also influence of non-governmental organizations, in this particular case 'stichting werkgroep Zwartendijk' seemed to be most prominent local actor at the time of research.

The first state actor, the government is in this case represented by **the ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (Ministry of I&M).** In general a ministry is officially as well as politically lead. Besides the general management the policy components are the core of the ministry, called Directorate General. For this case, Directorate-General for Spatial Development and Water Affairs (DGRW) of the ministry of I&M is the core policy component. The ministry of I&M is responsible for improving infrastructure and mobility, water safety and improving the quality of water and air. The DGRW has to develop policy for the water safety task (Breeman et al. 2016). Part of the ministry of I&M is also the Delta commissioner who is responsible for the Delta programme, he is placed directly under the minister, the head of the ministry. The DGRW is led by a directorate-general, as is **Rijkswaterstaat** (RWS), the branch of the ministry that executes the developed policy.

The **province** carries responsibility for organization and management of the physical surroundings, such as environment, spatial planning and infrastructure. Regarding environment that also entails policy for nature and landscape. They have a role to supervise municipalities and water boards and they execute many state government tasks. The province is responsible for managing the provincial infrastructure like waterways, roads,

bridges and tunnels. With PKB procedures the province presented their plans in a 'regional plan' (Brussard n.d.). The **water board** in its turn is responsible for the water quantity (ditches), water embankment (dikes and other structures) and water quality. The **municipality** is the lowest level of authority. The municipality offers general services (permits, passports) they manage the public space (streets, parks) and are responsible for important tasks like, garbage collection, development plans (bestemmingsplannen) and care for elderly and terminally ill. With PKB procedures the municipality presents their plans in a 'development plan' (Brussard n.d.).

The province, the water board and the municipality are later on referred to as the regional authorities.

The local **political party** is part of the city council. The city council is authorized to consider any issues they deem important as long as no higher authority is already responsible for the issue. Besides this on a few domains the city council has to implement central (national) policy. The non-governmental actor that is highlighted in this case is the **Werkgroep Zwartendijk**, they have formulated the following objective (own translation): 'To avoid any developments like, housing, industry, port and terrain, west of the N50 on Kampen municipality property, in order to preserve the area as nature and cultural landscape. […]. They want to achieve this objective by use of legal procedures and other legal resistance against violation of the natural area' (Zwartendijk n.d.).

The regional authorities with the political parties and actor group(s) are later on referred to as regional actors.

1.3 Literature

The previous sections have shown several characteristics of the programme. The programme has a **double objective**, a water domain objective, as well as a spatial planning objective. Additionally the objectives reflect different **actors and those actors are from different governing levels** therefore have different responsibilities. This is a results of the national and regionally implementation. Moreover the two objectives have official responsibility found in different levels, as water safety is a national responsibility and developing environmental quality is a regional responsibility. Since the environmental quality is a regional responsibility, regions could have their own development plans when at the same time nationally a policy was being developed focusing on the same area. This was seen in the parallel development of policies, the Environmental bill as well as the Room for the River programme, in other words, **parallel policies** were already identified.

These three characteristics seem to be in line with the programme being innovative[2]. An innovative programme should, and this programme seems to, *change the existing policy paradigm following an anticipated or desired shift in the policy paradigm* (Duijn 2009, p.131). As the normal policy processes would not have been able to deliver projects like Room for the River did. According to the policymakers of Room for the River this innovation, a break with the trend at the time, was also an additional cause for the programme (IMRO 2006, p.106).

[2] While still considering that it could be mere 'policy talk', (Wiering & Arts 2006), the start to have innovation seemed to be there.

However the characteristics that were mentioned may be part of this innovative policy, at the same time they have also been described in the literature as being challenges for policy change and policy implementation. Firstly, combining different objectives within a policy can cause challenges, especially when the two objectives originate in different (hegemonic) domains (Van Den Brink & Meijerink 2006). In this programme the objectives are both from two historically different hegemonies of water management and spatial planning. Bringing these together can create a fight among the two which can hinder the process of creating *shared perceptions and perspectives* (which is needed for finding solutions to problems) (Van Den Brink & Meijerink 2006, p.1). According to the same authors the specific objectives of this programme also bring in *new patterns of interaction* among actors, for example, no longer merely water managers are involved in solving the water safety problem. They will now have to cooperate with other actors and domains. Also Warner (2010) describes how tackling multiple objectives at once may create a struggle, in his article he refers to how it may cause confusion among actors, as some may be willing make sacrifices for one objective but not for the other, however when combining the objectives in one it becomes unclear what part of the project serves which objective. How this can also cause conflict among these actors supporting different objectives is not necessarily bad, however conflict can slow down the process and create even more confusion (Warner 2010). Though not necessarily adding to the challenge, another way of looking at these two objectives is by using the way of organizing problems as described by (Hisschemöller & Hoppe 1995), which is useful as the level of structure for a problem determines the level of consensus about the approach for problem solving. The first objective in this case seems structured and can be referred to as more technical. This first objectives is then combined with the second objective which seems to be unstructured and not defined, since the realization of that objective is left to the regions (IMRO 2006).

The double objective is also an illustration of how actors from different levels are involved, which is described as another challenge. The objectives illustrate that by the different official responsibility of each objective. Besides that governmental hierarchy can be seen in how the national program aims for regional implementation, the decentralization aim, for which they include all regional actors (Van Den Brink & Meijerink 2006).

The last characteristic and challenge is that some of the regions assigned to have a Room for the River project, for example the IJsseldelta region, did not agree with the spatial reservations the Room for the River plans put on their area as it would halt other developments in de area (Warner 2010; IMRO 2006; Van Buuren et al. 2016). For the IJsseldelta region, the Room for the River plan resulted in spatial reservation halting other regional development plans that were already on the regional and local agendas (Staten-Generaal 2004; Province Overijssel 2006).

Van de Brink & Meijerink have also called similar challenges the 'three dilemma's' and concluded in their article in 2006 that relating *previously independent practices to on another has not succeeded yet* (Van Den Brink & Meijerink 2006, p.18). Is that in any way different now?

1.4 Problem statement > objective > research questions

Anno 2016, at the time of this research, the programme is nearly finished. On the one hand it has been 'praised' for its innovative character. How it reflects a shift from a fighting to an accommodating paradigm. How it combines water safety, creating water safety for

many Dutch people, with improving the environmental quality of the areas that were made use of to achieve the water level reduction. It has a high importance with potentially saving lives and avoiding economic losses. On the other hand some challenges with the programme were identified when putting it into a scientific perspective. Three of these challenges are firstly a double objective, secondly different actors of different governing levels and thirdly regions possibly know other developments plans and objectives.

These aspects of the policy innovation ask for a critical view of the implementation of this policy programme to find out if and how these challenges played a role in it. Therefore it would be relevant to study the policy process of one of the projects of Room for the River. Now that the programme is nearly finished that has become possible.

Accordingly the role of the described challenges in the implementation process is studied here. This was done by reconstructing the policy process of a case study, the IJsseldelta. The specific case study forms the basis for reconstructing the policy process. To learn about the role of the aforementioned challenges the focus is put on different problems and objectives. The entire policy process is reconstructed as problems and objectives are formulated by actors that are embedded in the policy process. And considering the entire policy process will help to take into account how other (external) factors may influence the construction of problems and objectives.

This reconstructed policy process can then be analysed in order to answer the following research question(s):

1. How did the IJsseldelta regional development objectives interact with the Room for the River objectives (during 2000-2016)?

1.1 What are the Room for the River objectives (problems they aim to solve)?

1.2 What are problems faced by the IJsseldelta region? And what objectives for development do they have?

1.3 How did these problems and objectives of different levels relate to each other? (Did they influence each other?)

1.4 How did these problems and objectives of the water domain and the spatial planning domain relate to each other?

1.5 Outline of the report

The report will continue with chapter (2) where the methodology is described, which includes the research approach in general, the actual methods to conduct the research as well as a thorough description of the case study.

A theoretical framework is needed in order to answer the research questions of chapter 1 with the methods of chapter 2. Therefore in chapter 3, the theoretical framework is described as well as operationalized. The framework forms a lens in the entire research, and the operationalization of the framework served as a guide in conducting the research as well as organizing the results which are presented in chapter 4. In chapter 5 the research questions are then answered, followed by a discussion of these answers in relation to the theory, as well as a discussion of all aspects of the research. From approach, to theory, to conducting of the research.

2 Methodology

The methodology chapter is divided in four main parts, first is the general research approach and considerations that need to be done when conducting qualitative research that is followed by the case study selection. Third is a section on the methods used to conduct the research here the interviews, projects visits and literature review methods are elaborated upon. Fourth and last is a section explaining how the analysis is carried out, thus the process of transcribing to coding to thematically organising and finally the analysis.

2.1 Research approach

This research has a case study approach which seemed most fitting to have an in depth study into the Room for the River programme. The selection led to a specific and unique project within the programme, the IJsseldelta case (Warner & van Buuren 2011). Specific analytical questions were asked to develop a fuller understanding of this specific case. And finally the case was studied by the use of a policy theory in order to answer the research questions. The results of the use and the applicability of the particular theory were used to discuss the theoretical framework (Silverman 2013, p.146).

These characteristics of the research made it a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is a subjective and interpretive research approach (O'Leary 2010, p.105). This asked of the researcher to carefully consider the more or less presumed overarching principles as well as methods and tools for data collection and analysis (O'Leary 2010, p.89). The qualitative research also required the researcher to consider its view of the world and the research conducted within that world. The considerations done for this research were mainly done to better prepare, understand and place the research and findings into (scientific) context. Also for the main method, interviewing, this was important, to reflect on the position of the researcher towards the interviewees. Furthermore, this qualitative research made use of deductive reasoning to gain the in-depth knowledge of the case study. In-depth is a key term here, as the research aimed for an deeper understanding of what happened in this particular case, rather than aiming for quantity in data (O'Leary 2010, p.113). In qualitative research multiple perspectives and realities are accepted and also, and relevant for this politics-rich case, it has a way of dealing with political agendas and is not trying to ignore or work around them. Lastly, with all above mentioned aspects and in general, qualitative research recognizes the worth of subjectivity (O'Leary 2010).

This case study approach knows particular suitable methods and tools to conduct the research, 'a case study methodology', these will be described into depth after a section on the case study selection which will follow now.

2.2 Case study selection

The case study was already shortly introduced in the introduction chapter. Here the choice for this specific case is explained. Firstly, the number of possibly research cases was determined by the number of projects within Room for the River, secondly the project needed to still be under development to be able to conduct the research. In that way the actors involved are still active and available for interviews.

Moreover, and iterative with the focus of the research, the IJsseldelta knows the challenge of combining pending regional developments with the Room for the River, reflecting the challenge of parallel policy plans as well as combining objectives of different government levels.

Combining Room for the River with the regional challenges of the IJsseldelta was also already mentioned in the *Spatial Planning Key Decision* (PKB). Also other unique characteristics of this geographical area which influenced to choice for this case were mentioned. For example that the IJssel is assigned with a relatively high task for reducing the water level, compared to the other rivers in the Netherlands. They also describe a vision for the long term, where a high-water ditch (bypass) is mentioned to be the best option for improving the spatial quality, and bringing back the delta character of the area, however, due to financial consideration it is not included (IMRO 2006, p.64). These considerations and choices were seen as striking and as a cause for challenges in further and other developments in the IJsseldelta region. Besides being described in these official documents, the IJsseldelta also got publicity in papers and on television, both positive and negative, which was another nudge towards the selection of this particular case. Finally, the IJsseldelta case matched decisive criteria and ended up being the case study that could answer the questions asked in this research.

2.3 Methods

In the following section the methods that were used to conduct the research will be described. The selection of methods was based on qualitative research methods described by Silverman (2013) and O'Leary (2010). Also authors that have used the same theoretical framework or similar case studies have inspired the choices made regarding research methods (Stout & Stevens 2000; Van Buuren et al. 2016). The methods are thoroughly described to increase credibility. Also triangulation in qualitative research was applied in order to increase the credibility of the research as using multiple data sources can confirm the authenticity of each source (O'Leary 2010, p.115).

The first method was in-depth interviews with open-ended questions. Interviewing results helped to get a deep understanding and were used to constructs collective narratives (Silverman 2013, p.125; Stout & Stevens 2000). For the development of the topic list and data coding strategies a detailed chapter on that matter by K. Charmaz was used as the other research methodology book lacked in detail thereof (Charmaz n.d.). The chapter described a methodological protocol for interviewing. The second methods is that the project is visited, which is an *in situ* method. This method served a personal interest, but moreover created a better understanding off the interview data and gave context to the interview data. Project visits also served as an extremely unstructured interview method as arguments, anecdotes and project stories improved the deeper understanding of the case (Silverman 2013, p.132).

Finally, as a third method, textual analysis was used, which can be divided into literature review and content analysis. The first, literature review, was used to develop the theoretical framework and later on in the analysis as well as discussion. For developing the theoretical framework mainly policy theory literature was used. Which then resulted in a structure for presenting the findings. However for the analysis and discussion a broader range of literature was used, in that way the theoretical framework could be discussed, but also the findings, the results of the case relevant for society, could be discussed and put

into a scientific literature perspective. Thus, literature is used to verify both, the theory used in this research as well as the content related results of the research. The content analysis of project documents is used overall to improve the understanding of the case and the interview results, the research data (Silverman 2013). An elaboration on the methodological protocol for these methods will follow now starting with the interview protocol.

2.3.1 Interviews

The interviews served the main purpose of reconstructing the policy process. To guide the in-depth interviews a **topic list** was developed. The topic list was firstly based upon the knowledge available to the researcher at that time. To get to a final and up to date topic list, a former employee at the IJsseldelta project and a former intern at Room for the River were consulted to discuss the content. Some example questions were formulated based on the methodology of another research paper using a similar theory (Stout & Stevens 2000). The final topic list was the basis for all interviews and adjusted to the background and affiliation of each interviewee. However, after it was used in the first interview the basic topic list needed some adjustments. Firstly in order to better fit the reality and secondly to have more focus and get results that could answer the research questions. The improved topic list, which then formed the basis for each interview, can be found in the annex (i). It has four main categories with for each category a most important questions, which was then followed by some probing questions. Besides a topic list to guide the interviews a **timeline** of the IJsseldelta project was brought along (annex ii). The timeline was found to be a useful guide in the interviews considering the large history of the case and helped in getting a similar focus in all interviews. Both the topic list and the timeline helped to guide the interview and put some boundaries to the conversation (O'Leary 2010, p.200).

Prior to conducting each interview, most interviewees received the research objective and interview outline. This was done to give interviewees the opportunity to prepare for the interview and also to establish the same focus with each interviewee, a focus in line with the research objective. With each interview a description of the professional background of the interviewee, the objective of the interview and what the interviewee could be asked and tell was made. This description helped in adjusting the topic list. Each new interview was also approached differently and influenced by the knowledge gained in the preceding interviews.

When conducting the actual interviews the interviewee was provided with the necessary details regarding confidentiality and the purpose and use of the interview data. When the interview started the recording device was switched on (O'Leary 2010, p.202).

The number of **interviewees**, the sample size, was estimated at 6 interviewees beforehand, based on the argument to speak to the 'most important stakeholders' and saturation could not be expected without interviewing all of them. The beforehand estimation number was successfully reached, however one important stakeholder was missing (O'Leary 2010). For the selection of these interviewees snowballing was used as a technique, whereby the social network of initial contact persons was used. This initial snowballing led to the first three interviews. The latter three interviews were arranged by making use of the researchers' personal social network (Silverman 2013, p.203).

List of interviewees:

- Interviewee 1: GBKampen – Party member, political party, *3-4-2017, Kampen*.

- Interviewee 2: Stiching werkgroep Zwartendijk – Lobbyist, special interest group, *4-4-2017, telephone interview*.
- Interviewee 3: Rijkswaterstaat (RWS) – River branch manager, state executive agency, *13-4-2017, Utrecht*.
- Interviewee 4: Provincie Overijssel – Projectmanager, regional authority, *24-5-2017, Kampen*.
- Interviewee 5: Gemeente Kampen – Project manager, municipal authority, *30-5-2017, Kampen*.
- Interviewee 6: Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, DGRW – Senior policy officer, state authority, *16-6-2017, telephone interview.*

2.3.2 Project visits

The IJsseldelta project has been visited three times and served several purposes. Firstly, visiting the project site contributed to putting all project readings into context and further during and after the interviews it helped to put those results in perspective. Secondly the results and interviews could be viewed in another angle. Where the interviews alone were one way interaction and unilateral, the project visits brought in interaction among actors, as well as interaction of actors with the actual project. This contributed to understanding the different roles and responsibilities each actors had and to better understand their views in the interviews. Additionally the notes of the project visits were a minor input for the coding analysis of the documents.

- General project visit, guided by volunteer guides organized by water board WDOdelta, 17-5-2017.
  Presentation at project bureau and project field trip.
- 'Dag van de bouw', 'the day of construction', actual building site visit, starting point project bureau, 20-5-2017.
  Meeting the general public.
- Project visit with the province of Overijssel and water board WDOdelta employees, 24-5-2017.
  Joining a project visit that was taking place in order to get everyone familiar with the project they participate in.

2.3.3 Literature review

Literature is crucial to research at all stages, also in this research. The literature was essential in writing the research proposal, to justify the research and decide on- and creating the theoretical framework. Furthermore, it has served to bring context to the interview data. With the analysis scientific journals have played a role in reflecting on and discussing the results of the research, again putting it into wider context. Types of literature that were used are policy drafts, final (policy) plans, minutes of meetings, 'grey literature' such as project brochures and newspaper articles and more scientific literature, journal articles and policy theory books (O'Leary 2010).

2.4 Analysis

The interviews resulted in the main data source, however also the notes of the project visits were a data source that were processed in the same way as the interviews. The literature was not processed in any specific manner.

All 6 interviews were recorded and then word for word transcribed. To analyse these and the project visits notes, they were coded. The coding was done thematically, therefore

predetermined categories (themes) were used to code (O'Leary 2010, p.262). Using thematic coding is in line, with the objective to analyse specific parts of the policy process, thus that aim is leading. The theoretical framework was also suitable to meet that objective therefore also the basis for the code list (Annex iii).

Coding the transcripts and notes was done by the using comments in Microsoft Word. These comments were then extracted from the Microsoft Word documents and organized in Microsoft Excel. Extracting the comments was done by the running a macro in Microsoft Word, running a macro helps to shortcut repeated tasks, e.g. collecting comments. The Microsoft Excel files then formed the basis for the analysis. Microsoft Excel offers the possibility to filter, which makes it possible to filter and select a certain themes in all interviews. Thus in order to analyse the files, the codes were filtered and themes were analysed. The results off each theme offered the basis to writing the analysis chapter. In the findings chapter (4) the results are presented in thematic narratives.

3 Theoretical framework

Policy theory has been used to construct the theoretical framework for the analysis of the policy process for the IJsseldelta. To do so the framework first helped to reconstruct the policy process and subsequently the reconstructed policy process can be analysed to answer the research questions.

This chapter will first shortly explain the origin of the theoretical framework followed by a description of the framework itself. Then some arguments will be given explaining why the framework is useful for this research. After that more depth is generated with the conceptualization of the concepts. The conceptualization formed the basis for executing the research as was described in the methodology chapter.

3.1 Origin of the Five Stream Framework

Getting acquainted with the origin of the five stream framework helps to better understand the choice for this particular theory and the choices that are made further in this chapter to develop the framework and its concepts. Furthermore the original authors and their work deserve recognition for their renowned work.

Howlett et al have recently published several research papers presenting a framework they have developed based on the works of Harold Laswell (1956) and Kingdon (1984) & Zahariadis (2003) (Howlett et al. 2015a; Howlett et al. 2015b). Harold Laswell's work is the *policy cycle framework* and Kingdon firstly described the *multiple streams framework* which was further developed by Zahariadis. These works have shown to be influential, as they are still being used widely however they are also faced with critiques.

The main value of the policy cycle framework is structuring and describing the policy process by the use of the following distinctions, *agenda-setting, policy formulation, decision making, implementation and evaluation* (Howlett et al. 2015b). The main critiques it is faced with is that it is oversimplified and will never be encountered in real life policy making as such. The value of the multiple streams framework lies in the identification of three different streams in the policy process, *a problem-, policy- and politics streams*. The characteristics of the separate streams will be explained later on, yet the general idea of streams is that they represent separate processes and are actively coupled by actors in the process when the opportunity to do so arises, which is called a policy window (Cairney & Jones 2016; Zahariadis 2003). However also the multiple streams framework faces critique, the theory only focuses on the agenda setting stage of the policy process which makes it inadequate to be used beyond that stage. Although that was not Kingdons intention with the framework, scholars have made attempts to extend the framework to be used beyond agenda setting stage (Howlett et al. 2015a; Howlett et al. 2015b). Howlett et al (2015 a&b), is one of those attempts and they aim for a synergy when combining above mentioned frameworks. They argue that other attempts ignored complexities when extending the frameworks and the way forward is a better consideration of policy process' complexities by adding additional streams for the stages beyond the agenda setting.

This is how they developed the **five stream framework** (FSF), where the water flow metaphor remains, yet new streams of water, are added, or better, *new tributaries enter the river* (Howlett et al. 2015a). A novel framework for analysing the policy process, of which a more theoretical description will follow in the next section.

3.2 The five stream framework

The five stream framework is a framework based on a (water) streams metaphor in order to theoretically illustrate the policy process. The framework consists of five streams, the first three are the problem-, policy- and politics stream. Then in order of appearance a process- and a programme stream enter the main stream, as can be seen in Figure 2.

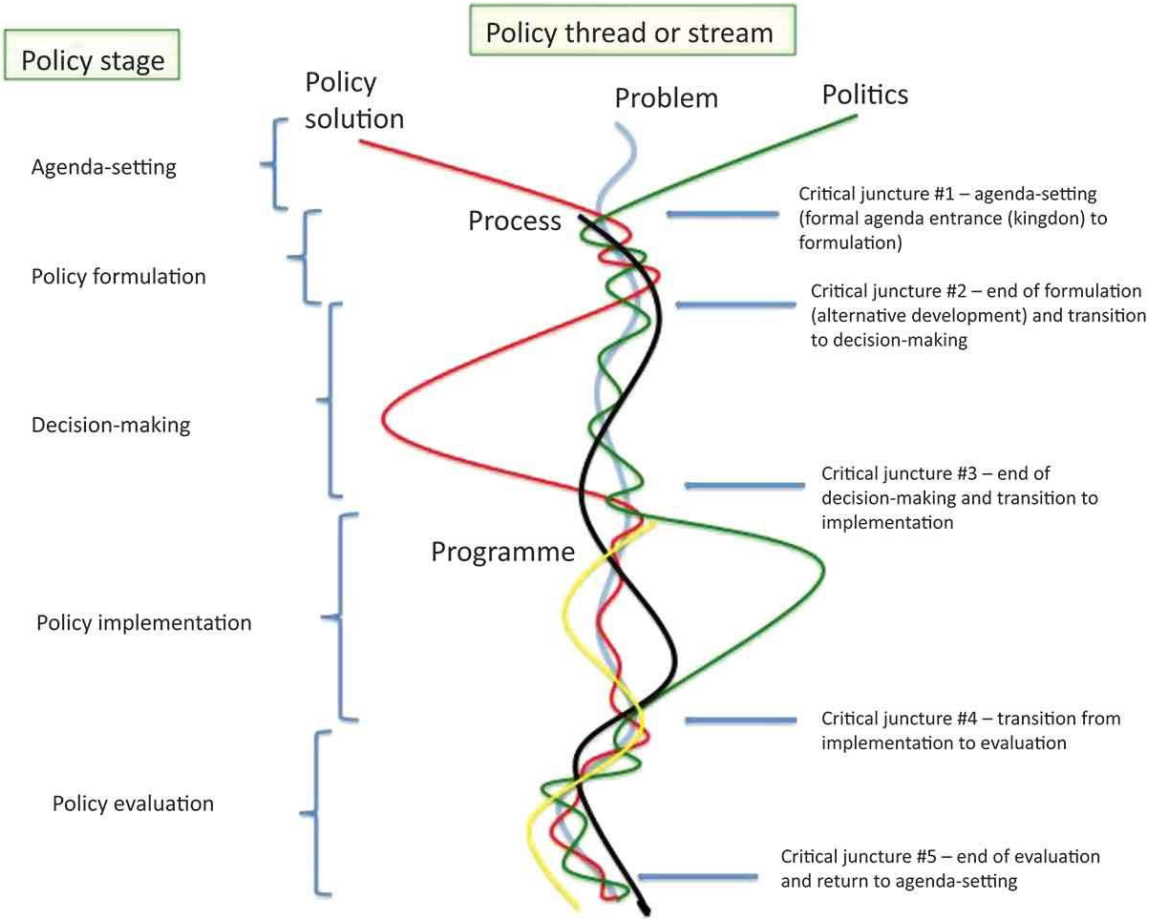


Figure 2 The five stream framework (FSF) (Howlett et al. 2015b).

The origin of the framework can be recognized in this figure as the policy stages can be seen on the left and the three original streams are at the beginning of the main stream at the agenda setting stage.

In the agenda setting stage the first three streams come together and are *coupled* when a window opens in either the problem or the politics stream. This *coupling* is an active step carried out by policy entrepreneurs and this point in the policy process is called a *juncture*. (A juncture is where streams are coupled, added or where new stages of the policy cycle are entered.) After the first juncture, entering the policy formulation stage, the process stream is added. The process stream **supports** *discovery of which policy solutions are most suited to addressing the problem at hand*. The process stream becomes the core of the process guiding the flow of the other streams (Howlett et al. 2015b, p.281). At this point in the process four streams interact, they get to another juncture and enter the decision making stage, in this stage the policy stream is more closely examined. The end of this stage marks another juncture, where a new stage is entered, the policy implementation stage, as well as a new stream is added, the programme stream. The

entire policy process is now made up of five streams. The five streams go through the policy implementation stage, then at another juncture they move towards the policy evaluation stage, the end of this stage is marked by another juncture where either the policy process is ended or the agenda setting stage can be revisited. During the entire policy process all streams interact and external events can influence the process (Howlett et al. 2015b).

In the next section arguments are given for the choice to analyse the IJsseldelta case with this particular framework.

3.3 Why the five stream framework for this research

The choice for the five stream framework out of the many policy theories is twofold. Firstly, this framework was selected for this particular case as it reflected several aspects of policymaking which were also already found in the case. Secondly, the choice was based on the fact that it is a new framework combining those influential works. With the new approach Howlett et al. make some claims of what the new framework could add, when using the theory those claims can be discussed. Moreover, making use of (well known) policy theory helps to fill the gap which exists in policy science, where *there is often an untheoretical approach on 'what works'* (Cerna 2013).

A few aspects of the case as mentioned in the introduction will be briefly mentioned again to illustrate the suitability. The Netherlands faced floods along the rivers in '93 and '95 forming a problem that needed a solution – *agenda setting*. In 2006 a national programme was officially in place to address that problem – *a decision*, however the details of the programme and individual projects were still under development – *policy formulation & decision making*. At the same time actors remained questioning the origin of the problem that was going be addressed as well as the policy solution, the Room for the River programme - *competing constructs* (IMRO 2006; Van Buuren et al. 2016). The framework recognizes that those *competing constructs of a problem can co-exist* in the policy process which is important to recognize as they can have a considerable influence on how the policy process unfolds and the actual outcome of policy (Howlett et al. 2015b, p.279). Also it considers how *often the problem is reframed as the symptoms of undesirable circumstances rather than causes* (Howlett et al. 2015a, p.423), which is helpful in this case as some actors have problems with the way the project and the solution are worked out more than with the objective of solving the flooding problem.

Furthermore the case is preceded by and embedded in other policies, the framework considers that policies are not made on a *tabula rasa,* and accounts for path dependency in the policy process (Howlett et al. 2015a).

These arguments give a theoretical foundation explaining why going into the direction of the five stream framework is valuable in relation to the IJsseldelta case. Additional to those arguments, the choice was made to test claims the authors make. They claim that in all political systems the five stream model can be identified and that it is flexible enough to *cope with variations in source of power, national policy styles and so on* (Howlett et al. 2015a, p.431). Similar to how Robinson and Eller answer to the call to test the limits of the multiple streams model (Robinson & Eller 2010), this study can be seen as testing some of the claims done by the authors and test the limits of the five stream framework. It is a necessary endeavour and also suggested by the authors themselves to do so (Howlett et al. 2015b).

3.4 Conceptualization

In the introduction of the five stream framework multiple concepts have come up, mostly linked to the streams metaphor. This introduction will now be broken down and conceptualized, keeping the streams metaphor yet making the concepts useful in a manner that they can be recognized in the practice of the policy making case. Conceptualization will thus entail specifying the concepts by use of indicators and in general characteristics.

First the five streams are conceptualized followed by the concept of critical junctures. Then the concepts related to entrepreneurial actors are described. The distinction which is made is additional to the framework presented by Howlett et al. (2015 a & b) and is added for analytical clarity. After that policy windows, attention and coupling are conceptualized. The chapter is ended with a small note in historical issues, explaining a path dependency.

3.4.1 Streams

Together the streams make up the entire policy making process and a single stream is *conceptualized as largely separate from the others with its own dynamics and rules* (Zahariadis 2014, p.25)*,* hence a stream through the system can be identified.

The **problem stream** presents the problem that needs to be addressed according to policymakers and citizens. Before describing the problem stream into more detail, a more general definition of what a policy problem is will be helpful. *A policy problem is usually defined as a gap between the existing and a normatively valued situation that is to be bridged by government actions. Since not everyone considers the same situation as undesirable, policy problems are no objective gives* (Hisschemöller & Hoppe 1995, p.43). The problem stream itself has several characteristics and for this research the following four will be elaborated, 1) indicators, 2) focusing events, 3) feedback and 4) epistemic communities (problem brokers). The first three characteristics help policymakers to find out which problem needs to be addressed. The fourth characteristics, epistemic communities, are the actors that make up the problem stream (Zahariadis 2014; Knaggård 2015; Mukherjee & Howlett 2015).

The first characteristic of the problem stream is indicators. Indicators are numbers and studies to assess the magnitude of the problem that needs to be addressed, they can be used politically in a variety of ways. These numbers and studies can be, costs, rates or for example a number of (potential deaths). The second characteristic is focusing events, these events direct attention to a specific problem, subsequently that attention can be fixed by the media or by policy entrepreneurs. Focusing events also increase political will to address problems. Examples are a strike or an accident, or clearly, a flood. The third characteristic is feedback. Feedback is important in pointing out what works and what does not work in other programmes related to the problem, in such a way that successes can spill over to other cases or countries (Zahariadis 2014). Lastly there is the epistemic communities, the actors that make up the stream, within that community a group can be identified, the problem brokers. Problem brokers have a specific role and are identified as problem-defining actors, they can be *scientists, political partisans and others depending on the case* and can be active beyond the agenda setting stage (Mukherjee & Howlett 2015, p.69; Knaggård 2015). More detail about the problem broker and its role will follow at the 'entrepreneur section' (3.4.3).

The **policy stream** is the stream where many different policy solutions can be found, that may or may not be suitable to solve the problem at hand. The policy solutions can be found

in, what it is called by many authors, a 'policy soup' (Zahariadis 2014). This collection of ideas which are already found it that 'policy soup' compete to be linked to a problem. Several selection criteria determine whether a policy survives assessment, these are, technical feasibility, value acceptability and resources adequacy. Besides those, more subjectively the solution needs to meet common norms and values. Integration of policy proposals is an option but is highly dependent on the actors' relations (Zahariadis 2014).

Similar to the problem stream, the policy stream is made up by the actors. In the policy stream actors are identified who support a certain policy instrument, with focus on the policy rather than what problem it is supposed to solve (Mukherjee & Howlett 2015; Voß & Simons 2014). An additional characterisation of these actors will be given at the 'entrepreneur section' (3.4.3) where they are called, policy brokers.

The **politics stream**, as the problem stream, is a stream where a policy window can open. The politics stream reflects *changes in government, legislative turnover and fluctuations of public opinion* (Howlett et al. 2015a, p.421), thus, to identify this stream attention should be paid to those characteristics. The last, fluctuations of public opinion, is also called the national 'mood', which can be explained as a broad range of people thinking along the same line and this same thinking can collectively change. It is therefore an extremely subjective characteristics, however it can be 'sensed' by for example polls, or by assessing the extent of supporting or opposing interest groups in the political arena. That assessment should help politicians to estimate the changes of success for a policy proposal. With the first two characteristics, thus with elections or when the government actually changes, politicians often choose to put specific attention to policy problems and possible solutions. Also at other times when politicians choose to act it is not necessarily because they assessed a problem to need a solution, but because of the need to be *seen* in the political arena (Howlett et al. 2015a; Zahariadis 2014).

The process and the programme stream are now added on, one by one, and *affect how the subsequent process unfolds,* starting with the process stream (Howlett et al. 2015b).

The policy **process stream** is created after agenda setting *in order to support discovery of which policy solutions are most suited to addressing the problem at hand* (Howlett et al. 2015b, p.281). It is the production process of a policy, reflected by exploring, examining, making decisions, putting products together, reflecting. Therefore with the introduction of the process stream, it becomes the largest stream. To discover that most suited policy solution the process stream knows several criteria. First of all, in the process stream the original problem may not remain the problem, it may be reframed or refined. However moving away from the original problem is not necessarily to improve the process, but this is how the stream is influenced by the politics (Howlett et al. 2015a). Another cause for alienation of the problem is that the problem is *reframed as the symptoms of undesirable circumstances rather than causes* (Howlett et al. 2015a, p.423). Moreover the process stream is shaped by existing institutions, which determine the course of the process (and the product). These institutions are, *governmental rules, procedures and norms,* and these are used to examine the policy options to solve the problem. The governmental rules, procedures and norms can be found at all authoritative levels. Furthermore the process stream also facilitates engagement with stakeholders.

When choices and or recommendations about the policy can be made, a confluence point is identified which is also the point where the programme stream is added.

The **programme stream** is the last stream to be added and enters when the policy implementation stage takes off. Preceding the programme stream, decisions were made about which type of programme and (range of) policy instrument(s) (e.g. regulations, finance) could be used for solving the problem while meeting the terms of the existing rules and regulations. Then in the programme stream those decisions are calibrated and integrated with the existing policies and programmes, in order to put it to practice.

3.4.2 Critical junctures

Critical junctures can be identified by looking for moments where something new is added to the stream, *such as new actors, new tactics* or *pivotal moments, [...] opportunities for reflection before moving on and/or turning points* (Howlett et al. 2015a, p.427; Howlett et al. 2015b, p.287). These moments represent the 'windows' when referring to Kingdons vocabulary. After each of these moments the configuration of the streams have changed, see the configuration of these streams in Figure 2 (Howlett et al. 2015a).

Although Howlett et al. do not mention the windows in great depth, they do refer to the junctures as being windows, similar to Kingdon. Therefore the assumption is made here that windows could have also been present at other times (similar to Kingdon) yet missed by entrepreneurial actors. Entrepreneurial actors make use of windows by using various strategies to couple streams (Zahariadis 2014; Howlett et al. 2015a; Howlett et al. 2015b).

Also as acknowledged by Howlett et al. this direction needs more research and thinking, thus for this research, the knowledge of the stages, streams and junctures combined will be used to determine where in this particular case the junctures can be identified.

3.4.3 Entrepreneurial actors

In the conceptualization of the streams the actors that play a role in the specific streams were already introduced briefly, however, one remark can be made to identifying actors. In the entire policy process actors can have different and sometimes multiple roles. Therefore, when analysing it is taken into account that actors' roles in streams are not mutually exclusive (Robinson & Eller 2010).

In order to increase the analytical clarity of the framework the actors and their specific roles will now be further conceptualized. Therefore a distinction is made between actors and enterprising actors in the, policy, problem and politics stream (Figure 3) (Mukherjee & Howlett 2015). This direction is also following a call of, - Mukherjee & Howlett, Knaggard, Robinson & Eller, Cairney & Jones -, who have made attempts and calls to reduce the difficulty in distinguishing streams. In the analysis this research will focus on identifying the enterprising actors.

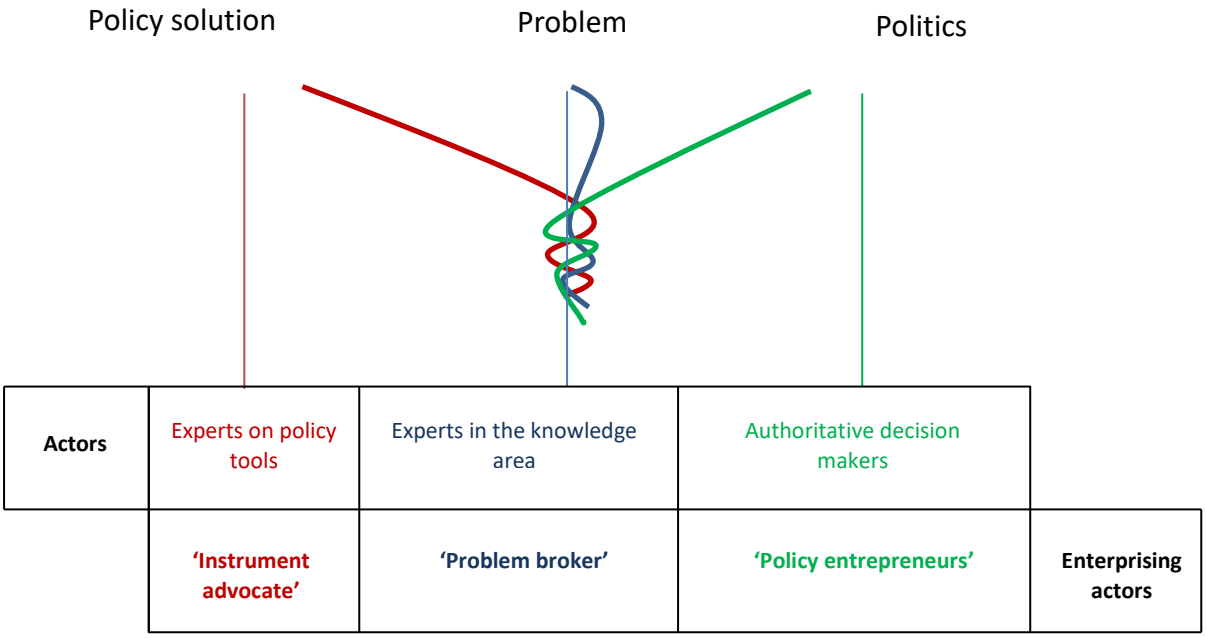


Figure 3 Actors and enterprising actors that are found in the policy, problem and politics stream (own work based on Figure 2).

The **policy entrepreneur** is a well-known concept in the policy theory, and used to describe the actors that couple the streams. They are 'highly motivated' actors that pay attention and play an active role in the policy process, they can be either organizations or individuals (John 2013, p.11; Mukherjee & Howlett 2015). Policy entrepreneurs need to be skilful in identifying the policy window and in actually coupling streams in those ceasing moments, in order to have issues publicly addressed. Their success is dependent of their access to policymakers and on their resources like time and money. Moreover, as Zahariadis, (2014) also says, *entrepreneurs must also employ manipulating strategies to accomplish their goal of coupling the three streams,* thus strategies is another factor for success. These factors reflect the sense of agency (Cairney & Jones 2016, p.16). Policy entrepreneurs can play a crucial role in policy change in the absence of e.g. a focusing event (Huitema & Meijerink 2010).

The aspects that determine the success of the policy entrepreneur can also be recognized in other entrepreneurial actors as well as a type of power and influence. These other entrepreneurial actors are the **'instrument advocate'** and the **'problem broker'**, originating from respectively, the policy stream (red) and the problem stream (blue).

The **instrument advocate** is the entrepreneurial actor originating in the policy stream. An instrument advocate promotes a certain policy solution (instrument) and focuses on innovating more than on considering the problem that needs to be solved (Voß & Simons 2014). The **problem broker** exerts its power in defining public problems (Knaggård 2015). Problems do not just appear, the problem broker is the one that defines problems and draws attention to them. The problem broker highlights the problems to have policy makers accept them, ergo, they do not suggest solutions to the problems (Knaggård 2015; Mukherjee & Howlett 2015).

According to Mukherjee & Howlett (2015), both, the instrument advocate as well as the problem broker highlight and promote solutions or problems that are already in the 'soup'

of ideas. The distinction between these three enterprising actors may shed light on the understanding of agency within the policy process (Mukherjee & Howlett 2015; Howlett et al. 2015b). The enterprising actors play different roles in the concepts that follow in the next section.

3.4.4 Policy windows > Attention > Coupling

The **policy window** has been mentioned before, firstly in that a window can open in either the problem or the politics stream, secondly as being crucial to policy entrepreneurs and that they can quickly cease and attention needs to be paid to them. Here the concept is explained more thorough and linked to the concepts of **attention** and **coupling**.

As the streams are conceptualized as independent, windows open independently. In the problem stream, this is when a problem actually presents itself, possibly in a focusing event (Cairney & Jones 2016). In the politics stream this window can be recognized as a moment where there is political need to be *seen*, or when there is a new administration or legislation (Zahariadis 2014; Howlett et al. 2015a). Windows represents a brief moment in which the policy entrepreneur can couple the streams, therefore the policy windows are often called windows of opportunity, as an opportunity arises to couple streams and thus move forward in policy making. However windows are indeed opportunities, hence not necessarily relevant to the problems that need to be solved or the policy solution (Zahariadis 2014).

Which brings us to **attention** as a policy window may not remain open for a long time, thus policy entrepreneurs in particular need to pay attention in order to use the windows to their advantage. A lack of use of policy windows can be ascribed to a lack of attention to the policy process. Being attentive to the process is also important for problem brokers as *one way to get ownership of a problem frame is to be the first in framing that particular condition* (Knaggård 2015, p.460).

With the **coupling**[3] of problems two things happen, 1) problem framing and 2) linking it to a policy solution. So, when the window is open, actors pay attention and couple the streams, which is how policy windows bring about policy change (Mukherjee & Howlett 2015; Copeland & James 2013). Coupling asks of entrepreneurs to be strategic in using those existing problems frames to *activate political action* and thereby legitimize a certain policy solution (Zahariadis 2014; Copeland & James 2013, p.3). The coupling metaphor helps to understand actors' possibility of having agency. Agency can be explained by coming from e.g. *state policy-making authorities once an issue is on the agenda (…) and later by forces such as oppositions parties and lobby groups that seek to shape the 'tailoring' of policy* (Howlett et al. 2015b, p.282).

3.4.5 Historical context

As policies are not made on a *tabula rasa* it is useful when a framework can cope with that. The five stream framework is able to do so, in other words, the framework can deal with a 'path dependent' five stream configuration. For this research the concept is briefly mentioned here to introduce the first section of the findings chapter (4), that is to describe

[3] It was originally called coupling by Kingdon, which will be used in the five stream framework for the continuity in concepts for this research, although Howlett (2015a) has suggested moving to a threads and weaving metaphor in the most recent version of the five stream framework.

the historical context of the national water policies as well as regional historic context regarding policy and the environment (Howlett et al. 2015a). This chapter (4) will follow now.

4 Findings

In this chapter the findings will be presented. The structure for the chapter is strongly based on the theoretical framework. This choice was made as that structure clearly describes the different streams, or parts of the process. Because of that separation the streams themselves can then consider the different governing levels, domains and actors. This way of describing the findings helps to answer the research question in the subsequent chapter. In line with that objective of answering the research questions this chapter mainly focuses on the problems stream. The other streams are described to support the findings of the problem stream as well as to understand the entire process and to address issues which cannot easily be separated into streams. What will follow now is an historical background.

4.1 The historic context...

First the historic context of the project will be described as this will help to understand the choices that were made. As can be seen in subsequent chapters, many choices and social processes were dependent on the past events. For the Netherlands overall, as well as for the IJsseldelta a brief water related history of change in the physical environment is described. For both also a history of management and policy approaches to water management or management in general is described.

4.1.1 ... of the Netherlands

With the flood in 1953 causing more than 1800 deaths, the Netherlands faced an extreme disaster. The Dutch government[4] responded to this disaster in a similarly extreme way. The first delta commission was called to life and the delta law gave way to a delta works programme that could run for 40 years. The approach could be seen as successful as ever since no one has drowned due to flood in the Netherlands (OECD 2014; Interview, 3). Around 50 years later and in a different time, the Room for the River programme was developed. Unlike the delta programme, the Room for the River programme got 10 years to run. This was decided by the spatial planning law for extensive programmes, therefore the used procedure for Room for the River (WRO; Interview, 3). The government decided that the water safety standards had to be met by 2015, this could be done with that 10 year running programme. The programme did reflect the decentralization trend as it made use of the so called 'regional-advice'.

At the time, that decentralization trend was only recently seen for the first time in a spatial planning policy. The aim for decentralization was a long time wish of the government. In this spatial planning policy, the Environmental bill in 2004, regional authorities were asked to come up with example projects. Also in line with this decentralization was that Room for the River was preferably planned and realised by the water boards, municipalities, the provinces and in some cases, of which the IJsseldelta, also Rijkswaterstaat (Interview, 3).

Despite the fact that the government was aiming for decentralization, 'state coordination' was applied to Room for the River. Under state coordination the only way to appeal is by

[4] Overall all interviewees have referred to the Dutch government in one way or another. I have generalized some of these references where, according to the context I concluded that was what they referred to. However where they mentioned a specific governmental body I have used that. Examples are (in Dutch): de overheid, het kabinet, het ministerie (oud en nieuw), de beleidsmakers binnen het ministerie (DGRW), Rijkswaterstaat de uitvoerende tak.

going to the Council of State, which is expensive and therefore reduced the number of appeals (Interview, 1,3,5,6)[5]. Thus the coordination speeds up the policy process, however gives a threshold for actors that want to appeal. The 'crisis and recovery law' is another way in which number of appeals are reduced, yet this law did so by setting new criteria for determining whether an actor officially has a stake in a project. Keeping issues and appeals closer to home (Interview, 3). Another change in the government affected the policy process. That change was how nature became part of the ministry of economic affairs around 2010. It resulted in a less prominent place for nature, though nature was a (major) part of Room for the River, causing the need for an adjusted political strategy when addressing political questions (Interview, 3).

4.1.2 ... of the IJsseldelta

The preceding section showed how the Room for the River as well as the local process is shaped - and influenced by governmental context and other national historical events. More locally the IJsseldelta area is also shaped and influenced by its history. When describing the IJsseldelta there is a rich history (Interview, 2,4). Relevant water related history is how the IJssel used to enter into the 'Zuyderzee'. The 14th century dikes for protection against the Zuyderzee can still be identified in the environment and date from that time. An example of such a dike is the Zwartendijk, dating back to 1302 (Interview, 2). A few centuries later, yet still far back, the IJssel was known to be 3 times its current size. At that time it had 8 tributaries instead of the 3 it has now. A map from 1724, illustrates the Reeve creek, one of the many waterbodies of the area in that time Figure 4. A century later, in 1821, there were already water management plans considered for the area. King Willem I assigned Goudriaan (inspector general for Rijkswaterstaat) to design a weir similar to the current day bypass, this shows how water management dates far back, also for this region (Interview, 4).

Figure 4 Reference map 1724 the delta of the IJssel and its multiple tributaries (arms). In the bottom left the Reeve creek can be identified (Province Overijssel 2017).

Nowadays most of those waterways are drained and are now polders, this has reduced the drainage area of the IJssel river. One of these polders, polder Masterbroek northeast of Kampen, is now a cultural heritage as it is one of the oldest polders in the Netherlands. The poldering history has left the area with the recognized 'long stretched fields' (slagenlandschap) (Interview, 5). The bordering lakes (de Randmeren) are also a result of poldering. The bordering lakes have a fragile ecology, which had reached a new healthy equilibrium just before the IJsseldelta was assigned with a Room for the River measure. Not only the area but also the city of

[5] For clarification: With referring to the identification numbers of interviews, comma's ',' and dashes '-', are used. Comma, where not consecutive: Interviewee 1 and 3 = (Interviewee, 1,3). A dash, were it is consecutive: Interviewee 1, 2 and 3 = (Interviewee, 1-3).

Kampen had experienced the water and the floods. In the 90's the water flooded the town quay and therefore the regional actors knew something needed to be done regarding water safety (Interview, 1). Furthermore the policy instrument for decentralization where regional authorities were asked to come up with an example project was answered by the regional authorities in the IJsseldelta. This resulted in the so called Masterplan for integrated environmental development. This marked a time where regional authorities began to think about how they should integrate all spatial tasks for their region (Interview, 2,4).

Figure 5 Water on the quay in Kampen city, in 1995 (Rijkswaterstaat n.d.).

4.2 Problem stream in stages

In this subchapter the problems that were found and mentioned by interviewees are described. The description of the entire stream in stages is preceded by a description of the indicators and focusing events which were identified.

4.2.1 Indicators

The indicators are the reports and numbers which were used to indicate the problems. Indicators from the entire process will be described here.

4.2.1.1 *Netherlands*

In the 1990s knowledge about climate change started to increase and as well as the presumption that it would take place (Interview, 3,6). Later around 2006, more indicators were identified, at that time Al Gore presented a striking image of 'Amersfoort at Sea', in his movie about climate change called *an inconvenient truth* (Interview, 3). Considering those climate change predictions, in 2006 a prognosis was done about which river discharges had to be expected for the future. The river Rhine discharged 12500 m3/s in 1995, but that number should be expected to reach 16000 m3/s at a reasonably short term and for the long term, which is by 2100, discharges were expected to reach 18000 m3/s (Interview, 3).

4.2.1.2 *IJsseldelta*

WATER RELATED

Even more indicators were identified in the IJsseldelta region. In 2008 a 2nd Delta commission, the Veerman commission, presented their advice. The commission had to develop advice on how the Netherlands could be protected from the effects of climate change. One of their advices was to raise the water level of Lake IJssel, however questions were raised to whether that would cause water to flow back from the Drontermeer towards the IJssel river (Interview, 1,3). Water flowing in that direction could also possibly influence the Room for the River measure. In 2009 another indicator presented problems for the Room for the River measure. That indicator was an effect assessment of the summer bed measure and the report showed that the deepening of the summer bed over the entire 22 km as planned, would cause negative effects for the water quality as the water would be polluted (Interview, 3-5; VGR effect assessment). To fight against the Room for the River measures the regional action group (or lobby group) obtained 'counter expertise' from a retired engineer (at HKV). With that they shifted from the problem of needing to defend threatened historic landscape (a spatial issue) to fighting plans developed to increase water

safety. A result of this counter expertise was a story about how Kampen would end up in a bathtub if the measure would be implemented. A public hearing in 2010 offered an answer to this concern. At the public hearing Kampen residents and other actors were addressed by several experts to explain that Kampen would not be held at a less safe water safety standard compared to the rest of the Netherlands (Interview, 1,3).

NOT WATER RELATED

The action group changed from a spatial to a water safety problem. The fact that they could do that shows how there are also other problems and indicators besides water safety. Also the regional authorities want other issues addressed. In 2006, PRIMOS and PEARL numbers were used to explain the need for housing. PRIMOS and PEARL are research bureau's providing numbers on development prognosis. The prognosis was set at 5000-6000 houses planned to be built between the N50 and Dronten. Later on this prognosis changed to 600 houses with a maximum of 1300 houses in 2017 (Interview, 1,5). A signature campaign in 2007, by the Zwartendijk action group indicated that many residents were not happy about the housing plans in that particular region (Interview, 2). Also the support of the masterplan by the ministry, is an indicator. The masterplan integrates spatial, infrastructural and water safety tasks, including a bypass, and the ministry demonstrated support for the entire plan by granting 22 million to develop it (Interview, 2,5, VGR22). The masterplan includes the regional objective of widening the N-roads, numbers of accidents and deaths along that road are used to illustrate the need. Though having clear indicators, regional authorities feared other roads near the urban agglomeration would be prioritized (Interview, 1,3). A particular other indicator was mentioned to illustrate the different interests of actors. The indicators is that the province invested 100 million in the project, which was perceived as striking as water safety is not their primary responsibility (Interview, 2).

4.2.2 Focusing events

Focusing events are the events that drew attention to a specific problem. They could have also increased the political will to address certain related problems (Zahariadis 2014).

4.2.2.1 *Netherlands*

The most prominent focusing events are the near floods of 1993 and 1995, they were mentioned by all interviewees as the cause for developing the Room for the River programme (Interview, 1-6). The premiering of the movie an inconvenient truth also drew attention to be a focusing event. The movie and other climate change indicators possibly caused the 2nd delta commission to be established, which had impact, as the 1st delta commission was established after the 1953 flood (Interview, 3).

A not water related focusing event, relevant for the Netherlands as well as for smaller regions, is the economic recession in 2008, this is again mentioned by all interviewees (Interview, 1-6).

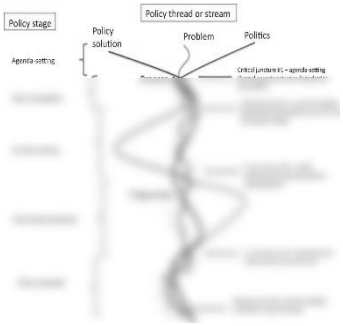
4.2.2.2 *IJsseldelta*

For the IJsseldelta region several more focusing events were identified. First the presentation of the masterplan in 2006 (Interview, 2,4). Also the delta commission Veerman with their advice to raise the water level of Lake IJssel (Interview, 1,3). The media attention for the IJsseldelta in 2008 and 2009 were also perceived as focusing events

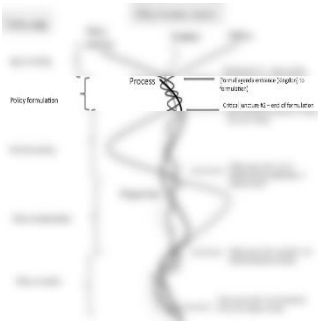
by some actors. The IJsseldelta area got attention on national (VPRO) as well as regional (RTV Oost) television (Interview, 2-4).

4.2.3 Describing the problem stream in stages

The **agenda-setting stage** is the stage where actors put forward problems that needed to be addressed. Water safety was put forward as the number one problem in need of a solution (Interview, 1-6; VGR1). The cause, also known by all actors, were the floods in 1993 and 1995, which caused the government to reconsider the water safety of the Netherlands. In doing so, they also took into consideration the effects of climate change. Besides indicators for increasing river discharges also the (storm) water of the Lake IJssel was mentioned as a problem that needed to be considered (Interview, 4).



The first juncture #1, around the end of the millennium, marks the start of the **policy formulation stage** in this stage policymakers look for *which policy solutions are most suited to the problem at hand* (Howlett et al. 2015b, p.281). In this stage focus is also on whether the previously defined problems and the initial assumptions about them are still valid (Howlett et al. 2015a). Nationally, policymakers defined the problem as water safety. This water safety definition remained (valid) and (as they looked for which policy solution would be most suitable) they added a second problem that indicated that spatial quality needed improvement. However, it became clear that with improving the spatial quality the water safety objective could not be compromised and by some actors the environmental quality was not recognized as an official objective (Interview, 1,2). The PKB stated the following: *In order to consider preconditions such as a timely realisation, the scope-budget and technical feasibility, not all measures can have spatial quality improvement* (IMRO 2006, p.12).



In this policy formulation stage the problems faced by the IJsseldelta region also came forward. Regional actors and authorities explained how, around the same time as developing the example project for the environmental bill, but also with developing the masterplan, the region was considering several developments. Several roads in the area needed to be widened, to improve safety and access (Interview, 1,4). Also the train track plans needed to be spatially planned in the environment and in answer to the housing need, the city of Kampen, the Province and other actors were developing housing plans (Interview, 3-5).

Also regarding water the regional actors knew something needed to be done in the area to increase the water safety. However, as the region became aware of the actual plans for Room for the River, they ran into the problem that their region became locked due to a large reservation for a future bypass. With this so called 'dome' over the area all of those regional developments would be halted until the national reservation would be gone, or implemented earlier, as with earlier implementation there would be an opportunity to combine it all. The 'dome' also caused the region to become less economically attractive

(Interview, 1,3). Together this forced the region to become proactive and avoid that long term reservation (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Left: The figure shows the plans for the IJsseldelta (as planned in the PKB). Moreover, the emphasis shows the area that would be reserved for a bypass in the long-term (Tweede kamer der Staten-Generaal 2005).

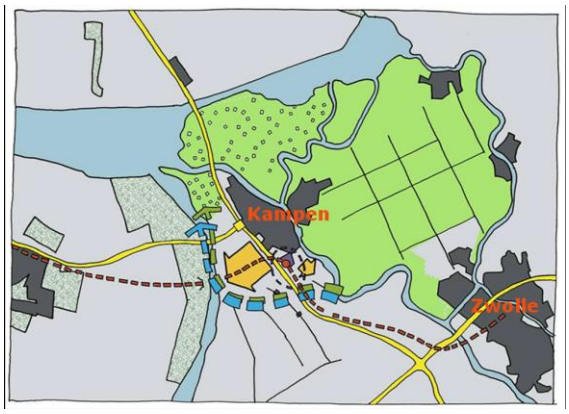
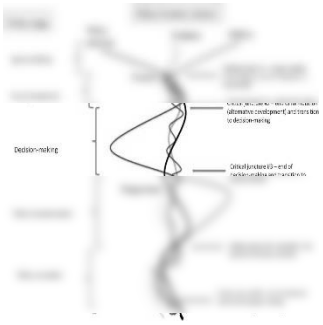


Figure 7 Right: Example project spatial planning development starting 2005. The spatial plans of the IJsseldelta region (as a result of participative process in the region) (Province Overijssel 2017).

All these problems remained and both national and regional plans were being developed next to each other. With both plans the policymakers chose for a participative process, nationally that meant among other things, that regions were asked to bring in a so called regional advice (Interview, 3,5,6). Regionally the governmental actors organized 'resident participation' from 2004 until 2006, such as meetings in the community centre (Interview, 2,5), this was not very well known from the start according to some interviewees (Interview, 2).

This process took place up until 2006 when it all resulted in a national as well as a regional plan, nationally the Room for the River programme and regionally the Masterplan. The national plan was called a *Spatial Planning Key Decision* (PKB) Room for the River, and included two objectives, to meet new water safety standards and to improve the spatial quality. To meet those objectives the programme was subdivided into more than 30 regional projects, the projects all combined had to meet the following three components set for the programme, time, scope and money (Interview, 3,6). Regarding the regional advice and the actual measures for the IJsseldelta, the PKB did not include a bypass for the IJsseldelta due to budgetary demands, which was in contrast with what the region had advised. However it was taken up in a long-term vision, which was the cause for the spatial reservation at the time. Furthermore an 'exchange measure' option was included in the PKB. With that the short term and long term measures could still be exchanged if other actors could meet the budget component, thereby avoiding a temporary lock. These results were a driver for many of the subsequent events.

The Masterplan was presented as an official document a few months before the PKB. The plan was based on the problems considered in the example project and the regional advice for the PKB. They were then integrated with the measures presented in the PKB for the IJsseldelta region, however for a different time span. These results mark another juncture #2 and the shift to the **decision making stage** in the end of 2006.



In this stage the policy solution, Room for the River, was taken for a closer examination, which resulted in policy changes and decisions over a period of 7 years, until 2013 when an official change of the original Room for the River PKB was made. In this case the problem (constructs) and policy objectives, nationally and regionally, played different roles in those changes and decisions. They either, remained the same (valid), in other ways actors ran into problems they were previously unaware of, or new problems arose in different levels and domains. Also problems with the policy solutions arose (which is really normal according to the interviewees), or problems were reframed and got a new construct.

From a national point of view the problems remained as described in the PKB. However, they did run into problems regarding their programme approach in reaching those objectives. Nationally the second objective is not operationalized, thus the problems the government runs into are based on the time, scope and money components to reach the water safety in time.

Regionally the governmental actors had to find a way to address their regional plans so their priority was to get the masterplan implemented. In a way their main problem remained the lock and their objective became to have the measures exchanged. The deadline for that exchange was set at 2009 as up until then all plans were still in writing. Rijkswaterstaat, one of the project commissioners in the IJsseldelta, was willing to help meet that deadline, however, due to other unforeseen circumstances the deadline was not met (Interview, 3,4,6). The first unforeseen problem is the Hanzelijn train track and the tracé on which it was planned. The tracé appeared to be a surprise to national as well as regional actors and it did to consider a possible bypass in the future (Interview, 3,4). The tracé could be adjusted slightly in a short period of time, and by bringing in a large sum of money. However the situation caused the width of a potential bypass to be limited at that point. The feasible width reduced the possible discharge capacity of the bypass with the result that the water safety level set for the region, could not be met with only a bypass, the scope could not be met (Interview, 3). The second unforeseen problem was the proposal by the Veerman commission to raise the water level of Lake IJssel in 2008 (Interview, 1-3). This proposal caused a discussion about the measures which then became the problem instead of a solution. The solution, the bypass measure would become obsolete as the raised water level was expected to have too much negative impact on the bypass. Though those expectations were discarded with calculations, it delayed the process, causing the regional actors and RWS to miss the exchange deadline (Interview, 2,3). The economic recession in 2008 is another external focusing event bringing in another problem. The problem was mentioned by (most) interviewees however in different contexts. One interviewee explained how the recession worsened the opportunities to meet the budgetary demands for a bypass. All these problems hindered the formulation of a plan to exchange the summer bed measure with a bypass, causing the missed 2009 deadline (Interview, 3).

However, this was, as will become clear, not a real problem for the actors in the IJsseldelta region as problems with the summer bed measure came to light (through another plan study) around that time which offered them a new opportunity. Though from a national point of view the two problems with the summer bed measure were actual problems as it caused the measures to fail to meet the scope. Both problems would be caused by deepening the summer bed over the entire planned 22 km. Firstly it would cause droughts at the Veluwe (Interview, 5) and secondly it would expose old train tracks near Zwolle which, when exposed, would cause pollution of IJssel water. That problem was only recently solved at the time and with the Room for the River measure that effort would be ruined (Interview, 3).

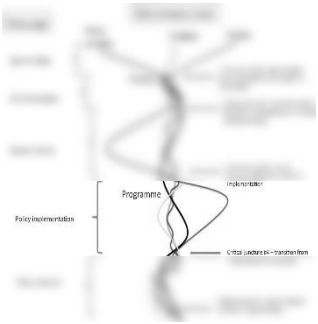
The combination of problems with the proposed measure, as well as problems with the bypass, finally lead to a combination of the two measures (necessarily) (Interview, 1,3-6). Though the combination could meet the time, scope, and money components, they could still run into problems. In 2011 the bypass was again reason for problems, as with its design at that time, polluted IJsselwater would enter into the Bordering Lakes. As the Bordering Lakes had a fragile ecosystem that had only recently been solved, it was not acceptable to have polluted IJsselwater entering those lakes. This problem caused a financial setback for the IJsseldelta project (from a Room for the River point of view), as another (engineering) structure needed to be designed to solve that (Interview, 3).

Regionally two other problems were found, firstly the national programme caused local problems in the beginning of this stage, right after the plans were presented. The problems were complaints about the plans and the chosen tracé, which, for the town south of the bypass, could be seen as NIMBY complaints (Interview, 2). The complaints were mainly against the bypass, thus the national as well as the region plan. Later in the process all these actors were more actively included in participants groups (Interview, 2,4,5). Secondly, the recession caused the PEARL and PRIMOS housing need numbers to become obsolete. That in combination with the large property investments by the municipality started to form a problem (Interview, 1,4,5). The masterplan was largely based on those housing plans and integrated all plans to make work with work. Though with plans largely dependent of each other, if one part fails other parts could fail, therefore the integration was also referred to as causing unnecessary problems itself (Interview, 5).

It was in this stage that the action group Zwartendijk, who wanted their problem addressed changed their strategy. At first they defended the 14th century Zwartendijk, however when that did not seem to work (sufficiently) they turned to someone with counter expertise, a retired engineer (of HKV), to question the initial problem and objective for the Room for the River programme, water safety. Also others with less of a strategy behind it, question the need for more room for the river, questioning climate change, or claiming that the water level rise would only be marginal. The retired engineer claimed that the policy solution would actually cause a problem and would put Kampen in a bathtub (Interview, 1,3). That problem was addressed with a public hearing in 2010 (Interview, 3,4). For Zwartendijk this strategy would have the same effect, saving their dike, however they put emphasis on another problem (Interview, 2,3).

In a way the policy programme and the measures ran into several problems they addressed and overcame. Near the end of this stage, the budget component for the bypass was still causing problems, therefore several solutions were made up, or as some said they were

forced into those solutions (Interview, 3,6). Firstly the region had split up their plans into phases, then Room for the River IJsseldelta followed that approach in order to save money on the short term by postponing expensive structures to the long term, which would be outside of Room for the River scope (Interview, 3,6). However, firstly, the solution would involve temporary measures that would still costs a lot of money and would not be able to discharge future discharges, meaning they would spend money on unnecessary measures (Interview, 3,4,6). Secondly, the region was concerned about the whether the state would see the necessity in finishing the second phase later on. While these concerns remained, at a certain point the money turned out to be made available by the ministry to combine the two phases again into one Room for the River IJsseldelta project (Interview, 3).



The preceding paragraphs showed how the bypass became a necessity for the Room for the River programme to reach the legal water safety standards and also how finally the money component is met. Thus the bypass officially becomes part of the PKB by June 2013, this moment marks the end of the decision making stage and the start of the **policy implementation stage** by a #3rd juncture.

By the time that Room for the River IJsseldelta was ready to be implemented, (parts of) the plan were appealed to and brought before the Council of State. The appeals were in the beginning of 2014 and the verdict in 2015 which was negative on several elements of which the following two. Firstly, the area planned for the bypass is the habitat of two bird species, the Karekiet and the Roerdomp. Their habitat needed better protection and therefore the bypass and the planned use of the waterway was restricted, the last few hundred meter could not be passed through and not used for recreational use, thus the bypass could not become a new access route. Secondly the grounds, numbers, for the housing plans described in the same document were ruled to be insufficient to indicate a housing need (Interview, 1-5).

The responses to these problems as a results of the Council of State verdict, are other examples of how actors change their strategy in the policy process. Proponents for full use of the waterway then described the old navigational route to Kampen via the North, as a dangerous route (to show the need for a new route) (Interview, 4,5). Others actors, who were opponents of a bypass and against housing could make use of this verdict regarding the birds, and change their strategy in order to reach their objective. These changing strategies again showed how the integration of plans was found to be problematic. How that was problematic could be seen in the how opponents of the bypass started to fight for the habitat of the birds, to have that result in no bypass and no complete access of the waterway, which could then mean no housing project, therefore protection of the environment, finally reaching their objective (Interview, 4,5). Or as they say themselves they broadened their scope, which was possible due to integration of plans (Interview, 2,5).

At the time of conducting the interviews the constructions were started, however the above mentioned problems following from the Council of State procedure were still under discussion.

Overall actors of all different levels and different domains recognize and mentioned the difference in their role in the process. Just as described in the introduction, all actors

recognize the different responsibilities they and others officially have, and therefore how all have diverging ideas about problems and emphasize different project objectives. For example the municipality on the liveability of the environment and the province more on nature and ecological development of the environment (Interview, 1-6).

4.3 Policy solutions stream in stages

In this sub chapter the policy solutions that were found in this process will be described. Within that a particular emphasis is put on those solution that played a decisive role in influencing the problems and objectives. Some overlap with the problem stream is inevitable, however the focus here is on the role of policy solution, thus overlap serves that purpose.

In the **agenda setting stage** old policy ideas found their way to the agenda. The idea was already there, however in combination with problems and politics now was the time that the idea was going to be examined whether it could be viable (Interview, 2,3). In line with the theory, without a possible solution (and political interest) there would be no agenda setting. As seen in previous sections it did happen therefore now some relevant policy issues follow.

In the **policy formulation stage** a vision resulted in a PKB, that result was already seen in the problem stream, however how did the spatial quality[6] objective get in the PKB? The choice for the objectives was mainly addressed by more national actors. Reasons for the spatial quality objective were several, for example the fact that the projects would have great impact on those living in the regions, *who have to give their land to the water*, developing their environment is a way of giving something back (Interview, 6). Also, 'while we're there' was mentioned as a good moment to develop spatial quality, since regions already have plans for that, the responsibility over the task is given to them. Hence, the objective also creates a support of the region towards the programme (Interview, 3,4). Furthermore, *if you would look at the riverine areas from a technical point of view, there would be around 600 measures for river widening* thus asking regional input and improving spatial quality can narrow down the policy options (Interview, Q3,4). So that is the origin of the second objective, however that was not recognized by all other more regional actors, they say developing spatial quality is their own responsibility (Interview, 1,2).

Overall all actors understand that approach, at least the different responsibilities and therefore the differences in where actors put emphasis in the project (Interview, 1-6). For example after elaborating on all different objectives of the different plans, *yes, and every objective has its own partner, because, well we don't do anything with water safety, RWS is there for the main structures, the water board for the dikes […] And the province focuses strongly on nature development […].* Resulting in a joint effort project (Interview 5). Or others who explain and acknowledge in a similar way the different interests (Interview, 4).

The time, scope, money components are more process (other stream) related aspects, though it was the cause for excluding the bypass in the PKB. The reason was the money

[6] Spatial quality. All interviewees have referred to the environment. They have used, environment, spatial planning and spatial quality. Linked to those terms improving and developing was used. In this chapter finally spatial quality (development) was chosen to address any issues related to the second objective or as part of the regional plans and what they wanted to develop.

component, therefore the policy makers made use of a policy instrument, and included the 'exchange measure' (Interview, 3-5). Figure 8 shows the measures for the IJsseldelta.

Figure 8 Left: Deepening of the summer bed of the river (originally over a length of 22 km). Right: A high-water channel (originally for the long-term and later on the bypass) (Rijkswaterstaat 2011).

However a policy solution for one actor is a problem for another policy solution, in this case the regional plans. Therefore because of the lock the regional authorities created the masterplan (Interview, 1,2,4). With which some emphasize that is was an opportunity to have the state committed to the region.

In the **decision making stage** the Room for the River programme is under close examination and undergoes several changes. These changes are in answer to arising problems or in answer to required changes by regional actors. Also some attempts are made to change the solution, by questioning the problem with counter expertise or developing alternative solutions, like with 'een dijk te ver', both by Zwartendijk.

Many problems arose due to the train track that was almost under construction, or because of procedural reasons and policy components. Also they found out more about the regions physical environment in the plan study phases of the masterplan and the Room for the River project. That these problems arose is perceived as a normal aspect of policy making (Interview, 3) especially when integrating multiple plans and interests (Interview, 5), yet they did need a policy response. Therefore, the policies were changed. The masterplan changed the tracé they had originally presented in 2006 and the PKB faced a more fundamental change. Due to the problems with the measure and that the scope could not be met anymore. Since the regional actors had kept integrating their plans with a bypass, they could use that opportunity to draw attention to the bypass solution (Interview, 2-4). Thus *the regional actors said; yes, we still have this plan? Remember? 'IJsseldelta Zuid' (Interview 3)*. Showing how they payed attention and rose to the occasion. Thus this resulted in adding a bypass measure to the PKB in 2013 (SNIP3). Furthermore the PKB policy was changed in that the water safety standards for the IJsseldelta would be reached in 2019 instead of 2015.

From this point on, the area knows the Room for the River project, which included both measures and not an exchanged measure.

The start of the **policy implementation stage** is marked by that SNIP3 decision. Regarding Room for the River, no major changes in the policy happened anymore. Though due to an earlier bypass, the regional masterplan and housing plans did change. Which was mentioned as another example where the region and the national plans helped each other. The bypass would cause seepage, at least north of the bypass, therefore the housing plans were adjusted to 'living near water', creating a unique living environment as well as solving the seepage 'problem' (Interview, 5, (4-with project visit)). Though again due to the recession the number of houses in this plan was only a fraction of the original housing plans in 2006.

Furthermore, in this stage of 2 years, the verdict of the Council of State came out, for which new policy solution were being developed at the time of interviewing. These solutions mainly had to solve the bird habitat threat and better show the need for housing (Interview, 1-5). This in turn shows how new problems can arise for which the policy stages need to be revisited.

4.4 Politics stream in stages

Overall in the political domain the official responsibility of actors explain role they have, it explains how different actor pursue different goals. In this sub section the political aspects of the process are described.

The political situation before the problem got on the agenda, so the **agenda setting stage**, was not addressed by many interviewees, though once it was mentioned that the national political situation was such that there was enough support for deciding that leaving water safety at status quo was not an option (Interview, 3).

In the **policy formulation stage** the local political mood at the time is reflected by being willing and trusting the government to protect them from wet feet (Interview, 1).

Because of the different responsibilities of actors, the province (could) create goodwill with the policy makers and with Rijkswaterstaat, who is official execution body of the national policy. The goodwill towards the province is a result of the provinces' stance towards Room for the River. They were aware of state's responsibility to water safety, and with that in mind created plans to integrate their regional plans with those national plans. Regardless or because of the red flag, the reservation, they showed their appreciation for the decentralization approach. With the region investing money, time and taking risks they created the goodwill with the national actors (Interview, 1-5). That was more an overall interpretation of this stage, more specifically individual actors played a crucial role. In 2003, a deputy of the Province Overijssel, called Rietkerk, played a crucial role in initiating plans to develop the IJsseldelta region, to develop a vision (structuur visie) which included the housing vision, with this he activated the regional actor and the local residents (Interview, 4,5). Later on in the **decision making stage,** Rietkerk's role remained prominent**.** With his position in pushing the processes he created goodwill with local farmers. That goodwill with local farmers was a result of how the province, starting around 2007, already acquired their properties for future developments. This steered farmers clear of years of uncertainty about their future (Interview, 3,4). The ground positions were taken to meet the housing plans as well as the bypass plans. Finally almost all properties were sold voluntarily, because of that approach. This is also how Rietkerk played a crucial role in creating the goodwill of the state by being willing to take those risks (Interview, 3,4).

The goodwill created with the state can be explained by the fact that the state was (is) dependent of regional actors to acquire the lands. Due to Rietkerks role is that he had a good bargaining position towards the state later on in the process. Also because of his history of working in The Hague, in the parliament, he could easily get in contact with the right person at the right place. This was also recognized by RWS with whom the province was cooperating in the IJsseldelta project, they recognized it as 'playing the game right' (Interview, 3,4). The municipality plays a lesser role in this, however they are autonomous and all plans have to be taken up in the development plans, which they create, this gives them some sort of position to have influence on other actors (Interview, 1,5).

A year after the province started to acquire the properties, the action group Zwartendijk is successful with a (signature) petition, as a result Rietkerk assigns the Zwartendijk to be a respect zone in 2008 (Interview, 2,4). Later in 2008, the recession is 'used' to back up their argument, they say the recession is a warning that one cannot look into the future, therefore should not take these investment risks (Interview, 1). In 2009 the state granted the integrated development plan, the masterplan, 22 million, showing its support for the bypass as well as environmental developments (Interview, 2,5; VGR22).

RWS had the main responsibility to meet the scope, when the measures had shown to become problematic RWS (and the province) bought time by applying the phased approach. Although they know it is not the best solution, RWS does apply that, until something better comes along. As it also did in this case (Interview, 3). Finally in 2009 a project team is set up, which was a combination of RWS and the province.

Another political event is the establishment of the 2010 'tolerance coalition'. This coalition started to question the climate change and the expenses done to reduce its negative effects. Additionally minister Bleker at the time dismantled the entire nature policy, where nature ended up being part of the ministry of economic affairs. As nature played a critical role in the Room for the River programme, these changes caused some threats to the policy. RWS played an important role in framing the programme in such a way to avoid political questions or money withdrawals (Interview, 3). Showing the role of using strategies and playing the game well.

In 2012, all of a sudden money became available, this changed the money component of Room for the River, solving some planning issues. The money was politically made available from another source and came as a surprise to RWS (Interview, 3; VGR). This money investment was thought to be influenced by other (country) governments, showing how infrastructure investments were a good way to climb out of the recession (Interview, 3).

Some actors also caused media attention, negative as well as positive. A national television programme like Landroof (stealing land) raised attention to concerns of certain local actors (Interview, 2,3) resulting in national political actors to come and have a look in the area thereby becoming more involved. Though seemingly irrelevant, RWS played a role in dealing with those negative media attentions. They got the deputy to be willing to take the hit for negative attention, this to avoid the (still neutral) position of state policy to have a negative name, before they could have taken formal position in the case. The situation again shows the 'good' position of deputy Rietkerk (Interview, 3). Even though Boerman (previously alderman in Kampen) became deputy taking over Rietkerks portfolio, Rietkerk remained responsible for the IJsseldelta project (Interview, 4).

Then in the **policy implementation stage**, as a result of the early property acquisitions, the province could already start with nature compensation, in this case reed (Interview, 4). Nature compensation is mandatory with projects of this size before starting constructions. This again showed how taking risks payed off later on, in speeding up the process.

4.5 Process stream in stages

The process stream is added after the agenda setting stage and it is there *in order to support discovery of which policy solutions are most suited to addressing the problem at hand* (Howlett 2015). Those discoveries are supported by laws, procedures and regulations. The stream also facilitates stakeholder engagement (Howlett 2015b). In this section the existing laws as well as the designed policy procedures will be described as found in this policy process[7]. The first will help to understand the choices for the design of the Room for the River programme as well as how certain other choices nationally and locally were bound by existing laws and regulations. The second the designed policy procedures then also play a role in how the IJsseldelta project developed over time.

In the **policy formulation stage** a large number of these laws and procedures were found to play a role, they are concisely described here. The Room for the River policy makers determined that the programme would be a PKB. The PKB was a procedure for developing policy programmes for extensive spatial plans and was part of the law for spatial planning. These programmes were designed with a time span of 10 years (Interview, 3,6, WRo). In this case that PKB also runs under state coordination which reduces the number of court procedures. Since with state coordination actors who want to appeal need to go to the Council of State directly which is expensive (Interview, 1-6). The programme was designed with 3 components, time, scope, money, within which the policy making branch (DGRW) of the ministry of I&M then further developed the programme (Interview, 6). The time component is thus determined by the use of a 'extensive project' procedure, the money component is determined by how much money could be reserved by- and was made available by the cabinet, for a the programme (Interview, 3,6). Thus, with the specified budget a certain water safety needed to be met by 2015. Until the finalization of the programme the ministry had, and still has, to present progression reports to the parliament every 6 months (Interview, 6). In order to run the programme several more institutions were established. The programme directors Room for the River (PDR) was set up to keep track of meeting the all-over water safety scope and judging whether individual projects would meet that scope (Interview, 3,6). To justify those decisions as well as the overall scope, Deltares, '*the undisputed institution to examine that*', is consulted to account for transparency and independency (Interview, 3). Then regarding spatial quality development, even though it is a regional responsibility and not operationalized in the PKB, here again a Room for the River programme institution was established. The so called Q-team judged the spatial quality developments, yet since the Q-team did not need to consider water safety, those measures were again judged by the PDR (Interview, 3).

Of the two involved ministry of I&M branches, it was the DGRW that developed the policy programme and RWS to implement it. After the policy formulation stage, the DGRW is therefore less visible, only when changes are made in time scope money, they come forward. These changes happened in this case as '*it was mainly the regional actors that wanted to move up the plans*', therefore adjusting the components (Interview, 2,3 Q6). For example the postponing of the water safety deadline (Interview, 6). Then the role of RWS is to implement the programme. RWS, more specifically the river branch manager,

[7] Adding the designed policy procedures was done due to its close relation with the governmental rules and procedures. And more so, because they already started to play a role in the policy-formulation-stage and decision-making-stage, and not only enter the policy process in the policy-formulation stage. The policy-formulation stage is where policy related designed procedures were originally assigned by Howlett et al 2015, with adding the programme stream.

was a key actor in linking national actors with the regional actors. With the regional actors they also partly facilitated participation (Interview, 3). The policymaker were aware of the regional intrusion the projects would cause. Partly because of that they developed the spatial quality objective, and included a regional advice. They also put an overall emphasis on participation which is related to the decentralization aim (Interview, 3,6). Furthermore regarding participation national actors point to the option for all actors to bring in ideas for possible measures and if all participation fails they can still go to the Council of State (Interview, 3,6). Though RWS played a key role in linking actors in this case, also other actors had short lines that easily connected the different levels and actors.

All of these procedural aspects were from either the Dutch administration or established with the Room for the River programme. What will follow now are procedural aspects of the IJsseldelta, so the regional administrative aspects or other recently established procedures. With these regional aspects coming in, the interaction of the national and regional level become visible.

Regionally the environmental bill in 2004 is cause for developing an example project. Around the same time, the regional actors see the need for developing the masterplan, based on that example project. That is where a national policy later on interacts with Room for the River. The interaction is seen in how the regional advice of the IJsseldelta region for the Room for the River programme is based on their aim for integrating it with the example project. The regional authorities wanted *a robust solution, meaning, not just nearly getting the scope*, they want to make work with work 'now' (Interview, 4). Although the regional advice is not entirely granted in the PKB, the province does get a leading role in the project, together with RWS (Interview, 3,4). Also where the advice is not entirely granted, procedures were in place, within the PKB, which gave the possibility to exchange measures, an official SNIP3 procedure was in place for that. This is a possibility until 2009 as up until then all plans are still in writing (Interview, 3,4,6). With developing the masterplan, the regional authorities were responsible for participation, they accounted for that by establishing a sounding board around 2005. Regional authorities also decided to have water as a leading principle, however all regional actors could have a say and influence on the tracé of the developments (Interview, 4). Furthermore, municipalities have autonomy in spatial planning, and over the development plans, which they have to confirm, which gives them a strong position (Interview, 1,5). The province has official responsibility to develop the spatial quality (Interview, 4).

The first thing in the next stage, the **decision making stage,** was a no-regret measure. Since all involved actors knew a bypass would be needed at some point in the future, money was quickly collected to put the train track and N50 on poles, illustrating how procedures can also be speedy (Interview, 3,4). Another event early in this stage is the minor adjustments of the tracé for the masterplan. Due to some discussion about the possibility of participation some room was left to grant some adjustments, however at a certain point adjustments would lead to new procedures and delays of quickly 1,5 years, which was reason to stop granting more adjustments (Interview, 2,4).

The time, scope, and money components played a crucial role in this stage to examine the policy solution. Firstly they are the driver for how RWS with regional authorities worked towards the exchange of measures and they are partly the reason for not meeting that deadline in 2009 (Interview, 3,4,6).

The scope remained. Then around 2010 a plan study was conducted as part of procedures before the masterplan could be implemented. That plan study also considered the summer bed measure and that was where it turned out that the measure was not sufficient.

In order to still meet the legal standards, RWS, not a regional actor, now also became dependent of other measures and possibilities. This resulted in plans and objectives to merge, so together all actors combined the summer bed measure with a dressed down version of the bypass. Although later on, that dressed down version changed to a fully functioning bypass when the money became available (Interview, 3,4). With this new approach, however, the water safety deadline had to be postponed, which was done by DGRW. Thus the time component was actually changed (Interview, 3,6). Besides a component change, also the content of the PKB changed, with at the end of this stage SNIP3 decision. Making the bypass part of the IJsseldelta Room for the River, described by almost all interviewees as a team effort (Interview, 3-6).

Some other procedures and rules played a role in this stage. Firstly there was a public hearing in 2010 (Interview, 2,3). Secondly, when the plans had become official, a few expropriation procedures had to take place for the last properties (Interview, 4) and thirdly, near the end of the stage, in 2012, a new law was implemented which included the so called housing ladder. This ladder played a large role in the possibility to integrate all regional tasks, with the water safety measures (Interview, 3-5).

The start of the **policy implementation stage** is characterized by m.e.r. procedures, ecological research, and research on rare and vulnerable animals, which are all studies that are mandatory before the actual implementation of a project (Interview, 4). Also before implementation all plans were reflected in development plans. Development plans are the responsibility of the municipality and there these plans have a certain period of time to be inspected (Interview, 1,4,5). These periods and procedures as well as the options to go to court could slow down the process, which also did happen (Interview, 4,5).

Two years into this stage, in 2015, a court procedure at the Council of State took place, which resulted in a negative verdict for a fully usable water way due to the bird habitat disruption (Interview, 3-5). Also the housing plans get a negative verdict due to lack in addressing the housing ladder, that is, the need for housing (Interview, 5). The response is to adjust and create new plans and if those will[8] not be accepted the municipality will be in great debt due to large property investments in earlier stages (Interview, 1,5). Also for e.g. the province, there is interest in creating new development plans as they have an interest in a fully usable water way.

Construction of the bypass started in 2015, thus regional actors seem to have solved their locked area problem, though still remain to fight for (some of) their interests. Furthermore, national policymakers say: *...not everything went conform the PKB planning, as originally water safety was planned for 2015. Considering all, this is not too bad a delay* (Interview 6).

[8] At the time of the interviews the new development plans are still under development.

4.6 Programme stream

The programme stream was described by Howlett et al. (2015b) as the last stream to be added to the process and it would enter when the **policy implementation stage** takes off. In the programme stream the preceding decisions were supposed to be calibrated and integrated with the existing policies and programmes in order to put it to practice.

However, in this case, those programme characteristics were identified, though not only in the policy implementation stage, but already earlier. Moreover, they were so closely linked to the governmental procedures and regulations of the process stream, that they were not (easily) identified independently. More on these findings will be discussed in the theoretical framework section of the discussion chapter (5.2).

4.7 Summarizing findings in timeline

The timeline in Figure 9 gives an overview of the most important events and decisions in the entire policy process which were addressed in the preceding sections.

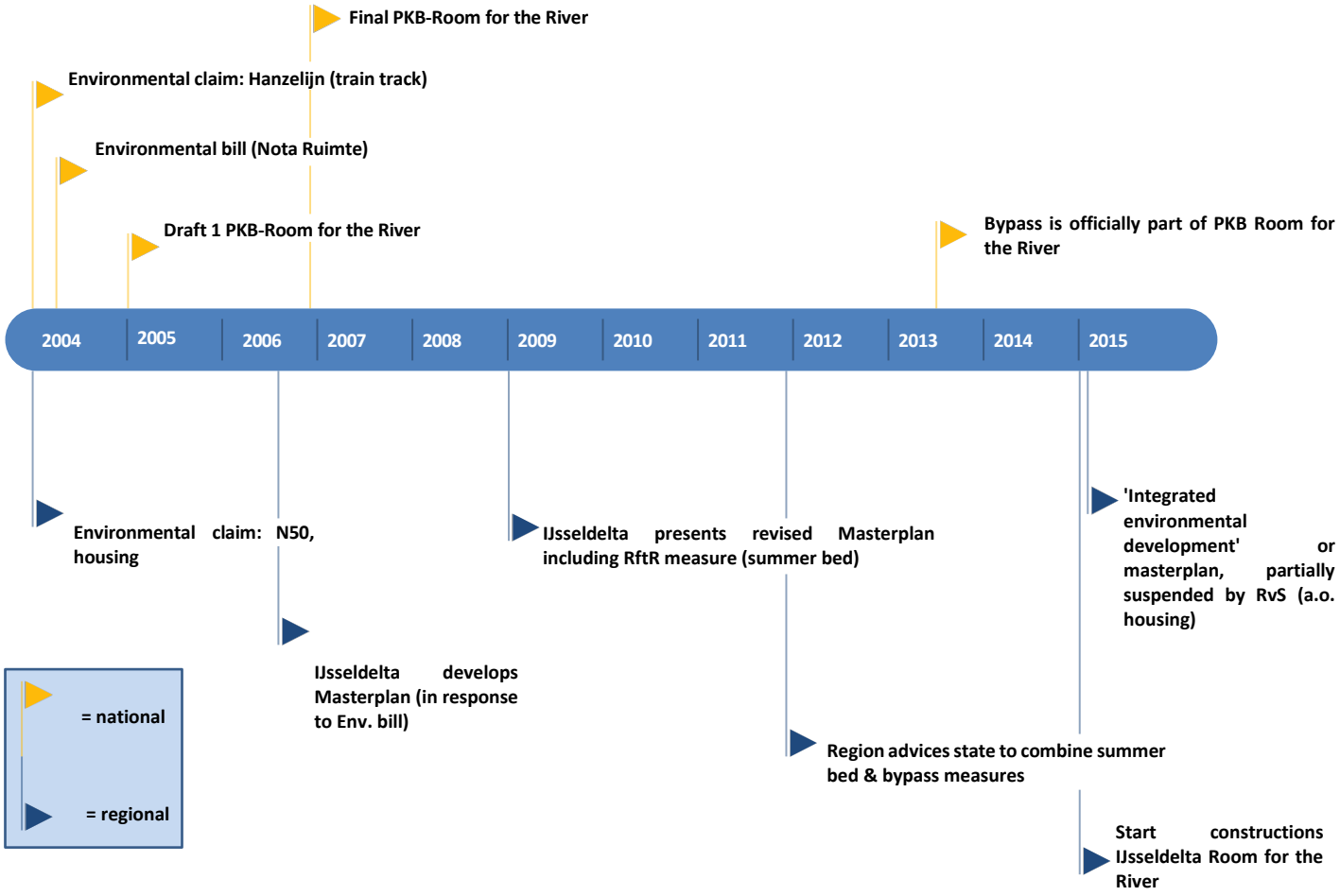


Figure 9 Timeline for the national and regional events regarding the IJsseldelta region (own work)

5 Discussion and conclusion

This research was conducted to learn about the policy implementation process of the Room for the River programme in the IJsseldelta region. And to find out whether, and if so, which role, policy challenges played in this case. The challenges were identified beforehand based on literature and on the characteristics of the policy. These were, firstly the challenge of having a double objective within a policy, secondly the decentralized implementation, and how the first two combined bring in multiple levels of governing bodies as well as multiple actors with different backgrounds and aims. Thirdly, the region where the policy was planned to be implemented also knew its own, other development plans and policies. (How) did these challenges play a role in the IJsseldelta. The challenges could be found in the problem stream of the theoretical framework, however the entire process was analysed, in this way the influence of the other streams on the problem stream, and vice versa, could also be identified. In this chapter first the research questions will be answered, followed by a section in which the theoretical framework as well as the methodology are discussed. Then a small section on the validity follows and the chapter is closed with recommendations.

5.1 Answering research questions

In this section the research questions will be answered. The answers are based on the interviews and how those were presented in the findings chapter. The answers will also be connected to a broader context by referring to other relevant (related) scientific literature.

5.1.1 What are the Room for the River objectives?

In this section first the Room for the River objectives as they were found are described. Then the possible rationale behind them is questioned and lastly the Room for the Rivier is described as a (window of) opportunity for regional actors.

Room for the River had near floods in the Netherlands as a focusing event. The aim to solve that problem lead to the objective of improving water safety in the Netherlands, however, when developing the policy another objective was added, that of improving the spatial quality. Nationally this was included to 'give something back', to create support and to address other issues 'while we're there'. The water safety objective is solving the water safety problem, which is also the responsibility of the government, who therefore need to solve this problem according to legal standards. Room for the River is finally presented as having a double objective, where the spatial quality objective is the other. However, water safety cannot be compromised, so spatial quality ended up being secondary.

Adding the spatial quality objective, is in contrast with what Hisschemoller & Hoppe write about governmental policymakers, who, as they say, *prefer to define problems as structured* as *doing so minimized their uncertainty, limits the need for search activities, and constricts the range of possible solutions to existing repertoire* (Hisschemöller & Hoppe 1995, p.45). That is not the case for this objective. However the determining components, time, scope and money, are in line with that argument. Overall, the fact that the governmental policy makers' approach seems partly in contrast with what Hisschemoller & Hoppe say, could be explained with the fact that Room for the River was a policy innovation, which aimed to contribute to the paradigm shift (Duijn 2009, p.131). More specifically, according to Duijn (2009), when shifting to the new paradigm, governments no longer structure the problem as such.

Furthermore, the development of this programme can be seen as a window for the actors of the IJsseldelta region. Mainly those actors who wanted to have certain issues addressed, this was a time to more easily find a way to the (national) agenda. However that is not in line with how Kingdon, and later Howlett et al. (2015b), have conceptualized a 'window of opportunity', as they say windows are quickly opened and closed, windows are fleeting moments. Therefore this seems to be a mismatch with the original theory, a problem which Stout and Stevens also ran in to (Stout & Stevens 2000, p.352).

5.1.2 What are problems faced by the IJsseldelta region? And what objectives for development do they have?

One conclusive answer to this questions is not possible that will be explained in this section at first. Then the objectives that were actually addressed by region are described and how they were a result of reframing a Room for the River solution. Then also the roles of different regional actors are described with the entrepreneurial actors concepts.

Problems in the region vary, that is found after interviewing and reading the perspectives of different actors. More specifically, the different actors have different problem definitions due to their different governmental positions and their official responsibilities. Those positions and responsibilities can further be linked to different domains, more environmental or public domain. Notably regional actors are not necessarily (officially) linked to the water domain. These different domains play a crucial role however that will be addressed in the next research question, yet it is mentioned here already as it explains why no concise answer can be provided on the problems the region faces. However, the regional actors that have signed the Masterplan can be taken together to formulate the collective problem. As multiple regional tasks were combined in the Masterplan.

The Masterplan plan aimed to address multiple regional tasks and formulated different objectives. The regional authorities originally wanted to integrate regional tasks, like the train track, widening roads, housing etc. During that time they learned about the long term plans for the bypass and the temporal lock it would cause, since that would halt those other developments they broadened their aim, and the Masterplan also got the objective to overcome the temporal lock, by already including the bypass. In other words, the fact that the budget component of the PKB cannot be met by 2006, caused a lock and forms a problem for the IJsseldelta regional developments. Which is an example of how *often the problem is reframed as the symptoms of undesirable circumstances rather than the causes* (Howlett et al. 2015a, p.423).

The *undesirable circumstances* are the basis for the regional actors to lobby their masterplan, the problem creates urgency and activates the regional authorities. Then these regional authorities can be called policy entrepreneurs, in the sense that they look for an opportunity to get their plans accepted, that is, they lobby for a bypass on the short term. However that does not say they do not indirectly want water safety as well. Also it is not necessarily a bad thing, as they lobby for those tasks that they are responsible for, which legitimizes their role. In this entrepreneurial role, as described in the theory, the success of these actors is dependent on their access to the policy makers. In this case, the role of deputy Rietkerk, played a crucial and successful role because of his access to the policymakers and the government.

The action group Zwartendijk also addresses problems yet can be seen more as a problem broker, in their approach to oppose the bypass, and other regional plans for example the

housing. They can be seen as a problem broker as they changed their strategy in order to point to problems. Those problems in turn could stop any spatial developments in the (Zwartendijk) region they aimed to preserve. Though on a side note they did develop an alternative to regional development, which is a characteristic of a policy entrepreneur, but moreover they have pointed out problems resulting from all other policy solutions. Again, this is also their role and therefore their objective.

So far, these first two questions seemed relevant considering the challenges described in the introduction. Also, the answers show how that competing constructs of a problem are co-existing (Howlett et al. 2015b). Moreover Hisschemoller & Hoppe (1995) address the importance of problem construction. As *the actual construction of a policy problem already points to its (perceived) solution* (Hisschemöller & Hoppe 1995, p.45). Thus those who have the power to get issues onto the agenda, have the power to choose which problems will be solved. When putting the answers of the first two questions into that perspective, the answers to the coming questions can already be anticipated upon. However, it may also contradict Hisschemoller & Hoppe (1995). Answering the next research questions will shed more light on how this played out.

5.1.3 How did these problems and objectives of different levels relate to each other?

In this section the interactions among the different levels are explained. An overall impression of interactions and how it affected the development of plans is followed by a more specific description of how different actors perceive their relation with other actors.

To start an overarching note. The water safety objective of the PKB set the standard for any other developments. So it is the national level, the government's objectives, that sets the stage for any other development in the IJsseldelta region.

The findings show participation instruments and the use of a regional advice, this indicates that national actors interact with regional actors. Also the regional plans which included Room for the River measures in the Masterplan indicates that interaction. However until 2011, the objectives of those separate plans, nationally and regionally, seemed to play a leading and decisive role within the plans. Up until then the governing levels seemed to acknowledge each other though remain to develop their own plans. Only when by 2011 the objectives converged the interactions of levels became visible in their plans. The objectives converged because nationally a bypass became necessary to legally meet the water safety standards. All the time before 2011, the IJsseldelta was already lobbying for that integration to happen. Because of that 'highly motivated' role, plans were quickly worked out so that all objectives could be met. In a way the state had become dependent of that proactive stance of the regional actors.

The actors involved in this process articulated different opinions on that integration of objectives and levels. The province explained that the state intervention was really needed in order to create a sense of urgency, without it the region would not have move forward. Though they also appreciated the decentralization approach. The municipality mainly explained the process and their role up until the converging of plans. Up until then they needed to pay attention in order to get the plans integrated. Paying attention is another characteristic of a successful enterprising actor (Howlett et al. 2015b; Zahariadis 2014).

Also more local actors recognized how regional authorities wanted to pay attention to get the state committed to the region, taking this opportunity. National actors, describe the interaction of different levels and the different objectives as playing a game. Which is possible for actors not personally involved but for those personally affected by the projects impossible to see the project process as a game.

Another result from the interviews sheds light on how actors perceive other (level) actors. Opponents of the bypass measure, described the project as a state plan that was forced upon the region. Another opponent described that regional authorities saw a possibility to get their plans on the national agenda. A proponent said the final measures is really a team effort. These different views show how there seems to be no consensus on cause for objectives. Creating more consensus between those actors involved can be realized by *a more open, inclusive approach of both agenda-setting and policy analysis* according to Van Buuren (2016), however that requires actors to collaboratively give meaning to what they see as their joint challenge, the objectives in this case (Van Buuren et al. 2016, p.84).

5.1.4 How did these problems and objectives of the water domain and the spatial planning domain relate to each other?

The way that the different domains relate is a result of the different official responsibilities each actor has. So how the domains interact is reflected in how the actors relate to each other and what they aim to develop. Therefore this answers is closely related to the previous questions, however the answer here will be explained in more detail in the relation of the two hegemonies. So what will follow further is firstly addressing the role of the water domain and secondly the link between actors' official responsibilities and domains and lastly how that played out for the IJsseldelta.

The state responsibility for water safety resulted in the PKB and in components that became leading. In a way those components can be seen as the boundaries for any other developments, thus they were sort of the garbage can wherein any other plans could be developed (Robinson & Eller 2010; Stout & Stevens 2000). Also the (problem) indicators for the Netherlands overall did not shows any spatial quality indicators, thus show also how spatial quality development is a regional responsibility. The garbage can idea is part of the Kingdonian vocabulary and is recognized here in a way.

Interestingly, regional actors, responsible for the environment of the IJsseldelta, did take the IJssel arm, thus water as the leading principle. Therefore, it is the regional advice in the first instance, which links the water safety objective with the environmental quality.

From around 2011 actors, responsible for different domains, all wanted the same measures in the region. All for different reasons, because of legal reasons (Ministry and RWS) or because of their regional development plans (province) or in order to get their housing plans through (municipality). After that is was explained as a joint effort and the national programme is not perceived as a bad thing. Interviewee 1: 'it was a team effort of [3] authorities, where the state had to bring in a little more money'. Interviewee 5 says the same, as he mentions how everyone acknowledges the different responsibilities and interests and that those are closely linked with the different domains.

From the state's point of view this (double objective) approach was to 'sell' the water safety measures. This lead to heavily integrating all plans, causing a shift to what Van Buuren explains to be a secondary focus (moving away from the water safety focus) (Van Buuren et al. 2016). Though that statement seems surprising as 1) it was an objective to develop

the spatial quality and 2) also this case shows that to meet the legal standards RWS became dependent of those plans that were already developed and integrated. More generally, the state's relation with the province was crucial both ways. So the domains 'helped' each other. In a way the double objective and different domains helped to frame the programme and project politically. The domains added framing possibilities and helped to manoeuvre the programme through the government whenever another approach was necessary.

The issues that are addressed with the answers to the last two questions (5.1.3 and 5.1.4) of how levels and domains relate have has also been addressed by Wiering & Immink (2006) in 'when water management meets spatial planning'. They explained the relation of domains as follows. The water domain mainly showed changes in the discourse, the 'rules of the game', however less in the institutions. The spatial planning domain shows less change. So their case illustrates what they describe as 'vagueness' of the concept 'space for the river'. As with that 'vague' concept the different actors involved interpret that new discourse in different ways (Wiering & Immink 2006, p.435). This IJsseldelta case showed that actors have different responsibilities which shaped their role and shaped which objectives they formulated. The room to shape their own role can thus be explained with on the one hand their official responsibility yet on the other hand, the fact that there is also 'too much' room to interpret the space for the river concept.

That is what played itself out within the boundaries of the PKB and those *safety norms and related policy measures in river basins of the hegemonic water agencies are not easily and openly discussed* (Wiering & Arts 2006, p.337).

5.1.5 How did the IJsseldelta regional development objectives interact with the Room for the River objectives, beginning in 2000 until 2016?

In the section the preceding questions and answer are brought together. To do that the river metaphor can again be considered but in another way. As explained in 5.1.2 regional problems were collectively addressed in the Masterplan. When the national actors and the regional actors are both considered as a water stream, they seem to have similar water sources, though streamed independently until around 2011. In a way, up until that moment, the interaction and participation is in line with the documents, what they 'ought' to do, though in practice, plans are developed parallel, to meet either national objectives or regional objectives.

The challenges that were explained in the introduction were indirectly addressed with the previous questions. More specifically, firstly in this case there seems to be no hegemonic fight over the water and spatial planning domains. That absence of a fight can be ascribed to the fact that spatial planning cannot compromise the water safety. Secondly, those answers show that decentralization has taken place, although still a hierarchical process is prominent. Most decentralization is found when national actors need the regional plans. And thirdly, in this case the fact that regionally already other policies were implemented played a crucial role in the entire process. To conclude the parallel policy issue, in this case the plans are combined and the masterplan tracé is still the existing tracé. Without water urgency it was difficult for the region to legitimize their plans. Depending on which point of view is taken, from which actor, something can be said about whether the challenges helped or slowed down the process.

In the introduction also the problem structuring by Hisschemoller and Hoppe (1995) was described. That seemed problematic in this case due to the different structuring for each objective, also 5.1.1 addresses that. In hindsight, the overall IJsseldelta project as part of Room for the River seems to be a wicked problem as the case showed that, *to address the whole problem is more than to address each of its parts. One cannot be sure what disciplines and specialisms are to be invoked for problem solving* (Hisschemöller & Hoppe 1995, p.43). In that way it is best to combine all problems, though that again was called problematic in this case, since then, if one part of the entire plan fails, all parts fail. That may be the dilemma for integrating plans or trying to address them one by one. Addressing *the whole problem* worked out it this case, despite that it may have been coincidental, or taken longer than needed. Coincidental, seeing that the process raises a question about what would have happened if the summer bed measures were simply enough to meet the scope (Hisschemöller & Hoppe 1995).

Though the challenges have not shown to play a problematic role, the way the process played out still *show that the attempt to relate previously independent practices to one another has* still not succeeded (Van Den Brink & Meijerink 2006, p.18).

To conclude, many favourable and integrated scenarios are envisaged and many scholars described challenges that will be playing a role. The most prominent challenge as seen in this research, is that despite promising future scenarios, the tension between the special responsibility for water safety of the government and spatial development and other interests, still remains (Wiering & Immink 2006, p.436).

5.2 Discussion of the research

Originally, I formulated another focus in the research proposal, however, when conducting the research it pointed me more towards a different direction. That is the balance between the different objectives and what was aimed for nationally and how that interacted with regional objectives, and the other way around. More specifically the role of different challenges with this type of innovative policy could be studied. That angle showed to be more relevant then merely elaborating on the problem constructs in the process. This meant that the topic remained the same, though the angle changed. In this section the theoretical framework as well as the methodology are discussed.

5.2.1 Theoretical framework

In this sub section the theoretical framework will be discussed. First the framework will be discussed in general. About the applicability as presented by Howlett et al. as well as the more specific concepts added for this research. Second a section follows in which the use of the independent streams is discussed and as a third the different stages are discussed.

5.2.1.1 General discussion

The theoretical framework as it is presented in chapter 3 will be discussed here. First the independence of streams in described, which is followed by an elaboration on a few claims Howlett et al. did and ended with discussing the added value of the additional concepts.

In the research it was found that the conceptualization was detailed though still presented challenges in identifying independent streams. The attempts that were made are therefore unique, as some interpretations were done in order to describe the streams. However a more detailed conceptualization would make it more difficult for the theory to fit a certain case, thus it would help to compare the application with other research. Moreover, though that may not have been the original aim, it is impossible to really separate the streams and have 5 unique narratives. This idea was also already addressed by Howlett et al. in their suggestion to change coupling of streams to weaving (Howlett et al. 2015b). The fact that it is difficult to separate the streams may be more a suggestion to avoid the narrative approach for each stream (Stout & Stevens 2000). As writing understandable narratives then requires a degree of repetition. When a policy really needs an analysis those different stream could be described more factual.

Howlett et al. did a few claims. Firstly, they said the framework would be capable of dealing with the idea that stages could be revisited, multiple times. It may be true that particular problems and solutions have gone through the entire process and then change or something new is learned about the problem which may cause revisiting of stages. However, that was not really found in this case. Moreover, the narrative approach does not lend itself to have a structured description of such revisiting. Secondly, they claimed that in all political systems the five stream model can be identified. This research can only discuss the use of the model in the Dutch political system, and the findings show that it could actually be applied, thereby agreeing with the claim. Part of the claim they say it is flexible enough to *cope with variations in source of power, national policy styles and so on* (Howlett et al. 2015a, p.431). The framework can in fact deal with those things, however, the way that is done is open for interpretation. In other words, the way it deals with those variations cannot be generalized or conceptualized.

Then in the conceptualization chapter additional concepts were described to increase analytical clarity. To what extent did that help with the analysis? Firstly about adding the

entrepreneurial actors. It was found to be helpful to have additional tools to identify the role of the actors in the streams, especially since all actors can be appointed to have a certain role, however, particular actors, as was seen in the findings, really did have a unique role. For example, the problem broker was identified. Only having the originally described policy entrepreneur would not have been sufficient to describe the role of this actor, as they did not necessarily propose policy solutions, but mainly addressed problems. The instrument advocate was not identified, however, that could also be due to the small number of interviews. As for example scholars explain that Room for the River can possibly be seen as merely giving room for the engineer (Wiering & Arts 2006). That idea suggests that actors can be identified who mainly want the instrument to be implemented, therefore can be an instrument advocate. This leads to the idea that this conceptualization of entrepreneurial actors gives answer to the call of many authors to improve conceptualization in order to make it easier to distinguish streams (Mukherjee & Howlett 2015; Knaggård 2015; Robinson & Eller 2010; Cairney & Jones 2016).

About critical junctures Howlett et al. said that it would need more research to determine where a critical juncture is found exactly. For this study the combination of stages, streams and junctures was found to be sufficient to determine where a stage ended. The particular events that determined the end and start of particular stages, thus also the junctures, in this case were clear. The last general remark is on the section about the historical context that was written. It was found to help understand the background of particular events, choices of actors, and how they were shaped by other historic events. Adding this section was not mentioned by Howlett et al., however they did claim that the framework could account for path dependency. That was not necessarily found in the framework specifically, therefore put in a separate section.

5.2.1.2 Streams

Overall the original three streams of the multiple streams model could be operationalized by the use of works of Kingdon, Zahariadis 2014 and other scholars applying the multiple streams model. The additional stream were more difficult to operationalize, as the works of Howlett et al in 2015, did not go into great depth of the operationalization. Their own application of it on the poll tax in the UK looked successful, however was insufficient in methodology to repeat for other research.

For the **problem stream** mainly indicators and focusing events were identified. Feedback from other similar type of policies was not found to play a role in this case. However, examples of how success or failure of other projects within the programme could spill-over was sometimes mentioned in interviews. So it may not have been used in this case, but the concept is found to be a relevant concept for the framework. The **policy solution** stream seemed to be a more passive stream compared to the problems and later politics stream. This can be explained with what was described at the entrepreneur discussion part, about the instrument advocate who was not identified. Moreover, in this case the stream seemed more a result of what happened in the other streams. To conclude the stream had a straightforward conceptualization which was also identified. The **politics stream** did address the political mood more locally. Nationally the political situation may be less determined by the mood as it was clearly the states responsibility. However the concept is recognized and did play a role. Also changes in government and legislation were identified and could explain events. Thus, these first three streams could be identified in this case.

The **process stream** was defined as *´constituted by the governmental rules, procedures and norms which examine options' (Howlett 2015).* The process stream in this case was

described in that way. Additionally the type of policy rules as a results of those governmental rules and procedures were described here. In this case that is the components in the Room for the River PKB, because of their crucial role they were included as rules and procedures in the process stream. Further in the stages the governmental rules etc. remained to play a role, though the procedures and components reflected in the PKB, are more present.

In other words, the components of the PKB, are actually reflections of governmental rules and procedures.

The **programme stream** could not easily be identified. That can be a result of 1) the difficulty of distinguishing the laws and procedures of the Netherlands and regional authorities from which are the rules and procedures as part and result of the policy programme. And 2) it was difficult because apparently as can be seen in the findings the policy programme already started to play a decisive role starting in 2006. That is two stages earlier then where Howlett et al. explain that the programme stream is expected to start.

Thus we run into a problem with the programme stream as they introduced and described it. A theoretical solution for this, at least in this case, would be to either 1) start to add a programme stream already in the policy formulation stage. That would include the chance that the process and the programme stream are really interwoven, since at least in this case the programme stream is a strong result of the process stream. Or 2) to leave the programme procedures characteristic within the process stream, and have a small, or non-existing programme stream. Another solution, not theoretical, in which this could be more easily kept separate is when, the programme is studied as a programme and not through the use of case study. Thus to study Room for the River as only a national programme. Or IJsseldelta on itself and viewing the Room for the River as existing rules and procedures. In that way no distinctions need to be made within the process stream itself.

For this case study the programme stream as explained by Howlett et al. was not applicable.

5.2.1.3 Stages

The stages as presented by Howlett (Figure 2) were used to separate the different type of phases in the process. However, for a better analysis of what happened in the decision making phase, additional phases could be added. This was also already addressed by Howlett 2015b, (p281) *at times, analysis of a specific process may involve further sub-divisions such as, for example, dividing policy formulation into options appraisal and consultation.* In this case, the crucial moments seems to have played out in the decision-making stage, therefore that phase could be zoomed in on, and divided into more stages. The idea of splitting a policy process up in more stages is not new, Laswell (1956) originally proposed seven stages, and also other scholars have proposed different stages (Howlett et al. 2015a)*.

The length of the actual stages, as seen in each stream, seem to correspond with Figure 2. Though it is a subjective observation, the findings show a relatively short agenda setting stage, a longer policy formulation, followed by the longest stage for thorough examination of the policy, the decision making phase, and then the policy implementation phase which seems to be shorter though no specific end of that stream was identified.

5.2.2 Methodology

The research has a qualitative research approach and made use of a case study. This approach was useful for a policy research like this. The five stream framework lends itself for qualitative research. Also to reconstruct and study the policy process the used research methods have shown to be useful. The interview methods in particular is addressed in the next sub section about the validation of the approach.

Furthermore regarding the analysis the following can be discussed. In this research Microsoft Office, a macro and excel filters were used. This choice was based on looking for an open source qualitative data analysis software. The possibility of using, e.g. Atlas.ti was found too late in the process, but could possibly increase the reproducibility of the research by providing more standardized presentation of coding data. Though for this research this approach turned out to be sufficient, however for any future research, with possibly more data, any more qualitative data analysis specific software would be helpful.

Predetermined themes were used for coding. The choice for the themes, is related to the theory and were actually identified, so from a coding perspective the theory was also applicable. Each theme could possibly be more specified seeing that the themes (codes) as they were now found in the theoretical framework were broad and perhaps too much open for interpretation. However in turn that would reduce the widespread applicability of the framework.

5.3 Reliability & validity

The reliability of the research is about the consistency and the reproducibility of the research. With the entire report and the discussion of these methods the research can be reproduced. The aspect of the research which cannot be influenced and reproduced is the interviews.

With discussing the interview approach some light is shed on the credibility of the research. The number of interviewees was consistent with the original aim as described in the methodology. However, that number was bound by the scope of a thesis research. Actors of all different levels were interviewed, except for a local resident not involved in e.g. an action group. Thus the variety of interviewees is as wanted, however a higher number in interviewees would improve the credibility. As a higher number would increase the data, which could reduce the amount of having findings which are based on only one interviewee.

Also more depth in the research could be found by considering which actors are pro/opponents and balance that out among the interviewees. That way the interviews can be better put into perspective, as well as it adds depth to comparing what different interviewees respond, besides merely knowing their affiliation with the project.

Considering the interview data, many dates and years of specific events were mentioned. These were crucial in reconstructing a policy process and to have answers that have weight. Judgements needed to be made, as date and years mentioned differed among almost all interviewees, and even, official documents. Mainly, the years were taken in which a final report of a real public decision was made formal, to distinguish the different stages.

Regarding ethical considerations, all interview data was processed confidentially.

5.4 Recommendations

For policy research it would be relevant to study a similar case but then focus on institutional change. For example Room for the River cases with theory on institutional change, by Streeck and Thelen (2005). With such a study we can learn more about the fundamental changes needed to see change in power and institutions, as now only the 'rules of the game' seem to have changed (Wiering & Immink). Also research could focus more on how the decentralization approach played out, with for example a multi-level governance approach.

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Annex i - Topiclist

Respondent X
Datum
Verwachte duur
Toestemming voor opnemen?
Uw bijdrage en gebruik daarvan in thesis
Wilt u een uitdraai toegestuurd voor controle?

Doel toelichten

Wie bent u?

Functie. Hoe ziet dat er uit? Verantwoordelijkheden (voor wie)? Welke partijen hebt u mee te maken? Beleid uitvoeren vs maken? Wat is uw rol en op welk niveau (nationaal vs regionaal vs ...)

Kernvragen eerste van de topics

Intro: Op vraag 1, in die proces fase vóór SNIP3 > TIMELINE

Q1: Denkend aan alle partijen, (dat is actoren, ook niet beleidsmakers) wat zijn volgens uw analyse meest cruciale gebeurtenissen geweest die het project vooruit hebben geholpen of juist grote fouten zijn geweest, of onnodig stagnatie. (lengte, kosten, omwissel, doelen bereikt)

Eg. Goed nieuw idee, een nieuw probleem, of;

Gebeurtenissen – eg Kogge, plotseling subsidies

Sleutelfiguren

Denk aan:
Intern (binnen het programma-de projecten, maatregel voorkeuren, demonstraties tegen manier van doen/formuleren, badkuip oid echt veel invloed? Of hoe neem je zoiets serieus? Zorgt t voor Uitstel?)
Extern (verkiezingen, crisis, wetsveranderingen)

(Doorslaggevend? Echt verandering? Of een vertraging? Of versnelling?)

Probleem definities:

Q2: Wat voor rol speelt een 'probleem' oplossen, oftewel de doelen. Hoe bindend of flexibel? *Kaders?*

Q3: Wat is de probleem definitie vanuit het Rijk? En zijn er lokaal andere definities naar voren gebracht om andere focus te krijgen/ andere oplossingen? Secundaire problemen?

Q4: Die twee doelen, hoe kunnen die samengaan? Of hoe gaat X, of u, daar mee om?

In hoeverre staan die twee naast elkaar? Hiërarchie? Conflict?

Q5: Hoe past de verantwoordelijkheid van X binnen de doelen?

Hierin, wat is kennis, cijfers, rapporten? Wie dringt door? Timing of juist contacten? Of juiste informatie, Hoever/dichtbij blijft het bij het probleem dat geadresseerd moet worden?

Q6: In hoeverre zijn deze nieuwe problemen doorslaggevend geweest? Lokaal eigenlijk wel tot nationale agenda doordringen?

Q7: Bypass op de korte termijn al, die beslissing liet op zich wachten, waarom?

Past wat lokaal gewenst is niet met nationale maatregel? Hoe flexibel/ruimte is er vanuit het Rijk? Is regio wel geschikt? Nemen ze het wel serieus? (verantwoordelijkheid) (Synergy of juist overlap/tegenwerking?

Q8: Heeft X zijn doel bereikt? Hoe en wanneer? En wat betreft andere partijen?

Momenten, sleutelfiguren, voorbeelden

Q9: Wat is de invloed van huidig beleid, of geschiedenis?

Q10: Of wat zijn andere manieren geweest waarop verschillende partijen hun doel communiceerden?

Oplossingen: *(6e scenario) 'andere oplossing aandragen'.* Aansluiting RvR?

Proces en samenwerken:

Q11: Verschillende ideeën, iedereen zegt de plannen hebben een andere oorsprong, hoe gaat eigenlijk zo'n samenwerking? Die verschillen in levels…

Zoveel partijen, zoveel gezegd, nationaal programma, verantwoordelijkheid regionaal, wat had u oorspronkelijk verwacht van zo'n samenwerking?

Q12: Wanneer, kan wie (burgers), betrokken worden bij het vormen van beleid, het project? Of gaat dat gewoon?

(partijen betrekken? Serieus nemen, ruimte geven? Wanneer wel/wanneer niet?)

Q13: Zijn naar uw mening, de doelstellingen van RvR bereikt in dit gebied? Wat tekent dat vooral?

Q14: Tijdsdruk, was die er? Zoja, hoe heeft dat u beïnvloed en wat had u zonder die druk anders gedaan? Hebben anderen hier juist gebruik van kunnen maken?

Toekomst beeld:

Voor dit project gebied?

Q15: Voor dit soort processen? Wat hebt u vooral geleerd als u denkt aan doelen halen en omgaan met onzekerheden. Verschillende manieren van ergens naar kijken, en toch stappen zetten.

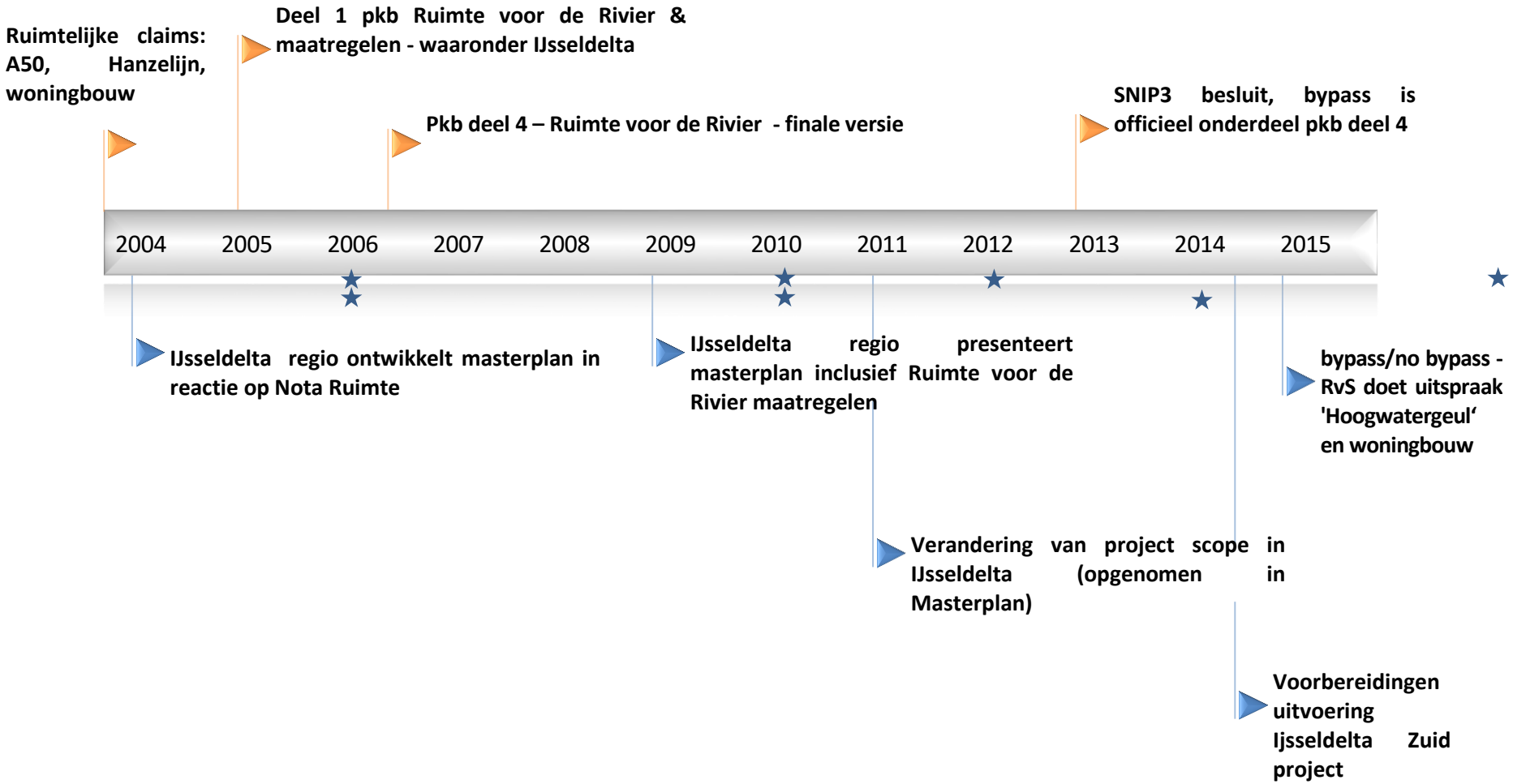
Afronden:

Zijn er nog vragen/onderwerpen die we niet besproken hebben maar die u wel belangrijk acht/ had verwacht?

Wie zou ik volgens u echt nog moeten spreken? En zou u daar dan ook contactgegevens van kunnen geven?

Bedankt!

Annex ii - Timeline



★ = verkiezingen

Annex iii – Codes

Predetermined codes used for analysing data:

- Historic issues
- Problems
    - Indicators
    - Focusing events
    - Feedback
- Policy (solutions)
- Politics
    - Politics (levels)
    - Mood
- Process
- Programme
- Actors
    - Policy entrepreneur
    - Problem broker
    - Instrument broker
    - Political actors
- Attention
    - –drawing
    - –paying
- Windows
- Events
- Timeline
- Political turnover