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# The role of coalition-building between Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations in the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in Member States of the European Union; *A case study in the Netherlands.*

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*A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Forest and Nature Conservation*

**Student:** Jordi Timmermans

**Reg. number:** 950724835060

**Supervisor:** Dr. AE (Arjen) Buijs

**Chair group:** Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group (FNP)

**University:** Wageningen University and Research (WUR)



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## Abstract

Coalitions of environmental NGOs (ENGOS) appear to have taken up a role in improving the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHDs) in Member States of the European Union (EU). However, detailed knowledge on how these coalitions are being formed, and what strategies they apply is still lacking. Given the current role of these coalitions and their potential role in future implementation of the BHDs, it is important to gain more insight in the processes of coalition-building and strategy selection. Therefore, the present study aimed to identify how ENGOS cooperate in order to affect the implementation of the BHDs in EU Member States. A study, based on three cases, was carried out in the Netherlands and all ENGOS in the associated coalitions were interviewed, as well as all relevant authorities. The three coalitions of interest showed variation in terms of size, structure and composition. In none of the coalitions, having shared beliefs was considered to be a prerequisite for the process of coalition-building. The opportunity to combine resources, on the other hand, was in all coalitions recognised as an incentive for collaboration. Other factors were however identified as well, including having a common objective, the visibility of organisations and the existence of permanent coalitions. With respect to strategy application, a categorisation consisting of eight different strategies was developed. The effectivity of these strategies turned out to depend on both the beliefs and resource availability of the organisations involved. Moreover, differences in strategical preferences between organisations were observed. So all in all, combining resources indeed proved to be a reason for coalition-building, but other factors appeared to play a role as well. Future studies should aim to both verify the identified factors and reveal additional ones. The present study also indicated that beliefs and resources indeed might affect strategy selection, further research is needed that delve into this relationship.

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## 1. Introduction

The Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957, formed the basis for the establishment of the European Economic Community, which later became the European Union (EU). Whereas environmental policy is an important theme in European politics today, the Treaty of Rome did not include any arrangement on environmental issues. This changed in 1972, when The Paris Summit was organised to discuss cross-border air pollution and the equalisation of environmental standards. This summit resulted in the declaration on environmental and consumer policy, and is considered to be the start of EU environmental policy. Subsequently, the European Commission (EC) set up a special task force to design an environmental action programme, which is the predecessor of today's Directorate-General for the Environment (DG Environment) (Jordan & Adelle, 2002).

The decline of bird species as a consequence of ecosystem degradation resulted a few years later in the Birds Directive (BD). This first EU directive on nature conservation, established in 1979, required countries to protect rare or threatened bird species and their habitats. Since 1992, the habitats of other animal species and plant species are protected as well via the Habitats Directive (HD). In order to conserve biodiversity, the sites protected under these two directives have been combined into a network of protected areas, which is called Natura 2000 (Beunen et al., 2009; Brescancin et al., 2017; Cent et al., 2013; Geitzenauer et al., 2016; Kati et al., 2014). Although Member States (MSs) are required to implement Natura 2000 policy, it appears that some states do not meet the requirements (Geitzenauer et al., 2016). The EC does have means to reprove these states, but its capacity to monitor state performance is limited (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2007; Fagan & Sircar, 2011). As a result, environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOS) have taken up a new role in enforcing Natura 2000 policy (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Geitzenauer et al., 2016). This study focused on this role and investigates how ENGOS aim to improve the implementation of Natura 2000.

In this introduction, I will first provide a general background on Natura 2000 and elaborate on the essential phases of the implementation process of Natura 2000 policy. Next I will discuss the enforcement of Natura 2000 and the role of ENGOS in this process. The problem statement of the study will be presented in the last paragraph.

### 1.1 Implementation of Natura 2000

Natura 2000 is a network of protected nature areas, covering approximately 18% of the terrestrial territory of the EU, distributed over all its MSs (Möckel, 2017a). The network is a combination of all Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) that are protected under respectively the HD (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and the BD (Council Directive 79/409/EEC). The central aim of Natura 2000 is to protect both animal and plant species and their natural habitats on the long term (Brescancin et al., 2017; Cent et al., 2013; Geitzenauer et al., 2016; Kati et al., 2014). Annex I of the BD contains an overview of protected bird species and their core areas. Plant species and other animal species, on the other hand, are protected under Annex II of the HD. The protected natural habitats needed for conservation of these species are listed in Annex I of the HD (EC, 2014; Kleining, 2017; Möckel, 2017a).

The department of the EC, responsible for the overall implementation of Natura 2000 policy, is the DG Environment (Cent et al., 2013). As the red column in figure 1 demonstrates, three phases are generally distinguished in the implementation process of Natura 2000 network. These are the designation, management and evaluation phase (Brescancin et al., 2017; Cent et al., 2013; Geitzenauer et al., 2016). Whereas designation clearly is the first step of the implementation process, the management and evaluation phase generally co-occur.

#### 1.1.1 *The designation phase*

Through the BD and HD, Natura 2000 is binding upon all MSs of the EU. If a European country enters the EU, it is required to designate its own SACs and SPAs. It depends on the MSs which authority is responsible for the designation. Before the proposal of the selected SACs and SPAs comes into force, it has to be approved by the EC. Biogeographical seminars are organised to facilitate the designation process, which are negotiation sessions where representatives of the EC, officials of MSs, experts, Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (ENGOS) and stakeholders are invited. As a result of these seminars, the EC can request the MS concerned to adjust or extend the original proposal (Brescancin et al., 2017; Cent et al., 2013; Geitzenauer et al., 2016).

### 1.1.2 *The management phase*

Besides the responsibility to designate SACs and SPAs, MSs have to develop management plans for these site that include concrete conservation goals (Geitzenauer et al., 2016; Grodzinska-Jurczak & Cent, 2010). In addition, these management plans are supposed to contain a site description, information on protected species, a cost-analysis and a description and planning of specific management, monitoring and evaluation measures (Geitzenauer et al., 2016). Whether the management is in the end conducted by the national government or local authorities, depends on the state's political structure (Brescancin et al., 2017). Whereas nature management is traditionally rather top-down in many European countries, characterised by limited involvement of non-state actors, current EU nature policy is often based on subsidiarity, which is also the case for Natura 2000 (Beunen et al., 2009; Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Brescancin et al., 2017). The subsidiarity principle explains that decisions should be taken as local as possible (Berkes, 2004; de Sadeleer, 2012). On a European level, this implies that the role of the EC is limited to only those tasks that cannot be performed at lower levels. In case of Natura 2000, this means that the designation of sites and the development of management plans are tasks of the MSs (Beunen et al., 2009).

In line with this trend is the involvement of stakeholders, like landowners, local citizens and NGOs in the decision-making process. Since Natura 2000 policy aims to take both nature conservation objectives and socio-economic interests into account, the HD describes that the responsible management authorities should involve stakeholders in the planning process of Natura 2000 (Brescancin et al., 2017; Sotirov et al., 2015). If management plans for Natura 2000 sites are indeed designed in such a bottom-up way, stakeholders have the opportunity to influence outcomes. Although there are examples of significant stakeholder involvement (Andonova & Tuta, 2014), it appears to be a challenge for most MSs to accomplish stakeholder participation, both in the designation phase and in the management phase (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Brescancin et al., 2017).

### 1.1.3 *The evaluation phase*

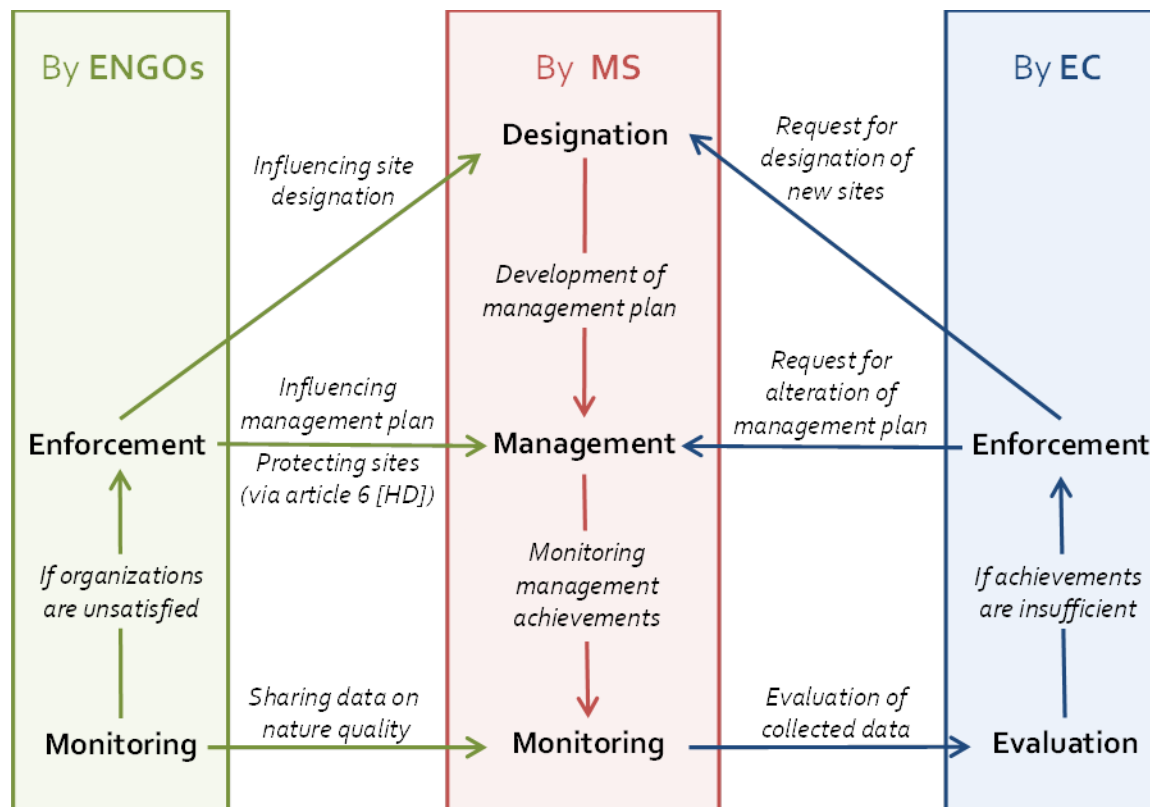
The third and last stage of the implementation process of Natura 2000 is the evaluation phase. The purpose of this phase is to determine the effectivity of Natura 2000 policy, by investigating to what extent the conservation goals, set in the management phase, are met. The procedure to inspect the status of SACs and SPAs is called monitoring, which generally comprises making an inventory of the habitats and the abundance of animal and plant species, covered by the two directives (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2007). MSs are required to monitor their protected sites and report progress or deterioration to the EC (Cent et al., 2007; Geitzenauer et al., 2016). ENGOs can be formally involved in the monitoring process, although their role is in these cases often limited to collecting data for state authorities (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Cent et al., 2007; Sotirov et al., 2015).

## 1.2 **Enforcement of Natura 2000**

Enforcement of Natura 2000 is important through all phases of the implementation process. As figure 1 demonstrates, both ENGOs and the EC play a role in the enforcement of Natura 2000 policy. The duties of MSs are particularly articulated in article 6 of the HD and most cases of non-compliance concern violation of this specific article. The next paragraphs will elaborate on the content of article 6 and the enforcement by ENGOs and the EC.

### 1.2.1 *Article 6 of the Habitats Directive*

Article 6 of the HD describes how MSs must manage and protect their sites. Since this article does not only apply to SACs, but also to SPAs designated by the BD, it protects the whole Natura 2000 network. Most cases of non-compliance occur in the management phase, by MSs violating article 6 of the HD (EC, 2014). According to article 6, MSs are in the first place obliged to take all necessary conservation measures, which also includes developing management plans (*HD article 6[1]*). Furthermore, states shall avoid any deterioration of natural habitats and disturbance of species in these habitats (*HD article 6[2]*). Estimation of potential effects is based on the precautionary principle, which implies that authorisation for a project or plan in a SAC is only allowed if it is proven, after an appropriate assessment, that it will not damage the site (*HD article 6[3]*) (EC, 2014; Möckel, 2017a; Möckel, 2017b).



*Figure 1: The implementation process of the Birds and Habitats Directives* - The process of implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHDs) carried out by MSs (MS), respectively consisting of the designation phase, management phase and evaluation phase. Site monitoring and evaluation together form the evaluation phase. This schematic representation is centred around the implementation by a MS (MS), as a result the interaction between environmental NGOs (ENGOS) and the European Commission (EC) is missing. The columns and associated coloured arrows indicate the role of the three actors; ENGOS, MS or EC, in the different implementation phases.

There are some exceptions to this rule, though, which are described in article 6[4]. In case of overriding public interest on social or economic grounds, permission can be granted for a project in a Natura 2000 area. If it concerns a priority habitat or a habitat with priority species, which are determined in Annex I and II (HD), permission will only be given if the plan is important for public safety or human health (EC, 2014; Kleining, 2017; Möckel, 2017b). If a MS gives permission for a project or plan that meets these circumstances, it is required to take all compensatory measures that are needed to ensure the coherence of the Natura 2000 network (EC, 2014; van Hoorick, 2014; Kleining, 2017; Möckel, 2017a; Möckel, 2017b). Furthermore, the MS concerned needs to inform the EC about the adopted measures (EC, 2014; van Hoorick, 2014). There are two types of compensatory measures a MS can take. On the one hand it can improve the habitat of the affected or another Natura 2000 site, and on the other hand, it can designate new SACs (Kleining, 2017).

### 1.2.2 Enforcement by the EC

If a MS shows insufficient effort in the designation phase, for example by delays or sending in a weak proposal, the EC can initiate an infringement proceeding against the state concerned. Such procedure is often accompanied by a request to expand the original proposal and include more sites, generally agreed upon by all participants in biogeographical seminars (Geitzenauer et al., 2016).

If the EC notices that a MS acts in violation with the HD or the BD in the management phase, it can, like in the designation phase, initiate an infringement proceeding against a country. Every year, dozens of these infringement proceedings on the HD and BD are initiated by the EC (EC, 2016; EC, 2018). If such proceeding does not result in improvement, the MS concerned can be brought before the European Court of Justice (ECJ), by the EC, which is usually the case, or by another MS (EC, 2014; EC, 2016; Geitzenauer et al., 2016). Annually, several of these infringement procedures result in court cases before the ECJ. In the majority of these cases, the court decides that a MS has not fulfilled its

obligations (EC, 2006; EC, 2014). Upon request of the EC, the ECJ might also impose a periodic or fixed financial penalty on the convicted MS (EC, 2014; EC, 2016; Geitzenauer et al., 2016).

### 1.2.3 *Enforcement by ENGOS*

In line with the subsidiarity principle, the responsibility of monitoring the status of the SPAs and SACs lies with the MS itself. The role of the DG Environment is limited to assessing the reports submitted by the states (Cent et al., 2013). As a result, the implementation of Natura 2000 relies heavily on the discretion of the MSs (Geitzenauer et al., 2016). Many states encountered serious problems with the designation and implementation of Natura 2000, due to various reasons, including a knowledge and expertise gap, a lack of national guidance and weak coordination on both the national and regional level. Other implementation issues are the result of unwillingness of national governments (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010). The obligations of MSs regarding Natura 2000 policy do not always correspond to real state performance. In order to bridge this gap, ENGOS appear to have taken up a new by improving the enforcement of the HD and BD (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Geitzenauer et al., 2016).

ENGOS provide the EC with information on ostensible non-compliance cases in order to provoke enforcement of Natura 2000. Whistle-blowing activities like these sometimes lead to infringement procedures or sanctions against MSs (Börzel & Buzogány; Geitzenauer et al., 2016). Furthermore, ENGOS attempt to put issues on the public agenda through media campaigns, starting petitions and informing Members of the European Parliament, and by taking countries to national courts (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2013; Slepcevic, 2009; Sotirov et al., 2015). By holding countries openly accountable for their performance in all three phases discussed, ENGOS seem to have found a new way to enforce Natura 2000 policy and thereby improve its implementation (Cent et al. 2013; Geitzenauer et al., 2016; Sotirov et al., 2015; Turnhout et al., 2015).

## 1.3 Cooperation between ENGOS

ENGOS are non-governmental organisations with a focus on environmental issues, varying from biodiversity loss and deforestation to climate change and ozone depletion (Andonova & Tuta, 2014). Some ENGOS are specialised on one particular issue, whereas others address the whole scope of environmental problems. Since the scale of environmental issues is variable, the level on which ENGOS operate varies as well, ranging from local to global organisations. One ENGO can also be operative at different levels (Richards & Heard, 2005). As environmental protection is an increasingly important topic for European governments, the support for ENGOS and their influence on international environmental institutions have strongly increased (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Richards & Heard, 2005).

The Europeanisation of environmental policy improved the positions of larger organisations, whereas it diminished the opportunities for smaller ENGOS to exert influence (Richards & Heard, 2005). In the choices regarding influencing policy and decisions, ENGOS are restricted by their limited resources and capacities. Hence, these organisations have to be selective in their activities and the strategies they use. ENGOS try to bridge the resource and capacity gaps by collaborating with other organisations. Since the availability differs between ENGOS, coalition-building is a way to maximise influence on environmental policy, including Natura 2000 (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2007; Cullen, 2015; Weber & Christophersen, 2001; Richard & Heard, 2005; Sotirov et al., 2015).

As discussed, coalition-building is a way for organisations to achieve their objectives, since it increases the capacities and resource availability, which expands the tactical opportunities. However, collaboration also carries the risk of disagreement (Richards & Heard, 2005). It is therefore necessary that the ENGOS that form these coalitions are at least to some extent connected by shared beliefs and ideas (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Cent et al., 2013; Cullen, 2015; Sarvasova et al., 2013; Sotirov et al., 2015).

The coalitions that result include both horizontal connections between ENGOS operating at the same level and vertical connections between organisations from different levels. Vertical connections range from the local to the international level, and also include the relations between ENGOS and their umbrella organisations. Sometimes ENGOS cooperate as well with NGOs from other sectors, governmental authorities, companies and industrial players, in order to achieve objectives (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2013; Richards & Heard, 2005).

## 1.4 Problem statement

There is a general recognition that ENGOS, and the coalitions in which they operate, play a role in the enforcement of the BHDs. However, detailed knowledge on how these coalitions are composed and contribute to the BHDs and their implementation is lacking. Furthermore, it is unclear what specific strategies are applied in what situation, and how these strategies are related to resource availability, beliefs and objectives (Andonova & Tuta, 2014). For both governments and ENGOS, it would be useful to gain more insight in these processes, since this knowledge could contribute to the implementation of the BHDs. Therefore, the present study aimed to get a better understanding of the role coalitions play in the implementation of the directives. In line with this, the overall objective of the study was to identify how ENGOS cooperate in order to influence the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives in EU Member States. The following research questions were used to in order to reach this goal:

- 1) What coalitions of ENGOS are being formed in order to influence the implementation of the BHDs?;
- 2) What role do shared beliefs play in coalition-building between ENGOS?;
- 3) What role does the opportunity to combine resources play in coalition-building between ENGOS?;
- 4) What strategies are applied by coalitions of ENGOS to influence the implementation of the BHDs?;
- 5) How do shared beliefs and combining resources explain strategy selection by coalitions of ENGOS?

In this report, the theoretical framework underpinning the research will be presented, followed by a chapter that elaborates on the methodologies applied, including a description of the cases investigated. In the subsequent chapters the results per case will be presented on the basis of the research questions. The report will end with a conclusion and a discussion section where the major conclusions are placed in a scientific context.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter will elaborate on the theoretical framework and associated decisions that underpin the present study. Concepts that play a role will be explained and the theories that formed the basis for answering the research questions will be described. The theoretical framework presented in this chapter is the original framework that was developed in the first phase of this study. Adaptations to the framework that were made later during the data analysis phase will be presented in the chapter on research methodology, the related decisions will be explained and justified in the discussion chapter.

### 2.1 Defining compliance

The objective of this study was to identify how ENGOs from different levels cooperate to improve compliance of Natura 2000 policy. ENGOs can be described as non-profit organisations with an environmental focus. They are not connected to governmental authorities and have a base of members or voluntary participants (Rodela et al., 2017). Compliance is here defined as “conformity with or adherence to international treaty obligations” (Andonova & Tuta, 2014), which are both the BD and HD in this case. As Hartlapp & Falkner (2009) explain, compliance with EU legislation often comprises the fulfilment of duties through the whole implementation process, including the adoption or adaptation of national laws and monitoring and enforcing these.

Tallberg (2002) discussed two perspectives on how to explain non-compliance can be identified. On the one hand, the management perspective sees non-compliance as a result of limited capacities and misinterpretation, and emphasises the role of support and information provision. The enforcement school, on the other hand, rather explains non-compliance as conscious violation and points to the importance of enforcement mechanisms, including monitoring and sanctions. Among the strategies available for NGOs are both strategies based on the enforcement perspective and strategies with a so-called management base. The latter comprises governance strategies with a supportive base, whereas the enforcement strategies are rather based on sanctioning (Andonova & Tuta, 2014). This study aimed to investigate what enforcement strategies and what management strategies are applied by ENGOs to address non-compliance with Natura 2000 by Member States (MSs).

### 2.2 Rational-choice theory

Given the objective of this study, a framework to analyse the acting of the concerned ENGOs was needed. ENGOs aim to maximise their influence on environmental policy and can choose between several strategies to achieve their objectives. These strategies all require a different resource and capacity availability (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Cullen, 2015; Glück, 2000; Hielscher et al., 2017; Richards & Heard, 2005; Sotirov et al., 2015; Weber & Christophersen, 2002). When selecting strategies, organisations act rationally, which means that they aim to minimise costs and maximise output. Since ENGOs have limited availability of resources and capacities, the selection of strategies depends on the availability of these means (Cullen, 2015; Glück, 2000; Hielscher et al., 2017). All in all, this implies that the behaviour of ENGOs can, at least to some extent, be explained by rational-choice theory (Glück, 2000; Hielscher et al., 2017). This was the starting-point of this study. Since ENGOs do not operate on an individual base, but rather form coalitions (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2007; Cullen, 2015; Weber & Christophersen, 2001), I chose to use an approach that acknowledges the important role coalitions play in policy change. The next sections respectively explain the role of coalitions for ENGOs, present relevant rational theories, and discuss the strategies coalitions can select to influence policy. Moreover, I will elaborate on the theoretical framework that will be used for answering the research questions.

### 2.3 Coalitions of ENGOs

The purpose of the first research question was to get an overview of the relevant ENGO coalitions. Coalitions are defined here as alliances between two or more Environmental NGOs (Glück, 2000). These coalitions often comprise organisations from different levels, including local, national and international NGOs. The boundaries between these levels are not always clear, since national and supranational NGOs sometimes represent NGOs active from lower levels (Andonova & Tuta, 2014). Furthermore, ENGOs are represented by the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) in Brussels, which is an organisation based on the collaboration between more than 145 NGOs from EU MSs. It is established to improve

environmental policies and to ensure compliance with these policies at both the national and European level. Local ENGOs have regularly used the EEB to put local cases of Natura 2000 violation on the international agenda (Bizer et al., 2010).

As argued, ENGOs form multi-level or transnational coalitions to combine resources with organisations that have similar objectives, in order to maximise influence on policy outcomes (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2013; Cullen, 2015; Sarvasova et al., 2013; Sotirov et al., 2015). A rational theory that describes the resource interdependencies between organisations is Policy Network Analysis (PNA) (Arts & Leroy, 2006; Cent et al., 2013; Smith, 2000). It assumes that NGOs collaborate and share resources to achieve their objectives, which makes this theory very useful for the present study.

However, what PNA neglects is the role of the organisational identity and preferences in collaboration. It is not only important that ENGOs have the same objective, but a shared view on how to achieve these objectives is necessary as well (Cent et al. 2013; Glück, 2000; Richards & Heard, 2005; Veenman et al., 2009). A rational-choice based theory that takes the identity of organisations into account is the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). This framework focuses on the role of ideas, beliefs and values in coalition-building (Cent et al. 2013; Glück, 2000; Veenman et al., 2009).

So whereas PNA merely focuses on resources, ACF describes the importance of the identity of an ENGO. Due to their common rational-choice base, but different emphasis, they are generally considered to complement each other and are therefore often combined (Arts & Leroy, 2006; Cent et al., 2013; Smith, 2000). Both approaches were also combined in this study to answer the second and third research questions.

## 2.4 Advocacy Coalition Framework

The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), which was used to identify what beliefs were shared among the organisations that formed alliances, focused on the role of ideas, beliefs and values in shaping cooperation and coalitions (Cent et al. 2013; Glück, 2000; Veenman et al., 2009). The ACF assumes that actors behave rationally, within the temporal boundaries and limited capacity. Furthermore, the actors are expected to compete for influence, and form coalitions with other organisations to maximise power. These coalitions are called 'advocacy coalitions' (Smith, 2000). According to the ACF, coalition building only occurs between organisations that have a shared belief system (Cent et al., 2013; Glück, 2000; Sarvasova et al., 2013; Veenman et al., 2009). In these belief systems, the following three levels of beliefs can be distinguished, varying in fundamentality and changeability: 1) 'Deep core' beliefs; 2) 'Policy core' beliefs; and lastly 3) 'Secondary aspects' (Cent et al., 2013; Glück, 2000; Smith, 2000).

Deep core beliefs are the normative values of actors and generally operate across policy domains. An example of deep core beliefs are the principles of democracy and the exhaustibility of natural resources (Glück, 2000; Smith, 2000). Due to the universality of this type of beliefs, one can assume that these principles are shared by all ENGOs in the EU. Therefore, the main focus was not on deep core beliefs in this research.

Policy core beliefs form the second type of beliefs in a belief system. This category comprises the fundamental ideas and perceptions that connect the actors within a policy domain, including the basic goals and strategies for achieving these. Coalitions result from cooperation between actors within a policy domain, therefore one can expect policy core beliefs to be shared by all organisations in an advocacy coalition. Since the policy core beliefs determine the basis and overall identity of coalitions, they were expected to be relevant to identify for the alliances in this research.

The last level of a belief system are the secondary aspects. This is the most specific category and consists of the preferences and views on particular policy issues, e.g. specific instrumental decisions and choices on institutional design. The secondary aspects basically describe the way an organisation wants to achieve and act according to the policy core beliefs. In contrast to the policy core beliefs, the secondary aspects are not necessarily the same for all actors in a coalition (Glück, 2000; Smith, 2000). For that reason, this study investigated to what extent the secondary aspects, related to the policy core beliefs, differed within advocacy coalitions.

The susceptibility to change increases from the deep core beliefs to the secondary aspects. Since deep core beliefs are widely shared, they are fairly resistant to change. Policy core beliefs are assumed to be steadfast as well, since coalition members will try to defend their beliefs and counter contradicting views. Policy core beliefs can, however, change if they become deviated too much from the real-world situation. The secondary aspects of actors, lastly, are knowledge and context dependent. They therefore are expected to be adjusted occasionally for strategic purposes or as a result of new scientific insights (Cent et al., 2013; Glück, 2000; Smith, 2000). As explained, I chose particularly deal with the two levels of the belief system that are coalition specific. Although these beliefs and views are subject to change, this study was limited to identifying the policy core beliefs and secondary aspects of coalitions and organisations at a fixed moment in time. It therefore does not give insight into how beliefs change over time.



## 2.5 Policy Network Analysis

Policy Network Analysis (PNA) explains that an individual organisation has limited resource availability and therefore forms coalitions with other organisations, called 'resource coalitions'. The actors in these coalitions are connected by their dependency on each other's resources. These resources are shared or combined in order to maximise their power and influence in policy arenas (Arts & Leroy, 2006; Cent et al., 2013; Smith, 2000). What resources are available or needed depends on the context and the level on which organisations operate. For that reason, the formation of multi-level coalitions can be favourable (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Toke, 2010).

There are numerous possibilities for the categorisation of resources and which categories apply best differs per situation (Toke, 2010). Although Arts & Leroy (2006), Cent et al. (2013), Davidson & de Loë (2016), Delfin & Tang (2008), Rodela et al. (2017), Toke (2010), Veenman et al. (2009) and Zhan & Tang (2011) all used a somewhat different resource classification in their studies on NGOs, in general they at least made a distinction between the following categories: 1) material resources; 2) informational resources; 3) social resources; 4) political resources; and lastly 5) relational resources. I used these five categories as a starting point to identify and distinguish the resources that were shared or exchanged within the ENGO coalitions (figure 2).

Material resources formed the first category, which is in this case the umbrella term for financial resources and equipment. Since the revenues of an organisation are limited, due to for example a small membership base, collaboration was expected to enable organisations to share equipment and combine budgets (Rodela et al., 2017; Zhan & Tang, 2011). Informational resources, secondly, included the information and expertise of an organisation and, furthermore, everything related to knowledge gathering and dissemination. The expertise of NGOs is often very specific, exchanging knowledge between organisations is therefore assumed to strengthen both. The social resources of an organisation comprised the public support for an organisation and its means to acquire public attention and support. By collaborating, NGOs were expected to benefit from each other's members and publicity (Rodela et al., 2017). The fourth category, political resources, covered both political support and the connections of an organisation with politics and policy-makers. Collaboration between NGOs was therefore expected to lead to an increased influence on decisions. (Toke, 2010; Weber & Christophersen, 2002). The relational resources, lastly, described the network of an organisation, and comprised its connections with other organisations. In line with this, it was expected to be beneficial for a small organisation with limited contacts, to form an alliance with a larger organisation with an extensive network (Rodela et al., 2017).

## 2.6 Strategies

Coalitions can apply many different strategies for influencing policy. Besides the role of resources and shared beliefs for coalition-building discussed, resource availability and beliefs of coalitions are also expected to affect the selection of strategies by the coalitions formed (Brumley, 2010; Zchout & Tal, 2017). Therefore the present research will first identify what strategies are applied and thereafter investigate how beliefs and resources relate to the selection of strategies. However, other factors such as the socio-political context (Brumley, 2010) and the position of an organisation in society (Richards & Heard, 2005) might also affect strategy selection by ENGOs to some extent. Furthermore, Brumley (2010) describes that organisations take the risk of strategies to the system and to society into consideration. So although rational-choice theory on the internal characteristics, resource availability and identity will be used as a starting point, openness towards alternative influential factors is needed.

No fixed or universal categorisation that classifies and describes the variety of strategies available for NGOs or social movements exists. Some studies used the degree of disruption of the system as a factor to classify strategies. Brumley (2010) for example distinguished between low risk, medium risk and high risk strategies for ENGOs. Most studies however used the character of the strategies for categorisation. Zchout & Tal (2017), for instance, divided consensus strategies, aimed at convincing the public or authorities, and conflict strategies, aimed at exerting pressure on decision-makers. The latter distinction roughly corresponds to the perspectives on compliance of Tallberg (2002), as described in section 2.1. He distinguished between compliance from a management perspective and compliance from an enforcement perspective. In line with this, some strategies applied by ENGOs contributed to the implementation process by supporting MSs, whereas other strategies were rather reactive and were based on exerting pressure on decision-makers. Based on Andonova & Tuta (2014), Tallberg (2002) and Zchout & Tal (2017), this study used a distinction between the management and enforcement perspective to classify strategies.

However, a further categorisation of strategy types within these two categories was needed to be able to distinguish between applied strategies. Types of strategies identified by other studies and relevant for the present study

were participating in decision-making, lobbying, protesting, litigating, raising awareness and providing information (Andrews & Edwards, 2005; Brumley, 2010; Munro, 2005; Richards & Heard, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017). Brumley (2010), furthermore, identified coalition-building as a strategy in itself. In this research, however, forming alliances was not considered as a separate strategy, but as a way to collect the resources necessary for applying a strategy. Coalition-building in itself was therefore not distinguished as a separate category.

Participation and lobbying were considered as examples of management strategies since they support MSs in their implementation of Natura 2000. Protesting and litigating on the other hand are strategies that fit in the enforcement category, due to their reactive character. These strategies challenge the choices of policy-makers (Richards & Heard, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017). Informational strategies could have both a management and an enforcement base. Information provision by ENGOs can contribute to policy-making, when provided to authorities, but it can also be used to raise awareness in society as a way to exert pressure on decision-makers (Richard & Heard, 2005). On the basis of the distinctions discussed, I chose to distinguish the following management-based strategies: 1) Direct participation; 2) Political lobbying; and 3) Information provision. Furthermore, this study will make a distinction between the following categories of enforcement-based strategies: 1) Protest strategies; 2) Juridical strategies; and 3) Awareness-raising.

### *2.7.1 Management-based strategies*

Participation has many forms, varying in the degree of involvement. The original participation ladder of Arnstein (1969), for example distinguishes between eight degrees of citizen participation, varying from non-participation to citizen control. This theory and later theories (Reed et al., 2017), especially distinguish between real coproduction and just informing decision-makers. In the present research, this distinction was used as well, respectively to distinguish between direct participation on the one hand and information provision on the other. In line with this, the first management-based strategy that can be applied by ENGOs is direct participation. This strategy includes direct participation of organisations in the process of policy-making, for example via alliances between NGOs and governments, as described by Brumley (2010).

Information provision is the second type of management-based strategies I distinguish. Information provision strategies are applied in order to provide national governments with the knowledge and data necessary to implement Natura 2000. This category includes both data collection commissioned by authorities, and sharing of independently collected data (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Cent et al., 2007; Sotirov et al., 2015).

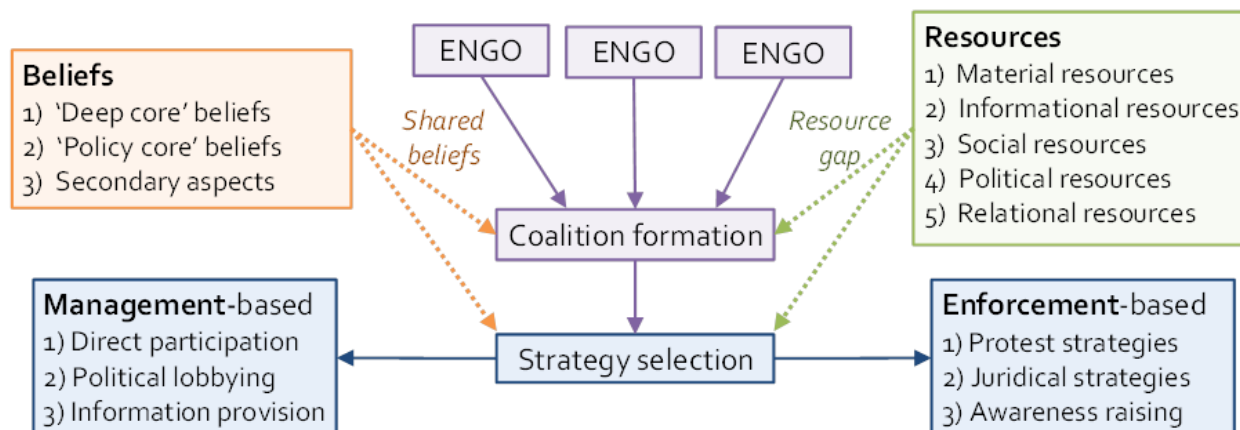
Another way for ENGOs to influence policy is political lobbying. Like direct participation, lobbying is based on ties with policy-makers. It, however, differs from direct participation in the sense that lobbying does not require direct involvement in the process of policy-making (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Richards & Heard, 2005).

### *2.7.2 Enforcement-based strategies*

The first category of enforcement-based strategies I distinguished is called protest strategies, which includes demonstrations, strikes and boycotts, but also more disruptive strategies like sit-ins, occupations, sabotage and road blocks (Andrews & Edwards, 2005; Brumley, 2010; Munro, 2005; Richards & Heard, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017). The aim of these strategies is twofold. On the one hand, they are symbolic in the sense that they are used to express the dissatisfaction of a large group, but these strategies are as well a way to pressure policy-makers. Attracting media attention is an important aspect of protest strategies, in order increase visibility and thereby public pressure (Zchout & Tal, 2017). Protest strategies are characterised by a strong element of protest and are generally non-violent (Andrews & Edwards, 2005; Brumley, 2010; Munro, 2005).

There are also juridical ways for ENGOs to address their disagreement with governmental decisions on Natura 2000. Lawsuits can be launched both at the national and international level, through respectively national courts or the European Court of Justice (ECJ), to challenge ostensible violation with the HD and BD (Richards & Heard, 2005).

Awareness-raising strategies lastly aim to provide knowledge and raise awareness, both to inform and convince the public and indirectly influence policy. Examples of informational strategies are conferences, media campaigns, petitions, polls, speeches, pamphleteering and posters (Andrews & Edwards, 2005; Brumley, 2010; Munro, 2005; Richards & Heard, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017).



*Figure 2: The theoretical framework of the study* - Environmental ENGOS aim to influence the policy-making process. In order to maximise influence, organisations with at least partially shared beliefs cooperate and combine resources. This closes resource gaps and thereby strengthens the power of such coalitions. The coalition-identity and resource availability, furthermore, are expected to determine the choice for strategies. This study identifies coalitions and their shared beliefs, resource interdependencies and preferred strategies.

## 2.8 The overall objective

As described, this study aimed to identify how ENGOS cooperate in order to influence the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHDs) in EU MSs. Figure 2 shows the overall theoretical framework that was used as a basis of this research. The role of coalition-building between ENGOS in addressing non-compliance was investigated in three different cases in one MS of the EU. Taking this state as a starting point, I identified the coalitions in order to answer the first research question, which was: "What coalitions of ENGOS are being formed in order to influence the implementation of the BHDs?"

After the coalitions were identified, the next step was to investigate what factors influenced the formation of the coalitions formed. The main incentive for organisations to collaborate and form coalitions is assumed to be the opportunity to combine resources, in order to achieve common goals and maximise influence (Arts & Leroy, 2006; Cent et al., 2013; Smith, 2000). Moreover, shared beliefs are expected to be an important boundary condition for the establishment of such alliances (Cent et al., 2013; Glück, 2000; Sarvasova et al., 2013; Veenman et al., 2009). Based on these hypotheses, the second and third research question were developed, which were: "What role do shared beliefs play in coalition-building between ENGOS?" and "What role does the opportunity to combine resources play in coalition-building between ENGOS?"

As discussed, ACF was used in order to answer the second research question, whereas PNA was applied to the third one. PNA is criticised for being too static and unable to explain radical policy changes, whereas the drawback of ACF is considered to be its ignorance of the structural features of coalitions. Cent et al. (2013), Hysing & Olsson (2008) and Smith (2000) however found that when combined, these theories compensate one another's shortcomings and are therefore considered to be complementary. They argued that beliefs taken into account in the ACF compensate for the lack of dynamics in PNA, whereas the resources dealt with in the PNA compensate for the lacking interests and interdependencies in the ACF. In line with this, I assumed that ACF and PNA are indeed complementary. For that reason these two theories were used to answer respectively the second and third research question.

The objective of this study focused not only on the coalition-building itself, but also on how these coalitions try to influence the implementation. Therefore, the fourth research question was raised to identify possible strategies: "What strategies are applied by coalitions of ENGOS to influence the implementation of the BHDs?" As described, strategy selection was expected to depend both on the resources and beliefs actors and thereby coalitions have (Brumley, 2010; Zchout & Tal, 2017). Accordingly, the last research question dealt with this relationship and reads as follows: "How do shared beliefs and combining resources explain strategy selection by coalitions of ENGOS?"

### 3. Research Methodologies

As described, the aim of this research was to identify and understand coalitions between environmental NGOs, established to contribute to the enforcement of Natura 2000 and thereby improve its implementation. The overall situation in one EU Member State (MS) will be investigated. Interviews with large, national organisations will be the starting point of this research. This chapter will provide insight into the types of data, and the decisions taken with respect to the selection of MSs, cases, and organisations.

#### 3.1 Types of data

In this research, the methodology for collecting data was twofold, both a literature study and interviews were conducted.

##### 3.1.1 Literature study

A first scientific literature study was used to develop the basis theory and, furthermore, formed the basis of the interviews. An additional literature study was carried out in parallel with the interviews, in order to explore the specific role of the concerned NGOs and to gain better insight in the cases. This second literature search consisted of an analysis of both primary sources, including policy documents of the EC, and secondary documents, including scientific journals, books and reports, but also media publications and web pages. For every ENGO that was interviewed, all relevant literature reporting on the role of the organisation in the specific case was analysed. The information acquired helped to make the interviews that followed more specific and focused.

##### 3.1.2 Interviews

The interviews with representatives of ENGOs were the most important source of data in this research. The questions asked in these interviews addressed the topics covered by the research questions, including: the composition of coalitions; the availability of resources, based on the categorisation presented; shared beliefs, based on the three levels of a belief system discussed; and lastly the strategies undertaken by coalitions in order to enforce Natura 2000 policy. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were arranged with key actors, so not only representatives of all involved ENGOs, but also with governmental authorities, including representatives of the national ministries and the international DG Environment.

Appendix II shows the interview guide that was used for the interviews with the involved ENGOs. For the interviews with governmental authorities, another interview guide was used. This one can be found in appendix III. Although these interview guides were used as a template for every interview, it time after time turned out to be impossible to follow the guide exactly. Since every case, organisation and respondent is different, there was variance in the sequence of the questions and emphasis on every question. There was also variance in the processing of the interviews. Most interviews were recorded and transcribed afterwards. This was the preferred method since it guaranteed that all information provided by the respondent is preserved. A few respondents, however, disagreed with recording, so during these interviews written notes were taken, which is more sensitive to inaccuracies.

For every interview, the transcript was shared with the concerned respondent afterwards. Furthermore, these respondents had the opportunity to elucidate unclear statements and indicate inaccuracies in the transcript. Citations of respondents in this report were only used in case permission was given by the respondent concerned. For privacy reasons the respondents that were interviewed for this research are not mentioned by name in this report.

#### 3.2 Decisions on data collection

Several decisions have been taken in the process of data collection. Firstly I selected a MSs and three ENGOs in that state to start with. On the basis of interviews with these organisations three cases were selected. Thereafter interviews with the organisations involved with these cases were conducted. This section explains the considerations related to these decisions.

### 3.2.1 *Member State selection*

The situation in one EU MS was investigated to answer the research questions and achieve the overall objective of this study. Since this research aimed to explore the strategies of ENGOS for influencing policy, a MS with strong civil-society organisations was required. These organisations are generally more-developed in countries in the north-west of Europe, EU MSs that are located in the central and eastern part are therefore less suitable for this study. (Börzel & Buzogány, 2010) Another prerequisite for the selection is there should be some discord within the MS on its performance with respect to meeting the requirements of the BHDs policy, as this research is focused on the role of non-compliance by states. This criterion excludes the Scandinavian countries, since these countries typically regard compliance with supranational legislation as more important than domestic concerns (Frederiksen et al., 2017).

Only a few MSs are left that meet both requirements presented. Moreover, there are some practical considerations relevant for selecting MSs. With respect to language, it is essential that the representatives of the organisations master Dutch or English. In additions, it is important that travelling distance to the interview locations is not too long, due to financial and temporal limitations. Based on this, I chose to select the Netherlands, which is country whose membership already lasts since the early beginning of the EU. The organisational capacity of ENGOS is, furthermore, well-developed in the Netherlands, and the Dutch courts accept the rigorous implications of the BD and HD (Slepcevic, 2009). Like other MSs in the Northwest of Europe, the Netherlands considers compliance with EU law as very important, but at the same time as one of many priorities (Frederiksen et al., 2017). Countries in the North-western Europe however also differ in some respects. Dutch ENGOS have relatively open access to courts, which enables them to easily challenge governmental decisions. In many other MSs, on the contrary, the opportunities for starting a lawsuit are relatively restricted and are, furthermore, characterised by high procedural costs, which is for example the case in Germany (Slepcevic, 2009). Despite the differences between states, many parallels can be identified as well between EU MSs. How universally applicable the research outcomes are will therefore be strongly dependent on the context.

### 3.2.2 *Selection of initial organisations*

For the selected MS, which is the Netherlands, I first selected the three most relevant ENGOS to start with on the basis of a few conditions. The first prerequisite was that these organisations had to consider themselves as national ENGOS, which excluded supranational and local organisations. Moreover, ENGOS were asked about the role of the BHDs in the general course of events of the organisation, since the organisations had to be involved in ensuring compliance of the directives. Of all Dutch organisations that met these requirements, the three with the largest number of members were chosen.

The WNF, which is the ENGO with the largest member base in the Netherlands, was for example approached, but was not selected since the BHDs were said to have a limited priority in this organisation. LandschappenNL moreover indirectly represents many members since it is the umbrella organisation of the Provincial Landscapes and Landscape Management Organisations, but was not selected as well, since it has no own members. Based on the three criteria, Natuurmonumenten, the Vogelbescherming and the Waddenvereniging were selected for the first round of interviews.

### 3.2.3 *Selection of cases*

The option to select specific cases on beforehand on the basis of literature was considered, but not chosen for several reasons. The benefit of this method would have been that the selection procedure did not depend on the preferences of organisations and respondents, but would be carried out by the researcher. An crucial drawback of this method however would be that it is impossible to get a complete and representative overview of all cases of non-compliance in the past. In addition, traceability of these cases is dependent on strategical choices, since lawsuits are for instance much better documented than lobbying campaigns. So overall, case selection on beforehand would have disadvantaged less visible strategies and would, furthermore, have excluded strategies that were not yet considered and included in the theoretical framework. Therefore it was decided to place this responsibility on the respondents. As discussed, Natuurmonumenten, the Vogelbescherming and the Waddenvereniging were the first three organisations selected for an interview. I chose to invite each respondent to present three cases in which their ENGO attempted to improve decisions on the BHDs. For every organisation, I subsequently selected one case to further elaborate on.

**Requirements:**

- 1) The respondent considers the presented case to be an example of non-compliance of the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHDs).
- 2) A minimum of at least two Environmental NGOs (ENGOS), including the organisation of the respondent, formed a coalition in the case in order to improve compliance with the BHDs.
- 3) The actions of the coalition to improve compliance were focused on a clear target actor, with the authority to decide on implementation of the BHDs.
- 4) The case is closed.



**Criteria:**

- 1) Coalitions with more ENGOS involved are preferred over smaller coalitions.
- 2) Coalitions that include ENGOS from different levels are preferred over one-level coalitions.
- 3) Coalitions with more involved actors are preferred over smaller coalitions.
- 4) More recent cases are preferred over older cases.

*Figure 3: The procedure for case selection* – Respondents of the three most relevant Dutch ENGOS were invited to present cases. The selection procedure for these cases was based on strict requirements and flexible criteria. Cases at least had to meet the four requirements in the upper box before being taken into consideration. In addition, cases that met the requirements were compared on the basis of the criteria in the second box, criterion 1 outweighing criterion 2, et cetera. Consequently, selection criteria 4 was only applied if cases were similar on the first 3 criteria.

The procedure for case selection was based on four strong requirements and, furthermore, three criteria to distinguish between cases that met the basic requirements. Figure 3 describes the requirements and criteria used in the selection procedure. The requirements presented, on the one hand, are conditions that necessarily need to be met in order to be able to answer the research questions. The determined criteria on the other hand are more flexible and are particularly related to the size and variety of a coalition. Larger and more diverse coalitions are expected to provide more information on the interactions between ENGOS and therefore preferred. The cases that scored best on these criteria were selected. Since one case was selected in every interview, this led to a total of three cases. In the interview with the representative of Natuurmonumenten, the Fitness Check of the BHDs was selected. “Windpark Fryslân”, a wind park in the IJsselmeer was the case that was chosen in the interview with the Vogelbescherming. The selected case in the interview with the Waddenvereniging, lastly, was salt extraction below the Wadden Sea.

### 3.2.4 Selection of further respondents

As explained the cases were selected on the basis of the initial interviews with Natuurmonumenten, the Vogelbescherming and the Waddenvereniging. The first interviewees provided information on the composition of coalitions involved in the chosen cases. All ENGOS that were part of the concerned coalition were approached and requested for an interview. The relevant targets were approached for an interview as well. This method of respondent selection can be seen as a form of snowball sampling, since the first round of interviews determined what organisations were interviewed next.

There turned out to be some overlap in organisations between the different coalitions, all three organisations I contacted for the initial interviews appeared to be part of all coalitions. I tried to avoid consulting the same respondent for more than one case. All approached organisations were willing to contribute to this research. Table 1 provides an overview per case of all organisations that were approached for an interview.

Moreover, a few exploratory interviews were conducted with organisations that were not involved in the coalitions described, but nevertheless play a notable role in the landscape of environmental organisations. The choices for these organisations were based on recommendations provided by respondents of ENGOS involved in the coalitions of interest. The organisations selected were the Groene11, the Vereniging van Bos- en Natuurterreineigenaren (VBNE), Das & Boom and Staatsbosbeheer. Insights gained from these interviews served as an exploration and background for subsequent interviews and phases of the study.

*Table 1: Overview of interviewed actors per case* – For every case, all relevant actors were interviewed, including the ENGOs that were part of the coalition and the authorities where the actions of the coalitions were focused on.

Case	Fitness Check of the BHD	"Windpark Fryslân"	Salt extraction below the Wadden Sea
<i>Coalition</i>	Vogelbescherming	Vogelbescherming	Vogelbescherming
	Natuurmonumenten	Natuurmonumenten	Natuurmonumenten
	Waddenvereniging	Waddenvereniging	Waddenvereniging
	Wereld Natuur Fonds (WNF)	IJsselmeervereniging	
	LandschappenNL	It Fryske Gea	
	SoortenNL		
<i>Target</i>	Ministry of Economic Affairs	Ministry of Economic Affairs	Ministry of Economic Affairs
	EC – DG Environment	Province of Friesland	

### 3.3 Case description

This section concisely describes the three cases that were selected. It will not go into detail on the cases and associated coalitions, since more detailed information will be provided in the results chapter.

#### 3.3.1 Case I: Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives

In 2014 a Fitness Check of the BHDs was announced by the EC. The main aim of this Fitness Check was to assess whether or not the directives were still fit for purpose, based on five criteria which were effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance, and EU added value (EC, 2017). The EC examined the successes, problems and costs of the implementation in general as well as the opportunities to improve the implementation and the status of implementation in EU MSs. In addition, the views of relevant stakeholder groups were taken into consideration (EC, 2017). The whole process can be divided into two parts, the first one consisting of gathering evidence and consulting Member States and key stakeholders. In this phase which lasted from January to June 2015, the EC visited and consulted Member States and relevant actors. Furthermore, a questionnaire was made available for nature authorities, other public bodies, private actors and NGOs concerned with nature conservation (EC, 2017). The second part of the Fitness Check primarily consisted of a public consultation, which was launched in order to gather and reveal the opinions of EU citizens. This public questionnaire was open for twelve weeks and closed on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 2015 (EC, 2015). In November 2015, the EC presented their draft findings of the Fitness Check and in March 2016 the evaluation of the Fitness Check process was published. In December 2016, the final report on the Fitness Check of the BHDs was published. This report concluded that both directives were fit for purpose and were still highly relevant, but that the implementation must be improved in order to reach their objectives, which requires collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders in EU MSs (EC, 2017). The EC lastly published an Action Plan which presented the shortcomings of the BHDs and actions for improving the implementation. Since the coalition of interest was primarily active during the Fitness Check itself, the focus of the present study was confined to the period between the announcement of the Fitness Check by the EC and the presentation of the final report.

#### 3.3.2 Case II: "Windpark Fryslân"

'Windpark Fryslân' is the second case of interest. Several coalitions played a role during the process that resulted in the plan to construct this wind park in the IJsselmeer. In the first phase an initiative called 'Fryslân foar de Wyn' developed a plan that investigated potential spots for wind parks in the Province of Friesland, based on both support in society and impact on the landscape. This initiative was financially supported by the Province of Friesland and was a collaboration between 'Platform Duurzaam Fryslân', 'Friese Milieu Federatie' and 'Hou Friesland Mooi', which are respectively an association for producers of wind energy, a collaboration between ENGOs, and a citizens organisation. The collaboration succeeded and they presented their final report in September 2014. In December 2014 however, the Provincial Council of Friesland ultimately voted against onshore wind turbines and thereby rejected 'Fryslân foar de Wyn', but allowed wind turbines in the IJsselmeer. This led to the plan of 'Windpark Fryslân', which was the development of a wind park in the IJsselmeer which is a lake protected under the Birds Directive and thereby part of Natura 2000. The announcement of this wind park resulted in November 2016 in the establishment of the coalition of interest in the present study, which aimed to

prevent the construction of 'Windpark Fryslân'. At the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2018, the administrative court of the Council of State decided that the objections against 'Windpark Fryslân' were unfounded, which meant that the 89 wind turbines may be constructed. In March 2019, the initiators started with the construction of the wind park. Since the coalitions of interest was formed after the plan of 'Windpark Fryslân' emerged, and was active until the final decision of the Council of State, the scope of the present study was confined to this period.

### *3.3.3 Case III: Salt extraction below the Wadden Sea*

After fifteen years of salt extraction by 'Frisia Zout B.V.' in the northwest of Friesland which led to subsidence and salinisation, the Province of Friesland and concerned municipalities advocated in November 2011 for relocating the salt extraction to the Wadden Sea. In September 2014 the State Secretary of Economic Affairs granted a permit on the basis of the Nature Protection Law, which is a Dutch law that also covers the BHDs. After this decision was challenged, the administrative court of the Council of State decided on the 23<sup>th</sup> of November 2016 that the permit for salt extraction below the Wadden Sea was legitimate. The start of the salt extraction by Frisia is planned for 2020. The third and last coalition of interest aimed to prevent salt extraction below the Wadden Sea, since they expected that salt extraction would lead to subsidence. The coalition formed was formed after the plan for relocating salt extraction to the Wadden Sea emerged and was particularly active until the decision of the Council of State, therefore this is the period of interest in the present study.

## **3.4 Data analysis**

As mentioned earlier, the interviews were the main source of information in this research. Information, provided by literature only had a supportive function, i.e. as a basis for the interviews or to position the outcomes of the interviews within the existing literature. All interviews were processed on the basis three steps. After the respondent gave permission for using the interview, recorded interviews were transcribed, divided into fragments, and the fragments were coded. The transcription step was skipped for interviews where recording was not aloud. The coding was based on the in advance developed theoretical framework that was presented in the previous chapter. This theory was developed on the basis of scientific literature in order to answer the research questions on beliefs, resources and strategies. This, however, does not ensure that the theory accurately corresponds with reality, therefore an open and critical view towards the theory was crucial during the data collection phase. Although the original theoretical framework largely remained unchanged, a few small aspects were altered. These changes will be described in the next section.

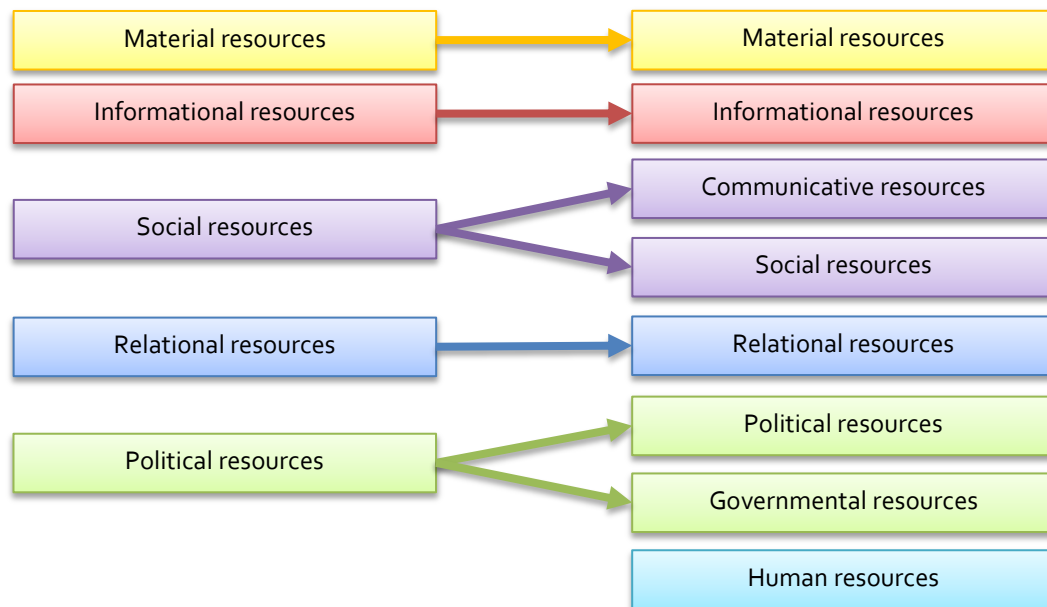
## **3.5 Modifications to the theoretical framework**

In general both the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) and Policy Network Analysis (PNA) were appropriate for data analysis, though some minor aspects have been changed in the categorisations of the resources and strategies that were developed in advance. A few categories appeared to overlap whereas other categories turned out to be not inclusive enough. This paragraph describes the modifications to the original framework, in the discussion section I will elaborate on the justifications of the choices made.

### *3.5.1 Modifications to the resource categorisation*

Figure 4 shows how the categorisation of resources changed during the phase of data collection. Social resources originally included on the one hand the members and followers and on the other the communication employees and channels. Respondents however generally appeared to distinguish between these categories and the availability of both did not always behave in a similar way. Therefore a new categorisation was made that does distinguish between the two. In this new categorisation, social resources are defined as all forms of public support, including members and followers. Communicative resources cover all means an organisation has to reach their social resources, including their (social) media channels and communication employees. Due to this new distinction, a distinction can for example be made between organisations that actively contribute to the communication strategy, and organisations that only contribute through public support.





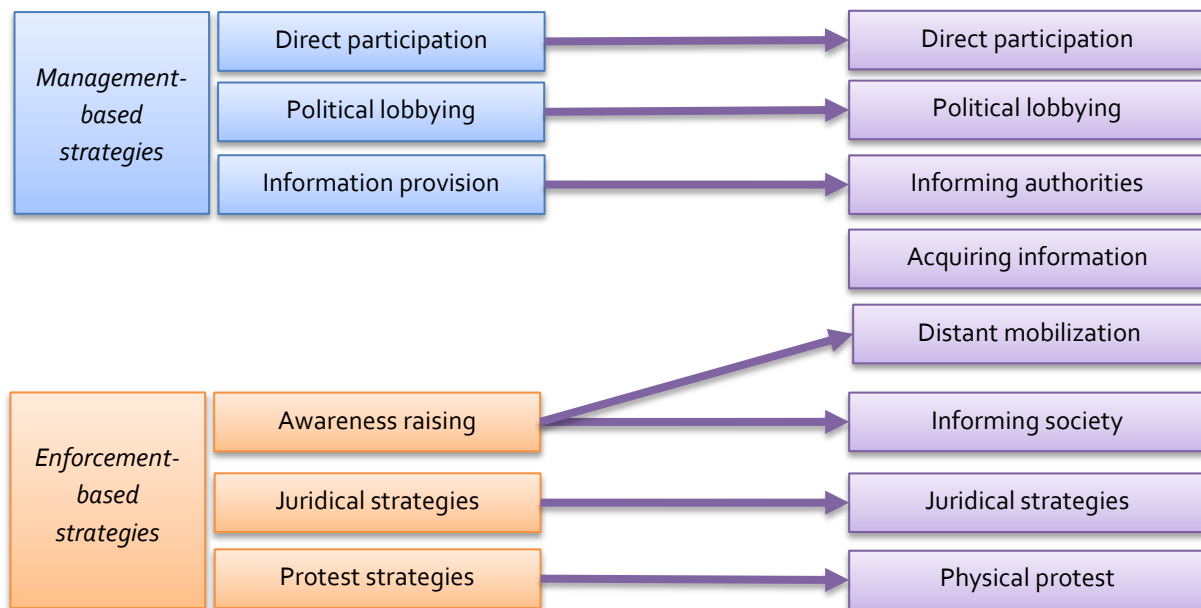
*Figure 4: Modifications to the resource categorisation* – This figure shows how the categorisation of resource types changed during the process of data collection. Two categories were divided and one new category was added.

Furthermore, I chose to divide the category of political resources into two new categories as well. In the original categorisation, the category included connections with both the executive and legislative power. The interviews however made clear that these two types of connections are fundamentally different, and are moreover associated with different strategies. In the new division a distinction is being made between political resources and governmental resources, they can be described as connections with respectively legislative and executive actors. The category of relational resources remained the same and included connections with societal actors.

Besides the divisions, a completely new resource type was introduced during data collection, this category is human resources. Respondents often emphasised the role of capacity, whereas this factor was not covered accurately by the original categorisation. Therefore the category of human resources was added to cover capacity and the element of time.

### 3.5.2 Modifications to the strategy categorisation

The theoretical framework on strategies was altered as well in the data collection phase, since the respondents appeared to distinguish between more categories of strategies than was initially determined on the basis of the collected literature. The original framework distinguished between management-based and enforcement-based strategies, which were respectively characterised as proactive and reactive. On the basis of the interviews, however, I decided to abolish this distinction, since coalitions often combine strategies and the strict distinction between proactive and reactive strategies, furthermore, appeared not to be exclusive. Therefore, the new strategy categorisation does not include subcategories (figure 5).



*Figure 5: Modifications to the strategy categorisation* – This figure shows the original and modified categories of strategies. The original distinction between management-based and enforcement-based strategies was abolished. Furthermore, the category of acquiring information was added and the original category of awareness raising was divided into distant mobilisation and informing society.

In the original categorisation, the strategy of awareness raising consisted of both informing society, and strategies that aimed to reveal people's opinions. The respondents however appeared to distinguish between the two, therefore these strategies were separated in the new framework. In addition, they clearly distinguished between on the one hand distant support, such as online actions, and physical mobilization on the other, which includes the more traditional forms of protest. Consequently the alternative framework made a distinction between informing society, distant mobilization and physical protest. Furthermore, the strategy of acquiring information was added to the framework, since respondents often identified gathering information as a strategy in itself. Acquiring information often formed the base of many other strategies, so considering the inquiry as a distinct strategy would provide insight into this process. The remaining categories in the framework remained unchanged.

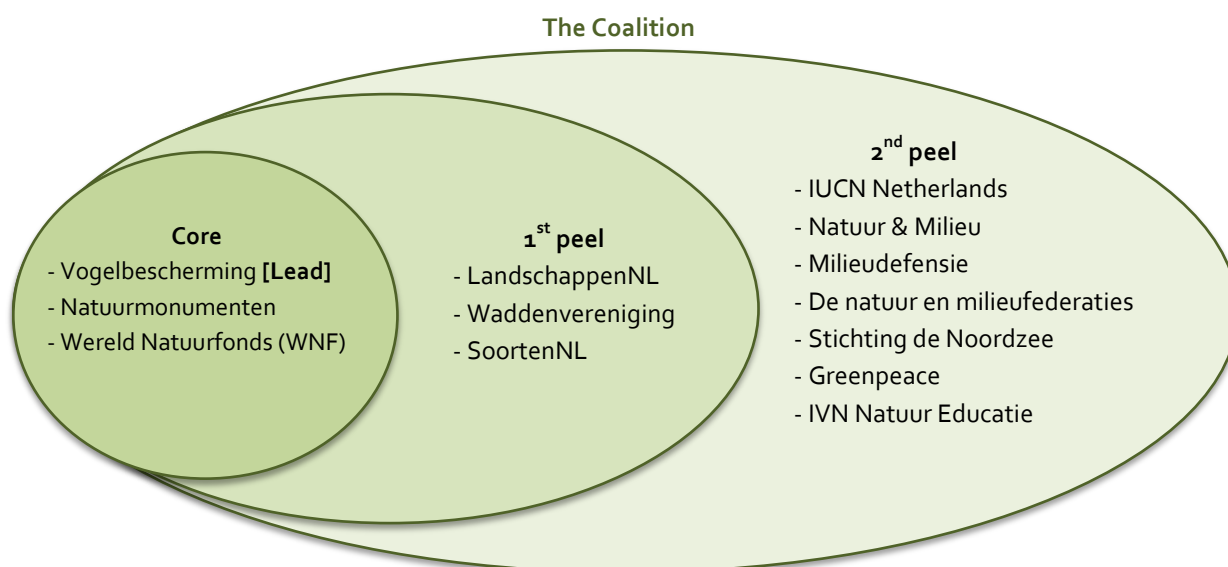
## 4. Results – Case I: *The Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives*

In this chapter, the findings of the interviews conducted for the case of the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives will be presented. Every section will deal with one research question. The last section of this chapter presents the main conclusions on the case.

### 4.1 Composition of coalition

The coalition in the Netherlands consisted of thirteen organisations. All respondents recognised a differentiation within the coalition in terms of involvement and divided the coalition into different parts. Five respondents, furthermore, used the same terms to name these parts and distinguished between a core and peels. The representative of the Vogelbescherming accurately described this distinction: “The coalition consisted of a core team, closely surrounded by first peel, which was surrounded again by a larger peel.”

According to all respondents, the Vogelbescherming, Natuurmonumenten and the WNF formed the core of the coalition, whereas the first peel consisted of LandschappenNL, Waddenvereniging and SoortenNL (Figure 6). The second peel was formed by the remaining organisation of the Groene11, which is a collaboration between Dutch Environmental organisations. All organisations in this coalition were affiliated to the Groene11. The Vogelbescherming took the overall lead in the coalition. The layers of this coalition differed from each other in several aspects, these differences will be discussed later.



*Figure 6: Composition of the coalition* – This figure presents an overview of the organisations that were part of the Dutch coalition. Furthermore, it shows how the different layers, where this coalition consisted of, were composed.

### 4.2 Shared beliefs and coalition-building

On the basis of statements made by the respondents, the following paragraph will respectively describe the main policy core beliefs of the coalition, how beliefs were related to coalition-building, and what secondary aspects played a role in the present coalition.

#### 4.2.1 Policy core beliefs shared by the coalition

All respondents were asked for the most important themes and goals of their organisations. The subject that was mentioned by all organisations was the value of nature and the aim to protect it. Furthermore, all organisations considered the BHDs to be of major importance for nature conservation in Europe. The unanimity within the coalition was also recognised by the representative of Natuurmonumenten who said that “All involved organisations made exactly the same assessment of the situation.”, and the representative of the Vogelbescherming who said that “All organisations agreed

with the most important goal of preserving the directives. Ideally we would even prefer stronger regulations to protect nature or conserve biodiversity, but this was the highest achievable. All organisations fully endorsed this standpoint.”

The only organisation that used to have a less pronounced view was LandschappenNL, as the respondent explained “In the past, there were a few landscapes that considered Natura 2000 to be a burden. Nowadays however, their view is more nuanced.”, and “Some people from the Landscapes used to say that the tensions between agriculture and nature were the result of the European obligations, but in the last years it turned out how important European nature legislation is for our own Dutch nature conservation.” So as the respondent describes all Landscapes that are represented by his organisation are currently in favour of the BHDs, despite the divided opinion in the past. All in all, this means that all organisations in the coalition shared the aim to preserve the BHDs, therefore the value of protecting nature can be considered as the main policy core belief that underpinned this collaboration.

#### *4.2.2 Policy core beliefs and coalition-building*

The policy core beliefs of an organisation were expected to play a role in the process of coalition-building. This was recognised by the respondents as well. Firstly, a connection was identified between prioritising of beliefs and the role an organisation takes up in a coalition. The organisations in the core and first peel all considered themselves as nature organisations, whereas the second peel of the coalition consisted of broader environmental organisations. In line with this difference, the respondent of SoortenNL distinguished between on the one hand ENGOs focused on grey issues, which are for instance Milieudefensie and Greenpeace, and green ENGOs on the other, which includes all ENGOs that focus specifically on nature-related issues. This distinction was also recognised by the representative of the Groene11 who described that “Nature policy like Natura 2000 is less relevant for broad environmental organisations than for nature organisations. Air quality on the other hand is an example of a theme that is more relevant for broad environmental organisations than for nature organisations.” So the nature and broad environmental NGOs at least differ in how they prioritise certain policy core beliefs, which in the case of the Fitness Check was visible in the division into on the one hand the core and first peel, and the second peel on the other.

How prioritising of beliefs translates into coalition-building was also described by several respondents. The representative of LandschappenNL for example mentioned that every organisation has other priorities and explained that these priorities influence the decision of an organisation to take up a leading role or not. A similar statement was made by the representative of Natuurmonumenten, who said that it depends on the case whether or not an organisation decides to join the core of a coalition. The WNF respondent, furthermore, identified the urgency of the issue as a factor that influenced their decision to join this coalition. Lastly, the respondent representing the Waddenvereniging concluded that “Organisations only cooperate if they share the same interests, shared interests are essential for coalition-building.” These statements indicate that the decisions on whether or not to join a coalition, and in what role, are dependent on how important an organisation considers a certain issue to be, and thereby on which beliefs are being prioritised over others.

As presented in the previous paragraphs, the respondents described that the organisations in the coalition of the Fitness Check case indeed did share policy core beliefs regarding the BHDs. The respondents however appeared not to consider shared beliefs as a necessary requirement for coalition-building. The representative of the Vogelbescherming for example said that: “It is not essential for coalition-building that all involved organisations share the same opinion on all subjects or even have the same principles; we also form occasional coalitions.” In line with this, the representative of LandschappenNL explained that “We usually collaborate with organisations that fit best with the subject. We collaborate a lot with Natuurmonumenten, but also with agricultural organisations, or private landowners. It varies strongly.”

Although the coalition in the Fitness Check solely consisted of ENGOs, some connections with companies were used as well. The representatives of LandschappenNL and Natuurmonumenten explained that mining companies were not in favour of the BHDs, but nevertheless supported the ENGO coalition for two reasons. Firstly, the existence of the BHDs legitimise their authorised mining activities. Their second reason was that opening up the directives could also lead to stricter regulations, which they really did not want. “We used these companies to show that not all companies were against the BHDs.”, the respondent of Natuurmonumenten explained, “We already knew most of these companies. In the past we, and the WNF as well, collaborated with some of these mining companies to implement nature development. This gave us the impression that these companies are not always our opponents”. The statements of these respondents imply that shared policy core beliefs are not necessarily required for cooperation between actors, and that only a shared goal might suffice.

#### *4.2.3 Secondary aspects shared by the coalition*

As explained earlier, secondary aspects are preferences of actors regarding policy regulation. Secondary aspects for example explain how actors want to achieve or implement their policy core beliefs. As mentioned in the previous section, the most important policy core belief that played a role and was shared by all ENGOs in the coalition was the value they ascribe to nature and biodiversity and the related aim to protect it. These organisations might have different ideas or opinions about how nature can be conserved best, since their identities differ in several aspects. However, no differences between secondary aspects have been observed. The representative of the Vogelbescherming described that “Our goals were to ensure that the directives would not be changed, and that the implementation would be improved.” As discussed in previous sections, it took little time for the organisations to agree on this goal, which implies that all involved ENGOs considered the BHDs as important regulation to protect nature. All involved organisations were actually even in favour of stricter directives, but they agreed not to aim for this. Opening up the BHDs would have been too risky and could possibly have led to weakening of the directives, the organisations argued. As the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained “Some people within our organisations thought that it would have been better to aim for more stringent directives, but that goal would not have been realistic in the political situation of that moment. The tendency was deregulation and reducing the obstacles for economic activities. So the expectation was that strengthening the directives would be unrealizable, therefore we focused out strategy on preserving the BHDs in their original form.”

Despite the absence of different views on secondary aspects, the core organisations made decisions on what subjects to focus on in terms of better implementation. As the representative of Natuurmonumenten explained “We all took up a topic where we are most familiar with. The WNF put a lot of effort in placing the deficient implementation of the BHDs in marine areas on the agenda, the Vogelbescherming expressed dissatisfaction about meadow bird policy being not efficient enough, and Natuurmonumenten emphasised the importance of the National Ecological Network as a means to achieve the Natura 2000 goals.” So overall, the ENGOs that joined this coalition shared secondary aspects in the sense that they agreed on the importance of the BHDs as a measure to protect nature in EU MSs, and all recognised implementation deficiencies. The organisations however did show preferences on which implementation issues to address.

### **4.3 Resource availability and coalition-building**

This section describes the role of resources within the national coalition, on the basis of the resource categorisation that was presented in the methodology section. The first paragraph presents which resources were contributed by which organisation in the coalition, whereas the second paragraph discusses for which of these resource types, the opportunity of combining resources of organisations played a role in coalition-building.

#### *4.3.1 Resource contribution per organisation*

As explained earlier, the respondents divided this coalition into a core and two peels. All respondents recognised that these layers can in particular be distinguished on the basis of differences in their resource investments. The respondents distinguished between resource types, when describing the differences in resource contributions between the different layers.

Firstly, all respondents indicate the invested amount of time and capacity, which are human resources, as a difference between the core on the one hand, and the peels on the other hand. This is best illustrated by a quote of the representative of Natuurmonumenten who described how coalitions, including the present one, are composed: “Several organisations form the core. This core is surrounded by a peel that is involved, but not on a daily base. This layer is again surrounded by a second peel that considers the topic to be important and supports the coalition, but does not have enough capacity to contribute as much as the first two layers”. As recognised by the respondents, the three core organisations together took all strategic decisions and thereby invested most time.

Most material resources were spent on the campaign and an outsourced scientific research. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming described that “Based on the size of the organisation, we usually make use of a standard distribution of the costs. Most of the costs have been contributed by Natuurmonumenten, the WNF and the Vogelbescherming.” The respondent of LandschappenNL recognised as well that usually a standard distribution of the costs is used to distribute the costs among the organisations. Two other respondents however said that in this case, the core organisations bore all costs. So despite the varying answers, all respondents at least acknowledged that the core organisations contributed most material resources.

As was recognised by all respondents as well, both the core and the first peel of the coalition contributed informational resources (table 2). All organisations in these layers provided practice examples and relevant studies. Furthermore, the respondents explained that the kind of knowledge that was contributed differed per organisation, due to their somewhat different focus and related expertise. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming for example described that “Organisations differ in the amount of input they contribute and all organisations contribute on the basis of their own background.” In addition, the respondent explained that “Natuurmonumenten has a lot of experience as a manager of nature areas, whereas we are a pure conservation organisation. Collaboration facilitates combining of different types of input.” and “SoortenNL contributed a lot science-based information. LandschappenNL, Natuurmonumenten and the Waddenvereniging came up with a lot of practice examples.” These informational contributions were recognised by four other respondents as well. Moreover, three respondents mentioned that juridical expertise played a role as well. Jurists from the Vogelbescherming, Natuurmonumenten and the Waddenvereniging were involved in the collaboration, as a result these organisations contributed most juridical expertise.

All three different types of connections were combined in the Fitness Check case. The contributed relational resources, firstly which are connections with non-governmental actors or non-political actors, were in this case connections with business and other NGOs. The core organisation already had relations with companies and used these to strengthen their own standpoint, which was already discussed in paragraph 4.2.2 on the basis of a quote of the representative of Natuurmonumenten. Connections with other organisations played a role in the coalition-building process in two ways. The connections of the core organisations with their international partners in the first place resulted in the cooperation between the core organisations nationally, the respondents explained. Moreover, the core organisations attracted the first and second peel through their existing connections within the Groene11. The role of connections with international umbrella organisations and the Groene11 will be described in further detail in 5.4. None of the respondents however mentioned that relational resources played a role in the sense that the coalition attracted organisations because of their relationships with other actors.

In terms of political resources, the Groene11 played a role as well. The respondents of the core organisations describe that they were supported by the Groene11 in their lobby activities. The representative of the Vogelbescherming for example explained that “The Groene11 facilitated contact with Members of Parliament. Together with an employee of the Groene11, I met many times with the PvdA, since they played a crucial role at a certain moment.” Furthermore, the WNF respondent said that “The Groene11 was used a lot. The three core organisations took part in the lobby, and were supported by the lobbyist of the Groene11 in the Hague. Since the Groene11 functions as our ears and eyes on all issues, they provided knowledge on important issues and developments.”

All three core organisations, furthermore, made use of their own political connections, these connections turned out to differ between the organisations. “The three big core organisations have a network, both in politics and government, and these connections were used.” and “We aligned our lobby activities with each other as efficiently and effectively as possible, which meant that we took into account who had the best relationship with a particular party and who was most familiar with a certain topic”, the representative of Natuurmonumenten explained. In addition, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained that “From the core organisations, everybody had different relationships one could use, via the network of its director or via its own network. We were very pragmatic in our contact with the Parliament: The one that had the best relationship with a certain Member of Parliament arranged and attended a meeting.”

Governmental resources were only mentioned by respondents in the context with the national sounding board, which was organised by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The Vogelbescherming, Natuurmonumenten and LandschappenNL participated in these meetings on behalf of the ENGO coalition. “We were in a working group, which was established by the ministry to involve stakeholders in the whole process and to collect input from stakeholders.” as described by the respondent of the Vogelbescherming. More information on this sounding board will be provided in the paragraph 4.5.1.

Opinion pieces in newspapers and information videos were examples of actions, mentioned by respondents, that required communicative resources. The core organisations took care of these actions and the overall media campaign. However, all involved organisations contributed to some extent by using their channels, including websites, mailings and social media, to distribute messages among their members and followers. As the WNF respondent described “Public actions were supported by the second peel of organisations through their website, social media channels and mails to members.” The representative of Natuurmonumenten also described that the peels were used to maximise the number of responses on the public consultation, and added that “Sometimes the followers of smaller organisations are much more motivated”, which indicates the added value of the social resources of the peels. This was also recognised by the

respondent of the Vogelbescherming who explained that “The peels profit from our work, but they are very useful for us as well, since they have a member base that distinguishes itself from ours.” and “We aimed for as many responses to the public consultation as possible. The mobilisation of not only the members and followers of the core organisations, but also of the peels strongly expanded our reach.” For the organisations in the second peel, no other contribution was mentioned by the respondents than communicative and social resources.

*Table 2: Resource contribution per organisation* – This table describes which resource types were contributed by which ENGOs in the coalition. It provides information on the investment of every organisation in the Fitness Check case, not on the availability of resources within these organisations in general. The table does not distinguish between the amounts a certain organisation invested.

		Material resources	Human resources	Informational resources	Relational resources	Political resources	Governmental resources	Communicative resources	Social resources
Core	Vogelbescherming								
	Natuurmonumenten								
	WNF								
1 <sup>st</sup> peel	Waddenvereniging								
	SoortenNL								
	LandschappenNL								
2 <sup>nd</sup> peel	IUCN Netherlands								
	Natuur & Milieu								
	Milieudefensie								
	De natuur en milieufederaties								
	Stichting de Noordzee								
	Greenpeace								
	IVN Natuur Educatie								

#### 4.3.2 Coalition-building and combining resources

All resource types identified were invested by at least three organisations from the coalition, as was shown in the previous paragraph and table 2. This however does not mean that there would have been an insufficient amount of resources available in this case for individual organisations without coalition-building. Therefore this section presents the resources types for which coalition-building was essential to increase resource availability, according to the respondents.

None of the respondents considered combining material, governmental, relational and political resources crucial in the case of the Fitness Check. For the availability of the remaining resources, coalition-building was crucial according to at least a few of the respondents. Only one respondent considered combining human resources as crucial in this case, the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained that “We would have been less effective if the organisations had less capacity.” and “Collaborating spares work, it is impossible to do all work on your own.”

Moreover, respondents of SoortenNL, the WNF and the Vogelbescherming considered the social resources and related communicative resources to be crucial, especially for the public consultation. As discussed earlier, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming for example said that the peels were very useful since they had a member base that distinguished itself from the members of the core organisations. This respondent, furthermore, stated that “A crucial resource was mobilisation of the public, so the communication was in the Fitness Check case crucial.” The representative of the WNF saw the importance of collaboration for the public consultation and described that “The collaboration between the three core organisations worked perfectly, since combined, these organisations had an enormous member base.”

All organisations, lastly, considered combining knowledge as a crucial element of this collaboration. As the representative of Natuurmonumenten explained, “A crucial resource was especially knowledge, scientific facts, practical and experiential knowledge.” In addition, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming said that “It was crucial that we had such an enormous scientific knowledge basis, and did this so thorough. We blew the European Commission away with our reports, that was

very important.” The representative of SoortenNL lastly argued that the coalition was not further expanded, because the level of expertise in the coalition was already sufficient, which indicates that combining the knowledge of organisations was an incentive for the formation of this coalition. All in all, the collaborating organisations combined their knowledge. This resulted in a large amount of knowledge which all respondents considered to be very important for the process of the Fitness Check.

#### 4.4 Other factors that affect coalition-building

Besides the influence of beliefs and resources, discussed in the previous sections, several other factors were identified by the respondents to play a role in coalition-building and within coalitions. A few of the factors discussed below are somehow related to beliefs and resources, others are not. None of them however perfectly fit in the theoretical frameworks, developed in advance.

The first factor that was mentioned by five respondents was the role of existing connections between the Dutch core organisations and their international umbrella organisations. Before the formation of the coalition between ENGOs at the national level, a cooperation between their international umbrella organisations was already established, which were Bird Life International, the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Friends of the Earth Europe. The national collaboration in several MSs, including the Netherlands, was induced by the international coalition, as the representative of Natuurmonumenten explained “The campaign was coordinated in Brussels by our umbrella organisations. So there was a coalition collaboration at the European level, and parallel to that at the national level as well.” The role of the international partners was also recognised by the other two organisations in the Dutch core, as the WNF respondent stated that “The WWF was our driving force and coordinated all actions for the WWF network” and the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained “Due to the consultation between our international partners, it was more natural for the national organisations to collaborate as well.” In this way, the international collaboration influenced the coalition-building between the national ENGOs, according to the respondents.

Connections played a role in a second way as well in the form of permanent coalitions. Most organisations had already cooperated in previous occasional coalitions, and all involved organisations were, furthermore, affiliated with the Groene11, which is a collaboration between Dutch ENGOs. The respondents of the Vogelbescherming, the Waddenvereniging, SoortenNL and Natuurmonumenten mentioned that the collaboration via the Groene11 contributed to the formation of the coalition in the Fitness Check case. “Coalition-building occurred within the framework of the Groene11. In the Groene11 Nature and environmental organisations regularly meet to discuss all kinds of subjects. This was one of the issues that became important and some organisations were willing to address the topic.”, the representative of SoortenNL for example explained. In the Groene11 organisations regularly meet in subgroups on the basis of shared interests and views on a certain theme, “Not all green topics are relevant for all organisations in the Groene11, so organisations collaborate on issues that they consider relevant”, the Groene11 respondent described. In this way, the Groene11 influences the formation of new coalitions, which appeared to be the case with the Fitness Check coalition as well.

Efficiency was a second factor that three respondents associated with coalition-building. The representative of Natuurmonumenten for example recognised that “Within coalitions, topics are often divided on the basis of quality and efficiency.” Effectivity was also mentioned by the respondent of the Vogelbescherming who described that “On our own we would have been much less effective.” and the representative of SoortenNL who stated that “If we do not cooperate, we are just not effective at all. We may seem big as a movement, but our actual influence on decision-making with respect to budgets and policy is very little.” The latter respondent considered collaboration to be particularly important in lobbying. Respondents of the Vogelbescherming and SoortenNL lastly recognised the importance of having a small core in the Fitness Check case that enabled the coalition to act and decide swiftly.

A last factor that was mentioned by multiple respondents was trust. “Crucial was the trust other parties had in the core organisations. As a result, no time was wasted on convincing the other organisations of strategical decisions.” the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained. In addition, the WNF respondent described that “Within the Groene11, we often use this as an example of a successful coalition. The most important conclusion was that the trust between the Dutch organisation was 100%. A lack of trust between coalition partners can also inhibit one another.” The representative of LandschappenNL lastly described that “Some organisations sometimes tend to project themselves at the expense of their coalition-partners and forget to collaborate, which does not favour the outcomes.” This was also recognised by the respondent of the Waddenvereniging.



## 4.5 Strategy selection by coalitions

This section describes what strategies were applied by the national coalition, on the basis of the strategy categorisation that was described in the methodology section. In each paragraph, the applied strategies for one category will be presented. The last paragraph addresses relations and overlaps between the used strategies.

### 4.5.1 Direct participation

The strategy of direct participation, which is involvement in the decision-making process, was applied in two different ways in the case of the Fitness Check. Firstly, three organisations from the coalition were involved in a sounding board arranged by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. "We were in a working group, which was established by the ministry to involve stakeholders in the whole process and to collect input from stakeholders. We clearly articulated our view, and made clear that we were willing to discuss about solutions, but not about changing the directives, which is what the Ministry wanted. The process was laborious, this working group never functioned well.", the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained. About the composition of the sounding board, this respondent said "Natuurmonumenten, LandschappenNL and the Vogelbescherming attended the meetings on behalf of the green organisations. On the other side were Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management (*Rijkswaterstaat*), the ministry itself, the Port of Rotterdam Authority and VNO-NCW, that kind of organisations."

During one of these meetings the green organisations made a statement by leaving the consultation halfway, "The focus was too one-sided on solving the bottlenecks of business, and not on how the directives could contribute to the conservation and restoration of nature and biodiversity", the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained. The representative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs who attended a few of these meetings as well, declared that this incident was based on a misunderstanding and said that "The green NGOs had derived from a certain message that the ministry wanted to change the directives, but this was actually not the case. And when the misunderstanding was solved there was no way back for them, which was unfortunate. From that moment our sounding board had fallen apart."

The respondents however considered the actual influence of the organisations in this sounding board to be limited. For instance the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained about the sounding board that "The participation was limited to informing the ministry. There was the opportunity to share your view, but in the end the government takes its own decision." This was confirmed by the respondent of the ministry, who said that "The organisations in the sounding board shared their view on our questionnaire and saw a concept version, but the questionnaire we sent in was only on behalf of the different governments. Everybody could send in its own questionnaire." The representative of the ministry however also described that "We still have contact with the green organisations about the follow-up of the Fitness Check. We had less contact with them on beforehand I believe, these contacts were established during the process." This might be an indication that the involvement of the ENGOs in the sounding board yielded something.

### 4.5.2 Political lobbying

Political lobbying is the second strategy type that I distinguish. On behalf of the coalition, the organisations in the core particularly lobbied at a national level. Especially the Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten played an important role in the national lobby, as the WNF respondent explained "The WNF played the most important role in the public debate, whereas the Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten conducted the hardcore lobby." As discussed earlier in 4.3.1, the core organisations were supported by the Groene11 in their lobbying activities.

In September 2015 the Permanent Committee of Economic Affairs, which is a committee of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands, appointed two national rapporteurs, Henk Leenders of the PvdA and Rudmer Heerema of the VVD. The rapporteurs were appointed in order to inform the committee about relevant developments in the process of the Fitness Check of the BHDs. Since these two rapporteurs had to report their findings to the House of Representatives, the Dutch environmental organisations put much effort in providing these rapporteurs with relevant information. As the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained, "We arranged several meetings with these rapporteurs, including a masterclass. In these masterclasses, professors provided information and discussed prejudices on the directives. This contributed a lot." Moreover, the respondent described "We had much contact with the Member of

Parliament of the PvdA. He listened well to us and gave a very balanced feedback to the House of Representatives. So that contributed a lot, the lobbying." The representative of the WNF shared this view and added that "Henk Leenders involved D66 and this led in a very good motion, that was the direct result of the lobbying by our coalition." In December 2015 this motion (*Dossier 34300-XIII nr. 116*) was submitted by Henk Leenders and Koser Kaya of D66 for not altering the BHDs. This motion was supported by the majority of the Dutch House of Representatives, which led to the advice of the Dutch government towards the European Commission not to modify the BHDs.

The coalition put most effort in their national lobbying activities, but also tried to influence the international political arena. "We lobbied in all different ways. We had a lot of contact with servants of the Commission, of which many shared our view. Higher officials in the EC on the other hand were more difficult to influence. Ultimately Commissioner Timmermans presented himself as a strong supporter of our goal.", the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained, and added "We lobbied directly with the Commission, and we met them at conferences. There are many moments to approach them and they are very sensible for public actions."

#### *4.5.3 Acquiring information*

A third category of strategies is acquiring information. As was discussed in 5.3.1, all organisations in the core and first peel collected the information and knowledge that was available within the involved organisations. Moreover, the coalition chose to gather a lot of additional evidence throughout the process of the Fitness Check as well. The respondent of SoortenNL firstly described that "A desktop study was outsourced. The aim of this study was to gain more insight in where the directives did work out well in the Netherlands. This research was used to fill in the questionnaire." Moreover, the coalition commissioned a second research called 'Are the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive fit?' as well, which was published in October 2015 by two researchers of Tilburg University; Bastmeijer and Trouwborst. "In this research, the feasibility of the Birds and Habitats Directives was analysed. The Dutch government considered the directives to be insufficiently dynamic. This analysis showed that the directives offer enough space for a dynamic approach, but that certain minimum level of implementation is required for this.", the representative of the WNF explained. So overall, the coalition commissioned two studies to acquire more information.

#### *4.5.4 Informing authorities*

In the case of the Fitness Check, the coalition frequently used the information acquired by the strategy discussed in the previous section to provide information to authorities. They provided the EC with information and evidence and sent in the questionnaire, which was an instrument provided by the EC for stakeholders to express their view on the BHDs. "The European Commission works from a policy perspective, but they need organisations like ours to actually achieve the European goals. They really appreciate the information that we provide them with.", the respondent of Natuurmonumenten described. In line with this the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained that "We sent in the questionnaire, wrote reports, provided practice examples and refuted dilemma's presented by the Dutch government. Together these activities led to the conclusion of the European Commission that the directives were fit for purpose, but that the implementation had to be improved." The effectivity of this approach was also recognised by the representative of the European Commission: "In terms of the NGOs, they put a lot of effort into providing evidence to support their viewpoint, and I think that was very critical in the context of the credibility of their input. And that was done in the different countries and at the European level, and I think tactically that was a really important kind of approach."

#### *4.5.5 Informing society*

Informing society was a substantial part of the Fitness Check campaign of the Dutch ENGOS. All involved organisations informed their members and followers about the developments in the process, through their own communication channels. The broader public was informed a few times as well; "We made an interesting division. The Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten participated in the sounding board of the ministry, in contrast to the WNF. We published several critical opinion pieces and an interview in a newspaper.", the respondent of the WNF explained. After the Fitness Check was closed, a brochure called 'Nature conservation in the Netherlands, forward with full strength' was published by the coalition. Based on the information collected during the process, this brochure presented how the implementation of the

VHR could be improved. “We distributed this brochure through social media, our website and news mailings.”, the representative of LandschappenNL said.

#### *4.5.6 Distant mobilisation*

The strategy of distant mobilisation was in this case limited to only one action, the public consultation. Like the questionnaire, the public consultation was an instrument provided by the European Commission, but this time in order to capture the views of individual citizens, instead of the large stakeholder parties. In total, the EC received a number of 552,472 responses, which was the highest number of responses ever the EC received to an online consultation. Although the public consultation was open for all citizens of the EU, 97% of the responses considered the BHDs important for nature conservation, 93% of all responses considered the objectives in the BHDs appropriate for protecting nature in the EU, and 92% of the responses considered the BHDs very effective in protecting nature. 37,613 of the responses originated from the Netherlands, which was 7% of the total number of responses received (EC, 2015).

As the respondents described, the coalition chose to formulate concept answers to the questions in the public consultation in order to lower the threshold for citizens to participate. All organisations in the coalition distributed the public consultation among their members and followers. “One of the things we did was to mobilise people to participate in the public consultation of the EC. Everyone could fill it in online and we provided a kind of frame, where people only had to add their name.” the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained. The representative of Natuurmonumenten moreover described that the national coalition consciously decided not to distribute the questionnaire among the broad public, since “mobilizing the broad public could have led to mobilisation of the counterparties.” “We encouraged our own member base to participate through our websites, emails, newsletters, and probably even our magazine. So we used all our communication channels to activate people to participate.”, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained.

All respondents considered the public consultation to be one of the most important strategies applied by this coalition. The representative of the Vogelbescherming for example said that “The public consultation really made a difference, the EC could simply not ignore half a million citizens.” In line with, the respondent of SoortenNL said that “Our goal was reached when people responded massively to the questionnaire, there turned out to be a very broad support for the directives.” This was confirmed by the representative of the EC who said that “One of the things that really did resonate here in the Commission was the fact that there were 552 thousand responses, which was unprecedented. I think that sent a very clear message about the importance of the subject to the College of Commissioners.” and “The public consultation was very significant as a perception of the interest and the concern of European citizens and citizen communities”.

#### *4.5.7 Physical protest*

Protest strategies have been applied in Brussels by the international coalition, but their national partners were not directly involved in these actions. At the national level, the strategy of physical protest was considered as well, but in the end not applied. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained that “On the occasion of the EU presidency of the Netherlands in 2016, a closing conference on the Fitness Check of the BHDs was planned in Amsterdam. The Dutch coalition intended to organise a public action during this event, but the conference was cancelled in the end.” According to the representative of Natuurmonumenten, the coalition chose not to organise similar protest actions in earlier phases, since “mobilizing the broad public could have led to mobilisation of the counterparties.”, as was mentioned in the previous section as well.

#### *4.5.8 Juridical strategies*

Juridical strategies lastly were neither applied nor considered by the coalition. It was simply not possible to sue any actors in this case, since the BHDs are the highest binding nature legislation for EU MSs.

#### *4.5.9 Relations between strategies*

As mentioned, some of the strategy categories discussed turned out to be intertwined or overlap in the case of the Fitness Check. Firstly, acquiring information formed the basis of several other strategies. The collected knowledge and examples

were used in four other strategies; including direct participation, political lobbying, informing authorities and informing society, as described in the previous sections. "We always combine strategies. For instance a media and a lobby strategy, and we try to influence stakeholders. Science is a stakeholder that can conduct a certain commissioned study or can be used as advocate.", the respondent of the WNF explained.

Moreover, there turned out to be overlap between direct participation and informing authorities in the sounding board organised by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. As the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained, "The participation was limited to informing the ministry. There was the opportunity to share your view, but in the end the government takes its own decision." Here, the boundary between direct participation and informing authorities appeared to be unclear.

A second example of overlap was observed between lobbying and informing authorities. As mentioned earlier, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained, "We arranged several meetings with these rapporteurs, including a masterclass. In these masterclasses, professors provided information on and discussed prejudices on the directives. This contributed a lot." This is an example of informing authorities in order to influence decisions, which in the end is lobbying.

Lastly, a few respondents described that strategies that focus on the public have an influence on the effectivity of lobbying. "The public consultation was a very important trigger, especially in the lobbying.", the representative of the WNF explained. In addition, the respondent of SoortenNL described that "A campaign that encourages people to fill in the public consultation by definition influences the government, since Members of Parliament prosper on media attention." In that way campaigns to inform or mobilise the public can be applied to invigorate a lobbying campaign. The examples discussed show that the different strategy categories sometimes overlap and can affect each other as well.

#### 4.6 Beliefs and strategy selection

All in all, the respondents seemed to recognise differences between organisations in terms of strategical preferences. Firstly, multiple respondents compared ENGOs on the basis of their strategical preferences. The representative of the Vogelbescherming for example described that the identity of organisations strongly influences their strategical choices and said that "The thirteen nature and environmental organisations can be placed on a spectrum that ranges from organisations that are more activist, to organisations that are more focused on consultation." The respondent added that "The Fitness Check protests in Brussels originated more from the activist, environmental organisations, than from the nature organisations, such as BirdLife." and "Natuurmonumenten is more focused on consultation. The WNF is sometimes somewhat more activist, but not as much as for example Greenpeace." Furthermore, the representative of LandschappenNL described that "Our approach is somewhat different from the approach of the Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten, who are sometimes a bit more activist than us." The respondent of the WNF applied the distinction to the, in previous sections described, role division within the core between the WNF on the side, and Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming on the other, and explained that "Our organisations was intrinsically a bit more hesitant about collaborating closely with the ministry.", and therefore instead chose to take up the more public role in the coalition.

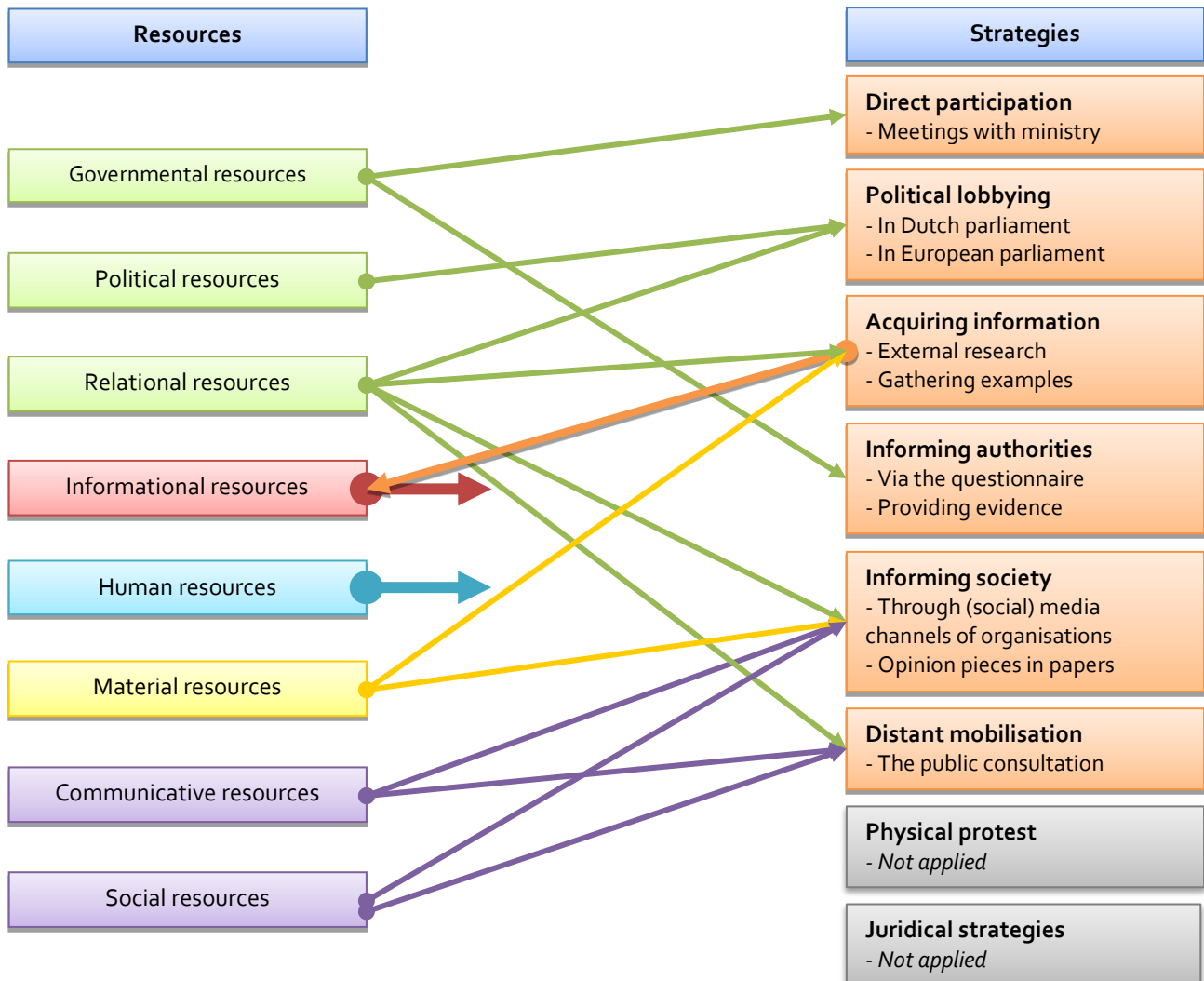
The representatives of LandschappenNL and SoortenNL recognised some strategical preferences in their organisations as well. LandschappenNL firstly represents the Dutch Provincial Landscapes and Landscape Management organisations. According to the representative, this influences the standpoints of its organisation "We always try to take a position, but this is sometimes difficult for us. We have to ask all affiliated organisations for their view." This also played a role in the decision whether or not to quite the sounding board, "The Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten proposed to quit together, since we did not agree with the approach of the ministry. This was for us a more difficult decision to take.", the respondent explained. The representative of SoortenNL, furthermore, described that its organisation is hesitant about applying both juridical strategies, "We supply information products and advices. Therefore we barely initiate lawsuits, since that is at odds with our role as provider of correct information." In addition, the respondent described that "Our lobbying activities are limited compared to the other organisations in the Fitness Check coalition, lobbying does not fit in with the identity of our network." and "We only lobby for the use of scientific facts, in our opinion governments should use the best information available in decision-making."

The examples presented indicate that organisations differ in their strategical preferences. This sometimes leads to differentiation within a coalition with coalition-partners taking responsibility for different strategies, as was shown in case of the Fitness Check. Apart from these observations, no concrete connections between specific beliefs and strategy selection were observed.



## 4.7 Resources and strategy selection

The relation between the resources availability and strategy selection was already superficially mentioned a few times in the previous sections, but will be dealt with in more detail here. The first paragraph will present which resource types were invested in which specific strategies in the case of the Fitness Check. The second paragraph will focus on how resource availability influenced the strategical decisions taken.



*Figure 7: The relationships between the resources types and strategies applied* – This figure shows for every strategy applied by the coalition in the Fitness Check case which resources were used, based on what the respondents said in the interviews. The strategy of acquiring information is an exception in the sense that this strategy not only requires resources, but also produces resources; informational resources, which is indicated with the orange arrow. Informational and human resources were used for all strategies and are therefore supposed to be connected with all strategy types. For clarity reasons, these (red and blue) arrows are not connected with the strategies, but are made thicker instead.

### 4.7.1 Resources invested in strategies

Figure 7 shows which resources were invested per applied strategy type by the Fitness Check coalition, according to the respondents. In this paragraph, I will provide more detail on how the resources in this figure were used in the different applied strategies. Since no juridical strategies and strategies of physical protest were applied, these strategies will not be taken into account. This paragraph is meant to connect the section on resources and the section on strategy selection, therefore all information presented here can be derived from paragraph 4.3.1.

The first three categories of resources all describe the connections with other actors. Governmental resources are the connections with authorities. In case of the Fitness Check, governmental resources played a role in the direct participation, via the consultation with the ministry and the EC, and in informing authorities, solicited through the questionnaire and unsolicited in the course of the whole process. Political resources originated both from the core organisations and the Groene<sup>11</sup>, and only formed the basis of the strategy of lobbying with both Members of the Dutch and Members of the European Parliament. Relational resources are connections with non-legislative and non-executive actors and originated and played a role in acquiring information, informing and mobilizing society, and in lobbying. Organisations used their network to collect evidence, LandschappenNL and SoortenNL for example contacted the organisations they represent to gather examples of successful implementation of the BHDs. In addition, relations with other organisations were used to distribute the public consultation among their followers. The representative of the WNF lastly also recognised the value of the relations with their international partners in aligning their lobby strategies.

Material resources played a limited role in the Fitness Check case and solely in the form of financial costs. Most of the costs were spent on a video that was used to inform society and an external study that was conducted by researchers of Tilburg University. The social resources, in the form of members and followers, were reached by using the media channels of the involved organisations and by publishing position pieces in newspapers. In this way, people were provided with developments on the case of the Fitness Check, and were encouraged to participate in the public consultation, hence social and communicative resources formed in this case the basis of both the strategies of informing society and distant mobilisation.

A part of the informational resources was already available in the involved organisations and thereby formed the basis of all applied strategies, since knowledge and expertise was used in consulting with authorities and in informing, convincing or mobilizing both political and social actors, as the respondents described. The strategy of acquiring information was applied to collect additional information and evidence. This is the only strategy that not only requires resources, but also yields resources, which the orange arrow in figure 7 illustrates. Human resources, lastly, turned out to be the only category of resources that was associated with every strategy type, since every action requires a minimum level of human capacity.

#### *4.7.2 Resource availability and strategy selection*

That strategical choices require a certain availability of resources is clear. The representative of the Waddenvereniging illustrated this by saying "Strategies are being chosen within the boundaries of the available resources." Some respondents firstly made some superficial statements about how resource availability influences their strategical choices. Firstly, a few respondents made some general statements about how material resources influence strategical choices. "If you invest more money, you can of course organise a much broader public campaign than we have done. We did no real expensive stuff such as TV commercials, since we simply did not have budget for that." the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained. The role of material resources was also recognised by the respondent of LandschappenNL who said that "LandschappenNL barely chooses juridical strategies, since that does not fit with the organisation. The financial aspect plays a role as well." Three other respondents moreover recognised how other resource types influenced the decisions of their organisations. The respondent of the Waddenvereniging for instance described that "An organisation with for example a large and strong member base uses other resources, and thereby chooses different strategies than an organisation without those members." This is in line with a statement of the representative of LandschappenNL who described "I do not think that strategical choices strongly depend on preferences. More influential is the fact that we do not have a large communication or a large lobby division, it are more practical than principle considerations that affect strategical decisions." Furthermore, the representative of the WNF recognised the role of informational resources, and described about the task division within the core of the coalition that "It was also a pragmatic decision, also purely based on capacity, since we did not have a team with knowledge on Natura 2000. The WNF only used its public affairs team."

Besides the general statements on how organisations are influenced by resources availability, presented in the previous paragraph, two more specific relations were identified by the respondents. Four respondents firstly considered the combining of informational resources to be essential for the quality of questionnaire that was submitted to the EC. The representative of the Vogelbescherming for example described that "It was crucial that we had such an enormous scientific knowledge basis, and did this so thorough. We blew the European Commission away with our reports, that was very important." In line with this, the respondent of SoortenNL said that "We did everything we could to make sure that the directives would be sustained, and the only way to do this was by providing the EC with scientific evidence." Since an

important part of the evidence was collected by an outsourced study, as described in 5.5.3, not only the availability of informational resources, but also the availability of material resources played a role in the questionnaire.

The respondents of the three core organisations, furthermore, identified that the combining of social and communicative resources by the organisations in the coalition was essential for reaching the number of responses to the public consultation that was reached by the collaboration. This is best illustrated by a quote of the representative of Natuurmonumenten who described that "Very important in the campaign of the Fitness Check were our communicative power, but even more the support from the public, which we used in the public consultation. [...] The mobilizing power of our member bases was a very important strength of ours." In accordance with this, the representative of the Vogelbescherming stated that "Mobilisation of the public and related communication were crucial for the public consultation."

The strategies of the questionnaire and the public consultation, presented above, were by most respondents considered to be the most influential strategies applied by the coalition. Both examples indicated that a certain availability of the needed resources was needed to have the intended impact on the EC. In other words, without enough informational and material resources available for the questionnaire, and without enough social and communicative resources available for the public consultation, these strategies would have been much less effective. None of the respondents however said that the coalition would have made different strategical decisions with a lower availability of resources in the present case. So despite the fact that resources were combined by the coalition-partners, and despite the view of respondents that the resource availability influenced the effectivity of the strategies applied, it is not clear whether the availability of the resource availability influenced the decision of the coalition to actually apply these strategies.

#### **4.8 Conclusion – Case I: *The Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives***

This section will draw the main conclusions on the case of the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHDs). Every paragraph will address one research question, respectively focusing on the coalition formed, the role of beliefs, the role of combining resources, the strategies applied and lastly the relationships between on the one hand beliefs and resources, and strategy application on the other.

The coalition formed in the Netherlands on the occasion of the Fitness Check of the BHDs consisted of 13 organisations in total. The respondents distinguished between several layers: A core, a first and a second peel. The Vogelbescherming took the overall lead in the coalition. Several aspects stood out when looking at the coalition formed. Firstly, all organisations in the coalition were ENGOS and moreover affiliated with the Groene11. A distinction within the coalition can nevertheless be observed in terms of focus. Whereas the organisations in the core and first peel are specifically focused on nature conservation, the organisations in the second peel are broader environmental organisations. Furthermore, all ENGOS in the coalition were national organisations, despite the fact that some organisations in the coalition usually focus their activities on specific nature areas. The Provincial Landscape organisations were only indirectly involved through their representation by LandschappenNL. No supranational organisations were involved in the coalition, although there was some coordination between the ENGOS in the core of the coalition and their umbrella organisations. So all in all, the coalition solely consisted of national ENGOS, which indicates its monotonous character in terms of horizontal and vertical connections.

The policy core belief that was dominant and shared by all ENGOS in the coalition was the value of nature and the related importance of nature protection. The organisations moreover shared the same overall objective in the present case, which was preserving the BHDs in their original form. In terms of secondary aspects, all organisations agreed on the value of the BHDs for protecting nature and biodiversity in EU MSs, which also appeared from the shared objective of the coalition. According to the respondents, the involved organisations were actually even advocates of stricter directives, but aiming for this in the Fitness Check would have been too risky in their view. Despite the corresponding shared policy core belief and secondary aspects in the present case, the respondents did not consider having shared beliefs to be necessary for collaboration. By contrast, sharing the same interests and objectives was identified as very important for coalition-building. These findings suggest that collaboration does not always require having the same belief system, which indicates that the explanatory power of the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) was limited in the present case.

All determined types of resources were combined by the coalition in the case of the Fitness Check. The distinction into three layers, which were respectively core, first peel and second peel, was particularly based on the difference in time invested, i.e. most human resources were contributed by the core organisations, whereas the second peel contributed least. Most of the remaining resource types were contributed by the core and to a lesser extent by the first peel. The second peel was primarily used for the public consultation and consequently only contributed communicative and social



resources. Despite the finding that all resource types were combined by organisations in this coalition, combining of only a few of these resource types was associated with coalition-building. According to one respondent this applied to human resources, whereas all respondents concluded that collaboration was needed for the availability of informational resources, in particular for the questionnaire. Three respondents lastly considered combining the social and communicative resources of organisations to be a reason for collaboration, especially with respect to the public consultation. So all in all, the opportunity to combine resources was identified as a reason for coalition-building, but this applied to only a few of the resource types. Since specifically these resource types were also contributed by the organisations in the peels, it is likely that the opportunity of combining these resources at least partly explain why these two peels were involved.

Besides the role of beliefs and resources in coalition-building, respondents also mentioned several other factors that affect the decision of organisations to form a coalition. The first factor that played a role were the connections between the core organisations and their international umbrella organisations, since the decision of the national organisations to address the case and collaborate was induced by their umbrella organisations. Permanent coalitions are the second factor that influenced coalition-building. All organisations in this coalition were affiliated with the Groene11, a permanent coalition. The members of the Groene11 come together on a regularly basis to discuss environmental issues, which facilitated coalition-building between its members in the present case. The third factor that was identified by several respondents was efficiency. They argued that it is often much more efficient and effective to address an issue together than addressing it on your own as an organisation, as long as the core of the coalition did not contain too many organisations. Trust was the fourth and last factor that several respondents mentioned to play a role. They described that the collaboration in the present case worked well because of the trust the peels had in the core organisations, whereas in other cases organisations sometimes tend to profile themselves at the expense of other organisations. The four discussed factors indicate that having shared beliefs and combining of resources alone were insufficiently able to explain the process of coalition-building in the present case.

Six different strategy types were applied by the coalition. Whereas some strategies were applied throughout the whole process of the Fitness Check, the application of others was limited. Direct participation occurred through meetings with the ministry, this strategy was only used in the first phase since the sounding board fell apart. The strategies of political lobbying and informing members and society were applied throughout the whole process. The same applied to the strategies of acquiring information and informing authorities, which were largely intertwined in the present case. An external scientific study was commissioned by the coalition, which was subsequently used to both inform Dutch authorities, and the EC through the questionnaire. The strategy of distant mobilisation was applied in the second phase of the Fitness Check, through the public consultation which was distributed among the members of all coalition-partners. A physical protest was planned in the last phase of the Fitness Check, but cancelled in the end. No juridical strategies have been applied since this was simply not possible. So all in all, the coalition did not only apply strategies sequentially, but also simultaneously. In addition, some of the strategies applied in the present case were based on instruments provided by authorities, which indicates that factors outside the coalition affected both the selection of strategies and the moment of application.

The last research question focused on the relationship between on the one hand beliefs and resources, and strategy selection on the other. With respect to the first part of the question, organisations appeared to differ with respect to their strategical preferences. Several respondents recognised a spectrum in terms of inherent strategical preference, ranging from more activist to more consultative organisations. In line with this distinction, Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming participated in the sounding board, whereas the WNF chose to take up a more public role. In terms of resources interdependencies, no clear relationship with strategy selection has been found. The increased resource availability as a result of collaboration only seemed to have affected the effectivity of strategies and the extent to which certain strategies are applied. This indicates that if more of the needed resources are available, an organisation or a coalition might choose to apply a certain strategy type more extensively. So although the present case showed that organisations have strategical preferences and made clear that resource availability of coalitions affects strategy effectivity, no concrete connection between preferences and beliefs, and between strategy effectivity and selection was found.

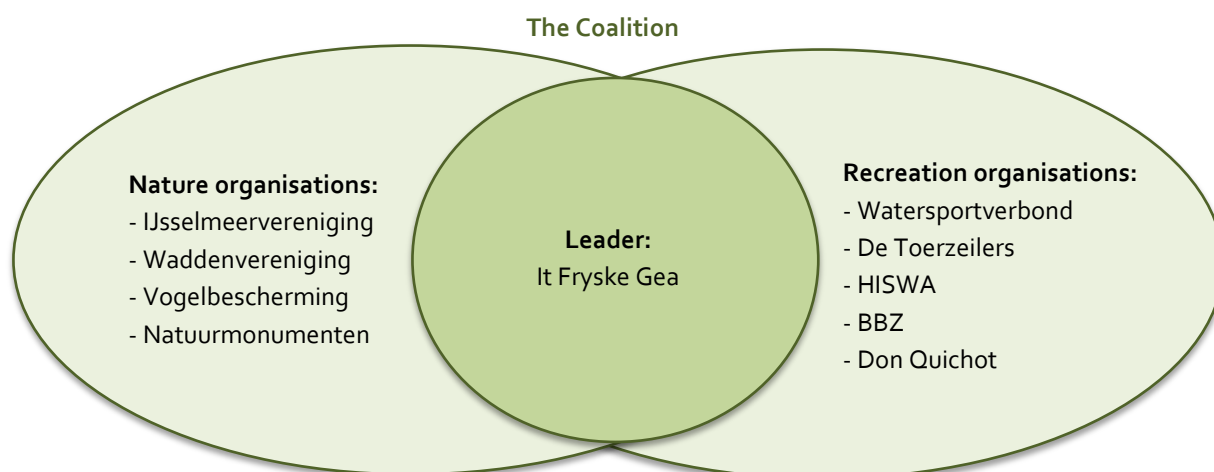
## 5. Results – Case II: “Windpark Fryslân”

In this chapter, the findings of the interviews conducted for the case of “Windpark Fryslân” will be presented. Every section will deal with one research question. The last section of this chapter presents the main conclusions on the case.

### 5.1 Composition of coalition

After rejection of ‘Fryslân foar de Wyn’, as described in 3.3.2, the plan of ‘Windpark Fryslân’ was presented. Thereupon, a the formation of a coalition was initiated by ‘It Fryske Gea’, which is the provincial landscape of Friesland (Figure 8). It on the one hand involved nature organisations, including the IJsselmeervereniging, Waddenvereniging, Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten. On the other hand several recreation organisations and interest groups were approached as well. Among these were the recreation organisations ‘het Watersportverbond’ which is an alliance between 400 water sports associations, and ‘de Toerzeilers’, which is an association for sailors. Moreover three interest groups were involved: the association for Professional Charter sailing ‘BBZ’, the Branch Organisation for Water Sport companies ‘HISWA’, and Don Quichot lastly, which was a local, occasional action group that represented local recreation entrepreneurs. Since the HISWA, BBZ and Don Quichot indirectly also represent recreational interests, these organisations will together with the Watersportverbond and the Toerzeilers be named recreation organisations in the rest of this chapter.

Since the present research focuses on coalition-building between ENGOS, only It Fryske Gea and the other nature organisations were interviewed for this case. The respondents did not really distinguish between different layers when describing the coalition. All respondents however agreed that It Fryske Gea took the lead in this coalition from the beginning. They also recognised that a board member of the IJsselmeervereniging played a key role as well.



*Figure 8: Composition of the coalition* – This figure presents an overview of the organisations that were part of the coalition. The figure shows that organisations from several sectors were involved and, furthermore, shows that It Fryske Gea took the lead in the coalition.

## 5.2 Shared beliefs and coalition-building

The following paragraph will respectively describe the main policy core beliefs of the coalition, how beliefs were related to coalition-building, and what secondary aspects played a role in the present coalition.

### 5.2.1 *Policy core beliefs shared by the coalition*

The actors that formed this coalition were connected by their overarching goal. All respondents confirmed that every coalition-partners agreed on the overall goal of preventing the wind park at this particular location in the IJsselmeer. The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging for example stated that "The coalition was fundamentally against the construction of the wind park at the designated site." The respondents however also recognised a division within the coalition on the basis of the incentives that underpinned this overall goal, especially a distinction between on the one hand nature-related incentives and on the other landscape-related incentives was identified.

The Vogelbescherming, the Waddenvereniging and Natuurmonumenten were primarily driven nature-related arguments. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming for example described that "The coalition-partners all had the same goals, but these were based on different interests. The Vogelbescherming of course had the objective to protect birds and their habitats, so bird interests was our motivation.", and the respondent of Natuurmonumenten said that "The IJsselmeer is an important area for many bird species, including protected species. This was part of our argumentation for coalition-building."

For It Fryske Gea and the IJsselmeervereniging nature-values were a motivation as well, but for these organisations the effect of the wind park on the landscape also played a role. The representative of It Fryske Gea described that "This wind park was planned in front of the Frisian shore, and in the sight from our own nature areas. Therefore we chose to lead the coalition.", and "A member consultation revealed that the majority of our members was against a wind park in the IJsselmeer at all." The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging also explained that "Nature and landscape are our main topics. Such a wind park does not belong in a nature area and, furthermore, does not fit in with the landscape."

The incentives of the remaining organisations in the coalition primarily had a recreational base. For some of these organisations, related economic arguments played a role as well. "The Watersportverbond, the Toerzeilers, HISWA and BBZ were against the wind park. They said to prefer an open landscape, since a wind park would strongly affect the experience. Don Quichot, who represented recreational entrepreneurs along the shore, feared that the wind park would impair the value their customers ascribe to the landscape.", the representative of It Fryske Gea described. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming confirmed this and said that "The recreation organisations were primarily involved because of the sailing. They were against the wind park, since that would constrain water recreation."

Despite these differences in beliefs, no internal division in the coalition occurred according to the respondents. "There were no contradictory interests in the coalition.", the representative of the IJsselmeervereniging described. In line with this, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming said that "The differences in incentives and backgrounds of the coalition-partners only played a role in the sense that every organisation contributed a different kind of expertise.", and "Shared interests are often an important reason for coalition-building." The representative of Natuurmonumenten lastly stated that "There was unity within the coalition from the beginning of the collaboration." So overall, the coalition-partners were connected by a shared goal, the differences in beliefs did not impede collaboration to achieve this objective.

### 5.2.2 *Policy core beliefs and coalition-building*

As described, It Fryske Gea took the lead in this coalition because "This wind park was planned in front of the Frisian shore, and in the sight from our own nature areas." In this way the urgency of the topic for It Fryske Gea affected the role they played in the coalition. The impact of the wind park on nature values also influenced the decision of the other nature organisations to join the coalition, as mentioned in the previous paragraph. It Fryske Gea already had connections with the recreation organisations and directly contacted them when they decided to address the case. These organisations got involved on the basis of recreational values, the respondents described.

Most nature organisations in this coalition were also member of the permanent coalition 'Het Blauwe Hart'. How this influenced the coalition-building process will be dealt with later, not all organisations of het 'Blauwe Hart' however chose to get involved in the present coalition. The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging for example explained that "Landscape Flevoland was part of 'het Blauwe Hart', but did not join the coalition for they found it too far.", which indicates differences in prioritisation between the organisations in 'het Blauwe Hart'. In addition, the representative of It Fryske Gea

said that PWN, a drinking water company and part of the Green Heart, did not want to take position and join the coalition. The same respondent also described that “We also asked the municipality of Súdwest-Fryslân to join us, but they refused because they considered it inappropriate for them as a government.” So companies and governments take other considerations into account than ENGOS in deciding whether or not to join a coalition.

No broad environmental organisations were involved in this coalition. Although the beliefs of Nature and Environmental organisations usually largely correspond, the present case however appeared to be an exception. The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging described that “Environmental organisations like Greenpeace advocated wind turbines, regardless of the location. Nature organisations, like the IJsselmeervereniging, Waddenvereniging, Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming on the other hand, are also proponents of wind energy, but not everywhere, and certainly not in or nearby Natura 2000 sites.” The respondent of It Fryske Gea, furthermore, said that “The Groene11 was divided on this issue. ‘Natuur & Milieu’ and Greenpeace disapproved our resistance against the wind park, for climate change was too urgent in their view. We as nature organisations however argued that the sustainable transition should be accurately integrated in the landscape. We have had a discussion with them on this issue.” This division was also confirmed by the representative of the Groene11: “Nature organisations are against wind parks in Natura 2000 areas, whereas environmental organisations consider it to be necessary for the transition to sustainable energy. This is indeed a sensitive case.” So despite the usually corresponding beliefs between nature and environmental organisations, they differed too much in terms of the prioritisation of beliefs regarding the sustainable transition to cooperate in the present case.

### *5.2.3 Secondary aspects shared by the coalition*

As described the nature organisations used the Birds Directive to protect the nature values of the IJsselmeer, in line with their shared view that a wind park does not belong in a nature area. The respondents however provided no concrete information on the secondary aspects of recreation organisations. Notwithstanding the court ruling that the wind park did not conflict with the Birds Directive, the interviewed organisations were still against the construction of wind parks in nature areas like the IJsselmeer. The representative of Natuurmonumenten for example described that “Natuurmonumenten still has the opinion that a wind park does not belong to the IJsselmeer, since it is a protected, valuable, and scenic open area, which has the status of Natura 2000.” This indicates that the nature organisations mainly see Natura 2000 as a tool to enforce their objectives, and not as an ultimate boundary or purpose. This was confirmed by the respondent of the Vogelbescherming: “Under some circumstances we are fundamentally against activities, regardless of whether these activities are allowed under regulations, for the reason that they are planned in nature areas.”

## **5.3 Resource availability and coalition-building**

This section describes the role of resources within the national coalition, on the basis of the resource categorisation that was presented in the methodology section. The first paragraph presents which resources were contributed by which organisation in the coalition (table 3), whereas the second paragraph discusses for which of these resource types, the opportunity of combining resources of organisations played a role in coalition-building.

### *5.3.1 Resource contribution per organisation*

According to all respondents, every organisation in the coalition contributed material resources, and specifically financial resources, to the collaboration. The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging for example said that “Together the organisations collected an amount of eighty thousand euros, which is quite a lot for our kind of organisations. The amount was largely spent on the costs of the study conducted by Alterra.” In line with this, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming stated that “We litigated together as a coalition and shared the costs, which made it more efficient than doing it all on your own.” As described, financial resources were spent on the research of Alterra, three respondents, furthermore, mentioned that the coalition hired a lawyer for extra support: “Together we hired an extra lawyer. We have limited capacities and are often busy with our own juridical procedures. In a large case like this one, we sometimes hire a lawyer and share the costs among all organisations involved, which is a benefit of litigating together.”, the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained. The amount money contributed however appeared to differ between the organisations. “All involved organisations contributed financially, the amount depended on their monetary resources

available in an organisation.”, and “The contribution largely differed between the organisations. Some organisations have few financial resources and are therefore not able to contribute that much.”, the respondents of respectively the IJsselmeervereniging and the Vogelbescherming explained. So overall, all organisations contributed material resources to finance the external study and the lawyer, their contribution depended on their financial capabilities.

The same turned out to apply to human resources, all organisations invested time in the case, but the amount differed largely between the involved organisations. The representative of the Vogelbescherming for example described: “It Fryske Gea put most effort and time in the case. We also did a lot, but It Fryske Gea was the leader and also the contact point of the coalition.” and “The lawyer of the IJsselmeervereniging did most of the juridical work.” This was confirmed by the representative of It Fryske Gea who explained: “It Fryske Gea was leader, so played an important role. Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming invested much time and capacity as well. But particularly much work was done by someone who was active for both the IJsselmeervereniging and the Waddenvereniging.” and “Don Quichot took initiative for public actions and the Watersportverbond contributed as well.” All interviewed respondents recognised that all organisations contributed human resources, but that most time was indeed invested by It Fryske Gea and the lawyer of the IJsselmeervereniging. This lawyer was also affiliated with the Waddenvereniging but primarily acted on behalf of the IJsselmeervereniging in this coalition, as described by himself.

All respondents recognised that every organisations contributed informational resources. Furthermore, a distinction between the type of information contributed was identified by the respondents. The representatives of It Fryske Gea described this particularly clear: “All organisations contributed knowledge to a certain extent. The water sports organisations contributed economical knowledge, that we for example did not have. Lawyers of the Vogelbescherming supported the lawyer of the IJsselmeervereniging.”; “The lawyer of the IJsselmeervereniging contributed much juridical knowledge and we contributed of course ecological knowledge.”; “The recreation organisation entrusted us with the ecological underpinning.”, and “The fact that both nature and recreation organisations were involved in the coalition enabled us to collect enough ecological and socioeconomic knowledge.” The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging moreover mentioned that the recreation organisation also contributed information on the shipping routes and provided relevant reports. Lastly, the respondents of both the Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten stated that “Every organisations contributed its own kind of expertise.” All respondents considered the external report of Alterra (WER) to be of major importance for this case, however since this study was outsourced by the coalition, it was rather the result of combined material resources. All in all, all respondents recognised that every organisations contributed informational resources. The kind of information contributed moreover turned out to differ between the organisations and was therefore considered complementary by the respondents.

In contrast to the three resource categories discussed, respondents were less clear about the role of relational resources. As described all respondents recognised that the collaboration between the nature organisations in the present case was the result of the permanent coalition, called ‘Het Blauwe Hart’. Only one respondent however provided insight into how the recreation organisations got involved in the present occasional coalition. The representative of It Fryske Gea described that “We directly contacted the recreation entrepreneurs, since we noticed that they were unsatisfied with how the province dealt with the case. It Fryske Gea already had connections with the recreation organisations.” This indicates that It Fryske Gea was responsible for the involvement of the recreational organisations, whereas the connections between the nature organisations already existed on beforehand through ‘Het Blauwe Hart’.

According to the respondents, political connections did not play an important role in this coalition. The representative of It Fryske Gea described that lobbying against a wind park in the IJsselmeer took place both during the process of ‘Fryslân foar de Wyn’ and after rejection of this plan, however not by the present coalition, that was built on the occasion of Windpark Fryslân. Instead, the ‘Friese Milieufederatie’ coordinated the lobbying activities and put most effort in it, according to the respondent. In line with this, the respondents of the Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten stated that their organisations were not involved in the lobbying at all.

None of the respondents mentioned any form of governmental resources. The Province of Friesland was the responsible authority for the Nature protection law, whereas the ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate was responsible for the coordination of the whole project through the ‘Governmental Coordination Regulation’ (Rijkscoördinatieregeling). However, no consultation between on the hand the coalition and on the other responsible authorities have taken place. Therefore, it is likely that governmental resources indeed did not play a role in the present case.

In general communicative resources were used in two different ways. Firstly all organisations informed their members and followers about developments in the case. “All organisations used their own channels to inform their members throughout the whole process.”, the respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging for instance described, and the respondent of Natuurmonumenten, furthermore, said that “The media and own media channels were used to inform

society and exert influence on the process.” Secondly a broader media strategy was applied by the coalition, coordinated by It Fryske Gea. “We submitted press releases throughout the whole process, of which many received substantial attention.”, the respondent of It Fryske Gea stated. So overall all organisations used their communicative channels to inform their members and followers, in addition It Fryske Gea used its communicative capacities as the contact point of the coalition and for press releases.

Social resources, lastly, only played a minor role in the activities of this coalition; all organisations informed their members and followers. They were however not mobilised or used to exert pressure. Only the IJsselmeervereniging used its member base to acquire financial resources: “The IJsselmeervereniging asked its members to contribute money for the juridical procedure”, the respondent explained. The representative of It Fryske Gea recognised the value of members as well: “In collaboration there always is the power of the number, since organisations such as Natuurmonumenten, the Vogelbescherming and the Waddenvereniging together represent lots of people. But we did not use these members in the sense that we for instance organised a demonstration.” Furthermore, the respondent of the Vogelbescherming described that “Public support in the form of members can be a reason to seek for collaboration.”, but also confirmed that “The member base was not mobilised in the present case. Mobilizing society would have been very difficult since nobody wants these wind turbines in its own back yard.” All respondents confirmed that except for the action of the IJsselmeervereniging, no member mobilisation took place in the present case.

*Table 3: Resource contribution per organisation* – This table describes which resource types were contributed by which ENGO in the coalition. It provides information on the investment of every organisation in the Fitness Check case, not on the availability of resources within these organisations in general. The table does not distinguish between the amounts a certain organisation invested.

		Material resources	Human resources	Informational resources	Relational resources	Political resources	Governmental resources	Communicative resources	Social resources
<b>Leader</b>	It Fryske Gea								
<b>Nature organisations</b>	IJsselmeervereniging								
	Waddenvereniging								
	Vogelbescherming								
	Natuurmonumenten								
<b>Recreation organisations</b>	Watersportverbond								
	De Toerzeilers								
	HISWA								
	BBZ								
	Don Quichot								

### 5.3.2 Coalition-building and combining resources

Many resource types were combined by the organisations in the coalition. However, for only a few of these resource types, coalition-building was crucial to reach the needed resource availability. The first resource type identified by the respondents were material resources. The representative of It Fryske Gea for example described that “Money was needed for the study conducted by Alterra, which was used as contra-expertise, and almost costed hundred thousand euros.”, and “Without this coalition, we would not have been able to pay the study of Alterra.” In accordance to this, the respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging explained that “Individual nature organisations simply do not have the budget to hire one lawyer, which we as a coalition did in the present case. Moreover, organisations do not have enough budget to outsource the contra-expertise.” Overall, all respondents considered combining material resources as an incentive for coalition-building.

Furthermore, the representatives of It Fryske Gea, the IJsselmeervereniging and the Vogelbescherming explicitly mentioned the importance of sharing human resources. “We as an organisation do not have much staff, therefore we have to efficiently distribute our tasks among the organisations.” and “Time plays an important role. There are so many relevant

issues, we have to choose and prioritise which one to address.”, the respondent of It Fryske Gea described. In addition, the respondents of the IJsselmeervereniging and the Vogelbescherming respectively stated that “The amount of work and time needed for a certain case determines the threshold for collaboration, it can simply only be done together.” and “Expertise, capacity and financial resources are all aspects that influence the decision to collaborate.”

In line with the latter statement of the representative of the Vogelbescherming, combining informational resources was considered to be an incentive for coalition-building as well by all respondents. The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging even identified it as the decisive factor for collaboration in a court case. The respondent of Natuurmonumenten lastly also recognised the importance of exchanging and combining expertise and financial resources, but, furthermore, identified a third one: “Collaboration was preferable to an individual approach, since this enabled us to combine our strengths, which are a combination of money, support of members, and knowledge.”

Combining social resources was also identified as an incentive for coalition-building by the representative of It Fryske Gea: “Both the number of people we represent and the number of organisations affected our decision to collaborate.” The respondents of the IJsselmeervereniging and the Vogelbescherming however denied that this played a role in the present case. The latter elaborately described that “Public support, for example in the form of members, can be an incentive to look for collaboration, especially with organisations with a large member base. The more people you can deploy, the better it is. This indeed played a role in the case of the Fitness Check. In the present case however, this did not play a role. We informed our members and followers, but did not activate them.”

So all respondents described that combining material and informational resources was a reason for their organisations to form a coalition in the present case. Furthermore, three of these respondents stated the same for human resources. The respondents were however divided about the role of combining social resources. Whereas these resources played a role for two organisations, two other respondents explicitly mentioned the opposite. The remaining categories, which are relational, political, governmental and communicative resources were by none of the representatives identified as a decisive incentive for coalition-building.

## 5.4 Other factors that affect coalition-building

Several factors were identified by the respondents that did not fit well in the predetermined factors or beliefs and resources. The first factor that was mentioned by all representatives of nature organisations was permanent coalitions. Back then, all ENGOS in the coalition were affiliated with the Blauwe Hart, a permanent coalition, mainly between provincial and national nature organisations, which was established to promote the interests of the IJsselmeer. “We were also somewhat involved in Fryslân foar de Wyn and we found it a good idea with quite some political support. After the rejection of Fryslân foar de Wyn, we looked for organisations to collaborate with, starting with our partners in the Blauwe Hart.”, the representative of It Fryske Gea explained. In line with this, the respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging described that “We formed an occasional coalition and used the Blauwe Hart as an engine, and for administrative support.”, and “In the committee assembly of the Blauwe Hart, every organisation articulated its interests. Subsequently, coalition-building occurred naturally.” So the occasional collaboration between the nature organisations in the present case was influenced by the fact that these organisations were already united in a permanent coalition on beforehand.

In addition, the representative of the Vogelbescherming identified efficiency as a reason for non-cooperation. The respondent described that “We in principle address issues on our own, but under certain conditions we choose to collaborate. Addressing a case on your own is sometimes just more efficient, and there is even not always time to form a coalition.” and “What we sometimes do if there is no coalition formed, is distributing an enforcement request among ENGOS. They can sign it if they want to, before submitting.” The respondent elaborated: “We usually address issues on our own if only birds interests are at stake. But if an case is broader, which is often the case, we look for collaboration with other organisations.”

The representative of the Waddenvereniging lastly elaborated on the role of conflicting interests in coalition building and explained that the Friese Milieu Federatie, which played an important role in ‘Fryslân foar de Wyn’, made the decision not to join the present coalition, since this might have impaired their relations with the provincial government. The respondent moreover described that HISWA, who was in the coalition, chose not to litigate with the other organisations in the coalition, but initiated a court case on its own for two reasons: HISWA possessed enough financial resources to initiate an own lawsuit, and the fact that HISWA was not a nature organisations could have led to conflicting interests within the coalition during the case. What the statement of these two respondents indicate is that collaboration is

not self-evident, under certain circumstances organisations could deliberately choose not to collaborate, or only collaborate in parts of the process.

## 5.5 Strategy selection by coalitions

This section describes what strategies were applied by the coalition, on the basis of the strategy categorisation that was described in the methodology section. In each paragraph, the applied strategies for one category will be presented. The last paragraph addresses relations and overlaps between the used strategies.

### 5.5.1 *Direct participation*

No meetings between on the one hand the coalition and on the other the Province of Friesland, or the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate were arranged in the present case, however the servants of both governments said to usually advise the initiators of such a project to consult with all relevant stakeholders. In accordance with this, meetings between the initiators and the coalition did take place. The representative of It Fryske Gea described that "We kept consulting with the initiators of Windpark Fryslân, but we never negotiated about mitigating measures." All respondents recognised that indeed meetings between the coalition and the initiator were arranged, but considered these to be ineffective. The respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging for instance described that "Discussing with us about mitigation did not make sense in that period, since we would under no circumstances agree with the wind park at the designated location." In accordance with this, the representative of It Fryske Gea explained that "Although we probably could have achieved more nature mitigation, we chose not to negotiate about these measures for two reasons. We firstly did not want to give the impression that we were advocates of such an impairment of the IJsselmeer. And secondly, our estimation was that we had a change of winning the case through a legal proceeding." All in all, the meetings between the initiator and the coalition that were arranged throughout the process did however not lead to consensus or visible alteration of the plan, according to the respondents.

### 5.5.2 *Political lobbying*

Lobbying particularly played a role in the phase of 'Fryslân foar de Wyn', which was the process that preceded the present case of Windpark Fryslân. "During the period of Fryslân foar de Wyn organisations already lobbied in Friesland. This was the ultimate phase of the lobby strategy. After the final decision of the Provincial Council we ran into the more legal procedures.", the respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging explained. According to the representative of It Fryske Gea, the 'Friese Milieufederatie' took responsibility in the lobbying throughout the whole process. This organisation was, however, not involved in the coalition of interest in the present study.

### 5.5.3 *Acquiring information*

The strategy of acquiring information was in the present case particularly applied to collect scientific evidence for the court case. The coalition commissioned an external research, conducted by WER. In this study, the potential effects of Windpark Fryslân and the methods used in the original environmental effect report were investigated. This report was introduced during the juridical proceeding. "We hired WER to provide us with contra-expertise. The report confirmed that there were enormous uncertainties in the plan of Windpark Fryslân and that the models used were precarious and based on some questionable and optimistic assumptions, so that was favourable for us.", the representative of It Fryske described. The value of the report of WER was also recognised by the other respondents. Furthermore, the servant of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate described that "The Nature organisations hired expertise from Wageningen, it was subsequently rather difficult for the initiators to find another Dutch expert that was able to refute that report." That it is sometimes difficult to find experts for contra-expertise was also recognised by the respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging. The servant of the Province of Friesland lastly said that "There is no wind park in the Netherlands for which the ecological impact was investigated so thorough as for Windpark Fryslân." Despite the contra-expertise provided by the coalition, the Council of State indeed declared that the permit authorisation for Windpark Fryslân was well-founded.



#### *5.5.4 Informing authorities*

The activities in terms of informing authorities were limited in the present case to the submission of opinion papers ('zienswijze') by the organisations in the coalition on the draft decision taken on the plan of Windpark Fryslân. "Generally opinion papers are submitted in order to inform and influence decision-makers. The instrument is not so effective though, since they are usually not incorporated well in the final plan. You however need to have submitted an opinion paper before you are allowed to litigate before the Council of State.", the representative of the IJsselmeervereniging explained. The respondent also described that "I wrote the nature part of the opinion paper and made it available for all organisations in the coalition, so that every organisation that was interested could use it. We deliberately decided to all send in a separate opinion paper, to maximise the impact, also politically." This was also confirmed by the representative of the Vogelbescherming. That the influence of the opinion papers sent in by the coalition was doubttable also appeared from a statement of the servant of the Province of Friesland: "I am not sure whether the opinion papers of the nature organisations did influenced the plan of Windpark Fryslân, but we do seriously evaluate them and take them into account if they reveal deficiencies in the original plan."

#### *5.5.5 Informing society*

As described, all organisations in the coalition informed their members and followers throughout the process of Windpark Fryslân. As the representative of Natuurmonumenten described, "The media and own media channels were used to inform society and exert influence on the process." The respondent of It Fryske Gea provided more insight into the broader media strategy applied: "We submitted press releases throughout the whole process, of which many received substantial attention. Both the 'Leewarder Courant' and 'Omrop Fryslân' carefully followed the process, but the NOS news also reported on the case." The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging confirmed this and described that "We made sure that there were full-page articles in the 'Leeuwarder Courant' and the 'Friesch Dagblad'." All respondents recognised that a media strategy was applied to inform both the own member base and broader society.

#### *5.5.6 Distant mobilisation*

The strategy of distant mobilisation was not applied by the coalition. As described, only the IJsselmeervereniging asked its members to donate money to cover the costs of the juridical proceeding. Similar activities were neither done by the other organisations, nor by the coalition as a whole. The representative of the Vogelbescherming explained this as follows: "The member base was not mobilised in the present case. Mobilizing society would have been very difficult since nobody wants these wind turbines in its own back yard."

#### *5.5.7 Physical protest*

The activities in terms of physical protest, such as demonstrations, were limited as well. The representatives of It Fryske Gea described an activity, organised by Don Quichot on behalf of the coalition: "At a certain moment, a rotor blade of a wind turbine was thrown into the IJsselmeer from the Afsluitdijk by Don Quichot to make a statement. We of course also pulled it out again." This action was confirmed by the representative of the IJsselmeervereniging, it is however unclear to what extent people were mobilised to attend this event. In general however, all respondents described that no physical protest was applied in the case of Windpark Fryslân. "We as a coalition chose not to activate our member base, for it is very difficult to mobilise people for an issue like this, since people also do not want wind turbines in their own backyard.", the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained. In line with this, the respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging described that in general, it is very difficult to physically mobilise people at all: "It is very difficult to make people taking the streets. You cannot mobilise people anymore for radical actions for nature environment." The respondent of It Fryske Gea lastly stated that "We did inform our members and followers, but we did not succeed in causing real commotion or turbulence in society." and "Maybe we could have put more effort in organising protests."

### 5.5.8 Juridical strategies

In September 2016, the dispensation on the basis of the Flora and Fauna Law, and an authorisation on the basis of the Nature Protection Law and the Water law, were granted by respectively the State Secretary of Economic Affairs and Climate, the Provincial-Executive of Friesland and the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment. HISWA, the rest of the coalition, and several other appellants separately appealed against these decisions. At 2 May 2017, the Institute for Consultation on Administrative Jurisdiction (STAB) for Environment and Spatial Planning published an expert report on the case. The coalition subsequently submitted an opinion paper on this report in July 2017. At 11 July 2018, the court ruled that almost all appeals were unfounded. Only the land use plan ('inpassingsplan') of 18 September 2016 provided by the Minister of Economic Affairs and the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment was discarded by the court, but this did not influence the construction of the wind park, since a new, modified, land use plan was determined at 8 August 2017. So all in all, the juridical procedure did not obstruct Windpark Fryslân.

The representative of the Vogelbescherming described that the Council of State made an irreparable mistake in the present case: "Two weeks after their decision, the European Court of Justice ruled in another case that a stronger assessment had to take place for these kind of wind parks, than was applied in the case of Windpark Fryslân." This was confirmed by the respondent of It Fryske Gea who explained that "We had doubts about mitigation and accumulation. And what we already plead for and what was confirmed by the European Court of Justice, was that in the case of Windpark Fryslân the mitigation measures were not determined accurately." Furthermore, the representative of the Vogelbescherming described that "This was the first wind park that was planned so conspicuous in a Natura 2000 area. That was one of the reasons that we chose to litigate; as a precedent, since a court decision does not only has consequences for case at stake, but also for future cases. For future wind parks, at least the decision of the European Court of Justice must be taken into account."

### 5.5.9 Relations between strategies

As described, the strategy of acquiring information was applied in the form of hiring WER to conduct a study on the potential effects of the Wind Park. This study was provided as contra-expertise in the lawsuit. In this way, the strategy of acquiring information and the juridical proceeding were combined in the present case. Except for this example, no relations between strategies have been observed on the basis of the statements made by the respondents.

## 5.6 Beliefs and strategy selection

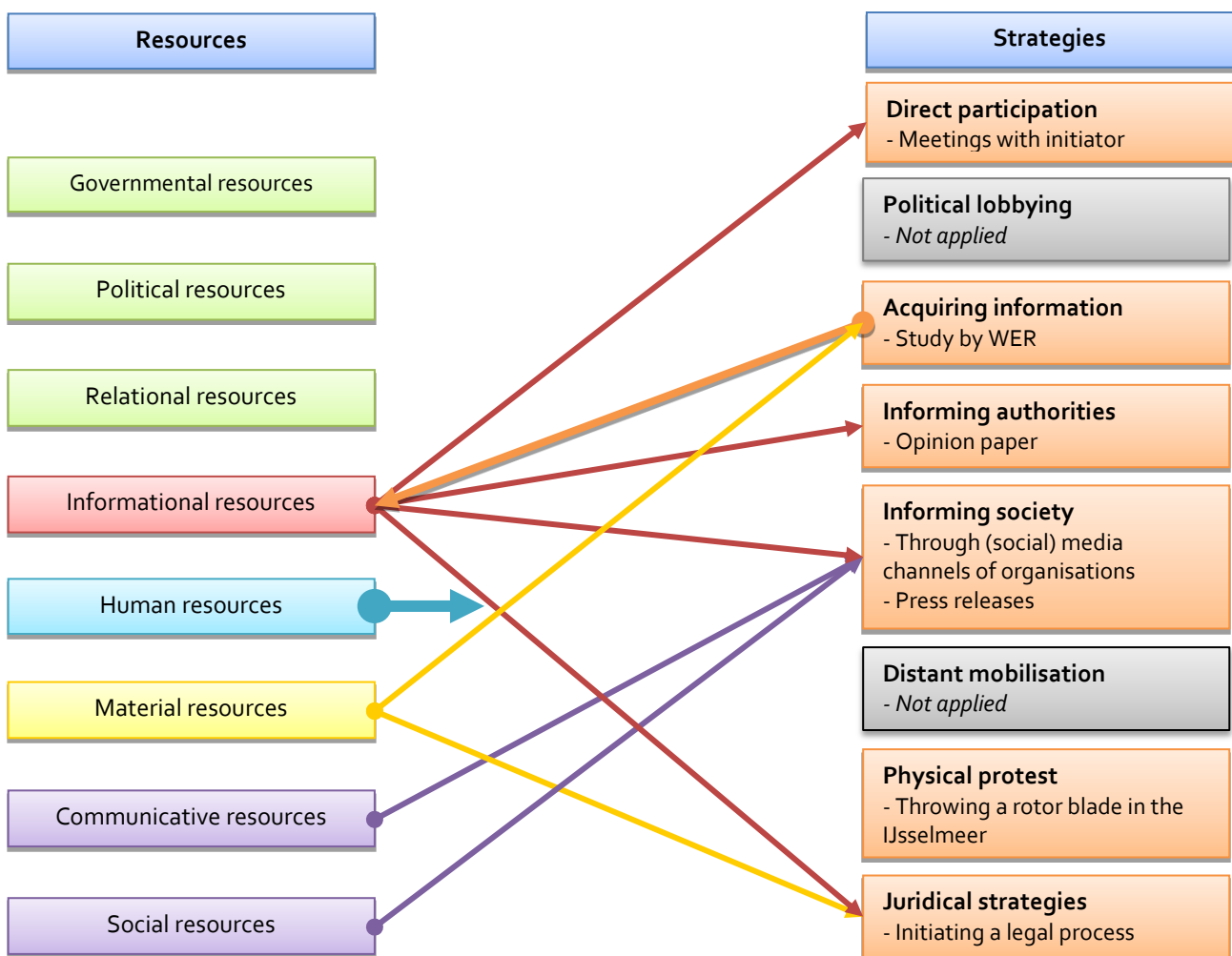
The respondents firstly recognised a relation between beliefs and the choice for direct participation. As described, meetings between the coalition and the initiator took place, but no consensus was found. "Although we probably could have achieved more nature mitigation, we chose not to negotiate about these measures for two reasons. We firstly did not want to give the impression that we were advocates of such an impairment of the IJsselmeer. And secondly, our estimation was that we had a change of winning the case through a legal proceeding.", the representative of It Fryske Gea explained. All respondents confirmed that this was the standpoint of the coalition in the consultation with the initiator. Moreover, the representative of the Vogelbescherming said that "It is often more efficient to reach your goals through consultation, but if that fails it is really important that we choose for litigation." So overall, giving in to some extent might have facilitated coming to an agreement and a more favourable outcome for the coalition. The coalition however was fundamentally against a wind park in the IJsselmeer, this view did not allow for any collaboration. This shows that the beliefs of an organisation or a coalition affect the effectivity of direct participation.

Moreover relationships between on the hand beliefs of an organisation and on the other the choice for juridical strategies and protest strategies were identified by the respondents. The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging firstly stated that "Looking to the strategical preferences of organisations, a spectrum can be identified. There are organisations that barely or never choose for juridical strategies, whereas other organisations bring a case before court more often." This was confirmed by the representative of the Vogelbescherming, who described that "Every organisations takes different considerations into account when deciding whether or not to litigate, the one will choose easier for a juridical procedure than the other." The respondent illustrated this with an example "In the case of the Sandwich Terns on Texel, Natuurmonumenten chose not to join the legal procedure. As a land owner, they also have to take into account the interests of other stakeholders, so there considerations differed from ours. The Vogelbescherming is more independent in that sense." This respondent also recognised this spectrum, as described for juridical strategies, also for protest strategies

and described that “As the Vogelbescherming, we do not avoid protesting, but extreme actions do not fit in well with our organisation, in that sense we are different from for example Greenpeace.” The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging also said that its organisation usually prefers not to apply extreme actions. So two respondents recognised that the preferences with respect to juridical strategies and physical protest differ between organisations.

## 5.7 Resources and strategy selection

The relation between the resources availability and strategy selection was already superficially mentioned a few times in the previous sections, but will be dealt with in more detail here. The first paragraph will present which resource types were invested in which specific strategies in the case of the Fitness Check. The second paragraph will focus on how resource availability influenced the strategical decisions taken.



*Figure 9: The relationships between the resources types and strategies applied* – This figure shows for every strategy applied by the coalition in the case of Windpark Fryslân which resources were used, based on what the respondents said in the interviews. The strategy of acquiring information is an exception in the sense that this strategy not only requires resources, but also produces resources; informational resources, which is indicated with the orange arrow. Human resources were used for all strategies and are therefore supposed to be connected with all strategy types. For clarity reasons, this (blue) arrow is not connected with the strategies, but is made thicker instead.

### 5.7.1 Resources invested in strategies

As discussed, no governmental and political resources have been combined by the organisations in the coalition. Relational resources were only used to form the coalition by it Fryske, this resource type was however not used for a specific strategy, which can also be seen in figure 9. As the respondents described, the combined material resources were primarily used to

outsource the study conducted by WER and to hire a lawyer, so for the strategy types of acquiring information and juridical strategies. Communicative resources were only used to inform society and members. Since the latter are an example of social resources, this resource type was used for the strategy informing society. The IJsselmeervereniging moreover used communicative and social resources to gather money among its members, this activity was however not included in figure 9, since this was not an activity on behalf of the coalition. Except for physical protest, the combined knowledge within the coalition formed the basis of almost every strategy, since information was provided to the initiator, authorities, society and the court. Human resources lastly formed the basis of every strategy as well, since every strategy obviously required time.

### 5.7.2 Resource availability and strategy selection

The respondents primarily elaborated on the relation between the availability of resources and juridical strategies, especially the availability of material resources was mentioned. The representative of the IJsselmeervereniging was most pronounced and stated that "Without good contra-expertise you have no chance of winning a case before the Council of State" and "Individual nature organisations simply do not have the budget to hire one lawyer, which we as a coalition did in the present case. Moreover, organisations do not have enough budget to outsource the contra-expertise." In line with this, the representative of It Fryske Gea described that "Without this coalition, we would not have been able to pay the study of Alterra." The respondent of the Vogelbescherming lastly stated that "We know that juridical procedures always cost a lot of money, especially hiring experts for contra-expertise. We take this into consideration when deciding whether or not to litigate." Without exception, the respondents recognised the importance of the contra-expertise by WER, and associated the availability of material resources to acquire this contra-expertise with the success of lawsuits.

Besides the availability of material resources, two respondents related human resources to juridical strategies. The representatives of both the IJsselmeervereniging and the Vogelbescherming identified the court case as the last resort. The latter respondent described that "The juridical procedure is our last resort. And not because of the financial costs, but we see litigating as a means, and not as a goal in itself." and "Juridical procedures also require capacity, since they take lots of time." The respondent of the IJsselmeervereniging confirmed this by saying "Juridical procedures cost relatively a lot of time, and the outcome is of course very uncertain." Human resources were not explicitly associated with juridical procedures by the other respondents.

So overall, all respondents identified material resources to be important for acquiring information, and described that the strategy of acquiring information often forms the base for juridical strategies. In addition, two respondents recognised that the availability of specialist expertise is limited in the Netherlands. Lastly, another two respondents lastly associated human resources with juridical strategies. No clear connections between the availability of the remaining resource types and strategies were mentioned by the respondents.

## 5.8 Conclusion – Case II: "Windpark Fryslân"

This section will summarise the main findings for the case of Windpark Fryslân. Every paragraph will address one research question, respectively focusing on the coalition formed, the role of beliefs, the role of combining resources, the strategies applied and lastly the relationships between on the one hand beliefs and resources, and strategy application on the other.

The coalition formed for this case consisted of 10 organisations in total. Half of the coalition consisted of nature organisations. These ENGOs were affiliated with the Blauwe Hart, which is a permanent coalition for conservation of the IJsselmeer. The rest of the coalition consisted of four recreation organisations and an occasional action group, which represented local citizens and entrepreneurs. The respondents did not distinguish between different layers of involvement, but It Fryske Gea was identified as the overall leader of the coalition. The involved organisations ranged from the local to the national level. Don Quichot was a local action group and It Fryske Gea a provincial landscape, whereas the remaining nature and recreation organisations mainly operate nationally. No supranational organisation were involved in this coalition. All in all, the coalition showed variation in terms of both horizontal and vertical connections, since the coalition consisted of different types of organisations, which were active at multiple levels.

No overall shared policy core beliefs were identified for this coalition. The respondents described that the ENGOs were especially connected by the value they ascribe to nature, whereas the recreation organisations, including Don Quichot instead were involved for recreational considerations. In line with this, no overarching secondary aspects were identified as well. Despite the differences in beliefs, all actors were connected by a shared overall goal, which was preventing the construction of the wind park at this particular location in the IJsselmeer. ENGOs can generally be expected

to largely share policy core beliefs. In the present case, however, broader environmental NGOs were not involved in the coalition since they were in favour of wind turbines. This again indicates that sharing policy core beliefs alone is not always enough for coalition-building. So the collaboration between nature and recreation organisations on the one hand, and the absence of broader environmental NGOs in the coalition on the other, show that having the same beliefs is not required and moreover no guarantee for collaboration. What the organisations in the coalition however did have was the same objective.

Except for political and governmental resources, all resource types were invested by organisations in the coalition. The use of relational resources was limited to the phase of coalition-building, and these were only contributed by It Fryske Gea, since this organisation took most responsibility in building the coalition and involving the recreation organisations. With respect to informational resources, a distinction between the nature and recreation organisations was identified in terms of the type of information contributed. The remaining resource types were invested by all organisations in the coalition and no strong differences between these organisations have been observed. According to the respondents, coalition-building was necessary for the availability of only a few of the resource types that were combined within the coalition. All respondents firstly considered this to be the case for informational and material resources, which were both particularly used in the juridical procedure. Furthermore, three of the five respondents ascribed the same importance to sharing human resources. So although most resource types were combined within the coalition, for only a few of these resource types the opportunity to combine resources was identified as a reason for coalition-building.

Several factors that influenced the process of coalition-building, but did not fit in the original framework were observed. The first factor all respondents recognised was the permanent coalition of the Blauwe Hart. Since Windpark Fryslân was planned in the IJsselmeer, it was logical for It Fryske Gea to first look for coalition-partners in the Blauwe Hart. Secondly, one respondent mentioned that efficiency was taken into account as well. It was said that under some circumstances it is more efficient to address an issue on your own as an organisation, or look for support after the strategical decisions have been taken. Another respondent identified conflicting interests as a third factor, for organisations for non-cooperation. The fact that these factors were mentioned by the respondents indicates that in the present case, the process of coalition-building cannot be explained by shared beliefs and combining resources alone.

Except for the strategies of political lobbying and distant mobilisation, all strategy types have been applied by the coalition. The strategy of direct participation firstly, was applied in the first phase of the project, through meetings with the initiator of Windpark Fryslân. Authorities were informed through an opinion paper, which furthermore, was a prerequisite for initiating a legal procedure. Physical protest was applied only once, by throwing a rotor blade in the IJsselmeer to make a statement. After the permits were granted, the coalition chose to indeed initiate a lawsuit against these permits. A study by WER was commissioned to acquire further evidence to provide in court. The strategy of informing society was applied throughout the whole process, both by press releases and own media channels. According to the respondents, the strategy of distant mobilization was not applied for the reason that it would have been difficult to find support in society. Moreover, political lobbying was not applied by the coalition, but instead by a separate organisations that was not part of the coalition. In terms of temporal differences, direct participation was only applied in the first phase, whereas acquiring information and the legal proceeding were combined in the last phase. The remaining strategies were applied in between the first and last phase, except for informing society which was applied throughout the whole process.

The last research question dealt with the relation between on the one hand beliefs and resources, and strategy selection on the other. Two respondents firstly recognised differences between organisations in terms of strategical preferences. Secondly all respondents explained that the strategy of direct participation is not always compatible with the beliefs of an organisation. In the present case, nothing was achieved during the meetings with the initiator, since the coalition did not deviate from their fundamental standpoint and consequently was not willing to negotiate about measures of mitigation. In this way the beliefs of organisations can prevent the application of direct participation. With respect to resources, several respondents made clear that a high availability of informational, human and material resources is essential for winning a lawsuit. This indicates that the chance of success in lawsuits at least to some extent depends on the availability of resources. For the remaining strategies applied, no considerations with respect to resource availability were mentioned. All in all, both differences between the strategical preferences of organisations, and a relationship between beliefs and the effectivity of direct participation were observed in the present case. In addition, resource availability was associated with the effectivity of strategies. However, a clear link between preferences and effectivity on the one hand, and strategy selection on the other was not found.



## 6. Results – Case III: Salt extraction below the Wadden Sea

In this chapter, the findings of the interviews conducted for the case of salt extraction below the Wadden Sea will be presented. Every section will deal with one research question. The last section of this chapter presents the main conclusions on the case.

### 6.1 Composition of coalition

The coalition that was formed in the case of the Salt extraction was smaller than the coalitions formed in the other two cases. All respondents were clear that this coalition consisted of only three organisations, which were the Waddenvereniging, Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming (figure 10). As mentioned in the methodology section, this case was proposed by the respondent of the Waddenvereniging. Representatives of the other two were interviewed as well. The respondents did not distinguish between different layers, according to them the role the different organisations played within the coalition was similar.



*Figure 10: Composition of the coalition* – This figure presents an overview of the organisations that were part of the coalition.

### 6.2 Shared beliefs and coalition-building

On the basis of statements made by the respondents, the following paragraph will respectively describe the main policy core beliefs of the coalition, how beliefs were related to coalition-building, and what secondary aspects played a role in the present coalition.

#### 6.2.1 Policy core beliefs shared by the coalition

The three organisations that formed the coalition in this case initially found each other in the “Coalitie Wadden Natuurlijk” (CWN), which is a permanent coalition in which seven nature organisations united. “It depends on the case which partners we choose to collaborate with. For some issues we have permanent coalitions, like the CWN. If this is not the case for a certain issue, we form an occasional coalition.”, the representative of the Waddenvereniging explained. In accordance with this, the respondent of Natuurmonumenten mentioned that “For issues related to the Wadden Sea there is the collaboration called CWN.” So Dutch organisations that are concerned with the Wadden Sea are united in the CWN, consequently the policy core belief that connects all organisations in that coalition is the value the natural value they ascribe to the Wadden Sea area.

The three organisations that collaborated in the coalition were unanimous about their view on salt extraction below the Wadden Sea. “Our viewpoint was that an activity like salt extraction really should not be allowed in this area”, the respondent of the Waddenvereniging described. The representative of Natuurmonumenten, furthermore, stated that “The Wadden Sea is part of Natura 2000 and a World Heritage Site, no mining activities should be allowed in such an area. [...] Salt can be extracted everywhere, so why specifically in the Wadden Sea? In our view the added value for society did not outweigh the associated risks.” and added that “The organisations were not divided, we all took the same position”. The representative of the Vogelbescherming recognised as well that the three organisations had the same view from the start and described this view as “An industrial project like salt mining does not belong in a nature area, let alone in a World Heritage Site.”

Although the three organisations had the same overall goal and shared the same views on salt extraction below the Wadden Sea, their underlying motivations to address this issue as an organisation were somewhat different. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming mentioned that “The Wadden Sea is a very important area for us. Many birds are dependent on the Wadden Sea, so addressing this was an easy decision.” In line with this, the representative of Natuurmonumenten described that “The Vogelbescherming was involved since birds interests were at stake.

Natuurmonumenten was involved because the extraction location was close to Griend, which is an island we manage. This made it more likely for us to get involved. The Waddenvereniging of course plays a general role in the Wadden Sea."

### 6.2.2 *Policy core beliefs and coalition-building*

As described, the three organisations in the core shared the same policy core belief. This was however not what respondents identified as the factor that influenced their decision to cooperate. Instead, all three respondents identified the significance of a topic as a factor that influenced their decision. "We all represent certain interests. If you observe that something affects these interests, you come together and form a coalition. All three of us had interests in the Wadden Sea and these interests ran a 100% parallel, so therefore we started collaborating.", the respondent of Natuurmonumenten explained. In addition, the representative of the Waddenvereniging explained that "There are always some parties that stand up and are willing to really address a certain issue and put effort in it. This also occurred in the case of the case of the salt extractions, where Natuurmonumenten, the Vogelbescherming and our organisation really wanted to put this issue on the agenda." As presented in the previous paragraph, the urgency also influenced the decision of the Vogelbescherming to address the issue: "The Wadden Sea is a very important area for us. Many birds are dependent on the Wadden Sea, so addressing this was an easy decision." So according to the respondents, the decision to address an issue and thereby cooperate is affected by how important an organisation considers a certain issue to be.

As mentioned, the organisations in the CWN share the same policy core belief on the Wadden Sea area. However not all organisations made the choice to join the coalition on this issue. The representative of Natuurmonumenten explained this as follows: "We decided in an early stage that the case of salt extraction did not necessarily had to be an activity coordinated by the CWN collaboration. Therefore the parties that were concerned most with the case took responsibility." In addition, the respondent of the Waddenvereniging said that "We considered to expand the coalition, but there were no logical partners left who were willing to join the coalition. Due to time constraints, we did not look for additional partners." The respondents were rather unanimous about eventual involvement of the remaining CWN organisations. "The location was too far away for It Fryske Gea", the respondent of the Waddenvereniging said. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming made a similar statement. The representative of Natuurmonumenten explained that "For the Groninger Landschap it was too far away, It Fryske Gea and Noord-Hollands Landschap were not interested as well.". Furthermore, two respondents discussed the possible involvement of organisations that were not affiliated to the CWN. "Greenpeace is more on energy and climate issues, this issue is too specialist for them" and "The WNF is usually selective in its themes, so they are not interested if the Wadden Sea is not one of these themes.", the Waddenvereniging respondent explained. In line with this, the representative of Natuurmonumenten said that "The WNF is not active in the Wadden Sea, so they were not even considered as coalition partner." So again, the respondents recognise that organisations differ in their prioritisation of issues, despite eventual shared policy core beliefs.

In addition, the representative of the Waddenvereniging described some considerations for coalition-building in general "We sometimes look for less obvious coalition partners, we collaborated for example with Carbontracker, Urgenda and Milieudefensie, but also for instance with LTO." and explained that "Having shared opinions is not always needed, for instance in our collaboration with LTO, the advocacy organisation for agriculture. Sometimes it is enough to only have shared interests [...] We also collaborate with fishermen now and then, which is not a logical coalition partner. But sometimes unexpected partners are very strong partners." The other two respondents provided no information on coalition-building with organisations with different beliefs.

So all respondents recognised that organisations with similar policy core beliefs nevertheless make different decisions on which issues to address. The respondents ascribe this to differences between the organisations in in what topics they consider as most important for them. The representative of the Waddenvereniging, furthermore, explained that shared policy core beliefs are not essential for coalition-building for its organisation, as long as the interests correspond.

### 6.2.3 *Secondary aspects shared by the coalition*

As discussed, the three organisations in the coalition shared the same beliefs and agreed on a shared goal in an early stage, they were by no means in favour of the salt extraction. The representative of the Waddenvereniging illustrated this by saying "We are usually constructive and willing to consider allowance of an activity since we cannot always be against everything. But in this case we agreed to oppose the activity, because we estimated that the consequences would be too



catastrophic.” There is however not always unity among ENGOs, the respondent described: “Sometimes disagreements occur within a coalition, for example when one organisation is willing to allow a certain activity in case of commitment of accurate monitoring and nature compensation, whereas another organisation is still a 100% against that activity. However, in general there is unanimity among coalition partners, since mutual disagreement dramatically weakens your position as nature organisations in lawsuits or in society.” The present coalition was nevertheless characterised by consensus, according to the respondents.

Two respondents moreover stated that their organisations are still against any mining activities in the Wadden Sea, despite the judgement of the court that the permit for salt extraction was granted legitimately. “We see the Natura 2000 goals as a lower boundary, nature protection through Natura 2000 is actually rather limited. Therefore we also try to alter or prevent certain activities in other ways, but Natura 2000 goals are sometimes useful for litigation.”, the respondent of the Waddenvereniging explained. Similarly, the representative of Natuurmonumenten said that “We as nature organisations still have the same standpoint: Salt extraction should not be allowed here, and not only for the potential ecological damage, but in our view mining activities just do not belong in a World Heritage Site, under no circumstances. Even if we cannot prove that it really damages the area, it should not be allowed. This was and still is our opinion.” This was also recognised by the servants of the ministry who described that a competent authority like the ministry on the one hand has to assess whether or not activities cause damage to the nature values of a Natura 2000 area, whereas ENGOs on the other hand can be fundamentally against salt extraction in the Wadden Sea, regardless of the regulation. In terms of secondary aspects, this indicates that the involved nature organisations are in favour of the BHDs, but that at least two of them at the same time have the opinion that the directives are not strict enough and thereby insufficient for protecting nature areas according to their standards.

### **6.3 Resource availability and coalition-building**

This section describes the role of resources within the national coalition, on the basis of the resource categorisation that was presented in the methodology section. The first paragraph presents which resources were contributed by which organisation in the coalition, whereas the second paragraph discusses for which of these resource types, the opportunity of combining resources of organisations played a role in coalition-building.

#### **6.3.1 Resource contribution per organisation**

Material resources only played a role in this coalition in the form of a financial contribution, according to all respondents. All respondents also agreed that the costs were divided equally among the three organisations, as the representative of the Waddenvereniging for example described “The distribution of costs is usually based on the carrying capacity of an organisation, but in this case we divided the costs evenly.” The respondents said that most of the financial costs were spent on the costs of an outsourced research and the hired lawyer. “The costs of the study by Leo van Rijn have been shared among the three of us, that costed a lot of money.” and “We also spent loads of money on the lawyer.”, the respondent of Natuurmonumenten said. In line with this, the representative of the Waddenvereniging and the Vogelbescherming respectively stated “Together we hired a lawyer and together we outsourced studies, this enabled to achieve much more.”, and “We involved an expert for contra-expertise and we hired a lawyer that supported us.” So the respondents all considered the expenditures of the research and the lawyer as the main costs and all, furthermore, recognised that these costs were shared equally.

In terms of human resources, the respondents described that tasks were divided, but no differences in in time investment between the organisations were mentioned by the respondents. The equal invested capacity is perfectly illustrated by a quote of the representative of the Waddenvereniging: “We distributed the tasks fairly in the case of the salt extraction. That is always our aim since every organisation is willing to contribute, there are usually no free-riders. Sometimes organisation X has more time available and the other time this goes for organisation Y, but this is usually aligned with each other.”

All three respondents considered the external study as the most important and valuable information that played a role in this case. Informational resources were however also contributed by the organisations in the coalition. The representative of the Waddenvereniging said that its organisation and the Vogelbescherming contributed juridical expertise, and also explained that “Our organisation has expertise on the processes that occur in the Wadden Sea, Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming are less specialised on this topic. [...] The Vogelbescherming contributed

knowledge on birds and Natuurmonumenten contributed site-specific knowledge. In this way all three organisations contributed to the information available in the coalition." In line with this, the respondent of Natuurmonumenten explained that "The Vogelbescherming contributed bird-specific information. The Waddenvereniging has specific knowledge on the Wadden Sea, and we manage and know everything about the island of Griend. Our knowledge is however limited to this island and does not include its surroundings." "We focused especially on the effects of salt extraction on birds, so we mainly contributed that input. [...] I think that our coalition-partners particularly focused on the habitat-type.", the respondent of the Vogelbescherming lastly described. All in all, the organisations contributed equal amounts but different types of informational resources.

In contrast to the resource categories presented in the previous sections, the respondents were less clear about the role of relational resources in this specific case. "We have most contacts related to the Wadden Sea area, including scientific contacts, so we usually contribute these connections to a collaboration. But this does not apply to topics like birds." the representative of the Waddenvereniging explained. The respondent of Natuurmonumenten was less pronounced and said that "It might for instance have been the case that the Vogelbescherming contributed a certain connection with a birds researcher, but this contacts usually does not play a major role." The respondent of the Vogelbescherming provided no concrete information on combined relational resources. Due to the deficient information, the cells in table 4 on contributions within the coalition in terms of relational resources were left open.

Respondents provided more information on the role of political resources in general and in this specific case. Firstly the representatives of both the Waddenvereniging and Natuurmonumenten related the Groene11 to political resources. "The Groene11 provides us with political contacts in the Hague, really great. It simply not possible for a nature organisation to that on your own.", the respondent of the Waddenvereniging explained. The respondent of Natuurmonumenten confirmed this and said "The Groene11 puts us in touch with some Members of Parliament and facilitates meetings with them. In the case of the salt extraction, we handed a report to Members of Parliament with the request to address the issue.", and "This meeting with Members of Parliament was of course prepared by someone of the Groene11." Besides the role of the Groene11, the representative of the Waddenvereniging mentioned the own political connections of ENGOS: "Within the Groene11 we also collaborate in lobbying and share the contacts we have with political parties.", and "Natuurmonumenten moreover had their own lobbyist in The Hague, who was also involved in the case, besides our common lobbyist of the Groene11. [...] ". The respondent added that "The contribution was pretty equally divided among the three coalition-partners in this case.", but however also noted that "Political connections and contacts in The Hague strongly depend on the person, even more than on the organisation. So it differs, but not because we are for instance the Waddenvereniging and they are Natuurmonumenten." So overall, in this case political resources were contributed by both the Groene11 and all three coalition-partners.

The governmental resources did not seem to have played a major role in this case. Although there were contacts between on the one hand the ministry and on the other the coalition in terms of exchanging information, none of the respondents mentioned these connections as resources provided by a specific organisation in the coalition. The same applied to the meeting that was organised by the ministry that was attended by both the ENGOS and the research firm of Frisia.

Communicative resources of the organisations in the coalition have been used several times throughout this case. The respondent of the Vogelbescherming for example described that "There have been a few joint press releases. On really crucial moments it is important to issue a press release together, since that has much more impact than publishing on your own.", and "There was a campaign called 'Stop Wrong Salt'. We were not involved in that campaign, it was completely arranged by the Waddenvereniging." In this online campaign people were encouraged to donate money, which would be used to prevent the salt extraction. Moreover, "The Waddenvereniging made a video that was distributed through YouTube and social media channels." on behalf of the coalition, according to the respondent of Natuurmonumenten. The representative of the Waddenvereniging however stated that "Natuurmonumenten took most responsibility for the media and social media campaign". In line with this the representative of Natuurmonumenten described several actions arranged by its organisation: "Natuurmonumenten organised a public campaign on the market square in Leeuwarden.", "We placed an article in a newspaper and there was an item on the Frisian television.", "We launched a Facebook page about the issue, where we regularly placed updates on the topic.", and lastly "Many people signed up for a newsletter on the issue, really lots of people." Through this newsletter, a consultation was organised. So all in all, Natuurmonumenten, and to a lesser extent the Waddenvereniging as well, contributed most communicative resources, according to the respondents. In addition, all three organisations informed their followers about developments through media and social media channels.

Social resources, lastly, played a role through all communicative activities that focused on the members and followers of the organisations in the coalition. As described in the previous paragraph, the Waddenvereniging asked their

members for a financial contribution through the 'Stop Wrong Salt' campaign, and Natuurmonumenten consulted the subscribers of the newsletter, which led to 1200 responses. Moreover, the organisations' communication channels were used to inform their members. In these ways, all organisations, but especially the Waddenvereniging and Natuurmonumenten used their social resources, in the form of members and followers, to raise awareness and mobilise people.

*Table 4: Resource contribution per organisation* – This table describes which resource types were contributed by which ENGO in the coalition. It provides information on the investment of every organisation in the Fitness Check case, not on the availability of resources within these organisations in general. The table does not distinguish between the amounts a certain organisation invested.

		Material resources	Human resources	Informational resources	Relational resources	Political resources	Governmental resources	Communicative resources	Social resources
Coalition	Waddenvereniging								
	Natuurmonumenten								
	Vogelbescherming								

### 6.3.2 Coalition-building and combining resources

Except for relational and governmental resources, all resource types were combined by this coalition. The respondents however considered some of these resource types as more important than others, therefore the present paragraph discusses the role combining resources played in the process of coalition-building in the present case.

In terms of material resources, firstly, all respondents explicitly recognised the added value of collaborating and sharing costs. The representative of the Waddenvereniging for example described that "Most important for this case were the hired experts for the contra-expertise." and "Together we hired a lawyer and together we outsourced studies, this enabled to achieve much more.", which indicates the importance of combined financial resources. The respondent of Natuurmonumenten confirmed this by saying "We ultimately also collaborated to share the costs, since the case costed lots of money, especially the contra-expertise. Then its favourable if the costs can be divided over three organisations, and that you do not have to pay everything on your own.", and "We probably would have addressed the issue as well without collaboration, but maybe not with the same intensity. I doubt whether we would have invested the same amount of money, since that would have been very expensive." The latter was also recognised by the representative of the Vogelbescherming who explained that "Without collaboration, we all probably would have made the same decisions as we did together. But it was very expensive, so I am not sure whether we would have had the same financial resources available on our own.", and "Litigating together with three organisations enabled us to do much more, also financially, than if we would have litigated on our own." These statements clearly indicate the importance of sharing material resources, since all respondents described that without collaboration, their organisations would not have borne all costs on their own.

The respondents were less pronounced about combining human resources as an incentive for coalition-building, however some statements indicated that capacity is taken into account as well. The representative of the Waddenvereniging for example stated that coalitions are formed "to join forces, since all organisations have a limited capacity." In line with this, the respondent of Natuurmonumenten described that "The choice to form a coalition is above all based on the possibility to divide tasks, and it, furthermore, is good to share the costs as well." Lastly, "Litigating together with three organisations enabled us to do much more.", which was mentioned by the representative of the Vogelbescherming, also implies that collaboration increased the total availability of human resources. So overall, the respondents seemed to consider the opportunity to combine human resources as an incentive to form coalitions as well.

As described in the previous paragraph, knowledge and expertise were contributed by all three coalition-partners. None of the respondents however stated that other decisions would have been taken, or insufficient information would have been available if no informational resources had been combined. "Most important for this case were the hired experts for the contra-expertise.", the representative of the Waddenvereniging explained, and this view was shared by the other two respondents as well. As mentioned, all respondents doubted whether their organisations would have commissioned

these studies without collaboration. This however again indicates the importance of coalition-building for the availability of material resources, instead of informational resources. In this way, collaboration was important to combine financial resources for acquiring information, but not to bridge deficiencies in terms of informational resources on beforehand.

In general, combining and using each other's political contacts was not identified by the respondents as an incentive to form coalitions. About the role of the Groene11 in general, the representative of the Waddenvereniging said that "The Groene11 provides us with political contacts in the Hague, really great. It simply not possible for a nature organisation to that on your own." The respondent however did not elaborate on the role of the Groene11 in the present case and made no similar statements about the political resources of individual organisations. Overall, none of the respondents recognised the eventual necessity or added value of combining each other's political resources.

The respondents considered neither the communicational, nor the social resources of their organisations to be deficient for addressing the issue on their own. In terms of communicational resources, firstly, the representative of the Waddenvereniging for example explained that "Natuurmonumenten took most responsibility for the communication campaign, for they had most capacity. But it also depends on the moment which organisation has most time available." "We chose to arrange the public campaign, but the Waddenvereniging would have been capable of arranging it as well.", the respondent of Natuurmonumenten described. Both statements at least indicate that the communicational resources of organisations are interchangeable. Despite the fact that communication resources were combined within the coalition, the respondents moreover did not considered the communicational resources to be crucial.

About the role of combining social resources for coalition-building, lastly, the respondents were unanimous. "I do not think that the number of members an organisation has is very important. Organisations do not seek collaboration because of each other's member base.", the respondent of the Waddenvereniging explained. The representative of the Vogelbescherming shared this view. "The number of members of an organisations does not play a role at all. There moreover even is an overlap between the member base of the Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten, so these cannot simply be added up.", the representative of Natuurmonumenten concluded. The respondents thus did not associate coalition-building with combining social resources. All in all, only combining material and human resources were perceived as incentives for the formation of this coalition.

## 6.4 Other factors that affect coalition-building

Again, a few other factors that influenced coalition-building, but did not fit in the original framework, were mentioned by the respondents. As discussed in 7.2, the representative of the Waddenvereniging explained that "It depends on the case which partners we choose to collaborate with. For some issues we have permanent coalitions, like the CWN." In accordance with this, the respondent of Natuurmonumenten said that "For issues related to the Wadden Sea there is the collaboration called CWN.", but "We decided in an early stage that the case of salt extraction did not necessarily had to be an activity coordinated by the CWN collaboration. Therefore the parties that were concerned most with the case took responsibility." These statements indicate that issues related to the Wadden Sea are usually discussed within the CWN and are, if appropriate, addressed by this coalition. So although the issue of salt extraction did not became an activity of the CWN in the end, the existence of this permanent coalition facilitated the formation of the smaller final coalition between the Waddenvereniging, Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming.

The representative of the Waddenvereniging secondly stated that the visibility of its organisation plays a role as well in the decision whether or not to form a coalition. The respondent said that "Collaboration has of course one disadvantage: it is difficult for people to distinguish between organisations. Why would someone sign up as member for the Waddenvereniging, when Natuurmonumenten and the Vogelbescherming do exactly the same?" and "It can be a choice to profile your organisation on its own on a certain issue, since you have to distinguish yourself from other organisations." This factor was not mentioned by the other two respondents.

In addition, the representative of the Waddenvereniging associated time with coalition-building. However not in terms of capacity as was described in the section on resources, but in terms of efficiency. "Collaboration usually takes much more time, but this also depends on how you organise the collaboration.", and "In the case of the salt mining we coordinated and divided many activities, but you can also choose to do everything together. Doing it in the latter way is of course very nice, but it also takes lots of time. It is for example not easy to write a joint letter with twenty different organisations." The same respondent, furthermore, elaborated that "Involvement is often limited to only endorsing something. In such a collaboration your organisation does not have to contribute any money, but is only asked to sign a statement or document. In return for this opportunity, you use your own communication channels to promote the case and

help the organisation that initiated the case. In this way, organisations help each other.” So according to this respondent cooperating is not always as efficient as addressing an issue without having coalition-partners. Moreover, the respondent described that collaboration does not always require a significant investment of resources by all organisations in the coalition. Again, similar statements were not made by the representatives of Natuurmonumenten and the Waddenvereniging.

## 6.5 Strategy selection by coalitions

This section describes what strategies were applied by the coalition, on the basis of the strategy categorisation that was described in the methodology section. In each paragraph, the applied strategies for one category will be presented. The last paragraph addresses relations and overlaps between the used strategies.

### 6.5.1 *Direct participation*

In terms of direct participation, the applied strategies were twofold. Firstly, meetings between the initiator and the ENGO coalition were arranged before the permit was granted. The respondent of the Waddenvereniging explained the following about the involvement of its organisation: “In the case of the salt extraction, we have not been involved in the decision-making process. In some cases the initiator does choose to involve nature organisations, but this is often in order to prevent juridical procedures.” and “There has been a meeting with all relevant stakeholders, where the initiator presented its plan and asked for our opinion. [...] At a certain moment we took position and said that this activity should under no circumstances be allowed in this area. Subsequently, a view meetings between the initiator and authorities took place but there was no room for alternatives.” This was confirmed by the representative of Natuurmonumenten who added that “The contact between the nature organisations and Frisia later faded away. We were fundamentally against the salt extraction below this area, which appeared to be a difficult base for consultation.” So before the permit was granted, some meetings took place between the coalition and the initiator, but did not lead to adaptation of the original plans.

During the licensing procedure moreover a consultation between the ENGOs and the ministry took place. A servant of the ministry described that the ministry arranged a meeting between the consultancy firms that were commissioned by Frisia and representatives of nature organisations, to inform the nature organisations and answer their questions. In addition, the servant explained that nature organisations can play a very useful role in the process, since they can influence the licensing conditions if they show that the foundation of the project is in inaccurate. In line with this, the representative of Natuurmonumenten said that “During these meetings, information was exchanged. Arcadis, which was the consultancy firm hired by Frisia, presented data that indicated that the salt extraction would only lead to minor effects, but the data was very difficult to assess. We subsequently also hired an expert to investigate the potential subsidence.” These statements indicate that the ENGOs were involved in the licensing phase, but this did not lead to different licensing conditions. Their involvement was however limited in the governmental decision-making phase, the ENGOs were involved after the initiator completed its plans.

### 6.5.2 *Political lobbying*

In terms of lobbying, the respondents described that the organisations collaborated their activities, and mentioned one activity in particular: “We went to the House of Representatives and we handed a report to some Members of Parliament. This also led to the adoption of a meaningless motion, that said that salt extraction should only be allowed there is no change for damage. But obviously the permit will only be granted if there is no risk. This rather is a way for political parties to express that they are concerned with the Wadden Sea.”, as described by the representative of Natuurmonumenten. The respondent of the Waddenvereniging confirmed this and said that “The Groene<sup>11</sup> arranged a meeting between us and some Members of Parliament. We gave them a report with the urgent request to address the issue. Subsequently, a motion like ‘no salt extraction if it causes damage’ was adopted. This motion was completely useless in the sense that the initiators already demonstrated that the salt extraction did not cause any damage, but the topic was at least on the agenda of the parliament.” The motion concerned (*Dossier 31349 nr. 14*) was submitted by the Members of Parliament Lutz Jacobi and Paulus Jansen, of respectively the PvdA and the SP, in April 2009. Furthermore, a document on a public consultation among members of Natuurmonumenten was handed over to the State Secretary of Economic Affairs. This action will be described in more detail in the paragraph on distant mobilisation.

### 6.5.3 *Acquiring information*

Besides the information that was already available within the organisations and was shared between the coalition-partners, two external studies were commissioned by the coalitions. "The salt extraction was planned on the 'Ballast plate', which is an important location for birds to forage. We as a coalition asked the NIOZ to conduct a research on the value of the Ballast plate for the Red Knot. This was the first external document that we commissioned in order to have a proof of the importance of the area.", the respondent of Natuurmonumenten explained. About the second research, the respondent described "We commissioned a research, conducted by the expert Leo van Rijn, to test the study of Arcadis, which indicated that the salt extraction would only have a minor impact. It would have been great if we were able to totally tackle that study with ours, but unfortunately that was not the case, which also turned out during the court session of the Council of State."

All respondents explicitly stated that it was very difficult to collect scientific evidence. The representative of the Waddenvereniging for instance explained that "In a case like the salt extraction, where you are dependent on very specialist, technical expertise, it is very difficult to deliver a sufficient amount of scientific information." and "It was very hard to find contra-expertise, that really was the bottleneck of this court case. The ecological report of the NIOZ was very thorough, but the second report on sedimentation was just not strong enough." "There are very few people in the Netherlands with enough knowledge on the subject, so that really is a limitation. Luckily we found an expert with a lot of expertise, but it just was a very difficult case to win." and "There are relatively few people with expertise on morphology and sedimentation, in the Netherlands they can be counted on the fingers of one hand.", the respondents of respectively the Vogelbescherming and Natuurmonumenten confirmed.

### 6.5.4 *Informing authorities*

The Ministry of Economic Affairs was the main authority in this case, since they were responsible for the licensing procedure. As discussed in 7.5.1, the coalition informed the ministry through a direct meetings. The report of the NIOZ was the most important research that was shared with the ministry to inform them about the value of the Ballast Plate as was mentioned in the previous paragraph. The other report was presented by the coalition as contra-expertise to the report of Arcadis in the court case. Despite the fact that the outsourced studies were not strong enough to prevent the salt extraction, the studies did affect the outcome of the case according the representative Natuurmonumenten: "The study carried out by the NIOZ showed the importance of the Ballast plate to the ministry. This also resulted in the adaptation of texts in the permit, so in that sense it was very effective. I am convinced that the studies did contribute to the quality of the decision-making. In the end we moreover even achieved that the monitoring regulations were made stricter." This role of nature organisations was also recognised by the servants of the ministry as well who described that the nature organisations queried the decision of the government which led to a reconsideration and a verification of this decision.

### 6.5.5 *Informing society*

As already briefly mentioned in the paragraph on resources, the coalition informed society in several ways. Firstly all organisations informed their members and followers about developments in the case. The respondent of the Waddenvereniging moreover mentioned that "We made videos; infographics, and we distributed these videos to inform people." According to the respondent of Natuurmonumenten, these were distributed through YouTube and social media channels, the respondent also said that Natuurmonumenten placed articles in newspapers and launched a Facebook page on the issue. Furthermore a newsletter where people could subscribe to was regularly released by Natuurmonumenten and "Natuurmonumenten organised a public campaign on the market square in Leeuwarden. An artist was invited and people could help building a large sculpture of salt and sand. We also distributed information sheets that elaborated our concerns. The action was very successful, many people stopped by and there was a lot of interest from the press.", the representative of Natuurmonumenten explained. The respondent lastly described that "The issue of salt extraction was a very easy topic in terms of communication. Much easier than many other topics that are more nuanced and too complicated for a broader public." All in all, the coalition applied a broad strategy to inform society about the developments in the case of the salt extraction.

### 6.5.6 Distant mobilisation

The strategy of distant mobilisation was applied in two ways by this coalition. Firstly, the Waddenvereniging organised the online campaign 'Stop Wrong Salt' where people were asked to donate money to prevent the salt extraction. In addition, Natuurmonumenten used the newsletter for its members in the northern part of the Netherlands; "Through this newsletter, people were requested to send in a message with their opinion on the salt extraction, which led to 1200 responses.", the respondent explained. These responses were in August 2013 handed to the State Secretary of Economic Affairs Dijksma, when she visited the island of Griend. Dijksma nevertheless granted the permit for salt extraction on the basis of the Nature Protection Law in September 2014. Since this was an activity of Natuurmonumenten, this activity was not mentioned by the other two respondents.

### 6.5.7 Physical protest

No strategies of physical protest have been applied in this case. The representative of the Waddenvereniging explained this as follows: "It is very difficult to mobilise people physically for a demonstration. Digital mobilisation is much easier."

### 6.5.8 Juridical strategies

Taking legal action was overall the last strategy applied by the coalition. The respondents of both the Waddenvereniging and the Vogelbescherming recognised that it was the only possibility for the coalition in that phase. The latter described that "We had no other opportunities left, taking legal action was the only option.", and the respondent of the Waddenvereniging said that "Court cases are always our last resort." The coalition hired a lawyer that supported them during the lawsuit.

As discussed the permit on the basis of the Nature Protection Law was granted on 2 September 2014. Subsequently, the coalition objected to the granting of this permit. The State Secretary declared this objection partially grounded and partially ungrounded, and decided in 12 May 2015 that the permit will be maintained. Thereupon, the appellants, which were all three organisations in the coalition, appealed against this decision of the State Secretary. The State Secretary, which was the defendant, then submitted a statement of defence. In this phase the nature organisations submitted the commissioned report 'Wadden subsidence due to salt extraction' of Leo van Rijn. The representative of Natuurmonumenten explained that "It would have been great if we were able to totally tackle the study of Arcadis with ours, but unfortunately that was not the case". The Institute for Consultation on Administrative Jurisdiction (STAB) for Environment and Spatial Planning moreover published an expert report on the case. "The STAB-report concluded that we inadequately underpinned our case and basically said that we were wrong. The chances strongly diminish if that is the conclusion of a STAB-report.", the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained.

In response to the STAB-report, the appellants, defendant and Frisia all submitted their opinion papers ('zienswijzen'). The STAB subsequently reacted to these opinion papers, and the appellants, defendant and Frisia again submitted opinion papers on the reaction of the STAB. In 26 April 2016, the State Secretary altered its decision made at the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the main modification was the inclusion of a monitoring program. The nature organisations again submitted their view on this decision. On 23 November 2016, the administrative court ruled (*Court decision 201504975/1/R2*) that the appeal against the decision of 12 May 2015 by the State Secretary was grounded. Consequently, the ENGOs received an amount of €496,00 for trial costs, €20.529,40 for trial costs of the appeal, and lastly the repayment of €331,00 for court fees. The court moreover ruled that the decision of the State Secretary was not unjustified on the basis of the appropriate assessment, and retained the permit, granted on 2 September 2014.

The representative of Natuurmonumenten concluded that "The most concrete gain of the court case was the extended monitoring program. So that was an improvement, although still a minor one." "Certain regulations were originally included in the permit that said that the project could be altered in the execution phase. The court ruled that this was not allowed. In case of alterations, the effects should be assessed through a new license application procedure. So this was a gain, but a minor one if you hope to prevent the whole project.", the representative of the Vogelbescherming explained. So overall, the coalition has been proved right on some points during the lawsuits, but the overall goal to prevent salt extraction below the Wadden Sea was not achieved.

### 6.5.9 *Relations between strategies*

The strategies applied overlapped and were combined in several ways according to the respondents. Acquiring information, firstly, formed the basis of several other strategies. As described the report of the NIOZ was for example shared with authorities of the ministry, was handed over to politicians from the House of Representatives, and was put forward in the court case. The report of Leo van Rijn was put forward in the court case as well. In this way, the strategy of acquiring information was used for informing authorities, political lobbying, and juridical strategies.

Two other strategies were used for the lobbying as well, according to the respondents. The representative of the Waddenvereniging for example explained that "We made videos; infographics, and we distributed these videos, also to members of the House of Representatives, to inform people.", and "Media campaigns influence politics and are therefore useful. Without media attention, politicians will not address an issue since they are just not aware of the issue." Furthermore, the respondent of Natuurmonumenten described that the 1200 opinions, sent in by members of their newsletter, were handed over to the State Secretary of Economic Affairs. In these two ways, the strategies of respectively informing society and mobilizing society were used by the coalition in their lobbying activities.

## 6.6 Beliefs and strategy selection

The respondents recognised several relationships between the beliefs of organisations and coalitions, and the strategies they apply. The representative of the Waddenvereniging firstly explained that "It can occur that organisations make different decisions on what strategies to apply, due to a difference in their opinions and beliefs. Then, one organisations for example chooses for consultation, whereas another for instance litigates." This was not mentioned so literally by the other two respondents.

All respondents described that strategy selection depends on important an organisations considers a certain issue to be. "As an organisation, you select a strategy on the basis of your budget and of how important you find something.", the representative of the Waddenvereniging explained. The other two respondents also explained that this also influenced the decision of the coalition to take legal action. The representative of Natuurmonumenten for instance said that "We discussed about whether or not to initiate a lawsuit, but the issue was so fundamental for us that we decided to take all possible steps, including bringing the case before court.", and the respondent of the Vogelbescherming explained: "Our organisation has an assessment framework for initiating juridical procedures. The chance of success of a case has to be high, since legal proceedings cost a lot of time and energy. Moreover, the planned location for the activity in question was the Wadden Sea. That is a significant part of the consideration as well, since the Wadden Sea is a very important nature area for us. Many birds are dependent on the Wadden Sea, so it was an easy decision." So overall, the respondents indicate that the decision on whether or not to apply certain strategies is related to how important an organisation considers a certain topic to be. Furthermore, two respondents described that juridical strategies are only applied if their organisation considers the concerned issue to be very important.

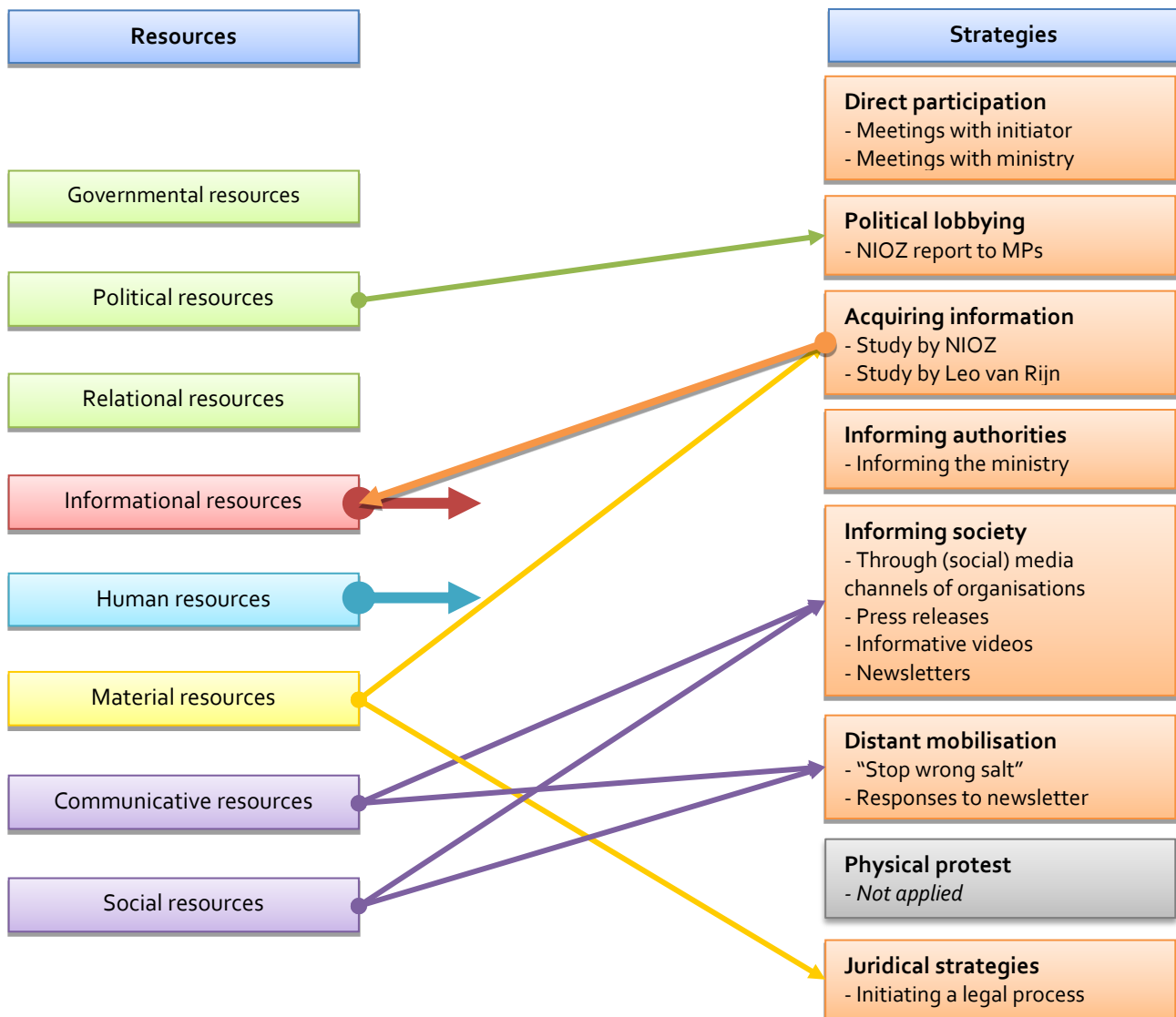
The strategy of direct participation was applied by the coalition through meetings with the initiators of the salt extraction. The respondents of both Natuurmonumenten and the Waddenvereniging however described that these meetings were not successful in the sense that they did not lead to modification of the plans of the initiator. "There was a meeting with all relevant stakeholders, where the initiator presented its plan and asked for our opinion. [...] At a certain moment we took position and said that this activity should under no circumstances be allowed in this area. Subsequently, a view meetings between the initiator and authorities took place but there was no room for alternatives.", the representative of the Waddenvereniging explained. The representative of Natuurmonumenten added that "The contact between the nature organisations and Frisia later faded away. We were fundamentally against the salt extraction below this area, which appeared to be a difficult base for consultation." The statements of these two respondents indicate that the strategy of direct participation is more difficult to apply when organisations are not willing to give in on any point.

The representative of Natuurmonumenten lastly described a consideration that its organisation takes into account when deciding on whether or not to apply the strategies of informing or mobilizing society; "The issue of salt extraction really was not a sensitive topic, but many topics are much more sensitive and difficult in terms of publicity.", and "For some topics the risk of damage is just too high. This is for example the case with fishery, which is a complicated topic since publicity and the public opinion often support fishermen." The respondent described that its organisation is more reluctant in applying public strategies when issues are more sensitive in society and thereby have a higher risk of damage for the organisation. In this way, strategy selection is related to beliefs.



## 6.7 Resources and strategy selection

The relation between the resources availability and strategy selection was already superficially mentioned a few times in the previous sections, but will be dealt with in more detail here. The first paragraph will present which resource types were invested in which specific strategies in the case of the Fitness Check. The second paragraph will focus on how resource availability influenced the strategical decisions taken.



*Figure 11: The relationships between the resources types and strategies applied* – This figure shows for every strategy applied by the coalition in the case of salt extraction which resources were used, based on what the respondents said in the interviews. The strategy of acquiring information is an exception in the sense that this strategy not only requires resources, but also produces resources; informational resources, which is indicated with the orange arrow. Informational and human resources were used for all strategies and are therefore supposed to be connected with all strategy types. For clarity reasons, these (red and blue) arrows are not connected with the strategies, but are made thicker instead.

### 6.7.1 Resources invested in strategies

The present paragraph presents which resources were invested for every strategy, based on the statements made by the respondents. The aim of this paragraph is to combine the section on resources and the section on strategies, therefore there might be some repetition.

According to the respondents, most of the material resources that were contributed by the organisations were spent on two studies, which were conducted by the NIOZ and by Leo van Rijn, and on the costs of a lawyer. Therefore, as figure 10 indicates, the strategy of acquiring information and the initiated legal process required most material resources. In terms of political resources, the respondents explained that both their own political connections and the connections of the Groene11 were used to reach Members of Parliaments. A meeting with some members of the House of Representatives was for instance arranged where the NIOZ report was handed to them. Governmental and relational resources were both not identified by the respondents as resources that were shared within the coalition and invested in one or more strategies.

Communicative and social resources were only used for the strategies that focused on society. Communicative resources were contributed by the organisations through communicative knowledge and their media channels. Information was distributed through articles, videos, newsletters and social media. Social resources particularly played a role via members of the organisations, and subscribers and followers of the newsletter and the social media channels. As figure 10 shows, human resources were the basis of every strategy applied. This is obvious since every strategy requires certain human involvement. Lastly, informational resources lastly played a role in every strategy type as well. In every strategy information or knowledge was somehow shared with authorities, politicians, judges or society.

### *6.7.2 Resource availability and strategy selection*

Concrete links between the availability of resources and strategical decisions were especially made by the respondents with respect to the juridical strategy. The respondent of the Waddenvereniging firstly described that "In terms of juridical knowledge it is possible for an organisation to litigate on your own. Nature organisations have a lot of juridical experience and expertise. But if want to have a chance of winning the case you really need scientific experts, that just is most important.", and "Together we hired a lawyer and together we outsourced studies, this enabled to achieve much more." This was accurately confirmed by the representative of Natuurmonumenten who explained that "As Natuurmonumenten, we could have litigated on our own, hiring a lawyer increases your chance but is not essential. But we could not have hired Leo van Rijn for the contra-expertise without coalition partners, and without contra-expertise you are definitely going to lose the case." The respondent of the Vogelbescherming lastly said that "Without collaboration, we all probably would have made the same decisions as we did together. But it was very expensive, so I am not sure whether we would have had the same financial resources available on our own.", and "I can imagine that we would make different decisions if there is no contra-expertise available, since without contra-expertise there is no chance of success in a lawsuit." These statements of the respondents indicate that the availability of contra-expertise influences their decision on whether or not to initiate a legal procedure, which again also depends on the material resources they have available.

The respondents of the Waddenvereniging and Vogelbescherming, furthermore, related human resources to strategy selection. The latter explained that "Our organisation has an assessment framework for initiating juridical procedures. The chance of success of a case has to be high, since legal proceedings cost a lot of time and energy." Moreover, the representative of the Waddenvereniging described that "We did not litigate a lot in the past years. We really have to be selective since it is so expensive and time consuming. If possible, we try to reach our goal in another way.", and "Court cases are always our last resort." So both respondents described that their organisations take the availability of human resources into consideration when deciding on juridical strategies, since this strategy requires a lot of time according to them.

## **6.8 Conclusion – Case III: Salt extraction below the Wadden Sea**

This section will summarise the main findings for the case of salt extraction below the Wadden Sea. Every paragraph will address one research question, respectively focusing on the coalition formed, the role of beliefs, the role of combining resources, the strategies applied and lastly the relationships between on the one hand beliefs and resources, and strategy application on the other.

The coalition formed on the occasion of the initiative of salt extraction below the Wadden Sea consisted of three nature organisations. In terms of the coalition structure, the respondents did not distinguish between layers, nor did they speak about one of the organisations having the lead. All three ENGOs in the coalition consisted of were affiliated with the Groene11, and were moreover part of the 'Coalitie Wadden Natuurlijk' (CWN). Neither horizontal nor vertical connections

were observed in the coalition, since all actors in the coalition were nature organisations, which were predominantly active at the national level.

The coalition-partners all shared the same policy core belief, which was the value of nature and the related view that nature areas should be protected. More specifically, the viewpoint of the coalition was that a mining activity such as salt extraction should not be allowed in a protected nature area like the Wadden Sea. Also no differences were observed within the coalition with regard to secondary aspects. All organisations recognised the value of the BHDs for protecting nature areas in the EU. Two of these however explicitly made clear that they were still against salt extraction in protected nature areas like the Wadden Sea, regardless of whether it is allowed or not under the BHDs. This indicates that these organisations do not consider the BHDs to be strict enough. Despite the shared policy core beliefs and secondary aspects, all respondents made clear that it is more important to have shared interests, one of them even stated that shared beliefs are not required at all for coalition-building. The organisations in the coalition indeed did have the same objective, which was preventing the activity of salt extraction below the Wadden Sea. So although the organisations shared the same beliefs, they considered having corresponding objectives to be more important for coalition-building.

The third research question focused on the opportunity of combining resources as an incentive for coalition-building. Except for relational and governmental resources, all resource type were invested by all coalition-partners, and the amounts contributed by the different organisations were more or less equal according to the respondents. In terms of informational resources however, the type of knowledge contributed differed between the organisations. Although most resource types were combined within the coalition, coalition-building was considered to be essential for the availability of only two resource categories. Firstly, all respondents described that their organisations did not have the human resources available to address the issue appropriately on their own. Material resources formed the second category where this applied to according to all respondents. Most material resources were invested in the outsourced contra-expertise and the hired lawyer that supported the coalition. So with respect to human and material resources, the opportunity of combining these resources indeed was a reason for the organisations to collaborate in the present case.

Three factors were identified that did not fit well in the predetermined framework of beliefs and resources, the first one being permanent coalitions. Although the case of salt extraction was in the end not dealt with by the CWN, the issue was discussed within this coalition which facilitated the coalition-building between the ENGOs that formed the final coalition, according to two of the respondents. Efficiency was the second factor, brought up by one respondent. The respondent described that collaborating often takes more time, especially if all activities are done together. This can however be reduced by dividing tasks or dividing a coalition into different layers of involvement. A third factor that was identified by one respondent was visibility. The respondent described that the disadvantage of collaboration is a reduced visibility. It is important for an organisation to profile itself and distinguish itself from other ENGOs, which is more difficult if an organisation is involved in a coalition. These three factors imply that having shared beliefs and combining resources alone did not fully explain the formation of the coalition in the present case.

Except for physical protest, all strategies have been applied by the present coalition. In the first phase, meetings with the ministry and initiator took place, but these were not effective according to the respondents since the coalition did not want to deviate from their fundamental standpoint. Throughout the whole process, both members of the ENGOs and society in general were informed via press releases, newsletters and the media channels of the organisations. The strategy of distant mobilisation was applied as well at two moments. Both Natuurmonumenten and the Waddervereniging separately organised a campaign to ask support from their members. In the phase before the lawsuit, both the strategies political lobbying and informing authorities were applied, supported by the outsourced research of the NIOZ. After the permits were granted, a legal process was initiated by the coalition. During this lawsuit, a second outsourced research was provided as contra-expertise, this study was conducted by Leo van Rijn. A respondent described that the strategy of physical protest was not applied for the reason that it is very difficult to physically mobilise people. What firstly stands out is that the strategy of direct participation was applied in the first phase, whereas the juridical proceeding was the last strategy applied. Moreover, the latter strategy was combined with the strategy of acquiring information. Notable as well is that all strategies were applied by the coalition as a whole, except for the strategy of distant mobilisation which two organisations executed individually.

The relationship between on the one hand beliefs and resources, and strategy selection on the other, was the focus of the last research question. The respondents described for several different strategies how the application is influenced by the views of their organisations. They firstly stated that their organisations usually only apply juridical proceedings in case a certain issue is considered to be important enough. Furthermore, two of them described that applying the strategy of direct participation is only useful if both sides are willing to give in to some extent. Lastly, one respondent explained that the strategies of informing and mobilizing society are in some cases avoided if the issue

concerned is too sensitive. Since one can assume that standpoints and views of organisations are related to their beliefs, these examples imply that the beliefs of organisations and thereby of coalitions affect strategy selection at least to some extent. With regard to the availability of resources, respondents identified a relationship only with the selection of juridical strategies. They described that a high availability of material resources is required for making a chance of winning a lawsuit, especially for outsourcing contra-expertise. Moreover, two respondents emphasised that legal proceedings are very time consuming and that this is taken into consideration when selecting a strategy. These relationships indicate that the availability of material and human resources influences the decision of organisation to initiate a legal procedure or not. So all in all, relationships between shared beliefs and combining resources on the one hand, and strategy selection on the other were observed in the present case, but only for a few strategy categories.

## 7. Discussion

Member States (MSs) of the European Union are responsible for the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHDs) within their state borders. Although both directives are binding, the past decades are characterised by numerous examples of deficient implementation and non-compliance by MSs. Many studies have identified that Environmental NGOs (ENGOS) have taken up a role in holding countries accountable for their performance with respect to these directives. Furthermore, several of these studies found that coalitions between these ENGOS are built in order to maximise their influence on the implementation of the BHDs. It is however unclear what specific considerations underlie the process of coalition-building and how these considerations relate to the strategies these coalitions apply in order to reach their goals. Due to the substantial role ENGOS play, it is important to bridge this knowledge gap. Therefore, the present study aimed to identify how ENGOS cooperate in order to influence the implementation of the BHDs in EU Member States.

Five research questions formed the basis of this study. These will be answered in the first section of this chapter, every paragraph will deal with one research question. In the second section, the findings will be placed in a theoretical context. The last section discusses the limitations of the study and concludes some recommendations for further research.

### 7.1 Answers to the research questions

The first research question, formulated to reach the overall objective, was “What coalitions of ENGOS are being formed in order to influence the implementation of the BHDs?” Three cases and related coalitions were selected for the present research. In the first case selected, a coalition was formed on the occasion of the Fitness Check of the BHDs. The second and third coalition were built on account of respectively a potential wind park in the IJsselmeer and planned salt extraction below the Wadden Sea. The three coalitions differed from one another in several aspects. Firstly, they differed in terms of size, varying from 3 organisations in the third case up to 13 in the first one. Moreover, the structure of the coalitions differed. In two of the coalitions, one specific organisation took a leading role, and in only one of the coalitions, a distinction between different layers was made. Thirdly, the composition differed between the coalitions, since the coalitions showed variation in terms of horizontal and vertical connections. One organisation solely consisted of nature organisations, whereas the other two also included other organisations. In addition, only one variation showed variation in terms of vertical connections, ranging from local to national. So all in all, the coalitions identified differed in terms of size, structure and composition.

“What role do shared beliefs play in coalition-building between ENGOS?” was the second research question used in this study. In two of the cases, all organisations in the coalition shared the same policy core beliefs and secondary aspects. For these coalitions, the policy core beliefs were in general based on the value the organisations attribute to nature and biodiversity. In terms of secondary aspects, these organisations advocated the BHDs, and several were even in favour of stronger directives. In the other case, a clear division in terms of policy core beliefs within the coalition was observed. Despite the finding that in two coalitions all organisations shared the same beliefs, having the same beliefs was in none of the cases identified as a prerequisite for coalition-building. Instead, respondents from coalitions considered having a shared objective to be of much more importance for coalition-building. The latter was illustrated especially by one specific case, where the coalition consisted of organisations that did not share policy core beliefs, but did have a shared objective. So these three cases indicate that shared beliefs do not play a major role in the process of coalition-building. Having the same objective, on the other hand, was identified as an important factor for coalition-building.

The third research question focused on the role of resources and reads as follows “What role does the opportunity to combine resources play in coalition-building between ENGOS?” Every determined resource category was combined in each coalition, except for governmental resources on the one hand and relational and political resources on the other, which were combined within respectively one and two of the coalitions. Overall, coalition-building was considered to be necessary for the availability of only a few resource types, dependent on the case. This firstly applied to informational and material resources, which were mentioned as such by all respondents in two cases. Moreover, the importance of combining human resources was in two cases identified by respectively half of the respondents and all respondents. In only one case, lastly, half of the respondents recognised the added value of coalition-building for the availability of social and communicative resources. So resource sharing within coalitions turned out to be common, but which resources were contributed depended on the case. For only a few of the determined resource types, however, combining resources was identified as an actual reason for coalition-building. This was especially the case for informational, material and human resources.

The fourth research question was “What strategies are applied by coalitions of ENGOs to influence the implementation of the BHDs?”. The goal of this question was to gain insight in the strategies available for coalitions. All in all, eight different categories of strategy were identified. Four of them were applied in all cases, whereas the remaining four were applied by only one or two of the coalitions. The strategies identified particularly differed in terms of focus and timing. Firstly, the strategies of direct participation, political lobbying and informing authorities directly focused on actors with decision-making power, whereas the strategies of informing society, distant mobilisation and physical protest made use of society. In cases where the strategies of distant mobilisation and physical protest were not applied, the dominant reason provided by respondents for not applying these strategies was the difficulty of mobilising people. With respect to timing, secondly, the strategies of informing authorities and informing society were generally applied throughout the whole process. In all cases, direct participation took place in the first phase, whereas juridical strategies were in general considered as a last resort. Acquiring information, lastly, distinguished itself from the other strategies in the sense that it was generally applied as a basis for other strategies. For the remaining strategies, no consistency with respect to the moment of application was observed. So based on three cases, eight different strategy types were identified and these strategies appeared to differ in terms of focus and moment of application.

“How do shared beliefs and combining resources explain strategy selection by coalitions of ENGOs?” was the last research question. Firstly, two potential relationships between beliefs and strategy selection were observed. In two of the cases the strategy of direct participation failed due to the contradictory standpoints of the coalition and the initiator. This implies that beliefs at least affect the effectivity of strategies. In addition, respondents in all cases recognised that differences between organisations in terms of strategical preferences exist. If strategical preferences are indeed related to the beliefs of organisations, this would mean that beliefs do affect the selection of strategies. With respect to the relationship between combining resources and selecting strategies, secondly, most respondents recognised that a certain availability of material resources is necessary for having a chance of winning a lawsuit. Several respondents made the same claim for informational and human resources. The relationship between resource availability and strategy effectivity was also identified by respondents in the other case. To conclude, the present study identified relationships between on the one hand strategical preferences and strategy selection, and on the other hand between beliefs and strategy effectivity. Furthermore, this study identified a relationship between resource availability and the effectivity of strategies. The information needed to understand how strategical preferences relate to beliefs, and how strategy effectivity manifests itself in strategy selection, was not acquired by the present study.

## 7.2 Theoretical reflection

The present study made use of two existing theories in order to investigate how ENGOs cooperate in order to influence the implementation of the BHDs in EU Member States. The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) and Policy Network Analysis (PNA) were applied to identify the role of respectively shared beliefs and combining resources in the processes of coalition-building and strategy application.

### 7.2.1 Coalition-building – Shared beliefs and combining resources

The first three research questions focused on the process of coalition-building. As described, ENGOs were expected to build coalitions with organisations that share the same beliefs, in order to increase total resource availability and thereby to maximise their influence on policy. Despite the observation that organisations in most coalitions shared the same policy core beliefs and secondary aspects, none of the respondents regarded it as a prerequisite for coalition-building. This result is contradictory to the ACF and does not confirm the findings of previous studies (Cent et al., 2013; Sarvasova et al., 2013), which identified that a shared belief system facilitates the process of coalition-building. Smith (2000), on the other hand, did find that coalitions are not formed along the lines of policy core beliefs per se and thereby argued that having shared beliefs is not required for coalition-building. Despite the apparent contradiction between studies, a possible explanation that matches with both previous studies (Cent et al., 2013; Sarvasova et al., 2013; Smith, 2000) and the present one might be that the process of coalition-building is more likely to occur between organisations that share the same policy core beliefs, than between organisations with a different belief system. Two possible explanations for this observation can be identified, the first one being that a shared belief system indeed facilitates coalition-building. Another possibility is that organisations have more connections with organisations that share the same beliefs, which makes coalition-building between these organisations more likely to occur. Regardless of which explanation is correct, one can at least conclude

that a shared belief system is not required for coalition-building, although the process might be more likely to occur between organisations that do have the same beliefs.

In addition to ACF, PNA was used to investigate the process of coalition-building. This theory expects organisations to build coalitions in order to increase overall resource availability. The present study found that organisations indeed collaborate in order to increase the total availability of resources. This however applied to only a few resource types per case. The latter observation was in line with Arts & Leroy (2006) who described that it indeed depends on the case what resources are crucial. In addition, Andonova & Tuta identified that it also depends on the coalition what kind of resources are shared. Although most resource types were combined within the coalitions of interest in the present study, only combining informational, material and human resources was identified as a reason for coalition-building. Information and money were indeed the only resource types that were recognised broadly throughout the scientific landscape on resources and coalition-building (Arts & Leroy, 2006; Cent et al., 2013; Davidson & de Loë, 2016; Delfin & Tang, 2008; Rodela et al., 2017; Toke, 2010; Veenman et al., 2009; Zhan & Tang, 2011), and can therefore be considered the resource types that most frequently underpin coalition-building. Human resources, on the other hand, were associated with coalition-building by only a few studies (Cent et al., 2013; Delfin & Tang, 2008; Rhodes, 1990; Zahn & Tang 2011). A possible explanation for the absence of human resources in many studies might be that contributing this resource type is considered inevitable in collaboration. However, since human capacity was identified as a reason for collaboration in the present research, it is important to treat it as a distinct resource category in order to understand the process coalition-building.

So PNA was able to at least partly explain the formation of the coalitions built in the present study, since combining resources was identified as a reason for collaboration. As described, this did not apply to all resources, it is therefore important to distinguish between different types of resources. Although previous studies indeed identified several types of resources (Arts & Leroy, 2006; Cent et al., 2013; Davidson & de Loë, 2016; Delfin & Tang, 2008; Rhodes, 1990; Rodela et al., 2017; Toke, 2010; Veenman et al., 2009; Zhan & Tang, 2011), a consistent or universal categorisation was lacking. For that reason, the present study combined the resource types identified in previous studies and developed a more comprehensive resource categorisation, which included material, informational, social, relational and political resources. Subsequently, the framework was further complemented during data collection. This resulted in a resource categorisation consisting of eight resource types, which was appropriate for investigating the applicability of PNA. The resource types added during data collection were governmental, human and communicative resources. These resource types were added to the framework, since respondents distinguished between them and because differences within coalitions in terms of investment of these resources were observed. These categories were not completely new though. Delfin & Tang (2008) already distinguished between political and governmental resources, and human resources were recognised in several studies as well (Delfin & Tang, 2008; Rhodes, 1990; Zahn & Tang, 2011). Only communicative resources were not previously identified as a separate category, but this resource type was often incorporated into the category of social resources (Davidson & de Loë, 2016; Rodela et al., 2017).

So all in all, PNA appeared to be a useful framework to explain the process of coalition-building at least partially, since combining resources indeed turned out to be a reason for organisations to look for collaboration. For the cases investigated in the present study, however, this relationship was identified for only three resource types. On the basis of ACF on the other hand, shared policy core beliefs and policy core aspects were identified for most cases, but these were neither perceived as an incentive for collaboration, nor as a precondition for coalition-building.

### 7.2.2 Coalition-building – An alternative framework

Besides the role of shared beliefs and combining resources, several other factors that influenced coalition-building but did not fit with the theories of PNA and ACF were identified. These will be discussed in this subsection. Sharing the same objective was the first factor observed, which was without exception considered to be of major importance for coalition-building. At first sight, the objective may seem closely related to the beliefs of organisations. Therefore it is important to distinguish between case-specific objectives and broader objectives, since the latter tends to correspond with the policy core beliefs of an organisations, whereas this not automatically apply to case-specific objects. The concept of shared objectives lacks in most studies on coalition-building, and when present often the broader definition is meant (Cent et al., 2013; Davidson & de Loë, 2016). Respondents in the present study revealed many examples where organisations with contradictory beliefs collaborated on the basis of a common, case-specific goal. Only one other study was found where the

importance of shared objectives for coalition-building was recognised as well. In their study on marine NGOs, Richards and Heard (2005) found that an absolute majority of the ENGOs considers sharing goals to be important for collaboration. Moreover, they identified that organisations perceive potential disagreement on contradicting goals of campaigns as a barrier for coalition-building. The outcomes of the present study and the study of Richards and Heard (2005) suggest that having the same objective at least strongly facilitates coalition-building. Since shared objectives do not always run parallel with the beliefs of organisations, it might be useful to revise ACF and include the role of objectives.

The existence of permanent connections and coalitions are the second factor identified. In all cases, permanent coalitions appeared to have influenced the formation of the occasional coalition. Most ENGOs were already involved in several of these permanent, topic-specific coalitions. As a result, it was a logical step for organisations to address the issues with at least some of these permanent coalition-partners. No other studies were found that reported on the effect of permanent coalitions. This might be due to the partial overlap between the formation of permanent coalitions and the theories of both ACF and PNA. Some of the permanent coalitions identified, for instance had their own daily staff, such as lobbyists, funded by its member organisations. This indicates an advantage in terms of combining resources, which is in line with PNA. Likewise, ACF can be used to at least partially explain the formation of permanent coalitions. The permanent coalitions identified in the present study consisted of organisations that largely shared the same beliefs, whereas this was to a lesser extent the case for occasional coalitions. This difference might indicate that having a shared belief system is of more importance in permanent than in occasional coalitions, which is not unlikely since permanent coalitions have to collaborate on varying topics in contrast to occasional ones. Future research is needed to investigate whether the importance of shared beliefs indeed differs between permanent and occasional coalitions. However, regardless of the outcome, distinguishing between the two types of coalitions is essential for understanding the process of coalition-building, since the existence of the one influences the formation of the other.

The third and last factor that did not fit in the original framework was visibility. A trade-off was identified between on the one hand effectivity, and visibility of organisations on the other. Coalitions of ENGOs were generally regarded as more effective than ENGOs that try to deal with an issue on their own. It nevertheless turned out that these organisations sometimes consciously choose not to collaborate, since organisations were considered to be less visible among their member base and society in general when involved in a coalition. None of the studies that described or applied the ACF or PNA identified this factor (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Cent et al. 2013; Glück, 2000; Rhodes, 1990; Sarvasova et al., 2013; Smith, 2000; Toke, 2010; Veenman et al., 2009). Two other studies however did recognise the importance of visibility and associated a reduced visibility with operating in coalitions. Richards & Heard (2005) described that there is a necessity for organisations to collaborate, but that collaboration goes together with the risk of being overshadowed, which especially applies to smaller organisations. This trade-off between visibility and resource availability is perfectly illustrated by the following conclusion they drew for marine ENGOs: "The most fundamental dilemma currently facing the MENGO community is the decision whether to 'go it alone', thus retaining individual profiles but with a limited resource base, or to work in coalitions, thus increasing capacity and sharing expertise through exploiting the groups' specific niches." (Richards & Heard, 2005) In addition, Cullen (2015) recognised a reduced visibility of organisations as well, when operating in large coalitions, but also mentioned that it at the same time might increase the legitimacy of organisations and provide them opportunities for making valuable contacts. Overall, these studies indicate that the trade-off observed in the present research does not stand alone. The results again imply that PNA on its own is not always accurate for explaining coalition-building, therefore the visibility of organisations should be included as an additional dimension in the framework PNA.

All in all, collaborations between organisations were indeed established in order to combine resources and increase total resource availability, so PNA proved to be an accurate framework for explaining the process coalition-building between ENGOs at least to some extent. ACF was expected to compensate for the limitations of PNA, based on the assertions and findings in literature that a certain level of shared beliefs was necessary for organisations to cooperate. This however turned out not to be necessary for the formation of the coalitions of interest in the present study, instead sharing case-specific objectives was of more importance. Furthermore, it appeared to be crucial to distinguish between occasional and permanent coalitions for two reasons. Firstly, permanent coalitions might facilitate occasional coalition-building between its affiliates. Moreover, beliefs can be expected to play a larger role in permanent coalitions, since organisations in these coalitions have to collaborate on topics that may vary strongly. Consequently, ACF might have explanatory power for the formation of permanent coalitions, whereas this was not the case for occasional ones. Overall, one can at least conclude that ENGOs build occasional coalitions in order to combine resources, with organisations that share the same case-specific objectives, while being affected by their connections in permanent coalitions and taking into consideration the visibility of their organisation.



### 7.2.3 Strategy application

Besides the process of coalition-building, the present research was also concerned with strategy application. It aimed to get insight in on the one hand strategy availability for coalitions of ENGOs and on the other their considerations associated with selection of these strategies. Despite the numerous publications on strategy application, consensus on a clear, univocal categorisation was lacking. Therefore, an alternative framework was developed that combined the several categorisations available in literature (Andrews & Edwards, 2005; Brumley, 2010; Munro, 2005; Richards & Heard, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017), which resulted in the following strategies: Direct participation, political lobbying, information provision, awareness raising, juridical strategies and protest strategies. This categorisation turned out to be pretty accurate for identifying the strategies applied in the cases of interest in the present research. Only two adjustment to the framework were needed during data collection, the first one being inclusion of a strategy called acquiring information. The studies used to develop the strategical framework did not ignore the role of information, in the sense that they identified NGOs as providers of information. Most of these studies, however, did not discuss where the organisations derived their information from, implying that all knowledge was already available in the organisations on beforehand (Andrews & Edwards, 2005; Brumley, 2010; Munro, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017). Only Richards & Heard (2005) described that ENGOs provide "sound scientific information through robust research, participating in conventions and publishing findings" and identified scientific research as a separate tactical approach. In line with this, the present research showed that ENGOs indeed commission scientific studies in order to collect information. Since this knowledge was used as a basis for several strategies, rather than for informing alone, it is important to treat acquiring information as a separate strategy.

An additional modification to the original framework was a division of awareness raising into the categories of distant mobilisation and informing society. The main purpose of informing society obviously is to provide society with information. The category of distant mobilisation, on the other hand, might also include an element of informing, but more importantly aims to reveal people's opinion, for example through petitions. Moreover, the product of the latter was often also used in order to strengthen other strategies, whereas this was not the case for the strategy of informing society. Despite the clear difference, none of the scientific studies consulted for the original categorisation recognised this distinction (Andrews & Edwards, 2005; Brumley, 2010; Munro, 2005; Richards & Heard, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017). The same applied to the remaining studies on NGO strategies consulted. Due to the different character of informing society and distant mobilisation, however, it is likely that the considerations underlying these strategies might differ as well. Therefore it is important to distinguish between the two in future research. All in all, theory and the present case study resulted in a strategical framework, consisting of the strategies of direct participation, political lobbying, acquiring information, informing authorities, informing society, distant mobilisation, physical protest and juridical strategies. All coalitions appeared to combine many strategies per case, which corresponded with the findings of Richards & Heard (2005).

The fifth and last purpose of this study was to reveal what factors influence strategy selection by coalitions of ENGOs. Corresponding to the process of coalition-building, both the beliefs of coalitions and the availability of resources in coalitions were expected to affect strategical decisions (Brumley, 2010; Cent et al., 2013; Zchout & Tal, 2017). Consequently, ACF and PNA were again expected to have explanatory power with respect to the application of strategies. In line with the predictions, ENGOs appeared to differ in terms of strategical preferences. These preferences were generally associated with the identity of organisations in the present study, which is in line with the results of Brumley (2010). In accordance with the study of Zchout & Tal (2017), the present study also recognised a distinction between more activist and more constructive organisations. However, no explicit linkages were found between strategical preferences and specific beliefs of organisations, which was contradictory to the study of Cent et al. (2013), where strategy selection was associated with the policy core beliefs of coalitions. Although the present study did not exclude this relationship per se, ACF at least appeared to be inadequate for explaining the strategical choices of organisations, let alone of coalitions as a whole.

As described, PNA was the second theory applied to investigate the strategy application by coalitions. Despite the finding that resource availability does influence the effectivity of strategies, no decisive indications were found that show whether and how resources influence strategical decisions. This could even mean that a relation does not exist at all, which would imply that coalitions select strategies, before taking the resources into consideration. However, juridical strategies specifically were often associated with high costs, and the study of Richards & Heard (2005) indeed suggested that this does affect strategical decisions with respect to juridical strategies. In addition, studies identified a relationship between resource availability and strategy selection by ENGOs in general (Richards & Heard, 2005; Zchout & Tal, 2017), which makes it plausible that resources have an effect at least to some extent.

So all in all, a strategical framework consisting of the eight strategies described above turned out to be adequate for covering all strategies observed in the present study. In terms of both beliefs and resources, no clear relationship with strategy selection was observed. Although individual ENGOs indeed turned out to have strategical preferences, no connection with the belief systems of coalitions were found. In terms of resources, the availability affected how effective strategies were, but no relationship with strategy selection was observed. Instead, the present study indicated that strategy selection is subject to both spatial and temporal factors. What strategies were applied appeared to depend on the phase, scale and level of the case. In addition, Brumley (2010) recognised that decisions on strategy application are also influenced by on the one hand the socio-political arena and the risks of strategies on the other, especially in terms of their effect on everyday activities. The political context was also identified as an influential factor by Richards & Heard (2005). These studies and the present one indicate that strategy selection by coalitions is subject to multiple and varying factors, therefore an open view is crucial for investigating this process. More elaborate research that focuses on these influential factors is needed.

### 7.3 Limitations and recommendations

The focus of the present study was twofold. On the one hand, it investigated the process of coalition-building between ENGOs, and on the other, it aimed to reveal how these coalitions try to influence the implementation of the BHDs in EU Member States. Although the findings enabled me to draw some conclusions, both the scale of the study and the lack of previous research on coalition-building between ENGOs, resulted in some limitations for the present study. Firstly, two of these coalitions even solely consisted of ENGOs, and almost all organisations in these coalitions were primarily active at the national level. In other words, the coalitions selected barely included horizontal and vertical connections. Previous studies, on the contrary, indicated that ENGOs were expected to build coalitions with many types of actors, varying from local to the supranational levels (Andonova & Tuta, 2014; Börzel & Buzogány, 2010; Cent et al., 2013; Richards & Heard, 2005). In addition, the present study was due to time constraints based on only three coalitions, and these cases were selected by the respondents themselves, who might have been biased. So due to on the one hand the unexpected monotonous character of the selected coalitions, and on the other hand the case selection procedure itself, it is possible that the selected cases are not an accurate representation of the landscape of coalitions formed on the occasion of the BHDs in the Netherlands.

A second limitation of the present study lies in the accuracy and validity of the information provided by the respondents. The method of interviewing is subject to several drawbacks. A first factor that might have influenced the results is the possibility that respondents did not always share all knowledge available, for instance to assure the position of their organisation or their own position in the organisation. Secondly, it is possible that respondents were influenced by the way questions were being asked, which consequently might have led to distorted or desired answers. Although no signals were observed that indicated that these factors indeed influenced the outcomes, the possibility cannot be completely excluded. A third possible drawback is the assumption that the respondents have enough knowledge and expertise about the topics of interest and that they interpret questions and concepts the same way. Although the concepts that played a role in the present study were clarified in the interviews, this might not have fully excluded the possibility that respondents interpreted questions differently, or that they simply did not have the knowledge required for answering the questions. Again, no signals that point to this distortion were observed. A last limitation to the present study only applied to one of the cases. Whereas the coalition in this case consisted of both ENGOs and recreation organisations, only the ENGOs were interviewed due to time constraints. Although the ENGOs in this coalition also provided information on the recreation organisations and the coalition as a whole, consulting all involved actors would have resulted in a more complete and balanced representation and is therefore recommended for future studies.

Despite these limitations, the present study did show that coalitions with limited horizontal and vertical connections are at least no exception in the Netherlands, and it revealed that it is crucial to distinguish between occasional and permanent coalitions, when investigating the process of coalition-building. Moreover, ACF and PNA turned out to be limited in their explanatory power both in terms of coalition-building and strategy selection, which indicates that openness towards factors other than beliefs and resources is necessary in future studies. Also important is that future studies cover a high number of coalitions to provide more insight in the landscape of occasional coalitions formed in the Netherlands. In addition, future studies should aim to maximize the variation among the selected coalitions in terms of horizontal and vertical connections, in order to reveal whether they differ with respect to the factors influencing coalition-building, and to reveal whether they behave differently with respect to strategy selection.

Besides the above presented limitations, it is important to discuss the broader applicability of the outcomes of the present study, both with respect to the subject and geography. In terms of the latter, only Dutch coalitions were selected due to both time constraints and financial constraints. Consequentially, it was not possible to make a comparison between different MSs. Börzel & Buzogány (2010) however recognised that the landscape of ENGOS largely corresponds between MSs in western Europe, which might indicate that the results of the present study at least apply to these MSs to some extent. Studies on coalition-building between ENGOS in other MSs are rare though. Therefore, I recommend that future studies select coalitions in multiple MSs, located in different regions of the EU in order to get insight in the differences between MSs. In terms of the thematic scope, the present study initially intended to select only coalitions that aimed to influence the implementation of the BHDs. This narrow selection criterion however turned out not to be compatible with the actual situation. Two of the coalitions did not specifically focus on improving the implementation of the BHDs, but rather used them as a means to protect nature areas in general. The purpose of the other coalition was not even related to the implementation, but instead focused on the overall preservation of the BHDs, again because the BHDs were regarded as an important means for nature protection. The cases of interest in the present study suggest that ENGOS cooperate in order to protect nature and use the BHDs to do so. If this indeed is true, it would imply that the results of the present study are not only applicable to cases related to the BHDs, but instead might also provide information on coalition-building and strategy selection by organisations that aim to protect nature areas in general. Future research is needed to investigate this hypothesis and to reveal whether the findings also apply to coalitions formed on the occasion of other environmental topics, or even on completely different themes.

## 8. Conclusions

Coalitions of Environmental NGOs (ENGOS) have taken up a role in enforcing the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHDs), and thereby improving the implementation. A knowledge gap with respect to the processes of coalition-building and strategy application however existed. The present study aimed to bridge this knowledge gap, since a better understanding of the role ENGOS play might be helpful for further improving the implementation of the BHDs. Therefore, the objective of the present study was to identify how ENGOS cooperate in order to influence the implementation of the BHDs in EU Member States.

The three selected cases appeared to differ in terms of size, structure and composition, whereas the variation with respect to horizontal and vertical connections was limited. The variety of coalitions observed demonstrates at least to some extent how coalitions in the Netherlands vary in general. PNA proved helpful in investigating the process of coalition-building. In line with the expectations, combining resources was for all cases identified as an incentive for coalition-building.

Before this study, an appropriate resource categorization supporting PNA was lacking. Therefore, a framework was developed that distinguished between eight different categories of resources. Since this framework adequately covered all resources shared within coalitions, it might also be useful for future studies that apply PNA to investigate coalition-building.

ACF on the other hand turned out to be less suitable for explaining the formation of occasional coalitions. Regardless of whether a coalition had shared beliefs or not, they were in none of the cases considered to be important for the process of coalition-building. Having the same case-specific objectives was instead identified as more important. Furthermore, the process of coalition-building appeared to be affected by factors like the visibility of organisations and the existence of permanent coalitions. In addition to the latter, the present study found that it is crucial to distinguish between occasional and permanent coalitions. So all in all, the findings clearly indicate that PNA and ACF alone do not fully explain the process of coalition-building. Therefore, a revision or expansion of these theories might be useful.

In terms of strategy application, an adequate overview of strategies that coalitions could apply to influence policy lacked in previous research. Therefore the present study developed a categorisation that covered all strategies observed in the cases of interest. With respect to ACF and PNA, resource availability and beliefs turned out to influence the effectivity of strategies. In addition, organisations were characterised by intrinsic strategical preferences. These findings thus suggest that both ACF and PNA might be helpful in investigating the process strategy selection.

All in all, the results of the present study demonstrate that combining resources does partly explain the process of coalition-building. However other factors appeared to be influential as well. Although the present study already identified some of these factors, further research is needed that is not confined to only ACF and PNA, but instead adopts a broader approach in order to identify a greater variety of influential factors. With respect to the second part of the study, no one to one relationship was found between beliefs and resources on the one hand and the process of strategy selection on the other. The findings nevertheless indicate that ACF and PNA are helpful in explaining strategy application at least to some extent. It is however likely that much more factors have an influence as well, therefore openness is required in future studies, in order to capture all factors that possibly affect the process of strategy selection.

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## 10. Appendices

### Appendix I: Abbreviations and translations

Abbreviation	Complete
ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework
BBZ	Association for Professional Charter sailing
BD	Birds Directive
BHDs	Birds and Habitats Directives
CWN	Coalition for the protection of the Wadden Sea
DG Environment	Directorate-General for Environment
Ministry of EA	Ministry of Economic Affairs (EA)
Ministry of EAC	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate (EAC)
EC	European Commission
ECJ	European Court of Justice
EEB	European Environmental Bureau
ENGO	Environmental non-governmental organisation
EU	European Union
HD	Habitats Directive
MS	Member State
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIOZ	Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research
PNA	Policy Network Analysis
SAC	Special area of conservation
SPA	Special protection area
STAB	Institute for Consultation on Administrative Jurisdiction
WER	Wageningen Environmental Research
WNF	World Wide Fund for Nature Netherlands

### Appendix II: Translations

Dutch name	Translation
Blauwe Hart	Blue heart; Coalition for conservation of the IJsselmeer
Coalitie Wadden Natuurlijk (CWN)	Coalition for the protection of the Wadden Sea
Friese Milieu Federatie	Frisian Environmental Federation; a collaboration between ENGOS
Fryslân foar de Wyn ( <i>Friesland voor de wind</i> )	Friesland in favour of wind energy, a multi-stakeholder initiative
Groene11	Green11; collaboration between 13 Dutch ENGOS
Hou Friesland Mooi	Keep Friesland Beautiful; a citizens organisation
IJsselmeervereniging	IJsselmeer Association
It Fryske Gea	Landscape management organisation of the Province of Friesland
LandschappenNL	Umbrella organisation for Dutch Landscape Organisations
Natuurmonumenten	Society for preservation of nature monuments in the Netherlands
Platform Duurzaam Fryslân	Platform Sustainable Friesland; a platform for wind energy producers
Rijkswaterstaat	Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management
SoortenNL	Network for Dutch organisations that conduct applied nature research
Stichting Advisering Bestuursrechtspraak (STAB)	Institute for Consultation on Administrative Jurisdiction
Toerzeilers	A Dutch sailors organisation
Vereniging van Bos- en Natuurterreineigenaren (VBNE)	Association for Owners of Forest and Nature areas
Vereniging voor Beroepschartervaart (BBZ)	Association for Professional Charter sailing
VNO-NCW	Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers
Vogelbescherming	Society for the Protection of Birds
Waddenvereniging	National Association for the Conservation of the Wadden Sea
Watersportverbond	Royal Dutch Watersports Alliance
Wereld Natuurfonds (WNF)	World Wide Fund for Nature Netherlands



## Appendix III: Guide for interviews with ENGOS

This appendix shows the interview guide used for the interviews. Since most interviews were with Dutch respondents, this interview guide is in Dutch as well.

Onderwerp	Richting van vragen
<b>Introductie</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Herhaling onderwerp</li> <li>o Focus onderzoek</li> <li>o Opnemen onderzoek</li> </ul>
<b>Over respondent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Sinds wanneer bent u werkzaam bij [naam organisatie]?</li> <li>o Wat is uw functie binnen [naam organisatie]? Sinds wanneer?</li> <li>o Wat waren uw vorige functies binnen [naam organisatie]? (Indien van toepassing)</li> </ul>
<b>Algemeen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Op welke niveau's, variërend van lokaal tot mondiaal, handelt [naam organisatie] voornamelijk?</li> <li>o Wat zijn de belangrijkste thema's waar [naam organisatie] zich mee bezig houdt?</li> <li>o Wat zijn de belangrijkste doelen voor [naam organisatie]?</li> <li>o In hoeverre houdt [naam organisatie] zich bezig met het verbeteren van de naleving van Natura 2000?</li> </ul>
<b>Kwestie</b>	<p>(Case identificatie; Indien van toepassing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Zou u een voorbeeld kunnen geven van een kwestie waarbij [naam organisatie] een samenwerking is gestart met andere organisaties om de naleving van Natura 2000 beleid te verbeteren?</li> </ul> <p>[INTERMEZZO: Case selectie formulier → Vragen stellen voor selecteren van kwestie.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Zou u deze kwestie kunnen beschrijven? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wanneer begonnen?</li> <li>▪ Hoe is het ontwikkeld?</li> <li>▪ Hoelang geduurd?</li> <li>▪ Belangrijkste momenten?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Betrokkenen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Waarom heeft [naam organisatie] bij deze kwestie de keuze gemaakt voor samenwerking met andere organisaties?</li> <li>o Welke organisaties maken deel uit van deze coalitie of samenwerking?</li> <li>o Waarom is [naam organisatie] bij deze kwestie juist met deze organisaties een samenwerking aangegaan?</li> <li>o Welke partners zijn cruciaal geweest? Waarom?</li> </ul>
<b>Overtuigingen &amp; doelen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Wat zijn/waren de <u>overtuigingen</u> van [naam organisatie] t.a.v. deze kwestie?</li> <li>o Wat zijn/waren de overtuigingen van uw coalitiepartners t.a.v. deze kwestie?</li> <li>o Wat zijn/waren de belangrijkste verschillen tussen de overtuigingen [naam organisatie] en de overtuigingen van uw coalitiepartners t.a.v. deze kwestie? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hoe hebben deze verschillen in de praktijk uitgepakt?</li> <li>▪ Is het belangrijk dat overtuigingen van de samenwerkende organisaties overeenkomen of verschillen? Waarom?</li> </ul> </li> <li>o Wat zijn/waren de specifieke <u>doelen</u> van [naam organisatie] t.a.v. deze kwestie?</li> <li>o Wat zijn/waren de doelen van uw coalitiepartners t.a.v. kwestie?</li> <li>o Wat zijn/waren de belangrijkste verschillen tussen de doelen [naam organisatie] en de doelen van uw coalitiepartners t.a.v. deze kwestie?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hoe hebben deze verschillen in de praktijk uitgepakt?</li> <li>▪ Is het belangrijk dat de doelen van de samenwerkende organisaties overeenkomen of verschillen? Waarom?</li> <li>○ Op welke <u>manier</u> wil/wilde [<i>naam organisatie</i>] deze doelen bereiken?</li> <li>○ Op welke manier willen/wilden uw coalitiepartners deze doelen bereiken?</li> <li>○ Wat zijn/waren de belangrijkste verschillen tussen de manier waarop [<i>naam organisatie</i>] en waarop uw coalitiepartners de doelen t.a.v. deze kwestie wilden bereiken? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hoe hebben deze verschillen in de praktijk uitgepakt?</li> <li>▪ Is het belangrijk dat de ideeën van samenwerkende organisaties over hoe bepaalde doelen te bereiken overeenkomen of verschillen? Waarom?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Hulpbronnen</b>	<p><i>Inleiding:</i> De volgende vragen gaan over de rol van resources of hulpbronnen. Onder hulpbronnen vallen niet alleen financiële middelen, maar alle middelen, capaciteiten, kennis relaties en al het andere dat een organisatie kan gebruiken bij het uitoefenen van invloed op beleidszaken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Welke hulpbronnen zijn/waren belangrijk bij deze kwestie?</li> <li>○ Welke van deze hulpbronnen droeg [<i>naam organisatie</i>] bij?</li> <li>○ Welke van deze hulpbronnen droegen uw coalitiepartners bij?</li> <li>○ Was het delen van deze hulpbronnen een reden om samen te werken voor [<i>naam organisatie</i>] bij deze specifieke kwestie?</li> <li>○ Hoe pakte het delen van hulpbronnen uit in de praktijk?</li> <li>○ Heeft de mogelijkheid tot het delen of combineren van {onderstaande invullen} een rol gespeeld bij de vorming van deze coalitie? (<i>Alleen hulpbronnen die nog niet genoemd zijn</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Materiële en financiële middelen</li> <li>▪ Kennis en expertise</li> <li>▪ Publieke steun</li> <li>▪ Politieke steun en connecties</li> <li>▪ Elkaars netwerk</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Welke organisatie heeft deze hulpbronnen geïnvesteerd in deze kwestie?</li> <li>○ Welke van alle besproken hulpbronnen zijn cruciaal geweest bij deze kwestie?</li> <li>○ Hoe zou het verlopen zijn bij afwezigheid van deze hulpbronnen?</li> </ul> <p>Daarnaast nog twee algemene vragen over hulpbronnen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In hoeverre is het delen van hulpbronnen een motivatie voor [<i>naam organisatie</i>] om een coalitie te vormen?</li> <li>○ In hoeverre denkt u dat het delen van hulpbronnen een motivatie voor andere organisaties is om een coalitie met [<i>naam organisatie</i>] aan te gaan?</li> </ul>
<b>Strategieën</b>	<p>De volgende vragen richten zich op de door u aangedragen kwestie.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Welke strategieën zijn toegepast door uw coalitie om de naleving van Natura 2000 te bevorderen bij deze kwestie?</li> <li>○ Welke van deze strategieën zijn het meest effectief gebleken?</li> <li>○ Waardoor waren juist deze strategieën effectief?</li> </ul> <p>Zijn de volgende strategieën ook toegepast door deze coalitie bij deze kwestie?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Directe participatie bij besluitvorming</li> <li>○ Politiek lobbyen</li> <li>○ Informatie voorziening</li> <li>○ Protest-strategieën</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Juridische strategieën</li> <li>○ Campagnes om bewustzijn te creëren</li> <li>➤ Ja? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Waarom deze strategie gekozen?</li> <li>▪ Was deze strategie effectief?</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Nee? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Waarom deze strategie niet gekozen?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Daarnaast heb ik nog een algemene vraag over strategieën.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Zijn er nog andere strategieën die huidige en eerdere coalities met [naam organisatie] hebben toegepast om de naleving van Natura 2000 door overheden aan de kaak te stellen?</li> </ul>
<b>Relaties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In hoeverre is er een relatie tussen de overtuigingen van een coalitie en de keuze voor bepaalde strategieën?</li> <li>○ Zijn er strategieën die uw organisatie niet toepast, omdat deze niet in de overtuigingen van de organisatie passen?</li> <li>○ Om welke strategieën gaat het en hoe botsen ze met de overtuigingen?</li> <li>○ In hoeverre is er een relatie tussen de beschikbaarheid van hulpbronnen voor een coalitie en de keuze voor bepaalde strategieën?</li> <li>○ Kunt u voorbeelden noemen van strategieën die een zekere beschikbaarheid van hulpbronnen vereisen?</li> </ul>
<b>Afsluiting</b>	

## Appendix III: Guide for interviews with responsible authorities

This appendix shows the interview guide used for the interviews. Since most interviews were with Dutch respondents, this interview guide is in Dutch as well.

Onderwerp	Richting van vragen
<i>Introductie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Herhaling onderwerp</li> <li>○ Focus onderzoek</li> <li>○ Opnemen onderzoek</li> </ul>
<i>Over respondent</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Functies bij target</li> <li>○ Sinds wanneer</li> </ul>
<i>Algemeen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rol Natura 2000 bij target</li> <li>○ Rol Natura 2000 voor respondent</li> </ul>
<i>Kwestie</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gedetailleerde beschrijving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Start en duur; ontwikkeling</li> <li>▪ Belangrijkste momenten</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Betrokkenen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Welke partijen aan Target-zijde? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Verhouding tot elkaar: target &amp; partners</li> <li>▪ Samenwerking: target &amp; partners</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Welke partijen aan ENGO-zijde? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hoe waren deze georganiseerd?</li> <li>▪ In hoeverre samenwerking onderling?</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Samenwerking tussen Target-zijde, en ENGO-zijde? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ja, op welke manier?</li> <li>▪ Nee, waarom niet?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Overtuigingen &amp; doelen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Van target-zijde</li> <li>○ Van ENGO-zijde</li> <li>○ Belangrijkste verschillen tussen zijden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overtuigingen en doelen zijden verenigbaar?</li> <li>▪ Hoe hebben verschillen uitgekapt?</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <u>Algemeen</u>: In hoeverre verschillen overtuigingen en doelen Target van ENGO-zijde?</li> </ul>
<i>Hulpbronnen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Belangrijke hulpbronnen voor Target-zijde? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bijdrage target &amp; partners</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Belangrijke hulpbronnen ENGO-zijde? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hulpbronnen reden tot samenwerking tussen ENGOs onderling?</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Checklist - Rol bij samenwerking binnen ENGO-zijde? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Materiële en financiële middelen</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Kennis en expertise</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Publieke steun (maatschappelijk draagvlak)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Politieke steun en connecties</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Elkaars netwerk</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Welke organisaties welke bijdrage?</li> <li>○ Cruciale hulpbronnen bij kwestie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Target-zijde, ENGO-zijde</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Verloop zonder deze *?</li> <li>○ <u>Algemeen</u>: Hulpbronnen reden tot samenwerking tussen ENGOS?</li> </ul>
<b>Strategieën</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Toegepast door Target-zijde?</li> <li>○ Toegepast door ENGO-zijde voor beïnvloeden kwestie? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welke meest effectief? Waarom deze?</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Checklist – toegepast door ENGO-zijde bij kwestie? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Directe participatie bij besluitvorming</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Politiek lobbyen</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Informatie voorziening (aan beleidsmakers)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Protest-strategieën</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Juridisch strategieën</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Campagnes om bewustzijn te creëren (in maatschappij)</i></li> <li>▪ Ja, effectief?</li> <li>▪ Nee, waarom niet gekozen?</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <u>Algemeen</u>: Welke strategieën doorgaans meest effectief voor ENGOS voor beïnvloeden Natura 2000?</li> </ul>
<b>Relaties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ENGOS: Overtuigingen &amp; strategie keuze (<i>Hoe? Voorbeelden</i>)</li> <li>○ ENGOS: Hulpbronnen &amp; strategie keuze (<i>Hoe? Voorbeelden</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Afsluiting</b>	

## Appendix IV: List of Respondents

The list below contains an overview of all interviewed respondents, sorted by case and date. In addition, four interviews were conducted to improve general understanding of the landscape of Environmental NGOs in the Netherlands.

No.	Case	Date	Organisation	Respondent	Position
1.	Orientation	04-10-2018	Das & Boom	Bert Hesse	Ecological and juridical advisor
2.	Orientation	27-11-2018	Groene11	Anna Herweg	Public affairs advisor
3.	Orientation	20-12-2018	Staatsbosbeheer	Janine Spieksma	Account manager IPO/BIJ12
4.	Orientation	10-01-2019	VBNE	Dianne Nijland	Director VBNE
5.	Fitness check	20-09-2018	Natuurmonumenten	Partick Nuvelstijn	Coordinator European and International Affairs
6.	Fitness check	01-10-2018	LandschappenNL	Berry Lucas	Senior policy employee
7.	Fitness check	18-10-2018	SoortenNL	Sander Turnhout	Strategic advisor
8.	Fitness check	15-11-2018	WNF	Marieke van Zalk	Public affairs employee
9.	Fitness check	20-11-2018	Vogelbescherming	Harm Dotinga	Senior lawyer
10.	Fitness check	28-11-2018	Waddenvereniging	Auke Wouda	Lawyer
11.	Fitness check	04-12-2018	Ministry of EA *	Annemiek Adams	Policy officer
12.	Fitness check	09-01-2019	EC – DG Environment	Micheal O'Briain	Deputy head of the nature unit, Coordinator of Fitness Check
13.	Fitness check	10-01-2019	Vogelbescherming	Dianne Nijland	Head of policy & strategy team, lobbyist
14.	Windpark Fryslân	19-09-2018	Vogelbescherming	Harm Dotinga Astrid Doesburg	Senior lawyer Lawyer
15.	Windpark Fryslân	24-10-2018	IJsselmeervereniging	Auke Wouda	Board member; treasurer
16.	Windpark Fryslân	30-10-2018	Ministry of EAC **	Jos Wigger	Policy officer
17.	Windpark Fryslân	14-11-2018	Province of Friesland	Paul Westerbeek	Senior advisor ecology Nature Protection Law
18.	Windpark Fryslân	23-11-2018	Natuurmonumenten	Esther Moens	Advisor public affairs
19.	Windpark Fryslân	28-11-2018	Waddenvereniging	Auke Wouda	Lawyer
20.	Windpark Fryslân	28-11-2018	It Fryske Gea	Chris Bakker	Deputy head, strategic advisor, advisor ecology
21.	Salt extraction	17-10-2018	Waddenvereniging	Esme Gerbens	Lawyer
22.	Salt extraction	12-11-2018	Natuurmonumenten	Geertjan Smits	External policy employee
23.	Salt extraction	20-11-2018	Vogelbescherming	Astrid Doesburg	Lawyer
24.	Salt extraction	13-02-2019	Ministry of EA *	Ben Schoon Ton Goedhart	Senior policy officer Senior policy officer

\* Ministry of Economic Affairs, currently Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate

\*\* Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate

