Administering multifunctional agriculture

A comparison between France and the Netherlands

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I was invited to do some research on the very hot – and no less interesting – issue of multifunctionality of agriculture and how it was institutionalised through agricultural policies. The possibility of doing an international comparison between the Netherlands and my native country, France was suggested. This seemed an interesting methodological standpoint. While there was much academic work on multifunctionality in Europe, very little sociological research had been done on the way multifunctionality was interpreted and implemented in different EU member states. This lack of knowledge appeared linked to the material difficulties facing researchers who take up challenge of crossing national borders. A challenge that lies firstly in language barriers, but also in the institutional context of research. I was fortunate to be integrated within a pluri-disciplinary research programme that linked Wageningen University and INRA. This provided a supportive environment to undertake empirical research in both countries and reflect and draw upon the different theoretical approaches developed by academics in the two countries.

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Introduction

Agricultural subsidies are one of the most contested forms of public intervention. The environmental crisis and the development of more market-oriented agricultural policy have both contributed to a widespread questioning of the relevance and legitimacy of agricultural subventions, particularly those of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Various reforms over the past two decades have sought to introduce new principles of distributing them so that they are more "in harmony with" market mechanisms. Decoupling the system of grants from agricultural production was one of the most obvious achievements of these reforms, as was the creation of a new generation of subventions that form what is now commonly called the "Second Pillar" of the CAP. These subsidies are neither aimed at supporting agricultural production nor at compensating for the "competitiveness gap" between European farmers and international markets. Instead, they are intended for landscape management, nature conservation, environmental protection, diversification, rural development and so forth. As Holmes (2002 and 2006) has remarked, the 'multifunctional rural transition' is primarily concerned with re-ordering the use of rural space in terms of production, consumption and protection. This transition has been driven by agricultural over-capacity, the emergence of market-driven amenity values and increasing societal awareness of conservation issues. Farmers are no longer just considered as producers of food and fibre, they are also seen as stewards of the countryside who provide multiple other functions to society (van der Ploeg et al. 2000; OECD 2001; SFER 2003). This transition in thinking is visible in the evolution of the CAP and the tightly defined principles for allocating grants within the European Rural Development Framework Regulation (RDRF) – although EU member states have considerable discretion in transposing this regulation, according to their national priorities. Most member states have implemented the RDR through developing contractual agreements with farmers under which farmers accept constraints on established practices that are intended to meet environmental standards and in exchange they receive financial compensation. This commitment is founded upon a philosophy of public intervention based on the principle of incentives, rather than upon the polluter-pays principle (Nieddu 2001). Thus the process of transformation towards multifunctional agriculture (MFA) relies on mutual agreements in which both parties – the farmers and the authorities – enter into reciprocal arrangements. The preference given to financial incentives as opposed to blunt policy prescriptions at least partially reinstitutes a reciprocal link between farmers and public authorities. Multifunctional agriculture policies go someway to reinstituting the pact between farmers and the authorities, instigated at the outset of the CAP. But there are still uncertainties about the effectiveness of the application of these policies, with questions remaining about *the extent to which policies that combine environmental constraints with productive activities actually contribute to multifunctionality.* That is the key question that this thesis intends to address, by investigating the experiences of two EU member states, France and the Netherlands.

The choice of these two countries is not simply a coincidence of cooperation between scientific institutions but reflects other more important considerations[1]. Both countries were

[1] This study was financed by a programme of research involving Wageningen University and the French institute of agronomy, INRA. A special agreement between both institutes was made in 2001, which gave birth to two

founding members of the Europe of Six and for a long time they followed the path of 'convergence' towards a single model of intensified and modernised family agriculture (Hairy and Perraud 1977; Devienne 1989; Servolin 1989; van der Ploeg 2003). Of all the member countries, they are probably the ones that most resolutely asserted their agri-exporting ambition. They organised their industries and built up their systems of production and processing, albeit in different ways, around this objective, and they have both maintained a large part of their agri-food strength to this day. In both countries hegemonic professional agricultural organisations have had much influence over political decisions and the management of public intervention (Coulomb et al. 1990; Frouws and van Tatenhove 1993). However, more recent evolutions in the implementation of agricultural policy are likely to reveal divergent trajectories in the way in which multifunctional agriculture policies are implemented. These differences have their roots in the variations in the political resonance of both environmentalism and neo-liberalism in each country. The Dutch environmentalist movement is one of the most politically astute in the world (van der Heijden 2002). In addition, the Netherlands also applied market-oriented reforms to agriculture in the 1980s, long before most other countries (De Vries and Yesilkagit 1999). France, by contrast, continues to be characterised by durable governance mechanisms that still provide a strong link between the state and professional agricultural interests. Although the French state-profession *cogestion*[2] of agriculture is in a process of transformation (Fouilleux 2003) it remained a cornerstone of agricultural regulation throughout the '90s. There are therefore likely to be significant divergences in the way in which contractual policy instruments have been implemented in the two countries. This thesis attempts to illustrate this, the reasons for it and its consequences.

Outline of the thesis

There are ambiguities over the implementation of these policy instruments, which relate to different (and contested) definitions of multifunctionality and how it should be implemented. One of the first issues that this thesis raises is the definition of multifunctionality as well as the type of analytical framework needed to address these issues in a policy context (Part 1). Differences in the notion of multifunctionality are discussed in chapter 1 which asks *what are the discourses regarding multifunctionality, what interests do these represent and how do these factors affect how multifunctionality is likely to be embodied in these instruments?* The chapter stresses that these variations are related to two different dimensions. First, multifunctionality is by essence a policy matter, the relevance of which extends beyond the closed agricultural world. The participation of new actors in the existing close relationship between the state and the agricultural profession therefore plays a crucial role in the implementation of these policies. Second, this definition is likely to be strongly influenced by the extent to which the socio-economic dimensions of farms are taken into consideration in policy circles. This issue sets the parameters of what are considered to be legitimate forms of public support and this will influence the opportunities for implementing policy instruments. The following two chapters seek to build an analytical framework capable of grasping these variables. The first of these chapters critically assesses the main scientific formulations for approaching multifunctionality. It shows how these approaches only provide partial and limited insights into *possible trajectories* of these policy instruments. This is due to the fact that these approaches share a view of the economy and markets which is deeply economistic,

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research programmes. One of these was concerned with "Multifunctional agriculture" and aimed to encourage pluri-disciplinary cooperation between different scientific groups within the two research institutes.

[2] *Cogestion* is the French term used to describe the system of co-management of agricultural affairs between the state and the agricultural profession.

providing a normative and biased framework of reference which restricts understanding of the potentiality of multifunctional agriculture. Chapter 3 suggests an alternative approach intended to go beyond these shortcomings; it proposes a sociological analysis of policy instruments and a method of investigation based upon these.

The second part of the thesis presents the empirical findings from the two countries in a systematic and comparative way. It highlights the main institutional arrangements through which the policies were implemented. Chapter 4 sets out the objectives and purposes of the policies in the two countries and the specificities of national contexts. It asks *what are the main orientations and objectives of the policies, and how these differences can be explained.* Some specific historical elements are detailed in order to explain the institutional arrangements in each country and how they were constructed. The next chapter (chapter 5) investigates how the implementation of these policy contracts was influenced by the articulation between professional agricultural organisations and the state. The key research question concerns *the role and place occupied by the agricultural profession and its attached organisations in the implementation of these policies.* Chapter 6 provides more detailed information on the process of norm production in policy-making. The construction of the policy framework was a process in which agricultural practices were discussed, negotiated and reshaped according to the objectives of 'multifunctionality'. In this way multifunctionality contributed to transforming the norms and ways of picturing and practicing farming. The respective places of the various stakeholders in the policy-making process are crucial in influencing how this occurs. *One particular issue for investigation is the extent to which the traditional co-management mechanisms of decisions gave way to more plural processes of decision-making.*

The third part of the thesis explores the materialisation of these national specificities at more local levels by studying specific local examples *in situ*. These cover Friesland, Flevoland (both in the Netherlands) and Isère (in France) (chapters 7, 8 and 9 respectively). These three regions were chosen to cover a range and diversity of circumstances. Isère and Friesland were chosen as areas where it seemed that the social dynamics of multifunctionality would be important. The Flevoland polder "built" as a site for agricultural production in the course of the C20th seemed far removed from this rationale for promoting multifunctionality. In all the cases, the research interrogates the relation between the national policy framework, and how local stakeholders translated and appropriated it, according to the space for manoeuvre that they had. The leading questions for each case could be summarised as follows: *does the policy framework – and its local translation – match the objectives of multifunctional agriculture, and if so for which type of multifunctionality? What contradictions does it address and which are left unresolved?*

The final part reviews the implications of these policy instruments on the modalities of subsidy distribution stemming from the new rules that they have introduced. Chapter 10 asks *what are the rules for distributing these funds and how can they be understood and interpreted within the broader evolution of agricultural policy?* It attempts to elaborate on the socio-economics of these processes of grant distribution. While these new instruments represent just a small part of the total agricultural budget, they have introduced new principles for distributing public funds. The EU imposes a common framework, but member states have room for manoeuvre in deciding the amount of money given to the farmers and for what reasons.

The conclusion summarises the results of the research and discusses the relevance of the analytical framework for understanding the evolution of agricultural policies. It specifically looks at how *the sociological understanding of policy-instruments (presented in chapter 3) adds to our understanding of the contemporary transformations of agricultural policy*. It is argued that this approach allows a broader view of multifunctional agriculture and its potential than narrow definitions with an economistic bias. Multifunctional agriculture policies were used to create instruments of public intervention that sought to structure the agricultural economy in very different ways: through a liberal environmentalist model in the Netherlands and a state-farmers co-management model in France.

Part 1. Multifunctionality: definitions, discourses and analytical framework

This thesis is a study of the multifunctionality of agriculture and the social and political aspects of its implementation. Before embarking on an analysis of these aspects the first chapter discusses various definitions of multifunctionality and the circumstances that gave rise to the emergence of the notion. The emergence of multifunctional agriculture as a notion was controversial, and it very quickly came to acquire quite different meanings at the policy level. Hollander (2004) distinguishes between a 'weak' and a 'strong' version of multifunctionality, based on the extent to which it was used as a defence against the global commodity regime. Three different policy interpretations or configurations of multifunctionality have been identified, whose different rationales are likely to produce very different outcomes. The first policy application of multifunctionality occurs when it is used primarily for rhetorical reasons to justify the continuation of an existing system of agricultural regulations. This helps maintain the economic justification for agricultural subsidies but does not lead to any genuine plural co-construction of agricultural norms. At the other extreme the 'green liberal' model focuses solely on environmental aspects and excludes economic regulative aspects from multifunctionality so as not to 'distort' the markets. Environmental expertise takes a very high priority in the 'green liberal model' and leaves little room for farmers' priorities. A third application of multifunctionality occupies a sort of middle ground offering the possibility of reconnecting the social, economic and biotechnical dimensions of agricultural policy. In this case, the 'social contract' between farmers and authorities is renewed through a pluralist reinvention of the way in which farming is practiced.

This initial outline of the variations of the definition and application of multifunctionality leads us to reflect, in the second chapter, upon the adequacy of the main analytical frameworks that are used to describe these complex and contested realities. Given that multifunctionality can be understood through its variable relation to the economy – as argued in the first chapter – any understanding of multifunctional agriculture policies needs to include a broader reflection of the interrelations between social and the economic aspects. The concern of this chapter is that the research should take into account the variations in economic management that exist because of different levels of priority given to the market within agricultural policy making. Thus this chapter critiques the 'economic bias' that considers the market and the social dimensions as two separate domains. Following the work of Karl Polanyi, special attention is paid to the relevance and limits of the concept of the social *embeddedness* of the economy (Polanyi 1957 [1944]). These theoretical considerations help us systematically demythologise the market oriented bias within many interpretations of multifunctionality, including those contained in the OECD's standard economic approach and the theoretical propositions of New Institutional Economics (NIE).

The third chapter attempts to move beyond this bias and proposes to investigate the implementation of multifunctional agriculture policies (and the configurations behind them) via a sociological understanding of the *policy instruments*. It argues that an alternative institutional approach, based on the analysis of policy instruments, is both possible and viable. Through developing an understanding of these tools, their social and institutional construction and the way and extent to which they influence the transformation of existing institutions, it is

possible to draw out the different social logics at stake. This pragmatist approach is situated in a critical perspective but also provides a comprehensive view on public action. The aim is to use these instruments to sketch an understanding of the logics of agricultural policies, which are understood as institutions of social regulation, and are later used as a basis for comparison between national and local situations.

Chapter 1. Multifunctional agriculture and its variations

1.1 Introduction

For several years the idea of multifunctionality of agriculture has been increasingly used by scholars, policy makers and practitioners of agricultural development. The focus on the 'other functions' of agriculture (such as landscape protection, environment conservation, and so on) shows that producing agricultural goods is but one of the numerous aims of farming. Multifunctionality has become one of keywords in the process of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform that started in 1992 with the MacSharry reforms. While the theme of liberalisation has been the keynote of the reform process, the concept of multifunctionality has crystallised numerous hopes and aspirations. Above all, it offered an opportunity to reconsider the legitimacy and role of agricultural subventions at a time when their role was being fundamentally challenged as a result of the widespread debate over the place of the farmers in western societies and the new and traditional functions that they could fulfil. This debate involved consideration of the functions threatened by the current – 'unsustainable' – modes of intervention as well as those that would be under threat if the entire subsidy system were to be abandoned. Thus, the debate over multifunctionality implies shifting the grounds of argument away from whether or not the grant system should be retained intact, and to what form it should take. This raises more fundamental questions about the future of agriculture and opens opportunities for completely overhauling the present system and formulating a new 'paradigm' of development for agriculture (Delorme 2004).

The various consecutive reforms of the CAP introduced new principles of distributing subventions that were more 'in harmony' with market mechanisms, as well as giving rise to new forms of intervention. Decoupling the system of grants from agricultural production was one of the clear achievements of the reforms. Alongside this change a new generation of subventions was introduced that constitutes, what is now commonly called, the second pillar of the CAP. Those subsidies are not primarily intended to support agricultural production or to compensate for the gap of competitiveness of EU farmers with international markets. They are meant for landscape management, nature conservation, environmental protection, diversification, rural development and so forth. In providing these grants the EU no longer treats farmers solely as producers of food and fibres, but also as providers multiple other functions to society.

This transformation was accompanied by another significant change, since many of the policy instruments contained in this second pillar are established as individual contracts, between the state and the farmer. It is precisely this new form of contractual arrangement that is of interest to this thesis. Contractual policy instruments rely on a mutual agreement in which both parties – the farmers and the authorities – engage in reciprocal arrangements. This raises questions of how these arrangements, that intend to combine environmental constraints with productive activities, can provide the pathway to multifunctionality, and above all what 'kind' of multifunctionality they offer. The process of reform has involved posing awkward questions about the meaning of multifunctionality. This takes on different meanings depending on the way in which agricultural policies are approached, the participation of non farming actors

within the processes of norm production and more general issues of power in the policy-making process. The combination of these variables means that the notion of multifunctionality encompasses many ambiguities (Perraud 2003) and is likely to stabilised only through *praxis*.

This introduction aims to elaborate on the various definitions and socio-political configurations behind the concept of multifunctionality. The first section argues that the notion of multifunctionality was introduced in response to both the criticisms of productivism, in the '80s and '90s, and in the context of international trade negotiations. The second section shows how this gave rise to new national policy instruments intended to initiate a new kind of social contract between farmers and society. The final section shows how these new types of instruments lead to, at least, three possible outcomes.

1.2 Multifunctionality as a new paradigm of agricultural development

From productivism to the recognition of multifunctionality

Multifunctionality emerged as a response to the crisis in the dominant model of agricultural development. Recent decades saw criticisms of the 'wrong' development of agriculture brought about by adherence to the post-war modernisation model. The landscape was being eroded, biodiversity disappearing, agricultural pollution affecting the environment, and, in addition, the quality of production was being questioned. All these problems were associated with productivism, a phrase that was used to capture the negative consequences associated with the development of modern agriculture in which production was the sole goal of agriculture, with no consideration for the other, often more subtle functions of agriculture[3]. In sociological terms, modernisation provoked a dynamic of 'disembedding' agriculture from its social and natural environment (Frouws and Mol 1997), just as the 'Great Transformation' described by Polanyi provoked a disembedding of the social link with the merchant rationality (Polanyi 1957 [1944]).

Awareness of this reality opened a space for reflection on the purpose and roles of agriculture within society. The critique of productivism naturally led to increased recognition of the other functions that farming did – or should – provide to society. From the 1990s onwards, there was increased emphasis on reducing, as much as possible, the negative effects of that modernisation (environmental pollution, landscape degradation…), but also identifying the positive and sometimes unspoken role played by farmers in the society at large[4]. It is nowadays more widely recognised that food and fibre production is but one aspect of

[3] I used the definition of productivism proposed by Combemale and Parienty (1994, 197; quoted by Alphandéry 2004), which defines productivism as an embodiment of the view that maximising wealth is the essential goal of human activity.

[4] Commenting on the concept of *multifunctionality* of agriculture, the European Commission, for instance, clearly stressed the necessity to have these functions recognised: *"agriculture provides services which are linked to the land and are mainly of a public good character. Indeed while over the centuries, the development of agricultural skills and techniques as well as structural adjustment have led to gains in productivity and competitiveness, it has also had the effect of producing and safeguarding landscape, which has become a public good in its own right. Moreover, in some cases, it has helped to safeguard the land itself. Apart from its production function, agriculture encompasses other functions such as the preservation, the management and enhancement of the rural landscape, the protection of the environment, including against natural hazards, and a contribution to the viability of the rural areas. Agriculture must also be able to respond to consumer concerns for example those regarding food quality and safety"* (European Commission 1999, 1).

agriculture and that farmers also fulfil other functions, for which they are sometimes rewarded, often depending on their geographic location.

All in all, the concept of multifunctionality covers a broad spectrum of various activities including protecting landscapes, conserving biodiversity, preventing pollution, securing the quality of food or more recently protecting animal welfare and preserving cultural heritage. It provides an overall vision for thinking holistically about agriculture that emerged in response to the numerous shortcomings of modernisation. It is embodied by a genuine social dynamic that affects several domains of society and is likely to create a new set of configurations between production activities and their natural and social environment. The complexity and profoundness of these changes has led some authors to allude to the 'total' character of multifunctionality, in the sense that it concerns large numbers of institutions and social groups, with multiple (economic, juridical, technical, and so forth) dimensions (Laurent et al. 2002). Recognition of multifunctionality affects daily agricultural practices, the official status of professional farmers (Blanchemanche et al. 2000), the analytical frameworks and orientations of scientific research (Laurent 2003) and the regimes of financial support for farmers (Laurent et al. 2002). Unsurprisingly the concept is closely associated with the concept of sustainable development, as it is recognised that the other functions of agriculture provide necessary pathways to sustainability. As C. Laurent (2000) commented, the official recognition of multifunctionality "expresses the wish that these different contributions could be associated in a sustainable and coherent way". Multifunctionality was discussed at the 1992 UN Rio conference, and has systematically been referred to in subsequent international meetings and conferences on agriculture and sustainable development. This international use of the term helped its further adoption in other situations, though over the following decade it became a controversial subject.

The controversies around multifunctionality

The question of the functionalities of agriculture and how they related to the traditional modalities of public intervention in agriculture also became a major issue in WTO negotiations. In 1994, the Marrakech agreements concerning the decoupling of subsidies within the CAP support system announced a further liberalisation of trade barriers. In response to this threat to the existing CAP regime the European Commission began to see the opportunities offered by the concept of multifunctionality and more integrated rural development and this changing position contributed to the Cork Conference in 1996 (Hervieu 2002). This proposed an intermediate position intended to provide an alternative and consensual response to the internal differences within Europe over the issue of agricultural subsidies, a pragmatic 'third way' (Lowe et al. 2002) that sought to bring together the ideologically opposed partisans of liberalism and protectionism. However other international institutions, particularly the FAO, distrusted the idea and rejected it (Hervieu 2002). This reluctance to seriously give consideration to multifunctionality was an expression of distrust towards both the concept and its proponents. The various formulas of multifunctionality employed at that time raised suspicions within the international community (particularly from the liberal opponents of multifunctionality) that the term was being used as nothing more than an 'euphemism for protection' (Swinbank 2001; Potter and Burney 2002). They questioned whether there was any 'substance behind the discourse's smoke' (Garzon 2005), if multifunctionality was a real project or just an alibi for perpetuating the existing subsidy system (Bazin and Kroll 2003).

This debate continued throughout the international negotiations of the Uruguay Round, where some participants expressed fierce opposition to the concept of multifunctionality, arguing that it was merely a strategy to avoid further liberalisation of trade and to continue with protectionist agricultural policies. The United States and the Cairns Group[5] were the leading proponents of this view, arguing that multifunctionality was a smoke screen designed to justify transferring existing subsidies from the 'amber' or 'blue' boxes to the 'green' box, and would maintain unfair market distortions between countries. They were not surprised that multifunctionality was most widely defended by those countries that protect their agriculture the most: the self-proclaimed 'friends of multifunctionality', consisting mostly of the EU members, Japan, Switzerland, Norway and South Korea. This group argued that multifunctionality was an expression of legitimate non-trade considerations that, in most cases, were about preserving the public general interest. Agriculture also produced public goods and public authorities needed appropriate regulatory mechanisms to manage this. In contrast to free traders this group did not believe in the capacity of the market to regulate these non-trade concerns, whose public character legitimated public intervention. Their pursuit would be harmed by a full liberalisation of agricultural policies, which posed a threat to rural development, food safety, and animal welfare, the three most disputed consequences of full market liberalisation (Burrell 2003).

In an attempt to clarify the issues involved in this debate the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) subjected the topic to more detailed analysis at the end of the 1990s, with the intention of providing clearer definitions and understanding (OECD 2001). The issues that had emerged separately throughout the '70s and '80s (environmental pollution, landscape degradation, and so forth) were no longer isolated from each other, but were bought into a global framework in which farmers were not only seen as producers but also as providers of other functionalities. A new paradigm of agricultural development was being born (as occurred in the '60s with modernisation). With an interventionist philosophy of intervention, it even appeared as a continuum of the past. Potter (2004) comments that multifunctionality sounds much like a reformulation of the early principles of the CAP. It originates from a social welfare justification for state support, strongly based on what Reiger (1977) called the 'moral economy' of the European Community. In this respect multifunctionality can be seen as an attempt to renew the social and economic aspect of agricultural policies, and to provide a balancing force to the effects of participating in a globalised market (Barthélémy and Nieddu 2003b).

Renewing the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

The introduction of multifunctionality provided an opportunity to renew and reinvigorate the CAP, since it led to the introduction of a new range of subventions, which took a different form than before. Rather than bluntly constraining the allocation of EU grants, by generalising the principle of cross-compliance over all agricultural subventions, the EU chose a step by step approach and created a new generation of grant, which would not restrict the existing group of compensatory grants. This is now usually referred to as the second pillar of the CAP. The conditions attached to the new type of subsidies were set out in the Rural Development Framework Regulation (RDRF) which was adopted by the EU just after the summit of Berlin in March 1999. In reality, the RDRF is not the only policy instrument for rural development, nor is it genuinely new. Rather the RDRF aggregated several existing policy instruments, such as agro-environmental measures, pre-retirement aid, subsidies for young farmers,

[5] The Cairn Group includes Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, South Africa, Chile, and Canada.

compensations for the less favoured areas, etc. and brought them within one framework that included 22 measures, potentially applicable across the entire EU territory. The summit of Berlin also instituted a coevolving strategy between the first and the second pillar, which remained a relatively small part of the CAP in budgetary terms (representing just 10.2 % of CAP funds during the 2000-6 programming period). This strategy also offered a platform for extending multifunctionality, since it also provided member states with the possibility of co-financing policies to promote multifunctionality.

So, the pathway towards multifunctionality has been paved with a series of financial incentives. Yet it needs not have been this way. Nieddu (2001) reminds us that different possibilities for intervention can be pursued according to the way in which society at large, and the policy community in particular, views a particular practice. In principle there are three different types of option for intervention. The first option is a total absence of intervention, where even in the face of a well recognised problem with social or economic behaviour the state chooses to leave it unregulated, adopting a *laisser-faire* approach instead of trying to regulate an externality. The second option consists of more coercive regulation based, for instance on the Polluter Pays Principle. This involves applying a system of taxes to actors whose practices do not correspond to what is expected. In this case responsibilities for meeting the standards fall squarely on the actors (farmers) who have to shoulder the burden of meeting the standards expected to protect the amenity. Thus environmental protection (for example) becomes a *due* that farmers *owe* to society, the economical consequences of which they have to assume. The third option is based on a more anticipatory approach in which regulation is pursued through establishing (voluntary) contracts through which farmers adjust their practices and are compensated for compliance in meeting agreed standards. Here the responsibility is shared between the two parties and the costs involved in achieving the objectives are passed on to the society. This possibility only applies to agreements over activities that go beyond legally defined minimum standards (such as the nitrates or the habitat directives). It only applies to activities that involve extra effort to meet higher standards and norms, that are legally required, and for which farmers are rewarded. The subventions under Pillar 2 were established under this principle and provide a new form of social contract between farmers and the authorities.

1.3 Renewing the social contract

The contractual policy as a new social contract

This transformation of the grant system implies a redefinition of the mutual obligations and links of reciprocity that exist between farmers, the authorities and society at large. The metaphor of the 'social contract', understood in a sociological or even political sense, was used to reconfigure the social link between farmers and society (Landais 1998). This attempt at reconfiguration found a legal basis in the shape of a contractual form. EU member states have devoted at least some of the second pillar funds to individual and often short term formal agreements between public authorities and individual farmers, a contractual form that was previously experimented with under the earlier agro-environmental measures (Boy 2000). Later, it took the shape of a broader contract, such as the Farm Territorial Contract (CTE) that evolved in France, which aimed at taking all of the dimensions of a farm into account (Domas 2000). This form of arrangement is characteristic of a broader trend in public intervention that embodies the principles of contractual policy (Gaudin 2004), placing more emphasis on the mutual responsibilities. Contracts supposedly provide more flexibility, equity and emancipation, than rigid and static prescriptions. Seen in this way, the 'contractualisation

of society' implies that prescribed forms of social links (the laws) are giving way to links based on mutual consent, that heteronomy is giving way to autonomy (Supiot 2001). Such contractual relations are helping to transform the modes of intervention within agriculture. Their widespread use is justified and legitimated by the underlying humanistic principles that mix the issues of autonomy and responsibility. The contractual engagements are 'voluntary', respectful of farmers' choices to committing to schemes that place certain constraints on their activities.

This autonomy also produces uncertainties for both parties involved in the contracts. For the farmers, the increase in autonomy is offset by the uncertainty – even precariousness – implicit in the requirement to periodically reconsider the terms of the agreements. The relatively short term agreements (of 5 or 6 years) – which may or may not be renewed in the next period – is in stark contrast to the long-term arrangements previously enjoyed under the guaranteed price mechanism. For a variety of reasons, there is always a possibility that the terms of the contract will change after the next review: there might be less funding available, the contracts might be made stricter; or the political and social context could evolve at the expense of the farmer. For a number of reasons the initial conditions of the contracts are likely to be transformed over the course of the time. The short-term character of the contract potentially institutionalises a form of structural instability, instituting a perpetually transformable relationship that makes the link between farmer and society potentially volatile and unstable.

The autonomy implied by these contracts is questionable, and perhaps double-edged. Doubtless, farmers are free to 'choose' whether or not to commit themselves to an agreement. Nevertheless, in a context of CAP liberalisation, do the farmers have any other real choice than to accept and try to appropriate these contracts? They may only come to adopt this form of policy instrument as a result of the loss of other agricultural subsidies. In this respect the farming profession's acceptance of the second pillar of the CAP is a response to the global reform process, and to the threat of losing the first pillar. For most farmers this move towards contractualisation is necessary, simply to guarantee the continuity of their enterprise. From this perspective, talk of the autonomy involved in contractualisation appears rhetorical, with the implicit aim of attracting farmers to support a predetermined change in policy orientation, rather than offering them any real choice. This rhetoric, though, embodies the ideal of independence, to which the farmers themselves are strongly attached. As Potter and Tilzey (2005, 582) comment "the phenomenon of post-productivism […] is only one symptomatic part of the process that is the fracturing of Fordism and thus needs to be related to profound shifts in the pattern of agricultural governance and modes of intervention and regulation". On this basis one can question whether the second pillar is a symbolic shift meant to initiate deeper transformations and achieve radical reform in agricultural policies or, whether it is a reformulation of a genuine paradigm of development that has emerged from a commonly adopted normative framework. To investigate this question, it is necessary to understand the *raison d'être* and contemporary evolution of modern agricultural policies, as an historical phenomenon.

The transformation of modern agricultural policy

Modern agricultural policy, and the related social contract on which it was grounded, have been differently anchored at different times. For many of the countries that have intensified their agriculture, the 'subsistence question' was closely associated with the development of family farming. The management of agriculture has involved interventions and multiple forms of regulation globally referred to as agricultural policy. The social and political achievement

of this objective has taken different forms throughout the course of the history. One can distinguish at least three periods.

1) From the very beginning of modern times, from the end of the C18th or so, agricultural policy sought to link the food provider function with a more social one. Policy sought not only to intensify agricultural production, but also to pursue the social and even political purpose of developing a model of production based on family farming. The balance of emphasis between these two goals varied between countries, often depending on the relationship between the aristocracy and the peasantry, and gave rise to different policies. For example Britain resisted pro-peasant agrarian reform and promoting access to land, since this was contrary to other interests which sought to clear the land and create a labour force for the industrial revolution[6] (Servolin 1989).

2) Over the years, the social and political treatment of this agrarian question has been transformed without destabilising the family farm model. The actions of the state – and later on the European Community – sought to reinforce the economic foundation of the small farm unit and to professionalise agriculture. These policies were meant to up-grade the status of farmers in modern urban societies, but paradoxically this required organising the departure from agriculture of those who didn't correspond to the contemporary criteria of modern agriculture (Coulomb and Nallet 1980). In promoting modernisation, authorities adopted specific sets of interventions tailored to the family-based structure of agriculture within their jurisdiction. Agricultural intervention was not only concerned with markets and climatic uncertainties and spreading technical knowledge, but also with addressing the relatively modest and scattered capital of many farm units. This public intervention was justified by the fact that the smaller productive units had a very low capacity for the investments required to modernise (Coulomb and Nallet 1980).

To organise this sectoral restructuring, a system of selection based on professional criteria of economic 'viability' was established, particularly to identify which farmers should leave farming (Coulomb and Nallet 1980; Rémy 1987). The issue of controlling access to the title 'professional farmer' became a focus of internal tussles within the farming profession, as it determined which farmers would be targeted and supported by the public and professional regulations (Rémy 1987). While seemingly defending the family-based model of farming, the move towards professionalisation actually brought about a shift towards a model of larger-scale and entrepreneurial farming and offered less and less support to family farms. Thus, since its creation, the CAP has encompassed dual goals. It sought to strengthen production capacity and, at the same time, ensure the perpetuation of the social structure – that is, the professional group – and thereby ensure farm reproduction (Barthélémy and Nieddu 2003a). This social dimension of agricultural policy was contained in the more global Fordist compromise in which policies for economic growth relied on the conjunction between increased production and mass consumption. Under these circumstances agricultural policies could guarantee that professionalised farmers would be able to generate sufficient income to maintain their farms.

[6] The first option has been a central goal of Denmark, which since the end of the C18th has encouraged farmers to buy their land and intensify production, thus giving birth to modern agricultural policy. The Netherlands and, later on, France also followed the same trajectory, whereas in the United Kingdom, despite the golden age of *high farming*, the large *enclosed* production spaces owned by the landlords did not provide a system that was as efficient as on the continent. At dawn of the 20th century, British producers provided only one third of the domestic food supply (Servolin 1989). The United Kingdom's trajectory was however more an exception than a common pattern.

3) By the mid ‘70s, the internationalisation of the economy affected this interventionism. The acceleration of international trade destabilised the national regulations intended to control productivity, investment and employment. It also entailed transformations in the forms of labour organisation, and threatened the institutionalised compromises that had underpinned the establishment of the Welfare State (Allaire 1995; Boyer and Saillard 2002). With the ascent of the neo-classical economy, neo-liberal recipes and the systematic reference to market-oriented logics came to dominate discourses about how to respond to globalisation (Jobert 1994). Agriculture was not exempt from this shift in economic paradigm and serious discussions were instigated over the future existence and legitimacy of the CAP regime. The MacSharry reform of 1992 marked the beginning of a succession of transformations that aimed to strengthen the primacy of market mechanisms. These reforms were strongly favoured by the ascendant neo-classical economist school, but were also supported by the European Commission which saw the need for reform and prepared ways of implementing them (Fouilleux 2000; 2003). This discourse was part of a broader process of reconsidering the role of the state in managing the economy, which moved from a Keynesian approach to a more *laissez-faire* one.

Though these successive reforms did not lead to the disappearance of the CAP, they led to the introduction of new rules for grant allocation. To complement – and in the long run substitute – the established regulative market mechanisms (guaranteed prices, public storage...), subsidies were introduced to compensate EU farmers for their lack of competitiveness with international markets. At the same time, other measures were introduced with a rural development purpose such as the agro-environmental, pre-retirement and young farmers’ settlement measure – which later evolved into the RDRF. It is open to debate how much these latter policy measures also implicitly contained a market regulation purpose, along with the other measures introduced at that time. One obvious example is dairy quotas which fixed farmers’ production rights and also placed a ceiling on the subsidies paid to farmers, to reduce excess production. Other examples include wine growing programmes, subsidies to encourage the closure of dairy farms and subsidies for suckling cows. The introduction of agro-environmental regulations, particularly the policies of extensification, was also prompted by this logic (Perraud 1995). Allaire (1995, 371) notes that the criticisms of productivism had been around for some time before agro-environmental measures appeared which led “one (to) wonder if its external effects play a role upon the crisis or if it is the [Fordist] crisis that has made them taken into consideration”. The agro-environmental schemes provided an opportunity to equilibrate the market situation and reduce over-supply. Environmental concerns were not the only motive that triggered the introduction of these measures. The CAP reform of 1992 also embodied a compromise between member states over maintaining control of production. In this respect these programmes can be seen as more of a pragmatic response to the crisis in Fordist regulation than the expression of an enlightened environmentalist ‘turning point’ that fundamentally reconsidered the productivist logic of agriculture.

Recent developments suggest that the same dynamic continues to hold sway. The continued intensification and mechanisation of agriculture has given rise to invocations of the local and the ‘terroir’ – but it is open to debate how much these appeals represent a search for re-embedding agriculture in its territory or for new ways of legitimating the status quo. The more agriculture frees itself from its territorial and environmental context, the more persistently references to local terroir-type imaginaries are invoked (Alphandéry and Dupont 1992; Alphandéry 2004). Similarly the numerous reviews of the efficacy of agro-environmental measures and their implementation have unanimously stressed the economic pragmatism

underlying their adoption by farmers, rather than a radical acculturation of environmental values (Morris and Potter 1995; Alphandéry and Billaud 1996; Buller et al. 2000). This demonstrates that these measures not only have a patrimonial function, but also clearly play a role in the organisation of the agricultural economy (Boy 1997; 2000). More broadly, the instruments used to promote multifunctionality contain an implicit market regulative function, which could be interpreted as resistance from the professional group strongly attached to authorities playing a lead role in regulating the market structure. At any rate, the reformulation of the pact between the professional farmers and the authorities seems strongly conditioned by transformations that have occurred in decision-making practices.

Opening up decision-making?

The contractual relation is far from a purely atomised link between the authorities and individual farmers. The content, modes of application and finances of the contracts are framed by other social and institutional dynamics that expand the traditional and simplistic model of closed interaction between the state and individual farmers. These aspects are not discussed or negotiated individually but collectively. Many aspects of multifunctionality require bringing in other actors from outside the closed world of professional farmers. The emergence of these new actors and interests politicises farming, as farmers are increasingly required to take 'societal demands' into account. This new challenge is somewhat of a break with the decision-making practices that dominated the era of modernisation. In particular they challenge the close relationship that existed between the state and the farming profession[7].

These transformations profoundly affect professional agricultural organisations. The effort needed to re-adjust agricultural practices to meet the new standards imposed by multifunctionality, and the need to participate in the management of policy procedures leads them to transform their internal organisations. New departments need to be created and new competencies developed. Sometimes, new professional organisations emerge to fill these gaps. At any rate, farmers' organisations play a key role as intermediaries in the discussions over and implementation of the policies. Their ability to have their interests represented within the policy-making process will depend upon their political weight and their capacity to integrate the new environmental and societal issues within their professional worlds.

These transformations also affect the position of the state, which is becoming increasingly enmeshed within a 'multilevel' system of governance that includes the European Commission on the top and decentralised authorities at the bottom (van Tatenhove 2003). Agriculture has been particularly influenced by the Europeanisation of policies and while policies are co-financed by the EU, the room for manoeuvre for implementing second pillar policies still gives states an important role in the governance of these funds and policies. Member states have relative autonomy in designing their policy-framework and in this sense EU policy is no longer just European when it is applied at the national level (Lowe et al. 2002; Daniel 2003). Equally there are very large differences between countries in the degree of autonomy passed down from the national level to decentralised authorities. Some member states have gone as

[7] In France, as in the Netherlands, this model was characterised by a governing structure in which farmers and the state combined their forces in a formal structure to jointly control the social and economic aspects of agriculture (Billaud 1990; Frouws and van Tatenhove 1993; Frouws 1994). Both governing structures have many common points in terms of the institutionalised relationship between farmers and the government and their isolation and screening from the rest of the society.

far as decentralising policy-making, but most of them have kept a central role for the state. In some cases, states have even 'territorialised' their public policies[8] (Duran and Thoenig 1996).

Lastly, there are also moves to transform the procedures of negotiations to give more prominence to the claims of civil society. The deliberative arenas intended to promote participation and negotiation are now being systematically integrated within the processes of policy-making, with the purpose of opening the agricultural arena to a wider group of actors and interests, including those that challenge the effects of productivist modes of agriculture. These include consumer groups, hunters' organisations, and particularly the environmentalist movement. The influence of these groups, particularly environmental ones, has grown over time and their constituencies have grown significantly over the past decade (van der Heijden 2002). The agricultural lobby is no longer able to circumvent them. These groups now strongly influence public opinion and have the capacity to intervene as expert organisations in various policy-making processes. The emergence of an ecological rationality within western modern societies is also evident with the emerging influence of public administrations concerned with nature protection, energy, water pollution, etc. This is observable not only with the establishment of ministries of the environment in the EU states, but also with the emergence of the influence of environmental interests in other public administrations, such as ministries of agriculture[9]. This ongoing institutionalisation has gone hand in hand with a profound transformation of the environmental movement which has both professionalised itself and, also begun to operate along less confrontational lines than before. More than forty years after its birth it has largely dissociated itself from the radicalism of bluntly rejecting development and technical progress, and has shifted from a romantic naturalist representation of the environment to a more pragmatic and technical discourse on nature and environmental protection. Environmentalists have developed scientific and technical knowledge in many fields and combine this expertise with value-led advocacy (Lascoumes 1994).

The procedures generated by the implementation of new public policies have opened up opportunities for these new actors to exert some influence. They have also created new possibilities for administrating agriculture because of the multiplication of levels of governance and the growth of arenas of negotiation. This new deal is likely to engender new patterns of interactions and domination between the actors. Whereas farmers benefited from their previously privileged political position and were able to postpone the first environmentalist attacks, the agricultural profession nowadays is 'under siege' (Frouws 1994; Frouws and Ettema 1994). But the outcome of the process of re-normalising agricultural practice also depends on the way that the commissions, arenas and 'societal' scenes are built. The structure of these governing mechanisms can tilt power towards the environmentalists or towards the agricultural organisations. The presence and political weight of the two groups within the processes of negotiation are directly linked to the games and principles of legitimacy. The co-production – some would say 'co-institution' (Rémy 2001) – of policy is therefore subject to variations at both the national and local levels, where the adopted definition of multifunctionality will greatly depend on the respective positions of power of the actors involved (Alphandéry and Billaud 1996, 10).

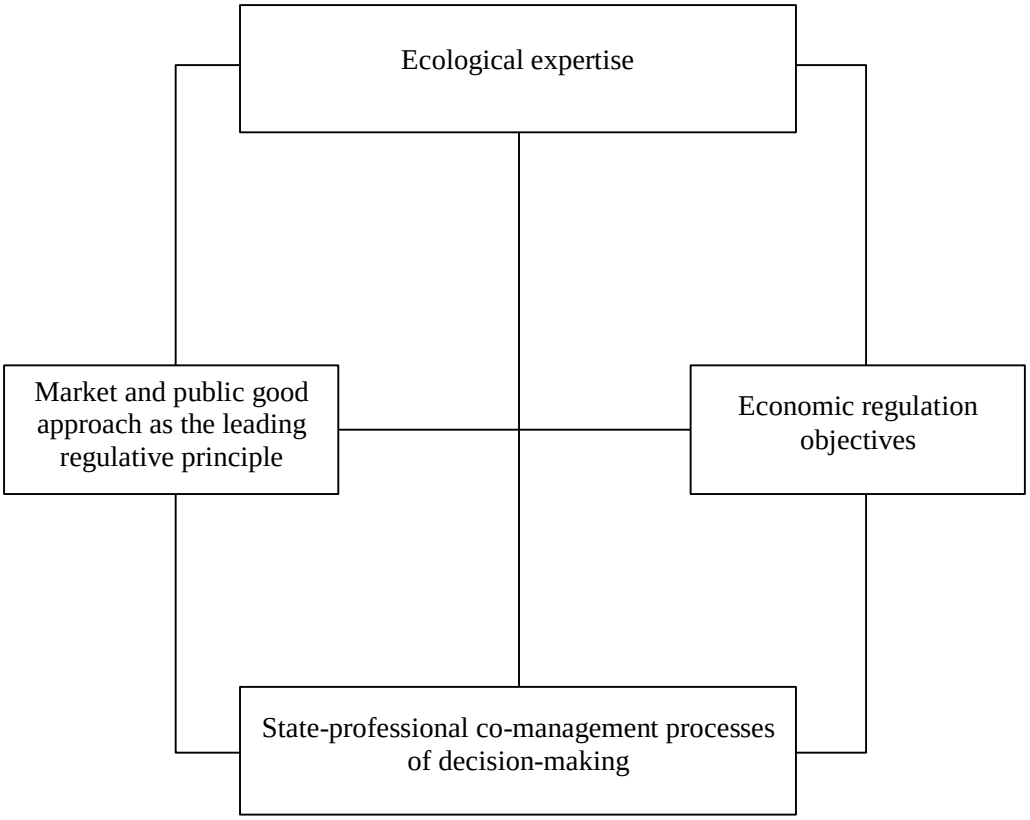
[8] The 'territorialisation' of public policies refers to adapting policy to the local characteristics of the territories in which it is implemented.

[9] This is especially the case in the Netherlands where the Nature Protection Department is one of the pillars of the Ministry of Agriculture. In France, environmental interests have remained less powerful and have been described as the « *parent pauvre de l'action publique* », (Charvolin 2003).

1.4 The three possible outcomes

Thus the introduction of multifunctional agriculture policies is giving rise to complex institutional transformations. My concern in this dissertation will be to question the extent to which these instruments actually lead to a new social contract between farmers and the public authorities, and this can vary greatly according to the range of circumstances outlined above. Given the central role that the national state plays in the design and implementation of agricultural regulations, there will certainly be variations at the national level (Losch et al. 2004). Firstly, because the state greatly influences the place and role of agriculture within society at large. Any transitions may influence the state's traditional forms of alliance with professional farmers. Liberal influences on policy development will strongly affect how agricultural policy objectives are formulated, avoided or euphemised. Secondly, the outcome of the policies depends on the scope and significance that the constraints place upon production. The 'social demands' need to be clearly and effectively formulated and translated into the policy framework in order to be successful and the transformation of traditional decision-making practices into a more open and pluralist system is likely to play a key role in this. These two parameters provide several potential outcomes, (discussed below) each of which embodies a particular conception of multifunctionality[10].

Figure 1.1.Different policy outcomes



[10] The categorisation presented below was largely inspired from earlier proposals by Laurent (2000) and Kroll and Bazin (2003) who also identified three possible pathways to multifunctionality.

The rhetoric effect

The first scenario is that of stasis. G.T. Lampedusa's famous novel which describes the issues facing an aristocratic family during the Risorgimiento was used to describe this situation (Laurent 2000): "if we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change."[11] In this case, multifunctionality provides a new formula to justify the perpetuation of the existing grant system without really changing existing agricultural practices. The purpose is to renew the justifications for the subsidies by appropriating values from outside the profession, so as to rejuvenate the legitimacy of public financial support. It becomes a process of euphemisation, providing a smokescreen to perpetuate an unchanged social order and, for this reason, has been denounced as a 'counter-reformation' (Laurent 2000). The sudden appropriation of the turning point of environmental awareness can all too easily be perceived as a strategy for countering the structural reforms that would permit a more equitable distribution of resources between farmers.

Attempts to maintain statis have mostly come from the traditional members of the alliance on which the CAP was built and its main beneficiaries, mainly the farmers' professional and sectored-anchored organisations. Agro-industries are less interested in this outcome, as most of them favour ongoing neo-liberal reform. The aim of these farmers is to limit, as far as possible, reforms and to maintain the existing compromise on agricultural subsidies in Europe. Some authors claim that this corresponds to a neo-mercantile movement, characterised by a belief in maintaining the export orientation of a large part of agriculture and the role of the state as the main supporter of domestic productive potential (Potter and Tilzey 2005). This is a long established position in European agriculture, and has promoted a highly productivist form of agriculture (Potter and Tilzey 2005). Its supporters are fiercely opposed to the decoupling of EU subsidies and argue for preferential treatment of community products.

This group's position is highly reliant on the traditional mode of governance. The group that supports this position seeks a relatively 'soft' definition of multifunctionality which offers few constraints and will allow many practices to remain unchanged. Such an appropriation requires knowledge of, and access to, institutional settings in order to influence the construction of new norms and guarantee a privileged position of influence. This implies minimising the influence of other stakeholders on policy formulation and maintaining a configuration in which the main agricultural professional organisations maintain a strong hand. Ultimately this position seeks to give a new form of green legitimacy to the existing grant system without compromising the privileged position of the main beneficiaries of existing agricultural policies (Bazin and Kroll 2003).

The economic definition of multifunctionality: the green liberal configuration

Kroll and Bazin (2003) identify a second position which they named the 'green liberal' configuration. This contrasts with the preceding model in that this model prefers less state intervention in the agricultural sector, arguing that there is no need. Rather, it emphases the need to build up an international free market with only marginal and pragmatic state

[11] The novel of G.T. Lampedusa, *The Leopard*, takes place during the unification of Italy in the C19t^{h} and early C20th. In this novel, Tancredi, the nephew of a Sicilian nobleman attached to the Kingdom of the two Sicilies, urges his uncle to rally to the cause of Garibaldi in order to avoid a much deeper and negative transformation for him and its family: "Unless we ourselves take a hand now, they'll foist a republic on us. If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change."

intervention when required. It considers agricultural goods like any other economic good; agricultural goods therefore do not justify privileged treatment. In other words, the laws of supply and demand at the international level should determine what and how much is produced by whom. This vision views preferential agricultural policies as archaic and protectionist measures implemented by national governments in defiance of the laws of the free market.

This line of thinking only sees public intervention in agriculture as justifiable when farmers are involved with the management of 'public goods', such as environmental goods. It sees the environmental shift as giving farmers an opportunity to offer green services to society, and this new vocation as providing additional opportunities for farmers to generate income. In this respect farmers can add another feather in their cap, by adding the role of green manager to that of entrepreneur. But, these two functions are to be managed separately. Environmental issues are important but are explicitly detached from the productive process and the economic, social and structural elements of farms, which should be regulated solely by the laws of the market. This conception corresponds to the economic definition provided by the OECD framework (2001) which elaborates the functions that legitimately fall within (and outside) the public interest (Laurent 2000). This economic definition seeks legitimacy by claiming scientific impartiality. For this reason, it has come to be known as the 'positive' approach to multifunctionality, although, as I discuss later, the assumptions it makes reveal it to be quite normative (see chapter 2).

This option is located in a much broader green liberal policy project that characterises a new and original alliance over agriculture. It is the expression of a compromise between environmentalists and liberals so as to present a common response to corporate farming interests (Bazin and Kroll 2003) and overcome the resistance of farmers to reform, whether liberal or environmental. Only subsidies for environmental services are considered as legitimate and 'non-distortive'. In pursuing this vision, many environmentalists, with their recognised expertise, have participated in a normative process of co-producing the contracts, which deeply structure how this vision of multifunctionality is implemented.

Multifunctionality as a reconnection between the economy, social and biotechnical processes

The last alternative moves beyond the green liberal model in the sense that it does not exclude the possibility of fundamentally re-embedding farmers' economic activities within broader social and biotechnical processes. It sees economic relations as subordinate to broader and sometimes contradictory objectives held by society at large, and not the other way round. As Laurent (2000, 413) remarked, " the purpose is to reflect upon the place of the agricultural activity in a society within which the objectives are not solely economic and that legitimate institutions of regulation are political ones". In contrast to the 'green liberal' configuration this approach does not see the regulation of the market and of other agricultural amenities as seperate and distinct, but as tightly linked and interwoven with each other, and seeks to reconnect them. This approach therefore advocates "the whole of the contributions of agriculture to an economical and social development considered in its *unity*" (our emphasis) (Laurent 2000).

This definition implies that political institutions need to be at the centre of the processes of re-normalising agriculture and that decision-making processes should be open to a range of

societal actors. Since redefining the framework of agricultural development involves a broad social spectrum, a plurality of values and interests need to be represented. This politicises agriculture, and distinguishes this model from that of the closed rhetoric readjustment and the exclusive and normative prescriptions of OECD economists.

Moreover, this political project is a global one that also integrates the redefinition of the relations of food interdependency and solidarities between the countries of the North and those of the South (Bazin and Kroll 2003). From this perspective multifunctional agriculture also has a role to play within the process of globalisation and in influencing the role of farmers within their national economies, particularly through their role as food providers. This broader view is being advocated by a heterogeneous network of associations that argue the case for a more socially and politically controlled form of globalisation that pays heed to concepts like 'food sovereignty'. These organisations come from civil society as well as professional organisations. At the European level, they are represented by the European Farmers Coordination (CPE) which seeks "to embrace a non-productivist form of agrarianism in which farming incomes derive primarily from the sale of farms products valued on the basis of environmental and social tariffs" (Potter and Tilzey 2005, 592)[12].

1.6 Conclusion

As in many transition periods, the definition and framing of the move towards multifunctionality is a social issue that is subject to extensive discussions and controversies. The institutional configurations engendered by public policies will largely influence the way that these problems are set and solved. While, multifunctionality is undoubtedly dependant on the huge variety of local characteristics in physical, agronomic, demographic and sociological terms, the way that it transforms the professional institutions of farming through Europe will be largely influenced by social and political dimensions. The question of whether the functions of agriculture are conceived and treated dependently or independently from market mechanisms, and the way and extent to which the processes of regulations are opened to a diversity of stakeholders, can drive the policy-making process in three possible divergent directions. The three models (the rhetoric, the green liberal and the more pluralist-Keynesian model) discussed in this chapter are more idealised or typical constructions than descriptions of the patterns that are encountered in reality. They are useful in highlighting the tendencies, processes and configurations that shape national orientations towards multifunctionality. Later on in this thesis, these idealised versions are examined against the experiences of two EU member states: France and the Netherlands. Before that, though, it is necessary to discuss some crucial theoretical aspects that explain the background to the configurations encountered in these two countries. This is the task of the next two chapters.

[12] This network of organisations is closely associated with the movements involved in world social forums of Porto Alegre and the views expressed there. Its main representative in France is the farmers' union Confédération Paysanne.

Chapter 2. The economic bias of analytical frameworks

2.1 Introduction

As argued in the first chapter, definitions of multifunctionality and their recognition are related to the extent to which it is intended to regulate part of the agricultural economy. One clear divide is over whether the instruments should relate to and be integrated with market mechanisms or, if they should remain distinct and apart from them. These divergent definitions of multifunctionality go a long way in explaining the differences in the choice of policy devices employed. From an analytical point of view, this raises issues about the conceptualisation of the economy and its relation to its social aspects. In this regard, the differences between analytical frameworks used to define multifunctionality can be distinguished according to their propensity to highlight the link between the economic and the social or, on the contrary, to reify the market as the natural and self-evident mechanism of coordination between individuals. As Barthélémy et al (2005) stressed *market framing* can adopt one of three approaches towards non-market components. The first is to exclude them from the analysis since they are not related to the issue of scarcity. The second is to assimilate them through implicit markets, thereby introducing market rules to the mechanisms of public regulation. The third option isolates them from market concerns, seeing them as 'public goods', which are understood as the consequences of market imperfections. The economic definitions of multifunctional agriculture that I discuss below adopt this last view.

Before appraising these approaches, I elaborate on the concept of social (dis-)embeddedness put forward by Karl Polanyi (1957 [1944]) that raises interesting elements of the nature of market framing the economy. Though the theoretical scope of Polanyi's concept has been criticised, its use here has an interesting heuristic purpose in that it provides a framework which allows us to see that the market-centred conception of the economy is but one possible configuration. This introduction to economic sociology leads to the second section which provides a critical view on the definition of multifunctionality adopted by economists at the OECD. Their analytical framework – which carries the notion of public goods as dis-embedded from market mechanisms – naturalises the market conception of the economy and imposes a neo-liberal bias on the definitions of (and policies for) multifunctionality. Following this, I will discuss the propositions of New Institutional Economics (NIE) which attempts to improve this economic view by elaborating on the 'institutional' components of market behaviour. I argue that their assumptions look as dubious as those of their neo-classic colleagues from whom they attempt to distinguish themselves, since they project a managerial bias onto the 'governance structure' that they identify. They tend to conceive the transition towards multifunctionality through organisational blueprints that assume efficiency to be an end rather than a means.

2.2 The economy, markets and social embeddedness

Without rehearsing the entire history of the concept of economy and its relation to the social dimension, this section highlights a few key elements relevant to the topic of

multifunctionality and government intervention. As a starting point, I take the concept of social *embeddedness,* first put forward by Karl Polanyi, who was examining the development of capitalism and its social implications. His conceptual propositions still provide an interesting picture of how market framing still influences our understanding of the relationship between the market and society. As Alain Caillé (2007) suggests, his work is a valuable theoretical resource for reconsidering the influence that the logic of the market exerts on our minds. The ensuing discussions among sociologists and economists about the concept of embeddedness are useful in understanding the relations between the economic and the social dimensions. The discussion here highlights some of the ambiguities and analytical limits to this approach but also shows it to be useful for understanding the extent to which market logic shapes economic relations.

Karl Polanyi and the problem of the social (dis-)embededdeness of the economy

The definition of economy proposed by Karl Polanyi can be traced back to a historical debate that ran from the ’30s to the ’70s between the formalists and the substantialists (Dufy and Weber 2007). The first group argued for a neoclassical approach to the economy that assimilates the study of human behaviours as the result of relations between needs and scarce resources. They assumed that mechanisms of exchange between people were part of an autonomous and self-regulatory market. The resultant economic relations necessarily corresponded to an optimum: the equilibrium achieved through the countervailing forces of supply and demand. This vision (rooted in the idea of scarcity) was countered by a more substantive definition of the economy in which the economic processes of producing and distributing goods was more explicitly linked to social relations. In the *Great Transformation,* Polanyi (1957 [1944]) showed that, rather than natural, using the market mechanism for organising exchanges and relations between people was historically specific (and largely socially constructed). This specific type of coordination became widespread and was institutionalised with the rise of the industrial revolution in the C19th, when the desire to create a self-regulating market showed a deep transformation in the cultural order of western countries. Land, labour and money then came to be considered as commodities. This evolution, associated with the rise of economic liberalism, became transformed during the course of the C20th through a second movement in which societies were no longer solely regulated by the free-market but also through social measures designed to regulate the recognised imperfections in the functioning of markets. Polanyi saw The Great Transformation as marking the end of the first market societies. During the ’30s, most industrialised countries abandoned the idea of separating the economy from society and adopted a variety of social and political reconfigurations that aimed to re-embed the market within society. This produced a range of outcomes, some extreme (such as sovietism and fascism) others less so (such as the New Deal in the United States or the *Front Populaire* in France). This transformation of society, which represented a fundamental change in the social and cultural order, was opposed by neoclassical economists who continued to take for granted the social order behind market societies. The ‘economistic fallacy’ then consisted in the naturalisation – even fetishisation – of particular institutions rather than demystifying them (Polanyi 1977)[13].

[13] Criticism of this reductionism was also at the very foundation of sociology (Steiner 2005). Rather than considering the market as external and totally independent from other rational (or irrational) forms of regulation, sociologists have for a long time recognised the market itself, and the development of capitalism, as the historical product of a specific rationality. Max Weber, in particular, showed how the early days of capitalism were tightly interconnected with the religious background of entrepreneurs. Their Calvinist faith with its strong ascetic component and the particular importance that it attached to labour, disposed the emerging capitalists to

Polanyi's original contribution stemmed from his intention to theoretically formalise this free-market society. His concept of social "dis-embeddedness" aimed to depict the processes through which the economic sphere, or more precisely the market logic, freed itself from society, when the logic of capitalism succeeded in isolating the economic domain from its social components. The diachronic process that he described in the Great Transformation was presented as a twofold movement of dis-embedding and re-embedding of society into the market (Polanyi 1957 [1944]).

The market as a social coordination

Paradoxically, this concept of social dis-embeddedness was not unanimously well received by all sociologists who thought that market coordination was not properly comprehended as a social phenomenon. Granovetter (1985) famously challenged the way that Polanyi used this concept. He recognised the importance of seeking to demythologise the fetish with autonomous and self-regulatory markets. But the market as a specific social coordination was not properly explained as a social institution in itself. Granovetter argued that market societies also contained social rules and did not exist in a contextual vacuum that could only be analysed by neoclassical economists. Even under market conditions, society is not fully atomised into millions of self seeking individuals. Behaviour is also driven by strong and recurrent interpersonal relations that help structure the market and, in this sense at least, markets are structurally embedded. By highlighting the networks of interrelations that help constitute markets – and arguing that they have a socially constructed character Granovetter (1990) specifically intended to provide a renewed vision of the markets. That would open new opportunities for research among sociologists who could reinvest in the sociological analysis of markets. This new theoretical positioning helped give rise to the birth of New Economic Sociology (NES) in the '80s and re-opened discussions about the relations between the economic and the social.

These debates engendered a large literature concerning the relevance and application of the concept of embeddedness. Zukin and Di Maggio (1990) in particular remarked upon the limited scope of the notion of structural embeddedness and argued for an enlargement of the concept to include cultural, political and cognitive dimensions.

But, more generally the concept permits a reconsideration of the market as a mechanism for social coordination. As Chantelat (2002) argues, it is necessary to seriously consider the fiction of the pure and perfect market since this is a social link that is inherent to modernity. "The market doesn't entail an absence of social links, it is a specific link" (Chantelat 2002, 537). The market is a social institution with its own social rules that should be analysed. It is historically and socially located, has its own inherent dynamics that shape human and social behaviour, whether positively or negatively. In this respect, the pragmatist school opened an interesting analytical window for seeing the market as but one possible form, amongst a range of regimes, for making arrangements between people (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). In the 'market regime', value is determined by the capacity to get ahead through competitiveness,

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see the accumulation of wealth as a virtue rather than a sin (Weber 1997 [1904-5]). More radically, by considering the economic fact as a social fact, Durkheim's ambition was to develop an alternative approach that could replace economics as an academic discipline. He saw economic arrangement as fully-fledged social facts that should be approached like any other social phenomenon. The vision of Durkheim (and Simiand) was not to complement the shortcomings of economic discourse, but rather to completely substitute economics with sociology (Gislain and Steiner 1995; This Saint Jean 2005).

wealth and willingness to take risks. But this is not necessarily the case for the other regimes. The 'industrial regime' is guided by productive efficacy and achieving utilitarian functions. Criteria of excellence are shaped by the capacity to be productive and efficient. By contrast, the 'civic regime' is characterised by a capacity to encompass the common good, as opposed to particular and individual interests. Lastly, the 'domestic regime' is concerned with valorising human beings through their lineage and roots[14]. These diverse, co-existing and sometimes conflicting logics provide various principles within which the market as a social institution provides but one response in terms of determining what is considered to be good or bad, justified or unjustified, right or wrong.

Does it still make sense to speak of the social dis-embeddedness of the market?

If the market is a fully-fledged mechanism of social coordination, what does this imply for the idea of social dis-embeddedness? Isn't the market always socially embedded? Does it still make sense to speak of the social dis-embeddedness of the market? Even if it is clear that the market is a mechanism for social coordination, the concept of social embeddedness is still, I believe, of analytical interest. This point is emphasised by Le Velly (2007) who stresses the heuristic nature of Polanyi's use of this concept. Le Velly sees two distinct definitions of social embeddedness[15]. The first has to do with recognising that the economy always has a social dimension. This definition corresponds more or less to the contribution made by Granovetter. The second definition makes sense in the context of the changes described by Polanyi in the *Great transformation*, when social organisation became increasingly governed by the principles of the market, which represented a specific way of organising economic relations. In this context, the concept of dis-embededdesss describes the pre-eminence of the market dimension over other forms of coordination. Inversely, re-embedding refers to the re-integration (increasing the weight given to) other non-market modes of social coordination. In these terms, the notion of 'dis-embededdesss' proposed by Polanyi resembles Callon's (1999) use of 'market framing', a description of social interrelations in which market logic is the most valued rationality and where one type of coordination (the market) takes primacy over all others. It also raises questions about the purpose of public intervention in regulating economies, and whether this should aim to establish the market as the main and desirable mechanism of regulation, or if it should control economic exchanges through other regulative mechanisms. That is what Jean-Louis Laville (2003) alludes to when he refers to the deficit of democracy in governing economic exchanges and argues for a "democratic re-embedding of the economy".

Attempts at defining and operationalising multifunctional agriculture also reflect these considerations, with the dis-embedded vision being fully internalised by OECD economists through the distinction that they make between the market and public goods. It is this definition that I next turn my attention to.

2.3 Public goods and the OECD's market framing

The OECD's approach to multifunctionality is a response to the acrimonious debates over the topic within international trade negotiations. Very early, the notion of multifunctionality proved highly controversial, as shown in the first chapter. It became important to try to define

[14] Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) also spoke of the 'fame regime' as well as the 'inspiration regime' which I have not explored in this presentation.
[15] This distinction was inspired by Caillé (1993).

this notion, so that it could be translated into a stable and useful scientific and political tool. The OECD economists took up the challenge of defining the concept so as to give a common 'scientific' basis to discussions and to policy-makers. In so doing, they provided an analytical framework that implicitly placed the regulation of the multiple functions of agriculture within a market framework that avoided many of the most important practical and analytical questions.

The OECD's approach (2001) aims to enlarge traditional economic theory by proposing a new analytical framework that integrates some closely related, but previously disconnected, topics of analysis, primarily the environment, rural development and food security. The idea of the market as the sole, legitimate and natural regulative mechanism is momentarily put aside by the economists who see multifunctionality as relating to the side effects (externalities) caused by the primary function of agriculture, i.e. the production of food and fibres. This definition puts the accent on the economic concept of 'externalities', which describes the indirect positive or negative effects produced by the activities of an economic agent. When these externalities have an impact on the public interest, they are considered to be 'public goods'. If market mechanisms are not sufficient by themselves to regulate these effects then public intervention is required. The OECD definition of multifunctionality very closely follows this line and includes the following: i) the existence of multiple commodity and non-commodity outputs that are jointly produced by agriculture, and ii) the fact that some of the non-commodity outputs show the characteristics of positive externalities or public goods, with the results that markets for these goods do not exist or function poorly. This definition highlights a distinction between markets, on the one hand, and other non-commoditised inputs that require public regulation, on the other. Economic activities would be characterised by the *junction* of these two domains. Durand and Van Huylenbroeck (2003, 1) paraphrase this definition of the multifunctionality of agriculture "as the joint production of commodities and non-commodities by the agricultural sector."

The economists seek to identify, list, characterise and value agriculture's non-productive functions. The list they devised includes, the conservation of the diversity of landscapes and ecosystems, the preservation and good use of water, air and soil quality, the fight against the greenhouse effect, the contribution to quality of life in rural areas, food safety, animal welfare, and so on (OECD 2001). Economists intend that this scientifically grounded list of externalities would set the benchmark for a 'positive' approach to multifunctionality, as opposed to the other more 'normative' definitions that have been proposed.

Critics of this analytical framework argue that it is not without its own normative components. Barthélémy and Nieddu (2003a) argue that the use of terms such as 'externalities' and 'joint products' are intrinsically problematic – at least in the way that they have been employed. Use of these concepts avoids recognition of the inherent characteristic of agricultural activity, as it involves a twofold and non-excludable production of commodity and non-commodity outputs. According to them, this approach "aims at converting the non-commodities into commodities, following in such a way the mainstream economist approach that tends to consider the issue of resources and products allocation from the sole market relation point of view or placing them as the ultimate finality" (Barthélémy and Nieddu 2003a, 108). The focus on the issue of the junction between the two domains shows that the adopted framework cognitively separates these two functions. Its objective is to legitimise public intervention toward selected individual components of agricultural activity, chosen for their technological and objective characteristics (landscape, environment) while excluding more 'normative' political matters (such as the social organisation of production, farm structures, employment, etc). The goal of

identifying the nature of the interrelationships is driven by a programme of disjunction, which aims to separate each of these functions so that any intervention could stick as closely as possible to the idealised undistorted market situation. If it is legitimate to question the scope and boundaries of public action, the approach adopted by standard economists, doing so through constant reference to the market, is equally questionable.

This definition sets very specific boundaries around public intervention in the sense that public goods are only defined in relation to the market and only regarded from a problematic point of view. Public goods are "always characterised in reference to the market, as objects with a low marketable quality" (Barthélémy and Nieddu 2003a, 114). They are only considered as a consequence of 'market failures'. This framework gives only a partial definition of what public goods are, based solely on them not fitting in with the terms of market transactions, rather than as the result of diverging and sometimes conflicting logics of social coordination. It frames multifunctionality solely in terms of the market, which denatures the 'public good' character of non marketed functions (Barthélémy et al. 2005). Public goods are seen separately from the market whose pre-eminence should remain undisturbed, which is a normative stance. This partitioning of the social and the economic dis-embeds market coordination from the other possible rationalities that might explain behaviour. This naturalises market co-ordination as the self-evidently natural arrangement that takes precedence over all other aspects of multifunctionality and draws attention away from the way in which social or political concerns might define the roles and functions of agriculture. For instance, one possible way to promote multifunctionality would be to regulate the market, or, to paraphrase Polanyi, to 're-embed' the agricultural markets into the social economy.

This bias is particularly due to the fact that there is no constructivist perspective on how multifunctionality is built up through time and space. Insufficient attention has been paid to the different views and controversies over what should be considered as a 'worthwhile' function. This approach takes the various identified non-marketed functions of agriculture view for granted. Although the OECD recognises that these functions have to be elaborated on a context specific basis, there is no empirical observation that permits a definition of these categories which takes into account the differences in discourses over these issues. Yet these very functions are embedded in social and institutional contexts that often influence their conditions of emergence, recognition, naming and classification – an aspect that is ignored in that framework.

The economic approach does not provide such a constructivist perspective of multifunctional agricultural or the interrelations that it contains (Dupeuple 2006), but only sees the separate functions from an essentialist point of view. This economic definition does not provide any space for analysing potential social or political disagreement over the content and scope of the definition. It eliminates the possibility of reflecting on the embeddedness (or dis-embeddedness) of the economy, since it *a priori* assumes a separation between the social and the market. In this sense, this market framing is normative and should be regarded as a social discourse in itself rather than as an objective scientific analytical framework, which it aspires to represent.

2.4 The contribution of New Institutional Economics (NIE) and the 'institutional' vision of pubic good management

New Institutional Economics (NIE) emerged as a response to the lack of any social or institutional perspective within the conventional neo-classical arm of the discipline of economics. Many authors from this school have used the approach to analyse multifunctionality. This is particularly the case in the Netherlands with the works of Polman and Slangen (Polman 2002; Slangen and Polman 2002) who have analysed the rise of environmental cooperatives, the new territorial organisations set up by farmers in the '90s to cope with environmental issues. Although, this approach challenges some of the assumptions of neoclassical economics, by bringing an institutional component to the analysis, it also generates new biases and forms of reductionism.

New Institutional Economics and the 'institutional' component

Oliver Williamson (1985), the founder of New Institutional Economics (NIE) had the ambition of going beyond the neoclassical economic approach and providing an alternative framework to pure market theory, along the lines suggested by Coase a few decades before (Coase 1988 [1937]). According to Coase, the market has its own institutional context, composed of firms and organisations. A free contract does not exist without the intercession of social institutions that make economic transactions possible. This implies that alternative arrangements that go beyond the logic of individualist welfare-maximisation, also influence market behaviour. This position resonates with Durkheim's argument that a contract is only possible under non contractual pre-conditions[16] (Steiner 2005, 16). But the NIE perspective differs importantly from Durkheim's on this. NIE uses the term institution to refer to the explicit rules that the social actors set up to solve collective problems and thereby achieve equilibrium. They assume that, while the actors have different preferences, they behave rationally to optimise the 'transaction costs' within their organisation or the (economic) effectiveness of external arrangements. While this approach benefits from including social and institutional aspects within economic theory, its shortcoming is that it assumes that the rationality of actors is solely related to maximising the effectiveness of the social organisation that supports the market. In short, in re-grounding their approach to include institutional aspects, the New Institutional Economists continued to be guided by the *a priori* utilitarian principles of optimisation and market rationality, which constitutes a bias[17]. For this reason, Hall and Taylor (1996) refer to this approach as 'rational choice' institutionalism. This bias is linked to both the presupposition of 'free choice' and the assumption that rationality is automatically and instinctively economical. Concerns regarding efficient arrangements are central to this interpretation of reality, which Granovetter criticised in the '80s as a form of functionalism: "the main thrust of the 'new institutional economists' is to deflect the analysis of institutions for sociological, historical, and legal argumentation and show instead that they arise as the efficient solution to economic problems. This mission and the persuasive functionalism it implies discourage the detailed analysis of social structure that I argue here is the key to understanding how existing institutions arrived at their present state" (Granovetter 1985, 505; quoted in Barthélémy et al. 2005).

[16] For Durkheim (1964 [1893]) free contracts are only possible if a social institution makes them possible.

[17] Consequently their focus has been more oriented towards research areas where actors tend to behave rationally, such as the American Congress (Hall and Taylor 1996).

Environmental cooperatives as an institutional component of multifunctionality

The term environmental cooperative has been used recently to describe the new forms of agricultural organisations that have emerged as a response to the environmental turning point. These environmental organisations have been described as cooperatives and presented as 'new institutional arrangements of farmers' (Hagedorn et al. 2002; Slangen and Polman 2002). These authors describe three possible forms of 'governance structure': the market, hierarchies (which are formal organisations) and a third way of coordination which they present as an intermediate 'horizontal non-market organisation' (Hagedorn et al. 2002, 14). The farmers' environmental cooperatives correspond to the last option, a sort of 'hybrid form' situated between pure market individualism and the determinism of hierarchies, a form of 'informal' and 'self-regulated' organisation. Then the research of these authors seeks to understand "when co-operatives and cooperation will be *competitive* and when other institutional alternatives will be preferred." (Our emphasis) (Hagedorn et al. 2002, 17). These cooperatives have a twofold purpose. Firstly they are meant to reduce the transaction costs associated with the new environmental policies, since: "(the) cost of administration, monitoring and enforcement, or generally speaking, the transaction costs of policy, can be lowered by cooperation and participation" (Hagedorn et al. 2002, 18). Secondly, they are supposed to represent local farmers' interests. This representation is grounded on a locally-based 'countervailing power' achieved through mobilising farmers and fine-tuning policy to local environmental conditions.

Multifunctionality as the institutional management of public goods

The analytical framework proposed by NIE has many the same methodological drawbacks as that of the OECD. It reduces the environmental cooperatives – also described as governance structures – to their managerial components and reduces multifunctionality to the institutional management of public goods.

Although the NIE approach criticises those who see the market as the sole possible coordination mechanism, it continues to accept the nostrum of maximisation and relocates it to the institutional level. This approach specifies a preferred and 'natural' organisational setting as being best able to efficiently work as a political and management interlocutor between individual farmers and the authorities. This approach is not dissimilar from contemporary managerial discourses that drive organisational reforms intended to make the public service as efficient as possible[18]. This approach advocates that services once provided by the state should be externalised so that public matters are 'efficiently' managed through systematic contractual agreements. The emergence of this movement is associated with the overriding objectives of reducing the transaction costs of policy delivery. One can speculate on the extent to which this view of informal, autonomous and self-regulated organisations (Polman and Slangen 2002, 93-95) is merely an ideological projection of this discourse onto reality or, if it does really describe contemporary transformations. In my opinion, this phenomenon does actually occur, but it is just one possible outcome or solution.

The analytical framework of NIE does not allow for any measurement of the nature and scope of the environmental cooperative phenomenon, as it implicitly envisages this transformation as the only possibility for multifunctionality. It assumes *a priori* that these professional

[18] For a global picture of the reforms that the New Public Management discourse has given rise, see the works of Pollitt and Bouckaert (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2000).

organisations are environmentalist service providers in the same way that, for example, conservationist organisations are. But it does not address the implications that this view might have in terms of transforming existing arrangements, for example, by disconnecting environmental issues from the more socio-economic ones. A further ambiguity associated with this theory is that it is not clear whether these organisations represent farmers internalising the logic of environmentalism, and appropriating the discourse of environmentalism so as to countervail it, or whether these organisations are a purely pragmatic reaction to ecological modernisation and its materialisation within public policy.

This view embodies a bias that mainly originates from paying insufficient attention to the nature of public intervention. It regards public action as a sort of black box, but it is one that needs unpacking (Latour 1999) in order to reveal the various social forces that shape it and the different rationalities that it encompasses. NIE only regards public action as being initiated from top-down or bottom-up interactions. But this vertical dynamic is not the only one shaping public action. Public action can sometimes be driven or influenced by the different visions of conflicting social groups. It is misleading to focus on farmers' interest in promoting a localist and self-regulative claim to multifunctionality. This interest may well have materialised at the local level as a result of farmer's weak influence at the national level. The loss of farming representatives' influence at the national level drove local groups of farmers to mobilise themselves so that they could create new avenues of dialogue, and re-establish their credibility with the authorities. Thus, instead of being seen as a purely bottom-up movement, the actions of farmers were related to broader change in the governance of agriculture. The Dutch environmental cooperatives can actually be seen as the expression of the fragmented resistance of the agricultural profession in response to an upsurge of restrictive environmental constraints. From this perspective, the focus of the analysis should be more on the difficult relations between farmers, the state and environmentalists, than those between the local farmers and the state. Furthermore, the NIE perspective views the farmers solely as willing protectors of the environment who will benefit from these actions. This provides a rather ideological view of the movement. Rather than assuming that self-governance is a natural institutional expression of multifunctionality, it might be more appropriate to ask why the farmers sought to be self-regulating. What were the institutional transformations that led the phenomenon to take be so localised and localist?

This framework relation prevents us from seeing the state as a collective space of reality construction, as a place of social learning. The relation between the farmers and the state is naturalised as an exclusive local-global vertical scheme. The role of farmers as a professional group which is also represented at the national level is not taken into account. Likewise, the reality of policies being constructed and negotiated, and compromises being made at the national level, where different social groups have an influence, is discounted. The state's role as the very place where tensions, conflicting discourses and learning processes coexist and are resolved is neglected. Instead, by elaborating on the dynamics and modalities of coexistence of different social forces, this institutional component is relegated to a given contextual factor. Yet it is this very context that needs investigating, since it has a huge influence on the way in which multifunctionality is envisaged and operationalised.

To summarise, despite the innovative character of the NIE research agenda, it has failed to fully grasp the deepness and implications of the Dutch environmental cooperative phenomenon. NIE contains many of the same shortcomings as the standard neo-classical approach. They both dissociate environmental issues and claims from broader realities – locating the issues at stake at the organisational level. Both positions give rise to frameworks

in which the market is necessarily *dis-embedded* from social and environmental regulatory mechanisms. The NIE framework corresponds to the upsurge of a managerial and market-oriented discourse among policy-makers, but deters any understanding of variability over how multifunctionality is defined and operationalised. Deconstructing this bias permits to understand why the environmental cooperatives don't exist in other countries, and why this phenomenon takes such a form in the Netherlands. The model proposed by NIE should be seen as but one of a range of possible trajectories, and a profoundly – an economistic one – rather than as a self-evident and fixed blueprint.

2.5 Conclusions

Social transformations can be interpreted in different and sometimes divergent ways. For this reason, the description of the changing reality also supposes an interest and willingness to take in to account the diverse interpretations, so as to reach what Max Weber calls axiologic neutrality (Weber 2002 [1919]). This chapter elaborated upon some of the different analytical frameworks that have been used to describe and interpret the transitional processes promoting multifunctional agriculture. It specifically demystified the economistic bias that is deeply ingrained in two of the most common approaches. This bias mainly consists in avoiding considering the concerns of multifunctionality as being closely linked to the market coordination. In so doing, economists view public goods as disconnected from the market, or in Polanyi's words as *dis-embedded* from economic relations. This market framing is a normative stance, since it doesn't take into consideration the possibility of a more socially embedded form of multifunctionality. Attempts from within NIE to emphasize the institutional level do not make this bias disappear. The institutional component (i.e. the emergence of the environmental cooperatives) is more linked to the growth of managerialism and its influence on organisational structures than a valid analytical framework capable of building a pertinent social theory. Moreover, by separating the management of public goods from market concerns, NIE reproduces aspects of the OECD's model. It interprets agricultural mobilisation as a local phenomenon, and ignores the national aspects which involved a fundamental transformation in the doctrines of governing the (agricultural) economy. The next chapter proposes a framework that intends to provide a more comprehensive view about public intervention and thereby transcend this economistic bias.

Chapter 3. An analytical framework: towards a sociological understanding of policy instruments

Previous chapters showed how the definition of multifunctionality adopted within regulatory instruments has been highly influenced by a more or less market-oriented conception of the agricultural economy. This chapter argues that a sociological analysis of policy instruments provides a useful stance for investigating multifunctionality. This can offer an alternative to the approach which the market vision has projected upon the agricultural economy. The concern of this chapter is to counter this bias by developing a sociological understanding of public action, and to capture and describe the contradictory and conflicting rationalities and discourses at play. To do so, some basic elements of a sociology of policy intervention are sketched out. First, a sociological definition of 'institution' is presented, which shows the importance of developing an alternative definition of multifunctionality to that provided by the New Institutional Economics (NIE). This approach sees policy instruments as social institutions, likely to be incrementally transformed through the succession of policies implemented. The contractual policies investigated in this thesis are policy instruments in the sense that they institute techniques to control and shape different domains of social reality. In conclusion, the chapter discusses some methodological issues related to this approach.

3.1 The policy instrument as a social institution

The approach that I adopt can be described as institutionalist. But the conception of the institution used in this study differs from that held by NIE. In the previous chapter, it was argued that while the NIE definition of an institution includes the rules of the game that guide individual behaviour, it also contains a utilitarian component. For Williamson (1975; 1985), the development of forms of organisations was motivated by the desire to reduce transaction costs. In this sense, institutions are social arrangements created by social actors to optimise social relations, which constitute a bias.

This bias can only be properly understood by adopting a sociological definition of institutions. Durkheim described institutions as the 'beliefs and modes of behaviour instituted by the community. Sociology could then be defined as the science of the institutions, their genesis and their functioning' (1990 [1937], 22). In this sense, institutions provide a general framework that guides the behaviour of individuals and reduces the daily uncertainties that they have to face. This sociological definition differs from the more classical one used in political sciences which reduces the definition to official organisations of state administration. While this view may be in accord with the every day view, from a sociological point of view, social institutions extend beyond the state[19]. Durkheim saw that the family, property rights, contracts, etc. were also institutions with their own intrinsic rules and evolution, which were legitimate objects for sociological study. This definition was taken up and somewhat amended by sociologists concerned with developing a more comprehensive view of the processes of

[19] That is to say that the formalised shape and symbolic power of the state and its constancy and respectability led to its association with the term 'institution'. Rather than seeking to contrast both definitions with each other, I recognise this ambiguity. Nevertheless, I adopt the sociological definition as it contains a much more interesting analytical scope.

social transformation. As the British anthropologist Mary Douglas emphasises, institutions are not only regularities and constraints imposed on the individuals, they also 'think' (Douglas 1987). They contain shared and contested visions of reality and their own cognitive categories through which empirical reality is interpreted, creating frameworks that provide normative and cognitive matrices in which people behave. They are organised around the totality of values, beliefs and representations of reality and they structure our relationship with knowledge. Institutional transformations occur through the generation of new frameworks and regeneration of existing ones.

In analysing political action via its institutions, the concern is less with describing the transformation of state administrations and organisations, and more with the way that public power contributes to generating, legitimating and instituting these structures. As I argued before, the state – and by extension public power – is a social institution, in that it has the power to impose categories of vision and to classify reality so as to generate regularities in social behaviour. The state is not therefore just a self-referential bureaucracy that justifies its existence by satisfying the interests of those who make a living frm it. Neither is it just a leviathan, an exogenous force that imposes its will upon its subjects. The state is also the place where the representations and relationships for building reality are institutionalised (Muller 1995; Muller and Surel 2000; Muller 2003). This is the example *par excellence* of legitimisation, which effectively differentiates between the formal and the informal, the official and the unofficial, the recognised and the unrecognised, the respectable and the non-respectable. In this perspective, a distinction between 'formal' and 'informal' institutions can be made, with the state embodying the formal type. Its role in the juridical recognition of norms, rules and categories, tends, in the long run, towards the naturalisation and universality of these modes of classification, and the legitimisation of the established social order (Bourdieu 1993). In consequence, policy-making processes are the crucial structural processes instigated by formal institutions, which in turn modify the status of informal institutions. A sociological understanding of public action therefore needs to look at the way that this intervention transforms, perpetuates and/or regenerates the cognitive frameworks that are the carriers of a particular social order. Public power should not just be understood as a social entity which can transform other external institutions; but actually as an entity that involves the production and reproduction of institutions in terms of the forms of representations within and structuring of different domains of social life.

As a consequence, it is necessary to conceive the state and public authorities in general, from the point of view of their own social practices. In this respect, the works of the Historical Institutionalists provide an interesting point of departure. Peter Hall who studied the various ways of governing the economy, defines these institutions as "the formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating practices that structure the relationship between individuals in various units of the polity and economy" (Hall 1986, 17). This definition includes those repetitive and procedural acts that are essential elements in the daily and recurrent practices of governing, that is, the materialisation of the state in action. In more general terms, Michel Foucault (1977) reminds us that this intervention can not be properly understood without also looking at its technical dimensions. The classical example he gives is that of the panoptical architecture of a jail that allows the guards to keep constant surveillance over their prisoners. In other respects, public action involves using technical forms of rationalisation and procedural instruments that maintain or create particular forms of power relations between social groups. These forms are presented as value-neutral, as the techniques of 'governmentality' (to use a Foucauldian expression). They are supposed to be free from

normative effects, but in reality embody both technical and normative preferences (Foucault 1994).

Thus, in themselves, the questions of legitimisation and access to power cannot provide a complete understanding of the nature of public action or its capacity to impose frameworks of action on its citizens. The organisation and achievement of public action offers a choice of a variety of tools that can be applied to meet official objectives. This repertoire has various dimensions: legislative and regulative, economic and fiscal, incentives and disincentives, informative, communicative or persuasive. These instruments constitute "devices, both technical and social, that organise specifically the social relation between public power and its recipients depending on the representation and significations that it carries" (Lascoumes and Le Galès 2004, 12). Callon (1986) argues that these instruments need to be included within the social processes of 'traduction,' which consists of transforming a problematic situation (from a social technical or even scientific point of view) into a particular language that is intended to solve – or at least – stabilise the situation. And although they appear to be merely technical tools, these instruments always contain an implicit normative element. They are never neutral and always have normative implications. In this sense, the instruments of public policy are, in themselves, institutions (Lascoumes and Le Galès 2004) and political actions need to be understood in terms of their objective of transforming social institutions through a supposedly instrumental dimension.

3.2 The incremental transformation of public policies

Political action also needs to be understood through its historical dimension. It is important to stress that governing means, above all, continuity with and inheritance from the past. Existing arrangements have instituted routines and representations that are deeply embedded within in society's cognitive structures and practice. They have crystallised long-term patterns within which political actors are embedded. For this reason, Historical Institutionalists insist that the outcomes of policies are not necessarily and systematically the product of strategic interactions between actors. Rather they are grounded in more fundamental and incorporated rules. As Hall states, "the image of the state as a kind of billiard ball, pushed around by different interest groups" can hardly explain the economic policies of the French and British states in maintaining continuity with traditions such as the welfare state in Great Britain, and planning and modernisation in France (Hall 1986, 17)[20]. These inherited frameworks shape the way that problems are settled, and restrict the room for manoeuvre enjoyed by actors participating in policy-making. But these regularities are not just constraining elements. As Steinmo et al (1992) remarked, this legacy also "save(s) political actors the trouble of fighting the same battle over and again." It is not necessary, for example, to discuss or negotiate the conditions of legislating each time a law is voted on by a parliament.

Numerous political scientists have used the concept of "path dependency" to describe the temporal orderings and historical processes that condition political change. Although a wide range of outcomes are generally possible, they are determined by the contingent events and particular features of timing and sequence. Small events, if they happen at the right moment, can change the outcome of policy, illustrating that the issue of time and ordering is crucial in

[20] Historical institutionalism was developed in the United State in opposition to a behaviouralist vision of politics (which was very influential during the 1960s and 1970s), which took for granted the fact that the policies are the outcome of political behaviour and conflicting interests (Hall and Taylor 1996).

politics. Furthermore, established processes can involve much "positive feedback" maintaining an equilibrium that is highly resistant to change (Pierson 2000).

This does not imply that society is institutionally motionless and sociological outcomes pre-determined. The existing framework does provide room for manoeuvre. The content and outcome of policies are the result of processes over which social actors, their projects and visions can have influence. These social actors include politicians, civil servants, non-governmental organisations, lobbyists, scientists and experts, all of whom can have real effects on the outcomes of policies. A whole range of other actors can be involved in the discussions, negotiations, and sometimes even implementation of decisions. All have their own interests that might shape the content of the policy, although their respective contributions will depend upon their interest and power position within the policy-making process.

But interests and power are not the only issues at stake. Stakeholders also have representations and ideas about the problem, and how it should be solved. Cognitivist approaches to policy analysis have led to a better understanding of the processes of transformation and the role of ideas in the policy-making processes. These approaches have developed from different schools of thought. In a recent article, Sabatier and Schlager (2000) present an overview of the importance given to the cognitive factors in the analytical framework of several political science theories in the United States and in France. They show that several concepts have been used to describe the ideological readjustment of policies. Among them, they inventory: the 'streams' (Kingdon 1984), the 'cultural types' of cultural analysts (Ellis and Thompson 1997), the 'system of beliefs linked to a public policy' derived from Advocacy Coalition Framework Theory (Sabatier 1988) and the "reference system" from the cognitivist sociology of public policies (Muller and Surel 2000). Approaches based upon discursive analysis also pay attention to the content of the discourses and storylines (Hajer 1995). All these concepts embody, in different ways, a totality of beliefs and system of representations, which orientate the definition of public problems and how they are resolved through the actions of the state. In a complex and uncertain society, policy-making processes are part of a dynamic and in turn result in the construction of frameworks through which reality is interpreted. They should not be seen as processes dedicated solely to solving societal problems, nor as the materialisation of power imposed on one social group by another; policy-making processes should always be seen through their cognitive content.

The introduction, circulation and incorporation of ideas into policy frameworks are supported by the social dynamics at play in the policy-making process, which influence the establishment of the policy framework. Pierre Muller (1995) identifies the *reference system* as a socially constructed framework of interpretation, which provides a cognitive basis for designing public policies. The cognitive and normative result of the social construction of policy "tends to become autonomous through the process of construction and, in this way, imposes itself on the actors as dominant models of interpretation of the world" (Muller and Surel 2000, 6).

This cognitive frame is more amenable to change when a dissonance arises, that is, in a period of instability during which the former framework is contested or appears unreliable. The discussions and debates likely to be entailed are socially and politically situated in spaces where the power of ideas co-exists with particular interests and institutional continuum. That is what Jobert (Jobert 1995) alludes as fora, which are social spaces where visions of reality

are discussed and debated among actors[21]. They provide essential mechanisms for resolving the uncertainties and controversies around complex socio-technical situations (Callon et al. 2001).

In this sense, new cognitive elements can then be added to the policy framework and the process of institutional change can be understood, from a diachronic perspective, as the succession of policies over the course of time. The ensuing cognitive and normative policy framework, the reference system, results from a twofold – more or less antagonistic – logic that confronts the institutional heritage with the current policies at play. Public policies are a step in the process of institutional change. Each of them adds or removes something of substance to the social frameworks. Each is a partial re-invention of the existing frameworks and, in this sense, policy making can be seen as an evolutionary and incremental process (Lascoumes 1994).

3.3 The policy instruments and rural studies

In a recent article, Evans et al. (2002) listed the existing approaches that had recently been used to describe and analyse current processes of transition in agriculture. These approaches included Regulation Theory and Actor Network Theory (ANT), two particularly useful approaches in understanding the major transformations that rural societies and agriculture are experiencing. The policy instrument approach permits the combination of certain aspects of these two approaches and provides an interesting avenue to approach rural policy formulation from a sociological perspective.

First, multifunctionality can be viewed through the ANT perspective since the social processes at stake contain many socio-technical processes. This approach highlights the technical issues, which are imbued with social questions, and shows that understanding science and its diverse social translations is, in itself, a social activity or a social process. For instance, the greening of agro-industrial practices requires an analytical framework that is capable of i) taking into account the numerous controversies related to the ecology, ii) of investigating how the social forces and dynamics are driven by sometimes contradictory interpretations of science. This theoretical framework draws on progress in the sociology of science and the techniques proposed by Callon and Latour (Callon 1986; Callon and Latour 1991).

The diverse functions of agriculture can be constituted as socio-technical issues that vary between settings. For example in Brittany, the main issues are related to nitrate pollution, whereas in the plains of Beauce, the focus is more on reducing the use of agro-chemicals. These approaches have inspired much work relating to the emergence of environmental policies, such as agro-environmental measures (Alphandéry and Billaud 1996) and the implementation of the Natura 2000 network (Pinton et al. 2007). The implementation of environmental policies creates room for the social expression of different, and sometimes

[21] In agriculture, at least four categories of fora have been distinguished, each with its own internal dynamics, influence and inter-relationships (Fouilleux 2000). First, the *polity forum* is the place where the debates are held between politicians. Second, the *professional forum* is the social space that mobilises and brings together the diverse and contradicting visions of farming held by different farmers' unions and organisations. Third, the *scientific forum* has its own internal rules. Its influence increases in relation to the power of expertise, which tends to depoliticise problem setting. And lastly, the policy forum consists of fully-fledged policy-makers. This one interacts with the other fora and encompasses a central place, in that it sets policy.

contradictory, values and rationalities, which can be resolved through open conflicts, negotiations, agreements or compromises. The course that these long-term interactions – generated through a succession of policy instruments – follows will produce new configurations between social groups. Mormont has theorised this phenomenon using the concept of the institutional 'devise'. He alludes to an institutional arrangement that, in periods of uncertainty, enables a reshuffling of the relations between representations, norms, practices and actors. "It is a way to join natural, technical, relational and symbolic components so as to reduce or reposition these uncertainties." (Mormont 1996, 30). Using other vocabulary, some others researchers allude to socio-technical regimes that undergo transformation with the rise of technical and social innovations (Roep and Wiskerke 2004). The new types of socio-technical configurations to which these entry points give rise, create *novelties*, or transformations within socio-technical regimes.

Second, it is possible to enter the debate through Regulation Theory and consider the relationship between multifunctionality and the management of the agricultural economy. Regulation theory shows the importance of depicting and analysing how processes of transformation relate to the changing structure of western economies. For example, it has described how the crisis of the Fordist model of regulation was provoked by the intensification of international trade and the centrality of neo-liberal doctrines in influencing contemporary patterns of globalisation (Boyer and Saillard 2002).

These multifunctional agriculture processes also have an economic regulative purpose, even if it is not explicitly formulated. Policy-instruments are regulation tools that contribute to shaping the market. This methodological standpoint partly challenges the NIE approach which either views the institutional component as separate from the market or as a contextual element. The market is a form of social institution guaranteed by specific social arrangements, and multifunctional agriculture instruments necessarily become a part of the institution that structures and regulates the market. Furthermore, it is not only governmental action that constrains social behaviour, through top-down prescription; other actors are also able to influence, appropriate and transform policy outcomes. The state apparatus should not be seen as a black box, as part of the context, but rather as one of several possible places where social changes can occur, and where social, sometimes conflicting, forces encounter each other. It provides an opportunity for social and technical learning as well as a space where compromises can be made.

The policy-instrument approach represents a continuation of ANT and RT works; it extends the domain of socio-technical analysis to economic sociology since multifunctional agriculture instruments also play a role in economic regulation as specific policy tools within a broader agricultural policy toolbox.

3.4 Methodology

This thesis employs a comparative methodology. It draws on a Historical Institutionalism perspective, the focus of which has traditionally compared similar phenomenon in different national contexts. Early studies included comparisons in the establishment of the welfare states in western countries and later, from the 1980s onwards, the transformation of these, through the pursuit of neo-liberal recipes.

Methodologically, the stance of these studies occupied a half way position between two contradictory approaches to comparative analysis: universalism and particularism.

Universalism involves generalising by transferring the characteristics and the specificity of an initial example to all examples. This method of investigation is deductive and quantitative, and the resulting theory aspires to universal validity. However, this approach runs the risk of missing intrinsic peculiarities from other cases, excluded from the framework of interpretation. Particularism follows the logic that each case has its own inherent irreducibility, and that knowledge can only be gained by grasping the specific complexity of each case. The method of research is more inductive and qualitative, and the results only valid for the limited scope of the research device covered[22].

Historical Institutionalists pursue an intermediate position, which consists of deeply analysing a restricted number of cases through a specific and delimited research focus. They argue for a supple – *situative* – theoretical positioning that hinges on the issues of social change. In this way and with a temporal focus, they seek to draw out sequences in the history of some restricted and delimited institutions, in order to understand the specific orientations adopted at key moments of their development (Giraud 2003). This dissertation intends to examine such historical sequences regarding multifunctional agriculture. The two national cases examined in the next chapters are embedded within their contexts in which the political choices, institutional heritages, and conceptions of multifunctionality vary. These variations strongly influence the convergences or divergences in the shape that multifunctionality assumes, both through time and space.

To this end, the analysis is limited to the main regulative national policies within France and the Netherlands and focuses the on the contractual instruments implemented between 2000 and 2006, the EU programming period for the Rural Development Framework Regulation. In France, I focus on the Farm Territorial Contracts (CTE) that started in 1999 and ended in 2002 with a change of government. In the Netherlands, I investigate the Nature Conservation Scheme (SAN) that started around the same time. In each case, these national policies are not the exclusive instrument of multifunctional agriculture development. They allow, however, a representative insight into each country's dominant vision of multifunctionality. Much attention is also paid to earlier transformations that affected the national contexts, and which help to explain the content and shape of the instruments that were adopted. Attention is given to the content and priorities of the policies, the processes of norm construction, and the role, weight and respective place of different actors in the policy-making process. The organisational settings and the routine mechanisms generated during implementation are also investigated.

Rebuilding the historical sequence of the institutional construction of policy instruments, involved collecting a large volume of empirical material, much of which was gathered through the storylines of the people who observed or participated in these processes. Interviews were conducted in 2004 and 2005 with the main stakeholders involved in the policy-making processes and policy implementation. In most cases, these were semi-structured interviews, containing a list of open questions or themes that had been previously prepared. Very often, the answers gave rise to new lines of questioning that initially had not seemed relevant. This systematically led to a readjustment of the questions and/or an enlargement of possible people to interview. Analysis of the content of the interviews focused

[22] In political science, rational choice theorists traditionally extrapolate extensively from a pre-defined model of political rationality. By contrast, culturalists, by individualising studies and extensive monographs, implicitly neglect to develop explanatory theory. However, both streams have recently moderated their approaches by adopting aspects of the opposite approach, and have since made innovations in the field of comparative analysis (Giraud 2003).

on two main elements: the comprehension of facts and events, and the sense that the actors gave to them. This twofold dimension is widely used within constructivist research (Berger and Luckmann 1989 [1965]). On the one hand, there are, the sociologist brings to light the objective structures by putting aside the subjective representations of people. On the other hand, these representations must be taken into consideration in order to explain the objectives' structures (Bourdieu 1987).

Interviews were conducted in French or English, as most Dutch interviewees had good command of the English language. For the few who didn't, a Dutch translator was used. This was necessary to avoid any potential bias based on language skills in selecting those to interview. The interviews were all recorded, transcribed and analysed.

To establish an accurate picture of the different situations, the method of triangulation was adopted. This is a means of checking the validity of events, facts and narratives by ensuring that they are corroborated by at least three sources. The sources of information used included the interviews, as well as the existing literature about the constitution of the policies and policy making, and the available relevant policy documents, such as regulations, directives, administrative memos, and so forth.

The historical sequences derived from these sources were closely scrutinised with regard to the more general institutional movements, in an attempt to distinguish the particularities of the local or national dynamics from European and more global changes. The primary focus was on two levels of investigation. First, the national level was explored to understand the logics of the application of EU regulations and the specific dynamic of national policy construction. At this level, the comparative study proved its worth, and helped to show the continued importance of national states in defining their economic policies[23]. In-depth investigation was also made at the more local level, where the aim was to investigate the application and translation of the policy framework to situated issues of multifunctionality. The 'translation' refers to the ways in which actors put forward their interpretations of the definition of the problem, and the distribution of roles within a network of interrelations (Callon 1986). In France, the local study was conducted at the level of the *département*, traditionally an important level in the organisation of the agricultural profession and policy implementation. As such this is the level at which many agricultural policies are translated into praxis. In the Netherlands, the geographical space for the study was smaller and focused on the dynamics of the new territorial farmers' organisations (environmental cooperatives). In the course of the investigation, the field investigation constantly moved between these different levels.

I limited myself to three local case-studies, one in France and two in the Netherlands. Each involved a meticulous description and analysis of the social processes at stake in each locality, and permitted an understanding of the policy application process and the related social dynamics. These three cases are not fully representative of the diversity of configurations that might be encountered in these two countries. Nonetheless, the selection was carefully targeted to cover a range of important variables. The department chosen in France was Isère, which has a very diverse range of agriculture; it includes intensive arable farming zones, productive dairy areas and more extensive cattle breeding zones in its more mountainous zones. One of the main issues at stake was to generate a coherent policy instrument capable of managing and accommodating this diversity. In the Netherlands, the cases selected focused on the recently emerged farmers' territorial organisations and how they related to the existing panorama of

[23] Some interviews were also conducted at the European level on the occasion of a previous survey made in 2003 regarding the application of the RDRF in both countries (Daniel 2003).

agricultural development. One case was located in the north-eastern part of Friesland, home of the very first environmental cooperatives which were established in the early '90s. The second case was in Flevoland, the last polder to be reclaimed from the sea: a place designed and constructed for productive agriculture and where the other functions of agriculture were unlikely to be recognised or prioritised. This large variation within the field research has a heuristic purpose; corresponding to 'maximum variation cases' according to the typology of Flyvbjerg (2001).

3.5 Conclusions

The analytical framework presented in this chapter provides an approach of political and economic sociology that seeks to adopt an institutionalist and comparative perspective. This framework combines approaches from a different background, which seek to understand the policies intended to govern domains of the economy as regulative *policy instruments*. In so doing, it considers that the techniques (of government) are not neutral, but have a normative impact upon the social domains to which they are applied. Equally, it borrows a research perspective from the regulation school, which questions the mechanisms of regulation of social and economic domains and the social dynamics behind this. This framework permits us to overcome the neo-liberal bias discussed in chapter 2, and to adopt a classic, sociological – and somewhat Durkheimian – definition of 'institution', thereby repositioning the actions of public authorities within a comprehensive vision of public action. This framework allows the analysis of policy instrument, in the sense that it translates broader transformations, which participate to change social institutions. The analysis of the dynamics that underpin their social construction permits us to comprehend the formation and implications of these regulative entities, and allows for a comparison between different situations. The transformation of these instruments over the course of time can highlight diverging or converging trajectories. The following two sections present the empirical results from this work.

Part 2. Multifunctional agriculture policies and their underlying institutional arrangements

Part 2 presents the first empirical findings in which I attempt to draw a systematic comparative analysis of the institutional arrangements existing in the two countries when they implemented their respective national instruments. I investigate the main forms of policy established during the EU programming period 2000-2006: the Farm Territorial Contracts (CTE) in France (replaced in 2003 by the Sustainable Agriculture Contract (CAD)) and the Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN) in the Netherlands.

Chapter 4 presents an overview of the nature and content of the respective national policies, as well as the underlying national contexts within which these policies were generated. This initial analysis permits us to identify some pre-existing and quite important differences in national objectives. The Dutch trajectory is characterised by an exclusively nature conservationist project, whereas the French approach contains a broader policy framework that includes a large spectrum of possibilities for financing and investment (quality products, improvement of working conditions and economic productivity and so forth). In this regard, public intervention in France is much less disembedded from market mechanisms than it is in the Netherlands.

These differences of objectives, choices and compromises are also perceptible in the new type of relations that were generated between the authorities and the professional organisations throughout the period of policy implementation. It is argued, in chapter 5, that these relationships have to be understood within an evolutionary perspective in which, to make the policies operational, their implementation creates new types of coordination mechanisms between the authorities and the professional organisations. This chapter elaborates on the organisational aspect of policy implementation, which largely depends, on the existing compromises that exist between the state and the farmers. The conservationist and liberal characteristics of the Dutch SAN are perceptible through the relative lack of delegation of tasks to the new territorial professional organisations (the environmental cooperatives) in the management of the policy. This situation contrasts noticeably with France where the arrangement seems more like a continuation and reinvention of the link between the professional organisations and the state.

Similar differences are also observable while analysing the structures of governance in force during the policy-making process. Developing the policy framework involves a process of norm production in which different visions of agricultural development have to be reconciled with each other. The ‘normative’ outcome of the policy is influenced by the way in which the spaces of deliberations are designed, which in itself reveals the nature of power relations between the various stakeholders. The sixth chapter, which undertakes a comparative analysis of the structures of governance, also stresses the manifest differences in this respect between the two countries. While the Dutch configuration is characterised by the domination of environmental expertise, the French arrangements are rooted in the traditional state-profession co-management mechanisms and had trouble in broadening the scope of the deliberations to include wider opinions, views and sources of expertise.

Chapter 4. The emergence of new policies for multifunctional agriculture

4.1 Introduction

The context in which agricultural policy reform occurred in the two countries has generated different forms of public intervention: the Territorial Farm Contracts[24] (CTE) in France and the Farmland Conservation Scheme[25] (SAN) in the Netherlands. These instruments adopted very different interpretations of multifunctional agriculture even through the two instruments share elements in common. First, they are both co-financed by the EU and therefore have to comply with the Rural Development Regulation Framework (RDRF). Second, they both involve voluntary contracts between the state and farmers, a major departure from the existing instruments of the CAP. Despite this the design and main orientations of these policies differed significantly. These differences are rooted in longer historical orientations and transformations that occurred in each country, when setting the principles for policy application. The selective – or inclusive – content of the respective policies speaks volumes about the different national discourses and compromises over what multifunctionality 'should' encompass. In this chapter I investigate *the main orientations and objectives of the policies and seek to explain the differences between the two countries.* Before embarking on a detailed analysis of the implementation of these instruments, this chapter provides an overview of the institutional context within each country, providing brief national historical overviews. These help the reader to understand the respective national contexts and how the policies introduced represent an incremental transformation. The stage will be set by introducing the major shifts preceding the introduction of policies for multifunctional agriculture. In addition, to understand the articulation of these national instruments within the broader national rural development policies, the implementation of the RDRF in both countries is discussed. This not only tells the reader about the broader context of these policies but also provides more background on the place of agriculture within the two national ruralities.

4.2 The French Farm Territorial Contracts (CTE): an 'all-encompassing' agricultural policy

In France, the national policy, the CTE, was instituted by the Agricultural Blueprint of July 1999. This policy was part of an attempt to rebuild a guiding principle for agricultural development. The CTE offered farmers an opportunity to voluntarily enter into individual contracts of five years with the state. The contracts covered two main dimensions: i) a territorial and environmental part intended to reconnect productive practices with the environment, ii) and a more social and economic part that would co-finance farm investments adjusting or reorienting them towards a more coherent and sustainable system. This section, argues that the 'all-encompassing' vision of the farm came about as a result of the conversion

[24] In French: *Contrats Territoriaux d'Exploitation*.
[25] In Dutch: *Subsidieregeling Agrarisch Natuurbeheer*.

of farmers and administrative elites to the ideas of sustainable development, a change that was aligned with a continuing acceptance of state intervention within the agricultural sector.

The state-profession co-management of agriculture

To understand the all-encompassing character of the CTE, it is important to remember the significance and persistence of the system of co-management between the state and the agricultural profession and the states' stance in intervening in the agricultural economy. Since the blueprints of modernisation of 1960 and 1962, the state took a leading role in regulating several domains of the agricultural economy so as to modernise the farms. It developed plans for modernisation and, together with professional agricultural organisations, became involved in controlling farm structures and was intended to improve productivity and economically reinforce the family-based structure of farming. The structural policy was not so much intended as a way of stabilising the total number of farms but more as a way of directing the ongoing and, as it was seen at the time, necessary process of farm restructuring. Over time, different instruments were implemented to encourage the departure of farms considered too small to cope with economic realities, consolidate the incomes of the remaining farms and secure a 'fair' repartition of production means among 'professional' farmers[26]. The system was complemented in 1974 by a system of subsidies to support young farmers.

These instruments were controlled and administered at the level of the *département* working jointly with the profession through commissions. During the following decades, this interventionist approach continued and was enlarged to other related domains. The management of farm structures was complemented with new elements, such as the dairy quotas in 1987 (Barthélémy 1999) and some of the direct compensatory payments of the CAP in 1992 (Barthélemy and Leseigneur 1999). The modernisation blueprint of 1995 perpetuated this co-management model and contained the new objective of improving the competitiveness of French farmers on international markets. It introduced departmental orientation plans for agriculture that were co-managed locally within farmer-state commissions, the *Commission Départemental d'Orientation Agricole* (CDOA) (Berriet-Solliec and Boinon 2002).

This co-management also included specific interventions for mountainous agriculture to address its lagging development. In 1974 the state established specific funds to counter the unequal development between zones of intense production and the more mountainous areas where agricultural development was constrained. This anticipated a move by the EC in 1975 which set up the Less Favoured Areas scheme, a scheme that played a crucial role in maintaining the economic stability of mountainous farms (Gerbaux 1994).

The belated translation of the new generation of European agro-environmental instruments into French regulations (in 1992) was also influenced by this co-management arrangement[27]. What were called the environmental accompanying measures were applied in France in a dual way. In some (albeit limited) parts of France, there were some participatory procedures involving farmers and other local stakeholders concerned with the use of rural space. These groups discussed the constraints inherent within the measures. The process was a mixed in its

[26] The title 'professional farmer' was the main criteria for selection. It was based on criteria of economic viability: minimum size of farm, educational level and full-time involvement in farming (Rémy 1987).

[27] The application of Article 19 in France at the end of the 1980s only provided for a very marginal pro-environment effort in comparison with some of its neighbours, particularly Great Britain. This was largely due to the relatively weak influence of the French environmental movement. The real breakthrough in terms of agro-environmental measures only came through in 1992 with the MacSharry CAP reform.

outcome; discussions between farmers and environmentalists sometimes gave rise to arguments and conflicts, at other times to compromises and mutual learning (Alphandéry and Billaud 1996). The process was rather time-consuming and was only one part of the policy. The other part, which represented 2/3 of the French agro-environment budget, took the form of a unified horizontal measure, the 'grass allowance' (*prime à l'herbe*) which was more based on a logic of sector regulation. This aimed to offset the recurrent crises in the beef sector and reconfigure the subsidy system so as to favour extensive cattle breeders, rather than to engage in a fundamental transformation of agricultural practices. This instrument was strongly driven by an economic rationale and led to an ongoing ambiguity regarding the actual purpose of the policy. Thus the first agro-environment experiments did not represent any significant breakthrough in the influence of environmental concerns upon policy. Rather, it represented the flexibility of the status quo in combining an environmental turning point with a framework that primarily was aimed at maintaining the stability of the agricultural economy (Alphandéry and Bourliaud 1996). This same spirit guided the introduction of the CTE, although its emergence also corresponded to the introduction of new issues that were driven by a specific social and political dynamic.

A window of opportunity for changing the agricultural paradigm

The Blueprint of 1999 came about because of three changes in the French socio-political context (Brun 2006). During the 1990s various different groups, including networks of associations, professionals, practitioners and scientists, discussed and proposed reinstating a global contract between farmers and society. The 'Seillac Group', a group of individuals and alternative associations from very different backgrounds, brought these reflections together and played an important role in launching new ideas for renewing agricultural policy. Their objective was to renovate the modernisation blueprints of the sixties, and amend agricultural policies so that they better took into account the social, territorial and environmental dimensions of agriculture (Groupe de Seillac 1994)[28]. One of the leaders, Bertrand Hervieu, a social and political scientist considered as the 'father of the CTE' (Rémy 1999), later became adviser to the cabinet of the socialist minister of agriculture, Jean Glavany, and played a key role in designing the policy. As the following quote explains, this reorientation was crucial in the agenda of the CAP reform:

"It was imperative that France was endowed with an instrument for decoupling subsidies before negotiations at the WTO meeting in Seattle. Two years before this deadline, when the preparatory works of the orientation blueprint had begun, who had anticipated it? Probably only the Minister of Agriculture, the Cabinet and the President of the Young Farmers' Union (CNJA).[29] (Hervieu 1999, 28)"

In fact, the Ministry of Agriculture was already experimenting with such an 'all encompassing' contract in some parts of the country, with the 'Sustainable Development Plans'[30]. In response to the Rio Summit of 1992, the Ministry of Agriculture proposed the idea of individual contracts with farmers that encompassed all of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of farms. This pilot scheme contained several features that were subsequently incorporated into the CTE contracts, including the farm and territorial assessment, and individualised development projects backed up with financial support. In this

[28] At the European level, a similar group came into existence under a name inspired from the place where they first met: the "Bruges Group".
[29] This corresponds, in French, to the *Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs*.
[30] In French: Plan de Développement Durable

respect this pilot scheme set the tone for the CTE. The agricultural profession contributed to the cognitive and normative shape of these contracts. The Young Farmers' Union (CNJA), in particular, was active in supporting and sustaining this project, which matched its own visions about how farming should evolve in a more entrepreneurial direction. The liberal reform of the CAP in 1992 had a traumatic effect on the profession. Young farmers, who were eager to defend the necessity of maintaining the economic stability of agriculture and mindful of the need to respond to the environmental and liberal evolution of agricultural policies proposed, reorienting subsidies through the use of individual contracts. This project was summarised in what became known as the 'entrepreneurial contract' (Brun 2006). This did not imply completely abandoning the logic of the market as the regulatory mechanism – since the international market continued to provide economic opportunities – but complementing this through contracts that would also take the other functions of farming into consideration, thereby reorienting agricultural subsidies. By inventing this contract, the young farmers broke free from its elder counterpart the main farmers' union, the *Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles* (FNSEA), just as the FNSEA had done forty years before in promoting modernisation (Rémy 2000).

The spirit of the agricultural blueprint of 1999

The socialist party opened this window of opportunity when it came to power in 1997. The agricultural blueprint, drafted and passed by a left-wing majority in 1999, marked a combination of a new direction with elements of continuity.

The CTE defined and supported new principles of agricultural development, putting agriculture at the heart of environmental, territorial and rural management. The ambitious objectives of the CTE would encompass new orientations while also reaffirming the industry-centred tradition of French agricultural policies (Léger et al. 2006). Rather than opposing the continued development of the modernised sector on environmental grounds, the objective was to reconnect these two trajectories and invent a new fined-tune combination between local agriculture and its environment. Thus the contracts encompassed both the environmental and the socio-economic dimensions of farming.

"The debate can't only be understood in terms of the opposition between territorial development and the improvement of such or such food supply chain. The ambition of the CTE is to link agricultural development with local development with a debate that should be a real societal debate (Hervieu 1999, 31)"

While the policy clearly introduced the principles of environmental protection and agricultural multifunctionality, it was implemented through directly funding farms and providing them with explicit income support. The administration of the contracts was fully incorporated into the regulative mechanisms of structural management, at the departmental level, with the main decisions being taken by the Departmental Agricultural Commissions (CDOA). (These assemblies were slightly enlarged to include other stakeholders, including environmental and consumer groups – see below). The government attempted to reinvent a new pact with the agricultural profession. The changes retained the features of a resolutely agricultural policy with the overall goal of supporting professional forms of production and reproduction of farms.

A further aim of the Blueprint was to redistribute subsidies among farmers. The CTE was available across the whole country and covered the entire range of agriculture. It was open to

extensive cattle breeders in the mountainous areas and to intensive arable farmers on the plains. Policy-makers wished to bring about a more equitable distribution of agricultural subsidies among these different types of producers to, at least partially, countervail the unequal distribution of subsidies through the first pillar of the CAP. In this respect, it had ambitions to address questions of farm structure.

"The management of the space means that agriculture is concerned with that mission. To do so, re-balancing the subsidies appears as one of the means to remedy the current effects of public aid allocated to agriculture that ultimately favour concentration" (Hervieu 1999, 28).

"The priority of the agricultural policy is not to increase production and competitiveness. Everyone knows that this objective could be met by just 150,000 farmers, working just one third of the agricultural surface presently exploited. We want agriculture with farmers to be well spread throughout the whole country. The adoption and choice of this priority entails a social change, for which it is necessary to amortise the shock and cost. (Hervieu 1999, 30)"

France was one of the few countries (together with Great Britain) to apply the modulation principle that allowed a transfer of part of the first pillar budget to the second pillar. However, the idea of the government was not to accelerate liberal reform mechanisms (as was the case in Great Britain) but to more fairly distribute subsidies among the farmers (Lowe et al. 2002). The modulation was progressive and discriminatory and only involved the 10% or so of farms in receipt of 41% of subsidies (Chatellier 2000). Not surprisingly, this move displeased the representatives of the largest arable farms, who benefited the less from this arrangement. Despite this challenge, the policy instrument remained strongly anchored in the tradition of agricultural policy and enabled a rather broad definition of multifunctionality to be adopted, as the following examination of the list of measures that it included will show.

The twofold component of the CTE

The design of the CTE provided farmers with a wide range of opportunities and funding possibilities. These measures had to be combined according an assessment of each farm which was intended to capture all the dimensions of multifunctionality (Josien et al. 2001). In fact, most farmers only chose a few of these measures when composing their contracts. These fell into two broad groups.

Initially, the investment measures allowed the state to provide significant levels of support to farmers. The Ministerial memo of 17th November 1999 allowed financial contributions of up to €15,000 for investments or expenses (material or immaterial) with socio-economic, environmental or territorial objectives. This budget was divided into four categories. The "working conditions" and "the economic productivity of the farming systems" measures accounted for 40% of the budget, and the budgets for the "quality of production" and "environmental management" each represented 15% of the budget. Concretely, the measures provided for investments in farm buildings, purchases of new materials and technical installations meant to innovate, optimise and secure the farming system. Other subsidies were also available for investment in appropriate materials to improve environmental practice (e.g. rotary hoes, mowing machines) or to improve visual aspects of the farm (renovating rural patrimony, buildings, farm yards, access paths and so on). Funds were also available to help farms adopt a quality label, sometimes based on a terroir-like production (e.g. *Saint-Marcellin cheese, AOC Bleu of Sassenage, Cantal*…) or to integrate into larger agrifood chains (whether through cooperatives or agribusiness industries -'*Agriconfiance*', '*La route du lait*' and so

forth). A few funds were also made available to help launch innovations such as local food processing and agri-tourist facilities. But these did not pose any real threat to the basic configuration of the industrial food-chain model.

The second type of measure was primarily concerned with agro-environmental measures (see Table 4.1). The most popular measure was for extensive grassland management, adopted in more than half of the contracts. This measure was quite similar to the existing grassland allowance and was implicitly used to maintain extensive cattle breeding, with its positive effect on the environment. In the mountainous zones, the extensive grassland management was meant to preserve the open landscape and boost local tourist activity; in the marshlands of Vendée and Charente-Maritime, the measures were used to preserve the remaining ecologically sensitive zones. One popular environmental management measure was hedgerow management. Other measures addressed pollution prevention which (in stark contrast to the Netherlands) was arranged through voluntary agreements with intensive arable farmers. These involved 'integrated fertilisation' and the use of nitrate-trapping intermediate crops, with the overall aim of reducing the use of mineral or organic fertiliser and reducing pollution. The integrated chemical use measure was popular, especially in regions dominated by arable farming and contributed to the goal of input reduction. The fact that agronomic aspects were taken into consideration is another major difference with the Dutch measures and was largely due to the closer proximity of French farmers to the policy-making process and less constraining pollution legislation[31].

Table 4.1. Take up of main measures by farmers in the CTE in France

Measures chosen in France	% occurrence
Extensive grassland management	53
Fertilisation management	24
Integrated chemical use	25
Winter crop planting	19
Hedgerow management	26

(Planistat 2003)

The CTE also provided support for conversion to organic farming, which further broadened its scope. Overall, it offered a wide range of possibilities and thus embodied a very broad definition of multifunctionality. However, the instrument only lasted three years as it was abandoned in 2002 by the new government.

The abandonment and replacement of the CTE

The change to a right wing government in 2002, brought a swift end to the CTE, much to the dissatisfaction of all the farmers' unions. One of the reasons given by the new minister Hervé Gaymard was related to the budget. The high uptake of the CTE would have provoked budgetary difficulties if the rate of successful applications continued unabated. In the first year there were less applications than available funding but there were clear signs that the number of contracts was about to exceed the available funding. In addition, the CTE had been criticised for sometimes providing excessive sums of money to some farmers. Some contracts were for very large sums, some exceeding €90,000. These, and other criticisms of the

[31] The farmers could only receive subsidies as long as they complied with the current environmental regulation. Thus the measures extended compliance with the regulations, taking them slightly further than the legislative requirements, which allowed the development of input management measures.

instrument led the Minister to review the situation after three years. An independent consulting firm was contracted to assess the way the policy was implemented. One of their conclusions was that the economic aspects of the contracts was often taking priority over the ecological objectives (Coperci 2002). The same report argued that the environmental aspects of the contracts needed strengthening. This led to the introduction of the Sustainable Agriculture Contracts (CAD)[32] which sought to refocus the support system more towards environmental grounds. Though both socio-economic and environmental parts of the contract remained in place, only investments linked to environment aspects were eligible for support. In addition, the départments were put under pressure to reduce the range of options available and to make a limited number of them compulsory in each contract. The last part of the reform process involved setting a budget limit for individual contracts to prevent possible abuse and allow the benefits to be better shared among farmers.

Thus after three years of experimentation with a framework that embraced a broad vision of multifunctionality, the policy eventually became more focused on the environmental aspects of multifunctionality. This change was largely brought about by impending budgetary problems, and led the French implementation of the RDRF to a position that was much closer to that pursued in the Netherlands, which is discussed in the following section.

4.3 The Dutch Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN): a nature conservation project

The Dutch SAN policy was adopted in 1997 but only implemented from 2000 onwards. This policy allowed farmers who so wished to engage with the state in voluntary six-year contracts for nature protection. The content of these contracts was regionally specific, but the most common aspects were maintaining a hedgerow landscape, protecting rare birds and creating buffer strips to support biodiversity. As argued in this section, this scheme is part of a much boarder conservationist project that extends well beyond agriculture and farmers. Before presenting the context of emergence of this plan, which is almost exclusively oriented towards nature conservation, I briefly review the major shifts that have affected the agricultural sector over recent decades.

The neo-liberal turning point of Dutch agriculture

The exclusively conservationist aim of Dutch policy instruments was largely a result of the liberal turning point of agriculture from the 1980s onwards (Wisserhof 2000). This was in a period of rapid intensification and concentration of agriculture and when the political weight of agricultural lobby organisations was declining. The environmental movement, among the strongest of the world[33], formulated a fierce criticism of agricultural modernisation, accusing farmers of exploiting and polluting nature. Its regular and increasingly powerful attacks made the industrialisation of farming a high profile political issue that politicians needed to respond to (Frouws 1997). The Dutch environmental movement also found allies among the liberal critics of public intervention on agriculture and they worked together on the relation between public intervention and agriculture. The liberals saw the large number of small farms as a historical relic that weakened Dutch agriculture in terms of both its economic and environmental performance (Kampstra and Leeuwen 1998). The liberals also saw

[32] In French: Contrat d'Agriculture Durable.

[33] With a membership of more than 3.7 million people in 2001, the Dutch Environmental movement was at its highpoint at the turn of the century (van der Heijden 2002).

international markets as promising new opportunities, as the common market had in previous decades. But to meet these new market opportunities further structural adjustment was required to give fewer, larger and more competitive farms. In that respect, the liberals saw public intervention in farming as counterproductive, as it artificially maintained uneconomic farm units. They viewed agriculture as a economic sector that should be treated no differently from any other. Accordingly, for example, the Netherlands implemented the dairy quotas introduced in 1984 according to quite liberal principles. The distribution of production rights was carried out through a nation-wide market that bore no relationship to farm sizes (Hoetjes and Boinon 1999). By the 1990s, in the Netherlands, there was much wider acceptance of a liberal market driven agricultural sector, in stark contrast to the highly interventionist role that the state had played in agriculture since the end of the Second World war.

This liberal turning point culminated in the mid 1990s with the 'Purple Coalition' that marked the arrival in power of a coalition liberal (VVD) and socialist (PvdA) government, which continued the change of orientation of agricultural policy that the previous Christian Democrat (CDA) government had embarked upon. The new government tackled head-on the question of the agricultural sector, its economic future and the relevance of public support and intervention. The Ministry of Agriculture was obliged to adopt the market as its reference in regulating the sector. By way of example, the extension system was privatised at this time (Labarthe 2006), and policies for supporting young farmers, early retirement policies and other structural intervention policies, common in many other EU countries, were virtually non-existent (Bonnet et al. 1996)[34]. And, despite soaring prices for agricultural land, the market for farmland remained unregulated. Policy overwhelmingly favoured a market led restructuring of agriculture, in which only the fittest were supposed to survive with the most vulnerable farmers being simply forced out of the system by market forces. The very existence of the Ministry of Agriculture was regularly debated, illustrating how little the government wished to intervene in agriculture.

"The liberals considered agriculture as an economic activity just like industry, or any other sector. During this period, there was talk of merging the Ministry of Agriculture with the Ministry of Economics. After all, the farmers are also economic actors. But finally it wasn't done." [35]

While the Ministry of Agriculture didn't disappear, the agricultural sector became increasingly subordinate to the rules of the market. Agricultural policies were diluted into wider rural development policies and were mostly taken over by the Provinces (Frouws and van Tatenhove 1993; Wisserhof 2000). The unofficial alliance of liberalism and environmentalism successfully weakened the corporate agricultural model. This partly explains the lack of economic interventionism within the SAN. Paradoxically, however, the environmentalists were at the forefront of constructing legitimacy for environmental intervention, on which the SAN policy was built.

The internal debate amongst environmentalists

The legitimacy of the SAN arose from a new kind of alliance that provoked heated debates within the environmental movement. In the course of these debates, two contradictory visions emerged about the best means of pursuing nature conservation, positions that can be

[34] The only support available for young farmers was low-interest loans.
[35] Interview with a civil servant at the DLG, August 2004.

characterised as the restorationist perspective and the pro-farmer conservationist one (van der Heijden 2005).

Initially ecological restoration was favoured as the appropriate response to the agro-environmental crisis. These ideas stemmed from ideologues like Frans Vera and Fred Baerselman who argued that the existing nature conservation areas needed to be extended by taking land out the reservoir of agricultural land and 'giving it back to nature'. Given the intense industrialisation of agriculture and the damage this was inflicting on the environment, this was presented as a legitimate compensation to society. This idea was not that new to the Netherlands: for almost a century, existing organisations (notably *Natuurmonumenten)* had been acquired land, particularly marshlands, wetlands and peatlands, to restore to 'natural' ecosystems. But it was only from the 1980s onwards that this came to the fore as a political issue. This discourse was fervently supported by *Natuurmonumenten* who saw it as complementary to their work, and the Dutch branch of the WWF which had, since 1990, started to acquire farmland for "new" nature (a move which coincided with a decrease of its donations to southern countries).

This restorationist discourse came in for criticism from other parts of the environmental movement, which argued that a dualistic geographical separation of land for agriculture and for nature could have negative consequences and could lead to a situation where nature would be enclosed within eco-feudalist sanctuaries, and it would no longer be possible to challenge the environmental impacts of an increasingly industrialised agriculture. This alternative conservationist discourse was advocated by other environmentalist organisations like Friends of the Earth and the Foundation for Nature and Environment (SNM) who argued for a nature protection strategy that involved, rather than excluded agriculture. This nature conservation needed to include the environmental problems related to intensive farming. Instead of separating the two functions, they argued that the two could meet through "interweaving the functions" (van der Heijden 2005). Nature values should be included within the agricultural landscape so it would not be solely shaped by ahistoric and technological conceptions. This vision posed an alternative to the binary approach that idealised "true nature" and set up a schism between eco-centrism and anthropocentrism (Larrère 2005). In practice, the Dutch politics of nature has alternated between these two approaches.

The politics of nature

From 1975 onwards, the state started to implement the first nature conservation contracts through a nation wide policy for the management of natural areas. This marked a timid but real beginning of state involvement in environmental issues and their politicisation. Very quickly, ecologists raised the possibility of enlarging the perimeters of protection to certain agricultural areas. Some were in favour of exclusively supporting those limited areas occupied by environmental organisations. Others considered that the most effective protection of places and species required including farming – the largest user of rural space – within these measures. In the end, both types of measure were adopted, producing a dualistic policy. Nature reserves were established and noteworthy agricultural spaces were selected for their ecological quality.[36] The management contracts at the time included constraints connected with the extensification of grassland management and bird protection measures. Thus agro-

[36] The protection scheme, or *Relatie nota*, distinguishes between the *reservaatgebieden* meant for nature protection within private zones and the *beheersgebieden* meant for nature protection on agricultural lands.

environmental practices were established very early in the Netherlands, in a conservationist project that had already divided environmentalists.

The restorationist approach gained influence in the eighties and the ideas held by ecological architects became more widely accepted as a result of the successful experiments in the new Oostvaarsplassen nature zone in the Flevoland polder. This gave an opportunity for the policy-makers to explore the possibility of experimenting with reconstructing nature rather than just protecting what was left (Hajer 2003; van der Heijden 2005). One outcome of this was the adoption of the Nature Policy Plan[37] by the Second Chamber in 1990 which established a network of nature zones throughout the Netherlands: the National Ecological Network (EHS)[38]. This consisted of a linked network of "high-quality" nature areas scattered across the country. The project included areas whose specific conservation interest was already recognised: forests, wetlands, peat lands etc. But the EHS did not just involve listing and indexing existing nature zones, it also involved a process of systematic reclaiming of natural spaces and extending the conservationist project. It involved plans to enlarge the recognised natural spaces, along with ecological corridors to link these areas to each other. The EHS was intended to cover some 750,000 hectares, 22% of the total national surface. Of this some 151,500 hectares of land were due to be acquired from agriculture by 2018 (equivalent 7.5% of the agricultural land in 1990), clearly illustrating the extent of Dutch ambitions for reclaiming nature.

"Nowadays, we believe that we can build up every thing, included nature. That is the modern way to see things. The Nature Policy Plan is based on this idea. If we want to make a connection between two marshlands, then we'll make it, no problem. We do what we want with nature." [39]

Such constructionism is nothing new in the Netherlands. Dutch history is marked by considerable transformations that have successively shaped the country's landscape (Lambert 1971). The various phases of polder building are widely regarded as one of the most brilliant achievements of the Dutch people. This contemporary constructionist phase is deeply anchored within this tradition of remoulding nature. But its growing legitimacy also attested to deep transformations in the collective representations of rural spaces. Instead of being seen solely as a place for agricultural production, the countryside has taken on new purposes. In a highly urbanised country, it is increasingly a place of recreation for urban people, which fits perfectly with – and legitimises – the EHS project. As a manager of the Ministry of LNV commented:

"We look at the countryside as an important area for the quality of living, the quality of working and for leisure. […] It is not exclusive area to farmers, but also for the people who need that space for quietness, beauty. […]That doesn't mean that there is no future for farmers in the Netherlands." [40]

The EHS project was therefore also designed to meet the growing demand for natural and recreational areas, somewhat at the cost of the traditional central place that farmers used to occupy. However, paradoxically, the legitimacy of the SAN was also linked to this shift of values.

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[37] In Dutch: Natuur Beleidsplan.
[38] In Dutch, EHS accounts for *Ecologische Hoofd Structuur.*
[39] Interview with a civil servant of the DLG, August 2004.
[40] Interview with a civil servant of the LNV, June 2003.

The Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN): a nature conservation led approach to multifunctionality

The SAN originated from this overall context. The management of these nature spaces and the growing possibilities for funding from the European Union for agro-environmental contracts, led to a new nature conservation instrument, the Management Programme[41]. Just like the former scheme, this involved the management of reserve-like areas, mostly owned by private nature conservation organisations, and of designated agricultural areas. The discussion over the costs and benefits of applying these costly measures to agricultural areas led to the introduction of clear policy objectives in terms of the acreage of agro-environmental contracts that would be concluded with farmers (with a target of some 117, 000 hectares in total).

Owing to the strict conservationist focus, the Dutch agro-environmental instruments were limited to quite tightly defined forms of intervention, as the details of packages adopted shows (see Table 4. 2.). The Dutch measures largely focused on what is commonly defined in the policy documents as 'goals for nature' which were developed from the meticulous work of methodically indexing the whole ecological structure of the country. This exercise systematically listed the country's natural elements, including birds, hedgerows, species of plants, ponds and other ecological and landscape elements. This led to the development of readily understandable and applicable conservation practices, commonly known as 'packages' that could be adopted by farmers (and other land users). Thus, the shape of the contracts – and the scheme's vision of multifunctionality – was highly selective and prescriptive.

Two aspects of the scheme are worthy of comment. First, in contrast to the French policy instrument, the SAN did not include any elements of farm investment to reorient farms towards new production systems or to encourage innovation. While there are some such subsidies available in the Netherlands (under bottom-up rural development policies implemented through the decentralised administrations), there is no central policy instrument to strengthen multifunctionality in its broader sense[42]. Secondly, the SAN did not specifically address the issue of water pollution. Practices for on-farm input reduction (e.g. use of agrochemicals or integrated manure management) were excluded from the policy framework, despite the potential relevance of these strategies to counter water pollution problems in the Netherlands[43]. Such measures were not considered as deserving direct financial support. This is partly due to specific conservationist orientation of multifunctionality in the Netherlands, but also to the underlying philosophy of the policies, which prevented financing any practices that merely achieve legal standards. There is no financial incentive meant to reduce the use of agrochemicals[44]. As a result, the policy framework lacked any mechanisms to reduce the use of agrochemicals or manure. As one stakeholder observed:

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[41] In Dutch, *Programma beheer*.

[42] This point is elaborated on in the next section, which discusses the choices made in applying the 22 measures of the RDRF.

[43] The whole of the Netherlands falls within the boundaries of the European Nitrates Directive and there are ongoing disputes with the European Commission as to whether the Netherlands is correctly applying this Directive. Several sources highlight that the (over) use of agrochemicals and manure continues to be highly controversial (Den Hond et al. 2003) with Dutch agriculture being one of the most intensive consumers in the EU. Consumption amounts 17 kg/ha (of active substance) compared to the European average of about 4.5 kg/ha (UIPP-LEL/BLO, see http://www.senat.fr/rap/l02-215-2/l02-215-239.html).

[44] Policies for reducing pollution are mainly restricted to organic farming. There is a dedicated scheme to support organic conversion and production. However, this remains relatively marginal compared to other EU countries, with only 1.7% of the Dutch farms covering a total surface of 2% of agricultural land being organic.

"It is very typical, that in contrast to many other schemes [from other EU countries], there are no environmental [pollution] packages in the scheme. We have packages for field margins alongside water courses, but that's it. And these even don't have an explicit environmental target, but a biodiversity target. The philosophy was that the legislation should handle this […] through the Polluter Pays Principle. It says that we could reward additional things but only if they go beyond the legislative level. But they were not keen on that. I think that they just don't want to enlarge the budget."[45]

Another difference was that average payments made to Dutch farmers under the SAN were quite limited, with the average participating farm receiving €3,100 p.a. (compared to €8,900 in France)[46]. This difference is not only due to the investment aspect of the policy in France[47], but because Dutch support for undertaking agro-environmental measures was less generous than in France[48].

In summary, Dutch agro-environmental policy was built up over the years through a conservationist and constructionist approach to nature restoration. The resultant contracts were almost exclusively concerned with nature protection, showing the importance of nature conservation in the Netherlands and the reluctance of the Dutch authorities to intervene in other aspects of the agricultural economy.

Table 4. 2. Main measures chosen by the farmers in the SAN in the Netherlands

Type of measures in the Netherlands (2004)	% occurrence
Collective measures for bird protection	56
Botanic grassland management	53
Landscape management	42
Field margins	26
Other bird protection measures	32

Source : Milieu- en Natuurplanbureau (MNP)

4.4 The Rural Development Regulation Framework (RDRF)

As the two previous sections show, France and the Netherlands followed different pathways and logics in implementing their policies. Analysis of the ways in which the two countries implemented the RDRF also provides insights into the different national orientations in terms of their rural areas and national trajectories.

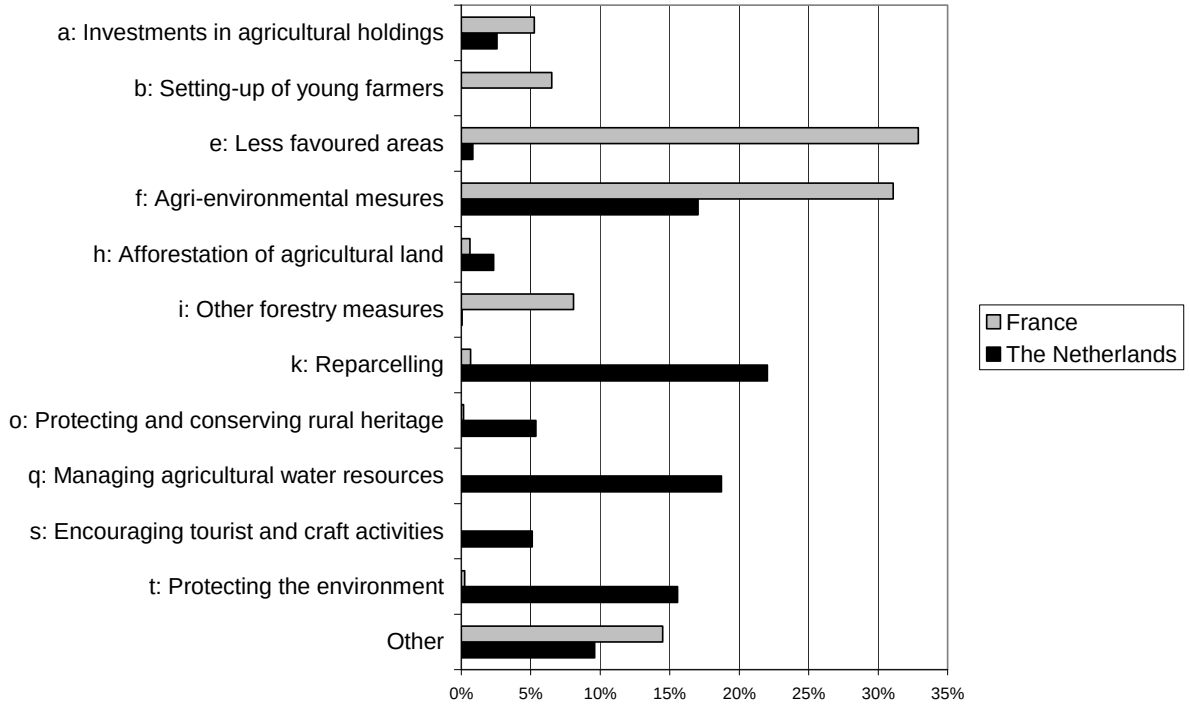
The RDRF was not actually as new as it seemed, as it aggregated several existing policy instruments, such as agro-environmental measures, retirement aids, subsidies for young farmers and compensation for less favoured areas. Thus it included many existing policy instruments, but also created the opportunity for other rural socio-economic activities to be co-financed by the CAP. This was largely made possible by Article 33 of the Regulation on "promoting the adaptation and development of rural areas" which allowed for an expansion of

[45] Interview with a former employee of Inatura, February 2006.
[46] These amounts are for the years 2000 for the Netherlands and 2002 for France. The Dutch estimate is provided on the website of the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency: http://www.mnp.nl/mnc/i-en-1321.html. French data is derived from Urbano and Vollet (2005).
[47] The investment part only represents €2,200/p.a.
[48] The mid term evaluation of the French agro-environmental measures showed that the average annual subsidy varied from €5,880 in the mountains, €7,063 in the Less Favoured Areas and €6,768 in the plains (CNASEA 2004).

European *agricultural* policy to a fairly broad conception of *rural development* and offered an opportunity for member states wishing to extend their support to non-farming activities in rural areas. In total, the regulation contained 22 measures potentially applicable across the whole European territory, including the policies discussed in the two previous sections. The sole condition attached was that any EU funding should be matched by national (or regional) funding. As long as this condition was met the state had free rein in deciding which measures to adopt or prioritise.

Despite the significant differences in the rural development funding available to France and the Netherlands[49], it is interesting, to compare the relative expenditure (per farm) on these measures. Such a comparison reveals that France spent approximately three times more per farmer under this regulations than the Netherlands (CNASEA 2003, 14). This divergence was further amplified by the fact that not all the budgetary allocations in the Netherlands went to farmers. An examination of the measures adopted clearly indicates the orientation of the two countries towards spending on rural development (See Figure 4.3).

Figure 4. 3. Percentage of spending of rural development funds (programming period 2000-2006)



Sources: Regiebureau (NL) and Ministry of agriculture (FR)

France adopted a relatively farmer-oriented Rural Development Programme, basing much of its policy on already existing national measures. A significant part of the budget (circa 33%) was dedicated to continuing to support the mountainous farms through the "Less Favoured Areas" measure (e). A large part of the budget was used to finance the national CTE scheme. This consisted of an environmental section (f) intended to encourage farm systems to adjust and develop new functions on the farm (e.g. environment, biodiversity, landscape, organic farming). The CTE also contained a socio-economic part, which corresponded to the measure

[49] Their respective budgets are quite different. For the programming period 2000-2006, France had €32 billion, 17.5% of the total EU second pillar budget, and the Netherlands just €0.372 billion, 1.22% of the budget. These differences can largely reflect the relative size of rural areas in the two countries.

on "investments in agricultural holdings" (a). In large part, these measures represent a continuity of French policy and a renewal of several already existing interventionist policies. Together they were intended to promote the continued modernisation of agriculture and improve its environmental performance. In this respect, the measure for supporting young farmers (b), which didn't exist in the Netherlands, illustrates the French will to maintain productive capacity through promoting economically healthy enterprises but also, in some areas, to offset the decrease in farm enterprises. This budgetary orientation clearly illustrates the application of the precepts of multifunctionality *à la française*: a quest to shape the structure of agriculture by influencing the reproduction of the farms across the country.

In contrast to France, the Netherlands did not concentrate all its efforts on the agricultural sector. Seventy five percent of the money spent under this budget line was directed to some measures under Article 33 of the RDRF (j to v) that were not necessarily oriented towards agriculture. This does not mean that all the envelope was directed away from agriculture but rather, that the Dutch government did not seek to intervene in any sectoral restructuring, which was left to market mechanisms. Similarly the Dutch did not support any measures for young farmers (b) or for pre-retirement schemes (d). The only sector-grounded measures were the investment measures for "modernising horticultural glasshouses" (a) which was considered a highly promising economic sector but only represented about 3% of the rural development money. The budget structure of the Dutch application was very much influenced by the EHS, a costly plan as it involved purchasing land and indemnifying landowners (k) and converting the land into nature (t). With the exception of some the grants given for organic conversion, most of the agro-environment measures (f) were used for biodiversity and landscape management, largely within the SAN[50]. Thus the Dutch implementation of the RDRF was considerably influenced by its conservationist stance and as a result there was no structural intervention in the agricultural sector. The priority was very much to renovate nature. This exasperated the main farmer's union which could not understand that part of the money from the Common *Agricultural* Policy was being given to some *non-agricultural* purposes.

This examination of the implementation of the RDRF confirms the earlier observations that France favoured a farmer-oriented application that would socially and economically reinforce farms, whereas in the Netherlands direct interventions to support farm income were not a priority.

4.5 Conclusions

The analysis of the discourses and compromises that surrounded the implementation of policies for multifunctional agriculture in both countries gives some insights into the different ways in which multifunctionality can be envisioned. France implemented a very broad and farmer-oriented vision of multifunctionality, where the agro-environmental aspects not only focused on ecological infrastructure but also covered measures for grassland management and input reduction. In addition, the substantial support for farm investment shows a determination to strengthen the competitiveness and liveability of the sector in several respects (pollution, working conditions and so on). Conversely, in the Netherlands, there was barely any investment support for farms and the agro-environment measures were centred

[50] Even though there were some other agro-environmental measures, like the Organic Farming Scheme and the Rare Domestic Breeds Scheme (which represent 6 and 0,5% respectively of Dutch agro-environmental spending), the SAN was the largest budget line, with a 93.5% share of the budget (Terwan 2005).

solely on nature conservation measures. To a certain extent, these differences can be explained by the different nature of ruralities in the two countries. As Goverde and de Haan observed, “The Netherlands is not particularly associated with rurality” (Goverde and Haan 2001, 32). With its dense network of urbanised areas it is one of the most densely populated countries of the world. This has, for long ago, influenced the fate of the surrounding rural spaces, whose development has been closely associated with that of the peri-urban zones. In this context, Dutch rural areas are strongly shaped by urban people and their influence and subject to far more pressure for recreational purposes. The project of nature restoration, which is the expression of a strong environmental movement, was strongly reinforced by these changing values on rurality. The nature conservation contracts proposed to the farmers were in keeping with these evolutions. In France, although the ‘agricultural republic’ is eroding (Hervieu and Viard 2001), the development of rural areas is still strongly linked to that of agriculture. That explains, to a large extent, the strong actual and symbolic place given to the agricultural sector within the CTE. Nevertheless, if the choices of orientations are embedded within geographical and socially contingent contexts, this chapter also showed that the construction of the policy instruments was linked to the ways in which doctrines of (non) intervention influenced the policy framework. The liberal views of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture excluded any possibilities of finance that would ‘artificially’ support an unprofitable sector of the economy. Only promising and highly profitable activities, such as horticulture, were grant-aided. In contrast, the French socialist government attempted to create a new social agreement between farmers and society. Criticisms of the instrument, the abuses it provoked, and above all a change of government together conspired to undermine this broad vision of multifunctionality. The French instrument was not completely suppressed, but was re-shaped into a greener and more liberal model. Despite the latest evolutions this study shows different national trajectories, with the Netherlands giving more space to market mechanisms and France showing more willingness to sustain its agricultural economy.

Given these differences in the conception and application of multifunctionality, I will now turn to examine the interrelations between the state and the professional organisations that were present throughout the process of implementing the national policies.

Chapter 5. The changing interrelations between the state and professional agricultural organisations

5.1 Introduction

The emergence of this new generation of policy instruments had several consequences for the public administrations charged with implementing them. Managing the 'new' functions of agriculture required establishing organisational settings capable of assuring the daily 'functioning' of the policy machinery. It involved constructing new standards of agricultural practice, administrating thousands of individual dossiers, setting up control procedures, evaluating policy and so on. The public authorities had the option of delegating some of these tasks – such as administering individual contracts – to farmers' organisations. Such choices were not solely logistical in terms of how to best technically implement the schemes. They were also highly political in the sense that they reflected the existing and institutionalised relations between the state and professional agricultural organisations. This shows the level of trust and power that the professional agricultural organisations enjoyed and raises the question of *the role and place of the agricultural profession and its organisations within the operational implementation of these policies.* This chapter examines the various arrangements through which the different national policies were implemented, which helps illustrate the evolving status of the professional agricultural organisations. The first section provides theoretical and sociological understanding of professional organisations and identifies the challenges that they faced with the introduction of these policies. The following two sections then examine the national arrangements that were arrived at. In each country, the professional organisations were invited to take some responsibility in implementing the new policy instrument but the role(s) allotted to them differed considerably.

5.2 Questioning the role of agricultural professional organisations

Before discussing the new challenges faced by the professional agricultural organisations it is important to address the question of their standing, the way in which they influenced agricultural policy in the past and how this has given them a certain legitimacy within policy making circles.

Professional organisations - neo-corporatist organisations?

Over time, professional organisations have been subject to different criticisms, with the term 'neo-corporatism' being extensively to describe them. Supiot remarked that the concept of neo-corporatism is often value-laden, either representing an idealised alternative to the welfare state or to denounce the excess political influence that a sector of society exerts upon the state[51] (Supiot 1987). In agriculture, the early structural-functionalist interpretations tended to present the existence of these organisations as the expression of a dominant social

[51] In France, the concept of corporatism is, in addition, layered with a double suspicion. It refers, on the one hand, to the pre-revolutionary society of privileges that the 1789 Revolution did not completely dismantle and, on the other hand, to the shameful period of "collaboration" of the Vichy regime during the Second World War (Supiot 1987).

group over the peasantry with the objective of structuring production so as to make the provision of food (for urban people) more efficient. This simplistic vision was a somewhat limited interpretation that presented professional organisations as servile instruments of the idea of progress advocated by the economic elite. Political scientists who studied the construction of the French modernisation law of the 1960s developed a clearer representation, seeing the manifestation of agricultural organisations at the political level as the expression of the remarkably efficient lobbying force of a farmer's organisation that, finally, managed to make their voice heard[52]. This success led to later criticisms of the agricultural profession receiving privileged political treatment. Both these descriptions contain an element of caricature: of professional farming being either the tool of an urban upper class or a powerful pressure group that enjoyed a privileged social and economic position (Coulomb and Nallet 1980). Any workable sociological definition of this phenomenon needs to detach itself from these ideological visions. Such a definition needs to look beyond a simplistic understanding of a single group having power over a more collective one; it needs look towards the forms of the social division of labour and the relations that these professional organisations have with modern states (Jobert 1988).

Supiot suggested that the emergence of professional organisations can be traced back to issues recognised and formulated in early sociological studies (Supiot 1987). Durkheim in particular showed that the structure of modern societies is shaped by processes of continuous rationalisation that undermine traditional solidarities, hold the seeds of anomie and tend to impose a hypertrophied state structure that controls and encloses individuals (Durkheim 1978 [1902]). One way to address this problem was to constitute independent professional groups that work within the parameters set by the state. This model of an institution proved successful as it avoided excessive state dirigisme, yet also offered an alternative to the traditional social structuring of the economy. Such association with the state contains important benefits for organisations that accept the 'deal'. Although they lose a part of their freedom, they also consolidate their control over the group that they represent (Jobert 1988) and impose internal rules for e.g. the organisation of labour. Durkheim identified three major features of this arrangement: i) professional organisations with an equal representation of employees and employers; ii) the organisation has a shared economic purpose; iii) these groups seek to establish general principles that shape industrial and labour legislation (Durkheim 1978 [1902]). These intermediate groups have been described as "professional bodies of equal representation with a normative vocation" (Supiot 1987, 180).

In agriculture, this professionalisation is distinguishable from earlier corporatist movements, whose features Coulomb (1990) elaborated upon. The 'organic corporatism of the landowners' was the first movement to form, as a reaction to urbanisation and the industrial developments at the end of the XIX century. This movement sought a separation of the development of rural areas from that of urban societies and to preserve land rights. The name 'organic' implied that rural societies should be organised in villages, independently from the influence of the outside urban world. Anti-capitalist and anti-state, this movement did not support intensification of production, and was opposed to the 'corporatist entrepreneurs' that argued for parity between the industrial and agricultural sectors. This last group argued that farmers had to become real capitalists and maximise profit so as to be economically independent of the state. This purely entrepreneurial vision of farming was rejected by the 'co-operative organic' movement, which thought that farmers should co-operate to improve their incomes.

[52] Specifically the young farmers' union, whose intense lobbying strongly influenced the 1960 modernisation law.

More recently, in the post WWII era there was the approach of the young farmers of the JAC (Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne) – which came to be very influential within agricultural organisations in the sixties. They argued that agricultural enterprises needed to be profitable and to grow and did not support the solidarity advocated by the cooperative movement. They argued that to economically advance farmers needed to form unions and work with the state in co-managing the process of modernisation. This marked the beginning of a period of stability of a socio-political regime based on the state-profession co-management of agriculture – a model that also became established in other European countries, such as Switzerland and the Netherlands (Hairy and Perraud 1977).

The state-profession co-management of agriculture and the new challenges of professional farming

The empowerment of professional agricultural bodies from the sixties onwards was related to the project of modernising and intensifying agricultural production, which necessarily implied broader sectorisation and industrialisation. Increases in agricultural productivity would mean food becoming cheaper and would allow surplus agricultural labour to be released to other sectors of the economy. Yet at the same time, maintaining and strengthening the traditional familial structure of agriculture was also a priority. The state did not want a class of landowners to appropriate the land for unproductive ends, and placed considerable emphasis on promoting the family-based peasant model. Thus the modernisation project in France sought to enhance the incomes of peasant farmers, not displace them. Rather than being seen as an relic, the family model of farming was seen as well adapted to the needs of industrial society (Servolin 1972). The corollary of this was that a whole range of professional bodies was required to ensure the success of this model of modernisation and reproduction. They were involved not only in disseminating technical knowledge, but also in managing the restructuring of farms. In every country where this model of production developed, a whole set of institutions emerged to provide a professional social, economical and technical structure of agricultural management (Coulomb and Nallet 1980, 8).

In the Netherlands, these professional bodies were strengthened through the wide-ranging *Publiekrechtelijke Bedrijfsorganisaties* (PBO) Act, adopted in 1950 to organise post-war agricultural reconstruction. These agricultural institutions had explicit contracts with the State, which delegated them with specific administrative powers. Some "vertical" organisations were established to oversee the sectoral, technical and economic development of agriculture (*Produckschap*); a more "horizontal" one (*Landbouwschap*) acted as a representative body and was also charged with some public service tasks (extension service, land management etc.) (Hairy and Perraud 1977; Devienne 1989). A comparable organisational setting also emerged in France from the 1960s onwards to encourage agricultural development, technological innovation and to organise production. This included vertical organisations such as the *inter-professional organisations* (Hairy and Perraud 1980) and horizontal ones such as the *Chambres d'agriculture*[53] and the *Associations Départementales pour l'Aménagement des Structures des Exploitations Agricoles* (ADASEA), territorial organisations charged with developing agriculture at the level of the département. Agricultural intensification was only possible through this co-management of agricultural

[53] Although the official creation of the chambers of agriculture dates from 1924, their establishment as a genuine and effective organisation dated from the 1960 modernisation law. The chambers were recognised as public establishments in 1969. They had an official consultative role and were also in charge of the extension programmes.

affairs. States recognised the utility of these general and specialised professional bodies, came to rely on them and gave them a certain degree of autonomy in their task of modernising agriculture. This helped guaranteed the success of agriculture in both countries, which are nowadays both leading world exporters of agricultural produce.

These agricultural organisations now face challenges in their organisation, their constitutions and even their existence. The recognition of the importance of other non-productive agricultural functions breaks with the traditional mechanisms of regulation that they practiced. Concerns for multifunctional agriculture are transforming these organisations, which are becoming involved with the new instruments and procedures in order to maintain their positions. They are becoming involved with – and participating in – the technical and administrative management of new public policies designed to tackle and solve a range of different problems. Their previously solely economic focus is being complemented by taking on additional roles (e.g. protection of the landscape, rural development etc.), leading them to shoulder new tasks such as project management, providing a new generation of extension services, administrative management of individual contracts, coordination, educational tasks, etc. In this respect, multifunctional agriculture in both countries has contributed to regenerating the role of professional organisations, albeit in quite different ways. This is illustrated in the next section, which elaborates on how the new policies for multifunctional agriculture were administered in the two countries.

5.3 The administrative organisation of SAN in the Netherlands: re-legitimising agricultural organisations

In the Netherlands, the implementation of the Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN) led to the creation of new institutional settings. The Ministry of Agriculture and Nature Management and Food Quality (LNV) was responsible for implementing the policy but the zoning aspect of SAN was decentralised to the provinces, which play a central role in spatial planning. Other aspects of operationalising the policy were given to departments within the LNV that were formerly involved with other tasks. LASER[54], which had responsibility for managing CAP subsidies, took on the financial and administrative tasks, including drawing up the contracts and farmers who wished to apply for contracts had to deal with LASER officials in Roermond. Another State agency, the Rural Areas Agency (DLG)[55], was put in charge of control and evaluation. This configuration of tasks meant DLG played a less central role than it had in the previous nature protection schemes[56]. This arrangement left a gap in responsibility for extension, with no agency having responsibility for assisting farmers in drawing up their individual dossiers. This created space for the 'environmental cooperatives', which had emerged few years before, to find a new role.

The emergence of the 'environmental cooperatives'

Farmers' environmental co-operatives emerged during the 1980s as a response to new and restrictive environmental regulations. Several of these farmers' organisations had emerged, in

[54] This state agency is nowadays called Dienst Regelingen.
[55] In Dutch: Dienst Landelijk Gebied.
[56] This agency was formerly involved with land consolidation projects and reparcelling works during the modernisation era and continued to exist at the birth of nature conservation (the Relatie Nota of 1975), with its administrators locally coordinating the policies. Its officials designed the shape of the contracts and the content of protection measures proposed to the farmers. They were also in charge of the negotiations with the farmers over the final shape of the dossiers and ensuring that the conditions were fulfilled.

different parts of the country in response to environmental laws that restricted the further concentration of intensive cattle breading in zones of dense animal production. This was the reason for the founding of the 'de Peel' cooperative in the sandy regions of North Brabant (Padt 2007, 138) and the two sister organisations VEL et VANLA in Friesland (De Bruin and van der Ploeg 1991; van der Ploeg and Renting 2001). Others were born in reaction to the establishment of National Ecological Network's (EHS) nature conservation project, which threatened to convert some agricultural land into ecological parks. Some of these local farmers' groups were able to demonstrate their ability to manage biodiversity to the authorities (Boonstra 2006, 59). In some places, such as the Green Heart (between Rotterdam and Utrecht), these groups came to arrangements with the authorities to maintain water meadows in exchange for a de-intensification of production (Luttik and van der Ploeg 2004). While the motivation for their establishment varied slightly, these associations were a new breed of environmental and agricultural organisation that emerged in response to the conflicting challenges faced by farmers.

The term cooperative was applied to these organisations in a somewhat looser sense than the term is normally used. It referred to farmers *voluntarily* taking part in a territorial organisation, and is used to describe 'collaboration' between individuals rather than implying the will to share or mutualise the costs and benefits of environmental management. Within the academic literature the term was used in an attempt to evoke the early utopian calling of co-operatives and a desire to evoke the spirit of solidarity that once underpinned the success of Dutch agriculture. In reality, these new farmers' organisation did not follow the Dutch cooperative model and, in some ways, reflect the erosion of this model rather than a rediscovery of the principles of solidarity among farmers. These organisations are local structures that exist alongside the powerful agricultural production cooperatives that have now internationalised their activities[57]. Wiskerke et al (2003, 3) underline that these new environmental "cooperatives" consist of "regional co-operations of (mostly) agricultural entrepreneurs [that] aim to integrate environment, nature and landscape objectives into farming practices at a regional level". With the exception of a few cases, they are not concerned with organising production, processing and distribution, and the farmers who belong to these cooperatives mostly continue producing for the established cooperative agribusinesses.

Over time, the term "environmental cooperative" (*milieucooperatie*) was progressively replaced by the term "nature associations" (*natuurvereniging*), which more accurately reflects the legal status and activities of most of these organisations. According to a study by Polman (2002), only 4 of the 81 'environmental cooperatives' existing in 1991 were legally structured as cooperatives[58]. The status of the majority created an organisational type that was not solely restricted to farmers and allowed other allies to be enrolled, an important feature during a period when discourses about rurality were highly divergent (Frouws 1998). Oerlemans et al (2004) estimate the membership of non-farmers in these associations to vary between 6% and 25%.

[57] The scale-enlargement of the cooperatives through successive mergers (in the dairy sector in particular) and the involvement of external shareholders have led to changes in the role of individual farmers within the very institutions that they created. The re-affirmation of the same spirit at the local level, by using the term 'environmental cooperative', was certainly animated by a feeling of dispossession among some farmers who saw these new institutions as a local response to broader changes that were largely beyond their control.

[58] The remainder were structured as follows: 18 foundations, 53 associations, and 6 other unknown structures (Polman 2002).

The exogenous factors contributing to the emergence of the environmental cooperatives

Although these associations were 'born from within' to paraphrase the expression of van der Ploeg and Long (1994), their emergence was also triggered by exogenous factors, such as the liberal turning point of Dutch agriculture – that left a gap within professional organisations –, and the support that they found amongst parts of the academic community.

The liberal turning point of Dutch agriculture in the eighties provoked several transformations in the state's attitudes to intervention on the sector, the most important of which was seeing the market as the most appropriate regulative mechanism. This led to the state abandoning attempts at regulating farm structures and its free extension service. This new policy was guided by concerns over efficiency and saving public money. It led to the restructuring of the LNV, which was divided into four sub-national units[59]. This evolution weakened the influence of the Farmer Assembly (*landbouwschap*) that previously exerted professional control on the extension services and farm structures regulations (Labarthe 2006). The *landbouwschap* lost much power and progressively failed to represent the interests of the whole sector, which was clearly aggravated by the declining demographic and political power of farmers and the growing pressures from environmental groups. The *landbouwschap* disappeared in the '90s as it no longer served a useful role. The farmers then sought to reorganise their forces under a more unified banner and to move away from a fragmented structure, which they recognised undermined their lobbying influence. Farmers' unions began to merge so as to present a more unified front. This process started in the south of the country with the merging of the catholic and the liberal unions, and continued up to the national level with the creation of the LTO[60] on the 1st January 1995 (Frouws 1994). The loss of free extension services created a vacuum, which became particularly acute when farmers tried to address emerging environmental concerns, and this contributed to this organisational restructuring.

The pioneers of these new organisations were inspired by the work of some scholars at Wageningen University who had been interested in agro-environmental issues since the end of the eighties[61]. These scholars argued that the modernisation of agriculture was neither necessary nor desirable. They started to demystify what neoclassical economists assumed to be the only path of development and proposed an alternative vision of agriculture, more integrated with its natural context. As the link between nature and farming is place-specific, this implies that nature management should be explicitly linked to the particularities of localities; that implies the need to *keep track* of these specificities, as the title of the first research report on this theme suggested (de Bruin and van der Ploeg 1991). This would involve a special type of co-operation between farmers and the authorities. Farmers needed to organise themselves locally and reflect on the 'endogenous' characteristics of their 'locality.' Local authorities needed to give farmers enough room for manoeuvre, so as to solve their problems by themselves and develop their own rural development strategy. Self-regulation was suggested as the most appropriate mode of regulation, which would prevent overly strict environmental guidelines being imposed upon farmers and avoid the development of an overwhelming bureaucracy (de Bruin and van der Ploeg 1991). The researchers proposed this

[59] These four regional administrations replaced 12 Provincial administrations, following the model of organisation of the Ministry of the Environment (VROM).
[60] *Land en Tuinbouw Organisatie*.
[61] Specifically rural sociologists such as Jan Douwe van der Ploeg, René de Bruin and latter on Henk Renting who did intensive field research in Friesland.

organisational model to some farmers in Friesland with whom they had close relations[62] as well to senior management within the LNV[63]. Further support for this approach came from the New Institutional Economists who saw such organisations as an appropriate 'institutional' component for nature management which could act as a *club*-like organisation and help reduce the *transaction costs* associated with nature conservation policies[64]. This analysis helped legitimise these emerging organisations as an appropriate and innovative institutional evolution that was highly suited to the new policy environment.

The institutionalisation of the environmental co-operatives: from self regulation to managers of nature

When the Conservative Liberal Mr. Van Aartsen took his post as Minister for Agriculture, he saw the potential of the environmental co-operatives as an institutional blueprint that could satisfy both the farmers' and the authorities' desire for 'post-corporatist' arrangements. Both groups recognised the importance of incorporating nature preservation within agricultural production but there were few ideas on how to achieve this. Aartsen gave some of the existing territorial farmers' groups some funding to continue with the experiments that they had initiated[65]. This was the first step in their institutionalisation. This became more pronounced with the introduction of SAN, which introduced a far larger stream of subsidies. While implementing the policy, the state found these organisations to be a useful interlocutor, providing the missing link between the state and individual farmers. The government made special financial allocations to support these co-operatives in mobilising and providing information to individual farmers. They also allocated monies directly to local farmer's organisations, letting them distribute it to their members according their own priorities. The authorities were attracted by the seemingly 'post-corporatist' characteristics of these organisations, especially as some of them had their boards open to non-farmers. The 'territorial' character of the new organisations also pleased policy-makers as it was seen as an appropriate way of incorporating local ecological concerns, with the organisations able to cut across traditional sectoral boundaries.

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[62] The researchers had a genuine impact on some places in the Netherlands, Friesland in particular. A leader of one of these organisations commented that the idea of creating local farmer's groups partly originated from interactions with sociologists from Wageningen. The researchers were exploring the ongoing academic debate, which has animated rural sociologists and anthropologists, about how to do field research and to combine a scientific approach with more active social involvement. Participation was therefore one of the keywords not only influencing the researchers to become involved with the local collective action, but also some of the most involved farmers to participate in writing some scientific articles in which they presented their views on the development of agriculture in their region (Hiemstra et al. 1993). This literature discussed the possibilities of systems of local self-regulation, which included a territorial contract between the authorities – the province – and the farmers (Hees et al. 1994). Inspired by these reflections and interactions, the farmers created their own local territorial farmer's groups (VEL and VANLA) drawing on the principles of recognition of the locality, self-regulation and the endogeneity of agricultural development. Though a few other similar organisations emerged before VEL and VANLA, the Frisian experiment developed a more theoretical groundwork to the 'environmental cooperative' phenomenon that, later on, spread around the country. This story is further elaborated in chapter 7.

[63] Van der Ploeg meanwhile had become an adviser to the minister Van Aartsen.

[64] Geert van Dijk belongs to this group. He is considered to be one of the fathers of the 'environmental cooperative' concept. He saw such organisations, set up in a classic cooperative juridical form (one farmer = one vote) as a way of internalising environmental externalities. The idea of environmental cooperative was later utilised by Nico Polman and Louis Slangen who saw these organisations as an institutional innovation for nature conservation schemes (Slangen and Polman 2002).

[65] This concerns eight of these groups, including: Vel and Vanla (Friesland), Milieu Cooperatie Peel (Limburg, Noord Branband), the South of Limburg (in its entirety), Waterland (Noord Holland), Ommer Marke te Ommen (Overijssel).

The legal structure and more pluralistic membership of the environmental cooperatives later led the government to view them as suitable nature managers within SAN. Van Aartsen, who wished to implement an efficient administrative system for nature management, wanted to give nature managers a greater sense of responsibility and restrict public sector involvement to evaluation. Initially this approach was adopted with existing conservation organisations, such as *Natuurmonumenten* or provincial organisations like *Fryske Gea*, which were able to sign such contracts for nature protection within the National Ecological Network (EHS). Outside of EHS areas, farmers were able to sign individual agri-environmental contracts; but it seemed more attractive to develop direct links between these territorial groups and the state, since this would encourage cooperation among farmers and reduce the administrative burden and cost. This configuration contained the seeds of the managerial doctrine that later emerged, with the authorities setting up contractual agreements to conserve the natural patrimony at the appropriate territorial level (both inside and outside the EHS) with private – or semi-private – organisations[66].

This initial funding represented an official recognition of the farmers' associations, who could use some of the grant to cover their administration costs. It also encouraged the establishment of other similar organisations, leading to a large increase in their number from less than 10 in 1994 to 124 ten years later. In 2004, about 10% of all Dutch farmers belonged to this kind of organisation (Oerlemans et al. 2004). The growth and success of these organisations corresponded to their involvement in the nature conservation policy instrument. It involved a process of institutionalisation, which somewhat diluted the initial ambitions of the pioneers. The system did not end up being as self-governing and self-regulatory, as they had initially envisaged. First, the European Union, which co-finances the contracts, refused to allocate subsidies to the farmers' organisations; the subsidies had to be paid directly to farmers in order to guarantee transparency and to ensure that the money was appropriately and equitably distributed among farmers. The associations, however, still benefit from the grant that they receive for their work in organising and structuring the local groups for nature conservation; but they were not able to administer all of the money as originally intended. Second, with the SAN, their role was limited to nature conservation. Third, their search for autonomy was weakened as they were not able to establish local arrangements for self-regulation. As chapter 6 shows, the construction of the nature protection measures was largely done at the national level and dominated by ecological expertise. Thus, these organisations became managers of nature, with a limited role that consisted of informing and mobilising farmers and implementing the scheme.

5.4 The empowerment of French local professional organisations through the implementation of the CTE

In France, the CTE signalled a fundamental renewal of the pact between the state and professional agricultural organisations and revived their working and cooperative relations. At the national level, the Ministry of Agriculture, under the guidance of its various services and the cabinet of the minister, took charge of the construction and application of the policy. Compliance and payment were delegated to the *Centre National pour l'Aménagement des*

[66] Part of the territory within the EHS is managed by the State agency SBB and this land did not enter into the programme. Nonetheless, its management is also framed by a contractual agreement whose structure became more autonomous from 1992. Up to 80% of the costs of the management are financed by the state and the trend is to give more autonomy to the organisation to create a more financially 'efficient' Public Private Partnership.

Structures des Exploitations Agricoles (CNASEA), the organisation that used to be responsible for the structural farm instruments in different agricultural sectors.[67] Many of the other administrative tasks were delegated locally to the professional organisations. The Ministry of Agriculture encouraged its local units to sign agreements of cooperation and delegation with the professional organisations. This arrangement, which was clearly stipulated in the administrative memo of 17 November 1999, specifically mentioned ADASEA and the chambers of agriculture, both of which function at the level of the *départements*.

From the 1960s onwards, both these institutions had played a crucial role in the modernisation of agriculture and the management of the structural policies. ADASEA was created under the laws for promoting modernisation and had responsibility for all the administrative tasks related to the implementation of the modernisation process. It was also responsible for seeing through the policies of farm restructuring, for managing the various existing subsidies and public structural interventions. It also managed the allocations for young farmers (DJA)[68], the live annuity for departure (IVD)[69] and some of the agro-environmental measures introduced from 1992 onwards. With the CTE, the ADASEA became the organisation responsible for pre-registering the individual dossiers in every *département.* The chambers of agriculture were assigned responsibilities for policy application. During the modernisation era, they had been delegated the role of agricultural and rural development. They had played a crucial role in consulting with farmers, in animation and economic development, disseminating technical knowledge and rationalising production systems. Thus it was a natural progression for them to be allocated tasks relating to animation.

The local organisational settings that emerged represented a sort of renewal of the old co-management style that these organisations had enjoyed with the state. This co-management system was embedded locally by the local administrations of the Ministry of Agriculture and the *Directions Départementales de l'Agriculture et de la Forêt* (DDAF). These pragmatic choices can mostly be explained by the longevity of these organisations, which had long been the main pillars of agricultural development in the French *départements.*

The longevity of the local professional organisations

The longevity of the local professional organisations, the chambers of agriculture and the ADASEA in particular, is due to their long-standing role in providing public services. This was grounded on a continuing compromise over delegation between the state and the dominant agricultural syndicates, the *Fédération Nationale des Structures d'Exploitation Agricoles* (FNSEA) and the union of young farmers (CNJA), the leaders of which were closely involved in the governance of professional structures (chambers of agriculture, ADASEA). An ongoing alliance was made between both syndicates to assure a majority position within the profession. This coalition between the FNSEA-CNJA assured them control of almost all the professional organisations. In addition to controlling the boards of the

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[67] Another organisation was also responsible for payments, the *Office National Interprofessionnel des Oléagineux, Protéagineux et Cultures textiles* (ONIOL - the Inter-professional Organisation for Oleaginous and Proteaginous Crops). The Berlin Agreement had significantly decreased the level of subsidies to this group of producers and French producers managed to obtain concessions which allowed the 'transfer' of grants for these producers, so as to maintain their viability.

[68] In French, the *Dotation Jeune Agriculteur* (DJA), created in 1973 and still extant.

[69] In French, the *Indemnité Viagère de Départ* (IVD). The principle of this measure was to offer retired farmers a supplementary pension if their farm holdings were passed onto an active farmer. This instrument was abandoned in 1990, but the "ongoing" character of the policy still entails some payments.

professional organisations, they were also well represented on numerous statutory local and national commissions and committees. This position helped maintain a unified position of support among farmers for state interventionism in agriculture, maintain some of the traditional instruments of agricultural regulation and to keep their role in managing these instruments.

However, there was growing discontent within the farming community over the governance of these organisations and the 'efficacy' of interventionism. The FNSEA was accused by the left wing union '*Paysans-Travailleurs*'[70] of having conflicting objectives – of supporting interventionism but also favouring the interests of an increasingly small minority of farmers. They accused the FNSEA of not acting enough in favour of small-scale farmers. Instead of lobbying to maintain existing farm structures, they claimed that the FNSEA did little more than warn against decreases in farm numbers. The FNSEA sought to display a unified front; but it had to work hard to maintain solidarity among its members (with sometimes conflicting interests) while supporting the concentration and the scaling-up of the farms that, it believed, was 'necessary' for increasing productivity. The resulting intervention on farm structures veered more towards creating the socio-economic conditions for increased and concentrated production than towards maintaining as many farms and farmers as possible.

Despite these internal tensions and contradictions, the practice of co-management remained barely unaltered by the successive changes of government throughout the '80s and '90s, allowing French agriculture to follow a much less liberal trajectory than many of its neighbours (the Netherlands in particular). The influential position of the FNSEA, institutionally grounded as a representative body, guaranteed a 'lock-in' effect and preserved the legitimacy of the professional organisations in different areas of the agricultural economy. It managed to control the mechanisms of state-profession co-management and helped perpetuate these arrangements from within.

The renewal and transformation of the professional organisations

In the nineties, with the emergence of the recognition of environmental problems and regulations to tackle the negative effects of intensification, the professional organisations managed to present themselves as the natural partners in the application of innovative and/or experimental instruments (Duclos 1998). The chambers of agriculture took advantage of their position to define the technical frameworks of policy measures, such as the management of nitrate pollution (Brives 1998) and experiments in limiting the use of fertilisers. It was also one of the main professional interlocutors of the state for applying the first experimental contractual policy; the *Plan de Développement Durable* (PDD). Similarly, ADASEA also managed to expand its competences to include the management, animation and coordination of some of the first agro-environmental policies. In so doing, it developed a portfolio of responsibilities similar to those of the chambers of agriculture. As other professional organisations became involved in the procedural instruments, these two started to broaden the content of their tasks from a concern with the technical and economic aspects of agricultural production, to incorporate other aspects and issues such as water pollution, landscape and biodiversity.

[70] This union was later involved in establishing the *Confederation Paysanne*, which gradually added an environmentalist element to its criticism of agricultural modernisation.

This breach permitted these organisations to extend the range of their activities to other rural concerns, not just linked to agriculture. This occurred at the same time as increasing demand for *territorial diagnostics,* which sought to discover new development strategies to respond to demographic, economic and social change in rural areas. Both ADASEA and the chambers of agriculture were able to respond to these demands and offer their services in this new field. Thus the professional organisations not only readjusted the scope of their activities to meet the emerging transformations of agriculture, but also broadened their competencies to fields of knowledge that extended beyond the agricultural world. From the 1990s onwards, an increasing part of their income came from delivering these new services.

These adjustments did not occur by chance, but were part of a broader strategy adopted by that these organisations in preparing themselves for possible reductions in their traditional fields of activity. This new revenue stream would compensate for the funds that traditionally financed them, which were increasingly at threat. This threat later materialised when the Ministry of Finance discontinued funding the National Agency for Agricultural Development (ANDAR), which traditionally financed some of the activities of the chambers of agriculture[71]. With traditional sources of funding diminished, a more competitive climate emerged between the two organisations, with both applying for the same projects. However, this period of competition was relatively short lived as the CTE led to a re-establishment of well-defined grounds of cooperation between the two organisations.

The CTE and the empowerment of the professional organisations

The reactivation of co-management mechanisms between the state and the professional organisations brought about by the CTE represented an implicit compromise between the political elites and farmers. The state needed partners to avoid taking on board the massive tasks of coordinating the scheme. The socialist government, which had prepared the orientation of 1999, needed as much support as possible from farmers to give legitimacy to this new policy. The support of the professional organisations was therefore needed to mobilise the agricultural sector behind the new policy. As the policy required the voluntary engagement of farmers, it was necessary to have positive publicity and the involvement of the professional organisations, well distributed across the country, to recruit sufficient numbers of interested farmers. The socialist government was also keen to renew a pact with the agricultural world and weaken the attachment of some farmers to right wing parties. And, as in other EU countries, there was the challenge of utilising the entire budget allocated by the EU for rural development.

The delegation of much of the work involved in implementing the CTE was therefore part of a political compromise that underpinned the acceptance of the policy by farmers. Other options would have been seen as provocative by farmers and might even have led to organised resistance from the professional organisations. ADASEA was seen as the natural intermediary between individual farmers and the administration in registering and managing the individual dossiers, a similar role to the one it had performed in other contexts since the ’60s. The chambers of agriculture also managed to maintain a privileged place in policy implementation. Their mission was to coordinate the processes, define the orientations and priorities in accordance with the locally defined Agricultural Project of the *Département* (PAD), define the collective and individual diagnostics and projects, and help elaborate codes

[71] The ANDA was initially converted into a broader agency for rural development (ADAR) in 2002 but was closed down in 2005.

of practice for applying the policy locally. Cooperation agreements were signed in every département and a special budget was established to fund all this (the FFCTE).

The CTE generated a complex administrative machinery, sometimes referred to by the actors involved as a 'gas-works' (*usine à gaz*). It sometimes struggled to find a way of functioning due to imprecise directions from above and the regular adjustments and readjustments needed to improve and harmonise the systems. The professional organisations charged with implementing the scheme did a good job of making it understandable and manageable at the local level. In this respect, the CTE did renew the pact between the state and professional organisations and partly re-established their role as co-managers of agricultural policies.

5.5 Conclusions

The institutional arrangements set up around the two national policies both reflected and further embedded the existing arrangement between professional agricultural organisations and the state. The content, scope and modalities of the policies structured, reinforced or weakened the influence of the professional organisations, their management role and their relationship with public authorities. In both cases, the agricultural organisations were recognised by public powers as interlocutors, not only in terms of discussing the content and modalities of the policies[72] but also, to a certain extent, in co-managing the administrative tasks involved in applying the policy instruments. But this active participation differed greatly between the two countries. The French local professional organisations benefited from their institutional legitimacy and imposed themselves as the appropriate actors to take on a substantial amount of the tasks (administrative building of the dossiers, construction of projects with farmers, advice and educational programmes for farmers, etc.). Their involvement also corresponded to the broad objectives of French agricultural policy. In contrast, the strictly conservationist Dutch policy provided a relatively limited role to agricultural organisations. The authorities gave some limited powers to the recently emerged territorially-anchored farmers' organisations, which had emerged as a result of the crisis of legitimacy among Dutch agricultural professional organisations. Though this 'institutional innovation' was linked to the rediscovery of ecological territory, it was also symptomatic of a search for legitimacy linked to the recent disempowerment of professional bodies. The scope of their action remained limited and their opportunities to cooperate with the authorities more fragile than in France. This says much about the reluctance of the Dutch state to reproduce the modes of regulation that it had employed during the modernisation era. Instead, it adopted a much more managerial nature policy in which farmers' organisations took on the role of managing nature. Their broader involvement was thwarted by a policy framework in which nature protection was the sole structuring element.

The different roles played by agricultural organisations is visible not only through this analysis of the role they played in implementing policy, but also observable through the influence that they had during the policy-making process, as described in the next chapter.

[72] This point will be further elaborated on in the next chapter.

Chapter 6. Decision-making processes and the definition of the policy framework

6.1 Introduction

The policy instruments for multifunctional agriculture are part of a range of transformations that together define the new normative contours of farming. Defining the policy framework is a highly political process, since not all actors share the same visions of multifunctional agriculture. Thus the mechanisms of decision-making during the design and implementation of the policy instruments are crucial in influencing the policy framework. In this regard, farmers no longer had a monopoly in defining farming, as other stakeholders particularly environmentalists, also had some say in the matter. Thus farmers' interests had to cope with other discourses that also seek to shape policy. Theses contradictory visions of agriculture came face to face in political arenas where such decisions were discussed and negotiated, through what Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) called 'deliberative democracy'[73]. But the distribution of power, the construction of these deliberative arenas and their modes of functioning, were all highly dependent on the way in which the problems were initially formulated. The various definitions of multifunctionality were revealed both through power struggles within the deliberative mechanisms and the way these deliberative spaces were built. Their shape influenced the involvement and participation of actors in the policy-making process and therefore conditioned the process of norm construction. The aim of this chapter is to elaborate on the 'governance structure' – understood as the structure of power in place throughout the decision-making process. *A key question here is whether the traditional mechanisms of decision-making in which the state and professional farmers were closely linked in a system of co-management gave way to more pluralistic processes, where other stakeholders had an influence in decision-making.* After outlining some basic aspects about decision-making in agriculture in each country, the two national policies (SAN in the Netherlands and the CTE in France) are investigated in detail. The analysis focuses on the types of arenas, discussion boards and working groups created for constructing the policy-framework, the institutional orchestration of the debates and decision-making and the asymmetries of power between different stakeholders.

6.2 The transformation of decision-making in agriculture

Before presenting a detailed description of the decision-making processes at stake in the respective policies, it is important to review the pre-existing configuration of power for decision making in agriculture. Over time, professional organisations had enjoyed quite considerable power and influence, shared with them by the state. This regulatory mechanism was often presented as an alternative to a *dirigiste* approach in which the state has overwhelming power. The state, however, did still maintain an important role in governing the negotiation processes, controlling the conditions of labour organisation and implementing public policies (Supiot 1987; Grossman and Saurugger 2006). Despite the frequent assertions of the particularity of agriculture by its representatives, these characteristics are shared with

[73] Some authors such as van Tatenhove et al (2000) also call this phenomenon 'political modernisation'.

many other sectors of the economy. The farmers are highly organised in professional groups and representative bodies, which grew in strength and influence during the post-war period of agricultural modernisation. This period saw a formalisation of the structures of these bodies and institutionalised relations between them and the state. The agricultural professional organisations turned out to be an active force which state authorities could rely on in promoting modernisation. In return the state kept its promises of promoting the welfare and status of professionalised farmers.

This relationship took a slightly different form in the two countries. In France, the co-administration between the professional bodies and the state was marked by face-to-face meetings between political leaders and executives of the main farmers' union, the *Fédération Nationale des Structures d'Exploitations Agricoles* (FNSEA). It was symbolised, at the national level, by the annual conference, a sort of yearly ritual where the Ministry of Agriculture and most of the professional organisations gathered to define the main orientations for agriculture in the coming year(s) (Coulomb 1990).

In the Netherlands, the relationship took form of a pillarised structure, following the Dutch model in which society was organised in belief-based 'pillars' (Liberal, Protestant and Catholic) (Lijphart 1968; Andeweg and Irwin 2002). In agriculture, this structure expressed the implicit social consensus among farmers over the conditions and modalities of agricultural modernisation. One of the crucial elements of Dutch agricultural corporatism was the *Landbouwschap*, an agricultural assembly that represented various professional interests. This farmers' assembly was "charged with consensus building at the top level, vested with public powers, and it functioned as the official spokesman with government in all matters of agricultural policy" (Frouws and Ettema 1994, 103). One feature of the *Landbouwschap* was its twofold territorial and belief based structure which helped maintain a solid consensus on agriculture. The economic liberalism that the Protestants drew on was complemented by the morals of the Catholics, who believed that public intervention should be aimed at broader social goals (Hairy and Perraud 1977). One element of the well-anchored consensus was that the poorest agricultural regions, mainly with sandy soils and in Catholic areas in the south of the country, would be modernised as much as the agricultural areas with better soils, mainly in Protestant regions in other parts of the country (Devienne 1989). Thus the *Landbouwschap* was the foundation of the structured relationship between the state and professional farmers.

In both countries, the system of regulation could be simplistically pictured as a mutual alliance between the state and farmers. In France, this close relationship was described by political scientists as a system of '*cogestion'*, that is a system in which the profession and the state co-administered and co-regulated agricultural affairs (Billaud 1990). The Dutch literature often talks of the 'iron triangle'[74] in describing the relation between the professional organisations, the political elites and the expert knowledge system within the Ministry of Agriculture. This concept was used to depict the ongoing social and political resistance of professional farming to a succession of environmental attacks from the 1960s onwards (Frouws 1994). More generally, the term iron triangle was used to depict the erosion of this system of governing than to describe its permanent and undisturbed reproduction. As Billaud commented at the very moment that the wheels of a regulatory system are described in detail then the threat to its existence as a stabilised regulatory mechanism increases (Billaud 1990).

[74] This concept of 'iron triangle' was used and criticised by Heclo to discuss how federal policies were made up in the United States of America to describe the existing coalition between members of the Congress, interest lobbies and career civil servants (Heclo 1978).

From the ’80s onwards the stability of this system of governance came under threat. This originated from liberal criticisms challenging the legitimacy of government intervention in agricultural affairs – especially in periods of overcapacity. Other criticisms came from environmentalists who were concerned about the effects of intensification. While agriculture was not their only target, it was a major one. While the environmental movement initially was protest based, it quite quickly came to present itself (in some cases) as a potential partner in constructing public policies (Lascoumes 1994). Over time policy makers became obliged to recognise these views and institute spaces for social dialogue and participation in policy making. According to Duran and Thoenig (1996), this corresponds to a general phenomenon of the ‘institutionalisation of negotiation’. The state maintains the right to enact the rules of the game via ‘constitutive’ law, and legitimises its intervention through bringing the different stakeholders together.

But these new practices of policy-making also raise new questions that are connected to the place and weight of the different actors. To what extent do they these new stakeholders influence decisions? Do the interests of farmers carry as much weight as before? How is the balance of power negotiated? These crucial questions are addressed in the following sections.

6.3 The Dutch Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN) and the power of ecological expertise

The development of the normative framework of the Dutch Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN) was organised in two major phases. The first consisted in developing a national package of measures for nature protection. This mainly took place under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries (LNV) and mostly involved mobilising ecological expertise. The second phase concerned the zoning processes; it was decentralised to provincial administrations, and led to differing interpretations of how to implement the policy.

The central role of the Department of Nature Protection within the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries (LNV)

Due to the exclusively non-agricultural focus of the National Nature Conservation Scheme, the Department of Nature Protection at the LNV (*Directie Natuur*) took the lead role in the policy-making process. In its early days, this Department was not under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture. Nature conservation initially found its niche in government within the Ministry of Culture. This department largely consisted of scientists experimenting with nature protection. But the move to the LNV marked a change in the importance accorded to nature conservation, which changed from being solely a question of preserving patrimony to one that played a broader role in rural transformation. Many ecologists in the department did not welcome their transfer to the LNV, as they considered this ministry to be one of their worst enemies. Yet the move contributed towards a change in the ministry's broader orientation (De Vries 1999) and the influence of the 'natuur' division increased as the political project of conservation took shape in the 1980s and 1990s. It subsequently emerged to be one of the main pillars of the ministry. The Directorate of Nature Protection logically took the lead in drawing up the terms of reference of the SAN, determining how it would be implemented and orchestrating the participation and negotiation processes.

The ad hoc pluralist groups of discussion and negotiation

In preparing the implementation of the regulation, negotiation and working groups were established at the national level. Two *ad hoc* commissions were established. The first was a monitoring group whose role was to advise on the most appropriate ways of implementing the policy (particularly defining the nature, content and number of measures that could be subsidised). This group consisted of the major stakeholders, the main landowners, the farmers represented by the newly formed union *Land en Tuinbouw Organisatie* (LTO), and private conservationist organisations, such as *Natuurmonumenten*. The state agency *Staatsbosbeheer* (SBB), which also manages some natural spaces, was not directly represented[75], but had a seat as an expert. The landscape federation (*Landschapsbeheer Nederland* -LBN) was also invited as an expert for its recognised role in nature and landscape management in agricultural areas. A further state agency *Dienst Landelijk Gebied* (DLG), with experience with the previous nature protection scheme (Relatie Nota) was also consulted for its expertise in nature protection policy instruments. Finally, the Expertise Centre of the LNV[76], and the national body representing the provinces, *Interprovinciaal Overleg (*IPO), were also invited.

A more technical group was set up to assist the monitoring group. This group was charged with more detailed examination of the issues raised and the practical points that needed clarifying. This group contained the same spectrum of stakeholders.

Both of these groups worked together to establish the content of the measures and how the policy would be applied. The coordination role was essential as the framework generated many intricacies. It took some four years (from 1997 to 2000) to come to grips with the numerous problematic issues. This was in large part due to the long list of specific issues that they had to address (adapting the measures to EU standards, wide-scale implementation of the policy instrument etc.). It was also made more complex by the difficulty in creating one single framework that could cover the diversity of possible configurations of nature protection across the country. It was the task of this dual commission to devise a centralised policy that would be appropriate to this range of diversity. The task was by no means simple and assured a strong representation of environmentalist expertise in the policy-making process. The main debates and controversies emerged among the environmentalists who did not agree on all issues, with the earlier cleavage between the 'separationists' and the 'restorationists' re-emerging through the policy process.

The two conceptions of nature: 'process-oriented' and 'pattern-oriented'

One of the main debates that occupied these two commissions concerned the legitimacy and relevance of considering farmers as potential managers of nature in the same way as conservation organisations were. Many ecologists were unconvinced of farmers' interest or capacity to maintain nature. Some asked whether: "farmers [were] able to create 'high value' nature?"[77] There was a view that it was a waste of time and money to invest in paying farmers

[75] SBB is a state agency in charge of managing some of the public estates with natural features (reserves, natural parks…). Most of its employees are civil servants directly paid by the state. For this reason the organisation does not fall under the Nature Management Scheme, which only covers private landowners, such as conservation organisations or farmers.

[76] The "Expertise Centrum" later on became connected with the "Directie Kennis" (Knowledge Directorate") of the Ministry of LNV.

[77] Interview with a member of the technical group (February 2006).

to maintain or create nature, a task that was far too 'serious' to be left to them. This position was mainly hold by the conservation organisations and their supporters, who favoured a nature protection policy that was restricted to well-defined areas of 'wild' nature. They thought that a farmers' approach to protecting nature would be as intensive as animal husbandry techniques. As a member of the technical group commented:

"[Opponents to nature farmland contracts] think that the quality of nature on farms is low. It is not worth spending for poor results. The value of nature in the National Ecological Structure (EHS) is so high that it is pointless to spend money elsewhere." [78]

These two approaches to nature protection were clearly in opposition to each other. One group which was the most hostile to farmers' involvement promoted the idea of a 'pattern-oriented' nature, in which nature was defined as biological space with the minimum possible human intervention. This group did not see 'breeding' birds or 'cultivating' protected species of plants as appropriate activities for biodiversity. The other view sought to include farmers in the process of nature protection and emphasised the relativity of 'nature,' arguing for different possible patterns. The holders of this 'process-oriented' approach argued for a more anthropocentric and integrated nature protection model. They saw that effective biodiversity conservation would be more likely if good practices were widely instituted, rather than limited to a few restricted areas. The agriculture-nature configurations that these practices would give rise to would be no less 'natural' than the 'natural' places produced by the EHS, which sometimes required major infra-structural transformations.

The coalition for farmer-centred nature protection

The ecologists in LBN, the landscape organisation, had for many years been developing an integrated vision of the landscape and nature preservation which involved collaborating with farmers. They supported a 'process-oriented' approach, as did officials from the DLG who had experience with the nature conservation contracts under the previous agro-environmental policy; this early scheme had convinced them of the inherent ecological value of nature protection in agricultural areas. This coalition, which saw on-farm nature conservation as legitimate, also included the farmers' union (the LTO) since some farmers saw the contractual instruments as a possible tool for future development. Joining this coalition was part of a process of transformation for the, recently created, LTO and the organisations it represented. The LTO was aware of recent farmer-led environmental initiatives, particularly the establishment of environmental cooperatives[79]. They represented an emerging view that farmers needed to take environmental issues into account and should do so in a voluntary, even proactive, way rather than reject the environmentalist agenda outright, as was common among farmers at that time. Though this was a new position for farmers and at odds with the traditional position of the agricultural unions, the executives of LTO saw working for the environment as a possible opportunity for the future development of agriculture.

"There is a trend for more and more environment. That is the reason why some farmers have started to do something about it. We can also manage the countryside and the landscape. Why should other people do that? […] Give us some money and we can do it better (than others)."[80]

[78] Interview with a member of the technical group (February 2006).
[79] More details about the environmental co-operatives can be found in chapter 5.
[80] Interview with an employee of *Natuurlijk Platteland* (April 2004).

LTO proposed creating regional and national representative bodies so as to federate the existing territorial farmers' groups, as had already happened in the western part of the country. Instead of opposing environmentalist interests, the leaders of the LTO convinced the farmers' leaders who were hostile to the environment to let the LTO take a lead role within it. This led to the creation of a "multifunctional" section (*Natuurlijk Platteland*) within the LTO that could federate the territorial groups, structure and unify them, and create a more organised network of regional and national representative bodies. The LTO fully embraced the 'process-oriented' discourse on nature conservation and integrated it into its strategy.

The 'result-oriented' approach of the LNV

The accounting approach chosen by the minister Van Aartsen helped ease this debate and forced the opposing sides to reconcile their differences. His approach entailed setting a result-based evaluation method that was applicable to all private managers of nature. Farmers were included as potential providers of environmental services and were able to make proposals to the authorities for nature protection projects. It was anticipated that this result-oriented approach would increase the sense of responsibility felt by the recipients of subsidies and standardise the evaluation criteria so that the efficacy of different nature protection practices could be measured and compared. One of the participants of the working group summarised it thus:

"The minister Van Aartsen wanted more well-defined targets. There had already been a quarrel with the farmers about setting concrete targets. Previously, the management measures were defined, the farmers applied them and if nature didn't improve, then they still received their money. Van Aartsen […] said: 'we have to define what kind of nature we want. The farmers do their job, and then, [only] if the results are there, are they paid"[81].

At first, objectives in terms of 'nature elements' were established, to have clear data on what the precise goals were. Extensive surveys were carried out across the country to define, count and index the varieties of ecosystems and the species and habitats that should be protected. Ecological scientists from the LNV's Expertise Centre were then asked to elaborate on this mapping, and provide a full list of 'nature goals.' The next step was to transcribe these scientifically determined goals into a full list of measures and packages for protection. These goals were discussed extensively by officials at the DLG who criticised their highly theoretical bias and wanted to see them more explicitly related to the realities of conservation practices. They thought that there were too many goals and that they were disconnected from reality in the field, making it difficult to apply them in practice. During the 1980s, the nature conservation instrument had produced too many protection measures and policy-makers had to significantly reduce their number to make the scheme simpler. The policy-makers were grappling with the same contradictions again and sought a reduction in measures to make the programme more manageable. A complex scientific reality was therefore distilled into a manageable package of measures. From 75 nature conservation goals, about 30 packages for nature conservation and 20 packages for landscape preservation were adopted. Priority was thus given to pragmatism rather than a more precise – but also more administratively complicated – system of nature management. This result-oriented approach implicitly favoured the 'process-oriented' approach. Through qualitatively and quantitatively defining nature objectives the scheme explicitly set a list of targets. Each 'package' resembled a set of

[81] Interview with a member of the technical group (06-02-2006).

measurable and assessable nature objectives, enabling payment of the subsidy to be conditional upon the results stipulated in the management framework[82].

Decentralised zoning

This first phase of design, based around ecological rationality and administrative pragmatism, was followed by a second one that involved processes of social negotiation at the provincial level. Those who supported a zoned and geographically limited application of the policy found that they had very little control over the zoning process as this was the responsibility of the provinces which played a central role in the country's strong spatial planning policy. The partial decentralisation of the SAN was meant to integrate it with the spatial planning logic of provincial administrations. This allowed the provincial planners and politicians to fine tune the SAN in relation to their own priorities; it also left them open to lobbying from different local stakeholders. The provinces were charged with mapping their territory and indicating precisely which areas would be eligible to apply for contracts. They were given explicit instructions that priority should be given to remarkable zones, as had been the case with the EHS. This still left the provinces with some room for manoeuvre, according to their views on what nature was and whether it should be kept within tightly delineated perimeters where public effort would be concentrated or a much broader conception of nature that possibly integrated agricultural activities. These boundaries would determine the areas where farmers could apply for the nature conservation subsidy. Some of the provinces, such as Friesland adopted a very broad zoning that covered their entire agricultural territory – to the displeasure of some ecologists who thought that this was contrary to the plan that they had worked on:

"The politicians at the provincial level are very involved with agriculture. So farmers have an important influence in the policy making at this level, far more than nature organisations. So the EHS is not so important anymore when they talk about multifunctional agriculture. In Friesland, they say 'it is not important at all'. Of course provincial policy-makers are very concerned with farmers earning money as farming is becoming difficult in the Netherlands. […But] The money for nature is not meant to help farmers. You should use other sources of money. It is important to help farmers, but not with nature money"[83]

In reality these two options – selective zoning and the 'roomy' approach – were applied almost evenly among the twelve provincial administrations (see Chapter 10).

This decentralised implementation of the policy was something that the ecologists (the separationists) were not able to control. The conservationist orientation of the policy and the relatively centralised first phase of policy development allowed the ecologists to dominate the debate and to set quite a tight agenda. It allowed concerns of ecological 'efficiency' in terms of, say the number of species protected, to take precedence (although these ecological requisites did not actually condition the allocation of the entire grant). This concern, widely shared throughout the policy forum, fed the existing cleavage between the restorationists and the pro-farmer conservationists[84]. The 'process-oriented' vision of nature of the last group fitted well with the objectives of ecological rationalisation promoted by the minister and led

[82] The philosophy of the result-oriented approach was not fully integrated into the payment mechanism as it only covers 15% of the grant.
[83] Interview with an official of the LNV, February 2006.
[84] This gave rise to debate amongst ecological scientists who tackled the issue and even questioned the ecological efficiency of the contracts and managed to carry this debate as far as the prestigious scientific review *Nature* (Kleijn et al. 2001).

to a very strict ecological policy-framework, in which evaluation and environmental results took priority. This also allowed farmers to become included within a coalition of actors and legitimise their own role in conservation at the provincial level.

6.4 The Farm Territorial Contracts (CTE) and the reproduction of state-profession co-management in France

In France, the basis of the Farm Territorial Contracts (CTE) was set between the institutions that were already well-established in implementing the existing structural policies. But this process was also marked by an attempt to open up the classical mechanism of state-profession co-management to a broader range of rural interests.

The central role of the Ministry of Agriculture and 'top-down and bottom-down' dynamics

Policy makers within the Ministry of Agriculture wished to utilise the traditional and efficient system of local administration to build up a list of measures adapted to different local situations. They envisaged that this administrative system could better identify a variety of projects and also be a place for local consensus-building. Thus the ministry decided to utilise the existing institutional infrastructure responsible for the governance and management of socio-structural policies. This reveals two major strategic choices that underpinned the direction and administration of the norm construction process.

First, it is important to stress that, the Ministry of Agriculture chose to give priority to efficiency and pragmatism in the management of the policy. The service traditionally responsible for handling the structural farm policies and rural development instruments, the *Direction des Exploitations, de la Protection Sociale et de l'Emploi* (DEPSE), took the lead in implementing the CTE. Its experience in managing structural policies made it a logical choice for managing this policy. Yet, there was another option as another department, the *Direction de l'Espace Rural et de la Forêt* (DERF), was equally qualified for this mission as it had experience in contractual policies. This section, considered as the 'idea box' of the ministry, had experimented with designing creative and innovative policy instruments (Brun 2006), including experiments with the PDD – an earlier contractual policy prior that also contained both environmental and socio-economic aspects. Unfortunately for the DERF, its small-scale and experimental role undermined its chances of taking a more central and powerful place within the ministry. Priority was given to the pragmatic administrative expertise of a larger division and, while cooperation between the two was intended the DEPSE imposed itself as the powerhouse in policy design (Brun 2006)[85].

These choices were reproduced through the different levels (regional and departmental) of the ministry's administration[86]. It was through this framework, and in consultation with the professional organisations, that the list of available measures was drawn up. These were based on the RDRF regulations, which had just been adopted, and had to be translated in such a way as to enable European co-financing. The first task consisted of listing the agro-environmental measures that had been created over the last ten years through various local 'concertation' processes in different parts of the country. The state and the chambers of agriculture jointly

[85] As a result of these tensions, and to put an end to the rivalries the two departments later merged into the *Direction Générale de la Forêt et des Affaires Rurales* (DGFAR) (Brun 2006).

[86] In many départements, the services of the state administration in charge of the dossiers was focused on the agricultural economy and management of the traditional subsidies. These choices were made because of the large experience of subsidies management that these administrative services had.

listed, and detailed as far as possible, the agro-environmental measures implemented in different regions. As this list did not cover the whole range of possibilities under the RDRF, some other measures were added to this general framework. Some proposals for these came from local reflection groups and others (such as the measures for apiculture or agro-forestry) came from the national level. This list was augmented by other locally designed measures that local stakeholders thought showed potential. Thus the design of the policy attempted to couple a top-down approach with a bottom-up dynamic of stakeholder participation. The final national catalogue of measures encompassed a considerable number of prescriptions and options intended to address the entire range of situations faced by agriculture, across the entire country.

The local agricultural commissions (CDOA) as a localised system of governance

The orientation law of 1999 stipulated that any measures had to be submitted at the departmental level to the agricultural assemblies, *Commissions Départementales d'Orientation Agricole* (CDOA). These commissions had been in existence for quite a while, and were the local professional body in charge of controlling the structural policy of the department, through regulating the sale of farmland, production rights or structural subsidies (for establishing young farmers, modernisation plans, etc.)[87]. These departmental regulatory bodies were assigned the task of facilitating local deliberation and debate between the stakeholders as well as consensus building.

Each departmental commission was given sufficient leeway to define how the policy should be applied at the departmental level and to adapt the general framework to local conditions. They judged the local relevance of the measures proposed, whether initiated locally or from a higher level. Farmers were not necessarily free to 'pick and mix' among all the possible measures. The commissions set limits on the measures that could be combined to ensure the coherence of the individual contracts. In some specific areas, there would be compulsory elements to the contracts (such as landscape or water pollution measures). It was also possible for the commissions to specify some models of contracts adapted to territorial or sectoral issues. In general, two types of contracts were possible: a constraining contract which contained a fixed number of measures, or one made up by a free combination of measures taken from the departmental list. This gave farmers the option to choose for a contract *à la carte* or to opt for a full *menu*. The local policy-makers had to balance the needs of allowing flexibility to address the variety of issues at the departmental level, together with the obligation to propose – or even impose – some pertinent measures and constraints. The definition of these modalities was delegated to the CDOA, which was responsible for defining locally the main priorities and for fine-tuning the content and scope of the contracts and the measures within them. Thus the coherence of the system was highly reliant on this level of governance.

These consultative commissions had considerable power as their pronouncements largely shaped the departmental orientations adopted by the state administration (DDAF). They played a crucial role in the local design of the policy. They were composed of the main local professional organisations, such as the chambers of agriculture or ADASEA (in charge of the administrative management of the structural policy instruments) and the main generalist

[87] Only since the modernisation law of 1995 was this system of professional commissions concentrated into one sole commission, as previously the regulations were split across different commissions (Berriet-Solliec and Boinon 2002).

farmers' unions[88]. The structure of power within the CDOA was therefore linked to the results of union elections. But it also depended on other parameters. The influence of these corporate agricultural bodies was renewed by the state in exchange for the commissions' opening up somewhat to include a more pluralistic range of stakeholders. The transformation of their composition was stipulated in an official decree made just one month after the orientation law was passed[89]. It specified that new non-agricultural stakeholders, such as local environmental organisations, hunters' associations and consumer groups should be invited to participate in the debates and discussions. In addition, the local authorities (the *Conseils Régionaux* and *Conseils Généraux*) were also invited to join the local commissions so as to politicise the agricultural and environmental questions. It was hoped that these changes would make the commissions more pluralistic and extend the debate from the closed professional world. There were, however, some uncertainties about the capacity of local environmental or consumer groups to get fully involved in the policy-making process and their ability to incorporate their claims within a the already well-oiled commissions. However, a door had been opened for a more deliberative policy-making process.

A difficult pluralism

This attempt to bring all the 'stakeholders' around the same table and build a more pluralist local arena did not completely work. This was partly due to the fundamental asymmetry of power within the commission. This gave the recently arrived organisations, particularly the consumer groups and environmental organisations, very little influence. The decree that enabled the opening of the CDOA to external stakeholders had been vigorously negotiated with the national professional organisations and, in accepting this change, they had obtained a permanent large majority within each commission (Rémy 2001). As a result, the newcomers were fairly isolated within them, facing strong farmer representation. In some cases, the limited number of seats available to non-agricultural organisations did not allow some environmental organisations to participate in the CDOAs[90]. In some départements, the environmental organisation's right to vote was challenged. Moreover the representatives of these organisations did not always regularly attend the sessions, in contrast to most of the agricultural organisations, which were usually represented by employees[91]. This was because these new stakeholders did not have a complete mastery of all the issues of the agricultural policies discussed. Their attempts to participate in the debates, were hindered by a lack of understanding of the specific codes and references used by the agricultural profession (Boulongne 2000).

"It is sometimes difficult to intervene properly in the CDOA. It is necessary to have people who know the agricultural world and make use of diplomacy. We should make concessions in some cases, and be more definite in other cases.[…]In fact, the agro-environmental policy of the department is not decided in the CDOA. It is the validation of the individual dossiers that really matters. […] We are in a situation in which, in most cases, the die are already cast."[92]

[88] Specifically: the right-wing Coordination Rurale and FNSEA, as well as the more left anchored MODEF and Confédération Paysanne.
[89] Decree n° 99-731 of the 26th August 1999.
[90] This occurred in the Vendée CDOA, where there were just two seats available to environmentalists. These were given to a local environmental organisation (ADEV) and a local organisation of fishermen, preventing another nature protection organisation (LPO) from being represented.
[91] A practice criticised by some agricultural organisations, for example in Isère.
[92] Interview with an environmentalist organisation in Isère, the 28th April 2005.

The other newcomers to the commissions were the local regional and departmental authorities, although they rarely attended the sessions. They said that lack of time was the reason for this apparent lack of interest: they would have to follow all the CDOA proceedings within their regional territory[93]. But what really made them turn down the invitation was the place that they were assigned in the policy-process. Some of them had previously initiated contractual policy instruments that could potentially have fitted within the CTE framework. But, to have these existing measures co-financed by the EU, the local authorities were forced to adapt them to the norms of the national Rural Development Plan (RDP), decided solely within the Ministry of Agriculture. The RDP was submitted to the EU by central government without consulting the local authorities or integrating the particularities of their policy instruments, thus eliminating their possibilities for receiving EU co-financing. Their participation in the CDOA was limited to discussing local adaptations of the RDP, into which they had had no input. They saw little point in getting involved in this process, all the more as they had to initiate the very heavy workload of 'notifying' their own grant system to be eligible for EU co-financing. This greatly angered some local authorities, as expressed by an official of the Region Rhône-Alpes:

"All of a sudden, it was necessary that support to the Région fitted with what the central government had written in the RDP. […] Really, we were on two different planets. They may have thought that after having 'laid' the criteria for support, we would have had nothing more to do than enter as soon as possible into their framework, without asking our opinion. That is the contrary to the spirit of decentralisation!"[94]

Local authorities no longer occupied the same place in the policy-making process as they had before[95]. These elected representatives had a much more limited role, with the same status as any other local stakeholders. Many local authorities refused to accept this position, particularly the regional authorities who would have needed to be involved with all the departmental CDOAs in their regions. Their absence, together with the weakness of the participating non-agricultural organisations meant that most discussions were focused around internal dissensions within the agricultural profession.

The structure of the professional forums

The discussions within the CDOA mainly took place among the farmers and re-animated existing debates between the main farmers' unions about 'models of farming'. Other alternative approaches, such as organic farming, also emerged at this time. Before explaining these cleavages, it is important to recall some aspects of French agricultural unionism.

For several decades, the FNSEA had dominated the boards of the professional agricultural organisations and their representative bodies. Its majority position was due to it championing a discourse that mixed support for modernisation with defence of the family-based model of farming, a position developed by its leaders in the '60s and maintained since then. This domination of the profession was strengthened by an ongoing alliance with the Union of Young Farmers (CNJA) with which they shared power within the professional

[93] There are for instance a total of eight CDOAs in the Rhône-Alpes Region .
[94] Interview undertaken on the 4th August 2003.
[95] The spirit of decentralisation is more based on the idea of delegating responsibility for the policies and their development through a periodic contractual agreement. For the regional authorities, this delegation is negotiated under the 6 years contracts, the "Contrat de Plan Etat Région".

organisations[96]. This gave the FNSEA a strong professional legitimacy which was unalterable even by changes in government[97]. The nineties saw, however, the emergence and growth of dissident forces from outside this alliance. From the left it was outflanked by the *Confédération Paysanne*, and from the right by the *Coordination Rurale*. Though having radically different views these two organisations both denounced the same liberal evolutions of agricultural policy as well as the weak resistance to this from the FNSEA and CNJA, which were seen as no longer adequately defending the interests of farmers. Both sets of criticism had roots in the internal discontents within the FNSEA.

The *Confédération Paysanne* was born in 1987 from the left leaning *Paysans-travailleurs* a branch of farmers who were dissatisfied with FNSEA as they felt that the union was not doing enough to defend the family-based model of farming. In the eighties, these groups joined forces to present a more coherent, operational and powerful opposition, a 'professional counter-power' (Cordellier 1990). They developed a radical criticism of the CAP reform of 1992 that showed the existing and continuing inequality of treatment to farmers in terms of access to European subsidies and showed how this was perpetuating the privileged position enjoyed by productivist and environmentally unfriendly farming systems. In so doing, they cleverly adapted their defence of a peasant-like model of farming with environmentally friendly production. They argued that sustainability had to be grounded in a de-intensification of production and for the adoption of an autonomous and environmentally friendly model of farming.

The right wing critique also originated from dissatisfaction within the FNSEA and led to the creation of the *Coordination Rurale* in 1994. This organisation also emerged from dissatisfaction with the CAP and FNSEA's response to it. They were concerned about the dismantling of the traditional agricultural policy instruments of regulation. They criticised the 1992 reform of the CAP, not because it reproduced the inequalities in the system of subsidy distribution, but because of the fundamental shift in the way in which CAP grants were allocated, which shifted from mechanisms of guaranteed prices to a system of compensatory direct aids. They argued that support for farmers, as for any other entrepreneurs, must be made on the basis of the product, not by the establishment of compensatory payments.

While the local debates may have been over technical issues they reflected these fundamental political cleavages. Both groups of dissident farmers felt the need to demonstrate the compatibility of their claims with the complex realities of the systems of production. Each camp tried to include these concerns by orienting discussions towards various on-farm experiments to test the economic, social and environmental 'sustainability' of the farm. A 'model of farming' based on experimentally proven optimal arrangements of the standards came to be proposed. Some left-leaning farmers, mostly members of the Confédération Paysanne, abandoned the syndicalist battle for a while and started their own on-farm experimentation independently from the chambers of agriculture. Little by little, a network of

[96] Most of the members of the CNJA end up as members of the FNSEA.

[97] Even the socialist party that came in power in 1981 could not radically change this configuration. It tried to reground the *cogestion* by favouring the more left leaning farmers unions. The FNSEA opposed this move and made it clear that nothing was really possible in agriculture without its approval, securing its stable position as a political partner (Muller 1984). Serge Cordellier (1990) also underlined the difficulties faced by the left leaning farmers' union when switching from a position of opposition and dissenting to a more operational role of social partner with the state. This brief episode shows the persistent relations of power within professional organisations that guaranteed (at least until recently) the dominance of the main union and its privileged relations with the government, no matter what its political leanings is.

technical groups of reflection and experimentation, known as the *Réseau d'Agriculture Durable* (RAD), emerged across the whole country[98] (Deléage 2004).

The alliance of FNSEA-CNJA did not accept the radical position that de-intensification was possible, as they believed it would destabilise the agro-industrial complex and have huge consequences for France's participation in international markets. FNSEA and CNJA also participated in the technicisation of the debates, and explored several issues related with nitrate pollution, reduction of chemical use and so forth. An alternative and less radical version of good environmental practices was proposed by some farmers from the CNJA. This model, called 'reasoned agriculture', was much more in keeping with requirements of controllability and certification, and for a while came to be recognised and accepted by the Ministry of Agriculture[99] (Féret and Douguet 2001).

The CDOA as a commission of validation

These technical developments had an influence on the debate within the CDOAs that reflected the cleavages among professional farmers. These confrontations were mainly won by the dominant FNSEA-CJA alliance which supported a broad, rather than a restrictive, policy-framework.

The orientation law emphasised a 'bottom up' approach so that initiatives could emerge from broad consultation with farmers. The main farmers' union fully supported this approach. In many départements, the professional organisations made the local policy-making process as participative as possible so as to encourage developing a large and diverse range of measures. This activity was particularly important during the 'prefiguration phase', a preparatory period in which the structure of the policy framework was established, which gave rise to many projects with different natures (Léger 2001). Some were based on territorial aspects; others more focused on developing and reinforcing industrial and short supply chains. These proposals emanated from various types of stakeholders including professional organisations, cooperatives, farmers' associations, natural parks, and farmers' unions. The role of the CDOA was then one of examining and validating these projects and proposals. The main union supported the validation of most of the projects and measures (as long as they fell within the framework of the RDP) in order to guarantee farmers a large range of choice in building their individual contracts. This greatly multiplied the numbers of measures adopted in each département and the subsequent possibilities of the arrangements.

This intense activity multiplied the conditions for registering for funding. The constraints were eased and softened as the number of measures and possibilities of combining them increased. That was particularly the case for the investment part of the contracts. It became possible for the farmers to receive large sums of money from their contracts without much effort. The Confédération Paysanne watched powerlessly over this aspect of the system:

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[98] The most emblematic of these groups is certainly the one created by André Pochon in Brittany called CEDAPA (*Centre d'études et de Développement pour une Agriculture Plus Autonome*). Some similar groups emerged in the western cattle breeding area of France, such as the CIVAM (Centre d'Initiatives pour Valoriser l'Agriculture et le Milieu rural) and also in the ARDEAR (Association Régionale de Développement de l'Emploi Agricole et Rural). Most of these groups are members of the national network '*Réseau d'Agriculture Durable'* (RAD), which is the national face of these numerous organisations from across the country.

[99] This model is more a system of normalisation than a set of principles of agricultural development and evolved into a certification system through a certification body, the FARRE network (*Forum de l'Agriculture Raisonnée Respectueuse de l'Environnement*). Although it was recognised officially via a report by Guy Paillotin (Pallotin 2000), the former president of the INRA, very few farms were ever certified.

"The limit of the CTE is that it looked like a jackpot with which everything was possible, even contradictory things. The pack of measures for investment was relatively important but could permit intensification on the one hand, and de-intensification, on the other. There was no clear message."[100]

The *Confédération Paysanne* could only propose their own more constraining and all-encompassing measures to the CDOAs to be included into the departmental catalogues. Measure 0104, proposed in most départements by the local members of RAD, was designed to extensify farming practices and establish farming systems that were less dependent on external inputs. But this measure was less attractive to farmers than many others in the catalogue, and had only a limited uptake. While it was but one of the numerous options within the whole catalogue, the FNSEA persistently opposed this measure claiming that it was economic unfeasible and implied a radical shift:

"When one extensifies, one should always do it with the same agricultural surface […]. Nowadays, the farming systems that converted their entire agricultural surface into grassland to produce their own feed are economically dependant, particularly those from the Confédération Paysanne. They don't produce enough feed and need more land… this disfavours young farmer who want to set up."[101]

The system was controlled by the FNSEA and the institutional professional organisations who promoted a system of norms whose overriding aim was facilitating the transfer of funds towards farms. Any constraining requirements were drowned by the competing necessity of creating an instrument that efficiently allocated funds. This was one of the guidelines from the ministry who wished to make maximum use of European co-financing and also wished to consolidate the new socialist governments' relations with farmers prior to the presidential elections in 2002. Together these factors explain the relatively weakness and laxity of state officials in arbitrating the decisions at that time. One of them recalls:

"Very quickly, the CTE became the cash cow of the agricultural sector. There were subsidies for investment with a supposed environmental reason, which, very quickly, provoked a budgetary overspends."[102]

The configuration of power was similar within almost each *département*, but led to quite varied outcomes, depending on the local agricultural geography. In some regions, the focus was on reinforcing the productive capacity of farms (Cochet and Devienne 2002) while in others (particularly in mountainous areas) priority was given to reproducing the landscape and the farm structures that produced it. In all cases, though these outcomes were the result of the state-profession co-management, which drove the local design process. With the *Contract d'Agriculture Durable* (CAD) adopted one year later, the national level sent down stricter directives to the DDAF, forcing them to territorialise their priorities for environmental protection and thereby limiting the choice of measures. It didn't however transform the structures of local deliberation toward more pluralist decision-making and the FNSEA maintained its central role.

[100] Interview with an official of the Confédération Paysanne, 12th September 2005.
[101] Interview with an administrator of the FNSEA, September 2005.
[102] Interview of 14th September 2005.

6.5 Conclusions

The devices for decision-making in each country show some commonalities, such as the continuing centrality of the state in the processes of agenda setting and decision-making (except for the zoning process in the Netherlands). But, as argued in this chapter, they also show some striking differences in terms of the composition of the commissions and arenas involved in the decision-making process, the involvement of non-agricultural organisations and the type of debates that emerged in the policy fora. The extent to which these mechanisms met the ambitions of 'pluralism' largely depended, on the main objectives of the policies. The conservationist focus of the SAN in the Netherlands gave ecological expertise a lead role and meant that the farmers' position was quite weak compared to the plethora of environmental and landscape institutions which largely drove the process. This is due to the policy having no explicit economic purpose, but being part of a broader project of nature conservation that extended far beyond agriculture. The farmers had to cope with a policy framework in which ecological expertise was central to the arbitrations made between stakeholders. They were forced to situate their claim within the logic of nature conservation and legitimise the measures relating to agriculture in terms of effective ecological protection, a far cry from the objectives that they were used to working with. In France, by contrast, the objectives of the policy largely contributed to the decision-making process being structured around the traditional mechanisms of state-profession co-management. Many decisions were taken at the départemental level within the 'agricultural assemblies', the CDOAs which, for the first time, incorporated non-agricultural stakeholders. However the participation of these new groups in the commissions was weak, largely because the debates were more driven by concerns about the agricultural economy and farm models than by environmental concerns.

These national differences in the orientation and shape of the policy device were themselves locally translated according to the specificity of the geographical zones. The following section of the thesis will focus on some case-studies to examine the range and diversity of local policy application.

Part 3. Case-studies of multifunctionality

The third part of this thesis analyses some of the local configurations that emerged as a result of the application of these policies and the types of multifunctional agriculture that they gave rise to. In all cases, the policies that were applied were an addition to already existing local arrangements. Thus, rather than a new departure, the national policies were an incremental move that served to institutionalise and transform existing local arrangements for multifunctionality. The leading questions for each case study can then be posed: *did the policy framework and its local translation effectively promote multifunctional agriculture? What types of multifunctionality emerged? And what contradictions did the national policies solve and give rise to?* In all the cases, the logic underlying the mobilisation of farmers was linked to strategies for maintaining their cohesion as a professional group in the context of the uncertainty caused by globalisation. There were important national differences in the way that local stakeholders were able to participate in defining the national policies. In France, local stakeholders were able to translate and appropriate the policy framework, whereas in the Netherlands, the possibilities for adapting the policy to local conditions were much more restricted. In addition, the resulting policy framework created different sorts of contradictions. In the Netherlands, the overriding conservationist orientation paid little heed to other aspects of sustainable development. For example, there were no measures to address environmental pollution. By contrast, in the French case-study, the policy framework was better adapted to various local issues, as a result of a broader policy framework and a more participative approach within the policy-making process.

Chapter 7. Friesland: The production of a typical agricultural *bocage* landscape

7.1 Introduction

It is difficult to directly investigate the locally adaptation of the Dutch Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN), as little room for manoeuvre was given to the local stakeholders in the design of the policy framework. In consequence, this chapter focuses less on the local translation of the policy framework by local stakeholders and more on the relationships between SAN and the local dynamics that existed prior to its establishment. *It specifically addresses the type of multifunctional agriculture that these social dynamics produced prior to SAN and how these interacted with the nature conservation policy.* In this respect, the Northern Friesian Woodlands is an interesting case study, as it was one of the places in the Netherlands where 'environmental co-operatives' first emerged. I first discuss the local physical landscape and how its unique character gave rise to the emergence of forms of multifunctional agriculture that were developed prior to the introduction of SAN at the end of the nineties. The adoption of SAN further institutionalised the compromises that had been made, but also marked a centralisation of the governance mechanisms towards the national level, which reactivated the local coalition of actors. The final section discusses the limits, evolutions and uncertainties of these arrangements in view of anticipated further structural transformations of agriculture[103].

7.2 The first arrangements for landscape conservation: Farming in the Wouden

The typical eastern Friesian landscape is the outcome of a historical process of interactions between human activities and the physical environmental. In most of the other sandy soil agricultural areas of the country, the hedgerows almost completely disappeared in the course of the last century. Here, the *bocage* landscape was preserved and, though landscape concerns were not the farmers' main priority, the maintenance of the hedgerows was closely aligned to the development of farming during the course of the XXth century.

The production of a typical bocage landscape

The specific region of interest is situated in the eastern part of the province, in the sandy soil zone called the *Noordelijke Friese Wouden* (Northern Friesian Woodlands) where about 85% of the farmers are dairy producers. It is characterised by a combination of closed landscapes consisting of wooded banks and tree borders between the parcels that alternate with relatively open areas on the lower peat-clay soils[104] (Renting 2003). For a long time this region was one of the poorest and less populated area of the province. The population were mostly landless labourers employed on larger farms in the surrounding area and the main activity was peat

[103] The interviews were mainly carried out in 2004 and the results do not take into account more recent developments.

[104] The closed-*bocage* landscape contains two types of hedgerows known locally as *dijkswallen* and *singels*. The *dijkswallen* are hedgerows consisting of mainly oaks planted on earthen banks of one metre height, whereas the *singels* consists of ditches with alder trees and occasionally pollard willows on the banks (Renting 2003).

extraction. These labourers could individually rent small plots of land and they steadily grew to form a peasantry. The structure of these parcels took a linear form due to peat exploitation, with the size of the plots corresponding to the size of the exploitation rights given to the peat extractors before the land was cultivated. The hedgerows were later introduced to delimit the field boundaries and supply wood for different purposes: timber, fence-posts and firewood. A system of ditches along the hedgerows ensured good drainage of the plots, some of which were 3 to 4 metres below sea level (Renting 2003). Thus the landscape was constructed to provide several complementary functions: the delimitation and enclosure of the parcels, the drainage of water and timber and fuel for local use.

The resulting landscape contrasts greatly with that in the other parts of the province. Compared to the fertile clay soil areas or the more touristy and recreational rural areas, the *Wouden* seems to have maintained an aura of seclusion and relative backwardness[105]. The region was even classified as a less favoured area at the end of the '80s, institutionalising the image of a lagging region. This was partly due to a lack of capital to finance the investments needed for further modernisation and up-scaling of the holdings, as well as the absence of any government scheme for land reclamation during the modernisation era in the '60s and '70s (Boonstra and Brink 2005). People's attachment to this landscape was so great that it was entirely rebuilt after its destruction during World War II, when people were so poor that they over exploited the hedgerows to heat their houses, leaving the wooded landscape looking like an open polder. Locals remember " seeing from Drogeham to Korhorn"[106]. After the war the hedgerows were slowly replanted and afforded some protection by the municipalities.

The restoration of the landscape

The intensification of agriculture in the '60s led to a change in management practices, which came to threaten the landscape. Less care was taken over the hedgerows, which came to be seen as a constraint on development rather than a valuable resource. People thought they could be replaced by artificial fences and had little interest in harvesting fuel wood, as they were now using other energy sources to heat their homes. But the system of ditches was essential, as it ensured proper drainage of the fields. Maintaining these ditches became problematic especially for larger farmers who might have several kilometres of trees to maintain. The trees came to grow haphazardly; pushing out into the farmers' fields and obstructing the ditches so that the plots did not drain properly anymore. The farmers responded by coppicing[107] the trees (cutting the trunks at their base) so that they had to grow from the base again. This greatly damaged the traditional landscape and worried the local authorities, which recognised the need to develop a plan of landscape maintenance.

From 1973 onwards, the municipality of Achkarspelen established a landscape policy to encourage farmers to prune the trees. They set up a commission to assist the farmers in this

[105] The *Noordelijke Friese Wouden* differs greatly from the Low Midlands, which stretch from the northeast to southwest of Friesland, where peat extraction created large lakes which were later used for water sports. It also differs considerably from northern and western Friesland which are characterised by a wide landscape of fertile fields and green meadows, with dikes and *terps* filling the horizon. This was reclaimed from the sea (polderised) and provided a clay-rich soil with optimal agronomic conditions. Cattle breeding could be easily be combined – or replaced in some cases – by arable farming and some of the farmers even adopted some very high value added crops like seed potatoes or flower bulbs.

[106] Interview with a worker at the landscape association, LBF (*Landschapsbeheer Friesland*), October 2004. Drogeham and Korhorn are two villages of the municipality of Achkarspelen, normally hidden from each other by the network of hedgerows.

[107] In Dutch *hakhoutbeheer*

task as, in the words of one observer, "*they didn't know how to do it anymore"*[108]. The commission consisted of a municipal employee and a member of the state administration in charge of the natural patrimony, the *Staatsbosbeheer* (SBB)[109]. There was no official farmer representation, but some enthusiastic and interested local farmers did take an interest and attend meetings[110]. This was the first step in building a local consensus about the importance of the local landscape and the possibility of paying farmers to maintain it.

From 1978 onwards, a state funded programme extended this arrangement. Following the recession provoked by the oil crisis, the state set up an employment creation scheme - the *Integraal Structuur Plan* (ISP) in areas that were not participating in the economic growth enjoyed by the western provinces (specifically Limburg, Drenthe and Friesland) (Glim and Toonen 1996). The provincial authorities had considerable discretion in designing these plans and in Friesland; it was decided to use the ISP to pursue some landscape goals. This enabled the municipality to extend its landscape policy and to hire unemployed workers in the Friesian Woodlands area to improve and maintain the typical woody landscape. They effectively took over a task that farmers had found onerous, allowing the farmers to focus on the productive part of their farms. In this way, the landscape was actively maintained through a policy of social and economic development financed by the central government and implemented at the provincial level. This development, grounded on a growing consensus about the need to maintain the typical landscape, also marked an externalisation of hedgerow management from farming.

A sophisticated landscape management scheme and its appropriation by the farmers

These arrangements proved to be quite stable, but over time, the position of farmers changed and some saw that hedgerow maintenance could be an interesting activity. The introduction of the milk quota system in 1984 considerably limited some farmers' aspirations for development. They began to see that they could take care of the landscape themselves and be paid to do so thereby complementing their income from agricultural production. This discursive reversal was associated with – and legitimised by – a refined and integrated conception of how farming activities could relate to the landscape.

At the same time, a newly created landscape association, the Friesian Organisation for Landscape Management (SILF)[111], criticised some aspects of the landscape plan. They argued that the management practices were seriously damaging the specificity of the landscape. The dregs from the dikes were being spread on hedgerows, increasing the nutrient levels and reducing the diversity of flora – leading to loss of moss, heather, sheep's-bit, and lichen. In addition the way that the trees were being cut was damaging the shape of the hedgerows. This group, which brought together environmentalists, the provincial government and farmers thought that nature and landscape could be preserved by farmers themselves. In the following years the association developed a code of practice for 'good' hedgerow management, drawing

[108] Interview with an employee of the municipality of Achtkarspelen in 2004.
[109] SBB is the state agency whose responsibilities include nature management of some rural public estates.
[110] According to a civil servant of the municipality of Achtkarspelen who was, at the time, part of the commission, the largest farmers who had more land and more hedgerows to maintain, were the most interested (Interview). This was also reported by Eshuis and Woerkum (2003, 391).
[111] In Dutch: *Stichting Instandhouding landschapselementen Friesland*. The name of the association changed to *Landschapsbeheer Friesland* (LBF) in 1999 when it became part of a national federation of local organisations. The Dutch national umbrella organisation is nowadays *Landschapsbeheer Nederland*.

on the expertise and enthusiasm of some farmers who supported this vision of the landscape. Yet not all farmers shared this vision, as one commented:

"I was seen as a "green guru" among the farmers. In fact, I have never been a member of an environmental organisation, but I am a leader in this domain [among the farmers], and it sometimes creates a certain distance with some other farmers."[112]

At that moment, the ISP landscape plan was coming to an end, and discussions were held on how to replace it. A consensus was arrived at on the necessity of continuing the former policy while improving the quality of the management. In 1987, the Ministry of Agriculture launched a contractual landscape policy called *rol/ral-regeling*, which guaranteed farmers a central role in landscape management. In this way, they took over the task of the unemployed people and the scheme provided them with management contracts of 10 years and the financial resources to maintain the hedgerows[113]. About 300 km of hedgerows were restored and maintained. In addition to this programme, some municipalities started to restore their network of hedgerows. In 1989, the region was classified as a European Less Favoured Area giving farmers more access to European funding[114]. The hedgerows and dykes, once seen by farmers as a constraint were transforming into an advantage as they could provide an additional possible source of income, and, later on an argument in their favour while facing the first attacks of the environmental movement upon intensive animal husbandry.

Compromises over intensive animal husbandry and the landscape

In 1987, a new measure from the Ministry of Environment, the ammonia law, placed new constraints on the productive capacity of agriculture[115]. The first draft of this law was rejected by the *Landbouwschap* and evoked organised resistance from the farmers' unions, but, despite this, the law was eventually adopted (Frouws 1997). The law prevented farms located close to some specified "nature areas" from further intensification, as it was considered that excessive emissions of ammonia from livestock were damaging these natural areas. Responsibility for defining the boundaries of these protected zones lay with the Dutch municipalities. In the *Tytsjerksteradiel* municipality the hedgerows were selected as 'natural elements', which effectively prohibited those farmers with hedgerows from intensifying or embarking upon some new activities (van der Ploeg and Renting 2001). The farmers, concerned with the viability of their businesses, perceived this law as a further unjustified imposition, following close on the heels of the quota system. Farmers argued that their future would be seriously threatened if they could not expand any more and that the landscape would disappear as a result. They argued that the maintenance of the hedgerows would no longer be possible if the farms were not economically viable. The farmers also argued for other ways of addressing the ammonia problem, ways that involved alternative methods of spreading manure rather than an outright ban on further intensification.

In the ensuing negotiations between farmers, the municipality and the Ministry of Environment, the farmers drew upon the existing arrangements that had given them considerable experience in maintaining the hedgerows and clearly gave them some credibility. A small group of farmers argued that the ammonia law would be detrimental, in the long

[112] Interview with a farmer, 02/08/2004.
[113] At first, the more valuable banks of wood, the *dijkswallen*, were maintained, and after a while, the *singels* were also included.
[114] In Dutch, the *bergboerenregeling*.
[115] In Dutch, the *Richtlijn ammoniak en veehouderij*.

term, to the quality of the landscape. They eventually persuaded the authorities to grant a derogation, in view of the specific local context and instead to provide additional incentives to help them maintain this typical landscape through adapting their farming practices. As a result the hedgerows were not classified as an ammonia sensitive zone which, for a while at least, removed one of the barriers to the economic development of the farms.

The structuring of local farmers' groups

This process triggered the establishment of farmers' groups that came to be known as environmental cooperatives. VEL came to existence, in 1992, only a short while after the compromise was reached with the municipality, and the sister association VANLA was founded a few months afterwards, in the municipality of *Achtkarspelen*[116]. Their registration as associations allowed them to apply to the Ministry of the Environment for funding for a project connected with sustainable development, a strategy suggested by researchers at Wageningen University (see chapter 5). As well as developing a formal structure the groups also sought to generate and articulate their own strategic vision of rurality, a process in which all the members participated. From the '90s onwards, the environmental cooperatives increased their legitimacy and developed further new agricultural functions. The region's status as a less developed one, meant that a range of different sources of funding were available to support their research and development projects. In addition, the landscape plans expanded to the neighbouring municipalities and four more environmental cooperatives came into existence in the surrounding areas[117]. From a landscape perspective this created a coherent geographical region, stretching from Dokkum in the North to Drachten in the south. The region of the *Noordelijke Friese Wouden* again became a territorial reality for the farmers.

The movement gained momentum with the creation of a regional organisation, Boeren Natuur, which federated these new local farmers' groups. The initiative emanated from the LTO and rapidly became a local section of the general farmers' union. This permitted a further institutionalisation of the actor-network coalition that had been developing a more refined conception of the landscape. It also allowed farmers to formally express their opposition to the government project of rebuilding nature and particularly the National Ecological Network (EHS). Farmers in the *Noordelijke Friese Wouden* were particularly incensed that the government was simultaneously supporting a project to develop an ecological corridor along the *Prinses Margriet* canal, the historical shipping linkage between Amsterdam and Groningen. They were not the only farmers annoyed by the expansion of nature zones – there were also local protests in the southern part of Friesland (Hajer, 2002). The farmers could not understand the government's attitudes to the environment, placing restrictions on farmers while supporting damaging mega-projects of nature reconstruction that had negative effects on farmland. Instead, the farmers lobbied for nature management plans that included farmers, rather than the 'eco-feudalist' ones that they felt were being foisted upon them. As one local observer summarised:

"there is a tendency in this country to make more and more nature. That is the reason why the farmers started to do something against that. We [the farmers] can also manage the

[116] VEL stands for *Vereniring Eastermar's Lândouwe* and VANLA for *Vereniring Agrarische Natuur and Landschapsbeheer Achtkarspelen*

[117] These new environmental cooperatives were created in the municipalities of *Dantumadeel*, *Kollumerland*, *Tytsjerksteradiel* (in addition to VEL), and *Smallinderland*.

countryside. We can also manage the landscape. Why should other people do that? […] Give us some money and we can do it even better."[118]

In the following years several other arrangements emerged that strengthened the position of farmers in this regard. First, the national management environmental instrument (RBON), previously restricted to some small zones, was extended to the whole agricultural area of Friesland, thus making ten year management contracts potentially available to all Friesian farmers. Such a non-zoned implementation of nature policy was highly unusual for the Netherlands[119]. Second, the SAN was adopted in 2000 and helped further institutionalise the move towards on-farm landscape preservation.

7.3 The Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN): a national scheme for on-farm nature and landscape management

With the introduction of SAN, the duration of management contract was reduced to six years, although the contracts were extended to include some additional elements of conservation, such as pools, birds, strips of botanical management and grassland management. The Province, which remained in charge of the zoning process, maintained its former open policy. As the "woodland" farmers had more experience of these kinds of contractual policy instruments and had active environmental cooperatives that informed and mobilised their members, the *Noordelijke Friese Wouden* had proportionately more contracts compared to other regions in the province.

The introduction of this more ambitious national policy institutionalised on-farm nature and landscape conservation and gave it more legitimacy. But it also brought a recentralisation of planning processes, leaving the environmental cooperatives with a lesser role. Although they continued to receive a grant for informing and mobilising their members, they no longer had any input into the local application of the policy, which created tensions and difficulties between the farmers and the state.

Local criticisms of the SAN

One reason for this tension was that the type of landscape generated by the environmental experts of the LNV did not completely correspond with the one developed by the local coalition of actors. They discussed the plan extensively and found that it was not sufficiently fine-tuned with the characteristics of the local landscape. One main criticism was that the standards for evaluating hedgerow quality, which was done on the basis of the percentage of trees in the row, did not take into account that some hedgerows could still be very poor in terms of plants diversity. This point was taken up by the landscape organisation (LBF), which argued that the focus on the percentage of trees was not the most appropriate way to measure the quality of landscape and biodiversity. More generally, there were doubts about the capacity of the very general policy framework to cover all the possibilities and configurations of nature protection in the country. According to one of LBF's employees, *"it is difficult to cover the whole Dutch landscape with only 16 measures. This kind of management cannot guarantee a quality landscape. It is too general. That is our principal criticism of SAN."* [120]

[118] Interview with a member of Boerennatuur, April 2004.
[119] This local approach is known as the *Frij inzetbaar hectares* (literally "the free available hectares").
[120] Interview with an employee of the landscape association LBF, October 2004.

This statement shows both how the highly centralised policy-making process provided few spaces for locally developed definitions of standards, and the difficulty of developing a general and all-encompassing national policy-framework applicable to all local situations. In this case, the new standards ignored the well-established local dynamics of landscape protection. Requests were made to the Ministry to make local adjustments and introduce self-monitoring, a line of argument that closely followed the earlier advice of rural sociologists that nature management should 'keep track' with the features of the local social and physical environment (de Bruin and van der Ploeg 1991).

Further tensions emerged as some farmers did not fully comply with the conditions contained in their contracts. Several controls had shown that the measures were not being systematically respected. For example, according to the officials of the DLG (*Dienst Landelijk Gebied)*, the grassland strips around fields were sometimes not as wide as they should be and, in several cases, were being tilled every year, against the recommendations for developing biodiversity. Farmers countered this by saying that the width of the strips should be calculated from the water level of the ditches and not from field boundaries, an argument that provided them with an extra few metres of productive land. The farmers also claimed that there was nothing in the regulation stipulating an absence of tillage. Officials of the DLG also claimed that hedgerows were sometimes not maintained properly, with many branches extending beyond the wire fences[121]. They argued that some of the farmers did not rigorously implement the contracts and were not respecting them. They thought that the environmental cooperatives had been too ambitious in mobilising farmers, a large majority of whom were not respecting the contracts but constantly trying to renegotiate their content:

"The agricultural organisations have made a lot of promotion. They said to the farmers: 'take these contracts, since you don't use these parts of your plots anyway. You can earn money without doing anything'. So now, there are a lot of contracts that don't work properly. The farmers are not happy with it and very often it is hard to obtain the target number of species."[122]

The farmers, for their part, claimed the state was being inflexible and criticised the distant behaviour of the DLG officials (the state agency in charge of controlling the application of the measures) who mechanically came to check for proper application of the measures, without trying to understand the local particularities of the landscape. This distant attitude generated a 'lack of trust' from the farmers (Eshuis and van Woerkum 2003). In some respects, this criticism was quite valid; the DLG, was rather distant from the individual farmers and there was no way for farmers to discuss the content and modalities of application. The sole direct interlocutor for the farmers was the remote and inexperienced state agency, LASER, which was in charge of registering the individual dossiers[123]. The DLG officials, who did understand the technical content of the packages, were only mandated to control their application. This situation left the farmers feeling quite isolated, especially in comparison to the previous local arrangements. Some came to be afraid of the strict annual inspections that determined the allocation of the grant, which was disbursed according to two criteria. Firstly, there was a yearly control to ensure that the measures were being effectively implemented and respected by the farmers. If the hedgerows were not cut properly, or if the grassland was mown too early, the farmers didn't receive their subsidy. Meeting these conditions earned farmers 85% of the annual subsidy. Secondly, the remaining 15% was held in reserve until the end of the

[121] The measure required installing a fence between the field and the hedgerows.
[122] Interview with an official of DLG, August 2004.
[123] LASER is the agency responsible for the payment of the European subsidies for farmers.

six-year contract period (i.e. in 2007) and was only paid if the nature protection goals had been achieved. The farmers felt this system to be very authoritarian.

The re-activation of the local commission

In response to these problems and particularly to the lack of technical and administrative support for farmers, the local environmental cooperative decided to reactivate its local network. A new monitoring commission was set up, bringing together the main actors of the local coalition, the farmers and the landscape organisation LBF. Its main role was to undertake pre-checks for farmers so they could be warned in case of irregularities in their nature management work. This would help farmers avoid nasty surprises from the official inspections. The local controlling commission took on a role of informal control and information provision. Doubts about how a measure should be applied could be discussed with the commission and ambiguities resolved. Thus, the local commission was a pragmatic solution to compensate for a shortage of advice and support from official quarters.

This response also provided an opportunity to restore a more local system of governance. In constituting such a commission, the farmers were seeking to move back to the arrangements that existed during the previous landscape policies. This secondary and informal controlling body was intended as a defence against the almighty state apparatus, which farmers thought was imposing its norms in an authoritative and unsympathetic manner. It also allowed the farmers to develop alternative solutions based on the relative autonomy of the local organisation that could deal 'efficiently' with nature. So they adopted a dual strategy of seeking to reanimate the discourse over self-regulation and re-establishing a locally based critique of the national scheme. In this way, farmers could fight for their own vision of what the landscape should look like and defend their professional interests. The local landscape association acted as an impartial expert, bringing an informed voice to the table. This discourse was in keeping with the process of self-legitimating which would promote their organisation as an expert local body able to achieve 'good local governance':

"I wish that we can find a way to have our own territorial policy. This policy can be controlled again by the provincial authorities, but let the associations like LBF that know about landscape management elaborate the programmes for a given territory." [124]

These two discourses harmonised and the coalition was able to present a united front. The presence of the LBF gave the farmers' position some legitimacy against the doubts of the DLG. Thus the reinvented local coalition was both an act of resistance from the farmers and a way of the LBF legitimising itself. In this respect it was than a pragmatic attempt to cope with the characteristics of the locality or to locally monitor collective learning about the landscape, it had other goals of defending the interests of farmers and affirming the legitimacy of the local landscape organisation. The farmers' strategy for bargaining over the modalities of nature protection was part of an attempt to make broader social and economic claims, as will be shown in the next section.

[124] Interview with a worker at the landscape association LBF, October 2004.

7.4 The contradictions facing multifunctional Frisian farmers

Environmental regulations and globalisation

These claims to autonomy reveal a delicate reality for farmers facing the ongoing liberalisation of the CAP. They are stuck on the horns of a dilemma in which they are being urged to be competitive internationally while environmental regulations seriously limit their possibilities of development. As summarised by a local observer, farmers are deeply affected by these tensions:

"Mr Fishler said: you have to give some money back from the milk [subsidies] and be environmental. And at the same time you have to work for the world prices, New Zealand prices. When you don't do that, you have to do something with the landscape, with nature, with environmental kind of things. […] The prices are very high and you can't manage. The prices of the products we are selling are getting lower and lower. That is one problem." [125]

The remarkable increase of production during the '70s led to an equivalent increase in the manure produced, increasing pressure on the environment. The situation in Friesland was as worrying as in other parts of the country, where intensive and polluting pig and poultry units flourished, but the dairy farmers of the Wouden were, nonetheless, concerned by the coming environmental regulation. At the end of the '80s, the farmers' appropriation of the bocage-type landscape represented a first victory against the criticisms of ammonia emissions and this exceptional measure adopted locally as a response to this problem was able to deflect the first attack from the Ministry of the Environment. But when the focus switched to nitrates, phosphates and water pollution, the hedgerows were no defence. In 1991, the nitrate directive (91/676/EEC) was adopted by the Council of Environmental Ministers of the European Union – at that time under the Dutch presidency. This directive obliged EU members to adopt an Action Programme to cope with water pollution caused by nitrates originating from agricultural activities. This mainly involved restricting the periods when fertilisers could be used, limiting their application and regulating the storage of manure. This programme had to be applied within specified 'vulnerable zones.' The whole of the Netherlands (and Belgium) fell into this category, as it had one of the highest field nitrogen surpluses within the whole EU (Commission Européenne 2002).

One of the paradoxes with the nature protection policy was that measures to reduce nitrate and phosphate levels were not applicable in areas where there are strict emission standards – as the policy could only support farmers in achieving standards that go beyond the existing regulations. Thus these farmers couldn't utilise any measures under the conservation policy to help them reduce their emissions. As a result, the agricultural profession and the Ministry of Agriculture adopted a delaying strategy (as they have done in the past), which permitted farmers to postpone implementing the nitrate directive for more than a decade[126] (Frouws

[125] Interview with a member of Boerennatuur, April 2004.

[126] Before the Nitrates Directive was on the agenda, there had already been discussions about manure surpluses. These led to the Temporary Act restricting pig and poultry husbandry (1984) followed by the Soil Protection and Manure Acts in 1987. In fierce debates the farmers (especially the more intensive pig farmers in the Southern sandy soil regions in particular) had opposed the government's attempts to impose maximum waste standards and levies. The agricultural profession adopted a delaying strategy while greatly increasing production, which indisputably worsened the problem. With pressure from Europe, this issue came back to the fore. In responding to the Directive, most affected EU countries adopted a ceiling of nitrogen application of 170 kg/ha in their vulnerable zones. Such a level would have destabilised the Dutch animal husbandry sector (in 1997 the average

1997). But, while the protective function of the CAP was being weakened through various reforms, the hardening position of the EU threatened these internal arrangements and led to the EU asking the Netherlands to seriously reconsider its national implementation[127], putting further pressure on Dutch farmers[128]. Despite the local attempts by farmers and agronomists (Eshuis and Stuiver 2005) to find new and better local solutions for controlling on-farm flows of nitrogen (Verhoeven et al. 2003)[129], the economic and social stability of farms in the *Noordelijke Friese Wouden* looks uncertain.

At the same time farmers were increasingly confronted with issues related to globalisation, particularly as they were so heavily involved in export oriented agri-business industries. One regional leader of the LTO, who was less involved than most in this dynamic thought that farmers could develop an alternative strategy to sidestep globalisation:

"I think that VEL and VANLA can find a niche market. That would be much more positive than to depend entirely on governmental subsidies. That's healthier, economically speaking. If there is a market, then you have real reasons to be there. Otherwise, you should stop your business."[130]

This strategy was initially part of the early project of environmental cooperatives, but eastern Friesian farmers have not managed to create their own niche market, as they hoped to in the nineties (VEL 1992), and most farms are still strongly linked to the conventional agribusiness industry. In the early nineties, a dairy producer launched an organic dairy cooperative close to Drachten, to the south of the Friesian Woodlands, but the project only survived for a few years before going bankrupt and being purchased by the Frisian international dairy cooperative, Coberco Dairy Foods. This showed the difficulty of breaking free from the conventional food chain and finding a market segment that can guarantee farmers a future in increasingly competitive and environmentally constrained circumstances.

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nitrogen surplus was between 170 and 400 kg/ha), so the Dutch developed a more 'accurate' system of control. The Ministries of Agriculture and the Environment invented a manure accountancy-system, which shifted the focus from application levels to levels of loss. This system, known as the MINerals Accounting System (MINAS), involved calculating the difference between the input of nitrogen going into the farm and the output. Only the balance was legally regulated. The argument in favour of this mechanism was that the actual pollution was linked to the genuine flows of nitrogen within the farm and that recycling nitrogen would prevent nitrates from polluting the water. As a result, a farmer with a high density of animals per hectare could potentially pollute less than a farmer whose agricultural practices did not optimise his use of nitrogen. The balance between inputs and outputs was used to calculate some ceilings and farmers who exceeded these were subject to fines. The law also stipulated that the ceilings would be gradually reduced over the years. This plan was finally approved by the newly formed farmers union LTO who argued that overly strict standards would be catastrophic for the competitiveness of the livestock sector. The profession expected that the focus on the on-farm nitrogen accountancy would avoid a serous decline of production.

[127] Unfortunately for the farmers, the government could hardly further soften the existing regulation. The EU did not look kindly on the MINAS system and the Dutch government was required to change its strategy for implementing the Directive. The system was seen as too bureaucratic; requiring a complex and burdensome system of accountancy, the accuracy of which was questioned. But, above all, the EU pointed the bad management system and its failure to sufficiently reduce water pollution. The Netherlands was required in 2005 to reconsider the possibility of implementing 'application standards' instead of 'loss standards.'

[128] It is worth noting that Dutch farmers will also have to deal with the planned EU Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC, which relates not only to the quality of drinking water but also ecosystem quality.

[129] This reduction in N surpluses reflects the general trend at the national level (RIVM 2002).

[130] Interview with a leader of LTO, January 2005.

Evolving farm structures and their possible consequences for multifunctionality

The international economic competitiveness of these farmers is still far from secure. There is no guarantee that they will remain globally competitive if the CAP is completely liberalised. Providing green services is one possible additional source of income, but the significance of this extra income is still unclear. The subsidies are calculated according to the extra cost that the environmental adjustment entails for the farms, which is far from offering farmers an alternative income that compensates for the lack of competitiveness on the international market or could guarantee an economically viable business[131]. They are still highly dependent on unpredictable milk prices and agribusinesses structures of production.

These trends obviously raise questions about the future economic and social development of the region and over nature and landscape conservation itself. In the future, the fewer Friesian dairy farmers will certainly have more hedgerows per farm to maintain. How will it be done, what will be the cost, and who will support it? As the costs paid for environmental services are related to the kilometres of hedgerows and stripes of lands, the increase in farm size is likely to increase the income of the farmers in charge of nature and landscape management. But the burden of work is also likely to increase. As an employee of *Boerennatuur* commented,

"Nowadays the farmers are growing bigger and bigger. They will get more cows, they need more cows. […] But when a farmer has 200 cows, he has no time to do something with landscape management. […] And you can even go further saying that in the future some [farmers] will milk and others will manage the grassland." [132]

With the dramatic decline in farm numbers such specialisation and division of labour is a possibility. Equally, the socio-economic organisation of the landscape could evolve and take another shape. The management of meadow birds, wild geese and the general, biodiversity of agro-ecosystems could possibly be externalised and, thereby, disconnected from the economical logic of farm development. Would this separation of functions be more or less likely to meet the ecological objectives? Ultimately, this raises the question of the ideal farm size, in terms of competitiveness, economically viability, environmental friendliness and socially economical. Will larger and fewer farms meet these new societal expectations?

7.5 Conclusions

This chapter presented a case study exploring the fate of a multifunctional form of agriculture that was grounded upon the development of the local landscape. It shows a situation where farmers use elements of the landscape and their role in maintaining them to negotiate improvements in their working practices and incomes. The farmers of eastern Friesland took advantage of living in a Less Favoured Area, re-appropriating their scenic and valued landscape and transforming it into a symbolic and financial resource. They offered to take care of the hedgerows in exchange for a significant softening of the environmental regulation. These arrangements led to subsequent compromises between the authorities and the farmers, then organised in territorial groups (environmental cooperatives). The study shows how the integration of these new functions with the more traditional productive one is important for

[131] In 1999, the average annual subsidy received by breeders for agro-environmental activities was € 3200, which represented 8.2% of their total income (De Koeijer and Leneman 2002).
[132] Interview with a member of Boerennatuur, April 2004.

the local agricultural economy. The adoption of the SAN, in the end of the '90s, further institutionalised these arrangements and produced considerable changes at the local level. The environmental cooperatives felt dis-empowered because of the top-down nature of the policy-making process and their weak role in the management of the policy, which brought tensions to the fore. The environmental cooperatives were reduced to explaining the scheme to their members and mobilising farmers locally, without having any say in how the scheme should be applied locally. This generated local criticisms of the policy and led to new attempts by the environmental co-operatives to assert a regime of self-regulation. In large part, this discursive localism was rooted in the exclusive focus of the SAN on nature and landscape protection rather than in the larger challenges facing farmers, who are trying to cope with strict environmental regulations and ongoing competitive pressures. Apart from creating a new – although modest – source of financial activity through landscape maintenance, there was no space to reconsider the overall model of development, or for the state to address the tensions that this gave rise to[133]. Local self-regulation was the response of the Dutch farmers, as this provided them with more space for manoeuvre within an uncomfortable situation in which they have to respond to two contradictory messages: to be competitive internationally and environmental friendly at the same time.

[133] This relates to the situation in 2004 and 2005 when most of the interviews were undertaken. In more recent years, local experimentations have permitted an extension of intervention to other aspects. The farmers have proposed extending the self-regulatory experimentations to domains other than nature and landscape management. This led to a territorial contract (*gebiedscontract*) covering the whole surface of the *Noordelijke Friese Wouden* being proposed and adopted. This involves about 1000 farmers with a surface area of 50.000 hectares, and has systematised and further enlarged the possibilities of nature funding for the farmers.

Chapter 8. Protecting birds in arable intensive farms in Flevoland

8.1 Introduction

Examining multifunctional agriculture on the Flevoland polder could appear somewhat incongruous, or even inappropriate, since this territory was initially completely designed for the sole purpose of efficient agricultural production. Here the imposition of (agri-) culture upon nature is more striking than almost anywhere else. There is a saying, "God created the Earth, but the Dutch created the Netherlands". The Flevo polder, although very recent, exemplifies this. In many respects it represents the pinnacle of Dutch ambitions to transform – and even generate – land into productive agricultural spaces. The Dutch reclaimed thousands of hectares from the sea between the 1930s and the 1960s, motivated by the desire to expand the available productive land. It may appear absurd and inconsistent to search for multifunctional agriculture in a place that was designed and built to maximise productive capacity and efficiency. However, even under such circumstances agriculture cannot be considered solely as an economic activity that is completely disembodied from its environmental, social and political context. Its multiple functions reflect and shape the territory in which it is located, no matter what process(es) of domestication was involved. Paradoxically the widespread portrayal of the polder as an exemplary model of productivism could reveal strong contradictions. Does the agriculture of the polder really only produce and generate economic gains? Is this its sole purpose? Have new, unplanned functions emerged too? How did farmers manage to incorporate nature protection contracts within such an environment? The first part of this chapter, succinctly describes, the history of creation of the polder, where land conquest and reclamation created a manmade, 'optimal' agricultural environment. A combination of social and technical engineering, together with the strong principles of planning was used to structure a new territory based around a strict spatial division between its different functions (agricultural urban etc.). The second section explains how this segmentation was challenged by several factors including the development of an integrated vision of nature conservationism that even found a place in the polder. Finally the last part of the chapter shows how institutionalised conservation raised new difficulties and questions.

8.2 The Flevoland: a territory built by, and for, farmers

The Zuiderzee Works

The three polders that make up Flevoland are among the last of a total of three thousand to be built in the Netherlands. They are part of the last generation of a project within a very long history of land consolidation, which started many centuries ago. This last generation of works differs from earlier reclamation in the scale of its ambition and was the most ambitious polder construction that the country ever made. The *Zuiderzee Act*, which was adopted by parliament in 1918, officially instituted the land reclamation projects of the C20th. The objectives were twofold. The construction of the huge dike (*Afsluitdijk*) was, firstly, part of an extensive determination to master the constant and dramatic risks of flooding that had so dramatically affected the country two years beforehand. Secondly, the polders were meant to overcome the

recurrence of any food shortage that the Dutch population had experienced during the First World War.

The extensive involvement of the State in this programme was due to the country's specific economic and social context. At the beginning of the C20th, the government adopted a highly interventionist approach to the free market economy. Over the previous century a small class of wealthy farmers had emerged, together with an increase in the demand for farmland among the population. The *Zuiderzee Act* recognised this and had several objectives in terms of promoting equitable social and economic development. The polder construction, fully driven and funded by the state, was intended to contain unemployment and to create new land to settle a new class of farmers (Hall 1987). The Great Depression of the 1930s only strengthened these intentions. Over time considerable amounts of land were reclaimed from the *Zuiderzee*, formerly a shallow inlet of the North Sea[134].

The success of physical and social engineering

Farm holdings on the polder were designed in a precise, structured and rational way that in each period was intended to achieve the 'ideal' farm size for maximising labour productivity. Over the years, this size increased from an average of 20 hectares in *Wieringermeer* to 30 hectares in the *Oostelijk Flevoland* (Lambert 1971), an illustration of the evolving perceptions of the optimal farm size. The works were achieved by the excellence of the Dutch hydrologic engineering and the accurate spatial planning doctrine principally advocated by Cornelius Lely, a civil engineer who later became minister of transport and water management[135]. This physical engineering was accompanied by a rational organisation of the social structure. Farmers were selected according to their propensity to run a modern farm, and their potential abilities and skills to contribute socially to the new communities, skills that were much needed in constructing new communities[136]. As Heeren commented, "this is one of those rare examples of detailed social policy derived entirely from a specific social theory"[137] (Heeren 1986, 233). This physical and social intervention permitted the creation of one of the most productive agricultural areas in the world. The farmers who settled on the polder received

[134] The first works started in 1923 with the construction of the *Wieringermeer*, in the North of the Province of North Holland, which covered about 200 km². Then, the three parts that nowadays constitute the Province of Flevoland were slowly reclaimed over the following forty years or so: the *Noordoostpolder* in the North of the Province (1936-1952), *Oostelijk Flevoland* in the East (1950-1967), and *Zuidelijk Flevoland* in the South (1959-1968) covering in total a surface of about 1450 km².

[135] One of the two main cities of the polder is named after him.

[136] The land had to be colonised and almost everything had to be built up from scratch. The State development organisation (*Rijksdienst voor de Ijsselmeerpolder)* supported the economic and social development of the area which involved establishing schools and churches and a myriad of other infrastructures facilities needed to meet basic needs and transform the polder into a decent living environment. Selecting the best settlers was an important issue. Social geographers, particularly Ter Veen, advocated operating a controlled and deliberate selection that would provide a much higher guarantee of success than a random selection (Heeren 1986). The system of land distribution was shaped to meet the requirements of this constructivist social policy. Leases in perpetuity were only granted after a period of leaseholding, which allowed settlers to be removed if they didn't fit with the requirements of the State agency.

[137] In reality, another principle of selection was introduced that gave preferential treatments to some parts of the population. In the *Noordoostpolder*, preferential access to land was given to the workers who had participated in the national effort of polder construction during the Second World War. Other priority groups later included families of farmers from Zeeland who had suffered from the devastating flood of 1953. Furthermore, the new land was also used as an opportune place to resettle some farmers who had given up their own land in other parts of the country as a result of a process of land reclamation, redistribution schemes or other public works. The planned function of the *Noordoostpolder* slightly changed from being purely an additional asset to the Dutch economy to providing space for the structural adjustment of Dutch agriculture.

leases in perpetuity. Most specialised in arable production, which in 1990 representing about 60% of the polder's agricultural production. Cattle production was rather low compared to other regions of the Netherlands, accounting for only about 18% of production from the polder (van Ederdingen and Janssens 2001)[138]. This balance was mainly due to the ideal soil conditions: the clay soils provided fertile conditions that supported arable farming. The main crops grown were wheat, potatoes and sugar beet, and these proved to be highly productive with much higher yields than elsewhere in the country. The national food shortage of the end of the '40s was rapidly overcome and, little by little, the polder came to export some of its production abroad.

Nature development on the polder

Parallel to the goal of agricultural development, the importance of offering some green and recreational spaces to the new population of colonists was also recognised. Planners considered this topic seriously from the outset and over time came to plant increasing amounts of woodland particularly on the edges of the polders. The emergence of nature conservation concerns, at the end of the '60s, further strengthened this aim. The landscape of *Zuidelijk Flevoland*, (the last to be reclaimed and constructed) bears witness to this development. Here plans for an industrial zone between the cities of Almere and Lelystad were abandoned and the area *(Oostvaardersplassen)* turned into a habitat for foraging and migrating waterfowl. This wet area, consisting of swamps and shallow pools soon became a nature reserve of national importance[139]. Nowadays, it is a nature reserve of international importance for at least 25 species and is under the management of the state agency Staatsbosbeheer. Thus, through ecological engineering, the function of nature protection acquired a place alongside intensive agricultural land use. This large reserve was one of the first major achievements of the Dutch environmental movement and became an inspiration for the conservationist cause. Around this time the need to create new agricultural land also diminished. *Zuidelijk Flevoland* was completed in 1967, but plans for a final polder at the southwest of the interior sea, the *Markerwaard*, never materialised as agricultural expansion was no longer a priority (van de Klundert 1987).

Since the start of the creation of the Zuiderzee polders, urban projects and nature developments co-existed with the primary agricultural function. Over time, the goal of agricultural production became less important. This is evident through examining the proportion of agricultural land on the surface of the different polders. On the last polder (*Zuidelijk Flevoland*), it occupies just half the territory whereas it occupies 87% on the first two polders, showing the changing priorities over the years. This suggests the possibility of reconsidering the centrality of agriculture within Zuidelijk Flevoland, although the logic of spatially separating different land uses was fully in force. The polder was structured so as to functionally separate agricultural and nature conservation spaces to achieve spatial optimisation. Nature was not a concern of agriculture and, conversely, the Oostvaardersplassen had no agricultural productive function.

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[138] This percentage is calculated in terms of NGE (*Nederlandse Grootte Eenheid*). It corresponds to a standardised measure of farm size based on the standard gross value added that allows for comparisons across sectors.

[139] With its large lagoons and reed beds, this huge nature reserve is now known as one of the best places for bird watching in the Netherlands. A total of about 250 of bird species, including populations of cranes, black-winged stilt, geese, ducks and birds of prey frequent an area of some 6,000 hectares. In addition, wild grazing stock including stags, horses and bullocks has been introduced to provide an original – if somewhat artificial – ecological equilibrium.

Globalisation and the evolution of agriculture during the '80s and '90s

The globalisation of agricultural markets during the eighties and nineties encouraged farmers and local planners to continue in the quest for productivity. Liberalisation of the CAP which started in 1992 encouraged farmers to find alternatives to subsidised crop production.

Some farmers decided to diversify production to find new niche markets. In the *Noordoostpolder* for instance, where farms were smaller than in the newer parts of the *Zuiderzee* polders, the farmers became aware of the productive limits of their small enterprises at an early stage. Some responded by developing a niche sector of seed potato production[140]. In this way, they managed to side step fierce international competition in potato production by becoming a supplier to most of their former competitors. In addition to sugar beet, winter wheat and potatoes, they also developed some new crops, such as flower bulbs, onions, fruit and erected some new glasshouses. In 10 years, the acreage of wheat in the *Noordoostpolder* decreased from 14,300 to 10,200 hectares to make room for these new forms of production, showing the interest of many of these farmers to seek new directions. They have explored niche markets that offered returns that equal or even surpass those of large arable farmers. Nowadays, the polder is the Dutch province with the most organically managed land.

But diversification hasn't provided a complete alternative to conventional production. Increases in productivity have also been pursued, through concentrating production. In this respect, the polders' planners did not sufficiently anticipate changes that were to come. The agricultural holdings quickly came to face the same issues as other parts of the country, the need to expand farm size and concentrate farm structures. Though the polder was designed to host the then ideal prototype farm size, they quickly became too small to compete on international markets[141]. More than elsewhere in the Netherlands, adjustment to this proved costly for the farmers many of whom have bought more land from retired neighbours. Farmers also faced the challenge of buying the land that they previously leased from the state. The land lease system, a legacy of the early years of the polder, became a sign of backwardness rather than one of modernity and the state offered farmers the possibility of buying the land (previously granted in perpetuity), which some of them had farmed for almost half a century. A vast programme of land sales was organised from 1994 onwards and in 5 years, ownership rates increased drastically, from 10% of the agricultural land surface in 1995 to 30% in 2000 (van Ederdingen and Janssens 2001)[142].

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[140] This has generated such good returns that, nowadays according to some local observers, the farmers of the *Noordoostpolder* are wealthier than those with larger farms in the south of the province.

[141] The equation was basic and simple in the minds of almost all of those responsible for the development of agriculture: agriculture had to be more productive and efficient and, to this end farm holdings needed to become bigger in order to reduce production costs per hectare. For this reason, the decrease in the number of farms still continues to be presented as the obvious and natural evolution. "In 2020, we expect that there will be 800 to 1000 farmers left on the polder. The size of the farms will increase tremendously. […] with the average being 50 hectares."

[142] The resulting investments generated a significant financial burden for farmers who go heavily into debt to acquire sufficient additional hectares. For those planning to handover their farm to the next generation, this represents a long term intergenerational investment. But for the others, it is a speculative investment that should at least enhance their retirement pension. Such speculation has the effect of substantially increasing land prices, which rose from € 15,000 per hectare to more than € 25,000 between 1995 and 1999 (CBS). Even on the very productive clays soils, it is very difficult to achieve a return from such investments. One farmer who lives in the polder comments, "there are no crops profitable enough to make a living out of it."

Despite the additional costs faced by farmers, agriculture on the polder has continued to search for new solutions and develop new initiatives and alternatives in response to globalisation. The national policy of farmland nature protection permitted some farmers to add another string to their bow.

8.3 The improbable 're-naturalisation' of productive spaces

As outlined above, the construction of the Flevo-polder was grounded on a rigid physical and territorial separation of different functions. The large nature conservation projects of the nineties followed and reinforced this spatial model. The adoption of the National Ecological Network (EHS)[143] by the second chamber in 1990 further instituted this separation and it was not really possible at this time to talk about 'nature' within the agricultural system[144]. The introduction of the SAN went some way to breaking down these territorial divisions between nature and agri-culture, bringing 500 hectares of agrarian nature agreements (mostly relating to field margins) to the previously mono-functional farming system of Flevoland[145]. Moreover, the bird protection measures within SAN, offered opportunities to farmers in the polder who were close to the Ijsselmeer. To protect a range of species of wader birds, including the black-tailed godwit, the lapwing, and the common redshank. These species of birds usually nest on pasture, wet grasslands and marshes, and ornithological handbooks say that lapwings are hardly ever found on purely arable or intensive grassland systems. But some had been spotted in Flevoland's arable fields and bird protection measures were added as an additional measure to the SAN for the Flevo-polder. This occurred through locally mobilising an alliance of actors that managed to transform the policy framework and put bird protection on arable fields at the agenda.

The misfortune of the waders

The '80s were marked by an intensification of land use, which had negative impacts on meadow birds[146]. At the time, biodiversity was protected through dedicated conservation activities, by maintaining parks, reserves and nature works etc. Ecologists did not take the idea of using agricultural land for such purposes very seriously. Their main preoccupation was with completing the EHS, one element of which involved transforming agricultural land into wetlands as habitats for waders.

Black-tailed godwits were a particular priority as the Dutch breeding population had declined considerably between 1970 and 1990 (Hötker 1991), a trend of international significance as 50% of the European breeding population is located in the Netherlands (Tucker and Heath 1994).

Although the EHS project was started at the beginning of the '90s, it had had little discernible effect on wader populations. Some species, like the Common Redshank, maintained a stable

[143] Details about the EHS, can be found in Chapter 4.

[144] However a scattered few places were designated for their historical and natural interest. These included *Schokland*, in the south of the *Noordoostpolder*, which was an island before being flooded in 1859. After reclamation it was designated as an archaeological site and was included into the EHS. For the rest of the plan, most of the new nature land was taken from agriculture and retransformed.

[145] Compared to the Province of Friesland, that was allocated one fifth of the national quotas (22, 000 hectares), the allowance on the polder is very limited.

[146] Intensification of farming practices in the breeding areas and the drainage of wetlands would be the major cause for the decline of waders, although this may also have been influenced by drought in their West African wintering quarters (Tucker and Heath 1994).

population level, while others like the Lapwing decreased slightly. But it was the Black-Tailed Godwit that gave most cause for alarm since it was virtually endemic to the Netherlands. It became rapidly the symbol of the waders' decline and its continued decline resulted in its preservation becoming a *cause célèbre.* In 1996, attempts were made to improve the accuracy of the bird census, when SOVON, the bird counting organisation, linked up with the national organisation of statistics (CBS) and worked on developing new environmental indicators. These were important as the species is very responsive to small changes in its ecological living conditions. It became possible to more clearly identify the rate of decline and, to some extent, its causes. It became evident that habitat change was not an issue that could only be dealt with by nature conservation organisations or within the perimeters of the EHS, but one that would also involve enrolling the co-operation of farmers[147].

The practices of bird protection in agricultural fields

There is quite a long history of bird protection in the Netherlands. The bird protection organisation *Vogelbescherming Nederland* (VBN) was set up at the end of the 19th century and since the '60s, has been active in encouraging private landowners to implement beneficial management programmes. These programmes included measures to create nesting areas protected from disturbance from livestock, domestic animals and agricultural machinery. But this management programme was fairly unfocused, seeking to save what could be saved and only provided a few oases in an ocean of hostile environmental conditions.

One approach that was developed was to extend the existing areas of protection to include the perimeters of agricultural fields. This involved detecting the nests of the birds so farmers were aware of their existence and could avoid agricultural practices (mostly mowing) that would destroy the nests. This enterprise of detection fitted well with a long established tradition that originated from Friesland. This involved finding the first eggs of lapwings in springtime. As this species does not nest on the ground but in high grasslands, the eggs were always difficult to find. The lucky collector of the first eggs of the season traditionally presented them to the Queen and for a short while was a national hero. The local knowledge about 'finding the eggs' coexisted with a relatively light use of the grassland that did not threaten the reproduction of the species.

This tradition continues today mostly in the north of the country but has become highly controversial. Environmentalists first opposed this practice finding it 'outdated', but have since become aware that a systematic mass search for eggs could slightly be amended and served as a tool for the conservationist cause. Today, detecting nests has come to be a hobby for hundreds of people who have been educated by the local landscape organisation, *Landschapsbeheer Flevoland* (LBF), about how to find the eggs. The search attracts both young environmentalists and older people who recognise that finding the eggs is more constructive than collecting them. When nests are detected, the volunteers inform farmers about their number and their exact location and encourage them to conserve the nests.

[147] An experimental research programme was established in 2000 by the *Vogelbescherming Nederland* (VBN), to re-establish the population of black-tailed godwits. Its aim was to better understand the relationship between farming practices and the birds' nesting behaviour. Establishing this programme involved collaborating with the national landscape organization (LBN) which already had several years experience of cooperation with farmers (for instance in Friesland, see chapter 6) and seeking funding from the Dutch *postcodeloterij*. Two years after, the programme the ministry of LNV became involved, bringing legitimacy and credibility.

SAN and the difficult recognition of breeding birds in intensive arable fields

However, these practices were limited to grassland areas, viewed as meadow birds' natural habitat. They were not really applied in intensively farmed landscapes, such as Flevoland which were not seen as providing a suitable habitat. However, the birds were not completely averse to the conditions on Flevoland and were found to be nesting there especially close to lakes. The LBF intended to make the farmers aware of this population. To cope with the problem of locating the nests, which requires some ornithological knowledge, they managed to mobilise some volunteers, all committed to the environmental cause. Not all farmers were enthusiastic about this initiative but some found it of interest. To make their lives easier a system was set up where the volunteers would plant flags by the nests so all the farmers had to do was to avoid mowing or harvesting around the flags.

Nevertheless, official recognition for these efforts was slow in coming. At the outset of the SAN, very few Flevoland farmers qualified for any subsidies for bird protection. They had to have at least 80% of their farm laid to grassland, which was very rare in the region. Yet, the birds and their nests were there and the farmers couldn't understand why they were being treated differently over this issue than farmers elsewhere in the country. They began to lobby the expert centre of the Ministry of LNV, which had designed the measures with support from the landscape organisation and the environment section of the farmers' union (NLTO-*Boerennatuur*). They sought to convince officials at the Ministry that meadow birds also nested in intensive arable fields and argued that a successful conservation plan needed to include all areas where the birds were nesting, not just the grasslands that were seen as their favoured habitat. They argued for the programme to focus on results rather than on land use.

The officials who first looked at the case were very sceptical. They had initially supported a results-oriented approach when designing the scheme, and were not all convinced of the value of in protecting nature in the polder. Was there enough nature worth protecting within intensive arable fields? Expert opinion was divided over this. While they accepted that some waders did adapt to these environments, some found it a difficult step to view these fields in intensive arable farming systems as valuable ecosystems. However, with the support of the landscape preservation organisation (LBF) and the provincial authorities the farmers managed to convince the Ministry to make an exception for this area, given its proximity to the Ijsselmeer and the restriction was finally lifted, extending the drive to save the black tailed godwit from extinction.

As in Friesland (chapter 7), farmers used an existing coalition with landscape conservationists to legitimise their claims and develop a new vision of nature outside of the EHS. One farmer declared that 'the system had to change' and it did in 2003 when farmers were allowed to participate in the national scheme for nature management and some additional bird protection measures were added to it.

The emergence of farmers' nature associations

This exceptional measure, however, did not cover the entire polder, but was only applicable in three regions,[148] around the edge of the polder where these birds were most likely to nest. These areas also happened to be where farmers had been most active in lobbying for change

[148] They were situated on the verge of the IJsselmeer (at the top of the Noordoostpolder and just above Lelystad), and on the border of the Ketelmeer.

and had formed formal associations for nature conservation. Their objectives went beyond ornithological concerns and included properly maintaining the ditches and cultivating grassland strips on the verge of their fields for biodiversity[149]. In this, they hoped to create a more pleasant environment that would attract tourists and help generate new economic activities. A few farms organised open days, offered tourist facilities; and set up biking paths and walking trails. Another organisation started to organise open days for local primary schools make children aware of nature issues[150]. In the long term, these children might become volunteers for detecting nests[151].

These experiences raised the profile of these farmers groups especially with the landscape organisation LBF which sometimes needed local partners for different projects. It became clear that money for bird protection should be split among the three groups of farmers, particularly as the nature protection scheme favoured working with groups. The subsidies were calculated on the basis of the number of nests found on a minimum of 100 hectares[152]. Since the average farm size on the Noordoostpolder, was around 30 hectares this forced farmers to cooperate each other. As a consequence, while lobbying for entry into the policy framework the pioneers also had to convince their neighbours and peers to form a group which would provide a logical and presentable breeding and nesting area. Equally the group could not be too big as the budget available for bird protection was limited. As a result these three farmer groups emerged, covering quite a small area. They quickly became formally registered as associations so they could enter the nature protection scheme.

The contradictions of territorial multifunctionality

The local outcome of these arrangements is quite nuanced. The bird population, and the black-tailed godwit in particular, declined greatly during the last years although the new, and still relatively marginal, farmers' practices do seem to have helped encourage a small recovery in numbers. Their protection practices shows an increase of meadow birds on these plots, is contrast to the continuing national trend of decline (Boerennatuur 2004). Farmers' nature organisations have used these results to argue for an expansion of the scheme. The results to date challenge the conventional idea that intensive farmers have no effective contribution to make to nature conservation. The arable farmers in Flevoland have succeeded in generating interesting intermediary zones that fall somewhere between nature conservation zones and conventional agricultural ones.

The resulting "re-natured" agricultural spaces co-produced by the farmers and the nature organisations show some rather specific configurations. They demonstrate, as anthropologists have frequently argued, that the notion of nature is variable and relative (Descola 2005). Its definition is embedded within social and economical contexts which can be rearranged through negotiation and coalitions of actors and tensions of interest. In this example, the selected elements of nature became validated when they entered into the logic of protection within the conservationist policy framework, since they were valuable to the experts at the ministry of LNV and consistent with their aims. The nature generated on the polder is not

[149] This group is called "Rivierduin", which alludes to the dune previously there.
[150] The name of the organisation is 'Kop van Noordoostpolder,' which refers to the location of the farms at the very north of the province as if it constituted the mouth (*kop*) of the polder.
[151] The other group of farmers, called 'Swaartemeerdijk' only emerged in 2002, even though the pioneers of the organisation started to work together in 1999.
[152] For 50 nests/100 hectares, the payment is €72 per hectare. It reaches €92 per hectare for 75 nests/100 hectares, and €112 per hectares for 100 nests.

intended to disturb the core activity of the farmers and exists alongside their production activities. The bird protection areas are zoned and restricted to specific geographical areas. This also happens within the individual farms, where there is a separation between nature and production, generating ecosystems in which some micro-enclaves of nature (the birds) co-exist within intensive agricultural fields.

However, this scheme does not resolve many of the broader underlying contradictions facing these farms. How effective is such a nature management effort without paying attention to reducing the use of agro-chemicals? No attempt has been made to discuss or resolve this issue. The contracts solely focus on maintaining ecological strips of land, alongside the dikes or around the nests of birds and do not take pollution issues into consideration. The logic of nature conservation is used to justify an activity, but related issues, such as chemical use, continue to be disregarded, even though the problems it gives rise to persist (Den Hond et al. 2003)[153]. Paradoxically some measures within the SAN were designed to prevent the contamination of canals and ditches by pesticides. The field margin measures to promote plant diversity were also used to prevent the leaching of pollutants into the water. While they were mainly intended for botanical management, they also helped control the pesticide problem[154]. Yet, this problem persists and there are no financial incentives for farmers to address it, unless they choose to go it alone. This is due both to choices made by the Netherlands to not finance such measures, but also to the financial rules of the EU that only allow compensation for efforts that go beyond the minimum existing regulations. As agro-chemicals are widely used in this region and regulations on their use are strict, there is little going beyond these measures via incentives. Reducing chemical use is a burden that falls on farmers shoulders, who must accept the Polluter-Pays Principle even though reciprocal arrangements between farmers and the authorities might yield better results.

8.4 Conclusions

Flevoland was the highpoint of Dutch spatial and social planning. The polders are a quintessential expression of human intervention over the natural and social environment. They were conceived and designed in a rational way, with spaces allocated to different functions to enable their separate and optimal evolution. Each part of the territory had a designated purpose: with, for example, productive agriculture being clearly separated from nature areas. History shows, however, that from the beginning this mono-functional organisation had to accommodate other purposes and this led to a slow evolution in the reasons for building the polders. Originally polder construction and the agriculture on it contained a social purpose, increasing domestic food production and generating demand for labour at a time of recession. Nowadays, agricultural production is mixed with other emerging functions like bird protection. The compartmentalisation between nature and agriculture proved to be less impervious than planned: even Dutch spatial planning could not prevent birds from nesting on agricultural land or farmers from profiting from this. The case illustrates how a new agricultural function was socially constructed. As in other places in the Netherlands, this happened through a coalition of farmers and conservationists who created a new human/nature configuration against the odds. These actors adapted industrial agriculture without really changing its logic. The nature management policy created a new situation in which elements of nature were conserved in restricted perimeters but without really

[153] With just 5.7 % of the national acreage, Flevoland is one main areas for organic farming in the country.
[154] Another joint outcome is the landscape that this creates. The farmers, and others, are stressing the aesthetic and tourist benefits of wildflower meadows, which are particularly attractive in spring.

transforming the logic of production. Moreover the transformation allowed a continued compartmentalisation between production and nature conservation areas within the farm, and did not transform the core production activities of farmers. The final outcome of this territorial multifunctionality is still uncertain. The contradiction of producing environmentally and being competitive internationally is far from resolved by a simple geographical separation of the two functions and remains problematic.

Chapter 9. Multifunctionality in Isère: towards a reinvention of corporatist management?

9.1 Introduction

Isère has a highly diverse agriculture in terms of both farming practices and farm structures. The *département* is very geographically diverse with mountainous areas in the south and flat arable plains in the north[155]. This diversity raises challenges for those who administer agriculture within the *département*, and this is an important factor since actors at the *départemental* level have relative freedom to develop their own priorities. There had been, at that level, a long standing co-management of agriculture between the agricultural profession and the state. This practice of cooperation continued with the implementation of the CTE, many aspects of which were decided at this level. This level of governance was very appropriate for implementing a policy that recognised the diverse functions of agriculture and arriving at compromises over agricultural development issues. Observing how the national policy was translated at the départemental level illustrates how the local actors appropriated and transformed national policy (Ollivier et al. 2001). The objective of this chapter is not to attempt to fully list all the (technical) solutions that were experimented with in each locality, but rather to show how they were used and institutionalised through the policy arrangements at the level of the département. This chapter focuses on the interplay between actors when incorporating, translating and appropriating a given policy framework and then looks at the forms of multifunctional agriculture that these social dynamics gave rise to. In this context, it is important to first look at the specific situation in Isère. This is done, in the first section, where it is argued that agriculture in Isère had long been undergoing a dualistic and diverging development, which led the farmers in the mountains and the plains to have different priorities. The second part shows how the policy arrangements of the 1990s sought to recognise this diversity when implementing a strategy for multifunctional agriculture. The last part elaborates on the local application of the CTE and how it prolonged and strengthened the existing institutional arrangements.

9.2 The successes and doubts of the professional model of farming

The diversity of agriculture in Isère and the development of professional farming

Agriculture in Isère is highly diverse and contains a great variety of farming systems. This diversity is due to the disparate geographic context of Isère. The visitor rapidly passes from a flat landscape of intensive arable farming (in the north) to an impressive set of mountainous zones in the south, where extensive cattle breeding is the main agricultural activity. Despite these disparities, from the 1960s onwards, the professional model of agriculture spread successfully all across the département. As elsewhere, modernisation was encouraged through the constellation of national and local professional organisations around the FNSEA (Gervais et al. 1977). This had different effects on the agricultural panorama of the département and produced important territorial contrasts within it, which accelerated intra-regional

[155] A *département* is a French administrative territorial unit.

differentiation. The north of the département intensified[156] considerably; this trend was much limited in the south because of geographical constraints. This area grew into a tourist region and received support through the Less Favoured Area schemes (Gerbaux 1994).

The département is also characterised by the persistence of small-scale farms and non-professional farmers[157]. The agricultural census of 1988 records that, of a total of 13,350 farms, only 6,070 were professional – i.e. more than half of the farms were not considered as "professional." This reflects the fact that the region has many small farms; some 40% of which are involved in some form or another of diversification (Blanchemanche 2000).

The uncertainties facing professional agriculture in the '80s

The beginning of the 1980s was an anxious period for the agricultural profession. Frequent overproduction and the imposition of the dairy quota system (in 1984) raised doubts about the future of farming. Farmers in the area reflected on their capacity to further develop and compete with more "efficient" farming systems. Were they in a position to continue along the lines of modernisation and intensification? An employee of the chamber of agriculture remembered: *"We were not in a region with the same kind of agriculture as the north of France. We did not have the same structure. We were not competitive at all."*[158]

The union's 1989 election brought a new team of leaders from the FNSEA to the Chamber of Agriculture who, in the absence of any credible alternative, promoted a strategy of continued modernisation. They maintained their efforts for improvement, rationalisation and further specialisation of production to increase profitability. Farmers started to lose interest in the local groups for development and extension (GEDA, GVA[159]), as the focus of these groups didn't address the issues faced by many farmers. Support was also given to developing cooperatives and agro-industrial partners.

These directions did little to reduce the intra-regional differences in development. On the contrary, these continued to become more pronounced as the different regions faced very different problems. On the plains, 'competitive' agriculture faced new problems, such as increasing land prices on the periphery of urban areas, the growing question of how to maintain economic viability and avoid the water pollution caused by intensified agricultural practices. There was an imminent threat of strict environmental regulations being introduced, which would have endangered intensive cattle breeding farms (which later took shape with the Nitrates Directive in 1991). The more mountainous, and marginal, zones faced problems of rural development and abandonment of farmlands. Abandoned upland meadows were rapidly invaded by shrubs and forest and the landscapes were becoming more enclosed, with a

[156] That triggered, among others, the development of powerful regional farmers' cooperatives of production, such as the dairy cooperative 'ORLAC,' created in 1962 and the grain production cooperative 'la Dauphinoise'.

[157] "A farm is considered as professional if its standard gross margin is €9,600 or more. This is equivalent to a minimal size of 12 hectares of wheat, 7 milking cows, 19 suckling cows, 126 sheep or 1 hectare of fruit-trees. This is assumed to provide the equivalent of one person working for at least ¾ of the year." (DDAF de l'Isère 2005)

[158] Interview with an employee of the Chamber of Agriculture of Isère, April 2005.

[159] GVA : the "Groupe de Vulgarisation Agricole" (Agricultural Extension Group). GEDA : the "Groupe d'Etude et de Développement Agricole" (Study Group for Agricultural Development). These groups played a large role in the dissemination of technical progress among farmers. They were meant to reflect the main farming systems and to experiment collectively with agronomic and technical choices. They were the local institutions for disseminating the professional model of farming and were controlled and supported by the Chamber of Agriculture and FNSEA.

possible consequence that the area might lose its attractiveness for tourism. The most threatened zones were the steep parcels of land immediately below the alpine pastures, which were already protected by policy measures. Some upland hamlets were in danger of becoming completely encircled by forest if nothing was done.

This dualistic evolution of agriculture meant that the professional organisations had to address a range of concerns if they were to serve the interests of all farmers. Yet the Chamber of Agriculture was mostly dominated by farmers from the plain, who had little vision about the future of agriculture in the mountains. In addition to the ongoing cleavage within the profession (between the FNSEA, the Confédération Paysanne and Coordination Rurale – see chapter 7), other "dissident" technical organisations were establishing themselves. These included the movement of organic farmers (ADABIO), the emerging organisation of on-farm accommodation providers (*Accueil Paysan),* and ÁRDEAR (part of the *Confederation Paysanne*). The emergence of these groups reflected and further emphasised the need to broaden the scope of agricultural development.

9.3 The adjustments of the '90s

The 1990s saw some changes that permitted developing and strengthening "non-productive" agricultural functions. These mostly stemmed from a reinforcing of the mountain policy, new arrangements on agricultural pollution and the development of new territorial approaches.

Reinforcing mountain policy

Though the mountain policy was already well established, it was further developed by the newly created decentralised authorities, some of whom developed policy instruments for agriculture[160].

In 1987, the Conseil Général of Isère[161] decided to invest extensively in measures for land management in the mountainous zones and allocated more than 4 million FF[162] to landscape conservation, through PEZMA (Prime à l'Entretien des Zones Menacées d'Abandon)[163]. This happened very soon after the EU had instituted agro-environmental measures[164], making Isère one of the first places in Europe (along with the UK) to adopt agri-environmental measures on a large scale. The president of the Conseil Général, Mr Carignon (who was also Minister of Environment in Chirac's coalition government), was the driving force behind this innovative and untested policy. He was strongly supported in this by a popular and charismatic elected official, Maurice Puissat, a former farmer who strongly supported the interests of the farmers in the more marginal areas of the Département. The goal was to strengthen the economic position of the mountainous cattle breeders since they played a central role in maintaining the upland meadows[165]. This measure was directly co-financed by the European Union (in 1993),

[160] Ambiguities within the policy guidelines gave the decentralised authorities the opportunity to intervene in "agricultural affairs" (Berriet-Solliec 2002; Berriet-Solliec et al. 2006).
[161] The Conseil Général is the local decentralised authority at the departmental level.
[162] The equivalent of €600,000.
[163] Subsidy for Maintaining Zones Threatened by Abandonment.
[164] Through Regulation 797/85.
[165] The risk of farmland abandonment was evaluated according to the difficulty of using agricultural machinery, that is, the steepness of the parcels, which was mapped with assistance from the research institute Cemagref. In the first year, the subsidy was paid to farmers according to numbers of livestock, but more accurate indicators of abandonment risks were soon applied. The measure initially covered 45 municipalities and was later (in 1990) extended to 87.

separately from the national agro-environmental schemes implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. The Conseil Général also tackled a more structural problem: launching a policy for supporting farm succession in 1991, together with grants to support diversification. This marked a revival of the use of farm structure instruments in Isère. These interventions were complemented by the Région[166] Rhône Alpes which also became involved in several aspects of agricultural regulation including hydrology, a measure for valorising food chains[167] and an agro-environmental policy[168].

New arrangements on agricultural pollution and farmland abandonment

Environmental concerns eventually came to inspire new thinking about the functions of agriculture within the Chamber of Agriculture which started to take an active interest in the problems of pollution caused by agricultural intensification. Young farmers were at the forefront of raising this issue, arguing that the professional organisations could no longer avoid the subject. They felt that, sooner or later, there would be some major changes in policy and if the profession adopted some voluntary measures they might forestall more drastic constraints. The Chamber created an environmental commission[169] and began some field experiments on ways of controlling nitrate pollution.

These experiments, known as 'Opération Pilazotes', were started in two locations in the département where nitrate pollution was a problem[170]. After five years of experimentation, the quality of the water had greatly improved in the regions[171]. The farmers used the knowledge that they had gained from these experiments and their pro-active stance to negotiate a softer implementation of the Nitrates Directive at the départemental level[172]. Their gamble paid off, as a member of the FNSEA commented: *"Then, for the Nitrate Directive, it has worked very well. […] Because, the authorities wanted to apply it strictly, but when we met with the DDA we said: 'Wait! Don't break up the machine. This is what we obtained through voluntary*

[166] The Région is level of government between department and the national level and is also called the "Conseil Régional".
[167] These last interventions were achieved through an integrated programme of agricultural development (PIDA), which started in 1990. It provided financial support to diverse dimensions of the chain (production, research, quality, processing etc.) and supported more than 50 initiatives (Delorme et al. 1997).
[168] The agro-environmental policy of the Conseil Régional was known as the PLGE (Plans Locaux de Gestion de l'Espace).
[169] A commission is not an administrative body but rather an official group of elected professional farmers meant to encourage reflections that can then be fed into policy should the occasion arise.
[170] Some earlier reflections of one GVA were started by looking at the best way to utilise the nitrogen in the soil. The objective was to improve the global value added of the farm by combining a cost reduction strategy with an environmental approach and thereby preventing nitrates leaching into water courses. This led to a revival of interest in agronomic science which provided the basis for understanding the mechanisms within the soil and generating some coherent systems of production. It led to the discovery that planting intermediary crops in the rotation system during the winter (CIPAN *Culture Intermédiaire Piège à Nitrate*) captured much of the excess nitrogen in the soil.
[171] To measure the effect of their nitrogen management on the water quality, they focused on small aquifers which would react quickly to the changes in practices. These results were then used as a basis for discussion with the authorities when more severe regulation was mooted. Different fertiliser regimes were experimented with, including some plots where no fertiliser was used. In addition farmers were mobilised and sensitised over the issues. A national certification label "*Fertimieux*" was given to both sites of Isère involved with the experimentation.
[172] Almost the entire northern part of Isère was classified as a vulnerable zone and was subject to some quite prescriptive measures. These included: registering manure spreading practices, a limit of 170 kg/hectares/year of nitrate application, a balanced plan of fertilisation, spreading manure at the appropriate time of year and the obligation to have good manure storage buildings.

efforts. If you put in all of the [restrictive] regulation you will pull this all down.' We were dealing with smart people, and they said no. […] and put in the minimum programme. They rely on what we showed them and what we had to say."[173] In the end the farmers negotiated a regulation that was not overly constraining and the Chamber of Agriculture's intercession later led to farmers receiving support from the Conseil Général which in 1991, created contractual measures for planting intermediate crops to trap nitrates.

The issue of farmland abandonment was taken up by another professional organisation, ADASEA, whose traditional role in administrating modernisation plans and subsidy schemes justified its involvement in managing the newly emerging agro-environmental measures. These measures brought new tasks which extended the role of the ADASEA beyond administration. It also had to act as animator, facilitator and rural developer, which meant that the staff of ADASEA needed to develop new competencies in terms of territorial assessment. The agro-environmental measures were mostly implemented in the more marginal agricultural areas such as the mountainous areas of Belledonne, Chambarans, Bonneveaux, Vercors and on the periphery of Grenoble.

The idea of 'territorial committees'

In addition to addressing environmental issues, the Chamber of Agriculture was also aware of the very different territorial dynamics and sought to address these by experimenting during the '90 with the idea of 'territory committee'.

Some leaders of the professional organisations decided to create 'territorial committees'. They realised that there was a lack of locally focused development and that it was the role of the Chamber to provide this. *"We realised that we were distant from the basic farmers. Did we really meet their needs? We were not so sure. We were organised along sectoral lines: beef, milk… and had no territorial groups. We had given those up, and there was a huge vacuum in that respect."*[174] Discussions were held at the Chamber of agriculture on how to reinvent the GEDA and local agricultural development – the issue at stake for the Chamber, being to thereby reclaim the territorial aspect of its extension work. *"We thought that it was necessary to launch some closer territorial dynamics with the territorial committees"* [175]. They were aware of the innovative territorial policy of the Conseil Régional and the successful examples of two local farmers groups (ADAYG and APAP) that had emerged in the previous decades[176]. *"Within a Park, they have this reflection. In addition to the farmers, the future of the territory is decided by the local authorities, the other professions… If this idea can be applied in a park, why isn't it possible to bring it to other places?"* [177] Staff at the Chamber of Agriculture were also intellectually intrigued about getting to grips with the notion of

[173] Interview with a member of the FNSEA, April 2005.
[174] Interview with a leader of the FNSEA, April 2005.
[175] Interview with a leader of the FNSEA, April 2005.
[176] APAP stands for the Association for the Promotion of Farmers in the Natural Regional Park of the Vercors (Association pour la Promotion des Agriculteurs du Parc Naturel Régionale du Vercors). This was established in the '70s shortly after the creation of the Natural Regional Park of the Vercors. APAP was set up as an institutional channel of communication with the Park Authority so that farmers within the park's perimeter could communicate effectively with it (Perret 2003). ADAYG stands for the Association for the Development of Agriculture in the Y of Grenoble (Association pour le Développement de l'Agriculture dans l'Y Grenoblois). As in the Vercors, the organisation was born with the support of a very specific institutional arrangement in which the local authorities in the peri-urban zone of Grenoble played a leading role.
[177] Interview with a leader of the FNSEA, April 2005.

territory[178] and developed a methodology of territorial assessment that could be applied across the department, a tool that proved very useful in the future development and materialisation of the concept of Territorial Committees[179].

The idea of these committees was well received among professionals, partly at least because they could facilitate the handling of the numerous initiatives for rural development that had emerged during the '90s. Farmers were increasingly being invited to participate in rural development programmes with local authorities and other stakeholders. Several of such initiatives had successfully mobilised groups of farmers within the département[180]. In each case, *ad hoc* commissions of farmers were set up to represent farmers' interests. The 'territorial committees' would institutionalise such platforms, formalise communication channels and thereby establish some coherence and continuity. They would become the Chamber's tool for pursuing local agricultural development. A farmer leader of the FNSEA commented: *"we said that these local structures, whatever their name, should become the Chamber of Agriculture's tool for territorial development"* [181].

Thus the Chamber of Agriculture encouraged the development of local territorial committees, with the hope that they would rekindle farmers' interest in territorial issues. Experimental territorial committees were set up in a few areas of the département[182] and the scheme was officially launched in 1996 on the occasion of the visit of a former national leader of the FNSEA, Raymond Lacombe. This meeting, in Beaucroissant, was intended to encourage the spread of these committees into the plain zones. However, this symbolic national support didn't have much influence in popularising the concept in these regions and the idea remained relatively unused in these more productive zones until the Farm Territorial Contracts (CTE) were instituted at the end of the '90s. The professional organisations within the département were in a strong position to assume a central role in their application.

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[178] One of them had developed, together with the University of Alpine Geography of Grenoble, a methodology of territorial appraisal. It sought to better understand the phenomenon of farmland abandonment and to link it, if possible, to an economic analysis of the landscape. The objective was to find ways to maintain and perpetuate the landscape understanding its economic dimensions.

[179] See for instance the work of Janin (1997)

[180] These stemmed from the European Union (Objectives 5b and 2, Leader 1, 2, +…), the Region Rhône Alpes and covered both the remote and "less favoured" zones, and the intermediary territories of the plain.

[181] Interview with a leader of the FNSEA, April 2005.

[182] This first started in 1993 when a Natural Regional Park was set up in the eastern part of the département, on the Chartreuse plateau. The Chamber of Agriculture fully participated in the initial planning period in which the territorial charter was designed and the main development issues at stake were identified. As in most of the parks, a farmer's organisation was created: the AAC (association pour l'Avenir de l'Agriculture en Chartreuse). This association closely cooperated with the Chamber in elaborating an agricultural project. Later on, the Chamber did the same in the mountains of Belledonne where an organisation called ADABEL (Association pour le Développement de l'Agriculture de Belledonne) which bought together local farmers and some of the municipal authorities, had been in existence since in 1985. Though the region was relatively rich, problems of land accessibility were constraining the further development of small-scale farms. This mountainous zone had become a popular residential destination for commuters from the Grésivaudan Valley. Here the Chamber appointed an extension worker to animate the process, which involved state supported experiments with specific individual farm contracts. The PDD (the predecessor of the CTE), was also implemented in this zone together with other actions for local development. These included, a policy for agricultural structures, local valorisation of produce, defending farmers' interests regarding land accessibility. Finally, in the southern part of the département, a further initiative was launched and supported by the Chamber. A third organisation was set up, SITADEL (Sud Isère Territoire Agricole Développement Local), which covered some isolated territories that had been designated as a European Objective 5B Area. These initiatives marked the first concrete achievements of the Chamber's territorial approach.

9.4 The CTE: the reactivation of co-management mechanisms

The Orientation Blueprint of 1999 marked a rupture with traditional agricultural policies in that it sought to combine agricultural development with the other functions of agriculture. There was unanimous enthusiasm over the shift that this policy represented. Even the radical farmers' union, the Confédération Paysanne, supported the principles of the reform: "*The interesting thing was that, for the first time, there was a coherent strategy behind the subsidies. There was a truly global vision of the farm"*[183]. Furthermore, it provided local stakeholders with quite some room to implement and adjust national policy to local situations. Locally, the policy involved linking existing, but previously separate, policies that had been developed by various local actors. An employee of the chamber of agriculture commented: *During these three years, the CTE has been a great adventure. That's how I see it. The blueprint really recognised this notion of multifunctionality, and in Isère, we were ready. All the ingredients were here"*[184] Paradoxically however, this period also saw a recentralisation of power back towards the professional organisations, which considerably influenced the process of policy implementation, thereby re-establishing the centrality of the state-profession partnership in managing agricultural affairs.

The local policy arrangement: the re-activation of the state-profession co-management mechanisms

When the policy came to be implemented the state had to decide on the most efficient way to administer the contracts. It couldn't handle these tasks by itself and the professional organisations were eager to play a key role in the management of the policy. The zeal of the Chamber of Agriculture in leading and coordinating the first policy reflections gave it a central role in the process. ADASEA also played a key role due to its agro-environment competences and its experience in policy implementation. An internal agreement was made between the major protagonists, ADASEA, the DDAF and the Chamber of Agriculture. ADASEA took responsibility for registration and the Chamber of Agriculture took charge of coordinating the processes (defining the proposals, orientations and priorities and developing the collective and individual projects). This arrangement meant that the administrative machinery functioned efficiently and after a few years Isère had one of the highest take up rates of the CTE in the whole country. But this arrangement also provided the professional organisations with total control over the procedures.

Nevertheless, the final shape of the policy was not exclusively decided by the farmers' organisations. The policy framework had to be discussed within the departmental agricultural assembly (CDOA)[185]. This consultative commission, chaired by the Prefect of the département, wass influential and its recommendations were usually accepted. A diversity of farmers' unions and professional organisations were represented on it, together with some new stakeholders, including environmentalists, consumer organisations and the local

[183] Interview with a representative of the Confédération Paysanne, April 2005.
[184] Interview from April 2005.
[185] In French, the Commission Départementale d'Orientation Agricole.

authorities who had recently gained access to this forum[186]. But, for several reasons (utlined below) this commission didn't work effectively as a plural arena.

First, the decree that opened the doors of the CDOA to these new groups only became effective after the initial preparatory phase, almost one year after the first discussions had started. This meant that the foundations of the policy had already been established. The Ministry of Agriculture had selected a few départements (including Isère) as test beds for implementing the first CTE before the blueprint became law (Léger 1999). During this preparatory phase[187], the policy framework was far from clear, even for the civil servants of the DDA who had to slowly learn from the Ministry's memos, laws and decrees what the precise outline was. The first discussions started at the end of 1998 within a working group consisting of the DDA and the main professional organisations. The Chamber was centrally involved in these discussions and ADASEA, the CDJA and the FDSEA all played an active role. The only new stakeholder in the discussions was the territorial association ADAYG, whose co-founder had become president of the Chamber. But except for this organisation the institutional set-up was basically the same traditional one. This allowed this network of farming interests to appropriate the national policy to their own agendas (Heim 2002) as they had a full year's involvement in designing the strategy before any other stakeholders contributed to the discussions.

Second, the position of the new stakeholders was weak and they were often prevented from asserting their views. Like the minority farmers' unions, their vote was not enough to oppose the cumulated vote of the numerous farmers' organisations. In Isère, this situation was worsened as the environmental organisations (FRAPNA in particular) were considered to be expert groups', and were not given any voting powers (contrary to stipulations within the orientation blueprint). This was apparently due to an error made by the Prefect while setting up the CDOA. It was later justified by saying that these groups were only represented by employees and that voting power could only be given to official representatives. Either way it was of little consequence as they were in a small minority and also faced another, more problematic, issue. Most non-farming organisations were lost in the technicalities of agricultural discussions. Many of the proposals before the CDOA were prepared by specialist technical groups which met prior to the main sessions. The implicit normative positions were mostly considered as technical issues. The CDOA, which was also responsible for assessing the individual dossiers, validated them very rapidly, with little genuine scrutiny of their coherence or consistency.

The representatives of the Confédération Paysanne regretted that they could not scrutinise further the dossiers: *"In CDOA, the FNSEA is very familiar with the dossiers because they are present at the local level. So they control the information. It gives them huge power. We have access to the dossier, but we don't always have an opinion."*

The CDOA came to resemble an administrative formality, an exercise in rubber stamping, rather than an organisation with any real deliberative control. The environmental organisation, which had previously actively participated in developing agro-environmental policies in some areas of the département, only sporadically managed to have a say. One area where they did have some influence was the 'lapwing protection' measure, whose framework they developed.

[186] Three environmental organisations were invited to participate: AVENIR, FRAPNA, CORA. The organic farming organisation ADABIO, later replaced FRAPNA. Consumers were represented by the organisation "UFC Que choisir?" The local authorities included both the regional and departmental authorities.
[187] For a detailed report of this phase, see Heim (Heim 2002).

But they had no real influence on overall policy making. This was also true of the consumer groups, which only attended the plenary sessions, when the general orientations were discussed.

The normative structuring of the policy framework was actually established within the local network composed of the state and the main professional organisations (ADASEA and the Chamber of agriculture). That was done through a working group, and continued thereafter by the official monitoring committee, the composition of which was more or less identical: the professional organisations and the state were represented, as well as the different farmers unions. In reality, as the discussions were largely referring to technical aspects, mostly the DDAF, ADASEA and the Chamber of agriculture participated in the meetings. Overall, the tight cooperation between the state and professional bodies over the local implementation of the policy remained rather undisturbed (at least until the end of 2001), and gave rise to a broad policy framework containing a large diversity of measures.

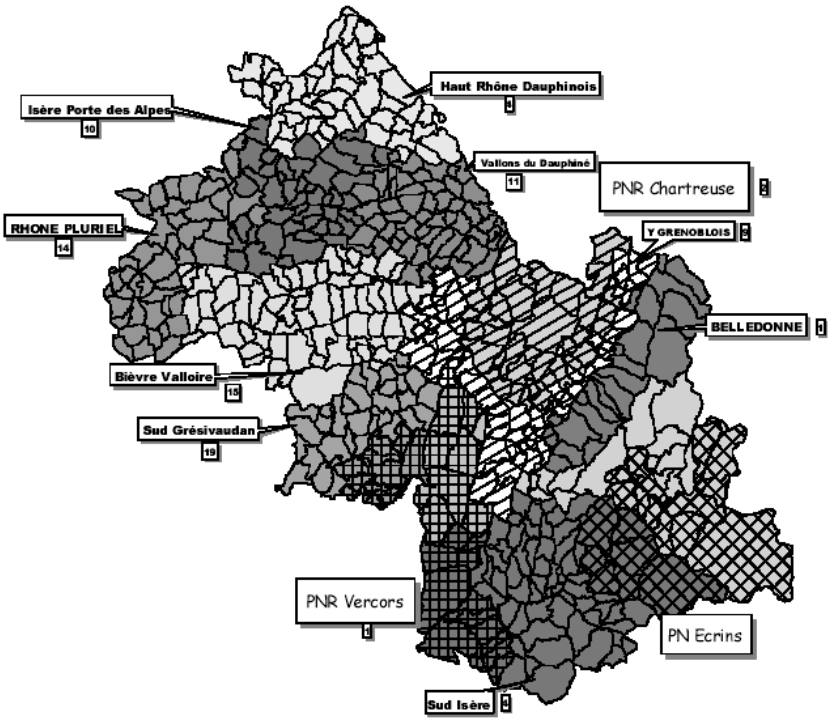
The normative construction of the policy framework

The content and nature of the measures had to be selected according to two principal aspects: environment and socio-economy. Everybody in the groups agreed that the CTE should incorporate the existing established instruments. These included the environmental measures that ADASEA had initiated and the land management measures of the Conseil Général. Other aspects were taken from the département's agricultural plan. The process also gave some room to groups of farmers to propose collective projects. These groups were either based on a food supply-chain or more territorially anchored. If these projects fitted with the National Rural Development Plan (NRDP) they were incorporated within the list of measures[188].

In addition, an attempt at territorial zoning was made in accordance with the new legal requirements. Those who supported the 'territorial committees' saw the CTE as an opportunity to extend this model across the whole département. Twelve different and distinct areas were identified. The existing local farmers' organisations, mainly situated in the south of the département, were included[189]. The other areas, mostly in the north of the département did not yet have Territorial Committees[190] (see Figure 9.1.). They were established on the basis of boundaries drawn from planning documents made by the regional authority for regional development (Jouve 1998). This was regrettable as these boundaries did not fully correspond to coherent agricultural territories, encountering similar development issues. A committee was set up in each territory and asked to propose some priority measures that reflected the local issues[191]. Some project drafts emerged, but these did not lead to the establishment of constraining fixed contracts for each territory. Instead, the working group decided to create one flexible departmental contract. The final policy framework offered farmers a fairly broad range of measures to choose from: 82 possible socio-economic investment measures and 182 agro-environmental ones. This gave farmers an enormous range of combinations to choose from.

[188] Most of these measures were later adapted in the regional declination of the NRDP.
[189] These include: the APAP in the Vercors, the APAO in the Oisans, SITADEL in the extreme south of Isère, ADABEL in Belledone, AAC in the Chartreuse and the ADAYG close by Grenoble.
[190] This corresponds to Sud Grésivaudan, Val du Dauphiné, Bièvre Valloire, Vallons du Dauphiné, Haut Rhône Dauphinois, Isère porte des Alpes, Rhône Pluriel.
[191] These committees had to consist of professional leaders, workers of the Chamber of Agriculture, the DDAF, local authorities and other local partner (environmental organisations…).

Figure 9.1. A map of the Territorial Committees in Isère



Source : A.D.A.S.E.A. Isère - A.G. 23/06/00

This wide range of measures was partly due to the great diversity of issues encountered in both the plains and the mountainous areas. However, only a few of these agro-environmental measures were widely taken up by farmers (see Table 9.1). Extensive grassland management, was by far the most popular adopted by 80% of farmers applying for CTEs, including cattle breeders in the mountainous zones and medium-sized farms on the plain. This measure and the fertilisation plans both offered farmers quite a wide range of management options and were far from prescriptive. 19% of farmers who applied for CTEs included hedgerow management measures in the contracts and 12% for planting intermediate crops to trap nitrates. Very few (just 7%) farmers opted for the organic option.

The investment measures allowed farmers to pursue a diverse range of transformations and upgrading works on their farm. Some of these helped farmers to develop new on-farm activities by financing facilities for on-farm sales and / or processing (26%), or make changes to help them conform to quality criteria for specific labels (19%). These approaches were supported by the territorial labels of local farmers' organisations (such as APAP and ADAYG). The CTE also financed more sector-oriented approaches, such as the brand 'Route du lait' which was launched by a dairy cooperative (ORLAC) and the quality measures of the Dauphidrom cooperative. Finally, a large percentage of the measures taken up were for improving farm buildings (52%) through renovating milking parlours or improving the visual integration of the farm within the landscape.

Table 9.1. Most commonly adopted measures in the contracts (Isère)

	% occurrence
Agro-environmental measures	
Extensive grassland management	80
Fertilisation plan	30
Landscape infrastructure (hedgerows)	19
Winter crop implantation	12
Maintenance and management of farmland at risk of abandonment	11
Composting	11
Investment Measures	
Diversification of activities on the farm	26
Improvement of labour conditions and working practices	52
Improvement of the quality of product	19

Source: ADASEA 38

The take-up of measures reflected the diverse agricultural conditions within the département. In the plains, they were mostly aimed at countering the negative effects of intensification, by making agriculture more ecological and reinforcing existing food supply chains and the agri-business system. In the south, they were used to encourage landscape and rural development, to reorient activities towards new local markets and to encourage diversifying activities.

Criticisms of the CTE

The rapidity with which the local policy network built the policy framework was the subject of some criticisms. According to some actors, the network rerouted the policy and used the CTE *"as an alibi to the rest of the profession. [For instance] the chamber only puts the 'on-farm' label to the fore and argues that it is its policy of quality. […] But it doesn't really do anything to support its development. They are very cold towards everything that challenges their way of thinking."*[192] In addition, the constraints imposed by the CDOA were quite accommodating in several respects. For instance, in the first years of the CTE, it was not compulsory for the big arable farmers to adopt a fertiliser plan. Instead, they could base their contract on the surface of grassland that they utilised. Likewise, the 'quality' charters validated by the CDOA had very flexible definitions. The chartering organisations made their own internal checks and were therefore both judge and jury.[193] This highlights the very weak involvement of consumer groups in the policy making process and also one of the main concerns of the state-profession *cogestion*, to generate a policy framework that was attractive to farmers.

Others criticised the limited territorialisation process. The territorial committees were only asked to check the appropriateness of the CTE to issues within each territory. Even though some territorial committees prepared a territorial charter for the monitoring committee, these were not transformed into specific territorial contracts, although a few of the measures proposed were integrated into a contract for the whole département. The territorial committees did not have the right to apply specific and additional territorial constrains within their territory. This particularly angered the APAP which had drawn up its own fixed contract for the whole Vercors region but found itself reduced to a mere consultative group (Jauneau and

[192] Interview with a representative of the Confédération Paysanne, April 2005.
[193] This was the case for the quality charter 'la Route du Lait' proposed by the dairy cooperative ORLAC.

Roque 2002). Later the zoning did take into account the various local dynamics in the south of Isère, but it was much less consistent in the northern part of the département. For example, it ignored the former agro-environmental dynamics on the Chambaran and Bonneveaux plateaus, where clear territorial cohesion had been identified[194]. This was because the zoning adopted by the Chamber split these zones across two or three territories. This illustrated, for some actors, the limited coherence of the approach (at least in the northern part of the department) and the greater importance attached to a sector-anchored logic rather than a 'territorial' one.

These criticisms show that many of the actors who had previously been involved in developing agricultural strategies felt a profound sense of dispossession in the way that the professional organisations (i.e. ADASEA, the DDA and the Chamber of Agriculture) almost completely dominated the whole policy-making procedure by centralising decision making power in a single monitoring committee. The weak position of the external stakeholders and the weak territorial aspect of the policy-making process led to some aspects of the CTE being less robust than they could have been. In a moment of self-criticism, the chairman of the chamber, noted: *"We might have done it rather too quickly, but the farmers wanted some CTE. We dropped the option of a territorial approach in favour of a centralised one at the departmental level" (cited in (Heim 2002)*. The situation did change a little in later years, as the policy network opened up slightly to other actors and a few adjustments were made to the policy framework[195]. But, only a few months after these changes were made the government abandoned the policy altogether.

2002: the end of the CTE and its replacement by the CAD

In August 2002, the right-wing national government closed down the CTE, replacing it a year later with a new contractual policy, the Contracts of Sustainable Agriculture (CAD).[196] This marked a change in the philosophy of state intervention, one aspect of which was a change in the available budget. 2003 was almost a 'white year' in which very few contracts were signed. In addition a ceiling of €27,000 was placed on the amount that could be paid under any one contract. In Isère, the average CTE was about €34,000 so this budgetary change had a large impact on the extent of intervention. Since the value of the contracts was calculated by the amount of land a farm had, these changes had the biggest effect on the largest farms, particularly, the big arable farmers (who had received 10% of CTE subsidies) and extensive cattle breeders (25%). They previously received an average of € 42,000 and € 47,000 respectively (ADASEA 2002).

Furthermore, the new policy had a more specific focus on environmental concerns and required the contracts to be more territorialised. Selective zoning was even suggested as a possible option. There was a clear drive to reduce the tremendous range of measures that

[194] On the plateau of Bonneveaux, this even gave birth to a new local farmers' organisation, the AGEB (Agriculture et Gestion de l'Espace Bonnevaux), founded in 1998.

[195] This marked the start of a period of appeasement between the Chamber of Agriculture and the territorial organisations. Agreements of cooperation were passed with both the ADAYG and the APAP, which divided up the task of local development. APAP were able to draw upon part of the CTE fund (FFCTE). Likewise, after having lobbied the DDA, the environmental groups gained representation on the monitoring committee and became involved in the technical committees of preparation for the CDOA giving them prior access to dossiers before the sessions. FRAPNA even provided a few ecological educational sessions for the staff of the Chamber of Agriculture, and also became involved in the FFCTE by participating in developing on-farm biodiversity assessment.

[196] In French, the Contrats d'Agriculture Durable.

farmers could chose from in their contracts and impose a few measures that would be decisive in improving local environmental quality[197]. A maximum of two environmental priorities were adopted for each of the eleven new zones[198] for which model contracts were designed. Four environmental priorities were adopted across the whole département: land management, prevention of nitrate pollution, prevention of agro-chemical pollution and preservation of biodiversity. However, no real commitment was made to local animation.

The other budgetary change at the national level was the abandonment of socio-economic investment measures. Fortunately for the farmers of Isère, the Conseil Général decided to fill in these gaps. It offered to offset the withdrawal of these funds at the national level and to strengthen the CAD by providing additional ongoing finance for socio-economic measures. These measures focused on diversification, improving the quality of produce and working conditions and environmental preservation. Farmers welcomed this intervention, but the Conseil Général made it conditional. The policy device had to be applied across the whole department, not selectively zoned, as had happened elsewhere. It had to remain open to all farmers. Second, to get the quality approach validated, the Conseil Général required that labels had to be approved by an external certification organisation. As a result, some of the quality approaches like the 'route du lait' could no longer be financed. One group – the cheese producers of Saint-Marcellin – were refused a label by the AOC. Third, the dossiers were examined not only in the CDOA but also in a Départemental Commission under the presidency of the Conseil Général.

Thus in the aftermath of the policy changes of 2002, the Conseil Général re-emerged as a significant actor in promoting agricultural development. It used its strong role to make some changes to the existing close knit and exclusionary mechanisms of governance by imposing its own new requirements upon them. This provided new opportunities for farmers who could benefit from additional support. The Conseil Général's response was not universally adopted at the national level, and the differences in departmental support could prefigure a future differentiation of agricultural development at both the departmental and regional levels. It did not fully compensate for the withdrawal of much state support, particularly as the stricter requirements on the socio-economic measures led to lower take up rates. Despite the Conseil's intercession, the shift to the CAD involved a narrowing of the contractual instrument to more pressing environmental problems and a neglecting of socio-economic aspects.

9.5 Conclusions

The local adaptation of the CTE policy framework was partly in keeping with the cognitive policy shifts that had occurred during the previous decade. These policy changes had provided some new practical solutions to the different problems encountered by agriculture in the region. They addressed different issues, particularly landscape management and the prevention of pollution. In participating in this shift, the professional organisations managed to appropriate some of the cognitive shifts that had been experimented elsewhere and thereby maintain their leading role within agricultural development. They fully shouldered the idea of multifunctionality. The arrival of the CTE policy marked a revival of the pact between the state and the professional organisations which were given the task of policy implementation.

[197] These measures had already been decided by the CDOA in Isère where farmers with more than 25 hectares of arable lands who wanted to join the CTE were obliged to adopt the integrated fertilisation measure.

[198] A new zoning system was also adopted which defined the territories in the north of the department, taking the Chambarans and Bonneveaux areas as distinct territorial entities.

This empowered the main farmers union, also in command of the professional organisations. It allowed the establishment of a multifunctional policy framework that integrated a diverse range of development priorities and challenges. In the mountainous areas, this was based on spatial management and rural development, whereas in the plains it was designed to contain pollution and strengthen the economic development of farms. This system was not without its critics as, some said that it favoured administrative efficiency at the expense of imposing more constraining measures. But the real transformation arose with the cancellation of the CTE and its replacement by the CAD. This marked a relative withdrawal of the state, which was only partially compensated for by the intervention of the Conseil Général. This most recent evolution gave rise to different local authorities adopting different responses to the withdrawal of state funding. While it does provide local administrations with an incentive to be stricter over defining terms of intervention, there is some uncertainty about the long term continuity of local authorities' involvement in this domain.

Part 4. Subventions and the rules of allocation

Chapter 10. Who get the grants? A comparative analysis of the rules of dispatching subsidies

10.1 Introduction

The policies for multifunctional agriculture (the Dutch SAN and the French CTE) helped reshape the principles for allocating subsidies within both countries, according to the respective logics, priorities and objectives of the national policy instruments. While the budget allocated to these policies is limited, it is a form of financial support that can prove critical to the existence and reproduction of farms at a time of ongoing 'structural adjustment.' The number of farm holdings in both countries continues to decline. Between 2003 and 2005, the number of agricultural holdings in France declined by 8% and by 4% in the Netherlands (Eurostat). The selective or inclusive distribution of grants among farmers is therefore crucial, bringing distributive – and redistributive – issues between farmers to the fore. Because the contracts in both countries are individual and depend on voluntary commitment, it would seem that the distribution of the budget would be highly dependant on the personal motivations and mobilisation of individuals. Nevertheless, the contractual policies cannot only be understood as isolated choices made between public authorities and individuals. General issues concerning the way a subsidy is conceived and calculated, the targeted population, the priorities within the instruments, professional mobilisation and so forth, also influenced the distribution of the budget among farmers. These issues are addressed in this chapter, which asks *what the rules of distribution are and how they can be understood and interpreted within the broader evolution of agricultural policy.* This is done by exploring three main themes: the modes of calculation of the grants, the logics and arbitrations in the geographical distribution of the budget, and the logics of distribution of grants among the farmers.

10.2 The modes of calculation of the grants

The manner in which the overall budget for these policies is distributed among farmers partly depends on how the subsidies are calculated[199]. Since the member states assigned each measure (protecting birds, maintaining the landscape etc.) an economic value, it is crucial to understand the principles that determined these values and the implications of this on the distribution of subsidies.

[199] There are, at least, two kinds of subsidies that make up the total money that farmers receive from the SAN and CTE contracts: i) those that co-finance investments (materiel or immaterial) needed to transform part of the functioning of the farm. In these cases, the mechanisms are relatively classic and the grant corresponds to a percentage of the total investment. The European RDRF set some maximum ceilings for such co-financing. ii) The other part is related more to the provision of an amenity. It is mainly this aspect of the contracts that interests me in this section, as it introduced relatively new ways of allocating grants among farmers.

In an early report, the OECD recommended remunerating farmers on the basis of the (environmental) good(s) that they provided. They recommended that the value of the subsidy should be calculated based on pertinent criteria: the number of kilometres of hedgerows maintained or restored, the surface area transformed into favourable habitats for wild flora and fauna and so on (OCDE 1992). This approach embodies a specific way of conceiving the grant, which is supposed to be calculated independently of the conditions in which this 'public good' is produced; this involves attempting to calculate the "intrinsic" value of the good itself.

Economists use several methods for calculating the value of public goods. Some consider that an amenity has a latent value that can be determined in terms of its use value. The methods they use focus on the people who directly benefit from the good provided. This can be done by estimating a value from the costs incurred by a 'consumer' to benefit from the public good (e.g. *the travel cost method*), or applying a price according to observation of behaviour relating to the environmental 'quality' of the goods (*hedonic pricing*)[200]. Another related approach involves considering the problem the other way round and placing the providers of the good (in our case, farmers) at the centre of the process of calculation. This is the approach adopted by the *contingent valuation method* which adopts the principle of basing payments on what people would be prepared to pay for an amenity, or the minimum that farmers would be willing to accept as a compensation for their costs[201]. This method is an attempt to artificially create the conditions of the law of supply and demand. It does not explicitly consider the income of the farmers, but rather their reaction (of repulsion or attraction) to the amount of aid offered. Such a valuation of public goods is not grounded solely on their supposed intrinsic value, but also takes into account the behaviour and attitudes of the actors involved.

In practice, these methods were hardly applied at all, because of numerous problems with their technical feasibility and the difficulty of systematically applying them to each amenity. Instead, a method that was more grounded on the farmers' economic concerns – the *cost incurred and income forgone* – was generally adopted. This method estimates the implications of technical changes on farmers' incomes. The grant was estimated according to the extra expenditure made by farmers to achieve changes on their farms, or the part of their income potentially lost by a change in practice[202]. This was the method chosen by the EU. Its use was partly instituted within the RDRF. This stipulated a ceiling for co-financing (for individuals) and delegated member states the responsibility of determining the values of the subsidies, within these limits. Thus member states were given relative freedom to develop their own grid of values reflecting their national and local features and priorities, (although it remained subject to approval by the STAR committee in Brussels). They were given some general instructions on how to calculate the grants. Article 24 of the RDRF stipulated that the amounts of the grants had to take into consideration the income foregone and the costs incurred. The states were invited to make the calculations necessary to evaluate the supplementary costs faced by farmers so that the provision of public goods fitted with the extra costs generated.

Both countries followed these modes of calculation and used the results in their official documents. They developed specific incentives depending on the national or regional contexts and priorities[203], and produced detailed estimations for every measure. These estimates were

[200] For a presentation of these methods, see for instance Madelin (1994).
[201] For a presentation of this method, see for instance Bonnieux and Vermersch (1993).
[202] For a presentation of this method, see for instance Jauneau and Roque (1999).
[203] France has for instance adopted a specific complementary incentive for Natura 2000 regions whereas the Netherlands has applied a rate of incentive of an average of 15% for all contracts (Terwan 2005).

made at a similar geographical level: at the regional level in France (after harmonisation) and at the national level in the Netherlands[204]. Both countries sought to find a balance between anchoring the measures in their territorial context and devising a system that was administratively manageable. At this early stage, these figures were necessarily approximations, based on an abstract of the average model of farm intended to represent similar farms. These estimates inevitably contained uncertainties related to 'underpayment' and 'overpayment' (Oréade-Brèche 2005, 177)[205].

The result was that, although the estimated cost of the measures did not correspond to any intrinsic value of the good, they were linked to the quantity of farmland, hedgerows or birds that the farmers chose to integrate in their contracts. Most of the measures were linked to surface area or other related quantitative criteria (hedgerows maintained, hectares of extensive grassland management, etc.) and the vast majority of the contracts inherently compensated farmers for the surface covered by the contracts. The more birds that farmers had to protect or hedgerows to maintain, the more money they were likely to be given. The distribution of the budget among farmers then fundamentally hinged on this criterion and for this reason larger farms attracted more subsidies[206]. The annexe of the RDRF did specify some ceilings on individual payments and this slightly softened this effect, avoiding an excessive concentration of grant payments to a few farmers. But overall, the value of the subsidy was highly dependant on the scale of the farm, what I choose to call the 'surface effect'. However, this was not the only factor that influenced the distribution of the budget; the next section explores other parameters.

10.3 The geography of subsidy distribution

Access to the subventions was also determined by rules for geographically distributing the funds, according to the objectives and priorities of the policy instruments. In that respect, ecological rationality challenged any claims for equality between agricultural territories, since it implied that financial efforts should be concentrated on selected areas of high ecological quality. Policy-makers had to choose whether to allow equal geographical access to the contracts or to more selectively zone the contracts in order to maximise the impacts in preferred areas and prevent a patchwork implementation of the policies. This section analyses the mechanisms of territorial distribution used in the two counties and scrutinises their internal rules of geographical inclusiveness and/or selectiveness. The trajectories taken by the two countries differed greatly at the outset of the policy implementation, but over time both tended to come closer together and integrate the two possible options to greater or lesser extents.

The Netherlands, the zoning process and the social mobilisation of ecological patrimony

In the Netherlands, the principle of zoning was at the core of the Nature Conservation Scheme. The state set a specific objective in terms of the number of hectares of agrarian

[204] The geographical surface of the Netherlands is approximately equal to that of a French Region, which lessens the difference of governance level employed.

[205] The practices of estimation generated different situations within the regions (particularly in France). It was reported that the trend was to overestimate the less demanding measures (the 'light green' measures) and underestimate the more demanding ones (the 'dark green' measures) (Oréade-Brèche 2005, 183).

[206] For example in the Dutch Farmland Conservation Scheme, Koiejers calculated that the 24% of the biggest farms (mostly specialised dairy farms of 158nge and 69 hectares) benefited from 31% of the hectares of contracts (Koeijer and Voskuilen 2004).

nature management agreements that it wished to establish, with a target surface of some 117,000 hectares (Leneman and Graveland 2004; Terwan 2005). This target was not to be achieved haphazardly: Provinces were instructed to concentrate their 'quotas' for nature management within the areas where strong nature elements had been identified. The resulting pattern was intended to be representative of the natural elements within agriculture as a whole, and to be part of a broader, coherent, National Ecological Network (EHS). The selection of areas that would have access to the contracts was an expression of a specific vision of ecological efficiency. The dynamic of mobilising farmers was therefore subordinated to the processes of identifying, classifying and zoning these 'natural elements' within the ecological patrimony, which would (for some farmers) represent a sort of resource or ecological capital.

Detection of ecological elements was one of the criterions adopted for selecting which areas would qualify for grant funding. Chapter 6 showed the role experts played in identifying the ecological elements in need of protection. The two case studies (chapter 7 and 8) showed that this also involved a coalition of 'enthusiastic' farmers (mainly organised in environmental cooperatives), together with landscape organisations (Landschapsbeheer Nederland) and provincial authorities. The long standing interactions between the members of these local coalitions also had some influence over the zoning. In Flevoland, the late mobilisation of the network contributed to the extension of the protection scheme that had already been decided upon. The farmers and the landscape organisation realised that they could tap into the agro-environmental budget, even though the experts at the Ministry of Agriculture had not classified their intensive arable lands as bird 'habitats'. A whole process of mobilisation was necessary to make the civil servants of the Province and the experts of the Ministry of Agriculture aware of the possibilities of nature management in this apparently inappropriate place on the verges of the polders.

This process of mobilisation inevitably entailed territorial competition between the farmers. It favoured those who could organise themselves and thus become 'visible'. In Flevoland, the 'quota' for bird habitat management was divided among the different territorial zones depending on the importance of nature. One farmer spoke of a colleague whose farm was located outside the perimeter of protection:

"There should be a possibility for this farmer to protect nature. He lives a few kilometres from here but is outside the perimeter, so there is no way to pay him to protect birds. That is not fair. That is one of the advantages of being part of the organisation."[207]

In his case there were insufficient quotas to extend the perimeter, which coincided with the borders of the land owned by members of the farmers' environmental organisation who had lobbied for this measure to be applied.

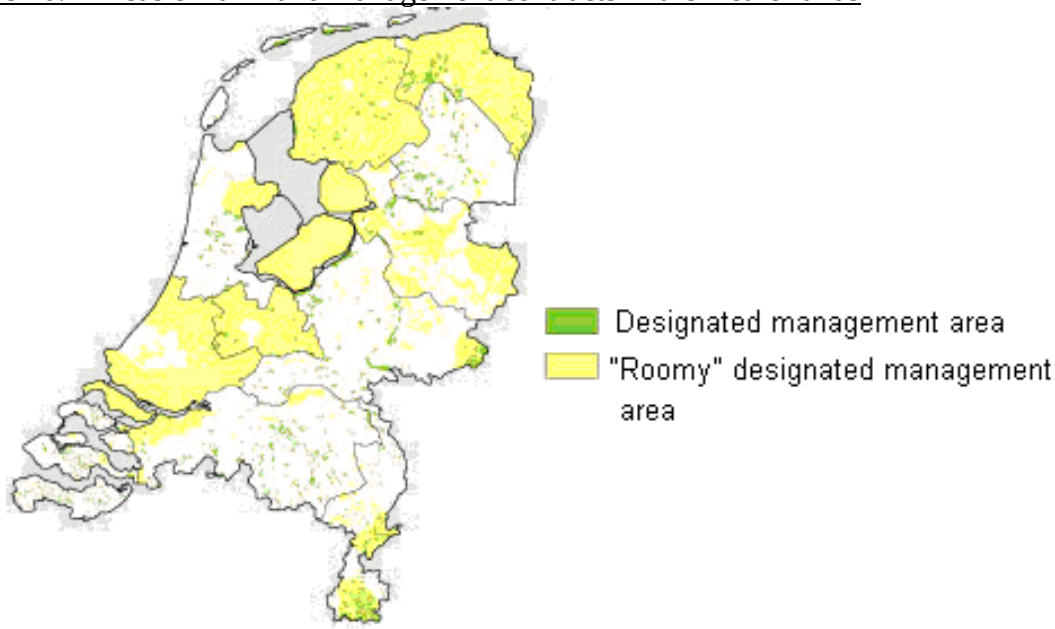
This process of mobilising ecological patrimony was not only an issue within the provinces, but was also an important feature when the provinces were allocated their quotas of agro-environmental hectares. Negotiations were held between the inter-provincial organisation (IPO) and the government about how best to share the agreements among the twelve provinces. There were only so many hectares available and this gave rise to conflicts as the provinces sought to negotiate a larger share of the cake with the Ministry of Agriculture. Claims based on objective ecological quality were pitted against those of equal access to

[207] Interview with a Dutch farmer in July 2004.

financial resources. The provinces with the best endowments of agro-ecological resources received higher quotas. For instance, Friesland is considered as a very green place and was endowed with one fifth of the quotas (22, 000 hectares), whereas Flevoland, where nature areas are mainly in non-agricultural areas (within the *Oostvaardersplassen*) was endowed with only 500 hectares.

Thus priority was given to the zoning rationality as opposed to an equal territorial distribution of the subsidies. The zoning mechanism, which resulted from a twofold process that associates the material existence of ecological resources with the social process of constructing them, did not ensure an egalitarian spatial distribution of public money. However, despite the instructions about zoning, the principle was not universally applied. When selecting the management areas, some provinces decided to make an 'integral' zoning in which contracts could be signed anywhere within the agricultural area (see Figure 10.1)[208].

Figure 10.1 Areas of farmland management contracts in the Netherlands



This interpretation of the policy known as the 'roomy' approach[209], was not unanimously well received by the policy-making community, especially those who supported the 'pattern-oriented' approach to nature conservation (see chapter 6). They thought this approach would undermine the financial effort through an ecologically inefficient distribution of a limited budget. Few of them spoke out against the 'contestable' interpretations of the provinces adopting this approach and the supposed influence that agricultural organisations had over the provincial authorities in adopting this stance:

"The agricultural lobby is more powerful than the nature organisations at the provincial level […]. At the beginning, [the roomy approach] was simply illegal. There was a covenant between the provinces and the Ministry that stated that only 10% of the agreement areas could be outside the EHS. That was in 1991. Now, more than 50% is outside the EHS and it is

[208] This was particularly the case in the provinces of Flevoland, Friesland, Groningen, South Holland and Utrecht. In Flevoland, the zoning principle was only applied to the bird protection measure, the other packages were applied across the entire province.
[209] In Dutch this option is known as "ruimtejas", literally, the "roomy coat".

still growing. For several years it has been illegal but at some moment the minister Veerman just accepted it. I was one of the very few at the Ministry who said that it was illegal. But most of people just ignored it."[210]

Yet these provincial choices could not be explained by the greater influence of the agricultural "lobby" at the provincial level. The reasons varied from one province to the other. In the northern part of the country, for instance, this strategy was linked to 'rural development' objectives. These regions had unemployment rates that were among the highest in the country, and maintaining the scenic landscapes was part of a strategy for enhancing tourist activities. In other parts of the country, like Flevoland, the provincial officials chose the roomy approach because of the uncertainty about whether or not the farmers would accept the contracts.

"In 2000, we hadn't so many signals that show us that all the contracts would be taken up by the farmers. For this reason, we chose to apply it everywhere. But now, there is more interest among the farmers and we want to more focus more on quality. We'll probably decide to zone the contracts for the next period."[211]

There was indeed a risk of losing the already small budget allocated for nature management, if the farmers didn't sign enough contracts. This risk was as significant because the farmers of the polder were more famous for their intensive and productive farming systems than for their propensity to develop multifunctional farms.

France: The mobilisation of agricultural institutions

In France, by contrast, the CTE was applied across the entire agricultural territory. This absence of zoning was not so novel, given the application of earlier agro-environmental policies. Although it did break away from the early localised agro-environmental measures, which created islands of targeted zones (Alphandéry and Billaud 1996), the universal application of the CTE more resembled the earlier grass allowance (*prime à l'herbe*) which was potentially accessible to all farmers[212].

This universal accessibility can largely be explained by the sectoral focus of the policy. As the title of the "Orientation Blueprint for Agriculture" suggests, it stemmed from a background of sector-based regulation. Although it broke with the productivist logic by introducing principles of multifunctionality, the blueprint still targeted one specific sector of the economy: agriculture. The shift to multifunctionality therefore had to be accessible to all farms, so

[210] Interview with a civil servant of the LNV, February 2006. This official refers to the 'IPO-LNV covenant' that stemmed directly from the Nature Policy Plan of 1990 that instituted the EHS. The nature conservation agreements were then ruled by the 'Relatie Nota' regulation (see chapter 3).

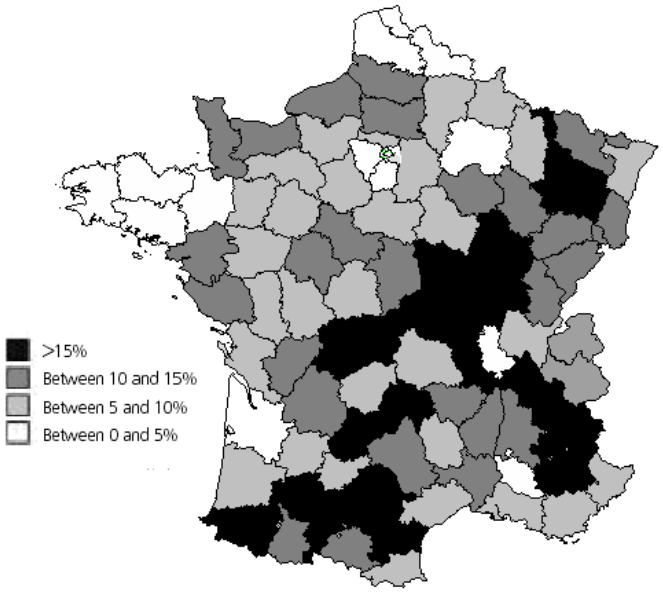
[211] Interview with a civil servant of the Province of Flevoland, February 2006.

[212] The French application of the European agro-environmental Regulation 2078/92 involved two types of policy instruments. One, known as 'Local Operations', consisted of localised participative policy instruments where the content of the contracts was negotiated with the local stakeholders. This included the OGAF ("Opération Groupée d'Aménagement Foncier") and the OLAE ("Opérations Locales Agro-Environnementales"). These participative policy instruments were mostly located in marginal zones and were only a very small part of French agro-environmental policy. The main component of the EU regulation was applied to a transversal subsidy for extensive grassland management. This was originally known as the PMSEE (*Prime au Maintien des Systèmes d'Elevage Extensif*) and was replaced in 2003 by the PHAE (*Prime Herbagère Agro-Environnementale*) commonly called the '*prime à l'herbe*'. The official objective of the measures was to support the adoption of more environmental practices, but it had an unofficial secondary objective of assisting and maintaining extensive cattle breeding systems. The first instrument was selectively territorial zoned but the second was universally applicable.

zoning simply did not enter the equation. The CTE was intended to give all farmers the opportunity to sign a contract irrespective of their location. Since the policy was not only meant to protect the environment, but also to develop and modernise farming, the principle of 'equity' among the farmers prevailed over any territorial point of view (Léger 1999). However, designated disfavoured areas did receive preferential treatment regarding the rate of investment co-financing[213]. The main consequence of the absence of zoning was that, rather than mobilisation being subordinate to an ecological rationale, the geographical distribution of the subsidies took a patchwork form, with apparently 'erratic' patterns in the take up of contracts across the country.

Analysis of the geographical distribution of contracts shows that the take up rate differed between the departments (Figure 10.2). This was due to the extent to which the departments were able to build an attractive and acceptable policy framework. The level of contractualisation depended on the attractiveness of the measures proposed and the efficiency of the departmental commissions (CDOA) in validating individual dossiers. It was not therefore in the interests of the commissions to propose a policy framework that was too constraining, as this would lessen the take up and the department's chances of using its allocated budget. The resulting distribution was an outcome of the tension between the necessity for an efficient mechanism for validating contracts and the obligation to comply with the 'acceptable' normative requirements decided in the CDOA[214]. The disparities in take up between the regions can be largely explained by the balance between the attractive features of the contracts and the constraining nature of the measures.

Figure 10.2. Take up of CTEs by département



(source: Planistat, 2003)

[213] The rate of co-financing under the CTE was 40% in Less Favoured Areas. This went up to 50% under CAD.
[214] Even within the Ministry of Agriculture, this issue was of concern. The uncertainty about budget spending led the government to enter into financial arbitrations between the different regions.

A second factor was the higher level of farmers' mobilisation of farmers in marginal areas where multifunctional agriculture is one of their main means of survival. This factor shifted the distribution of subsidies somewhat in the favour of the most marginalised regions, which was one of the goals of the CTE (Hervieu 1999). The mapping of the geographical distribution of contracts among the regions shows a clear differentiation between regions (mainly dominated by extensive agriculture) with a high level of contractualisation and those with a lower level where intensive agriculture is stronger. More contracts were concluded in the less favoured areas (38% of farmers in Less Favoured Areas signed up for CTEs) and in regions with structural difficulties (Objective 5b and 2 areas) (Planistat 2003; Urbano and Vollet 2005). This pattern also held true within departments that contained these types of zones. For instance, the marshland zones in Vendée accounted for one fifth of the total contracts concluded in the département.

A similar pattern emerges when looking at the typology of contractualised farms. Farms breeding horses, goats, sheep and cattle were more strongly represented in the CTE than they were in the national population (49% versus 37%), whereas specialised dairy producers, mixed farms (dairy and cattle breeding) poultry and big arable farms and winegrowers were less represented (Planistat 2003; Urbano and Vollet 2005). The higher participation rate of the first group of farmers is doubtless linked to their higher propensity to accept and adopt contractual modes of intervention and to integrate them into their daily farming activities[215]. But, this asymmetric participation rate also reflects the relatively weak incentives offered by the CTE to make any changes to the overall functioning of more intensive farming systems.

"The problem, in these regions, is that the CTE doesn't work properly. There are almost no applicants because the measures are not attractive enough […]. They all clearly lead to an extensification of agriculture. These regions are very intensive, with a very high density of cattle, with many hectares of corn. Even if some farms begin to limit the corn production and transform their farms into grassland, the measures proposed are not suitable for them because they just don't want to reduce their cattle." [216]

This reluctance is obviously due to the structure of the farms, engaged with the system of first pillar grants, which is somewhat at odds with the objectives of the CTE[217]. These farmers are blocked into a logic of development and the incentives offered by the CTE were clearly not sufficient to allow them to break with this logic. This did not prevent many of these farmers from contracting agreements, as the wide range of measures available offered some benefits, albeit in a small way.

With the disappearance of the CTE in 2002 and its replacement by the CAD the following year, the geographical pattern of subsidy distribution changed slightly. The *'laisser-faire'* approach that characterised the implementation of the CTE was replaced by two main measures that changed the geographic distribution of subsidy payments. First, budgetary limits for CAD contractualisation were established to guide how would be shared the budget among the twenty two French Regions. This implied a shift in contractualisation rates. Previously they were largely dependent on the capacity of the agricultural institutions to mobilise farmers and provide an attractive framework. Now they were distributed according to pre-determined regional allocations, made according to environmental and farm structure

[215] See for instance the works of Chatellier and Delattre (2003) who show the importance of the second pillar subsidies in the income of mountainous dairy farmers.
[216] Interview at the Ministry of Agriculture, September 2005
[217] The grant for intensive corn production (€300/ha) was much higher than for grassland management (€100/ha).

criteria (Gervasoni 2003)[218]. Secondly, as several evaluations had identified that the territorial and environmental aspects of the CTE were weak; instructions were given to focus more on these aspects. For each "territory" (corresponding to a water catchment) a standard contract had to be drawn up that contained a very limited number of compulsory and/or optional measures. To improve the environmental impact, issues of zoning also emerged. Part of the agricultural profession felt marginalised by the State imposing these conditions. An official of the Ministry of Agriculture commented:

"With the CAD, when we started talking about zoning, the farmers unions were not very happy. Because this meant that it was possible [to have a contract] in one place, but not somewhere else. People asked for explanations, they carped at their professional leaders; they didn't appreciate this territorialisation. But given the limited budget, we could not do otherwise. We had to prioritise." [219]

This concern for a more environmental orientation, which was closely associated with budget cuts, came out of the blue and took priority over the guarantee of theoretically equal access to contracts across the whole country. Nevertheless, the zoning principle was variably applied within departments, and in some cases the profession managed to get a great deal of the agricultural land surface area within the zoning area[220].

10.4 The logics of distributing grants among farmers

The distribution of grants under the CTE can also be looked at on a sectoral basis. Earlier I remarked that not only were the largest farms favoured by the "surface effect", but they were also highly represented among the farms that did conclude contracts (in both countries) in relation to the average sized farm[221]. This suggests a 'selective' process that favoured the largest farms.

The construction of an ideal model of a professional farmer had once helped institutionalise a picture of viability based on selective standards of minimal agricultural surface area, educational background and full-time productive activity on the farm (Rémy 1987). With the

[218] That included land surface within Natura 2000, existing agro-environmental measures, surfaces of Less Favoured Areas, potential area of organic farming conversion, as well as other agricultural criterions, such as the type of farm structures, number of farms, and the total agricultural area. This implied significant differences between the regions as for example Brittany was allocated with €5.4 M of engagements rights while Alsace got only €1.7M (2004 figures) respectively representing 1.6% and 0.5% of the national engagement rights budget.

[219] Interview at the Ministry of Agriculture, September 2005.

[220] In Isère, for example, the professional organisations managed to convince the DDAF not to apply selective zoning. But in some departments, zoning became an issue in order to fulfil these new objectives and strengthen the environmental impact. In Vendée, for instance, the DDAF concentrated the budget almost exclusively on the marshland zones. About 80% of the territory was not eligible anymore, upsetting local professional farmers who denounced the abandonment of egalitarian principles. The following months were marked by the profession making considerable efforts to improve the environmental shape of the policy framework and regain the trust of the state administration. The issue of water quality already identified in the previous period became a priority and the concept of water catchments emerged as an appropriate way to re-segment the territory. In the end, except for some small enclaves, almost all of Vendée became eligible for grants. In the three years after the end of the CTE, the agricultural profession managed to get all of the agricultural land surface eligible for agri-environmental measures again.

[221] In the Netherlands, the average size of farms for which contracts were signed was about 36 hectares (Koeijer and Voskuilen 2004), compared to a national average of about 21 hectares at the same time (CBS). Likewise, in France, the average size of farms with a CTE was 93 ha (Urbano and Vollet 2005) compared to a national average of just 42 hectares (Communautés européennes 2003).

introduction of multifunctional agricultural policies, such farmers did not have such exclusive access to the grant system. The RDRF did not impose any professional prerequisites for participation in the agro-environmental measures and only some requirements for the investment measures. Article 5 of the regulation stipulates that investment measures could only be allocated to farms that could demonstrate their economic viability and professional competencies. Individual states were given discretion to determine these criteria themselves. The French CTE allowed non-professional farmers access to the contracts; the Dutch policy allowed any private land owner to apply for a contract as long as the land was classified as 'agricultural land.'

The selection among the farmers, was therefore in terms of access to information about the possibility of having a contract and an internalised vision about what constituted a 'viable' farmer. In both countries, information about the instruments was largely diffused through the professional institutions, which mobilised their members to take advantage of these contracts.

In the Netherlands where the professional organisations involved (the territorial farmers' co-operatives) were relatively new, the networks of information dissemination were quite efficient. As an official of the DLG commented, the farmers were much better organised and therefore had an advantage, as compared to more isolated non-farmers who owned plots of land and could benefit from the nature conservation scheme, but were unaware of it:

"The non-farmers come on their own initiative. We don't ask them. When they think: 'that's interesting, I can make my own management with this Conservation Scheme', then they can come to us and ask for an agreement. That is a very difficult group of people because we don't know who they are until apply for an agreement. It is very hard to call everybody who has a piece of forest. Whereas the agricultural organisations are organised and you can approach them."[222]

However, in the Netherlands, as the farms are smaller than in France and the contracts were only concerned with agro-environmental measures, the annual payment only reached an average of €3,100 (Silvis and van Bruchem 2002; Terwan 2005).

In France, the professional organisations also played a large role in the process of publicity, which implicitly had a normative bias on the spreading of information. A large survey of 800 French farmers showed that the size of the farm was among one of the main factors associated with knowledge about the existence and forms of the policy instruments[223]. In fact, only the 'professional' farmers were targeted. Information about the CTE instrument didn't spread to the non professional farmers, even though they were also supposed to be targeted by the policy. Only the professional farmers had real access to information about the policy and as an evaluation report concluded, hardly any non-professional farmers participated in the scheme (MAAPAR 2004). While there may not be many non professional farmers left in some regions, in other regions (such as Isère) they are substantial in number and crucial to rural development. Furthermore, a process of selection occurred throughout the contractualisation procedures, from the information meetings to constructing the projects. The professional organisations were also in charge of setting up the dossiers. They played a relatively normative role in constructing the dossiers with farmers, and this structure either encouraged or discouraged farmers from applying. This pre-selection had the effect of

[222] Interview with an official of DLG, August 2004

[223] This survey was realised by François Colson and Jacques Rémy with the IPSOS data. It concerned 800 farmers in 10 departments. See http://www.agr.gc.ca/pol/egs-bse/pdf/remy_f.pdf

stimulating the 'best' farmers and discouraging those who didn't fit with preconceptions about a 'viable' enterprise. In this respect, the professional organisations opened their criteria of professionalisation to include some multifunctional aspects of farming: pluriactivity, short food supply chains and so forth; but, though the criteria are based purely on technical skills (as before) questions of the viability of farms still seemed to implicitly favour the largest farms, assumed to have more chance of economic survival. It is not surprising then to observe that the farms with a CTE were also more likely to be in receipt of (more) subsidies from Pillar 1 (Planistat 2003). This illustrates that such farmers were more inclined to apply for public funding.

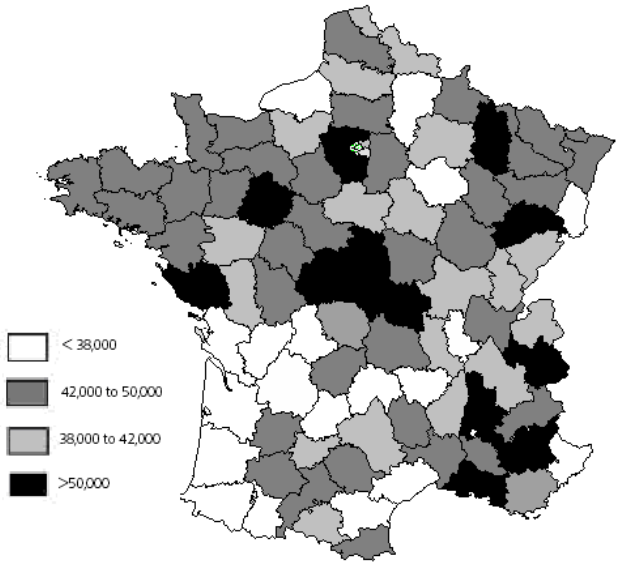
Didier Busca's phrase eco-opportunism (2003), can quite justifiably be applied to some aspects of the way that these policies worked. Here it describes farmers who were more inclined to set up a dossier, because they knew how the procedures work. They had the technical support of the agricultural organisations that were closely involved in organising and implementing the policy and preferential access to information concerning the modalities of contractualisation. These farmers and their professional organisations were able to integrate the farm restructuring component within the policies, thereby creating a situation in which the farms most likely to survive were the ones most able to attract financial support[224].

Overall then, the 'surface effect' was not compensated by a more egalitarian distribution of grants between different types of farmers. This resulted in a concentration of the funds in the hands of relatively few farmers and in an increase in the amounts paid on individual contracts. The annual average amounts paid out rapidly came to exceed the level expected when the CTE was implemented. The audit of the CTE (Coperci 2002) noted that despite a national ceiling of €15,000 for the investment element of the contracts, the average payment on individual contracts reached €45,000 in 2002, even though member states were allowed to scale back payments if the acreage of land within the agro-environmental schemes increased to more than expected. In addition, at the departmental level, the CDOA had the ability to limit the size of payments and set up its own local rules based on criteria of economic farm size to empower small-scale farms and enable a more egalitarian distribution of the budget. In reality, very few departments did this (Urbano and Vollet 2005)[225]; most simply avoided the issue. The map of the average grants paid per contract (see Figure 10.3, below) shows great differences in the value of CTE grants, the average size of which varied from €23,000 to €93,000.

[224] In that logic, advantages in terms of preferential rates of investment were provided to young farmers in some departments.

[225] That is the case of the department of Haute Pyrénée, or Maine et Loire (Daniel 2002).

Figure 10.3. Distribution of the CTE according to the average amount per département (in euros)



(source: Planistat, 2003)

These abuses were one factor that contributed to the demise of the CTE and its replacement with the CAD. Fixed regional budgets were established to calm the eagerness of the departments that appeared least interested in maintaining these ceilings. Furthermore, as the sums of money being paid by some départements became manifest, the Ministry set an average limit of €27,000 per contract for every department. Rather than imposing a strict individual ceiling for each contract, the Ministry opted for a regulation that allowed each département a degree of flexibility[226]. The intention of this new deal was more to control and lessen expenditure than to offer a more 'egalitarian' distribution of the subsidies. This shift also raised other questions. As the CAD introduced more environmental constrains (particularly by introducing the necessity to meet the standards of the Nitrate Directive), it posed more difficulties to small farms that had not been priority cases in the schemes implemented in the previous decade[227]. The issue of selectiveness became even more pronounced and is likely to be shaped by questions of environmental efficacy.

To conclude, while the grant levels differed significantly between the two countries, it is noticeable that the policies tended to favour larger than average farms. Not only did these farms benefit from the 'surface effect', but also from the procedures of policy application. Though new rules are included in the process of grant dispatching, these mechanisms suggest an attempt to generate, perpetuate and/or reformulate the implicit rules that strengthened the ongoing process of structural adjustment by channelling flows of money towards restricted groups of farmers.

[226] Only the departmental average should not go beyond the limit of 27000€, which means that the large averages had to be compensated by the smallest ones. Some departments chose to impose individual ceilings, like in Isère where the agro-environmental measures should not go beyond the limit of 45000€.

[227] I refer specifically to the PMPOA (Scheme for the Containment of Agricultural Pollution) that was meant to contain agricultural pollution by restoring and waterproofing cattle sheds and manure storage facilities which was, in itself selectively applied to the biggest and most polluting farms.

10.5 Conclusions

Policies for multifunctional agriculture introduced new elements and principles in the ways in which the financial support of agriculture is distributed, which challenged some of the traditional justifications for, and patterns of grant aid. The precise nature of these changes varied between the two countries, according to the objectives and content of their policies. There were some notable differences between the French and the Dutch projects. France, which introduced the logic of socio-economic development within its contracts, embedded the principle of equal access to the grant within the policy framework from a territorial point of view. Any selective geographical zoning of access to the grant was prevented, because the policy was agricultural and because the professional organisations were influential in defending the principle of equal access across the whole country. The stronger environmental orientations of the CAD, together with the budgetary restrictions, helped transform this policy framework and opened up the scope for zoning, although often at the discretion of each département. Where it was introduced the professional farming groups lobbied against it, often with some success. Thus the French model came to more closely resemble the Dutch model, where the use of geographical zones to select where to apply the contracts, was one of the most important (and discussed) principles of the policy. This was due to the exclusive dominance of an ecological rationale, where the emphasis on ecological efficiency led to an acceptance of the necessity to zone so as to make the best use of public money.

A common striking feature of both national policies is the way in which the new logics of distribution became embedded in the rationale of farm restructuring and represented a sort of continuity with the management of structural adjustment. As these logics tended to favour larger farms, it is far too early to discount the hypothesis of structural adjustment (Kroll 2002; Berriet-Solliec et al. 2003). Any desire to distribute these grants on a more egalitarian basis was countered by administrative convenience and the implicit necessities of structural adjustment. While multifunctionality has certainly opened up definitions and understanding about what a farmer is and does, it has made far less impact on the ongoing process of farm concentration.

Conclusions and discussion

Edgard Pisani, one of the fathers of France's modernisation laws, recently asked the pertinent political question: "What type of agriculture is needed to respond to the needs of the world?"[228] It is certainly not the first time that this type of question has been asked. The agricultural policies that emerged in the sixties were a response to a similar reflection. This questioning bears witness to the on-going transition of farming within our society towards a more multifunctional model (Wilson 2007). In the past, Europe's agricultural policies achieved food self-sufficiency, even overcapacity, but at the same time attracted numerous criticisms, particularly from environmentalists, because of the side effects of agricultural intensification. Today agriculture faces a new range of challenges; many are the result of the legacy of agricultural intensification. These include preserving the landscape, environmental quality, biodiversity, agro-tourism, etc. Multifunctionality is a way of recognising these sets of objectives, and is increasingly recognised in official circles as a viable strategy that can be incorporated within agricultural policies. The guiding questioning of this thesis was to understand this transition and come to grips with the variable shapes that multifunctional agriculture policies can and do take in different national and local situations. It asks whether these policies do provide the appropriate and intended regulative mechanisms that can promote the multiple functions of farming. It shows that different trajectories have been taken. Focusing on the French and the Dutch policies (CTE and SAN respectively) has allowed a detailed analysis of some of the similarities and differences between the two. These are summarised in the two first sections of this chapter. The situations encountered in both countries vary according to the rationale for public intervention: whether it aims to support public goods or the farms that co-produce these goods, and whether this new agricultural policy is coherent or slightly euphemised. The final section of this chapter discusses the relevance of the policy instrument approach that was chosen to investigate the content and functioning of these policies. It is argued that this approach is particularly appropriate for investigating policies as "moving institutions", and that this allows us to transcend the economistic bias inherent in some of the more commonly used definitions of multifunctional agriculture. This approach also provides an alternative view of the 'environmental cooperative' phenomenon to the one formulated by New Institutional Economics (NIE).

11.1 The Netherlands: multifunctionality as 'green liberalism'

Liberalisation and nature conservationism

The arrangements for the Dutch Farmland Conservation Scheme (SAN) correspond to a 'green liberal' model, a configuration with a strong environmental component. The powerful political influence of environmental movements reflects the strong levels of social support that they enjoy. In a country where membership of environmental organisations is one of the highest in Europe, environmental objectives have come to occupy a prominent place on the political agenda over recent decades. That is particularly the case for nature conservationists

[228] France Culture. 8th August 2007. *Quel avenir pour l'agriculture française ?* Debate chaired by Caroline Broué. See also Pisani's recent book (2004).

who have managed to get their claims about biodiversity and landscape preservation taken into consideration. They were particularly successful in establishing a large project of nature reclamation, which started at the beginning of the '90s. The SAN, which is also centred around nature conservation, was very much a continuation of this project. This political influence largely explains the exclusive conservationist purpose of the SAN policy.

But this shift wouldn't have occurred in such a way without a broader move towards a liberalisation in the management of agriculture in the Netherlands over the last 20 years. This strongly affected the ways in which the Dutch state came to understand and implement multifunctional agriculture. The liberal view of multifunctionality emphasised the individual responsibilities of economic actors[229] and the belief that intervention should be minimal to avoid interfering with market mechanisms. The market is conceived as a self regulating entity relying solely on the principles of supply and demand. Regulation disturbs this equilibrium. This means that any subventions for multifunctional agriculture should be kept separate from market concerns. Any reformulation of the grant system is therefore meant to be independent from 'productive' concerns. This liberal shift among Dutch policy-markers explains, to a large extent, the emergence of a policy almost exclusively based on managing nature. The instrument was not formulated as a fully-fledged agricultural policy, but rather as an instrument within a broader project of nature conservation, in which farmers participate.

The weight of ecological expertise

This almost exclusively conservationist problematisation of multifunctional agriculture led to ecological expertise providing the dominant rationale throughout the policy-making and implementation processes. Measures of nature conservation were designed within the Ministry of Agriculture, although these measures extended beyond agriculture (Chapter 7). While various stakeholders participated in building the policy framework, the negotiations were, above all, the concern of experts. Priority was given to maximising the scheme's ecological efficiency, with no specific concerns for the interrelated question of farm structures. This focus led the budget to be concentrated on limited parts of the country (where nature values were highest), a principle that prevailed over a more egalitarian distribution of funds among the Provinces or farmers. But the idea of ecological efficiency proved to be highly controversial. Throughout the policy-making process differences emerged between conservationists about the most appropriate approaches to nature protection and the relevance of promoting nature protection schemes in agricultural spaces. Nature 'restorationists', who argued for a strategy of protecting nature solely within enclosed perimeters, argued against farmers' involvement in nature protection, claiming that biodiversity protection was much more effective within non-agricultural spaces. By contrast, the more process centred nature conservationists considered nature protection to be more efficient if the scheme covered a larger surface area, which should include agricultural areas. The farmers managed to form alliances with this latter group and argued the case for their involvement in nature conservation. But the farmers had to work within a strict logic of conservation, the sole *raison d'être* of the scheme, and this limited their ability to mobilise themselves.

The farmers' logics of mobilisation

The development of 'environmental cooperatives' enabled farmers to hone their discourse to the conservationists' position. This new generation of farmer's organisations grew, partly as a

[229] This option was theorised in political philosophy by Marcel Wissenburg (Wissenburg 1998).

reaction to the growth of environmentalism. The organisations first emerged at the beginning of the '90s as a response to the new and tough environmental regulations that seriously affected their working practices. Some farmers sought to contest these new regulations, and proposed a self-regulatory alternative to the very restrictive measures that the Ministry introduced in an attempt to meet the requirements of the Nitrates Directive (Glasbergen 2000). The compromises they proposed worked well in some locations (van der Ploeg et al. 2002) but they were not widely adopted across the Netherlands as a whole. These environmental cooperatives only really developed and became widespread when the government launched its nature conservation scheme and recognised the cooperatives as valid partners for implementing the scheme, even paying them an additional grant to encourage their multiplication. The spread of these local farmers' groups occurred as their role of nature conservation was recognised, opening possibilities for state subsidies. In that respect, the farmers participated in a process of legitimating their role, sometimes trying to establish their own standards of nature protection that were relevant to their areas. This occurred, for example, in Flevoland where the farmers argued the case for protecting meadow birds outside of the areas designated by the SAN (chapter 8) and in Friesland where the farmers tried to set new criteria for hedgerow management (chapter 7). This work of mobilisation through the *mise-en-scène* of natural elements was also associated with the selective zoning processes. In places where ecology didn't provide sufficient items of conservation interest, the farmers did not have the opportunity to be paid to protect 'nature'. Getting within the zoned areas became an issue for farmers and the multiplication and institutionalisation of new territorial farmers' organisations were also a consequence of this process of seeking legitimatisation.

Thus the early self-regulation project of the first environmental cooperatives was replaced by partnerships with the government, which involved applying a nature management programme designed by the experts at the Ministry of Agriculture. This somewhat diluted the self-regulatory ambitions of the movement which found very limited its abilities to develop its own standards.

The implications of the green liberal model

Some questions should be asked about the longer term and broader implications of this green liberal configuration, and particularly how much this selective definition of multifunctional agriculture is likely to contribute to sustainable development in any broader sense. The conservationist concerns of Dutch policy makers neglect many aspects of multifunctionality. The policy is solely concerned with biodiversity and landscape elements, reducing the problematisation of multifunctionality to its conservationist dimension. Other environmental concerns (use of chemicals, nitrate pollution) are not completely ignored but do not fall within the incentive system. Instead farmers have to comply with strict regulations, with no economic compensation. Secondly, the nature conservation scheme only covers a limited part of the Dutch territory, raising questions of its capacity to contribute to a broader 'greening' of agriculture. Through its geographical selectivity SAN has effectively segmented agricultural areas into productive and protected zones. This compromise is indicative of a country where environmentalism is important, but where maintaining a productive and large export capacity is also a high priority. As a broad conception of multifunctional agriculture would threaten the equilibrium of the food regime, a clear compromise was made in dividing the Dutch agricultural territory. In the long term, the development of clearly identified and independent 'High Nature Value' farmlands (to use the words of the European Environmental Agency (2004)) is one possible way forward. This new way of distributing subsidies could lead to a segmentation of agricultural land. The explicit support for sustainable development in some

areas, and none in others, is only a partial response to the challenges faced by Dutch agriculture.

11.2 France: multifunctionality as an agrarian arrangement

The reproduction of a fully-fledged agricultural policy

The French trajectory represents an attempt to invent a new pact between the state and the farmers through formulating a genuine agricultural policy. The social and economic objectives within the 1999 blueprint, which instituted the Farm Territorial Contracts (CTE), showed multifunctionality could be directly used to support farmers' incomes. This reinvention originated from at least two components. Firstly, the construction of this policy instrument was due to the arrival of a new policy-making elite, sensitive to the issues of sustainable development. They were able to influence the new socialist government and part of the agricultural profession to translate these preoccupations into a new way of supporting farmers (Brun 2006). This occurred at the same time as a change in the orientation of the European Commission which, through the agreements made at Berlin in 1999, had instituted new rules for allocating subsidies through the Rural Development Framework Regulation (RDRF). This new vision for agriculture, rooted in the principles of multifunctionality, was clearly associated with the recognition that the grant system had to be transformed rather than abolished. This brings us to the second component that shaped the contours of the CTE policy, the specific way in which the French state sought to manage and support its agricultural economy. Though neo-liberalism was significantly re-shaping the institutions of the welfare state, the French state sought to maintain a role in shaping and managing the structure of agriculture during the '80s and '90s. And while the agricultural profession became less influential (Hervieu and Viard 2001), its social and political influence did not completely vanish. What, in other times, would have been designated as 'agricultural particularism', revealed a lock-in effect regarding agricultural regulation that traversed governments of both political colours. It was upon this legacy that the new and 'innovative' vision of agriculture developed by the Seillac group – that set the agenda for the CTE policy – was based. Its holders sought to re-establish a new sort of 'social contract' following the model of the post-war agricultural modernisation period (Rémy 2000).

For this reason, multifunctionality was not limited to nature conservation (as it was in the Netherlands). Instead, the CTE was designed as a comprehensive policy instrument that could provide a wide variety of measures that could potentially be adapted to different production systems. It included financial support for the economic and social development of farms, enabling them to adjust to standards of quality, water pollution, landscape protection, and so forth[230]. The 'investment' part of the contract specifically enabled an economic reorientation of some farms (by financing rural development actions, on-farm diversification, short food chain supply, and so on). In addition the scheme was universally available to all farmers, without any territorial selectivity since MFA was seen as a paradigm for agricultural development rather than merely nature conservation.

[230] Environmental measures for input reduction were included in the agenda, which had a more agronomic and farm-oriented list of measures.

The transformation of the cogestion system

This relatively strong involvement of the state in managing the agricultural economy implied a renewal and transformation of the long standing and close relationship between the state and professional agricultural organisations. These organisations were given responsibility for some of the administrative and management tasks involved in implementing the policy (administrating the individual dossiers, organising the consultation, generating the proposals, animating farmers and so forth). The downside of this new pact was that the decision-making process (located within the departmental agricultural commissions, which had for a long time been responsible for the structural management of agriculture) for building this new vision of multifunctional agriculture did not fully integrate a plurality of stakeholders. These local arenas, chaired by the state administration, mostly consisted of a range of farming interests. While they were enlarged to include new social groupings, mainly environmentalists, hunters and consumers, these groups were not able to exert much influence over the emergent policy.

The framing of the CTE was largely led by the professional farming organisations. Several factors served to limit the influence of non-farming interests on this process. Firstly, in some instances they came late to the table when the basic outline of the policy had already been sketched out. Secondly, the new interests were significantly outnumbered by farming interests who carried a large majority within the fora. Thirdly, the structure of the fora often inhibited new interests from making an effective contribution to the debate. The status (as employees) of the non farming delegates was sometime used as a reason to deny them voting rights. Finally the non farming groups were often frustrated by the technical agrarian issues discussed, which were outside their field of expertise. This did not mean that non productive concerns were completely excluded from the discussions ; but this was mainly a result of the existing cleavages between agricultural organisations, promoting different visions of the social and economic aspects of sustainable agriculture, that hinged around different "model of farming"[231]. The issues at stake were not solely, or even mainly ecological, but involved considering the structural evolution of farming systems, their relation to globalisation and the articulation between ecological performance and a more social component. The concern with preserving farmers as a professional group and integrating this goal within broader objectives relating to multifunctionality thus occupied centre stage within the technical debates. A pragmatic resolution to these debates resulted in a very wide range of policy measures being included in the policy framework, which favoured the less constraining options supported by the FNSEA, the main farmers' union.

A nuanced implementation of the CTE

The outcomes of this policy process varied between départements. At the national level the distribution of grants did help to counter the existing regional discrepancies in the distribution of CAP grants. The CTE favoured less 'competitive' zones where possibilities for intensification were limited, and where providing non productive amenities (like landscape) was a vital complementary aspect of agricultural activity. Yet, a significant part of the budget also went to the more intensive agricultural regions, since the policy framework was intended to be global.

[231] 'Organic farming' both coexists and contradicts with the more 'peasant-like' model of farming proposed by the left-leaning movement of farmers, and the 'reasoned agriculture' model originating from the main farmer's union.

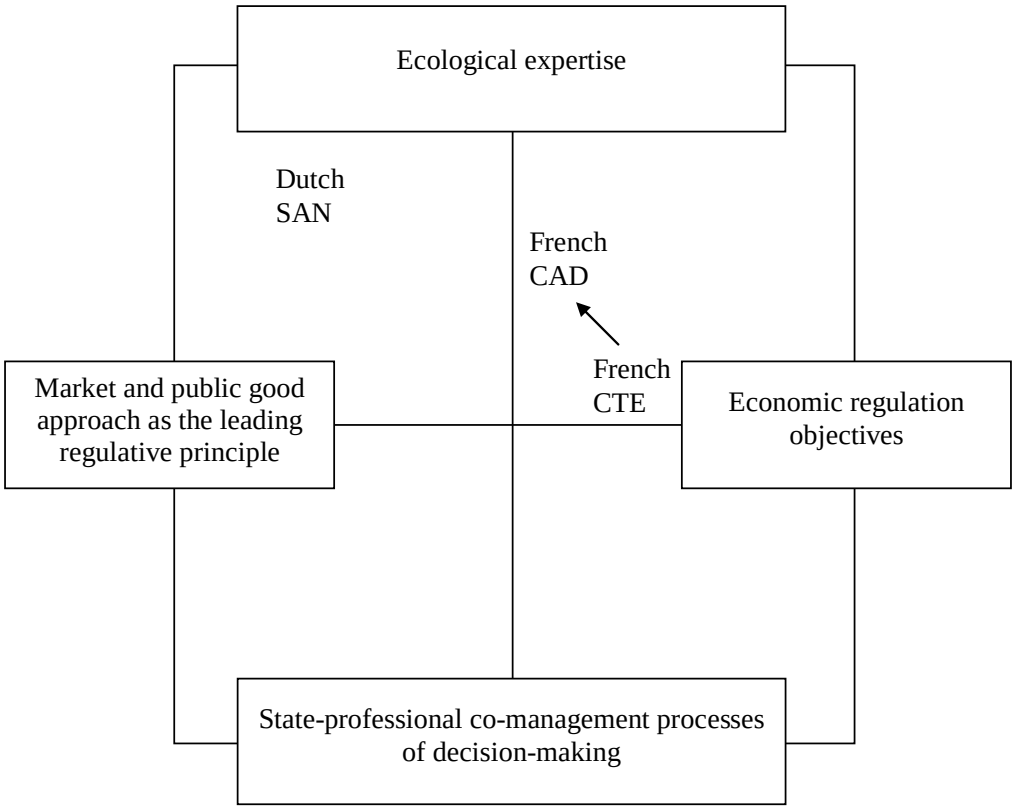
In terms of implementation, different logics were apparent, depending on how the processes of norm construction integrated and prioritised ecological and territorial concerns. Sometimes the policy implementation remained closely wed to a purely sector-anchored logic of development. The case study of Isère, which contains a diversity of agricultural production systems, illustrated how the grant system could handle different types of agriculture within a single policy framework. Here policies were adopted that addressed the issues facing both extensive agricultural regions in the mountains, and the more intensive systems on the plains where pollution problems were a priority. The study showed that it was more difficult to integrate territorial concerns in the more productive zones.

Given the weak integration of non-farming visions about agricultural development, one can speculate on the extent to which the French trajectory, though concerned with establishing a genuinely empowering agricultural policy, was in fact merely a rhetorical facade. In the course of time, the non-agricultural groups did learn how to operate within the organisational structure of the CDOAs. But their influence was largely limited to very specific concerns, rather than on the whole system of reference of the policy framework. Overall, it quickly became evident that the policies pursued often accentuated the differentiation between territories that had resulted from modernisation in the ‘60s and onwards (Alphandéry and Billaud 1996). The conflict between territories valorised by their patrimony and those valorised by productivism were perpetuated through the differentiated implementation of the many measures available within the CTE.

French policy underwent a major change in 2002 with the abandonment of the CTE and its replacement, the following year, with the CAD (Sustainable Agricultural Contract). This instrument introduced zoning, upper limits on individual payments and restricted payments to environmental aspects. This last transformation gave the policy a more environmental and less interventionist focus, driving it closer to a green liberal model.

Box 1. Different trajectories of multifunctionality

This scheme summarises the trajectories followed in France and the Netherlands in constructing and implementing their multifunctional agriculture policies. It shows the divergences between the two countries. The Netherlands pursued a green market-oriented model, based on managing biodiversity and landscape: a process in which ecological expertise dominated the policy-making process. In France, a wider approach was adopted that combined economic regulation with environmental objectives and maintained and reinvigorated the existing close links between the state and the agricultural profession in decision-making.



11.3 Multifunctionality and the sociological understanding of policy instruments

The policy instrument approach used in this thesis is anchored on a classical Durkheimian definition of institutions, which implies considering the instruments of regulation as fully-fledged social institutions. This approach has three benefits. First, it permits developing a sociological understanding of multifunctional agriculture policies. Second, it allows us to develop an analytical framework that goes beyond the economistic vision of multifunctional agriculture. And thirdly, it facilitates an understanding of the emergence of discourses of self-regulation among Dutch farmers, which became one component of the green liberalism shift that occurred there.

Multifunctional agriculture policies as one of the regulative instruments of the CAP

First of all, the policy-instrument approach enables us to view policies for multifunctional agriculture as but one tool among the set of regulative instruments within the CAP. This specific form of intervention is one possibility among several that are open to public authorities in intervening in the agricultural economy. Though but a small part of the total CAP budget, multifunctional agriculture policies have proved important in terms of re-defining agricultural practices and standards.

In that respect, the policy instruments for multifunctional agriculture are socially constructed and the shape of the contracts depends on the social and political dynamics within the different countries. The content of the policy framework was influenced by the way in which different actors participated in the discussions and negotiations that shaped the policy. One major difference between the two countries was the extent to which the policy-making process was influenced by environmentalists. In the Netherlands, they greatly influenced the design of the policy, whereas in France they were more isolated stakeholders within the local agricultural arenas. These different roles were linked to positions of power at specific moments of policy-making. But the outcome of the policies was also in keeping with a specific historical trajectory. Both national policies were an (ongoing) outcome of a succession of preceding policies, all of which incrementally contributed to transforming the policy framework. These historical elements partly explain the differences in the trajectories of the two countries. The Dutch choice to ground multifunctional agriculture on biodiversity and landscape conservation should be understood in relation to earlier political choices, such as the existing ambitious nature conservation scheme. Nature management contracts such as the *Relatie Nota* scheme already existed and these inspired the design of the SAN. Similarly, the French blueprint of 1999 was linked to new ways of conceiving the role of the agricultural sector. It was only made possible by the previous – sometimes experimental – policy instruments (the *Plan de Développement Durable*, for instance) which contained some elements that were included in the CTE contracts. Equally the scaling down of the CTE into the CAD can be seen as an inverse form of incremental change.

This focus on the instruments not only permits an understanding of the historical specificity of the process, but also reveals elements of the specific order that they give rise to and the normative components hidden within their seemingly purely technical appearance. While these instruments are meant to be "instrumental", they actually contain normative components. As Foucault showed, the choice and employ of instrument is never neutral. This was the case with the contractual instruments described in this thesis. These contractual instruments were quite innovative, representing a transformation in the philosophy of intervention. The contracts seem to consecrate rational choice, decisional autonomy and voluntary commitment[232]. Yet, they only last for five or six years, a relatively short-term period compared to the other instruments available to farmers. It is questionable whether such a form of short-term intervention actually does provide the basis for liberalising agricultural policies. But these short-term agreements are also motivated by the need to take into account changing regulations and the ongoing restructuring of agriculture. These changes imply that some farms will continue to grow and others will go out of business. These transformations will considerably change the structure of agriculture, and for policy-makers this may justify the short-term nature of these agreements.

[232] Boltanski and Chiapello identified this new principle of worth as a 'connectionist' regime, embodying a principle of justification based around ideas of flexibility, networks, autonomy and 'projects' that are helping transform the shape and spirit of contemporary capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005).

The actual normative component of the instrument lies more in the implicit *a priori* problematisation that existed in each country, which favoured a particular type of intervention, and led to the inclusion or exclusion of possible objectives within the national framework. The Dutch scheme (SAN) excluded any interventions that ran against the dynamic of market regulation. SAN was part of a broader 'nature conservation' policy rather than an agricultural policy, the objectives of which would have been seen as interventionist. According to this vision of multifunctional agriculture, biodiversity and landscape are 'public goods' that should be regulated without disturbing the market. This vision, however, is but one possible definition of multifunctional agriculture. Furthermore, even such policies contain some interventionist aspects since their implementation inevitably has consequences for farm restructuring. In both countries, the implementation of the policies had consequences on structural adjustment, as shown in Chapter 10. Views of multifunctionality which focus solely on the public good, such as those promulgated by the OECD, present the topic (and intervention) in neutral 'scientific' terms, but actually contain an economist bias that this thesis has tried to illustrate and move beyond.

Beyond the economistic bias

The comparative approach also permits moving beyond the narrow 'economistic' definition proposed by the OECD. As stressed in Chapter 2, this ready-made conception of multifunctional agriculture (derived from the management of 'public goods') considers regulation as external to the self-regulative mechanisms of the market. Only public goods should be regulated: other forms of regulation are considered as a subterfuge for protectionism. This conception is problematic as it means placing social, environmental, political and any other concerns outside the closed and self-referential domain of the economy. In other words, it sees *homo economicus* as living in a world without public regulation that is dominated by the 'natural' rules of the market. These economistic stances do not question what the market is or its relations with multifunctional agriculture policy. They fail to acknowledge that, in so doing, they are disconnecting the market from the 'other' dimensions of multifunctionality, and that the market coordination is in itself a social construction. As a result, the scientific framework of the OECD provides a normative understanding of (and prescriptions for) multifunctionality, based on economic neo-liberal doctrines, rather than an objective view. Isolating market coordination from other regulatory regimes is the result of political vision rather than any 'natural' state, and leads to the market being seen (and treated as) socially disembedded (in the sense used by Polanyi).

The policy instrument approach adopted in this thesis permits gaining insights into some of the social processes that underlie the construction of policy tools. It demonstrats that disconnecting the management of public goods from the self-regulatory market mechanisms is a theoretical approach that represents but one possible policy direction. This creates a situation where the market is 'disembedded' from society rather than providing a definitive or impartial definition of multifunctional agriculture. This was the policy direction followed by the Dutch configuration, which became a self-fulfilling prophecy in terms of the model of multifunctionality that it delivered. 'Nature' was targeted by policy makers as a public good to be regulated independently from the market. The French case showed quite a different situation which did not correspond to the 'public good' model advocated by economists. Instead, the French state was prepared to intervene with market mechanisms and to try to socially re-embed the market. The CTE contracts offered farmers the opportunity to reposition their farming activity vis-à-vis the market. They were encouraged to start and develop new

activities (agri-tourism, short food supply chains, and so on) in relation to the opportunities before them.

This comparative approach also permits an examination of agricultural subsidies through a different perspective. It shows that public support to multifunctional agriculture can either be restricted to the provision of amenity (as in the Dutch case) or can address the social and economic conditions that underpin farmers' capacity to provide these amenities. From this perspective, subsidies are not so much a sum of money allocated to a 'privileged' social group, but are an expression of the reciprocity between farmers and society. The subsidy is a sort of Maussian counter-gift which expresses society's indebtedness to farmers[233]. It represents a new social contract between farmers and society that sets out a new social role for farmers. This is a socially constructed pact that draws in different domains of social and geographical reality and varies from area to area. In each case, the application of the contracts shows the readjustments are motivated by concerns for renewing the pact between the state and farmers. This could be seen in the way that the subsidies were calculated, which was not on the basis of any 'objective' inherent value of 'public environmental goods' (Chapter 10). It was also observable that the policy gave relatively high priority to maintaining and reproducing farmers as a professional group – what Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) called the 'domestic' regime of justification. The French policies towards multifunctional agriculture were explicitly linked with the dynamics of farm restructuring, which shows that multifunctionality need not be restricted to questions of providing public environmental goods.

The discourse of self-regulation as an expression of green liberalism

Finally, this policy instrument approach permits an alternative interpretation of the phenomenon of the Dutch 'environmental cooperatives' to the one given by New Institutional Economics (NIE). As shown in Chapter 2, the NIE approach partially maintains the separation between the market – and its individualist assumptions – and the domain of the social and institutional. NIE does not abandon the assumptions of optimisation made by the neo-classical school but reinterprets them at the 'institutional level'. In this sense NIE views the environmental cooperatives as a form of institutional expansion in response to the opportunities offered by multifunctionality, which provides an opportunity for local self-regulative governance structures. The rationale underlying the constitution of these farmers groups is assumed to derive from their seeking to optimise the 'transaction costs' associated with policy implementation (Polman 2002; Polman and Slangen 2002).

The analysis of the SAN, in this thesis, allows a different approach to – and interpretation of – the environmental cooperatives. Firstly, it is important to understand that the emergence of self-regulation discourse was a specific response by farmers to some broader shifts in state regulation of the agricultural economy. These changes, which combined environmental and liberal creeds, created a situation where farmers were facing increased market uncertainties and tougher environmental regulations. These changes generated resistance from farmers, which took shape in the idea that the environmental constraints could be made more flexible through locally self-regulated arrangements that would achieve the same environmental results without damaging the economic feasibility of the farms. Thus the weakening of the

[233] According to Marcel Mauss, the dynamic of exchange supposes three main movements. The act of giving supposes that the other person is capable of receiving. This creates a feeling of debt which then has to be repaid, what he called the 'counter-gift'. In this sense, economic exchanges should be understood as being part of the way in which people construct social links between each other (Mauss 1990 [1924]).

regulatory role of the state (in economic terms) brought about a discourse of self-regulation among farmers. Their proposals for local governance and autonomy were attempts to side step top-down environmental pressure and the absence of state support to fulfil these expectations.

But, with the exception of a few specific cases, the environmental cooperatives were rarely able to institutionalise the autonomy that they sought and, instead, became instruments of the government's conservationist project. Although the early environmental cooperatives had an ambitious project, the movement only gained momentum at a national level with the implementation of the SAN, which only gave farmers a limited role and no real possibility to contribute to the policy-making process. The centralisation of these processes within the 'environmentalist state' meant that control of the SAN remained firmly in the hands of ecological experts and that there was little room for any locally based and systematic discussion or negotiation (as occurred in France). This, somewhat showed the unwillingness of the state to organise and orchestrate any local debates. The Friesian farmers' effort in rebuilding a local arena of stakeholders sought to get closer to a model of local deliberation (Chapter 7). But overall Dutch farmers had little influence over policymaking, compared to their French counterparts, and the Dutch state was reluctant to organise local arenas that could contribute to the norm construction process.

The shift in the goals of environmental cooperatives – from seeking greater autonomy to becoming instruments for meeting policy objectives – was less a consequence of farmers' being concerned by optimisation and the institutional efficiency of the scheme and more a result of a radical shift in their ambitions. To maintain their role, and if possible expand their influence to other domains, they appropriated the limited managerialist opportunities offered to them in order to present themselves as serious and efficient institutional partners, on whom the authorities could rely. But it would be wrong to reduce the rationality of the farmers to optimising the implementation of policy. Their main intention was to develop compromises with the authorities over the environmental constraints placed on their farming practices. Their expansion as formal associations (and not cooperatives) only came about as a response to their newly assigned task of nature management, which was part of a broader government project. Optimising nature management was more the concern of the authorities, which promoted these associations, than of the farmers who were more concerned with guaranteeing the production and reproduction of their farms. Their supposed focus on 'transaction costs' therefore was a result of the spread of managerialist nature management contracts rather than a spontaneous orientation of farmers towards this objective.

In summary, even though self-regulation did exist as a discourse, it did not strongly influence the *modus operandi* of the environmental cooperatives. Their emergence during the '90s was one component of the green liberal shift; it is in this context that concerns regarding administrative efficiency, supposedly held by these farmers, should be understood.

11.4 Conclusions

In conclusion, this sociological approach, that uses policy instruments as an analytical tool, produced a more comprehensive picture of public action and its role in regulating multifunctional agriculture. It allowed a sociological understanding of these types of instruments within the existing CAP toolbox. Contracts are instruments of public intervention that can contribute to the structuring of the agricultural economy. They are socially constructed and incrementally shaped by the transformations that they go through over time. Using these instruments permitted us to go beyond the economistic bias that has shaped some

definitions of multifunctional agriculture. Questioning multifunctionality implies reflecting upon the economy of the non-productive functions of agriculture. These can either be conceived as connected to market mechanisms or as separate and autonomous from the market. This distinction was not made by the OECD which developed an analytical framework in which the definition of multifunctionality was disconnected from the market. The comparative analysis helped highlight these alternative conceptions and the ways in which they were operationalised. This comparison revealed two divergent trajectories for implementing and regulating MFA, based on two distinct definitions of multifunctional agriculture: a liberal environmentalist model and a state-farmers co-management model.

In the Dutch liberal environmentalist model, multifunctional agriculture is based on strict ecological standards, a view which placed ecological experts in charge of the procedures. The decisive criteria are ecological indicators, based on biodiversity and landscape objectives, rather than agricultural ones. The farmers have to adjust to meet these targets – the importance of which varies between areas. Because the intervention has no economic objectives, the farming systems are governed by constraints that do not relate to their productive targets, leaving them with limited management options. Furthermore, the zoning system limits access to agro-environment subsidies so the conservation led approach is highly selective in terms of subsidy distribution. This approach adopts a geographically broad view of multifunctionality, viewing it from the national level (Wilson, 2007). By contrast, in the French state-farmers co-management model, multifunctional agriculture is interpreted as a comprehensive sector-based agricultural policy that combines the productive and non productive functions of agriculture. With the CTE, the main axis of MFA-related change is agriculture itself, and the programme offers a wide range of measures that farmers can adopt, according to their own interests, strategies and income. This was done largely independently from the requirement of other social groups in what Lowe et al. (2002) refer to as the agrarian agenda. The desire for radical reform was, however, quite short lived, and the CTEs were quickly abandoned and replaced by a more environmentally-focused policy with a more restricted budget.

While both of these approaches incorporated the concept of multifunctionality, in different ways, they both represented a revival – albeit under a new name – of the principles on which European agricultural policies had long been grounded (Potter 2004). With ongoing and continuing market deregulation, one may speculate on the extent to which multifunctional agriculture instruments are a genuine and effective replacement for the traditional regulative instruments of the CAP. With the new programming period 2007-2013 and the recent enlargement of the EU, the budget for these instruments is in decline[234]. Hence the question becomes how to do more with less money? (Féret 2006). Equally, it can be asked whether the entire CAP is evolving towards multifunctionality through decoupling and cross compliance? While this may be the subject of debate, it is obvious that the current situation is temporary, given that agriculture continues to go through profound structural changes. Despite the large differences in the way that the RDRF was implemented in the two countries, the rates at which farms are disappearing and the industry becomes more concentrated are identical in both countries. Nineteen per cent of French and Dutch farms went out of business between 2000 and 2005, with no significant decrease in agricultural production in either country. This concentration of farming activities seems to be representative of a more general structural evolution in Europe, towards, larger and more entrepreneurial farms, a trend that raises a new

[234] For France for instance, the budget for the second pillar for the programming period 2007-2013 declined by 16% compared to the period 2000-2006.

set of questions: specifically, will these emerging new types of farm will need, or adjust to, multifunctionality in the future?

List of acronyms

ADABIO	Association pour le Développement de l'Agriculture Biologique
ADAR	Association pour le Développement Agricole et Rural
ADASEA	Association Départementale d'Aménagement des Structures d'Exploitations Agricoles
ADAYG	Association pour le Développement de l'Agriculture dans l'Y Grenoblois
ANDAR	Association Nationale pour le Développement Agricole
ANT	Actor Network Theory
AOC	Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée
APAP	Association pour la Promotion des Agriculteurs du Parc naturel régionale du Vercors
ARDEAR	Association Régionale de Développement de l'Emploi Agricole et Rural
CAD	Contrat d'Agriculture Durable
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDA	Christen Democratisch Appèl
CDJA	Centre Départemental des Jeunes Agriculteurs
CDOA	Departmental Agricultural Commissions
CIPAN	Culture Intermédiaire Piège à Nitrate
CIVAM	Centre d'Initiatives pour Valoriser l'Agriculture et le Milieu rural
CNASEA	Centre National pour l'Aménagement des Structures des Exploitations Agricoles
CNJA	Centre National des Jeunes Agriculteurs
COPA	Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the European Union
CPE	European Farmer Coordination
CTE	Contrat Territorial d'Exploitation
DDAF	Direction Départementale de l'Agriculture et de la Forêt
DEPSE	Direction des Exploitations, de la Protection Sociale et de l'Emploi
DERF	Direction de l'Espace Rural et de la Forêt
DGFAR	Direction Générale de la Forêt et des Affaires Rurales
DJA	Dotation Jeune Agriculteur
DLG	Dienst Landelijk Gebied
EC	European Commission
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FARRE	Forum de l'Agriculture Raisonnée Respectueuse de l'Environnement
FCS	Farmland Conservation Scheme
FDSEA	Fédération Départementale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles
FFCTE	Fonds de Financement des Contrats Territoriaux d'Exploitation
FNSEA	Fédération Nationale des Syndicats d'Exploitants Agricoles
FRAPNA	Fédération Rhône-Alpes de Protection de la NAture

INRA	Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique
IPO	InterProvinciaal Overleg
ISP	Integraal Structuur Plan
IVD	Indemnité Viagère de Départ
JAC	Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne
LASER	Dienst Landelijk Service bij Regelingen
LBF	Landschapsbeheer Flevoland
LBF	Landschapsbeheer Friesland
LBN	Landschapsbeheer Nederland
LNV	Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Visserij
LTO	Land- en Tuinbouworganisatie
MINAS	MINerals Accounting System
MFA	Multifunctional Agriculture
NEN	National Ecological Network
NIE	New Institutional Economists
NPM	New Public Management
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGAF	Opération Groupée d'Aménagement Foncier
OLAE	Opérations Locales Agro-Environnementales
ONIOL	Office National Interprofessionnel des Oléagineux, Protéagineux et Cultures textiles
PAD	Project Agricole de Développement
PDD	Plan de Développement Durable
PEZMA	Prime à l'Entretien des Zones Menacées d'Abandon
PHAE	Prime Herbagère Agro-Environnementale
PMPOA	Programme de Maîtrise des Pollutions d'Origines Agricoles
PMSEE	Prime au Maintien des Systèmes d'Elevage Extensif
PvdA	Partij van de Arbeid
RAD	Réseau d'Agriculture Durable
RDRF	Rural Development Framework Regulation
SBB	Staatsbosbeheer
SNM	Foundation for Nature and Environment
VANLA	Vereniring Agrarische Natuur and Landschapsbeheer Achtkarspelen
VBN	Vogelbescherming Nederland
VEL	Vereniring Eastermar's Lândouwe
VROM	Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijk Ordening en Milieu
VVD	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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Samenvatting

Sinds de hervormingen van MacSharry, in 1992, heeft de Gemeenschappelijke Landbouw Beleid (GLB) nog diverse ingrijpende veranderingen (transformaties) ondergaan. Er is met name geprobeerd om nieuwe aandachtsvelden te integreren in de algemene doeleinden van het GLB – aandachtsvelden die in toenemende mate de meerledige functies van de landbouw weerspiegelen. Dit heeft geleid tot een geheel nieuwe generatie van beleidsinstrumenten die voorzien in vrijwillige, contractueel, vastgelegde overeenkomsten met boeren. Aan boeren wordt gevraagd een brede waaier van maatregelen toe te passen, inclusief die welke betrekking hebben op de verbetering van de milieuefficiency, in ruil voor het ontvangen van publieke ondersteuning. Een dergelijke overeenkomst is gebaseerd op een filosofie van publieke interventie, die beperkingen combineert met positieve prikkels en die beduidend verschilt van regulatievormen die gebaseerd zijn op het principe dat de vervuiler betaalt. Deze contracten behoeven niet noodzakelijkerwijze te worden begrepen als geatomiseerde relaties tussen individuele boeren en autoriteiten – het is ook mogelijk en bovenal nuttig ze te begrijpen in het kader van de meer algemene evolutie van het landbouwbeleid. Dit beleid voorziet in de mogelijkheid om nieuwe vormen van een “sociaal contract” tussen boeren en maatschappij te ontwikkelen precies op het moment dat boeren geconfronteerd worden met een toenemende economische onzekerheid als gevolg van globalisatie en liberalisatie. In deze studie worden deze ontwikkelingen benaderd vanuit het perspectief van de politieke sociologie; centraal daarbij staat de vraag in hoeverre deze overeenkomsten de relaties tussen boeren en de staat hebben getransformeerd. Subsidies moeten niet worden gezien als een geschenk dat wordt toegekend aan een bevoordeelde sociale groep maar als de hernieuwing van het wederkerige verband tussen maatschappij en de agrarische beroepsgroep. Deze veranderde oriëntatie van het landbouwbeleid impliceert ook bepaalde veranderingen in agrarische praktijken en normen. De plaats en rol van boeren in de maatschappij worden geherdefinieerd; dit proces wordt weerspiegeld in de normatieve aanpassing van professionele praktijken, hetgeen een van de vereiste condities is voor de hernieuwing van het pact tussen boeren en de staat. De bestudering van de ervaringen in Frankrijk en Nederland leidt, in dit proefschrift, tot het inzicht dat deze hernieuwing sterk variabel is. De daarmee gegeven verschillen vloeien voort uit de mate waarin beleidsinstrumenten de sociale en economische dimensies van de landbouw omvatten. Op zijn beurt hangt dit weer af van de mate waarin verbrede doeleinden expliciet tot uitdrukking worden gebracht en worden ondersteund door de staat. Daarnaast is multifunctionaliteit een beleidsaangelegenheid die uitgaat boven de van oudsher “gesloten deuren” van het circuit waarin het agrarisch beleid tot stand kwam, alsook van de mate waarin het gebaseerd is op de betrokkenheid en invloed van “nieuwe” actoren bij het maken van beleid. Dit alles is de reden dat dit proefschrift de aandacht richt op de sociale en institutionele factoren die bijdragen aan de totstandkoming van beleidsinstrumenten in beide landen. Daarbij wordt vooral gekeken in hoeverre het “openen van de deuren” heeft geleid tot de introductie van bredere maatschappelijke doeleinden en aandachtsvelden en hoe dit invloed heeft gehad op het vermogen van de professionele boerenorganisaties bij te dragen aan de ontwikkeling van een integraal landbouwbeleid. In de Nederlandse ervaring was van meet af aan sprake van een duidelijk “groen liberaal” traject waarin een sterke ecologische expertise en een liberale ideologie zich combineerden met een zwakke sociaal economische worteling in de bredere maatschappij; dit leidde tot een model dat gedomineerd wordt door

belangen die meer gericht zijn op conservering dan op landbouwbelangen. De Franse ervaring is meer genuanceerd. De overmacht van de professionele boerenorganisaties over het proces van beleidsformatie heeft ertoe geleid dat de transformaties vooral ten goede komen aan landbouwbelangen en aan de handhaving van de beproefde status quo tussen deze organisaties en de staat. De meest recente aanpassingen van dit beleid vertonen enige tekenen van een lichte beweging in de richting van het Nederlandse model.

Summary

Since the MacSharry reforms in 1992, the CAP has undergone several transformations. In particular it has attempted to integrate new concerns in its overall objectives, concerns that increasingly recognise the multiple functions of agriculture. That has given rise to a new generation of policy instruments that provide voluntary contractual agreements with farmers. Farmers are invited to adapt a range of measures including those intended to improve environmental performance, in exchange for receiving some public subsidies. This arrangement is rooted upon a philosophy of public intervention that combines constraints with the principle of providing incentives and differs from modes of regulation based on the polluter pays principle. Rather than seeing these contracts as purely atomised relations between individual farmers and the authorities, it is more useful to conceive them in the context of the broader evolution of agricultural policies. These policies raise the possibility of building a new type of 'social contract' between farmers and society at a time when farmers face increased economic uncertainty due to globalisation and liberalisation. This study addresses this question from the perspective of political sociology, and the extent to which these contracts have transformed relations between farmers and the state. The subsidies should not be viewed as a gift allocated to a privileged social group but rather as a renewal of reciprocal links between society and the agricultural professional. The changed orientation of agricultural policy also implies some changes in agricultural practices and norms. This redefines the place and role of farmers in society, a process which is reflected in the normative re-adjustment of professional practices, which is one of the necessary conditions for renewing the pact between farmers and the state. By studying the experiences of France and the Netherlands, this thesis shows how this redefinition has varied between the two countries. These differences stem from the extent to in which the policy instruments included the social and economic dimensions of agriculture. This in turn depends on whether these objectives are explicitly recognised and supported by the state or not. In addition multifunctionality is a policy matter that extends beyond the traditionally closed doors of agricultural policy making and the way in which it is defined varies according to the involvement and influence of 'new' actors in shaping policy and policy goals. This thesis therefore focuses on the social and institutional factors that helped to shape the policy instruments in the two countries. In so doing it addresses the extent to which opening the doors of policy-making led to broader societal concerns being embedded within these policies and how this influenced the ability of professional agricultural organisations to arrive at a fully fledged agricultural policy. From the outset the Dutch experience showed a clear 'green liberal' trajectory – in which strong ecological expertise and a liberal ideological stance combined with a weak socio-economic embeddedness to produce a model dominated by conservationist, rather than agricultural concerns. The French experience was more nuanced. The domination of professional organisations upon the policy framing, especially at the beginning of the policy-making process, meant the transformations favoured agricultural concerns and the maintenance of the long established status quo between these organisations and the state. The later adjustment of the policy later showed signs of a slight movement towards the Dutch model.

Curriculum Vitae

François-Joseph Daniel was born on the 22nd of May 1978 in Rennes, France. He started his studies in agricultural sciences at the School of agriculture of Angers where he obtained a master's degree in 2002. During this time, he narrowed his studies, focusing on rural and agricultural development in European countries as well as abroad. He was fortunate to have the opportunity, at this time, to journey to Mexico to study the strategies of cattle breeders coping with trade liberalisation. For his major thesis, he worked in France at the *Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique* (INRA) to investigate the influence of a new agricultural policy on the local policy-network in Maine-et-Loire. In 2002, he started a *Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies* (DEA) in sociology at the University of Nanterre and INAPG in Paris and began some initial comparative research on the implementation of rural development policies in Europe. In 2003, he commenced his PhD at the Rural Sociology Group at Wageningen University, and became part of an international pluri-disciplinary research programme that linked Wageningen University and INRA. He then began field research which explored multifunctional agriculture policies in different parts of the Netherlands, after which he returned to France to continue his field investigations. He was hosted at the centre of rural economy and sociology of INRA in Ivry-sur-Seine where he finished the writing of his PhD dissertation.

Completed Training and Supervision Plan

Description	Institute / Department	Year	ECTS*
Courses:			**28,5**
Mansholt Introduction course	Mansholt Graduate School of Social Sciences	2003	1,5
Governance crossing borders	Mansholt Graduate School of Social Sciences	2003	4,2
Policy Evaluation Methodology	Mansholt Graduate School of Social Sciences	2006	4
Sociology of the locality	INAPG & University of Paris 10 (France)	2003	2,9
Nature, techniques and society: impact of the environmental risks	INAPG & University of Paris 10 (France)	2003	2,9
Local development: stakeholders and territory	INAPG & University of Paris 10 (France)	2003	2,9
Transformation of the family	INAPG & University of Paris 10 (France)	2003	2,9
Ethos of democracy in the XX century	INAPG & University of Paris 10 (France)	2003	2,9
Methodology of scientific survey	INAPG & University of Paris 10 (France)	2003	2,9
Intensive Language course in Dutch	CENTA (Wageningen)	2003-2004	1,4
Presentations at conferences and workshops:			**3**
Mansholt Multidisciplinary seminar (Wageningen)		2005	1
Rural governance seminar organised by the Rural Sociology Group (Wageningen)		2003	1
Annual Congress of European Society of Rural Sociology, Keszthely (Hungary)		2005	1
Total (minimum 30 ECTS)			**31,5**

*One ECTS on average is equivalent to 28 hours of course work