

6. The Netherlands

Greet Overbeek and Janneke Vader

6.1 Introduction

Usually, in the Netherlands rural-urban problems are perceived from an intraregional perspective, in which cities put many claims on land use in rural municipalities. Urban claims mainly consist of a demand for space for houses, business sites and infrastructure, but also for recreation, nature, forests, meadows, water basins and waste treatment. Besides the demand for land surface, there is also an interest in crisscrossing the rural hinterland with more roads and highways. Often, this bundle of varying claims from urban regions results in 'overpressure' in rural areas.

In the Netherlands, the rural-urban problem is approached with a zoning policy to solve the spatial demands of the diverse interests. This holds in particular for the demand of houses and business sites on the one hand, and agricultural land use on the other hand. The zoning policy resulted in a settlement pattern with a concentration of houses and business sites in towns and villages, surrounded by a relatively 'empty' area for agriculture, and to a lesser extent also for nature. However, nowadays there are many more demands and actors.

The interregional rural-urban problems are defined and experienced by policy makers and stakeholders in urban areas preferring a distinction between built up or more economic functions in the cities and non-built or non-economic functions in the countryside. Within 'rural' areas the rural-urban relationships are not always perceived as a distinction in built and non-built functions. Often rural areas welcome the demand for space to construct houses and business sites and pay less attention to the demand for nature, water basins and waste treatment. Within a region, rural municipalities experience more intraregional rural-urban problems when they fear spatial claims of a neighbouring town on their area.

Main current rural-urban relationships

Many rural-urban relationships are no longer intraregional, but have become interregional, created by the government and the provinces to manage a balance between income and activities in areas. The relationships are also the result of population movements entirely dependent on the public transportation system and the road infrastructure. Villages are no longer autonomous entities based on the provision of services and employment for their own population, but mainly residential resorts (Thissen, 2004). Cities offer a lively atmosphere

with employment and services with sometimes the disadvantage of having a number of less affluent worse neighbourhoods, which are unsafe and less suitable for children. Villages offer quietness, green, space, social contacts, cheaper houses and a safer environment, but have the disadvantage of more social control and less services.

Land use policies to solve rural-urban problems

The idea of towns and countryside as 'separate entities' represents the classical view in Dutch spatial policies to preserve the countryside in tandem with a high concentration of economic activities and population in the towns. Dutch land use planning is highly regulated and centralised with a zoning policy that lays down which activities are allowed on a specific location. The role of the government includes both the decision-making about the zoning policy as well as the control over the permissions for the activities that may be performed. Moreover, land use is influenced by sector-specific policy, such as the EU agricultural policy, nature, and spatial and environmental policy. The zoning policy leads to segmented markets for land use. Land prices are related to the value of profits of the activity that is permitted on the land. Plans for a change of the (inexpensive) agricultural destination into (expensive) built-up land will increase the land prices. Thus the highest land prices have been paid in the villages near built locations (Luijt et al., 1999).

The obligation in spatial planning to develop zoning plans dates from the Sanitation and Housing Law of 1901 with. All administrative layers draw up spatial plans. The Spatial Planning Act from the government provides the legal framework for national planning. The municipalities are responsible for drawing up municipal development plans to show how land may be used. The provinces draw up regional plans and approve municipal development plans with the guidelines of central government based on its national spatial planning policy. There is a slight tendency towards a more neutral position of the national government, leaving more room for decentralisation of land use policies and spatial arrangements. Provinces and municipalities become less restricted in their decision where to build if they fulfil conditions of rural landscape development.

Selection of case study areas

The M area Oost-Zuid-Holland is located in the middle of the so-called 'Green Heart', which is surrounded by the metropolitan cities Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam and The Hague in the Netherlands (Figure 6.1). The Green Heart is one of the most mentioned examples of urban pressure in the Netherlands. This makes Oost-Zuid-Holland a logical choice. The T area Zeeuwse Eilanden is a tourist area with an uneven distribution of tourism: there is a high concentration of tourists at the coastal area and a lower one in the hinterland.

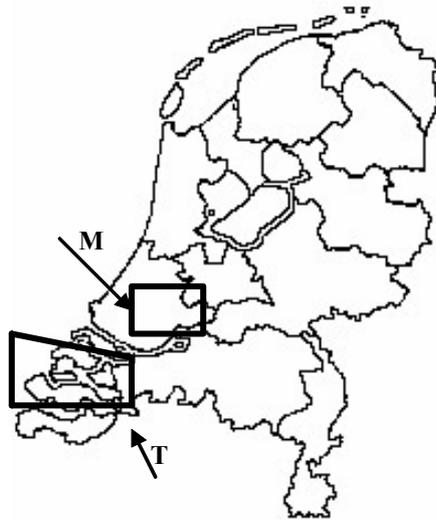


Figure 6.1 Location of the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden
Source: RURBAN project.

In the M area, the challenge is how to deal with the urban pressure without damaging the rural identity (table 6.1). In the T area, there is the converse of a rural-urban problem. Despite its natural beauty there is no demand for housing construction and business sites. Recent improvements in infrastructure have changed its peripheral location and urban visitors are arriving faster. The coast is a traditional tourist area. Effects in the rural hinterland become more intense with the emergence of a new type of tourism characterised by the combination of the proximity to the urban centres and the traditional sun and beach resources and the own 'values' of rural areas with their quietness, landscape, nature, tradition and local food. Tourist activities could be strengthened in the hinterland and reinforce the Zeeuwse Eilanden to distinguish themselves by offering both beaches and green tourism.

Table 6.1 Socio-economic indicators of the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden

Indicator	Year	M area	T area	National
Population size (1,000)	2000	321	265	15,864
Population size (1,000)	1990	300	249	14,892
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 2000</i>				
<14		21	19	19
15-64		68	65	67
>65		11	16	14
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 1990</i>				
<14		21	19	18
15-64		69	66	69
>65		10	15	13
Population density (inh/km ²)	2000	642	247	468
Total area land & internal water (km ²)	2000	547	1,180	37,350
- Share of built area in total area (%)		12	12	13
- Share of agricultural area in total area (%)		75	68	62
- Share of nature & forests in total area (%)		2	7	13
- Share of recreation area in total area (%)		3	2	2
- Share of internal water in total area (%)		8	11	10
Total employment (1,000 persons)	2000	143	108	6,900
- Share agriculture in total employment (%)		5	4	3
- Share industries in total employment (%)		18	26	23
- Share services in total employment (%)		77	70	74
Total employment (1,000 persons)	1990	89	79	5,304
- Share agriculture in total employment (%)		5	2	2
- Share industries in total employment (%)		28	29	27
- Share services in total employment (%)		66	67	72
First homes (1,000)	2000	124	113	6,560
Second homes (1,000)	2000	0.96	9.0	87.4
First homes (1,000)	1990	111	104	5,802
Second homes (1,000)	1990	0.95	6.8	n.a.

Source: RURBAN project.

6.2 M area: Oost-Zuid-Holland

6.2.1 Basic information

Municipalities

Oost-Zuid-Holland is formed by 16 municipalities (Figure 6.2). The study area has around 320,000 inhabitants of which 44% live in the main cities Alphen a/d Rijn and Gouda in the centre of the area.

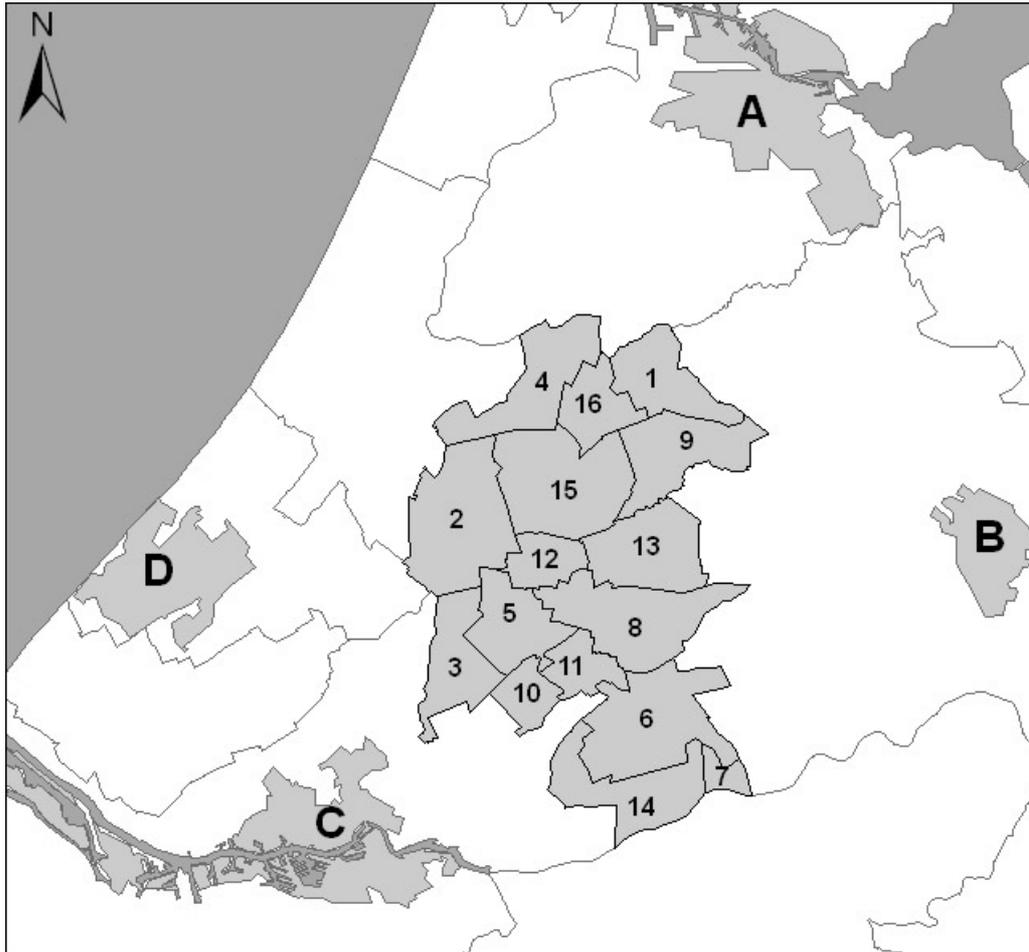


Figure 6.2 Map of Oost-Zuid-Holland

<p>1 = Liemeer; 2 = Rijnwoude; 3 = Zevenhuizen-Moerkapelle; 4 = Jacobswoude; 5 = Waddinxveen; 6 = Vlist; 7 = Schoonhoven; 8 = Reeuwijk; 9 = Nieuwkoop; 10 = Moordrecht; 11 = Gouda; 12 = Boskoop; 13 = Bodegraven; 14 = Bergambacht; 15 = Alphen aan den Rijn; 16 = Ter Aar. A = Amsterdam; B = Utrecht; C = Rotterdam; D = The Hague.</p>
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Source: RURBAN project.

Geographical context

Oost-Zuid-Holland is internationally well connected with Amsterdam and Schiphol airport 25 km north of the region. Gouda is connected to the metropolitan cities The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht by highways and railways. Alphen a/d Rijn has a main road and a railway connection to Leiden and Utrecht. The region is flat, below sea level and has a typical Dutch landscape: polders and peat meadows. The northern area (Rijnstreek) and the western area (Gouwestreek) are the oldest areas of reclaimed land, while the southern area (Krimpenerwaard) has mainly peat meadows.

Protected nature landscapes

Oost-Zuid-Holland belongs to the National Landscape Green Heart (IUCN category V, which allows a moderate level of man-made development). Constructions of buildings are allowed as long as they enhance the rural landscape. International wet nature areas (EU Bird and Habitat Directives) are around the lakes of Nieuwkoop, Reeuwijk and Jacobswoude. Further there are national protected nature areas belonging to the ecological main structure and agricultural landscape or bird protection areas. In the western part a forest is developing (the so-called Bentwoud).

Agricultural production

In the urban Randstad, agriculture is still an important land user in Oost-Zuid-Holland. More than 80% of the land is used by agriculture. Main cultivations are dairy cattle and horticulture. The number of farms decreased from 3,320 farm enterprises in 1990 to 2,656 in 2000 and 2,336 in 2003. Although the number of farms decreased, agricultural land use hardly changed because of a scale enlargement of farms. The strength of the horticulture businesses is its market orientation and efficient organisation. Boskoop is the main cultivation centre for trees and plants and is well connected with Schiphol airport. For dairy farmers the peat soil and the high ground water level are constraints. Often water boards try to lower the water level, but this leads to an oxidation of peat and consequently to a lowering of the land level. The peat soil is also a constraint for building activities.

Counterurbanisation and the housing market

The regional population increase could be attributed mainly to a positive natural balance, especially in the second half of the nineties. Migration is limited. After 2000 the negative balance of more emigrating people was equal to the positive natural balance of more births than deaths. Alphen a/d Rijn and Gouda have the highest population and have the highest population increase (11% and 14% respectively in the last ten years). This may be contributed to the new residential areas (VINEX locations) in these towns, where most of the newcomers settled. The number of newcomers in the villages is quite small. Some people who are able to buy a farm settled in the rural area, others went to the municipalities with some small new building plots.

The pressure on the real estate market has been created by the increasing demand, individualisation of households, the attraction of the region for businesses and the restrictive building policy. The result is that the median prices for houses increased by 150% between 1990 and 2000 in the study area, which is somewhat higher than the national average (135%).

Tourist amenities

The study area has a rich cultural heritage, such as the history of the lakes of Nieuwkoop and Reeuwijk, the meadows of the Krimpenerwaard and the history of digging peat, parcel patterns and open space. Furthermore there are the Limes zone (the old border of the Roman Empire) and the Old Dutch Waterline and windmills. However, this cultural heritage is not optimally developed for social experience. The most important location for day recreation is Gouda with a historic city centre. Alphen a/d Rijn has the bird park Avifauna and the historic theme park Archeon. The area is rich of (long-distance) walking, cycling and water sport tracks, but has few thematic events, gastronomic seminars, artisan fairs etc. Around the lake of Nieuwkoop, with its many restaurants, there are activities related to fun shopping and gastronomy.

6.2.2RGS

Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years

During the last decades, the land use patterns were rather stable with a slight increase of the built up area mainly in the surrounding of two towns: Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn. Due to the Dutch spatial policy, extensions of residential areas are concentrated in the direct surrounding of towns and villages, leaving the remaining rural area mainly untouched. The social impact of the change in land use patterns is rather moderate, as population increase is mainly concentrated in the two towns Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn. Nevertheless, the transport infrastructure has been extended during the last decades. Further, the increase in the costs for water management results in some shift in the policy orientation of the Water Board. As Oost-Zuid-Holland is located below sea level, the decision about the height of the ground water level is a main issue. For a long time, the policy of the Water Board was mainly directed at farmers; nowadays it has to deal with the conflicting interests of farmers, residents and nature organisations. Farmers and residents prefer a rather low ground water level as this is more efficient for agricultural production and the subsidence of houses and gardens. On the other hand nature organizations prefer a relatively high ground water level to protect specific habitats.

Agricultural land is mainly used for dairy farming. In the western area Gouwestreek there is an area for horticulture. On the whole, agricultural land use is quite stable. Main changes refer to more emphasis on landscape management by dairy farmers. In Oost-Zuid-Holland many environmental cooperatives have been set up by farmers to organise agricultural landscape management. Citizens can also become a member of those environmental cooperatives. In this way, closer contacts between farmers and urban population arise.

RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy
 An overview of the main RGS includes the following:

Demand of RGS	Supply of RGS
Rural cultural heritage	Monumental houses near the lakes, dikes and farms
Landscape & nature	Accessible meadows, bird-management and nature parks
Land leisure	Cycling & hiking tracks, horse riding schools and golf courts
Water leisure	Water tracks, rental boats in the northern area
Culture - in cities - in villages	Gouda city, theme parks Alphen a/d Rijn Excursions, museums, visitors centre (forthcoming)
Accommodation	Few hotels and meeting places in rural areas
Gastronomy	Restaurants around the lakes
Regional products	Green Heart farm shops, farmers market

Figure 6.3 RGS in Oost-Zuid-Holland
 Source: RURBAN project.

Public RGS such as nature and agricultural land management with accessible meadows and bird management strengthen the value of landscape, while the development of tourist routes, management of museums and preservation of old farms facilitate the consumption of the landscape. Monumental houses in the countryside form an important part of the rural heritage. Private RGS such as cafés, restaurants, accommodations and farm shops support the consumption. The contribution by homeowners near the cities and visitors of the city centre of Gouda and the theme parks in Alphen a/d Rijn to the landscape is small, because housing, city-marketing and theme parks hardly show relations with the hinterland.

At the national level, 26% of the farms had one or more other economic activities in 2003. The most popular is nature conservation (11% of all farms with one or more activities). The number of farms with other economic activities is equal to the national average in the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and higher in the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden (Table 6.2). In the M area landscape management and consequently public RGS are the main activities. In the T area there are more private RGS.

Table 6.2 RGS supply on farms in Oost-Zuid-Holland and the Zeeuwse Eilanden, 2003

	Number of farms			% of all farms		
	Oost-Zuid-Holland	Zeeuwse Eilanden	Netherlands	Oost Zuid-Holland	Zeeuwse Eilanden	Netherlands
All farms	2,336	2,273	85,501	100	100	100
Farms with RGS	598	945	21,857	26	42	26
Landscape management a)	350	266	9,577	15	12	11
Product sale	119	309	5,380	5	14	6
Stabling	98	224	3,835	4	10	4
Tourism	45	264	2,462	2	12	3
Processing on farm	76	37	1,105	3	2	1
Care	8	6	372	<1	<1	<1

a) Excluding nest protection.

Source: CBS Agricultural Census (2003).

The importance of those activities in the local economy is low, because most RGS are traditional activities executed by family members of farm enterprises (home sale, stabling, small campsites). New activities are coming up (agri-recreation, social care and farm shops). The social valuation is improving due to more contacts between citizens and farmers.

The contribution of RGS to employment is estimated to be small in Oost-Zuid-Holland, but rather difficult to measure, as it is not separately distinguished in statistics. For instance, the share of tourism in the regional employment was 2% in 2003 (Terluin et al., 2005), a figure reached by counting employment in hotels, restaurants and cafes, which mainly concern Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn.

6.2.3 Institutional framework

Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS

Entrepreneurs inside the area face urban pressure positively when it is accompanied by economic development. Municipalities also seem to have a positive attitude towards urban pressure when it means that they are able to put claims on the area at the fringes of towns and villages for construction of houses and business sites. Often towns with a need for building space are more positive about the claimed expansion than villages. Newcomers in the countryside try to stop urban pressure, as they prefer to maintain the existing status quo and to prevent large flows of visitors into their neighbourhood. Newcomers in the towns are usually attracted by the lower house prices and

the size of the houses in Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn relative to the metropolitan cities outside the region. It seems that they have a rather passive attitude towards urban pressure. This does not imply that they are not interested in the surrounding rural area, as many of them are members of nature protection organisations.

Both internal and external actors value the landscape, with its peat meadows, lakes and towns, and pay more attention to the difficult production circumstances of farmers. However, RGS hardly contribute to the (non-)blurring rural-urban boundaries.

Role of the local government in land use and RGS

In interregional contacts, municipalities are against the metropolitan cities' interference in the development of rural areas. Municipalities prefer to plan the development of the rural area themselves according to their own views. Some differences in the role of 'urban' municipalities and 'rural' municipalities, which include the lakes and the peat meadows, can be perceived. Urban municipalities with hardly non-built land tend to extend the built-up areas at the cost of green areas from the rural municipalities, whereas rural municipalities are rather in favour of conserving the existing borders between red and green.

Policies which support the demand of public RGS to enhance the rural landscape have resulted in recreational infrastructure. The development of leisure tracks has contributed to creating an accessible landscape instead of a closed area. Further, agricultural landscape management and the transformation from agriculture into nature is strengthened by the agri-environmental measures of the second pillar of the CAP.

Policies to enhance private RGS are scarce and lack a vision on the future of the countryside. Supply of private RGS such as farm shops is often hampered by spatial and environmental policies that only permit small-scale, non-agricultural activities on or nearby a farm. The main restrictions are stench circles (distance standards) at locations in the countryside where only monofunctional agriculture is allowed and hygiene restrictions that do not permit the combining of different activities, for instance a shop near a stable.

6.2.4 Consumers

There are many citizens who visit the area for active recreation such as cycling and walking during the weekend and summer evenings. More day-trippers would like to smell the countryside, the farm ambience and to spend the day outside with the family. Often the demand is to meet the 'countryside' more *interactively* and to get more personal care. There is a growing interest in local history, in particular in the story behind the landscape, the ditches and the

farms. Finally, there is an increasing demand for luxury houses near the lakes and for farms. The consumers are predominantly from the region itself (Figure 6.4). The consumer motivations that are most relevant for the RGS are the traditional, unique and responsible consumers (Chapter 2). Within each type of RGS the consumers show some variation.

RGS	Location of consumers	Motivation	Location of producers
New houses	Internal	Traditional, calculating	External & internal
Old houses	Internal & external	Traditional, unique	Internal
Landscape & Nature	Internal	Traditional, responsible	Internal (farmers) & external (nature organisations)
Land leisure	Internal	Traditional, responsible	Internal
Water leisure	Internal	Unique	Internal
Culture - urban - rural	External Internal & external	Traditional, unique Traditional, responsible	External Internal & external
Accommodation	Internal & external	Traditional, responsible	Internal
Gastronomy	Internal & external	Unique	Internal & external
Regional products	Internal	Traditional, responsible	Internal (farmers)

Figure 6.4 Consumers and producers of RGS in Oost-Zuid-Holland
Source: RURBAN project.

Most consumers have a traditional motivation to demand a house (change of family size or employment, retirement), especially around Alphen a/d Rijn and Gouda. They also have a calculating motivation, because those homes are cheaper and more accessible compared to homes in the metropolitan cities. Newcomers in the countryside are willing to pay more for a view and a quiet environment. Most day trippers of land and water leisure and clients of regional products come from the region itself. People from outside tend to focus on culture, gastronomy and accommodation, as far as this is available. Visitors from abroad are predominantly attracted to the city of Gouda.

The natural dimensions (the green and varied landscape, horizon view, fresh air, silence) and cultural dimensions (gastronomy, rural lifestyle and idyllic spots) of RGS seem to be most important to communicate the rural-

urban relationship to consumers. Important are the (farm) nature excursions to inform and involve consumers about farm life, (agrarian) nature and water control. Also relevant are the farms and other local buildings. To an increasing extent, they receive a monumental status that implies that they have earned 'investments for preservation' and can develop the history of the building.

Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS

Although there are many tourist tracks, they lack main entry points with a visitor centre, in which the cultural history is told, and which includes a restaurant and a recreation ground for children. For the less active groups of consumers the RGS could be improved. There are hardly luxury services and rural attractions, such as overnight and meeting accommodations. A number of cafés are not open on Sundays for religious reasons. There are few consumers from outside due to the soft tourist marketing of the rural area and the lack of accommodation. The cultural history and nature development are hardly known outside.

Further, there is a lack of private RGS and therefore a lack of possibilities for urban visitors to spend money and hence to pay additionally for the local landscape. Also the responsibility for the development and preservation of public RGS could be communicated better. Traditional consumers, interested in community values, and responsible consumers, interested in sustainability and engagement, may be reached more. There is a willingness to pay for public RGS if we consider the members of nature organisations in the study area (the regional Zuid-Hollands Landschap and the national Nature monuments), local interest in agricultural environmental cooperatives and interest groups to protect the countryside (Gras en Wolken).

6.2.5 Producers

A number of RGS are on farms (agricultural landscape management, cheese making, agri-recreation, farm shops, social care, Figure 6.4). Other examples of rural producers are the hotel and catering industry, museums, and recreation entrepreneurs such as water sport and golf sport entrepreneurs. Producers of private RGS are often closer to cities such as Gouda and the lakes, where tourists and day-trippers are present. The RGS producers are mostly locals. On farms it is often the successor or spouse who starts with new activities. Sometimes private RGS are started as a hobby, for instance the development of horse stables. There are some newcomers who came to the study area to set up a new business (often the catering industry). Nature organisations are both from inside (Zuid-Hollands Landschap) and from outside the area (Natuurmonumenten).

Bottlenecks for producers of RGS

Spatial policy often hampers the extension of private RGS activities in the countryside. Many RGS activities on farms lack innovation and concern similar things with few risks and investments. Lack of accommodation is one of the reasons why consumers spend only a short time in the area. The supply is not always efficient and meaningful enough for urban visitors.

Although the internal cooperation of rural entrepreneurs has improved, for example in the network 'Struinen and Vorsen' with farmers and other rural entrepreneurs enhancing rural tourism, there is scope for further improvement to realize a more diversified supply of RGS. Contact with the demand side could be improved further with the help of the relevant internal and external urban stakeholders (see Section 6.2.6). The marketing of the region based on themes could be improved to reach more urban visitors. Tourist tracks could be made more thematic by linking them to cultural themes and connecting them with cafés and restaurants.

The public investments for nature and agricultural landscape preservation are scarce and hardly sustainable for private actors. Further, the investments are disconnected from the private profits from economic RGS based on nature and landscape.

6.2.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

The most important actors are the province and the municipalities. They provide subsidies for development of co-operations and tourist tracks and may hamper private RGS developments by applying spatial policy. Another public actor is the water board that manages the level of the ground water. By doing so, it has to take the diverging interest of farmers, nature organizations and citizens into account.

The tourist organization is responsible for the marketing of the region. This mainly concerns the cities. The promotion of the countryside as an interesting place to visit or to stay is quite a recent development for tourism and regional products. Most of the public relations are quite small-scaled inside the region.

The most important stakeholders are the agricultural environmental cooperatives, nature organisations, the farmers' union WLTO, museums and the rural tourist co-operation 'Struinen and Vorsen'.

Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders

Strong points of intermediate actors are the increased cooperation among municipalities to enhance the region and its actors. Weak points are the lack of integration between the profits of economic RGS (homes and tourism) and non-economic RGS (management of nature and landscape) and the marketing

of the region outside the area. Strong points of private co-operations are the increase of members who want to preserve the area and more territorial cooperation (Struinen and Vorsen). Weak points are the few links with urban stakeholders inside the region, f.i. members of recreation and sport clubs that would like to use agricultural land (for hikes, bird-watching, horse riding etc.) and citizens in the local councils.

6.2.7 Recommendations for improvements

EU policies to strengthen RGS

About 15% of the farms in Oost-Zuid-Holland apply agricultural landscape management (Table 6.2). These second-pillar policies strengthen the supply of agricultural landscapes, but are not a sustainable improvement. Hampering factors for the uptake of these policies are the moderate compensation for agricultural landscape management, the frequent changes in the policies, and the fact that agri-environmental cooperatives are not allowed to receive payments for a collective supply of agricultural landscape management. Further, the lower milk prices caused by the 2003 reform of the first pillar of the CAP are a threat for dairy farming.

There is a LEADER Local Action Group in the southern Krimpenerwaard. A number of projects are cofinanced. With financial support from INTERREG, a visitors' centre will be realised in Bodegraven.

Strengthening RGS

The main goal is to enhance sustainable public RGS with more accessible landscape and nature and producers that are able to realise an economic perspective with public RGS management. The development of private RGS is quite recent and includes the demand for more unique consumption, while the supply of private RGS could be better organised. This implies making more use of rural culture, development of small-scaled luxury sleeping and meeting accommodation. More thematic organisation of recreation infrastructure and more payments for public RGS by private RGS are some of the main goals to realise. It is also important to promote the region and its RGS by more contacts with the urban world both inside and outside the region.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Near the metropolitan cities - Countryside with meadows and lakes - Physical recreation infrastructure - Increasing territorial cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small budget for landscape management - Few cultural RGS to be experienced - Lack of promotion to urban stakeholders - Legacy of the hierarchical planning
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liberalisation of the governance and planning system - Well-organised sub-regions - More local interest in regional nature and culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First-pillar CAP and higher groundwater level decrease the role of agriculture - Urban pressure - Landscape policy for peat meadows not (yet) sustainable

Figure 6.5 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for RGS in Oost-Zuid-Holland

Source: RURBAN project.

If we consider the role of private actors and policy makers in strengthening the supply and demand of RGS we have to remark that in the past local RGS development was never an important policy in the study area. This holds both for the demand, provision and the payment of RGS. The lack of policy interest resulted in many restrictions for accommodation in the countryside. The transformation of agricultural functions has resulted in a diversification and fragmentation of functions in the countryside with more nature areas and built-up areas, and consequently more divergent private rural owners and interests. CAP and national policies (including water management) have strengthened the agricultural sector, but nowadays tend to substitute their support for production objectives into landscape management. There is a renewal of the rural identity with the image of the peat meadows. It has been expected that the transformation of the countryside from a production into consumption countryside will continue. Private RGS activities in the countryside are increasing and support homeowners, who profit from the public RGS activities into landscape and nature and the development of the recreational infrastructure.

The ownership of the countryside will become more dominated by divergent private actors. Therefore, it will be more important to allocate the development rights or property tax by the transformation of agricultural land into built land (profit) and into nature (loss). Municipalities have to develop a policy perspective for a sustainable countryside focusing on public issues (nature, water areas, landscape development) and guidelines for private RGS. Private actors who will start with RGS may choose more innovative examples that enhance the countryside.

Improvements of rural-urban relationships

From the SWOT analysis it can be concluded that rural and urban relationships have to include both rural and urban actors. To an increasing extent the public RGS require budget from private RGS (homes and businesses). Rural areas have more public RGS and need the profits from private RGS to finance the former, while the opposite holds for urban areas. Therefore, an important requirement is to find a regional strategy with rural and urban actors connecting private and public RGS developments. With the withdrawing government a more comprehensive vision of the countryside under urban pressure needs to focus more on the residential environment with possibilities for recreation, agriculture, nature, water catchment, and building developments. Therefore, the following recommendations are basic:

1. *More promotion of the rural areas with urban stakeholders*

More interaction with urban stakeholders to preserve the peat meadow landscape is important. The cooperation between rural producers and local and regional urban stakeholders (recreation clubs) might be explored more. Tourist tracks could be more thematised and promoted outside the region. The development of the visitors' center Fortress Wierickeschans is promising, because it will include both nature and landscape interests (peat meadow structure) and culture interests (the fortress is part of an old defense line).

2. *More organisation of payments for public RGS by urban partners*

Landscape funds show opportunities for new partnerships, initiated by rural organisations, public or private, to find financial means for landscape development and preservation. Landscape funds lack of private investors. Private investors are found more in urban places and also in residential municipalities near the lakes, whereas the funds concern predominantly the needs of rural places. Hence, it may be relevant to bring those funds more within a territorial rural-urban perspective.

3. *More territorial combinations of private and public RGS*

Private RGS activities in the countryside are increasing and support homeowners, who profit from the public RGS activities in landscape and nature and the development of the recreational infrastructure. To solve the problem of losing zoning profits with a change of functions (if agricultural land becomes built up), the province, together with 22 organisations, started the 'Zuidplaspolder' project. Included are both the rural municipalities inside the region and the town of Gouda as well as the metropolitan towns outside (Rotterdam, Zoetermeer). The main objective is to improve the landscape quality with water, nature and recreation functions with the zoning profit of land sale with built functions. The public involvement is important to analyse the integrated perspectives about the future, to organise the decision-making and to set

up a ground bank to finance nature development plans with payments from built up plans. The consequence is that many investments are necessary to build up the project organisation. Although it is still in its infancy, it tries to solve the dilemmas to bridge private and public functions.

Many rural-urban relationships are still supply-oriented based on the role of agriculture as a silent actor to preserve the peat meadows. To strengthen the rural-urban relationship it will be important to develop a territorial policy in tandem with a financial instrument (ground bank, landscape fund etc.) to balance the zoning profits towards investments in the rural landscape. Both factors are crucial to enable rural actors (farmers) to find an economic life by supplying public RGS paid by the zoning profits or by supplying private RGS (including houses) including investments to enhance public RGS. This will require a regional scale to include both rural and urban stakeholders. National policies to enhance the countryside remain important, for instance the investment conditions to develop and communicate a national landscape, and sector policies to renew rural buildings.

It should be noted that many urban stakeholders are already living in the countryside and show an interest in public RGS. These inhabitants are organised in sport, gardening and culture clubs, citizen groups and represented in local councils. Therefore, municipalities could take the initiative to develop such a territorial policy further in tandem with the local organisation of the payments for public RGS.

6.3 T area: Zeeuwse Eilanden

6.3.1 Basic information

Municipalities

The study area includes 10 municipalities (Figure 6.6). The study area has 265,000 inhabitants. The urban centre is on Walcheren and consists of Middelburg (44,900 inhabitants) and Vlissingen (44,300 inhabitants), together comprising one-third of the population of the study area.

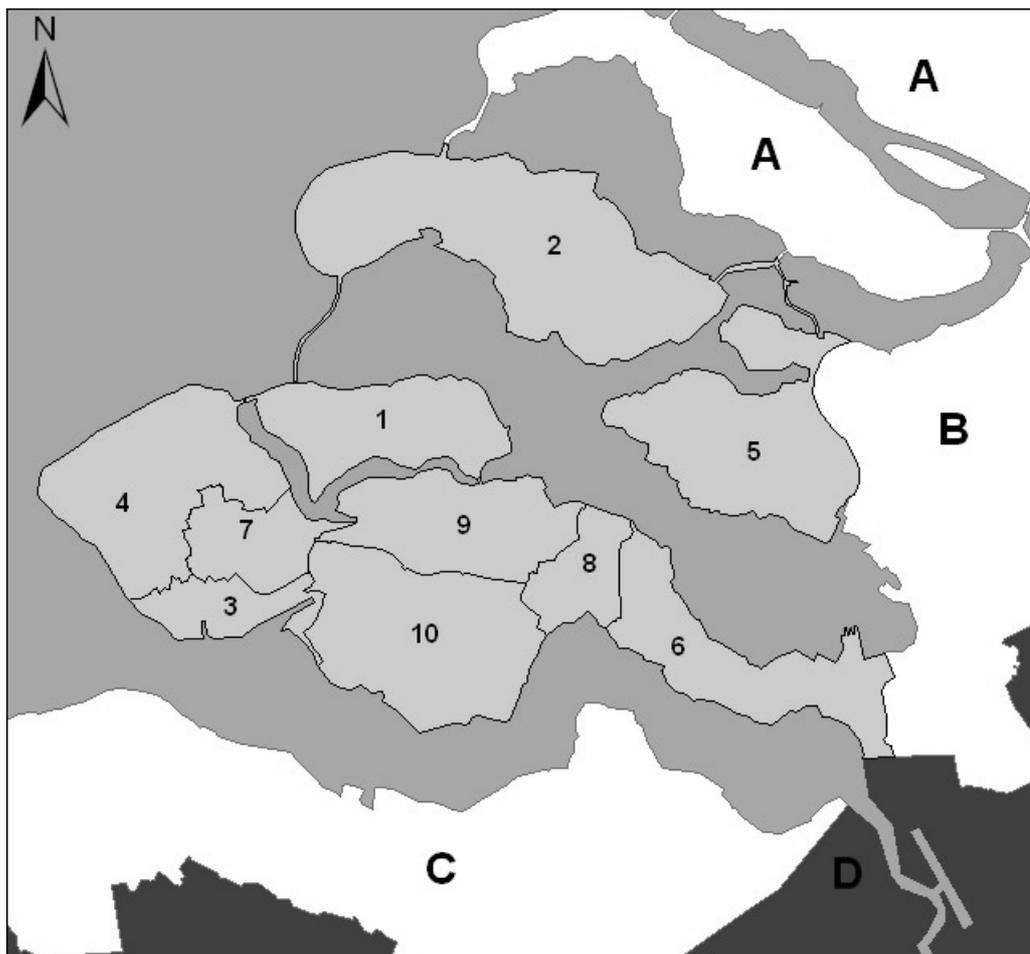


Figure 6.6 Map of the Zeeuwse Eilanden

<p>1 = Noord-Beveland; 2 = Schouwen-Duiveland; 3 = Vlissingen; 4 = Veere; 5 = Tholen; 6 = Reimerswaal; 7 = Middelburg; 8 = Kapelle; 9 = Goes; 10 = Borssele A = province of Zuid-Holland; B = province of Noord-Brabant; C = Zeeuws Vlaanderen region; D = Belgium.</p>
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Source: RURBAN project.

Geographical context

The study area Zeeuwse Eilanden belongs to the EU region Scheldemond and is the heart of the delta between the urban networks of the provinces of Zuid-Holland (Rotterdam) and Noord-Brabant (Breda and Roosendaal) in the Netherlands and Flanders (Antwerp and Brussels) in Belgium. Arable fields and water are the dominating views in the landscape. The region is a *salt*-water area, flat, below sea level and composed of 'empty' landscapes with peat and clay and dunes along the coast. The northwestern isle of Schouwen-Duiveland has the broadest beaches and behind the beaches a large forest and dune area. The southwestern isle of Walcheren combines the beaches and forest area with some historical cities.

The flood disaster in 1953 has been an important turning point to increase the accessibility of the area and to connect it with the rest of the Netherlands. The Deltaworks with its construction of banks over the Eastern Scheldt between the northern and southern peninsula and recently the Western Scheldt tunnel between the southern peninsula of Zeeland and Flanders have strongly improved the transport infrastructure. Nowadays the study area is connected through main roads with the province of Zuid-Holland, the province of Noord-Brabant and with Flanders. Middelburg and Vlissingen are located on the intersection of these roads and have a railway connection with Noord-Brabant and further away. Brussels airport in Belgium is not far away (50 km). Vlissingen/Terneuzen has a seaport for cargo transport, and is located between the world ports of Antwerp and Rotterdam.

Protected nature landscapes

The attention for nature developed recently by legislation and tourism. Most nature areas are wet areas. Veerse Meer, Western Scheldt and Kapelse Moer belong to the EU Bird and Habitat Directives (IUCN IV). The Eastern Scheldt basin and the surrounding dunes are a national nature park (IUCN IV). Walcheren and Zuid-Beveland (with flower and tree dikes) belong to the national landscape Zuidwest-Zeeland (IUCN V). For tourists predominantly the nature areas near the Eastern Scheldt, Veerse Meer and the dunes of Walcheren and Schouwen-Duiveland are important.

Agricultural production

Nearly four-fifths of the land is used by agriculture. The main cultivations are arable farming and horticulture (fruit). The number of farms decreased from 3,163 in 1990 to 2,595 in 2000 and 2,273 in 2003. While the number of farms decreased, agricultural land use hardly changed because of a scale enlargement of farms. Arable farmers had a strong position in the past and still have a strong say in the decision-making process. Many small farms have increased their income through tourist activities and the sale of (fruit) products. The local marketing of farm products and tourist services is still in its infancy.

Counterurbanisation and the housing market

The population growth was 6% between 1990 and 2000, which is a little lower than the national figure of 7%. For the region as a whole the population increase could be attributed both to a positive migration balance and to a lesser extent to a positive natural balance. Population growth was the highest in Goes and Schouwen-Duiveland, with households commuting to Rotterdam in the province of Zuid-holland, the province of Noord-Brabant, and the lowest in the cities Middelburg and Vlissingen.

Most of the newcomers settled in the new residence areas (VINEX locations). Some settled in a village by buying a farmhouse or a worker's house. Apart from the increase of permanent residents, there are also more temporary residents with second homes. These second homes are concentrated in the leisure resorts in Schouwen-Duiveland, Veere and Noord-Beveland, where they form more than a quarter of the total number of homes. Since it is not permitted to use second homes as a permanent home, the daily population may be quite different during the year. Compared to 1990 the total number of homes increased with 10% in 2000. The number of second homes increased more, 32%, but small in absolute terms.

There is not much pressure on the housing market. The median prices for first houses increased with 180% to 120,000 euro in 2000 (which is lower than in Oost-Zuid-Holland). To an increasing extent it has been acknowledged that the living conditions are important to increase the population and to enhance the local economy. The province tries to attract more permanent residents by public relation campaigns that focus on the good living conditions, while it tries to avoid building large leisure resorts with second homes.

Tourist amenities and the importance of gastronomy

The tourist amenities are concentrated in the beach areas. There are opportunities for many water sports, and tracks for cycling, horse riding and walking. The nature and landscape areas have been mentioned already. The air quality was used for sanatoriums on the coast of Walcheren. One of the most important theme parks for national and international visitors has become Neeltje Jans on the Eastern Scheldt basin, which includes the history of the Delta Works, and recreation and nature development. Most cultural services are small scaled. In total there are 37 museums and attractions. The cultural heritage in the hinterland is still developing to become experienced.

Although gastronomy and regional products are not the core of the tourist economy on the Zeeuwse Eilanden, their importance is increasing. The region is known for the mussel and the oyster culture. Quite new is crayfish from the Eastern Scheldt. Furthermore, some farmers produce wine, cider and innovate regional products. The region has some certified restaurants. More restaurants promote themselves with regional products. There is a yearly culinary festival in Middelburg. Further, tourist accommodations advertise culinary arrangements.

6.3.2 RGS

Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years

Changes in land use are small. There has been a remarkable improvement in infrastructure, consisting of water connections (bridges, tunnels), dams and

dikes. This has improved the accessibility of the islands. For example, a visit to the Zeeuwse Eilanden is now a day trip for Belgians and it is easier for inhabitants of Schouwen-Duiveland to commute to the metropolitan city of Rotterdam. Increases in the built-up area have been used for the reconstruction of second houses in resorts.

As the Zeeuwse Eilanden have a long tourist tradition, locals are used to foreigners. Second homeowners tend to have the Dutch or German nationality. Moreover, second homeowners contribute to the maintenance of daily basic services in rural areas such as supermarkets and health care. Too many second homes within villages are considered negatively, because of the absence of second homeowners and hence the emptiness of these houses in wintertime. Nowadays, regional policy makers try to restrict the extension of second homes within villages.

Agriculture consists mainly of arable farming production and fruit cultivation. Due to the extension of nature, the amount of agricultural land has slightly been decreased. There is some struggle about sweet and salt water, with farmers preferring sweet water whereas tourist stakeholders and nature stakeholders prefer salt water in several parts of the region to restrict eutrophication and to favour certain habitats. There is also some discussion about the groundwater level with farmers preferring lower water levels than the other actors.

RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy

An overview of the main RGS includes the following:

Demand of RGS	Supply of RGS
Rural cultural heritage	Country estates at Walcheren, farms, dikes
Landscape & nature	Nature areas, dunes, forests, agricultural wayside flora management
Land leisure	Cycling & hiking tracks, riding stables & golf courts
Water leisure	Diving and sailing in the Eastern Scheldt
Culture - beach area - in cities - in villages	Theme park Neeltje Jans, Miniatuur Walcheren Cities of Middelburg, Veere and Zierikzee Museums
Accommodation	Many campsites, few rural hotels
Gastronomy	Beach area and around Zierikzee
Regional products	Farm shops

Figure 6.7 RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden

Source: RURBAN project.

Public RGS with nature and some agricultural landscape management strengthen the value of landscape, while the development of tourist tracks, management of museums and preservation of country estates and scattered farmhouses facilitate the consumption of the landscape. Private RGS with cafés, restaurants, accommodations and farm shops support the consumer service. The financial contribution of the visitors of the old cities of Middelburg, Veere and Zierikzee and the theme parks to the landscape is more potential than real, because the supplied activities hardly show relations with the hinterland.

The number of farms with other economic activities is relatively high on the Zeeuwse Eilanden: 42% compared to the national average of 26% (Table 6.2). Product sale, landscape management, tourism and stabling are the main activities. The Zeeuwse Eilanden has a long tradition in tourism. The 5% share of tourism in total employment is above the national level of 3%. The share of farms with tourism, 12%, is far above the national average of 3%.

6.3.3 Institutional framework

Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS

Entrepreneurs inside the area have a positive perception of urban pressure, because they welcome economic development. The province and municipalities also seem to have a positive attitude towards urban development to attract more population. The group of actors who have a negative perception of urban pressure are newcomers. They try to stop urban development, as they prefer to maintain the existing status.

Both internal and external actors highly value the landscape, the lakes and the towns. The valuation for the preservation of the landscape behind the beach is increasing. RGS contribute to urban development, because it will attract more people to the region. RGS will blur the boundaries between the beach and the hinterland and will enhance the latter with an upgrading of activities. To an increasing extent the province tries to arrange investments in private RGS with the condition to invest in the landscape.

Role of the local government in land use and RGS

In interregional contacts, the province and the municipalities prefer to increase the number of houses, predominantly for permanent residents in the small cities. There are hardly conflicts about the rural-urban boundaries due to the absence of main cities. Rather, it should be noticed that there is a lack of common consciousness of how to enhance the hinterland.

(Inter)national policies have contributed to the development of public RGS by assigning protected nature areas (EU Bird and Habitat Directives) and by enhancing nature compensation. Supply of agricultural landscape

management and the transformation from agriculture into nature is strengthened by the agri-environmental measures of the second pillar of the CAP.

The policy towards private RGS is mainly a lenient one. There is not an openly communicated policy on enhancing the countryside through the contribution of private RGS. The province has made a list of private RGS that are allowed in the rural landscape. Often interested farmers consider the permitted size of those RGS activities too small. Further, the supply of private RGS such as farm tourism is often hampered by spatial and environmental policies that do not permit large-scale non-agricultural activities on farm. More recently the provincial policy intended to upgrade rural (tourist) accommodation in tandem with investments in landscape development.

6.3.4 Consumers

Consumers are predominantly from the surrounding provinces of Zuid-Holland and Noord-Brabant and from Belgium and Germany (Figure 6.8). The improvements in the Western Scheldt infrastructure are important for the increase in Belgian day-trippers. The consumer images that are most relevant for the RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden are the traditional and unique consumers. Within each type of RGS the consumers show some variation.

The trend is to visit the Zeeuwse Eilanden more often for just a couple of days. The small-scale activities and services in the hinterland contribute to this. Further, being in nature is considered a healthy activity. On the other hand, people have the need to do something different and to find a unique experience. A second trend is the increasing demand for information about rural cultural heritage and its history. Third, there is the demand for more various, active, expensive and adventurous recreation. Finally, there is the trend for personal care and indulging in beauty treatments and luxurious care.

The hinterland is a new natural dimension. People feel attracted to the variety of landscapes, its openness, the wind and the nature. The hinterland exudes an atmosphere of rest, peace and space and is free from mass tourism. Further, the economic dimension is important, because the hinterland offers less expensive RGS (first homes, farm campsites). This fits with the image of the area that describes its population as economical. The cultural dimensions consist of the cultural history in the cities and villages, the regional food products such as fish and fruit, the Delta water protection works and the history of the water flooding. However, those RGS are mainly located in the beach area.

RGS	Location of consumers	Motivation	Location of producers
New houses Old houses	External Internal & external	Mixture	External Internal
Landscape & nature	External (Dutch & German tourists)	Traditional, calculating	Internal (farmers) & external (nature organisations)
Land leisure	Internal & external (Dutch tourists)	Traditional, responsible	Internal
Water leisure	Internal & external	Unique	Internal
Culture	External	Traditional, calculating	Internal & external
Accommodation	External	Traditional, calculating	Internal
Gastronomy	External (Belgian & Dutch tourists)	Unique	Internal & external
Regional products	Internal & external	Traditional, unique	Internal (farmers)

Figure 6.8 Consumers and producers of RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden
Source: RURBAN project.

Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS

Due to the lack of a strong regional policy to promote the countryside, most of the consumers become aware of the hinterland when they are already in the area. There is not much promotion and branding of the hinterland outside the Zeeuwse Eilanden. The opportunities to experience the hinterland could increase with more tourist tracks in tandem with a visitor centre focusing on the cultural history behind the land reclamation in the last five centuries. Further, by permitting more multiple use of recreation, the opportunities for experiencing agriculture and the rural cultural heritage could be increased. The supply is quite small-scaled and not always distinguishing, efficient and meaningful enough for beach visitors. This holds in particular for consumers interested in unique experiences, who are willing to pay more for attempting RGS.

6.3.5 Producers

Most of the RGS producers in the hinterland are locals, predominantly farmers (agri-tourism, farm sale and agricultural landscape management). More than two-thirds of the farmers near the coastal zone (Walcheren and Schouwen) supply RGS, while this share is less than one third of the farmers further away (Noord and Zuid-Beveland, Duiveland). Predominantly the new members of

the family start RGS activities, which are a diversification of the current production. There are some farmers who have built up a quite varied supply of RGS. The developments in RGS combinations seem to be based on agricultural production and agri-tourism. There are some entrepreneurs who have transformed their farm completely with a new activity as their main profession. There are a few newcomers who came to the Zeeuwse Eilanden to start a new business, often gastronomy. Other external RGS producers are nature organisations that act on a national scale.

The main trends among farmers are the choice to focus on scale enlargement in agriculture or on other RGS activities. The economic prospects of RGS are expected to increase for private RGS due to the fact that tourists visit the hinterland more often and spend more money and time there.

Bottlenecks for producers of RGS

The strong position of agriculture as the main land user is threatened by the 2003 reform of the first pillar of the CAP. Many farmers try to diversify with tourism, but the innovation capacity in these RGS is low. Despite some individual good examples many producers hardly take risks, unless they get a subsidy for the investment, and consider the tourist stream as evident. Farm tourist entrepreneurs claim for more legal places during high season, but hardly have plans to upgrade the farm campsites to landscape campsites and to attract more people outside the peak holidays. The number of luxury services and attractions in the hinterland could increase, such as overnight and meeting accommodations within a rural ambiance and rural guides. The supply of regional products is small and predominantly seasonal. The marketing of the regional products could concentrate on the urban demand locations. This implies more focus on the visitors' centres and on the cities in the area as locations for product sale.

An important obstacle is the lack of trust among producers to consider cooperation as an incentive for a common benefit. Often a negative individualism - each one for himself - is also a main obstacles for local cooperation. Recently, with the help of the municipality Borsele, a more intensive local network around a cycle track has been developed in Zuid-Beveland. In this network, the 'farmers landscape route' (Boerenlandroute), 25 RGS producers along the cycle track have opened their doors to visitors (campsites, tearooms, farm shops, gardens, social care, museums and handicrafts). Further, the province and the rural municipality often hamper the extension of non-agricultural activities on farms.

6.3.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

Important actors are the municipalities and the province, which provide subsidies for development of tourist tracks and may hamper developments by applying spatial policy. The water board arranges the quality of the ground water and the beach infrastructure. By doing so, they have to take account of the diverging interests of farmers, nature organisations and citizens. The Tourist organisation VVV cares for the marketing of RGS, but focuses mainly on the beach areas. It tries to enhance the marketing of the region with cultural festivals ('After summer in Zeeland') and culinary festivals ('A Taste of Zeeland'). Important stakeholders are the farmers' union ZLTO, the organisation of tourist providers (RECRON, VEKABO) and nature organisations (Zeeuws Landschap, Natuurmonumenten and Landschapsbeheer).

Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders

Strong points are the increase in actors with a willingness to preserve the landscape and its law-abiding mentality towards the government and its policies. Weak points are the internal cooperation (mostly sectoral) and external oriented structure (marketing). Agriculture is defending its production interests. Most of the public promotions about the hinterland are quite small-scaled and do not go beyond the study area. The promotion of the hinterland outside has been done mainly for housing, but less for tourism, gastronomy and regional food marketing.

6.3.7 Recommendations for improvements

EU policies to strengthen RGS

The second-pillar policies strengthen the management of the agricultural landscape, but are not yet a sustainable improvement. Hampering factors for the uptake of these policies are the moderate compensation for the agricultural landscape management. Further, the lower prices for arable products caused by the 2003 reform of the first pillar of the CAP may decrease the number of farms. Important for the development of the public RGS are the EU Bird and Habitat Directives that enhanced the protection of nature areas. There are several LEADER Local Action Groups. Many projects have been co-financed with the LEADER budgets. With the financial support of INTERREG for the Scheldemond cooperation, the recreational infrastructure has been improved.

Strengthening RGS

The main points in the supply of RGS are the development of more private RGS that meet the consumer services and the demand for more unique

services, while the supply of RGS could be better organised and communicated. This could be more focused on rural culture with its history small-scaled luxury sleeping and meeting accommodation, more wellness. The supply of private RGS supply may be enhanced more by newcomers. Within the public RGS, predominantly the promotion of the hinterland and its RGS could be improved. The opportunities for public RGS through nature compensation could be explored further with more integration of payments for private RGS outside the region. Figure 6.9 summarises the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to be taken into account when strengthening the supply of and demand for RGS

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High valued quality of the living and the recreation environment - A tourist tradition and interesting rural water culture - Good transport and infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of innovation spirit; economic and law-abiding mentality, narrow arsenal of development agencies - Building restrictions - Lack of territorial cooperation - Promotion of the hinterland region
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location between urban regions - Development of culture - More commuters and second homes - Nature compensation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing discussion about the future of industries versus a service economy - Decreasing support of the first pillar CAP

Figure 6.9 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden

Source: RURBAN project.

In the past the economic perspective of RGS development was never an important policy on the Zeeuwse Eilanden. This holds both for the demand, supply and the payment of private RGS and the supply of public RGS. Tourism at the beach area was evident. There has become more interest for public RGS in the hinterland, in particular nature and landscape management through nature compensation and the development of some recreation infrastructure.

Concerning private RGS the province will take more initiatives to upgrade RGS activities and will pay more attention to the residential economy. Municipalities have to develop a policy perspective for a sustainable countryside focusing on public issues (nature, water areas, landscape development) and private RGS. The last years more private RGS producers have tried to innovate and to diversify the supply and to cooperate with others. Important private producers often come from outside the region. Agriculture

has a double position with on the one hand farmers who want to enlarge the agricultural production and on the other hand farmers who want to diversify their enterprise with more RGS.

Improvements of rural-urban relationships

From the SWOT analysis it can be concluded that rural and urban relationships have to include both rural and tourist actors. To an increasing extent the public RGS require budget from private RGS such as homes and businesses. Rural areas have more public RGS and need the profits of private RGS to finance the former, while the opposite holds for the tourist areas. Therefore, an important requirement is to find a regional strategy with rural, tourist and urban actors connecting private and public RGS developments. With the withdrawing government a more comprehensive vision of the countryside needs to focus more on the residential environment with possibilities for recreation, agriculture, nature, economic and building developments. Therefore the following recommendations are basic:

1. More activities in the hinterland to attract tourists

Plans to develop a hinterland visitors' centre are in its infancy (Zuid-Beveland). However, building the image of the hinterland should be encouraged and opportunities should be created for visitors to experience the area and to learn about the process of reclaiming land that is visible in the landscape. Further, more shops of regional products should be located near the urban demand (visitors' centre and cities). Tourist tracks could be more thematised and promoted outside the region.

2. More activities to attract newcomers

(Agricultural) industries are becoming less important, while the valuation of public RGS as an important asset is increasing. The residential environment is becoming more important for services employment. Therefore regional policy makers intend to pay more attention to the residential factors. To enhance the contribution of newcomers to the RGS economy, it could be important to scatter the new buildings in order to integrate the newcomers more with the local population. Try to mix different categories as well as possible, within the frame of an adequate zoning and territorial land use policy.

3. More regional co-operation

More attention for regional co-operation among different producers is relevant. Until now this has not been done intensively. However, since the hinterland has many small and seasonal producers, the urgency to co-operate will increase to realise a substantial scale of RGS and may be stimulated with more thematic RGS networks and tracks.

4. *Compensation of nature and landscape with private RGS*

On the Zeeuwse Eilanden the urban actors are less present. National legislation has been more important to enhance public RGS by nature compensation to develop nature areas with a strategic value. Important policies are the EU Bird and Habitat Directives, the Ecological Main Structure and the regional policy that requires individual private RGS producers to upgrade the landscape if they develop business sites. Possibly urban regions, which are not able to fulfil their compensation duties of nature areas in their own region, can find locations to realise the compensations on the Zeeuwse Eilanden. At an individual level, the province supports expansion of the existing recreation surface in the hinterland if contributing to expansion of employment, improving the quality of the accommodation and enhancing the character of the landscape. The development of extensive landscape campgrounds aims to offer more income for the farmer, more nature for public use and more facilities for tourists in the hinterland (Provincie Zeeland, 2004).

The Zeeuwse Eilanden could explore the benefits of being a rural region with many public RGS compared to the surrounding urban regions. Therefore more attention to the opportunities of the Zeeuwse Eilanden for nature compensation and the marketing of the hinterland to the urban regions will be important. Apart from this interregional perspective, the Zeeuwse Eilanden should focus on the intra-regional perspective, in particular the relationship between the beach area with many urban visitors and the rural hinterland. The province and the municipalities already enhance the public RGS and the investments of private RGS to support public RGS. To strengthen the rural-urban relationship it will be important to facilitate the private RGS in the hinterland that are able to invest in public RGS and to attract more unique consumers instead of calculating consumers. The idea is that external actors may 'invest' more in the region through a second home.

6.4 Comparative analysis of the key questions

If we compare the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden we can state the following:

1. In the M area the population increase is similar to the national average and occurred mainly near the towns in the region. In the T area the population increase is lower than the national average. In both areas, agriculture is the main land user, with dairy farming and intensive horticulture in the M area and arable farming and fruit cultivations in the T area. The transformation of agricultural land into built-up areas is still

modest in both areas. In the T area there is also transformation of agricultural land into nature.

2. In the M area the main RGS that enhance the landscape are public RGS and concern the peat meadows and tourist tracks, while private RGS with a contribution to the landscape have been less developed. In the T area both public RGS (nature) and private RGS (tourism) are more widely supplied than in the M area.
3. Since most of the private RGS are rather small, their contribution to the regional economy is modest. The contribution to the regional economy is higher in the T area than in the M area.
4. In the M area, there is more concern about urban pressure than in the T area, where it has been considered an incentive for economic development. In the T area the loss of valued public RGS is less evident.
5. In particular, national policies have enhanced public RGS. In the T area, the province has contributed to private RGS that enhance the landscape at an individual level. In the M area, there has been more support for local co-operation to enhance private RGS. However, in both areas the local policy is lacking a vision about the future of their non-built countryside.
6. Consumers visiting the area are quite new for the M area, but more common for the hinterland of the T area. Consumers are searching for more nature and culture. In the M area, they are more often from the region, while in the T area they are mostly coming from outside. In both areas, traditional and calculating motivations are most important. In the M area there are also responsible motivations, while in the T area more unique experiences are asked.
7. The bottlenecks for consumers to visit both the M and T area are the unfamiliarity of the RGS outside the area.
8. Producers are mainly locals. In the M area they co-operate more than in the T area. In the T area there are more individual innovative actors.
9. The most important bottlenecks for the supply of RGS are the moderate payments for public RGS and the moderate capacity to renew private RGS.
10. The most important intermediate actors and stakeholders are the traditional ones (governments and sector groups). The province and the municipalities are important to facilitate RGS. Many stakeholders try to integrate their sector interests into a territorial co-operation.
11. In the M area the internal co-operation among several actors from the region is more developed than in the T area. The external co-operation with actors from outside is weak in both areas and implies a weakness in the marketing to the external consumers.

12. The EU-policies to strengthen the RGS are mainly the agri-environmental schemes of the second pillar of the CAP in both areas and the EU Bird and Habitat Directives, and LEADER-funding in the T area.
13. In the past, RGS development was not an important policy in both study areas. This holds both for the demand, provision and the payment of RGS. Municipalities have to develop a policy perspective for a sustainable countryside focussing on public RGS (nature, water areas, landscape development) and guidelines for private RGS. Producers who will start with private RGS may choose more innovative examples to enhance the rural landscape and to diversify the RGS, in particular in the T area. In the M area more attention is necessary to balance the zoning profits with the help of a financial instrument (ground bank, landscape fund).
14. In the M area more attention could be given to an interregional policy based on an urban demand to enhance the landscape in tandem with a ground bank to finance public RGS. Further, more contacts could be made with urban stakeholders, both inside and outside the region. In the T area the interregional policy may focus more on the role of nature compensation that the surrounding urban regions have to do. More contacts could be made with urban stakeholders in the beach area. They may also help to renew the rural identity.

6.5 Evaluation

In the Netherlands there are many rural areas under pressure from metropolitan cities, while there are few rural areas under tourist pressure. Concerning the results, it has been quite innovative to discuss the rural and urban issues within a common regional/territorial perspective. This may enhance the territorial development perspectives and the responsibility for a rural-urban partnership. In the past, rural and urban issues were mainly treated as separated within a national perspective without having any shared responsibility. Also, the restrictive building policy without much enhancement of the countryside did not contribute to reinforce rural-urban relationships within a territorial perspective.

From the experiences in the other countries we learned about the agricultural protection zoning policy in the countryside, the lack of a tourist tradition, but also the well-organised governmental institutions and the upcoming territorial co-operation among different stakeholders, both public and private. We have seen that the building pressure in the Dutch study areas has been quite regulated. Further we perceive an increasing number of rural

actors who are organising themselves to receive the citizens instead of considering them as enemies.

From the perspective of the methodology, it would be interesting to go a step further and to weight and to compare the contributing factors more from a national perspective (bench-marking). The judgement of the factors we have found is a main issue in such a benchmarking approach that could also help to analyse best practises.

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This chapter was based on the national reports of the case study regions in the Netherlands. See the overview of RURBAN reports in Appendix 1.

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