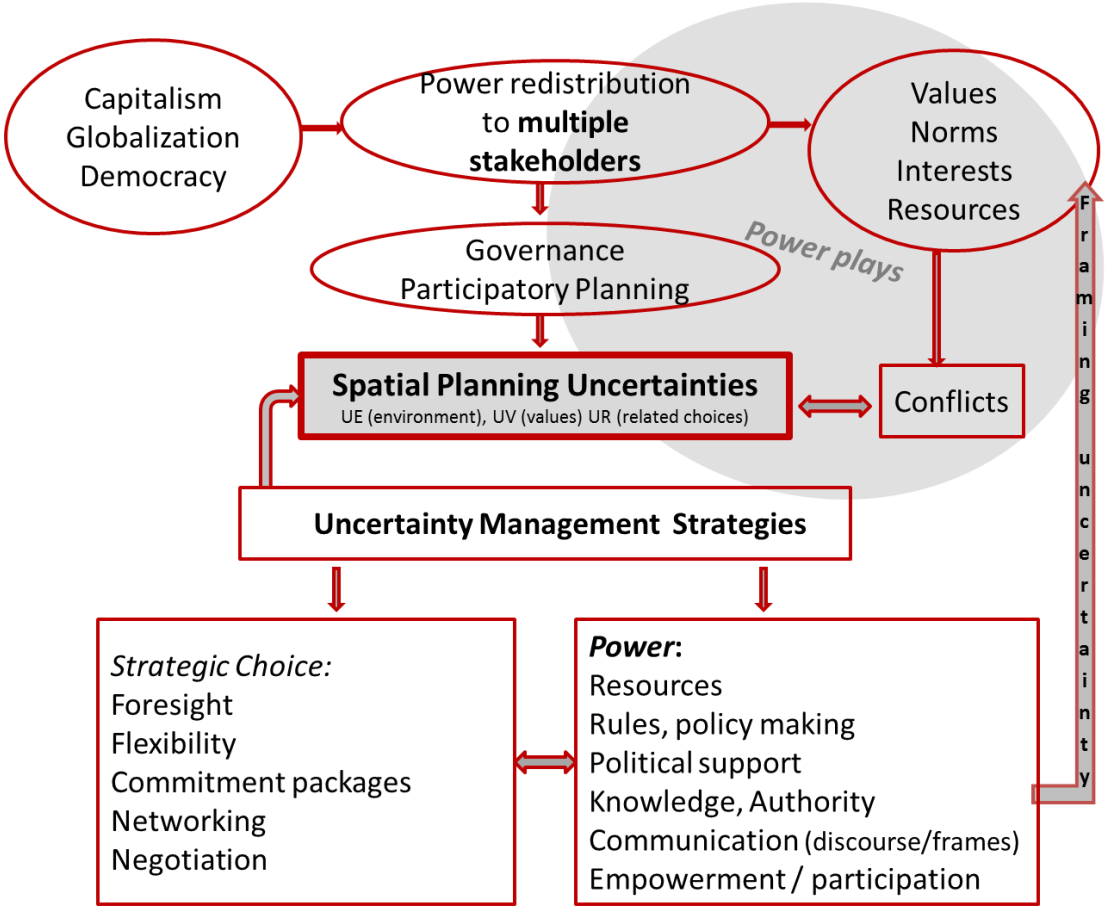
The role of Power in (creating and managing) Spatial Planning Uncertainties

A study of uncertainties and power relations in the Flevoland Province, the Netherlands



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WAGENINGEN UR
For quality of life

The role of Power in (creating and managing) Spatial Planning Uncertainties: A study of uncertainties and power relations in the Flevoland Province, the Netherlands

This thesis is written as a final assignment for the Master Degree in Landscape Architecture and Planning, Specialization Spatial Planning, at Wageningen University.

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Abstract

The context of Spatial Planning in democratic societies has changed as a result of globalization, governance and participatory planning. This resulted in more risk for the involved stakeholders and *uncertainty* about the possibilities of reaching their goals and successful implementing their plans. Three types of uncertainty are treated: uncertainty about the environment, due to incomplete knowledge, uncertainty about the values of the involved stakeholders and uncertainty about the interrelated fields of choice, or the consequences of specific actions. Management strategies for these uncertainties are found in the form of strategic planning, more specifically the strategic choice approach.

On a second trail, the role of power in Spatial Planning is investigated, in its different forms (material, political, professional or social) and manifestation (financial resources, policy making, authority, status, use of knowledge, discourse, communication, negotiation, empowerment), in order to find out whether power plays a role in creating uncertainties in spatial planning, or whether the exercise of power could be used in managing uncertainties.

Key words: spatial planning, uncertainty, strategic choice, power

Preface and acknowledgements

As a child I often experimented the feeling that if I had some magic powers I could make all my dreams come true, and solve all my problems and those of others. Growing up I noticed how some people were more powerful that others, and how they could make things happen. Their powers were not exactly magical – some had social or political status (being the mayor's son or the school principal's daughter), others had money and could buy whatever they wanted, and others yet could make their way simply by being scary and threatening. Later I could observe how these types of power were exerted by different individuals or institutions to influence the fulfilment of their wishes also in the field of spatial planning – creating a nice green area in a rich neighbourhood, for example, while placing wastewater cleaning facilities or a prison in a less favoured area, where the protests of the locals were not powerful enough.

Growing up in (post) communist Romania, I often saw public spatial planning as the responsibility of the State, which had autonomous power and capital to build pretty much anything anywhere – there was no question of uncertainty – not for the planners. In my years of studying Spatial Planning in Wageningen, I often heard of governance - restructuring of power relations through Participatory Planning – more power to the people. While this seems to be the democratic way of giving everyone a chance to be heard and get involved in spatial social developments, I often wonder what this means for the planner – more help or more trouble in the planning process. The extra information supplied by the growing number of participants can be helpful to planners, but the different sets of values and interests, as well as the personal resources of participants can also create more uncertainty for a successful planning process and implementation of plans. Where does their loyalty lie, who can be trusted and how can the plans best serve the common good? Does Participatory Planning really solve the problems of the less powerful citizens? Who holds and exercises power in Spatial Planning? And what is power anyway? Are those in power more certain of getting their way? Can their *magical powers* actually reduce uncertainties in Spatial Planning?

All these questions led me to study this topic in my Master Thesis, and try to see what the connections are between *power* and *uncertainty* in Spatial Planning Practice. This was however not an easy task, since it seems to be a less approached topic: most scientific literature focuses on the power - knowledge relations, but not much is available on power – certainty relations. However, after much toil and with help from my supervisor, my family and friends I managed to get a more clear idea on these notions, which I hope to present clearly in this thesis.

I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. Arnold van der Valk for helping me stay focused and not get lost in details, by providing me with constructive feedback and useful insights. I am also thankful to all the people willing to respond to the interviews and open discussions for the case studies. I also want to thank my loving husband for all the care and support during this thesis and during the entire study. Last, but not least, I want to thank my family and friends for being there for me, and encouraging me throughout my hard, and sometimes overwhelming work, as well as for their feedback on my work.

Summary

In participatory planning, the increased number of stakeholders with differences in interests, skills, experience and resources often leads to uncertainty for all parties involved, making the decision-making process more complex. These uncertainties can be about the *environment* in which the decisions are to be made, or about the planning *process* itself. The management strategies for planning environmental uncertainties include: carrying out *extra research, risk analysis, foresight, flexibility* in decisions made and *commitment packages* – or good timing for action. Strategies proposed for managing planning process uncertainties are: *participatory planning*, improved *communication* with stakeholders in order to better *understand* their values and goals, and build *trust* relations, shaping problems, making *objectives clearer*, setting *priorities*, *negotiation, collaboration, coordination of projects* in order to save costs*, compromising, networking* and using a *broader planning agenda*.

Power in Spatial Planning is classified here according to its means (or components) and its ways of manifestation. The means of power include two types: p*olitical and material* - such as financial resources, police force, policies and authority; and p*rofessional (or institutional), social and personal means*: such as knowledge, expertise and the use of information. The second type of power means was further classified by the possible manifestation of power in two categories: *power manifested by planners* (and the institutions they represent) – such as technical expertise, professional authority, the strategic use of knowledge, and communication in multiple forms; and *power manifested by citizens* – such as empowerment, networking and collective action, organized local resistance groups, lobbying, media stunts or civil disobedience.

The concepts of uncertainty and power were studied in the context of two different practical cases in the Flevoland Province, the Netherlands: the ecological corridor OostvaardersWold and the organic-planning agro city Almere Oosterwold project. OostvaardersWold, a project designed as the solution to the problem of big grazer's overpopulation in Oostvaardersplassen nature area, involved many stakeholders (many of which governmental bodies, being thus politically sensitive), and with them many uncertainties. Almere Oosterwold is part of the vision for Almere's growth - it is a pilot project in which inhabitants are building their own homes and communities, without much interference from the government. They are, however, also responsible for the infrastructure necessary, facilities and city agriculture. The novelty of this type of project brings with it much excitement, but also much uncertainty.

Based on the analysis of *power* and (*un)certainty* relations resulting from the theories studied and the practical examples in Flevoland, it could be concluded that *power* (in its different forms and manifestations) plays an important role in Spatial Planning uncertainties in two ways: the exercise of power can *induce, or create uncertainty* in multi-stakeholder planning processes, and it can also help manage uncertainties. The exercise or manifestation of power can induce uncertainty in planning through political changes, instrumental use of expert *knowledge* or of *authority* in negotiations processes. Some of power's features could also function as uncertainty management strategies: the use of *financial resources* to help advance the planned projects, gain political support for the project, or sharing specific pieces of *knowledge* with participants, which will help them better understand the problems causing the uncertainties. The exercise of power could also help manage uncertainties by influencing the way people give meaning to problems and *frame* uncertainty, through strategic use of language and discourses.

List of Figures and Tables

Abbreviations and translated Dutch terms

ELI	Ministry of Economy, Agriculture and Innovation (previous LNV)
Gedeputeerde staten	Council executive body
IenM	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment
OBA	OostvaardersWold blijft agrarisch – OostvaardersWold remains agricultural
OW	OostvaardersWold
Province	the Flevoland Province authorities
Provinciale staten	Provincial Council
Raad van State	Council of State of the Netherlands
SBB	State Forest Service
State	Ducth National Government
V&W	Ministry of Transport and Water
VROM	Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment

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Introduction

1. Problem description

Throughout history, the powerful seem to hold the keys to happiness, to be the ones deciding what were the acceptable norms and values, the human rights and even the value of other people's lives. Besides the use of the army force, power was acquired and secured by use of science, religion and politics (including playing the masses against each-other to win their support). And when the less powerful dared to rebel against unfair life conditions, they often were the ones losing. Or as Arnstein (1969) and the Political Economics Harvard Professor Dani Rodrik (2012) capture a world-wide idea: the powerful always get what they want. "Financial regulation is driven by the interests of banks, health policy by the interests of insurance companies, and tax policy by the interests of the rich. Those who can influence government the most – through their control of resources, information access, or threats– eventually get their way" (Rodrik, 2012).

Centralized, technocratic public domain Spatial Planning in communist countries was usually the initiative of the State, who took decisions based on the existing power hierarchy (Hirt, 2005). For the building of the immense *People's Palace* in in the historic center of Bucharest, Romania, eight square kilometers of the city were wiped down, erasing thus many monuments (3 monasteries, 20 churches, 3 synagogues, 3 hospitals, 2 theaters) and evicting (and relocating) about 40,000 people, with only one day notice (Anania et al., 1995). If the communist regime allowed for that to happen, in nowadays society, democracy, globalization, capitalism, free market, access to information and technology, and more open social and political systems give people from different backgrounds, wealth, education or social status, the chance to fight for personal or social causes, to make their voice heard and to make a difference in society.

Along with the economic, political and social changes in society, the *context of spatial planning* has changed as well (Healey et al.1997, Dabinett and Richardson, 1999). Globalization causes changes in the institutional structure, processes, influence, and scope of planning (Friedmann, 2005). Economic restructuring of urban regions towards more production and services exercises more pressure on urban spaces. The fiscal stress and neo-liberal political philosophy resulted in new public-private relationships in the development sector; the growing political influence of environmental and other lobby groups put also pressure on planners and planning processes (Healey et al.1999).

In contrast with the modern period, when the state had a more central role in the urban and rural spatial development, nowadays the planning system has been more decentralized, giving regions and municipalities more leeway to act how they find best for their community (Hajer and Zonneveld, 2000). This transition from a top-down, government-led planning to a more bottom up, participatory planning, allows more actors – with sometimes conflicting goals - to get involved in planning processes, and renders the planning process more uncertain for the planners and other participants (Forester, 1989; Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994; De Roo, 1999; Zonneveld, 2005).

This also means that planners have to compete for bringing their ideas on the public agenda, and are faced with many uncertainties regarding the success of their plans. Effectiveness, functionality and legitimacy are no longer enough to ensure the implementation of a plan: now there are more factors influencing the outcome of plans, such as the political influences, discourses, power sources and its exercise, and many others. And with the increase of globalization (Friedmann, 2005), more national and international pressure for high performance presents challenging uncertainties for the actors involved in specific planning projects, regarding the interests and allegiances of the other actors (Davis and Duren, 2011).

In Spatial Planning in a democratic, post-modernist society, making decisions in uncertain and unstable situations is largely dependent on social, political and economic changing contexts, and on the interests, perceptions and commitments of others participants in those planning processes (Forester, 1989). This can make the problem-solving process quite challenging, especially considering the continuously changing perceptions of problems and attitudes towards planning issues (Hillier, 2008).

Planning in an uncertain world with limited time and excessive, inadequate information, political systems driven by capitalism, where the public-good clashes with personal profit, interests and demands, how can a planner perform his job impartially, and satisfy his customers? Here a difference can be made between *public-sector planners*, whose responsibility is to fulfill the needs of the general public, while having to cooperate with a multitude of interested actors , and the private-sector planners, whose list of collaborates is usually shorter and whose loyalties lie clearly with the contractor (Forester, 1989). In this thesis the focus will be on the first type of planners – namely those working for the governmental bodies at national, provincial and local levels, involved in public-sector projects, for improving the overall quality of life.

2. Problem statement

Democracy, capitalism, globalization, free market, information access, technology innovation, governance and participatory planning – all are, one way or another, influencing Spatial Planning, rendering the dynamics of planning processes complex and uncertain (Abbott, 2005; Friedmann, 2005).

In communist Romania, where public domain Spatial Planning, supposed to care for the *common good*, was guided by the *autonomous power* of the government, planning as profession was not faced with too many uncertainties – it was clear who was in *control*. Having and exercising power conferred certainty. At the same time, uncertainty was placed on the rest of the population, and mostly those directly affected by such top-down decisions (Hirt, 2005)

In nowadays democratic, participatory planning, however, power is distributed over multiple stakeholders, and is exercised in more subtle ways, ranging from (deliberate) *miscommunication, use of political, social or institutional authority, control, status, instrumental use of knowledge, social networks, movements and protests,* to *manipulation, threats and even power abuse* (Graham, 1989; Reuter, 1989; Forester, 1989; Flyvbjerg, 1998; Hillier, 2002; Rodrik, 2012). The multitude of actors involved in participatory planning

processes, and their differences in values, interests, resources and goals, render the planning processes more uncertain (Forester, 1989; De Roo, 1999; Friend and Hickling, 2005; Zonneveld, 2005) for the planners and for the other stakeholders, who do not have *control* over circumstances or those creating them (Bordia et al., 2004).

The *problem* to be treated in this research thesis is the *reconstruction of the concept of uncertainty* in contemporary spatial planning, based on the current planning theories, in order to allow for a re-evaluation of classical methods of uncertainty management, and possibilities for updating these strategies. Further, the role played by the manifestation of power (by different actors) is considered in both creating and managing spatial planning uncertainties. For this purpose, an in-depth study of two cases in the Province of Flevoland, the Netherlands, was realized: the OostvaardersWold ecological corridor and Almere Oosterwold agro city. Details about the case studies will follow in a later chapter.

3. Research Objective

The ***aim*** of this paper is to investigate the concept of *uncertainty* in spatial planning, and the current practices for its management, as well as seeking opportunities for improving these strategies, by considering the role of *power* (in different forms and manifestations) in uncertainty management.

Here ***power*** refers to different ways in which actors can exert *influence* in order to guide the outcome of projects in a desired direction. This can be material, political, professional or social means of power.

4. Research questions and sub-questions

1. What does the concept of *uncertainty* mean for today's planners?
   - What types of uncertainty are planners faced with nowadays?
   - What are the sources of uncertainty in spatial planning?
   - Which strategies are currently used for *managing uncertainty* in spatial planning?

2. What role does *power* play in Spatial Planning?
   - What is power (how is it expressed) in Spatial Planning?
   - What role does *power* play in spatial planning uncertainties?

3. How can *power* be used as a strategic tool for the management of spatial planning uncertainties?

5. Outline

This research thesis is structured as follows: the first chapter contains the problem description and statement in the current Spatial Planning context, and the research questions which form the frame of this thesis. In the second chapter, the research design is shown, including the philosophical worldview, the selected strategy inquiry and the research methods used for the research. The third chapter presents the theoretical framework, including theories on current planning practices, uncertainty management strategies used in planning and the role of power in Spatial Planning. The following chapter describes the practical planning examples chosen to study for this research, and investigates the uncertainty management and power plays present in the cases. Afterwards, a discussions chapter will present the relevant dynamics of the planning process in the two cases through the filter of the theoretical framework. The thesis ends with conclusions, recommendations for the parties involved in the two cases studied, recommendations for planners in future planning processes and ideas for future research.

Research Design

1. Selected strategy of inquiry

For this master thesis I chose to conduct a qualitative research, in the form of an in-depth case study, to allow for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals involved in the planning processes of the OostvaardersWold ecological corridor and the Almere Oosterwold agro-city case in Flevoland, and to capture the complexity of these situations. This allowed for interpretation in the context of scientific literature, and helped draw useful lessons for the improvement of uncertainty management strategies in planning practices.

Due to the complexity of both concepts of *power* and *uncertainty*, as well as to the lack of scientific literature connecting the two concepts in the context of Spatial Planning, this research is merely explorative, and does not cover all the angles and possible connections between power and uncertainty. Furthermore, the idea for studying such a relation between power and (un)certainty came from communist examples (and experiences) of planning practices, but is now studied in a regional, democratic setting. This research is thus not an attempt to make a general statement fit to different planning cultures.

Even though in participatory planning processes uncertainties and power relations are created and experienced differently by the involved actors, this research is written from the perspective of a planner: it focuses more on the uncertainties a planner has to deal with and the power means available for dealing with this. These uncertainties are, however, partly dependent on the uncertainties of the other stakeholders, which are thus also taken into account.

2. Philosophical worldview

The philosophical worldview shaping this research is the *social constructivist view,* the goal of which is to try to understand the complexity of a case by investigating the views and meanings of the actors involved, based on their experiences (Creswell, 2009). I believe this is the right approach for this study, considering the rich variety of actors involved in the cases chosen to study, and the broad array of challenging (social, political and economic) circumstances occurring during the planning processes.

Participants in a specific project understand the issues surrounding a new proposed development and create meaning through interaction with others (Creswell, 2009). By paying particular attention to the way people experience and talk about the planning process, this research is meant to uncover the underlying relations leading to particular interpretations of the concepts pertaining to the case. This was possible to realize by carrying out open interviews with multiple participants in the case studies. Details on the research methods used are presented in the next chapter.

3. Research methods

In order to find the best answers to the research questions, to allow for feasible, sound application in planning practices, data was gathered by using the *triangulation method*: scientific literature study, documents and media consultation, and interviews with actors involved in the study cases.

In the *first phase* of the research, the theoretical basis was laid with the help of a broad array of literature, by analysing the concepts of *risk and uncertainty*, and their occurrence, meaning and management in spatial planning over the years, as well as the role of *power* in spatial planning.

At the same time, data from different sources were collected and analysed: government and media documents were consulted, in order to obtain information on the context of the planning projects to study, and the current physical, social and political developments pertaining to the cases.

For a more in-depth study of the dynamics of the cases, interviews were carried out with different actors involved in the cases, such as governmental bodies, scientists and lay people. The interview questions were open-ended, to allow the participants to freely express their meanings and feelings about the projects. The first few interviews were held with the help of a list of questions (See Appendix 2), to which the interviewees could freely answer (orally or in writing). After two such interviews, however, it seemed that the discussion was rather bound to the questions, and as soon as they felt the question was answered, the participants were less inclined to discuss more about it. This way their personal impressions were more difficult to read. For the remaining eight interviews, a new approach was taken: the interviewee was asked to *tell the story from their own perspective and experiences*. During their narrative, a few key words were used to guide the conversation, and more questions were asked, in order to obtain better insight into the way participants experienced the planning process. This approach allowed the interviewees to talk more about what they though was most important in the process, and what affected them the most. This helped thus also the researcher understand the interactions between the involved parties from different perspectives. In the results chapter of this research, the case studies are also presented this way – from the perspective of the interviewees, so that the complexity of the case can be better captured.

The data obtained this way was validated by sending the participants transcripts of the interviews, and integrating the received feedback in the results.

Afterwards, a connection between the two concepts of *uncertainty* and *power* is attempted, based on the literature studied and interpretation of data obtained in the empirical part of the research.

The figure below represents the frame on which this research is built.

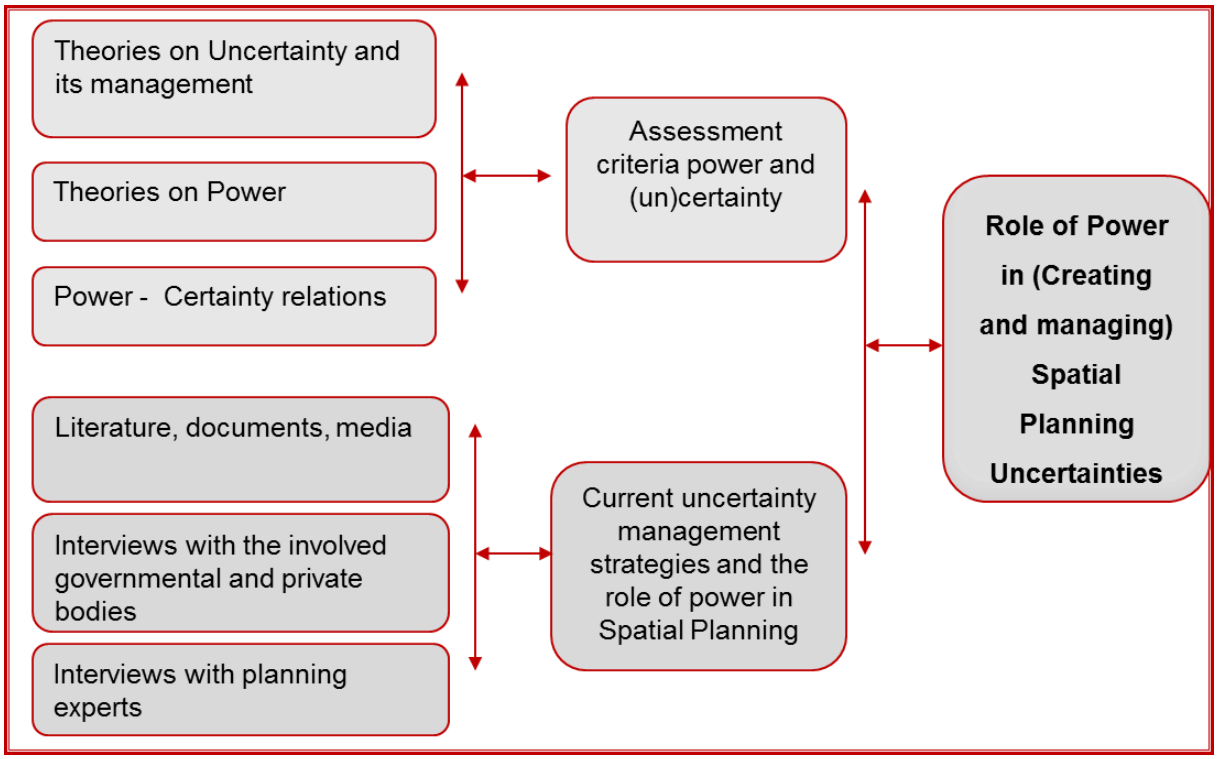


Figure 1. Research framework

The research objective is to analyse the possible role played by power in the management of Spatial Planning uncertainties. This was done with the help of the research object, and the research perspective.

The research object - gaining insight into the current uncertainty management strategies, was realized with the help of literature study, documents and media consultancy, as well as with interviews held with the actors involved in the case studies - the OostvaardersWold project and the Almere Oosterwold case.

The research perspective is the theoretical standpoint on which the assessment criteria for (un)certainty and power are based, in order to get a clear understanding of what (un)certainty means in spatial planning, and what the role of power is in planning processes.

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the current Spatial Planning trends are presented in the Dutch context, in which the concept of uncertainty and its managements are analysed, followed by a study of power influences and expression in Spatial Planning.

1. Spatial Planning context in the Netherlands

The Netherlands, a 'decentralized unitary state' with a three-layered government – central/national, provincial / regional and municipality/local, is famous for its "polder model" of consensual decision making, by finding harmonious patterns of interaction between social partners (Horst, 1996). This necessity to form coalitions results from the Dutch conviction that *power flows from consensus* (Van der Valk, 2002).

The Dutch National Spatial Planning Agency is known for its sophisticated spatial planning strategies and over the years, it has seen many changes. Revised and improved spatial planning policies have been published in *National Spatial Strategy* documents (Nota Ruimte's and Nota Ruimtelijke Ordening), focused on increasing the economical urban and rural development. The strategies for doing so change from one document to the next. In the First Memorandum, the focus was on expanding the Randstad outwards, protecting the Green Heart with buffer zones, and decentralizing the industries to the peripheries of the country. The Fourth Memorandum in 1988 focused the policy on boosting the economy by investing in the Port of Rotterdam and Schiphol Airport. In the last Memorandum, spatial planning is looked at from the layer approach; the *concentric urbanization* is replaced by urban *networks* developed in specifically designated areas; also, the national government had a smaller role in the local planning, while the role of municipalities became more important (Zonneveld, 2005; Needham, 2005).

The main goal of spatial planning in the Netherlands is enhancing the quality of life by improving the sustainability, livability and the quality of the social and spatial environment in an area (Van der Valk, 2002), as well as creating spatial order and preventing spatial clutter through comprehensive, integrative planning (Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994).

In *traditional, top-down* planning models, the government had the leading role, steering the actions of other stakeholders; the final products of policy making and planning were the adoption of *a new policy* or the production of a *new plan. However,* when it came to the implementation of the plan, it seemed that planning could not keep up with the social changes (Louw et al., 2003). Spatial Planning is, however, not only about the physical land use *a*nd about the regulation of new developments, such as their type and location, but also about other policy dimensions, setting frameworks and principles, shaped by the *economic, social and political dynamics* of a place, bringing thus more actors into play (Healey et al.1997, Dabinett and Richardson, 1999). As a reaction to changes in these fields, the relations between state and society also changed, leading thus to a shift from government to *governance*, in which the role of the state is no longer leading, and more (private) stakeholders become involved in the planning process (Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994; Zonneveld, 2005; Needham, 2005).

Governance implies cooperation between public and private actors, resulting from the need to exchange resources as money, information, and expertise in order to achieve specific outcomes (Bjørnå and Aarsæther, 2010). Furthermore, concerned citizens are now involved in public policy making processes (Van Woerkum, 2000, Aarts and Leeuwis, 2010).

The *aim* of participatory planning is, according to Stirling (2006) to allow for exchange of information in a democratic way, while building a trust relationship among stakeholders (restore public credibility and trust) and a feeling of co-dependency. But while this may be a positive step for enriching the planning processes by using different sources of knowledge, the increased number of actors participating in a planning decision-making process presents the planners with the challenge of finding a *common ground* between the differences and conflicting interests of involved parties.

Along with the changing planning context and methods, the *role of the planner* had to change depending on various economic, political or social factors at play in planning practice, to better suit the needs of the stakeholders involved, and the goals of the project (Forester, 1989).

Participatory planning can benefit the planning processes in different way: increasing the quality of spatial plans by including different types of knowledge from different actors; making more appropriate plans for each case by including the local interested parties with their *local wisdom* in the process; avoiding big conflicts with protesting locals by involving them in the decision making process. However, participatory planning also confronts planners with problems and dilemmas, such as uncertainties about responsibility, accountability, and the role of government and other actors in policy-making (Aarts and Leeuwis, 2010). Other problems refer to the complex relationships with politics (and politicians), time consuming process, compromises, little support, and difficulties in defining (and claiming) success (Aarts et al., 2007; Van Assche, 2004).

2. Uncertainty in Spatial Planning, and its management

Planning is “a process of *decision-making under uncertainty*, due to choices made between alternative courses of action, with only an inadequate picture of their implications” (Friend & Jessop, 1969). Planning is about changing the future, in an uncertain and changing social environment (Abbott, 2005).

The high complexity surrounding spatial planning is believed to be the effect of quick tempo developments, increasing interest of different stakeholders in environmental issues and growing strength of environmental movements (Breheny, 1991). Moreover, the transition from a top-down type of government to a more democratic type of governance, in which *different actors hold the power,* contributes to the complexity of planning practices (Faludi and Van der Valk, 1994; Zonneveld, 2005). The growing amount of stakeholders who can make decisions in planning processes can result in high degrees of uncertainty (De Roo, 1999; Faludi, 2000), especially in regional and local planning (Van Ark and Hidding, 2002).

Decision making in Spatial Planning is dependent on the values, interests, perceptions and commitments of others (Forester, 1989), fact which may result in uncertain and unstable

situations, risk, ambiguity and doubt, constituting thus an obstacle to decision-making and delay in action (Lipshitz and Strauss, 1997).

Uncertainty is often conceptualized as *lack of control*, *instability, chaos,* due to lack of knowledge about current and future events, which undermines our ability to control these events; this may have consequences such as stress, dissatisfaction, feelings of helplessness and loss of commitment and trust (Bordia et al., 2004). ***Control*** is defined as "an individual's beliefs in his or her ability to effect a change, in a desired direction, on the environment" (Greenberger and Strasser, 1986). *Uncertainty* is also defined by Mack (1971) as the *complement of knowledge,* "the gap between what is known and what needs to be known to make correct decisions", which is by nature *complex, elusive and omnipresent*.

A. Types of uncertainty

Uncertainties in spatial planning differ per situation, depending on the type of planning project, the number of stakeholders, the time frame, the budget available and the social and political support the project enjoys. In consequence, the management strategies differ per planning project. Besides, even the meaning of the words *uncertainty* and *strategy* can differ per actor, depending on the stakes they have in a project, and their ability to take efficient action (Christensen, 1985; Albrechts, 2004).

One typology for uncertainty stands out in planning literature, namely that of Friend and Hickling presented in *Planning under pressure* (2005). They refer to three ***types of uncertainty*** [1](comparable to the ones described by Lipshitz and Strauss, 1997[2]) with which planners have to deal (See Figure 2). These types of uncertainty are:

- **UE**: uncertainty about the working environment, due to incomplete knowledge about the (social, political or economic) context, or due to lack of technologies to carry out the necessary research.

- **UV**: uncertainty about values guiding the other stakeholders, due to lack of knowledge about the interests, desires, norms and goals of participants in the planning process.

- **UR:** uncertainty about interrelated fields of choice - consequences of an intervention in field A for field B and C. This type of uncertainty is about the cause-effect relations of specific actions, which may trigger undesired (negative) effects.

All these types of uncertainties are interrelated, and their boundaries may be difficult to clearly discern in planning practices (Friend and Hickling, 2005). They affect both the spatial planning process and the plans made under uncertain circumstances: planners have limited resources and insufficient or imperfect knowledge of the relevant factors, and future

[1] Abbott (2005) classifies uncertainties in two categories: *environmental*, and about the *process* (in which the UV and UR of Friend and Hickling are treated together)
[2] Lipshitz and Strauss (1997) also distinguish three types of uncertainties: *inadequate understanding, incomplete information and undifferentiated (similar) alternatives.*

environmental changes and performances; furthermore, plans are often based on assumptions about the values and behaviors of other decision-makers (Humpfreys, 2000).

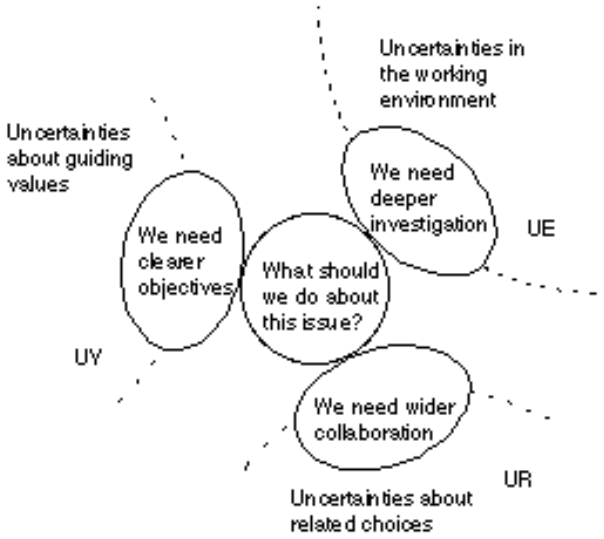


Figure 2. Types of uncertainty (Friend and Hickling, 2005)

(Source: http://www.ifm.eng.cam.ac.uk/dstools/choosing/strach.html)

The differences in backgrounds, interests and values of the actors interacting in planning processes generates *uncertainty* and can have unplanned side-effects, leading sometimes to *conflicts,* especially in the UV and UR fields of uncertainty presented above (Aarts and Leeuwis, 2010).

Conflict

Conflict is inevitable in society, fact that can be especially observed in planning practice (Pløger, 2004). The absence of conflict, according to Fischer (1977), means that the interactions between actors are not meaningful.

Fischer (1990) defines conflict as an *incompatibility of goals or values* between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other. Conflict is also defined as "*a struggle, a state of disharmony or hostile behaviors* (Ungerleider, 2008) resulting from *top down issues,* such as scarcity of resources(Laslo and Goldberg, 2008) or authoritarian management, or *bottom-up issues,* such as contradictory interests, needs, perceptions, cultural norms or beliefs, or mutually exclusive desires."

Kats (1965) distinguishes **three types of conflicts** (occurring on different levels[3])**:** economic, value and power. *Economic conflicts* refer to competition for scarce resources –

[3] Types of cconflicts, depending on the *number of people involved* (Kats,1965):

- interpersonal conflicts– between two people with incompatible needs, goals or values; tactics used in such struggles include deception, evasion, threats, emotional blackmail, flattery ...
- role conflicts – between members on an organization where the responsibilities are not clear
- intergroup conflicts occur between ethnic or racial groups, threatening their identities, or different levels of decision making within an organization;

slicing the 'economic pie', the goal of each party being maximal gain. *Value conflicts* involve incompatibilities of ideologies, preferences, principles and practices of life. *Power conflict* results from the attempt of different parties to maximize their influence or control exerted on the other parties, struggle which ends in victory or defeat for some parties. It is however noteworthy that the causes of conflicts are usually a mix of the above mentioned types, besides a specific degree of *ineffective communication (Kats, 1965).*

Even though decision making cannot be conflict-free (Aarts and Leeuwis, 2010), there are some strategies and tactics which planners can use to cope with conflicts and manage uncertainties. These are presented in the next section.

B. Uncertainty management strategies

Many strategies have been proposed along the years for dealing with uncertainties, risks and conflicts in spatial planning, some of them being more suitable for specific planning projects than others, of which one stands out, namely the Strategic Spatial Planning.

Strategic planning came as a reaction to the growing complexity of environmental problems, consequences of uncontrolled growth, the need for a higher security of the market (Vasilevska, 2009) and the complexity of planning processes due to the high numbers of stakeholders involved in decision making (Ark, 2005).

Strategic Spatial Planning has been *defined* by Healey (1997) as a "social process through which a range of people in diverse institutional relations and positions come together to design a plan-making process and develop contents and strategies for the management of spatial change." This process helps generate new ways of *understanding*, of building *agreement*, of mobilizing *political influence* and it usually results in a set of territorially integrated *policies* and project proposals, as well as a *decision framework* which will influence future activities (Sartorio, 2005; Vasilevska, 2009). Strategic plans are also seen as a genre of organizational communication, which shape and are shaped by social interaction, in which participants share perceptions of what constrains their interpretation of things (Cornut et al., 2012). In planning practice, a certain degree of ambiguity can be incorporated in the content of the strategic plans by use of language, allowing for multiple interpretations by different actors, who in turn will adapt the text to their own purposes, framing thus a specific discourse.

The concept of *strategy* has two **components** (Sartorio, 2005): one dealing with *implementation*, long-term visions and desired futures, and the other with *stakeholders* and their divergent goals.

The necessity of *Strategic Spatial Planning* becomes especially clear in *regional and national* scale spatial development (Salet and Faludi, 2000), due to the involvement and influence of

- multi-party conflicts occur among societal groups with opposing ideas for resource management or policy-making. This type of conflicts is more complex and can be resolved through collaborative approaches of consensus-building (Cormick et al., 1996);
- international conflicts occur between states, due to competition for resources. They can be solved through diplomacy, threats, or even war.

the public sector in the spatial distribution of activities (Albrechts, 2004). The *goal* of strategic spatial planning is thus to improve the quality of life by strengthening regional identity and by developing new ways of regional *collaboration* (Vasilevska, 2009).

The aim and the challenge of strategic planning is to reconcile the extremes of its practice: the “utilitarian” extreme of planning, with the focus on serving collective preferences, and “planning as accommodation” of the dominating market and government powers (Salet and Faludi, 2000).

How is strategic planning more suitable for planning nowadays than traditional planning methods? In *Rule and Order: Dutch Planning Doctrine in the Twentieth Century,* Faludi and Van der Valk (1994) compare the traditional project plan to the strategic plans (See Table 1).

Table 1.Project plans versus strategic plans

	Project plans	Strategic Plans
Object	Material	Decisions
Interaction	Until adoption	Continuous
Future	Closed	Open
Time element	Limited to phasing	Central to problem
Form	Blueprint	Minutes of last meeting
Effect	Determinate	Frames of reference

This difference between project and strategic plans is also treated by Albrechts (2004), as represented in the figure below.

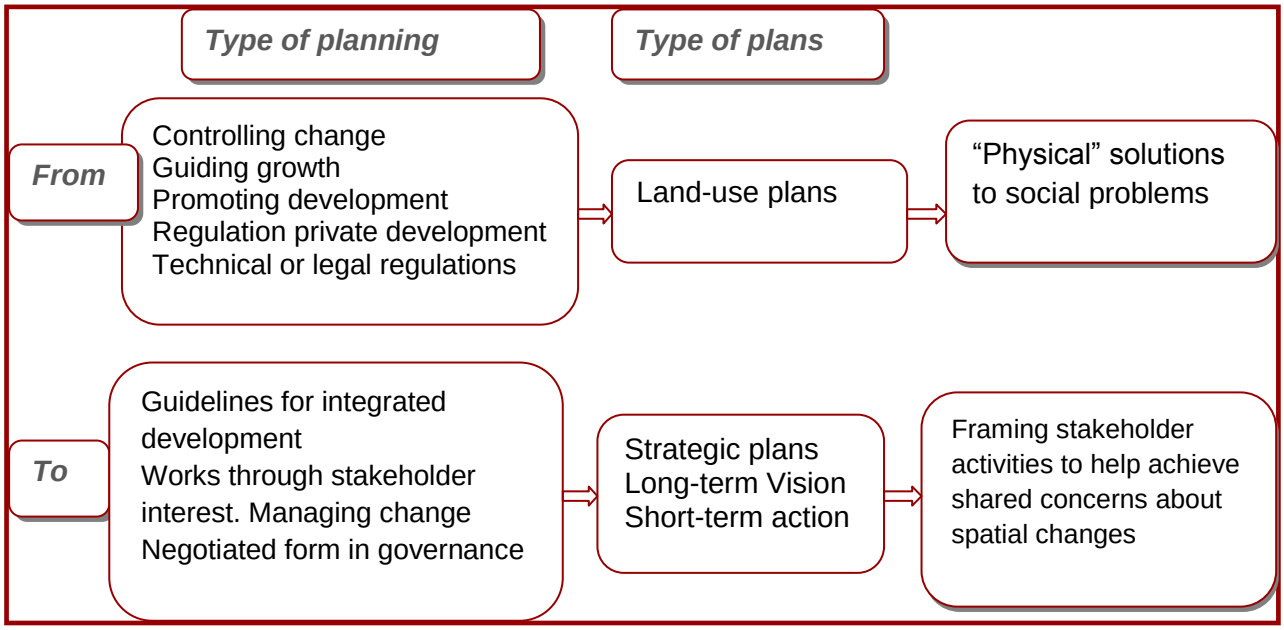


Figure 3. From traditional land - use planning to strategic planning (Albrechts, 2004)

While the *project plans*, or operational plans, are more of routine work, following prescribed patterns and addressing less complex problems, the *strategic plans* are abstract, overall plans, generating possible solutions to complex problems. They are constructed with a time horizon and long term vision, clear, consistent and more flexible, as to adapt to different circumstances, being thus more suitable to *address uncertainties* (Sartorio, 2005).

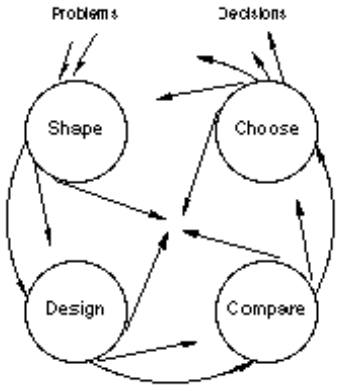
- **Strategic choice**

Within the field of *strategic planning*, one method sets itself apart as a useful tool for managing uncertainties, namely the **strategic choice approach** presented by Friend and Hickling (2005).

Strategic choice is an on-going, interactive approach, in which collaboration with stakeholders from different backgrounds and with different skills is a key factor. The approach is incremental, focusing not on the end product, but on finding *flexible* solutions to problems, by using a framework named the "***commitment package*".** This means that a *time balance* is found for urgent decisions and those which can be left open for a later time (Friend and Hickling, 2005).

Unlike the traditional management norms used in many systems, which are *linearity, objectivity, certainty and comprehensiveness*, the strategic choice aims instead for flexibility to work with *cyclicity, subjectivity, uncertainty and selectivity*. This is no easy task, but these prescriptions form an effective guide to help the planner train for managing complex problems (Friend and Hickling, 2005).

Friend and Hickling (2005) present four ***modes of strategic choice*** (see Figure 4): shaping, designing, comparing and choosing. In the *shaping mode* the problems are shaped, and the relations between them are analysed. In the *designing mode* alternative solutions are considered, which are evaluated and compared in the *comparing mode.* After an alternative is designated in the *choosing mode*, and consensus is reached about further action*,* the remaining uncertainties are treated*.*



The *designing* of possible courses of action and *comparing* them are the two more technical modes which may work in simple situations; but in more diffuse, continuous processes the other two – more political – modes are necessary, namely the *shaping* of problems, and the *choosing* mode, or the forming of proposed commitments to action.

Figure 4. Modes of strategic choice (Friend and Hickling, 2005)

(Source: http://www.ifm.eng.cam.ac.uk/dstools/choosing/strach.html)

One useful tool available for evaluating the urgency of an issue and deciding on the best course of action is the **uncertainty matrix** (See Figure 5) designed by Mack (2001), showing the impact uncertainties can have on different projects, based on the degree of uncertainty. The matrix can be used to narrow down the most influential factors in a planning project, and help thus the planners realize a "*commitment package*", that is to prioritize their activities based on their impact in the long run (Friend and Hickling, 2005).

Degree of uncertainty: Low	Medium	High	Level of impact
Critical planning issues Highly relevant and fairly predictable (can often be based on existing projections). Should be taken into account in *all* scenarios.	**Important scenario drivers** Extremely important and fairly certain. Should be used to differentiate scenarios. Should be based on projections but potential discon-tinuities also should be investigated.	**Critical scenario drivers** Factors and forces essential for success and highly unpredictable. Should be used to differentiate scenario plots and trigger exit strategies.	High
Important planning issues Relevant and very predictable. Should be figured into most scenarios.	**Important planning issues** Relevant and somewhat predictable. Should be present in most scenarios.	**Important scenario drivers** Relevant issues that are highly uncertain. Plausible, significant shifts in these forces should be used to differentiate scenario plots.	Med
Monitorable issues Related to the decision focus but not critical. Should be compared to projections as scenario is implemented.	**Monitorable issues** Related but not crucial to the decision focus. Should be monitored for unexpected changes.	**Issues to monitor and reassess impact** Highly unpredictable forces that do not have an immediate impact on the decision focus. Should be closely monitored.	Low

Figure 5. Uncertainty matrix (Maack, 2001)

The *strategic choice philosophy* is about being aware of the uncertainties present in the planning processes, and adopting a *flexible approach* to decisions made, so that they can withstand future changes (Friend and Hickling, 2005).

Before matching the uncertainty management strategies to the three types of spatial planning uncertainty presented by Friend and Hickling (2005) – UE (Uncertainties about the environment), UV (uncertainties about guiding values) and UR (uncertainties about related choices), it is important to note that the three types of uncertainty are not strictly separated in the planning processes, but they are influencing each other. For example, uncertainty about the location of a new development could have a higher impact on the people affected by it (who might have to move away) than on those who would stand to gain from it. An UE uncertainty is thus directly related to the UV uncertainty, and implicitly to UR, because any location choice for a new development will get different reactions from different stakeholders. The difficulty in exactly pinpointing the type of uncertainty in each situation with which the planners (and other parties) have to deal, makes the uncertainty management strategies also more flexible. Communication and flexibility, for example, can (and should) be used for managing all types of uncertainties, while carrying out research may be more fit for managing UE. Still, a classification is attempted for the above mentioned uncertainty management strategies, to respond the three types of uncertainty presented by Friend and Hickling (2005).

- **UE (Uncertainties about the environment)**

UE can be reduced through different kinds of exploration of the working environment, by carrying out or *more research* about its nature, such as economic studies, technical analyses, land use *surveys*, demographic *studies* (Humpfreys, 2000). This type of uncertainty can also be managed by carrying out a *risk analysis,* reducing thus ambiguities and helping the actors in accepting or rejecting decisions (Chapman and Ward, 2004).

Other strategies, suggested by Friend and Hickling (2005), depending on the type of projects, are forecasting exercises, creating *flexible plans,* making *commitment packages* (prioritizing the urgency of activities based on their – long term - impacts), and *foresight*.

Foresight is defined as "*a systematic, participatory, future intelligence gathering and medium-to long-term vision-building process*" (HLEG-Report, 2002). Foresight can help *reduce uncertainties* with the help of the knowledge flows it uses (Loveridge, 2001). If in the beginning foresight was used as a technical forecasting tool and later industry and the market, today it is seen from a more social and user-oriented perspective, used as a tool for broad consultation, networking, development of common visions and pursuit of joint goals (Hanssen et al., 2009).

Policies and regulations could be useful in reducing some environmental uncertainties by specifying what is allowed and where, setting thus some limits to the choices (for example for location) of new developments. People could either consult policy makers, who know more about specific issues, or – when possible - get involved in the policy-making process, to represent the interests of a group (Friend and Hickling, 2005).

Uncertainty is also mediated by feelings of *control*, according to Bordia et al., (2004). A way of becoming more confident, lessen the feelings of uncertainty and gaining more control, is through investigation of the circumstances surrounding the decision making process. Also, *communicating the information gathered this way with the other participants*: the more information one acquires about the changes planned in a specific field, the more prepared one feels, and can cope with these changes (Bordia et al., 2004; Friend and Hickling, 2005).

- **UV (uncertainties about guiding values)**

A way of reducing UV is by *surveying and consulting* the community in which changes are planned, to gain feedback and a better understanding of the interests of the locals, and possible support or protest to expect (Kitchen, 1997; Humpfreys, 2000).

The more demanding the aspirations or *objectives* of an actor, the more vulnerable to uncertainty they are (Regan et al., 2005), which is why *flexibility* is advised, so that decisions made can be *adapted* to future circumstances shaped by the goals of other stakeholders (Friend and Hickling, 2005).

Even though *participatory decision-making* is an uncertain ground due to the increased number of participants with different interests (Faludi, 2000), *involving others* is also a way of helping manage those uncertainties created by diversity. By allowing stakeholders to meet each other, they can *share* their interests and values in the planned area and together *shape the problems* to deal with (Friend and Hickling, 2005). Increasing *awareness* and understanding of the changes planned, *clarifying the goals and objectives* of others, gaining

each-others' *trust* and *setting priorities* can lead to more personal control and perceived influence on the future (Bordia et al., 2004; Friend and Hickling, 2005).

In treating the issues of a society with a capitalistic structure and democratic political system, *talk and arguments* are important tools, which can be used in participatory planning in order to create a middle ground for understanding and decision-making (Forester, 1989). But talk is not enough: planners also need to *pay attention and listen* to the involved parties, analyze and take into account their interests, perceptions and commitments, so that they can anticipate obstacles and respond effectively and practically (Forester, 1989).

- **UR (uncertainties about related choices)**

As a management strategy for UR, Friend and Hickling (2005) refer to *broadening* the decision-making *agenda*, to include other related (and future) problems connected to the current issues.

One strategy of managing UR is by consulting and *cooperating* with other interested parties and decision-makers in related fields, such as government departments, private developers, landowners, and other stakeholders (Humpfreys, 2000). Another strategy, proposed by Laslo and Goldberg (2008) refers to the *coordination of projects*, in order to save costs, and encourage cooperation between actors in the form of networking, coalition-building, and mutual adjustment (Lindblom, 1959).

In interactions with other stakeholders, different strategies can be adopted to manage uncertainties about the choices to make, such as *networking*, *negotiations, competing, avoiding, collaborating, manipulating* and others *(*Friend and Hickling, 2005). Some of these are also the strategies proposed for resolving conflicts between parties, which will be treated in the next passage.

Conflict management

Five response **strategies for managing conflicts** involving stakeholder pressures are presented by *Thomas en Killmann* (1974)[4], namely *competing, accommodating, collaborating, avoiding and compromising (See Figure 6).*

The ***competing*** response mode emphasizes one's uncooperative winning over another. This is a power-oriented mode, aiming to dominate the other in a "win-lose" fashion.

Accommodating is both unassertive and cooperative. The focus is on self-sacrifice and acquiescence, trying to satisfy the concerns of others.

Collaborating is an assertive and cooperative mode. It refers to investing much time and energy in working with the other parties, trying to find satisfactory alternatives

[4] Comparable models of response to conflict are suggested by Aaltonen and Sivonen (2009) and Afzalur et al. (1992).

Avoidance is neither assertive nor cooperative. It is about neglect, withdrawal, indifference, denial, or apathy to the concerns of either party.

Compromising, (sharing, trading or negotiating), is finding a (partially) satisfactory middle ground between assertiveness and cooperativeness.

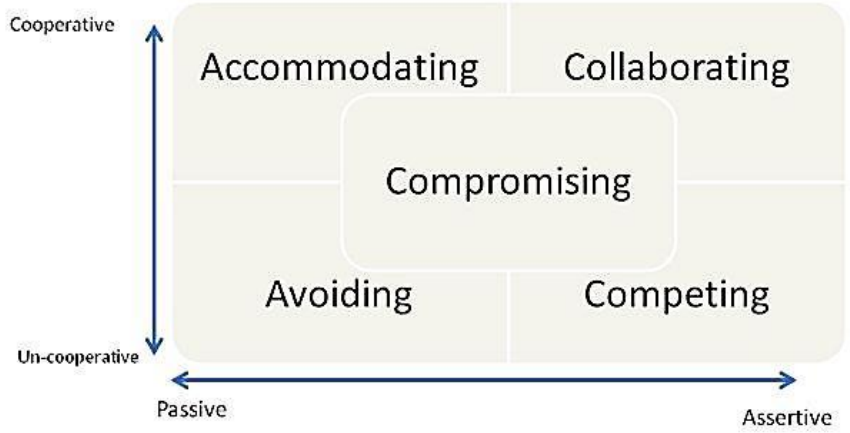


Figure 6. Conflict management strategies (Thomas en Killmann, 1974)
(Source: http://www.knockalla.net/choosing-your-conflict-resolution-mode/)

A few more tools for conflict resolutions, ranging from *negotiation, to mediation, conflict transformation and peace building*, are described by Ungerleider (2008).

Under pressure from various stakeholders or situations in the environment, planners will respond differently, based on their skills, assets and experiences. The strategy to use should be chosen depending on the type and dimensions of the conflict (source). And since there is not one best way of dealing with uncertainties in spatial planning, a more *strategic approach* to planning practices is necessary, which makes planning processes adaptable to different situations (Healey, 2004).

Even though most often it may be perceived so, conflict is not always negative. It can sometimes be useful as an asset for *vision* development, helping to understand the context and causes of the conflict from different points of view (Landau et. al 2006; Vaaland 2004). The vision created as a result of the conflicts can be a powerful binding force within an organization (Landau et. al, 2006). Conflicts have the potential to maximize productive outcomes and generate positive social change (Kriesberg, 1998).

The types of uncertainty discussed in this chapter, and the strategies for their management are summarized in the Table 2.

Table 2. Types of uncertainty and management strategies

Type of uncertainty	UE (Uncertainty about the environment)	UV (Uncertainty about values)	UR (Uncertainties about interrelated fields of choice)
Definition of uncertainty	Incomplete knowledge about context (social, political) and technologies	Lack of information about norms and values of other actors	Choices in one field may have consequences in another field
Management strategies	More research / information Risk analysis Coordination of projects (to reduce costs) Regulations Forecasting Foresight Flexibility Commitment packages (good timing)	Communication Make objectives clearer Negotiation Participatory decision making (group discussions) Clarify aims Set priorities Shape problems	Control/ influence Competing Accommodating Collaborating Avoiding Compromising More coordination Networking Broader planning agenda Design/compare solutions

As mentioned above, the strategic choice is also influenced by politics, and in the process steps between detecting problems and deciding on the best course of action, power also plays an important role, which will be referred to in the next section.

3. Power in Spatial Planning

"If planners ignore those in power, they assure their own powerlessness!"
"Alternatively, if planners understand how relations of power shape the planning process, they can improve the quality of their analyses and empower citizen and community action" (Forester, 1989).

Spatial planning can take many forms, and planners can adopt different roles and fulfill different tasks in various circumstances in planning practice, such as regulators, rule-setter, analyst, mediator, innovator (Christensen, 1985), planner-centric experts, advocates, narrators, organizers, facilitators, puppets of the market, and others (Allmendinger, 2009). In all these situations, planners have different responsibilities and stakes, and make use of different planning tools, fit for their specific function. But the common ground to all these functions, in which the planner has to work, is the - far from neutral - political basis of the problems they have to deal with (Forester, 1989). Planning in governance systems is closely intermingled with power and its distribution in a society (Albrechts, 2003, Healey, 2003).

In planning practices, the power plays in which planners are engaged are rather *subtle,* such as in power games in the absence of planners, government bureaucracy, power struggles between practitioners and elected representatives, pressure from developers, and others (Hillier, 2002).

In this chapter, a few *power* definitions from scientific literature are presented, after which a classification of power means and manifestations in Spatial Planning is made.

A. Power definitions

Many definitions have been given *power* over the years, depending on the understanding of the concept and the culture, political and economic systems in which *power* occurred.

Power can refer to the *capacity* to do something – possessing the material, scientific, social or political means of power, or the *actual exercise* of power, which uses all the available power means to condition possible actions in all social relations (Wrong, 1968; Foucault, 1980, 1985). The exercise of power is a mode of modifying the actions of others either enabling or restricting them (Foucault 1984).

Power is further defined in scientific literature as:

The *capacity to control one's* life and environment (Albrechts, 2003) and the choices of *others* (Dahl, 1963), with the aim of changing the processes of social interaction and promoting specific goals (Parsons, 1967). Power is about influencing one actor's possibilities to act, by either restricting them through controlling the alternatives, or by generating more action possibilities (Mäntysalo, 2008).

"The capacity of an individual to reach his will, even against the opposition of others" (Weber, 1968) and to *exert influence* over the less powerful, be it for self-interest oriented goals or socially responsible goals (Chen et.al, 2001).

Power is *high status, authority, influence* (Graham, 1989)*, and* "the capability to secure outcomes, where the realization of these outcomes depends on the agency of others" (Aarts and Leeuwis, 2010).

Power is *strategic action* taken by knowledgeable, self-centered actors to achieve their goals (Flyvberg, 1998).

The definitions above inspire a negative feeling about power and its use. However, *power can also be used positively* in planning practices, not as oppression and constrain, but as a productive process of new forms of behavior in social relations (Foucault 1978, 1980). In planning practices, this can be realized in different ways for different stakeholders: planners have at disposal personal and academic skills, which they can employ as power tactics, while the participating citizens can be empowered through participatory planning.

Empowerment of the participants can be realized through inclusion in democratic decision-making processes, by mobilizing specific groups of interest and gaining a meaningful voice (Miller, 1994; Stirling, 2006). Booher and Innes (2002) refer to the" network power" which empowers participants through collaboration. The subject of empowerment is further treated in the subchapter C *Power manifested by citizens.*

Based on the definitions of power and its characteristics found in literature, power is further analyzed through the prism of its main means (instruments) and their manifestation.

B. Means of power

Based on the broad array of available scientific literature on *power*, the means (or instruments) of power are classified in two categories:

- *Political and material means*: force – such as the army of the police, financial resources, rules and policies (Reuter, 1989) and authority (Graham, 1989).

- *Professional (or institutional), social and personal means*: knowledge, expertise, and the use of information (through the arts of rhetoric and persuasion (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Albrechts, 2003) and through media (Reuter, 1989)).

- **Political, institutional and material means of power**

The army and police **force** are not directly relevant as strategies of managing spatial planning uncertainties, being thus outside the scope of this paper.

Authority plays an important role in giving power to arguments (Graham, 1989), along with the effective use of media and the consequent repetition of the argument (Reuter, 1989, 1997). In order for someone (A) to be able to exercise power over others (B), B should be convinced that A has the power to control them, and they must thus modify their behavior accordingly. The power of A over B is thus expected and accepted (Wrong, 1968). Someone's believe that someone else has power confers power to the later (Reuter, 1997).

Attributing authority of *experts* to certain individuals is a strategy to ensure that their status is unquestioned and their message accepted. Planning as a discipline is seen as such an authority, determining what counts as appropriate planning methods or which policy issues should be given attention (Richardson, 2002).

As for the power of money, there are multiple sources referring to it. Foucault (1980) sees the power relations as directly connected to economic relations, Lee (2000) suggests that the mechanisms and practices of power are maintained by the state system, dominated by (global) economy and Chen (2001), for example, sees power as **financial means**. Real power is developed in the fields of financial capital and **political** control (Hillier, 2002). This is also observed by Bent Flyvbjerg (1998) in his study of the Aalborg case in Denmark, who refers to both money and public authority as sources of power: "*Money added weight to the arguments, helping them become demands, and the popularity and support of the mayor could help speed things along".* In another study, realized by Carr (2005), of people migration in Ghana due to the effects of environmental change on the local economy, politics and manifestations of power, the locals perceived money as the "source of safety and certainty".

In the Netherlands, Spatial **Rules and policies** are made by different governmental bodies on all three administrative levels, with the help of advisory groups. On the national level the spatial policy document is the `Key Spatial Planning Decision' (*PKB-Planologische Kernbeslissing*), written by the national government. It sets the ground rules for the regional and local documents, being thus the most powerful spatial policy (Wolsink, 2002). The national government has autonomy over and delegates responsibilities to the provincial and municipal level governments, also supporting them financially (Van der Valk, 2002).
On the province level the spatial document is the `Regional Plan' (*Streekplan*), written by the provincial government in collaboration with the national government. This document is more detailed than the national one, and specific to each of the 12 Provinces in the country.
And on the municipal level there are two spatial documents written by the local government, complying to the rules set by the national and provincial governments: the 'Structure vision' (*Structuurvisie)* and `Zoning Scheme' (*Bestemmingsplan*). If not opposing the national policy, provinces and municipalities have the freedom to use the subsidies received from the national government however they find fit (Wolsink, 2002).

- **Professional, social and personal means of power**

Planner's personal skills and professional expertise can be a source of power, to potentially influence the outcomes over lay people (Reuter, 1989; Hillier, 2002). According to Francis Bacon, **knowledge** is power. However, Flyvberg sees it otherwise: power is knowledge - "*Power determines what counts as knowledge, what kind of interpretation attaint authority as the dominant interpretation. Power procures the knowledge which supports its purposes, while it ignores or oppresses that knowledge which does not serve it*". Power decides what is important, it defines sets of values and norms – it defines reality (Flyvberg, 1998).

Another form of professional power, which planners can use in multi-stakeholder planning processes, is the control of shared **information**. Planners can shape the type and amount of information communicated with the other actors involved, making use of their **personal** language and rhetoric skills (Forester, 1989).

From the power means presented above, some are more pertinent to spatial planning than others: while force can be used mainly by the authorities to ensure the application of rules and regulations, financial resources and knowledge are instruments which can be easily used by multiple actors involved in spatial planning processes. For the remaining of this study, more attention will thus be given to the manifestation of the *financial and informational power* in planning practice, with the help of politics and media.

C. The manifestation of power in spatial planning

Power can be manifested by individuals or by organizations and institutions (Foucault, 1980). Manifestations of power, shaped by social relations, can help find solutions to problems by suggesting possible courses of action, based on the (re)sources available to different actors (Foucault, 1980). The power sources available to citizens and to planners will be discussed in this subchapter.

Power manifested by citizens

In participatory planning processes, citizens get the chance to express their wishes about new developments and get involved in their design. The actual participation in decision-making processes addresses thus the need for ***empowerment*** in multi-cultural societies (Wrong, 1968; Healey, 1994, 1997).

Even though (local or regional) authorities have the statutory requirement to involve the community in the development of policies (Sturzaker, 2010), sometimes pressure from central governments for timely delivery of policies can contribute to resident's exclusion from strategic decision making (Kokx, 2011). And even when participating in planning processes, citizens are not automatically empowered (Albrechts and Denayer, 2001). For this reason, a question often posed in participatory planning is *how to give the powerless stakeholders a better chance to be heard* and make a difference (Healey, 1994)?

Hillier (2002) tries to answer this question by suggesting that knowledge is power, and it can be acquired and communicated through **networking and collective action** – idea also advocated by Booher and Innes (2002). Networks are relational links through which people can obtain access to material resources, knowledge and power and mutual support for inhabitants of a community (Hillier, 2002).

In more challenging situations where networking may not be sufficient to reach the desired effects, empowerment can also be sought through more o*vert* expressions of struggle for gaining privileges of power: "The very form of power which subjugates can also produce the possibility of refusal and reversal" (Foucault, 1981).

This can be realized by mobilizing concerned parties and the public opinion in organized **local resistance** groups**,** counter-planning, symbolic acts, (Reuter, 1989). Other types of actions are lobbying, getting influential people to support a cause, using media stunts and civil disobedience, in order to get their message across to decision makers, and to attract more attention to their issue, create more awareness and gain more support from other citizens (Hillier, 2002). This type of action can be initiated by citizens themselves, or by planners. The roles planners can play in planning processes and different ways of exercising power are presented in the next section.

Planners' power

Based on their field of work, planners can be divided in two categories: planners working for the *private sector* – the "corporate strategic planners" who mostly need to worry about satisfying their client, and planners working for the *public sector*, which need to find a balance between efficiency, social welfare and justice and decent outcomes under market influences (Forester, 1989). The second category of planners is the priority for this study.

Throughout planning theory and practice, there is a common assumption that *whatever power is, planners do not have it (*Booher and Innes, 2002), and that planning is the *servant* (Weiss, 1987; Harvey, 1989) or even the *victim* of power (Flyvberg, 1998).

Many other theorists argue otherwise, saying that *planners have the power* to make things happen in society (Forester, 1989; Hoch, 1994; Throgmorton, 1992; Bryson and Crosby, 1992). Healey (1994), for example, sees *development plans* as *projects of the powerful: a spatial plan* is a point of reference framework for future decisions, in which specific relationships between criteria and action are prioritized over others (Healey, 1994). Planning frameworks exert *power* on any future decision making; planning involves *political struggles* and is subject to *manipulations* (Dabinett and Richardson, 1999) by different actors, seeking to influence the outcome and further their own interests, also referred to as *power-acting* (Reuter, 1997).

Even though they are often frustrated by lack of power or the means of implementing a plan (Faludi, 2000), and even though they are legally required to involve citizens in the planning processes, planners do have some powerful tools they can use to steer the course of action in the favour of their plans. Some techniques and manifestations of power which planners can use in order to gain and be able to exert more influence[5] in the planning processes are presented by *Forester (1989)* and Friend and Hickling (2005) (some of which are similar to the strategies presented by Reuter, 1989, Healey, 1992, Flyvbjerg, 1998 and Albrechts, 2003):

- Technical expertise (specialized knowledge)
- Monopoly on organizationally and politically relevant information
- Preempting definitions of problems, thus approaching the solutions
- Channel information, shaping participation services or promises, feeding the hopes, expectations, frustration and trust of participants, selectively calling their attention to particular opportunities or threats

[5] Keys and Case (1990) talk about five *keys* to *becoming and remaining influential*:

1. Develop a reputation as an expert. Besides the expert knowledge, also information about the other actors and the problems to be solved should be gathered and analyzed, in order to be well prepared for the challenge (Forester, 1989).
2. Prioritize social relationships based not on social preferences, but on the needs of the project, which can be helpful in accomplishing the professional goals. Also trying to understand the other actors and communicate effectively with them is essential (Forester, 1989).
3. Develop a network of trusted experts or resourceful persons interested to cooperate.
4. Choose the correct combination of influence tactics for the objective and target to be influenced – for example choosing a face-to-face meeting over a phone call.
5. Influence with sensitivity, flexibility and solid communication. Read the body language of the other actors, and articulate your arguments to fit the needs and interests of the other person.

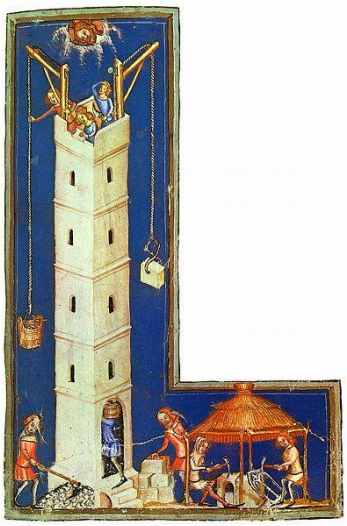
- The role of “gatekeeper” of information and access: control the amount and type of information shared, deciding what and when to share
- Communicate effectively: describe, indicate, explain, designate, specify…
- Use institutional or public authority figures or skilled argumentation specialists to give weigh to arguments;
- Divide large projects into pieces and divide opposing groups, in order to avoid conflicts;
- Offer symbolic decision-making opportunities;
- Widespread contacts and Coalition building
- (In)formal bureaucratic and political pressure
- Bargaining
- Negotiations
- Cooperation
- Alerting, warning or working with outsiders

In addition, a few ethically questionable techniques can also empower the planner: manipulation, intimidation, sharing incomplete or wrong information, misleading, provoking, infiltrating the opponent’s party, spreading well-calculated rumors and incriminating the others (Reuter, 1989). Planners should thus also keep in mind moral considerations and ethical responsibility (fairness, impartiality, legitimacy, respect) (Hillier, 1998).

The above-mentioned techniques can be classifies on three main levels: *communication, expertise and negotiation.*

- **Communication**

"They are one people and have one language, and nothing will be withholden from them which they purpose to do." So God said, "Come, let us go down and confound their speech." And so God scattered them upon the face of the Earth, and confused their languages, and they left off building the city, which was called Babel "because God there confounded the language of all the Earth." (Genesis 11:5-8).



The Bible story of the Babel tower gives a good example of the power of communication. The people then spoke the same language literally and figuratively – they had the common goal of building the tower, which is what gave them strength to realize their goal. That is until they could no longer understand each other: not only their words had become unclear, but also their common goal seemed less certain. In this situation of uncertainty, they could not take decisions anymore, and the cooperation was slowly dissolved, resulting in failure to achieve their initial goal: the building of the tower was ceased. As long as they understood (and agreed with) each other, they were so powerful that God had to intervene and stop them.

Figure 7. The Babel Tower

(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_der_Weltenchronik_001.jpg)

Spatial Planning and public policy-making are not only about the technical production of material things; they are often seen as processes of *communication*, argumentation and interpretation (Forester, 1989, Healey, 1997, Hillier, 2002). They are discursive sets of practices, and process of interactive, mutual learning, for better understanding of problems and decision making under uncertain circumstances (Faludi, 2000; Gunder and Hillier, 2009).

Communication – in its many forms- is one of the most powerful tools planners can use (Healey, 1992). Planners must routinely argue, practically and politically, about desirable and possible futures. Their failure to recognize the subtle communicative effects of their ordinary actions, can work counterproductively, despite good intentions. They may be sincere but mistrusted, rigorous but unappreciated, reassuring yet resented. Contrarily, when planners recognize the practical and communicative nature of their actions, they can devise strategies to avoid these problems and to improve their practice as well (Forester, 1998).

Planners have at their disposal one very basic, but also very powerful tool when used strategically, and that is the use of *language* (Hillier, 2002). The importance of **language** in planning practice led to the influential field of *communicative and collaborative planning* theory and practice (Innes, 1995; Healey, 1997), where planners facilitate understanding and trust between rational actors with the aim of framing a shared consensual perspective (Gunder and Hillier, 2009). Besides its function of transmitting information, language can also evoke effects on the other actors (Lacan, 2006), influencing their perception of interests and preference (Hajer, 2000). Through their use of *language,* planners have the ability to focus the attention of others, to shape expectations and the understanding of participants in debates and to minimize (or enhance) communication distortions, in order to reach their goals (Forester, 1989, 1999; Flyvberg, 1998).

Some other communication tools planners may use to gain insight into the complex dynamics of planning processes and those involved in them are the use of *semiotics* (Radford, 2002; Beunen and Hagens, 2009), *discourse analysis* (Hewitt, 2009), *scenario building* (Börjeson et al., 2006; Carsjens, 2009), and others. *Reasoned* ***discourse*** is a form of power, which can even be noticed in the use of expressions such as '*power of persuasion'* and *'powerful argument'* (Stein en Harper, 2003).

The idea of *rhetoric, narratives* and *persuasive storytelling* in planning is advocated by Sandercock (2003) and Throgmorton, (1992/), who present storytelling as a powerful tool in planning practice, by helping produce persuasive plans and policies. Used in the initial phases of the planning processes, stories can clearly explain and portray the desired planned developments. This way some common ground can be laid for participants with different backgrounds, and enable meaningful communication.

One very important form of communication is the *control of information shared.* By choosing what type of information they present to the public, and how they present it, planners can shape the planning processes. They can decide who to invite to the meetings and how to run the meeting in order to read the expectations of the participants, and create a relation of trust with them (Forester, 1989). Besides, they can strategically use words so that they are positively interpreted by the receiver. The interpretation with the stronger power base *becomes* the truth (Flyvbjerg, 2002).

Planners should be aware that in participatory planning, power could dominate through *discourses* and communication, silencing the already marginalized, powerless groups,

resulting in false consensus (Hillier, 2002). This can happen through *distorted communication,* which is defined as *ineffective communication based on assumed understanding of other and their interrelations* (Habermas, 1970). By finding the source or reasons behind such distorted communication, the existing power plays can be identified and possibly countered (Hillier, 2002).

Discourses *are* defined *as multiple and competing sets of* ***ideas*** *and concepts, produced, reproduced and transformed into a set of practices,* ***giving meaning*** *to the material and social reality* (Richardson, 2002; Hajer, 1995). Planning doctrine – or discourse, is a *common frame of reference,* leading to a common way of perceiving problems and evaluating solutions, which gives strength and a stable direction to planning. This can be done by articulating an image of a desirable future, shaping thus the perceptions of people, by use of images and stories (Faludi, 2000).

Planning doctrine (or discourse) has a social function, playing an important role in consensus building under constrains of belief systems, structures of meanings and norms. This consensus reached through the persuasive power of planning discourses gives direction and can ensure coordination, improving the performance of planning (Faludi, 2000).

The way people attach meaning and significance to things is discoursive, making planning an arena of constant struggle and discoursive conflicts over meanings and social values, **framing** and reframing problems and solutions (Richardson, 2002). Power relations create and shape the social and political conditions of everyday planning situations, reinforcing certain ways of thinking while excluding others (Richardson, 2002). By using discourse theory, the power relations can be better understood, and power abuse can be uncovered (Richardson, 2002).

Frames are cognitive or interactional structures representing the way of thinking and the interests of stakeholders communicating them (Kaufman and Shueli, 2011), which guide the way people perceive things and understand the external world, constructing meaning and forming their own selective realities (Entman, 2007). Frames are based on people's sets of norms, values, interests, knowledge and conviction from experiences (Putnam and Holmer 1992; Dewulf et al., 2011), as well as on their estimated risks and expected gains or losses (Lewiki and Briensfield, 2011).

Framing is a technique used in conflicts, negotiations and intergroup interactions for developing understandings of issues, of identities and of relationship and for finding common ground among actors, by altering the way the social message of conflict is constructed. Framing of issues is seen as responsible for the resolution of perpetuation of conflicts (about what is important and how problems should be treated), for the type and quality of negotiated agreements Lewiki and Briensfield, 2011).

The shaping of the information received by participants (or framing) in decision making processes is interpreted through the mindset of the receiver, allowing for decisions to be made after a mental comparison between the new information and preexisting cognitive representations (knowledge, believes, preferences, experiences) (Curseu, 2011). Here t**rust** plays a very important role in helping to organize and frame the new received information. In relatively uncertain situations, decision makers can decide easier for a specific course of action if the other partners are perceived as trustworthy, just as s(he) will decide against a different direction if the others are not considered dependable (Lewiki and Briensfield, 2011).

The more inclusive planning is and the more actors it involves, the more important discourses are for the performance of plans. The preparation of plans is thus a very important aspect of *framing the discourses,* which will support the plans (Faludi, 2000). Frames are however, not stable – they are continuously (re)constructed by the changing expectations and goals, through communication and interaction (Aarts and Van Lieshout, 2006). Planners should thus use their analytical expertise to formulate flexible discourses, able to fit the needs and interests of other actors involved in the planning process (Faludi, 2000), helping them thus to (re)shape their frames of the issues discussed.

- **Planner's expertise**

In tumultuous planning processes dominated by participation, planners may sometimes forget one very important tool they can use to their advantage: their **expertise**. Planners are experts who know the complexities of urban and regional systems, and can *anticipate* their dynamics, being thus able to plan accordingly (Allmendinger, 2009). This gives planners the right and **authority** to use scientific studies, rhetoric and jargon for persuading other actors (Albrechts, 2003). They can further bring sound scientific arguments into play, and use the institutional authority of Universities as support in debates and negotiations (Albrechts, 2003; Allmendinger, 2009).

Adopting a strong, persistent attitude, stemming from *confidence* in their expertise can exert strong influence, forming thus a source of power (Prislin, 1996). As Wrong (1968) and Reuter (1997) see it – if someone inspires in others the belief of their own power, the latter will recognize (and confer) power to that person.

Further, planers can make use of scientific knowledge in planning practices, in different ways. In his ideal speech, Habermas refers to two ways of using **knowledge**: instrumentally, to gain control over a situation, or communicatively, to understand others and reach consensus. However, people often choose for their own advantage and become competitive, using truth selectively. Because of this, and due to the differences in views, beliefs and interests of those involved in planning practice, consensus is not always possible, and knowledge is used more predominantly as a control instrument (Hillier, 2002). Further, Healey (1992) argues that knowledge production (and exchange) is infused with political practices, which protect the powerful and confuse the powerless. A principled and progressive planner should thus seek to avoid misinformation.

- **Negotiation**

In planning processes with multiple stakeholders, planners will often find themselves in the position to negotiate the best terms for action, and the negotiation strategies to use differ per type of stakeholders involved (Albrechts, 2003; Allmendinger, 2009).

Forester (1989) presents **six strategies** for planners to use in **negotiations** and mediation of local land-use conflicts:

- The planner as regulator. Here the planner acts not only as technician or bureaucrat, analyzing information and facts, but also talks to the residents of the area in question and share his professional judgment with the planning board, who will then make the final decision.

- Pre-mediate and negotiate. In their meetings with the developers for discussing the project proposals, from which the residents are absent, the planners anticipates the concerns of the affected residents and represents their interests in the negotiations.

- The planner as a resource. Considering the multiple stakes of different involved parties, the planner cannot be neutral in the mediating process, so the planner recommends meeting between the developers and residents, so that a compromise can be made.

- Shuttle diplomacy. The planner confronts the developers directly with the concerns of the residents, while mediating the conflicts between the parties.

- Active and interested mediation. The planner as mediator tries to build trust by listening carefully and respectfully to both parties, then sharing their concerns with the other party. This way each party knows what they are up against, and how to prepare their case.

- Split the mediator-negotiator job. If the case becomes more complex, the planner can call in some help: or a planning boards member as negotiator, or an informal, volunteer mediator from a local institution, to mediate the conflicts.

These six negotiation strategies are not neutral. In order to avoid the unjustifiable use of power, planners should rely on **procedures directed against misuse of power** (Reuter, 1989), by using methods such as:

- self-determination, self-organization, self-help in planning;
- minimal planning – leave most definitive measures to the user;
- make measures reversible;
- break the planning process in small steps;
- give more rights to minorities;
- allow majority rule only for public areas;
- allow consumers' associations to control the planning designs and end products;
- strengthen media as control power;
- strengthen legislation against executives.

Under pressure, aiming at achieving specific goals, planners may choose to flexibly apply rules and exemptions, depending on the circumstances (Buitelaar and Sorrel, 2010). It is up to them to decide on a course of action in line with their professional ethical code, which will either perpetuate or challenge the inequalities of information, expertise, political access and opportunity" (Forester, 1989).

In a democratic society characterized by power structures, planning is time consuming, frustrating, turbulent and chaotic. Planners must thus adjust their toolkits and mindsets to the changing challenges and needs of it (Hillier, 2002).

If used correctly, the tools presented above can help the planners gain some steering power for their projects, towards a successful implementation.

The figure below summarizes the concept of power as defined in this chapter, and its manifestation in Spatial Planning.

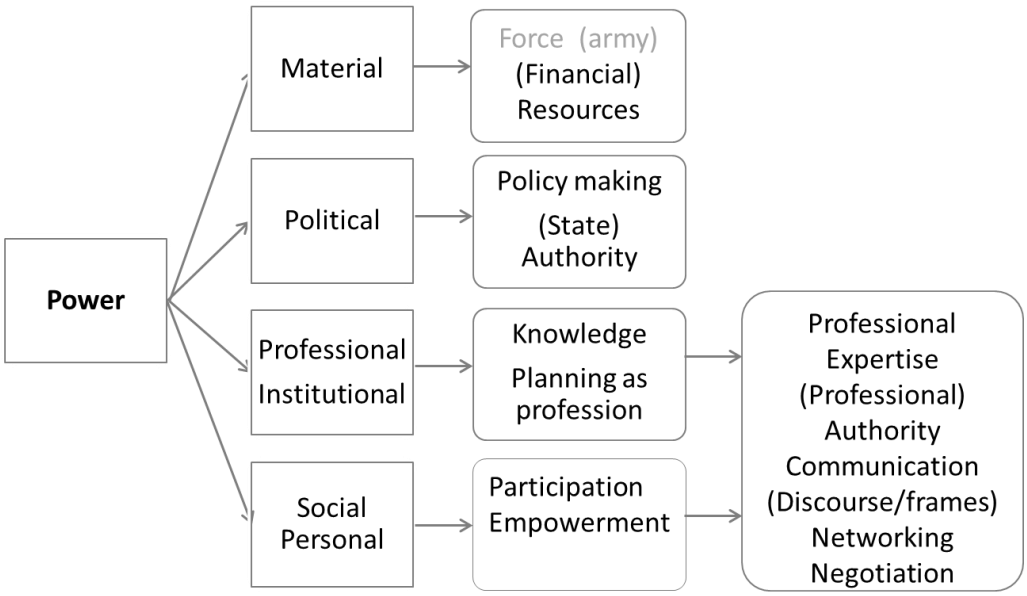


Figure 8. Power in Spatial Planning

4. Conceptual model

For better understanding of the theories discussed in this chapter, the conceptual model below (Figure 9) illustrates the relations between the main concepts discussed above.

In this concept, the power redistribution in society, because of capitalism in a globalized democracy, leads to a transition from *top-down government* planning to *governance* in participatory planning. Due to the multitude of stakeholders partaking in planning processes, each with own sets of values and interests, but also with different resources and means of power they can exert over the other actors, many interest conflicts occur, making the planning field a playground for power games.

The gray – shaded area covering the representation of stakeholders' interaction symbolizes the uncertainty and lack of clear rules surrounding the planning processes. These uncertainties are classified in three types: **UE** - uncertainty about the environment (incomplete knowledge), **UV** -uncertainty about values (lack of knowledge about the values and norms of participants in the planning process,) and **UR -**uncertainty about interrelated fields of choice (consequences of an intervention in field A for field B and C).

As a management strategy for uncertainty, the *Strategic choice* of planning is proposed, with the help of which planners can collaborate with other stakeholders and create flexible plans which can be adapted to different future situations. Also, special attention is given to the commitment packages, because – *after all – timing is everything.*

An additional factor is proposed as supplemental management strategy for uncertainty, namely the use of power, and its many manifestations. This was considered a necessary, logical step, considering the multiple roles power plays in planning processes.

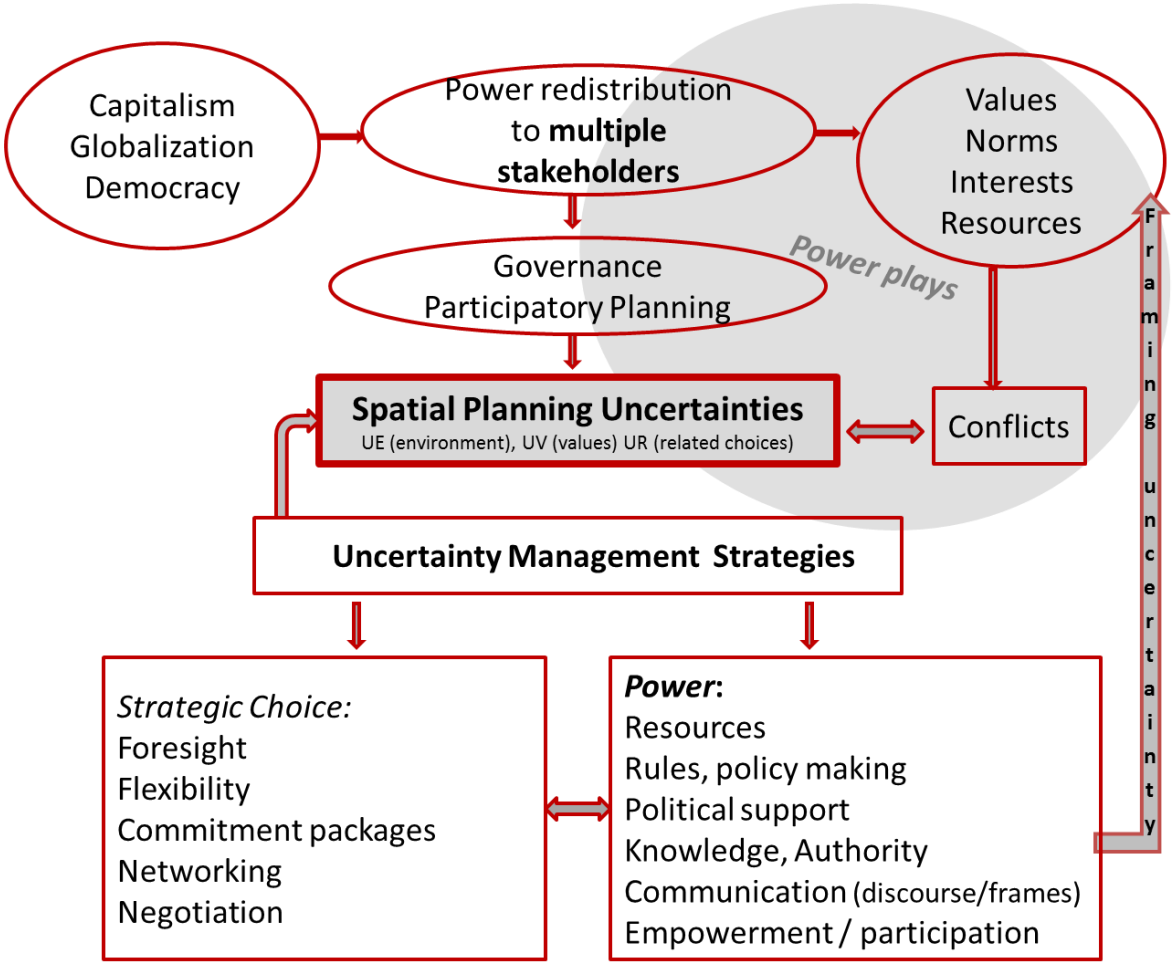


Figure 9. Conceptual model of the Theoretical Framework

Furthermore, power is also considered responsible for defining the concept of uncertainty itself, and the way it is understood by different stakeholders. Here power refers to the influence one can have and exert in planning practice, through professional (knowledge) means, material (financial) resources, political support, policy making, the authority one enjoys, or –most importantly, through communication. By use of specific language, adapted to participants' expectations and goals, planners can focus attention on discourses which will help the (re)shape stakeholders' understanding of the issues discussed in the planning process – framing the issues, framing their uncertainties.

And last, but not least, empowerment of citizens also plays an important role in minimizing their uncertainties in the planning processes, by giving them a chance to make their voice heard, and to make a difference in their environments.

As .. said, uncertainties cannot be completely eliminated, but one could profit of the above mentioned strategies to be able to make more informed decisions in uncertain situations.

The next chapter presents the two cases chosen to exemplify the relations between power and uncertainties in Spatial Planning practice.

In the table below a summary is made of the uncertainty types and strategies for their management, as discussed in the theoretical framework.

Table 3. Types of uncertainty in Spatial Planning, current management strategies and the role of power as additional uncertainty management strategy

Type of uncertainty		**UE (Uncertainty about the environment)**	**UV (Uncertainty about values)**	**UR (Uncertainties about interrelated fields of choice)**
Definition of uncertainty		Incomplete knowledge about context (social, political) and technologies	Lack of information about norms and values of other actors	Choices in one field may have consequences in another field
Actors involved		Scientists Planners Politicians Government Inhabitants	Land owners Investors (public/private) Governmental bodies Planners Politicians Inhabitants	Land owners Investors (public/private) Developers Governmental bodies Planners Politicians Inhabitants
Management strategies		More research / information Risk analysis Coordination of projects (to reduce costs) Regulations Forecasting Foresight Flexibility Commitment packages (good timing)	Communication Make objectives clearer Negotiation Participatory decision making (group discussions) Clarify aims Set priorities Shape problems	Control/ influence Competing Accommodating Collaborating Avoiding Compromising More coordination Networking Broader planning agenda Design/compare solutions
Power (Political and material) means as additional uncertainty management strategy	**Financial means**	Financial resources to support research and new technologies Hire expertise	Offer incentives and/or alternatives to competing actors	Finance anticipative research, to forecast/avoid choice-related problems Pay off competition
	Rules	Clear environmental policies	Influence accepted values and norms	Limit the power of other actors (through policy)
	Political support	Gain political support for project	Justify and Legitimize objectives	Support choice with policy Use political authority to control information (media) and limit choices (manipulation, threats)
Power (professional and social) means as uncertainty management strategy	**Professional authority / Knowledge**	Access to scientific knowledge/ research Anticipate problems	Guide values/norms through information shared Shape uncertainty through discourse	Use professional authority (and status) to gain upper hand in negotiations Limit / control shared information
	Social power	Knowledge exchange through participation Gain social support for project (shape the problem)	Find stakeholders with common goals Collaboration	Keep informed about social changes Maintain/renew contacts with actors (networking) Negotiation

Case studies

The case studies chosen will serve as examples to help make sense the theories presented above, and to help draw lessons for improving the planning practices in uncertain situations. These two cases are The OostvaardersWold project – an ecological corridor, and the Almere Oosterwold project – an adjacent area to the ecological corridor OostvaardersWold, but with a living, agricultural and recreational function.

Flevoland is one of the twelve provinces of the Netherlands, located in the centre of the country (Figure 10), established in 1986 on the land reclaimed from the Zuiderzee, with Lelystad as its capital. The province consists of six municipalities and has approximately 394,758 inhabitants (www.flevoland.nl).

Figure 10. Flevoland Province
(Source: www.fietswebwinkel.com/nl/fietskaarten-/40-fietskaart-kop-van-overijssel-falk.html).

The *Oostvaardersplassen* is a wetland nature reserve in the Flevoland Province, covering about 56 km^2, home to many fauna species, such as Konik ponies, red deer, Heck cattle, Great Cormorant, Common Spoonbill, Great Egret, White-tailed Eagle and Eurasian Bittern. Of these, large herbivores (the Konik ponies and Heck cattle) have gained the most media attention due to their death en masse in the cold winters, because of overcrowding and overgrazing (www.birdsnetherlands.nl). The national and local governments, as well as national and international animal protection groups and scientists, forming the *Gabor commission,* have been trying to find a solution to this problem (www.resource.wur.nl). The *OostvaardersWold* ecological corridor was the proposed solution to solve the problem of overgrazing in Oostvaardersplassen, by creating an exit route for the animals, who would then be able to cross over to the Horsterswold , and further to the National Park The Veluwe and to Germany (www.flevoland.nl).

At the same time, another very important development for Flevoland is the growth of Almere, one of the six municipalities of the Province (http://almere20.almere.nl): in the State-region program Amsterdam-Almere-Markermeer (RRAAM) of the House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer), the National Government, the provinces of North Holland, Utrecht and Flevoland and the municipalities of Almere and Amsterdam work together on the ambition to triple the number of housing, and improve accessibility and ecology in the Northern Randstad (www.rraam.nl).

Through this program, Almere grows in the next twenty to thirty years to become the fifth city of the Randstad, with an extra 60.000 new homes and 100.000 new jobs (RRAAM. Basisinformatie. Werkmaatschappij Almere Oosterwold) (http://almere20.almere.nl).

Both studied cases are located in the Flevoland Province in the Netherlands, and even though they are geographically neighbouring, the cases differ very much in almost all points: their function, size, planning styles, types of uncertainties and their management.

The two cases are now presented separately.

Results desk study and interviews

In order to show the events of the case studies in a comprehensive way and to avoid repetition, the information acquired through desk studies is presented below together with the complementary knowledge resulted from interviews. For obtaining more information about the stakeholders involved in the OostvaardersWold project, and to get a clear impression of how they experienced the planning process, open-ended interviews have been carried out with representatives of most parties involved.

In this chapter, the information gathered in the interviews will be presented. In an attempt to reduce bias resulting from using selective pieces of information taken out of context, the discussions with the parties involved in OW will be reproduced without quotes.

The results obtained from studying the two cases are now presented separately.

1. OostvaardersWold, Flevoland

The OostvaardersWold is a planned ecological corridor of about 1800 ha, meant to connect the Oostvaardersplassen nature area in the Flevoland Province, with the Horsterwold in Zeewolde and de Veluwe, the biggest nature area in the Netherlands (Figure 11). The planned nature area would be a significant nature compensation and expansion of the recreation facilities, helping to accumulate excess water and refilling the ground water resources, offering many new jobs, and improving thus the quality of life in the Flevoland province (www.flevoland.nl).

The figure bellow represents the planned location of OW and the nature areas it connects.

Figure 11. Map of the planned area (Source: www.zuiderzeeland.nl)

The OostvaardersWold (OW) project was proposed as solution to the problem of too many big herbivorous animals in the Oostvaardersplassen nature area, at the request of the National State, who asked the province to plan a robust connection between this nature area in the west of the Flevoland Province and the Horsterwold forest area in the Southeast of Flevoland. This way the animals would be able to cross through this ecological corridor to the Horsterwold, further to the National Park The Veluwe, and even further to Germany.

The interviews held with multiple stakeholders involved in OW revealed that the OostvaardersWold project was highly politically sensitive, since two of the main actors involved were the National Government and the Regional Government of Flevoland Province. Considering the politically sensitivity of OW project, not all stakeholders were willing to discuss about it. Nonetheless, the impression formed based on the interviews held with the willing parties is accurate and representative of the actual events. Even though no interview could be held with representatives of the National Government, the role of the State in OW and its relations with the other actors has been studied with the help of public documents, and discussions with the other stakeholders involved in OW.

A. OostvaardersWold Events Timeline

The developments that took place in the planning process for OW are presented in chronological order in this chapter.

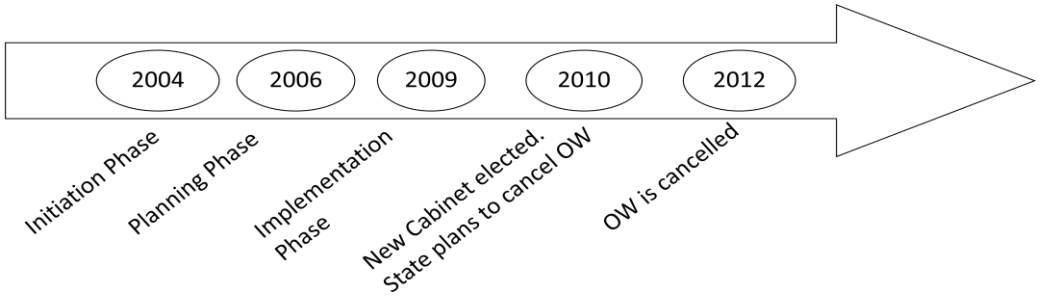


Figure 12. The OW events in a chronological timeline

(Source: http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuwsdossier/11/OostvaardersWold?P=19)

The OostvaardersWold project started after the National Government commissioned the Flevoland Province **in 2006** with creating a robust connection between the Oostvaardersplassen and the National Park The Veluwen. The State would be a partner in the OW project, supporting it financially. The Province made thus a Regional Plan containing the location of the OostvaardersWold, as well as development details, environmental goals to reach and future zoning within the OostvaardersWold area. http://www.flevoland.nl/wat-doen-we/grote-projecten/OostvaardersWold/documentatie-oostvaarders/).

From the involved parties, some were supportive of the project (for example the State, the Province, the municipalities of Almere and Lelystad and the Flevolandschap Foundation), while others – such as the Zeewolde Gemeente and the inhabitants of the area, which stands to lose the most land to OW, opposed the new planned development. (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/75152/zeewolde-ecozone-veel-te-groot).

The future location of the ecological corridor was planned in an agricultural area. For the realization of the OostvaardersWold project, the 35-40 farmers living in the area were supposed to relocate, with the promise of financial compensation and help with finding a new place (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/32834/vereniging-biedt-petitie-aan). During the negotiations, however, the farmers were not pleased with the prices they were getting for their lands, and decided to form an opposition organization called *OostvaardersWold blijft agrarisch (OBA)* – meaning *OostvaardersWold remains agricultural.*

In **2006** the State pays the Province 35 mil euro from the 240 promised for OostvaardersWold, which the Province found quite insufficient. http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/33760/flevoland-niet-tevreden-met-35-miljoen-subsidie).

Meanwhile, the Zeewolde municipality and the farmers, now organized as the OBA organization, supported by the LTO North Agricultural organization, kept bringing arguments against the uncertainties created by the Province regarding their lands and the unilateral way in which the Province handled the communication with the other involved parties. In addition, the choice of location for the OostvaardersWold project – which was sacrificing the best quality agricultural lands, was a point of critique (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/nieuwsbericht?Lang=nl-NL&newsId=34564). In November, farmers decided to express their neglected critique by protesting publicly in front of the Province house against the project, and what it meant for them (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/nieuwsbericht?Lang=nl-NL&newsId=35990).

In **2007,** the Province assigned 1,650 ha land between Almere and Zeewolde as *nature area*. In addition, the Province wants to expand the area with 300 ha extra (referred to as the *missing area*), ***if*** the five farmers owners of the area are willing to sell. Three of the farmers were willing to relocate, making thus more space for OW (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/nieuwsbericht?Lang=nl-NL&newsId=40145).

In **2008**, the Province organized workshops with inhabitants and farmers of the three municipalities, for exchange of information and ideas about the new ecological corridor (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/44626/meedenken-over-inrichting-OostvaardersWold). This action was however not sufficient to improve the communication between the farmers (grouped as OBA) and the Province. As a result, OBA disintegrated. LTO North Agricultural Organization continues its attempts to protect the farmer's interests throughout the next planning phases of OostvaardersWold. (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/nieuwsbericht?Lang=nl-NL&newsId=46059; http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/nieuwsbericht?Lang=nl-NL&newsId=45928/).

Halfway through the year, the Province took a new decision, during a closed-door meeting, in which it was decided to control the development activities in Flevoland by not allowing any new big constructions without the permission of the Province, for the next half year. This raised much critique especially from Zeewolde Municipality and LTO North, who argued that

this decision scares off developers who would otherwise have been building outside the planned OostvaardersWold nature area. Some farmers who were planning to expand their business and the Zeewolde Municipality accuse the Province of *power abuse*, for imposing restrictions on the Municipality without consulting them first. (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/nieuwsbericht?Lang=nl-NL&newsId=47861/).

As the years passed, the uncertainty grew for the farmers who did not yet relocate. **In 2009,** they attempted repeatedly to convince the State to cancel the OostvaardersWold project. In their anger, the farmers insinuate that the preliminary research and the reports written about the effects of OostvaardersWold on the inhabitants were paid by the Province to give the desired results. The farmers were not interviewed and the reports could thus not reflect the reality, in their opinion. (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/57027/).

By the end of 2009, some of the political parties of the House of Representatives (CDA, VVD and SGP) motioned for canceling the OostvaardersWold project, arguing that the money can be better put to use elsewhere (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/65649/).

With the election of the new cabinet in **2010,** the financial situation of OostvaardersWold became less certain: the new government was planning on budget cuts, and nature development projects were no longer a priority. The State Secretary Henk Bleker and the newly elected government decided not to support OW anymore, finding the total estimated costs of 400 million euro too high (www.volkskrant.nl).This was a problem for the Province, since the project was started at the request of the State, who also promised financial support. Since the beginning of the OostvaardersWold project, however, the Province has only received about 40 million from the State, borrowed 20 million, and invested the rest up to approximately 160 million from its own budget, trusting to be refunded by the State.

Even after State Secretary Henk Bleker (CDA) has announced that the government would stop financing OW, the Provincial Council of Flevoland agreed to the Integration Plan OostvaardersWold. Due to the juridical position (agreements were already signed) and to the fact that 1000 hectares of land from the total of 1800 necessary was already acquired, the plan was adopted unanimously, but the Province was aware of the impossibility to implement OW without financial support from the government, hoping thus for successful negotiations with the Secretary (www.depers.nl, http://www.almeredezeweek.nl).

Besides the financial challenges facing OW, there were also social issues at play, regarding the farmers whose land was necessary for creating the nature corridor. The farmers were not very keen to sell, arguing that the quality of their land is unique in the country, and their business would have to suffer much if relocated (www.destentor.nl; binnenland.nieuws.nl; http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuwsdossier/11/OostvaardersWold?P=19).

Some of the other stakeholders found, however, that stopping the project will be a waste of the efforts invested so far, 75% of the necessary land having already been purchased, and some of the existing nature having been damaged during the preparations of the nature belt area, which will now have to be compensated (www.almerevandaag.nl).

In **2011,** the Province filed a lawsuit against the State, who was willing to pay maximum 81 million euro (of the 241 million expected by the Province) – their estimated costs for the project so far. Meanwhile, the Province tried to find alternative financing sources, such as World Nature Funds and Flevolandschap Foundation, State Forest Service, Landal

Greenparcs. The lawsuit was won by the State, who paid only 61 million euro to the Province. The main argument in State's favor was the fact that the financial agreement with the Province was not in writing, and that the Province should have worked harder in finding alternative financing for the rest of the costs (besides the 240 from the State) (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/88962/rijk-betaalt-niet-meer-dan-61-miljoen; http://zoeken.rechtspraak.nl/detailpage.aspx?ljn=BV9654).

The task of continuing the project fell thus on interested parties, namely the Flevoland Province, including the municipalities of Almere, Zeewolde,Lelystad, the World Wildlife Funds (Wereld Natuur Fonds) and the Flevolandschap Foundation, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Waterschap Zuiderzeeland and the State Forest Service (SBB – Staatsbosbeheer). These parties decided, in May 2011, to take charge of the project, including other interested private or governmental parties, and searching for a common financial ground with the state government and the farmers whose land are necessary for the realization of the nature belt (Structuurvisie OostvaardersWold, 2009; www.duurzaamnieuws.nl).

After long delays in the progress of the OostvaardersWold project, the **State decided to cancel the project** anyway due to lack of evidence of financial support. The State Forest Service leases the land reserved for OW back to farmers (for at least one year), while other options are considered for nature compensation for the expansion of highway A6 (and other developments).

During the debates following the new coalition and its effects on ongoing projects as OW, the political parties of the House of Representatives have different opinions. Most of them, among which PvdA and SP, find that since the plans for OW were made before the new coalition, the State should honor its agreements and not cancel the project. The behavior of the State is believed to be untrustworthy and to bring the inhabitants of the area unnecessarily in uncertainties (www.flevoland.pvda.nl, www.sp.nl, http://publitiek.nl).

B. OostvaardersWold Stakeholders

The OostvaardersWold project was led by a *steering group* in partnership with an *advisory committee*. The *steering group* comprised the Flevoland Province, National Government, the municipalities of Almere en Zeewolde and Lelystad and the Water Board Zuiderzeeland. The *advisory committee*, comprised the State Forest Service (SBB), LTO North (withdrawn since july 2008), Flevolandschap, ANWB, Nature and Environmental Federation Flevoland (NMFF), Recron, Chamber of Commerce Flevoland and the project development organizations AM Wonen and Rabo Vastgoed (both withdrawn since 2010 (http://www.metropoolregioamsterdam.nl/groen-OostvaardersWold10.1.html). Other stakeholders involved were the farmers and the inhabitants of the Province.

The table below includes a list of the interviewed stakeholders of OW.

Table 4. Interviewed stakeholders OW

OostvaardersWold	
Flevoland Province	Herald van Heerde – Communication liaison
Farmers	- 10 farmers interviewed by Sanne Broekhof - LTO-Noord - Jasper van der Horst. Provincial Secretaris Flevoland
Zeewolde Municipality	Bert Oldewarris
Almere Municipality	Henk Mulder - director Urban Development Almere Municipality
Staatsbosbeheer Regio Oost	Susan Bonekamp
Waterschap Zuiderzeeland	Rob Nieuwenhuis and Rob Peeters

Throughout the planning process of OW, the relations between stakeholders are complex and depend on the interests and goals of each party in the issue. Depending on the extent and the intensity of the effects OW was representing for all parties, some of them had more to lose than others, making them thus more vulnerable to uncertainties, and implicitly to conflicts. Even though the interactions between all parties have been studied through the interviews, due to the time limit and for the relevance in this study, only the most intense interactions will be presented here.

The relations between stakeholders can thus be analyzed from different perspectives, with more attention paid to the (Flevoland) Province– the *planner* of OW, the State and the farmers, as the relations between these actors were the most intense.

- State
- Province
- Farmers (also represented by LTO)
- Other stakeholders: Municipalities of Almere, Lelystad and Zeewolde, Zuiderzeeland Water board, SBB – State Forestry Service, Flevolandschap, and World Wildlife Fonds.

The figure below shows schematically the relations between the participants, with the National Government (further also referred to as *the State*), the Flevoland Province (further also referred to as *the Province*) and the farmers as main stakeholders, and the municipalities and other organizations as partners.

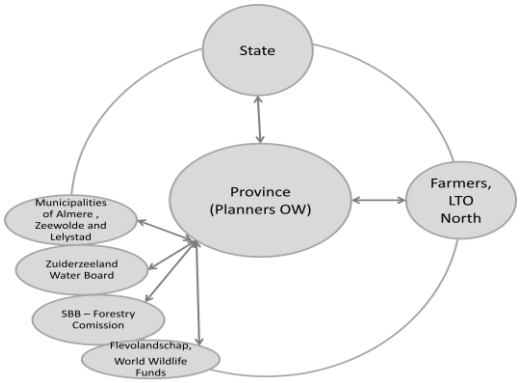


Figure 13. Stakeholders involved in the OostvaardersWold project

Every stakeholder will now be presented separately, including their role in OW, their goals and the interaction with the other parties. Besides published documents, the information used here was also obtained from interviews with representatives of the involved parties. As a result, different actors, based on their perceptions of reality, may present some of the information differently.

- **State**

The National government's goal for OW was the realization of an ecological corridor connecting the Oostvaardersplassen to the Horsterwold nature area, solving thus the problem of animal death as a result of overgrazing in the Oostvaardersplassen.

The involvement of the National Government in OW was done through different bodies: The State Council (Raad van State), the Ministry of Economy, Agriculture and Innovation (ELI – previous LNV), the Ministry of IenM (Infrastructure and environment – formed by the former ministries VROM - Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and V&W – Ministry of Transport and Water).

The National Government commissioned Flevoland Province and its municipalities to give substance to some national environmental goals mentioned in the National Spatial Planning Strategy (Nota Ruimte 2006). The province is charged with creating a robust connection between the Oostvaardersplassen and the National Park The Veluwen. http://www.flevoland.nl/wat-doen-we/grote-projecten/OostvaardersWold/documentatie-oostvaarders/.

- **Flevoland Province**

For this part, (where no other references are present), the information was provided by Herald van Heerde – Communication liaison Flevoland Province. The story is thus presented partly from the perspective of the Province.

At the request of the National Government, the Flevoland Province drew up the Flevoland Regional Plan (2006), the main priority of which was the ecological corridor OostvaardersWold (OW). This "robust connection" binds the Oostwaardersplassen nature park with the Horsterwold forest in Zeewolde, so that the American elk can cross through the National park the Veluwe to Germany. Besides its ecologic function, the area is also to host new recreation possibilities for walking and biking, housing, industry, nature and water storage. This regional plan contains the location of the OW which was chosen based on a Strategic Environmental Assessment realized by research groups, such as Wageningen University and Arcadis. The next step was the development of a Structure Vision for OostvaardersWold (2009), which provides insight into the design of OW: what OW is going to look like and what the benefits are for the area (www.flevoland.nl).

The planned developments were decided upon by the whole consortium (of involved stakeholders) (in de steering group). The planning phase was thus completed with the signing of a cooperation agreement according to which the involved parties were going to work together on improving the nature, recreation and water storage conditions; the document also contains the financial, organizational and planning agreements. (http://www.flevoland.nl/wat-doen-we/grote-projecten/OostvaardersWold/documentatie-oostvaarders/)

The plans for OW published in the Flevoland Regional Plan (2006), foresaw the project completion in 2014. According to the communication liaison of the Province interviewed, this tight schedule was based on the studies done regarding the planning and implementation period, including the possible risks and unforeseen circumstances, and even though the workload was big, the timing was considered feasible, given the commitment of the involved actors.

The Flevoland Province was involved through its main body – the Province General Board (Provinciale Staten) and its Province Executive Board (Gedeputeerde Staten). The project was led by Deputy Anne Bliek and later Marc Witteman of the Flevoland Province, with Rob van der Werff as project leader (of the Province), in collaboration with ENNO Zuidema Stedenbouw architect bureau (incorporated in project organization) (www.flevoland.nl).

At first, the Province saw no direct benefits in such a corridor which was offering only nature, and proposed instead a mix of functions, to render the new area more economically, environmentally and socially feasible. These functions were: robust ecological connection, recreation, nature compensation and water storage, all combined in a 1,840 ha area. Besides, new businesses were expected to be established in the buffer zone along the corridor, increasing the economic diversity of the province.

Finances

The **finances** of the OW were planned as follows: the main source (covering the costs for 1,125 ha) was the State (through LNV - the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality), and lower amounts (for the remaining 700 ha) were mainly covered by other partners involved (through SBB – the State Forest Service) as nature compensation. Almere Municipality had to pay for the development of a newly constructed business park, RWS (Rijkswaterstaat – the executive body of IenM - the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment) (25 mil euro for 133 ha nature) for the expansion of the A6 highway, ProRail for the Hanzenlijn – a new railway connecting Lelystad, Dronten, Kampen and Zwolle.

The administrative procedures between State (represented by *LNV* - the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, now the *EL&I* – Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation) and Province were based on a governmental written and signed agreement (December 2006).

LNV was co-financing OW through a 7-year programme through ILG (Investment budget for rural areas): during the first three years, there was little money invested; after three years, a mid-term review was to be realized, and if there was money left over from environmental projects in other provinces, it could be used for the OW. But this did not happen anymore, due to the fall of the cabinet (and the start of a new one).

The inhabitants of the three municipalities were invited to get involved in the planning process before the Structure vision was issued. 4000 people were contacted per post / mail. From the interested ones, 30 were elected, from which 8 farmers. This group of participants was presented the plans for OW, with a trip to the area, after which, working in groups of 4-5, they came up with seven design drawings for the OW. From these designs, 50 statements were made about OW, which were sent again to the inhabitants as a questionnaire per mail. This had 500 reactions, based on which recommendations and 10 pieces of advice were

made for the structural vision of OW, trying to implement the desires of the citizens in the plans.

The farmers living in the area destined for the robust connection, who had to move away, were approached differently – more personal. They were proposed compensation for their land and an extra remuneration for relocating their business. Some of the farmers were flexible and open to the proposal, and made the best of an uncertain situation. They took a chance, and started anew elsewhere. Others chose to stay, hoping to get more for the value of their lands, or that they may, in the end, remain there.

Conflicts

Even if they were secretly following their own interests**,** wanting the highest benefits for least costs, all partners were cooperative**,** holding firm to their commitments, minimizing thus the opportunities for conflicts. But a project the size and complexity of OW could not completely avoid conflicts.

The most prominent protests in the beginning of OW came from the farmers living in the area destined for the ecological corridor, who found themselves in a difficult position of having to relocate their business, families and whole lives. The farmers in questions started protesting massively in group, hoping to convince the Province to change the location of OW, or cancel it altogether. When approached individually, most of the farmers were more flexible and could think openly about the different options they had. As a result, and after seeing that their protests do not give the desired results, some of the farmers sold their land relocated. In the end, two thirds of the necessary land for OW was acquired.

The election of the new cabinet in 2010, and the new proposed agreement for nature resulted in much *uncertainty* regarding the OW. The Province expected thus some delay in the implementation of the project, but thought that since the OW agreements were already made, the new cabinet would see it through to its successful implementation. The fact that the new government was no longer supporting OW came as a shock, especially since it was the Government who had proposed the ecological corridor in the first place.

As a result of the State autonomy and non-transparent process / interaction with the province, the disaster which the cancelation of OW presented could not have been foreseen or prevented.

The new cabinet tried to make new agreements, without honoring the old agreements. The state secretary was hoping to find an easier way of solving the issues, without going to court, but the offer made to the Province was too meager to cover up all the costs made.

Looking back at the rise and fall of OW, the province reconsiders some of the decisions made, and wonders what else could have been done for the success of the project. The start was promising, and even the way ahead was long and full of unknown elements, due to the ample size of the project and the amount of stakeholders involved, as well as the continuous economic and social changes, the commitment (in written agreements) of the involved parties lead to their belief in the success of OW.

OW was cancelled due to insufficient funds, according to the new Premier. The Province wonders if it would have helped to give more attention to the economic chances of OW, such as trying to find investors earlier in the planning process, who were interested in bringing new

business to the area. Investments in a hotel in the area or bungalow park, for example, would have given more weight to the project, and could have maybe saved it. But then again – it may have been difficult to find investors in recreation facilities in the middle of nowhere. However, this was not considered necessary, since the project had the support of the State.

If everything was well planned, and went accordingly to plan –partners honoured their commitments, the planning/ implementation process remained within the budget and followed tightly the time frame – what went wrong? Why was OW cancelled?

The Province answers this question in one meaningful sentence: the most important partner – namely the State, pulled back! They broke their agreement and the trust of the others, and wanted no longer to participate in OW. Further yet, after many debates in court and outside it, which exempted the State from their (full) debt to OW (they ended up having to pay part of it), OW could not go through, due to lack of funds. The Province and the remaining partners are looking for alternative financing and solutions for salvaging bits of the huge amount of work, energy and money invested in OW.

The biggest conflict came however when the newly elected government decided not to remain a partner in OW, and pulled back, refusing to pay for OW what was agreed on. With much shock and consternation, the Province went to court, only to find a disappointing outcome: the State only had to pay a small part of the OW costs. On May 30th the executive board of the Province has decided not to appeal on this verdict, after consulting the general Board.

In May 2012, the general Board of the Province decided to start an open plan process, to gain new commitment from the stakeholders, based on social acceptance. The idea is that stakeholders present a new plan for nature development in Flevoland. This plan is aimed to be presented in November 2012.

- **Farmers**

This part presents the involvement of the farmers in OW, from their perspective, based on interviews carried out by Sanne Broekhof, PhD Student Wageningen University, and from the perspective of the agricultural organization LTO Noord, based on the interview with Jasper van der Horst - Provincial Secretary.

OostvaardersWold was planned in an agricultural area. For its realization the farmers living there (about 35-40) had to move, to make space for nature (www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/nieuwsbericht?Lang=nl-NL&newsId=36011). The *farmers* in the Netherlands are of principle against nature, because it usually comes at the costs of agricultural land (Beunen and Hagens, 2009).

The Province promised financial compensation and help with relocation (www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/32834/), but the farmers were not pleased with the offered for their lands.

In the initial shock of having to move, the farmers tried to fight for their rights, hoping to somehow change the situation. The farmers were not pleased with the new situation: having to move away, and start a new life, but they had no choice. Most of them were leasing their farming land from the government, so when the (40 years) lease was close to its end, it was

not renewed, forcing the farmers to move. This was particularly difficult for the older ones among the farmers, who at the age of 55 had to restart their business somewhere else.

In their opposition, the farmers formed an association: **OBA** "OostvaardersWold remains agricultural", working together with the Agricultural Organization **LTO North** in trying to protect the rights of the farmers and their families (www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/45928). After unsuccessfully having tried on different occasions to make their voice heard to the Province and the Government through protest as OBA, and even feeling mocked and not taken seriously, OBA soon disassembled. The interests of the farmers were to be represented further by LTO North.

Even though they were not directly legally forced to move out, the farmers were pressured into it, and at some point even *manipulated* by the Province, who was willing to help them find a new location for their business as long as they decided to sell quickly, and even *threatened* with expropriation if they did not sell their land. Under this type of pressure and *uncertainty* about their future, and based on their age, family situation and disposition to start their life over somewhere else, some farmers decided to sell and moved away (some even moved to other countries). Others did sell their land, but decided to remain and live on the current property until further notice (this was an offered option). Others yet (one or two farmers) refused to sell as a statement that for them agriculture is more important than nature (which is a sensitive spot for farmers), and they should not be disrespected and sent off without any regard for their lifework and their families.

The top-down planning process was nor open nor flexible, and the *communication* between the farmers living in the OW area and the Province was experienced by the interviewed farmers as a one-way street from the Province to them. They felt that they had no opportunity to discuss the issue, and that they had absolutely no choice in the matter – the decisions were already made, and they simply had to move away.

This was a big problem for the farmers, since they had worked hard on building a life and a business there; besides, the agricultural land in Flevoland is of superior quality in the country, so moving away would be deficient for their business.

Farmers were not happy with the way they were approached by the Province, who contacted them late in the planning process, after the location for the nature corridor was already decided. One issue that raised much uproar among the farmers was the unexpected and unforeseen location change of OW: initially it was agreed on one location for the ecological corridor, but right at the last moment a slightly different route was chosen, more to the North. This came as a shock and raised much uproar and protests from the farmers, whose situation about the future became suddenly *uncertain*.

Later in the planning process, the farmers were invited by the Province, possibly in an attempt to improve the communication relations between the two parties, to participate in a workshop in which the farmers could share their ideas about the new nature corridor, and maybe come with proposals for its design. This was, however, painful for the farmers, who were insulted by such action: not only were they being practically kicked off their land, but now they also had to help design its future?

While most of the farmers said not to be emotionally attached to their land, they were aware of its productive qualities (being one of the best agricultural lands in the country), and

preferred not to move away from Flevoland. They also found it quite a waste of rich, productive agricultural land to be transformed in nature.

As a rule, most farmers interviewed consider the agricultural land in Flevoland too good to be wasted on nature, but under the circumstances, one of two farmers were actually open to the idea of getting involved in agro tourism, had the Province been open to the idea. Nevertheless, the planning process for OW was top-down, not much open to suggestions of multifunctional use of the land.

At the end of 2008, the Province hired a private organization - Wing and CLM Research and Advice - to mediate the relations between the Province and farmers (represented by LTO North), trying to solve problems and seeking new forms of cooperation. (http://www.wing.nl/projecten/samenwerking/Landbouwadvies_OostvaardersWold). This attempt came, however, a bit late and did not improve the situation much. Even though after the protests there was more communication between the Province and farmers, the uncertainties for the farmers remained big for the whole period, charged with social and emotional factors.

OW did not affect only the lives of the 35 farmers who had to make space for nature: the farmers remaining in the area were equally displeased with the new nature corridor coming next to their farms. This would mean more restrictions for them, risk of weed seeds infesting their farms flying over from the nature area, despite the buffer zone planned in between, having to clean the water ditches separating their land from the nature corridor, and no possibilities for future expansion of their farms.

The project has produced adverse effects from farmers and caused major political divisions because good farmland was being sacrificed for nature. After all the trouble they had to go through, ironically enough, the OW project is not going through, and the farmers who moved away, moved for nothing, while the ones who remained are still not certain if and when they can return to their ordinary tasks.

- **Other Stakeholders**

  - ***Lelystad Municipality***

Even though Lelystad Province was directly involved in the planning process as member of the steering group for OW, the implementation (or later cancellation) of the project would pose smaller risks for the development of Lelystad, resulting thus in smaller uncertainties. The main stake of Lelystad in the OW project was related to the effects this may have on the plans for Lelystad Airport (an extension of the main (inter)national airport Schiphol (http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lelystad_Airport). The municipality asked for a delay in choosing the exact location of OostvaardersWold, due to uncertainties about the flying routes to the Lelystad Airport, which may go above the nature area planned, but the Province did not think that necessary. Further, no drastic interactions of the municipality with the other stakeholders came to light throughout the OW planning process.

- ***Almere Municipality***

This part is presented from the perspective of Almere Municipality, based on an interview with Henk Mulder, the City Development Director.

Amere Municipality was involved in OW from the beginning, at the request of Flevoland Province. The main goal Almere is hoping to reach through OW is to fulfill its nature compensation duty for new developments (such as a business park) and future city expansion. After negotiations with the State, Almere's contribution to OW (to be paid to SBB for nature compensation) was approximately €37 million. Further, the role of Almere was limited to following the process and advising, but without much influence.

Almere supports OW, seeing in it an opportunity for compensating its nature debt, for more recreation facilities for its inhabitants and new touristic developments. Since OW is located mostly on the land of Zeewolde Municipality, there are no negative economic effects for Almere of negative reactions from Almere inhabitants, although the new nature corridor poses some worries for the growth of Almere City to the East. (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/36612/almere-tegen-provinciaal-plan).

During the OW planning process there were no conflicts between Almere and the other participants, and the biggest uncertainty was about the successful implementation of OW, without which the nature compensation debt of Almere will not be solved.

- ***Zeewolde Municipality***

This part is presented from the perspective of Zeewolde Municipality, based on an interview with Bert Oldewarris of the Development Department.

The Zeewolde Municipality was involved in the OW planning process from its beginning. The route of the OW ecological corridor passes through Zeewolde, involving the Municipality implicitly, even though the Municipality did not favor such an ecological corridor which would be realized at the expense of a large agricultural area.

From the three municipalities involved in OW, Zeewolde stands to lose the most physical ground to the new recreation and nature planned area, which makes this municipality, its inhabitants and especially the farmers owning the land in discussion the main opposition of the project. As a result, Zeewolde had much critique over OW, addressing its size, considered too big, and the hindrance this will be for farmers, because of too much farming land lost. Furthermore, Mayor Ype Dijkstra and council members are unhappy with provinces' Regional Plan - they criticize the province for not having considered enough alternative locations for corridor, arguing that the west side of the Adelaarstocht would offer more space. (http://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuwsdossier/11/OostvaardersWold?P=19). But the Province wants to leave the west side open for future developments of Almere Municipality (the Almere Oosterwold project, which is treated later in this paper).

As a result of decreased agriculture in the area and demolition of the farming buildings, the property tax revenue of Zeewolde decreases. This could possibly be compensated by touristic and recreational functions and new developments of OW, but it is still uncertain how.

In the beginning of the planning process, Zeewolde had to make a zoning plan for the OW part located on Zeewolde territory, but asked the Province to make an integrated plan

instead for the whole OW. Further, the role of Zeewolde was limited to critically watching, advising and tracking the project. In 2010, the Province started implementing the project buying out farmers. The cooperation of Zeewolde was requested and where possible also given, for example in moving a farmer elsewhere while preserving existing rights as intensive farming. The Municipality felt they lacked any power of influencing the outcome of OW.

The greatest uncertainty during the process was the decision of the new Cabinet in October 2010 to cancel the OW plans. Some people, most of which farmers, received this as good news. Besides the few episodes of farmer protests in the beginning of OW, no other incidents occurred to challenge the relations between Zeewolde and the other participants.

- ***Zuiderzeeland Water Board***

This part is presented from the perspective of Zuiderzeeland Water Board, based on an interview with Rob Nieuwenhuis en Rob Peeters.

Zuiderzeeland Water Board has been involved in the administrative process for OW from its beginning, helping in deciding the location of OW. The chosen route – the Adelaarstracé, which was a spatial reservation for a possible road, is expected to decrease in altitude by 2030, creating water problems in the area. The role of the Water Board in OW was not fully clear until 2008, and there was much uncertainty about the water works to be done and their costs. In 2008, at the inquiry of the Province about the possibilities to realize water storage in OW, the Water Board to decide that due to the uncertainties about future water problems, it would be better not to invest yet in a solution for a problem which might occur in 2030.

The OW budget was also changed now: the Province had approximated the costs for water storage around € 30 million which the Water Board would invest (This would however only cover the cost for water management on 300 ha of the total of 6200 ha).

This decision not to invest in water storage anymore (while it was one of the main pillars of OW – nature, recreation and water storage), was interpreted by the other participants as a change in ambition, after having inspired high expectations about their role in OW. The long period of uncertainty about the role of the Water Board in OW led to too high expectations of the other participants. These expectations were now let down by the decision not to invest in water storage, fact which decreased the trust of the partners in Zuiderzeeland Water Board. As a result, the role of the Water Board has changed to advisory, and another water system was chosen for OW. Further yet, the other partners became more uncertain about the financial consequences after the withdrawal of the Water Board. After this incident, the communication between the Water Board and the rest of the parties improved slowly, but it never reached the initial levels.

- ***SBB – State Forestry Service***

Besides the public documents used to study the role of SBB in OW, this part is also presented from the perspective of SBB, based on an interview with Susan Bonekamp - Green Development Manager SBB.

The Forestry Commission (SBB) is an independent administrative organ financed by the central government, overseeing and conserving many nature areas in the Netherlands. The objectives sought by the Forestry Service (SBB) with the implementation of the OW were twofold. One was solving the problem of overpopulation and lack of food of big grazers in the

Oostvaardersplassen, by providing them with a safe route to the Horsterswold. The second goal was the fulfillment of nature compensation for new developments in the Province, such as the business park in Almere, the airport in Lelystad, the construction of the A6 highway and the Hanzelijn railway in the North of the Province (http://www.staatsbosbeheer.nl/).

The role of SBB in OW was that of advisory partner. During the planning process, SBB did not encounter many conflicts with the other partners. However, one case of tension stands out, between the State Forestry Service (SBB) and Flevolandschap Foundation. SBB owns the Oostvaardersplassen and the Horsterswold nature areas, which OW was supposed to connect, and they would have liked to become also the administrator of OW. Flevolandschap owns instead some of the lands in the future OW area, and they also wanted the administrator position of OW. After long discussions, the issue was solved by SBB making Flevolandschap administrator of two other nature areas, instead of OW (http://www.flevoland.nl/downloads/planvormingsfase/2007/P19_afspr_beheer.pdf; http://www.flevoland.nl/downloads/planvormingsfase/verslagen/SG_OVW_28-1-08.pdf).

- ***Flevolandschap***

The Flevolandschap is a Foundation managing nature areas in the Flevoland Province. The foundation bought 450 ha of the land necessary for OW, seeing the project a valuable addition to the national Ecological Network, and a good solution to the problem of overgrazing in the Oostvaardersplassen.

Regarding the relations with other stakeholders, Flevolandschap had a disagreement with SBB about the administration of OW. The case was peacefully settled by SBB giving Flevolandschap the administration of other nature areas. The biggest uncertainty came, however, from the decision of the State to cancel OW, since Flevolandschap had already purchased some land there. Bart Fokkens, Chairman of the Board of Flevolandschap, finds the cancellation of OW "social capital destruction". It is yet to be seen how the purchased land can be best used (http://www.flevo-landschap.nl/Nieuws/126/).

The goals, uncertainties, and power means of the OW stakeholders, along with the success of their exercise, are presented in the table below.

Table 5. The goals of the stakeholders to achieve through OW and their success

Stakeholder	Goals	Uncertainties	Power means	Effectiveness / success
State	*OW*	Feasibility OW Costs OW	Authority, Money, Politics, Framing OW	(No) success
	No OW	Winning court case	Authority, politics, Money, Framing OW	*Success*
Flevoland Province	*OW*	Commitment partners Farmers relocation Financing OW	Money, authority, policy, knowledge, expertise Partnerships, Framing OW Incentives, Threats	No success
Farmers, LTO	*No OW*	Relocation Expropriation	Protests, Not selling land	No success
Almere, Zeewolde, Lelystad, SBB Rijks-waterstaat,	*OW, Nature compensation*	Nature compensation costs, Location OW, Decision to cancel OW	Partnerships, Paid nature compensation to SBB	No success

2. Almere Oosterwold, Flevoland

The facts presented in this chapter are based, besides the public documents and media messages used, on the interviews held with Frans van Deursen of the Municipality of Almere - the Project Leader for Almere Oosterwold, and with Jan Eelco Jaansma, Wageningen University researcher and Project Leader for the Agromere initiative. In order to avoid overlapping information and repetition, the interview results have been combined with the information from other sources, and are described below.

Almere Oosterwold is part of the State- region program Amsterdam-Almere-Markermeer (RRAAM) (www.rraam.nl), through which Almere grows to become the fifth city of the Randstad, offering 60.000 new extra homes and 100.000 new jobs (RRAAM. Basisinformatie. Werkmaatschappij Almere Oosterwold) (http://almere20.almere.nl).

Figure 14. Map of Almere Oosterwold

(Source: http://www.mijnnieuwsbrief.nl/afbeelding/784-nieuwsbrief-27.htm)

Table 6. Interviewed people in the case of Almere Oosterwold

Almere Oosterwold	**Interviewed people**
Wageningen	Jan Eelco Jansma - Leader Project Agromere
Almere Municipality	Frans van Deursen - Project Leader

The Integrated Agreement Framework (IAK) contains the agreement between three operational organizations (WAO - Werkmaatschappijen): Almere-Amsterdam, Almere Centrum-Weerwater en Almere Oosterwold, for the realization of the regional developments proposed in the RRAAM program. This contract includes work agreements on the further growth of the city, in the field of housing, infrastructure, employment, culture, ecology, education, sports and finance (www.rijksoverheid.nl).

The growth of Almere, a barely forty years old city, into one of the five largest cities in the Netherlands by 2030, is described in the Structural Vision Concept - Almere 2.0 policy document. Based on this vision, the growth of Almere to the East spreads over the municipalities of Almere and Zeewolde. In this area there are 15.000 new homes planned in low-density housing in a rural landscape, which harmoniously combines the nature, recreation, agriculture and living. With the growth of economy, more business will establish there, creating about 26.000 new jobs (http://almere20.almere.nl). Almere's ambition to become the icon of sustainability, through organic town planning, is described in development strategy for Almere Oosterwold published by the municipality, titled 'Estate for Initiatives' (Almere Oosterwold. Land-Goed voor Initiatieven. RRAAM. 2012).

Almere Oosterwold, a 4300ha big area at the east of Almere, is a revolutionary approach to Dutch urban planning, which stimulates private initiatives and entrepreneurship for development, instead of the traditional governmental dictate. The area offers space for citizens to build their dream home, without the restrictions of development policies. The inhabitants have maximum freedom in choosing the shape and size of the plots, as well as finding sustainable systems for water, energy, waste, mobility and infrastructure, be it individually or in cooperation with the neighbors (RRAAM, 2011). In order to contribute to the sustainability goals of the city, 50 percent of the area will be used for urban agriculture, producing thus food for the city, and maintaining the rural character of the area (www.stedebouwarchitectuur.nl).

As council member Adri Duivenstein of Almere puts it: "The development strategy is based on an important principle: you have space to realize your dream, but you must do everything yourself. Initiators develop along with the plot itself all the parts needed: a piece of the road, energy, sanitation, waste disposal, water supply, a part of the green space for urban agriculture. Some parts are organized individually or collectively with the neighbors. The advantage is maximum freedom within a defined program of 18% built areas, 8% streets, 13% public green, 2% water and 59% urban agriculture. That leaves room for initiatives such as golf courses, plantations, autonomous villas, etc. (Almere Oosterwold. Land-Goed voor Initiatieven. Essays. RRAAM. Maart 2012).

If Almere is an artificial city, created from scratch on the drawing table, planned top down, first by the national service IJsselmeerpolders (RIJP), and later by the municipality, without any involvement from the future occupant (s), Almere Oosterwold contributes to the discourse on *Making Cities*, by allowing people – the future occupants, to create their city. (Almere Oosterwold. Land-Goed voor Initiatieven. Essays. RRAAM. Maart 2012).

The planning of Oosterwold is more innovative, more demand-driven - a clear example of *governance*: the role of the national Government shifts from determining to facilitating, and the municipal authorities leave much of the decision making to others – the interested citizens and entrepreneurs. (Of course, some may think that this is just a way for the government to save money). It is the farewell of a planning culture in which the government

or the developer had already predetermination what the new developments will look like. Here the responsibility for the establishment of the area - local infrastructure, water, energy, urban agriculture and public space, falls to the end user: the residents and businesses which will settle in the area. This type of planning is new in the Netherlands - is the transition from the planned to the organic growth of the city (www.rraam.nl).

The trend shift from *housing for citizens* to *housing by citizens* symbolizes, in the opinion of Almere council member Adri Duivenstein, the empowerment of society strengthening the social, economic, political, educational, racial and spiritual force (s) of the individual and the society as a whole.

Almere has the freedom to build housing that no longer meets all the rules and requirements of the Building Decree. This is a five-year pilot project, the results of which can be included in future updates of the building regulations (Almere Oosterwold. Land-Goed voor Initiatieven. Essays. RRAAM. Maart 2012).

Agromere

Figure 15. Agromere

(Souce: http://www.agromere.wur.nl/UK/The_project/)

In traditional planning, the rural functions such as food production and nature are usually separated from the urban development. New research is lately aimed at including agriculture, on a smaller scale, in urban, so that the benefits of both types of environments become equally beneficial to city and countryside people. One such example is Agromere - a project (initiated by Jan Eelco Jansma, researcher at the Wageningen University) through which an attempt is made to bridge this separation between urban and rural activities. The objective of Agromere is integrating urban and rural life into a residential quarter, exemplified in the real-life agricultural city planned in Almere Oosterwold.

Almere Oosterwold is a 4300 ha development area at the East side of Almere, partly located on the Municipality Zeewode. It is part of the Almere 2.0 Structure Vision plan of helping Almere grow to the fifth city of the Randstad. 15.000 new houses (of the total of 60.000 for

the growth of Almere) are planned here through the State - region program Amsterdam-Almere-Markermeer (RRAAM) (www.rraam.nl; http://almere20.almere.nl).

Based on the principles proposed by Agromere, Almere Oosterwold is an initiative aiming to transform the 4300 ha area into a low-density living area in a rural landscape, where people can design their own houses. However, they are also responsible for realizing their facilities in a sustainable way: using alternative energy sources, storing rainwater, disposing of waste, maintaining, and enriching the green elements in the environment.

The plans for Oosterwold were developed in 2010 by the Operating Company Oosterwold Almere, a close cooperation between the municipality of Almere, the RVOB (National Realty and Development Company) and architects MVRDV.

Planning process

Compared to traditional planning in the Netherlands, the planning of Oosterwold is more innovative, more demand-driven - a clear example of *governance*: the role of the national Government shifts from determining to facilitating, and the municipal authorities leave much of the decision making to others – the interested citizens and entrepreneurs. (Of course, some may think that this is just a way for the government to save money). It is the farewell of a planning culture in which the government, or the developer, had already decided what the new developments would look like. Here the responsibility for the establishment of the area - local infrastructure, water, energy, urban agriculture and public space, falls to the end user: the residents and businesses that will settle in the area. This type of planning is new in the Netherlands - is the transition from the planned to the organic growth of the city (www.rraam.nl).

The Almere Oosterwold project is a radical alternative for large scale urban planning, in which residents themselves design the area. The end user has the chance to realize his or her dream home, without much interference from the government. This type of development is new in the Netherlands, making thus the planning process very *uncertain* for all parties involved: it is not clear what everyone can expect, what their desires are, how they are going to fulfill them and what that means for the neighbors and for Almere.

In traditional housing development, a developer buys the land, builds the houses and sells them. In Almere Oosterwold, the people planning to live in the area buy the land, build their own houses and have to arrange their own facilities. The future residents have the freedom to fulfill their living dream, but they also have the responsibility to take care of all the infrastructure and living arrangements. These include access roads, public green, production of clean energy, urban agriculture, retention and drainage of rainwater, clean drinking water, processing of waste and wastewater, as well as the overall spatial coherence of the different functions.

Almere Municipality, together with the other actors (the State, Flevoland Province and Zeewolde Municipality), is working on a Structure Vision containing the playing rules for Almere Oosterwold, which should be ready by the end of 2012. The main guidelines for the area are thus made public, and anyone willing to build a life in Almere Oosterwold will have to play by those rules. Besides that, they have the freedom to design their plot according to

their wish and creativity, making of Almere Oosterwold a ***planned anarchy,*** in which uncertainties play a very important role for anyone willing to live there.

Approximately 50% of the land in Almere Oosterwold is currently owned by the National Government, roughly 25% by farmers and the rest of about 25% by developers (who had bought it about 5-6 years ago, hoping to develop residential areas). The current inhabitance of the area consists of about 40 farmer families and 50-60 homes. They can continue to live there, without changing much, or can choose to take part in helping create the new sustainable communities (but they are not required to do so).

The investors have the choice between four types of plots, with characters from highly agricultural if located on the edges of the area or along the existing green elements (such as the old riverbed Eemvalley), to densely built plots, is located along the main roads, with public transportation facilities. They are: agricultural, landscape, urban and standard plots. The first comers have thus more choice.

Any organization or private party willing to establish in Almere Oosterwold, would have to choose the location of the desired plot, talk to the current owner (state, farmer or developer) and negotiate the conditions: shape and size of plot, main function – agricultural, recreational, nature and so on. After which the building works can start.

A. Stakeholders in Almere Oosterwold

Almere Oosterwold is a pilot project, still in its initial phase, and of such a nature that not many of the stakeholders are yet known. The main stakeholder – the initiator of the project- is the **Municipality of Almere**.

The **other stakeholders** are the *current inhabitants* of the area (according to the municipality less than 100 people, of which approximately 40 farmers), *land owners* (mostly developers who did not yet build houses, farmers or governmental bodies), and *future investors (*citizens, organizations or developers who want to live or open a business in the area).

Due to the fact that most stakeholders are not yet known, the relations between them cannot yet be studied, and their uncertainties regarding the planning and development of Almere Oosterwold are deduced from the theory studied, and from the interviews held with the initiators of the project (mentioned earlier in this chapter). The information in this part is thus speculative and presents the situation from the point of view of the researcher and of the interviewed people.

The uncertainties of stakeholders in Almere Oosterwold are presented in the table below, along with their management strategies, and the power means available for that.

Table 7. Uncertainties, power and uncertainty management in Almere Oosterwold

Stakeholder	Uncertainties	Power means	Uncertainty management
Almere Municipality	Feasibility, Costs, profits Who will move there/invest How will they interact Goals/ values	Authority Regulations Incentives Framing Almere Oosterwold	Flexibility (development / interactions) No pre-investments Research Participatory planning Area monitor
Land owners (government 50%, farmers 25%, developers 25%)	Selling land (profit) Getting involved in new developments Building public facilities	Money, property (Not) selling land (in desired form)	Communication Negotiations Flexibility
Farmers Current inhabitants	New neighbours /functions Effects on current practice (move out)	Local knowledge (Not) selling land Intensive farming Produce for local market	Networking Communication Help new inhabitants with agriculture
Future inhabitants, investors	Regulations Location (accessibility, facilities) Type of plot Financing (loans) Work (alone / partners) Neighbours (nuisance)	Money, Partnerships, Lack of strictly defined rules and policies	Communication Negotiation Conflict management (competing, collaborating, accommodating, avoiding, compromising) Coordination of projects Flexibility

Discussions

OW was a highly politically sensitive project, as a result of which not all parties were willing to talk, and from the interviewed ones, not all felt free to talk openly. The facts presented here may thus not be presenting all sides of the story. In addition, some of the information gathered through interviews may be biased, since it presents the point of view of the interviewee, and is presented here through the interpretation of the researcher.

The planning approaches used in the two cases studies are very different: while in planning OostvaardersWold (OW), the Province (Flevoland) took a top-down approach, taking and keeping the lead in the planning process, in Almere Oosterwold the Municipality of Almere allows the future inhabitants to become both the planners and the beneficiaries of the area. As a result, the uncertainties and power manifestation in the two cases are also different per case, even though the geographical, political and social conditions are the same (the cases are planned on geographically adjacent areas in the province of Flevoland), and some of the stakeholders involved in the two cases are the same (such as the Flevoland Province regional Government, the National Government, the municipality of Almere and some of the farmers living in the planned areas). The uncertainties and power relations in the two cases will now be discussed separately.

1. Uncertainties in the case studies

The three **types of uncertainty** presented by Friend and Hickling (2005) (**UE**, or uncertainty about the working environment, due to incomplete knowledge about the (social, political or economic) context, or due to lack of technologies to carry out the necessary research; **UV,** or uncertainty about values guiding the other stakeholders, due to lack of knowledge about the interests, desires, norms and goals of participants in the planning process; and **UR,** or uncertainty about interrelated fields of choice - the cause-effect relations of specific actions, which may trigger undesired (negative) effects in other areas) were useful as a *guide* in tracing and studying the uncertainties in the two cases studied.

It was, however, difficult to make clear separations between the three types of uncertainty: they seemed rather interconnected. In OW, even though much research was carried out, there were still doubts if the location was optimal (Zuiderzeeland Water Board, for example, decided not to invest in water storage technologies in OW, due to expected problems of high level water by 2030, making it thus more difficult for the Province to reach its water storage goal, and implicitly hindering the cooperation between the two parties). As for uncertainties about values and interrelated fields of choice (which Abbott presents together as planning *process* uncertainties), they could both be observed together in the planning process of OW: the choices made by stakeholders were based on their values and goals, and the effects of such choices were thus experienced by other stakeholders based on their own values and goals. In the Almere Oosterwold case, for example, since most stakeholders are not yet known, the uncertainties related to their values and interrelations were mostly speculative.

The analysis of the OW uncertainties is thus not tightly following the uncertainty classification of Friend and Hickling (2005).

A. OostvaardersWold

The high complexity and levels of *uncertainty* in participatory planning are believed to be the result of interactions of multiple stakeholders with conflicting goals, perceptions, values, commitments and resources (Forester, 1989; De Roo, 1999; Faludi, 2000).

The Flevoland Province authorities (further referred to as the Province), as the ones in charge for the planning process of OW, represent the *planner of OW.* During the planning process for OW, the Province was faces with many uncertainties, related to the commitment of other stakeholders, and other factors influencing the successful implementation of OW.

Initially the ***goal*** of the **State** was the realization of an ecological corridor to function as a way out for the big grazers suffering from lack of space and food in the Oostvaardersplassen. This goal was commissioned further to the Province, who at first saw no benefits in OW, but after adding a few points of own interest to it (water storage, recreation, and nature compensation for other developments in the province), the realization of OW became also the goal of the Province. As the responsible party for the realization of OW, the **Province** had to deal with uncertainties on different levels: about the commitment and involvement of the other parties, about the farmers and their willingness to sell their land, about the administration of the new ecological corridor, about the effectiveness of the corridor for the animals in the Oostvaardersplassen and later in the process about the chances of still implementing OW after the decision of the State to cancel the project.

The **other stakeholders** involved in OW (Municipalities of Almere, Lelystad and Zeewolde, Zuiderzeeland Water Board, SBB – State Forestry Service, Flevolandschap, World Wildlife Fonds), depending on how much they stood to gain or lose from the realization of OW, were able to align their goals with those of the Province, avoiding thus (new) uncertainties or conflicts. For example, Almere saw in OW a way of fulfilling its nature compensation duty, while for Zeewolde, OW meant losing much valuable and productive agricultural land, and with it a source of economic income. Their main uncertainties were about how much some of them had to pay for (past and future) nature compensation, about the exact location of OW and the effects of that for other developments (such as the planned Lelystad Airport), and about the future of OW after de decision of the State to cancel the project.

Eventually, after many meetings and discussions, the roles of each partner in OW were concluded in the signed agreements. This included also the amount of money some partners had to pay as nature compensation for developments such as the Hanzelijn Railway in the North of Flevoland, the broadening of the Highway A6, and city growth in Almere. The signing of the agreements set the Province's mind at ease, thinking that as enough proof of commitment.

There was however one exception to the agreeing parties: the **farmers**. The planning and implementation of OW has brought with it from the beginning much uncertainty for farmers – for those who had to sell their land and move away, as well as for those staying behind, due to the side effects of nature on their fields, such as weed infestation.

The farmers were not legally forced to sell their lands. Their *goal* was thus to remain there in protest, hoping for the OW plans to be cancelled. This posed a problem for the Province, since the farmers were not legally required to move away, and they protested vehemently

against it: no offer from the Province (price for their land or help with relocation) seemed good enough. This opposition of the farmers to OW brought the Province in much uncertainty, which started thinking about alternative ways of convincing them to sell.

The situation was, however, not any clearer or certain for the farmers on whose land the OW was planned, about 35 in total. They have been living in uncertainty even since the OW plans have been announced. Mostly because they were told that selling their land was a voluntary action, while at the same time they were being pressured by the Province, manipulated and even threatened with expropriation if they did not sell their land. This went on for years, and after many unsuccessful protests and appeals to the State to stop the Project, some farmers gave in and sold their lands, moving away (or choosing to remain and use the land they just sold, as long as that was still allowed by the Province). Others still refused to sell, and remained in the area, waiting for more certainty about their situation: keep using their land as before, or be expropriated.

One of the main reasons why the farmers were not keen on selling is the fact that the agricultural land in Flevoland, and particularly in the OW area, are among the most fertile lands in the country, Flevoland being one of the newest formed polders. The farmers were thus not too quick on sacrificing such good land for nature, which they do not care much for, especially when it comes to the costs of their lives work and the wellbeing of their families. Another reason was the fact that the farmers were not impressed by the idea of moving away to make space for nature (in the Netherlands, farmers are by nature against *nature*, as the study of Beunen and Hagens, in 2009, shows) - they stood only to lose by that.

After many protests without results and after it became clear that the OW plans would go through, some of the farmers decided to take their chances and sell their lands now, while the Province was willing to help them find a new location. The farmers who decided to remain in the area were allowed to use their land for production on a temporary basis, until the OW would become clearer. But the uncertainty went on for years, until a decision was taken in 2012 to cancel the OW plans. And even after that, it is still not certain what the Province plans on doing with the purchased lands, if the farmers who did not move can return to their activities, and if the farmers who had sold their land could return and buy them back.

Underlying to their goals are the ***values*** people attach to things, based on the estimated risks of gain or loss (Lewiki and Briensfield, 2011). Uncertainty in spatial planning can also arise from lack of knowledge or understanding about the values of other stakeholders, or conflicting values.

A few years later in the OW planning and implementation process, some political changes took place: a new government was elected in November 2011, and that changed the dynamics of the process. Before that, the goal of most stakeholders was the implementation of OW (with as little impact for themselves as possible), except for the farmers, who have always opposed the project. The new government, however, changed the playing rules, and confused everybody involved by announcing that nature was no longer a priority due to the changes in the governmental policy and the available national capital, and OW would be cancelled (despite all the investments done so far). The new goal of the State brought with it new uncertainties for the stakeholders. If in the beginning of the project most uncertainties

were related to the commitment of the partners and their cooperativeness, in the later phases of OW, during the legal trial between State and Province, the main uncertainty for all the partners was if OW would still be realized or not, and what that would mean for the involved parties.

During the trial with the Province, the **State's** uncertainty was about winning the trial, and implicitly the amount of money they had to pay to the Province. Another uncertain point was about the feasibility of OW: was it worth to go on with the implementation, since much of the necessary land were already purchased, and much money and energy was already invested in it, or should they just cut their losses and stop now, not risking even more by continuing to spend on OW.

If in the beginning of OW, the Province's mind was set at ease by the signing of the agreement between stakeholders, after the elections in 2011 even a signed document proved insufficient proof of commitment: the State was no longer willing to be involved in OW, and withdrew, breaking thus its commitment. This brought up new uncertainties for the Province, even bigger than in the beginning, because by now, much work had already been done and much money and energy had been invested in the project. Two thirds of the lands had already been purchased, and the farmers either moved away or chose to remain use the land until the implementation of OW would be certain, and they had to move definitively. The biggest uncertainty for the Province was now about the decision of the State to cancel OW, and to only pay out part of the costs already made by the Province. The **management strategy** used for this uncertainty was suing the State for the amount of money promised in the beginning. The court case was however won by the State (due to a technicality in the signed agreements), leaving the Province with a big financial loss and much uncertainty about the future. It was mostly uncertain what the alternatives were for realizing a smaller version of OW (on the already purchased lands), and who would be willing to participate and invest in the new plans.

Uncertainty is also conceptualized as ***lack of control*****,** *instability, chaos* (Bordia et al., 2004)*,* due to lack of knowledge about certain events, or feelings of inability to effect a change, in a desired direction, on the environment" (Greenberger and Strasser, 1986). In OW, most stakeholders interviewed considered themselves powerless and without any meaningful influence, while – in their opinion, the Province held the power. From the interview with the Province, however, it seemed that the Province felt quite powerless as well, believing that the State held the power to control the success of OW (which in the end they did, seeing from the way OW ended). A relation can thus be noticed in this hierarchy of **power** between stakeholders, and their feelings of helplessness and **uncertainty** (which could also be observed from the attitudes of the interviewees, not just from their words).

B. Almere Oosterwold

In the Almere Oosterwold case, the uncertainties about the working environment are dependent on the choices of the future inhabitants and investors, since it is they who create the working environment, and decide what the physical environment is going to be like. At their turn, these decisions are based on their goals and values, as well as on the interactions with other stakeholders (such as land owners or future neighbours).

Considering the open – organic - way of planning Almere Oosterwold, also referred to as *planned anarchy*, uncertainty is expected to play an important role in all phases of planning and implementation of the project. These may be different for the involved parties.

The role of **Almere Municipality** in the Oosterwold project is that of initiator and overseer of the developments. However, even though in charge with the experiment, Almere Municipality has some uncertainties about the future of Almere Oosterwold, regarding the physical environment, the values and norms of the other involved parties, and the interrelated fields of choice.

Uncertainties about the complex environment of decision making in Almere Oosterwold are pertinent for the Municipality and for the investors/ inhabitants alike. It is, for example, still uncertain how much space has to be left open and where, how much nature, along the planned ecological corridor OostvaardersWold (which is currently going itself through a very uncertain period regarding its implementation).

Regarding the values of other actors, the Municipality is uncertain who the future inhabitants will be, if there would be enough people interested in coming to live there, what types of people, if they will be up for the challenge of arranging and building everything themselves, if they will be willing to cooperate and form a sustainable, prosperous community, and what this all will mean for the community and for Almere.

Even though there are a few guidelines for development, most of the rules are unwritten and less conventional, making decision-making dependent on the choices of the (future, unknown) inhabitants. Considering this freedom in choice, a developer/inhabitant could always choose alternative way of solving a problem, which may not be according to the expectations/ wishes of the Municipality, leading thus to conflicts. For example, the Municipality is in charge of improving the accessibility of Almere Oosterwold – broadening the existing roads, building a new one and building bicycle paths along the roads. But this is also dependent on the future developments in the area – if the area does not become inhabited as expected, it is not feasible to start improving the streets now.

Even if the **current inhabitants** of Almere Oosterwold are not required to take part in the sustainable development of the area, they are still faced with uncertainties regarding the future developments, about the new neighbors, the new functions and the new identity their neighborhoods may soon have.

Farmers are also faced with uncertainties about their business and the new neighbors. Can the farmers continue farming the way they did? Or should they adapt to producing food for the local market? Is that profitable now, or maybe they should wait a few more years until Almere Oosterwold is fully inhabited? Will they be able to expand their farms? Should they

consider alternative ways of farming- maybe educational animal farms, camping grounds on the farm or organic farming? Will the new neighbors complain about smells from the farm?

The **future inhabitants** of Almere Oosterwold are also faced with many different types of uncertainties, resulting from the fact that they have to take care themselves of everything. Even though they may be conceived differently by different actors, based on their desires, resources, and persuasion abilities, uncertainties could be grouped and treated in the three categories presented by Friend and Hickling (2005).

*O*ne type of uncertainty with which future inhabitants or developers of Almere Oosterwold are faced regards the physical environment: accessibility of the area and the facility choices are the responsibility of the end-user (which is not yet known). In the 1800s, the sewers systems, the streets, water pipes were all clearly designed and presented in the city Structure Vision. The citizens were beneficiaries. But in Almere Oosterwold the owner has to take care of everything. Someone deciding to go live in the area would thus have to decide about the type of energy to use, and its generation (which should be sustainable), about the access road – how broad and long it should be, about the water facilities, water storage and waste water management, performance of sun or wind generated energy, back-up energy networks…

What should an inhabitant do? How can all these uncertain issues be best estimated? How much will all these investments cost? How much can one afford to loan, and what are the guarantees of managing to pay back in time? Should one go into such a big investment project alone, or is it better to combine forces with the neighbours (if there even are any neighbours)?

An **investor**/ **developer** has to deal with many types of uncertainty: about being able to find a land plot in a desired area (for example, it may be already taken); about the willingness of the owner to sell the plot in the desired shape and size; about who the neighbors will be. Other types of uncertainties are about the work that needs to be done: where to start with the realization of facilities, constructing the road to the house, energy sources, water storage, wastewater management, agriculture. There are also uncertainties about the finances of the project – about the size of the bank loan necessary, and after buying the land, how long it will take to build the house and how costly will that be.alternatives may be considered for going into such an investment alone or with family or friends. Build the street alone or with the neighbors – that is if there are any neighbors? How long would the inhabitant have to live without energy, water or a street? Should he already move there? But if not, can he afford to remain in the old house until the new one is ready? And how long will that take? Could some alternative, temporary solutions be found? Or would that just increase the costs? Where will they go groceries shopping? Where would the kids go to school? How long will it take until a small community will be formed?

As for the interests, goals and values of other actors, it is yet uncertain who the future inhabitants will be, what their dreams are for their plot and community, how willing they will be in cooperating with their neighbours for the realization of the necessary infrastructure, if there will be nuisance (smell, noises) from the farms around or from neighbors..

Uncertainty management

The few rules laid down by the government for Almere Oosterwold are general, and the Municipality has no certainty whatsoever regarding the future development. This requires much *flexibility* and uncertainty management strategies in the part of the Municipality, in order to cope with all the types of uncertainty of Almere Oosterwold.

The main strategy used by the Municipality to deal with uncertainties in this project is *flexibility*. The authorities of Almere are not rushing into investing in the area unless they know for sure that there will be enough parties interested in living there and turning the area into a sustainable agro-city. If the project will not succeed – meaning that not too many people will decide to populate the new area and transform it into a prosperous community, the Municipality is then prepared to consider other uses for the land, such as allowing developers to build regular residential areas, or leaving it to be further used as agricultural land.

In order to help coordinate the developments and help minimize some of the uncertainties for all parties, Almere Municipality, together with the State, appoints an ***area monitor*** (or manager) who will help answer all the questions of those interested in living in Almere Oosterwold, and clarify their uncertainties. This way, every case can be assessed separately, and a decision can be taken together with investor, about what may or may not be built in a specific area.

Regarding the uncertainties about environmental issues, or costs of development, risk analyses and more research in the subject can help with decision making. The coordination of project – facilitated by the municipality through the appointed monitor – can help investors save costs.

The most obvious (and effective) solution for managing uncertainties *about the values of other actors* is *communication*: the interested parties should meet and talk about what each finds important, what are they trying to achieve, how they perceive the situation and what their uncertainties are. By making the objectives clear, and reaching a necessary level of trust, the participants can shape the common problems to deal with and frame uncertainties, being thus able to decide on the priorities. There is, however, always the chance that due to out of hand uncertainties and miscommunication leading to conflicts, different parties may end up in court. So the Municipality of Almere and the other stakeholders involved should be prepared for different circumstances

2. Power relations in the case studies

A. OostvaardersWold

In OW, even though there were multiple actors involved in the planning process, according to the interviewed parties, most of them had only an advisory role and very little effective power. The assumption present in planning theory and practice that *whatever power is, planners do not have it (*Booher and Innes, 2002), and that planning is the *servant* (Weiss, 1987; Harvey, 1989) or even the *victim* of power (Flyvberg, 1998), became somewhat disputable in OW. There the Province – the actor described by the other participants as the one with most power (besides the State) was also the *planner*.

Some may think that using material and authoritative power is more of a communist practice, which does not apply to current democratic societies, and that participants in negotiation and decision-making processes nowadays have equal chances of winning. In the planning process for OW, however, as it could be observed in the discussion with the interviewed stakeholders, the power of authority and the financial means were used repeatedly in negotiations, rendering other actors less powerful.

The State, for example, held the upper hand in the negotiation process, having at its disposal the financial means to ensure the realization of OW, or – as it latter happened – to cancel the whole OW plan by cutting its financial support. Even though at times the State did not have the full political support of politicians for both initiating OW and later cancelling it, as clearly shown in media messages and public political debates, there were still enough politicians supporting OW (SP, GroenLinks and partly CDA) or its cancellation (such as parts of CDA, PvdA and PPV) (http://publitiek.nl/debat/OostvaardersWold_17-02-2011).

The *management strategy* used for the uncertainty produced by the State's decision to cancel OW (and to pay out only a part of the initial promised amount of money), was different from the ones used with the other stakeholders. The State was a more powerful actor than the Province, being one of the main sources of income of the Province (Van der Valk, 2002). The only alternative the Province saw in this case was searching legal justice, by suing the State (who won the case in the end).

The Province used different strategies to deal with the farmers, such as: hiring a *communication mediator* (www.wing.nl/projecten) to help the communication flow between the two parties; using *incentives* – offering to help them find a new location for their business (www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/32834); or - according to the interviewed farmers, even using its *institutional authority* to intimidate and *threaten* farmers with expropriation.

In participatory planning practices, the **authority** of scientific **expertise** can give weight to planner's arguments, according to Albrechts (2003) and Allmendinger (2009).

Regarding the location of OW, the Province (or the planner of OW) uses *institutional and scientific authority* discourses to legitimize the OW location choice as the result of preliminary research done by external bodies, such as Arcadis, or Wageningen University. This was however not a strong enough argument to convince the farmers of the value and necessity of OW, nor of its location choice. The element of *trust* in science and in the Province played an important role in the relations between farmers and the Province. The farmers considered the

research done for alternative locations for OW biased and not representative of the real geographical and social situation, since the research groups were paid by the Province for the research, and the farmers themselves were not interviewed. In farmer's opinion, expertise was framed based on the power exercised by the Province, making thus knowledge political.

One strategy sometimes used in participatory planning processes when actors with different goals and resources are involved, is the **misuse of power,** in different forms – intimidation, manipulation, threats (Reuter, 1989). Throughout OW, the Province was repeatedly accused of *misusing* its *power* in pressuring the farmers to sell their lands, and even threatening them with expropriation (as could be concluded from the interviews with the farmers). Also Almere Municipality was pressured into paying more for its nature compensation (according to the Development Director interviewed). Furthermore, the Province exercised influence on regulations – such as the policy made *behind closed doors*, according to which any new big developments in the area were prohibited without a permit from the Province, for a period of six months (www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/47861).

Having a specific amount of power or influence proved to be beneficial in reducing some of the uncertainties of the Province, by – for example – influencing the regulations, or pressuring the other actors into consensus.

Framing OW: how do different stakeholders perceive the ecological corridor?

OW presents the struggle between alternative discourses of development, understood differently by the involved actors. Based on their values, perception of things, knowledge and conviction from past experiences (Putnam and Holmer 1992; Dewulf et al., 2011), people form opinions about new ideas – they ***frame*** issues. The struggles between the OW stakeholders reflect differences in the cultural and social positions of the disputing parties, based on local understandings of environmental issues – how people apprehend the changes threatening their local context and how they shape their uncertainties.

The case of the big grazers starving to death in the cold winters in the Oostvaarderspalssen has been the subject of many scientific and political debates and much media attention, waking many feelings of pity in the public, who expected the government to take action in solving this problem. When the Dutch National Government came with the idea of creating an ecological corridor for the migration of those grazers to other nature area in the Netherlands and even further to Germany, the OostvaardersWold was planned as a solution to a public problem. The Flevoland Province and its municipalities found themselves implicated in this mission of saving the animals, and tried to make it a multifunctional project, with benefits also for the human inhabitants of Flevoland. But even though this project would help solve the problem of the grazers, it would pose new problems for the Province. Displacing 35 farmers who had to move away to make space for the corridor, sacrificing productive agricultural land for nature, and possibly damaging the relations with other stakeholders involved in the project due to confusion and disagreements in the planning process. The discourse of *saving the animals* framed by the media gave weigh to the idea of OW, even though the locals involved were not very enthusiastic about it, as could be deducted from the interviews held. The involved parties framed OW differently, based on their input and sacrifices required.

The *State* saw OW initially as the solution to the problem of big grazer's overpopulation in Oostvaardersplassen, who could now pass over to the Veluwen National Park. However, the newly elected government saw OW as an expensive nature area which was worth more if cancelled. The *frame* of OW changed. The new government had different interests (namely saving money through budget cuts on nature, among others), based on which the costs and necessity of OW were re-evaluated. This resulted in a new perception of OW, which was now seen as a very expensive piece of nature the State could no longer afford to develop.

The way the State frames its risks and uncertainties is especially important, since it influences the uncertainties of the other stakeholders, and the way they frame the new situation. The new agreements of the new elected government were focused on saving money through budget cuts among others in nature development, and any further development of OW posed a big risk for the State, being costly. The continuing of OW was thus framed as a problem based on the underlying interests in money saving, and was solved by interrupting its process and putting an end to it: better stop now and save future costs. From the interviews held, as well as from the many public debates and media messages, this was not seen or experienced as a good decision: it was in fact considered a very bad choice of action, which rendered the Government unreliable and untrustworthy. The main argument for this was the fact that the agreements to realize (and financially support) OW were made long before the new budget cuts agreements, and should have thus been honored, not just cancelled based on new interests.
(http://www.sp.nl/milieu/nieuwsberichten/8193/101203;
http://publitiek.nl/debat/OostvaardersWold; www.almeredezeweek.nl/nieuws/2170345).

The *Province* saw OW as a necessary multifunctional development: as a wildlife migration corridor, which was also offering opportunities for other functions. These functions were expanding the recreation facilities in Flevoland, compensating nature for other developments, and finding water retention possibilities, not to forget the status and fame such a project would bring to the Province, according to the WWF director "*OostvaardersWold will soon form a stunning uninterrupted nature corridor, along with the Oostvaardersplassen. This project, unique to the Netherlands is a valuable example for the rest of Europe* (www.almeredezeweek.nl).

Even though OW started out as a solution to the problem of overgrazing in Oostvaardersplassen, frame in which the animals were portrayed as the victims, this role of the victim was soon to be overtaken by the farmers, whose peaceful lives were now disrupted by the new plans of nature. Some of them had to move away now for a second time, having come to the Flevoland about twenty years ago, when they were relocated for other public projects. The farmers in OW perceived the project as a big disaster for their families and their business. Not only would it be difficult for the children to readjust, or for the older farmers to restart their business somewhere else, but also the lands they were asked to give up are the best agricultural lands in the country, being among the youngest lands won from the sea. If the farmers were asked to make space for any other development, maybe they would have shown less opposition, but according to a study realized by Beunen and Hagens (2009), in the Netherlands, farmers are in general against *nature,* due to many restrictions it placed on their farming methods, or the contamination of their farmland with weeds from nature areas. Having to make space for nature is thus a sensitive spot for farmers, and OW was no exception.

Terms like *property, rights, freedom, and nature* have different, contested meanings for the Province and for the farmers. The farmers may have had property rights of their land, but the Province had means of overpowering those rights; the farmers had the freedom to move or to stay, but the Province had the means to influence that as well. The certainty farmers may have thought to have through their legal and democratic rights was turned into uncertainty after the Province exercised its power over it.

B. Almere Oosterwold

Almere Municipality's *institutional and authoritative power* is expressed in the framework with the rules to follow for future developments in Almere Oosterwold, but the end-user has the effective power of making things happen, since the financial and material *resources* are the responsibility of the investors (dependent also on bank loans and availability of construction technologies and work force).

The Municipality has no autonomous power (no monopoly or blueprints) in the Almere Oosterwold area – decisions are taken by the (future) land owner / developer, in agreement with the rules set by the municipality.

Even though the project enjoys political support and is widely considered a good initiative, there is always the chance of conflicts resulting from clashes between the interests of stakeholders, or their interpretation of the rules set by the municipality. However, before it gets so far, efforts should be made to deeply investigate the causes, and try to find a solution accepted by all parties. This could be done through better communication, negotiations and the conflict resolving strategies presented in the theoretical chapter: competing, accommodating, collaborating, avoiding or compromising.

The other stakeholders involved – aspiring inhabitants, governmental agencies, private businesses, developers, can also exercise power on different levels. Land owners, for example, can refuse to sell the land plots in a specific shape desired by the buyer, or for a different plot type/use than (s)he had in mind.

Participants in Almere Oosterwold can become empowered by forming networks, in which they can use their resources to support a cause – for example a new school in the neighborhood, or protest against other land uses – such as intensive farming nearby, or a big, noisy wind mill on the neighbor's property.

Discourses in Framing Almere Oosterwold

The use of media to spread a public image of everything Almere Oosterwold promised, and the discourses used to present it, targets a specific audience – the people who dream of building a beautiful house, expressing their own taste and desires, with few limits from the existing policy on public building. Almere Oosterwold is presented as a customized, desire-driven development, more fitting to the increasingly individualized society, promising citizens the freedom to build their dream home without much interference from the government or building agencies. There is just one catch: they have to also take care of the facilities – renewable energy, agriculture, water retention, waste water purification, building a piece of public road, etc.

If this may seem ambiguous or too much of a burden to some, it will certainly be a challenge accepted by those thirsty to express themselves through design. Besides, people can always try to form networks with their neighbors and work together to solve their common problems.

The use of images, cultural events, media messages and short films in which the planning boundaries for Almere Oosterwold are presented, help give a common understanding of what is expected from the future inhabitants of the area, while leaving enough room for own interpretation. This can be realized with the help of web blogs and the interactive games available, in which the public can design their own plot of land in Almere Oosterwold, alone or in cooperation with the neighbors. By finding out about the shared interests and worries, people can build a common frame of uncertainty, and work together in trying to manage it.

3. Power - (un)certainty relations

"*Power breeds certainty*" (McRaney, 2011).

Considering the very little scientific literature available connecting the concepts of *power* and (*un)certainty* in Spatial Planning, an attempt is made here to make this connection based on the literature studied on *uncertainty* and on *power* separately, and based on the two practical cases studied.

In a complex, unstable and inherently uncertain world, planning means basically dealing with uncertainty about the future, not necessarily by reducing it, but by controlling it (Abbott, 2005; Gunder and Hillier, 2009).

In participatory planning practice, where multiple actors with opposing interests, needs, perceptions, cultural norms or beliefs are involved, power is manifested in different forms in all phases of planning processes – it even precedes the planning processes, by influencing the actors who will come to work together on a plan. Power plays between actors with different experience, skills and resources, can influence them emotionally and *induce uncertainty* in the process of negotiation for spatial decision making, much like in a card game – everyone wants to win, but no one knows the cards held by the other players or what their next move will be (Sandercock, 2003). This uncertainty of participants about their hidden goals in planning processes and the can often translate in lack of trust and result in conflicts (Laslo and Goldberg, 2008).

Money

Uncertainties about the working environment can be managed by carrying out more research (Humpfreys, 2000; Friend and Hickling, 2005). Power – in the form of financial means (Foucault, 1980; Lee, 2000; Chen, 2001), could help with the managing of this type of uncertainty by paying for more research, for the technologies necessary, and for the implementation works.

In the case of OW, money played a crucial role in the success of the project: the biggest conflicts between participants, which led to the decision (of the State) to cancel the plans for OW, occurred due to lack of money. The main financial resource of OW was the State, but with the new budget cuts, there was little money available for OW. The biggest uncertainty of all stakeholders whether OW would be implemented or not – was thus dependent on the availability of funding. Lack of money was the source of uncertainty, and – if available – could have been also useful in reducing uncertainties.

Control

Based on the definitions of power given in chapter 3 of this paper, the most powerful actors in society, and implicitly in spatial planning, have the *capacity* to influence the realization of the desired outcome by *controlling* the (work) environment (Albrechts, 2003), or the

alternatives for action of the other stakeholders, usually less powerful (Dahl, 1963; Foucault 1984; Chen et.al, 2001).

At the same time, one way *uncertainty* is defined*,* is *lack of control* which can be mediated by gaining more *insight* into the circumstances surrounding the decision-making process (Bordia et al., 2004). More information about the changes planned in a field can confer people the feeling of *more control, and less uncertainty* (Bordia, 2004; Friend and Hickling, 2005). From these two perspectives of defining power and uncertainty, it could be concluded that power, or control, is (or can confer more) certainty.

Policies

One management strategy mentioned in scientific literature is the use of *policies and regulations,* which could help reduce uncertainties by laying the ground rules for new developments, limiting thus the choices of stakeholders (Friend and Hickling, 2005). For example, while the new policy of the Province in OW to prohibit new big size developments in the area (www.omroepflevoland.nl/Nieuws/47861) was adversely received by the farmers affected and other stakeholders, it did help manage some of the uncertainties of the Province regarding the future of OW, by ensuring that the physical appearance of the area will not undergo big changes which might later impede the progress of OW.

Authority

Power is *high status, authority, influence* (Graham, 1989)*, and* "the capability to secure outcomes, where the realization of these outcomes depends on the agency of others" (Aarts and Leeuwis, 2010).

In the relations between the OW stakeholders, the higher political rank of the Province conferred it the authority to take decisions about the project that were accepted by the other parties even if they did not always agree. Some of these decisions were choosing - and later changing – the location of OW, changing development policies, manipulating other actors into paying more for their nature-compensation duty, or intimidating the farmers into moving. It seemed – from the interviews, that they felt overpowered, and felt that resistance would be useless.

The authorities of the Province felt that they would have had more authority, and their plea for continued implementation of OW would have had more weight and would have been more certain, had they had the support of more influential actors, with more resources (such as investors, or big nature organizations).

Knowledge

In contrast with Francis Bacon's argument that *knowledge is power*, Flyvberg (1998) argues that *power is knowledge*: "*Power determines what counts as knowledge, what kind of interpretation attaint authority as the dominant interpretation. Power procures the knowledge*

which supports its purposes, while it ignores or oppresses that knowledge which does not serve it."

Power is responsible for creating, communicating and using discourse and knowledge (Foucault, 1980, 1984; Rebien, 1996). Power is selective – it decides what is important or not – it defines sets of values and norms regardless of truth or rationality – it defines reality (Flyvberg, 1998).

At the same time, based on different definitions of *uncertainty*, the main cause for uncertainty is *lack of knowledge* (about the working circumstances, the values and goals of other stakeholders, or about the effects of a specific choice in interrelated fields, about the future) (Bordia, et al., 2004; Friend and Hickling, 2005). Many of the uncertainty management strategies proposed in planning literature refer thus to the importance of gaining and use of knowledge flows) (Loveridge, 2001) in order to reduce the uncertainties.

Communication (discourse, frames)

Planning in governance systems is closely intermingled with power and its distribution in a society (Albrechts, 2003, Healey, 2003). The existing social power relations within *social structures* create conditions for thought, communication and action which shape people's understanding of the world, and helps them give *different meanings* to common circumstances or concepts, such as participation, uncertainty, common good (Richardson, 2002). Designing a new public function, such as a playground, in a specific area, may be perceived as serving the public needs by the inhabitants with young children, who would stand to gain by having a playground nearby. As for the inhabitants without children, this could be perceived rather as a nuisance, due to the noise expected.

People perceive their environments and their available choices based on their sets of *norms, values*, interests, knowledge and conviction from past experiences (Putnam and Holmer 1992; Dewulf et al., 2011), as well as on their estimated risks and expected gains or losses (Lewiki and Briensfield, 2011). By defining the common sets of *norms and values* of society (Foucault, 1980, 1984; Rebien, 1996; Flyvberg, 1998) power manifests itself thus also in the framing of uncertainties. Power can be used as strategy framing the attention of others through the language and discourses used (Hillier, 2002).

The amount of power one can exert is dependent on the amount of power the other participants have, and the interactions between them. The less control they have over a situation, the more uncertain their decision making process becomes (Bordia et al., 2004).

By analyzing and understanding the planning issues from the point of view of the participants in the planning processes, planners can make use of the powerful tools available to them to *frame* public issues and to influence the way people perceive them. This can be done through a selective simplification of the shared information, by defining – and limiting – the field of vision of the participants (Kaufman and Shueli, 2011). Understanding how the others frame the issues, and what the underlying interests are, planners can address those interests directly and improve communication, increasing the chances of a mutually beneficial outcome. Understanding more about the goals of other stakeholders, may also help build the trust relation between participants and help them feel less threatened and less uncertain.

Participation

Participatory planning is sometimes described as the cause of uncertainties in Spatial Planning, for allowing many stakeholders with different interests to influence the decision-making process (Faludi, 2000). However, participatory planning could also be a way of helping manage uncertainties about the guiding values of other stakeholders, by offering a setting in which different parties can come in contact with each other, and through discussions, to better understanding of each-other's goals and through negotiations to possibly reach consensus (Friend and Hickling, 2005).

Another strategy used in current participatory planning *negotiations* to create a middle ground of understanding for the involved stakeholders, is the art of talk and argumentation, by use of language and discourses (Forester, 1989, 1999; Flyvberg, 1998; Radford, 2002; Beunen and Hagens, 2009; Hewitt, 2009). This is meant to help reduce the uncertainties about the different values and goals of other parties, but it could at the same time, open a door for more power plays by giving those with persuasion skills an advantage in the conversation, inducing thus indirectly more uncertainty.

Empowerment

Empowerment of the participants can be realized through inclusion in democratic decision-making processes, by mobilizing specific groups of interest and gaining a meaningful voice (Miller, 1994; Stirling, 2006). Booher and Innes (2002) advocate the" network power" which empowers participants through collaboration.

Seeing how most uncertainties emerge from lack of knowledge about the intentions of other stakeholders, and the chances one has to reach his/her own goals (Bordia, 2004; Friend and Hickling, 2005), through empowerment favorable conditions are set for discussions between actors. By getting to know better the other parties, and what their individual and common goals are, the uncertainties can be reduced, and stakeholders can become stronger by cooperating in realizing those common goals.

In OW, considering its top-down approach, the participation of multiple stakeholders seemed to be more symbolic, not aimed at including their wishes. The organizing of the farmers in the opposition group OBA, even though it gained some media attention and a few extra meeting with the Province, in the end it did not have the success or power the farmers were hoping for.

In Almere Oosterwold, however, the bottom-up planning approach is offering opportunities for citizens to take initiatives and form networks through which they can work together towards reaching their goals.

In the table below, the types of power discussed above and their manifestation in spatial planning are presented based on their possible role in helping to manage uncertainties.

Table 8.The role of power in managing Spatial Planning Uncertainties

Type of uncertainty		**UE (Uncertainty about the environment)**	**UV (Uncertainty about values)**	**UR (Uncertainties about interrelated fields of choice)**
Definition of uncertainty		Incomplete knowledge about context (social, political) and technologies	Lack of information about norms and values of other actors	Choices in one field may have consequences in another field
Power (Political and material) means as additional uncertainty management strategy	**Financial means**	Financial resources to support research and new technologies Hire expertise	Offer incentives and/or alternatives to competing actors	Finance anticipative research, to forecast/avoid choice-related problems Pay off competition
	Rules	Clear environmental policies	Influence accepted values and norms	Limit the power of other actors (through policy)
	Political support	Gain political support for project	Justify and Legitimize objectives	Support choice with policy Use political authority to control information (media) and limit choices (manipulation, threats)
Power (professional and social) means as uncertainty management strategy	**Professional authority / Knowledge**	Access to scientific knowledge/ research Anticipate problems	Guide values/norms through information shared Frame uncertainty through discourse	Use professional authority (and status) to gain upper hand in negotiations Limit / control shared information
	Social power	Knowledge exchange through participation Gain social support for project (shape problem)	Find stakeholders with common goals Collaboration	Keep informed about social changes Networking Negotiation

Conclusions

The aim of this research was to investigate the concept of *uncertainty* in Spatial Planning, and the strategies used for its management, in order to see if they could be updated. Also, the role of *power* (in different forms and manifestations) in Spatial Planning was investigated, from the perspectives of the planner and of other stakeholders. The underlying thought was considering the role different types of power and their manifestation could play in Spatial Planning uncertainties – either creating them, or helping with their management.

For this purpose, an in-depth study of two cases in the Province of Flevoland, the Netherlands was done: the OostvaardersWold ecological corridor and Almere Oosterwold agro city. Even though the cases are geographically adjacent, they differ very much in almost all points: their function, size, planning styles, types of uncertainties and their management. Oostvaarderswol is a project designed as the solution to the problem of big grazer's overpopulation in Oostvaardersplasse It involved many stakeholders (some of which governmental bodies, being thus politically sensitive), and with them many uncertainties. Almere Oosterwold is part of the vision for Almere growth - a pilot project in which inhabitants are building their own homes and communities, without much interference from the government. They are, however, also responsible for the infrastructure necessary, facilities and city agriculture. The novelty of this type of project brings with it much excitement, but also much uncertainty

Uncertainties

In participatory planning, the increased number of stakeholders with differences in interests, skills, experience and resources often leads to uncertainty for all parties involved, making the decision making process more complex. These uncertainties can be about the (geographic, social, political, cultural) *environment* (UE) in which the decisions are to be made, or about the planning *process* itself. Here a difference is made between uncertainties about the underlying values (UV) guiding people's interests in the planning process, or about the interactions between actors, and the effects specific choices may have on interrelated fields (UR).

Uncertainty management

Multiple uncertainty management strategies are considered, based on available scientific literature, such as the *strategic choice approach* (of Friend and Hickling, 2005), or using the *uncertainty matrix* (of Maack, 2001) to determine the order in which specific types of action should be taken, based on their assessed impact.

Management strategies for environmental uncertainties (UE) include: carrying out *extra research, risk analysis, foresight, flexibility* in decisions made, so they can be adapted later in the process if necessary and *commitment packages* – or good timing for action.

Strategies for managing planning process uncertainties (including both UV and UR) are: *participatory planning*, improved *communication* with stakeholders (in order to better *understand* their values and goals and build *trust* relations), shaping problems, making *objectives clearer*, setting *priorities*, *negotiation, collaboration, coordination of projects* in

order to save costs*, compromising, networking* and using a *broader planning agenda*, as to include more elements which could impact the decision making process.

Power

Power in Spatial Planning was classified according to its *means* (or components) and its ways of *manifestation*.

The means of power present in Spatial Planning were further classified in two categories: p*olitical and material means* - such as financial resources, the army of the police force, rules and policies and authority; and p*rofessional (or institutional), social and personal means*: such as knowledge, expertise and the use of information - through rhetoric, persuasion or media.

The second type of power means was further classified by the possible manifestation (or exercise) of power in two categories: *power manifested by planners* (and the institutions they represent) and *power manifested by citizens* (or other stakeholders involved).

The *power manifested by planners* includes technical expertise, professional authority, the strategic use of knowledge (sharing it selectively, for example), negotiations, and communication in multiple forms (strategic use of language and discourses to frame common problems). The *power manifested by citizens* (or other stakeholders involved) refers to empowerment, or the active involvement in participatory planning, networking and collective action, organized local resistance groups**,** counter-planning, symbolic acts, lobbying, media stunts or civil disobedience.

Power – (un)certainty relations

Based on the analysis of *power* and *uncertainty* relations in the discussions, it could be concluded that *power* (in its different forms and manifestations) plays an important role in Spatial Planning uncertainties in two ways: the exercise of power can *induce, or create uncertainty* in multi-stakeholder planning processes, and the exercise of power can help manage uncertainties.

The exercise or manifestation of power can induce uncertainty in planning in different ways: through *financial resources* (or lack thereof), political changes, instrumental use of expert *knowledge*, use of *authority* – scientific, institutional, political or social in negotiations processes, or by limiting the choices available to stakeholders through its (power's) distribution in the social structures.

Some of power's features named as causes for uncertainty in planning processes could also function as uncertainty management strategies. These are the use of *financial resources* to help advance the planned projects (paying for research, technologies, or paying off competition), gain political support for the project (by positively influencing policy), or sharing specific pieces of *knowledge* with participants (pertinent to their uncertainties), which will help them better understand the problems causing the uncertainties.

Another way in which the exercise of power could help manage Spatial Planning uncertainties is by influencing the meaning people give uncertainty and the way they *frame it.* This could be done through strategic use the language and discourses, shaped to the fears,

interests and goals of the stakeholders. The uncertainties with which planners have to deal in planning practice are partly dependent on the ways the other participants shape their uncertainties. So if planners can find out what the other stakeholders are uncertain about, they could try to handle/ solve those problems, helping thus reduce own uncertainties.

The management of uncertainties starts with the way they are understood by those framing them. In addition, the power position of each stakeholder and the relations with other stakeholders influence their understanding and experience of uncertainties. For better understanding of uncertainties and conflicts in spatial planning processes, the underlying power relations between stakeholders must first be uncovered and studied. By understanding more clearly the forms of discursive interplay in daily activities of planning, planners can become more proactive, and their strategies for decision-making under uncertainty more effective.

Recommendations

Lessons learned from OW and recommendations for planners

The planning process and the communication between Province and the other stakeholders of OW were experienced as top-down approach, according to some of the interviewed parties: even though the Province gave the other parties multiple chances to communicate their ideas and wishes for OW, they felt that few of their suggestions were actually taken into account. This was considered a disturbing factor in the communication between Province and the other actors, especially the farmers. Improved communication between planners and stakeholders can help reduce the individual and common uncertainties.in order to avoid conflicts and to increase the chances of cooperation between actors, planners should thus pay much attention to the way they approach the other stakeholders, and use diplomacy in their relations.

Another point of attention emerging from the interviews, was the wish of some stakeholders (such as the farmers) to have been included in the planning process in its earlier phases. Even though it may not have made a difference in the actual decisions (seeing how the planning approach left no room for much bottom-up input, according to the farmers), knowing at an earlier stage what they could expect from such a project as OW (and what was expected from them) could have conferred them more certainty about the future.

An important lesson to learn from OW is that earning the trust and cooperation of other parties involved in participatory planning is not an easy task, and efforts should be made on all sides to treat the others with respect, and not take them for granted. Also, having someone's cooperation and trust can easily change, if the other party feels impartiality in the negotiations.

As for the relations with other stakeholders, and gaining their support, more flexibility is advised: for example, having considered multifunctional use of the farming land, such as agro-tourism, could have improved the relations between the Province and some of the farmers. From the interviews held it seemed that one or two farmers were open to this idea.

Money played an important role in OW: in fact, OW was eventually stopped due to lack of funds. As the Province later realized, having searched for alternative ways of financing OW could have been the key to the successful implementation of the ecological corridor. Trying to find investors in a project in time, and not trust fully on one main source (even though it may seem safe), may be a sensitive way of succeeding in implementing a plan, especially in an unstable economy.

Even though Spatial Planning uncertainties have been categorized in planning theory (as presented in the theoretical framework), in the case studies realized for this research it seemed that types and definitions of uncertainties are difficult to generalize or to fit in predefined categories. They were rather specific to each case, depending on the stakeholders involved and their interrelations. Decision making under uncertain circumstances should thus not take *uncertainty* definitions for granted, and move forward to finding solutions. Instead, planners should start by studying the context, in which the uncertainties are framed, and the underlying interests and power manifestation leading to the current perception of uncertainties of participants. Only after more insight has been gained

into the goals of the participants, their loyalties and history, and their understanding of *uncertainty*, planners can use their expertise to shape the information offered to stakeholders, influencing thus the forming of a common frame of the planning issues at hand.

Recommendations for the Flevoland Province

During the long and difficult path of OW, the Province has come across many uncertainties and threats to the success of OW. Different strategies were used for minimizing the effects of these uncertainties on the decision-making process, among which also (contested) manifestations of power. This can often have an adverse effect on the other involved stakeholders, jeopardizing the overall commitment to the project.

In searching for alternative opportunities of realizing OW (a smaller version of it on the already purchased lands or in a different location), the Province should consider being more cautious in communicating with the other stakeholders, and flexible in negotiations. Adopting a top-down position (even though it may be dressed-up as participatory planning) could cause the inhibition of some parties. As the old idiom says, *the carrot is more effective than the stick.* Diplomacy is a priceless tool that should be used well in planning processes.

Recommendations for Almere Municipality

In Almere Oosterwold, every investor and future inhabitant assumes both the role of the planner, as that of the citizen. Due to the simple fact that the many of the other stakeholders are not yet known, and there is no deadline for new joining parties, meaning that the pool of actors can continuously grow or change (and with it the uncertainties of already involved parties), the project is prone to much uncertainty. This could (and probably will) lead to many conflicts, but hopefully the area manager appointed by Almere Municipality will be able to clarify the issues and answer most of the questions of the disputing parties. Trying to solve the conflicts out of court is advised, in order to save time and money.

If the number of stakeholders grows considerably, the Municipality could consider involving more than one area manager, considering the novelty of this type of organic planning projects, and the subjectivity with which the few ground rules can be interpreted.

However, due to the difficult economic situation of the last years, and to the fact that the future inhabitants of Almere Oosterwold would have to invest not only in their house, but also in the works around it (infrastructure, energy production, utilities), the idea may seem too risky and discourage possible investors, leaving the area low populated. In that case, the Municipality of Almere may think of offering incentives to make the project more attractive to potential investors.

Recommendations for future research on the topic

This research was carried out as a local study, and may thus not be representative for other planning contexts. It is merely meant to bring a new idea on the planning agenda, in the hope of stimulating discussion and debate.

A deeper understanding of the relations between power and (un)certainty in Spatial Planning requires more research, in different contexts, including more elements of a culture (such as its historical, political, social, ethnic or religious background), for a broader applicability of the results.

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Appendixes

1. Interviewed people

OostvaardersWold				
Flevoland Province	Herald van Heerde – Communication liaison	0618-303 933; 0320-265-552. Visarenddreef 1, 8232 PH, Lelystad	Phone/ email	Vr, 25 May 12, 11 AM
Almere Municipality	*Henk Mulder - directeur Stedelijke Ontwikkeling van gemeente Almere*		email	26 Oct 2011
Zeewolde Municipality	*Bert Oldewarris*		email	28 Oct 2011
LTO-Noord	Jasper van der Horst Provinciaal Secretaris Flevoland	088 – 888 66 66 LTO Noord Zwolle Zwartewaterallee 14 8031 DX Zwolle jvdhorst@ltonoord.nl	0620-598381	Mo 14 May 2012, 11 am
Staatsbosbeheer Regio Oost	Suzan Bonekamp	Binnensingel 3, 7411 PL Deventer 0570-747100	phone	Fr, 25 May, 15.00
Waterschap Zuiderzeeland	Rob Nieuwenhuis Rob Peeters	Lindelaan 20, 8224 KT Lelystad. (0320) 274 911 . waterschap@zuiderzeeland.nl	email	

Almere Oosterwold				
Wageningen – Project Agromere	Jan Eelco Jansma	0320 - 291 612 0320 - 291 347	Phone/ email	19 June 2012, 10:30
Almere Project Leader	Frans van Deursen		Email	19 June 2012, 15:00

2. Interview questions

Interviews: Uncertainties in the planning and implementation process of the OostvaardersWold process

General questions

1. How did your municipality/municipality get involved with the OostvaardersWold project? Was it own initiative?
2. What does this project mean for your municipality? What new developments are planned, and how does the municipality profit from their implementation?
3. What are your tasks as municipality? Are these tasks (and were they always) clear?
4. Did these tasks change much over the years? Did that raise uncertainties about the process? What type?
5. Does your municipality have the opportunity to bring own ideas in the OostvaardersWold project, regarding both the planning process and its content? Are the other actors flexible in this respect?

6. Are there uncertainties regarding the support (social, political, financial) for this project? Which ones? How are they addressed?

Financial

7. What costs does the municipality have for the OostvaardersWold project?
8. Is the project worth the efforts and costs for your municipality? Are your objectives being reached?
9. Are there subsidies, or financial contributions from private parties?
10. Is (or was) the implementation of the project delayed by lack of money?

Social

11. How do the inhabitants feel about the OostvaardersWold project? What are their attitudes? Are they supportive?
12. Did they express their doubts or worries about the benefits or the success of the project? (Maybe when the new-elected government did not support the project anymore).
13. Were (are) there protests against the project (from inhabitants, farmers)? How were they treated?
14. Did people's attitudes change over the time, regarding the project? Are they more trusty of its success?

Political

15. Does your municipality enjoy political support? How does that help (with reducing uncertainties)?
16. Are (were) there conflicts with other stakeholders (municipalities, government, private parties, and investors)? Why? Are they being handled?
17. Are there objectives of your municipality which were not reached, due to lack of support?
18. Have there been moments during this project when you felt that power (influence) (of lack of it) had played an important role? When? Why?
19. Do you think that your municipality has enough power/influence to reach its aims?
20. Thank you for your time!