

Wolf Management and Perceived Legitimacy of Stakeholders in the Province of Gelderland

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Preface

This master thesis is a result of 7 months of hard work. I have experienced how to do social research and have learned a new skill, conducting semi-structured interviews. Sometimes writing this thesis was challenging, but I am proud about with the end result. I could not have done this on my own. Therefore I would like to thank all the people that have supported me during the process. First of all, I would like to thank Arjen Buijs, my supervisor for all his time and his feedback. My special thanks will go to all the interviewees, without their participation and true and honest stories about their experience, this master thesis was not possible. And last but not least, I would like to thank my family and friends that have supported me during difficult times.

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Abstract

The grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) is expanding its distribution in Europe due to better nature conservation and legislations. In 2019 the wolf returned to the Netherlands after 150 years. The wolf is a protected species, killing, hunting or catching is not allowed. With the return of the wolf conflicts arise, leading to debates on how to deal with the wolf. The province of Gelderland has appointed a “Gebiedscommissie Preventie Wolvenschade Gelderland” (Area committee for Prevention of Wolf damage Gelderland) in May 2019. The purpose of this committee is to advise the province of Gelderland about preventive measures and subsidy for those measures. The aim of this research is to explore the perceived legitimacy of stakeholders about the formal wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland; and to explore how this management is perceived by stakeholders in the province of Gelderland in practice. I have focused on empirical legitimacy. Legitimacy is defined as: “Legitimacy is determined by the degree to which power is ethically and legally justified, politically recognized and socially accepted”. I examined legitimacy by the use of the three concepts of Beetham; 1) it conforms to established rules 2) the rules can be justified by reference to beliefs shared by both dominant and subordinate 3) there is evidence of consent by the subordinate to the particular power relation and by the use of the input-output-throughput theory. In total 16 people have been interviewed by the use of semi-structured interviews in the months December 2020 and January 2021. The results show that the established rules are perceived as quite legitimate by the stakeholders. However, there are differences in beliefs between the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the stakeholders about the existence of the wolf and the wolf management. Nevertheless, subsidy for taking preventive measures had a positive influence on the perceived legitimacy. Consent was given by several sheep owners in the way that they participated with a pilot of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland. For the legitimacy of the management plan in practice the participation of stakeholders, the effectiveness of the management plan for the stakeholder and the process with the stakeholders are important. Not all sheep owners did feel represented and heard, but the preventive measures were effective. The Wolvencommissie Gelderland used several ways for communication. However, stakeholders did have the feeling that not all information was shared and that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the province of Gelderland were not always transparent and open. It is concluded that the wolf management plan is not perceived as illegitimate, but it is also not fully perceived as legitimate. Increase of the number of wolves and increase in wolf attacks will decrease the legitimacy of the wolf management plan. Depending on the reaction the Wolvencommissie Gelderland on new developments will determine the perceived legitimacy in the future.

Introduction

The grey wolf (further indicated as wolf), a large predator, is expanding its distribution in Europe after it was almost disappeared mainly due to a combination of hunting, lack of prey and deforestation (Trouwborst & Basmeijer, C, 2010). The comeback of the wolf is possible because there has been put a lot of effort to nature conservation and legislation. The increase of wild ungulates, the favourite diet of the wolf, has also helped to increase the wolf distributions (Chapron et al., 2014; IPO, 2019). The wolf is a large predator and therefore it stands at the top of the food chain (Ripple et al., 2014). With their presents, the wolf has a direct effect on prey densities (mainly cervid species), but also an indirect effect on the vegetation. Because wolves predate on herbivores, the numbers of herbivores will decrease (Kuijper et al., 2016; Ripple et al., 2014). This results in changes of vegetation structures. Because of the reduced herbivory, trees have the possibility to grow. Growing trees store carbon, and especially in the boreal zone, wolves can have a serious impact on carbon storage (Ripple et al., 2014).

Wolves are extremely good in adapting in cultural landscapes (Reinhardt, Kluth, Nowak, & Mysłajek, 2013). In 2017 it is estimated that more than 12.000 wolves are living in Europe, more than twice the amount of wolves living in the United States (approximately 5500) while the Europe continent is smaller and the human density is higher (Chapron et al., 2014; Drenthen, 2015). Wolves live in packs with a mating pair and their one-year old offspring (Mech & Boitani, 2003). After one, sometimes two years, the offspring will disperse to new areas. When the conditions are favourable, a female wolf can have puppies each year. A litter contains on average 5 or 6 puppies (Mech & Boitani, 2003). The growing wolf populations and the return of the wolf in more and more European countries does not go unnoticed, bringing emotions, discussions and conflicts (IPO, 2019).

European legislation

In many European countries the wolf is a protected species and it is not allowed to kill a wolf. There are two important legislations in regard of nature conservation in Europe; the Bern Convention (1979) and the Habitat Directive (1992) (Chapron et al., 2014; Ministerie van Landbouw, Natuur en Voedselkwaliteit, n.d.). According to the Bern Convention, (threaten) plant and animal species should be maintained and protected (Trouwborst & Basmeijer, C, 2010). This convention is binding to almost all European countries (Kuijper et al., 2019). In the Habitat Directive, in which amongst others the Bern Convention is processed, the 28 European countries that are bound to this directive, must ensure biodiversity and must protect and conserve plant and animal species and strive for a favourable enhancement of populations (Kuijper et al., 2019). According to the Habitat Directive, disrupting, catching or hunting wolves is not allowed (Borgström, 2012; Trouwborst & Basmeijer, C, 2010). There are some exceptions for these rules, in case of danger for public safety and regular attacks on livestock, but this is only possible if there are no other alternatives possible (Trouwborst & Basmeijer, C, 2010).

Management in Europe

In the following section I will discuss the wolf management in Germany, France, Finland, Spain, Denmark and Belgium. These countries have faced the return of the wolf, some countries

longer than others. Although these countries fall under the European legislations, the wolf management plans can differ from country to country. It is interesting to see how these countries are dealing with the presence of the wolf and which lessons can be learned.

Management Germany

In Germany, wolves have returned since 2000 from Polish populations and are strictly protected by the Habitat Directive (Kohlmorgen, 2016; Reinhardt et al., 2013, 2012). In some exceptional cases, where no alternatives are possible, a single wolf can be shot legally within the Habitat Directive (Herzog, 2018). The federal states (16 in total), are responsible for their own wolf management. This means that the wolf management plans are regional and can differ per federal state, there is no national wolf management plan (Kohlmorgen, 2016; Reinhardt et al., 2012). The first federal state that had to deal with the wolf was Saxony and a long time this federal state was a pioneer in wolf management. However, because of high reproduction rates and immigrating wolves from the Alps and Poland, the wolf distribution has expanded to many more federal states (Kohlmorgen, 2016; Reinhardt et al., 2012). Many federal states take Saxony as an example for their wolf management plan, which reduced the differences between the federal states.

In order to claim compensation for damage on livestock, a farmer should have taken preventive measures, if not, a farmer will not be compensated (Reinhardt et al., 2012). Wolf management in Germany can be described as a passive observation of what is happening (Herzog, 2018). In many federal states it is possible to receive subsidies for preventive measures. However, the height of these subsidies can differ between federal states (Reinhardt et al., 2013). Local people are actively informed about effective preventive measures to prevent attacks (Drenthen, 2015). To reduce and avoid conflicts, there have been put a lot of effort to involve stakeholders to find a sustainable coexistence of wolves and humans. When the wolf just had arrived, several discussion groups had been formed to involve stakeholders. Also information meetings for sheep farmers and hunters were organised by LUPUS Wildlife Consulting (Reinhardt et al., 2013).

In general, Germany has put a lot of effort to prevent wolf attacks, they have done multiple experiments of several preventive measures. According to a study of Bruns, Waltert & Khorozyan (2020), electric fences and fences with fladry are most effective in preventing wolf attacks. However, they note that there is not done a lot of research in the effectiveness of preventive measures. Also electric fences combined with guarding dogs are seen as effective (Bruns et al., 2020; Reinhardt et al., 2012). It is recommended to have at least two guarding dogs with a flock (Bruns et al., 2020; Kohlmorgen, 2016). However, many livestock owners did not have any experience with these dogs, so education was and is also important in regard of wolf management (Reinhardt et al., 2012).

Management France

In France, wolf management is centralised at national level. In 2018 the new National Action Plan for 2018-2023 was published. This action plan is developed by the Ministry for Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture (Sedy, 2018). Departmental authorities coordinates the National Action Plan on regional level in practice (Sedy, 2018). The wolves

have returned in France by Italian populations in the 1990s (Tack, Jary, Hecke, & Mulier, 2019). They occur mostly in the Western Alps (Tack et al., 2019).

Again, also in France the wolf is strictly protected by law. However, the French government provide regional hunting licences to reduce the wolf populations (Herzog, 2018). This may contradict the European legislation, but as Trouwborst and Fleurke (2019) mention, “the more wolves in a country, the more flexibility”. In the Habitat Directive it is stated that a country should strive for a favourable conservation status (in this case for the wolf) (Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019). In the National Action Plan it is stated, that the favourable conservation status of the wolf is 500 individuals (Ministère de l’Agriculture et de l’Alimentation, 2018; Sedy, 2018). However, it is estimated that there are more than 500 individuals living in France (Ministère de l’Agriculture et de l’Alimentation, 2018; Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019). For this reason the French government decided to set a quota to kill 10-12% of the wolves (Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019). The amount of wolves that can be reduced, are based on yearly wolf monitoring (Sedy, 2018). In this way it is not threaten the favourable conservation status and is killing of wolves under the Habitat Directive possible (Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019). The wolf management in France can be seen as an active wolf management in contrast to a more passive management in for example Germany (Herzog, 2018).

The National Action Plan further focusses on the protection of livestock and financial compensation (Ministère de l’Agriculture et de l’Alimentation, 2018). Also focus lies on education and training of livestock owners to increase the knowledge of these farmers. In France many sheep can roam freely without any protection. This results in a high amount of killed sheep by wolves compared to other European countries. In France more than 30% of sheep is killed by wolves, while in other European countries this is much less, only between 1 and 14%. With the new National Action Plan they put effort in preventive measure such as electric fencing and guarding dogs because they have shown to be effective (Ministère de l’Agriculture et de l’Alimentation, 2018; Reinhardt et al., 2012). An example is the intention to establish a “guard dog network” for the protection of livestock. Also livestock owners should have taken preventive measures in order to claim compensation when a wolf has attacked their livestock (Ministère de l’Agriculture et de l’Alimentation, 2018).

Management Finland

Finland has a long history with wolf populations, despite intense hunting in the last centuries the wolf never completely disappeared (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2005). Before Finland entered the European Union, it was possible to shoot wolves that were threatening, for example livestock (Borgström, 2012; Pellikka & Hiedanpää, 2017). However, when entering the European Union in 1995, they had to follow the Habitat Directive and killing wolves was not allowed anymore, with exception in the northern part of Finland where semi-domestic reindeers live (Borgström, 2012; IPO, 2019). In this northern part there is no quota for the amount of culling wolves (Tack et al., 2019). In other areas hunting is only allowed with special permits for the removal of individual wolves that caused problems by for example attacking livestock (Suutarinen & Kojola, 2017). The wolf populations in Finland did not reach a sustainable population yet, one of the reasons is illegal hunting (Borgström, 2012).

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is responsible for wolf management on national level. On the local level the game management districts are responsible for the wolf management (Bisi, Kurki, Svensberg, & Liukkonen, 2007). At first, wolf management was focussed on national and regional levels, but it appeared to be not effective. Also the focus of the wolf management has changed, first it was based on compensation for attacks on livestock, now the focus is on preventive measures to reduce wolf attacks (Salo, Hiedanp, Luoma, & Pellikka, 2017). Also, the involvement of stakeholders has been increased. Regional Large Carnivore Committees (RLCC) which involves for example NOGs have been established for increasing acceptability for large carnivore policy (Pellikka & Sandström, 2011). In these committees the regional policy goals are discussed. Discussions have indicated that a more local management would be appreciated (Pellikka & Sandström, 2011).

Management Spain

Wolves do not have the same protection status at every location in Spain. It varies between “strictly protected” and “protected, but hunting is allowed”. The Douro River is the border between the two different wolf managements. North of the Douro River, hunting on wolves is allowed, south of the Douro River the wolf is strictly protected (Quevedo et al., 2019). Wolf management is decentralised to the regional governments (Quevedo et al., 2019).

Most wolves live in the regions: Galicia, Castilla y Leon and Asturias (Quevedo et al., 2019). These regions also have their own (different) management plans. In other regions wolf management plans are lacking. In the management of Galicia, population viability is important and the wolf is seen as a game species. This is the same for Castilla y León (Quevedo et al., 2019). Both regions work with hunting quotas where the hunting quota of Galicia is dependent of the depredation of livestock by wolves. Besides, they also have established management zoning, which includes a zone where no lethal management take place, a hunting zone, and a zone where culling is possible as reaction on livestock predation (Quevedo et al., 2019). The wolf management plan of Asturias is focussed on increasing tolerance of the wolf in this region (Quevedo et al., 2019). The wolf is not considered as a game species, but population control is seen as important (Quevedo et al., 2019). Asturias have created a Wolf Control Action plan in which the annual management actions are stated (Ottolini, De Vries, & Pellis, 2020). It is estimated that annually 200 wolves are killed. In the management plan of 2015 it is stated that also residents can participate in the culling activities (Ottolini et al., 2020).

Following the Habitat Directive, the Spanish wolf management plan should provide information and guidelines about conservation, managing and restoring viable wolf populations, but this is in most of the regional management plans lacking (Quevedo et al., 2019). In the management plan they do focus on the coexistence with humans (Tack et al., 2019). The government provides subsidies to subsidise preventive measures such as fences and guarding dogs (Delibes-Mateos, 2020). In the Asturias region, livestock is well protected and wolf attacks are low (Ottolini et al., 2020). At daytime livestock is protected by shepherds and at night they are locked up in pens. Across Spain farmers can get compensated if a wolf attacks livestock (Delibes-Mateos, 2020; Ottolini et al., 2020). The management plans will be updated every 10 years.

Management Denmark

In 2012, the first wolf returned to Denmark (Højberg, Nielsen, & Jacobsen, 2017). Also, in this country the wolf is native and therefore Denmark is obliged to protect and support recolonisation. Hunting or capturing wolves is not allowed, by breaking the law you will get a fine and you can go to prison for up to two years (Højberg et al., 2017). The only exception of culling a wolf is if it is causing serious problems and no other alternatives are possible similar as in Germany. The decision of the exception can only be taken by the authorities (Sonne et al., 2019).

The Danish Wildlife Management Council for the Department for the Environment has created a management plan. In this management plan it is stated that farmers will be compensated if livestock is attacked by wolves if preventive measures have been taken. The management plan is “dynamic” which means that it will be adapted if there are new insights or experiences (Højberg et al., 2017).

Management Belgium

The management plan of Belgium does not much differ from the wolf management plan of Germany or Denmark. The wolf is strictly protected and only in some exceptional cases a wolf can be killed (Everaert et al., 2018). Damage caused by wolf can be compensated by the government. Not only the wolf itself is protected also the living environment is protected (Everaert et al., 2018). A lot of attention goes to the communication about the wolf to increase knowledge and decrease for example fear. Also the use of preventive measures is stimulated in the wolf management plan (Everaert et al., 2018).

Looking at these European countries it can be said that there is put a lot of effort in taking preventive measures. Electric fences and fences combined with guarding dogs is most often recommended and subsidies are provided to support farmers. Also, in most countries farmers can get compensated for damage caused by wolves. However, although these countries fall under the same European legislations, the wolf management plans can differ per country. In for example Germany and Belgium the wolf is strictly protected and hunting, disrupting or catching is only allowed in exceptional situations where no alternatives are possible. Where in parts of Finland and Spain the wolf can be legally killed. However, wolves do not take boundaries in consideration, many wolf populations are transboundary. In total there are ten different (sub)populations of which eight populations lives at borders (Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019). It is possible that a population living on the border is protected at one side of the border, while at the other side it can be shot. For this reason countries are starting to work together for a more transboundary wolf management (Reinhardt et al., 2013).

Conflicts

Although in many European countries there is a clear wolf management plan, there are conflicts about the return and the existence of the wolf. I will not discuss the conflicts country specific, because in many countries the conflicts are going about the same topics. However, I will discuss some of the reasons for the conflicts.

Depredation of livestock and competition between wolf and hunters is an important source of the conflict (Skogen, 2001). Although farmers can get compensated, for many farmers

options are restricted to react on a wolf that attacks livestock (Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019). In some cases, emotions run high. In France farmers kept a national park director and two others as hostages because they did not agree with the management of the park (Tack et al., 2019). Because of disagreement of the wolf management plans, illegal hunting takes place, which is one of the important death causes of wolves (Borgström, 2012; Reinhardt et al., 2013; Sonne et al., 2019; Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019).

There have been a lot of research about the attitude of people towards the wolf. In a meta-analysis of surveys conducted in Europe from 1976 till 2012, about attitudes towards wolves (and bears), it could be concluded that the attitudes of hunters and farmers are more negative towards the wolf than that of the general public (Bisi et al., 2007; Dressel, Sandström, & Ericsson, 2015). Also people that have experienced damages caused by wolves have a more negative attitude (Dressel et al., 2015). Other factors of negative attitudes were age and educational level. Older and less educated people had a more negative attitude while young and more educated people had a more positive attitude (Bisi et al., 2007; Dressel et al., 2015). Also knowledge seemed an important factor in the way how people view the return of the wolf (Arbieu et al., 2019). An interesting result was the fact that, when the wolves lived longer in a country, the positive attitude decreased over time (Dressel et al., 2015). However, a study of Figari & Skogen (2011) discovered that most of the time the discussion was not about if the wolves were welcome, but how many wolves could be tolerated. Which can be related to the fact that with a higher abundance of wolves, the chance of livestock attacks is larger.

Another important aspect is about how people view their environment. Mostly farmers and hunters that have a negative attitude against the wolf see the environment as a place to use. While conservationists and others, that are in favour of the wolf, do see the environment more as untouched nature (Figari & Skogen, 2011). It is important to recognise that people have different views on nature and this affects their opinion about the return of the wolf. The relationship of human and nature has changed (Drenthen, 2015). More people are living in urban areas and are removed from nature. These people see their environment as humanised and that humans have the control of nature (Drenthen, 2015). Also concerns and fear for the attacks of wolves on people have effect on the acceptance of the return of the wolf. However, there are also people who sees the return of the wolf as an enrichment of nature and prove for true nature, where humans are less dominant (Drenthen, 2015). The conflicts are not only about the wolf itself, it is rather social and economic (Kuijper et al., 2019). Because of the different interests of stakeholders, there are different ideas and preferences about wolf management (Slagle, Wilson, Bruskotter, & Toman, 2019). It is important to take these socio-economic conflict into account to create support for wolf management (Kuijper et al., 2019).

Management of the Netherlands

In this research the focus will be the return of the wolf in the Netherlands. In 2019 the wolf has officially returned to the Netherlands after more than 150 years (BIJ12, 2020b). It did not come as a completely surprise, because wolf populations in Europe are growing and the wolf already had visit the country multiple times (Drenthen, 2015). For some it was hard to believe that this predator could live in a highly populated area as the Netherlands (Drenthen, 2015). There are at the moment three wolf territories in the Netherlands. Two are located at the

Veluwe in the province of Gelderland. The wolves living in the northern part of the Veluwe have had a litter in 2019 and in 2020 (BIJ12, 2020c). The third territory lies in the province of Noord-Brabant (BIJ12, 2020a). In September 2020 also in Drenthe a wolf had been officially registered as territorial wolf for several months but this wolf has moved to Germany, just across the border the province of Drenthe (BIJ12, 2020b, 2020a). It might be possible that the wolf will return to Drenthe, but there is no guarantee (BIJ12, 2020a). Besides these provinces, almost every province in the Netherlands have already faced a wandering wolf, only the province Noord- and Zuid-Holland and Zeeland have had no visits of a wolf (BIJ12, 2020d).

In the Netherlands regulations and policy regarding to the wolf is decentralised to the 12 provinces (van Geel, 2019). In regard to this decentralisation, the “Interprovinciaal Wolvenplan” is written with the focus of providing information about subsidies and measures that should be taken to prevent livestock attacks. In this report it is stated who is responsible for prevention, compensation, information and research. It is a basis which each province can use to form a policy (IPO, 2019). However, just as with the management plan of Denmark, the “Interprovinciaal Wolvenplan” is dynamic, as new practical insights and experiences can be adjusted to the report (IPO, 2019).

Just as in many other European countries, farmers can get compensated for damages on livestock caused by a wolf. The amount of compensation depends on many factors such as: breed, gender, purpose of use, health status, pregnancy and stadium of pregnancy and whether or not being a biological company (BIJ12, n.d.). Until 2022 livestock owners will be compensated, also if they did not take preventive measures. After this period farmers should have taken preventive measures in order to claim compensation (IPO, 2019). Therefore, the focus of the management plan is informing farmers about preventive measures and provide financial support to take these measures (van Geel, 2019).

The province of Gelderland has appointed a “Gebiedscommissie Preventie Wolvenschade Gelderland” (Area committee for Prevention of Wolf damage Gelderland) in May 2019. In this committee different stakeholders are involved and the committee has several tasks related to damage prevention of wolf attacks (van Geel, 2019). Also the provinces of Drenthe has established a committee that already prepared for the wolf and although the wolf has moved, the committee will continue their work and support livestock owners for taking preventive measures (BIJ12, 2020a; Provincie Drenthe, 2020). However, the province of Drenthe does not have a provincial policy (Meijer, personal communication, September 24, 2020). The province of Noord-Brabant has recently formed a “Gebiedscommissie Preventie Wolvenschade Noord-Brabant” (Area committee for Prevention of Wolf damage Noord-Brabant) just as in the province of Gelderland (BIJ12, 2020a). It is not clear if this province is working on a provincial wolf management plan. Also, for the other provinces there are no signs that they are working on a provincial wolf management plan. However, on November 25, 2020 the “Landelijk Overleg Wolf” (LOW)(National Consultation Wolf) has taken place for the first time (BIJ12, 2020a). In this LOW common issues related to wolf damage can be discussed and provinces can work together to exchange experiences and knowledge to create a joint policy, instead of making policy separately (BIJ12, n.d.)

As in the rest of Europe the return of the wolf causes different emotions and there are proponents and opponents. While nature conservationists see the return of the wolf as an enrichment of the Dutch nature, especially farmers are not fond of the wolf (van Asseldonk, 2020). Mostly sheep farmers see wolves as a problem and would like to kill these wolves if they attack their livestock or even if they show up (NOS, 2019). In March 2020 a research on the attitudes of the Dutch population was published. They concluded that 57% of the Dutch population had a positive attitude towards the returned wolf (Grient & Kamphuis, 2020). This is a more positive attitude than in the research conducted in 2012 before the wolf had returned, where 45% had a positive attitude towards the wolf (Grient & Kamphuis, 2020; Intomart GfK, 2012). Reasons for this positive attitude is that these people view the wolf as part of the Dutch nature (Grient & Kamphuis, 2020).

Problem statement

The return of the wolf in the Netherlands is recent and many articles already have been written about attitudes, frames and the biological and ecological issues of the wolf (Adams, 2015; Drenthen, 2015; van Asseldonk, 2020; van Heel, Boerboom, Fliervoet, Lenders, & van den Born, 2017).

The return of the wolf leads to debates on how to deal with the wolf now that it has returned. An “Interprovinciaal Wolvenplan” has been written as a tool for the provinces to form their own provincial wolf management plan. This management plan leads to discussions and conflicts because not everyone feels involved or heard. The organisation for agriculture and horticulture in the Netherlands (LTO) already said that they think that this wolf management plan does not provide enough clarity and that many of their questions remain still unanswered. On their website they said: “We doubt whether this plan offers enough guidance to legislate the safety of humans and animals (LTO, 2019).

To create support for the wolf management plan, stakeholder involvement is important (Bicknell et al., 2019). Stakeholder involvement and participation in decision-making creates higher acceptance of the policy (Pellikka & Sandström, 2011). Besides the involvement of stakeholders, the effectiveness of the wolf management in practice is also important. It is important to understand how these laws, regulations and management are working in practice. It can be good management on paper, but it is also about the implementation in practice. Within large predator (including the wolf) management plans, it appears to be difficult to create representative outcomes and to involve stakeholders in such a way that they feel they have influence on the decision-making process (Serenari & Taub, 2019). This results in a lack of legitimacy of the management plans. This failure can make the discussion between proponents and opponents of the return of the wolf more extreme and in some cases, lead to people taking command and illegally killing wolves (Borgström, 2012; Trouwborst & Fleurke, 2019).

However, legitimacy of the wolf management plan in the Netherlands has not been researched earlier. There is not much research done on how the process of the formulation of this policy went and how stakeholders perceive the legitimacy of this wolf management plan in practice. The Netherlands is still very new with the situation and it is therefore important to know how this wolf management is doing in practice and how the wolf management is

perceived by stakeholders in regard of legitimacy. It is important to understand this as this can help to understand the current human-wolf conflict and solve and avoid future conflicts in the Netherlands.

Research aim

The aim of this research is to explore the perceived legitimacy of stakeholders about the formal wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland; and to explore how stakeholders in the province of Gelderland perceive this management in practice. The focus of this research is especially the province of Gelderland, because this is the only province that has formulated a wolf management plan. The outcomes can be relevant for other provinces that will deal or already have to deal with the return of the wolf. With this research aims I came up with the following research question that I will try to answer with this research: “How do stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland?”

To answer this question, I formulated the following sub-questions:

- How do stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the formal wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland?
- How do stakeholders in the province of Gelderland perceive legitimacy of the wolf management plan in practice?

In the following section I will describe the concept of legitimacy.

Theoretical framework

Before I can discuss the perceived legitimacy of the wolf policy of the province of Gelderland, the concept of legitimacy itself should be explained. The concept legitimacy is used in many disciplines, but a clear definition is not often well described (Parkinson, 2003). Legitimacy is a complex and multidimensional concept (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012; Tankebe, 2013). It is even discussed if THE legitimacy exists at all. In this theoretical framework I will discuss the different theories and views on the concept of legitimacy. For this research I will use the following definition: “Legitimacy is determined by the degree to which power is ethically and legally justified, politically recognised and socially accepted” of Bokhorst (2014) referring to the definition of Beetham (1991).

In literature, legitimacy is often divided into normative and empirical legitimacy. In short, normative legitimacy uses normative criteria. If certain conditions are fulfilled and if it is consistent with certain rules and principles, it can be seen as legitimate (Jackson, Hough, Bradford, & Kuha, 2015; Jackson, Milani, & Bradford, 2018; Noyon, 2011; Steffek, 2003). On contrary, empirical legitimacy is more from the perspective of the people who are affected by the rules, laws and policy. It is about if the affected people approve the authority (Jackson et al., 2015, 2018; Steffek, 2003) and accept the rules and laws (Bernstein, 2011; Noyon, 2011). Authorities or power is perceived as legitimate if the people that are affected by it believe and are convinced it is legitimate (Bokhorst, 2014; Noyon, 2011). The affected people believe that the authorities act appropriately and conform to the standards of rules and laws (Hough, Jackson, & Bradford, 2013).

Because I am interested in the stakeholder’s perception of legitimacy about the wolf management plan, a focus on empirical legitimacy seems logical. As Schmidt (2013) points out, with the normative criteria it is checked if it is legitimate, while with the empirical approach it is if people find/believe it is legitimate. So, you could say that with normative legitimacy the perspective of the people is of less value than it is for empirical legitimacy. However, although in some literature this distinction between normative and empirical legitimacy is made, in practice and also other in literature, it is concluded that this division is not as clear as previously suggested (Noyon, 2011). There is not a big difference between normative and empirical legitimacy as Bernstein (2011) writes in his article: “arguments about why members of a community should accept a decision or rule as authoritative includes possible reasons why the decision is accepted and vice versa.” (p.20). In many cases, the concept of legitimacy is divided into several concepts, but they do not solely focus on normative or empirical legitimacy. However, because I am especially interested in the experiences, beliefs and feelings of the stakeholders, the emphasis will be on empirical legitimacy, but some aspects of normative legitimacy will be taken into consideration as described below.

Beetham (2013) argues that belief and consent are important parts of legitimacy but this is not the only thing that is important for legitimacy. According to Beetham (2013) there are three different conditions needed for legitimacy:

- 1) It conforms to established rules
- 2) The rules can be justified by reference to beliefs shared by both dominant and subordinate
- 3) There is evidence of consent by the subordinate to the particular power relation

As Beetham (2013) describes, one of the conditions that are needed for legitimacy is that it should conform to established rules. This is also described as legality. Talking about legality is talking about if the power “is acquired and exercised in accordance with established rules in [...] society” (Tankebe, 2013 p. 108). Or in short, it is the “rule of law” (Bernstein, 2004). Because legalisation is only about the rules and laws it is also called juridical legitimacy (Buijs & Boonstra, 2020; van der Steen, Fenger, van der Torre, & van Wijk, 2013). This juridical legitimacy can be tested and reviewed by directives, such as the Habitat Directive (Buijs & Boonstra, 2020; van der Steen et al., 2013). If policy meets the rules of the juridical system, it can be seen as juridical legitimate. Authorities are subjected to already existing rules when they want to create new rules or wish to change rules (Beetham, 2013). These authorities have the qualities and serve the general interest (Beetham, 2013). However, it is also about what people believe as rightful and not only about authorities that claim to be rightful (Gilley, 2006). People do have certain expectations such as due performance and equity within society (Beetham, 2013; Tankebe, 2013).

Because people that are affected by a rule or law, feel/believe that the authority has the right to rule (Tyler & Jackson, 2014), people feel the responsibility of obligation to obey the authorities because it is the right thing to do (Jackson, Bradford, Stanko, & Hohl, 2012). It is important that people that are affected by a rule or law feel that the authority in charge is treated them fairly. If not, people are less willing to comply with the rule or law (Tankebe, Reisig, & Wang, 2016). Trust, appropriateness and satisfaction are important in creating obligation to obey (Bernstein, 2011; Bokhorst, 2014; Buijs & Boonstra, 2020). The belief in the normative rightfulness of a rule is important for acceptance (Steffek, 2003). It is about how people perceive the policy and in this way accept or not accept the results of a policy (Buijs & Boonstra, 2020). It is important that if people do follow the rules because of fear for punishment or coercion, or because they do this only because of self-interest this does not say something about the legitimacy (Steffek, 2003).

A commonly used theory in normative legitimacy is input-output-throughput theory. With this theory certain criteria are established and if fulfilled, a policy can be seen as legitimate. However, the criteria that are used in the input-output-throughput theory (explained below), are also coming back in the results of the empirical legitimacy approach (e.g. Jackson et al., 2018; Steffek, 2003). So, although input-output-throughput theory is often used in normative legitimacy, the concepts of this theory could also be of importance for my research. Important to notice is that with normative legitimacy the criteria are used to check if the conditions are fulfilled, this does not take into account what stakeholders actually perceive or feel. However, I will use the concepts of the input-output-throughput theory for my research as sensitizing

concept, meaning that this input-output-throughput theory will be a guide for my research of the perceived legitimacy of stakeholders (Bryman, 2016). The input-output-throughput theory will be explained next.

The input legitimacy is about the openness of decision-making and the possibility for citizens to express their preferences (Bokhorst, 2014). Input legitimacy is a result of participation by people (Mena & Palazoo, 2012; Pellikka & Sandström, 2011; Schmidt, 2013; Serenari & Taub, 2019; Steffek, 2019). The more involvement of citizens and influence of citizens in the decision-making, the chance for the policy to be legitimate increases (Buijs & Boonstra, 2020).

Output legitimacy consists of the effectiveness of the policy (Bokhorst, 2014). The policy is seen as legitimate if it creates value and helps to solve collective problems. So it is about the effectiveness of the policy for the people (Mena & Palazoo, 2012; Pellikka & Sandström, 2011; Schmidt, 2013; Serenari & Taub, 2019; Steffek, 2019). Different from input legitimacy, it is more important to address social problems than the involvement of citizens by formulating policy (Buijs & Boonstra, 2020). Output legitimacy will increase if policy is effective and brings solutions for social problems (Buijs & Boonstra, 2020). Some critiques on this input-output theory were that the process itself is not considered. So, it does not tell you anything about what is lost and gained of legitimacy. Because of this critique the concept of throughput is added.

The concept of throughput was later added to the theory by Schmidt (2013). The reason for this was that the process between input and output was missing (Buijs & Boonstra, 2020; Demidov, 2018). Throughput describes these processes, it is about what is in the black box (Demidov, 2018; Schmidt, 2013). Throughput is about the efficacy, accountability, transparency, openness and inclusiveness with people (Mena & Palazoo, 2012; Schmidt, 2013; Serenari & Taub, 2019; Steffek, 2019).

The third condition of Beetham (2013) is that there is evidence of consent by the subordinate to the particular power relation. Affected people can express their consent to the authority by actions, by for example taking part in an election, which provides the evidence of consent (Beetham, 2013). By the actions of the affected people they can show consent and therefore legitimate the authority and the policy (Beetham, 2013). Dominants can 'bind in' the most important stakeholders through actions or ceremonies, in this way these important stakeholders can give an expression of consent and demonstrate to other stakeholders the legitimacy of the dominants (Beetham, 2013). When there is no evidence of consent it can be expressed in disobedience or protests. It is important to realise that legitimacy is not an "all or nothing affair", all three conditions contribute to legitimacy but it is a matter of degree (Beetham 2013, p. 20).

The three conditions give the affected people moral alignment to cooperate with the authority (Beetham, 2013). With moral alignment people believe that authority uses its power within ethical and normative frameworks of a society (Jackson et al., 2012). If authority and the affected people share moral values than it can be seen by the affected people that the authority have the right to govern (Jackson et al., 2012). These shared moral values increase the connection and cooperation between authority and affected people (Jackson et al., 2012).

Participation or inclusiveness of stakeholders is also an important key for legitimacy, not only who is involved but also how they are involved (Connelly, Richardson, & Miles, 2006). However, these components can be valued and perceived different by individuals. Legitimacy can be seen as a continuously process of dialogues between authorities and affected people, it is a continuously process between them (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012; Connelly, 2011).

Summary

To summarise, legitimacy is a complex concept and many definitions exist. For this research I will use the following definition of legitimacy: “Legitimacy is determined by the degree to which power is ethically and legally justified, politically recognized and socially accepted” of Bokhorst (2014) referring to the definition of Beetham (1991).

I have chosen to focus on empirical legitimacy because I am interested in how people perceive legitimacy. I will use the three different conditions needed for legitimacy according to Beetham (2013):

- It conforms to established rules
- The rules can be justified by reference to beliefs shared by both dominant and subordinate
- There is evidence of consent by the subordinate to the particular power relation

However, besides the empirical focus of my research I will also use the input-output-throughput theory as sensitizing concept, where criteria such as, openness, transparency, inclusiveness and efficacy are important.

Methodology

In this research, the province of Gelderland is my case study. The province of Gelderland is one of the twelve provinces of the Netherlands and the first province with a returned wolf with its own territory. It is a single case study as other provinces did not work a management plan yet. With this research, I focused on the stakeholders that have formulated the wolf management plan of the province, and the stakeholders of the Veluwe that are living in the designated habitat of the wolf. The Veluwe is a natural area with a variety of ecological habitats, such as forest areas, heathlands and sand-drifts (van der Heide, van den Bergh, van Ierland, & Nunes, 2008). The Veluwe area is approximately 1000 square kilometres (van der Heide et al., 2008). The territory of the wolves on the Veluwe at the moment is approximately 670 square kilometres (van Geel, 2019). The area is used multifunctional, it is used for: agriculture, forestry, recreation, military training area, living and nature (van Geel, 2019). The area also has different owners: councils, farmers, estate owners, private owners, recreational businesses, Kroondomein Het Loo, and land management organisations (van Geel, 2019). There are more than 600 locations where sheep and goats are owned, both for business as for hobby (van Geel, 2019). In total, there are 6758 sheep at 381 different locations and 1782 goats over 226 different locations in the Veluwe area (van Geel, 2019). There are 7 businesses or foundations that work with sheep flock as a way of nature management (van Geel, 2019).

Research approach

In (social) research there is a classical distinction between two different approaches for doing research, quantitative and qualitative research. The focus of quantitative research is to quantify variation in a phenomenon and to explain relationships between variables (Adams, 2015; Bryman, 2016; Kumar, 2019). It uses structured methods and validity and reliability are of high importance to draw conclusions on a larger scale. The emphasis lies on testing theories and the social reality is seen as an external objective reality (Bryman, 2016).

The focus of qualitative research is on understanding, explaining and exploring perceptions, beliefs, experiences and emotions (Hurst et al., 2015; Kumar, 2019). Words instead of measurements are of importance in qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). Qualitative research is of relevance for studying social relations, an object is studied in its complexity in their everyday context and not reduced to a single variables as with quantitative research (Flick, 2002).

Because I am interested in the perceptions of stakeholders about the wolf management plan in the province of Gelderland, and not in the exact numbers of who is negative and who is positive towards the wolf management plan, I used a qualitative approach. An advantage of a qualitative approach is that the distance between researcher and participants is close, making it possible to better understand how the participant understands the world (Bryman, 2016). Qualitative research is less structured than quantitative research resulting in the fact that qualitative research is more flexible, so in this way it is easier to change direction if needed (Bryman, 2016).

Some critique on qualitative research is that the results are subjective and therefore unreliable. The external reliability, the degree of gaining similar results by replicating the study, might be

difficult because it is a social setting which it is impossible to 'freeze' this setting (Bryman, 2016). Besides, there are many factors that have influence, such as the mood of a participant, that you cannot control (Baarda, de Goede, & Teunissen, 2005). However, also quantitative research has to deal, be it in a lesser extent, with external reliability. Only in a laboratory situation it is possible to reduce other influences on the research (Baarda et al., 2005). Another issue is the internal reliability which is about the interpretation of the data. To increase internal reliability I used triangulation, the use of multiple different data sources, such as newsletters and report to verify the data (Baarda et al., 2005). I let other researchers read the data and discuss the interpretation of the data.

In qualitative research there are also some threats for validity (Baarda et al., 2005). Because often the sample sizes are small and/or the results are from a single case study, generalisation of the study to a larger extent, the so speak external validity, is difficult (Bryman, 2016). Internal validity is about the correspondence between theoretical ideas and observations (Bryman, 2016). A threat to the validity can be reactivity, where the interviewees responds differently because of the fact that they are speaking with a researcher (Baarda et al., 2005). Especially the fact that I am a student Forest and Nature Conservation at the Wageningen University can have influence on the responses of the interviewees. This is something that I had taken into account, and is partly solved by using other data sources such as reports and newsletters.

Data collection method

To answer my research question, I have interviewed different stakeholders using semi-structured interviews. The advantage of doing semi-structured interviews is that it is flexible, you can come up with follow-up questions and probing questions in order to reply to the interviewee, resulting in that I could go more into depth (Bryman, 2016). Because I wanted to explore the perceptions of people, it is more valuable to hear what they have to say in their own words instead of using a survey (Baarda et al., 2005). Interviewing and also transcribing interviews is time consuming (Bryman, 2016). Because of this and because of restricted time for doing this research, I have interviewed 16 different stakeholders. However, with qualitative research it is not about the number of interviews conducted, but it is about the information that an interviewee will give (Bryman, 2016). Even a small amount of interviews gives valuable and useful information (Baarda et al., 2005; Bryman, 2016). Besides the use of semi-structured interviews, I also used other data sources to cross-check my findings such as official documents, national and provincial management plans and newsletters of stakeholder organisations (Baarda et al., 2005; Bryman, 2016). Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the semi-structured interviews were conducted online with the use of Microsoft Teams. An advantage of this method was that it was less time consuming because there was no travel time for the interviewer or interviewee.

Before I started with the semi-structured interviews, I created an interview guide where the main questions were already formulated (Annex I & II). An advantage of this method was that you forget a topic less often because you had written it down (Baarda et al., 2005). During the interviews it was possible to change the order of the main questions and follow-up questions differed among interviews. With this kind of interview, it was possible to ask for more detail

or elaboration to the interviewee. This resulted in a more natural conversation compared to a structured interview (Gray, 2006).

The questions that were asked to the interviewees were based on the concepts described in the theoretical framework. Before I started with the actual data collection I pre-tested my interview guide on a small scale to discover any problems regarding the practical, methodological and reliability issues (Hurst et al., 2015). For example, it helped to discover if the questions were understandable and did not make the interviewee feel uncomfortable, and it improved the validity (Hurst et al., 2015). I asked permission in advance for recording the interview. These recordings were only used for transcribing and analysing the data. After the data analysis, the recordings were removed. Fieldnotes during and after the interview were made. The quotes that I use in this report were sent to the interviewee to ask approval for placing the quote.

Stakeholder selection

The province of Gelderland had appointed the Wolvencommissie Gelderland, who created a prevention plan. In this plan, the committee has given advice about the actions that should be taken to prevent wolf attacks, the subsidy and they also made some recommendations. The province of Gelderland has adopted the advice of Wolvencommissie Gelderland. Therefore, I have interviewed the members of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland because they were involved in creating this plan. The members of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland are representatives from LTO, Platform Kleinschalige schapen- en geitenhouders (KSG), de Gescheperde kuddes, nature organisations, councils and private landowners. I have interviewed them all except the representative of the private owners. I also have interviewed the secretary of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland who also has a role in the province of Gelderland and in this way represented the province of Gelderland.

These stakeholders have given me insight into the process forming of the policy of the province of Gelderland. Besides these stakeholders, I also have interviewed the stakeholders on who the management plan has an effect, sheep owners professionals, shepherds and hobbyists to see how the management plan is perceived in practice. I contacted the members of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland by email. Finding sheep owners was more difficult, but with the use of snowball sampling, internet research and phone calls, I was able to interview several sheep owners. I also used purposive sampling, where I had to select, because of limited time, stakeholders to participate based on the expectation of certain information and knowledge, so that it would be relevant for my research question (Baarda et al., 2005; Bryman, 2016). As for example the location of sheep owner was of importance. I have selected sheep owners that live in the designated habitat of the wolf and have the possibility to get subsidy for preventive measures. I also have interviewed sheep owners that live just outside the designated habitat of the wolf and cannot get subsidy for preventive measures. In total I have interviewed 16 stakeholders (table 1), in the period of December 2020 and January 2021. Two interviews were not conducted by using Microsoft Teams, but by using a phone conversation. The duration of the interviews varied between 20 and 73 minutes.

Table 1: list of interviewees and their function

Interviewee	Function
A1	Wolvencommissie Gelderland
A2	Wolvencommissie Gelderland & sheep owner
A3	Wolvencommissie Gelderland & sheep owner
A4	Sheep owner
A5	Sheep owner
A6	Sheep owner
A7	Wolvencommissie Gelderland
A8	Wolvencommissie Gelderland
A9	Sheep owner
A10	Sheep owner
A11	Sheep owner
A12	Sheep owner
A13	Sheep owner
A14	Wolvencommissie Gelderland
A15	Wolvencommissie Gelderland
A16	Former sheep owner

Data analysis

After the conducted interviews, all spoken text was transcribed, literally, including unfinished sentences. All non-textual words such as “eh” were not included. After the transcription, I analysed the data by using codes in the program Atlas.ti. The codes were formulated in the first place inductive, meaning that I came up with codes by reading the transcription. After this process, I also used deductive coding. These codes were based on the theory of legitimacy. Codes that were based on the theory but not used are also important data. The codes were continuously reviewed and codes changed during the process or a new code was added if a code was missing. In total, I used 36 codes which can be found in Annex III. Besides the conducted interviews I also used secondary data such as official documents and news articles.

Results

In this chapter, the findings of the conducted research are described to provide an answer to the main research question: “How do stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland?”. I analysed the results with the use of the three conditions of Beetham and the input-output-throughput theory described in the theoretical framework.

Established rules

The first condition of Beetham is that it conforms to established rules. The established rules are in this case the European legislation, where it is stated that the wolf is a protected species. These established rules are taken as basis for the “Gebiedgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe”: *“The existing rules were a fact, so everything that has to do with the protected status of the wolf and the provincial plans, we took as a starting point.”* (A1, Wolvencommissie Gelderland)¹. However, although the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is bound to these rules, they have researched and explored the possibilities and flexibilities within these regulations, such as population management or shooting ‘problem wolves’. The Wolvencommissie Gelderland has recommended to work on a national escalation ladder, where they would like to make clear when a wolf is called a ‘problem wolf’ and when population control might take place. *“[...] [I]n our committee (Wolvencommissie Gelderland) we have argued for an escalation ladder, so you make clear that if a wolf does this, then something must really happen. And we have also said that if a wolf repeatedly attacks sheep despite good adequate wolf-repelling measures, then something really must be done because then it has become a ‘problem wolf’.”* (A2, Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owner)². This escalation ladder is seen as important as it will give stakeholders: *“[...] a better picture of what happens if something goes wrong? Or a wolf causes a lot of damage, what can be the next step?”* (A14, Wolvencommissie Gelderland)³. This search for flexibility might be a sign that at some point the perceived legitimacy of the established rules is lacking. Although the goal of the “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe” is advising about preventive measures which is according to the established rules, they also have searched for possibilities in case the wolf causes more problems. This will be discussed further in the discussion section.

Besides the fact that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is bound to the existing rules and their reaction to this rules. It is important to know how stakeholders perceive this. In general, the overall attitude of sheep owners towards the wolf is negative, as they say: *“We did not ask for the return of the wolf”* (A3, Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owner)⁴. Arguments that are often mentioned to support why the wolf does not belong here, are the fact that the wolf

¹ Die bestaande regels waren voor ons een gegeven. Dus alles wat te maken heeft met de beschermde status van de wolf en hoe dat gaat en de provinciale plannen die hebben wij als uitgangspunt genomen.

² Wij hebben in onze Gelderse wolvencommissie ook gepleit voor een escalatieladder dus dat je duidelijk maakt dat als de wolf dit doet dan moet er toch echt eens een keer wat gebeuren, dus ja er is ook al we gezegd dat als een wolf herhaaldelijk ondanks goede afdoende wolf werende maatregelen toch schapen pakt ja dan moet er echt wat gebeuren want dan is het een probleem wolf geworden.

³ Ten behoeve van haar achterban om een doorkijk te geven van wat nou als het misgaat? Of een wolf richt heel veel schade aan, wat kunnen dan de vervolgstappen zijn?

⁴ Wij hebben niet om die wolf gevraagd.

was eradicated in the Netherlands 150 years ago and our small country: *"[The] wolf is the worst ever what they could have done. [...] Sheep and wolves do not go together. They were not crazy 150 years ago when they killed the last wolf. The Netherlands is too small, there must be management. Now they are still in the wild, but it will probably not be long till they are not. [...] The Netherlands is too crowded and the wolf does not fit in"* (A11, sheep owner)⁵. Despite the negative attitude towards the return of the wolf, stakeholders recognise that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is bound to the existing rules: *"The province does not have that many options of course, because of the European regulations. [...] The Netherlands has once agreed to the legislations, so this determines largely the protection of the wolf."* (A4, sheep owner)⁶. Stakeholders hold the province of Gelderland and the national government responsible for the decision-making of the wolf management. *"[...] [T]he province is responsible for the wolf management. You could say national politics could play a role, but they have delegated it to the provinces, also because not all provinces have to deal with it (the wolf). But I think that it is good that the province is responsible."* (A5, sheep owner)⁷.

Rules can be justified by shared beliefs

As the previous citations have shown, rules that are conform to established rules are an important condition for legitimacy. However, it is not only important that it is legally justified. It is also important that it is ethically justified and socially accepted. Beetham described the second condition as the shared beliefs of the dominants and the subordinates. In my case, the dominants are the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the subordinates are the stakeholders. Although the stakeholders seem to be convinced that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland acts according to established rules, this does not mean that they have shared beliefs. One of the examples is how the return of the wolf is perceived by the stakeholders. Nature organisations see the return of the wolf as an enrichment of Dutch nature: *"In my opinion it is beautiful, I think that it is a fantastic result of that nature conservation in the Netherlands, Europe, can work. I find it ecologically very interesting what the effect of the wolf will have on Dutch nature [...], because it is a special animal. It is beautiful that he (the wolf) returned and that it happened spontaneously, I would say it is a gain, with the challenges that come with it."* (A7, Wolvencommissie Gelderland)⁸. This differs from the beliefs of most sheep owners. Most sheep owners do not see the return of the wolf as something good and give reactions as: *"[...]*

⁵ Wolf is het slechtste wat ze ooit hadden kunnen doen.[...] Schapen en wolven die gaan niet samen. Ze waren 150 jaar geleden niet gek dat ze toen de laatste wolf hebben afgemaakt. Nederland is te klein er moet beheer plaats vinden, nu zitten ze nog in het wild, maar het duurt vast niet lang voordat ze dat niet meer zijn. Nederland is echt veel te vol, die wolf past daar niet bij.

⁶ Provincie die heeft niet heel veel mogelijkheden natuurlijk want er is Europese regelgeving., Nederland heeft daar ooit mee ingestemd dus dat legt de bescherming van die wolf groot en deels vast.

⁷ Voor het wolvenbeleid ja ik denk dat dat het oke is dat de provincie daarvoor verantwoordelijk is, je zou kunnen zeggen nationale politiek zou daar een rol in kunnen spelen, maar die hebben het gedelegeerd naar de provincies en dat is ook voor een deel omdat niet alle provincies daar mee te maken hebben, maar ik ik denk dat het goed is dat de provincie daarvoor verantwoordelijk is.

⁸ Ik vind het hartstikke mooi, ik vind het een heel mooi resultaat van dat natuurbescherming in Nederland kan of niet in Nederland maar in Europa dus goed kan werken. Ik vind het ecologisch natuurlijk heel interessant wat de wolf voor effect gaat hebben op de Nederlandse natuur, op het gedrag van dieren, want het is wel een bijzonder dier maar ik vind het heel mooi ja dat ie terugkeert en dat het ook spontaan gebeurd dat is dat vind ik wel winst, het is een soort dat vroeger in Nederland voorkwam dus dat is geweldig dat ie weer terugkeert, met de uitdagingen die daar bij horen.

[F]or me he (the wolf) can leave today, yesterday would have been fine too [...].” (A3, Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owner)⁹. There are also rumours that the wolf did not returned completely on its own: “I have heard several stories that the wolf did not come here entirely by chance, and I do find it striking that I hear that story from several sides, so I have my doubts. So, I do not have the idea that all the cards have been played out in the open.” (A6, sheep owner).¹⁰ Or another interviewee stated: “We still have the idea that people are moving wolves. The way the female wolf at the Zuid-Veluwe now suddenly has a male, while there was no proof whatsoever that the animal was on its way to the Veluwe – and it must have travelled 50 to 150 km through the Netherlands – is something I do not believe at all. [...] There is an inequality in the distribution of information about the presence of the wolf.” (A3, Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owner).¹¹ These rumours lead to distrust of sheep owners in the governments and the wolf experts. This distrust has negatively effects on the shared beliefs of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the stakeholders, because of different views on the return of the wolf.

Besides the overall negative attitude of a majority of the sheep owners that I have described earlier, it is not completely black and white. All sheep owners agree that the wolf is not in favour of their sheep and their business, but some are more positive about the return of the wolf in general but also realistic about the consequences: “The return of the wolf is a fact, he came here on its own and it is a protected species, so we have to deal with it. The return of the wolf is fascinating, but I do realise very well, that it is very intense when a wolf attacks. But yes, in my point of view we have to deal with the wolf. [...] In general, shepherds are of course also nature lovers and we work on nature restoration, so yes, in fact, it is fantastic that the wolf feels at home here [...]. Anyway, purely from a commercial point of view, we are not very happy, it is a lot of work and worries. (A2, Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owner)¹². So, these results show that there are differences in beliefs of the return of the wolf. These differences also lead to a difference in belief about how to deal with the wolf now that it is back. If the management plan of the province of Gelderland differ to much from the idea of the stakeholders to manage the wolf, the stakeholders will perceive the management plan of the province of Gelderland as illegitimate.

⁹ Hij mag van mij vandaag nog vertrekken, gisteren was ook goed geweest.

¹⁰ Dat ik van meerdere kanten verhalen hoor dat die wolf hier niet helemaal toevallig naar toe gekomen is, dan ja dat ik vind dat wel frappant dat ik dat verhaal van meerdere kanten hoor en dus daar dat ja daar heb ik wel mijn vraagtekens bij. Dus daar heb ik niet idee dat daar helemaal openkaart over die route dat daar helemaal openkaart over is gespeeld dat dat idee heb ik niet.

¹¹ Want we hebben nog steeds het idee dat er mensen zijn die met wolven slepen. Maar zoals nu op de Zuid-Veluwe dat vrouwtje in ene een mannetje heeft terwijl op geen enkele manier is gebleken dat er een beest onderweg was naar de Veluwe en dan moet ie toch echt 50 tot 150 km door Nederland hebben getrokken daar geloof ik dus echt helemaal niks van. Er is een ongelijkheid in de verdeling van de informatie over de aanwezigheid van de wolf.

¹² Ja ik vind dat de wolf een gegeven is dus hij is hier op eigen kracht gekomen en het is een beschermd dier dus we zullen er mee moeten dealen. Het fascinerend de terugkeer van de wolf, maar ja ik realiseer me wel heel erg goed dat het heel erg heftig is als je aanval hebt van de wolf. Maar ja mijn standpunt is ja we moeten er gewoon mee dealen met de wolf. Maar in het algemeen zijn herders ook gewoon natuur liefhebbers en wij werken aan herstel van de natuur en ja het is eigenlijk natuurlijk echt fantastisch dat ie wolf zich hier nu thuis voelt qua natuur. Maar goed puur bedrijfsmatig zijn we er natuurlijk niet zo blij mee het is gewoon een hoop gedoe.

For the Wolvencommissie Gelderland, the preventive measures are an important tool in preventing wolf attacks on livestock. The purpose of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland was: *“To advise ‘Gedeputeerde Staten’ (provincial states) on effective preventive measures with a plan aimed at protecting sheep and goats from wolves in the designated habitat in Gelderland. In the plan, the committee has indicated which preventive measures it considers effective, and has advised ‘Gedeputeerde Staten’ that, if farmer take these measures, they should be subsidised for doing so. (A8, Wolvencommissie Gelderland).¹³ The shepherds in the area often work for nature organisations that are pro-wolf. These nature organisations have set conditions that shepherds have to take preventive measures because they graze with their sheep inside the designated habitat of the wolf. The shepherd I spoke with, did not see this obligation as a problem: *“In itself, I think that it is good, because I also think that as a sheep owner, I have to protect these animals against possible attacks. So, I have no problem with that. And Natuurmonumenten was also one of the clients who thought of a solution to keep it commercially interesting for us.” (A9, sheep owner).¹⁴ Other sheep owners are free to decide if they want to take preventive measures. At this moment there are only a few sheep owners that have taken these preventive measures. In the subchapter *Effectiveness* I will elaborate on this.**

The subsidy for the preventive measures is seen as something logical because in the opinion of the sheep owners the governments are the ones that are in favour of the return of the wolf. So, the governments should take responsibility: *“[...] [If] the government says we want this (the wolves), our society want this? Well alright, but then make sure you have good regulations and a good compensation [...].” (A5, sheep owner).¹⁵ However, many sheep owners would like to see a more pro-active management: *“They do count deer and wild boar and they know exactly how many there are and how many they want. I say: do the same for the wolf! Count how many wolves there are and determine how many there should be. [...] Or they should make it clear: if the wolf does this or that, then action will be taken, but that will only happen when it goes wrong and that is far too late!” (A11, sheep owner).¹⁶**

Too much difference between beliefs about the management of the wolf can result in the perception of illegitimate wolf management. It seems that although the differences in beliefs of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the stakeholders, the *“Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe”* is not seen as completely illegitimate. At the moment the numbers of

¹³ De belangrijkste taak voor de Wolvencommissie was om GS te adviseren over effectieve preventieve maatregelen en een gebiedsgericht schadepreventieplan met als doel schapen en geiten te beschermen tegen wolven in het aangewezen leefgebied in Gelderland. De commissie heeft in het plan aangegeven welke preventieve maatregelen zij effectief acht en heeft GS geadviseerd om, als dierhouders deze maatregelen nemen, hen hiervoor subsidie te geven.

¹⁴ Op zich vind ik dat goed want ik vind ook dat als schapenhouder die dieren te beschermd tegen mogelijke aanvallen. Dus daar heb ik geen moeite mee. En Natuurmonumenten was zelf ook één van de opdrachtgevers die heel erg meedacht in een oplossing om het voor ons ook commercieel interessant te houden.

¹⁵ Neergelegd en dan moet je als overheid zeggen wij willen dat, onze samenleving die wil dat? Ja oke. Maar dan zorg er dan ook voor dat je goede regelingen voor hebben en goeie schadeloosstelling

¹⁶ Ze doen tellingen van herten en zwijnen ze weten precies hoeveel er zijn en hoeveel ze ervan willen hebben en ik zeg doe dat dan ook opstellen van de wolf. Tel hoeveel wolven er zijn en bepaal hoeveel er moeten zijn. Of ze moeten duidelijk maken als een wolf dit doet of dat doet dan wordt er actie ondernomen, maar dat gaat pas gebeuren als het mis gaat en dat is dus veel te laat!

wolves in the Netherlands are low, an increase in numbers can affect the perceived legitimacy as the desire for more active management by the stakeholders will increase. This will be discussed in the discussion.

Evidence of consent

If we look at the third condition of Beetham, the evidence of consent, it can be said that there is evidence of consent in the way that for example sheep owners accept that there are other people that make the decisions. “[...] *I can imagine that if you want to make policy and you have to include all people then there will not happen that much. So, it seems to me that it would be more convenient if you had representatives of certain interest groups and that these people are involved in the policy.*” (A6, sheep owner).¹⁷ However, the composition of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is criticised by some stakeholders. The composition of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is determined by the initiators LTO, KSG, and the province of Gelderland. “*We had the opinion that it was important that a balanced club would emerge. So, that the proportion of wolf lovers and not so wolf lovers was equal and that all experts would be present.*” (A3, Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owner).¹⁸ According to the Wolvencommissie Gelderland, all the important stakeholders were represented. When specific expertise or opinions were required, other experts and stakeholders were invited on ad hoc basis. Although most stakeholders accept that other people make the decision, not all sheep owners feel well represented in the Wolvencommissie Gelderland. They have the opinion that someone with real experience in the field should be included: “*I do not feel represented by the committee and so think many others. They should actually put someone from the farm in the committee and not a representative, someone who really know how things go in practice.*” (A11, sheep owner).¹⁹ Although the Wolvencommissie Gelderland tried to involve a diverse group of direct stakeholders with experience in the field, not all sheep owners have the feeling that the right persons were involved. This lack of involvement can influence the perceived legitimacy as will be discussed next.

Legitimacy of the “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe” in practice

In this second part of this chapter, I will show how the legitimacy of the “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe” is perceived by stakeholders, by discussing the concepts of the input-output-throughput theory.

Participation and communication

The Wolvencommissie Gelderland has tried to involve and inform stakeholders by organising meetings for the stakeholders in the area. Stakeholders could sign up for a newsletter so that they would be kept informed, and they could participate within one of the pilots of the

¹⁷ Ik kan me voorstellen dat als je beleid wil maken en je moet iedereen op die manier meenemen, dan gebeurt er ook niet zo veel. Dus het lijkt me handig als je vertegenwoordigers hebt van bepaalde belangen groepen dat deze betrokken zijn bij het beleid.

¹⁸ We vonden dat het in ieder geval belangrijk was dat er een gebalanceerde club zou ontstaan, dus dat er een gelijke verhouding was tussen wolven minnaars en wolven niet zo minnaars en dat ook alle deskundigheden aanwezig zouden zijn.

¹⁹ Maar ik voel me zelf niet vertegenwoordigd door de commissie en zo denken er meer.

Nou kijk ze zouden dus eigenlijk echt iemand van uit de boerderij daar neer moeten zetten, en niet een vertegenwoordiger, iemand die echt weet hoe het gaat in de praktijk.

Wolvencommissie Gelderland. The committee has used several methods to communicate the report with the stakeholders: *“The province has hired someone who simply has expertise in the field of communication to do the work required around communication and this has been done through a whole mix of means. We made use of our newsletters and there have been interviews so that it has also been in newspapers and on ‘Tv Gelderland’. The ones who represent a branch of the sheep farming industry in the wolf committee has informed their own constituencies. The province, of course, has its own standard things to do to publish certain schemes. So, with these ways a lot of publicity was given (to the report of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland).”* (A7, Wolvencommissie Gelderland).²⁰ Most sheep owners were aware of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the subsidy scheme. Three of the five sheep owners that I interviewed that lived inside the designated habitat of the wolf did participate in a pilot of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland, one of the sheep owners stated: *“Well, I am quite aware (of the subsidy scheme) because I participated within the pilot, so that is not completely fair. However, my neighbour for example does not have a phone number or something where he can go, it is unclear. I think that that is a bad thing. For me it is different because it (the contact) was directly with the province (because of participating within the pilot), so I knew where and with whom I could contact, but this does not apply to the average sheep owner.”* (A11, sheep owner).²¹ Thus, although most of the interviewees were involved and there has been good communication, this is not always the case according to this sheep owner. However, I did not speak to a sheep owner that perceived this. The other sheep owner that did take preventive measures did this after a wolf attacked his sheep. The sheep owner that did not take preventive measures argued that: *“[If I would take preventive measures] it would mean that I have to replace my whole fence, and well that is a tall order and a whole expense and I have difficulty with that in that sense that I have a fine fence. Well, it is not more than a meter in height so it would actually go about a raising the fence, but it would mean that I have to replace all poles, a new wire and even then, I am not so sure if the wolf will not come into my pasture.”* (A6, sheep owner).²² This sheep owner is not the only one who did not take preventive measures. The number of applications for the preventive measures are low, lower

²⁰ Nou er is speciaal iemand ingehuurd door de provincie voor de communicatie die gewoon expertise heeft op het vlak van communicatie om het werk te verzetten wat nodig is rondom communicatie en dat is via een hele mix van middelen gedaan, we hebben natuurlijk onze nieuwsbrief ingezet er zijn interviews geweest zodat het ook in kranten heeft gestaan en dat het op tv Gelderland is geweest. De verschillende geledingen dus de schapenhouders dus die drie fracties die hebben ook hun eigen achterban geïnformeerd, dus ja zo is er wel een brede en de provincie heeft natuurlijk ook nog haar standaarddingen om bepaalde regelingen bekend te maken dus op die manier is daar heel veel bekendheid aan gegeven.

²¹Ja ik ben redelijk op de hoogte omdat ik met de pilot heb meegedaan, dus het is niet helemaal eerlijk. Maar mijn buurman bijvoorbeeld die heeft geen telefoonnummer of wat van waar hij wezen moet, het is onduidelijk. Dat vind ik wel echt een slechte zaak. Bij mij is het natuurlijk iets anders doordat het rechtstreeks via de provincie ging wist ik waar en met wie ik contact kon opnemen. Maar dat geldt niet voor de gemiddelde schapenhouder.

²² Dan zou ik mijn hele afrastering moeten vervangen, en dat is best een heel een hele klus en een hele kostenpost ook en ik heb daar in die zin ook moeite mee dat ik dat ik op zich prima afrastering heb staan en hij is nou geen meter hoog dus dan zou het eigenlijk om een verhoging gaan, maar dat zou wel betekenen dat ik alle palen moeten vervangen en nieuwe draden en ja en dan nog kijk als ik dan zeker zou weten dat ik nooit die wolf in mijn weiland krijg was het nog weer een ander verhaal maar daar ben ik niet daar ben ik niet zo zeker van.

than expected unless the effort of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland to inform and involve all stakeholders.

Another way of involving stakeholders is by the composition of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland to include different stakeholders from different fields. The perception on the composition of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and of the sheep owners has been discussed earlier. It was also already described that the committee has invited several stakeholders to meetings. Another way the Wolvencommissie Gelderland involved stakeholders was by sending a draft version of the report, so comments and suggestions on the report could be given: “[...] *[W]e have consulted our constituencies during the process, but even when the draft report was available, we asked for comments from all stakeholders before it was presented to ‘Gedeputeerde Staten’ in the final form. So, we did have some comments on the first draft [...] and in consultation with the stakeholders, a number of adjustments were made, so it is not a diktat from the ivory tower.*” (A8, Wolvencommissie Gelderland).²³

Effectiveness

The effectiveness is about the fact whether the policy is effective for the people: does it help to solve collective problems? The Wolvencommissie Gelderland was established to advise preventive measures to protect livestock. The measures seem to work, sheep owners with preventive measures did not have any wolf attacks*. Besides the effectiveness of the fences and grids, there are also some practical issues with these preventive measures. In general, the use of the fences and especially the temporary fences used by for example shepherds have been experienced as time consuming, heavy and inconvenient. *“The grids work well, but in the past, it was just a few [...] poles and a couple of wires along and it was done. Now it takes me about 8 hours or more. In the past it was easy you only needed one or two wires and it was done, you only had to keep your sheep in your pasture. But now with the wolf you have to make sure to keep the wolf out your pasture. This means that you have to put up several wires at different heights and that is more work.”* (A11, sheep owner).²⁴ For these reasons, sheep owners argue that there also should be a compensation of the labour costs. Without this compensation it is less appealing for sheep owners to take preventive measures. In addition, this is related to accountability. According to sheep owners, governments are responsible for the management in regard of the wolf. Since these governments are in favour of the return of the wolf, they should provide subsidy for preventive measures. They also should compensate sheep owners when they lose sheep after a wolf attack. *“In my opinion the government should take responsibility for the negative effects. Now these adverse effects are being passed to a*

²³ Gedurende het opstellen van het plan hebben de leden van de commissie hun achterbannen geraadpleegd en is hen de gelegenheid gegeven commentaar te geven op het concept-plan. Dat heeft geleid tot een aantal opmerkingen die verwerkt zijn in het eindconcept. Het advies is dus in samenspraak met betrokkenen gemaakt en geen dictaat uit de ivoren toren.

* This research is based on the data collected in the period December 2020-January 2021. After the data collection one of the respondents told me that there have been wolf attacks despite good preventive measures.

²⁴ De rasters werken goed, daar niet van. Maar vroeger waren het een paar prikpaaltjes waar je een paar draadjes langs liet lopen en klaar, nu ben ik er wel een uur of 8 of langer mee bezig. Vroeger was het makkelijk één of twee draadjes en je was klaar want je hoefde alleen je schapen binnen je weiland te houden, maar nu met de wolf moet je de wolf buiten je weiland houden. Wat betekent dat je meerdere draden moet spannen op verschillende hoogtes en dat kost gewoon veel meer werk.

part of the population and that are the people that keep sheep. (A4, sheep owner).²⁵ After 2022 the compensation for attacked sheep of farmers without preventive measures will be stopped. Many do not agree with this: *“We believe that all damage caused by a wolf should be paid now and forever.”* (A3, Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owner).²⁶ The subsidy for preventive measures as the compensation after a sheep attack is seen by sheep owners as something logical, they did not ask for the return of the wolf, but they have to deal with the consequences of the management of the government. Changes in these subsidy schemes will influence the perceived legitimacy of stakeholders, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Process

The province of Gelderland was the first province that had to deal with the comeback of the wolf, therefore they only had some experiences from other countries. The plan that now has been written is flexible. New developments and insights result in adaptations of the plan. The link between policymakers and stakeholders in the field is important: *“For everyone it is new, a wolf population in the Netherlands, but I think as long as we keep talking to each other, and learn from practice... This is something I am curious about, how this will end, if decision-makers are indeed going along with what we learn each year about how the wolves behave.”* (A9, sheep owner).²⁷ Sheep owners living inside the designated habitat of the wolf have the overall feeling that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland has communicated well and most of the sheep owners were involved by participating with the pilots.

However, I also spoke with sheep owners that just lived outside the designated habitat of the wolf. These sheep owners are less involved, because this was not the purpose of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland. These sheep owners live close to the designated habitat of the wolf and would also like to take preventive measures: *“You know, the thing that is disappointing, about a year ago I made a request, [I live] in Putten in Gelderland, to the province to get subsidy to buy a wolf-resistant grid. However, I did not live in the right area. So apparently, the wolf does not cross the road between Putten and Ermelo at the left side, he stays on the right side...”* (A12, sheep owner).^{28*} But because they will not be compensated for taking these preventive measures, they wait and will not take these preventive measures: *“All my fences are temporary and I wanted to replace them, but I wanted to do it right. However, I saw that there were subsidy possibilities for good fences but only if I lived just 5 kilometres ahead and the difference is huge! It was about 10.000 euro or something like that,*

²⁵ Met name dan de overheid meer zijn verantwoordelijkheid moet nemen voor de nadelige effecten, de nadelige effecten worden nu afgewenteld over een deel van de bevolking en dat zijn die mensen die dus schapen houden.

²⁶ Wij vinden dat alle schade die door de wolf wordt veroorzaakt betaald moet worden nu en tot in eeuwigheid

²⁷ Het is voor iedereen nieuw zo'n wolvenpopulatie in Nederland en ik denk zolang we maar met elkaar in gesprek blijven en leren van de praktijk... Dat is waar ik wel benieuwd naar ben hoe dat gaat aflopen of dus inderdaad de beleidsmakers mee meelopen met wat we leren uit elk jaar met hoe de wolven zich gedragen.

²⁸ En het gene wat ik erg jammer vind ik heb al ongeveer een jaar geleden heb ik een verzoek gedaan ik zit in Gelderland Putten en aan de provincie om subsidie voor een wolfwerend raster aan te kunnen schaffen. Nou ja en toen viel ik niet binnen het gebied. Dus kennelijk dus de wolf die steekt de weg tussen Putten en Ermelo aan de linkerzijde niet over die blijft echt rechts.

* This research is based on the data collected in the period December 2020-January 2021. Since March 2021 the designated habitat of the wolf has been expanded.

so I just let it rest. If there was a subsidy for me than I would have done this all at once.” (A13, sheep owner).²⁹

This shows the importance of the subsidies for the sheep owners for taking these preventive measures. The Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the province of Gelderland are aware of this and are investigating the possibilities to expand the designated habitat of the wolf to allow more people to make use of the subsidy. The situation of the wolf is a continuous process, and it is important that the decision-makers will follow the developments and adapt the management plan if necessary.

²⁹ Nee eerlijk gezegd niet, want al mijn afrasteringen zijn ongeveer nu tijdelijk en daarom wou ik die allemaal gaan vervangen en echt goed maken, maar ik ben daar nog niet aan toegekomen onder andere zag wat de subsidiemogelijkheden zijn voor een goede afrastering als ik net 5 km verder woon en nu dat verschil is zo gigantisch dat ging echt om bijna 10.000 euro ofzo dat ik het even heb geparkeerd. En als die subsidie er wel was geweest dan had ik het allemaal in een keer gedaan.

Discussion

In this part of the report, I will answer my research question: *“How do stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland?”* by combining the theory and the results of the previous chapters. To answer this research question, I will discuss how stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the formal wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland and; how stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the wolf in practice by the three conditions of Beetham and the input-output-throughput theory. I will also compare my findings with other studies about legitimacy of wolf management. Then I will discuss the usefulness of the theoretical concepts for this research and some limitations.

Established rules

The Wolvencommissie Gelderland has taken the established rules as their starting point, which makes the *“Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe”* normatively speaking, based on established rules. In this way, the *“Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe”* is legitimate according to the first condition of Beetham. However, this study is about the perceived legitimacy. As the results have shown, the sheep owners that live in the designated habitat of the wolf recognise that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is bound to the European legislation. They see that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is doing their best with the establishment of the subsidy scheme. Stakeholders argue that this committee cannot change the established rules. So according to the first condition of Beetham, the *“Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe”* is perceived as legitimate.

The wolf has not caused substantial damage or big dangers and the preventive measures seems to work. However, an increase in the wolf population and more nuisance of these wolves will decrease the legitimacy the wolf management plan (Borgström, 2012). A majority of the sheep owners wants to see pro-active management such as, population control. This desire of population control contradicts with the established rules. The fact that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland has explored the boundaries of the European regulations for possibilities when the wolf populations will increase in the future, might be a sign that the established rules are not completely perceived as legitimate. Another reason can be that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is exploring the boundaries of the European legislation to ensure their legitimacy in the future. This is something that did not become clear in the analysis. However, it can be assured that if in the future the wolf populations will increase and more nuisance will occur, the current management plan will no longer be perceived as legitimate and adaptations will be necessary.

Rules can be justified by shared beliefs

With the current situation of the returned wolf, stakeholders perceive the established rules as legitimate. However, most sheep owners would not like to see a wolf at all, or at least want more active wolf management. This belief is the opposite of the governments, as they believe in the effectiveness of taking preventive measures. The fact that there are doubts about the ‘natural’ return of the wolf has a negative influence on the credibility of the wolf management of the governments. Although sheep owners did not have any proof that people have helped the wolf to return, these rumours decrease the legitimacy and the credibility of the

management plan. Also in Germany and Denmark stakeholders believe that wolves have been relocated on purpose, which negatively influenced the attitude towards the wolf (Theodorakea & Essen, 2016). Although the Wolvencommissie Gelderland, the province of Gelderland and even on the national level have tried to communicate that the wolf has returned on its own, stakeholders do not have the feeling that all information is shared, resulting in distrust. Besides, the rural community views the conservation of wolves as something that is determined by the urban community, while the rural community believes that they are most suitable for the decision-making in regard of the wolf management themselves (Højberg et al., 2017). A lack of trust in the authorities is at the root of this (Borgström, 2012; Højberg et al., 2017; Skogen & Krange, 2020). This has also been shown in my results: the sheep owners would like to see someone with practical experience involved in the committee. Distrust in authorities makes the division between lovers and haters of the wolf bigger. In Scandinavian countries, the distrust has led to illegal hunting (Skogen & Krange, 2020). Illegal hunting can be seen as an expression of the fact that these stakeholders do not agree with the current management: it is a way of defiance (Von Essen, Hansen, Nordström Källström, Peterson, & Peterson, 2014). According to Borgström (2012), the differences of beliefs between stakeholders about wolf populations and the discussion about a favourable population size of the wolf is an important cause for illegal hunting. The more the beliefs differ, the more difficult it is to legitimise decision-making.

In the Netherlands, there is also a difference in beliefs about wolf management. Until now this difference in beliefs did not lead to illegal killings of the wolf. Probably because of low numbers of wolves and relatively little nuisance. Also, the subsidy scheme has helped legitimising the “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe”. Without compensation, people would consider the regulations as unjust and so illegitimate (Borgström, 2012). Sheep owners in the designated habitat of the wolf have responded positively on the possibility for getting subsidy when taking preventive measures (they do see some improvements for labour costs and the materials itself). Now they do not completely agree with the policy, but the subsidy can be seen as a compromise; without the subsidy there would be less support for the “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe” and the legitimacy would decrease. Besides, not every sheep owner in the province can apply for the subsidy. The sheep owners, both inside the designated habitat of the wolf as outside, argue that the rules for the right on compensation should be for all sheep owners. Increasement of numbers of wolves will make the differences in beliefs about wolf management bigger. Depending on the reaction of the governments and adaptations in the management plan will determine the legitimacy of the wolf management for the future.

Evidence of consent

Beetham (2013) wrote that the expression of consent can be established when important stakeholders (subordinates) are ‘bound in’ through actions or ceremonies. In this case, the participation of sheep owners with the pilots of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland can be viewed as such a ceremony. With this participation, the sheep owners demonstrate to other sheep owners their consent to the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the province of Gelderland as decision-makers. The participating sheep owners that have taken preventive measures can be seen as a sign of consent.

Despite the success of the pilots, the total amount of applications for the subsidy for the preventive measures is disappointing. The question is if this is passive resistance and so a lack of legitimacy of the “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe”, a lack of knowledge of the possibilities or reticent of the sheep owners. Since I only spoke with one sheep owner inside the designated habitat of the wolf that did not take preventive measures, it is not possible to give an explanation for the reason of the low subsidy applications.

The representation of the different stakeholders in the committee is also important. If people do not feel represented, this will influence the expression of consent. As is shown in the results, not all sheep owners feel represented by the Wolvencommissie Gelderland. The Wolvencommissie Gelderland has used several ways of including stakeholders. In their opinion, the direct stakeholders are involved and otherwise invited for some of the meetings. The reason why this is not always perceived by the sheep owners did not become completely clear and can be researched in future studies.

Legitimacy of the formal wolf management plan

By discussing the three conditions of Beetham I can now answer my sub-question: “How do stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the formal wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland?” Stakeholders recognise that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland is bound to European legislations and that the “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe” is according established rules. However, sheep owners have different beliefs about how the wolf should be managed than the committee. For now, the number of wolves is low, but it is expected that it will increase in the future. This increase might lead to an increase of wolf attacks which will have a negative effect on the legitimacy of the current “Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe” as the call for active management will increase. Several sheep owners that lived in the designated habitat of the wolf participated with a pilot and this can be seen as a sign of consent. To conclude, stakeholders perceive the formal wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland at this moment quite legitimate. However, the situation changes almost every month, new wolves, wolf attacks and expansion of the designated habitat. For the management plan to be legitimate in the future, it is important to be flexible, following new developments and adapt the management plan if necessary.

Formal wolf management plan in practice

With the input of the input-output-throughput theory, the possibility for the stakeholders to express their preferences and the openness of the decision-making is important. As in the discussion section *Evidence of consent* already described, the sheep sector does not always feel represented by the Wolvencommissie Gelderland. Representativeness or so to say the participation can give stakeholders the feeling that there will be listened to their statements and arguments. The possibility to participate with the pilots and the sharing of experiences can help to enlarge the feeling of participation. To be a part of the pilot helps to give the feeling of involvement, and gives a voice about the developments. However, not everyone participated in the pilots and this may lead to a diversion between the perceived participation. I did not interview enough sheep owners that did not participate with a pilot to draw a conclusion. Participation and involvement of stakeholders have been shown important (von Essen & Allen, 2017). In Sweden and Finland Regional Large Carnivore Committees (RLCC) have

established to increase participation of stakeholders and to increase the acceptance of large carnivore management (Pellikka & Sandström, 2011). These committees are comparable with the Wolvencommissie Gelderland. For these RLCCs important concepts for the legitimacy were: perceived goals, inclusiveness and communication and information exchange (Pellikka & Sandström, 2011). It is concluded that in both countries the establishment of the RLCCs have led to an increase in trust and acceptability of large carnivore management (Pellikka & Sandström, 2011).

Besides the input, the output or the effectiveness is of importance as well. The effectiveness of the preventive measures was positive in the way that there has not been an attack on livestock where preventive measures were taken. However, the numbers of sheep owners that do take preventive measures is already low. A possible reason for this is the fact of the amount of time, heavy work and inconvenience of the preventive measures. Another reason could be the differences in the opinion of wolf management. The governments want to protect the wolf and advise sheep owners to take preventive measures. Sheep owners, on the contrary, would like to see active management. They would like to see action being taken when a 'problem wolf' attacks livestock and regulate the populations size. This difference in belief of wolf management might affect taking preventive measures by sheep owners and therefore the effectiveness of the "Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe". Important to notice is that after the data collection, I received an email of one of the interviewees. This interviewee wrote that wolves have attacked sheep despite good preventive measures. I did not include this in my research as it appeared after my data collection, but it will influence the perceived effectiveness of the preventive measures. If the Wolvencommissie Gelderland will not change or adapt the wolf management plan, the legitimacy of the wolf management plan will decrease and the call for active management instead of preventive measures will increase.

Efficacy, inclusiveness, accountability, openness and transparency are important, this was also found in the study of Højberg et al (2017). The efficacy and inclusiveness have already been more or less discussed. The Wolvencommissie Gelderland is established with the purpose of advising good preventive measures to effectively protect livestock. During the data collection, this was also perceived as effective protection. However, there were some critiques on the workability of the fences. But pilots with different preventive measures are still running to see in practice what does and does not work. Stakeholders are involved in this process. The efficacy of the preventive measures and inclusiveness of the sheep owners do have a positive effect on the perceived legitimacy of the management plan.

Another important concept is accountability. The province of Gelderland is accountable for the wolf management of the province since the wolf returned. Stakeholders also see this in this way. Accountability can be judged on the responsiveness of the authority and this authority can be held responsible for their decision-making (Schmidt, 2013). According to the sheep owners, the province of Gelderland is responsible for the decision-making. The possibility for subsidy for preventive measures has been positively received.

Transparency and inclusiveness are important factors for legitimising management (Højberg et al., 2017). Gelderland have been open and transparent, by sending newsletters and by

organising meetings. They have included stakeholders by sending a draft version of the report to the stakeholders where everyone could give comments. However, this transparency and openness is not always perceived this way by the sheep owners. The fact that some sheep farmers believe that the wolf has had a hand in its return might be at the root of this. This was also found in the study of Pohja-Mykrä (2016) about the legitimacy of wolf management in Finland. This study concluded that based on normative legitimacy, the wolf management in Finland should be legitimate as there is involvement of stakeholders, accountability and transparency. However, when also include people's attitudes, it showed that people in wolf territories do not agree with the management, and that the wolf management is not perceived as legitimate (Pohja-Mykrä, 2016). This indicates the importance of empirical legitimacy.

Legitimacy of the "Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe" in practice

The sub-question "How do stakeholders in the province of Gelderland perceive legitimacy of the wolf management plan in practice?" can now be answered. The "Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe" is mostly positively received. The stakeholders that I interviewed felt involved, but improvements for the representativeness in the committee could be made. The preventive measures were experienced as effective against wolf attacks during my data collection. The subsidy for taking preventive measures has been perceived as logical and positive. However, the subsidy should also be made available for all sheep owners that would like to protect his sheep for possible wolf attacks and not only for the sheep owners that live within the designated habitat. In practice it appeared that using preventive measures is time consuming, heavy and inconvenient. Therefore, sheep owners call for compensation of the labour costs. At the moment of this research, most stakeholders have perceived the "Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe" as quite legitimate. But it is important that this management plan is flexible and will adapt as there have been already some changes in the effectiveness of the preventive measures to be perceived legitimate in the future.

Theory in general

For this research I decided to focus on empirical legitimacy because I was interested in how stakeholders perceived the wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland. The input-output-throughput theory is normally used in normative legitimacy. I used the concepts of the input-output-throughput theory, but from an empirical point of view. So, I did not check if it met the criteria of the input-output-throughput what would have been done with normative legitimacy. I used the concepts as starting point for the empirical legitimacy and see how stakeholders perceive these concepts. It appeared that this was important as it could indicate the differences in perception of for example the involvement of stakeholders. Based on normative legitimacy you could conclude that the Wolvencommissie Gelderland has involved stakeholders and that the wolf management would be legitimate. However, when taking the perceived involvements of stakeholders into account, it appeared that the stakeholders did not perceive this involvement in the same way as the Wolvencommissie Gelderland did.

In my case study it appeared that the involvement of stakeholders was important for the legitimacy of the wolf management plan. Shared beliefs, the second condition of Beetham was also important. Without shared beliefs between the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and the

stakeholders it is more difficult to legitimise the wolf management plan. However, it is not always easy to understand these beliefs, as many external factors have an influence on the beliefs that are out of scope of this research.

The third condition of Beetham, the evidence of consent, was difficult to research and to conclude about. The fact that the sheep owners did participate with the pilots can be viewed as a way of giving consent and there are no huge protests or illegal hunting. On the other hand, it is difficult to research if the stakeholders do really have given consent. They have more or less accepted that others do the decision-making. Again, involvement and shared beliefs are an important issue, perhaps more important and applicable in this case study than the evidence of consent.

The three concepts of Beetham together with the input-output-throughput theory as sensitizing concept, were useful to get an insight in the perceived legitimacy and to answer my research questions. There was some overlap between the three conditions and the input-output-throughput, which made it sometimes difficult to make strong divisions between the concepts. With this approach the legitimacy can be evaluated, and possible lacks of legitimacy can be indicated. However, it is also important to recognise that legitimacy is a continuous process. Changes in for example the number of wolves, or an increase in wolf attacks can change the perceived legitimacy. Wolf management should be flexible and adaptable to be legitimised in the future. For further research it will be interesting to follow these developments to see if legitimacy changes and the reactions of the governments on this.

Limitations

For this research, I used online semi-structured interviews, due to covid-19. The fact that these interviews took place online might have had a minor influence on the response of the participants as body language is harder to see and read. Therefore interrupting is more difficult as well. However, I had the feeling that everyone was at ease and that the fact that the interviews took place online did not influence the answers of the participants. The fact that I am a Forest and Nature Conservation student from the Wageningen University might have had an influence on the participants, as Wageningen University has a certain image and Wageningen Environmental Research has been involved with studies on the wolf. This might give sheep owners the idea that they speak with someone who is pro-wolf, which is mostly contradicting with their own view, influencing their responses. I explained that I was interested in their experiences and ideas and tried to stay neutral in the situation.

To structure the transcribed text of the 16 interviews, I made the use of codes. By the use of codes, I tried to make a selection of relevant data for this research. However, it might be possible that by selecting the data, I was unpurposive biased by selecting the findings. I tried to solve this by reading and discussing the transcripts with others.

Contact with the members of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland was relatively easy as the contact information was available via their website. For finding other stakeholders, I used snowball sampling. With this method, participants come up with new participants to interview next. This can result in the fact that they come up with participants that do have the same opinion or ideas. To overcome a possible bias when only using snowball sampling, I also

searched the internet for possible participants and I posted a message on two Facebook pages for sheep owners. Despite the different methods to find participants, most sheep owners that lived inside the designated habitat for the wolf were closely connected to the Wolvencommissie Gelderland through participating with a pilot. It gave a good insight of how these sheep owners perceived the Wolvencommissie Gelderland, but it would also have been interesting to interview more sheep owners that have less strong bonds with the committee, as the number of applications for subsidy is lacking. It was difficult to find such sheep owners. Other stakeholders that I interviewed were representatives of certain groups. Interviewing them gave an overview of how this group thought about the wolf and the management plans. It would have been interesting for example to not only interview the representative of nature organisations, but also interview several people within these organisations. However, due to limited time this was not possible. In general, it is important to realise that the wolf is a hot topic and almost everyone has an opinion or has something to say about it. Therefore, it was sometimes difficult to make the decision to include or exclude someone from the research group. However, with the focus on the members of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland and sheep owners, the most important groups are involved in this study. In follow-up research more different stakeholders such as hunters can be included.

Conclusions

I can now answer the main question: “How do stakeholders perceive legitimacy of the wolf management plan of the province of Gelderland?” It can be concluded that the wolf management plan is legitimised by the Wolvencommissie Gelderland through involvement of stakeholders, communication and information. However, stakeholders did not completely perceive it this way. The preventive measures were effective in protecting sheep and the wolf management is conforms established rules. Differences in beliefs resulted in different ideas about wolf management. But the stakeholders do recognise that others do the decision-making. This all brings me to the conclusion that the wolf management plan is not perceived as illegitimate, but is it also not fully perceived as legitimate. It is a continuous process almost every month there are new developments. It will depend on the reaction and adaptability of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland how the wolf management plan will be perceived in the future.

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Appendix

Annex I

Interview guide for members of the Wolvencommissie Gelderland:

Welkom,

Fijn dat u mee wilt helpen aan mijn master thesis. Ik zal mij nog even kort voorstellen. Ik ben Leanne Eenink, ik 25 jaar en ik studeer aan de Wageningen Universiteit, ik doe de master Bos en natuurbeheer. Waarbij ik mij heb gericht op het management. Hiervoor heb ik ook de bachelor Bos en natuurbeheer gedaan in Wageningen waarbij ik mij heb gespecialiseerd in ecologie en beheer. In deze thesis richt ik mij voornamelijk op het wolf management van de provincie Gelderland. Ik zal graag willen weten hoe de procesvorming, het inhoudelijke beleid en het beleid in de praktijk wordt ervaren.

Vandaag zou ik graag uw perspectieven willen horen over het wolvenbeleid van de provincie Gelderland. Allereerst zou ik graag uw toestemming willen vragen om dit gesprek op te nemen, dit is alleen voor het terugluisteren voor mijzelf als ik de interviews ga analyseren. De opname zal verwijderd worden na de analyse.

Mocht u tijdens het interview vragen hebben, stel ze gerust, ook als een vraag u niet helemaal duidelijk is. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden, ik ben benieuwd naar uw perspectieven als individu.

Heeft u op dit moment nog vragen?

Interview vragen:

- 1) Kunt u kort iets vertellen over uzelf?
 - Wat heeft u hiervoor gedaan?
 - Hoe bent u bij de wolvencommissie terecht gekomen?
 - In welk stadium bent u bij de wolvencommissie gekomen?
(Zelf schapen? Wel of geen preventieve maatregelen? Hoe is subsidieaanvraag gegaan?)

- 2) Hoe is de wolven commissie tot stand gekomen?
 - Waarom heeft provincie dit ingesteld?
 - Wat is het doel?
 - Hoe bent u bij de wolvencommissie gekomen? (Welk stadium?)
 - Was het moeilijk om leden te vinden?
 - Wat vindt men van het opstellen van de wolvencommissie?

- 3) Kunt u mij iets vertellen over uw functie in de wolvencommissie?

- 4) Wat vindt u van de terugkeer van de wolf?
 - Waarom? Standpunt weten.
 - Wat vindt u ervan dat de wolf een beschermde status heeft?

Julie hebben als wolvencommissie het Gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe opgesteld

- 5) Hoe is het preventieplan tot stand gekomen?

- 6) Hoe is de wolvencommissie omgegaan met de bestaande regels met betrekking tot de wolf in Nederland?
- Habitatrichtlijn, bescherming status
- 7) Wat vindt u van preventieplan van de wolvencommissie?
- Waarom wel/niet tevreden?
- 8) Hoe is er op het preventieplan gereageerd?
- Door de provincie
 - Door schapenboeren
 - Door natuurorganisaties
 - Door jagers
 - Door omwonenden
- 9) Kunt u mij vertellen wat u vindt van de huidige werking van het preventieplan in de praktijk?
- Effectiviteit?
 - Minder schade?
 - Minder conflicten?
 - Hebben de pilots effect op andere schapenboeren?
 - Subsidie aanvragen?
 - Waarom wordt er tot nu toe nog weinig gebruik gemaakt van de subsidieregeling?
- 10) Hoe is dit management plan gecommuniceerd naar de mensen op wie het wolvenplan betrekking heeft?
- Wie is hiervoor verantwoordelijk, de commissie of de provincie.
- 11) Wat vindt u van de transparantie van het preventieplan van de wolvencommissie?
- 12) Wie zijn naar uw idee belangrijke stakeholders?
- Zijn deze stakeholders ook allemaal betrokken bij het preventieplan?
 - Ja? Hebben deze stakeholders allemaal evenveel invloed in de besluitvorming?
 - Nee? Waarom niet?
 - Zijn dit mensen van binnen of buiten de wolvencommissie?
 - (In hoeverre zijn mensen buiten de wolvencommissie betrokken bij het wolvenplan?)
- 13) Als u iets zou kunnen veranderen aan het preventieplan, wat zou dat dan zijn? Wat zou u willen veranderen aan het preventieplan van de wolvencommissie?
- Wat dan precies? Waarom?
 -
- 14) Kunt u mij iets vertellen over de rol van de provincie Gelderland in het beleid van de wolf in Gelderland?
- Hoe groot is de invloed van dit preventieplan van de wolvencommissie op het wolf management plan van de provincie Gelderland?
 - In het preventieplan van de wolvencommissie staan een aantal aanbevelingen, hoe gaat de provincie daarmee om?
 - Is hiervoor een management/beleidsplan geschreven?
- 15) Wat vindt u van de rol van de provincie Gelderland betreft het wolvenbeleid?

16) In hoeverre verschilt het beleid over de wolf van de provincie Gelderland met het preventieplan van de wolvencommissie?

Op 25 november vond het eerste landelijke overleg plaats.

17) Waarom heeft dit landelijke overleg plaats gevonden?

- Wat wordt er in dit Landelijk Overleg besloten?
- Hoe verschilt dit met de taak van de wolvencommissie van de provincie Gelderland?

18) Wie zou ik volgens u nog meer moeten interviewen?

Afsluiting

Bedankt voor uw antwoorden. Heeft u nog vragen of opmerkingen? Dan heb ik voor u nog een praktische vraag: in mijn thesis zal ik quotes gebruiken uit de interviews, heeft u er bezwaar tegen dat uw naam erbij staat? Of alleen uw functie? Ik kan als u dat wilt de quotes sturen voordat ik ze in mijn thesis plaats, dan kunt u goedkeuring geven.

Dit was het interview. Mag ik eventueel nog contact opnemen als ik nog vragen heb?

Hartelijk dank voor uw tijd.

Annex II

Interview guide for sheep owners.

Welkom,

Fijn dat u mee wilt helpen aan mijn master thesis. Ik zal mij nog even kort voorstellen. Ik ben Leanne Eenink, ik ben 25 jaar en ik doe de master Bos en natuurbeheer aan de Wageningen Universiteit. Waarbij ik mij heb gericht op management. Hiervoor heb ik ook de bachelor Bos en natuurbeheer gedaan in Wageningen waarbij ik mij heb gespecialiseerd in ecologie en beheer. Zoals ik in de mail al had beschreven, richt ik mij met deze master thesis voornamelijk op het wolf management van de provincie Gelderland. Ik zal graag willen weten hoe de procesvorming, het inhoudelijke beleid en het beleid in de praktijk wordt ervaren.

Vandaag zou ik graag uw perspectieven willen horen over het wolvenbeleid van de provincie Gelderland. Allereerst zou ik graag uw toestemming willen vragen om dit gesprek op te nemen, dit is alleen voor het terugluisteren voor mijzelf als ik de interviews ga analyseren. De opname zal verwijderd worden na de analyse.

Mocht u tijdens het interview vragen hebben, stel ze gerust, ook als een vraag u niet helemaal duidelijk is. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden, ik ben benieuwd naar uw perspectieven als individu.

Heeft u op dit moment nog vragen?

Interview vragen:

- 1) Kunt u kort iets vertellen over uzelf?
 - Opleiding
 - Leeftijd
 - Schapen bedrijf, hobby of commercieel?
- 2) Kunt u iets vertellen over uw bedrijf?
 - Aantal schapen
 - Aantal medewerkers
 - Waarom werken met schapen?
- 3) Wat vindt u van de terugkeer van de wolf?
 - Waarom? Standpunt weten.
 - Zelf een aanval meegemaakt?
 - Wat vindt u ervan dat de wolf een beschermde status heeft?
- 4) Wat betekend de terugkeer van de wolf voor u en uw schapen?
- 5) In hoeverre bent u op de hoogte van de wolvencommissie van de provincie Gelderland?
 - Hoe weet u hiervan af?
 - Waarom is het ontstaan/doel?
 - Welke partijen zijn hierbij betrokken?
 - Wat vindt u van deze samenstelling?
 - Wat is het doel van deze wolvencommissie?

In hoeverre bent u op de hoogte van het gebiedsgericht preventieplan wolvenschade Veluwe die deze wolvencommissie heeft opgesteld?

- 6) Wat vindt u ervan dat dit preventieplan is opgesteld?
- Wat vindt u dit preventieplan zelf?
 - Wat vinden anderen schapenboeren/collega's van dit preventieplan?
 - Hoe is dit met u gecommuniceerd?
 - Hoe zijn jullie als schapenhouders betrokken bij dit plan?
 - Wat vindt u hiervan?
 - Is naar uw mening iedereen betrokken bij dit plan die betrokken zou moeten worden?
 - Wie zijn dit zoal?
 - Wie missen er?
- 7) Hoe gaat de wolvencommissie om met uw meningen en ervaringen?
- 8) Wat vindt u van de informatie die u krijgt van de wolvencommissie/provincie over de wolf?
- 9) Heeft u het gevoel dat alle informatie met u wordt gedeeld?
- 10) Kunt u mij vertellen wat u vindt van de huidige werking van het preventieplan van de wolvencommissie in de praktijk?
- Effectiviteit
 - Minder conflicten
 - Minder schade
- 11) Heeft u zelf preventieve maatregelen genomen?
- Waarom wel/waarom niet?
- 12) Wat is hiermee uw ervaring?
- De plaatsing
 - De arbeid
 - De kosten
 - Hoe verliep de subsidie aanvraag?
 - Effectiviteit
- 13) Waar kan het beter?
- 14) Zou u iets willen veranderen aan het huidige preventieplan?
- Wat dan precies? Waarom?
- 15) Wat vindt u van de subsidieregeling die is opgesteld door de wolvencommissie?
In hoeverre bent u op de hoogte van de subsidieregeling voor preventieve maatregelen?
- Hoe bent u hiervan op de hoogte gekomen?
 - Hoe is deze subsidieregeling tot stand gekomen?
 - Aan welke voorwaarden moet u voldoen om in aanmerking te komen voor subsidie?
 - Wat vindt u hiervan?
- 16) Wie is volgens u verantwoordelijk voor het wolvenbeleid?
- Provincie Gelderland?
 - De gemeente?
 - Het rijk?
- 17) Hoe vindt u dat dit gaat?

- 18) Wie zou volgens u moeten worden betrokken bij het wolvenbeleid nu de wolf terug is?
- Zijn deze stakeholders naar uw idee ook betrokken bij het preventieplan van de wolvencommissie?
 - Voelt u zich gehoord?
- 19) Wat vindt u van de rol van de provincie Gelderland in het wolf management?
- Actief/niet actief
 - Afwachtend?
- 20) Wat vindt u van de informatie die u krijgt van de provincie over de wolf?
- 21) Heeft u het idee dat alle informatie wordt gedeeld?

Afsluiting

Bedankt voor uw antwoorden. Heeft u nog vragen of opmerkingen? Dan heb ik voor u nog een praktische vraag: in mijn thesis zal ik quotes gebruiken uit de interviews, heeft u er bezwaar tegen dat uw naam erbij staat? Of alleen uw functie? Ik kan als u dat wilt de quotes sturen voordat ik ze in mijn thesis plaats, dan kunt u goedkeuring geven.

Dit was het interview. Mag ik eventueel nog contact opnemen als ik nog vragen heb?

Hartelijk dank voor uw tijd.

Annex III

Table 2: List of codes used for analysing the data.

Codes	Aantal
• Acceptatie	2
• Adviezen	25
• Beleidsvorming Provincie Gelderland	33
• Communicatie	112
• Deskundigheid	27
• Discussie	16
• Doel Landelijk overleg Wolf	24
• Doel wolvencommissie Gelderland	39
• Draagvlak voor de wolf	20
• Effectiviteit	40
• Emotie	33
• Ervaring	88
• Houding	176
• Kennis	72
• Nationaal beleid	18
• Natuur mens relatie	14
• Onderzoek	10
• Ontstaan wolvencommissie	23
• Overig draagvlak	6
• Participatie	86
• Preventieplan	59
• Preventieve maatregelen	80
• Regels	23
• Rol overheden	44
• Rol overige stakeholders	18
• Samenstelling Landelijke commissie	13
• Samenstelling wolvencommissie	29
• Samenwerking	22
• Schaal	11
• Stakeholders	35
• Subsidieregeling	38
• Transparantie	29
• Verantwoordelijkheid	30
• Verbeteringen	23
• Vergoeding	30
• Vertrouwen	36