Spatial Policy in Practice
The Netherlands

Robert Dijksterhuis
Vice-Director of Spatial Planning
Head of Spatial Policy
Spatial Planning Directorate

April 17, 2019
Spatial Planning in The Netherlands

Definition

*The process with which,*
*in a changing society,*
*through integral considerations and*
*in a sustainable manner,*
*functions and activities get their position*
*in the physical living environment.*
Spatial quality

Vitruvius:

Three core values

• **Use value**: efficiency and functional coherence

• **Experience value**: diversity, identity and beauty

• **Future value**: sustainability, adaptability and manageability

‘The body of architecture’
The human dimension as foundation
Spatial policy

Spatial quality + Environmental quality
Five basic principles

› Concentration  › Differentiation  › Cohesion  › Hierarchy  › Justice
Current spatial quality in The Netherlands
Made by humans...
With unique landscapes...
With excellent international connections...
In a network of cities...
National planning: evolution of rules and strategic plans

20th Century - Seeking balance between cities and farmland
main driver: need for housing

• 1901 - Housing Act. Modern planning starts: rules on housing
• 1930s - Beginning of regional plans: cities and surrounding land
• 1950-60s - National spatial planning: urban reconstruction after WW II / housing shortage
• 1970s - Suburbanisation (polycentric but concentrated)
• 1980-90s - Regeneration of existing city
• 2000s - New national spatial policy goals: decentralization of planning
Historical background: protection of green areas

- Rapid urbanisation 1950s: concerns on availability of rural land
- Leisure later
- Restriction on new housing in green fields, preventing sprawl
- New towns at some distance of the cities to prevent massive suburbanisation of the ‘Green Heart’ of the Randstad
- Late 1990s: provincial policy of red and green lining
Development 1960-2006-2020: fast, polycentric urban growth
High population density... in areas below sea level
Current challenges

- Urbanization continues
- Ageing population
- New housing requirements
- Climate change adaptation
- Transition to renewable energy
- Transition to circular economy
- Remaining economically competitive
- Transition to circular agricultural system
- Efficient and robust multi-modal transport system
Population: spread of growth and decline

(PBL Forecast 2012-2027)
Energy transition

Future energy consumption NL: 2400 PetaJoule

90,000 3 MW wind turbines = 600,000 ha solar farms = 240 million Solar panels on rooftops
Multiple challenges + Limited space = Search for innovative combinations of functions
Combining functions

Katwijk aan Zee – Underground parking and flood defence
Combining functions

Rotterdam Benthemplein – Water Square

17 april 2019
Combining functions
Combining functions

A50 - Integrated solar panels in noise barriers
Combining functions

Scheveningen - Smart lamp posts
Spatial planning: decision making at 3 levels

1. **Local (355 municipalities, 21 water authorities)**
   - Zoning plan, structure plan
   - Dikes and water safety

2. **Regional (12 provinces)**
   - Structure vision

3. **National (12 ministries)**
   - Structure vision/national plan
   - National interests
   - Coordination of national policy
Characteristics of Dutch spatial planning

- Multi level government
- Using urban design
- Consultation of stakeholders
- Long term objectives
- Integrated planning
- Monitoring progress
Legal basis

Today
- The Spatial Planning Act (Wro)
- Implementation Decisions (Bro, Barro)

2021
- Environment and Planning Act
- Digital system of the Environment and Planning Act (DSO)
- Implementation Decisions (Ob, Bkl, Bal, Bbl)
- National Environmental Planning Strategy

Competitive  Accessible  Liveable  Safe

“Decentralisation and simplification”
Major transitions ask for new, more integrated laws and planning

1. Transitions in the living environment
   a. to renewable energy,
   b. adaptation to climate change,
   c. smart and green transport,
   d. the circular economy,
   e. liveable and accessible cities.

2. Societal demand for more efficient procedures

Now working on: integrating Spatial Planning Act into Environmental and Planning Act.

With this new act and transitions a new national strategy is needed (NOVI)
“The National Environmental Planning Strategy not only combines, but also interconnects the existing vision documents in areas such as spatial development, traffic & transport, water, the environment, nature, cultural heritage, and natural resources.”
Thank you for your attention