“The Dutch model” – a cooperative approach at landscape level executing the agri-environmental scheme
Content

1. What is the collective approach?
2. Why this approach in agri-environmental management?
4. Where are we now and looking forward.
Dutch agri-environmental scheme 1975-2016

- Individual farmers – since 1990s AECs in some parts of NL.
- About 13,000 contracts between farmers and government.
- Limited ecological guidance of farmers.
- Subsidies: first come, first get.
- Detailed planning of government at field level.
But: decline in farmland biodiversity continued

Farmland birds in the Netherlands

Bron: NEM (Sovon, CBS)
Why a new approach in 2016?

- A cross-farm approach was needed to stop decline in farmland biodiversity
- High error rates and implementation costs
- Need for a more flexible system
- And: in the Netherlands already a tradition of agri-environmental cooperatives
- Since 2016 within CAP: possibility for farmer collectives
What’s specific about the new approach since 2016?

- Front- and back-door.
- Forty agricultural collectives covering the complete country.
- Landscape approach.
- SCAN-ict exchanges with Dutch Enterprise Agency.
Change in responsibilities.

- Province has a goal and budget.
- Cooperative makes a plan that fits that goal and budget.
- Cooperatives concludes private contract with farmers.
- Cooperative is the party that receives the subsidies.
- Group of farmers take responsibility for implementation of the scheme.
- Province must let go of responsibilities.
Specific for the approach: front- and back-door

**AUTHORITIES**
- government contract (areas, qualities)
- accountability cost-effectiveness

**COOPERATIVES**
- regional fine-tuning
- individual contracts, controls, payments
- government checks
  - administrative
  - financial

**LAND MANAGERS**
- on-the-spot checks by cooperative and authorities
  - no. 1
  - no. 2
  - no. 3
  - no. 4
  - no. 5
  - etc.
AES in current CAP (2016-2022)

• Landscape-scale approach.
• Conservation measurements at ecosystem level.
• Intermediair position of cooperatives.
• The farmer in the lead!
• Ecological guidance in all phases
• Increased stakeholder involvement.
• All cooperatives are certified.
Specific for approach: 40 agricultural collectives, together covering the complete country
Activities of farmer collectives (AES)

- Developing a landscape management plan.
- Preparation of collective claim.
- Contract management with participants.
- Inspection of realisation of management activities.
- Preparation of payment justification / payment of participants.
- Monitoring conservation measurements and results.
- Ecological guidance of the participants.
Landscape approach - four habitat types

Open grasland landscapes

Open arable landscapes

Dry habitat networks (wooded)

Wet habitat networks
Main activities BoerenNatuur

- Our vision is based on nature inclusive agriculture.

- BoerenNatuur aims to conserve farmland nature and maintain the farmland landscape.

- We connect and inspire farmer collectives and represent their interests.
Specific for approach: SCAN ICT exchanges with Dutch Enterprise Agency

1. SCAN Office

2. SCAN GIS

3. SCAN Financial

Dutch Enterprise Agency
Where are we now?

- All 40 collectives are certified for the AES.
- In 2021: over 11,000 participants.
- In 2021: 99.75% of the subsidy was payed out.
- In 2019: max. 114,000 ha in the AES – 72 million euro in application for paying out.
- Efficiency: collectives have less than 20% overhead.
- Effectivity: promising results, but we need to do much more!
- Time to move on!
As of 2023 some things will change. Climate goals part of the collective approach

- Open grasland landscapes
- Open arable landscapes
- Habitat networks (wet & wooded)
- Climate

Collective approach
AES: collective approach has settled.

Collectives growing in role of regional partner, other projects besides AES.

Farmland biodiversity: recovery and sustainable & viable populations need management across larger area: food, shelter, reproduction – Nature inclusive should be new standard.

Farmers motivated, but need higher price for products and services.

Initiatives from market.
New CAP; from 2023 onwards

- Ecoregelingen (new!) and conditionaliteiten (changed)

- System that awards points for measures contributing to biodiversity, landscape, water, soil and climate. Those are voluntary measures for participants.

- Partly the same measures as in AES. Challenge to choose well and work effectively on the goals.
Questions?

Thank you for your attention!

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More information?

https://www.boerennatuur.nl/english/
https://www.samenvoorbiodiversiteit.nl/ (Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery)
https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-agriculture-nature-and-food-quality/vision-anf (Strategiepapier Dutch Ministry on future agriculture (in English, German, Spanish, French))