



## Interactive Knowledge Base on Spatial Planning Systems

Evaluation of the he Spatial Planning Systems of the INTERREG IIB  
North West Europe (NWE) Member States

Royal Haskoning (NL)

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# Interactive Knowledge Base on Spatial Planning Systems

*Need for new initiatives for long lasting flood damage prevention through spatial planning and urban development*

*Why is flood damage prevention linked to spatial planning?*

Effects of climate change are often increased by spatial development:

- loss of forested areas up streams
- sealing of surfaces by urbanisation and infrastructure,
- building of residential areas and economic activities zones in river beds
- canalization of rivers

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## *Goal of this part of NOFDP*

“Explore the national planning methodologies and planning instruments and the relevant EU-directives, national laws and policies in North West Europe with regard to their possibilities and problems related to the integrative approach of water management and ecological aspects.”

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## Subjects

- (Characteristics)
- Levels of spatial planning per nation
- Fine-tuning between the levels
- Most important planning documents
- Relations between and integration of spatial planning, water and ecology
- Learning from each other and working together

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Levels of spatial planning per nation

## ***Centralized or not?***

Large differences due to:

- historic deviances in administrative divisions
- authority of the central government and current trend to decentralize certain government activities

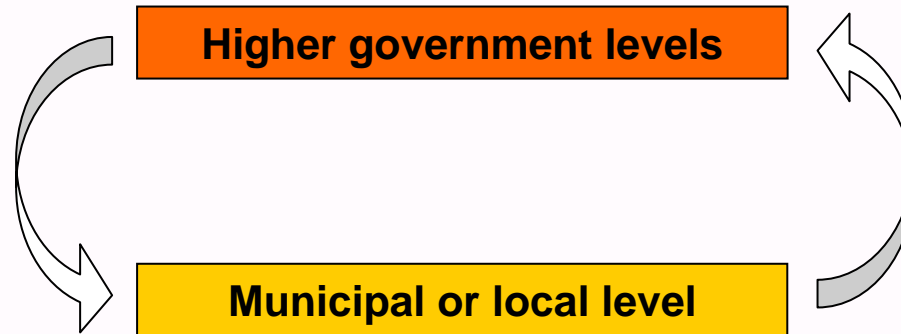
## ***National planning document or not?***

- Most states possess a national planning document
- Exceptions are Belgium, France and the United Kingdom
- Belgium and UK: almost no planning activity on the national level
- France: national planning laid down in different development directives and sectoral plans

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## *Power of the local level?*





The municipal or local level has most powers in each country (with the exception of France and Luxembourg), but no pure autonomy in setting up plans.



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## Fine-tuning between levels

In general four ways:

- Active involvement in the planning process 
- Higher level plans act as a framework for lower level plans 
- Higher level government approves lower level plans 
- Lower level plans give input to higher level plans 



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Most important planning documents

*Number of different planning documents per government level*

	National		Sub national				Local		
	Union/ Republic	Country	Federal States	Regional	Provin- cial	Depart- ment	Water boards	Inter- muni- cipal	Muni- cipal
Belgium				7	2				12
France		(2)		3		1		1	1
Germany	1		1	1					1
Ireland		2		1					5
Luxembourg		4		1					3
Netherlands		2			3				5
UK		3		1					6

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Relations between and integration of spatial planning, water and ecology

## **New and improved regulation**

Broadening of European sectoral regulations on nature and water management in the search of a more sustainable and balanced development e.g. Water Framework Directive, the Habitat and Birds Directives and Flooding Directive

=> More and more national and local planning documents integrate environmental aspects or sectors that (might) have a spatial impact.

## **New instruments**

Instruments to further enhance integration:

- water assessment or water test, which has enlarged the role of water management in the planning process
- specific nature protection zones (Natura 2000), which has improved the fine-tuning of spatial planning and nature development.

## **Experiences in practice**

Experiences in the planning practice have also enlarged the integrated approach: due to flooding in the nineties => flood damage prevention strategies.

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Learning from each other and working together

- Advanced aspects and approaches
- Deficiencies in planning process which run against ecological targets
- Deficiencies in planning process which run against protection against flood damage
- Transferable planning methodologies and planning instruments for transnational-oriented projects
- Relevant aspects for establishing transnational cooperation

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## Advanced or innovative aspects and approaches

- Water test (*watertoets*): in early stage municipalities or developers get into contact with the water board of a specific area and talk about the restraints and possibilities the water system offers to the desired development
- Computer models are used to simulate patterns of natural flooding. Sometimes nature development is also integrated into the model.
- Other instruments: risk atlases or risk maps showing what areas could be subject to flooding.
- Most measures are more local oriented and therefore not transferable as a common ground for all the countries.

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Deficiencies in planning process which run against ecological targets

Factors that interfere with an effective integration:

- Lack of knowledge about the intensity and impact of certain spatial developments on ecological values
- “Cultural differences” (too conservative and not strategic contra too abstract and too much focused on development)
- Different administrations with their own procedures regarding implementation of laws and integration.
- Financing: options that are cheaper on the short term prevail.

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Deficiencies in planning process which run against flood damage protection

Factors that interfere with an effective integration:

- Individual effort as integration mainly depends on the willingness, knowledge and concern of the leading representatives, state services, technicians or consultants
- Lack of awareness due to absence of threats of flooding
- Different geographical scopes
- “Cultural differences” (sectoral, centralized, project orientation contra integral, territorial and decentralized orientation)
- Lack of knowledge: changing sectoral demands of and opportunities arising from the water sector are not considered sufficiently during the process by urban design
- Lack of implementation and concretisation in lower level plans
- Different administrations with their own procedures regarding implementation of laws and integration
- Not legally binding water test
- Financing: options that are cheaper on the short term prevail

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## Transferable planning methodologies and planning instruments

Because of the differences in planning systems hard to identify methodologies or instruments that can be transferred to other countries. Examples are:

- Water test (Netherlands and Belgium)
- Flood Risk Assessments (United Kingdom)

Development planning = making earlier allowance during planning for the actual implementation of the plans. Features are:

- Adopting an area-dedicated approach that improves spatial quality in the entire area
- Co-operating and agreeing firm arrangements with stakeholders
- Carrying out various projects cohesively

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Relevant aspects for establishing interregional and/or transnational cooperation

Success is defined by a clear understanding of and respect for the approach to spatial planning in each of the countries

Differences in:

- amount of integration and scale of plans
- method of saving and exchanging the data.
- character and time-scale of procedures
- the way certain government administrations and the public should be involved.

All these factors should be taken into serious consideration in interregional and/or transnational cooperation.

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Discussion/questions