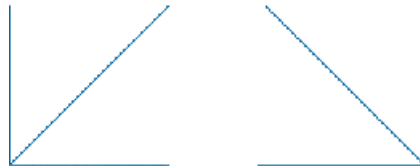


**NOTA  
RUIJMT**



## **NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY**

### **SUMMARY**

*Creating space for development*

**NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY - SUMMARY -**

***Creating space for development***

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

The National Spatial Strategy contains the government's views on the spatial development of the Netherlands and the most important objectives associated with that development. In accordance with the government's coalition agreement, the strategy represents the contribution of national spatial planning into a strong economy, a safe and liveable society and an attractive country. The Implementation Agenda for the strategy provides insights into the most important spatial investments and implementation activities with respect to the policy. The National Spatial Strategy sets out national spatial policy up until 2020; the long-term aspects cover the period from 2020-2030.

**The National Spatial Strategy and other national policy documents**

The new National Spatial Strategy replaces the current national strategies on spatial planning and/or the national spatial planning key decisions (PKBs in Dutch) that were part of the Supplement to the Fourth National Policy Document on Spatial Planning (*Vierde nota over de ruimtelijke ordening Extra*) (and its update in the VINAC) and the Second National Structure Plan for Green Areas. In addition to the National Spatial Strategy, a few other national planning key decisions will be taken. For example, regional strategies will be drawn up for the Wadden Sea and the area covering the major rivers: the PKB Third Policy Document on the Wadden Sea and the PKB 'Space for the Rivers'.

**Background**

The government has recently adopted the National Spatial Strategy. The basis for this strategy - the Fifth National Policy Document on Spatial Planning and Second National Structure Plan for Green Areas (*Vijfde Nota over de Ruimtelijke Ordening and Tweede Structuurschema Groene Ruimte/SGR2*) - were drawn up by the previous government, under Prime Minister Kok. During this period of government, preparatory work was also carried out on the National Traffic and Transport Plan (*Nationaal Verkeers- en Vervoersplan*). All three of these policy documents followed the procedure

required for a national spatial planning key decision (PKB), but none was instituted during the term of that government. The current National Spatial Strategy integrates and completes the current (PKB) procedures of the Fifth National Spatial Planning Policy Document and the Second National Structure Plan on Green Areas, so that attention can now be focused on implementation of the policy. It is primarily the method of governance (the 'how') rather than the policy content (the 'what') that has changed compared to previous plans. The most important objectives, policy concepts and basic principles that were announced in previous policy plans have been adopted by the present government. The adjustments have primarily been made in the number and types of tools to be utilised. The earlier policy plans, formulated in part 1 of both PKB's, provided sufficient scope for a change in emphasis in the National Spatial Strategy in the way preferred by the current government. The public responses to the initial policy plan are still very relevant and have been taken into consideration in the new government statement in the National Spatial Strategy. The same applies to the recommendations that have been made and the results of the parliamentary discussions. The ex-ante evaluation carried out jointly by the national spatial, social, economic, nature and environmental planning agencies, the evaluation on the emancipatory effects of the policy and the advice on Spatial Development Politics by the Advisory Council on Government Policy (WRR) have also been explicitly included in this process, as was the Position Paper on National Spatial Policy (*Stellingnamebrief Nationaal Ruimtelijk Beleid*) published by the previous government.

Fewer rules and regulations dictated by central government, more scope for local and regional considerations, more development planning and less development control planning were among the more frequent suggestions. The changing economic prospects and the problems of creating a liveable environment in the major cities were also reasons to give more weight to the public responses that demanded attention for such issues. Many people felt that a clear, decisive national vision was lacking, as was coherence in the content and implementation of the national policy. The National Spatial Strategy, with its nationwide vision and the associated Implementation Agenda was this government's response to this criticism. With respect to the earlier policy proposals (part 1 of the PKB), the number of rules and regulations imposed by central government on others has been reduced, while creating more scope for local and regional governments, social organisations, private actors and the citizens themselves. The role of the provinces has been strengthened. The government acknowledges that there are differences between the provinces and that these may become greater given the additional scope for local and regional considerations. However, as long as the basic quality standards are safeguarded, such differences may in the end be very attractive for the Netherlands as a whole.

## **2. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The main goal of national spatial policy is to create space for the different functions that demand it, on the limited surface area that we have available to us in the Netherlands. More specifically, the government focuses on four general objectives: strengthening the international competitive position of the Netherlands, promoting strong cities and a vibrant, dynamic countryside, securing and developing important national and international spatial values, and ensuring public safety.

### **Strengthening the international competitive position of the Netherlands**

A faltering economy and growing international competition compel us to strengthen the economy and international competitive position of the Netherlands. Wherever possible, the National Spatial Strategy

removes spatial obstacles to economic growth. The range of attractive places to locate businesses, both in general and with respect to links in the agricultural chain, and an effective approach to tackling traffic congestion, are crucial in this context. Bottlenecks occur mainly in the major cities and the two main ports, where high-production economic activities take place and agglomeration advantages can be exploited. The integrated planning advocated by the National Spatial Strategy must also ensure that the innovative opportunities and potentials inherent in prominent knowledge clusters in regions such as Eindhoven, Wageningen, greater Amsterdam, the southern wing of the Randstad urban agglomeration, Utrecht, Twente and Groningen can be fully exploited. Based on the area's very prominent international position in the field of research and development, the Eindhoven/South East Brabant region has been included in the strategy as a brainport. Since many knowledge clusters are located along the A2 motorway (Amsterdam-Maastricht) this major road is sometimes referred to as a knowledge axis.

### **Strong cities and a vibrant, dynamic countryside**

The problems in the major and medium-sized cities relating to social and economic factors and the liveability of the urban environment demand an appropriate response from the national government. The differences between rich and poor urban districts, but also between relatively poor, multicultural cities and relatively prosperous, largely native Dutch surrounding regions, require a whole range of measures to deal with the different issues. Some of these measures include spatial considerations. To prevent an unbalanced population structure from developing, the national government is encouraging more variation in the types of housing provided. In the cities in particular, more high-quality housing options are needed. This prevents the middle-class and the higher income groups from leaving the city. At the same time, urban renewal and restructuring are urgently required to increase the liveability of the cities. The cities cannot deal with these problems on their own. The surrounding municipalities not only need to share the benefits, but also need to help find solutions to the problems. For example, it is important that they contribute towards the provision of housing for people with fewer financial resources. While the urban problems are primarily dealt with at the level of cities and neighbouring municipalities, the opportunities for the longer term present themselves generally at a higher scale: the national urban networks. Teamwork, coordination of individual efforts and division of labour between cities and urban regions are very important. The same is true with respect to maintaining the urban support base for public facilities and ensuring sufficient urban mass and the associated economic agglomeration advantages. Also, in more rural areas a number of developments require a suitable, partially spatial, response from the government. The number of agricultural businesses is diminishing and the liveability and vitality of some regions is in decline. In combination with the consequences of climate changes and soil subsidence, these developments have a major impact on land use, water and soil management and the development of the environment and the landscape. In the National Spatial Strategy, the government provides the spatial pre-conditions for a vibrant, dynamic countryside.

### **Preserving and developing important national and international spatial values**

It is clearly visible in various places in the Netherlands that the landscape is becoming more fragmented and less coherent. Even areas designated as UNESCO world heritage sites are sometimes removed from sight or overshadowed by new buildings. However, there are also opportunities to design new spatial values. The National Spatial Strategy provides the spatial pre-conditions required to preserve and develop these natural, landscape-oriented and cultural values.

### **Ensuring public safety**

In recent years, it has become clear that public safety from flooding needs to be guaranteed more effectively. Besides the problems posed by rising sea levels, greater extremes of precipitation and drought are expected. Add to that the problem of soil subsidence, particularly in the already low-lying western part of the Netherlands, and it is clear that drastic changes are needed in the water system and water management. These also have consequences for the agricultural businesses and the way in which new urban areas are designed and planned. The National Spatial Strategy identifies water as a structuring principle, which will be an integral element in the spatial planning processes. In addition, disasters due to high-risk activities, such as the firework disaster in Enschede, have made it abundantly clear that public safety in our country is not always guaranteed to a sufficient extent. The policies in the National Spatial Strategy also contribute to proper spatial conditions to increase the safety of the population.

### **3. PHILOSOPHY OF GOVERNANCE**

In its spatial vision and objectives, the government works from the basis of a dynamic, development-oriented spatial policy and a clear division of responsibilities between the national government and the local and regional governments. In the past, national policy on spatial issues was set out in separate policy documents. This government has chosen to incorporate as much of the national policy as possible into one single strategy. A single National Spatial Strategy will help to reduce the overlap in the different policy fields and the number of separate policy documents, while offering more clarity and ensuring more coherence in the policy and its implementation.

#### **Strategy provides a general outline**

The National Spatial Strategy is a strategic policy document that provides a general outline, distinguishing between the responsibilities of the national government and other parties. The national government is not the sole font of wisdom, nor does it pretend to provide all the solutions to all the problems at hand. The national government will be focusing less on looking after others and more on ensuring that others can deal with matters more effectively on their own. It is the responsibility of the national government to provide other tiers of government with an effective toolkit for implementing spatial policy. This brings the government back to the essential principles of the national spatial policy, which are expressed for example in the decentralised planning system where a pivotal role is reserved for land use plans, shifting the emphasis from planning to development. The National Spatial Strategy distinguishes between different forms of governance. The extent of national governance will depend on the responsibility that the national government bears for that specific issue. With respect to the spatial policy targets and objectives, as well as how they will be put into practice, it is indicated the extent to which the government wishes to become involved and the ways in which such involvement might occur. In relation to all the issues included in the strategy, the national government at the very least bears responsibility for the system. The National Spatial Strategy contains the process architecture for the local and regional governments, but the national government is in few cases responsible for the results where the basic quality standards are concerned. Where national interests are at stake, guidance from the national government may be necessary. In several such cases, the national government is even responsible for the results. The national government also chooses to be selectively and directly involved in concrete policies regarding spatial development related to the National Spatial Structure, which often involves major investments. In strategic policies related to the National Spatial Structure, the national government is in any case involved as a partner. National involvement is greatest in projects in which many elements of this structure converge or intersect, such as in the Randstad urban agglomeration. The National Spatial Strategy also defines the spatial

framework for all spatial investments to be undertaken by national, regional and local governments, as such investments could become relevant in sector-based policy documents.

### **Basic quality standards and the National Spatial Structure**

The National Spatial Strategy makes it clear which minimum basic values are guaranteed everywhere — the basic quality standards — and which spatial structures entail greater responsibility for the national government: the National Spatial Structure. All policy statements made by the national government in the National Spatial Strategy can be linked to one of these two concepts.

The National Spatial Strategy contains generic rules to preserve the general basic quality standards, the baseline for all spatial plans, which all those involved are bound to maintain. For example, in the context of the economy, infrastructure and urbanisation, the basic quality standards concern the urban concentration policy, the location policy, a good balance between red (urban) and green (rural)/blue (water-based) functions, environmental legislation and safety. In the context of water, nature and landscape, the basic quality standards are laid down in areas such as the 'water test', functional combinations with water, and the green spaces in and around the cities. The basic quality standards may involve requirements for the content or processes, but they may also involve more financial principles. For example, it is not permitted in the context of spatial considerations and new local or regional plans and projects for negative effects to be transferred to existing land uses or to functions such as water, nature and infrastructure. The basic principle is that the initiator deals with the problems created (instigator principle) and does not automatically turn to the national government. That is a logical consequence of the healthy principle of keeping both costs and benefits under joint control as much as possible. Spatial quality can be expressed in the concepts of use-related value, experience-related value and future value. In the National Spatial Strategy, the national government indicates which quality standards should be included in the National Spatial Structure and the basic quality standards. This allows the government to guarantee proper spatial quality standards at the national level. Local and regional governments have the same responsibility at their own scales. In addition, Dutch and international treaties, agreements and regulations sometimes include requirements that are relevant to spatial considerations. These are the legal basic quality standards. It should be noted that the government wants to encourage local and regional governments to achieve more than just the basic quality standards as much as possible in fields such as environment and safety, as well as high-quality landscape and spatial design.

Together, the regions and networks that the government considers to have national significance comprise the National Spatial Structure. In these areas, the national government generally strives to achieve more than just basic quality standards. In the National Spatial Strategy, the National Spatial Structure is more selective than in the previous policy encompassed in the Fifth National Policy Document on Spatial Planning. It focuses on national policy and its implementation. In the context of the economy, infrastructure and urbanisation, this focus is primarily concerned with economic core areas, the two main ports, brainports and greenports, new city key projects, major transport axes and the national urban networks. With respect to water, nature and landscape, the National Spatial Structure comprises the major rivers, the IJsselmeer region, the Coastal, Bird and Habitat Directive areas and protected nature areas, the National Ecological Network and the main ecological links, UNESCO world heritage areas and national landscapes. The greater ambition the national government has in this context is primarily expressed in policy implementation. Clear examples include the national commitment (financial and otherwise) to both main ports (port of Rotterdam and

Amsterdam Schiphol airport), the planning of the Amsterdam Southern Axis (*Zuidas*) and the five other national city key projects, as well as the National Ecological Network.

### **Layer approach and spatial quality**

One can picture land use in the Netherlands as consisting of three layers: surface (water, soil and the flora and fauna in those environments), networks (all forms of visible and invisible infrastructure) and occupation (spatial patterns due to human use). Each layer influences the spatial considerations and choices with respect to the other layers. For too long, we have considered urbanisation, intensive agriculture and other forms of occupation as separate, unrelated elements, without sufficient consideration to the demands created by the other layers. The development of intensive livestock farming on sandy soils and of large-scale urban areas in the peat soils located below sea level are striking examples of such problems. Water also sets intrusive constraints on long-term, sustainable location policies. Slowly developing trends such as rising sea levels, higher levels of water discharge and more precipitation force us to change the way we think about water. We need to give much more consideration to the properties and functions of the surface layer and the network layer, as well as the structural significance of both layers. In the planning stage, the processes in the different layers need to be considered more in relation to each other. This can prevent conflicts between different users of the same land, as well as creating greater coherence in the measures to be taken. After all, intervention can serve more than one policy objective at the same time.

This approach allows plans that consider all three layers and the constraints they put on land use to be future-oriented, sustainable and usable. The layer approach works well with the different aspects of spatial quality standards: use-oriented value, experience-oriented value and future value. The government wants to improve spatial quality throughout the Netherlands by preserving the basic quality standards and improving them where possible, while focusing extra attention on the National Spatial Structure. The actual form that such spatial quality will take will be decided on a situation-by-situation basis by the provinces and municipalities.

## **4. TOOLS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

In the National Spatial Strategy, the government chooses a dynamic, development-driven spatial policy. This shifts the emphasis from setting constraints to stimulating developments. In other words: the government is placing more emphasis on development planning and less on development control planning. Local and regional governments, social organisations, citizens and private actors are explicitly invited to participate in spatial planning in order to arrive regional and local visions and policy implementation with a broad support base. In this context, public authorities will have to take on the role of partner to enterprising individuals and companies, reinforcing the dynamics rather than working against them by a complex system of rules. This will contribute to better utilisation of spatial opportunities and improved regional qualities, thus also allowing the Dutch design traditions of landscape, urbanisation and architecture to continue. The national government will only set limitations on spatial developments if national interests are at stake. At least once every two years (preferably in the context of the Implementation Agenda of the National Spatial Strategy to be updated every two years) the government will assess whether the policy scope is sufficient in practice.

### **Amendment of laws and land policy**

A full range of legal tools is needed to ensure the proper implementation of the National Spatial Strategy. The Spatial Planning Act (*Wet op de ruimtelijke ordening*) will be amended, bringing it more in line with the strategy's philosophy of governance. The Rural Planning Act (*Wet inrichting landelijk gebied - WILG*), as the successor to the Land Use Act (*Landinrichtingswet*), will also facilitate proper implementation, as will land policy.

### **Implementation and funding**

Various investment schemes contribute to the realisation of the objectives of the National Spatial Strategy, such as the Second Urban Renewal Investment Budget (ISV-2 in Dutch) and the Rural Areas Investment Budget (ILG in Dutch) currently being developed. The ISV-2 will include cutbacks: the number of objectives for which the national government wants to set performance agreements has been reduced and the objectives are being more precisely formulated. The ILG will integrate many individual schemes and funding arrangements for the rural areas.

The Agenda for a Vibrant, Dynamic Countryside (*Agenda Vitaal Platteland*) will be published at the same time as the National Spatial Strategy, as the elaboration of the policy for the economic, ecological, social and cultural aspects of the countryside. The investment priorities arising from this agenda and the other resources that are important to the rural areas will be included in the associated Multiannual Programme. The Second National Traffic and Transport Structure Plan (*Tweede Structuurschema Verkeer en Vervoer*) will be succeeded by the National Traffic and Transport Strategy (*Nota Mobiliteit*), whose spatial strategy is based on the National Spatial Strategy. Pursuant to these policy documents, spatial-economic policies and the resulting investment priorities are elaborated in the Regional Economic Perspectives (*Gebiedsgerichte Economische Perspectieven*) and the Action Plan for Business Estates (*Actieplan Bedrijventerreinen*).

### **International context**

In terms of spatial economics, the Netherlands has increasingly strong ties to other countries, particularly within Europe. Protected natural areas and water systems generally do not conform to strict national boundaries, and people and businesses relocate their activities abroad with increasing ease. The demand for space for economic functions in the Netherlands is dependent on international economic changes. The demand for space in the two main ports (port of Rotterdam and Amsterdam Schiphol airport) is a good example of the influence of international factors. Similarly, the consequences of international economic growth or recession can be seen directly in the demand for office space in the Netherlands, such as in the Amsterdam Southern Axis. Spatial policy in the Netherlands needs to consider this international context and anticipate the effects of international developments. For example, the National Spatial Structure needs to connect to the most important European structures, including the Trans-European networks and the European ecological network.

## **5. CONCENTRATION OF URBANISATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

The national government wants to concentrate urbanisation and infrastructure into national urban networks, economic core areas and major transport axes as much as possible. Concentrating urbanisation and infrastructure and organisation in urban networks is the policy strategy the national government wishes to employ for the economy, infrastructure and urbanisation. The derivative policy objectives are: developing national urban networks and urban centres, strengthening the economic



core areas, improving accessibility, improving the liveability and socio-economic position of cities, maintaining accessible recreational facilities in and around the cities, preserving and strengthening the variation between city and countryside, harmonising urbanisation and the economy with water management, and safeguarding environmental quality and safety. It is primarily the responsibility of the provinces and (collaborating) municipalities to develop the specific applications of the generic concentration policy and to implement the policy with a view to specific problems and challenges. In this context, the national government greatly values partnerships between municipalities on issues that cross municipal borders, particularly in the fields of urbanisation, the economy and transport.

### **National urban networks and economic core areas**

The Netherlands is developing into a network society and a network economy. On the one hand, individualisation continues to progress; on the other hand, all those individuals are increasingly closely interconnected in numerous networks. This development also has major consequences for spatial planning. There is more and more coherence between the various cities and urban areas. The government applauds this development towards urban networks. Partnerships between such networks expand the support base of public facilities and services and open up opportunities for optimal use of the scarce space. To respond to this trend, the national government has designated 6 national urban networks. The development of these networks is a high priority. The same applies to 13 economic core areas, which are mostly located within the networks. The national urban networks are: Randstad Holland, Brabantstad, Southern Limburg, Twente, Arnhem-Nijmegen and Groningen-Assen. 3 economic core areas are situated outside these urban networks: Wageningen-Ede-Veenendaal-Rhemen, Venlo and the Vlissingen-Terneuzen/Gent canal zone. A national urban network is defined as an entity of larger and smaller cities, including the open spaces in between. The cities and centres that comprise these networks complement and reinforce each others' strengths, so that they have more to offer together than they do as individual cities. It is explicitly not the intention that a new tier of government be created for the national urban networks. The partnerships between the local and regional governments within the networks are completely voluntary, flexible and pragmatic. The national government expects that the municipalities will draw up agreements on how they will shape the concentration policy, in consultation with the provinces and the urban regions.

Within each national urban network, the national government designates a number of areas where urbanisation will be concentrated. Provinces, urban regions and municipalities will incorporate these concentration areas into their plans and elaborate on the urbanisation policy. It is not the intention that these concentration areas be fully urbanised. Although the emphasis in these areas is on urbanisation, the spatial plans must also leave space for water, nature, landscape, recreation, sport and agriculture. In the concentration areas, city and country must be developed together, as a coherent, integrated whole. In the national urban networks, the creation of easily accessible, attractive city centres with a variety of functions and public facilities is crucially important. The municipalities bear the primary responsibility for achieving that goal, while the national government adopts a stimulatory role and contributes to the necessary investments. It is particularly important to develop city centres around infrastructure nodes. The national government has assigned top priority to the development of the Amsterdam Southern Axis into a high-profile international location. A similar approach is being used for Rotterdam Central and the four other national city key projects: The Hague Central, Utrecht Central, Arnhem and Breda.

### **Main ports, brainports and greenports.**

The Netherlands has two main ports: Amsterdam Schiphol airport and the port of Rotterdam. These cover not only the actual port and airport areas, but also the surrounding regions, as a setting for offices of major urban and international businesses. The economic importance and the pressures on space around both main ports require national co-ordination. The national government maintains that Schiphol should be able to develop further at its current location until 2030. Businesses and offices may be located in the immediate vicinity of Schiphol provided they are airport-related, determined on the basis of the importance of accessibility, safety and the future demands that Schiphol itself will place on the available space. The government does not consider it desirable for new urban areas to be built under frequently used flight paths. In concrete terms, this means that no new urban areas can be developed within and beside the noise contours associated with the five runway system, with the exception of the existing locations reserved for developments designated in the context of the Fourth National Spatial Planning Policy Document. In order to leave sufficient space for the development of Schiphol both now and in the future, no new housing locations may be developed under the flight paths over Hoofddorp West, Noordwijkerhout and the Legmeerpolder land reclamation area.

For the future of the port of Rotterdam, the government has developed plans in the Supplement to the National Spatial Planning Key Decision on the Development of the Port of Rotterdam (*PKB-plus Mainportontwikkeling Rotterdam*). This national spatial planning key decision establishes the land and constraints required to respond decisively and effectively to the private sector in future decades. In order to respond to the demand for 300 hectares of port-related business estates, the national government considers it necessary to reserve space at the northern edge of the Hoeksche Waard area. The national government also wants to keep options open for locating large-scale chemical firms on the Tweede Maasvlakte, setting strict constraints for the transport of hazardous materials.

In the field of research and development, the Eindhoven/South East Brabant region is highly prominent both nationally and internationally. The location policy and the policy for creating city centres in the national urban networks support the development of this brainport and other knowledge and innovation clusters. The Policy Document on Regional Economic Perspectives (*Nota Gebiedsgerichte Economische Perspectieven*) elaborates on this in more detail.

Besides the two main ports and the brainport, the Netherlands has 5 greenports: concentrations of knowledge-intensive horticulture and agribusinesses. From an international economic perspective, the national government considers it important to preserve and strengthen the international importance of the horticultural function in these locations.

### **Major transport axes**

The national government is responsible for the major infrastructure of roads, railways and waterways and aims to provide basic quality standards throughout the entire major infrastructure. On the basis of the spatial policy, the national government primarily focuses its efforts in this area on the major transport axes between the two main ports (and the surrounding regions) and the most important major urban areas in the Netherlands and abroad. These major transport axes are the backbone of the National Spatial Structure. The policy for the major transport axes is elaborated on in the National Traffic and Transport Strategy (*Nota Mobiliteit*). At locations where problems demand solutions, the national government assigns priority to solving problems on the major transport axes, particularly within the 'triple-A' axes of the A2, A4 and A12 motorways.

A rapid public transport link from Schiphol and Amsterdam to Almere and Groningen (the so-called 'Zuiderzee link') aims to improve the accessibility of the north of the country and of the northern wing of the Randstad urban agglomeration. This would not only promote the economic development of the north of the country, but would also put Almere on a more equal footing with the other cities in the Randstad. There are four possible alternatives for creating such a link, two of which have been designated as preferred alternatives (Maglev link and high-speed train link) and two as fall-back options (intercity line and so-called Hanze line plus link). The national government has initiated a planning study for the 'Zuiderzee link'. At this planning study stage, an integrated proposed route/environmental impact assessment tender procedure will be followed. The first stage is a public tender in the form of an open competition. The competition invites private actors to develop plans for a Maglev or high-speed line. These plans must meet set financial terms and functional requirements. The context also includes an IJmeer variation as an option for the Schiphol-Almere link. The 'Zuiderzee link' and the other major transport axes (A6/A7 and A28 motorways) can also play an important role in eliminating the disadvantage of the north of the country vis-à-vis other regions in the Netherlands.

### **Transporting hazardous materials**

Large quantities of hazardous materials are transported between the major industry and port areas in the economic core areas and neighbouring countries. This transport can create conflicts of interest between spatial planning, the economy, the environment and public safety. Following the National Spatial Strategy, the national government will set up regulatory systems for transporting hazardous materials by road, rail and water. Modes of transport and transport axes will also be designated, on which the transport of hazardous materials will not be made impossible. Depending on the costs and benefits for society, a balance must be achieved between transporting hazardous materials and the spatial developments in the surrounding areas. To achieve this balance, safety zones will be maintained along infrastructure routes for transporting hazardous materials, within which certain restrictions will be placed on spatial planning. In addition, contributions will be made via spatial-economic policy and environmental policy to limit and integrate transport flows. The transport of hazardous materials will have to be controlled in such a way that it stays within the set safety margins. In this context, the preferred solution is following market practices by means of negotiable rights, price policies, etc.

With respect to transport by road, a balance will have to be found between the conflicting interests of transport and spatial consideration, e.g. by rerouting. Transporting hazardous materials by water and pipelines causes relatively few problems.

### **Business estates**

The Netherlands is faced with the task of restructuring more than 21,000 hectares of business estates, more than a fifth of the current acreage. The problems encountered here often include soil contamination, poor accessibility, need to relocate businesses, crime and a lack of safety and security. However, experience has shown that restructuring produces only a limited number of additional areas for development. For that reason, it is expected that more than 23,000 hectares of new business estates will be needed between now and 2020. In that context, the national government will offer extra support for large, complex business estates, the so-called 'top projects', which are located within the economic core areas. The national government considers the creation of business estates in the Hoeksche Waard (300 hectares) and the Moerdijkse Hoek (600 hectares) to be of national importance for sustainable, long-term economic growth. The implementation of the policy for business estates has

been included in the Implementation Agenda of the National Spatial Strategy. In addition, the national government will publish an Action Plan for Business Estates (*Actieplan Bedrijventerreinen*).

### **Green spaces in and around the urban areas**

Urban dwellers increasingly seek possibilities for 'green recreation' in and around the cities. However, the provision of such facilities has not kept pace with the increasing demand: in the national urban networks, the development of recreational facilities has lagged behind the urbanisation process. For that reason, the national government considers it important that the local and regional governments involved reserve sufficient land for green spaces and other recreational opportunities around the city, and that sustainable recreational landscapes are created and maintained. In this context, a specific role is reserved for the former national buffer zones. In the past, these areas were designated to keep cities separate from each other and have been kept free of large-scale construction projects since that time. In addition to their important buffer function, these areas have increasingly developed into recreational areas for the urban population. Due to the serious shortages in this field, it is important that the emphasis on day-recreation increases. Spatial developments in these areas are possible, as long as the landscape and recreational aspects do not suffer as a result. The responsibility for this transformation of the buffer zones lies with the provinces, urban regions and (collaborating) municipalities. The national government will adopt a stimulatory role and assess the planning regime for the former buffer zones. The national government will also keep to the previous investment agreements for the buffer zones. The Multiannual Programme for a Vibrant and Dynamic Countryside (*Meerjarenprogramma Vitaal Platteland*) elaborates on the availability of national government funding.

## **6. BASIC QUALITY STANDARDS FOR CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES AND ACCESSIBILITY**

The government aims to achieve basic quality standards for cities, towns and villages and the accessibility of these communities. Concentration is key in this context. In general, the national government limits itself to indicating frameworks and standards. Local and regional governments have more scope in the implementation of these policies. However, in a number of cases, the national government will evaluate whether the standards are being complied with sufficiently.

### **Concentration of urbanisation and economic activities**

With respect to urbanisation and economic activities, the national government works on the principle of a concentration strategy. Concentration in this context has many advantages. The cities are supported in their function as economic and cultural motors. In cities, towns and villages, the support base for public facilities is optimised. Infrastructure can be concentrated and utilised optimally. The national government does not implement the concentration policy itself; that is a task for the local and regional governments. However, the national government does adopt a stimulatory role. It will also evaluate whether provinces and urban regions include the concentration policy for urbanisation and economic activities in their policy plans. The basic principle is that sufficient space is provided in each municipality to accommodate the natural growth of the population. This also applies to more rural areas, where people are looking to come onto the housing market for the first time and the elderly have particular problems in finding suitable housing, all of which causes extra social pressure. To be able to monitor this problem, the national government will be assessing capacities in regional and local plans. In addition to its own population increase, each municipality must also provide sufficient space for locally-oriented industries and businesses.

The concentration of urbanisation and economic activities means that new construction for these functions will largely be realised in areas of high concentration, that is in existing built-up areas, adjacent to existing built-up areas or in new clusters outside the existing built-up areas. Optimal use must be made of the space available in the existing urban areas by building at higher densities. The goal is to realise 40% of the total expansion programme for houses and employment locations in those areas, although the government, in view of practical experience in recent years, will take into account lower production levels within existing built-up areas for 25% of the total programme as a basis for investment decisions.

In particular in neighbourhoods that contain many disadvantaged population groups and low-quality housing, the goal of achieving a large percentage of the new production within the cities must be maintained both now and in future years. By pursuing this goal, it may be possible to reduce social tensions and integration problems and increase development opportunities. The national government encourages revitalisation, restructuring and transformation of both (obsolete) urban districts and business estates in general.

### **Location policy for businesses and public services**

In recent years, the Netherlands has pursued a location policy that was intended to guide the location of businesses and public services in accordance with their transport needs. This so-called 'ABC location policy' and the location policy for Peripheral and Large-Scale Retail Establishments has been replaced by an integrated location policy that serves various purposes: economic development opportunities, accessibility and liveability of the surrounding environment. This policy is decentralised, shifting the responsibility to provinces and urban regions. The intention is that each region will provide location options for businesses and public services, facilitating an optimal contribution to strengthening cities, towns and villages. In this context, an appropriate location should be offered for each business. It is best for the provinces and urban regions to determine for themselves what constitutes an appropriate location. The national government limits itself to setting out a number of guidelines regarding the desired basic quality standards. For example, the government prefers housing and employment locations to be mixed as much as possible. Locations must also be provided for businesses and public services that cannot be located in city centres of residential districts due to safety considerations or public nuisance. The provinces and urban regions must lay down rules and criteria to define such activities. In addition, businesses and public facilities that involve significant transport flows must be provided space at locations that have good links to various types of transport.

### **Balance between red (urban) and green/blue (water-based) land uses**

The quantity and quality of the green spaces in and around the city has noticeably diminished in recent decades. In part due to the policy of the compact city, many green areas have disappeared. Sports fields and allotments have often been moved to the edge of the city, while greenfield locations have been built on. High land prices often mean that new city districts have a high concentration of housing with little room left for green spaces. All these factors mean that there is a major shortage of green and blue (water-based) recreational opportunities in and around the cities. Moreover, the green spaces that are available often do not meet the current quality standards: in many cases they are incoherent and poorly accessible. The national government considers it part of the basic quality standards it wants to guarantee that all citizens should have access to sufficient green and blue recreational opportunities. The availability of such opportunities in the rural areas must be kept in balance with the development of the built-up areas. Provinces and municipalities are expected to incorporate this balance between construction and green/blue spaces in their spatial plans. This also

includes improving the accessibility of the green spaces, both by eliminating obstacles and by expanding the network of pedestrian and cycle paths and the water recreation network. Green spaces often are also afforded the lowest priority in new urban construction areas. The national government is relying on municipalities to use the guideline of 75 square metres of green space per dwelling when planning new locations. In addition, parks and green structures in cities, towns and villages should preferably be retained. However, the restructuring targets may require part of a park or a sports field to be built on. The responsible (local and regional) governments will have to weigh up the different aspects of the matter themselves.

### **Water and urbanisation**

The concentration of urbanisation should be linked to the water system. By taking the spatial water policy into account, provinces and municipalities can prevent negative effects on groundwater and surface water when planning urban areas. This has been included as a statutory requirement in the Spatial Planning Decree (*Besluit op de Ruimtelijke Ordening* - BRO) and expanded in the National Spatial Strategy. It is essential that water policy be not shifted on to adjacent regions or postponed indefinitely. More space for water also offers good opportunities for improving the structure and quality of cities, towns and villages, by restoring historic waterways or developing new water-rich residential and employment areas. New urban areas need to be designed in such a way that the water storage capacity remains at the same level. If more hard surfaces are realised then this needs to be compensated elsewhere; this approach is referred to as water-neutral or water-positive construction.

### **Concentration of infrastructure**

Due to the growth in passenger and freight traffic, if the policies remain unchanged the congestion on the Dutch roads will have doubled in 2020. This would seriously endanger the competitive position of the Netherlands. To prevent this from happening, the national government wants to improve accessibility on the entire motorway network. The concentration principle plays an important part in making that possible. The growth in traffic will largely be concentrated on specific major routes, most of which already exist. Expansion of capacity will also take place on those routes as much as possible. The bottlenecks on the major transport links will be considered as a coherent whole and may receive priority, even if there is a somewhat more favourable cost-benefit analysis for bottlenecks on other routes. The national government, provinces, water boards, urban regions and municipalities are each responsible for providing basic quality standards for part of the infrastructure. This requires proper coordination in the form of an integrated, joint approach to accessibility problems. Development planning and tailor-made solutions offer good starting points. The national government indicates in the National Traffic and Transport Strategy (*Nota Mobiliteit*) and the Multiannual Programme for Infrastructure and Transport (*Meerjarenprogramma Infrastructuur en Transport* - MIT) which expansions and new routes have been provided, and will check whether local and regional governments take these developments into account in their plans.

The growth of (scattered) building and construction is now tending to make the view of the Netherlands from a car or train to be similar to that of one large city. Integrated regional designs could prevent this from happening and preserve or restore varied panoramas. The national government considers proper spatial assimilation of major infrastructure to be a contribution to the desired basic quality standards. The aim to achieve concentration creates the risk that visual barriers around infrastructure are further facilitated. Dealing with this barrier effect around major infrastructure is also a good approach to preventing problems with respect to noise, air quality and public safety. The national

government gives priority to removing barrier effects where important ecological links intersect major infrastructure links.

### **Airports, seaports and knowledge and innovation clusters**

Besides Amsterdam Schiphol, the Netherlands has a number of regional and minor airports. An amendment of the Aviation Act is being carried out with respect to these airports, based on the model of the system chosen for Schiphol. The Aviation Act sets a basic quality standard for public safety and security. After the functions and powers have been handed down from the national government, the provinces will be free to impose more stringent restrictions on regional and minor airports.

The government's seaport policy is aimed at strengthening the added value that the seaports can provide for the Dutch economy. To that end, the national government is applying a selective investment policy and a condition-creating policy. Strengthening the free market and international competitiveness, as well as creating clear pre-conditions for liveability and public safety, are the main priorities in this context. It is up to the relevant local and regional governments to determine the desired growth and size of the seaport areas within these constraints. In this context, choices must be made about public funding and the use of available space. The national government first and foremost focuses its investments on accessibility by land and sea, so that investments in the port of Rotterdam take priority over investments in those ports in the other economic core areas (Amsterdam and Vlissingen/Terneuzen-Gent canal zone), which in turn take priority over investments in the other ports.

The Eindhoven/South East Brabant region has been included in the strategy as a brainport. In addition, the Netherlands has a number of other important knowledge and innovation clusters. Many of these clusters (including greater Amsterdam and Utrecht) are located along the A2 motorway, which is therefore also referred to as a knowledge axis. Groningen, the southern wing of the Randstad urban agglomeration and the Nijmegen-Enschede-Wageningen triangle are also significant in this context. Where knowledge clusters are concerned, the main focus is on the exchange and application of knowledge, research and development, knowledge institutes and a well-educated, diverse professional population.

### **Environment and safety**

In terms of environmental quality and safety, provinces and municipalities receive more scope for local and regional solutions tailored to the specific needs of the situation. The national government sets basic environmental quality standards in laws and regulations and provides frameworks within which the local and regional governments can make their own judgements. It is important that they include and integrate environmental and safety aspects into their planning processes at an early stage. The European norm for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) is expected to be achieved no later than 2015. This is not within the deadline of the requirements for the European air quality directive. The national government is continuing to make an effort to change this aspect of the directive. In terms of noise pollution, the government wishes to have dealt with the major problem areas along roads and railways before 2020.

## **7. GOING WITH AND ANTICIPATING THE FLOW**

The changing climate has major consequences for spatial development in the Netherlands. To keep our heads literally above water, we will have to 'go with the flow' and anticipate expected developments. To ensure public safety from flooding, the national government is allowing more space

for the major rivers and the coastal defence systems. However, in more general terms, we also need to start seeing water as an important structuring principle for land use, design and use of the space. This means that spatial choices explicitly need to be considered, based on the characteristics of water systems. Spatial water policy is aimed at introducing order into the water system and maintaining that order, as agreed in the National Administrative Agreement on Water (*Nationaal Bestuursakkoord Water*). The national government, provinces, municipalities and water boards each have their own responsibilities in elaborating the details of the policy.

### **Spatial water policy**

The spatial water policy is based on the principle of 'going with and anticipating the flow'. The following starting points affect the implementation of that policy. To ensure public safety from flooding, space that is already available along the major rivers and the coast will be reserved for water. Where necessary, extra space will be created. To prevent problems with respect to the quantity of groundwater or surface water (too much or too little), the space will be zoned, designed and used in such a way that groundwater and surface water will not be polluted. If that is insufficient, unpolluted and polluted watercourses will be kept separate. The last stage requires purification and decontamination. This is the three-step strategy for water quality: prevent-separate-purify. Negative influences on the water system by spatial interventions will be compensated for by water-neutral or water-positive methods. The aim is to achieve a situation in which it is possible to prevent or reduce problems in groundwater and water quality or quantity from being shifted to the surrounding areas. Where possible, space for water will be found by combining water management with other functions. For example, water offers good opportunities for strengthening the historical identity of cities and landscapes. It is also possible to combine functions by expansion in the agricultural sector, mineral extraction, nature development, freshwater buffering, recreation and housing. Waterways can also be effectively incorporated to help achieve the goal of a sustainable transport system.

These starting points mean that location choices and design and management measures will explicitly be considered in spatial visions and plans based on water management considerations. The most important tool in this process is the so-called 'water test'. This test dictates that the initiator of all spatial plans and decisions must take water management into consideration from the very beginning, in close consultation with the water manager. The results of these considerations are described in the plan explanation: the 'water paragraph'. The water manager sets the criteria for the water test together with the project initiator. The starting points of the spatial water policy are used to determine the criteria. The water test should ensure that potential negative consequences for water management be prevented. If that is not possible, then some way must be found to compensate for the negative consequences. The national government assesses provincial and municipal plans and decisions to see whether or not they pass the water test. In developing spatial water policy, river catchment area visions also play an important part. These visions show the spatial consequences of introducing and maintaining standards in the regional water systems. Municipalities must elaborate the river catchment area visions in urban water plans (no later than 2006). After that, provinces and municipalities establish the relevant spatial agreements for the regional water systems in their provincial policy and regional plans (no later than 2007) and in municipal structure and local plans. The national government monitors the process to ensure that this actually happens.

### **Major rivers**

The main aim of the policy programme Space for the Rivers (*Ruimte voor de Rivier*) is to reserve space for the Rhine (which in the Netherlands branches into the Nederrijn, Waal, IJssel, and Lek) and



Meuse rivers. This policy acts as an evaluation framework for activities in the winter bed of the major rivers. The policy, instituted after the flooding in 1993 and 1995, is restrictive in nature. A more development-oriented approach would seem to be preferable. Based on the results of an evaluation, the national government will decide in 2005 whether this policy can be modified, and if so, how. At the same time, a combination of spatial and technical measures is needed in the areas around the rivers to create extra space for the rivers with a view to the expected higher levels of river discharge. Extra space can be found both inside and outside the dykes. River-expanding measures can be introduced in the winter bed within the short term; these can also be perceived as a saving with respect to more long-term measures. Emergency overflow areas also need to be available in case of impending flooding. For the time being, the national government has expressed a preference for designating overflow areas in Rijnstrangen, Ooijpolder and the eastern part of the Beersche Overlaat. The government will take a final decision on this matter no later than 2006.

The areas inside the dykes that may be needed to expand the winter bed, reinforce the dykes or for water storage areas or emergency flooding will be exempt from developments that might interfere with these functions. New residential neighbourhoods and other large-scale developments will not be permitted there. The national government will assess provincial and municipal plans to assess whether this guideline is being followed.

The policy described above will be elaborated for the Rhine river and Meuse river (downstream of Hedikhuizen) in the national spatial planning key decision PKB Space for the Rivers (*PKB Ruimte voor de Rivier*). The rest of the Meuse River is covered by the Integrated Review of the Meuse River Basin (*Integrale Verkenning Maas*). Besides ensuring public safety, the PKB Space for the Rivers also serves another purpose: improving spatial quality. After all, the area around the rivers is very important for the environment and the landscape. A vision is being developed to achieve both goals. This vision includes concrete river expansion measures for the short term, looks ahead to the measures in the long term, and outlines a differentiated development of spatial quality standards in the area. This latter aspect means that the choices for the various arms of the river will be tailored to their specific characteristics. The regional recommendations being drawn up jointly by the provinces involved are an important cornerstone of this vision. The Netherlands depends heavily on cooperation with other countries that the Rhine and Meuse rivers flow through in order to achieve adequate protection against flooding. The Netherlands and France have taken the initiative to investigate options for a European approach. The European Commission will be drawing up a proposal for a legal tool, which is intended to put a high priority on the principle of not passing on the blame and responsibility to others.

## **8. INVESTING IN THE QUALITY OF NATURE**

The national government, provinces and municipalities are responsible for various types of protected nature reserves: EU Bird and Habitat Directive areas, Nature Protection Act areas and the National Ecological Network, including the main ecological links. The actual implementation of the National Ecological Network is the responsibility of the provinces; the national government provides funding and expertise. The Wadden Sea is subject to the current national spatial planning key decision PKB Wadden Sea (*PKB Derde Nota Waddenzee*). The aim in protected nature reserves is to preserve, restore and develop the essential features and values. The provinces set out in their spatial policies which nature values should be protected. The national government also asks the provinces to determine no later than 2005 what environmental and water quality standards are required to make

that possible and what steps should be taken to facilitate them. The Netherlands has committed itself to designating large-scale areas with internationally important ecosystems as national parks. The policy is aimed at the creation of 18 national parks; these are the pearls in the chain of the National Ecological Network.

### **Main ecological links**

The expected climate changes will have consequences for nature and for the kinds of species present in the Netherlands. For example, southern European species will move towards our borders, while indigenous species will depart for more northern climates. To make these migrations possible, it is important to link ecosystems to each other. The current National Ecological Network is too fragmented. For that reason, as part of the National Ecological Network, 12 main ecological links will be realised: the Northern Water Axis, Drente plateau-South Twente, Veluwe-North East Twente, Veluwe-Utrechtse Heuvelrug, Veluwe-Achterhoek, the Western Water Axis, Biesbosch-Zeeland-Flanders, Oostvaardersplassen-Veluwe-Germany, Beerze, Schinveld-Mook, New Dutch Waterline (Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie) and Gateways to the Veluwe. These links and the other parts of the National Ecological Network must be realised by 2018. This realisation will be carried out in phases. Where possible, the links will also be made to nature areas in the surrounding countries.

### **Protected nature reserves**

The areas in or near protected nature reserves fall under the 'no, unless' principle. New plans, projects or activities will not be permitted if they affect the essential features or values of the area. Deviations from this rule can only be made if there are no other realistic alternatives and they can be justified by major contributions to the common good. In that case, the project initiator must take steps to eliminate or overcome the negative effects and, where this is insufficient, to compensate for the negative consequences by creating areas of equivalent value, preferably in or near the affected area. The relevant authorities will ensure that such compensation does in fact take place. If physical compensation is impossible, then financial compensation will be offered. Financial compensation is not an option for EU Bird and Habitat Directive areas. If an activity has significant consequences for these areas, the project initiator is required to create an alternative nature reserve in advance and in time. In the assessment framework for the National Ecological Network, plans, projects and activities are evaluated individually. To promote a more development-oriented approach, it is possible to deviate from this method by introducing a 'no, unless' principle at a regional level. This 'total balance' approach could, for example, achieve a less fragmented National Ecological Network, or functions or activities could receive better development opportunities elsewhere.

### **Species policy**

There are many aspects of nature in the Netherlands that are worth protecting and developing, and not all of them are located inside protected nature reserves. Half of the plant and animal species to which the Netherlands has made international commitments to protect have habitats that fall outside the National Ecological Network. Because local and regional governments are insufficiently aware of the presence of these species, they often receive attention too late in the planning and development stages. Specific attention should be paid to preserving and developing protected species, their habitats and the links between them. This is primarily a task for the provinces. In the regional plan for each province, they indicate how protected species and their habitats are protected and developed.

## **9. DEVELOPING LANDSCAPES WITH QUALITY**

Even more than other countries, the Netherlands is a man-made landscape. What we see around us has almost all been shaped by human hand in a process that took centuries. The quality of this landscape deserves full appreciation in spatial considerations. Water plays an important role in this context. After all, the Dutch landscape has largely been formed by flowing water.

### **World heritage sites**

The primary responsibility for the basic quality standards of the Dutch landscape lies with the provinces. The national government assesses whether they have focused attention on the quality of the landscape in their regional plans. However, a number of valuable areas and buildings have been designated as part of the national landscape and/or recorded on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The national government bears specific responsibility for these areas and buildings. The areas are accordingly included in the National Spatial Structure. The Netherlands has 6 areas and buildings that UNESCO has placed on the World Heritage List: Schokland and surroundings, the Defence Line of Amsterdam, the mill Network of Kinderdijk-Elshout, the D.F. Wouda pumping station, the Beemster polder and the Rietveld-Schröder house in Utrecht. In addition, a number of areas and objects have been placed on the preliminary list, including the New Dutch Waterline. The necessary protection and development of these areas must be arranged in regional and local plans.

### **National landscapes**

National landscapes are areas that have internationally exceptional and nationally characteristic qualities of landscape, cultural history and nature. These qualities must be preserved, sustainably managed and strengthened where possible. The basic principle here is preservation through development: as long as the core qualities are preserved or strengthened (the 'yes, provided that' principle), then spatial developments are possible within national landscapes. There is scope for no more than the natural population growth (a neutral migration balance) and for local and regional activities.

Scale and design are significant with respect to the preservation of the landscape qualities. This is why large-scale developments are not permitted. Where such activities are inevitable due to pressing national interests, mitigating and compensatory measures will be taken.

A sustainable perspective is preferred for agriculture in the national landscapes, in which expansion may offer opportunities. Special attention should be paid to agriculture in peat areas. Land-based agriculture is important to these man-made landscapes, so unique internationally. The policy for the peat areas is generally aimed at maintaining or increasing the groundwater levels. Within national landscapes, attention is also needed for nature in relation to cultural history and landscape, and for tourism and recreation.

Provinces are responsible for elaborating the policy for national landscapes. The national government will assess the regional plans on this aspect. The borders of the Green Heart of the Randstad national landscape are fixed by the national government in the National Spatial Strategy and must be adopted by the provinces. The national landscapes are: Green Heart of the Randstad, Middag-Humsterland, Northern Wouden, Westergo, South West Friesland, Drentse Aa, the IJssel delta, North East Twente, Graafschap, Achterhoek, Gelderse Poort, Veluwe, the Major Rivers area, Noord-Hollands Midden, South west Zeeland, Green Woud, the Limburg hills, Arnhem-Eemland, the New Dutch Waterline and the the Defence Line of Amsterdam. With a view to the specific nature of the Defence Line of Amsterdam, the National Spatial Strategy lays down no further requirements here, other than the

obligations and responsibilities arising from the status of world heritage site. In relation to the New Dutch Waterline, the national government follows the Perspective on the the New Dutch Waterline / Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie (*Linieperspectief Panorama Krayenhoff*).

### **More opportunities for the countryside**

The economic support base and the vitality of the more rural regions are under pressure. To alleviate that pressure, the government wants to create more options for reuse and construction of buildings in the countryside. Disused buildings may be converted into housing or locations for small businesses. In some cases, new construction may be preferable. For example, housing construction in the form of new estates can create funding for the creation of recreational facilities or nature reserves ('red for green') or for creating water storage space ('red for blue'). The regulations for second homes are being changed. Because second homes are being used as permanent residences more and more often, the policy for these is being brought into line with the policy for normal houses. An application to build a second home will only be granted if permission would also be granted to build a normal house on that location. An exception is made for holiday complexes run for commercial purposes; they do not have to meet the requirements for normal housing construction. However, the operators of these complexes and the relevant municipalities are responsible for preventing permanent residence in the complexes.

### **Sustainable and vibrant agriculture**

The agricultural sector, the largest land user in the Netherlands, is in the midst of a process of change. Society's expectations for food safety, animal welfare, nature and the environment are changing rapidly. At the same time, the liberalisation of the global market has serious consequences. Intensive livestock farming in particular has recently been negatively perceived by the general public, in part due to serious outbreaks of livestock diseases. The 2002 Reconstruction Act for Concentration Areas (*Reconstructiewet Concentratiegebieden*) offers a sustainable development perspective for intensive livestock farming in the provinces of North Brabant, Limburg, Utrecht, Overijssel and Gelderland, by means of an integrated approach to livestock, manure and environmental problems. The Reconstruction Act dictates that these five provinces must draw up reconstruction plans and submit them to the national government for approval. One important tool in the reconstruction plans is spatial zoning based on three perspectives for intensive livestock farming: agricultural development, interweaving and extensification. These zoning principles separate functions that create obstacles for each other and encourage the sector to make new investments in sustainable locations.

The government sees an economically vibrant land-based agriculture as essential to the management of the countryside. However, falling incomes are rapidly reducing the numbers of such businesses. The provinces are expected to create more opportunities in their spatial plans for business operations. The national government supports the changes in agriculture, for example by facilitating spatial developments for sustainable production.

### **Greenports and agricultural development areas**

In particular, the national government is working to strengthen the agrofood complexes and to develop knowledge-intensive agribusiness. This mainly involves capital-intensive forms of horticulture that are not land-based (greenhouse horticulture, permanent flower bulb cultivation and cultivation in pots and containers). In this context, the government is working to achieve concentration in 5 greenports: horticulture locations with a strong, stable position in the global market. The greenports are the South

Holland greenhouse district (Westland and Oostland), Aalsmeer and surroundings, the agricultural logistics cluster in Venlo for greenhouse horticulture, the Bollenstreek bulb region for flower bulb cultivation and the Boskoop area for cultivation in pots and containers. By concentrating these activities in greenports, it is possible to achieve economies of scale and promote efficiency in transport and logistics. The main strength of a greenport is that functions and links are coordinated, for example including options for using each others' waste products. Restructuring and easy accessibility is often needed to maintain the international competitive position of such greenports. This is mainly a task for the provinces.

The national government is working to concentrate capital-intensive and land-based agriculture in sustainably organised agricultural development areas that have been incorporated effectively into the landscape. The provinces should designate such areas and define their boundaries in their regional plans, at the same timing limiting the development of these forms of agriculture outside these areas. The spatial policy is aimed at reinforcing the strength of the existing agricultural development areas and preserving the space they need. The national government will assess whether the provinces are including these starting points in their regional plans. Agricultural development areas are also important for restructuring obsolete greenhouse horticulture areas. In many cases, businesses will need to relocate away from the existing areas. With a view to these considerations, the national government has designated 10 agricultural development areas: Zuidplaspolder, Berlikum, Emmen, Grootslag, California/Siberia, Luttelgeest, Bergerden, IJsselmuiden, Moerdijkse Hoek and Terneuzen. New areas must also be found for part of the permanent flower bulb cultivation. This cultivation, traditionally concentrated on the sandy soils between the dunes and the polders in the west of the Netherlands, is highly intensive and has a major impact on the environment. Further extensification of these activities is therefore planned. The national government has designated 3 areas as agricultural development areas for flower bulb cultivation: Kennemerland, the Northern sand flats and the Hollandse Bloementuin. New establishment of permanent flower bulb cultivation outside these areas will be discouraged.

## **10. DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES PER REGION**

The Randstad urban agglomeration, the coastal area, the Wadden Sea, the South Western Delta and the IJsselmeer region are important elements in the National Spatial Structure. The developments in these areas are complicated and different parts of the National Spatial Structure intersect. Guidance from the national government is needed, as well as cooperation and coordination with local and regional governments, international organisations and other parties. For that reason, the objectives of the National Spatial Strategy for each of these regions are being incorporated into a coherent development perspective, in which the government outlines the main plans for development up until 2030. A similar perspective will be drawn up for the North Sea. All those involved can use these perspectives to develop the policy for each sector and each local area.

### **Randstad Holland**

The Randstad Holland urban agglomeration is the political, administrative, social and cultural heart and the most important economic motor of the Netherlands. It is also a region that has highly complex spatial and administrative needs. There are many pressures on the available space and numerous functions jostle for space. Accessibility by road is under pressure, and there are obsolete urban areas that urgently need major spatial and social renewal. Investments are also needed to protect the

Randstad from flooding due to rising sea levels and soil subsidence. The Randstad faces formidable international competition. For that reason, the national government wants to strengthen the Randstad's international competitive position. Boosting the economy, increasing the strength and dynamics of the cities and developing the unusual qualities and the vitality of the Green Heart contribute to this goal. It is important that the very scarce available space is optimally utilised. In future years, the national government will be investing millions of euros in the Randstad, especially in the National Spatial Structure. In addition, investments will be made by the private sector and by the provinces and municipalities. The trick is to make optimal use of this development potential by achieving synergy between all those involved. The urban network in the Randstad coincides with important elements of the National Spatial Structure, thus playing a major role in achieving the aims of the National Spatial Strategy. The strategy outlines a coherent development perspective for the Randstad as a whole, supplemented by several specific policy choices by the national government for the northern and southern wings of the Randstad urban agglomeration, the Utrecht region and the Green Heart. Based on these outlines, the local and regional governments can further shape the spatial policy. The development perspective is aimed at preserving and strengthening the spatial, cultural and economic diversity of the Randstad and responding to the Randstad's own need for space. To strengthen their international position, the two most important motors of the Randstad, the main ports of Amsterdam Schiphol airport and the port of Rotterdam, can develop within the established legal and environmental frameworks. New urbanisation is planned in such a way as to prevent unnecessary limitation of the development opportunities for the main ports. Bottlenecks on the major transport axes to the main ports have also received higher priority, for example by filling in the missing links, such as the A4 motorway between Delft and Schiedam. The policy is aimed at expanding the Amsterdam Southern Axis into a major location for internationally operating businesses and institutions and helping greater Amsterdam develop further into a centre of knowledge and innovation. Moreover, in conjunction with the links to the stations on the European network of high-speed trains, the areas around the central railway stations of Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht will be restructured and developed into high-quality residential and business areas. The economic structure of Rotterdam and the surrounding region needs to become more versatile. There are opportunities for improvement in the further development of the cultural attractions and professional services, particularly in the ICT sector. The agricultural businesses of the greenports in the Westland, the Bollenstreek bulb region and Aalsmeer will maintain and strengthen their position in the global market by restructuring and by ensuring easy accessibility.

It has been calculated that it will be necessary between 2010 and 2030 to meet a demand for more than 8000 hectares of business estates and space for 360,000 to 440,000 dwellings. Some of the dwellings can be realised by compact building in existing urban areas. Old and declining city districts in particular could become more attractive due to restructuring and renewal activities. Moreover, business estates no longer always meet the current requirements. Sometimes revitalisation is an option, but if the original function has been lost (such as obsolete railway yards, ports and industrial parks) transformation into new residential and business areas may be a realistic option. The aim is to realise 40% of the total for dwellings and workplaces in existing urban areas, even in the Randstad. The options for construction in the existing cities will be increased by — where possible — facilitating a more flexible application of the safety regulations. In addition, urban renewal will be accelerated, for example by the '50-district approach': 56 obsolete urban districts will receive additional support from the national government. The housing and living environments in the cities will also be improved by providing sufficient opportunities for sports, recreation and leisure in and around the cities. The former national buffer zones and strategic green projects can also be redesigned to serve as green (and blue)

recreation areas. The definition of these green areas is the responsibility of the provinces. Current strategic projects, such as De Venen, Krimpenerwaard and Hollandsche IJssel, will be speeded up. It is inevitable that dwellings will also be built outside existing urban areas. However, these new urban construction areas will be linked as much as possible to the cities and to existing traffic and transport services and facilities. The emphasis will be on expanding green residential environments, which are in greatest demand. New urbanisation plans must comprise solutions integrating housing, businesses, infrastructure, water, green spaces and other public facilities.

The Randstad stands out in comparison to other major urbanised areas in Europe in part by the presence of the Green Heart and its unique recreational, landscape and nature qualities. The Green Heart is often seen as the eye of calm at the centre of a hurricane. However, that image is one-sided. The Green Heart is also an economically vibrant, dynamic area that needs some space to develop in order to preserve that vitality. In the Green Heart, improvement of the landscape quality standards is essential; large-scale urbanisation would not be appropriate. The development programme for the Green Heart will be based on different zones. In some places, it will mainly involve green/blue development with restrictions on construction activities, while other locations will involve dealing with and transforming fragmented or devalued areas that can also provide space to the development of new economic motors. The Administrative Platform for the Green Heart (*Bestuurlijk Platform Groene Hart*) has already published a possible plan for these quality zones. In a few places, the national government has changed the borders of the Green Heart to allow urbanisation, such as at Rijnenburg, in the Bloemendalerpolder between Muiden and Weesp, and in the Zuidplaspolder.

Areas that have been designated for green/blue development include the Holland-Utrecht peat areas, the South Holland Waarden and the Lake District (*plasseengebied*). Transformation zones with opportunities for small-scale functions are located along the A2 motorway and on the western side of the Green Heart, among other places. The quality-based zoning focuses particular attention on the future of the agricultural sector. Land-based agriculture makes an important contribution to the peat landscapes, but is under pressure because sustainable management sets different demands than current agricultural practices. Preservation of economic vitality can be achieved in part by combining functions with for example recreation and water. The provinces of North Holland, South Holland and Utrecht will draw up a Green Heart Development Programme that will provide a framework for the necessary investments. The national government will continue to be involved, both in the details and the funding, as the party commissioning the developments. The national involvement will be elaborated further in the Implementation Agenda of the National Spatial Strategy (*Uitvoeringsagenda Nota Ruimte*).

The demand for new housing locations is greatest in the northern wing of the Randstad urban agglomeration. This is also the area that has the highest economic dynamics and greatest diversity. Amsterdam Schiphol airport is an important economic motor, surrounded by concentrations of logistics and transport activities and international headquarters. The space potentially available for new residential areas is therefore limited in the northern wing. Space for urbanisation will largely have to be found in the region of Haarlemmermeer- Amsterdam-Almere. Almere in particular will be expanded significantly. The necessary extent of this expansion will depend on the economic development and to what extent Amsterdam will succeed in its ambition to realise construction within its built-up area. If those efforts are only partly successful, then extra growth in Almere may be needed. Due to the various uncertainties in this area, the government has decided to adopt a policy that allows for moderate growth of Almere between 2010 and 2030, with some 40,000 new homes.

This policy is expected to require extra national investments in the transport infrastructure. The national government will initiate a planning study to investigate opening up access to Almere for this moderate growth and for an estimated higher growth. The consequences of more limited growth than the moderate alternative will also be included in the study. The planning study will look into the options for streamlining routes out of Almere, extending the A6 motorway to the A9 and creating an IJmeer link. Based on the moderate alternative, the national government will take a preliminary decision on funding for improving access to Almere. The reasons for choosing the moderate alternative will be reviewed no later than 2006 to see whether they are still valid. Expansion of space for urbanisation is also needed on the southern side of the Haarlemmermeer-Schiphol-Amsterdam axis. In addition, space needs to be available in that area for strategic green spaces, nature, water and business estates. In the zone of Haarlemmermeer and surroundings there will be further investigation of the options for urbanisation, taking into account the spatial limitations of Amsterdam Schiphol airport and the greenport of the Bollenstreek bulb region, as well as the necessary housing construction and water. As commissioned by the national government, the provinces of North and South Holland will consult with other parties involved to create an integrated regional plan for this zone outside the Green Heart. The government will decide in 2004 about whether or not to close the Valkenburg marine aviation camp. If closed, the location would be an option for urbanisation, but at a low density and in balance with the functions of green spaces and water.

In the southern wing of the Randstad construction is taking place in the existing cities, among other locations. The policy of the local and regional governments involved is aimed at a better utilisation of the existing infrastructure (both rail and road in conjunction), and thus to realise a substantial percentage of the urbanisation target particularly near existing stations and infrastructure. The national government is creating space for large-scale urbanisation in the triangle between Rotterdam-Zoetermeer-Gouda (mainly in and around the Zuidplaspolder near Gouda). The province of Utrecht is working on possible major urban expansion projects, such as Rijnenburg, within the constraints of the National Spatial Strategy. Such construction needs to give explicit consideration to water management. Proposed urbanisation is also not permitted to cause bottlenecks on the Oudenrijn traffic junction.

### **Coastal areas**

The national government has set itself a twofold objective for the coastal areas. Firstly, public safety from flooding must be guaranteed. This will be done by maintaining and improving the coastal foundations (which carry the dunes and dykes) and by strengthening 8 high-priority weak links in the sea defences: the sea plains at Den Helder-Callantsoog, Hondsbossche and Pettemer sea defences, Noordwijk dyke, Scheveningen dam, Hoek van Holland-Kijkduin, Flauwe Werk, south west Walcheren and West-Zeeuws-Vlaanderen. Secondly, the unusual character of the coastline must be preserved. Large sections of the coast are protected nature reserves or water collection areas. Both objectives are influential in the coastal towns. Rising sea levels may make it necessary in future to reserve more space for strengthening the sea defences. At the same time, the growing population and economy demand space. This space is found inside built-up areas, with 'yes, provided that' as principle for construction activities. Expansion of construction outside the existing built-up areas and on the beaches will in principle not be permitted (the 'no, unless' principle). The space needed for safety precautions has been designated in the Third Policy Document on the Coastal Areas (*Derde Kustnota*), published in 2000. Following on from that policy document the national government will publish policy guidelines for the coastal areas in 2004, specifying the responsibilities of the governments and users.



## **Wadden Sea**

The Wadden Sea is the largest continuous nature reserve in Western Europe and the largest tidal area in the world. Despite all kinds of changes, the wadden mud flats have remained a coherent whole with a character all their own. The area's vast expanses and openness are particularly unique.

The natural quality of the Wadden Sea is influenced by, for instance, shellfishing, the sudden appearance of exotic species such as the Japanese oyster, and the risk of a disaster on the North Sea. In addition, the water quality still does not meet the levels set for a number of substances. In the long term, there is also the factor of uncertainty about the effects of the changing climate and rising sea levels. The national policy is primarily aimed at sustainable protection and development of the Wadden Sea as a nature reserve and at preserving the openness. Economic activities must fit within the framework of this main objective. Construction is only permitted on the edges of the Wadden Sea, and even then only if it is suitably adapted to the open environment. This will allow future generations to continue enjoying the peace, tranquility and unusual nature on the wadden mud flats. Following on from the National Spatial Strategy, the national government will elaborate its policy for the Wadden Sea in a separate national spatial planning key decision, the Third Policy Document on the Wadden Sea (*Derde Nota Waddenzee*). The aim is to publish this policy document before the end of 2004. In addition, the national government is working to protect the Wadden Sea outside the borders of the Netherlands, including the Eems-Dollard region. After all, the Dutch Wadden Sea is part of an internationally unique nature reserve that stretches from Den Helder through to the coast of Denmark.

## **South Western Delta**

The South Western Delta comprises the province of Zeeland and bordering areas of South Holland and North Brabant. The construction of the Delta Works has increased public safety from flooding, but in the long term, rising sea levels and fluctuating river discharges from the Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt Rivers (higher discharge in the winter, lower in the summer) will result in new safety issues. These developments also influence agriculture. The rising sea levels may cause increasing brackishness. The water quality in a number of river basins is also a cause for concern.

The national policy takes an integrated approach to these issues. Activities that strengthen the national competitive position should be combined with developments that increase public safety and strengthen nature, landscape and cultural history, including recreational uses. Agriculture and fishing will continue to play an important role in the region, as will the seaports in the Sloegebied and the Terneuzen-Gent canal zone and the shipping routes to Rotterdam and Antwerp. Ecological quality standards, public safety and accessibility for shipping will all be served by restoring natural transition areas between the river and the sea. This approach follows on from 'Space for the Rivers' and the goal of the further development of shipping transport. Slightly opening the Haringvliet locks will be a step in the same direction. The national government will work with the Flanders region of Belgium to draw up a package of measures to ensure and improve, where possible, public safety from flooding, accessibility for shipping and the quality of nature. The government is working closely with the Flemish government to create a Development Outline 2010 for the Scheldt Estuary (*Ontwikkelingsschets 2010 Schelde-estuarium*). The aim is to arrive at a political decision by the end of 2004.

## **IJsselmeer region**

The IJsselmeer region has important functions in various fields: public safety from flooding, drinking water supplies, nature and culture, water sports and tourism. The spatial pressures on the IJsselmeer and the surrounding lakes between the former coast and the polder areas reclaimed from the sea are only increasing as a result. In order to preserve and develop the various functions despite this pressure, the national government will be designating zones. In the southern area, a more dynamic and intensive use of the space will be possible, while the north will be reserved for a slower pace of development with scope for tranquility and space. These plans were discussed in the national government's 2002 Integrated Vision on the IJsselmeer Region (*Integrale Visie IJsselmeergebied*).

The expected rising sea levels will also put new demands on the IJsselmeer. Measures are being taken to anticipate this development by a gradual increase of the water levels in the surrounding area, together with dyke reinforcements. The development of natural embankments can contribute to these reinforcements. In anticipation of possible dyke reinforcements, no expansion of the existing built-up areas will in principle be permitted in a zone of 100 metres inside the dykes and 175 metres outside the dykes. Wind turbines are an exception to this rule. New developments outside the dykes, expansions or restructuring of existing activities outside the dykes and new polder creation activities or other land acquisition techniques will be subjected to the 'no, unless' principle for water or nature respectively. The water of the IJsselmeer can selectively be introduced into the polders to make it possible to live or work at the water's edge. For example, a feasibility study is underway for a new border lake between the former coast and the reclaimed polder at Wieringen. The government has abandoned the intention to reserve space for a new border lake between the former coast and the Noordoostpolder: a feasibility study showed that a cost-benefit analysis is unfavourable. No reservations have been made for large-scale polder land reclamation projects. The spatial reservation for a major polder reclamation of the Markerwaard has been abandoned and the National Spatial Strategy sets strict requirements for new activities and land acquisition projects (such as polder projects) outside the dykes. The government will decide on expansion of capacity of the drainage sluices in the IJsselmeer Closure-Dike. Any new construction must do justice to the unique character of the IJsselmeer Closure-Dike, with its unparalleled, austere design.

### **North Sea**

Human activities on the North Sea are increasing to such an extent that the government has provided a national spatial policy framework for the Dutch part of the sea for the first time. This is necessary not only due to the specific problems, but also due to the administrative complexity involved. The North Sea is used extensively and has busy shipping routes, but it is also a key area in the National Ecological Network. The national policy focuses on strengthening the economic significance, linked to preservation and development of nature and landscape values, such as unobstructed views of the horizon. The usefulness and necessity of new activities must therefore be proven. Whether such activities are permissible will be tested, based on a step-by-step plan which will be further elaborated in the 2015 Integrated Management Plan for the North Sea (*Integraal Beheerplan Noordzee 2015*), which the national government will be publishing at the end of 2004. Activities that serve the greater common good, such as finding and extracting crude oil and natural gas, are exempted from this assessment. The national government considers it important that the full potential of natural gas deposits in the North Sea be exploited. The number of cables and pipelines on the bed of the North Sea is expected to increase. The aim is to intensify the use of space by combining cables and pipelines. Unused pipelines within the 12-mile zone off the coast will be removed wherever possible. Pursuant to international agreements, the national government will realise a coherent, interlinked network of protected nature reserves at sea. The eligible areas are: the Kustzee, the Frisian Front, the

Central Oyster Banks, the Klaverbank and the Doggersbank. New activities in those areas must be carefully weighed up. This policy will be elaborated in the Integrated Management Plan for the North Sea (*Integraal Beheerplan Noordzee 2015*). In addition, international agreements heavily influence the Dutch policies on the North Sea. The national government is consulting with the other North Sea countries to coordinate policy. Activities that conflict with shipping traffic are kept away from the shipping lanes (clearways) and access waters.

## **11. SPECIFIC THEMES**

The National Spatial Strategy pays specific attention to 5 policy themes. These themes are discussed in more detail because they concern spatial aspects that involve national interests.

### **Supply of construction materials**

The Netherlands needs 150 million tons of raw materials for building purposes each year. Economic, high-quality use of these materials is the first policy principle. Maximum use of other materials is also needed, such as wood. The national, regional and local governments can set an example here. Despite these measures, there continues to be a great need for surface extraction of minerals, which goes hand in hand with a proportionate demand for space. Extraction and collection in the Netherlands limits the transfer of spatial problems to neighbouring countries and other environmental aspects, such as transport needs and extra energy consumption. The government therefore wants to stimulate the extraction and collection of construction materials in the Netherlands, but in a socially acceptable way. Extraction and collection is left to the private sector. The government will take steps where possible and necessary to eliminate unnecessary free market obstacles. To that end, the ministries involved will consult with the parties involved to create a plan for the conditions required for the free market to function optimally. To facilitate a proper transition to increased private sector involvement, it is necessary that projects for collecting sand for concrete and mortar that have already entered the preparatory stages are implemented as soon as possible. In this context, it is particularly important that the Geertjesgolf and Over de Maas projects in the province of Gelderland go ahead as planned, to the same extent and under the terms agreed with the national government. Wherever possible, the extraction and collection of construction materials on land and in national waters should be multifunctional. Opportunities for combinations with nature development, recreation, living on water and water management should be exploited. This is one of the elements of the 'construction materials test' that will be used for new spatial plans outside existing built-up areas. The test will also look at the effects of the supply of construction materials and the geological occurrences of scarce construction materials.

### **Military areas**

The government considers military activities to be a national interest that does not lend itself to sole consideration by local and regional governments. The space needed for military activities will be set out in a separate national spatial planning key decision following from the National Spatial Strategy, the Second National Structure Plan for Military Areas (*Tweede Structuurschema Militaire Terreinen - SMT2*).

The military use of part of the Wadden Sea region will be continued in its current form. Management of practice and target grounds must meet the nature objectives. Army training grounds that have major nature values are in principle open to outdoor recreation, to the extent that this is justifiable in terms of

safety considerations and considerations of what the natural surroundings can bear. Military areas in protected nature reserves that are closed down by the Ministry of Defence will preferably be designated as nature reserves. In the rezoning of military areas and complexes an attempt will be made to preserve cultural and historically valuable buildings by assigning them new functions. The 'Phoenix' project has been started under the current government, aiming to achieve good zoning plans for four complexes that are expected to become available: Valkenburg marine aviation base, Twente and Soesterberg airforce bases and the Ede east barracks complex.

### **Energy supply: electricity**

The electricity market in the Netherlands is undergoing a process of privatisation and liberalisation, with the exception of network management, including high-voltage connections. The national government has the task of guaranteeing sufficient space for large-scale electricity production and high-voltage lines. In addition, it is important for guaranteeing supply, as well as for the efficiency and inclusion of electricity from renewable power sources, that the power grid is expanded wherever necessary and adapted as needed to facilitate effective exchange with other countries and wind turbine parks in the North Sea. The spatial needs of electricity supply will be set out in a separate national spatial planning key decision, the Third National Structure Plan for Electricity Supply (*Derde Structuurschema Elektriciteitsvoorziening* - SEV III). This plan indicates where large-scale energy production can be located. In this structure plan the government will also lay down safety policy for nuclear power plants. The the coalition agreement the government indicated that the Borssele nuclear power plant will be closed down when the technical design lifetime ends (no later than 2013).

It is the intention that 10 per cent of Dutch energy be supplied from renewable energy sources by 2020. The national government has the responsibility to give these forms of electricity generation a chance, if necessary by using specific measures to stimulate them within the liberalised market. The government is encouraging the placement of wind turbines, so that the objective of a generation capacity of 7500 megawatts will be achieved by 2020; 1500 megawatts on land and 6000 in the North Sea. The aim is to place the wind turbines on land in clusters, preferably on or near business estates and infrastructure. Placement in open water is not recommended so that visual pollution of the open horizon is prevented, nor is placement by the Houtrib Dike and the closing-off dyke allowed. Wind turbine parks are permitted on the North Sea within the 12-mile zone at the pilot location Near Shore Windpark (near Egmond) and off the coast by IJmond and the Maasvlakte, provided shipping safety considerations do not prevent placement.

### **Energy supply: natural gas extraction and storage**

The national government considers it crucially important to the energy supply that as much natural gas as possible is extracted from the small-scale Dutch fields, so that the full potential of natural gas supplies can be exploited. Detection, storage and extraction of natural gas are very important to the Dutch economy, a guaranteed supply and the transition to more renewable energy management.

### **Subterranean spatial policy**

The upper layer is increasingly being intensively used for subterranean construction, multiple use of space and infrastructure. Subterranean major transport links are crucial to the Dutch industry sector and to energy supply. Pipeline transport is reliable and sustainable and creates hardly any visual pollution. However, there are safety risks and effects on nature and landscape. Moreover, increasing subterranean pressure may cause bottlenecks in the distribution of available space. The development of pipeline transport, which was set out in the National Structure Plan for Pipelines (*Structuurschema*

*Buisleidingen*), is being delayed by the high costs of intersections with other major infrastructure systems. All in all, a better, more sustainable organisation of subterranean spatial use would be preferred.

The public authorities are primarily responsible for the organisation; in addition the private sector also has a responsibility. The national government aims to prevent problems and bottlenecks in the organisation of major subterranean transport pipelines, promote integration and ensure public safety. Where demands of society dictate, pro-active facilities will be instituted to facilitate intersections with other major infrastructure systems. The costs of these pro-active measures will in principle be borne by the private sector. The national government will analyse the bottlenecks experienced by the private actors involved in the use and organisation of subterranean space. On this basis, the frameworks for which the national government is responsible will be reviewed to see whether they need to be changed. Where necessary, other government tiers and private actors will be reminded of their responsibilities. The aim is to present the a letter on Subterranean Spatial Planning to the Lower Chamber of Parliament in mid-2004.

The national government also has a task with respect to the routing of major transport pipelines. The national network of major links in the National Structure Plan for Pipelines (*Structuurschema Buisleidingen*) will be updated. Provinces and municipalities will incorporate the actual location of these routes into their regional plans and zoning plans. In this context, they will need to take into account a safety margin of 55 metres on either side, which will be subject to restrictions on major spatial developments, such as residential neighbourhoods and apartment buildings. The national government supports the European Union's policy for a Trans-European Energy Network.

### **Drinking water and industrial water supply**

The public water supply is a cause of concern for the government. Sustainable safety protocols with a view to public health and safety are the main priority. National spatial policy guarantees the availability of sufficient space for the collection of clear groundwater and surface water and the protection of such areas. The water supply is arranged in the Water Supply Act (*Waterleidingwet*) and the Policy Plan for Drinking and Industrial Water Supply (*Beleidsplan Drink- en Industriewater Voorziening*) which is based on it. A complete review of the Water Supply Act has been announced and will be implemented in stages.

Groundwater collection is essential for the water supply. To supplement the provincial environmental policy, spatial tools will also need to be used more intensively to protect the source areas. Provinces must incorporate the protected areas for existing and future water collection in their regional plans. Municipalities in turn must include the areas in their land use plans, paying particular attention to enforcement of the restrictions. In addition, the range of spatial tools will be used to protect the water collection function of the Meuse and Rhine Rivers, the IJsselmeer and regional waters. The dunes will also continue to be essential to the public water supply. The dune regions combine drinking water collection and nature functions. The spatial reservation of the Markermeer for the drinking water supply will remain untouched.