Citizen participation and the wind farm decision-making process

An exploratory case study on the current practice in Dutch municipalities

Master's Thesis

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Wind farm Spui, Nieuw-Beijerland
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"*The wind blows where it wishes. You hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going.*"

- John of Patmos

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Preface

Politics and policy-making have always had my interest. Governments can make decisions that affect society as a whole, which in my opinion is very fascinating. It was one of the reasons I started studying at the Technology, Policy & Management faculty and brought me now to graduate at the Organisation and Governance department. Studying always went very smoothly, until I had to start my thesis. Finding a subject and writing the thesis was a long and solitary process. It did not bring out the best in me, and has confirmed that a career in the academic world is not something I am striving for. Now it is finished, however, I can say that I am proud of the result, having completed the biggest deliverable in my career so far. It provides insights into the current practice of citizen participation and the decision-making process that I would not have obtained in another way. I am surprised at the many stories I have heard in the interviews, of which many could not even get a place in this thesis as the topics were too far from my research questions. It has shown me the large impact that plans for a wind farm can have on communities and personal lives, and the very many perspectives a person can view it from. I have encountered completely different descriptions of and emotions about the same process, and learned a lot. Getting to know these nuances and the search for truth in a field full of opinions is a part of the process that I really enjoyed. My hope is that the insights in this thesis might be useful: in future academic research, for policy-makers, or for people in whatever way involved in such a process.

I also want to thank some people, as without them, I would not have been on the verge of successfully graduating. First of all, I am very grateful for Shannon Spruit. When I approached her with my interest for a thesis in the field she was also researching in, she was the first one to see how my interests and skills could be combined into a thesis research. In the further process, she has always been very approachable and our meetings took place in a very relaxed atmosphere. It was also very useful to have half an hour scheduled every Tuesday, even though half of the time this was not used, as meeting so often was actually not necessary. I also want to thank my other committee members, Thomas Hoppe, Niek Mouter and Bert Enserink. I truly appreciate the always positive and encouraging tone in the comments of Niek, the extensive suggestions for comparable theory from Thomas and Bert's understanding when the process took me more time than I envisioned. Finally, I want to thank God, my creator and heavenly father. Even though I did not notice a lot of his proximity in the process of writing this thesis, I am very grateful he gave me the motivation and insights to continue and finally finish it.

I am not sure what the future may bring; 'the wind blows where it wishes', but I certainly do not rule out the possibility that it will have something to do with citizen participation, wind farms or decision-making processes.

Lucas F. Geerts

Delft, February 2020.

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Summary

Wind farms are one of the main means for sustainable energy supply in the Netherlands. In the period of 2013-2020 provincial governments were tasked with siting a certain number of megawatts of wind energy on their territory. This led to the development of wind farms in many Dutch municipalities, of which the decision-making process has in many cases recently finished. In this process, citizen participation played a large role. This thesis research provides an exploratory study on the influence of this practice, using the following research question: *How does the current practice of citizen participation influence the decision-making process of wind farms in the Netherlands?* To answer this question, three cases have been selected of wind farms where the decision-making process was recently completed: Weijerswold in Coevorden, Spui in Hoeksche Waard and Nij Hiddum-Houw in Súdwest-Fryslân. These cases are chosen as they are very diverse regarding the type of initiator, the citizens involvement and the role of the municipality. Literature and policy documents are studied, and interviews are held with policy-makers, wind farm developers, citizens and experts. For each case, the main groups of actors that most highly influence the decision-making process are described: provincial and municipal government, initiators of wind energy and participating and activist citizens. The division of citizens into these two groups is somewhat artificial, as in reality these groups are not so strictly distinct. It also is noted that citizens participating and representing other citizens can be difficult, as in every case there are also citizens who fiercely object to the entire participation process.

All three cases are analysed and evaluated using the Rounds model of G.R. Teisman (2000). In this model, the activities of the different actors are described in different 'rounds of decision-making'. It focusses on the interaction between actors, who can make decisions in varying combinations. This thesis includes case-specific graphical representations of the Rounds model. This has not been done before by other authors who applied this model, even though it is very suitable and adds clarity to the description in text: broad outlines are easier to visualise and cross-case analysis is simplified. The cases are also classified on Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation, the most used academic reference for classification by influence. On this ladder, the current practice of citizen participation can best be described as placation or partnership, depending on the specific case. It is hereby noted that this influence is not the only valid measurement by which to assess a citizen participation process. Furthermore, six factors of influence are determined, which each have their own influence on the decision-making process.

The analysis shows that municipalities especially take on very different roles in the process, ranging from full opposition of the proposed wind farm to organising the participation process. They are not forced into either position, but decide for themselves. Furthermore, government shapes the participation process, regardless of whether this is the province or the municipality. They determine the first four factors: *the timeliness of citizen involvement*, *the flexibility of the government process framework, the diversity of the citizen board composition* and *the degree of decision options in the citizen board.* The timeliness is one of the most mentioned issues: in all the cases, the decision for a number of megawatts had already been made before the citizen participation process in the form of a citizen board started. The flexibility of the process is an issue when citizens want to organise the process somewhat differently, or need more time to make decisions and inform the other citizens than initially envisioned. Regarding the citizen board composition, there are cases where only nearby residents are represented and ones where there are also many other societal groups, both having different advantages. When it comes to the degree of options, it is also a question of perception to how open the options really still are.

Furthermore, the attitude of the initiators is of great importance in the participation process, as is described regarding the fifth factor: *the initiator's relative willingness to extra-legal concessions.* What they have to do is not completely legally determined, so this willingness to make concessions

that they are not strictly obliged to also influences the influence of citizens in the participation process. The sixth factor is *the experienced legitimacy of the participation process and its outcome.* This experienced legitimacy is influenced by the other factors, but action committees can also have a large influence on this, as is illustrated clearly in the Spui case. In general, it is very important that citizens are put in such a position that they can have influence. This includes, for example, that they are assisted by an expert. When the right conditions are created, citizens can have real influence on the outcome of the process, ranging from the exact location of the wind turbines to financial compensation. However, their influence on the process itself is usually very limited: government, and to a lesser extent initiators, should provide the boundaries in which citizen participation can be executed well. Another conclusion is that the current legal framework is insufficient to secure a well-designed citizen participation process. This is illustrated by the wide variety of methods of organising this process in the different cases and mentioned by multiple interviewees. Research from a legal perspective is therefore also of vital importance.

1. Introduction

Sustainable energy supply is one of the biggest challenges in contemporary society. The negative effects of fossil fuel, mainly global warming because of the emission of carbon dioxide, have caused politicians all over the globe to commit to goals to lower the emissions. Also in the Netherlands, the political debate is focused on reducing carbon emissions (Ros, 2015).

One of the options often mentioned to reduce CO_2 emissions is nuclear energy. However, nuclear energy is heavily debated. There is still no undisputed solution for nuclear waste, the 2011 Fukushima accident has fuelled the debate over safety, and costs have skyrocketed because of additional safety requirements. Therefore, in many countries nuclear energy has been reconsidered as a desired option for sustainable energy supply (Ming et al., 2016). In Dutch politics, there are no serious plans for construction of a new nuclear power plant. Water power is not a large scale option in the relatively flat Netherlands. Geothermal energy is increasingly being used to heat buildings, but power generation by geothermal energy is relatively expensive in the Netherlands.

The remaining means of sustainable energy supply that are discussed seriously in Dutch policy-making for large-scale implementation are wind energy, solar energy and biomass. A combination of these three ways of energy supply to lower fossil fuel energy supply is currently used in the Netherlands (CBS, 2019). Wind and solar energy have the disadvantage that they depend on the weather and cannot be started and stopped when the demand for electricity is high. Biomass therefore plays an important role to secure the energy supply. However, it has one main drawback: a lot of agricultural land is needed to supply for and regrow biofuels (Minnesma & Hisschemöller, 2003).

Wind energy might be the most promising technology to supply in this need for sustainable energy. Although wind turbines which generate electricity have been around for decades, wind energy technology is now developing quickly. Especially in a country such as the Netherlands with relatively high wind speeds and low sun intensity, wind energy is more cost efficient than solar energy (Warringa et al., 2016). In the last few years a lot of attention is paid to wind farms at sea, as this is an environment where very large scale wind farms can be placed. Due to building costs, the majority of wind turbines are currently placed on land, but this may change in the future.

1.1 The 2020 goals for wind energy

In 2013, the Dutch government and many societal representatives signed an energy agreement with a goal for sustainable energy supply (SER, 2013). In this 'Energy Agreement for Sustainable Growth' the goal was set to reach 14 percent renewable energy by 2020, where it was 4 percent in 2013. The main focus hereby was on wind energy: 6000 megawatts should be generated by on-shore wind turbines. An agreement was reached between the central government and the province to divide this amount over the twelve provinces of the Netherlands. So each province had a task to fulfil, according to the suitability of the province for the placement of wind turbines. The difference in tasks among the provinces are large: Flevoland had to place over 1,000 megawatts, while Overijssel, Utrecht and Limburg had to place less than 100 megawatts. How they dealt with this challenge also differed: Zeeland chose quite a limited number of wind farms, of which many are developed by a large cooperative, Zeeuwind, while Gelderland chose to use smaller locations, of which some still have no developer (RVO, 2019a).

Now, in early 2020, it is clear that these goals will not be reached by most provinces: only North Holland is expected to do so. However, 79 percent is built or expected to be finished in time (RVO, 2019a). These goals have caused a lot of wind farms to be developed in recent years that are just finished or being built now, and of which the decision-making procedures started quite soon after the

plans were made known to all the provinces. Plans for these wind farms may be older, but these goals have ensured momentum for the decision-making.

1.2 Objections to wind energy

Wind turbines on land also meet quite a lot of resistance. Grounds for this resistance are numerous. First of all, people dislike the sight of wind turbines (Wolsink, 2007). Especially in rural provinces, the open agricultural landscape is highly valued. Also, wind turbines higher than 150 metres should be equipped with lights for aviation security. These lights can be shielded at the bottom side, but the effect on the visibility from the ground, especially from a slightly further distance from the wind turbine, is very limited (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2016).

Most opposition however comes from residents living in the vicinity of the (planned) wind farm. Shadow flicker is generally considered most disturbing by residents. This effect occurs because of the shadow of the blades of a rotating turbine. When this shadow flicker falls on a house, this causes the feeling that the sunlight is constantly being switched on and off. Although modern wind turbines are often equipped with technology to stop the wind turbines when shadow flicker on a nearby building occurs, it still is an issue, as stopping the wind turbine is a costly option. In Dutch law, there is an average maximum of 17 days for 20 minutes a day that there may be shadow flicker on the windows of a building (RVO, 2019b). Shadow flicker in the garden is also perceived as a nuisance.

The sound of wind turbines is also a source of discontent. In general the bigger wind turbines are, the more noise they make. This noise is especially perceived when the atmosphere is quite silent on ground level, but when there is more wind at the height of the turbines. Also, the turning of the nacelle of the wind turbines can be a source of noise. When there is not a lot of wind at height, the nacelle turns the blades in a direction where they can catch more wind. For the noise there are also legal maximum standards, 47 dB during daytime and 41 dB during night (RIVM, 2017). Sound levels closely below these standards are still perceived as noise. Lastly, wind turbines emit low-frequency noise. This is not heard by people, but is feared to cause health issues. In academic studies however, such risks are not identified, although the research is not yet abundant (Baliatsas et al., 2016).

Furthermore, people are objecting to wind turbines for other reasons. Some do not see the need at all to reduce CO_2 and without CO_2 pricing, wind energy is more expensive than fuel energy. For placement close to nature reserves, there is opposition from nature groups due to the effects on wildlife, especially birds (Aarts & Bruinzeel, 2009). The influence of wind turbines on birdlife, however, is limited. Most birds do not experience hindrance from wind turbines, but there are certain birds that are relatively often killed by the rotor blades or that do not breed any more in areas where wind turbines are built. Birds of prey are especially sensitive to both these effects. (Buij et al., 2018). There are people objecting to wind turbines in their vicinity because of the expected decrease in value of their house. Also, limited recyclability of wind turbine components is an argument. A clear sign of this opposition is that for almost every wind farm on land in the Netherlands, a case is filed at the highest administrative judge, the council of state. As this council only assesses the procedure, which has often been carefully followed, the vast majority of these court decisions are in favour of the wind farm (Akerboom, 2019). Social impact assessments confirm that the development of large wind farms has severe impact on the local community in the Netherlands, due to the above objections, aesthetic decline, and loss of leisure opportunities (Langbroek & Vanclay, 2012).

1.3 Citizen participation

This opposition has made government in the Netherlands aware that it is important to sufficiently inform and involve citizens in the decision-making process. In literature on public decision-making, this kind of involvement is often called public participation or citizen participation. In this thesis the definition by Roberts (2015, p.7) of citizen participation is used:

"The process by which members of a society (those not holding office or administrative positions in government) share power with public officials in making substantive decisions and in taking actions related to the community."

To distinguish direct from indirect participation, Roberts adds: *"when citizens are personally involved and actively engaged"* (p.7). The terms 'citizen participation' and 'public participation' are used interchangeably, and in this wind energy domain always refer to Roberts' direct participation.

When it comes to citizen participation, often a distinction is made between invited and uninvited participation, among others by Wynne (2007). Invited participation is understood to mean that citizens or groups of citizens are invited to take part in the process, while uninvited participation means that citizens try to interfere in the decision-making, without anyone 'inviting' them to.

In the context of wind energy, both forms are evident in the current practice of citizen participation. There are people who have founded foundations to stop the plans with the means they have; spreading information about the consequences of a wind farm in the neighbourhood, speaking at the municipality council, making themselves heard in the media or initiating a council of state procedure. On the other hand, are wind farm developers and government. More positively regarding wind energy and in an earlier stage of decision-making, it can be seen as uninvited participation when citizens unite in a cooperative to develop wind turbines. These projects are often successful, but mostly on a small scale (Schwenke, 2018). In these cases, the options offered and the further process as shaped by (local) government are therefore of vital importance (Oteman, Wiering & Helderman, 2014). Regarding the larger-sized wind farms, these initiatives mostly trigger opposers of the plans to take action. Many initiatives meet a lot resistance, leading to delay of these plans (Koers & Rietveld, 2018).

A certain degree of invited participation is part of the process in the Netherlands. There are legal obligations to inform citizens, both in writing and by means of meetings in the neighbourhood. However, how exactly a citizen participation process has to be shaped, is left open in the law. Currently, a new law is being prepared regarding this, the 'Omgevingswet' (Environment Act), which is due to enter into force in 2021. However, as most wind energy developers and local governments were well aware of the resistance against the wind farm plans, they often shaped a citizen participation process; also in the run-up to the 2020 goals for renewable energy. A group of representatives of citizens is formed and meetings are held not just to inform, but to discuss matters concerning the wind farm. The composition of such groups varies widely: sometimes just the citizens living in the near vicinity are invited, sometimes it is also open to neighbourhood representatives and interest groups like nature protection. Also the scope of the matter on which decisions can still be made differs. In some cases, the number and exact location of wind turbines are still undecided, while in the other extreme, talks are just about the exact spending of the financial compensation or the transportation route of wind turbine components.

1.4 Research gap

There are already multiple studies that deal with this topic of citizen participation regarding wind energy projects. A lot of authors hereby focus on the citizens: they investigate for example their willingness to participate in these energy projects (Kalkbrenner & Roosen, 2016) or in what way they can participate (Yildiz, 2014; Chilvers & Longhurst, 2016). Also, ways to engage the public more is the subject of multiple studies (Enzensberger, Fichtner & Rentz, 2003; Hoffman & High-Pippert, 2010; Pidgeon et al., 2014). In multiple domains, studies have been conducted about assessment methods or criteria for the impact of public participation on policy-making (Abelson & Gauvin, 2006; O'Faircheallaigh, 2010). Criteria for successful public participation was recently also described in the master's thesis work of Rusman (2019). When it comes to questions about how governments can deal with the citizen participation that exists, several studies have also been conducted. Some time ago Khan (2003) investigated the impacts on the planning process for wind energy from a governance perspective in Sweden. In the Netherlands, a study has been conducted to analyse in what way local governments react on the emergence of local energy initiatives (Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017) and Hoppe et al. (2015) have made a study about what can be learned from two best-practice cases of local energy cooperatives from a governance and niche-management perspective.

What has not been researched yet, is what the effects are of the way that citizen participation is shaped. The effects from the organisation and the attitude of the local authorities, represented by aldermen, councillors or civil servants, are largely unknown. Specifically, this research continues on two other recent master's theses about citizen participation in the Netherlands. Noë (2019) wrote about enlarging public support for wind farms, using a specific analysis method (social impact analysis) and advised further research on the needs of local authorities. Rusman (2019) discussed evaluating public participation and suggested further research into the citizen perspective of public participation. This thesis is an exploratory study to give insights into the most recent phase of wind farm planning in the Netherlands towards the 2020 sustainable energy goals. It is a thesis about the situation in the Netherlands, showing the current practice of citizen participation and its influence on the decision-making process.

1.5 Research questions

This leads to the formulation of the following main research question:

How does the current practice of citizen participation influence the decision-making process of wind farms in the Netherlands?

This main question is divided into the following sub-questions:

1. *What is the current practice of citizen participation regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*
2. *What actors play which roles in the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*
3. *What is the influence of citizen participation on the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*
4. *What factors influence the process of citizen participation and its outcome in the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*

With these questions, both the practice of citizen participation and the decision-making process in these cases will be explained and analysed. Insights will be given in the actors with their respective

power and interests, and in the mechanics of influence in the decision-making process. Finally, factors are identified that influence the decision-making, and the effects of the shaping of citizen participation will be clear.

In the next chapter, a more theoretical perspective will be given on decision-making. Also, the Rounds model that will be used to analyse the results will be explained. Chapter 3 contains the methodology: case selection, data collection and how the Rounds model will be applied. In the fourth chapter, the current practice of citizen participation and decision-making in the three cases will be described. In chapter 5, the remaining two sub-questions will be answered using the Rounds model. Finally, a conclusion and discussion is provided.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, first theory on the decision-making process and the important issues that play a role in this are explained. Secondly, an overview of theory on citizen participation is given, especially focusing on participation regarding wind farms. Finally, the Rounds model of Teisman (2000) will be explained, as this model later on will also be used as a means to analyse the decision-making process in this case study.

2.1 Theory on the decision-making process

The energy transition is also a hot topic in scientific publications, and the development of wind farms is one of the greater challenges of the built environment. There is quite some literature on the decision-making process of wind farms and the consequences it will have. In section 1.4 many authors publishing about citizen participation and decision-making in different domains have already been mentioned to define the research gap. Specifically on the decision-making process, research has been conducted about how citizen participation can be part of multi-criteria decision-making regarding energy policy in the UK (Stagl, 2006). In this paper, Stagl also illustrates how multi-criteria decision-making can be implemented correctly. In the Netherlands there are also academic papers about examples of good practice of participation as part of the decision-making process. Kuitenbrouwer (2017) describes the practice in healthcare, Warbroek & Hoppe (2017) on local energy initiatives. In his thesis research Travaille (2013) researched the possibility of using the sharing of profits to reduce resistance towards wind farms, concluding that it could work when the citizens also participate in the planning process and when this arrangement does not include the use of hush money. This enumeration indicates that there is a wide variety of ways that decision-making processes are shaped and that the participation of citizens can be a part of that and is assessed.
In many of these papers, legitimacy of the process and its outcome is an important issue. In Australia, Gross (2007) has researched this legitimacy regarding the decision-making process around wind farms. A key finding of this study was that different parts of the community see different things as legitimate: the fairness of the process, the fairness of the outcome or the favourability of the outcome. This distinction between the legitimacy of the process and its outcome is widely referred to as input and output legitimacy, a distinction first described by Scharpf (1970). It is a distinction between a normative and a utilitarian approach. In this thesis, both forms of legitimacy will be regarded. Moreover, this thesis does not provide a framework to measure the 'overall legitimacy' of the policy process and its outcome. Therefore, the experienced legitimacy as indicated by the different actors involved in the process will be used, which in literature is called 'personal legitimacy' (Rasinski, Tyler & Fridkin, 1985).
More recently and in the Netherlands, Akerboom (2018) studied the participation in the decision-making process from a legal perspective. She concludes that citizen participation is an important part of this process and inherent to the democratic constitutional state. In general, scientific papers conclude citizen participation is a 'core ingredient' to improve legitimacy of policy-making (Mazerolle et al., 2013), but it does not necessarily improve this (Abels, 2007). This leaves room to delve deeper into the concept of citizen participation.

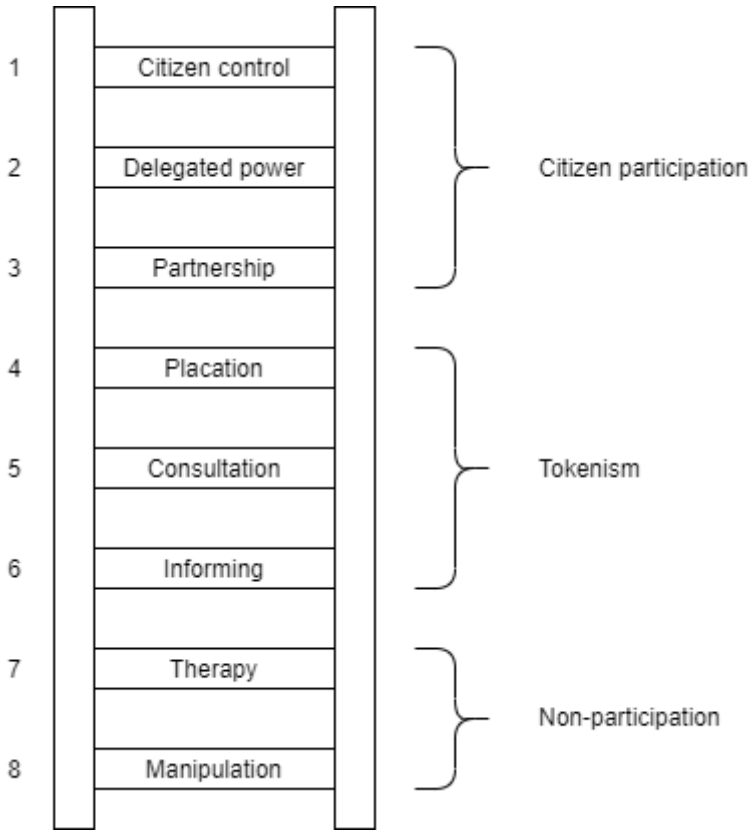
2.2 Theory on citizen participation

There is quite some literature about public participation and there are multiple theoretical divisions made to categorise citizen participation. These categorisations are made to distinguish degrees of citizen participation, but also for other aspects.

Categorisation by degree of citizen influence: Arnstein

Arnstein's participation ladder (1969) is by far the most commonly used scientific reference to indicate the degree of citizen participation. She describes eight levels of citizen participation, gradations ascending from mere information of citizens to complete citizen control. In the first two stages, people are engaged, and are only informed, without having an influence on the process or its outcome. This 'nonparticipation' can be a means to enlarge public support. In the middle three stages, the public also influences decisions made, in ascending forms of consultation. The power to make a decision, however, does not rest with them. In the last three stages, citizens do have the formal power to decide, ranging from jointly in a partnership to full citizen control. In the following image, Arnstein's participation ladder is shown.

FIGURE 1. LADDER OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



Redrawn from Arnstein (1969, p. 217)

Such a subdivision of citizen participation by power can also be found for businesses and non-profit organisation, for example by Bowen et al. (2010), who distinguish 'transactional', 'transitional' and 'transformational' community engagement. In the latter form of engagement there is also joint decision-making of citizens and companies, leading to outcomes that would not have been obtained

without citizen participation. In the case of wind energy in the Netherlands, there are also multiple examples of citizen participation processes where there was extensive cooperation between energy companies and groups of citizens, which can be seen as transformational community engagement. The Dutch Public Administration Council (in Dutch abbreviated: Rob), an organisation advising government about its design and functioning, also published about citizen participation. In 2012 they published a report, advocating a change from citizen participation to 'government participation' (Rob, 2012). This emphasises the role government has regarding citizen initiatives. They make a ladder like Arnstein's, but from a government perspective. This ladder has the following steps, as translated by Mees et al. (2019):

5. Regulating
4. Network steering
3. Stimulating
2. Facilitating / enabling
1. Letting go

Mees et al. (2019) signal that in the past few years government is slowly changing their attitude and response regarding citizen initiatives and is slowly 'descending the ladder'. Where government is used to regulate, they are more often trying to make greater use of the self-organising capacity of citizens. This is so far however mainly the case regarding issues that have a relatively minor impact on society: this study does not investigate large impact issues such as wind turbines.

Criticism of Arnstein: other classifications of participation

However, the degree of citizen participation is in the aforementioned literature measured as the influence of citizens. According to other scholars, this is not the only thing that matters; one of the main critiques on Arnstein's participation ladder and the models derived from it or with a similar focus, is that they heavily emphasise the power of the public to influence the decisions made, whilst the process itself may be a goal in itself (Tritter & McCallum, 2006). Other authors emphasise other aspects of the participation process. For example, Stirling (2008) describes three rationales - reasons for public participation - continuing in line with the imperative typology Fiorino (1989): normative, instrumental and substantive. With the normative rational, participation is viewed as the correct means to shape the process, regardless of its outcome. With the instrumental rational, the actor initiating the process has a particular goal in mind. This can for example be a higher legitimacy of the process outcome. In the substantive rational, the assumption is that participation will lead to a substantively better process outcome, although how exactly this would happen is not defined beforehand. Another approach that recently received more attention is social learning. Collins & Ison (2009) also argue that Arnstein's ladder limits participation as a matter of power, and instead view it as a process of social learning: they view it as social behaviour within its context and encourage learning from it in an iterating process. Also Tippet et al. (2005) have published about social learning in the context of citizen participation, more practically concluding that it can be useful to open up the process and try to create mutual understanding.

Considerations with regard to public participation

More practically regarding citizen participation, there are many considerations by both policy makers and academics. One such question often asked is who should be involved in citizen participation. More

parties participating does not always improve the process or its outcome. Delgado, Kjölberg and Wickson (2011) identified this tension and ask the question: for whom is it relevant to participate? They furthermore address that it is often unclear to what extent participating citizens represent the public. To enlarge this representativity, Evans and Plows (2007) argue to also involve disinterested citizens. They can be seen as a 'neutral majority', who are actually no less affected by the decisions to be made than other interest groups. De Vivero, Mateos and Del Corral (2008), on the other hand, dedicate a paper to what they call the 'participation paradox': the more different actors participate, the lower the influence of each actor. This paradox increases the need to only include the 'relevant' citizens.

Another paradox on citizen participation is mentioned by Noë in her thesis research (2019), specifically on wind energy projects in the Netherlands. The paradox she describes is the tension between timely involvement of the community and making plans concrete. Now important decisions are often made before citizens are involved or do not see the potential consequences. When the plans are more concrete and citizens are involved and aware of the consequences for their living environment, the room for adjustments is rather limited. Noë proposes Social Impact Analysis as a way to achieve timely cooperation and to 'prevent the paradox', as this analysis can be a tool and a framework to enforce early participation and create preconditions for participation.

In conclusion it can be said that citizen participation is written about and characterised by many scholars, among others by the influence of citizens, reasons for implementing it, the timeliness, and who is involved in the process. In the analysis chapter of this thesis, these classifications and approaches will be discussed with regards to the cases investigated in this study.

2.3 Teisman's Rounds model

In 2000, Geert R. Teisman published a paper titled "Models for research into decision-making processes: on phase, streams and decision-making rounds" (Teisman, 2000). In this highly-cited paper, three conceptual models to analyse complex decision-making are compared. Those models are used to describe and give insights into the decision-making process. Teisman takes the Phase Model of Mintzberg et al. (1976) and the Streams model as further developed by Kingdon & Turber (1984) and adds his own model, which he calls the Rounds model. Teisman compares these three models and applies them on the same case: he describes the decision-making process of the Dutch Betuwelijn rail road in the language of those three models. In the methodology section of this thesis research is further elaborated on how the Rounds model will be applied in this case study. In this section, the models itself are explained.

The Phase model focuses on one actor in the policy process, for example the main concerned government body. This focal actor is most powerful and dictates the decision-making process. This process can be seen as a succession of different stages that are more or less the same for each decision-making process. First there is a problem formulation, followed by a presentation of solutions. In the next stage a solutions is adopted, then implemented and evaluated. All analysts using this Phase model face the downsides to this very rational approach: Bryson and Crosby (1992) for example see difficulties applying this model when there is no such focal actor dictating the process. Nonetheless, they argue that for an effective decision-making process an organised approach like this is needed.

The Streams model does not assume the existence of one focal actor, but identifies three so-called streams that are highly influencing the decision-making process. These streams are the problem stream, the policy or solution stream and the politics stream. These streams are considered to be independent. Actors in the different streams can search for what they need in the other streams; for example an entrepreneur with a solution can search for a problem owner and political commitment.

When the three streams come together, a 'policy window' occurs, through which a decision or a policy change emanates. In this model, there is no sequence in time, but the policy decision develops in a rather unpredictable way.

In the Rounds model, the importance of actors is again stressed more, albeit without one focal actor. Rather, there are multiple actors whose paths sometimes cross, who interact and who jointly make decisions that shape the further course of the process. What is central in the Rounds model are these dynamic combinations of problems and solutions brought in by different actors. The Rounds model focusses on and gives insight in this interaction between actors, with policies resulting from it. This interaction does not always mean co-operation, but can also be in forms of conflict or avoidance.

Teisman describes how the different models can be useful for application on different kinds of cases. He compares the criteria to determine when which model is more suitable, which is displayed in table 1.

TABLE 1

Comparative perspective on the phase model, the stream model and the rounds model.			
	Phase model	Stream model	Rounds model
Criteria for the separation of strands of activities	Stages a focal organisation goes through	Different concurrent streams of problems, solutions and politics	Rows of decisions taken by actors, creating rounds through interactions
Characterisation of decision-making	Sequence of formation, adoption and implementation	Coincidental or organised links between streams	Interaction between decision taken by various actors
Assumptions about the nature of the process	One moment of policy adoption holds sway over other decisions and guides the process	A simultaneous stream of problems, solutions and politics, linked more or less at random	Decisions that conclude a round and initiate a new round, without fixing its progress
Assumptions about the content of the process	A focal actor adopts a dominant definition of the problem solution, creating governmental policy	Dynamics within and links between streams determine major policy changes	Interdependent actors take decisions, separately or jointly, leading to governance policies

Teisman (2000, p. 946)

The first criterium is the separation of strands of activities. In the wind farm cases, phases can be identified in the process. These phases are not the same for every case and are not always ushered in by the same actor. Secondly, government, initiators and citizens all play an important role in it. The decision-making is really characterized by the interaction between those actors. This does not mean that every actor has the same amount of power, but they can influence the process of decision-making, as well as the decisions themselves, each in their own way. Regarding the process, the moments that an important decision is made and when a new phase or round can be identified are not fixed. Formerly made decisions could be undone under certain circumstances in a new round of decision-making, which also frequently happens in wind farm planning in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the actors in the wind farm cases are interdependent: they sometimes can make decisions on their own, but this often happens in consultation. In the Rounds model, the actors and their interactions that take place in the different 'arenas of decision-making' are central too. This model is therefore very applicable on the wind farm cases of this thesis concerning all of these criteria. Although the Rounds model fits many of the characteristics of these cases, it still demands simplification to fit the complex and layered reality

in the scheme of the model. This leads to a simplification that does not completely do justice to reality, which is the main drawback of the use of this model.

In his 2000 paper, Teisman applies all three models on the decision-making process of a railway in the Netherlands. In addition to Teisman himself, other authors have analysed decision-making processes using the Rounds model. Decision-making rounds are described, among others, on dam placement in China (Zhang & Qin, 2015), on the extension of Schiphol airport in the Netherlands (Klijn & Koppejan, 2015) and on the legislation formation process in Canada (Howlett, 2007). In the methodology, section 3.4, it is further elaborated how the Rounds model will be used to analyse the cases in this study.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, first the case study methodology and its applicability are described. Furthermore, criteria for case selection are given and cases are selected. The main method of data collection, interviews, will be described and the choices for the interviewees are explained. Lastly, the methodology for analysis will be clarified, including the applicability of Teisman's Rounds model, and the new way in which his theory is applied is set out. As emerged from the first chapter, the main research question central to this thesis is:

How does the current practice of citizen participation influence the decision-making process of wind farms in the Netherlands?

3.1 Case study methodology

This question and its sub-questions are answered using multiple case studies. According to Yin (1994), a case study "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13). When it comes to citizen participation in the decision-making process of wind farms, that is certainly the case. Wind farms on this scale are a relatively new phenomenon in the Netherlands: there have been wind turbines in the Netherlands for a few decades, but the scale on which wind farms are built now, both in number of wind turbines as well as their size, is unpreceded. Therefore, also the scale and multitude of citizen participation in this domain is rapidly increasing. Furthermore, citizen participation is part of the decision-making process and influences its further course. This makes it an interesting phenomenon, where different actors are involved that steer the process and its outcomes. In evaluating citizen participation in general, case studies are widely used.

For this thesis, three cases are studied. This multiple case study design was chosen to be able to compare the cases and see a variety of situations in the different cases. An advantage of multiple case studies, is that triangulation can be used to verify results and expand understanding: perceptions of multiple groups of people on the same phenomenon explain and identify the different realities (Stake, 2013). This is especially useful as in the citizen participation the different parties involved have really different views and frameworks of reality and the process evokes many emotional reactions. The choice to limit the number of cases to three is made in order to have this advantage of multiple cases, but still be able to obtain an in-depth understanding of the decision-making process in the individual cases in the limited time that was available. Case comparison will therefore be mainly qualitative to ensure the complexity of the cases is sufficiently taken into account. With only data collection in the limited number of three cases, a quantitative, statistical analysis is not possible.

3.2 Case selection

For the selection of the cases of wind energy projects, criteria have been established. All three cases have to fit these criteria, in order to be suitable to answer to the research question. The criteria that are used is described below.

1. There should be plans for an on-shore wind farm within the borders of a municipality. Off-shore wind energy has completely different challenges that are not comparable.
2. The formal policy-making procedures should be finished. This does not mean the wind farm already has to be built, but the decision-making process should be finished. This way, the

outcome can be evaluated and the effects of the current practice of citizen participation are measurable.

3. The applicable authority regarding the wind energy project should be the provincial government. This is in general the case when wind farms have a capacity between 5 and 100 megawatts (Rijksoverheid, 2019). This category is common in the Netherlands: below 5 is nowadays often just a single wind turbine, not a wind farm, and over 100 megawatts are really big wind farms, that were less common and are managed by the central government.
4. There should be citizens who got involved in the decision-making process, either as part of the official citizen participation process or else trying to influence or stop the plans for a wind farm. In literature, this distinction is often called 'invited' versus 'uninvited' participation. In this thesis, both forms are included. This criterium has been included to ensure that the effects of the current participation practice are measurable.

The criteria above should be applicable on all the cases. Furthermore, there are characteristics of the cases that should be different for each of the three cases. The following characteristics emerged from a quick scan of potential cases: in different wind farms a variety was observed on the following topics. This variety potentially has an influence on the dependent variable of the research design; they might explain the different decision-making processes and their outcomes. These characteristics are the following.

1. The kind of company that is planning to develop the wind farm. This can vary from large energy companies to local entrepreneurs.
2. The extent to which citizens are involved in the wind project. Although there has to be a certain degree of citizen involvement, this can vary between projects. On one side of the spectrum citizens are heavily involved in the project, be it also financially participating or in the decision-making process. On the other side of the spectrum citizen participation can be limited to a minimum.
3. The extent to which local residents oppose the planning and realisation of the wind farm. This can vary from no opposition at all to heavy opposition such as demonstrations or even threats.
4. The attitude of the municipality, both the municipality council, the board or even the civil service, towards wind farms on their territory. This can vary between a proactive municipality that wants to stimulate the realisation of wind projects and municipalities that were more reluctant and have been forced to create wind farms by higher government authorities.
5. The duration of the decision-making process. This can vary from timely delivery without complications to serious delay or cancellation.

With these criteria as a basis, a longlist of possible cases has been made, including plans for wind farms in the municipalities of Breda, Coevorden, Emmen, Gouda, Hoeksche Waard, Hollands Kroon, Loon op Zand, Súdwest-Fryslân, Schouwen-Duiveland, Terneuzen, Tilburg, Utrecht, Veenendaal, Venlo, Vlissingen and Waalwijk. Of this list, several were dropped, for example as the process is not finished yet, so a final evaluation cannot yet be made (e.g. Terneuzen). Others were dropped because very few citizens live in the near vicinity (e.g. Schouwen-Duiveland). Another practical reason to not choose certain cases was because there has already been too much media coverage or other research on these specific cases, which would complicate data collection, since the topic has become very sensitive (e.g. Utrecht). This makes clear that the cases that are chosen are not representative regarding these aspects; there were for example also cases that at a certain time were in roughly the same phase, but still did not lead to successful implementation. An explanation for success or failure in terms of the final realisation of the wind farm will therefore not be resulting from this study. Three wind farms fitted all the criteria, and were in addition very distinct in all the other five characteristics, and were therefore chosen. These cases are wind farm Weijerswold in Coevorden, wind farm Spui in Hoeksche

Waard and wind farm Nij Hiddem-Houw in Súdwest Fryslân. In the following table, these characteristics are shown.

TABLE 2

Wind farm	Weijerswold	Spui	Nij Hiddem-Houw
Initiators	Cooperation of Raedthuys (now Pure Energie, a medium-sized sustainable energie company), WindUnie (a wind energy cooperation) and local landowners	Klein Piershil B.V., a company for specifically this wind farm, an initiative from D.L. De Bruijne Participatie Maatschappij B.V. (a local farmer and entrepreneur) and YARD Energy Group B.V. (a wind energy investment company)	A cooperation between Gooyum-Houw B.V. (a cooperation of local farmers) & NUON (now Vattenfall, a large energy company)
Citizen involvement	A process where citizens have been involved from quite an early stage	A process that has known many different stages, but mostly with limited direct citizen involvement	A process with extensive citizen involvement, but of which the results were not always used
Opposition	Initial opposition, which relatively calmed down when shown that the plans could not be stopped	Intense opposition, even an attitude of opposition by the ones involved in official citizen participation	Opposition willing to think along, but fiercely opposing the plans as they were
Attitude municipality	Working along, controlling the process	Firmly opposing the plan and not collaborating in any way	Officially opposing the plans, but cooperating behind the scenes
Duration	Since 2013, when the province divided their task statement	Since the early 2000s, as an initiative of local landowner De Bruijne	The upscaling of an existing wind farm, foreseen, included in concrete plans in 2012

3.3 Data collection

For all the cases, documents have been studied: municipal and provincial policy documents, reports from citizen platform meetings and documents prepared by action committees or initiators. Furthermore, interviews are held with the different actors that played a role in these cases. These interviews form the main data source of this thesis. This way a thorough understanding of the process and decision-making in the selected cases is developed. In the analysis chapter, these findings will be rooted in theory as well. Regarding wind farm decision-making on the local level, first of all politicians and government officials are playing an important role, both to decide where a wind farm can be developed as well as to practically provide licenses et cetera. Furthermore, there are the initiators: the wind energy developers. Those can be multinational energy companies, companies originated from collaborating land owners like farmers, companies that are investing in wind farms or planning to sell them again, as well as local or even individual initiatives. Furthermore, in contemporary Dutch policy-making around wind farms, citizens play an important role. Citizens are not a homogeneous group, but they can roughly be divided into three groups. First of all, there is the majority of citizens who do not involve themselves at all in the process. Secondly, there are citizens who are against the plans and try

to stop them. Often, for this purpose a foundation is set up, which is also the case in the three selected cases. Thirdly, there are citizens who are involved in the official participation process. These citizens often are representing the citizens in a certain area. Furthermore, in many of these participation processes, there are also people who join as outsiders and will play a significant role in the process. They are asked to join the process for their expertise, either to assist citizens or to guide the process. To obtain a balanced overview of the decision-making in the cases, therefore from all these groups, people have been interviewed. For every case, that involved people in the following functions:

1. A government official
2. An initiator of the wind farm
3. A member of an action committee against the wind farm
4. A citizen involved in the official participation process
5. A person who was recruited as external advisor or manager

In the following paragraphs, for each of these roles it is explained in concrete terms who is interviewed.

1. A government official

When it comes to the government, provincial government is in first instance the competent authority for a wind farm as selected in these cases. However, provinces can delegate this task to municipalities, making them the government executing the process and stepping back themselves. In other cases, there have already been plans for a wind farm for a long term, where the municipality was the conversation partner of the initiators. There also are lots of cases where the province is the concerned government and acts as such as well. Even then, licenses can be given and integration plans can be made by the municipal government, but in quite a number of cases, the province takes over this as well. In the Weijerswold case, the municipality carried out the whole decision-making and participation process from the moment they knew they had to place a certain amount of megawatts wind energy within their border. Therefore, an interview was held with the alderman, who has been in office during the largest part of the process. In the Spui case, the municipality was orchestrating the process in first instance, yet without results. At some point therefore the province took over, which led to the realisation of the windfarm. Therefore in this case, the project leader of the province of South Holland was interviewed. In the Nij Hiddum-Houw case, it has been a provincial issue from the beginning, so in that case also the provincial project leader was interviewed.

2. An initiator of the wind farm

In the Weijerwold case, there were two companies who worked together on this windfarm: Raedthuys, now named Pure Energie, and WindUnie, who were both equally involved. For practical purposes, an interview was conducted with the project leader at WindUnie. In the Spui case, a local landowner with plans for a wind farm sought contact with an investor in wind energy, YARD Energy. An interview was held with a partner of YARD and spokesperson during the process. In the Nij Hiddum-Houw case, NUON, now named Vattenfall, was the initiator together with a company founded by local land owners and entrepeneurs. In the participation process, NUON supplied a community manager with whom an interview was conducted.

3. A member of an action committee against the wind farm

In Weijerswold, there was the foundation Stichting Tegenwind Weijerswold (Foundation Against Wind Weijerswold). Their chairwoman was interviewed. In the case of wind farm Spui, no interview was held with people from the action committee. In this case, there was indeed a foundation, Stichting Tegen Windturbines aan het Spui (Foundation Against Wind Turbines along the Spui), but they did not want to be involved at all in the participation process. This did not mean they were not of importance, on

the contrary they were, as will be elaborated in detail in the analysis chapter. However, their actions were limited and their ties with the people that were involved in the participation process were tight; although their methods were different, they pursued the same goals. For these reasons, no interview was conducted with any member of this foundation. Regarding Nij Hiddum-Houw, the main foundation against the current plans for the wind farm was Hou Fryslân Mooi, although they already existed before the integration process of Nij Hiddum-Houw, suggesting other wind turbine placements. An interview was held with one of their founders and board members.

4. *A citizen involved in the official participation process*

In Weijerswold, a citizen platform was formed to discuss the location and practical affairs of the wind farm. The chair of this platform was the husband of the chair of the Stichting Tegenwind. They were therefore for practical purposes interviewed together in one interview. Regarding Spui, a group of citizens associated with Nieuw-Beierland's neighbourhood association Filopopers was involved in the talks with initiators and government, first as part of a sounding board group, later in a smaller setting, by then called Compensation Plan Group. The leader of this group, delegated by Filopopers, was interviewed. Nij Hiddum-Houw also had a citizen participation process, which mainly took place in the so-called Community Advisory Board. Here citizens were present as well, but their voices were mainly represented by their advisor, the chairman of the Dutch Association for Residents near Wind Turbines (in Dutch: NLVOW). Furthermore, Hou Fryslân Mooi was initially also part of this Board. Therefore no other citizens have been interviewed in this case.

5. *A person who was recruited as external advisor or manager*

The aforementioned NLVOW chairman was not only heavily involved in the participation process of Nij Hiddum-Houw. Also in Weijerswold he was hired to assist the citizens during the process and in a later phase also in the Spui case. He was interviewed about his role in all three of the cases. Furthermore, in the process of wind farm Spui, the sounding board group was chaired by a mediator, who was also interviewed. At Nij Hiddum-Houw, the Community Advisory Board (in Dutch: OAR) was led by an independent chair, who was interviewed as well.

In the following table, an overview of the people interviewed is displayed. In appendix A, a list of the names of the people interviewed is provided. All interviews were held in Dutch, as that is the mother tongue of all the interviewees. The interview protocol that is used in these interviews is given in appendix B.

TABLE 3

Wind farm	**Weijerswold**	**Spui**	**Nij Hiddem-Houw**
Government	Concerned alderman of municipality Coevorden	Project leader of South Holland	Project leader of Friesland
Initiators	WindUnie's project leader	Partner of YARD Energy	Community manager of Vattenfall (NUON)
Foundation against the wind farm	Founder and chair of Stichting Tegenwind	- *(had the strategy to not be involved)*	Founder and board member of Hou Friesland Mooi
Participating citizens	Chair of the citizen platform	Filopoper's representative in the Compensation Plan Group	- *(represented by the NLVOW chair)*
Hired experts	Citizen advisor and chairman of the NLVOW	Chair of the sounding board group	Chair of the OAR

3.4 Analysis

An analysis based on these interviews is given in the next chapters. This analysis is structured according to the different sub-questions:

1. ***What is the current practice of citizen participation regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?***

From the interviews, case descriptions are given that show the course of the process in the three selected cases. These are summaries of what happened in a chronological order. This is a factual description, without explanation of underlying mechanics. It is merely an indication of the current practice of citizen participation in these three cases and therefore answers the first sub-question. The case descriptions have been submitted to the interviewees and adjustments have been made in response to their comments. When things interviewees said have been used, these are not literal quotes: they are paraphrases that are translated and cleaned, and used with permission. The case descriptions can be found in chapter 4.

2. ***What actors play which roles in the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?***

The second question focusses on the most important actors in the decision-making and citizen participation process. In these three cases, there are different types or groups of actors that are very comparable. First of all, government plays an important role in the process, for example in deciding on the location. It really differs in each case which decisions are made by provincial and which by municipal government. In all three cases, these two government levels have played an important role and will therefore be reviewed separately.

Regarding these actor groups, a first question that is to be answered, is which persons and groups are meant when actions are taken by government, both municipal and provincial. Many decisions regarding wind energy are taken by the concerned alderman or deputy and carried out by government officials, being part of a municipality or a province. They get their mandate from the municipality council or provincial parliament, consisting of the different democratically chosen political parties, which also makes important decisions about the plans for a wind farms. These decisions are mainly decisions early in the process: whether to agree with the plans for a wind farm on the territory of a certain municipality and on the size and location of the turbines. More detailed decisions are made by the executive power of the municipality or province, with regular feedback given in council meetings. Therefore in this thesis, when there is mention of actions by 'the municipality', mainly the aldermen and government officials are meant, who act as instructed by the council. When 'the province' is mentioned, it is the deputy and government officials. In this thesis work, there were no cases of disobedience, that government officials did not act in accordance with the legislative body's orders. Next to the government, wind energy developing companies, often called initiators, play an important role. In the three cases, these initiators were significantly different kinds of companies, who used their means in other ways and had different stances towards the participation process.

Citizens are the final group to be discussed. This group is least homogenous of all, which makes including them as a category arbitrary. However, some distinctions and groupings can be made. First of all, there are the majority of citizens who are not involved in any way. This does not mean they are not concerned or do not care at all about the wind farm, but they at least chose to not be involved and are therefore not directly taken into account in this research. For the people who get involved, the distinction between invited and uninvited participation can be made, as was already mentioned in the

introduction. So, on the one hand, there are people who speak out against the plans for a wind farm in an activist way. On the other hand, there are people that are making themselves heard in a consultative body, as offered to them by government and initiators. There can be overlap in both these groups of citizens, but their roles in the process are clearly distinct.

To sum up, five groups of actors that play an important role in the citizen-participation and decision-making process are identified in the three cases, namely:

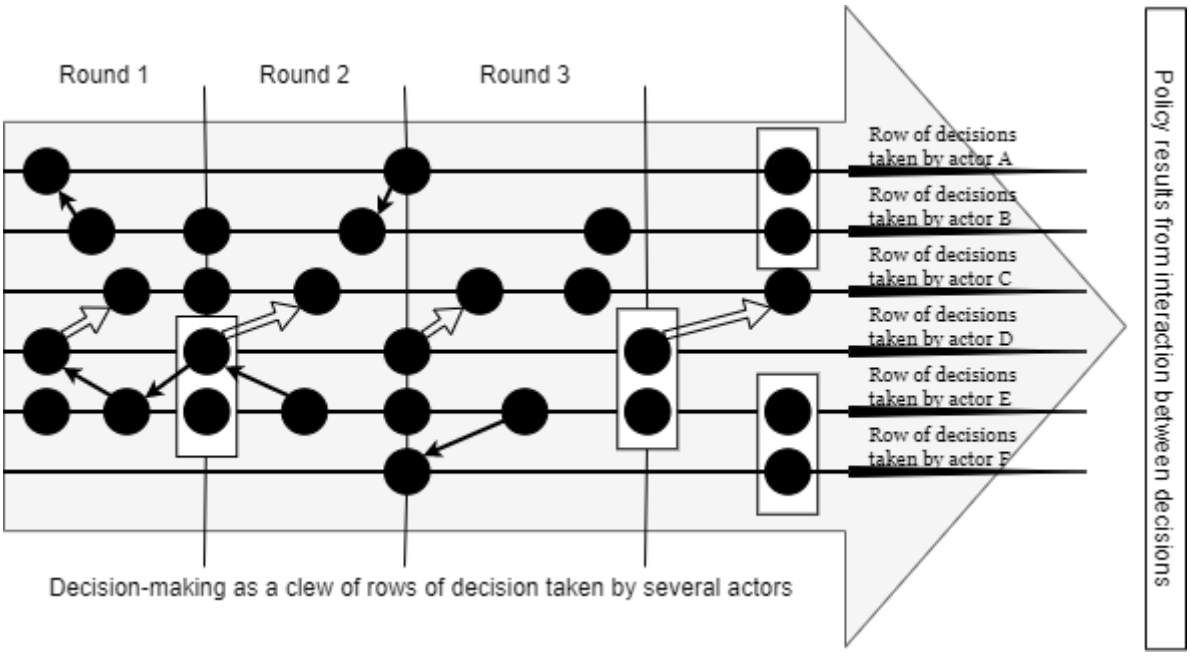
1. Provincial government
2. Municipal government
3. Initiators of wind energy
4. Participating citizens
5. Activist citizens

Compared to the actors as mentioned in the data collection section, there are two differences. Firstly, for this analysis, province and municipality are split. They are two completely separate actors that can fulfil a very different role and within one case often both are of great importance, despite one of the two often being much more involved in the citizen participation process. Furthermore, the external advisors or mediators are ignored, as their actions are always in line with another actor or group of actors: they are either backing another group or simply guiding the process. These five groups of actors, their roles and activities, are explained in section 5.1.

3. What is the influence of citizen participation on the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?

For the answering of this question, an overview is made focussing on citizen involvement. Key moments of influence are identified and the decisions where they had influence are summarized. To do this, Teisman's Rounds model is used. As explained in chapter 2, this model is very suitable to analyse the decision-making on wind farms in the Netherlands. In summary the reason for this is that there are multiple independent actors that are involved to a greater or lesser extent and cooperate in different rounds of decision-making. In his 2000 paper, Teisman uses a figure to graphically display these rounds and the decisions made in each round, which is shown in the figure below. However, when applying his theory on a case, he just explains the concepts in text and does not show the actors and events in a figure such as that. Other authors who use his theory of the rounds model and are mentioned in the theoretical framework applying the Rounds model do this as well. Even though no author has done so yet in a peer-reviewed paper, a figure like this lends itself well to practical application. Therefore, for each case a figure of the Rounds model is made analogous to Teisman's own figure.

FIGURE 2. THE ROUNDS MODEL



Redrawn from Teisman (2000, p. 945)

An advantage of this graphical representation per case is that the involvement of the different actors over the time is directly visible. This simplifies comparison between the cases, as structural differences can be seen at a glance. Furthermore, the graphical representation helps to order the complexity: only the most important moments and decisions are displayed. This way the figure adds clarity and understanding and can be used to see in which stages of the process citizens were involved in important events. This makes it a means to answer this third sub-question.

As actors in this figure, the five actor groups that are described to answer the second sub-question will also be used when applying Teisman's Rounds model on the cases. This is a simplification that specifically becomes an issue regarding the generalisation of citizens: in the figure, activist and participating citizens may seem to be two distinct actor groups, while in practice they are neither distinct nor homogeneous in themselves. However, this is not too big an issue for the analysis of these cases: the five groups are present and active in all of the cases and their actions can be described clearly and distinctly. The results of this analysis are described in section 5.2.

4. What factors influence the process of citizen participation and its outcome in the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?

To answer this fourth sub-question, factors are determined that explain this influence. These factors stem from the understanding of the processes that took place in the three cases, as described in the case descriptions of chapter 4 and analysed with Teisman's Rounds model and Arnstein's ladder in the first part of chapter 5. They are topics that recur in all cases and are observed to have been of importance in the process. To identify these factors, the in-depth interviews with people that were involved in the three cases have been of vital importance. These interviews provided the information on the reasons for certain actions. Therefore paraphrases are also used frequently in this part of the thesis, again only after submitting them to the interviewees and adjusting them if desired. In this section, for every factor the significance of this factor in the three cases is elaborated. Altogether, this is the last step before answering the main research question.

How does the current practice of citizen participation influence the decision-making process of wind farms in the Netherlands?

To be able to answer the main research questions, first the three cases are compared. This is done by ranking the identified factors for every case. Furthermore, the relationship between the different factors is made explicit and shown graphically. When relations between different factors have already been identified in academic literature, these relations are explained. Originating from the previous observations and analyses, the influence of public participation is assessed and placed on Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation. Hereby it is noted that this is not the only indicator of the success of participation, as was the criticisms of Arnstein's ladder as described in the previous chapter. When finally answering the main research question, the answers on the four sub-questions are used.

To summarise: for the three cases, a complete overview is given of the decision-making process. The actors that play a role are described and special attention is paid towards the influence of citizen participation on this process. The cases are visualised and compared using Teisman's Rounds model. Factors are derived from this and compared cross-case, which leads to an answer on the main research question.

4. Case descriptions

The following case descriptions are based on internet research and interviews. A list of people interviewed per case can be found in Appendix A.

4.1 Wind farm Weijerswold - municipality Coevorden

Siting the task for wind energy

As part of the 2020 goals for renewable energy, the province of Drenthe received the assignment of 285.5 megawatts, which they spread among their municipalities. The municipality of Coevorden was tasked with placing 40 megawatts, of which they already had 20 in place. These 20 megawatts would translate to 7 extra wind turbines, as the province ordered the turbines to generate at least 3 megawatts each.

Various wind energy companies kept a close eye on these developments as well, and scouted for potential locations for a wind farm. In Coevorden, the area of Weijerswold was one of these locations. It is a relatively open area with few inhabitants: the hamlet of Weijerswold contains about 50 houses. It is a small densification originating from a linear settlement along the road from Coevorden to Schoonebeek, along the German border. On the German side of the border, there was already a wind farm. These energy companies saw the suitability of the Weijerswold area and took an advance on the situation by contacting local landowners and contracting them for the building rights on their land in 2012 and 2013.

The municipality of Coevorden had already anticipated the task they would receive from Drenthe and had included plans for wind energy in their structural vision for 2013-2023 (Gemeente Coevorden, 2013). After they got the task, they decided to split it across two locations: Weijerswold and the industrial area Europark on the other side of the city. Furthermore, they demanded to develop the wind farm with only one party, so before they continued they wanted the different energy companies to settle the issue between themselves and act as one. The majority of the land contracts in Weijerswold were in the hands of two companies: WindUnie and Raedthuys, who soon decided to collaborate instead of competing with each other, which made them the initiators of the planned wind farm.

Contact with citizens leading to resistance

When WindUnie and Raedthuys in mid-2013 had submitted their plan, the first thing the municipality of Coevorden asked them to do was to inform the local community. The initiators therefore organized an information evening in Weijerswold. For this evening however, they only invited the nearest residents; people who lived just outside this area heard about it after the meeting. When other citizens heard about the plans after this meeting they were overwhelmed, and indicated that this was the case for many inhabitants. It also turned out that the plans were published in a local newspaper, which is in line with the standard procedure, but this local newspaper was not delivered in the area of Weijerswold. This was not intended by the municipality; the alderman indicated that they did not know that the delivery was not up to standard.

Right after this, citizens who opposed the wind farm founded the Stichting Tegenwind Weijerswold. The goal of this foundation was to stop the plans for a windfarm in the area because of the consequences for the landscape and the nuisance it would cause. They spread folders to inform the neighbourhood and gathered arguments against the plan. Later on, they also spoke in the

municipality council and argued that the Weijerswold area was a brook valley landscape with monumental farm houses, as well as that local residents could be negatively affected by stress or sleeping disorders if the wind farm was built. These arguments were all rejected by the council, so the plan could continue to be developed. This first phase of the process was quite a shock to many villagers, as described by the chair of Stichting Tegenwind: '*After a lot of pressure the first information evening was held. This was a busy evening, many angry reactions. All because it was all completely settled already, without any consultation. Nothing to be changed about it anymore.'*

Formation of a citizen platform

When the final decision was made by the municipality council, elections soon followed. In early 2014, after these elections, a member of the Christian Democratic party became the new alderman. He set himself the goal to build the wind farm with maximal influence from the citizens: *'For me the aim was to give residents maximal influence on how it would be arranged. To put them in such a position that that would be possible. With the underlying idea: if you do something in an area where people live, you involve them wherever possible.'* As plans for the wind farm were to develop further, Stichting Tegenwind and the Dutch Association for Residents near Wind Turbines (in Dutch: NLVOW) asked the alderman for a different approach with more influence for citizens. In January 2015 a so-called 'citizen platform' was formed, which initially consisted of three citizens. Because of the positive attitude of the alderman, and because of the decisions of the municipality council, Stichting Tegenwind felt that protesting would not be of influence and put their activities on hold.

When the platform had just been formed, the citizens of the Weijerswold area asked for someone to assist them, as they lacked knowledge and experience. They knew the chairman of the NLVOW, and asked whether he could be hired in the platform. The municipality of Coevorden supported this idea and Raedthuys and WindUnie agreed on it as well, so this man joined the citizen platform as an advisor. The citizen platform did not have a chairman specifically appointed for that function. In practice, the advisor of the NLVOW acted as the chairman. The project leader at WindUnie argues it would have been better to have an independent chair. This could have been from the municipality, but it was really the choice of the municipality to merely facilitate these meetings and let the initiators and local citizens figure it out themselves. He described it as follows: *'In these meetings I think the attitude of the municipality was structurally too passive, which caused the feeling that we stood in the position of the government: we had to explain all the things we also had to take into account.'*

For the Europapark area, there was a citizen platform formed as well, whom the Weijerswold platform had good relations and kept in regular contact with. As the task was to place seven wind turbines, the two platforms agreed on the allocation of four mills to Weijerswold and three to Europapark, as it was obvious that in Weijerswold more space was available.

Negotiations in the citizen platform

During 2015 it soon became clear that many more meetings were desired than was foreseen by the municipality. One of the reasons for this was that the citizens in the platform wanted to sufficiently inform the other citizens, who did not have a seat in the platform. The municipality and initiators also agreed on this, so in between platform meetings information meetings with the other citizens were held. In terms of content, lots of topics were discussed in the platform meetings. This included shielding from the lighting of the wind turbines, the colour of the bottom of the tower and mitigation of the turbines for shadow flicker and for noise exceeding the limit. Furthermore, they agreed on

determining the financial compensation before the wind turbines were built, something quite unique in the Netherlands. The normal situation is that compensation is determined once the wind farm is already in use.

The major topic however was the exact location of the wind turbines. Although the task statement for Weijerswold after the agreement with the Europapark citizen platform was four wind turbines, for the municipality it was negotiable whether more wind turbines could be placed. The municipality would be glad with more production of sustainable energy, but only if the local citizens would agree to that. The initiators suggested plans for more wind turbines, also leading to more financial benefits for the residents in the area. However, it was very clear for the citizens in the Weijerswold platform that this was not desirable at all, so therefore the number of wind turbines to be placed in Weijerswold stayed at four. For these four, there were many potential locations, so the platform sought for the location were nuisance would be minimal. After some investigation, that seemed to include lands somewhat more eastward. Therefore the citizen platform was expanded with an extra three citizens who lived closer to that area. When the search for the locations with least nuisance continued, a location even further east was suggested by the platform. This was heavily objected by the initiators due to large cabling cost and missing building rights, and also went against provincial policy that prescribed the grouping of wind turbines. The alderman would be open to defend that it was still one area, but was told by the province that they would not allow it.

FIGURE 3. MAP OF WIND FARM WEIJERSWOLD

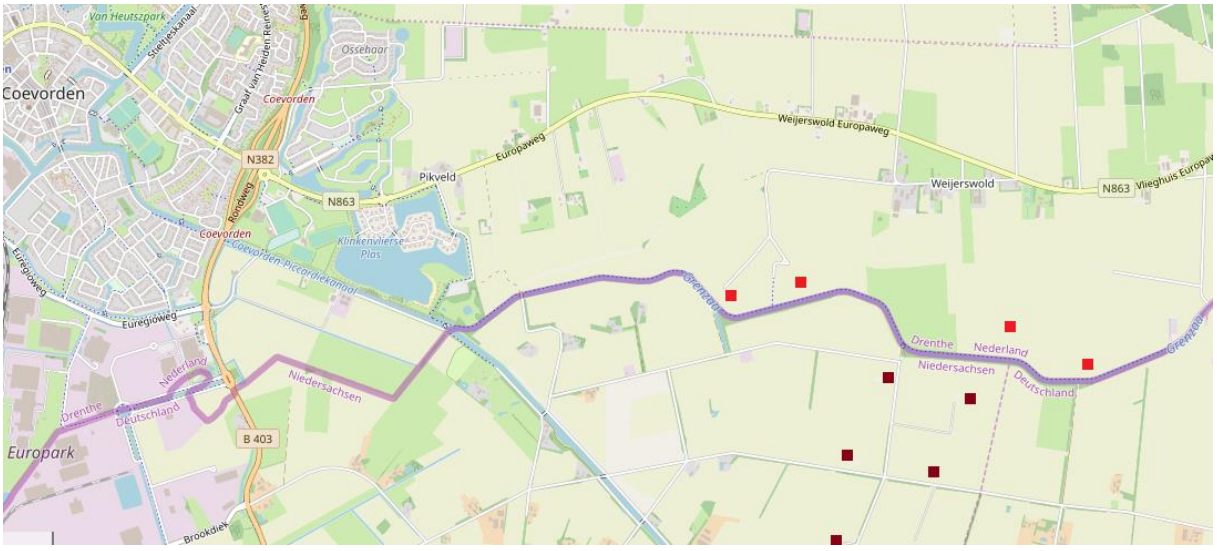


Image based on OpenStreetMap contributors (2020) and Vranken & Claessens (2017). The projected wind turbines are coloured red, the new German wind turbines are brown.

Another example of a cause of dispute that extended the negotiations was the distance that should be kept between the wind turbines and pipelines for gas or oil, which are abundant in the Weijerswold area. This distance was quite a limiting factor: if the maximum distance could be lowered, it would be possible to place the windmills further away from houses. Someone in the citizen platform had heard from someone at the Dutch Petroleum Company (in Dutch: NAM), the official authority regarding those pipelines, that placing a wind turbine closer to a pipeline could be possible. When the initiators told the citizens it was not possible to deviate from the applicable standards, there was no-one else who could confirm this. It therefore was officially requested at the NAM, who did not allow closer building. This frustrated the initiators, as they already knew for sure that it would not be possible. The platform however wanted a party they trusted more to confirm that, and neither the municipality of Coevorden nor the NLVOW advisor had the knowledge for this; they did not have the experience of the initiators,

who had been developing wind farms for years and knew exactly what was possible and what was not. After more almost a year of regular meetings, the citizen platform and the initiators came to an agreement. This included many details on the size, exact location, financial participation and compensation and technical details of the projected wind farm.

Re-establishment of the citizen platform and finalisation of the plans

A few months later however, there was news that the German wind turbines were about to be replaced with bigger ones. This caused one of the Dutch turbines to no longer be feasible at the planned location. Therefore, the citizen platform was asked whether they would be involved again in decide on a new location. They agreed to, despite pressure from others citizens, who did not want the platform to renegotiate. This caused quite some tension in the neighbourhood, described by the chair of the citizen platform: *We explained it and it was not a pleasant meeting. Everyone was happy with how it was and said: you should have said no: you were finished, right?* The platform managed to agree on a new location that was actually more favourable for most residents, but significantly closer to the house of one of the platform members. His acceptance that this was the best location now, even though it was closest to his house, received praise from both initiators and municipality and outlines the attitude of the citizen platform.

In general, the participation process is evaluated very well by the people involved. The chairman of the NLVOW also uses the approach in Coevorden as an example in other cases of what can be achieved when participation is designed well. However, this does not mean that the citizens are content with the results; the citizens in the platform were cooperating to have some influence on the design, but this did not change their vision on whether the turbines should be built there at all. As a final action, Tegenwind Weijerswold started a procedure at the Council of State, the highest Dutch administrative court. In September 2018 this objection was rejected.

4.2 Wind farm Spui - municipality Korendijk / Hoeksche Waard

Reactions on a local wind farm initiative

Since April 2019, five windmills have been operational along a dike in the polder of Hoeksche Waard. The location is situated in the west of this polder, just southwest from Nieuw-Beijerland, a village with approximately 3800 citizens. With a nominal capacity of 4.2 megawatts each and a tip height of 198 metres they are among the largest onshore wind turbines in the Netherlands.

Plans for the placement of windmills on this site have already existed for 20 years. In 1998 the first ideas for a wind farm on this location came from a local farmer and landowner. Permit applications were made, and the first notion of this location for wind turbines was in 2000. The location, called Klein-Piershil, was mentioned as a search area in the regional plan (Streekplan) South Holland South. In the 2000s, Klein-Piershil was part of provincial policy-making and kept being mentioned in official province documents, becoming a desired location instead of search area in the 2006 revision of the provincial Nota. In the next provincial Nota in 2010, Klein-Piershil was a search area again, in its 2012 revision becoming the desired location.

The municipality where Klein-Piershil is located did not take big steps towards determining a location for energy. At that time, this was municipality Korendijk. The initiator had filed out a permit request for the building of wind mills and an exemption for the zoning plan, which was declined. In municipal reports or visions, Klein-Piershil has never been determined as preferred location, nor was there any mention of competing potential locations. On the contrary, the municipality was talking

about a plan to let an entrepreneur develop a large recreation area with vacation rentals right next to it in the early 2010's, which would be incompatible with a wind farm in that area.

During this time, in the local community of Klein-Piershil, little attention was paid to these plans. Although the first newspaper article in a local newspaper was published about it in 2007, it was only by 2012 that more attention was drawn to it. In this year, Klein-Piershil was included in provincial documents as a desired location for wind turbines, which the municipality opposed. The publicity it received also led to the founding of Stichting Tegen Windturbines aan het Spui (Foundation Against Wind Turbines along the Spui, in short: Stichting) in 2013, which would become the main group of citizens opposing the wind farm. Among other things, they spread posters with the call to object to the plans for wind turbines at this location.

By then, the task for municipality Korendijk was to place 15 megawatts, as established by the province of South Holland, but the location of Klein-Piershil could still be changed. The municipality therefore started a process to search for the optimal location for wind turbines on their territory. They remained in contact with the various neighbourhood associations and involved citizens in the search process. The municipality also started an environmental impact analysis (EIA) procedure, in which they counted on the presence of the large recreation park to be built. With this recreation park being built, Klein-Piershil would be an unsuitable location for wind energy.

Province and municipality in conflict

In the meantime, the initiator had sought contact with a wind energy development company called YARD energy, in order to have more expertise in wind farm planning and more financial strength. Together they founded Klein Piershil B.V. As Klein Piershil B.V. did not get any permission for the wind farm on the land of the initiator, they submitted an integration request to the province. There was intensive contact between the province and the municipality about this request. Given the fact that the municipality had so far failed to fix the proposal or find an alternative location, the province did not have any legal grounds to refuse this proposal, situated on their preferred location. In 2014, this led to the provincial parliament deciding to start an integration procedure themselves. The province of South Holland then overruled the municipality, which does not often happen in the Netherlands. This was not completely unexpected by the citizens in contact with the municipality. As the spokesperson of the Nieuw-Beierland's neighbourhood association Filopopers stated: '*The province had warned the municipality several times. 'If you continue like this, we'll take over.' So that warning was in the air, it did not come unexpected.'*

The project team of the province of South Holland also started an EIA procedure, for which they hired wind energy consultancy company Bosch & Van Rijn. In contrast to the municipal EIA procedure which had been carried out before, in this EIA the proposed recreation park was not taken into account, as this was not officially recorded anywhere yet. The province sought contact with citizens as well. This started with a round of so-called kitchen table talks and information evenings in community centres.

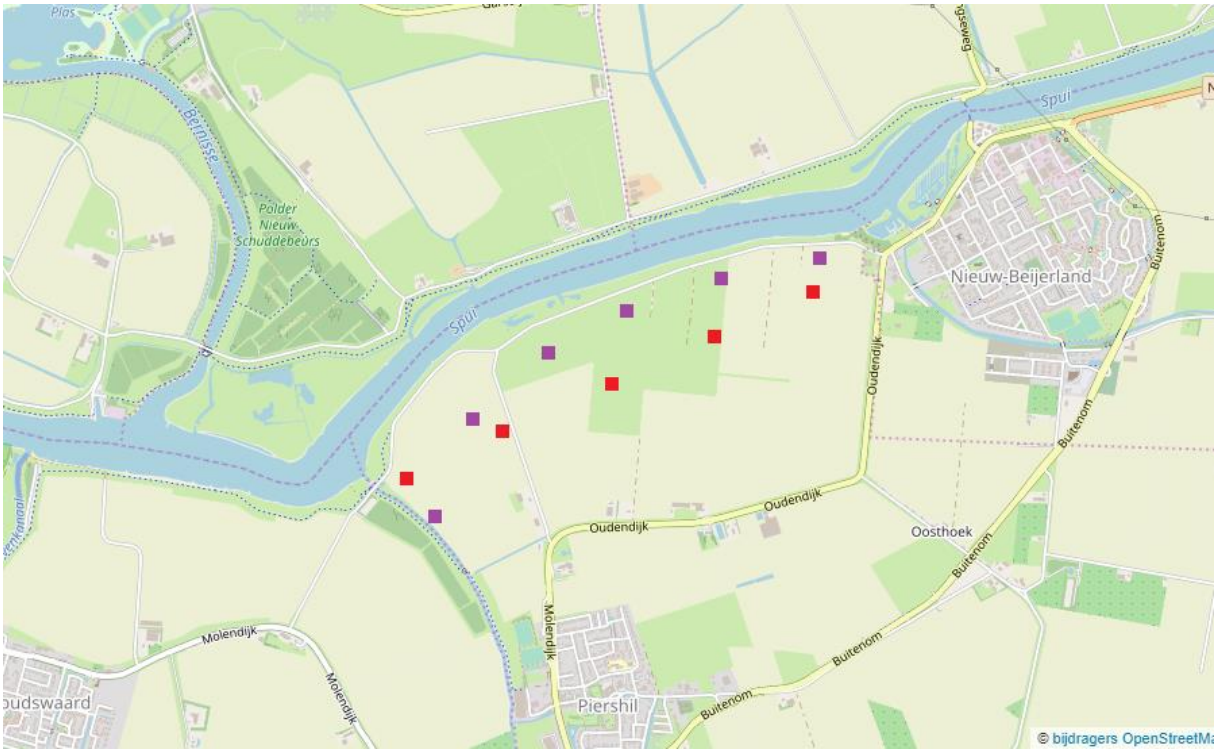
The province of South Holland leading the process

After the kitchen table talks, in April 2015, a sounding board group was formed: initiated by South Holland to facilitate information sharing and public participation. In this group, initiators and provincial government were present and representatives of people living in the different villages nearby were invited, as well as local nature organisations. Also people from the municipality of Nissewaard, on the other side of the water of the Spui, were invited, where the plans for the wind farm were less well

known. All groups were representatives from local (residents) associations, individual citizens who lived closest to the proposed location were not invited. As an independent chairman of these discussions between government, initiators and citizen groups, a mediator was asked to lead this sounding board group. There were eight meetings of the sounding board group in 2015 led by this mediator.

Within the sounding board group, various details where discussed, such as shadow flicker and financial participation, but the biggest result regarded the arrangement of the wind turbines. The initial drawing from the initiators had always been six wind turbines in an arc, which met resistance from the people from Nissewaard, as the turbines would stand close to the dike in that scenario. An alternative would be five turbines in a straight line. Citizens from the Korendijk area argued for the placement of four turbines. To settle this issue, the province asked the advice of the provincial advisor spatial quality, who advised the turbines to be placed in a straight line. Klein Piershil B.V. accepted this amendment as well, which lead to a different arrangement and the deletion of one wind turbine from the plan as the provincial advisor advised. They, however, did not want to give in any further than this regarding the number of wind turbines.

FIGURE 4. MAP OF WIND FARM SPUI



This image is based on OpenStreetMap contributors (2020) and Dooper & Verweij (2015). The projected wind turbines are coloured red, the alternative locations are purple.

Deterioriation of the atmosphere

During the year 2015, the attitude towards the process of participation changed. Although the provincial overruling had brought clarity, there was still a lot of opposition, which was fuelled by the Stichting Tegen Windturbines aan het Spui. They started an active campaign to discourage citizens to talk with the province or initiators in their efforts to stop the creation of the wind farm. They planned to challenge the decision for the wind farm in court and did not want to participate in any way. In their vision, participation and talking meant a certain agreement with the plans, which they absolutely did

not. As the project leader of the province of South Holland described: *The opponents said: if you join, you agree, so don't talk. I believe there was a tactic behind this: if no one talks, the participation has failed.* For the citizens, this stance was confirmed as there were no alternatives: the province had already made the decision that the wind farm would be built on this location. This even resulted in people sending back the information letters from the province, as they opposed the course of action and did not want to be informed. The general opinion also became more critical towards the independence of the mediator leading the process and towards the structure of the entire participation process.

Besides that, there was the issue that a lot of citizens were not familiar at all with the process regarding the development and placement of wind farms. Already during the kitchen table talks, citizens mentioned they would like external expertise to assist them. However, no expert joined until the very end of the sounding board group meetings. As the spokesperson of neighbourhood association Filopopers stated: *'People said: 'we would appreciate it if we had an expert at our disposal who can guide us through the process'. That is nicely written down by the province, but nothing is done with that.'* When the sounding board group started, however, the citizens were not assisted by an expert. They proposed to invite the chairman of the NLVOW, the Dutch Association for Residents near Wind Turbines to the sounding board group. He is well-known for assisting citizens in processes like these. Government and initiators also agreed to this plan, however it was not possible immediately. They explained this was due to the fact that the NLVOW had ties with the Stichting, who did not want to get involved in the process, in accordance with their strategy. As the chair of the sounding board group explained: *'It would have been much better if an expert consultant for the local residents was contracted in an earlier stage, preferably already in April. But that was not possible because the "Stichting Tegen Windturbines" did not want to participate in the participation process.'* The province therefore did not get the NLVOW's assistance for the citizens. This led to the departure of the Filopoper's representatives - who were by then present under the name Compensation Plan Group (CPG) - from the sounding board group in November 2015. After that, the province made it possible for the NLVOW chair to assist the citizens, after which the CPG rejoined for the last sounding board group meeting, with the chair of the NLVOW assisting them.

The lack of professional support was one of the reasons for discontent from some of the people in the sounding board group. Another point of dissatisfaction was that the possibilities for influence were regarded as limited. A lot of the time was spent on discussing the results of Bosch & Van Rijn's EIA and, apart from the deletion of the sixth windmill from the plan, no major things were given in. Some other requests were dishonoured, for example the request for more financial transparency by the initiators and more extensive 3D visualisations.

Final discussions and realisation of the wind farm

One of the conclusions of the sounding board group was that the details of the implementation would be worked out in a participation plan, which was not complete by that time. This CPG now consisted of people who lived relatively close to Klein-Piershil, mainly in the villages of Nieuw-Beijerland and Piershil. After the sounding board group meetings were ceased, the CPG, supported by the chairperson of the NLVOW, continued talks with the initiators. These meetings were supervised by the province of South Holland, but without the mediator and without the other citizen groups that were not representing the closest circle of local residents.

These meetings, as the name of the CPG indicated, were mainly focussed on the financial aspects. This was also due to the fact that technical adjustments or other measurement to reduce nuisance were not negotiable any more at this stage. In these meetings there was quite some tension

between the initiators and the CPG again. Both sides blamed each other and felt that the other side did not want to make many concessions, which led to an impasse. Subsequently, conflict arose around the question of how the money that was intended for the different destinations - among others the so-called area fund and the neighbour arrangement - should be spent. The CPG argued that the division as made in the sounding board group did not sufficiently compensate the residents living closest to wind farm and thus experiencing most nuisance. Here both Klein Piershil B.V. as well as the province did not want to re-discuss this.

Also, Klein Piershil B.V. was in principle not entirely satisfied by this course of action. The person in charge on behalf of YARD explained that they were willing to make some concessions and to support the neighbourhood where they developed a wind farm, but they criticized the fact that the legal framework is insufficiently clear. He describes: *'There is no legal framework, it is all extra-legal. That is part of the problem. If we, developers, want to start developing, we get an anterior agreement. So governments make the developer pay for all kinds of things in the anterior agreement, things they cannot achieve through the exploitation plan.'* So they signed an anterior agreement in which some concessions to participation or compensation were noted. These agreements deteriorated their business case, while there was no formal legal ground concerning the content of this agreement. This led to conflict when the CPG expected them to give in more, while they were not even obliged to compensate them more than the legal minimum and Klein Piershil B.V. already compensated more than that. Eventually, this led to the cessation of these meetings.

In the meantime, the final decision for the building was about to be made. In 2016, there was a final possibility for objection for citizens, and the municipality was asked again if they by now did have a serious alternative, which was not the case. Also, Stichting Tegen Windturbines aan het Spui did not succeed in stopping the plans. On September 14 of 2016, the building permit was given to Klein Piershil B.V. by the province of South Holland and the construction could start.

In 2017, there had been some meetings with the CPG and Klein Piershil B.V. again, but only regarding the transportation route for the construction workers. To stop the plans on procedural grounds, citizens, the Stichting and the municipalities of both Korendijk as Nissewaard started a procedure at the Council of State, but the court ruling in early 2018 did not agree with them. So building continued and was finished in April 2019, after which Klein Piershil B.V. sold the wind farm to Japanese company Eurus Energy Group.

4.3 Wind farm Nij Hiddum-Houw - municipality Súdwest-Fryslân

The choice for Nij Hiddum-Houw

The province of Friesland has quite a history with wind turbines. In this rural province in the north of the Netherlands, in the 20th century farmers had been allowed to place windmills on their property. As back then wind turbines were much smaller than nowadays, nuisance was limited as well. In the 2020 objective for wind energy generation, the province of Friesland had to place significantly more windmills. The province was aware of local resistance to this, and also in the provincial parliament there were parties opposing the placement. In 2012, preliminary plans were to concentrate the new windmills in the southwest, the area around the Afsluitdijk, a causeway damming the water of the IJsselmeer and connecting Friesland with North Holland. In this area, there was already an existing wind farm of 10 small windmills, Hiddum-Houw, which was built in 1995 and almost due for remediation. The proposed renewed wind farm on the same site got the name Nij Hiddum-Houw, 'nij' meaning 'new' in Frisian.

Fryslân foar de Wyn

This centred approach met resistance as well, which let to activity by a group of citizens united in the Foundation Hou Fryslân Mooi (Keep Friesland Beautiful). They were of the opinion that if more wind turbines really had to be built, it would be better to spread them over the province, as historically had happened as well, and put them not all in the southwest. They therefore started the initiative 'Fryslân foar de Wyn' (Friesland for the Wind), together with two other citizen organisations worrying about the initial plans, Platform Duurzaam Friesland (Platform Sustainable Friesland) and the Friese Milieu Federatie (Frisian Environment Federation). Fryslân foar de Wyn sought contact with wind energy developers and all others involved in the wind energy business and sought suitable locations for smaller-scale wind energy throughout Friesland. In 2014, they offered their proposal to the province of Friesland, where the provincial parliament had to make a decision about it. The person who would become project leader says about this process: *'It was one of the most difficult items, because there is a number of parties in Friesland that absolutely does not want new wind turbines and a number of parties that think it is necessary. And the Frisian, in general, is very attached to the open landscape.'* Keeping in mind the upcoming elections, the provincial parliament decided to stick to the old plan and allow wind turbines in the southwestern area only, minimising the areas where wind turbines would be built. They chose Nij Hiddum-Houw on the shore and Windpark Friesland, a much bigger projected wind farm in the IJsselmeer, off the Frisian coast.

Start of developing Nij Hiddum-Houw

The old Hiddum-Houw windfarm was developed and exploited by Gooyum-Houw B.V. and NUON. Gooyum-Houw is a company uniting local entrepreneurs and farmers, NUON is an energy company that has recently changed their name to their mother companies' name Vattenfall. When the province of Friesland decided for this location in general, they started developing plans. In August 2016 a start nota from the province of Friesland confirmed the location and marked the start of the spatial process. The objective was to generate 36 extra megawatts of wind energy in this area. From that moment on, citizens were informed again about the plans for a new wind farm in the area. Information evenings were held in community centres and a community advisory board (in Dutch: OAR) was to be formed. Province and initiators both were in favour of this board and the financing was split between the two.

The institution of the OAR

For this OAR, all representatives from neighbourhood associations and the people living closest to the projected area were invited, as well as nature and other interest organisations. Not all of these organisations accepted the invitation: some neighbourhood associations refused because the wind farm was relatively far away or because there was disagreement among their supporters about the desirability of taking place in this OAR. Others initially took a seat in the OAR, but soon decided not to come or be involved anymore. Next to representatives of two neighbourhood associations, this also applied to the farmers' lobby organisation. In the first meeting of this board, in February 2017, it was decided that a chair was needed, as well as expertise for the inhabitants. For this purpose, an independent chairman was hired, as well as an advisor to assist the inhabitants. As advised by Hou Fryslân Mooi, the chairman of the Dutch Association for Residents near Wind Turbines (in Dutch: NLVOW) was asked and joined the OAR as this citizen advisor and spokesman. For all the participants it was clear from the beginning that this OAR was not the place where discussion about the desirability of the wind farm on this location was to take place. The shared goal of the OAR was to realise 36

megawatts with as little nuisance as possible. This 36 megawatts concerned the net increase: when the old mills would be removed, they were to be compensated.

FIGURE 5. MAP OF WIND FARM NIJ HIDDUM-HOUW

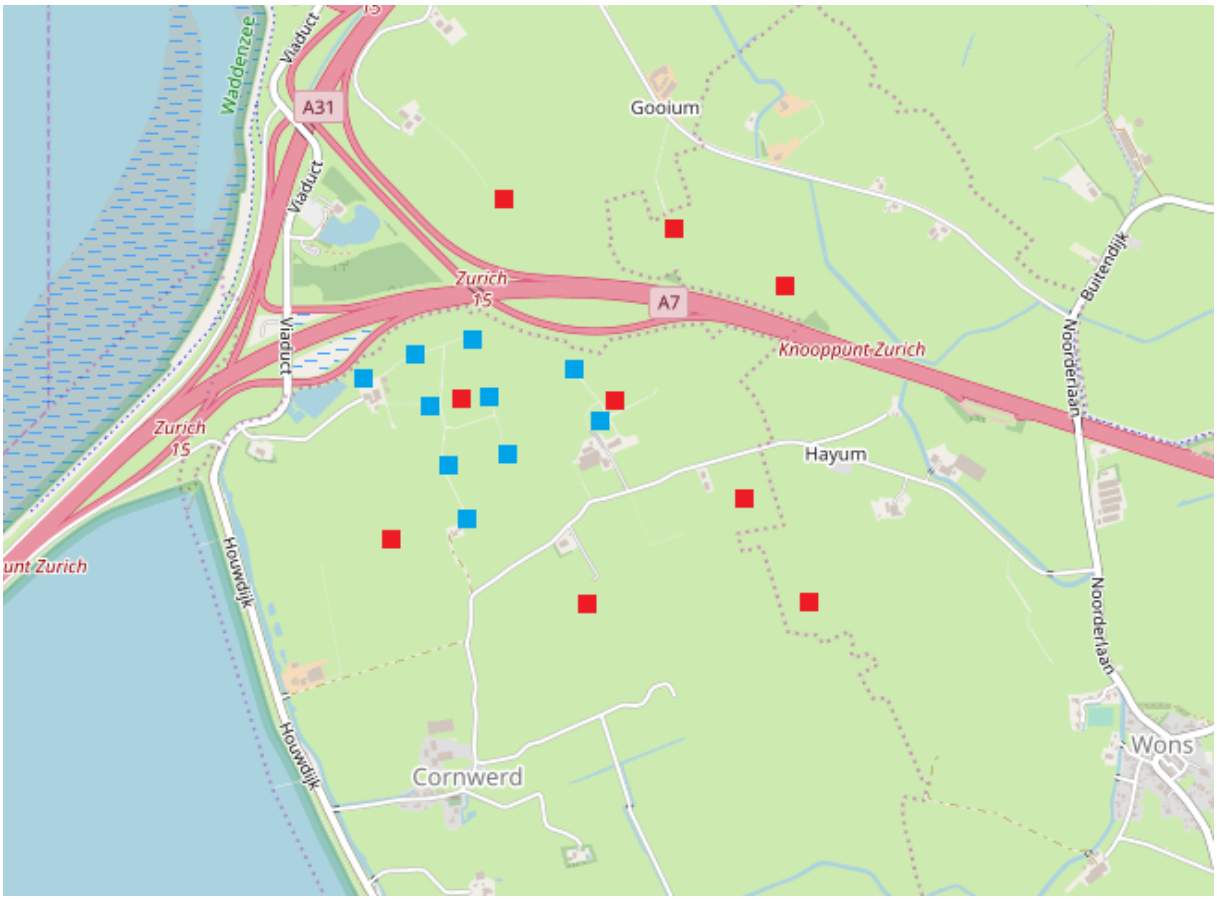


Image based on OpenStreetMap contributors (2020) and Andela & Van Breukelen (2017). The projected wind turbines are coloured red, the smaller old wind turbines to be removed are blue.

Decision-making in the OAR

In the beginning, one of the main topics discussed in the OAR concerned the number and the height of the wind turbines. For this, the initiators came up with three scenario's: 9 big wind turbines, 11 mid-range or 18 small ones. This was visualized by Witteveen+Bos, a consultancy company that would also make the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for this wind farm, and discussed in the OAR. After some discussion and an improved visualisation, everyone agreed that scenario A, 9 big wind turbines, seemed to be best. This was more efficient, easier to fit into the landscape and expected to cause the least nuisance, so it was decided that this alternative would be investigated more thoroughly in the EIA.

In mid-2017 a smaller group was extracted from the OAR to discuss the financial parts. As the OAR was quite big, these negotiations were thought to be better conducted in a smaller group. This included ways for financial participation and ways in which money that could be made available for the inhabitants in the surrounding area could be spent, either directly by compensation for near residents or in the form of an area fund. This so-called Petit Comité also had regular meetings and

informed the complete OAR on their decisions. Also during this time Hou Frieslân Mooi left the OAR. The initiators, chair and other members interpreted this as a wish to be able to fully oppose the plans from outside the OAR. According to the foundation itself, the reason was that the choice for scenario A of 9 bigger turbines was made too quickly. They said to have agreed to the investigation of this alternative first, but had never agreed that this was their preferred alternative to be built. As one of their board members describes: '*If you accept Nij Hiddum-Houw will be built, accept it will be 36 megawatt, but cannot even discuss the choice for nine wind turbines based on the EIA results, there is no point in being part of the OAR.'* This view was not shared by the other people involved, also not by the advisor assisting the local residents.

The role of Súdwest-Fryslân

The role of the municipality of Súdwest-Fryslân was noteworthy in this case. They officially opposed the wind farm, but realised they could not stop it. They therefore cooperated in issuing all permits and had regular consultation with the province of Friesland. The political responsibility, however, they explicitly placed with the province. The project leader of the province of Friesland sees this as a pleasant cooperation: '*I also benefitted a lot from their administrative commitment: they had a lot of expertise that I did not have.'* So the municipality spared the province a lot of effort making the integration plan, which they were much more experienced in. However, all responsibility was laid by the province. Besides that, they also informed the province of things that played among the citizens, often confirming things they also heard in the OAR meetings. The community manager of NUON, however, criticizes their ambivalent role, taking the fees for cooperation without taking the political responsibility. This community manager represented NUON at all the OAR meetings. He argues it is not clear towards the citizens either: if they are formally against it, but decided to cooperate, they should take the responsibility for this choice too.

The OAR process and agreement

This OAR process was quite intensive. As NUON's community manager stated: '*It has been a very intensive process. At some point, I have been there every Friday, for the OAR or the Petit Comité. That is not the case anywhere else.'* However, in December 2018 the meetings came to an end and an agreement was finished and signed. This agreement included lots of details that were discussed, among others about the lighting of the wind turbines. Turbines higher than 150 meters should have lighting due to aviation, but technology to reduce the light intensity in clear weather will be installed and they will be alert for new technology and changed legislation to further reduce nuisance. A far-reaching commitment by the initiators that also positively surprised the OAR chairman was to not allow any shadow flicker on houses at all. Furthermore, agreements concerning the maximum noise level were made, health monitoring would be started, and a single point of contact for complaints and information would be maintained by the initiators. The process and meetings of the OAR were evaluated pretty well by the participants: the atmosphere was quite good, without tensions running too high. For the neighbourhood associations representatives, however, their position was not always easy. They were accountable to their village associations, where there were often a lot of people opposing the plans for the wind farm, of which a number did not even want their association to participate in the OAR. This had already led to the rejection to join and the early departure of some representatives from the process, but for the remaining ones this caused difficulties as well.

Adjustments after the OAR agreement

Right after the OAR had published their agreement, a protest for the province hall was organised by opponents of the wind farm. This caused the members of provincial parliament to rethink the agreement. They debated about it, and ordered the deputy of the province to negotiate with the initiators again with the goal to raise the amount of money for local residents and to lower the height of the wind turbines. With this assignment the deputy went to the initiators, where his negotiation position was now much stronger than theirs. The financial payment by the initiators was raised and the maximum permissible height was lowered from 208 to 188 meters. In the OAR, this course of action was not received with a lot of enthusiasm. Of course, they were glad that the new agreements were to their advantage, but foremost, they felt that their result of a very intensive process was not taken seriously. As the OAR chair described: '*They were not against the changes, but they all had that feeling: we have achieved great things, regarding noise reduction, regarding shadow flicker... And instead of getting acknowledgement, "we have achieved this!", they got this.'* Besides this, they emphasized again that the financial aspect had always been a relatively minor issue: the primary goal of the OAR was to reduce nuisance. Regarding the lowering of the maximum height also the advisor of the citizens agreed with the initiators that when turbines are that high, such a change in height is hardly perceived any more. Outside of the OAR, however, citizens were happy their actions at the province hall had effect, that politicians acted and that a more favourable deal was possible. Hou Frieslân Mooi tried to still stop the plans through the courts. However, also in the last procedure at the Council of State their appeal was declared inadmissible and unfounded.

5. Analysis

The previous chapter gave an overview of the current practice of citizen participation in the three selected cases in the Netherlands, in that way answering the first sub-question of the research design. In this chapter, the three remaining sub-questions are answered. The insights and the examples from cases that are used are mainly resulting from the interviews held with the people involved in these cases. When there was disagreement between different interviewees about the course of action or the reasons why certain decisions have been made, this is indicated in the text; when affairs are just described, this understanding stems from interviews or policy documents and there was no controversy.

5.1 Actor analysis

In this section, the second sub-question is central:

What actors play which roles in the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?

For this, the five most important groups of actors as identified in the methodology chapter are systematically explained and analysed.

1. Provincial government

Provincial government is officially responsible for the placement of wind turbines for the 2020 goals and the competent authority for small to medium-sized wind farms, as are central in this thesis. This might suggest that they are fully in charge of realising a wind farm. However, the Netherlands has a fairly decentralised system in which landscape integration, destination plans and building permit licensing are normally carried out by the municipal government. This would make it a logical approach as well for the province to let the municipality do the decision-making around wind farms. Another reason for that related to citizen participation is given by Hart (1972): *"a decentralized environment is the optimal condition for citizen participation"* (p. 604). As municipalities are closer to the citizens, it seems reasonable that they would execute the decision-making and citizen participation process. Furthermore, in municipalities there might already be plans for a wind farm. If these plans fit the criteria a province might eventually set, it is also logical to let the municipality further execute these plans. Therefore, although the official responsibility is with the province, often municipalities play an important role. While municipalities have a large role in the decision-making of wind farms, provinces however often impose criteria for these wind farms as well. These criteria can, among others, be about the location, size and arrangement of the wind turbines.

In the three selected cases of this thesis, this variety of involvement is reflected well. For Weijerswold, the province left the implementation to the municipality of Coevorden, though with some requirements. The most important ones were that the number of megawatts was fixed on a total of 40 for Coevorden, and that new wind turbines should be placed in clusters. For Spui, on the contrary, the province had a large role and executed the complete citizen participation process for this wind farm. The role of the province was so large because they were approached by the initiators after the municipality did not honour their request to work towards implementation of the plans for a wind farm on their proposed location. Nij Hiddum-Houw is in the middle between the other cases, as the province of Friesland organised the participation process, but permits were still granted by the

municipality Súdwest Fryslân. This division of tasks could count on the support of the province. When provinces have a large role in the citizen participation process, as in the case of wind farm Spui and to a lesser extent Nij Hiddum-Houw, this is not most of the time because they did not want to lead the process themselves. As the chair of the sounding board group of wind farm Spui indicated: '*The province overruled the municipality and decided: we will continue with this project. In contrast with their preferred policy that the decisions are made on the local policy level.'* This course of action was therefore caused by the municipality refusing to execute the decision-making process on that location or even refusing to cooperate. This brings us to the next group of actors: municipalities.

2. Municipality government

The role of the municipality, being the lowest layer of government in the Netherlands, is also of great importance for the further course of the process. Generally speaking, two ways can be identified by which a municipality comes to deal with the plans for a wind farm. First of all, there can be local initiatives regarding wind energy. This was clearly the case for wind farm Spui, where a local entrepreneur developed plans, but also partly for Nij Hiddum-Houw, where the developers of the existing wind farm already assumed the wind turbines would be replaced at some point. Secondly, the municipality can get the task to site wind turbines from the province, as happened quite often as a means to achieve the 2020 goals. Those two ways do not have to be mutually exclusive. The reactions and degree of positivity of municipalities towards these plans differ widely. Some municipalities resist the initiatives, others look happily for possibilities to develop wind energy. In some municipalities, an interesting shift can be observed in their attitude towards the developments of wind energy. In these cases, municipalities are initially quite positive about the possibilities for wind turbines, but when they are confronted with high local unrest about the proposed plans and the emergence of action groups, this attitude changes. This change is then given by the municipality council. Of the three cases that have been intensively studied for this thesis, this change is visible most clearly for the former municipality of Korendijk, where wind farm Spui is located. Since it is sensitive to a considerable proportion of citizens in the area, municipalities are not eager to fully support the plans.

How municipalities subsequently act, also differs greatly. In the three cases studies, municipal government fulfilled a completely different role. In the case of Weijerswold, the municipality fully directed the process. If wind turbines had to be built, they wanted to be in charge themselves. Municipality Súdwest Fryslân had a different attitude towards Nij Hiddum-Houw: they did not want political responsibility, but cooperated with the province regarding the plans for the wind farm. At wind farm Spui, the municipality did not wish to cooperate at all, instead did everything in their might to try to stop them. For the spokesperson of YARD, this became very clear when the municipality made a new zoning plan for the area: '*They are going to make a zoning plan that includes this area. The Spatial Planning Regulation states that there must be a wind farm there and there is an initiator. Why don't you include that wind farm in your zoning plan? That was the definitive signal: it's not going to be alright.'*

Municipalities have large influence on their own involvement: it is their choice how they position themselves. This level of involvement determines the possibilities they subsequently have to influence the process. Government plays a decisive role in the decision-making and citizen participation process; if the municipality is not closely involved, the province will shape the process instead. This influence of the concerned government includes decisions about the location and the way in which the citizen participation process is organised. These decisions are not solely made by the one most concerned government body though. For example the choice for a location is also influenced

by the existence of local initiatives and possibilities for initiators, guidelines about the vicinity of nature, or eventual lobby groups for or against a specific location.

3. Initiators of wind energy

Next to governments, developers of wind energy play an important role in the decision-making and citizen participation process. In the field of wind energy, they are often referred to as initiators. This terminology is definitely applicable in some of the cases: in these cases, they are the ones whom the idea of a wind farm on the specific location stems from. These can for example be local initiatives, land owners who see it as a business opportunity, or groups of people united in a cooperation. The case of Spui is an example of a wind farm originated from such a local initiative. A farmer and entrepreneur had been working on the plans for over a decade and found help in the form of wind energy investment company YARD energy.

The majority of the wind turbines that were built as part of the 2020 climate goals, however, are not part of a local initiative. The larger wind farms especially are often developed by a big energy firm. In these cases, they often get to know that in a certain area wind turbines are to be built. They then scout for the best potential locations and sign building rights contracts with local land owners. This course of action is most clearly displayed in the case of Weijerswold. Here, there were no local initiatives, but the provincial assignment for wind energy was upcoming. Wind energy companies saw the suitability of the land next to Weijerswold for wind turbines and knew about this assignment for wind turbines to be built. They contracted land owners, which in this area was mainly done by two companies: Raedthuys and WindUnie. When Weijerswold was indeed confirmed to be one of the locations for a wind farm to be developed, the municipality of Coevorden instructed both companies to collaborate and to submit a joint plan, including a citizen participation strategy. To stay in line with the literature, as well as with the terminology that is used in the field, this thesis also uses 'initiators' to refer to the private party that is developing the wind farm, in the Coevorden case this is the collaboration between WindUnie, Raedthuys and the local land owners.

Nij Hiddum-Houw was in a way different from the other two, as there was already a wind farm, exploited by a private company, a collaboration between energy company NUON and local entrepreneurs. Therefore it was obvious that when the old turbines had to be broken down, the replacing ones were to be developed by the same parties.

4. Participating citizens: citizen board

The first group of citizens that will be discussed, are the citizens that decided to participate in the participation process as designed by government and initiators. This process often starts with open information meetings, for example in community centres. At some point, however, a group of these citizens is invited in a community board of some kind to discuss the plans for the wind farm, representing the rest of the citizens. There is no standard name for such a citizen group. In Weijerswold, it was called a 'citizen platform', in Nij Hiddum-Houw 'community advisory board', in Hoeksche Waard 'sounding board group'. Also, the timing of the start of these meetings and the content to be discussed widely differs between the different cases, as will be discussed in depth later on. The requirements for when people can take place in such a board, also differ. Common requirements are that people have to live within a certain range from the projected wind turbines and that they have to be there as representatives, not just as individuals. Taking a seat in such a board can be quite an intensive commitment for different reasons. First of all, meetings are often quite regular, up to biweekly. Furthermore, as the citizens are representatives for the rest of the community, they

have to inform them and also act as part of the group. This can be a burden on the people in the council, as the people they are representing might have different opinions about the projected wind farm and some of them do not even want them to be on this board and to compromise about the farm. In the Spui case, an example is given by the spokesperson of the neighbourhood association Filopopers: '*I have been in a meeting were I really got attacked. I had to defend myself for the role I played.'* The citizens on these boards are not paid, although sometimes they are assisted by an advisor who is paid. Also a mediator or independent chairman can be part of the board, who is then paid as well.

In the case of Weijerswold, the citizen board consisted of local residents, assisted by the NLVOW chair. The fact the spokesman for the citizens was also the de facto chair of the council, was in retrospect not the ideal situation, according to the alderman. In the case of Spui, also interest groups like nature organisations and representatives from neighbourhood associations somewhat further away were invited to be part of the board. There was an independent mediator and after some time Rob Rietveld joined there too. Although initially this group functioned acceptably well and results were achieved, over the year these talks took place, this group lost the backing and recognition of a larger part of the local population, among which were their representatives on the board. This was mainly due to the campaign of the action committee against it, and resulted in cessation of these board meetings. In a later stage, talks were resumed about the financial aspects with another, smaller group of representatives of local residents and their advisor. In Súdwest Fryslân, the board also had some changes, but mainly in the beginning, when representatives from certain towns decided not to be involved. Halfway through the process, the main action committee against the current state of affairs left the board. This indicates that there are big differences in the way these boards function and how talks are evaluated by all parties. The role of the action committees can especially not be neglected, which leads to the last actor group.

5. Activist citizens: action committee

Finally, there are citizens coming into motion, speaking out against the plans for a wind farm on the specific location. These citizens are often locally oriented: they live in the neighbourhood themselves and are for that reason concerned. They unite in an action committee of some kind, which in the Netherlands is almost always a foundation. They already make themselves heard before the official citizen participation process is started, but often do not cease their activities when this process starts. Often, there is a lot of distrust towards the authorities and the initiators and disagreement that the citizen participation process that is started does justice to their situation. It could be that the same people are active in both the conversation with the initiators as well as the action group. However, this is often done by different people, as in such a board, concessions are made and often the action committee also opposes these concessions.

In the case of Nij Hiddum-Houw, foundation Hou Friesland Mooi was initially part of the citizen board, but left halfway through. They themselves stated as their main reason to leave that they disagreed with the process: the decision for a scenario of nine bigger windmills was made too early, they did not yet agree with it. By others involved in this process, it was mainly seen as a way to be able to fully oppose the plans again, without the shared responsibility such a board brings. In Hoeksche Waard, the action committee was less visible, as they denied to speak out in the process. This was a chosen strategy to show the participation process did not work out. In Coevorden, the action committee did not do much during the negotiations of the citizen board, but afterwards did file a case at the Council of State to still stop the wind farm. Starting a judicial process is in general one of the things that action committees do a lot, as it is their only clear and hard way to officially influence the results when discussions in formal or informal settings do not lead to their desired outcome. This

happened in all three cases. As can be seen from these examples, the strategies and actions of action committees does influence the process. The effect of this on the outcomes will be described in section 5.3. Although most of the time different local inhabitants react on the plans in these two different ways, this does not mean they are not connected or part of the same community. Some people might come into action to protest against the wind farm in an action committee, whilst others participate in the official process to try to improve the plans on a citizen board.

5.2 Process analysis

In this section, the activities of these actor groups are mapped in the rounds model. This will give insights into the involvement of the different actors and therefore also answer the third sub-question

What is the influence of citizen participation on the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?

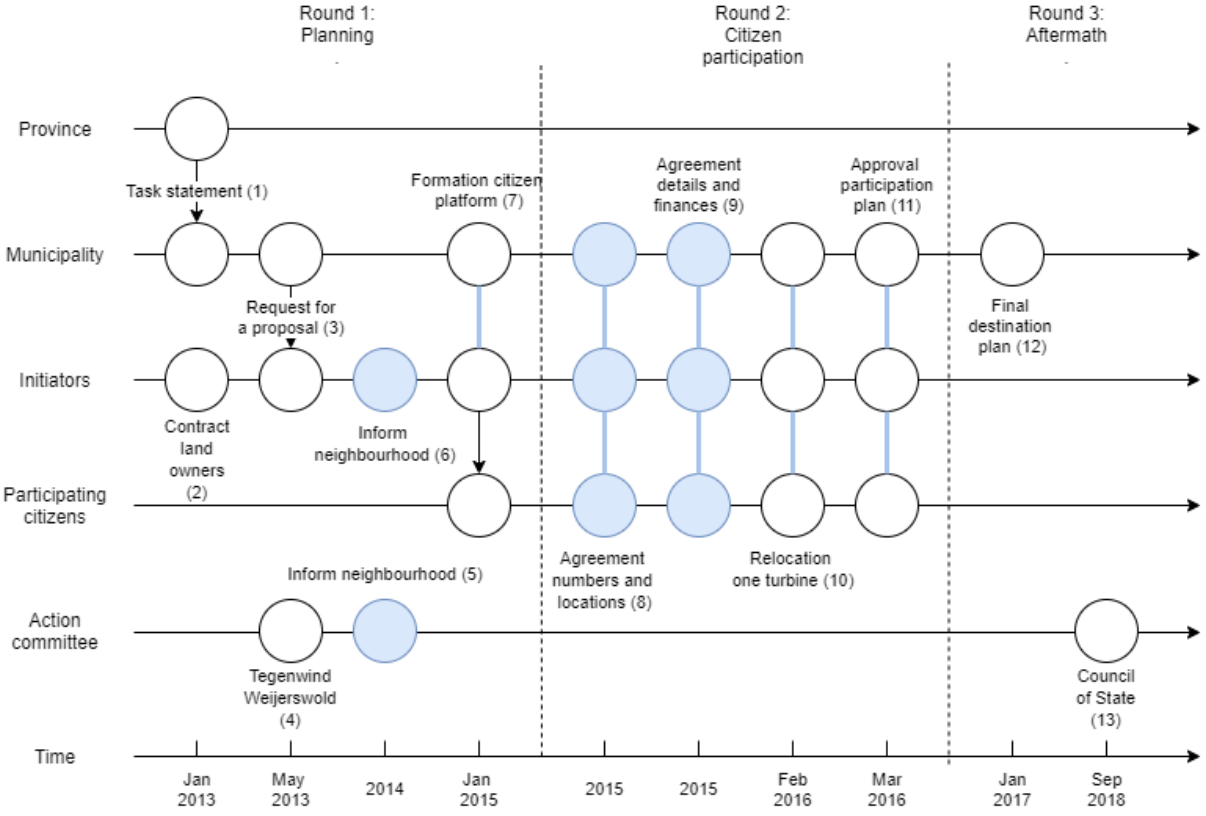
In these figures, the actors are displayed on the horizontal lines. When an action is executed or a decision is made by an actor, this is indicated by a circle on the line of the corresponding actor. When this is done by multiple actors in collaboration, the circles are connected by a thick blue line. When an arrow is drawn, this means that a decision of one actor group has an influence on the actor the arrow points to. Some circles are coloured blue. This indicates that this is not an action at a specific moment in time, but a process that took longer. Naturally, these diagrams are simplifications: there are more moments in the process that were of importance. For the overview, the number of moments displayed in the diagrams is limited to ten. All three cases are divided into three different rounds of decision-making:

Round 1: Planning
Round 2: Citizen participation
Round 3: Aftermath

In the case of Nij Hiddum-Houw, a fourth round had to be distinguished, prior to the other three rounds. This preliminary stage did not take place in the other two cases, but the rest of the decision-making rounds are still very comparable. This does not mean the cases are similar regarding the content or that the events within the rounds are the same. However, due to the standard policy process and the legal framework, it is logical that these three rounds can be distinguished in every case. Furthermore, as the beginning of a round is given by a certain decision or an outcome of the previous round, these are logical moments to draw a line. Regarding these cases, the transition from the first to the second round is often right after a start nota and the first information meetings. After this, the substantive citizen participation process kicks off, which is the beginning of the second round. The transitions to the third phase is marked by the end of this citizen participation process. This can be concluded by a joined agreement, but this is not necessary. At some point, however, matters stop being discussed, permits will be issued and the development of the wind turbine can continue, which includes, among others, the tender for the wind turbine type.

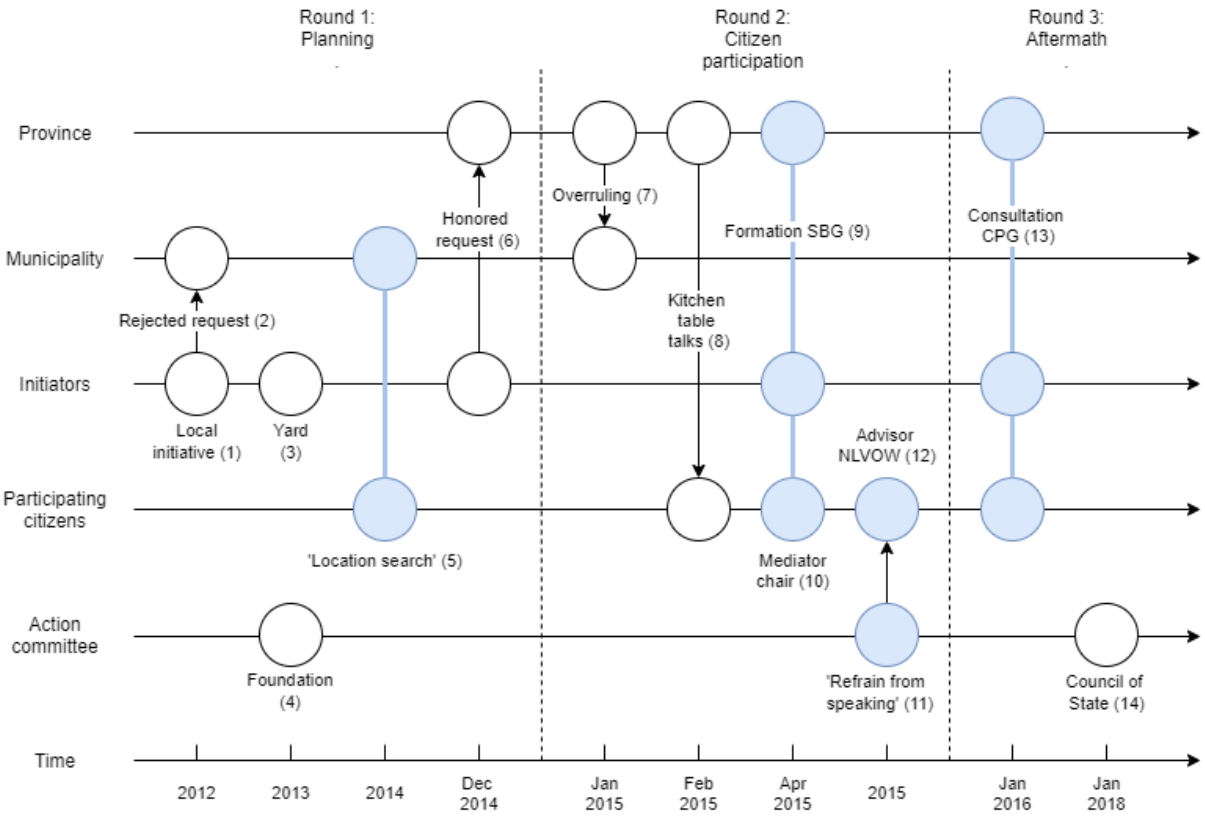
The diagrams are supported by an accompanying text: for everything drawn, a note is made, giving an explanation about its meaning. Decisions had to be made on which moments to include and which not to. In case some events are not sufficiently clear from the figure and its description, the reader is referred back to the case descriptions in chapter 4.

FIGURE 6. ROUNDS MODEL OF CASE WEIJERSWOLD



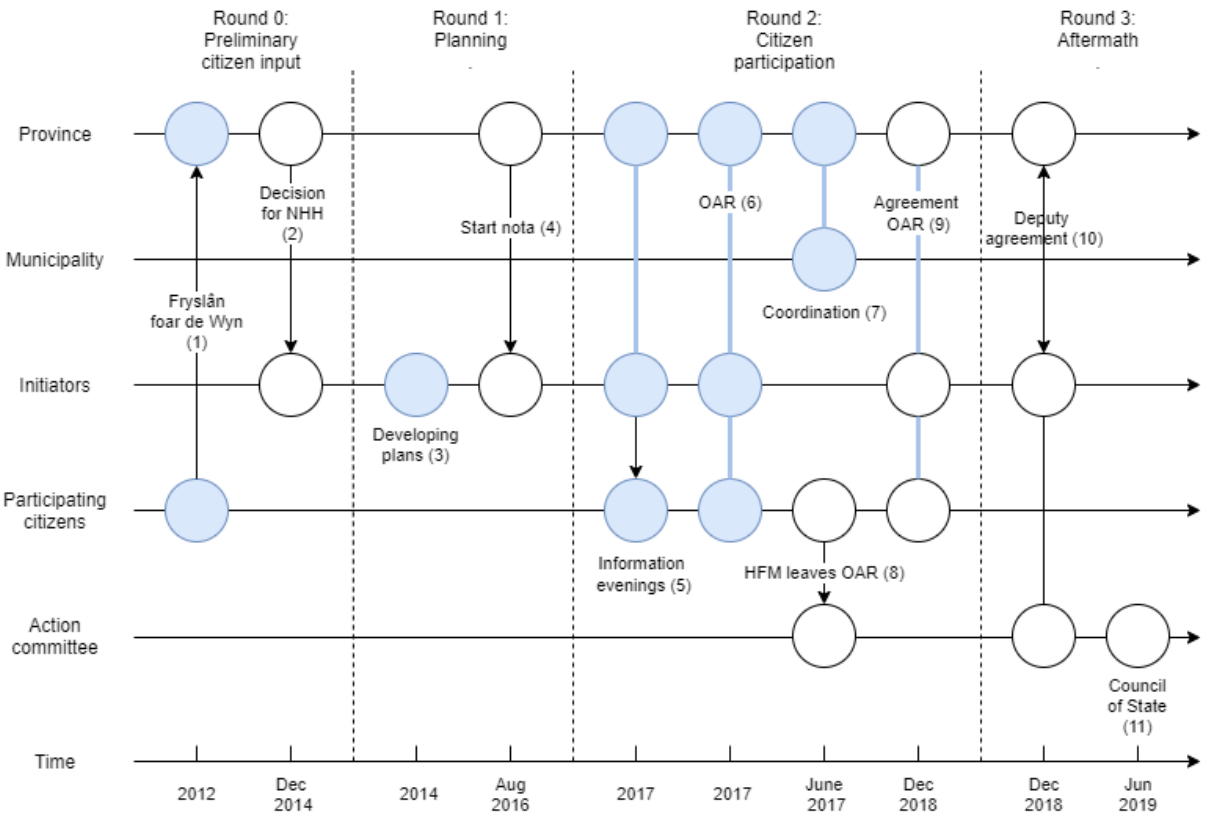
1. A task statement of 35 megawatts is given from the province of Drenthe to the municipality of Coevorden.
2. Wind developers like Raedthuys and WindUnie contract local land owners for the building rights on their property.
3. The municipality stays in contact with the initiators, requesting a joint proposal
4. Stichting Tegenwind Weijerswold is founded.
5. Tegenwind Weijerswold informs the other citizens in the area about the impact of the proposed plans.
6. The initiators also inform the citizens, organising information evenings.
7. A citizen platform was created to facilitate citizen participation.
8. In the citizen platform, agreement is reached between initiators and citizens about the number of wind turbines and their locations.
9. In the citizen platform, agreement is reached between initiators and citizens about the technical details and financial aspects.
10. After the citizen platform agreement, because of developments in the German wind farm, one turbine has to be relocated.
11. The final participation plan between initiators and citizens is signed.
12. The municipality council of Coevorden accords the plans, so development could continue.
13. A lawsuit at the Council of State is filed by among others Tegenwind Weijerswold, which is unsuccessful.

FIGURE 7. ROUNDS MODEL OF CASE SPUI



1. A local land owner already had plans for a wind farm on his land for over a decade.
2. The local land owner's request for wind turbines to the municipality is refused.
3. YARD joines the local land owner, together they become the initiators of the wind farm.
4. Stichting Tegen Windturbines aan het Spui is formed.
5. The municipality Korendijk starts a process with citizens to search for potential wind farm locations, not yielding any results at all.
6. The initiators request the province of South Holland to facilitate the process to develop a wind farm.
7. The province overrules the municipality and becomes the responsible government.
8. The province and initiators organise so-called kitchen table talks to inform citizens and answer questions.
9. A sounding board group is formed with citizens and interest organisations.
10. A mediator becomes chair of this sounding board group.
11. The Stichting starts a campaign to refrain other citizens from participating in any form.
12. The NLVOW chair, who had joined at the end of the sounding board group meetings, also assists the CPG as an expert.
13. The sounding board meetings are ceased, one group of near residents continues talking with the initiators as the compensation plan group (CPG).
14. The Stichting starts a procedure at the Council of State, which is unsuccessful.

FIGURE 8. ROUNDS MODEL OF CASE NIJ HIDDUM-HOUW



1. A group of citizens and societal organisations make a proposal on how to divide the need of wind energy over the province of Friesland.
2. The provincial parliament of Friesland decides to build Nij Hiddum-Houw.
3. The initiators start developing plans for Nij Hiddum-Houw.
4. A start nota is signed by the province, marking the start of the process towards realisation of the wind farm.
5. Information evenings are held by the province and the initiators for people living in the vicinity of the projected area.
6. The Citizen Advisory Board (in Dutch: OAR) is formed.
7. Municipality Súdwest-Fryslân and the province of Friesland work together intensively.
8. Stichting Hou Friesland Mooi leaves the OAR, from now on solely opposing the current plans for this wind farm.
9. The OAR comes to an agreement of all the participation aspects and details of the wind farm.
10. Campaigning citizens persuade the provincial parliament to make the deputy of provincial-executive negotiate again with the initiators.
11. Hou Friesland Mooi starts legal procedures to stop the wind farm, but unsuccessfully.

Findings from the figures

An advantage of the Rounds model is that there are not necessarily certain phases in a strict consecutive order. However, in these cases, the division in the three rounds is logical and works out well for all three cases, with the addition of the extra round for the case of Nij Hiddum-Houw. There are some interesting remarks that can be derived from these figures.

Broadly speaking, it can be noted that the citizen participation phase in the Weijerswold case has been very organised and clear. In this case, the citizen platform was formed relatively early and a lot of decisions have been made within this platform. The other cases show a more fragmented image where also the action committee plays a role in this round of decision-making. This is expressed in the events they were involved with. For Nij Hiddum-Houw, Stichting Hou Fryslân Mooi has initially been part of the OAR, where in the other cases the action committee being against the proposed plans did not participate in the participation process. The process of the Spui case did have an even less straightforward process in this round of decision-making. Here, there have been many forms of contact with citizens, which did not give the idea of one structured citizen participation phase. The figure actually makes it look like it has been more uncomplicated than it was, as the different societal and citizen groups that participated in the different moments of consultation cannot be distinguished in the figures. On the content, in this case, citizens are most negative about the influence they had. As the spokesman of Filopopers stated about the process: *'No, we had no influence there. It was just hearing the findings of Bos & Van Rijn, who then did the investigations. You hope to have influence, but it turns out you have none.'* An interesting matter in this case is also that the meetings that were held with the initiators, province and the CPG actually took place in what in this thesis is called the 'Aftermath' round. The decision for the wind farm had already been made, building of the wind farm was already planned, but still these meetings were held, as there was no agreement yet on - in this case in particular - the financial aspects of the participation plan. These meetings have also been ceased due to the mutual dissatisfaction that nothing was achieved.

At the very end of the time line of the figures, a Council of State procedure is added in all of the cases. This may not seem too much of importance, as such a procedure is filed in the vast majority of cases and is almost always unsuccessful. However, it is important to indicate that the action committees opposing the plans did not stop their activities and change their opinion about the proposed wind farm once they were not part of the official communication process any more.

The rounds model mainly provides insights into the broad outlines of the decision-making process. The involvement of the various actors is visible at a glance and the various phases - rounds of decision-making - make it easier to compare the cases. However, to answer the main research question, the issues that play a role within the citizen participation and decision-making process should be studied in more detail. For this, in the next section, factors regarding citizen participation that influence the decision-making are determined and elaborated.

5.3 Factors of influence

When studying these processes, different topics recur in all of the cases. These are things that are often described by the people that were interviewed for this thesis and that emerge in reports from the participation process. People complain about these topics or mention them as having a large influence on the process. Furthermore, these are topics that seem to have made a difference in the course of the process as analysed in the previous sections. This section will cover these topics and the way they are displayed in the different cases. It describes the way that these factors influence citizen participation and the decision-making process, which will answer the last sub-question:

What factors influence the process of citizen participation and its outcome in the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?

1. Timeliness of citizen involvement

The phase in which citizen participation is introduced by government and initiators is different among all cases. In many cases, the first moment that citizens are actively approached is when the global location of the wind turbines is already determined. In some cases, by that time it is not yet given what the number, size or exact location of the wind turbines will be, in other cases, these are also already determined at this stage. However, even in the earliest cases, the decision for this specific area has still already been made. There is a logic behind this. Sometimes, it is the only possible location, stemming from an initiator who planned it on a specific location, which is approved by government. This was the case for wind farm Spui when the province took over. In other cases, governments decide directly on which sites they prefer wind turbines. This happened in Coevorden, where Weijerswold and one other location were designated. When this was not determined yet, it was not even clear which citizens in which regions to inform. This mechanism is called the 'participation paradox' and described in detail by Noë (2019) regarding wind energy projects in the Netherlands. She defines this paradox as *the trade-off that has to be made between informing the community timely and making the plans concrete* (p. 47). In an early stage, when people are informed that wind turbines will be place somewhere in the municipality, they do not consider that it will affect them and when they do find out, the decision has already been made. Also Khan (2004) describes it regarding wind power planning in Sweden, stressing the importance it has: *Consultation […] has important limitations […], to a large extent because strategic decisions are made before the public becomes involved. For wind power this situation is even more pronounced since there are few issues to deliberate on, the most important being where to locate turbines."* (p. 563). Also in the interviews conducted for this thesis, the moment that citizens are approached to be involved in the process is considered a crucial factor and mentioned by the majority of people interviewed. Especially citizens, but also the independent citizen board chairs and the advisor of the citizens mention that in the current situation this is relatively late in the process. In the case of Coevorden, which was a relatively smooth process, this was seen as one of the main critiques about the process from the point of view of the citizens.

There are exceptions to this dominant course of action. Partly, Nij Hiddum-Houw, is such an exception. The process of Fryslân foar de Wyn was a citizen's initiative, supported by government. At this stage, the location was not yet given, which also meant that many citizens from the area where the wind farm would eventually be planned were not involved at that stage yet. In the end, the proposal of Fryslân foar de Wyn was rejected by the provincial parliament though, after which the case became quite comparable with the other two cases regarding citizen participation. There are more examples, among others Coevorden's neighbouring municipality Emmen. Coevorden's alderman often compares the two, as they got the same task to place wind turbines, but decided to take a different

approach: Coevorden decided on the locations before they started conversation with citizens, while Emmen organised consultation evenings first. A final comparative conclusion between those two cases, however, cannot be given yet, as the decision-making on this topic in Emmen is still ongoing. Also, the first stage of wind farm Spui, when the municipality planned a search for potential locations in a working group with citizens, is comparable. However, just as in the Spui case, this approach did not lead to a proposed location and in Emmen, the decision-making process is still not yet completed, so a full comparison cannot be made yet.

2. The flexibility of the government process framework

Not only is the timing of citizen participation relevant, but also the way the process is subsequently shaped and whether this leaves room for citizens to have influence. When the official citizen participation process starts, the responsible government has a framework according to which they and the initiators will execute and shape the participation process. In many cases, this is dealt with in a so-called 'anterior agreement' between government and initiators. The scope of what is still possible within such agreements, differs. When then the first information is sent, there is a notable difference in the perception of how well people are informed between citizens and initiators or government. In the case of Coevorden this was caused by a unintentional mistake: in first instance, information about the plans for the wind farm was distributed in a local newspaper that was not delivered in the Weijerswold area. In this case, also only very near residents were invited to the first information meeting, while it later turned out that people in a larger area were interested. In Hoeksche Waard, there is substantive disagreement: initiators indicate that they did inform the local residents sufficiently, while at least some of the people disagree with this, which poses the question of what sufficient information provision is.

In later stages, the flexibility of the government framework is exposed clearly when citizens indicated that they want adjustments of the procedure. In the Weijerswold case, when the citizen board was formed, on multiple occasions more time was needed as the citizen platform wanted to sufficiently inform the other local residents. This was often granted, but this was not always possible, as there were also deadlines for the province. The alderman of Coevorden said about this: *'For the feelings of local residents it would have been better if there had been just a little more time.'* In Súdwest Fryslân, many more meetings were held than were initially scheduled, which is a very common thing in many other cases that are not studied in-depth too. The project leader of the province of Friesland indicated how they wanted to guarantee the proper functioning of the citizen board: '*As a province, we said: "You are not giving the OAR enough possibilities to form an opinion. We will not make a decision: just do it over. Go back to the story." And they did that.'* Regarding Spui, already during the kitchen table talks, citizens had indicated that they wanted to be assisted by a professional during the participation process. It took about half a year before this request was granted, for which the spokesman of local neighbourhood association Filopopers blames the province of South Holland. The project leader of South Holland and the sounding board chair explain this by the fact that the proposed advisor, chair of the NLVOW, could not come, as the local Foundation Against Wind Turbines along the Spui was also tied to the NLVOW and blocked this request, which is denied by the Filopopers spokesman.

3. Diversity of group composition

In all of the cases, at some point, a group of citizens is chosen to discuss the proposed plans and give substance to matters that are not fully determined yet. Apart from what is still possible at this stage,

also the diversity of the group that is involved in this process is a factor that differs between different cases, as has also been discussed in the actor analysis. There are multiple reasons for these differences. Sometimes, it has never been an issue: the Weijerswold case is an example of such a case. There were no interest groups involved, only local residents. When the wind turbine placement was planned a little more eastward than initially assumed, this group was supplemented with some residents from that area. In other cases, it is an issue that comes up and the responsible government might have a vision about this and invite the concerned parties. In other cases, however, the participation process is open to whoever wants to participate and is representing a concerned group of people. They then decide themselves. Nij Hiddum-Houw is the best example for this, where e.g. some nature organisations and neighbourhood associations decided not to join, and others did. Foundation Hou Friesland Mooi, although not invited in the first place, could join the community advisory board when they indicated they wanted to.

Some groups of actors do not join, as their interest in it is not that great. Other groups, however, are concerned, but do not join because they disagree with the process or are internally too divided to join. In all cases, there was resistance within the local community towards joining. Arguments for this were, among others, that is would be useless or would just make the developing of the wind farm more legitimate. Although initiators and governments would contradict this, they were not believed by at least a part of the opponents of the wind farm. In Nij Hiddum-Houw and Weijerswold, this caused tensions in the local communities. However, the strongest call to refrain from speaking of the three selected cases was by far in the case of wind farm Spui. Here, the distrust towards the government was very high and at some point, the Foundation Against Wind Turbines along the Spui started a campaign, stating that 'talking meant agreeing'. This leads to a change of mood in the process and finally to the early breakup of the consultation.

4. Degree of decision options in a citizen board

When such a citizen board is formed, the number and kind of decisions that still can be made varies. This is partly dependent on the timeliness of the start of the board, the framework as provided by government and the people who are at the table, but these factors do not cover this degree of decision option completely. Also when these 'preconditions' are met in such a way that there should be much room for citizen influence, this is not necessarily the case. An example of this is given by the founder and board member of Hou Fryslân Mooi (HFM). He indicates the reason for HFM to leave the OAR is that the choice for a certain number and size of wind turbines was said to have everyone's approval, while HFM only agreed to research that alternative first. He describes how afterwards, no discussion was possible anymore: '*If you accept Nij Hiddum-Houw will be built, accept it will be 36 megawatt, but cannot even discuss the choice for nine wind turbines based on the EIA results, there is no point in being part of the OAR.*' This view is not shared by the other interviewed actors in this case, who interpreted their leaving as a way to be better able to act against the proposed plans as an action committee, without the responsibility of being part of the participation process. However, this example clearly illustrates the perceived lack of influence by citizens in the participation process.

Another example of such a decision option is how the compensation money for local residents should be spent. In some cases, there are limited possibilities left and government and initiators have strong preferences on how it should be spent. In the case of wind farm Spui, these financial aspects were crucial in the latter stage of the citizen participation process. As the name of the group of citizens concerned, Compensation Plan Group (CPG), already indicates, the financial aspects were the main point of discussion. This was mainly due to the fact that this was one of the last subjects about which discussion was still possible. Here, however, the initiators and province had a quite determined view

on how it should be spent. The available money was divided over different items, which was also partly a result of the previous citizen participation group. In these meetings with the CPG, ideas could be put forward about exact spending of the money, but the division in the different funds was already quite fixed. Regarding Nij Hiddum-Houw, the financial aspects were also discussed, but were much less prominent, as the main focus was on reducing nuisance and therefore also the exact placement of the turbines and technical details et cetera were discussed. For the initiators in this case it was also not much of an issue how the money made available would be spent: '*It is not up to us to determine how someone personally prefers to benefit.'* Regarding financial compensation, Weijerswold is quite unique a case as plan damage was already specified before the turbines were even built. This was even mentioned as an example of good practice by the CPG spokesman in the Spui case. That this was possible, was not only because it was not determined to be arranged in a certain way in an earlier stage, but also because the initiators would agree to this, which leads to the next factor.

5. Initiator's relative willingness to extra-legal concessions

The examples mentioned regarding the previous factor show that in the participation process there are less influence possibilities, because issues have actually already been fixed, at least from a citizen perspective. Even when this is not the case - when the participation framework is flexible and the citizen involvement begins at an early stage - possibilities for citizens can be limited because of the attitude of the initiators. Generally speaking, government only sets the frameworks and have few substantive requirements, as long as the required number of megawatts is developed. They leave the negotiation to the initiators and the citizens and their representative: in multiple cases, government officials are present at the negotiations between citizens and initiators, but view themselves as the facilitators and want to keep their role as small as possible. Weijerswold is a good example of this mechanism: although these citizen group meetings in Weijerswold were held in a good atmosphere, one of the critiques of the initiators was that the municipality was sometimes too passive. In this case, this was actually something both citizens and initiators agreed on. They could have informed the citizens more about what was realistically possible and what was not. As the chair of the citizen platform stated after the initiators had to explain why the result of the participation process had to be changed due to the new plans for the wind turbines on the German side of the border: '*Afterwards I had a conversation with the alderman: "I think you should provide this information. You must inform that place has changed and why." There was also a civil servant who was concerned with communication present and I couldn't convince him to do it.'* In the words of WindUnie's project leader: '*In these meetings I think the attitude of the municipality was structurally too passive, which caused the feeling that we stood in the position of the government: we had to explain all the things we also had to take into account.'* From a more legal perspective, however, something can be said in favour of this passivity of local government, as the chair of Hou Fryslân Mooi describes: '*We actually do not know for sure that the province has the authority to determine such provisions, as it is almost the regulations of economic relations between two private parties. That is actually outside the scope of the provincial government, according to the Provinces Act.'*

Because government is relatively passive, the attitude of the initiators is of great importance. Formally, the initiators are not obliged to make many concessions: even everything that has been agreed to in the anterior agreement is extra-legal. This is a major criticism of the partner of YARD energy about the current system. Also other interviewees pointed out that the legal framework is insufficient. The chairman of the NLVOW argues that within the current framework, the return maximisation strategy of commercial companies automatically leads to maximisation of nuisance, towards the maximum permitted level of 47 Lden sound nuisance: '*If there is a space to realise wind*

farms, do I always have to place wind farms in such a way that I go to the 47 Lden noise standard? Maybe not. But it always happens. Why? Because that one extra turbine simply provides more return. [...] On the national level you can have this 47 Lden as maximum permissible standard. But not as a right to always go for.' This concept is also described by the Hou Fryslân Mooi spokesman, explaining how mitigation of wind turbines is always used in such a way that it exactly stays within the permissible standard: '*Shadow flicker: mitigation. Top lighting: mitigation. So the entire EIA is full of: "it exceeds the norm, let's mitigate."'*

However, initiators can make more concessions than they are obliged to. Actually all initiators indicate they are willing to give in on some extra points, but to which extent they do this differs greatly. The chairman of the NLVOW, identifies roughly three different kinds of initiators regarding this topic: first of all, there are large companies that are susceptible to pressure from society. Bad publicity could make them loose customers. Secondly, there are companies like 'cowboys', who are not eager to make any compromises as they are just developing the wind farms and plan to sell them as soon as it is operational. The third category he mentions are companies in between, who are not as susceptible to social pressure as the main big energy companies, but still do want to invest in ties with the local community as they do plan to exploit the wind farm.

Also in the way in which different companies are organised regarding the citizen participation process, large differences can be observed that are also indicators for the attitude of the initiators. Vattenfall, exploiting Nij Hiddum-Houw, has hired a community manager whose specific task it is to guide the participation process. On the other hand, regarding wind farm Spui, this was realised by just a local land owner and YARD energy, which is a relatively small company: a partner of the company was present at all the citizen board meetings. These differences cause very different attitudes at the negotiation tables.

6. Experienced legitimacy of the participation process and outcome

A last factor identified that influences citizen participation and the decision-making process is the experienced legitimacy. This is legitimacy experienced by citizens, first of all on the process, but also on its outcome. Here, the difference between participating citizens and activist citizens are noteworthy. In general, everybody sees at least some points that are achieved in the participation process. In Weijerswold, the chairwoman of Stichting Tegenwind states as the most important achievement of the participation process that at least the number of wind turbines has been limited. In Hoeksche Waard, the arrangement of the mills has been changed after this was mentioned in the citizen board. However, there is discussion about whether these achievements are really caused by the input of citizens or would nonetheless have been altered. In Hoeksche Waard, the spokesman of neighbourhood association Filopopers argues that this rearrangement would have happened anyway, as also the provincial advisor on spatial quality advised so. The situation of Nij Hiddum-Houw, however, is the most remarkable regarding this topic. Here, the community board had reached a final agreement regarding many things. When this had to be approved by the provincial parliament, there was a protest in the province's capital city, which made the deputy renegotiate with the initiators. This is a clear sign that even though an agreement was made with a group of citizens who were to represent 'the citizens', there were other citizens who did not feel represented and rejected the deal. For the citizens participating in the process of the OAR, this was not beneficial for the legitimacy of the process. As the chairman of the OAR describes: '*I mean, they were not against the changes, but they all had that feeling: we have achieved great things regarding noise reduction, regarding shadow flicker... And instead of getting acknowledgement, "we have achieved this!", they got this.'*

When the process is viewed as legitimate, literature already concluded that it can provide an

incentive to cooperate (Cuppen, 2007). In this case of wind farm Spui, however, there was a lot of distrust towards the process and the decisions made. At the start of the sounding board group, the mediator leading this group noted this lack of trust and tried to re-establish the dialogue: '*I said: to the extent that you have influence, you should use the opportunity to start a dialogue with the community, even in an escalated situation as it was with wind farm Spui: try to have an open discussion. So that's what I did.'* Although initially with some success, after some time, the campaign of the Stichting to not participate was so effective that people withdrew from the negotiation process. In a certain way, they diminished their own possibilities to influence the course of action. As the partner of YARD indicates: *'If citizens want something, they have to take part in the process that we organised for that with each other.'*

5.4 Case comparison

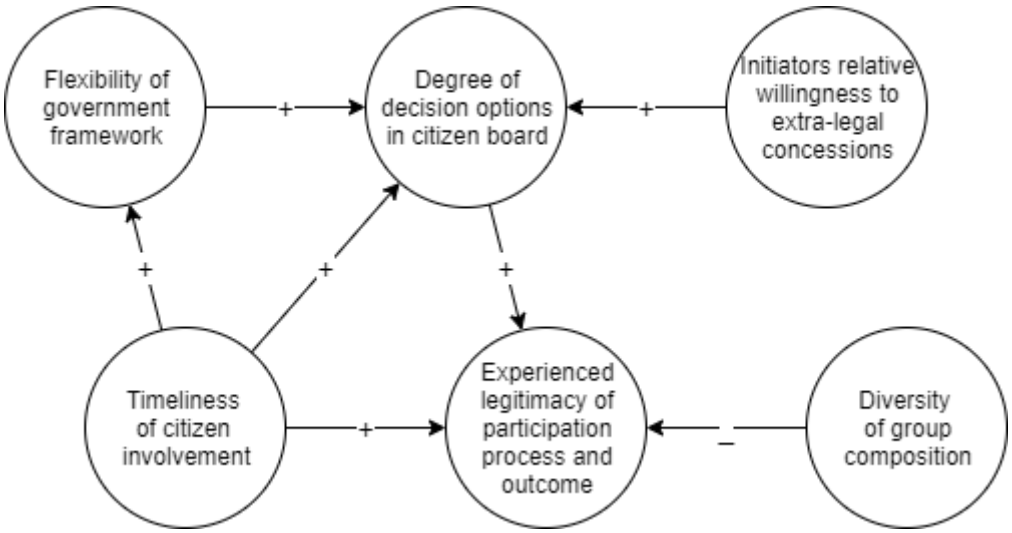
These different factors can be rated qualitatively for the three cases. This has been done in the table below. The indicators range from strongly negative (- -) to neutral (0) to strongly positive (+ +). This scoring has been based on the case descriptions and factor analysis.

TABLE 4

Factor	Spui	Nij Hiddum-Houw	Weijerswold
Timeliness of citizen involvement	- -	+	0
Flexibility of the government process framework	0	0	+
Diversity of group composition	+ +	+	-
Degree of decision options in a citizen board	- -	+ +	+
Initiator's relative willingness to extra-legal concessions	-	+	+
Experienced legitimacy of the participation process and outcome	- -	-	+ +

As can be seen in this table, many of the factors seem to be related: across the cases, all factors correlate positively with each other, except for the diversity of group composition, which is related negatively with the other factors. Because the ratings on the factors are purely qualitative and the number of researched cases is only three, this cannot be statistically substantiated. However, it indicates the interdependence of the factors. Besides that, for some of these factors a theoretical explanation can be given that indicates a causal relationship. In the following figure, these relationships are conceptually indicated. It has to be very clear that although there are dependencies, the factors are factors on their own, as described in section 5.3, where these factors were introduced. Each factor has its own influence on the citizen participation process and is never merely explained by other factors influencing it.

FIGURE 9. FACTOR RELATIONS



First of all, this case study suggests the timeliness of citizen involvement and the flexibility of the government are related. In the three investigated cases, the government framework is more flexible when citizens are involved earlier. Both the timeliness of citizen involvement and the flexibility of the framework, however, are mainly influenced by one actor, namely the responsible government authority, be it municipality or province, which could also make a third variable explain this relationship. The timeliness of citizen involvement and the flexibility of the government framework both influence the degree of decision option in the citizen board. When participation has started late and the framework is rigid, there are also fewer options for the citizen board. So, in general, this degree of decision options is highly influenced by the responsible government, who according to Mees et al. (2019) are increasingly changing their attitude to regulate less and let citizens self-organise more in the Netherlands. On the other side, this degree of decision options is also influenced by the initiator's willingness to concessions. Although governments mainly decide on the framework, the initiators also have an influence on what is actually possible.

The experienced legitimacy of the process and its outcome also correlates with many of the other factors, of which some can be explained theoretically. When citizens are involved relatively late in the process, more decisions have already been made that citizens have not been involved in, which leads to a lowered legitimacy. When in the citizen board the decision options are limited, this leads to the same results. The diversity of group composition negatively influences the experienced legitimacy of the process outcome, which can be explained by the fact that the more parties there are present, the lesser the influence of individual actors. This relation has already been examined and confirmed by De Vivero, Mateos and Del Corral (2008).

These six factors largely influence the decision-making process; they indicate whether citizens are in such a position that they can have influence on the process and its outcome. It therefore now is possible to rank the citizen influence on the decision-making process in these cases on Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation (1969). The seventh sport of the ladder, 'delegated power', is definitely too high for the current practice of citizen participation, as citizens do not have this delegated decision-making power. The sixth sport: 'partnership', seems applicable. On this sport, there are partnerships that enable citizens to negotiate and achieve trade-offs with traditional power-holders (Arnstein, 1969). Government officials and initiators also see it in this way, as the project leader of Friesland

describes: '*So the assignment was: make sure there is a wind farm of sufficient size, with as much cooperation as possible from the community.'* However, as is described regarding the fourth factor of influence in section 5.3: options may be more limited than they seem or than citizens hope for. This would suggest a more applicable placement is on the fifth sport, 'placation', where the traditional power-holders keep the power to decide. However, as the chair of Nij Hiddum-Houw's OAR also described: '*The question is to what extent residents really had an influence on the process. Indirectly, the province and developers know that if people stay salty, they are in trouble. So indirectly that influence has been great. Directly, I have the feeling, certainly within the Petit Committee, there were a few residents' representatives who were smart and who knew how the negotiation process should be played.*' When placing the cases on Arnstein's ladder, therefore, at least the cases of Nij Hiddum-Houw and Weijerswold should be on the sixth sport: partnership. In the Spui case this influence has been much more limited and disputed, and the citizens were to a lesser extent placed in a position where they could have this influence, which leads to the conclusion that in this case, the fifth sport is more appropriate.

It is important though to realise this influence, as now placed on Arnstein's ladder, is not the only important aspect to answer the research question of this thesis. It ignores other valuable aspects of the process, the way it is evaluated and the motivations for participation in the different cases, that have already emerged in this thesis. To conclude on the research question, all these aspects have been included: the current practice is mapped, factors are derived from the case studies and models of Teisman and Arnstein are applied. This answers the research questions and paves the way for conclusions to be drawn. In the next chapter, these conclusions are recorded per sub-question, the contribution and limitations of this research are described and recommendations are provided.

6. Conclusion & Discussion

The analysis has led to an answer on the main research question:

How does the current practice of citizen participation influence the decision-making process of wind farms in the Netherlands?

6.1 Conclusion

In this section conclusions on all sub-questions will be given, leading to a conclusive answer to the main question.

1. *What is the current practice of citizen participation regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*

From these cases, it becomes clear that citizen participation is an essential part of the decision-making process. All actors recognise it as such, but the actual elaboration of this in current practice and the perspectives of the different actors on it are very different. An aspect of this heterogeneity is nicely illustrated by the process of Fryslân foar de Wyn, which preceded the choice for Nij Hiddum-Houw. This process was completely bottom-up and resulted in a comprehensive proposal, although in the end the result was not adopted by Provincial States. Furthermore, in all cases a citizen participation process is started when the location and number of megawatts is roughly determined, where government, initiators and citizens come together to negotiate. How this process is shaped, largely differs. In the case of Spui, there were separate participation processes from the municipality and the province. There were also many different stages in the decision-making process regarding citizen participation, including information evenings, kitchen table talks, a sounding board group with representatives from many societal groups, and meetings with near residents and the initiators. In the Weijerswold case, the practice of citizen participation was clearer, with a shorter preliminary stage in which plans for a wind farm in the area were known, but the process was not yet shaped. Here quite soon a citizen platform was formed, in which the entire participation process took place, only supplemented with information evenings to inform and engage the residents who were not in this platform. This variety is caused by the attitudes and actions of the various actors involved.

2. *What actors play which roles in the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*

When these actors are investigated, it becomes clear that the role of the municipality is especially different across the cases. Government in general has the most means to shape the process, determining the framework for it. Whether provincial or municipal government takes the lead in this, differs. In the time period researched, the provinces had a clear task to realise wind energy. They were often the ones to determine a case. In Friesland, they chose to place new wind turbines in the Nij Hiddum-Houw area. Regarding Weijerswold, the province of Drenthe assigned the task as a number of megawatts to the municipality. Also in Spui, eventually the province determined that the plans for a wind farm on that location would be realised. The municipality however, has a very large influence on their own involvement and different municipalities make radically different decisions on this. Therefore, in some cases municipalities shape and implement the participation process, whilst in others the provincial government keeps the responsibility. Also, the relationship between provincial and municipal government is very different throughout the cases. The entire decision-making and

participation process in Weijerswold was completely carried out by the municipality of Coevorden. In Hoeksche Waard, the municipality initially started a process, but failed to make decisions on it, so initiators and province had no confidence anymore that they would realise a wind farm, and finally overruled. In this case, municipality and province did not cooperate. Even here, however, the municipality always had the choice to change their attitude, as the provincial project leader describes: '*Even at the very last moment, in 2016, when the provincial parliament would determine the siting plan, even at that moment we said to the municipality: if you have a better alternative, please say so. But even then they couldn't come up with one.'* In contrast with the case of Spui, regarding Nij Hiddum-Houw there was an extensive cooperation between municipality and province. The province was in the lead and bore the responsibility, but the municipality took care of permit granting, et cetera. In general, the role of the municipality is never imposed upon by the province: the municipality themselves, an alderman, eventually specifically commissioned by the municipality council, makes the decision of how they will react to the plans for a wind farm and to what extent they will lead.

Secondly, developers of wind energy play a large role. Government does not determine the area for wind energy just by themselves: initiators are also very important in this. In the case of Nij Hiddum-Houw, there was already an existing wind farm and this renewal and enlargement, albeit not to this extent, also emerged from the Fryslân foar de Wyn process, which also took place in consultation with the initiators. Weijerswold had the least obvious single initiator, but even here, wind energy developers had already ground contracts with land owners before the formal decision-making and citizen participation processes started. After this initiative that also partly influences in which areas wind turbines will potentially be placed, the role of the initiators remains of importance. Although the goals of the different kinds of wind farm initiators may be similar, namely to realise the wind farm and to profit from it, as befits a commercial enterprise, their role in the process widely differs. This regards their attitude as perceived by citizens and government and the concessions they are willing to make. As the process is not very static or predefined, this causes a large difference on the participation process and its outcomes.

Lastly, regarding citizens, an important distinction should be made between citizens in action committees, who are often not formally involved in the official participation process, and citizens who participate. Activist citizens, for example the local foundation against wind turbines on the proposed location, normally influence the image of the wind farm and the process. This was the case in both Hoeksche Waard and Coevorden. In Súdwest-Fryslân, Hou Fryslân Mooi was initially part of the citizen board, but this foundation was also not against a renewal of the old Hiddum-Houw turbines, they were just very sceptical about the size of the proposed wind farm. In practice though, on the individual level, activist and participating citizens are not always so distinct at all. The third sub-question examines the role and possibilities of citizens in more detail.

3. *What is the influence of citizen participation on the decision-making process regarding the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*

In the situation as observed in the three selected cases, the participation process is primarily shaped by the actions of the responsible government. In addition, initiators have a large influence on the potential for changes to the original plan that could emerge from this participation process. Regarding the influence that citizens themselves have, two separate methods of influence can be determined: first of all the influence of citizens on the participation process itself, secondly the influence on the outcome of this process. As seen before, citizens normally only get involved in the participation process when they are invited. An early process like Fryslân foar de Wyn is rather rare, and the 'uninvited participation' of action committees against the wind farm should not be considered as

participation. The effects of the actions of such committees are relevant in changing the public opinion, mobilising people and putting pressure on the process, as the example of wind farm Spui most clearly indicates. Also in the other cases, the dilemma for citizen representatives whether or not to participate in the process was very real and caused division within the local community. However, in all cases, in the end the only adjustments to the plan originate from the official participation process itself. Procedures at the Council of State attempting to stop the wind farm are almost always unsuccessful. When it comes to the influence of citizens on the official participation process, it is important to note this process is already designed when citizens join. This does not mean they do not have any influence on the process at all. For example the need for an external advisor to assist the citizens, was in none of the cases determined beforehand and has been added after citizens asked for it, sooner or later. Regarding the topics that they can have an influence on, however, their possibilities are rather limited.

Regarding the realisation, there are choices emerging from the participation process. These can be about the number and height of wind turbines, their exact location, the spending of financial compensation, details regarding the wind turbines (e.g. a green bottom or top lighting blocks) and on construction conditions. Citizens, however, often are unexperienced in these negotiations and the need for an advisor is therefore stressed. A question can be asked about who really has the influence on the citizen's side of the table: the citizens themselves, or their advisor? To characterise this, the spokesman of Hou Fryslân Mooi indicates the following about the NLVOW chair and citizen advisor: '*These negotiations in the OAR were negotiations between [Name] and the initiators. It was between the two of them. [Name] has done a great job, and with that, the OAR has done so too.'* In all of the cases the relationship between the citizen groups and their advisor was good, so this functioned as intended. In conclusion it can therefore be said that citizens have influence and can get things done, but only within the boundaries they are given. If they are put in such a position that they have power and expertise, the result is obvious. In all three cases, there are things that have changed through citizen input, although examples of this are much more abundant and undisputed in the Weijerswold case than in the Spui case. This has everything to do with the position they were put in.

4. *What factors influence the process of citizen participation and its outcome in the development of wind farms in three selected cases in the Netherlands?*

Next to the description of the influences that these actors, including citizens, have on the decision-making process, there are specific things they do, individual or jointly, that influence the process. Six of such factors have been determined in this thesis. These are important issues that have proven to be key in determining the course of the decision-making process. These are the following factors:

- Timeliness of citizen involvement
- Flexibility of the government process framework
- Diversity of group composition
- Degree of decision options in a citizen board
- Initiator's relative willingness to extra-legal concessions
- Experienced legitimacy of the participation process and outcome

These factors can eventually be adjusted to change the decision-making process and the role of citizen participation in it. There is broad agreement that citizens are involved too late in the process. Governments and initiators also agree with this, as described by the project leader of WindUnie: '*What was important in Coevorden is the sequence in which things happened. In Coevorden we started the conversation on the moment that there were only some land contracts and some business agreements between Raedthuys and us.'* When the official participation process is started, the diversity of the

composition of this group and the flexibility of the process turn out to largely influence how it is evaluated. The degree of options that are still not determined when the participation process is started, is another factor. The influence of citizens also depends on the willingness of initiators to make concessions, more specifically the extent to which they are willing to make more concessions than they are strictly obliged to. All of these factors emerged from the investigated cases and are the final step to answering the main research question.

- **How does the current practice of citizen participation influence the decision-making process of wind farms in the Netherlands?**

Concluding on the main research question, it can be said that citizen participation does normally not influence the course of the process itself much, but does influence the outcome of this process. The only shared result of citizen participation on the process itself is often that the citizens are supported by more expertise, or make the process take more time than initially envisioned.

Government plays a very important role in setting the framework of the participation and determining what topics can still be discussed, whether this is province or municipality, as municipalities have the choice to what extent they will be involved. With this, they put citizens in a certain position that determines how much influence they have. This position is very important: when the most important choices have already been made, they are not in such a position anymore. The NLVOW chair describes this when talking about how in the Spui case the permits were already granted, but negotiations were still taking place between citizens and initiators: '*These are choices that should be combined in a total package of agreements. You cannot cut it there. Because when you cut it, then the wind farm is definitive, the procedure continues, the permit is granted, the zoning plan is tackled. Then we will talk about compensation, about money and about all kinds of things. But then it has no use any more, because the residents are not in a fair position. […] Then Weijerswold, as a real counterpart. The developer could not have said that, because then they would not have received a permit.'*

On the content - the outcome of the negotiations - governments often do not have much of an opinion. The responsible alderman of Coevorden illustrated this when declaring his aim at the start of the participation process: '*For me the aim was to give residents maximal influence on how it would be arranged. To put them in such a position that that would be possible. With the underlying idea: if you do something in an area where people live, you involve them wherever possible.'* The main outcomes of citizen participation that are seen as most important by the citizens involved are often concrete alterations of the plans. These range from very large changes such as determining the number and size of the wind turbines to rather detailed matters like the least nuisance-causing transportation route for turbine components during the construction of the wind farm. Besides this, there is also agreement that the current legal framework is insufficient. This causes participation processes to start too late. In conclusion: one of the most important things to enable citizens to have influence is that they should be put in such a position that they can exert this influence.

6.2 Scientific contribution

There are two main scientific contributions that this study provides. First of all, there has not been a study conducted before that so specifically describes the role of public participation in the decision-making process of wind farms. The case study methodology gives valuable insights into how these processes took place in recent Dutch policy-making. It also shows the perspectives and evaluations of

different actors. In a lot of academic literature regarding citizen participation, the role of communities and citizens is investigated. This thesis, however, also looks into the processes and attitudes that play a role in governments and initiators. As in the next few years many new wind farms will be developed in other Dutch municipalities, it is good to see which factors and mechanics play a role. For wind farms development processes yet to come it is useful that next to their own evaluation of actors involved there is also an overall scientific perspective as provided in this thesis. Therefore, in section 6.5 some recommendations for policy-makers are given.

Secondly, in this thesis research Teisman's Rounds model is used by a graphical representation of the cases. In his 2000 paper, Teisman introduces this graphic to explain the model theoretically. When applying it on a case, he himself does consequently only describe the model in text, and no longer uses the graphic. Other authors using this model do exactly the same. This thesis shows that a graphical representation for a specific case can be made as well. The graph Teisman himself introduced as a general description of the model lends itself very well to case-specific adjustment. The advantage of such a case-specific graphic is that the involvement of the different actors can be mapped and very well-arranged. This makes it easier to compare cross-case, as differences in the structure are directly visible. Another advantage of this graphical representation is that it reduces complexity: the course of the process is shown in a big outline with only the most important moments incorporated. Specifically for answering the research question of this thesis, the graphs clarify the involvement of the two categories of citizens that are included in the different stages of the process. This graph is therefore a valuable addition as opposed to a description in text only.

6.3 Limitations

This thesis research has some limitations, which may be caused by the scope of the research, by the nature of the research design or by practical drawbacks. First of all, sometimes different respondents gave different representations of the course of action. Regarding most of the topics, this was not an issue and there was agreement about what actually happened. There are some exceptions in which different interviewees disagreed with each other, for example the reason why Hou Fryslân Mooi left the OAR. Related to this, the goal of this thesis as stated in the research question was to measure influence, but from the interviews the perceived influences according to the interviewee is obtained. To counter both these issues, triangulation is extensively used and statements made in interviews are checked by multiple other people involved in the same case, and if applicable by policy documents. However, a considerable amount of the data this thesis relies on is opinion and interpretation of what has happened, which is inherent to such qualitative and exploratory research.

Furthermore, the number of people interviewed per case for this thesis is rather limited, but due to time constraints could not be enlarged. It is an advantage that for all of the relevant categories of actors in the cases an interview is held. However, as for example participating citizens are not a homogenous group, this perspective would potentially be slightly different when another citizen was selected for the interview. Therefore, in this study relatively little distinction has been made between the enormous diversity among citizens. The question of who citizens are has been discussed in the theoretical chapter and two important citizen groups have been included in the analysis, among others in the Rounds model. However, it would have been better if many more citizen groups would have been included and their vision on the processes would also have been taken account. This would however have taken a lot of extra time and effort, which in the context of this thesis has not been possible. Furthermore, this thesis has compared only three cases. This was necessary to ensure that the cases could still be studied in-depth, but this is too few a number to be able to do a thorough comparative analysis, let alone a statistical comparison.

A final limitation is that this thesis investigated processes that already began several years ago. When such a process would start now, there would in general already be many changes compared to the practices this thesis investigated. As the WindUnie project leader summarised: '*The world has really changed compared to 2012/2013 when we set up this process.'* There is much more awareness now by both initiators and local governments about the importance of a good participation process. It has become more normal to set up a citizen participation process, which by the way does not mean the quality of these processes has also increased. It was not possible to study more recent cases, as the decision-making process in these cases would still be ongoing, so conclusions on the outcome and an evaluation could not have been made. However, this may mean that this thesis is already partially outdated even before it is published.

6.4 Recommendations for further research

As this study is exploratory research, the practical recommendations on how to change or improve the various issues that are encountered in this study are relatively limited. This thesis mainly gives insight into how these processes now take place, and is not about how these issues can be adjusted. These are excellent topics for further research. For example the timely incorporation of citizen participation is such a topic that recurred in many interviews and has been a factor in the analysis. Further research could show what the bottlenecks are for timely involvement of citizens and develop a plan for how this would be possible, also continuing on the thesis work of Noë (2019). Another example is the composition and the methods of a citizen board. This thesis shows that citizen boards have a large influence in shaping citizen participation, but also that there is almost no standardisation at all when it comes to timing, composition, topics or possibilities. What the conditions and ingredients for such a group to function well are, is a fascinating topic for further research, which is also linked to the important issue of the legitimacy of the participation process.

Furthermore, in this research, the legal framework has been treated as a given. In the cases investigated, all three took place in the same period of time, so this was also a given for the actors involved. However, this framework is not static and could change. In fact, the current legal framework has been extensively criticised by multiple actors and a change could be desirable. In many interviews, such topics have emerged, but they were too far from the focus of this thesis to be fully included. One such remark was made by one of the founders of Hou Friesland Mooi, who is also an emeritus professor of administrative law: '*Record the things that are now in the area agreement. Do not shift it to a private law agreement, but record it under public law.'* Studies from a legal perspective towards the possibilities of a for example more standardised approach of citizen participation regarding wind farm development would therefore be of great value. Sanne Akerboom, who in 2018 completed her doctorate on decision-making of government on wind farms, is doing research towards wind energy in the Netherlands from a more legal perspective. This thesis hereby emphasises the importance of this research.

6.5 Policy recommendations

Next to research recommendations, also recommendations for policy-makers in the wind energy sector can be drawn. First of all, the late involvement of citizens in the participation process is mentioned by many people interviewed as one of the main drawbacks of the current practice, first and foremost by participating citizens themselves, but also by government officials and initiators. This factor is also mentioned in literature before as one of the most serious flaws of current practice, most

clearly and specifically about wind farm development in the Netherlands by Noë (2019). So next to more research on it, wind energy developing companies and municipal and provincial policy-makers should be aware to inform and involve the concerned citizens in as early a stage as possible.

Another practical recommendation is that the participating citizens should be sufficiently supported with expertise to be in a position that they can have the influence that was envisioned. This may seem logical, but it has become clear that there is relatively limited transmission of knowledge and experience regarding this topic, especially concerning municipalities. The wind sector has a lot of expertise and also an organisation like the Dutch Association for Residents near Wind Turbines is gaining more and more expertise. When a municipality, however, is newly starting to facilitate the development of a wind farm, including the citizen participation process, municipal officials often have little experience and knowledge about the complexities that come with it. The chair of the NLVOW describes clearly the difference in how citizen participation regarding wind projects takes shape compared to, for example, the construction of a new highway, which is executed by Rijkswaterstaat, an executive body of the central government: '*They have described exactly in which phase of the project what type of people are reacting. That's already sorted out long ago. But that is Rijkswaterstaat, the government itself. They have a lot of experience with these kinds of projects and how to handle them.'* Therefore, not only citizens should be supported with expertise, by the government who is leading the process, but also municipalities should be provided with the knowledge of how to shape such a process, by the central government.

As may be clear from this thesis, the design of the participation process and the position in which citizens are put, is crucial to how the evaluation will be. Therefore, this thesis ends with a quote from M.S. Reed (2008, p. 2417), as a final policy recommendation to the Dutch government:

"Participatory processes may seem very risky, but there is growing evidence that if well designed, these perceived risks may be well worth taking."

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Appendices

Appendix A: list of interviewees

Case Weijerswold:

- Eelco Bots – Project leader at WindUnie
- Jeroen Huizing – Alderman of the municipality of Coevorden
- Johan and Cisca Stoffels – Chair of the citizen platform Weijerswold and chair of the action committee Foundation Tegenwind Weijerswold

Case Spui:

- Jan Hiemstra – Partner of YARD Energy
- Fon ten Thij – Mediator of the Sounding Board Group
- Mark Speldenbrink – Spokesman of neighbourhood association Filopopers
- Willemien Croes – Project leader at the province of South Holland

Case Nij Hiddum-Houw:

- Albert Koers – Founder of Foundation Hou Fryslân Mooi
- Erik van Norren – Community manager, NUON
- Gerrit Valk – Independent chair of the Community Advisory Board
- Harm-Jan Bouwers – Project leader of the province of Friesland

All cases:

- Rob Rietveld – Chairman of the Dutch Association for Residents near Wind Turbines (in Dutch: NLVOW)

Appendix B: interview protocol

This interview protocol is in Dutch, as the interviews were conducted in Dutch. A semi-structured interview method is used. Nonetheless, for every interview, a case-specific protocol is made, of which most questions were the same. However, some case-specific or even interviewee-specific questions were added, for example on the process of Fryslân foar de Wyn.

Eigen betrokkenheid

1. Wat was het eerste moment waarop u betrokken raakte?
2. Hoe ziet u het proces daarvoor?
3. Wat was het doel van uw betrokkenheid?
4. Is uw doel gedurende het proces veranderd?
5. Wat waren belangrijke momenten? / Wanneer werden beslissingen genomen?
6. Heeft u op andere wijze geprobeerd het proces te beïnvloeden?
7. Wanneer werd met wie contact gezocht / samengewerkt? (En hielp dat?)

Locatie

8. Wanneer was de locatie bij u bekend?
9. Hoe is de locatiekeuze tot stand gekomen?
10. Is de locatie gedurende het proces aangepast?
11. Hoe is het aantal windmolens tot stand gekomen?

Ontwerp

12. Is de hoogte van de windmolens aangepast?
13. Zijn er technische verandering doorgevoerd?
    - Geluidsreductie (uilenveer, demper)
    - Licht (lampjes, knippering, afscherming)
    - Draaiprogramma (slagschaduw, tijdslimieten)
    - Uiterlijk (kleur, schittering)
14. Hoe zijn de veranderingen tot stand gekomen?
15. Hoe kwam de bewonersvergoeding tot stand?

Proces / rol overheid

16. Hoe verliep de coördinatie van de omgevingsraad?
17. Hoe lagen de verhoudingen in de omgevingsraad?
18. Wie nam de beslissingen?
19. Hoe kwamen veranderingen in de omgevingsraad tot stand?
20. In hoeverre had u / hadden de bewoners invloed?
21. Hoe merkte u die invloed?
22. Verliep het proces volgens plan?
23. Wat was de rol van de gemeente?
24. Wat zou u met de kennis van nu anders doen?
25. Hoe waardeert u het besluitvormingsproces?
26. Hoe waren de reacties op uw inspanningen?