

The fine art of boundary spanning –making space for water in the East Netherlands

Jeroen Warner (corresponding author), Kris Lulofs & Hans Bressers
CSTM Twente University
j.warner@utwente.nl

The desire to comply with the European Water Framework Directive, which seeks to promote Integrated Water Management objectives, has led regional water management boards in the Netherlands to define a large number of projects that in turn make huge demands on the financial and administrative capacity of water managers. Besides the scarcity of space and the need for space for water challenges makes multi function solutions inevitable. Therefore the wat managers need to combine multiple fields of interest and participation to complete each project, such as agricultural interests, regional economic development, natural values, water safety and water quality issues. To achieve these goals, water managers will often need to negotiate and strike alliances with actors in other policy areas such as spatial planning and local and regional economic development.

The concept of Integrated Water (Resource) Management has been criticized, among others, for its vagueness and ultimate impossibility in practice. 'Full' IWRM at basin level is a mirage, (Biswas 2004, Molle 2008). 'Lighter' forms of IWRM however can be achieved that stop short of full integration, incorporation and merger and respect political and institutional realities, but cross boundaries that were previously uncrossed (Moriarty, Butterworth and Batchelor, 2004). The present article suggests that selective, pragmatic boundary crossing strategies at project level enable forms of interorganisational coordination and harmonization that help achieve goals outside the reach of individual organisations.

Integrating water policy at the minimum requires a degree of 'boundary spanning'. Bressers and Lulofs (2010) define boundary spanning as 'adaptive governance activities of water managers linking their sector, scales, and time frames to previously independent other *sectors, scales* and *time frames*.' 'Spanning' in this context refers to space, breadth and timing/duration. The activities cover both content and social capital.

The cases below, provided by way of illustration, show that it is preferable to apply boundary spanning early rather than late, and that opponents are also aware of this option.

They discuss two recent innovative Dutch water projects initiated by water boards: a retention basin project on a tributary of the (transboundary) river Vecht and the planning of a new channel, the Breakthrough; Both are non-main river flows located in the east of the Netherlands.

It analyses strategies pursued by 'administrative couplers' and integrates the analysis with that of a focus group workshop held with Dutch 'administrative couplers' working in Dutch regional water management boards. This workshop inventoried the ways 'couplers' strategize to achieve their long-term goals, while maintaining constructive long-term relations in a relatively "tightly coupled" water policy network.

These experiences reveal a prevalence for strategies that both conserve positive working relations and a value-based but hard-nosed business orientation.

In the Dutch context, river basin management only makes sense for smaller rivers. All main rivers, for which the national department is responsible, are transboundary. Often the polder rather than the river is the sensible management unit.

While generally enthusiastic about European standards of water quality and safety, Dutch water managers can rarely manage the water alone to reach those objectives. They have to engage actors at higher, equal and lower scales, as well as all social domains – private, public and civil society. They rely on subtle forms of network management with actors they are horizontally, vertically or diagonally connected with (see Fig.) to achieve ambitious goals.

Water touches a myriad of partly interdependent social functions, and the different values of water are increasingly recognised. Water can be a threat and a nuisance, but also a source of enjoyment, beauty and economic gain. The different values of water have brought new stakeholders to the arena, increasing the complexity of regional water management. While especially after the 1953 sea flood, which claimed some 1800 lives in the Netherlands alone, water was seen as the enemy, the positive social, economic and ecological values of water are increasingly emphasized.

Innovative change requires political entrepreneurship as well. The 1990s saw a rediscovery of the positive aspects of rivers in Western Europe. Making space for cleaning up and restoring the river has proved a 'magic formula' combining many social desirables – quality, quantity, tourism, urban regeneration, economic growth – into multifunctional packages. Making space for the river is often coupled with 'nature development' projects, which seeks to recreate natural dynamics in the floodplain landscape (e.g. Nienhuis and Leuven 2001).

The 'MacSharry' reforms of the European Common Agricultural Policy (1991) instigated a move from production to socio-environmental protection, and the set-aside of agricultural lands. This created space for rivers, which could help achieve a higher level of safety combined with other desirables. The agricultural sector however would not take it lying down.

Integrating these multiple values have triggered innovative approaches requiring new combinations of scales, actors, perspectives, strategies and resources (Bressers & Kuks 2004). Crossing boundaries to create a regime where there is no central body. In Dutch water practice, such change cannot easily be imposed in a top-down manner but relies on bottom-up initiative to achieve. However from this bottom up perspective, often sector boundaries can only be crossed when with regard to certain aspects scale boundaries and/or time boundaries are crossed.

The article first introduces the concepts of 'administrative coupling' and 'boundary spanning' (deploying adaptive activities of water managers that encounter complex water challenges by linking their sector, scales, and time frames to previously independent other sectors, scales and time frames).

IWRM: Spanning which boundaries?

In governing people three types of instrumental styles can be mixed and matched: coercion-regulation, material incentives and communicative governance. As water managers, water boards dispose of some, if weak, coercive instruments (hard power) to force others to comply with their policies, such as expropriation. Coercion, such as forced expropriation, is only practiced in Dutch water management if all else fails. The water board is an obligatory passage point for building applications, and a negative water board advice is not easily ignored. However, in a tightly coupled policy network where people meet each other in different policy arenas, it is seldom advisable to rub the other actors the wrong way. The alternative (litigation) is not attractive, and some have explicitly renounced coercive instruments.

Financial incentives, the second instrument, may be available, but despite their taxing capacity the means of water boards to enter into big projects are limited. 'Carrots' therefore need to be found outside the water board's domain. This requires cooperation with others to qualify for regional, national and European subsidies.

We found that the water boards recognise they are well advised to find strategies that target both the *goals* and the *relationship* with other actors in their network. This requires both empathy (what do others want?) and acumen to locate policy opportunities. The power of communication and persuasion features heavily in this approach. This incited actors to look across boundaries to explore inroads for persuasion and material incentives.

The emphasis on the *constructed* nature of boundaries highlights their changeability. Yet, while integration suggests a constant transfer of functions and authority (Mitrany), leading to the disappearance of boundaries between actors and topics, boundaries have important social functions. A boundary enables and constrains, in so doing structuring the world around us. Boundaries, the inter-subjective constructed demarcations between different social domains establish 'distinctions and differences between and within active systems that are created and agreed on by groups and individual actors over a long period of time while they are involved in those activities. As traces of past activities boundaries trigger learning and development' (Kerosuo 2006). Some boundaries are deemed essential to preserving an absolute: a sense of identity or security. When such boundaries are enshrined in law or institutions, they are harder to negotiate and modify. In the Dutch water sector, for example, different alternatives for river management can be proposed but the framework of river safety norms is non-negotiable. Certainly not in the context that recently it is decided that in principle the accepted risk along large rivers will become ten times more ambitious (Commissie Veerman...).

Boundaries may be highly institutionalized and sacralised - the division between legislative, executive and legislative power (Montesquieu's Trias politica) or the boundaries to national sovereignty. A project at the interface of multiple domains on the other hand can be a 'boundary object' that calls existing boundaries into question. 'Boundary objects are an entity shared by several different communities but viewed or used differently by each of them (Star and Griesemer 1989). 'Boundary objects' such as transboundary infrastructure or policy plans can incite actors to reconsider their boundaries - a re-evaluation of one's boundary judgment. The boundaries at issue result from decisions or judgments, made by a decision-maker, analyst, scientist or practitioner. Boundary judgments concern issues such as: what is your task, your domain? Currently institutional adaptivity to climate change is in vogue but all kinds of changes are making demands on institutions that exceed their boundaries and capacities. Due to the resulting complexity and dynamics of decision-making, more people in organisations find themselves at the interface between inside and

outside now and then. 'Boundary spanners' are subsystems at the outskirts of an organization that exchange information with the organizational environment to engage with these bigger issues. Boundary spanning looks across disciplinary, institutional, geographic boundaries. Investing in personal networks to hear what is going on in another organisation in the network (say a regulating agency developing new policies, an active NGO, a slow-moving local authority) may include regular visits, and even hiring someone who also works part time in an important network partner, or who has worked there, and can bring in a wealth of knowledge about that organization.

Table 1: Boundaries can be crossed, blurred or dismantled (Bressers and Lulofs 2010)

Type	Example of boundary	Crossing boundaries
Enclosing boundaries	river embankments	Building in floodplain; moveable dikes
Intermediate boundaries	different systems, disciplines	interdisciplinary approach; Boundaries of policy fields, between scientific disciplines: water management, spatial planning, science and practice, economy and sociology
Sense-making boundaries	ideas or concepts through which meaning is given for actions in the social systems	Reframing river planning problem as 'spatial quality'
Temporal boundaries	Flood response (Reactive)	Parallel (simultaneous) and 'sequential' coupling. Boundaries of phase in the safety chain. Profiling, Backcasting
Geographic boundaries	River sections, polders	Integrated Catchment Management

(Bressers and Lulofs 2010)

Changing boundaries between stakeholders in water management and changing political boundaries in flood risk management have resulted in the adaptive distribution of responsibilities between the national, regional and local authorities and concerned citizens (Roth, Warner & Winnubst 2006). The traditional division of labour between water authorities working behind the dikes and the Spatial Planning Department working outside the dikes is no longer valid. This requires the Public Works Department to learn new negotiation skills: to be a tough negotiator with other stakeholders with claims to space, rather than the previous patronizing/authoritarian stance (interview RIKZ 2006). Moreover, although risk preparedness is still underdeveloped in Dutch flood planning, Dutch flood policy is moving in the direction of covering all phases of the safety chain (proaction, prevention, preparedness, response and aftercare) (Ten Brinke 2005) in recognition of the residual risk of a river or sea flood occurring. This requires the Public Works Department to work with other departments, lower-level authorities and private and civic actors. The spread of public consultation and participation in the Netherlands also leads to a widening of the knowledge base and perceptions taken into account. Crossing *intermediate boundaries* implies 'boundary work' between science and policy and integrating local knowledge into the knowledge base underpinning decisions through the instatement of focus groups or participatory platforms (*klankbordgroep*).

The resulting extension and overlap of playing fields for water agencies requires them to devise cross-boundary strategies. Our interviews suggest boundary spanners invest in personal networks to hear what is going on in another organisation in the network (say a regulating agency developing new policies, an active NGO, a slow-moving local authority) may include regular visits, and even hiring someone who also works part time in an important network partner, or who has worked there, and can bring in a wealth of knowledge about that organization. Often boundary spanners express that they dominantly focus upon programs rather than projects, as the former often incorporate a more substantial time horizon and subsequently connect to projects.

A finding from our interviews is that the boundary spanning also needs to be done inside one's organisation, not only externally. While policy offers take bold initiatives, the Board of Directors may be more concerned with the dilution of the integrity of the organisation's mission or opposed to financial risk-taking. The spanner's operational mandate needs to be negotiated and well-defined internally.

In addition to boundaries of space and organization, we observe a crossing of time boundaries: the complexity, diversity and dynamics characterising such situations mean that synoptic top-down planning becomes problematic (Kooiman 1993, 2000). Problem definitions can be multiple and contradictory and change over time while opportunities for addressing the situation are often found 'as you go'. The policy process is not believed to manifest itself as a series of consecutive plans: preparation, decision, implementation and evaluation interlinked by feedback loops. Rather, the dominant pattern can best be characterised by unpredictable and dynamic rounds of decisions, and phases are nested and interlinked (Teisman 1992).

While policy cycles assume a sequence of policy formulation, decision-making and implementation, in reality boundary spanners indicate they are involved in many parallel and iterative processes. Playing the field means playing multiple chessboards. One's own constituency, board of governors need to be kept in the loop and give a mandate to operate in sometimes risky ventures. At the same time the organization may be playing in multiple arenas outside the organization – in the water arena, but also spatial planning and environmental conservation. The other players are sometimes the same people while the stage of the policy game may be different.

Planning and implementation, then, are not necessarily sequential, the policy process becomes jumpy rather than linear, the network and topics and resources involved are like streams. Rather than funneling the project from wide to narrow in terms of range of actors and range of alternatives, there sometimes is a widening, at other times a narrowing of those ranges. Playing creatively with time, space and actors, with problems and solutions may mean a temporary expansion which of course takes time and energy. This pragmatic, flexible form of 'muddling through' (Lindblom 1959) invites analyses drawing inspiration from the work of March & Olsen (windows of opportunity (Kingdon 1984) and 'garbage can theory' coupling streams of solutions and problems (March & Olsen 1979).

Reversing the normal order of project stages, anticipating future development, waiting for others, or what was termed 'strategic arguing on minor issues' (and sometimes focus on nonessential issues to buy time., pers. comm. 2009.). Adaptive time management also includes exploiting windows of opportunity such as a (physical or policy) crisis (Kingdon 1984), the handling of which releases resources and goodwill. An example is the high water event of 1993, which showed how unwise it was not to have an evacuation plan. The Rivierenland water board was the

leader in bringing about an evacuation which then was tested at the next high water event in 1995. The wisdom of that evacuation has been disputed but the water board claimed it was worth trying the evacuation plan.

Some risks

Boundary spanning implies risk taking. Apart from financial and procedural risk, there is the risk of opposition from other actors in the arena refusing to play along with the boundary spanner. How attached actors are to their boundaries is a function of the motivation, cognition, resources (Contextual Interaction Theory, as described in Bressers and Lulofs 2010). Early involvement of other actors helps to involve internal and external actors in one's own frame. On the basis of interviews, workshops with people within Dutch water board, we could identify a number of strategies employed by key players in Dutch water boards. They identified themselves or were identified by others as 'boundary spanners'. It appears from the interviews that 'boundary spanners' rarely start with a comprehensive plan. They invest in process: calling and visiting their 'accounts' regularly without direct occasion, to check 'what's up'. They do not carry a blueprint in their pocket, but respond adaptively, on the lookout for seizing opportunities and preventing or removing constraints.

Influencing and communicating with others brings, predictability of expectations therefore lengthening the 'shadow of the future' in a complex and/or unstable environment.

Obviously, early contact means one is also exposed to other actors' frames. A risk of too much flexibility in bargaining is that one's constituency suddenly reasserts the boundaries.

Another risk to boundary spanners is that the network arrangement is superseded by hierarchy when the projects or bargaining processes are elevated to a national security and sovereignty issue. The national water authority can decide to take over in a top-down decision mode. Opponents may successfully build counter alliances seeking to re-establish previous boundaries, invoking national or European rules, such as anti-trust legislation, environmental (EIA) and participatory procedures, to stymie the change process.

Finally, opening up the process to others runs the risk that others have plenty of time and information to devise a strategy of obstruction or co-optation. We can expect others to be equally adept at boundary spanning and to be capable of beating the spanners at their own game. As we shall see in the following case studies, this scenario is far from imaginary. It should be noted that boundary flexibility in linkage and framing can be used as a strategy to facilitate solutions, but also to complicate things (linkage politics). The below cases, described

in more detail in two chapters by Bressers, Hanegraaff and Lulofs in the forthcoming book by Bressers and Lulofs (2010) may illustrate and, to a degree, complicate these issues.

Case Study 1 : the Breakthrough channel¹

In 1992 the Regge en Dinkel water management board, a regional water authority, published a strategic plan announcing the construction of a new channel, 13km long and 25m wide, to separate rural from urban water. Currently clean countryside water is mixed with polluted water in the urban system in a densely populated region. The new stream was planned in an area already designated as an ecological corridor. A prefeasibility study led to an initial plan presented in 1997. This set in motion multiple 'games of chess'.

First off the block, the Provincial authorities would cooperate on condition that the plan would conform with its Nature and Countryside Policy Plan. As a consequence the river would have to be widened by 25m of greensward on both banks in rural areas, and a further environmental reservation of up to 75m where the stream bordered on urban functions and infrastructure. Thus the new channel became dual-purpose. The Province also wanted to include the Breakthrough Brook in an ongoing land consolidation project so that it could use its legal powers and funds to help construct the channel. Under the Consolidation Act this type of fund allocation was not allowed, but the provincial authorities knew that the Agriculture Ministry was about to relax this. This meant waiting until the Act had been passed in Parliament, which would take time. One village however opposed this ecological connectivity, as the rules for nature reserves would impede agriculture operation, and were also against the delay resulting from the decision to wait until the amendment of the bill.

The problem definition took some further negotiating. One village wanted drought management included, while three towns were toying with the development of a business park, which would compete for space with the channel and greensward. The province wanted the stream as a buffer zone between the business park and urban space. An external consultancy report (*Rural water running through the urban belt*) proposed a route that followed existing streams where possible.

As a result a number of linkages were established to enable a boundary-spanning project within the immediate policy network¹, but external opposition was mounting. This required crossing privately owned agricultural land, eliciting resistance from the regional Farmers' Union. They lobbied councillors of Wierden municipality, where the new stream was to begin. While the land consolidation plan ultimately provided clarity about the first stretch of the brook's route, the next stretch bordering on the prospective Regional Business Park which was still beset with uncertainty. When the legally required EIA led to the publication of the initial memorandum, landowners realised they were sitting on 'hot land'. Land prices skyrocketed. In the Netherlands, an Environmental Impact Assessment can take many years. To prevent this happening, the provincial authorities, who stood to benefit from both the Breakthrough and regional business centre, pragmatically cut the EIA procedure in two – a location impact statement, open to public consultation, and the actual detailed planning. At this stage the provincial authorities linked the project to another function a buffer zone for the business park separating it from residential and other zoning. This meant the buffer could even be as wide as 175m along the tentative boundary of the business park. The local widening of the river and its banks tied in well with a campaign conducted by the national government in response to recent flood events, arguing that the rivers need space.

As a result of heavy rainfall, which the existing water system could not handle, flooding rather than improving water quality became core to the Breakthrough rationale. Recreational values also found their way into the objectives. The new functions thus meant a considerable change of objective with respect to 1998.

In 2000 the project leader found that new forms of water management were eligible for European subvention under the European regional programme, Interreg. This however required speedy action: subvention could only be realised after concrete work had been done. It would mean a vast injection if all turned out well, but immense costs in the worst case. Funding overtook legal and practical processes the water authority was pursuing. including a public tendering process that itself depended on legal procedures. The water authority at least had to secure title to the land needed for the Breakthrough. Additional funds were secured from national flood prevention and storage programme.

¹ The concept of policy networks refers to the fact that 'policy making and implementation involves a large number and wide variety of public and private actors from the different levels and functional areas of government and society' (Hanf and O'Toole 1992: 169).

The perceived need to split project leadership into a financial coordinator and a project coordinator brought a fortuitous change of project leadership. The new executive, who came from the Land Consolidation service, coincidentally had been involved in the very first project sketches as a student from Wageningen university. This helped the integration of provincial land consolidation and inter-municipality channel planning.

The water authority successfully requested Wierden local authority to depart from its zoning plan to enable the channel. The departure required a public hearing which revealed a desire for greater public involvement. The hearing also brought proposals for modifications which were incorporated by the water authority.

A public hearing revealed a desire for public involvement and led to some changes in the project plan. The water authority promised the town of Wierden that all possible planning blight would be compensated at the water authority's expense. This was not yet legal, but would be possible as inside information revealed that the central government was going to scrap the right to compensation for planning blight.

The media amplified resident discontent about the second section (business park area). Farmers proposed an alternative that reduced the greensward to the original 25m, which the farmers could accept in the interests of stormwater management. They believed in rainwater storage, not in nature reserves. They pragmatically cooperated with a nature conservation group to substitute the area for land elsewhere, owned by that conservation group. They assumed the ecological corridor function had only been put in place to gain EU funding. The farmers' union, residents and one political party appreciated the alternative and some provincial council members wanted to study this alternative plan before giving planning permission for the changes in the municipal zoning plan. At this time, the first stretch was already being dug. A compromise was reached where the water authority accepted a deal where agricultural use would be allowed for seven years, but the area would ultimately become a natural reserve. This bought time for coming to an agreement with landowners. By then some residents felt the buffer would protect them from an even more threatening development, the regional business park and supported the deal.

A practical obstacle at the implementation stage was that planning permission was needed from the Ministry of Public Works, a time-consuming procedure. The Public Works department however proved very helpful in overcoming the practical challenge of how to make the stream cross a motorway and a railway. The Ministry

found funding for an ecological underpass and was prepared to spend it on the Breakthrough. Finally, implementation was coordinated with the municipality of Almelo, to enable connecting gas and electricity utilities to a new housing estate there. The utilities would do their work first, after which the Breakthrough project was to excavate the ground which then could be used for the housing development.

A lot of boundary spanning and coordination between sectors and functional planning clearly went on, which at times yielded unexpected intelligence and opportunities. However the farmers' outreach to the nature conservationists revealed that opponents know how to span boundaries too.

The North and South Meene project

The river Vecht originates in Germany and empties in the Lake IJssel in Central Netherlands. The river became an important boundary object in an ongoing integrated decision-making process on the designation of the 400ha North and South Meene wetland area as a Site of Special Scenic Interest by enhancing natural values. Substantial European subsidies became available (IRMA programme) plus matching funds from the Ministry of Environment. The process involved municipal, provincial and water authorities plus farmers to ensure a solid support base, thus successfully crossing boundaries. The provincial authorities however did not want to limit natural values to fallow plots, and kept a rather formal attitude. As a result agriculture was decoupled from nature development goals, and the water storage or retention area was not part of the spatial planning documents of the province.

This proved an important role when in 1998 heavy rainfall led to safety concerns in four villages along the river IJssel. Following a classified security scenario for the region the decision was taken to prepare the area for evacuation and cut the dikes for controlled flooding. The cuts were only cancelled at the last minute, but evacuation was already in place. At a public meeting organized by the farmers' union, residents demanded this would not happen again, which the water authority promised. The area was now going to be a safe retention area, in an early example of multifunctional arrangement to make space for the river. The detention area would reduce the downstream flood peak by 13 cm.

The retention area proposed by the water authority triggered complaints from residents that the proposed dikes were planned too close around their houses. Also, farmers felt they had fallen victim to

other interests downstream, and were presented with *faits accomplis*.'

Instead of diking residential areas, the water board came up with the alternative of placing buildings and roads on small mounds. Meanwhile the farmer committee member in a local commission, that should draw a plan for revitalizing the area in which the planned retention area should be embedded, was accused of mixing personal and professional interests. In response the farmers union responded by reaching out more to the other resident stakeholder, and came to act as a go-between (broker) between residents and authorities. In this role they reached an agreement with the water board that made explicit the constraints and requirements for turning the area in an official retention area. European funds however needed to be spent in time less they would be repossessed. Time pressure gave residents of the Meene an advantage in land acquisition negotiations. The provincial authority was rather inflexible with regard to not legally backing land acquisition for the project in the context of not having integrated the plans in the spatial planning documents of the province. A strange situation since the province did integrate the plans in the water management plan of the province. In 2000, quite late in the day, the Municipal authority, purporting to act on behalf of the area's residents, claimed it needed to change the municipal zoning plan and threatened to halt all activity. This also connected to the issue who has to compensate the farmers for damage incurred by the project (*planschade*), and how much.. The provincial authority, as the superior administrative layer, could have stepped in but refused to do so. The water authority, realizing its miscalculation and the impossibility to go back on promises made after the flood, had no alternative but to comply. Planning permission was issued just months before the IRMA deadline.

Due to time pressure, implementation had to start without the formal planning being finalized. Expropriation was not an option, and inhabitants held a race to the top for the best compensation rates. One farmer who was previously opposed to the project now decided to terminate his operation and was prepared to offer up land for the project, breaking the impasse and enabling intersectoral 'recoupling' to nature goals. But when almost all farmers had reached an agreement with the water board, a small group were still prepared to block everything, forcing the Farmers' Union to act as a broker. The Union realized that residents and land owners would all be negatively affected if individuals succeeded in blocking realization through appealing to administrative courts. The water board might call the whole plan off. Due to the time pressure building started in very inclement weather, and everyone was

agreed it was sheer madness. Still the works were built in four years, and compare favourably with other projects.

In this case study, residents and farmers took centre stage. Their disenchantment with security-mode decision-making (Warner 2008) caused distrust *vis-à-vis* the water authority. They demanded flood measures, but as the memory of the flood faded, the downside of the proposed intervention became apparent and controversial. They became aware of, and used, their obstructive power.

The integrated policy started well with a broad set of actors and a project seeking to connect agricultural, landscape, recreational, infrastructural and natural values.

The flood provided a window of opportunity and linkage between security and natural values. Sectoral linkage however was a mixed success and only became feasible thanks to high compensation deals and good offices on the part of the Farmers' Union..

Territorial links could have made with the upstream Germans and other towns, in a comprehensive basin plan. The link with Europe provided money but the time constraint attached felt like a guillotine. The province stepped back, leaving the water authority to fend for itself. Several stakeholders pursued only their self-interest. Early, effective coupling with the municipality including discussion on substantive issues, not just focusing on social capacity could have prevented later damage.

Reflection

In today's environmental policy, it would be hard to conceive decisions that do not involve some kind of boundary spanning. In the Netherlands space is at a premium, virtually every square foot has been planned and allocated, so that a project initiator easily steps on other actors' toes. However the degree and timing of boundary spanning can make a crucial difference. The attitude towards timing may be termed proactive and reactive.

The Regge and Dinkel water administration, realising the new channel would be an uphill battle, thought proactively and when running into problems, mostly found creative ways out – indeed, breakthroughs. The Velt en Vecht water authority showed foresight in devising a multifunctional, transsectoral solution, but due to time constraints invested less in relations with other stakeholders. Spanning connections were only made with the board's back against the wall. To qualify for European subsidy, both water boards had to accept 'being coupled' by the European Union, whose project funding required transsectoral links. As the European deadline drew

ever nearer, the water board was controlled by the clock rather than playing for time, taking away the option of shifting gears.

This is not the only form of reactive spanning. Unlike Regge en Dinkel, Velt en Vecht were confronted by an uncooperative local government and provincial authority, which lost precious time. Regge and Dinkel water board, while being more proactive, perhaps had also failed to not anticipate well enough that the opposition in the policy arena showed similar creativity by linking with the conservation organizations. In such instances, boundary spanning invited counter-spanning, so that the policy arena starts to look a lot like a standoff between two pragmatic advocacy coalitions (Sabatier 1988) across sectors, established because there is a common adversary. What really makes the difference between pro-active and reactive boundary spanning is that pro-active boundary spanning enables spanning over sector boundaries by strategies that are based on spanning scale and/or time boundaries, just because there is little fixed as yet and time pressure is not yet felt.

Another difference between the cases is the amount of discursive flexibility (and policy drift) that coupling induces. The plans to make a channel were sufficiently unspecific to allow the Breakthrough project to be changed considerably without looking foolish. In the Meene case on the other hand the water authority had painted itself into a corner by promising controlled flooding would never happen again and subsequently presenting blueprints. It is true that a security frame ('securitisation' after Buzan *et al.* 1998) can revive moribund planning processes (see also the Maaswerken project, Van de Grijp and Warner 2001, Warner 2010). But by placing an undebatable boundary, drawing a line in the sand, the Meene had lost much of its flexibility as a "boundary object" (Turnhout and Leroy, 2004).

The gold rush of opportunity can also incite unstoppable dynamics that can blind actors to downsides and alternatives bringing another sort of closure ('opportunitisation', Warner 2004). The attempted integrated approach for both projects got a boost from spanning into the safety and European domain, but both linkages also turned out to be constraining and to incite anxiety, confusion and opportunism. This could easily shift the power balance against the initiating water management board.

These brief case descriptions thus indicate the interest, but also teach some realism with regard to boundary spanning. Boundary spanning strategies conserve positive working relations and a value-based but hard-nosed business orientation. Policy integrators

themselves (the provincial authorities in the Vecht case) may step back and decouple (un-span) rather than span domains.

Table 2: Boundary spanning applied to the Breakthrough and North and South Meene projects (after Bressers and Lulofs 2010)

	<u>Breakthrough</u>		<u>N and S Meene</u>	
<u>Type of spanning</u>	<i>Spanning by water board</i>	<i>Spanning by others</i>	<i>Spanning by water board</i>	<i>Spanning by others</i>
Enclosing boundaries	Planning beyond river banks: Widening greensward	Opposition alternative (smaller greensward)	Mounds in detention areas	
Intermediate boundaries	Combining safety, quality, environmental and land consolidation functions. Drought and flood management added later on			Combining safety and other functions; <i>decoupling</i> individual negotiations from overall planning
Sense-making boundaries	Making space for water and natural values. The 'breakthrough' frame itself		Safety through detention and mounds	
Temporal boundaries	Implementations started before all pland acquisition issues resolved	EU Time pressure	Implementation started before all land was acquired	EU Time pressure, municipal replanning delays project
Geographic boundaries	Connecting West and East Twente, linking up with Almelo new development		Detention to lower peak level downstream	

References

- Bressers, J. and S. M. Kuks. Eds. 2004. *Integrated governance and water basin management: Conditions for regime change towards sustainability*. Dordrecht-Boston-London: Kluwer.
- Bressers, J. and K. Lulofs. 2010. Governance and complexity in water management. Creating cooperation through boundary spanning
- Brink, M. van den & S. Meijerink. 2006. Implementing policy innovations Resource dependence, struggle for discursive hegemony and institutional inertia in the Dutch river policy domain, GaP working paper series. Nijmegen: Radboud University.
- Buzan, B., O. Waever and J. de Wilde. 1998. *Security. A New Analytical Framework*. London
- Grundig, F. and H. Ward. 2008. Hegemonic Leadership or Leadership Competition?: Beyond Hegemonic Stability Theory. Paper presented at the 49th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association San Francisco, March 26.
- Finocchiaro, M. A. 1999- *Beyond Right and Left: Democratic Elitism in Mosca and Gramsci*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Grijp, N.M. van der, and J. Warner. 2001. Planning and decision-making related to the Maaswerken project. In: A.A. Olsthoorn and Tol, R.S.J. Eds., *Floods, flood management and climate change in the Netherlands* (IVM report, R-01/04). Institute for Environmental Studies, Amsterdam, 67-88
- Gupta, J., K. Termeer, J. Klostermann, S. Meijerink, M. van den Brink, P. Jong, and S. Nooteboom, *Institutions For Climate Change: A Method To Assess the Inherent Characteristics of Institutions to Enable the Adaptive Capacity of Society*.
- Hanf, K. & O'Toole, L. 1992). Revisiting old friends: networks, implementation structures and the management of inter-organizational relations. In: *European Journal of Political Research* 21: 163-180.
- Kerosuo, H. 2006. *Boundaries in Action. An Activity-theoretical Study of Development, Learning and Change in Health Care for Patients with Multiple and Chronic Illnesses*
<https://oa.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/3666/boundari.pdf?sequence=1>
- Kingdon, J.W. 1984. *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. HarperCollins, New York.
- Kingdon, J.W. 1993. How Do Issues Get on Public Policy Agendas?. In: W. J. Wilson (ed.). *Sociology and the Public Policy Agenda*. London, Sage, pp. 40-50.
- Lindblom, Charles. 1959 The Science of Muddling Through. *Public Administration Review*, 19, 79-88.
<http://www.emerginghealthleaders.ca/resources/Lindblom-Muddling.pdf>
- March, J.G. and J.P. Olsen. 1979. *Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations*. 2nd edition, Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.
- Moriarty, P., Butterworth, J. and Bathelor, C. (2004). *Integrated Water Resources Management and the water supply and sanitation sub-sector. A Thematic Overview Paper*. Delft: IRC.
- Nienhuis, P.H. and R.S.E.W. Leuven. 2001. River restoration and flood protection: controversy or synergism. *Hydrobiologia* 444: 85-99.

- Ohlsson, Leif (1998) Water and Social Resource Scarcity. An issue paper commissioned by the. FAO AGLW (Rome).
- Sabatier, P., 1988. An advocacy coalition framework of policy change and the role of policy oriented learning therein. *Policy Sciences*, 22:129-168.
- Soeterbroek, F. 2000, *Onderhandelen. De kunst van Schakelen en verbinden*, Kluwer.
- Star, S.L. and Griesemer, J.R. (1989). Institutional Ecology, 'Translations' and Boundary Objects: Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907-39. *Social Studies of Science*, 19, 387-420.
- Teisman, G. 1992. *Complexe besluitvorming - Een pluricentrisch perspectief op besluitvorming over ruimtelijke investeringen*, Den Haag..
- Turnhout, E. and P. Leroy. 2004. Participeren in onzekerheid. Literatuuronderzoek naar het inzetten van participatie in wetenschappelijke beleidsadviesing. RIVM Rapport 550002008/2004
- Warner, J.F. 2010. *The politics of Flood Planning*. London: IB Tauris.
- Westley, F., 2002. The Devil in the Dynamics: Adaptive Management on the Front Line. In Gunderson, Lance H and C S Holling, *Panarchy: Understanding transformations in human and natural systems*, Island Press (2002) pp...., Ch. 13
- Zweekhorst, P.A.M. (2001) *Communicatiemanagers: eerder Aaron dan His Master's Voice*) In Zweekhorst *Communicatiemagnagers. Visies van topmanagers*. Amsterdam- Boom. 109

ⁱ (based on product no. 3 – Hanegraaf, Lulofs, Bressers):