

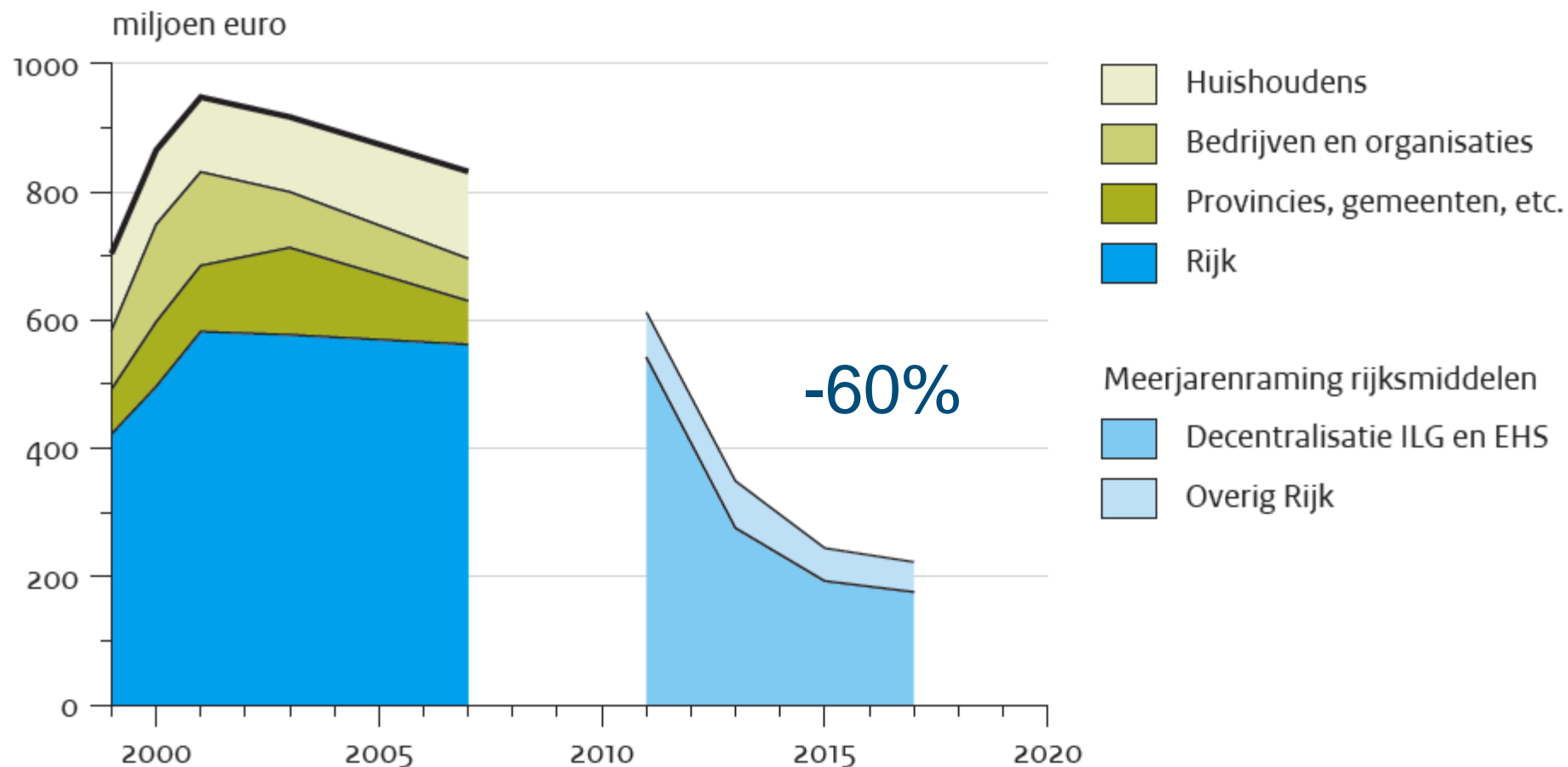
# Biodiversity: an 'endangered concept' in Dutch nature policy

*Bas Arts*



Figuur 1

## Nationale uitgaven natuur- en landschapsbeheer
















Bron: CBS (2000-2007); EL&I (2011-2017)

# Measures

1. 60% budget cut
2. Decentralization to provinces
3. Management tasks to private sector
4. Reassessment Dutch ecological network (EHS)
5. Reassessment implementation N2000

# Backgrounds

- New cabinet (liberals, Christian-democrats, populists)

Doelen	nuut beleid <sup>1</sup>	Toelichting	Verwijzing <sup>2</sup>
<b>BIODIVERSITEIT</b>			<b>H5, 6</b>
Kwaliteit Natuur		Verkorten rode lijsten. Sturen op kwaliteitsverbetering via aankoop en milieuverbetering	Webdocs 0027, 1003 en 1015
Oppervlakte nieuwe EHS		Met huidige budgetten wordt doel niet gehaald. Perspectieven in minder vrijwilligheid en gericht op samenhang aankopen	Webdocs 1004 en 2045
Stop achteruitgang biodiversiteit 2010		Kwetsbare soorten en ecosystemen gaan achteruit. Perspectieven liggen in voortzetting EHS en innovatieve combinaties tussen gebruiksectoren en biodiversiteit	Webdoc 1001
Ruimtelijke samenhang		Trend onvoldoende om doel te halen	Webdoc 2046
Milieudruk op natuur		Afname milieudruk stagneert	Webdoc 1002, 0030 en 0058
Duurzame landbouw		Doelen niet concreet geformuleerd	Webdoc 1009
Duurzame visserij		Grootste deel vispopulaties niet duurzaam bevist	Webdoc 1011
<b>LANDSCHAP</b>			<b>H5</b>
Waardering landschap		Waardering neemt licht toe maar onvoldoende om doel te halen; herformulering beleid	Webdoc 2040
Natuurlijke en culturele kernkwaliteiten		Doelen SMART maken	Webdoc 2050
Bundeling intensieve landbouw 2006-2020		Op basis trend	Webdocs 2042, 2043 en 2044
Kernkwaliteiten nationale landschappen		Regels voor gemeenten nog onduidelijk	Webdoc 2051
Migratiesaldo nationale landschappen		Bijstellen om woningbouw te sturen	Webdoc 2037
Bouwen in Rijksbufferzones		Aandacht voor handhaving continueren	Webdoc 2031

# Backgrounds

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- (Perceived) lack of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

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- (Perceived) lack of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy
- Various views on 'nature'



# Views on nature





# Nature policy



# Nature policy



# Biodiversity discourses

- Technocratic: biology, ecology, rational planning
- Populist: political ecology, critical discourse analysis
- Local: situated practices of biodiversity definition, use, management and conservation

(Source: Adger et al., 2001)

# NLs: technocratic biodiversity discourse

- Experts, scientists, jargon
- Counting, measuring, databases
- Warning, segregation
- Only 'impacts' count
  - Negative about policy
  - Negative about agro-environmental schemes
- (Perceived) arrogance towards lay people

# Conflicts

- Agriculture vs nature
  - Farmers strike back...
- Managers vs residents
  - People strike back...

# Interim conclusion

- Low resonance of technocratic biodiversity discourse
- Reflected in current Dutch cabinet and policy
- Biodiversity: 'endangered policy concept'

# Solution?

## ■ New discourse?

- Living with biodiversity (Turnhout)
- Public ecology (Robertson & Hull)



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## ■ New policy / management?

- Static → dynamic
- Impact → input
- Fewer but bigger (connected) areas
- Innovative governance arrangements
- Simplicity / clarity of rules / law

# Reflection

## ■ Discourse matters

- Naming, identity, exclusion
- Knowledge, power, resistance
- Affects nature conservation itself / flow of resources (materiality!)

## ■ De-/Re-construction necessary, but how?

# Thanks



# Biodiversity discourses

- Technocratic, populist, local (*Adger et al., 2001*)
- Natural history, ecology, environmentalism, ecological anthropology, economics, STS (*various papers*)
- (1) Biological dimension of nature, (2) indicator of ecosystem quality, (3) metaphor for species loss, habitat destruction and genetic erosion, (4) indigenous knowledge and rights, (5) TEEB / EGS, (6) socio-material hybrid (what is counted counts)

# Biodiversity discourses

- Normal vs post-normal science → ecology vs public ecology (*Robertson & Hull, 2001*)
- Time (evolution) and space (habitat) (*Bowker, 2000*)
- Structure, composition, function  $\leftrightarrow$  genes, species, habitats (9 dimensions of BD) (*Redford & Richter, 1999*)
- Empty signifier..??