

## **Final Reflection**

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WATERBIOMES

HA 2024/25 Erfgoedlijn P5

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## **Project Description and Approach**

A Water Biological Center for migratory fish is created on the floodplain in Sliedrecht, previously housing a water tower and a Shipyard. The structure of the old building serves as a framework for a new program that stimulates the innovative and sustainable sector, guaranteeing employment for scientific institutes in the Netherlands and Sliedrecht. The surrounding plot is transformed into a park and simultaneously functions as an open-air lab. Wherein fish can be studied in their physical surroundings

### **The relation between research and design**

To determine the specific programs of the outside and inside labs, the habitats of fish had to be studied on different levels and in different stages throughout the fish's lifespan. The research is the direct impetus for a toolkit of physical elements that have been used to shape the park and the basins in the outside lab. Through doing the initial Group analysis of the entire Heritage Line, the topic of the graduation was established.

### **The relation between graduation topic, studio topic, and master of Architecture**

The graduation topic is largely informed by the research conducted during the initial weeks of group analysis in the studio. In discovering the ecological heritage of the area, a pressing theme was uncovered: The historic abundance of fish in the river of Sliedrecht. This, combined with the Industrial Heritage of the site, created the idea for the ecological center: Whereas the area previously was mainly in service of economic flows utilizing the river, the change of the economy allows for a shift in the function of the area towards ecological sustainability.

### **The Relation between the project and the wider social, professional, and scientific framework & transferability**

The way in which I approached this scientifically is by not following a desired outcome. Through my ecological research, a gap was found in the literature of architecture: The habitats of underwater animals. This did not mean there were no initiatives in the Netherlands concerned with Fish, but most of them were small-scale local initiatives, sportvisserij Nederland, or led by the industrial fish rearing companies and fisheries. Throughout this research, I have a strong suspicion that if fish don't fall into the photogenic species, the only parties that really have an interest in them are those that seek to maximize profitability of some kind other than ecological understanding. These themes are beyond the scope of this project, but can be transferred to other fields with a stronger inclination towards biology, ethics, etc.

### **(ethical) Issues and Dilemma's**

The current plan for the area is to maximize profitability through expansions in the form of apartment blocks. I wouldn't be surprised if shareholders and stakeholders are not happy with the plan to create this fish-rearing research facility. However, it is entirely clear to me that this area, with its outerdike area, is unique along this stretch of the river delta. Right now, the closest park is a kilometer ride away and does not take into account the river. Since the old maritime industry has left, a new function that uses water can be found. Utilising these unique pieces of land can enhance the quality of Sliedrecht as a whole and its appeal in the long run.

### **Planning towards P5**

The narrative is broad and at risk of meandering away from the architecture. In the P5 I should imagine a room full of stakeholders, using my presentation to convince those yet on the fence. The images and the plan should be so clear that anyone can understand why the park is appealing and the right decision for the area.