

# A justified decision or a justified symbolic process: Exploring the Relationship Between Procedural Policy Tools, Stakeholder Conflict and Multi-Level Decision-Making in Dutch Infrastructure cases.

---

Master thesis submitted to Delft University of Technology  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

## **MASTER OF SCIENCE**

in Engineering & Policy Analysis

Faculty of Technology, Policy and Management

by

Matthijs de Gooijer

Student number: 4354648

To be defended in public on March 30 2023

### **Graduation committee**

Chairperson : Dr. W.W. Veneman; Multi-Actor Systems  
First Supervisor : Dr. N. Goyal; Multi-Actor systems  
Second Supervisor : Dr.ir. Z. Roosenboom-Kwee; Values, Technology & Innovation

## Acknowledgements

With the finalization of my time as a student, I would like to thank a few people for their help and assistance during my thesis.

First and foremost, I'd like to thank my supervisors, Wijnand, Nihit, and Zenlin. The constructive feedback I received was extremely beneficial, but more importantly, the enthusiastic support was critical to my process. The assistance as well as the space to gather myself individually aided greatly in getting myself back to work and delivering work worthy of graduation. Wijnand, your perspectives on my findings, as well as the general thesis guidelines/process, were very refreshing, allowing me to relativize the project during difficult times. They also assisted me in delving deeper into my findings and not taking them at face value, but rather considering their implications. Your questions made me analyse more critically the information I have and appropriately process it, which has also improved my analytical skills, which I am confident will benefit me in the future.

Nihit, I also can't emphasise enough how much the weekly meetings aided me in organising my work and thesis. Throughout the meetings, you always made strong recommendations or nudged me in the right direction to investigate. Making the thesis feel less like drowning in an ocean of information and giving me more structure. Your writing suggestions greatly improved the quality of my thesis by assisting me in structuring my arguments. Aside from your contributions to my thesis, you and Wijnand made the entire process much more enjoyable. You noticed when I was struggling early on, without me saying anything, and we worked together to overcome these difficulties. I felt much more at ease after that, which greatly aided me in finishing the thesis. I feel very fortunate with the supervision I received and can't thank you both enough.

Zenlin, thanks for always asking questions on elements which I continuously tried to rush. Thanks that persistence, I also had to consider the implications of these decisions and elements which I would've otherwise ignored. This also made me better understand the different contexts and considerations for the research design, making my findings also more robust.

Lastly, thanks to my friends and family for your support during my time as a student and during my thesis. Having (study) friends that could take my eyes off my screen proved to be priceless, and they made the days less stressful and boring. Giving you all free coffee using my coffee-card was a small (non-existent) price I gladly pay again. With that my time as a student is reaching its end, thank you all for making it educational but more importantly as enjoyable as it was!

Matthijs de Gooijer

Delft 2023

## Summary

Policy making and the decision-making process has developed over the past decades to include more (scientific) evidence to support policy construction, such as the Cost-benefit Analysis or Environmental Impact Analysis. However, depending on the perspective of the policymaker as well as the evaluator, the definition of successful policy outcomes may be different between stakeholders. This can then potentially lead to conflict during the decision-making process for future policies, on which metrics were deemed successful. Despite these uncertainties, this 'evidence-based policymaking' approach has become more applied, especially for infrastructure projects. It is being questioned whether this approach is beneficial, with criticism that the appraisals don't include all relevant contexts and are possibly prone to subjectivity. These elements lead to potential strategic (mis-) use of the tool for decision-making. The role of the procedural policy tools for decision-making is therefore explored in this research. More specifically, in cases with significant conflict among stakeholders, based on their (policy) values. Aiming to answer the following research question:

*How do CBAs and EIAs influence conflict on policy beliefs and decisions, between stakeholders of varying levels of government during the policy cycle?*

The exploration is made using case studies. Cases are delineated through process tracing, aiming to provide enough context for analyses. The cases are analysed using the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). The ACF was developed to analyse 'wicked' public policy problems, meaning that they include goal conflicts and technical disputes, while involving stakeholders of several levels of government. It defines stakeholder groups as coalitions, who move in coordination with each other to attempt to dominate the decision-making process in their favour. With the aim to have (most of) their policy beliefs and values represented in the final policy. The ACF provides the lens through which the world is conceptualized, aiming to better define the role of procedural policy tools for decision-making and stakeholder conflict (mitigation). The cases examined are the road expansion through a nature reserve (Ring Utrecht) and the opening of a new commercial airport (Lelystad Airport). How the procedural policy tools affected advocacy coalitions' beliefs and strategies for/against policies is analysed.

Both cases demonstrated a diminished formal role for the procedural policy tools. This was attributed to multiple factors. Firstly, there was low acceptance of appraisal results from either the CBA or the EIA. While the EIA had more objectively verifiable information, the CBA was more difficult to verify or validate based on its subjective elements. Furthermore, while the appraisals ideally should aid with the forming of policy alternatives, this did not hold in practice. In both cases the appraisals were done late during the decision-making process, resulting in only a single alternative being appraised per case. This also added towards the inter-stakeholder conflict, with regional stakeholders perceiving the decision-making as pre-determined without their input. More significant impacts came from external events, especially the binding Paris Climate Accord. Through which new sustainability targets were set, giving the EIA more legislative influence. Furthermore, both cases but especially Lelystad Airport demonstrated how procedural policy tools could be used strategically, or at least seem to be used as such.

The ex-ante evaluations without much legislative support for incorporation for policymaking seemed to have little effect on policy- or core belief-changes of stakeholders, even when confronted with contradicting outcomes. Instead, procedural policy tools that have more support in legislation, hold more influence on the decision-making and subsequent policy implementation process. Procedural policy tools seem to be more informative and symbolic, with outcomes more used for debates as

conclusive results rather than opportunities to explore and improve policy options. Hence, limiting the formal role of the policy tools to explore policy alternatives. In practice, the late timing of tools' use in the decision-making process and exclusion of regional stakeholders in the appraisals exacerbated negative sentiments of regional stakeholders. Leading to increased distrust between policy advocacy coalitions, aggravating the (policy) conflict and preventing compromises. Furthermore, procedural policy tools were very resource dependent, limiting regional actors' ability to perform their analyses due to their limited resources. Making them highly dependent on national governments, fuelling the distrust and conflict based on the earlier mentioned exclusion and lacking transparency. The skewed resource distribution worsens the information inequalities between institutions, which can be exploited during the decision-making process.

Ultimately, the procedural policy tools had little significant impact on the beliefs or policy proposals, other than postponing them based on environmental impacts. The methodology of the tools was controversial in both cases, which further increased conflict among stakeholders due to the increased distrust. In theory the tools can positively impact the decision-making, yet the required practices aren't done and prevent this from occurring. Suggestions for improvement of the practices and to reduce conflict are the introduction of formal third-party supervisory committees for procedural policy tools, mandatory regional stakeholder-inclusion for tool' appraisals, and methodology' transparency measures.

## List of abbreviations

ACF: Advocacy Coalition Framework

BO: 'Bestuurlijk Overleg'. An administrative meeting of public national and regional representatives in the Netherlands.

CBA: Cost-Benefit Analysis

Commissie MER: supervisory committee to check performed analyses for correct and consistent applications.

CPB: Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy (Central Planning Bureau). An independent research institute of the Netherlands, providing economic analyses and projections for policies.

EBP: Evidence-Based Policymaking

EC: European Commission

EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

EU: European Union

KRU: Kerngroep Ring Utrecht. Opposition coalition for the case Ring Utrecht.

LVNL: Luchtverkeersleiding. Dutch air traffic control

MER: 'Milieueffectrapportage'. Dutch term for environmental impact analysis.

MleW: Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water management

MIRT: 'Multi-Year Programme for Infrastructure, Spatial Planning and Transport'

PCF: Policy Conflict framework

POL: Policy-Oriented Learning

RSP: Relatively Stable Parameters

SATL: "Samenwerkende Actiegroepen Tegen Laagvliegen". Coalition of stakeholders opposing the opening and operationalisation of Lelystad Airport

SEO: SEO Economisch Onderzoek. Independent economic research institution, often commissioned by national institutions (MleW/Rijkswaterstaat) to evaluate economic impacts of policy designs.

WOB: Wet Openbare Overheid. Transparency law for public institutions Netherlands

WOO: Wet Open Overheid. New transparency law public institutions Netherlands, based on WOB

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1: MIRT phases

Figure 3.1: ACF visualisation (2005)

Figure 3.2: Intensity spectrum of policy conflict

Figure 5.1: Project phases overview (Ring Utrecht)

Figure 5.2.1: Relatively Stable Parameters Ring Utrecht

Figure 5.2.2: Coalitions period 1 (Ring Utrecht)

Figure 5.2.3: Policy subsystem Ring Utrecht

Figure 5.2.4: Events and shocks to policy system

Figure 6.1: Project phases Lelystad Airport

Figure 6.2.1: Relatively stable parameters Lelystad Airport

Figure 6.2.2: Coalitions Lelystad Airport

## List of Tables

Table 3.1: Typology of coalition opportunity structures

Table 7.1: Resource advantages comparison

Table 7.2.1: Consensus and transparency structures comparison

Table 7.2.2: Stakeholder inclusion and coalition' stakeholder diversity comparison

Table 7.4.1: Strategic behaviour comparison

Table 7.4.2: Devil shifts comparison

## Contents

Acknowledgements.....	1
Summary .....	2
List of abbreviations.....	4
List of Figures .....	5
List of Tables .....	5
1. Introduction .....	10
1.1 Policy evaluations and conflict.....	10
1.2 Managing policy- and stakeholder conflicts .....	10
1.3 Evidence-based policymaking for infrastructure and procedural policy tools .....	11
1.4 Procedural policy tools' flaws .....	12
CBAs .....	12
EIAs.....	13
1.5 Knowledge gaps .....	13
1.6 Research questions .....	14
Research design and framework selection .....	14
Advocacy Coalition Framework .....	15
1.7 Research' contributions .....	15
1.8 Report structure.....	15
1.9 EPA relevance.....	16
2. Formal role procedural policy tools & political landscape Netherlands.....	17
2.1 MIRT programme for large infrastructure projects .....	17
Study phase.....	17
Exploration phase & procedural policy tools.....	18
Plan elaboration- & realisation phase.....	18
2.2 Other relevant legislation for large infrastructure projects .....	18
Formal role EIA.....	18
'Tracewet' .....	19
WOB .....	19
2.3 Political landscape.....	19
Multi-party parliament & coalition agreement .....	19
Formal authority of stakeholders .....	20
3. Advocacy Coalition Framework .....	21
3.1 Key concepts .....	21
Stakeholders' beliefs.....	21
Advocacy coalitions.....	22

Coalition opportunity structures .....	22
Policy subsystems .....	22
3.2 Resources and resource distribution .....	23
Four paths to policy change .....	23
Procedural policy tool as path to policy change .....	25
3.3 Conflict intensity levels .....	25
3.4 Historical ACF applications and findings .....	25
4. Methods .....	27
4.1 Design .....	27
4.2 Case studies .....	27
Case criteria .....	27
Case selection process .....	29
4.3 Case operationalisation .....	30
4.4 Data collection .....	31
4.5 Process tracing .....	31
4.6 Research questions' methods .....	32
4.7 Discussion of research design .....	33
5. Ring Utrecht .....	34
5.1 Project phases & Timeline .....	34
Phase 1 (2005-2010) .....	34
Phase 2 (2011-2016) .....	35
Release of CBA during the decision-making (2014) .....	35
Phase 3 (2016-2022) .....	35
5.2 ACF application Ring Utrecht .....	37
Period 1: Pre-CBA (2005-2013) .....	37
Period 2: Emissions mandate (2013-2018) .....	39
Period 3: Project initiation (2018-2022) .....	42
5.3 Impact of procedural policy tools: Ring Utrecht .....	43
Coalition switches .....	43
Maximize support, not exploration .....	44
Formal role and experienced influence on decision-making process .....	44
6. Lelystad Airport .....	46
6.1 Project phases and timeline .....	46
Phase 1: Aldersreport and long-term vision (2006-2012) .....	47
Phase 2: Airport decision & CBA release (2012-2018) .....	48
Phase 3: Appraisal Faults & Court verdicts (2018-present) .....	49



6.2 ACF Lelystad Airport.....	51
Period 1: Aldersreport and Long-Term Vision ('06-'12).....	52
Period 2: Airport decision, explorative CBA & EIA ('12-'18) .....	53
Period 3: Faults and court verdicts ('18-present) .....	54
6.3 Impact of procedural tools: Lelystad Airport.....	55
7. Case comparison .....	57
7.1 Resource availability and dependency .....	57
7.2 Consensus and transparency structures.....	58
Consensus structures.....	58
Transparency structures .....	59
Stakeholder' inclusion during decision-making .....	59
7.3 External events & changing policy-making approaches .....	61
2008 Economic crisis: budget-oriented policymaking (2008-2015) .....	61
2015 Paris Climate Agreement: sustainability-oriented policymaking (2015-2022) .....	61
7.4 Strategic behaviour and case outcomes .....	62
Venue shopping .....	64
8. Discussion & conclusions .....	65
8.1 Discussion of results.....	65
Legislation & guidelines for decision-making .....	65
PAS-verdict & EIAs.....	66
Third party supervision procedural policy tools .....	66
8.2 Appraisals and policy change .....	67
CBA.....	67
EIA .....	67
8.3 Policy- & decision-making conclusions .....	68
Diminished formal role of tools & solution-oriented decision-making .....	68
CBAs and EIAs don't significantly change policy beliefs or stakeholders' positions.....	69
Symbolic informing of stakeholders by procedural policy tools.....	69
Procedural policy tools and conflict.....	70
8.4 ACF conclusions and implications .....	70
Diminished importance of coalition diversity.....	71
Venue shopping and shocks.....	71
Regional opposition lacking skillfull leadership .....	71
8.5 Policy- and decision-making recommendations.....	72
Improve transparency of CBA and EIA appraisals.....	72
Mechanisms to ensure timely appraisals and submission during exploration phases.....	73

8.6 Limitations & future research .....	73
Case selection influencing outcomes.....	73
Solution oriented design .....	74
Lack of case-specific interviews .....	74
Intercountry comparison .....	74
Lack of quantitative data .....	75
Venue shopping through CBAs .....	75
Bibliography .....	76
Appendix A: ACF Ring Utrecht .....	86
ACF period 1: pre-CBA application and release (2005-2013) .....	86
ACF period 2: prior to PAS-verdict (2014-2019) .....	88
ACF period 3: PAS-verdict and continued Trace-decisions (2019-present).....	89
Appendix B: ACF Lelystad Airport .....	91
ACF period 1: First Alders report (2006-2012).....	91
ACF period 2: Airport decision & CBA (2012-2018) .....	94
ACF period 3: Appraisal faults & court verdicts .....	95

## 1. Introduction

In this chapter, the research problem is introduced, and the relevant (technical) definitions will be elaborated. The societal implications of the problem area will then be described. The gaps in the literature on the problem will then be delineated, which will lead into the research questions for this thesis. The research questions will be used to structure the addressing the relevant knowledge gaps in the literature. The relevance of this thesis' research for the EPA programme will also be argued for.

### 1.1 Policy evaluations and conflict

In politics, claims of a particular policy's success are frequently made. However, these assertions lack systematic support (Marsh & McConnell, 2010). The lacking support can be partially attributed to the multi-dimensional nature of policies, which can have diverse impacts. Making that proponents and opponents can have diverging evaluations, framing the same policy as failure or successful based on their own interpretation of the results and evaluations (McConnell, 2010). This disagreement can lead to policy conflict among stakeholders, based on the differing perspectives. Ex-ante (and ex-post) policy evaluations are also used for future decision-making, as they provide empirical knowledge for future policies (Pawson, 2002; Sabatier, 1988). However, how these (scientific) results and appraisals should be considered and used for decision-making is debated on throughout the ages, given their perceived influence despite the arbitrariness of the evaluations' interpretation (Pawson, 2002; Marmot, 2004; Oliver, Lorenc, & Innvær, 2014).

Conflicts between stakeholders can also occur during the decision-making process for policy. These conflicts can be based on conflicting policy targets or stakeholder interests. For instance, in the Netherlands where the drive for sustainability targets and policies has increased polarisation among policy stakeholders (Mensink, 2021). An example being the case of the A27-highway expansion in the Netherlands which requires deforestation in favour of new lanes. Resulting in public protests directed at the environmental impacts, while expansion would harm sustainability targets being achieved (Hoekstra, 2020). Or the construction of datacentres in Zeewolde, which would consume almost all locally generated sustainable energy. Leading to the national government vetoing the local initiative for economic growth in favour of the national sustainability targets (Selles & Boelens, 2021). Or the expansion of Schiphol Airport using Lelystad Airport for increased aviation and economic activity, which potentially has significant consequences for regional (emission) pollution (SATL, n.d.). In each of the cases there were (policy) conflicts between local and national interests, and implicitly their policy objectives and values. Policy values being "the ultimate ends of public policy—the goals and obligations that policy aims to promote as desirable in their own right, not just as means to some other objective" (Thacher & Rein, 2004, p. 460). Meaning: what policies should achieve and in what manner that should be done.

### 1.2 Managing policy- and stakeholder conflicts

Managing policy value conflicts and the resulting trade-offs has been researched. Governments typically respond to value conflicts during decision-making by balancing competing values and making relevant trade-offs (Thacher & Rein, 2004). Due to the arbitrary nature of value trade-offs, research emphasized the need for institutional structures to better manage the value-conflicts (Stewart, 2009; Thacher & Rein, 2004; Heikkila & Weible, 2017). An example of such arrangements are the ex-ante evaluations of policies. Through the evaluations and their appraisals, effects of to-be-implemented policies are approximated and weighed. This fits with the evidence-based policymaking (EBP) approach that many countries are adopting. This approach aims to use information such as the ex-ante evaluation, or appraisals, as supporting 'evidence' for policy

decisions (Thacher & Rein, 2004). A Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) or Environmental Impact Analysis (EIA) are examples of such ex-ante evaluations for decision-making (van Wee, 2007). A CBA measures the societal costs and benefits of policy alternatives, quantifying them and comparing them to determine the most economically efficient option. A CBA quantifies the societal costs and benefits of policy alternatives and compares them to determine the most economically viable alternative. An EIA measures the environmental impacts of a policy and is frequently required for the permitting of infrastructure and other development projects. It aims to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed projects and to identify countermeasures to mitigate or avoid negative impacts.

### 1.3 Evidence-based policymaking for infrastructure and procedural policy tools

Policymaking has developed throughout the past decades with more emphasis on evidence-based policymaking (EBP), with procedural policy tools being developed to support the decision-making. Procedural policy tools (e.g., CBA or EIA) are techniques which can be used to justify policy decisions or measures as superior over others (Hertin, et al., 2009; Bali, Howlett, Lewis, & Ramesh, 2021). These techniques aim to provide an unbiased and scientific analysis of to-be implemented policies, supporting policymakers to make a weighted decision (Tallacchini, 2009). Procedural tools are different from policy tools or instruments which are aimed towards achieving a policy goal. Procedural policy tools translate policy preferences to operationalized policy instruments (e.g., taxes or subsidies) to address the policy objectives and being specifically calibrated towards that end (Howlett, 2009). However, the procedural tools don't provide an answer to what is the *morally* correct decision and rely on the interpretation of the appraisal (Wolcher, 2007). Thus, creating opportunities for possible strategic tool usage in service of personal agendas to achieve desired decision outcomes (Hertin, et al., 2009; Hoekstra, 2020). This critique is often recurring in literature, questioning whether this evidence-based approach is beneficial for decision-making. With gaps in the literature addressing that 'evidence' by itself doesn't stand alone, calling for research on how evidence and its implications should be incorporated into the policy process (Pawson, 2002; Marmot, 2004).

The EBP approach is also frequently applied to infrastructure projects, with a variety of procedural policy instruments used to determine societal impacts. Infrastructure has a significant impact on society because it facilitates economic activity and social welfare. Transport infrastructure networks enable the efficient movement of people and goods, thereby facilitating trade and commerce. It also allows citizens access to essential services like education, healthcare, and employment (Worldbank, n.d.). Therefore, it is also essential for (improving) social welfare. Countries have also standardized procedures to improve infrastructure project decision-making, for instance the MIRT programme in the Netherlands (Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, 2018). The purpose of the program is to create comprehensive solutions for societal issues, using the MIRT's guidelines and the procedural policy instruments for support. However, this evidence-based approach and the utilized analyses may not necessarily improve decision-making and may also increase conflict between stakeholders. Sources for conflicts can be characterized by the earlier mentioned factors, such as stakeholder specific interpretations and how evidence is used for decisions (Cats, 2016; Hoekstra, 2020; Marmot, 2004). Complex policy projects may not be easily analysed using procedural policy tools, for instance due to (indirect) effects being difficult to approximate. Thus, possibly creating opportunities to abuse the guidelines and information of programs to promote policy proposals that better align with political ideologies. Resulting in the assessment procedures impeding open deliberation and knowledge application (Hertin, et al., 2009). Meaning that institutional arrangements, such as information processing- and release-guidelines, can be abused by decision-

makers. Resulting in critical discourse in practice and in the literature on the use of procedural policy tools for decision-making.

#### 1.4 Procedural policy tools' flaws

CBA critiques are often aimed at the internal functioning of the CBA, with focus on the uncertainty on what defines and approximates costs and benefits. The uncertainty is attributed to various factors, the most recurring one being that CBAs attempts to “measure diverse goods along the same metric” (Sunstein, 1993, p. 841). Meaning that due the nature of CBAs it cannot include all facets of policies, as it doesn't necessarily account for all the various (social) consequences of policies and regulations. Although it does remove forms of inconsistencies due to previous ad-hoc decisions becoming tractable, these aggregations of social impacts will always contain a certain crudeness in cost & benefit approximations that do not expose the full set of effects (Sunstein, 1993; Adler, 1997). In CBAs, policy benefits are defined through willingness-to-pay monetization, with benefits being experienced by “winners” of the policy whose welfare is improved, expressed in monetary gains. However, this doesn't imply moral reason to favour the project as it is difficult for CBA results to denote something as morally important, since all diverse factors are measured along a single metric without including all effects (Adler, 1997). Therefore, CBAs should not be seen as “a criterion for a morally just decision but as a morally justified decision procedure” (Adler, 1997, p. 1373).

#### CBAs

This is also described in other research, which cites politicians' desire for projects to be completed because they represent tangible results of their terms (Priemus, Flyvbjerg, & van Wee, 2008). Politicians in this context also tend to overestimate demand and underestimate costs when promoting policies, as was observed in the CBAs examined by Priemus, Flyvbjerg, and van Wee (Priemus, Flyvbjerg, & van Wee, 2008). It becomes unclear whether ideologies are systematically favored, which raises the question of how tools such as CBAs influence decision-making when policy conflicts arise based on ideological differences and how this is experienced. For instance, in the case of Lelystad airport in the Netherlands, where initial CBAs performed by proponents were used as support for expansion, where later findings suggest that CBAs systematically favour airport expansions (Bus & Manshanden, ESB, 2022). Or with the case ‘Ring Utrecht’, also in the Netherlands, where a road expansion through a nature reserve is being seen as a prestige project for proponents and that the CBA benefits are seen as overtly positive compared to the costs (Cats, Onderzoek toont aan: Verbreding A27 betaalt zich zelfs in 100 jaar nog niet terug!, 2016). These empirics of cases lead to questioning in literature whether CBAs are conducted to promote one's own policy beliefs rather than to provide decision-making with unbiased information (Mouter, 2019).

Although most literature focuses on the inner workings of the CBA, its role and influence in the policy cycle and decision-making process is also unclear. Whether CBAs affect policy outcomes has been quantitatively researched as well as the possible uses by politicians during decision-making (Annema, Frenken, Koopmans, & Kroesen, 2017; Mouter, 2017; Rienstra, 2008). However, research performed did not include, or only briefly touched upon, the influence of the CBA and how it's used in the decision-making processes. While the outcome of the research was that CBA outcomes aren't statistically significantly correlated with policy outcomes, its influence on the decision-making process isn't explored. Research by Daniel Cole (2012) did explore empirically the functioning and the types of CBA use during policy decisions. The positive role of CBAs in facilitating welfare enhancement as well as the strategic role is explored, with critique aimed at the subjective nature of CBAs which allow for strategic manipulation (Cole, 2012). For example, as CBAs focus on what the preferences are, it disregards how these preferences emerge while establishing the indisputable validity of individual preferences (Wolcher, 2007). By constructing preferences with the value of

human reasoning reduced to means-end calculations, CBAs heavily rely on the correct appraisal techniques, thereby creating opportunities for CBA abuse based on technique choice or misrepresentation of what actual preferences should be (Wolcher, 2007). Daniel Cole further pointed out that the transparency of formal CBAs aids with the exposure and correction of manipulation and flaws, thus calling for the need of high transparency for positive use of CBAs (Cole, 2012). However, his research lacked the context of the political role of CBAs and its possible correlation with other relevant policy tools play in policy arenas. His research was also on the CBAs being applied in non-infrastructure related sectors (Cole, 2012). Cole therefore calls for more empirical knowledge on whether CBAs influence policy outcomes and how stakeholder' strategic behaviour can influence the CBA use during the decision-making process. The (strategic) role in the policy arena/cycle and decision-making process involving conflicting stakeholders, and how this affects stakeholder beliefs or positions has not yet been thoroughly explored in the literature.

## EIAs

EIAs have been researched in lesser extent, as internationally most research on EIA is on the CBA part of the EIA performed (e.g., in the US). However, in most literature one of the general critiques on EIA's conducted was that there is a high information quality dependency for many countries as well as differing requirements to conduct the analysis, causing great variations in the quality of EIA's depending on resource availability (Morgan, 2012; Ortolano & Shepherd, 1995). With further criticism on the lacking inclusion of the social distribution of environmental impacts and the resulting inequalities of the policy implementation (Walker, 2010). Research also pointed out that often the EIA isn't carefully integrated into the planning while it potentially holds a lot of influence (Morgan, 2012; Zubair, 2001; Ortolano & Shepherd, 1995). Leading into the more substantial critique. Namely, when governments have an incentive to stimulate activity (e.g., economic growth), they would often promote physical infrastructure expansion as it encourages development projects. Making them generally seek quick and short decision-making on the projects and adapting the EIA use towards these goals, for instance by making it vague to understand (Morgan, 2012; Koenis, 2020).

Research on Dutch EIA use and integration in the decision-making process also indicated that it was often seen by formal authorities and initiators as an administrative nuisance, with the consequence that the "environment may not be weighed full-fledged during the decision-making process" (Girjasing, 2011, p. 42). Creating the impression that the EIA is merely being performed to 'tick off boxes' in the decision-making guidelines. Meaning that decision-making may become forced too quickly without properly assessing policy alternatives. Research has pointed out these flaws with EIAs, yet they have not discussed (environmental) policy core changes or how the EIA influences conflicts during the decision-making process. With much uncertainty on the implications for stakeholder conflicts in the decision-making process as a result from EIA use (Dietz, Fitzgerald, & Shwom, 2005; Walker, 2010).

## 1.5 Knowledge gaps

Having a better understanding of the use and influences of procedural policy tools can therefore improve the decision-making process. Improving the decision-making process and policy cycle in general, holds value as this can improve regional implementation of national policies by better understanding impacts and stakeholders' conflict. Due to tensions and conflicts between the "wants and needs" of the national and regional governments, national policies that are aimed to improve living conditions of (local) citizens have found much resistance to be locally adopted and implemented (Bache, 1999; Dotti, 2016). This is also true in the Netherlands, for instance in the earlier mentioned cases. Which led to the research into the causes of conflicts between citizens in

relation to plans concerning sustainability of living environment as these were often recurring in the Netherlands (Mensink, 2021).

The research done by Mensink concerned the conflict in the policy arena of government or citizen initiatives for sustainability and policies for living environment. Concerning mostly the decision-making process and tensions between citizens themselves. It focusses on the meaning people assign to events and experiences and interpreting them to understand the conflict and what effects it had on citizens as well as policies. Outcome examples were that the process was experienced as unfair and for the 'advocates' of sustainability policies being important to the dynamics of conflicts. "If advocates do not actively organise themselves and also have no direct stake in the plans, the chance of conflict is much reduced" (Mensink, 2021, p. 99). Although the decision-making process is also noted to be an influential factor for conflict, the role of ex-ante evaluations or procedural policy tools usage on the conflict is not addressed. Although these appraisals are legislatively incorporated in the decision-making to be used as support, the procedural policy tools' incorporation and influence on policy decisions and conflict is not addressed in Mensink's research. Other research on also indicated that the inclusion of procedural tools as supporting arguments influences the decision-making process, yet in what manner and to what extent is often unclear (Rienstra, 2008). This gap is what this research aims to elaborate and contribute on, adding to knowledge of procedural policy tools and conflict management for public policy during the decision-making process.

## 1.6 Research questions

Therefore, this research aims to address the problem as described above, focussing on understanding the role procedural policy tools play in the decision-making process. The aim is to have a better and clearer understanding of how policies are formed using policy tools and whether the policy tools influence the conflict during policy making and implementation between levels of government. Furthermore, it aims to understand how policy tools affect (changes of) perspectives of stakeholders during the decision-making process. The research question is therefore:

*How do CBAs and EIAs influence conflict on policy beliefs and decisions, between stakeholders of varying levels of government during the policy cycle?*

This will be answered through sub-questions which are described below.

1. What is the formal role of the CBAs & EIAs in the multi-level decision-making process in theory vs practice?
2. What are the implications, if any, of the procedural policy tools' influence on the proceeding agenda setting for the shaping and changing of policy (alternatives)?
3. How do the procedural policy tool inform stakeholders in the decision-making process and what were the implications, if any, for stakeholders during the decision-making process.
4. How does the procedural policy tool affect stakeholders' allegiance to policies and how are position changes, if any, translated in the final policy?

## Research design and framework selection

The decision is made to further investigate Dutch cases to contribute to Rienstra and Mensink's research. By using Dutch cases new findings will have the same socioeconomic conditions across the cases, which should aid with facilitating robustness and generalizability of new findings. As Mensink's research has identified sources of conflict among stakeholders, the influence of procedural policy instruments on these country-specific sources of conflict can be analysed.

The cases selected for this research are the A27 highway expansion, and the opening of Lelystad Airport. Both cases seemingly had diverging outcomes: one where the national (government) interests 'prevailed' for the A27 case, the other where seemingly regional interests won by preventing the opening of Lelystad Airport. Both cases also took place during the same time-period, making it interesting to determine what specifics led to the different outcomes. And what the role of the procedural policy tools was for the different outcomes. Another motivation for these cases is that they both involve a large infrastructure project, ensuring that CBAs and EIAs will be performed. Why this is, is elaborated on in chapter 3 and 4. A further motivation for the research design and case selection will be provided in chapter 4.

### Advocacy Coalition Framework

As this research focusses on the role of procedural policy tools for decision-making through empirical cases, a framework will be used to conceptually model and analyse the cases. The framework selected is the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). The framework developed by Paul Sabatier to analyse 'wicked' public policy problems; problems involving "involving substantial goal conflicts, important technical disputes, and multiple actors from several levels of government" (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 189). One of the motivations for the framework is the emphasis it places on the role of research and (scientific) information for decision-making. Where other frameworks such as the three-streams model or the rounds-model focus more on processes and moments of opportunity, the ACF includes these elements with the added contexts of stakeholder conflicts and learning. In the ACF, learning by stakeholders is essential for triggering both minor and major policy and/or belief changes. The framework allows to conceptualize varying policy processes, which can vary between highly politicized processes involving many actors to more 'routinely treated' cases involving technical and specialist knowledge (Cairney, 2013). Where other frameworks focus more on either the procedural or technical aspects of policy processes, the ACF includes both perspectives in its analysis and therefore this framework is chosen. This research focusses on the interaction of human factors and the technical knowledge of ex-ante appraisals during decision-making, and how this influences policy outcomes. Therefore, the ACF fits to analyse these cases. The choice for the ACF will be further elaborated on in chapter 2.

### 1.7 Research' contributions

Focusing on the incorporation of regional values and participation, the research seeks to improve governance between levels of government and regional policy implementation. By gaining a better understanding of the strengths and limitations of procedural policy tools in various (political) practices, stakeholders may be able to increase the tool's transparency and accountability. Through an understanding of the tool's use and how it can influence stakeholder positions, processes can be designed to engage and involve stakeholders in the decision-making process, particularly in instances where policy goals are in conflict more effectively. These factors can contribute to the improvement of policy outcomes. Potential policy decisions can find more support when there is a high level of transparency regarding the outcomes of the tool's use and how this translates to the outcomes of the analyses (Cole, 2012). Combined with increased stakeholder engagement, this can result in a more thorough incorporation of the policy goals and values of all involved parties. In an effort to establish a possible causal relationship between the analytical policy tools and the final conclusions, the fuzzy decision-making process and where and how analytical policy tools are utilized may be better defined.

### 1.8 Report structure

The following will be the format of the research: The formal role of procedural policy tools, relevant legislation, and the political climate of the cases will be described in chapter 2. This chapter



establishes the environment within which the cases will operate. After the description of the context, the ACF will be elaborated on in chapter 3. There the decision for the ACF as framework for analysis is argued for. This is done by arguing for the appropriateness given the contexts in which the use of procedural policy tools and research problem operate. The research questions will be answered using the ACF conceptualization and analysis of the cases. The choice for this framework will be justified by a discussion and elaboration of its key elements and mechanisms in chapter 3.

After examining the contexts of the cases and the framework through which they will be analysed, the research design and methods will be discussed. The approach being case studies, for which will be argued in the chapter. It will be described how each research question will be approached and by what respective method. In the subsequent chapters the case studies will be conducted, followed by a comparison of the cases. After completion of the case studies and cross-case comparison, a discussion of the research' results and limitations will be provided. Resulting in the conclusions of this research, and policy (making) recommendations will be made. Finally, recommendations for future research will be provided.

### 1.9 EPA relevance

The knowledge gaps regarding the use of EIAs and CBAs are also related to the United Nations' sustainable development goals (SDG). The effectiveness of EIAs in anticipating and mitigating environmental hazards may impede efforts to safeguard the environment and achieve sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12). Inaccurate or inadequate EIAs, whether they are the result of political usage or other empirical situations of use, may impede the identification of negative environmental impacts, thereby impeding the achievement of SDG12. For CBAs, the appropriate use in particular contexts, valuation of non-monetary costs and benefits, and underlying assumptions of the analysis can impact its effectiveness in achieving prosperity for all (SDG8). The (political) use of policy tools during decision-making can thus impact the United Nations' ability to achieve its SDGs.

This public policy problem is also related to grand challenge 16 of the UN SDG; "to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (United Nations, n.d.). This challenge regards effective governance and institutions essential for sustainable development. By understanding the role and use of CBAs and EIAs allows to better understand EBP decision-making. Which can aid with determining how procedural policy tools can influence and improve the transparency and accountability of decision-making processes. Transparency on how decisions are promoted and are accounted for is essential for good governance, hence it is essential in achieving any grand challenge for sustainable development. Informing decision-makers on the influence of their used policy tools therefore aid with their decision-making process.

The approach of the research is also analytical in nature, by applying a theoretical framework to analyse cases such as the ones described in section 1.1. The Advocacy Coalition Framework will be used to conceptually model the case studies of Ring Utrecht/A27 and Lelystad Airport. This research will also result in a policy advice on how the use of procedural policy tools can be improved for decision-making and stakeholder' conflict resolution.

## 2. Formal role procedural policy tools & political landscape

### Netherlands

In this chapter the political landscape and pertinent legislative processes will be discussed. Firstly, a description of the 'Multi-Year Programme for Infrastructure, Spatial Planning and Transport' (MIRT) of the Netherlands will be presented, outlining the overall decision-making guidelines for large infrastructure projects. This programme provides governing authorities with the broad guidelines for initiating projects and the (legally required) analyses for each phase/decision. After elaborating the MIRT programme, relevant legislation for large infrastructure projects will be described. Finally, the political landscape will be presented, defining the (political) context in which the cases operate.

The background provided will be used as examples of how decision-making should theoretically take place. This can then be used for comparison with the processes of the cases, to determine whether and where discrepancies took place. Case-specific political and legislative factors will be discussed in their respective chapters.

#### 2.1 MIRT programme for large infrastructure projects

The MIRT programme is a development and improvement plan for the Netherlands' infrastructure and transport projects. These include development and maintenance of roads, rail- and waterways, airports, and public transport networks. It is overseen by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (MIEW), with implementation done by various government bodies and organizations on national and regional/municipal levels. It originates from the Multi-Year Infrastructure and Transport (MIRT) program of the 90's and has been developed into the MIRT in 2010.

An overview of the phases of the MIRT will be provided in this section and can be seen in figure 2.1 below.

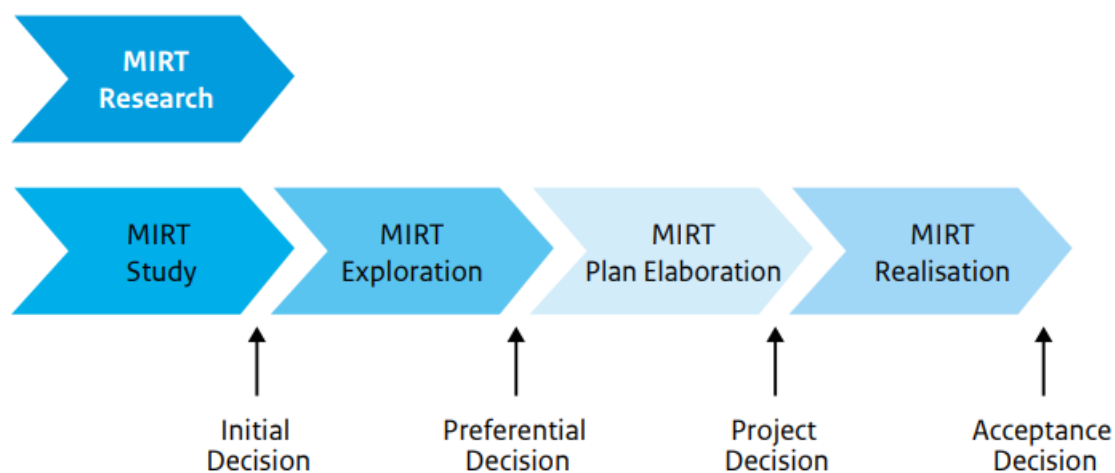


Figure 2.1: MIRT phases (Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, 2018, p. 3)

#### Study phase

The programme can be delineated into four phases, which may vary in length depending on the specifics of the project and its complexity. In general, the process is started through the 'initiation phase' which identifies the needs for new infrastructure or improvements for existing infrastructure. This is done at the start of each new year during the BO MIRT (Bestuurlijk Overleg in Dutch) where local and national governments discuss current infrastructure problems. This results in the 'Gebiedsagenda' (regional agenda in Dutch). There aren't specific guidelines on which societal factors should be used to determine the needs. However, often recurring ones include economic

development, ecological goals, adaptation to climate changes, and connectivity and changes in demand of existing transport networks (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2016). Agreements are made during the 'BO MIRT' on how the regional agenda should be undertaken and how progress is monitored (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2016). Concluding the 'BO MIRT', 'Initial decisions' are made on what projects to continue development and which projects to put on hold for further review.

#### Exploration phase & procedural policy tools

After identifying the societal needs and urgency, the project enters the exploration phase. During this phase, projects are further developed through the preparation of design plans and the evaluation of the environmental and social impacts of possible alternatives. The objective is to arrive at a "Preferential Decision: a well-grounded selection of the best solution, the legal procedure, and the funding method" (Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, 2018, p. 3). The preferential decision must include both a CBA as well as argumentation against the rejected alternatives. Although EIAs are not mandated by law, MIEW recommends that they be incorporated into the decision-making process, indicating that they are considered important (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2016). However, when projects exceed certain thresholds or meets specific case criteria, EIAs are obligated to be performed (Commissie m.e.r., n.d.). For instance, for projects where Natura2000 areas are included.

#### Plan elaboration- & realisation phase

The preferential decision is further developed during the 'plan elaboration phase', in which parties elaborate their designs with defined construction terms and requirements in order to tender the project (Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, 2018). After the design requirements have been met, a project decision is made and communicated to the parliament for approval. The design minimally requires definitions on "who, when and how people are involved in the project and how information is processed, and what legislative procedures must be followed" (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2016, p. 28) Acceptance of a project decision signifies the beginning of the realization phase, where the project is executed. The acceptance decision specifies when the project should be completed and is communicated to the parliament so that it can monitor the project.

## 2.2 Other relevant legislation for large infrastructure projects

Other legislation and procedures are also of importance to large infrastructure projects, while they aren't standardly included in the MIRT. This may be due to projects empirics, for instance projects involving national roads or other national infrastructure network problems with high complexity. The relevant legislation or influential procedures will be discussed below.

#### Formal role EIA

As mentioned above in 2.1, the EIA is also involved in the decision-making process. The EIA is required for (large) projects and is used as an aid to the decision-making process by providing information regarding possible environmental impacts and compensation of projects. Similar as the CBA, it does not hold formal authority for decisions, meaning it is not a prerequisite for projects (Girjasing, 2011). But like the CBA, it does hold influence as political information, especially with the (political) importance presently given to environmental impacts (Deltacommissie, 2008). Although the EIA doesn't have the statutory power to stop projects from moving forward, it does have a role in political discussions and negotiations. Therefore, it is frequently viewed as an administrative nuisance by formal authorities and initiators, resulting in the fact that "environment may not be weighed full-fledged during the decision-making process" (Girjasing, 2011, p. 42). Insinuating that the EIA is being conducted just to "check boxes" for the decision-making criteria. However, following

the 2019 'PAS-verdict' in the Netherlands, environmental impacts must be adequately accounted for throughout construction as future compensation for emissions cannot be used as present-day compensation during construction (Raad van State, 2019). Thus, stopping projects from acquiring appropriate licenses when environmental concerns are not adequately addressed prior to-, during- and post-construction. Thus, after the PAS-verdict, the EIA has gained considerable sway in the decision-making process.

#### 'Tracewet'

The 'Tracewet' (Trace is also a significant piece of legislation as it provides the formal authorization to initiate projects without veto interference. The 'Tracewet' applies to all construction or projects involving national roads (Rijkswaterstaat, n.d.). The 'Tracebesluit' is the minister of Infrastructure and Water Management's (MlEW) final power to decide whether the proposed alternative will be implemented. After the decision, policy actors may file an appeal, but they cannot veto the project (Rijkswaterstaat, n.d.). After the appeals period, either the "Tracebesluit" is modified based on the appeals or it is definitively authorized. Regional governing bodies are then tasked with adopting and implementing the policy (Rijkswaterstaat, n.d.). The Tracewet operates independently from the MIRT programme, as the Tracewet is aimed to maintaining quality of construction and maintenance of public infrastructure or transportation networks where the MIRT programme is more aimed at developing and improving existing infrastructure. Although the two programmes/acts operate independently, these may overlap depending on the specifics of the problem, for instance projects involving national roads.

#### WOB

There is also country-specific legislation on public administration in the Netherlands to promote government transparency and accountability. The 'Wet Openbaarheid Bestuur' (WOB) is a legal act that enables individuals to request access to government information and documents regarding the decisions and activities of government agencies. This is applicable to the national, regional, and municipal levels of government (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). The law was repealed in 2022 and replaced with the "Wet Openbaar Overheid," which is essentially the same law with additional definitions of what information can be withheld and a broader focus on government transparency. It specifies, for instance, how and in what format information that must be made public must be published. It also allows for the release of proposals, views, or advises of government officials, which was more restricted in the WOB (Rijksoverheid, 2022).

### 2.3 Political landscape

The political climate is also of relevance for this research. Where the legislation and MIRT programme provide guidelines and requirements for policies, the political climate provides the context in which these guidelines apply and are used. Relevant political factors and how these affect policy propositions will be discussed.

#### Multi-party parliament & coalition agreement

The Netherlands has a multi-party parliament with at least two distinct political parties in the government coalition (Ardc, Annema, & Van Wee, 2015). Distinct in this case being of diverse socioeconomic or religious origins. The objective of the governing coalition is to secure a majority vote in the Dutch parliament, thereby preventing the vetoing of proposed policies. Furthermore, "The foundation of a new government requires many compromises by political parties in different policy areas which, by means of a coalition agreement, become officially binding for the involved political parties and ministers" (Ardıç, Annema, & Van Wee, 2015, p. 120). Meaning that prior to policies being designed and proposed, these have been negotiated by involved parties, to allow

policy beliefs representation for each coalition party. With the policies becoming binding through the coalition agreement of the ruling government.

The Dutch political system relies heavily on consensus and corporatism, evidenced for example by the coalition agreement. Resulting in many discussions between the government and (policy) interest groups to decide on public policy (Andeweg & Irwin, 2009). Consensual political systems are often characterized by a limited ability for innovation (Fischer, 2014). Which was also found for the Dutch policy-making process, which moves slowly and leaves little room for novel departures from current policies (Andeweg & Irwin, 2009).

#### Formal authority of stakeholders

In varied degrees, political parties, ministers, and regional/local government agencies wield formal decision-making authority in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, for the sake of this study, formal decision-making authority will be characterized as veto power (Ardc, Anne, and Van Wee, 2015). This posits that the authority may be able to impose the decisions even when challenged with opposing coalitions that lack authority. This veto power is held by the ministries, and therefore political parties, that compose the governing coalition through the coalition agreement. Secondary policy actors, such as political parties not in the coalition agreement, wield secondary formal authority in which they do participate in the decision-making process but cannot ultimately block policies, even if they oppose them (Rijkswaterstaat, 2016). This results in a top-down hierarchy, with the national governing government holding the most, if not all, of the statutory authority over their policy proposals.

### 3. Advocacy Coalition Framework

This chapter will describe on The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), created by Paul Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith. The framework is designed to conceptually model and analyse public policy problems (Sabatier, 1988). Specifically, ‘wicked’ problems “involving substantial goal conflicts, important technical disputes, and multiple actors of several levels of government” (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 189). The analyses will be used to assess how the procedural policy tools influenced the decision-making process involving conflicting stakeholders. The framework and its key components will be presented and further elaborated on. Historical applications of the ACF for public policy problems will be described. How the framework’s key concepts and principles fit for analysing the influence of procedural policy tools for decision-making will be argued for in the respective sections.

The ACF lens will also provide a guide to determine relevant legislation and to conceptualize the political landscape of the Netherlands. This will help to establish the formal role of the procedural policy tools, as well as provide the context in which they are used. Furthermore, these are important elements for the ACF analysis of the case studies. The relevant legislation and the political landscape findings will be described in the chapter 3.

#### 3.1 Key concepts

Figure 3.1 below is the ACF visualised. The concepts will be elaborated on in the subsequent sections.

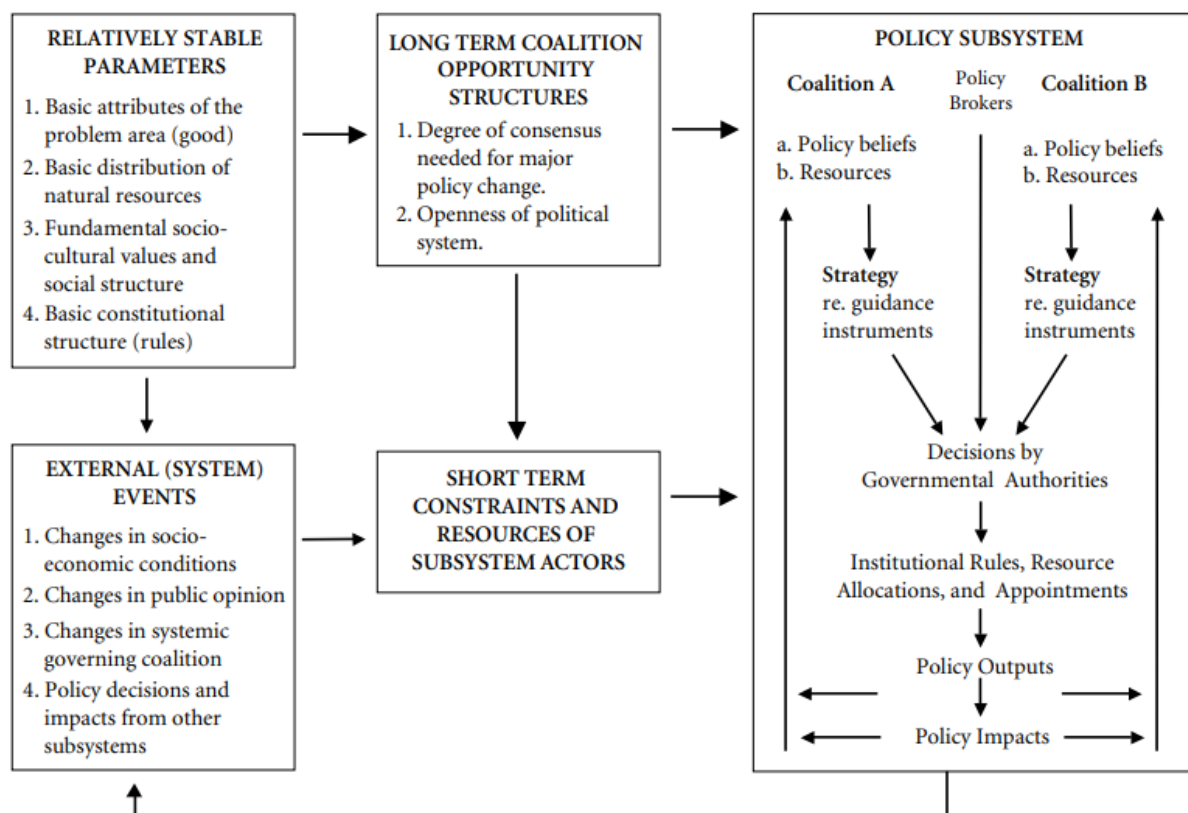


Figure 3.1: 2005 version of the ACF (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 202)

#### Stakeholders’ beliefs

One core assumption of the ACF is that policy actors in general engage in politics to transform their beliefs into policy (Cairney, Understanding public policy: theories and issues, 2019). Their beliefs are

founded on values that they find important, as well as how these need to be the guidelines for how to achieve policy goals. How policy goals are achieved is of importance, with the means to achieve the goals needing to be representative of their beliefs. The ACF suggests that to understand the complexity of real-world politics, one needs to focus on how policy actors themselves simplify the complexities enough to be able to act individually and as a coalition (Cairney, Understanding public policy: theories and issues, 2019).

### Advocacy coalitions

Policy actors identify and promote their beliefs, through which they can find other actors with similar beliefs. Through these actions they can form coalitions with others who share these beliefs or values (Cairney, 2012). A coalition would contain actors of a variety of positions, including non-government, and display coordinated activity. An important underlying assumption for the coalitions in the ACF is that losses will be remembered more than gains (Quattrone & Tversky, 1988; Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard, & Vu, 2017). With the effect that individuals may overestimate both power and malice of opponents (Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard, & Vu, 2017).

### Coalition opportunity structures

“Opportunity structures refer to relatively enduring features of a polity that affect the resources and constraints of subsystem actors” (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 200). Meaning, that these structures affect the resources and behaviour of coalitions. Sabatier and Weible have indicated 2 major variables: *degree of consensus needed for major policy change* & *openness of political system*. The degree of consensus refers to restraints in norms of consensus. Depending on the used norms, behaviour will adapt to these restrictions.

The openness of the political system is split up into two components: the number of instances/decision-making venues any major change needs to pass through, and the accessibility of each instance. Depending on the conditions found, the type of decision-making structure can be determined, seen in table 2.1, along with the accompanying parameters.

Table 3.1: Typology of coalition opportunity structures (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 201)

Openness of Political System	Degree of Consensus Needed for Major Policy Change		
	High	Medium	Low
High	Pluralist	Pluralist	
Medium	Recent Corporatist	Westminster	
Low	Traditional Corporatist		Authoritarian Executive

### Policy subsystems

Coalitions, and therefore also individual actors, operate within a policy sub-system. Sub-systems are dedicated to a specific policy issue, within a wider policymaking environment (Cairney, Understanding public policy: theories and issues, 2019). For example, the wider environment being a national policy-making agenda and the subsystem being on a specific agenda item. In the policy subsystem, coalitions compete to dominate the decision-making process.

### 3.2 Resources and resource distribution

In past research, resources used by coalitions have rarely been focussed on. However, using past research and case studies, Sabatier and Weible have defined and presented a typology for policy-relevant resources that can be used in the policy arena to influence decision-making. These are the following six (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, pp. 201-203):

1. Formal legal authority to make policy decisions
  - a. When actors of positions of legal authority are part of a coalition, the authority becomes a major resource to the coalition. Often dominant coalitions more members have positions of legal authority, allowing dominance over coalitions will less members of authoritative positions.
2. Public opinion
  - a. Public support for a coalition is resource for policy participants. Public support often translates to more electoral votes for coalition supporters for legislative and other formal positions.
3. Information
  - a. Information on problem severity and causes is also seen as an important resource. It is used to win political debates and battles against opponents. This involves also strategic use of information to consolidate coalition membership or positions.
4. Mobilize troops
  - a. Policy elites can also direct themselves to members of the public to engage in activities in support of coalitions. Often used by coalitions with little financial resources.
5. Financial resources
  - a. Used to purchase other resources.
6. Skillfull leadership
  - a. Skillfull leadership can influence the image of coalitions, efficient use of resources and attracting new resources. Skillfull leadership and entrepreneurs are seen as essential for actual changes in policies.

#### Four paths to policy change

In the ACF, conditions need to be met for major policy change to occur. Stakeholders are resistant to information that goes against/contradicts their own belief system (Sabatier, 1988). Therefore, to cause such a shift, conditions need to be met that facilitate the policy change. Originally, the ACF only had 2 defined paths for policy change, Policy-Oriented Learning and External Shocks/perturbations. Two alternative paths, internal shock and negotiated agreements, were also added to the ACF. The 4 paths are described below.

#### *Policy-oriented learning*

Policy actors and coalitions learn from historical policy implementation. This is a key difference from general policy learning, which is a relatively vague term for acquiring new knowledge or skills. Sabatier (1988, p. 155) describes policy-oriented learning as followed: *“policy-oriented learning refers to relatively enduring alterations of thought or behavioural intentions which result from experience and which are concerned with the attainment (or revision) of policy objectives. Policy-oriented learning involves [...] perceptions concerning external dynamics, and increased knowledge of the state of problem parameters and the factors affecting them”*. The ACF also assumes that coalition members attempt to better understand the world, to better further their policy objectives. How the knowledge is integrated with the beliefs of the actors and coalitions is what the ACF focusses on.



Learning occurs through the lens of the beliefs of the coalitions, in turn creating different interpretations of facts and events by differing coalitions who have differing beliefs (Cairney, *Understanding public policy: theories and issues*, 2019). Sabatier further describes that actors will resist information that suggests that their beliefs are invalid or unrealistic. In response, actors will use formal policy analyses to elaborate their own beliefs or to diminish the beliefs of opposing coalitions (Sabatier, *An advocacy coalition framework of policy change and the role of policy-oriented learning therein*, 1988). Learning therefore also becomes a political process.

#### *External shock*

External perturbations to the wider policy system are seen as crucial but by itself an insufficient condition for major policy change within a subsystem (Sabatier, 1988). External shocks examples are economic recessions, changing of ruling powers, (humanitarian) disasters, or outputs of other subsystems. Due to the shocks, policy actor behaviour may change accordingly, translating to shifting agenda items or focussing public focus towards different problems and attaching new weight to certain policy issues. Even for dominating coalitions shocks can cause major policy change, as the shock forces policy core belief changes.

#### *Internal shock*

Internal shocks are shocks within policy subsystems, for instance an oil spill affecting actors involved in the petroleum-subsystem. Shocks are described as focussing events within a policy subsystem, which attract attention to issues, bringing policy failures or neglect to light and facilitating new information (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). The balance of power within the subsystem may also shift accordingly to the shocks, creating the opportunity for major policy change.

Sabatier & Weible (2007, p. 205) further state that “Internal shocks that indicate monumental failures of the policies and behaviors of a dominant advocacy coalition also strongly affect the belief systems of policy participants”. For minority coalitions their policy core beliefs are reaffirmed, as the dominant beliefs led to the failure, causing increased membership of minority coalitions. In turn, the opposite holds for the dominant coalitions, who’s policy core beliefs and resulting policies effectiveness are being questioned. Internal shocks directly question policy core beliefs, where this is less clear with external shocks.

Both internal and external shocks cause redistribution of (political) resources, for instance by focussing on different problems that are seen as more urgent or pressing. As the wider system or internal subsystem have shifts in their conditions, power structures can also change potentially resulting in new coalitions and coalition structures. For example, multiple minority coalitions could merge into one or two competitive coalitions against the dominant one.

#### *Negotiated agreement*

When coalitions disagree over longer periods of time, major policy changes can still occur in the absence of shocks. The resulting policy change is achieved through negotiated agreements. Negotiated agreements is the result of combining the hypotheses of policy-oriented learning with the concept of alternative dispute resolution (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). In essence, this often occurs when there is a hurting stalemate, where progress on decisions must be made while coalitions have so far been unwilling to relent to each other. Often a policy broker is involved in facilitating the negotiated agreement, preventing the conflict to escalate beyond unreasonable levels (Sabatier & Weible, 2007).

### Procedural policy tool as path to policy change

Depending on the argumentation, a procedural policy tool can be seen as a form of any of the 4 paths to major policy change. Depending on the context of the tool usage, it can become a shock to the policy system, provide information for POL, or be used in negotiated agreements. Which contexts apply in practice, and which result in major policy changes, is the interest of this research. The policy changes would indicate levels of compromise, signalling changing levels of conflict (Weible & Heikkila, 2017). How and if procedural policy tools such as the CBA and the EIA cause these changes, or whether beliefs were changed due to other events will be further researched.

### 3.3 Conflict intensity levels

Weible & Heikkila developed the policy conflict framework (PCF) as an alternative based on the ACF, with more emphasis on policy conflicts (Weible & Heikkila, 2017). Although the framework could be used for this research since it focusses on the policy conflicts and their sources, the ACF is more elaborated on the role of information and research for decision-making. Which is also more the focus of this research. This research focusses more on the role of policy resources (i.e., procedural policy tools) for decision-making, and their role on policy conflicts. Thus, making the ACF seems to a better fit over the PCF. However, the spectrum of policy conflict levels from the PCF will be used to characterize the level of conflict. The spectrum is shown in figure 3.3 below.

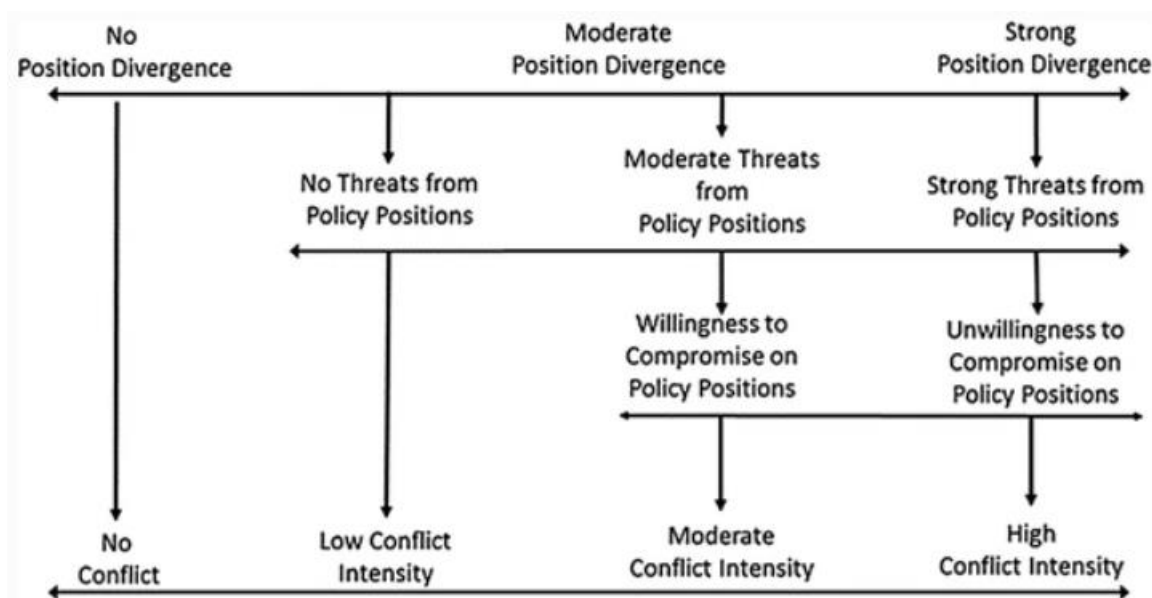


Figure 3.3: Intensity spectrum of policy conflict (Weible & Heikkila, 2017, p. 30)

### 3.4 Historical ACF applications and findings

Since its conception, the ACF has been used for various contexts and settings. The ACF has also been revised by Sabatier multiple occasions, incorporating new findings on the usage and empirical knowledge of the framework (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Sabatier and Weible have outlined most usages of the ACF and categorized them based on policy domains. Most cases analysed by Sabatier & Weible were based in the United States and involved water-management. However, over time more studies have applied the ACF to different policy topics including infrastructure and (spatial) planning (Wolsink, 2003; Greenaway & Grantham, 2000; Owens, 2004). Most applications involved national level of governance across various sectors of public government (Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard, & Vu, 2017). Although the geographic location, scope and policy topic varied, they all stressed the importance of stakeholder participation in the decision-making. With the research indicating how

institutions surrounding the policy subsystem can affect the possibilities for stakeholders to become involved.

Most ACF research identified the policy-oriented learning pathway for minor policy change (Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard, & Vu, 2017). Policy-oriented learning may facilitate minor changes, in conjunction with internal or external shocks it could lead to major policy change (Jenkins-Smith, Nohrstedt, Weible, & Sabatier, 2014; Weible, Sabatier, & McQueen, 2009). In over a third of historical applications of the ACF, an external shock to the policy subsystem paired with policy-oriented learning caused significant policy change (Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard, & Vu, 2017). Suggesting that this combination is the most common identified pathway to policy change in historical ACF applications. Since the addition of the “negotiated agreements” pathway, it has been often identified in subsequent ACF applications (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard, & Vu, 2017). Applications of ACF that identified negotiations also often involved policy brokers (Pierce, Peterson, Jones, Garrard, & Vu, 2017). Policy brokers are stakeholders whose primary concern is to keep political conflict within acceptable limits while reaching a reasonable solution (Sabatier, 1988). Whether procedural policy tools affect these types of policy changes, coalitions, or belief changes, can help determine the influence of the tool on the decision-making process and policy cycle.

## 4. Methods

This chapter describes the methods used to answer the research questions. The design of the research will be delineated. After discussing the general design, the specific methods used for the research design will be discussed. Relevant factors will also be addressed.

### 4.1 Design

This research relies on case studies to analyse and comprehend the process-dynamics of procedural policy tools in infrastructure projects. The case studies involving (political) conflict between stakeholders during the decision-making process. For this study, a multiple embedded case design is implemented (Yin, 2011). This design permits theoretical replications to generate new yet anticipated results, or direct replications to test for similar outcomes (Yin, 2011). Multiple cases are necessary because they permit cross-case comparisons. Which in turn generates further (empirical) data to provide confidence in the findings. This assurance is necessary for drawing more generalizable conclusions about the impact of analytical policy tools. The cases will be analysed through the lens of the ACF.

### 4.2 Case studies

Case studies will be used to analyse the role of policy tools in the decision-making process. Case studies offer insights for new research areas or areas with inadequate existing theory, which traditional approaches may not achieve (Eisenhardt, 1989). In the study by Yin (Yin, 2011), there are three situations where case studies could be relevant. The application relevant to this research is that the research questions are descriptive and explanatory. Meaning that they aim to determine what events have occurred, or how these events were made to happen. This provides an opportunity for case studies to be used. Furthermore, case studies also provide empirical (qualitative) knowledge rather than using only data sets as foundation for analysis (Yin, 2011). Given the human factors in this research, real world empirical context will allow to better understand the complexities of phenomena.

There is a trade-off between time available for research and the level of depth that can be reached. Since case studies benefit from using multiple sources of evidence, the aim is to have fewer case studies but to go into more depth. Therefore, two cases of complex socio-technical problems and projects in the Netherlands will be examined, to determine how and to what extent policy tools have (externally) influenced the decision-making process. Furthermore, it is chosen to use two cases where (on the outset) different outcomes have occurred: a case where (seemingly) national interests prevailed and one with the opposite outcome. Through analysing two cases in depth and using the comparison between the cases, the design will allow to research the impact of analytical policy tools on conflicts between national and regional/other stakeholders and interests. Although comparisons can be made for a general conclusion, it should be noted that only two cases are used. Although using more cases would be beneficial for the strength of the conclusions, the number of cases is constrained due to the available time for the research. Looking into more cases in depth, and including all the phases of the decision-making process, would be too time consuming and is therefore constrained.

#### Case criteria

The motivation for using case studies in this research is to add knowledge to the current research. However, out of the case options a selection needs to be made which allows case comparisons. The following criteria have been used for the case selection:

1. Cases must be of minimal 10-year length, with a (temporary) final decision made.

This criterion is important since this time span is often minimally needed to observe value and belief changes of stakeholders. As belief system changes are used to measure conflict between stakeholders, the minimal time span is needed for the research to have value. Therefore, this is one of the most important criteria. A final policy decision, or temporary one, is also needed to indicate that final policies have been formed. This allows to analyse cases for policy changes within the decision-making process. If the decision is yet to be made, it will be more difficult to determine whether stakeholders have changed perspectives through e.g., coalition changes or other actions.

## 2. Cases need significant (public) levels of conflict between levels of government.

The cases are required to have observable conflict between national and others' interests and proposed solutions. As there is always a level of conflict between involved stakeholders, cases with high levels of conflict will allow to better understand the fundamental conflicts between stakeholders since high levels of conflict suggest fundamental policy core conflicts. These can therefore be more accurately described for the analysis. When the conflict is also public, through public statements or other forms, more data is expected since statements will be made in the first place, ensuring better data availability. The conflict intensity spectrum as described in chapter 2.3 will be used to identify whether cases have the minimal level of policy conflict.

## 3. Single country

The aim is to use cases of a single country. This is due to the political and legislative climate being consistent across cases, as well as stakeholders having consistent ideologies across the cases. By having more consistency between the cases, findings can potentially be more generalizable. Given that only two cases are being used in the research, having diverse cases could provide novel findings but then these are difficult to control for. If the research were to include more cases, cross country comparison would be interesting to include but for this research to maintain better cross case comparability and control, the decision is made for the cases to be of a single country. As there already has been research done in the Netherlands for conflict in decision making (Mensink, 2021) and the role of CBA in the decision-making (Rienstra, 2008; Annema, Frenken, Koopmans, & Kroesen, 2017), this research will continue expanding using Dutch cases as these can then be used in accordance with the previous research' results. In turn hopefully leading towards more generalizable findings and recommendations.

## 4. Cases need to be infrastructure projects involving Rijkswaterstaat and/or Ministry of Infrastructure & Water-management.

Having a single infrastructure sector for both cases would improve cross case comparisons, however it was chosen that this does not have to be done. Given the first two criteria, finding cases in similar infrastructure sectors proved to be difficult. It also didn't necessarily add more value to the research, as criteria 1 or 2 often was not met. Therefore, the decision is made that the project needs to involve infrastructure but isn't limited by a single sector. By choosing infrastructure projects, CBA usage is ensured since this is legally required through the MIRT programme. By having the national institution Rijkswaterstaat involved, complications for regional implementation of the national agenda are also investigated in this research.

## 5. Data availability

Data needs to be readily available for the cases. Data includes a CBA performed, ideally by each coalition. Other data on the decision-making process is also needed to better understand the process leading towards final decisions and conflict resolutions. Since large cases with high levels of

conflict are chosen, good data availability is expected since these involve more guidelines for analyses and (political) discourse.

#### *Case selection process*

As the topic of this research concerns national policy implementation at local levels, choice for cases is large. The criteria described in 4.2 allow for multiple potential cases to be used for this research. Varying cases with diverse socio-technological and economical contexts were considered. The decision was made for the 'A27-highway expansion' and 'the opening of Lelystad Airport', cases also mentioned in chapter 1. The reasoning behind this decision will be explained below.

#### *Time length and reviews of procedural policy tool assessments*

Two significant criteria are the 10-year minimal length of cases, while including a (temporary) final decision with a known policy proposal. This is fundamental requirement for the ACF to become applicable. The ACF foundations state that the minimal length is required for beliefs- and policy changes to occur. Although it is possible for changes to occur in smaller periods of time, the timespan is also needed enable assessment of procedural policy tools during the decision-making process. Meaning that performed analyses and assessments are reviewed on their assumptions and methodology. As mentioned in chapter 1, transparency of CBAs is needed for flaws and errors to be found, for instance through second opinions. This allows to determine contrasting beliefs between coalitions, as they may use different parameters due to beliefs. Cases such as the construction of Datacentres for Facebook in Zeewolde are therefore not chosen. Although the case topic lends itself for this research, its timespan is too short, causing also limited available data for the case study. By having the long timespan as criterium, other criteria are also (partially) facilitated.

For case selection CBAs also need to have been performed by the national government or official institutions, as these are designed to be included in the decision-making process due to existing Dutch legislation. CBAs performed by non-government institutions still hold a place within the decision-making process, yet it is unclear to what extent these are included in the decision-making since analysis are also subject to various requirements for conducting analyses. Performing and using of policy tools is therefore highly (financial) resource-dependent, which are often only readily available for national institutions such as Rijkswaterstaat (Commissie Schoof, 2013; Sabatier & Weible, The advocacy coalition framework: Innovations and clarifications, 2007). Results from nationally conducted CBAs, and nationally checked EIAs, need to be included in the decision-making for large infrastructure projects whereas third-party analyses don't have this binding requirement. Although they can be used in the discussion for policies, they don't hold a formal role compared to nationally conducted or commissioned ones through the MIRT program (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2016). Therefore, cases that don't include these (commissioned) CBAs won't be selected as it is unsure whether third-party CBAs were included in the decision-making process. This makes that only cases with major (infrastructure) projects can be selected, as these require either by legislation or political demand to have CBAs or EIAs to be performed.

#### *Moderate to high levels of policy conflict*

Public levels of conflict between levels of government, including citizen participation, is also of high importance for this research. As the research questions indicate, the influence of policy tools in the decision-making process when confronted with conflicting stakeholders is explored, with emphasis on conflict between levels of government. Where the conflict between stakeholders and levels of government isn't present, the tools' influence is of lesser importance. This is due to that the political uses won't be don't by stakeholders, as there is less discussion on the policy alternatives. Cases where there may be conflict, but not significant enough for opposition to continue, will also not be

chosen. Cases such as the windmill parks in the Dutch Veluwe, concerning deforestation of protected nature areas for windmill parks to support the energy transition, are not taken for this reasoning. Although the case example potentially can be used for this research, opposition already indicated at an early stage to discontinue protesting the already approved constructions and are focussing now on new areas which may be chosen for new windmill parks (Actiecomité Voorthuizen Windmolens NEE, 2019).

In general, cases where policy solutions are decided but locations for implementation need to be chosen, such as for the windmill parks for energy transition, will not be selected. It is expected that policy tools won't have significant influence on the policy changes or the decision-making process. It is expected that policy core beliefs remain, which is to support the energy transition through windmill-parks or other sustainable alternatives (Wing; Alterra; Bosch & Van Rijn; Student Hogeschool Van Hall Larenstein, 2016). Meaning that there are no threats to from policy positions, leading to low conflict intensity. The conflict level also affects the media coverage, which is relatively lower for these cases of lower conflict. Leading to less data availability and making these cases less fitting for this research (Mensink, 2021).

### 4.3 Case operationalisation

Case studies are still only theoretical and need to be operationalised for this research to add value towards existing literature and answering the research questions.

Firstly, for each case a timeline will be constructed to determine how the decision-making process took place. This also allows to determine the context of the cases, filling in parameters and guidelines as set out by the ACF.

Using the constructed timeline, the ACF will be used as structure for the analysis to determine the influence of analytical policy tools on the value conflict between stakeholders. Timelines will be split into different phases, focussing on decision moments, information processing, stakeholder behaviour, as well as shocks to the policy system. By splitting the timeline into different phases, changes can be observed, as well as providing context for the analysis through the ACF lens. Using knowledge of the ACF factors, such as resources and the beliefs mechanisms of policy stakeholders, changes to the policy system can be analysed. Value and belief change findings will be based on the data found through empirical research of the cases. Stakeholder position changes on policies, or statements and actions indicating beliefs contradicting political parties' ideologies will be viewed as beliefs or value changes. How and where procedural policy tools influence the policy- and decision-making process will then be the focus. Aiming to determine how the procedural policy tools' use may have induced changes. However, relevant documents or reports not specifically related to a policy tool will also be investigated. This is done to determine the relative influence of other types of reports/documents on the decision-making process compared to procedural policy tools. In turn helping to determine whether the tools influence on conflict levels during decision-making is significant or not.

Using this information and the findings, a conclusion will be made for each case on how analytical policy tools may have influenced conflicts between stakeholders of differing governmental authority. The outcomes will then be cross compared to form a more general conclusion on how the policy tools have affected process. Depending on the outcomes, improvements for (regional) policy implementation and possible (procedural) improvements will be suggested.

#### 4.4 Data collection

Literature, grey and scientific, used for this research is primarily found through online search engines, using Google Scholar primarily for scientific literature and using Google for related public documents and statements. Literature used will be in English or Dutch. Searches were also directed by insights gained from initial searches as well as personal insights/knowledge concerning public policy. The use of Google Search engine was to reduce time searching on public domains such as that of Rijkswaterstaat for specific documents related to the cases, as well as to find related grey literature such as news articles and public statements. Similar as the snowballing done for the literature review, documents found that provided bibliographies or other related (public) domains were explored after the initial findings.

#### 4.5 Process tracing

For this research, process tracing will be used. As described by Collier (Collier, 2011, p. 824): “As a tool of causal inference, process tracing focuses on the unfolding of events or situations over *time*. Yet grasping this unfolding is impossible if one cannot adequately describe an event or situation at one point in time”. If one wants to understand and properly analyse the process of change and sequence, key steps need to be defined and described. Descriptions will therefore start through identifying key and specific moments during the process, which will allow the analysis of change and sequence.

In this research, the applied process tracing method will be for theory building purposes. As mentioned in chapter 2, existing literature has not researched in the causal mechanisms of analytical policy tools on the decision-making process as well as the potential influence for value changes. Process tracing for theory building uses structured analysis of empirical material to link outcomes with (sets of) causes present in multiple cases so that findings may be generalized (Beach, 2017). In short, it aims to answer the question of “how did we get here?” (Frieden, 1986, p. 582; Swedberg, 2012, pp. 6-7).

The influence analytical policy tools have on the decision-making process and policy cycle will be explored through defining and structuring the key moments, and how stakeholders have acted accordingly, e.g., through public statements or other coordinated activity. As mentioned through Chapter 2, the exact role CBAs and EIAs in influencing value changes is unclear, and only final values were often included in past research. Whether it was the cause for changes or if it held less influence is unclear and can be explored through characterization of key moments during the policy cycle and decision-making process. Therefore theory-building process tracing lends itself well to this research, as the relationship between analytical policy tools and value & belief changes during the decision-making process can be explored.

The process tracing will be done through several steps. First data, e.g., general facts and guidelines of the decision-making process for infrastructure projects, will be assembled and analysed. This will allow to understand where the analytical policy tools where, how and should be used during the process. Afterwards cases will be analysed similarly to find whether the cases fitted the guidelines or deviated from them and how this has affected the conflict between stakeholders and their values (changes). Policy documents as well as interviews will be used for this purpose.

The aim of the process tracing is to identify the values and belief system changes stakeholders may have experienced as a result of (the introduction of) analytical policy tools. To do so, data needs to be analysed and operationalised for the theoretical concepts of the ACF. To do so, value coding will be applied, which is described below. Furthermore, process tracing will also aid with identifying



whether there were elements of the hypotheses presented in Chapter 3.3 present in the cases, and if these had causalities with proceeding events or decisions.

#### 4.6 Research questions' methods

As mentioned in chapter 1, this question will be answered via sub-questions for which the methods used will be described. All cases will be analysed using the ACF, which also considers the social impacts and influences of external events or (socio-technical) policy changes. This is done to minimize the use of frameworks that may (theoretically) contradict one another, thereby complicating or invalidating the findings. In addition, process tracing will be utilized to investigate and comprehend the causal relationships between decision-making process events.

1. What was the formal role of the policy tool in the decision-making process?

This question will be answered through the reading and comprehension of guidelines for large infrastructure and complex socio-technical projects, as well as the application of policy tools found within the guidelines. Due to the ACF's stipulation, the cases analyzed will be at least ten years old. Also considered will be how these factors have evolved over time. The national guidelines established by the Dutch government will be determined using public policy documents. Other public documents that detail the events leading up to the usage of the policy tool will also be used, such as documents pertaining to project planning. Due to Dutch legislation mandating openness, such as the Wet Openbaar Bestuur (WOB), these documents are frequently available.

2. What was the policy tools' influence, on the agenda setting for that shaping and changing of policy alternatives and what were the implications, if any, of the policy tools' influence?

This will be answered through case studies, which will be further described below in section 4.4. Process tracing is used to determine the events in the cases and to analyse them. Data is collected through public documents and grey literature. Public documents will also include reports of council meetings and project/case specific reports to give insight in the external impact of the policy tools on the decision-making process, not just the internal workings and directly related actions of the policy tool. Public statements made by relevant (political) figures will also be used to provide additional information on stakeholder stances and nuances within the decision-making process. These statements are used to help with identifying the experienced impact of the policy tools by stakeholders of differing levels of government.

3. How did the policy tool inform stakeholders in the decision-making process and what were the implications, if any, for stakeholders during the decision-making process.

This question will be answered through the ACF, applying it to the case studies. The process tracing done for sub-question 1 and 2 will also be used towards answering this question and expanded through sub-question 3. Data used will be public policy documents, including procedural documents. Also, grey literature such as statements regarding the information releases of the policy tools within the decision-making process will be used. The case studies will provide empirical knowledge on the application of policy tools and how tools' information is used in the decision-making.

4. How did the policy tool affect stakeholders' allegiance to coalitions and policies and how were position changes, if any, translated in the final policy?

This question will be answered through the case studies and the ACF. This question will be related to the level of conflict between stakeholders. Information found will help to understand whether policy tools have changed the perspectives of stakeholders or whether other (procedural) factors

influenced stakeholders. Process tracing is therefore also used, similar to the previous sub-questions.

#### 4.7 Discussion of research design

The research design does hold flaws due to the specificity of case selection and general approach. One is the small sample size of cases as a result of the case criteria, which lead to the decision for two cases in varying complexity. The cases also have a high level of conflict between the levels of government, and the coalitions, on the policy core beliefs. Given that the cases hold much conflict, and processes are relatively delineated by legislation such as the MIRT, outcomes between the cases may not necessarily differ too much from each other regarding the influence of policy tools. Although the outcome of the policies may differ between the cases, with one with national government prevailing and one with regional government prevailing, results on the influence of policy tools may still be the same. This could be due to the case criteria and selection, making that it might not provide new or diverse insights. For instance using cases where there is less political or ideological conflict between coalitions could provide different insights on the influence of policy tools on the decision-making process compared to outcomes from the Ring Utrecht and Lelystad Airport cases.

The sample size of cases used in this research is also low, with only two cases being used. Using more cases would be beneficial for the research, however this is not done due to time restraints. Yet having 1 or 2 additional cases to be analysed with more diverse parameters/contexts compared to Ring Utrecht or Lelystad Airport could provide more insights and would allow for more generalization of the findings on policy tool influence on the decision-making process with policy conflicts between stakeholders. These implications therefore need to be acknowledged when analysing the findings of the case studies.

## 5. Ring Utrecht

This chapter analyses the Ring Utrecht case. The purpose of this study is to determine how procedural policy tools were utilised in the decision-making process and their impact on (intermediate) policy decisions and conflict in the case of Ring Utrecht. This chapter's structure is as follows: The phases of the project will be outlined to provide structure and context to the case. Where and when procedural policy tools were used during the decision-making process, as well as how they affected subsequent processes/decisions, will also be investigated. The ACF will be utilised to determine the impact and influence of analytical policy tools on the decision-making process. The outcomes of this chapter can then be used in conjunction with those of chapter 6 to compare the application and influence of procedural policy tools in the decision-making process.

### 5.1 Project phases & Timeline

The project was delineated by Rijkswaterstaat into 3 phases, and this will be used as initial structure for the analysis. For each phase, actions by policy actors are documented with the aim to link these with (policy) goals of the actors. The aim of this was to determine involved stakeholders and to define their policy beliefs, as these are the foundations of policy goals. The current timeline of the project is 2005-2022, with the final decision being expected in 2023.

The project Ring Utrecht is aimed towards reducing the levels of congestions in central location of the road-network of the Netherlands, with the road capacity reaching its maximum (Rijkswaterstaat, 2016). Figure 5.1 below gives an overview of the project phases.

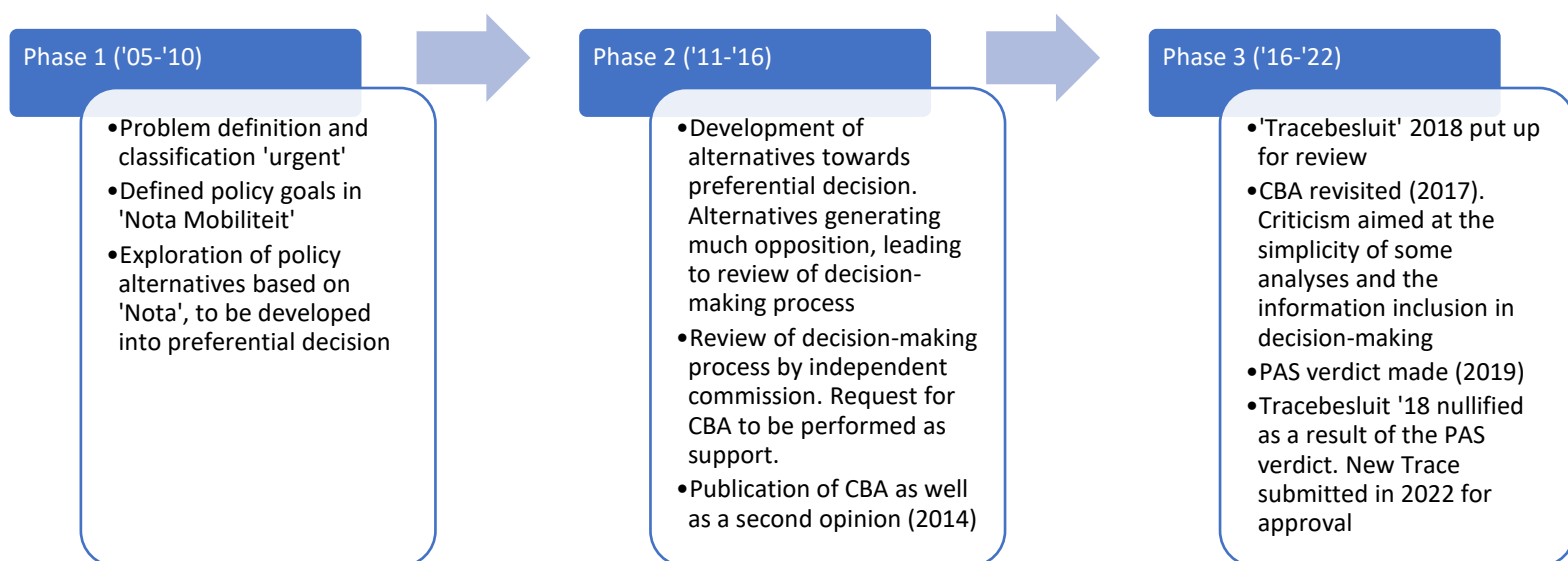


Figure 5.1: Project phases overview

#### Phase 1 (2005-2010)

The first phase is between 2005-2010, where the preferential decision was determined. All involved policy actors in the arena acknowledged the issue that congestion at Ring Utrecht was reaching critical levels, limiting the mobility of the transport network. Thus, intervention would be needed before 2020 as levels would then surpass the maximum capacity (Rijkswaterstaat, 2016). To this end, goals for traffic levels and benefits were defined in the "Nota Mobiliteit". These factors are related to reducing travel time and jams, during and outside of rush hours. The first phase resulted in a choice for the preferred policy alternative, which will be tested on environmental impacts by the "Commissie MER" on whether the information of the impacts can be adequately included in the decision-making process. In essence, an initial environmental impact analysis/exploration was made

for the to be chosen alternatives. The conclusion by Commissie MER was that impacts could be adequately included in the decision-making process, and all alternatives would have benefits. Yet there were significant differences in effectivity and impacts across the alternatives, indicating the need for further exploration in the alternatives (Commissie MER, 2011).

### Phase 2 (2011-2016)

The second phase was aimed towards developing the preferred alternative into a preferential decision which can be used for the “Tracebesluit”.

During phase 2 (2011-2016) the goal for Rijkswaterstaat was to develop an alternative that could be approved for the Tracebesluit. The policy alternative chosen was to expand the road with new lanes within Amelisweerd, requiring deforestation in that area. During this phase, after the decision for the preferred alternative, more controversy clouded the project as impacts to affected regions became clear (Kracht van Utrecht, 2010). In part due to the public opposition against the preferred alternative, an independent commission ‘Commissie Schoof’ was introduced to test whether decisions, both content- and procedural-wise, were done adequately and correctly (Commissie Schoof, 2013). The conclusion of Commissie Schoof was that the decisions were done correctly, but it recommended that a CBA should be performed to support the decision for the road expansion (Commissie Schoof, 2013). Yet prior to conducting the CBA in 2013, MleW already gave notice to the parliament that the preferential decision would include the road expansions (Schultz van Haegen-Maas Geesteranus, 2013). The municipality Utrecht indicated that they explicitly were against the proposal for road expansion, and that they weren’t later included in the process of conducting the CBA in 2014 (Hooijdonk, 2014; Rijkswaterstaat, 2016).

### Release of CBA during the decision-making (2014)

Furthermore, during phase 2, the preferential decision would be finalised by determining the optimal solution per region of Ring Utrecht (Rijkswaterstaat, 2016). During these explorations, the CBA was performed to aid with the decision-making, as requested by Commissie Schoof (Commissie Schoof, 2013; Decisio, 2014). The CBA was only performed for the preferential decision, not for other possible alternatives (Decisio, 2014). The results of the CBA were that the project was deemed beneficial, in the event of very high economic growth and continued reliance on fossil fuels. Yet even in these circumstances, the benefits were not significantly higher than the costs. The scenario’s used were also relatively dated, as these were constructed in the earliest phases of the exploration (phase 1, around 2000). A second opinion performed by the Netherlands’ Bureau for Economic Policy (CPB) also indicated a high economical risk for the project (Centraal Planbureau, 2014). The CPB also suggested that delay of the project to gather more information of impacts and costs would be beneficial for decision-making, as delaying wouldn’t yield significant higher costs (Centraal Planbureau, 2014). During this period Kerngroep Ring Utrecht (KRU), a coalition comprised of political parties and (citizen) interest groups against the road expansion, also used Rijkswaterstaat’s CBA as a basis but with assumptions of less reliance on fossil fuels and lower economic growth (Cats, 2016). In KRU’s analysis, the benefit-cost ratio of preferred alternative became negative, indicating that assumption-choices and scenarios can influence the outcome of the CBA, with vastly different results all whose validity could be argued for.

### Phase 3 (2016-2022)

Phase 3 of the decision-making process was more procedural focussed, as the preferred alternative was decided during phase 2. During phase 3 (2016-2022), the preferential decision and the opposition’s 2x6 variant are reviewed for the ‘Tracebesluit’. As mentioned, if the Trace proposal is signed by MleW, the policy would become definite and start project construction (Rijkswaterstaat,

n.d.). In 2016, the first iteration of the Trace was proposed. This was revised and in 2018 again put up for review. However, this 'Tracebesluit' was ultimately nullified based on wrongful emission calculations of the construction for the expansion by the Council of State (Rijkswaterstaat, 2019). In 2019 the Dutch government acknowledged the "stikstofcrisis" (greenhouse-gasses crisis), revising norms and guidelines that major constructions need to adhere to receive construction permits (Raad van State, 2019).

As the societal issue was still classified as 'urgent' by all policy actors, a new 'Tracebesluit' was constructed by Rijkswaterstaat. Rijkswaterstaat used the preferential decision, including the 2x7 variant, for the 'Tracebesluit 2020'. However, they now included more direct environmental compensation for the deforestation of Amelisweerd (Rijkswaterstaat, 2020). This was again met with strong opposition from KRU as well as the involved political actors such as the municipalities and province Utrecht. The opposition's new aim was to prevent the road expansion and the deforestation of Amelisweerd altogether rather than compromise on policy elements (Hoekstra, 2020; DUIC, 2020). In 2022, the revised version is again put up for review by MlEW, with the aim of using the 2x7 variant from 2018 (DUIC, 2022). This was argued for as the most viable solution, both economically and socially, as according to MlEW the other alternatives did not yield effective results (DUIC, 2022; NOS, 2020). However, in the Tracebesluit the option is made for the opposing parties to provide a different alternative specifically for the area Amelisweerd. If the alternative provided by opponents would be equal 2x7 variant in terms of mobility benefits, they could be switched (Harbers, 2022). The opponents' first iteration of the alternative is expected in fall 2022, the finalized version provided in early 2023 (Gemeente Utrecht, 2022). If the 'Tracebesluit' including the 2x7 variant is accepted before, then for the region Amelisweerd the variant could still be altered to the proposed alternative the process (Harbers, 2022). It is argued by MlEW that preventing further delay is crucial, as the traffic levels are reaching critical levels and need to be addressed prior to these levels (Harbers, 2022). Arguing for continuing the approval process while the decision-making for the alternative is not yet completed.

#### *Revisited CBA (2017)*

During the third phase, the CBA was revisited. The revision was commissioned by KRU, where the original CBA was commissioned by MlEW (Decisio, 2017). The motivation for KRU being the earlier mentioned criticisms of the CBA performed in 2014. The outcomes described in the revisited CBA was that the project would still be a robust alternative to the congestion issues, although it is stated that the conclusion is based on a global calculation/interpretation of the costs and that it is highly dependent on the congestion-developments especially in the long run (Decisio, 2017). The advice given, based on the revisitation, was to revisit the (traffic) analyses to include all bottlenecks (Decisio, 2017). The fact that the CBA uses simplified global analyses for determining traffic flows and congestion, and to gain better insights into the traffic flow in the whole network, were the arguments by the opposition for possible revisions and re-evaluations (Cats & Gallé, 2017).

The revision of the CBA also pointed out that information inclusion in the decision-making should be re-evaluated, with argumentation since the new scenarios as well as the used low discount rate could influence the (expected) outcome of the project greatly (Decisio, 2017). Yet Decisio still state that the conclusions of their original CBA would remain, and that another new CBA would only be meaningful when there are more alternatives to weigh. The revised CBA was again only performed for the 2x7 variant, as other alternatives weren't revised or provided for the CBA (Decisio, 2017).

Another conclusion in the revised CBA was that delay of the project until 2030 wouldn't yield significant higher costs compared to the current process of expediting the 2x7 variant (Decisio,

2017). This is in contrast with the earlier classification of ‘urgent’ for the project, where immediate action is predicated (in 2017).

## 5.2 ACF application Ring Utrecht

In this section, the ACF will be applied to the case Ring Utrecht. The problem area and relevant elements for the analyses through the ACF lens will be described in this section. The full ACF diagram can be found in Appendix A.

First the relatively stable parameters will be discussed, to provide structure to the case. These can be found in Figure 5.2.1 below. Afterwards the project will be delineated into periods which will be centred around the CBA and EIA.

The project Ring Utrecht has been delineated by Rijkswaterstaat in 3 phases, which were described above. As this research focuses on the role of CBAs and analytical policy tools, the project timeline can be structured into 3 different periods with more emphasis on the CBA. These periods are described as ‘pre-CBA’, ‘Emissions mandate’, and the ‘Project initiation’. This structuring is done to highlight the context surrounding decisions at periods when policy tools were used or had influence on the project.

### Period 1: Pre-CBA (2005-2013)

Basic attributes problem area	Resources for coalitions	Socio-cultural values and structure	Constitutional rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade-off between mobility improvement and nature conservation</li> <li>• Economic investments and benefits of policies also of importance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal legal authority to make policy decisions: Municipalities have supervisory authority but ultimately decisions are made by Rijkswaterstaat/MieW;</li> <li>• Public opinion: public opinion divided but mostly favoured towards opponents. Increased importance for economic costs due to crisis 2008.</li> <li>• Information: favoured for government coalition, demonstrated by the fact that they have earlier access to results of research (e.g., Schoof report)</li> <li>• Mobilize troops: used by opponents through public demonstrations. More available for opponents, less for government coalition. Often used against public policy by opposition. However can also be used by national government, evidenced by 2010 reduction of nature conservation policies</li> <li>• Financial resources: the government coalition holds most resources, municipalities and provinces less available as shown when analyses were initiated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top down hierarchy. Regional implementation for issue that is regarded national in nature (by government). National government holds final legislative authority over public policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MIT programme for Ontwerp-Tracebesluit.</li> <li>• Coalition Agreement formed which includes multiple parties to undersign the policy.</li> <li>• Tracewet 2011</li> </ul>

Figure 5.2.1: Relatively Stable Parameters Ring Utrecht

### Coalitions

Two distinct coalitions can be defined in the policy subsystem. The first being the ‘government coalition’, which comprises of (national) political parties holding a majority vote in the parliament. And the opposition coalition, comprised of the other political parties as well as interest groups and citizen initiatives. The opposing coalition will be referred to as KRU, the earlier mentioned coalition in section 5.2 ‘Phase 2’. Between 2005-2013, there were 2 government coalitions, meaning differing political parties. However, 2 right-wing oriented parties were present in both iterations. CDA was

included in both coalitions and was the largest/dominant party in the first coalition, while the VVD was the dominant/largest political party in the second coalition. Both parties view nature as to be utilized to society's benefit, while CDA also stresses more importance to preserve nature, so that it won't be completely removed (Oudman, 2021).

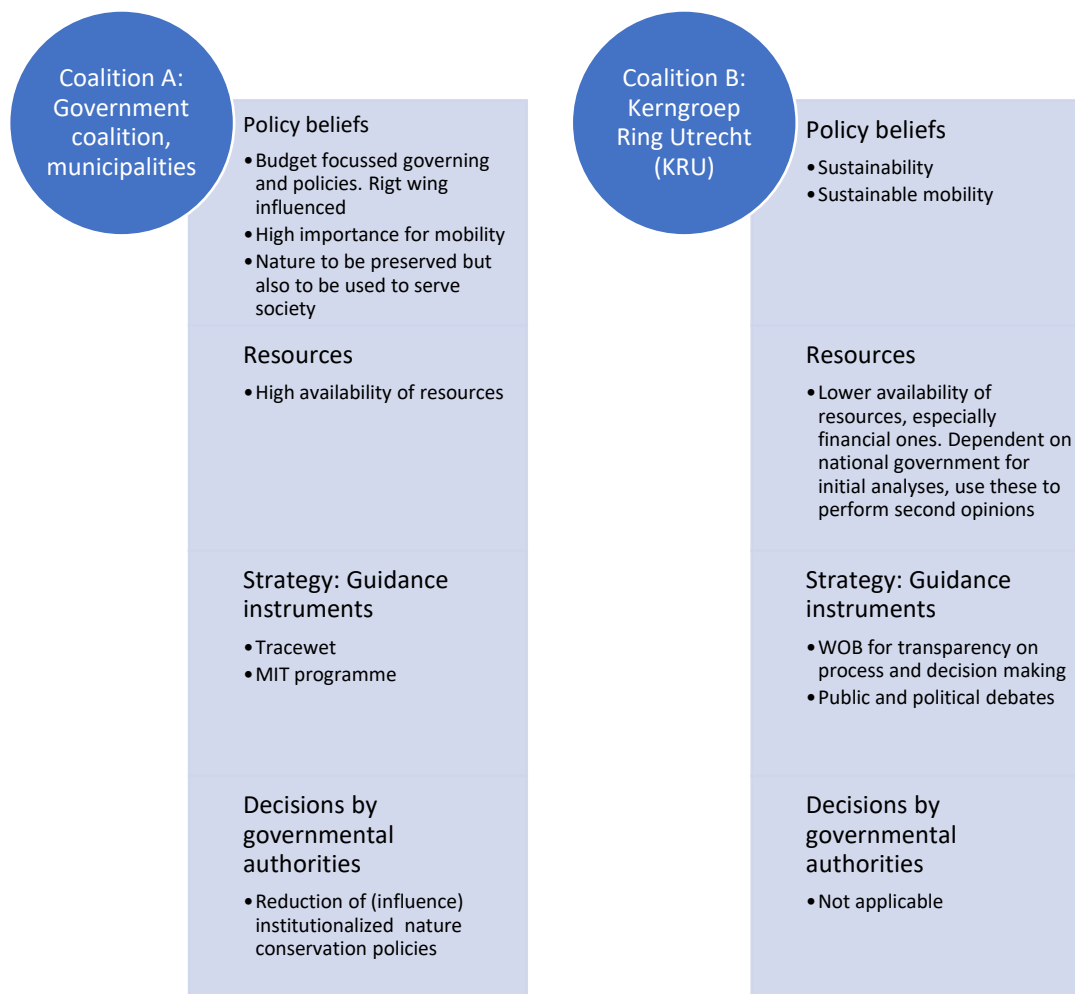


Figure 5.2.2: Coalitions period 1

### Coalition beliefs & resources

The emphasis on utilization of nature by the Government coalitions between 2005-2013 can be seen in how the road expansion was further researched while less invasive alternatives were explored less during project phase 1 of Rijkswaterstaat. The aim of both Government coalitions was to improve mobility while preserving traffic safety, since Rijkswaterstaat did not further investigate less invasive alternatives that were deemed to be (comparatively) unsafe by Commissie Schoof. Through these arguments, the decision made by the Government coalition was to value safety of road users and mobility, accepting the increased costs of construction, over the preservation of nature.

This also displays how resource distribution affects the decision making, as Rijkswaterstaat has high resource availability compared to the other (smaller) policy actors. Responding to the report of Commissie Schoof, MIeW commissioned the CBA to be performed but made the choice to only explore the road expansion despite opposition to this alternative. A point regularly made regarding analyses is that these require financial and expertise resources which aren't readily available for less affluent stakeholders. By being the only policy actor with these resources readily available, Rijkswaterstaat may be able to push through policies prior despite public opposition who cannot

perform the analyses. This is also where an instance of an experienced 'defeat' can be found, as the municipality feels left out of the decision-making process.

The process towards the preferential decision seems to also follow that narrative, given the direction MleW can give the CBA for the project. Since only the preferred alternative was explored, this indicates that a decision was already made for the policy alternative. Furthermore, MleW had earlier access to certain information, for instance to the report by Schoof. Through earlier access to the report, MleW was able to prepare next actions such as the CBA and responses to Schoof, where other policy actors were still processing the information. The 'devil shift' also can be seen in this instance, as KRU framed this process negatively and that it was experienced as a loss. KRU representatives felt that the release of the report was used to finalize and bind the 2x7 variant, where effectively not all information was available to all parties during the decision-making process (Kracht van Utrecht, 2013). Even though the report by Schoof indicated that the decision-making was done properly, statements made by KRU show that this was not experienced as such through strong wording.

### *Shock*

A shock with significant impact to the policy system was the economic crisis of 2008, which had effects on the political discourse as well as legislation of nature related policies. The Netherlands has been a historical frontrunner for (European) nature conservation policies, evidenced by its contributions to 'The Habitats Directive' or the 'Natura 2000' network of the European Union (Keulartz, 2009; Van den Top & Van der Zouwen, 2002). Dutch nature policies of the 1990's was aimed towards developing ecological networks such as the 'National Ecological Network' (NEN) in 1990, with nature conservation policies being relatively stable for the 20 years onwards (Keulartz, 2009; Buijs, Mattijssen, & Arts, 2014). During this period public support for nature conservation was high as well as agreement amongst political stakeholders on the importance of nature policy. Substantial public funds being invested in the NEN and Natura 2000, leading towards institutionalization of nature policy in the Netherlands (Arnouts, 2010; Buijs, Mattijssen, & Arts, 2014). However, the right-wing oriented government coalition of this period challenged many of these institutions with a strict budgetary approach to government as a response to the economic crisis. Exemplified by budget cuts up to 70% for nature conservation and initiating less strict nature protection laws (Buijs, Mattijssen, & Arts, 2014). The economic crisis provided credibility to these actions, framing them to be most effective for societal benefits given the financial limitations. Nature conservation was reframed from an ecological challenge to an economic and societal challenge, signifying the changing beliefs on nature conservation in the Netherlands by the Government coalitions (Buijs, Mattijssen, & Arts, 2014).

### Period 2: Emissions mandate (2013-2018)

#### *Coalitions*

Between 2013-2018, the composition of the government coalition changed twice, with the VVD being consistently present. The VVD was also the political party with most votes in parliament during this period. Although the composition of involved political parties has changed, those involved in the government coalition often still held similar policy core beliefs and were all relatively right-wing oriented. The lack of changing policy beliefs was seen in the subsequent coalition agreements, which held on to the road expansion for Ring Utrecht. In practice, prolonged negotiations for the government coalition-forming are experienced as a hurting stalemate by (political) stakeholders. This is due to policies not being finished and agreed upon to be submitted to the senate for approval, thus stagnating the national governing of public issues. This mechanism can lead to involved political parties not fully aligned with the policy beliefs, to accept policy elements that are



against their beliefs. Resulting in disagreement with their local subsidiaries who still oppose the policy, for instance seen with the PvdA and D66 in this case. Their national parties undersigned the road expansion through the coalition agreement thus preventing the stagnating governing, yet their local subsidiaries in the municipality council Utrecht are actively opposing and exploring alternatives to the policy (Binnenlands Bestuur, 2013; Schaap, 2013).

This phenomenon where political parties in the Government coalition align themselves with proponents, while their local subsidiaries are opponents to the expansion was also seen later in periods 2 and 3 (Schaap, 2013). This made the local municipality experience the decision making as exclusive for the national political elite, while having little local influence in the process, where this would have been appropriate (Binnenlands Bestuur, 2013). Due to these factors, as well as the earlier mentioned lack of exploration in alternatives by Rijkswaterstaat, possibly made the municipality Utrecht switch coalitions to the opposition 'KRU' (Hooijdonk, 2014).



Figure 5.2.3: Policy subsystem Ring Utrecht. Including municipalities switched

### Shocks

#### Paris Climate Agreement

During this period an external shock also occurred, as the Paris Climate Agreement was co-signed by the Netherlands (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). The agreement was to reduce the impacts of climate change, by reducing emissions with 40% by 2030 (compared to 1990), with the Netherlands taking a more

proactive role by aiming to reduce emissions by 49% (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). The agreement becomes effective per 2020. During this period the agreement did hold influence on the decision-making, but the agreement was not effective or binding during this period. An effect the agreement had was that environmental impact became more prominent in the public's eye, and that this was explicitly documented by political/government bodies. The Climate Agreement may also have increased the valuation of nature areas by the public, as this argument has become more prominently used by opposition (Kerngroep Ring Utrecht, n.d.; Van Oosten, 2016). The consequences of the agreement were more noticeable during the next period, which is described below in the next sections.

#### *CBA release*

As described 5.1, the CBA evaluating the road expansion was released in 2014. This can be seen as an external shock as new information was presented to the decision-making process, which at the time was not necessitated through decision-making guidelines. The CBA was not received positively by opposition, with criticism aimed at the lacking exploration of alternatives. It also criticised the assumptions as being skewed to positively influence the outcomes of the CBA.

Around the time of release, the municipality also changed from being proponents of the road expansion policy alternative, to being opponents. This was done when the municipality explored other options through expert judgement, suggesting alternatives where expansion wasn't chosen and the Amelisweerd wasn't deforested (Hooijdonk, 2014). These suggested alternatives weren't further explored by Rijkswaterstaat, potentially causing the municipality to switch coalition (Hooijdonk, 2014; Rijkswaterstaat, 2016).

#### *CBA revisit*

The CBA was also revisited in 2017, which was commissioned by KRU. A significant outcome of the revisit was that the delaying the decision on the project until 2030 wouldn't yield significant larger (financial) losses, compared to continuing the current process for the road expansion. This, along with the notion that a new CBA where more alternatives would be explored, made that this information was political ammunition for opponents to at least delay the project. Yet still MleW continued the Trace in 2018 despite protests, making the project decision including the road expansion binding. Thus, demonstrating the decision-making authority of MleW and its willingness for the road expansion despite continued protests, showing that the policy core belief of mobility over nature has not significantly changed during this period. With no significant changes for compromise or ability to compromise on the policy issue, indicating a moderate to high level of conflict among coalitions (Weible & Heikkila, 2017).

This notion is also shown through beliefs of political actors, such as I. de Bondt (VVD) or S. van Veldhoven (D66), who see that the CBA should provide information for decision-making, but that political ideology can be a substantial motivation to deviate from the CBA result (de Bondt, n.d.; van Veldhoven, n.d.). De Bondt also indicates that although data is beneficial for decision-making, it should not be the determining factor as "uncertainties in the model as well as other grounds for consideration should be equally weighed in the decision-making" (de Bondt, n.d.). Political actors therefore see it necessary to occasionally make unpopular decisions with less public support, as otherwise no decisions and progress can be made and societal benefits will only further stagnate or decrease (van Veldhoven, n.d.; van Lunteren, n.d.; de Bondt, n.d.). Demonstrating that the CBA is experienced by involved political actors as something that is used to inform but doesn't hold too much influence on the final decision. This desire for performance deliverables and project initiation is also described by Priemus et al., who noted the will for politicians to have projects finished as these provide concrete deliverables of their terms (Priemus, Flyvbjerg, & van Wee, 2008). Politicians in that sense also tend to overestimate demand and underestimate costs, which was also seen in the

CBA (Priemus, Flyvbjerg, & van Wee, 2008). In the scenarios of the CBA the demand would reach significantly high volumes and while costs would be manageable, where opposition pointed out that the projects costs have only continuously been increasing and that demand, and therefore the benefits, may be overestimated for skewed results (Cats, 2016).

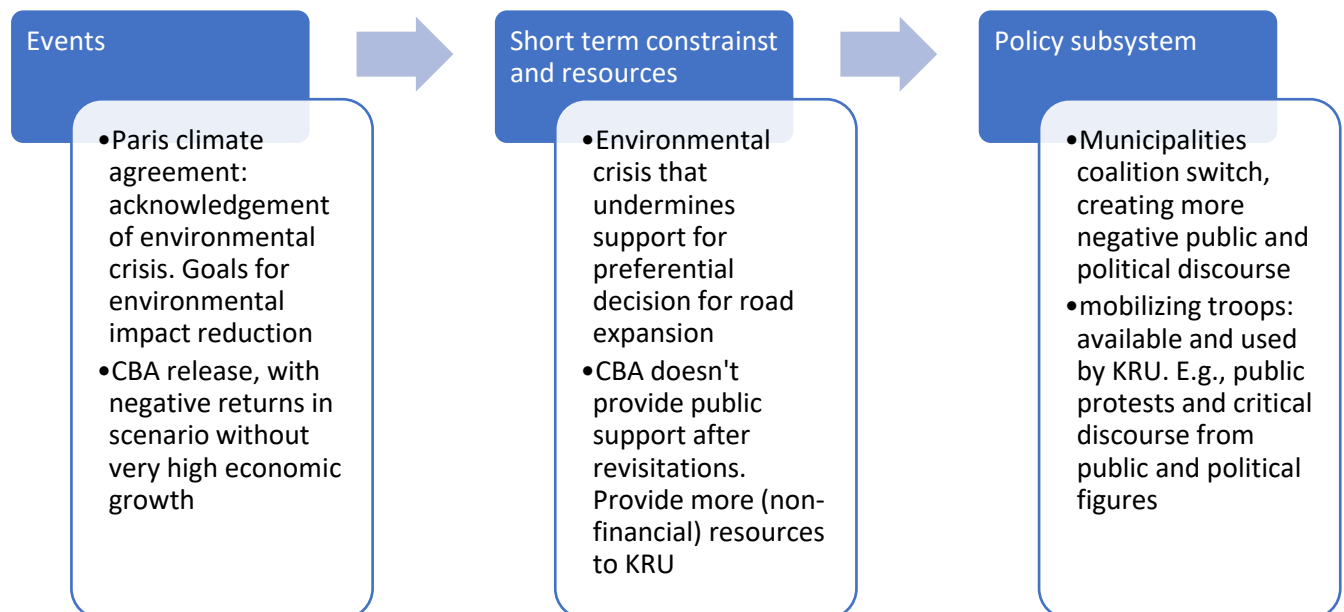


Figure 5.2.4: events and shocks to policy system

### Period 3: Project initiation (2018-2022)

#### *Coalitions and political changes*

During this period, the government coalition fell in 2021 due to the 'Toeslagenaffaire', which caused a new election to be held. This caused a renegotiation of the coalition agreement, in turn creating an opportunity for negotiations regarding Ring Utrecht (Rijksoverheid, 2022). Yet there was no change for the Ring Utrecht policy alternative. However, contrary to the earlier proposals, there was room for opponents to influence the project, indicating lower levels of conflict due to the compromise option. There was a time-period made available to propose alternatives for Ring Utrecht concerning the region of Amelisweerd (DUIC, 2021). As the region was a specific point of criticism, MlEW allowed for the trace to be *potentially* changed for innovative solutions, depending on the expected forecasts which need to be comparable to the road expansion (Harbers, 2022; Rijksoverheid, 2022). With the benefit for MlEW that it doesn't need to invest its own resources, as the alternative needs to be submitted by the opposition against MlEW & Rijkswaterstaat's proposal. Yet whether the policy would meet the criteria, as well as the metrics used for comparison, are not publicly known. Meaning that mechanisms that should reduce the subjectivity of decisions are not provided, at least publicly. This can be seen as an indication that the policy beliefs of the Government coalition over the past decade have not changed, as they have not further researched innovative alternatives to their original policy. Furthermore, an added benefit is that this is experienced by KRU as a 'victory', since they are provided with an opportunity to actively contribute to the decision-making. KRU became enabled to truly change the policy instead of only receiving more compensation for environmental impacts, which is the case with the preferential decision. Yet whether the provided alternative will be equally weighed, or if the gesture is more symbolic, can still be questioned.

## *Shock*

### *PAS-verdict*

The most significant shock occurred during this period, being the PAS-verdict. The council of state judged that the Trace 2018 Ring Utrecht was not valid based on (legislative foundations of) the environmental impacts (Rijkswaterstaat, 2019; Raad van State, 2019). Therefore, the Trace was nullified and had to be revisited by MleW & Rijkswaterstaat. MleW proposed a new trace in 2020 with more compensation for the environmental impacts in the affected areas, compared to the Trace 2018. But the proposed alternative remained the same and in the core the Trace didn't significantly change.

### *Beliefs & appraisal*

The desire and view of urgency of the issue by the Government coalitions is greater than the willingness to delay the project for more (public) support. This is demonstrated by the continued push for the Tracebesluit while the CBA has indicated that delay of the project would not yield significant extra costs. Through this action, at least on paper, all parties involved are satisfied although this is dependent on the proposed alternative by KRU and whether it will be adopted. Making that this will be a potential devil shift instance where, if the proposal is not adopted, the experienced loss will be severe as there is no possibility of altering the project afterwards and their inputs have not been adopted throughout the decision process. Therefore, the appraisal of the alternative becomes crucial as it needs to be compared to the proposal by MleW & Rijkswaterstaat.

Although MleW have stated that the alternative needs to have 'comparable' results, agreement on the appraisal will most likely be difficult. This can be attributed to varying factors, with the most prevalent being that current methods have difficulty appraising innovation for which little historical data exists (van Lunteren, n.d.). furthermore, CBAs require that alternatives are developed, yet developing the ideas requires much (financial) resources. When alternatives aren't fully developed, this could lead towards negative CBAs as there are more effects with high uncertainty. This also implies that effects of innovative alternatives have higher uncertainty, making them more susceptible to be argued against.

The aim of the CBA is to facilitate objective decision making based on the (economic) costs and benefits of the project. With economic effects tending to be more emphasized in CBAs due to their concrete, and better-known, effects (van Veldhoven, n.d.). Thus, arguing for innovative alternatives with lacking data on (economic) returns will become significantly more difficult in the decision-making, as these can be easily shut down by CBAs based on the mentioned factors.

## *5.3 Impact of procedural policy tools: Ring Utrecht*

### *Coalition switches*

Based on the decisions made despite a negative CBA, the CBA seemingly didn't have too significant influence on the decision-making process. Both the original CBA commissioned by MleW/Rijkswaterstaat as well as the revisitation commissioned by KRU expressed that delay of the project would be beneficial to explore alternatives, given the high risk of returns for the road expansions. It is therefore interesting that the decision was made to continuously push for the expansion despite the protests, indicating the performance desire by political actors, a finding which was also identified in the literature (Priemus, Flyvbjerg, & van Wee, 2008). If the CBA would be truly influential the suggestion for delay would most likely have been adopted instead of the push for the Trace despite the high uncertainties and associated costs. Or more moments/options for compromise in policy alternatives should have been explored because of the CBA. Indicating its limited influence on the conflict levels among involved stakeholders and coalitions.

It should still be noted that the municipalities expressed their coalition switch around the release of the CBA. Their (public) motivation was the increased conflict with the policy goals and beliefs of the government coalition, while the critical public discourse may also have influenced it. Which could be attributed to the CBA release and its lacking support for the Tracebesluit. The results providing an opportunity for the switch, due to the subsequent the critical discourse based on CBA findings. Criticism of the CBA and its methodology was a point of critique of both the municipality and KRU, indicating that the process of conducting the CBA also influenced the switch. By not being included in the analyses, beliefs and assumptions were experienced by KRU to not be fully considered equally. As mentioned in Chapter 2, transparency and stakeholder inclusion in the CBA process can aid with interpretation and inclusion of CBA results in the decision-making (Cole, 2012). This effort of 'joint fact finding' for policy effects has also been stressed as constructive CBA application (Rienstra, 2008, p. 9). Yet this was not done in this case. Through the exclusion, the municipality may have become more favourable to the KRU coalition due to overlapping beliefs and experienced exclusion of the decision-making process. Evidenced by their collaborative effort for an alternative to the preferential decision. This gives the notion that rather the process surrounding the CBA had significant influence on the decision-making process, rather than its results.

#### Maximize support, not exploration

The CBA seemingly was mostly used to make information explicit and objective, as that is part of the formal role of the CBA. This was also acknowledged by the involved stakeholders. However, there was much discussion on the used assumptions and scenarios. The nuances involved for CBA information processing are also pointed out by de Bondt, van Veldhoven and van Lunteren. They state that model usage should always be brought into context and that it should serve to be beneficial to decision making, not become dominant on itself. This held true for the case of Ring Utrecht, but the CBA was not necessarily as beneficial to the system or subsequent decision-making. By only fully evaluating one policy alternative, the CBA was seemingly constructed to generate support for the preferential decision. Suggested by the lacking changes of the Tracebesluit despite the outcomes of all CBAs. Which consequently resulted in increasing opposition. Opposition which was only met with the (possible symbolic) opportunity to provide an alternative for the region Amelisweerd as this was the policy point generating the conflict. Instead of having another devil shift where the opposition feels powerless in addressing their concerns, MleW instead can gain public support if the alternative provided by KRU will be sufficient. While if the alternative isn't sufficient, it has more objective arguments to continue with the current project. In that sense the policy core beliefs haven't changed, but the process was made so that public and political support could be maximized for the current policy alternative. Suggesting a solution-oriented policy-making approach, a shift from the initial problem-oriented approach.

#### Formal role and experienced influence on decision-making process

Contrary to the CBA, the EIA had a lot more influence. Due to the PAS-decree by the council of state, the previous Traces were nullified and had to be remade to better account for environmental damages and impacts. Making the EIA hold much more influence, as the mitigating and compensating for the impacts become more important. The PAS-verdict forced MleW to better compensate for the impacts, which given their (policy core) beliefs, MleW was not expected to do, suggested by the push for the policy design of 2016.

The EIA is also *experienced* by politicians as being more influential compared to the CBA. This is evidenced by the process surrounding the release of the CBA and the decision in 2013 of the first policy design by MleW for the road expansion. The decision for the 2x7 variant was made prior to the conducting of the CBA, with the CBA being performed following the advice by 'Commissie

Schoof' that it was needed to build more support for the relatively hasty decision. In that sense the CBA was seen as information that possibly could be complementary for the policy decision by formal authorities. If the CBA would provide negative outcomes, it argued for (by politicians such as van Veldhoven or de Bondt) that political motivation would be a sufficient argument to continue the 2x7 expansion. Combining this information with notions from the literature that CBAs are more political ammunition without holding too much influence, show that the in the Ring Utrecht case the CBA didn't necessarily change beliefs as the 2x7 variant was not changed or delayed based on the CBA's conclusions. Only through the EIA and PAS-verdict more environmental compensation was realised for the project, while the policy alternative was left unchanged. Demonstrating that the CBA or EIA were not significantly influential in changing core beliefs while seemingly increasing the conflict. Which was seen through the contradicting results of the second opinion and subsequent responses by either coalition. Suggesting little change in policy core beliefs or opportunity for compromise resulting from the procedural policy tools.

## 6. Lelystad Airport

In this chapter, the case of the opening of Lelystad Airport will be analyzed. Similar to chapter 5, the purpose of this section is to determine the impact of CBAs and EIAs on the decision-making process and the policy decisions and conflicts at Lelystad Airport. The chapter follows the same format as chapter 5. The legal and political landscape of chapter 3 is again the context for the policy arena. The project phases are described to provide context for the case and highlight other pertinent details. The ACF will be used to determine the influence and impact of the procedural policy tools on the decision-making process and stakeholder positions/beliefs. This is done by analysing data from the project phases and possible causalities between tool use and subsequent actions that influenced the policy conflict. The outcomes of this chapter can then be used in conjunction with those of chapter 5 to compare the application and influence of procedural policy tools in the decision-making process. The comparison of the cases will be done in chapter 7.

### 6.1 Project phases and timeline

The project timeline will be broken down into three phases which will be used for the ACF application. The contexts of the phases will be elaborated on, focussing on the significant events or the procedural policy tools' usage. The aim is to understand how procedural policy tools can influence the decision-making process and stakeholders' policy views or positions. This is to determine the impact of procedural policy tools on policy conflicts between stakeholders with differing levels of (government) authority. Whereas Rijkswaterstaat provided an overview of the project phases and relevant reports for Ring Utrecht, this is not (yet) the case for Lelystad Airport. Using public documents and other grey literature discovered through desk research, the contexts surrounding decisions and their relationship to decisions involving EIAs and CBAs will be described. These contexts will be used for the application of the ACF.

The case concerns the expansion of Schiphol Airport, using Lelystad Airport as a proxy airport for small distance flights. This is due to Schiphol's flight movements reaching its maximum capacity and its desire to grow. Schiphol was also seen by the government as an important factor for the local and Dutch economy, as it provides employment and functions as "corridor to the world" (Rijksoverheid, 2006, p. 9). Although it aims to preserve the socio-economic benefits, the government also acknowledged that it had to protect residents from negative impacts of increased aviation activity, to preserve the quality of the living environment (Rijksoverheid, 2006).

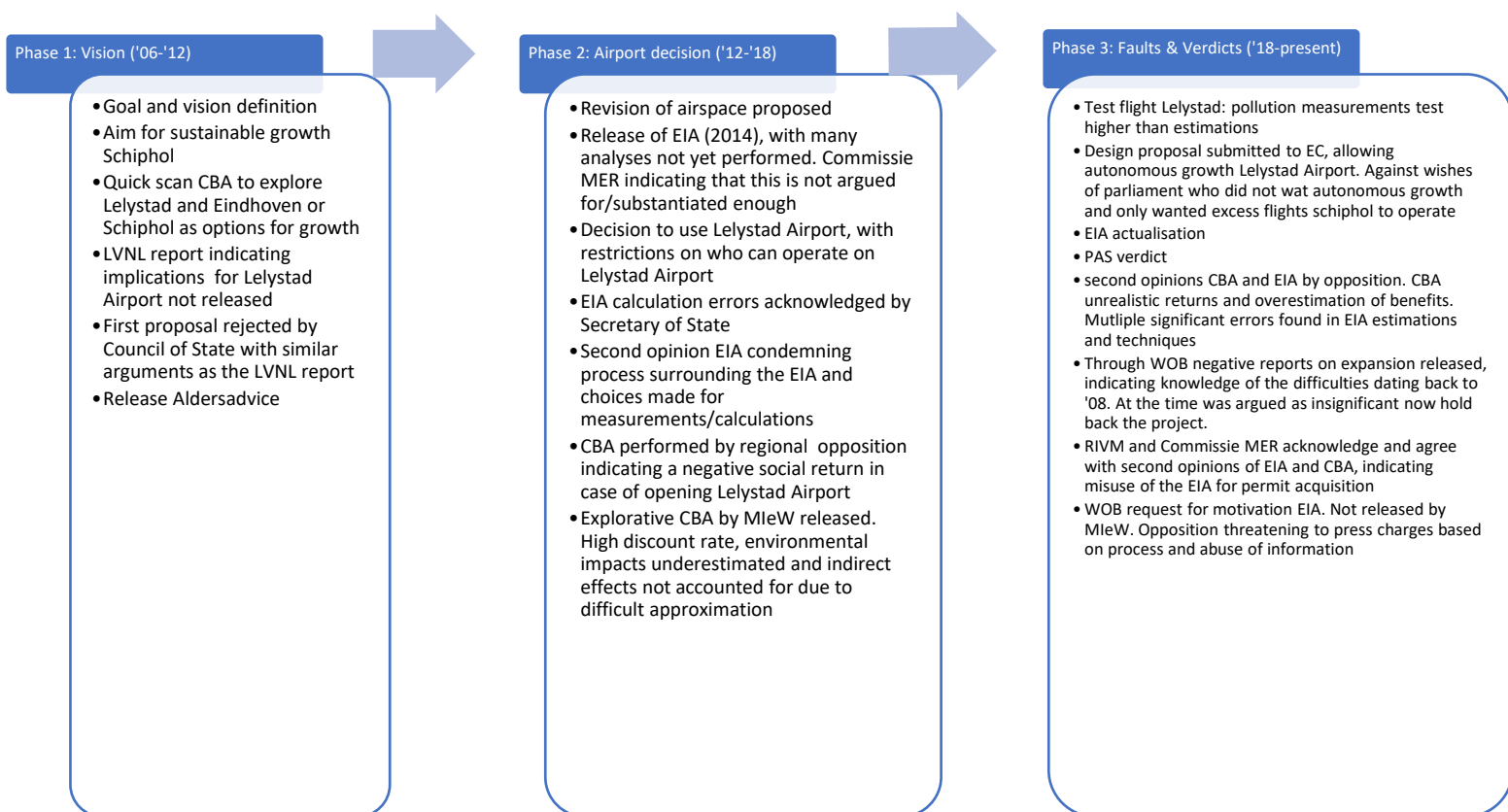


Figure 6.1: Project phases Lelystad Airport

### Phase 1: Aldersreport and long-term vision (2006-2012)

The first period can be characterized by the definition of the long-term vision and the governments' position on the expansion of Schiphol Airport. Or put into MIRT terms, the study phase where project goals are defined, and the needs of the project are addressed.

As Schiphol airport is reaching its maximum capacity, it was exploring options for expansion. To this end, the government coalition at the time constructed and documented the long-term vision for sustainable growth of Schiphol, while maintaining Schiphol's position as hub for north-west Europe (Rijksoverheid, 2006).

This resulted in development goals for growth, with indications of important points which need to be preserved in the possible strategy. The 'Alderstafel', an advisory body commissioned by MleW, was created to give advice to MleW on how to achieve the growth in accordance with these important points (Alders, 2008). The Alderstafel included residents, members of the aviation sector and regional governing agents/policy actors. The advice was to incorporate regional airports such as Lelystad or Eindhoven into the operation of Schiphol, with the regional airports to be used for overflow of flights. Expanding Schiphol was not seen as beneficial as it would create significant higher impacts on residents, potentially exceeding certain (health) thresholds. Making it less attractive compared to using Lelystad or Eindhoven for additional flight movements, resulting in the advice to use regional airports (Alders, 2008).

A first iteration of a CBA was also performed around the release of the first Alders' advice. In it, the costs and benefits of 2 factors was explored: how possible growth of aviation in general will affect the Dutch civilization, and what the effects would be for Lelystad or Eindhoven to accommodate the



growth/overflow of Schiphol (Decisio; SEO; Bureau Louter, 2008). The function of this CBA was to explore options and alternatives suggested by the Alderstafel, and as such was called a 'quick scan CBA' to provide angles and points to be used for the long-term CBA analysis. Outcome of the CBA was that growth would be beneficial for society as all alternatives facilitating growth would have higher returns compared to costs, with the note that Lelystad was seen as the better host for overflow than Eindhoven.

However, around this period the LVNL (Netherlands' aviation regulatory body) was also commissioned to conduct an analysis of the possible use of Lelystad. It concluded that the proposed method to mediate environmental impacts to an acceptable level, by having low-altitude flights, was unfeasible based on EU legislation (Luchtverkeersleiding Nederland, 2009). A restructuring of the Dutch airspace is needed to accommodate the extra flights; however, LVNL stated this to be unrealistic due to legislative and operational conditions (Luchtverkeersleiding Nederland, 2009). Thus, it deemed the project not possible, or at least ineffective in facilitating the growth of Schiphol given current legislation. Yet these conclusions had little effect on the decision-making process, as the report was not published to the public at the time and only came to light a decade later through the WOB (Zembla, 2017). The government argued for this action with that the conclusions of the report led to subsequent studies being performed and provided new insights, making the LVNL report obsolete (Zembla, 2017). As these conclusions were unknown to (opposing) stakeholders, the decision to designate Lelystad Airport for expansion was met with little resistance (Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat, 2009).

After the decision, new reports and analyses were performed to better identify the impacts of using Lelystad Airport for expansion. As the LVNL report was not published most critiques were relatively unknown to policy actors in the senate or in local councils. However, an analysis on the effects of flights on natura2000 areas was explored, with the advice that for responsible nature conservation flights should be held over natura2000 areas as this could affect the biodiversity negatively (de Molenaar & Ottburg, 2009). The results of the report were used to determine and document minimal altitudes over the natura2000 areas to mitigate significantly harming biodiversity. This report as well as knowledge of the LVNL report gave indications of the difficulties of the project, however these were not made public or didn't reach the public. Ultimately the difficulties described by LVNL were the core reasons for the Council of State to annul the decision to use Lelystad Airport in 2011 as this was not possible given current legislation on flight routes and limited available space (Binnenlands Bestuur, 2011). In response to this, legislation on aviation was edited to decentralize authority to regional governments and falling under different criteria to continue with Lelystad Airport for expansion, allowing for the flight routes to be calculated at a later stage of development.

#### Phase 2: Airport decision & CBA release (2012-2018)

This phase is characterized by analyses done to reach the "Luchthavenbesluit" (airport decision), which can be viewed as the exploration phase within a MIRT programme to reach a preferential decision. Furthermore, at the end of this period a project decision was also made, yet the substantiation for the decision (including CBA and EIA analyses) was often lacking in quality or incomplete, leading to delays for the project. These delays will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

After the legislation changed to remove restrictions on Lelystad Airport, the project was continued to explore options for Lelystad Airport to become operational. In accordance, an EIA was performed to determine possible impacts of the expansion. However, although the EIA's outcomes were relatively positive, this was in part due to the fact that much information was incomplete or was

designated to be analysed at a later stage of development, and as such, were not fully included in the weighing of impacts (Faber, Repko, & Verschoor, 2014). After providing the additional analyses the EIA was approved, indicating that the environmental impacts were identified, and mitigation measures were sufficient according to the Commissie MER.

Subsequently a new Airport decision was made since the previous one was nullified by the Council of State in 2011, designating again Lelystad Airport as overflow airport (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu, 2015). MleW also indicated that the necessary airspace rearrangement wasn't expected to be finalized by 2023. This allowed the continuation and exploration for the project, during which new issues came to light. The earlier mentioned faults of the EIA did turn out to be significant errors, which were later acknowledged by the Secretary of State (Zembla, 2017). During this period public resistance against the expansion and opening of Lelystad Airport also grew (Duursma, 2017). Critiques were aimed at the fact that supervisory bodies such as the Commissie MER for EIA approval doesn't have enough capacity to ensure quality of performed analyses and that the MleW also didn't aid enough with information processing for the decision-making process. Leading to biased information in the EIA and other appraisals (HoogOverijssel, 2017). The second opinion of the EIA performed by opposing stakeholders also indicated abuse of measuring techniques for the EIA for positive results, while also identifying sections that significantly lacked in quality which weren't noticed by the commissie MER (HoogOverijssel, 2017). These insights, along with the public acknowledgement of the Secretary of State, fuelled the opposition against the airport. In that light, A 'counter'-CBA performed by opponents analysing impacts on local tourism was negative towards airport expansion. Expansion would reduce local employment due to increased environmental impacts detrimental to local tourism (Baumann, 2018). It recommends for a complete CBA to be performed, as seemingly not all impacts and effects on residents and the region are incorporated in the decision-making. It was argued by MleW that the actualisation of the CBA was sufficient for the decision-making (Minister van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat, 2019).

An actualisation of the CBA of 2008 was made in 2014, with the aim to use present-day information for the scenarios and to better determine the effects of Lelystad Airport for expansion (Decisio; SEO, 2014). Decision did indicate that the actualisation was done in relatively short time and that possibly not all developments are included in the analysis. The outcome of the analysis was that expansion would provide significant societal benefits, with caveats that much information is still unclear and that there still may be cases of overestimation of benefits due to high economic growth assumptions and that negative impacts as noise pollution may not be accurately included (Decisio; SEO, 2014). This CBA was used for another 'explorative' CBA performed in 2018, to explore other alternatives and to further actualise data and information used in the analysis (Decisio; SEO, 2018). The outcome being that expansion via Lelystad Airport would still yield the most benefits.

### Phase 3: Appraisal Faults & Court verdicts (2018-present)

The subsequent period (2018-present) is defined by multiple controversies and delays, some of which were earlier pointed out by the opposition, the mentioned reports of LVNL (2009) or of de Molenaar & Ottburg (2009).

#### *Changing policy-making approach and release of negative reports*

While the appraisals of the CBA and estimations of the EIA were relatively positive towards expansion through Lelystad Airport, opponents were still sceptical towards these results. Contributing to this scepticism was a test flight, where measurements of noise pollution was significantly higher than the previously calculated ones indicating structural miscalculations for the predicted impacts (Wezep, 2018). Furthermore, the European Commission (EC) rejected MleW's

proposal for Lelystad Airport as the proposal prevented autonomous growth as only flights from Schiphol would be allowed to operate on Lelystad instead of allowing all flights, which was a hard demand of the parliament. However, as this would restrict the free market too much, the EC rejected the design. Leading to a new proposal being submitted which included the option for autonomous growth by allowing all flight agencies to operate on Lelystad Airport, against the wishes of the Dutch parliament (van der Parre & Meindertsma, 2019).

The PAS-verdict was released during this period, requiring that the EIA needed to account for impacts immediately and couldn't use future compensation plans as mitigation techniques for expected emissions (Raad van State, 2019). Meaning that the project would remain on hold until more compensation was to be included. This led to a delay to analyse and address the lacking mitigation and compensation for the impacts. During this period second opinions on the CBA were also released. These indicated that both the benefits and importance of Lelystad Airport were structurally overestimated, with returns being based on unrealistic assumptions while the motivation for assumptions lacked transparency (Bus & Manshanden, 2019). Furthermore, through a WOB request a report dating from 2008 came to light, constructed by the Netherlands independent economic research agency (SEO), where it was explicitly stated that the airport wasn't feasible due to EU legislation (SEO, 2008). Suggesting that the decision-making process continued despite numerous negative advice and conclusions, thus possibly on incorrect grounds. This also suggest that a solution-oriented approach has become the approach, deviating from the initial problem-oriented approach.

#### *Further review and faults found in appraisals*

A commission was also established to determine the approach for project-construction given the emissions-crisis. This commission Remkes also indicated the implications for the aviation industry and growth of Schiphol, stressing that growth can only occur when current (national) emission-levels are reduced and that Lelystad shouldn't be opened until this is addressed (Commissie Remkes, 2020). Bringing the environmental impacts again to the forefront of the discussion. However, more miscalculations of the EIA 2014 were acknowledged by MIEW although these were seen as insignificant for project. Transparency on the choices that caused the mistake was lacking, with memos on the choices not being made public even when asked by the parliament (Omroep Flevoland, 2020). The EIA was actualised to apply for new permits.

Yet new faults were found in both the 2018/present versions EIA and CBA, with second opinions being performed by opposing parties. With especially the emissions being structurally lower (through measuring choices) than what would be realistic, according to the second opinion, and that permits should not have been given to the project based on these emissions (Salden, 2019; SATL, 2019). Since these statements were made by opposition, they could be framed as biased. However, the mistakes were also acknowledged by the supervisory EIA body (Commissie MER) and the national institution for public health (RIVM). Giving the statements credibility by acknowledging that the mistakes were significant and that the second opinions' statements on the faults were objective and correct (Commissie MER, 2020; Omroep Flevoland, 2020).

Motivated by these mistakes, the opening was delayed further. Also, a study was done to determine the social support for the aviation sector and Schiphol expansion through Lelystad Airport. The outcomes being that the public support experienced a negative shift dating from 2018 which continued to worsen in subsequent years (van der Lelij, Bos, & Roelofs, 2020). The general support for the aviation industry was also decreasing, with more desire for it to become more sustainable. The study also showed that environmental arguments are seen as the most important, while aviation proponents focussed more on the possible economic benefits (van der Lelij, Bos, & Roelofs,

2020). The report did not cover the implications of the calculation mistakes for the public support, although these can be indirectly linked. The study indicated that citizens view the government as responsible for the aviation and regulation, thus it must also be responsible for the supervision of the process. If multiple mistakes are made during the process, these should be accounted for by the responsible party. Thus, the implications in this case being that support would decrease since decisions were made using wrongful information or following incorrect protocols. An example of the significantly lower support in the decision making was the pressing of charges against MleW. The opposition accusing them of knowingly miscalculating and misrepresenting information of analyses to gain necessary permits and methods to circumvent legislation that restricts aviation based on emissions (Salden, 2022). This was supported by the public prosecution service, who also started the investigation in the process and decisions made for Lelystad Airport (Zembla, 2022). The focus of the investigation being the malpractice behind the EIA to receive necessary permits.

## 6.2 ACF Lelystad Airport

In this section the ACF will be applied to the case of Lelystad Airport. As done for Ring Utrecht in chapter 5, the problem are and relevant elements will be described through the ACF lens. The full description can be found in appendix B. The relatively stable parameters will be first described, to

Basic attributes problem area	Resources for coalitions	Socio-cultural values and structure	Constitutional rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable growth for Schiphol Airport as it's reaching max capacity</li> <li>• Schiphol holding much (political) value for economy</li> <li>• Flight traffic causing negative impacts on affected region (Schiphol area &amp; municipalities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal legal authority to make policy decisions: MleW holding formal authority. Council of state holding authority that it upholds projects to existing legislation;</li> <li>• Public opinion: No strong opinion, information not made public yet (e.g., LVNL report). Public desire to have negative impacts reduced to minimum for surrounding municipalities Lelystad Airport. In essence, public perception is that expansion should be possible and could be beneficial for Dutch economy/prosperity;</li> <li>• Information: High information availability (for RWS/MleW) and influence on information release (e.g. LVNL report which was negative towards expansion). High information advantage for proponents. Other parties can access documents through WOB, but they will need to know about the documents to access them (e.g., LVNL report that was not accessed, and only was 'discovered' in 2018)</li> <li>• Mobilize troops: Highly available for opponents, less for Rijkswaterstaat/MleW. Often used against public policy. Not really available or necessary during this phase for opponents since many negative impacts are still unknown;</li> <li>• Financial resources: MleW &amp; Schiphol hold a lot of financial resources, opponents rely on donations and in essence have less financial resources availability. Mostly displayed when CBA and EIA are conducted, which only RWS/Schiphol/MleW could perform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top down hierarchy. Regional implementation for issue that is regarded national in nature (by government). National government holds final legislative authority over public policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MIT programme</li> <li>• Coalition Agreement formed which includes government coalition parties to undersign the policy.</li> <li>• Since not solely infrastructure specific but including multiple travel modes making the project difficult to fall under specific programmes such as the MIT. Does require EIA/MER for construction permits, CBAs performed are done to inform but not obligatory. CBA lack of obligation seen through the partial CBAs performed instead of a complete one</li> <li>• Airspace needs to be revised to accomodate new flights. This needs to be revised in the wet Luchtvaart or Luchtvaartwet</li> <li>• Free market for airports within European Union (e.g., can't impose too many restrictions on growth Lelystad Airport)</li> </ul>

Figure 6.2.1: relatively stable parameters Lelystad Airport

define the problem area and setting the context for the case to operate. These can be seen in Figure 6.2.1. The project will split into the three periods as described in 6.1.

### Period 1: Aldersreport and Long-Term Vision ('06-'12)

#### Coalitions

There are 2 distinct coalitions in the case of Lelystad Airport, with them being opponents to Lelystad to be used for Schiphol and the proponents. The proponent coalition is composed of the government coalition (also described in chapter 5.2), Royal Schiphol group and aviation operators in the Netherlands (e.g., KLM). The opponents during this period were SATL, which is a coalition of (action) groups against the low-altitude flights necessary for Lelystad Airport to become operational.

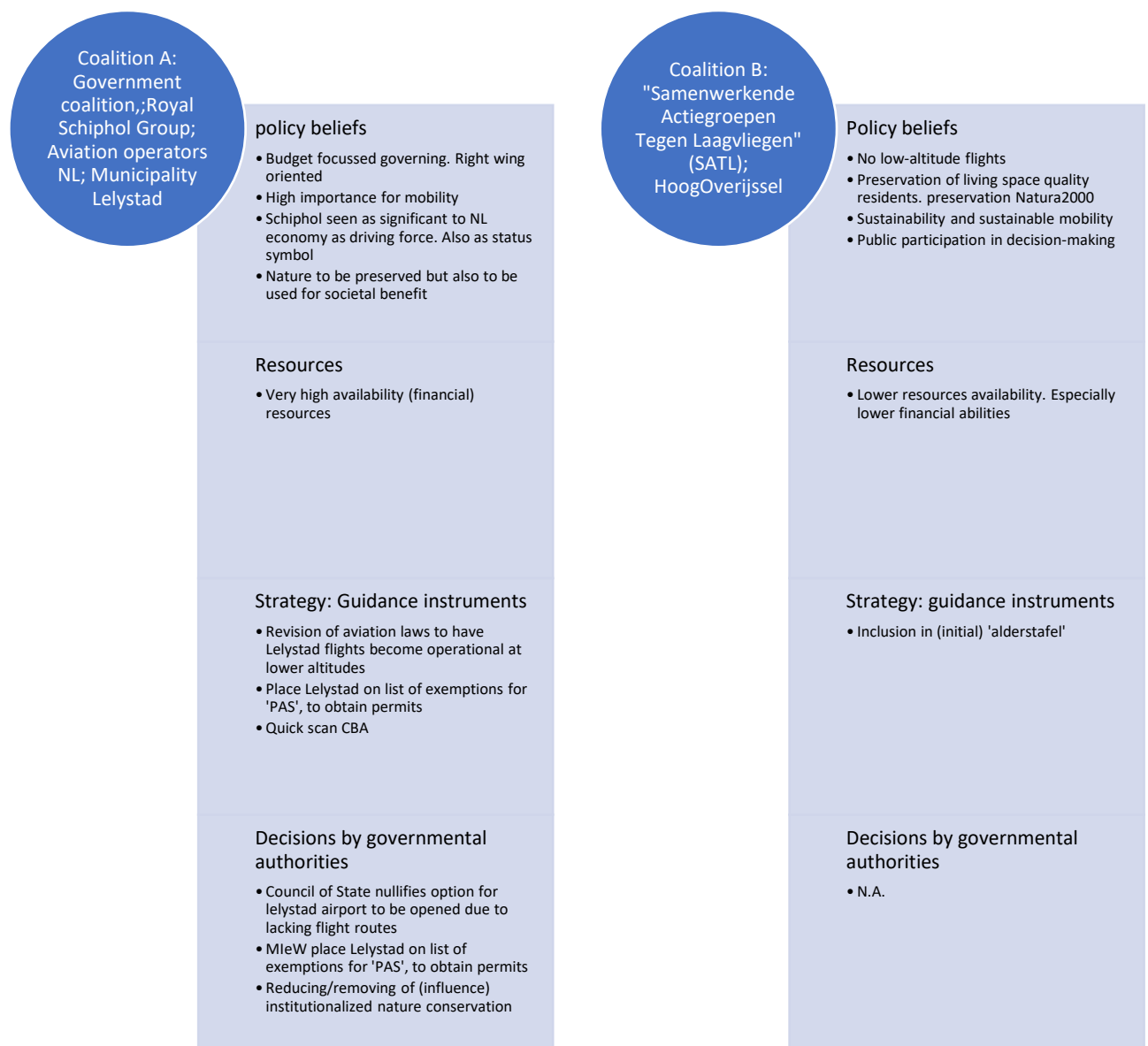


Figure 6.2.2: Coalitions Lelystad Airport

#### Coalition beliefs

As mentioned in 5.2, the government coalition views nature as a commodity to be used towards the benefit of society while aiming to mitigate the most significant negative impacts. Although it is

stressed that the quality of the environment and for example the biodiversity needs to be preserved when considering expansion of Schiphol, its subsequent statements on importance of Schiphol for the economy is seen as dominant for decision-making. Which is also more in line with the policy beliefs of the government coalitions during the '06-'12 period, where policy decisions were more budget driven. The desire for expanding Schiphol can then be partially explained, given the (perceived) importance of Schiphol as engine for the Dutch economy as mentioned in the long-term vision published by the government.

During this period the beliefs of the opposition coalition were relatively straightforward, namely to prevent low-altitude flights resulting from the expansion. During this period, information indicating further implications and impacts were either not known or made public such as the LVNL report. Through the information availability, complications were not known and support for the expansion was positive due to the economic importance of the airport. Public perception was also that the expansion was possible although that environmental impacts should still be minimized, making that opponents didn't have significantly more public support.

#### *Quick scan CBA*

The support for the expansion could also (partially) be attributed to the quick scan CBA as well as other analyses performed during this period. Although most reports (that were published) indicated the benefits for aviation expansion either via Schiphol or Lelystad/Eindhoven Airport yielded net benefits for society, most of the reports stressed that they did not include all societal aspects in the appraisals of impacts. This influx of positive information made it that the only restriction proposed by the parliament was to prevent autonomous growth of Lelystad Airport, to provide clarity to residents and to alleviate concerns regarding negative impacts (de Rouwe & Cramer, 2009). Yet in the final years of this period, the importance of the airspace revision for low altitude flights, and its lacking thereof in the design, lead to the nullification of the airport decision for Lelystad Airport to be operational for Schiphol flights. Although the airspace design was acknowledged as important, no published reports stressed the implications of the lacking designs. Demonstrating a high willingness for expansion by MleW while a complete design was yet to be constructed, who control the information release of the reports that they've commissioned.

#### *Period 2: Airport decision, explorative CBA & EIA ('12-'18)*

As mentioned in 6.1, the second period is characterized by the analyses performed towards making an airport decision for the expansion of Schiphol. The period is significant since it provides multiple shocks to the policy system. Second opinions performed by opposition did possibly cause belief changes, with much of the criticism aimed at the process of the appraisals of the CBA and EIA.

#### *Coalition beliefs*

The coalition composition didn't significantly change, with no clear 'switching sides' by stakeholders. However, there is a shift in the beliefs and strategy by the opposing coalition. The policy beliefs have not been significantly changed by the EIA or CBA, as the opposition still is directed at the prevention of the low-altitude flights and minimizing negative (environmental) impacts for the residents. What was seen was that both coalitions had complete deviations on the potential worth of opening the Airport. For instance, with regional CBAs being negative towards the expansion (Baumann, 2018) and the CBA performed by proponents stated benefits for society for each expansion scenario (Decisio; SEO, 2014; Decisio; SEO, 2018). Differences between CBAs can be attributed to the assumptions underlying the appraisal, giving the argument of the outcomes potentially less weight. Making the second opinion of the CBA relatively easier to counter using the justification for assumptions.

### Shocks

However, the second opinion of the EIA performed and its critique towards the miscalculations and inability of the supervisory body to control for the outcomes generated much more controversy and possibly galvanised the opponents towards a harder stance against the airport. Although this action would not necessarily change policy beliefs of the stakeholders, it can influence the strategy employed as well as the view of the other stakeholders, making the miscalculations and information withholding a shock to the system. By highlighting errors which have significant impact, such as the emissions or noise pollution created by aviation, opponents can affect the faith in the decision-making process as information used becomes viewed as biased and incorrect. Implying that decisions based on these analyses or information in turn are also incorrect. The miscalculations were also acknowledged by the secretary of state, giving this argument a lot more weight compared to the second opinions of the CBA (Zembla, 2017).

This sentiment of residents' distrust in the decision-making process is also evidenced in a report published by a resident delegation. The delegation was assembled by request of the MIeW, who wanted local input for advice on the opening of Lelystad Airport. In the report and subsequent proceedings, the decision-making process was critiqued as well as that the airport should be opened until the airspace restructuring was completed (Bewonersdelegatie Lelystad Airport, 2017; Bewonersdelegatie Lelystad Airport, 2018). These elements, an unclear process and decisions based on incomplete information, add to the conflict between residents and the (political) decision-makers.

In research performed by Mensink on conflicts between residents and stakeholders in the Netherlands, factors contributing to conflict between decision-makers and residents are the exclusion in decision-making and experiencing the process pre-determined towards a certain solution (Mensink, 2021). The exclusion of residents in the decision-making process as well as experiencing the decision-making as pre-determined to open Lelystad Airport without too much intervention for residents has further led to increased distrust and conflict between the residents and proponents (Bewonersdelegatie Lelystad Airport, 2018). "Het vertrouwen van de bevolking in het proces 'Lelystad Airport' is tot een dieptepunt gedaald. Door steeds nieuwe verontrustende berichtgeving en onthullingen is ook het vertrouwen in uw ministerie ernstig geschaad" (Bewonersdelegatie Lelystad Airport, 2018, p. 1). Which translates to that the trust of the residents in the decision-making process, as well as in the Ministry, has reached all-time lows. This is attributed to the 'disturbing information and revelations of malpractice'. Indicating that the (incorrect) performed analyses of the CBA and EIA have added towards the conflict between stakeholders, as the malpractice has led to low confidence and trust in unbiased and good decision-making.

### Period 3: Faults and court verdicts ('18-present)

The third period can be seen as continuation of the end of period 2, with more controversies surrounding the decision-making becoming public. Although analyses were updated given the findings during period 1 and 2, the updated versions still contained mistakes or oversights with significant ramifications for opening Lelystad Airport and the conflict between stakeholders. Policy beliefs weren't necessarily changed, but how the decision-making was experienced and subsequent strategy employed by opponents did seemingly change. Furthermore, significant implications of the PAS verdict also had their effect on the decision-making.

Beliefs of stakeholders didn't change significantly, evidenced by motions proposed in the parliament against autonomous growth of Lelystad Airport and the design proposals submitted by MIeW (Laçin,

2018; Rijksoverheid, 2019). However, the design proposed to the EC did contain the option for autonomous growth, to accommodate the free-market demands by the EC as this continuously prevented approval. Thus, going against the wishes of the parliament, making that the decision-making surrounding this aspect seem meaningless since it was disregarded in favour of the expansion. This can then be seen as a devil-shift, with the experienced loss by opponents being severe that even contrary to the multiple years of debates and parliamentary motions being ultimately disregarded in favour for the expansion, implying that the 'victory' for the proponents was basically guaranteed. An issue which, similar as described by opposition and residents during period 2 of the project, lead to further conflict between stakeholders by exclusion and distrust in fairness of the decision-making process.

#### *Conflict reaching boiling point*

Given all the uncertainties and acknowledged mistakes in the EIAs and CBAs performed, updated versions of the analyses were commissioned by the MleW. The EIA holds a lot of legislative influence, since permits are dependent on the identification and mitigation of environmental impacts of projects. The importance of the mitigation and compensation was also stressed by commission Remkes, as mentioned in 'chapter 6.1: period 3' above. Thus, Lelystad Airport's EIA required an update to better substantiate the mitigation of impacts. However, as mentioned in 6.1, faults were found in the updated EIA, with miscalculations with significant implications for the appraisal being found. Similar as during period 2 the miscalculations were again acknowledged by national governing bodies, namely the RIVM and Commissie MER, giving again much weight to the criticism of EIA conducted and the surrounding decision-making process. The controversies and lacking transparency of the EIAs and CBAs performed, as well as the revelation of critical reports not being released to the parliament, contributed to the conflict between the coalitions and stakeholders reaching a boiling point. Symbolized by the charges pressed by the opposition regarding, accusing proponents of malpractice and information abuse, with the charges being investigated by the public prosecution service which only operates when there is sufficient evidence requiring further investigation.

#### 6.3 Impact of procedural tools: Lelystad Airport

The procedural tools had an impact on the decision-making process as well as the conflict between stakeholders. One of the impacts was that it showcased a large discrepancy of information availability and processing capacity between the national governing bodies and related agencies compared to the availability of the opposing (regional) opposition against the policy. The proponents, which includes MleW and Royal Schiphol Group, seemingly hold much more (financial) resources compared to the opposition. Evidenced by the fact that the opposition only performed partial CBAs, e.g., Baumann (2018) or exclusively second opinions CBAs and EIAs performed by the proponents. Although this can also be viewed as strategic use of resources, as reviewing research requires less resources than performing research from scratch, the second opinions did provide substantiated critical discourse on the project to counter argue the mostly purely positive information released and used for decision-making. The fact that the found mistakes were acknowledged by credible institutions does indicate that the second opinions are objective, countering the argument that the opinions are purely biased based on opposing beliefs.

The disparity between resource availability between the stakeholders is also seen through this instance, as procedural supervisory agencies lacked the resources to adequately assess the submitted appraisals from the procedural policy tools for relevant decisions. Most of the critiques regarding the calculations and assumptions underlying the appraisals only came after the approval of the Commissie MER, indicating that it structurally didn't have the capacity to fully assess the EIAs



performed. This can be attributed by the fact that the Commission only has a handful of experts to assess the performed analyses, with limited time available for review. A limitation which is also acknowledged by the Commissie MER itself (Commissie MER, n.d.). With the effect that information availability becomes significantly more influential for decision-making. This was for instance seen with the lacking critical parliamentary questions and public discourse for decisions, as critical reports were long unknown to opposing stakeholders such as the LVNL report (2009). Through continued second opinions and WOB requests on the appraisal tools, the resource availability differences became noticed by all involved stakeholders and aggravated the conflict between the opposing stakeholders.

Furthermore, opponents to the airport indicated that the methodology of the CBAs structurally favour airport expansion, due to it having many components for benefits while uncertainties are lower appraised (Bus & Manshanden, 2022). This argument has been countered by designers of the methodology, stating that the critique is also at fault for providing biased and a unilateral perspective, that which Bus and Manshanden suggested the CBA of doing so (Koopmans, et al., 2022). Although this could have led to more conflict on the decision-making using the CBAs, this proved not to be the procedural tool with most impact on the decision-making process and its conflicts.

Where the arguments on the CBA methodology could be countered, this was significantly less the case with the EIAs performed. Second opinions on the CBAs didn't significantly influence subsequent discourse and conflict, but the reviews of the EIAs exposed on multiple occasions miscalculations which had to be acknowledged by the performing and supervising bodies. This led to increased distrust of the residents in the decision-making. This was further aggravated through decision which were continuously protested, through parliamentary questions or public discourse, providing one of the crucial factors in conflicts between stakeholders, which was fuelled by increased public importance for environmental impacts. Residents indicated the feeling of being powerless and having little faith in the decision-making process, with the notion that decisions are predetermined without the inclusion of their needs. When confronted with the push for the national policy for Lelystad Airport, public opposition increased against the policy proposition. As transparency surrounding the procedural tools' analyses was also lacking, conflict reached a boiling point as criminal charges were pressed.

## 7. Case comparison

The cases of Ring Utrecht and Lelystad Airport will be compared in this chapter using the ACF lens. The decision-making process will be compared, with a focus on how elements (e.g., relatively stable parameters or policy subsystem and strategies) differed or overlapped between the cases. The resource dependency and availability will be discussed first, followed by a review of the cases' consensus and transparency. The impact of external events on the policy system will then be investigated. The policy outcomes will be compared using these components. The policy tools used in the cases, as well as their implications, will be discussed. The goal of this chapter is to determine how the differences in policy systems influenced decision-making and conflict among stakeholders.

### 7.1 Resource availability and dependency

Table 7.1: Resource advantages comparison

	Dominated by	
	Ring Utrecht: national vs KRU (regional)	Lelystad Airport: National vs SATL
Formal Authority	National	National
Public Opinion	KRU	SATL
Information	National	National
Mobilize troops	KRU	SATL
Financial resources	National	National
Skillfull leadership	NA	NA

Both cases demonstrated that the conduct and quality of appraisals are heavily reliant on (financial) resources. This is due to the high costs associated with appraisal performance, as expertise, available time, and the complexity of the cases make appraisal a costly operation. In both cases, non-national government or business stakeholders pressed for the implementation of CBAs, claiming that they were unable to do so themselves. Suggesting that 'smaller' stakeholders, often the opposition, have limited resources and must make strategic decisions with their budgets. By having other institutions conduct the analysis, more evidence against the policies can be gathered at a low cost, as early observations suggested that the CBAs in both cases would yield low societal returns.

The complexities of policy issues necessitate expertise, which is frequently commissioned from outside sources. Furthermore, due to the urgency of the policy problem, the appraisal must be completed in a short period of time. Because of the associated costs, the commissioning of CBAs and EIAs is financial resource dependent. A resource that is frequently unavailable to opposition coalitions that rely on membership contributions and are more financially constrained than, e.g., Rijkswaterstaat, which has far fewer budgetary constraints. As a result, only national institutions conduct or commission appraisals.

This also suggests that the coalitions' resource distribution and availability is skewed, with the national government having access to the majority of resources. This is understandable given that the national government, as an institution with multiple subsidiaries (ministries), has a larger pool of resources and expertise than (regional) coalitions, which represent a much smaller group. While large companies or organisations such as the Royal Schiphol Group have similar advantages with profits of over 100 million, compared to SATL who rely on pro-bono or discounted expertise for analyses (Royal Schiphol Group, 2021). Although the opposition had more options for mobilising troops, as evidenced by public protests against policy proposals and the use of public figures, the lack of financial resources severely limits the impact of the opposition on policy systems. While

national government institutions frequently have more human resources, resulting in more directly available knowledge. What the national government or large corporations may lack in knowledge or manpower, they can compensate for and attain with their financial resources.

Financially affluent coalitions have a significant information advantage indirectly through these advantages. Because they commission the appraisals, they have firsthand knowledge of the results and can adjust their behaviour accordingly. This was also true for non-appraisal information, as demonstrated by the Ring Utrecht case. The report of Commission Schoof was first given to the ministry, which was able to prepare a press statement and subsequent actions before the report was made public to the opposition. Limiting their response time and potential actions, indicating MIEW's strategic advantage. Because their networks and financial capabilities are more extensive than regional coalitions, information is more easily accessible or attainable. Giving affluent coalitions a significant advantage in the policymaking process.

It is interesting to note that the impact of second opinions on procedural policy tools on decision-making was unclear. The second opinions did not make use of the tools to propose and analyse an alternative that could have been weighed against the preferential decisions. This can be attributed to opposing coalitions believing that decision-making was predetermined, or to a lack of resources to fully analyse and weigh new alternatives. It is also possible that non-national institutions are unfamiliar with the methodologies for procedural policy tools and how to use them in decision-making. A constructed CBA could be used to analyse new alternatives if the general effects are known or can be theorised. However, in the examined cases, this was either not done or the propositions and analyses were not expected to be weighed equally with the preferential decision's analyses. However, this could not be conclusively attributed to resource constraints or decision-making constructs. In neither of the cases studied, the second opinions resulted in the introduction of new policy alternatives. Making it unclear whether the second opinions held significant influence for decision-making and policy change.

## 7.2 Consensus and transparency structures

The level of consensus and transparency required for significant policy change can influence the coalition opportunity structures for the policy system over the long term. In the sections that follow, the relevance of these to policy and decision-making will be elaborated. The table 7.2.1 below provides an overview of the consensus and transparency structures.

Table 7.2.1: Consensus and transparency structures comparison

	Institutions	
	Ring Utrecht	Lelystad Airport
Consensus needed	Little (regional) consensus needed due to binding coalition agreement and Tracewet	Little consensus: binding coalition agreement.
General legislation	Due to involving national infrastructure, legislation directed at furthering policymaking/preventing delays. Obstructive changed by National coalition using formal authority	Same as Ring Utrecht
Transparency	WOB for decision review. Need prior knowledge of possible information for it to be effective	Same as Ring Utrecht

### Consensus structures

As described in chapter 2, a high level of consensus is required for decision-making in the Netherlands. However, this necessary consensus is typically reached during the formation/beginning

phase of new government coalitions. National policies must be discussed and agreed upon by the relevant political parties in the ruling coalition in order to provide direction for future policy proposals. By debating the coalition agreement behind closed doors, political parties can freely discuss their beliefs and policy preferences. This discussion then yields a coalition agreement containing, ideally, compromises between the political parties involved. Thus, theoretically debate could be negated, allowing for faster policy adoption. Even if regional subsidiaries of involved political parties oppose the policy, the national body can still adhere to the coalition agreement. Thereby ensuring the policy's adoption due to the agreement's statutory enforceability. The coalition agreement and consensus can thus be viewed as a legislative foundation whose primary purpose is to advance policies, as opposed to facilitating policymaking debate between levels of government or competing stakeholders.

Relevant consensus legislation in both cases were seemingly designed to advance policy making and to prevent further delays or hurting stalemates. For instance, how the MIRT programme is constructed to guide the process towards a problem-oriented solution. Or the Tracewet, which allows national-road projects to progress without significant intervention opportunities. However, these decision-making structures effectively reduce intervention opportunities or options for alternative proposals. Although these guidelines provide information about decision-making to the general public, discussions about policy proposals are still dominated by the political elite. The majority of information about these discussions was obtained through WOB requests, with little information directly published in the public domain. As a result, regional stakeholders have witnessed policymaking as predetermined and exclusive by national institutions or political elites, with no local input. Which in turn leads to more conflict between the stakeholders, which was explicitly stated in the case Lelystad Airport and matches the findings of Mensink (2021).

#### Transparency structures

Although documents for policy proposals and design are not always published, transparency mechanisms are in place to allow the public to learn about the decision-making process. The WOB (now WOO) gives the public access to public documents pertaining to decisions, such as methodology or assumptions. However, in order to make the request, one must be familiar with the decisions or the process. The majority of the public is unaware of these mechanisms and is thus reliant on groups such as journalists for WOB requests. WOB requests were initiated in both cases by journalists who discovered flaws in the methodology. Or used the information or flaws found by (opposition) stakeholders for WOB requests (SchipholWatch, 2021). Although useful, these documents can only be obtained from public sources, not private ones, and they do not necessarily include all potential meeting backlogs. As in the case of Ring Utrecht. The municipality switched coalitions following the release of the CBA, but whether this was motivated by the CBA or was predetermined by the municipality cannot be determined through WOB requests. It is difficult to determine whether the action is based on information or if the information was a convenient argument for their actions. Since there are no public documents or knowledge of specifics for the municipality's decision, WOB requests can be used strategically to create biased reporting.

#### Stakeholder' inclusion during decision-making

Both cases demonstrated a lack of stakeholder inclusion, both in methodology and coalition composition. According to Sabatier, a diverse coalition composition, including some opposing beliefs, is critical for better (or easier) decision-making (Sabatier, 1988). However, both cases showed limited diversity in the coalitions, being highly polarized and consisting only of either proponents or opponents. There was little effort made to include 'difficult' stakeholders in either coalition. The comparison is shown below in table 7.2.2. Regional opposition in both cases indicated

that decision-making was perceived as exclusive. In either case, this is a statement that could be supported by reviewing the coalition composition, which were largely composed of either strong proponents' beliefs or opposition beliefs. Other than (ideally) achieving the Paris Climate Agreement's sustainability targets, the coalitions appeared to have little overlap on policy values in both cases.

Table 7.2.2: Stakeholder inclusion and coalition' stakeholder diversity comparison

	Stakeholder composition and diversity inclusion	
	Ring Utrecht	Lelystad Airport
National coalition (Proponents)	Little diversity inclusion. Meaning that the coalition is mostly comprised of similar beliefs, with little inclusion of 'difficult' stakeholders. When municipality switched even more polarized coalitions. No inclusion of regional/opposition stakeholders in appraisal methodology. Holds most, if not all, formal authority	Similar composition as Ring Utrecht case but including municipality Lelystad. Also, no regional/opposition inclusion in appraisal methodology
Regional coalition (Opposition)	Low diversity but includes municipality Utrecht as formal government. Yet doesn't improve diversity of beliefs, given the motivation provided by Municipality Utrecht to switch. Little formal authority (veto-power)	Low diversity, all stakeholders hold similar beliefs. No inclusion of 'difficult' or diverging stakeholders. Little formal authority
General remarks	Highly polarized coalitions, with relatively little overlap between coalitions' beliefs	Similar to Ring Utrecht

This mechanism of 'exclusive' discussion for decision-making is also present in both cases' appraisal methodologies. Regional stakeholders and opposition were not included in the appraisals for Ring Utrecht and Lelystad Airport, making them more critical of the results. According to the literature, collaboration among stakeholders during these processes has the potential to positively influence conflict situations. A constructive discussion can take place by involving stakeholders and providing insight into how effects can develop, with the goal of mutual understanding of each other's perspectives and values (Mensink, 2021). This is acknowledged by politicians such as van Veldhoven as well as in the literature, which claims that regional values are less incorporated in CBAs than economic benefits (van Veldhoven, n.d.; Adler, 1997). As currently procedural tools are used primarily for support, negative appraisals tend to be ignored during debates by proponents of policies (Rienstra, 2008). With political ideologies being seen as valid reason enough to deviate from the results (van Veldhoven, n.d.). Where for the policy proposal broad consensus is needed for major policy change, this not the case for the appraisals methods used to support the policy proposals. Both examined cases demonstrated much controversy and disagreement on the appraisals and their methodology. This was (partially) attributed to the exclusion of opponents or regional stakeholders in the CBA or EIA process. The exclusion of regional stakeholders from the CBA or EIA process also indicates a lack of transparency, as the motivations for assumptions were unknown to other stakeholders. Although there were invoice moments for regional populations, it is unclear how far their concerns were incorporated into the policy, as policies are often developed prior to formal invoice moments, as appears to be the case for both Lelystad Airport and Ring Utrecht. Rather than exploring regional policy values, the invoices appeared to be used to explain current policy decisions to regional citizens. Possibly exacerbating the conflict between regional stakeholders and national policymakers.

In both cases, there was also limited information on the backgrounds of participating stakeholders, particularly involved citizen collectives. Public discourse, primarily through the media, was viewed as a component of opposition coalitions. As a result, the opposition coalitions were seen as supporting public/societal values against the political elite. However, as previously stated, infrastructure projects are viewed in the literature as a means of improving access to critical facilities. Because there is little documentation of the background of the citizens involved during the invoices, it is unclear how broadly these arguments are supported by all layers of the public. For example, whether the citizen collective is made up of lower-income people who rely heavily on cars and infrastructure, or of higher-income people who rely less on cars and infrastructure. Both of whom would have vastly different policy values in their respective situations. Lower income households would have almost no opportunity for input during the decision-making process, based on the previously mentioned stakeholder resource distribution. As a result, there is a distorted view of what the 'public' wants. It is then questionable whether both the political and public decision-making elites still intend for policy to benefit marginalised citizens. Or whether they've become too fixated on "winning" the policy debate in order to advance their own policy values.

### 7.3 External events & changing policy-making approaches

As both cases occurred within similar timeframes, the shocks to the policy system were also comparable. They had a significant impact on the decision-making process because they influenced policy beliefs and increased emphasis on various policy elements such as sustainability. The impact on policymaking and strategy approaches will be discussed further below.

#### 2008 Economic crisis: budget-oriented policymaking (2008-2015)

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the 2008 economic crisis emphasised the budgetary approach of government coalitions in the Netherlands. Although the budgetary approach existed prior to the economic crisis, the crisis prompted a re-evaluation of existing policies and institutions regarding public spending. The response, for example, was to reduce the institutions in place for nature conservation, with budget cuts of up to 70% (Buijs, Mattijssen, & Arts, 2014). The economic crisis altered public and political discourse, allowing critics of nature conservation policies to advocate for policy change. Existing policies' values were rearranged as the problem was reframed from a sustainability issue to an economic and social issue. Leading to a greater emphasis on budget-friendly policymaking with a focus on societal benefits or profits. The legislative inclusion of CBAs in the decision-making through the MIRT programme can then be seen as a result of the budget-oriented approach.

#### 2015 Paris Climate Agreement: sustainability-oriented policymaking (2015-2022)

Ironically, the de-institutionalization of nature conservation runs counter to the subsequent approach following the Paris Climate Agreement. After supporting and undersigning the global initiative, more focus was placed on sustainable policy- and decision-making. The climate agreement established legally binding goals for emissions and sustainability, giving environmental arguments and impacts far more weight in decision-making. Whereas the economic crisis fueled critical public and political discourse about institutionalised nature-policies, the climate agreement fueled advocates for sustainability. According to the literature, environmental impacts frequently gain public and political traction as a result of events occurring outside of the policy-specific arena (Breeman & Timmermans, 2008). This was also evident in both cases due to the increased importance of EIAs. The climate agreement refocused attention on the environmental impacts of policies, particularly when nature is sacrificed for policy projects. The PAS-verdict is an example of revisited procedures, changing the minimum environmental compensation requirements for

construction projects. However, elements of the budget-oriented approach have persisted, as evidenced by the fact that de-institutionalized legislation has not been (partially) reinstated.

Both cases involved a conflict between societal benefits and the environment, or more broadly, sustainability. Initially, opponents of the policies focused their arguments on the effects the policies would have on residents. The scope of the argument shifted from regional to national (environmental) impacts during the decision-making process. National policymaking is now required to accommodate the Climate Agreement's sustainability goals. Both cases involved significant changes to natural areas, which appeared to be at the heart of the conflict between coalitions. More importantly, it shifted the discussion from whether the policies would be beneficial to society in light of the negative consequences to whether the policies in general could fit within the sustainability goals. Such that, societal impacts as measured by the CBA or EIA became secondary to whether the policies could even pass. Following the PAS-verdict, policies did not have much room for change, as evidenced by the veto decisions in both cases. The veto was only temporary until a new proposal included direct environmental compensation elements. A compensation that could be easily addressed by, for example, planting new trees elsewhere, as seen with Ring Utrecht. To accommodate the sustainability argument, Ring Utrecht had the option of a sustainable alternative to deforestation. However, if the alternative was deemed insufficient, the project could still proceed. Indicating a willingness to find a way to get the policy proposals passed despite environmental concerns. Similar to the continued advocacy of Lelystad Airport, despite the numerous faults found and acknowledged in the EIAs performed. Shifting the political discourse from whether the policies would yield sufficient societal benefits to whether the policies could be realised.

#### 7.4 Strategic behaviour and case outcomes

The strategic behaviour of either coalition to influence policy outcomes is compared in table 7.4 below. When compared to the regional opposition, the national government coalitions exhibit significantly more strategic behaviour. This can be attributed to a scarcity of resources. This is especially true of formal decision-making authority, which allows them to influence other institutions in their favour, such as legislation amendments prior to decisions.

Table 7.4.1: strategic behaviour comparison

		Strategic behaviour	
Resource used	Coalition	Ring Utrecht	Lelystad Airport
Formal Authority: legislation	National	Changing of Tracewet, reducing intervention opportunities	Changing of Luchtvaartwet and wet Luchtvaart
	Regional	Use of WOB; Using PAS-verdict to prevent policy proposals based on insufficient Environmental impact mitigation	Use of WOB; Using PAS-verdict to prevent policy proposals based on insufficient Environmental impact mitigation; Filing charges against MleW/national government for malpractice;
Information	National	Had first access. Significant advantage	Had first access; attempted withholding of negative reports
	Regional	Highly dependent on national institutions, little strategic behaviour	Review of performed analysis and continued release of mistakes
Public opinion	National	Highlight reduced congestion and making it a national issue	Framing of importance of aviation/Schiphol for

			Netherlands (engine for Dutch economy; international standing Schiphol)
	Regional	Use of public figures; Public demonstrations/protests; Focus on sustainability targets	Interviewing discoverers of miscalculations; Publication of negative reports through WOB; Focus on sustainability targets

When comparing the outcomes and procedures, both cases show similarities. In general, information sharing was opaque in both cases. In both cases, negative reports were either not published or were released with apparent strategic timing. Limiting the potential responses by forming anti-policy coalitions. This was also evident with the publication of the CBA and EIA in both cases. Both included the CBA late in the decision-making process, resulting in limited alternative exploration in the CBA. Only the preferential decision was fully worked out in the CBA in both cases. Similar to the EIA, the impacts can only be defined once the specifics of the project alternative are defined. Since alternatives were not objectively weighed against each other due to a lack of exploration, both tools became highly political.

Despite the fact that procedures were followed, the release of the appraisals was not completely transparent. WOB requests were frequently used to obtain motivations for assumptions. In the extreme case of Lelystad, the assumptions were incorrect to begin with, resulting in an investigation and public persecution. The inconsistent information release and processing can explain at least some of the continuous delay in both cases. Whereas the tools were supposed to clarify information for subsequent decisions, they appear to have increased distrust in the process and among stakeholders. As a result, no significant changes to core policy have occurred.

Furthermore, both cases are characterized by limited negotiation and compromises during the decision-making for the final policy. This can be seen through the amount of possible devil shifts where a moment of victory/loss is experienced, shown in table 7.4 below.

Table 7.4.2: Devil shifts comparison

	Devil shifts	
	Ring Utrecht	Lelystad Airport
National (proponents)	PAS-verdict	PAS verdict; Miscalculations acknowledgement; public prosecution investigation
Regional (opponents)	Submission of each Trace (4x); Continuation despite PAS-verdict; No intervention possible through tracewet; Early access MleW to Schoof report; No revision of decisions based on analyses (EIA & CBA)	Continuation despite significant miscalculations; No revision of decisions based on analyses (EIA & CBA); Revelation of approval despite negative LVNL and SEO report; No amendments after Remkes Report;

As previously stated, CBAs and EIAs provided opportunities to re-evaluate the desirability of the projects. Despite the submitted critiques of policy proposals, some of which were based on CBA and EIA results, few compromises were made after the initial policy development. Given their formal letters to parliament, the opposition coalitions in both cases believe this to be the case. The lack of compromises may have also prompted the opposition to focus on the EIA, as they felt their values



and concerns were ignored. Rather than attempting to reach a compromise, the PAS-verdict and EIA results were used to prevent policies from being implemented at all. Although policy brokers were used in some ways to avoid the hurting stalemate and its consequences, this did not result in progressing negotiations. As demonstrated by the Schoof report for Ring Utrecht and the Remkes report for Lelystad Airport. Both were used to assess the decision-making process and whether it was carried out correctly and provided a sufficient (legislative) foundation for the projects to continue. However, the release of the report in the Ring Utrecht case was also contentious. MleW had first access to the report and could plan their next steps accordingly. While the opposition received the report later and had a limited time to respond. All of these elements can be seen as contributing to regional stakeholders' distrust in the decision-making process, which is supported by the literature (Mensink, 2021). Because there was little faith left in changing the policy, the goal could have shifted to preventing the policy. As a result, there were fewer opportunities for policy change and more polarised stakeholders on the policy issue.

### Venue shopping

The instances of strategic behaviour in both cases resemble the mechanism of 'venue shopping'. Venue shopping are the activities and behaviour of advocacy groups and policymakers "who seek out a decision setting where they can air their grievances with current policy and present alternative policy proposals" (Pralle, 2003, p. 233). The goal of advocacy coalition' shopping is to shift to new policy arenas where institutional (formal) power is distributed differently, in the hopes of changing the decision-making dynamics and gaining more influence. Shocks to the policy subsystem are frequently the cause of venue switching, as shocks already provide opportunities for (formal authority) resource redistribution (Pralle, 2003; Sabatier & Weible, 2007). This was seen in both cases to varying degrees. The strategic behaviour as shown table 7.4.1 can be seen as instances of venue shopping.

Legislation was changed in both cases to accommodate policy proposals that would otherwise have little legislative support or meet requirements. The changing of legislation to accommodate policy proposals is an example of a venue change. There was significant opposition to the policy proposals during the initial policy arena where they were discussed. The national coalitions manoeuvred themselves into a dominant position by utilising the formal authority available in an institutional policy venue where legislation could be adapted, effectively reducing intervention opportunities. The earlier consensus requirement could be bypassed due to the adapted legislation when 'returning' to the initial policy arena to decide on the policy. As seen with the national government allowing Trace-proposals in Ring Utrecht, or in the case of Lelystad changing the luchtvaartwet to accommodate the airport's opening.

More importantly, the opposition attempted to change the venue using the EIA in a similar manner. Following the PAS-verdict, the opposition focused on the legislative requirements for the policy proposals. Ironically shopping for a strong institutional venue, which earlier brought them at a disadvantage due the changing of legislation by the national government coalition. Since the opposition lacked the formal authority to change legislation, it shifted decision-making to an institutional venue to enforce the goals of the Climate Agreement and used the EIA to do so. When faced with limitations in their current venues, both advocacy coalitions took similar actions to gain more influence on decision-making. Suggesting that the EIA has gained significant political sway as a policy tool, since it allows coalitions to change venue via the PAS-verdict. Demonstrating that, depending on the shock experienced, procedural policy tools can gain formal authority.

## 8. Discussion & conclusions

The results of this research and conclusions will be discussed in this chapter. First, results of the research and how they tie in with the literature will be discussed. The results are used to answer the research question:

*How do CBAs and EIAs influence conflict on policy beliefs and decisions, between stakeholders of varying levels of government during the policy cycle?*

The most important findings will be elaborated on. After which results regarding the use of procedural policy tools on policy change will be discussed. Using the discussion, conclusions will be made, aiming to answer the sub- and main-research questions.

### 8.1 Discussion of results

Multiple factors influenced the decision-making process. Some of which were directly related to the use of procedural policy tools, while others had indirect influence on the decision-making. These will be delineated in this section, elaborating on what manner they influenced the process and subsequent policy outcomes. How these affected policy change and conflict among stakeholders will also be discussed.

#### Legislation & guidelines for decision-making

Legislation, such as the MIRT programme for large infrastructure projects, had a significant impact on decision-making. Many of the guidelines it establishes are binding agreements that must be met before policy decisions can be made. The benefits include the ability to continue the decision-making process with defined decision moments. However, in the cases studied, the steps were not always followed exactly as outlined in the guidelines. This is due to the fact that both cases were initiated prior to the implementation of the MIRT programme in 2007. Another possibility is that the cases had specifics that allowed them to circumvent the MIRT programme's requirements. The Ring Utrecht case involved a national road, which required the Tracewet to be used in decision-making. The project at Lelystad Airport included multiple infrastructure networks and domains. This may have made guidelines less strict, influencing the timing of appraisals and the exploration of alternatives.

The legislation aided progression in the decision-making process by establishing prerequisites for decisions. CBAs and EIAs, for example, are required for MIRT infrastructure projects. However, legislation can also be seen as a method by national coalitions to overrule their opposition. The Tracewet in the case of Ring Utrecht is one such example. While projects in the MIRT programme must be approved by the parliament, the Tracewet allows for this to be avoided. The Tracewet empowers the MleW to make the final decision on whether policies will be implemented. The principle underlying the practise is similar to the principle underlying other legislation. That is, to avoid policy stagnation, which would result in a loss of welfare. The Tracewet is also limited to national roads, implying that it is only used for national infrastructure purposes. However, by avoiding regional politics and approvals, it can be viewed as a method of ignoring opposition to national policies. Although policies should be thoroughly weighed before making decisions, this does not include the need to accommodate regional values in policies. Giving the impression to regional stakeholders that decisions have already been made. Which is an identified source of conflict among stakeholders, facilitating greater distrust and conflict in the decision-making process (Mensink, 2021). The process of weighing alternatives through the CBA and EIA is then perceived as symbolic, especially since only one alternative is fully explored. Which can be attributed to limited guidelines on the CBA and EIA legislative methodology.

## PAS-verdict & EIAs

In both cases, the PAS-verdict can be viewed as a pivotal moment in decision-making. As discussed in Chapter 7, the Paris Climate Agreement signalled a shift in policy and decision-making. Prior to the 2015 agreement, policymaking was more budget-focused; however, sustainability has become an important factor. The agreement's binding goals required new policies to accommodate sustainability benchmarks in order for them to be adopted. The PAS-verdict demonstrates that this transition was not smooth. The verdict defined policy requirements, leaving little room for interpretation of policy requirements. Without the PAS-verdict, both cases would most likely not have been delayed as significantly. Prior to the PAS-verdict, there was no regional veto power, and it provided opposition with a new means of delaying or preventing policies. As a result, opposing coalitions shifted their arguments to EIAs, which were historically viewed as a nuisance by decision-makers (Girjasing, 2011). Making that the EIA often was performed more symbolically to 'check off the boxes'. Yet now the EIA gained significant veto-power, due to the increased importance of sustainability and PAS-verdict.

## Third party supervision procedural policy tools

Both cases demonstrated the effect third-party supervision can have on the use of procedural policy tools. Where the CBA does not have a supervisory body to control for the analyses, the EIA does. Where the results of the CBA were continuously questioned and discredited, the claims could not objectively be supported due to lacking supervisory committees. As mentioned, in the literature often the impartiality of CBAs is questioned by politicians (Mouter, 2019; Mouter, 2017). This can be attributed to political ideologies, causing differences for key policy values and their perceived importance. Although the CBA should in theory be impartial and unbiased, this is almost exclusively not seen as such in practice. Evidenced by the continuous discrediting of CBAs performed by either coalition in the examined cases. In both cases the results of the CBAs were often questioned, along with uncertainties on the methodology. Motivations behind certain values were given yet these could still be falsified by opposition. Although these claims were not acknowledged by national institutions, it still influenced the public and political discourse on the project. It provided political ammunition for debates, where the impartiality of the CBA could be questioned. While the claims of the opponents couldn't be acknowledged, motivations of proponents also couldn't conclusively be supported. This can be attributed to the lacking supervisory body which reviews the appraisals. Where CBA results could be discredited, EIA results were more difficult to discredit. In part due to that environmental impacts are more easily objectively quantifiable compared to societal elements. But another important factor was that through the supervisory committee the results must be argued and accounted for by the conductors.

However, the quality of supervision appeared to be lacking in both cases. Despite the presence of supervision, critical EIA miscalculations for Lelystad Airport went largely unnoticed. Due to limited staffing and available time to review the analyses, reviewing EIAs is a time-consuming operation. As many impacts must be analysed for large infrastructure projects, appraisals become significantly larger documents containing complex approximations. These errors were only discovered through second opinions from opponents who had more review time. Whereas claims against CBAs were more difficult to objectively recognise, EIA claims could be reviewed more objectively. Transparency in methodology is ensured through the supervisory committee. In comparison to the CBA, this results in a more effective and objective review for EIAs. As evidenced by the discovery of Lelystad Airport miscalculations, which could then be reviewed and acknowledged by the supervisory body and national institutions. In both cases, second opinions of CBAs could not be acknowledged or supported conclusively by either coalitions or national institutions. As a result, there will be more

political discourse with subjective interpretations of the CBA results. Leading to increased political discourse with subjective interpretations of the CBA results.

## 8.2 Appraisals and policy change

Although both procedural policy tools were used in the cases, their impact on policy changes varied. While both tools, by definition, should provide an objective assessment of policy impacts, the objectivity was questioned by the coalitions involved. The degree at which this could be questioned could have attributed to the different level of influence of either respective tool on policy change.

### CBA

In both cases, the CBA appeared to be less influential than it was made to be in the (public) discourse. This finding was also partially supported by politicians, as seen in published interviews (van Veldhoven, n.d.; van Lunteren, n.d.; de Bondt, n.d.). In the literature it was also researched and acknowledged that CBA outcomes weren't correlated to policy adoption (Annema, Frenken, Koopmans, & Kroesen, 2017; Mouter, 2017). However, by definition, CBAs should still serve to concretize information about policy alternatives. As Mouter (2017) indicated in his research, Dutch politicians tend to not solely base their judgements on CBAs. His research also indicated that disagreements on normative decisions (i.e., assumptions) created distrust on the impartiality of the CBA. Limiting the CBAs' influence and providing political ammunition to opposition. These elements were also seen in both cases. Motivations behind normative decisions were not transparent, giving opposition more arguments against the CBA and EIA findings. Allowing them to deviate from the outcome and judge the project as undesirable. When the appraisal information is continuously discredited, its functioning during the decision-making process and influence become limited.

The CBA's timing during the decision-making process hampered its functioning and influence even more. CBAs were performed relatively late in the decision-making process in both cases. This limited its influence on the formulation of policy alternatives, a mechanism also mentioned in the literature (Mouter, 2017; Rienstra, 2008). Furthermore, it has been suggested in the literature that politicians tend to have their policy judgement ready prior to the release of the CBA and use the CBA's outcomes accordingly. The desirability of the policies then becomes the driving force in discussions, while policy formation through the CBA is almost non-existent (Rienstra, 2008). CBAs should aid in the formation of alternatives, but this did not occur in both cases. Prior to the appraisals, project alternatives had already been constructed, with a preferential decision made. Due to mistrust in the assumptions or already formed opinions on the desirability of the proposed policies, the opposition quickly discredited the CBA. Indicating that, in practise, political ideology can be sufficient for politicians to deviate from and disregard CBA results. Despite its 'unbiased' approach, the CBA has been transformed from an objective representation into a subjective argument. As a result, its influence on policy alternatives is limited.

### EIA

The EIA did seem to hold more influence on the decision-making process, most significantly after the Paris Climate Agreement. The agreement provided legislative binding goals to be accommodated for by future policies, with implications seen through the PAS-verdict. However, looking beyond the veto-function the EIA gained through the PAS-verdict, the EIA didn't significantly change policy core values in either case. Better mitigation or direct compensation was needed to accommodate new constructions. However, in both cases the mitigating measures were minimal if present at all, with both policies focussing on compensation. Indicating lacking policy beliefs changes, as little effort is done to mitigate the negative impact of the policy but rather accept them, indicated by the added compensation. For instance, Ring Utrecht added new forestation initiatives to their policy design but

continued to disregard the sustainable alternatives for their project, indirectly disregarding the emotional value Amelisweerd has for residents. The amendment for an alternative proposal by the opposition was done for the project to prevent a hurting stalemate. It suggests that the national coalition/MieW did not change the policy core elements to mitigate the concerns, thus seemingly no significant policy core belief change occurred due to the EIAs.

In both cases the EIA was still seemingly performed to “check the boxes”. Rather than giving way for changes in the policy, it was mostly used by opponents to either halt or nullify policy proposals. Ideally, the EIA should be used to clarify information regarding impacts of proposed policies. Yet almost immediately the information became political in the analysed cases, with the outcomes being seen as either “go” or “no go” verdicts for the policies. Rather than addressing opposition criticisms on the impacts, proponents’ coalitions responded by adding new compensation. Possibly leading to more conflict with the regional populations, as their points of distrust were not addressed properly. For instance, for regional populations the value for historic forests and animal populations can be different than a newly constructed forest area. In a way the EIA did gain significant influence on the decision-making process given the consequences it had in both cases. Yet seemingly in practice it is still performed to ‘check the boxes’ rather than to re-evaluate the desirability and operation of policy proposals. Diminishing the policy-changing potential of the EIA.

### 8.3 Policy- & decision-making conclusions

The conclusions to the research question:

*“How do CBAs and EIAs influence conflict on policy beliefs and decisions, between stakeholders of varying levels of government during the policy cycle?”*

will be provided in the following sections. The research question will be answered through the sub-questions, which will be provided prior to their respective section. This will provide the conclusions related to the use of procedural policy tools in practice. Conclusions related to the ACF will be discussed afterwards in section 8.4.

#### Diminished formal role of tools & solution-oriented decision-making

*RQ: What was the formal role of the CBAs & EIAs in the multi-level decision-making process?*

*RQ: What were the implications, if any, of the procedural policy tools’ influence the proceeding agenda setting for the shaping and changing of policy (alternatives)?*

The formal function of procedural tools is to provide an objective representation of policy impacts. The analyses that result should then aid in the formulation and selection of preferred policy options. This was evident in both cases studied, where the CBA and EIA did provide information for decision-making. However, the impartiality of both was frequently called into question, leading to scepticism about the results. As a result, the formal role of policy tools appears to have been diminished, as the outcomes were weighed differently and effectively used to a lesser extent. It has been demonstrated in the literature that politicians are more likely to use CBA results opportunistically than to form their opinions. This was also evident in the cases studied, indicating a reduced formal role in practise. This could be due to a variety of factors. Most notably, only one alternative was developed in the appraisals, while other options were quickly dismissed. The examined alternative was already regarded as the preferential decision, though this should not be made until all alternatives have been evaluated. However, if no alternatives are weighed against each other, no decision should be made. Although the motivation for excluding other alternatives could be understood if resources were limited, this was not the case in the cases studied. This allowed opponents to dismiss the results due to a lack of information, allowing them to disregard the results

and shape their subsequent actions accordingly. As a result, there is little room for compromise or policy changes in the proposal.

The lack of compromises and changes also suggests that the approach to policymaking and subsequent agenda-setting has shifted. The MIRT programme was designed for a problem-oriented approach, but both cases ended with a solution-oriented approach. The problem-solving approach was chosen to enable more effective policies for increased social welfare. The appraisal results should have aided in identifying the best solution to the societal problems. However, the decision-making shifted toward either pushing the solution through or rejecting it. The implications for decision-making were that it was not focused on effectively addressing problems, but rather on 'winning' the discourse in favour of their policy proposals or ideology. As a result, the approach of involved stakeholders shifted to a solution-oriented one, which had a significant impact on the subsequent agenda setting.

CBA and EIAs don't significantly change policy beliefs or stakeholders' positions

*RQ: How did the procedural policy tool affect stakeholders' allegiance to policies and how were position changes, if any, translated in the final policy?*

As mentioned in section 8.2, procedural policy tools did not appear to have a significant impact on stakeholders' policy core beliefs. What's interesting is that the EIA's miscalculations did not result in significant shifts in stakeholder allegiance. Miscalculations were claimed by MIEW and proponents to have insignificant effects on final policies, but in both cases, they caused significant delays. In both cases, stakeholders reaffirmed their support for the policies in subsequent periods. While the municipality of Ring Utrecht did switch coalitions, it was unrelated to the appraisals. Their (publicly stated) motivation stemmed from a lack of inclusion in decision-making and evaluation methodology. However, the causality between the switch and the CBA is not clear. The municipality was a member of the proponents' coalition during the exploration phase. As a result, they could have been already opposed to the preferential decision and use the decision-making process and methodology to switch coalitions. The question then becomes whether their core beliefs have changed. Or if they already held those beliefs prior to the switch and saw the appraisals and decision-making as an opportunity to switch.

The political parties that the municipality consists of induced no significant change on the policy proposals in either examined case. Therefore, it could be argued that the municipality as stakeholder also didn't have core belief changes. Supporting the notion that political ideologies are strong enough to disregard appraisal results, even when confronted with significant errors in methodology. Displaying the lacking ability for policy change and compromises, while maintaining own political and policy beliefs.

Symbolic informing of stakeholders by procedural policy tools

*RQ: How did the procedural policy tool inform stakeholders in the decision-making process and what were the implications, if any, for stakeholders during the decision-making process.*

Part of the formal role of the procedural policy tools is to objectively concretize information for stakeholders. This was also to a certain extent true in the examined cases, as impacts of the preferred policy alternatives were elaborated. The informing function for the specific alternatives was therefore met. However, as other alternatives weren't examined, it could be seen as less of informing function but rather convincing function. By only examining a single or little alternatives, stakeholders aren't informed on the possibilities for policies. Supporting the notion of the solution-oriented approach in practice which in theory should be a problem-oriented one. For procedural policy tools it should be expected that stakeholders are informed of the multiple options rather than

the single alternative. This results in limited knowledge of the problem and solution areas. With the potential consequence of sub-optimal solutions to societal problems.

Further implications are that for subsequent agenda items and discourse, the options become either policy adoption or denial. When only a go or no-go decision can be made, the procedural policy tools become political arguments to either support or disregard the policy proposal. They don't necessarily provide new or clarified information, or stronger arguments given the politicians' distrust in the impartiality of the appraisals. No exploration on new alternatives was held resulting from the tools, with discourse predominantly focussed on the examined alternative. Suggesting that the use of the tools, and their informing function, in practice becomes mostly symbolic.

#### Procedural policy tools and conflict

Based on the elements described in earlier sections, procedural policy tools seemingly don't have a conflict reducing influence on the decision-making process. The formal role of the tools being diminished hampers its potential conflict reducing mechanisms. The tool should have aided with informing and weighing of alternatives, yet the alternatives were already largely decided on prior to the appraisals. In turn giving stakeholders experiencing the decision-making as predetermined without their input, which was a significant factor for the conflict among stakeholders. The timing of the appraisals also didn't aid with alleviating that experience. The tools only appeared relatively late in the decision-making process, further diminishing its possible influence. The timing made the use seem symbolic, which attributed to the distrust surrounding the appraisals. The errors in the appraisals and the subsequent responses by relevant stakeholders also suggest that the tools induced conflict among stakeholders rather than alleviate it.

The development of the preferential decision and lacking exploration of alternatives could've made the opposition feel excluded from the decision-making process. Exclusion of regional or opposition stakeholders in the appraisal process further added to the conflict. Where literature suggested that this would be beneficial for the role of the procedural policy tools, this was not done in practice. Adding towards the sentiment of the devil shifts during decision-making, making the opposition experience the continued losses and exclusions in increasing severity. This polarized political landscape with little room for compromises potentially made opposition stakeholders focus on preventing policies rather than compromising and improving them.

Decision-makers also saw enough opportunities to hold on to their own ideologies, often directing critiques towards the impartiality of appraisals. How results of the appraisals were processed by stakeholders is exemplary of this. Stakeholders were quick to rebuke the results of CBAs, based on ideological differences on assumptions. While proponents were quick to trivialize significant EIA errors, indicating low appreciation of environmental impacts and in general the appraisals. The results of the appraisals therefore didn't lead towards new debates for compromises in the policy proposals. The focus then became to win the policy debate in their favour, further polarizing involved policy actors. Resulting in a toxic political arena, where distrust in information and conflict among coalitions is high.

#### 8.4 ACF conclusions and implications

In this section conclusions related to the ACF literature and practices will be described. These are aimed to have findings contribute to the ACF framework, discussing important elements of the framework and how these were found in the practices of the cases.

### Diminished importance of coalition diversity

The ACF- and other relevant literature stressed the need for institutional arrangements to structure value inclusion and trade-offs during the decision-making. The importance of the institutions is acknowledged in the Netherlands through the introduction of the MIRT programme, including the BO MIRT for regional input. Although these mechanisms and venues are in place which in theory should facilitate inclusion of 'difficult' stakeholders, this was not seen in practice. Stakeholder inclusion, especially opposition, was not done in practice, leading to shifts in allegiance and increased opposition. Sabatier suggests that inclusion of difficult stakeholders and having a diverse coalition is important to prevent delays and hurting stalemates, yet both cases' coalitions displayed limited stakeholder diversity. Where according to Sabatier this should have led to delays that would've led to policy change due to the need for negotiation. Yet this was circumvented in both examined cases (partially) through strategic use of formal authority.

### Venue shopping and shocks

As mentioned in chapter 7, coalitions may attempt to change decision-making venue to improve their position in negotiations. The coalitions in both examined cases displayed similar behaviour, attempting to use institutions as a bypass for compromising or negotiation. As national government coalitions hold most formal authority, it didn't have the need to include the 'difficult' stakeholders described by Sabatier, as they could change legislative limitations. While the regional coalitions used the PAS-verdict to disregard further negotiation in favour of nullifying the proposals. Showing that in practice coalition diversity and inclusion isn't as easily achieved, with limited capacity for policy change or value inclusion depending on the formal authority distribution. As regional institutions have little formal authority in delaying national policies, they effectively don't have to be included. Which could be examined with the stakeholder invoice moments or CBA methodology. Leading to venue shopping by opposition coalitions to increase their formal authority with the PAS verdict.

The venue shopping also demonstrated how shocks to the policy subsystem could prevent policy change from occurring, rather than facilitating it. Almost all ACF literature names shocks combined with policy-oriented learning as the most common pathway to policy change. In theory the shocks in both cases could have led to policy change since the shocks seemingly changed the policy-making approach. Therefore, it is interesting that no significant policy changes were seen in either case, despite the external or internal shocks. To some extent this could be attributed to the coalition agreement, which possibly prevents internal opposition within the coalition from forming. Even when confronted with changing government coalitions and negotiation opportunities, no noticeable policy change was formed. If any, the shocks only exacerbated the polarisation between coalitions, demonstrated by their respective actions following shocks. Either changing legislation and requirements to fit the policy or using said requirements to nullify the proposal. The shocks in theory could have led to new negotiations or instances of (minor) policy learning, yet these didn't form in the examined cases.

### Regional opposition lacking skillfull leadership

The absence of resource redistribution could also indicate lack of skillfull leadership, especially from opposition coalitions. Where it is earlier mentioned as minimal capacity for negotiations above, it could also be framed as exceptional leadership by the national government coalitions. Despite numerous significant shocks and controversies, they managed to maintain their formal authority and dominant position. Although the PAS-verdict provided an opportunity for opposition to stop the policy, this is only temporary as added environmental compensation is sufficient for continuation. Demonstrating lacking skillfull leadership, as the shock was not used to improve their position. Furthermore, the exclusion of opposition or 'difficult' stakeholders in the national coalitions



demonstrate much skillful leadership. As in theory this should have led to delays, the coalition managed to circumvent this through actions in different (institutional) venues, enabling the policy proposals. Despite the protests and lacking support of 'difficult' stakeholders, the proposals still found passage in each venue, although the PAS verdict temporarily halted it. According to most ACF literature this would have been a death-sentence for the policy proposal, yet the actions and strategic behaviour of the national government coalition managed to prevent this.

### 8.5 Policy- and decision-making recommendations

Recommendations to improve the use of procedural policy tools will be given below. Through improvement of the use of the policy tools, conflict could potentially be reduced during the decision-making. Most of the recommendations are directed towards the formal role of the tools, some of which were also mentioned in the literature.

#### *Improve transparency of CBA and EIA appraisals*

Improving the transparency of the appraisals is key, as this can aid with the decision-making process. Understanding the importance of the effects and arguments used for assumptions could aid with the discourse on policies. When these are not properly argued for, it provides an opportunity to be quickly countered by opposition and allow them to view the appraisals as biased and disregard their results. Justification at later stages may be insufficient to change the policy beliefs, as stakeholder then already have formed their opinions on the policy. The following suggestions are aimed towards improving the transparency of the appraisals.

#### *Independent third-party supervision for CBAs*

An independent supervisory committee for CBAs could potentially improve the transparency of the methodology and processing of analyses. Through a supervisory committee, more transparency is asked of the appraisals since they will need to be reviewed by an independent body. The potential benefits were seen in the EIA and the commission MER, who review the EIAs. Although mistakes could still be left unnoticed, review by opposition can lead to their discovery. Providing the commission MER with an opportunity to judge whether or not claims of miscalculations are objectively true. This was most clear in the case of Lelystad Airport, where the oppositions' review and commission MER review led to uncovering the significant mistakes. Currently CBAs don't have such an institution, resulting in limited transparency on the appraisal. An introduction of an independent supervisory institution could therefore aid with the CBA use in practice.

#### *Stakeholder inclusion in methodology*

Another core issue of the conflict was the experienced exclusion of regional stakeholders in the decision-making or appraisal methodology. In the literature this was indicated to be a strong factor of conflict, and this held true in the examined cases. The appraisals didn't include regional or other opposition stakeholders in the analyses. Inclusion of these stakeholders could help with facilitating better decision-making, as they gain knowledge of the appraisal through involvement. Often stakeholders, especially citizens, don't have the insight or knowledge of the appraisal process. Which could make them distrust the results from the start. Most of these elements were only found through WOB requests, indicating unwillingness of public authorities to disclose that information. By removing those barriers and providing more information, trust in the decision-making can then be better facilitated. Understanding the justifications of assumptions, as well as the desirability of the policy for each stakeholder, conflict could at least be discussed constructively. In the examined cases, this did not occur. The discourse was directed solely at either discrediting results or downplaying these concerns. When 'difficult' stakeholders are included, this exclusion-argument

could potentially be reduced. Allowing for more constructive discussion, leading towards more room for compromise.

#### *Redistributing formal authority to regional governments*

This does require a certain capacity for compromise of stakeholders, which seemed to reduce when the decision-making reached its conclusion in the examined cases. Since the inclusion of these stakeholders is consistently not done, making it mandatory through legislation could ensure better regional value inclusion. Other mechanisms will need to also be in place to ensure equal weighing of their inputs. As the cases demonstrated, decision-making was experienced more as elitist, with little input other than national perspectives. This drowning-out effect must therefore then be prevented for the (mandatory) inclusion of regional stakeholders in appraisals. This could be addressed by granting more formal authority to regional government institutions such as municipalities. This could also ensure that their beliefs need to be better accommodated for, rather than being circumvented by coalitions who hold all formal authority. Redistributing formal authority could therefore prevent the drowning out of regional stakeholders.

#### *Mechanisms to ensure timely appraisals and submission during exploration phases*

There also seemed to be a lacking capacity for changing beliefs or stakeholder positions, in part due to the timing of the appraisals. As well as politicians that view their ideology as a strong enough argument to disregard CBA results, suggesting a lacking capacity for change. The late appraisals didn't have enough credibility or authority for stakeholders to change their beliefs accordingly. In the examined cases the appraisals were mostly conducted after determining the preferential decision, suggesting that these are formed based mostly on ideological beliefs for solutions. When appraisals are as late in the decision-making, stakeholders will have further formed their opinions on desirability and seemingly don't tend to deviate significantly from that belief. If the CBA and EIA were to be performed earlier during the exploration phase, the tools could aid with the forming of the opinions. The tools would require either more conclusive justification for excluding policy options, or they would include these extra options for alternative weighing. When the objectivity of information is more guaranteed, stakeholders could be more inclined to use the information in shaping their views. Hence supporting the formal role that the procedural policy tools aim to have for policy decision-making.

## 8.6 Limitations & future research

The research did have limitations, the most significant ones being described below. After describing the limitations, suggestions for future research are made to address the limitations of the respective section.

#### *Case selection influencing outcomes*

The case selection was highly influential for the results found. Both cases had high complexity, with multiple specifics which potentially diminished the role of the procedural policy tools. For instance, the case of Ring Utrecht involved national roads, which gave the Tracewet a lot of influence. Or Lelystad Airport, which involved multiple industries and infrastructures, along with increased complex and conflicting societal values. Both cases didn't fit perfectly within the decision-making guidelines as described through the MIRT programme. In turn possibly affecting the outcomes of both cases, as well as stakeholder specific behaviour. Both projects were also initiated prior to the adoption of the MIRT programme, although they did largely follow them.

Diversifying the case selection could therefore aid future research to better control for procedural policy tools and policy outcomes. It would therefore be interesting to consider cases with less complexity, e.g., with less legislation involved other than the MIRT programme. This could improve

the generalisability of the findings as well as focus more on the role of appraisals, improving the understanding of the procedural policy tools in conflict situations. Cases with clearer guidelines would also aid with determining the influence of appraisals. In the examined cases they were seemingly performed more ad-hoc, making it more difficult to establish their influence and the causality of the findings.

#### Solution oriented design

The cases in this research demonstrated a shift from problem-oriented to solution-oriented decision making. Yet the aim for the MIRT programme was for decision-making to be problem-oriented, to better address societal needs. It would be beneficial to examine cases where the problem-oriented approach was maintained and compare them with the solution-oriented cases. It may be that for the problem-oriented approach the CBA and EIA are most likely used to weigh differing alternatives, compared to the solution-oriented cases examined in this research. If the use of the procedural policy tools were to differ between approaches, it would improve understanding the effects a procedural policy tool can have for decision-making and what conditions determine its specific use. Therefore, adding these types of cases would be beneficial for future research.

#### Lack of case-specific interviews

Interviews could have helped significantly with this research. Although it was attempted to interview case specific stakeholders, this was not achieved. However, gaining insight in the motivations and values directly from the stakeholders would improve the validity of the results. For example, the switch of municipality Utrecht and the causality could then be specifically asked and determined, improving the validity and strength findings. Although there was information indirectly mentioning the influence of procedural policy tools, or determined through induction, the findings were more difficult to validate. This prevented stakeholder behaviour from being conclusively determined. Interviews could have helped this research in understanding the influence of policy tools on stakeholders. For instance, it could aid with understanding conditions where stakeholders become unable or unwilling to compromise on policy alternatives. Interviews can therefore contribute to the findings of this research. It allows to focus more on the influence procedural tools can have on unbending stakeholders, and determine what conditions led to these positions and how these can be mitigated.

It would also aid with determining value changes of stakeholders. Through the interviews, initial and final policy values can be determined. It could also be used to better determine conditions where stakeholders become unwilling to compromise during decision-making processes. Therefore, interviews can improve the analysis of the influence of procedural policy tools on value changes. In this research this element was lacking, as values had to be determined through mediums such as news articles or policy documents. Although this did provide quality information, case-specific interviews could have validated the findings significantly more.

#### Intercountry comparison

This research is a continuation on the earlier findings for the Netherlands, making the findings specific for one country. Future research would also benefit from intercountry comparisons on procedural policy tools usage. A cross-country comparison would aid in better and further generalizing the findings. In turn better understanding the influence procedural policy tools can have in various contexts. This research involved many societal elements, including cultural and political ones. An example being the coalition agreement, which affects the veto-power in parliament. Such factors significantly influence how decision-making is experienced and responded to by political or public figures. Which affects opportunities for innovation in decision-making, or the general

approach to policymaking. Determining how country-specific cultural elements influence the procedural policy tool use would be beneficial in understanding its influence.

#### Lack of quantitative data

This research could also have benefitted from quantitative approach for text processing. This research depended heavily on empirical research, which is qualitatively described. However, adding a quantifiable factor to the text processing could help validate the findings better and aid with visualisation of the findings. It could allow to determine whether the discourse differed significantly between cases, and how that affected the case outcomes. It could add an extra layer of validity, which currently the research is somewhat lacking. It currently expects “to take my word for it”, while coded or quantified text data could be used to reduce that factor. However, the inclusion of quantitative data also needs to be considered with its proper contexts. Data can always be misconstrued to alter the interpretations in favour of certain sentiments. Although adding this quantitative layer to the validation of the research could be beneficial, it needs to be treated with a certain level of sophistication and nuance. This element therefore could be an addition for research but isn't as crucial or significant as the earlier described limitations and suggestions.

#### Venue shopping through CBAs

The venue shopping in the cases by the opposition using the EIA demonstrated how procedural policy tools could gain significant formal authority. Due to the PAS-verdict, it gained enough influence to change the decision-making venue to a formal legislative institution. This could be partially attributed to more easily quantifiable elements and methods of EIAs compared to the CBA. It would still be interesting for future research to examine in what conditions similar authority could be granted to the CBA. In the examined cases, the CBA was quickly neglected, and the focus shifted to the EIA. As there was significant debate on the impartiality and objectivity of CBAs in the examined cases, it would be interesting to determine how the CBA could gain a similar position. This would require more (perceived) objectivity of the CBA which needs to be controlled. Analysing and comparing where these elements differ with comparable elements of the EIA could then improve the understanding of either tool. It could also aid with understanding in what contexts procedural policy tools could gain formal authority to change decision-making venue, and which institutions are involved.

## Bibliography

- Actiecomité Voorthuizen Windmolens NEE. (2019). *Te lezen informatie voor de gemeenteraadsleden voor het "Het Gesprek" over de NRD structuurvisie windenergie in Barneveld op 17 januari 2019*. Retrieved from <https://api1.ibabs.eu/publicdownload.aspx?site=barneveld&id=100019514>
- Adler, M. (1997). Incommensurability and cost-benefit analysis. *U. Pa. L. Rev.*, 146, 1371-1418.
- Alders, H. (2008). *Advies Alderstafel middellange termijn*. Retrieved from <https://omgevingsraadschiphol.nl/adviezen-alderstafel/>
- Andeweg, R., & Irwin, G. (2009). *Governance and politics of the Netherlands*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Annema, J. A., Frenken, K., Koopmans, C., & Kroesen, M. (2017). Relating cost-benefit analysis results with transport project decisions in the Netherlands. *Letters in Spatial and Resource Sciences*, 10(1), 109-127. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12076-016-0175-5>
- Ardıç, Ö., Annema, J. A., & Van Wee, B. (2015). Non-implementation of road pricing policy in the Netherlands: An application of the 'Advocacy Coalition Framework'. *European Journal of Transport and Infrastructure Research*, 15(2), 116-146.
- Arnouts, R. (2010). *Regional Nature Governance in the Netherlands: Four Decades of Governance Modes and Shifts in the Utrechtse Heuvelrug and Midden-Brabant*. Wageningen University and Research.
- Bache, I. (1999). The extended gatekeeper: central government and the implementation of EC regional policy in the UK. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 6(1), 28-45. doi:10.1080/135017699343784
- Bali, A. S., Howlett, M., Lewis, J., & Ramesh, M. (2021). Procedural policy tools in theory and practice. *Policy and Society*, 295-311.
- Baumann, J. (2018). *Analyse van de economische schade door laagvliegroutes Lelystad Airport*. Retrieved from [https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/rapport-economische-schade-LEY-v2.0\\_final1.pdf](https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/rapport-economische-schade-LEY-v2.0_final1.pdf)
- Beach, D. (2017). Process-Tracing Methods in Social Science. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia*. doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.176
- Bewonersdelegatie Lelystad Airport. (2017). *Een Ander Geluid: Advies Bewonersdelegatie Aansluitroutes Lelystad*. Retrieved from <https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/andere-geluid-binnenwerk-proef.pdf>
- Bewonersdelegatie Lelystad Airport. (2018). Contra-expertise Milieu Effect Rapportage ( MER ) Lelystad Airport. *Luchtvaartbeleid (31.936); brief regering; Informatie over aansluitroutes en MER-actualisatie Lelystad Airport (TK, 462)*. The Hague. Retrieved from [https://www.eerstekamer.nl/nonav/overig/20180221/de\\_bewonersdelegatie\\_lelystad/met\\_a](https://www.eerstekamer.nl/nonav/overig/20180221/de_bewonersdelegatie_lelystad/met_a)
- Binnenlands Bestuur. (2011, December 07). *RvS wijst opnieuw uitbreiding vliegveld Lelystad af*. Retrieved from BinnenlandsBestuur.nl.

- Binnenlands Bestuur. (2013, April 5). *Raad Utrecht voelt zich genegeerd door Rijk over A2*. Retrieved from Binnenlands bestuur: <https://www.binnenlandsbestuur.nl/ruimte-en-milieu/utrecht-wordt-genegeerd-door-rijk-over-a2-vindt-de-raad>
- Breeman, G., & Timmermans, A. (2008). *Politiek van de aandacht voor milieubeleid; een onderzoek naar maatschappelijke dynamiek, politieke agendavorming en prioriteiten in het Nederlandse milieubeleid*. Wageningen Universiteit, Wageningen.
- Buijs, A., Mattijssen, T., & Arts, B. (2014). "The man, the administration and the counter-discourse": An analysis of the sudden turn in Dutch nature conservation policy. *Land Use Policy*, 38, 676-684.
- Bus, L., & Manshanden, W. (2019). *Verkennde MKBA beleidsalternatieven Luchtvaart*. SATL. Retrieved from <https://satl-lelystad.nl/2019/06/25/mkba/#rapport>
- Bus, L., & Manshanden, W. (2022, February 16). *ESB*. Retrieved from Werkwijzer luchtvaart-MKBA's bevoordeelt uitbreiding vliegverkeer: <https://esb.nu/esb/20069509/werkwijzer-luchtvaart-mkbas-bevoordeelt-uitbreiding-vliegverkeer>
- Cairney, P. (2013, October 30). *Policy Concepts in 1000 Words: The Advocacy Coalition Framework*. Retrieved from Paul Cairney: Politics & Public Policy: <https://paulcairney.wordpress.com/2013/10/30/policy-concepts-in-1000-words-the-advocacy-coalition-framework/>
- Cairney, P. (2019). *Understanding public policy: theories and issues* (2nd ed.).
- Cats, G. (2016, May 09). *Onderzoek toont aan: Verbreding A27 betaalt zich zelfs in 100 jaar nog niet terug!* Retrieved from Kracht van Utrecht: <https://www.krachtvanutrecht-initiatief.nl/joomla/dossier-ring-utrecht/artikelen-over-ring-utrecht/447-mkba-ring-utrecht-in-nieuwe-wlo-scenarios>
- Cats, G., & Gallé, A. (2017). *Verkeersprognoses: analyse van de cijfers. Tracébesluit A27/A12 Ring Utrecht op drijfzand gebaseerd*. Utrecht: Kerngroep Ring Utrecht. Retrieved from StopverbredingUtrecht.
- Centraal Planbureau. (2014). *Second Opinion MKBA Ring Utrecht*. Den Haag: Centraal Planbureau.
- Cole, D. (2012). Law, Politics, and Cost-Benefit Analysis. *Alabama Law Review*, 64, 55-89.
- Collier, D. (2011). Understanding Process Tracing. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 44(4), 823-830.
- Commissie m.e.r. (n.d.). *Wanneer is m.e.r. verplicht?* Retrieved from Commissie mer: <https://www.commissiemer.nl/onze-diensten/wat-is-mer/wanneer-is-mer-verplicht>
- Commissie MER. (2011). *Aanvullend advies voor richtlijnen voor het milieueffectrapport Ring Utrecht, onderdeel A12/A27*.
- Commissie MER. (2020). *Evaluatie stikstofberekeningen Lelystad Airport*. Retrieved from <https://www.commissiemer.nl/docs/mer/p34/p3456/a3456ov.pdf>
- Commissie MER. (n.d.). *Hoe toetst de Commissie?* Retrieved January 17, 2023, from Commissie MER: <https://commissiemer.nl/onze-diensten/werkwijze/hoe-toetst-de-commissie>

- Commissie Remkes. (2020). *Niet alles kan overal*. Retrieved from <https://open.overheid.nl/repository/ronl-e1d98609-6f59-4245-8758-ec00da553db5/1/pdf/niet%20alles%20kan%20overal.pdf>
- Commissie Schoof. (2013). *Besluitvorming Verbreding A27*. Ministry of Infrastructure and Water management. Retrieved October 26, 2022, from <https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9vvij5epmj1ey0/vj8bou5q6wzx>
- de Bondt, I. (n.d.). Ingrid de Bondt over de MKBA. (N. Mouter, Interviewer) Opgeroepen op October 27, 2022, van <https://www.mkba-informatie.nl/uit-de-praktijk/ingrid-de-bondt/>
- de Molenaar, J., & Ottburg, F. (2009). *Uitbreiding vliegverkeer Lelystad Airport en alternatieve locaties in relatie tot 'Natuurontwikkeling' in de regio*.
- de Rouwe, S., & Cramer, E. (2009). Kamerstuk 31936: Motie VAN DE LEDEN DE ROUWE EN CRAMER. *Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal*. The Hague.
- Decisio. (2014). *MKBA Ring Utrecht*. Decisio. Retrieved October 26, 2022, from <https://www.rwseconomie.nl/binaries/rwseconomie/documenten/rapporten/2016/augustus/augustus/mkba-ring-utrecht/2014+MKBA+Ring+Utrecht.pdf>
- Decisio. (2017). *Actualiteit MKBA Ring Utrecht, Quick scan analyse gewijzigde uitgangspunten*. Utrecht: Decisio.
- Decisio; SEO. (2014). *Actualisatie quick scan MKBA Schiphol en Lelystad Airport Middellange termijn*.
- Decisio; SEO. (2018). *Verkennde MKBA beleidsalternatieven luchtvaart*. Retrieved from <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/downloads/document?id=79946ba1-5813-484d-94f6-7c008583ddee&title=Verkennde%20MKBA%20beleidsalternatieven%20Luchtvaart.pdf>
- Decisio; SEO; Bureau Louter. (2008). *Quick Scan Maatschappelijke Kosten en Baten voor de opties voor Schiphol en de regio op de middellange termijn*. Decisio.
- Deltacommissie. (2008). *Adviesrapport: Samenwerken met Water*. Uitgeest: Hollandia Printing.
- Dietz, T., Fitzgerald, A., & Shwom, R. (2005). Environmental values. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 30, 335-372.
- Dotti, N. F. (2016). Unwritten Factors Affecting Structural Funds: The Influence of Regional Political Behaviours on the Implementation of EU Cohesion Policy. *European Planning Studies*, 24(3), 530-550.
- DUIC. (2020, November 18). *Kerngroep Ring Utrecht 'voorbereid op juridische strijd' tegen verbreding A27*. Retrieved from DUIC: <https://www.duic.nl/algemeen/kerngroep-ring-utrecht-voorbereid-op-juridische-strijd-tegen-verbreding-a27/>
- DUIC. (2021, December 15). *Coalitieakkoord over verbreding A27: kijken of verbreding toch anders kan*. Retrieved from DUIC: <https://www.duic.nl/algemeen/coalitieakkoord-over-verbreding-a27-kijken-of-verbreding-toch-anders-kan/>
- DUIC. (2022, March 30). *Ministerie houdt toch vast aan verbreding van A27 bij Amelisweerd*. Retrieved from DUIC: <https://www.duic.nl/algemeen/ministerie-houdt-toch-vast-aan-verbreding-van-a27-bij-amelisweerd/>

- Duursma, M. (2017, April 04). *Overijssel vreest herrie door vliegtuigen voor Lelystad*. Retrieved from NRC: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/04/04/overijssel-vreest-herrie-door-vliegtuigen-voor-lelystad-7920672-a1553197>
- Faber, H., Repko, M., & Verschoor, M. (2014). *Milieu-effectrapport Lelystad Airport 2014, Deel 1*. Advanced Decision Systems Airinfra BV.
- Frieden, R. (1986). A diagrammatic Approach to Evidence. *Boston University Law Review*, 66(4), 571-620.
- Gemeente Utrecht. (2022, Juli 7). *Raadsbrief Alternatief voor Tracébesluit Ring Utrecht*. Retrieved from Bestuurlijke Informatie: <https://utrecht.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Reports/Document/e87d1186-f58e-4bba-9cd9-fa10e71e463a?documentId=885328c1-9d1f-4bfc-b7b1-b7bcb4aaca1>
- Girjasing, B. (2011). *Kwaliteitsborging van het Milieu Effect Rapport: een verkenningsstudie van kwaliteits (borging) systemen*. Erasmus Universiteit.
- Greenaway, J., & Grantham, A. (2000). Transport policy paradigms at the local level: The Norwich inner ring road. *Public Administration*, 78(4), 815-833.
- Harbers, M. (2022, March 30). *Stand van zaken Ring Utrecht*. Retrieved from Tweede Kamer: [https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven\\_regering/detail?id=2022Z06095&did=2022D12493](https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2022Z06095&did=2022D12493)
- Heikkila, T., & Weible, C. M. (2017). Policy conflict framework. *Policy Sciences*, 50, 23-40.
- Hertin, J., Turnpenny, J., Jordan, A., Nilsson, M., Russel, D., & Nykvist, B. (2009). Rationalising the policy mess? Ex ante policy assessment and the utilisation of knowledge in the policy process. *Environment and Planning A*, 41(5), 1185-1200.
- Hoekstra, D. (2020, November 26). *Wanhoopsoffensief Utrechtse politiek tegen verbreding A27: 'Inhoudelijk slaat het nergens op.'*. Retrieved from Gelderlander.nl: <https://www.gelderlander.nl/utrecht/wanhoopsoffensief-utrechtse-politiek-tegen-verbreding-a27-inhoudelijk-slaat-het-nergens-op~a12172a0/>
- HoogOverijssel. (2017). *Analyse van de milieueffectrapportage Lelystad Airport door HoogOverijssel*. Retrieved from [https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/paper\\_actiecomite%CC%81\\_HoogOverijssel\\_t.b.v.\\_gesprek\\_over\\_MER\\_Lelystad\\_Airport\\_d.d.\\_9\\_november\\_2017\\_.pdf](https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/paper_actiecomite%CC%81_HoogOverijssel_t.b.v._gesprek_over_MER_Lelystad_Airport_d.d._9_november_2017_.pdf)
- Hooijdonk, L. v. (2014, June 16). *Reactie gemeente Utrecht besluit Ring Utrecht*. Retrieved from [https://www.krachtvanutrecht-initiatief.nl/joomla/images/Downloads/Reactie\\_gemeente\\_Utrecht\\_besluit\\_Ring\\_Utrecht\\_juni\\_2014.pdf](https://www.krachtvanutrecht-initiatief.nl/joomla/images/Downloads/Reactie_gemeente_Utrecht_besluit_Ring_Utrecht_juni_2014.pdf)
- Howlett, M. (2009). Governance modes, policy regimes and operational plans: A multi-level nested model of policy instrument choice and policy design. *Policy Sciences*, 42(1), 73-89.
- Jenkins-Smith, H. C., Nohrstedt, D., Weible, C. M., & Sabatier, P. A. (2014). The advocacy coalition framework: Foundations, evolution, and ongoing research. *Theories of the policy process*, 3, 183-224.



- Kerngroep Ring Utrecht. (n.d.). *Onze visie*. Retrieved Oktober 20, 2022, from StopverbredingUtrecht: <https://www.stopverbredingringutrecht.nl/onze-visie/>
- Keulartz, J. (2009). European nature conservation and restoration policy – problems and perspectives. *Restoration Ecology*, 17(4), 446-450.
- Koenis, C. (2020, July 27). *Vernietigend rapport over Luchtvaartnota: milieu-effect niet te meten*. Retrieved from RTL Nieuws: <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/economie/artikel/5173764/luchtvaartnota-mer-advies-milieu-schiphof-groei-vluchten-lelystad-airport>
- Koopmans, C., Hoefsloot, N., Lieshout, R., de Pater, M., Ummels, R., & Boonekamp, T. (2022, February 16). *MKBA-werkwijzer luchtvaart wordt verkeerd voorgesteld*. Opgehaald van ESB: <https://esb.nu/esb/20069617/mkba-werkwijzer-luchtvaart-wordt-verkeerd-voorgesteld>
- Kracht van Utrecht. (2010). *Kracht van Utrecht 2.0: Het duurzame alternatief*. Utrecht. Retrieved October 26, 2022, from [https://www.krachtvanutrecht-initiatief.nl/joomla/images/Downloads/kracht\\_van\\_Utrecht\\_2\\_het\\_duurzame\\_alternatief.pdf](https://www.krachtvanutrecht-initiatief.nl/joomla/images/Downloads/kracht_van_Utrecht_2_het_duurzame_alternatief.pdf)
- Kracht van Utrecht. (2013, October 10). *Chronologie van het politiek theater rond het Schoof onderzoek naar besluitvorming Ring Utrecht*. Retrieved from Kracht van Utrecht: [https://www.krachtvanutrecht-initiatief.nl/joomla/images/Downloads/Chronologie\\_rapport\\_commissie\\_Schoof\\_maart\\_2013.pdf](https://www.krachtvanutrecht-initiatief.nl/joomla/images/Downloads/Chronologie_rapport_commissie_Schoof_maart_2013.pdf)
- Laçin, C. (2018). Luchtvaartbeleid; Motie; Motie van het lid Laçin c.s. over niet toestaan van autonome groei of vracht op Lelystad Airport. *Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal*. Retrieved from <https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9vvij5epmj1ey0/vkufcy3lk2y0>
- Luchtverkeersleiding Nederland. (2009). *Luchtruim Flevoland 2020: een verkenning van de mogelijkheden*. Retrieved from <https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/luchtruim-flevoland-2020-576527642.pdf>
- Marmot, M. (2004). Evidence based policy or policy based evidence. *Bmj*, 328(7445), 906-907.
- Marsh, D., & McConnell, A. (2010). Towards a framework for establishing policy success. *Public Administration*, 88(2), 564-583.
- McConnell, A. (2010). Policy success, policy failure and grey areas in-between. *Journal of public policy*, 30(3), 345-362.
- Mensink, W. (2021). *Barstjes in de lokale gemeenschap: Conflicten over verduurzamingsplannen*. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.
- Minister van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat. (2019). BRIEF VAN DE MINISTER VAN INFRASTRUCTUUR EN WATERSTAAT. *Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal*. Retrieved from <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-31936-651.pdf>
- Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu. (2015, March 31). Besluit van 12 maart 2015 tot vaststelling van een luchthavenbesluit voor de luchthaven Lelystad (Luchthavenbesluit Lelystad). *Staatsblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*.

- Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu. (2016). *Spelregels van het Meerjarenprogramma Infrastructuur, Ruimte en Transport (MIRT)*.
- Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat. (2009, november 4). Ontwerp Aanwijzing luchtvaartterrein Lelystad. *Staatscourant van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*. Retrieved from <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stcrt-2009-16623.html#extrainformatie>
- Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. (2018). *The Dutch Multi-Year Programme for Infrastructure, Spatial Planning and Transport (MIRT)*. The Hague: Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.
- Morgan, R. K. (2012). Environmental impact assessment: the state of the art. *Impact assessment and project appraisal*, 30(1), 5-14.
- Mouter, N. (2017). Dutch politicians' use of cost–benefit analysis. *Transportation*, 44(5), 1127-1145.
- Mouter, N. (2019). The Politics of Cost-Benefit Analysis. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1007>
- NOS. (2020, November 17). *Minister zet verbreding A27 bij Amelisweerd door*. Retrieved from NOS: <https://nos.nl/artikel/2356972-minister-zet-verbreding-a27-bij-amelisweerd-door>
- Oliver, K., Lorenc, T., & Innvær, S. (2014). New directions in evidence-based policy research: a critical analysis of the literature. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 12(1), 1-11.
- Omroep Flevoland. (2020, december 3). *Minister: fout in oude berekening stikstofuitstoot Lelystad Airport*. Retrieved from Omroep Flevoland: <https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/206914/minister-fout-in-oude-berekening-stikstofuitstoot-lelystad-airport>
- Omroep Flevoland. (2020, March 31). *Onjuiste stikstofcijfers gebruikt in Mer Lelystad Airport*. Retrieved from Omroep Flevoland: <https://www.omroepflevoland.nl/nieuws/179759/onjuiste-stikstofcijfers-gebruikt-in-mer-lelystad-airport>
- Ortolano, L., & Shepherd, A. (1995). Environmental impact assessment: challenges and opportunities. *Impact assessment*, 13(1), 3-30.
- Oudman, T. (2021, March 8). *Zo denken politieke partijen over de natuur*. Retrieved from de Correspondent: <https://decorrespondent.nl/12160/zo-denken-politieke-partijen-over-de-natuur/974251660800-003ac95a>
- Owens, S. (2004). Siting, sustainable development and social. *Journal of Risk Research*, 7(2), 101-114.
- Pawson, R. (2002). Evidence-based policy: in search of a method. *Evaluation*, 8(2), 157-181.
- Pierce, J. J., Peterson, H. L., Jones, M. D., Garrard, S. P., & Vu, T. (2017). There and back again: A tale of the advocacy coalition framework. *Policy studies journal*, 45(S1), S13-S46.
- Pralle, S. B. (2003). Venue Shopping, Political Strategy, and Policy Change: The Internationalization of Canadian Forest Advocacy. *Journal of public policy*, 23(3), 233-260. doi:10.1017/S0143814X03003118
- Priemus, H., Flyvbjerg, B., & van Wee, B. (2008). *Decision-Making On Mega-Projects: Cost-Benefit Analysis, Planning and Innovation (Transport Economics, Management, and Policy)*. (K.

Button, Red.) Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar.  
doi:10.4337/9781848440173

- Quattrone, G. A., & Tversky, A. (1988). Contrasting rational and psychological analyses of political choice. *American Political Science Review*, 82(3), 719-736.
- Raad van State. (2019, May 29). *PAS mag niet als toestemmingsbasis voor activiteiten worden gebruikt*. Retrieved from Raad van State: <https://www.raadvanstate.nl/@115651/pas-mag/>
- Rienstra, S. (2008). *De rol van kosten-batenanalyse in de besluitvorming*. Den Haag: Kennisinstituut voor Mobiliteitsbeleid.
- Rijksoverheid. (2006). *Kabinetsstandpunt Schiphol*.
- Rijksoverheid. (2019). *Ontwerp Luchthavenbesluit Lelystad*. Retrieved from <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/besluiten/2018/12/14/ontwerp-luchthavenbesluit-lelystad>
- Rijksoverheid. (2022, January 10). *Coalitieakkoord 'Omzien naar elkaar, vooruitkijken naar de toekomst'*. Retrieved from Rijksoverheid: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2022/01/10/coalitieakkoord-omzien-naar-elkaar-vooruitkijken-naar-de-toekomst>
- Rijksoverheid. (2022). *Wat regelt de Wet open overheid?* Retrieved from Rijksoverheid: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/wet-open-overheid-woo/vraag-en-antwoord/hoofdlijnen-woo>
- Rijksoverheid. (n.d.). *Klimaatbeleid*. Retrieved Oktober 20, 2022, from Rijksoverheid.nl: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/klimaatverandering/klimaatbeleid>
- Rijksoverheid. (n.d.). *Wet openbaarheid van bestuur (Wob)*. Retrieved from Rijksoverheid: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/wet-openbaarheid-van-bestuur-wob>
- Rijkswaterstaat. (2016). *Ring Utrecht: Proces van probleemverkenning naar ontwerp-tracébesluit (2005-2016)*. Utrecht: Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu; Rijkswaterstaat. Retrieved October 26, 2022
- Rijkswaterstaat. (2019, July 17). *Uitspraak Raad van State project A27/A12 Ring Utrecht*. Retrieved from [a27a12ringutrecht](https://www.a27a12ringutrecht.nl/nieuws/1403311.aspx#:~:text=De%20Raad%20van%20State%20heeft,Programma%20Aanpak%20Stikstof%20(PAS).): [https://www.a27a12ringutrecht.nl/nieuws/1403311.aspx#:~:text=De%20Raad%20van%20State%20heeft,Programma%20Aanpak%20Stikstof%20\(PAS\).](https://www.a27a12ringutrecht.nl/nieuws/1403311.aspx#:~:text=De%20Raad%20van%20State%20heeft,Programma%20Aanpak%20Stikstof%20(PAS).)
- Rijkswaterstaat. (2020, December 12). *Tracébesluit 2020*. Retrieved from Rijkswaterstaat: <https://www.a27a12ringutrecht.nl/nieuws/1823932.aspx>
- Rijkswaterstaat. (n.d.). *Tracéwet*. Retrieved October 26, 2022, from Rijkswaterstaat: <https://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/wegen/wetten-regels-en-vergunningen/wetten-aanleg-en-beheer/tracewet>
- Royal Schiphol Group. (2021). *Annual Results 2021*. Royal Schiphol Group. Retrieved from <https://www.schiphol.nl/en/schiphol-group/page/financial-results/>
- Sabatier, P. (1988). An advocacy coalition framework of policy change and the role of policy-oriented learning therein. *Policy Sciences*, 21(2), 129-168.

- Sabatier, P., & Weible, C. (2007). The advocacy coalition framework: Innovations and clarifications. In P. A. Sabatier, *Theories of the Policy Process* (pp. 189-220). Routledge.
- Salden, J. (2019, December 04). *Ingenieur Adegeest ontdekt opnieuw forse fouten in milieurapport Lelystad Airport: 'Het is je reinste oplichterij'*. Retrieved from EenVandaag: <https://eenvandaag.avrotros.nl/item/opnieuw-ontdekt-leon-adegeest-fouten-in-milieurapport-lelystad-airport-het-is-je-reinste-oplichter/>
- Salden, J. (2022, June 01). *Lelystad Airport dreigt met rechtszaak over stikstofvergunning vanwege besluit minister*. Retrieved from EenVandaag: <https://eenvandaag.avrotros.nl/item/lelystad-airport-dreigt-minister-met-rechtszaak-over-stikstofvergunning/>
- SATL. (2019). *Berekende versus werkelijke stikstofemissie van de luchtvaart in Nederland*. Retrieved from [https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Berekende-versus-werkelijke-stikstofemissie-van-de-luchtvaart-in-Nederland\\_final.pdf](https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Berekende-versus-werkelijke-stikstofemissie-van-de-luchtvaart-in-Nederland_final.pdf)
- SATL. (n.d.). *Satl-lelystad*. Retrieved from Samenwerkende Actiegroepen Tegen Laagvliegen: <https://satl-lelystad.nl/>
- Schaap, R. (2013, March 26). *MINSTER WIL VERBREDING A27 TOCH BUITEN DE BAK*. Retrieved from Utrecht.Groenlinks.nl: <https://utrecht.groenlinks.nl/nieuws/minster-wil-verbreding-a27-toch-buiten-de-bak>
- SchipholWatch. (2021, 07 20). *WOB-verzoek geeft onthutsend inkijkje in gesjoemel Lelystad*. Retrieved from SchipholWatch: <https://schipholwatch.nl/2021/07/20/wob-verzoek-geeft-onthutsend-inkijkje-in-gesjoemel-lelystad/>
- Schultz van Haegen-Maas Geesteranus, M. (2013, March 28). *Vaststelling van de begrotingsstaat van het*. Retrieved from Parlementaire Monitor: <https://www.parlementairemonitor.nl/9353000/1/j9vvij5epmj1ey0/vj8bnalbr9s9>
- Selles, J., & Boelens, T. (2021, December 23). *Landelijke politiek zet rem op datacenter in Zeewolde: halen nieuwe wensen al gemaakte afspraken in?* Retrieved from destentor.nl: <https://www.destentor.nl/zeewolde/landelijke-politiek-zet-rem-op-datacenter-in-zeewolde-halen-nieuwe-wensen-al-gemaakte-afspraken-in~a3949cda/>
- SEO. (2008). *De ontwikkeling van een houdbaar afwegingskader voor het luchtvaartpolitieke selectiviteitsbeleid op Schiphol*. Retrieved from <https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/SEO-rapport.pdf>
- Stewart, J. (2009). *Public Policy Values*. Palgrave Macmillan London. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230240759>
- Sunstein, C. R. (1993). Incommensurability and valuation in law. *Michigan Law Review*, 92(779), 780-861.
- Swedberg, R. (2012). Theorizing in sociology and social science: turing to the context of sicovery. *Theoretical Sociology*, 41(1), 1-40.
- Tallacchini, M. (2009). Governing by values. EU ethics: soft tools, hard effects. *Minerva*, 47(3), 281-306.
- Thacher, D., & Rein, M. (2004). Managing value conflict in public policy. *Governance*, 17(4), 457-486.

- United Nations. (n.d.). *Goal 16*. Retrieved from United Nations Sustainable Development: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>
- Van den Top, M., & Van der Zouwen, M. (2002). Europees natuurbeleid in Nederland: een pionier die zichzelf in de weg loopt. *Landschap*, 17(2), 81-96.
- van der Lelij, B., Bos, L., & Roelofs, S. (2020). *Luchtvaart in Nederland: Draagvlakonderzoek onder het Nederlands publiek, meting 2020 (derde meting, tijdens COVID-19-pandemie)*. Amsterdam: MleW.
- van der Parre, H., & Meindertsma, B. (2019, september 6). *Brussel geeft groen licht voor vluchten vanaf Lelystad Airport*. Retrieved from NOS: <https://nos.nl/artikel/2300526-brussel-geeft-groen-licht-voor-vluchten-vanaf-lelystad-airport>
- van Lunteren, R. (n.d.). Remco van Lunteren over de MKBA. (N. Mouter, Interviewer) MKBA-Informatie. Opgeroepen op October 26, 2022, van <https://www.mkba-informatie.nl/uit-de-praktijk/remco-van-lunteren/>
- Van Oosten, K. (2016, June 16). *Van Oosten- Krankzinnig*. Retrieved from Nieuws030: <https://www.nieuws030.nl/columns/van-oosten-krankzinnig/>
- van Veldhoven, S. (n.d.). Stientje van Veldhoven over de MKBA. (N. Mouter, Interviewer) MKBA-Informatie. Opgeroepen op October 26, 2022, van <https://www.mkba-informatie.nl/uit-de-praktijk/stientje-van-veldhoven/>
- van Wee, B. (2007). Rail Infrastructure: Challenges for Cost–Benefit Analysis and Other ex ante Evaluations. *Transportation Planning and Technology*, 30(1), 31-48. doi:10.1080/03081060701207995
- Walker, G. (2010). Environmental justice, impact assessment and the politics of knowledge: The implications of assessing the social distribution of environmental outcomes. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 30(5), 312-318.
- Weible, C. M., & Heikkila, T. (2017). Policy conflict framework. *Policy Sciences*, 50, 23-40.
- Weible, C. M., Sabatier, P. A., & McQueen, K. (2009). Themes and variations: Taking stock of the advocacy coalition framework. *Policy studies journal*, 37(1), 121-140.
- Wezep, P. S. (2018). *Analyses Belevingsvlucht*. SATL. Retrieved from <https://satl-lelystad.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Analyses-belevingsvlucht-13-december-2018.pdf>
- Wing; Alterra; Bosch & Van Rijn; Student Hogeschool Van Hall Larenstein. (2016). *Verkenning Mogelijkheden Windenergie in Bosgebieden*. Wing.
- Wolcher, L. (2007). Senseless kindness: the politics of cost-benefit analysis. *Minnesota Journal of Law & Inequality*, 25(1), 147-202.
- Wolsink, M. (2003). Reshaping the Dutch planning system: a learning process? *Environment and Planning A*, 35(4), 705-723.
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Applications of case study research*. sage.
- Zembla. (2017, September 08). *'Luchtruim niet geschikt voor uitbreiding Lelystad Airport'*. Retrieved from [bnnvara.nl/zembla/artikelen: https://www.bnnvara.nl/zembla/artikelen/luchtruim-niet-geschikt-voor-uitbreiding-lelystad-airport](https://www.bnnvara.nl/zembla/artikelen/luchtruim-niet-geschikt-voor-uitbreiding-lelystad-airport)

- Zembla. (2017, October 17). *Staatssecretaris geeft rekenfout in rapport vliegveld Lelystad toe*. Retrieved from BnnVara Zembla:  
<https://www.bnnvara.nl/zembla/artikelen/staatssecretaris-geeft-rekenfout-in-rapport-vliegveld-lelystad-toe>
- Zembla. (2022, July 07). *Strafrechtelijk onderzoek naar mogelijk gesjoemel stikstofcijfers Lelystad Airport*. Retrieved from BNNVARA Zembla:  
<https://www.bnnvara.nl/zembla/artikelen/strafrechtelijk-onderzoek-naar-gesjoemel-stikstofcijfers-lelystad-airport>
- Zubair, L. (2001). Challenges for environmental impact assessment in Sri Lanka. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 21(5), 469-478.

## Appendix A: ACF Ring Utrecht

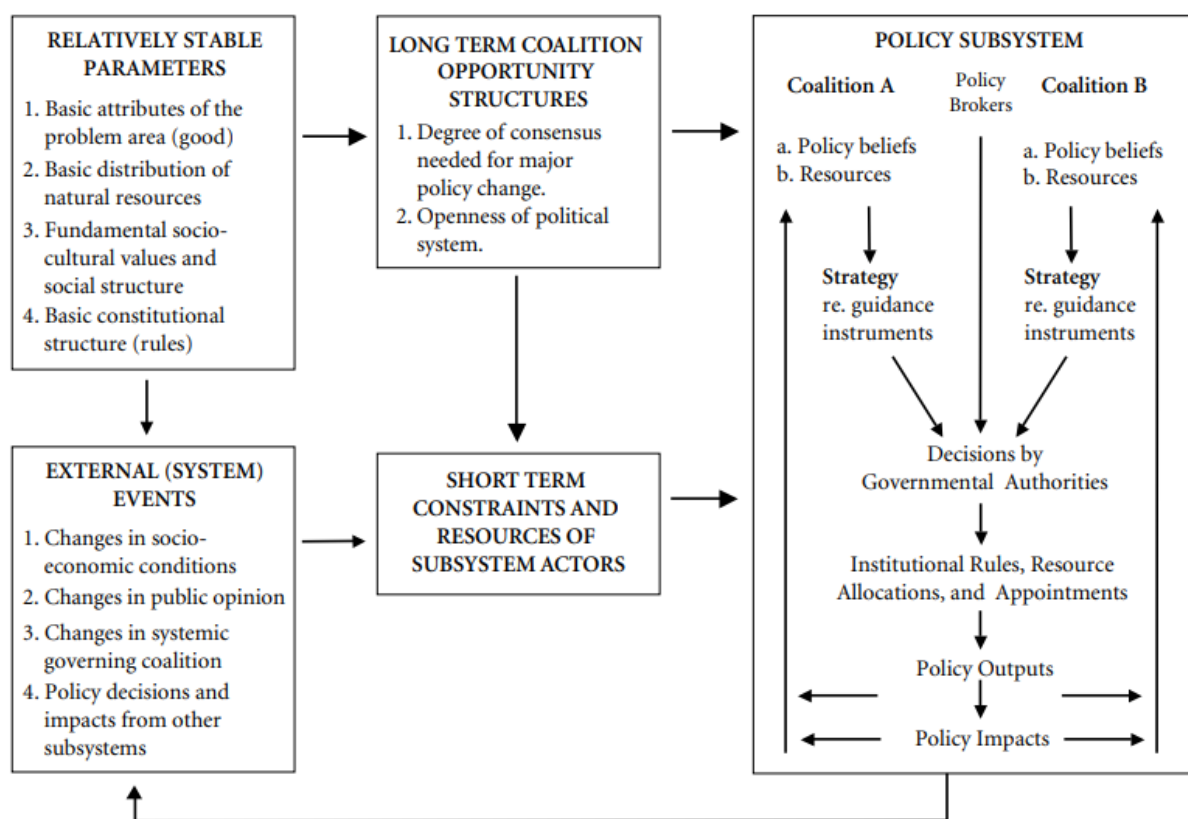


Figure A.1: ACF structure (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 202)

### ACF period 1: pre-CBA application and release (2005-2013)

Relatively Stable Parameters (RSP)	
basic attributes problem area	1. trade-off between sustainability and economic benefits; 2. Regional nature reserve vs national infrastructure;
basic distribution of natural resources	1. Formal legal authority to make policy decisions: Municipalities have supervisory authority but ultimately decisions are made by Rijkswaterstaat; 2. Public opinion: public opinion divided but mostly favoured towards opponents. Proponents mainly dependent on Rijkswaterstaat; 3. Information: favoured for Rijkswaterstaat, demonstrated by the fact that they seemingly have earlier access to results of research; 4. Mobilize troops: used by opponents through public demonstrations. highly available for opponents, less for Rijkswaterstaat. Often used against public policy 5. Financial resources: Rijkswaterstaat holds most resources; municipalities and provinces less available as shown when appraisals were initiated. 6. Skillfull leadership
fundamental socio-cultural values and social structure	Top down hierarchy. Regional implementation for issue that is regarded national in nature (by government). National government holds final legislative authority over public policy

basic constitutional rules	MIRT programme for Ontwerp-Tracebesluit. Coalition Agreement formed which includes multiple parties to undersign the policy. Referendum not often adopted. Tracewet also changed in 2011, increasing supervisory authority and reducing a new participation procedure for aspects deemed insignificant
----------------------------	--

Long Term Coalition Opportunity Structures	
Degree of consensus needed for major policy change	1. Multi-party parliament in centralized political system; 2. coalition agreement; 3. Tracewet (2011): allows for legislation to be pushed through for national roads by Rijkswaterstaat/MleW even when involved (supervisory) authorities don't agree; 4. high degree of corporatism and consensus, requiring much negotiation between coalition parties through the coalition agreement
openness of political system	High degree of openness, documents can always be accessed during specific periods. 'inzageprocedure' and the Wet Openbaar Bestuur

	policy subsystem	
	coalition A: Government coalition, municipalities (2005-2014)	Coalition B: Kerngroep Ring Utrecht: Kracht van Utrecht (Group of experts and citizens), Municipalities Utrecht (after 2014)
policy beliefs	1. Budget focussed governing ;2. Mobility Netherlands; 3. Sustainability;	1. Sustainability; 2. (sustainable) mobility; 3. Public participation in decision-making
resources	See RSP	see RSP
Strategy: Guidance instruments	1. Tracewet; 2. MIRT programme	



decision by governmental authorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduction of (influence of) nature conservation policies</li> <li>2. Shift to budget-oriented decision-making</li> </ol>
--------------------------------------	--

External events	
changes in socio-economic conditions	1. Economic crisis 2008-2012; High car dependency and ownership;
changes in public opinion	1. High (emotional) value for Nature (Natura 2000 areas); 2. Post 2008 more importance to economy and budgets for policymaking
changes in systematic governing coalition	1. CDA, PvdA, CU (2007-2010); 2. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012)
policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems	1. Reduction of budgets and strictness of nature policies by Secretary of State

#### ACF period 2: prior to PAS-verdict (2014-2019)

For the second period, only the differences from the first period will be described. This involves the external shocks and the policy subsystem. Specifically, the shocks being related to strategy changes in the policy subsystem by the opposition coalition.

External events	
changes in socio-economic conditions	1. High car dependency and ownership;
changes in public opinion	1. High (emotional) value for Nature (Natura 2000 areas); 2. Increasing traffic levels and congestion reaching record heights; 3. Increasing emphasis on sustainability and climate change
changes in systematic governing coalition	1. CDA, PvdA, CU (2007-2010); 2. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012); 3. VVD, PvdA (2012-2017); 4. VVD, CDA, D66, ChristenUnie (2017-2021; 2022-present)
policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems	1. Paris Climate Agreement

	policy subsystem	
	coalition A: Government coalition and Rijkswaterstaat	Coalition B: Kracht van Utrecht (Group of experts and citizens), Municipalities Utrecht
policy beliefs	No change	No change

resources	No change	
Strategy: Guidance instruments		Coalition started with focussing on the EIA results. Through Climate agreement, sustainability became important both socially as well as put in writing. As it became an agenda item, it needs to be weighed more urgently and prominently in decision-making. Through the EIA results and sustainability goals attempt to delay or stop the project.

### ACF period 3: PAS-verdict and continued Trace-decisions (2019-present)

Similar as for period 2, only changing elements of the ACF will be described. Again, it involves external shocks to the policy system, which affected the strategy employed by coalitions.

External events	
changes in socio-economic conditions	1. High car dependency and ownership; 2. More focus on sustainability goals as set out by Climate Agreement; 3. Conflict between industries involving large emissions
changes in public opinion	1. High (emotional) value for Nature (Natura 2000 areas); 2. Increasing traffic levels and congestion reaching record heights; 3. Increasing emphasis on sustainability and climate change
changes in systematic governing coalition	1. CDA, PvdA, ChristenUnie (2007-2010); 2. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012); 3. VVD, PvdA (2012-2017); 4. VVD, CDA, D66, ChristenUnie (2017-2021) (2022- )
policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems	1. 'Stikstofcrisis' (emissiongasses-crisis)/PAS-verdict, limiting constructions for projects.

	policy subsystem	
	coalition A: Government coalition and Rijkswaterstaat	Coalition B: Kerngroep Ring Utrecht: Kracht van Utrecht (Group of experts and citizens), Municipalities Utrecht; Province Utrecht

policy beliefs	1. mobility; 2. Accessibility of public services;	1. Sustainability and nature preservation; 2. Innovation for policymaking and industries; 3. sustainable mobility
resources	see RSP	
Strategy: Guidance instruments	1. Tracewet; 2. CBA for support; 3. Information release	1. Mobilize troops: create policy alternative to tracebesluit; 2. Gain public support: create distrust in policy alternative chosen through public statements/interviews; 3. Express doubt on the decision-making process and regional value exclusion
decision by governmental authorities	1. Tracebesluit 2022 is established; 2. Allow time for alternative to be developed by coalition B	

## Appendix B: ACF Lelystad Airport

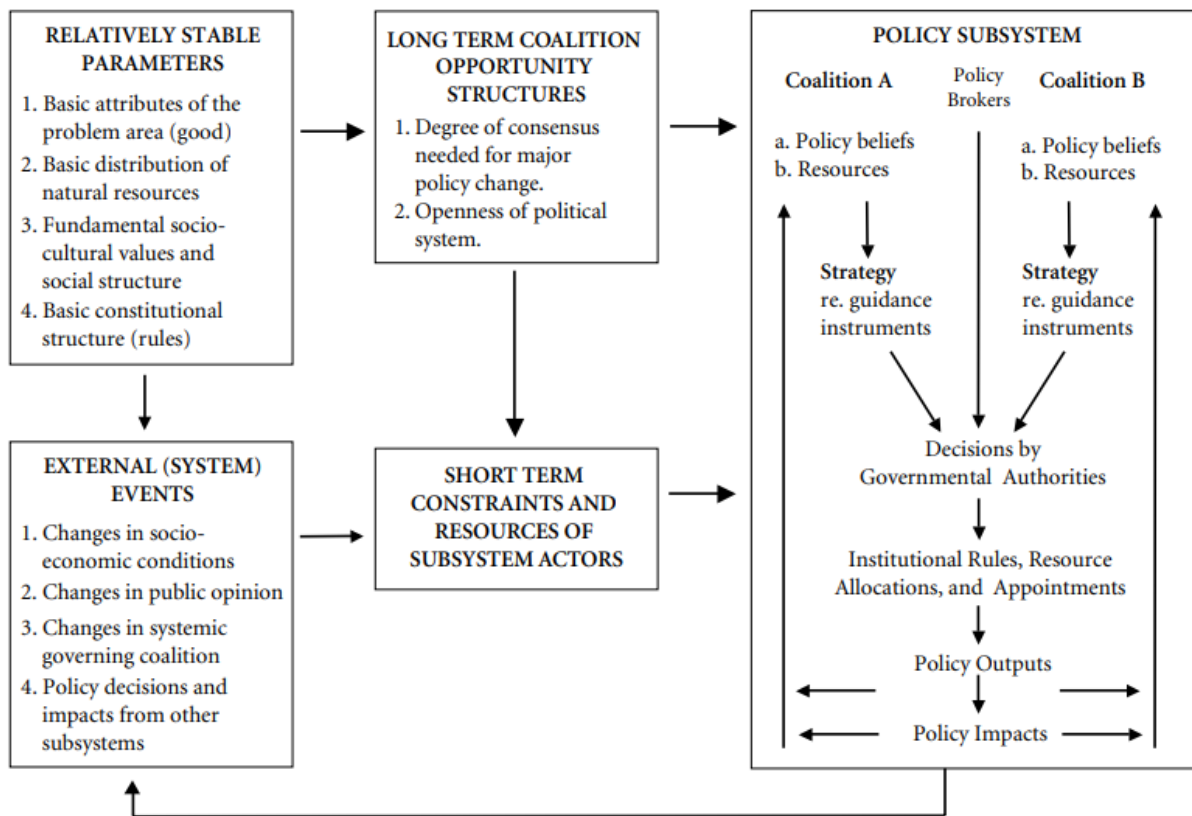


Figure D.1: ACF structure (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 202)

### ACF period 1: First Alders report (2006-2012)

Relatively Stable Parameters	
basic attributes problem area	1. Sustainable growth for Schiphol Airport as it's reaching max capacity; 2. Schiphol holding much (political) value for economy; 3. Flight traffic causing negative impacts on affected region (Schiphol area & municipalities);

<p>basic distribution of natural resources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formal legal authority to make policy decisions: MleW holding formal authority. Council of state holding authority that it upholds policy to existing legislation;</li> <li>2. Public opinion: No strong opinion, information not made public yet (e.g., LVNL report). Public desire to have negative impacts reduced to minimum for surrounding municipalities Lelystad Airport. In essence, public perception is that expansion should be possible and could be beneficial for Dutch economy/prosperity;</li> <li>3. Information: Many impacts not known, information available during this period relatively positive towards expansion through Lelystad Airport. High information availability (for RWS/MleW) and influence on information release (e.g. LVNL report which was negative towards expansion). High information advantage for proponents. Other parties can access documents through WOB, but they will need to know about the documents to access them (e.g., LVNL report that was not accessed, and only was 'discovered' in 2018);</li> <li>4. Mobilize troops: used by opponents through public demonstrations. highly available for opponents, less for Rijkswaterstaat/MleW. Often used against public policy. Not really available or necessary during this phase for opponents since many negative impacts are still unknown;</li> <li>5. Financial resources: MleW &amp; Schiphol hold a lot of financial resources, opponents rely on donations and in essence have less financial resources availability. Mostly displayed when CBA and EIA are conducted, which only RWS/Schiphol/MleW could perform</li> <li>6. Skillfull leadership</li> </ol>
<p>fundamental socio-cultural values and social structure</p>	<p>Top down hierarchy. Regional implementation for issue that is regarded national in nature (by government). National government holds final legislative authority over public policy</p>
<p>basic constitutional rules</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Since not solely infrastructure specific but including multiple travel modes making the project difficult to fall under specific programmes such as the MIRT. Does require EIA/MER for construction permits, CBAs performed are done to inform but not obligatory. Lack of obligation for CBA seen through the partial CBAs performed instead of a complete one;</li> <li>2. Airspace needs to be revised to accomodate new flights. This needs to be revised in the wet Luchtvaart or Luchtvaartwet;</li> <li>3. Free market for airports within European Union (e.g., can't impose too many restrictions on growth Lelystad Airport)</li> </ol>

Long Term Coalition Opportunity Structures	
Degree of consensus needed for major policy change	1. Multi-party parliament in centralized political system; 2. coalition agreement; 3. high degree of corporatism and consensus, requiring much negotiation between coalition parties;
openness of political system	High degree of openness, documents can always be accessed during specific periods. 'inzageprocedure' and the Wet Openbaar Bestuur

policy subsystem		
	coalition A: Royal Schiphol Group, MleW, Aviation Netherlands (including agencies e.g., KLM)	Coalition B: "Samenwerkende Actiegroepen Tegen Laagvliegen" (SATL), Stichting HoogOverijssel
policy beliefs	1. Mobility Netherlands; 2. Sustainability;	1. Sustainability; 2. (sustainable) mobility; 3. Public participation in decision-making; 4. preservation of Natura 2000/environment
resources	See RSP	see RSP
Strategy: Guidance instruments	1. Revision of aviation laws to have Lelystad flights become operational at lower altitudes; 2. Place Lelystad on list of exemptions for 'PAS', to obtain permits; 3. Quick scan CBA	1. Allow developments, with input through alderstafel;
decision by governmental authorities	1. Council of State nullifies option for lelystad airport to be opened due to lacking flight routes; 2. MleW place Lelystad on list of exemptions for 'PAS', to obtain permits	

External events	
changes in socio-economic conditions	1. Economic/financial crisis 2008-2012; 2. High car dependency and ownership;
changes in public opinion	1. High (emotional) value for Nature (Natura 2000 areas);
changes in systematic governing coalition	1. CDA, VVD, D66 (2003-2006) 2. CDA, VVD (2006-2007, bridging minority coalition); 3. CDA, PvdA, CU (2007-2010); 4. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012)
policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems	

### ACF period 2: Airport decision & CBA (2012-2018)

External events	
changes in socio-economic conditions	1. Economic crisis 2008-2012; 2. High car dependency and ownership; 3.
changes in public opinion	1. High (emotional) value for Nature (Natura 2000 areas);
changes in systematic governing coalition	1. CDA, VVD, D66 (2003-2006) 2. CDA, VVD (2006-2007, bridging minority coalition); 3. CDA, PvdA, CU (2007-2010); 4. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012); 5. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012) 6. VVD, PvdA (2012-2017); 7. VVD, CDA, D66, ChristenUnie (2017-2021) (2022- )
policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems	1. Paris Climate agreement;

policy subsystem		
	coalition A: Royal Schiphol Group, MleW, Aviation Netherlands (including agencies e.g., KLM)	Coalition B: "Samenwerkende Actiegroepen Tegen Laagvliegen" (SATL), Stichting HoogOverijssel
policy beliefs	1. Mobility Netherlands; 2. Sustainability;	1. Sustainability; 2. (sustainable) mobility; 3. Public participation in decision-making; 4. preservation of Natura 2000/environment
resources	See RSP	see RSP

Strategy: Guidance instruments	1. Release of MER; 2. Release of CBAs;	1. Increase doubt on results of appraisals by exposing (perceived) mistakes; 2. Review decision-making process and stress areas suspect of wrongful decision-making; 3. Address lacking quality of supervision of EIAs and in turn the EIAs lacking quality
decision by governmental authorities	1. Submit proposal for airspace revision (2013); 2. Luchthavenbesluit; 3. Changing of Luchtvaartwet/Wet Luchtvaart to accommodate operational structure Schiphol & Lelystad Airport	

### ACF period 3: Appraisal faults & court verdicts

	External events	Internal Events/developments
changes in socio-economic conditions	1. Economic crisis 2008-2012; 2. High car dependency and ownership; 3. Increased perceived importance of sustainability through Climate agreement; 4. Conflict between industries with high emissions and sustainability goals (e.g. farmers)	
changes in public opinion	1. High (emotional) value for Nature (Natura 2000 areas);	1. High sense of injustice, evidenced by charges pressed against national government authorities;
changes in systematic governing coalition	1. CDA, VVD, D66 (2003-2006) 2. CDA, VVD (2006-2007, bridging minority coalition); 3. CDA, PvdA, CU (2007-2010); 4. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012); 5. VVD, CDA, PVV (2010-2012) 6. VVD, PvdA (2012-2017); 7. VVD, CDA, D66, ChristenUnie (2017-2021) (2022- )	
policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems	1. PAS-verdict, preventing constructions of projects.	1. Netherlands Public Prosecution Service investigating the information release and handling /processing behind reports and tools used by national government instances (2022)



policy subsystem		
	coalition A: Royal Schiphol Group, MleW, Aviation Netherlands (including agencies e.g., KLM)	Coalition B: "Samenwerkende Actiegroepen Tegen Laagvliegen" (SATL), Stichting HoogOverijssel
policy beliefs	1. Mobility Netherlands; 2. Sustainability;	1. Sustainability; 2. (sustainable) mobility; 3. Public participation in decision-making; 4. preservation of Natura 2000/environment
resources	See RSP	see RSP
Strategy: Guidance instruments		1. Focus on inconsistent information release by national gov. instances; 2. Focus on MER and relevant legislation/verdicts to postpone opening Lelystad; 3. Pressing charges against Coalition A for information embezzlement and malpractices surrounding the use of the EIA
decision by governmental authorities	1. delay opening Lelystad Airport until 2024; 2. Court denied appeal by Lelystad Airport to be opened instead of delaying the decision	