



DEMOCRATIC LANDSCAPE

An adaptive collaborative planning approach to regional urban planning



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COLOPHON

Democratic Landscape
*An adaptive collaborative planning approach
to regional urban planning*

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INTRODUCTION

It is no secret that our society is changing. Just seeing the news every day will make you realize that. Crises and climate issues for instance seem to play an important part in these changes. Last decade's economic crisis, which is still in effect today, has caused significant economic cutbacks by both national and local governments. As a result of that our national government slowly started decentralizing its tasks, as decentralization is often seen as an effective method to cope with such cutbacks (Council of Europe, 2013). But so far decentralization in the Netherlands has mostly resulted in confusion and competition between lower authorities (Boogers et al., 2008; Lambregts et al, 2008). According to the report by Boogers et al. municipalities claim to lack the proper knowledge to execute their new tasks the right way, which puts other important tasks – such as spatial planning – under pressure too. Lambregts et al. state that municipalities continue to compete against each other as their budget is largely depending on subsidies from the national government. But instead of competing, it might be better if these municipalities cooperate with one

another. This way both knowledge and effort will be combined to increase efficiency and to save money if needed. The question remains how this cooperation can be facilitated.

This graduation project focuses on one of our government's important tasks: spatial planning. In this thesis plan a proposal is made for research on new forms of collaborative planning that can be used alongside existing planning methods. These new forms can possibly provide a helping hand in achieving ambitious planning goals, such as energy self-sufficiency or maintaining liveability in shrinking areas. In order to do research on the topic an extensive 'pre-research' was conducted which resulted in this report.

The thesis plan consists of three parts: introduction of the problem, theoretical framework, and research setup. The first part starts with a detailed problem definition. What problems can we identify and what are the causes of these problems? The problem field is then concluded in a 'problem statement'. Next to

this, the project aims and the project's relevance to both society and scientific research are explained.

The next part sets up a theoretical framework on which the graduation project will be built. This framework introduces a handful of important topics and key words, which will be further explored during the project.

After introducing the theoretical framework the outline of the graduation project will be explained. This is followed by the introduction of the project location, the research questions and the methodology that will be used to conduct and conclude the research. Diagrams are used here to visualise the project process and feedback. The report ends with a rough planning for the upcoming months.

‘The tension between centralization and decentralization within the domain of spatial planning cannot be solved, it can only be made manageable’

Lurks (2001)

‘The logic of people’s personal and informal ‘life world’ is more and more colliding with the hierarchical and formal ‘system world’ of governments and organisations’

Salverda et al. (2012)

THE NEOLIBERAL TURN IN PLANNING

Dutch traditional planning dates back to 1941, when a hierarchical system of national, provincial and municipal governments was introduced in the Basic Planning Act (Basisbesluit). In this act it is described that any municipal provision in conflict with regional or national plans would be forfeited (Boelens, 2009). A strong vertical planning instrument was born. Originally this top-down planning approach was meant to be executed by a multidisciplinary team of experts, including sociologists, geographers, agricultural and urban planners, and lawyers, all under the supervision of a general planner (Kloos, 1939). This view on the planning of society is typical for modernism, described by Anthony Giddens in 1998 as “... a shorthand term for modern society (...) associated with a certain set of attitudes towards the world, the idea of the world as open to transformation, by human intervention...” (Giddens, 1998, p. 94). Modernist planning thus assumed that experts would be able to uncover the complexity of society through thorough rational analyses and the use of scientific methods.

After the Second World War this top-down approach proved to be very successful in rebuilding the Netherlands. During the war lots of homes were destroyed, resulting in a severe shortage. The scale and urgency of this spatial issue required a systematic approach for new urban development. Another issue would be the growing infrastructural needs as the car became a public good in the 1960s. In practice this ‘national planning’ was carried out together with elite members from civil society (Hidding, 2006). Ultimately this resulted into the emergence of the so-called “poldermodel” that the Netherlands is still famous for today.

From the 1970s onward however we can see a shift appearing from national government to new types of ‘governance’. Political challenges like massive unemployment and rising governmental debts had a major effect on spatial planning and forced the government to take action (Boelens, 2010). Tax reductions, reduction of public services, privatisation of public enterprises, deregulation, and decentralization followed shortly after. In

turn the emerging network society and new environmental challenges resulted in significant budget cuts and new tasks for spatial planners at the same time. Planners were presented the task to improve the economic potential of entire regions. According to Giddens this did not mean the end of planning by the national government, but a reorganization of the 'welfare state' towards a kind of 'social investment state', carefully introducing elements of the market approach into civil services (Giddens, 1998).

This process has continued ever since. Over the years neoliberal strategies have been introduced into public housing, water management, and zoning policies (Boelens, 2010). In the end this caused the traditional planning system to become undermined. Constant reorganization and redistribution of national and regional planning resulted in fading systems, making it hard or even impossible to implement new ideas.

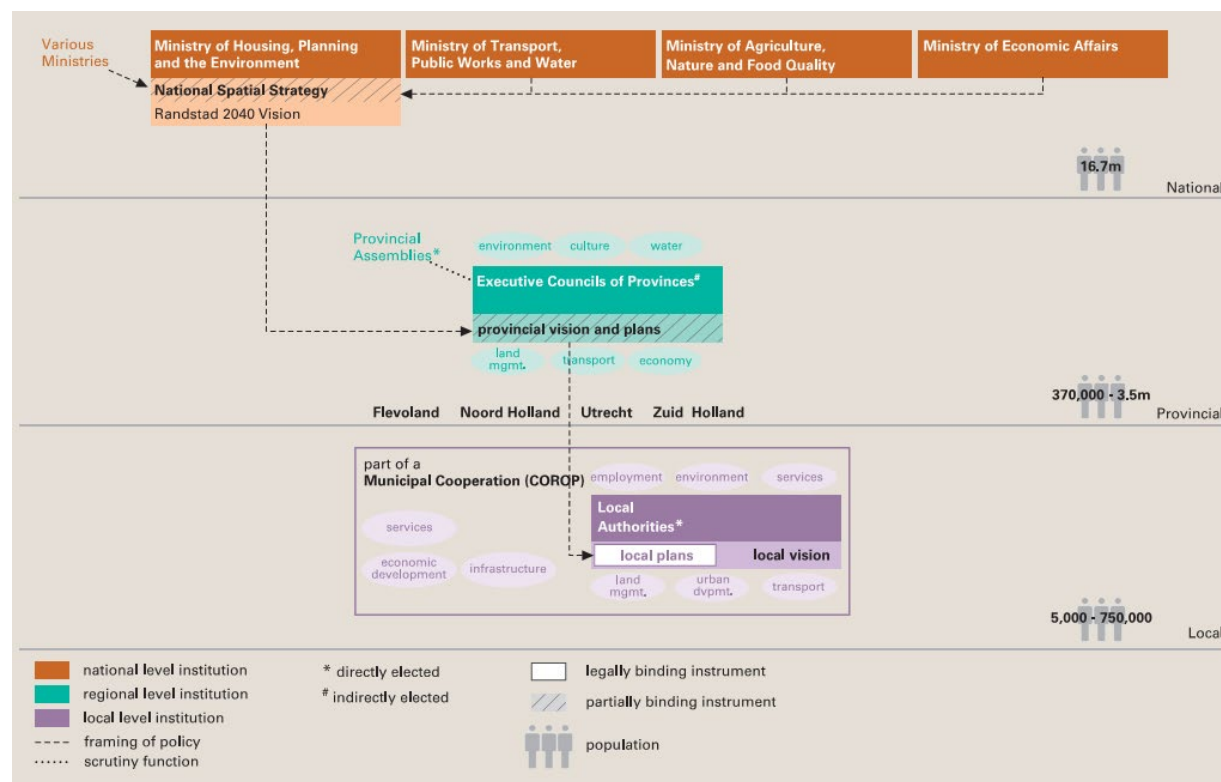


Figure 2: graphical representation of the traditional Dutch planning system before 2008 (source: Burdett et al., 2011, p. 10)

FROM GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNANCE

The continuous privatization and deregulation of the public sector in the 1980s and 1990s revealed the limits to the neoliberal quest for ‘less state, more market’ (Sørensen and Torfing, 2008). Over the years this marketization strategy not only showed symptoms of imperfect competition, unstable and insufficient market supply and growing inequality, but it also failed to reduce the need for state regulation and to facilitate collectively oriented and pro-active governance on the basis of joint objectives and mutual trust.

In the last decade the failure of the marketization strategy has caused a shift from ‘government’ to ‘governance’. People debated about whether our government should be based on either state or market, but in order to compensate for the limits and failures of both forms of regulation new forms of ‘social governance’ have formed instead. Since then collaborations such as public-private partnerships and strategic alliances have flourished. Nowadays the state no longer has full control of citizens and the regulation of business and other institutions. Instead, they have to take

into account the many other participants – or stakeholders – and scales. More and more planning is being executed both horizontal and vertical, in a network that concerns across local, national and regional borders (table 1).

However, despite earlier efforts to reform the existing governmental system or establishing alternative forms of regulatory governance of a more flexible character, they have not succeeded in fully integrating these network strategies. Recent political developments hinder a proper integration of network governance and so do political instruments like municipal zoning plans. Furthermore there are still lots of possibilities that are unexploited.

GOVERNMENT	GOVERNANCE
clearly defined participants linked to the state	mixed state and non-state participants (including e.g. NGOs)
linear model	network model
top-down	multi-layer
formal institutions and procedures	evolving and ongoing processes
simple and intuitive representation of citizens through election	power is dispersed or opaque
domination through rules or force may be required to ensure universal acceptance of a decision	acceptance of and support for decisions by all players arises out of wide participation in earlier debate

Table 1: differences between government and governance (source: Open University, no date)

THE REGIONAL GAP

Society is always changing. One thing that is changing now is the scale at which we live: our Daily Urban System (DUS). People commute from their homes in the suburbs or the countryside to their work in cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam, people go to school or university in a nearby town or city and they go out shopping and relaxing. We are no longer bound to the city or town we live in. According to Manuel Castells it is the unstoppable penetration of information technology into our society that triggered this development (Castells, 1996). This change ultimately resulted in a collapse of traditional power structures like nations and empires. Instead 'the region' has emerged as the most important scale at which human activities take place. But the problem here is that these activities are mostly being organized at a different scale (Güven et al., 2011). This mismatch between the scales – also known as the 'regional gap' – results in a complex system of public and private players that have no incentive or possibilities to cooperate and address common problems (Innes et al., 2011). Instead, hundreds of authorities, national, provincial,

municipal, and regional sectorial agencies and regulatory bodies make independent and conflicting decisions.

An example is the Randstad in the Netherlands. This (metropolitan) region in the western part of the country consisting of large cities – like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht – spreads across multiple provinces. It was first acknowledged as a single entity half a century ago by the Dutch aviator Albert Plesman and it has been marked as a planning concept by the Dutch government ever since. But the Randstad does not fit into the traditional planning framework of the Netherlands. Its 7 million inhabitants are distributed over around 175 municipalities and five provinces or parts thereof. In the past several collaborations were being organized in order to be able to anticipate and successfully adapt to internal and external economic and social challenges. These collaborations all took place at different scales (figure 3). But despite continuous and serious attempts to strengthen capacities and institutions the region still lacks effective governance today

(Lambregts et al., 2008). Collaborations like the Randstad Region have been discontinued because city-regions organized themselves in separate “wings” that were too competitive in nature.

It has become clear that (metropolitan) regions require more than just a formal regional government. What they need is a system that is able to build linkages between different agencies, both urban and rural, on varying scales, and with different but interdependent interests. This way they will be able to bridge the so-called ‘regional gap’.

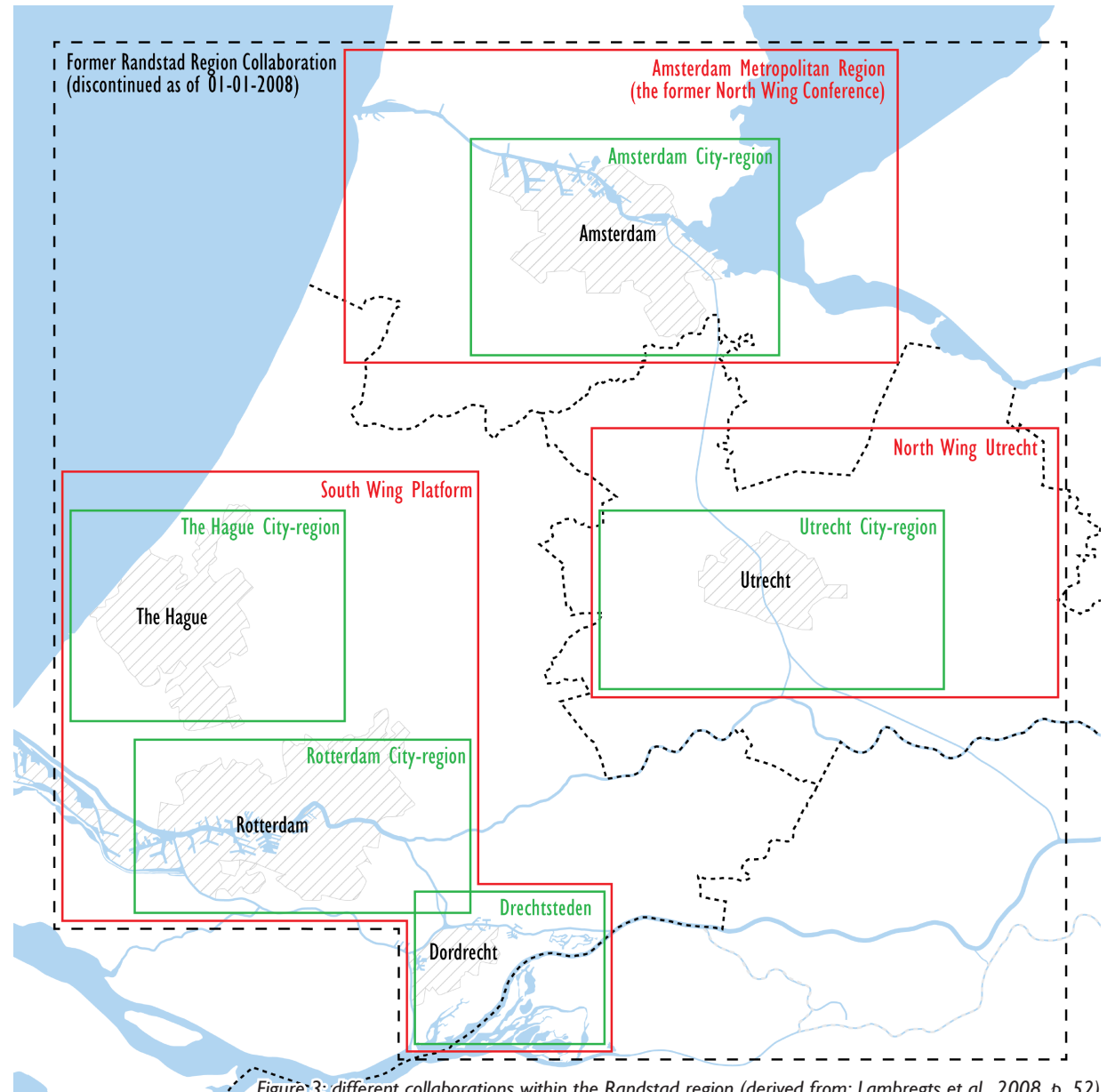


Figure 3: different collaborations within the Randstad region (derived from: Lambregts et al., 2008, p. 52)

PROBLEM STATEMENT

When looking back at the issues described in the previous chapter we can conclude that the Dutch planning system is lacking an acceptable collaborative approach. Literature shows that there is a general consensus that some form of 'collaborative planning' is needed for tackling contemporary planning issues. However, the road towards successful implementation of new instruments into practice shows to be long and troublesome.

The continuing reorganization and redistribution of national and regional planning to municipalities and cities resulted in competition between the lower authorities and is forcing them into a corner. Relations between political and economic organizations become increasingly dysfunctional, as some rigid governmental structures continue to resist any significant change (Soja, 2011). However, our changing daily lives and the activities we carry out on an increasing scale require authorities to combine efforts and to collaborate instead of competing with one another.

Although a general consensus on collaborative planning is existing current planning practice still lacks an acceptable collaborative approach. There is a gap between theory and practice.

PROJECT AIM

There is a vast collection of literature on collaboration within planning practice, ranging from topics such as collaborative planning theories and vital coalitions to network governance and soft space planning. But while there is so much literature on these topics there still seems to be a significant gap between theory and practice. We yet have to find a way to bridge this gap and to be able to put our theories to good use. The aim of this graduation project is to contribute to building the bridge between theory and practice.

Another important aim of this graduation project is to develop and test a democratic decision-making tool for spatial development, which is built upon the idea of collaboration between important stakeholders – including citizens – and which can be used by (local) governments as a helping hand in achieving their ambitious goals. The tool will be based on the reviewed literature that will be explained further in the chapter Theoretical Framework.

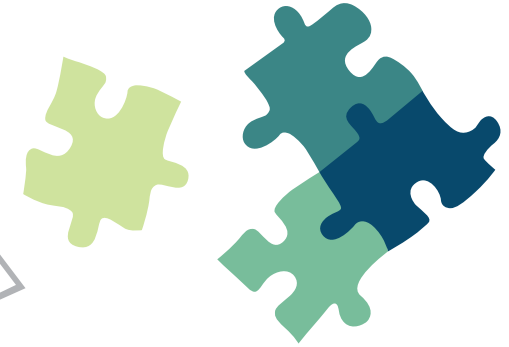
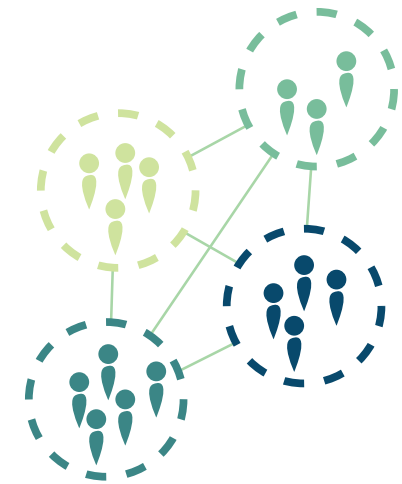
COLLECTIVE KNOWLEDGE**COLLABORATION****COMMUNICATION****COMMUNITIES**

Figure 4: diagram showing the “four C’s” representing the project aims. By communicating the right way and integrating important stakeholders, or communities, knowledge and effort will be combined and true collaboration can be achieved

SOCIAL RELEVANCE

Tuesday the 16th of September 2014, Prinsjesdag. It was the day that our King, Willem-Alexander would give his second Speech from the Throne (Troonrede). During his first speech in 2013 he introduced the term “participation society”. It marked the end of our so-called welfare state. The idea of this participation society is that we take responsibility for our own living environment, rather than the government. But an exact definition of the word is still lacking. The King’s second speech was therefore dominated by the uncertainty about the world and our society and what the future might actually bring. This is a typical example of the problem statement introduced in earlier chapters: at this time it is not clear how we can guide the shift from purely governmental decision-making to a more collaborative approach in which all members of society might have a say. Who exactly have to take part in this new approach? What scale do we need to work on? What will be the tasks of governmental authorities?

Is there a chance that citizens will play a role as well? Over the last few years there has been a growing recognition that social initiatives play a crucial role in a change of direction in social transitions (Hajer, 2011). This indicates that citizens do play a role in planning. But for this to work local governments need to be willing to guide the initiating citizens. Rather than using quantitative, location-specific typologies for living environments thought up by government it is better to devise more flexible network-oriented typologies and thus to include social initiatives as well (Boelens, 2005).

DINSDAG 16 SEPTEMBER 2014

Prinsjesdag

Het is hoog tijd voor vernieuwing

Is er in 225 jaar eigenlijk wel wat veranderd?



FOTO'S ANP, BEELDBEWERKING NRC

Hoe ontstaat een revolutie? Stelt iemand die vraag nog wel eens? Pessimisten horen de wereld kraken. Het wapen-gekleetter heeft in tijden niet zo dreigend geklonken.

Paus Franciscus sprak dit weekend zelfs van de sluipende nadering van een Derde Wereldoorlog.

Binnen onze eigen grenzen heerst evenmin een gerust gevoel. Naar verluidt komt het kabinet-Rutte II vandaag met een zonnige begroting voor 2015. Weerspiegelt dat de stemming in het land?

Burgers tonen weinig vertrouwen in de structuren en systemen die boven ons zijn gesteld. 'Europa' als schepper van vrede en welvaart - daar loopt alleen 'de elite' nog warm voor. De gezondheidszorg - een slagveld van bezuinigingen, en menigeen vreest dat ouderen straks thuis aan hun lot worden overgelaten. De woningcorporaties - ooit een sociale sector, nu een kaste van 'graaiers' die onlangs nog in de beklagdenbank van een parlementaire enquêtecommissie hebben gezeten. Banken - daar begon de malaise van de afgelopen jaren.

Optimisten zijn er intussen ook. Zij zien de crisis als kans. Een duurzame en sociale economie zou vanzelf ontstaan als we afscheid nemen van het dogma van eindeloze economische groei en onze samenleving kleinschaliger organiseren.

Het klinkt aaibaar. Maar zullen de zachte krachten inderdaad overwinnen? Of is het de hoogste tijd heel diep na te denken over manieren om onze economie, het openbaar bestuur, de samenleving te vernieuwen? (...)

Nieuws

Cultuur & Leven

de Volkskrant

Archief

Ineens verdween een heel ministerie

Links was jarenlang te dominant bij de inrichting van Nederland, vindt rechts. Bij de kabinetsformatie werd daar met een pennenstreek een einde aan gemaakt.

DOUWE DOUWES EN RON MEERHOF 14 mei 2011, 00:00

0 ♥

Op het oude ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Ruimtelijke Ontwikkeling en Milieu, kortweg VROM, hadden ze afgelopen zomer wel fiducia in de formatie en de reductie van het aantal ministeries. Misschien ging een fusie met Verkeer en Waterstaat wel leiden tot het langverwachte superministerie: het ministerie van Ruimte!

Toen het stof optrok, sloeg blijde verwachting om in schrik en afgrijzen. Niet alleen was er geen apart ministerie van Ruimte gekomen, de hele term was zoek. VROM en Ruimte waren dood, leve het ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu.

Figure 5: Compilation of news paper articles. The NRC article questions the current societal system and thinks it is time to think about renewing it. The Volkskrant article writes about the sudden fusion of ministries and the start of a new planning structure (sources: Enthoven, September 2014, NRC Next, p. 4-5, edited by author; Douwes and Meerhof, May 2011, Volkskrant archive, retrieved from: <http://www.volkskrant.nl/dossier-archieffineens-verdween-een-heel-ministerie~a2428832/>)

SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

As reviewed in earlier chapters there is a growing consensus on facilitating a more collaborative planning approach. However, there is still a large gap between knowledge itself and implementing this knowledge. In his essay Fred Feddes calls this the chasm between planning and reality (Feddes, 2011). This chasm is caused by different complicating factors, like time, fragmentation of scales, and national planning policies. Goedman and Zonneveld add to this statement that there is also a gap between science and policy (Goedman and Zonneveld, 2011). But the discussion about how to close these gaps between planning and reality on the one hand and science and policy on the other has only started just yet. The central aim of this project is therefore to contribute to closing the gaps between science, planning policy, and reality. The project will consider a new perspective towards planning within the field of science, focusing on communication between scholars, decision-makers and citizens. In doing so, it adds to the existing body of knowledge on collaborative planning theory and practice within spatial planning research.

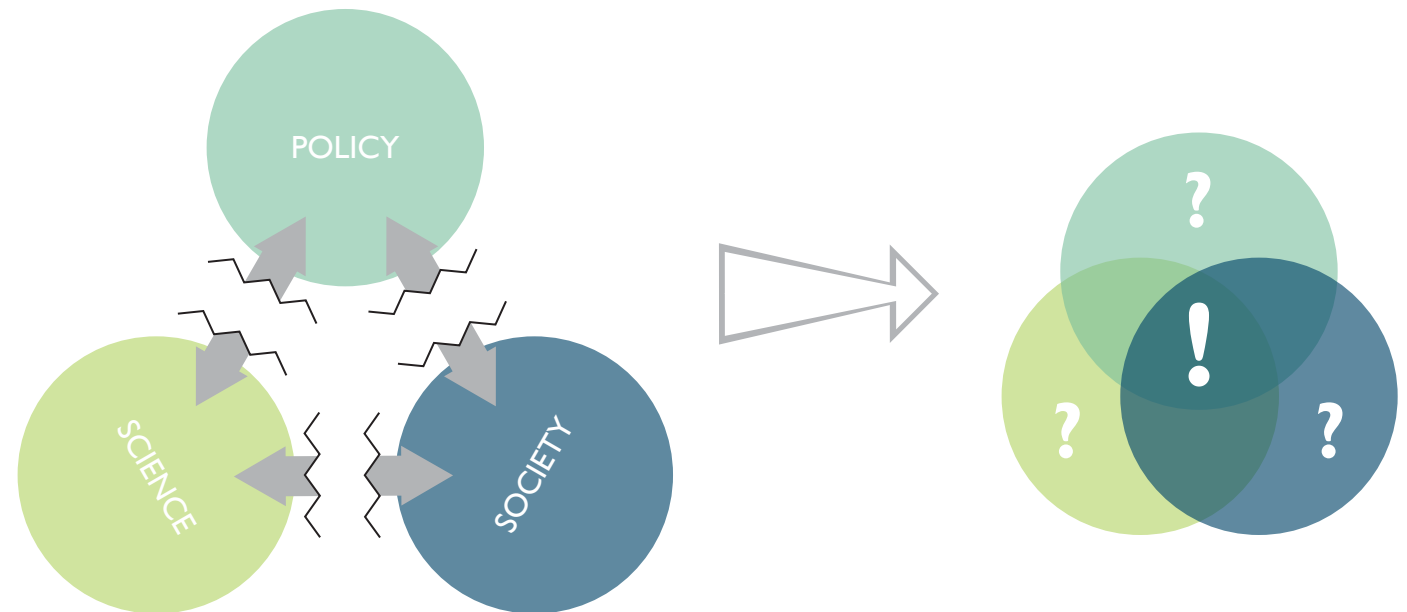


Figure 6: we need to close the gaps between science, politics, and reality

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The basis for a relevant theoretical framework for the graduation project can be found throughout the literature on collaborative planning theories. Based on this literature we can develop the project's hypotheses and research questions.

Preconditions for successful collaboration

It is clear that the main focus of this project is on collaboration between stakeholders. Since collaboration is all about communication it is wise to consult literature about this subject. This is done, as part of the pre-research, in the form of a review paper. In this paper a vast amount of literature has been reviewed in order to set up a list of preconditions for successful collaboration. These preconditions are based upon the notion of trans-disciplinarity: stakeholders from policy, science, and society need to be involved in the planning process.

Inter-municipal and regional governance

In order to facilitate collaboration within the planning process we need to research the ultimate form of collaboration. On what scale do we

collaborate? What system do we need to use? We know that decentralization of the national government is occurring. Ultimately, this could result into merging of the smallest municipalities into regional governmental bodies. Whether or not this will actually happen, the need for collaboration on an inter-municipal or regional scale is evident. There is already a vast body of literature on this subject, which will be reviewed within this graduation project. Examples are '*The urban connection*' by Luuk Boelens (2009), '*Theories of democratic network governance*' by Eva Sorensen and Jacob Torfing (2008), and '*The new spatial planning*' by Graham Haughton et al. (2010).

The Pattern Language

As described earlier part of this project consists of developing and testing of a democratic decision-making tool for spatial development. In order to develop this tool some knowledge is needed on how to combine theory and practice, communication and expertise. This knowledge is found in Christopher Alexander's '*Pattern Language*' (1977; 1979) and Sybrand Tjallingii's idea

of 'Guiding Principles'. Both ideas rely on some degree of top-down structuring, while the main incentive is to provide a way to communicate between expert and the layman. During the project the theory on these two subjects will be reviewed to develop a new set of 'patterns'. These patterns will be tested in real-life.

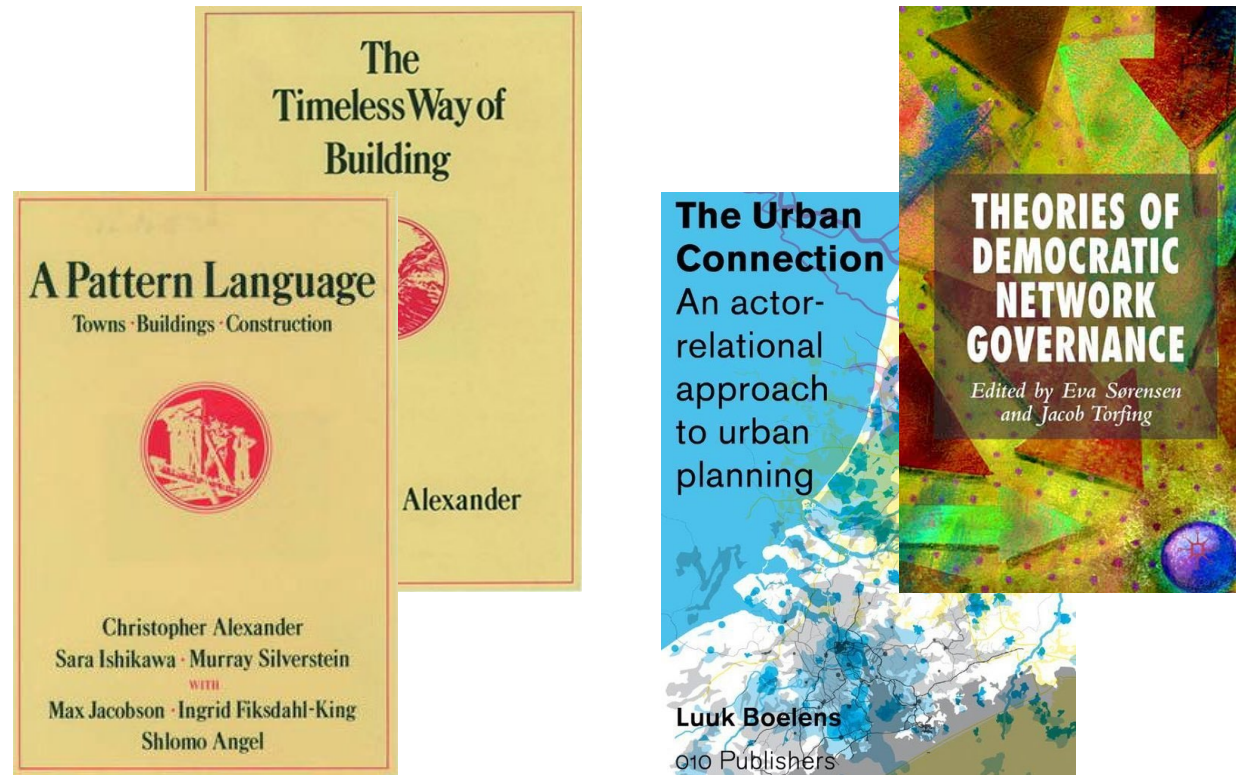


Figure 7: a selection of the literature that will be reviewed during the graduation project

PROJECT DEFINITION

Now that the relevant scope of this project is defined it is important to formulate the project aims. These aims address current planning governance and communication between actors in the field of spatial planning. To summarize, the aims of the project are:

1. To explore the possibilities of a kind of collaborative approach and letting go the traditional administrative borders of national, provincial, and municipal government. This collaborative approach needs to be flexible in terms of actors and scales.
2. To test this 'adaptive governance theory' which, presuming that some degree of top-down power is needed, is based on the notion of "guiding principles".
3. To investigate the role of communication in this adaptive governance theory. Research on this topic will result in a Collaborative Planning strategy. This strategy will be a starting point for a practical study on

communication with citizens.

4. To develop a kind of pattern language that will be used for communication between government and important representatives of society: citizens. By testing this pattern language through a workshop the urban planner acts as a mediator between both actors.

The diagram on the right shows the project definition in relation to the research design. The next step is to set up researchable hypotheses and to define their corresponding research questions.

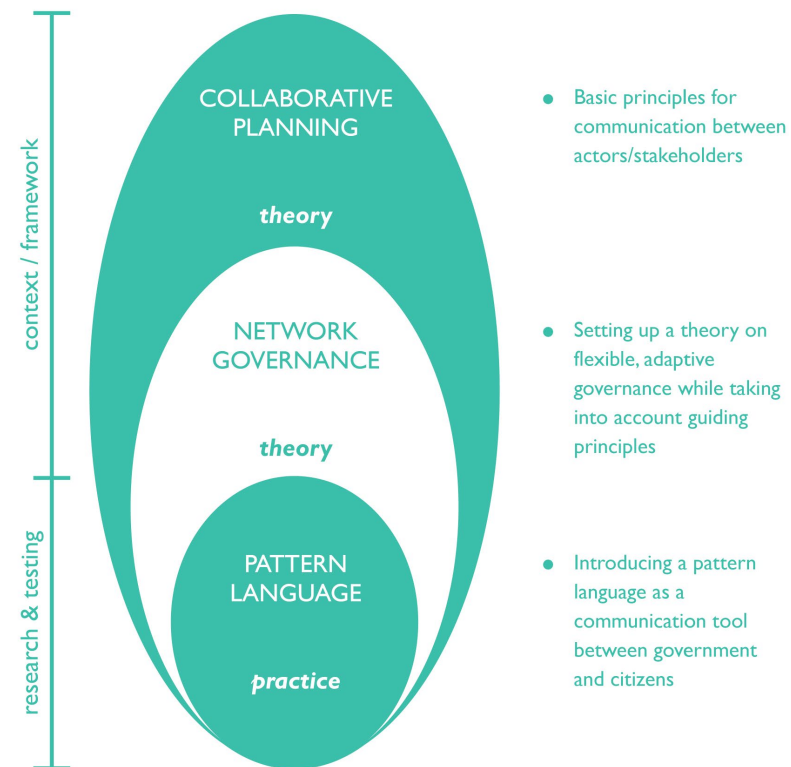


Figure 8: Diagram showing the project aims in relation to the research design. The research consists of three components. Two of the components make up the theoretical framework for this master thesis. Within this framework a practical study will be carried out, based on the principles of the framework.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

THEORETICAL RESEARCH

In order to address the aims of the project two main research questions are to be answered. These research questions represent the theoretical and practical part of the graduation project. Both are based on hypotheses about the subjects to attend.

The main research question for the theoretical research part is based on the following hypotheses:

A more flexible and collaborative governance system is needed, which goes beyond the traditional borders of governmental authorities. This system however cannot exist on its own, but it will strengthen the traditional planning system.

A successful collaborative planning strategy can only be achieved by involving actors from science, policy, and civil society.

Based on above hypotheses the following main research question arises:

“How can we implement an adaptive governance strategy, based on the notion of collaborative planning, that draws upon the influence of actors from science, policy, and civil society?”

There are two sub-questions that follow from this research question. These are tied to the two main focuses of the above research question.

Collaborative planning

“How can collaborative planning contribute to proper communication between actors in a complex network?”

New versus traditional system

“How can this collaborative approach strengthen the traditional planning system and help control a flexible and informal way of planning?”

Each of the sub-questions targets one main aspect of the research. The first sub-question aims at identifying the main criteria for successful collaboration within spatial issues through communication. These criteria will be the starting principles for collaboration within governance. Moreover, they will play an important role in conducting the practical part of the research as well.

The second sub-question focuses on implementing a collaborative planning approach within the existing traditional planning system and how both systems can strengthen each other. This research will result in a strategy for network governance and the role of the government within this strategy.

When combined, these sub-questions answer the main theoretical research. This theory is then used to test on a specific project location: the practical research.

PRACTICAL RESEARCH

The outcome of the theoretical research will be used as input for the practical research and vice versa. This practical research consists of multiple phases of research: (1) literature review, (2) location study, (3) workshop testing, and (4) design research. These phases overlap and provide feedback for the other phases of the research.

The main research question for the practical research part is based on the following hypothesis:

The role of the urban planner is that of mediator between citizens and other actors. The pattern language will be used by the urban planner to communicate between the laymen and the professional.

This pattern language is derived from the theory introduced in the book 'A timeless way of building' by Christopher Alexander in 1979. The patterns described in this book and its companion 'The pattern language' provide a useful structure on which we can build a communication tool.

Based on this hypothesis is the following main research question:

“How can we create a pattern language that can be used as a communication tool between citizens and other actors?”

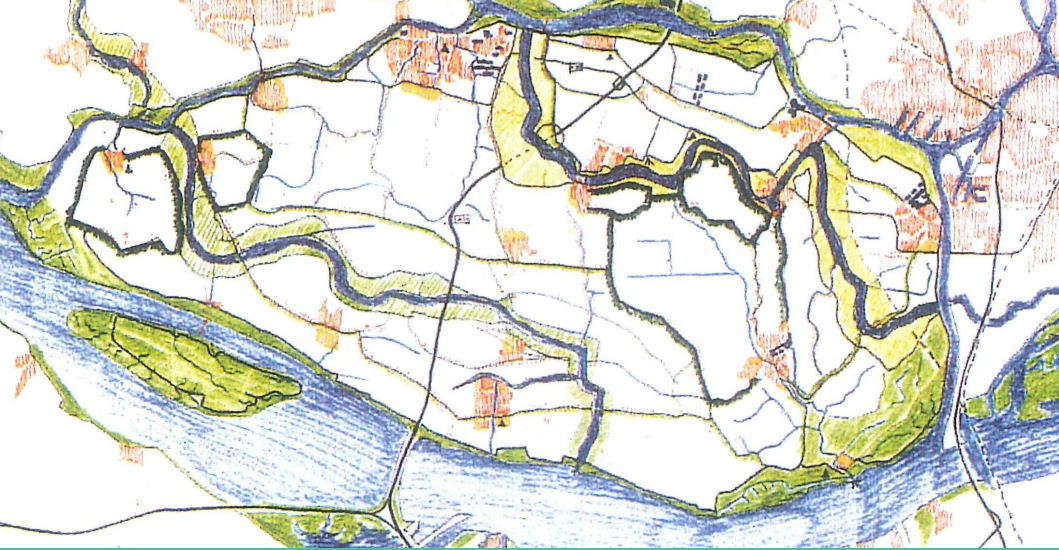
Can we increase the influence of civil actors by using this pattern language as a communication tool? In order to test this a pattern language will be created. This pattern language will be region specific. That is why a suitable project location has to be chosen: the Hoeksche Waard. The next chapters will further elaborate on the project location and the methodology for tackling the research questions that are presented in this chapter.

THE HOEKSCH WAARD AREA

AN ISLAND WITH A RICH (PLANNING) HISTORY

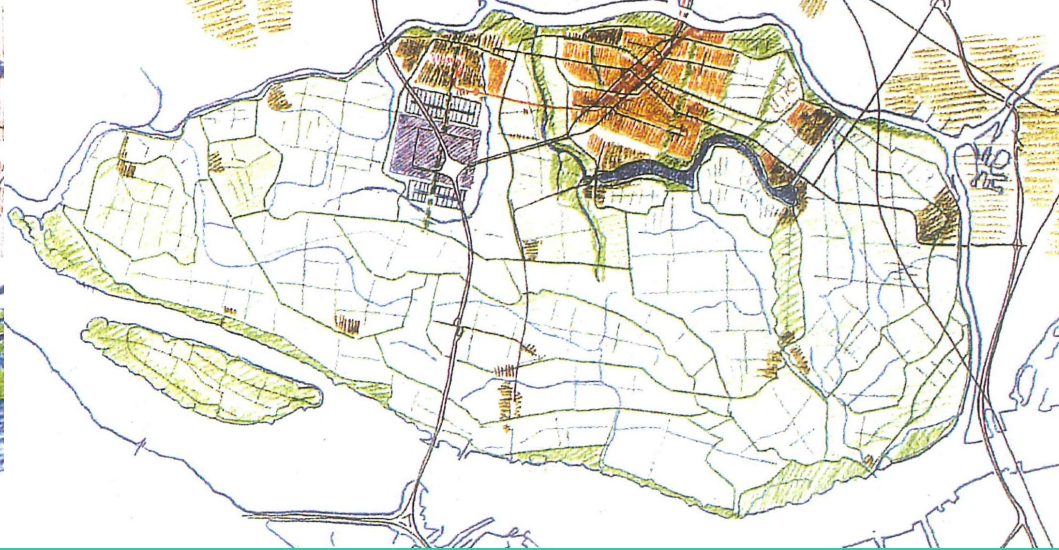
Most scientific research in the urbanism field is done using existing cases. In fact a good case will show fellow researchers and professionals the reason why your research is relevant and important. At the same time it makes the research both visual and tangible to other people. In this master thesis the Hoeksche Waard region is used as the research case. This area was picked for multiple reasons.

- The Hoeksche Waard is located in-between Rotterdam and Dordrecht, but the island itself has a very rural character.
- The island is a so-called 'anticipation region': a region that might suffer from population shrinkage in the near future. Can we do something about this by collaborating?
- The island seems to have a strong identity, although it might be difficult to explain this identity.
- The Hoeksche Waard is one of the country's 'National Landscapes', meaning that nature and cultural heritage play an important role within planning.
- The island seems to have an intriguing planning past. Over the last few decades lots of different plans and scenarios were created (figure 9). However, none of them was ever implemented.



Open Island

The Hoeksche Waard will be reshaped into a green oasis where agriculture, nature, landscape, recreation, and cultural heritage will dominate. The landscape's characteristics will be enhanced by preserving the openness of the polders and the pattern of dikes and creeks.



Hoeksche City

On the northern part of the island a new city of approximately 30.000 new houses will be developed, while the southern part will remain open landscape. There is some space reserved for port related business and greenhouses.

Northern Park

The northern part of the island will be reserved for urbanization within a robust green structure. In the southern part of the island agriculture will dominate. A maximum of 20.000 new houses and 400 ha of business parks will be developed.

Business Park

The Hoeksche Waard will be developed as a link in the Rotterdam-Antwerp corridor. Linked to the economic transport system there will be enough space for large scale business parks and greenhouses, up until 700 ha. The rest will remain open.

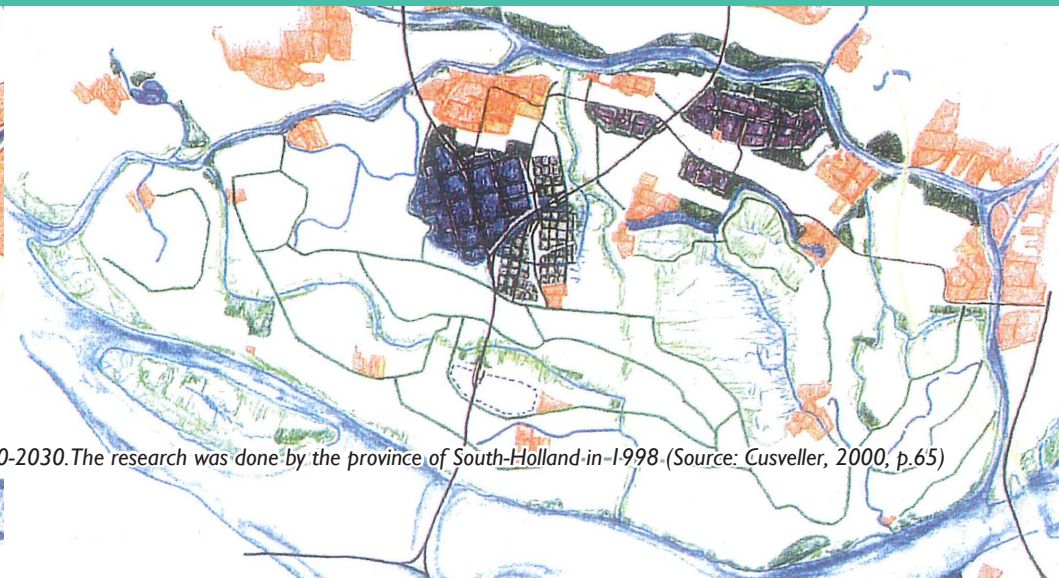
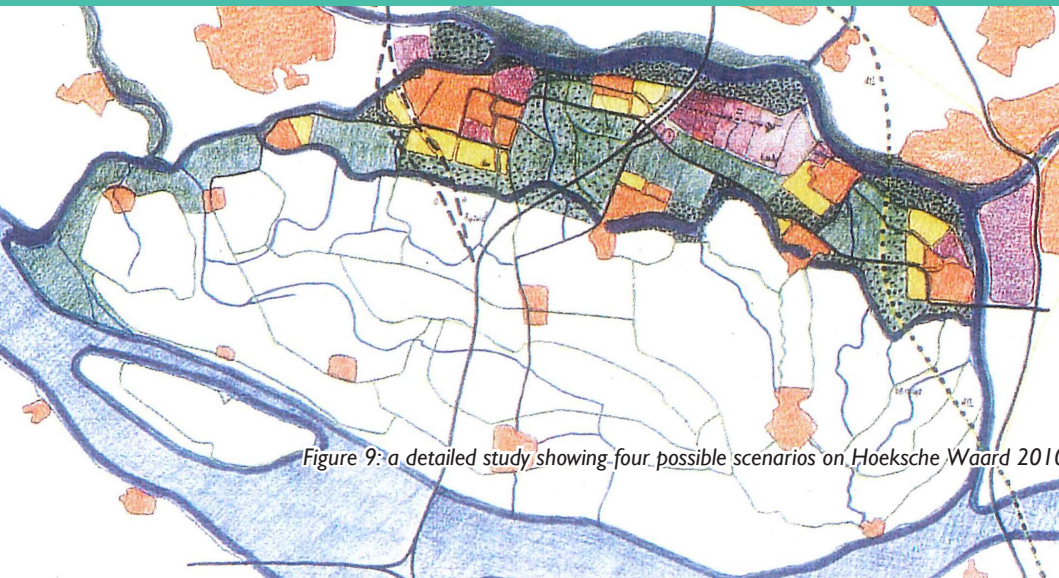


Figure 9: a detailed study showing four possible scenarios on Hoeksche Waard 2010-2030. The research was done by the province of South-Holland in 1998. (Source: Cusveller, 2000, p.65)

This project starts by conducting literature research, exploring the wider scope of the research questions. This way the research addresses subjects like network governance, collaborative planning, and communication and their relevance towards urbanism.

Methods

The theoretical research will be conducted through an extensive literature review. This research will be accompanied by a thorough location study on the Hoeksche Waard. This location study will provide input for the creation of the pattern language: which issues need to be solved in a different way than the traditional way? Creating the pattern language is in itself a test of the developed theoretical strategy. A workshop with citizens of the Hoeksche Waard will provide the testing of the practical part of the research: does a pattern language increase citizen's influence? To conclude the research a visualization of the workshop's outcome will be made.

Products

In answering both main research question this project will result in multiple products. First, a set of starting principles that provides knowledge for communication between actors. Secondly, a strategy to deal with planning processes within governance networks. And thirdly, to bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical research, a communication tool for collaborating with citizens. Finally, the test results from the practical research will result in a conceptual urban design or vision.

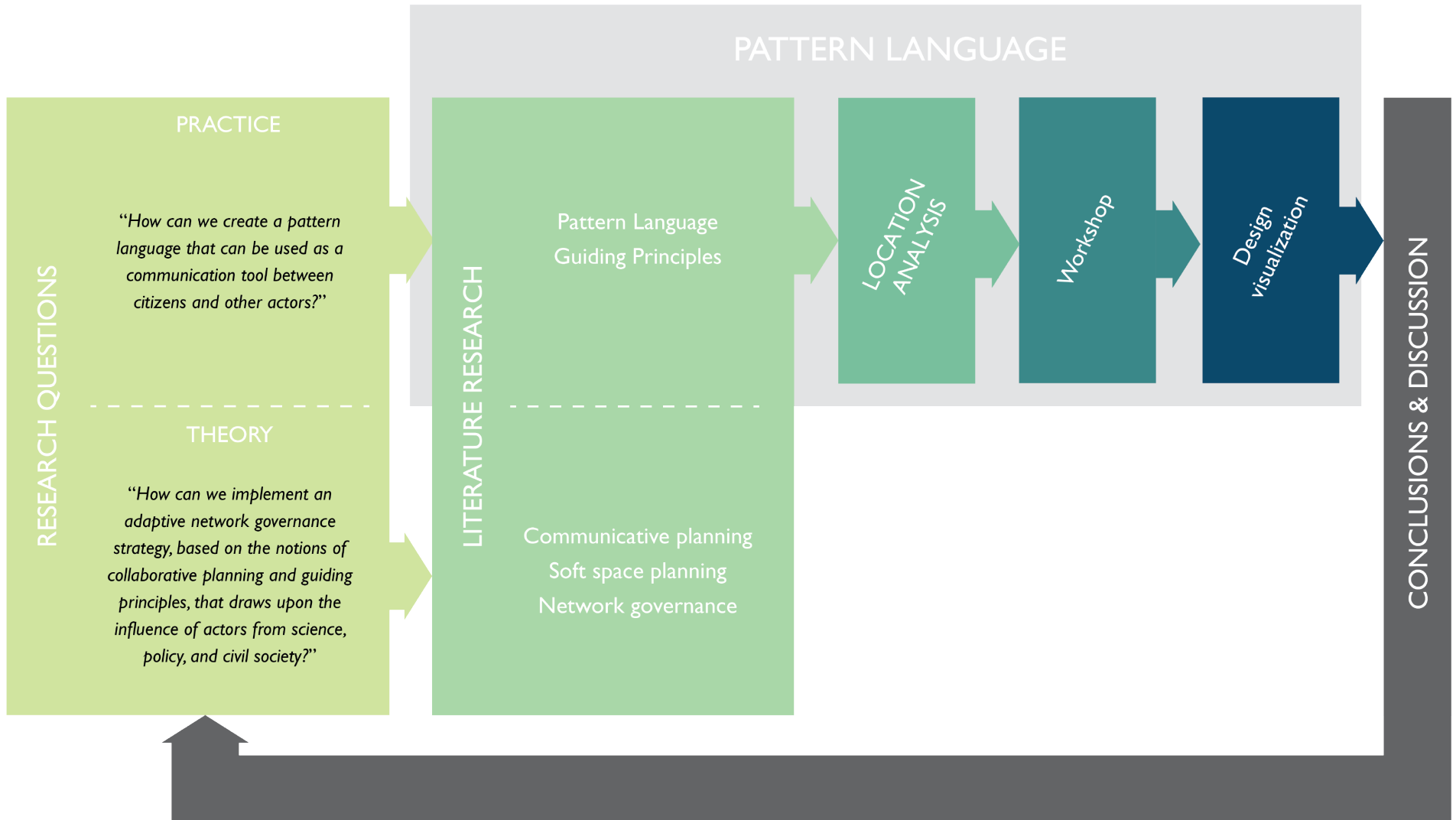


Figure 10: diagram of the research setup

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