

Linking Water management to Spatial Development; impact from EU to local level

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ABSTRACT

The co-operation between water managers and spatial planners depends heavily on its basic element: competing interests. Aspects that shapes the co-operation and define its effectiveness are language (discipline related jargon), contracts, trust, personal competences, policy tuning & policy instruments, institutional innovations, instrumental innovations and mental innovations. This co-operation is mainly informal of character. These aspects will be discussed based on a comparison of two case studies around water management and spatial planning. Another aspect are the recent evaluations of the European Commission that show that implementation of environmental directives proves to be a challenging task for the responsible authorities. This paper discusses also the relation between the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and the Birds and Habitats Directives with a focus on the Netherlands. Studies show that legal and procedural aspects of planning and decision making gain the most attention at the EU level (the formal side) and that environmental goals, e.g. around water and nature, are fading into the background, especially on the EU level. The difficulties that arise in the implementation process on a local and regional level are discussed and also the integration of both directives from a policy and practice perspective are presented.

KEY WORDS: *Water management, spatial planning, EU and local co-operation*