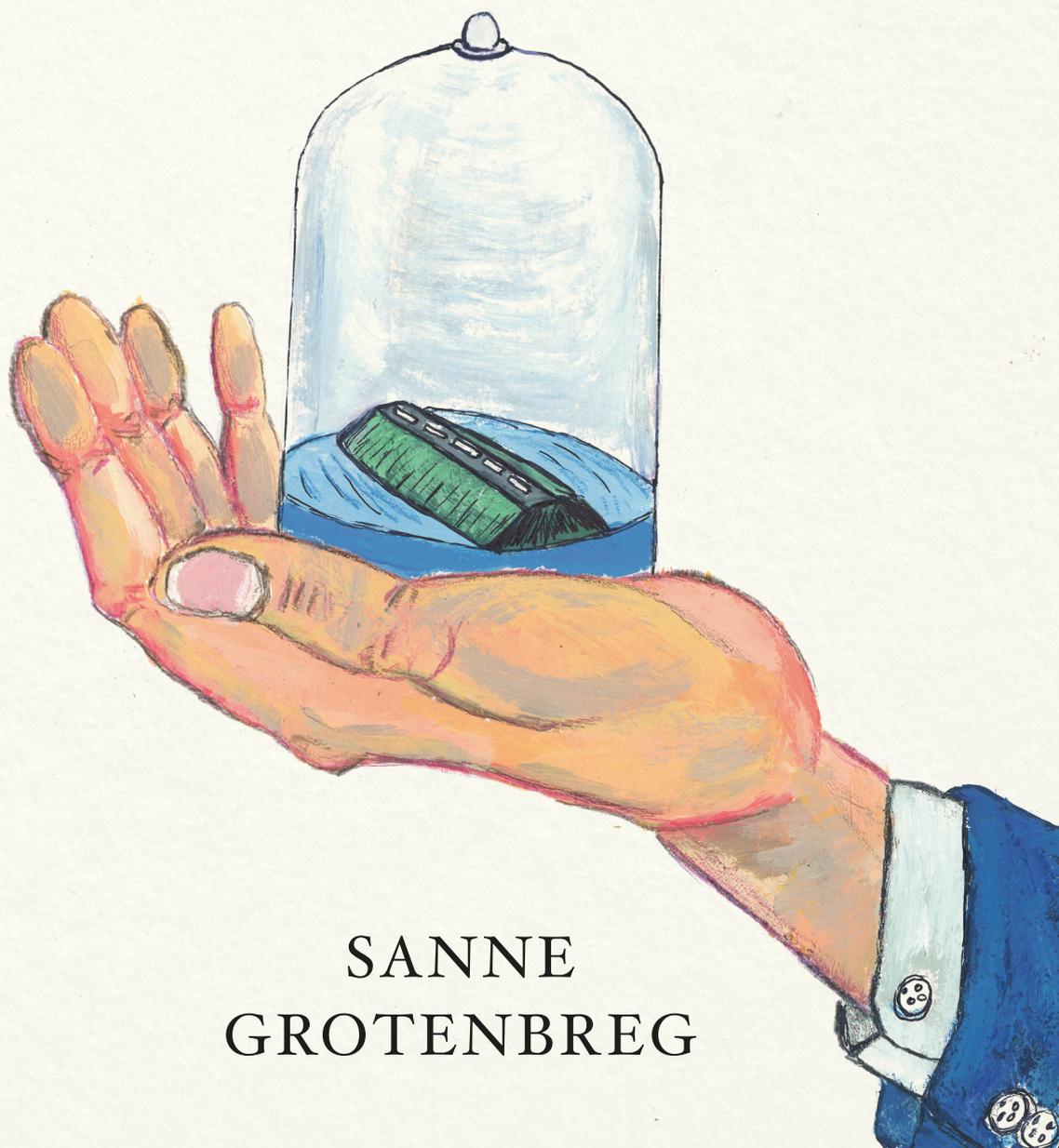


# GOVERNMENT FACILITATION

*Dilemmas of the Enabling State*



SANNE  
GROTENBREG



**Government Facilitation:  
Dilemmas of the Enabling State**

Sanne Grotenbreg

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# Government Facilitation: Dilemmas of the Enabling State

*De faciliterende overheid: dilemma's voor een overheid die 'mogelijk maakt'*

Thesis

to obtain the degree of Doctor from the  
Erasmus University Rotterdam  
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# 1

## Introduction



## 1.1 THE EMERGENCE OF GOVERNMENT FACILITATION

### The Brouwersdam case

What can the involved authorities do so that private actors can create a viable business case? What conditions should be met?<sup>1</sup>

I want to say to the government: 'find the necessary budget (...) show your greatness and do it!' (...) Private actors are not able to finance this. The matter is being shuffled back and forth. What we need is government steering, facilitation is not enough.<sup>2</sup>

Since 2010, there have been plans to install a tidal power plant, an installation to generate renewable energy from flowing water, in the Brouwersdam. The Brouwersdam is a public dam in the southwest of The Netherlands. It closes the land and the water behind the dam off from the tide, and this has led to a severe deterioration in the water quality. Now, the dam needs to be partly reopened by making an breach and bring back the tide in the inland lake to enhance the water quality. Initially, it was believed that the breach could be financed with the revenues from energy generation, but even after research showed that this would not be the case, public authorities were still in favour of the realisation of a power plant. They believed that it would contribute to sustainability and innovation, boost the (regional) economy, and be good for the international reputation of The Netherlands as a forerunner in delta technology.

The authorities were not, however, willing to finance, commission, or exploit a power plant themselves. They aimed to facilitate a private initiative. They wanted a private consortium to finance, realise, and run the power plant out in its own interest and on its own account. The authorities were willing to facilitate such an initiative, meaning that they were prepared to provide the location, give the necessary permits, and subsidise the project. They set up a joint project bureau and conducted an extensive market consultation and pre-competitive dialogue with potential private initiators to explore the possibilities and stimulate them to take action. There were, however, no private actors willing to take the lead in such a project.

The first quote at the start of this introduction is from the market consultation document in which the authorities asked private actors to specify the conditions that the authorities

---

1 'Hoe kunnen de betrokken overheden er voor zorgen dat marktpartijen aan de Brouwersdam een goed project met een robuuste business case aan hebben? En in het bijzonder: aan welke randvoorwaarden moet [worden voldaan]?' (Rijkswaterstaat et al., 2013: 8).

2 "En eigenlijk zeg ik: 'Overheid doe dat nu, maak middelen vrij (...) Dus overheid toon nu je grootsheid en doe dat' (...) We schuiven het balletje maar op en neer. Dus we hebben veel meer sturing nodig. De overheid moet meer sturing geven. Niet faciliteren, dat is onvoldoende" (Interview with representative of private firms in the water sector).

should create to attract the private sector to realise a power plant. They asked 'how can we facilitate you?' The quote underneath the authorities' statement is a reaction from a representative of the private sector. According to him, the government should not facilitate a private initiative but should take the lead itself, put the work out to tender, and fully finance it. This opinion was shared by many of the private actors involved, as can be read in the report on the market consultation.

The Brouwersdam tidal power plant is one of the cases in this thesis. The public authorities in this case, and their struggles, are exemplary of many of today's authorities that are exploring new forms of collaboration with non-governmental – public and private – actors. Instead of taking the lead themselves in the production of public goods and services, they entice non-governmental actors to do this, and the authorities aim to facilitate their actions. Facilitation and related terms, such as enabling and giving space, are widespread in modern governments' discourse. What this facilitation exactly entails, however, does often not become clear.

### **Facilitation in governments' discourse**

The socio-political relations between the government, the private sector, and society are changing radically. This has consequences for the actions of governors and civil servants of the public administration. More often citizens and social entrepreneurs are active in the public domain, for example in the role of co-governor or co-producer of public value. The government (...) wants to give initiators a better position (...) This means more control, ownership, and space for initiators and additionally a government that is a partner, gives space, and creates the conditions for initiative. (doedemocratie.net, accessed April 2018)

On its 'do democracy' web page, the Dutch Ministry of the Interior states that society has a growing 'self-organising capacity' and, in reaction to that, the government has the ambition to 'let go, facilitate and give space' to societal initiatives (idem). In the accompanying newsletter, one reads that nowadays, instead of 'citizen participation', it is better to speak of 'government participation' (Rijksoverheid, 2013a). This stance follows the King's speech in 2013, written by the government at that time, stating that The Netherlands is becoming a 'participation society' with a 'compact' public administration that offers 'space and opportunities' (Rijksoverheid, 2013b). Subsequent government agreements echo this discourse on 'giving space' to societal actors (Rijksoverheid, 2012, 2017), and the agreements of the major Dutch cities also envision modest governors that await non-governmental initiative (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2014, 2018; Gemeente Rotterdam, 2014). In this discourse, there is a focus on the actions of non-governmental actors. The government describes its own role as a small one, it presents itself as an outside facilita-

tor that plays mainly a coordination role. It generally does not act on its own account but in reaction to others' initiatives.

This focus of Dutch governments on societal action and a facilitative state mirrors developments in other Western democracies. In 2010 in the UK for example, the then Prime Minister David Cameron advocated a 'Big Society' in which societal actors promote the public good (Kisby 2010: 484). It is the government's task to 'empower communities, redistribute power and promote a culture of volunteering' (Kisby 2010: 484). Cameron's government envisioned a state that 'facilitates, supports and enables active communities' that 'do things for themselves' (Blunkett, 2003: 43). The promotion of societal initiatives is shaping the agendas and the rhetoric of governments all over the world (Taylor, 2003). What traditionally have been public policies are assigned to non-governmental actors (Edelenbos, Van Meerkerk & Schenk, 2018). Like the UK government, governments worldwide 'present a re-conceptualisation of citizen engagement in which individuals, the private sector, and third sector groups are set to gain a variety of responsibilities for the management of civic space and the provision of public services' (Buser, 2013: 3).

### **Research into government facilitation**

The aim of modern states to give non-governmental actors a more prominent role in the creation of public value and public service delivery does not go unnoticed in the Public Administration literature. Scholars speak of a 'responsibilisation' of non-governmental actors (Garland, 2001); of 'a stepping back of the state and a concern to push responsibilities onto the private and voluntary sectors' (Stoker 1998: 21).

There are various ideas about the reasons behind governments' focus on societal initiatives. Some consider it a response to a more 'energetic' society (Hajer, 2011) or a way to enhance democratic legitimacy (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016). Others think that it is primarily an austerity measure (Pestoff, 2012; Meijer, 2016). Whatever the motive behind modern governments' aim to facilitate, there is reason enough to study this type of facilitating government. Authorities increasingly seem to choose for the facilitation of external initiatives (Buser, 2013; Taylor, 2003) and there is relatively little research into the phenomenon.

In Public Administration studies, the emergence of less state-centred forms of governing is described as the shift from government to governance (Osborne, 2010; Pierre & Peters, 2000; Rhodes, 1997). The literature discusses several forms of governance in which the government collaborates with non-governmental actors, such as network governance (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016), public-private partnerships (Greve & Hodge, 2013), interactive governance (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016; Torfing & Triantafillou, 2011), co-creation and co-production (Brandesen & Honingh, 2016; Voorberg, Bekkers & Tummers, 2015), collaborative governance (Emerson, Nabatchi & Balogh, 2012), and collaborative innovation (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, 2012).

However, this literature does not fully grasp the phenomenon of government facilitation because, in the governance forms discussed, the government still plays a very prominent role. In public–private partnerships for example, governments act as the main initiator, agenda setter, principal, and financier (Greve & Hodge, 2013). In collaborative governance, ‘the forum is initiated by public agencies or institutions’ (Ansell & Gash, 2008: 544), and ‘public agencies have a distinctive leadership role’ in it (Ansell & Gash, 2008: 546). The same holds for other ‘new’ forms of governance, such as co-creation and collaborative innovation (Sørensen & Torfing, 2012): the government invites non-governmental actors to participate in *their* work. The literature thereby focuses mainly on participation of and collaboration with non-governmental actors and not so much on the facilitation of external actors’ own initiatives (e.g. Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, 2012).

More applicable to the study of government facilitation is the growing body of literature on citizen initiatives and self-organisation (e.g. Edelenbos et al., 2018; Nederhand, Bekkers & Voorberg, 2016; Swyngedouw 2005). This literature, however, concentrates on citizens as initiators of public value creation, but government facilitation is not limited to citizens and civic communities. Governments’ aim to facilitate applies also to private actors and, for example, NGOs (Bode & Brandsen, 2014; Buser, 2013; Nikolic & Koontz, 2008; Westerink et al., 2017). Another limitation of this body of literature is that it analyses government facilitation mainly from the non-governmental actors’ perspective. Scholars study, for example, how initiatives emerge and develop and how they relate to public authorities (e.g. Edelenbos et al., 2018); governments’ perspective on the phenomenon is much less studied (Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017).

Furthermore, the available literature on government facilitation is mainly theoretical, and descriptions of what facilitation exactly entails are rather general (e.g. Salamon, 2001; Vigoda, 2002). There are as yet few empirical studies into public authorities that (aim to) act as facilitator and, for example, the motives they have and the difficulties that they encounter. The empirical observation of public authorities’ focus on the facilitation of non-governmental actors, combined with the (lack of accurate) academic knowledge on this topic, led to the formulation of the following research question for this thesis:

*Why, how, and with what effects do governments facilitate the actions of non-governmental actors to create public value?*

Public value can be defined as ‘what adds value to the public sphere’ and ‘what the public values’ (Bennington, 2009: 233; Hartley, 2010). It relates to goods, services, and commodities that are valuable for more than just the producer and are ‘non-rival and non-excludable in consumption’ (Michael & Pearce II, 2009: 287). What government facilitation is exactly, what it is not, and what different actors in the public sphere consider it to be, is the subject of this thesis. It is hard to demarcate it precisely as this point. We conduct a

comparative case study into five non-governmental initiatives in the Dutch water sector. This choice of research design is further discussed in section 1.4.

### **Sub-research questions**

The main research question of this these will be answered through five sub-research questions. The first question concerns the concept of facilitation and its characteristics in comparison to other governance models. Several scholars describe a form of government facilitation although they might use different terms, for example ‘societal self-organization’ (Van der Steen, Van Twist & Bressers, 2018: 392) or ‘citizenry coerciveness’ (Vigoda, 2002: 531). Most of these studies are however not empirical. From the available literature, it seems that facilitation contains overlaps with other government models, for example with network governance (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016) as authors describe the facilitating government as a network manager (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). Therefore, the first sub-research question is:

*1 What is and is not facilitation? How does government facilitation relate to government models such as Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and New Public Governance?*

As our discussion of the literature in section 1.3 will show, there is not much empirical research yet into the facilitating government in action. Little is known about what a government that aims to facilitate societal initiatives actually does and does not do. The second sub-research question relates, therefore, to how exactly authorities facilitate:

*2 What do (and do not) public authorities do when they facilitate the actions of non-governmental actors? What tools do they use? What forms of facilitation can be distinguished?*

Third, there is are a variety of ideas on the motives or explanations for authorities’ choice of facilitation. Is it primarily a reaction to changes in society, an attempt to enhance democratic legitimacy, or merely an austerity measure? (Bang, 2009; Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016; Meijer, 2016). The third sub-research question is:

*3 Why do public authorities (choose to) facilitate the actions of non-governmental actors? What are the explanations behind such a strategy?*

Different scholars point to the difficulties that authorities face when they facilitate non-governmental initiatives (e.g. Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Edelenbos, Van Meerkerk & Koppenjan, 2017b; Matos Castaño, Hartmann & Dewulf, 2017). We explore under what

conditions government facilitation can be a successful governance model despite these difficulties:

*4 What are the conditions for successful government facilitation? What capacities, resources, relations, and networks do public authorities need in order to facilitate?*

Our analysis of the literature in section 1.3 also shows that much is still unknown about both the intended and the unintended effects of governments choosing to facilitate non-governmental initiatives. Therefore, the last set of sub-research questions for this thesis is:

*5 With what effects do public authorities facilitate non-governmental actors? How does the choice of specific forms of facilitation affect the governance processes?*

In the next section of this introductory chapter, we discuss the status of government facilitation as a distinct government model. Then, we explore the available literature and examine what is already known about our research questions. In the last section, we present our research and give an overview of the structure of this thesis.

## **1.2 GOVERNMENT FACILITATION AS A DISTINCT GOVERNMENT MODEL**

### **From Traditional Public Administration to New Public Management to New Public Governance**

Public Administration scholars generally divide the historical development of administration over the last century into three phases. It is common practice to distinguish an old, traditional, or Weberian public administration under the hegemony of the state. The rule of law was dominant, and bureaucracy was central in policymaking and implementation (Weber, 1922; Wilson, 1991). From the 1970s, New Public Management became prominent, with a greater involvement of the private sector and private sector techniques (Hood, 1991). Authors describe how policymaking and policy implementation were separated; governments were supposed to do less rowing and more steering, and parts of the public service delivery were contracted out to the market (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992).

To characterise the last decennia's developments in public administration, scholars use different terms. The term New Public Governance (Osborne, 2006; 2010) is popular; others use Network Governance (Klijn & Koppenjan 2016), Public Value Governance (Bryson, Crosby & Bloomberg, 2014), or describe a development from an overloaded to a hollowed-out to a congested state (Skelcher, 2000). Regardless of the exact term used,

they all mention more or less the same developments, which can be described as a shift from government to governance. This shift includes a shift from hierarchies to networks and from command and control to negotiation and persuasion (Salamon, 2001). Governments are more horizontally organised and work together with a wide range of public and private actors; 'instead of relying exclusively on government to solve public problems, a host of other actors is being mobilized' (Salamon 2001: 1610). This trend towards more collaboration became manifest in new governance forms like interactive decision making, co-creation, and public-private partnerships (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016; Greve & Hodge, 2013; Voorberg et al., 2015).

Scholars describe how the role and degree of modern governments' involvement differ from case to case. The government has a pragmatic approach, it will be 'sometimes steering, sometimes rowing, sometimes partnering, and sometimes staying out of the way' (Alford & Hughes, 2008; Bryson et al., 2014: 448). The existing literature, however, focuses mainly on practices in which the government still takes the lead. Forms of governance in which the government really 'stays out of the way' and chooses solely facilitation of non-governmental actors are underrepresented in the literature. There are a few exceptions, however, of public administration scholars that describe societal self-organisation and government facilitation as a distinct form of government (although they might name it differently), which we discuss in the next section.

### **Government facilitation distinguished by others**

Back in 1969, Arnstein created the 'Ladder of Citizen Participation'. The ladder visualises the relation between government and citizens, varying from manipulation in which there is no citizen participation at all, via consultation and partnership, to citizens' control in which citizens have full power. Vigoda (2002: 531) also presents a continuum of public administration-citizen interaction. According to his model, this interaction has developed from coerciveness, via delegation and responsiveness, to collaboration between government and citizen, which is the current status. In the new generation, there will be citizenry coerciveness. Citizens transform from partners to owners of the governance process, and governments become subjects.

More recently, Edelenbos et al. (2017b: 56–57) speak of three models of democracy: representative, participative and self-organising. In the representative model, the electorate votes, after which they are governed by the elected politicians. In the participative model, societal actors are involved in policymaking and decision making by the politicians. In a self-organising democracy, an active civil society solves public problems by themselves, facilitated by the government. Comparably, Span, Luijkx, Schalk, and Schols (2012) distinguish three governance roles for local governments: commissioner, co-producer, and facilitator. When the government acts as facilitator, societal actors self-steer and initiate public problem solving on their own terms.

Based on, among others, Bourgon (2011) and Van der Steen et al. (2015), Van der Steen et al. (2018) add societal self-organisation as a fourth governance perspective to the traditional categorisation of Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and Network Governance. The authors describe how, in the Network Governance perspective, the government and societal actors work together and, in the case of societal self-organisation, the production of public value is fully in the hands of a self-reliant citizenry. Government's actions in this perspective are limited to facilitating, letting go, blocking, or simply doing nothing (Van der Steen et al., 2018: 392).

### **Government facilitation as a sub-form of New Public Governance**

In line with the above authors, we conceptualise government facilitation at this point as a distinct model of government. Not however, as Van der Steen et al. (2018) do, as a fourth model, but as a sub-form of New Public Governance, as the counterpart of government collaboration. Table 1.1 gives an overview of the characteristics, derived from the literature, of government facilitation compared to Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and government collaboration. Collaboration and facilitation together make up New Public Governance.

In both government collaboration and facilitation, non-governmental actors have a prominent role, they work together with the government to produce public value. Steering mechanisms and policy tools can be alike. It is, however, important to make a conceptual divide between the two because the role division between the government and non-governmental actors is substantially different in the models. In the case of government collaboration, the government acts as the main definer of public needs and goods (as it does in Traditional Public Administration and New Public Management), although it does this in collaboration with non-governmental actors. The government is a partner in a policy network alongside other public and private actors (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). In the case of government facilitation, the government does not function as principal, as definer, and as main producer of public value. Non-governmental actors set the agenda and take the initiative in the production of public value. The government has a humbler, less dominant role, holding back, solely facilitating, and enabling the actions of others (Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Van der Steen et al., 2018).

**Table 1.1 Government facilitation in relation to other government models<sup>3</sup>**

	Traditional Public Administration	New Public Management	New Public Governance	
			Government collaboration	Government facilitation
<b>Principal, definer of public needs</b>	government	government	government, in collaboration with market, citizens, and other non-governmental actors	market, citizens, and other non-governmental actors
<b>Producer of public goods</b>	government	market	government in collaboration with market, citizens, and other non-governmental actors	market, citizens, and other non-governmental actors, facilitated by government actors
<b>Government role</b>	ruler, trustee, definer of public needs	principal, contract manager, definer of public needs	partner of non-governmental actors network manager, co-producer of public value	subject, facilitator, enabler, participant
<b>Civil servant behaviour</b>	neutral, focus on equality and integrity	results oriented, focus on efficiency, customer focused, managerial	active, networking, focus on collaboration, sensitive to environment	humble, holds back, enabling, facilitating
<b>Steering mechanisms</b>	bureaucracy, policy, command-and-(coercive) control	performance measurement, contract management, holding accountable	collaboration, partnerships, negotiation and persuasion, compromises, trust, incentives, institutional design, modulation, connect to societal initiatives	
<b>Role of non-governmental actors</b>	subject, voter, taxpayer, passive receiver	client, active customer	partner of the government stakeholder, participant, co-producer of public value	initiator, producer of public value
<b>Citizen-government relation</b>	government coerciveness	delegation, responsiveness	collaboration	citizenry coerciveness

Based on Edelenbos et al. (2017b); Meijer (2016); Nederhand et al. (2016); Salamon (2001); Skelcher (2000); Sørensen & Torfing (2011, 2012); Van der Steen et al. (2018); Vigoda (2002).

<sup>3</sup> These models are of course a simplification (as all scientific models). They are theoretical constructs and some scholars even suggest that they are no more than that (Imrie & Raco, 1999; Kjær, 2011; Schillemans, 2013). The models are archetypes at least, and, in reality, elements of them overlap and often coexist (Osborne 2006: 378).

### 1.3 GOVERNMENT FACILITATION IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LITERATURE

#### How do governments facilitate?

How does the facilitating government actually facilitate societal initiatives? Stoker (1998: 24) points to public administration scholars' difficulty in describing the new role of government: 'The literature is striving hard to find adjectives to describe the new 'light-touch' form of government.' Still, a handful of scholars have written about the roles, tasks and tools of the facilitating government.

Sørensen (2006), Sørensen and Torfing (2011, 2012) and Torfing and Triantafyllou (2011) use the term metagovernance, literally meaning the governance of governance, to describe the new role of the government. They differentiate between hands-on and hands-off metagovernance. Hands-on metagovernance resembles active network management, hands-off metagovernance is more about facilitation. Both, however, mainly relate to the involvement of citizens in policymaking and implementation, and not so much to the facilitation of societal – public and private – initiatives. The term metagovernance indicates that, instead of participating in the governance process itself, the government is governing the process in which others take part. Through metagovernance, the government ensures that the self-regulated actions of non-governmental actors are 'in line with the overall goals of the government' (Dean, 1999; Torfing & Triantafyllou, 2011: 8). Besides metagovernor, the role of the facilitating government is described by others as 'enabler', 'catalytic agent', and 'commissioner' (Page & Wright, 2007; Stoker, 1998: 24). According to Vigoda (2002), the new generation government is a subject, whereas the citizen becomes the owner of the governance process.

The main task or act of the facilitating government, which follows logically from this role description, is to 'organize the self-organization' of non-governmental actors (Van der Steen et al., 2018: 392). The government can mobilise the relevant actors around a certain public problem (Sørensen & Torfing (2011, 2012). For this mobilisation, it can use, for example, persuasion (Page & Wright 2007; Salamon, 2001), stimulation (Edelenbos et al., 2017b), activation (Page & Wright, 2007), and encouragement (Healy, 2006). The government enables the collaboration between these actors that it has brought together and shapes the collaboration context (Sørensen, 2006). It orchestrates and modulates their work, for example by negotiation (Salamon, 2001) and 'relieving bottlenecks' (Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017: 6). Edelenbos et al. (2017b: 59) call this 'procedural monitoring'. Van der Steen et al. (2018: 392) point to some other important tasks of the facilitating government, namely, 'block', 'let go', or 'do nothing' to let non-government actors truly self-organise.

More concretely, some authors describe specific tools or instruments that a facilitating government can use in performing its tasks. Salamon (2001: 1645) identifies social and economic regulation. Sørensen and Torfing (2009) identify institutional design, subsidy

schemes, network and process management, and framing and storytelling. Bakker, Denters, Oude Vrielink, and Klok (2012: 400–401) differentiate between tools for network structuration and tools for process management. Laws, statutes, and formal and informal rules can be used to structure the ‘playing field’ for non-governmental initiatives. By building trust, developing interpersonal contacts, creating a sense of commitment, creating a shared understanding, and agenda control, authorities can manage the process. Nederhand et al. (2016: 1067–1068) further identify monitoring, formulating playing rules, imposing strategic frameworks, playing with fear, and offering support, for example by providing legal assistance or financial help.

This overview shows that there is quite some overlap between government collaboration and facilitation, and that most authors do not differentiate between the two. Therefore, it is hard to pinpoint what a facilitating government actually does and does not do based on this literature.

### **Explanations for a shift to government facilitation**

Why do authorities opt for government facilitation, what are the explanations for a shift to this form of governance? Some scholars see governments’ choice of facilitation as a reaction to a perceived democratic deficit of representative democracy, more assertive citizens and a growing call in society for more participation in decision making and policymaking (Barnes, Newman & Sullivan, 2004; Meijer, 2016; Michels, 2011). Facilitating societal initiatives is then seen as a way to increase democratic legitimacy (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016). Other scholars consider the shift to facilitation as a response to a more active or ‘energetic’ society (Hajer, 2011): to a growth in civic engagement and community self-organisation (Bang, 2009; Marien, Hooghe, & Quintelier, 2010). They argue that governments are more facilitative because societal actors are more proactive about creating public value by themselves (Edelenbos et al., 2018).

Another recurring explanation is that public authorities have no choice but to facilitate and collaborate with non-governmental actors because of an ‘ever growing societal diversity and complexity’ (Kooiman & Jentoft, 2009: 820). Public problems are increasingly ‘wicked’ and can no longer be solved by the government alone, it is argued. Authorities have to work with a wide variety of private and public actors to resolve them. These actors bring in new resources, financial resources but also such things as knowledge that the government lacks (Bode & Brandsen, 2014; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Facilitation, just like collaboration, is seen as a way to increase the availability of resources and enhance productivity and public innovation (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006).

Not all scholars share the view that governments’ choice to facilitate is a logical and inevitable response to societal changes. Some consider it primarily a deliberate, political choice of governors (Dickinson & Sullivan, 2014; Swyngedouw, 2005). Meijer (2016: 603), for example, states that ‘the new structure of relations cannot just be regarded as

something that political activists demanded – more democracy! – but also as a change that was imposed on citizens from the perspective of declining government budgets – less cost!’ Governments’ focus on societal initiative is considered an austerity measure in reaction to ongoing fiscal stress (Pestoff, 2012). Lastly, there are scholars who ascribe the shift to facilitation to the state’s reputation as being bureaucratic, inflexible, and inefficient. A widespread believe is that ‘the state is bad and almost anything else—the free market, charities, volunteers—is better’ (Kisby, 2010: 485). By taking a step back and giving space to these non-governmental actors, the government might hope to enhance its reputation.

### **The difficulties of government facilitation**

The literature discusses several factors that can cause difficulties for authorities that aim to facilitate non-governmental initiatives. First, there are historical factors. Path dependencies, institutions, and bureaucratic values that ensure continuity and stability prevent the emergence of innovative collaborations between authorities and non-governmental actors (Van Buuren, Eshuis & Bressers, 2015). Authorities in participatory spatial planning, for example, have a hard time adapting to societal initiatives. They hold on to policy instruments that keep them in a central position, and planning proposals remain controlled by the government (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). Regarding local energy initiatives, authorities manifest an impromptu and opportunistic response because of path dependencies and institutional legacy (Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017). The historically grounded structure of the political system makes politicians also fall back on traditional roles. A lack of trustful relationships between them and external initiators and a lack of boundary spanning between the two further hinders politicians from facilitating non-governmental initiatives (Edelenbos et al., 2017b).

Second, there are contextual factors that form a barrier to government facilitation, such as the under-development of metagovernance tools. These tools are often inadequate and energy and time consuming, thereby impeding the facilitation process (Haveri et al., 2009). Besides politicians, civil servants also have to adapt to a new role. They have to develop from ‘inward-looking bureaucratic clerks, and passive servants to their political masters’ to ‘stewards of public assets with restless value-seeking imaginations’ (Benington & Moore, 2010: 3). Another reason why facilitation can be difficult for authorities is that the government is ultimately held accountable for the satisfactory delivery of public goods and services, and this obstructs a transfer of responsibilities to non-governmental actors (McGuire, 2006; Meijer, 2016; Reynaers & De Graaf, 2014; Thaler & Levin-Keitel, 2016).

Third, there are factors related to the content of governments’ policy goals. In this regard, Matos Castaño et al. (2017) discuss the intervention dilemma as a hindrance to government facilitation. This is a dilemma that authorities encounter when they aim to encourage non-governmental initiatives but at the same time control the initiatives to safeguard predetermined policy goals. Similarly, there are tensions between governability

and flexibility for the facilitating government, between co-operation and competition for resources between societal initiators, between accountability and efficiency, and between openness to an unrestricted number of participants and closedness to reach the policy goal (Brownill & Carpenter, 2009). All these tensions make government facilitation a form of governance that is hard for authorities to sustain (Jessop, 2000). Research shows that despite many authorities' intention to facilitate non-governmental initiatives, a lot of them eventually fall back on traditional, top-down forms of governing (Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Haveri, Nyholm, Røiseland & Vabo, 2009; Whitehead, 2003).

### **The effects of government facilitation**

The intended results of government facilitation listed in the literature mirror the motives discussed earlier. Some of the intended results, such as enhancing democratic citizenship, social cohesion, and solidarity, apply specifically to the facilitation of the citizens' initiatives (Lowndes & Sullivan, 2008). Others, such as the enhancement of the legitimacy of government policies, are more general and relate to the facilitation of all sorts of non-governmental initiatives (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016; Thaler & Levin-Keitel, 2016). More innovative solutions to 'wicked' public problems can be another intended result (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016; Peters & Pierre, 1998), as also cost reduction (Pestoff, 2012; Meijer, 2016) and enhancing the state's reputation (Kisby, 2010).

Besides these intended results, multiple scholars point to the undesirable side effects of government facilitation, for example in terms of inequality and legitimacy (Meijer, 2016; Taylor, 2007). Although one of the aims of the facilitation of societal initiatives can be to increase democratic legitimacy, the opposite might happen (Alexander, Priest & Mees, 2016; Haveri et al., 2009). Swyngedouw (2005) calls new, horizontal governance arrangements Janus-faced because they privilege certain social actors and ignore the ideas of less well-organised groups. Westerink et al. (2017: 17) suggest that governments should find additional mechanisms to include the voice of stakeholders other than the initiators. Skelcher, Mathur, and Smith (2005: 589) highlight the tension between the imperatives of democracy and delivery. Edelenbos et al. (2018: 18) find that, because politicians question the legitimacy and representativeness of societal initiatives, they are hesitant to facilitate them.

## 1.4 PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH: CASES, METHODS, STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

### Case study design

We chose to study government facilitation by conducting five in-depth case studies. In the following chapters of this theses, which have been or are going to be published as international peer-reviewed journal articles, different sets of these cases are discussed and compared to answer the research questions. A multiple case study design fits the topic and the type of questions that we aim to answer in this thesis. Because relatively little is yet known about the facilitating government in action, this study is explorative (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2001). The case study design allows in-depth knowledge to be gained on the complex phenomenon that government facilitation is, and the facilitating government and its environment can be studied as a whole (Stake, 1998; Yin, 2014, 2018). It provides a detailed and contextualised understanding of the research object (Edelenbos et al., 2018); it does not allow for direct generalisations or readymade solutions to public problems (Hufen & Koppenjan, 2015). The aim is to gain a better insight into the dynamics of government facilitation by studying a small number of cases in detail. A consequence of our research design, our study will not lead to empirical knowledge that is easy to generalise.

### Case selection

Through strategic sampling, we selected five cases in which Dutch water authorities facilitate, or aim to facilitate, non-governmental initiatives. The initiatives are taken by private actors and by an NGO. By making this selection, we add to the existing literature, which focuses mainly on citizen initiatives facilitated by local governments. Local governments have a tradition of facilitating societal initiatives; for national governments it is a more novel approach. We therefore chose to focus also on these other governments. The facilitating authorities in our cases are municipalities, provinces, ministries, and the national government's executive organisation for infrastructure and water, Rijkswaterstaat.

The Dutch water sector is an interesting sector in which to study government facilitation for several reasons. Traditionally, the sector is government-led, publicly funded, and strongly anchored in laws and regulations (Van Buuren et al., 2015). Water management focuses primarily on controlling water, safety, and risk avoidance (Van Buuren et al., 2015; Roovers & Van Buuren, 2014). Values that are important in government facilitation, such as adaptation, flexibility, and responsiveness, thus seem at odds with the dominant values in the Dutch water sector. The selected cases can therefore be considered extreme cases (Yin, 2018) compared to other cases of government facilitation. In the Dutch water sector collaboration with non-governmental actors is generally seen as a threat to decisive and uncompromised action (Warner, 2006). Recently however, the sector has been gradu-

ally opening up to more collaboration (Van Buuren, Grotenbreg, Duijn & Roovers, 2019; Van Buuren, Klijn & Edelenbos, 2012), leading to interesting cases to study authorities' exploration of facilitation.

The case selection includes four cases in which the authorities aim to facilitate sustainable energy generation by private actors at public water works (Afsluitdijk, Oosterscheldekering, Brouwersdam tidal power plant, and Grevelingendam tidal test centre) and one case in which an NGO (Natuurmonumenten) took the initiative to realise a new nature reserve (Marker Wadden) in a freshwater lake. Because the initiatives are located at public assets, owned and managed by the government and vital for flood protection, the government cannot stand aside and let the non-governmental actors do their thing; the authorities' involvement is indispensable. The authorities also want to be involved and support the initiatives because the latter are believed to be beneficial for nature development, innovation, sustainability, and regional economic development, among other things. The authorities are not willing, however, to realise and finance the projects themselves, therefore they opt for facilitation and accommodate non-governmental initiatives.

Our case selection enables a multiple case study because the cases are comparable but different. The sector, authorities involved, and time path are, to a certain degree, alike. The characteristics of the non-governmental initiatives, the strategy choices of the authorities, and the outcomes are different. Furthermore, the case selection covers various forms of facilitation allowing an exploration of the differences. The fact that our findings cannot be generalised to other sectors than the Dutch water sector one-to-one does not mean that they cannot be useful for practitioners and scholars studying government facilitation in other sectors. We elaborate on the generalisability of our findings in section 6.8 of the conclusion of this thesis.

## **Data collection**

We collected our data through a combination of document analysis, interviews, and (participant) observations. The first step of the data collection on a case was generally an extensive search for relevant documents. These could include newspaper articles, governmental policy briefs and notes, permit and subsidy applications and allocations, statements of the actors involved, agreements between these actors, project and company websites, and tender and market consultation documents. In the Marker Wadden case, we also analysed a large number of documents – disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act – containing the confidential communications between the government and NGO Natuurmonumenten. We also consulted scientific work of others on the cases under study, for example of Lenferink, Leendertse, Arts, and Tillema (2012) and Janssen, Mol, Van Tatenhove and Otter (2014) on the Afsluitdijk case and Waterhout, Zonneveld and Louw (2014) on the Marker Wadden case. The document analysis was, among other things, used to reconstruct the timeline of the cases and identify the actors involved and

their positions. In one of the sub-studies, we used the policy documents on two of our cases to conduct a qualitative content analysis; the specifics of this analysis can be found in Chapter 3.

We conducted around 10 in-depth semi-structured interviews per case and used the transcripts of more than 20 interviews conducted by students writing their master thesis. We aimed to interview at least one representative of all the key players in each case. These included civil servants in municipalities, provinces, ministries, and Rijkswaterstaat, project managers, and (potential) non-governmental initiators, including the directors of the private firms that generate renewable energy at the public water works and of Natuurmonumenten. We further interviewed a representative of an autonomous public agency providing subsidies and the chairman of an umbrella organisation representing private firms in the water sector, among others. For all in-depth and semi-structured interviews, we prepared a list of talking points ahead of the interviews but generally only used these at the end to check that we had not missed any important topics. Most interviews lasted between one and two hours. Further specifics of the people interviewed per case and their associations and the topics discussed can be found in the methodology sections of the relevant chapters. Besides the document analysis and the interviews, we attended several meetings in which public authorities, potential private initiators, and other stakeholders met to discuss the realisation of projects. More elaborate descriptions of the cases and of the research design of the sub-studies can be found in the relevant chapters.

### **Structure of the thesis**

The multiple case studies of which our study on government facilitation in the Dutch water sector consist are reported on in the following chapters. In Chapter 2, four initiatives to realise integrated energy and water works are analysed. We examine how the authorities facilitate these initiatives and differentiate between four administrative capacities that authorities can employ to do this. In Chapter 3 we conduct a content analysis of the discourse of authorities that aim to facilitate external initiatives. We compare the government's communication in the Afsluitdijk and Brouwersdam cases and find 10 facilitation frame elements that combine into two forms of facilitation. In Chapter 4, we compare the Brouwersdam case with the Marker Wadden case to determine the difficulties and dilemmas encountered by facilitating authorities when they employ different forms of facilitation. We find out how authorities deal with these dilemmas, with what consequences. In Chapter 5 we study the dynamics in the strategy of authorities that aim to facilitate, and we formulate explanations for the frequent strategy changes. We end with overall conclusions in Chapter 6. Table 1.2 gives an overview of the thesis chapters and articles. Table 1.3 shows in which empirical chapters the research questions are addressed.

**Table 1.2 Structure of this thesis**

Chapter	Article title	Research question	Empirical work	Outlet
1	Introduction			
2	Realizing innovative public waterworks: Aligning administrative capacities in collaborative innovation processes	What capacities are employed by public authorities to support public–private innovation and with what consequences?	Multiple case study of four integrated energy and water works	Published in <i>Journal of Cleaner Production</i>
3	Facilitation as a governance strategy. Unravelling government's facilitation frames	How do governments use discursive framing to activate non-governmental actors to produce public goods (in this case, energy from water)?	Multiple case study of Afsluitdijk and Brouwersdam tidal power plant	Published in <i>Sustainability</i>
4	Government facilitation of external initiatives: how Dutch water authorities cope with value dilemmas	What dilemmas do water authorities encounter when they choose to facilitate external initiatives; how do they deal with these dilemmas; and with what results?	Multiple case study of Brouwersdam tidal power plant and Marker Wadden	Published in <i>International Journal of Water Resource Development</i>
5	The U-turn in government facilitation: how Dutch water authorities facilitate non-governmental initiatives	How does the strategy of public authorities regarding non-governmental initiatives change over time and what are the explanations for these changes of strategy?	Multiple case study of Afsluitdijk and Marker Wadden	Accepted for publication in <i>Public Works Management &amp; Policy</i>
6	Conclusions and discussion			

**Table 1.3 Sub research questions addressed in empirical thesis chapters**

	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
<b>1 Concept</b>				
<b>2 Tools, forms</b>				
<b>3 Motives</b>				
<b>4 Conditions</b>				
<b>5 Effects</b>				



# 2

Realizing Innovative Public  
Waterworks: Aligning Administrative  
Capacities in Collaborative Innovation  
Processes

## ABSTRACT

The importance of government support for innovation is widely acknowledged, but the way governments support innovation is changing. We discern three trends: local innovation policies are gaining importance; governments increasingly choose a bottom-up, tailor-made approach to support specific innovations; and there is more collaboration between public and private actors. We analyse these trends and investigate how modern governments employ their administrative capacities to support innovation. We conduct a comparative case study of four attempts to realize integrated energy and waterworks, combining water safety and sustainable energy generation. Despite broad support, attempts to realize such innovative, multifunctional works in The Netherlands have had varying degrees of success. We examine the governmental support for these attempts and assess how governments' actions affect the innovation process. We conclude that all governmental administrative capacities have to be employed, and that public alignment is crucial for a synchronized endeavour. We elucidate the growing importance and special role of local authorities in innovation and demonstrate how modern governments spur innovation with tailor-made support in close collaboration with the private sector. We further conclude that 'encouraging interaction' is an insufficient public contribution to innovation and that expectations must be carefully managed to avoid role confusion in public-private innovation.

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## 2.1 TRENDS IN GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT FOR INNOVATION

It has become common practice to understand innovation as a result not solely of a private firm's research and technology activities (Smith, 2000), but also of the complex interaction between private producers, public policy, consumers, research and education, politics and infrastructure (Lundvall, 2010). The important role of governmental action in the generation, diffusion and adoption of innovation is widely acknowledged (Etzkowitz, 2003). This role is changing however. Different trends can be discerned in the way governments support innovation.

First, there is a gradual dispersal of innovation policy away from the national government towards regional and transnational (European) authorities, leading to a more multi-level setting (Partzsch, 2009: 986). Public research, technology and innovation are no longer exclusively in the hands of national authorities (Kuhlmann, 2001: 953). Reacting to the perceived failure of national governments to address environmental challenges, local governments are for example implementing their own policies to support innovation for sustainability, in a 'rebirth of regionalism' (Garret-Jones, 2004: 3). The emergence of 'smart' cities is one example (Cohen & Amorós, 2014). Local governments are seeking to attract the creative class, establish innovation districts and profit from the job creation that innovation brings (Cohen & Amorós, 2014; Doh & Kim, 2014). The local environment is an important determinant of a private firm's capacity to innovate, and research shows that R&D intensity and innovation activity vary more across regions than across national states (Oughton, Landabaso & Morgan 2002).

Related to this trend towards localization is the trend towards more applied, tailor-made governmental support for innovation. Increasingly, policy measures are developed in interaction with industry and universities (Etzkowitz & Klofsten, 2005). This results in 'smart regulation, a new type of negotiated settlement in which improved procedures allow for better, institutionally assured cooperation, more ambitious goals and limited administrative costs' (Partzsch, 2009: 985). Instead of 'sponsoring grand technology citadels', governments increasingly choose a more bottom-up approach, aimed at establishing local clusters, knowledge hubs and innovation districts (Garret-Jones, 2004: 3).

The third trend is the focus on collaborative governance and a more coordinating role for governments. Modern governments increasingly rely on collaboration to realize their policy goals. A host of non-governmental actors, public and private, are mobilized to solve today's 'wicked' public problems (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016; Salamon, 2001). This also applies to the field of environmental innovation policymaking. Now that the state's capacity to deal with environmental challenges is diminishing, 'other actors and institutional arrangements are stepping in' (Francesch-Huidobro, 2015: 11). The role of the government in innovation processes shifts to 'encouraging interaction and cooperation between institutional spheres' (Etzkowitz, 2003; Lundberg, 2013: 213). A result of this

trend towards collaborative governance is the blending of public and private innovation. Governments often involve private actors to address (traditionally) public problems. They try, for example, to increase private investments in innovation in the water sector (World Bank, 2004).

The vast literature on government support for innovation generally distinguishes between supply-oriented and demand-oriented policy instruments (Aschhoff & Wolfgang, 2009; Guerzoni & Raiteri, 2015). The former stimulate the supply side of innovation, for example by providing subsidies to private firms to support their R&D activities. Demand-side instruments stimulate the market for innovative products and services, for example by public procurement or mandatory standards. Many studies test the effectiveness of a specific policy instrument for innovation, for example public procurement (Uyarra et al., 2014) or R&D project subsidies (Kang & Park, 2012). Recently, growing attention has been given to the combined effect of various policy instruments (Rogge & Reichardt, 2013). The term policy mix is used to refer to the 'set of different and complementary policy instruments to address the problems identified' (Borrás & Edquist, 2013: 1514). The current literature, however, still focuses predominantly on traditional governmental support for innovation. There is a dearth of research exploring how local governments support innovation (Mazzarol et al., 2014) and, although innovation in the public and the private sector are melding, the literature on public and the literature on private innovation are still largely separated. There are, in other words, few studies that cover the new ways in which governments support innovation and the capacities they employ in doing this. Therefore we formulated the research question: What capacities are employed by public authorities to support public-private innovation and with what consequences?

To answer this question, we analyse four cases that reflect the trends in governmental support for innovation. We compare four regional projects in which public and private actors collaborate to add innovative techniques for sustainable energy generation (tidal energy, salinity gradient power) to public waterworks. Not only are these techniques innovative. Also the fact that public waterworks are used for commercial goals is novel, as is the way in which public and private actors have to collaborate to realize the implementation of the innovative techniques.

Transnational, national and local governments are involved in the projects, and their role differs per case. We unravel how the authorities contribute to the innovation processes by mobilizing different administrative capacities. We do not focus on the support of one sole government or policy instrument, but rather analyse the actual mix of different instruments and resources in a multi-level and multi-actor setting, thereby zooming in on a tailor-made form of governmental support for specific innovation projects. We investigate what extra activities authorities undertake to spur the adoption of innovations, in addition to the institutional framework of policies, rules and regulations at national level. Instead of comparing national systems, we thereby analyse variation within one such system to

determine whether different mixes of employed capacities result into different outcomes. In Section 2.2, we further elaborate the public-private nature of integrated energy and waterworks and the special position of authorities in realizing them.

## **2.2 OUR RESEARCH: INTEGRATED ENERGY AND WATERWORKS AS PUBLIC-PRIVATE INNOVATION**

Innovation can be defined as ‘the successful exploration of new ideas’ (Francis & Bessant, 2005: 171) or, more elaborately, as ‘the recognition of opportunities for profitable change and the pursuit of those opportunities all the way through to their adoption in practice’ (Baumol, 2002). The technologies used in our cases, such as the turbines that generate tidal energy and the membranes for osmotic energy, are typical, private sector innovations developed by private firms for ‘cost reduction, market expansion and profit maximization’ (Schumpeter, 1934; Stoneman, 1983). These techniques are implemented, however, in public infrastructure, in dams, sluices, levees and dikes that normally are used only for flood risk safety and water management. As these waterworks are publically owned and managed, realizing integrated energy and waterworks thus inevitably has a public component. Such works could therefore be called public-private innovations.

In the water sector governmental support is of great importance to achieve innovation, because, compared to other sectors, the R&D intensity and innovation rate is relatively low (Ipeksidis et al., 2014). Innovation in the water sector is driven predominantly by regulatory developments and social and environmental factors and much less by market demand and competitiveness (European Commission, 2014: 275). The relatively low profitability is one of the reasons for the lagging private investments in water innovation (World Bank, 2004). The same holds for the renewable energy sector; technology development for renewable power generation is largely driven by governmental support (Cantner, Graf, Hermann & Kalthaus, 2014).

To realize integrated energy & waterworks besides the cooperation of public asset managers is essential. Their cooperation is not straightforward however, because the infrastructure used in energy and waterworks is vital for flood protection and the supply of fresh water. Dutch water management, anchored in laws and regulations, focuses on risk avoidance, and public asset managers have a strict, monofunctional task orientation (Roovers & Van Buuren, 2014; Van Buuren et al., 2015). It is therefore not easy to accommodate other functions at waterworks, as required in integrated energy and waterworks.

Governments generally promote innovation because it fosters economic growth (Aschhoff & Wolfgang, 2009: 1235; Smith, 2000: 75). Innovation is believed to increase competition, create jobs and generate wealth for individuals and the nation (Michael & Pearce II, 2009: 285). These objectives also apply to governments’ support for integrated

energy and waterworks. In addition however, the realization of such works contributes to climate adaptation, sustainability and the transformation towards a green economy; and local governments hope that the innovative constructions will attract tourists and international businesses to their region.

The factors described combine into a complex position for authorities in the realization of integrated energy and waterworks. In our study, we take a closer look at this special position and investigate how authorities' contributions influence the attempts to realize such works. In Section 2.3, we discuss the literature on the different capacities governmental actors can employ to support innovation.

## **2.3 ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITIES TO SUPPORT INNOVATION**

### **Administrative capacities of the modern state**

There is a huge literature on organizations' capacities and capabilities. Most authors take a resource-based view (Nelson & Winter, 1982), wherein institutional capacities are considered the core competences of organizations, built up over a long period of interaction and collaboration in which actors develop routines and competences that are essential for their joint effectiveness (Spekkink, 2013; Wehn de Montalvo & Alaerts, 2013). We focus solely on the level of government organizations and take a more instrumental view on capacities as the resources and instruments an organization uses to realize its ambitions.

To investigate the extra activities undertaken by governments to support the realization of integrated energy and waterworks, we use Lodge and Wegrich's (2014) theoretical framework on the administrative capacities of the modern state. Lodge and Wegrich's administrative capacities relate to the four principal governing resources: treasure, nodality, organization and authority (Hood, 1986; Howlett, 2000). In line with Lodge and Wegrich, we define administrative capacities as the sets of skills and competencies that authorities employ to address today's governance challenges, distinguishing between delivery capacity, analytical capacity, coordination capacity and regulatory capacity. In the rest of this section, we further define these four capacities and how they are used by authorities to support the adoption innovation.

### **Delivery capacity to support innovation**

Delivery capacity is an authority's capability to make things happen; it consists of the resources that governments use to perform their primary tasks at the policy frontline (Lodge & Wegrich, 2014). A state's delivery capacity relates to its treasure; it includes for example grants and loans and, in modern times, research funding (Hood, 1986; Howlett, 2000: 420). Government funding is an important stimulus for innovation (Guerzoni & Raiteri, 2015; Hyytinen & Toivanen, 2005). In collaborative innovation processes, access

to resources is one of the fundamental conditions brought in by governmental actors (Sørensen & Torfing, 2012: 8). Authorities use their delivery capacity to spur innovation by providing 'funds, human resources (...) risk capital and base capital' (Moon & Bretschneider, 1997: 61). With their delivery capacity, they can support both the supply side of innovation, e.g. with R&D subsidies, and the demand side, by purchasing innovative products in public procurement procedures (Caerteling, Halman & Dorée, 2008; Cantner et al., 2014).

### **Analytical capacity to support innovation**

Authorities' analytical capacity is based on the information that authorities have at their disposal and use to make policy choices; it is the knowledge that informs decision making. This form of capacity 'addresses demands on forecasting and intelligence that informs policy making under conditions of uncertainty' (Lodge & Wegrich, 2014: 14). Analytical capacity relates to the governing resource nodality and stems for example from the state's access to networks of expertise. Examples of nodality-based policy instruments are advice and training, education and information provision (Hood, 1986; Howlett, 2000).

Governments can use their analytical capacity to support innovation by providing knowledge and information. This can be done in an indirect way by financing universities that generate knowledge spill-overs to the private market (Aschhoff & Wolfgang, 2009: 1237; Moon & Bretschneider, 1997) or in more direct ways by bringing data into innovation processes. In collaborative innovation, one of the roles of governmental actors is to bring 'new knowledge into play (...) and encourage transformative learning and out of the box thinking' (Sørensen & Torfing, 2012: 8). In the case of integrated energy and waterworks, access to governmental data on water streams and environmental conditions is essential for successful realization.

### **Coordination capacity to support innovation**

Coordination capacity is the capacity to 'bring the necessary actors together to achieve problem-solving' (Lodge & Wegrich, 2014: 13). Besides being one of the participants in collaborative governance, government can act as the organizer or facilitator of the process, bringing participants together and 'aligning organizations from different backgrounds under often tricky conditions' (Lodge & Wegrich, 2014: 13). Salamon (2001: 1638) speaks of the 'new government's orchestration skills'. In modern times, governments do not 'play all the instruments alone' and they cannot depend on 'control and demand'; instead, they use their coordination capacity to enable the orchestra's performance.

In innovation the government's role as network manager, boundary spanner, broker and intermediary is also gaining importance (Gregersen, 1992; Howells, 2006; Partzsch, 2009). Modern governments promote innovation by encouraging interaction among institutional spheres (Etzkowitz, 2003; Lundberg, 2013: 213). Authorities have to 'cre-

ate, institutionalize, and manage open and flexible arenas for collaborative interaction with other relevant and affected actors' to make innovation possible (Nambisan, 2008; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011: 16).

### **Regulatory capacity to support innovation**

Regulatory capacity (Lodge & Wegrich, 2014: 11) is the modern state's capacity to prohibit or permit and refers to the government's power to constrain economic and social activities. Regulatory capacity is based on the governing resource, authority; associated policy instruments are regulations and licences, and in modern states, labelling, treaties and political agreements (Hood, 1986; Howlett, 2000: 420).

Authorities can use their regulatory capacity to spur innovation by adding, improving or removing regulation (Aschhoff & Wolfgang, 2009; Cohen & Amorós, 2014; Gregersen, 1992). The literature on innovation often identifies rules and regulations as a hindrance to innovation (Sørensen & Torfing, 2012). One function of regulations is to eliminate risk, whereas the acceptance of risk is a precondition for innovation (Brown & Osborne, 2013). Rules can, however, also be necessary to make innovation possible. In the case of integrated energy and waterworks, there is on the one hand an overload of rules; there are many, often conflicting, laws and regulations concerning water safety, energy generation and nature conservation. On the other hand however, there is an institutional vacuum, there are no rules yet specifically aimed at integrated energy and waterworks. Governments can thus stimulate innovation by using their regulatory capacity to abolish or adjust rules or draft new ones, for example in the form of new 'organizational or juridical arrangement, additional contracts, temporary permissions or bilateral agreements or new policy rules' (Van Buuren et al., 2015: 694).

## **2.4 METHODOLOGY**

### **Case selection**

The cases selected are The New Afsluitdijk, Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam, Oosterscheldekering and Testing Centre Grevelingendam. As stated, these cases were selected because they display the three trends in governmental support for innovation discerned from the literature. The technologies used, the membranes and tidal turbines, are private sector innovations. Their implementation in public waterworks, that are essential for flood protection and are managed by water authorities with a monofunctional task orientation, is as much as an innovation however. We can learn much from these cases because they can be considered as most extreme cases in water innovation (Seawright & Gering, 2008). On the one hand, there is a strong shared belief that the Dutch have to invest in their world-leading position with regard to innovative delta technology. Both the

national government (with innovation policies aimed at stimulating innovation in a couple of top sectors, including water) and the regional authorities emphasize the importance of making the Dutch Delta the worldwide window of innovative delta solutions. At the same time-as elaborated in Section 2.2-the collaboration of the responsible water authority is indispensable to realize this kind of innovation because it necessitates the use of public waterworks. That makes these cases very relevant from this article's perspective, as these innovation processes necessitate the employment of different administrative capacities by various public actors with different and even conflicting interests.

The national authorities involved are the same in all four cases and the other authorities involved have comparable capacities. Although the resources and administrative capacities that could be employed by the authorities thus do not differ significantly, the capacities that they employ in reality do differ. The cases further differ with regard to their (tentative) success, making them suitable for exploring the relation between administrative capacities employed and innovation success. Much research on innovation is biased towards best practices; by selecting cases with different levels of success we avoid this (Borins, 2001).

Because of our research design, our results cannot be directly generalized to all processes of (water) innovation. Innovation processes all have 'their own dynamisms and are influenced by, among other things, the features of technologies, the specific organizational and institutional settings, legal frameworks etc.' (Meijer, 2014: 206). Although our research does not lead to generalized empirical knowledge, it does enhance our understanding of the role of public authorities in water innovations and leads to a detailed understanding of the relation between the capacities they employ and the success of innovations. Our case studies thus can contribute to further theory development on this topic (Walton, 1992).

### **Data collection**

We gathered data by in-depth semi-structured interviews, document analysis and observations. We studied relevant documents such as newspaper articles, governmental policy briefs and notes, agreements between actors, permit and subsidy applications and allocations. This document analysis was used to reconstruct the planning process, the relevant actions of involved actors and their formal agenda. We attended several public meetings where stake and shareholders discussed specific issues concerning the projects (such as the business case or the contract arrangement).

Between February and December 2014, we conducted 17 interviews. We also made use of the transcripts of 23 more interviews conducted by master students writing their theses. The interviews were equally distributed among the cases. We interviewed all key players in the four cases: public professionals of national and local authorities, directors of the private firms involved and representatives from other public organizations. The

interviews were used to deepen our understanding of the process and the agenda of the actors involved, the perception of the authorities' contribution to that process and actors' perceptions about the relative impact of this contribution. Finally, our reconstruction of capacities and their impact was checked by one key representative per case (in all cases a public policy official).

### Operationalization and measurement

On the basis of the literature on administrative capacities and innovation policy, we constructed Table 2.1 containing possible public contributions to energy and waterworks. We use this table to determine the capacities employed by the public authorities in our cases. To assess the extent to which these capacities are actually employed, we make a distinction between low, medium or high use, which we define as follows:

Low: Almost no elements of this type of capacity are employed;

Medium: Various elements of this type of capacity are employed;

High: (Almost) all different elements of this type of capacity are employed.

**Table 2.1 Possible governmental support for integrated energy and waterworks ordered by administrative capacities**

Administrative capacity	Government support for innovation	Indicators. Authorities:
Delivery capacity	Financial support, subsidy and funding schemes, risk and base capital, R&D support, public procurement, organizational and human resources	-Provide R&D subsidies, grants or research funding -Act as launching customer -Stand surety for loan -Adjust assets for multifunctional use
Analytical capacity	Information provision, advice, training, public networks of expertise, policy analyses, cost-benefit and impact analyses, open data	-Commission studies -Share public information and expertise -Supply information for permit application -Support subsidy or grant application -Investigate possibilities for innovation -Conduct market consultation
Coordination capacity	Network management, bringing actors together, boundary spanning, initiating and maintaining intermediary platforms	-Organize workshops and meetings -Involve relevant actors -Maintain relations with actors involved -Negotiate and lobby -Ease entrance to organization for private initiators (e.g. by 1 single window) -Synchronize actions and collaborate with other authorities involved
Regulatory capacity	Constrain economic and social activities, prohibit and permit via regulations and licences, labelling, treaties, political agreements	-Abolish, adjust and/or develop policy, rules and regulations to support innovation -Sign agreements -Give (temporary) permissions, accept risks

We are interested in the effect of the capacities employed on the success of the attempt to realize energy and waterworks. We acknowledge that success is subjective, difficult to define and hard to assess, even more so because the attempts in our study are ongoing. We define success as the realization of an integrated energy and waterworks and we take into account interim results, such as permits granted, subsidies obtained or construction started. These are milestones on the way to full realization. We distinguish between four aspects of success: (perceived) progress, feasibility, institutional fit and legitimacy. We define feasibility as the availability of (financial) resources to realize the innovative works, and progress as the satisfaction of the involved actors about how fast the project is proceeding. Institutional fit stands for the fit of the project within the institutional framework and organizational values of public authorities involved, and legitimacy is the support the project receives from authorities, other stakeholders and the general public.

## 2.5 CASE DESCRIPTION: FOUR ATTEMPTS TO REALIZE INTEGRATED ENERGY AND WATERWORKS

In this section, we briefly summarize the four attempts to realize integrated energy and waterworks in The Netherlands. Table 2.2 gives an overview of the main characteristics of the cases, followed by a narrative description of the stimulus, the involved actors' interests, and dependences and progress in all four cases.

**Table 2.2 Main characteristics of the cases**

	The New Afsluitdijk	Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam	Oosterscheldekering	Testing Centre Grevelingendam
<b>Water work</b>	32 kilometre-long dam, north Netherlands	6.5 kilometre-long dam, southwest Netherlands	8 kilometre storm surge barrier, southwest Netherlands	6 kilometre-long inland dam, southwest Netherlands
<b>Project content</b>	15–25 turbines in 8–12 shafts + blue energy pilot installation	Large number of turbines in 100 metre-long breach in dam	3–5 turbines in 1–2 shafts	Test location for tidal turbines
<b>Estimated power</b>	~2–3 MW*	~5–45 MW	~1 MW	Varying
<b>Estimated costs for realization</b>	~€20–25 m*	~€60–250 m**	~€9 m	~€10–30 m
<b>Stimulus</b>	Renovation dam for water safety	Breach in dam for water quality	Need for turbine showcase	Reopening sluice for water quality

Table 2.2 (continued)

	The New Afsluitdijk	Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam	Oosterscheldekering	Testing Centre Grevelingendam
<b>Initiator</b>	Private actors and local governments	National and local governments	Private actors	Local governments
<b>Asset manager</b>	Focuses on renovation, facilitates private initiatives	Actively investigates possibilities of power plant	Facilitates private initiatives	Invests in reopening sluice
<b>Local governments</b>	Support private initiatives	Act alongside national asset manager	Support private initiatives	Initiated, aims to facilitate private initiative
<b>Private actors</b>	Initiated projects	Participate in market consultation	Initiated projects	Some take initiative, some wait-and-see
<b>Public-private collaboration</b>	Local governments support, national government facilitates private initiative	Market consultation, private actors wait-and-see	Local governments support, national government facilitates private initiative	Governments want to facilitate, private actors wait-and-see
<b>Drivers</b>	Ambition and support local governments	Broad-mindedness asset manager	Public subsidy, support local governments	Perseverance public and private initiators
<b>Barriers</b>	Energy projects small re renovation, no integration	High costs, dependence on other local developments	No private investors	Little interest from private investors and costumers
<b>Progress (August 2016)</b>	Tender renovation, 2 energy projects realized, 1 working on business case	Market consultation closed, tender in preparation	1 of 2 initiated projects realized	Private consortium works on business case and permits

\*Tidal energy Den Oever, tidal energy Kornwerderzand and *blue energy* together

\*\*Additional costs for tidal plant in breach, range for different options

## The New Afsluitdijk

The Afsluitdijk (Enclosure Dam) was constructed in 1927-1933; the dam is essential for water safety, and the adjacent lake is an important source of fresh water. The dam no longer meets the safety criteria and needs extensive renovation. The asset manager, the national Department of Waterways and Public Works (RWS) is in charge of this renovation. The national government decided to focus solely on water safety and finance only essential renovation. Complementary ambitions, e.g. in relation to nature development, tourism and sustainable energy generation, are left to local authorities and private actors.

For them, the complementary plans are very important because it is believed that they will generate a much needed boost to the local economy.

Local governments and private firms therefore hope to seize the opportunity of the renovation to realize and expand pilot installations for sustainable energy generation. The asset owner, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, has a somewhat ambiguous attitude towards the energy projects. It prescribes (and solely pays for) essential renovation but, at the same time, the minister is enthusiastic about the Afsluitdijk becoming an integrated energy and waterworks. Therefore, RWS feels unofficially obliged to support the local ambitions and has agreed to help the private actors and local authorities to implement their plans.

Since 2008, a turbine constructor has been operating a pilot installation in one of the shafts of an outlet sluice. In 2015, partly financed by public subsidies, the firm expanded its installation with three more turbines. Together with the local authorities, it wants to realize a second pilot installation. There have been talks with different possible investors and participants, but to date (August 2016) without success. In 2014, another private firm opened a pilot installation for the generation of blue energy, using the difference in salinity between fresh and salt water, at the Afsluitdijk. Realizing the installation was a shared ambition of the local authorities, and the firm received subsidies from national and local authorities.

### **Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam**

The Brouwersdam, constructed in 1971, encloses a saltwater inlet of the North Sea, creating the lake Grevelingenmeer. Since the enclosure, the water oxygen level has gone down, damaging nature and the local economy. Therefore, the public authorities developed plans to breach the Brouwersdam to restore estuarine dynamics and improve the water quality in the Grevelingenmeer. With this plan, the idea emerged to realize a tidal power plant in the breach. The authorities hoped that the alteration to the dam, a very costly undertaking, could be financed with the revenues from energy generation. In 2013, local authorities and RWS set up a project bureau to investigate the feasibility of a power plant in the Brouwersdam. They conducted an extensive market consultation and joint fact-finding with market actors to investigate different options and costs. They concluded that it was not possible to finance the renovation with the revenues from energy generation; rather, the realization of a power plant would entail additional costs.

The local authorities nevertheless see great benefits in the realization of a power plant. They expect great benefits for local employment, the knowledge economy and attracting visitors to the region. They have small budgets, however, and are willing nor able to make large financial investments in a power plant. RWS advocates for a power plant but is also unable to make extensive financial contributions. RWS is now (August 2016) preparing a concession-based tender in which the realization and the exploitation of the

power plant are combined. The private actors in this case have a somewhat wait-and-see attitude. They consider the power plant a public ambition and hope to be given the job to build the plant at public expense.

### **Oosterscheldekering**

The Oosterscheldekering (Eastern Scheldt storm surge barrier) is part of the delta works in the southwest of The Netherlands, built after a flood in 1953 as protection from the North Sea. In 2008, a consultancy firm and a turbine constructor both took the initiative to install tidal turbines in one of the breaches in the dam. Their primary goal is to create a showcase for potential customers. Both firms applied to RWS for a permit and for several local, national and European subsidies. The Province of Zeeland is an enthusiastic advocate and promoter of tidal energy. The region is known worldwide for its innovative delta works. Zeeland now hopes to update this status by combining the waterworks with sustainable energy generation. The Province expects many financial and social spin-offs for the region. RWS aims to contribute to the multifunctional use of infrastructure, sustainability and technology development. Therefore, RWS decided to deliberate jointly with the firms and help them to formulate a viable permit application. In an intensive, collaborative process, the private firms and RWS came to an agreement about the terms and conditions under which the firms could install their installations and generate energy at the dam. Both projects received several public subsidies but had a hard time finding additional private investors. Consequently, the project was postponed multiple times. The two initiatives merged, and in September 2015 the turbine constructor and partners successfully realized one of the projects by installing five turbines in one of the dam's breaches. It is uncertain whether it will also realize the second project. In 2016 the firm applied for an additional V2 m in subsidies to expand the project.

### **Testing Centre Grevelingendam**

The Grevelingendam is a 6 km-long dam in the southwest of The Netherlands, built in 1958 as part of the delta works. The Grevelingendam is not a primary flood defence and its water safety function is no longer clear. The dam has a road connection and several recreational functions. Because the water quality in the adjacent lake, the Grevelingenmeer, is low since its enclosure, plans were developed to reopen the sluice in the dam to restore estuarine dynamics in the lake. With this plan to reopen the sluice, the idea emerged to realize a testing centre for tidal turbines in the sluice. The local authorities see great benefits in establishing a testing centre. The region aims to become 'the home of the tidal energy industry', and a testing centre would contribute to this ambition. They are unwilling, however, to realize (and finance) such a centre themselves. The Province of Zeeland therefore took the initiative to find private initiators. It funded engineering and a consultancy firm to organize a series of workshops to bring together interested actors.

The local authorities hoped that private firms and knowledge institutes would unite in these workshops to realize the test location without governmental participation, but the workshops did not have the hoped-for result. One obstacle is that it is unclear whether there is any need for a test location on the private market. The asset owner, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, is willing to reopen the sluice earlier than planned to facilitate the realization of a tidal testing centre. The work has been put out to tender, and the reopening of the sluice is planned in 2017. The consultancy firm formed a consortium of private partners that is now (August 2016) trying to obtain the necessary permits and public and private funding.

## 2.6 ANALYSIS

We now take a closer look at the public authorities' contributions to the four attempts to realize the integrated energy and waterworks. We categorize the capacities used and indicate to what element of the innovation processes (feasibility, progress, institutional fit or legitimacy) the authorities contributed (see Tables 2.3-2.10).

### **The administrative capacities employed per case**

#### ***The New Afsluitdijk***

In The New Afsluitdijk case, the local authorities employ a wide range of administrative capacities to contribute to the sustainable energy projects (see Table 2.3). The effectiveness of their effort, however, often proves insufficient. The innovation process is very time-consuming, and the realization of the various projects is uncertain. To a certain extent, there is public alignment between the different authorities involved; the national asset manager and the local authorities have regular contact and keep one another informed about their activities, but they fail to synchronize their activities in such a way that the implementation of the local agenda is connected to the national government's renovation work. Furthermore, despite requests from the local authorities, RWS is not willing to complement the capacities that the local authorities lack. These include, for example, more delivery capacity (in the form of directly purchasing the generated electricity) and regulatory capacity. An important barrier is the fact that RWS is not willing to adjust its rules with regard to the planning or the scope of the dam renovation. Table 2.4 gives an overview of the administrative capacities employed by the different authorities involved.

**Table 2.3 Public authorities' contributions to innovation process The New Afsluitdijk**

Public authority	Authorities' action contributing to energy and waterworks	Administrative capacity	Positively contributed to
Ministry Economic Affairs	Subsidy for projects, per amount of energy generated	Delivery	Feasibility
Ministry I&M	€20 m (total) financial contribution to local sustainability projects	Delivery	Feasibility
Asset manager RWS	Established 1 single window for all requests from the region	Coordination	Progress, institutional fit
	Participates in multiple local deliberative bodies	Coordination	Progress
	Supported private initiators to formulate admissible permit application	Analytical	Institutional fit
	Negotiated with private initiators about permit requirements and adjusted standard requirements	Regulatory	Institutional fit
	Informed local actors about its own activities, advised local actors about theirs	Coordination	Progress, institutional fit
	Offered opportunity to include local projects in tender for renovation	Coordination	Progress, institutional fit
	Obliges the renovation contractor to take into account the local project plans	Regulatory	Institutional fit
Local authorities (united in project bureau)	Support private project initiators in finding financial investors	Coordination	Progress, feasibility
	Support private projects initiators to formulate admissible subsidy applications	Analytical	Institutional fit, feasibility
	Lobbied asset manager to purchase generated energy directly from initiators	Coordination	Feasibility
	Contributed financially to projects through local funds	Delivery	Feasibility
	Stand surety/pre-finance projects, thereby taking financial risks	Delivery	Progress
	Negotiated with asset manager about conditions for including projects in renovation tender	Coordination	Progress, institutional fit
	Secure coherence/relation between individual projects	Coordination	Progress

**Table 2.4 Overview of administrative capacities employed in The New Afsluitdijk case**

	Delivery capacity	Analytical capacity	Coordination capacity	Regulatory capacity
<b>EU/national government</b>	Medium	Low	Low	Low
<b>National asset manager</b>	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
<b>Local authorities</b>	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low

### ***Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam***

In this case, there has been great public alignment. RWS and the local authorities, united in a project bureau, employed a lot of analytical and coordination capacity researching the possibilities and feasibility of a power plant (see Table 2.5). The authorities worked closely with private actors, and the employment of their administrative capacities has been fine-tuned in order to fit the private ambitions. It is too early to conclude whether the authorities' effort will be successful; the exploration of the feasibility of a tidal energy plant is ongoing. Currently (August 2016), RWS is exploring how it can employ its coordination and regulatory capacity with an innovative, integrated tender in which the realization and the exploitation of the power plant are combined. Much effort is being made to align what the public authorities can further contribute to realization, but it is uncertain whether the necessary public funds will become available. The employment of delivery capacity in the form of a substantial public financial contribution will be essential for realization but it is uncertain if this becomes available. Table 2.6 gives an overview of the administrative capacities employed in this case.

**Table 2.5 Public authorities' contributions to innovation process Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam**

Public authority	Authorities' action contributing to energy and waterworks	Administrative capacity	Positively contributed to
Asset manager RWS	Entered collaboration with local authorities, became member of project bureau	Coordination	Progress, legitimacy
	Will give initiators the chance to realize an energy plant in waterworks	Regulatory, delivery	Institutional fit
	Prepared innovative integrated tender for realization and exploitation of power plant	Regulatory	Feasibility
Local governments (united in project bureau)	Researched financial, technical and social feasibility and affordability of different power plants	Analytical	Feasibility, institutional fit, progress
	Organized meetings with potential stake- and shareholders	Coordination	Legitimacy
	Conducted market consultation, joint fact-finding and red flag analysis	Analytical	Institutional fit, progress
	Lobbied Ministry of Economic Affairs to financially contribute	Coordination	Feasibility
Province Zuid-Holland	Suggested the idea of a power plant	Coordination	Progress
	Set realization of power plant as condition for financial contribution to renovation for water quality	Coordination	Progress, feasibility
Province Zeeland	Willing to contribute financially to power plant	Delivery	Feasibility

**Table 2.6 Overview of administrative capacities employed in the Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam case**

	Delivery capacity	Analytical capacity	Coordination capacity	Regulatory capacity
<b>National asset manager</b>	Low	High	High	Medium
<b>Local authorities</b>	Low	High	High	Low

### ***Oosterscheldekering***

Table 2.7 contains all the public contributions made to the Oosterscheldekering project. In this case, there was effective alignment between the public authorities involved; Table 2.8 shows that together they employed all four capacities. RWS employed its analytical and regulatory capacity in a very explorative mode, deliberating with the initiators and adjust-

**Table 2.7 Public authorities' contributions to innovation process Oosterscheldekering**

Public authority	Authorities' action contributing to energy and waterworks	Administrative capacity	Positively contributed to
EU	€3,250,000 subsidy for regional development	Delivery	Feasibility
Ministry Economic Affairs	€1,750,000 subsidy	Delivery	Feasibility
	Subsidy, per amount of energy generated	Delivery	Feasibility
Ministry I&M	Gave RWS permission to support the privately initiated projects	Delivery	Institutional fit
Asset manager RWS	Actively investigated possibilities for privately initiated projects	Analytical	Institutional fit
	Supplied information necessary for permit application	Analytical	Progress, institutional fit
	Had monthly talks with initiators, helped them to formulate admissible permit application	Analytical	Institutional fit
	Negotiated with initiators about permit requirements and adjusted standard requirements	Regulatory	Progress, institutional fit
	Extended standard permit period to improve private business case	Regulatory	Feasibility
	Granted a provisional permit before all necessary research was conducted	Regulatory	Progress, feasibility
	Accepted (financial and safety) risk of damage to the waterworks	Regulatory	Institutional fit
	Extended monitoring programme for new infrastructure (costs for private initiator)	Regulatory	Institutional fit
Province Zeeland	€500,000 subsidy	Delivery	Feasibility
	Compensated potential objectors to prevent notice of objection procedure	Coordination	Legitimacy, progress
	Lobbied other authorities to support the initiatives	Coordination	Legitimacy

ing its permitting rules. The Province of Zeeland acted as network manager and applied a lot of coordination capacity to achieve public alignment and broad public support. Zeeland closely monitored the barriers in the innovation process, employed the capacities that were missing and removed obstacles for the private initiators. All levels of government employed their delivery capacity; this resulted in large subsidies. This case is therefore relatively successful: in September 2015 one of the two privately initiated projects was realized; five tidal turbines have been installed in the dam.

**Table 2.8 Overview of administrative capacities employed in the Oosterscheldekering case**

	Delivery capacity	Analytical capacity	Coordination capacity	Regulatory capacity
<b>EU/national government</b>	High	Low	Low	Low
<b>National asset manager</b>	Low	High	Low	High
<b>Local authorities</b>	High	Low	High	Low

**Testing Centre Grevelingendam**

In this case, the local authorities, especially the Province of Zeeland, employed a lot of coordination capacity (see Table 2.9), thereby hoping to bring together private actors who then together would take the initiative to realize a testing centre, but the sole employment of coordination capacity proved an insufficient public contribution. Only after substantial financial support is a private consortium now making an attempt to realize a testing centre. RWS has limited its contribution to renovating and reopening the sluice. It has not been necessary to employ regulatory capacity because there have been no permit applications yet. Table 2.10 gives an overview of the administrative capacities employed in this case.

**Table 2.9 Public authorities’ contributions to innovation process Testing Centre Grevelingendam**

Public authority	Authorities’ action contributing to energy and waterworks	Administrative capacity	Positively contributed to
Asset manager RWS	Renovated and reopened sluice to make testing centre possible (estimated costs €8,300,000, commissioned by Ministry I&M).	Delivery	Institutional fit
Province Zeeland	Searched for private initiators	Coordination	Legitimacy, progress
	Paid €100,000 to draw up programme of requirements	Delivery, analytical	Institutional fit, progress
	Made testing centre part of EU research project, paid for workshops to support realization of the test centre	Delivery, coordination	Legitimacy, progress
	Financed €100,000 revolving fund for private initiators to start up project	Delivery	Feasibility, progress

**Table 2.10 Overview of administrative capacities employed in the Testing Centre Grevelingendam case**

	Delivery capacity	Analytical capacity	Coordination capacity	Regulatory capacity
<b>National asset manager</b>	Medium	Low	Low	Low
<b>Local authorities</b>	Medium	Low	High	Low

### Case comparison

Table 2.11 gives an overview of the capacities employed and the success of the four cases. To date (August 2016), the Oosterscheldekering case is the most successful; one of the two initiated projects has been realized. In this case, all administrative capacities have been employed. Several authorities have made substantial financial contributions, and the province employed a lot of coordination capacity to ensure public alignment and broad support. The asset manager employed its analytical and regulatory capacity to support the private initiatives. In the other cases, one or more of these success factors are missing, resulting in moderate to no success (yet).

**Table 2.11 Comparison of the administrative capacities employed in the four cases**

	Delivery capacity	Analytical capacity	Coordination capacity	Regulatory capacity	Success
<b>The New Afsluitdijk</b>	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderately successful, all capacities employed, little public alignment, insufficient feasibility, moderate institutional fit
<b>Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam</b>	Low	High	High	Medium	Relatively promising, low feasibility, slow but steady progress, moderate institutional fit, high legitimacy
<b>Oosterschelde- kering</b>	High	High	High	High	Successful, high feasibility, slow but steady progress, moderate institutional fit, high legitimacy.
<b>Testing Centre Grevelingendam</b>	Medium	Low	High	Low	Moderate success, low feasibility, slow progress, moderate institutional fit, high legitimacy.

### *Delivery capacity in the innovation process*

The employment of delivery capacity, in the form of financial contributions, is an important stimulus for innovation (Guerzoni & Raiteri, 2015; Hyytinen & Toivanen, 2005); our cases confirm this. Public funding is, at least at the current stage of technology development, essential to realize integrated energy and waterworks. The availability of a large subsidy was a driver of success in the Oosterscheldekering case, and the absence of public

funding is an important barrier in the other cases. Allowing public infrastructure to be used by external actors is another, essential form of employing delivery capacity to enable this public-private innovation. The financial contributions made by the authorities in our cases are all one-time contributions. Governments are hesitant to make long-term investments and become partners in these projects. Neither are they willing to act as launching customers to support the demand side of this innovation (Aschhoff & Wolfgang, 2009; Gregersen, 1992). The Oosterscheldekering case shows that this does not necessarily have to be a problem; the works can successfully be initiated, owned and run by private actors. This, however, must be clear from the beginning of the innovation process. In the Grevelingendam case, public authorities incessantly expressed their ambition for a testing centre. This left the private actors in a wait-and-see position; they expected the public authorities to take the lead and supply the necessary resources. The authorities' failure to do so led to deadlock.

#### ***Analytical capacity in the innovation process***

In the Oosterscheldekering case, the asset manager's willingness to share governmental data on water streams and environmental conditions with the private initiators and pro-actively deliberate jointly about the possibilities was an important success factor. In The New Afsluitdijk, the asset manager is more hesitant to share information and work together with the private initiators. In the Brouwersdam case, the asset manager and the regional authorities not only shared information, but also went a step further by conducting research to generate new information from which private partners in the innovation process could benefit.

#### ***Coordination capacity in the innovation process***

Our analysis illustrates that the role of the government as network manager and boundary spanner in innovation is essential (Etzkowitz, 2003; Howells, 2006; Partzsch, 2009). To realize integrated energy and waterworks, the authorities' coordination capacity proved especially important to ensure public alignment and shared ambitions. For the Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam, the national and local authorities worked closely together in a project bureau, and this led to broad support. In the Afsluitdijk case, the lack of alignment between national and local authorities is a barrier to success. Innovation processes benefit from public authorities that work together, know one another's capacities and are willing to step in when others cannot deliver. Coordination capacity is also important to involve possible share- and stakeholders, keep track of the process and eliminate possible obstacles, as the Province of Zeeland did in the Oosterscheldekering and Grevelingendam cases. The Grevelingendam case, however, also shows that the sole employment of coordination capacity, bringing relevant actors together and facilitating their collaboration, is an insufficient public contribution to realize innovation.

***Regulatory capacity in the innovation process***

The initiators of integrated energy and waterworks have to work with different legal frameworks concerning water safety, energy generation, technology development and regional development. Besides the rules and regulations, dominant values such as efficiency, effectiveness and risk aversion can form a barrier to innovation. To realize integrated energy and waterworks, organizational fit has to be created between the dominant institutional framework and the aimed-for innovations (Van Buuren et al., 2015). To do this, public authorities have to employ their regulatory capacity to abolish or adjust existing rules and draw up new ones (Aschhoff & Wolfgang, 2009; Gregersen, 1992; Moon & Bretschneider, 1997). However, in our cases, this capacity is hardly employed. To realize energy and waterworks, customization of organizational rules and tailor-made agreements are essential. As with the employment of analytical capacity, it is important that public authorities use their regulatory capacity in a positive, open and learning way. Only when the asset manager is willing to collaborate with initiators and exchange wishes and ideas is it possible to come to arrangements that safeguard public values and enable innovation. This is in line with the literature on innovation, which states that regulation created in interaction with relevant actors leads to 'a negotiated settlement of smart regulation' (Lundberg, 2013; Partzsch, 2009: 985).

Because of the low number of cases, it is not possible to discern clear patterns in the various capacity mixes and related success rates. In all four cases however, it proved crucial for the authorities to be able to combine their capacities in such a way that an optimal mix was formed that enabled realization of the innovations. The national asset manager had an important role in organizing the formal opportunity, providing access to the infrastructure and supplying the necessary information about on-site physical conditions. The local authorities provided the necessary network facilities and could give access to the (much needed) public funds. The Oosterscheldekering case shows how the asset manager and local authorities align their efforts and together successfully support the realization of an innovation. The national asset owner and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, however, are nearly absent in the cases. This is unfortunate, as the first has the regulatory capacity essential for multifunctional use of public infrastructure and the latter has the delivery capacity crucial to enable this kind of innovation. The aloofness of these two authorities makes it difficult for the other actors to achieve successful innovation, as they have to deal with quite restrictive conditions.

## 2.7 CONCLUSION

The importance of governmental support for innovation is widely acknowledged. In the water sector, the involvement of authorities in the innovation process is of even greater importance (Krozer et al., 2010). The way governments support innovation is changing however. Local innovation policies are gaining importance (Cohen & Amorós, 2014); governments increasingly choose a bottom-up, tailor-made approach to support specific innovations (Garret-Jones, 2004); and public and private actors collaborate more, leading to a blend of public and private sector innovation (Francesch-Huidobro, 2015). We analyse these trends and investigate how modern governments employ their administrative capacities to support innovation by adjusting their own routines and by facilitating private actors to implement their innovative techniques.

Our study shows the combined effect of various policy mixes (Borrás & Edquist, 2013). For complex, public-private innovations such as integrated energy and waterworks to succeed, no single policy instrument can do the job. The authorities have to employ all their capacities: regulatory capacity to adjust their own policies and regulations; delivery capacity for to enhance the feasibility of implementing techniques currently not fully developed; analytical capacity to provide the necessary information about possible consequences and impacts; and coordination capacity to reach public alignment and build a strong public-private coalition. The four capacities, however, do not have to be employed by one and the same public actor; ideally, authorities complement one another. The authorities all employ their capacities in a way that fits their own procedures and ambitions, but public alignment is crucial. Public-private innovation necessitates the synchronized deployment of authorities' capacities in a contextualized, dedicated way because each situation is unique (even when the same technological innovation is pursued). The framework of Lodge and Wegrich (2014) can help authorities to make an inventory of the available and the necessary administrative capacities.

Our analysis confirms the growing importance and special role of local authorities in innovation support (Kuhlmann, 2001). Local authorities foresee great benefits of innovation for their region and develop tailor-made support for regional innovative industries (Doh & Kim, 2014). Local authorities' capacities are limited, but they are an important actor in the innovation process. With their coordination capacity, they act as network managers, bringing together relevant share- and stakeholders, achieving public alignment and public support. They work in close collaboration with private project initiators, keep track of potential barriers and smooth the innovation process.

Our study shows the extra activities that modern governments can undertake to spur innovation, in addition to the existing national framework of policies, rules and regulations. The authorities employ their capacities to support specific innovation projects. Through interaction and negotiation, public and private partners achieve tailor-made solutions

and successful public-private innovation in these projects. Our study further shows how the government's role as pacer in innovation, 'encouraging interaction and cooperation between institutional spheres' (Lundberg, 2013: 213), works out in practice. Bringing the relevant actors together and subsequently facilitating their collaboration are tasks that modern governments are very keen to undertake. We find, however, that often this is too small a public contribution for innovation to succeed. A substantial financial contribution, for example, is often needed.

Our study demonstrates another pitfall of collaborative public-private innovation. Authorities tend to express great ambitions, even when they do not intend to take a prominent role in the innovation process or to act as launching customer. Deadlock can occur when articulated public ambitions do not match their actual ability or willingness to act. When authorities are trying to activate the private sector with their enthusiasm and support and arrange a series of interactions, they can unintentionally accomplish the opposite: a wait-and-see private sector that expects the government to take the lead. To avoid this role confusion, managing expectations is crucial. There has to be clarity about actors' aspirations, the capacities they are willing to employ and their expectations of other, public and private, actors. Integrated energy and waterworks are realized under challenging conditions. In general, public-private collaboration for innovation is a sensitive process, an ongoing search in which the actors involved continuously have to exchange wishes and opportunities to reach solutions that are acceptable for all.

# 3

## Facilitation as a Governance Strategy: Unravelling Governments' Facilitation Frames

## ABSTRACT

Governments increasingly choose facilitation as a strategy to entice others to produce public goods and services, including in relation to the realisation of sustainable energy innovations. An important instrument to implement this governance strategy is discursive framing. To learn how public authorities use discursive framing to implement a facilitation strategy, we conducted a comparative case study on two Dutch examples in which the government aims to facilitate non-governmental actors to exploit public waterworks for the production of renewable energy. Using content analysis, we identify ten 'facilitation frame' elements. We find two configurations of elements: restrained facilitation and invitational facilitation, which both have their advantages, ambivalences and drawbacks. It is often unclear what governments want to achieve and what they have to offer in terms of facilitation. The (discursively) offered support, ranging from 'giving space' to 'creating beneficial conditions', is often elusive. We conclude that, to avoid deadlock, false expectations and the inactiveness of external actors, the government's communication should both enthuse and inform these actors about what they can expect. If, however, the potential, non-governmental initiators just lack the necessary capacity to act, there is only so much discursive framing can do. Then authorities should reconsider their 'facilitative' role.

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, the most encompassing shift in public administration in the last decennia is the shift from government to governance (Osborne, 2010; Pierre & Peters, 2000). The shift includes a shift from ‘hierarchies to networks’ and from government ‘command and control to negotiation and persuasion’ (Salamon, 2001: 1632–1634). In hybrid and dynamic network constellations, public agencies collaborate with a wide range of public and private actors to address today’s ‘wicked problems’ (Emerson et al., 2012; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016; Peters & Pierre, 1998; Rhodes, 1997).

In the wake of this development, governmental agencies also increasingly choose facilitation as a governance strategy (Kisby, 2010; Vigoda, 2002). Instead of producing public goods and services (commissioned) by themselves or in collaboration with others, governments try to entice non-governmental actors to take the lead in public service delivery. Authorities aim to ‘facilitate’ the actions of these non-governmental actors. This can be seen, for example, in governments’ plea for ‘active citizenship’ and ‘self-organisation’ of societal actors (Swyngedouw, 2005). Scholars speak of a ‘responsibilisation’ of non-governmental actors (Garland, 2001). There is ‘a shift in responsibility, a stepping back of the state and a concern to push responsibilities onto the private and voluntary sectors’ (Stoker, 1998: 21). This shift is clear, for example, in then-UK Prime Minister David Cameron’s plea for a ‘Big Society’ and for a state that solely acts to ‘facilitate, support and enable’ (Blunkett, 2003: 43; Taylor, 2007).

The aim of modern states to give non-governmental actors a more prominent role in the accomplishment of public value and public service delivery is also visible in the fields of planning, infrastructure development and sustainability (Francesch-Huidobro, 2015; Roodbol-Mekkes & Van den Brink, 2015). Public agencies increasingly turn to the market and to non-profit organisations for the creation of public goods (Westerink et al., 2017). They want to go beyond the traditional principal–agent relation in public–private partnerships (PPPs). Instead of procuring the public good or service, in our case sustainable energy generation at public waterworks, or commissioning market parties, governments want market parties to take the lead in the realisation and exploitation of such innovative infrastructure (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018). They expect ‘initiating leadership’ from non-governmental actors (Emerson et al., 2012; Westerink et al. 2016). This leaves authorities in a rather ambivalent position: they want something to be done but do not want to do it themselves or (fully) pay others to do it.

There is not much research yet into these governance processes in which the government acts, or aims to act, as facilitator (Westerink et al., 2017). In a lot of the ‘new’ governance practices that are frequently studied, such as PPPs, the government still acts as initiator, principal and/or the main financier. The literature that comes closest to the phenomenon at stake is the literature on metagovernance. Metagovernance is an

'attempt to govern interactive governance arenas without reverting too much to traditional statist governing tools based on command and control' (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2011: 2). Through metagovernance, the government ensures that 'self-regulated' actions of non-governmental actors are 'in line with the overall goals of the government' (Dean, 1999; Torfing & Triantafillou, 2011: 8). However, besides rather general and theoretical descriptions of metagovernance, there is relatively little research into the exact strategies the government exploits as a facilitator and how successful it is in doing this.

The energy sector is one of the sectors in which authorities are searching for new ways to relate to non-governmental, private and societal initiatives, especially when they are striving for a transition towards sustainable energy. The sector is characterised by rapid technological developments and more bottom-up and regional action. National and regional authorities are searching for the right responses to these developments, sometimes leading to adjusted regulatory frameworks, new policy instruments and collaborations. In our study, we investigate two Dutch cases in which the government chooses the role of facilitator as it aims to facilitate sustainable energy generation at public waterworks. The government, the owner of these waterworks, is in favour of this kind of innovative energy generation but is not willing to realise it itself, and is not willing or able to enforce it by way of regulation. Instead, the government tries to activate private actors to take the lead in this and tries to suffice with creating the right conditions for these actors to enable these initiatives (Frantzeskaki, Jhagroe & Howlett, 2016). A government that aims to facilitate non-governmental initiatives can use different strategies. One of them is discursive framing: enticing non-governmental actors to take action and legitimising the government's own inaction. In our study, we analyse this strategy in more detail.

We are interested in the configuration of frames used by a facilitating government; the variety of frames that the government uses in different situations; and the potential inconsistencies and ambiguities within these frames in relation to the government's role and resources. How does the government 'communicate facilitation', how does it persuade others to take action and justify its own restraint? We formulate our research question as: How do governments use discursive framing to activate non-governmental actors to produce public goods (in this case, energy from water)?

We conduct a comparative case study of two cases in which the national government aims to facilitate non-governmental actors to generate energy at public waterworks. We systematically analyse the policy documents on this topic to learn about the discursive (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational) frames that the government uses to activate a non-governmental actor to take action and to legitimise its own (absence of) action. In the next section, we discuss the relevant literature on facilitation and discursive framing. In Section 3.3, we present our research design, followed by a description of our two cases in Section 3.4. Section 3.5 includes our (comparative) analysis. We end with a conclusion in Section 3.6 and a discussion in Section 3.7.

### 3.2 THEORY

The role of government in governance networks is generally described as 'metagovernance', literally meaning the 'governance of governance' (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2011: 9). As metagovernor, the government mobilises the relevant actors, public and private, governmental and non-governmental, around a certain public problem and structures their interaction. The government creates a forum for horizontal interaction and collaboration between these actors and enables collaborative decision making and policy implementation. Metagovernance is a new 'light-touch form of government' (Stoker, 1998: 24), in which authorities do not revert to 'traditional statist governing tools based on command and control' (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2011: 2). Instead, the government uses, for example, institutional design, coordination, subsidy schemes, network and process management, or framing and storytelling to achieve its policy goals (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016; Salamon, 2001; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). The actual strategies employed by the government differ from case to case. In pragmatic terms, the government as metagovernor will be 'sometimes steering, sometimes rowing, sometimes partnering, and sometimes staying out of the way' (Bryson et al., 2014: 448).

The degree of government involvement in governance processes differs from case to case. One can make a distinction between hands-on and hands-off metagovernance (Sørensen, 2006). When the government conducts hands-on governance, it participates actively in the governance process as, for example, network manager (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016; Sørensen & Torfing, 2012). When the government chooses hands-off metagovernance, its involvement is limited to shaping the collaboration context by, for instance, formulating general policy goals or creating an institutional framework that is beneficial for the self-organisation of non-governmental actors (Haveri et al., 2009; Sørensen, 2006). If the government aims to 'responsibilitate' non-governmental actors to produce public goods and reduce its own role solely to facilitation, it has various policy instruments available, such as subsidies, open data and framing (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018; Westerink et al., 2017). In our study, we focus on how governments use framing to realise their goals.

#### **Discursive framing as an instrument of power**

Framing and storytelling are important instruments of hands-off metagovernance (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011; 2012). With 'persuasive' framing, the government mobilises relevant actors (Partzsch, 2009; Paschen & Ison, 2014: 1084) and with 'political, legal and discursive' framing, it sets the interactive arena in which the governance process takes place (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2011: 14). The government gives a certain meaning to a network of actors through framing and storytelling. It can influence the 'the main story underlying a network' and the way network members understand their efforts and goals

(Haveri et al., 2009: 542). Framing thus serves as a forceful hands-off way to influence self-governing actors (Sørensen, 2006). Many of the instruments and strategies that the government as facilitator uses are not new; they are just used in a new way. Subsidy schemes or institutional design, for example, are now used to activate non-governmental actors and support self-organisation for public value creation. This also holds for discursive framing.

Framing is a well-known instrument of power. Those whose frames are dominant are the ones in power (Foucault, 1991; Stone, 1997). Framing is sense making; through framing, a certain social reality is constructed: 'A frame is a perspective from which an amorphous, ill-defined, problematic situation can be made sense of and acted on' (Rein & Schön, 1993: 146). Authorities use framing to achieve their policy goals. Through framing, authorities influence what is considered a public problem, how problems are cognitively defined and experienced by the public (Schön & Rein, 1994). The frames that governments construct consist of 'a cluster of inextricably intertwined casual and normative beliefs' (Schön & Rein, 1994: xiii). The frames give meaning and a normative direction to people's thinking and acting (Schön & Rein, 1994). Government framing thus affects how people conceptualise an issue and act upon it (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Van Buuren & Warner, 2014: 1000). Paschen and Ison (2014: 1084) speak of 'persuasive' framing: the intentional use of language to influence opinion and behaviour around an issue.

A distinction can be made between diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing (Benford & Snow, 2000). Diagnostic framing refers to the identification and classification of a specific policy problem in terms of possible and relevant causes (Bekkers & Moody, 2011: 459). Diagnostic frames define what the problem is. Prognostic framing refers to the identification of possible and relevant solutions and approaches (Bekkers & Moody, 2011). Prognostic frames thus define how the problem should be dealt with. Motivational framing involves 'a rationale for engaging in collective action' (Benford & Snow, 2000: 617). Motivational frames mobilise the actors that should deal with the problems defined.

### **Discursive framing by the facilitating government**

The kind of diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames that authorities use depends largely on their policy goals. Both the preferred solution and the envisaged way to get there, including the task division between the different actors involved, influence the frames that authorities employ. When authorities, for example, take far-reaching measures to protect people from flooding, they will probably use diagnostic frames that stress the severity of the problem and prognostic frames that justify the measures taken (Warner & Van Buuren, 2011). If authorities choose not to act, they can use framing to downplay the issue at stake.

We expect authorities that aim for a facilitating role to use a particular way of discursive framing. Authorities whose aim is to facilitate perceive a public problem, an opportunity, any situation that might benefit from change. Instead of intervening themselves, they want other, non-governmental actors to take the lead in this change. The authorities themselves are willing to facilitate the actions of these external initiators. They do want something to happen, because they believe that it is in the public's interest, but they do not want to act as the main designer or financier of the action taken and do not fall back on traditional statist forms of government (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011).

We therefore expect facilitating authorities to use framing to legitimise their own abstention from action and to mobilise external actors to take action. More specifically, we expect that, using diagnostic frames, authorities will identify a specific situation that needs or merits change. The frames might refer to a public interest but will send the message that it is not (solely) a government issue. With diagnostic framing, the situation can be presented as a great opportunity for external actors (e.g., for private actors to make money). We expect prognostic framing to be used to propose certain actions to be taken by non-governmental actors. The government's role in the proposed solutions will be facilitative. With motivational framing, the suggested task division is legitimised by, for example, presenting it as a matter of course, a natural way of doing things. We expect the motivational frames to further emphasise the benefits for non-governmental actors and the government's reasons to help. An overview of our expectations regarding facilitation frames is presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Hypothesised characteristics of frames used by the facilitating government**

Type of frame	Characteristics of frame
Diagnostic frames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Identify situation that will benefit from change</li> <li>· Present problem as opportunity for external actors</li> </ul>
Prognostic frames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Propose actions that could be taken by external actors</li> <li>· Propose facilitative, modest role for authorities</li> </ul>
Motivational frames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Emphasise benefits for external actors</li> <li>· Elaborate the facilitation external actors will receive from the government</li> <li>· Present public-private role division as a matter of course</li> </ul>

We aim to unravel the facilitation frames that the government employs to realise its goals. A government that aims to solely facilitate is in a precarious position: it wants something to be done but does not want to do it itself or take full financial responsibility for others to do it. We wonder how the facilitating government manages the expectations of external actors about the government's input into the governance process. From previous research (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018; Westerink et al., 2017), we expect some ambiguity and inconsistency in the government's communication regarding its role and the resources it is willing to employ, and we try to unravel this in more detail.

### 3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

#### Case selection

The aim of our study is explorative because not much is yet known about how authorities in their new metagovernance role as facilitator use discursive framing. Because we want to gain in-depth knowledge about the specific configuration of frames, we conducted a comparative case study of two cases (Flyvberg, 2001; Yanow, 1996). We selected two Dutch cases in which the national government aspires to the role of facilitator of external initiatives in the field of sustainable energy production: the Afsluitdijk and Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant. The facilitation of energy generation at public waterworks fits in the trend towards multi-functionality of public infrastructure. Solar panels, for example, can be added to dikes or sound barriers alongside highways.

Compared to the wider population of multi-functional use of public infrastructure, our cases can be considered as extreme cases for different reasons. Non-governmental initiatives are not a matter of course in this sector. As further elaborated in Section 3.4, the envisioned places of action are publically managed and owned waterworks, with a legally anchored function to guarantee safety against floods. Renewable energy has never before been generated at these works on this scale in the Netherlands. The techniques used are innovative and not yet commercially exploitable. Such projects thus cannot be realised without government support. The government is not willing, however, to initiate these projects by procuring the technologies. It does, however, acknowledge the importance of developing such innovations and using the world-famous delta works to showcase these technologies to a wider audience. The facilitation of energy generation is thus not a straightforward act in these cases.

In the Netherlands, there are a couple of comparable energy-from-water projects at national level and multiple projects at local level conducted by the regional water boards. Our two cases can be considered exemplary for this population of projects in which energy from water is generated at public waterworks. We deliberately selected two cases that are comparable but different, making them fit for a search for differences in framing in differing situations. The sort of actors involved and the project content in the two cases are alike; the relation between the public and the private actors is one of the things that differ. Obviously, the design of our research does not allow for drawing generic conclusions. It will, however, enhance our understanding of the facilitating government and its use of discursive framing.

#### Method: content analysis of policy documents

To analyse the authorities' discursive framing in our cases, we conducted a qualitative content analysis of the relevant policy documents (Krippendorff & Bock, 2009), thus performing case study research in the form of in-depth desk research of written material (Yin,

1994). Content analysis of policy documents is recognised as an adequate method for analysing the use of frames and framing by authorities (Goffman, 1974; Paschen & Ison, 2014: 1084). In January and February 2016, we selected all the national government's documents that mention energy generation at the waterworks and give any information about the problems or opportunities at the sites and/or the actions that could be taken by different actors. Our selection consists of 24 documents: 13 from the Afsluitdijk case, eight from the Brouwersdam case and three documents that contain information about both cases. The documents were issued between 2007 and 2016 by the Cabinet of Ministers; the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment that serves as asset owner of the waterworks; the executive organisation that serves as the asset manager of the waterworks; and the project organisations comprised of national authorities and local authorities. See Appendix B for an overview of the selected documents.

Between February and August 2016, we carried out an inductive, qualitative coding process using the software ATLAS.ti (ATLAS.ti, Berlin, Germany). We read the documents closely and selected all the text that refers to energy generation at the sites. In the first step of our analysis, we then identified the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames in the selected text. Text that identifies a certain situation as a problem or opportunity (either for governmental or non-governmental actors), we coded as 'diagnostic frame'. Text that mentions possible solutions or actions that can be taken, we coded as 'prognostic frame'. We made a distinction between text referring to the role or actions of non-governmental actors and text referring to the role and/or possible actions that authorities (will or can) take. Text that explains why actors should or should not take certain actions, we coded as motivational frame.

In the second step of our analysis, we coded the selected diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames for a second time. Analysing the content of the text fragments, we identified ten facilitation frame elements—more about these in Section 3.5. See Appendix C for an overview of the number of text fragments coded.

In addition to the content analysis, we attended several public meetings and conducted 13 semi-structured interviews between February 2014 and June 2016. We selected respondents involved in one of the two cases working at the national water authority, regional authorities or private companies. See Appendix A for an overview of the respondents' affiliations and interview specifics. In the interviews, we discussed the motives, goals and ways of working of each respondent's home organisation and the collaboration with the other stakeholders involved. With the private actors, who are the target group of the authorities' discursive framing, we additionally discussed how they find the government's position and (lack of) action, the way the authorities frame and fill their role, and how they act upon that. We used these last interviews to learn more about the effects of the authorities' use of discursive framing.

### 3.4 CASE DESCRIPTION

#### Energy from water at the Afsluitdijk

In the first case, the Afsluitdijk, the national authorities are preparing a large renovation of the dam because, since 2006, the dam no longer meets the safety criteria. The asset owner, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, and the executive asset manager, RWS, want to give external actors the chance to seize the opportunity of this renovation to add functions, including energy generation, to the dam. Since 2005, local firms have had pilot installations for the generation of tidal and osmotic 'blue' energy at the dam, and they have the ambition to extend these installations. The national authorities support the local initiatives because they believe that this will secure local and national goodwill for the renovation. They facilitate the projects by, for example, joining the private initiators in thinking about the possibilities and easing the permit procedure. However, requests from the external initiators for more help and support—by the national authorities buying the generated energy or adjusting the planning of the renovation, for instance—go unanswered.

#### Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant

In the second case, Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant, national and local authorities including asset manager RWS plan to make a breach in a dam for water quality reasons. They see an opportunity for the installation of a tidal power plant in this breach. If turbines are installed in the water at the breach, energy can be generated from the tide. This plan has been in existence since 2010. At the start of a formal investigation in 2013, the authorities' hope was that the breaching procedure, a very costly undertaking, could be financed with the revenues from energy generation. Research showed, however, that this is not possible. The construction of a tidal power plant will rather cost extra money. Despite this, the authorities are in favour of a power plant. The asset manager has the ambition to contribute to sustainability and innovation with its asset. The authorities further believe that a power plant will boost the local economy and the reputation of the Netherlands as a forerunner in delta technology.

Asset manager RWS collaborates closely with two local municipalities and two provinces. They together set up a project bureau and conducted an extensive research programme and market consultation to involve possible partners and explore the technological, financial and organisational possibilities. Despite all their efforts and ambitions, the authorities are not willing to finance, commission and/or exploit a power plant themselves. They aim for non-governmental, private initiators. The authorities are now (October 2016) preparing an integrative tender; they hope to attract a private commissioner that will construct both the breach and the power plant. The authorities will, however, only pay for

the breach; the additional costs and risks of the power plant will be the responsibility of the private commissioner.

In both cases, the national authorities are thus in favour of sustainable energy generation at the waterworks but do not want to design, build, finance or operate the generation itself; instead, they want to facilitate external actors to do so. The cases thereby form a good example of the government in its new metagovernance role as facilitator. Discursive framing is one of the tactics used by the facilitating authorities to realise their goals. In the Brouwersdam case, the authorities are adopting a more active approach in searching for private initiators. We expect that discursive framing in this case is used mainly for the mobilisation of external actors. In the Afsluitdijk case, the authorities are more passively facilitating existing external initiatives. Our expectation here is that discursive framing is used mainly to justify their own facilitative role.

### 3.5 ANALYSIS

After the first round of analysis in which we selected the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational text fragments on energy generation on the waterworks, we conducted a second round of qualitative, inductive coding. In this second round, we searched for the elements, or building blocks, of the authorities' facilitation frames in the two cases. By an inductive process, going back and forth between the text and the codes and merging and splitting codes, we identified ten facilitation frame elements, presented in Table 3.2. The majority of these frame elements are present in both cases, but frequency and dominance differ. We discuss the identified discursive framing in the two cases, followed by a comparison of the two.

**Table 3.2 Facilitation frame elements**

Type of frame	Frame Element	Characteristics
<b>Diagnostic</b>	1. Visualisation	Visualises options; sums up possibilities and opportunities for development, e.g. sources of energy that could be produced; sketches (mostly bright) image of future situation.
	2. Promotion	Promotes the location and/or situation as extraordinary and unique; great chance; 'not to be missed' opportunity for external initiators.
	3. Consolidation	Describes established partnerships/collaboration between government and non-governmental actors and its achievements; refers e.g. to a good spirit or willingness to act.
<b>Prognostic</b>	4. Presentation	Factually presents the authorities involved and their agenda; sets out (past and future) process and role distribution. What have authorities done and what will be the next process steps.

**Table 3.2 Facilitation frame elements (continued)**

Type of frame	Frame Element	Characteristics
	5. Invitation	Explicitly invites or asks non-governmental actors to take initiative or become process partner; 'from shareholder to stakeholder'; possibly referring to mutual dependence.
	6. Demarcation	Explicitly demarcates authorities' capacity and/or willingness to act; draws a boundary around government action; e.g. by stating that government 'will solely facilitate'.
	7. Designation	Designates or assigns certain tasks or actions to non-governmental actors; e.g. by stating that something is a task for the market or a private actor's 'own responsibility'.
<b>Motivational</b>	8. Offer	Does a facilitation offer to potential non-governmental initiators; authority offers e.g. free use of the location, a specific service, assistance or cooperation by the government.
	9. Lure	Sums up concrete, private revenues for non-governmental actors in taking action; e.g. referring to growing chances to sell their product abroad if they realize this Dutch project.
	10. Justification	Justifies public-private role distribution; gives arguments or reasons for the previously formulated demarcation and/or designation; e.g. stating that 'market is better in innovation'.

## The Afsluitdijk

Table 3.3 gives an overview of the occurrence of the different frame elements in the documents on energy generation at the Afsluitdijk.

**Table 3.3 Facilitation frame elements in the Afsluitdijk case.**

Type of frame	Frame Element	Number of text fragments
<b>Diagnostic</b>	Visualisation	32
	Promotion	8
	Consolidation	8
<b>Prognostic</b>	Presentation	48
	Invitation	7
	Demarcation	10
	Designation	23
<b>Motivational</b>	Offer	9
	Lure	5
	Justification	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>

The dominant diagnostic frame element used in this case is visualisation. With visualisation, the government presents the opportunities of the situation. It sums up all the things that could be done (if somebody takes the initiative to do them), such as generating energy from wind, the tide or the salinity difference between salt and fresh water. The words 'can' and 'could' are repeatedly used in sentences such as 'The iconic status

[of the dam] could be enhanced by adding sustainable and innovative initiatives' ('De icoonwaarde kan worden versterkt door het toevoegen van duurzame en innovatieve initiatieven') (Ministerie van Infrastructuur & Milieu, 2011b: 6). The government further promotes the Afsluitdijk as a location by stressing its uniqueness and suitability for the realisation of innovative projects by, for example, stating that 'The Afsluitdijk is an icon of the past, present and future with potential for sustainability and innovation' ('De Afsluitdijk is een icoon van verleden, heden en toekomst met toekomstpotentie voor duurzaamheid en innovatie') (Rijksoverheid et al., 2014: 3). A future Afsluitdijk is sketched, accommodating highly innovative projects for renewable energy generation. In this vision, the current pilots have evolved into large-scale projects that contribute to the country's supply of sustainable energy.

The dominant prognostic frame elements in the Afsluitdijk case are presentation, designation and demarcation. The authorities involved and the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among them (who does what) are presented. The planning of the dam restoration is set out, as are the deadlines for external initiators to submit their projects so that their wishes can be taken into account in the planning process. The government's ambitions concerning energy generation are virtually absent in the texts, however. There is hardly any mention of the government's demands or desires. Both presentation and explanation are quite plain. The situation and the plans are presented as facts. Why things will happen in a certain way or who will benefit from this are not mentioned.

The government further clearly designates certain tasks to external actors by, for example, stating that 'the generation of sustainable energy is a task for private actors' ('Het opwekken van duurzame energie is een taak van marktpartijen') (Rijkswaterstaat, 2011: 6). In discussions about what the government will do with regard to the facilitation of sustainable energy generation, the most recurring phrase is 'giving space'. Often, it is not specified to/by whom and how this space will be given. In the text fragments, the subject is often unclear or the infrastructure itself is put down as the subject in, for example, stating that 'the dam offers great opportunities'. In a few documents, the national government's restoration work is put forward as creating certain opportunities. The formulation is vague, however, as in the sentence: 'The restoration possibly offers the opportunity for an approach in which there is a place for a wide range of ambitions' ('dat deze opknopbeurt mogelijk kansen biedt voor een aanpak waarin een breed scala aan ambities tot zijn recht komt') (Ministerie van Infrastructuur & Milieu, 2011a: 9).

Furthermore, all the proposed government actions are reactive; they presuppose action by external actors. The authorities will, for example, 'facilitate', 'accommodate', 'make possible', or 'create beneficial conditions for' the actions of others. The actions range from passively 'not making external action impossible' to more actively 'stimulating'. Overall, the authorities' stance is quite reserved; one of the text fragments states that the government will 'do its best to cooperate' ('inspannen om medewerking te verlenen')

(Rijksoverheid et al., 2014: 4). The government also clearly demarcates what it will not do, that is, generate energy, make financial investments or become a partner in exploitation.

The facilitation frame in the Afsluitdijk case is not very motivational. Some benefits for private initiators are sketched: with their projects on the Afsluitdijk, the companies will increase their international reputation and competitiveness. As stated, however, the authorities refrain from a clear 'facilitation offer' to support external actors in doing this. The most dominant motivational frame element is justification, but the government mostly does not go beyond just stating that generating sustainable energy is 'a task for private actors' or that the development of the Afsluitdijk is 'not just a government task'. In a number of documents, there is reference to an RWS management decision not to make financial investments in sustainable energy projects a justification. Table 3.4 shows the configuration of the different frame elements in this case.

**Table 3.4 Configuration of the facilitation frame in the Afsluitdijk case.**

Type of frame	Frame element	Characteristics
<b>Diagnostic</b>	Visualisation	Summing up all the innovative things that could be done on the dam.
<b>Prognostic</b>	Presentation	Presenting authorities, ambitions, planning, procedures, deadlines.
	Designation	Designating sustainable energy generation to external actors.
	Demarcation	Demarcating governments' support for sustainable energy generation.
<b>Motivational</b>	Justification	Assigning public and private tasks, referring to management decision.

The image that we deduce from the documents resonates with the interviews with the actors involved. The project manager from the national water authority speaks of a clear task division between national authorities, local authorities and non-governmental project initiators. The renovation is clearly the national government's first priority. Adding functions such as energy generation is allowed only if it does not interfere with the renovation process and the accompanying narrow budget and time schedule. The minister, however, repeatedly speaks of the Afsluitdijk as becoming an 'icon of the future', including innovative energy projects, but this does not result in a greater mandate or financial resources for the asset manager. The discrepancy between the expressed ambitions and the government's limited willingness to actually contribute to them leads to frustration on the private initiators' side. One of our respondents says about his interaction with the authorities: "I constantly have to keep their minds on the matter. I recently asked [the local governor]: 'Do these public ambitions still apply and, if yes, can you please act according to them?'".

### **Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant**

Table 3.5 gives an overview of the occurrence of the different frame elements in the documents on the governance of the Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant.

**Table 3.5 Facilitation frame elements in the Brouwersdam case**

Type of frame	Frame Element	Number of text fragments
<b>Diagnostic</b>	Visualisation	33
	Promotion	9
	Consolidation	23
<b>Prognostic</b>	Presentation	29
	Invitation	13
	Demarcation	5
<b>Motivational</b>	Designation	10
	Offer	19
	Lure	11
	Justification	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>

The dominant diagnostic frame elements in this case are visualisation and consolidation. The visualisation of opportunities is focused on the realisation of a tidal power plant (in contrast to the frame elements in the Afsluitdijk case that mention a wide range of ways to generate energy). The future Brouwersdam area is visualised as an icon of Dutch delta technology, with an ‘appealing appearance for the region, the country and the world’. Again, the word ‘could’ is repeatedly used to indicate both opportunity and conditionality (the presented options will take place only if somebody takes the initiative). The Brouwersdam and the surrounding area are promoted as a perfect location for the realisation of an innovative ‘low tide’ tidal power plant. The national and local governments conducted an extensive market and stakeholder consultation, and the results of this project are stressed to consolidate what has been achieved already. The existing energy generation and the willingness of non-governmental actors to participate in the realisation of a tidal power plant is repeatedly referred to, for example by stating that ‘private actors already formed a consortium’ and that there are ‘multiple initiatives’ for energy generation. The shared responsibility is made clear by sentences such as ‘There has been an intensive collaboration process (co-creation) between private constructors and the public project bureau. It turned into a shared search for viable solutions’ (‘Dat gebeurde in een intensieve samenwerking (cocreatie) tussen waterbouwers en het projectbureau Getijdencentrale Brouwersdam. Het werd een gezamenlijke zoektocht naar haalbare oplossingen’) (Projectbureau Getijdencentrale Brouwersdam, 2015: 2).

The dominant prognostic frame elements in the Brouwersdam case are presentation and invitation. The different authorities involved and their collaboration in the project bureau are presented, as also the past and future process steps. In contrast to the Afsluitdijk case in which external actors are invited to realise energy projects themselves, in this Brouwersdam case, external actors are invited to join the government in exploring the possibilities for energy generation by stating, for example, that ‘The private actors are

all very knowledgeable. They are asked to join in thinking about public conditions and a viable business case' ('De marktpartijen hebben allen veel kennis in huis. Aan hen wordt gevraagd om mee te denken over de publieke randvoorwaarden en over een haalbare business case') (Projectbureau Getijdencentrale Brouwersdam, 2014: 13). The invitation thus takes the form of a partner proposal; government and non-governmental actors are presented as equal partners.

The dominant motivational frame elements in the Brouwersdam case are offer and lure. The government's financial investments in water quality are presented as the generator ('flying wheel') of non-governmental actors' initiatives. The government offers to create 'beneficial conditions' for private initiators and says that it is willing to 'contribute' to the realisation of a power plant by, for example, providing a suitable location. As in the Afsluitdijk case, however, the government does not really explicate this facilitation offer to external actors. In some documents, the offer is even formulated as a question to potential external initiators: 'What can the involved authorities do so that private actors can create a viable business case? What conditions should be met?' ('Hoe kunnen de betrokken overheden er voor zorgen dat marktpartijen aan de Brouwersdam een goed project met een robuuste business case aan hebben? En in het bijzonder: aan welke randvoorwaarden moet [worden voldaan]?') (Rijkswaterstaat et al., 2013: 8). External actors are lured into participation by the enumeration of some private benefits, such as the development of a successful product for exportation and other commercial gains: 'The potential realisation of a tidal power plant contributes to the technological development of sustainable energy supply. In this case, private actors have direct revenues from selling energy. In addition, there are "green" investment opportunities for individual and institutional investors' ('Een eventuele uitvoering met een getijdencentrale, draagt bij aan de technische ontwikkeling van duurzame energievoorzieningen. Private partijen kunnen in dat geval directe baten uit de verkoop van energie genereren en er ontstaan "groene" beleggingsmogelijkheden voor particuliere en institutionele investeerders') (Ministerie van Infrastructuur & Milieu, 2014: 36). Table 3.6 shows the configuration of the different frame elements in this case.

**Table 3.6 Configuration of the facilitation frame in the Brouwersdam case.**

Type of frame	Frame element	Characteristics
<b>Diagnostic</b>	Visualisation	Numerating tidal power plant options and additional benefits.
	Consolidation	Stressing established cooperation, enthusiasm and willingness to act.
<b>Prognostic</b>	Presentation	Setting out followed path and steps to come.
	Invitation	Inviting external actors as partners in exploration and exploitation
<b>Motivational</b>	Offer	Offering facilitation, beneficial conditions, accommodation.
	Lure	Summing up some commercial gains for private actors.

The interviews confirm the findings of our content analysis. The national water authority’s project manager admits that the government had difficulty formulating its own goals regarding energy generation after it became clear that a power plant would not generate money to finance the restoration but rather cost extra money. The authorities repeatedly had to adjust their expectations about the private actors’ capacity to finance, realise and exploit a power plant. They had to alter their ideas about the potential amount of generated energy, possible revenues and the private sector’s willingness to run this project. Even now that an extensive subsidy scheme has been set up, it is uncertain whether private actors can take up the role the government envisages for them. The private actors involved display some frustration about the absence of clear public goals and about the mismatch between the authorities’ exhibited enthusiasm and their willingness to contribute financially. A private sector representative says in this regard: ‘I want to say to the government: “find the necessary budget (...) show your greatness and do it!” Private actors are not able to finance this. The matter is being shuffled back and forth. What we need is government steering, facilitation is not enough’.

**Case comparison: Afsluitdijk versus Brouwersdam**

To some extent, the discursive framing in the two cases is alike; in both cases, for example, the government uses visualisation to highlight the opportunities in the situations. However, especially in the prognostic and motivational frames, there are significant differences between the cases. Table 3.7 gives an overview.

**Table 3.7 Comparison of the facilitation frames in the two cases.**

Type of frame	Afsluitdijk	Brouwersdam
<b>Diagnostic</b>	Visualisation	Visualisation
		Consolidation
<b>Prognostic</b>	Presentation	Presentation
	Demarcation	Invitation
	Designation	
<b>Motivational</b>	Justification	Offer
		Lure
	<b>Restrained facilitation</b>	<b>Invitational facilitation</b>

The facilitation frame in the Afsluitdijk case is built mainly upon the elements visualisation, presentation, designation, demarcation and justification. We call this form of facilitation ‘restrained’. The authorities are in favour of the realisation of renewable energy projects at the location; they show this by mentioning the different opportunities in their policy documents and depicting a future in which these projects figure. They present their own work on the dam as a unique opportunity to help potential external initiators to plan their

activities. What the authorities are willing to contribute to the energy projects is limited, however; they act somewhat aloofly towards the initiatives. The authorities clearly demarcate their own limited willingness to act and, through designation, they make clear that non-governmental actors should take the lead in the realisation of energy projects or nothing will happen. Through justification, the government explains why this division of responsibilities is chosen.

The facilitation frame in the Brouwersdam case is constructed with the elements visualisation, consolidation, presentation, invitation, offer and lure. We call this form of facilitation 'invitational'. The authorities express their enthusiasm about a tidal power plant through visualisation of opportunities and a bright future including such a power plant. In this form of facilitation, the authorities present themselves as more cooperative; they actively invite non-governmental actors to join the governance process. Private actors are invited to share their knowledge, ideas and desires to come to a shared understanding of what is feasible at the Brouwersdam. Consolidation is another indicator of the collaborative character of this form of facilitation. By stressing the partnerships already established and enthusiasm generated, the authorities consolidate the collaboration. They make a facilitation offer to potential initiators and further try to mobilise them by spelling out possible gains for them if they take action.

### **Two facilitating logics: restrained and invitational facilitation**

There are different reasons why governments would want to facilitate the actions of external, non-governmental actors. External—public or private—actors can bring resources into the governance process that the government lacks, such as knowledge or money, especially in times of austerity (Roodbol-Mekkes & Van den Brink, 2015). Facilitation of external initiatives can in this way foster the delivery of public goods; public goals can be met that could not have been met otherwise (Skelcher, et al., 2005: 589). Facilitation of non-governmental initiatives can also lead to more innovative solutions to public problems (Van Buuren et al., 2015). It can further increase stakeholder involvement and strengthen (local) support for governmental measures (Skelcher, et al., 2005: 574).

To profit from these potential benefits of facilitation, both the authorities that employ restrained facilitation and the authorities that employ invitational facilitation try to entice private actors to take the lead in project realisation. The first part of the facilitation frame that they employ is therefore the same. The authorities inform external actors about the situation and the actions they themselves are undertaking in the region; they promote the location and try to engage external actors by visualising opportunities. The authorities build their framing upon the unique possibilities that they, as the owner of public waterworks, have available for other actors to realise. They further communicate their public task as an opportunity for other actors to join them in order to create more public value together.

The subsequent prognostic and motivational frame elements differ, however, depending on the form of facilitation. In Table 3.8, we summarise the two frame configurations.

**Table 3.8 Context and characteristics of restrained and invitational facilitation.**

	Restrained facilitation	Invitational facilitation
<b>Context</b>	There is a general opinion that the government has to enable public value creation, although there are no formal policy goals that oblige public actors to help private initiatives to succeed.	There is a public ambition to realize a certain goal, which cannot be realized without private help.
<b>Storyline</b>	Private initiatives are welcome but the public contribution for realizing them is necessarily limited and the focus of the public actors is upon their own assignment.	Private initiatives are indispensable for realizing the public assignment, thus as much public facilitation as possible will be made available.
<b>Structuring elements</b>	Initiatives are primarily the own responsibility of private actors. Limited public role as unavoidable due to legal and policy constraints.	There is a common interest between public and private actors. It is necessary to strengthen each other where possible, due to the innovative character of this endeavour.
<b>Narrative validity</b>	The narrative gives actors hope for public support, but the emphasis on its limited character generates doubts.	The narrative remains unclear about what public actors actually can do because the limitations are not defined.

In the case of restrained facilitation, the authorities emphasise their limitations in what they are able or willing to contribute. Unambiguously, they designate certain actions and responsibilities to non-governmental actions; through justification, they give an explanation for the envisioned role division. An advantage of this approach is that potential initiators know what they can expect. A possible downside of this restrained form of facilitation is that it is somewhat aloof; that external actors do not feel invited, nor sufficiently enthused or convinced about what the government has to offer to them in terms of support. Authorities might choose such an approach if they have little interest in project realisation. Another possibility is that they believe that external initiators will show up and succeed anyway; if authorities believe that private actors will realise their project without their discursive encouragements or support, the authorities can afford to adopt a restrained stance.

In the case of invitational facilitation, authorities are more involved, less aloof, but also less clear about their own ambitions and limitations. With this form of facilitation, authorities will probably arouse non-governmental actors' interest and willingness to participate. A possible danger is the emergence of a deadlock, in which government and non-governmental actors both expect the other to take the lead, as witnessed in the Brouwersdam case. Invitational facilitation can result in high transaction costs and false expectations, and can even harm the government's reputation as a trustworthy and reliable partner.

### 3.6 CONCLUSIONS

In the practice of politics and public administration, 'the narrative of collaboration between stakeholders' is becoming more dominant (Skelcher, et al., 2005: 573). Societal actors' self-organisation and a more modest, reactive, facilitative role for the government are hot topics (Bryson et al., 2014; Taylor, 2007). Despite this, however, there is relatively little research into governance processes in which the government assumes this facilitative role (Westerink et al., 2017). Our study shows that facilitation is not such a straightforward, easy act for the government as it might seem. Partnerships between government and non-governmental actors are not all about 'mother love and apple pie' (Dickinson & Sullivan, 2014; McLaughlin, 2004: 103).

Using content analysis of relevant documents, we identified ten facilitation frame elements: visualisation, promotion, consolidation, presentation, invitation, demarcation, designation, offer, lure and justification. We find that these frame elements combine into two forms of facilitation: restrained and invitational. The forms are constituted by a different set of frame elements and have their own origin, advantages and downsides. The two frame configurations can be seen as illustrations of more hands-off (restrained) and more hands-on (invitational) forms of facilitation.

We can conclude that facilitation and communication about facilitation is a balancing act between, on the one hand, enthusing external actors, consolidating the achieved collaboration, and enticing external actors to take the lead in public good production by summing up potential benefits and, on the other hand, being clear about what is expected from external actors and what the authorities themselves are willing or not willing to do; in other words, what the facilitation offer exactly entails. Too often it remains unclear what exactly the government has to offer to external actors. This facilitation offer, ranging from 'giving space' to 'creating beneficial conditions', is often elusive. Equally indefinite is what the authorities hope to achieve. Often, there is hardly any mention of what their goals are and what they are willing to do to reach these goals. Consequently, both restrained and invitational facilitation can cause unrealistic expectations on the external actor's part about what the government is actually willing and able to do to support their initiatives. Private actors' standard response is 'in for a penny, in for a pound'.

We conclude that, although not easily done, if governments aim to mobilise and facilitate non-governmental actors in the production of public goods, they have to communicate in both a restrained and an invitational way. Before that, however, an accurate assessment of the private actors' capacity to realise the envisioned public goals is essential. Discursive framing and an appealing facilitation offer, no matter how enticing, will not automatically lead to private action. If the potential initiators just lack the necessary capacity to act, there is only so much discursive framing can do. The government's facili-

tative role then needs to go hand in hand with more 'traditional' government roles, such as those of provider, contractor and/or financier.

### 3.7 DISCUSSION

Today's authorities increasingly explore new ways to collaborate with other actors to deal with pressing societal issues. The energy sector is one of the sectors in which the importance of bottom-up initiatives (both private and societal) is growing. Authorities search for ways to relate to these initiatives and to develop a new repertoire to deal with them. In our study, we analysed how authorities use discursive framing to invite non-governmental actors to generate energy at public waterworks. We explored new forms of public-private collaboration at the project level. In the envisioned task division, private actors initiate, realise and finance projects; authorities 'solely facilitate'.

Our cases reflect public authorities' more general search for public value creation (Bryson et al., 2014; Stoker, 2006). The Dutch national water authority tries to enable value creation by choosing a rather safe role, based upon facilitating non-governmental initiatives. Despite the shortcomings of this strategy, it sticks to this strategy because of legal, financial and political constraints. The cases that we studied reflect the need for public value pragmatism (Alford & Hughes, 2008). In this approach: 'the organization is open to the utilization of any of a variety of means to achieve program purposes, with the choice of these means focused on what is most appropriate to the circumstances, consistent with the important values at stake' (Alford & Hughes, 2008: 131).

From our analysis, the question arises as to whether the context in which public asset managers have to work allows for this form of pragmatism. After all, there are many regulatory barriers that make private involvement difficult; and, for public water authorities, it is difficult to provide a stimulating context for these types of initiatives because of their rather strictly delineated role and responsibilities. Regulatory adjustments to give asset owners and asset managers the incentive or even the responsibility to contribute to energy transition, and regulatory innovation to simplify and broaden the possibilities for private actors to use public works, seem to be logical steps to overcome the permissiveness of facilitation and to enable more pragmatism in facilitating bottom-up initiatives.



# 4

Government Facilitation of  
External Initiatives: How Dutch  
Water Authorities Cope with Value  
Dilemmas

## ABSTRACT

Water authorities search for new collaborations with nongovernmental actors, with the aim of facilitating societal initiatives. A comparative case study was conducted to analyze the value dilemmas faced by water authorities when they choose to facilitate and how they cope with these dilemmas. The study found that the most prevalent dilemma is between traditional democratic values and efficiency-related values. In the chosen solutions, the latter seem to prevail over the former. Casuistry, cycling and hybridization are common coping mechanisms. The study shows the potential of non-governmental initiatives in the water sector while also reflecting critically on dominant administrative values.

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## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

As in all sectors of public administration, the water sector has shifted from hierarchical and highly institutionalized forms of government rule towards a more collaborative approach (Fliervoet & Van den Born, 2017; Pierre & Peters, 2000; Termeer, Dewulf, & Van Lieshout, 2010). Water authorities increasingly collaborate with individual water users, communities, private actors and non-profit organizations to reach their policy goals (Pahl-Wostl, 2007; Watson, 2015). The involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process has become common practice in many countries (Koontz, 2014; Petts, 2007; Schoeman, Allan, & Finlayson, 2014). The involvement of non-governmental actors in other phases of the policy process, such as policy implementation and evaluation, is less prevalent (Mees et al., 2016).

Recently, however, water authorities have started to explore new, more encompassing forms of working with non-governmental actors (Edelenbos, Van Buuren, Roth, & Winnubst, 2017a). They advocate the self-organization of stakeholders and encourage non-governmental actors to take more responsibility for flood risk management, for example (Johnson & Priest, 2008; Nye, Tapsell, & Twigger-Ross, 2011; Watson, Deeming, & Treffny, 2009). Authorities aim to work with non-governmental actors as equal partners or even limit their own role to the facilitation of external actors' actions (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018). The initiating leadership in projects then lies with the non-governmental actors (Westerink et al., 2017). Pahl-Wostl, Jeffrey, Isendahl, and Brugnach (2011) speak of a new water management paradigm in which a new balance is set between bottom-up and top-down processes and in which narrow stakeholder participation is replaced by broad stakeholder participation.

Water authorities have a lot to gain in these forms of collaboration: embracing external initiatives may result in cost savings, generate public support, and lead to innovative solutions to public problems (Alexander et al., 2016; Nikolic & Koontz, 2008). But the authorities also have something to lose when they choose to facilitate external initiatives: they have to share discretion over the use of public authority and public funds with non-governmental actors (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006). This may result in administrative value conflicts (Van Buuren et al., 2015; Hood, 1991).

In traditional forms of water management, in which the government is the main initiator, financier and definer of the measures taken, classical, democratic values such as state sovereignty, public authority, legality and impartiality dominate. In alternative forms of collaboration in which the government facilitates external initiatives, other administrative values, such as customization, flexibility and effectiveness, are more important (Edelenbos et al., 2017b). Despite the wish for more collaboration with non-governmental actors, water authorities are also still expected to uphold the classical, democratic values.

Choosing to facilitate can thus lead to contradictory demands and value dilemmas for water authorities (Meijerink & Dicke, 2008). This study examines these dilemmas.

Existing research predominantly describes practices of stakeholder involvement initiated by government. Self-organizing initiatives that develop autonomously in society are much less studied (Mees et al., 2016). Despite growing scholarly attention to new forms of collaboration between state and non-state actors in the water sector, much is still unknown about the dilemmas encountered by water authorities when they choose to facilitate external initiatives, how they deal with these dilemmas, and with what result. These questions form the starting point of this study.

A comparative case study was conducted of two cases in which the Dutch national water authority, RWS, aimed to facilitate an external initiative. The Dutch water authority is an informative object of study because the Dutch water sector is traditionally strongly government-led, publicly funded, and focused on risk avoidance (Van Buuren et al., 2015). Collaboration with non-governmental actors is generally seen as a threat to decisive and uncompromised action (Warner, 2006). Recently, however, RWS started exploring the facilitation of societal and private initiatives (Frantzeskaki et al., 2016). The water authority wants to go beyond the principal–agent relationship common to formal public–private partnerships (PPPs) (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018). This leads to a situation in which many value dilemmas can be expected.

A comparative case study design was chosen to find the relation between different value dilemmas, coping mechanisms, and results. In the first case, the water authority accommodated the initiative of a non-profit organization to create a nature reserve. In the second case, the water authority searched for private initiators to realize and exploit a tidal power plant in a public dam. This selection covers two forms of facilitation: accommodating facilitation, in which the authorities react to an existing initiative; and invitational facilitation, in which authorities have a role in mobilizing external actors to initiate a project that the authority can subsequently facilitate (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2017). Therefore, the effects of different forms of facilitation can be identified.

In the next section, four common ways in which private-sector and civil society initiatives are accommodated worldwide in the water sector are briefly discussed. In the third section, the relevant literature on government facilitation is examined, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages for water authorities of embracing external initiatives. An overview is presented of three types of administrative values that can conflict in facilitation practices and different mechanisms employed by authorities to cope with these dilemmas. The fourth section presents the research design, and the fifth describes the selected cases. The next section discusses the analysis and case comparison. The final section closes the article with a discussion and conclusions.

## 4.2 FROM GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNANCE IN THE WATER SECTOR

In the government-led Dutch water sector, water management is perceived as a public task, and water authorities rely heavily on their duty of care (Kraak, 2011). Water security is publicly funded by taxes, ensuring full cost recovery. As in most countries, there is still a strong prediction and control regime (Pahl-Wostl, 2007), and water management is predominantly focused on risk avoidance (Van Buuren et al., 2015). Participation by non-governmental actors is often seen as a threat to decisive and uncompromised action (Warner, 2006). Recently however, new forms of collaboration with non-governmental actors are being introduced in the Netherlands. Gradually, and relatively late compared to other sectors and other countries, external actors are being admitted into the arena (Edelenbos et al., 2017a).

### **Policy instruments for the inclusion of non-governmental actors worldwide**

Other countries are generally more progressive than the Netherlands in terms of granting non-governmental actors an active role in the provision of services in the water sector. There are various instruments through which participation by private and societal actors is promoted worldwide. First, PPPs enable projects to be (partly) financed by private consortia. The PPP finance structure gives governments access to alternative debt and equity that traditional public (debt) finance cannot provide (Reynaers & De Graaf, 2014; World Bank Group, 2014). Second, viability gap funding is an instrument that enables funding by a combination of taxpayers' and users' payments. It reduces the upfront capital costs of pro-poor investments by providing grant funding, which can be used in the construction phase of a project (Farquharson, Torres de Mästle, Yescombe, & Encinas, 2011).

Third, in unsolicited proposals, private actors propose a PPP project to the government. Submissions are treated confidentially in their initial stages, but once the financial viability of the project has been demonstrated and the government declares it of national interest, the project is often put out to public tender, enabling open competition among other private consortia. Fourth, tax swaps allow companies to invest in projects proposed by local authorities and receive a tax reduction in the following years until the equivalent of the investment is achieved (Deloitte, 2014). Whereas the first two instruments are applicable mainly to private initiatives where a more traditional public commissioner–private consortium model applies, the last two can be used by societal actors such as NGOs, cooperatives, and local companies interested in making a contribution to their community.

### **Government facilitation of non-governmental initiatives and its benefits**

Government facilitation, as discussed in this article, can be seen as another governance instrument through which non-governmental initiatives are accommodated in the water sector. It combines elements of PPP and unsolicited proposals. In government facilitation, private or societal actors take the initiative to produce public goods or services, and the government facilitates this initiative. Ownership of the initiative lies (predominantly) with the non-governmental initiator, and there is no principal–agent relation in the sense that the government does not act as the commissioner of a project. Government facilitation exists in different forms and intensities (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). Authorities can for example actively entice non-governmental initiatives, or they can passively await such action. The amount and form of support can also differ; authorities might change rules and regulations in favour of the initiative and contribute financially, or they might solely provide a platform for non-governmental actors to meet and further develop their plans (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018).

Facilitation of non-governmental initiatives can have many benefits for authorities. It can enlarge the reservoir of available knowledge and financial and organizational resources, thereby complementing the strengths of the public sector. There can be efficiency gains (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006; Reynaers & De Graaf, 2014), and facilitation can increase productivity and public value creation (Zhang, Crawley, & Kane, 2015). Things can be accomplished that the government could not have done on its own. Embracing external initiatives can further generate public support and lead to more innovative solutions to public problems (Van Buuren et al., 2015; Wegerich, Warner, & Tortajada, 2014). The facilitated project can function ‘at arm’s length’ from centres of political authority; this may offer greater flexibility in decision making, resource acquisition, management, and accountability arrangements (Skelcher et al., 2005).

## **4.3 THEORY OF VALUE DILEMMAS AND COPING MECHANISMS**

### **Different (interpretations of) administrative values**

The administrative values in situations of government facilitation of external initiatives are analyzed using Hood’s (1991) distinction between three types of administrative values: theta, lambda and sigma. Theta values are democratic values; they secure an honest and fair governance process. Lambda values relate to quality; they are about keeping things robust and resilient. Sigma values are about being effective and efficient, keeping things clean and purposeful (Hood, 1991; Hood & Jackson, 1991). These three value types can serve as justification for different administrative doctrines. Many New Public Management practices are for example generally justified by the sigma values, efficiency and austerity. The values guide how administrations are organized, the role assigned to

the government, how public officials perform, what are understood as public goods, and what the government aims to achieve (Van Buuren et al., 2015).

Based on the literature on public–private collaboration and government facilitation – further elaborated on in the next section – Table 4.1 lists the administrative theta, lambda and sigma values that could be at stake in situations where government facilitates external initiatives. This overview is used to analyze the dilemmas confronted by the authorities in the cases because, in administrative reality, it is hard, if not impossible, to meet all three value types at the same time (Rutgers, 2008). The administrative values are not absolute; they overlap and may conflict (Koppenjan, Charles, & Ryan, 2008).

**Table 4.1 Relevant administrative values in situations of government facilitation of external initiative**

Theta values	Lambda values	Sigma values
Legality, rule of law, reliability	Quality, robustness, validity	Delivery
Equality, equity, impartiality, fairness, neutrality	Strategic clarity (in contrast to complexity)	Austerity, parsimony, thrift
Legitimacy, duty of care, right actor for the task	Government control, discretion over production	Efficiency, rapidness, productivity
Transparency, honesty	Security – avoiding risks	Flexibility
Democracy, responsiveness	Government reputation	Effectiveness
Representativeness, inclusiveness	Professionalism	
Primacy of politics, government authority	Government accountability	
Public interest, public money for common goods	Customization, tailor-made solutions	

Besides a differentiation between different types of administrative values, there can be various interpretations of the same administrative value. This variation in interpretation can lead to different evaluations of a governmental practice. In the governance literature, some authors mention the gains for democratic legitimacy of involving stakeholders and facilitating external initiatives (Lockwood, Davidson, Curtis, Stratford, & Griffith, 2010; Lupo Stanghellini & Collentine, 2008; Thaler & Levin-Keitel, 2016). They state, for example, that societal actors such as non-profit organizations are better than the government at identifying citizens' needs (Bode & Brandsen, 2014). Others authors, however, point out that involving non-governmental actors in traditional public services could harm democratic legitimacy (Skelcher et al., 2005; Swyngedouw, 2005; Taylor, 2007). The difference between these authors can be explained by the democracy model that they apply. Edelenbos et al. (2017) distinguish a representative, a participatory, and a self-organizing democracy model in this regard.

In the representative model, politicians govern on behalf of the electorate, uphold the primacy of politics, and are the first to decide on issues that impact society (Edelenbos

et al., 2017b; Held, 2006). This can be threatened if non-governmental actors enter the administrative arena (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Adherents to this model argue that government facilitation of societal initiatives clashes with the public imperatives of democracy (Skelcher et al., 2005). In the participatory model of democracy, citizens get the chance to take part in the policy- and decision-making process; politicians create the conditions for this participation process (Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Pateman, 1976). Adherents to this model advocate stakeholder involvement in government-initiated processes because it strengthens trust, support, and the legitimacy of government measures (Thaler & Levin-Keitel, 2016). In the self-organizing democracy model, social issues are as much as possible managed by voluntary and democratically self-governing associations. The government's role is to stimulate and reactively facilitate societal initiatives (Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Hirst, 1994). Adherents to this model assume that a focus on societal actors' self-organization, accompanied by a modest, facilitative role for the government, enhances democratic legitimacy.

Growing attention is being paid to this last model of democracy, in which co-production and self-organization have central roles (Mees et al., 2016; Voorberg, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2015). It is argued that, in current times of increasingly complex public problems (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016) and decreasing levels of political trust and voter turnout (Mair, 2005), there is a need for such forms of governance (Michels, 2011). In the practice of public administration also, there is a growing tendency to interpret democratic legitimacy more from a collaborative or participation perspective (Van Buuren et al., 2012). This perspective does not, however, fully replace traditional, representative notions of democracy. Especially on the national level, the idea of the primacy of politics is still very strong (Van der Steen et al., 2018). This means that alternative democratic notions lead to contradictory demands and value dilemmas for public authorities.

### **Possible value dilemmas in government facilitation of non-governmental initiatives**

A dilemma, meaning 'two propositions' in Greek (Hampden-Turner, 1990), is a special form of choice in which a complex issue manifests itself; it involves clashing or conflicting values (Klijn, Edelenbos, Kort, & Van Twist, 2008; Quinn, Fearman, Thompson, & McGrath, 1996). The literature suggests that several such values are to be expected in situations of government facilitation.

If facilitating authorities choose to support external initiative financially, in cash or in kind, non-elected actors gain discretion over the spending of public funds. According to some, this can cause a dilemma between the primacy of politics (a theta value) and delivery (a sigma value). Facilitating authorities no longer exclusively decide how public money is spent, what solution is chosen for a public problem, and who exactly benefits.

They, in other words, have to compromise on production, payoff, and preference discretion if they facilitate (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006).

Collaboration with, and facilitation of, non-governmental actors have an inclusionary aim; authorities aim to include external actors in the governance process. This has the potential of enhancing the theta values, inclusiveness and representativeness. But of course, not all external actors will be included; facilitation of certain actors inevitably excludes others (Alexander et al., 2016). Unorganized, vulnerable, or less educated actors, who are less capable of securing government support, are especially at risk of falling behind (Westerink et al., 2017). Government facilitation can thus also endanger theta values such as equality and representativeness. It favours certain actors and can lead to ignoring alternative solutions (Taylor, 2007).

The facilitation of non-governmental initiatives often requires customization: tailor-made solutions for a specific project. Customization is a lambda value. This can conflict, however, with theta values such as the state's legality, reliability and impartiality (De Graaf, Huberts, & Smulders, 2016). The theta value, transparency, can also be jeopardized when authorities and the facilitated external actors come up with tailor-made solutions behind closed doors. Facilitation can further harm the lambda value, strategic clarity. The involvement of multiple public and private actors leads to great strategic complexity (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Facilitated projects are less straightforward and could be structured less professionally compared to when the authorities do it themselves (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006). The lambda value, professionalism, could be jeopardized, depending on the quality of the process and its participants.

Facilitating external initiatives can further come at the price of diluted government control (a lambda value) and, despite expectations of lower implementation costs (a sigma value), it can also lead to higher transaction costs. Collaboration with non-governmental actors is often time-, resource-, and skill-consuming for the government (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Watson, 2015). There is a dilemma between flexibility and administrative values such as clarity, legal certainty, and decisiveness (Van Buuren, Driessen, Teisman, & Van Rijswijk, 2014). Authorities are also exposed to reputational vulnerability; they can be held accountable for things that are out of their hands. Other theta and lambda values that could be endangered in facilitated projects are government authority, legitimacy, and accountability in the public sphere (Skelcher et al., 2005). Finally, there is a risk of diminished administrative capacity; the less an authority performs certain actions itself, the less capable it will become of doing them (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006), and in the long term less capable of judging and monitoring their quality.

### **Coping with value dilemmas**

When a dilemma between values emerges in administrative reality, a trade-off sometimes has to be made (De Bruijn & Dicke, 2006). Seeking a trade-off is not, however, the only

way public professionals can deal with a value dilemma (Koppenjan et al., 2008). Building on work by Thacher and Rein (2004) and Stewart (2006), Steenhuisen and Van Eeten (2008) distinguish six alternative coping mechanisms: cycling, firewalls, casuistry, hybridization, incrementalism and bias.

In cycling, public organizations address conflicting values sequentially over time. Building firewalls means that conflicting values are assigned to different departments; the values are decoupled, and each department is made responsible for realizing only one of the values (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008). Casuistry entails public officials making decisions for each particular value conflict on the basis of their experiences in similar cases (De Graaf et al., 2016). In hybridization, conflicting values coexist in different policies or practices. This occurs, for example, when additions that reflect different values are made to existing policies (De Graaf et al., 2016). Incrementalism means that value conflicts are mitigated by incremental changes, for example small norm deviations. In bias, certain values are internalized in the organization through the dominant discourse, for example by a strong emphasis on 'safety first' (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

**Table 4.2 Typology of coping behaviour from Steenhuisen and Van Eeten, 2008, p. 148**

Coping type	Explanation of what happens in a value conflict
Cycling	Dividing attention on multiple values sequentially over time
Firewalls	Separating institutions committed to different values
Casuistry	Assessing priorities case-by-case among values on a routine basis
Hybridization	Letting policies or practices coexist with different value bases
Incrementalism	Mitigating conflicts between values with small stepwise changes
Bias	Favouring certain values over others through dominant discourses

Table 4.2 gives an overview of the coping mechanisms. The research on which Steenhuisen and Van Eeten's (2008) typology of mechanisms is based is aimed mainly at public organizations in general, not at authorities, with the aim of facilitating non-governmental initiatives, and not specific projects with a limited time span as in this research. It is believed, however, that the typology can help elucidate the behaviour of facilitating authorities when they are confronted with value dilemmas.

## 4.4 METHODOLOGY

To answer the research question, comparative case-study research was conducted (Yin, 1984), with the aim of gaining in-depth knowledge of complex situations. This entailed studying a small number of cases in detail to fully understand the situations in all their complexity (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2001). The two-case comparison re-

vealed the relation between different value dilemmas, coping mechanisms, and results. The cases were selected deliberately, by strategic sampling. Because of the research design, the study will not lead to direct generalizability or ready-made solutions to public problems (Hufen & Koppenjan, 2015). It does, however, elucidate new governance arrangements in the water sector.

### **Case selection**

Two cases were selected in which the Dutch national water authority aimed to facilitate non-governmental initiatives: Marker Wadden and the Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant. In the first case, the water authority chose to facilitate an environmental NGO's plan to create marsh islands; in the second case, the authority aimed to facilitate a private consortia initiative to build and exploit a power plant in a public waterworks. The envisioned form of collaboration in the cases is novel in the sense that, in the past, the authorities would probably have designed and financed the projects, put them out to tender, and commissioned only their construction, limiting the private-sector role to that of the 'hired hand'. Recently, authorities have been looking for alternative task division and are delegating the service provider role more and more to the private sector.

Both cases related to multifunctional use of public assets; water management functions (for safety and for water quality) were combined with, respectively, nature creation and energy generation functions. Government involvement in the projects was indispensable because the projects related to public assets and because the external initiators could not succeed without governmental support. The water authority encountered various dilemmas that it tried to tackle with different institutional, relational and regulatory arrangements. This makes the cases fit for the research aim. Furthermore, the case selection covers two forms of facilitation, allowing exploration of whether and how dilemmas and arrangements differ depending on the form of facilitation.

### **Data collection**

The investigation of documentation relating to the Brouwersdam case started in October 2013. An important part of the investigation was an extensive document analysis of policy documents, news articles, and reports on market consultations. The research team conducted 14 semi-structured interviews with the water authority's project manager, representatives of the other national and local authorities involved, private actors and local stakeholders. Several stakeholder and market sounding meetings were also observed.

Research on the Marker Wadden case started in October 2015, also with an extensive document analysis. Among other things, a large number of documents disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act (*Wet openbaarheid van bestuur*, 1991) containing the communication between the government and the external initiator and between different government departments were analyzed. Eight semi-structured interviews were

conducted with representatives of all the national and local authorities involved and the external initiator, Natuurmonumenten. The Appendices A and B give an overview of the documents and interviews used in the analysis.

### **Data analysis**

To gain insight into the value dilemmas faced by the authorities and the coping mechanisms they employed to deal with these dilemmas, the process followed in each case was reconstructed using the collected documents. The decisions made by the authorities in each case – and their timing – were identified, and an overview prepared. In the interviews that followed, the research focused on these decisions. The respondents were asked why certain choices were made, what alternatives were considered, what the pros and cons were of the options available, and how they evaluated the outcome. The respondents were further explicitly asked about the dilemmas and difficulties encountered in terms of the facilitation of, and collaboration with, the non-governmental actor(s). Case-specific situations and government facilitation in general were discussed, and the respondents elaborated on the potentials and pitfalls of this governance strategy. The identified decisions and dilemmas were coded using the list of theta, lambda and sigma values (see Table 4.1) to determine which dilemmas qualified as a value dilemma. The selection of the dilemmas for further analysis was guided by the respondents' judgements of the value dilemmas that they perceived as the most important, pressing, urgent, and/or typical of government facilitation situations.

## **4.5 CASE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Marker Wadden**

In the heart of the Netherlands lies a large freshwater lake, created in 1930 by enclosing a sea inlet. The southern part of this lake is called the Markermeer. The Markermeer barely has natural shores; some compare it with a bathtub, and it is relatively shallow. Sediment that had accumulated on the bottom of the lake was churned up by the wind and waves, making the water very turbid. The deterioration in water quality had a severe impact on the flora and fauna in the area.

Over the years, there were numerous programmes, research projects and policy plans to deal with these problems. Most of them stalled because the authorities were not willing or able to finance the necessary interventions. In 2012, a market consultation was initiated, searching for cost-effective measures to create a future-proof ecosystem in the Markermeer area. Three private consortia came up with plans, with estimated costs ranging from €282 million to €1194 million. At the same time, a Dutch non-governmental organization for nature conservation, Natuurmonumenten, presented a plan for the

Markermeer to the government. It proposed to create a marsh, built from the silt sediment accumulated at the bottom of the lake. Estimated costs were €75 million for the first 1000 ha of marsh. The project was named Marker Wadden.

In 2011, Natuurmonumenten was granted a €15 million subsidy for the Marker Wadden project from one of the Netherlands' largest lotteries. Natuurmonumenten asked for an additional €30 million financial contribution from the government. The prevailing situation at the national government was fertile ground for Natuurmonumenten's proposal. There were pressing environmental issues at the Markermeer, but the government did not have the resources for an all-encompassing plan. Natuurmonumenten brought a well-developed, manageable plan and €15 million of its own resources to the table. Stimulating non-governmental actors to take the lead in solving public problems was an important goal of the government, and this project fitted this vision.

After internal discussions, two ministries decided to contribute €15 million each. Because of concerns about Natuurmonumenten's capacity to manage such a large project, it was decided that the national water authority RWS would join Natuurmonumenten in a collaborative executive organization and would execute the tendering process. To avoid allegations of state aid, a unique, open invitation was sent to private and societal actors to become partners in the project. Interested actors had to show their commitment by co-investing a minimum of €5 million. Because of this high entry requirement, only the province of Flevoland was able to step in.

In 2014, the work was commissioned to a private consortium, and by 2016 the construction work had started. After the creation of the first island in 2016, Natuurmonumenten was responsible for raising the funds needed to complete the first project phase with the creation of four more islands. Local and national authorities contributed another €14 million, other private and societal actors €11 million. Table 4.3 gives an overview of the characteristics of the cases, including the roles and aims of the different actors involved.

### **Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant**

The Brouwersdam, constructed in 1971, is one of the world-famous Dutch delta works. The dam fully closes off the water behind the dam from the tide. This led to a deterioration in water quality; low oxygen levels caused the disappearance of flora and fauna; and the lack of tide led to accumulation of sediment on the lakebed. To improve water quality, as dictated by European Union legislation, the government developed a plan to partly reopen the dam and restore estuarine dynamics in the water behind. Making a breach would be very costly, but, thanks to the increasing potential of tidal energy generation, in 2010 the idea emerged to realize a tidal power plant in the future breach that would contribute financially to the construction of the breach.

In the first phase of the project, in 2013, a joint project bureau, composed of the national water authority RWS, two provinces and two municipalities, was installed to

investigate the feasibility of a breach, including a power plant. From the start, the intention was that private actors would design, build, finance, maintain and operate the plant. Because of the many uncertainties regarding the business case for this investment, the project bureau started an extensive, pre-competitive dialogue and fact-finding process with the market. At the end of 2013, there were dialogues, both public and confidential, between the authorities and the interested companies. A range of private actors, such as engineering companies and tidal turbine constructors, participated. It became clear that a power plant would not lead to the hoped-for revenues to cover the costs of the breach; on the contrary, realizing a power plant would result in additional costs. However, enthused by the conversation with the private and societal actors and convinced of the additional benefits of a power plant, such as a positive impact on the local economy, the investigation continued.

In a second phase of the project, in 2014, four private consortia were selected and financially compensated to further optimize their plans. Parallel to the market consultation, one of the provinces joined an EU-funded project researching the best possible technique to generate tidal energy at the Brouwersdam. The results were made available to the market. Through the whole process, the authorities involved highlighted the collaborative, public–private nature of the process, speaking of co-creation. The authorities invested substantial resources, time, energy and manpower in the consultation, while maintaining their stance that the market ‘has to do it’ and the government ‘will solely facilitate’. The recurring government message was that the aim was to stimulate the market to come up with an innovative proposal and a feasible business plan.

In 2016, in the third phase of the project, the national water authority started preparing an integrative, concession-based tender for making the breach, including the power plant. According to this plan, the government would pay only for the breach. The winning consortium would be responsible for the design, financing, maintenance and exploitation of the power plant, therefore bearing all performance, financial and commercial risks. The government planned to facilitate the private initiative by providing several subsidies to the winning consortium and by offering compensation for design costs to the private consortia participating in the design and tendering phase. The plans to realize a power plant are currently on hold. Public and private stakeholders await further political decision making on partly reopening the dam, which is a precondition for a power plant. To date (July 2017), there is insufficient public willingness to finance this reopening. The decision has been postponed until after the formation of a new government, after the national elections of March 2017.

**Table 4.3 Case characteristics of Marker Wadden and Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant**

	Marker Wadden	Brouwersdam
<b>Physical project content</b>	100 ha archipelago of marsh islands in freshwater lake	Tidal power plant in breach in primary flood defence dam
<b>Environmental urgency</b>	Medium urgency, deteriorating flora and fauna, sediment accumulation	No immediate urgency for power plant
<b>Administrative history</b>	Decennium of plan making, policy development and research	Decennium of investigation into possibility of power plant
<b>Initiative and initiator</b>	NGO took initiative to create archipelago and asked the government for help	Public authorities invited private actors to participate in realization of power plant
<b>Form of government facilitation</b>	Accommodating	Invitational
<b>Government's aim</b>	Support external initiative, benefit from additional funds	Financially enable breach in dam, support (local) business, support renewable energy generation
<b>Aim of non-governmental shareholder(s)</b>	Realize appealing project for (future) members	Profit making
<b>Stance of non-governmental shareholder(s)</b>	Active, eager to act	Awaiting
<b>Novelty of governance arrangement</b>	Novel, collaborate, public–private creation of new land	Novel, public facilitation of private use of public infrastructure
<b>Drivers of successful realization</b>	Resoluteness of NGO; attractive project for both the NGO and government; willingness to innovate	Strong public–public collaboration and enthusiasm
<b>Barriers to successful realization</b>	Difficulty finding additional participants and funding	Limited public willingness to contribute financially
<b>Progress (July 2017)</b>	First marsh island created, funding for four more islands secured	No political willingness to finance breach, which is a precondition for the power plant

## 4.6 ANALYSIS

### Marker Wadden

#### *Dilemmas in the Marker Wadden initiation phase*

The first dilemma in the Marker Wadden case became manifest when Natuurmonumenten presented its plan to the government. The government had just initiated a market consultation, but Natuurmonumenten decided not to participate officially in this consultation because it did not want to comply with the accompanying terms and conditions. The authorities saw the benefits of Natuurmonumenten's plan. It was, among other things, substantially cheaper than the proposals of the private consortia that did apply for the

market consultation. The situation can be understood as a dilemma between the theta values, legality and reliability, and the sigma values, delivery and austerity. As Natuurmonumenten did not comply with the market consultation terms, it was not operating on a level playing field with the private consortia that did comply. Nevertheless, the authorities rated Natuurmonumenten's proposal as 'too good to ignore' and decided to include it in the consultation's results. In terms of coping, the authorities applied casuistry (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008); the characteristics of the NGO's initiative persuaded the authorities to make an exception.

Natuurmonumenten contributed €15 million and requested another €30 million from the national government. This created a dilemma between the theta values, reliability and primacy of politics, and the sigma values, delivery and austerity. The economic crisis had hit, and there had been budget cuts in nature development. The government did not have the money to realize a large-scale project on its own, and it was therefore happy with Natuurmonumenten's initiative and funds. But it had difficulty finding the requested €30 million. The entire available budget had been assigned to other policy plans. Eventually, the ministries involved decided to revoke and reallocate money previously assigned to the provinces for nature development.

Another dilemma emerged when the government decided to collaborate with Natuurmonumenten and contribute €30 million to this project without conducting a public tendering procedure first. This could harm the government's impartiality, a theta value. The authorities dealt with this by publishing an open call for expressions of interest in joining the project. The entry requirements were steep, however – participants had to contribute at least €5 million, and thus no other non-governmental actors joined. Besides the open call for expressions of interest, the authorities prevented unlawful state aid by not financing more than half of the total project costs and demanding that any possible revenues be reinvested in the project. Fearing that they are neglecting public values in collaborations, public authorities often introduce rules and regulations (Koppenjan et al., 2008).

The authorities made more tailor-made agreements with Natuurmonumenten. This customization, a lambda value, is often indispensable in such an unconventional public-private collaboration. There can be a tension, however, between customization and the theta values, equality and transparency. A group of landowners filed a complaint about non-transparent decision making. Under the Freedom of Information Act (Wet openbaarheid van bestuur, 1991), the government had to disclose almost all its communication with Natuurmonumenten.

### ***Dilemmas in the planning and design of Marker Wadden***

There was internal discussion within the government about the organizational form of the collaboration with Natuurmonumenten. Should the government transfer the €30 million contribution to the NGO; should the NGO transfer its budget to the government and make

it a state-owned project; or should they form a collaborative project organization and work together as equal partners? Joining the project would cost the government more money (in time, energy, manpower and so on) and affect the sigma value, austerity. Eventually, it was decided to form a joint project organization to safeguard lambda values such as quality, government control and government reputation. By joining and not only facilitating the project, the authorities hoped to have a positive effect on the project outcomes. The authorities also decided, at the expense of austerity, to lead the tender of the construction work, thus securing the relation established with the market. In terms of coping, this approach can be labelled hybridization: the authorities allowed the coexistence of practices with different value bases (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

The government's project goal (improving water quality by reducing mud accumulation) and Natuurmonumenten's goal (creating a nature reserve) overlap but are not identical. The authorities involved had some difficulty safeguarding their project goals and indirectly the public interest (a theta value). It proved not to be feasible to make the government's financial contribution contingent on the achievement of clearly defined and measurable project outcomes. Therefore, the authorities refrained from that. To secure some other public goals, such as innovation and knowledge development, the authorities set up (and partly financed) a parallel learning programme. This is an example of erecting firewalls; different sections of the organization now safeguarded different values (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

Natuurmonumenten voiced its concerns about the possibility that the government could withdraw its financial contribution after future elections and the formation of a new government. The NGO proposed to secure the money by lodging it in an external bank account. This caused tension between the primacy of politics, a lambda value – democratically chosen political bodies should control the spending of public funds – and delivery, a sigma value – the NGO would not continue the project without securing the money. The authorities gave in, and the external bank account was created. They applied the coping mechanism of casuistry in deciding on this solution in this particular case (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

### ***Dilemmas in the creation and exploitation of Marker Wadden***

In the realization phase, the government encountered some new dilemmas. The water authority RWS, the executive organization, normally follows standardized working methods and procedures. This secures legality, a theta value, and efficiency, a sigma value. Some of these methods and procedures proved to be a hindrance in the Marker Wadden project. The project organization also dealt with this dilemma by casuistry (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008). The organization decided, for example, to bypass the RWS tender board, a board that gives binding advice about the tendering approach. Instead, it established another tender board with a more limited mandate. Another example of casuistry for customization is the changes made regarding the software that RWS normally works with

to track project progress and financing, which Natuurmonumenten could not access. The project team therefore now works with self-designed systems, custom-made for the Marker Wadden project. The customization ( $\lambda$ ) is aimed at enhancing delivery ( $\sigma$ ).

RWS further experienced its dependence on the external initiator, Natuurmonumenten. The two parties agreed that the NGO was responsible for raising the additional funds necessary to finalize the project. The authority found it not legitimate (a  $\theta$  value) to engage in this task. When Natuurmonumenten had difficulty raising these funds, endangering project delivery (a  $\sigma$  value), the government helped out, and different authorities agreed to make additional financial contributions. This coping mechanism can be labelled incrementalism; with small, stepwise adaptations conflicting values were mitigated (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

Table 4.4 gives an overview of the value dilemmas, coping mechanisms and solutions chosen in the different phases of the Marker Wadden project. A number of trends can be observed. The most recurring dilemma is between democratic ( $\theta$ ) values and delivery ( $\sigma$ ) values, and in a majority of situations the  $\sigma$  value seems to prevail in the chosen solution. Nevertheless, the  $\theta$  value was not fully rejected, as authorities chose an arrangement in which delivery or austerity took priority but at the same time the  $\theta$  value at stake was guaranteed to a certain degree. It can also be observed that, when  $\lambda$  values such as quality and professionalism were jeopardized too much, authorities chose to take a more dominant, no longer facilitative role – for a specific project phase – at the expense of austerity, a  $\sigma$  value. An example of such a choice is RWS' decision to take care of the tendering process, driven by doubts about Natuurmonumenten's capacity to organize it.

In this case, the authorities responded to an external initiative, and this led to a reactive way of working. It included finding instant, custom-made solutions in reaction to unexpected situations. This approach seemed to work in this case; the actors involved are happy with the results to date: the first marsh islands have been created. But the process to arrive at this result required significant effort, transaction, and coordination costs for the government. This could be because this form of collaboration with a societal partner is relatively new for the water authority. Future projects could make use of developed arrangements as a blueprint and require fewer government resources for their preparation. In that case, the resources used could be seen as an investment and part of a learning curve to adapt to this new role. But if every new collaborative project is as resource-intensive, it is not certain that the authorities will find it worthwhile to continue accommodating external initiatives.

Another point for consideration is the long-term consequences of this way of working. The three private consortia that submitted their plans at the government's invitation were sidelined the moment Natuurmonumenten showed up. This could harm the government's relation with market parties and weaken the government's credibility.

**Table 4.4 Value dilemmas and chosen solutions in the Marker Wadden case**

Situation	Value dilemma	Coping mechanism	Authorities' choice, outcome
<b>Initiation phase</b>			
Initiator does not comply with market consultation terms	Legality (theta) vs. austerity (sigma)	Casuistry	Austerity, proposal included in consultation result
Initiator requests substantial, public, financial contribution	Reliability (theta) vs. delivery (sigma)	Casuistry	Delivery, budget reallocated
Financial contribution without public tender	Impartiality (theta) vs. delivery (sigma)	Hybridization	Middle way, open call for participation
Formal complaint about non-transparent decision making	Transparency (theta) vs. customization (lambda)	Cycling	Transparency, under Freedom of Information Act
<b>Planning and design phase</b>			
Discussion about organizational design of collaboration	Quality (lambda) vs. austerity (sigma)	Hybridization	Quality, government project partner, and contracting authority
Public goals do not fully match external initiator's goals	Public interest (theta) vs. delivery (sigma)	Firewalls	Delivery, public goals in separate programme
Initiator fears withdrawal of public financial contribution	Primacy of politics (theta) vs. delivery (sigma)	Casuistry	Delivery, project budget in external bank account
<b>Realization and exploitation phase</b>			
Standardization does not match with project	Legality (theta) vs. customization (lambda)	Casuistry	Customization, project-specific procedures and methods
Authority dependent on initiator's search for further funding	Legitimacy (theta) vs. delivery (sigma)	Incrementalism	Middle way, authority supports initiator in search for funding

## Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant

### *Dilemmas in the Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant initiation phase*

In the initiation phase of the Brouwersdam project, the authorities actively searched for private initiators and other societal actors willing to participate. This caused several dilemmas. First, the involvement of a large number of actors can lead to a complex and time-consuming process. Strategic clarity (lambda) and efficiency (sigma) can be jeopardized. It does, however, enhance inclusiveness (theta). In this case, the authorities categorized stakeholders and shareholders. Selections of them were invited to specific parts of the consultation, with a focus on private actors who were expected to provide the necessary private funds and information. In terms of coping, the authorities applied cycling. By initially inviting all interested actors and in later sessions making a selection, they applied different values sequentially over time (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

Part of the initiation phase was an extensive, precompetitive market consultation. In some cases, private actors wanted to share information only behind closed doors. This caused a dilemma between the theta values, legality and impartiality, and the sigma values, delivery and effectiveness. Confidential dialogues with a selected group of private actors could give the latter unfair advantage over their private competitors. But these dialogues were essential for the project's progress. The authorities found a middle ground in disclosing as much information as possible but keeping sensitive competition information confidential. This can be typified as hybridization: the coexistence of practices with different values bases (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

Another dilemma emerged in this initiation phase. The authorities aimed to entice private actors to take the lead in the realization of a power plant, among other things by stressing the governmental support that private initiators would receive. This hopefully would enhance project delivery, a sigma value. But the authorities also had to be transparent (a lambda value) about their own limited capacity to contribute to a power plant and their desire to 'solely' facilitate. In the Brouwersdam case, the authorities seemed to focus on enthusing rather than downplaying expectations. A potential unintended consequence was an inactive, awaiting market that expected the government to take the lead (and as a consequence, no private delivery at all). In terms of coping, the authorities applied the bias mechanism: they discursively focused on the (private) benefits of realizing a power plant (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

It was uncertain whether the public budget would become available to realize the breach in the dam, which was a precondition for the private realization of a tidal power plant. Despite this uncertainty, the authorities started the market consultation process. There was a dilemma between reliability (theta) and government reputation (lambda) versus delivery and flexibility (both sigma). If no public budget became available after all, the private actors would be disappointed, and the government's reliability and reputation would be harmed. But if the budget did become available, the consultation findings would contribute to the quality of the project preparation and speed up its implementation.

#### ***Dilemmas in the planning and design of the Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant***

The main dilemma for the authorities in the planning phase of the Brouwersdam project was that they wanted a tidal power plant to be realized (delivery, a sigma value), but at minimal public risk and costs (austerity, also a sigma value). With the planned tendering of a concession, the authorities tried to entice private actors to realize and exploit the power plant. The winning consortium would receive a government payment only for the breach; the consortium itself would have to finance the power plant, with a limited number of subsidies, such as the subsidy for generating renewable energy. This is another example of coping by hybridization: the authorities aimed to realize both delivery and austerity by

focusing on private responsibility supplemented by public subsidy (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

The design costs in the competition phase proved to be too high for the private actors. This endangered the sigma value, delivery. One of the authorities involved therefore decided to reimburse part of the design costs of the power plant if private actors lived up to set expectations. But this arrangement came at the cost of the sigma value, austerity. The authorities applied casuistry as coping mechanism: the developments in the case led them to change their strategy (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

***Dilemmas in the realization and exploitation of the Brouwersdam Tidal Power Plant***

Because of its innovative nature, potential private initiators had difficulty attracting investors for this project. This again created a dilemma for the authorities between legality (theta) and customization (sigma) and between austerity and delivery (both sigma values). As stated, the authorities wanted a tidal power plant to be realized at minimum public cost. To reduce the risk of private initiators' not finding the necessary funding and the power plant not being realized, the authorities set up an active support scheme for potential private initiators. They actively searched for subsidy possibilities; one of the provinces lobbied national and European bodies to increase financial support for the power plant. In terms of coping, this could be labelled firewalls: the authorities divided tasks in such a way that especially the local authorities helped the private actors find financial resources (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

The fact that a privately initiated tidal power plant would be heavily subsidized caused another dilemma. Was not a small group of private actors benefiting disproportionately from public money? This can be understood as a dilemma between public interest and impartiality, theta values, and, again, delivery, a sigma value. The authorities tried to deal with this dilemma by stressing that the private initiators needed to invest a substantial amount themselves. Another way of coping with this dilemma was to frame private benefits as also being public benefits. 'The power plant will be an international showcase attracting a lot of visitors to the region' was the government's message. This resembles the coping mechanism cycling: the authorities alternately stressed private responsibility and public-private collaboration (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008).

Table 4.5 gives an overview of the value dilemmas, coping mechanisms and solutions in the different phases of the Brouwersdam project. Again, most of the dilemmas were between democratic (theta) and delivery (sigma) values. The authorities took a more dominant role than the discourse about 'sole facilitation' suggested, not because lambda values were at stake, as in the Marker Wadden case, but because the sigma value, delivery, was endangered. The envisaged private initiators had difficulty raising funds and attracting investors, mainly because of the uncertainties regarding the revenue-generating

capacity of the project. To ensure project continuation, the authorities supported the private actors with lobbying, finding subsidies, and reimbursing part of the design costs. This came at the expense of the sigma value, austerity, and the intention to 'solely facilitate'.

**Table 4.5 Value dilemmas and chosen solutions in the Brouwersdam case**

Situation	Value dilemma	Coping mechanism	Authorities' choice, outcome
<b>Initiation phase</b>			
Stake- and shareholder involvement	Strategic clarity (lambda) vs. inclusiveness (theta)	Cycling	Inclusiveness, few boundaries to number of participating actors
Confidential talks with selected group of private actors.	Legality (theta) vs. effectiveness (sigma)	Hybridization	Middle way, some information behind closed doors
Enticing potential initiators with public enthusiasm and support	Transparency (theta) vs. delivery (sigma)	Bias	Delivery, authorities not always clear about their own limited capacity
Uncertainty about availability of public funding for breach	Reliability (theta) vs. flexibility (sigma)	Casuistry	Flexibility, market consultation prior to conclusion about budget
<b>Planning and design phase</b>			
Public desire for innovative tidal power plant at minimum costs and with limited risks	Austerity (sigma) vs. delivery (sigma)	Hybridization	Austerity, concession-based tender, minimal public subsidies
Design costs too high for private actors to bear	Delivery (sigma) vs. austerity (sigma)	Casuistry	Delivery, partial compensation for design costs
<b>Realization and exploitation phase</b>			
Total investments too high and too risky for private actors	Legality (theta) vs. delivery (sigma)	Firewalls	Strong public support in form of (search for) subsidies
Private initiators benefit from public subsidies	Public interest (theta) versus delivery (sigma)	Cycling	Middle way, private investments, framing benefits as being public

The outcome of this governance process remains uncertain. To date (July 2017), there is insufficient political willingness to finance the reopening of the dam, which is a precondition for the realization of a power plant. The decision has been postponed until after the formation of a new government, after the national elections of March 2017. Only after this will the success of the water authorities' actions become clear. Will the private actors take the lead in realizing and exploiting a power plant? Until now, the private actors have been relatively positive about the project, but it is too early to really take stock. The authorities took a risk in initiating such an intensive market consultation. If the project does not proceed due to a lack of political will, the private actors involved will be disappointed and possibly less willing to participate in future consultation processes.

## Case comparison

Although very different in nature, the two cases show comparable dilemmas in the project phases. These dilemmas can more generally be expected to emerge in situations in which water authorities facilitate external initiatives. In the initiation phase, the emerging dilemmas mostly relate to how a successful collaboration can be designed. Inclusiveness, stakeholder involvement and enhancing local support are important goals of facilitation, but inclusiveness inherently encompasses exclusiveness. Certain actors will be excluded, leading to dilemmas relating to traditional democratic values such as legality, impartiality and representativeness. Here, the discrepancy between a classic representative democracy model and a more collaborative model becomes apparent. In the planning and design phase, the details of the collaboration arrangement are established, leading to questions about the distribution of risks, costs and benefits. Relatedly, dilemmas concerning public interest emerge. How is this guaranteed in a collaboration with an actor that has possibly divergent interests? The dilemmas in the realization and exploitation phase are mainly about project continuation. How can obstacles be overcome?

Table 4.6 facilitates further comparison of the two projects under study. It becomes clear that the value dilemmas, coping mechanisms and outcomes depend largely on the characteristics of the non-governmental initiative that an authority facilitates. The characteristics of the initiative partly determine the form of government facilitation, which goes hand in hand with certain dilemmas and coping mechanisms.

**Table 4.6 Case comparison Marker Wadden and Brouwersdam**

	Marker Wadden	Brouwersdam
<b>Environmental urgency</b>	Medium urgency, deteriorating flora and fauna, sediment accumulation	No immediate urgency for power plant
<b>Initiative and initiator</b>	NGO took initiative to create archipelago and asked the government for help	Public authorities invited private actors to participate in realization of power plant
<b>Form of government facilitation</b>	Accommodating	Invitational
<b>Main value dilemma</b>	Theta versus sigma	Theta versus sigma
<b>Main coping mechanisms</b>	Casuistry, Hybridization	Cycling, Casuistry, Hybridization

In the Marker Wadden case, the NGO Natuurmonumenten approached the government with a well-developed project plan, a significant budget and a clear interest in realizing the plan. The water authority subsequently employed an accommodating form of facilitation; it reactively accommodated the external initiative. Consequently, the authority seemed to lag behind events somewhat; it had to find a way to deal with every new situation that popped up. The ad hoc way of working in relation to accommodating facilitation is reflected in the coping mechanisms employed. The mechanisms most often employed

were casuistry (finding case-specific solutions) and hybridization (letting different values coexist).

In the Brouwersdam case, there was no external initiative beforehand; the authorities had to employ an invitational form of facilitation. Instead of passively awaiting a non-governmental initiator, the authorities actively searched for one. This is reflected in the types of dilemmas that emerged, especially in the initiation phase. These dilemmas all related to the question of how the authorities could successfully entice external actors to take the lead. The fact that the private actors were not as resourceful as the authorities initially thought also impacted the coping mechanism that the authorities had to employ. Cycling was one of the most employed coping mechanisms, meaning that sequentially over time different values became prevalent. In this case, some firewalls were also erected: the national and the local authorities divided tasks, the national authority stressed the private actors' own responsibilities, and the local authorities helped the private actors attract the necessary funding.

In both cases, the water authority at some points took a more dominant role than envisioned beforehand. The reasons for doing this differed, however: quality in the Marker Wadden case versus project continuation in the Brouwersdam case. This can also be traced back to the characteristics of the initiator: the NGO in the Marker Wadden case was less experienced in procuring a project; therefore the water authority felt the need to step in.

Another factor that influences an authority's dilemmas and stance in a project is how close the external initiative is to the authority's own priorities and policy goals. In the Marker Wadden case, the national government felt great urgency to do something about the deteriorating environmental condition of the Markermeer area and had already conducted a market consultation. In the Brouwersdam case, the national and local authorities disagreed about which government was responsible for solving the environmental problems in the area and how this should be done. If an authority can meet its own obligations by facilitating an external initiative, it is willing to do more to let this initiative succeed. In the Marker Wadden case, the water authority was willing to make significant adjustments to its standard way of working. Significant concessions were made to accommodate the NGO's project.

## **4.7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

Water authorities search for new forms of collaboration with non-governmental – private and societal – actors. The involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process has become common practice, but the involvement of non-governmental actors in other phases of the policy process is less prevalent, as is research on this topic (Mees et al.,

2016). Little has been written about bottom-up initiatives in the water sector; this study contributes to knowledge development on this topic.

Increasingly, collaborative and participative views on democracy have reached the water sector. But traditional views on democracy in which values such as the primacy of politics and government authority are prominent are also still important for water authorities. New forms of collaboration in which authorities facilitate non-governmental initiatives therefore lead to dilemmas between various (interpretations of) administrative values. There are a few studies that mention these value dilemmas (Meijerink & Dicke, 2008; Van Buuren et al., 2015) and the diverging democracy models (Edelenbos et al., 2017b) that could hinder new forms of collaboration and self-organization, yet much is still unknown about the specific dilemmas authorities face, and how they deal with these dilemmas, and with what result.

This study adds to the literature by discussing the advantages and disadvantages of government facilitation. Furthermore, it introduces typologies of administrative values and of mechanisms to cope with value dilemmas (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008) to the academic debate on this topic. The typologies are used to systematically analyze dilemmas, coping mechanisms and results. The comparative case study design enables an analysis of the relation between these three elements and of the effects of different forms of facilitation (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2017), which is also novel to the field.

The analysis shows that the value dilemmas faced by authorities, their coping mechanisms and the results of their actions depend on characteristics of the non-governmental initiative and relatedly the form of facilitation employed by the authorities. Another factor that influences the dilemmas and authorities' actions is the extent to which the external initiative matches the authorities' own policy goals and priorities.

In general, the most common dilemma is between traditional democratic values and sigma values such as efficiency and austerity. In a majority of cases, the solutions chosen by the authorities let sigma values prevail. Nevertheless, in doing so, the authorities do not fully reject the other values but take measures to safeguard a minimum level of democratic values. The conflict between traditional and more collaborative forms of democracy manifests itself, for example, in concerns about the public value of the facilitated projects; the representativeness of the facilitated external actors; and whether they benefit disproportionately from the government's contribution.

Common mechanisms to cope with value dilemmas are casuistry (finding case-specific solutions), cycling (giving different values prevalence sequentially over time) and hybridization (allowing the coexistence of practices with different value bases). Another common pattern is that authorities end up taking a more prominent role beforehand, thereby abandoning the initial intention to 'solely facilitate'. Authorities do this when the quality or continuation of a project is jeopardized.

In general, the authorities deal with the dilemmas in a relatively ad hoc way. This is partly inherent in the spadework they undertake; this form of collaboration with a non-governmental actor is rather new to the water sector. The question, however, is whether the tailor-made solutions they come up with are fit to use in future situations, or whether they will have to keep reinventing the wheel. Water authorities might benefit from lessons learned elsewhere. In developing countries, for example, working with unsolicited proposals from non-governmental actors is common, and Anglo-Saxon countries are more experienced in involving the private sector.

Austerity can be an important reason for authorities to choose facilitation. But this study shows that facilitation can be a very resource-intensive governance strategy. And an authority that enters a collaboration with an external initiator becomes dependent on the (sometimes lack of) capacity and the whims of that actor. This requires great flexibility and makes the authority vulnerable. When the continuation of a project is endangered because of shortcomings in the external actor's capacities, the authority involved will feel compelled to help out organizationally or financially to save the project and the public resources invested. This is not unique to facilitation, however; it is inherent in contracting out the provision of public services to non-governmental actors. When public assets and public goods are involved, the government is a shareholder no matter what, and consequently a complete transfer of risks is virtually impossible.

Another pitfall of government facilitation relates to the potential discrepancy between short- and long-term effects. Short-term 'sigma wins', such as speedy delivery and austerity consequent to the facilitation of a non-governmental initiative, could translate into long-term 'sigma losses'. A government aiming for more active participation and responsibility on the part of non-governmental actors in the provision of water services should carefully safeguard administrative values such as impartiality and reliability. If this is not ensured, it could harm the government's relation with market parties and societal actors and weaken the government's credibility, resulting in higher transaction costs in future projects.

This study shows both the potential of facilitation of non-governmental initiatives in the water sector and the institutional barriers to it. By doing this, it adds some critical remarks and points of reflection to a stream of literature that is generally positive about both the desirability and the feasibility of new participation practices. The water sector proves to be fertile ground for non-governmental initiatives: they can enhance project quality and delivery, and water authorities appear to be able to find creative solutions in these innovative collaborations. At the same time, however, government facilitation, driven by popular, collaborative views on democracy, leads to value dilemmas that are not easy to solve. Living up to traditional democratic values, as is still expected from most authorities, requires the development of complex coping strategies.

This study is explorative, in the sense that two cases in the same country in one sector are studied in depth. Further research is therefore needed to validate the results

and extend our knowledge on value dilemmas, coping mechanisms and results in the facilitation of non-governmental initiatives in other settings.



# 5

The U-Turn in Government  
Facilitation: How Dutch Water  
Authorities Facilitate Non-  
Governmental Initiatives

## ABSTRACT

Public authorities in infrastructure, aiming to facilitate societal initiatives, explore new forms of collaboration with non-governmental actors. A comparative case study of two Dutch initiatives is conducted: energy generation at a public dam and the realization of a nature reserve. It is analyzed how and why the authorities' strategy regarding their non-governmental partners changes over time. Authorities' strategy change is modelled on two axes: governmental investments and governmental influence, and a differentiation is made between limited facilitation, invitational facilitation, partnering, and Design, Build, Finance, Maintain, and Operate. A U-turn-shaped pattern in authorities' strategy is found: Authorities move from partnering to limited facilitation and subsequently revert to invitational facilitation. Institutional factors, process factors, and initiative characteristics are identified that explain the strategy changes. It is concluded that government facilitation is a dynamic, interactive process and that authorities adapt their strategy to the initiative at hand and are pragmatic in their approach.

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Driven by both external and internal factors, today's authorities explore new forms of collaboration with non-governmental actors. Consequent to, among other things, shrinking budgets, a societal call to reform democratic practices, and the idea that they can no longer solve today's "wicked" problems on their own, public authorities try to adjust their ways of working (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). The shift from government to governance is extensively described in the public administration literature (Osborne, 2010; Pierre & Peters, 2000). Recently, various authorities seem to have taken the sharing of responsibility and discretion with non-governmental actors another step forward (Kisby, 2010; Swyngedouw, 2005). They encourage external actors to "embrace partial responsibility" for the delivery of what traditionally have been considered public services (Edelenbos et al., 2018; Mees et al., 2016, p. 1). Instead of taking the lead themselves, governments aim to facilitate initiatives taken by non-governmental actors (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018).

In the fields of infrastructure and nature development, authorities have also been exploring alternative forms of collaboration with their civic and private partners (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006; Leavitt & Morris, 2007). Traditional public procurement gave way to Design, Build, Finance, Maintain, and Operate (DBFMO) contracts in public-private partnerships (PPPs; Brown, 2007; Van Hurk, 2018). Now, some authorities are attempting to go beyond the PPPs in which they act as principal and commission private actors to work on their behalf. Instead, they aim to stimulate and facilitate the self-organization of non-governmental actors in the field (Francesch-Huidobro, 2015; Roodbol-Mekkes & Van den Brink, 2015).

The facilitation of non-governmental initiatives differs from PPPs in the sense that the initiating leadership of a project lies with non-governmental actors, which can be civic or private (Westerink et al., 2017). There is no public procurement; the non-governmental actors initiate a project on the basis of their own motivation and interest (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011). Project ownership stays in the hands of the initiators (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018). They do not work on behalf of the government, and although they might receive financial support, for example, in the form of subsidies, they are not paid by the government, as would be the case in a PPP or unsolicited proposal (Verweij, Teisman, & Gerrits, 2017).

The Dutch authority responsible for waterways and road networks, RWS, has been exploring the facilitation of non-governmental initiative (Hueskes, Koppenjan, & Verweij, 2016; Van Buuren, Eshuis, & Bressers, 2015). RWS awaits civic or private sector initiatives that it can subsequently facilitate (Frantzeskaki et al., 2016). RWS opts for government facilitation regarding renewable energy generation and the multifunctional use of assets. Instead of procuring a piece of infrastructure, such as, for example, an energy-neutral

dam, RWS requires non-governmental actors to take the lead in the initiation, realization, and exploitation of that infrastructure (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018).

Government facilitation exists in different forms and intensities (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). The amount and form of governmental support can differ: authorities might change rules and regulations in favor of the external initiative, they might contribute financially, or they might solely provide a platform for non-governmental actors to meet and further develop their plans (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018). There is great variety in the support received by different non-governmental initiatives from public authorities, and little is known about the reasons behind these differences.

Besides the variation in governmental support between different external initiatives, there is variation in authorities' strategy regarding the same initiative over time. A known dynamic is that, despite the aim of solely facilitating, projects end with heavy government involvement (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Brownill & Carpenter, 2009). It is not uncommon that authorities find themselves back at the steering wheel when they had the intention to work collaboratively on a project with non-governmental actors (Klijn & Teisman, 2003). From research into community initiatives, another form of non-governmental initiatives, it is also known that authorities have difficulty sustaining new strategies (Edelenbos et al., 2017b). They change their initial strategy of facilitation and, for example, incorporate the external initiative into their own organization (Grotenbreg & Altamirano, 2017).

Despite the growing scholarly attention for new forms of governance in which authorities facilitate non-governmental initiatives (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Nederhand et al., 2016), there is not much research yet into the actions of public authorities that opt for facilitation. Relatively little is known about the strategies they deploy and how these strategies change over time and shape the relation with external initiatives (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016). More insight into these topics could ease a shift to government facilitation and contribute to the understanding between the government and its non-governmental partners. Ultimately, this could enhance project realization, as previous research shows that, despite their intentions, authorities are now struggling to sustain a facilitating strategy (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Edelenbos et al., 2017b). More indirectly, this is also relevant for society as a whole that has a stake in the successful realization of projects that in the past would have been executed by the government but are now entrusted to non-governmental actors.

Hence, the research question in this study is as follows: *How does public authorities' strategy regarding non-governmental initiatives change over time and how can these changes be explained?* Dutch authorities' strategy changes regarding different non-governmental initiatives are analyzed. The aim is to find out how authorities decide on the amount of support an initiative receives. Furthermore, the dynamics of the relation between government and non-governmental initiatives are explored, examining when "old" administrative behavior comes back into play.

A comparative case study of two Dutch projects is conducted: energy generation at the Afsluitdijk dam and the realization of a nature reserve called Marker Wadden in a freshwater lake. In both projects, the authorities changed their strategy regarding their non-governmental partners multiple times. The study has a government-oriented perspective that originates in the public administration discipline (Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017). This means that the cases are analyzed from the perspective of the government; the focus is public authorities' strategy change regarding non-governmental initiatives. The aim, besides gaining insight into the explanations for strategy change, is to formulate some recommendations for the management of public projects. The term external initiative is used to refer to these initiatives initiated outside the governmental organization; they are external from the government's perspective.

To gain more insight into the changing strategies of public authorities, the potential reasons for a shift to government facilitation are first discussed in the following theory section. Then, potential barriers to strategy change are elaborated: institutional stability and traditional administrative values. Because the facilitation of non-governmental initiative is a new strategy for the authorities in this study, the theoretical knowledge on barriers might help to understand their struggles. Third, to learn when and how a new strategy can be sustained, the theorized enablers of strategy change are discussed. After the theory, the research design of this study is elaborated, after which a description of the cases is given. In the analysis section, a model of strategy change is first presented, and then the authorities' strategy changes in the cases are described and subsequently analyzed. The article ends with conclusions and discussion.

## 5.2 THEORY

In this study, the shifting strategies of public authorities regarding non-governmental initiatives are analyzed. Strategy is defined as the "patterns or consistencies" in "streams of behaviour" (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985, p. 257). There is a difference between leadership plans and intentions, called intended strategy, and what an organization actually does, the realized strategy. Sometimes, the realized strategy mirrors the intended strategy, that is the strategy is deliberate. In other cases, strategy emerges despite, or in the absence of, intentions. These are emergent strategies (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985). Through strategic learning, organizations change their intentions on the basis of emergent strategies. They "respond to an evolving reality rather than having to focus on a stable fantasy" (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985, p. 271). These theoretical insights are useful for the study of government facilitation because public authorities struggle to sustain a facilitating strategy although they intent to; their intended strategy does not mirror the realized strategy (Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Klijn & Teisman, 2003).

### **Reasons to opt for government facilitation**

There are various reasons why public authorities might choose a strategy in which they facilitate non-governmental initiatives in the first place (Grotenbreg & Altamirano, 2017). Facilitation can enhance so-called sigma values. These are efficiency-related administrative values, in contrast to democratic theta values and quality lambda values, as distinguished by Hood (1991). Facilitation enlarges the available pool of knowledge and financial and organizational resources to solve public problems (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). There can be efficiency gains (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006), and facilitation can increase productivity and public value creation (Zhang et al., 2015). Things can be accomplished that the government could not have done on its own. Embracing external initiatives can further generate public support and lead to more innovative solutions (Van Buuren et al., 2015; Wegerich et al., 2014). The facilitated project can function at arm's length from centers of political authority, thereby potentially offering greater flexibility in decision-making, resource acquisition, management, and accountability arrangements (Skelcher et al., 2005). Finally, depending on the democracy model adopted, government facilitation can also enhance democratic legitimacy (Edelenbos et al., 2017b).

### **Institutional stability, administrative values, and government facilitation**

Despite the benefits, public authorities often do not sustain their facilitating strategy (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Brownill & Carpenter, 2009). An important reason why innovative, facilitating strategies are hard for authorities to sustain is the stability of institutions (Van Buuren et al., 2015; Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017). Institutions are “the rules of the game in a society” (North, 1990, p. 3), and the way in which authorities collaborate with non-governmental actors can be considered an institution (Genschel, 1997). Although their stability is the prime reason for their effectiveness, over time, misfits emerge between institutions and the environment in which they function, because the latter changes whereas the former is stable (Genschel, 1997). This is the case in this study: The environment of today's public authorities (literally and figuratively) requires new ways of collaborating, and consequently the authorities' way of collaborating with non-governmental actors has to change (Nutt & Backoff, 1995).

In general, there are three overarching reasons why institutions such as the way collaborations take shape are hard to change: sunk costs, uncertainty, and political conflict (Genschel, 1997). Institutions have large set-up costs, meaning that it takes time, money, and effort to become established. Public managers have to get used to the rules and conventions associated with institutions, and organizations develop specific competencies and set up a physical infrastructure (e.g., software systems) in line with their institutions (Genschel, 1997). This generates sunk costs, which preserve an institution (Lanzara, 1998). Shifting to another way of working means that established structures lose value and new investments have to be made (Pierson, 2000). Second, strategy change implies

uncertainty: The costs and effects of new ways of working are hard to predict (Genschel, 1997). Returns on the investments that have to be made to effect change are uncertain and often delayed in time; there is a “slow feedback” (Lanzara, 1998, p. 6). Risk aversion therefore is an important hindrance to change in public organizations. Third, strategy change by public organizations can lead to political conflict. The status quo has beneficiaries; established institutions often have a distributive bias, meaning that certain actors benefit from the way things are organized (Genschel, 1997), and these actors will probably try to prevent change. These three factors are expected to also be important in the cases in this study: Sunk costs, uncertainty, and political conflict are potential barriers for a facilitating strategy and might lead authorities back to more traditional ways of working.

A fourth reason why a facilitating strategy is hard for authorities to sustain is that it can conflict with traditional administrative values, such as representation, equality, impartiality, and the primacy of politics (Grotenbreg & Altamirano, 2017). In a traditional view on representative democracy, politicians govern on behalf of the electorate, they uphold the primacy of politics, and are the first to decide on issues that impact society (Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Held, 2006). This can be threatened if non-governmental actors enter the administrative arena (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). Adherents of this traditional view argue that government facilitation of societal initiatives clashes with the public imperatives of democracy (Skelcher et al., 2005) and this forms another barrier for change.

A way in which facilitation can conflict with traditional administrative values is that when the government chooses to facilitate an external initiative, it no longer exclusively decides on how public money is spent and what solution is chosen for a public problem; the government loses some discretion to non-governmental actors (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2006). Government facilitation might furthermore harm the governments impartially because it favors the societal actors that have the capacity to initiate a project and reach out for support (Westerink et al., 2017). In addition, to facilitate, authorities have to be flexible and find tailor-made solutions to the initiative at hand, and this can conflict with values such as transparency, legal certainty, and decisiveness (Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Van Buuren et al., 2014). Other values that could be at stake include, for example, professionalism and government accountability (Skelcher et al., 2005). In this study, traditional administrative values are therefore also expected to form a barrier to a facilitating strategy.

### **Enablers of strategy change**

It is difficult, but not impossible, to change an organization’s strategy and sustain an innovative, facilitating strategy. Scholars have identified four countervailing mechanisms that enable change: focal points, increasing returns, institutional bricolage, and patching up (Genschel, 1997; Lanzara, 1998). First, focal points are “seeds” for institutional change, signals toward a certain direction provided by, for example, political leaders,

social movements, or shared beliefs (Lanzara, 1998, p. 22). Second, increasing returns provide positive feedback: If the first investment in the new way of working generates small returns, it paves the path for further change (Baumgartner & Jones, 2001; Lanzara, 1998). Third, institutional bricolage is “the recombination and reshuffling of pre-existing available components” (Lanzara, 1998, p. 27) meaning that a new organizational strategy might be comprised of components of established strategies. This reduces uncertainty and the loss of sunk costs and generally increases the willingness to accept the new strategy (Genschel, 1997; Lanzara, 1998). Relatedly, patching up means replacing only parts of the established way of working. Only certain components of a strategy are changed, leading to fewer costs, fewer risks, and less political conflict. Patching up often happens in specific parts of a public organization; there is no central coordination and this makes it less threatening to the (beneficiaries of) the status quo (Genschel, 1997).

Previous research into the facilitation of non-governmental initiatives by public authorities shows the value of these mechanisms. Regarding local energy initiatives for example, local authorities use a patched up strategy that is incidental and limited to ad hoc and episodic adaptations, thereby avoiding explicit struggles with the status quo (Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017). In the water sector, pilots, which are a form of patching up, are frequently used to introduce governance innovations (Van Popering-Verkerk & Van Buuren, 2017). In addition, institutional bricolage is used in this sector to safeguard traditional administrative values when new ways of working are introduced. Through so-called auxiliary arrangements, it is assured that a new strategy fits into existing organizational rules and practices (Van Buuren et al., 2015). The countervailing mechanisms that enable the introduction and sustainment of facilitating strategies are expected to also be present in the cases under study. Now that the reasons for, barriers to, and enablers of strategy change that can be found in the literature are discussed; in the next section, the research design of this study is presented.

### **5.3 DATA AND METHOD**

The way in which public authorities change their strategy when facilitating societal initiatives, the object of this study, is a complex phenomenon. A comparative case study design was chosen to analyze this phenomenon. This method suits the topic and the research question best; case studies allow in-depth knowledge to be gained of complex situations (Stake, 1998; Yin, 2018). As a consequence of the research design, this study will not lead to findings that are easy to generalize or to readymade solutions to public problems (Hufen & Koppenjan, 2015). The aim is to enhance the available knowledge on the dynamics of government facilitation, with a focus on the water sector.

## Case selection

Through strategic sampling, two cases were deliberately selected in which Dutch national and local authorities were exploring new forms of collaboration with non-governmental actors: renewable energy generation at the Afsluitdijk dam and realization of the Marker Wadden nature reserve. In the first case, RWS aimed to facilitate private actors' initiatives to generate renewable energy at a public dam. In the second case, two national ministries chose to facilitate a nature organization's plan to create marsh islands in an inland lake. In the past, these authorities would probably have designed and financed the projects themselves, putting the projects out to tender and commissioning a private actor for the construction work. The fact that this approach was new for the authorities makes the cases interesting for this study. The cases fulfil another prerequisite for answering the research question: The authorities changed their strategy regarding their non-governmental partners multiple times. Finally, this selection suits a comparative case study because the cases are comparable but different. The sector, actors involved, and time path are alike, but the characteristics of the societal initiative and the outcomes are different. One of the differences is the type of good that will be realized: At the Afsluitdijk, the main good is renewable energy; at Marker Wadden, it is a natural amenity.

## Data collection

The study of the Afsluitdijk case started in October 2013 with a document analysis of policy documents, news articles, and market consultation reports. Use was also made of research conducted before on the case by Lenferink et al. (2012) and by Janssen et al. (2014). Between February and December 2014, 10 in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of the national and local authorities involved and private project initiators. See Appendix A for an overview. The Marker Wadden case was followed from October 2015. This study also started with an extensive document analysis. Among other things, a large number of documents, disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act, containing the communications between the government and the initiator Natuurmonumenten and between different government departments were analyzed. Between January and May 2016, eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives of all the national and local authorities involved and Natuurmonumenten.

To gain insight into the strategies and strategy changes deployed by the authorities regarding their non-governmental partners, the respondents were asked to reflect on the decisions that were made, the alternatives considered, the pros and cons of the available options, and how they evaluated the outcome. Furthermore, the respondents were asked about the dilemmas and difficulties encountered in terms of facilitation of, and collaboration with, the non-governmental actors. Case-specific situations and government facilitation in general were discussed, and the respondents were asked to elaborate on the potentials and pitfalls of facilitation strategies, in their opinion. The interviews, combined

with the information gathered in the document study, led to the analysis and conclusions in the remainder of the article. All the presented statements are the result of the author's analysis; no literal quotes are used in the text.

## 5.4 CASE DESCRIPTIONS

### Renewable energy at the Afsluitdijk dam

The location of the first case of this study, the Afsluitdijk (literally Enclosure dam), is a 32-km-long dam in the north of the Netherlands. The dam was constructed over the period 1927 to 1932 to enclose a saltwater inlet of the North Sea to protect the land from flooding and create new farmland. With the enclosure, the Netherlands acquired a freshwater lake in the heart of the country, called IJsselmeer. Figure 5.1 shows the location of the Afsluitdijk and Marker Wadden. Since 2006, the Afsluitdijk no longer meets the safety criteria. The Ministry of Transport and Water Management conducted a market consultation for a redesign of the dam. This resulted in various comprehensive plans from private consortia combining the necessary renovation of the dam with ideas for recreation, nature development, and energy generation. The ministry, however, decided to procure solely a simple renovation for flood protection. Ideas and initiatives to upgrade the dam with, among other things, renewable energy generation were left to non-governmental actors. The three municipalities and the two provinces in which the dam is located took the stance that initiating, financing, and realizing energy projects were primarily the responsibility of non-governmental actors.



Figure 5.1 Location of Afsluitdijk and nature island Marker Wadden in the north of the Netherlands. Source. dutchwatersector.com.

Two local private firms, located at the Afsluitdijk, both took the initiative to expand their pilot installations to generate renewable energy. A private turbine construction company that operates an installation for the generation of tidal energy wanted to expand this installation. In addition, it wanted to realize a second installation at another location on the dam. Another firm had the ambition to generate blue energy, using the difference in salinity between fresh and salt water, at the Afsluitdijk.

RWS, as the executive organization of the ministry, and the local authorities gave some more support to these initiatives than they initially envisioned. For the local authorities, the energy projects were important because it was believed that they would give a much-needed boost to the local economy. RWS had a more ambiguous attitude toward the projects. It was not willing to take responsibility for them, but the minister was enthusiastic about the Afsluitdijk becoming a so-called energy dam. Therefore, RWS felt unofficially obliged to support the local energy projects and agreed to help the firms and the local authorities to implement their plans. It facilitated the energy projects by engaging in discussions with the private initiators about the possibilities and about easing the permit procedure.

The blue energy firm received subsidies from both national government and the local authorities and realized its pilot installation on the dam in 2014. In 2015, the turbine construction company expanded its installation, also partly financed by public subsidies. To date, however (November 2018), it has not managed to realize the aspired second installation. Requests from the firm for more help and support, for example, for RWS to buy the generated tidal energy or to adjust the planning of the construction work in favor of the tidal energy installation have gone unanswered.

### **The Marker Wadden nature reserve**

The location of the second case of this study is the freshwater lake, enclosed by the Afsluitdijk in 1932, from which from 1936 onward, parts were reclaimed to create new land. In 1976, a dam was built to enclose the southern part of the lake, called the Markermeer, but the planned reclamation of this water never happened. What remained was a "bathtub," a relatively shallow lake with barely natural shores. An accumulation of sediments in the Markermeer makes the water very turbid, and the flora and fauna in the area have declined severely.

Over the years, there have been numerous programs, research projects, and policy plans to deal with the problems in the Markermeer. Most of them foundered because the national and local authorities involved were not willing or able to finance the necessary interventions. In 2012, the national government in collaboration with the two provinces located around the lake set up a market consultation, comparable with the one in the Afsluitdijk case, searching for cost-effective measures to restore the flora and fauna in the Markermeer area. This resulted in three comprehensive and costly designs from private consortia, ranging from €282 million to €1,194 million. The national government, however, decided not to procure

one of these plans. Instead, the two ministries responsible for the Markermeer area entered a collaboration with the non-governmental organization (NGO) Natuurmonumenten, which took the initiative to realize an archipelago of marsh islands in the lake.

In 2011, Natuurmonumenten was granted a €15 million subsidy for the Marker Wadden project from one of the Netherlands' largest lotteries. Natuurmonumenten asked for an additional €30 million financial contribution from the national government. The prevailing situation at the responsible ministries provided fertile ground for Natuurmonumenten's proposal. There were pressing environmental issues at the Markermeer, but the ministries did not have the resources for an all-encompassing plan. Natuurmonumenten brought a well-developed, manageable plan and €15 million of its own resources to the table. Stimulating non-governmental actors to take the lead in solving public problems was an important goal of the government, and this project fitted this vision. After internal discussions, the two ministries involved decided to contribute €15 million each.

The ministries' initial idea was to facilitate Natuurmonumenten's project from a distance. Over time, however, they became more and more involved. So, whereas in the Afsluitdijk case, the national government distanced itself from the non-governmental initiatives, in the Marker Wadden case the opposite happened. Because of concerns about the NGO's capacity to manage such a large project, it was decided that RWS would join Natuurmonumenten in a collaborative organization and would execute the tendering process. In 2014, the work was commissioned to a private consortium; in 2016, the construction work started. Because Natuurmonumenten did not manage to raise the money needed to complete this first phase of the project, the ministries involved and two provinces decided to contribute another €15 million approximately. Figure 5.2 shows the location of Marker Wadden in the Markermeer.



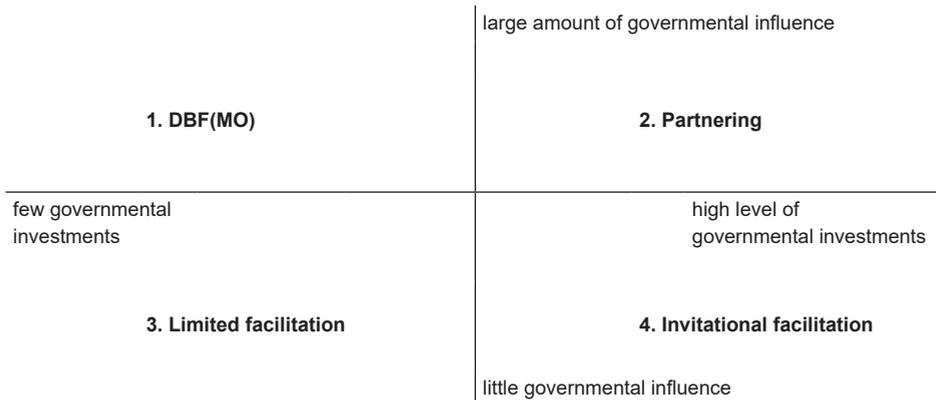
**Figure 5.2 Location of Marker Wadden in the Markermeer. Source. NOS/Lars Boogaard.**

## 5.5 RANGES OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES' STRATEGY CHANGE

The first step of the case analysis is an inventarisation of the ranges of change of the public authorities' strategies. The strategies varied in the amount of influence claimed by the authorities in the projects and in the resources that they invested. To enhance the analysis, a model is constructed in which these variables are visualized as two axes (see Figure 5.3). Four ideal types of public-private arrangements are consequently distinguished. First, in the case of a Design, Build, Finance, and (potentially) Maintain, and Operate contract, the government has to make few investments and has a large amount of influence. The government procures public work, leaves the initial investments to the private contractor, and pays availability fees when the work is delivered. This resembles contracts in the UK Private Finance Initiative (Klijn, Edelenbos, & Hughes, 2007; Van Hurk, 2018). This arrangement never prevailed in the cases; although both cases started with a market consultation, the authorities did not aim for a DBF(MO) contract.

Second, if the amount of governmental influence and level of investments are high, it is called partnering. The authority works together with non-governmental actors as partner. They share the ownership of a project and both make significant investments. Such a collaborative project can be initiated by both public and private actors. The third type is called limited facilitation, as governmental influence and investments are low (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2017). In the case of limited facilitation, authorities accommodate societal initiatives to create public value, but the support received by the external initiators is restricted. The authority might, for example, support the initiative by adjusting rules or regulations that form an obstruction (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018). The initiating leadership of the project lies with non-governmental actors (Westerink et al., 2017), and they are subsequently the ones responsible for realization and exploitation (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2017).

Fourth, invitational facilitation is distinguished if the government claims little influence and makes substantive investments in a societal initiative. In the case of invitational facilitation, supporting non-governmental initiatives is a policy intention of a public authority; a public authority actively invites non-governmental actors to initiate a project (Van Buuren, 2017). With a discourse that emphasizes the opportunities and benefits for non-governmental actors, the authority tries to entice them to take action (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2017). Initiators can count on a significant amount of different forms of support from the government. Besides regulatory support in the form of adjusted rules and regulations, the initiative might receive analytical support in the form of information and advice, coordination support in the form of access to networks and fora, and financial support, for example, in the form of subsidies (Grotenbreg & Van Buuren, 2018).



**Figure 5.3 Ranges of public authorities' strategy change in public-private arrangements.**

### **Public authorities' strategy change in the Afsluitdijk case**

The constructed model is first used to analyze the strategy changes of the public authorities in the Afsluitdijk case. In 2008, the national Ministry of Transport and Water Management conducted a market consultation in preparation for a public procurement to renovate the Afsluitdijk. At that time, the ministry's strategy was to procure a full renovation of the dam, including various side projects to generate renewable energy. It aimed to collaborate with a wide range of societal actors on this. The economic crisis hit however, and driven by austerity measures and government reform, all side projects were left to non-governmental actors. The ministry decided to finance solely a simple renovation for flood protection. Non-governmental actors that wanted to add functions to the dam could count on minimal support; the government's strategy shifted from partnering to limited facilitation. Over time, however, for different reasons, the provinces and RWS decided to give more support to the non-governmental project initiators; the strategy of these authorities shifted from limited facilitation toward invitational facilitation. These strategy changes are visualized in Figure 5.4.

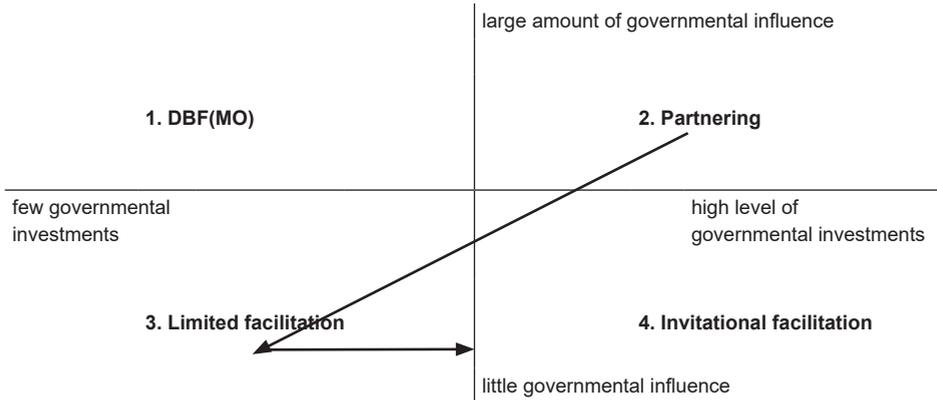


Figure 5.4 Public authorities’ strategy change in the Afsluitdijk case.

**Public authorities’ strategy change in the Marker Wadden case**

In the Marker Wadden case, a collaboration between the national and the local government conducted a market consultation in preparation for a public procurement for restorative measures for flora and fauna in the Markermeer area. Similar to the Afsluitdijk case, the responsible ministries then changed their strategy and decided not to procure any work. Instead, they decided to facilitate the initiative of an NGO to realize a nature reserve in the area; the government in this case too shifted from partnering to limited facilitation. Despite the initial plan to leave the ownership of the project with the NGO and invest few governmental resources, RWS ended up as a full project partner contributing substantial resources to the project; the strategy shifted from limited facilitation back in the direction of partnering, as visualized in Figure 5.5.

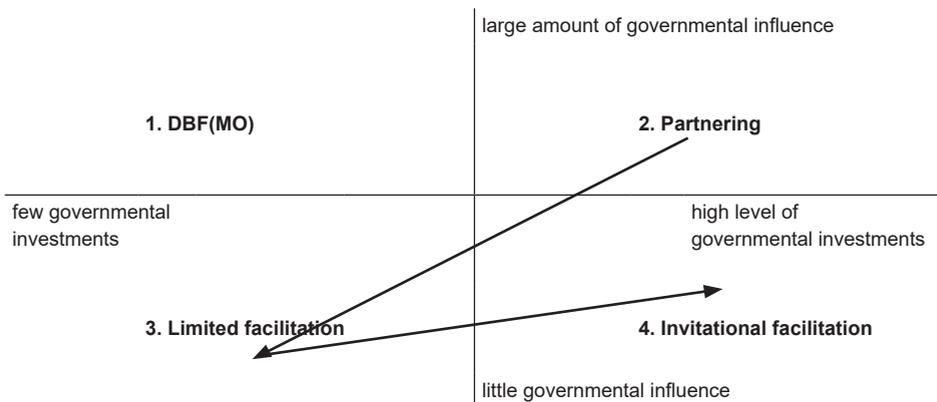


Figure 5.5 Public authorities’ strategy change in the Marker Wadden case.

In the two cases, a similar U-turn shape can be seen in the change of strategy regarding facilitation. The authorities involved started off enthusiastically, with extensive plans for

all-encompassing projects and collaborations with a wide range of societal actors, and then they seemed to revert to known, traditional ways of working in which they focused on their own core tasks, after which they returned to a more moderate form of facilitation in which they worked with societal actors on their terms adapted to the situation at hand. In the next section, these two moves in the authorities' change of strategy are analyzed more elaborately.

## **5.6 EXPLANATIONS FOR PUBLIC AUTHORITIES' STRATEGY CHANGE**

### **Explanations for a shift from partnering to limited facilitation**

The starting point of the analysis in both cases was a market consultation conducted by the national government. In both cases, the government had the intention to realize an integrative project combining flood protection with additional functions such as energy generation, recreation, and nature development. The intended strategy was to collaborate with a wide range of civic, public, and private actors in this. It was planned to put part of the work out to tender and to commission a private consortium. Governmental influence and investments were going to be large in the sense that the government intended to initiate, finance, and determine the content. In both cases, however, the government changed its strategy to limited facilitation. In the Afsluitdijk case, RWS decided to focus solely on flood protection and leave any additional functions to local authorities and non-governmental actors. In the Marker Wadden case, the two ministries involved chose to facilitate a relatively small initiative by an NGO, instead of procuring one of the more encompassing plans that resulted from the market consultation.

An important explanation for this strategy change is a reshuffling and compartmentalization of administrative responsibilities. The national government made substantial cuts in the budgets for nature development and innovation and partly transferred these policy domains to local governments. This, in combination with austerity measures, affected RWS's strategy. The energy initiatives in the Afsluitdijk case, for example, besides generating energy, contributed to innovation and economic development. In the new situation, these were no longer the responsibility of the water authority. The non-governmental initiatives no longer enhanced the authority's policy goals. RWS also had to strictly safeguard its own renovation work at the dam, not allowing any interference from the energy projects. The authority thus opted for limited facilitation, because the external projects' goals did not match its own and even interfered at some points.

A more positive policy change proved to be an incentive for a shift to limited facilitation: In the Marker Wadden case, one of the ministries decided to explore new public-private arrangements and be more open to non-governmental initiatives, which it believed would

enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization and add to its legitimacy. Facilitation of the NGO's initiative fitted this policy intention nicely. In this situation, the realized strategy is the intended strategy; the government deliberately chose to change its approach, adjusted its policy, and acted accordingly.

Another reason for the change to limited facilitation is simply the existence of a competent external initiative. In the Marker Wadden case, the NGO Natuurmonumenten approached the government with its initiative. The NGO was known as a reliable partner, and it presented a well thought through project plan. This, in combination with the policy changes, made it easy for the responsible ministries to choose a strategy of facilitating a non-governmental initiative instead of taking the lead itself. The authorities in both cases initially chose a strategy in which they claimed little influence in the facilitated projects and made relatively few investments. A reason for choosing limited rather than invitational facilitation is a fear of jeopardizing traditional administrative values such as legality, impartiality, and legitimacy. Concerned about accusations of unwarranted state aid, the authorities in both cases hesitated to support the non-governmental projects financially. Traditional, administrative values and, relatedly, uncertainty about the outcomes of a new approach and sunk costs of established ways of working are known barriers to strategy change (Genschel, 1997; Van Buuren et al., 2015).

In the Marker Wadden case, this was dealt with by an open call for other societal actors to join the project. In the Afsluitdijk case, RWS set strict conditions to its support for the energy projects. A solid business case and fully developed project plan were preconditions for the inclusion of the project in the authority's procurement of the renovation. A financial contribution could be obtained only if all the other (non-governmental) financiers had confirmed their contribution to the project. This can be seen as a type of institutional bricolage; by facilitating external initiatives, RWS tried something new, but it built in provisos to reduce uncertainty (Lanzara, 1998).

### **Explanations for a shift from limited facilitation to invitational facilitation**

As discussed, after the decision not to enter a public–private collaboration to realize a large, multifunctional project, the authorities retreated to a strategy of limited facilitation. Over time, however, they started making more investments and claimed more influence in the facilitated projects than initially planned. This U-turn is seen in both cases, but in the Marker Wadden case, it is more extreme. RWS in this case eventually became a project partner and the ministries involved invested significant amounts of money; in the Afsluitdijk case, the authorities' support was more limited.

There are various explanations for the U-turn toward invitational facilitation. In both cases, policy was changed to be more open toward multifunctional use of public water works and new forms of collaboration with non-governmental actors, for reasons of efficiency and legitimacy. In addition, in the Marker Wadden case, the external project

helped the ministries involved to fulfil their own policy goals. The initiative contributed to nature development in the area, for which the ministries were responsible. This also partly explains the difference between Afsluitdijk and Marker Wadden. In the Afsluitdijk case, RWS, by supporting the energy projects, hoped to secure local support for its own work: the renovation of the dam. The facilitation thus served an indirect goal, but generating renewable energy, the main purpose of the initiatives, was not on the to-do list of the water authority. One could say that the ministries had more responsibility in the Marker Wadden case because nature is a public good in the sense that nature is nonrival and nonexcludable in consumption (although Natuurmonumenten could close off the island; Webster & Wai-Chung Lai, 2003).

A second explanation for the difference between the cases is the resources of the external initiator. In the Marker Wadden case, the ministries decided to support Natuurmonumenten, which was willing to invest €15 million of its own resources (in contrast to the three other private consortia that participated in the market consultation and expected full cost recovery). In the Afsluitdijk case, RWS was not fully convinced of the business case for the energy projects and the capacity of the initiators to realize these projects successfully. Natuurmonumenten, in contrast, presented a well-organized project and was considered a competent and reliable partner.

Doubts about the competence of the non-governmental initiator to live up to the authorities' standards, however, also proved to be a reason to invest more and gain more influence. In the Marker Wadden case, several RWS departments pleaded for a full takeover of the project from the NGO; the organization had difficulty adapting to the new role of partner instead of principal. RWS eventually decided to lead the tendering process and procurement of the construction work and subsequently became the project's legal contract manager. This decision was driven by the view that leaving it to the NGO would harm the continuation of the project and the authority's relation with the private market. RWS also opted to acquire more influence to ensure that public money was well spent and that the investments advanced the government's policy goals. RWS thus chose invitational facilitation to safeguard traditional administrative values such as professionalism and government accountability.

A related explanation for the increase in governmental investments and influence, especially in the Marker Wadden case, was lock-in. The two ministries invested significantly in Marker Wadden, and when a lack of resources threatened the project's future, the ministries decided to contribute even more.

A last explanation for why facilitation in the Marker Wadden case was less limited than in the Afsluitdijk case is the way in which it could be organized within the governmental organization. In neither case did facilitation fit with the prevailing regulations, working methods, and organizational culture. For that reason, the external initiatives were isolated in the Afsluitdijk case to safeguard the RWS's priority: the renovation of the dam. In the

Marker Wadden case, the mismatch between the external initiative and the bureaucratic organization was bypassed by explicitly setting up the project as a pilot, in relative isolation from the rest of the organization. Consequently, the people working on the project had greater discretion to deviate from the organization's standards, resulting in a more invitational form of facilitation (Van Popering-Verkerk & Van Buuren, 2017). This is an example of patching up: only part of the bureaucratic organization changed its strategy, and this made it less threatening to the status quo (Genschel, 1997).

The change from limited to invitational facilitation is explained mostly by process factors and the characteristics of the external initiative at hand. Consequently, the realized strategy was mostly emergent: It emerged in response to current events rather than policy. The theorized enablers of strategy change, such as increasing returns and patching up, eased the shift to invitational facilitation (Baumgartner & Jones, 2001; Lanzara, 1998).

### **Overview: institutions, process factors, and the initiative's characteristics as explanations for strategy change**

Table 5.1 gives an overview of the identified explanations for strategy change by public authorities that aim to facilitate non-governmental initiative. The literature on public strategy (Genschel, 1997; Lanzara, 1998) and on government facilitation (e.g., Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Whitehead, 2003) focuses mostly on institutional barriers to strategy change. In this study, process factors and the characteristics of the non-governmental initiatives also proved to be important. In the table, a distinction is made between these three explanations for strategy change.

The table shows that the shift to limited facilitation can be largely explained by institutional factors: Compartmentalization, austerity measures, and traditional administrative values led the government to revert to a strategy of limited facilitation. The non-governmental initiatives had broad objectives, such as innovation and regional development. Consequent to the reshuffling and compartmentalization of policy responsibilities and budget cuts, it was unclear which governmental organization was in charge. The strictly defined responsibilities and the government's inability to work in an integrative way thus formed a barrier to supporting the non-governmental initiators. This finding is in line with literature that stresses the difficulty for bureaucracies to facilitate societal initiatives (Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017). Other research (e.g., Skelcher et al., 2005; Westerink et al., 2017) also mentions that bureaucratic values, such as legality and impartiality, make public authorities hesitant to invest in external initiatives. The sunk costs of standardized working methods and procedures are also important here (Lanzara, 1998).

**Table 5.1. Main Explanations for Strategy Change Regarding the Facilitation of Non-governmental Initiatives.**

	Towards limited facilitation	Towards invitational facilitation
<b>Institutional factors</b>	Compartmentalisation; austerity; administrative values	Governance policy; administrative values
<b>Process factors</b>	Presence of societal initiative	Lock-in, positive feedback; increasing returns
<b>Characteristics external initiative</b>		Initiator's capacity; contribution to policy goals

Besides the institutional factors, a process factor that explains the shift to limited facilitation is simply the presence of a viable non-governmental initiative. Natuurmonumenten's proposal gave the responsible ministries the opportunity to pull back, transfer responsibility to the NGO, and refrain from investing in a resource-intensive PPP.

Table 5.1 further shows that, for the shift to invitational facilitation, institutional factors proved to be of less importance. The characteristics of the external initiatives are the main explanation for this strategy change. The authorities in the cases were willing to give more support to an initiative that enhanced their own policy goals. This corresponds with findings of, among others, Boonstra and Boelens (2011) and Van Buuren et al. (2015). Furthermore, the authorities decided to give more support to the Marker Wadden initiative because it had a high chance of success but at the same time could not succeed without government support. An initiator's incapacity could thus also be an incentive to gain more influence in a project; the water authority took over part of the project because the project goals were important for the ministries involved and there were doubts about the NGO's capacity to successfully realize the project on its own. The government was pragmatic in its choice of strategy here.

A related explanation is lock-in; at a certain point, the continuation of the Marker Wadden project was endangered by a lack of resources. Because the ministries had made significant investments already, they decided to invest even more. Other research has also found that such process factors can be an explanation for authorities' strategy regarding societal initiatives (Edelenbos et al., 2018; Emerson et al., 2012).

The theorized enablers of strategy change were also present in the Marker Wadden case as process factors: The successful collaboration with Natuurmonumenten gave positive feedback, leading to a willingness to make more investments, bringing increasing returns (Baumgartner & Jones, 2001). The facilitation of this eye-catching initiative thus served as a focal point that further enhanced the facilitating strategy (Lanzara, 1998).

Governance policy, or the wish to introduce new forms of collaboration with non-governmental actors and be more facilitative because it would enhance the efficiency and legitimacy of the organization, was an institutional explanation for a shift to invitational facilitation. Remarkably, traditional administrative values such as accountability

and professionalism drove both less and more governmental involvement in the external initiatives. The authorities in the cases chose limited facilitation because they feared facilitation might harm these values but, when they became involved anyway, the authorities invested more resources to safeguard these values.

Our analysis shows that government facilitation is context dependent and results from the interaction between government and societal actors; they react and adapt to each other's characteristics and wishes. The fact that government facilitation is a dynamic process and that the government's behavior can be largely explained by the process and the initiative's characteristics is neglected in most of the existing literature (e.g., Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Warbroek & Hoppe, 2017). This literature focuses mostly on static, institutional factors, such as the political system, bureaucracy, and administrative values that hinder government facilitation of societal initiatives (e.g., Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Edelenbos et al., 2017b).

## 5.7 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Public authorities are exploring new forms of collaboration with non-governmental actors (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016). In the fields of infrastructure and nature development also, authorities are searching for alternative ways to collaborate with their civic and private partners (Francesch-Huidobro, 2015). They aim to be more open to societal initiatives and facilitate the work of non-governmental actors (Roodbol-Mekkes & Van den Brink, 2015). Relatively little is known yet about the strategies and actions of public authorities that aim to facilitate non-governmental initiatives (Edelenbos et al., 2018). To enhance our understanding about the barriers and enablers of government facilitation, this study follows two initiatives over time and analyses how and why the authorities changed their strategy regarding these initiatives.

Most of the literature on government facilitation focuses on static factors that hinder facilitation (e.g., Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Edelenbos et al., 2017b; see for exceptions Edelenbos et al., 2018; Van Buuren et al., 2015; Westerink et al., 2017). This study shows that process factors and the characteristics of the facilitated initiative are also important explanations for the behavior of facilitating authorities, indicating that government facilitation is an interactive process. The government is pragmatic, and the strategy that it deploys is context dependent; authorities change their strategy in reaction to the (also changing) characteristics of the initiative at hand. This process of facilitation is neglected in a lot of the literature (e.g., Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Skelcher et al., 2005).

Another finding is that traditional administrative values, in the literature identified mainly as barriers to innovative collaborations (e.g., Skelcher et al., 2005; Westerink et al., 2017), also prove to be a driver of invitational facilitation. As other research shows, au-

thorities are hesitant to facilitate non-governmental initiatives because they fear that they will jeopardize values such as government accountability and professionalism (Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Van Buuren et al., 2015). This study shows that when authorities, for other reasons, start facilitating anyway, they opt to obtain significant influence in the initiative to safeguard these values.

Based on the findings, the conclusion is that, to attract government support, a non-governmental initiative should enhance government's policy goals or at least not interfere with them. This also applies to traditional administrative values; facilitation of the initiative should not jeopardize these values (too much). In addition, the public authority involved should be willing and able to facilitate. This is not a matter of course, because facilitation requires different skills than traditional governing, and as authorities do not operate in a vacuum, political and managerial support from the top of the organization for this way of working is another precondition. Last but not least, the non-governmental initiators should be both competent and in need of government support. To be eligible for facilitation, an initiative should thus have a high chance of success, but at the same require some government support to achieve that success.

The two Dutch cases on which these conclusions are based can be considered extreme cases (Yin, 2018) in the sense that, in The Netherlands, the water sector has traditionally been in the hands of the government, with a strong prediction and control regime focused on risk avoidance (Van Buuren et al., 2015). Even more than in other countries, facilitating non-governmental initiatives is innovative for Dutch water authorities compared with their traditional ways of working (Grotenbreg & Altamirano, 2017). Although other countries are generally more progressive in terms of granting non-governmental actors an active role in the provision of public services, they are also searching for new forms of public-private collaboration and a more facilitative role for the government (Buser, 2013; Mees et al., 2016; Taylor, 2003). The expectation is that the theory-based mechanisms found in this explorative, qualitative study will also be present in other sectors and other countries, but more research is needed to further corroborate the conclusions.

In terms of recommendations for practitioners, this study shows the value of the enablers of strategy change for authorities that aim to explore new forms of collaboration with their civic and private partners (Genschel, 1997; Lanzara, 1998). By retaining parts of the established working method, patching up, and institutional bricolage, the uncertainty that accompanies facilitation of external initiatives can be reduced. This can help a bureaucratic organization to grow into a new strategy. A facilitating strategy that fits with the existing organizational structure and values is an emergent strategy: It takes shape over time and is hard to spell out in policy beforehand (Mintzberg & Waters, 1985; Van Buuren et al., 2015). Government facilitation is trial and error, and when some first steps are taken, for example in a pilot, positive feedback and increasing returns can pave the way for more facilitation (Baumgartner & Jones, 2001; Van Popering-Verkerk & Van Buuren, 2017).

# 6

## Conclusions and Discussion



## 6.1 INTRODUCING THE CONCLUSIONS

Public authorities are exploring new ways to relate to non-governmental – public and private – actors. They aim to collaborate with these actors, and recently authorities worldwide also increasingly seem to opt to facilitate the actions of these non-governmental actors. Politicians speak of a ‘Big Society’ (Kisby 2014: 484), a ‘do democracy’, or a ‘participation society’ (Rijksoverheid, 2013a) in which non-governmental actors take the lead in public value creation and authorities facilitate their actions instead of taking action themselves (Blunkett, 2003; Taylor, 2003). The ‘new’ government is presented as small, lean, humble, and obliging to an energetic society, making room, giving space, and (only) helping where necessary (Hajer, 2011; Kisby, 2010; Van der Steen et al., 2018). This new order of things is sketched as being rather bright and unambiguous, government facilitation as uncomplicated. An optimistic picture is painted about governments facilitating non-governmental initiatives (Ossewaarde, 2014). The Dutch government, for example, simply states that society has a growing ‘self-organising capacity’ and, in reaction, the government will ‘let go, facilitate, and give space’ to societal initiatives (doedemocratie.net). It is believed that this form of governance will increase democratic legitimacy (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016), enable budget cuts (Meijer, 2016), and lead to more public value (Bryson et al., 2014) and to more innovative solutions to public problems (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, 2012).

In Chapter 1 the emergence of facilitation in governments’ discourse was discussed, leading to the conclusion that there is relatively little research on this form of governance and that the available literature is mainly theoretical. Not much is yet known about what authorities that aim to facilitate actually do, what their struggles and successes are, and with what effects they facilitate non-governmental initiatives. This observation formed the start of this thesis.

The picture that emerges from our study of the facilitating government is one of a seeking and a struggling government; a government that feels the need to do things differently, tries to do things differently, encounters significant barriers and dilemmas in doing this, and in reaction sometimes sees no other solution than to revert to familiar ways of working. Our research results add some footnotes to the optimistic, uncomplicated, and unambiguous image of government facilitation that emerges from governments’ discourse and some of the literature (Ossewaarde, 2014).

In the remainder of this concluding chapter, we first discuss the reality of government facilitation; unlike the uniform picture sketched in governments’ discourse, the practice of facilitating is rather diverse. We differentiate between two forms of facilitation and four administrative capacities that authorities employ to support non-governmental initiatives. We show that the dominant focus on coordination, bringing relevant actors together and

creating a platform for their collaboration, is misleading: for an initiative to succeed the government often needs to employ all four capacities.

In section 6.3, we discuss the difficulties and dilemmas faced by authorities that aim to facilitate; these are not prominent in the positive discourse of modern governments. Our research shows how institutional stability, traditional administrative values, and a misfit between the capacities of the bureaucratic organisation and the needs of a dynamic societal initiative causes unexpected unease for authorities. The choice of facilitation, which seems a logical response to societal and economic developments, often proves to be an ill-considered one. Facilitating non-governmental initiatives proves to be complex and demanding.

In section 6.4, we describe the various ways in which authorities cope with the difficulties that they encounter and how these sometimes lead to a shift away from facilitation. Authorities introduce performance criteria to track an initiative's results or they take a role as network manager, and this means that their activities resemble those of the government in New Public Management or New Public Governance. We state that, in coping with the difficulties and dilemmas that come with facilitation, authorities move to other forms of governance. This raises the question of whether government facilitation is sustained as a separate mode of governance. In section 6.5, we discuss the results and unintended consequences of authorities' choice of facilitation.

It is not all doom and gloom however; our research shows some practices of government facilitation in which authorities give external initiators space but do not leave them to themselves; where authorities enthuse non-governmental actors with a rousing discourse but do not raise false expectations; and where initiatives receive sufficient support but are not taken over by the government. In the sixth section, of this conclusion we sum up several factors for successful government facilitation that we derive from our research, leading to the formulation of some recommendations for authorities that aim to facilitate. We then discuss what our research results mean for government facilitation as scientific concept, and we end by discussing the generalisability of our findings and suggestions for future research.

## **6.2 THE DIVERSITY IN GOVERNMENT FACILITATION**

### **Administrative capacities and facilitative actions**

In the available literature the descriptions of what facilitating authorities actually do are rather general (e.g. Salamon, 2001; Vigoda, 2002). Governments' discourse might lead one to believe that facilitating non-governmental initiatives is rather straightforward. An image is sketched of a government that does less, thereby giving space to societal initiatives that, with a little governmental support, will automatically blossom. Our research

shows, however, that there is more to it than the unspecified 'letting go' and 'giving space'. The focus in Chapter 2 is on how public authorities facilitate non-governmental initiatives. A distinction is made between four capacities, and associated actions, that facilitating authorities can employ. Table 2.1 in Chapter 2 gives a detailed overview of how authorities can employ their analytical, coordination, regulatory, and delivery capacity to facilitate non-governmental initiatives. This classification makes it possible to undertake a structured evaluation of government facilitation, compare cases, and evaluate the effectiveness and results of different facilitating actions.

A number of things stand out: first, we find that authorities that aim to facilitate are keen to employ their coordination capacity. They choose, for example, to organise network meetings or create an online platform for stakeholders to connect. From our analysis of authorities' discourse, discussed in Chapter 3, it also appears that the authorities see bringing relevant actors together and facilitating their collaboration as a prominent part of their envisioned role as facilitator. These activities are relatively cheap to conduct and involve few risks; the government does not make investments and does not have to take a stand in politically sensitive cases. It can be necessary to bring relevant external actors together and facilitate their collaboration. Our research shows, however, that in the Dutch water sector often it is insufficient to let initiatives succeed. Frequently, there is a lack of internal communication between the various authorities involved to ensure public alignment (Duijn et al., 2019).

Secondly, the employment of analytical capacity – for example by opening up governmental data, pro-actively exploring possibilities with external initiators, and commissioning research that will benefit the initiatives – is an important tool for facilitating authorities. Authorities have access to essential information that non-governmental actors often lack, for example about public assets or environmental conditions. It is not straightforward, however, for authorities, to employ this capacity, especially not in the Dutch water sector, where collaboration with non-governmental actors is relatively new and sharing information does not fit with the dominant regime focused on prediction and control (Van Buuren et al., 2015).

Thirdly, employing regulatory capacity also proves to be a necessary and effective tool for facilitating governments. Besides (temporarily) abolishing and adjusting existing rules and regulations that hinder a non-governmental initiative, it is sometimes necessary to set up new rules. In the tidal energy projects in our study, the authorities had to decide how much fish mortality caused by the rotating turbines they allowed. The absence of rules to assess the conditions under which an initiative is allowed can be as much of a hindrance as too many rules. Close collaboration with the external initiators is essential here to arrive at tailor-made solutions. Authorities generally are hesitant to adjust rules but over time find that it is necessary for external initiatives.

Lastly, authorities are not always keen to employ their delivery capacity; direct financial support is not easily given to non-governmental initiatives. This might be because authorities initially chose facilitation as an austerity measure and because they do not consider that making investments a task of a facilitator. Indirectly however, facilitating authorities do employ a substantial amount of delivery capacity, for example in terms of working hours invested by civil servants. However, direct financial support from the government, for example in the form of a subsidy, is frequently needed for an initiative to succeed.

### **Two forms of facilitation**

Looking at the use of various administrative capacities, combined with other characteristics such as a certain discourse, we differentiate between two forms of facilitation: invitational facilitation and accommodating (in other chapters of this thesis also called restrained and limited) facilitation (see Table 6.1). This is another manifestation of the diversity in government facilitation.

In the case of accommodating facilitation, authorities accommodate non-governmental initiatives, but the support they give is limited. Authorities might, for example, support an initiative by adjusting rules or regulations that obstruct the initiative. Just like investments, the influence the government's influence in an initiative is generally low. The initiating project leadership lies with non-governmental actors, and they are consequently the ones responsible for realisation and exploitation. In their discourse, authorities that employ this form of facilitation emphasise the limitations of what they are able or willing to contribute. They unambiguously assign certain actions and responsibilities to non-governmental actors. An advantage of this approach is that potential initiators know what they can expect. A possible downside of this restrained form of facilitation is that it is somewhat aloof: external actors feel neither invited nor sufficiently enthused or convinced about what the government has to offer to them in terms of support. Authorities might choose such an approach if they had little interest in project realisation. Another possibility is that they believe that external initiators will materialise and succeed anyway; if authorities believe that non-governmental actors will realise their project without their discursive encouragements or support, the authorities can afford to opt for a restrained stance.

In the case of invitational facilitation, supporting non-governmental initiatives is a policy intention of a public authority; a public authority actively invites non-governmental actors to initiate a project. Initiators can often count on a significant amount of support of various kinds from the government. Besides regulatory support in the form of adjusted rules and regulations, the initiative might receive analytical support in the form of information and advice, coordination support in the form of access to networks and fora, and financial support, for example in the form of subsidies. With a discourse that emphasises the opportunities and the benefits for non-governmental actors, authorities try to entice them to take action. A disadvantage of this discourse is that authorities' ambitions and

limitations are less clear. Authorities will probably arouse non-governmental actors' interest and willingness to participate, but a possible danger is the emergence of a deadlock, as witnessed in the Brouwersdam case. Because of the government's proactive approach and enthusiastic communication, non-governmental actors expect the government to take the lead in project realisation. The government, however, aims for a facilitative role. Invitational facilitation can result in high transaction costs and false expectations, and can even harm the government's reputation as a trustworthy and reliable partner.

**Table 6.1 Context and characteristics of accommodating and invitational facilitation**

	Accommodating facilitation	Invitational facilitation
<b>Context</b>	Public willingness to accommodate non-governmental initiative but government focuses on own tasks	Public ambition to enhance non-governmental initiative to reach certain policy goals
<b>Government's discourse</b>	Factual and restrained, clear about initiators responsibilities, not very encouraging	Used to entice external actors to take the initiative, enthusiastic about opportunities, unclear about role divisions and limitations of governmental support.
<b>Governmental support</b>	Limited, on external initiators' requests, mainly regulatory and analytical, e.g. advice about permit application	Substantial, offered to potential initiators proactively, employment of all administrative capacities, including financial support

### 6.3 DIFFICULTIES AND DILEMMAS FOR THE FACILITATING GOVERNMENT

The literature on government facilitation mentions various reasons why it is difficult for authorities to facilitate non-governmental initiatives, for example because they are ultimately held accountable for the delivery of public services (McGuire, 2006; Meijer, 2016). Additionally, there are scholars that think government facilitation is undesirable, for example because it may have a negative impact on equality and democratic legitimacy (Haveri et al., 2009; Taylor, 2007). In governments' discourse however, facilitating non-governmental initiatives is mostly presented as rather straightforward and uncomplicated (Ossewaarde, 2014). Authorities focus on highlighting the opportunities for initiators and benefits for society. They envision a situation in which the government gives space by doing less, and non-governmental initiatives blossom with a little governmental support. There is relatively little attention for the downsides and difficulties of facilitating societal initiatives. Our study of authorities that actually tried to employ government facilitation gives insight into the complexity of this form of governance. We now highlight several of the difficulties that they encounter.

### **Too little versus too much involvement**

The differentiation between two forms of facilitation, invitational and accommodating, relates to a challenge for the facilitating government: finding a balance between, on the one hand, helping an initiative, giving it the necessary support for it to succeed and, on the other hand, leaving the initiative in the hands of the non-governmental actors, not taking it over as government.

Authorities find it difficult to stick to a collaborative or facilitative approach (Boonstra & Boelens, 2011; Brownill & Carpenter, 2009; Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Klijn & Teisman, 2003). Our cases show how difficult it is for authorities to find the right balance: authorities act too restrainedly for initiatives to succeed, as in the Afsluitdijk case; they are so involved that one could wonder whether their approach could still be called facilitation, as in the Marker Wadden case; or they are so dominant that non-governmental actors do not feel the need to take action and the government crowds out external initiative, as in the Brouwersdam case. The Oosterscheldekering is a case in which the authorities did find a good balance between supporting and giving space: the initiative received various forms of support from the authorities involved, who aligned their support in such a way that the private initiator got all the support they needed. At the same time, however, the project is now clearly in the hands of the turbine constructor that initiated it; this company is responsible for project realisation and exploitation.

There are various explanations for the tendency for both too little and too much involvement by facilitating authorities. Authorities can feel too restrained by traditional administrative values, such as equality and representativeness, to give the necessary support. They can become too involved because of to a lock in: after initial investments, authorities acquire a stake in project finalisation. We elaborate these dynamics in Chapter 5, and in paragraph 6.5 of this conclusion.

### **Being flexible versus being clear**

A related dilemma for authorities that emerges from our study is the balance between being clear and being flexible. The facilitating government must be clear about what it wants to achieve and what it is willing to do to achieve this. Our analysis of the Brouwersdam case shows the downside of inadequate expectation management. In this case, the public authorities employed a form of invitational facilitation: they repeatedly expressed their enthusiasm for the realisation of the tidal power plant without being explicit about the limits of the governmental support that private initiators could receive. As a consequence of this approach, combined with opportunism and unfamiliarity with this new form of governance on both sides, potential private initiators took a waiting stance. They expected the government to take the lead in financing the project. Besides managing expectations, it is important for a facilitating government to be flexible, to give space, find tailor-made solutions, and move along with the changing needs of a non-governmental initiative. It

is a challenge for authorities to strike a balance between being clear about expectations and their willingness to contribute to an initiative and being flexible enough to change these things when necessary. This balance is further discussed in the recommendations in section 6.5.

### **Facilitation versus negotiation**

It is a widely shared belief that government facilitation is a reaction to growing civic engagement and the willingness of non-governmental actors to initiate public value creation (Edelenbos et al., 2018). Although it is not hard to understand why non-governmental actors would take matters into their own hands, there are also good reasons for these actors to await government action, for example because in some cases the government can create public value faster, more cheaply, or better. Our research shows that there can be a difference in interest between initiators and the government. We add this observation to the literature that mentions the potential differences in interest between societal initiators and the wider population (Edelenbos et al., 2018; Meijer, 2016). In our study, the private actors in the Brouwersdam case, whose initiatives the government aims to facilitate, do not necessarily have an interest in the government having a facilitating role. They would prefer to act as a contractor and get paid by the government. What the authorities in this case describes as a 'shared search'<sup>4</sup> into the feasibility of a power plant can sometimes better be described as a negotiation. There is a dilemma between, on the one hand, collaboration and facilitation of non-governmental actors and, on the other hand, negotiating with them.

Non-governmental actors that are invited by the government to create public value can consequently have an interest in downplaying their own resources, capacity, and willingness to act. This way, they hope to receive as much support from the government as possible. Another reason why private actors might not fully disclose their capacities in, what the government sees as, a 'shared search for viable solutions' is competition and commercially sensitive information. This will be the case especially if multiple private actors, potentially competitors, are participating. This image of the facilitation process, of a process full of strategy, negotiation, and opposing interests, does not accord with the image generally sketched in some of the literature in which the facilitating government brings together non-governmental actors, creates a forum for their peaceful collaboration, and streamlines the process as an objective outsider (e.g. Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Sørensen & Torfing: 2011, 2012). The government often is as much of a stakeholder as non-governmental actors are, especially in the Dutch water sector which we studied.

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4 'Het werd een gezamenlijke zoektocht naar haalbare oplossingen' (Verslag van de precompetitieve fase Getijdencentrale, p. 2).

### **Traditional democratic values and organisational misfits as explanations of the difficulties encountered**

In Chapter 4, we conceptualise the dilemmas encountered by facilitating authorities as dilemmas between different types of administrative values: theta, lambda, and sigma values (Hood, 1991). Generally speaking, theta values are traditional democratic values, lambda values relate to professionalism, and sigma values relate to efficiency. The general picture is that the traditional democratic values can form a hindrance to a facilitating approach. For facilitation, things such as flexibility, customisation, and making exceptions are important. This is often at odds with values such as predictability, representativeness, and equal access. Others also point to this tension (Haveri et al., 2009; Meijer, 2016; Taylor, 2007). In the Marker Wadden case the government struggled with the initiator's project proposal because it did not meet the requirements of the market consultation that the government had just conducted. Consequently, the authorities had to find a way to justify their decision to support the initiative financially.

The way public authorities are organised is related to the traditional administrative values. Our study shows an organisational misfit between the government and the non-governmental initiatives that it aims to facilitate. Bureaucratic organisations are not equipped to facilitate external initiatives and lack the necessary tools, resources, and competences. An example of an organisational factor that complicates government facilitation is the strict compartmentalisation of responsibilities between public organisations. The goals of a societal initiative are often not easily ascribed to a particular organisation; they can be broad and multidimensional. In the Afsluitdijk case, the private initiatives are expected to contribute to regional development, innovation, and sustainability. As a consequence, non-governmental actors went from pillar to post in their search for governmental support. In the Oosterscheldekering case, there were no regulations available to decide on the unusual request of the private initiator to generate renewable energy at the public dam. In the Marker Wadden case, the standardised working methods of the water authority obstructed its collaboration with Natuurmonumenten. In Chapter 5, we discuss the fact that institutions, such as the way the government works, are hard to change. So, although politicians and governors might be in favour of government facilitation, it is not easily implemented.

## **6.4 THE DYNAMICS OF GOVERNMENT FACILITATION**

### **Strategies to cope with difficulties and dilemmas**

We have just concluded that traditional democratic values, such as legality and representativeness, can form a barrier to government facilitation. In our cases however, we see that authorities that face a dilemma between different values adopt certain strategies

to cope with the dilemma. This way, they can sustain their facilitating approach without fully abandoning their democratic values. In Chapter 4, we discuss how authorities use casuistry, hybridisation, cycling, and firewalls (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008) as coping strategies.

In the case of casuistry, authorities assess dilemmas case by case and make pragmatic decisions in finding case-specific solutions, including making exceptions. This happened in the Marker Wadden case when the government decided to put the project financing in an external bank account to safeguard it from future political decision making. In the case of hybridisation, authorities let different values coexist, they find a middle way, for example by including established practices in new ones. This happened when the government did not put the project out to tender but made an open call for participation. Cycling means dividing attention on different values sequentially over time and reverting to traditional administrative values when necessary. The government employed this strategy when it had to open up its communication with Natuurmonumenten after a period of negotiation behind closed doors. Erecting firewalls is a coping strategy in which authorities uphold traditional administrative values by separating governmental responsibilities between different departments of a public organisation. The government set up a knowledge and innovation programme in the Marker Wadden case, separate from project realisation, to safeguard policy goals.

We find that, in general, the authorities in our cases deal with dilemmas in a relatively ad hoc way. This is reflected in the coping strategies most frequently employed: casuistry and hybridization. In these specific situations, this generally worked out fine. A question is, however, whether the tailor-made solutions authorities come up with are fit to use in future situations, or whether they will have to keep reinventing the wheel as facilitating authorities.

### **Authorities' erratic search for a good strategy**

The difficulties and dilemmas that facilitating authorities encounter, and the way they deal with these, lead to specific dynamics in authorities' strategy. In Chapter 5, we show how authorities in various projects, mostly as a result of institutional factors, move from the intention to collaborate with non-governmental actors, to accommodating facilitation, to invitational facilitation. After they pull back and retreat to an approach in which they give very little support to external initiators, they then gradually increase their investments and influence in the non-governmental initiatives, what leads to a U-turn shaped pattern in their strategy. The investments they make and the influence they gain reinforce each other. In almost all cases under study, the authorities eventually take up a more prominent role than envisioned beforehand. The explanations for this change of strategy are mostly process factors. Along the way, authorities gain a stake in a project and acquire an inter-

est in project realisation; they get locked-in and are no longer the objective facilitator on the side lines.

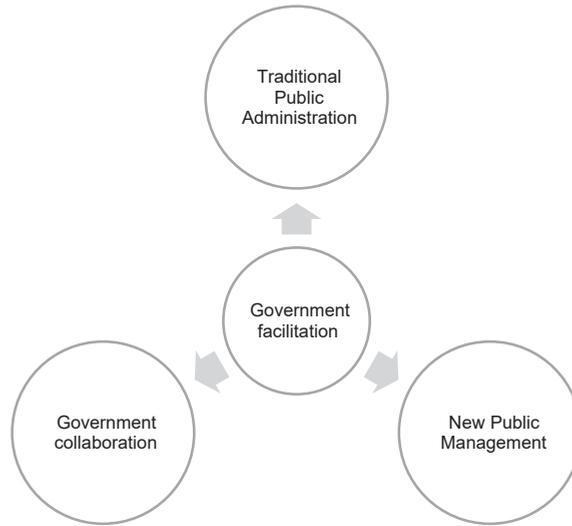
In the introduction to this thesis, we make a conceptual divide between three government models: Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and New Public Governance. New Public Governance consists of two sub-parts: government collaboration, and government facilitation. Authorities that have the intention to employ government facilitation often end up employing another government model.

Often, the government assumes a prominent and permanent role as network and process manager. It becomes an active participant in the governance network itself because solely bringing non-government actors together to kick-start their collaboration proves not to be enough. The role of the government then resembles the role of a government in the government collaboration-side of New Public Governance.

In other cases the government ends up having a role that resembles the government's role in New Public Management because it decides to start a tender procedure and commission a private actor to realise a project. We see this in the Marker Wadden case where the government tried to include private actors as project partners at the private actors' expense but eventually had to conduct a traditional tender to finance their work. Uncertainty about the results of the non-governmental initiative can also lead to the introduction of strict performance and output criteria to receive governmental support, again resembling New Public Management.

Alternatively, giving support to particular societal initiators and not to others can lead to the neglect of traditional administrative values such as impartiality, legality, and legitimacy. The facilitating government can respond to this with new rules and bureaucracy, resembling Traditional Public Administration. Another reason why a facilitating government turns to a more traditional role is doubt about the professionalism and quality of an external initiative. As the government is held ultimately accountable, it might not resist the urge to take over.

Our analysis shows how difficult it is to sustain a facilitating strategy. Metaphorically speaking one could say that facilitation is in the middle of a web of government models; Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and government collaboration pull a facilitating government towards them like magnets, as visualised in Figure 6.1. It is a continuous balancing act for authorities. They are, for example, balancing between supporting but not taking over, and between letting go but not letting an initiative drop. Often, authorities end up employing a form of governance that contains so many elements of another model that one can ask whether what they are doing can still be called facilitation.



**Figure 6.1 Government models pull a facilitating governments towards them**

## 6.5 RESULTS OF GOVERNMENT FACILITATION

In Chapter 5, we analyse why the public authorities in our cases opt for government facilitation. Their motives mirror the reasons for government facilitation mentioned in the literature (e.g. Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016; Meijer, 2016; Thaler & Levin-Keitel, 2016). The idea that there will be better, more innovative solutions to public problems, that are more supported in society, and at less cost to the government is especially widespread among the authorities in our study.

Regarding the hope for better solutions to complex public problems, we can say that, in our cases, several innovative pieces of infrastructure have been realised. In the Marker Wadden project, hundreds of acres of new land have been formed in the Markermeer. Now, these marsh islands are inhabited by several plant and animal species and can be visited by boat. In the Oosterscheldekering, turbines to generate tidal energy have been installed in a primary flood defence, just as in the Afsluitdijk. At the Grevelingendam, a centre to test tidal turbines is under construction and the plans to realise a tidal power plant in the Brouwersdam are still in place. The national government recently decided to reserve €75 million to make a breach in the dam, which is a prerequisite for the realisation of a power plant.

In all these cases, non-governmental actors, facilitated by the government, invested resources that government lacked, such as innovative ideas, perseverance, persuasion, and knowledge about technical details. It is hard to say, however, whether the realisation of these innovative projects can be ascribed to the government's choice of facilitation.

We do not know what the results would have been if the government had not opted for facilitation but had, for example, put the projects out to contract.

We can say that, by opting for facilitation and letting other actors take the lead, the government lost its exclusive right to specify the results. Besides recourses, the non-governmental actors brought their own goals, and these were not necessarily the same as the government's goals. The results of initiatives facilitated by the government thus are not always the solutions as formulated by the government. The main environmental problem in the Markermeer area is an accumulation of sediments on the bottom of the lake but, contrary to what was hoped for, the Marker Wadden project does not really constitute a solution to this problem. Natuurmonumenten's main objective is to create a bird sanctuary.

Regarding societal support and satisfaction among stakeholders and shareholders, the projects in our study can generally count on broad support. They are innovative, appealing, and receive plenty of positive attention in the media. The role of the government and its collaboration with non-governmental actors is also positively reported on. The non-governmental initiators of the projects that succeeded (the Oosterscheldekering, the Grevelingendam test centre, blue energy at the Afsluitdijk, and the Marker Wadden) are generally satisfied with the authorities' facilitation and with the results. All of them, however, have also experienced difficulties in their collaboration with the government; they complain about bureaucracy, lengthy procedures, and ongoing uncertainty about subsidies. Most of them had hoped for more governmental support.

Regarding the authorities' hope to reduce costs by choosing facilitation, our study shows that government facilitation generally is a resource-intensive governance strategy. Depending on the capacity and willingness of non-governmental actors to take action, the government has to invest substantially to activate them, bring them together, and let them collaborate. Furthermore, the support needed by the initiators is ongoing, not limited to the start-up phase, and not limited to non-financial resources. Often, a significant financial contribution from the government, for example in the form of a subsidy, is indispensable. Consequently, there is probably less cost reduction for the government than it expected or hoped for when it opted for facilitation. However, compared to procuring an integrated energy and water works or new nature reserve by itself, letting non-governmental actors realise them at their expense is in all probability cheaper.

Besides these results in terms of assets, support, and cost reductions, a more indirect result of the government's facilitation of these initiatives is the learning experienced by authorities. Because this form of collaboration with external actors is new to the authorities in our study, the effort, transaction, and coordination costs are high. In all cases, the authorities worked in an ad hoc way; they repeatedly had to find instant, custom-made solutions in reaction to unexpected situations. Future projects could make use of the developed arrangements as a blueprint and might require fewer government resources.

In that case, the resources now used could be seen as an investment and part of a learning curve to adapt to this new role of facilitating government. However, a certain degree of customisation, flexibility, and adaptation is unavoidable; it is inherent in the practice of government facilitation. In Chapter 5, we show that the dynamics in every project are different and depend on the characteristics of the external initiator and the interaction between initiator and authority. There can be no standard procedure set in stone to facilitate non-governmental initiatives.

### **Unintended consequences**

To take stock of the results of government facilitation, it is important to look also a look at possible side effects or unintended consequences. Several scholars point to negative consequences in terms of inequality and legitimacy (Meijer, 2016; Taylor, 2007). According to some, democratic legitimacy can be harmed instead of enhanced by a choice of government facilitation (Alexander et al., 2016; Haveri et al., 2009). Our findings are consistent with the literature that stresses the Janus-faced nature of government facilitation; it can privilege certain actors and disadvantage others, especially less well-organised ones (Swyngedouw, 2005). In our study, we encountered this in the Marker Wadden case where the government issued an open call for participation but set the entry requirement very high: participants had to contribute at least €5 million. Several actors were disappointed that they could not join the project.

Besides equality, other administrative values can be at stake when authorities opt for facilitation. Because existing procedures often do not fit with the practice of facilitation, authorities come up with ad hoc procedures. In Chapter 4, we show how these procedures sometimes jeopardise traditional administrative values such as transparency, predictability, and reliability. In the Marker Wadden case, a group of landowners filed a complaint about the non-transparent decision making between the government and Natuurmonumenten. Under the Freedom of Information Act, the government then had to disclose its confidential communication with that NGO.

A related unintended consequence of a government's choice of facilitation is the harm it can cause to its relations with its external partners. In Chapter 5, we show how the government first employed a strategy of partnering in two cases; the authorities conducted an extensive market consultation and invited private actors to submit extensive plans for full area development. Then, they shifted to a strategy of limited facilitation and severely restrict the scope of the work and the role that the government will play in it. In the Marker Wadden case, the three private consortia that submitted their plans at the government's invitation were side-lined the moment Natuurmonumenten appeared. Such shifts leave the private actors feeling empty handed, weaken the government's credibility, and harm its relations with the private market.

## 6.6 SUCCESS FACTORS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT FACILITATION

### Success factors for government facilitation

Authorities that aim to facilitate non-governmental initiatives face various difficulties and dilemmas, they have to find ways to deal with these, and in doing this they have a hard time sustaining their facilitating approach. It is not all doom and gloom however; there are various cases in which the government has successfully facilitated external initiatives despite the difficulties and dilemmas. From our research, we derive several factors that contribute to such successful facilitation.

First, it proves to be beneficial if the government's communication both entices non-governmental actors to take action and also makes it clear what the government is willing and not willing to do to support potential initiators. Authorities have to find a balance between invitational and clear communication. With an upbeat discourse, the government attracts a lot of non-governmental actors, but, if the government's limits are not clear, such actors await public action. In multiple cases, we see that the government's failure to manage expectations caused confusion and irritation among non-governmental actors, reducing rather than increasing their willingness to act.

What appears obvious is that a prerequisite for successful government facilitation is the presence of a well-organised, competent initiative with goals that are (somewhat) in line with the government's goals. Authorities that aim to facilitate do not always seem to realise this though. Clear communication can contribute to the emergence of such an initiative. What is also important for potential non-governmental initiators is that there is really something in it for them (to earn, to learn, to demonstrate). A factor that contributes to successful facilitation thus is authorities not pressing their own policy goals too much and giving external initiators space to pursue their goals.

In the realisation phase of an initiative, a success factor is the employment of all administrative capacities to support the initiative: delivery, coordination, analytical, and regulatory. These capacities do not have to be employed by one and the same public authority; through public alignment various authorities can complement one another. Difficulties and dilemmas will inevitably occur, and, if the government manages to cope with these by introducing certain arrangements, this will contribute to a better fit between the public organisation and the external initiative. Positive feedback and increasing returns can subsequently lead to a virtuous circle towards more facilitation.

### Recommendations for the facilitating government

This summing up of success factors leads to the formulation of several recommendations for authorities that aim to facilitate non-governmental initiative. The first recommendation for authorities is that they make up their mind. Concretely: think beforehand about why

you are opting for facilitation, what you want to achieve, and what you are willing and not willing to do to achieve this. Authorities should think about what actions and investments they expect from other actors and what capacities they are able and willing to employ to support them. The type of facilitation authorities can best choose depends on this.

A central question should be whether there are specific policy goals that can be better achieved by, or together with, non-governmental actors. Then, invitational facilitation is a good choice. Necessary condition for this choice of strategy is that the authority is able and willing to invest a substantial amount of resources, become project partner and stay involved after the initiation phase. It might also be necessary to activate potential initiators if there are no initiatives present yet.

Are there no pressing policy goals but is an authority nevertheless able and willing to facilitate an external initiative if it emerges? Then accommodating facilitation is a fit. Authorities should realise, however, that this form of facilitation can be costly too in terms of adjusting the organisation’s standard working methods and finding tailor made solutions for the initiative at hand. Table 6.2 gives an overview of this choice and necessary conditions for the two forms of facilitation.

**Table 6.2 Ideal situation and conditions for accommodating and invitational facilitation.**

	Accommodating facilitation	Invitational facilitation
<b>Ideal situation</b>	Government is willing to accommodate non-governmental initiative, but does not aim to achieve specific policy goals with it	Government has specific policy goals that it aims to achieve by facilitating non-governmental initiative
<b>Realistic goals</b>	Enhance democratic legitimacy and general goodwill in society, create extra public value	Achieve specific policy goals by, or together with, non-governmental actors
<b>Communication strategy</b>	Clear about opportunities and responsibilities for non-governmental actors; emphasises limited involvement and contribution by government	Activating and enthusing; invitational, highlights opportunities for non-governmental actors; clear about government goals, proposed role divisions, and (limits of) government’s contribution
<b>Necessary conditions</b>	(Part of) governmental organisation is willing and able to accommodate initiative, find tailor-made solutions, and make exceptions and concessions	Government is willing and able to activate non-governmental actors, bring them together, give ongoing support, be involved for a longer duration of time, and invest financially

What authorities should also assess is the presence and capacity of non-governmental initiators. This will not be easy, because external actors might have an interest in not being frank; they can overstate their capacities to attract the government’s interest or downplay their capacities to generate more governmental support. Another part of the inventory is an assessment of other public authorities’ willingness to join and also facilitate

external initiatives. This allows for public alignment; others might be willing to supply the capacities that one lacks.

It is important that authorities clearly communicate their choices to potential initiators and manage their expectations. This all might seem somewhat counterintuitive; the general idea is that a facilitating government should have an open, wait-and-see attitude. It is characterised as operating reactively and at a distance (Van der Steen et al., 2018) and with little emphasis on reaching set results or outcomes (Edelenbos et al., 2017b). On the basis of our research however, we recommend authorities to take stock and speak out when they opt for facilitation. This does not mean that choices are set in stone; a facilitating strategy is likely to change along the way when an authority reacts responsively to the developments in a project and to the needs of an initiative.

What seems obvious is that a non-governmental initiative will emerge only if there is really something to gain for potential initiators. Authorities that employ invitational facilitation are very much focused on their own policy goals and can lose sight of the wins for external actors. Authorities have a role in creating beneficial conditions for an initiative, for example by allowing private actors to make money by using public assets and by lowering the administrative burden for an initiative.

When considering whether it should facilitate a specific initiative, an authority should evaluate whether the initiative enhances its own policy goals (in the case of invitational facilitation) or does not interfere with these goals (in the case of accommodating facilitation). This also applies to traditional administrative values; facilitation of the initiative should not jeopardise these values too much. Furthermore, the non-governmental initiators should be both competent and in need of government support. To be eligible for facilitation, an initiative should thus have a high chance of success but at the same require some government support to achieve that success.

Despite an authority's inventory of its own goals and capacities and those of the other actors involved prior to facilitating, there will be difficulties and dilemmas on the way no matter what, if only because facilitation does not match with an organisation's institutions and established ways of working. The coping strategies discussed in Chapter 4 of this theses can help to deal with the difficulties encountered as a result of institutional stability and the dominance of traditional, administrative values. Conflicts can be mitigated, for example, by introducing changes step-by-step or by erecting firewalls, meaning that governmental responsibilities are divided between different departments. The new practice of facilitating an external initiative is then conducted separately from the rest of the organisation, for example in a pilot project. Positive feedback from this pilot can subsequently pave the way for more facilitation.

## 6.7 GOVERNMENT FACILITATION AS A SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT

In the introduction to this thesis, we discuss how various public administration scholars conceptualise government facilitation as a separate model of government (e.g. Arnstein, 1969; Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Van der Steen et al., 2018; Vigoda, 2002). After our research, what can we say about government facilitations right to exist as a distinct government model?

In Chapter 2, we analyse how Dutch national and local authorities facilitate four external initiatives. The policy instruments they use are not new, but the specific mix of instruments employed and the emphasis placed on some of them by the government is. In Chapter 3 we further analyse governments' discourse regarding facilitation. We show that authorities describe its own role as a small one, focused on coordination between external actors. Many of the proposed governmental actions are reactive; they presuppose non-governmental action. On the basis of government communication, one could thus say that a facilitating government indeed is a different government than a government in Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, or New Public Governance. Its role is different, more reactive and smaller, just as the literature states (Edelenbos et al., 2017b; Van der Steen et al., 2018; Vigoda, 2002; Westerink et al., 2017).

Our research, however, is not limited to the literature and governments' communication; we also studied the facilitating government in action. We show that ideal type facilitation as described in theory and in policy documents often does not endure in the fuzzy reality of governing. For the government, facilitating non-governmental initiative leads to several difficulties and dilemmas, which we describe in Chapters 4 and 5, and, dealing with these dilemmas, the facilitating government often ends up employing a different government model than intended.

### Facilitation as intention

We conclude that government facilitation in many cases is mainly an intention of the government. It is the starting point of a collaboration with non-governmental actors, a position that an authority takes to make its intentions clear. It includes the intention not to be the main initiator, owner, and financier of a project and focus on facilitative and coordinative acts such as bringing societal actors together and supporting them, for example by removing obstructive regulations. Maintaining this position is difficult; institutional stability, path dependency, and other barriers, difficulties, and dilemmas pull the facilitating government to other models. However, even though the actual actions of a facilitating government change over time and in practice there is a lot of overlap between what a facilitating government does and what governments in other models do, governments' intentions, and relatedly their discourse, are actually different.

It is important to study this intention and discourse because they affect a government's relation with non-governmental actors and they put a stamp on the eventual governance arrangement between them. Discourse is not just a governmental tool through which to inform about changed relations between government and society, it is a means to change these relations (Kjær, 2011; Skelcher et al., 2005). As Dickinson and Sullivan (2014: 17) state: such discourses 'have political purposes that are (...) about influencing actors to engage in processes of change through altering perceptions of what and how services should be delivered.' We therefore stick to the claim that it is important to conceptually distinguish government facilitation from government collaboration, as sub-parts of New Public Governance. They are, at least in theory substantially different, authorities increasingly seem to opt for facilitation and there is little research on this part of New Public Governance.

## **6.8 GENERALISABILITY OF OUR FINDINGS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **Generalisability of our findings**

In the introduction to this thesis, we elaborate our choice of research design and the consequences of this choice for the generalisability of our findings. We believe that government facilitation, being a complex and relatively little studied topic, can best be explored through qualitative case studies (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2001). Conducting case studies allows in-depth knowledge to be gained in dynamic environments and situations. It leads to a detailed and contextualized understanding of the object under study; it does not allow for direct generalisations to other contexts or situations (Yin, 2014; 2018). This does not mean that our findings cannot be useful for practitioners and scholars studying government facilitation outside the Dutch water sector. Our hypothesis is that many of our findings will also apply to other situations of government facilitation, but to a lesser extent. We expect that the dynamics, the difficulties, and the dilemmas that authorities encounter, and the strategies needed to cope with these difficulties, are larger and more extreme in the Dutch water sector compared to other sectors. Facilitation might be easier and less complicated in other sectors.

Our cases can be considered as extreme cases (Yin, 2018) because the Dutch water sector is strongly government-led, publicly funded, and anchored in laws and regulations with a focus on risk avoidance (Roovers & Van Buuren, 2014; Van Buuren et al., 2015). Facilitating non-governmental initiatives is genuinely new for the authorities in this sector and substantially different than their institutionalised way of working. Because the initiatives are innovative and are located at public assets, which are owned and managed by the government and are vital for flood protection, the government cannot stand aside and

let the non-governmental actors do their thing; the authorities' involvement is essential. Future research will have to show, however, whether our hypothesis that our findings apply also to other situations of government facilitation, but to a lesser extent, can be accepted. In other sectors, there will of course also be other kinds of difficulties, coping mechanisms, and strategy changes. It would be interesting to compare those to learn more about the causes of difficulties and effects of coping strategies and see what different sectors might learn from each other.

Furthermore, we believe that the concepts that we use, such as the four administrative capacities that authorities can employ to facilitate external initiatives (based on Lodge & Wegrich, 2014), the facilitation frame elements, the two forms of facilitation, and the coping mechanisms (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008) could also be used to study different sectors and circumstances. It would be interesting to find out whether and how these concepts apply to other situations in which authorities facilitate non-governmental initiatives and find out if they can be used to make comparisons between different settings.

### **Suggestions for future research**

A first research question that stems from our results, is what the exact organisational conditions are that enable public authorities to facilitate non-governmental initiatives. We show that despite the many difficulties and dilemmas, sometimes authorities successfully facilitate external initiatives. They pick strategies to cope with the encountered difficulties and resist the lure of falling back on traditional ways of working. Future research should give more insights into the conditions that should be met, for example in terms competences and discretionary authority for professionals, tools and resources, and institutional frameworks. A follow-up question is what authorities can do to meet these conditions and make their organisation fit for facilitation.

Another topic for future research is the strategic game between the government and non-governmental actors that emerges when the government opts for facilitation. We show that the government is not an objective outsider in government facilitation, it is stakeholder and shareholder and its interest often do not match those of external initiators. This leads to a process in which both (have to) make strategic choices. Future research should provide more insights into the interaction between government and its partners, and into the drivers of, and barriers to, their collaboration. Part of this strategic game is the government's communication. Based on our research we state that the communication of authorities should both enthuse and inform potential initiators. Those two objectives can, however, conflict. It is hard to pinpoint the optimal balance between enthusing and activating, and managing initiators' expectations. Future research, for example in the form of an experiment, could help to generate more knowledge about the actual causal effect of governments' communication and help find this balance.

A last question that stems from our research is if and how government facilitation can become more mainstream. We observe that the authorities in our cases work relatively ad hoc; they lack behind events somewhat and search for a tailor-made solution to every new situation. We raise the question whether government facilitation could ever become more of a routine because it will always need a flexible, pragmatic government that moves along with the needs of the initiative at hand. We also state, however, that it is important to have some general rules or blueprints so that authorities do not have to keep reinventing the wheel. Future research should help to develop these.

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# Appendices



## APPENDIX A. INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

### Afsluitdijk case

Respondent function	Respondent organisation	Time of interview	Location of interview
Project manager Energy 'The New Afsluitdijk'	Energy Valley	February 2014	Erasmus University Rotterdam
CEO 'Blue Energy'	REDstack	February 2014	REDstack, Sneek
Project manager Afsluitdijk	Rijkswaterstaat	March 2014	Rijkswaterstaat, Utrecht
CEO	Tocado Tidal Turbines	March 2014	Tocado, Den Oever
Project manager 'The New Afsluitdijk'	Province of Friesland	March 2014	Province Hall, Leeuwarden
Advisor 'The New Afsluitdijk'	Province of Noord-Holland	April 2014	Province Hall, Haarlem
Stakeholder manager project Afsluitdijk	Rijkswaterstaat	April 2014	Rijkswaterstaat, Utrecht
Project manager 'Sustainable Energy'	Strukton	May 2014	Strukton, Utrecht
Project manager 'Tidal Energy Afsluitdijk'	Tocado Tidal Turbines	June 2014	Tocado, Den Oever
Project manager 'The New Afsluitdijk'	Province of Friesland	December 2014	Province Hall, Leeuwarden

### Oosterscheldekering case

Respondent function	Respondent organisation	Time of interview	Location of interview
Policy advisor Energy and Climate	Province of Zeeland	July 2013	Province Hall, Middelbrug
Policy advisor	Rijkswaterstaat	July 2014	Rijkswaterstaat, Rotterdam
Program manager OP-Zuid subsidy	Stimulus	September 2014	Eindhoven
Policy advisor Energy and Climate	Province of Zeeland	October 2014	Province Hall, Middelbrug

### Grevelingen test centre case

Respondent function	Respondent organisation	Time of interview	Location of interview
Managing director	BT Projects	July 2014	Erasmus University Rotterdam

**Brouwersdam tidal power plant case**

Respondent function	Respondent organisation	Time of interview	Conducted by colleague
Project director Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam	Rijkswaterstaat	May 2014	
Consultant	Antea Group	May 2014	X
Policy advisor Brouwersdam	Province of Zeeland	May 2014	X
Policy advisor Brouwersdam	Province of Zeeland	May 2014	X
Policy advisor Brouwersdam	Province of South Holland	May 2014	X
Advisor Water Governance	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment	May 2014	X
Policy advisor Brouwersdam	Ministry of Economic Affairs	May 2014	X
Policy advisor Brouwersdam	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment	May 2014	X
Director	Marina Port Zélande	May 2014	X
Policy advisor Brouwersdam	Municipality Schouwen- Duiveland	May 2014	X
Policy advisor Brouwersdam	Province of Zeeland	June 2014	X
Business development manager	Tocado	July 2014	X
Project director Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam	Rijkswaterstaat	May 2016	
Policy advisor Waterways	Rijkswaterstaat	May 2016	
Project member Tidal Power Plant Brouwersdam	Province of South-Holland	June 2016	

**Marker Wadden case**

Respondent function	Respondent organisation	Time of interview	Location of interview
Project manager Marker Wadden	Rijkswaterstaat	January 2016	Rijkswaterstaat, The Hague
Research manager Marker Wadden	Top sector Water	February 2016	Rijkswaterstaat, The Hague
Former policy advisor	Ministry of Economic Affairs	February 2016	
Policy advisor	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment	February 2016	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, The Hague
Project director Marker Wadden	Natuurmonumenten	February 2016	Province Hall, Lelystad
Policy advisor Marker Wadden	Province of Flevoland	April 2016	Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, Utrecht
Project control manager	Rijkswaterstaat	May 2016	Rijkswaterstaat, Utrecht
Advisor on Public-private partnerships	Taskforce Delta technology	May 2016	Private address, Hagestein

## APPENDIX B. DOCUMENTS ANALYSED

### Afsluitdijk case

#### Documents included in document analysis Chapter 3

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- Rijksoverheid, Provincie Fryslând, Provincie Noord-Holland, Gemeente Súdwest- Fryslând, Gemeente Wieringen (2011). *Bestuursovereenkomst Toekomst Afsluitdijk*. 23 December. Retrieved from
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- Rijkswaterstaat (2013). *Nota van Antwoord. Behorende bij Startdocument Planuitwerking Afsluitdijk*. 10 December. Retrieved from [www.deafsluitdijk.nl/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Nota-van-antwoord-planuitwerking-Afsluitdijk\\_tcm174-355255.pdf](http://www.deafsluitdijk.nl/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Nota-van-antwoord-planuitwerking-Afsluitdijk_tcm174-355255.pdf)
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## Brouwersdam tidal power plant case

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### Marker Wadden case

- BoerCroon (2013). *Van droomproject naar stapsgewijze realisatie. Overzicht van maatschappelijke baten van Marker Wadden*. 17 June.
- Boskalis (2015). *Inschrijving deel 2. EMVI 2 - Landschappelijke kwaliteit vogelparadijs*. 29 May.
- Gemeente Lelystad & Natuurmonumenten (2013). *Milieueffectrapport ten behoeve van het bestemmingsplan Marker Wadden*. June. Retrieved from <https://docplayer.nl/8065103-Milieueffectrapport-ten-behoeve-van-het-bestemmingsplan-marker-wadden-definitief-gemeente-lelystad-natuurmonumenten.html>
- Natuurmonumenten. (2011). *Marker Wadden. Droom van een vogelparadijs*. September. Retrieved from <https://docplayer.nl/12325188-Marker-wadden-droom-van-een-vogelparadijs.html>

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- Natuurmonumenten, Rijksoverheid, Provincie Flevoland & Stichting Groenfonds (2014). *Kad-erovereenkomst Eerste Fase Marker Wadden*. 11 March. Retrieved from <https://rijksoverheid.archiefweb.eu>
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- Rijksoverheid & Natuurmonumenten (2014). *Overeenkomst tot vestiging erfpacht. Eerste Fase Marker Wadden (Markermeer)*. 14 March. Retrieved from <https://rijksoverheid.archiefweb.eu>
- Rijkswaterstaat (2015). *Projectplan Waterwet 'Eerste Fase Marker Wadden'*. 11 June. Retrieved from <https://rijksoverheid.archiefweb.eu>

## APPENDIX C. NUMBER OF CODED TEXT FRAGMENTS FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS CHAPTER 3

Coding	Number of quotations
Diagnostic Frame	58
Prognostic Frame	11
Prognostic Frame for authorities	100
Prognostic Frame for external actors	60
Motivational frame	28
Motivational frame for authorities	19
Motivational frame for external actors	23
<b>Total quotations</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>Total unique quotations</b>	<b>198</b>

Coding	Number of quotations
Visualisation	65
Promotion	17
Consolidation	31
Presentation	77
Invitation	20
Demarcation	15
Designation	33
Offer	28
Lure	16
Justification	19
<b>Total quotations</b>	<b>321</b>
<b>Total unique quotations</b>	<b>224</b>

## Summary



## THE EMERGE OF GOVERNMENT FACILITATION

Public authorities are exploring new ways to relate to non-governmental – public and private – actors. They aim to collaborate with these actors, and recently authorities worldwide also increasingly seem to opt to facilitate the actions of these non-governmental actors. Politicians speak of a ‘Big Society’ (Kisby 2014: 484), a ‘do democracy’, or a ‘participation society’ (Rijksoverheid, 2013a) in which non-governmental actors take the lead in public value creation and authorities facilitate their actions instead of taking action themselves (Blunkett, 2003; Taylor, 2003). The ‘new’ government is presented as small, lean, humble, and obliging to an energetic society, making room, giving space, and (only) helping where necessary (Hajer, 2011; Kisby, 2010; Van der Steen et al., 2018). This new order of things is sketched as being rather bright and unambiguous, government facilitation as uncomplicated. An optimistic picture is painted about governments facilitating non-governmental initiatives (Ossewaarde, 2014). The Dutch government, for example, simply states that society has a growing ‘self-organising capacity’ and, in reaction, the government will ‘let go, facilitate, and give space’ to societal initiatives (doedemocratie.net). It is believed that this form of governance will increase democratic legitimacy (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016), enable budget cuts (Meijer, 2016), and lead to more public value (Bryson et al., 2014) and to more innovative solutions to public problems (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, 2012).

While authorities increasingly seem to opt for facilitation, there is relatively little research on this form of governance. In most of the available literature, for example on collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008), public–private partnerships (Greve & Hodge, 2013) and collaborative innovation (Sørensen & Torfing, 2012) the government still plays a very prominent role. Furthermore, the available literature on government facilitation is mainly theoretical and the government’s role is discussed in rather general terms (e.g. Salamon 2001; Vigoda, 2002). Not much is yet known about what authorities that aim to facilitate actually do, what their struggles and successes are, and with what effects they facilitate non-governmental initiatives.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The empirical observation of public authorities’ focus on the facilitation of non-governmental actors, combined with the (lack of accurate) academic knowledge on this topic, led to the formulation of the following research question and sub-research questions:

*Why, how, and with what effects do governments facilitate the actions of non-governmental actors to produce public goods?*

*1 What is and is not facilitation? How does government facilitation relate to government models such as Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management, and New Public Governance?*

*2 What do (and do not) public authorities do when they facilitate the actions of non-governmental actors? What tools do they use? What forms of facilitation can be distinguished?*

*3 Why do public authorities (choose to) facilitate the actions of non-governmental actors? What are the explanations behind such a strategy?*

*4 What are the conditions for successful government facilitation? What capacities, resources, relations, and networks do public authorities need in order to facilitate?*

*5 With what effects do public authorities facilitate non-governmental actors? How does the choice of specific forms of facilitation affect the governance processes?*

We answer our research questions by conducting five in-depth case studies. In the four empirical chapters of the thesis different sets of these cases are discussed and compared to answer the research questions. This multiple case study design fits the topic and the type of questions that we aim to answer. Our study is explorative (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2001); the case study design allows in-depth knowledge to be gained on the complex phenomenon that government facilitation is (Stake, 1998; Yin, 2018). The aim is to gain a better insight into the dynamics of government facilitation by studying a small number of cases in detail. A consequence of our research design, our study will not lead to empirical knowledge that is easy to generalise.

Through strategic sampling, we selected five cases in which Dutch water authorities facilitate, or aim to facilitate, non-governmental initiatives. The initiatives are taken by private actors and by an NGO. The Dutch water sector is an interesting sector in which to study government facilitation because traditionally, the sector is government-led, publicly funded, and strongly anchored in laws and regulations (Van Buuren et al., 2015). Water management focuses primarily on controlling water, safety, and risk avoidance (Roovers & Van Buuren, 2014; Van Buuren et al., 2015). Values that are important in government facilitation, such as adaptation, flexibility, and responsiveness, thus seem at odds with the dominant values in the Dutch water sector. The selected cases can therefore be considered extreme cases (Yin, 2018). The selection includes four cases in which the authorities aim to facilitate sustainable energy generation by private actors at public water works (Afsluitdijk, Oosterscheldekering, Brouwersdam tidal power plant, and Grevelingendam tidal test centre) and one case in which an NGO (Natuurmonumenten) took the initiative to

realise a new nature reserve (Marker Wadden) in a freshwater lake. We collected our data through a combination of document analysis, interviews, and (participant) observations.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The picture that emerges from our study of the facilitating government is one of a seeking and a struggling government; a government that feels the need to do things differently, tries to do things differently, encounters significant barriers and dilemmas in doing this, and in reaction sometimes sees no other solution than to revert to familiar ways of working. Our research results add some footnotes to the optimistic, uncomplicated, and unambiguous image of government facilitation that emerges from governments' discourse and some of the literature (Ossewaarde, 2014).

### **Four administrative capacities to facilitate non-governmental initiative**

In Chapter 2 of the thesis we analyse how public authorities facilitate non-governmental initiatives. A distinction is made between four capacities that facilitating authorities can employ: analytical, coordination, regulatory, and delivery capacity. This classification makes it possible to undertake a structured evaluation of government facilitation, compare cases, and evaluate the effectiveness and results of different facilitating actions.

We show that authorities that aim to facilitate are keen to employ their coordination capacity. They organise network meetings or create an online platform for stakeholders to connect. Our research shows, however, that in the Dutch water sector often it is insufficient to let initiatives succeed. Secondly, the employment of analytical capacity – for example by opening up governmental data, pro-actively exploring possibilities with external initiators, and commissioning research that will benefit the initiatives – is an important tool for facilitating authorities. It is not straightforward, however, for authorities, to employ this capacity, especially not in the Dutch water sector, where collaboration with non-governmental actors is relatively new and sharing information does not fit with the dominant regime focused on prediction and control (Van Buuren et al., 2015).

Thirdly, employing regulatory capacity also proves to be a necessary and effective tool for facilitating governments. Besides (temporarily) abolishing and adjusting existing rules and regulations that hinder a non-governmental initiative, it is sometimes necessary to set up new rules. Close collaboration with the external initiators is essential here to arrive at tailor-made solutions. Authorities generally are hesitant to adjust rules but over time find that it is necessary for external initiatives. Lastly, authorities are not always keen to employ their delivery capacity; direct financial support is not easily given to non-governmental initiatives. Indirectly however, facilitating authorities do employ a substantial amount of delivery capacity, for example in terms of working hours invested by

civil servants. However, direct financial support from the government, for example in the form of a subsidy, is frequently needed for an initiative to succeed.

### **Two forms of facilitation**

Looking at the use of various administrative capacities, combined with other characteristics such as a certain discourse, we differentiate between two forms of facilitation: invitational facilitation and accommodating facilitation

In the case of accommodating facilitation, authorities accommodate non-governmental initiatives, but the support they give is limited. Just like investments, the influence the government's influence in an initiative is generally low. The initiating project leadership lies with non-governmental actors, and they are consequently the ones responsible for realisation and exploitation. In their discourse, authorities emphasise the limitations of what they are able or willing to contribute. An advantage of this approach is that potential initiators know what they can expect. A possible downside of this restrained form of facilitation is that it is somewhat aloof: external actors feel neither invited nor sufficiently enthused or convinced about what the government has to offer to them in terms of support.

In the case of invitational facilitation, supporting non-governmental initiatives is a policy intention of a public authority; a public authority actively invites non-governmental actors to initiate a project. Initiators can often count on a significant amount of support of various kinds from the government. With a discourse that emphasises the opportunities and the benefits for non-governmental actors, authorities try to entice them to take action. A disadvantage of this discourse is that authorities' ambitions and limitations are less clear. Because of the government's proactive approach and enthusiastic communication, non-governmental actors expect the government to take the lead in project realisation. Invitational facilitation can result in high transaction costs and false expectations.

### **Difficulties and dilemmas for the facilitating government**

In Chapter 4 we discuss the difficulties and dilemmas that authorities face when they aim to facilitate non-governmental initiatives. In the thesis' conclusion we highlight three of these difficulties as an example. First, authorities struggle to, on the one hand, help an initiative, giving it the necessary support for it to succeed, and, on the other hand, leaving the initiative in the hands of the non-governmental actors, not taking it over as government. Second, they have a hard time finding a balance between being clear about expectations and the willingness to contribute to an initiative, and being flexible enough to change these things when necessary. Third, although the government sees itself as an outside facilitator, it is as much of a stake- and shareholder as the non-governmental actors in a project. The process of facilitation show to be full of strategy, negotiation and opposing interest. Authorities struggle to deal with this, for example when they aim for a

shared search with external actors for solutions to public problems but these actors have a stake in keeping their knowledge and information for themselves.

Using Hood (1991) we conceptualise the dilemmas encountered by facilitating authorities as dilemmas between different types of administrative values: theta, lambda, and sigma values. Generally speaking, theta values are traditional democratic values, lambda values relate to professionalism, and sigma values relate to efficiency. The general picture is that the traditional democratic values can form a hindrance to a facilitating approach. For facilitation, things such as flexibility, customisation, and making exceptions are important. This is often at odds with values such as predictability, representativeness, and equal access. The way public authorities are organised is related to the traditional administrative values. Our study shows an organisational misfit between the government and the non-governmental initiatives that it aims to facilitate. Bureaucratic organisations are not equipped to facilitate external initiatives and lack the necessary tools, resources, and competences. In Chapter 5, we discuss the fact that institutions, such as the way the government works, are hard to change. So, although politicians and governors might be in favour of government facilitation, it is not easily implemented.

### **The dynamics of government facilitation**

The authorities in our cases deal with the difficulties and dilemmas they encounter using so called coping strategies (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008), this leads to certain dynamics in their strategy. In Chapter 5, we show how authorities in various projects, mostly as a result of institutional factors, move from the intention to collaborate with non-governmental actors, to accommodating facilitation, to invitational facilitation. After they pull back and retreat to an approach in which they give very little support to external initiators, they then gradually increase their investments and influence in the non-governmental initiatives, what leads to a U-turn shaped pattern in their strategy. The investments they make and the influence they gain reinforce each other. In almost all cases under study, the authorities eventually take up a more prominent role than envisioned beforehand. The explanations for this change of strategy are mostly process factors. Along the way, authorities gain a stake in a project and acquire an interest in project realisation; they get locked-in and are no longer the objective facilitator on the side lines.

We further show that authorities that have the intention to employ government facilitation often end up employing another government model. The government for example assumes a prominent and permanent role as network and process manager. It becomes an active participant in the governance network itself because solely bringing non-government actors together to kick-start their collaboration proves not to be enough. The role of the government then resembles the role of a government in the government collaboration-side of New Public Governance. In other cases the government ends up

having a role that resembles the government's role in New Public Management because it decides to start a tender procedure and commission a private actor to realise a project.

Uncertainty about the results of the non-governmental initiative can also lead to the introduction of strict performance and output criteria to receive governmental support, again resembling New Public Management. Alternatively, giving support to particular societal initiators and not to others can lead to the neglect of traditional administrative values such as impartiality, legality, and legitimacy. The facilitating government can respond to this with new rules and bureaucracy, resembling Traditional Public Administration. Another reason why a facilitating government turns to a more traditional role is doubt about the professionalism and quality of an external initiative. As the government is held ultimately accountable, it might not resist the urge to take over.

### **Success factors for government facilitation**

Despite the difficulties that authorities encounter, there are various cases in which the government has successfully facilitated external initiatives. From our research, we derive several factors that contribute to such successful facilitation.

First, it proves to be beneficial if the government's communication both entices non-governmental actors to take action and also makes it clear what the government is willing and not willing to do to support potential initiators. Authorities have to find a balance between invitational and clear communication. With an upbeat discourse, the government attracts a lot of non-governmental actors, but, if the government's limits are not clear, such actors await public action. In multiple cases, we see that the government's failure to manage expectations caused confusion and irritation among non-governmental actors, reducing rather than increasing their willingness to act.

What appears obvious is that a prerequisite for successful government facilitation is the presence of a well-organised, competent initiative with goals that are (somewhat) in line with the government's goals. Authorities that aim to facilitate do not always seem to realise this though. Clear communication can contribute to the emergence of such an initiative. What is also important for potential non-governmental initiators is that there is really something in it for them (to earn, to learn, to demonstrate). A factor that contributes to successful facilitation thus is authorities not pressing their own policy goals too much and giving external initiators space to pursue their goals.

In the realisation phase of an initiative, a success factor is the employment of all administrative capacities to support the initiative: delivery, coordination, analytical, and regulatory. These capacities do not have to be employed by one and the same public authority; through public alignment various authorities can complement one another. Difficulties and dilemmas will inevitably occur, and, if the government manages to cope with these by introducing certain arrangements, this will contribute to a better fit between the

public organisation and the external initiative. Positive feedback and increasing returns can subsequently lead to a virtuous circle towards more facilitation.

## **GOVERNMENT FACILITATION AS A SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT**

Our analysis shows how difficult it is to sustain a facilitating strategy. Often, authorities end up employing a form of governance that contains so many elements of another model that one can ask whether what they are doing can still be called facilitation. In section 6.7 of the thesis' conclusion we discuss what this means for government facilitation as a scientific concept. We conclude that government facilitation, rather than being a fully-fledged government model, in many cases is mainly an intention of the government. It is the starting point of a collaboration with non-governmental actors, a position that an authority takes to make its intentions clear. Although government facilitation might not be as distinctive as other government models, we stick to the claim that it is important to conceptually distinguish it from these models. It is important because the government's intentions affect the relations between government and societal actors and put a stamp on the eventual governance arrangement between them.



## Samenvatting



## DE WENS VAN DE OVERHEID OM TE FACILITEREN

Overheden wereldwijd verkennen nieuwe manieren om samen te werken met zowel publieke als private niet-overheidspartijen. In toenemende mate verkennen ze ook de mogelijkheid om de initiatieven van deze partijen te faciliteren. Politici spreken over een 'Big Society' (Kisby, 2014: 484), een 'doe-democratie', of een 'participatiesamenleving' (Rijksoverheid, 2013a) waarin maatschappelijke partijen het voortouw nemen in het creëren van publieke waarde en waarin overheden, in plaats van zelf actie te ondernemen, de initiatieven faciliteren (Blunkett, 2003; Taylor, 2003). Deze 'nieuwe', faciliterende overheid zou klein zijn, efficiënt, nederig, en in dienst staan van de actieve samenleving. Een faciliterende overheid zou ruimte geven, initiatieven mogelijk maken, en deze enkel ondersteunen waar nodig (Hajer, 2011; Kisby, 2010; Van der Steen et al., 2018). Deze nieuwe situatie waarin een overheid voornamelijk maatschappelijke initiatieven faciliteert, wordt over het algemeen neergezet als positief en ongecompliceerd; faciliteren wordt gezien als iets dat een overheid moeiteloos doet (Ossewaarde, 2014). De Nederlandse overheid stelt bijvoorbeeld simpelweg dat de samenleving een groeiend 'zelf-organiserend vermogen heeft' en dat de overheid, in reactie daarop loslaat, faciliteert, en ruimte geeft aan maatschappelijke initiatief (doedemocratie.net). Het idee bestaat dat faciliteren door de overheid de democratische legitimiteit vergroot (Edelenbos & Van Meerkerk, 2016), bezuinigingen mogelijk maakt (Meijer, 2016), dat het leidt tot meer publieke waarde (Bryson et al., 2014), en meer innovatieve oplossingen voor publieke problemen (Sørensen & Torfing, 2011; 2012).

Terwijl overheden in toenemende mate lijken te kiezen voor het faciliteren van maatschappelijke initiatieven, is er relatief weinig onderzoek naar deze vorm van besturen. In de wetenschappelijke literatuur gerelateerd aan het onderwerp, zoals die over 'collaborative governance' (Ansell & Gash, 2008), publiek-private samenwerking (Greve & Hodge, 2013) en 'collaborative innovation' (Sørensen & Torfing, 2012) spelen overheden nog een prominente rol. Daarnaast is de literatuur over het algemeen sterk theoretisch en wat een faciliterende overheid doet, wordt enkel beschreven in generieke termen (bijvoorbeeld door Salamon, 2001; Vigoda, 2002). Er is nog niet veel bekend over wat faciliterende overheden precies doen, welke moeilijkheden ze daarbij ervaren, en wat de effecten zijn van hun keuzes.

## ONDERZOEKSVRAGEN EN ONDERZOEKSONTWERP

De empirische observatie dat overheden steeds vaker lijken te kiezen voor het faciliteren van maatschappelijk initiatieven, gecombineerd met het gebrek aan wetenschappelijke

literatuur over het onderwerp, heeft geleid tot de volgende onderzoeksvraag en deelvragen:

*Waarom, hoe, en met welke effecten faciliteren overheden maatschappelijke initiatieven?*

*1 Wat is faciliteren door de overheid (niet)? Hoe verschilt faciliteren door de overheid van de sturingsmodellen Traditional Public Administration, New Public Management en New Public Governance?*

*2 Wat doen overheden (niet) wanneer ze maatschappelijk initiatieven faciliteren? Welke beleidsinstrumenten gebruiken ze? Welke vormen van faciliteren zijn er?*

*3 Waarom kiezen overheden ervoor om maatschappelijke initiatieven te faciliteren? Wat zijn de verklaringen voor deze keuze?*

*4 Wat zijn de condities voor succesvol faciliteren door de overheid? Welke capaciteiten, middelen, en contacten hebben overheden nodig om te kunnen faciliteren?*

*5 Met welke effecten faciliteren overheden maatschappelijke initiatieven? Welk effect heeft de keus voor een specifieke vorm van faciliteren?*

We beantwoorden onze onderzoeksvragen door het doen van vijf, kwalitatieve casestudies. In de vier empirische hoofdstukken van deze thesis analyseren en vergelijken we verschillende combinaties van deze cases. Vergelijkende casestudies zijn een onderzoeksmethode die goed past bij het onderwerp van deze thesis en het soort vragen dat we stellen. Ons onderzoek is exploratief (Blatter & Haverland, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2001) en casestudies zijn een geschikte methode voor het doen van kwalitatief onderzoek naar een complex fenomeen zoals faciliteren door de overheid. Door een klein aantal cases grondig te onderzoeken, hopen we meer inzicht te krijgen in de dynamiek van faciliteren door de overheid. Een consequentie van ons onderzoeksontwerp is dat onze resultaten niet makkelijk te generaliseren zijn naar andere situaties dan degene die wij onderzoeken.

We hebben vijf cases geselecteerd in de watersector in Nederland waarin overheden een maatschappelijke initiatief faciliteerden of dit ambieerden. De initiatiefnemers zijn private partijen en een NGO. De Nederlandse watersector is een interessante sector voor het bestuderen van faciliteren door de overheid omdat de sector zo goed als volledig gefinancierd is door publieke middelen en wordt gekenmerkt door een sterke overheid (Van Buuren et al., 2015). De focus in de sector ligt op veiligheid, het voorkomen van risico's, en het onder controle houden van water; dit alles is vastgelegd in strikte wetten en regels (Roovers & Van Buuren, 2014; Van Buuren et al., 2015). Waarden die belang-

rijk zijn voor faciliteren, zoals adaptatie, flexibiliteit, en responsiviteit staan ver af van de dominante cultuur in de sector. De door ons geselecteerde cases kunnen daardoor beschouwd worden als 'extreme cases' (Yin, 2018). Onze selectie bestaat uit vier cases waarin overheden initiatieven voor het opwekken van duurzame energie poogden te faciliteren, en een casus waarin een NGO het initiatief nam om een nieuw natuurgebied te creëren. We hebben onze data over de cases verzameld door middel van document-analyse, interviews, en (participerende) observaties.

## BEVINDINGEN EN CONCLUSIES

Het beeld van de faciliterende overheid dat uit ons onderzoek naar voren komt, is een beeld van een zoekende en een worstelende overheid. Ze heeft het idee dat dingen anders moeten en probeert dingen anders te doen. Ze ervaart hierbij verschillende moeilijkheden en ziet vaak geen andere mogelijkheid dan terug te keren naar haar vertrouwde manier van werken. Ons onderzoek plaatst een aantal kanttekeningen bij het optimistische, ongecompliceerde beeld van faciliteren dat overheden zelf, en een deel van de wetenschappelijke literatuur, schetsten (Ossewaarde, 2014).

### **Vier bureaucratische capaciteiten voor het faciliteren van maatschappelijk initiatief**

In Hoofdstuk 2 analyseren we hoe overheden maatschappelijk initiatief faciliteren. We maken daarbij onderscheid tussen vier capaciteiten die overheden kunnen inzetten: de capaciteiten tot analyseren, coördineren, reguleren, en leveren. Dit onderscheid maakt het mogelijk om een gestructureerde evaluatie te doen van faciliteren door de overheid, om cases te vergelijken en om de effectiviteit en de resultaten van verschillende vormen van faciliteren te beoordelen.

We laten zien dat overheden die willen faciliteren, graag hun capaciteit tot coördineren inzetten. Ze organiseren bijvoorbeeld netwerkbijeenkomsten of creëren een online platform waarop belanghebbenden met elkaar in contact kunnen komen. Dit is echter vaak een onvoldoende bijdrage van de overheid om maatschappelijke initiatieven te laten slagen, zeker in de Nederlandse watersector. De capaciteit om te analyseren is ook een belangrijk instrument van faciliterende overheden. Ze delen bijvoorbeeld informatie over publieke werken, of doen onderzoek naar de mogelijkheden voor potentiële initiators. Dit is niet altijd makkelijk voor overheden, wederom zeker niet in de Nederlandse watersector waar samenwerken met externe actoren relatief nieuw is en geregeld botst met de dominante focus op voorspelbaarheid en controleerbaarheid (Van Buuren et al., 2015).

De capaciteit van overheden om te reguleren blijkt ook nodig om maatschappelijk initiatieven te faciliteren. Naast vrijstelling geven van bestaande wet- en regelgeving die

een initiatief hindert, kan het nodig zijn om nieuwe regels op te stellen. Om te komen tot maatwerk moet dit gebeuren in samenspraak met de externe initiatiefnemers. We zien dat overheden in eerste instantie terughoudend zijn om hun capaciteit tot reguleren in te zetten, maar gedurende een project komen ze er vaak achter dat het toch nodig is. Ook hun capaciteit tot leveren, door het geven van financiële steun aan een initiatief, zetten faciliterende overheden niet graag in. Toch zijn er indirect vaak hoge kosten, bijvoorbeeld door de inzet van ambtenaren. Directe financiële steun, bijvoorbeeld in de vorm van een subsidie, blijkt echter ook vaak onontbeerlijk voor het slagen van een maatschappelijk initiatief in de Nederlandse watersector.

### **Twee vormen van faciliteren**

Op basis van de inzet van de verschillende capaciteiten door overheden, gecombineerd met andere zaken zoals een bepaald discours, maken we een onderscheid tussen twee vormen van faciliteren: uitnodigend en accommoderend faciliteren.

In het geval van accommoderend faciliteren, accommoderen overheden een maatschappelijk initiatief, maar de steun die het initiatief ontvangt, is beperkt. Ook de invloed die een overheid heeft op het initiatief is klein. De maatschappelijke partijen nemen het voortouw en zijn verantwoordelijk voor de realisatie en exploitatie van een project. In hun communicatie benadrukken overheden dat hun steun beperkt is. Een voordeel van deze aanpak is dat potentiële initiatiefnemers weten waar ze aan toe zijn. Accomoderend faciliteren is echter wel wat afstandelijk; initiatiefnemers worden niet geënthousiasmeerd door de overheid en kunnen zich onvoldoende welkom voelen. Ook kunnen maatschappelijke partijen twijfelen of zij voldoende steun van de overheid zullen ontvangen wanneer ze initiatief zouden nemen.

In het geval van uitnodigend faciliteren, is het ondersteunen van maatschappelijk initiatief een duidelijk beleidsdoel van overheden. Ze nodigen maatschappelijke partijen uit om initiatief te nemen en deze partijen kunnen op veel (verschillende vormen van) overheidssteun rekenen. In hun communicatie wijzen overheden op de kansen en mogelijkheden voor potentiële initiatiefnemers; overheden proberen hen actief in beweging te krijgen. Een nadeel van deze aanpak is dat overheden hun eigen ambities en grenzen niet altijd duidelijk maken, en door het enthousiasme van overheden kunnen potentiële initiatiefnemers onterecht het idee krijgen dat die overheden het voortouw zullen nemen. Deze vorm van faciliteren kan daardoor leiden tot valse verwachtingen en hoge transactiekosten.

### **Moelijkheden en dilemma's voor de faciliterende overheid**

In Hoofdstuk 4 analyseren we de moeilijkheden en de dilemma's waar faciliterende overheden tegenaan lopen. In paragraaf 6.3 van de conclusie voeren we vervolgens drie van deze moeilijkheden op als voorbeeld. Ten eerste worstelen overheden ermee om een

initiatief wel de nodige steun te geven maar toch voldoende afstand te bewaren en het initiatief niet over te nemen als overheid. Ten tweede zien we dat overheden het lastig vinden om zich enerzijds duidelijk uit te spreken over wat zij verwachten van initiatiefnemers en wat zij bereid zijn bij te dragen aan een initiatief, en anderzijds flexibel genoeg zijn om hun opstelling te veranderen als dit nodig is. Een derde moeilijkheid voor faciliterende overheden is dat zij tegen verwachting in vaak niet de objectieve buitenstaander zijn in een project. Faciliteren is een strategisch spel, waarin partijen, inclusief overheden, vaak tegengestelde belangen hebben, en waarin onderhandelen onontkoombaar is. We zien dit bijvoorbeeld in de casus Brouwersdam waar de betrokken overheden verwachtten samen met private partijen in een open proces te kunnen zoeken naar oplossingen voor de problemen in het gebied. De partijen bleken er echter baat bij te hebben hun kaarten grotendeels tegen de borst te houden en maar weinig van hun kennis te delen.

We gebruiken het werk van Hood (1991) om de dilemma's waarvoor faciliterende overheden staan te typeren als dilemma's tussen verschillende bureaucratische waarden. We onderscheiden daarbij zogenaamde theta-, lambda-, en sigma-waarden. Thetawaarden zijn traditionele democratische waarden, lambdawaarden hebben betrekking op professionaliteit, sigmawaarden op efficiëntie. Het algemene beeld is dat vooral thetawaarden een belemmering vormen voor faciliteren door de overheid. Voor het faciliteren van maatschappelijk initiatief zijn dingen als flexibiliteit, maatwerk, en het maken van uitzonderingen noodzakelijk. Dit botst vaak met thetawaarden als voorspelbaarheid, representativiteit, en gelijkheid.

Gerelateerd aan deze traditionele waarden, is de manier waarop bureaucratische organisaties zijn ingericht. We zien een mismatch tussen de publieke, bureaucratische organisaties en de initiatieven die ze proberen te faciliteren. De organisaties zijn onvoldoende uitgerust voor deze taak en ontberen bijvoorbeeld de nodige competenties, capaciteiten, en middelen. In Hoofdstuk 5 bespreken we dat instituties, zoals de manier waarop publieke organisaties zijn ingericht, moeilijk te veranderen zijn. Hierdoor is het voor overheden lastig om maatschappelijke initiatieven te faciliteren, ook al willen politici en bestuurders dat wel graag.

### **De dynamiek van de faciliterende overheid**

Om te kunnen omgaan met de moeilijkheden waar ze tegenaan lopen, gebruiken de overheden in onze cases zogenaamde coping-strategieën (Steenhuisen & Van Eeten, 2008) en hierdoor ontstaat er een bepaalde dynamiek in hun aanpak. In Hoofdstuk 5 laten we zien dat overheden projecten vaak starten met de intentie om samen te werken met externe partijen, vervolgens kiezen ze voor accommoderend faciliteren, om daarna op te schuiven naar uitnodigend faciliteren. Nadat de overheden zich dus eerst terugtrekken en maar weinig ondersteuning bieden aan initiatiefnemers, nemen hun bijdragen geleidelijk toe, net als de invloed die ze claimen in een initiatief. Dit leidt tot een U-bocht in de

strategie van faciliterende overheden. In bijna alle door ons onderzochte cases hebben de overheden uiteindelijk een meer prominente rol dan zij beoogden. Meestal ligt de verklaring hiervoor in het proces: als een project vordert, krijgen overheden er steeds meer belang bij dat het project ook werkelijk tot een goed einde komt. Ze raken 'ingesloten' en zijn niet langer de faciliterende buitenstander die ze voor ogen hadden.

Overheden met de intentie om te faciliteren, belanden dus vaak in een andere rol dan voorzien. Ze worden bijvoorbeeld proces- of netwerkmanager. Ze gaan zelf actief deelnemen aan het governance-proces omdat enkel het samenbrengen van externe partijen onvoldoende blijkt om het project te laten slagen. In deze gevallen komt de rol van een overheid overeen met de rol van een overheid in de collaboratieve vorm van New Public Governance. In andere gevallen, als het toch nodig blijkt een project aan te besteden, schuift een overheid op naar New Public Management. Twijfels over de kwaliteit van een initiatief of de resultaten kan er ook toe leiden dat overheden hun steun gaan verbinden aan strikte criteria of dat ze resultaatafspraken willen maken met initiatiefnemers, wat ook lijkt op New Public Management. Tot slot kunnen overheden, in reactie op het in gedrang komen van traditionele, democratische waarden, zoveel bureaucratie creëren dat hun rol weer gaat lijken op de rol van een overheid in Traditional Public Administration. De kans hierop is extra groot doordat een overheid uiteindelijk toch vaak verantwoordelijk wordt gehouden voor het oplossen van publieke problemen; dit geldt bij uitstek voor de Nederlandse watersector.

### **Succesfactoren voor een faciliterende overheid**

Ondanks de vele moeilijkheden waar faciliterende overheden tegenaanlopen, zijn er verschillende projecten waarin het wel lukt. Op basis van onze cases, formuleren we een aantal succesfactoren voor faciliteren door de overheid.

Ten eerste blijkt het belangrijk dat de communicatie van overheden maatschappelijke partijen zowel enthousiasmeert als informeert. Het moet de partijen zowel in beweging krijgen als duidelijk maken wat een overheid wil en wat zij hiervoor bereid is (niet) te doen. Met uitnodigende woorden kunnen overheden maatschappelijke partijen interesseren maar als een overheid zich te enthousiast toont, zullen deze partijen verwachten dat die overheid zelf het voortouw neemt.

Een tweede belangrijke voorwaarde voor succesvol faciliteren is natuurlijk de aanwezigheid van competente, goedgeorganiseerde initiatiefnemers. Ook al lijkt dit een vanzelfsprekendheid, overheden lijken het zich toch niet altijd te realiseren wanneer zij eindeloos blijven trekken aan een situatie zonder zicht op een maatschappelijk initiatief. Goede overheidscommunicatie kan bijdragen aan de vorming van een initiatief, maar wat vooral belangrijk is, is dat er werkelijk iets te halen valt voor externe partijen. Ze moeten bijvoorbeeld iets kunnen verdienen, leren, of demonstreren. Overheden moeten dus op-

passen dat de overheidsdoelen niet te overheersend zijn en dat er voldoende ruimte is voor maatschappelijke partijen om hun eigen doelen na te jagen.

Wanneer een project eenmaal van start is, is het tot slot belangrijk dat alle vier overheidscapaciteiten ingezet worden. Dit hoeft echter niet te gebeuren door een en dezelfde overheid, overheden kunnen elkaar aanvullen. Het is daarvoor vaak wel noodzakelijk dat ze dit onderling afstemmen. Er zullen zich onvermijdelijk moeilijkheden voordoen bij het faciliteren, wanneer een faciliterende overheid er vervolgens in slaagt hiermee om te gaan middels zogenaamde coping-strategieën zal dit leiden tot een betere match tussen de overheidsorganisatie en het initiatief. Goede resultaten en positieve feedback uit het project kunnen vervolgens leiden tot een opwaartse spiraal en tot nog meer succesvol gefaciliteerde initiatieven in de toekomst.

## **FACILITEREN ALS WETENSCHAPPELIJK MODEL**

Met onze analyse laten we zien hoe moeilijk het is voor overheden om het faciliteren vol te houden en niet op te schuiven naar een ander sturingsmodel. In paragraaf 6.7 van de conclusie bespreken we wat deze constatering betekent voor faciliteren als wetenschappelijk model. We stellen dat faciliteren geen volwaardig sturingsmodel is, zoals bijvoorbeeld New Public Management. Vaak is het enkel een intentie van een overheid om dingen anders te organiseren. Deze intentie vormt het startpunt van een samenwerking tussen een overheid en haar partners. Maar ook al beschouwen wij het dus niet als volwaardig sturingsmodel, we vinden het wel nuttig om faciliteren in wetenschappelijke studies conceptueel te blijven onderscheiden van andere modellen. Dit omdat de intentie van een overheid, ook al houdt die geen stand, wel degelijk invloed heeft op de relatie tussen een overheid en haar partners en op het verloop van hun eventuele samenwerking.



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About the author



Sanne Grotenbreg (1986) studied Sociology and Political Science at the University of Amsterdam. She completed her studies with a master thesis, combining qualitative and quantitative research, on the relation between political trust and educational level. She graduated *cum laude* in 2012. After her graduation she worked at the Municipality of Zaanstad as a researcher and strategic analyst, focusing on the changing role of civil servants and their relation with non-governmental actors. In 2013, Sanne started as a Ph.D. candidate at the department of Public Administration at the Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Her research focuses on new forms of collaboration between the government and non-governmental actors, specifically government facilitation of societal initiatives. She conducted her Ph.D. in three externally funded research projects: 'LIPSE', an EU FP7 project on public sector innovation; 'Energising Deltas', a Dutch project on the governance of integrated energy and water works; and 'Governance for Smartening Public Private Partnerships', on smart governance and public-private collaboration. In these projects she worked with international scholars and local stakeholders. As part of her Ph.D. Sanne also worked at Deltares, an institute for applied research in the field of water and subsurface. Dissemination has been an important part of her job.

Sanne published in international peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Cleaner Production* and *Public Works Management & Policy*. Besides the publications included in her thesis she co-authored articles on Public-Private Partnerships and on innovation at local governments. She participated in multiple international conferences and presented her work several times at the annual conference of the International Research Society for Public Management (IRSPM). At the department of Public Administration and Sociology, Sanne was part of an active Ph.D. community. She participated in the Ph.D. platform for peer reviewing and organised the yearly Ph.D. trip. She completed the doctorate training program of the Netherlands Institute of Government taking courses on, among other things, network governance, content analysis, and integrity and responsibility in research and advice.

As of March 2019 Sanne works as a postdoctoral researcher at TIAS School for Business and Society in Utrecht. She participates in 'COGOV', a European research project on co-creation, strategic management, and public value. Here she will continue her research on collaboration between the government and non-governmental actors.

