56 DESIGN IN STRATEGY

DIRK FRIELING

All planning is rooted in the belief-system that people are free agents that by conscious actions may influence the course of events in the way they deem fit. Designs are means to enlarge awareness of potential consequences of specific actions. For that reason, plans are instrumental in improving human ability to organise society and to shape the world according to attitudes to life and images of society present in the human mind.

Conceived this way, planning is a human activity implying considerable responsibility: one reason to oppose planning. The most effective way to escape this responsibility is to deny the possibility of planning: *'it is not up to human beings to shape the future'*. Devout as this may seem, it opposes the essences of Christianity and humanism alike, both focusing on freedom of the individual and responsibility of that person to act accordingly. For practical reasons too, this kind of opposition to planning is not to be taken seriously. Human society, and especially the city, by far the most impressive human achievement, just would fall apart if people stopped planning.

A second reason to oppose planning is that is encroaches on personal liberty. Evident as this may seem, it is true only, if one leaves planning to others and does not take personal responsibility by participating in the planning process oneself. On a deeper level, the tension between individual and collective liberty can be seen as tension between a concept of freedom as something in the nature of things, that everybody is entitled to as a consumer, and a concept of freedom as a potential of human beings, that every single person has to develop as a producer.

For both reasons, this kind of opposition to planning should be taken quite seriously. To overcome the encroachment argument, planners must participate or fail. To overcome the consumers approach to liberty, planners are wise to show how small, frail and unstable human freedom is and how only joint effort may sustain, strengthen and enlarge it.

Planning is concerned with future action under future conditions in a future situation: a heap of uncertainties to be considered. As most people do not like to live with uncertainties, planning can be seen as a way to reduce uncertainties. The main characteristic of the future is that it is not yet there, it exists only in the human mind, it is by definition a virtual reality.

56.1 FOUR WAYS TO FACE THE FUTURE

To find out what may come, one can follow several methods. This article distinguishes four of them. One is rooted in the idea that everything embodies a spiritual existence or energy; aeternal, beyond time and space. To find out what may come, contemplate that existence or energy and articulate what comes up in your mind: the way of art, the alpha way.

Another one is rooted in the idea that everything is organised according to rules inherent in energy, time and space. To find out what may come, try to discover them by analysing the evolution of systems. Knowing the rules, we may predict their future course: the way of natural sciences, the betha way.

A third one focuses on people as the main source of human events. If we can discover the driving forces of their actions we may influence their behaviour in the future. The rules of the game here are as important as in the natural sciences, the difference being that they are manmade and open to human influence: the way of social sciences, the gamma way.

The last method distinguished here considers everything as ongoing recreation. The focus is on emergence of the present not from the past but from the potential of the future. In it the present is not caused by the past, but conditioned by it. The past does not push the

present; the future attracts the present. This is the way of designers and engineers, people inventing things: the delta way.

In day to day reality, of course, all these methods continually intertwine. But, in University, these methods have to be dis-entangled to clarify them by ongoing research and to test and improve them for educational purposes. As this book is written for designers and engineers the focus is on design, the delta way.

First of all, the rôle of design in strategic planning will be explained in theory. After that, the case history of the emergence of the concept Deltametropolis[a] will be used to demonstrate the rôle of design in practice. It will be elaborated by three examples: design as a method to clarify political options[b], the contribution of design to investment strategies and design as a method to forge social alliances. The concept 'Deltametropolis' was not there from the beginning. There was no hidden agenda. Nevertheless, it emerged from several more or less independent design exercises.[c] The hidden order of Deltametropolis was exposed by inter-action of discoveries and inventions, generated by an intermittent process of design[d] that started in the middle of the eighties and is still going on.[e]

56.2 THE RÔLE OF DESIGN IN STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning starts with acknowledging that there are all sorts of futures to reckon with.[f] As far as people want to influence the future they do this by setting aims and allocating means.

When aims and means are both undefined, we find ourselves in the realm of potential futures; the domain of inventors, designers and engineers. Design is mainly conceptual.

When aims are defined, but means are undefined, we are in the realm of desirable futures, the domain of all kinds of private associations, interest groups and political parties. Design is programmatic, functional and system orientated.

When, the other way round, means are defined unlike aims, we enter the realm of probable futures; the domain of traditional research. Design is aimed at process, not product: design is to conceive rules regulating the course of events.

When aims and means both are defined, we can call them necessary futures. Strictly speaking, the word 'necessary' is logically not allowed, because aims and means are defined by arbitrary human decisions. However, for this typology of futures within a framework of strategic planning, the word 'necessary' is clear enough.

Designing has several dimensions that will be referred to with four different adjectives: formal, functional, technical and analytical. In the same way the four dimensions of time-space generate undivided experience, these four dimensions of design are included in undivided action. They are continuously present in the hand and mind of the designer. But, the force of their presence changes with evolution of the design and with the different rôles of it and of the designer in that evolution.

In the phase of exploration, when aims and means both are indefinite and undefined there is nothing more to design than form, formal composition and formal relations. Via these forms I explore my environment in search of viable combinations of placebound situations and timebound activity patterns. Because of this, designs in this phase of exploration often have a rather formal and schematic character.

In the phase of deciding there will be requirements to meet. They may become dominant as soon as a client has to decide on a design, having to take all kinds of political and financial risks. The functional dimension of design will grow in importance as form and function have to harmonize.

In the phase of realisation the aim is always to find the optimum solution for a wide array of conflicting requirements. There technical design is needed, the invention of the most effective and efficient combination of mutually contradictory demands.

MEANS \ AIMS	undefined	defined
undefined	potential futures	desirable futures
defined	probable futures	necessary futures

560 Typology of futures
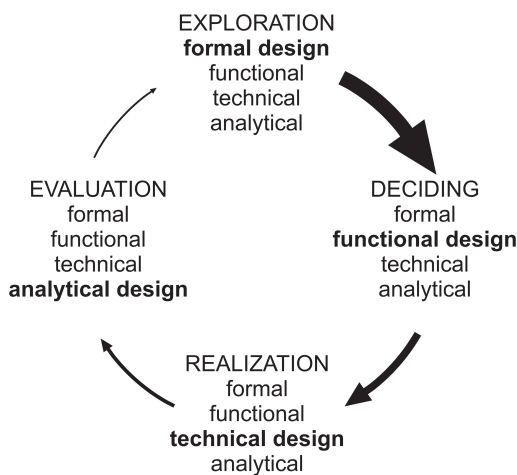
561 The rôle of design in different phases of a development process

a   Frieling, D.H. (1995) *Het metropolitane concept.*
b   Frieling, D.H. (1997) *Verstedelijking als politieke opgave.*
c   Frieling, D.H. (1996) *Het metropolitane debat;* Frieling, D.H., W. Mitchell et al. (1996) *The future of design and research.*
d   Frieling, D.H., W. Reh et al. (1998) *Onderzoekateliers Bouwkunde Onderzoek Deltametropool Atelier Stad.*
e   Frieling, D.H. (1998) *Het metropolitane debat.*
f   WRR (1977) *Nederland over 25 jaar;* WRR (1981) *Beleidsgerichte toekomstverkenningen;* WRR (1983) *Poging tot uitlokking.*

In the phase of evaluation – whether ex ante or ex post – designing will become deconstruction, an analysis aimed at exposure of the inter-action between an object and its environment, as well as its use and users.

56.3   EXPLORATION

To clarify the specific rôle of design in the phase of exploration we must further analyse the specific contribution of formal design. Since one explores the future by design, and both aims and means are undefined, one may fear to wander aimlessly in the dark.

Any object in any context, designed for a specific programme of requirements in a specific situation for a specific client, at a specific moment by a specific designer is, because of all that, considered to be unique. However, in strategic planning, objects and contexts have to be used for typical reasons, as well as for reasons of unique fit to situation or vice versa.

This double identity of design, being both singular and a type, can be clarified by the scheme shown distinguishing between defined and undefined objects and contexts. When both object and context are defined, we can evaluate like in a case, analysing properties, internal inter-action and other characteristics. This is what we may call design research.

Exploration by design starts when one or both of these components are kept undefined. By liberating an object of its context, and projecting it in all kinds of contexts, we can analyse its transformations and discover its continuous properties, that is: its type. By liberating a context of its object and projecting all kinds of objects in this context, we can analyse its continuous influence on these objects, that is: its identity or *'genius loci'*.

Both forms of exploration by design are useful by themselves. They also serve to explore areas where both object and context are undefined. There and then design is used to discover an agenda.

One may think this scheme does not work for inventions or discoveries: there is no case to start from. Experience shows that the creative mind in this situation does not work in empty space, groping in the dark. It is trying an endless series of examples that might serve as an analogy. This may explain why designers often speak in metaphors. They have to use these analogies to explain what they are looking for. The 'Deltametropolis' is a perfect example of this. By choosing this name, two directions of exploration are introduced: connectedness and inter-action between people to explore the type of metropolis the people living there may become; and connectedness and inter-action between watersystems to explore the identity of the delta that is the breeding ground of this metropolis.

To conclude this short introduction to the theory of the rôle of design in strategic planning a simple scheme may help (figure 563) to improve awareness of design as a social process. This awareness is important in organising participators in planning and in keeping in mind that good planning enlarges liberty and does not diminish it.

The design as a material object is the product of the inter-action between a territorial situation and a programme of requirements, generated by an activity pattern. This inter-action is personified by respectively landowners and people using the land. The design as an intervention is the product of the inter-action between change and continuity, personified respectively by initiators of change (developers) and people in charge of certainty, safety and continuity (government). In a more abstract way the design can be conceived as the transformator of four interacting forces: use of space and spending time transform under pressure of opportunities and threats that work to generate change but interact with rules and regulations to maintain the status quo.
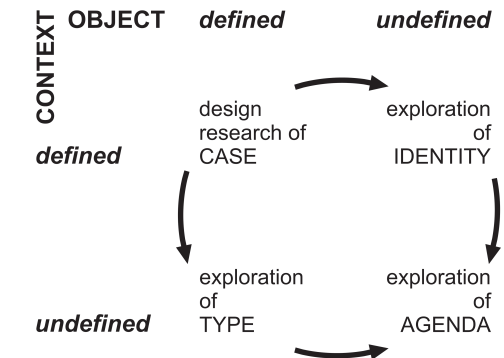
562 Exploration by design
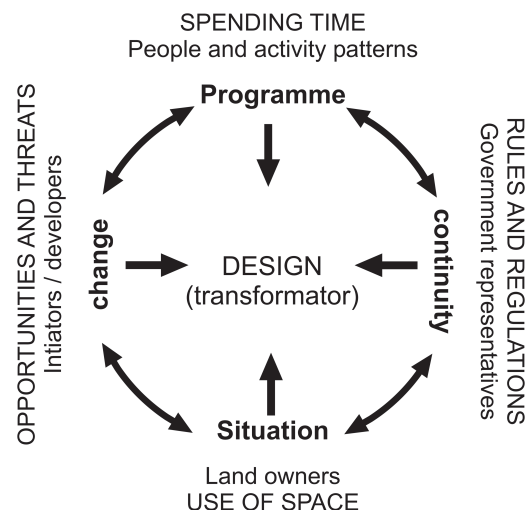
563 Design as a social process

56.4 DESIGN TO CLARIFY POLITICAL OPTIONS

In the seventies the Netherlands were influenced rather greatly by co-incidence of the Club of Rome report on 'limits to growth' and the first energy crisis, triggered by OPEC-countries. A few years later, even planning for the future became politically incorrect. This standstill in planning triggered an initiative by the Foundation Architectural Museum (presently the Netherlands Institute of Architecture, NAi) called *'The Netherlands Now As Design, the rules of growth'*. The idea: to organise an exposition on the Netherlands in 2050.

The initiators[a] took two policy- orientated explorations of the future by the Scientific Council on Government Policy as a starting point for their exercises in design. They decided to make four designs for 2050. The social-democratic design is called 'Critical', the conservative design 'Dynamic'. The christian-democratic design 'Careful'. And a future based on technological and political breakthroughs 'Relaxed'. With the exposition on the Netherlands in 2050 they aim to kill three birds with one stone: regain attention for planning, explore future transformations of the Netherlands under different sets of rules for growth and, in the wake of the Scientific Council, to revitalise politics. The Foundation NNAO (1984 – 1989) organised the support of government departments, universities and private research organisations, collected four million guilders and engaged the 'fine fleur' of the design profession. A three – year design programme followed with more than 200 professionals participating, meeting every three months to discuss designs and progress.

The exposition of these four political perspectives was opened by the Prime Minister in Amsterdam in 1987; a second viewing organised in Rotterdam in 1988. The State Printing Office published a two-volume catalogue: one with all the designs, the other with background research. Exposition and books were widely discussed in the press and covered by television.

In the course of this design exercise the organizers developed a method to make political options comparable, by conceiving the spatial system of the Netherlands as consisting of four sub-systems: water system, rural system, transportation system, urban system. They conceived landuse policy as a multi-level system of planning offering a choice between concentration and deconcentration on each planning level. And they conceived the governance of this landuse policy to be influenced by the value systems of different political parties as generated by their respective images of society. Figure 564 shows the frame of reference as developed by NNAO, each party programme containing positive statements on the different spatial sub-systems and each proposing a different option of settlement patterns.

The Scientific Council was helpful in commissioning Rob van Engelsdorp Gastelaars and Leo de Klerk from the University of Amsterdam to write the political scenarios for the Critical, The Dynamic and the Careful future. The Foundation commissioned Taeke de Jong, from Delft University to write the Relaxed scenario. All four perspectives are similar in their attention to the rôle of the water system, the decline of agriculture, the importance of international connections and the transformation of patterns of independent cities into multicentred network systems, urban constellations.

These four scenarios result in four different landuse programs shown in figure 565.

Searching for a sustainable balance in these matters, the four perspectives follow a different policy, resulting in different directions of development. The planners and designers show that quite different attractive and consistent futures can be invented and developed: four perspectives that overlap in many ways, differ according to the political priorities attached to economic growth, social equity, environmental sustainability and cultural identity.

The Careful perspective shows the Netherlands as part of Europe, leaving out state boundaries. This European orientation gives the eastern and southern parts of the country a more central position, whereas the western part is becoming more peripheral. The network of roads and railroads is transformed from the present starlike shape, radiating from the west,

Radius	DISPERSION							
100 km	Deconcentration				Concentration			
30 km	Deconc		Conc		Deconc		Conc	
10 km	D	C	D	C	D	C	D	C
		Careful	Critical	Dynamic				Relaxed
LANDUSE								
Urban system		+	**+**	+				+
Transport system		+	+	**+**				+
Rural system		**+**	+	+				+
Water system		+	+	+				**+**

564 The Netherlands as a choice of policy options

	1986	Careful	Critical	Dynamic	Relaxed
Water	9	9	16	10	10
Nature	14	22	29	35	30
Agriculture	65	51	39	34	46
Infrastr.Industry	5	7	8	6	9
Urban areas	7	11	8	15	5

565 Landuse in % of total area of the Netherlands

a   NNAO (1987) *Nieuw Nederland 2050;* NNAO (1989) *Nieuw Nederland, Nu Nijmegen & Arnhem Ontwerpen.*

into a grid connecting all parts of the country to each other and to neighbouring European countries. The water system is re-designed to enable natural watercourses to retain more water. Agriculture and nature are integrated, farmers cultivating both. Cities, towns and villages grow independently, maintaining a nice provincial air in the urban system while the country becomes ever and ever more densely populated. *Eindhoven* – pride of the south – is chosen as subject of regional design.

The Critical perspective is designed for a society that changed radically in three ways: energy systems are based on sunlight, wind and biomass, working hours are reduced to three days per week and all urban regions are connected to the European network of high speed transport. Combination of less work and better connections extend the job market to Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt, Brussels, Paris and London. The western part of the country is transformed into an ecological balance area. The former Green Heart is changed into a huge water-realm and cities and wetlands are integrated into one ecological system. Elsewhere also large areas are transformed into wetlands and nature reserves. Agriculture for the international market is concentrated in the clay areas in the north, middle and south-west. *East-Groningen* – at present one of the poorest parts of the country – is chosen as subject of regional design.

The Dynamic perspective is based on a market-orientated scenario. The western constellation of cities is strengthened via three interventions in the transport system: a new international combined seaport / airport in the sea, high speed railway connections with the rest of Europe and a new circle line to inter-connect the main cities in the west. The country as a whole is in a way considered as a 100 Mile City, still having its CBD in the west and living areas on higher and drier grounds in south and east. The lower parts of the country are transformed into large scale wetlands for water-management. Farming has become large scale factory farming. *Amsterdam* – international trade centre – is chosen as subject of regional design.

The Relaxed perspective combines all technological and political breakthroughs one can think of. The essence of this perspective is that all these breakthroughs put together will not lead to ongoing urban dispersal but just the other way round, to a new period of urban concentration. This is exactly the same conclusion Manuel Castells drew in his book on the Informational City[a] and Saskia Sassen in 1991 in her book on the Global City.[b] The central technological breakthrough will be the availability of cheap energy by nuclear fusion and by harvesting sunlight, for which 2000 SqKM are allocated. Energy being no problem anymore, speed of transport can be multiplied. The political breakthrough (envisaged a few years before the fall of the Berlin Wall) is that technology of communication will be the driving force to break through old world political boundaries. This will have geo-political influence and change the traditional political decision process into interactive policy development. In this perspective of a full energy economy and trans-continental magnetic train systems, *Rotterdam* is the region to concentrate on. It will no longer serve only as a mainport for Germany, but also for Central Europe and Russia.

56.5   MAJOR IMPACTS OF THE EXERCISE

The impact of this exercise in using spatial design as a method to explore the future may show on different levels. One of them will be assessed here: its usefulness to clarify political options and its impact on everyday politics. The contribution to strategic planning and the influence on design methods has been treated already in the theoretical introduction to this case history.

The political events of the day are that a year after the exposition *'Netherlands 2050'* the fourth policy document on spatial planning appeared in 1988. Central government in the Netherlands is legally obliged to produce such a policy document every ten years.

A year later again, in 1989, the foundation Netherlands Now As Design published an investment strategy[c], based on this policy document, financed by the main pension funds and

a   Castells, M. (1989) *The Informational city*.
b   Sassen, S. (1991) *The global city: New York, London, Tokyo.*
c   NNAO (1989) *Nieuw Nederland, proeve van een investeringsstrategie.*NNAO (1989)

life insurance companies. This investment strategy originated a public-private committee on spatial investments chaired by a former minister of Housing, Planning and Environment and consisting of departments, burgomasters of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht and representatives of private sectors.

The arguments for metropolitan development are quite pronounced in the Dynamic, Critical and Relaxed perspectives, although for different reasons: economical in the Dynamic worldview, ecological in the Critical, the outcome of technological breakthroughs in the Relaxed perspective. The designers mis-interpreted the Labour priorities however. Labour allied with the Christian-Democrats in an anti-metropolitan policy. This became clear by the difference between the fourth policy document on spatial planning[a] and a fourth policy document 'extra'.[b] The original report, issued by a conservative minister of planning, had as its main issue metropolitan development in the west. Three years and a cabinet crisis later, a socialist minister issued an extra report in which the three main cities in the west are replaced by thirteen cities all over the country. That minister now is the Queen's Commissioner in Groningen.

The committee on spatial investments commissioned a study on a high speed / high frequency transport service between the main cities in the West and Schiphol Airport. By reducing travel-time the separate cities would be integrated into one urban system that would improve overall efficiency and hence its earning capacity. By the time the report was published in 1992, the tide of metropolitan development was out already. The four perspectives all had been orientated on Europe. In political reality however, not the international future, but the provincial present did win the day.
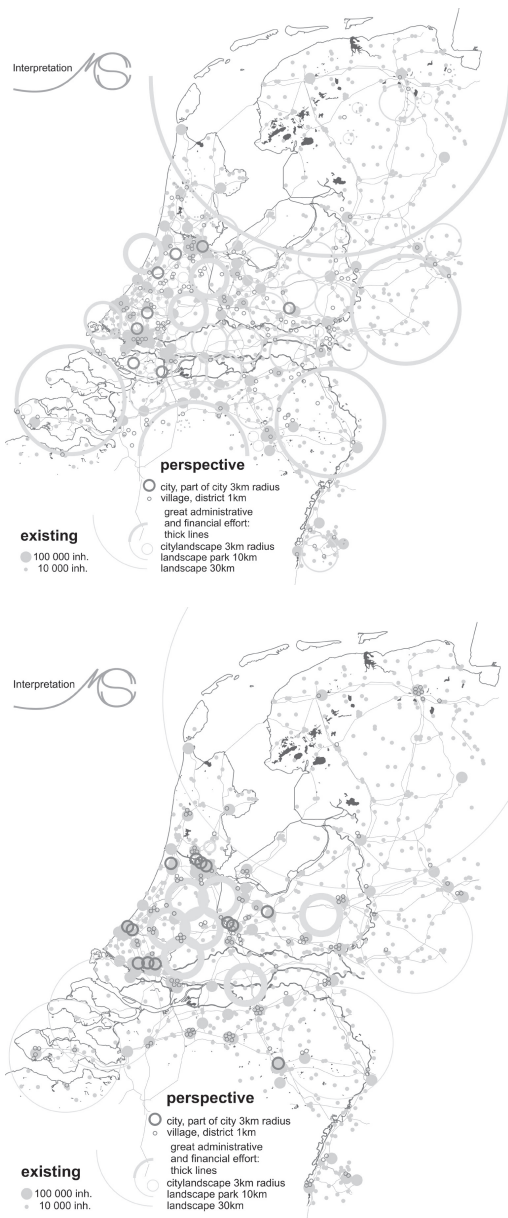
Summing up these experiences one may conclude that the political impact of the project has been pretty thin as far as direct influence on landuse policy is concerned. On a deeper level however, design has been discovered as a method to explore the future. Many political issues on top of the political agenda today, like water-management of the delta, decline of agriculture and the need to rethink the transport system were imagined fifteen years ago. The designs made all sorts of expectations visible, publicly debatable and subject to planning and decisions on investment priorities. But to change potential into practice, the focus of research has to be directed to the decision processes themselves.

56.6   DESIGN TO DECIDE ON INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The research project that followed the line set by *The Netherlands Now As Design* and preceded the Deltametropolis declaration[c] originated in the Faculty of Architecture of the Delft University of Technology. For years it had been clear to professional planners that the loose pattern of urban centres in the west was rapidly transforming to a collection of cities with overlapping spheres of influence causing interference, competition and a general loss of competence to promote common interest. For that reason research was done to find means to generate a next transformation, in which this collection of separate cities would integrate into an urban system, an inter-connected constellation of urban centres, a multi-centered metropolis.

At a Faculty of Architecture, research is mainly study by design. To be able to focus on decision processes, partners were found in the University of Amsterdam and the National Institute of Planning and Housing, a private association of planners and local politicians. With financial support of the main cities in the west and several departments, a foundation was created: The Metropolitan Debate. The aim of this foundation is to experiment with new methods of decisionmaking to get better decisions quicker. The idea is that metropoli distinguish themselves from other urban concentrations by being able to do just that: take better decisions quicker. The method conceived to improve the decision process on planning policy distinguishes between perspectives, projects and strategies.

Perspectives are general and integrated long-term policy statements illustrated by designs to indicate different directions of development.

perspective
○ city, part of city 3km radius
∘ village, district 1km
   great administrative
   and financial effort:
   thick lines
   citylandscape 3km radius
   landscape park 10km
   landscape 30km

existing
● 100 000 inh.
∘ 10 000 inh.

566 Two out of four perspectives, see also page 457.

a   VROM (1988) *Vierde nota over de ruimtelijke ordening.*
b   VROM (1992) *Vierde nota over de ruimtelijke ordening Extra.*
c   Amsterdam, Den Haag, Rotterdam and Utrecht (1998) *Verklaring Deltametropool.*

Projects are direct interventions in existing situations. Strategies are a combination of one perspective with a portfolio of projects that will contribute to realisation of that perspective.

The decision process addresses participants in three rôles: as individuals deciding on their own place of residence, as agents in initiating and realising projects and as citizens in defining and selecting perspectives.

The decision process itself consists of decisions in a series of four steps, starting at home where everybody cherishes his or her own opinions. The next step is to study available perspectives and projects and to decide on personal preferences, eventually preparing an individual strategy. The third step is confronting all these personal preferences in a dealing room, facilitating transactions and trade- offs between participants. This will lead to a hybrid strategy combining features of several perspectives and a mix of projects. The fourth step is evaluation of the results of the dealing room by parliament. Their decision will then trigger a new series of decisions by private citizens either to move or to stay.

The method was first tried out in 1997, sponsored by the four main cities and a government research programme managed by the Interdepartmental Commission on Economic Structure (ICES). Later that year a second try-out was held on a regional level, sponsored by four cities in the eastern part of the country. In 1998 the Minister of Housing, Planning and Environment commissioned the foundation with organising a debate on a recent department study called 'The Netherlands in 2030'[a] Four metropolitan debates were organised, for the north, east, south and west of the Netherlands respectively. Later in the same year the Minister of Agriculture, Nature Reserves and Fisheries commissioned the foundation with a debate on the future of rural Netherlands. In slightly more than twelve months the new method was tested seven times. To be sure, all these were laboratory tests. Perspectives were more or less realistic, in the debate on The Netherlands in 2030 even formally so, but no real projects and investments were involved.

56.7 MAJOR IMPACTS OF THE EXERCISE

Since the testing of the method did not involve real perspectives and projects and participants did not represent all actors participating in reality, the direct impact on political reality has been zero. The aim of the foundation is to develop a method that parliament might use in deciding on the fifth policy document on spatial planning that had to appear in the report "People desire dwelling, dwelling in the 21st century".[b] The tests did show two weak spots in the method. The most important one: there is no decision support system available that can evaluate perspectives and projects with the same speed participants need to support their decisions. The second weak spot: projects tend to be too detailed and complicated when nearby in time, or too vague and superficial when far off. A format specific enough to make real decisions, and general enough to be useful in strategic planning was developed at the last moment for the debate on the rural system of the Netherlands.

Politically there were also reasons not to engage in experiments of this kind. First of all, a new Minister of Housing, Planning and Environment postponed the fifth policy document on spatial planning. Second, parliament decided they would prepare for the debate on the fifth policy document by evaluating the experiences with and results of the fourth policy document first. Third, the planning institutes of central government for the environment (RIVM), the economy (CPB), society and culture (SCPB), traffic (AVV) and spatial planning (RPD), commissioned by the ICES to develop an ex ante evaluation system for major public investments, did not come up yet with an operational method to be used publicly.

So the proposal of the foundation to organise for a change in parliamentary exploration of the future, after several parliamentary enquirements of the past, has to wait.
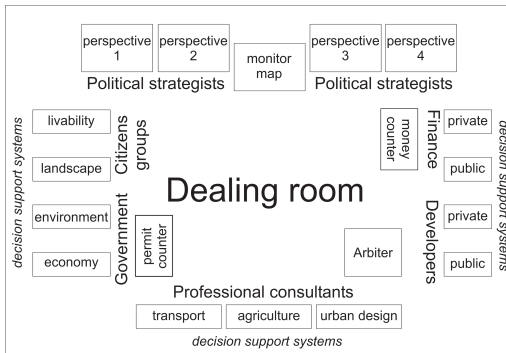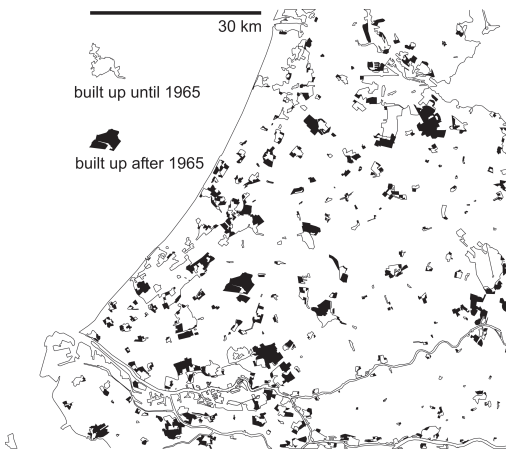

567 Projects
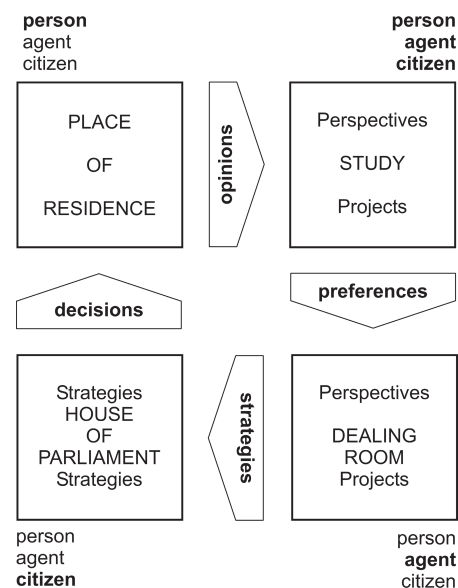
568 Decision process on planning policy

a   VROM (1998) *Nederland 2030, Discussienota Verkenning Ruimtelijke Perspectieven.*
b   VROM (2000) *Mensen wensen wonen, wonen in de 21e eeuw.*

569 Lay-out of dealing room

570 Dispersal

The contribution to strategic planning of this exercise in improving decision procedures can be summed up in a lay-out of the dealing room used in testing the method, the centrepiece between the private study for personal positioning and the assembly hall for collective evaluation. The influence on the design methods have been described (see figure 561, 562 and 564).

56.7 DESIGN TO FORGE SOCIAL ALLIANCES

To analyse the difference in perspectives you need a uniform legenda. This legenda has been developed by Taeke de Jong of the Delft Faculty of Architecture.[a] It consists of four main units (water networks, transport networks, rural and urban fields) differentiated according to size, with quantum leaps in land surfaces of 10. With this tool he analysed 25 perspectives of different public authorities and private associations, published in 1995 and 1996.[b] He then could show that indeed all of them were planning ongoing dispersal on a national scale (R=100km), in line with the fourth policy document on spatial planning report extra of 1991.

This analysis convinced Aldermen responsible for the municipal planning policy of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht that if they wanted to reverse this policy of dispersal, they had to join forces.

The first thing you do if you want to reverse a policy that was followed successfully for forty years is to change the concept on which it is based. The politically 'correct' concept is that there are independent cities developing independently. The reality is that the fields of influence of these cities in the west overlap and interfere and that this mutual interference weakens them because they spend energy in irritation in stead of saving energy by co-operation. Joining forces is the answer. Another politically 'correct' concept is that the Netherlands is the most densely populated country of the world and that the western part is the most densely populated part of this high density country. So the Aldermen said: "stop thinking of the delta as high density land and start looking at it as a low density city."

Starting from there, a period of a year and a half has been used to develop a perspective on the transformation of the loose collection of independent cities into an integrated urban system, to be called deltametropolis. The four Aldermen commissioned the University of Amsterdam to write them a scenario and to organise a two week combined design studio of their best designers, commission the ING-bank with a research of concentration by integration, invited David Rusk from Washington D.C. to advise them on metropolitan development strategies and spend a series of eight sessions to formulate the declaration Deltametropolis. This declaration states in 21 articles that in a European perspective the need arises to transform the cities in the delta into a deltametropolis. This declaration was issued just before municipal and parliamentary elections in 1998.

A few months later, after being re-elected, these four people – three men and a woman – convened to decide on further action, to wit: to broaden the political base; to start a research and design programme to convince the supporters of the dispersal policy that in a European field of action concentration may be more desirable and maybe even necessary; to be active in public discussion as well as in everyday negotiations on policies and projects. In February 2000, the Association Deltametropolis was formally established. The association has institutional members only. At the moment this Chapter is being written, the Association has thirty-three members: twelve cities with more than a 100.000 inhabitants, five chambers of commerce, six waterboards, four 'green' members (two farmers' associations, the Associations for Monuments of Nature and the National Recreational Association), four housing corporations, The Employers Association of Holland and a transport company. The idea is that the Association creates the opportunity to discover and invent together how this metropolitan transformation may be realised.

a   Jong, T.M. de and M. Paasman (1998) *Een vocabulaire voor besluitvorming over de kaart van Nederland.*
b   Jong, T.M. de and J. Achterberg (1996) *25 plannen voor de Randstad.*

The research and design programme concentrates on seven issues:

1. improving the water system of the delta that is now being used up to and beyond its capacity;
2. re-thinking the transport system to overcome the negative influence of low density and dispersed urbanisation on the efficiency of the transportsystem;
3. urban diversity, to use the opportunities of metropolitan development to widen the range of urban environments the delta has to offer;
4. economical synergy, analysing which clusters of economical activity establish themselves where and why, to be able to improve conditions for their earning capacity.
5. defining urban growth boundaries to conserve the water realm in the centre of the Deltametropolis and to guarantee its ongoing agricultural use;
6. the development of Leiden, of strategic importance as a node in the metropolitan transport system and
7. scanning cultural facilities and events to assess the cultural production of the Deltametropolis and its quality level.

Several reports have been published;[a] seminars on the results are held with a frequency of two per year. Findings of the studies on the water and the transport system are finding their way in research and design of others, just as the Association also uses knowledge and ideas from elsewhere.

56.9   MAJOR IMPACTS OF THE EXERCISE

The Association has been unexpectedly successful in its everyday political action on policy matters. Policy documents of the Minister of Transport and Water Management and of the Minster of Agriculture state explicity that they agree with the concept of Deltametropolis. The Minister of Housing, Planning and Environment has adopted Deltametropolis as a main issue of his fifth report on planning.[b]

The proof of the pudding will be if he accepts that in this low density and rather dispersed deltametropolis, motorways and railways have to be connected to raise the efficiency of the transport system. A political preference for railway systems may lead to a policy that pays lipservice to the Deltametropolis but stays fixed on traditional notions of public transport by rail as if the Deltametropolis had the density of Paris or London.

The Association Deltametropolis aims at reducing travel time within the metropolitan area to a maximum of one hour. This norm is only attainable if cars and public road transport with taxi's, vans and buses take a fair share in total mobility.

The contribution to strategic planning of the Deltametropolis Association has been quite impressive, keeping in mind its relatively short time of existence. From the start, 1996/97, the initiators knew they should be very selective in their choice of strategic projects, leaving the bulk of decisions where they traditionally belong. There are three criteria to select strategic projects:

- The project directly supports the main aim of the strategy: to improve integration of the metropolitan system and enlarge synergy.
- The project is conditional to many other projects and for that reason certainty should be attained about its realisation.
- The project is directly related to the metropolitan level and this level is the only right one to conceive, design and realise the project.

The first criterion refers to the importance of a strategic project, the second to the urgency of it, the third to the opportunity to take action.

In 1996 it was decided that the water-system and the transportation system should be considered strategic projects. The water system is chosen not only because of its existential
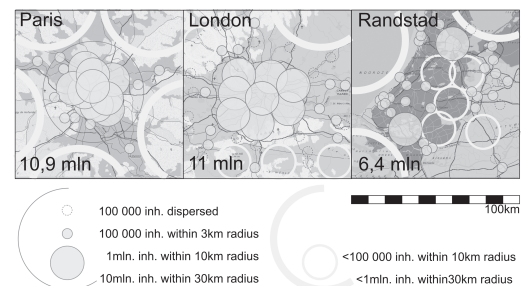
571 Density of Paris. London and Deltametropolis

a   Deltametropool, Vereniging (1999) *Personenvervoer in de Deltametropool;* – (1999) *Planning Metropolis, urban growth and social patterns;* – (2000) *Wonen in de Deltametropool;* – (2001) *Waterrijk Deltametropool.*
b   VROM (2000) *Mensen wensen wonen, wonen in de 21e eeuw.*

importance for the Deltametropolis, but also because the water system is considered to be the main structural component of the delta landscape and the cities in the delta. The water system expresses identity and image of the Deltametropolis. This identity and image is internationally recognised.

The transportation system is chosen for its direct contribution to improved integration of the metropolitan system, the need to organise the system on metropolitan level and the urgency of a major system improvement by integrating the roadsystem and railsystem that are still rather segregated.

The influence on design methods is not yet clear. The fact that the Deltametropolis Association offers a platform for informal policy discussion on perspectives has made it into a refuge for representatives of political and public and private bodies to discuss openly about quality criteria and to comment on explorative designs of transport systems and landscape transformations. By and by exploration by design is being accepted as a method to articulate an agenda for the future.

56.10 CONCLUSION

Where does the Netherlands stand today and what difference does the Deltametropolis concept make? The most important change, needless to say, is emergence of the European Union. With state boundaries having lost their rôle as economical boundaries, competition is no longer between countries, but between city-regions. Deltametropolis first and foremost is an answer to that new market-situation. The dependence of the Dutch economy on trade, transport and finance is a strength in an economy where wealth is based on worldwide exchange of material goods and Dutchmen happen to be gatekeepers of the main entrance to the European continent. Hoewever, in an economy based on information and services, the game has changed. If you are not an original source of information and if your service level is not up to world standard, you have got a problem.

Deltametropolis is a strategy to tackle this problem. The Dutch ideal of tolerance, solidarity and egalitarianism is dear of course to Dutch hearts. We should like to maintain this cultural identity as a characteristic of the European Union. The Deltametropolis declaration explicitly states that growth in size or wealth is not our biggest problem, nor foremost concern. It states that the city is an emancipation machine, a method of adding value and a school of civic culture. The Association Deltametropolis can serve as an example of this civic culture. It is an example of broad institutional participation in planning Deltametropolis; a serious endeavour to join forces to sustain, strengthen and enlarge the freedom of choice for those who live here.