The NCEA in 2013 and in the future

Effects of NCEA advice are significant

EIA for water projects: a successful choice

European EIA Directive affects Environment and Planning Act

Shale gas, wind farms, gas production need careful approach

Dutch investors abroad benefit from EIA expertise

What does the NCEA do?
Water and EA
EA and the law
Energy and EA
International activities
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The year 2013 began well for the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA). An external audit revealed that environmental assessment in general, and our advisory services in particular, are effective in no less than 80 per cent of all cases. That is, they result either in modifications to a plan or project or in better substantiation. This is a result we are proud of. Through continued critical reflection and an ongoing commitment to improve, we intend to maintain that excellent score.

I am firmly convinced that early application of our know-how to a project is one way to achieve improvement. External evaluation of our “process-oriented advice” pilots has confirmed that. This new approach has been shown to add value for you as a competent authority or project initiator. It was also found that, as long as the relevant procedures are conducted carefully, selectively and transparently, our position as an independent reviewer is in no way compromised. Naturally, the NCEA is only too happy to accept those conditions.

Once again, over the past year we have assessed a wide range of plans and projects at the national, provincial and local levels. We conducted a total of 251 advisory reports in 2013, covering everything from the effects of fracking and the inundation of the Hedwige polder to numerous land-use plans for rural areas. For each of these, we were able to draw upon the comprehensive expertise of a large number of independent specialists.

Internationally, too, the NCEA continued its efforts to make the application of environmental assessment more effective. For example, we assisted in improving the relevant legislation and regulations in five central African countries. In Russia, Pakistan and Bangladesh we played our part in the introduction of strategic environmental assessment. And in Kenya and Georgia we reviewed EA reports. As far as possible, such activities are carried out in collaboration with climate and delta planning organisations, as well as inspection and enforcement agencies.

Our Dutch Sustainability Unit (DSU) continued to support embassies and government departments in incorporating sustainable development in their policy and plans. In this area we have placed a particular emphasis upon climate issues over the past year. We also received numerous requests for advice on the inclusion of gender equality as an integral part of such plans. Over the next few years we intend to keep to the path we are now on, working even more intensively with partner institutions in the Netherlands and abroad, and with the Dutch business community.

Looking back over 15 years as chairman of the NCEA, I would like to thank you all for the inspiration you have given us. I am particularly grateful to our experts for sharing their knowledge and for their dedication. My final piece of advice is for our Dutch lawmakers: please cherish the unique model you have created with the NCEA.

Niek Ketting,
Chairman, Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (until 31 December 2013)
In the Netherlands, the NCEA issued 251 advisory reports and reviews related to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) or Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) in 2013:

- 24 advisory reports on the terms of reference (ToR) for EIAs or for combined SEA/EIAs;
- 23 advisory reports on the ToR for SEAs;
- 62 advisory reviews for EIAs or combined SEA/EIAs;
- 130 SEA advisory reviews; and,
- 12 additional, non-mandatory advisory reports.

Compared with 2012, the total number of reports issued rose by 27. The number of SEA advisory reviews actually doubled. This was because many Dutch local authorities were required to update and digitise their land-use plans by 1 July 2013. A lot of them waited until the last possible moment to do so, resulting in a clear “spike” in these reviews during the year.

As expected, the downward trend in demand for ToR reports continued in 2013. Only half as many were issued as in the previous year. The reason for this is the increase in the fee for non-mandatory advisory reports by the NCEA as of 1 July 2012.

**Mandatory versus non-mandatory reports**

Due to the fee increase, the number of non-mandatory reports issued was about 40 per cent down on the 2012 figure. As our production of mandatory reports increased sharply in 2013, non-mandatory reports accounted for only 25 per cent of total output.
Advisory reports in 2013

What does the NCEA do?

The proportions of advisory reports and reviews produced for the different branches of Dutch government have remained fairly constant in recent years. Of those issued in 2013:

- 65 per cent were for local authorities (versus 64 per cent in 2012);
- 21 per cent were for provincial authorities (21 per cent in 2012);
- 12 per cent were for central government (14 per cent in 2012); and,
- 2 per cent were for water authorities (4 per cent in 2012).

Public submissions

The NCEA considered public submissions in 127 of its advisory procedures (53 per cent of the total) in 2013. Of these, 97 were reviews (51 per cent) and 30 were preliminary advice (64 per cent). These figures reflect a continued downward trend in the integration of such submissions in our advice since 1 July 2010, when it ceased to be mandatory for the NCEA to take them into account. These were included in 62 per cent of procedures in 2012, and in 73 per cent in 2011. This decline is regrettable, since specific information provided by the public improves the overall quality of the advice we issue.

Mandatory versus non-mandatory involvement 2009-2013

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>Non-mandatory</th>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>2010</td>
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Who asks for advice?

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**Quality**

**Notifications of intent**
The NCEA’s point of departure for advisory reports on terms of reference (ToR) is the so-called notification of intent. In 91 per cent of its advisory reports the NCEA introduced new elements to this notification. In many cases these were new alternatives or variants (58 per cent), supplementary information to substantiate the proposal (51 per cent), information requested on nature values (42 per cent) and health-related issues (23 per cent). In only 6 per cent of cases did the competent authority not adopt our ToR advice in full, with most of these demurrals related to not yet fully elaborated alternatives and variants.

**Environmental assessments**
The NCEA reviewed 192 environmental assessments reports (EIAs and SEAs) in 2013. As in previous years, those covering water-related projects were high in quality.

**Shortcomings**
Significant shortcomings were found in 63 per cent of the 116 reviewed assessments (not related to land use plans for rural areas). This proportion is in line with figures from previous years; in the period 2008-2012 they fluctuated between 50 and 66 per cent. Most of the shortcomings identified in 2013 concerned a lack of information about:
- nature (70 per cent);
- alternatives and variants (42 per cent); and,
- noise emissions and substantiation of the intended activity (20 per cent each).

**Quality of environmental assessment reports in 2013**

![Quality of environmental assessment reports in 2013](chart)

- Energy, industry and extraction of natural resources
- Infrastructure
- Intensive livestock farming
- Rural areas
- Recreation
- Water
- Housing projects, industrial estates and urban construction projects
Environmental information

Nature protection
Many authorities continue to underestimate the impact on the Natura 2000 wildlife and habitats protection network. They find it difficult to compile a good assessment of these impacts.

Insufficient information
Where intensive livestock farming is an issue, there is frequently insufficient information about the environmental impact of acidifying and eutrophying substances. As well as details of nature, plans for residential, industrial, commercial and urban development projects often lack supporting material about possible alternatives and variants and about the effect upon the living environment.

Supplementary information
If important environmental information is missing from the original submission, supplementary information is provided. The NCEA can be requested to review this information. The number of requests for such reviews is falling. In 2013 they were asked for in 41 per cent of cases, compared with 90 per cent in 2010. The fee of €3500 for what is a non-mandatory procedure is quite possibly a factor in this decline.

The fall in demand for reviews of supplementary information has been particularly acute in the case of strategic environmental assessments (SEA) for land-use plans for rural areas. Disregarding these, competent authorities requested the NCEA to evaluate supplementary information in 62 per cent of cases in 2013.

Initiators sometimes opt to take more time to develop their plan or project and so notify the NCEA at the outset that a supplement will follow later. In more than half of such instances, after reviewing this the NCEA was able to conclude that the environmental assessment report contained all the necessary environmental information. However, about 40 per cent were still insufficient or incomplete.

Rural areas
Because of the large number of land-use plans for rural areas submitted in 2013, and also the pressing issue of nitrogen deposition in the areas they cover, it was decided to analyse these plans as a separate category. Land-use plans for rural areas set out a local authority’s policy for its entire non-built-up area, and for its agricultural sector in general. In 2013 the NCEA reviewed 76 SEA reports for land-use plans, a lot of which had not been updated for many years.

Missing information
89 per cent of the SEA reports reviewed were found to have at least one significant shortcoming. Most of the problems identified concerned a lack of information about:
• impacts upon nature (79 per cent);
• alternatives and variants (50 per cent);
• substantiation of the intended activity (28 per cent); and,
• impacts upon the landscape (20 per cent).

Shortcomings in respect of impacts upon nature are attributable to missing or insufficient information about the effects of acidifying and eutrophying substances produced by the agricultural sector. More than in previous years, there was also inadequate coverage of impacts upon the landscape – an important factor when making choices about the use of rural areas.
The effects of environmental assessment

Recent evaluations by the universities of Utrecht and Groningen and by consultancy firm Berenschot, identified the following benefits of environmental assessment in general, and NCEA advice in particular.

- **EA demonstrably enhances environmental awareness amongst project initiators and competent authorities, resulting in “greener” decisions.**
- **The fact that EA is mandatory largely explains its effectiveness as a technique.**
- **The quality of EA reports is an important factor in their subsequent impact and the NCEA plays a key role as an independent guarantor of that quality.**
- **In more than 60 per cent of cases, the EA and the NCEA’s advice add evident value. In another 20 per cent, they have some impact. Their effect takes a variety of forms, including better justification of particular decisions and the modification of proposals to make them more environmentally friendly.**

**Legal proceedings**

Environmental assessment and NCEA advice also regularly play a part in legal proceedings. The Council of State, the Netherlands’ highest legal body, gives substantial weight to NCEA’s opinions in its own judgments. We also enhance the impact of EA by actively sharing our experience and know-how. To provide competent authorities and project initiators with a helping hand, we send out a regular newsletter, organise themed meetings and issue a range of publications.
Invitation-planning
With the expected enactment of a new Environment and Planning Act in the Netherlands, over the next few years the practice of environmental assessment—and with it our advisory role—is likely to be dominated by the transition from “permissive” to “invitation” planning. Combining flexibility in planning with careful assessment of environmental impacts without increasing the investigative workload is going to require considerable creativity. We are actively seeking to enter into a dialogue with other interested parties, so that we can tackle this challenge together. In the meantime, we intend to emphasise the following aspects in our advisory work and products.

Rule-of-thumb guidelines and uncertainties
Making more use of rule-of-thumb guidelines can help keep EA reports concise and to the point. A clear understanding of which rule-of-thumb guidelines are effective at the strategic and project level is therefore necessary. Together with our experts and the EA community, in 2014 we intend to take substantive steps towards that goal. Accepting uncertainty when identifying effects is uncharted terrain. At present, environmental assessments reports hardly ever address this factor. In the future, though, particularly given the shift towards “invitation planning”, it has to become an integral aspect of every environmental assessment report.

Health
Health effects are playing an increasingly prominent part in the public debate. Environmental assessments must and can provide the information needed for health issues to be considered properly in decision-making. Where relevant, we already explicitly point out their importance when advising on terms of reference. From now on we shall also pay more attention to health factors used in the development and assessment of alternatives.

Sustainable development
Sustainable growth is becoming a core objective of public policy. By this we mean economic growth with less environmental impact, less dependence upon fossil fuels and more efficient use of natural resources. Reflecting this, in our advice we are going to demand greater consideration for such themes as climate, energy transition and use of resources. In addition, as a comprehensive planning tool, environmental assessment has to reflect socioeconomic impacts more than is currently the case. By better harmonising its information with that derived from social cost-benefit analyses, we hope to strengthen both instruments and to create a foundation that supports sustainability-driven decisions in practice.

Customised advice
Building upon the positive evaluation of our “process-oriented advice” pilots, from now on we intend to offer competent authorities and projects initiators complete, customised advisory procedures.
The Netherlands and the Flanders region of Belgium are cooperating to restore the natural environment of the Scheldt estuary. One of the projects within this programme is the inundation of the Hedwige polder in the Netherlands and part of the Prosperpolder in Flanders. By realigning the dykes protecting these two areas of reclaimed land, they are to be returned to the river to create new estuarine habitats. Flanders approved its part of the scheme in 2007 and began work to allow the Prosperpolder to flood. In the province of Zeeland the idea generated a lot of opposition, prompting several studies to investigate alternatives. Finally, it was decided to proceed with the original plan and instigate the environmental assessment (EA) procedure. This revealed the difficulty to predict future developments in an estuarine environment, where nature is particularly dynamic. The complex system of channels, mudflats, salt marshes and sandbanks is constantly being affected by tidal flows. Some areas tend to silt up most of the time, but are then eroded away by high tides and storms.

**Our advice**

One opponent produced a report containing totally different predictions concerning the rate at which the inundated area would silt up: too fast a silting process would actually detract from the natural value of the estuarine environment. This alternative report was published with the EA report, as a public submission. The NCEA reviewed the EA report as well as the opinions provided by its opponents. In our view, the EA report rightly stated that the inundated polder would benefit nature in the Western Scheldt estuary at every stage of its development. It would indeed silt up over the years, and at a faster rate than was predicted in models in the EA report. Because silting also has a role in the intended restoration of the natural environment, we agreed with the positive conclusion reached in the EA report on that point.
Phased island construction

Marker Wadden in the spotlight

The Markermeer is the southern part of the IJsselmeer, the freshwater lake created by the enclosure of the former Zuiderzee. Its ecological quality is currently poor, but national conservation society Natuurmonumenten hopes to change that over the next 30-40 years through its Marker Wadden project. This provides for the use of the lake’s excess mud to create, in phases, a series of islands providing natural wildlife habitats. For the first phase of development to proceed, it has to be included in Lelystad Council’s land-use plan. At the council’s request, in its first advice on the terms of reference of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the NCEA considered only the two principal aspects of the scheme: mud use and habitat development. As usual, in its second advice at the review stage the entire SEA report was examined.

Sound basis
The NCEA was very impressed with the approach adopted in the SEA report. As the exact way in which the work is to be carried out will have to be agreed with the contractors involved, and may be subject to change as the project progresses, Natuurmonumenten described a broad spectrum of possible activities and the potential impact of each of them. This meant that there was a sound basis for the overall conclusion that the project should result in substantial improvement of the Markermeer’s ecological quality. Given the very long duration of the project, the decisive role to be played by commercial contractors and the uncertainties involved, we did emphasise the need for effective monitoring. We also advised that good criteria be compiled for the assessment of possible changes as the project unfolds and recommended that the “ecological surplus value” needed to enable economic development in the Amsterdam-Almere-Markermeer region be taken into consideration.
Towards a climate-proof country

**Delta Programme**

The Delta Programme has been established to put forward solutions to the problems facing the Netherlands between now and 2050 as a result of climate change and socioeconomic developments. Strategically, it is also looking further ahead, as far as 2100. Decisions concerning five key issues, all of them interrelated, are due to be taken in 2015. They are: water safety, freshwater strategy, adaptive planning, the Rhine-Meuse delta, water-level management in the IJsselmeer region.

The programme has been working towards these decisions in phases, with progress reports issued on a regular basis. These include the annual Delta Programme presentation on the opening day of the parliamentary year. The NCEA has been asked by the Delta Commissioner, who oversees the entire programme, to contribute to this unique operation in order that environmental issues receive the attention they deserve in the decision-making process, alongside the many other aspects to be considered.

**Advice on terms of reference**

In 2013 we issued an advisory report on the terms of reference for the Delta Programme’s environmental research. Our principal recommendations were as follows.

- Properly justify the choices made, particularly in respect of water safety as this is now subject to a new set of standards.
- Describe strategic choices and concrete measures for each issue on which decisions are to be made.
- Develop a simple reference scenario – for example, one in which current policy continues unchanged until 2050.
- Describe the environmental impact of choices made and alternatives, including an appropriate assessment incorporating the risks to Natura 2000 areas. Compare these effects with those under the situation in the reference scenario.

In his response to the report, the Delta Commissioner stated that our advice will heavily influence future phases of the programme.
Environmental assessment lacks depth on climate change

Monitoring climate effects

According to planning specialists and the writers of Environmental Assessment (EA) reports, these documents do not yet pay enough attention to climate change. The long time span over which climate effects are measured and the uncertainties surrounding their magnitude make it difficult to consider them. The planning horizon of EA is typically 10 years, sometimes 20, whereas climate scenarios look 50-100 years into the future.

European directives
Despite this, EA is an ideal means to chart the effects of climate change and measures to counter them. The new European EIA Directive, currently under development, requires that more attention will be paid to climate issues. Wageningen University has been conducting research into the coverage of climate change in SEAs for structure visions. That reveals that, as a rule, it is not addressed in any great depth. On the other hand, there does appear to be an increasing focus upon the subject in planning and the accompanying SEAs, now that more and more practical examples and instruments are becoming available. In 2013, the NCEA organised a meeting on the theme of environmental assessment and climate, at which suggestions and tips were gathered to embed climate consideration in the assessment process. Some of these were:

• Make EA part of the development process, not a review at the end.
• Explicitly describe climate risks and effects:
  – conduct the climate stress test at the local level (this is being developed as part of the Delta Programme);
  – use vulnerability maps;
  – use sensitivity analysis when describing impact on land and water;
  – formulate adaptation measures.
• Deal with uncertainties:
  – link uncertainty to area goals and “no-regret” measures;
  – conduct regular monitoring and formulate additional measures to hold in reserve.

In 2014, these tips and suggestions are to be refined to produce a practical guide for the EA community.
Over the next few years, the Dutch government and the country’s provincial and water authorities are to compile new water policy plans for the period up to 2021. At the heart of these are the Delta Programme decisions and area processes.

Coupled with careful consideration of the various interests at stake, they should result in water policy choices that enjoy broad support. In turn, those choices will help shape projects and plans affecting groundwater or surface water management, or water quality. The legal standards for water quality are derived from the European Water Framework Directive. The fact that these are still not being met in many parts of the Netherlands means that we have a tough task ahead of us. This applies in particular to Natura 2000 areas, which are highly reliant upon good hydrological conditions.

Help in making choices

Strategic environmental assessment can play an important role in helping to make the right choices when it comes to water policy. The new National Water Plan and several of its regional equivalents are therefore being subjected to SEA procedures. Water policy is set to be an increasingly important part of the EA process at both planning and project levels, with SEA/EIA reports addressing their negative effects for water management as well as ways in which they could improve it. Through its advice, the NCEA intends to promote the use of environmental assessment for this purpose.
The proposed Environment and Planning Act is intended to create a single, all-embracing framework for environmental regulation in the Netherlands. At present, this is fragmented along sectoral lines. What the new legislation will mean specifically for environmental assessment first became apparent in 2013, with the publication of a so-called “consultation draft” of the bill. A wide range of organisations, the NCEA amongst them, were asked to respond to this. Their input was then incorporated into a new draft text, which was submitted to the Council of State for its consideration in the autumn of 2013. The NCEA supports the intention to introduce more co-ordinated decision-making. After all, that suits the environmental assessment system very well. The inclusion of EA in planning and decision-making procedures is also a positive development, as long as it is applied early enough to allow scope for the formulation of alternatives. Procedural streamlining should not restrict the effects of EA.

**Broader support**

The NCEA also suggested some improvements to the bill. We emphasised the importance of investing in the preparatory phase prior to decision-making, in the form of preliminary problem analysis, wide-ranging investigation of alternative solutions and early public participation in the EA process. These measures should result in decisions that enjoy broader support and also may save substantial amounts of time and money. We were critical of the proposal to abolish the comprehensive EIA procedure, as that would remove material and procedural safeguards like research into alternatives and the NCEA reviews of projects requiring important environment-related choices. The bill’s structure could also be improved, so that initiators are encouraged to consider the EA procedure from the early stages of the project. The bill is expected to be submitted to Parliament in the summer of 2014, but it will be several years before the EA community has to deal with its provisions.
Late in 2012, the European Commission published a proposal to revise the EIA Directive. This prompted a lot of debate in Brussels in 2013, with the Council of Ministers wanting to weaken the proposal whilst the European Parliament was keen to strengthen it. The current directive has been in force for more than 25 years, and in all that time has barely been updated. From practical experience, however, it is clear that revision is needed. For example, its effects vary quite considerably from one member state to another. Through its proposal, the European Commission wants to improve the quality of EIA, to streamline procedures and to bring the tool more in line with other EU legislation. The scope of EIA would be expanded to include such factors as climate change and biodiversity. And it would be harmonised, or even merged, with other environmental checks like the appropriate assessment. Finally, the rules governing an EIA would be specified in more detail so as to achieve greater uniformity.

**Focus upon quality**
As EIA quality is not always up to scratch, the proposal addresses this aspect at length. Under the amended directive, it will become mandatory to investigate alternatives. Moreover, the quality of every EIA will have to be checked by qualified experts or a national expert committee – like the NCEA. And there will be a requirement that projects are only allowed to proceed if the monitoring measures proposed in the EIA are implemented.

At the start of 2014, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers agreed a final draft text of the revised directive. It is expected that this will be made public in spring 2014. It will be another three years before the Dutch regulations have to be amended to comply with the new version.
For environmental assessment, 2014 is going to be an important year. It is when we discover how future Dutch legislation will govern the topic.

**European EIA Directive**

In the first quarter of 2014, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers negotiated the draft text of a revised version of the *EIA Directive*. On the basis of this agreement, the updated directive could enter force by the summer. The member states then have three years to bring their own legislation into line with it.

**European EIA Directive and the Dutch Environment and Planning Act**

The revised EIA Directive will very much shape the role played by environmental assessment in the Netherlands’ proposed Environment and Planning Act. That is expected to be tabled in Parliament this spring. In its present form, however, it is based upon the original European directive. The question is whether the relaxation of EA regulations contained in the Dutch bill is compatible with the revised directive. In particular, does the latter make it compulsory to obtain an advisory report on the terms of reference of an assessment and to subject the final EIA to an independent quality control? Whether the new European rules require that the proposed Dutch legislation be amended will become clear sometime this year.

**New fees**

For the NCEA, our proposed new fee structure is an important development. In the future, the competent authority will have to pay for the advice we provide. In the first half of 2014, the Dutch House of Representatives and the Senate approved a bill to allow us to charge fees that cover our full costs.
In 2009, the British oil and gas company Cuadrilla was awarded a licence to look for shale gas reserves in the province of Noord-Brabant and the Noordoostpolder district. The firm wanted to sink a test well near the town of Boxtel. But due to growing opposition to fracking, the technique used to extract shale gas, the Minister of Economic Affairs decided to suspend all exploratory drilling and commission more research into the issue. As an independent assessor, the NCEA was asked to review the resulting report.

Safety
The NCEA found that the document presents a reasonable summary of the risks associated with shale gas production, but as it does not really go into the consequences for nature, the landscape and the living environment, it is impossible to conclude from it that fracking is safe. Exploitation of the available gas reserves would probably require a large number of wells, causing substantial disruption over a long period. This information is not included in the report. Nor is there any mention of the need for and benefits of shale gas production, even though that is a key aspect of the controversy surrounding the issue. The NCEA advised the minister to compile a strategic plan and strategic environmental assessment addressing these points, and to initiate a wide-ranging consultation process to ensure a good public debate on the matter.

Siting
The minister has followed our advice and announced that he will indeed produce a strategic plan and an SEA before making any decision on trial drilling. Currently, the most suitable locations for successful production with the least possible impact upon people, nature and the environment are being investigated. Before, during and after compilation of the strategic plan and SEA, there will be opportunities for input and consultation. The NCEA will be involved in that process.
Siting turbines is a skill

The wind energy puzzle

When it comes to wind energy, in the Netherlands central, provincial and local governments all have their own strategies. To take just one example of the differences, in some places broad areas are designated as suitable for wind turbines whilst in others their exact sites are plotted in great detail. As a result, environmental assessments of wind energy projects also vary widely. Which makes answering even simple questions like “where?”, “how?” and “how many?” a complicated puzzle.

Determining impacts

In its advisory role, the NCEA focuses upon careful, accurate determination of the effects the plans envisaged by the competent authority will have. Sometimes that authority takes it upon itself to include alternatives in its environmental assessment, for example in the form of a landscape master plan or exclusion zones. On other occasions such specifics are left to others, giving the private sector quite substantial freedom of action. In both cases, however, the corners of the “playing field” have to be visible. Both in the form of some alternatives delivering maximum renewable energy yields and others designed to minimise impact upon nature, the landscape and the living environment. In developing such alternatives, customisation is key. Only then do they fulfil their essential role, facilitating sound and transparent decisions concerning wind energy.
Inadequate and incomplete evaluation

**Five years of Wadden Sea gas production**

Acting as audit commission, since 2007 the NCEA has issued an annual advisory report on the monitoring of gas production in the Wadden Sea. In 2013, the NCEA audit commission also reviewed the results of the evaluation of the monitoring programme in 2007-2012. Production company NAM has made some changes and advances over the past five years, but the time has now come for a fundamental rethink of that programme.

**Harmonisation and cohesion**

Based upon a draft evaluation, early in 2013 the NCEA audit commission recommended that more focus, harmonisation and cohesion be introduced into the programme. The final evaluation, received in the autumn of 2013, was considered inadequate. Sufficiently accurate data sequences were not available for all relevant subjects, and measurements were not adequately harmonised. For example, the evaluation revealed that the programme does not monitor most bird species in the Wadden Sea closely enough to determine any link between their numbers and subsidence caused by gas production activities. The auditors therefore called for an approach in which bird counts are examined in conjunction with other research, into such factors as seafloor fauna and habitat size. This will enable a focus upon bird species that does provide accurate information when considered alongside other aspects. At the end of December the auditors received a revised evaluation with a monitoring proposal. In 2014 they will advise on the suggested changes to the new monitoring programme for 2014-2019.
There are many approaches to the theme of energy and environmental assessment. Oil and gas production, electricity generation and energy transport and storage all require some form of EA, as do networks like pipelines and the power grid.

**Renewable energy**
In recent years, the NCEA has reviewed many environmental impact assessments for new coal-fired, gas-fired, waste-fired and nuclear power stations. In 2013 we witnessed a real shift towards renewable sources of energy, such as biomass and wind farms. Central, provincial and local governments are all working on strategic and land-use plans to enable the Netherlands to produce 6000 megawatts of onshore wind energy.

**Shale gas**
The national government is developing several strategic plans for energy. These include “Wind at Sea”, a shale gas plan and STRONG, covering geothermal energy and natural gas production. The NCEA is applying its expertise to advise on the accompanying SEAs, thus providing a firm basis for sound future choices.

**Alternatives highlighted**
The EIA or SEA procedure is an excellent means through which to highlight possible alternatives to energy-related plans and projects. However, many of these exercises still focus too single-mindedly upon technology and safety. A more comprehensive approach to the living environment, disruption and perceptions can result in different ideas. Projects at the Port of Rotterdam provide a good example of this. They have demonstrated that there is scope to improve (unsatisfactory) air quality and to counter unnecessary pollution.

Energy transition is also going to become an increasingly important aspect of EA, as are the opportunities it creates to develop alternatives. Through its advisory work, the NCEA will continue to encourage the tabling of such alternatives and to evaluate them against renewable energy targets.

EA is an excellent instrument to incorporate alternatives in energy plans and projects.
Environmental assessment required for Dutch initiatives abroad?

Screening of project proposals

Dutch organisations wanting to carry out activities in developing countries can make use of a variety of subsidy schemes operated by government ministries in The Hague. These include ORIO for the construction of public infrastructure and the PPP-programme to encourage public-private partnerships in the water and food security sector. To qualify for the latter these projects must involve collaboration between government, the business community and non-profit organisations.

Advice and support

The NCEA supports the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), the body charged with awarding the subsidies, in screening project proposals. Looking at national environmental assessment regulations in the country concerned, we determine whether an EIA is required. Where relevant, we refer the initiator to industry guidelines – environmental or otherwise – and examples of other projects. The extensive experience we have built up in many of the countries concerned often allows us to advise on the capacity of the local environmental authority and other stakeholders in the EIA procedure. In 2013 we screened 41 proposals, about half of which were found to require an EIA.

Mandatory EIA

When an EIA is mandatory, both the Dutch and the local partners in the project can make use of the NCEA helpdesk. This can provide them with information about local rules and regulations for environmental assessment, and the consequences for their proposal. If desired, we can also play a role during the EIA process itself by advising on guidelines for the assessment, for instance, or by reviewing it. In 2013 we were asked by the Burundian government to advise on an ESIA of the project Clean and Waste Free Bujumbura (CaWFB), a project partly funded by ORIO.
Controversial Georgian dam in the news

The NCEA reviews EIA Khudoni Dam

To reduce its dependence upon Russia for energy, Georgia is considering completing the Khudoni Dam project, begun in the 1980s but later abandoned. Situated on the River Inguri, this has a potential hydroelectric capacity of approximately 700 megawatts. Because of the plan’s complexity and political sensitivity, the Minister of the Environment asked the NCEA to review its combined environmental and social impact assessment. An international team visited Georgia in April 2013 and concluded that the assessment falls short on a number of points.

- It includes no plans for the relocation and compensation of about 200 households.
- The dam’s expected useful life is not 90 years, as stated in the EIA, but probably only 30.

This is because the reservoir behind it will fill with sediment faster than predicted.
- No social cost-benefit analysis has been conducted; only the financial equivalent is available.

NCEA advice

The NCEA has advised that relocation and compensation plans be drawn up in accordance with the international standards. We have also recommended that the dam’s useful life be reassessed and this information be included in a new social cost-benefit analysis.

Our presentation of these and other findings attracted considerable media interest. Georgia’s Prime Minister subsequently instructed the ministers of Energy and the Environment to follow our recommendations. We expect to be able to review the definitive EIA in 2014.
De Dutch Sustainability Unit (DSU) is a facility established at the NCEA to support the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in making its international interventions in the domain of water and food security more sustainable. In its work, the DSU pays particular attention to climate and gender equality issues. In 2013 the unit issued 25 advisory reports for the ministry itself and for Dutch embassies abroad. The requests ranged from reviews of embassies’ Multi Annual Strategic Plans to the climate, gender and environmental aspects of programme and project proposals by the ministry in The Hague.

**Secretariat model**
The DSU underwent an external evaluation as to its effectiveness towards the end of 2013. This found that almost all of its clients are satisfied with the advice they receive. For them the unit’s strength, like that of the environmental assessment programme, lies in its use of the so-called “secretariat model”. Under this, a relatively small central office – the secretariat – maintains good contacts with embassies and with the ministry’s internal directorates. As a result, advisory assignments can be formulated quickly and then subcontracted to outside experts, working on behalf of the DSU. Over the years, the NCEA has built up a group of such experts specialising in all aspects of sustainable development.

In 2014 the DSU’s main focus will be practical: how can ministry and embassy staff best be supported in their efforts to ensure that programmes make the greatest possible contribution to sustainable development, gender equality and good climate management?
Environmental assessment is now very much on the agenda in central Africa. In the past five years the NCEA has coached five national EA associations and their regional federation, the SEEAC. This video takes you to Cameroon and the closing meeting of the coaching programme.

This is a very important collaboration. The government by itself cannot succeed.
International EA and the law

A substantial proportion of our work abroad consists of advising on environmental assessment legislation and regulations. Typical subjects are changes to existing legislation and regulations, the amendment of current laws and the development of guidelines. These advisory activities are often part of long-term partnership programmes with national governments.

Burundi: scoping in EA
By ministerial order, since 2013 scoping has been formally included in Burundian EA legislation. With the support of the NCEA, the original order has been fleshed out to create standardised guidelines for assessment. Already generally accepted, these have brought far greater efficiency to the process.

SEA in Pakistan
In Pakistan we are involved in a four-year capacity development programme to strengthen environmental assessment. As well as improving EIA, this is dedicated to introducing SEA. Our contribution includes supporting pilot SEAs and raising awareness at the highest political level. This effort appears to have been a success, as it now looks like strategic environmental assessments are to be enshrined in law and the associated regulations. The more progressive of the provinces, which play an important role in environmental management in Pakistan, have indicated that they wish to continue the implementation of SEA after the partnership programme comes to an end in 2014.

“At present, all mega projects require an EIA. Now we have suggested in the draft proposal for new legislation, to conduct environmental assessments of plans and policies as well.”

Dr Mohammad Bashir Khan, managing director of Environmental Protection Agency, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Controversial shipping access to Colombian port

A new canal for Cartagena?

The proposed expansion of the Port of Cartagena is important to the Colombian economy. Based upon the assumption that the current access canal has reached its maximum possible breadth and depth, a replacement has been designed in order to cope with the port’s expected growth. But this project is controversial because of its potential environmental impact, including damage to mangrove swamps and coral reefs, and the restrictions it will impose upon local fishermen.

EIA review
At the suggestion of the Dutch embassy in Bogotá, the NCEA was requested by the Colombian Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development to review the EIA for the canal project. On a visit to the country, our team was impressed by the initiator’s intention to complete the project in an environmentally friendly and socially acceptable way, and by the other stakeholders’ commitment to support that aim. Nonetheless, they identified a number of critical shortcomings in the EIA report. The most important were:

- The unclear relationship between this project and future use of the port.
- The lack of justification for the basic assumption that this is the best solution. For example, no alternative locations are described.
- The insufficient description of the method to be used for the planned relocation of coral reefs, and the inadequate justification of the choice of new location.

Our feedback concerning the absence of any alternatives, in particular, contributed towards renewed critical reflection within the Colombian government. It has now decided to suspend this project and to investigate whether the existing canal can be widened and deepened after all.
The combination of independent advisory and review work and capacity development remains one of the key pillars of our activities in 2014. Programmes involving this mix are continuing in Burundi, Rwanda, Mozambique and Pakistan. In Kenya we have been invited to devise a similar programme, following on from our advice concerning the SEA for land-use planning in the Tana Delta. And in Benin, Mali, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Indonesia we are in talks concerning capacity development. We also very much hope that the situation in Yemen will improve enough to enable us to resume our work there. As well as governments, we continue to work with EA associations in Africa – not just in the central part of the continent, where we are already engaged in intensive co-operation, but also in east and west Africa. There we are investigating the possibility of launching new regional programmes.

Knowledge and learning platform
Our advisory and capacity development activities receive support from our knowledge and learning platform. Its focal areas in 2014 are:
- the mid-term review of our five-year agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- further development and roll-out of tools to produce SWOT analyses of EA systems; and,
- expanding our EA country profiles, containing the information Dutch and local organisations need to conduct EA effectively.

DSU
Our Dutch Sustainability Unit (DSU) continues to support embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2014 in matters related to climate, gender equality and the contribution to sustainable development of water and food activities. In an evaluation towards the end of 2013, that support was rated as highly successful. We co-ordinate our work with organisations like the Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP), the Centre for Development Innovation (CDI), the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN). In our view, integrated support is essential in achieving sustainable development.

On principle, the DSU is demand-driven. Exactly what activities it will undertake in 2014 therefore remains to be seen, but making themed programmes gender and climate “smart” remains high on its list of priorities.

What does the NCEA do?
We focus on five key areas:
- Environmental assessment
- Water and EA
- Energy and EA
- EA and the law
- Knowledge centre

Also view:
- World map
- Screening Dutch investment projects
- Georgia hydropower dam
- Environmental assessment legislation abroad
- Colombia port expansion

The future
- International activities
- NCEA
- 2013 and beyond
- page 28 of 53
Since 2010 the NCEA has been endeavouring to place greater emphasis upon its function as a knowledge broker, and that effort continued in 2013. This process aims to enhance self-reliance in EA on the part of competent authorities, to improve the application of EA and to raise the quality of reports.

Facts and figures

- Twelve editions of the e-newsletter OpMERkelijk were published in 2013.
- On the NCEA website, 77,625 visitors accounted for almost 308,800 page views.
- Website visitors made 12,000 searches for case law. Ninety court judgments were added to the site, with commentaries for EA practitioners.
- Thirty-one factsheets are available on the website. Most of these were updated in 2013.
- New factsheets included Livestock and Health in EA and EA and Land-Use Plans for Industrial Estates and Business Parks.
- Six themed meetings were organised. Topics included the Flora and Fauna Act, landscape, climate and health.
- Twelve press releases were issued, in particular one about our advice on fracking attracting widespread media interest.
- The NCEA tweeted about advisory reports, press releases, newsletters and case law.
- In the run-up to the themed meetings, LinkedIn was used to initiate discussions.
- The helpdesk received 165 knowledge-related queries, most about the organisation of the EA process and our role in it.
- The NCEA had a stand and organised workshops at the annual Link Day (a gathering for employees in all branches of government) and I&M EA Day (the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment's environmental assessment event). In 2013 the NCEA organised a total of 29 workshops.
- The NCEA published six articles in academic journals and contributed six chapters to books.
- Two videos were produced, about the NCEA itself and about process-oriented advice.
Knowledge centre · Presentations and publications the Netherlands 2013

Presentations
- Basiscursus M.e.r., Geoplan, Amsterdam
- Basiscursus M.e.r., Schakeldag, 's-Hertogenbosch
- Basiscursus Milieurecht, Geoplan, Amsterdam
- Basistrainingen voor deskundigen, Driebergen/Utrecht
- Beeldvormingsbijeenkomst schaliegas, provincie Noord-Brabant, 's-Hertogenbosch
- Cursus M.e.r., StAB, Den Haag
- Cursus M.e.r.-beoordeling, Berghauzer Pont, Utrecht
- Cursus M.e.r., Afdeling bestuursrechtspraak van de Raad van State
- Cursus Milieurecht, onderdeel milieueffectrapportage, Studiecentrum voor Bedrijf en Beroep, Rotterdam
- Presentatie bij DOG/BRB, IPO, Breda
- Presentatie IIR Schaliegascongres, Amersfoort
- Presentatie Kaderstelling, werkbijeenkomst DCMR, Schiedam
- Presentatie over PAS, Instituut voor Bouwrecht, Utrecht
- Presentatie tijdens academische workshop over Nederlandse ervaringen met stroomlijning van besluitvorming en milieu-effect-rapportage bij trans-Europese energienetwerken (TEN-E), Cambridge
- Technische briefing schaliegas aan Commissie Economische Zaken van de Tweede Kamer, Den Haag
- Themabijeenkomsten Flora- en faunawet, Commissie m.e.r., Utrecht
- Themabijeenkomsten Gezondheid, Commissie m.e.r., Utrecht
- Themabijeenkomsten Klimaat, Commissie m.e.r., Utrecht
- Themabijeenkomsten Landschap, Commissie m.e.r., Driebergen/Utrecht
- Verdiepingstrainingen voor deskundigen, Driebergen/Utrecht
- Werkwijze van de Commissie m.e.r., Geoplan, Utrecht
- Workshop De Commissie m.e.r.: Hulp in moeilijke tijden, lenM-m.e.r.-dag, Amersfoort
- Workshop Impact Assessment, post-graduate masteropleiding Management of Safety, Health and Environment, TopTech TU Delft
- Workshop M.e.r. in Europees perspectief, lenM-m.e.r.-dag, Amersfoort
- Workshop RCR-projecten en m.e.r., Nationale windenergie dag, Amsterdam
- Workshop Ruimtelijke ordening en m.e.r. voor de gemeente Tilburg
- Workshop Ruimtelijke ordening en m.e.r.-onderzoek, Schakeldag, 's-Hertogenbosch
- Workshop Toepassen van vuistregels en omgaan met onzekerheden bij effectbepaling, lenM-m.e.r.-dag, Amersfoort
- Zoomcursus Omwegingsrecht voor niet-juristen, onderdeel milieueffectrapportage, Universiteit van Amsterdam

Publications
- ‘Pilot procesgericht adviseren m.e.r. Flexibele inzet Commissie m.e.r.’ Ten Holder, V.J.H.M. en C.T. Smit. Toets (2) 2013, p. 12-16
- ‘Kan Effectbepaling niet eenvoudiger? Toepassen vuistregels en expert judgement in m.e.r.’ Draaijers G. e.a. Toets (3) 2013, p. 10-15

more on the next page
Knowledge centre • Presentations and publications the Netherlands 2013

- Tekst en Commentaar Wabo, onderdeel Bor en Mor (tweede druk). Den Haag: Kluwer, 2013
- Periodieke annotaties m.e.r.-jurisprudentie voor Jurisprudentie Milieurecht. Den Haag: SDU, 2013
- ‘Quality Review of EIAs/SEAs: a Dutch perspective Assessing the assessment.’ Hoevenaars, G. Environmental Law Network International (ELNI) (1/2) 2013, p. 30-37
- ‘Representatieve invulling van de maximale planologische mogelijkheden van een bestemmingsplan (deel 1). Een analyse van (recente) jurisprudentie en rechtsvragen die zijn blijven bestaan.’ Van Velsen, S.M. Tijdschrift voor Bouwrecht (65) 2013, p. 412-421
- ‘Representatieve invulling van de maximale planologische mogelijkheden van een bestemmingsplan (deel 2). Een analyse van (recente) jurisprudentie en rechtsvragen die zijn blijven bestaan.’ Van Velsen, S.M. Tijdschrift voor Bouwrecht (77) 2013, p. 516-525

Also view:
- Presentations and publications International 2013
- Facts and figures the Netherlands 2013
- Knowledge centre the Netherlands 2014
- Facts and figures International 2013
- Presentations and publications International 2013
- Knowledge centre International 2014

What does the NCEA do?
Water and EA
EA and the law
Energy and EA
International activities
contents organisation advisory reports
The NCEA knowledge centre aims to enhance self-reliance in EA on the part of competent authorities, to improve the application of EA and to raise the quality of EA reports. What knowledge-related activities and products can you expect from us in 2014?

**Meetings and more**

Meetings are being planned with themes including landscape, climate and water, health, invitation-planning, effective impact identification and sustainable development. We compile factsheets and position papers for each meeting, and on other topical subjects, to provide the EA community with practical information. You can find all of these documents at www.commissiener.nl.

**Newsletter and website**

About 20 editions of the e-newsletter OpMERkelijk are to published in 2014. If you are not yet receiving OpMERkelijk, click here to subscribe.

The NCEA website provides full details of all our advisory reports, including supporting documents. You will also find case law with commentaries for EA practitioners and plenty of information on relevant topics like wind energy, nature and climate. www.commissiener.nl.

**Practical examples**

The NCEA compiles descriptions of real EA projects that are of particular interest because of their approach or the way they look at environmental issues. You can find these fascinating examples at www.commissiener.nl.

**EA in vision**

Accompanying this annual report are two new videos, one about the NCEA and the other about process-oriented advice. In 2014 we want to bring the practical side of EA to the screen. How? We are still thinking about that...

**Plus...**

- If you have any questions about EA in practice, you can call our helpdesk on +31 30 234 7666 or e-mail kennisplatform@eia.nl.
- In 2014 you will find our stand or an NCEA workshop at several conferences.
- The NCEA is happy to organise a presentation or workshop for your organisation. For more information, call +31 30 234 7666.
- You can follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.
Sharing information about environmental assessment with developing countries is a vital part of the NCEA’s work. We maintain a website for this purpose, featuring news, publications, country profiles and advisory reports. Furthermore, we develop methods to map and monitor EA systems to facilitate improvement, we publish on our own work and contribute to third-party publications.

**Facts and figures**

- The international website was completely renewed in 2013.
- Over 7000 visitors accounted for more than 36,500 page views.
- Our country profiles, covering EA legislation, regulations and practice, were completely overhauled and seven new profiles were added: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Georgia, Mali, Mozambique and the Palestinian Territories. Nine profiles of central African countries were translated into French and a new search function is in development.
- A video was produced about the Programme to Support National Associations for Environmental Assessment in Central Africa (PAANEEAC).
- More than 25 presentations on EA and related themes and sectors were given around the world.
- The NCEA produced or contributed to five publications, both academic and general.
- The EIA Mapping Tool, a SWOT analysis of EA systems, was improved and then translated into three languages.
- An English-language newsletter was distributed to more than 750 subscribers.
- One new key sheet was issued, and four were updated.
- More than 2400 sources on international EA in the online catalogue.
Presentations 2013

- Various presentations on EIA and inspection for the Ministry of the Environment of Georgia in the framework of the two-year government-to-government assistance programme for EIA, licensing and inspection
- Presentations concerning: 1) Performance criteria for SEA, 2) NCEA’s systems approach to effective SEA, 3) Case study evaluation of EIA system performance in Ghana during the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) conference in 2013, Calgary, Canada
- Introductory workshop on SEA for the EIA-department of the Ministry of Environment; Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Pre-conference workshop EIA review Are we doing it right?, South Asian Environmental Assessment Conference, Islamabad, Pakistan
- Presentations concerning: 1) SEA for the port of Rotterdam, 2) SEA and water management and 3) The Commission for Environmental Assessment and its international activities for Indonesian delegation from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs; Utrecht, the Netherlands
- Panel Presentation on SEA for renewable energy planning in the context of the Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme of the World Bank and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; The Hague, the Netherlands
- Various presentations on EIA review, accreditation of EIA experts and development of EIA associations as part of the National Impact Assessment Programme (NIAP); Pakistan
- Various presentations and training sessions on scoping and review for the Ministry of Environment; Bujumbura, Burundi.
- Training of trainers under the PAANEEAC-programme; Kibuye, Rwanda
- Presentation on financing mechanisms for EIA in five Central African countries, SEEAC annual conference in 2013; Douala, Cameroon
- Three-month distant learning course on SEA in collaboration with Universidad Loyola Loyola and ITC; La Paz, Bolivia
- Masterclass on EIA and SEA for employees of IUCN, Both Ends, WWF, Wetlands International, Global Witness; Utrecht, the Netherlands
- Various presentations on (Dutch) SEA experiences during workshops with Chinese delegations, as part of the cooperation with the Chinese Ministry of Environment; Beijing, China / Utrecht, the Netherlands
- Workshops on SEA for oil and gas in the framework of the Dutch trade mission in Moscow, Russia

more on the next page
• Presentation on EIA, land use planning and the activities of the NCEA for a delegation from the Gambella Region Land Administration, Utilisation and Environmental Protection Authority (Ethiopia); Utrecht, the Netherlands

• Guest lectures on SEA at UNESCO-IHE/Delft; Leiden University, Utrecht University

Publications 2013


• ‘Evaluating the substantive effectiveness of SEA. Towards a better understanding.’ Doren, D., P.P.J. van, Driessen, B. Schijf and H.A.C. Runhaar. Environmental Impact Assessment Review (38) 2013, p. 120-130


• ‘Les mécanismes de financement de l’action publique en matière d’études d’impact environnemental.’ Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment, Utrecht 2013
In 2014 we continue to keep our website up-to-date, to translate our know-how into relevant and innovative products, to improve access to our information and to disseminate it as widely as possible.

Products planned for the coming year – and in some cases already available as of mid-2014 – include the following.

- A new website for the Dutch Sustainability Unit (DSU).
- Publications about our approach to the EA system, based upon Dutch and international practice: A Systems Approach to EIA and SEA Effectiveness.
- A short video about the whys and wherefores of EIA mapping.
- A Quick Reference Guide to Integrating Gender Equality into Climate-Smart Development in interactive PDF format.
- A presentation and search screen for the EA country profiles. New functions include the ability to compare particular aspects of EA systems in different countries.
- The development of so-called “EA system building blocks”. These take the form of publications, usually interactive PDFs, describing the components of an EA process or system, such as screening and review. Drawing upon our expertise in the field, we present possible options for governments and other stakeholders to modify or improve these components. The choices actually may depend in part upon context, available resources and what is realistically achievable.
- A number of presentations about EA for events such as the 2014 Annual Meeting of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) in Chile.

Also view:
Knowledge centre
the Netherlands 2014

Knowledge centre
Facts and figures
the Netherlands 2013

Presentations and publications
the Netherlands 2013

Knowledge centre
the Netherlands 2014

Facts and figures
International 2013

Presentations and publications International 2013

Knowledge centre
International 2014
Focus of EA shifts from mandatory to voluntary

What kind of organisation is the NCEA?

Veronica ten Holder, Director of the NCEA, on the role of the NCEA now and in the future.
Finance and personnel

Financial accountability in 2013
To perform its statutory tasks in the Netherlands and maintain its function as a knowledge broker, the NCEA receives subsidies from the ministries of Infrastructure and the Environment, Economic Affairs and Education and from Culture and Science. Our international activities are financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (developing countries) and Infrastructure and the Environment (developed countries). Total NCEA expenditure in 2013 was €8,601,692, of which €6,308,536 was spent in the Netherlands and €2,293,156 on international work. Once our 2013 financial statements have been audited, we will post a summary on our website (May 2014).

Staff details - December 2013

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Employees per 31 December 2013

Consultative body of chairperson
Chairman
Mr N.G. Ketting (Niek)
Deputy chairpersons
Mr J. Bout (Jan)
Mr F.W.R. Evers (Frans)
Mr F.D. van Heijningen (Erik)
Mr R. Rabbinge (Rudy)
Ms J.G.M. van Rhijn (Marieke)
Ms M.A.J. van der Tas (Marja)
Mr L.H.J. Verheijen (Lambert)
Mr J. van der Vlist (Hans)

Ad hoc deputy chairpersons
Mr H.G. Ouwerkerk (Hans)
Ms L. van Rijn-Vellekoop (Leni)
Mr D.K.J. Tommel (Dick)

Directors
Ms V.J.H.M. ten Holder (Veronica)
Mr M.P. Laeven (Marc)
Mr R.A.A. Verheem (Rob)

Technical secretaries
the Netherlands
Mr B. Barten (Bart)
Mr B.F.M. Beerlage (Bart)
Ms J.M. Bremmer (Marijke)
Mr G.P.J. Draaijers (Geert)
Ms M. van Eck (Marja)
Mr S.J. Harkema (Sjoerd)
Mr G.A.J.M. Hoevenaars (Gijs)
Mr P.J. Jongejans (Pieter)
Mr J.F.M.M. Lembrechts (Johan)
Mr R. Meeuwsen (Roel)
Ms J.P. Siedsma (Jeltje)
Ms W. Smal (Willemin)
Ms C.T. Smit (Corrie)
Ms S.M. van Velsen (Selma)

Technical secretaries
International
Ms G.J. van Boven (Gwen)
Ms S. Groenendijk, MSc (Sara)
Mr A.J. Kolhoff (Arend)
Mr S.G. Nootbboom (Sibout)
Mr R.A.M. Post (Reinoud)
Ms B. Schijf (Bobbi)
Ms I.A. Steinhauer (Ineke)

Board of governors
Chairman
Mr N.G. Ketting (Niek)
Secretary/treasurer
Ms J.G.M. van Rhijn (Marieke)

Board of governors
Ms T.A. Maas-De Brouwer (Trude)
Mr J. van der Vlist (Hans)
Mr H.H.F. Wijffels (Herman)

Authorised representatives
Mr V.J.H.M. ten Holder (Veronica)
Mr M.P. Laeven (Marc)

Knowledge & information
Ms H.M.E. Boerman (Heleen)
Ms. A.T. Hardon (Anne)
Ms G. Sonderegger, MSc (Gabi)
Ms V.G.J. van Stokkom (Véronique)

Finance department
Ms W.M.G.B. Lucassen (Willeke)
Mr A. Roelofsen (Alek)

Personnel department
Ms M.T.C. van Bilsen (Marjos)

Administrative and domestic services
Secretaries NL
Ms A.J.C. van Asperen (Angelina)
Ms B.C. Benkers (Linda)
Ms H.J. Bijvank (Heleen)
Ms G. Lesman (Greet)
Ms J. Raaben (Jacqueline)
Ms G.W. Takken (Bep)
Ms M.E.C. van den Tempel (Marijke)

Secretaries International
Ms V.M. Fortes (Vanda)
Ms W. Sun (Wain)
Ms L.M. Wildenburg (Liduina)
Ms J.W. Zomer (Jamila)

Reception desk / helpdesk
Ms A.M.E.M. Evers (Margareth)
Ms M. Verbon-van Lemmeren (Mireille)
Ms W. Visser (Nanny)

Domestic services
Ms G. Brakkee (Gea)
Ms J.H.M. Lammers-Zieljes (Janny)

IT department
Mr P. Kop (Peter)
Ms A.M. Voogt-van Hamersveld (Astrid)
Mr M.J.F. Wagenbuur (Mark)

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Mr M.J.F. Wagenbuur (Mark)

Personnel department
Ms M.T.C. van Bilsen (Marjos)
Members and advisors who participated in NCEA’s working groups in 2013

**The Netherlands**

**Members**
- Mr H.G. van der Aa
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<td>M.e.r.-beoordeling Gebiedsontwikkeling De Logt, Oirschot en Oisterwijk</td>
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Please go to [www.commissiemen.nl](http://www.commissiemen.nl) for all project information and advisory reports.
Advisory reports on complex projects and plans

- O95 Scoping Advice for the Dutch IWRM Support Programme, Rwanda
- O96 Review EIA report for dredging of el Varadero access canal to Cartagena Bay, Colombia

Advisory reports by the secretariat

- Appraisal of EIA requirements for projects submitted for financing under Fonds Duurzaam Ondernemen en Voedselzekerheid (FDOV), Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland
- Advice on quality of draft environmental pre-feasibility scoping study (EPDA) and terms of reference by EcoFarm sugar plantation, Mozambique
- Advice on quality of ESIA project brief for proposed increase of sugar production by reclamation of papyrus area, Rwanda.
- Advice on tender process for the Zambezí Multi-Sector Agenda/SEA/PEOTT, Mozambique
- Advice on the terms of reference (structure) for the ESIA of the project Clean and Waste Free Bujumbura (CaWFB), Burundi
- Conseil sur la validation de l'EIE du Projet de Redéveloppement du Champ Pétrollière de Sêmé, Benin
- Instruments for the application of EIA (scoping/review) in Burundi

Capacity development countries/regions

Africa
- Burundi
- Ghana
- Mozambique
- Oeganda
- Tunisia
- CLEAA (Africa)
- SEEAC (Central-Africa)
- WAAEA (West-Africa)

Asia
- Bangladesh
- China
- Indonesia
- Pakistan

Europe
- Georgia

South-America
- Bolivia

EIA mapping workshops
- Burundi
- Cameroon
- Central African Republic
- Congo Brazzaville
- Rwanda

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Advisory reports Dutch Sustainability Unit (DSU)

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SU01-11 Preparing the dialogue/cooperation with CDKN – Analysis of climate adaptation within multi annual strategic plans of 6 Dutch embassies, DGIS

SU01-12 Peer review of draft paper ‘Sturing op mainstreamen van klimaat in OS’, DGIS

SU01-14 An inventory of existing risk profiles on climate change and extreme weather

SU01-24 Assessment of climate change relevance of the Alliances in the MFS-II Programme, ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands

SU01-26 Key sheet: Climate change and disaster risk reduction: Links to country-specific risk profiles

SU01-29 Assessment of the ‘Climate Justice Dialogue project proposal by Mary Robinson Foundation and WRI’ for the Dutch government, DGIS

SU01-30 Workshop on intervention logic: Women's rights and gender equality, DGIS

SU01-31 Gender integration in ‘Online course to enhance understanding on water and development cooperation’ for professionals at Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs, DGIS

SU01-34 International Workshop on Implementation of the Strategic Environmental Assessment in Russia

SU01-36 Formulation and reporting of DGIS contribution to UNFCCC Biennial Report

SU02-08 Report validation workshop Reinforcement and extension of Lake Kivu Monitoring Program, Rwanda

SU02-16 Advice on integrating environment, climate change and disaster risk reduction into the Multi Annual Strategic Plan of the Great Lakes Region

SU02-17 Advice on integrating environment, climate change and disaster risk reduction into the Multi Annual Strategic Plan, EKN Rwanda

SU02-18 & 19 Advice on integrating gender equality into the Multi Annual Strategic Plans of EKN Rwanda and Great Lakes Region, DGIS

SU02-24 Assessment of climate change relevance of the Alliances in the MFS-II Programme, ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nederland

SU02-30 Workshop on intervention logic: Women's rights and gender equality, DGIS

SU02-31 Gender integration in ‘Online course to enhance understanding on water and development cooperation’ for professionals at Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs, DGIS

SU03-27 & 28 Advice on integrating gender, climate change (incl. disaster risk reduction) and environment into the Multi Annual Strategic Plan and Activities, EKN Mozambique

SU03-33 Comments and Suggestions on the Integration of Gender Equality in the Multi-Annual Strategic Plan and Activities, EKN Benin

SU06-20 Advice on integrating environment, climate change and disaster risk reduction into the Food Security Programme, EKN Burundi

SU06-21 Gender review of the Multi Annual Strategic Plan, EKN Burundi

SU07-25 Gender review of tender documents of the programme ‘From policy and strategy to governance and knowledge’ (PSGK), EKN Zuid-Soedan

SU12-15 Peer review quality @ Entry AgriCord and Agri-ProFocus, DGIS

SU12-23 Peer review quality @ Entry PIDG 2013 – 2017

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SU12-35 Observations on Quality @ Entry IFC Sustainable Business Advisory

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International advisory reports and capacity development 2009-2013

Per continent 2013

Also view:
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Knowledge centre

What does the NCEA do?
Water and EA
EA and the law
Energy and EA
International activities
### Abbreviations - International

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<tr>
<td>ARCOS</td>
<td>Albertine Rift Conservation Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDI</td>
<td>Centre for Development Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDKN</td>
<td>Climate &amp; Development Knowledge Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLEAA</td>
<td>Capacity Development and Linkages for Environmental Assessment in Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>DGIS</td>
<td>Directorate General International Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSU</td>
<td>Dutch Sustainability Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>EANECE</td>
<td>East African Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIA</td>
<td>Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
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<td>EIE</td>
<td>Études d’Impact Environnemental</td>
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<td>EKN</td>
<td>The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENTRO</td>
<td>Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office</td>
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<td>ESIA</td>
<td>Environmental and Social Impact Assessment</td>
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<td>FDOV</td>
<td>Facility for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Food Security (Netherlands Enterprise Agency)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAIA</td>
<td>International Association for Impact Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFC</td>
<td>International Finance Corporation</td>
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<td>INECE</td>
<td>International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement</td>
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<td>ITC</td>
<td>International Institute for GEO Information, Science and Earth Observation</td>
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<td>IWRM</td>
<td>Integrated Water Resources Management</td>
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<td>IUCN</td>
<td>International Union for Conservation of Nature</td>
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<td>IVM</td>
<td>Institute for Environmental Studies</td>
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<td>MCC</td>
<td>Millennium Challenge Corporation</td>
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<td>NCEA</td>
<td>Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment</td>
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<td>NIAP</td>
<td>National Impact Assessment Programme (Pakistan)</td>
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<td>NORAD</td>
<td>Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation</td>
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<td>NWP</td>
<td>Netherlands Water Partnership</td>
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<td>OECD-DAC</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Collaboration and Development/Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>ORIO</td>
<td>Development-related Infrastructure Facility (Netherlands Enterprise Agency)</td>
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<td>PAANEEAC</td>
<td>Programme d’Appui aux Associations Nationales pour l’Évaluation Environnementale d’Afrique Centrale</td>
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<td>PEAA</td>
<td>Partnership for Environmental Assessment in Africa</td>
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<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership facility (Netherlands Enterprise Agency)</td>
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<td>SCF</td>
<td>Sustainability Challenge Foundation</td>
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<td>SEA</td>
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<td>UNEP</td>
<td>United Nations Environment Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCO-IHE</td>
<td>Institute for Water Education</td>
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<td>UNFCCC</td>
<td>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</td>
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<td>WAAEA</td>
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**What does the NCEA do?**

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Mission statement

The Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) is an independent advisory body of experts that advises government at home and abroad on the quality of environmental assessment and makes its extensive knowledge of environmental assessment available to all.