

NAARDERMEER

Nature Reserve NL 2018



**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD
December 5, 2017 – December 3, 2018**

**In accordance with the relevant directive
of the Council of Europe, this report describes only the changes
which took place in the period under review.**



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE
Committee of Ministers
Comité des Ministres

Text:

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**RESOLUTION ResDip (2008) 1
ON THE REGULATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN DIPLOMA OF PROTECTED AREAS**

(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 20 February 2008 at the 1018th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)

ANNUAL REPORT FOR NAARDERMEER

State: Netherlands
Name of the area: Naardermeer
Awarded since: 5 may 2004

Central authority concerned:

Name: Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
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www: <https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-agriculture-nature-and-food-quality>

Authority responsible for its management:

Name: Natuurmonumenten
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1&2. Conditions and/or recommendations for award or renewal

Based on the Resolution CM/ResDip(2009)7 on the renewal of the European Diploma of Protected Areas awarded to the Naardermeer Nature Reserve (Netherlands) the following condition and recommendations are

Condition:

- 1. The authorities concerned are urged to respect the integrity of the open polder area surrounding the Naardermeer and to abandon all projects related to the motorway connection (A6-A9) which would have negative effects on the diploma area*

The A6-A9 project has been cancelled. In 2006 the decision was made to widen the current A1 motorway instead of connecting A6-A9 with a new motorway. Nevertheless attention will be paid to any eventual revival of these plans. We also continue monitoring possible threats caused by planned large infrastructural projects in the surroundings of the Naardermeer, even in the earliest stage.

Recommendations:

- 1. The efforts to improve the hydrological conditions of the reserve must be continued by focusing on reducing the pumping out of drinking water in the Gooi hills and completing municipal sewerage plans in order to increase the quality of infiltrated water.*

The winning of drinking water is at a sustainable level and is not affecting the water level of the Reserve. One possible threat was the recently planned development of small scale groundwater winning by the Gooische Hockey Club (GHC) to irrigate their hockey fields, which could affect the grasslands of the Laegieskamp. The plans were revealed in November 2017. Natuurmonumenten has targeted this potential impact in good cooperation with GHC which resulted in a solution which has no impact on the Laegieskamp's natural values. A monitoring plan is included in the solution.

- 2. The decreasing area and quality of reedbeds (phragmites and other pioneer vegetation) should be subject to specific research and increased management efforts;*

Research on a more flexible water level is developed by the Regional Water Authority (Waternet) in cooperation with a.o. Natuurmonumenten. Additionally, an expert meeting took place to discuss the subject. One of the outcomes of this meeting was the decision to raise the upper limit of the water level by 10 cm in winter time. According to the information provided by the Regional Water Authority (Waternet), this change will soon be reflected in a new water level agreement. The decision to raise the water level has to be formalized via a so called Water Plan, which is a legal document. The procedure of the Water Plan will start in 2019.

- 3. Nature restoration and development around the Naardermeer core area is to be fully completed; to that end missing lands (notably in polders south of the lake) should be made available to Natuurmonumenten, mainly in view of the long-term maintenance of optimal water level management and the restoration of biodiversity. The province and the Dutch Government Service for Land and Water Use are urged to make greater efforts to finalise the Naardermeer recovery plan.*

Although it was not yet possible for Natuurmonumenten to acquire all the missing lands and this way completing the Naardermeer Recovery Plan, it was possible to buy a large property in the south-western part of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve, the so-called De Jong grounds. Next to that, Natuurmonumenten has a fair chance to buy and trade several properties on the north side of the Naardermeer, in the Overscheensepolder. When both projects are finished (estimation 2020) the Naardermeer Nature Reserve will be almost totally surrounded by nature restoration areas.

4. *Regional planning processes should avoid further habitat fragmentation in the corridor landscapes towards the IJmeer, the IJsselmeer, the Vecht River, the Ankeveense Plassen and the Gooi hills. The realisation of the Dutch ecological main structure, its “wet axis” and “robust connections” with the Naardermeer as a core area must be given high priority.*

The landscape concept of a wet axis crossing The Netherlands was somehow revoked by a past government. Some important measures were nevertheless implemented aiming at reducing the barrier effect caused by the major roads that delimit the Reserve. Next to that, the railroad will be reconstructed including 8 eco-tunnels (see 3).

- a. *A) The establishment of larger ecological zones in the surrounding agricultural area enabling the further restoration of water levels is recommended, in order to avoid leakage from the reserve and further sinking of peat layers.
B) Restoration programmes transforming polders into wetlands must be encouraged in order to link the Naardermeer with its surroundings; this needs agro-environmental agreements with the agricultural sector.*

As said, in the near future most of the area around the Naardermeer Nature reserve will be purchased by Natuurmonumenten. Together with the Regional Water Authority and the province of Noord-Holland a restoration plan is made for the complete surroundings of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve, including the planned water level raise. The procedures to realize this restoration plan will start in 2019.

- b. *The possibilities to improve the connecting corridor between Naardermeer and Ankeveense plassen by reconstructing the actual road on pillars (removal of a barrier) are to be considered.*

The corridor has been realized and has been proven to be very effective. The arrival of the European Otter in the Naardermeer at the beginning of 2017 is the biggest success so far, being absent for 50 years. The estimated population consist of 1-3 animals. Also 3-4 Badgers have reached the Naardermeer. The corridor consists of two separate passages under the road with both wet and dry components.

- c. *A) In relation to the construction of a new motorway connection (A6-A9), the zero option, alternative routes and the possibility of underground passage NW of the reserve are to be duly investigated in a preliminary Environmental Impact Study.
B) The effects of widening the A1 on the nearby reserve are to be minimised.
C) Risks for pollution deriving from transport along motorways and railroad are to be minimised and carefully caught.
D) In 2009 the Committee of Ministers renewed the EU diploma under the **condition** that:
- the authorities concerned are urged to respect the integrity of the open polder area surrounding the Naardermeer and to abandon all projects related to the motorway connection (A6-A9) which would have negative effects on the diploma area.*

In 2006 the decision was made to widen the current A1 motorway instead of connecting A6-A9 with a new motorway. Since then the possibilities of an underground passage or alternative routes are abandoned. In the years following 2006 the plan for widening the A1 became more concrete and in 2013 the actual widening started. If everything goes as planned the reconstruction will be finished in 2020, including a large eco passage under the A1 between the Naardermeer and the lakes of the Veluwerandmeren.

3. Site Management

Natuurmonumenten is working together with the Dutch Rail Organisation ProRail and the province of Noord-Holland to create 8 ecological passages under the railroad which divides the Naardermeer in two separate parts.

These passages will be finished in August 2019. There will be no direct exchange of water between the two parts to secure the water quality in the southern part of the Naardermeer (Bovenste Blik). The water quality of the Bovenste Blik is of a better quality compared to the northern part. When in the future both water qualities are comparable the wet fauna passages can be easily opened to create direct exchange. Further aspects will be described at 10.

4. Boundaries

There have been no changes towards the boundaries of the Naardermeer.

5. Other information

None.

6. Natural heritage (general a biotic description: geomorphology, geology and hydrogeology, habitats, flora, fauna, landscape) — State of conservation

6.1. Environment: changes or deterioration in the environment, of natural or anthropic origin, accidental or permanent, actual or anticipated.

Due to extreme draught during summertime we had to let in extra water from the river Vecht to prevent the peat from getting too dry. The peat vegetation was saved and as far as we can tell there were no other negative effects on other habitat types.

6.2. Flora and vegetation: changes in the plant population and in the vegetation cover; presumed causes.

In the Laegieskamp at the eastern part of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve New Zealand Pygmy Weed has been found in an isolated pond. This invasive species tends to be very aggressive and has the potential to cover a pond and edges completely within one year, suffocating all native plants. We immediately undertook action to remove all visible plants on a weekly basis for 4 months in a row during 2017 and 2018. By now it looks like it's under control. Nevertheless we will monitor the pond in 2019 very closely.

In 2009 the Committee of Ministers renewed de EU diploma under the recommendation that: the decreasing area and quality of reed beds (Phragmites and other pioneer vegetation) should be subject to specific research and increased management efforts.

In the centre of the Naardermeer reed beds are fenced out since 2012 to improve these beds as a breeding habitat for Purple Herons. Nets surrounding several reed beds disable geese to fly in and forage on young reed stems. After testing several types of nets the past year we had a break-through in 2017. The amount of breeding pairs of Purple Herons in the netted reed beds almost doubled in 2017 towards 101 breeding pairs. In 2018 the number of breeding pairs was back to 63, which is considered to be normal for the Naardermeer (and still is higher than the results in the years prior to 2017). For 2019 more reed beds are planned to be fenced off to get an even better result.

6.3. Fauna: changes in the sedentary or migratory populations; congregating, egg-laying and breeding grounds.

The success of the Purple Heron has been mentioned above. The Black Terns had one breeding attempt but failed to raise a nest. The terns seem to favor other breeding sites outside the Naardermeer. Other important breeding bird populations or wintering bird populations have been stable. One big surprise: the Lilipad Whiteface

Leucorrhinia caudalis, in the Netherlands only known from de Wieden, arrived in the Naardermeer in significant numbers (about 150 individuals), making the Naardermeer the second most important area for this rare species of dragonfly in the Netherlands.

7. Cultural heritage and socio-economic context

7.1. Cultural heritage: changes concerning cultural heritage.

No changes.

7.2. Changes concerning the socio-economic context.

No changes.

8. Education and scientific interest

8.1. Visitors – Information policy

8.1.1. Arrangements for receiving and informing the public (building, booklets, maps, cards, etc.).

Several new information signs have been placed in 2018. Next to that, the Naardermeer website is updated several times per month with relevant information and news. We also have an active Naardermeer Facebook and Twitter account.

8.1.2. Frequentation by visitors and behaviour (number, distribution in time and space).

During the year almost all of the excursions on the Naardermeer were fully-booked. Approximately 7.000 visitors enjoyed a boat-trip to the cormorants or the duck-decoy in 2018.

8.1.3. Special visits (distinguished persons, groups, etc.)

None.

8.2. Scientific research.

8.2.1. Current or completed research (observation, experimentation, etc.; identification or inventory of the species listed in the appendices to the Bern Convention, etc.).

In October 2017 we've started a monitoring research towards the European Otter in (the surroundings of) the Naardermeer, in collaboration with the Dutch Otter Research Group (CaLutra) and the province of Noord-Holland. Main goal of this research is to learn about the actual distribution and movements of the otters, related to possible threats (especially dangerous road crossings). The research will be continued till October 2019. Next to the otter research we've had the on-going monitoring of breeding birds and wintering Great White Egrets in the western part of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve. This year a complete vegetation-monitoring has been carried out, which is done every 12 years. We've also started to monitor the abundance of exotic invasive Crayfish species which might have a negative impact on important habitats.

8.2.2. Scientific publications.

An article about the distribution of Otters in and around the Naardermeer has been published in "Tussen Duin en Dijk", issue 3, 2018. An English version of this article was presented during the MJPO-conference in Eindhoven, September 2018.

9. Site description (vulnerability, protection status, ownership, documentation)

9.1. Changes in legislation or regulations.

In January 2017 the new nature legislation became active by the Wet natuurbescherming (Nature Protection Law). In a nutshell: no major changes regarding the protected status of the Naardermeer Nature Reserve. At this moment the Natura 2000 management plan, constructed by the province of Noord-Holland, is almost finished and will be published in 2019.

9.2. Changes in ownership title (conversion to public property, rentals, etc.)

No changes.

9.3. Extension or transfer, new uses (for example, conversion into total reserve).

No changes.

10. Site management (management plans, budget and personnel)

10.1. Improvements made

10.1.1. Ecological action affecting the flora and biotopes; controls of fauna.

Several restoration actions have been realized to reduce the impact of nitrogen (so-called PAS-management actions), which included the restoration of 8 hectares. The restoration actions improved the conditions for marsh birds and peat vegetation. It is not yet known how the bird population has reacted, data-analyzing is not completed yet.

10.1.2. Protection against the elements (fire, water regime).

The current dephosphorization installation, which is used for the inlet of clean water into the Naardermeer Nature Reserve in times of drought, will be replaced at the beginning of 2019. This new installation removes phosphates out of the water to make sure the right conditions for underwater vegetation are available.

10.1.3. Approaches and thoroughfares (paths, roads, car parks, signposting, fencing, etc.)

No changes.

10.1.4. Field equipment (hides and study facilities).

No changes.

10.1.5. Waste management.

No changes.

10.1.6. Use of renewable energy systems.

No changes.

10.2. Management

10.2.1. Administrative department: changes made.

No changes.

10.2.2. Wardens' department: changes made.

No changes

10.2.3. Internal policing measures.

No changes.

10.2.4. Infringement of regulations and damage; legal action.

No changes.

11. Influence of the award of the European Diploma of Protected Areas

Due to the European Diploma both the Regional Water Authority and Natuurmonumenten were very aware of the necessity for a new dephosphorization installation. Both parties, along with the local and regional governments, have agreed to take all the steps necessary to protect the water vegetation of the Naardermeer.