The Influence of Sustainable Tourism Research on Dutch NGO and Action Group Discourse on Tourism Mobility, Aviation and Climate Change

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Abstract

Research impact assessment has gained more importance over time. Most research impact studies, however, focus on evaluating the effects of sustainable tourism research on the industry whilst neglecting how research is influencing policy- and decision-making. This thesis focuses on the influence of sustainable tourism research on the discourse on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change among Dutch NGO's and action groups. In this case study design semi-structured interviews were conducted with people from different NGO's and action groups in the Netherlands, as well as with a scientist. Furthermore, data was obtained through relevant reports and newspaper articles. The data from these interviews, reports and newspaper articles was then used to identify how, when and why the discourse of the respondents evolved over the past years. Even though sustainable tourism research does not play a significant role in how the discourse of NGO's and action groups changed, it formed important starting points for the discussion on the future of aviation in the Netherlands. STR has been used by NGO's and action groups to strengthen their arguments and has opened up the possibility to share their representation with the public and to critically question the position of the government and other actors in the aviation sector.

Key words: sustainable tourism research; research impact; discourse analysis; aviation; NGO; action groups; climate change

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Acronym list

CO_2	Carbondioxide
IenW	Ministry of Infrastructure, Public Works and Water Management
KLM	Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij
NGO	Non-governmental organization
STR	Sustainable tourism research
UK	United Kingdom

1. Introduction

Research impact has become more important in the past years and that communication, dissemination, engagement and debates are essential elements for sustainable tourism development according to Font, Higham, Miller and Pourfakhimi (2019). They also mention that for most researchers, their research is completed after being published (Font *et al*, 2019), indicating that academics are not included in policy making and in the industry. Over time, interdisciplinary research has become more important, in which scientists collaborate with policy-makers and other actors (Bodin *et al*, 2016). Within impact studies, often the research effects on the industry and society are measured (Font *et al*, 2019) whilst neglecting the ongoing negotiations and communication between scientists and policy-makers and the industry. The focus of these impact studies is on the actual impact of sustainable tourism research, this does, however, fail to address how research is influencing policy- and decision-making. Furthermore these studies assume that decisions made by policy-makers and the industry are entirely based on scientific research even though this is often not the case as scientific knowledge is just one of the factors involved in policy- and decision-making (De Marchi, Lucertini & Tsoukiàs, 2016). This combined results in a simplified perception of research impact. Since common perspectives on research impact are not sufficient, it encourages studying research impact from an alternative approach to address this knowledge gap.

The alternative perspective in this paper draws from post structuralist discourse analysis and aims to develop an alternative conception of research impact. Post structuralist discourse analysis focuses on how language constructs practices and how it informs actions that people take (Paul, 2009). Howarth explains discourse as "systems of meaningful practices that form the identities of subjects and objects" (Howarth, 2000). This implies that one's belief or opinion on a situation is formed by the discourses that are apparent. By analyzing the evolution of the existing discourses, the driving forces in creating this discourse can be identified. Therefore, discourse analysis is an appropriate method to study how research outcomes influence the standpoints taken by significant actors. By studying the discourse of actors involved in sustainable tourism, it can be identified whether scientific research influenced the discourse of the actors on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change. Discourse is constructed through a process of object formation (Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011). To study this process of object

formation this thesis draws from their approach, in which they make a distinction in the process of object formation between pathways, sites and techniques.

In this thesis the case of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and action groups in the Netherlands is selected. This thesis focuses on the discourse of Dutch NGO's and action groups on tourism mobility, aviation, and climate change. As previously mentioned, policy-makers and the industry are important actors in the debate on sustainable tourism. NGO's and action groups, however, play an important role as well. This can be explained by the growth of influence of NGO's and action groups in decision- and policy-making processes over the past years (Guay, Doh & Sinclair 2004). It is argued by several scientists that non-state actors, such as NGO's and action groups, are becoming more important in politics (Betsill & Corell, 2001; Keck & Sikkink, 1999; Carpenter et al., 2014). Therefore it can be argued that this is a relevant population to study.

Tourism mobility, aviation and climate change are important elements within sustainable tourism research. The flight between St. Petersburg and Tampa is considered to be the first commercial flight and was in operation for three months in 1914 (Provenzo, 1979). More than 100 years later, aviation as mode of transport has taken up 54% of international trips and the tourism sector is expected to grow with 3 to 4% each year (Peeters, 2017). The combination of the effect of aviation on the climate and the growth of the aviation sector has triggered scientists to research the effect of aviation on climate change. As a result there is an extensive amount of research on the aviation sector and the effect traveling by plane has on the climate. Overall the most significant contribution of aviation to climate change is the emission of CO_2 (Wuebbels, Gupta & Ko, 2007; Gettelman & Chen, 2013; Timmis *et al*, 2015; Peeters, 2017). One of the first publications about CO_2 emission is the one of the UNWTO in 2008, which concludes that air transport is responsible for 43% of the CO_2 emission in the tourism sector (UNWTO-UNEP-WMO, 2008). Moreover the tourism sector in general is responsible for approximately 5% of the anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (Hall et al, 2015; Odimegqu & Francis, 2018). Furthermore, in his PhD, Paul Peeters (2017) explains that he expects CO_2 emissions to grow with 3,2% per year. Climate change has a negative impact on health (McGushin, Tcholakov & Hajat, 2018), vegetation and the world food supply (Pardee, 2018; Rosenzweig & Parry, 1994). Besides this, sea levels are rising and coral reefs are disappearing due to higher acidic levels of ocean water (Change, 2016). These are only a few of the impacts of climate change. Whilst there is an

extensive amount of significant research on the effects of aviation on climate change, the impact of sustainable tourism research remains uncertain.

The aim of this paper is to identify the role of sustainable tourism research in the discourse of Dutch NGO's and action groups on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change. To achieve this goal, this paper will start with exploring important concepts such as research impact and research impact assessment, post structuralist discourse analysis and NGO's & action groups. In the next section, there will be an explanation of the methods used for data collection and data analysis. Data will be obtained through semi-structured interviews and relevant newspaper articles, official reports and magazines. The framework for analysis draws from Duineveld & Van Assche (2011) and aims to identify the different pathways, sites and techniques that exist in the discourse of NGO's and action groups. Following the methodology, there will be a chapter devoted to the results of the data collection in which the existing pathways, sites and techniques are explained. In the discussion and conclusion answers to the research questions will be provided as well as the limitations of this study and recommendations both for further research and NGO's & action groups. For the aim and purpose of this study, one main research question and three secondary research questions were developed. The main research question is:

What is the influence of sustainable tourism research on Dutch NGO and action group discourses on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change?

The secondary research questions that were developed are:

1. What are the existing storylines as produced by Dutch NGO's and action groups on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change?

2. How have these storylines changed over the last years?

3. How has sustainable tourism research contributed to the evolution of these storylines?

2. Theoretical framework

To answer the research questions, a theoretical framework will be employed. The framework will function as a foundation for the proposed methodology. The first section explores the concept of research impact. It provides answers to questions such as, what is research impact? And how has it previously been assessed? As mentioned in the introduction, there is a need for an alternative approach to assessing research impact. Therefore, the second section covers the reasoning for the use of discourse analysis and how discourse analysis informs the methods of study. The final section establishes the foundation on which the choice of focusing on Dutch NGO's and action groups has been made.

2.1 Scientific impact

According to Font et al (2019), the importance of research impact assessment can be traced back to a financial incentive. They explain that since the 1990's we have shifted towards a knowledge economy, which lead to the development of an "audit culture through which governments seek to establish a greater prescription and control" (Font et al, 2019, p. 1). To gain control, the focus is put on performance, in which a financial imperative is linked to the outcome (Font et al, 2019). An example of this can be found in the UK, where universities are funded by the government for their research, which results in the expectation of a return on the investment. This goes even further when looking at the universities' research agendas that reflect the UK's industrial strategy (Font et al, 2019).

Research impact can be local, regional, national or even international and can relate to many different elements, such as products, behaviors, policies, practices and protecting nature and society from harm (Font et al, 2019). Another perspective to research impact is that of Reale et al (2017) and Flecha (2014. Reale et al (2017) mentions that research impact can be distinguished in [1] scientific impact, [2] social impact and [3] political impact. Flecha (2014) uses a different distinction for impact as it is argued that dissemination is a part of the impact of a research as well. Within scientific impact, a difference can be made between academic impact, the impact of the contribution in a field of study, and the external socioeconomic impact (Reale et al, 2017). Political impact is reached when policy- and decision-makers use scientific research as foundation for the policies that they implement or the actions that they make (Flecha, 2014; Reale et al,

2017). Social impact can be seen as the apex of scientific impact, dissemination and political impact according to Flecha (2014). Moreover, social impact occurs when the outcomes of a research are implemented in policies and the initiatives of non-governmental organizations, where they eventually lead to improvements in society (Reale et al, 2017).

This definition by Reale et al (2017) and Flecha (2014) of research impact implies that research and policy-making & society are separate entities. Furthermore, it implies that policies and initiatives are entirely based on scientific research instead of continuous collaboration & negotiations and politics. As a result of seeing science and policy as separate entities, little is known about the time between the publication of a scientific article and the creation and implementation of policies and initiatives. Evidently, dissemination, communication, engagement and debate are important to creating research impact and sustainable development (Font et al, 2019). This indicates that research is not finished after it is published. Post structuralist discourse analysis creates an alternative approach on thinking about research impact, namely as the construction of alternative realities (Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011). Therefore, discourse analysis can be used to identify whether research on sustainable tourism has been an influencing factor on the construction of the discourse of NGO's and action groups. The next section explains what discourse analysis is and how it can be used to identify the role of sustainable tourism research on the discourse of NGO's and action groups in the Netherlands.

2.2 Post-structuralist discourse analysis

Michael Foucault is one of the founding fathers of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis can be defined as "a way of organizing knowledge that structures the constitution of social (and progressively global) relations through the collective understanding of the discursive logic and the acceptance of the discourse as social fact" (Adams, 2017). Thus, discourse analysis refers to how social relations and reality are understood and accepted. Another definition of discourse analysis is that of Stephan Gill, "a set of ideas and practices with particular conditions of existence, which are more or less institutionalized, but which may only be partially understood by those that they encompass" (Adams, 2017). This indicates that discourses could differ among different social groups. This is relevant since it indicates that there might be different discourses between stakeholders and even between different non-governmental organizations and

action groups. Discourse is the fixing of meaning of text in such a way that it creates an epistemic reality, which can be used as a form of control (Adams, 2017). Discourse produces power that is constitutionalized by emitting and marginalizing other discourses (Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011; Foucault, 1994). Thus, to create a discourse, certain elements are purposely included and excluded. According to Foucault, the construction of a discourse is a process of object formation (Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011). The approach on object formation that this thesis draws from is that of Duineveld & Van Assche (2011), in which they make a distinction in the process of object formation between pathways, sites and techniques.

The pathway of object formation covers the events that have occurred and the decisions that have been made. The events that already have occurred ensure that some developments are more likely to happen than others; this concept is called path-dependencies (Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011). This means that some elements of the path of object formation are not set in stone, whereas others can be considered objective with a great likelihood of occurring (Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011). By identifying the different events a timeline on what influenced the process of object formation, and in extension the construction of the discourse, can be established. The second element of this approach is that of sites. Sites refer to the context in which object formation occurs. This can include both informal, e.g. conversations, and formal settings, e.g. educational and academic contexts. Furthermore, a series of sites can be seen as a path in object formation. These sites also indicate the knowledge/ power relations that are taking place. Besides this, Duineveld & Van Assche (2011) also mentions that each site is given a level of authority in society. Techniques are features of object formation, which can be used to explain the process forming an object. It can be concluded that discourses are constructed by events and decisions that have occurred and the context in which that happens.

The approach as proposed by Duineveld & Van Assche will be used in this project to study the discourse of NGO's and action groups in the Netherlands. The next section will provide a definition of NGO's and action groups. Furthermore, it will provide the necessary information for the decision to focus on these stakeholders.

2.3 NGO's and action groups

NGO's are non-profit organizations and often professionally managed, like Amnesty International and the World Wildlife Fund. The United Nations defines NGO's as "any

non-profit, voluntary citizens' group […], driven by people with a common interest […], serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements'' (United Nations, 2003). Generally, NGO's and activists aim at the party that holds all the cards. This means that in the past their main target were governmental actors. This has, however, shifted due to the fact that non-state parties increasingly own shares in multinational corporations (Spar & La Mure, 2003). Over the past 20 decades, the influence of NGO's has grown significantly and its influence played a major role in the changes in corporate behavior and governance (Guay, Doh & Sinclair 2004). Given the significant influence of NGO's in decision making, governance processes and politics (Betsill & Corell, 2001; Keck & Sikkink, 1999; Carpenter et al., 2014), it can be argued that this is an important actor in changing the current discourse on sustainable tourism and should therefore be included in this research. Furthermore, discourse analysis has been used before in the context of policy-making, both general policy-making as well as aviation in specific (Apthorpe & Gasper, 2014; Feindt & Oels, 2005; Griggs & Howarth, 2017). Besides this, research has been done on discourse analysis and the industry as well (Font, Elgammal & Lamond, 2017). The discourse of NGO's and action groups is, however, studied much less.

An action group is interpreted as "all those actors (or groups) that pursue their own interests in global governance but do not belong to or are not affiliated with official governmental entities" (Böhmelt, 2013, p. 698-699) Futhermore, it is defined in the Cambridge dictionary as "a group of people that work together to try to achieve changes relating to a particular situation or in order to help a particular group of people" (Cambridge English Dictionary, n.d.). Action groups are, thus, seeking for a way to change something in accordance with their shared belief. Therefore it can be argued that they are similar to non-governmental organizations, however, action groups are not always organized in such a manner as NGO's are. In essence, action groups are seeking attention such as media coverage in order to spread their beliefs and influence decision-makers and policy-makers (McCluskey, 2008). The Dutch cabinet has been trying to transfer more responsibility from the government to the citizens (de Groot, Salverda, van Dam & Donders, 2012). As a result, it can be argued that the influence of action groups is growing as citizens are receiving more responsibility.

When looking at sustainable tourism development, NGO's tend to include the indigenous/ and or host communities, as well as showing appreciation of the consequences of human actions on both nature and local economies (Wearing,

McDonald & Ponting, 2005). Wearing *et al* (2005) also mentions that, in contrary to NGO's, corporations tend to focus on making profit rather than taking care of the people. It has to be noted, however, that they identify a shift in the attitude of these corporations towards more social responsibility. As NGO's have become more influential, they are increasingly being seen as advocates of sustainable tourism (Wearing *et al*, 2005) Kamat (2004) even mentions that "NGOs have been identified as the preeminent, if not sole, organizational forms that can implement the global commitment to 'bottom up' development" (Kamat, 2004, p. 155), meaning that NGO's now have the power to gain global commitment and to make positive development happen. NGO's are restructuring democracy in a way that integrates global capital interests (Kamat, 2004). According to Böhmelt (2013), action groups lobbying for better policies on climate change are unlikely to directly affect policy-making processes, whereas lobbying performed by business groups is more likely to influence policy-making. He mentions that the collective action issues faced by environmental action groups could be what is causing the lack of influence. This does, however, question "the traditional viewpoint of states as isolated powerful actors" (Orr, 2006, p. 167). Besides this, Böhmelt (2013) argues that policy-makers have to include action groups in policy-making processes, as they should be playing a significant role.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data collection

3.1.1 Case study design

To study how sustainable tourism research influences the discourse on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change, a case study design was employed. A case study is an appropriate research design "to produce an in-depth analysis of phenomena in context, support the development of historical perspectives and guarantee high internal validity, which is to say that the observed phenomena are authentic representations of reality" (Gagnon, 2010, p. 2-3). For a successful discourse analysis, in-depth data of the representation of the respondents is needed. Furthermore, since the approach of Duineveld & Van Assche (2011) aims to establish a timeline of the significant events, it is important that historical perspectives are supported. Within discourse analysis the aim is to identify the way the respondents look at reality, ensuring an authentic representation of reality is therefore important in this study. The case that has been selected for this project is that of NGO's and action groups in the Netherlands. There is only limited knowledge on existing discourses of these actors on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change, even though these actors can be influential. Furthermore, the recent commotion around Lelystad airport and the expansion of Schiphol provides for an interesting case to study.

3.1.2 Data collection/ framework

Five semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to collect the necessary data to identify the influence of sustainable tourism research. Semi-structured interviews give respondents the opportunity to provide in-depth answers to questions, whereas structured interviews normally generate shorter answers. Interviews are an appropriate method to study discourse analysis because discourse analysis focuses on language and the meaning that people attach to certain objects (Burck, 2005). Interviews provide respondents with the opportunity to explain how they make sense of the world around them, after which discourse analysis is used to make sense of their story (Burck, 2005). The first section of the interview aims to establish a timeline, in accordance with Duineveld & Van Assche's (2011) concept of pathways. The second part of the interview will be directed at obtaining relevant sites. The goal of this section is to identify other relevant stakeholders and their opinions and how they have organized themselves and

established their opinions over time. The third section aims to identify the techniques and strategies that have arisen as well as identifying how different ideal situations, solutions and challenges are created. This interview guide is based on the approach proposed by Duineveld & Van Assche (2011), which aims to indicate how sustainable tourism research influences the existing storylines and how this has developed over time. The interview guide can be found in Appendix 1. The interviews were conducted in Dutch, as this is the language spoken by the respondents and answering in their language makes it easier to elaborate and go in-depth. Important to note is that some respondents might not always be straightforward as some elements of the interview could include politically sensitive information. In addition to the interviews, newspaper articles, magazines and official reports will be used to establish the timeline and to ensure triangulation of information.

3.1.3 Sampling

Participants are chosen based on two in-depth interviews with an expert on sustainable tourism. Based on these interviews a long list of potential respondents was created. With feedback from the expert, this list was transformed into a short list, of which all potential respondents were contacted. Among these participants there are three NGO representatives, one representative of the action groups and one scientist. All respondents are working in a senior position within their organization. The reasoning for this form of sampling includes the fact that all respondents are relevant to the study. The interview guide is based on three sections. These articles are selected based on a combination of snowball sampling and purposive sampling to ensure that they consist of relevant information. Articles are either selected after they are either mentioned during one of the interviews, by the thesis supervisor or when the respondent or his or her organization is directly mentioned in the article and fits within the timeline as discussed during the interview. An anonymized overview of the sample can be found in appendix 2.

3.2 Data analysis

Before the data obtained in the interviews was analyzed, it had to be transcribed. Transcription was done in the Dutch since information might otherwise get lost in translation. Even though the interviews were conducted in Dutch, when a quote is used in the result section, this was translated into English. What has to be noted is that translation is arbitrary and information might have gotten lost due to a mistake in the translation process. To ensure the anonymity of the respondents, the transcripts are

excluded from the appendix. When questions about the data arise, the author or the thesis supervisor can be contacted.

For this part of the data analysis the perspective of Duineveld & Van Assche (2011) will be used. To analyze the process of object formation, the first step is to analyze the pathway, or timeline, in which the storylines of NGO's and action groups in the Netherlands have evolved. Based on the interviews and the articles, the important moments were selected and placed on a timeline. This pathway will indicate what has influenced the timeline and the evolution of the discourse. In the second part of the analysis light is shed on what other actors played a role in this evolution and how they are connected to each other. Their (in)formal networks will be identified as well as their positioning. The articles and TV reports provide supportive information and deepen the knowledge about the different positions of the parties involved. These two elements of the analysis provide the information to answer the first two research questions. The third part of the analysis relates to the third part of the interview. In this part the techniques and strategies of the different parties are explained from a NGO and action group perspective. This information identifies the role of power and the games that are occurring in the distribution and positioning of the discourses of NGO's and action groups. With this knowledge, an answer for the third secondary research question can be formulated.

4. Results

4.1 Context

Currently there is quite some debate in the aviation sector on the expansion of Schiphol airport and the opening of Lelystad airport. Proponents believe that expanding Schiphol or opening Lelystad airport is beneficial to the economy in the Netherlands and that the aviation sector should grow. Opponents, on the other hand, believe that the aviation sector in the Netherland is already on its limit and should not grow any further. Furthermore noise pollution and the emission of CO_2 pollution that is caused by aviation is an important factor in the discussions about Schiphol and Lelystad. Several climate change platforms – in Dutch: klimaattafels – have been organized to discuss the future of aviation in the Netherlands. Besides this, environmental effects reports – in Dutch: milieueffectrapportage – on both Schiphol and Lelystad airport have been published. This is all in preparation for the aviation note that is expected to be finished by the end of this summer. This aviation note lays out the plans for the aviation sector for the coming 30 years, thus it becomes a crucial document in the discussion concerning aviation in the Netherlands.

4.2 Significant moments (pathway)

During the first fifteen years of this century aviation has not been discussed that much among politicians, NGO's and action groups and the media. Even climate change was not an important topic for these players until 2006, when the documentary 'An Inconvenient Truth' came out, showing the public that climate change is a real issue. It was not until 2015, at the time the Paris agreement was signed, that aviation slowly gained more attention. One of the criticisms on this document was that aviation was not really included. This gradually led to a discussion among politicians, journalists and social media in which they critically questioned the aviation sector and the climate agreement. This discussion picked up slowly during 2015 but grew significantly between 2015 and 2018.

In 2016, the year following the Paris Agreement, the discussion concerning the opening of Lelystad started to gain ground. Citizens living close to the place reserved for the airport and the people living underneath the flight routes started to complain about the noise pollution the airport would cause. In January 2017 a miscalculation was identified in the Environmental Effects Report of Lelystad airport, which led to even more

discussion (Van Dinther, 2017; Duursma, 2017). As a result of these two elements civilians started to unite themselves in action groups to attempt to improve their situation. At this time the newly founded action groups experienced little support from environmental NGO's. The beginning of 2017 is also the time they started their position 'can higher, must higher' to protest against low-flying, a concept in which the flight routes are relatively low causing more noise pollution. Several politicians picked up this protest (Duursma, 2017) and by the end of 2017 even the NGO's realized that the action groups were making progress. From this point the action groups experienced more support from different environmental NGO's. Even though action groups had experienced no support from NGO's before, this does not mean that aviation has not been receiving any attention from NGO's. In the course of 2017, the rapidly evolving societal and political debate on Dutch aviation released (government) funding for NGOs to pay attention to aviation. This indicates a political shift as well, since providing funds to address aviation indicates that politicians were more committed to the topic.

The media storm following publication of Paul Peeters' PhD on aviation's role in emissions and achieving the Paris agreement, mid November 2017, pushed climate change into the Schiphol/Lelystad discourse (Reijn, 2017; Van Der Heijden, 2017). This research gained a lot of interest from the media, which does not happen for most research projects. The publication of this study is seen by some as a 'tipping point'. The citizens were already getting angrier in this discussion and after Peeters (2017) it became obvious that there would be a problem if the aviation sector continued its path. From this point onwards, the combination of the mistakes found in the Environmental Effects Report of Lelystad and the commotion that resulted from Peeters (2017) the public started to realize that something had to change.
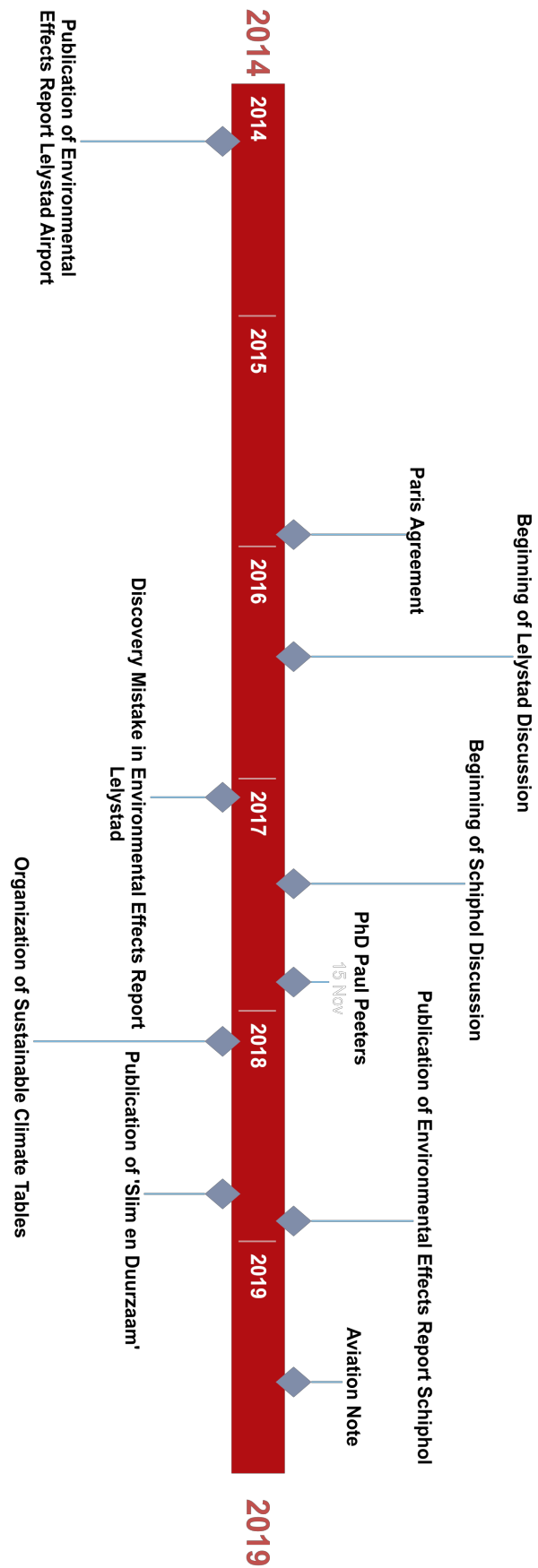
2018 is seen as the year in which the discussion about aviation in the Netherlands culminated. In the beginning of 2018 several climate change platforms were organized by the Ministry of Infrastructure, Public Works and Water Management – in Dutch: het Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat (IenW) – in which different parties, such as the sector, scientists and NGO's, sat together to discuss the future of aviation in the Netherlands. Different climate change platforms were created, all focusing on their own subject, to provide input for the Climate Change Agreement – in Dutch: klimaatakkoord. One of the platforms on aviation focused on a concrete plan for its future, e.g. who pays what, who does what, et cetera. This platform has been criticized for lacking a policy

frame, lack of ambitiousness and a lack of guidance (Van Santen & Van Der Walle, 2018; Stellinga & Van Der Walle, 2019)

Furthermore several studies were published in 2018. Among which an advice written by the Council for Living Environment and Infrastructure – in Dutch: Raad voor Leefomgeving en Infrastructuur, an official advisory body – on the economic value and importance of aviation to the Dutch economy. Besides this, the document 'slim en duurzaam' – in English: smart and sustainable – was published in October 2018 (Allard et al, 2018). This document was composed by the aviation sector and several scientists and was appraised by an independent research institute as being ambitious and concrete. This document included plans of action for the aviation industry. Even though this document was considered to be ambitious by some, NGO's and action groups considered it to be 'not ambitious enough'. The document has even been openly criticized the document whereas normally this would not be the course of events. In 2018 several campaigns were launched to, among others, show that the aviation sector has a strange and exceptional position as compared to other sectors. In the media 'slim en duurzaam' was criticized for lacking ambition by other parties than NGO's and action groups as well (Ekker, 2019). Most of the actions were focusing on technological innovation, even though this would not be a feasible option in the next few years. Moreover, social media played an important role in this year as well. There were many social media movements protesting aviation in the Netherlands, such as the summer without flying movement and the concept of flight shame. This also indicated that the youth was involved in the discussion about aviation as well, which is promising according to one of the respondents. Besides social media, the youth and recently graduated people are involved in starting small business initiatives to contribute to sustainable traveling as well.

This 'perfect storm' of events continued in 2019. From the beginning of 2019 the action groups received a seat at the climate change platform, as they did not have one before. According to the respondents, the aviation sector received some more negative attention this year. KLM has been criticized due to the fly-by that they organized for their 100th anniversary and the image of the aviation sector was worsened due to the fact that Boeing 737 airplanes had to be kept on the ground due to a defect in their design. These two elements do not have that much to do with flight routes directly, but affect the image of the aviation sector in general, as mentioned by one of the respondents. At this point,

Figure 1: Significant Moments in the Discussion About Aviation in the Netherlands

Publication of Environmental Effects Report Lelystad Airport

2014

2014

2015

Paris Agreement

2016

Beginning of Lelystad Discussion

Beginning of Schiphol Discussion

Discovery Mistake in Environmental Effects Report Lelystad

2017

Publication of Environmental Effects Report Schiphol

PhD Paul Peeters
15 Nov

2018

Organization of Sustainable Climate Tables

Publication of 'Slim en Duurzaam'

2019

Aviation Note

2019

the discussion is not yet finished. The aviation note 2020-2050 is expected to shed light on the future direction for aviation in the Netherlands, this document is 'setting the rules' for the next decades and shows who (which stakeholders) have the largest influence on IenW. For now, this continuous discussion between pro- and opponents of aviation will continue. A summary of this timeline is presented in figure 1.

4.3 Power relations and networks (sites)

As previously mentioned, in the discussion about the future of aviation in the Netherlands one can distinguish two groups, one in favor of growth and one against growth. This distinction, however, is not definitive. In between these groups there are the actors that are striving for moderate growth. The groups that are in favor of growth mainly originate from the industry, such as KLM and Schiphol. Action groups and environmental NGO's compose the opponents of growth in the aviation sector. The government can be identified as both pro and against growth. The sector is receiving a lot of support from the government, which indicates that the government would want the aviation sector to grow. On the other hand, the government provides the government-funded NGO's with funding and actively organizes and engages in participatory meetings to discuss the sustainability of the aviation sector. What has to be noted, however, is that the government both consists of many different parties and individuals, each with their own opinion, and different levels, such as regional, provincial and national level.

The Ministry that is responsible for aviation is IenW. According to one of the respondents, this Ministry is seen as adopting a two-way approach, in which they support aviation growth from an economical perspective, and support NGO's who are striving for reduction in the aviation sector at the same time. This is a result of conflicting interests within the Ministry. IenW is considered to be very powerful. They are responsible for developing new policy, they filter information, they invite the people they talk to and they publish many studies. In essence, IenW is though of as directing the course of the aviation sector. This Ministry was responsible for organizing the sustainable aviation tables in 2018, which opened the doors to other stakeholders to discuss the future of aviation.

Among these other stakeholders there is the industry. During the sustainable aviation platforms they seem to agree that aviation should grow, however, should become more sustainable as well. The different parties in the industry present are, some more

progressively than other, in favor of growth, which has been and is supported by the government for a long time. Even though they all agree that the sector should grow, they disagree on how technological innovation should play a role. Since the Paris Agreement the aviation sector is gaining more pressure from the other parties and the public. They are seen as the sector that was always let off the hook, e.g. KLM is seen by some as the pride of the Netherlands, and should therefore be protected. This perspective is being critically questioned now in this discussion on the future of aviation. During the period in which the position of the aviation sector was not really questioned, they had quite some power since no one actually could do something about it. After starting to realize that the aviation sector had quite an exceptional position, as compared with other sectors, they have been receiving more pressure from NGO's and action groups, 'they feel the NGO's breathing in their necks'.

Since the discovery of the mistake in the Environmental Effects Report of Lelystad by a civilian member of an action group (De Zeeuw, 2017; Duursma, 2018), individual and local action groups emerged. Some of these action groups were formed or joined by local people with specific expertise on aviation-related topics. Over time, many of these smaller groups started to collaborate and unite into one larger action group called SATL, Collaborating Action Groups Against Low-flying. Within this collaboration there are groups with their own strengths and weaknesses, therefore they are working with a task division. Conversations with national and regional political spokesmen take place and there is more collaboration with environmental NGO's since 2018. This collaboration is mainly informal and consists of deliberation and organization of several protests against aviation. Furthermore, exchange of information is one of the functions of this collaboration as well.

Similar to action groups, NGO's converse with politicians as well. They have conversations with other actors both at the sustainable climate tables and on an individual basis. Environmental NGO's work together with IenW, from whom they directly receive assignments. The Groene 11 – in English: Green 11 – is a collaboration of eleven environmental NGO's, of which Greenpeace, Natuur & Milieu and the Natuur en Milieufederaties are working on the aviation dossier. This is a formal network, in which they actively form agreements on who is responsible for what. Even though there is collaboration, every organization chooses its own path. They do, however, align their plans with the other parties so that the message is consistent with their collective goal

and they are not working on the same things at the same time. Most of the collaboration in this network happens behind the scenes.

NGO's and action groups are not actively involved in the process of decision-making. Furthermore action groups were not even given a seat at the climate table until this year. Even though NGO's and action groups were invited to participate in one or several climate change platforms, they felt like their voices were not heard and their statements could not be found in the official records of the conversation. Thus, this indicates that even though these parties are attempting to make a difference, the other side of the table is not budging. NGO's and action groups have created a societal movement in which flying has become less favorable and the aviation sector is critically questioned. The question thus arises whether the parties involved in the actual decision-making will listen to the public opinion. Thus, the result of the work of action groups and NGO's will become more clear when the aviation note is published later this year.

4.4 A game of power (techniques)

The main concern of NGO's and action groups is to change the attitude of the consumer, here the public. In many cases the public is perceiving flying as a right, especially among youth (Steketee, 2019). To address this, NGO's and action groups launch campaigns and use the media to provide the public with knowledge about the effects of aviation on the climate. Besides changing the public opinion, they attempt to influence the political opinion as well. This is done by extensive lobbying and talking with these parties to exchange interests and opinions. The Ministry is criticized for excluding parts of the conversation from the records of one of the climate change platforms. Furthermore, the government has been buying shares of AirFrance-KLM as a form of protection for Schiphol. This is questioned by both the NGO's and action groups as well as the media (Duursma, 2019; Van Raan, 2019). Van Raan (2019) even mentions that the Minister of IenW agrees that Schiphol should grow and that Lelystad should open. All these elements indicate that the government is working a double agenda, in which they seem to support sustainable aviation, but simultaneously give the aviation sector all the freedom to stay in their exceptional position.

Another tactic used by both pro- and opponents is that of continuous invalidating each other's arguments. When an argument is made, the NGO's and action groups attempt to refute this, first by looking whether the statement is true. Second, they look at what is not said in those statements or studies, sometimes this is were the real message can be

found. And finally, how are the conclusions derived and how are these used in debates? An example of this is the concept of 'Schiphollen', a concept in which the government signed an agreement on the maximum number of flights, only to break this agreement afew years later (Winsemius, 2018). In another case the Minister wrote a letter with a statement in which she refers to an appendix. If you then look at the appendix, it agrees with her statement, however, many other things are not taken into account. The withholding of information is another tactic used in this discussion. This can also be seen in some of the studies published by the government, in which they provided an independent research institute with an assignment and, according to one of the respondents, before publication a paragraph was left out because it did not correspond with the message the government was trying to get along. Besides this, the government provides action groups and NGO's with reports, and one respondent mentioned that it occurred regularly that they were overloaded with new reports just slightly before deliberation sessions. The withholding of information and providing others with information at the latest moment possible identifies the powerful position the government has.

When the government is referring to itself and the sector parties during conversations at the climate table, they are often using the term 'we'. This indicates that the government sees them as a whole instead of individual parties, pointing to the fact that aviation is an abnormal sector with an exceptional position that is strongly supported by the government. This could also explain why NGO's feel like it is an all against one conversation at these tables. It can be argued that the government has a bias in favor of the aviation sector, even though they strive for more sustainability. Action groups and NGO's are considered biased when they commission results, thus for them it is very significant to come with scientifically correct information in order to be taken serious. Industry actors often do not come across this issue. They make statements without reasonable substantiation and they can hide behind their authoritative position. In discussion they either undermine that there is a problem, or trivialize the problem (Allard et al, 2018; IenW, 2019). One of the respondents refers to this as an old-fashioned way for businesses to deal with issues. The government enables this position.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The discussion on the future of aviation in the Netherlands gradually evolved during the last four years. Where it was not a big deal four years ago, nowadays many different parties are involved and concrete plans are being formulated. This pathway is highlighted by several significant moments, such as the Paris Agreement, the discovery of a mistake in the Environmental Effects Report of Lelystad and the publication of Peeters (2017). At first it was believed that the aviation sector was a sector that did not have to change, or even a sector that no one dared to challenge. 2018 was the year in which other parties really began to question the position of the aviation sector, as well as creating more resistance from the public. Now, both the government and the society are starting to realize something has to change. In order to answer the main research question as to how sustainable tourism research influences the representation of NGO's and action groups on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change, the secondary research questions need to be answered first.

The first secondary research question aims to uncover the existing storylines as produced by NGO's and action groups on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change. The storylines produced for the government and the aviation sector are criticizing the lack of ambition, as the CO_2 emission and noise pollution are not going to be reduced as long as the number of flights is not reduced. The government and the industry parties are solely aiming for technological innovation, which is not directly criticized by NGO's and action groups as technological innovation is already a positive development, however, according to the respondents, technological innovation might only be feasible in a long term perspective. Changes have to be made from a short term perspective as well, to make sure no further permanent damage is done.

NGO's and action groups are attempting to gain support from the public, by explaining to them two things. First, they try to diminish the government's credibility. This is done by showing the public that the government is knowingly withholding information and twisting the information that is provided to the public. The government is using all kinds of tricks to hide the reality, according to the respondents. Second, NGO's and action groups try to create awareness for the fact that flying is a major burden for the climate and reinforces climate change. This is done by enabling (social) media movements, such as 'laagvliegen' (low-flying) and flight shame and by promoting alternative forms of transportation. In their opinion, the consumers' attitude has to change; they should no

longer believe that it is normal to go on vacation several times per year. They, thus, represent aviation and the government in such a way that the public will stop believing the government and significantly reduces their frequency of flying.

The second secondary research question refers to how these storylines have changed over the past years. The opinion of most of the respondents has not changed over the past years, as most of them have been against aviation for quite some time. What has changed is that other parties are now willing to listen to the messages of NGO's and action groups, whereas before the Paris Agreement they would not. The storylines have not significantly changed, the government, however, has. They went from not willing to change the aviation sector at all, to a position in which they are forced to question the current position of the aviation sector.

The third secondary research question attempts to shed light on how scientific research has contributed to the evolution of these storylines. Scientific research has not played a significant role in the creation of the storylines by NGO's and action groups. Scientific research, however, does play a major role in the strengthening of their storyline, as NGO's and action groups are generally not taken serious without scientific prove of their statements. The discovery of a mistake in the Environmental Effects Report on Lelystad is seen as a significant moment in the evolution of the discussion about aviation in the Netherlands. Furthermore the study of Peeters (2019) strengthened the position of NGO's and action groups. Scientific research has, thus, been used to give more power to the storylines that this stakeholder group has been producing. Even though scientific research is used to strengthen the position of NGO's and action groups, at the same time it is used to weaken it by the publication of contradictory studies by the government and parties in the aviation sector. It can be argued that scientific research plays an important role for both sides of the discussion through constantly invalidating the other's statements. However, political impact as mentioned by Flecha (2014) and Reale (2017) can be considered limited as STR does not directly influence policy- and decision-making.

Sustainable tourism research has, thus, played a role in the evolution of the existing storylines. Because of STR, starting points for the discussion were created as well as the foundation for the position of NGO's and action groups. It did not have significant influence in changing the storylines that NGO's and action groups wanted to produce, however, it did open the possibility to share it with the public and to critically question the aviation sector in discussions with both sector parties and the government. Sustainable

tourism research supported NGO's and action groups in making other parties change their opinion. Even though STR is not of a significant influence in the creation of the discourse of NGO's and action groups on aviation, it has played an important role in the dissemination of it. As Flecha (2014) rightfully notices, dissemination is an important factor in the research impact assessment of STR. Important to note, however, is that publicity has played a great part in the influence of STR. If the media would not have picked up, for example, Peeters (2017), NGO's and action groups might not have been able to get the same results as they have now. The influence of STR is, thus, dependent on the set of circumstances that are existent. Media often have a wider audience, and even people who might previously have had no interest in the topic can be reached. The influence of sustainable tourism research in the aviation debate in the Netherlands is therefore highly dependent on the publicity it receives from the different media sources.

5.1 Limitations

Even though the aim of scientific research is to be objective, some degree of personal bias will always be present during the collection and analysis of the data. This is one of the general limitations of qualitative research (Anderson, 2010). As the sample size is relatively small due to limited time, this might affect the results of this study. With a greater sample the results may show a better representation of discussion on aviation in the Netherlands. It is possible that the results of this study do not represent the actual situation, as part of the information obtained during the interviews may be politically sensitive. Because of the article analysis, the interview outcomes were in many cases confirmed, removing some of the uncertainty of whether the actual situation was represented. Respondents might have withheld crucial information or have provided a biased representation of the aviation sector in the Netherlands even though anonymity was assured and the transcripts emitted from the report. Furthermore, since this is a specific case study that differs from similar case studies in country size, airport size, the position of the government & the aviation sector and significant moments that have occurred. Therefore it is difficult to generalize the results of this study to other cases.

5.2 Recommendations for further research

To further research the influence of sustainable tourism research on tourism mobility, aviation and climate change, I recommend focus on a different aspect of sustainable tourism. As it is difficult to generalize the results of this study to a wider population,

additional research into different aspects can reduce this limitation. With an increased knowledge on sustainable research impact and research impact assessment, the impact of STR can be enlarged. For this recommendation, a similar method of data collection and analysis can be employed, however, for a different case.

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7. Appendix

Appendix 1: interview guide

Theoretisch kader (voor interviewer)
Research impact: the construction of alternative realities through a process of object formation

Object: tourism mobility discourse in the Netherlands

Aim: identify pathways, sites, and techniques of object formation (see Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011)

Pathways: "the series of decisions and events that typifies the emergence and solidification of a discursive object" (p. 3).

Site: the informal and formal settings in which object formation occurs. Sites can assume a broad array of shapes and forms, certain sites lead more easily to certain other sites (Duineveld & Van Assche, 2011).

Technique: " a feature of the process of object formation that partially explains that process" (p. 4).

Ter introductie (voor de respondent)
Met dit interview willen we graag drie dingen achterhalen. Allereerst, hoe de discussie over luchtvaart, toerisme en klimaatverandering in Nederland zich ontwikkeld heeft, en nog steeds ontwikkeld. Ten tweede, welke veranderingen zich hebben voorgedaan in deze discussie, en, tot slot, op welke manieren deze veranderingen tot stand zijn gekomen.

We doen dit aan de hand van een drietal hoofdvragen, waar we vervolgens dieper op doorgaan.

1. Pathways ('route' of 'pad')

Wat zijn voor u belangrijke momenten geweest in de dicussie rondom luchtvaart, toerisme en klimaatverandering in Nederland?

'Momenten' is een brede term. Dit geeft respondenten ruimte om zelf invulling te geven aan de vraag.

Probing

- Doorvragen naar belangrijke beslissingen en gebeurtenissen in de discussie rondom luchtvaart, toerisme en klimaatverandering in Nederland (dit zijn ook momenten).
- Doorvragen om eventuele 'path dependencies' te achterhalen: in hoeverre en op welke manier staan de door de genoemde momenten / beslissingen / gebeurtenissen volgens de respondent in verband met elkaar?

Beoogd resultaat
Een tijdslijn (oftewel 'pathway') vanuit het gezichtspunt van de respondent, met daarop belangrijke momenten en hun onderlinge relaties.

2. Sites ('settings')

Als we nu kijken naar de tijdslijn die u zojuist geschetst heeft, welke partijen zijn hierbij betrokken, wat zijn hun standpunten (en zijn deze standpunten in de loop der tijd veranderd)?

Hoe hebben deze partijen zich in de loop der tijd georganiseerd om hun standpunten kracht bij te zetten?

De eerste vraag dient puur om tijdens het interview snel een overzicht te krijgen van betrokken organisaties en hun standpunten. Dit is informatie die wij ook via desk research en via CSTT kunnen achterhalen. De tweede vraag is belangrijk: deze

achterhaald namelijk de 'sites'. De probing richt zich dan ook met name hierop.

Development pathways of object formation often include organisations as "sites of power/knowledge" (p. 13). In the case of Bulb City, the resistance process was a path of establishing new organisations, coalitions, and pacts. These new actors mobilized new networks and produced new arguments that enforced the production an alternative reality (p. 13).

Probing

–   Zijn organisaties samen gaan werken in coalities?
–   Zijn er formele samenwerkingsverbanden of pacts ontstaan?
–   Zijn er gemeenschappelijke agenda's ontwikkeld?
–   Zijn er nieuwe organisaties opgericht?
–   Welke informele netwerken spelen een rol?
–   Hoe functioneren deze netwerken?
–   In hoeverre en op welke manieren zijn deze netwerken tegenover elkaar komen te staan / zijn er verschillende kampen ontstaan?

Beoogd resultaat
Een overzicht van verschillende partijen, hun standpunten en de manieren waarop deze partijen en standpunten zichzelf in de loop der tijd georganiseerd hebben.

3. Techniques ('technieken' / 'strategieën')

Welke ideale situaties, oplossingen, maar ook problemen propageren de verschillende partijen? Welke argumenten en informatie gebruiken zij om anderen van hun gelijk te overtuigen? Zijn hierin in de loop der tijd veranderingen opgetreden? Waarom? Hoe ging dit in zijn werk?

Deze vraag dient om te achterhalen hoe (met welke techniques) ideale situaties, oplossingen en problemen (objects) tot stand komen / worden gecreëerd. We doen dit om te kijken welke technieken zoals beschreven door Duineveld & Assche we kunnen

identificeren in de discussie rondom luchtvaart, toerisme en klimaatverandering in Nederland.

Probing

- Doorvragen naar specifieke strategieën en retorische technieken waarop organisaties volgens de respondent macht en invloed uitoefenen
- Doorvragen naar specifieke, belangrijke 'elementen' binnen deze strategieën en retorische technieken. Deze elementen zijn discursief. Voorbeelden: symbolen (grafieken), cijfers (statistieken), waarheidsclaims over de toekomst (als we dit niet doen, dan gebeurt dat), ideaalbeelden en mythes over de toekomst (bijvoorbeeld dematerialisatie, technologische oplossingen), etc.
- Doorvragen naar gebruikte informatie: (wetenschappelijke) rapporten, metingen, eigen onderzoek, etc.

Beoogd resultaat

Een overzicht van verschillende (retorische) technieken en strategieën die zijn ontstaan en de verschillende (discursieve) objecten die worden voorgesteld.

Appendix 2: Interview sampling

Role	Date of interview	Length of interview
Scientist	07-05-2019	51:42
NGO executive	13-05-2019	50:46
NGO executive	15-05-2019	1:09:24
NGO executive	17-05-2019	1:02:03
Action group representative	21-05-2019	1:12:19