

SHERPA  
Rural Science-Society-Policy  
Interfaces

PRACTICE ABSTRACT

# The role of policy actors in a Multi-Actor Platform in The Netherlands



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Engagement in a Multi-Actor-Platform (MAP) contributes to creating a policy setting that does justice to the rural reality and creates a flourishing rural life. The experiences of the Network of Large Rural Municipalities (P10) in the Netherlands shed light on the different forms MAPs can take to shape policy processes.

It is worth noticing that for policy actors, engaging in a Science-Society-Policy interface means contributing to policy making in the widest sense of the word. Policy actors do not expect the MAP dialogue to create progress in any specific policy arena. The work of the policy maker consists of communicating in multiple arenas, platforms, tables and meeting rooms, streets and kitchen tables.

This is the basis for policy preparation, formulation and implementation. In this context what the MAP does provide is a non-politicised space for dialogue and for exchange. This is valuable in itself. The process in the SHERPA MAP P10 predominantly created a space to exchange with other regions and the opportunity to join forces with other countries.

The linkages to other levels of policy making are also valuable and being part of an international project gives some importance to rural areas. It provides opportunities to make yourself heard and increases the chance to be listened to. The true policy actor as public actor that is in it for the public good. Their contribution is providing insight in the nuanced policy dialogue and the status of the ongoing policy process, but most importantly listening how the dialogue unfolds. This allows them to share experiences and learn from other areas.

Especially in these polarised times, it is important to create non-politicised spaces for dialogue as they can play an important role in moving forward. European projects and policy labs can be used as vehicles for creating non-politicised spaces. For sustaining these spaces, it would be important to also develop the Rural Pact as a non-politicised space for rural dialogue. It is important to avoid being hijacked by any specific lobby. Public actors should play an unbiased role in safeguarding this space.

## MAP Climate-proof Ruralities

### Location

The Netherlands

### MAP contacts

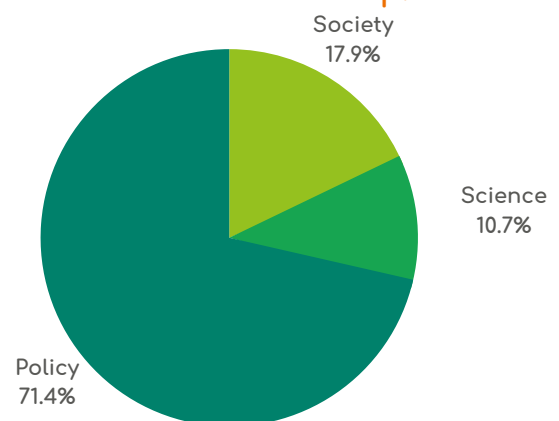
Facilitator: Winny Scheeringa  
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### More info

[SHERPA Regional Multi-Actor Platform | Climate-proof Ruralities - SHERPA \(rural-interfaces.eu\)](#)



## MAP membership:





## ABOUT THE MAP

In the Netherlands, the National Network of Large Rural Municipalities (P10) and the Wageningen University (WUR) coordinate the [MAP Climate proof ruralities](#), which operate at multi-regional and national levels. The Municipalities gathered in the P10 form the heart of the MAP, for each event science, society and policy actors were invited to enrich the discussion. The municipalities in the P10 are each in different stages of developing their climate adaptation plans and take their own approach. This creates a rich basis for learning.



## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this MAP are the following:

- Organise multi-actor dialogues on the opportunities, challenges and requirements for climate adaptation in the rural areas of the P10 (the Netherlands) by exploring the territorial-oriented approaches;
- Increase awareness of climate adaptation in relation to rural areas;
- Draw attention to the importance of a territorial-oriented and integrated approach to move forward on the great transitions and create a prosperous future;
- Emphasize the strengths of the rural areas and of local governments and the importance of rural-urban collaboration.



## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

The MAP P10 organised science, society policy dialogues in three regions of the Netherlands and some exchange between the regions. Especially the exchange between the regions was especially valued. This resulted in the [MAP Position Paper on “Land use and climate change” \(2022\)](#). The call to European and national governments is to give rural areas the room and confidence to develop their area-based approach, the puzzle of societal challenges needs to be laid in the rural reality. The MAP sees an important role for higher policy levels to create a constructive forcefield in which the area-based approach takes shape. In addition, a national MAP dialogue was organised to broaden the conversation and allow all 31 municipalities of the P10 to share their perspectives.

Currently, the P10 is involved in exploring the potential for a Dutch Rural Pact and together with SHERPA partners delivering a workshop at the European Week of the Regions and Cities on the topic of Rural Emancipation.

In 2023, this MAP also published a [MAP Fiche on the topic of governance in rural areas](#).



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