

DELTAMETROPOLIS

A declaration by the spatial planning aldermen of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht regarding future urban development in The Netherlands.



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- 1 *THE DYNAMICS* of society put heavy demands on town and country planning to accommodate the constant changes in the kaleidoscope of activities pursued by the population and the business and institutional sectors and to meet the ever higher environmental quality standards demanded by society.
- 2 *THE SPATIAL PLANNING DYNAMICS* are not confined to the territory existing within the administrative boundaries of municipalities and provinces and within national borders.
- 3 *THE FOUR BIG CITIES* of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht have closely intertwined spheres of influence and would benefit immensely from a common spatial planning vision to provide each city with a clearer understanding of its own responsibilities in relation to urban development.
- 4 *THE ADVENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION* makes that common vision even more necessary and urgent as the removal of national borders throughout Europe means that the role of the Netherlands within Europe will be largely determined by our ability to develop an urban complex with an international appearance, in other words: a European metropolis.
- 5 *IN SOCIETAL AND ECONOMIC TERMS* the development of the Delta Metropolis will depend on autonomous administrative bodies cooperating with equally autonomous companies and institutions, many of which operate internationally. Pooling resources is not a goal in itself, but rather a means to remain competitive in the international theatre of forces and thus competing in the international arena.
- 6 *IN TERMS OF SPATIAL PLANNING* the *Randstad* conurbation located in the west of the Netherlands is indissociable from its location in the delta between the rivers Rhine, Maas and Scheldt. This urban complex, abounding in water, forms the basis of the Dutch man-made landscape and has been a European hub of information, trade and transport for hundreds of years. The Dutch metropolis stands out from others in Europe, as it is a delta metropolis.
- 7 *WE HAVE USED THIS BACKDROP* to formulate the following vision of the future. The Delta Metropolis represents a two-pronged improvement in environmental standards: as a delta (in other words as a dynamic natural biotope) and as a metropolis (in other words as a dynamic urban area). The Delta Metropolis represents three growth areas:
 - *growth in diversity: broadening and deepening the repertoire of social, economic and cultural activities*
 - *growth in competition: competing internationally to create the best conditions for sustainable human welfare*
 - *growth in synergy: pooling creativity, organizational talent and potential to achieve better results on the basis of team effort*

In the context of this vision, we see diversity as the cultural goal, competition as the economic resource and synergy as the driving force or social energy of the metropolis.

- 8 *GROWTH* in the context of this vision is first and foremost growth in quality. Greater diversity increases the freedom of choice. Greater competition inspires a better performance. Synergy calls for growth in the number and the intensity of internal social relationships, growth in the participation of the population in social, economic and cultural activities and growth in complexity. These qualities contribute to a sustainable society as they create the conditions for growth in flexibility, adaptability, societal resilience and solidarity.
- 8 *QUANTITATIVE GROWTH* is neither our main concern nor our highest priority on account of the population density and affluence in the Netherlands. On the basis of current population forecasts we face the prospect of having to accommodate at least one million more people in the Delta Metropolis by the year 2030 and provide the appropriate job opportunities and mobility. We expect that the continuing greater stringency of environmental standards will contribute to innovation in production processes in agriculture, industry and the services sector and thus to further growth in prosperity.
- 10 *THE DEVELOPMENT* of the Delta Metropolis is seen as a growth process which, from a historical perspective, started centuries ago; the process will take at least a few more generations to reach maturity. This development will accelerate in the second half of this century, on account of the strong growth in population and affluence and thanks to the multifaceted development of technology. The advent of the European Union will add greater momentum to the pace of development. These developments necessitate the formulation of new concepts and ideas.
- 11 *THE QUALITY OF SPATIAL PLANNING* is, for the purposes of this vision, the sum total of spatial planning conditions for a broad and deep repertoire of social, economic and cultural human interaction. Human interaction is the backbone of urban life. The city in its role as a provider of equality and opportunity relies on social interaction, with competition and compassion helping city-dwellers to acquire a mature social identity as human beings, as individuals and as members of society. The city as a source of prosperity relies on economic interaction, which produces synergy, added value from pooling individual capabilities and skills in urban economy. The city as an academy relies on cultural interaction, the permanent and public re-evaluation of prevailing standards and values, in which the arts and sciences, politics and religion are critical factors and reflected in all manner of practices and rituals. Attending this academy enhances cultural competence, the ability to handle a large diversity of standards and values and to establish one's own routine.
- 12 *THE DELTA METROPOLIS* represents the changing mosaic of villages, towns, cities and a multitude of urban overflows, innovations and fragments - the *sprawling* city - in a controlled and carefully managed dynamic maze of scenic and urban components, the synergy of which relies on a sophisticated and interlinked transport and communications system - the *compact* city. This change is brought about by the transformation of each one of the four components of the spatial planning system: the water in the delta, the man-made landscape, the areas of urban interaction and the transport and communications network.

- 13 *THE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK* is the first transformation component, the core of which comprises the creation of synergy between the positive aspects of the road and rail transport systems. Given to the current ratio in passenger kilometres between motor traffic, public transport and slow traffic of 80:10:10 we advocate a massive expansion of public road transport (*taxis, maxis, buxis and buses*) as a replacement for private motor car transport. For the same reason we are all for linking up railway stations, public road transport stations along the motorways and parking facilities for private cars, wherever possible. This will establish a system of *city ports* in the Delta Metropolis, which in turn will create favourable conditions for areas of urban interaction. These city ports are interlinked by a metropolitan magnetically levitated (maglev) train system that combines speed with high frequency and low noise levels, if possible.
- 14 *URBAN DIVERSITY*. The variety in urban interaction environments as a whole is the second transformation component. This transformation comprises four subprocesses: (1) rearranging the amenities for the sciences, arts, politics, religion the media, education, sport and games, scattered throughout the sprawling city, so that they form a network of highly urbanized centres for interaction for all sections of the activities repertoire; (2) accommodating the urban economy, including its smallest sectors of business activity, according to the nature and phase of development of the business activity in question, possibly combined with other aspects of city life, such as housing, recreation, education, health care, transport and distribution, (3) urban renewal wherever necessary in view of the housing and labour markets, combined with further intensification of the use of space as far as possible (4) adding new, extensive urban and more village-like environments, such as those found on the coast and in the *Amstelland* and *Vechtplassen* areas.
- 15 *THE MAN-MADE LANDSCAPE*, as the backbone of a huge variety of communities of plants, animals and human beings is the third transformation component. In the west of the Netherlands, where space is used the most intensively, the man-made landscape is in decline as a result of homogenization and levelling off caused by continuing urban development: natural and historic differences are evened out. Diversity can be reinstated and enhanced by promoting the synergy of big and small regions, old and new forms of agriculture, major and minor waterways and lakes, wood and parkland, interlinked by 'blue' and 'green' networks, in a coherent parkland system. A metropolitan parkland system is essential if the dynamics of urban development are to be controlled and if the land is to be used - partly thanks to sustainable agriculture - as a tool for subdividing the city and marking the city boundaries.
- 16 *THE VARIETY OF WATER IN THE DELTA*, the source of existence and symbol of the metropolis, is the fourth transformation component. The Delta Metropolis has a rich diversity of water: everything from ditches, brooks and rivers to reservoirs, canals, lakes, estuaries and the sea. Rural and municipal boundaries are defined by controlling water levels. This diversity will be enriched by changing the green belt of the *Randstad* into a Water Reserve, which will provide greater opportunity for enjoying the countryside and active open-air recreation, such as rambling, cycling, camping and all forms of water sports, than the present mix of fenland meadows and reclaimed land. As the backbone of the metropolitan parkland system, this Water Reserve will make a major contribution to the structure of the Delta Metropolis by the carefully selected location and form of pools and watercourses.

- 17 *FROM A SPATIAL PLANNING PERSPECTIVE*, the logical conclusion of the foregoing is to allow each of the four above-mentioned components to develop more or less independently, whilst continuing to interact with one another. The modernization of water management in the west of the Netherlands, the necessary adjustments to make agriculture comply with more stringent environmental requirements, urban renewal and retaining the position of the Netherlands in the network of European transport and communications links are developments which are each caught up in their own individual market circumstances and policy framework, yet by the same token they collectively form an integral part of the structural change which the creation of the European Union entails for the Netherlands as well.
- 18 *AS ALDERMEN OF FOUR LARGE CITIES* we look upon the responsibility for renewing our cities as our role in the development of the metropolis, and we expect others to regard the renewal of their cities, the development of the countryside, water management and transport and communications links as their responsibility. In a societal context the process of urban renewal covers a broad range of renewal: integration into society, education, employment, security and care. All these aspects share the common goal of enhancing and promoting participation in urban society. Spatial planning has been assigned the task of modernizing housing conditions, industrial estates, educational facilities and encouraging inner-city development. More generally, urban renewal means considerable improvement in the quality of public spaces, i.e. urban paving and plants with the emphasis on focal points of urban activity, such as parks, squares, sports facilities and areas around railway stations. After all, factors such as the quality of the everyday environment of city-dwellers determine their self-esteem.
- 19 *THE CENTRAL PROJECT*, which will give the Delta Metropolis form and substance, will designate and develop the five central *city ports* in the metropolis: the South Axis/City Centre of Amsterdam, Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, Hoog Haghe, Rotterdam CS railway station and the Utrecht City Project. These link up the intercontinental air route network, the international railway network and the interregional motorway network via a number of public transport transfer points. The provision of public rail services between these five city ports which combine the speed of the TGV with the frequency of regional travel services will turn the four cities of the Randstad conurbation into one single urban complex: the Delta Metropolis.
- 20 *THE COMBINATION* of the five city ports with the urban network of centres for interaction will promote the accessibility of these centres with one another. This will establish the right conditions for creative *intercity* competition, which in turn will enhance the diversity aspect, and greater diversity will promote synergy. All this will create the conditions for further differentiation, specialization, top quality and for amalgamating the urban centres around the Water Reserve so that they form one complex whole: a European metropolis.
- 21 *THE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT* for the Delta Metropolis comprises the interaction of the following four distinct processes: (1) forming public opinion to clarify the similarities and differences between the situation now and the Delta Metropolis, (2) forming coalitions and alliances to unite the supporters of the above-mentioned developments, (3) researching, and designing - for example the five city ports and the Water Reserve - to bring major elements of the metropolis nearer to realization, (4) prioritizing all projects that promote the creation of the Delta Metropolis. The

synchronization and the interaction of these four processes with each other form the essence of the development concept and are a prerequisite for synergy. Translated into plain English, synergy means increased effectiveness produced by combined action.

The ideas on which this declaration is based are described further on in this publication.

THE DELTA METROPOLIS

THE SPATIAL PLANNING ALDERMEN

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THE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

The 'Transport and Communications Network' map shows an intricate system of railways, motorways, waterways and air routes, each with its own stations, junctions, intersections and ports. The Delta Metropolis is linked to Europe and the rest of the world through airports, seaports and city ports.

URBAN DIVERSITY

The 'Urban Diversity' map shows the huge variety of urban areas of interaction, from extensive and more village-like areas through a wide range of ever more urban and more intensively used areas to highly urbanized centres of interaction with concentrations of social, economic and cultural activities.

MAN-MADE LANDSCAPE

The 'Man-Made Landscape' map shows the wealth of landscapes in the delta with high-level and dry land in hill ranges and dunes, low-lying and wet land in fen polders and low and man-made dry land in reclaimed areas, all criss-crossed by meandering rivers: a fertile biotope for vegetation, animals and human beings.

THE WATER IN THE DELTA

The 'Water in the Delta' map shows an intricate and subtle system of watercourses and reservoirs used to accurately control water levels in the Delta Metropolis to the nearest centimetre. Water traverses town and country like a system of blood vessels and is sustainably dynamic through rainfall and evaporation and the water current in rivers and the sea.

CITY PORTS

The 'City Ports' map reveals the essential core of the Delta Metropolis: a combined effort by the Dutch cities to compete with other European cities for the title of world cities. The city ports which see the day-to-day flow of transit passengers, act as the main transit centres in the Delta Metropolis and are located at the junctions of intercontinental air routes, international railways and interregional motorways. Main transit centres for the transshipment of goods are located at land and sea junctions.