

# Heritage in Strategic Environmental Assessment: Practice in the Netherlands



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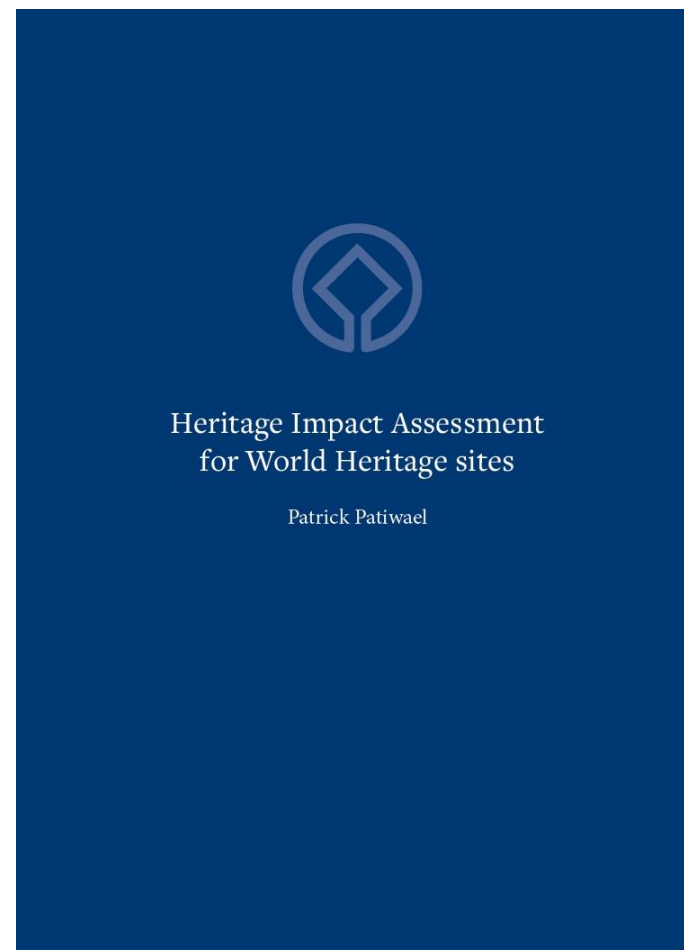
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# Background

Patiwael 2022. *Heritage Impact Assessment for World Heritage sites: critical reflections on ten years of applying the HIA framework in the management of World Heritage sites*. Rijksuniversiteit Groningen: Groningen, the Netherlands.

Then: Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (Commissie mer; NCEA)



## What is an environmental assessment report?

A report which describes the environmental effects of a project or plan. For example the effects of a new road on health, or of dike improvement on landscape and nature. With the report, the government authority in charge can make a well informed decision on the project or plan.

*Environmental assessment in the Netherlands refers to both environmental impact assessment (EIA) and strategic environmental assessment (SEA)*

## Environmental Assessment

ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS ON:

Climate

Nature

Safety

Heritage

Living environment

Health

## The Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment Its role in the Netherlands

### What does the Commission do?

#### Advises and reviews

Advises on what should be addressed and reviews what has been described in an environmental assessment report.



#### Does not write environmental assessment reports

That is done in most cases by consultancy firms.



#### On request: considers views of the public

With local information a better advice.



#### On site

The Commission visits the project location to see what the issues are.

### What is the Commission?

#### Independent

The Commission has no interest in the project itself. The authority decides if a project is carried out or not.



#### Established by law

The Commission is a public body, established by law. It is not part of government for reasons of independency.

#### Knowledgeable and up-to-date

For each project, the Commission selects the relevant experts from a large database.



#### Transparent

All advisory reports by the Commission are available on its website.

## Heritage Impact Assessment for World Heritage sites

Patrick Patiwaël



# What does AI say?

Is cultural heritage effectively assessed in Dutch strategic environmental assessment?

*“The assessment of cultural heritage within Dutch Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) is indeed a significant aspect. SEAs in the Netherlands are designed to evaluate the environmental impacts of policies, plans, and programs, including cultural heritage considerations<sup>1</sup>.*

*However, the effectiveness of these assessments can vary. Some studies suggest that while cultural heritage is considered, there are challenges in consistently integrating it into the broader environmental assessment framework<sup>2</sup>. ...”*



Canal Ring Area of Amsterdam © Ko Hon Chiu Vincent

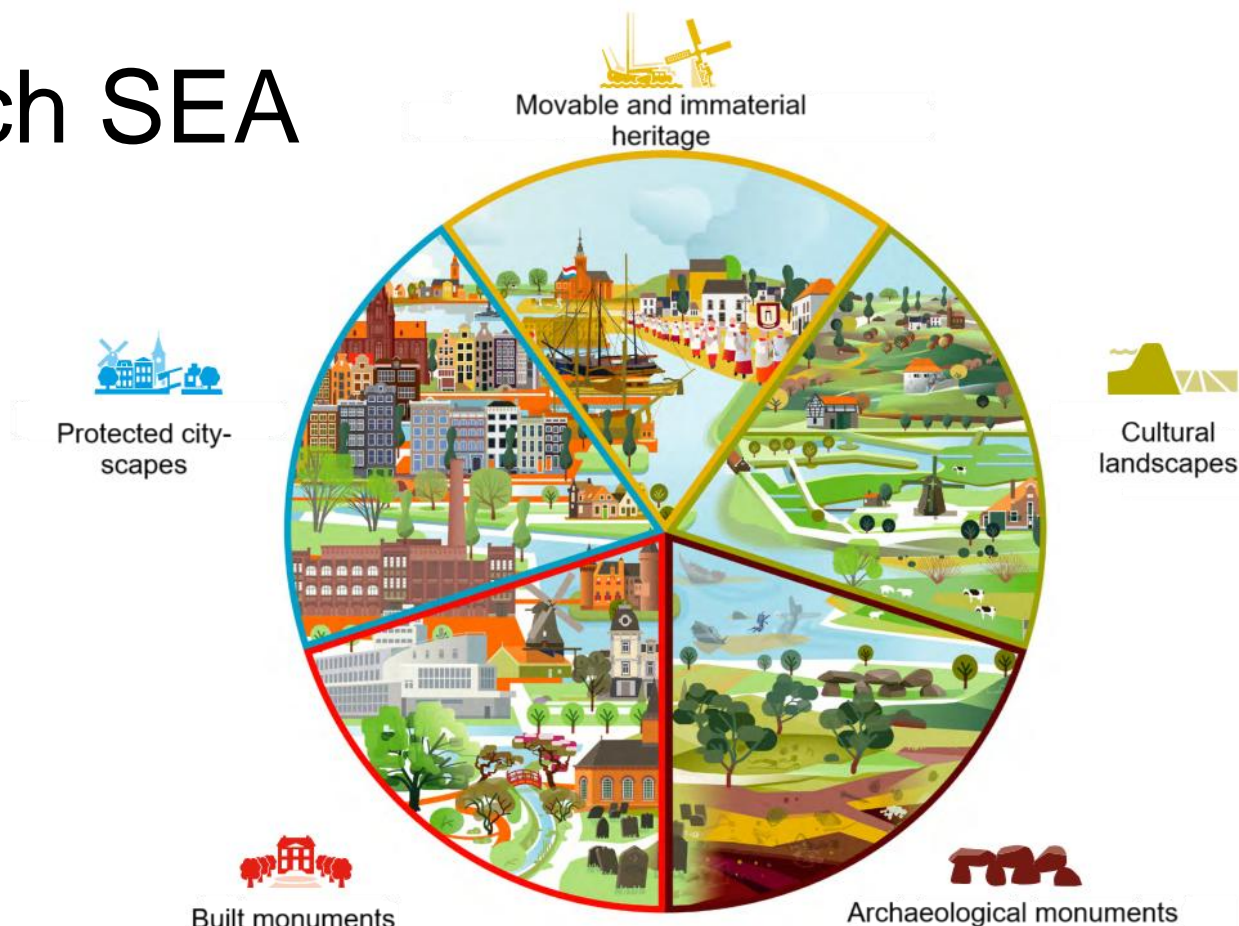
# Cultural heritage and Dutch SEA

Mandatory by law to assess impacts on cultural heritage and landscape

World heritage often separate

Sometimes part of 'spatial quality'

Geological heritage increasingly added



Cultural heritage as defined in Omgevingswet. Source: RCE. 2022.



# AI on Dutch SEAs (between 2019-2024)

How many Strategic environmental assessments were conducted in the Netherlands between 2019 and 2024?

*“The exact number of Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) conducted in the Netherlands between 2019 and 2024 isn't readily available from a single source. However, the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) has been actively involved in reviewing and advising on numerous SEAs during this period<sup>1 2</sup>.”*



Rietveld Schröder House © Stichting Werelderfgoed Nederland

# Dutch SEAs (between 2019-2024)

Between 2019 and 2024: 244 SEAs conducted (and reviewed by the NCEA).

Following Directive 2001/42/EC, SEA is obligatory for statutory or compulsory administrative plans that

- form the framework for future decisions subject to EIA; or
- require an appropriate assessment on the basis of the Dutch Nature Conservation Act.



Ir. D.F. Woudagemaal © UNESCO Nederland

# Types of SEAs 2019-2024

- 69 Strategic spatial plans/programs
- 38 Energy (wind/solar, high-voltage lines)
- 25 Infrastructure (roads, railways, harbors, airports)
- 10 Resource extraction (gas, sand/gravel, drinkingwater)
- 08 Management of watersystems (dykes)
- 22 Industrial areas and factories
- 24 Agricultural 'area plans' and 'large scale' farms
- 30 Housing development plans
- 18 Nature development/improvement



Mill Network at Kinderdijk-Elshout © OUR PLACE The World Heritage Collection



# Cultural heritage in Dutch SEA

- Quality of the assessment varies
- Baseline information cultural heritage generally of high quality\*
- Impacts on cultural heritage are generally included in SEA, especially on archeaology and landscape\*
- Strong focus on legal protection (listed monuments)
- Heritage values identified almost exclusively through desk research. No real participatory approaches
- Setting and cumulation often overlooked
- Intangible and movable heritage generally not included



Planetarium Eise Eisinga © UNESCO NL

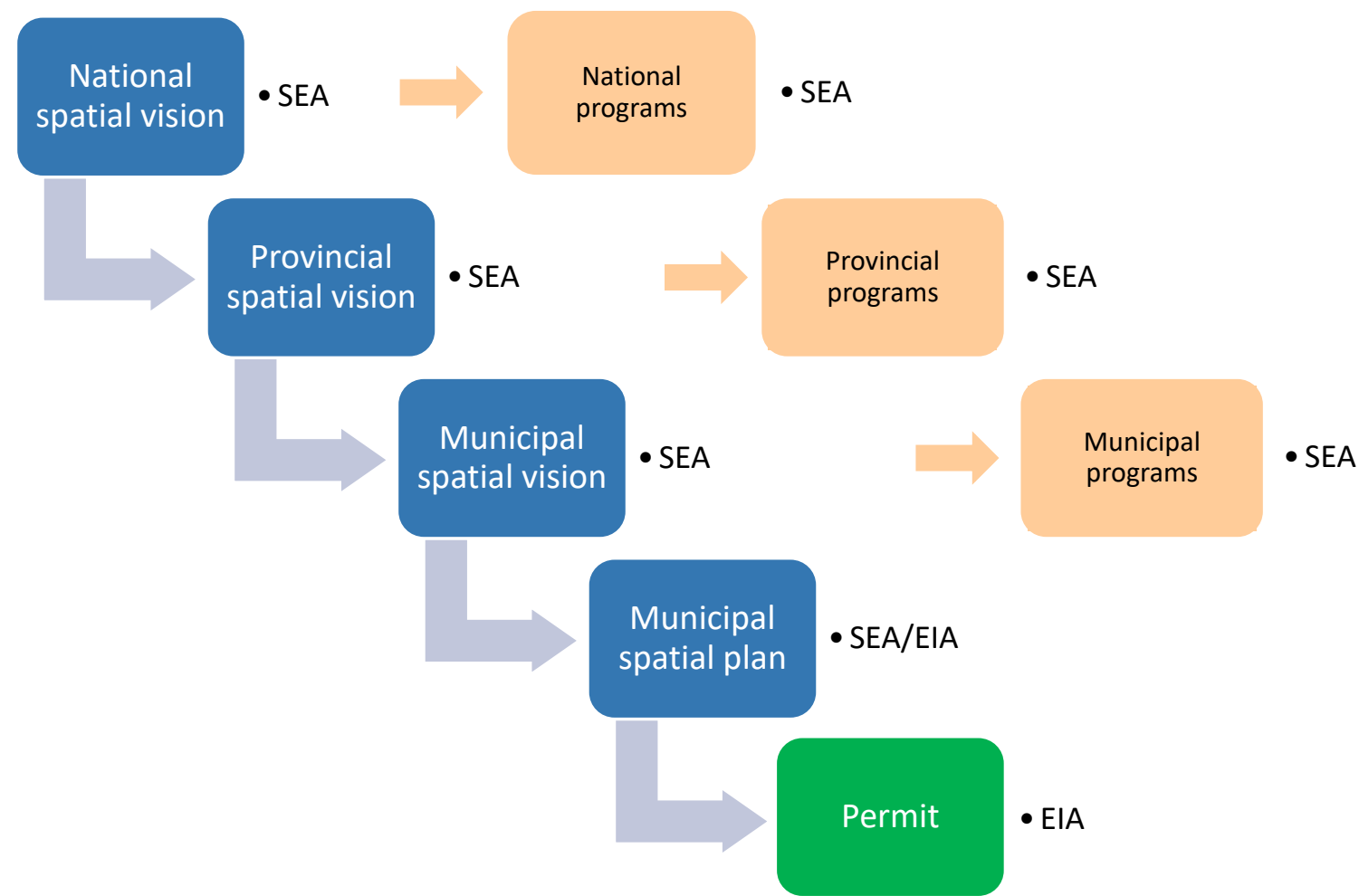
# Dutch spatial plans

Dutch SEAs (2019-2024):

1 SEA National vision 2020  
3 SEA National programs

5 SEAs provincial visions  
4 SEAs provincial programs

56 SEAs municipal visions

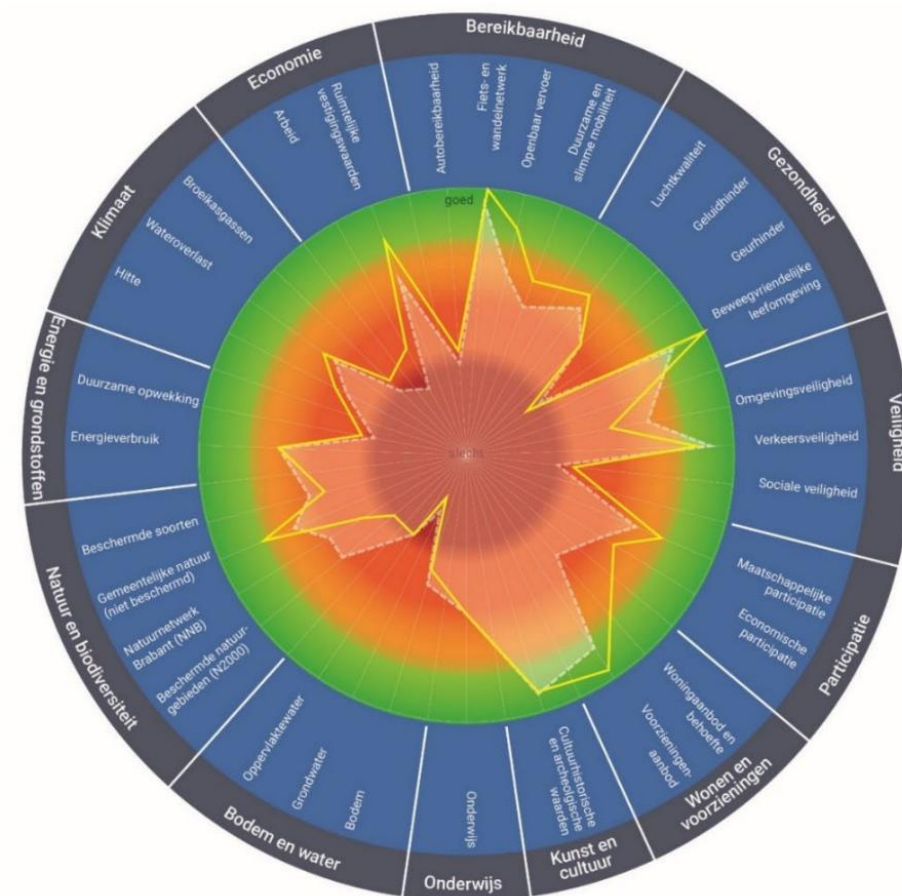


# Dutch spatial plans

52 out of 56 SEAs for municipal spatial plans assessed the impact(s) on cultural heritage.

Most (45) focused on (cultural) landscapes, built monuments and archeaology, some included World Heritage (4) and geological heritage (7)

19 times we asked for additional information about impacts on heritage/landscape\*



Source: RHDHV. 2023. OER Omgevingsvisie Helmond 2040.



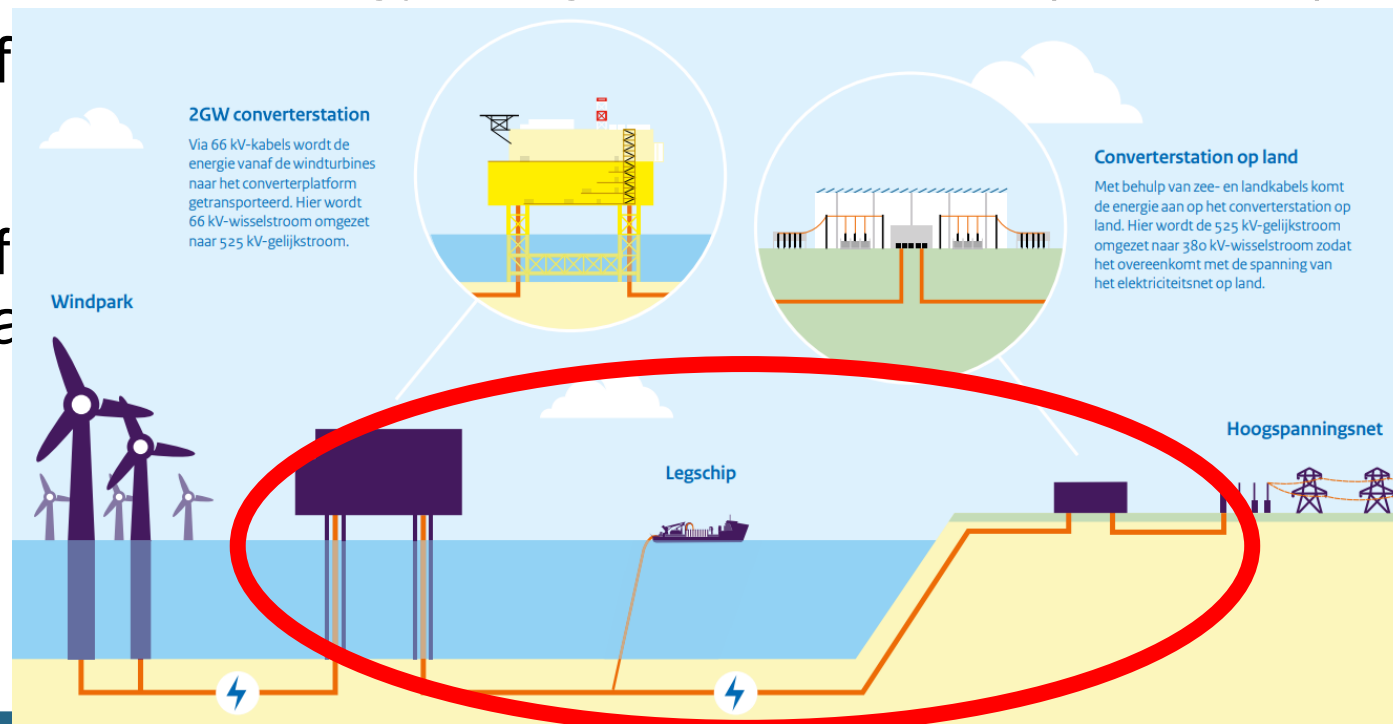
**Figuur 8:** Overzichtkaart van alle mogelijke aanlandlocaties die Programma VAWOZ onderzoekt.

# SEAs for the Dutch 'grid at sea'

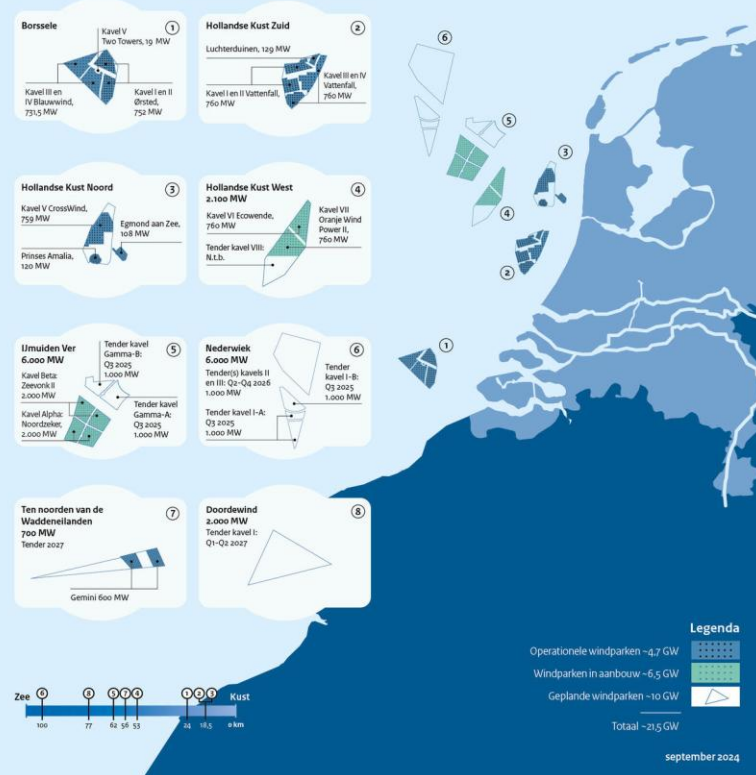
SEA for wind energy 'program North Sea' (locations)

SEA f

SEA f  
at sea



## Routekaart Windenergie op zee 21 GW





# SEAs grid at sea Nederwiek 1, 2 and 3

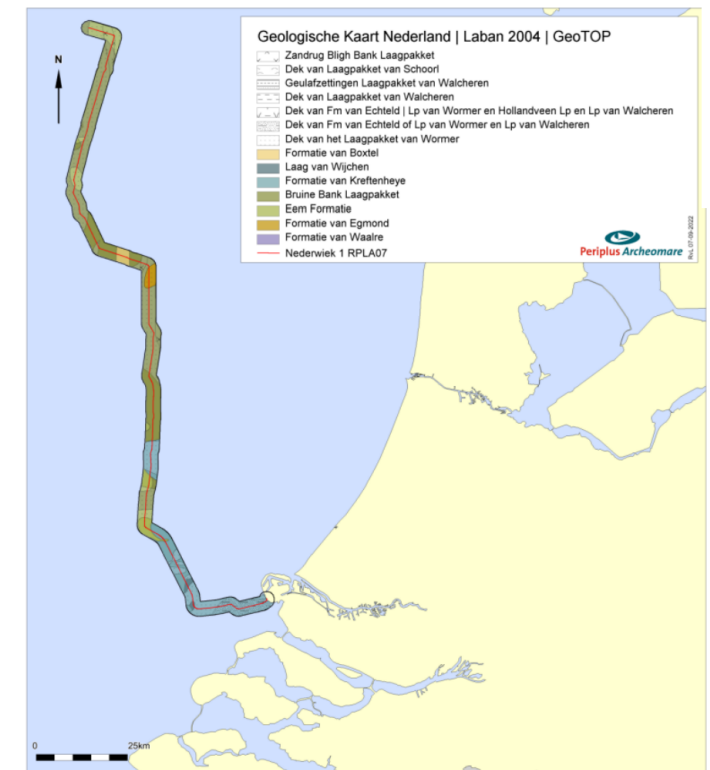
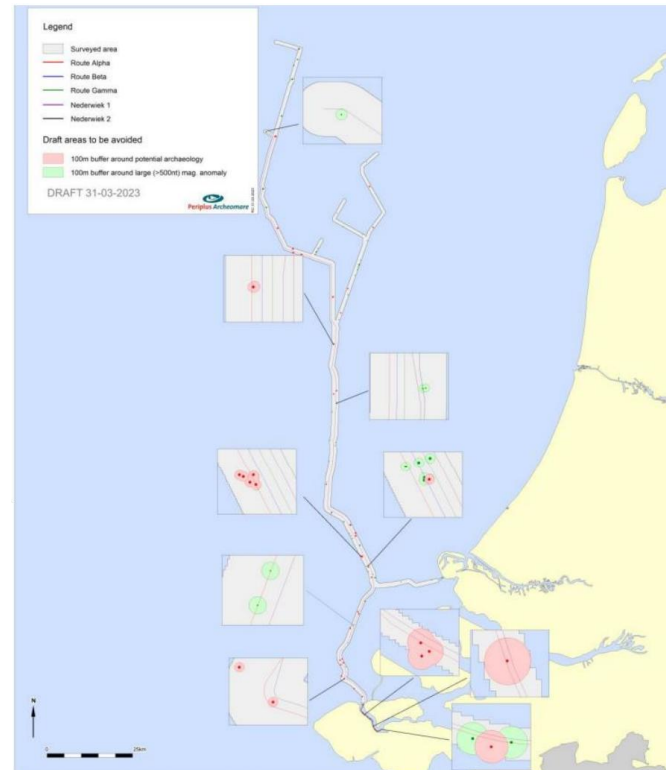
Impact assessment divided into:

- (1) cultural heritage/landscape on land: area characteristics; coherence and context; visibility and experience; geological values; cumulation
- (2) archeaology at sea: geological values; known archaeological values; expected archaeological values
- (3) archeaology on land: known archaeological values; expected archaeological values



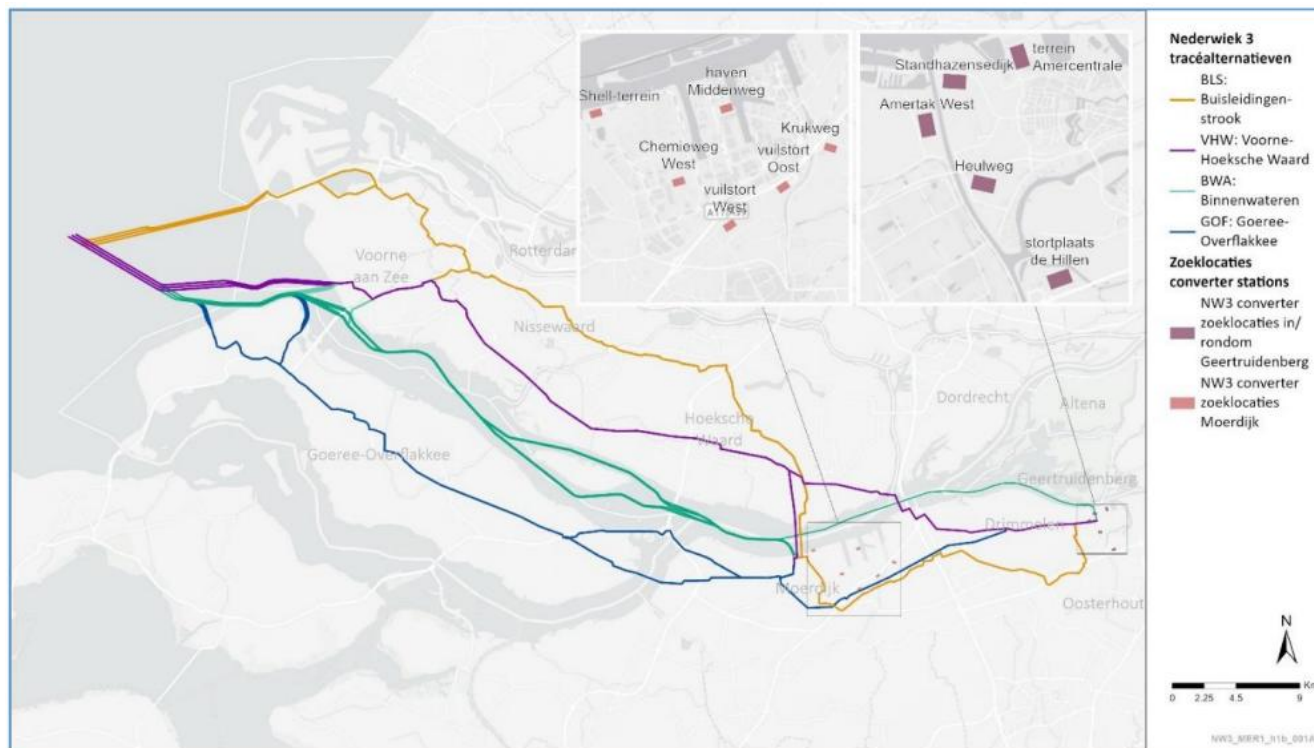
Historic coastlines North Sea. Source: McNulty & Cookson in National Geographic Magazine.

# SEAs grid at sea Nederwiek 2



Source: Pondera & Arcadis. 2023. [Grid at sea Nederwiek 2: Environmental effects report: Part B.] Net op zee Nederwiek 2: Milieueffectrapport Deel B.

# SEAs grid at sea Nederwiek 3



Cultural heritage assessed (for each route/location):

- area characteristics;
- coherence and context;
- visibility and experience;
- geological values

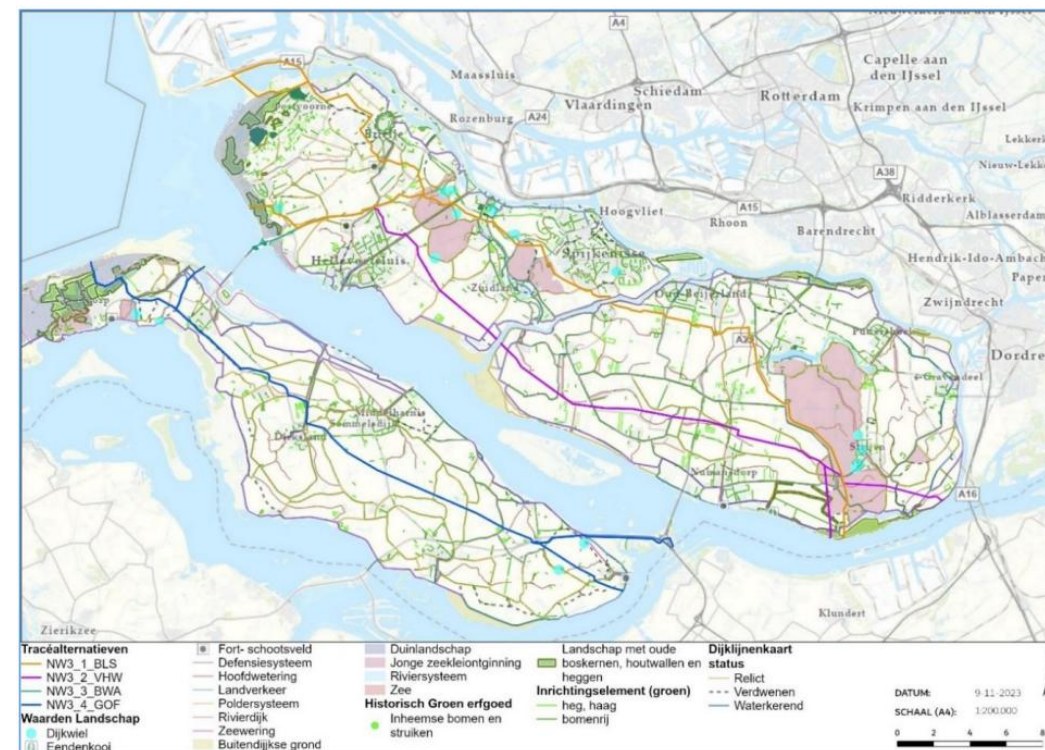
Archaeology on land: known archaeological values; expected archaeological values

Archaeology at sea: geological values; known archaeological values; expected archaeological values

Source: Pondera & Arcadis. 2024. [Grid at sea Nederwiek 3: SEA phase 1: Environmental effects report: Part A.] Net op zee Nederwiek 3: MER fase 1: Milieueffectrapport Deel A.

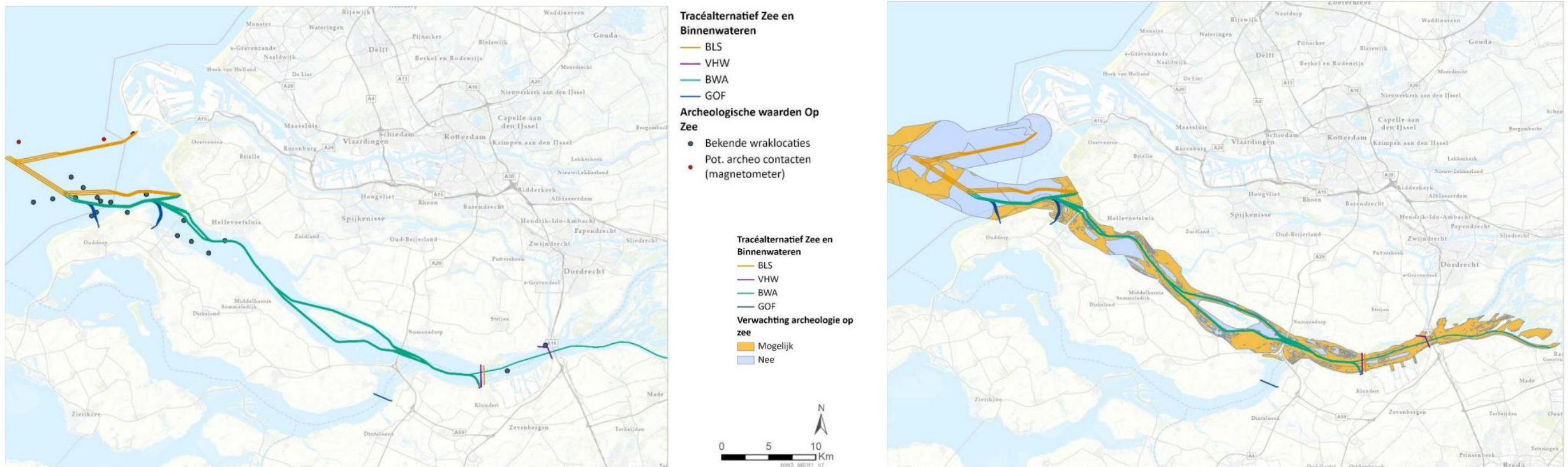


# SEAs grid at sea Nederwiek 3



Source: Pondera & Arcadis. 2024. [Grid at sea Nederwiek 3: SEA phase 1: Environmental effects report: Part B.] Net op zee Nederwiek 3: MER fase 1: Milieueffectrapport Deel B.

# SEAs grid at sea Nederwiek 3



Source: Pondera & Arcadis. 2024. [Grid at sea Nederwiek 3: SEA phase 1: Environmental effects report: Part B.] Net op zee Nederwiek 3: MER fase 1: Milieueffectrapport Deel B.



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Planetarium Eise Eisinga © UNESCO NL





# Let's continue the conversation!

Message me your questions or comments in the IAIA25 app.

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