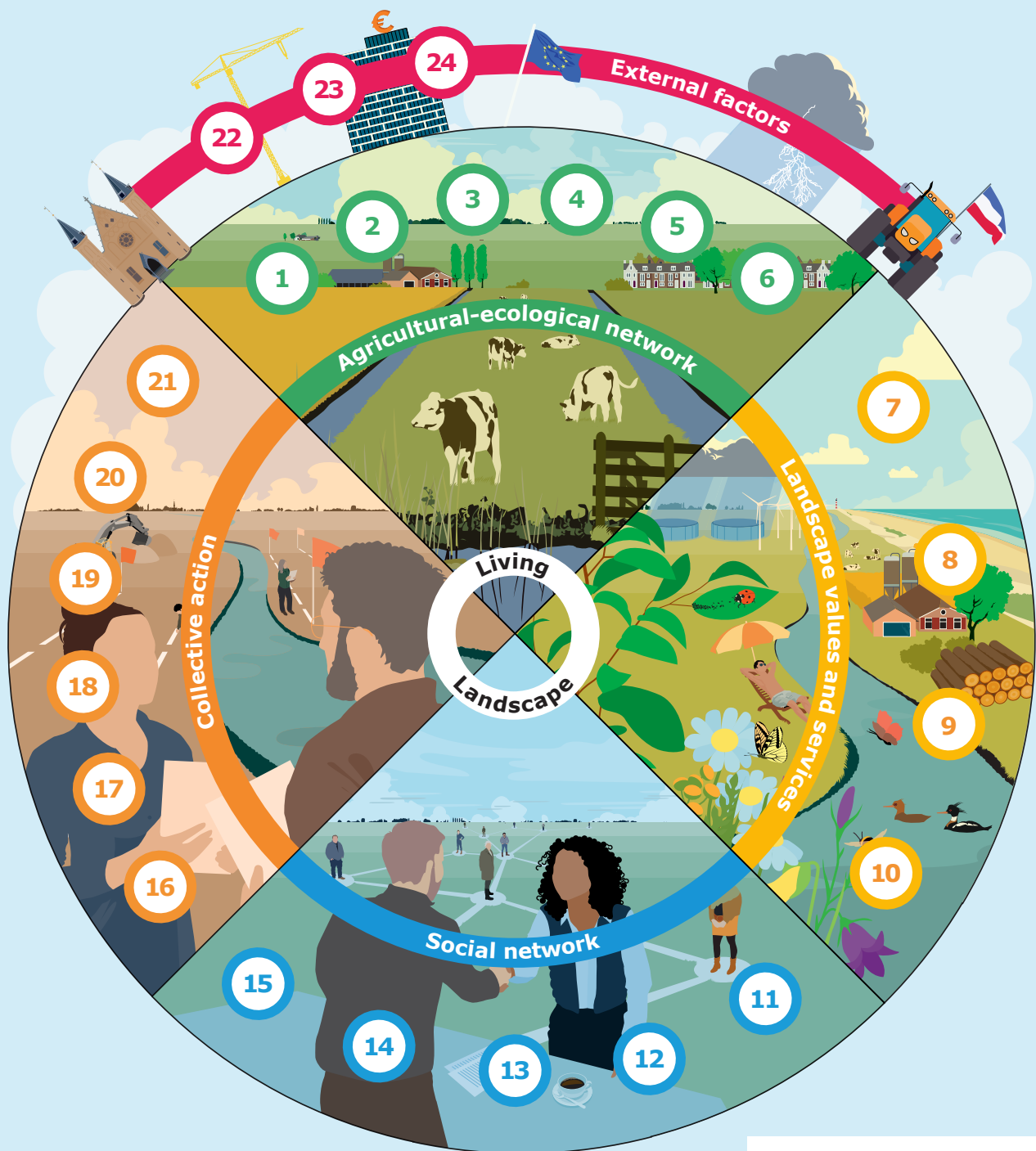




Getting started

Living landscape

A tool for reflection on landscape and area processes

For groups collaborating on a future-proof landscape



WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Introduction

The Living Landscape method is designed for organizers and facilitators to engage a group in reflecting on landscape and area processes.

concrete steps for improvement, while considering the diverse interests and goals that are at play in the landscape.

For whom?

This tool can be used by individuals or groups who (wish to) work on area processes in agricultural areas. This includes governments, agricultural and nature organizations, entrepreneurs, citizens, and social organizations. Together, they collaborate and work towards a future-proof landscape.

Goal

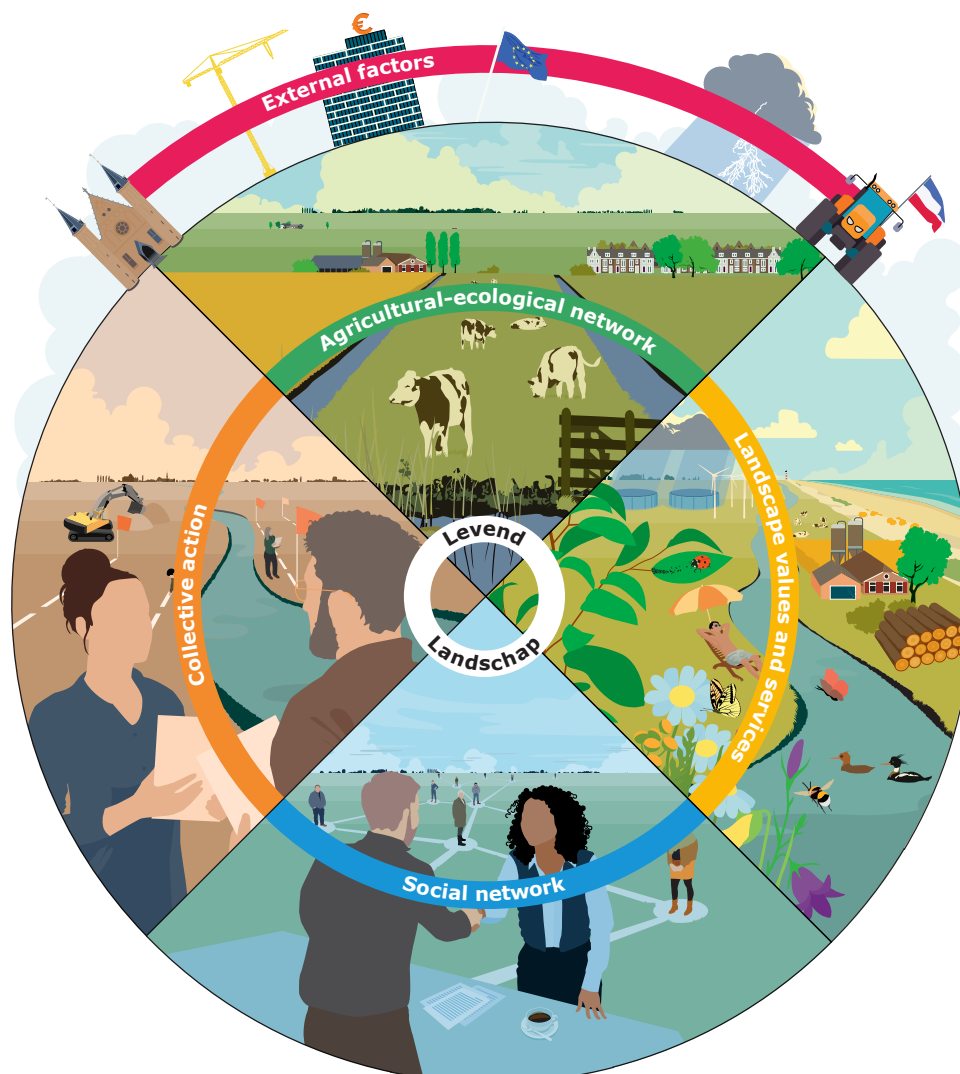
A region or landscape is often complex in its organization. Each party involved in the area has its own interests. The goal of this workshop is to reflect with stakeholders on the current state of the landscape and to formulate

Living Landscape tool

We distinguish five different components:

1. Agricultural-ecological network,
2. Landscape services and values,
3. Social network,
4. Collective action, and beyond this,
5. External factors.

To reflect together with stakeholders on the landscape and area process, 24 reflection questions are discussed. The questions cover key topics that are essential for realizing future-proof landscapes.





Agricultural-ecological network

The physical living environment in the landscape includes agricultural plots and natural elements, such as thickets, road verges, and ditches, existing animal and plant populations, as well as roads and buildings. These have a certain quality based on how they are managed. The design and management influence biodiversity in the landscape and the provision of landscape services.



Landscape values and services

The agricultural-ecological network has various values and provides different services to the social network. Services such as food production, pollination, water regulation, and recreational opportunities, as well as values experienced by people in the landscape, such as openness, beauty, and tranquility.



Social network

The social network consists of stakeholders in the form of people and organizations in the landscape. The size, interrelationships, and trust within this group influence how effectively they can achieve common goals.



Collective action

The social network organizes itself into collective action to improve the landscape. Stakeholders collaboratively determine which values and services are needed in the desired future landscape, set goals, and make agreements for this collaboration to realize those values and services.



External factors

External factors that influence the landscape but cannot be changed in the short term by the social network, such as laws and regulations and technological developments.

Overview of the tool



Preparation

1 Determine the starting point of the workshop

As an organizer, you inventory what has already been done in the landscape. This includes reviewing previous conversations, measurements, or research conducted to move towards a sustainable landscape. This inventory helps to establish the starting point of the area before applying the reflection tool in the workshop.

The overall goal of the tool is to reflect on the landscape and area process in order to develop concrete actions for landscape improvement. However, the specific reason for initiating this session needs to be clearly defined in each case. Determine the purpose for organizing the workshop. This is also an ideal time for the workshop facilitator to thoroughly review the 24 questions and explanations from the Living Landscapes tool to ensure that you are well-prepared for the session.

2 Identify the target audience and send invitations

When selecting and inviting stakeholders to participate in the reflection process, it is important to involve a diverse range of stakeholders to ensure an inclusive and representative discussion. This may local communities, government agencies, nature conservation organizations, businesses, landowners, and experts in fields such as ecology, spatial planning, or cultural heritage. Stakeholders should be chosen based on their interest in the landscape, their expertise, and their potential contribution to the reflection process. The group size for the workshop can vary and should be adjusted depending on the session's purpose and timing.

Tip

To facilitate effective discussion, it is advisable to limit the group size to a maximum of 15 participants. If more stakeholders are involved in the process, divide the group into smaller subgroups. Each subgroup will work with the tool during the workshop. At the end of the session, share the outcomes from all subgroups with the entire group.

Ensure that stakeholders are invited and informed about the workshop in a timely manner. Their absence can impact the results, as their interests may not be adequately considered. In some cases, it may be beneficial to ask someone to represent any absent stakeholders.

Analysis of Stakeholders (stakeholder analysis) – How do you do that?

Do you want to know more about stakeholder management or conducting a stakeholder analysis?

Visit: edepot.wur.nl/545712 – Influence without power. Stakeholder management in practice.



Getting started

Executing the workshop

Requirements

For the workshop, the following is needed:

- A group of stakeholders who are committed to improving the landscape
- A facilitator
- A note-taker equipped with a laptop or pen and paper, along with a timekeeper
- A large table that accommodates all participants
- This guide
- A map of the area to be placed on the table, preferably indicating land use types such as forest, agricultural land (specifying types), housing, industry, and other important elements. The map serves to make the conversation concrete.
- Workshop materials from the Living Landscape tool:
 1. PowerPoint slides with explanations of the workshop and tool (download via <https://edepot.wur.nl/676948>)
 2. The set of cards, printed
 3. The 'game board'
 4. An action agenda template



3

Preparing the room

Ensure that the room is set up for the workshop, allowing all participants to sit comfortably around the table. Place the large map in the center and arrange the set of cards around it, with the illustrations facing up. If needed, provide a screen for the PowerPoint presentation and designate a visible area for the action agenda, such as a flip chart, so that all participants can see it clearly.

4

Introduction (15 min)

- Do the participants not all know each other yet? Here is a link for inspiration for an introduction round: blog.slido.com/10-ice-breakers-to-kick-off-your-conference/ or www.workshopper.com/post/icebreakers-for-meetings-and-workshops
- Do the participants already know each other? Here is a link for inspiration for conducting a deeper introduction round: www.mural.co/blog/small-group-ice-breakers
- Use the PowerPoint to provide a brief introduction to the plan for this workshop. What are we going to do,

and what is expected of the participants?
Roles

Initiator of the workshop

As the initiator of the workshop, you should be familiar with the landscape and the area processes. You can be a stakeholder, it is not a requirement.

Facilitator

As the facilitator of the workshop, it is essential to remain independent and impartial. Your role is to facilitate the conversation among stakeholders and set the pace at which the reflection questions are addressed. It is important for you to be familiar with the reflection tool and the steps necessary to reach agreements and create the action agenda. Content knowledge of the landscape and area processes is less critical in this role.

Notetaker

As a notetaker, your responsibility is to document the content and outcomes of the workshop. This involves actively listening during the session and noting key points, decisions, and action items for the agenda. After the workshop, you will compile a report and share it with all participants.

Tips for facilitation

As a facilitator, you play an independent role in guiding reflections on the landscape and area process. Your task is to help a group of stakeholders engage in meaningful discussions about the landscape, reflect on their insights, and translate these reflections to concrete actions when needed. Having experience in facilitating group discussions can be highly beneficial. Below are some helpful tips:

Tip 1: Establish clarity and structure

At the start of the session, clearly communicate the objectives of the workshop to all participants. This ensures that everyone understands the purpose and focus of the discussion.

Tip 2: Practice active listening

Actively listen to the contributions of all stakeholders. Foster an open dialogue in which each participant feels valued, heard, and respected.

Tip 3: Ensure balanced participation

Encourage all participants to share their insights throughout the workshop. Pay special attention to those who may be more reserved, and actively invite them to contribute their thoughts.

Tip 4: Managing conflict

As a facilitator, it is your role to recognize and address conflicts and differences of opinion. Promote respectful communication, emphasize shared goals, and assist in finding common ground or compromises.

Tip 5: Summarize and provide direction

After discussing each topic, summarize the key insights, agreements, and action points. This clarifies the conclusion of the discussion on that particular subject. Additionally, ensure that all participants understand their responsibilities regarding the agreed-upon actions.



Participant

As a participant in the workshop, you play an active role by contributing your perspective as a beneficiary or producer of landscape services and values.

Duration

The workshop lasts approximately 3 to 4 hours. Please plan for a half-day session to allow for participant arrival, breaks, and a debriefing discussion.

5

Exploring the landscape (15 min)

Start with the map of the area: what does the landscape look like, and what elements do we encounter? The goal is to ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding the discussion topic. Only proceed with this step if the group has not previously discussed the landscape together.

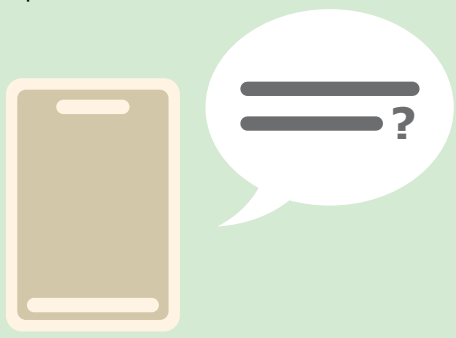
6

Reflection on landscape and area process (± 2 hours)

Start by addressing the Agricultural-ecological network. It is advisable to cover all topics in the first meeting to identify key areas of focus in the landscape. The specific questions to discuss may vary depending on the current stage of the landscape process. If it becomes clear that a question has already been addressed in the context of another discussion or is no longer relevant, you, as the facilitator, may choose to skip it. The notetaker will document the key discussion points in a report and update the action agenda accordingly.

For each question, you can proceed as follows:

1 Begin by asking a participant to read the question aloud from the card.



2 Turn the card over to provide further explanation.

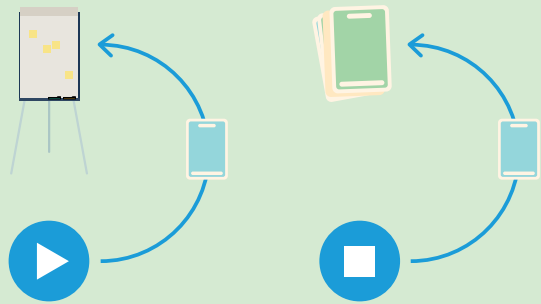


3 Engage the group in a discussion for each question. Focus not on 'right' or 'wrong' answers, but on reflection: how are we addressing this aspect, and are we collectively satisfied? The aim is to foster a constructive dialogue.



4 As a group, assess each card: is action required or not?

- If action is required, instruct the notetaker to place the card on top of or next to the action agenda.
- If no action is required, place the card in a discard pile on the table.
- Ensure you monitor your progress on the 'game board.'



7 Creating an action agenda (20 min)

For each card that has been added to the action agenda, clarify the following:

What: What specific action is required? Additionally, consider what we aim to achieve and why. The extra details on the back of the card can assist in this.

Who: Who are the individuals and/or organizations responsible for executing this action?

When: What is the timeline for achieving results?

8 Concluding and evaluating (20 min)

- As the workshop concludes, invite each participant to share their reflections on the session: What emotions are you taking home with you?
- Express gratitude to everyone for their participation and inform them that a summary, including the agreements and meeting minutes, will be shared.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting to review the progress on the action agenda items.

Implementing the action agenda

9 Distributing and implementing the action agenda

Digitally document the agreements made during the workshop. Prepare a comprehensive workshop report and complete the action agenda template in a digital format for easy distribution. Once finalized, share the action agenda with all workshop participants. Ensure that the actions outlined in the agenda are implemented, and arrange necessary follow-up meetings to monitor progress and uphold agreements.



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Design: Stainless Media (Taco Zwaanswijk)
Illustrations: Xander Wiersma

10 Follow-up meetings

In follow-up meetings, assess the action agenda by discussing the progress made: Which actions have been completed, which can be removed from the agenda, and are there any new actions that need to be added? Review the questions previously set aside and decide whether they should be addressed due to recent developments. This process ensures that evaluation questions guide the creation of future meeting agendas, enabling continuous monitoring and adjustment of both the landscape and process.

Authors

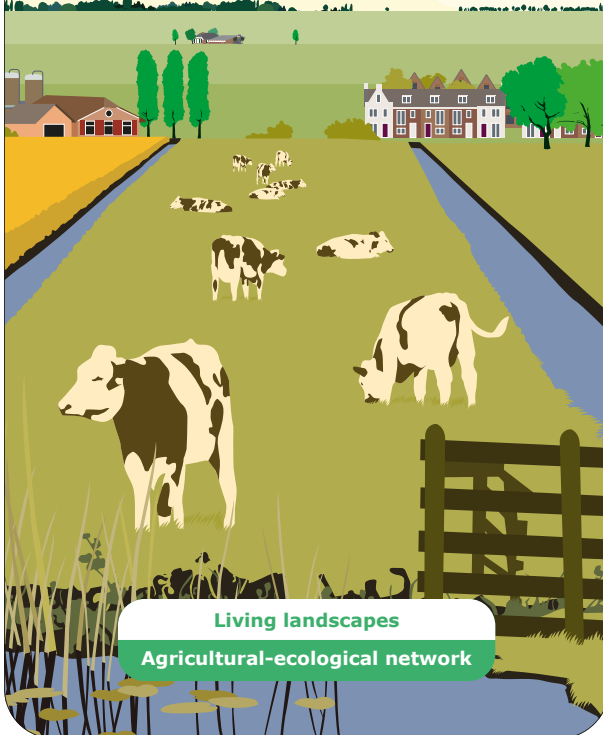
Isabella Selin-Norén, Ellen Bulten, Jurre Dekker, Emma Knol, Heleen van Kernebeek, Femke Meulman, Rolf Michels, Sabine van Rooij, Marianna Siegmund-Schultze, Barteld Vervelde, Marcel Vijn, Judith Westerink, Amy Wortel

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Living Landscape – tool for reflecting on landscape and area processes – for groups collaborating towards a sustainable landscape. Wageningen Research.

1

**What types of land use exist
and in what proportion?**



Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

1

**What types of land use exist
and in what proportion?**

Different types of land use have varying effects on landscape services (for example food production, pollination, water regulation and recreational opportunities) and landscape values (such as openness, beauty, and calmness). Examples of land use include agricultural (grassland/arable farming), semi-natural (field margins, species-rich grassland), natural (forest/ woodland/heath) or infrastructure/industry.

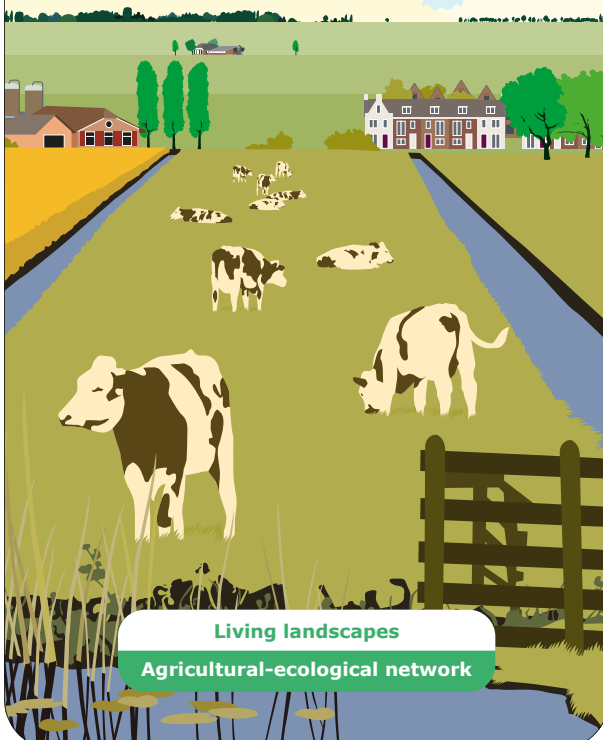
Determine which types of land use are present in the landscape and what the surface area ratio is between them.

Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

2

**Which species are characteristic
(keystone species) of the
desired biodiversity?**



Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

2

**Which species are characteristic
(keystone species) of the
desired biodiversity?**

The structure and quality of the landscape combined determine the opportunities for biodiversity.

Identify several species that are important and characteristic for the landscape. These species should be prioritized for conservation. The desired species may be derived from cultural history, the *Birds and Habitats Directive*, or can be selected based on the services and values they provide.

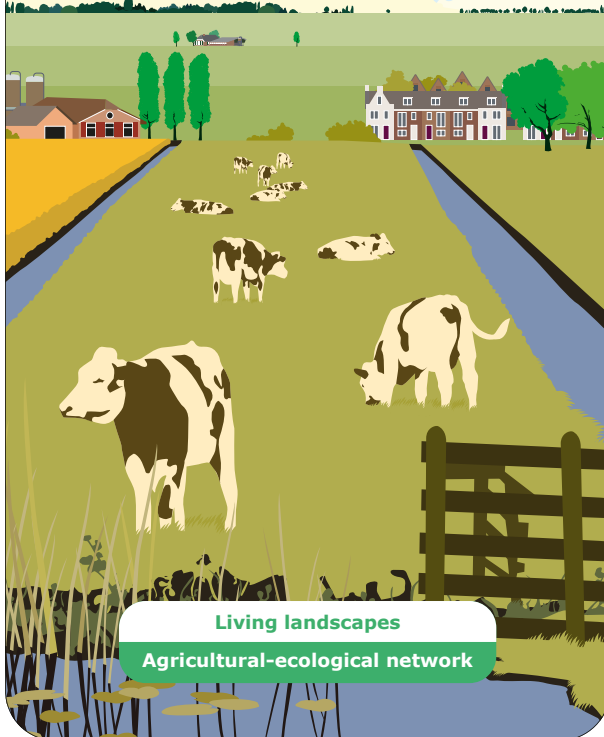
The goal is not to be exhaustive: the species represent ecosystems in which many more species occur.

Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

3

What is important for a high-quality landscape?



Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

3

What is important for a high-quality landscape?

There are different views on what constitutes a high-quality landscape. For some, it aligns with cultural history, while for others, quality is about providing as many services and values as possible.

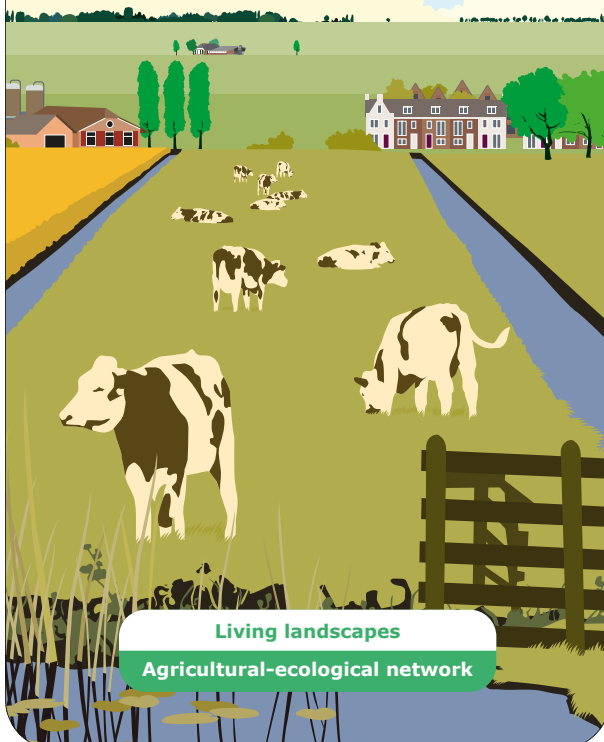
Together, consider which aspects are important for your landscape and then evaluate the current landscape against these aspects.

Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

4

To what extent are the (semi-)natural landscape features connected?



Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

4

To what extent are the (semi-)natural landscape features connected?

Many plants and animals benefit from a small-scale landscape with good connections between (semi-)natural areas.

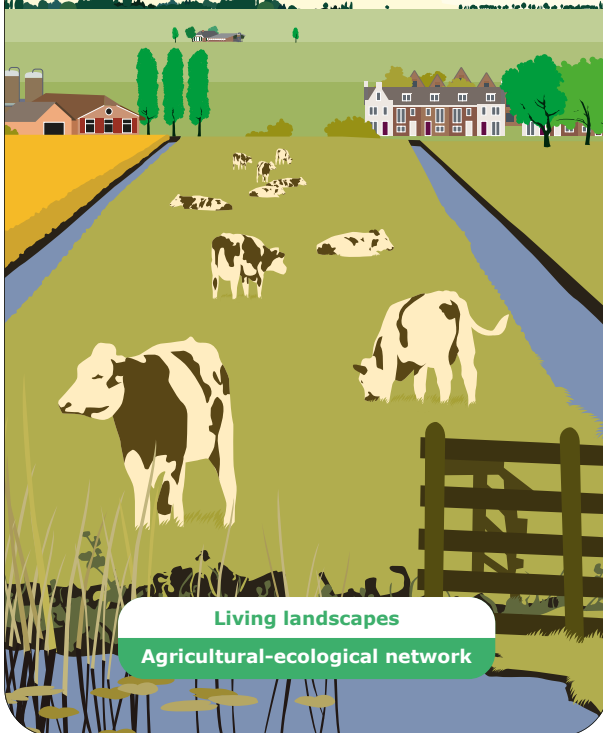
Determine whether there are many small or large agricultural plots or areas of nature present. Is agriculture or nature concentrated in one place in the landscape or rather spread out?

Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

5

Does the management of the landscape align with the quality identified in question 3?



Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

5

Does the management of the landscape align with the quality identified in question 3?

The way agricultural plots, semi-natural areas, road verges and yards are managed affects the quality of the environment. Consider activities such as fertilization, grazing, mowing, pruning and the use of crop protection products, and their effects on, for example, species richness and water quality.

Determine the effects of this management on the important aspects from question 3 using available monitoring data or expert experience.

Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

6

Are the desired species and their habitats present?



Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

6

Are the desired species and their habitats present?

To evaluate the state of the landscape, you need to know to what extent the desired species from question 2 are present.

Assess, based on available observation data or expert experience, the status of the desired biodiversity. Do the structure, quality, and management of the landscape meet the needs of these species?

If necessary, revise your answers to questions 1-4.

Living landscapes

Agricultural-ecological network

7

What do you consider to be the important values and services that the landscape provides?



Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

7

What do you consider to be the important values and services that the landscape provides?

Landscape values include values such as openness, beauty, and calmness.

Landscape services (also known as ecosystem services) include services such as food production, pollination, water regulation, and recreational activities.

Identify important values or services for people and organizations and consider when they are used. Also consider indirect users, such as villages downstream that depend on good water quality from your landscape.

Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

8

Which values and services do you feel are missing in the current landscape and why?



Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

8

Which values and services do you feel are missing in the current landscape and why?

Describe what you feel is missing in the landscape. Try to formulate this in terms of services, experiences, or values that you miss in the current landscape. Also, determine what changes would be needed in the landscape to achieve the desired values or services. Refer to your answers to questions 1-6 if necessary.

Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

9

To what extent do values and services also meet the needs of future generations?



Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

9

To what extent do values and services also meet the needs of future generations?

Due to changing preferences and needs over time, it is very likely that future generations will have different priorities than current generations (for example due to climate change). Also, consider people and organizations who are not present now but will possibly have interests in the future.

Determine to what extent the values and services are sufficient to meet the needs of future generations.

Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

10

Do different people and organizations have access to the values and services?



Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

10

Do different people and organizations have access to the values and services?

Identify who can and cannot access values and services and to what extent this is a problem. In the event of a shortage of values and services, it may be the case that not everyone can make use of them equally. Which people or organizations have less access to values and services in that case? Consider people dependent on public transport, barriers for people with disabilities, or exclusion due to private access to areas.

Assess who does and who does not have access to values and services and to what extent this is a problem.

Living landscapes

Landscape values and services

11

Who are part of your network?



Living landscapes

Social network

11

Who are part of your network?

A clear understanding of the network helps in answering the questions. Is it a diverse group with both producers and beneficiaries of landscape services? Both should be part of the social network or at least have access to it.

Describe the individual people and organizations involved in the process. Also, discuss the interests of nature and who represents these in the network.

Living landscapes

Social network

12

To what extent are the people or organizations in the network connected?



Living landscapes

Social network

12

To what extent are the people or organizations in the network connected?

Do people and organisations know how to find each other? Is there enough respect and trust for collaboration?

Assess together whether it is necessary to strengthen the connections in the network.

Living landscapes

Social network

13

Is there sufficient quality and capacity in the network?



Living landscapes

Social network

13

Is there sufficient quality and capacity in the network?

Is there enough quality (for example knowledge) and capacity (like time and commitment) in the network to advance your process in the area?

Determine whether there is enough quality and capacity in the network and which (new) people and organizations could bring these.

Living landscapes

Social network

14

Is your network open to new participants, and does everyone feel welcome(d)?



Living landscapes

Social network

14

Is your network open to new participants, and does everyone feel welcome(d)?

Open networks, where everyone feels welcome and new people can participate, allow for diverse participants, new perspectives and different values. Open networks are often more resilient. On the other hand, in closed networks where people already know and trust each other, it is easier to create common rules and further develop existing ideas.

Determine whether the amount of openness you currently have is appropriate for the phase of the area process you are in.

Living landscapes

Social network

15

How is newly acquired knowledge and information developed, collected, shared and applied?



Living landscapes

Social network

15

How is newly acquired knowledge and information developed, collected, shared and applied?

Learning capacity in the network is important to make good decisions and take action. This can be done by sharing experiences and new knowledge with each other and regularly reflecting on your own process.

Assess whether there is enough space for this in the network or whether it needs more attention.

Living landscapes

Landscape services and values

16

Has a shared vision been formulated collectively?



Living landscapes

Collective action

16

Has a shared vision been formulated collectively?

A shared vision is necessary to determine in which direction the landscape should develop and it is the essential basis for collaboration.

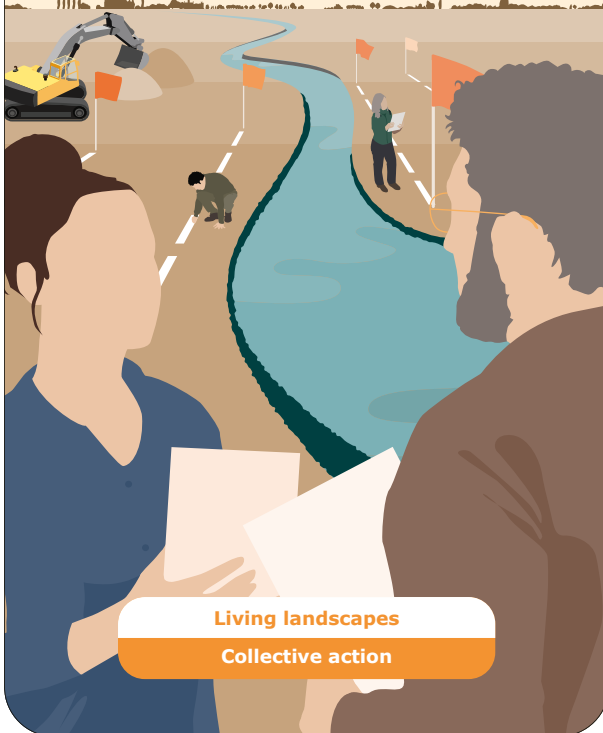
How would you summarize the answers to questions 1-15? What is the desired future for the landscape and what tasks need to be worked on together?

Living landscapes

Collective action

17

**What actions are needed
to realize the intended
shared vision?**



Living landscapes
Collective action

17

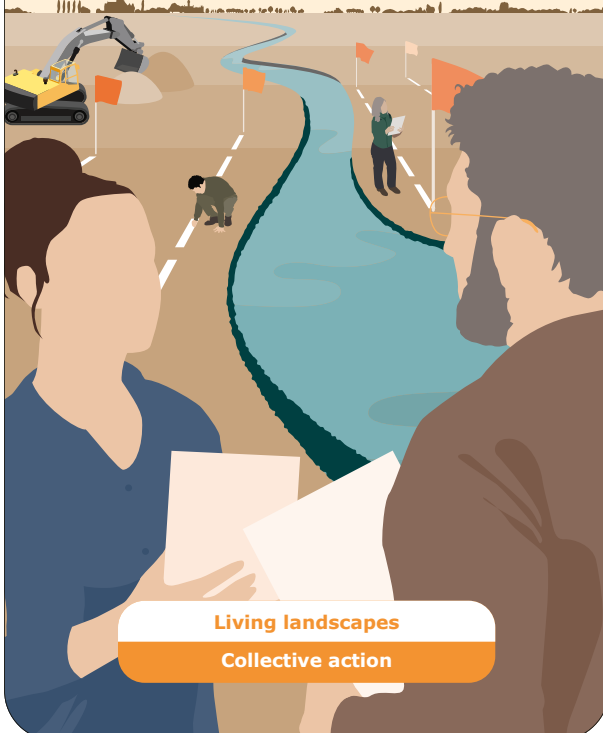
**What actions are needed
to realize the intended
shared vision?**

Think about what actions are needed to realise your vision. Draw up concrete actions for this; for example, in the form of an action list or a timeline and make this as spatially concrete as possible.

Living landscapes
Collective action

18

**Are the benefits and burdens of
the intended actions distributed
in a fair way?**



Living landscapes
Collective action

18

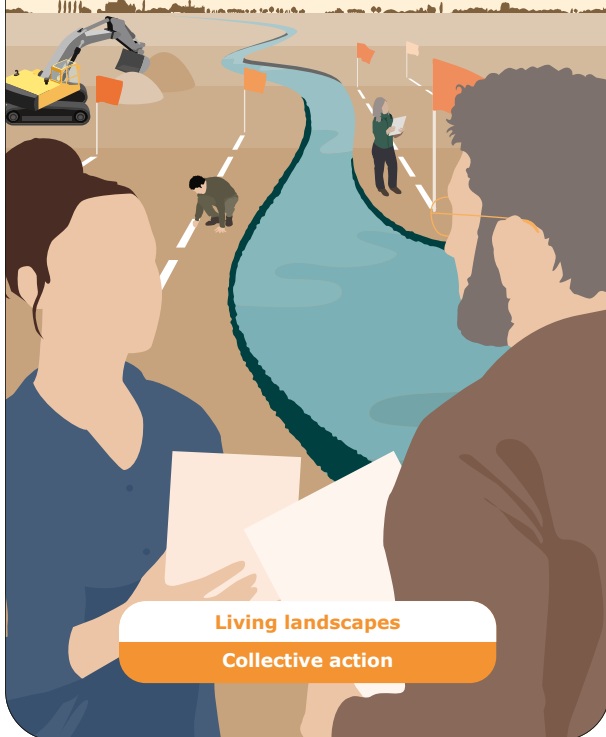
**Are the benefits and burdens of
the intended actions distributed
in a fair way?**

If the network wants more landscape services and values, benefits and burdens need to be distributed fairly. Discuss whether the providers need some form of payment to provide the desired services and values. Possible forms of payment include money, volunteer work, a 'license to produce', and 'exceptions in standing policy'.

Living landscapes
Collective action

19

**Are the necessary resources
for the organisation and
execution available?**



Living landscapes

Collective action

19

**Are the necessary resources
for the organisation and
execution available?**

To realise your vision, time, knowledge,
and a budget from the social network are
needed.

Are these available?

Living landscapes

Collective action

20

**Is decision-making
transparent and fair?**



Living landscapes

Collective action

20

**Is decision-making
transparent and fair?**

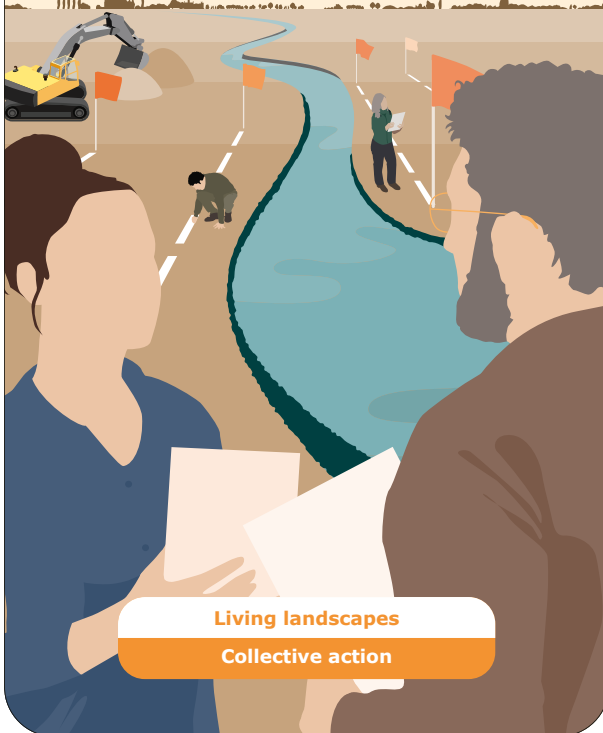
Do the people/organisations affected by
decision-making have sufficient access to
the decision-making process? Are there
clear agreements on how decisions are
made? Are there procedures for resolving
conflicts, such as a complaints committee?

Living landscapes

Collective action

21

How is progress in the network evaluated?



Living landscapes

Collective action

21

How is progress in the network evaluated?

In a collaborative process it is important that the vision and corresponding actions are evaluated. Then, if necessary, these can be revised.

Assess how your process is evaluated, what happens with the evaluation, and how you can learn from it.

Living landscapes

Collective action

22

What spatial developments present opportunities or threats?



Living landscapes

External factors

22

What spatial developments present opportunities or threats?

Spatial developments can influence the functioning of the landscape. These could be temporary changes that occur regularly or unexpectedly.

Regular events might include seasonal flooding of a river or annual (sports) events. Unexpected changes could be a forest fire. In the longer term, the effects of climate change, overgrazing, and urban expansion can play a role.

To what extent do spatial developments raise opportunities or threats to the development of your landscape? How do you respond to these?

Living landscapes

External factors

23

What political developments, policies, and regulations raise opportunities or threats?



Living landscapes

External factors

23

What political developments, policies, and regulations raise opportunities or threats?

Changes in policy, laws, regulations and political developments can influence the functioning of the landscape.

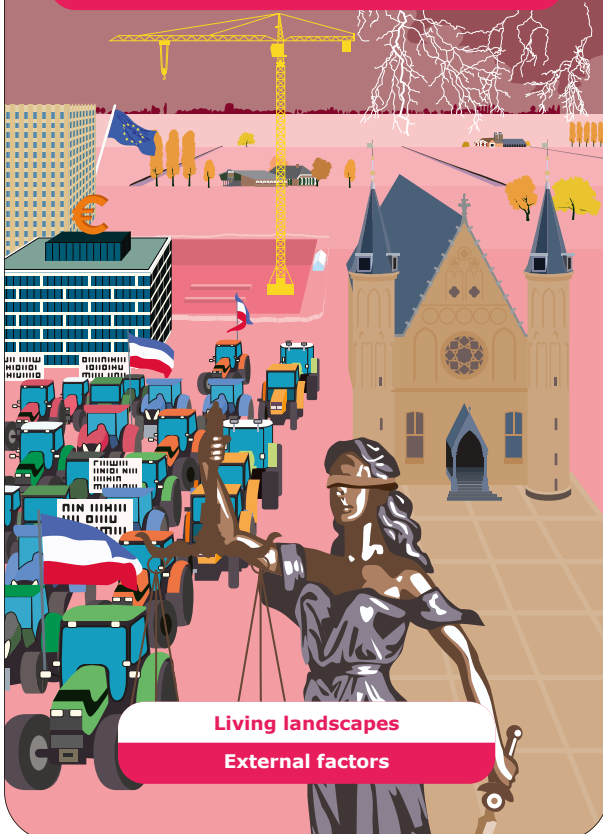
To what extent do political developments, policies, and regulations raise opportunities or threats to the development of your landscape? How do you respond to these?

Living landscapes

External factors

24

What economic factors raise opportunities or threats?



Living landscapes

External factors

24

What economic factors raise opportunities or threats?

Economic factors can influence the functioning of the landscape. Consider the availability of resources such as labour, subsidies, and (external) financing, or the influence of the global market on prices and farmers' business models.

What economic factors raise threats or opportunities for the development of your landscape? How do you respond to these?

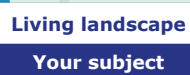
Living landscapes

External factors

[illegible]

Living landscape

Your subject



[illegible]

Living landscape

Living Landscape

Method for reflection on landscape and area processes

For groups collaborating on a future-proof landscape

Action agenda

Question	What <i>Description of action</i>	Who <i>Responsible</i>	When <i>Optional deadline</i>
1			
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