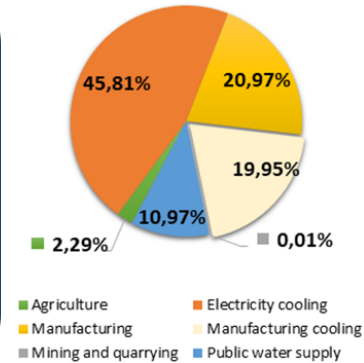
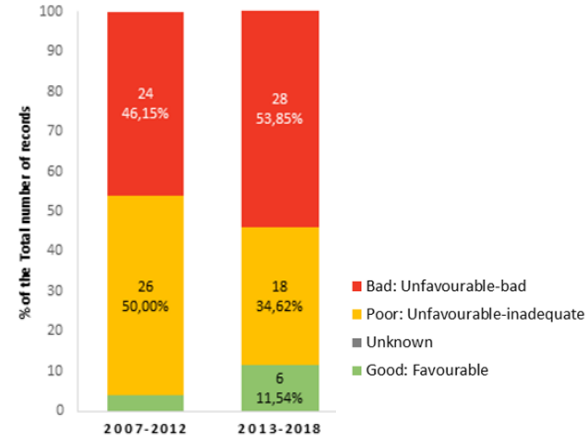




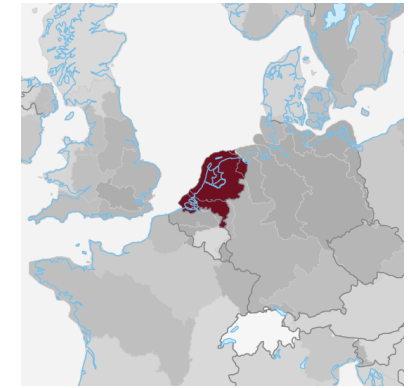
# of inhabitants **17.6 million**  
Surface area **34 188 km<sup>2</sup>**  
GDP per capita **130 pps [1]**  
Significant bodies of water (RBDs) **Rhine; Meuse; Scheldt; Ems**  
Polity **decentralized unitary state**  
Layers of government **central government; 12 provinces; 355 municipalities**  
Legislative powers at the sub-national level **No**  
Decentralisation index **1.8 (11 out of 27) [2]**  
Water Exploitation Index plus (WEI+) **4.15% (2017) [3]**



Water abstraction per sector in The Netherlands - Source: EEA (2022)



Conservation status for habitats in 2007-2012 and 2013-2018 in The Netherlands - Source: EEA (2021)



Water bodies with less than good ecological status in The Netherlands - Source: EEA (2021)

**Main actors responsible for WEFE nexus relevant governance**

**NEXUS PILLARS**

**POLICY MAKING**

**POLICY EXECUTION**

**Water**

Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management

Rijkswaterstaat; provinces, regional water authorities; municipalities

**Energy**

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy

Netherlands Enterprise Agency; provinces; municipalities

**Food**

Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority; provinces

**Ecosystems**

Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority; provinces

**WEFE NEXUS PERSPECTIVE**

**CHALLENGES**

- Improve the coordinated implementation between water, marine and nature policies.
- Ensure the completion of the Natura 2000 network
- Improve the conservation status of habitats and species, in particular by addressing the pressures from agricultural activities and changes in water regimes
- Reinforce the Nitrate Action Programme and help farmers switch to more sustainable and less intensive production methods

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- The Netherlands' Recovery and Resilience Plan allocates nearly 1 billion euro to reduce nitrogen emissions through a subsidy scheme for the cessation of intensive pig farming and a comprehensive Nature Restoration scheme
- The Netherlands launched a biodiversity program in 2020 and strives to achieve 100% of the objectives of the Birds and Habitats Directives by 2050
- The 'Societal Natural Capital Programme' has been implemented to inspire and facilitate businesses in different economic sectors to account for natural capital impacts, dependencies and risks in their operations
- The Netherlands has a high level of expertise in ecosystem accounting and associated trend analysis.



More information on WEFE nexus governance in the EU

[1] EU purchasing power standard  
[2] <https://portal.cor.europa.eu/divisionpowers/Pages/Decentralization-Index.aspx>  
[3] The threshold for water scarcity is set at > 20%

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