

The Oostvaardersplassen Debate

A content analysis of the framing of the management of the Oostvaardersplassen by stakeholders in newspapers



Figure 1 Oostvaardersplassen (van der Wielen, n.d.)

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Abstract

There has been a lot of scientific and social debate about the rewilding of the Oostvaardersplassen. The idea behind the nature reserve is to let nature run its course without human intervention, in order to halt biodiversity loss and reverse land degradation. Perspectives on rewilding, and other management measures, differ between stakeholders. How stakeholders frame the management, especially in the media, strongly influences public opinion. Moreover, understanding the different perspectives can improve the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. Therefore, this study aims to provide insights into the different stakeholder perspectives on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen by analysing how it is framed in the media. A content analysis of a local newspaper was conducted to study the stakeholder perspectives. The management measures that the stakeholders mentioned, and the tone and emotions they expressed regarding these measures were coded for 80 articles published in 2010 or 2018. The analysis resulted in five frames, one for each stakeholder group: duty of care for the grazers (activists & NGOs); agricultural interests above rewilding experiment (locals); publicly approved management (politicians); wilderness without suffering (State Forest Service); and human-wildlife coexistence (scientists). Overall, the focus of the stakeholder statements was on passive management (rewilding), hunting management, expanding the Oostvaardersplassen and reactive shooting. In most cases, a positive tenor was expressed, but a negative tenor was also often present. Emotions regarding the management – such as compassion, aversion or anger – were mainly showed by activists & NGOs and locals. These insights into the stakeholder perspectives help to understand their opinion better, which makes it more feasible to form a compromise about the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. Implementing a consensual form of management will result in more support and success. If the nature reserve is well-managed, this will lead to an increase in biodiversity, and land restoration.

Keywords: rewilding, management, Oostvaardersplassen, stakeholders, media

Introduction

A long time ago, Europe was one large nature area, rich in species that could freely roam the continent. Nowadays, Europe is densely populated, and this has caused the species richness to decline (Vera, 2009). Most species that have not yet gone extinct, have largely disappeared from their natural habitats (Vera, 2009). Land degradation and loss in biodiversity are urgent global sustainability challenges that call for action, according to the United Nations (n.d.). Therefore, Sustainable Development Goal number 15 states the following vision: “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” (United Nations, n.d.).

A relatively new – and highly discussed – conservation strategy to restore land and biodiversity, is the rewilding of nature. Rewilding is a passive form of nature management that is used to bring back wildlife and naturally functioning ecosystems (Navarro & Pereira, 2015). It aims to re-establish ecological dynamics without much human intervention (Navarro & Pereira, 2015). Since rewilding is a rather new addition to conservation science, there is still quite a knowledge gap on the conceptualization and implementation (Bullock et al., 2019). This knowledge gap has led to a lot of debate about rewilding, both scientifically and socially. For instance, Jørgensen (2015) finds it alarming that rewilding results in the separation of nature and culture. In contrast, Prior and Ward (2016) reject Jørgensen’s point of view by stating that the rewilding of landscapes will be co-shaped by humans and non-humans. The lack of a clear definition of what rewilding entails and how it should be implemented causes a lack of understanding about the consequences of rewilding (Bullock et al., 2019; Jepson, 2016). This leads to a lot of confusion and debate within society about rewilding. A typical example of such a highly-debated rewilding experiment is the Oostvaardersplassen in the Netherlands (Prior & Ward, 2016).

The Oostvaardersplassen is a nature area that arose in 1968 when the South Flevoland polder was reclaimed from Lake IJssel (Vera, 2009). The nature reserve Oostvaardersplassen consists of ~6,000ha of open water, marshland, and wet and dry open grasslands (Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. b; Vera, 2009). Management of the Oostvaardersplassen came into the hands of State Forest Service (*Staatsbosbeheer*) in 1996 (Aarts, van Herzele, Ruysenaars & Steuten, 2005; Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. b). State Forest Service is an organisation that manages nature areas in The Netherlands. They aim to preserve these areas sustainably, and to (re)connect humans with nature (Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. d). State Forest Service used rewilding as their nature management strategy for the Oostvaardersplassen (Driessen & Lorimer, 2013): human influence on the nature reserve was minimalised and only permitted under certain circumstances (van der Plicht, 2018). Their goal was to sustainably increase biodiversity and restore naturally functioning ecosystems (Vera, 2009). To achieve this, the Greylag Geese, together with Heck cattle, Konik ponies, Red Deer, and a few other animal species, were left unhindered so that they could maintain the diversity of the Oostvaardersplassen without much human intervention, simply by grazing (Vera, 2009; Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. e). This ensured varied vegetation and a wide range of wild plant and animal species (Vera, 2000; Duffy, 2003).

For a while, this strategy seemed to be successful. However, this passive way of managing the Oostvaardersplassen also had its downsides. Around 2004 the first heated discussions about the management of the Oostvaardersplassen started when a lot of the large herbivores died over winter (Aarts et al., 2005). Because of the harsh conditions during the winter of 2004, there was not enough food available in the nature reserve for all the animals to survive (van der Plicht, 2018; Vera, 2009). The fences around the Oostvaardersplassen also prevented the herbivores from migrating to areas where there was still food available (Vera, 2009). Other harsh winters followed in 2009, 2010 and 2018 (Aarts et al., 2005; van der Plicht, 2018). State Forest Service also practised reactive management (Vera, 2009). This meant that the organisation would only intervene out of animal welfare considerations by shooting a starving animal when its behaviour indicated that it was on the edge of dying and there was

no chance of survival anymore (Vera, 2009). The reason for this reactive management was that intervention was usually only needed at the end of winter, so the number of animals was still mainly regulated naturally by the food available (Vera, 2009), in line with the idea of rewilding. This reactive management fuelled the public commotion about the reserve even further (Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. c), indicating a change of management was needed. Therefore, the province of Flevoland became responsible for all policy decisions regarding the Oostvaardersplassen in 2016; State Forest Service now only executes the decisions made by the province (Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. a, c). The new management plan of the province will be made public in 2019 and will focus more on the recreational purpose of the nature reserve (Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. a). Furthermore, hands-on, hunting management instead of reactive management is now practised by bringing back the number of large herbivores to 1,100 (1,830 Red Deer will be shot, and 160 Konik ponies are moved elsewhere), so that there is more room for diversity, and deaths during the winter months will become less likely (Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. c).

Even though the management of the Oostvaardersplassen changed, there is still a lot of emotionally charged debate about it. The media attention for this topic increased rapidly, especially since the winter of 2010 and the winter of 2018 (based on the yearly number of published newspaper articles found in the database LexisNexis). Several stakeholders express their (both professional and personal) opinions through media channels. What the media report, influences the opinion of the public greatly, as media are often one of the main sources of information (Carter, Killion, Lindquist & Melvin, 2019). Media also play a role in setting the (political) agenda (Buijs, Langers, Mattijssen, Steingröver & Westerink, 2013). Therefore, the way different stakeholders speak about the Oostvaardersplassen in the media affects the course of the ongoing debate and influences future management choices. Thus, researching how the management of the Oostvaardersplassen is framed in the media is of importance to understand the way in which public opinion is formed. The success of the management of the Oostvaardersplassen largely depends on this. Analysing how stakeholders frame the management in the media also improves the understanding of the perspectives of the stakeholders, which could lead to a mutual understanding (Boerboom, van den Born, Fliervoet, Heel & Lenders, 2017). An increased overall understanding would consequently result in improved debate on different management choices that need to be made (Boerboom et al., 2017).

As of this moment, little literature can be found on the stakeholder framing of the management of the Oostvaardersplassen in the media. Research has been done on the link between social media and people's attitudes towards the Oostvaardersplassen (Bremas, Mattijssen & Stevens, 2018), and on the content of social media accounts of stakeholders and the content of semi-structured interviews (Aarts et al., 2005). However, there is a lack of research on other media than social media, such as newspapers. Therefore, this research aims to gain insights into different stakeholder perspectives on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen through an in-depth content analysis of newspaper articles. To achieve this, the following research question is formulated: "How is the management of the Oostvaardersplassen being framed by stakeholders in newspapers in 2010 and 2018?". For a more accurate content analysis, the following secondary research questions are formulated: "Which topics are discussed regarding the management of the Oostvaardersplassen by the different stakeholders?", and "What tone and which emotions are represented by the different stakeholders?".

In the following chapter, a theoretical background of the media influence on public opinion and key concepts of this research are elaborated upon, and a conceptual framework is given to visualise the relations between the research concepts. In the chapter after that, the method that was used is explained and justified, and a coding-scheme is presented. The third chapter presents the results of the content analysis, which are then discussed in the second to last chapter, next to the limitations and implications of the research. The last chapter concludes the research and answers the research questions briefly.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Theory

Media Influence

The social relevance of this research is based on the influence that the media have on public opinion and the (political and public) agenda setting. Media draw the public's attention to a topic and indicate how much importance should be attached to this topic by placing a certain amount of emphasis on it (McCombs, 2002, 2018). According to Lippmann (1922), "the news media are a primary source of those pictures in our heads about the larger world of public affairs" (p. 29). Our knowledge of the world is thus, to a great extent, based on what the media show us (McCombs, 2002, 2018).

The prominent topics on the media agenda also become the focus of the public (McCombs, 2002, 2018). Research of McCombs (2002) states that "the agenda-setting influence of the news media is not limited to this initial step of focusing public attention on a particular topic – the media also influence the next step in the communication process, our understanding and perspective on the topics in the news" (p. 5). Moreover, the specific content of a media message such as the tone of a news article, influences public opinion and the public's attitude towards the topic (McCombs, 2002). How a topic is portrayed in the media affects how it is perceived and how people feel about the topic (Döveling, Konijn & von Scheve, 2002). The more emotional a news message is, the more it evokes feelings by the readers (Schramm & Writh, 2005).

Concepts

The terms below are key concepts for this research. They are of importance for the content analysis and are therefore shortly defined in the following paragraphs.

Management

Management in a broad and general sense is defined as "the process of dealing with or controlling things or people" ("Management," n.d.). Managing something entails "to plan, organize, direct and control ... for obtaining common objectives or goals" (Nature of management, n.d., p. 2). In the case of the Oostvaardersplassen, the following management strategies are especially relevant: passive management (rewilding), reactive management, and hunting management (*afschotbeheer*).

Rewilding, also referred to as passive management, is defined "by the strategies that aim at allowing natural processes to regain dominance in landscapes rather than by some fixed set of end goals for how the landscape and biodiversity should look like" (Navarro & Pereira, 2015, p. vi). It promotes the return of wildlife and is the "passive management of ecological succession with the goal of restoring natural ecosystem processes and reducing human control of landscapes" (Navarro & Pereira, 2015, p. 10). Although passive management implies no management or little human control, interventions may be needed in early restoration stages (Navarro & Pereira, 2015).

Reactive management is also a hands-off form of management. In the case of the Oostvaardersplassen, it entails "a management policy where individuals that are below condition thresholds determined by clear and publicly accepted welfare criteria are culled on a daily basis to minimize suffering" (International Committee on the Management of large herbivores in the Oostvaardersplassen [ICMO], 2006, p. 8). Meaning that "if an animal's behaviour indicates that its death is impending, it is shot" (Vera, 2009, p. 35). So, when reactive management is practised, there is almost no human intervention unless the welfare of an animal is at stake.

Hunting management means that several large herbivores at the Oostvaardersplassen will be culled pre-emptive, so before winter takes its toll on the health of the animals. The goal of this preventive form of management is to balance the number of large herbivores so that

the natural habitat of plants and other animal species is preserved, and to prevent animals from suffering from a lack of food available (Staatsbosbeheer, n.d. c).

Media

Media are generally defined as “the main means of mass communication regarded collectively” (“Media,” n.d.). Media, in this research, is from now on referring to news media in the form of (daily) newspapers.

Stakeholders

A stakeholder is “a person with an interest or concern in something” (“Stakeholder,” n.d.). Whether someone is considered a stakeholder or not, is not necessarily based on their degree of impact on the managed entity (McGrath & Whitty, 2017) (in this case, the Oostvaardersplassen). A stakeholder can also be an actor that is simply interested in the management of the entity (McGrath & Whitty, 2017). In this research, the represented stakeholders contain only the stakeholders who actively participated in the media debate. If there are other stakeholders, they have been left out due to their lack of participation in the media and thus their irrelevance for answering the research questions.

Tenor

The tenor of an article is the “general sentiment orientation” (Vogel, 2018, p.4). It influences the perception of the readers (Vogel, 2018). The main tenor of an article can be neutral (objective choice of words and little use of sympathy or antipathy awakening adjectives), positive (one-sided presentation of the facts using sympathy awakening adjectives) or negative (one-sided presentation of the facts using antipathy awakening adjectives) (Vogel, 2018).

Emotional Content

There is no scientific consensus on how the concept of emotion should be defined (Reisenzein, 2007). The working definition of emotion consists of a list of emotions. This list does not explain what the concept means, but it provides a useful overview of what it includes. An exact and universal definition is not necessarily needed for meaningful research – a list of emotions is often enough (Reisenzein, 2007).

According to Vogel (2018), emotional content can be defined as follows: “The term emotional content refers to the characterization of emotions in texts” (p. 4). The emotional content of an article can therefore only capture part of the emotionally charged message (Vogel, 2018). Articles are often tainted by the emotional perspective of the journalist. The emotional content in news articles is thus not only based on the emotions that the stakeholder experiences towards the management of the Oostvaardersplassen, it is also partly influenced by the perspective of the journalist. Note that only emotional content concerning the management (or lack thereof) of the Oostvaardersplassen is taken into account in the content analysis.

Framing

Framing, in this research, is defined as how stakeholders perceive and communicate about the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. According to Kuypers (2009), frames make some aspects stand out more because of the emphasis that is placed on those aspects: “Framing can be understood as taking some aspects of our reality and making them more accessible than other aspects” (p. 181). The tenor and the emotional content are part of how the management of the Oostvaardersplassen is framed in the media.

Conceptual Framework

The stakeholders express their perspectives on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen through the media (figure 2). How these perspectives come across largely depends on the tenor and the emotional content presented in the article, which together form the framing of

the perspective – the way in which the perspective is communicated. In turn, the presentation of the perspectives on the management in the media has an impact on how the stakeholders feel about the management. This last relation will not explicitly be analysed in this research, just as the effect of the tenor and the emotional content on framing, hence the striped arrows.

There are several more relations between the concepts, such as the indirect influence stakeholders have on management decisions by voicing their opinion through the media, and the direct influence some stakeholders have on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen by participating in decision-making and drawing up policies. However, these relations are not visualised in the conceptual framework. Only the most relevant relations for this research are included in order to maintain a clear overview.

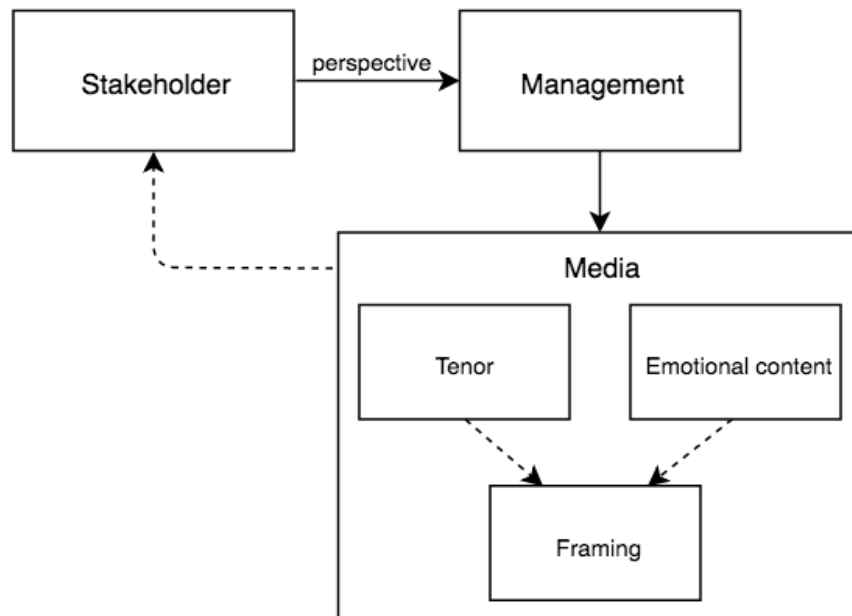


Figure 2 Conceptual framework of the presentation of stakeholder perspectives on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen in the media

Methods

Content Analysis

To answer the research questions, a qualitative content analysis was conducted by systematically evaluating texts from newspaper articles. A content analysis is “an approach to the analysis of documents and texts (which may be printed or visual) that seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner” (Bryman, 2012, p. 289). In this research, some code categories were predetermined, and other code categories emerged whilst (re-)reading the news articles (table 1). The predetermined categories consisted of deductive codes which were mostly based on categories used in similar scientific studies by Vogel (2018), Stoepel (2006), Wilms (1994), and Bouwmans and Runhaar (2016). The other codes that did not fit into the predetermined categories were developed by inductive building processes.

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Subcategories</i>	<i>References</i>
Time of publication	January 2010, February 2010, March 2010, April 2010, May 2010, June 2010, July 2010, August 2010, September 2010, October 2010, November 2010, December 2010, January 2018, February 2018, March 2018, April 2018, May 2018, June 2018, July 2018, August 2018, September 2018, October 2018, November 2018, December 2018	Stoepel, 2006; Vogel, 2018
Length of the article	One or two paragraphs, three to five paragraphs, more than five paragraphs	Stoepel, 2006; Vogel, 2018
Stakeholder	State Forest Service, scientist, local, politician, activist & NGO	Vogel, 2018
Management	Passive management, reactive management, reactive shooting, hunting management, fences, feeding, shelter, (re)move grazers*, (re)move grazers illegally*, contraception*, expanding area (during winter)*, illegal feeding*	Vogel, 2018
Tenor	Neutral, positive, negative	Bouwmans & Runhaar, 2016; Stoepel, 2006; Vogel, 2018
Emotional content	Joy, compassion, aversion, anger, sadness, fear, hope*	Wilms, 1994; Vogel, 2018

Table 1 Coding scheme of the code categories; the codes marked by an asterisk are the inductive codes that emerged from the content analysis

Most categories and subcategories were straightforward since they were hard facts, such as the time of publication, the length of the article, the stakeholders, and the management measures. The tenor of the article was less unambiguous, as it was difficult to separate from the subjective assessment of the coder. This was also indicated by Vogel (2018). The subcategories of the category ‘emotional content’ were based on the categories used in similar studies, on the portrayal of human-wildlife interactions with wolves in the media (Vogel, 2018; Wilms, 1994). Some of the categories from this study were excluded because they were less relevant for the Oostvaardersplassen. The emotional content subcategories require some

explanation. Therefore, a few examples of emotions that were paired with the subcategories are given below. In addition, an overview of examples of quotations that were coded under the categories 'management', 'tenor' and 'emotional content' are given in the appendix (page 25) to clarify how the subcategories were coded.

The subcategory 'joy' implied the expression of emotions such as enthusiasm and happiness when it came to the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. 'Compassion' entailed emotions such as sympathy and affection towards the animals in the nature reserve. 'Aversion' resulted from exceeding norms (Vogel, 2018), and was expressed by either curious affection, aggression, or fear regarding the management. Revulsion and disgust were also emotions associated with aversion. 'Anger' towards the management was shown by the expression of frustration or hatred. However, frustration was also an expression of 'sadness', together with emotions such as powerlessness and sorrow. 'Fear' was mainly expressed by panic and shock. 'Hope' had to do with expectations and desirability, such as a positive projection of something in the future (Vogel, 2018).

Newspaper Articles

The database LexisNexis was used to collect press articles published from the 1st of January to the 31st of December of 2010, and the 1st of January to the 31st of December of 2018. The years 2010 and 2018 were chosen because these were the years during which the most recent winterkills (*wintersterftes*) occurred, and because of the increased overall media attention for the Oostvaardersplassen in those years (Aarts et al., 2005; van der Plicht, 2018).

The collected newspaper articles of which the content was analysed, were written and published by De Stentor/Dagblad Flevoland and De Stentor. Both newspapers were part of the same paper. In 2010, the paper was more regionally focused and called De Stentor/Dagblad Flevoland, the name later changed to De Stentor and became less regional, now focussing on the provinces of Flevoland, Gelderland, and Overijssel. The articles published in 2018 were all under the new name, the ones published in 2010 were under the old name. Not only was this specific newspaper chosen because it was the local paper of Flevoland and it was thus likely to represent at least two of the important stakeholders: locals and State Forest Service, it was also chosen because it had published the most articles on the Oostvaardersplassen. From these papers, the most relevant news articles (according to the algorithm of LexisNexis) that addressed the management of the Oostvaardersplassen were collected. Articles addressing other topics regarding the Oostvaardersplassen, such as recreation, and articles with almost the same content were left out. This resulted in 20 selected articles out of the 193 articles that were published in 2010, and 60 articles out of 296 articles published in 2018. Only the paragraphs of the articles dealing with the management were included in the analysis. NVivo was then used to facilitate the content analysis.

Justification

One of the reasons that content analysis was chosen as the research method, was that this method made longitudinal research possible (Bouwman & Runhaar, 2016). Using this method meant that the stakeholder perspectives from 2010 and 2018 could be combined, so that the perspectives could be analysed over time. Another reason is that newspaper articles were easily accessible and analysing their content was less time consuming than interviewing all stakeholders. Therefore, a larger sample could be analysed within the time frame of this research.

Reliability, Replicability and Validity

There has been some discussion about the relevance of reliability, replicability and validity for qualitative research. These criteria are often more applicable to quantitative research. However, in qualitative research, it is also possible to implement reliability measures to increase consistency (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, after the first read, a second coding turn was conducted "to control, revise and confirm the first coding process where necessary" (Vogel, 2018, p. 6). This test-retest method ensured a consistent measurement of the concepts, and

so increased the (intra-coder) reliability of the research (Bryman, 2012). Inter-coder reliability was not possible to establish in this research due to time constraints and budget limitations.

Replicability is also not very common in social research (Bryman, 2012). However, to make the research replicable by someone else, every step of conducting the content analysis and developing additional code categories was documented. By doing this, and by using a coding scheme, the replicability increased (Bryman, 2012). These replication measures resulted in a lot of transparency, which made the content analysis not only replicable but also a rather objective qualitative method of analysis (Bryman, 2012).

Validity questions if the measures represent the concepts they are supposed to be measuring (Bryman, 2012). In this case, validity questioned if the code categories measured the concepts that were defined in the conceptual framework. Due to the limitations of this research, it was difficult to establish validity. However, the code categories were reviewed by fellow students to see if they were interpreted in the same way. External validity was not possible to establish in this qualitative research because of the relatively small sample size (Bryman, 2012).

Practical Issues

There were a few practical issues whilst conducting the content analysis. It was for instance, according to Bryman (2012, p. 306), “almost impossible to devise coding procedures that do not entail some interpretation on the part of the coders. Coders must draw upon their everyday knowledge as participants in a common culture in order to be able to code the material with which they are confronted”. A review of the codes was conducted by other students, some codes were retrieved from similar studies, and all articles were re-coded to minimize the influence of the personal bias of the coder.

Another practical issue for this research was that the content of the news articles might have been influenced by the perspective of the journalist. The journalist might have used slightly different wording than the stakeholder him- or herself. This could have affected how the tenor or the emotions in the articles were coded and thus how the stakeholder perspectives were perceived. Even though the findings consisted of ‘soft data’, they provided insights into the stakeholder perspectives (Stoepel, 2006).

Furthermore, all stakeholder quotations presented in this research were translated from Dutch to English, which may have resulted in a slight difference in meaning from the source. However, this has not influenced the content analysis since the analysis was conducted in Dutch, by a native speaker. Therefore, there was no language barrier that could have influenced the coding of words or text segments.

Results

The content analysis resulted in insights into the different ways in which stakeholders perceive the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. The general results are first addressed in this chapter, such as the stakeholders that were found in the articles, the length and content of the articles, and the overall tenor and emotional content of the articles. The second part of this chapter addresses the stakeholder frames that resulted from the content analysis.

Stakeholders

In the articles, a broad range of stakeholders was found. Activists and NGOs combined presented their perspective on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen 52 times in 40 different articles, almost all of them published in 2018. Especially the opinion of the spokeswoman of the action group *Dieren bijvoeren Oostvaardersplassen*, Maacha Vrolijk, is brought forward in the articles. Furthermore, foundations such as *Stichting Welzijn Grote Grazers*, *Stichting Cynthia en Annemieke*, *Code Rood*, and a few other animal welfare foundations presented their perspectives through the media. Protesters not belonging to a specific action group were rarely found. Bianca Bolognese, the spokeswoman for *Pro-Oostvaardersplassen*, was the only activist voicing a positive view on the Oostvaardersplassen. Few locals presented their perspective on the management through the media; only 11 references were found in 11 different articles. The represented locals mainly consisted of farmers and unknown, concerned citizens. Politicians were mentioned 56 times in 39 different articles. The province of Flevoland is by far mentioned the most, followed by the State Secretary for Nature, Henk Bleker. Other politicians that were found in the articles existed of political parties from the House of Representatives, such as GroenLinks, PVV, SGP, PvdD, PvdA, VVD and CDA. State Forest Service was referred to 27 times in 22 different articles. Most references mentioned the organisation as a whole or mentioned anonymous foresters. However, forester Hans-Erik Kuypers was mentioned four times, and spokeswoman Joke Bijl and director Chris Kalden were mentioned two times each. Scientists were mentioned 43 times in 35 different articles. Commission Gabor was mentioned relatively often in 2010, whilst commission Van Geel was the most mentioned group of scientists in 2018. Furthermore, scientists such as individual biologists, ecologists, veterinarians and environmental philosophers were mentioned. In summary, the stakeholders that voiced their take on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen the most were the politicians and the activists & NGOs, followed by the scientists and State Forest Service. The local citizens' perspective was represented the least in the newspaper articles.

Newspaper Articles

Of all the analysed articles, 12 were only one or two paragraph(s) long, 26 consisted of three to five paragraphs, but most articles (42) were more than five paragraphs. More than half of the articles (16) from 2010 were published in either November or December. The publication dates of the articles from 2018 were more evenly spread out over the year, with a slight increase in March (11 articles) and April (13 articles). In November 2010, commission Gabor published their report on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. The report of commission Van Geel was published in April 2018. The articles from 2010 mainly focused on reactive shooting and expanding the Oostvaardersplassen (especially during the winter months), which was also the focus of the report by commission Gabor (International Commission on Management of the Oostvaardersplassen [ICMO2], 2010). In 2018, the emphasis of the newspaper articles was on hunting management and again on expanding the area, but this time year-round. These topics are in line with the content of the report by Van Geel (*Externe Begeleidingscommissie beheer Oostvaardersplassen*, 2018). Passive management was a key topic in both years. Noteworthy was the increase in articles about protests and the activist perspective in 2018.

Tenor

In figure 3 and 4, the relative use of the different tenors and emotional content per stakeholder, for all the management measures together, is visualised. A negative tenor was found in 55% of the tenor-coded references for the locals (figure 3). For the activists & NGOs, this was 43%, followed by 40% for the politicians, 38% for the scientists, and 36% for State Forest Service. The activists & NGOs expressed a positive tenor 57% of the time; scientists expressed this 55% of the time, followed by politicians with 53%, and State Forest Service with 51%. The perspective of the locals was the only one with less than half of the references positive (36%). A neutral tenor was found the least. State Forest Service showed the most neutral attitude regarding the overall management of the Oostvaardersplassen with 13%, followed by the locals with 9%. For both the politicians and scientists, this was 7%. Activists & NGOs expressed no neutral tenor at all. Overall, in all articles was a clear tenor present in the statements made regarding the management.

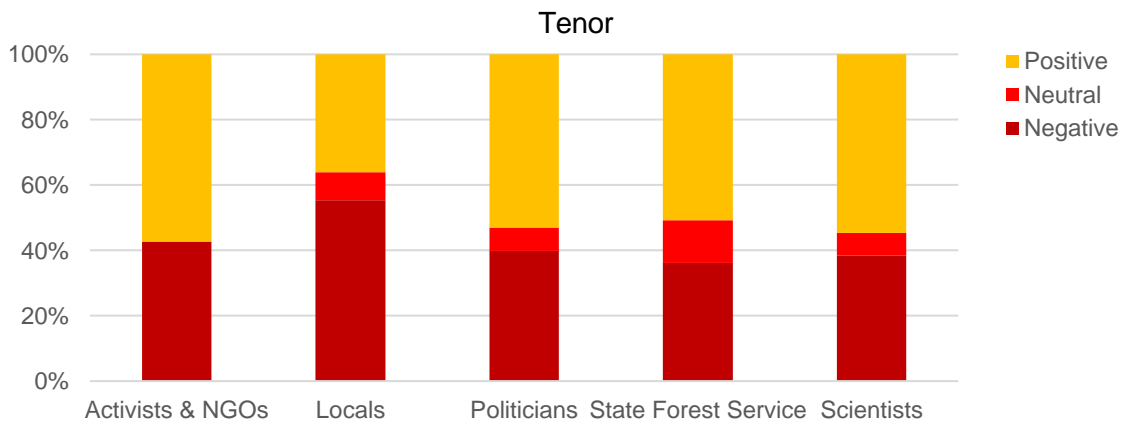


Figure 3 Percentage per tenor expressed by stakeholders regarding the management of the Oostvaardersplassen

Emotional Content

Emotional content was not in every article clearly present. Activists & NGOs and locals used by far the most emotional content whilst expressing their perspectives (figure 5 and 6). Moreover, the emotional content of the stakeholder perspectives differed quite a bit compared to their tenor (figure 4). Relatively, activists & NGOs expressed mainly aversion (37%) and anger (33%). Locals mainly spoke about the management with aversion (40%) as well, but also with compassion (27%). Politicians expressed four different emotions equally: aversion (25%), sadness (25%), compassion (25%), and joy (25%). State Forest Service mainly voiced their compassion (57%). Scientists expressed the most hope of all the stakeholders (26%). Furthermore, they mainly expressed compassion (26%) and joy (21%).

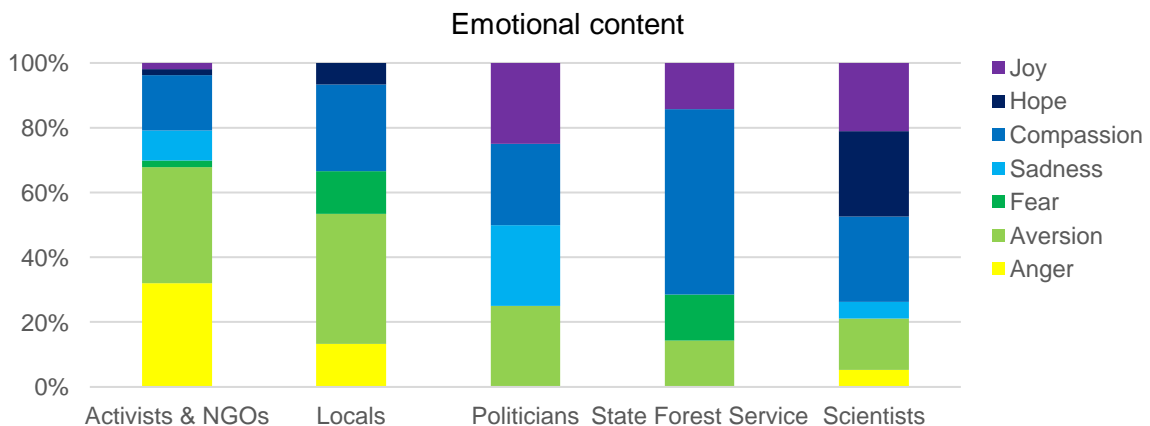


Figure 4 Percentage per emotional content expressed by stakeholders regarding the management of the Oostvaardersplassen

Stakeholder Frames

The content analysis resulted in five frames, one for each stakeholder, which are presented in narrative form in the paragraphs below. These frames provide insight into how each stakeholder perceives the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. Figure 5 to 9 visualise how often a stakeholder mentioned a certain type of management, and what the tenor and emotional content of their statements was.

Activists & NGOs: Duty of Care for the Grazers

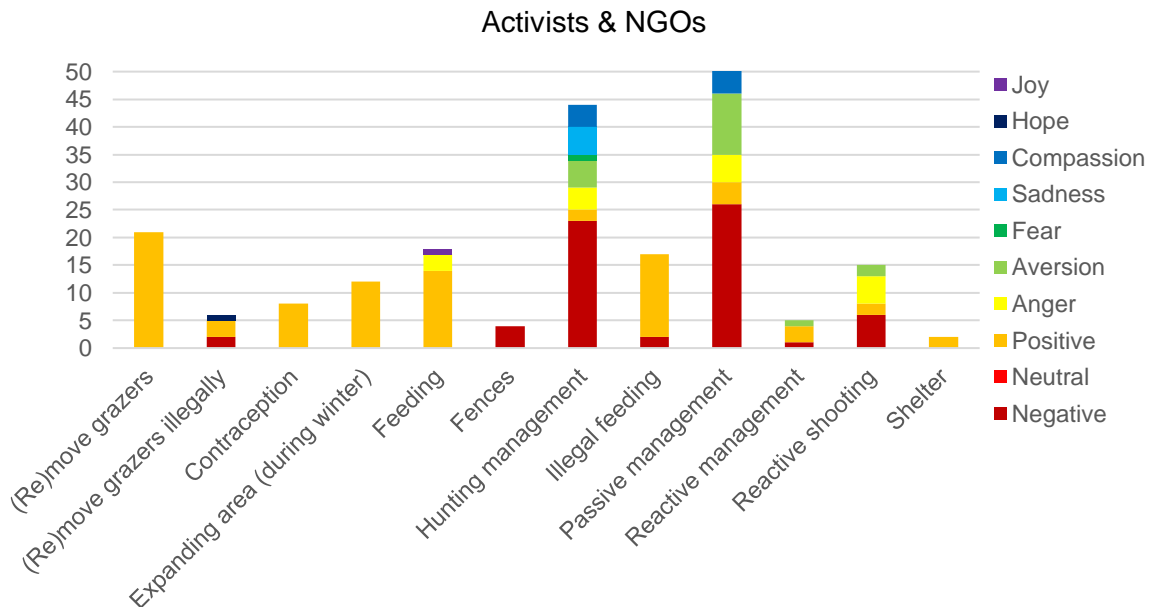


Figure 5 Frequency of the expressed tenor and emotional content by activists & NGOs regarding different management measures of the Oostvaardersplassen

Activists & NGOs are for the most part negative about passive management: “Where humans clearly interfered with nature, as is the case for the Oostvaardersplassen, there is a duty of care for all living things” (article 1-1-2018), and hunting management: “The ruling is actually very bizarre: shoot the animals, because otherwise they will die during the winter” (article 32-55-2018; figure 5). They have a positive attitude towards the removal of grazers, expanding the nature reserve, feeding and illegal feeding, and the use of contraceptives. *Stichting Cynthia en Annemieke* state for instance that they will not rest until “all grazers are removed from the Oostvaardersplassen” (article 30-53-2018). Another activist states that “the province and State Forest Service must feed the animals until there is enough food available again for them to survive” (article 40-71-2018).

The emotions anger, aversion, sadness and compassion are expressed the most, especially towards hunting management and passive management. Anger is also expressed towards the lack of feeding and reactive shooting. Animal activist Yvonne Bierman expresses her aversion towards the passive management of State Forest Service by saying: “I am completely done with State Forest Service and done with the foresters. How can they call themselves animal lovers?!” (article 2-2-2018). Other protesters show compassion by saying that they find the shooting of the Red Deer “unnecessary and sad” (article 51-94-2018).

In conclusion, the activists & NGOs plead for better care for the animals in the Oostvaardersplassen. They strongly feel that there should be a duty of care for the grazers.

Locals: Agricultural Interests Above Rewilding Experiment

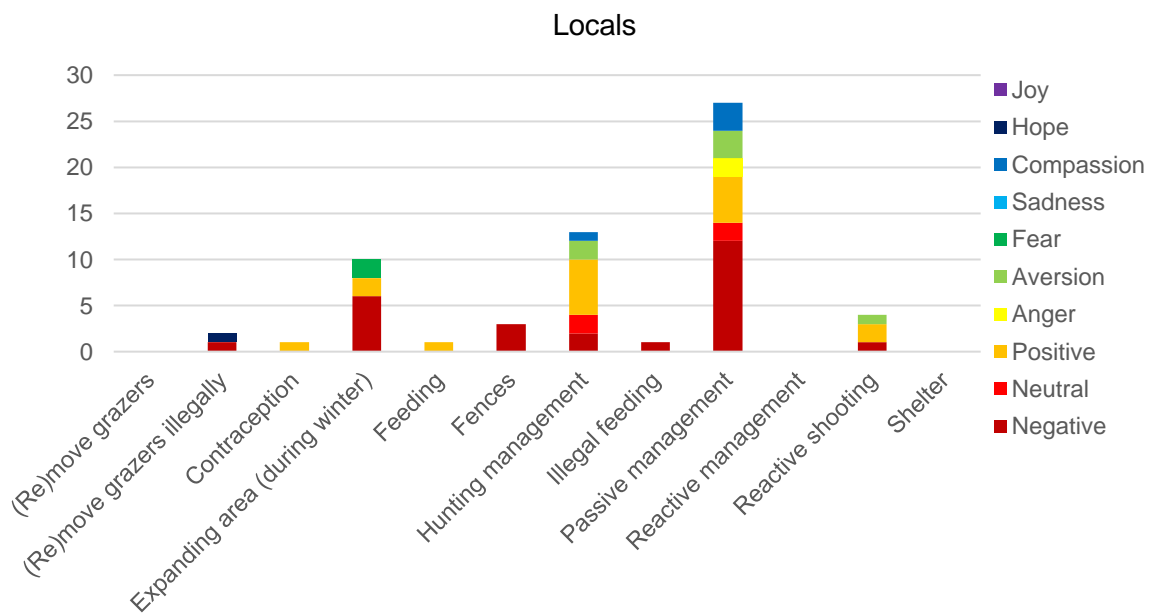


Figure 6 Frequency of the expressed tenor and emotional content by locals regarding different management measures of the Oostvaardersplassen

Locals were underrepresented in the media compared to the other stakeholders. They mostly express a negative tenor, especially regarding the expansion of the Oostvaardersplassen: “If such a connection became reality, I would have to shut down my business” (article 7-12-2018), and passive management: “The current state of the nature reserve between Lelystad and Almere is a disgrace, and it must change” (article 38-66-2018; figure 6). However, they also express themselves in a positive tenor towards passive management, and towards hunting management.

Anger, aversion and compassion are shown regarding passive management: “The feeling of compassion for the animals runs deep in the people” (article 1-1-2010). Moreover, aversion is expressed towards hunting management, and fear is expressed regarding the expansion of the area: “I am afraid that people do not realize what a connection with the Oostvaardersplassen would mean” (article 7-12-2018).

Overall, most locals care about the welfare of the animals in the Oostvaardersplassen. However, they find the success of their agricultural businesses more important than the nature reserve. They put agricultural interests above the rewilding experiment.

Politicians: Publicly Approved Management

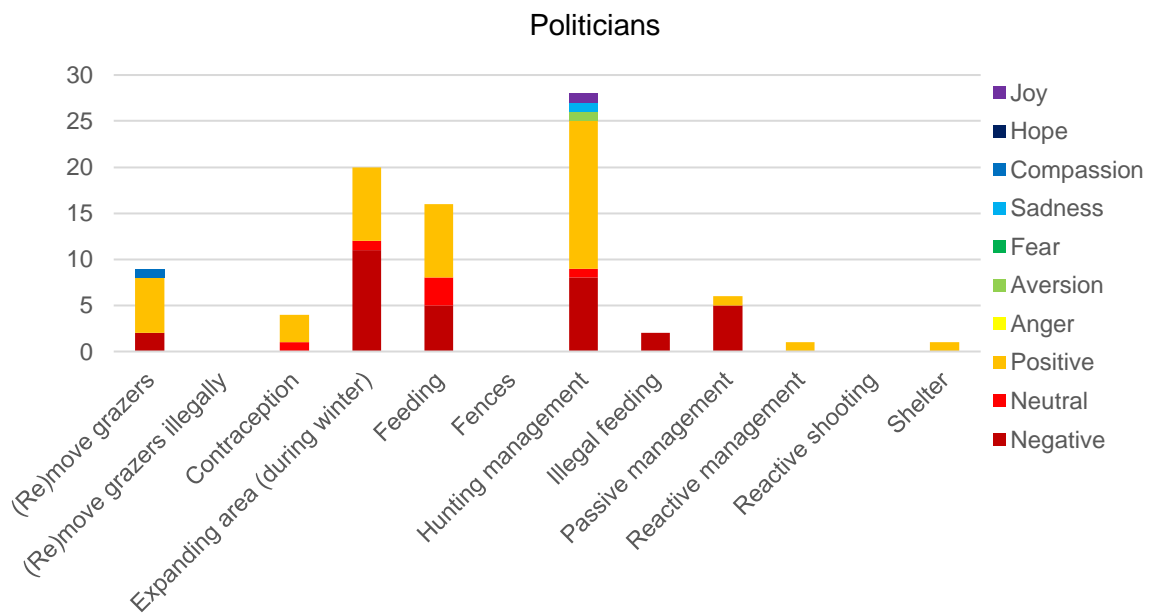


Figure 7 Frequency of the expressed tenor and emotional content by politicians regarding different management measures of the Oostvaardersplassen

Politicians have a divided opinion about expanding the Oostvaardersplassen, feeding, and hunting management (figure 7). Their perspective of expanding the area is partly positive, but mainly negative, which seems to be because of the monetary costs of expanding: “Government money will not be invested in the Oostvaarderswold” (article 10-34-2010), states the province of Flevoland. Their perspective of hunting management and feeding is also partly positive and partly negative. However, for these management measures, the emphasis of the articles is slightly on the positive tenor. Some politicians also express a neutral tenor towards feeding. They only agreed to the feeding of the animals because it pleases the public, not because they genuinely believe in it: “The only reason that we feed the animals is because foresters were being threatened with death” (article 50-88-2018). Furthermore, politicians express positivity regarding the removal of grazers and negativity towards passive management. They express barely any emotion in the newspaper articles.

In general, politicians are looking for public support for the Oostvaardersplassen whilst staying within their budget. Without public support, management cannot succeed. Publicly approved management is thus necessary.

State Forest Service: Wilderness Without Suffering

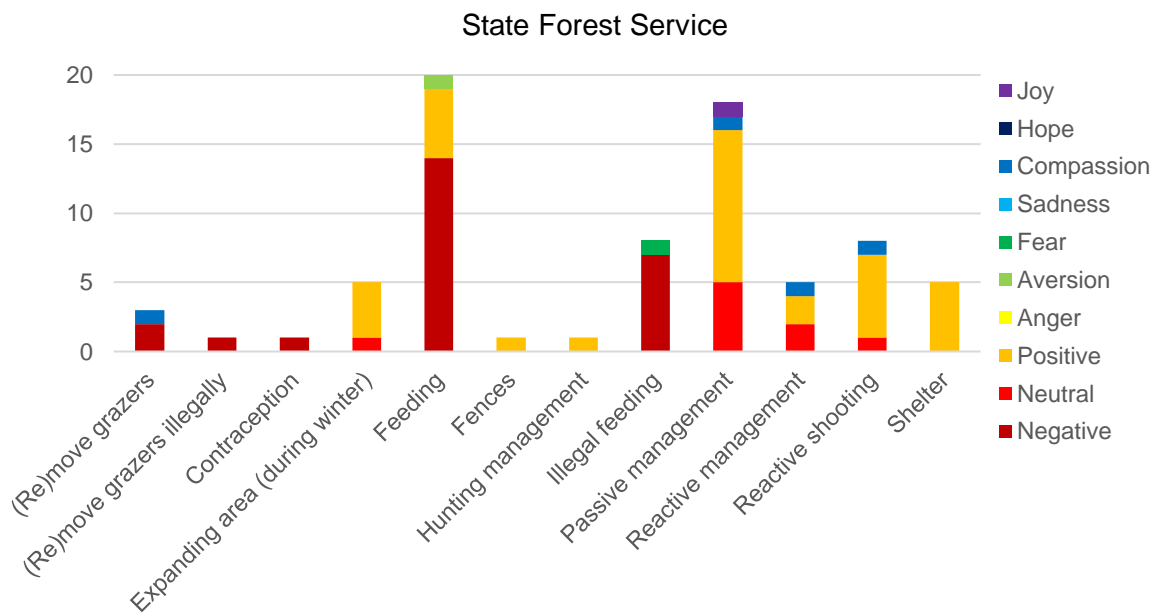


Figure 8 Frequency of the expressed tenor and emotional content by State Forest Service regarding different management measures of the Oostvaardersplassen

The tenor of State Forest Service is negative regarding feeding: “They [the animals] will have a full stomach, and they will think that it is spring already” (article 3-5-2018), and illegal feeding: “It is worrying. They feed apples, pears, carrots and agricultural hay. All food that has too many calories and is not suited for the animals. It will make the animals ill” (article 15-23-2018; figure 8). State Forest Service is one of the few stakeholders, together with the scientists, that expresses a neutral tenor towards passive management: “This is the circle of life, there are good and bad times” (article 12-49-2010). They also have a positive attitude towards passive management. Furthermore, they are positive when it comes to expanding the Oostvaardersplassen, feeding the grazers, reactive shooting, and providing shelter for the animals.

Like the politicians, State Forest Service expresses few emotions. However, they are compassionate to the (potential) suffering of animals: “The majority of animals is being shot to free them from their suffering” (article 10-17-2018).

In conclusion, State Forest Service strives to keep the Oostvaardersplassen a wild nature area. To them, changes in population size are part of nature. Nonetheless, they agree with other stakeholders that the animals should suffer as little as possible. State Forest Service wants wilderness without suffering.

Scientists: Human-Wildlife Coexistence

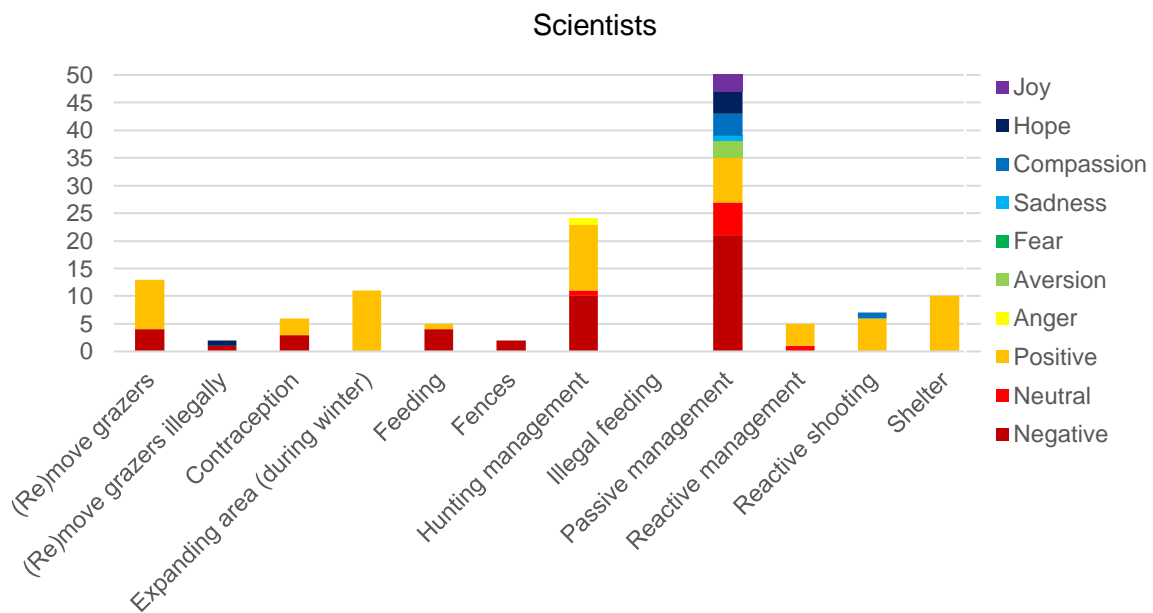


Figure 9 Frequency of the expressed tenor and emotional content by scientists regarding different management measures of the Oostvaardersplassen

Scientists are mainly negative about passive management (figure 9). Commission Van Geel says: “Intervene at the Oostvaardersplassen ... Do not let nature run its course any longer” (article 45-82-2018). However, like State Forest Service, they also have a neutral and a positive perspective of passive management. In addition, they have a divided opinion about hunting management, although they are slightly more positive than negative. On the one hand, scientists state that: “People should, if needed, take control by shooting” (article 44-80-2018). On the other hand, there are also scientists that state the following: “Shooting this many animals is anything but sustainable” (article 31-54-2018). Furthermore, scientists express a positive attitude regarding removing the grazers, expanding the area and creating shelter.

The emotions present in the statements of the scientists are mainly compassion, hope and joy towards passive management. Biologist Frans Vera hopefully says that: “Everything experts predicted that was not possible at the Oostvaardersplassen, has been proven wrong by the developments in the nature reserve” (article 1-1-2010). Ecologist Ruben Smit expresses his joy about the Oostvaardersplassen by saying: “What I love about it, is the interaction between the plants and the animals, but also the interaction between the different animal species” (article 6-26-2010).

Overall, scientists want a balanced, sustainable and well-managed nature reserve. They enjoy the pure wilderness, but they also agree with the activists & NGOs to the extent that they find human intervention necessary to maintain the welfare of the animals. Human-wildlife coexistence is preferable.

Discussion

The aim of this research was to gain insights into different stakeholder perspectives on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen through an in-depth content analysis of newspaper articles. Gaining these insights adds to the body of knowledge and improves the understanding of the stakeholder perspectives; it also gives some insight into how public opinion about the management of the Oostvaardersplassen is formed. To achieve this, this research looked at which management measures were discussed by the stakeholders in the media, and which tenor and emotional content were expressed regarding these management measures.

The main finding of this study is that the perspective differs notably per stakeholder. None of the stakeholders want to see the animals at the Oostvaardersplassen suffer; however, how they want the nature reserve to be managed differs plenty. Whenever perspectives of stakeholders clash, mutual understanding is difficult to establish – which is necessary for more successful debates on different management strategies and their implications (Boerboom et al., 2017). According to a study by Vitali (2014), on the conflicts between people and an expanding wolf population, conflicting frames stand in the way of implementing effective management because they form a barrier to compromise between the different stakeholder groups. Taking all stakeholder perspectives on management into account is difficult, but it will eventually lead to less resistance and more public support, and therefore to more successful management (Hajer, Wieringa & de Wit, 2011). Until a consensus is reached on an appropriate form of management, “calls for public participation and for more inclusive and equitable policy are likely to remain in the realm of rhetoric” (Vitali, 2014, p. 580).

One possible explanation for the divided perspectives is that they might originate from the inconclusive discussions about rewilding in the literature. Rewilding lacks a concise conceptualization, and currently there is insufficient knowledge about the possible outcomes (Bullock et al., 2019), especially when it comes to ecological consequences (Nogués-Bravo, Rahbek, Sanders & Simberloff, 2016). The fact that rewilding is not clearly defined and highly controversial has led to a lot of debate about this form of nature management (Fernandez, Genes, Pires & Svenning, 2018; Jepson, 2016). If research and literature are divided on what rewilding entails and how it should be implemented, it is not easy for stakeholders to form a clear opinion about the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. Other studies concerning rewilding also show differing opinions and a lack of consensus between stakeholders. For example, a study on rewilding in Scotland by Deary and Warren (2017), revealed divergence regarding the means and ends of rewilding, because there is too much diversity of practice and vision. However, they did find a consensus between stakeholders on that a certain level of human intervention is needed (at least at the beginning), even if decreasing intervention is the long-term goal. These findings are in line with the results of this research.

Remarkable was the difference in emotional content for the stakeholder groups. Politicians showed almost no emotion in their statements at all, and State Forest Service and scientists also expressed little emotional content. In general, politicians express a lot of emotions to voice their opinion (Gabriels, Koenis & Swierstra, 2018), which was not the case here. This may be because the politicians were rarely interviewed compared to the other stakeholders. Whenever their perspective was presented in the media, this mainly happened in an indirect manner. The public stakeholders – activists & NGOs and locals – were the stakeholder groups that expressed the most emotional content. Research by Vogel (2018) on the portrayal of human-wildlife interactions with wolves in the media, also found the highest occurrence of emotions for public stakeholders. Her results showed mainly the expression of aversion, followed by fear; environmentalists were the only ones that expressed hope. In this research, aversion was also the main emotion that was found. However, fear was less present. Instead, compassion and anger were shown. What also differed from Vogel’s (2018) study, was that in this research scientists expressed the most hope, whilst State Forest Service (the environmentalists) did not express any. Vogel (2018) explained why the public was likely to show more negative emotions and why the environmentalists expressed hope the most, but she did not elaborate why the highest occurrence of emotions was found for the public.

Limitations

It should be kept in mind that a subjective perspective of the researcher is unavoidable for content analyses (Vogel, 2018). Especially the code categories ‘tenor’ and ‘emotional content’ are open to subjective interpretation. Therefore, the subcategories attached to them have been retrieved from similar studies by other researchers, to minimize the subjectivity. Additionally, journalists also include their subjective perspective by using their own wording. Besides that, a second coder would increase the validation of the coded contents (Bryman, 2012; Vogel, 2018). Three articles have been coded by four different coders, to see if the codes were interpreted in the same way and if they really measured the intended concepts. Unfortunately, using more than one coder for all articles was not feasible for this research.

In a few articles, there was also mention of the police and the public prosecutor’s office. These parties have not been coded as stakeholders in this study even though they may also influence public opinion about the Oostvaardersplassen. They have been left out because they presented no clear view on the management; they only expressed themselves regarding the prosecution of the law. However, it would be interesting to include their role in the formation of the public perspective on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen in further research.

The articles for the content analysis were retrieved from one newspaper only, De Stentor. Analysing the content of other newspapers may have resulted in different findings. However, due to time constraints, it was not possible to analyse more than one newspaper. Since the Stentor is the local newspaper of Flevoland and since it published most articles about the Oostvaardersplassen, it was the most interesting and representative newspaper for this research. Moreover, only analysing newspapers does not show the entire picture. Even though this research focused on newspapers – because that is where the current research gap exists – social media also play a role in gaining insights into stakeholder perspectives. This has not been taken into account in this study. It would be interesting to combine both media in follow-up research.

Implications and Recommendations

As stated in the introduction, there is a lack of knowledge of how stakeholders perceive and how they frame the management of the Oostvaardersplassen in the media. Insights that came forth from this research add knowledge of how different stakeholders look at the management to the body of knowledge. Understanding the diverging perspectives is of importance since the perspectives on the management influence future management, and accordingly indirectly biodiversity. This research showed that rewilding is still very controversial, and consensus on nature management is far from being reached for the Oostvaardersplassen. This stands in the way of developing more effective management (Vitali, 2014). The conflicting perspectives partly result from the vagueness that exists around rewilding (Deary & Warren, 2017). Research into the conceptualization, implementation, and output of rewilding is necessary to resolve the conflicting perspectives on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. Moreover, research into the implementation of a consensual form of management is needed to achieve successful management and to halt biodiversity loss and reverse land degradation. It would also be helpful if further research is executed on how the frames in the media have influenced public opinion so that this can be better understood.

The analysis of the stakeholder perspectives makes developing a form of management that suits society better more feasible. A study by Asperó et al. (2014), on the stakeholder perceptions of landscape changes, suggests involving all stakeholders and encouraging public participation so that a more consensual form of management can be developed. Moreover, according to Boitani (2000), involving the public in parts of the management process will lead to more acceptance. Bullock et al. (2019) also suggest including key stakeholders in decision-making, to identify social-ecological constraints and evaluate benefits and disadvantages of management. Implementing public participation could go a long way to achieving a more effective, publicly supported form of management for the Oostvaardersplassen. Furthermore, educating stakeholders on the management measures, so providing them with another source of information besides media, could increase the support of the society.

Conclusion

This study gained insights into different stakeholder perspectives on the management of the Oostvaardersplassen, by answering how the management of the Oostvaardersplassen is being framed by stakeholders in newspapers in 2010 and 2018. The conducted content analysis showed that all stakeholders have a very different perception of the management of the Oostvaardersplassen. Overall, every stakeholder, except State Forest Service, expressed a negative perspective on rewilding the Oostvaardersplassen. Generally, in more than half of the statements that were coded, the tenor of the stakeholders regarding the management measures was positive, but a negative tenor was found almost as often. Emotional content was mainly found in statements from activists & NGOs and locals; the other stakeholders barely expressed emotions towards the management measures. The articles in which emotional content was found, mainly existed of statements with negative emotions.

Even though the stakeholder perspectives differ a lot, it is of importance to understand them. Gaining insights into different stakeholder perspectives and understanding their conflicting views, leads to a more publicly supported, successful form of management for the Oostvaardersplassen – which will contribute to an increase in biodiversity and the restoration of land.

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Appendix

In the following tables, used subcategories, keywords and quotations belonging to the subcategories are given. These quotations are all retrieved from articles from De Stentor.

Management

Category	Keywords	Representative quote (<i>original Dutch quote</i>)
(Re)move grazers	Removing, reduction, transportation, replacing	<p>“We will continue protesting until all grazers have been removed from the reserve, or until this is promised.” (<i>“We gaan net zo lang door met actievoeren tot het gebied van grote grazers is ontdaan of we die toezegging hebben.”</i>)</p> <p>“The provincial government wants to remove as many grazers as possible from the nature reserve between Almere and Lelystad without shooting them, as this lies politically sensitive.” (<i>“Het provinciebestuur wil zoveel mogelijk grote grazers verwijderen uit het natuurgebied tussen Almere en Lelystad zonder ze af te schieten, omdat dit politiek gevoelig ligt.”</i>)</p>
(Re)move grazers illegally	Freeing the grazers, removing, protest	<p>“She wants to free the suffering animals from the Oostvaardersplassen”. (<i>“Die wil creperende dieren bevrijden uit de Oostvaardersplassen.”</i>)</p> <p>“Within no time, activist Maacha Vrolijk collected 150 trailers to remove the grazers from the Oostvaardersplassen.” (<i>“Binnen een mum van tijd heeft actievoerder Maacha Vrolijk zo'n 150 trailers gevonden om de grote grazers uit de Oostvaardersplassen weg te halen.”</i>)</p>
Contraception	Birth control, contraceptive injection, castration, sterilization	<p>“The stallions could, with or without a few mares, be removed and/or castrated.” (<i>“De hengsten zouden, al dan niet met een aantal merries, moeten worden uitgeplaatst en/of gecastreerd kunnen worden.”</i>)</p> <p>“Furthermore, she thinks a long-term plan should be developed to reduce the population by using sterilization”. (<i>“Daarnaast vindt ze dat er voor de lange termijn een plan moet komen om de omvang van de populatie door middel van sterilisatie in te perken.”</i>)</p>

Expanding area (during winter)	Wildlife corridor, larger area, connection with other reserves, Oostvaarderswold, Hollandse Hout, Gelderse Veluwe	<p>“According to commission Gabor, connecting existing nature reserves is necessary to improve the welfare of the grazers.” (<i>“Volgens de commissie-Gabor is het aaneensluiten van bestaande natuurgebieden noodzakelijk om het dierenwelzijn van de grote grazers te verbeteren.”</i>)</p> <p>“The idea for the wildlife corridor at Zeewolde has been in development since 2009, but it has never been executed.” (<i>“Het idee voor de ecologische verbindingszone bij Zeewolde is al sinds 2009 in ontwikkeling, maar de zone kwam er nooit.”</i>)</p>
	Feeding, extra hay	<p>“The activists demand that the province structurally feeds the starving animals.” (<i>“De activisten eisen dat de provincie Flevoland de hongerlijdende dieren structureel bijvoert.”</i>)</p> <p>“According to GroenLinks, feeding increases the grazer population.” (<i>“Volgens GroenLinks komen er door het bijvoeren alleen maar meer grote grazers bij.”</i>)</p>
Fences	Fences	<p>“When we interfere with the lives of the animals by placing fences, we disturb the ecosystem.” (<i>“De mens die ingrijpt in het leven van de dieren door ze achter hekken te plaatsen, verstoort daarmee het ecosysteem.”</i>)</p> <p>“However, this nature reserve is completely surrounded by fences.” (<i>“Dit natuurgebied is echter geheel afgezet met hekken.”</i>)</p>
Hunting management	Shooting off, bringing back, population control, Van Geel report, reduction	<p>“Humans should, if necessary, take control by shooting.” (<i>“De mens moet, indien nodig, met afschot de regie nemen.”</i>)</p> <p>“The province already received permission on Friday for the shooting, and planned on starting today.” (<i>“De provincie had vrijdag de vergunning voor het afschieten al gekregen en was van plan om vandaag met het afschot te starten.”</i>)</p>
Illegal feeding	Feeding, protest, illegal feeding, hay	<p>“When the protesters arrived here last winter with hay, I approached them.” (<i>“Toen de demonstranten hier afgelopen winter met hooibalen aankwamen, stapte ik op ze af.”</i>)</p> <p>“The illegal feeding of the grazers at the Oostvaardersplassen has been continued.” (<i>“Het illegaal bijvoeren van grote grazers in de Oostvaardersplassen is hervat.”</i>)</p>

Passive management	Natural processes, natural management, wilderness, experiment, minimal human intervention	<p>“State Forest Service wants minimal human intervention.” (<i>“Staatsbosbeheer wil zo min mogelijk menselijk ingrijpen.”</i>)</p> <p>“Van Geel states that there is no ‘natural management’ anymore at the Oostvaardersplassen.” (<i>“Van Geel vindt dat er geen sprake meer is van ‘natuurlijk beheer’ in de Oostvaardersplassen.”</i>)</p>
Reactive management	Population management, suffering, intervention, shooting,	<p>“She has lobbied for expanding the area, proper early reactive management and replanting the area.” (<i>“Ze heeft bij de commissieleden gepleit voor gebiedsuitbreiding, goed uitgevoerd vroeg reactief beheer van de dieren en herbeplanting van het gebied.”</i>)</p> <p>“Early reactive management prevents the animals from suffering.” (<i>“Door het zogenaamde vroeg-reactieve beheer wordt juist voorkomen dat dieren onnodig lijden.”</i>)</p>
Reactive shooting	Weak/suffering animals, chance of survival, shooting	<p>“The foresters, my colleagues, shoot animals that will not survive the winter in a timely manner.” (<i>“De faunabeheerders, collega’s van me, schieten tijdig de dieren af die de winter niet zullen overleven.”</i>)</p> <p>“No longer waiting until a weakened animal almost dies, but shooting when it is clear that the situation will not improve due to the weather.” (<i>“Niet langer wachten tot een verzwakt dier bijna zijn laatste adem uitblaast, maar al afschieten als duidelijk is dat er geen uitzicht is op verbetering van de conditie door de weersomstandigheden.”</i>)</p>
Shelter	Shelter, ledges	<p>“Earlier this month, ledges have been created.” (<i>“Eerder deze maand zijn beschuttingsrichels aangebracht.”</i>)</p> <p>“According to forester Hans Breeveld of State Forest Service, six to seven ledges between 100 and 200 meter will be created.” (<i>“Volgens boswachter Hans Breeveld van Staatsbosbeheer komen er zes tot zeven richels, van tussen de honderd en tweehonderd meter.”</i>)</p>

Emotional Content

Category	Keywords	Representative quote (<i>original Dutch quote</i>)
Anger	Angry, threats, (verbal) violence	<p>“The banners are clear: ‘Dig your own grave, not that of the animals’ and ‘Oostvaardersplassen: concentration camp’, they read. “Assholes”, shouts a lady.” (“<i>De spandoeken liegen er niet om: ‘Graaf je eigen graf, niet dat van dieren’ en ‘Oostvaardersplassen: concentratiekamp’ valt er te lezen. „Klootzakken”, schreeuwt een dame.</i>”)</p> <p>“People are incredibly angry. I cannot rule out that some people might get violent.” (“<i>Mensen zijn ontzettend boos. Ik kan niet uitsluiten dat sommige mensen gewelddadig worden.</i>”)</p>
Aversion	Inhumane, disgrace, suffering, murder, controversy	<p>“The animals are first starved for weeks and then brutally shot at the last moment. What is happening here, is a huge disgrace.” (“<i>Die beesten zijn eerst wekenlang verhongerd en op het laatst bruut afgeknald. Wat hier gebeurt, is een grof schandaal.</i>”)</p> <p>“What is this for inhumane thing to do?” (“<i>Wat is dit voor iets onmenselijks?</i>”)</p>
Compassion	Unnecessary suffering, starvation	<p>“The large grazers have unnecessarily suffered last winter.” (“<i>De grote grazers in de Oostvaardersplassen hebben vorige winter onnodig veel geleden.</i>”)</p> <p>“It is gripping if animals die.” (“<i>Als dieren doodgaan is dat aangrijpend.</i>”)</p>
Fear	Sorrow	<p>“I am afraid that people do not realize what a connection with the Oostvaardersplassen would mean.” (“<i>Ik ben er bang voor dat mensen niet doorhebben wat een eventuele verbinding met de Oostvaardersplassen gaat betekenen.</i>”)</p> <p>“There are still a lot of concerns. Not only about the animals, but also about the mental health of the hunters that have to shoot the calves.” (“<i>Toch blijven grote zorgen bestaan. Niet alleen over de dieren, ook over de mentale gezondheid van de jagers die kalfjes moeten afschieten.</i>”)</p>
Hope	Opportunities	<p>“Here we can see that nature development is also possible in a highly industrialised and densely populated country like The Netherlands.” (“<i>Hier kunnen we zien dat in ook een hoog-geïndustrialiseerd en dichtbevolkt land als Nederland natuurlijke ontwikkeling mogelijk is.</i>”)</p> <p>“The sea eagle and the white egret have returned.” (“<i>De zeearend is teruggekeerd en de zilverreiger ook.</i>”)</p>

Joy	Enthusiasm, happiness	<p>“A forester talked with a lot of enthusiasm about how unique this area is; especially because nature can run its course here.” (<i>“Een boswachter vertelde met groot enthousiasme hoe uniek het gebied is; juist omdat de natuur er zoveel mogelijk haar gang kan gaan.”</i>)</p> <p>“He feels ‘a lot of happiness’ regarding the advice.” (<i>“Hij voelt ‘veel blijdschap’ over het advies.”</i>)</p>
Sadness	Hurt, disappointment	<p>“The protesters find the culling of the Red Deer unnecessary and sad.” (<i>“De demonstranten vinden het doodschieten van de edelherten onnodig en zielig.”</i>)</p> <p>“She is shocked and sad about the situation.” (<i>“Ze is ‘geschokt en verdrietig over de situatie.’</i>)</p>

Tenor

Category	Keywords	Representative quote (<i>original Dutch quote</i>)
Negative	Stop, change, measures, broken, failure	<p>“Wild nature is not something we can control within our dykes.” (<i>“Wilde natuur is echter niet iets om binnen onze dijken onder controle te houden.”</i>)</p> <p>“According to GroenLinks, feeding the large herbivores will only increase their population size.” (<i>“Volgens GroenLinks komen er door het bijvoeren alleen maar meer grote grazers bij.”</i>)</p>
Neutral	Death, realistic, honest, understanding	<p>“What we should not forget is that death is part of nature.” (<i>“Wat we echter niet moeten vergeten is dat de dood hoort bij de natuur.”</i>)</p> <p>“It is the natural cycle, says Kuypers. Being born, living, dying.” (<i>“Het is de cyclus van de natuur, zegt Kuypers. Geboren worden, leven, doodgaan.”</i>)</p>
Positive	Action, improvement, pleading, hope, possibility	<p>“The <i>Faunabescherming</i> already plead for expanding the nature reserve.” (<i>“De Faunabescherming pleitte eerder al voor het uitbreiden van het natuurgebied.”</i>)</p> <p>“Hofstra said that, if possible, he wants to (re)move the large herbivores.” (<i>“Hofstra zei hierover dat als het mogelijk is hij grote grazers graag wil uitplaatsen.”</i>)</p>