

**Projects without Project Ecologies: Experiments in
Regional Governance from the Netherlands to
Bulgaria and Back**

Elena Boyanova Krumova

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2012

© 2012
Elena Krumova
All rights reserved

ABSTRACT

Projects without Project Ecologies: Experiments in Regional Governance from the Netherlands to Bulgaria and Back

Elena Boyanova Krumova

This dissertation investigates the efforts of a temporary organization, or a project, to assemble a set of diverse stakeholders to deliberate and chart a territorial plan for the Black Sea coastal region in Bulgaria. The project lasted two years and tried to apply the integrated method of regional planning developed in the area around the port of Rotterdam. It was led by a Dutch consultant and a team of Dutch and Bulgarian environmental experts. The main question the dissertation addresses is how a temporary organization operates in an environment that provides little support for its actions. All new organizations, but temporary ones in particular, have a high risk of failure due to limited time to set roles for their members, establish trust among them, and build a common identity. Temporary organizations have been shown to rely on role structures, identities, and sources of trust outside of the organization itself. Project ecologies comprised of personal and organizational ties built around industries and geographical areas facilitate their work. Usually the existence of such ecologies is assumed in research on organizations. There are few studies addressing the question how such ecologies might come into being or how an organization that lacks the support of ecologies might try to survive. Following one such case, this dissertation details the turning points in the project's strategy as its leader

consecutively attempted to play the role of facilitator, recruiter, and finally, supporter of other organizations. In the process, he abandoned the associational governance model which relies on assembling "the public" through representative organizations. Instead, connections were made and mutual support was extended to organizations on the periphery – small entrepreneurial NGOs and municipalities lacking many investment opportunities. In this sense, the project leader acted as an institutional entrepreneur trying to carve institutional space for this and other similar projects and organizations. He tried to employ coalition building tactics based on common goals and current opportunities for exchange. The project's connection to previous similar projects even if they are in a geographically different region, as well as its efforts to link itself to ongoing and future similar projects, is what we call a projective path. It is through its temporal embeddedness in this chain of previous and future projects that a temporary organization can hope to achieve results and survive the slow and difficult process of organizing.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: <i>Organizational Form After the End of the “Society of Organizations” or How to Eat and to Talk at the Same Time</i>	1
Chapter 2: <i>My Coast, Our Coast, Whose Coast?: Contention and Experimentation in Spatial Planning from the Netherlands to Bulgaria and Back</i>	43
Chapter 3: <i>“Just Talk”: Facilitation, Expertise, and Fragmented Organizational Fields</i>	77
Chapter 4: <i>No Project is an Island: A Temporary Organization on a Projective Path</i>	121
Chapter 5: <i>Summary and Conclusions</i>	178
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	185

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

An endeavor that requires long-term commitment, resources, and persistence cannot survive without the support of many people who have contributed intellectually, emotionally and financially to it. I am deeply indebted to all of them. First, I would like to thank the two Dutch consultants, Rene and Linda, for allowing me to travel with them and attend their meetings, for providing contacts in other organizations and engaging in long and spirited discussions with me. Doing research is a large part of the reason I wanted to go into academia and this first substantial project proved that this career change was worth it. I am also indebted to all my committee members for their comments and suggestions throughout the process of analysis and writing. They supported my work and ambitions, even as I slowed down for a while to start a family. David Stark has provided guidance, inspiration, and practical advice from the beginning of my studies at Columbia University. He opened my eyes to new ways of seeing the world, pointed me to research and authors who inspired and influenced my thinking, and shared his insights and ongoing research with me. Josh Whitford guided my education in economic sociology and reminded me that there are only two kinds of dissertations – the perfect and the finished. Diane Vaughan led me into the literature on organizations and provided insightful comments. Gil Eyal has always been an inspiring thinker and teacher, providing carefully written and extremely encouraging commentaries. Ann Mische opened up a new horizon in my theoretical thinking and a new path for my research. I am honored to have been working with all of these brilliant researchers and authors and I hope to continue learning from them.

Other people have also been supportive and have helped shape this dissertation in ways they may not even know. Nicole Marwell helped me clarify my thinking by challenging me to make my argument in plain English, without using sociological terms. Dana Fisher introduced me

to the literature on ecological modernization. I have also benefited from comments from all the participants in the regular CODES meetings at the Center for Organizational Innovation and in the IGERT interdisciplinary meetings in the “Development and Globalization” program. My fellow graduate students have provided invaluable encouragement, laughter, comments and questions that pushed me along the path of productivity. I have to mention in particular Dennis Bogusz, Victor Corona, Nancy Davenport, Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, Pilar Opazo, and Natacha Stevanovic, as well as visiting scholars such as Elena Bogdanova and Maja Lotz. My mom and my brother provided logistical and emotional support while I was doing research in Bulgaria. Thank you all!

Finally, all of this would not have been possible without my husband Sam who encouraged me to go back to graduate school and has been my incredible and steadfast champion.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Boyan Krumov, one of the most inquisitive and widely-read people I have ever known. He was a patient teacher and a spirited debater who taught me to challenge myself always.

CHAPTER 1

Organizational Form After the End of the “Society of Organizations”

“...we need to create ‘self-destroying organizations... lots of autonomous, semi-attached units which can be spun off, destroyed, sold... when the need for them has disappeared.’”

(Alvin Toffler, 1970, “Future Shock”, p. 122, citing Donald Schon, President of the Organization for Social and Technical Innovation)

“Life is conceived as a succession of projects; and the more they differ from one another, the more valuable they are.” (Luc Botanski and Eve Chiapello, 2005, “The New Spirit of Capitalism”, p. 110)

Research Motivation

I often read Bulgarian news online to keep up with life in my native country. A few lines in an article, not too long ago, caught my attention because they captured a theme that I was long interested in. The article described how one woman was dealing with her frustration with cars that were parked on sidewalks, leaving little if any space for pedestrians: she printed humorous but chiding stickers and left them on the offender’s windshield. The article’s well-known and prolific journalist applauded the effort with the following words: *“The best part about the stickers is that they are the product of a pure civic impulse, an individual effort... She does not want to start a movement, does not plan*

on registering an association, does not call her idea a PROJECT (original emphasis) and is certainly not getting ready to apply for EU funding.”¹.

Apart from the professed misgivings about any form of coordinated action in this statement, what was more interesting to me was the emphasis on projects as just such a form, different from either an association or a social movement. In Bulgaria, as in Eastern Europe overall, projects became the organizational vehicle through which institutional reform was delivered, at first by the World Bank and later, by the European Commission. Projects were used as the organizational settings where decisions were made and tools were developed to deliver both market and democratic reforms. More than simply a vehicle, however, projects became the most visible organizational feature and an indication of making progress towards market democracies. Pre-accession and structural funds fuel government-organized tenders to select among competing projects from the private and the civil sectors. Projects seem to be what everybody has to master - from public administration officials, to NGOs, to businesses. A whole new industry around training and consulting on projects has sprung up in the new century to deal with this phenomenon. From the organization of tenders, through project selection and implementation, the process of charting out the new project topography is seen as a marker of making progress towards a market democracy.

We can look right past projects and focus on questions of institutional reform in the context of Eastern Europe. We can ask questions about the changing nature of governance or the restructuring of government bureaucracies, or of the influence of the European

¹ Dnevnik Daily, April 4th, 2007, “Don’t get upset, man, act!” by Iva Rudnikova

Union on its new members. Instead, I propose that we focus on the diffusion of projects as a process of reformatting the organizational landscape in line with the “new spirit of capitalism” (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2006). Projects are a specific organizational form that deserves its own treatment in research and analysis. To overlook this form would mean to miss an important organizational restructuring in a wide variety of industries, as well as in the public sector. To treat projects as simply vehicles or tools for implementing reforms or for carrying out work, would be the equivalent of treating any other form of organization the same way and forgetting that organizational forms themselves influence outcomes. This was indeed the case with the emerging bureaucratic forms in the early twentieth century, when the justification and design of industrial hierarchies was the mission of engineers and management theorists. This is very much the case today in regards to projects as manifested in a growing number of works in the specialized project management literature.

Organizational sociology emerged as a field because it was interested in issues beyond design of organizations. There is a lot that sociologists can contribute to the research of temporary organizational forms both in terms of methodology and theoretical models. One of the questions that demands attention, especially in light of what Boltanski and Chiapello have called the “projective citè”, or the new moral regime of post-industrial capitalism, is the question of the diffusion of project forms beyond firms and industries. Focusing on projects in regional policy-making in an Eastern European country provides a fertile ground to study how project organizing diffuses in places with little experience and institutional support for it. It is also a good starting point to a discussion of building the

organizational capacity to deal with the requirements of market democracies in the twenty first century. This question is not specific to Eastern Europe or to developing countries alone, but is relevant even for the Western world where building the project society is very much an ongoing process.

As temporary organizations, initiated through contract deals and structured around the accomplishment of specific tasks, projects require changes to existing models of planning and coordination, or in other words, governance. This kind of governance draws for legitimation on claims for both market-oriented flexibility and for democratic participation. In that sense it is different than the early legitimation of bureaucracies as administratively efficient machines designed for either the market or the public sector. Industrial hierarchies were set up to sanction competition, and government hierarchies were set up to sanction representation. The inherent tension between markets and democracies, or how “to eat and to talk at the same time” to use Przeworski’s (1991) apt expression, was temporarily settled through the mediation of a class of experts. Industrial bureaucracies emerged with the growth of a managerial class that claimed to resolve tensions between owners and workers (Shenhav, 2001), and in response, state bureaucracies expanded with the growth of an expert administrative class mediating between the represented and the elected. At first a solution, bureaucracy became the arena for critique of capitalism through accusations of resistance to either market flexibility or democratic participation. Unlike bureaucratic forms of organizing which rely on separating the “bazaar” from the “cathedral” (Raymond, 2001), project organizing explicitly claims orientation to the bazaar as the arena for both the market and the community. In

contemporary capitalism, projects are faced with the challenge to defend their work as both market-oriented and democratically participatory.

In the context of Eastern Europe, these new models of governance are actively promoted from outside and represent a rupture with established patterns of organizing. Funded through EU pre-accession programs and structural funds, projects are initiated through tenders organized by various government bodies. However, they rely on planning and implementation from private companies, associations, NGOs, consultants, or an alliance among these. Thus projects in Eastern Europe represent a change of relations between the state and the business sector, between the business sector and NGOs, and between the state and the NGOs. More than that, project organizing extends beyond national territories and entangles organizations in all three sectors in transnational networks. Thus project organizations represent a rich opportunity for organizational sociologists to address macro-level social relations. As ruptures to “business as usual”, project organizations in Eastern Europe are interesting sites to study the same dynamics that had occurred more slowly in other places and the efforts it took to adjust to them.

At the same time, projects in any particular setting do bring their own questions and specificities. Eastern European projects raise questions that have not been addressed by either the organizational or the economic sociology literatures on temporary organizations. Previous research on projects has focused on two issues: coordination of activities and innovation. Within the organizational literature, researchers are interested in coordination of activities among actors who may or may not know each other. Within the economic sociology / economic geography literatures, the interaction of different organizations and

/or among practitioners with different expertise within a single organizing effort has raised the interest of researchers of learning and innovation. Projects in policy-making fields have not been studied but they pose their own problems interesting for both the organizational and the economic sociology scholars. Many of the underlying issues that are raised with the diffusion of temporary organizations are subject to research in both fields and even the scope of studies often overlaps. Coordination, learning, and performance can all be investigated either as issues internal to organizations or as macro-level problems of regions or specific industries (or the intersection of the two).

Coordination in policy-making projects is an interesting topic for research because the existing external structures to stabilize action within a temporary organization are likely to be different than those identified for corporations. Performance is also more difficult to measure in policy-making than in an industry and takes on a different dimension when community outcomes are involved. Policy-making projects represent an interesting and unexploited site for research since the study of a single organizational episode involving different networks, organizations, and communities allows an opportunity to address questions of coordination, performance, and learning at several analytical levels – the single organization, the larger networks, and regions in which it operates.

Research Question and Theoretical Foundations

The main question this research asks is how new organizational forms take root in an inhospitable institutional environment. Specifically, I am interested in how projects, or

temporary organizations aligning diverse but interdependent interests for the completion of specific tasks, are deployed in places with little, if any, experience and institutional support for instant collaboration. Yet, this is not simply a question about collaboration - about when and how it could or couldn't happen. Projects are a distinct organizational form that requires more than collaboration across boundaries. It is also a form that is constrained by a deadline, a fixed budget, and a specific task. Often, it is initiated and driven by a contractor in competitive bids. In this sense, the question posed with this research is not about inter-organizational cooperation per se which would typically require a study across long periods of time. It is rather a question about coordination under the specific constraints of time, task, and team. As an episode of organizing, a project relies on other long-term institutional arrangements to support such short-term endeavors and hence, the question of coordination in the absence of such well-developed institutions also becomes a question about the process of diffusion of an organizational form. When asked in the context of regional development planning, this question speaks to the changes in the process and institutions of policy making. Thus in the time-honored tradition of organization studies, asking how an organizational form operates in an inhospitable institutional environment addresses the question of the relationship between an organization and its environment.

There is no agreed-upon definition of what an organizational form is and often when the concept is used, it is taken to mean diverse configurations as general as bureaucracy and as specific as firms in a specific industry at a specific period of time. Thus, organizational form can refer to an ideal-typical form or to an empirical reality grounded in

legal entities and contractual obligations. The project form is somewhere in the middle of that range - it is empirically-derived but is generalized and lean in its definition. As conceived by Weber, the ideal-typical form of bureaucracy has six characteristics: formal hierarchical structure, management by rules, specialist organization, up-focused or in-focused (i.e. accountable to those who empowered the organization as in board of directors, government agency, or stockholders, etc); purposefully impersonal, and employment based on technical qualifications. These six elements were a theoretical model of what a rational bureaucracy should look like. In contrast, projects are identified by only three characteristics: limited time; specific task to perform, and teams². Thus the definition is much fuzzier and generalized, leaving the question of structure and culture unspecified. It is neither ideal-typical in the sense that bureaucracy is, nor specific and tied to particular organizational fields or periods of time. The main reason for this fuzziness is that projects are not in-focused but rather outer-focused, i.e. they are accountable to networks and organizations outside their immediate structure. Thus it could be said that it is a generalized, lean form that can easily adapt to multiple environments in terms of structure and culture by its very nature of being disposable – task-oriented and short-lived.

The concept of organizational form can be used to make the connection between networked structures and the processes that take place within them. It could be altered in much the same way as the concept of “rules” has been altered: from one prescribing structure, to one generating structure. Generative rules are understood as guides to forming relationships and as codes for principles of coordinating these relationships (Kogut, 2000).

² This definition is the one used in the organizational literature the most. There are some variations on it, but it is generally agreed among researchers that this is the most parsimonious way to delineate projects.

A similar treatment is proposed by Sabel and Prokop (1995) to the concept of standards. In a world of collaborative production, product or process specifications alone fail to provide assurance that partners will be reliable and perform as in the past. Thus instead of providing technical norms for grades of steel or dimensions of paper, or of instructions to carrying out procedures, discursive standards try to test firms' capabilities to perform as promised. These tests are open-ended, discursive and thin in terms of content. The ISO 9000 are an example of this new order of standards. Feldman and Pentland (2003, 2005) also describe organizational routines not as formally prescribed ways to act but as generative of organizational networks and fields.

Likewise, organizational forms can be understood not as prescriptions for organizational structure, as when we talk, for example, about hierarchical, functional, or matrix forms of organization. An organizational form can thus be understood not in terms of structure but in terms of a process of stabilization that pertains to both its internal elements and its external environment. A lean definition of form whose characteristics are more oriented towards action than structure is generative in the sense of being able to reinforce or change the relations that brought it into being. So for example, two key specifications of the project form is that it is created to accomplish a specific task. Even if participants have faced similar problems and tasks before in their work, the exact circumstances are never the same: the resources available might be different, the context into which the project has to perform might change, and the team itself is not likely to be one hundred percent the same, so that new members might have new ideas. This task orientation means that projects by definition are action-centered, rather than oriented

towards goals and decisions (Lundin and Soderholm, 1999). The challenge every project faces is how to act right now given the resources it has at its disposal for a limited amount of time. The need to act to solve a problem and accomplish a specific task means that the internal structure and procedures need to be flexible enough and pull on resources as the need arises. By the very act of pulling people from different departments, or firms, or other organizations, the project form is generative of network structures and processes. *Thus the project form, as an action-oriented temporary frame for organizing, is a form which generates new or activates latent network ties.*

How an organizational form diffuses has usually been a question posed in relation to bureaucracies as ideal-typical rational-legal structures (Weber, 1924/1968; Chandler, 1964; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Perrow, 2002). As Weber pointed out, it is not until the growth of industrialization that this process starts. As the “organizational form of modernity” (Kalinnikos, 2004), rational bureaucracy provides the theoretical foundation for the emerging field of organizational studies in the early twentieth century. Weber’s warning that the momentum of bureaucratization was irreversible was mirrored by the rise of the management profession as an area of expertise in designing efficient systems of work in the beginning of the twentieth century (Shenhav, 2004).

Organizational studies emerged as a scholarly field in the 1950s and proposed to analyze organizations as distinctive social systems in their own right, rather than merely as settings within which work was carried out (Scott, 2004). Taking off from Weber’s assertion that capitalist market economies require the continuous, precise and prompt administration of rules, as well as from early managerial theorists such as Taylor (1911)

and Fayol (1919), organizational theorists devoted much attention to the “dilemmas of bureaucracy” (Blau, 1955) - formal and informal structures; rationality and social constraints (March and Simon, 1958); purposeful action and unintended consequences (Merton, 1949). Large organizations and the determinants of their structures remained the main focus of organizational research. Firms were conceptualized as “islands of hierarchical coordination” in a “sea of market relations” (Richardson, 1972). The term “organizational form” itself ceased to refer to such a general concept as bureaucracy and acquired a more particular outline as researchers were interested in specific industries at specific points in time.

The question of diffusion of organizational form was thus closely associated with explaining organizational change and in the 1970s - 1980s it gave rise to two theoretical and methodological lines of research: organizational ecology and new institutional theory (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Starr, 1980; DiMaggio, 1981; Coser, Kadushin, and Powell, 1982). These two approaches were at once competing and complementing each other. Organizational ecology emphasized competitive forces that worked not on individual organizations but on whole populations of similar organizational forms. The main motivation was to explain the observed variety of forms through studying how they were generated, grew, declined, and eventually died as manifested in quantitative studies of population ecologies. The interpretation of organizational form is thus linked to a particular industry at a particular moment in time and diffusion was understood as driven by competitive fitness to external environmental forces.

Institutionalists, on the other hand, agreed that competitive selection might be relevant for new fields of organizations but asserted that it could not explain the growing homogeneity of form after a field matures. They proposed that organizational forms change and diffuse not as a result of selection, but of isomorphic processes within a field. Instead of ecologies of competing firms, institutionalists looked at institutionalized fields of organizing that included suppliers, consumers, regulatory agencies and other organizations. Thus for them, diffusion was explained through larger institutional forces for legitimation in the face of uncertainty, including norms, coercive pressure or simply imitation.

Combining the two approaches, we can summarize that the spread of a generalized bureaucratic form of organizing (despite variations within industries at different points in time) was understood as initially generated by competition and the drive for efficiency but subsequently carried on through exertion of power or the need for legitimation to conform to dominant forms within the field. Thus institutionalists understand organizational diffusion as a process that is driven by individual rationality at the micro level but by institutional forces at the macro level. This duality in the process leads to less than rational outcomes for the organizational field as a whole (DiMaggio, 1988).

Although the two lines of research start from different questions and with different assumptions, both reaffirm that large and resource-rich organizations can more effectively control their environment. Population ecologists explained this through concepts such as “liability of newness” (Stinchcombe, 1965) and “liability of smallness” (Aldrich and Auster, 1985) which were based on the premise that inertia saves older and larger organizations from “dying”. In contrast, institutionalists focused their explanation on the

process of legitimization and the exercise of power which leads to isomorphism of organizational forms. Despite the fact that they analyzed larger systems such as ecologies or fields, in both traditions organizations were understood in the Weberian tradition of internally-oriented systems of social relations regulated by formal rules. By the end of the twentieth century, the pervasiveness of bureaucracies seemed so complete that Charles Perrow announced that we live in “society of organizations” (Perrow, 1991, 2002). This view stemmed from his observation that large bureaucracies, especially corporations, shape not only career mobility and the dynamics of inequality, but also education, public policies on health care, retirement and social service, as well as the outcomes of urban and regional economic development.

The existing traditions in population ecology and institutionalism, however, do not provide adequate means of analysis when it comes to forms of organizing that have only minimal formal structures, predetermined start and finish dates, and are often enmeshed with other organizations and networks. The population ecology approach, with its measurement of birth and death rates as a result of competitive pressures from the environment cannot be used in the case of disseminating projects, which have predetermined start and end dates. Likewise, new institutional theory cannot account for the rise of relatively new forms in inhospitable institutional environments. It assumes the relative maturity of organizational fields and organizational forms, two conditions that are not met in the case of project organizing.

As a reaction to the earlier focus on corporate hierarchies, the latest efforts in the studies of organizations have been directed towards searching for diverse organizational

forms that correspond with the changing nature of post-industrial capital accumulation. After a period of low interest, the concept of organizational form started getting a lot of attention again in the 1990s (Foss, 2002). The main theme of this most recent research is the importance of collaboration and interdependence among organizations to their survival in a highly uncertain and rapidly changing environment. These two features are seen as antithetical to the bureaucratic form as it has been attacked for two reasons: in the private sector, for its deficiency in learning and innovations caused by lack of joint participation from diverse groups of experts and customers (Sabel, 1991); in the public sector, for its deficiency in the democratic principles of participation and transparency (Hirst, 1994, 1997; Scott, 1998). *Attack on bureaucratic forms of organization, be it in the public or the private sector, was thus launched from the same basic source: they were deficient in learning, innovation, and responsiveness because they were too insulated.* If vertically integrated organizations driven by formal rules and technical expertise started out as the epitome of efficiency, towards the end of the twentieth century they came to symbolize resistance to inclusion and change. Instead, bureaucracies were redefined as structures “for which the reproduction of their system of means becomes their main organizational goal” (Castells, 1996, p. 71). New institutionalist theory in sociology and evolutionary theory in economics contributed to that reinterpretation.

Thus the moment when Perrow announced the peak of the society of organizations was also the moment of the height of its attack. Less than two decades later, Gerald Davis declared that the society of organizations was dead (Davis, 2009). The model of the organization as a building block of society turns out to have been short-lived: less than a

century. Instead of stable bureaucracies shaping their environment, it was the pervasive uncertainty and fast-paced changes of the environment that seemed to exert their unrelenting pressure on corporations. The central role of vertically integrated corporations was eroded by the rise of service and non-profit organizations, the contracting out of functions that were previously in-house, the financialization of the economy and its reliance on trade markets, and the resurgence of communities and networks as vehicles for knowledge creation and transfer (Wenger, 1999; Smith, 2002; Freeman and Audia, 2006; Davis, 2009). As Carroll and Hannan (2000) report, the importance of new, small firms in the economy is rising, as the size of large firms is falling - the average size of US corporations has declined from about 60 employees in 1960 to about 34 employees in 1990.

Yet, it is probably premature to declare the end of society of organizations. The world of post-industrial production may have destabilized the central role of hierarchically integrated organizations but it has also brought increasing interdependencies among professional fields, sectors, and organizations. Uncertainties that cannot be calculated away only seem to exacerbate the need for collective action in a world where competition moves from mass markets to niche and custom markets (Knight, 1921; Podolny et al. 1996; Sabel, Stark, 2009). *Organizations are still as important as ever but they are fragmented and networked, and often, short-lived and small.* The proclamation that the society of organizations is dead is perhaps appropriately understood as a call to end the Weberian definition of organization based on structural characteristics, i.e. the organization-as-thing, and towards understanding organizations as processes and patterns. Indeed, most recent

scholarship on organization is going through what might be called a process turn, or an orientation to action rather than structure and an emphasis on *organizing* rather than *organization*. Such a view has led researchers to focus on shifting populations of participants (Bidwell and Kasarda, 1985), on narratives that emerge through time (Czarniawska, 1997) or on sense-making and improvising (Weick, 1998; Faulkner and Becker, 2009). As W. Richard Scott (2004) argues, it might now be the case that societies are absorbing organizations, not the other way around.

While that might be the case, organizational sociologists are still faced with understanding the organizational manifestations of this process. To say that societies are absorbing organizations might be a good way to capture a general trend but it is also overlooking the problem of organizational form. If we consider organizational form as a generalized model of structuring relations, then we should be asking what the models that enable this process of connecting across social systems are. The reason this is important is because, as decades of organizational research have shown, organizational forms matter for macro-level outcomes.

Indeed, most of the recent research in organization studies has been directed towards varieties of forms understood as specific structural arrangements. Searching for innovation and the way to the future of organized capitalism, researchers have looked for organizational varieties where sectors or fields meet - for example, at the intersection between communities and firms, such as cooperative farms; or communities and non-profits such as the Burning Man festival (Chen, 2009); or between the public and private sectors, such as public-private partnerships. The common theme in most of this research is

the use of communities or informal networks as the underlying structures aiding the organizing efforts.

In contrast, my research focuses on the more generalized form of temporarily structured and task-oriented action that can be found in a variety of sectors and fields. Thus instead of looking for a diversity in organizational forms, I follow the call to study how diversity is organized (Stark, 2009). I understand this also as a call to researchers to look for common patterns of organizing activities, i.e. a commonly found form of organization, rather than to gather a collection of varieties. The interest in such a form has been mostly abandoned perhaps as a reaction to the earlier preoccupation with the bureaucratic form and its diffusion. The end of society of organizations and the view that organizations are best understood as arenas for action harks back to the period in the beginning of the twentieth century, before the field of organizational sociology found its voice. We seem to be in the midst of a similar period now and it might be one reason behind the trend of shifting the locus of scholarship towards professional, and specifically, business schools (Scott, 1996; Hinings and Greenwood, 2002).

While I share the view that organizations should not be understood as “things”, i.e. clearly bound and steady structures, I also think that organizational scholars should revive their old concern with showing that organizations are more than vessels for action. An organizational form that is diffusing across domains can be a unifying lens through which to address larger issues such as career structures, policy planning and implementation, the emergence of new professional fields such as facilitators or project managers, or urban and regional development outcomes. In that sense, I am sharing an institutionalist concern

with diffusion of form as a well-defined set of characteristics. However, instead of asking how a mature form diffuses into already mature organizational fields, this research asks how a non-traditional form is diffusing in inhospitable environments. In contrast to new institutionalist analysis, which views organizational form as a structure that is then disseminated through institutional processes, the proposed question relaxes this dichotomy and treats both form and environment in terms of experimentation with structure and process. This insight comes from the last decade of organizational research which produced a view of organizations as loosely-coupled and fluid.

The theoretical concepts that I will use come from economic sociology, social movements research, and the sociology of conventions.

Networks and Communities, Markets and Politics

The view that corporations are the defining organizational form of post-industrial capitalism has been shaken gradually. Starting in the 1980s and into the next couple of decades, organizational research has been focused on documenting the fragmentation of organizations, their experimentation with boundaries, governance models, and with flattening structures. Individual firms have been described as heterarchical and production markets have been described in terms of networks or chains (Gereffi et al, 2005; Podolny et al, 1996). Networks and communities, in particular, have been proposed as the emerging structures of organizing the post-industrial world. Thus organizations are no longer seen as closed social systems reproducing themselves by adapting to their environment, but as open-systems always looking beyond the current state of the environment into the

uncertain future. As the boundaries of an organization blur into larger structures of personal and/or organizational ties, researchers argue that the unit of analysis should be based on these structures, rather than individual organizations. Practitioners and theorists alike emphasize the increasing importance of collaboration to respond to the uncertainty and instability of markets driven by an ever-faster pace of creativity and information flows, on the one hand, and the increasing pressures for transparency and participation, on the other. Evidence and discussion of these trends can be found in research from various fields such as economic sociology, economic geography, organizations studies, public administration, and political economy studies.

Inter-organizational networks have been proposed as an alternative to either markets or hierarchies (Powell, 1997). Rather than short-lived and exchange-based relations, network relations are long-term and are based on social proximity defined as trust, norms of behavior, conventions, professional interests, or reputation careers (Piore and Sabel, 1984; Adler, 2002; Podolny et al 2005). Thus networks undermine both market relations, based on short-term pursuit of the best available deal, and hierarchical relations, based on impersonal technocratic expertise (Powell et al, 1996). Even some of the most hierarchical and bureaucratic organizations in the world, the U.S. military (Alberts, 2003) and the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (Ward et. al, 2000), sought out network models of organization to counter the problems and inefficiencies associated with vertical communication and insulation.

Similarly, communities are the equivalent of inter-organizational networks on the personal level. Deliberation and information interpretation with others who are equally

involved and interested in particular problematic are seen as mechanisms to preserve and enhance knowledge, arrive at more innovative solutions, and ultimately, enhance democratic participation, be it in shaping one's work or one's living environment. Some examples about how communities work together to enhance the performance of a larger unit of economic action, such as a firm, a cooperative, or a region come from an entertainment company (Cohendet and Simon, 2007), the software industry (O'Mahony, 2003), the cases of the Mondragon worker cooperatives in Spain (Turnbull, 1994; Wright, 2010), participatory budgeting in Brazil (Fung and Wright, 2003), and "learning regions" (Amin, 1999; Amin and Roberts, 2008). In studies of firms and industries, community is a different concept than the traditional understanding offered by the concept of *Gemeinschaft* in which personal interest is subsumed to the common interest and which is based on common beliefs and behavioral norms (Adler and Heckscher, 2006). In collaborative communities, in contrast, the common ground is a shared purpose "when a collectivity engages in cooperative, interdependent activity towards a common object" (ibid, p. 21). Such communities can be fostered within organizations or across many organizations and are proposed as an essential structure to organizing efforts. The collaborative community as a form of organization is oriented towards common goals or professional practice, i.e. towards pragmatic action rather than reproduction of itself. The norms and values that bind the community emerge from that practice rather than from familial or friendship ties or from relations of spatial proximity.

In social movement and political sociology studies that are more interested in democratic empowerment and participation, rather than in learning and innovation,

community can be understood not so much in terms of common professional practice or goal but in terms of common issues and concerns such as health, public education, and social services (Evans, 2004; Fung and Wright, 2003). Social problems are seen as best addressed by connection, cooperation, and community building. Fung and Wright use the concept of “empowered participatory governance” to describe a mechanism for participation based on deliberation and collaboration among the public and private sectors. When it is tied to state policy making, empowered participatory governance is an alternative to top-down, state-centric solutions. To be effective, Fung and Wright assert, participation must be formally constituted within state institutions. Thus, it is not only participation and collaboration that matter, but specific organizing mechanisms such as regulation, monitoring, and sanctioning at a higher level that make the theoretical concept of community involvement different than traditional collective action. The relationship between the community and the state is one of division of labor, rather than of plan and control. The local level is the one that innovates and experiments, while the higher, or institutional, level is the one that administers, monitors, and sanctions.

Researchers in that tradition have often been dubbed romanticists (DeFillipis et al, 2006; Jessop, 2002) and criticized for being overly optimistic about what, in effect, has meant the withdrawal of the state from delivering services and the increasing role of NGOs or private firms. In many policy arenas such as in the broadly defined area of economic development, mutually reinforcing trends like fiscal decentralization and localization of policy responsibility mean that cities increasingly manage their affairs through mechanisms of collaboration, which puts government in a position resembling the “hollow

state” (Jessop, 2003; Agranoff, 1998). The hollow state concept refers to units of government that are separated from their outputs, where negotiated contracts or other agreements link organizations. Just as in industry, networks play an ever-increasing role in public policy planning and implementation. In the case of local economic development, persons who represent government agencies spend a great deal of time arranging and operating in networks (Agranoff, 1998; 2003). This contrasts with the conventional view of hierarchically organizing economic policy objectives through a single government agency (Fosler, 1992) or acceding entirely to market forces for changes in the economy. As with the opposition between markets and hierarchies, networks and communities challenge the notion that the state is a representative hierarchy set off from a sea of civic relations. The “networked polity” (Ansell, 2000) comprises many organizations in and outside of traditional state hierarchies who together work on policy planning and implementation in a series of temporary projects. Just as in for-profit enterprises, interdependency and flexibility are the hallmarks of planning and organizing in public policy.

In sum, networks and communities complement each other and together are understood as social formations that undermine hierarchical and market relations. Not only that, but the existence of such relations is posited as detrimental to the formation of more collaborative forms of organizing because trust and collaboration will be stifled (Piore and Sabel, 1984; Ferraro et. al, 2007). Whether in the public or the private sector, participation and collaboration through networks or goal-bound communities are emphasized as both the observed trends and the prescribed models for advancing economic growth and deepening democracy. They are understood as antithetical to either markets or hierarchies and blur the

boundaries between sectors. Often, the onset of these new organizational forms raise the hopes for reconciliation between market and democratic values, long considered at odds with each other (Fung and Wright, Evans, Davis). Market relations are considered detrimental to democracy when only economic values are taken into account and communities' needs are destroyed; democracy is considered detrimental to markets when community participation destroys the incentives and lengthens the timeline for investments. The new relational models of organizing are seen as constraining markets by introducing elements of community into them.

However, as other scholars have observed, the trend towards communal forms of organizing, with its emphasis on long-term relationships, trust, and cooperation, is counter-balanced by another trend – that of fragmentation and an ever-increasing focus on market-flexibility and responsiveness. This is especially visible in recent research on work and occupations. This fragmentation is manifested not only in the decreasing size of organizations, as pointed above, but also in the significant increases in temporary employment relationships and freelance workers (Smith, 2002; Baumol, 2002; Teece, 2003), in outsourcing in the private and the public sectors through the use of tender procedures and short-term contracts (Agranoff, 1998), and in the intensifying orientation towards quick responses to market demands. Increasingly, people are working in smaller units, under non-traditional employment relationships emphasizing individual judgment, expertise, and responsibility (Zenger and Hesterley, 1997; Felin et. al, 2009). Researchers who point to the modularization and fragmentation of organizational relations emphasize

that contrary to predictions for more community-oriented relations, current trends only intensify market relations (Felin et al, 2006).

Although these two trends seem to be pointing in opposite directions - one in the direction of decreasing relevance of markets, and the other in the direction of their increasing relevance - they are more complementary than it might seem at first glance. The underlying organizational form that aligns networks, constructs and maintains communities, while at the same time introduces the elements of market flexibility, short-term horizons, and transactional relations is that of the project. The unifying discursive element is that of inclusion and forming ties. This micro-level of organizing, below networks, communities, or firms, is where the justifications are made in terms of ideas related to both market (flexibility and efficiency) and democracy (representation and participation of diverse points of view). The common denominator is connectivity. Connectivity is interpreted in terms of both market responsiveness and democratic participation.

Indeed, according to Boltanski and Chiapello (2005), the new logic of capitalist accumulation is based on a connexionist moral system that they term the projective city³. It emerges as a selective absorption of the capitalist critique of the 1960s. This selection retains the emphasis on individual freedom and personal expression but neglects the social critique: demands for social justice, equality, and solidarity. At the organizational level, the emphasis is upon change rather than stability, process rather than structure, and outcome rather than procedure. In their research on managerial texts in the 1990s, the authors

³ The City or Cité is a concept that the authors borrow from Plato to refer to a moral regime of justification that provides a definition of the common good and criterion for the judgment of the value of human beings.

notice that the *project organization* is a term that is often mentioned. They take this organizational form as the emblem for contemporary capitalism and the name for the emerging moral regime at the end of the twentieth century. The reason the authors do not follow the network metaphor and do not call the emerging moral order a networked or a connexionist city, for example, is that more than a structure of relations, projects introduce the requirement for reflexivity and making judgments through engagement and communication. These two features, engagement and communication, are crucial to understanding the modern “spirit of capitalism”. They are elevated to values and enshrined into institutions, organizations, and models of governance. Engagement, communication, interdependence, and flexibility inspire and legitimate new ways of organizing, production, and public management. In these texts, the “project managers”, “innovators”, and “coaches” come to replace the corporate manager as the main hero of the day. Bureaucratic rules and rigidity are rejected in favor of self-control, permanent change, and extending networks.

“Projects make production and accumulation possible in a world, were it to be purely connexionist, would simply contain flows, where nothing could be stabilized, accumulated or crystallized. Everything would be carried off in an endless stream of ephemeral associations which, given their capacity to put everything in communication, constantly distribute and dissolve whatever gels in them.” (ibid. p. 105).

Projects, with their capacity to stress not only communication and relation but also engagement and reflexivity, are the forms that make it possible to formulate claims about the common good and generate justifications for actions. Not only in the business world, but in the world of social movements and political mobilization, homogeneity of ideology

and organization is viewed as too totalitarian. Heterogeneity, face-to-face action, direct aid and pluralism are valued.

Thus the moral regime that emerges and which the authors dub the projective city is a constraint on the networked world. It offers a form of justice that simultaneously justifies the connexionist order and makes it possible to critique it when it does not contribute to a common good as defined in series of engagements. The extension of networks in itself is nothing new and has existed since commercial activities first commenced. What is new is the new value placed upon the activity of mediating and on the roles of facilitators, coaches, mediators, brokers, etc. (ibid, page 106). The quality of established ties are evaluated both by the social distance they have had to bridge and by their fruitfulness in terms of extending and refocusing the existing networks. Links that are simultaneously unlikely and highly productive confer the status of innovator or of an audacious project leader.

The role of intermediaries and brokers is reviving interest in the new institutionalist camp as well. As W. Richard Scott suggests, the role of these actors has been neglected by studies which focus only on the main actors but that these mediators stabilize the fields in which they work. They collect, disseminate, and interpret information so as to affect action in the principal agents. There is already some existing research focusing on such brokers. For example, Suchman (1995) and Suchman and Cahill (1996) study the role played by law firms who acted as legal consultants in the emerging semi-conductor industry in Silicon Valley. They didn't just pay attention to the venture capitalists, the entrepreneurial firms, and the mainstream electronic firms who were the main economic agents in the

industry. In their analysis, they showed that the legal consultants went from firm to firm and compiled a list of practices to distil a core set of organizing principles which then they disseminated to other members of the population. What is even more interesting, however, is the specialized roles that are emerging specifically to facilitate and mediate. There is no unified professional field, at least not yet, but there are various names for such roles, as Boltanski and Chiapello point out. They could be called project leaders, or facilitators, or negotiators. More often than not, they are performed by people who have taken an official role as consultants or investors and have won contracts in tenders to deliver specific projects. Thus in my research, I have also paid close attention to the role of such mediators as crucial to building the structure around projects and beyond projects, to networks.

Thus the formulation that Boltanski and Chiapello give to the project form is a first and rare attempt to treat it as a theoretical concept. In Organization Studies, Sydow et. al. (2004: 1480) noted that “apparently projects come in many kinds and definitions are quite vague, pointing rather to an empirical level of interest than a clearly bounded theoretical subject area”. If the goal of organization studies is to understand social processes through the prism of organized activities, then it behooves it to start developing such a theoretically bounded subject area. Insights from the latest research in organization theory, particularly, the dual emphasis on organizing as both cognitively and materially distributed process, is especially helpful.

Organizations and Social Movements

The cognitive side of organizing has been emphasized by many authors, especially Karl Weick (2005) and his approach to organizing as collective sense-making. The emerging scholarship on the common grounds between social movements and organizations has been especially productive in deploying narratives and identity as coalition-building mechanisms. Both social movements and organizations are forms of collective action and as such face challenges to recruit and retain participants and provide common orientation through training or other means (Davis et al, 2005). Research that blends organizational and social movements theory usually falls along three lines: the way social movements trigger organizational change (or how organizations respond to social movements); the way social movements set up organizations to be represented; and finally, within organizations, there are movement-like processes that are used to explain how internal change became possible. It is this last line of research that is helpful in addressing the question of diffusion as well by using some concepts developed in the social movements literature around coalition building. The difference is that instead of discussing change within single organizations, such as the one presented by Kellogg (2008) in her comparative case study of two hospitals, the processes of coalition building can be considered across organizations and thus used to explain processes of diffusion. The inspiration from the social movement literature allows organizational scholars to break the mold of deploying either formal authority or informal personal ties as a way to explain organizational structures (Clemens, 2005). For that reason, it also provides some useful concepts to address the question of diffusion of organizational forms that go beyond

authority (formal or informal) and delve deeper into how narratives and identities affect organizations.

It is interesting that in the social movements literature, this trend towards coalition building around identity and narrative has been aided by the use of the term “projectivity”. Ann Mische revives the concept from the work of Alfred Schutz as a way to theorize future-oriented action. In their research of youth organizations in Brazil, Mische and Pattison (2000) analyze the multiple layers of identities and action to organize social movements by using both non-government associations and projects as intersecting units of analysis. In this case, projects serve as long-term narratives of strategic goals rather than organizational forms. Emirbayer and Mische (2008) place the “projectivity” in the particular context of western culture with its “narrative-based structuring of time” and its ontological conceptions of human freedom. Further, in the phenomenological tradition, the authors emphasize the fact that projectivity involves intersubjectivity- it is the projective work of the imagination that allows the emergence of collective ideals, group interaction and negotiation, and strategic interaction. Pizzorno (1986) continues further by emphasizing not only the interpersonal inter-dependence but also the temporal interdependence: "identity through time will be securely defined by the standards of recognition anticipated for....future selves" (Pizzorno 1986, p.371).

From the theoretical concept of projectivity, Mische and Pattison derive their definition of projects as “*future-oriented narratives of proposed interventions*”. This conceptualization of projects as interacting collective strategies allows Mische and Pattison to analyze social movements in a changing political arena. By looking at the cross-section

between organizations and the projects they are engaged in, the authors are able to follow how the structure of relationships in the civic arena changes over time. They argue that coalitions are formed on the basis of multiplex and contentious relations among actors, overlapping sectoral domains, and fluid and changing sets of projects.

Emirbayer and Mische suggest that projectivity has an internal structure. First, there is the play of scenarios where participants let the imagination take alternative paths to what is already existing and ask “what if” questions; second, participants propose a hypothetical resolution to the actor’s existing conflicts; and third, there is an experimental enactment that tests the proposed resolutions in tentative or exploratory social interactions. The authors see projectivity as a dimension of institutions and suggest that this dimension has been neglected by new institutionalists in their pursuit of demolishing rational choice theory. In other words, Emirbayer and Mische use the term as an agentic theoretical concept that allows for analysis of change in organizations and institutions. In contrast, the implication of existing research on organizations suggests that projectivity is not only a dimension of organizations but is being used as a model to provide structure to ever-more short-lived, disposable, and experimental episodes in organizing. We can call this a generalized planning model and it is used to reformat the organizational landscape in both the public and the private sector. That is how I will use this concept – not in the sense of an institutional dimension but as a model for planning of activities within and beyond projects.

To address the question of reformatting the organizational landscape through projective planning, the concept of framing is useful. Goffman (1959) used the idea of

frames to label "schemata of interpretation" that allow individuals or groups "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" events and render meaning to them. Framing involves the strategic creating and manipulation of shared understandings and interpretations of the world, its problems, and viable courses of action. In the social movements literature, frames mediate between opportunity structures and action because they provide the means with which people can interpret the political opportunities before them and decide how best to pursue their objectives (McAdam et al, 2005). In the economic sociology literature, Callon (1998) uses framing as a way to define who the actors are and their relations. He also reminds us that every frame is threatened by overflows, i.e. that every frame is a cut-off but it is also connected to outside networks.

A project is a specific episode that temporarily pulls together in its orbit people from different networks. Part of the project work is framing work and the challenge is to employ existing frameworks and adapt them to its own needs. In my work I will use the term framing as an attempt to make narrative associations between objects, words, and actions that give meaning to what the participants are trying to do, what their relations are, and that ultimately, also set the expectations for outcomes from their efforts. Thus framing is understood as deploying not just symbols and metaphors but also material objects and physical surroundings.

For this reason I see them as referring to the same process of building the Project Topography.

The Topography of the Project Economy

As pointed out above, the project form of organization has become the preferred organizational model for “old” and “new” industries alike, as well as for public policy planning and implementation. Researchers, predominantly in economic geography and management studies (Lundin and Soderholm, 1995; Grabher, 2001; Ekstedt, 1999; Hobday, 1998) are taking an interest in how such temporary engagements are conducive to learning and innovation both at the individual firm and at the regional level. The main question that excites these studies is how to sustain the knowledge gained after the end of a project. There is also a very large specialized literature on projects within management and operations studies. They are concerned with issues around design, evaluation of performance, and human resource management issues. Yet, organizational studies have just recently started to pay attention to these temporary, disposable organizations. There are several key issues that such organizations raise: the problem of coordination given the short time to establish routines, common culture, or common identity to the organization, and indeed, to even get to know the other’s members; the problem of devising coherent career paths and narratives that do not involve upward progression through a hierarchy; the emerging professionalization of project management as a discipline; the emerging tools and standards devised around managing projects; the relationship between projects and between projects and permanent organizations, given that they often have to borrow resources from them. Beyond projects themselves, the diffusion of the form in the provision of public services raises questions about the changing nature of regional

planning and the role of public administrators. There are probably other issues that are problematized by the spread of this form.

Several definitions have been proposed to delimit the contours of projects. Gernot Grabher, an economic geographer, defines them along four characteristics: interdependence, tasks, deadlines, and a contractor. Interdependence refers to the fact that parties to the project depend on each other's input to do their own work. A contractor usually manages the projects and selects the team. Tasks refers to the fact that instead of being goal-oriented, projects have very specific tasks to handle which leads to a focus on activities rather than on decision-making. Finally, of course, deadlines mean that as temporary organizations, projects have a foretold termination date and are largely judged on whether they can meet it. Asheim and Marriusen (2003) propose a similar definition but they omit the contractor feature of the project, most likely because they study projects within firms rather than across them. Beth Bechky follows an approach that looks at projects predominantly as stand-alone organizations such as those found in film making or open-source coding. Her definition revolves largely around the fact that projects are temporary and involve people who don't know each other personally.

The three characteristics of team, time, and task are generally seen as sufficient to denote projects as specific forms. What is meant by team, however, needs to be augmented beyond simply a group of people working together. The crucial dimension of this work is the intersubjectivity involved, i.e. the need for group interaction and negotiation about the work at hand. That implies that although the task may be well-defined, exactly how one gets there is not, and that requires a level of engagement across different competencies.

Intersubjectivity here does not mean that there is consensus reached or that there are common meanings and symbols. Very often the short-term nature of projects does not allow for sufficient time to reach such consensus and indeed, that may not be necessary (Girard and Stark, 2002). Divergences of meaning, or dissonance (Stark, 2009), is partially where the strength of mixing competencies for short-term tasks lies.

These three elements are sufficient to delineate a project as an organizational form from the other uses of the word that are tied to individual endeavors (no team), routine work that does not involve team intersubjectivity, or long-term strategic narratives (no task and no deadline). At the same time, the looseness of the definition allows research on projects to be carried out in different contexts – within organizations (as with projects in marketing or R&D), within strategic alliances (common in the automotive and electronics industries), as stand-alone organizations that link several permanent organizations (as with film and TV production), or within project ecologies within particular industrial clusters or regions. Thus, “no project is an island” (Engwall, 2003) and cannot be analyzed in isolation from its particular context. Multiple layers of analysis are required, involving networks, epistemic communities, teams, and permanent organizations (Grabher, 2001).

The move towards projects in many different kinds of industries has been called by one researcher “*the projectivization of the economy*” (Ekstedt, 1999). Projects, either within or across firms, can be found not only in information and knowledge-intensive industries such as software, entertainment, and advertising, but in traditional ones such as automobiles and pharmaceuticals as well. In their search to be ever-more responsive to changing market demands, more flexible, nimble and innovative, firms are using

temporary organizing as a means to accomplish short-term tasks through bringing together diverse resources they may not necessarily own themselves. Complex products and systems, which have customized, interconnected elements are usually designed and produced in projects (Hobday, 2000). Users, buyers, other suppliers and often government agencies and regulators are involved in new designs, especially in the public safety and national security industries such as aerospace, telecommunications, energy systems, and the military.

Indeed, the very rise of the project as an organizational form is linked to these industries, rather than to industries that have more traditionally been set up to operate in projects, such as construction. The rise of projects as organizational spaces and as particular techniques for coordinating work for complex products can be traced to the military and its suppliers throughout the period between 1950s –1980s (Engwall, 1995; Crawford, 2004). Technological advances made the new weapons more complex and costly, which in turn triggered a re-conceptualization of weapons as a “system” (Horgan, 1992). New techniques were needed to maintain control over their development, often involving the dispersed functions of design, procurement, production, and funding. The development and acquisition of weapons after World War II led to a re-alignment of organizational models between the Department of Defense and its contractors. The solution was to establish a focal point for the new systems – a project office – away from the formal organization, bypassing existing command lines (Horgan, 1992). In 1954, the Navy established a Special Aircraft Project Office, followed by the Polaris program. The first methods of managing projects are associated with these first military-industrial projects.

The Polaris program introduced the Program Evaluation and Review Technique. In 1957 DuPont introduced a similar model, called the Critical Path Method, designed to address the complex and precarious business of shutting down chemical plants and then restarting them once their maintenance had been finished. Also in the 1950s, Bechtel was one of the first corporations to use the term “project manager” applied to international work on remote sites (Crawford, 2004). Projects continued to be associated mainly with the high technology sector throughout the 1970s and 1980s with the growth of computer technologies and software. This is also the period when project organizing begins a process of liberation from its system-based engineering origins and their emphasis on control and execution techniques and towards being seen more generally as a comprehensive way to organize creativity and innovation.

Thus, even though projects are first started within highly industrialized settings and evolved as organizational forms under the guidance of engineers and systems theorists, during the 1980s and 1990s that approach was challenged by software developers who insisted on their autonomy and emphasized innovation and team work rather than efficiency. Management academics, especially those concerned with human resources, creativity and innovation also resisted the purely technical approach to project organizing. Goodman and Goodman (1976) were among the first management theorists to start thinking systematically about what they called “temporary systems”. They based their studies mostly on theater productions and research and development projects, but also pointed out that the term applies to election campaign organizations, senate hearing committees and juries. From being seen as simply tools for performing one-off pieces of

work, projects evolved to the main units for organizing productive work, even where it used to be based on traditional operation flows (Sydow et al, 2004). Thus the “career” of the form follows a similar arc as that of bureaucratic structures. They were similarly justified first in terms of efficiency and designed by engineers as work systems, only to find resistance from those they tried to organize and be challenged by theorists who analyzed them as cornerstone elements in organizing social life.

The continued expansion of project forms of organizing into traditional industries such as cars and pharmaceuticals is further attributed to the spread of complex products in the modern economy as the appeal of mass produced goods wanes, technologies make customization, the involvement of consumers possible, and co-design and development with suppliers possible. Project organizing is increasingly seen as a requirement for harnessing innovation. Regional studies in the Nordic countries, in particular, have been finding that industries and clusters who know how to use projects to transform and exploit knowledge for economic purposes, do better than those who don't (Asheim and Mariussen, 2003).

Beyond industries and firms, other researchers have also acknowledged the diffusion of temporary, task-driven teams. In his comprehensive review of the field of regional development in Western Europe, Chris Ansell (2000) develops the notion of the networked polity where work is done in projects involving many organizations with overlapping jurisdictions engaged in cooperative relationships. He argues that the networked polity is an increasingly prominent and explicit model that operates on multiple scales (local, regional, national, and European).

The variety of different contexts and uses of projects has led to many studies that try to answer the question of how such temporary endeavors are able to coordinate their member's efforts. The explanations that the literature has offered rest on processes and structures found in networks, organizational fields, or institutions. Thus project organization emerges in a topography of interconnected and mutually defining levels of organizing activities.

The concept of swift trust (Meyerson et al, 1996) has been used to describe how people who don't know much about each other are able to work together, as well as the concept of trust in the case of communities whose members are in close and regular contact (Grabher, 2004). Relationships of trust typically emerge over repeated contacts, familiarity, shared experiences, and fulfilled promises. Such relationships may emerge in communities that have strong ties with each other and a common prehistory. Networked relations in industrial clusters are typically described in terms of trust. The concept of swift trust changes the location of trusting relationships from long-established strong ties to weak ties. People who may not know each other and will only be working together for a short period of time have to manage issues of uncertainty, risk, vulnerability, and expectations. Swift trust is not based on the quality of the relations between people but on the generic features of the setting within which their interaction occurs. These features vary with each situation but include such parameters as role expectations based on professional codes and certifications, the size of the labor pool, and the level of interdependence among participants.

In contrast, Beth Bechky (2006) argues that in the context of movie production, where teams of “gofers”, “gaffers” and “grips” run the movie sets, swift trust is not enough to ensure the smooth coordination of their activities. What stabilizes the project and provides career structures for these temporary employees is the existence of stable, enduring role structures which are reproduced through their continuous enactment in series of projects. Unlike swift trust, which implicitly requires professional communities with their codes of conduct, standards, and expertise, role structures refers to the work of production assistants who do not form such professional communities. They learn their skills mostly on the job and understand each other’s roles by because they have often performed them themselves. The role structures are thus the scaffolding upon which temporary projects can be built.

Drawing on the concepts of weak ties, structural holes, and identity, Grabher compares the advertising firms in Hamburg to the software development firms in Munich. He anchors projects into thin personal knowledge networks, or communities of practice, as well as into firms. The identity of a project is built around the demanding and unique tasks each one presents and is stronger than the identity of firms, especially in advertising. However, as much as a source of stability, the multiple layers within which projects are embedded could also be a source of tensions and instability as the identities and aims of projects, team members, and firms may not agree with each other. The logic of communality that governs the strong personal relationships in the software industry may clash with the “strategic rationality” of projects and may discourage the inclusion of unfamiliar team members. In contrast, weak ties in the advertising industry encourage an

ongoing rewiring of relationships and are governed by reputation more than trust.

However, this requires a continuous investment in time and other resources which is costly both to projects and to individual professionals.

In sum, the research on temporary organizational forms so far, has pointed to institutionalized mechanisms for coordination such as role structures, reputation networks, and professional standards and practicing communities. It also describes the topography of the project economy that is multi-layered and inter-dependent: projects, firms, networks, and communities of practice are intertwined and constitutive of each other.

However, all of the research so far has been conducted within particular industries. There is no study yet on projects and networks that go beyond a particular industry. This is especially the case in regional planning networks, or what Ansell has called the networked polity. Economic development plans and infrastructure are laid down in series of projects implemented at the regional level and with the participation of multiple organizations from different fields. This poses a couple of questions for the project organization: can we still talk about a community of practice involved, since it is likely that there will be more than one such community involved and that not all participants may be part of such communities; can we still talk about an organizational field when a variety of industries, NGOs, and government agencies are involved; can we still talk about even ecologies of projects which are typically understood as competing for the same pool of resources and within the same reputational networks? If these stabilizing structures do not exist, what is the topography of regional development projects? More than that, how does the project form endure in environments that lack any such stabilizing mechanisms?

Research Case and Methodology

Perhaps nowhere is the formation of the project topography more visible than in Eastern Europe in the first decade of the twentieth century. Projects were the organizational vehicle through which institutional reform was delivered, at first within autonomous Project Offices, established away from the perceived corruptive influence of central governments, and later, via bilateral and European Union funds. More than simply a vehicle, however, organizing in projects itself became one of the main tropes of the transformation process, and especially, of joining the developed countries in the European Union. Through Structural Funds and programs such as MATRA, PHARE, and SAPHARD, Eastern European countries received funding for a variety of public policy goals, all of which were packaged in the form of thousands of projects. To have these projects done, Eastern Europe had to learn new models for planning and for coordination. Such models were actively promoted through the very projects through which the funds were delivered and they represented a rupture with established institutional logics.

In 2007 I started following a regional development project on the Black Sea coast in Bulgaria for a period of two years until its end in December 2008. I found out about it from local newspapers and contacted the project manager. After an extensive conversation with him and his partner, I was allowed access and started following the activities of the project. The selection of this case was driven by the fact that both its task and its composition were complex. The project was established as an attempt to shift the path of development on the coast from one that is based on mass tourism to one that incorporates

environmental and social concerns. The task was to draft a strategy for the next twenty years based on rounds of negotiations among various local and national organizations and to propose and start building the institutional framework for its implementation.

I went to Bulgaria three times to do research – the first time was in June 2007 for a period of three weeks, a second time in the Fall of 2007 for a period of ten weeks, and again in the Fall of 2008 for a period of 12 weeks. I met multiple times with the two project leaders, traveled with them around the country to attend scheduled meetings with representatives of different organizations, as well as to a number of large, public, so called round-table meetings. Based on a list of organizations that the project leads have contacted, I conducted unstructured interviews with participants in these meetings as well as with organizations who were invited but ultimately decided not to be involved. I took field notes, recorded and transcribed the public round table meetings, took notes on (but did not audio record) my informal interviews, and collected all project reports, attendance rosters and memos. In an effort to understand better how this project connects different organizations together, I also traveled to the Netherlands to meet people at the agency which funded the project and who are involved in the set up and evaluation of similar projects. During the course of my involvement, I was always careful to explain my role as an outsider to the organization, in order to avoid any perception that I could be partial to the views held by the project leaders. Typically, that was not a problem since the mere fact that I am Bulgarian seemed automatically align me more with the Bulgarian organizations involved rather than with the Dutch consultants.

Chapter 2

My Coast, Your Coast, Our Coast, Whose Coast?:

Contention and Experimentation in Spatial Planning

“Political ecology does not shift attention from the human pole to the pole of nature; it shifts from certainty about the production of risk-free objects (with their clear separation between things and people) to uncertainty about the relations whose unintended consequences threaten to disrupt all orderings, all plans, all impacts.” (Bruno Latour, 2004, “Politics of Nature”, p. 25)

“You came to the Netherlands. Why? Because we are specialists in handling nature... The integrated approach means thinking of everything, including the social sphere – the individual citizens, government, NGOs, it all works together. On the other hand we have to think of how we create new land, it’s not only gaining new land, but also improving the existing cities and coasts.” Senior advisor to the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Environment, and Housing and the Ministry of Economic Affairs in the Netherlands, member of the advisory board of “My Coast” project

The project I followed, “My Coast”, starts and ends in the Dutch Ministry of Spatial Planning, Environment and Housing (VROM) but its route extends before it even took off and after it finished, and it links various regions and networks in the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Brussels (where the European Commission resides), and other European cities. Furthermore, apart from the physical world, the project also links different discourses on the environment, economic development, planning, and participation. It crosses different expertise fields, geographical areas, organizations, and policy networks. Its material presence is manifested in a dizzying array of such managerial tools as reports, strategic plans, memos, official letters, meeting minutes, rosters of participation, a collection of best practices, a web page, and maps. In this regard, it is by no means an exception. European

spatial planning and policy projects are weaved into such networks, narratives, and written communications on multiple levels. Perhaps it is not surprising that my search for a case of a project that is complex both in terms of its mission and in terms of its composition led me to “My Coast”. But if it can be located in any particular field, “My Coast” would fall within the large domain of sustainable spatial planning which is a relatively new and loose concept among European planners and policy makers.

Clearly, the project does not start with the idea that what it wants to do is to teach locals how to work in projects. What it envisions as its larger mission is the dissemination of a core set of ideas and practices, which together are known as “associational governance”. Much like neoliberalism is seen as a global form that travels through standards and laws around the world, associational governance can be seen as a larger program within the European Union combining economic growth with democratic participation. This program is galvanized by technological advancements and innovations that come from concerns with the environment and preserving resources but also with how decisions about the use of such resources has been reached. Under the heading of ecological modernization, scholars and policy makers have sought to reshape the practice of public policy making in line with associational governance but also with tools and standards for environmental management.

In order to understand the larger context of this project, a brief tour into the rise of ecological modernization and how it affects regional planning in the European Union in general, and in the Netherlands, in particular, is outlined below. Environmental and regional planning are slowly becoming more and more intertwined and that process is

evolving within the framework of what Sabel and Zeitlin (2008) have called experimentalist governance. However, this is a contested and unsettled process, one pulled between the twin poles of hard and soft regulation, or from another perspective, between managerialist (legal code) and associational (flexible guidelines) types of governance. This review of the larger context of “My Coast” illuminates two things: first, the sources of uncertainties and instability that a regional planning project faces even before it encounters the particulars of local institutions and problems; and second, it highlights the project as an experiment in a long chain of similar experiments, some of which will become demonstrations, a.k.a. best practices, and some of which will enter the column “lessons learned”.

Governance, Regional Planning, and Ecological Modernization in the European Union

The initiation of the “My Coast” project provides an overview of the many tools, plans, committees, institutions, and organizations involved in leading up to, setting it up, and justifying the project. Ecological modernization, regional planning, and associational governance (Sabel and Zeitlin, 2008; Ansell, 2001), are all frames within which such complex policy making projects take place. A review of how these separate fields and practices interact reveals public planning projects as temporary experiments in highly uncertain and contested terrains.

The diffusion of projects into the private sector has been linked to proliferating market uncertainties arising from the changing nature of demand, the changes in

technology, the rise of complex products and customization, and the speeding up of the race to innovate. In the field of public planning and governance in general, a crucial role in destabilizing long established practices and boundaries is played by the environmental movement from the 1970s and on. Spatial planning is slowly moving away from being focused on particular objects, such as roads and water management facilities, to being focused on projects – amorphous interfaces among many different fields, organizations, and institutions. Instead of a focus on objective or ‘true’ needs that have to be “discovered” through surveys and polls, converted into objects, and planned through blueprints which are then executed in the most efficient way, planning is increasingly viewed as a political process. The environmental critique played a crucial role in this shift. However, as Latour has argued (2004), this critique is not so much about “nature” or the “environment” but about the profound uncertainty about complicated associations between beings and things: producers, consumers, regulations, equipment, institutions, habits. Environmentalism bears not so much on a crisis of nature but on a crisis of objectivity.

This move parallels the one observed in the private sector, as well as in the general areas of regulation. In the private sector, companies are also shifting the focus of their activities from products to projects, and in the field of regulation, regulators are experimenting with guidelines instead of strict standards. Similarly, in planning, instead of objects, the field is reorganizing around projects as a way to include both market flexibility and democratic participation in the process. This new conceptualization falls in line with the idea of associational governance which emphasizes the same principles. The inherent tensions, however, between market and democracy are still present. These are still

experiments in “how to eat and to talk at the same time” and as such they are continuously trying to prove that these two actions are not only possible but complementary to each other. Thus the challenge is to contain them and circumscribe any other trends that are outside of this framework. Such threats are posed by legal claims and the application of strict standards.

Ecological Modernization

The notion of ecological modernization was launched in the 1980s by the so-called “Berlin school” of environmental policy which influenced both social science research and German policy debate (Mol and Janicke, 2009). Many of the arguments that these researchers made have some parallels to arguments made in the early twentieth century by mechanical engineers who were also concerned with the scarcity of resources and with increasing labor militancy (Shenhav, 2001). Instead of the labor issues and wasting valuable resources, this time the discourse was around health issues and not accounting for valuable resources. Much like the engineers of the early twentieth century, the Berlin school proposed to reconcile the environmental movement and the business world by proposing that environmental issues are not in opposition but in effect, complimentary to innovation and technology. The emphasis was on efficient use of resources and providing benefits for both the economy and for the ecology.

In the period 1970-1985 “green discontent” led to protests against both environmental harm and how decisions that resulted in such harm were reached (Tatenhove and Leroy, 2009). The most radical environmentalism was in Germany where

the movement dominated the political scene in the 1970s. While the agenda on ecological modernization was set in Germany, the further development of the approach into a more systematic and formal theory was initiated in the Netherlands.

Critique of ignorance of political and economic elites both on the content of decisions and on the insular manner in which they were taken led to a double development in environmental politics (ibid). The first one was along the lines of encoding environmental standards and developing laws and regulations and institutions to implement them. Some examples of the new regulatory tools that were developed were the environmental impact assessments and technology assessments required for new investment plans. The second development was that the issue of participation of relevant stakeholders took off. The variety of forms of interactive policy making currently experimented with all over Europe represents a family of non-codified political practices in which associations and government agencies congregate to discuss politics in early stages of policy making (Akkerman, Hajer and Grin, 2000). On the other hand, government aims at pricing the environment as a common good through a variety of economic instruments such as taxes and fines to tradable emission permits.

Thus the environmental movement, especially in its transformation from an opposition and critique of corporations into a corrective and an opportunity for growth, has influenced the practice of regional planning, especially in countries where it had strong presence like Germany, Britain, and the Netherlands. However, just as ecological modernization influences regional planning in the direction of associational governance, it

also provides the rhetoric and the means to move in a direction of traditional, centralized measures for compliance.

European Governance

Associational, or network governance, is perhaps most associated with European Union governance and can be understood as a political program of European exceptionalism. The translation of economic sociology literature on networks from the 1980s was taken up mostly by British and Dutch political scientists and public administration scholars who developed the notions of networked and community governance. Predominantly Rhodes (1990, 1996) and Kickert (1997) argued that the state alone does not have the capacity to exert hierarchical authority over all aspects of the economy and should be involved in an interorganizational network that would make far better policies. In these works, network, or as it is also called, associational or collaborative, governance emerged as an alternative to known policy making models such as adversarialism and managerialism (Ansell and Gash, 2007).

One model of policy-making is the winner-take all, or adversarialism. Groups involve in typically zero-sum games, where the win of one side means that the other loses. Even though coalitions and areas of agreement might be found, the emerging cooperation is ad-hoc and doesn't evolve over the long term. The decision-making is not explicitly oriented towards creating positive sum games. Another way of resolving conflicts and issues of public policy is to rely on agency experts. This is the managerialism view. Managerial approaches may even consult stakeholders but the latter are not directly

involved in decision-making. Collaborative governance, or associationalism, emerged as an idea in the scholarly literature in the US, Britain and the Netherlands, mostly in reaction to the accountability deficit in managerialism in statist systems and to the high political costs in pluralist systems.

Today in the European Union, it has become the guiding principle of public policy making, as well as the actual practice in many areas of public policy making (Agranoff, 1996; Ansel, 2000). The White paper on EU governance specifically outlines that good governance has three main principles, which are openness, participation, and effectiveness. In a system of network governance the state is an activator. Instead of top-down, hierarchical allocation, the state is charged with bringing together the relevant state and societal actors. It is oriented towards problem-solving rather than individual utility-maximization. (Eising and Kohler-Koch, 1999).

One of the dominant features of associational governance is that it is multi-level which is to say that it is interconnected – the supranational, the national, and the sub-national levels of decision-making are not nested into each other but instead each can operate within each of the other levels. (Hooghe and Marks 2001). The second dominant feature is the community method, i.e. that during the preparation, formulation, and implementation of policies, the EU commission consults with or even co-opts private groups and organizations in order to gain from their expertise. Empirical evidence has been brought in support of the theory that the inclusive nature of network governance has the positive effect of being more open to new interests and innovative ideas (Herritier, 1999).

A slightly different concept than associationalism is that of experimentalist governance, introduced by Sabel and Zeitlin (2008). Openness and participation are key to the concept as well, but the focus is on the nature of rule-making, or on the functions, rather than the structure, of governance. A single function, like monitoring, can be implemented through a variety of institutional mechanisms. The general framework for experimentalist governance is the Open Method of Coordination which was established with the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The key to experimentalist governance is that instead of relying on hard laws and sanctions, its architecture is built around guidelines, goals, performance measures, and best practices. In return for their relative autonomy from strict measures, national and local actors have to participate in peer reviews in which their results are compared with those of others pursuing similar goals but with different means. Often, the deliberations and experiments that are conducted at various local levels result in revisions of EU directives, regulations and standards. Thus Sabel and Zeitlin argue that although collaboration and negotiation are important features of EU governance, the really crucial innovation lies not so much in its deliberative nature but in the fact that it introduces a set of tools for monitoring and implementation that allow for continuous revision of already established “hard” and “soft” regulations. Experimentalist governance in that respect does not seem to be in opposition to managerialism or adversarialism, the way associational governance is. It is an alternative that lies on a different scale and could, in theory, accommodate both a move towards stricter standards and a move towards deliberation. That inherent tension is essential to experimentalist approaches. This is one reason why projects as temporary settings organized around the tools of framework goals,

deliberation, performance measures, monitoring, and best practices provide the organizational setting for such experiments. Depending on the specific fields within which they act and on their perceived success in demonstrating the merits of deliberation, projects can become “arguments” for or against more flexible or stricter application of regulations. The next string of projects, however, can reaffirm or unstabilize previously reached conclusions, depending on their ability to produce lasting institutions or technologies.

Spatial Planning

Within this general framework of experimentalist governance, the practice of public policy planning is changing as well. Planning has long been linked to the idea of the modern nation state and its ambitions to develop a comprehensive system of controlling its territories (Perloff, 1980; Scott, 1998). As a professional field in the United States, planning refers to urban or spatial planning or, as it is also sometimes called, community planning. This emphasis is based on the tradition of small local government with ethnically and racially stratified settlements (Friedmann, 1987). It involves infrastructure, architecture, land use, and industrial location.

In Europe, planning has a broader meaning, including many layers such as macro-economic policy, development methods, and social welfare policies. Spatial or regional planning is taking on new political and academic significance, as Europe is becoming more integrated and issues of trans-nationalism are springing up. With the addition of new member states, the question of how to transform their institutions has also given rise to what is called developmental planning (Bruzst, 2002).

Developmental planning stems from the European's left idea of regulated capitalism where empowerment of diverse social and economic actors ensures extended and multi-level accountability (Hooghe, 1998). The economic cohesion policies that fund national, regional, and sectoral developmental programs are premised on the principles of partnership and programming. The rationale is the coordination of economic activities so as to achieve positive outcomes through the creation of public goods in the areas where targeted populations live. In that sense, developmental planning as applied through projects in Eastern Europe has its roots in European regional, or spatial, planning.

Regional planning as a policy field was first established with a resolution by the Parliamentary Assembly to the Council of Europe in 1964. In 1967 a report was published by the Council of Europe called "*Regional Planning: A European Problem*". Since 1970, a series of conferences under the label CEMAT (Conference Europeenne de Ministers Responsable pour L'aménagement du Territoir) were held annually to address themes of transnational spatial planning. In one of these conferences in Spain in 1983, a European Charter of Regional / Spatial Planning was adopted. It stipulates:

"Regional / spatial planning seeks out at one and the same time to achieve balanced socio-economic development of the regions, improvement of the quality of life, responsible management of natural resources and protection of the environment, and rational use of land',

It continues on to state that the achievement of these goals is "essentially a political matter". It took another few years and several conferences for the publication of the first official European Spatial Development Prospective (ESDP), which became a kind of a "Mao bible of the spatial planning community in Europe." (Kunzmann, 2007). The claims

that spatial planning makes are based on the idea of interconnectedness among various industries, the environment, and the culture of a particular location. A locale is viewed not only as a whole but also as a whole that needs to be able to sustain itself.

Thus in the last decade in the European Union, there are some interesting developments regarding the various forms of planning, such as spatial, environmental, regional, and social welfare. Traditionally separated, there are some trends that these forms of planning are slowly converging in theory and in practice. This has led to a new approach which in the Netherlands has become known as integrated planning. Integrated planning grounds itself in the People-Planet-Profit framework: the three-pillars of sustainable development.

The EU formulated the three pillars of sustainability at its Copenhagen Summit and with the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997. Known as the "three-pillar model of sustainability", the principle states that sustainability not only comprises the natural heritage passed on to the next generation but also the economic achievements and social institutions of society, such as democratic political participation or peaceful conflict resolution. Sustainable development thus rests on an ecological, an economic and a social pillar. Proponents argue that if one of the pillars gives way, the 'sustainability building' will collapse.

In 2001 the EU adopted its own sustainability strategy as a supplement to the Lisbon strategy, which addresses the economic development. Climate change and clean energy, public health, demographic trends and migration, the management of natural resources and global poverty and development are the focal areas of the strategy. Almost

all EU member states have now adopted their own sustainability strategy. In many cases, one characteristic feature of sustainability strategies is the close involvement of social players such as associations, environmental organizations, societies and municipal authorities, the underlying idea being that sustainable development cannot be prescribed by law but that all players and agents must contribute to it.

The growing complexity, the increasing concern about rapid and random development, and dramatic increase in environmental issues, put the emphasis on long-term thinking and more strategic approaches and frameworks (Albrechts, 2004; Salet and Faludi, 2000). In the European Spatial Development Perspective from 1999, sustainable spatial development is a central concept. It combines various approaches, not just the classical ecological sustainability concept, but also the so-called cohesion and competitiveness approach. This two approaches include the ideas of fair distribution of income (a long-time objective of the EU) and the competitiveness of regions. Thus within regional planning, there are the often contradictory demands for competitiveness and for sustainability. Environmental NGOs, who have been especially active in shaping EU policies through lobbying groups such as the Green 10 and the Coalition for Sustainable Development, often express concerns in their reports that sustainability concerns will be trumped by issues of competitiveness. Even if European guidelines advocate for participation, the European courts will uphold the right of corporations to execute their plans to their interests. Thus the decentralized, or associational form of governance that has been highly promoted within the EU, could be circumscribed by the legal route where

‘soft’ regulation such as guidelines and negotiations have no leverage when it comes to implementing “hard” laws.

In conclusion, the fields of spatial, regional planning, and environmental planning, although separate, in practice began a process of converging in the 1990s and on. Although often the convergence is under the category of sustainable development or sustainable spatial planning, that concept is not always used. Regional plans have to take into account environmental standards and concerns. Environmental NGOs are active participants in shaping regional development plans and participate both at the local level and directly lobbying EU institutions. Both regional and environmental planning have addressed the issues of participation and openness in the manner in which decisions are made, while at the same time preserve their concerns with measurable and comparable outcomes. Associational governance can be challenged on the basis of legal codes and standards enforceable by European courts. Further, critiques of associational governance point out that for all the local autonomy and flexibility, hierarchical centralization is still very much a tendency within Brussels that pulls towards enactment of a multitude of laws and regulations in the name of unity but with very little input from the public (Borzel, 2008).

Many of the uncertainties that any given project faces in these conditions is that there is no established organizational or expert field within which it is located. To be more precise, the fields are themselves changing and often merging in terms of professionals involved and arguments made. Projects need to thread multiple discourses, multiple organizational and institutional dynamics, and multiple professional fields. These include not only urban and environmental planners but also scientists, activists, and politicians.

These groups can be located in any one of many organizational settings such as universities, NGOs, national government agencies, European agencies, or local municipalities and regional governing bodies.

In the particular case of “My Coast”, these conflicting forces come into play when the project is conceived, planned, and justified. It can be understood as one in a series of attempts to influence EU-level policies, through experimenting in a new member country. The motivation for this project lies partly in Dutch aspirations for positioning the Netherlands as an expert on sustainable or “green” development based on its long history of managing environmental issues. The other part of the motivation lies in a larger “argument” for the policy-making approach that “My Coast” selected, with its emphasis on flexibility when it comes to targets and on consensus-building. This argument plays out both on the local ground in Bulgaria, but also and in connection to that, on the larger European arena.

“My Coast” Pre-History

The project falls in a line of similar projects that stemmed from the renovation of the port of Rotterdam and the general Rijnmond area surrounding it. The experience of the renovations of the port were translated into a framework for regional planning that was called “integrated area planning”. After piloting several projects with this approach in the 1990s, the Netherlands sought to export it to other urban areas in the European Union. “My Coast” is a sequel to these series of experimentations, this time in a new member country. There are several actors of importance in this process – the Dutch Ministry of Housing,

Spatial Planning, and the Environment (VROM) and the Dutch Agency for International Business and Cooperation (EVD). In addition, the experiences of the city of Rotterdam and surrounding areas, the Randstadt, are crucial to understanding the overall framework of “My Coast”, why it was started in the first place, and why the consultants who won the tender to execute the project won. The initiation of the project is itself a long and a negotiated process. In this case it started three years before the commencement of “My Coast” in the beginning of 2007.

The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, and the Environment (VROM) and EVD, the Agency for International Business and Cooperation

The original initiative for “My Coast” starts with the VROM and more specifically, with the coordinator of the International Platform for exchange of know-how and expertise within the ministry. This initiative leads to an official delegation of the VROM to the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development in 2004. The mission of the delegation is to find possible areas for cooperation between the two governments in the area of regional planning and development. This is important moment when Central European countries are accepted into the European Union and the same is expected to happen in 2007 for Bulgaria and Romania. With that in mind, the Dutch were looking to gain a foothold on markets where they can offer some expertise and also influence institutional change in the new member countries. During these negotiations, the Dutch saw an opportunity to promote their way of doing regional planning and to gain consulting and service procurement contracts in the that field. Subsequently, a conference in one of the large resorts on the

Bulgarian sea coast was held again with representatives from VROM and various Dutch organizations. At that conference, it was agreed that the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development “urgently needed a Perspective of the Future of the Bulgarian Coastal Zone in line with the Dutch approach”.⁴

Funded through the MATRA pre-accession program run by the EVD, the Dutch Agency for International Business and Cooperation, “My Coast” is part of several hundred bilateral projects the Dutch government sponsors in preparations of European Union candidate countries⁵. The EVD is funded by three ministries: the VROM, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. It distributes funds on projects all over the world. It funds short-term projects that last about one year and are mostly around issues of social inclusion, as well as long-term projects which last two years and have to be about institution building. The project that was later named “My Coast” was initiated and funded through the EVD as one of their long-term projects. The individual activities around the drafting of regional strategy, the establishment of institutional mechanisms to implement it were to be executed by local actors, so the purpose of the project was to provide technical assistance, understood predominantly as project management assistance or facilitation.

When describing the motivations behind promoting integrated management and funding projects like “My Coast”, the project officer at the EVD who was responsible for Bulgaria and Romania commented in this way:

⁴ Terms of Reference for the project, as written by EVD / NEDECO, October 2006, PPA06/BG/7/3

⁵ In the period in question, those countries were Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Turkey. Even though Romania and Bulgaria were accepted into the European Union in 2007, they still qualified for pre-accession funds.

“The Netherlands is a service-oriented country, we export, that’s the way the Netherlands makes money, we don’t have large industries and stuff, so for us its really important that all sectors get integrated...We are doing a lot about the environment, all this people-planet-profit... to find a way to make projects, to stimulate the economy again ... so there are a lot of environmental projects happening because of the crisis, to develop new jobs and to get creative. In other countries, like Germany, they became really active in the environment as well. Now we are trying to get ahead again but we are not there yet. This is my opinion but I think Germany is better in environmental issues. ...I see more German consultants in Bulgaria but more possibilities are in Romania for the Dutch especially because of Constantia, the port.”

The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, and the Environment in the Netherlands was established in the 1980s as a first step towards integrating the previously separate areas of regional and environmental planning. Housing is a very important problem in the country where high-density construction has to be reconciled with environmental concerns. Limited space, high population density, and a tight regulatory framework around land usage creates a situation of continuous housing shortage (Shetter, 1987). Thus the three issues of housing, environment and spatial planning (understood as economic development) were coupled together under a single government authority. This was the beginning of a movement towards integrated, or sustainable spatial planning. The VROM is also very active at the EU level where is trying to influence environmental regulations in water and air (de Roo, 2003).

To understand the importance of spatial planning in the Netherlands, one has to start with the importance of water management. Water has always been a key issue here: the coastline makes up half of the borders in the country, it is situated in three river deltas, and most importantly, more than half of the land lies beneath the sea level. For hundreds of

years, the Netherlands has installed and operated an extensive water management system, with its own administrative bodies, the water boards. These boards manage the levies around the local polders, as well as the waterways that crisscross the country and they monitor the water levels and quality. They are even heralded as the first democratic institutions in the Netherlands emerging in the 13th century as local communities had to cooperate (TeBrake, 2002). In turn, alongside defense from flooding, land reclamation has always been a key objective in spatial planning. One of the most important undertakings that shaped the landscape of today's Netherlands was started in the 1950s after a disastrous flood led to consolidation of local water boards. The Delta Plan involved large-scale dyke building and land reclamation that created large inland fresh-water reservoirs (Shetter, 1987). Dykes that could withstand ten-thousand-year floods, or a flood the likes of which has a probability of occurring equal to one in ten thousand in any year, were built. No other country set such exacting requirements. In this process, hydraulic engineering which has always been an influential profession in the country, has become an important symbol of technological ingenuity and prowess. In terms of social power and prestige, it parallels the atomic physicist and the genetic engineer in the US. The Ministry of Transport and Water Affairs also grew beyond its original mandate to oversee day-to-day management of water and evolved into a "state within a state" (Shetter, 1987).

Yet, for the first time in its history, the Netherlands may have to relinquish some control over its water policy. As the European Union is working towards unification of standards for environmental protection, the Netherlands is finding itself in an unfavorable position. While the Netherlands thinks more in terms of goals, target values, and

guidelines, the EU sets limit values on pollutants and area designations which are directly enforceable by the European Court of Justice (van Ravesteijn and Evers, 2004). The aim of preserving biodiversity that have been set by the EU Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive, specifies that countries have to specify areas that will be protected from urban and industrial development. For the Netherlands that means less ability to build necessary housing. In addition, intensive land use in the Netherlands has resulted in high concentration of environmental pollution, specifically water pollution. As the most densely populated state in the EU and with the highest density of roads, waterways, railways, and power lines, the Netherlands finds itself in a situation to defend its policies against strict implementation of EU sanctions. *Thus spatial planning, which has always been of central importance in the country, becomes not only an internal issue but also one that has to be managed at the European level.*

The EU environmental standards pose a serious challenge to the Netherlands but the country is not unprepared. The challenge to the authority of hydraulic engineers and technologically-oriented management of water issues that broader environmental concerns pose started earlier and was especially visible in the city of Rotterdam. This shift from technology to policy-orientation in the planning of space is thus led by environmental movements but is still an ongoing process that is by no means uncontested.

When VROM was established in the 1980s, there was already growing concern that environmental planning should be considered as part of spatial planning. Consensus-building and participation have traditionally been part of spatial planning but not of environmental one, which remained largely focused on water management issues.

Throughout the 1980s, the approach the ministry took was still based on establishing standards and regulations, enforced by the Dutch courts. This started slowly changing in the 1990s under the direction of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning, and Environment.

In 2000, the VROM proposed a new spatial planning act that had the ambition of revising the entire planning system in line with the recommendations of the Scientific Council of Government Policy, a think tank whose mission is to advise the government. The plan emphasizes communication and negotiation as key elements in convincing various interest groups to embrace common goals and strategies. These were already part of the Dutch planning system but were now seen as suffering from an elitist bias as they were based on supplementary structures of semi-corporatism (van Waarden, 1992). This closed character of planning came under serious pressure and the very idea of the concept of space changed to include not only physical but also social and technological components of networks. The Scientific Council concluded that institutional changes referred to as stakeholder planning, were needed to revive the legitimacy of initiated projects. The government-centered approach to planning should be eliminated because it generates problems to legitimacy and only creates resistance. Ongoing structuring and reformulation of the problem throughout the planning process was recommended, as the “usefulness and necessity” of it would be constantly reconsidered and deliberated in light of new information.

A key part in this change was played by the Rotterdam Harbor and the area surrounding it.

Rotterdam City and Harbor

Rotterdam is one of the most important cities in the Netherlands. It plays an indirect role in “My Coast” through its role in shaping the ROM strategy but beyond that in representing a “best practice” in coastal zone management. The VROM delegation which visited the Bulgarian regional development ministry in 2004 found out that one fruitful area for cooperation is under the EU directive for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) from 2002. “My Coast” was eventually conceptualized and funded within that directive and after the specific request of the Bulgarian ministry for help in building the necessary policy instruments to comply with it. Thus even though it is a bilateral project between two governments, “My Coast” was implemented as an institution-building project under EU guidance. The Netherlands itself is still figuring out how to respond to this directive and this project was seen not only as an experiment in transferring their own experience to another context but also as an “argument” that the EU guidelines are best implemented through a Dutch consensus-style approach, rather than through institutions relying on technical expertise. Further, the project was seen as an opportunity to export expertise on integrated area management and specifically on port management, as provided by the case of Rotterdam Harbor. The VROM was also specifically interested in the port of Varna and its plans for renovation and expansion.



The ICZM is a new directive and as such it is not compulsive but as coastal country, Bulgaria signed it. The Bulgarian ministry of regional development wanted to be in compliance with coastal planning in particular, and in general, with regional planning directives in the EU and wanted to show good spatial plans and projects to implement them. This is where the experience of Rotterdam as the largest port in Europe and one that has gone considerable transformation in the last twenty years came to play a role in the methodology for “My Coast”.

In addition, Rotterdam is in competition with German ports as a distribution point for Eastern Europe. The Rhine-Danube link will open much of Eastern Europe to Rotterdam. Under the EU competition policy which aims at abolition of state aid and the creation of free internal markets, the port of Rotterdam found itself with cut subsidies while other countries, such as France and Germany continued to provide aid. Thus Rotterdam finds itself with opportunity to boost its trade volume as it opens to Eastern European markets. As a city of great economic importance to the Netherlands, the VROM is willing to help in that process, especially if it leads to demand for Dutch expertise in areas such as dredging, port construction, and water management in the new member countries. The consultants who eventually won the bid to execute the project specifically emphasized in their proposal that they had experience and could rely on the support of people who were involved in the theory and practices behind Rotterdam’s impressive growth and apply these lessons to the Bulgaria Black Sea coast.

In the 1980s, as the country was struggling with unemployment and economic restructuring, the port was made into a major pillar of international competitiveness

because it was seen as one of two main distribution points in the Netherlands⁶. At the time, the city was considered a problem child. In the 1970s, a strategy was developed as a broad coalition of local residents and authorities known as "building for the neighborhood". Solidarity and equality were emphasized but in doing so economic activities were driven out of the city (Wigmans, 2001). The undoing of this strategy started in the 1980s when the concept of the city as a collective residential arrangement gave way to the entrepreneurial city (ibid, p. 207). For Rotterdam, it was decided that the port should grow from being primarily a supplier of the German Ruhr area into a major node in international networks and the gateway to Europe (van Ravesteyn and Evers, 2004). City branding and the search for an image of a city that is neither global like London, nor sub-global like Amsterdam yielded the image of a harbor or gateway city.

A program for the renovation of the port and the expansion of its shipping and distribution capacities was started in the 1980s⁷. The Municipality and the Port Rotterdam company perceived this expansion as crucial to the economic health of the city and the surrounding areas. The Rotterdam Harbor and Industrial Complex was traditionally managed through a series of covenants between the government and firms, where environmental targets were stipulated. However, a coalition of regional and national environmental organizations protested that the standards are not being met and that the economic benefits do not outweigh the damage to the environment and quality of living in the region. Costly legal battles often stalled the process. These NGOs felt that their position was not taken into account in the process. In addition to the harbor, several other

⁶ The other one is the Schiphol airport which was similarly elevated to a national priority.

⁷ This part is from Baas, 2008 and Kelly, 2000

infrastructure projects in the 1990s failed, among which a highly publicized one for building a rail connection from Rotterdam to the German border. These failed projects demonstrated that the discussions could never be limited to technical issues and economic growth alone. These failures were studied by the Scientific Council and attributed to the central planning approach and the exclusion of stakeholders with critical perspective (de Roo, 2003).

A new approach was attempted along the lines of an industrial symbiosis in 1994. Industrial symbiosis has its origins in ideas from sustainable architecture. The set of industries within a region is considered as a whole and sustainable solutions are sought where the inputs of one industry are the outputs of another. The industrial association, Deltalinqs, started the a set of projects with the participation of 69 industrial firms. Initially, they defined 15 potential projects. Sharing of utilities was the first possibility for developing alliances within the region. In 1998, the results were evaluated by Deltalinqs and after securing more funding, the association started a second project called INES Mainport Project 1999-2002 (Baas, 2001).

Thus the experiences of Rotterdam led to an understanding that a region has to be considered in its whole and that no government planning can achieve what sustained rounds of negotiations and agreements among local organizations can do. As the Secretary of the ROM Rijnmond, the regional partnership for the Rotterdam Harbor put it:

“It is very difficult in Holland to do something because of all the strict regulations regarding environment and the only way to do something is to negotiate.”

To build on these experiences, the VROM started a series of eleven experimental projects during the 1990s. They varied in the extent of openness they had, the size of the areas they covered, or the publicity and political significance they had. Despite these differences, the VROM concluded that what all these projects demonstrated was the inability of a standards-driven approach to resolve conflicts. This led to a new approach to planning, which in the Netherlands is known as ROM (Ruimtelijke Ordening and Milieu: Spatial Development and Environment). The assumption behind it is that there is only a limited certainty as to the final outcome of a policy and that participation and negotiations have to become part of the planning process. The plan takes on a different meaning from blueprint – it is a reference for continuous interaction through which discourses may evolve (Healy 1993). In practice, this meant that it is possible to deviate from prescriptive regulations, if there were sound reasons to do so. The responsibility for this decision was placed in the local level.

Thus building on a long tradition in Dutch policy making, ROM policy making emphasizes building consensus and devising individual solutions geared towards local circumstances. The new aspect of it is that the circle of participants is wider and they are involved earlier in the process. Informal and implicit rules related to relationships and local circumstances are allowed to function and the focus shifts from being goal-oriented to being driven by ad-hoc settlements. The central questions are: Who is to reach consensus, on what, and how? Thus the ROM approach assumes a temporary project structure, as participants are drawn on the basis of a designated area and target groups in a series of decision-making and implementation initiatives (de Roo, 2003).

With this approach the entire region with all its complexity of industrial and social relations becomes the unit of planning policies. Thus ROM is contrasted with old-style sectoral approaches which came to be seen as fragmented and counter-productive in the long-term. For example, building a highway should be considered within the broader issue of livability in an area, i.e. it is linked to ecological, economic, and social dimensions (Glasbergen and Driessen, 2005; De Roo, 2003; Wigmans, 2001). The region itself is organized around a series of related projects rather than individual objects such as ports, railways, housing units, dykes, fisheries, farms, or industrial sites.

In 2001, the successes of these pilot ROM projects were actively promoted by VROM through Eurocities – a network of one hundred and forty city governments across thirty countries in the Union and with the sponsorship of the European Directorate for Research. This resulted in another set of projects, collectively known as the Pegasus Programme. It implemented the ROM approach to the renovation of other urban areas such as Oslo, Malmo, and Vienna and created a report on the lessons learned about communication and facilitation in bringing about conflicting parties to the table. With these series of projects, the Dutch government sought to influence the theory and practice of planning beyond its borders and to build a portfolio of cases that demonstrate its approach to planning.

In their bid for the project, the consulting consortium had to propose a project design for the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. Part of the project design is the methodology that the project is going to use to achieve its tasks and organize its activities. The team built its

proposal around the methodology that the previous Pegasus projects used and which is derived from the experiences in Rotterdam. In their bid, they wrote:

“My Coast will introduce a new way of policy making in Bulgaria based on the Pegasus methodology, a functional methodology for integrated project or process development.”

The team strongly believed that they won this tender because of the methodology they proposed.

Thus “My Coast” was started initially as an exploration by the VROM into possible projects in Bulgaria and after a series of visits, workshops, and seminars, an agreement was reached that the Black Sea coast needed help with coastal zone management. At that point, there was no particular decision about the specific approach to be taken with this project, only that it is framed as an initiative under ICZM. The “integrated” part in the directive referred mostly to having more than one industry involved in the process of planning and openness and participation were recommended. But what exactly does that mean is left to the interpretation of local actors in each particular case. Stakeholder participation is itself an often contested issue – who is representative and what does it even mean to be representative. How much and in what sense there is participation and openness thus varies across ICZM projects. What the VROM specifically liked about the approach “My Coast” was proposing is that it touted the Dutch interpretation of these issues: representation through organized interests and dialogue among them.

This approach is not as open as the British participatory process but it is not as closed as the French approach either. The process of negotiations as described by the Secretary of ROM Rijnmond is restricted to a few local NGOs:

“We work with three NGOs in the inner circle, about nature protection and development. In the wider circle we have more NGOs we speak with. They have a consulting role.”

In addition, the role of the ROM Rijnmond association is to be a “platform, mediator, and facilitator”. Negotiations are usually led by the association in a bilateral manner: ROM and industry, ROM and NGOs, ROM and government. It is conceived of as a partnership by the VROM when it launched the organization in 1993. The partners in ROM are several ministries, the municipal authorities in the area, the executive boards of the Port of Rotterdam, the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce and the industrial association Deltalinqs.

When I ask the head of the Coastal Marine Union based in the Netherlands, an umbrella organization of environmental NGOs in some forty countries, whether participatory planning is required by ICZM, he says:

“I think there is more than one way of doing integrated coastal management. When there was the debate about that ten years ago, about whether there should be any kind of directive, recommendation, or... should we have anything at all, the North Western European countries were then, and are still now, against the idea of having any sort of legislation. One, because they don’t like being told by Europe what to do, and two because they feel they are already doing it themselves.”

As a British transplant to the Netherlands, he has a critical view of the Dutch:

“They believe fervently and genuinely, that they are doing public participation. They are not. They are doing consulting, and may be they will take opinions on board and may be they won’t. There is nothing enshrined in legislation.”

On the active role of the Dutch government in ICZM planning, he says:

“The problem for me is that the Dutch always come up with technical solutions. It’s a totally controlled environment. ... But I think they are

recognizing that and are giving some of their land back to the sea. Ten years ago in this country it would have been unthinkable. The Dutch have recognized that you shouldn't always fight nature. That is something that has been absent in this country for fifty years at least. I went to a wildlife reserve in wetlands, I just said to the manager of the wetland "What's your biggest problem here" and he answered in one word 'Nature.... We constantly have to fight nature'. How sad! It typifies how this country works."

These quotes reflect many of the criticisms about the traditional way of planning in the Netherlands and show that the integrated approach is new there as well. Therefore, it is too simplistic to say that "My Coast" aimed at diffusing certain practices in another country, because as it turns out, these practices that include other considerations than technological expediency, are still developing in the country as well. One of the objectives of "My Coast" as stated in the projects terms of reference, is that

"Since The Netherlands is also in the process of preparing the set-up of ICZM along the Dutch coast, it is expected that both (Bulgarian and Dutch) parties can benefit from this project".

Rather than an object that travels from one place to another, "My Coast" is better understood as an experiment that is performed in one place but has repercussions in several: Bulgaria, the Netherlands, and Brussels.

As a coastal country and one with a lot of stake in the regulation of management of water and coastal zones, the Netherlands is very interested in what will happen as a result of the directive. ICZM opened opportunities for the country to promote its expertise but it also had to be careful about what lessons Brussels was going to draw from the implementation of the directive. The preferred outcome would be that the local level in

Europe is left autonomous to decide how they implement the directive, so there is no specificity about either what the decisions should be or how they have been reached.

An insight into the dynamics behind framing “My Coast” as an integrated regional development, and specifically, coastal management project, rather than a project providing technical expertise comes from a consultant who leads another EU project, called “Our Coast”. “Our Coast” was started in 2009 by the EU Directorate on the Environment in order to collect best practices in integrated coastal zone management from all over Europe and issue a book that can be used for learning across boundaries. The consultant is trained as a marine scientist and works for a Dutch marine environment consulting group staffed mostly by scientists and shares that the general feeling among other scientists is that such policy-oriented directives are a waste of time. But he is also a politician with the liberal party and is interested in policy. So he says,

“ICZM can only be sold if we prove, we actually prove, that it works. Because a lot of people will say that it is a waste of time - talking, talking. But actually it has value because if you do it properly, you can avoid a lot of difficulties. That’s what we hope to prove.”

The way to prove that is to collect a lot of good examples about industries, NGOs, and governments working together in specific areas. In Bulgaria, “My Coast” has just finished and it is likely that it will be reviewed by “Our Coast” as a potential candidate for either best practice, or for “lessons learned”. While the consulting group is managing Our Coast, the actual ground work of collecting cases is executed by the Coastal and Marine Union – an NGO umbrella group, which is based in the Netherlands but whose member

organizations come from forty countries. In my conversation with the Union's Head of Policy and Projects, he explains:

“A lot of these things [directives about spatial planning] come out of Brussels, and they become sort of buzzwords that are...they are hot items, you know, you'd get more money, you are guaranteed to get funding if you put integrated spatial planning into your proposals now, whereas five years ago those three words weren't even used together at all... And I think a lot of member states now realize that integrated coastal zone management is actually working. And that they all see benefits from doing it. Purely sectoral way of doing things hasn't worked and I think the member states now appreciate that it's not working. That's why some of the more intransigent ones like shipping...uh... now they are putting areas of wild life in their ports, this sort of thing, you know, trying to get a bit of biodiversity into this... uh, Rotterdam particularly, it's the second biggest harbor in the world!”

Thus the integrated approach to regional planning in general, and coastal planning in particular, is pushed both by Brussels and by the Netherlands through the vehicle of experimental projects that are meant to demonstrate how useful or applicable this new approach would be. This push represents a move away from technically driven or standards-based approaches while at the same time it does not directly challenge such approaches. Associationalism might still be challenged by those who think it is nothing but talk and push for harder forms of regulation. Such threats might come from scientists but they might also come from the new EU members to the East. Answering my question if the ministries in the Netherlands are involved in “Our Coast”, the scientist-politician from the consulting agency explains:

“They are involved; they want to be involved because perhaps they are afraid that Brussels wants to play a bigger role in ICZM rather than just recommendations. Perhaps based on our results, the EC says well, you have to have a more legal framework and of course, at least in Western Europe every country is afraid of that. Of course, in the Baltic States,

where you have much less experience with coastal management because of historical reasons, they might be very interested in having these kinds of rules and regulations being implemented by Brussels. [The EU] might want to get rid of the recommendations, and make directives. As a consultant, I don't care and as a politician, I do care, and I am very much against it."

It is understandable if the Netherlands is trying to get new members to the European Union to follow its example of coastal management not only because it has an interest in securing service contracts for the port areas but as a longer term strategy to position itself as an expert on integrated planning and build a portfolio of projects which can serve as arguments against hard regulation. "My Coast" is one of several such projects. The Dutch would like to build both on their technical expertise and on their particular understanding of participatory planning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, "My Coast" appears on the policy making field in Bulgaria as an experiment in integrated coastal zone management. More broadly, it is an attempt to influence the outcomes of the Black Sea Coast region by organizing a representative array of organizations with the facilitation of a Dutch consulting company under the assumption that deliberated plans provide a better tool for long-term development than blueprints and the enforcement of standards. Grounded in the theory of integrated planning that comes from the Netherlands and its experiences mainly in Rotterdam, "My Coast" also resides in a wider European context of planning. This is a contested and unsettled area, governed by

a structure designed for experimental learning through a series of tools but also through temporary organizational forms.

A deeply-seated source of uncertainty for public policy planning projects like ‘My Coast’ is the question of what sorts of connections it needs to make, of what and who to account for. The question of representation – who represent, what is represented, and what does it mean to represent – is a crucial one to resolve. That question includes not only organizations and individuals but also objects and species: roads, ports, birds, natural habitats, citizens, etc. How to organize these entangled relationships is one of the main challenges. There are no right and wrong answers, no recipes to follow, only temporary experiments to answer specific problems.

Chapter 3

“Just Talk”: Facilitation, Expertise, and Fragmented Organizational Fields

Project Circles

“Imagine you are on the Bulgarian Black Sea in twenty years’ time staying at a luxurious hotel amidst throngs of people or at a sprawling bungalow at a virgin spot, untouched by human hand, in the midst of enchanting views and scenery in a resort of the future? Which of these would you say is YOUR coast” – Rene, March 2007 meeting with members of parliament, government officials and state experts

Rene, the project leader, says this in an attempt to start a “dream your vision” workshop among a group of members of parliament, state experts, and government officials gathered one day in early March 2007 to hear about My Coast and explore what they think the Black Sea coast should look like in twenty years. So far, the team’s efforts to start a brainstorming session through the tools they have prepared such as “ice breaking” exercises, “speed dating”, maps and photos of the coast, and images of its potential “futures” have not yielded much success. During the opening speeches of the meeting, the Dutch ambassador had explained that the relationship between the environment and the economy is noted in an EU special recommendation for integrated coastal plans. Such plans can be used as instruments to attract more money from EU Structural Funds because they promote projects along the lines of the “people-planet-profit” framework. This view is echoed by the Bulgarian deputy minister of regional development who states that Bulgaria needs to think about “development with a deep respect for nature”. To this “carrot” incentive, Rene later adds the “stick” incentive:

“You couldn’t expect a hotel to operate well and make money if it sits in the midst of a polluted environment. If the Black Sea is polluted, you couldn’t expect fishing companies to have regular handsome catches because the fish will go away. At the end of the day, there can be no economic development without tourists and without fish. These are common interests and shared ideas, upon which we shall seek to build in the course of the next few months.”

This reflects Rene’s firm belief that the conflicts among business, environmental movements, government officers, and professional associations can be resolved on the basis of the common understanding that, in the long term, “we are all in the same boat”. During the initial several months of the project, he vigorously rejected any notion that interests are too entrenched, conflicts too bitter, and trust too low to accomplish any level of engagement and negotiations among different parties. Such comments usually come from Bulgarians, even those on the “My Coast” team who believed in the project’s goals and methodology. Rene attributed such skepticism to what he saw as a tendency among Bulgarians to exaggerate problems and overlook opportunities, “possibly because of decades of bureaucratic governance”. For Rene, helping the process of participation, negotiation and consensus-building has significance beyond “My Coast”. It is related to a broader “awakening” of civil society and strengthening of democratic discourse in the country.

Rene’s connection to Bulgaria starts back in 1997 when he first comes as a consultant on a project for a water treatment facility. He has partnered with a local consulting company who brought him in as an expert in water management and has worked with them for the last ten years. In his home town of Utrecht, he is a member of the Environmental Council, an advisory body to the city government, and a member of the

Green Party. A middle-aged man with a limp in his gate, Rene has a quick sense of humor and direct style of expressing opinions. He claims deep knowledge of EU environmental regulations and a large network of people in government institutions in the Netherlands, Brussels, and the new member states. His projects take place in other Eastern European countries such as Romania, Croatia, and the Czech Republic. More importantly, though, his connection to Bulgaria is a personal one, since he has a girlfriend here - an experienced long-time journalist with the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency. She helps the project by using her connections to secure press releases and interviews for Rene. Both of them see themselves on a mission to develop civil society and democracy. As an example of ways to revive civic values in Bulgaria, they recount a story about how they planted a garden in the backyard of her building. The usual fate of such common backyards, shared by several surrounding buildings, is that after the fall of the communist regime and the party-organized clean-up days, they became dilapidated, deserted, and dirty. Once the playground for neighboring children, now people often use them for parking. Rene and his girlfriend started cleaning up and planting flowers (“tulips of course”). At first their neighbors told them they were wasting their time, because the plants would be stolen or destroyed and cars parked on top. But one day another neighbor joined and slowly, together they enrolled others. Eventually, they put the story and some pictures of the new garden on a popular “green” website, gorichka.bg (forest.bg)⁸, and started a whole

⁸ Gorichka.bg was started in 2006 by a well-known Bulgarian tennis player. After her sports career, she became very outspoken about being an environmentally-conscious consumer and also established a company for organic food products, Bio Bulgaria. The website is a regular meeting space for people interested in “green” development.

discussion group about how to reclaim backyards in the city. Some people wrote back and asked for advice on how to get started. Characteristically, Rene laughs and says:

“I told them to just take a shovel and dig. But they think that’s too simple, it can’t be that simple. There’s got to be some secret.”

It won’t be much of an exaggeration to say that, for Rene, “My Coast” is a larger and more methodical effort along the same lines of organizing people for the common good. Demonstrating the value in self-organizing and participation is all part of why Rene has shifted his interests from doing technical projects to projects that are more complicated in political terms. Like many who were trained in one engineering discipline or another, he found that the solutions are not always, if ever, purely technical. Like many who take environmental issues to heart, he found that the way to frame those issues for political discourse is around the values of democracy.

Unlike Rene, Linda - his Dutch partner in running and organizing the project - is strictly professionally involved. Linda is a tall blonde woman in her late thirties who has a master’s degree in social geography and sustainable development. She is a member of the European Federation of Associations of Environmental Professionals, where she actively organizes events and presents at conferences. Her enduring love is the sea, as she remembers how growing up nearby Rotterdam, she often went to the harbor to look at the ships, on one of which her father was a captain. Renee employs Linda for this and other projects he runs in other countries. He has also contracted two Bulgarian guys from the consulting company he has worked with in the past. The two of them are in their mid-to-late twenties and are very enthusiastic about “My Coast”. Alexander, or Alex, graduated

from Oberlin College in the US with a dual degree in economics and environmental management. He returned to Bulgaria because “life in the US is too easy, the real challenges are in Bulgaria”. Stefan, the second Bulgarian member, has a master’s degree in sustainable development from Queens University in Belfast, Ireland. Both of them sympathize with a newly-fledged Green party in Bulgaria and write regularly for gorichka.bg or for printed newspapers, covering topics about the environment.

This is the inner circle of “My Coast” – the team of project members who are organizing and running the meetings, writing the presentations and reports, and regularly discussing the progress they are making. In their efforts they are aided by advice from a committee back in the Netherlands. The three committee members traveled several times to Bulgaria, especially at the beginning and the end of the project. One of them is a professor of environmental studies in the University of Utrecht, another member is a council member of the regional government of South Holland, and the third one is a member of the European Center for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism. In their travels, these three members were sometimes accompanied by a director of one of the environmental NGOs that negotiates with the Rotterdam port authority over its expansion plans. These four people made presentations during meetings in which they argued the case for cooperation by showing best practices, talking about their experience in Holland, and providing other arguments in support for developing tourism away from the sun-and-sea formula of mass packaged tours and towards sustainable forms that also incorporate or enhance other industries such as agriculture, construction, culture, and green energy.

Thus all core members of the project, the inner circle plus their Dutch advisors, have backgrounds and interests rooted in environmental issues. Yet, when one day during lunch, I ask the four members of the team if “My Coast” is mostly about environmental issues, they disagree. They say that the environment is only one part of it, but it is really about doing economic development in an open, transparent manner. The discussions they want to start should include tourism, energy, ports management, agriculture, infrastructure, employment and urban planning. Linda says that she doesn’t view businessmen as “the enemy” but as people who have ideas and resources that could contribute to the well-being of everyone. The key is to do it “the right way”. She says that she doesn’t take sides but tries to understand everyone’s concerns and make sure that the decision-makers have a seat at the table. To my comment that I think “My Coast” is an experiment, they all laugh and agree that it is. Knowing the particular salience of the word “experiment” in Bulgaria, I clarify that I do not mean this as a deficiency. A popular narrative about the reign of the communist party in the period 1945 - 1989 was that it unleashed an “experiment on the people” – an experiment imposed by the Soviet Union and responsible for the economic ruin of the 1980s. While we “experimented” with communism, the West continued on its “normal” path towards development and democracy, the sentiment went. Now Bulgarians wanted to have a “normal” country. That is why when I say to the team (specifically the Bulgarian half of it) that their project is an experiment, I clarify that learning happens through experiments. Rene heartily agrees.

What was this experiment about? The task of the project was to come up with a vision and a strategy for the spatial development of the Black Sea region but it had to do

that in a particular way – through negotiated deals among various organizations on the local and the national level. Economic development was to be achieved not simply by allowing the state to draw its plans or the business sector to choose its investments but through a process of assembling various “publics” to agree on what kind of development they wanted. In that sense, it was an experiment in governance, or to use Przeworski’s turn of phrase again, “how to eat and to talk at the same time”. The combination of economic objectives of growth with democratic principles of representation reframe what it means to “talk” and what it means to “eat”. If “eating” takes on a meaning of doing it in a sustainable way, i.e. without damaging the very resources it depends on, “talking” is predicated on the concept of representation through organized interests. It is the latter that ensures the former.

In that sense, the experiment was a political act of composing and directing the various voices. It was an experiment in moving from hierarchical to associational governance. If hierarchical governance solves the tension between market and democracy through empowering the talk of an expert class of technocrats mediating between the represented and the elected, in associational governance the act of mediation is separated from the act of talking. The new mediators don’t do the talking themselves. If before the “talking” happened in two stages – first representation, then expertise – now it is in the simultaneous combination of representation with expertise under the guidance of another sort of “voiceless” expert – the project manager. Challenged by both left and right - by the proponents of democracy and the proponents of markets - the expert class has moved from privileged mediators to just one in a multitude of voices. The act of mediation in public

planning projects means the drawing the boundaries of a project's outer circle, i.e. who participates and who is left out.

In this effort to create boundaries between the inside and the outside of the project, the project manager resembles Latour's scientists and engineers (Latour, 1988). He too faces the problem of keeping interests in line without having the formal authority to do so. The scientist is interested in producing an inside / outside divide so as to secure funding and audiences for his science without wasting time in indulging in outsiders' opinions, i.e. he has to produce the "hard facts" in his laboratory and deliver them to those outside, while those outside are to become a trained and disciplined public bringing in resources and accepting the facts. On the other hand, a scientist also needs disciplined and capable insiders to discuss what a fact is before presenting it to the public. In the lack of such organized insider group, the lonely researcher cannot discuss, verify and affirm what a fact is.

In some respects, Rene's task as a project manager for My Coast is similar – he has to produce an inside/outside boundary around the project and produce "deliverables" that the larger public accepts and uses as the basis for further action. However, unlike the engineer or the scientist, the project manager of public planning projects does not rely on expertise as the organizing principle for assembling and coordinating among insiders.

As the organizational literature on projects in industrial settings has demonstrated, assembling and coordinating among the insiders of the project depends on the assembling and coordination among outsiders – either through existing industry role structures (Bechky, 2005), or through professional norms and codes in epistemic communities that

generate swift trust (Grabher, 2004; 2006), or through objects and artifacts that structure the interactions among the group (Lazara and Morner, 2005; Souza et al, 2005). Roles, swift trust, and artifacts that are found in already existing institutional or material structures are carried over to the work on the inside of the project and reflect on how interactions within it are structured as well. Similarly, we can expect that in public planning projects, mediators cannot single-handedly impose a structure on the project's work but have to import roles, artifacts, or professional conventions as resources in assembling and coordinating a temporary organization. In the field of spatial planning, there are no single epistemic communities but several: environmentalists, urbanists, architects, different industries, and scientists. The project deliverables themselves are not "hard facts" but "soft contracts" among various "stakeholders". The composition of the project in public planning relies on the principle of representation – organizations representing constituents, images and maps representing the region, and experts representing scientific knowledge. That experiment through My Coast proved to be far more challenging than the Dutch team ever expected.

The Problem of Representation

The idea of talking through organized interests that "My Coast" is based upon is a new reincarnation of liberal democracy. Traditionally, liberal democracy is predicated on the concept of representation through elections. With the retreat of the state, the concept of representation extends beyond the institutional framework of elections and representatives, to a framework of networked organizations and the represented interests behind them.

These organizations represent a multitude, a plurality of publics, rather than a unified group understood as “the people”, or “citizens”. If any conflicts exist, they are expressed through the voices of these organizations, conceived of as stakeholders. These stakeholders are expected to have a well-defined voice and an interest to unify disparate organizations with similar voices, so as to better fight counter arguments from other interests.

Multistakeholderism is the new model of representation, based on ideas of open and rational dialogue. This model of organizing based on sectoral or issue representation is a Western model that has evolved from liberal democratic ideas and poses challenged to the idea of electoral representation (Mouffe, 2005; Rossiter, 2006). Yet, the organizational landscape in Eastern Europe is much more complicated than the multistakeholderism model would suggest. In Eastern Europe, to the problem of electoral representation we have to add the problem of organizational representation. Here, networks among organizations are not only vertically fragmented, they are horizontally entangled and unstable. It is difficult to assume orderly organizational fields that can be drawn upon to assemble a representation of the “public”, as the multistakeholderism model would have it.

Failed “Voice” Sessions

The project started with a series of meetings in the Spring of 2007. These meetings didn’t go over well or as planned. As the brochure for the “My Coast” project explained:

“The first step is that government, the private sector, NGOs and local residents develop a shared vision that expresses the main ideas of what Bulgaria’s Black Sea Coast should look like in 2030. It defines the coastal zone in terms of qualities: what is the preferred quality of the environment and nature; what is the preferred quality of economic activities; and how

can these support each other for example by careful consideration of the choice of location? In the first step, these qualities will be described in images and ideas more than in numbers or indicators.”

In line with the Rotterdam ‘Pegasus’ methodology, this first stage was conceptualized as the explorative “voice” stage, i.e. when separate groups of stakeholders are identified and invited to participate in workshops to formulate challenges and broad ideas for the coast. The “voice” stage is succeeded by the “agora” stage, when the goal is to “muster all creative potential” and come up with solutions and concrete ideas for resolving the challenges and addressing the broad visions identified previously. The final stage is the action one, when the participants negotiate and agree on a final decision and sign a policy covenant together. They also pledge in front of one another that each one of them is going to do their best to ensure the implementation of the policy decision. This covenant is the institutionalization of the agreement and can serve as the basis to establish a formal authoritative body to guide decisions, organize tenders and select projects that are in line with the common vision and strategy.

Rene and Linda prepared carefully for the “voice” workshops, drafting out a detailed list of activities and preparing tools. They had asked the dozen or so participants to state their motivation for coming to the meeting and their expectations from it. They had planned on asking them to break into small groups of four people each and brainstorm ideas about the future of the Black Sea coast. Cards were distributed, so that participants can write one idea on each card, only 3-5 words per idea. Then the entire group together was supposed to discuss the ideas that they have come up with, written on the whiteboard in front of them by the facilitators who would prompt them to think about what the easiest,

the most difficult, and the most important were. Having done that, the group was to proceed by identifying any political or economic events that might affect the achievement of these ideas.

Despite the claim that local residents were invited to these sessions, this was not the case in the first stakeholder meetings. There were several meetings with participants from different organizational fields – government and members of parliament, NGOs, and business. These meetings were reported on in the media but citizen participation was not sought at this point. The whole methodology of the project is based on the idea of organized interests, i.e. organizations represent constituent groups and speak for them. To the question why citizens are not invited to these meetings, Linda muses:

“Why should we invite everyone? What are we to do – just pull people off the street and tell them to come to the meetings? We can’t do that. We need to make sure that all points of view are represented”

Thus the presumption is that the various points of view are organized and represented through a clear “voice”. The role of the project is to tie their refrains into a more or less coherent chorus. Thus the project advisors and managers understood the many conflicting interests and problems on the Black Sea coast but they also operated on the assumption of orderly organizational fields, be it in tourism, port management or agriculture. Their main task, then, was to help these representative organizations navigate these conflicts and help them reach the calmer shores of structured collaboration. Yet, the vertical disintegration and fragmentation of the organizational fields of tourism and environmental NGOs meant that it was difficult to assemble a set of representative

organizations, let alone start the first rounds of discussions. Indeed, instead of giving their “voice”, the majority of organizations prefer to “exit” the project altogether.

In their attempts to find out who should be involved, Rene and Linda took a traditional approach of talking to national-level umbrella organizations and soon found out that they do not have local tentacles or that there are other national organizations who also claim to represent the same constituents. The initial list of stakeholder organizations that should be consulted included 65 organizations in tourism, 41 environmental NGOs, 25 educational institutions, 17 organizations in the agriculture and fisheries sector, and 61 business organizations, including ports, chambers of commerce, trade associations, large factories, and banks. To this grand total of 209 non-state organizations they also added a list of all the local and regional authorities such as municipalities, water inspectorates, forestries, national parks, and development agencies. The overall number of organizations that were related to issues on the Black Sea coast, whether on the national, regional or local level, quickly reached more than 250. Many of these organizations never responded to invitations to participate, specifically the trade associations and the large industrial conglomerates. In addition to these stakeholders, the project also invited key members of political parties to these first “voice” meetings. The members of parliament that attended the meetings were entirely from opposition parties and used these meetings, which were reported on by the media, to express their criticism of the way the current government does its job.

Who to get involved remained a question throughout the length of the project, as participants joined in and dropped out as late as the Fall of 2008. When asked who else

should be involved, more and more organizations were typically cited. Who is part of the “public” relevant to the Black Sea region thus was never entirely settled. What “My Coast” was trying to do was to perform a political act of assembling a coherent collection of different publics and hold them together for the duration of the project. In that task it had to struggle against the fragmentation and destabilization of the various organizational fields that were involved. Before there could be a solution to the problem of coordination, there had to be a solution to the problem of composition. To solve that problem required that the main protagonists of “My Coast”, its project leads, had to modify their own positions vis-à-vis the organizational fields they were confronting.

The Black Sea Coast and Representation in Tourism

The length of the Bulgarian coastline along the Black Sea, in the span between the Romanian and Turkish borders, is roughly 384 km. The coastline includes part of the territory of 15 municipalities, home to more than 745,500 people or 9.6% of the population in Bulgaria.



The Black Sea region is a meeting point of various interests: tourism, fishing and sea cultures, navigation and sea ports, industry, security and safety, and it is a preferred place for living. Enclosed from all sides, except for the narrow straits of the Bosphorus, the sea suffers pollution from industrial sites located not only directly on its coasts but also

along the trans-European Danube River. Almost one-third of the coastal zone is covered by sand beaches but erosion is threatening to dramatically decrease their size.

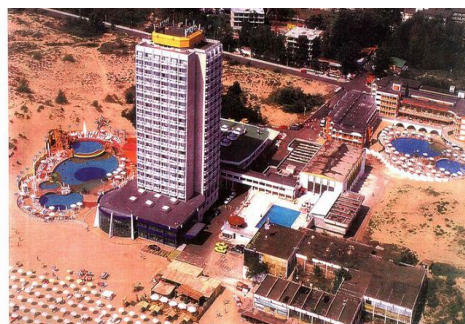
The two largest ports are Varna and Bourgas. Both of them were currently planning renovations and expansions to handle more shipping traffic, while also moving their shipping facilities from the city centers to the outskirts. In the vicinities of both cities there are also facilities for the production of refined oil, chemicals, and plastics. Other industries such as fishing and food production are also important on the coast, especially to the North where there are almost no sand beaches. The North of the coast is also flat and that provides opportunities for a budding interest in wind energy as a new industry with the potential to get preferential treatment via EU structural funds. However, the current major interests in that part of the coast are around building golf resorts.

In the last ten years, it has been tourism and related activities that have been driving economic growth in the area. Tourism in Bulgaria accounts for over 15% of GDP and is the second export sector in the Bulgarian economy. The Black Sea coastal area contributes close to 40% of that revenue⁹. In 2006, the revenues from tourism grew by eight percent and the government expected a double-digit growth in the following years¹⁰.

⁹ Ministry of Regional Development data for 2007

¹⁰ State Agency for Tourism data 2006

As a new member state, Bulgaria has access to EU Structural Funds which are used for financial assistance in regional development, employment policies, or agricultural assistance.



New hotel construction on the beach

For the period starting in 2007, 14% of all the funds that the Ministry of Regional Development was going to receive were targeted to the tourism sector. In 2006-2007, the government was considering the establishment of a separate ministry for tourism, an act that would replace the current State Agency for Tourism.

There are seven large resort complexes built during the 1960s-1970s which were designated as especially important for the economy¹¹ in 2005. Together, these resorts include about 329 hotels for a total of almost 120,000 beds. The management of the resorts is trying to upgrade and expand their facilities, including building new hotels, pools, skating rinks, and other entertainment sites on the beach. They partnered with large tourist agencies, such as Thomas Cook, First Choice, Neckermann Reisen and Thomson Travel, who brought in tourists by the load and guaranteed full capacity in the summer. The growth in tourists that these resorts experienced and the pressure to keep expanding, tax the infrastructure for the entire region. Comparisons with the problems that unregulated development on the Spanish coast (Costa Brava and Costa Del Sol) were often drawn in the media.

¹¹ The seven sea side resorts are: Golden Sands, Sunny Beach, Dunes, Albena, St. Konstantin and Elena, Primorsko, and Elenite. There are two other resorts assigned this status but they are in the mountains – Borovetz and Pamporovo.

In addition to these legacy resorts, there are a number of small villages which have traditionally attracted many visitors and where people have been supplementing their incomes by hosting visitors in the summer for decades. After 2000, when it became clear that Bulgaria had a serious chance of being



Street in Nessebar

accepted into the EU, a “gold rush” to the coast was fueled by skyrocketing prices of real estate. Investors tried to secure plots of land to build hotels on. This land grab was also fueled by hopes to attract what was perceived as well-paying foreign tourists from Northern Europe who were looking for new and more affordable vacation destinations. These new investment plans centered mostly on such villages with previous experience in hosting tourists because they either offered great beaches or because they had cultural and historical cache. Two such villages are Nessebar and Sozopol which are old settlements dating as far back as the Bronze age and featuring traditional architecture from the 18th-19th centuries.

Finally, there were the old camping sites which were typically in pristine areas. Camping in the days during the communist regime, although not banned, was perceived as a slight form of dissent from expected behavior, for it



Construction on the old camp site Oasis

meant that instead of going to the “resort stations” that every factory, ministry, or academic institution had built for the “relaxation of workers”, those workers preferred the bare bones accommodations of camps away from the watchful eyes of coworkers. It was mainly

people from the artistic and scientific circles who made it a habit to go camping every summer. Now, camping sites became targets for the interests of the tourism industry as well.

The tourism industry organizes through numerous trade associations. There are more than fifty local tourism associations, four regional ones, and more than twenty national ones. The organizational field is highly unstable, as associations may close, reinstitute themselves again, or new organizations can be established altogether. In the summer and fall of 2007, two new national tourism associations were incorporated – The Bulgarian Congress Bureau, an association of the largest hotels and tour operators, and the Union of Tourism Investors, an association of those who consider themselves to be the largest investors in the sector. There are organizations of tour operators, of hotels and restaurants, of alternative tourism firms, of rural tourism firms, of SPA tourism firms, and various permutations of all of the above. In the summer of 2006, a dispute among two large trade associations arose about who really represents the industry. The director of the State Agency for Tourism lamented the increasing fragmentation of the field and blamed it for the lack of progress on coherent state policy on tourism.¹²

This fragmentation and instability of the organizational field reflects a continuous formation of coalitions and ties among various business owners and organizations in pursuit of lobbying goals and public strategies. A theory of competitive state capture (Barnes, 2007) might help explain this instability and reshuffling of coalitions within the industry. The theory describes the relations between state and business in Bulgaria. Rather

¹² Capital Weekly, May 12th, 2006, interview with Mario Al-Jeboury Interview

than a single business group capturing the state, there are multiple groups who have formed ties with multiple parties and are competing for resources. Each change in ruling parties comes about as a result of disappointment with the previous ones. The economic groups of the previous government are usually weakened but new ones emerge. The system is different from clientelism, under which networks reach from top to the bottom of society and distribute some benefits. The networks that form under competitive capture system are much more unstable and uncertain. Thus the question of who represents the interests of the tourism industry does not have a straightforward answer, as various coalitions among the myriad of old and new associations are changing their shape with the political context in the country. This point was reiterated several times along the duration of “My Coast”, as the team conducted conversation with many local administration officials and found that they were also businessmen with particular agendas, as the midterm elections were held in the Fall of 2007, and as conversations in the large city of Varna proved frustrating because local power networks had infiltrated various industries and government agencies. These tangled networks between the business sector and the state sector, coupled with fragmentation within each organizational field ultimately defeated attempts to assemble a stable set of organizations that could negotiate in a series of meetings over several months.

Environmental NGOs and Representation

The role of environmentalism in the politics of transformation in Eastern Europe is well established. The deterioration of the natural environment seemed to signify everything

that was wrong with state socialism (Fagin, 1994). In the 1980s, the continuing deterioration of air, water, and toxic accidents caused widespread awareness of environmental issues. Action and discontent became more visible and organized especially after Gorbachev's glasnost. The fact that people's health and even lives were concerned served as highly emotionally charged accusations of deligitimation of the claim that the state is "for the people, by the people" (Hicks, 1996).

In Bulgaria, environmental opposition was mobilized initially through state-sanctioned conservation societies which became a vehicle of discontent around specific a-political objects such as caves, forests, and rivers (Cellarius, 2004). A larger national movement was sparked particularly in 1987 in the city of Russe around the issue of trans-boundary air pollution from a chemical factory in Romania. When early attempts by the government to resolve the issue failed, concerns spread to the national scene and gave start to a national organization called Ecoglasnost in 1989. At a meeting in Sofia in 1989, organized by the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Bulgaria was criticized by the UK, USA, and West Germany about human rights and the environment. That opened a possibility for the illegal Ecoglasnost to organize press conferences and stage protests against planned water infrastructure projects (Bumgartl, 1993). After 1989, Ecoglasnost became a founding member of the union of opposition parties and later established one of the two Green parties in Bulgaria.

Thus the visions of building participatory liberal democracies and environmentally sound economies were linked together in their critique of state socialism. The visibility of the movements at the time the regimes fell and the increasing political clout of

environmentalist discourse in the West, spurred particular attention from bi-lateral and multilateral donors. Some of the largest NGOs, who were funded and staffed in the early 1990s were those in the environmental sector.¹³

Today, environmental causes are again the main framework for social protest against the unchecked accumulation of wealth often under the protection and with the assistance of government officials. These protests continue to be small and sporadic and the groups that organize them may or may not be registered. However, they generate a lot of publicity and online chat activity. According to a survey that the WWF – Bulgaria conducted in August 2008, Bulgarians are becoming more impatient with environmental problems. As the top problem, 70% of respondents identified the destruction of forests. More than half of the respondents also identified as major problems¹⁴ the illegal construction and over-construction on the sea side and the mountains.

Along the Black Sea coast, the expression of protest is organized mostly around the old camping sites which became arenas for bitter fights between small environmentalist groups and local municipalities lured by investors' money. These small groups, with names such as "Save Irakli" or "Save Koral", formed around individual sites. The participants in these coalitions are typically the families of people who have old ties to these beaches. At the gathering of one such group of around one hundred people in August 2008, a man in his fifties summarizes his feelings about the place and the plans of a Spanish construction company to build a new tourist complex there:

¹³ Some of those NGOs are Green Balkans, Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation, as well as the local chapters of the World Wildlife Fund and BirdLife

¹⁴ All these numbers saw significant increases over the previous two years. Survey

“I am a biologist by profession. I have worked all around the world – from the Amazonian to the North Pole. Right now my work is on the island of Guam. But every summer I come back here, to this small beach and to this small camp site. The proof that I love this place is right here: my son who was conceived right on this beach thirty years ago. That is why I want to thank you all for mobilizing to save Koral from the clutches of construction speculators.”¹⁵

Most of these self-organized groups lack resources. They are driven by a romantic nostalgia for a pure, unspoiled state of nature. Their main form of organizing is the protest – either in front of a government agency, a local municipality, or at the site itself. These protests are also reminiscent of the sporadic protests before 1989 which served as the main form of expression of opposition to the regime.

In many ways, these small groups contrast with the large environmental NGOs in Bulgaria. Driven by ties of trust among people who know each other, these groups form close circles that espouse an “us versus them” mentality. Unlike NGOs, they do not seek participation in political life through partnership and participation but through social protest. These networks based on personal loyalty are arguably of a stock with the famous “parallel structures” that enabled Eastern European but even more so, Balkan societies, to survive oppressive regimes and find solutions when official structures failed them (Sampson, 2002). The very intervention by the European Union and all the other international donors after 1989 was centered on substituting “civil society”, i.e. representative NGOs, for these informal social networks which are also the basis on which feuds develop and feed for a long time (Scheppele, 1999).

¹⁵ Koral camp site protest, August 2008

The period 2007-2008 was a period of catching up to EU environmental regulations in Bulgaria. The Draft National Sustainable Development Strategy was approved in May 2007 by the National Advisory Council on Sustainable development. That year marked the first ramped up efforts by government to catch up with EU environmental regulations. The centerpiece of these regulations is the Natura 2000 network¹⁶. Natura 2000 is a European-wide network of protected territories, proposed by individual countries and approved by a panel of scientists at the European Commission. Each such site is managed through a management plan that should include several stakeholders and which is monitored by the Commission against a set of standards. Currently, the network covers about 18% of EU territory. The sites are not strict conservation sites, as some activities such as forestry, agriculture, and tourism are still allowed. But all of these activities have to abide by the principles of sustainable development, or the people-planet-profit framework.

In February 2007, the Bulgarian government approved 20% of the territory of the country as protected under Natura 2000. This was less than the 28% percent that the scientific advisory committee had recommended. In July of the same year, the WWF and six other NGOs submitted an official petition to the EU Directorate Environment in which they accused the government of purposefully omitting many important sites on the Black Sea coast in order to allow for planned construction. At the same time, there were several protests which were sparked by the Supreme Administrative Court decision to take Strandja¹⁷ mountain off the protected territories of Natura 2000. In July 2007, political scientist and renowned opposition leader from the early 1990s, Evgenii Dainov, wrote in

¹⁶ Commission of the European Communities, Working Document on Natura 2000, December 2002

¹⁷ Strandja is a low mountain in the Southeastern part of Bulgaria which borders on the sea coast

Dnevnik¹⁸ an article with the title “The court gave Strandja to the mafia”. The court ruled in favor of a company that was building a resort multiplex in the area. That sparked a protest of about 500 environmentalists in front of the court in Sofia. The police arrested 35 of them since the protest was not officially allowed. However, the many reports in the media created high visibility of the protest and the next day, the minister of the environment declared that the government should fight the decision and return Strandja to its stature as a protected territory.

The large environmental NGOs acknowledged the small gain achieved at the protests in the summer of 2007 but they do not organize or support such protests. In fact, they distance themselves from them, believing instead that legal action is their best strategy. By attacking the government in court, mainly at the European level, these NGOs are hoping to force the administration to become more effective in applying the law. Rather than mobilize local protests and pressure from below, the large and most active environmental NGOs take on the role of professional experts. As a program director of large international NGO in Bulgaria explained:

“Older people, but younger ones as well, are used to top-down, direct management, the kind that local authorities impose. We work with concrete ideas. We have particular proposals that we take to the local authorities and try to find a compromise. This puts us in the role of experts.”

Another program manager at another large NGO explains that there are two different strategies, the legal one and the protest one and expresses some ambivalence towards the strictly legal approach adopted by her NGO:

¹⁸ One of the most respected and high-circulation daily newspaper in Bulgaria.

“Here, the last protest managed to draw attention to the issue of the boundaries of Natura 2000 in Strandja and so Parliament will have to vote on it, while we have been trying to go the legal route for more than a year now. I don’t know what the better approach is. We in the NGO sector feel without support but these protests gave me some hope. I think the ecological sector is the most organized. May be only the architects organize around cultural heritage sites as well as we do.”

The representative and the expert roles are not inherently in opposition to one another but the fact that many of the NGOs rely on international aid and are often competitive with each other (Petrova and Tarrow, 2007) make them seem interested less in representing and more in collaborating with the state. They do not rely on membership drives for resources or legitimacy. Most environmental organizations in Bulgaria have memberships of around 25 people and are constituted around the activities of only half-dozen to dozen committed activists (Cellarius and Staddon, 2002). The very definition of a member is unclear, since these numbers are self-reported and may be inflated or based on different understanding – people paying dues, members of the organization itself, collaborators, etc. The period after 1989 may have produced many NGOs¹⁹ but academic studies found that Eastern Europeans have low levels of organizational membership, volunteering, or trust in institutions. The ENGOs are thus seen as not truly representing constituents and localities but as yet another professional group of experts seeking consulting or advisory roles, especially because they are often staffed by people trained in such disciplines as geography, biology, or ornithology. Especially after the decrease in international aid over the last decade and with the EU emphasis on promoting participation

¹⁹ For example, as of November 2005 in a country of less than nine million, there were more than 22,000 registered NGOs, a 27% increase since the previous two years (Bulgarian Center for Non-profit Law, 2006).

of civil actors in policy making, many NGOs started providing research and consulting services to government agencies (Hicks, 2004; Fagan, 2006). For example, 56% of municipalities in Bulgaria consult NGOs in order to improve their strategies and related projects, even though a third of them assessed their partnership as poor (Petrova and Tarrow, 2007). These interorganizational ties are not based on trust but on the pursuit of legitimacy in front of Brussels, rather than in front of local publics (Cellarius and Staddon, 2002). Even as they report on collaborating, government officials do not necessarily trust in the competency of environmentalist NGOs. They view them not as representative of groups of citizens or of specific interests but as experts in a particular field, and as such, they find them lacking. If they represent anyone, it is the “birds and the bees”, as another local municipal legal advisor put it. As one district administration official resentfully explains:

“There is a lot to be desired in respect to increasing the competency level of civil society.... The representatives of some NGOs don’t always understand reality and the problems on the national level. There have been cases when they present incorrect information. Experts have to follow their specialty and talk only on things they know about. It can’t be that an ecologist talks about a program for regional development. But they have the confidence that they can do it and they have plenty of opportunities.”

Thus the field of environmental organizations in Bulgaria is just as fragmented as the tourism one but what is more, the very idea of NGOs as representative of social movements or other civil society group interests is without support. Rather than the role of representatives, such NGOs play the role of experts. The organizers of social protests against over-construction on the coast are small, lack resources, and unlike the NGOs, take on an uncompromising stand to both government and business.

Visual Representations of the Black Sea Region

As mentioned in the quote from the My Coast promotional brochure, most of the discussion was supposed to happen around images of the coast today and in the future. The use of images in spatial planning is a distinctive Dutch innovation, initiated by the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Housing, and Environment (VROM) in order to aid the integrated planning approach. Various design techniques such as target images, models, structure plans, visual categories, etc, as well as drawing techniques borrowed from architecture were imported into spatial planning negotiations and decision-making, particularly about the regeneration of the docklands in Rotterdam (Gomart, 2005). Images were employed not only as tools for inspiration in the achievement of a common political vision but also as the tools for debating this vision and a guarantee for future action on it.

Unlike an object-centered approach to spatial planning, the integrated approach does not posit a single object to be discussed in all its complicated technical, economic, and social aspects. It proposes the simultaneous consideration of many such objects – the main sea ports, water treatment plants, road connections, hotels, factories, housing, etc in a single area. The sheer impossibility of discussing all of these objects at once means a move away from object-oriented planning and towards planning as an exercise in political vision and a strategy. This strategy approach means thinking about objectives, targets and indicators, and projects. An example of such a hierarchy that starts with objectives and ends with specific projects is provided by the example of Rotterdam: the objective of strengthening the port position is defined as a set of two targets – to provide more space for

and increase the accessibility of the port; these two targets in turn are linked to indicators for congestion, space, and goods traffic; finally these targets and indicators are used to justify and evaluate projects for land reclamation, road expansion, and for agro logistics. Thus, indicators and objects are very much the stuff of integrated planning as well, but they are subsumed under broader objectives that are arrived at in negotiations. This is a different model for making politics and constituting publics than the traditional consensus-and-compensation green polder model. Instead of enhancing the state's ability to say "this is what I want", the images and future visions enable the assembled interests to say "this is what we want, this is why we want it, and therefore, it must happen."

However, these images did not help the participants in Bulgaria debate the way they were supposed to. Images, maps, and drawings did not inspire or serve as objects for debate. On the contrary, they seemed too abstract to address any current concerns and conflicts. Part of the reason was that most of the participants in these first meetings were not from the local municipalities but from national organizations. The meaning of the "Black Sea coast region" in cultural terms is non-existent, as there is no sense of common identity as a resident on the coast, no common cultural traditions. In terms of administrative units, the regions in Bulgaria are existent only on paper but have very little substance in terms of self-governance or representation. The main conflicts are between the local administrations, typically a town and its surrounding area and the national administration.

This tension between the central and local government is well documented by researchers of public administration in Bulgaria. As Djildov has demonstrated, the process

of decentralization, which first started in 1995, proceeded only slowly and with many conflicts. The first major interruption in the process came in 1997 with the IMF agreement to introduce a monetary board and the ensuing re-centralization of fiscal decision-making. The explicit goal of the board is economic restructuring through monetary devices and privatization. In this framework, it is a somewhat contradictory task to give more independence to local governance structures. The central government refused to be engaged with clear division of power between central and local authorities. Its actions were limited to assigning tasks without providing the budget for them (Djildov, 2002). Thus municipalities were often used as deflectors of popular discontent, for example, when social security benefits were not paid on time. In turn, the local structures of the government fought to establish themselves as independent from the central authorities. The main push for decentralization came from two national non-governmental organizations, the Foundation of Local Self-Governance Reform (FLGR) and the National and Regional Assembly of Municipalities (NRAM). The proper role of mayors had to be resolved by the Constitutional Court which ruled in their favor that they are not part of the executive authority at the state level, but of the local one. In addition, Bulgarian mayors are directly elected and enjoy high visibility in political life. Their role is further buttressed by the large size of municipalities both in terms of population and territory²⁰. Thus, the regional level, at which My Coast was initiated, administratively is very weak in Bulgaria. Instead, the two main levels – the national and the local are in a conflictual and tense relationship that does not aid the project leads.

²⁰ The average number of inhabitants is about 34,000 and the average territory is 418 sq. km. – rather high compared to other European countries.

Against this backdrop of fragmentation of organizational fields, vertical disconnects, and conflict among organizations, the project had to struggle to provide coherence and assemble a representative public. This process of assembling and drawing an inner circle of participants who would then continue on negotiating around the details of a vision, was supposed to happen in the first, initiation stage of the project. The inability to proceed as planned was attributed by the Dutch consultants to a lack of understanding among organizations of the concept of working together. It was also attributed to a lack of understanding what working in projects means. As Rene explained:

“A project shouldn’t have an end. There should be many projects, a whole series, to achieve a long-term, very concrete goal”.

In the summer of 2007, the team believed that this was still possible because “My Coast” was proposing a different sort of strategy, unlike all the strategies written before that. This strategy was going to draw a framework that would generate ideas and funding for future projects, and was going to establish a mechanism for their selection and evaluation. Rene and Linda acknowledged their mistakes mostly in framing the project and began rethinking seriously the words they were using. In order to emphasize that difference with all previously drawn strategies by different consultants, they thought of calling theirs a management plan. It sounded much more action-oriented. Instead of calling the meetings workshops, they called a planned series of local meetings along the coast “round-table meetings”. This way instead of emphasizing work, they were emphasizing the democratic principle of negotiations by summing up a term during the 1989-1990 period, when round table negotiations were held between opposition parties and the old communist parties.

They emphasized a lot that the wording they are using is important as it calls different images and associations. So throughout 2007, My Coast was still making an effort of utilizing the ideas and the framework of representation around which to engage participants and compose the project.

However, there was also another challenge in the task of drawing boundaries between the inside and the outside of the project – who is an expert? Just as the question “who is representative?” was difficult to answer and meant that representation could not serve as the guiding principle in either composing the outer circle of the project or in clarifying the roles to be played by participants, so the confusion around expertise generated confusion around roles.

The Problem of Facilitation as Expertise and Role Expectations

Instead of following the script of the “voice” meetings, participants typically had a lot of questions about the expertise that Rene and Linda had to offer and about what this project was hoping to accomplish. Specific issues were brought up, like problems with water treatment plants or sewage. The Dutch project leads did not always know the details, nor did they feel that they should. They were told that they don’t understand local concerns and were questioned on their role. These first meetings raised a whole polemic around what expertise they were offering and what roles they, the ministries, and the other stakeholders were expected to play. Due to this confusion about roles and how to perform one’s expertise, the project was beginning to suffer from a foretold death sentence –

predictions were made that it is not going to achieve anything substantial, that it was “*just talk*”.

The issue of facilitation as a particular expertise was not understood in the context of hierarchical relations within state agencies. As the head of the department for strategic development at the Ministry of Transport put it:

“Who is to write up the strategy? It should be written by an independent party, someone who can listen to all the opinions, gather information, and based on their expertise, come up with a good strategy. It is not clear that any of the project leaders can do that since they are not really experts.”

According to the management structure of the project, this facilitating role was supposed to be supported by the ministries of regional development and of transport, as well as the state agency for tourism, which were construed as the project partners and beneficiaries. Instead, these agencies were themselves confused about the role they were expected to play. This confusion came from construing expertise as a technical matter in which they were supposed to assist mostly by providing information when asked. There was some frustration that they expressed about the amount of work or involvement that was expected of them. The project liaison from the ministry of transportation stated that:

“There is no clear proposal to discuss. It is all very chaotic. We don’t know who has what role, who is going to do what. We asked many times but never got a clear answer.... When we go to these meetings we know they [other participants but mostly Rene and Linda] will be asking questions but we never know what questions and cannot prepare in advance. It is very unpleasant because we cannot know all the details they want. Each one of us is a specialist with a particular profile. If they want the details, we have to find the appropriate specialist and get him in advance. They cannot expect us to just show up and know the answer to every question they have.”

This feeling of being pressed to perform as an expert without being prepared is echoed by a junior expert in the ministry who says that she felt like a student being quizzed by her professors and not knowing the correct answer. In addition, she explained, they are expected to attend local meetings at local municipalities and have to translate meeting minutes and reports. All this, the project liaisons at the national government agencies felt, was asking too much of them. They felt that the main ideas and involvement should come from the local municipalities and organizations.

The director of spatial and urban planning at the ministry of regional development, the main project beneficiary, was less forward in her comments but confirmed that her main involvement in the project was to review documents that Rene sent and answer his questions. She explained that the policies of decentralization to the local level over the last several years have meant that the ministry cannot tell municipalities what to do. Also, there were less people and funds available to the ministry as compared to previous years and they could not put aside resources for travel to the seaside. In addition, she adds, “local municipalities don’t really want us there.” Rene construed this as the ministries being “simply afraid of locals” and reluctant to face them because they will be asking for resources, commitments, or concrete answers to local problems – all issues that ministries are ill-prepared to address. The third beneficiary, the state agency for tourism, is similarly detached from local interests and is primarily concerned with drafting strategies and organizing the Bulgarian participation in annual tourism fairs in Europe. Thus existing hierarchical relations within national and local administrations did not allow for space for a

facilitating role and was only confusing existing expectations about what kind of roles they were supposed to play.

Why were Rene and Linda not considered experts? First, they themselves continuously emphasized that “we are not going to tell you what to do, this is your project”. This is the official Dutch guideline for projects funded through the EVD. As the program officer at the agency explained,

“The executors are always there to say ‘hey, this is your project, you have to work with it, we are here to help you but we are not gonna do the work for you’, because they are not going to write the document for them, they have to write the document themselves. So in the beginning when they [the Bulgarian counterparts] realize ‘oh, they are not gonna write the document for us’ it’s a pain but then in the end they are always very happy”

Rene and Linda felt that they had to fight the image of experts and position themselves as independent, third parties with no stakes in the process. This independent position stemmed not from objective technical expertise but from their ability to facilitate and lead negotiations. Thus rather than the all-seeing eye of the disinterested expert, they were proposing a view of expertise as the art of facilitation. The key to this kind of expertise is still that it is disinterested in the sense that no personal gains can be made from it, but that claim to objectivity is not based on a detached scientific or technical knowledge. Technical or scientific knowledge experts provide just one of the possible answers. The “good” mediator is the one who claims the exact opposite – I have no answers because I have no stake in proposing answers, including stakes based on my technical training. Thus the “good” mediator is independent because she is an outsider to all related professional and organizational fields. At the same time, she is not accumulating personal advantage

during the process. This was the rationale for having a consultant run the project rather than someone in the ministries or even a local person. Duality of roles has to be avoided so as to maintain the claim to impartiality.

The Dutch project leads were conscious also of the fact that there have been many previous projects and many previous consultants who have produced strategies and worked on EU projects with various organizations. They acknowledged that a certain weariness of such projects and consultants was setting in, especially after Bulgaria was already accepted into the European Union. The skeptical attitude was that they are after their own interests, getting more grant money or furthering foreign interests. That is why they were careful not to appear as if the project was about promoting either Dutch interests, or their own. Having worked in Bulgaria for a long time and already enjoying some contacts within local administrations was certainly an advantage for Rene in that respect. In addition, while traveling, the team always picked local cheap bed & breakfast places and never stayed at a hotel. The project budget for the two years of its duration was 400,000 euros which had to be distributed across wages, travel expenses, organizing dinners and other events. Managing the budget tightly and showing that the project is not a vehicle for enjoying expensive hotels and restaurants, was one way for Rene to avoid the image of the rootless consultant making a good living in a place that he knows or cares little about. Another way to avoid the image of a self-interested broker was to involve any other Dutch organizations that were not already affiliated with the project. On one occasion, when a partner of his brought to a meeting a young Dutch entrepreneurial couple who wanted to start an

ecological business in Strandja, Rene became infuriated that “*now everyone will think I am trying to promote other Dutchies.*”

Thus expertise did not provide a resource for structuring roles or for swift trust (Meyerson et al, 1996) to emerge among parties. Role confusion was linked to the lack of a concrete object to discuss but also to the understanding of expert in their role as consultant. This lack of clarity on role structures, coupled with the failure of images to play the role of concrete objects of discussion seemed to institute an opinion that this whole project was going to be “*just talk*”. The sentiment that there was no concrete proposal on the table to discuss was mentioned many times over as a big concern for how effective this endeavor was going to be. The predominant feeling was that if only the laws were applied as they should, there would not even be a reason for My Coast to exist. One of the main beneficiaries to the project, the Black Sea Basin Directorate, expressed its reservation about the method of the project and even threatened to withdraw its support. As its director, put it:

“All these consultative meetings – what can I do if I am only talking? Things don’t get accomplished like that, there’s got to be standards, mandates, directives...not like that, with...chats. I also work on another project with another Dutch company, on sea sediment clean-ups, and it’s the same story – mostly talk.”

He continues to explain how before going to the consultative meeting, he called up a colleague at the Ministry of regional development and asked him if he was going. The colleague said, “*Well, no, if it is going to be only talk, why should I go.*”

The view that My Coast cannot hold the over-construction on the coast by “*just talk*” was echoed by the members of parliament and NGOs as well. The common view was

that it was too late for “My Coast” to save the coast. NGOs, in particular, felt that two or three years earlier the project might have had success but too many infractions and unlawful constructions were allowed to stay and the only way forward was to fight in court. As one NGO directors said:

“It is as if we are the Wild West here. May be it is because we haven’t learned how to be a decentralized country. The municipalities cannot control their territories and are not following the laws. There are infrastructure and construction plans that do not have the required environmental impact assessments. How can we talk about any planning? The only way is to make state agencies exercise control over municipalities”.

Another officer at a large international NGO also explained how their main activities are international and national lobbying. She attributed problems with the implementation of environmental laws to the lack of capacity and training in the ministries. The legal route these NGOs are following reinforces the view that stricter laws and sanctions are required to stop the current trajectory of mass development on the coast. Imposing court decisions is in line with a more top-down approach, rather than an associational governance approach and reinforces the scientific expertise of NGOs.

Because “My Coast” was to be structured around the concept of representation, existing expectations about roles based on expertise were not met and consequently created a problem of credibility for the project. Not only state agencies, but also the large and well-connected NGOs perceive themselves more as experts than representatives and were confounded about how they can contribute or what a facilitator role is all about. While many of them agreed that they would benefit from trying to “learn to work together”, they branded the project as “just talk” from its very beginning. Unlike other projects that the

government and non-government sectors are used to, My Coast was not about “transfer of expertise” or “train the trainer”. In that respect, this project was a relative novelty in the country and while people liked and agreed with its concept and ideas, these were not going to work in the Bulgarian context. State incapacity, top-down relationships, or the sheer “mentality” of taking personal advantage of every situation were pointed as the causes for the foretold failure of inter-organizational cooperation in “My Coast”.

The existing organizational landscape was thus hostile to a temporary organization like “My Coast”. In order to avoid self-destruction, the project had to reconsider how it was going to insert itself into that landscape. That predominantly meant that the project leads had to change their roles and move from the idea of representation to active recruitment of participants. Moving from representation to recruitments is a move from a facilitator to a brokerage role. A broker focuses the ties on himself, i.e. he forms a tie on a one-on-one basis and proceeds to expand a star-shaped network with himself in the middle. A facilitator inserts himself in the middle of already existing ties and is not actively structuring them.

From “Voiceless” Facilitators to Persuasive Brokers

As their expectations of well-structured organizational fields that they could pull together based on representation were proving wrong, the project leads decided to take on a different approach. In the summer of 2007 Rene and Linda started shuttle brokering through one-on-one meetings with important stakeholders. They had to persuade local interests to take part in a planned series of local round table meetings in the Fall. This, in

effect, meant that they had to change their role from one of “voiceless” facilitators to persuasive mediators, soliciting ideas and promising positive outcomes. Soliciting or recruiting, thus relies on enrollment in the project’s goals and ideology. In other words, they had to start acquiring a voice of their own. That means actively selling the project to local interests and accepting those who enroll not on the basis of representation as the main principle, but on the basis of whether they “get it”.

The majority of the one-on-one meetings were with people from local administrations. On the one hand, the Dutch consultants concluded that people are not going to travel even to the next town to participate in open meetings, and on the other, they thought that such private conversations would be more productive in soliciting ideas for the coast. The objective was to collect such ideas and summarize them under common headings, so that they can be starting points for discussions in a planned series of round-table meetings on the coast. The goal was that by December 2007, they could produce a short document of about 4-5 pages that would summarize the vision for the Black Sea coast.

During the meetings with government officials on the local level, Rene and Linda found that many of them were also businessmen. They had joined government agencies mostly as a form of information and influence gathering but had interests in particular sectors. Often they would meet in their capacity as municipality representatives but during the meeting will steer the conversation towards their private interests. The most frequently requested favors were for making contacts or providing information. Rene explained:

“If we wanted to keep the contact, we had to sometimes engage in such favor exchanges but we have to be careful not to appear to have vested interests and still participate in these exchanges.”

At this point Rene and Linda started playing a brokerage role – actively structuring connections and arguing for participation. The locals understood this role better as “what’s in it for me?” was an implicit question in every meeting. Thus the brokering role was endangering their position as unbiased, objective, uninterested experts of facilitation but was a more productive role in terms of soliciting ideas and willingness to participate. Since they were not offering immediate ways of getting funding, that question often did not have a good answer. Often, the best offer they could make was to lobby the Ministry of Regional Development about a particular issue, such as funding for GIS systems to the North or for clarification of the boundaries of Natura 2000. These kinds of requests came from municipalities. From NGOs, requests were more often directed towards other projects that they might be working on and how these projects might also help “My Coast”. Contributors in the environmental organizations working in the South were enrolled in this manner.

However, at this point, Rene and Linda still believed in being impartial facilitators who could achieve rational discourse among the participants they had enrolled. The unease with which they approached the brokerage role put tight boundaries around what kinds of issues they would be willing to discuss with their counterparts. In the summer of 2007 and towards the end of that year, their roles were changing from facilitators in a multi-connected world to brokers who are trying to approach that world one tie at a time. It involved some work of disentangling, i.e. talking to individual interests one a time and

then enrolling them in My Coast. At this stage, they were still trying to construct their position as one of outsiders, although now they had to speak more persuasively about the virtues of an integrated approach.

For example, Rene and Linda found themselves explaining over and over why this approach was much better than a strictly legal one. They argued that legal battles take even longer than the span of My Coast and for that reason the project was a more expedient way of addressing the issues on the coast than going to court. They emphasized that heavy sanctions existed on paper already and simply increasing penalties won't work. They tried to argue that top-down planning had so far proven inept, that local organizations needed to press the national government for what they want, and My Coast was the perfect vehicle for that. To businesses, they were emphasizing that environmental regulation does not close investment opportunities but on the contrary – opens up new ones and ones that could be supported by EU funding, as well. To environmental groups, they were making the argument that preserving natural sites does not mean that no economic activities are allowed but that these activities are monitored by their organizations through vehicles like My Coast and the institutional structure it is trying to set up. To local administrations, they were making the argument that investments would not stop but on the contrary – they could expect longer tourist seasons and more diversified revenue streams. In addition, many of the infrastructure changes that they wanted to make would still be possible but would not be as controversial if they were pulled under the collaborative framework of My Coast.

The result of this shuttle brokerage in the summer and fall of 2007 was a series of round table meetings on the coast. The region was broken down in four separate areas – the North, the South, and the two major port cities of Varna and Bourgas. Each of these areas has its own topography, faces its own issues, and organizational landscapes. Breaking down the region into separate areas was part of the work of disentangling the field and it also meant that in each of these separate areas, the roles of the project within the institutional landscape was different. It prompted further changes in the roles of the Dutch project leads as they faced different challenges in each case. Towards the beginning of 2008, the role of brokers was not sufficient to continue the project. They had to reconsider once again their strategy and become entangled in the conflicts and in the networks they were just trying to mediate.

Conclusion

As a public planning project, “My Coast” has two main issues to address: the issue of composition (who participates) and the issue of coordination (how to organize participants). Stemming from the Dutch experiences on integrated planning, but also on the wider European governance framework of multistakeholderism, the project was premised on the idea of orderly organizational fields that could be the basis for an assembled array of interests representing “the public”. Small and disjointed environmental groups and the general citizenry were not considered part of these organizational fields for their lack of “representativeness” and ability to affect decisions through the formal institutions. The issue of composition was thus assumed relatively unproblematic and was supposed to be

resolved in the first, initiation stage of the project, lasting a couple of months in the spring of 2007. Yet, composing the public interest was not as straightforward as it was presumed. Instead of being resolved early on, this problem became the centerpiece of the project's efforts till its very end in the fall of 2008. Thus the problem of coordination which was supposed to be provided with an innovative solution by the methodology used by "My Coast" became intricately entwined with the problem of composition.

Instead of vertically integrated organizational fields, the project leads found fragmented and disjointed fields in the tourism sector, in the public administration sector, and in the environmental NGOs sector. Instead of networked polities working on common projects, the team found entangled networks between the political, the business sectors, and the non-government sectors, with people occupying several roles at the same time, shifting roles often and using informal, closed networks instead of formal institutions to get information and resources.

In the lack of reliable marker of claims to being representative, it was difficult to justify who should participate. Alternative claims, based on expertise, were often raised by local and national state agencies but they challenged the very structure of the project and the roles of the project managers as facilitators. Unable to draw a clear boundary between who is to be included in the project based on the existing organizational landscape, the Dutch leaders of "My Coast" found themselves changing their own roles from "voiceless", i.e. disinterested facilitators, to persuasive brokers who had to make explicit decisions about who participates and who does not. They had to acquire a more decisive and distinctive "voice", i.e. a discourse, around which they could start making justifications

about who “gets it” and who doesn’t. In the absence of existing supportive scaffolding, such as epistemological communities, role structures, or boundary objects, the project had to continuously generate ties and try to reinforce them over the course of its duration. As a result, it was a somewhat unstable assemblage of various organizations, all circulating around the persona of its manager.

Chapter 4

No Project is an Island: A Temporary Organization on a Projective Path

“We stepped into a project that in the Netherlands takes ten years to complete and here we only have two years.”

“My Coast” team members, second half of 2008

As the previous chapter showed, the role of facilitator that the Dutch consultants were prepared to play had no established history or meaning in the organizational landscape in Bulgaria. As a triple outsider to the local actors on the sea coast – once as a Dutch national, second as a consultant, and third, as someone based in the capital Sofia – Rene’s most credible role was that of an outside technical expert. However, the entire philosophy and design of “My Coast” was a rejection of the technocratic approach. Unable to fit into a landscape of fragmented organizations, broken vertical links of representation, tangled and non-transparent relationships among various organizations, and uncertain roles and identities, “My Coast” had to abandon its strategy of facilitating relationships and take on a much more active role of making and breaking relationships. This process shaped out in two phases. At first, the team of “My Coast” tried to follow a strategy of recruitment of the major players to the round table meetings and play a brokerage role between local organizations and national government. This approach proved successful at generating interests but not enough at sustaining dialogue among the organizations that could propel “My Coast” along its path to completion. As the spring of 2008 was coming to a close, Rene shifted his strategy for a third time: instead of recruiting organizations, he looked for

ways to support those of them who could most readily contribute not only to the final deliverables of “My Coast” but also who still “got it” under his interpretation.

Meetings, and especially the so-called round table meetings, emerged as crucial sites for testing the relationships between “My Coast” and other organizations, as well as across the invited organizations. Meetings were, in fact, the only manifestation of the existence of “My Coast” outside of the press interviews that Rene gave with the help of his journalist girlfriend. Rather than being the sites for making decisions and committing to action that the theory behind “My Coast” suggested, these meetings were sites where participants tested each other. From the perspective of “My Coast” the test was whether someone was “getting it” and from the perspective of other organizations, the test was about what role “My Coast” or other attendant organizations could play not only vis-à-vis the project itself but also regarding their own activities. This was especially true for the recruitment/brokering phase but was also valid even towards the very end of the project.

As the second year of the project was starting, it was becoming clear that the role of recruiter /broker was not going to yield the desired results. What Rene found necessary was to acquire a more active voice for “My Coast” and start supporting other organizations in order to claim some of their ongoing and future activities as a follow-up on the project’s vision. In the process of changing its strategy, the project itself changed its internal organization and shifted its focus towards long-term goals rather than the achievement of the specific tasks outlined in its initial terms. Some members left while others joined in to work on specific assignments. With these changes, the team no longer worked together but divided along geographical sub-areas along the Black Sea. In the midst of these changes,

only Rene remained the unifying figure for all endeavors along the coast. His relationship to the advisory team in the Netherlands also changed as he had to convince them on a narrative for “My Coast” that centered not on what was achieved within the two years of its duration but on the capacity for institutional change in the future.

Despite all the efforts and the shifts in strategy, was this project “just talk” in the end, a pro-forma performance executed by Dutch consultants for the sake of ministerial track records, while local organizations played along so they can boost their own project portfolios? This is the cynical view that can also be interpreted as the view of loose coupling of organizations to their environment when diffusion takes place due to imitation and/or coercion. As noted earlier, Rene was very sensitive to such an interpretation during the first few months of the project and vehemently rejected it even as he complained about various obstacles. He fits into the image of the institutional entrepreneur (DiMaggio, 1988; Fligstein, 1997) who does not believe that the world is statically fixed by economic interests or power relations but tries to rearrange relations in the organizational field to influence institutional change. “My Coast” itself can be seen as an episode of institutional entrepreneurialism attempting to create possibilities for action locally through reimagining the collective situation on the Black Sea coast.

As Dornisch (2002) has argued, projects in Western regions are possible because they are supported by financial, professional, and knowledge structures that enable them to become provisional vehicles for institutional change. In contrast, in Eastern Europe, where such structures are in flux, projects are characterized by false starts and unpredictability, and reproduce, rather than change, existing institutions. A similar argument is advanced by

David Mosse (2005) in his study of developmental projects in Asia in which he concluded that projects make action possible by reproducing existing institutional forms. Thus the question of success has two dimensions: first, on the level of coordination, how was the project able to continue and finish its tasks when it lacked supporting structures; and second, in terms of performance, did the project achieve its tasks only because it was able to reproduce existing institutions? In practice, these two questions are linked and have no definitive answer but following the process of organizing that the team of “My Coast” carried out, we are able to analyze how in order to deliver on any short-term tasks, “My Coast” had to get on a long-term view.

In the end, it was not the project it had set out to be but it also tried very hard to eschew the fate of becoming “just talk”. In order to do so, “My Coast” had to borrow from the repertoire of social movements and engage in what Tarrow and Petrova (2007) have termed ‘transactional activism’ – rely not on the participatory approach which comes from ideas of representation, but on pragmatic skills of finding and working on more projects within the same domain of work. The work of transactional activism consists of trying to forge provisional coalitions with organizations which share, or at least do not militate against, the theoretical frame of the project. Thus, rather than viewing projects as flexible short-term mechanisms for delivering on tasks, projects are also discursive spaces where ties can be formed with a view towards the future (Mische, 1998; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2006).

Projects are thus embedded not only in organizational networks and professional communities but also in chains of past and future projects which enable certain

transactions and preclude others. As we have seen in the previous chapter, “My Coast” is an episode in a series of similar projects all linked to one of two themes – integrated planning as understood through the Rotterdam experience or coastal management as understood within the guidelines issued by the EU. This path of previous project work provides a cognitive framework for “My Coast” and serves to chart a possible future path for the project. This chapter focuses on how the temporal embeddedness of “My Coast” in a chain of previous and possible future projects helps it delineate its boundaries and accomplish results.

From “*this is your project*” to “*we are collecting all ideas*”: Recruitment and Brokerage

In the summer of 2007, Rene and Linda embarked on a different approach: rather than rely on traditional methods of organizing local participation through umbrella organizations and associations, they started recruiting participants through one-on-one meetings with individual organizations locally. Since “My Coast” found so little support in the face of technocratic experts at the ministries, Rene and Linda decided that the best strategy was to organize “from below” and convince their political appointees at the ministries that the demands from local organizations should be taken seriously.

The uneasy relations between national government and local municipalities in the previous several years, characterized by half-hearted attempts at decentralization, had fueled renewed attempts to give more power back to the minister of regional development. Throughout 2007, a new Black Sea Law was in the works in parliament and its goal was to

give more control over development along the coast to the minister. The Ministry of Regional Development director Stancheva explained that the ministry was not very happy with the way some municipalities had approached development “in a very commercial way”. Aware of this development, Rene also wanted to leverage My Coast as a demonstration that centralization is not the only option and show that if led through the right process, municipalities can produce regional plans that are not “commercial” but meet European standards for sustainability. He hoped to organize local interests to push back on this law and orchestrate a bottom-up pressure on the national government not to reverse the trend of decentralization.

The solution My Coast was advancing was to create another institutional layer between local municipalities and national government, i.e. coordinate any investment projects at the regional level. To do that, “My Coast” wanted to “*give the region a voice*”, which in this case meant the creation of an image and a narrative that did not exist in the first place. Visualizing, or branding, the region through images and words meant that each investment proposition is judged within the criteria set by this common vision, or brand. A regional institution on the model of regional development organizations would be granted authority to review project proposals and deny requests for investments that do not fit into this common vision. As Rene explained, this additional layer not only requires that municipalities coordinate their resources (water treatment facilities have become a contentious issue) but provides a defense against encroachments from both ministries and business interests. To the latter, a mayor could say: “it is not us who are blocking your

investment plans, it is the region”. Dealing with the former, the region gives mayors more collective leverage in negotiations.

One of the first outcomes of this new approach was to realize that the Black Sea coastal area was not the right geographical unit of territorial organization. Instead, the coast was divided in roughly the North, the South and the main city port of Varna.

As the first meetings in the spring of 2007 proved almost disastrous to the project, “My Coast” set out to collect ideas of what the regional vision or brand could be. Rene and Linda wanted to collect some ideas with which to start discussions at the round table meetings in the fall. Thus the rhetoric of the project started slowly to shift from “*this is your project*” to “*we are listening to all points of view and collecting all ideas*”.

This shift meant also a different role for the team of My Coast. Instead of facilitating a dialogue among the participants, this new role put the team in multiple dyadic relations with various organizations, often unwilling to talk to each other. As a project backed by the ministry of regional development, “My Coast” often found itself in the position of a broker between the ministries and local interests. If they wanted to secure participation, Rene and Linda had to engage in this role and promise that they would lobby for particular resources that municipalities wanted. However, this position was not easy to enact. For one thing, it was not available everywhere as many municipalities and businesses did not need any outside involvement. More importantly, there were numerous other projects and channels that local organizations could use to try to secure influence and resources, so “My Coast” was not the only available bridge to cross.

In addition, acting as brokers was complicated by the upcoming elections in November 2007. Local mayors and local parliaments were likely to change in just a few months and given the political stalemate in a government composed of three coalition parties which were getting ready for general elections the following year, “My Coast” was also facing a difficult political climate. Brokering with local governments was going to be uncertain, especially if newly elected mayors saw no rewards in continuing with projects that their predecessors have started. But most of all, the role of mediator between national government and local interest required that “My Coast” demonstrate that it has the political backing of these ministries. The absence of representatives of the ministries was invariably interpreted as the lack of such support. Thus Rene and Linda found themselves in a Catch 22 situation where to organize local interests they needed the backing of the national ministries but to get the backing of national ministries, they needed to demonstrate that organizing was going on locally already.

These challenges are exemplified by the difficulties of recruiting participants to the fall 2007 round tables. As was already becoming evident during the first conversations with NGOs and mayors, a common coastal region did not exist and speaking of a common coastal image for the entire Black Sea area was not possible. With the problem of composing a public around the Black Sea coastal region unresolved, the vision for “My Coast” turned out to play out in different versions according to organizational dynamics in different sub-regions. Comparing the processes that took place in these different regions provides a glimpse into the different ways the project completed its work. Some of the sub-regions did not deliver any participants and the project folded its efforts after negotiating

with the Dutch sponsors and the Bulgarian ministries. The efforts in other sub-regions were more successful in producing results but what worked in each case was different. Despite the differences between these cases, they also had one common theme – in each case the project had to find local organizations to hook into, i.e. whose agendas it championed and among whose projects it could get integrated.

Initially, there were six proposed sub-regions but two of them quickly turned out to be impossible to assemble. The area between the city of Varna and the Sunny Beach resort, where the majority of hotel construction was taking place in 2005-2008 yielded no willing participants to the project. They did not respond to invitations for participation and declined preliminary conversations with the Dutch consultant. The large Sunny Beach resort itself was uninterested in participation since it enjoyed direct private contacts with key decision makers in the government and had no reason to sit at a negotiating table.

That left three regions that “My Coast” focused on: the Northern region of Dobrudja, the city of Varna, and the Southern region of Strandja with the port of Bourgas. Left out were the stretches of large resorts or booming villages in between Varna and Bourgas. Each of these three regions presented its own organizational environment and required a different adaptation of strategy on the part of “My Coast”. Despite these differences, however, the challenge for the project was the same in one sense – it had to find its own “voice” and position itself as a player aligned with others’ agendas. At the same time, in its written reports and in its dealings with people from the Bulgarian and Dutch ministries, the project manager had to translate these activities into the technocratic language of bureaucracies.

The Neglected North – the plains of Dobrudja

The Northern part of the sea coast is characterized by rocky beaches and by agriculture further inland. The three coastal municipalities in the region - Shabla, Kavarna, and Balchik - were all in the process of preparing development plans which subsequently had to be approved by the ministry of regional development. By law, each such plan is developed through a tender procedure that the municipality organizes and a consulting group wins. The plans have to go through a phase of public hearing after they are drafted and the consultant is supposed to incorporate the hearing's comments into the plan. However, there is no feedback mechanism in case comments and suggestions from these hearings were not reflected in the plan and there was already discontent brewing especially along the coastal areas of Shabla and Balchik with the lack of such a provision.



Figure 1: Dobrudja Region

Lacking the sandy beaches of the coasts to the South, the municipalities here were interested in developing golf, yachting, and windmill parks. The lack of mass tourist resorts also meant that, historically, the municipalities did not have strong connections to central government. The mayor of Kavarna, in particular, had developed a reputation for a maverick able to turn the town from a low-key, lackluster relaxation spot into an exciting festival destination. This approach, however, did not call for cooperation with either the national government or with the neighboring municipalities, so he never responded to invitations from “My Coast”. That left the counties of Balchik and Shabla, together with the regional center Dobrich and the large resort Albena, as potential players in My Coast.

The Port City of Varna



Figure 2: Varna and Varna Lake

The port in the city of Varna is the largest in Bulgaria and had some significant reconstruction plans approved by government as early as 1999. The port wanted to expand and capture some of the increasing traffic from the Romanian port of Constanza. In addition to new terminals, the port administration wanted to move existing centrally located terminals to the outskirts of the city. This move followed a world-wide trend in

turning old industrial shipping zones into shopping and entertainment areas. The opportunities for consulting and other businesses that could come from these investment plans were one of the primary reasons for the interest of the Dutch ministry to pursue “My Coast”. The move of the terminal, however, was controversial and as such, details and exact timetables were not forthcoming from neither the port itself, nor the Varna municipality. The location of the new terminal was disputed both by environmentalists concerned about the wildlife in the wetlands areas around the inland lakes and by civil right organizations concerned with the displacement of a gypsy ghetto in the area.

The Booming South – Strandja Mountains and the Seaside mayors



Figure 3: Strandja Region

The southern half of the Black sea coast is home to another port, Burgas, as well as a host of small towns, most of them bordering on the national park “Strandja” - low-lying mountain range with dispersed small villages subsisting mainly on sheep herding and some

agriculture. The mountains are home to some endangered species of birds and butterflies and the preservation of the grazing lifestyle of sheep herders is crucial to the preservation of the ecology that supports these species. The director of the national park “Strandja” and the mayors of some of the adjacent municipalities, particularly Tsarevo and Primorsko, were at odds about development plans along the coast in areas that were part of the protected park lands.

Fall 2007 Round Tables: Attempts at Recruitment and Brokerage in the North

Enlisting participants through much personal effort in one-on-one meetings rather than through existing organizational structures put Rene and Linda into a different kind of position than facilitation. Organizing through recruitment of various parties in a one-on-one series of meetings meant that “My Coast” had to offer something to each one of them for their participation.

In their recruitment efforts, Rene and Linda cast a very wide net and tried to invite as many organizations as they could, from as many sectors as they could. If anyone expressed interest and was willing to come to a meeting, even in an ad-hoc, unrepresentative capacity, the team would invite the person. During this period in the second half of 2007, they were slowly abandoning the rhetoric of “*this is your project*”. Instead, they were mixing it up or completely transitioning to some new assertions: “*we would like to hear your opinions*”, or “*we are collecting all opinions*”. Thus they were slipping towards a role as a broker between local interests and the national government, in particular the ministry of regional development and the ministry of transportation. This

was a precarious position to take since it was not evident that “My Coast” was going to be the only filter, or the only passage point, between local interests and national plans. Furthermore, even though the ministry of regional development was the official “beneficiary” of the project, it was providing little in the way of support for “My Coast”. Stancheva, the head of the urban planning department who was the “My Coast” point of contact with the ministry seemed well-disposed towards the project but it was clearly not one of her top priorities as she would often explain her absence from local meetings with other duties such as organizing promotional events. Internal politics also seemed to affect how much support “My Coast” was receiving from the ministry. Rene regarded the minister with suspicion. Even though the minister himself was not involved in “My Coast”, it seemed that “My Coast” was kept under the radar of his attention. It was not until the second half of 2008 that one of the directors in the urban planning division who reported to Stancheva, felt that he could more freely engage in “My Coast” and come to local meetings. This person had participated in all meetings with the ministry up to that point but had always remained silent. Rene was genuinely surprised in 2008 as he exclaimed:

“Suddenly we find out there is someone at the ministry who actually understands this project”.

Furthermore, it seemed that Stancheva herself did not want to draw attention to “My Coast” as she sometimes left Rene to go to the steering committee meetings by himself. He had asked her if she trusted him to represent what was going on to the sponsors and interpreted her refusal to attend in two possible ways: she either did not want the minister to learn of the ongoing meeting or she didn’t feel prepared to talk. It seemed

like Rene was prone to believe the first explanation more likely. Thus even though “My Coast” was trying to recruit participants in a series of meetings, they had little to offer in the way of political connections. It was a tricky position to be in and the team knew it. They were hoping that the political support they lacked from the ministry would be compensated for through establishing connections on the local level. Organizing the fall 2007 round table meetings hinged on the success of this slow and difficult process to recruit one person at a time.

In preparation for the meeting in the North, Linda and Alex traveled to Dobrich in July to meet people from local organizations. They were able to establish some local connections, some of them completely ad hoc. For example, they met the head of the local chamber of commerce by simply walking in the building and asking for a meeting. These efforts continued on throughout the summer and into the month of October when it was decided that the meeting was to be held in early November.

The following episodes exemplify the difficulties of securing participation and the weakness of the role of broker that “My Coast” was trying to play. As part of organizing the round table meetings, Alex had sent official letters of invitation to the local mayors. Unsurprisingly, the mayor of Balchik had not responded as he did not know much about the project and had no interest in continuing work on something that his predecessor had started. The morning of the round table meeting, Linda and Alex were trying to strategize how to address the issue in a coffee shop over breakfast. The person that was supposed to be delegated to the meeting was not the mayor himself but the director of economic activities at the municipality. He had attended meetings before and seemed interested in the

project but needed official permission from the mayor to attend. Attempts to get such a permission were met with bureaucratic resistance - either the letter was not in the appropriate official form or the mayor was traveling and could not sign the authorization. One of the ways that "My Coast" was trying to persuade the mayor was that all the other municipalities were sending a representative and only Balchik would remain unrepresented in a meeting that can have an impact on policy. After a few days of phone calls leading to no commitment, Linda had to resort herself to failing to engage Balchik. She kept saying that "*there is no point if they don't see the value*" and "*this is their project, I can't force them to participate*". To her surprise that morning, however, when Alex decided to make one last call, the municipality confirmed that its director of economic activities was going to attend. It seemed like a small victory but during the round meeting itself this person never made any comments.

In a similar effort to attract participants, Linda and Alex went to an agricultural seminar in Dobrich on the morning before the round table. The seminar was on rural development through European structural funds, organized by the ministry of agriculture. Using their contact at the Chamber of Commerce in the city, Alex and Linda were successful in getting an introduction to the head of the public relations office at the ministry. Having secured her participation, they also wanted to look at the attendance log of the seminar and see who else might be a potential participant in the round table meeting that day. However, when we got there towards the end of the seminar, most of the roster was already sent to the chamber of commerce and only one page of it was sitting at the front desk. Linda and Alex started discussing how to get the rest of it. Alex felt that being

part of “My Coast” didn’t give him the clout to ask for things because he did not have anything to offer or to threaten with. Linda said she understood his concerns and offered her way of dealing with the issue of lacking the resources to engage in brokering:

“I just have to remind myself that this is the right thing to do. I am doing it for this project and not for me. Even if no one seems to understand the approach or believe in it, I have to believe that this will change and things will start happening later on. Then it is easier to be ‘rude’ and demand things from people.”

These little vignettes show how difficult it was to put together a set of participants on the local level even after several months of local meetings. Feelings of doubting the potential for success were always present throughout 2007 as the political clout of “My Coast” was tested over and over during the one-on-one and round table meetings on the coast. The trials of assembling the public also reveal the uncertain and precarious position the team of My Coast was occupying vis-à-vis other players. These experiences began altering the perspective of even the optimistic Rene. However, he was still hopeful that “My Coast” could marshal local interests to demonstrate that there was “pressure from bellow” to establish regional development councils to endorse a common strategy for the seaside. Rene’s hope was that this bottom-up strategy would then leave the government with no other choice but to fund these regional councils and provide the political support for their operation.

The recruitment strategy of bringing people to the table relied mainly on the gap between national ministries and local interests in the face of ministries, large resorts, and national parks. Structurally, “My Coast” could bridge the divide between Sofia-based

bureaucrats and representatives of coastal organizations but politically the project was in a weak position. The locals wanted various things from the ministries but the ministries did not have much to gain from exposing themselves to such demands.

In support of this idea that “My Coast” could be such a bridge in the North, the round table meeting was set up in the offices of the regional administration and an architect from the Ministry of regional development was supposed to be present. Hours before the meeting, Linda discussed the lack of proper cartography in the region and promised the regional administration that she would recommend the purchase of a GIS system to the ministry. The regional “senior expert” related a joke demonstrating how marginalized the northern regions felt by the national government:

“Vidin (in the Northwest) and Dobrich are the two most important municipalities in Bulgaria because when someone in government needs to pin the map on the wall, that’s where they stick the pins (rendering the two cities invisible)”.

“My Coast” was banking on this sentiment. One of the very first questions the expert asked upon meeting the team of “My Coast” right before the round table was whether someone from the regional ministry was going to attend. However, as it turned out, the architect did not arrive for the meeting and nobody else replaced him. In our discussions later, Linda shared that at this moment, as on many similar occasions, she felt that the mandate of “My Coast” was being questioned as locals seemed to conclude that the project lacked high-level support.

Still, the manner of opening the round table meeting in Dobrich suggested that the project was a vehicle to influence politics at the ministry. Despite its name, the round table

meeting took place at an auditorium at the regional administration building, with Linda and Alex facing rows of sitting participants. Linda was mostly sitting and quietly taking notes while Alex was standing and leading the meeting. He opened with a new line:

“We accept ideas and suggestions what the vision should be for the Black Sea Coast and what can be done in Dobrich Municipality.”

Throughout the roughly six hours of the meeting, most participants faced and spoke to Linda and Alex, instead of to each other. There were twenty two participants from fifteen different organizations. Most of them were from local, regional, or national government organizations. There were three representatives from the largest resort in the area, “Albena”, and two from the budding wind energy and organic agriculture industries. There were also three NGOs and one scientist from the oceanology institute. Thus the round table meeting had quite a broad swath of organizations and they had all come to state their positions but not to each other – these positions were stated to “My Coast” as a proxy for government planners. Indeed, very little conversation occurred among participants themselves. Some latent conflicts became evident but confrontation was mostly suppressed and potential disagreement avoided.

The main concern in the North from a planning perspective was the multiple claims on agricultural land and the over-taxation of water resources. The regional administration was worried that selling off agricultural land for golf courses or wind turbines was not going to support local consumption and production. The energy generated by wind turbines was to be fed to a national gridline taking electricity away from the region and the golf courses were not going to generate many employment opportunities for people in the area.

Repurposing agricultural land was also taking away opportunities for sustainable agriculture. Despite these tensions, all of the participants at one point or another stated that they did not want to repeat what was done in the South. Beyond general statements like that however, there was little agreement on what should be done. Even while starting with the statement that “*our coast should not repeat the over-construction mistakes made in the Bourgas region*”, the general director of the large complex resort “Albena” went on to say that:

“Our coast should resemble, let’s say...Cancun or the shores of Cuba where it wasn’t allowed for the hotels to build one on top of another, there is zoning and a wonderful nature park.”

The reason the director of “Albena” was attending the meeting became clear in his short and deliberate speech which he made standing up and addressing Linda directly:

“Our sea is deprived of islands and is not so attractive in the summer. Our laws are very restrictive regarding that. I do think that in some places around “Albena”, let’s say 300-400 meters into the sea, if there were a few islands, the sea would be much more attractive because it will be dotted by boats and yachts leaving our port....We are talking business here, so when we want to attract people with money... we have to give them occasions and reasons to spend it. They need places to go to. Otherwise, we will remain a destination for tourists of modest means.... This is the challenge I put forward - can we influence the legislature so that such initiatives are possible in the future?”

Apart from requesting help with lobbying effort, another problem this director was facing was confusion over the proper jurisdiction for the approval of plans for marinas or similar facilities – the local, the regional, or the national. The expert from the ministry of regional planning explained something to the effect that proposals should be resolved with

the help of NGOs and scientific organizations, as required by the EU guidelines that the ministry was implementing. Such vague response was clearly nothing new to the director and he continued on to say that perhaps the Dutch, with their experience in reclaiming land from the sea, could help in providing expertise and services for the resort's plans.

Similarly, the representative from an association of the wind turbine industry was looking for lobbying help with clearing some legal hurdles for the erection of wind turbines, especially as this sector was heating up with the help of EU funds for alternative energy projects. He made a passionate speech about the future of wind energy as an engine for growth in the area but complained that Natura 2000 did not make clear which lands would be suitable for wind turbine farms. The man was interested in whether he could get "My Coast" to help with lobbying central government to make more land available for wind turbines. Similarly, the organic agriculture representative wanted to make a case for more subsidies for small farmers.

In addressing Linda and Alex directly, the representatives from these various business interests were casting "My Coast" as a potential broker between them and government policy-makers. They were not attending the round-table in order to face hostile NGOs and speed up a possible solution, as might have been the case in Holland. More surprisingly, perhaps, was that the same strategy was employed by the NGOs themselves. None of the representatives had come in order to have a many-to-many conversation over development plans in the region. In fact, they actively avoided airing any conflicts during the meeting. For example, during his opening remarks, Alex had made references to such

existing conflicts between NGOs and businesses in the area. In response, one of the first statements that the representative from a network of regional NGOs made was:

“I want to allay the concerns stated earlier in the opening statement that we (the NGOs) are going to get into sharp polemics with the representative of the wind turbines business”.

However, as the local press reported at the time, there were latent conflicts between wind turbine proponents and NGOs interested in the welfare of birds. Mitsubishi had recently won a contract to build a large wind turbine farm around one of the sea capes. The cape and the surrounding area had subsequently become the object of disputes, as some local NGOs concerned with the effect of the turbines on large flocks of rare migrating birds wanted these lands to be included in Natura 2000. However, none of this conflict was aired during the meeting, even though the representatives from local NGOs behind that effort were present. In talking to one of them after the meeting, he confirmed these existing tensions, not only with the wind turbines plans but also with the resort “Albena”:

“Everyone is looking after themselves while they are claiming to care about nature. The same with the wind turbines... It’s a good idea but they will be in the pathway of a lot of migrating birds coming from the south. And I ‘admire’ the people with the islands. I know this guy. He started working at the resort when he was 20 years old, i.e. in communist times, and he has climbed up the ladder steadily since then. It is his idea to have islands and he is working hard to promote it. Between the islands and the wind turbine farms, the ecological balance in the region will be destroyed.”

Another such opportunity for an open exchange between participants was allowed to pass when the director of the national park “Zlatni” stated that the municipality in Balchik had included many areas from the park in its zoning plans, thus breaching the law

that stipulated that the nature park was public property excluded from construction activities. The representative from Balchik who was the head of the economic activities department said that he could not comment. Similarly, the representative from Dobrich municipality declined an invitation from Alexander to share his experience in planning the economic activities of the Dobrich municipality. Alex had intended this as a moment of sharing practices but the representative declined on the basis that he wasn't prepared to talk about that. Thus there were several occasions in which Alexander tried to facilitate a cross-organizational dialogue between participants but the invitation was declined one way or another.

Instead, the NGOs at the meeting mostly had questions around the organization of the project. They asked about the mechanism for the implementation of the strategy that "My Coast" was supposed to propose – was it going to be ratified by Parliament, who was going to fund it, and what ministries were included. Similarly to the business representatives, the NGOs were interested in assessing the ability of "My Coast" to influence policies at the national level. Like the regional and local municipalities, they suggested that many more ministries should be included in future round-table meetings – the transportation, the environmental, the agricultural, the economic affairs, the culture ministry, as well as the Forestry Agency and the Black Sea Basin Directorate. Soon, pretty much every national-level institution was suggested as a necessary participant. The conversation that both NGOs and businesses wanted to have was not with each other but with ministries. The battles over defining territories and standards were thus missing their most important audience and if "My Coast" was not able to guarantee the attention of that

audience, then none of these organizations had many incentives to participate. At this point, each organization was still evaluating its involvement in the project. That was why the rhetoric of “*this is your project*” was ringing hollow and was giving way to “*we are collecting all ideas*” which was suggesting that “My Coast” was positioning itself as a broker.

Despite the lack of dialogue, a common theme could indeed be detected among the many short speeches made that day and it was mainly the idea that the North should not rush to build many hotels and resorts and should link agriculture, tourism, and alternative energy into a mutually-supporting complex. As a result of that meeting, Linda and Alexander created a one-page document outlining the “vision” for the North, “From Coast to Countryside” in order to deliver the first of several project results as expected by the Bulgarian and Dutch ministries.

Fall 2007 round table meetings: Attempts at Recruitment and Brokerage in Varna and in the South

If the North was unhappy about the lack of attention and resources from the national government, the South was only too happy to be left alone to take advantage of the many investment offers for hotels and marinas. Southern small towns and large old-time resorts had become the poster child for chaotic over-development and the real estate boom. All attempts to set up a round table meeting in the fall of 2007 there failed. The small towns south of the port of Burgas all had ambitious development plans to increase the number of tourist beds several times over and to build marinas in the place of old

fishing ports. If any brokering was needed here, it was between the expansionist mayors and the national park “Strandja”. This brokering role, however, would turn out impossible to fulfill.

Similarly, as a state-owned company, the port of Varna had direct and sound relationships with people from the local and regional administrations, as well as the various ministries. Instead of the regional directorate, it was the port of Varna who hosted the round table meeting and the main theme of conversation was the port’s renovation plans. These plans were closely related to the development plans of the city of Varna since they involved the renovation of old port facilities in its center into attractive entertainment areas. The controversial part of the plans was about the removal of an old gypsy ghetto and the clearing of a nearby wetlands area for the new container shipping terminal. Several NGOs had opposed these plans and had referred again to the Natura 2000 plan as a tool to contest the location of the new terminal. Thus the main point of contention because it was easier to counter with existing law, was not so much the ghetto but the lack of environmental audit for this move. At stake was the lack of transparency over the procedures and intentions of the port and the city regarding the overall plan in general and the port renovations, in particular. As it turned out, the round table meeting was seen by the port, as well as by many in the city municipality, as a potential threat to the drafting of these master plans. At stake was the ability of the port and the city to maneuver so as to avoid any outright confrontation with either NGOs or environmental regulations or sanctions that might be imposed by the ecological ministry. The threat was not so much because of the strict regulation of laws by the ministry itself but because of the

involvement of Dutch consultants who might turn out to be critical and thus bring on criticisms from an already critical EU commission. Thus unlike in Dobrich, the port's agenda for the round table meeting was not so much to seek help with resources and connections to national government but to neutralize any potential threats to its plans while also assessing the interest of the Dutch consultant to bring in Dutch expertise to help implement these plans. To that end, the port director had planned a tour of the facilities and a promotional video explaining that the plans for relocation and renovation are crucial for the economic development not only of the port but of the city of Varna and the country as a whole.

As in Dobrich, the regional administration showed rhetorical support for "My Coast", as the deputy regional governor emphatically stated:

"In Bulgaria, the usual practice still is one of forceful administration, or top-down approach and that is one of the biggest problems which we have not overcome. I think the way ahead is exactly this coordinated and integrated alignment of interests from different sectors. I hope that your project will contribute to that end."

However, when the discussion started, it became clear that, as in Dobrich, the participants were not really interested in talking to each other and considered the exercise mostly "an exchange of information" with the team of "My Coast". Thus despite the demonstrated support in principle for the project as an organization, in practice, the relationships among participants "on the ground" did not follow the role expectations that "My Coast" assumed. In fact, any potential realignment of relationships that could come as a result of "My Coast" was not welcomed. As the head of the Black Sea Coastal

Association, a business association that included the port itself, as well as the large industrial conglomerates in the city, explained:

“We cannot stop territorial planning so that we can apply all principles of integrated management and then proceed with territorial planning again. The only thing we can do is what we are doing now – exchange information as we go and apply some principles as much as we can.”

However, getting into the process of territorial planning in the city proved pretty much impossible as the plans were never shared with the team of “My Coast” or indeed, any other organization. At the time of the meeting, “My Coast” represented a new potential player in the complex negotiations between local and national government over the renovation plans of the port and the city of Varna. Thus the port authorities and the organizations aligned with them had come to assess whether “My Coast” was to be neutralized or utilized as an ally. At the very same time that the round table meeting was taking place, there was another meeting in the city where the master plan for its development was being discussed. Under the new tender procedures for developing such territorial master plans, the city contracted a consulting company to draft it. An architect from that company was present at the round table meeting but some of his colleagues were meeting with municipality officials to draft the plans. One of the architects from the municipality who came to “My Coast” left after the first usual questions about roles and participation were asked, evidently to go to the other meeting. She left one of her junior colleagues, Kremena, to attend the round table meeting.

As it turned out Kremena had a complicated set of identities which would come out to play an important role for “My Coast”. She had a private architecture bureau together

with her husband and according to her own account, had started working for the city mainly to get access to information and contacts about potential construction projects. Apart from that, she had also started a professional organization called “Chamber of Young Architects” which was in the beginning stages of challenging the process of drafting Varna’s master plan. Pointedly, this organization was outside the auspices of the national Chamber of Architects and was often vocal about the lack of transparency in drafting the master plan of the city. Kremena was only in her later twenties and at the time of the round table meetings in the fall of 2007, she was still just a young city employee in the eyes of those around the table at that meeting. Nobody knew at the time that only a year later, she would become one of the faces of the opposition against corporate interests in Varna’s master development plans and in particular against a huge construction project to build several large hotels, casinos and restaurants on the grounds of one of Varna’s landmark public properties –the Maritime Garden. In 2009 she received an award from the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee for human rights for these efforts.

However, in the fall of 2007 she had not yet become a public persona and had come to the round table meeting only because her direct supervisor at the municipality had decided to go to the other, more important meeting on the master plan, and send a junior colleague to “My Coast”. At that round table her remarks brought up some latent conflicts which otherwise would have remained buried, just like at the meeting in Dobrich. While during the presentation that the director of the port gave on its renovation plans it seemed that there were no frictions about those plans, Kremena was the first to mention that there

had been indeed, conflict. To that remark, the head of the Black Sea Coastal Association responded:

“We are talking about bird habitats there but these wetlands are already quite polluted and we have to ask ourselves if these birds are the birds we want to protect. Next, there is the issue with the application of EU legislation which allows infrastructure development to go through protected areas as long as new protected areas are created or there are some other kinds of compensations. The same thing has been done here a long time ago, without the awareness of the extremists who are interested in protecting the birds and nothing else....Birds are not stupid, they find ways to survive.”

While stating this however, he also said that the new terminal was not going to be located in the wetlands because that was going to stir up an outcry. At this point, Linda asked if there was indeed conflict over the location of the terminal or not. The same representative responded that there seemed to be no conflict. When Kremena asked him to confirm that the port was not moving to the wetlands, his response was that there were still “some analyses done by experts”. As Linda repeated the question again, he explained:

“This discussion brings a lot of questions, a lot of ‘whys’. We selected the location of the terminal for several reasons: one of them is that it is a landfill of construction materials from the process of urbanization in Varna. So the first question is, who and why allowed this landfill for such construction materials...There were marshes there, now everything is filled, no more marshes. Why have the [stork] habitats been liquidated. ...So there are many whys. If we start arguing now about whether the location of the terminal is appropriate there...I personally won’t work at the port when all this is done but as a reasonable person who wants to live in a nice city, I think this is the right location. ...I propose that we drop this topic now, it has to be discussed in a much wider and higher audience”.

Linda then turned to Kremena to ask if the city territorial department was happy with the port's plans for the location. Kremena responded that she just wanted to point out that things were not as clear as initially presented and that there would be more debates about the location, especially between the minister who changed his position once already and the newly elected city officials. So, it was not that the municipality disagreed with the plan, but that the procedures around it were not transparent. As the team of "My Coast" has learned in the process of talking to NGOs, businesses who wanted to build somewhere, including around the Varna lake, and did not have the proper environmental assessments, proceeded to build very quickly so as to get to a point where it was a "done deal", i.e. too late to save habitats. This is where the many "whys" were coming in – why was construction allowed before around the lake, why nobody was sanctioned, and why did that even matter at the current point of discussions.

Kremena then, continued on to say that for her "My Coast" was an opportunity to make that process transparent. The deputy regional governor interrupted to say that things were not going to change because the newly elected officials were still "*really the old ones*" to which Kremena disagreed.

In a subsequent conversation, Kremena decoded that exchange for Linda and Apo. She explained that what the governor had meant was that even though there were new faces in the local parliament, they were still beholden to the well-known Varna economic group that owned most of the large businesses in the city, including the airport, the nearby chemical conglomerate, and not coincidentally, the consulting firm drafting Varna's development plans. That same business group had many investment plans in the city and

was thought to control many politicians and experts in government. Her response, she continued on, was based on her inference of internal struggles within this group as she had observed during the group's meetings at the municipality. In her interpretation, there were factions within it and they were struggling over a strategy to diversify their portfolio of political connections. In addition, there more struggles with the chief architect of the city who at that point in time was representing an obstacle to the investment plans of the group because he had blocked their idea of pushing all waterways underground. This move would have allowed them to build on territories that were currently protected because of these waterways. However, as the architect had argued, every hundred years or so the waters swell and pushing them in underground pipes would create problems in the future. In other words, while the governor thought that the settlements that the central government and the city council had reached were stable despite changes in representatives in parliament, Kremena thought that these agreements had not been settled yet and saw an opening for a demand for more transparency on the territorial planning process.

As these exchanges illustrate, the dynamics of planning in Varna were very different than those in the North. The main problem here was not the disconnection between local and national administrations but the complex games involving city officials, national government, and local business interests. The conflicts and plans were not transparent and a lot was happening in meetings that were closed off to Rene and Linda. Realizing this, Linda suggested that "My Coast" should probably talk with the top managers of that economic group since they were such important stakeholders. Clearly amused, Kremena asked:

“Are you really prepared to deal with them? People in Varna find them daunting and often say that nothing could happen unless these guys want it to happen. Here is how one of their bosses comes to a meeting at the municipality: two Jeeps block the street from both ends and the guy gets out while at least four bodyguards watch over.”

Thus just as in Dobrich, the round table meeting in Varna is more of an exercise in assessing the ability of “My Coast” to influence people in the ministries than a dialogue among participants. NGOs were mostly passive and rose to speak only when their legitimacy was threatened. Responding to the earlier comment about extremists defending bird habitats, the representative from a Black Sea NGO network defended her colleagues:

“A few words on the procedures for selecting the protected areas under Natura 2000: the selection was made by experts who are not extremists, as was incorrectly implied here, but these are people from academic circles, such as the biological faculties from universities all over the country... Some of these experts are, of course, members of NGOs. They were asked to do the groundwork for preparing and drafting the data and supporting materials for the Natura 2000 plan. I am not going to comment much, other than to say that the ministry of ecology did not announce these protected areas in a timely manner.”

Unsurprisingly, the NGO representatives did not engage in taking a position on the issue of location but felt obligated to defend their image as experts, especially as it related to their relationships with national ministries, which they perceived as incompetent bureaucrats who do not know how to follow up on the work that the NGOs had done.

These first round table meetings resulted in two documents that “My Coast” delivered to the project’s “beneficiaries” – the Bulgarian ministries of regional development and of the environment. The two documents are the “visions” for Dobrudja and for Varna. The first one was called ‘From Coast to Countryside’ and reflected what

Linda and Alexander saw during the meetings as an interest in linking tourism to organic agriculture inland. The second one was called ‘Varna Shipping and Nature: Sailing towards clean water’. The report on the round table meetings that the team wrote back to the Dutch ministry was optimistic about the political support that local administrations showed by hosting the meetings and the positive statements everyone had made about the benefits of integrated planning. These pledges of support were seen as signs that specific people who have shown enthusiasm should be contacted individually and recruited as potential local “leaders” who would drive others into further meetings. More round tables were planned for 2008 to discuss the details about how the broad “visions” were to be developed into more practical plans. It was also noted that everybody had requested broader participation from various national and local governing bodies.

Rene, Linda and the environmental research scientist on the advisory committee of “My Coast” wrote an article and presented it to the annual conference on the Human Dimension of Global Environmental Change in Berlin. The article was entitled “Double Dutch?: Transferring the Integrated Area Approach to Bulgaria”²¹ and described the preliminary experiences of “My Coast”. The authors noted the difficulties they had and in particular, that “*project participants could not be transformed into problem owners*” (p.11). Nevertheless, it concluded that the change in approach that the project made in the summer of 2007 had resulted in good round table meetings in the fall of that year and that transferring the approach was not a “copy and paste activity but requires efforts, skill, and creativity of all participants to avoid double Dutch situations” (p. 16).

²¹ http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/ffu/akumwelt/bc2008/papers/bc2008_317_Dieperink.pdf

Thus after a near-collapse, the first year of “My Coast” ended on a more hopeful note that the well-attended meetings might lead to more support for the project locally.

Who gets it?: “My Coast” supports organizations on the margins to wrap up its mission

Changes in team and strategy in early 2008

The second year of “My Coast” turned out to be even more turbulent than the first. A second round of meetings took place in February and this time the number of participants was less. Soon after these meetings, the team itself went through some changes, as one of the Bulgarian contributors who had been focusing mostly on the Southern region of the coast along the nature preserve “Strandja” left the project. A couple of months later, in April, Linda found another job at the Dutch ministry of economic affairs and also left “My Coast”.

In the early months of 2008, while trying to arrange a round table meeting in the southern region of Strandja, Stefan and Rene had a fundamental disagreement about whether the director of the “Strandja” national park and the mayor of the largest municipality on its coastal territory would ever be able to negotiate. The two had been at odds with each other for a couple of years over the borders of Natura 2000 in the park. The park director viewed the mayor as an unscrupulous politician and a businessman ready to sell the park’s lands, while the mayor viewed the park director as an “eco fundamentalist” who would not allow any business activities in the park. Stefan argued that this feud had

been going on for a while and had become personal, while Rene could not accept the idea that they could not see the opportunities in working together to make the park into a profitable extension of the tourist season on the coast, while investing into preserving its unique natural habitats. Rene told Stefan that there cannot be “no way” that the two will ever work together, that “there’s got to be some way” and that Stefan just hadn’t found it. After that conversation, Stefan decided that there was nothing else he could do for the project and left.

With the departures of Linda and Stefan, Rene found himself looking for new collaborators in the Spring of 2008. He tapped into his contacts of people that he had worked with before. These were all people from NGOs or in government positions linked to environmental projects. He contracted two new consultants, one from an environmental NGO, Kiril, and one from the Agency for Economic Analysis and Forecasting who soon after left his government job to become a freelance consultant. Kiril had consulted small municipalities on writing sustainable development plans as they were required to do under the new EU rules and had written a simple software program to guide them through the process. The second person, Dragomir, had experience in Bulgarian environmental laws and regulations and was going to help “My Coast” in drafting the plans for setting up the new regional coastal councils. He was a founding member of a new Green Party and had established relations with many NGOs through his prior position with European environmental programs. Dragomir became a go-between these NGOs and Rene for the remainder of the project. This new group of people in the project was not a team in any meaningful way. They never met as a group since each one of them was involved in the

project in a separate capacity and for a particular region. Rene had become the only person connecting all the parts of “My Coast”. Indeed, he had become “My Coast”.

At this pivotal time, however, his own approach changed and he started adopting some of the language and attitude of his Bulgarian colleagues. Whereas throughout 2007 he remained characteristically upbeat and optimistic about the prospects for rational discourse among conflicting organizations, in the early months of 2008 he started using much more negative terms to describe his work and sarcasm was seeping in his comments about the motivations of various participants. In 2007, even I was warned not to make any remarks that might shed doubt on the applicability of the Dutch approach to the Bulgarian context in front of Rene. He who would immediately argue that there were good ideas and interested people and we should all stop being so negative. In 2008, he had no qualms about expressing negative feelings:

“I am basically sitting on top of an impossible project. I have to work with a lot of idiots who do not understand and do not believe in it.”

As the deadline for the project was drawing nearer and some of the results that were tracked on the project progress reports were getting delayed, Rene completely abandoned the strategy of recruitment and took on a much more practical approach of talking only to those who “*get it*” and can get useful results for the project. At this point, it was not so important to make sure that the important stakeholders were represented. Indeed the whole idea of representation through organizations was abandoned. Instead, as “My Coast” was threatened to lose steam again due to team changes, the only way for this project to survive was to position itself among a community of organizations with similar

goals and identities. In other words, “My Coast” had to stand for something, find its voice and become a stakeholder. However, finding this community of organizations was not an easy process, as the existence of such community was not obvious and even if it were, “My Coast” still had to find a way to interject itself into it.

Turning from Tasks to Goals: “My Coast” takes on a long-term perspective

As the strategy was shifting slowly from recruiting to supporting local organizations so that “My Coast” can deliver some results, it was necessary for Rene to convince his project sponsors back in the Netherlands that their expectations had to be scaled down. He was feeling more and more frustrated with the steering committee’s lack of understanding of local conditions. In particular, the person from the regional government of South Holland, Menko, was very optimistic about “My Coast” and did not agree that Bulgaria presented different challenges. He argued that the issues Rene was facing in Bulgaria, including personal animosities, obstruction, and political games had taken place in Rotterdam as well and were eventually resolved through the integrated approach. Apart from Menko, the sponsor from the Dutch Ministry of Housing was eager to see some concrete results of cooperation on the port in Varna and the opening of further opportunities for the Dutch to consult or provide other services there. Therefore it was critical for Rene to reframe “My Coast” in terms of long-range goals such as institutional change rather than specific tasks and gain flexibility in what he could do in the remaining time of the project. The visits by the Dutch steering committee became opportunities to demonstrate how hard it was to start any exchanges among organizations. During these

visits, the Dutch advisory team kept on giving presentations about the possibilities of “monetizing nature”, i.e. being able to charge higher prices for clean air, water, and beautiful vistas. Rene had often given such talks himself but eventually recognized that often what Bulgarians heard was not the so called “best practices” of collaboration among sectors but further proof that the Netherlands had capable and more resourceful state administration. These were not the lessons the Dutch wanted to deliver. So Rene tried to convince them that they should talk less, listen more and scale down their expectations. One part of tuning down the expectations was to justify why he could not involve the largest NGOs in the process. Even though they did not participate, he had kept them informed of his work and asked them regularly for feedback and stated positions. The lack of response from them or responses that amounted to “*we are taking legal action, so there is no need to participate in talks*”, were presented as evidence to the Dutch team of the NGOs decision to pursue legal means of action. Rene also had to explain why some local municipalities were not eager to discuss openly their planning activities. In contrast to the Netherlands, where strict law enforcement regarding the environment had made direct negotiations relatively more efficient way to start new construction, in Bulgaria the poor enforcement of environmental control meant that municipalities had little incentive to try to get relevant players on the table to negotiate. As Rene himself explained:

“In Rotterdam, the port still did whatever they wanted to do – they renovated, the expanded, but they did it while discussing with all the environmental NGOs - people like Mike and his organization for preservation of the dunes. So, in the end, Mike had to agree and give in but now he can’t say anything anymore because he has been part of the process, even though they went to court. And I say this to the government people when they don’t want to work with NGOs but they don’t care.

They probably think ‘we do whatever we want anyway, why make it complicated’”.

The turning point for Menko was his meeting with the regional governor for Bourgas. At a cocktail in the Dutch embassy afterwards, he complained about it and proclaimed that he couldn’t understand how “*a guy like that*” could be governor. Rene was finally succeeding in turning down some of the pressure from his advisory committee and enjoyed describing Menko’s frustration. Finally, in April 2008 during the quarterly advisory committee meeting, Rene convinced the EVD and VROM representatives that the initial plan for a full national ICZM strategy based on stakeholder agreements was too ambitious. After that meeting, what everyone in the “My Coast” team started saying was:

“We stepped in a project that in the Netherlands takes ten years to complete and here we only have two years”.

This new framing of “My Coast” as an overly ambitious undertaking that had not taken into account the lack of necessary project infrastructure allowed Rene to openly shift his approach from trying to recruit those who “should” be involved based on the stakeholder model to supporting those who “get it” and “understand the project” even if they were small, marginal organizations.

This shift became fully apparent during the second round table in the city of Varna. After several failed attempts to get copies from the draft management plans for the city, Rene decided that he had no chance of achieving anything due to resistance both from the municipality and from the port. Only ten minutes into the meeting and after the familiar official statements from the municipal representatives that they are working on the

territorial management plans and there was no real need for discussion, he adjourned the meeting to everyone's surprise. As he explained "*they either get it, or they don't*" and joked:

"Have you ever heard of a consultant firing his clients? Well, I just did."

The sponsor for "My Coast" at the Dutch Ministry of Housing was not very pleased at the lost opportunity for business in the largest port in Bulgaria but the new framing for "My Coast" allowed a degree of freedom for Rene who could justify his results in light of a long-term shift in the regional governance model rather than with specific outcomes. Relaxing the criteria for judging the success of "My Coast" allowed Rene to pick his partners rather than stick to the model of engaging "important stakeholders". In his skillful maneuvering to reframe the project along such long-term goals rather than more practical benefits to the project's sponsors, Rene acted more as an institutional entrepreneur than an opportunist. At the same time as he was acting in pragmatic terms of doing what is achievable, he was also interpreting this newfound flexibility less in terms of liberation from imported models for planning than in terms of disappointment with the lack of initiative and leadership from local organizations. For all the talk of the idealism and impracticality of the small, militant organizations defending the coast from any development, "My Coast" relied on a no-less ideological frame for the right type of governance. It is precisely this tension between practicality and ideology which allowed "My coast" to survive as an organization, on the one hand, and on the other, to veer away from decoupling from its environment and becoming "just talk".

Establishing Regional Coastal Councils in the North and in the South

The shift of interpretation of what success would mean for “My Coast” allowed Rene to stop focusing his efforts on persuading the largest NGOs and businesses in the area to participate in “My Coast”. However, he still had to deal with local municipalities if he wanted not only to deliver some strategies but also to establish the so called Coastal Councils. The two regional coastal councils that he was planning, one for the North and one for the South of the coast, were supposed to function as the legal platforms which would approve any investment projects in their areas. In the Netherlands, the equivalent to the coastal councils were the so called voluntary covenants, signed by all parties but not enacted by any legislation. Like the covenants, the councils in Bulgaria would present an institutional platform for the different parties to meet regularly and to make sure that the projects they approve align with their vision for the coast. Unlike the covenants, the coastal councils would require legal action and Dragomir was working on the legal aspects of how to do that.

The last round of meetings in the fall of 2008 involved a much smaller group of people who were mostly drawn from the local municipalities. The talk shifted from trying to get participants to talk to each to the much more practical issues that these municipalities faced. Rene’s focus was also much more practical in his efforts to get the local officials involved in setting up the coastal councils but also more activist in the sense of training and explaining to them why that was necessary. Thus rather than playing the role of a disinterested facilitator, Rene was actively taking the interests and concerns of the municipalities in order to recruit their efforts for “My Coast”.

At the final round table meeting in Dobrudja in September 2008, the issue of stricter rules and regulations came up again, as three representatives of a local municipality spoke about the problems they had been facing recently. That municipality had started a procedure to select the firm that would write their territorial management plan and was already confronted with a big investor who was pressing them to approve one of his companies. This investor had acquired and had big plans for a large swath of seaside properties through what the three municipal officers described as illegal land-swap deals. The three of them admitted that they had come to the meeting specifically to ask for help in this case, which they described as “*quite daunting and scary*”. Since it was only municipalities present at the meeting, such discussions were possible and Rene’s goal was to show them that “My Coast” could help empower them, specifically by creating the regional councils that would approve all investment projects. The real incentive was in getting EU funding by convincing the program managers that the proposed projects were in-line with a larger regional strategy and have been already agreed on by all major stakeholders. To the inquiries about stricter law and law enforcement, Rene adopted a much more active tone in preaching the virtues of working through alternative channels.

“There is a Bulgarian expression that the law is a door in an open field and I am very aware of that [chuckles in room]. I have seen it in this project and in the previous years I have worked here. The question is: do we need stricter regulation and penalties. That is why I talk about the third part of the plan which is creating opportunities in terms of writing high quality project proposals that attract more money to the region. I don’t think you can fight all things that are happening here only with stricter penalties. What I do believe and what I’ve seen happening in many countries is that when you create an environment where things can be achieved the proper way... that creates a lot of opportunities and corrects substantially what has gone wrong elsewhere”

Rene continued on to explain to the gathered municipal representatives that creating the regional councils was one mechanism of dealing with aggressive investors since local municipalities can say that any particular investment plan had to be reviewed by them. At this meeting, one of the directors from the urban planning department of the Ministry of regional planning was present and he promised support in terms of financing such a regional council, “*provided that there is local initiative*”. His presence was somewhat of a surprise to both Rene and the local municipalities. Politics within the ministry had shifted and even though he was involved in “My Coast” from the beginning, it was only towards the end of the project when he became more active.

What was needed next was a letter signed from all three coastal municipalities in the North, requesting that the Ministry draft a proposal for the establishment of the council. Rene drafted the letter himself and circulated it to the municipalities. As it was close to the end of “My Coast” the process was out of his hands and depended on the continued interest of local officials to pursue it.

Similarly, in the South the meetings in the summer and fall of 2008 were mostly among people from the local municipalities plus representatives of the national park “Strandja”. As in the North, Rene’s task was to get the two local municipalities and the park to cooperate in requesting a regional council to be set up. Unlike in the North, where there was a general consensus against expanding the number and size of hotels, in the South there was a sharp conflict between municipal plans to triple and sometimes even, quadruple their hotel base and the national park. Rene’s goal at these meetings was to see

whether he could get some ideas for ecotourism started so that he could get both municipalities and the park excited about cooperation. Thus the main question at these meetings was whether any such cooperation was possible. He put this question directly to the twenty participants in the fall 2008 round table meeting. Tentatively, the legal advisor for the Tzarevo municipality started explaining:

“I think cooperation is inevitable, otherwise what we have is an imperative from those who have power and money. But I also think that those who make and implement the laws, and those who fight for the environment have to take as their priority the human factor...not just to protect the environment and some nice ideas...I read in your memo that Tzarevo is reluctant to participate. I will explain why. We are always cautious when a program is planned because too often what is done is for the program itself, not for the people involved. “

Tzarevo is the municipality which was in conflict with the nature park “Strandja” over the proper borders of the park. The legal advisor clearly blamed the park for any missed opportunities to collaborate when the municipality proposed that deserted agricultural land on the coast would be used for tourism development. In apparent frustration she said:

“Now we have almost 60% fallow agricultural land because of...”birds and bees” that don’t even exist because of heavy pesticide use in farming during communism”.

She proceeded to say that going forward there would be no opportunities for cooperation. At this point Rene turned to the park representative and asked her where their funding came from (the state) and if it was ever sufficient (no, never). Then he said:

“You have another source of income: ecotourism. Nature protection serves everyone. Safari parks in Kenya make millions of dollars from tourism.

Similar question to Tzarevo and all the municipalities: What do you want? This or... this?"

On the wall behind him were portrayed two images of the coast – one with many large hotels close to each other and one with some small hotels and lot of greenery.

“It is not a very hard choice, is it? When you start talking, don’t start talking about..oh, I want 600 hectares from your land or I don’t want to give it. Start talking about this (points to the images). This is what your long-term perspective is....You can’t do that on your own, you need someone to make sure that you talk about the longer term. You need an independent organization. The Oblast (the regional administration) – they have no interests, let’s put it that way. The oblast is not building its own resorts. “

Someone interjected to say “that’s not certain”. Laughing, Rene continued:

“I am talking about the organization. They can be an independent mediator. That’s the idea we have for the coastal council. If you continue to argue about what’s going on today without thinking about the long term, you don’t solve any problems.”

Then Rene directly asked the representative from the regional administration in Bourgas if he would be willing to host a number of sessions among the municipalities and the park just to explore possibilities for cooperation. After a few exchanges, the deputy regional governor eventually agreed. Having secured that promise, Mike from the Dutch advisory committee who was also present at the meeting said:

“There is one thing lacking at the moment. We need an engine, a kind of steering of this process. We know who the host is but who is going to organize it? Be aware that three months from now “My Coast” is over, the driving force is gone. So you have to take over.”

Organizing the meeting meant that an official letter to the governor had to be drafted asking for the sessions to be held at his administration. The seemingly trivial question of who was going to draft that letter had all participants shrug and try to avoid the responsibility. Indeed, the current political stalemate in the government ruling tri-partite coalition had created an environment where something as ordinary as requesting a regional meeting was going to be treated as a risky political move. The three ruling parties had an uneasy partnership where every ministry and local administrative seat was divided along party lines and as an election was approaching the following year, these relationships had become almost explosive. Everyone eventually suggested that Rene should write that letter and he agreed.

Given that “My Coast” was about to close and the long time it would take to take legislative action, the project was running out of time to establish these councils. If “My Coast” was to have any effect beyond its closing date, it was up to the municipalities and the regional administration to drive this process, as it had become clear that the largest NGOs had no interest in doing so. This was a very uncertain proposition but at least the first steps in that direction were made – the ministry of regional development promised funding and further action in the north and in the south, the regional governor did host a meeting in the fall of 2008. As Rene interpreted it, the regional governor was not really supportive of the idea but he felt that because “My Coast” was supported by the Ministry of regional development he had to at least show some activity on it. So he appointed a head of the council, a person who was employed by the state tourism agency.

In the concluding report to the Netherland's ministry of spatial planning, the results of these meetings were proposed as examples of an alternative governance mode:

“On EU level, and also observed in Bulgaria, legislation cannot prevent or regulate all activities...In line with the principles of ICZM, this document serves as a guide to deal with the external effects and accumulation effects as a result of individual municipal decisions and individual economic activities such as accumulated pressure on the environment, accumulated use of resources, and accumulated environmental risks.”

Partnering with peripheral organizations to deliver demonstration projects

At the same time as Rene was organizing meetings with municipalities, he was also working with other organizations which “*understood what this project is about*”. He was no longer pursuing important players such as the port or the large resort “Albena” in the North, or the park “Strandja” in the south, as much as he was establishing connections to smaller, more marginal organizations which he thought, more or less fit into what “My Coast” was trying to do. Both strategies – working with the municipalities and regional authorities to establish regional councils and with peripheral organizations working on similar projects – required Rene to stake the claims and the identity of “My Coast” in much stronger terms. In contrast to the initial “*this is your project*”, “*we are here to facilitate*” rhetoric, the new strategy required that “My Coast” and Rene in particular clear states what it stands for. This shift meant that Rene didn't need to demonstrate his ability to influence politics at the ministries as much anymore, but that he could speak the language and contribute to organizations with similar agendas.

In Varna, this strategy meant that the port and the municipality were entirely excluded. Even though in rhetoric they showed themselves willing to talk the language of

cooperation and sustainability, in practice they didn't want any interference in the non-transparent process of territorial planning and did not even share a working draft of the plan. After Rene disbanded the spring round table in the city, he did not completely leave Varna. In order to produce anything tangible that would count towards a deliverable for "My Coast", he hooked his project to another Dutch-funded international project called PlanCoast which created a GIS database for the Black Sea aquatory of Bulgaria and Romania. The Ministry of Transportation was charged with developing a maritime strategy as required by the EU Integrated Coastal Zone Management guidelines. Reviewing the work done under PlanCoast, as well as other similar EU projects for aquatorial planning, Alex and a regional planner from Varna regional administration drafted that document. With that, the official work of My Coast for the city of Varna ended.

However, more than just delivering a document for "My Coast", true to his mission to promote integrated planning on the ground, Rene continued working with Kremena's organization and with the Varna's School of architecture on how to do integrated public planning. These collaborations involved doing simulation exercises of planning for the territory of the Maritime garden in the center of Varna and together with a similar plan that architecture students in Sofia developed for the coastal town of Sozopol, it was included in the final documents of "My Coast". Eventually, after the end of "My Coast" this cooperation with young architects, somewhat unexpectedly, gave a second life to the project. About a year later Rene's name came to be connected to that of the protesters against the privatization of the Maritime gardens. The protests were led by Kremena and her involvement with "My Coast" was used as a tactic by the potential investors in the

garden areas to question her true motivations and suggest that may she, Rene, and some other unspecified interests had their own investment agendas. The integrated planning exercise that the young architects did was used as an example of an unauthorized attempt at interference with the territorial planning process in the city, as are the proposed regional coastal councils. Dragged into this conflict, Rene started giving interviews again in 2009 about “My Coast” and its goals. While disavowing any interference in the planning process or any future investment plans, he did not miss the opportunity to criticize the Varna municipality for selling the Maritime gardens to private interests.

Thus by enlisting PlanCoast, a similar project under the EU ICZM guidelines and by working with professional groups of architects, Rene was able both to deliver something for “My Coast” and to insert itself as an organization with a particular goal and identity. In order to deliver the short-term results required under the framework of a temporary organization, Rene retreated to writing a technical strategy for one of the beneficiaries. At the same time, in order to demonstrate that the original intent of the project had merits, “My Coast” also associated and supported oppositional groups who challenged the municipality and business interests it defended. In doing so, “My Coast” acquired its own voice and identity and took a position in local politics, despite its initial efforts to be apolitical. Staking an identity and acquiring a voice allowed “My Coast” to not only drop important stakeholders but also associate with what under the original conception of the project would be considered marginal associations. Rather than proceeding with meetings which were really going to be “just talk” and then producing the

84th strategy for the region, as Rene has said, he took a different approach – to enlist other projects and organizations to help “My Coast” achieve its goals.

Similarly, in the South, Rene used the contacts of one of the people on the advisory board of “My Coast”, Menno, to get access to a small network of NGOs working in the Strandja Mountains. Menno was a member of the European Center for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism and found an organization in the south of France called RebelFarmer. This organization had some contacts in the Strandja mountains and promoted the self-organization of farmers into sustainable communities as a way to resist both commercialization and state-centered certification processes. The common feature among the organizations in Strandja that were part of this small network was that they were all small independent NGOs, typically started by a single person. Furthermore, their work fell more in the category of social entrepreneurship around environmental causes. Thus even though they were NGOs, through the previous and current contacts of their founders, they were also engaged in creating entrepreneurial opportunities for themselves and for their local communities. Still, Rene was not entirely supportive of these organizations since they did not fit neatly into the definition of an NGO. Working with Menno was not easy as Menno often voiced his disapproval of engaging municipalities and regional authorities. Explaining their relationship, Rene said:

“Menno is interested in supporting NGOs and sometimes he supports them too much. The problem is that these are not NGOs, they are small businesses. They are interested in running small businesses and getting funding.”

On his part, Menno considered government officials utterly corrupt and feared they would only hurt efforts to develop alternative forms of tourism. Apart from being corrupt, he thought they suffered from niche thinking which prevented them from seeing how agriculture is linked to tourism and to infrastructure. Despite these differences, the two agreed that establishing coastal councils was the right way to counter the chaotic developments on the coasts. He explained his efforts this way:

“As an NGO, we can go onstage before anybody has any idea of what is going on and take it. This coastal council will be the only place to lobby for projects. Now is the time to do it, if we don’t seize the moment, it is gone. We have to show that it is possible to raise tourism pressure one hundred times without the negative impact.”

Menno’s role in the work of the local NGOs-entrepreneurs was to secure funding for their ideas and link them to the proper EU funding programs. At the time he was making the rounds at several embassies, including the Dutch, French and the British, which as he put it “have been desperate to find some projects like that”. The coastal council was a vehicle for these ideas to get further funding and make sure that only “green” projects are approved for the Strandja area. As Rene was working on the process of setting up the coastal council, Menno was writing the first program that the council was going to work on and grouped all ongoing initiatives and ideas under that program. As he explained, Rene and he had agreed to take the “Russian tsar approach”: make the plan very big so that at least some parts of it get through. That meant Menno collected all ecotourism and other “green” entrepreneurship ideas and translate them in terms of carbon offsetting. The main idea was that the large industrial conglomerates would pay to offset their carbon footprint and the money would go to these small projects to start building up humus in

soils exhausted from decades of fertilizer-heavy farming or to collect biomass that could be used as an alternative energy source. In other words, there was money to be made from growing cap-and-trade markets that non-traditional, or carbon, farmers and green businesses could use to finance their activities.

One such idea was voluntourism, i.e. engaging tourists in local lifestyles to help farmers with their activities. The rationale was that rather than retraining farmers for the tourism industry in hotels and restaurants, a pretty much impossible task, voluntourism will help keep them employed as farmers while also helping the local ecosystem. Various initiatives had been started, such as the transhumance project championed by a local organization called the Fund for Wild Flora and Fauna. This initiative involved resurrecting old sheep grazing routes across the Strandja and Balkan mountains into one “eco corridor” in the EU parlance. Eco-corridors were a new concept in the EU agenda to build a “green infrastructure” as a tool to improve species connectivity, i.e. the ability of animals to go from one protected area to another without interruption. As sheep graze their way through these routes, they help maintain the balance of the ecosystem which includes some rare species of birds and butterflies in Strandja. Tourists travel together with the farming family and help to experience an authentic shepherd lifestyle. The same organization was even considering supplying lamb meat to restaurants en route but Menno didn’t think this would meet EU regulations on slaughtering. Other proposed projects included the construction of ecological housing, ecological sanitation to create biomass, the production of sheep milk from a rare local breed of sheep, creating renewable energy sources for hotels on the coast, etc.

Conclusion

In conclusion, “My Coast” traveled through a path of role adjustment and strategy changes as it tried its theories of organizing on the surrounding environment. Coming in with the idea to facilitate across an ordered field of organizations, the project found itself faltering and trying to recruit the main local actors in a bid to facilitate a bottom-up pressure on the government to fund the establishment of a local project infrastructure involving regional coastal councils, visions and strategy for development. When that approach failed to sustain interest and cooperation on the local level, “My Coast” had to shift gears again and take a more active role in deciding who it was going to support and who was going to stay outside of the project.

The support “My Coast” could provide was in the provision of resources which took one of three forms: training, providing tools, or help in securing funding. In the North, the project provided a software program to help small municipalities who felt pressured by investment interests in developing their territorial development plans in accordance with EU guidelines. The project also helped them secure a promise for additional funding from the ministry of regional development on the coastal council which was to further help them coordinate efforts towards integrated planning. In Varna, the support took the form of training and rhetorical support in the media of the organization of young architects which was becoming a leading voice of opposition to aggressive investment plans in the public Maritime Garden. In the South region of Strandja, “My Coast” hooked itself to ongoing efforts to start alternative tourism ventures by grouping such projects under one similar

strategy in an effort to help both establish the coastal council and find funding from EU and other agencies.

In this new strategy, “My Coast” had to acquire a more active voice in expressing what it stood for and what it was against. Part of that more active presence was severing ties with the municipality and the port in Varna, as well as with all large resorts who were interested in expansive investments. At the same time, the project was closed to what were considered small militant environmental organizations on the coast. The only “militant” organization it continued talking to was the national park “Strandja” in trying to educate the park’s director that not all investments and not all business activities are bad. Outside the project were also the large NGOs who did not want to spend their time on something they considered “just talk” but also who were viewed by the team as lacking representative credentials. The organizations that were still part of “My Coast” were municipalities which considered themselves disadvantaged when it came to resources from the national government and small organizations which billed themselves NGOs but whose members were also actively involved in other entrepreneurial activities, mostly ecotourism. Thus they were not participating in their representative capacity but in their capacity as social and institutional entrepreneurs.

Thus instead of assembling the public and acting on the principles of representation and dialogue, “My Coast” was more likely participating in an emerging organizational field of alternative forms of tourism. It is not possible to conclude the emergence of such a field from the data in this study but what the team was doing was trying to find other organizations with agendas that it approved and enroll municipalities in supporting such

activities in their territorial plans. Thus the round table meetings moved from being sites for participation of multiple organizations to being relatively small carefully picked gatherings of mostly local municipalities where “My Coast” could assume a role that is closer to that of a mentor than to a facilitator. These meetings are in fact, what produced the project and the testament to its work and existence.

In hindsight it seems naïve for anyone to have expected that “My Coast” could alter the path of development on the coast from mass tourism based on booming real estate to restrained alternative forms of tourism. In hindsight it also seems naïve to have expected that a small team of Dutch and Bulgarian environmentally-minded consultants could step into a highly contested field and tell the local mayors, governors, and resort managers how to plan for the future of their area. Judged by these expectations, “My Coast” comes out as a failure. Another way to define failure is to say that what the project did was produce a few documents that gather dust in a shelf somewhere at the ministry of regional development, the only “real” results being that the consultants collected some money and some municipalities and some NGOs could report that they have participated in another project. I think this is the maximalist view of success and if we subscribe to it, “My Coast” is unequivocally a failure. There is great value in studying failures, as well as success cases and understand the ways in which organizations might fail. However, I argue that what we have here is not a simple case of failure but a more nuanced case of failure with effects.

We could also take what might be called a minimalist view and look at what the project did NOT do. First, it did not continue with pro-forma meetings but chose to take sides and engage particular organizations. Second, it did not turn to a more technocratic

solution of suggesting the formation of a committee of experts to look at the planning activities of all the municipalities on the coast. Indeed, such solution was available and was what was done in a very similar project funded by the EVD in Romania. Rene made explicit that he considered these two outcomes worse failures than failing to assemble productive round-table meetings. If we had any of these two outcomes, “My Coast” would still be a failure but a different kind of failure. It would have failed to use its connections to past integrated planning projects to mobilize connections to potential future projects. Instead, it would have relied on gaining legitimacy from its connection to the Ministry of regional development and the Dutch government or from technocratic expertise. In the first case, we could have said that “My Coast” was completed through coercive or mimetic processes. As the case unfolded, however, we have followed the project through its trajectory as an outsider to the field of relations among organizations on the coast to a vocal participant and advocate.

If it was ever not evident, the experience of “My Coast” testifies to the fact that organizing is a slow and difficult process and involves talking to one person at a time, multiple times, securing their participation both through an exchange of favors and through affirming a framework for interpreting each other’s activities. That means slowly building a community of similar organizations, projects and a network of individuals interested in similar kinds of work. In that process, a project may find support in what we may call a projective path – the project’s connection to previous similar projects even if they are in a geographically different region, as well as its efforts to link itself to ongoing and future

similar projects. The projective path helps the project not only gain legitimacy in an environment with a low density of similar projects but also in delivering its final results.

Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusions

The main question this research posed was how new organizational forms, specifically temporary organizations, operate within inhospitable environments. This is certainly not a new question in organization studies. However, two aspects of the research are unique: first, the case under investigation is of a temporary organization and second, there are close to no ethnographic studies detailing the tribulations an organization faces in trying to establish itself. More often than not, ethnographic studies of organizations deal with established organizations. Few, if any, studies exist of organizations which are trying to operate in places with few other similar organizations. If this question is asked, it is typically not investigated through a qualitative study of a single organization but through a case study of an industry or a geographical area, or through quantitative studies. Such a study can highlight the many micro changes an organization goes through as it tries to recruit and keep its people, make connections to other organizations, and deliver results.

Stinchcombe (1965) argued that young organizational forms have a higher propensity to die due to the difficulties in establishing trust among strangers, performing new roles, and maintaining connections with new clients (or other organizations). He termed this vulnerability of new organizations the “liability of newness”. Organizational ecologists took an inspiration from this observation to study the impact of size and density on birth and deaths of populations (Baum & Singh, 1994; Podolny, Stuart, & Hannan, 1996). New institutionalists reinterpreted this observation in terms of lack of cognitive and

sociopolitical legitimacy and emphasized the importance of embeddedness in economic and political environments. This risk is even higher for temporary organizations which do not have much time to learn or negotiate new roles or to build trust among their members. Combining insights from both ecology and institutionalism, researchers have suggested various mechanisms outside the temporary organization itself that enable it to function. Such mechanisms might be industry-supported role structures, professionally-supported swift trust and learning (Myerson et al 1996, Graebher, 2004) or company-supported teams (Asheim and Mariussen, 2003). What happens when such mechanisms do not exist, as is the case when a temporary organization is expected to function in a place without previous experience with such forms, has not been investigated.

This liability of newness was certainly evident in the beginning of “My Coast” when there was confusion about roles just as Stinchcombe would expect. The project almost stalled completely a couple of times and had to reconsider its strategy, role, and rhetoric as time went by. Coming in with a theory of integrated planning based on multistakeholderism, “My Coast” expected to play the role of facilitator. The team quickly discovered that the orderly field of organized interests it expected to find was in fact, unstable, fragmented, vertically disconnected, and entangled. Eschewing to offer a role of technical expert, the team then tried to act as a recruiter of the major players in locally subdivided areas, thus unwittingly assuming a position of broker between national governments and local organizations. This role was not easy to play as the project was in fact, lacking in strong political support from the ministries and as the Rene and Linda themselves felt uncomfortable engaging in favor-trading. Finally, after gaining flexibility

on its terms of success, the project completely abandoned the idea of assembling participants based on representation and instead, played the role of mentor or supporter of those who “got it”: disadvantaged municipalities, small NGOs looking for new ventures, and in one case, of a vocal professional organization. Doing so required “My Coast” to abandon also the idea of impartial facilitation and embrace a vocal position of promoting a particular mode of governance and development on the coast. Supporting other organizations took the form of providing training, tools, and help in securing funding. A more important effort was to establish the institutional basis for an infrastructure of projects through the coastal councils. Setting up the initial momentum through meetings, legal proposals, strategies for implementations and pilot projects were some of the steps “My Coast” took to ensure the diffusion of projects based on integrated planning.

In other words, “My Coast” tried to find a niche of activities and organizations that support not only the immediate work of the project but also its identity as an integrated planning project. As a temporary organization, that identity comes not from its own previous work, or even the previous work of its members, as much as from its connection to a series of previous projects revolving around the methodology used in Rotterdam. It is one in a series of experiments across the European Union. Even though it starts in 2007, there is already a path that has been travelled by other projects in other part of the continent, supported by a project infrastructure of funding, tender procedures, and best practice exchange. The methodology for this project, therefore, included following not only the project itself but also trying to position “My Coast” within this larger environment

of integrated planning and ICZM projects in Europe. In order to go forward, “My Coast” tried to also start and support projects and project infrastructure along the Black Sea Coast.

This larger project infrastructure includes not only other projects but the programs and guidelines that the EU governing bodies issue and seek to fund and monitor through the circulation of terms of reference, project fiches, evaluation guidelines, and best practices. Under each such program, but also across programs, hundreds of projects can be found just as there are hundreds of projects under the Integrated Coastal Zone Management program. Not all of these projects would form a projective path that is relevant to the execution of the next ICZM project. A projective path links a series of projects who share the same framework for action. This framework thus helps the project by bringing in established definitions of roles, steps, and institutional arrangements that can guide the project through its work. In the case of “My Coast” this action framework was defined by the Rotterdam experience and its Pegasus methodology that relied upon assembling organized interests and facilitating their exchanges through a hierarchy of objectives, from more general to more specific, until specific indicators are reached. This arch included not only projects in the Rotterdam area but also projects done in other cities in Europe and they helped “My Coast” evaluate its engagement with other organizations as its methods of work were being challenged in Bulgaria.

In that sense, a project is not an island not only because it ultimately has to work within ecology of similar projects in an area, but also because it is part of a chain of previous and future projects which provide a basis for comparison and continuous evaluation of its results. It is not precisely identity that a project borrows from its

predecessors, as the method of work might be the same but the scope of work might be quite different. A projective path might provide a framework for roles and activities that are to be taken but when that did not prove sufficient in the case of “My Coast”, the projective path could also provide a long-term vision and long-term goals for the project. Aided by such goals, then, the team can make choices about what connections and projects to generate, and what connection to terminate.

Thus rather than focusing only on an industrial cluster or geographical area as the loci of project ecologies, this methodology suggests a temporal view of temporary organizations which situates them in a context of projects that goes beyond a single location or a single industry. Projective paths may connect projects that do not share any team members, do not follow closely in time, and span territories that are disjointed. Projective paths connect seamlessly local activities to regional institutions and to global institutional programs.

This is especially important for projects in the public domain which often include a mix of organizations and outcomes that are hard to measure. Public projects such as “My Coast” often seek to advance a particular model for governance and particular institutional arrangements. Ostensibly under the same program or the same set of guidelines, different projects might advance different institutional arrangements and each one of them is only an episodic experiment in diffusing such arrangements. The success or failure of any one of them is not crucial to this overall institutional program but is merely a “case” with the potential to lay the ground for future projects or to turn its experience into “best practices” or “lessons learned”. Thus each one of these projects is a small movement in the same

direction. Even if it is very important in the local relations and outcomes, it is also not a definitive moment but an attempt at furthering the chain of projects that form a common projective path.

Thus the argument that is forwarded with this research is that in the decisions about what connections to make, projects members mix discursive and exchange relations. In other words, it is not only through their identity or discourse that members extend ties to other organizations. At the same time, ties are not made solely through exchange relationships in competition for resources. As relatively short-term organizations, projects have to deliver results and therefore are looking to hook into other organizations who can help them deliver these results. However, claiming that such ties are made purely out of the need to deliver something also misses the point that projects are part longer projective paths and are judged also against the goals and visions set through these paths and therefore. Making ties with other organizations thus rests on the ability of the project to define itself in terms of these goals and try to engage in tentative coalition building. This is how temporary organizing in the public domain resembles organizing in social movements – temporary organizations have to engage in coalition building that relies both on the pursuit of resources and on a definition of their long-term vision and goals in order to secure ties to other organizations.

My Coast” is not a spontaneously emerging new organizational form but an imported one and it is not carried forward by a social movement, but rather through government action. Thus the question of diffusion of organizational forms is salient to address here, even though we cannot fully answer such a question without a survey of

more than one project over a long period of time. Despite this, however, what is important to note is that in this case, we did not observe what the theory of organizational diffusion would suggest. The theory would suggest that an organization that is imported would be loosely coupled to its environment (Weick, 1976, Meyer and Rowan, 1977). More specifically, that means a disconnection between high-level processes such as planning, policies, and decisions from their implementation “on the ground” (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). Thus decoupling in the context of policy is almost always a synonym of policy failure.

This study is suggesting a more nuanced view in the case of temporary organizations. Indeed, instead of a detached execution of planning and policies, the team members had to actually engage in local politics and make explicit their own positions. “My Coast” in fact, had to entangle itself and take sides in conflicts on the coast and align itself with organizations whose agendas it approved. It relied on social-movement mechanisms for coalition building.

Recent research has already pointed out the connections between organizations and social movements. Social movements are viewed also as important sources of cultural and organizational innovation (Rao et al, 2000; Clemens and Minkoff, 2008). In these studies, social movements give rise to new organizational forms by bringing together different organizational fields. An important extension of this research agenda would be to include the question of diffusion of organizational forms even in the absence of local social movements which support it, through social-movement-like processes locally.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agranoff, Robert. 1996. "Managing Intergovernmental Processes" in *Handbook of Public Administration* edited by James L. Perry. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Akkerman, Tjitske, Maarten Hajer and John Grin. 2000. "Interactive policy making as deliberative democracy?", paper presented at the American Political Science Association Conference, 31 August–3 September, Washington DC.
- Alberts, S. David. 2003. "Network-Centric Warfare: Current Status and Way Ahead" *Journal of Defense Studies* 8(3)
- Albrechts, Louis. 2004. "Strategic (spatial) planning reexamined". *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* 31
- Aldrich, Howard E. and Ellen Auster. 1986. "Even dwarfs started small: liabilities of age and size and their strategic implications". in: L.L. Cummings and B.M. Staw, Eds, *Research in Organizational Behavior* vol. 8, JAI Press, Greenwich, CT (1986), pp. 165–198.
- Ansell, Chris and Alison Gash. 2007. "Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice". *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 18(4)
- Ansell, Chris. 2000. "The Networked Polity: Regional Development in Western Europe." *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration* 13(3):303-333.
- Asheim, Bjorn Terje and Age Mariussen. 2003. "Innovations, Regions, and Projects: Studies in New Forms of Knowledge Governance." Stockholm, Sweden.
- Baas, Leo. 2008. "Industrial symbiosis in the Rotterdam Harbor and Industry Complex: Reflections on the Interconnection of the Techno-Sphere with the Social" system. *Business Strategy and the Environment* 17(5)
- _____. 2001. "Developing an industrial ecosystem in Rotterdam: learning by...what?" *Journal of Industrial Ecology* 4(2).
- Barnes, Andrew. 2007. "Extricating the state: The move to competitive capture in post-communist Bulgaria" *Europe-Asia Studies* 59(1)
- Baumgartl, Bernd. 1993. "Environmental protest as a vehicle for transformation: the case of Ecoglossos in Bulgaria" in A. Vari and P. Tamas eds. *Environment and Democratic Transition: policy and politics in Central and Eastern Europe*. Dordrecht: Kluwer

- Baumol, William. 2002. "Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Growth: the David-Goliath Symbiosis". *Journal of Entrepreneurial Finance and Business Ventures* 7(2)
- Bechky, Beth. 2006. "Gaffers, Gofers, and Grips: Role-Based Coordination in Temporary Organizations." *Organization Science* 17:3-21.
- Boltanski, Luc and Eve Chiapello. 2006. *The New Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Verso
- Borzel, Tanja A. 2007. "European Governance – Negotiation and Competition in the Shadow of Hierarchy". In *European Union Studies Association (EUSA) Biennial Conference, May 17-19*. Montreal, Canada.
- Bruzst, Lazslo. 2002. "Making Markets and Eastern Enlargement: Diverging Convergence?" in *The Enlarged European Union: Diversity and Adaptation* Frank Cass edited by Peter Mair and Jan Zielonka. London, Portland
- Callon, Michel. 1998. *The Laws of the Market*.
- Castells, Manuel, 1996. *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Vol. I*. Cambridge, MA; Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Cellarius, Barbara A. and Caedmon Staddon. 2002. "Environmental nongovernmental organizations, civil society and democratization in Bulgaria". *East European Politics and Societies* 16(1)
- Cellarius, Barbara. 2004. *In the Land of Orpheus: Rural Livelihoods and Nature Conservation in Post-Socialist Bulgaria*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press
- Cohendet, Patrick and Laurent Simon. 2007. "Playing across the playground: paradoxes of knowledge creation in the videogame firm". *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 28(5)
- Coser, Lewis A., Charles Kadushin and Walter Powell. 1982. *Books: The Culture and Commerce of Book Publishing*. New York: Basic Books
- Crawford, Lynn (2004) 'Professional Associations and Global Initiatives' in P.W.G. Morris and J. K. Pinto (eds). Pp. 1389-1402. *The Wiley Guide to Managing Projects*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons
- Davis, Gerald F., Doug McAdam, W. Richard Scott, and Mayer N. Zald. 2005. "Social Movements and Organization Theory." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- De Souza, Cleidson, Jon Froehlich, and Paul Dourish. 2005. "Seeking the Source: Software Source Code as a Social and Technical Artifact". *Proc. ACM Conf. Supporting Group Work GROUP 2005* (Sanibel Island, FL).
- DiMaggio, Paul. 1988. Interest and agency in institutional theory. In L. Zucker (Ed.), *Institutional patterns and organizations* (pp. 3-22). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- DiMaggio, Paul and Walter W. Powell. 1983. "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields". *American Sociological Review* 48:147-160
- DiMaggio, Paul. 1988. "Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory" in L.G. Zucker (ed.) *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment*. Cambridge, MA: Bollinger
- _____. 1981. "Cultural Entrepreneurship in nineteenth-century Boston. Part 1: The creation of an Organizational Base for High Culture in America". *Media, Culture, and Society* 4:33-50
- Dornisch, David. 2002. "The Evolution of Post-Socialist Projects: Trajectory Shift and Transitional Capacity in a Polish Region." *Regional Studies* 36: 307-321.
- Ekstedt, Eskil. 1999. *Neo-Industrial Organizing: Renewal by Action & Knowledge Formation in a Project-Intensive Economy*. Florence, KY: Routledge.
- Emirbayer Mustafa and Ann Mische. 1998. "What Is Agency?". *The American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 103, No. 4 (Jan., 1998), pp. 962-1023
- Emirbayer, Mustafa. 1997. "Manifesto for a relational sociology". *American Journal of Sociology* 103:962-1023
- Engwall, Mats. 2003. "No Project is an Island: Linking Projects to History and Context." *Research Policy* 32:789-808.
- Fisher, D. 1993. "The Emergence of the Environmental movement in Eastern Europe and its role in the revolutions of 1989" in B. Jancar-Webster ed. *Environmental Action in Eastern Europe: Response to Crisis*. London; M.E. Sharpe
- Fligstein, N. (1997). "Social skill and institutional theory." *The American Behavioral Scientist* 40(4): 397-405.
- Friedmann, John. 1987. *Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

- Gerald F. Davis, 2009. "The rise and Fall of Finance and the End of the Society of Organizations". *Academy of Management Perspectives* 23(3): 27-44.
- Glasbergen, Pieter and Peter P J Driessen. 2005. "Interactive Planning of infrastructure: the changing role of Dutch project management." *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 23:263-277.
- Gomart, Emilie. 2005. "Political Aesthetics: Image and Form in Contemporary Dutch Spatial Politics". in Latour and Weibel eds. *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press
- Healey, Patsy. 1993. "Place, Identity, and Local Politics: Analyzing Initiatives in Deliberative Governance" in *Deliberative policy analysis: understanding governance in the network society* edited by Maarten Hajer and Hendrik Wagenaar. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.
- Herritier, Adrienne. 1999. *Policy-Making and Diversity in Europe: Escape from Deadlock*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Hinings C.R. and Greenwood R. 2002. "Disconnects and Consequences in Organization Theory?" *Administrative Science Quarterly* 47(3)
- Hirst, Paul. 1994. *Associative Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity
 _____ . 1997. *From Statism to Pluralism*. London: UCL Press
- Hobday, Michael. 2000. "Innovation in complex products and system." *Research Policy* 29:793-804.
- Hooghe Liesbet and Gary Marks. 2001. *Multilevel Governance and European Integration*. Rowman and Littlefield.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks, and Arjan H. Shakel. 2010. *The Rise of Regional Authority: A Comparative Study of 42 democracies 1950-2006*. Routledge
- Hooghe, Liesbet. 1998. "EU Cohesion Policy and Competing Models of European Capitalism". *Journal of Common Market Studies* 36(4)
- Horgan, Lucille. 1992. 'Close Partners: The Adoption of Industry Management Procedures by the Department of Defense', *Business and Economic History, Second Series, Volume 21*

- Kellogg, Katherine C. 2008. "Not Faking It: Making Real Change in Response to Regulation at Two Surgical Teaching Hospitals". Working papers, MIT Sloan School of Management
- Kickert, Walter J. M. 1997. "Public Governance in the Netherlands: An Alternative to Anglo-American "Managerialism"." *Public Administration* 75:731-752.
- Kogut, Bruce. 2000. "The Networks as Knowledge: Generative Rules and the Emergence of Structure". *Strategic Management Journal* 21: 405-425
- Kohler-Koch, Beate and Rainer Eising. 1999. *The Transformation of Governance in the European Union*. London and New York: Routledge
- Kunzmann, Klaus. 2007. "The ESDP, the New Territorial Agenda, and the Peripheries in Europe" in *The ESDP and Spatial Development of Peripheral Regions* edited by Nadia Farrugia. Valetta: Malta University Publishers
- Latour, Bruno. 2004. *Politics of Nature*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- Lazara, Giovan Francesco and Michele Morner. 2005. "Artifacts Rule! How Organizing Happens in Open Source Software Projects" in Barbara Czarniawska (ed.) *Actor-Network Theory and Organizing*. Malmo, Sweden: Liber & Copenhagen Business School Press
- Lundin, Rolf A. and Anders Söderholm. 1995. "A theory of the temporary organization." *Scandinavian Journal of Management* 11:437-455.
- Mark C. Suchman and Mia L. Cahill (1996), "The Hired-Gun as Facilitator: The Case of Lawyers in Silicon Valley," *Law and Social Inquiry* 21(3):679-712.
- Meyerson, Debra, Karl Weick, and Roderick M. Kramer. 1996. "Swift Trust and Temporary Groups." Pp. 166-195 in *Trust in Organizations*, edited by R. M. Kramer. London: Sage Publications.
- Mische, Anne. (1998). Projecting democracy: Context and dynamics of youth activism in the Brazilian impeachment movement. Doctoral Dissertation, New School of Social Research
- Mol, Arthur P.J. and Martin Janicke. 2009. "The Origins and Theoretical Foundations of Ecological Modernization Theory". in *Ecological Modernization Reader* edited by Arthur P.J.
- Mol, David A. Sonnefeld, and Gert Spaargaren (eds.). London and New York: Routledge
- Mosse, D. (2005). Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice. London, Pluto Press.

- Mouffe, Chantal. 2005. *On the Political*. London: Routledge
- O'Mahony, Siobhan. 2003. "Guarding the commons: how community managed software projects protect their work." *Research Policy* 32:1179-1198.
- Perloff, Harvey S. 1980. *Planning the Post-Industrial City*. Chicago, Ill: APA Planners Press
- Perrow, Charles. 2002. *Organizing America: Wealth, Power and the Origins of American Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- _____. 1991. "A Society of Organizations." *Theory and Society* 20(6):725-762.
- Petrova, Tsveta and Sidney Tarrow, 2007. "Transactional and Participatory Activism in the Emerging European Polity: The Puzzle of East Central Europe" *Comparative Political Studies* 40(1)
- Podolny, Joel M, and Karen L Page. 1998. "Network Forms of Organization". *Annual review of sociology* 24(1): 57-76.
- Powell, Walter W. 1990. "Neither market nor hierarchy: Network forms of organization." Pp. 295-336 in *Research in Organizational Behavior*, edited by Barry M. Staw and L. L. Cummings: JAI
- Przeworski, Adam. 1991. *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and in Latin America*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Rhodes, Rod A. W. 1996. "The New Governance: Governing without Government". *Political Studies* 44(4)
- _____. 1990. "Policy Networks: The British Perspective." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 2(3)
- Richardson, George B. 1972. 'The Organisation of Industry, ' *The Economic Journal*. 82(327): 883-896.
- Roo, Gert de. 2003. *Environmental Planning in the Netherlands: Too Good to be True*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing.
- Rossiter, Ned. 2006. "Organized Networks and Non-representative Democracy" in J. Dean, J. W. Anderson, and G. Lovink (eds.) *Reformatting Politics*. London: Routledge
- Sabel, Charles and Jane E. Prokop. 1995. "Stabilization through Reorganization? Some Preliminary Implications of Russia's Entry into World Markets in the Age of Discursive

Quality Standards." in *Corporate Governance in Central Europe and Russia*, edited by R. Frydman, A. Rapaczynski, and C. Gray. Budapest: World Bank / Central European University Privatization Project Publication.

Sabel, Charles and Jonathan Zeitlin. 2008. "Learning From Difference: The New Architecture of Experimentalist Governance in the EU." *European Law Journal* 14:271-327.

Salet, William and Andreas Faludi. 2000. *The Revival of Strategic Planning*. Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences

Sampson, Steven. 2002. "Beyond Transition: Rethinking Elite Configurations in the Balkans". In C. Hann (ed). *Postsocialism*. London: Routledge, pp. 297-316.

Scheppele, Kim. 1999. "The Inevitability of Corruption in Transition". Connecticut Journal of International Law 14(2)

Scott, James. 1998. *Seeing Like a State*. New Heaven, CT: Yale University Press

Shenhav, Yehouda. 2000. *Manufacturing Rationality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shetter, William Z. 1987. *The Netherlands in Perspective*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff.

Smith, Vicky. 2002. *Crossing the Great Divide: Worker Risk and Opportunity in the New Economy*. Ithaca: Cornell University/ILR Press

Stark, David. 2009. *The Sense of Dissonance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Streeck Wolfgang and Philip Schmitter. 1991. "Community, Market, State, and Associations? The Prospective Contribution of Interest Governance to Social Order" in G. Thompson, J.

Frances, R. Levacic, and J. Mitchell (eds.) *Markets, Hierarchies, and Networks: The Coordination of Social Life*. London: Sage Publications

Tatenhove, Jan P.M. and Pieter Leroy. 2009. "Environment and Participation in a Context of Political Modernization" in *Ecological Modernization Reader* edited by Arthur P.J. Mol, David A. Sonnenfeld, and Gert Spaargaren (eds.). London and New

TeBrake, William H. 2002. "Taming the Waterwolf: Hydraulic Engineering and Water Management in the Netherlands During the Middle Ages". *Technology and Culture* 43(3)

Van Ravesteyn, Nico and David Evers. 2004. *Unseen Europe: A survey of EU politics and its impact on spatial development in the Netherlands*. NAI Publishers

Van Waarden, Frans. 1992. "Dimensions and types of policy networks". *European Journal of Political Research* 21

Ward, Robert, Gary Wamsley, Aaron Schroeder, and David B. Robins. 2000. "Network organizational development in the public sector: A case study of the federal emergency management administration (FEMA)", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 51(11)

Weick, Karl, Kathleen M. Sutcliffe, and David Obstfeld. 2005. "Organizing and the process of sense-making." *Organization Science* 16:409-421.

Wigmans, Gerard. 2001. "Contingent Governance and the Enabling City." *City* 5:203-223.

Zenger, Todd and William Hesterley. 1997. "The Disaggregation of Organizations: Selective Intervention, High-Powered Incentives, and Molecular Units", *Organization Science* 8 (3)