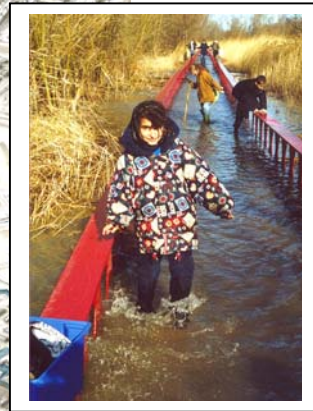




Fact Sheet

Rotterdam Hoogvliet – *Wilderness in an Urban Environment*



In 2001, the City Council of Rotterdam Hoogvliet contracted Stroming to re-design the green areas around the urban area of Hoogvliet, a multi-cultural 37,000 inhabitant suburban area of the Rotterdam City. The objective was to create a new recreational space for the inhabitants, which would increase the local life quality as well as attraction of Hoogvliet as a living area.

Based on a visionary plan, with the design of a new green ring of 'wilderness' areas of 150 hectares, the City Council has invested more than € 3.5 million, with another € 14 million planned over the coming years. Compared to the previous, traditional park areas with well managed grass lawns, planted trees and shrubs - often of exotic origin - and asphalt paths, the annual management costs have been reduced with up to 90%.

The project took advantage of the possibility of connecting the green areas with natural dynamics of the Maas River. With the removal of exotic trees and shrubs, promotion of re-colonization of the natural vegetation, and the introduction of

natural grazing (Scottish Highland Cattle), a very interesting urban ‘wilderness’ area is currently under development.

To make the area attractive for the local inhabitants, more than 500 m of boardwalks were constructed in the tidal area, more than 50% of the asphalt paths were removed and a new path system of 20 km in length was created to increase accessibility. An important aspect has been to link the wilderness area to education and outreach programmes, and a more natural children playground – Ruige Plaet – was created.



The new ‘wilderness’ area has already attracted a lot of wildlife, such as the beaver, roe deer and numerous bird species, and Hoogvliet was recently designated as a Natura 2000 area under the EU Habitats Directive.

Key success factors have been the principles of connecting nature with people & development, the identification of the social and ecological “genesis” of the place, and using the physical and ecological processes as the basis for planning.

