



# A FESTIVAL TOO FAR: A CASE STUDY ABOUT THE CANCELLATION OF EILÂN FESTIVAL

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## Abstract

This research revolves around the cancellation of Eilân festival in autumn 2019 on an island called Terschelling in the north of the Netherlands. The purpose of this study is to understand this cancellation by examining the organisation process, the contents of the festival and communication between stakeholders. Theory on spatial planning, festival planning and social impact assessment are used as a framework to analyse Eilân through a scope of pillars of 'perfect' festival planning. Central to this 'perfect' festival is a reflection on stakeholder involvement, minimising unwanted impacts and mitigation strategies. This comparison between Eilân festival and the pillars of a 'perfect' festival was made through interviewing local stakeholders, an expert interview and examining policy documents. A combination of miscommunication, fear of damage to nature and the question whether the festival fits the local cultural storytelling led to a trial in which the festival permits were deemed unsatisfactory. While mitigating with stakeholders at an earlier stage of planning may prevent a situation similar to Eilân festival, it will also pose new challenges such as delays and disagreements within stakeholders. The creation of a concept event vision in 2021 by the municipality, in which local event planning frameworks are presented, is a step in the direction of a more systematic planning strategy. Future research on Terschelling on planning within this new framework can help improve the understanding of event planning and its impacts.

Keywords: Overtourism / Festivalisation / Spatial planning / Festival planning / Social impact assessment / Mitigation / The 'perfect' festival

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## 1. Introduction

“Dance festival Eilân on Terschelling is cancelled after all”

This was the message posted by Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (2019) on September 7 in 2019 about the new festival called Eilân that would have been held one week later. According to this article, local inhabitants disliked the festival idea and started a trial, which they won.

Eilân festival was cancelled after a trial started by several local communities (Rechtbank Noord-Nederland, 2019b). Eilân is an alternative music festival for 6000 guests and was supposed to take place in natural areas on Terschelling (Eilân, 2019). Reported problems by these local communities concerning this festival included environmental problems such as nitrogen oxides emissions that threatened the nature in the surrounding area. Stichting ons Schellingerland filed a lawsuit, as they were concerned about the preservation of the nature. Their concerns include the nitrogen issues as well as environmental damage that could be caused by a festival (Ritzen & Bontjes, 2019). On the event website by Eilân (2019), information about the controversy of organising a festival in a protected area is being discussed. The organisers actively tried to assure that the environmental values are respected. Even the change of location towards an area further away from the Natura-2000 region did not convince the local community foundation, and the festival lost the trial resulting in the cancellation of Eilân (Hart van Nederland, 2019; Rechtbank Noord-Nederland, 2019b).

### 1.1 Case description

The case of Eilân, a music festival on Terschelling, is an interesting case within this delicate framework of stakeholder involvement and tourism benefits and challenges in rural areas. What makes this case interesting is that the mentioned possibility for culture commodification and community involvement for regional development is contradicted by this negative involvement. Apparently, the organisation of this event led to a certain ‘critical point’ where members of local communities decide they needed to act against the organisations of the event. This resulted in the eventual trial and cancellation of the festival. The conflicts include interactions between the organisers of this tourist event and the local inhabitants, with a group of local inhabitants not welcoming tourists for the festival (Korthals Altes et al., 2018). This seems to confirm that reasoning for the cancellation of this festival is more complex than the argument of overtourism.

Within this context of growing awareness of conflicts that may arise within tourism planning, this research helps explaining factors that may push local communities away and provoke hostility towards events, festivals, or other tourism-related activities. The focus will not be on quantification, but rather on explanation of emotional aspects that influence local communities to respond negatively to a festival. It is important to analyse these conflicts and factors to improve on tourism planning by developing strategies to enjoy regional benefits of a tourism while maintaining positive involvement of local communities.

This negative response to a festival is interesting in an academic context. In scientific literature, attention is often given to how tourism can be a driver of economic growth, broader regional development as well as an opportunity for local communities to commodify a culture that they feel proud of (Kneafsy, 2000; Sijtsma et al., 2015). Blichfeldt & Halkier (2014) explain that communities can organise festivals to “sell their culture”. So why did this festival on Terschelling provoke a different response?

During the last few years, the paradigm that tourism is seen as unquestionably “good” has shifted towards a paradigm in which negative effects of overtourism are acknowledged (Goodwin, 2017). A negative effect of tourism that is often referred to in scientific and popular literature is overtourism.

According to Séarphin et al. (2019), overtourism may surface when one or more of three thresholds has been breached. These include when the number of visitors is higher than the number of locals, when a destination has reached a limit to tourism development or when the destination is suffering the strain of tourism. In successful regions, this risk is higher due to exacerbation of the already existing potential of attracting visitors.

According to Milano et al. (2018), some scholars argue that dealing with overtourism needs to become a priority. In their article, Dodds & Butler (2019) explain that unlimited and unrestricted travel is no longer seen as a right because of potential issues concerning environment, energy use, quality of life and preservation of cultural heritage.

Another gap in research is that previous analyses on negative effects of tourism and festivals often focus on urban environments. According to Séarphin et al. (2019), city branding strategies in destinations that are victims of overtourism may lead to exacerbating the already existing potential of attracting visitors. One of these branding strategies that can cause increased attractiveness of a city is the organisation of events (Namberger et al., 2019). For these events, the amount of additional tourists and the potential negative impact to host cities may raise overtourism concerns (Mhanna et al., 2019). Furthermore, in their article, Dansero & Puttilli (2010) discuss practical challenges of events and festivals such as short-term revenue and unequal distribution of revenue.

However, negative impacts of tourism also occur in rural destinations. Peeters et al. (2018) stress that rural areas may suffer loss of heritage, environmental appeal, and authenticity as a result of impacts from tourism encounters. This can be problematic, because tourism could help foster broader regional development through income, employment, regional pride, cohesion and could help with protecting natural resources (Ilbery & Saxena 2011; Keyim, 2018; Stoffelen et al., 2017). This is especially helpful for rural areas that are at risk of being marginalised as a result of globalisation processes (Blichfeldt & Halkier, 2014). This means that rural areas need to find an additional balance. This balance is between the chances for regional development through tourism and the risk of losing local pride and resources because of negative effects of tourism. This research revolves around exploring a rural case where the balance between tourism opportunities and challenges could not be maintained as well as where conflicts between the tourism sector and local communities arose due to a planned event to further attract tourists in an already 'successful' tourist destination.

## 1.2 Research question

Taking into account the conflicts within tourism planning, the question arises how planning strategies can be improved. For this research, I will focus on festival planning especially. How can the positive effects of tourism be maximised, while negative effects and conflicts are minimised? My research question will therefore be:

“Why was Eilân festival cancelled and what can be changed planning-wise to prevent similar cancellations to happen?”

To answer this question. I compare the Eilân festival case with a theoretical framework based on successful festival planning. If aspects of Eilân festival deviate from this “successful” festival theory it might help explain why this festival received the backlash it did. It has to be noted, however, that there are likely different planning methods that suit festivals, which means that a difference between Eilân festival planning and a successful festival does not necessarily imply that that difference was the reason for the cancellation. This will be reflected upon during the research.

Furthermore, theory on communication strategy is used to understand involvement and the options available to include stakeholders. This enables comparing the strategies used with Eilân festival to

other cases. This might also help understanding why Eilân festival was cancelled, while other festivals may help regions with broader development.

Answering this question helps with understanding how to minimise negative effects from phenomena such as festivalisation and overtourism. The benefits of this understanding is that less negative effects enable tourism planning to foster regional development more efficiently. Analysing a case in which the tourism event was cancelled gives other researchers an impression of what happens when negative effects overweigh the positive effects in some manner.

## 2. Theoretical framework

For the case study on Eilân festival, it is necessary to put concepts such as festivalisation and overtourism into context. For this research, I decide to put festivals planning in the context of spatial planning. The reason for this is the focus on the broad regional development that can be fostered with successful tourism planning that I described in the introduction. To make this connection, there needs to be an understanding of general planning theory before it becomes applicable within the context of festivals.

### 2.1 Spatial planning

An abundance of theory on spatial planning has been published over the past decades. An important distinction made by de Roo (2013:41) are components of planning processes. He distinguishes five different types of processes. The first one is the intellectual process, which includes the philosophical and academic viewpoints as well as perspectives and rationality. The second process is the societal process, which involves democracy, participation and inclusion. The third process is the organisational process, revolving around coordination and working together. The fourth process is the institutional process that revolves around the rules and regulations and how decisions are made. The final process is the decision-making process, which explains how knowledge results in action and when interventions are made. For my research, these processes are easily operational and are an option to connect festival planning to broader planning theory.

Planning theory is not static and paradigms have changed throughout the past decades and longer. This shift is explained by de Roo (2013:35). He describes a shift of planning from a top-down perspective towards a more complex type of planning. This new complex revolves around different types of rationality. These are technical rationality and communicative rationality. Technical rationality is a top-down rationality, which revolves around "blueprint planning". In essence, this type of planning rationality is directing and coordinating from a dominant agency. An example of this is the use of traffic lights, that are designated a specific location where people have to adjust their driving behaviour according to these lights based on colour. These people have no agency to influence the planning process of placing these traffic lights. Communicative rationality, on the other hand, revolves around involving stakeholders. Planners applying this mindset take a more mediator-like role between stakeholders than that of an expert (de Roo, 2013:35). However, in his article, Amdam (2010) argues that this distinction between top-down and bottom-up may not necessarily be a choice between either of them. He argues that elements from both approaches can be combined in spatial planning.

A second shift is the different scales of planning he calls micro, meso and macro. Planning interventions have implications on different types of institutional depth. De Roo (2013:40) uses an example of trying to solve congestion problems. He argues that making the highway broader seems a simple solution to a congestion problem. However, this intervention has implications. On the macro level, he explains that changes in people's behaviour in the city network can lead to new congestion issues. People who used public transport before may decide to now commute using the car again with the new extra space on the highway. On the micro level, he explains how traffic rules and land ownership may lead to issues with implementation. De Roo (2013:40) argues that the emergence of multi-level perspective, which combines these scales, is a development of importance. These planning mentalities and levels are interesting to take into account for the case of Eilân festival, as they provide more context for planning decision during the organisation process.

Finally, de Roo (2015) explains that traditional planning perspectives revolve around the idea that reality does not change. This would enable for a so-called command and control planning, which is the blueprint type of planning with set plans and set goals. He argues that, while this type of planning is



still widely used for broader regional planning directories and project management, a long-term strategy planning has shifted towards scenario planning. This type of planning enables for changes within the plans, taking into account the changeable nature of reality. Furthermore, de Roo (2013:66) explains that intersubjectivity influences planning. He argues that the concept of reality in planning is no longer considered static, but revolves more around giving meaning to reality. This type of thinking is communicative in nature, as interaction between people creates a communal perspective on reality.

This idea of complex, dynamic planning was addressed earlier by Hillier (2008) in his article. He emphasises that our worlds are characterised by complexity and uncertainty. According to Parsons (2002), decisions must be taken in this 'swamp of uncertainty, flux, unpredictability, change and the impossibility of knowing very much'. Schön (1973) based this swamp image upon older theory. So while the idea of the complexity of planning has already been addressed decades ago, it is becoming more relevant more recently. I argue that this shift towards scenario planning with a communicative rationality quickens due to influence of the internet. Within their article, Rzeszewski & Kotus (2019) explain that the issue of public participation is increasingly important and that using online tools for this participation is relatively inexpensive, enables research on wide scale and allows sustainable implementations that can be scaled in time and space. Furthermore, they state online mapping tools offer significant potential for data collection. These arguments convince me that for spatial planners, it is now easier to execute a more inclusive bottom-up planning strategy, as the internet enables these planners to reach their stakeholders more efficiently.

It has to be noted that most of planning theory within this research is based on literature by de Roo (2013). This is a decision based on the clear distinctions between types of planning that he describes. However, there are more ways in which spatial planning can be approached in literature that are not taken into account for this thesis.

## 2.2 Planning impacts

Spatial planning interventions influence the location in which they are carried out, regardless of the strategy used. A field of science that revolves around understanding the influence of spatial planning interventions is called social impact assessment. In his article, Vanclay (2002) provides several conceptualisations of the disputed concepts that are shown in box 1. Central to social impact assessment is the analysis of and reflection on the consequences of policy actions or project development and how it alters the way people live.

- People's way of life
- Culture
- Community
- Political statements
- Environment
- Health & Wellbeing
- Personal or property rights
- Fears and aspirations

*Box 1, List of variables that influence social impacts (Vanclay, 2002)*

In his paper, Vanclay (2002) described that scientists have tried to conceptualise social impacts through decade. He made his own list containing the factors shown in box 1. This is useful for the case of Eilân festival, because it enables this festival to be put into context of spatial planning in a concise manner.

Taking into account the idea of uncertainties within spatial planning and the notion of increased public participation in planning, these factors of social impact assessment are relevant for every individual stakeholder involved. This makes spatial planning that includes social impact assessment strategies complex in nature. However, categorising impacts in which people may influence negative impacts within planning also provides a more concise overview on how planning strategies can be adapted to decrease these negative impacts. More on this strategy adaption will be explained in sector 2.4.

### 2.3 Festival planning

Using this theory on social impact assessment, I can understand other festivals and categorise impacts as a specific type of spatial planning. In his article, Agbabiaka (2016) describes physical planning implications of the Eyo festival in Lagos Island, Nigeria. He explains that local residence faced several problems concerning this festival including disruption of local activities, street littering, street trading and increase in price of goods. He explains that cultural festivals attract both positive and negative impacts. This classification of impacts can also be used for Eilân festival. It should be noted, however, that the differences between Nigeria and the Netherlands need to be addressed. Impacts of festivals and the experience of local stakeholders of these impacts may differ between different countries.

However, not all aspects of festival planning revolve around physical changes. In their article, (Kim 2017) focuses on structure of storytelling and the emotional factors as communication and experience tool of historical and cultural resources in terms of cultural semiotics:

First, a strategy linked with historical and cultural resources as a package touristic product made of the tradition is explained. Examples include history, cultural heritage, arts and winery experience. The second strategy focuses on storytelling that is in line with the heritage. The third strategy is oriented to communication and experience, a fourth strategy revolves around inducing fun and fantasy. The final strategy explains how European local festivals are considered to be worth benchmarking in many different domains in the sense that they create new contents by making interesting stories adapted from the past history.

With a history- and cultural-centred approach towards local festivals, identity plays a central role. In their article, Adongo & Kim (2018) explain that the sustenance and institutionalization of local festivals hinge on the extent to which various stakeholders work together effectively. Research often fails to focus on the various relationships between all stakeholders involved. They remark that more inclusion of different stakeholders can help training festival organisers and other stakeholders with institutionalising festivals. This is interesting, as de Roo (2015) explains that stakeholder inclusion is a central factor within spatial planning. It may be interpreted that the advice of Adongo & Kim (2018) can be realised by changing planning paradigm of festivals towards a mindset in which uncertainties and local community inclusion are seen as positive factors.

Important to note is that with inclusion of local communities within festival planning, power relations play a central role. According to Jepson & Clarke (2011), it is interesting to investigate power structures in local community festival creation. Power structures have also played a role within broader spatial planning, as described within the five processes of planning in the book by de Roo (2013:41). When considering who makes decisions, which agencies in society are involved with planning decisions and within what framework of rules and regulations decisions are made, festivals can be influenced by these broader processes.

## 2.4 Stakeholder involvement

During all phases of a spatial intervention, it is necessary to engage with stakeholders. As stated before, communication with local stakeholders plays a vital role within tourism planning. Taking into account the different processes of planning by de Roo (2013:41), the decision-making processes requires coordination and working together. In the case of inclusive planning, the decision-making process seems to be reliant from this coordination. This is where stakeholder involvement is relevant.

In practice, there are different ways to engage with stakeholders within planning processes. Within their article, Vanclay et al., (2015) refer to this engagement as mitigation. Mitigation of impact through involving affected people of a spatial intervention increases the likelihood that a project can be successfully executed (Vanclay et al, 2015). Mitigation also helps affected stakeholders cope with changes that may at first hand seem unwanted through repairing or avoiding adversary effects of these changes (Vanclay et al, 2015). In practice, mitigation strategies can include project modifications, availability of project infrastructure for local communities and building of utilities for local communities creating benefits to counter the unwanted changes (Vanclay et al, 2015). It has to be noted that these modifications will raise the total costs of the projects. Within the context of conflicting interests, this makes mitigation a delicate and complex process (Korthals Altes et al, 2018).

Within event planning, mitigation is seldom sufficiently taken into account. According to Quinn (2006), neither festival organisers nor tourism managers often have a well-developed understanding of how festivals can contribute to broader regional development goals. The impact of festivals on local communities is often a weakness. This is problematic, because local communities can play an important role within festival organisation, as festivals need to be organised in 'their place' (Korozog, 2011). It also needs to be noted that planning alone is not a cure-all for possible negative impacts. However, careful planning may minimise negative impacts, maximise economic returns and improve sustainability and accountability when properly executed in governance (Hall 2000, cited by Maguire & McLoughlin, 2019). Mitigation seems to be a suitable method to ensure these goals by bringing together tourism organisers and local communities through governance. It has to be noted that governance that revolves around inclusion of a multitude of stakeholders is complex and uncertain in nature (de Roo, 2015). Improving mitigation of tourism event planning through a governance type that tries to bring festival organisers and local communities together is therefore a significant challenge for future projects. Furthermore, project modifications raise the total costs of the projects. Within the context of conflicting interests, this makes mitigation a delicate and complex process (Korthals Altes et al., 2018).

Taking into account the notion by Rzeszewski & Kotus (2019) about the usability of internet as a tool of communication within spatial planning, this mitigation support can be done through online data gathering. However, Rzeszewski & Kotus (2019) add the critical note that not everyone may have access to internet. This risks some people to be excluded from the data gathering process. This is a challenge if the idea is to involve all stakeholders within planning processes and requires inventive thinking by planners.

## 2.5 The 'perfect' festival

Combining these insights on festival problems and planning strategies, it seems that combined challenges from most components of planning are relevant for tourism planning. So how is a "correct" festival planned?

In their article, Blichfeldt & Halkier (2014) analyse an example of a successful festival in Jutland, Denmark. They emphasise the large role of local communities and the implications for broader regional development as important reasons for a successful festival. They emphasise the concept of Place

branding as a way of describing efforts of cities, regions, countries, tourist destinations to position itself in the competition for tourists, visitors, investors, residents, resources and more. It has to be noted that place branding is a contested concept that can encompass an entire theoretical framework by itself. I merely describe the version of the concept used by Blichfeldt & Halkier (2014). Interestingly, for this festival, the involved communities were simply tasked to “do something” rather than being presented a festival plan with the question whether they agreed. These communities were actively tasked to come up with festival ideas with considerable freedom to propose ideas. This led to the organisation a successful mussels festival.

Putting this example into context of spatial planning as described by de Roo (2015), it is interesting to note that with the freedom given to local communities, a communicative approach was chosen. Furthermore, uncertainties were embraced by allowing these communities to adjust the project. Within context of social impact assessment mitigation as described by Vanclay et al. (2015), the Jutland example followed the advice of mitigation of changing the project to minimise negative impacts.

The example by Blichfeldt & Halkier (2014) was only a single example of a successful festival. The next question I ask is how festival planning can be structured so that local communities can benefit from the festival consistently. This requires understanding both positive and negative aspects of tourism planning. Earlier in this introduction, I wrote about festivals and events as a type of tourism that can be used to help sell an identity. During the past decades, festivals and events are increasingly focused on within scientific literature. According to Roche (2011), festivalisation can be taken to refer to the role and influence of festivals on the societies that host and stage them. This role can be both indirect and direct, as well as be short term or long term. Interpreting this definition, it seems that festivalisation embodies more than just the stated fact that these festivals are organised. I question whether festivalisation could help with explaining possible negative aspects of event planning.

Combining this literature in the context of planning as described by de Roo (2013) and theory on mitigation and how to involve stakeholders by Vanclay et al (2015), I propose several ‘pillars’ to check how ‘successful’ a festival is. These are:

- Involvement of local communities in early stages of planning. These articles all describe that planners can learn from insights of local communities, such as with the Eyo festival example by Agbabiaka (2016). Furthermore, active participation can help leading to successful festival planning. It has to be noted that, according to de Roo (2015), a planning mentality that includes many stakeholders from a bottom-up perspective is inherently more complex than top-down planning. It may take longer to organise a festival. According to Blichfeldt & Halkier (2014), the success of a festival that celebrates community identity can be measured by the extent that local communities perceive it as a celebration and to the extent it enhances local identity. Taking into account the notion by Adongo & Kim (2018) this success can be achieved more likely when stakeholders communicate.

- Minimise unwanted non-physical impacts by taking into account the cultural aspects for storytelling with festival planning based on local cultural heritage. This advice is based on the notion by Kim (2017). I argue that a festival has a higher chance of being organised successfully if it respects the cultural heritage of the local area in which it was organised. The example by Blichfeldt & Halkier (2014) represents this idea, as the festival followed a narrative around mussels, which was a central part of the identity of local communities in Jutland.

- Minimise unwanted physical impacts. The article by Agbabiaka (2016) about the Eyo festival includes an entire list of negative impact that are described by local communities as unwanted. Understanding which potential negative effects can be expected when organising a festival may help anticipate local communities, stakeholders and planners to prevent these effects or repair them. It has to be noted

that these unwanted physical impacts may be case-specific. In the article by Vanclay (2002), he referred to a notion by Juslén (1995) that a checklist for impacts may be useful, despite he considered that a universal list of impacts suitable for every case was probably not possible.

- Operationalise these pillars through the mitigation strategies described by Vanclay et al. (2015). Approaching festival planning mitigation as a variation of social impact assessment is useful for listing the impact variables that can be influenced and listing the strategies that can be implemented to mitigate these variables. Using social impact assessment theory, a planner may be able to identify physical and non-physical unwanted impacts of their festival and mitigate these with local communities in advance.

2.6 Theoretical model

Understanding of the pillars of the ‘perfect festival’ can help with understanding the cancellation of Eilân festival and planning steps that can be improved. To visualise this, I created a conceptual modal that is shown in figure 1. Firstly, a certain extent of understanding on spatial planning and social impact assessment is a necessary umbrella used to create a festival planning strategy following the four pillars of the ‘perfect’ festival. In order to achieve the ‘perfect’ festival, the pillars are sorted by themes. On the left side the communicative strategy is shown and on the right side the reflection on social impacts. These pillars are then connected using arrows towards the mitigation strategy that can be formed through the understanding of involvement and impacts. The pillars are then connected to the ‘perfect’ festival. In order to emphasise the complexity of planning and the idea that this inclusive type planning is uncertain in line with de Roo (2015), I decided to make the arrows point towards both sides. This indicates that evaluation is necessary and strategies may be adapted from case to case. For example, social impacts for the Eyo festival described by Agbabiaka (2016) and the preferred mitigation strategy to solve these issues may differ from the Eilân case.

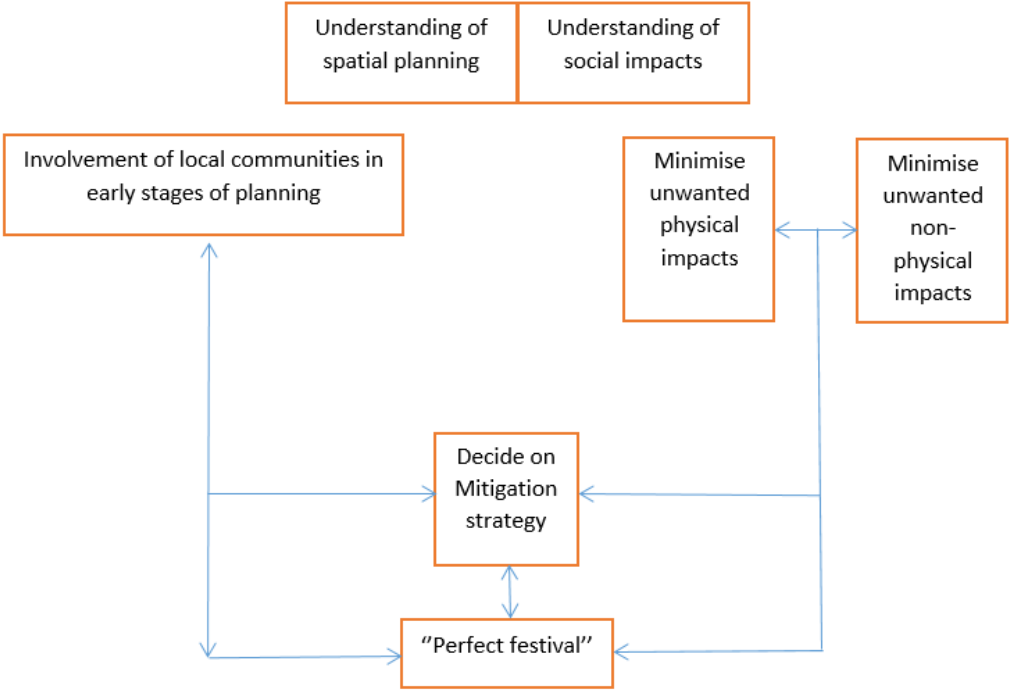


Figure 1. Conceptual model (own source)

### 3. Methodology

The goal of this thesis is to understand why Eilân was cancelled and to learn how to improve festival planning through understanding these reasons for the cancellation. Using the framework of the 'perfect' festival, it is interesting to compare a cancelled festival such as Eilân with this framework. This way, Eilân as a case study contributes to a better understanding of successful festival planning (Rice, 2016 cited by Hay: 232).

Taking a reflexive and interpretative perspective (Stoffelen, 2019), I analysed the complex process of the Eilân cancellation through semi-structured interviews and policy document analysis. Given the sensitive nature of the Eilân cancellation with some stakeholders, a qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews was deemed most appropriate, supplemented and contextualized with policy documents relating to the planning process. Together, these data sources indicate most in-depth how the festival was reflected upon, which factors influenced these reflections and how Eilân fits within broader planning frameworks as discussed in the theory chapter.

#### 3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Because this research revolves around careful selection of respondents that may provide the most in-depth answers to questions, purposive sampling was deemed the most suitable method of participant selection (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016 cited by Hay: 124). I started out this project with a focus on local inhabitants, because the trial that led to the cancellation of Eilân started with disillusioned local communities consisting of local inhabitants who were unhappy with the current situation concerning Eilân (Hart van Nederland, 2019). I selected respondents who are active on the island for work or residential purposes. I also made sure they knew about the festival. For example, when I contacted local residents, I informed them that the interview would be about the festival before making appointments for date and time of the interview. This meant that all respondents were able to prepare for the interview, as they knew the topic in advance. This could have influenced their answers, as they may have researched the topic beforehand.

A total of seven respondents were interviewed in 2020 and 2021 (see table 1). Due to Covid-19 regulations, this process took longer than I expected, and I had to alternate between physical interviews on Terschelling and online interviews. The online interviews lasted slightly shorter than the physical interviews. This could imply that I missed an opportunity to obtain more information with the online interviews. Unfortunately, I also neglected to ask my respondents their age and the time they live on the island. This would have added some context to the answers they provided.

For the interviews, I used a semi-structured interviewguide. This way of interviewing means that I prepared some topics and questions in advance, but the order and extent of the interview were dependent on the interviewee and the conversation, in line with (Dunn, 2016 cited by Hay: 152). The structure of the interviews was as follows: first, I addressed the connection of individual respondents to Terschelling. This enabled me to understand the values that respondents attribute towards the island. Knowing which attributes of Terschelling were highly valued by interviewees provided me a background in which Eilân festival related answers could be contextualised.

The next part of the interview revolved around the processes and contents of Eilân festival and the reflection of the respondent towards these themes. The final part of the interview guide revolved around mitigation attempts. The full interview guide is included in appendix A.

During the data collection process, I also contacted an expert who was tasked with judging the event permit and mediate between the organiser and stakeholders through meetings. This interview helped explaining mitigation processes as well as to which variables were taken into consideration by different

parties for the judging of this festival. Because mitigation is an interaction between planners and local communities, the most thorough analysis can be conducted when both sides have explained their experiences with attempts of mitigation (Vanclay et al., 2015). These mitigation strategies and their outcomes can be analysed along with the given answers by respondents to pinpoint miscommunications or missed opportunities on either side. According to Döringer (2021), expert interviews tend to focus more on the knowledge of the interviewed expert. Therefore, for this interview, I used a different questionnaire that was focused more specifically on the mitigation responses connected to disruptions as shown in the conceptual model in figure 1. This interview helped with explaining thoughts and actions from other involved stakeholders and is shown in appendix B.

Name or alias	Occupation
<b>Ms de Boer (online interview)</b>	Resident
<b>Ms Blaak</b>	Entrepreneur hospitality
<b>Mr Aaldering</b>	Tourist information office
<b>Mr Jansen</b>	Theatre owner
<b>Mr Kapers</b>	Bike Rent
<b>Mr Paters</b>	Entrepreneur hospitality
<b>Ms Tegelaar</b>	Permit judging

Table 1. Respondent list

### 3.2 Policy document analysis

Finally, I reviewed policy documents acquired from the local municipality. These can be used to research the reflection of the municipality regarding Eilân festival and the broader planning direction the island wishes to move towards. It is helpful to utilise these types of documents, as they create a scale-specific framework in which broader planning theories can be put into. According to Stoffelen (2019), detailed reading of policy documents and comparing them to interviews can help indicating complementing or contrasting information.

The policy documents are acquired on the internet as well as through contact with the local municipality. I found documents on tourism planning and goals via the website of the municipality. This resulted in a corpus of six documents

Title document	Author and year	Acquired via
<b>Concept evenementenvisie</b>	Gemeente Terschelling (2021)	Local Municipality
<b>Presentatie concept evenementenvisie Gemeente Terschelling</b>	Terschelling TV (2021)	Online research via YouTube channel 'Terschelling TV'
<b>Webinar Evenementenvisie</b>	Gemeente Terschelling (2021)	Online research via google
<b>Verdict preliminary relief judge 1</b>	Rechtbank Noord-Nederland (2019a)	Ms. Tegelaar
<b>Verdict preliminary relief judge 2</b>	Rechtbank Noord-Nederland (2019b)	Ms. Tegelaar

Table 2. List of policy documents

### 3.3 Data analysis

The analysis of the data was conducted based on the steps for interview and policy document analysis indicated by Stoffelen (2019). Firstly, the coding phase in which codes emerge from texts, are checked for patterns, and then provisionally coded based on literature. These codes are then organised in a hierarchical coding scheme and cyclically coded again using this scheme. Due to my research question being changed several times during the research process, these coding steps were executed a bit



messy, as the codes had to be re-organised. The second phase is the post-coding phase in which the content of the nodes are carefully read and summarised. The next step Stoffelen (2019) describes is analysing the policy documents by reading these and connecting the nodes and literature to the document. Lastly, after a second round of interpreting analytical documents, the link between empirical data and theory is created, which enables the researcher to identify key results, organise the results and selecting the quotes. Note, I have simplified the description of the steps and phases by Stoffelen (2019) to make the overview more concise.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim (Oliver et al., 2005), after which I conducted a first round of open coding, using in vivo themes generated through reading the transcripts. I conducted a second round of coding using predetermined codes derived from literature through deductive coding. (Cope, 2016, cited by Hay: 378). These codes reflect the themes of processes, contents, and mitigation of Eilân. These codes organise the themes of the first round of coding and connect the themes to existing literature.

After the coding of the interviews, I analysed the policy documents. According to Stoffelen (2019), a possible strategy is to include policy documents within the analysis after coding of semi-structured interviews. In my research, I have chosen to collect policy documents before coding, although I waited with the in-depth analysis until after coding. The reason for postponing this is also explained by Stoffelen (2019), as he stated that comparing the contents of the policy documents with the contents of the interviews could be done more easily with the interviews fully coded and organised. Furthermore, Stoffelen (2019) advises a second reading of policy documents after comparison of literature and interviews. I have to note that the article by Stoffelen describes strategies for middle-range research projects, while my research is a fairly small sized project. However, I interpret the discussed strategies as equally usable for smaller researches, as my research has a similar combination of data types. Only the scale of the interview is smaller, making the steps discussed by Stoffelen (2019) easier to execute.

### 3.4 Challenges

Qualitative research must therefore be done with rigour. This means that the research includes strategies for trustworthiness as well as documentations and reflections on the research process through open analysing to enable checking by others. The use of different theories and sources for both primary and secondary data gathering is a strategy to increase rigour. During every step in the data gathering process, I reflected upon work of other researchers. By learning from other researchers, I was able to deal with challenges more accurately during data gathering and analysis. Contacted stakeholders were also involved within data analysis as well as the policy documents used for the analysis. During the research process, a supervisor follows my process and provides comments during the structuring and writing of this thesis (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016 cited by Hay: 127). It should be noted that qualitative research, even with all these considerations regarding rigour, has limits to transferability. The reasons for this limit are that research topics are often very specific, the methods rarely revolve around generalisation and that the researcher has influence on the results and process of the research (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016 cited by Hay: 127).

Rigour-related challenges concerning interviewing include finding a balance between maintaining focus on those themes and being flexible with research questions. It is often the case that respondents may drift off-topic. This can be steered with asking specific follow-up questions (Turner, 2010). With my choice of a semi-structured interview, I hoped to find a balance between asking specific questions while leaving room for in-depth explanations by respondents. The reason for this approach is to allow respondents to give information that was not even considered by me within my interview guide but may still be useful. This type of information that is not considered by academics is called an “unknown



unknown” (Hanna et al., 2016 pp. 175). I hope to obtain these “unknown unknowns” by asking respondents whether they would like to add some comments on their own by the end of the interview.

### 3.5 Ethics

Qualitative research such as this case study needs to be conducted in an ethical manner. For in-depth interviews, this means considering confidentiality, informed consent, and privacy (Orb et al., 2001). Informed consent means that a respondent is able to exercise their rights to either accept or refuse participation in the research or parts of that research. This means that informants need to be fully aware of the broad outline of the research and what you expect from them. (Downling, 2016 cited by Hay: 32). The informed consent form is shown in appendix D.

Privacy and confidentiality can be assured by identity-protection with an alias as well as openness to the publication of results. This is especially important when respondents provide personal and recognisable information (Orb et al., 2001). Furthermore, because Terschelling has relatively small-scaled communities, I ask my respondents whether they would like their occupation to be masked or changed and make sure that they feel at ease in the interview setting by providing some background about my research (Downling, 2016 cited by Hay: 31-32). Furthermore, the respondents will be told how to contact me after the interview should they have remarks or questions on the transcript or the product. Finally, the respondents should be asked about the possibility of recording the interview and making notes of given answers (McNamara, 2009).

Before, during and after the interview, it is of utmost importance to ensure that respondents are not harmed in any way. This does not mean that I cannot ask them upsetting questions, but I have to make sure that their mental and physical wellbeing is not negatively influenced by participating in my research (Downling, 2016 cited by Hay: 32). During the interview, I treated the respondents either as equals or as more powerful than the researcher, depending on the relationship the respondents prefer. Because I needed to travel to Terschelling several times to conduct the interview, in reality, the relationship was asymmetrical for most interviews (Downling, 2016 cited by Hay: 36).

Within qualitative research, it is important to recognise that the research process and results can also be influenced by the researcher themselves. I need to take into account that I have an emotional attachment towards Terschelling myself. Not only do I visit the island every summer with my family, my parents have actually lived on the island and met each other there. Furthermore, I tend to feel strongly about the protection of nature, which is related to the reasoning behind the cancellation of Eilân. To make sure that the possible bias is as little as possible, critical reflexivity is necessary. This means that I, as researcher, make sure that my work and process are repeatedly scrutinised by reporting my research process as well as analysing my role within this process (Downling, 2016 cited by Hay: 34). These are examples of how this research not only deals with subjectivity, but also with intersubjectivity. Which revolves around the meaning and interpretations that are influenced by interactions of people and place context. (Downling, 2016 cited by Hay: 39).

In practice, I have decided not to disclose my connection towards the island to the respondents. I made this choice to remain the ‘outsider’ perspective to nudge participants to explain as much as possible. If I had chosen to disclose to my respondents that I am familiar on the island, they might not explain things such as the location of the festival, assuming I already know the location. A downside to this approach is that disclosing familiarity with the location of the festival might have actually nudged respondents to go more in-depth about the impacts of the festival on the island. If islanders know I visited the places they talk about, they can describe how impacts of the festival might change those places. Unfortunately, I realised this after refining my research question and approach after data gathering.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Cancellation Eilân festival

To understand why Eilân festival organisation processes led to cancellation, both the cancellation process and the festival itself need to be analysed. In this section, I focus on the cancellation process and the actors involved.

Chasing the Hihat, which is the music concept company that created the idea for Eilân 2019 and the new edition in 2022, had to inform the municipality that they wanted to acquire the necessary permits. According to Ms. Tegelaar, the two permits needed are the event permit, which is centered on the festival ideas, and the area permit, which grants permission to use a specific location to organise the festival. The selection of permits a planner needs to acquire make organising festivals on Terschelling a lengthy process that may take as long as a year. As explained by Ms. Tegelaar, who was involved within this process, in box 2.

The first advice on the event permit request was given in September 2018. These advices were implemented in November 2018. This enabled the beginning of a 26-week process in which people can request amendments to the plans. For smaller events, the process of judging the event permit takes about six weeks, because the municipality can do it themselves. For larger events like Eilân festival, the province, local stakeholders and the security regions need to be consulted. There were four meetings planned with these stakeholders to negotiate about the event permit. In August 2019, this permit was granted.

During the process, local stakeholders can provide their input on the concepts for the permit via so-called *zienswijzen*. Twenty-three of these *zienswijzen* with complaints were submitted. Two of these submissions led to a trial. After this trial, the judge decided that changes needed to be made to the event permit and that the area permit could not be accepted (Rechtbank Noord-Nederland, 2019a). Before these changes were made, the permit would be temporarily invalid. The municipality only had a few week to fix these issues, which they were unable to do. This led to the cancellation of Eilân festival.

#### *Box 2. Summary of evaluation process of event permit (Ms. Tegelaar, 2021)*

Several practical issues need to be addressed more in-depth to understand this *zienswijzen* process and the context of the trial. For the *zienswijzen* process, an interesting example is the issue regarding noise. Chasing the Hihat (2022) managed to find a solution to noise issues. Ms. Tegelaar explains:

*“We have a calculation for sound in a kilometre range around the festival site. However, we used the wrong calculation for the event permit. This was adapted after a *zienswijze* from the organiser themselves”.*

For the trial, the adjournment of the area permit was the deciding factor, which led the preliminary relief judge to be unable to grant both permits before the date the festival should be held. Ms. Tegelaar explains:

*“ The preliminary relief judge searched for a connection between the event permit and the area permit. This was a second track. This one is about nature. Because the area permit concerning nature was not granted yet, at that moment by the end of August, he said that the event permit could also not be granted yet”.*

So where did these zienswijzen originate from? According to Ms. Tegelaar, first reactions of islanders were often questions or worries such as those described in box 3. Interesting to note is that the fact that the organiser of Eilân festival is not from Terschelling seemed to be of importance to some local stakeholders. Mr. Jansen reflected on this, explaining that some local community members, not himself, dismissively referred to these people as “kutamsterdamers” referring to the organiser being from Amsterdam instead of Terschelling.

Initial reactions from islanders during the planning phase of Eilân festival include:

- > Should we do this on Terschelling?
- > Who is this organiser from Amsterdam?
- > Should we want this festival?
- > This music is going to cause trouble

*Box 3. Initial questions of islanders when they became aware of Eilân festival (Ms. Tegelaar, 2021)*

For the actual cancellation, environmental damage seems to be the primary fear that has been used during the trial by concerned islanders. Mr. Jansen explained that nitrogen emissions were the primary reason that Eilân festival was cancelled. Even though Staatsbosbeheer (the forestry) gave a green light and the location did not have the nicest nature, these islanders could still reject the festival due to emissions.

The nitrogen emission argument is verified in the verdict of the judge regarding the case of Eilân festival. The judge deemed nitrogen emissions in a natural area too high to as stated in the verdict (Rechtbank Noord-Nederland, 2019b):

*“First of all, the preliminary relief judge states that for the Natura 2000-area Dunes Terschelling, taking into account the present background pressure, the critical deposition values are abundantly exceeded”*

Ms. Tegelaar, who works with judging permits on Terschelling, explains that for the case of Eilân festival, the organisers needed two permits to successfully hold the festival. The evenementenvergunning (event permit) and the omgevingsvergunning (area permit). While the event permit was already accepted, the area permit was stalled due to the nitrogen emission argument. As explained in the judge verdict (Rechtbank Noord-Nederland, 2019b):

*“The above-mentioned considerations lead the preliminary relief judge to conclude that, within the decision-making in the framework of the area permit, flaws and omission are present. This leads to adjournment of the area permit. Now that, as a result of this adjournment of the area permit, the festival cannot be held, requesters to the decision of the preliminary relief judge no longer have an interest in a treatment of their requests against the event permit and the sound dispensation”*

For the case of Eilân festival, it is interesting that stalling the acquisition of the area permits meant the festival could not be held anymore. As stated in the quote above, it was not necessary anymore to further look into the event permit and noise exemption as the festival could not be held anymore.

Ms. Blaak reflected on this, stating that the late communication has influenced the cancellation. Ms. Tegelaar added that this was a lose-lose situation, as the opposition has spent time, effort and energy in trying to stop the festival and the organisers and visitors have spent money and time to make the

festival happen. Mr. Jansen added that food, drinks and tickets had already been bought, meaning that a lot of food and money was wasted with the cancellation.

Mr. Aldering, with his experience in the tourism industry, explained that he wondered whether protecting the nature or simply stopping an unwanted festival using every means possible was the goal of the concerned party that started the trial.

*“The problem was that people did not like the process and the festival, so it just started them off at the wrong foot”.*

Ms. Blaak talked about the late communication and how that influenced the cancellation

*“As well as the people who were unhappy with yet another festival on a busy island”*

This was a discrepancy between the organisers who claimed to have done everything perfectly, while the protesters did not agree.

In the end, the process concerning the cancellation was an unfortunate event for many people on the island. Mr. Jansen explains that he feels for the organisers of Eilân festival, as they had to deal with the late cancellation of their festival. Ms. Tegelaar explains further:

*“In the end it was not satisfactory for both parties. For the festival and organiser, Eilân could not be realised, while the opposing party had to work hard and they were angry and disappointed with the municipality because of this. No one was happy, it was not a pleasant time at that moment”.*

Interesting to note is that these perceived negative effects of the process such as having another festival on a busy island were already expressed by some local community members in an early stage of Eilân planning, as shown in box 3 with responses to the initial idea of Eilân festival. For the community members starting the trial to stop the organisation of the festival, apparently their worries were not addressed enough to not respond to them.

#### 4.2 Contents Eilân festival

Along with the cancellation, understanding the festival itself may help understanding why Eilân festival specifically was cancelled. Respondents analysed the festival using themes that either positively or negatively affected Terschelling and communities on the island.

Firstly, the behaviour of the visitors of the island was discussed within my respondents. Mr. Jansen introduced the word “terrorgabbers” describing the fear some islanders had that the Eilân visitors would use drugs and pee in the surrounding nature. Mr. Paters explains a fear of noise, disturbing animals near the festival site. However, Mr Aldering, Mr. Jansen and Mr. Kapers reflected that the Eilân public who decided to still visit the island after the cancellation of Eilân festival were actually well-behaved people around the age of 30 with money to spend on the island.

Why is it relevant to investigate the type of tourist that would visit Eilân festival? According to Mr. Jansen, the visitors for the largest current festival called Oerol are mostly an elderly audience:

*“Oerol is ageing. It just starts to age, because there is almost no music. Well there is music, a lot of music, but not festival-like music. You have blocks of music with Oerol, but it is not connected. Therefore, everyone is laying around like a washed-up whale in the sand. When a fun rap group plays a gig, those people are dull”.*

These comments can be linked to a wish to attract a different type of tourists. Mr. Jansen feels like a younger audience needs to be attracted.

*“A rejuvenation of the island.”*

Interestingly, this audience of Eilân fits perfectly within the type of tourist Mr. Jansen explained would be best for Terschelling to benefit economically while rejuvenating the island at the same time. It should be noted that this opinion might not be shared by everyone within local communities. It does, however, make sense that the reflection upon Eilân festival is being influenced by the idea of optimal tourism by the respondents based on whether the festival fits within the idea of these individuals.

Another factor of influence was the size of Eilân. According to several respondents, the festival would have been visited by around 5000 guests. My respondents disagreed on whether amount was suitable for Terschelling or too large. Resident de Boer and entrepreneur Paters felt like the amount of visitors was too high, while Ms. Blaak, Mr. Jansen and Mr. Kapers thought the amount was fine for Terschelling. Mr. Aaldering, who provides advice for tourism on Terschelling, explained that starting with a smaller quantity of visitors might have minimised negative responses towards the festival. However, Mr. Kapers explained that this might have been impossible for the organiser, as a lower amount of tickets would not cover the expenses for artists, podiums and food stalls. He explains that the choice for 5000 tickets instead of 1000 for higher revenue follows a “mass is cash” philosophy. This connects to economic impacts of the cancellation of Eilân festival. As Mr. Jansen, who is working within tourism on Terschelling, explains:

*“And the catering of course. They had maximally invested here. The Loods, the VRC loods, bought drinks for the festival. They had a really tough year, because the festival could not be held. They had to get rid of all the junk. Drinks, food, bread, biological cutlery and so on”*

Furthermore, festival organisers have to ensure safety, which costs even more money, which was a theme briefly explained by Bike rent shop owner Mr. Kapers, who explained about protocols regarding safety and first aid. This is a burden for organisers of events on Terschelling. Ms. Blaak remarked that the cancellation was relatively expensive. Taking into account the safety costs and already bought food and drinks, this is not surprising.

Furthermore, the geographical location of the festival site was discussed in detail by my respondents. Geographical factors described by my respondents can be organised in two groups. The first gap is the transport via the ferry, which limits the amount of possible visitors towards Terschelling every day. According to Mr. Aaldering, approximately 8000 people can be transported towards the island every single day at maximum capacity. This means that exclusively Eilân visitors make up almost half of these available spots. Secondly, the theme of the festival site itself is discussed. Interestingly, the lake and dunes where Eilân festival was supposed to be held is reflected upon as either suitable or unsuitable by my respondents. Mr. Jansen explained that the area would recover quickly after Eilân festival, with Mr. Jansen further explaining that the lake is already used for recreational purposes. Resident de Boer and entrepreneur Paters explained that the location would not be suitable, with Ms. de Boer arguing that the space is too limited for the amount of Eilân visitors. She compares Eilân with Lowlands festival, which is held annually on a large field near Biddinghuizen. Mr. Paters explains that the surrounding nature would be disturbed too much. More on nature will be explained in sector 4.2.

*“Biddinghuizen has more space” – Ms. de Boer*

The contents of the festival were also addressed. With the idea that a diversity of tourism is organised on Terschelling, why did specifically Eilân festival receive the backlash it did? In the past, several events have been organised on the island that did not receive negative reactions from local community members. For example, the other major festival annually organised was reflected upon. This festival is called Oerol and is organised in June every year. The festival revolves around art, music and landscapes

and features several artists each year (Oerol, 2022). Mr. Paters, who works as an entrepreneur, likes this festival, because it fits with the idea of how Terschelling wishes to promote itself:

*“Terschelling wants to profile itself as a cultural and natural island, but then culture like they do with Oerol”.*

Respondents reflected on the goals of Eilân festival. Interestingly, respondents describe the festival itself as being the main focus of the organisers rather than Terschelling. As entrepreneur Paters explains:

*“It is just a business. That is a business model, I think. It has nothing to do with an addition to Terschelling as island, but it was a business model. And that is fine. There is nothing wrong with that, but I did not mind that it was not held”.*

Resident de Boer and entrepreneur Blaak both explained that promoting the island was probably not the main aim of Eilân festival, with Ms. De Boer feeling like the organisers could have presented the festival in a more positive manner and Ms. Blaak explaining that the freedom of enjoying music was the main aim.

Content-wise, according to Mr. Aldering and Mr. Jansen, the festival was supposed to attract people around the age of 30 with significant money. Interestingly, these people still travelled to Terschelling after the cancellation of Eilân festival.

Eilân festival was a music festival centred on the house-genre. Mr. Jansen, who is active in the culture sector with his theatre, explains that that is a party music genre. He liked the idea, as there has not been a similar festival on Terschelling yet. Mr. Aldering, however, explained that along with positive responses, some islanders reacted negatively towards the type of music. Mr. Kapers explains this negative reaction towards the music theme as “unknown makes unloved”. Interestingly, Ms. de Boer thought the music genre was not her type and she would be more interested if it was a different genre she enjoyed more.

As briefly discussed within the geographical arguments, nature was the most discussed topic concerning reflection of Eilân festival. Several themes related to nature were discussed by my respondents. Firstly, the nature of the festival site was reflected upon. Mr. Jansen explains that people were afraid that surrounding nature would be damaged by the festival, although the forestry judged the festival safe for nature. Secondly, animals and wildlife that may be disturbed were discussed by three interviewees. While Mr. Jansen declared possible disturbance of salamanders, toads and bats acceptable, Mr. Paters deemed scaring away wildlife unacceptable when organising a festival. He opted to organise large-scale festivals near large fields or lakes in Friesland rather than an island. Mr. Kapers, who works on Terschelling, also distinguished between types of nature, naming the large natural area called the Boschplaat in the East of Terschelling as an unsuitable location for festivals because of bird breeding zones. A final theme discussed was nitrogen emission, which was the deciding factor in cancellation according to Ms. Blaak.

It is tough to judge whether potential damage to the nature was too large to organise the festival, especially because the impacts of the festival are speculative after the cancellation. There is no easy way to answer the question concerning this potential damage, as the festival has not been organised. Mr. Aldering explains this:

*“You have a total open component and not a closed component, which is the biggest difference. If it would have happened, you could have measured if Eilân actually influenced nature. Was it actually damaging the location yes or no?”.*

Putting Eilân festival in the grander context of tourism on Terschelling things organised in the festival. It seems local community members have to maintain a balance between being dependent on tourism and not having their livability be disrupted too much by tourism. An interesting comment by Mr. Jansen, who works in a theatre, is made about this dependency of the local economy on tourism:

*“ We cannot sustain ourselves without all the tourism. That is what the island thrives upon. Sometimes I also think that it relies too much upon tourism, as it is getting more and more of course. Tourism is increasing and the buildings where the tourists stay are getting taller. There are getting more greenparks and shit like that. Beautiful small summerhouses are being destroyed, making place for giant villas. I think that is unfortunate”*

Entrepreneur Blaak speaks about the different tourism seasons by advising the organisation of events during different parts of the year.

*“By organising these events in other seasons, in the calm season, although those get smaller through time hahaha”.*

Interestingly, she also acknowledges that, while organising an event during a season in which less events are organised may be helpful, these time frames get narrower. This is another indication that may explain the hesitant stance of some islanders towards another festival on Terschelling.

Mr. Jansen, who works in a theatre, even expects that the calmest season will be busy tourism-wise after the Covid19 lockdowns. I have to note that this interview was conducted in 2020, which is why he was speculating about the time after Covid19. He also expressed that he enjoys the calmer winters tourism-wise:

*“It is a strange feeling. Everyone is visiting during holidays and you live here. Every place, beautiful places, how is it during the winter. Other people visit only during summer, but I like all seasons. When it was calm on Terschelling during the lockdown, Terschelling was at its most beautiful without tourists”.*

Terschelling is now attempting to acquire a general idea of how the local community members feel about the dependency of tourism. This questionnaire is part of a bigger concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) to develop future tourism strategies on Terschelling. This event vision will be analysed further in section 4.3 and in the discussion. The chosen method to obtain an evaluation of the standings amongst islanders towards the organisation of festivals was a questionnaire to be distributed within islanders. The goal of this questionnaire is to understand the position of islanders towards festivals to compare wishes and goals. This can help counter the possibility that a minority can make decision that a majority might not agree with as well as include more stakeholders within festival planning on Terschelling.

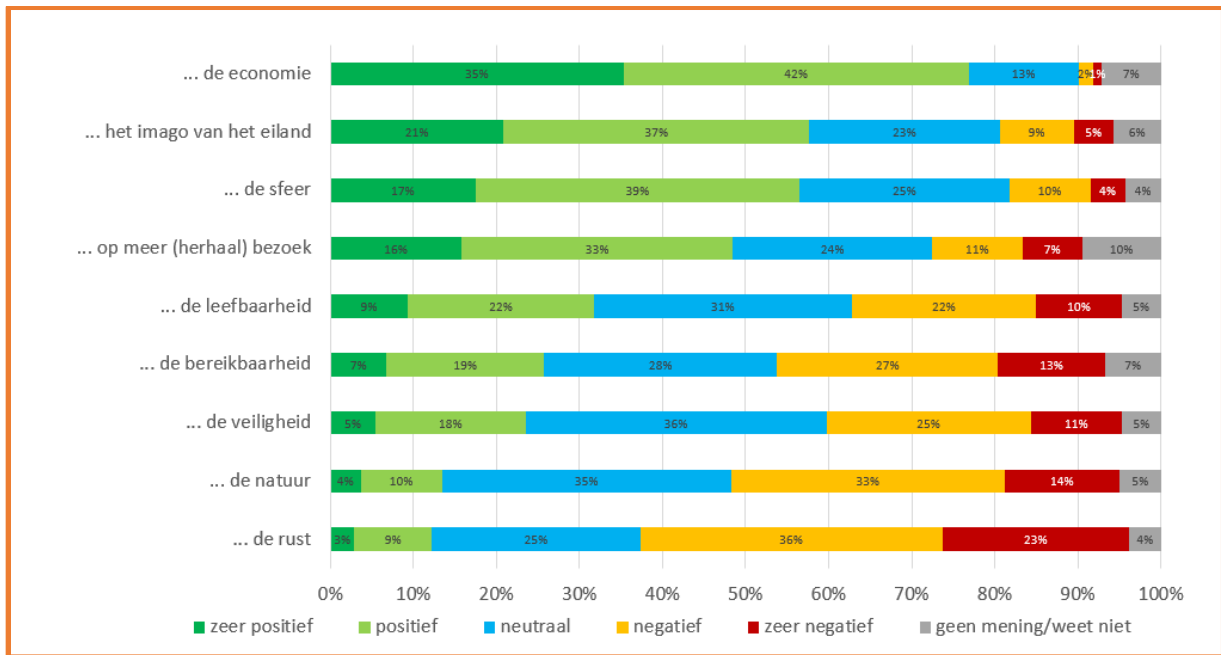


Figure 2. Evaluation of positive and negative effects of events and festivals within different sectors from the Webinar evenementenvisie (Gemeente Terschelling, 2021)

In this figure derived from this questionnaire on the island filled by 1625 participants, the most positive influence of events on the island are considered to be economic and image-related. The most negative influences include damage to nature and disruption of the tranquillity on the island. It is interesting to note that positive effects within economy and the image of the island are themes that are also addressed by my respondents. However, as described using the interviews, there were contested opinions on whether Eilân festival fits within the image of the island. According to the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021), culture, sports and nature are central themes within the image that Terschelling wishes to promote. Within my interviewees, some respondents such as entrepreneur Blaak and theatre owner Jansen argued that the concept of a music festival in nature such as Eilân fits within the Island image, while resident de Boer and entrepreneur Paters explained this festival is not appropriate for Terschelling.

Interestingly, both the issues concerning the suitability of Eilân festival and the potential liveability issues such as noise complaints were already discussed in the early stages of planning and shown in box 3. However, environmental damage, which was the direct variable on which the cancellation was based, was not yet named in this early stage. Apparently, this was an impact that received more attention by local community members as the time passed.

#### 4.3 Involvement and mitigation

Lastly, using the involvement and mitigation theory by Vanclay (2002), I can understand communication issues between stakeholders and aim towards finding a solution to prevent a cancellation like Eilân festival from happening again. Amongst my respondents, not a single person was actively involved with decision-making processes regarding Eilân festival apart from Ms. Tegelaar. She was part of the neutral agency within the municipality tasked with judging event permits. Mr. Aaldering, who is also working within the tourism industry, was asked about Eilân festival on behalf of his organisation:

*"We were asked, should the festival be organised yes or no? What is our advice? We responded that we are not going to provide advice about this. It is time that an event vision is constructed. That you*



*have a testing framework. That festival plans can be tested for safety and that is it. It is time you go to work with that. After this, a lot happened. The acquisition of permits, the contest about this, Stichting Ons Schellingerland that started a trial etc. I know both sides of the story”.*

It is interesting to note that Mr. Aaldering seems to convey a lack of festival planning frameworks on Terschelling. The concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) that I mentioned earlier seems to be an attempt by the local municipality to create this framework.

Furthermore, it is interesting all the other interviewees decided to take a more passive approach and await the result of the trial or did not know enough about the process to get involved. They had different experiences about becoming aware of Eilân festival. Mr Paters explains:

*“I heard from other islanders but not from my own experience, so I cannot say anything about it, I do not know.”*

Mr. Jansen, who lives on Terschelling, did obtain information about the organisation process of Eilân through Terschelling TV, which is the local television channel. He explains how he became aware of the festival:

*“By reading, because I wanted to go there”*

Finally, Ms. Blaak read about it in a newspaper as well as talking with islanders about the festival.

An interesting note about these processes of becoming aware of the festival is that these interviewees did not learn about Eilân festival through the internet. Although Eilân festival has a website which I referred to in the introduction, information was also shared through other media. This is, however, only an observation within my own group of interviewees. It provides no information on the way other islanders obtained information on Eilân festival.

However, interestingly, not a single respondent was actively approached by the organisation of Eilân festival. This could be experienced as a problem by stakeholders, as it implies that involvement only started at a relatively late stage of festival planning. It has to be noted that a generalised statement about stakeholders being approached by Eilân festival cannot be made with a small dataset such as mine. However, insights about the how stakeholders were approached can be helpful for understanding the process. Resident de Boer explains:

*“The involvement in the beginning was low amongst islanders. That could have been done better. It is better to acknowledge, before you begin, that people think the location is beautiful. They do not acknowledge that you have to deal with others, that the population is concerned and that the geographical scale is small. I had that feeling”.*

What she explains here is that the organisers maybe have underestimated the perceived impact of the festival amongst local communities. As explained by Mr. Jansen, some local communities on Terschelling are unhappy with interventions such as additional festivals on the island, these people have a mentality that he describes as:

*“Pruts niet aan mien eiland”*

This translates to: “do not mess with my island”. As stated earlier. It is difficult to change the minds of people that oppose a planning idea when the plans are finalised and cannot be changed to compromise with problems. If the issue expressed by local stakeholders is that they do not support any more festivals on the island, this makes mitigating with these stakeholders more challenging.

So what did the interviewees advice Eilân festival organisers to change in their planning strategy? Respondents proposed multiple ideas.

All respondents stressed the importance of communication. Mr. Paters admits that it is tough to adopt an efficient communication strategy, relating to his time as an entrepreneur in the tourism sector.

*“I had a company for 35 year, and the toughest of all in a company is communication. It is for a reason that there are written so many books about, and it is not for nothing that so many people are busy with it”*

It was interesting to note that multiple interviewees commented on the late communication by Eilân organisers. To prevent a power dynamic where striving a cancellation is the main tool for opposing people; tourism advisor Aaldering proposes a mitigation strategy:

*“Get people on board earlier in the process. If people do not want to, then they do not want to. If someone says: “I do not like that idea” it is very difficult to change that persons mind”.*

It seems that the strategy of creating benefits to counter unwanted changes was proposed several times by interviewees. Mr. Jansen, with his background in entrepreneurship and tourism, explained that backlash could have been prevented if money was generated for local communities with Eilân festival. Not everyone agrees with this point of view. Ms. Blaak, with her experience in hospitality and business explains:

*“I think that the permits need to be finalised already. Then you can specifically tell people what the plan is and you have permission”.*

Interestingly, she then started to question this comment by saying:

*“Maybe this is not right at all, because you do not get those permits easily. It is probably not the right route to take, because you get the permits late nowadays. Well you have to start when you are starting the acquisition of permits, when you have a good plan. If you have a framework and you are asking for permits and inform people about the plans. You will get opposition, advocates, and information. You can take this to the municipality”.*

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Cancellation

Based on the results, it seems the organiser had concrete plans for the event permit. Potential issues with noise were taken care of by the Chasing the Hihat. However, the area permit variables such as the emission of nitrogen were not tested enough according to the judge (Rechtbank Noord-Nederland, 2019a). Therefore, it seems that nitrogen emission was the deciding factor within the cancellation process. I argue that this process of several necessary permits made the planning process of Eilân festival complex in nature.

Besides the permit acquisition process, the planning strategies further contributed to the complexity of Eilân festival planning. Taking into account the planning theory by de Roo (2013), a combination of top-down and bottom-up planning has been used for the Eilân case. While the ideas for Eilân were already finalised, the involvement of local communities was possible with the *zienswijzen* and was exercised with the court case as a result. Central to the cancellation was the lack of options for stakeholders to change the contents of the festival to minimise negative impacts through mitigation (Vanclay et al., 2015). Stakeholders had either the option to agree with the festival plans or attempt to cancel the festival itself in case of disagreement. What missed was a middle ground option. This means that the questions displayed in box 3 and the people who, according to Mr. Aaldering, got off on the “wrong foot” had no means to convey their concerns to Chasing the Hihat and have impact in the festival planning process. Therefore, a preliminary relief judge was invoked by these concerned islanders through a mediator, which was the municipality in this case.

Therefore, a factor that limited the options for stakeholders to be included within Eilân festival planning was the lack of communication. This does not imply that there were no communication efforts by Chasing the Hihat. They did share information using several media on the festival. I perceive this as positive taking into account the notion by Rzeszewski & Kotus (2019) about the internet not being accessible by everybody. Sharing information through multiple media is an effective method to ensure a larger part of local community members being informed by spatial planning ideas.

Reflecting back to my theoretical model for the ‘perfect’ festival. Involvement of local communities in early stages of planning may help with obtaining a general idea on whether your festival would receive support or be mostly rejected. For the case of Eilân festival, serious efforts were made to meet these requirements of involvement. However, these efforts were based mostly on informing, not on actual empowerment of local stakeholders through the planning process of the festival. This can be put into context using planning perspective by de Roo (2013). In practice, Eilân festival was organised by Chasing the Hihat mostly through a top-down blueprint perspective by having a set festival plan and utilising informing as main communication method. For Chasing the Hihat, the foremost priority was to acquire the permits, for which communication with local communities was not a central factor. On the other hand, the option to input *zienswijzen* and to invoke a judge was not possible through Chasing the Hihat, but included mostly the local municipality as mediator. This is a more communicative, bottom-up approach. The communication for both local community members and Chasing the Hihat was mostly indirect in nature.

For the case of Eilân festival, the lack of direct contact between Chasing the Hihat and local community members may have led to exaggerated concerns and miscommunications that could have been less impactful. It seems that the involvement part of my ‘perfect festival’ model was mostly executed by the local municipality, rather than Chasing the Hihat. This does not necessarily mean that Eilân festival planning should have been organised through a completely bottom-up approach, where all individual members of local communities were empowered. Taking into account the notion by Amdam (2010)

that it is possible to combine elements from top-down planning and bottom-up planning, I urge festival planners to actively reflect on what approach is most suitable for the festival they would like to organise. While a local municipality as mediator can help local stakeholders to be able to voice their concerns about the organisation of festivals, direct contact with the organisers should also be considered.

## 5.2 Contents Eilân festival

Connecting the results to the theory, several types of fear were influencing the perception of stakeholders towards Eilân festival. Firstly, the fear of the so-called “terrorgabber”. This falls back on social impact variables described by Vanclay (2002) shown in box 1. Fears of a certain impact can also be considered a social impact, as social impact assessment focuses on all consequences of policy actions and project development, not only physical impacts. It is interesting to note that, according to Mr. Jansen, people who did not know the type of tourist that would visit Eilân were the most scared of the tourists.

Secondly, several interviewees seem to convey a fear of overtourism. Mr. Jansen, who is working within the tourism industry, explained that, tourism-wise, Terschelling is experiencing unwanted effects due to increasing tourism with the comment about the villa buildings and the loss of the calm seasons. Apart from being explainable using the social impact variables by Vanclay (2002), this increase of influence of tourism to livability could be a possible effect of overtourism as well (Milano et al. 2018) On the other hand, Mr. Jansen acknowledges that tourism is a vital part of the local economy. It seems that the balance between too little tourism and too much tourism may be of delicate nature on an island as dependent on tourism as Terschelling.

In line with the previous fears that some islanders expressed and other did not, there was disagreement on whether Eilân festival was suitable for an island such as Terschelling. Compared to the idea of storytelling by Kim (2017), it seems that, the idea of cultural festivals like Oerol fit enough within the cultural heritage Terschelling wishes to project to the outside world to be organised annually without a trial or cancellation threat. I base these choices of Terschelling on heritage on the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) and the questionnaire results shown in figure 2. This does not necessarily mean that this is the only narrative that is suitable for the island. However, it is interesting to see that a preference for a type of cultural heritage is being expressed. For some people, a music festival in nature such as Eilân does not fit within the storytelling ideas of Terschelling. Other people argue that a festival in nature can lead to environmental damage and scares wildlife. Understanding the reasoning of stakeholders on impacts like these may help explain why specifically Eilân and no other festivals were put to trial.

With successful festivals in rural areas such as the mussels festival described by Blichfeldt & Halkier (2014), the theme of the festival reflects something that the area is known for and the local community members had freedom to contribute to the shaping of the festival. For the case of Eilân festival, it seems that the idea of a music festival was the main focus, with the location being chosen for aesthetic purposes rather than being an active part of the festival theme with little input from local community members. Within my interviewees, it is interesting to note that the reflection on whether the festival was deemed positive or negative by respondents was an entirely individual thought process. Interviewees did reflect on how others reacted to the festival, but mostly based their opinion on Eilân festival mostly on whether they liked the festival idea themselves.

A possible explanation for this disagreement for evaluating whether Eilân was seemed as a positive or negative influence for Terschelling may be explained using the negative impacts perceived within nature and tranquillity. As described in section the result section, common concerns regarding eilân

festival were overcrowding, noise complaints and damage to nature. Even though the impacts of Eilân festival are in a rural area rather than the urban region in which Eyo festival was explained in the article of Agbabiaka (2016), negative impacts feared by local communities somewhat overlap. While topics such as street trading and the price of goods are not addressed, littering and disruption of the local activities are relevant themes named during interviews and within policy documents. Furthermore, these variables fall within the questionnaire themes such as image, liveability and tranquillity shown in figure 2 (Gemeente Terschelling, 2021).

When addressing Eilân festival analysis from a perspective of Social Impact Assessment, it is interesting to connect these factors by the Webinar event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) shown in figure 2 to social impact assessment factors shown in box 1. The list of impacts described by the Webinar event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) are quite similar to the variables that influence social impacts (Vanclay, 2002). This reinforces my idea that it can be helpful to develop festival planning strategies using theory on social impact assessment. If a festival planner recognises potential unwanted impacts of their festivals and is able to categorise these, it is easier to implement strategies to reduce these impacts. For example, within the Eilân case, the fear of damage to nature could have been less impactful if Eilân festival emphasised respect for nature in the presentation of their festival ideas.

However, taking into account the complexity of planning with a multitude of stakeholders as described by de Roo (2015) it is complex to understand and prevent all unwanted impacts during festival planning. Local communities experienced impacts during Eilân festival planning that influenced their health and wellbeing, culture and environment, which are variables that Vanclay (2002) distinguished within social impact studies. However, these communities had limited control over these impacts, as they are unable to influence the contents of Eilân festival, which was set in advance as a house-music festival for 6000 visitors at the set festival site. This forced members of local community to form an opinion on this concept and either support or reject certain aspects using the “zienswijzen” described in box 2, which they were empowered to do. With the aforementioned communication issues that stem from the mix of top-down and bottom-up planning perspectives, potential negative impacts of Eilân festival were addressed unsatisfactory during the planning process.

Apart from inadequately addressed unwanted impacts, it is unclear whether the idea of Eilân festival fitted within the tourism profile of Terschelling altogether. The idea that islanders wonder what the consequences of more events and festivals on Terschelling would be implies that festivalisation, as introduced by Roche (2011), is a relevant concept for Terschelling. Festivals play a vital role in the economy of Terschelling, but are creating challenges for the hosts simultaneously. Theory on overtourism and festivalisation help putting the discussion about the size of Eilân into context. Apart from the limit of 8000 people that can be shipped towards the island at the same time, Terschelling is a relatively small island population-wise and surface-wise. Only 4.960 people live on the island in 2022 and the land surface is 8.721 hectares (AlleCijfers, 2022). This means that a festival on a part of this island with 5000-6000 can have serious impact.

Taking into account my theoretical model on the ‘perfect’ festival, minimising both unwanted physical and non-physical impacts play a vital role in festival planning. For the case of eilân festival, both the storytelling aspects of cultural heritage and potential damage to nature were impact variables in which part of local communities perceived to many unwanted impacts to ignore them. Preventing this is no easy task due to the previously mentioned complexity in planning and the challenge of understanding potential unwanted impacts in early stages of planning. I urge festival organisers to reflect on reasons local community members may reject their festival plans in an early stage of planning. This has two advantages. Firstly, the organiser can adjust the plans of the festival to prevent the impacts if they

decide to involve local stakeholders within festival planning. Secondly, the organiser can seek options to repair or compensate the impacts to prevent a negative reaction to the impacts if the plans cannot change. However, this further attributes to the complex nature of festival planning. Festival organisers need to be aware that actively preventing unwanted impacts increases the time needed to organise a festival.

### 5.3 Stakeholder involvement and mitigation

Due to the method of planning Eilân festival, where the idea of the festival was finalised before the local communities had the opportunity to respond, mitigation strategies described by Vanclay, et al (2015) such as modification of the project were no longer possible. This limited the options of local stakeholders to communicate with the organiser of Eilân. I argue that these communication issues played a pivotal role in the cancellation of Eilân festival.

The described communication issues have their roots in the interesting discrepancy between top-down planning and bottom-up planning that was present with Eilân festival that I previously mentioned. On the one hand, respondents could write *zienswijzen* to address issues they wished to convey during the organisation process. This *zienswijzen* process is interesting in the context of power structures within local community festival creation, as these *zienswijzen* could be formulated by single individuals. This means that relatively small groups of individuals within local communities can have significant power within festival planning processes.

However, as described in section 5.2, the contents of the festival itself were finalised before the inclusion of local stakeholders. In practice, this meant that any issues with the contents of the festival itself were almost non-negotiable. This left stakeholders that disagreed with Eilân festival contents with no other option than to invoke a trial to force changes from the organiser. This search for power by local stakeholders to still be able to make the changes they wish happen seems to refer back to theory by Jepson & Clarke, (2011). Terschelling needs to investigate power structures in future festival planning, as currently the power lies with the people that use knowledge of laws and permit requirements during trials.

Furthermore, some interviewees argued that the negative responses towards Eilân festival were partly explained by the feeling that locals will not profit from the festival economically. This follows the notion by Dansero & Puttilli (2010) about unequal distribution of revenue of festivals and events. Potentially, a mitigation strategy that is explained by Vanclay et al., (2015) is to repair negative impacts. I argue that this can be done by replacing negative impacts by positive impacts. Mr. Paters explained that Eilân festival was organised more through a businessmodel mindset. Furthermore, resident de Boer and entrepreneur Blaak had expressed that promoting Terschelling was not the focus of Eilân festival. This seems to convey that Eilân festival was not created to actively benefit local community members. This does not mean that Eilân should have aimed to promote the island and make sure that islanders benefitted from the festival, but it is a mitigation choice that Eilân decided not to use.

I would argue that organising a festival requires careful deliberation between efficiency and inclusivity. With the case of Eilân, the focus may have been too much on organising the festival itself. It would benefit festival organisers to have a clear framework of planning steps and wishes of local communities in advance. This helps organisers understand what ideas are being generally supported by local communities and doable in the location. Taking this idea in mind, it is interesting to note that Terschelling is attempting to create this framework through the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021).

While it seems that decreasing the size of the festival to grow organically through mitigation as well as contacting stakeholders earlier in the process may be ideas to reduce negative effects of Eilân festival, it has to be stressed again that complex planning with a multitude of stakeholders is uncertain in nature (de Roo, 2015). According to the Roo (2015), to efficiently plan using a bottom-up perspective, it is necessary to embrace these uncertainties. However, if these uncertainties imply in practice that stakeholders have trouble understanding what is going on and are actively trying to avoid involvement due to lack of frameworks, the planning strategy may become too chaotic.

As explained by Mr. Aaldering, decreasing the size of the festival may reduce opposition. Mr. Kapers explained that shrinking the festival too much decreases the cost-efficiency of the festival. This is an example of the complexity, which makes finding the correct planning strategy difficult. Furthermore, Ms. Blaak struggled with deciding what the optimal time would have been to contact stakeholders in the planning process of Eilân festival. Lastly, some respondents may not accept any changes on the island, which disrupts the efficiency of mitigation strategies. It is interesting to note that a mentality of not wanting any changes on the island as described above may implicate that inclusive planning may not be a “cure-all” for any stakeholder disputes within tourism planning (Hall 2000, cited by Maguire & McLoughlin, 2019).

These dilemmas described by interviewees are examples of dealing with a significant amount of stakeholders where it is tough to find a universal communication strategy that appeases every person. The variety of opinions and modification wishes of stakeholders for Eilân festival are almost impossible to be honoured by organisers of Eilân festival. This is an example of a swamp of uncertainties (Schön, 1973) that are part of inclusive planning with a multitude of stakeholders (de Roo, 2015).

It is interesting to reflect on this uncertainty and reflect on what the right planning strategy would have been for the organisers. I would argue for the case of Eilân festival that there is no single correct answer. Every planning strategy decision discussed by de Roo (2013) and de Roo (2015), including which rationality to think with and the extent of acceptance of uncertainties is a decision with positive and negative effects. The same can be applied to the mitigation strategies as described by Vanclay et al. (2015). I acknowledge that is challenging for festival organisers to take all these choices into account, especially as there is no universal correct strategy for festival planning.

Taking into account the role of mitigation within organising the ‘perfect’ festival, I advise festival organisers to understand the importance of communicating ideas with local stakeholders. I do reflect on the idea that “more communication”, “more mitigation” and “more empowerment” sounds appealing for improving festival planning. However, my notions on disagreements between local stakeholders, the uncertainty of inclusive planning and the loss of efficiency of planning by lengthening the process pose a challenge. Being aware of these challenges may help preventing unexpected hiccups during festival planning processes

The concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) could help with providing a solution to prevent hiccups during planning processes. The framework created in this document makes formulating mitigation strategies easier by providing some representativeness of what events and festivals islanders generally support or reject. Furthermore, it helps planners with shaping their planning strategies to the context of the island.

In the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021), Terschelling set four pillars to decide what festival are supported on the island. Firstly, Terschelling wishes to choose for events that follow the wishes of the island itself. This is an interesting point that may be hard to implement into practice, due to the previously described uncertainty of spatial planning with a multitude of stakeholders by de Roo (2015).

The second idea is to organise events that connect to the DNA of Terschelling. This second prerequisite can be useful for filtering unwanted events along with the previously mentioned questionnaire that is shared amongst islanders with the results shown in figure 2. However, I have to reflect on a notion by de Roo (2013:66) about intersubjectivity that it may be difficult to conceptualise the “DNA” of the island due to different perspectives of individuals within the local communities who share this “DNA”. Speaking of a concept such as the “DNA” of the island may therefore be a bit simplified.

The third idea mentioned in the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) is to keep events that have contributed to the worth of the island for years, while the fourth idea revolves around restricting the growth of new autonomous events that attract people from the mainland to the island. These two points seem to convey that Terschelling aims to conserve current tourism ideas rather than attracting new visitors, which may convey a fear of overtourism. Terschelling seems to be aiming to limit potential negative effects of overtourism by restricting new tourism. This could help preventing the exacerbation of the already existing potential of attracting visitors of busy regions, which is a situation described by Séarphin et al, (2019) on overtourism. The only difference between Séarphin et al (2019) their notion is that the context is a city rather than an island. However, I argue that overtourism theory could also be applicable on islands such as Terschelling. These islands have geographical boundaries and travel restrictions that limit the capacity for visitors. For Terschelling, the ferry that can transport 8000 people per day along with the maximum 8721 hectares of space limit tourism growth. This renders the island vulnerable for overtourism.

Although I argue these four ideas from the concept event vision can still be interpreted in different manners, I would advise festival planners such as Chasing the Hihat to take these into account while forming festival ideas. This would convey to local community members that the organisers are respecting their wishes during communication efforts.

#### 5.4 Importance of research

Taking into account the complex decision making of festival planning and mitigation, the importance of this research is shown. On a larger scale, the idea of this research revolves around improving the benefits of tourism planning for regional development while preventing negative impacts. As described in the introduction using literature by Kneafsy (2000) and Sijtsma et al. (2015), tourism can help foster regional development by commodifying culture. Interestingly, the cultural aspects of commodification seemed to be of scant importance with Eilân festival. The festival itself seemed to be the central factor and not everyone within local communities felt like Eilân festival fitted within the cultural commodification strategy of the island. This might be linked to the notion by Kim (2017) that the cultural heritage and storytelling aspects of tourism are relevant along with the physical aspects. The people who opposed to Eilân festival possibly experienced a discrepancy between what they would like to express as their culture and the idea of Eilân festival. An example of this is the debate whether a music festival like Eilân in nature would be suitable on an island like Terschelling. While I argue that this does not necessarily mean that the festival cannot help with fostering regional development, I do argue that it influenced the stance of local community members towards the festival based on the interviewees and the questionnaires for the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021).

For future festival planning, it is therefore recommended that organisers first understand the planning framework and general wishes of local community members before organising a festival. Furthermore, I advise that local policy makers take into account the positive and negative aspects of tourism while creating planning frameworks. These recommendations that not have a single correct implementation. However, reflecting on these topics is already a step towards more structural festival planning and tourism policy making in which regional development can be stimulated through tourism.



## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Answer research question

The research question for this thesis revolved around the cancellation of Eilân festival and what can be changed planning-wise to prevent similar cancellations to happen.

The cancellation process began with concerns that were inadequately addressed during early stages of Eilân festival planning. Furthermore, most communication during the planning phase of Eilân festival was done through mediators such as the local municipality and the preliminary relief judge. The lack of options for local stakeholders to be involved within the festival planning eventually led to a trial. During this trial, the preliminary relief judge stated that the area permit requirements were inadequately met.

Both the communication methods and the contents of the festival influenced the outcome of this trial. On a planning level, the confusion combination of top-down blueprint planning by Chasing the Hihat and a bottom-down communicative approach by the local municipality implied that most communication with concerned stakeholders was done through the municipality. On a social impact assessment level, fear of overtourism, challenges for liveability and potential damage to nature were concerns that were relevant for Eilân festival planning. Furthermore, it was unclear whether Eilân festival was a suitable concept for communities on Terschelling. These concerns were disclosed with the local municipality through *zienswijzen*, rather than directly with Chasing the Hihat. This meant that there were little mitigation options, as Chasing the Hihat was unable to prevent or repair these unwanted impacts.

The creation of an event planning framework in the event permit is a step in the right direction to prevent a similar cancellation of future events, as it gives festival organisers context about what types of festivals are likely to be accepted or rejected. Furthermore, better understanding of mitigation strategies and when to involve stakeholders in the planning process can decrease the chance a stakeholder may choose to start a trial to cancel the festival.

There is, however, no guarantee that the strategies above solve every planning case, as planning with a multitude of stakeholders revolves around uncertainties. Furthermore, sometimes it is not possible to change the mind of stakeholders. Lastly, more stakeholder participation can lead to longer planning time and even more uncertainties due to disagreements within those stakeholders.

Using the four pillars on the 'perfect' festival. This means that the pillars can be implemented more efficiently through planning frameworks such as the concept event vision. However, this also implies more uncertainties. This means that preventing cancellations such as Eilân festival may not be possible, although the threat of cancellation may be decreased when there are more communication options for stakeholders and fewer uncertainties when planning using a clear framework.

### 6.2 Recommendations for future research

For municipalities, to counter problems concerning testing the necessity and desirability of festivals like Eilân, reflection on the pillars of the 'perfect' festival is advised. This can help formulating planning frameworks in which potential unwanted impacts can be identified and in which some context on the wishes and concerns of local community members can be given. With the emergence of the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021), these pillars may be included as extra framework.

Taking this into account a recommendation for further research by academics is comparing Eilân festival with a similar case on Terschelling after the finalisation of this concept event vision. Interestingly, Eilân is attempting to organise the festival again in 2022. This is an opportunity for

researchers to investigate the difference in planning and mitigation now that there is a framework of reference for the organisers, municipality and local community members.

For planners, it is of importance to understand the social impacts of the festival. Reflect on how the festival may negatively affect the local community members. Furthermore, an understanding of local planning frameworks such as the concept event vision may help to understand whether the idea for an event or festival is suitable for the location it is organised in.

For local community members, it is helpful to communicate with planners and local stakeholders. I advise to voice concerns in an early stage of planning, whenever the stakeholder is aware of a festival that is being planned. This way, there are more options to address those concerns other than a trial, such as compensations or adaptations of the festival ideas.

The case of Eilân festival might help with preventing a similar situation like Eilân festival 2019 from happening in the future. This could prevent dissatisfaction within local communities, loss of revenue and a waste of effort for festival organisers. Conducting a quantitative research in which factors by Vanclay (2002) and the concept event vision by Gemeente Terschelling (2021) are compared through questionnaires may help understanding social impacts of events and festivals on Terschelling with a connection to academic theory.

### 6.3 Reflection

While this research provides a framework that can be used to improve festival planning and reduce unwanted effects of festivals, it only comprises part of the story. This research focuses on the planning aspect of the festivals. However, psychological aspects such as sense of place could also provide a scope in which unwanted effects of festival planning can be interpreted. Furthermore, festival planning itself includes more steps than acquiring permits and preventing negative reactions from local stakeholders. Calculations on profit distributions and the creation of jobs have received little or none consideration for this research.

Furthermore, the contents of the research are based only on a part of the involved stakeholders. It would have been more useful if I had been able to interview the people who input the zienswijze and started the trial. Interviewing a representative from Chasing the Hihat would also provide more context to this research.

During the research process, I had to change my research question and approach several times. This implied that some of the data gathering strategies were not optimal, as discussed within the methodology section. It would have better to have made this adjustments before conducting the interviews, as several abundant questions have been asked to interviewees. Furthermore, the process of coding and analysing was a bit messy, as described in the methodology section.

Limitations to this research include that a significant part of my analysis revolves around the concept event vision published in 2021. However, my interviews were mostly conducted in 2020. This means that interviewees were unable to reflect on the concept event vision. This was a missed opportunity to obtain a reflection of interviewees on planning changes before and after the publication of the concept event vision.

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## Appendix A: interview guide: resident interview

### Introductie:

Korte inleiding van het onderwerp

Behandelen van toestemmingsformulier

### Deel 1: Vragen over respondent

Hoe bent u verbonden met de toeristische sector op Terschelling?

> Hoe voelt u zich persoonlijk verbonden met het eiland? En hoe met de mensen die hier wonen? (persoon individu & community)

> Hoe voelt u zich als u denkt aan de omgeving van Terschelling? (plaats fysiek & sociaal)

> Hoe is de manier waarop u zich verbonden voelt met Terschelling ontstaan? Hoe zijn die gevoelens ontstaan? Wanneer en waarvoor was u voor het eerst op dit eiland? (plaats gevoel & gedrag & cognitie)

### Deel 2: Vragen over Proces Eilân

Wat heeft u meegekregen van het organiseren van het Eilân festival? (Door wie?)

Wat deed het met u toen u hoorde dat dit festival georganiseerd werd? > (Waarom? Eilandbeleving, overlast, rust)

Hoe reageerde u? > (vervelend, klagen, in opstand, actief actie)

Uiteindelijk hebben de organisatoren van Eilân geen vergunning gekregen, hoe staat u tegenover de rechtszaak en het uiteindelijke afschaffen van het festival? > Waarom is dat? (past beter bij eilandbeleving, nu minder overlast, festival past niet bij rust / ruimte,

### Deel 3: Vragen over inhoud Eilân

Kunt u uitleggen wat u van het idee van een muziekfestival in de natuur vindt? Is dat iets wat positieve of juist negatieve gevolgen voor een gebied kan hebben? (proces, fysiek, sociaal)

Wat deed het met u toen u erachter kwam wat voor festival Eilân zou worden? > (Waarom? Eilandbeleving, overlast, rust)

> Kunt u vertellen wat voor positieve of negatieve gevoelens u had verwacht als Eilân door was gegaan? (vervelend, klagen, in opstand, actief actie)

Had u anders gedacht over Eilân als het een ander soort festival was? Waarom wel of niet? (maakt type festival uit)

Kunt u uitleggen waarom u wel of niet tevreden bent met de manier waarop Eilân Terschelling wilde promoten? (ander imago, past niet bij cultuur, gaat niet goed met natuur om)

#### Deel 4: Onderhandeling en communicatie

Kunt u uitleggen hoe u de communicatie tussen organisatoren en eilanders heeft ervaren?

> Bent u op een bepaalde manier geïnformeerd/benaderd/betrokken bij het organiseren van het festival? (door wie, wanneer, waarom)

> Heeft deze manier waarop u benaderd werd uw mening over Eilân beïnvloedt? (positief, negatief, op welke manier)

Wat zou volgens u de beste manier van communicatie zijn tussen lokale bevolkingen en de toerismesector (participatie, overheid, bedrijven, cultuur)?

#### Deel 5: Afsluitende vraag

Hadden de organisatoren van Eilân iets kunnen doen om uw support/draagvlak te krijgen?

Zo ja, wat wilde u dan beïnvloeden/bereiken als uitkomst? > (locatie, type festival, betrokkenheid, ondernemers)

Zo nee, waarom niet?

Wilt u zelf nog wat toevoegen?



## Appendix B: interview guide: expert interview

### Introductie:

Korte inleiding van het onderwerp

Behandelen van toestemmingsformulier

### Deel 1: Vragen over Proces Eilân

Wat heeft u meegekregen van het organiseren van het Eilân festival in de beginfase? (Door wie?)

Wanneer heeft Eilân vergunningen aangevraagd? (wat was het concept dat werd aangeboden?)

> Wat was uw eerste impressie van het verzoek?

> Hoe verliep het proces? (welke actoren benaderden u? Voorstanders? Tegenstanders?)

Hoe staat u tegenover de rechtszaak en het uiteindelijke afschaffen van het festival?

> Hoe hebben jullie uiteindelijk het definitieve besluit genomen?

### Deel 2: Vragen over inhoud Eilân

Welke thema's heeft u beoordeeld voor het wel of niet verlenen van een vergunning voor Eilân?

> Welke thema's vormden het grootste struikelblok? (Voor wie waren dit struikelblokken?)

> Kunt u vertellen wat voor positieve of negatieve gevoelens u had verwacht als Eilân door was gegaan? (vervelend, klagen, in opstand, actief actie, juist positief)

Had u anders geoordeeld over Eilân als het een ander soort festival was? Waarom wel of niet? (maakt type festival uit)

### Deel 3: Onderhandeling en communicatie

Kunt u uitleggen hoe u de communicatie tussen organisatoren en eilanders heeft ervaren?

> Was er veel interactie tussen voor- en tegenstanders? (ruzie, overleg)

Wat zou volgens u de beste manier van communicatie zijn tussen lokale bevolkingen en de toerismesector (participatie, overheid, bedrijven, cultuur)?

### Deel 4: Afsluitende vraag

Hadden de organisatoren van Eilân iets kunnen doen om het festival wel door te laten gaan?

Wat zou er anders moeten om in de toekomst een dergelijk festival te kunnen organiseren?

Wilt u zelf nog wat toevoegen?

## Appendix C: codebook

Concept/theme	Finalised Codes
<b>Awareness and reaction</b>	Awareness Eilân
	Reaction Eilân
<b>Cancellation process</b>	Negative effects
	Reason Cancellation
	Reflection Cancellation
<b>Eilân reflection</b>	Reflection Eilân – Bureaucracy
	Reflection Eilân – drugs
	Reflection Eilân – economic
	Reflection Eilân – geographical
	Reflection Eilân – goals festival
	Reflection Eilân – impact
	Reflection Eilân – music
	Reflection Eilân – nature
	Reflection Eilân – noise
	Reflection Eilân – security
	Reflection Eilân – size festival
	Reflection Eilân - social
<b>Mitigation</b>	Mitigation – advice
	Mitigation – information sharing
	Mitigation - involvement
<b>Stakeholder</b>	Attachment
	Involvement stakeholder
<b>Tourism</b>	Reflection tourism Terschelling

## Appendix D: Informed consent

### Toestemmingsformulier (Informed consent)

Betreft: deelname aan interview over het festival Eilân

Doel onderzoek: Begrijpen op welke manier een festival zoals Eilân het gevoel van verbondenheid met een plaats beïnvloedt.

Dit formulier is tweemaal ondertekend voorafgaand aan het interview. Ook ontvangt de deelnemer een kopie van dit formulier.

---

Naam deelnemer: \_\_\_\_\_

De onderzoeker heeft mij helder ingelicht over het onderwerp en het doel van het onderzoek. Hierbij verklaar ik dat:

- Mijn deelname vrijwillig is en ik het recht heb om vragen niet te beantwoorden of gegeven antwoorden aan te passen. Ook heb ik het recht om het interview te beëindigen wanneer ik wil.
- De uitkomsten van dit interview uitsluitend voor wetenschappelijke doeleinden mogen worden gebruikt. Dit houdt in dat de resultaten van interview verwerkt mogen worden in een wetenschappelijk verslag of publicatie.
- Mijn deelname vertrouwelijk is. Indien ik er geen toestemming voor geef worden persoonlijke gegevens en informatie in geen enkele vorm verspreid.
- Dit interview opgenomen mag worden voor enkel de verwerking van antwoorden. Ik heb het recht om deze opnames op te vragen.
- De opnames van dit interview getranscribeerd mogen worden. Ik heb het recht om deze transcripten op te vragen.

Voor de volgende vragen kunt u een cirkel om het gewenste antwoord plaatsen.

Mijn naam mag worden genoemd in het onderzoeksverslag JA / NEE

\* Indien u nee heeft omcirkelt wordt er een pseudoniem gebruikt

Mijn werk/functie mag worden genoemd in het onderzoeksverslag JA / NEE

\* Indien u nee heeft omcirkelt wordt er een andere baan/geen informatie over werk weergegeven

Handtekening deelnemer:

Datum:

---

Naam onderzoeker: Chelvan Landman

Ik verklaar dat:

- Ik mij zal houden aan alle afspraken die zijn bevestigd in dit formulier
- ik bereid ben om vragen voor, tijdens en na het interview zo duidelijk en compleet mogelijk te ontvangen. Ik overhandig hiervoor contactgegevens.

Handtekening onderzoeker:

Datum:

---

Contactgegevens:

e-mailadres: [T.Landman.1@student.rug.nl](mailto:T.Landman.1@student.rug.nl)

tel: 0622685817



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