



# PROLOGUE

This election program – "And what are we doing tommorrow with the water in Fryslân and the Westerkwartier?" – was written in the autumn of 2022. It describes the general principles and wishes of the FNP with regard to water (purification) management as executed by Wetterskip Fryslân, the Frisian Water Authority, for Fryslân and the Westerkwartier.

The committee is very aware of the fact that we are living in uncertain times. There is a war going on in Ukraine, on the edge of Europe. This war is threatening us as well and has huge economic and financial consequences for our country. Inflation is high, interest rates are going up and the energy prices are going through the roof. Wetterskip Fryslân is feeling the pinch too. Add to that a tight labour market and a shortage of raw materials and resources. It makes scheduling and costing work a lot harder.

However, we stay hopeful, and as FNP want to present our own bold and ambitious approach, while keeping both our feet on the ground. Our approach is based on the 7 key values of the FNP: democracy, federalism, internationalism, our own language and culture, entrepreneurship, solidarity and sustainability.

Bert Vollema Listlûker FNP Wetterskip







Bert Vollema:

'HOWEVER, WE STAY HOPEFUL, AND AS FNP WANT TO PRESENT OUR OWN BOLD AND AMBITIOUS APPROACH, WHILE KEEPING BOTH OUR FEET ON THE GROUND.'







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# INTRODUCTION

# The Water Authority

Wetterskip Fryslân, the Frisian Water Authority, has become a modern organisation that is squarely rooted in society. It is confident and assertive where knowledge and expertise of water is concerned, innovative, and makes use of the latest technologies, has both feet on the ground and listens to what is going on in society. In their information campaigns, the Wetterskip explains to residents what they do and why. The area supervisors play a proactive role and are the personal point of contact for citizens. Of course, it collaborates with other authorities, knowledge institutions and business. There should be more attention for the activities of the Wetterskip in primary and secondary education. With Open Days in the Wetterskipshûs, field trips and visits to the Woudagemaal (the pumping station near Lemmer), future generations are made aware of what water management entails.



# 'AND WHAT ARE WE DOING TOMORROW WITH THE WATER IN FRYSLAN AND THE WESTERKWARTIER?'

## Development

Four of the past five summers, it was (very and even too) dry in Fryslân. However, if we look at the annual precipitation, this has actually gone up. It may not rain as often, but when it does, the rainfall is significant and we get heavy downpours. This climate change is visible and noticeable all over the world. The glaciers are melting, the ice caps on both the North and South Poles are getting thinner, the sea level is rising and the average temperature is going up.

Not only climate change, but European legislation, developments in society and the National Policy on Rural Areas are making the work of Wetterskip Fryslân more and more complex. We are faced with a number of big problems. In addition, the Dutch Coalition Agreement specifies that soil and water have to play a bigger role in spatial planning. This gives the Wetterskip, the authority on water, a prominent role. In addition to its duties as water manager, it now also has to act as area development coordinator. The costs of coordinating all these activities and of implementing climate adaptation policy cannot be borne by the residents of Fryslân and the Westerkwartier alone. Tackling climate change should be a national responsibility, also with a national budget. The FNP is of the opinion that the State has to increase funding via the Deltafonds to allow the various Water Authorities to not only use it for the permanent High-Water Protection Program (HWBP), but also for other aspects of climate adaptation. This can include funding for the costs of spatial planning adjustments and changes to fresh water management.

The Frisian authorities – the Provincial Executive, the municipalities and the Wetterskip – share a responsibility for the Frisian approach to climate adaptation. This requires good collaboration and an equal, well-aligned division of tasks between the Province, Wetterskip and municipalities. However, we also need the input from farmers' and nature organisations, local collectives, educational institutes and business to keep our feet dry and water usable in the future. The biggest question that Wetterskip Fryslân has been trying to answer is: "And what are we doing tommorrow with the water in Fryslân and the Westerkwartier?" We have to look far into the future. Only if we work together we can keep the water in Fryslân and the Westerkwartier safe, clean and healthy.



# The sea dike – our primary water defence

The next ten years, the Wetterskip will invest substantially in the safety of residents in Fryslân. Following the latest climate insights, they will continue working on reinforcing the sea dikes. The FNP wants to carry out these projects in the most sustainable and natural way possible, and wants to focus on the creation of green sea banks. Where no foreshore has been formed yet on the Wadden side, that has to be promoted, as it is the most natural way to protect the land behind the dikes in the future. The FNP is of the opinion that the appearance of a number of villages, such as Peazens/Paesens and Wierum, should not be affected by the dike reinforcements. The solution has to found in methods to reinforce the dike on the sea-side, even in Natura 2000 areas. Innovative technologies may help ensure that the existing dikes continue to meet safety requirements. Further research here is required.

The State has now made funding available via the "Large Water Program" for the improvement of the ecology on and around the dikes. The FNP supports this program. We also support the introduction of more herbs and flowers along and on dikes. Fish passages require good systems to transition from fresh to salt water. Care has to be taken to prevent salinisation of the farmland behind the dikes. The use of the high-quality agricultural land in the north-west and north-east of Fryslân should not be affected in any way as a result of dike reinforcement.

The FNP is in favour of – where possible – having cycling paths outside the dikes. The Wadden area form a unique nature reserve, that everyone should be able to enjoy. In the zoning processes the needs and wishes of business, nature organisations and local residents should be taken into account. What has to be kept in mind is that the Wadden area has to remain a sanctuary that is totally dark at night, also because it is an important foraging and resting area for birds. Under conditions, tourist and recreational facilities can be introduced here and there.



## Wadden islands and regional water defences

In the past, the "Administrative Agreement on Water" has specified that the dams and dunes on the Frisian islands will be managed by the Wetterskip. The FNP is not against that arrangement, but does want to impose some conditions. In any case, the State must provide funding that includes a budget for multi-annual maintenance. Our residents should not have to pay for what is in essence a national problem. The FNP is of the opinion that the State has to be 100% financially responsible for the primary water defences.

The regional defences are of huge importance for the area behind the dikes. The height and stability of the polder defences has to be monitored and maintained. To reduce the water pressure on the dams and dikes, more overflow and retention polders have to be designated. These provide capacity to store water in case of extreme downpours. It is important to set up good collaborations here with the area management organisations (TBOs).

- We want to see dikes with a huge variety of flowers and herbs
- Prevent dike breaches, with a risk of more salty marshland behind the dikes
- Promotion of the expansion of mud-flats
- 100% funding by the State of primary water defences

# 2. CLEAN AND HEALTHY WATER

#### Groundwater

The FNP wants clean water for us to drink, for healthy cattle and for a healthy fish stock, and clean water to swim in. For the FNP, sustainable water management means that today's water requirements should not affect future generations, and that the landscape and the soil are not harmed. That is why the FNP is against CO2 capture, fracking and the storage of chemical or radioactive waste in Frisian soil. The FNP is also against any new gas extraction plans! Clean groundwater is of fundamental importance for our drinking water.





# 'CLEAN GROUNDWATER IS OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE FOR OUR DRINKING WATER.'

#### Clean water

The European Water Framework Directive (KRW) sets high requirements with regard to the water quality and the ecology in and around the water. We will have to meet those targets by 2027. Also, "Brussels" has recently tightened these requirements even more. The FNP wants to meet the KRW requirements, but we also want to be realistic. The last few percentage points are always hard to achieve. That is why the FNP wants to properly weigh off the costs and benefits before putting money into projects. We rely on the commitment of third parties (Province and municipalities) to achieve the targets, which means we all have to be on the same page when working together on achieving the results.

A lot of rain water still ends up in the sewerage system, and from there in the purification plants. Municipalities have to try their best to keep rain water from entering the system. This will prevent drains from overflowing, polluting the ground water.

We are still not able to remove all contaminants from waste water, for instance medication residues. The FNP wants to finance innovation to solve this problem. This can be done in collaboration with the Union of Water Authorities, higher education institutions and business. The end goal is not having to incinerate sewerage sludge from purification plants, but making it suitable for re-use as a resource.

Pollution (discharge/dumping) by recreational and professional vessels still has not been adequately solved. The partnership between the Wetterskip, Provincial Executive, municipalities, the Marrekrite, Hiswa and professional shipping organisations has to be restarted. We need more waste water collection points. All surface waters should be clean enough to swim in. The FNP is of the opinion that "wild swimming", swimming at non-supervised locations, must remain possible.

- No polluting extraction from and capture in our soil
- More waste water collection points for professional and recreational vessels
- More research into the removal of medical residues from waste water
- No restrictions for wild swimming



# Nature-friendly farming

For us, the Frisian nature and landscape are what makes Fryslân unique and they are of huge importance for our society as a whole. Fryslân has been awarded the title of most beautiful province of the Netherlands for a good reason! We want to keep it that way, and also allow everyone to enjoy it. The Provincial Executive is in charge when it comes to the countryside. Nature should never be seen as a cost item. Nature always brings in more money than it costs. It improves the wellbeing of people and animals, but is also of great economic value for recreation and tourism. That is why we consider our nature as our "green gold", and we have to take good care of it.

The FNP is of the opinion that farmers in Fryslân also have to be able to run their business in the future. We envisage a sector with circular, ecological and soil-bound agriculture. Whether it is on clay, moorland or sand: each area requires its own specific approach. The sector is under huge pressure because of nitrogen pollution, the loss of derogation, the use of pesticides etc. The sector has to find ways to make farming more sustainable, for healthier soil and cleaner water. A lot of farmers are already making great strides in the field of agricultural nature and landscape management. The Remkes Report specifies that this is the future of agriculture. The FNP wants to implement the Frisian approach.

The Natura 2000 areas in Fryslân are very valuable, and their quality has to be preserved and protected. A healthy water table in and around these nature areas is important to ensure that.

#### Feangreide and damaged foundations

The "Feangreidefisy" (The Vision on the Management of the Feangreide (peat meadow) region), as established by the Provincial Executive and Wetterskip Fryslân, serves as guidance on this difficult issue. To preventer further subsidence, the water level in this peat meadow region has to be increased. Not only to preserve the peat and reduce CO₂ emissions, but also to prevent the higher sand grounds from drying out and prevent salinisation.

In the coming years, the zoning processes have to ensure steps in this area. This requires custom measures for the various regions. The national government has earmarked funding for this agricultural and natural management, and there is a "climate budget" for the implementation of the CO<sub>2</sub> policy. Farmers should receive financial support from this budget to adjust their business operations and continue to farm with higher water levels.

The Provincial Executive and Wetterskip Fryslân have indicated that they feel morally responsible for the











damage to building foundations in the "Feangreide" region. The legal position is that owners of houses/ buildings are responsible to damage to their property. The report "Approach to foundations" contains more information and rules. The FNP thinks that setting up a Foundation Agency, that provides information to residents in the region and helps them draw up a damage restoration plan, is a good idea. However, in the current situation, owners have to pay for all the damage themselves, although there is a guarantee scheme where they can lend money. The FNP is of the opinion that part of the damage should be compensated. We want a part of the climate budget for the Feangreide region to be made available for such a scheme. People on a small budget also have to be able to live in a safe and healthy home.

### **Grutte** & Lytse Bouhoeke

Right behind the see dikes, we find fertile farmland, suitable for growing potatoes, beetroots, grains, cabbages etc. The FNP is concerned about this region, that is prone to salinisation. As we already indicated in the chapter on primary defences, further salinisation at the transition zones between fresh and salt water has to be prevented. This also applies to the Lauwersmar/Lauwersmeer, in our opinion. The FNP wants to avoid further risks to farmland as a result of a saltier Lauwersmar/Lauwersmeer.

In the medium term, sluicing water from the IJsselmeer can help keep salinisation under control. For the long term, more research is necessary to see whether other technical solutions (such as vertical drainage) offer any solutions.

## De greidhoeke

The FNP supports an integral approach to water management, with attention to nature, cultural history, energy, economy and recreation. This also applies to the Greidhoeke. In the Greidhoeke, there are still areas with ancient farmland. The FNP does not want that heritage to disappear. Surveys have to be done to determine whether larger water level areas can be introduced, to prevent the costs of land consolidation pumping stations having to be replaced.

- Use the climate budget for the Feangreide (peat meadow) region to compensate damage to foundations
- A higher water level in the Feangreide region
- Work with the agricultural sector in the zoning processes to develop future-proof agricultural methods
- Prevent salinisation of the Lauwersmar/Lauwersmeer

# 4. PLENTY OF FRESH WATER

## Dry and wet go hand in hand

In the introduction, we already mentioned that the number of dry summers is going up, while there is also more precipitation. On the one hand, this gives problems with a low water level in the summer, while the timely drainage of water after heavy showers is also a problem. Nature also suffers when it has to contend with several dry summers in a row, and farmers on sandy soil have huge problems finding a consistent water supply.

The FNP is of the opinion that in higher areas, water retention measures have to be put in place. Luckily, this has been getting more attention in recent years. In case of extreme downpours and when it rains for longer periods, the (overflow) polder capacity can be used to

retain the water. As the weather can be quite reliably predicted nowadays, it is easier to adjust the measures as and where necessary. Safety (high and strong water defences and dams) plays an important role here.

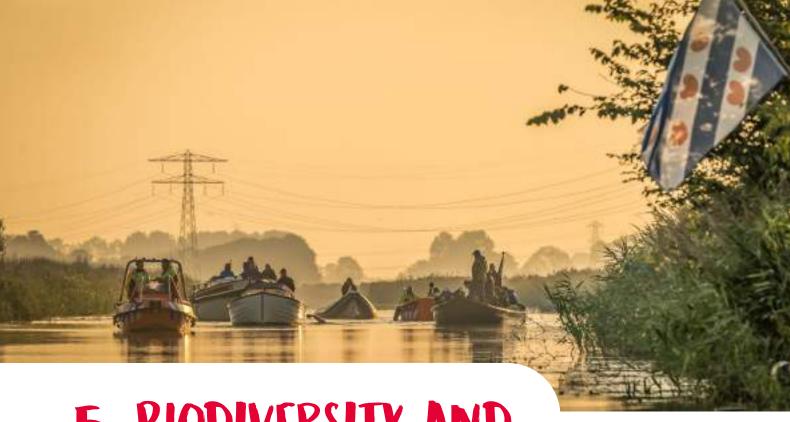
The "Blauwe Omjouwingsfisy" (Blue Environmental Vision) also has to pay attention to the huge importance of sufficient fresh water in the IJsselmeer and Lauwersmar/ Lauwersmeer. These buffer lakes are not only used by Fryslân, to sluice in water in times of drought, but also by other water authorities. At the same time, we have to look at ways to have excess water flow from the IJsselmeer and Lauwersmar/Lauwersmeer to the Wadden Sea in a natural way (gravity flow). Research has to show whether this requires water management controls (such as pumping stations).

- More water storage in the higher areas of Fryslân
- IJsselmeer and Lauwersmar/Lauwersmeer are of huge strategic importance for the supply of fresh water
- More retention/overflow polders for water storage









# 5. BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION

#### **Ambition**

Biodiversity and ecology play an important role in everything the Wetterskip does. The Wetterskip can help improve biodiversity in the area where it operates. The decline of biodiversity has been scientifically proven. The number of insects has reduced dramatically in recent years, for instance, while insects are of huge importance, also for the agricultural sector. In May 2021, the memorandum "Ambysje bioferskaat Wetterskip Fryslân" (Biodiversity ambitions of Wetterskip Fryslân) was adopted, and a budget of €200,000 has been earmarked for the next two years. The FNP is of the opinion that it takes structural funding to realise the ambition of the Wetterskip.

An integral approach is required. Again, we need to find partnerships with and input from agricultural collectives Fryslân and link the plans to the Deltaplan Biodiversity Restoration of the Union of Water Authorities.

## **Exotic plants**

As a result of climate change (global warming), plant and animal species are disappearing, but new ones are taking their place. This is also part of nature. However, some new (exotic) species are less welcome here. The muskrat has been successfully driven out, but we are now seeing American crayfish and especially New Zealand pigmyweed (Crassula helmsii) in our parts. The first causes a lot of damage by digging into water- and quaysides. The second grows so quickly that it blocks the water flow. Combating these species costs a lot of money. One logical plan would be to make money available from the Climate Adaptation budget to fight these invasive species. At the same time, we have to keep a watchful eye for new exotic plants and animals.

### Land for the grassland birds

For the FNP, grassland bird preservation is very important. In nature reserves such as Skrok & Skrins, the "Skriezekrite" Idzegea and the farmland of Murk Nijdam and lots of other farmers, an amazing biotope is being realised for our grassland birds, while preserving the land's agricultural function. The water level in these areas is of huge importance. The FNP wants all water and landscape management activities to be carried out with the grassland birds in mind. We want to ask the Wetterskip to take these birds into account and align their activities to the provincial policy. The FNP wants farmers who carry out grassland bird preservation activities on and around their land to be given the opportunity to raise the water level themselves.

### Fish population

Biodiversity and ecology also means a healthy fish stock in the waters in Fryslân and the Westerkwartier. The Water Framework Directive (KRW)-implementation plan specifies measures to improve the habitats of the various fish species. This is also important for professional fishermen and amateur anglers. Amateur anglers are a significant economic factor in Fryslân from a recreational/tourism point of view, and deserve policy and practical support from the Provincial Executive and the Wetterskip. The angling locations have to remain accessible, also for people with an impairment.

## **Climate** adaptation

We are all responsible for a healthy living environment. The hot summers and extreme rain cause a lot of nuisance and practical problems. In collaboration with the provincial and local authorities, housing co-operations and, also, citizens, we can ensure that our living environment is adapted to climate change in time. More green in cities and villages, more natural gardens, more rainwater capture and storage for home use, sedum roofs – it all helps. The FNP wants the authorities to set up a joint information campaign to promote these measures.

Wetterskip Fryslân wants to be climate-neutral by 2030. Sustainable water initiatives brought to the table by third parties have to be facilitated where possible, according to the FNP. Other initiatives, such as generating biogas from verge grass and using dredgings for bokashi, also deserve our support. Call for tenders also have to be carried out as sustainably as possible.

- Higher structural budget for biodiversity for the Wetterskip
- Closer collaboration between the Wetterskip and farming collectives
- 🖖 Joint promotion campaigns with municipalities to stimulate residents to make their gardens greener
- Use climate funding to combat invasive species
- Support for third-party sustainability initiatives







# 6. AFFORDABLE

#### **Taxes**

In the past four years, the tax levies for the Wetterskip have gone up significantly. Wetterskip Fryslân has huge debts. In addition, a lot of repair, replacement and adjustment work is forecast for the coming years (pumping stations, culverts, quaysides etc.), requiring huge investments. The FNP wants the Wetterskip to draw up exact reports of the state of our current assets. Good data management and modern inspection methods can help set up a risk-based replacement schedule. This allows us to develop a sound financial policy for the next 15 years, keeping the tax levies as low as possible. As already indicated in the introduction, the State will have to provide a financial contribution to be able to carry out all this work. It has to be clear that the Wetterskip works efficiently, with an administrative organisation to match. The FNP will never touch the 100% remission for lowincome households.

The FNP works on the basis of "the polluter pays"-principle. In the next administration, we will have to assess whether the cost distribution for water management and purification is still proportionate. The rates for permits may have to be brought in line with the costs.

The expertise of the Wetterskip is often called upon, for instance when developing plans for new housing and for infrastructure projects. The FNP is of the opinion that the Wetterskip has to become more professional and charge consultancy fees for these activities.

#### Do more with less

If the Wetterskip has to play a more co-ordinating role, this requires a matching administrative organisation. This not only means more work for the organisation, but also requires different types of competencies. At the same time, the tight labour market means it is getting harder to find the right people. This demands an organisation that focuses on efficiency. Using the latest digital technologies and digitisation form an important prerequisite to doing more with less money and fewer people. Using aerial imaging and artificial intelligence for the annual inspections and to detect illegal dumping are good examples. The FNP sees opportunities to further develop these initiatives. With more insight in the data and more continuous monitoring, we can make better decisions on water management and purification systems, and we can work in a more efficient and cheaper way.

- Services provided by the Wetterskip have to be paid for
- We need clear reports on the current maintenance status of the assets
- Optimum use of technical developments
- A State contribution for the new role of the Wetterskip



# WHAT HAVE WE BEEN WORKING ON?

In the period 2019-2023, the FNP had two representatives on the general management board of Wetterskip Fryslân. We discussed various points from our previous election program, "Skjin wetter, skjinne loft en sûn lân achter feilige diken" (Clean water, clean air and healthy land behind safe dikes), during the Wetterskip committee and board meetings.

Where possible, we have tried to collaborate with other parties, because you can achieve more together.

We want to point out a few of the results achieved based on our proposals and hard work:

#### BIODIVERSITY

We provided input for the memorandum "Ambysje bioferskaat by it Wetterskip" (Biodiversity ambitions of Wetterskip Fryslân), for which an initial budget of €200,000 has been made available.

#### SEA DIKES

The dikes between Koehoal/Koehool and the Lauwersmar/Lauwersmeer will be reinforced, based on the green, nature-friendly variant. For Peazens/Paesens and Wierum, a custom solution will be developed to preserve the appearance of the villages.

#### FRYSK

The Frisian language has gotten a more prominent position and more attention at the Wetterskip. Agreements have been written down in the memorandum "Frysk by it Wetterskip" (Frisian at the Wetterskip).

#### WATER LEVEL

More possibilities have been found to deviate from the standard water level. This is good for nature and for grassland birds.









#### **TRANSPORT OF SLUDGE DEPOSITS**

Green diesel is now used in the trucks that transport sludge deposits to Moerdijk. This reduces the impact on the environment.

#### **GRASSLAND BIRDS**

The Wetterskip now allows the land to be flooded in times of drought, sluicing water from the polders, to improve the biotope for grassland birds.

#### **PREMISSION**

We and other parties have fought hard to keep the 100% remission for low-income households. We are glad that the coalition parties, CDA, CU, VVD, Geborgd ongebouwd, Geborgd gebouwd, Lagere Lasten Burger, changed their minds after a year.

Of course, we also shared our views on other topics that were discussed. Our election program has always served as the foundation. We want to continue our work for four more years. We want to continue working for a safe, clean and healthy Fryslân and Westerkwartier.



The FNP is of the opinion that the people exercises power over the government. People **DEMOCRACY:** 

must be involved in public administration where possible.

**FEDERALISM:** The FNP promotes an administrative system where people and local communities have the

> power and the means to develop their own living space. The FNP wants more power to be transferred to the Province, a strong provincial administration and therefore a stronger Fryslân.

**INTERNATIONALISM:** The FNP wants to know what binds people and sees the world as a federation of

communities. Human rights and respect for other cultures and ways of life are at the

heart of that philosophy.

**LANGUAGE AND CULTURE:** Language and culture contribute to the identity and consequently to the well-being of

> people. The FNP wants to strengthen the Frisian identity and protect the Frisian language and culture. The FNP promotes Fryslân, where other language and cultures are also respected and appreciated, such as Biltsk/Bilts and Stellingwarfs/Stellingwerfs.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP:** The FNP wants to give room to business initiatives, creativity, responsibility and

entrepreneurship, to allow people and communities to develop and grow, and maximise

their talents and opportunities.

**SOLIDARITY:** The FNP is a party for and from the community. To preserve this solidarity, we need to

maintain and strengthen mutual understanding and respect, between rich and poor,

young and old, healthy and sick. Nobody should be left behind.

SUSTAINABILITY: The FNP wants to pass on a sustainable world to future generations. In stead of

squandering money, the FNP wants to apply economic principles that guarantee a better

balance between consumption and conservation.

# THE CANDIDATES ON THE LIST



**Bert Vollema** Tsjom



Bram **Bonnema** Frjentsjer



Tryntje Albada Twellingea



Jan Pieter van der Velde Ryptsjerk



Anneke Hylkema Aldegea (SWF)

- 6. Gabe Schaaf, Baard
- 7. Jeltsje Piersma, Nijemardum
- 8. Ytzen van der Velde, de Grinzer Pein
- Jan van der Kooi, Ryptsjerk
- 10. Doeke de Jong, Bitgummole
- 11. Jan Benedictus, Boelensloane
- 12. Anna Martha van der Mei, Tsjom
- 13. Jan Roelof Buruma, Kollum
- 14. Bauke Beart Keizer, Koarnjum
- 15. Wopke Veenstra, De Harkema

DÉ PARTIJ FOAR DE **REGIO SÛNT 1962.** 





#### Colophon

FNP program Water Authority Elections Wetterskip Fryslân 2023-2027

Ljouwert, December 2022

#### The program committee

Bram Bonnema Bert Vollema Tryntje Albada Jan Pieter van der Velde Anneke Hylkema

