

Rewilding the Dutch Landscape



The innovator

Sonja van Uden

Region: the Netherlands

Sector: Multifunctional land use



Features of my innovator journey

- Founder of the Landdrift Foundation, using my experience as an entrepreneur and manager in various industries (architecture, innovation, energy, non-profits) and countries (the Netherlands, Norway, Germany, and the US) to develop a concept for multifunctional land use to rewild the Dutch landscape.
- The objective is primarily **environmental** but has a **social** component by establishing new communities close to nature. I am driven by the wish to counteract the degradation of land. In my view, the Dutch landscape has become too monotonous, polluted, and silent. I believe that multifunctional land use will serve humans and other species. However, different land use approaches face challenges around legislation and economic devaluation of land when nature-inclusive practices are implemented.
- On a first plot of almost 5 hectares of agricultural land in the south of the Netherlands, animal and plant species habitats, biological food production, and a small temporary community will be combined to create a wild and abundant land. The permit for the tiny homes that will house the community is currently under development, and I am raising capital to fund the land purchase. In the future, it is the goal of Landdrift to create multiple wild locations with caring communities to ensure a bright and flourishing future for the Netherlands.

Barriers



Legislation

Every inch of the Netherlands has an assigned land use. Only limited assignments are possible, for example, nature, agriculture, homes for living, industry, roads, or recreation, and municipalities are responsible for the assignments. If a piece of land has an agriculture assignment, someone cannot live on the land, nor can the owner plant a forest. Multifunctional land use is a new concept in the Netherlands, and governments are scarcely allowing its implementation.

Economic value of land

The assigned land use defines the economic value of the land. For example, land with a nature assignment is valued at €1/m², land with an agriculture assignment is valued at €10/m², and land with a living assignment is valued at €400/m². This puts an enormous financial strain upon landowners who want to implement nature-inclusive practices on their land.

Accessibility of data

Access to data from forerunners and scientists on creating wild locations (biodiversity, water management, and so on) and caring communities is priceless when setting up Landdrift. I hope to build a network of people with invaluable scientific knowledge and practical experience by participating in the Living Lab.

“ I hope to find a community of like-minded women who want to fight for a flourishing future for both humans and other species alike and create wild spaces inside and out”. Sonja van Uden, farmer.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101083408



www.grassceiling.eu

