Mid 2014: pilot project Braine l’Alleud-Waterloo stopped

→ Stevin project:

• Ex post evaluation public acceptance
• Permitting phase (nearly) finished
• Many (voluntary) information/participation attempts

BBL = Bond Beter Leefmilieu

• Flemish environmental umbrella organisation
• 150 local and regional NGO’s
Analysis of existing documents
- **Stakeholder** mapping
- Analysis: local **inputs, objections and concerns**
- Analysis: **reactions** to the objections and concerns
- Analysis planning and permitting **procedures**

Interview, workshops with stakeholders
- 10 **in depth-interviews** with most important stakeholders
- 2 **workshops** with NGO’s, farmers, public concerned, local authorities,…
  - How to improve **stakeholder engagement** in these procedures?
- 2 **focus groups** with (local) governments, administrations, consultancy offices, …
  - How to improve **procedures**? What about the new procedure of the Flemish Government? ‘What if’ we would have used the new procedure for Stevin?
WP3 – Stevin: what is it?

**Key info:**
- Zeebrugge – Zomergem (near Ghent)
- 380kV
- 47km of which 10km underground
- 4 drivers:
  - Offshore windfarms
  - Interconnection UK-Be (Nemo)
  - Onshore decentralised energy
  - Harbour development
WP3 – Stevin: protected areas

Local situation:
- 8 communities
- 2 provinces
- 1 region
- Protected landscapes (red)
- Protected nature (green, blue, yellow)
- Habitation
  - Very disperse
WP3 – Stevin: permitting proces overview

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28/09/15
WP3 – Stevin: measures

Main issues throughout the process

- Visual impact
- EMF and health related issues
- Property value

Measures taken

Technical
- Routing:
  - Maximal (re)use of existing high voltage lines
  - Bundling with another line
  - HTLS-conductors
  - Undergrounding through Natura2000
- Two terns with shift in phase
- Tower design with isolated mast arms
- Demolition 2 old lines

Non-technical
- Landscape integration project
- Compensation policy for spanned houses
- Compensation policy for farmland

Results

- Rather high % of easy agreements with land owners
- Positive reactions about info markets
- “only” 8 appeals against spatial plan, less against permits
WP3 – Stevin: lessons learned

- 25 recommendations + quick wins
- 7 topics
  - Participation
  - Use and necessity
  - Transparency
  - Communication
  - Environmental impact
  - Synchronising policy within and between levels of governance
  - Sharing benefits and burdens
WP3 – Stevin: lessons learned

• Early participation
  • Participatory approach to alternatives in SEA/EIA
    • Unofficial guidance group: very useful
    • similar action with local officials/politicians and citizen groups?

• Open Communication
  • Translate complex matters into comprehensible information
    • technical language sometimes perceived as deception
    • explain the very basics of high voltage
    • use analogies to explain things
    • make a very short “non-technical summary” – 1 A4
Full report with explanations about the recommendations:

“Summarising analysis of the stakeholder engagement process and planning and permitting procedures in the Stevin project”

available at

Extra slides – not to be used
### WP3 – Stevin: 25 recommendations

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<td>Joint fact finding</td>
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<td>Participatory approach to alternatives in SEA/EIA</td>
<td>1 central website</td>
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<td>Ongoing involvement</td>
<td>Explain procedures</td>
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<td>Neutral process manager</td>
<td>Give feedback on comments</td>
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<td>Format information exchange</td>
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Participative approach to alternatives in SEA/EIA

- **Legal procedure:**
  - Initial document with proposed alternatives: public enquiry
  - SEA/EIA gets made by independent SEA/EIA-experts
  - SEA/EIA is discussed with regional and local authorities

- **Unofficial guidance group**
  - Relevant Flemish administrations (changing throughout the process)
  - Established before start of SEA-procedure
  - High level check of alternatives before start of public procedure
  - Deemed very useful
    → similar action with local officials/politicians and citizen groups

- **Which alternatives are “relevant”?**
  - Technically and economically feasible: decided by TSO
    → Request for participation in this decision
WP3 – Stevin: lessons learned

Translation of complex matters into comprehensible information

• High voltage is very technical and complex to laypeople
• Use of technical terms perceived as deception by some
• Project details are unknown during the early stages (SEA)
  ➔ try to avoid technical terminology
  ➔ explain the very basics of high voltage
  ➔ use analogies to explain things
  ➔ explain why project details are still unknown during SEA
  ➔ make a very short “non-technical summary”