



Who is your wolf?

*A study of the framing of wolves by
inhabitants of the Veluwe*

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Colophon

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Preface

This study is the product of approximately a year of contemplating, studying, reading, re-reading, interviewing, writing, rewriting and rewriting again. It has been a year of planned and un-planned delays and moreover, I year of self-reflection. Writing this thesis proved to be a very challenging, yet rewarding endeavour. The final product is something I can say I am proud off, and I think really gives an insight in how the wolf is being framed on the Veluwe. Needless to say, I did not do this on my own.

First of all, I would really like to thank all the people that somehow contributed to this study. These are the people that got me in touch with the inhabitants of the Veluwe, provided me with information, phone numbers, insights and so on. Furthermore, I am really grateful for the interviewees that took the time to talk to me about the reappearance of the wolf. Without any exception, the interviews were pleasant, insightful, interesting and I got a warm welcome in homes or offices every time I went to an appointment.

Secondly, I would like to thank Rikke Arnouts, Noelle Aarts and Martin Drenthen for their knowledge, insight, patience, understanding and all the other things I forget to mention. Without their supervision, I could not have written this thesis.

Lastly, my partner Anne-Lous, without whom I would have never finished (really!). She had to endure al the contemplations, struggles, re-writings, problems, melt-downs and so on and kept me going. I could not ever express how grateful I am for her to be in my life.

Have fun reading!

Marijn van Asseldonk

English Summary

Large predators are making a comeback on the European continent. The wolf in particular, has made a spectacular return to Western Europe. The reactions to the reappearance of the wolf in the Netherlands are ambiguous. Nature conservationists and conservation agencies applaud the return of the wolf. They note that the wolf belongs to Dutch nature and is a needed addition to its biodiversity. On the other hand, livestock owners and sheepherders are not fond of the wolf's return. They are afraid of the wolf threatening or even killing their livestock. The reappearance of wild animals thusly raises the question whether we are still able to coexist with them.

This research explored the question whether we are able to co-exist with wolves and began formulating the beginning of a possible answer to such a big question. In doing so, this research revolves around the reaction to the recently reappeared wolf in the Netherlands, particularly on the Veluwe. The aim of this study was to expose the frames used by inhabitants of the Veluwe concerning the reappearance of the wolf and to understand what those frames tell about the ability to co-exist with such an animal. The question that guided this research was: *“What frames can be identified among inhabitants concerning the reappearance of the wolf and how do these frames illustrate our ability to coexist with wild animals?”*

To gain insight in the content and patterns of the frames of individuals, the model of frame of references was used. The frame of references model refers to the way people interpret situations. It refers to the cognitions within consciousness people refer to when framing something. According to the frame of reference model, people's perceptions are the result of a (largely unconscious) process of tuning the elements that are within their frames of reference (Nijland, Aarts, and Van Woerkum, 2018; Nijland Aarts and Renes, 2013).

Whilst utilizing a qualitative research strategy, I am able to uncover the way people construct frames by being concerned with what they are saying. 18 inhabitants of the Veluwe were interviewed. Selected by two forms of purposive sampling. The selection was based on the research question.

The analysis showed that people used their knowledge and convictions to legitimize their values, interest and other claims. Moreover, it showed there were three groups – opponents, navigators and proponents - among the interviewees that each framed the wolf in its own way. The frames showed that for some of the inhabitants, acknowledging the wildness of the wolf is difficult. It showed that control is an important aspect of the situation and the management is a key aspect for all groups. Moreover, in order to understand how inhabitants frame the wolf, one needs to have an understanding of the area and its inhabitants, the connections they have with the Veluwe and the existing wildlife. This study showed that such an understanding cannot come from a generalized view, but requires a specific view and specific input from different actors involved. It shows that framing the wolf in terms of the opinion of some (extreme) hunters and some (extreme) conservationists is not able to grasp the complexity of how things are seen by the inhabitants of the Veluwe.

Dutch Summary

Roofdieren zijn bezig aan een opmars op het Europese continent. De wolf in het bijzonder maakt een spectaculaire terugkomst in West-Europa. Er wordt op verschillende manieren gereageerd op deze terugkomst in Nederland. Natuurbeschermers en natuurbeschermingsorganisaties zijn blij met de terugkomst van de wolf en benadrukken het belang van deze terugkomst voor de Nederlandse biodiversiteit. Veehouders en schapenherders zijn echter niet blij met de terugkomst van de wolf. Zij zijn bang dat de wolf hun dieren bedreigt of misschien zelfs zal doden. De terugkomst van wilde dieren roept dus de vraag op of wij nog wel met ze kunnen samenleven.

Dit onderzoek richt zich op de vraag of wij nog wel kunnen samenleven met wolven en tracht een begin te maken deze vraag te beantwoorden. Het onderzoek richt zich daarbij op de recent teruggekeerde wolf in Nederland, op de Veluwe. Het doel van dit onderzoek is om de frames van inwoners van de Veluwe te identificeren die betrekking hebben op de terugkomst van de wolf. Op basis van de frames die naar voren komen bekijk ik vervolgens wat deze frames betekenen voor de mogelijkheid tot samenleven met wolven. De hoofdvraag hierbij luidt: *“Welke frames betreffende de teruggekeerde wolf kunnen worden geïdentificeerd onder inwoners en wat zeggen deze frames over de mogelijkheid tot samenleven met wilde dieren?”*

Om inzicht te krijgen in de patronen en uitingen van inwoners van de Veluwe wordt het *frame of reference* model gebruikt. Dit model refereert naar de manier waarop mensen situaties interpreteren. Het refereert naar de mentale activiteiten in het bewustzijn van mensen wanneer er iets wordt geframed. Volgens het frame of reference model is de perceptie van mensen het resultaat van het (veelal onbewuste) afstemmen van de verschillende elementen binnen hun frame of reference (Nijland, Aarts, en Van Woerkum, 2018; Nijland Aarts en Renes, 2013).

Dit onderzoek heeft gebruik gemaakt van een kwalitatieve onderzoekstrategie. Deze strategie maakt het mogelijk om frames te identificeren zoals die in interviews met 18 inwoners van de Veluwe naar voren zijn gebracht. De inwoners zijn geselecteerd door middel van *purposive* sampling. De selectie is daarmee gebaseerd op de onderzoeksvraag. De interviews zijn vervolgens getranscribeerd, gecodeerd en geanalyseerd.

Uit de analyse blijkt dat inwoners hun overtuigingen en kennis gebruiken om hun normen, waarden en belangen te legitimeren. We kunnen daarbij drie groepen onderscheiden: ‘voorstanders’, ‘navigators’ en ‘tegenstanders’, die elk hun eigen frame met betrekking tot de wolf hebben. De manier waarop de inwoners de wolf framen laat zien dat het voor sommigen moeilijk is om de ‘wildheid’ van een wolf te accepteren. Het laat zien dat controle een belangrijk aspect is en dat management een kernaspect is voor alle groepen. Om te begrijpen hoe inwoners de wolf framen is begrip nodig van de connecties van inwoners met die omgeving. Het onderzoek suggereert dat we begrip moeten hebben voor de diversiteit aan frames en dus niet uit moeten gaan van uitersten, omdat dat niet recht doet aan de complexiteit zoals die wordt ervaren door Veluwenaren.

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1. Introduction

This chapter will start with the return of the wolf in Europe. Following that background, I will discuss some studies that have addressed the human-animal relation, accompanied by studies on the relationship between humans and wolves in other countries. After discussing the literature, I will present the research aim and main question of this study, followed by the scientific and societal relevance. The chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of this study.

1.1 Return of the wolf

Large predators are making a comeback on the European continent. They are expanding towards Western Europe, with the brown bear, Eurasian lynx, wolverine, grey wolf and golden jackal increasing their range (Rewilding Europe, n.d.). The wolf in particular, has made a spectacular return to Western Europe. Wolves used to be common on the European continent. However, with the passing of time and the expansion of human settlements, humans increasingly came into conflict with the wolf and started to perceive the wolf as a threat. Consequently, the wolf became increasingly hunted, resulting in its near extinction in Europe. In 1982, the Convention of Bern took effect, which was signed by all European countries in order to protect the wolf (amongst others). This protection as well as persistent conservation efforts have led to its revival.

After it crossed the Alps in 1992, the wolf returned to Germany from Poland at the beginning of this century. From there, wolves are expanding to Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium. In the Netherlands, it disappeared around the 18th and 19th century. The last wolf was seen between 1869 and 1897 (there is some dispute about the exact year of disappearance). Since then, the wolf has not been present in the Netherlands for around 150 years. In 2015 however, the first sighting of a wolf was reported, followed by a second sighting in 2016 which already raised the debate on how to deal with these wolves (Ruiter, 2016; AD, 2015). Recently, the first wolf has officially settled in the Netherlands, on the Veluwe¹, and it has attracted a partner and established a pack (Wolven in Nederland, 2019).

The reactions to the reappearance of the wolf in the Netherlands are ambiguous. Nature conservationists and conservation agencies applaud the return of the wolf. They note that the wolf belongs to Dutch nature and is a needed addition to its biodiversity. On the other hand, livestock owners and sheepherders are not fond of the wolf's return. Farmers are afraid of the wolf threatening or even killing their livestock. There are also people who note that the wolf is a dangerous animal that is causing economical and emotional damage (NoWolves platform; WolvenNederland platform Facebook, 2019). Although the wolf is protected by European law, it seems that the conflict has already gone past that protection. Naya, the pregnant female wolf who lived in Belgium vanished before the summer, and only her mate has been sighted since. After investigating, it is now assumed that she has been killed by

¹ An area in the Netherlands mainly covered by forests, see Methodology

professionals. The presence of wolves seems to affect people's values, interests and feelings, as was noted by a respondent in a research to the perceptions of wolves in the United States by Slagle et al. (2019): “[T]he debate over wolves has nothing to do with wildlife ecology or the wolves themselves; it's purely a debate on human values, wants, needs, desires, etc. In general, those values, wants, needs and desires are poorly informed, which is leading to questionable decisions and positions.” The reappearance of wild animals thusly raises the question whether we are still able to coexist with them.

1.2 Addressing the relation between humans and animals

After Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* (1975), the scope of interest in human-animal relations expanded (Demello and Shaprio, 2010). The academic field addressing the human animal relation - often called human-animal studies (HAS) – exploded over the last decades (Demello and Shaprio, 2010). To understand how these interactions take place, several authors have made contributions in the field of human - wildlife interactions and conflicts. Over the last decades, there has been a vast amount of research done to large carnivores in Europe and the rest of the world, focusing on both the species and their interaction with humans (Linnell, 2013). These studies have shown how complex the relationships between people and large carnivores are (Linnell, 2013). One of the insights of research to human interactions with large carnivores is that conflicts are more than solely the impact large carnivores have on humans. There is also the side where different motives, forms of knowledge, priorities, values, interests or agendas are active (Redpath et.al, 2013; Bouwma, 2010). Or, as Skogen, Krangle and Figari call it in their book *Wolfs Conflicts, A sociological study* (2017): “*More than human wildlife-conflict, what we see are social conflicts: they are conflicts between people over wolves.*”(p.8). Skogen, Krangle and Figari (2017) combined 15 years of sociological research on wolves in Norway in their book. The authors studied different narratives concerning wolves in France and Norway, showing that conflicts over large animals are not only about the animals. What Skogen, Krangle and Figari (2017) showed is that – on top of ‘obvious’ issues such as hunting with dogs in areas where wolves live is difficult and the fact that people do not like to have wolves close to their homes – the wolf is intertwined with established social cleavages such as the rural-urban division. Furthermore, in his article ‘The return of the wild in the Anthropocene. Wolf resurgence in the Netherlands’ Drenthen (2016) studied the reaction of humans to the spontaneous rewilding of the wolf. According to Drenthen, this challenges our existing ideas about ourselves and our place in the landscape. Drenthen (2016) showed that different perspectives on the reappearance of the wolf are the product of different environmental identities and different views on the nature-culture dichotomy. These studies show that the reappearance of the wolf is not merely an ecological phenomenon.

Studies in different countries

In the Netherlands, research on wolves predates their arrival. Intomart GfK (2012) researched the attitudes of Dutch inhabitants on the wolf by asking to what extent they would appreciate its

reappearance. Van Heel et al. (2017) did a similar thing when researching the attitudes of inhabitants of a province of the Netherlands to large predators. Both studies found a positive attitude towards the wolf.

Germany has been experiencing a growing wolf population since around 1998. This has resulted in researchers studying the wildlife value perception of German social groups (Herman, Voß and Wenzel, 2013). The arrival of wolves in Germany followed by research on the value orientation as a predicting factor to the support of reintroducing the wolves showed that agricultural students were more in favour of domination of the migrating animals as compared to other groups (Hermann, Voß and Menzel, 2013).

In Belgium, wild boar and fox, wild animals who repopulated Belgium, were the topic of a heated debate, as Van Herzele, Aarts and Casaer (2015) showed. Above all, they showed that a debate about the reappearance involves arguments about the animals belonging in the region or not, about opportunities and threats related to the presence of the animals, and about the need to control nature, or let it run its course.

In Finland, issues concerning the wolf have had a number of societal, ecological and economic implications. The research in Finland dates earlier, since wolves have been living there for longer consecutive periods. The initial research resulted from the entry of Finland to the EU. With that entry, Finland had to comply to the Habitats Directive, Consequently, this made it illegal to shoot a wolf, whereas former legislation was more locally oriented. This resulted in the wolf being able to expand and researchers started to look into people's perceptions on the wolf (Borgström, 2012, Pellikka and Hiedanpää, 2017). Especially here, social scientists have been researching the perception of the wolf by several groups in order to establish a firmer policy. Borgström (2012) showed that the problems involved in wolf conservation are more socio-cultural than ecological or legal of nature, thereby addressing the importance of societal support for the migrating wolf.

In the United States, where successful reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park resulted in a growing population, Bruskotter and Wilson (2014) reviewed the attempts to determine the factors that affect human tolerance for large carnivores. They observed that beneficial perceptions were stronger indicators of the degree of tolerance than risk perceptions. These beneficial perceptions were also found to be a better predictor of intentions to support wolf recovery in the United States. Together with the beneficial perception, the risk perception of large carnivores determined for a large extent whether or not they were tolerated.

1.3 Research aim and question

Are we still able to coexist with wild animals like the wolf? This research will explore this question and will contribute to a possible answer to such a big question. In doing so, this research revolves around the reaction to the recently reappeared wolf in the Netherlands. I am interested in how the situation develops in a place where the wolf just reappeared, so where people have a chance of encountering a wolf. The aim of this study hence, is to expose the frames used by inhabitants of an area where wolves

have returned and to find out how these frames illustrate our ability to co-exist with wild animals like the wolf.

Entman (1993) established the research paradigm on framing, showing how the concept of framing can be used to identify the power of communicated text. More recently, the concept of framing was used to analyse the debate on the return of wild animals in Flanders. Herzele, Aarts and Casaer (2015) traced the fault lines of the debate on the return of wild boars and foxes in Flanders. They observed a heated debate in which frames were used by the involved actors to gain credibility and support among their audiences, ranging from an interest in the protection of wildlife to the protection of human interests. Peterson et al. (2010) even note that the way we phrase conflicts between humans and wildlife (human-wildlife conflicts) are detrimental to coexistence between humans and wildlife. The representation of conflict in terms of human-wildlife conflict namely “*constrains the way problems are defined and limits the array of potential solutions available.*” (p.79). Therefore, an understanding of the representations of the reappearance of the wolf are necessary.

Above, we have already seen that there is research done on narratives concerning the wolf in Norway and France and research on the frames used in the debate concerning wildlife in Flanders. The way a frame of a large carnivore is constructed is however not among those studies. Based on the ideas that the conflict between humans and wolves does not merely concern the animal, but is more a conflict between humans over the animal, the findings of Herzele, Aarts and Casaer concerning the importance of framing in a wildlife debate and the notions of Redpath et al. (2013) and Bouwma (2010) that there are different motives, forms of knowledge, priorities, values, interests or agendas active in a human-animal relation (Redpath et.al, 2013; Bouwma, 2010) I drew up the following main research question:

“What frames can be identified among inhabitants of the Veluwe concerning the reappearance of the wolf in their region and what do these frames mean for our ability to coexist with wild animals? “

This question will be answered following two sub-questions, which will be introduced in Chapter 2.

1.4 Scientific relevance

It remains unclear how frames on the return of a large predator are constructed. Farmers, nature conservationists and individuals who seem directly involved in the reappearance of the wolf are continuously involved in the debate - see for instance the new interprovincial wolfplan² - but the inhabitants remain under addressed. As stated in the wolfplan, the attitudes of inhabitants should be researched, since the last research on inhabitants (issued in 2012 by Gfk) predates the arrival of the wolf (IPO, 2019). We have seen that the perceptions on large predators have been studied in the Netherlands. It remains unclear however, what the actual reaction to the reappearance of a wolf is and how the frames concerning the reappearance of the wolf are constructed. Research in the Netherlands to a reappearing apex predator might be scarce, but there is research done to a reappearing predator. There is literature on the reintroduction of wild animals, including apex predators, in several areas. This however, does not mean that we have a full understanding of what such reappearances do with local inhabitants.

With regard to wolf research, there has been qualitative research done to the perception of the wolf by social groups (Skogen, Mauz, Krange, 2008; Borgström, 2012; Pellikka and Hiedanpää, 2017), as well as quantitative research to the perception of wolves (Herman, Voß and Wenzel, 2013; Slagle et al. 2019). Those researches however, do not approach the problem from a framing perspective. The most closely related studies approach the phenomena from a social representations and narratives perspective (Skogen, Mauz, Krange, 2008; Skogen, Krange, Figari, 2017).

With regard to the framing of human-wildlife interaction, mostly, the way how human-wildlife conflict is framed is being researched in framing studies. The target group consist of policymakers and documents and agents involved in the conflict. However, studies on how the local inhabitants frame the reappearance of wildlife are quite rare. Concluding from the literature search on the topic of human-wildlife interaction, there is very limited research on human-wildlife interaction in the Netherlands. It is therefore interesting to look at how the local inhabitants frame the reappearance of the wolf in the Netherlands.

Connecting frames to people's ability to co-exist with wildlife has not yet been done in previous scientific endeavours. Hence, because of the missing scientific understanding regarding the frames concerning the reappearing wolf in the Netherlands and the new connection made between frames and co-existing with animals, this study will add a way in which human-wildlife interaction can be understood and interpreted. Whilst using the frame of reference model, this study will try to unravel the frames in terms of behaviours, values, norms, feelings, intentions and knowledge, convictions and feelings that come about when coexisting with such animals.

² https:// Gelderland.stateninformatie.nl/document/6968763/1/Bijlage_Interprovinciaal_wolvenplan

1.5 Societal relevance

With regard to the societal relevance of this thesis, I would like to address two main topics. First, I will address to ‘socio’ relevance of this thesis, followed by the ‘ecological’ relevance. As science, as well as the other realms, are becoming increasingly aware of the effects of human society on its surroundings, contributions that address how humans perceive their surroundings and co-exist with other species will help to achieve environmental goals set by several institutions.

First, the ‘socio’ relevance. Most of the encounters with wildlife in the Netherlands happen in therefore designated areas, the natural parks. Yet, as the wolf reappears the Netherlands, an animal that does not comply to fences is claiming territory. That inevitably results in conflict, as already observed. Several headlines since 2016 have mentioned wolves killing sheep (Tubantia, 2018; Gelderlander, 2019). The involved parties have a different perspective on it, as we have seen in other cases earlier. Hunters do not want to compete with it and the Agri -and Horticulture Organisation (LTO in Dutch) is already asking at what number the wolves are going to be kept (Trouw, 2018). In short, the wolf brings some societal unrest.

Whereas the aforementioned hunters and farmers are already involved and addressed regularly in the debate, analysing the way inhabitants of an area where the wolf lives frame the reappearance of the wolf will help to gain a further understanding of how the reappearance of the wolf is perceived. An understanding of those frames will support scientist, policy -and decision makers to make decisions. Those decisions are able to take into account the perceptions of the different involved actors, thereby refraining from conflict. When refrained from conflict, and possibly given a deeper understanding of the frames of the counter groups, social groups could enter a constructive dialogue in which they are able to come to mutually agreed decisions. Such processes do not only benefit the interests of the social groups, but would also benefit the existence of the wolf in the Netherlands.

That notion brings me to the ‘ecological’ relevance. Wolves, similar to beavers, are called keystone species. These species have a larger impact on their environment than their numbers alone would suggest. Their impact creates conditions which allow other species to live there. One of the best-known examples is the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park. When wolvers arrived at first, the stream -and riversides were bare, closely cropped by high population of red deer. Soon after the introduction of the wolf, this changed. Deer avoided staying too long at one place, for they otherwise would easily be caught. This resulted in the trees being able to grow near the stream -and riversides, which on its turn cooled the water and provided cover for fish and other animals. More seedlings survived, bare valleys began reverting to forests and the number of birds increased (Monbiot, 2014). This is only a small portion of the effects the wolf had on the ecosystem of Yellowstone National Park. Such restorations of biodiversity are of utmost importance to our planet, as recently shown by IPBES. Millions of species are currently at risk of extinction, which is 100 times higher than the normal background rate, affecting ecosystems viable to all living creatures on earth (IPBES, 2019; United Nations Sustainable Development, 2019). These alarming facts prompt the need to understand how

humans frame the reappearance of animals and to understand those frames, in order to be able to achieve nature development without conflict.

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) noted the deteriorating state of biodiversity and ecosystems worldwide in their Global Assessment: *“The deterioration of biodiversity and ecosystem functions, and the consequent disruption of benefits to people, has both direct and indirect implications for public health.”* (Diaz et. al., 2019, p12). As the report notes, preservation of current biodiversity and restoration of ecosystems is needed. However, with an increasingly growing population and expansion of humans, humans and animals are increasingly coming into conflict over living space and food. In order to prevent these conflicts and its subsequent negative impacts on both sides, an understanding of the possible conflicts is needed. Part of understanding these conflicts is the notion that behind those conflicts, different individuals have different motives, forms of knowledge, priorities, values, interests or agendas (Linnell, 2013). In other words, part of understanding how these conflicts arise is an understanding of the framing of the reappearance of the wolf.

1.6 Structure of this study

This study is structured as follows: in Chapter 2, I will provide a background of the concept of framing, an elaboration of other concepts used in this study on the base of which the sub-questions of this research will be introduced. Chapter 3 will present the methods of data collection. In Chapter 4, I will discuss the results and answer the main research question. Chapter 5 will conclude the findings of this study. In Chapter 6, I will reflect on how this study fits in the findings of other studies. Lastly, in Chapter 7 I will provide some recommendations derived from the findings of this study.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter is outlined as follows: first, I will explain the concept of framing. Secondly, I will introduce the frame of reference model. The frame of reference model uses five categories that combined give an understanding of how people frame certain phenomena. Using this model will allow me to unravel the way people construct their frames of the wolf. Lastly, I will introduce the symbolic convergence theory which I will use to address the human-nature relationship.

2.1 Framing

When people describe events, phenomena or situations they can never describe these completely. Consciously or not, people select specific aspects while putting other aspects to the background. Here the concept of framing makes sense. According to Entman (1993), framing involves both selection and salience. Framing is selecting an aspect of perceived reality and making that aspect more salient, to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation or a treatment recommendation for the described phenomenon. Whatever its specific use *“the concept of framing consistently offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text. Analysis of frames illuminates the precise way in which influence over a human consciousness is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information from one location -such as a speech, utterance, news report, or novel- to that consciousness.”*(Entman, 1993, p.52)

There are two ways of framing distinguished in the literature. Cognitive framing emphasizes the frames that people have in their minds, based on associations and/or experiences. People can also co-construct frames in interaction, those frames are called interactive frames. It is important to make the distinction, since they both refer to different traditions of the concept of framing. Cognitive framing focuses on frames as mental structures that help to organize and interpret information by fitting it in schemas or frames about reality (Dewulf et.al. 2011). Minsky (1974 p.1) explicitly formulated this form of framing; *“When one encounters a new situation (or makes a substantial change in one’s view of the present problem) one selects from memory a structure called a Frame. This is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary”*. Interactional framing on the other hand, is framing based on communication. While communicating, people send meta-communication cues that indicate how interaction should be interpret. Because our interaction is filled with uncertainty of meaning, there is need for framing (Dewulf et.al. 2011). An important difference between the two traditions is that cognitive framing considers framing to be the process applying cognitive frames to situations, whereas interactional framing considers framing to be a dynamic process of the shaping of meaning in interaction (Dewulf et.al. 2011). In this study, framing (unless otherwise specified) will refer to the cognitive tradition. The frames that I am looking for are the mental structures that people use to organize and interpret the reappearance of the wolf. The way they react to the reappearance of the wolf and how they fit this new situation to their reality is what this study tries to unravel. The frames that people use can be interpret by using the frame of reference model.

2.2 Frame of reference

To gain insight in the content and patterns of the utterances of individuals, the model of frame of references makes sense. The frame of references model refers to the way people interpret situations. It refers to the cognitions within consciousness people refer to when framing something. According to the frame of reference model, people's perceptions are the result of a (largely unconscious) process of tuning the elements that are within their frames of reference (Nijland, Aarts, and Van Woerkum, 2018; Nijland Aarts and Renes, 2013). The elements of the frame of reference are commonly (Nijland, Aarts, and Van Woerkum, 2018; Nijland Aarts and Renes, 2013) distinguished as follows:

- *Values*: opinions about what is intrinsically important;
- *Norms*: translation of values into rules of conduct;
- *Interests*: including material (economic) as well as immaterial (social, moral) interests;
- *Knowledge*: constructed out of experiences, facts, stories and impressions;
- *Convictions*: opinions about “the way things are”, assumptions that are taken for granted.

According to the original model, the interplay between these five topics determines people’s framing of a certain issue. Yet, as Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum (2018) noted, the topics seem somewhat limited. They argued for an additional category, namely ‘feelings’. Feelings are known to play a key role in framing (Nijland Aarts and van Woerkum, 2018; Futrell, 2003). Especially in topics like the reappearance of the wolf or animal welfare, people refer to feelings. Therefore, feelings will be distinguished separately in the frame of reference model in this study, following the distinction earlier made by Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum (2018). Feelings can refer to affective concerns: physical sensations, states, and emotions. In addition, earlier studies (Hermann and Menzel, 2013; Slagle et.al. 2013; Scarpa and Menzel, 2005) have used feelings of threat to explain why people are for instance more prone to protect interest of humans over the interest of animals. These studies showed that feelings of threat play a significant role. Ruid et.al. (2009) noted in a study on the tolerance of wolves that one of the biggest complaints regarding the wolf is their perceived threat to human safety. Herman and Menzel (2013) researched to what extent perceived threat affects the willingness to protect human interest, showing that a high perceived threat shows more willingness to protect human interest.

Johansson and Karlsson (2011) showed that high perceived threat to human interests results in negative dispositions towards the animal. Hermann and Menzel (2013), as well as Scarpa and Menzel (2005), have shown that a high level of threat to animals will result in more protective behaviour of the animal, in this case the wolf. So, people can have feelings of threat of the wolf, but can also feel concerned over the wolf. I.e. they feel that the wolf is being threatened. A high perceived threat could lead to preferring human interest above the interest of animals (Hermann and Menzel, 2013). These studies show that feelings of threat are part of the feelings that come about when people are confronted with large predators.

In addition, the elements ‘knowledge’ and ‘conviction’ are often addressed separately. However, I will treat them as one element of the frame of reference model. Both elements namely

concern elements about ‘the way things are’ (Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum, 2018). With regard to the topic of the reappearance of a large predator, separating ‘true’ knowledge from convictions is difficult, especially when there are some conflicts regarding the knowledge as to how a wolf can react and moreover, as I am looking at how people construct their frame on the reappearance of the wolf, I am not concerned with whether they use ‘true’ knowledge, but I am concerned with how they use their frame to fit the situation to their reality. Thusly, in this research, the following elements will be distinguished (based on the distinctions made by Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum, 2018):

Values: Values are opinions about what is intrinsically important. They are rational concerns, conceptualisations about what and whom is considered important and to what extent (Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum, 2018). When framing the reappearance of the wolf, values are frames that consists of how nature is valued, how the living conditions or living place is valued, what the personal values are and who or what people take into consideration.

Norms: Norms are the translation of values into rules of conduct; what is brought forward that should be done: ideal rules of conduct imposed on the self - and possibly others (Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum, 2018). Frames that are linked to this element answer the question; ‘*what should be done?*’. When framing the reappearance of the wolf, noting the absence or need for management of wolves implies a norm, as well as a view on how nature in general should be managed. Norms also involve acceptance; accepting wildlife presence and accepting that loss is part of life. Norms involve having respect for nature or protecting the environment and having a more long term perspective when it comes to decision making.

Interests: Interests include material (economic) as well as immaterial (social, moral) interests. This element regards one’s personal interests: recognised stakes and goals that inner drives (consciously or unconsciously) motivate us to strive for, both material (physical, economic) as well as immaterial (social, moral, aesthetic) (Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum, 2018). Interests involve interests in one’s own living conditions (e.g. wolf is affecting that negatively) or interests in one’s business. It also involves positive interests, such as an interests in the positive state of nature.

Knowledge & Convictions: Knowledge and convictions are constructed out of experiences, facts, stories and impressions. They are notions about ‘the way things are’ and assumptions that are taken for granted. People frame in terms of knowledge and convictions when they talk about stories they heard and convictions they have about others (Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum, 2018). This involves knowledge about the wolf (e.g. factual information about the wolf), knowledge about nature and other animals (such as the behaviour of deer) and stories about conflicts and occurrences with nature/animals in their living area. References to people’s knowledge and convictions also involves convictions about the state of

nature (the Netherlands is a 'garden'), convictions about how things generally are (about groups in society, such as 'greens' or farmers), in the Netherlands or somewhere else.

Feelings: Feelings consists of certain mental states of inhabitants (e.g. a certain mood), or emotions elicited by interviewees (Nijland, Aarts and Van Woerkum, 2018). When it comes to feelings, feelings of excitement and fear are part of this element, as well as a feeling of compromised safety (not feeling safe with the presence of wolves). Other feelings could be feelings of being dispirited by behaviour of others humans.

Abovementioned results in the first sub-question:

“What frames can be identified concerning the reappearance of the wolf and how can we understand these frames in terms of knowledge, convictions, interests, values, norms and feelings? “

2.3 Human-nature relation

To assess the human-nature relation, the symbolic convergence theory will be useful. The symbolic convergence theory namely refers to similarities in communicative behaviour. People use language to construct stories that give meaning to the world around them. The symbolic convergence theory assumes that human beings are social storytellers who share their stories and hence build a form of group consciousness and create their own social realities. The stories are shared with like-minded people, and by sharing stories in groups a structure is created. This allows for differentiating different stories in different groups (Borman, 1985). For instance, as Nijland, Aarts and Renes (2013) showed, the stories on animal welfare of circus animals by circus trainers differ from the stories that veterinarians have on animal welfare of circus animals. Similarly, Van Herzele, Aarts and Caesar (2015) observed a strong convergence in the debate around wildlife comeback in Flanders. Arguments converged to a set of binary oppositions, thereby showing that arguments and opinions of like-minded people tend to converge. Hence, the frames of the inhabitants are likely to converge as well. It is important to note that abovementioned refers to interactive framing, where people co-construct certain frames. As mentioned, I will not look into the construction of interactive frames, but I assume however, following the symbolic convergence theory, that the cognitive frames that people have in mind have been co-constructed in interaction with others.

Furthermore, the convergence of the frames of inhabitants would allow for differentiating different dominant stories or perspectives among different groups. These perspectives hence, could illustrate the group's ability to co-exist with wildlife by looking at what these group frames can tell us about the group's perspective on the reappearance of the wolf. Whilst combining distinguishable group perspectives with their particular frames, I will try to understand how these frames are linked to traditional notions of the human-nature relationship.

“How do the frames of the various groups illustrate their perspectives on the reappearance the wolf and subsequently their notions of the human-nature relationship?”

Abovementioned is graphically shown in Figure 1.

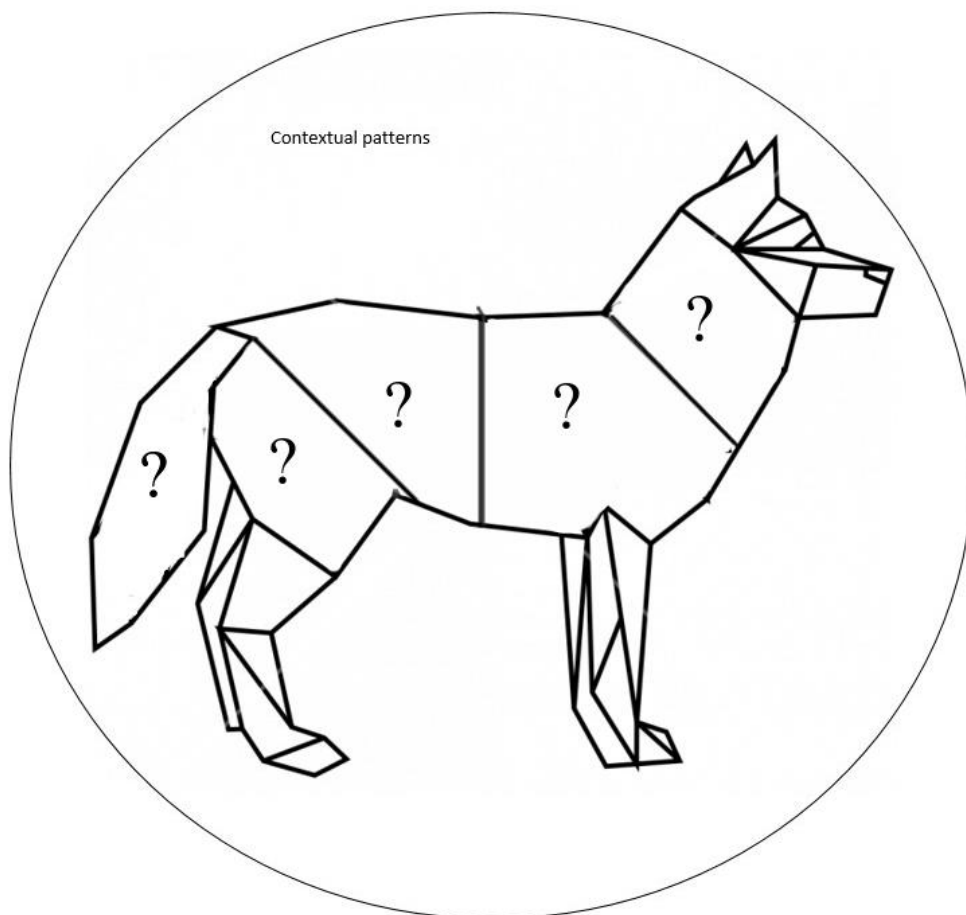


Figure 1. Visualisation of the sub-questions

Figure 1 graphically shows the sub-questions. What elements of the frame of reference model will be used to ‘fill’ the frame of the wolf. Furthermore, how does this wolf frame look for various groups and what do the frames of various groups tell us about their ability to co-exist with wildlife?

3. Methodology

This chapter is outlined as follows: first, I will elaborate on the chosen research strategy. Secondly, I will present the case selected for this research, followed by the methods for data collection. After that, I explain the selection of the interviewees and how the data is analysed. The chapter concludes with a reflection on validity and reliability in qualitative research.

3.1 Research strategy

This study uses a qualitative research strategy, since this particular strategy will enable to uncover the way people construct frames, including how such may relate to their specific context and background. There are three features particularly noteworthy about qualitative research according to Bryman (2016). First, qualitative research has an inductive view between theory and research; rather than drawing conclusions based on hypotheses (deduction), this research derives conclusion from the gathered data. Secondly, the epistemological position belonging to qualitative research is described as interpretivist. The social world is understood through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants. In other words, this research examines the way people interpret the world and categorize it, using their own frames. Third, its ontological position is described as constructivist. Constructivism asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors. Social phenomena are not only produced through social interaction, but are constantly being revised in interaction as well (Bryman, 2016).

However, saying that a wolf is a social construction may be a bit controversial and so it may ask for some further clarification. Simply put; collective ideas about reality can have a significant impact on the world. William and Dorothy Thomas famously captured that notion: *“If men define situations as real they are real in their consequences”* (Ultee, Arts and Flap, 2003). For example: during the economic crisis of 1929, certain banks were rumoured to be about to go bankrupt. People rushed in to withdraw their savings, which led to the collapse of those banks. (Skogen, Krangle and Figari, 2017). Such an event is an example of a self-fulfilling prophecy, an aspect of the phenomenon that people’s interpretation of certain events can lead to real tangible repercussions. It is clear that people’s action nor their thoughts cause carnivores doing damage. However, people’s ideas about the wolf and its place in the Netherlands affects their choices of action, which may have consequences for wolves or wildlife management at large. Using the constructivist approach to research the reappearance of the wolf is not conflicting with other sciences, such as biology, which studies nature as it exists in reality. Meaning however, is created through social processes. The wolf on itself has an existence which is independent of anything human. However, the meaning the wolf has for humans depends on our ideas and thoughts. As Skogen, Krangle and Figari, 2017 put it: *“The wolf is out there anyway, but our ideas of it are socially constructed”* (p22).

3.2 Case: The Veluwe

The Veluwe is the region in which this case study took place. It was chosen for a more practical reason: the reappearance of the wolf occurred in the Veluwe and both settled females are currently living there. The Veluwe is an area mainly covered by forest, situated in the province of Gelderland, in the eastern part of the Netherlands. It is an area of around 1000 km², and hosts two natural parks, National Park 'De Hoge Veluwe' and National Park 'De Veluwezoom'. As mentioned earlier, this is the place where the first wolf settled after 150 years, meaning that she was present in the same area over a period of 6 months (WUR, 2019). The wolf track in the North of the Veluwe resembles this female (Wolf GW998f). The other wolf track, in the Middle of the Veluwe, resembles another female wolf (Wolf GW960f) who is considered to have officially settled after the 27th of February 2019. Additionally, as of January, a male wolf (Wolf GW893m) seems to have entered the territory of Wolf GW998f. This has resulted in the formation of a pack, with sightings of at least 3 cubs. (WUR, 2019).

As is shown in Figure 2, there are only a few small villages in the centre of the Veluwe. The largest part of the area, 912 km² is inhabited by only 13.900 people. In addition, there are larger cities on the periphery of the area. These cities are Arnhem, Apeldoorn, Amersfoort, Harderwijk, Ede and Barneveld which in total occupy over 500.000 people.



Figure 2. The Veluwe (wolf tracks indicate presence)

3.3 Methods for data collection

To gather data for this study, I interviewed inhabitants of the Veluwe. Interviewing is one of the most widely employed methods in qualitative research. Two main types can be distinguished (Bryman, 2016); unstructured and structured interviews. Unstructured interviews are conducted with a topic list as a brief set of prompts to keep the interviewer to a certain range of topic. This form of interviewing mostly resembles a conversation. It can consist of one question on which the interviewee can respond freely. The interviewer then responds to follow up on certain points of interest. Semi-structured interviews involve an interview guide. An interview guide involves a list of questions or specific topics that are to be covered for the sake of systematic and consistent research. Yet, the interviewer still has room to manoeuvre. Questions do not have to be asked in the exact outlined way. The interviewer can pick up on topics mentioned by the interviewee and can ask questions that were not outlined beforehand. Still, all the question will be asked to the interviewee and will be asked using similar wording from interviewee to interviewee (Bryman, 2016).

Since this research involves analysing multiple interviewees, I made use of some structure, since that will ensure cross comparability. To ensure that structure, I drew up an interview guide. An interview guide entails a list of issues that need to be addressed in order to answer the research question. In contrast to a structured interview schedule, an interview guide allowed me to examine the perspectives of the participants on their social world, as well as giving flexibility in the way the interviews are conducted. The flexibility and the possibility to examine the perspective of the participants on their social world are crucial to the examination of frames used by individuals. Should the questions be too specific, the possibility arises that the focus on the question will result in being inconsistent with the aim to analyse the worldview of the participants, as well as being inconsistent with the emphasis of qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). The inhabitants were asked to plan an interview which would last about an hour (interviews ranged from about 33 minutes to about 94 minutes, see Table 1). Below, I will explain how the interview guide is structured. The full guide can be found in [Appendix: Interview Guide](#).

Interview guide

According to Patton, there are six questions that can be asked of people. Making a distinction between the types of questions compels to be clear about what is being asked. This in turn makes it easier for the interviewee to respond appropriately (Patton, 2015). Using this way of sequencing makes the interviewee feel more comfortable, starting with easier to answer question. The following sequence, as is also stated in the guide, was followed where possible.

Experience and behaviour questions are questions about what a person does or has done. These questions aim to elicit behaviours, experiences, action, and activities. Hence, I started the interviews with asking the respondents about their experiences (do you visit natural areas in the Veluwe?³).

³ Actual question: “*Komt u wel eens in de natuur in en rondom de Veluwe?*”

Questions on opinions and values are aimed at understanding the cognitive interpretive processes of people. Answers to these questions can result in finding out what people think about a certain phenomenon. Following the questions about their experiences, I asked people what their opinion was on the return of the wolf⁴. Questions about feelings aim at eliciting emotional responses of people to certain phenomena (Do you feel threatened by the wolf?⁵). Knowledge questions are aimed at inquiring the factual information of the interviewee. What does the interviewee know? What people knew became apparent when probing individuals; asking follow up questions on their statements/answers. After the question inquiring about the feelings of the interviewees, I asked them about to what extent they regularly talk about the wolf with others and if they share their opinion. Symbolic convergence namely would suggest that they talk about this with their peers and their peers share their opinions. The final substantive question⁶ was asked to gain insights in the overarching point of view. Lastly, there are background / demographic questions such as age, education, occupation. Literature showed that such features may be linked to perceptions and behaviours (Nijland, Aarts, van Woerkum, 2018; Nijland, Aarts, Renes, 2013; Te Velde, Aarts, Van Woerkum, 2002).

Whilst interviewing, I made use of a technique commonly used in in-depth interviews called ‘laddering’ (Nijland, Aarts, Renes, 2013; Te Velde, Aarts, Van Woerkum, 2002). A laddering interview is an in-depth interview that elicits the values associated with a particular phenomenon, in this case the wolf. This technique aims to reveal the true beliefs, feelings and goals of the participants (Reynolds, Dethloff and Westberg, 2001). To reveal these underlying motivations, participants are probed with a ‘why - question’ after answering. By asking participants ‘why’, I was able to get past apparent answers and get an understanding of the motivation of a participant. The outcome of such conversations is an in-depth understanding of the construction of the frames of the wolf, with patterns of interconnected convictions, values, norms, knowledge, and interests, in context.

Combining the way of sequencing the interview with the ‘laddering’ technique resulted in in-depth interviews. On the one hand, laddering - by probing with ‘why’ question - went past the cursory answers to get a deeper understanding of the frames concerning the wolf, with patterns of interconnected convictions, values, norms, knowledge, and interests, in context. On the other hand, the way of sequencing aimed at eliciting the deeper understanding of people's frames, but did that mainly in asking the questions in a particular order, to get the interviewee to feel comfortable and give descriptive answers.

3.4 Interviewees

The inhabitants of the Veluwe were the target group of this study. The inhabitants were selected by two forms of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is commonly used in qualitative research. The

⁴ Actual question: “*Wat vindt u ervan dat de wolf terug is op de Veluwe? Kunt u die mening toelichten?*”

⁵ Actual question: “*Voelt u zich bedreigd door de wolf?*”

⁶ Actual question: “*Denk u dat mensen nog kunnen samenleven met wilde dieren?*”

selection is based on the research question, meaning that the sampling group is selected in order to allow for the research question to be answered (Bryman, 2016). The first form is called snowball sampling. Selection will at first be contingent. I have contacted different village councils, as well as municipalities (See [Appendix: Sampling](#) for the list) to ask whether they can get me in touch with inhabitants of the Veluwe. Additionally, I posted a message on my personal LinkedIn profile⁷ (See for the message: [Appendix: LinkedIn Post](#)) to announce that I am looking for inhabitants of the Veluwe to participate in an interview regarding the reappearance of the wolf. Participants were asked to propose other participants with characteristics relevant to this research. Foregoing is what is commonly referred to as snowball sampling (Bryman 2016). The selection of the participants hence, was somewhat fortuitous. The first form was complemented by a second form of purposive sampling, called theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling entails selecting data that will result in being able to make comparisons. The goal here is to maximize opportunities to discover variations (Bryman, 2016). This does not mean that I tried to get a representative sample. I tried to get an example that offered a variety of frames that would result in a deeper understanding of those frames and moreover, would result in a deeper understanding of the construction of the frames concerning the wolf. The selection of participants continued until theoretical saturation. Theoretical saturation namely entails selecting participants until no new information or frames are being found. This means that there is no new relevant data emerging. This means that selecting participants continued until frames were well developed, they are demonstrating variations and the relationship between the frames is established (Bryman, 2016).

Table 1 shows the participants that took part in this interview, including their anonymized background details. All participants were asked to make an appointment. For some this was not possible. Those interviews were held over the phone. In total, three interviews were conducted over the phone. Unfortunately, the interview of R9 later proved to be a damaged file, which could not be recovered. The answers of that interview are based on the notes I took during the interview. All the other interviews were recorded and transcribed. Recording the in-depth interviews with the inhabitants allowed me to concentrate on what was being said, to react on it and to probe the interviewee. It also made interviews transcribable. According to Bryman (2016) recording interviews has roughly six main advantages: (i) the recording of the interviews assist the natural limitations of our memory, thereby correcting possible intuitive conclusions, (ii) it makes possible a more thorough research of what is said, (iii) a recording can be repeated, (iv) the recordings can be used by other researchers, who can evaluate them and replicate the research, (v) this helps to counter biases, since the used data is open for scrutiny, (vi) the data can be reused to test new ideas. The recordings were transcribed verbatim, resulting in word files containing what was said. To ensure anonymity of the participants, I used the age and education categories of Central Bureau of Statistics and generalized the professions.

⁷ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/marijn-van-asseldonk-441691139/>

In addition, a literature study, interviews with experts, social media searches for wolf debates and unplanned conversations further complemented the data. These different sources of data on the wolf will result in greater confidence of the findings. Using different sources of data in order to gain more confidence is often referred to as ‘triangulation’ (Bryman, 2016).

Table 1: Demographics of participants

Participant	Duration	Gender	Age category	Education	Profession	Urban/rural
R2	49:34:24	Male	50-60	High	Fundraising	Urban
R3	45:47:00	Male	40-50	Middle	Agricultural entrepreneur	Rural
R4	48:55:00	Female	40-50	Middle	Ranger	Rural
R5	52:57:00	Male	70-80	Middle	Retired - agricultural entrepreneur	Rural
R6	44:53:00	Female	50-60	Middle	Teaching Assistant	Rural
R7	30:12:00	Female	50-60	Middle	Teacher/instructor	Rural
R8	34:37:00	Male	60-70	High	Retired - agricultural sales	Rural
R9	56:49:00	Male	50-60	Middle	Agricultural entrepreneur	Rural
R10	53:40:00	Male	50-60	High	Recreation entrepreneur	Rural
R11	33:38:00	Male	60-70	Middle	Retired - insurance agent	Rural
R12	43:39:00	Female	20-30	Middle	Student	Urban
R13	1:34:06	Male	60-70	High	Rural planner	Rural
R14	43:21:00	Male	50-60	High	Recreation entrepreneur	Rural
R15	1:15:23	Man	60-70	Middle	Photographer	Rural
R16	38:00:00	Female	60-70	High	Career expert	Rural
R17	1:07:12	Male	50-60	High	Catering industry entrepreneur	Rural
R18	1:14:29	Male	60-70	Middle	Painter	Rural
R19	40:09:00	Male	50-60	High	Electrical engineer	Rural

Source: collected interviews

3.5 Data analysis

Recording and transcribing the interviews verbatim allowed me to analyse the interviews in Atlas.ti. In Atlas.ti, I started coding the interviews. Codes were generated by reading the interviews and reviewing the answers with the elements of the frame of reference in mind. This means that I consistently reviewed the statements of the inhabitants in terms of knowledge and convictions, values, interests, norms, and feelings. Questions that I kept in mind were: what element(s) is (are) being used here? What element is this statement referring to? What is being said in terms of the element? In what way does the statement refer to the element? After I assigned codes to the different statements, I reviewed these codes and looked for similarities. Reviewing and analysing the codes was also a constant process, which sometimes also resulted in already recognizing similarities and patterns in the data. Also during this stage I kept the perspective of the frame of reference model in mind. Did I interpret the element correctly? Or might it be another element? After aggregating the initial amount of codes, there were 24 codes left. These codes belonged to the elements of the frame of reference model, as can be seen in the accompanied codebook.

3.6 Validity and reliability in qualitative research

Using validity and reliability as criteria for a qualitative research is not common and, more importantly, not possible. These criteria are more commonly applied to quantitative research (Bryman, 2016). Reliability and validity are namely mostly concerned with the way measurements were taken. Yet, there are writers that have tried to apply to concepts to qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 1985, Kirk and Miller, 1986 in Bryman, 2016).

Firstly, in terms of reliability LeCompte and Goetz (1982, in Bryman 2016) differentiate between external and internal reliability. External reliability, by which they mean replication, is hard in qualitative research. As noted above, the position of constructivism entails that the social world is constructed by actors and, related to the ever changing context, is under constant revision. This makes replication hard, if not impossible, since one cannot freeze certain social situation. Internal reliability refers to there being more than one observer that can agree on what is being seen or heard. As for the internal reliability, the expertise of my supervisor and coordination of two experts have resulted in agreement on the coding, classifying and interpreting of what is being said.

Secondly, there is validity. Validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions. There are many facets of validity. As for the validity, Lecompte and Goetz also distinguish internal and external validity. The first refers to whether there is correspondence between the observations and the theoretical ideas. This takes place when analysing the data. In that stage of the research, I will try to establish congruence between the theories and the data. External validity refers to whether the finding can be generalized. This has similar problems as external reliability, partly as a result of the nature of a constructivist approach and partly due to the small samples in qualitative research. As for the issue with constructivism; constructivism is not concerned with generalizing since social realities are considered to be under constant revision. However, social realities shift over time and some become more

predominant than others, thereby assigning some stability to social realities for some time (Inglis, 2018). Therefore, the findings of this research are at least to some extent generalizable to the contextual realities they try to understand.

4. Results

In this chapter, I am going to answer the main research question. First, I will answer the sub-questions, derived in Chapter 2. The first section is aimed at first sub-question. The second section is aimed at the second sub-question. At the end of the chapter, I will answer the main research question.

4.1 Framing the reappearance of the wolf

As said, the first part of this chapter revolves around the first sub-question: “*What frames can be identified concerning the reappearance of the wolf and how can we understand these frames in terms of knowledge, convictions, interests, values, norms and feelings?*” In this part, I will present the identified frames concerning the reappearance of the wolf.

What became apparent from the interviews, was that the expectation concerning the different groups was identifiable. The interviewees were expected to be divided over three groups. The contents of the interviews proved to be aligned with that expectation, and the interviewees were divided over three groups (see Table 2). Interviewees who mentioned not being in favour of the return of the wolf, along with frames supporting that disposition, were placed in group 1: Opponents. Interviewees who welcomed the wolf and framed its reappearance accordingly, were put in group 2: Proponents. Interviewees who had a disposition which ranged between both accepting the wolf’s presence and disfavours certain elements of its presence, were placed in group 3: Navigators. I will discuss the findings of those groups separately and will mention the contents of the group-dominant frames they used.

Table 2: Overview groups (including occupational background)

Group 1 Opponents	Group 2 Proponents	Group 3 Navigators
R3 (Agricultural entrepreneur)	R4 (Ranger)	R2 (Fundraising)
R5 (Retired – agricultural entrepreneur)	R7 (Teacher/Instructor)	R6 (Teaching assistant)
R8 (Retired – agricultural sales)	R11 (Retired – insurance agent)	R10 (Recreation entrepreneur)
R9 (Agricultural entrepreneur)	R14 (Recreation entrepreneur)	R12 (Student)
R17 (Catering industry entrepreneur)	R15 (Photographer)	R13 (Rural planner)
	R18 (Painter)	R16 (Career expert)
	R19 (Electrical engineer)	

Source: collected data

Below, I will discuss group 1 first, followed by group 2. Group 3 will be the last group discussed. Using this order gives a good overview of the ‘extremes’ first, which is then followed by a disposition that navigates between the two.

4.1.1 Group 1: Opponents

Table 3: Opponents

Group 1 Opponents	
R3 (Agricultural entrepreneur)	R9 (Agricultural entrepreneur)
R5 (Retired – agricultural entrepreneur)	R17 (Catering industry entrepreneur)
R8 (Retired – agricultural sales)	

Looking at the interviewees that form group 1, we can see that it consist mostly individuals that have an agricultural background of some sorts. The composition of this group is not striking, we have seen that in the societal debate, individuals with an agricultural background mostly side with the opponents. The composition of this group also quite lines up with the expectations concerning the background of the groups. However, there is also an inhabitant with no agricultural background, who is a former nature guide. He framed the reappearance of the wolf somewhat different. The frames focused more on his connection the landscape, rather than the more dominant agricultural frames mentioned by others belonging to this group. This already hints at the complexity of the issue, as it illustrates that generalisations regarding the opponents group do not necessarily apply. Naturally, the wolf poses a risk to livestock owners and that risk is part of their frame. But, as we will see, the frame of the opponents cover more aspects than solely livestock damage.

Interests

It is the notion of interests from which the opponents differ mostly from the other groups and which defines this group as being the opponents (see Appendix A4). As we will see, the interests are substantiated by the opponent's knowledge and convictions regarding their living area. All the information portrayed by the inhabitants concerning the damage by wildlife, the consequences of the presence of certain wildlife or the consequences that are the results of the reintroduction of wildlife substantiate their interest frame:

“But it is a threat of our living conditions. Our living pleasure. Or how you might call it. And that is being affected by predator birds, foxes, conditions concerning the business, wild boar, deer and that will definitely not become less with the return of the wolf.” (R5, 02/05/2019)⁸

And:

“And for instance, the 60 km zones. Even more fences. It is terrible around the Veluwe, which is something that bothers me a lot. I am also a mountain biker for instance, and running, that is

⁸ Maar wel het bedreiging van onze leefomstandigheden. Onze woongenot. Of hoe je het maar noemen wil. En dat wordt dus door roofvogels, vossen, bedrijfsomstandigheden, door wilde zwijnen door herten al aangetast en dat zal dus door de wolf zeker niet minder worden.

less, but if I come on my mountain bike. It is terrible around here. The XXX we used to get on, that is also closed now. The fences are getting bigger and bigger. “(R17, 04/06/2019)⁹

Interviewees mention the return of the wolf will even further affect their living conditions, which makes them not fond of the addition of yet another animal to the list that affects their livelihoods. In addition, the way the community is affected by the reappearance also adds to the resistance of wolves:

“And yes, if others are negatively affected financially, or not financially but in their job satisfaction. Yes, then that affects me as well. Then I feel concerned yes. “R5 (02/05/2019)¹⁰

Norms

Following their interest are the norms to protect them. Norms namely answer the question ‘*what should be done?*’ about the reappearance of the wolf. These norms are highly influenced by the other elements of the frame of reference. We have seen that they are weary for the consequences of the presence of the wolf, because it affects their interests. Consequently, when it came to terms of what should be done, opponents unequivocally noted the need for management. Following that notion, what should be done about the wolf is:

“I would manage it. Now you have. Now there aren’t that many yet. Now it is easy. And if it is getting a real population then it will be A harder to do and B there will be commotion about it.”
(R8, 13/05/2019)¹¹

Knowledge and convictions

The interests and norms portrayed by the opponents are substantiated by their knowledge and convictions. They make use of their knowledge and convictions to substantiate their disposition and to legitimize certain aspects of it. When opponents used their knowledge and convictions to frame, the content of those frames evolved around knowledge and convictions regarding humans and society, about wolves and (the consequences of) their presence, and about nature and wildlife.

What became apparent was that opponents are rather sceptic about policies and the information of institutions:

⁹ En dat is bijvoorbeeld, ja. 60 km zones. Nog meer hekken. Dat is natuurlijk ook verschrikkelijk om de Veluwe, dat is echt iets waar ik me enorm aan erger. Ik ben ook een mountainbiker bijvoorbeeld, en hardlopen, maar dan kom je iets minder van, maar als ik met mijn mountainbike. Het is verschrikkelijk hier. Het kamp mochten we vroeger ook nog op, het ISK, dat is nu ook afgesloten. De hekken worden alleen maar groter.

¹⁰ En ja, als anderen dan financieel nadelig getroffen worden of nog niet eens financieel maar in hun arbeidsvreugde getroffen worden. Ja dan raakt mij dat ook. Dan voel ik mij daar ook bij betrokken ja. Ja.

¹¹ Ik denk. Ik zou 'm gewoon beheren. Nu heb je er nog. Nu zijn er nog niet veel. Nu kan dat ook makkelijk. En als je ze als dat echt een hele populatie wordt, wordt het A moeilijker om het om het goed te doen en B krijg je dan een heleboel commotie daarover

“And then you shouldn’t say because of the glyphosate, and that is because of the biodiversity [that bird population is not increasing], no that is because of other things. But that is not being told. And that is the same with the wolf. He will come in. That will have a consequence. What that is I don’t know yet. But that will be on a small hardworking group of society. Well, and they have to figure out how to deal with the term nature inclusive agriculture” (R3, 02/05/2019)¹²

Being sceptic about policies and the information of institutions results, as the quote shows, in a disposition of distrust regarding what is said about the wolf. Here, the frame already moves towards other actors, rather than the wolf. What immediately became apparent when interviewing the inhabitants belonging to this group, is that they are not opposed to the wolf as an entity, but they are opposed to its entirety:

“It is not a thing on itself you know. Down the line, you encounter other species as well. Because animals are being hunted. Hunters, if they are hunting, animals are crossing roads. They are looking for quieter areas. That results in roads being downgraded. And if that doesn’t result in people driving slower, than there will be speed bumps. It will become an uninhabitable area. It is nice for the cyclist, they are not concerned with speed bumps, but we, we who are working the soils, we have to cross that with agricultural machinery and that is not nice at all. Road narrowing’s, speed bumps. Those are the results of collisions with animals amongst other things. And then I think. Then there will be a wolf as well. Results in more collisions and people will make up even more things. Farmers cannot go on provincial roads anymore, because, I don’t know. You can make up all kinds of lions and bears, but it is still too early to tell” (R3, 29/04/2019).¹³

The opponents do not dislike the wolf itself. On the contrary, all of the interviewees in this group expressed some connection to nature and most of them would even like to see a wolf. However, it is the entirety of the situation that makes them opponents. So, when talking about wolves, the opponents could also become somewhat ambiguous:

¹² En dan moet je niet zeggen door het glyfosaat, en dat komt door de biodiversiteit, nee dat komt ook door andere dingen. Kijk maar dat wordt niet verteld. En dat is met die wolf ook. Die komt er weer in. Dat heeft een gevolg. Wat weet ik ook nog niet. Maar het wordt wel weer makkelijk afgeduwd op een hardwerkende kleine groep van de bevolking. Nou, die moeten dan weer rond zien te komen met de term natuurinclusieve landbouw.

¹³ Het is niet een op zichzelf staand iets hè. Want je komt gewoon weer bij andere diersoorten terecht. Doordat er gejaagd wordt op wild. Ook jagers als die zouden gaan jagen, gaat wild de weg oversteken. Die gaan een rustiger gebied zoeken. Wat krijg je dan. Wegen moeten afgewaardeerd worden. En als mensen dan toch niet langzamer gaan rijden moeten er drempels in. Dat wordt een onleefbaar gebied. Dat is mooi voor de fietser, die daar heeft daar geen last van van een drempel, maar als wij, die de gronden moeten bewerken met de landbouwmachines is dat allemaal niet fijn. Wegversmallingen, drempels. Dat komt allemaal door verkeersaanrijdingen onder ander. Dan denk ik van ja. Dan loopt ze wolf daar ook alweer bij. Krijg je nog meer wildaanrijdingen. gaan mensen nog meer dingen verzinnen. Mogen boeren niet meer op N-wegen rijden, want weet ik veel. Kun je allerlei leeuwen en beren verzinnen, maar het is nog te pril om nu al te weten wat er gebeurd

“Oh that would in itself of course be special. From that point of view. Yeah. It would possibly be nice.” [seeing a wolf]” (R8, 13/05/2019)¹⁴

But also, as noted by the same interviewee:

“In addition to the fact that they are not friendly animals. I mean they. You do not need to cuddle them. They are bloodthirsty, ferocious. Yes.”(R8, 13/05/2019)¹⁵

R17 expressed this ambiguity explicitly:

“Yeah it is very mixed with me. [Opinion on return of the wolf]. It is a sign that it is going well with nature, let me say it like that. But I am very sceptical whether the animal can survive here.” (R17, 04/06/2019)¹⁶

About whether the wolf can survive here, R17 goes on mentioning several consequences regarding the presence of the wolf (and other wildlife). When talking about the wolf, the frames used by the opponents illustrated that it is a rather complex situation for them. As R17 noted, it is “*mixed*”. As an animal, they like the wolf, but the consequences are undesirable.

And that the wolf has undesirable effects is a frame that is used often by this group. These foreseen consequences result in these inhabitants being opponents of the reappearance of the wolf.

“I still think they should have shot him when he crossed the border, but they did not check. Because this will only result in frustrated people. At one place, a sheep will get killed, at another place, a young calf will get killed. People say that he will take deer and roe deer. But those animals can walk way faster than a sheep or that calf that is walking in the pasture. So that wolf is crazy, if he is going to exhaust himself running after deer and roe deer, if he can take a calf that is waiting for him.” (R5, 02/05/2019)¹⁷

And consequences regarding the living conditions for inhabitants:

¹⁴ Oh dat zou op zich natuurlijk best bijzonder zijn. Uit dat oogpunt. Ja. Zou het misschien mooi zijn.

¹⁵ Plus het feit dat het ook geen vriendelijk dier is. Ik bedoel ze. Je hoeft ze niet te knuffelen. Ze zijn een bloeddorstig, verscheurend. Ja.

¹⁶ Ja heel dubbel bij mij. Ik vind het geweldig dat zo'n beest terug is. Dat is een teken dus dat het goed gaat met de natuur, laat ik zo maar zeggen. Ik ben wel heel sceptisch van hoe kan die hier overleven.

¹⁷ Ik vind nog steeds dat ze hem direct zodra ie de grens overkwam, maar dat hebben ze neit gecontroleerd, dat ze hem meteen dood hadden moeten schieten. Want dat gaat alleen maar gefrustreerde mensen opleveren. Ene plek wordt een schaap doodgebeten zometeen, andere plek wordt het kalfje wat in het land loopt doodgebeten. Men zegt dan wel, ja hij pakt alleen, nouja tenminste als er genoeg lopen, pakt ie alleen herten reeën etc. Maar die beesten kunnen veel harder lopen als dat schaap of dat kalfje wat in het weiland loopt. dus die wolf die is toch gek, als die zijn eigen beduusd gaat rennen achter een hert of een ree, als die daar zo een kalf pakken kan wat op hem staat te wachten bijna.

“And what are the consequences if they are settling with a pack. That is a matter of 1 or 2 years. There is going to be a male and what are the consequences of that. On that side of the Veluwe, closing paths and forest. Creating areas where you can’t get in no more.” (R17, 04/06/2019)¹⁸

R17 mentions the changes in the landscape due to the presence of wolves. R5 also observed changes in the landscape with an increasing population of wildlife, affecting their land:

“I have said it often to people: when we became farmers, some 50 years ago, if you saw 5, 6, 7, deer back then, you would go home very fast and call your wife to come look at those 5, 6 7 deer on the meadows. Now, there are packs of 40, 50, 60 deer. That is way more than back in the day and that puts pressure on the agricultural land. That should not be possible from my point of view.”(R5, 02/05/2019)¹⁹

As we can see, the possible consequences the opponents mention are deduced from experiences with other wildlife. Interviewees had had experiences with European bison, badger and geese. The experiences they had with these animals consequently result in foreseeing a variety of problems concerning the reappearance of the wolf. Moreover, as the quotes by R5 and R17 show, those consequences do not solely consist of damage to livestock or damage to agricultural business. The quotes show both the damage to livestock as well as an infringement of their living conditions. Interviewees mentioned the appearance of (even more) fences, as the quote by R17 shows, but also reducing speed limits and adding speed bumps to roads, making the roads less convenient for inhabitants, as well as making them more difficult to use with agricultural machines.

Albeit being fond of nature, this group also has negative experiences with nature and wildlife, which they use to substantiate their disposition. They mention their knowledge and convictions regarding their issues with nature and wildlife to support their convictions of the negative consequences the wolf will have:

“It is actually somewhat similar to the Oostvaardersplassen, where we thought nature could run her own course. Yeah, that is not possible in the Netherlands. We have seen that now. Now we had to shoot hundreds of them. And they have to manage it otherwise it will be just the same in 5 years. You cannot have 100% real nature in the Netherlands, you have to manage it

¹⁸ En wat de gevolgen zijn als dus inderdaad die wolvin zich hier gevestigd met een roedel. Dat is ook een kwestie van 1 of 2 jaar. Dat er een mannetje bij gaat lopen, en wat dat voor consequenties heeft. Dus en aan die kant van het hek van de Veluwe, dus aan de Veluwsekant, met het afsluiten van paden en enorme bossen stukken bos. Creëren van rustgebieden waar je dus niet meer in kan.

¹⁹ Maar ik heb al vaker tegen mensen gezegd: toen wij boer werden, zegmaar dat is dan nou een kleine 50 jaar geleden, als je dan een keer 5, 6 of 7 herten in het land zag lopen ging je gauw naar huis te ging je je vrouw roepen en zei je moet je komen kijken er lopen 5, 6, of 7 herten in het land. Nu lopen er koppels van 40,50,60 herten. Dat is veel meer als destijds en dat legt toch een druk op het agrarisch gebruik van de gronden hierzo. Dat eigenlijk niet zou moeten in mijn ogen.

somehow. Like with the geese. If you hear how many geese there are, and see how they cover agricultural areas in shit, eat up and shit on everything.”(R5, 02/05/2019)²⁰

Whereas it involves damages above, there were also negative experiences with reintegration programmes:

“The people here say, well, all for that one animal again. And when the wolf has left, then there will be another one. No, they are very pragmatic in that regard. You know, it is fun. People want European bison to return, great of course. But let them do it in their own garden. Because the places where I used to run or mountain bike, hundreds of hectares at Radio Kootwijk are closed, because of a couple of European bison you can’t even see.”(R17, 04/06/2019)²¹

So, what we see above is that respondents use utter knowledge and convictions to express a variety of concerns and issues regarding the reappearance of the wolf. What we have seen is that these concerns and issues validate their interests and consequently the norms they would like to see to protect those interests.

To conclude on this group, I would again like to refer to the complexity of the issue for them. Rather than being ‘simple category’, we have seen that the frames used by the opponents are more complex than ‘the wolf damages livestock’. They frame the wolf using frames concerning the consequences of the wolf, deduced from their experience with other wildlife. They do however not dislike the wolf and those somewhat mixed feelings are also mentioned by this group. They feel affected in their living conditions, and frame the reappearance of the wolf accordingly. Consequently, they would like to see regulation, because they foresee an array of problems.

²⁰ Het is eigenlijk een beetje hetzelfde als wij dachten in de Oostvaardersplassen, daar weer een natuureservaat wat allemaal zijn gang kon gaan. Ja dat gaat niet in NL. Dat hebben we nou gezien. Nou hebben ze er zoveel honderd af moeten schieten. En ze zullen het in de hand moeten houden anders zijn we over 5 jaar weer net zover natuurlijk. Je kunt in een landje als NL, is geen, nou geen 100% echte natuur meer mogelijk. je moet dat in de hand houden op een of andere manier. Het gebeuren met de ganzen. Als je hoort hoeveel ganzen, of er lopen, als je ziet ook hoe ze de boel onderschijten in sommige agrarische gebieden, alles opvreten en alles onderschijten.

²¹ De mensen hier zeggen joh allemaal voor dat ene beestje weer. En als de wolf weer weg is dan komt er weer een ander beestje. Nee, wat dat betreft zijn ze heel pragmatisch eigenlijk van ja. Weetjewel, het is leuk. Mensen willen wisenten terug, tuurlijk geweldig. Maar laat het ze in hun eigen tuin doen. Want de plekken waar ik vroeger ging hardlopen en mountainbiken, honderden hectaren bij Radio Kootwijk afgezet, vanwege een paar wisten en die je nog niet eens kunt zien.

4.1.2 Group 2: Proponents

Table 4: Proponents

Group 2 Proponents	
R4 (Ranger)	R15 (Photographer)
R7 (Teacher/Instructor)	R18 (Painter)
R11 (Retired – insurance agent)	R19 (Electrical engineer)
R14 (Recreation entrepreneur)	

When looking at the proponents, we see that their backgrounds are more diverse than those of the opponents. The inhabitants in this group all have a different connection with nature. The connection with nature of a ranger is for instance more obvious than the connection with nature of an electrical engineer. Nevertheless, they all have a similar look at the relation humans should have with nature, including the wolf. As is the case with the opponents, the frame by the proponents is more complex than portrayed in the media. Rather than being ‘nature lovers’ who just want nature back at all costs, this group displays a complex frame regarding the presence of the wolf. Moreover, it is often mentioned that people who own animals aren’t fond of the presence of a wolf (Simons, 2019). However, there are several proponents that own animals; both R11 and R14 own either sheep or goats and R18 and R7 own chicken. Again, it becomes clear that one’s background does not necessarily determine one’s frame.

Values

When looking at Appendix A4, we see that the frame of the proponents consists of values, in fact, exactly these values portray the frame they uphold very well. In their opinion, humans are disconnected from society and that society is to blame for a variety of issues. When framing, the values they put forward relate to their knowledge and convictions; they are concerned with the wolf’s well-being and with the state of nature:

“If they know where the den is, yeah then I am afraid that photographers will try to come there and if so, then you have to have people guarding the place which results in more human sent towards wolves. That won’t work. You will never get cups this way.” (R18, 14/06/2019) ²²

²² Als ze weten waar die bouw, waar een bouw zou zijn, ja ik ben bang dat daar heel stiekem allerlei fotografen toch proberen bij te komen en dan moet je daar dus mensen laten posten en je krijgt weer geur van mensen naar die wolven toe. Dat wordt het niet. Dan krijg je ook geen welpjes op die manier denk ik.

*“But I am more inclined to think well, I put the animals more to the front. Maybe I can do some things less myself, but so be it. That is what I enjoy more so to say. In my opinion, nature is not only mine, but nature is also wild and animals.”*²³(R4, 02/05/2019)²⁴

Norms

Being concerned with the state of nature and the well-being of wolves translates into several norms. In addition, according to the proponents we should not meddle with nature. In terms of what should be done, they mentioned the need for acceptance and the need for humans to learn how to live with nature:

“My opinion is accept it, I don’t see the problem. It is part of how we live. Sometimes something dies. So be it. Accept it.”(R11, 16/05/2019)²⁵

“Wake up. Learn how to have respect for everything that lives. Not only animals, but also trees, plants, just everything that has to do with the planet. Wake up for this planet.” (R18, 14/06/2019)²⁶

Knowledge and convictions

The knowledge and convictions of the proponents evolve around the human-nature relation, regarding wolves, nature and wildlife and notions regarding humans and society. What is also visible here, is that their values and norms are legitimized with knowledge and convictions. The proponents are familiar with wildlife and wildlife encounters and have knowledge about it and experience with it. They use this to frame the wolf:

“I know from deer for instance, that if they are in an area where a lot of food is that they will get a lot of offspring very fast. However, if the population is that big that there is balance between the animals and the available food, they get less offspring.”(R15, 25/05/2019)

They also use this knowledge to oppose to certain arguments:

“A fox has a territory, a very large territory, an old male fox. It makes sure that there won’t be any other foxes in his territory. So all the animals that live in that area, live in fact in a quite

²³ Maar ik ben meer geneigd dat ik dan denk van nouja, ik geef liever het wild dan iets meer voorrang. Dan kan ik zelf even iets minder, dat zei dan zo. Ik geniet daar meer van zegmaar, ik heb ook meer zoiets van ja, de natuur is niet alleen van mij. de natuur is ook wild en dieren zegmaar.

²⁴ Maar ik ben meer geneigd dat ik dan denk van nouja, ik geef liever het wild dan iets meer voorrang. Dan kan ik zelf even iets minder, dat zei dan zo. Ik geniet daar meer van zegmaar, ik heb ook meer zoiets van ja, de natuur is niet alleen van mij. de natuur is ook wild en dieren zegmaar.

²⁵ Ik vind, accepteer dat nou, ik zie daar niet zo'n probleem mee hoor. Het hoort gewoon zoals wij leven. Sneuvelt eens een keer wat. Het zij zo. Accepteer dat maar.

²⁶ Wakker worden. Gewoon leren respect te hebben voor alles wat leeft. Niet alleen dieren, maar ook bomen, planten, gewoon alles wat met deze planeet te maken heeft. Wakker worden voor deze planeet.

peaceful area, because that fox cannot kill all the animals. But once you shoot that fox, you will get young male foxes that are entering the territory, which is then divided in 4 or 5 pieces, with 5 dens and it takes year before there is a strong male again who chases the others away. That they are scared for the disappearance of the farmland birds is only because humans shoot too many foxes. “ (R18, 12/06/2019)²⁷

Humans do not understand nature anymore. An important aspect for the proponents is the connection of humans to nature. They observe a disconnection from nature:

“People are not close to nature anymore. People are not close to many things anymore.”(R15, 25/05/2019)²⁸

We have seen the way they value their connection with nature, and what becomes clear is that – according to the proponents - the disconnection between humans and nature is the cause of a variety of problems, including the conflict concerning the reappearance of the wolf:

In Canada, when there is a bear with cups on a parking space, that parking space is closed because of the wildlife. At one point, they will leave and the parking space is reopened. You could not imagine that happening here. That something is closed because of wildlife. That parking space of this area, that people cannot walk or cycle here because of a wolf. I don't think people agree to that.”(R4, 02/05/2019)²⁹

It became clear that according the proponents, humans are the cause of conflict and problems concerning wildlife and nature. This disposition is also visible when they frame about the wolf. When framing about wolves, interviewees in this group mentioned the negative image of the wolf, induced by humans, and the relativity of wolf damages:

“Well, the wolf has a bad name of course. There is nothing right about a wolf. The big bad wolf, which kills everything and attacks people.”(R11, 16/05/2019)³⁰

²⁷ Een vos heeft territorium, heel groot territorium, een oude rekel. Die zorgt ervoor dat er geen andere rekel in zijn hele gebied komt. Dus alle dieren in dat gebied leven, leven in feite in een redelijk rustige omgeving, want die vos die kan niet alle dieren doodbijten. Maar schiet je zo'n vos weg, dan krijg je allemaal jongere rekels en krijg je zijn territorium wordt in 4en of 5 stukken verdeeld en dan heb je 5 bouwen en dan duurt het jarenlang voordat er weer een sterke rekel opstaat uiteindelijk uit die groep, die dan langzaam die anderen weer weg kan krijgen uiteindelijk, maar dat heeft jaren nodig. Dat ze bang zijn dat de weidevogel verdwijnt door de vos is puur doordat de mens te veel vossen schieten

²⁸ Überhaupt mensen die staan heel ver van de natuur af. Die staat überhaupt heel ver van heel veel dingen af

²⁹ In Canada wordt dan deels zegmaar, op een parkeerplaats liep een berin met twee jongen, dan wordt dat stuk afgesloten omdat dan dat wild daar leeft. En die trekken op een gegeven moment weer weg en dan houdt dat weer op, wordt dat weer opengesteld. Dat zou je hier niet voor kunnen stellen. Dat iets afgesloten wordt haast, voor wild. Dat hier de parkeerplaats of dit stuk zegmaar, dat mensen niet meer mogen fietsen omdat er een wolf loopt. Ik denk niet dat mensen het daar me eens zijn hier.

³⁰ Nou Ja, de wolf heeft gewoon een slechte naam natuurlijk. Daar deugt in principe helemaal niks van. De grote boze wolf, die maakt alles dood en kan mensen aanvallen. Nou ik denk dat als de wolf ook maar in de buurt komt van een mens dat die maakt dat die weg komt hoor. Die

And this image is kept in place:

“That is what it is full of in the media of course, that people are scared of wolves with sheep and so on. If you want to hit a dog then you will find a stick and if you want to hit a wolf you are also going to find one. There are so many myths, fake news so to say, that are being used by hunters and the CDA and so on. That is not convenient.”(R19, 14/06/2019)³¹

Wolf damage is relative, since the damages done by wolves do not compare to the damage done by dogs:

“And that will happen of course [wolves attacking sheep], but that is a drop in the ocean. What I said earlier, there is much more damage done by dogs that are not kept under control than done by wolves.”(R15, 25/05/2019)³²

So, when framing the human-nature relationship and framing the wolf, it becomes apparent that the disposition of this group tend to human induced problems. It is society that is creating problems. Consequently, this makes the interviewees in this group rather opinionated about certain groups in society:

“We as humans think we are developing ourselves, we read, we become better, more intelligent, that we think of new ways. Boy, are we good.”(R14, 25/05/2019)³³

“Disinterest. It is a materialistic society. People want to be happy. Mostly through materialism. You are happy when you have a nice phone.” (R18, 12/06/2019)³⁴

Looking at the knowledge and convictions proponents express, we see that they are blaming humans and society for the current situation. They frame humans as being disconnected from nature and frame that as materialistic and being rather full of themselves. The conflict regarding the wolf can also be traced back to human interference. Wolves have a bad name, not because they are bad, but because

gaat echt niet naar een mens toe. Nee, maar hoe dat soort verhalen, je hoort dat steeds meer, en mensen ja, die maken mekaar ook een beetje gek joh.

³¹ Dat is ook waar de pers vol van staat natuurlijk, dat mensen bang zijn voor de wolf zelfs met schapen enzo. Kijk als je een hond wil slaan vind je allicht een stok en als je een wolf wilt slaan vind je allicht een stok ook wel. Er zijn zoveel fabeltjes die dan toch, fake news zegmaar, waar gewoon gebruik van gemaakt wordt onder andere door jagers en het CDA enzo. Dat is gewoon niet handig.

³² En dat zal best wel een keer gebeuren, maar dat is een druppel op een gloeiende plaat. Wat ik in het begin al zei, er wordt veel meer schade aangericht bij veehouders door honden die niet onder controle worden gehouden dan dat er door een wolf zou gebeuren.

³³ Wij als mensen vinden dat we onszelf ontwikkelen, dat we lezen, dat we beter worden, intelligenter, dat we nieuwe manieren bedenken. Goh wat zijn we goed.

³⁴ Desinteresse. Het is een materialistische maatschappij. Mensen willen gelukkig zijn. Meestal door materialisme. Je bent gelukkig als je een mooi telefoontje hebt

humans give them a bad name. The proponents seems to uphold a disposition which is concerned about the wolf. This is the disposition they built upon when framing their values and norms.

Concluding group 2, we have seen that they frame the reappearance of the wolves in terms of a human induced problem that we should solve by accepting and reconnecting to nature. They frame the relationship humans and society have with nature as being disconnected. It is society that creates the negative image of the wolf. The proponents value nature and take the interest of nature into consideration. Consequently, they are concerned with the wolf's well-being. With regard to what should be done, they frame it as situation in which humans should learn how to live with nature again.

4.1.3 Group 3: Navigators

Table 5: Navigators

Group 3 Navigators	
R2 (Fundraising)	R12 (Student)
R6 (Teaching assistant)	R13 (Rural planner)
R10 (Recreation entrepreneur)	R16 (Career expert)

This group consists of interviewees that framed the wolf using aspects of both sides. Looking at this group, we see a variety of backgrounds. It is a group who is not disavouring the return of the wolf. However, it is also not in equivocally in favour of the return of the wolf. They navigate between the dispositions (hence navigators) and frame accordingly. As we will see, the frames of group 3 often consist of aspects that point to both positive and negative aspects of wolf presence. This group does not have a defining element, rather, it uses more of a mixed frame, in which several aspects come to fore.

Values

The problem with regard to the reappearance of the wolf for this group is visible in their consideration between the values of nature, wildlife and their interest. Interviewees in this group are fond of nature and wildlife. They have experience with wildlife and all of them mentioned that they value being in nature. They value it for relaxation and walks. Being in nature is a moment of peace or a so-called '*being into the present*' moment:

“For me that is always a ‘being into the present’ moment.” (R12, 20/05/2019)³⁵

“Yes, it is my moment of peace. It makes me very happy. I like trees very much.” (R6, 06/05/2019)³⁶

³⁵ Ik vind dat wel altijd zo'n nu-momentje.

³⁶ Ja het is mijn rustmoment. Ik word daar wel happydepeppie van. Ik ben heel erg van de bomen

Not only do they value nature for peace and happiness, they value the encounters they have with wildlife:

“It is a fantastic experience and an experience like wow, I am at the right place to see this. Last year, there were some deer that stood here on the corner of the pasture bellowing. We had never experienced that before” (R13, 21/05/2019)³⁷

The group mentioned values concerning their living place more than the other groups. They value the place for its nature and wildlife:

“We live here in paradise. We’ve got it in the backyard [wildlife].” (R6, 06/05/2019)³⁸

Interests

Navigators value nature and wildlife in and around their living place. However, it is important that nature is not bothering. When frames regarding interests occur, they occurred mostly in terms of *‘as long as it doesn’t bother me’*. This clearly follows the equivocal disposition. They do value nature, but their interests cannot become at stake:

“It is fine, as long as it doesn’t bother me” (R6, 06/05/2019)³⁹

“And so we come back to the issue of the wolf, if you do something like this, what kind of impact does it have on the things we enjoy now.” (R13, 21/05/2019)⁴⁰

It might be that the wolf has a positive influence:

“I don’t think that it [presence of the wolf] is unfavorable for the Veluwe if you have are a recreational entrepreneur. It is a PR for the Veluwe.” (R10, 16/05/2019)⁴¹

Yet, as R10 later in the interview noted, once animals come too close to the villages, measures should be taken, because then there are too many. It is that disposition that is visible in their norms regarding the reappearance of the wolf. The wolf (and wildlife in general) should be managed.

³⁷ Het is ook een fantastische beleving en een ontzettende ervaring van hé verrek, ik ben op de juiste plek om dit te zien. Vorig jaar stonden hier in de hoek van die wei stonden een aantal herten et burlen. Dat hebben we nog nooit meegemaakt

³⁸ We wonen hier in het paradijs hè. We hebben het hier in de achtertuin hè

³⁹ Ik vind het prima, als ik er maar geen last van heb

⁴⁰ En dan komen we weer terug op de wolf, en dat als je iets dergelijks doet, wat heeft dat voor impact op al die andere dingen waar we nu van genieten.

⁴¹ Ik denk ook wel dat het niet ongunstig is voor de Veluwe als je camping hebt hoor. Het is toch weer een stukje PR voor de Veluwe

Norms

Albeit being fond of nature and valuing it in a variety of ways, what became clear is that for the navigators, nature should be controlled by humans. Frames were not equivocal, since there were frames regarding the management of wildlife at one point in the interviews, and at another point there could be a frame regarding the acceptance of nature:

“We should not chase him away if he settles on a territory over here. If he does, we should find a way to live with it and I think that will be just fine.” (R2, 29/04/2019)⁴²

However, the most important norms mentioned by the navigators are the norms regarding the human agency in nature. So, the navigators mentioned the need for nature and wildlife management:

“Yeah I think that we have to, what I mentioned earlier, do some sort of management. So, also hunting. To make sure that animals that live there can find food and such.” (R10, 16/05/2019)⁴³

“You should divide it [available space], and once there is too many of something you should shoot it. Whether it are foxes or wolves or wild boar or deer. That doesn’t matter, but you should intervene, at least I think so.” (R16, 27/05/2019)⁴⁴

Knowledge and convictions

Whilst using their knowledge and convictions to frame the reappearance of the wolf, the navigators mentioned the relationship between humans and nature. They mentioned the wolf and nature and wildlife, as well as knowledge and convictions regarding humans and society. The frames they used show that interviewees belonging to this group navigate between wolf/nature and human interests. What is defining for this group is the variety of aspects they bring up when the issue of the wolf is concerned. We have seen how that translates into values and norms.

The navigators used frames that mentioned others reaction to the wolf reappearance. The frames used by the navigators consist of contemplating about the presence, what others might think, how others might react and to what extent the wolf belongs here and if it came voluntarily or not:

⁴² Denk ja als ie hier een leefgebied treft denk ik ja. Dan moeten we hem ook niet meer wegjagen denk ik dan moeten we daar gewoon weer onze plek mee zien te vinden weer en ik denk dat dat best goed gaat.

⁴³ Ja dat denk ik wel in die zin van, maar dat moeten we wel, wat ik daarstraks al zei, daar moet wel enig beheer op gedaan worden. Dus inderdaad ook wel jacht. Om het gewoon wel, ja, de dieren er dus leven dat die ook wel voedsel kunnen vinden en dergelijke.

⁴⁴ Dat je doet moet verdelen, ja en dat je dan toch op een gegeven moment als er te veel van iets komt dat je dat af moet schieten. Of dat nou vossen of wolven of wilde zwijnen zijn, of herten. Dat maakt niet uit, maar daar moet je op ingrijpen, dat denk ik wel.

*What I think about is whether or not it will become a hype, wat people will do with it. You will probably get two sides. One side will shout that they should shoot the wolf and the other finds it amazing. And I think I am in the middle of that.”(R16, 27/05/2019).*⁴⁵

They take the different actors in society into account:

*“Well, I think that if you have lived here for a long time, you think you need to protect your living space, then you have had to live from the cattle of your pasture. Because a farmer who has a cornfield that is being overrun by wild boar, he will have a different opinion then the tourist with his sandwich who is looking and sees wild boar.” (R16, 27/05/2019)*⁴⁶

*“Well, fine [changes]. But, do we take the people who are being affected enough into account, especially in my backyard, so to say.” (R13, 21/05/2019)*⁴⁷

But also mention that the wolf is not really a topic of conversation yet:

*“No, it is not really a topic of conversation yet. Yeah, at the local gas station, that guy knows everything about the neighbourhood of course, and one time it has been mentioned that the wolf is on the Veluwe.” (R10, 16/05/2019)*⁴⁸

With regard to the relationship humans have with nature, this group notes that humans are the ones that maintain a certain balance:

*“As long as they monitor the population. The population of wildlife. We have also meddled with it, so we must make sure that nature is in balance.” (R6, 06/05/2019)*⁴⁹

*“It is a kind of a game. And that game takes place on a board that is called the Netherlands, how much space do humans get and how much space do animals get and how much for flora, fauna, you name it.”(R13, 21/05/2019)*⁵⁰

⁴⁵ En waar ik dan wel over nadenken, wordt het een hype, wat gaan mensen daarmee doen. Je gaat waarschijnlijk twee kampen krijgen. Het ene kamp wat gelijk roept gelijk afschieten en het andere kamp wat zegt oah helemaal geweldig. En ik denk dat ik daar een beetje tussenin zit.

⁴⁶ Nou ik denk als je al langer woont hier dan heb je altijd je gebied moeten beschermen, dan heb je altijd ook moeten leven van je vee zegmaar of van je grasland. Kijk want een boer die daar een partij maïs heeft en waar de hele partij maïs van ondersteboven wordt gelopen door de wilde zwijnen, die denkt daar anders over als de toerist die hier met boterham op de hoek gaat staan zo van hee leuk wilde zwijnen.

⁴⁷ Nou, hè, prima. Alleen, bedenken we voldoende, en betrekken we daar de mensen ook echt bij die het betreft, zeker in mijn achtertuin, laat ik het maar even zo zeggen

⁴⁸ Nee het is niet echt een gespreksonderwerp in die zin. Ja als je bij de plaatselijke benzinepomp komt, die jongen weet alles van de buurt natuurlijk, en het is 1x geweest van ja de wolf zit op de Veluwe, ja die zit op de Veluwe, vrij in de buurt ook nog gespot ja

⁴⁹ Als het maar in de gaten houden qua bestand. Qua wildbestand. Wij hebben er ons altijd mee bemoeit, dus moeten we er in ieder geval voor zorgen dat de natuur in evenwicht blijft.

⁵⁰ Dus het is ook een soort, een soort spel. En dat spel speel je met elkaar op een speelveld, dat heet NL en ja, hoeveel ruimte krijgt de mens en hoeveel ruimte krijgt de dieren en hoeveel ruimte krijgen flora, fauna noem maar op.

Navigators navigate between wolf/nature and human interests. Interviewees navigate between acceptance of wildlife and nature in the area and the potential consequences and noting a certain nuisance:

“A badger, we have had one our grass. And then it is like, well, awesome a badger. But if he is making holes in your lawn, then it becomes less fun, but it is something that comes with it. Just like the fox with the chicken. We once saw two little foxes in the morning that is awesome. But, if your chicken pen is being snatched then it is slightly less awesome, thus you make sure that your chicken pen is fox proof.” (R16, 27/05/2019)⁵¹

Such navigating became also clear when they frame the state of nature. When it comes to nature and wildlife, it are humans who remain in control:

“There is lots of nature around here, but this is largely managed. It is not like let everything run its own course, we don’t do anything with it so to say. We don’t come here for 100 years and then see what it is like. That is not the case in the Netherlands anymore. It is just too small.”(R10, 16/05/2019)⁵²

The navigators displayed an ambiguity. They are taking different possibilities into consideration. We have seen that this group navigates between several dispositions. Although there is a so-called human induced balance, they also note nature’s own ways. It is a group who tries to look at different angles and possibilities. This disposition was visible in their values, interests and consequently in their norms.

Concluding this group, the following quote summarizes their position:

“It is fine by me, but we must monitor it. Because there is of course very much overpopulation of wild boar and deer, and that is where the wolf lives from. So that is fine, because otherwise those animals have to be shot. However, we also have a shepherd with a herd of sheep, I am also concerned about that. So we have to monitor the wolf and if their population is increasing, make sure that the balance in nature stays” (R6, 06/05/2019)⁵³

⁵¹ De das die hebben we al eens op het grasveld gehad. En dan is het dan een beetje zo van een das is leuk dat is geweldig. Maar als ie zulke gaten in je grasveld maakt, dan wordt het al iets minder leuk, maar dat is wel iets wat erbij hoort. Dat is net als met de vos en de kippen. Ja. We hebben een keer hier 's morgens op het pad twee jonge vosjes gezien, nou dat is geweldig. Maarja, als je kippenhok leeggeroofd is dat weer iets minder geweldig, dus zorg dat je kippenhok vos proof is zal ik maar zeggen

⁵² Het is wel allemaal natuur hier natuurlijk, maar het wordt wel allemaal grotendeels beheert. Het is niet zo, laat alles maar z'n gang gaan, we doen er niets mee zal ik maar zeggen hè. We komen er 100 jaar niet en kijken hoe het er dan uit ziet. Zo is het niet meer hier in NL. Daarvoor is het gewoon ook te klein natuurlijk

⁵³ Ja ik vind het wel goed alleen we moeten het wel in de gaten gaan houden. Want er is natuurlijk ontzettend veel overpopulatie van de wilde zwijnen en herten, en daar leeft de wolf van. Dus op zich is dat heel prima, want die moeten anders afgeschoten worden. Maar ja, we hebben

4.1.4 Concluding the frames

The aim of the first part of this chapter was to answer the question “*What frames can be identified concerning the reappearance of the wolf and how can we understand these frames in terms of knowledge, convictions, interests, values, norms and feelings?*”

As we have seen, inhabitants of the Veluwe combined several elements of the frame of reference. They combined their knowledge and convictions, interests, values, norms and feelings to frame the reappearance of the wolf. We have seen that all inhabitants mostly refer to their knowledge and convictions. That is not a surprise, since people select their knowledge to substantiate their opinions. Those opinions reflect their values, norms, interest and feelings. Whilst looking at the frequency of occurrence of the elements of the frame of reference, I noted that it illustrates how the total frame of the reappearance of the wolf is constructed, but it is not a parameter of the amount of meaning given to a certain element. Moreover, there are three dominant groups to be distinguished.

Firstly, we have seen the opponents, who are opposed to the reappearance of the wolf. For them, the reappearance of the wolf and the way it is treated comprises their way of living. The wolf affects their living pleasure and their work and living conditions. This however, is not solely confined to the wolf as such, but wildlife in general is nuisance that should be controlled by humans. Wild boar and deer are also affecting agricultural pastures and the restoration of animals such as the European Bison affects the living conditions of inhabitants of the Veluwe. This results from policy makers who do not understand the way of life and the practicality of it. It is all thought of behind a desk. According to them, there is no room for wild animals in the Netherlands. The Netherlands is a garden that should be maintained.

Secondly, the proponents who are completely unequivocal when it comes to the reappearance of the wolf. The wolf belongs in the Netherlands and belongs in nature and should be accepted and given the space it needs. It is an important return for biodiversity and it can revitalize certain natural areas. Issues concerning the reappearance of the wolf are exaggerated and human induced. It is the product of Little Red Riding Hood stories. The amount of sheep that are being killed by dogs doesn't even break the news. It is because humans have lost connection with nature and that we have the arrogance to think that we are able to control nature that we see the reappearance of the wolf as a problem. Rather, we should regain contact with nature again in order to accept the wolf and to accept nature as such. For if not, we are destroying the very thing that we depend upon.

Lastly, we have identified the navigators. This group has a rather equivocal view on the reappearance of the wolf. The reappearance of the wolf is valuable for nature and biodiversity in the Netherlands. However, we have only limited space available for everyone living in this country and current wildlife is also already causing nuisance due to limited control. We should try to make sure that

ook een schaapherder met een schaapskudde, daar ben ik ook wel aan gehecht. Dus ze moeten wel een beetje kijken waar die wolf zich bevindt en als ie zich gaat vermeerderen dat de balans in de natuur wel een beetje blijft.

everyone's needs are met, including that of the animals. The balance that exist in nature should be maintained through human interference. This should be achieved by human controlled nature and wildlife management. We have to accept the reappearance of the wolf, as long as people and society are not bothered with it. For if that is the case, something should be done about it.

4.2 Framing human-nature relationships

In this part of Chapter 4, we are going to find an answer to the second question I drew up, namely: "*How do the frames of various groups illustrate their perspectives on the reappearance the wolf and subsequently their notions of the human-nature relationship?*" Based on the contents of the frames, I derived three dominant perspectives: the wolf as intruder, the wolf as innocent wildlife and wolf pragmatism. The perspectives will be discussed separately and they will be connected to the groups I mentioned in the first section.

4.2.1 The wolf as intruder

For individuals who perceive the wolf as an intruder, the identification with the landscape is very important. They identify themselves with certain aspects of the land, which are consequently very important to defend. Therefore, the wolves pose a threat to the identity of these individuals. Their identity is also threatened by the wolf not complying to the separation of nature and culture. This distinction became clear when inhabitants noted that the Netherlands is a garden, in which there is no space for wolves. Or when specifically mentioned:

"This is a cultural landscape. Wildlife cannot take its own course." (R3, 02/05/2019)⁵⁴

I already argued that one's background does not immediately determine ones disposition towards the wolf. It is rather the things the inhabitants identified themselves with that seem to be affecting their disposition. During the interviews, I have seen the contents of those environmental identities. I interviewed inhabitants who mentioned themselves as being opponent, framing the wolf as a threat to *their* way of living. R17 for instance, framed himself as nature person, who loves mountain biking, running, being in the woods etc. However, the reappearance of the wolf threatened to comprise this way of living. The places he used to go as a child and the places where his children were playing in the forests were cut off from them. The connections he had to the land are all of a sudden compromised. According to him, there is no room for a wild wolf, because it will result in humans being banned from certain places. So, although not necessarily relying on the separation of nature and culture, R17 showed the wolf can be an intruder, regardless of how one looks at the relationship between nature and culture. R17 did not frame the domains as clearly separated, but did however, see the wolf as intruding *his* space. R3

⁵⁴ Dit is een cultuurland. Hier kun je niet zomaar het wild zijn gang laten gaan.

noted a similar intrusion of space. When talking about the reappearance of the wolf, he noted how it would affect the conditions of the roads surrounding his farm. There would probably be more road narrowing's, resulting in more difficulties manoeuvring his agricultural machines and farmers might not even be allowed on the provincial roads anymore. In addition, there were the more traditional views of humans dominating the nature, and therefore seeing the wolf as an intruder. R5 for instance, who noted that the wolf should have been shot at the border, for there is no room for it here. He noted that this is a cultural landscape, dominated and controlled by humans in which a wolf has no place. Although identifying himself as a nature person as well, part of his environmental identity relied on humans controlling that very nature and the wolf does not comply with that. Examples of this disposition were also apparent when he talked about other animals. Boar for instance, who were allowed to roam freely, but were now destroying everything. They should be managed, for nature cannot run its own course.

What the interviewees make clear is that they have a sense of place, a connection to the land which relies on certain aspects of that landscape and the wolf is an intruder of that place. In addition, what R3 and R17 make clear, is that it is not merely a mental connection, they are emplaced. They are being formed by the interpretations and meanings of the land. The meanings and interpretation inhabitants give to the land form their opinion. For R3, farming and the way he normally drives around the landscape using the roads forms him and R17 is formed by the meanings the landscape has for him; where he went with his children and where he used to run or mountain bike. So, in addition to threatening one's environmental identity by not complying to the separation of nature and culture, it can be seen as an intruder through threatening aspects of one's place.

4.2.2 *Wolf as innocent wildlife*

Opposing the view of the wolf as an intruder are the individuals who see the wolf as an innocent victim of human hostility and/or see the wolf as a friend. This comes with some hostility towards the opponents of the wolf. A reaction visible when looking at different Facebook groups, or for instance visible in the framing by R18. R18 framed hunters – who would like to hunt wolves, or who oppose wolf presence – as killers who like to shoot innocent animals, and got visibly upset when talking about them.

“If it would be hunting to control the population, then they should welcome the wolf, so we don't have to do it. No, they just like shooting too much. Back here too, as soon as there is something, they shoot.” (R18, 12/06/2019)⁵⁵

At first sight, it seemed that the proponents were able to acknowledge the place of a wolf in a landscape we also inhabit. Especially the predatory nature of the wolf is an aspect that they seemed thoroughly aware of. They noted the ecological significant role it could play in the Dutch ecosystems and what an

⁵⁵ Als het beheersjacht zou zijn, dan zouden de jagers moeten zeggen laat de wolf maar komen dan hoeven wij het niet meer te doen. Nee ze vinden het schieten gewoon veel te leuk. Hierachter ook, het knalt, zodra er wat is

asset it would be to the Dutch biodiversity. Especially the proponents were aware of the ecological function of the wolf, noting the way animals behave when hunted or when not. In addition, the wolf's natural autonomy was very much valued. In other words, the proponents seemed to value the wildness that comes with a wolf and with a self-sustaining ecosystem. Hence, what appears to be the case is that the proponents in this study seem to be able to acknowledge the place and ecological role wolves occupy in a landscape.

However, albeit acknowledging the wildness of a wolf, what I also encountered was the proponents blaming humans for issues concerning the wolf. The wolf was not to blame, because even if a wolf would kill sheep, the problem would be that the sheep were not thoroughly guarded. Proponents considered every notion concerning wolf issues as human induced. Instead of considering the wolf might cause some problems, the proponents respond with arguments that, according to them, show that the wolf is not to blame. Humans cause trouble. Not wolves. Thus, proponents might acknowledge the ecological role of a wolf, but they have difficulties acknowledging the place of a wolf in a landscape that is *also* inhabited by humans.

4.2.3 Wolf pragmatism

Both the inhabitants who see the wolf as intruder, as well as the inhabitant who see it as innocent wildlife, are firmly imbedded in their particular outlook on the issue. Navigators on the other hand, seemed to approach the issue with more pragmatism. They mostly upheld the disposition that we should monitor how the wolves are doing and should let them be if they are not causing any nuisance.

“And, subsequently, how are you going to control the introduction [reappearance of the wolf] and at the same time, and then we return to when it becomes successful, what is the impact on the short term and definitely also on the long term. On the short term, it is nice and fun and on the long term oh dear, there many, and what are we going to do about it”. (R13, 21/05/2019)⁵⁶

Within their frames, it became apparent that ‘wildness’ is not something that is easily dealt with. They noted the need for managing the wolf and monitoring it, because we should intervene, as we are doing with all animals. They noted how things can get out of hand when we do not, as has happened with boar or deer for instance. This aspect of the fear of uncontrollability was also apparent among the opponents, who kept stressing the need for management as well, again with several examples of other wildlife damages property, because they are not kept under control. The proponents also displayed the need for some sort of control. The problems are human induced and we should do something about that. Hence, the way the opponents, the navigators and the proponents frame the reappearance of the wolf clearly

⁵⁶ En, vervolgens, en hoe ga je dat dan begeleiden enerzijds de introductie maar tegelijkertijd ook, en dan komen we terug op als het succesvol wordt, was is de impact daarvan op de korte termijn en zeker ook op de lange termijn. De korte termijn is van leuk en aardig en de langere termijn is van oh jee, het zijn er toch wel heel veel ,wat gaan we eraan doen.

shows that a certain wildness is no longer an option for them. Their environmental identities rest on the notion that nature is to be controlled by humans (in the case of the opponents and navigators) or that nature is something that cannot be blamed and humans have to be controlled (in case of the proponents). Consequently, every addition or change therefore has to be monitored, controlled or even excluded and humans have to be kept in check as well, for we are the ones that cause issues.

4.2.4 Concluding the human nature relationship

The aim of this part was the answer the question: “*How do the frames of various groups illustrate their perspectives on the reappearance the wolf and subsequently their notions of the human-nature relationship?*” I argued that among the opponents, we can trace frames that are related to seeing wolves as intruders. The perspectives is based on the separation between human and nature, but seeing a wolf as intruder can be a result of other forms of identity. The wolf can also intrude one’s space by disconnecting people from their connection to the landscape. Inhabitants who framed the wolf as innocent wildlife stated its ecological function and predatory nature as an important aspect of it and seemed to actually value this wildness. However, when further analysed, it became clear that they also could not acknowledge the place of a wolf in a landscape we also inhabit, for they see the wolf as innocent wildlife that cannot be blamed. According to them. The wolf is a victim of human induced issues. The frames by the navigators portrayed a form of pragmatism. They framed being fond of nature and they stressed the importance of nature. But, nature should not become a nuisance and moreover, balance should be maintained and controlled by humans. This notion of controllability seems important for all groups.

Human control

The absence of positive effects of the wolf, besides it hunting game, was notable. There were no frames of the fact that forest grows where wolves are present, or that other animals - including threatened species like monk vulture or the red kite- return in places where the wolf is present (ARK, 2014). Some of the knowledge concerning the positive effects of the presence of wolves is of course detailed and rather specific and could therefore be unknown to the general public. However, the positives sides were rarely mentioned, even by proponents, who focused more on what others were not doing right.

Interviewees namely framed nature and nature management in terms of human agency. It often occurred that participants, as mentioned in the results, were talking about the presence in terms of ‘as long as it does not bother me’. When it was bothering them, there should be human interference. Such an interference was for some participants also necessary when things got out of hand; when there would be too many wolves (or any animal for that matter). This human agency often occurred when participants were talking about a balance of nature. What exactly that balance is, proved hard to say. But it seems that they were talking about their ideas of the relationship between nature and culture. For most of the participants, this balance has to be maintained by nature management; human agency. Thus, most

participant showed that they were no longer able to deal with wildness, by stressing the need for human intervention.

Opponents mentioned the lack of being able to cope with the situations, whereas navigators and proponents noted several ways by which they could prevent depredation, and thus protect their animals. It is in this notion of their coping appraisal where the loss of control is apparent. What we have seen above, is that this sense of control to some extent determines our ability to accept the presence of a wild animal. Within the group of proponents, there were inhabitants who valued the autonomy of nature, but I do wonder how far that perspective stretches. It is namely rather easy to express this fondness, but how does that perspective shift when individuals are for instance confronted with being cut off of areas where they used to go, issues presented by R17? Some of the proponents have had somewhat negative experiences with predatory animals, such as foxes, but they mentioned not really being bothered with it. R11 for instance noted that:

“I regularly have an owl on my aviary. That is a lot of trouble. Birds are flying everywhere, bumping against the mesh. Then you think, well yeah. I am bothered with it of course. But on the other side you think well, yeah, then I should go live in Apeldoorn, where there are no foxes or martens. That is the toll you pay of living this freely. I accept that as it is.” (R11, 16/05/2019)⁵⁷

Or R7:

“Well look, three times my chickens were killed by a marten like animal probably, we think. Then I have to either have a better pen, or accept that I cannot have chickens. Because that marten is here. It has a territory exactly in my garden. Well. That is it.” (R7, 06/05/2019)⁵⁸

Both quotes show an attitude or disposition that surpasses controllability so it seems. Yet, it might have to do with the way inhabitants are connected to the land, what kind of things make them value their living area. It may be that both R7 and R11 accept the fact that their animals might be eaten by predators, but what if they could not go into the forests they value so much anymore, as was noted by R17. R7 noted her valuation of the forest close to her home several times. I cannot help but wonder what the reaction would be should that forest be closed or fenced up due to the presence of wolves (or other animals).

⁵⁷ Ik heb ook regelmatig een uil 's nachts op de volière. Dat geeft ook een hoop problemen. Vogels die gaan vliegen, knallen tegen het gaas aan. Denk je, ja. Dan stoor je je daar natuurlijk wel aan. Maar aan de andere kant denk je van ja, als ik dat niet wil dan moet ik in Apeldoorn gaan wonen, daar heb je geen vos en geen marter. Dat is de tol die je betaald als je zo vrij woont. Dat neem ik dan maar op de kop toe

⁵⁸ Ja. Kijk, ik heb tot drie keer toe kippen gehad en tot drie keer toe doodgebeten door een marterachtige denken we. Dan moet ik of een beter hok, of accepteren dat ik geen kippen kan houden. Want die marter die is er. Die heeft het leefgebied daar precies achter bij mij in de tuin. Ja. Zo is het

4.3 Frames and coexistence

“What frames can be identified among inhabitants concerning the reappearance of the wolf and how do these frames illustrate our ability to coexist with wild animals?” “That was the question I started this research with. My aim was to find an answer to this question. In doing so, I drew up the two sub-questions I answered above. In this part, using these answers I gave, I am going to answer the main question of this study.

We have seen that there are three groups among the inhabitants of the Veluwe that frame the wolf in their own way. There are opponents who are concerned with the reappearance of the wolf. They see that their way of living is being comprised. They too, value nature and like being in nature. They do not dislike the wolf as an entity. Rather, they see the negative consequences of the reappearance of the wolf. Moreover, they are rather sceptic towards institutions and policies that are there to both protect their livelihoods and the wolf. Their frame in the end, is seeing the ‘entirety’ of the wolf as problematic.

The proponents on the other hand are completely unequivocal when it comes to the reappearance of the wolf. For them, the wolf belongs in nature and should be accepted and given the space it needs. They frame the problems or issues concerning the reappearance of the wolf as human induced. Humans are disconnected from nature that and humans are giving the wolf a negative image through myths and fake news. The group is consequently concerned with the well-being of the wolf. According to the proponents, humans should regain connection with nature again in order to accept the wolf.

Lastly, we have seen the navigators. This group has a rather equivocal view on the reappearance of the wolf. For them, humans should maintain the balance that exist in nature through nature management. This group values nature and wildlife and there should be room for nature, but in the end, it should be the humans who are controlling the situation. For this group, the frame exists of accepting the reappearance of the wolf, as long as they (or society) are not bothered with it.

We have seen what elements are involved, and moreover, we have seen *how* they are involved in framing the reappearance of the wolf by inhabitants of the Veluwe. The contextual patterns became apparent whilst analysing the interviews. The groups framed the wolf in their own ways, which thus illustrates that a general perspective on who is on what side of the debate is too simplistic. We have seen that background characteristics do seem to be able to determine to some extent on what side of the debate someone is, but one should not rely on that. Agricultural entrepreneurs do dominate the opponent group, but there was also an inhabitant who opposed to the reappearance of the wolf with a completely different background. Whereas the opponents are concerned, the group did not only consist of people who are to some extent engaged with nature. This showed me, that one cannot assign a certain frame to a certain group solely based on the background characteristics of that group. Frames concerning the reappearing wolf are more complex. Figure 2 shows the different wolves and the composition of the elements as used by the inhabitants.

Furthermore, what became clear when looking at the different perspectives, opponents see the wolf as an intruder of their place. Proponents see the wolf as innocent wildlife and navigators seem to

have a more practical approach. Moreover, what became apparent that at the core of this question seems to be some notion of controllability at the connection inhabitants have with their living place. Coexisting and therefore allowing for some autonomy seems to be a difficult matter. Even when the situation is approached from a wildlife management perspective in which wildlife seems to be given autonomy, wildlife is robbed of their autonomy. Precisely the fact that they are managed robs them of their very wildness. Reviewing what inhabitants told me, and reading on social media and talking to experts, it might even be the case that coexisting with wild nature is very hard for Dutch inhabitants, and is something that should be relearned entirely. Acknowledging the presence of an autonomous wild animal is something that seems very difficult.

A systematic approach

The groups are similar in portraying the complexity of the reappearance of the wolf. One cannot simply say that people who own livestock are opponent, because their livelihood will be damaged, or that people who are fond of nature are proponents because they like restoration of nature. No, there were of course frames that followed this pattern, but what we have seen is that the issues are more complex. Livestock may be at risk but there are more foreseen consequences affecting living conditions. This accounts for the proponents as well. They might be fond of nature, but so was everyone. All interviewees expressed their value for nature or being a nature person. The proponents however frame the reappearance as a societal problem and that is exactly where overlap is becoming salient. For the opponents, it too is a societal problem, caused by certain groups that are not fully aware of the conditions on the Veluwe, or who do not know how things work in 'practice'. For the proponents it is a societal problem, because society is disconnected from nature and society has forgotten how to live with nature. The framing in terms of norms show this: opponents framed it should be management, navigators framed in terms of management but society should also accept some more and proponents mentioned the need for acceptance. The frames by these groups showed that, apart from how different the contents are, they also convene around a single matter; there is need for a systematic approach. This approach seems to ask for some sort of management. Although proponents framed in terms of acceptance, they are somewhat concerned over the wolf being harmed. The wolf should be protected, which consequently asks for management of some sorts as well. Furthermore, as I have shown above, the proponents seem somewhat indifferent when it comes to depredation of their own animals, I haven't come across notions in which their connection with the landscape might have become at stake. Contrary to both the opponents and the navigators, who clearly framed wolf related issues in terms of what was important to them to preserve. Hence, a systematic approach must address the connection of inhabitants to the landscape.

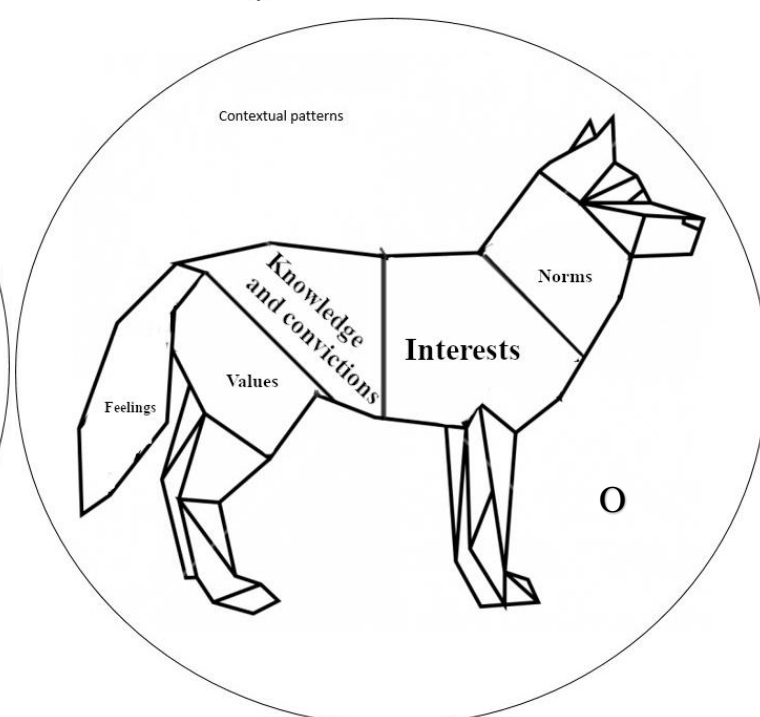
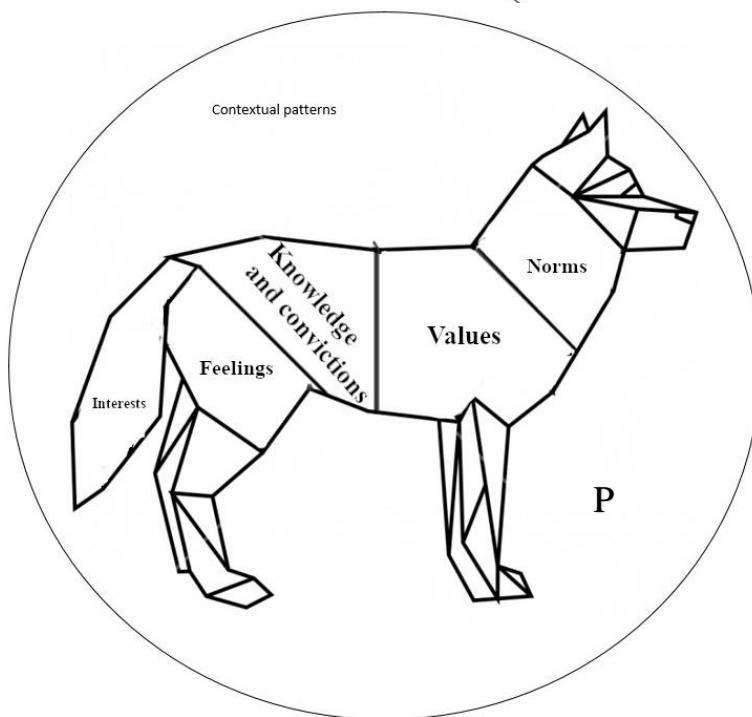
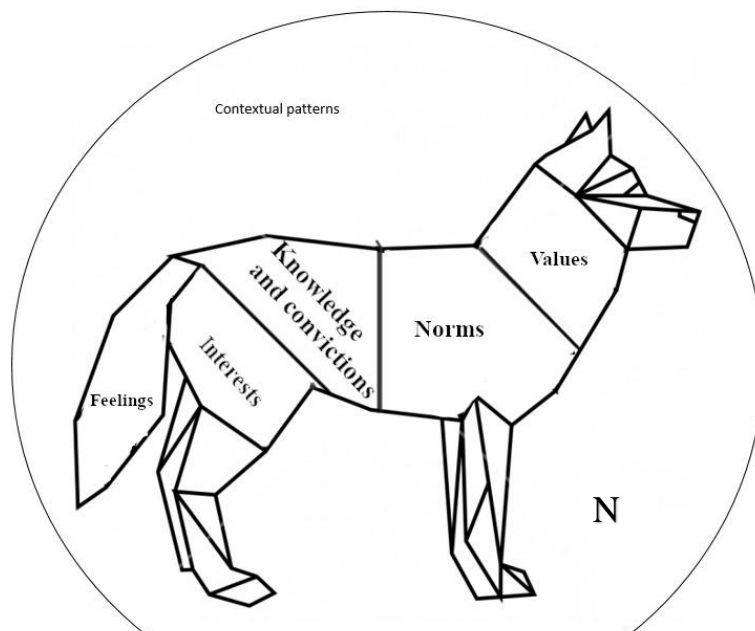


Figure 2. Visualisation of the dominant frames per group

*N=Navigators; P=Proponents; O=Opponents

5. Conclusion and limitations

This chapter will provide a summarizing conclusion on the findings from the previous chapter. The conclusion is followed by the limitations of this study.

5.1 Conclusion

Considering the findings of this study, we have seen that there are three different groups identifiable among the inhabitants of the Veluwe, who each frame the reappearance of the wolf in their own way. Additionally, we have seen what those frames tell us about the ability to co-exist with the wolf. Moreover, as we have seen, inhabitants use their knowledge and convictions of the Veluwe to substantiate further elements of their frame, which ranged from an emphasis on interests for proponents, on various aspects for the navigators and on values for the proponents. The frames the inhabitants used illustrate possibilities of co-existing with wild animals like the wolf. The acceptance of wildness seems to be difficult and it became clear that all groups are in need of some sort of management in order to maintain some sort of control over the wolf.

Furthermore, what I have tried to illustrate in this study is that in order to understand how inhabitants frame the wolf, one needs to understand their living conditions, their occupations and possible (occupational) consequences with regard to the reappearance of the wolf. There is need for an understanding of the area. The connections the inhabitants have with the Veluwe and the existing wildlife. This study shows that such an understanding cannot come from a generalized view, but requires specific views and specific inputs from different actors involved. It shows that framing the wolf in terms of the opinion of some (extreme) hunters and some (extreme) conservations is not able to grasp the complexity of how things are seen by the inhabitants of the Veluwe. Moreover, it shows that every group needs to be taken seriously, for stereotyping overlooks important aspects.

This of course, has consequences for conservation efforts. As I argued in Chapter 1, this study aims to contribute to both the realms of society and ecology, the socio-ecological realm. The findings show that in order to protect the wolf, conservation efforts should also focus on the specifics of an area from the point of view of the inhabitants, for if that point of view is overlooked, inhabitants are not fond of conservation efforts and will thus not support them. The opponents and navigators for instance, mentioned a lot of conservation efforts in which the point of view of inhabitants or locals were overlooked, resulting in resistance against the efforts. Their frame was amongst others, based on this sort of knowledge.

Combining frames and a more philosophical approach on the return of the wolf proved to be a valuable combination in answering the question whether people are still able to co-exist with wild animals like the wolf. Analysing the frames provided data that could be used to interpret in terms of co-existence, showing that frames can provide an abundance of information with regard to how people react to certain situation and how they interpret certain events. Analysing frames in human-nature (or human-

wildlife) discussions in the future is a very useful tool in understanding these relationships in specific contexts.

5.2 Limitations

The choices made to conduct this research unavoidably result in some limitations. The gaps left by this study could be subject to further research. First of all, the way I presented the results incorporated some part of the context of the interviewees, but I have not incorporated the largest part of the context that is part of the frames of the inhabitants. This is due to my inexperience with qualitative research, as well as choices made in how to present the data. The chosen method allowed me to answer the question I drew up. However, one could of course apply other methods in order to highlight different aspects of the human-wolf (animal) relationship.

Secondly, the way I choose to get in touch with people on the Veluwe resulted in a somewhat age-homogenous group of interviewees. I reached out via my own network and contacted several interest groups and municipalities to get me in touch with inhabitants. I was able to ensure a variety in occupational backgrounds, but as I was dependent on the people that reached out for and to me (via the interest groups and municipalities), I could only select the interviewees to some extent. Nevertheless, again, I am very grateful for their help. Connected to this procedure of selecting the inhabitants, is that the inhabitants I spoke were to some extent already interested in the reappearance of the wolf. They knew about it and had an opinion about it. As I spoke to people on the Veluwe, as well as outside the Veluwe, it occurred to me that there are also a lot of people who do not know about the reappearance of the wolf. I think that they too, should be a target group for further research, as it is interesting to know about their opinions on wolves (e.g. do they even care?). Especially people who live in urbanized areas might not know about the return of the wolf. In this study, I interviewed two inhabitants who lived in a somewhat urbanized environment. One already knew - out of interest- and the other was not really aware of the presence of the wolf. The difference between rural and urban opinions might be interesting, as well as necessary, since it is likely that some wolves eventually will roam near outskirts of cities that are close to the Veluwe. So, the methodological choices resulted in some limitations.

Furthermore, as I mentioned in the beginning of this study, I set out to challenge myself to do a qualitative research. During the process, I had to pick up the skills that belong to this way of research and put them into practice immediately. My interview skills therefore, are not near as good as the interview skills of an experienced interviewer. This might have improved along the way, but there is still a lot to learn. Thus, the interviews I conducted might be lesser in-depth and might contain lesser information than if the inhabitants were interviewed by a practiced interviewer. This is also the case for the analysis. The analysis might have been more thorough had it been done by a practiced qualitative analyst.

Moreover, I chose a more or less interdisciplinary approach. I am still convinced of the value of an interdisciplinary approach and I think it provided very valuable insights. However, structuring the

different elements proved to be quite a challenge. I encourage to do more interdisciplinary research and to find a well suited structure for presenting it.

Concluding this part, is that the chosen direction of a study always leads to some blind spots for other relevant and interesting information. I already stated several of these relevant and interesting directions in Chapter 4 that should be subject to further research.

6. Discussion

In this chapter, I am reflecting on the results and I will discuss the results in relation to earlier research. I will put the results a broader perspective by looking at how this research fits in the existing knowledge on human-animal relations. First, I will look for similarities between the findings of this study and a study by van Herzele, Aarts and Casaer (2015) on wildlife comeback in Flanders. Secondly, I will do a similar thing using the book of Skogen, Krange and Figari, (2017): *Wolf conflicts: a sociological study*. Thirdly, I will reflect on the second part of the analysis by comparing it to the article by Drenthen (2016). In the last part of this chapter, I will look at the findings from another philosophical perspective with regard to the connection people have with a place.

6.1 *Wildlife comeback in Flanders*

The article by van Herzele, Aarts and Casaer (2015) on wildlife comeback in Flanders was already mentioned briefly. Van Herzele, Aarts and Casaer (2015) traced the fault lines in a debate on the return of foxes and wild boar in Flanders, and found that debates emerged around similar arguments. The debates unfolded mainly along three fault lines:

- Belonging / Not belonging: the animals belong in nature or they do not belong here
- Opportunity / Threat: animals are useful and provide opportunities versus they pose a threat
- Control by intervention / Nature controls itself: the necessity to keep animals under control vs. nature controls itself.

These three fault lines were also mentioned in the interviews concerning the reappearance of the wolf on the Veluwe. In Chapter 4, we have seen how inhabitants of the Veluwe frame the wolf in terms of not belonging here or being part of Dutch nature. We have seen how inhabitants framed the opportunities, but also the threats the wolf could pose to livestock. We have seen how they mentioned that it could pose a threat to the living conditions of the inhabitants, but also how it could contribute to Dutch nature by predation on animals that are now seen as too abundant. The last fault line, whether or not the wolf should be managed or nature should manage itself was again part of the way the wolf was framed by inhabitants of the Veluwe. We saw how opponents and navigators mentioned that the wolf should be managed and monitored by the proper authorities, contrary to the proponents, who mentioned that nature is capable of controlling itself. Frames concerning the reappearance of the wolf thus seem to follow a similar pattern as the debates concerning the reappearance of wildlife in Flanders.

Following the identification of the fault lines, the authors integrated the findings in the three layers of debate. Whereas I did not observe debates for this study, the frames of the inhabitants of the Veluwe follow similar patterns as the argumentation used in the observed debates in Flanders. Comparing these patterns allows for a deeper understanding of the frames used by the inhabitants and illustrates the similarities between this study and the study in Flanders.

6.1.1 Dichotomies

In Flanders, observed arguments rested on a small set of binary oppositions or dichotomies. Evaluations that contradict each other were underpinned by facts and definitions. Whilst framing the reappearance of the wolf, inhabitants mainly framed in terms of knowledge and convictions, thereby underpinning evaluations with facts and definitions. We have seen that the knowledge and convictions element was used to legitimize certain dispositions and to substantiate frames. Concerning the belonging / not belonging fault line, we saw that participants mentioned that the wolf does belong here, by mentioning its place on the planet and its place in Dutch nature. However, those frames were opposed to by inhabitants who mentioned that the wolf was kicked out of the Netherlands for a reason.

Furthermore, as discussed, we have seen frames noting that the wolf could be useful in hunting animals that are now overpopulated, such as deer and wild boar. Yet, on the other hand, there were frames regarding the damage a wolf can do, such as damage to livestock. We have seen frames regarding nature's ability to control itself versus frames that address the need for nature management. These are all dichotomies, running along the fault lines that can be traced in the frames of the participants.

6.1.2 Arguments

Whereas the debate in Flanders was heated and involved value-laden language - as we also see on social media in the Netherlands where the reappearance of the wolf is being discussed (NoWolves platform, 2019; WolvenNederland platform, 2019) - inhabitants of the Veluwe were fairly moderate in their answering. Although the frames were mainly dichotomous, participants also acknowledged the existence of other possibilities, or middle ground. This was mostly expressed in terms of "*we have to wait to see what happens*" or "*it is too earlier to tell*". However, a common way of substantiating one's argument - to which I referred to as people referring to things they already know - was linking the issue of the wolf to other issues at hand. Issues were mainly concerned with damage or nuisance caused by deer and boar. Inhabitants used their experiences with boar and deer, mentioning the damage they do to agricultural land or gardens, or the nuisance they cause. Badgers also were a subject of nuisance because of digging dens and their protected status. These nuisances hence, were projected on the appearance of the wolf. Although participants mentioned that the wolf came here on its own, its reappearance was also compared to the reintroduction of other animals, such as the black grouse or otter, as mentioned above. The links to these - in their eyes failed - introductions, were a link to the possible costs of the reappearance (and management) of the wolf.

Another practice of framing the reappearance of the wolf is making the wolf no longer the specific subject of the frame. Instead the institutions and (social) relations involved became the centre of the frame. Specifically, it involved the responsibilities, interests and agenda of those actors. Van Herzele, Aarts and Caesar (2015) referred to such practices as a strategy of '*linkages to social relationships*'. It involved frames in which the responsibilities of the province, municipality or even

specific NGOs are mentioned, such as flora and fauna management, who are responsible of keeping track of wildlife in the area.

Stereotypes of certain groups were used to demonize or blame other groups of either the reappearance of the wolf, or being killers who take pleasure in shooting animals. This involved frames concerning hunters, who are not in favour of the reappearance of the wolf because they feel competition and as a consequence, can no longer shoot the same amount of animals. On the other hand, it involved frames concerning the 'greens' or 'nature people'. Being the subject of stereotypes was also addressed. R9 for instance, mentioned that he was bothered with the fact that farmers are being blamed for everything, such as biodiversity loss and water contamination (Noted speech, 14/05/2019). He felt that there were others that were to blame as well.

Comparing the findings of Herzele, Aarts and Casear (2015) shows some clear similarities between how people in Flanders discussed the return of wildlife in the area and how inhabitants of the Veluwe frame the reappearance of the wolf. It shows what strategies are used to build certain frames and how inhabitants find legitimacy for their arguments and claims.

6.2. Wolf conflicts: a sociological study

The book by Skogen, Krange and Figari (2017) is the result of about fifteen years of sociological research on wolf conflicts in Norway. The authors observe the conflicts between wolves and people as conflicts *between people over wolves* (p.8). They paint a picture of wolf conflicts as driven by social change in rural areas, embedded in class conflicts and struggles of knowledge, legitimacy and power. The social cleavages they have observed during their research touch upon things inhabitants of the Veluwe talked about or they are outright similar. Therefore, their findings are useful in both observing conflicts over wildlife in the Netherlands, as they can be a source of inspiration for further research.

In their fifth chapter, Skogen, Krange and Figari present findings based on focus group sessions held in Norway. These focus group sessions were attended by inhabitants of Norway with a variety of backgrounds; farmers, sheep breeders, landowners, hunters, conservationists, hikers, mushers (someone who works with sled dogs), local tourists operators, teachers, architects, nurses, sawmill workers and neighbourhood groups. The goal of the focus groups was to find out whether the social conflict (between proponents and opponents of the wolf in Norway) lines up with the different perceptions of the wolf. Please note that, Skogen, Krange and Figari tried to understand the wolf conflict in terms of a social representations, which can be described as: *“the collective elaboration of a social object by the community for the purpose of behaving and communicating”* (Moscovici 1963: 251 in Skogen, Krange and Figari, p93), whereas I studied the construction of cognitive frames by inhabitants of the Veluwe: *“When one encounters a new situation (or makes a substantial change in one’s view of the present problem) one selects from memory a structure called a Frame. This is a remembered framework to be adapted to fit reality by changing details as necessary”* (Minsky, 1974, p1). The difference here, lies in the phenomena

to which frames and representations refer (Buijs et.al. 2011). Social representations are the socially developed interpretations of a specific object, whereas frames are related to a specific social-political issue. Through framing an issue, actors position themselves with regard to the issue; they define what is at stake and what topics should be taken into account. A frame therefore, tends to be more dynamic (Buijs et.al. 2011). Social representations on the other hand, transcend specific issues. They are developed through social practices which are in turn related to a variety of issues and contexts (Buijs et.al. 2011). The conclusions of this study can hence not be directly compared to the conclusions of the study by Skogen, Krange and Figari. There are however similarities to be found.

6.2.1 *Entirety, not entity*

I will not elaborate too much on the social representations theory. However, the following is key in understanding how it relates to this study. Simply put, the social representation of a phenomenon is described as ideas at different levels; the central and peripheral levels. The central core can be seen as a set of basic convictions that are non-negotiable. These are the culturally rooted conceptions that are self-explanatory and self-evident. The second level, the peripheral level, consists of ideas that are flexible and heterogeneous. It is at this level where conflict or negotiations over wolves take place (Skogen, Krange and Figari, 2017). The topics of conflict in the peripheral level are exactly the topics that make inhabitants opponents, proponents or navigators.

Similarly to what I earlier phrased as '*it is about the entirety, not the entity*', Skogen, Krange and Figari found that at the core of their ideas, interviewees had very similar ideas about the wolf. The wolf is a majestic and pretty animal, and the foresight of a possible encounter is exciting. The terms used by their interviewees to talk about the wolf are very similar to the ones that the inhabitants of the Veluwe used. What I observed was that inhabitants of the Veluwe do not dislike the wolf itself and the problem is not with the wolf. Inhabitants noted that one cannot blame the wolf, for it goes where it wants to go. But the ones who defend the wolf, those are to blame for its reappearance and consequently its (possible) nuisance.

The conflict in the study of Skogen, Krange and Figari, arises over the peripheral ideas. Interestingly, these ideas seem to be very similar, if not downright the same, as the fault lines found by Herzele, Aarts and Casaer (2015). Consequently, the peripheral ideas over which conflicts arises are similar to the main framing topics, for I have argued above how this study related to the study by Herzele, Aarts and Casaer. Questions that raised discussion among the interviewees of Skogen, Krange and Figari (2017) were whether or not the wolf belongs in the Norwegian forests, whether it is perceived as threatening or threatened, and whether it represents a danger to people. Comparing both the study in Flanders by Herzele, Aarts and Casaer (2015) and the study in Norway by Skogen, Krange and Figari (2017) shows that there seem to be very similar patterns in different countries when it comes to the return of wildlife. The comparison shows that there can be at least three core topics distilled from the return of wildlife in Flanders and the reappearance of wolves in the Netherlands and Norway. Those

topics (does it belong here, is it a threat or opportunity and should we manage or leave be) could prove to be key in finding ways to facilitate coexistence. If we can find acceptable solutions to the concerns people have regarding these topics, inhabitants of areas with wolves might be more willing to accept the presence of the wolves. Whether these topics are found elsewhere should be subject to further research.

6.2.2 Secret reintroduction

When interviewing R16, I was told a very remarkable story. R16 told me that she had encountered a person who told her a story about the wolf being brought to the Netherlands by animal transport. The conclusion of the story was that the wolf might not have come on its own at all. R16 however, was not entirely sure whether she had to believe the story but her husband was quite sure it was real.

Interestingly, Skogen, Krange and Figari (2017) found that both in French studies, issued by Isabelle Mauz, as in Norwegian studies issued by them, that there are some stories about secret reintroductions of wolves. The analysis of the comparison of the French and Norwegian studies show that wolf reintroduction rumors help people make sense of a troubled situation in which power structures are hard to grasp and seem impossible to confront (Skogen Krange and Figari, 2017). Although rumors of secret wolf introduction have not yet reached popular media in the Netherlands, as was the case in the studies in France and Norway, the analysis by Skogen, Krange and Figari again shows the importance of understanding the social dynamics in play when wildlife returns. And although I heard it only once whilst interviewing the inhabitants of the Veluwe, the rumor was picked up by their friends, as R16 told me. It might be that the surfacing of such rumors is a signal of distress by inhabitants. Further research could study the origin of rumors and their symbolic power in the Netherlands.

6.3 Human-nature relationship

In his article ‘The return of the wild in the Anthropocene. Wolf resurgence in the Netherlands’ Drenthen (2016) studied the reaction of humans to the spontaneous rewilding of the wolf. According to Drenthen, the return of the wolf challenges our existing ideas about ourselves and our place in the landscape. Drenthen distilled three dominant perspectives, each linked to a particular traditional notion of the human-nature relationship. As I am going to argue below, these perspectives resonate to some extent with the results of this study, as with the studies by Herzele, Aarts and Caesar (2015) and Skogen, Krange and Figari (2017). It is in these empirical studies that we see the contents of the perspectives that Drenthen described.

6.3.1 Wolves as intruders

Individuals who perceive the wolf as an intruder are accompanied by reactions of disbelief, followed by anxiety and hostility. Drenthen observed these reactions when the first wolves appeared in the Netherlands. One was found dead near the side of a road. Even when DNA-matching proved that the animal was a wolf, people still could (would not) not believe that there were wolves in the Netherlands.

There even was an explanation of the wolf being there: it was dropped there by Polish immigrant workers who put it there as a prank after they had ran over the wolf in Germany or Poland. This story was also picked up by the media, who accepted it as the explanation of the wolf's presence. Drenthen argues that the idea of wild animals not belonging in present-day cultural landscapes is common in the responses to the wolf's reappearance. This means that as long as wolves remain in the wilderness, there is no problem, but as soon as they enter our world, they are seen as intruders. The idea of wildness entering our space should somehow be tamed by stories that comfort its presence. Drenthen notes that the most important problem with the arrival of wolves appears to be that they undermine the very distinction between wild and cultivated land. In his article, he notes the importance of the distinction between culture and nature for this group. Because the wolf enters the cultural landscape, individual who uphold this perspective have difficulties acknowledge the wolves place in the landscape. What I made clear is that individuals who see the wolf as intruder have a strong sense of place. They feel that their space is intruded by the wolf and are therefore not font of its return. So, whereas Drenthen (2016) observed reactions of disbelief, followed by anxiety and hostility, I observed that the wolf intrudes people's place, which results in nuisance. Moreover, I noted that seeing the wolf as an intruder does not have to be based on a strong belief in the distinction between nature and culture. I argued that the way inhabitants are connected to the landscape, their sense of place and their emplacement, results in feeling that the wolf is an intruder.

6.3.2 Wolf as a victim or friend

Drenthen notes that, similar to the individuals who see the wolves as intruders, individuals who see wolves as a victim or friend are also heavily emotionally involved. Drenthen notes that individuals who uphold this perspective often stress that wolves are victim to modern civilization, dominated by arrogant human chauvinism and an overly rational attitude towards nature. We have seen such frames when inhabitants talked about human induced problems. However, Drenthen also notes an aspect that I did not encounter. Wolf lovers typically neglect some facts about wolves, according to Drenthen. They especially neglect the fact that they are predators and that it consequently is in their nature to eat meat and therefore hunt. In addition, their negative view on modernization also makes them somewhat sceptical towards science. Because of this, Drenthen concludes that wolf lovers have a similar problem as wolf haters: they both find it hard to acknowledge the place of the wolf in the landscape we also inhabit.

At first, I thought that the proponents in this study were capable of acknowledging the place of the wolf in the landscape, since they were well aware of the ecological functions of a wolf. However, as I argued, proponents were not able to acknowledge possible difficulties with the wolf, or nature as a whole. Albeit acknowledging the wildness of a wolf, what I encountered was the proponents blaming humans for issues concerning the wolf. The wolf was not blame, because even if a wolf would kill sheep, the problem would be that the sheep were not thoroughly guarded. Proponents considered every notion concerning wolf issues as human induced. As Drenthen notes:

“As soon as someone only mentions that wolves might cause problems, many self-declared wolf lovers respond as if they are under attack themselves. Apparently, the very fact that someone can have genuine reasons to worry about possible adverse effects of wolves is difficult to accept.” (p.325)

Thus, proponents might acknowledge the ecological role of a wolf, but they have difficulties acknowledging the place of a wolf in a landscape that is *also* inhabited by humans. Hence, the consequence of the perspective distilled by Drenthen as the consequence of framing the wolf as innocent victims align; individuals who uphold this disposition cannot acknowledge the place of wolves in a landscape we *also* inhabit.

6.3.3 Wolf management

Both the abovementioned perspectives are blinded by a particular outlook on nature according to Drenthen. As he notes:

“Both parties seem to be blinded by their particular outlook on nature that is determined by particular ideologies and human desires, rather than by a realistic approach to the wolf as an actual animal. For this reason, many feel that the most important thing to focus on to help further the debate is to separate fact from fiction, and to fight prejudices and preconceptions about the wolf that are not based on facts.” (p.327)

Consequently, there are individuals who opt for a rational approach to the issue. Their assumption, as Drenthen notes, is that a modern rich country as the Netherlands should be able to accommodate living alongside a wolf, as long as we approach it rationally. Wolf managers recognize the advantages and disadvantages of a wolf and promote a pragmatic approach. In line with firmly embedded Dutch tradition of controlling nature, the authorities began preparing the country for the wolf's arrival. However, this rational approach appeared not flawless. When a wolf was spotted in Groningen, displaying what was marked as unnatural behaviour – that being close to homes and humans - experts and the general public opted to radio collar the animal so it could be monitored. This response was met with protest, as Drenthen notes. The conservation and preservation experts, with their emphasis on knowledge and rational thought, overlooked what the wolf stands for. Drenthen notes that, underneath the wolf plan, there seems to be fear that the wolf is uncontrollable. Managing the wolf and trying to avoid human-wildlife conflict robs nature of its wildness and wolf management therefore seems not able to deal with the symbolic meaning of a wild wolf.

The pragmatist, as I called them, also have difficulties acknowledging the wildness of a wolf. As I argued, the wolf pragmatist have difficulty acknowledging the uncontrollability of a wild wolf. I argued that this notion of control is embedded in a variety of frames that I encountered, and that opponents, proponents and navigators all need some sort of control.

The empirical work I did showed some resemblance with the work by Drenthen (2016). The conclusions of my findings and those of Drenthen (2016) more importantly, are similar. People have difficulties acknowledging the place of a wolf in a landscape they also inhabit.

6.4 Rewilding and connections to places

The concern to what extent people experience (wild) landscapes and animals has been studied quite recently by a variety of authors (Drenthen, 2018; Monbiot, 2014). Both Drenthen (2018) and Monbiot (2014) addressed reaction of people to rewilding initiatives, and noted that when an area is selected for rewilding, it often is met with resistance of some sorts.

6.4.1 Rewilding

Rewilding Europe, a pan-European organisation committed to making Europe a wilder place, defines rewilding as follows:

“Rewilding is a progressive approach to conservation. It’s about letting nature take care of itself, enabling natural processes to shape land and sea, repair damaged ecosystems and restore degraded landscapes. Through rewilding, wildlife’s natural rhythms create wilder, more biodiverse habitats.” (Rewilding Europe, n.d.)

The definition shows that rewilding initiatives are meant to let nature run its own course, without any human involvement. Moreover, the idea rests on the notion that humans are no longer in control.

Drenthen (2016) studied the reaction of humans to rewilding. As a result of different rewilding projects, nature is reclaiming ground. The establishment of large scale wilderness areas and the European ecological network Nature 2000, meant to connect existing areas has resulted in several successes. Large predators like the brown bear, Eurasian lynx, wolverine, grey wolf and golden jackal are increasing their range. This is the direct result of the efforts to increase European wilderness and connect existing areas. Such efforts are what Drenthen (2016) argues to be more conscious anthropogenic changes towards new nature. There is however, also a second form of rewilding, which resurfaces spontaneously. Apart from regaining ground in wild areas, large carnivores are repopulating Europe’s humanly-dominated landscapes. The wolf is an excellent example of spontaneously rewilding.

Drenthen (2016) argues that this spontaneous form of rewilding is met with more resistance. I already showed that when we are dealing with an animal that has its own agency, or sense of control is lost and it becomes hard to tolerate this autonomous entity. This contrasts the conscious rewilding, in

which humans are still the main agents who consciously decide to no longer control nature. The idea behind this might be to relearn to tolerate nature, as Drenthen (2016) argues, but in practice is mostly a case of ‘*controlled decontrolling of nature*’ (Keulartz, 2012, p60 in Drenthen (2016), p321). So, the emphasis seems to lie on the controlling nature of humans. As we have seen, that plays an important part for the inhabitants of the Veluwe. I argued that inhabitants have difficulties accepting the wildness of the wolf, based on what the frames illustrated about their environmental identity. However, there is another way of approaching the connection people have with a landscape I would like to briefly discuss here. This approach is called the *shifting baseline syndrome*.

6.4.2 Connections; Shifting Baseline Syndrome

In the results, we saw that R17 mentioned the difficulties he encountered regarding rewilding efforts. He would lose access to yet another area. Due to such efforts, he could no longer do what he had always been doing. I noted that such issues are part of the connection people have with the landscape. It is ‘us’ versus ‘nature’, because when nature comes, we are cut off from a certain area we used to go. We are connected⁵⁹ to the land we live on, and therefore take offense when that land is altered or somehow affected. I will reflect on those connections below.

These connections seem to be of significance in both conscious as spontaneous rewilding occurrences. There are a variety of connections possible. People can refer to different ‘layers’ of a landscape when it comes to restoring a specific area. Cultural landscapes in the Netherlands are namely often ‘layered’. The passing of time has left impressions on the landscape that, with a trained eye and familiarity with the landscape, can be ‘read’. When certain landscapes are being restored, people might refer to different layers of this landscape (Drenthen, 2018). Consequently, this results in arguments about what layer should be the baseline of restoration. This is especially the case when certain landscapes are being ‘rewilded’ in order to preserve or restore certain species.

Drenthen (2018) referred to these layers in context of the so called *shifting baseline syndrome*. The shifting baseline syndrome (SBS) was first used by marine biologist Daniel Pauly in 1995. He referred to the syndrome occurring in fisheries. Pauly observed that every new generation of fishers seems to consider the fish stocks they encountered in their childhood as ‘normal’. Because the ‘normal’ shifts with every passing generation, people become unaware of the environmental damage that is being done. When nature conservationist then opt for a restoration of the area, they might refer to the fish stock that was available in their youth, unaware of the fact that the fish stock they refer to as ‘normal’ was already a heavily depleted one.

⁵⁹ Thom van Dooren uses the word ‘entangled’, mainly to illustrate that the connection we have with our surroundings is not linear, neither is it dichotomous. Van Dooren refers to the connections across evolutionary, affective and multiple other domains. It is like a plate of spaghetti, in which you encounter all kinds of connections when ‘pulling’ at a certain string. However, I will use the word connected here, to prevent misunderstandings.

Thom van Dooren (2014) illustrated how such baselines can occur in the conservation (and restoration) of certain species. The Hawaiian Crow has been ecologically extinct⁶⁰ for several years. Only a handful remained in captivity. Restoration encounters criticism, among which the most vocal are pig hunters. Pigs probably came to the island with the first explorers. Escapes (and releases) resulted in wild populations of pigs. Yet, pigs thin the understory of a forest, which exposes Hawaiian Crows to its natural predators (hawks for instance). The hunters are afraid that when Hawaiian Crows are being restored, the pigs have to be excluded. This would also include excluding a practice that has lasted for centuries. It would affect the cultural attachment of the pig hunters to the land. So here too, two baselines lead to tensions; on the one hand, the restoration of the Hawaiian Crow (with an array of cultural and historical meanings) and on the other, the preservation of the pigs (with an array of cultural and historical meanings).

Such conflict and controversy with the rewilding of certain landscapes was summarised very neatly by a Welsh sheep herder. When Monbiot (2014) discussed the case of land restoration and rewilding with Dafydd, a Welsh sheep herder, he said the following:

“With blanket rewilding you lose your unwritten history, your sense of self and your sense of place. It’s like book-burning. Books aren’t written about people like us. If you eradicate the evidence of our presence on the land, if you undermine the core economies that support the Welsh speaking population in the language’s heartland, you write us out of the story.”

People are afraid that when ‘their land’ rewilds or is opted for nature conservation, their presence and connection with the land will disappear. I came across such baselines in this study.

There are different baselines to be observed in the results of the study. Looking at quote 18 for instance, where R5 mentioned the changing landscape. He noted that 50 years ago, there were only a handful of deer, as opposed to contemporary sightings, where he encounters packs of over 40. His baseline lies with those 5, 6, 7 deer in the meadows, whereas he now sees over 40. From his point of view, that is strange and even ‘wrong’, since his baseline refers to a situation in which there were much less deer, a situation of which he thinks is the ‘right’ situation. From his point of view, the reappearance of the wolf is also ‘wrong’, since it alters the state of the agricultural landscape. The agricultural landscape with its features is ‘normal’ and the wolf is not a part of those features. On the other hand, we have seen opponents noting that the wolf is part of the Dutch landscape and that it should be part of it. From their point of view, it is ‘wrong’ that the wolf is not part of the landscape. They refer to a baseline predating much of the agricultural landscape, and note that that is the normal situation.

Baselines are fuel for contemporary rewilding debates. Conservationists run into resistance when

⁶⁰ This refers to the extinction of a species when it has lost its ecological function.

an area is being restored. Because when one baseline is taken, it inevitably collides with other baselines of people living in that area. Frans Vera for instance noted that the shifting of baselines over the past centuries has resulted in wrong notions of how some landscapes should look like and consequently caused a decline in biodiversity (Vera, 2010). The solution is to go back to a situation predating much cultural heritage. Such solutions by conservationists to restore landscapes can be conceived as conservationist trying to clear the landscape of human heritage (Drenthen, 2018). Debates concerning landscape hence, inevitably result in heated arguments. Drenthen (2018) therefore opts to look forward rather than backward. According to Drenthen (2018), we should see rewilding as a *new* layer, rather than restoring a previous one. In doing so, rewilding projects could both acknowledge the cultural heritage of a landscape and restore wildlife.

So when it comes to different baselines concerning the reappearance of the wolf, blaming someone for connecting with a different baseline of a landscape is not beneficial. Neglecting thousands of years of cultural heritage is not right and neglecting biodiversity decline over baselines is also not right. So therefore, we should talk about what a responsible new socio-ecological situation is, rather than debating about which old situation is acceptable. This resonates with the frames in this study. Proponents and opponents talk about different aspects of the wolf. Both are right. As neglecting the consequences of wolf presence for inhabitants is not right, but neglecting the importance and positive sides of wolf presence is also not right. Instead of deciding which frame is the right frame, we should look at how we can create a common frame by taking the frames of all groups into account.

6.5 Concluding remarks

Above, I have tried to illustrate how this study relates to other studies in this field, as well as the field of philosophy. Moreover, I tried to show how my findings resonate with the findings of earlier studies that resemble the return of wildlife in an area. In the first paragraph, I argued how the contents of the frames that are used by the inhabitants of the Veluwe relate to the contents of discussions over wildlife return in Flanders. In the second paragraph, I have shown how this study relates to work of Skogen, Krangle and Figari, who accumulated observations and data on human-wolf relations in Norway over 15 years. Comparing this study to their work, I could emphasize the notion that the reappearance of the wolf is about the entirety, not the entity. It is a conflict between people over wolves (Skogen, Krangle and Figari, 2017). In the third paragraph, I compared my findings to a study by Drenthen (2016), showing the difficulties both studies encounter when inhabitants are faced with the place of a wolf in a landscape we also inhabit. Lastly, I tried to show how philosophical ideas relate to this study. The concept of shifting baseline syndrome shows how a certain baseline alters people's expectations. Furthermore, competing baselines complicate rewilding in certain area, as well as spontaneous rewilding by wolves.

As I have argued, the return of the wolf is a complex issue. In Chapter 4, I showed that assumptions regarding who upholds what position is not as clear cut as often portrayed. I also showed

how complex the framing on the matter is. Oversimplifying the issue of the wolf can result in misinterpretations and ill-advised assumptions that would consequently only fuel the issue. Simplifying things can be useful in order to act proactively, but, as Drenthen (2016) noted: *“Resurging wolves confront us with the need to update our ideas about our place in the natural world and urge us to put in perspective how we take for granted human power over nature. They force us to rethink what it means to live in a living wild landscape.”*(p.331). This process of updating our ideas should be constant, for the social world is dynamic and people’s desires, affiliations, contexts etc., change over time.

7. Recommendations

Whilst studying the reappearance of the wolf on the Veluwe, I was able to question people who actually have to live with a wolf pack. As mentioned in the beginning of this study, there is already an established pack in the Netherlands, making the translation between theory and practice even more relevant. Based on the findings of this study, I will derive some recommendations in this chapter. I will start with a more general recommendation; thinking globally and acting locally. This is followed by more specific recommendations concerning engaging in a dialogue about wolves. It involves how those dialogues should be structured, who should be involved (black swans and navigators) and how they should be facilitated.

7.1 *Think globally, act locally*

“*Think globally, act locally*” is an environmental slogan that from time to time is used to emphasize that people should consider the health of the planet and should take action in their own communities and cities. This study shows that there is some truth in the slogan. The issue with declining biodiversity is very pressing. Returning biodiversity therefore, is very important. Especially wolves, who are seen as keystone species. However, in order to understand how inhabitants frame the wolf, one needs to understand their living conditions, their occupations and possible occupational hazards with regard to the reappearance of the wolf. There is need for an understanding of the area. The connections the inhabitants have with the Veluwe and the existing wildlife. In order words, to be able to facilitate the return of wildlife, one needs to understand the local situation. These situation vary from place to place, which emphasizes the importance to interact with the inhabitants of areas where wildlife returns. I illustrated how a lack of control in the situation might affect people’s willingness to tolerate wildlife. To ensure feelings of control, I think people should be part of the solution, they should talk about it. Hence, my first recommendation is engage in a dialogue.

7.2 *Wolf dialogues*

When people talk about wolves, it has become apparent that when focusing on the wrong aspects of how people react to their reappearance, it is inevitable that the discussion will result in a stalemate. It is important to understand that what people say is the product of what has already been said before (Aarts, 2018). I mentioned the fact that people are most comfortable with the things they already know and with the people that agree with them. The result is a dialogue were repeated arguments gradually become uncontested and where people withdraw and cling to the opinion of their group. Discovering the differences in opinion and discussing them could overcome this and prevent people from closing their minds to what is happening outside the group (Aarts, 2018).

7.2.1 *Aligning frames*

We have seen that the frame of the proponents is nothing similar to the frame of the opponents. Both stories are undeniably true: wolves do sometimes invade the livelihoods of inhabitants and at the same time, wolves have a positive effect on the ecosystem. Previous research on mechanism in a dialogue shows that people are poor listeners, and they select aspects of what is said to confirm one's existing opinions. This complicates facilitating a good dialogue, as people select the information that fits their opinion (Aarts, 2018). Moreover, people involved in a dialogue rather try to convince others instead of listen to them. When facilitating a dialogue, one should therefore also try to assist people having an open attitude. (Aarts, 2018). This prevents people from focusing on their own opinion, which would result in a 'shouting match' of who is right and who is wrong.

Focusing on the other frames we have seen, the groups could convene. Opponents look for a systemic approach in the reappearance of the wolf, as do proponents. Both groups, that seemingly have an incompatible point of view, can align when highlighting the proper aspects of their total frame. In addition, people of the Veluwe proved to be very willing to talk, regardless of whether they were proponent or opponent. I showed that there were opponents who really dislike the wolf, but that did not result in an unwillingness for cooperation. They were fairly moderate in answering and seemed to be open for solutions that do not necessarily involve removing all wolves. What they are looking for is some kind of ability to maintain the situation and interfere when things go wrong. Although they are glad with the reappearance of the wolf, most proponents acknowledge that there were some issues with its reappearance. They might have framed in terms of a human induced problem, but this shows that they also expect some human agency in the matter.

7.2.2 *Common ground*

Hence, when discussing the concern regarding the reappearance of the wolf with both opponents and proponents present, one must focus on that aspect of their frame. The dialogue should revolve around what an acceptable situation *is* for the involved parties, rather than focusing on what an acceptable situation *was*. I argued this in the previous chapter, building on the work of Drenthen (2018). Pointing at certain historic baselines as an option for how one should deal with an area off-sets either the pro or opponents. Rather, one should try to develop a new baseline, in which the heritage of involved parties can be incorporated. This study already showed that there are at least some points that should be taken into consideration:

The ability to protect livestock and domesticated animals should be a topic to be discussed.

- We have seen that there were inhabitants concerned for their animals.
- Address the pressure on agricultural land of wildlife in general.
- How to manage the costs for damage done by wildlife?
- Addressing the way humans treat nature. As mentioned by inhabitants of the Veluwe. We have seen that inhabitants are looking for more acceptance and respect for nature.
- How to protect the wolf when it has settled in an area should be a topic of discussion

- Opportunities for wildlife management. What to do when there are too many wolves. How to control the population.

What is also important when entering a dialogue is choosing the right people to enter in the dialogue. My second recommendation rests on that notion; choosing the navigators and black swans.

7.3 Who enters the dialogue?

Making sure that different inhabitants with different frames are present, makes sure that at a variety of interest is being taken into account. Having navigators entering the dialogue makes sure that several aspects of the issue are being highlighted. Navigators showed to be the inhabitants that were most susceptible for various aspects of the reappearance of the wolf. They noted both its positive and negative effects and the navigators were also people who have to deal with the presence of the wolf on a daily basis. These inhabitants uphold a disposition that allows them to look at several aspects of the situation without having to talk about whether the presence of the wolf is right or wrong. Ensuring the presence of these inhabitants can result in dialogue outcomes that are acceptable for a variety of stakeholders involved.

7.3.1 Characteristics

Whilst looking at the groups, we have seen that characteristics of the groups are also not as simple as often portrayed. The characteristics of the opponents consists of more than merely an agricultural background, as there is a former nature guide belonging to the group. This accounts for the navigators and proponents as well. This tells us at least two things. The first is that when the reappearance of the wolf is being discussed and dialogues are started, one cannot overlook a certain group based on a stereotype frame. Every group has to be involved and their arguments taken seriously. The second thing is that the general view that individuals who own animals are not in fond of the reappearance of the wolf, is not substantiated by this study. Both the navigators and proponents own livestock, and amongst the navigators there is even a recreational sheep farmer (R16). This not only shows that the simplistic view of the characteristics of the actors in the wolf debate are flawed, but it also shows the value of the qualitative nature of this study: *what appears to be 'white' often turns out on closer examination to be black.*" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p11) According to Flyvbjerg, single cases are especially valuable for using the idea of falsification introduced by Popper. Popper used the example of swans, to substantiate his argument: the proposition that all swans are white, is rejected by identifying one single black swan. So, the proposition that agricultural entrepreneurs are the opponents of the reappearance of the wolf and that the nature persons are all in favour of its return is simply false. So what can we take from this?

7.3.2 Black swans

Who is your wolf?

Identifying the ‘black swans’ among the inhabitants that frame the reappearance of the wolf (or whatever animal or rewilding project) could result in finding exactly those inhabitants that could prove to be invaluable during co-creation. Where some people in a group might be more steadfast in their point of view, these black swans shed some different light on the concerns of that specific group. Analysing the interview with R17 for instance resulted in additional insights in the concerns opponents had with reappearance of the wolf. The interview especially highlighted the sense of place aspect of the situation, which consequently put some statements of the other opponents in another light. Having those individuals in a dialogue hence could give a better understanding of the point of view of a certain group. Furthermore, talking to people who own animals but are not afraid of the wolf harming them could be very helpful in places where animals might be at risk of being harmed. Especially these ‘black swans’ bring something new to the table.

7.4 Facilitating dialogues

A place where people can talk and be part of policy efforts could be a *co-creation area*. Currently a popular policy tool where people, governments, knowledge institutions, companies and NGO can ‘co-create’ (Duits, 2017; Maas, Deuten, van den Broek, n.d.). It is at these places, where experience can be shared, innovative solutions to encountered problems can be suggested and local issues can be addressed. Especially ability of addressing local problems could help smooth the reappearance of predators and wildlife, since the inhabitants of the Veluwe deal with other challenges than inhabitants of more urbanized areas when it comes to the reappearance of wildlife and predators. Moreover, animals tend to adjust to their living environment, making that certain efforts to assist the human-animal relationship might work in a certain area, but not in another, since the animals behave differently. Such local factors make it difficult to come up with a national or even international strategy, or to develop general conservation plans, applicable to all kinds of situations. The co-creation areas could make it possible to attune conservation efforts with local factors/needs. They could help finding the balance between where we can restore and regain nature, without illegal killings due to conflicts or disagreements. Incorporating above-mentioned recommendations could make co-creation area’s concerning reappearing wildlife a success.

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Appendix

A1. Sampling

Dorp	Link
Loenen	https://loenenopdeveluwe.info/inwoners/dorpsraad-loenen/
Hoenderloo	https://www.hoenderloo.nl/groepen/3-dorpsraad-hoenderloo
Schaarsbergen	https://dorpsraadschaarsbergen.nl/De-Dorpsraad
Wapenveld	https://www.wijzijnheerde.nl/profiel/93/dorpsraad-wapenveld
Ugchelen	https://dorpsraadugchelen.nl/red-de-veluwe/
Heveadorp (gemeente Renkum)	https://www.heveadorp.nl/contact/
Oosterbeek	http://www.dorpsplatformoosterbeek.nl/index.php/contactformulier
Renkum Heelsum	info@renkumheelsum.nl
Wolfheze	info@dorpsbelangwolfheze.nl

Gemeente	Contact
Apeldoorn	gemeente@apeldoorn.nl
Arnhem	https://www.arnhem.nl/Formulieren/Contactformulieren/Contactformulier
Barneveld	info@barneveld.nl
Brummen	gemeente@brummen.nl
Ede	info@ede.nl
Elburg	gemeente@elburg.nl
Epe	gemeente@epe.nl
Ermelo	gemeente@ermelo.nl
Harderwijk	info@harderwijk.nl
Hatterum	gemeente@hattem.nl

Heerde	gemeente@heerde.nl
Nijkerk	gemeente@nijkerk.eu
Nunspeet	gemeente@nunspeet.nl
Oldebroek	gemeente@oldebroek.nl
Renkum	info@renkum.nl
Rhede	https://www.rheden.nl/Digitale_formulieren_e_diensten/Contact_met_de_gemeente
Voorst	gemeente@voorst.nl
Wageningen	gemeente@wageningen.nl
Provincie Gelderland	post@gelderland.nl

Buurtvereniging	Contact
Buurtvereniging Werven	loeka@online.nl
Buurtvereniging Hoornerveen	gerrit.stijf@gmail.com
Buurtvereniging Godefridus	0578 697272
Buurtvereniging de Bruggenhoek	grdeweerd@gmail.com
Buurtvereniging De Langeslag	m-wagenaar@hotmail.com
Buurtvereniging Horsthoek	bvhorsthoek@gmail.com
Buurtvereniging Markluiden-De Vosse	jaaproeters1946@gmail.com
Buurtvereniging Zuppeld/Veen e.o.	0578 696118
Buurtvereniging 't Broek	oldenhof.liesbeth@gmail.com
Buurtvereniging Z.V.E.O.	geen info
Buurtvereniging Lijphartlaan	geen info

Vereniging	Contact
Otterlo's belang	https://otterlosbelang.nl/contact/
Klarenbeeks belang	info@klarenbeeksbelang.nl
Hoog Soeren	contactformulier
Wenum Wiesel Dorpsraad	contactformulier

Esmter Belang	contactformulier
Dorpshuis Heerde	contactformulier
Vierhouten	info@dorpvierhouten.nl
Kootwijk	info@kootwijkvooruit.nl
Olburgen	contactformulier
Barneveld	contactformulier
Wilp	contactformulier
Harskamp	info@harskampsbelang.nl
Nijbroek	info@pbnijbroek.nl
Zwartebroek Terschuur	info@zwartebroekterschuur.nl
De Steeg (Rheden)	info@indesteeg.nl
Laag Soeren	info@soerensbelang.nl
Ugchelens Belang	contactformulier
Kootwijkerbroek	contactformulier

A2. LinkedIn Post

Beste netwerk,

Als masterstudent aan de Radboud Universiteit doe ik onderzoek naar de recent teruggekeerde wolf. Hiervoor ben ik op zoek naar mensen die op de Veluwe wonen. Ik ben namelijk benieuwd naar hoe mensen op de Veluwe tegen de komst van de wolf aankijken.

Graag ga ik hierover in gesprek! Woont u op de Veluwe en wilt u meewerken aan mijn onderzoek, stuur mij dan een privé bericht of een e-mail naar m.vanasseldonk@student.ru.nl. Dan kunnen we een afspraak maken voor het interview. Het interview zal maximaal een uur duren en is volledig anoniem. De locatie kunnen we in overleg afstemmen.

Wilt u liever eerst wat meer informatie, dan kan dat natuurlijk! Neem dan vooral even contact op, ik beantwoord eventuele vragen graag.

Alvast hartelijk dank voor de hulp!

Delen van dit bericht wordt erg gewaardeerd :)

Met hartelijke groet,
Marijn van Asseldonk

Interview Guide

Marijn van Asseldonk
Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen
Master *Environment and Society studies*

<p>Introductie</p>	<p>Allereerst, hartelijk dank dat u mee wilt doen aan het interview. Ik zal me nog even verder voorstellen, ik ben Marijn van Asseldonk, student Environment and Society studies aan de Radboud Universiteit en dit interview is onderdeel van mijn masterthesis. Het doel van dit interview is om een inzicht te krijgen in het beeld dat u heeft op de komst van de wolf naar de Veluwe. Daarbij zijn er geen foute antwoorden. Het gaat om wat uw beeld op de komst van de wolf is.</p> <p>Dit interview is volledig anoniem. Dat wil zeggen, dat de antwoorden die u geeft worden geanonimiseerd. Ze zijn dus niet naar u te herleiden. De opname wordt uiteindelijk getranscribeerd en daarna verwijderd. Het interview zal ongeveer een uur duren.</p> <p>Heeft u vragen met betrekking tot wat er zojuist is gezegd?</p>
<p>Vragen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviours 	<p>Kunt u me iets over uzelf vertellen?</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Values - Norms - Feelings - Interests - Knowledge and convictions - Symbolic convergence - Probes waar nodig - Wanneer - Wie - Waar - Wat - Hoe - Waar 	<p>Komt u wel eens in de natuur in en rondom de Veluwe?</p> <p>Ziet u wel eens wilde dieren?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Wat vindt u daarvan? ii. Wat geeft het u voor gevoel als u een wild dier ziet? <p>Heeft u al eens een wolf gezien? Kunt u me daar meer over vertellen?</p> <p>Wat vindt u ervan dat de wolf terug is op de Veluwe? Kunt u die mening toelichten?</p> <p>Is uw mening ten aanzien van de wolf verandert ten opzichte van voor de terugkomst op de Veluwe?</p> <p>Wat voelt u bij de terugkomst van de wolf?</p> <p>Waar komen die gevoelens vandaan?</p> <p>Voelt u zich bedreigt door de wolf? Kunt u dat uitleggen?</p> <p>In hoeverre denkt u dat de aanwezigheid van wolven in het gebied uw dagelijkse bezigheden beïnvloed? Kunt u dat uitleggen?</p> <p>Praat u wel eens met anderen over de terugkomst van de wolf?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Hoe gaan die gesprekken dan? <p>Denk u dat mensen in uw omgeving dezelfde mening hebben over de wolf?</p> <p>Denk u dat mensen nog kunnen samenleven met wilde dieren?</p>
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<p>Afsluitend</p>	<p>Als ik dit interview ga uitwerken, waar moet ik me dan op focussen, wat is de kern van uw verhaal?</p> <p>Heeft u nog aanvullingen?</p> <p>Hoe jong bent u?</p> <p>Welke opleiding heeft u gedaan?</p> <p>Wat voor werk doet/deed u?</p> <p>Hartelijk dank voor uw deelname. Kent u wellicht nog andere mensen die mee zouden willen doen aan het onderzoek? Indien er nog eventuele vragen ontstaan, mag ik dan contact met u opnemen? Uiteraard kunt u contact met mij opnemen mocht u nog vragen hebben. Indien gewenst kan ik u het uiteindelijke product toesturen.</p> <p>Noteren interviewer</p> <p>Datum:</p> <p>Begin tijd:</p> <p>Eind tijd:</p> <p>Geslacht (Man / Vrouw)</p> <p>Stedelijk/landelijk</p>
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A4. Overview of occurrence per frame of reference element

	Group 1 Opponents	Group 2 Proponents	Group 3 Navigators
Knowledge and convictions	71,48%	70,84%	69,85%
Values	6,87%	15,26%	11,71%
Norms	6,19%	11,55%	9,11%
Interests	13,74%	0,20%	5,86%
Feelings	1,72%	2,15%	3,47%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: collected data

