



Ministry of Agriculture,
Nature and Food Quality

Towards agricultural circularity for nitrogen

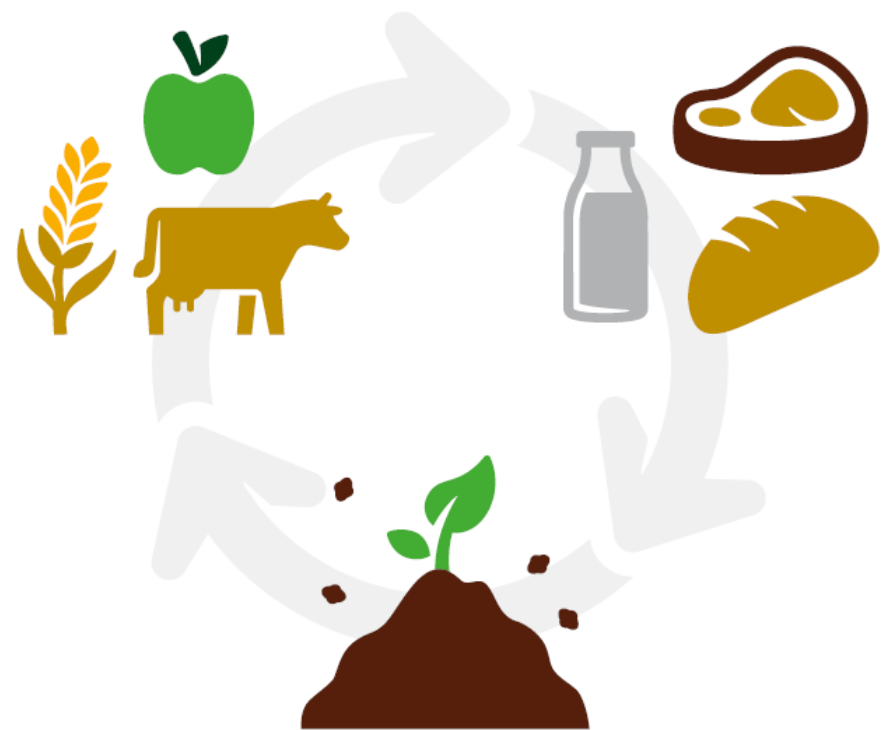
Focussing on a future manure
policy

Eke Buis



Towards agricultural circularity of nitrogen

- Minister Schouten presented her vision on Circular Agriculture in 2019
- Reduction of emissions very important
- Nitrogen is essential for the growth of crops
- Various emission routes
- Focus on water quality



<https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-agriculture-nature-and-food-quality/vision-anf>

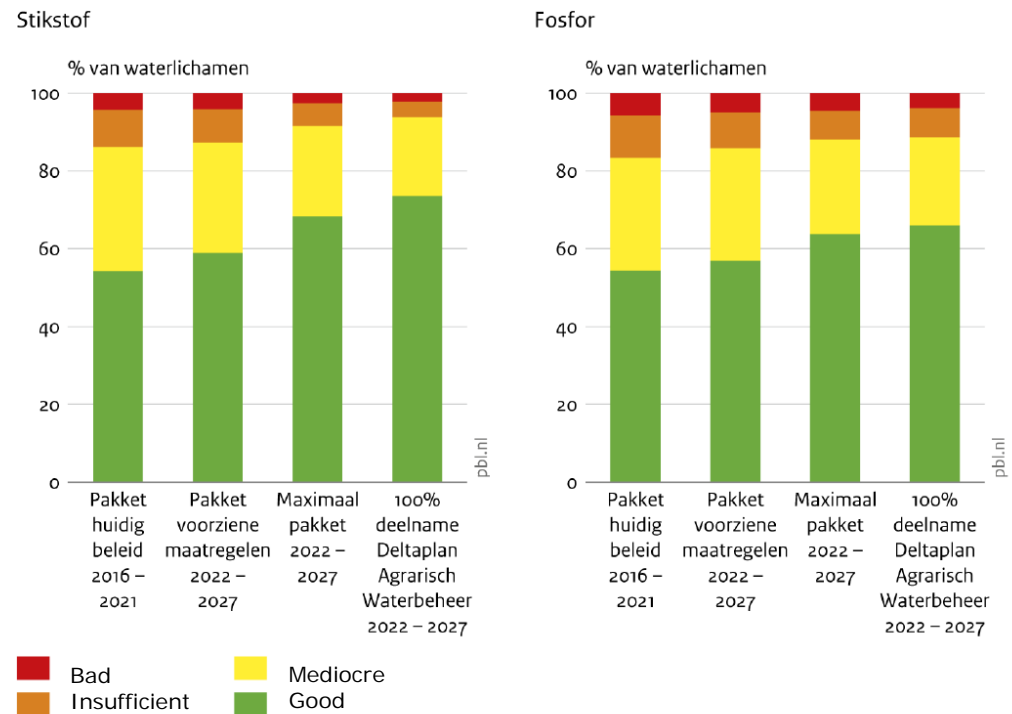


Reduction task

- A good water quality is essential for
 - Drinking water for humans and cattle
 - Nature and biodiversity
 - Recreational activities

- Goals are a.o. set in:
 - Nitrates Directive
 - Water Framework Directive

Status assessment of regional water bodies according to the Water Framework Directive, 2027

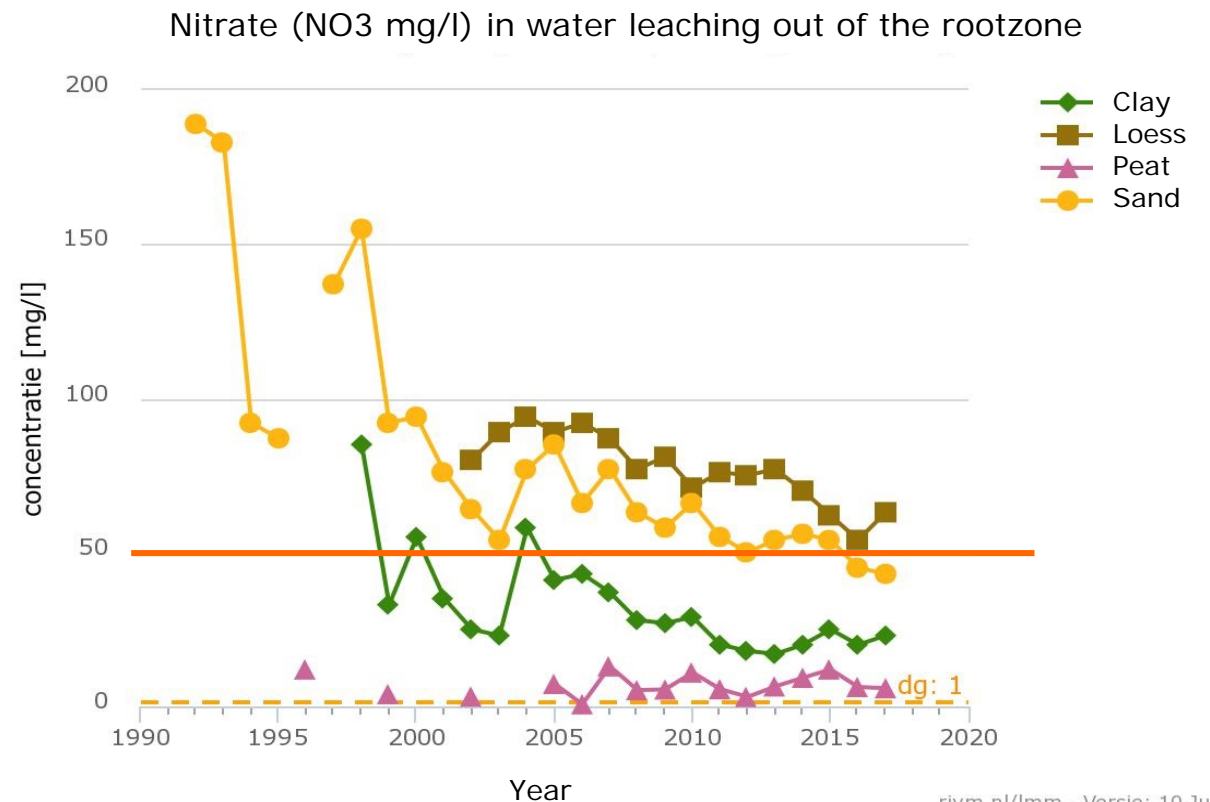


Task WFD: in 2027 even with all measures in place as known now and 100% voluntary commitment to implementing measures, not all water bodies will be in good quality



Reduction task

- The nitrate concentration in groundwater under farms (LMM) is strongly reduced since the start of the measurements, but stabilized last years
- In peat and clay concentrations are below the 50 mg/l nitrate threshold
- In sand and loess around or just above the 50 mg/l nitrate
- LMM: Dutch Minerals Policy Monitoring Program National Institute for Public Health and the Environment

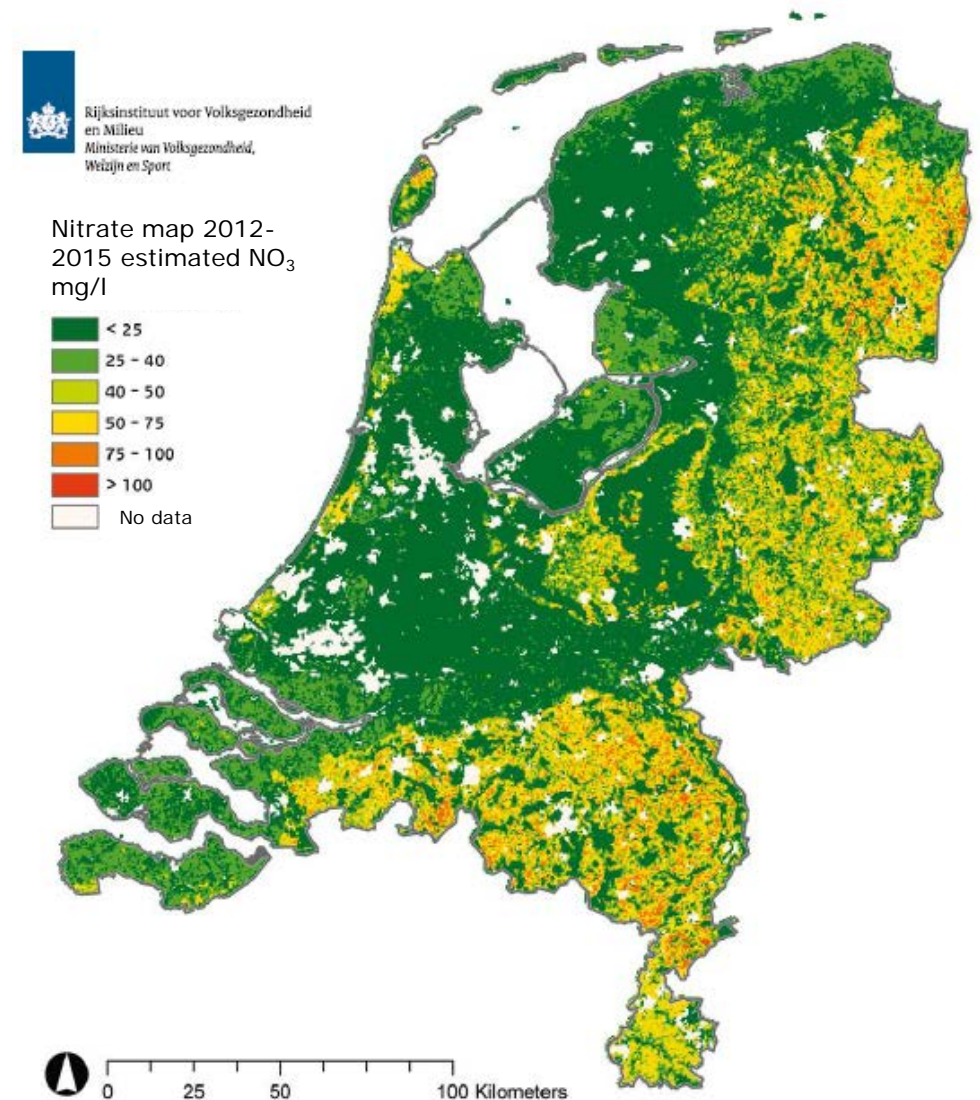
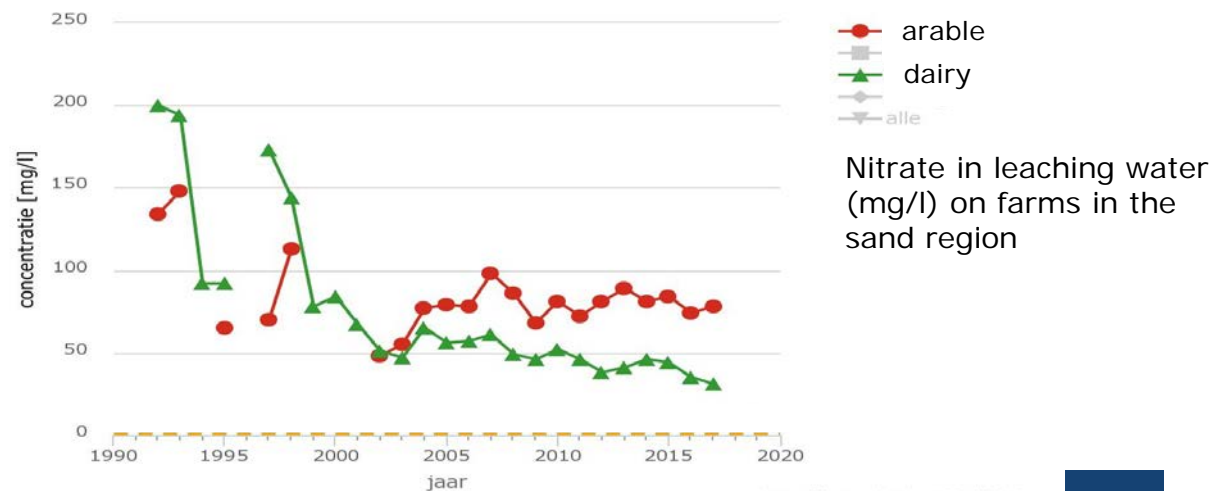


rivm.nl/lmm - Versie: 10-Jul-2019



Effect of soil & crop type

- Soil type has a huge effect on nitrate concentration
- Nitrate concentration is low on dairy farms, in recent years higher at arable farms
- Even higher under horticulture
- Due to nitrate leaching vulnerable soils with deep groundwater and nitrate leaching vulnerable crops





Reduction task:

- Main reduction task is at soils and crops vulnerable to nitrate leaching
- Water quality in southern sand and loess region insufficient for both ND and WFD
- Additional measures are needed in 7th and 8th Action program Nitrates Directive
- Drought increases the reduction task!
 - Nitrate concentrations increased due to drought in 2017 and 2018
 - Drought seems to become more common
 - Mitigation measures are needed



Mini break

➤ Questions?





Future manure policy

- Trajectory for a new manure policy – announced end 2017
- In 2019 collection of input by stakeholders throughout NL
- This year presentation of contours and further elaboration
- First steps to new manure policy taken in 7th action program for the Nitrate Directive
- Every four years a new action program has to be set up. Process has started for the 7th.
- Goals: water quality, soil quality, climate, nitrogen, circular agriculture, biodiversity



Seventh and eight Nitrate Action Program

- 7th Action program (2022 – 2025) & 8th Action program (2026 – 2029)
- Main focus: sand and loess region, but also clay and peat
- Attention for drought measures
- Strong relation with the WFD

- European picture:
 - Farm to Fork strategy
 - Biodiversity strategy





Important aspects for 7th and 8th AP:



- Very important to increase knowledge and awareness -> leading to a feeling of responsibility for a healthy environment
- For farmers, advisors, retail and even customers
- Measuring, monitoring, research, sharing knowledge from science to farmer and farmers among themselves
- Increase soil and water quality knowledge in education
- Working together is key



Measures which might be examined in the context of drawing up the 7th AP:

- **Groundwater:**
- Less nitrate leaching vulnerable crops, more grass and grains
- More and better use of catch crops
- Stimulating use of deeper rooting, more nitrate efficient crops
- Measures to limit effect of drought





Measures which might be examined in the context of drawing up the 7th AP:

➤ Surface water:

- Decreasing surface runoff to waterways
- Decreasing phosphate load

➤ Overall:

- Improving soil quality

➤ Positive incentives:

- Common Agricultural Policy
- Derogation of Nitrate Directive
- Possibly subsidies





Forseen trajectory

- Discussions with a broad group of stakeholders and science on which measures are most appropriate to implement
- Several formal steps still have to be taken
- Our intention end of 2020 concept action program ready for environmental assessment report

- End 2021 action program should be ready





Questions?

