

Project properties	
Title	What's in a name? Typical geographical names and past terminology for different peatland types
Group	Cultural Geography Group
Project type	thesis
Credits	12(BSc)/36(MSc)
Supervisor(s)	Maurice Paulissen (GEO) and Roy van Beek (GEO/SGL)
Examiner(s)	Dr Roy van Beek (GEO/SGL)
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Begin date	2017/10/01
End date	2022/03/15
Description	<p>Large parts of the Low Countries were once covered by raised bogs (hoogvenen). Many bogs have disappeared since the Middle Ages due to reclamation and peat exploitation. What remains is natural and cultural heritage under pressure. The history of large-scale peat exploitation and reclamation in the Low Countries has been studied in several regional cases, but other aspects of man's historical interactions with bog landscapes have hardly been studied yet.</p> <p>One way to improve insights in the past human use and perception of bogs is through the study of geographical names (toponyms). These include place names, fieldnames, water names and road names, and their age may range from prehistoric to recent. However, with regard to peatland toponymy there are some issues to be tackled. First, the Dutch word hoogveen seems to be a quite recent and technical term. What word(s) did people in the past actually use to denominate bogs, and how does this vary across the Low Countries? Second, to what degree did people distinguish bogs from other peatland types, such as fens (laagvenen), or even from adjacent non-peatland areas, such as heathlands?</p> <p>In this project, you will produce an overview of the available evidence on one (BSc) or more (MSc) Dutch peatland areas by collecting and assessing different types of data. Published literature (recent or old), archival sources, and interviews with (regional) experts will be used to shed light on past terminology for different peatland types. Toponyms from e.g. old cadastral maps and local surveys will be collected and entered in ArcGIS, and related to spatial environmental data (e.g. soil maps, old topographical maps, elevation data, etc.). Optionally, in a field check you may assess to what extent people in bog areas still know local fieldnames and to what degree these names can still be experienced in the landscape (e.g. through road signs). You will be part of the Home Turf project team (http://www.boglandscapes.eu/), and your project results will likely be used by ongoing and future studies on past and present human use and perceptions of bog landscapes.</p>
Used skills	
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge on landscape history/historical geography, and/or ecology. • At least basic GIS skills. • Enthusiasm for the subject. <p>Also possible as minor Master thesis.</p>