Design for multifunctional agriculture

Jeroen Groot¹,², Derk Jan Stobbelaar¹,²,³, Bart Venhorst¹,²,⁴, André Jellema¹,⁵, Niels Dignum¹,², Walter Rossing¹, Martin van Ittersum², Henk Renting³, Kees Booij⁴ & Jan Douwe van der Ploeg³

Which functions do we see for rural areas?
Many simultaneously; multifunctionality:
• Generating agricultural income
• Production of food
• Recreation
• Space for wild plants and animals
• Readable landscapes
• Steward of cultural heritage

Research question:
To which degree can agriculture play a multifunctional role and which trade-offs between objectives are required?

Approach in the research project
Multifunctionality requires synergy among economically viable farm management, prevalence and survival of species, and a readable landscape. Insight in opportunities and constraints of various alternative land use options at field, farm and regional scales inform the public debate on regional development.

Methods in the research project
Design: integrate disciplinary knowledge in alternative options
Prototyping: evaluate rough designs with regional stakeholders
Iterative: repeat steps with increasing detail
Interactive: do research together with stakeholders in the regions

Case study areas
• Noordelijke Friese Wouden (NL) (dairy farming)
• Kennislandgoed Flevoland (NL) (arable farming)
• Vendée (F) (dairy farming)
• Eure et Loire (F) (arable farming)