

SHORT SUMMARY

Organisation: Province of Noord-Brabant, www.brabant.nl

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Product & sector: groundwater level measurement network

Country: The Netherlands



Province of Noord-Brabant Circular Procurement



Instead of equipment, the province purchases the measurement data.

The Province of Noord-Brabant has permanent groundwater level measurement networks to measure groundwater levels and quality. Do we really need to have our own fully-equipped measurement sites? Or could we switch to another type of use? These and yet more critical questions led to another circular tender to update the groundwater level measurement network.

Project description

The Province of Noord-Brabant is transforming towards a circular economy. The circular tender for the provincial groundwater level measurement network forms a part of this. The province has purchased the measurement data instead of equipment. The province is also incorporating sustainable initiatives such as composting coffee cups, The Road of the Future, Biobased Delta, the biobased barrier and infra projects.

Approach

Circularity was incorporated in the new procurement policy as of 4 October 2016. Preparations for the tender to realise the groundwater level measurement network had already started;

there were already technical descriptions for the level indicator and accessories. Procurement then advised taking more time and to make the conversion to functional specification. A lot of time was also invested in allowing the project team to become familiar with the circular approach. Market analysis and consultation showed that it was possible to supply measurement data instead of equipment. The market parties were also extremely pleased they were involved in discussions, instead of the usual paper exercise. The findings of the market meeting were incorporated in the tender document. As the finishing of the measurement location and measurement system go together, the province decided to go for one lot.



FACTS & FIGURES

Province of Noord-Brabant:

- > **Number of FTEs:** 1,128 in 2013. As of 2016 from FTEs to capacity per task.
- > **Tender volume:** this fluctuates. The Province of Noord-Brabant's budget in 2017 is € 1.3 billion.

The tender:

- > **Volume product contract:** an internal cost expert was successful in estimating a realistic amount that the tenders must not exceed, which was indeed the case.
- > **Contract form:** performance contract

Results

The tender was successful, the contract was awarded on 5 July 2016. So instead of equipment, the province now purchases measurement data. The construction needed to be robust and vandalism-proof, so the tube (level indicator) remained in the Province's ownership.

"Procurement is not a goal in itself, but a tool."

Remco de Jong, Administration and Procurement Adviser, Province of Noord-Brabant

The remainder of the measurement equipment is owned by the market party. The market party provides data to the province with a delivery obligation of 98% for the entire measurement network (and 95% per measurement filter). This construction is a win-win situation.

The market was given the space to apply new technologies and devise its own design.

Lessons learned

- Communications and monitoring help make the results visible.
- Internal communications are often forgotten, in contrast to external communications in the form of the residents' evenings.
- Employees need examples, support or instruments to hold on to.
- The biggest opposing force was time and insight. This often starts with the wrong assignment, namely that things need to happen as quickly as possible. But time is at odds with innovation and circularity. You need time to respond to advancements in insight.
- Be prepared to put everything up for discussion.
- You need a number of people who look at the whole picture and do not immediately go for a solution.

About REBus and the Green Deal on Circular Procurement

The Green Deal on Circular Procurement (GDGP) is an initiative of MVO Nederland (CSR Netherlands), NEVI, Central government, Duurzame Leverancier, PIANOo, Kirkman Company and Circle Economy. Various pilots originating from GDGP are partly financed by the European REBus project, implemented in the Netherlands by Rijkswaterstaat (Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management). They are working together to support businesses and government organisations in their circular procurement ambitions.

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