

# The Dutch experience

Policies to make the livestock sector more sustainable

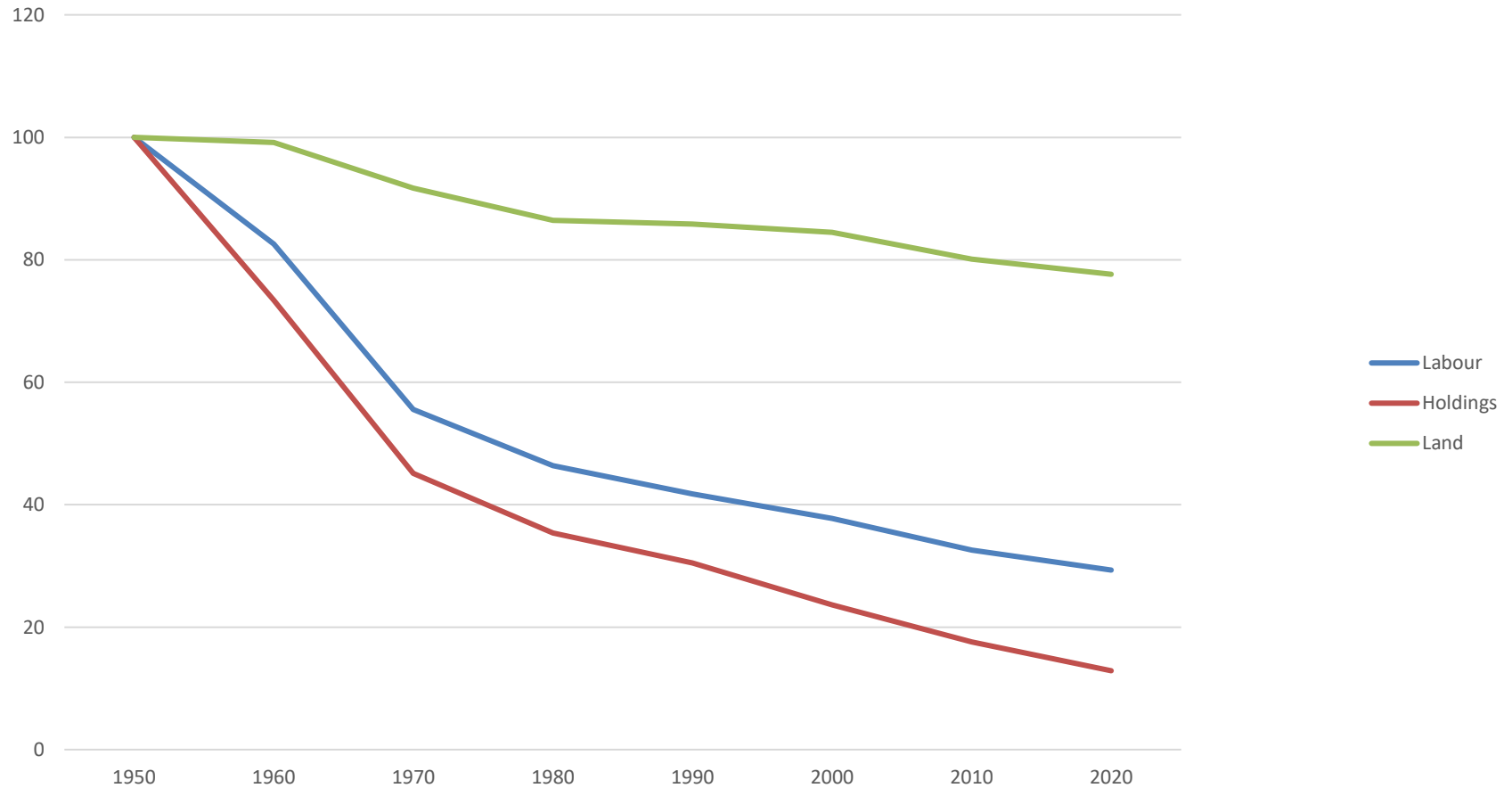
Petra Berkhout, 1 September 2023



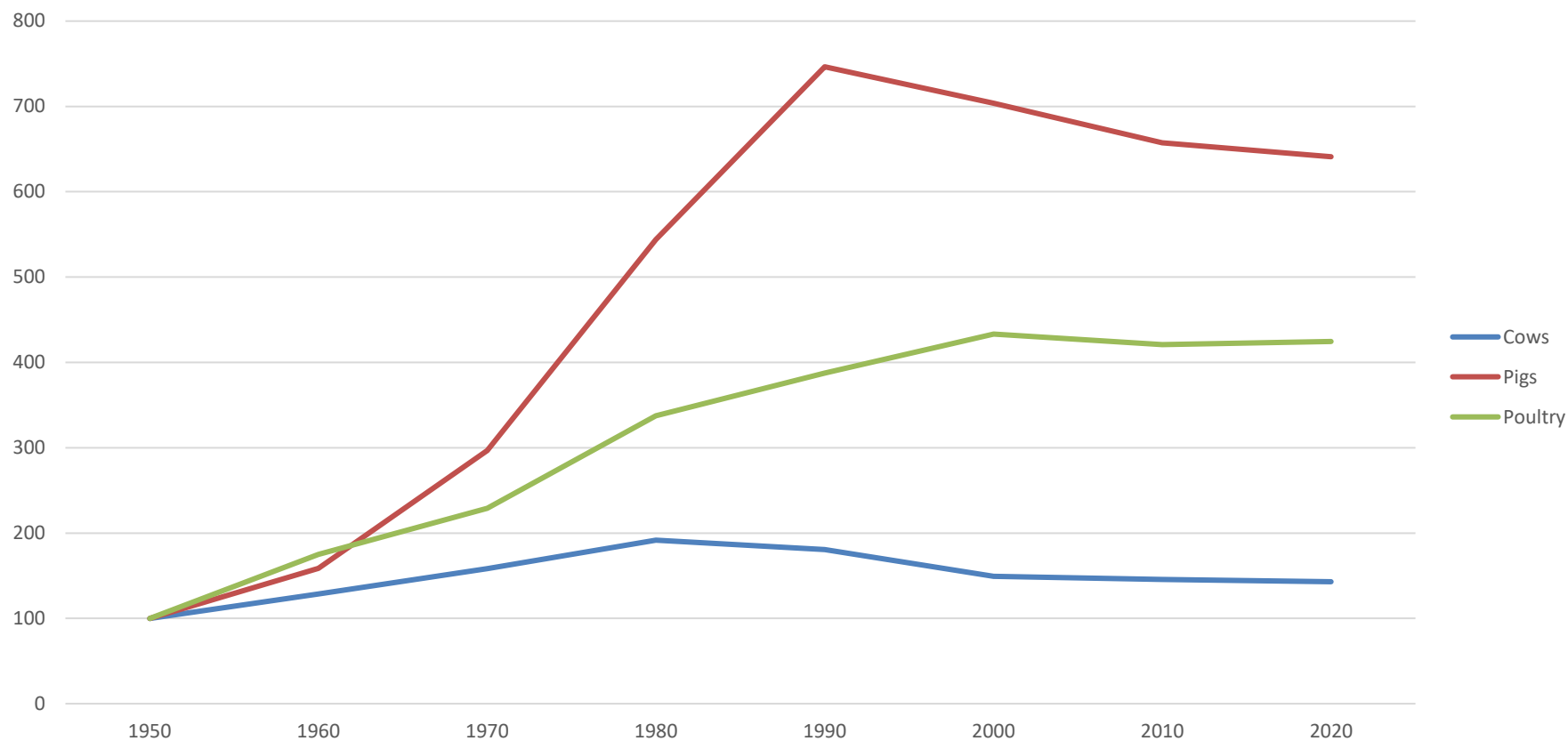
# The Netherlands is a delta



# Development agricultural sector (1950=100)



# Development number of animals (1950=100)





# Some numbers on dairy

In 2000

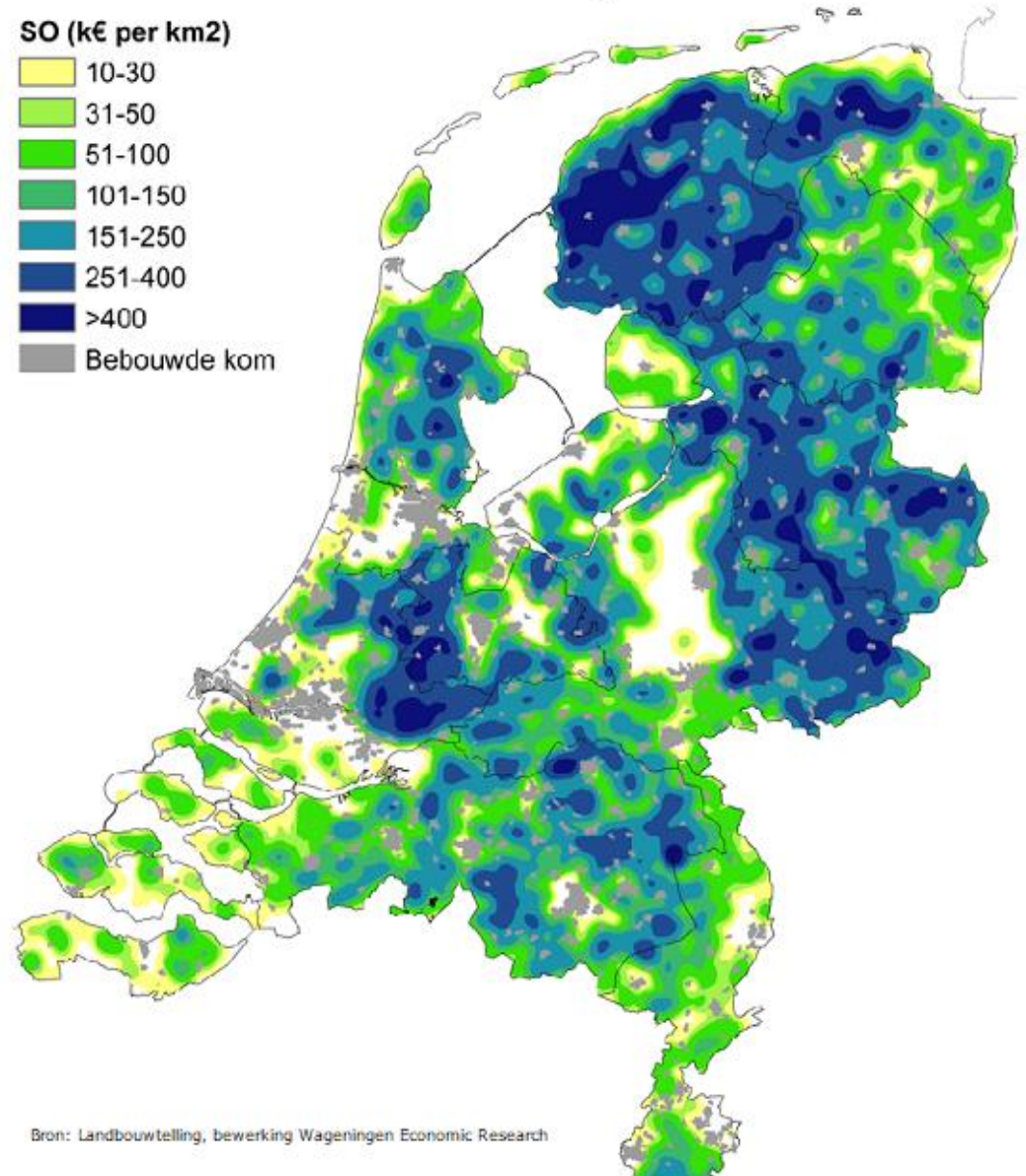
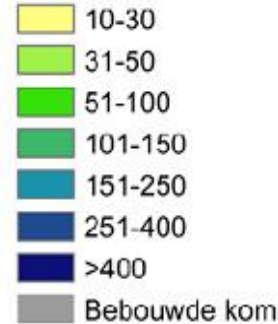
- 23.280 specialised dairy farms
- 57 cows per farm

In 2022

- 14.119 dairy farms
- 113 cows per farm

Ruimtelijke verdeling van de standaardopbrengst (SO), 2020  
Melkveehouderij

SO (k€ per km<sup>2</sup>)



Bron: Landbouwteiling, bewerking Wageningen Economic Research

# Policies livestock sector 1980 - 2010

- 1984: milk quotas (EU)
- 1987: decree on the use of animal fertilisers (NL)
  - Limits amounts of phosphate per ha
- 1991: tightening of the 1987 standards
- 1998: MINAS: mineral balance system
- 2002: Ammonia and Livestock Act
  - Restrictions on the emissions of ammonia, low-emission stables
- 2006: MINAS revoked, back to application standards

# Policies livestock sector 2010 - today

- Covenants on feed, outdoor grazing and antibiotics
- 2015: milk quotas abolished, introduction of phosphate rights
- 2015: Dairy Act and Land-Based Growth Dairy Farming Act
- 2019: start Nitrogen crisis – continues till today.





# Nitrogen ....





# Nitrogen

- Programmatic Approach to Nitrogen (PAS) rejected by Council of State in 2019
  - Licensing procedures have come to a standstill, including construction
- The Netherlands on lockdown
- Strong measures needed to reduce nitrogen emissions from agriculture (ammonia) and traffic/industry (NO<sub>x</sub>)
- Coalition agreement: accelerate achievement of targets to 2030 instead of 2035



# Impasse .....



# In summary – 1980 to 2023

- From manure policy in the '80s to integrated policy
- Social debate started on pig farming in the '90s
  - Debate broadened to dairy farming and eating animal products in general
- Industry take various initiatives
  - On the fresh market many good initiatives, much less so for the processed market
- EU legislation and NGO's have had a decisive influence on the developments



# Thank you!

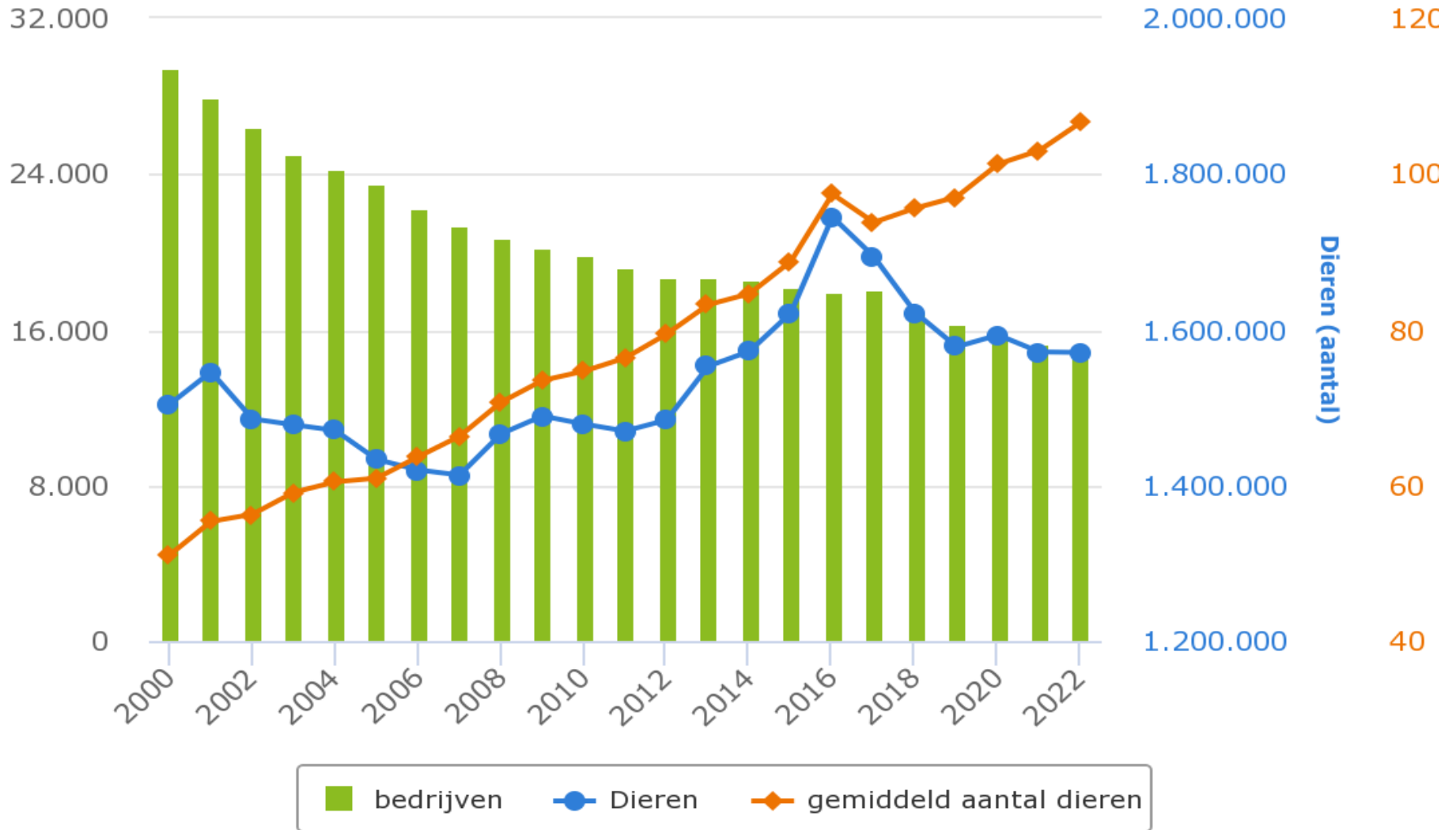
[Petra.Berkhout@wur.nl](mailto:Petra.Berkhout@wur.nl)

Wageningen Economic  
Research



# Aantal bedrijven, aantal dieren en dieren per bedrijf

melkkoeien



Bron: CBS-Landbouwtelling, bewerking Wageningen Economic Rese.

# Nitrogen

- For the period 2020-2030, a 13% reduction in ammonia emissions from all sources compared to 2005 (133 mln kg) has been agreed at EU level
- This target has already been met in the Netherlands
- However, nitrogen deposition partly due to ammonia emissions is too high in the Netherlands to achieve biodiversity targets.
- The Dutch agricultural sector has more than halved emissions since 1990, but ammonia emissions per hectare of agricultural land are still 60 kg ammonia, making it the highest in the EU

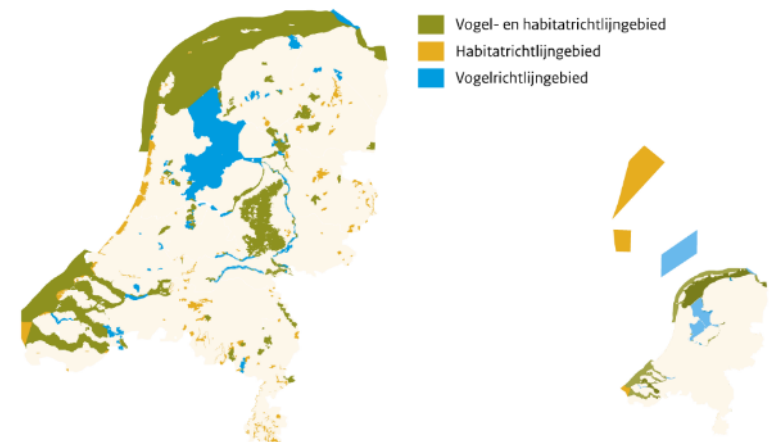


# Nitrogen

- Address exceedance of critical deposition values (CDV) in Natura 2000 areas
  - Part of Birds and Habitats Directives areas
  - EU network of nature conservation areas
  - Protecting species and their natural habitats to preserve biodiversity
  - The Netherlands has over 160 Natura 2000 areas
- Program Approach Nitrogen

*CDV: the limit above which there is a risk of vegetation quality being significantly affected by the acidifying and/or eutrophying impact of nitrogen deposition*

Natura 2000-gebieden, 2015



Bron: EZ