



heijmans

Royal Heijmans N.V.

Water Matters!

Vision on water

2025

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Introduction Water Matters!

Vision on water



Netherlands: a water country

The topics within the Water theme are diverse. They concern the quality and quantity of surface water, groundwater, drinking water and wastewater. But soil is also an important link. The various components directly influence each other. Each topic also has its own specialist discipline in terms of subject matter (hydrology, geohydrology, ecohydrology, sewerage engineering, wastewater technology, environmental science, soil science, geotechnical engineering, permitting, etc.).

Water and the Netherlands are inextricably linked. A look at "Netherlands: waterland", the changes of recent years and the challenges of the future.

Almost a third of the Netherlands lies below sea level. Without dykes, more than half of the country could even be flooded. Fortunately, the Netherlands has a long tradition of dealing with water. This is deeply rooted in Dutch culture. Through trial and error, we have learned to keep the water at bay. The Dutch have also made optimum use of water to increase food production and prosperity. In this context, it is also important to mention water quality. Since the 1970s, with the introduction of the Surface Waters Pollution Act, the quality of surface water has improved dramatically. A key factor in this was the reduction of industrial and urban wastewater discharges. Since the beginning of this century, the Netherlands has been working on the next step in improving water quality through the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The WFD aims to further improve the chemical and biological quality of groundwater and surface waters.

How the Netherlands has managed water has profoundly changed the landscape over the centuries and has delivered many ingenious structures. New techniques and materials are continually being invented and applied on a larger scale than before. Dutch water expertise has even become an export product, helping other countries to reclaim land and prevent flooding. The idea that everything is "makeable" has also had negative consequences for groundwater and surface waters. In many places, we face flooding, and in many areas water quality is poor. Over recent decades, awareness has grown that water cannot be fully controlled, and there has been an active search for ways to live with water, for example by giving rivers more space and taking water more fully into account in projects.

For a more detailed overview of the role of water in the Netherlands and its functions, please refer to the Informatiepunt Leefomgeving (IPLO) website, which provides information on soil, construction, water, the environment and the Environment and Planning Act: <https://IPLO.nl/thema/water/>. The water cycle and water chain are shown in the figure below.

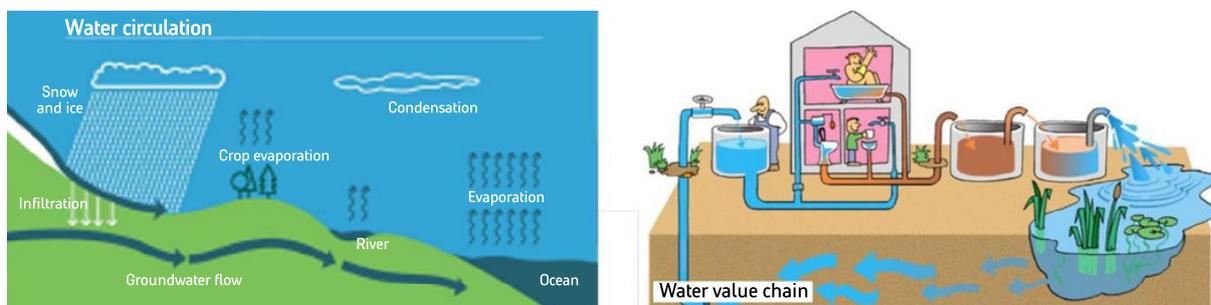


Figure 1: Water cycle and water chain

Climate change

If greenhouse gas emissions continue at the same pace, the Earth will keep getting warmer. With major consequences for people, nature and the environment. For example, over the past 130 years the Earth's average temperature has risen by 1°C. In the Netherlands, the increase is as much as 1.7 degrees. There will be more heavy downpours, more severe storms, or conversely prolonged periods of heat and drought. The Netherlands is particularly vulnerable to flooding because much of the country lies below sea level. And building higher dikes is very expensive. Climate change can also lead to shortages of drinking water or food. Scientists expect the Netherlands to face (temporary) higher river water levels and rising sea levels. In the western part of the country, the ground will continue to subside. Other areas will dry out as a result of global warming, with negative consequences for nature and agriculture. Climate change is making Dutch weather more extreme. This mainly means that the risk of drought, heat, waterlogging and flooding is increasing:

- Extreme precipitation can cause waterlogging. During cloudbursts, roads can become impassable and rainwater can flow into buildings. During prolonged rainfall, the soil becomes saturated with water. Agricultural areas may then flood, or groundwater flooding may occur.
- Water shortages can arise during long periods of dry or warm weather. Drought can cause crops to fail and increases the risk of land subsidence. In addition, natural areas can dry out, which also increases the risk of wildfires.
- Heat can cause heat stress, which can lead to health complaints. Heat can also reduce labour productivity, for example due to poor sleep. In addition, heat can cause nuisance or damage to infrastructure, such as asphalt melting and movable bridges that can no longer open.



- Heat, drought and extreme precipitation all affect water quality. During heavy rainfall, a lot of pollution is washed into waterways, with all the resulting consequences for water quality. Heat raises the temperature of surface water, which often causes certain substances and bacteria to increase rapidly—for example blue-green algae. Drought can reduce water depth in surface waters; ditches can even dry up completely. This too has various adverse effects on the chemical and biological condition of groundwater and surface water.
- Flooding caused by high water levels in rivers and seas can damage buildings and infrastructure, and can even cause deaths and injuries. Vital services, such as drinking water, electricity and telecommunications, can also be damaged and disrupted.
- Public (and private) areas need to be designed differently to cope with the effects of climate change. Recent examples of the impacts of a changing climate include: extreme drought, heat and heatwaves in 2018; flooding in Limburg in 2021; and 2023, which started as the driest year on record and ended as the wettest. In 2023, drinking water companies sounded the alarm: in some areas, they can no longer guarantee security of supply.

Water impact

Our activities in public spaces, in our offices and on our building sites have an impact on the water system. In addition, there are impacts in the value chain arising from the production of the materials we use (water use, water quality and water balance in the supply chain). These impacts directly and indirectly affect nature, agriculture, water supply and the urban climate. Finally, when designing our structures, we can also create positive impact during the use phase (for example by delivering water-efficient homes).

With the 2024 figures and an initial study of water use in the supply chain, we are gaining an increasingly clear picture of where the water-related impacts of our operations and value chain lie.

Water use

Drinking water is used in our offices, but also on our building sites and at our own production locations. We also use rainwater in the production of our own hemp fibre. In addition, we abstract groundwater for dewatering and, in rare cases, as a substitute for drinking water.

Beyond our own operations, water is also used in the supply chain to produce the materials we use. In particular, materials that require thermal production processes have a high water footprint. Biogenic construction materials also have a high water footprint because water is required for the growth of the material. Materials with a high water footprint include: timber, asphalt, bricks, pavers, glass, steel, cement and concrete.

However, water use does not stop when structures are handed over. Water is also used during the use phase of residential and non-residential buildings, for which Heijmans bears indirect responsibility. This relates exclusively to drinking water use.

Water balance

Through dewatering, we discharge groundwater either back into the ground elsewhere or into surface waters. This has a direct impact on the water balance between groundwater and surface water levels. We also influence the water balance through our use of rainwater. Other activities that affect the water balance include our construction works. In our construction works, we often use heavy equipment, which causes soil compaction; excavation works disrupt the structure and composition of the soil. Both affect the soil's permeability and thus the flow of rainwater into the groundwater.

We can also assess the impact on the water balance in the supply chain by looking at the materials we purchase. The impact on the water balance is expected to be greater for biogenic materials than for non-biogenic materials.

In addition to the impact on the water balance from our own operations and the materials we purchase, we also influence the water balance through the construction projects we deliver. Dikes, locks and stormwater drainage systems have a water-regulating function and therefore affect the water balance. We install stormwater drainage systems precisely where we create impermeable surfaces (such as buildings and roads). Impermeable surfaces largely prevent rainwater from infiltrating into the soil and recharging groundwater. As a result, rainwater must follow a different route in order to infiltrate the soil. This may lead to waterlogging. Stormwater drainage solutions are applied to mitigate this.



Water quality

Heijmans also impacts water quality: construction activities can cause pollution, turbidity and disruption of surface-water ecosystems. Pollutants such as oils can also enter the soil and contaminate groundwater. Finally, we influence the composition—and therefore the water quality—of water bodies through the discharge of pumped groundwater into surface-water or groundwater bodies (chemically and ecologically).

In addition to water being used in the production of materials, a lot of contaminated water is also generated. As a result, we also impact water quality in our value chain through the supply chains of the materials we purchase.

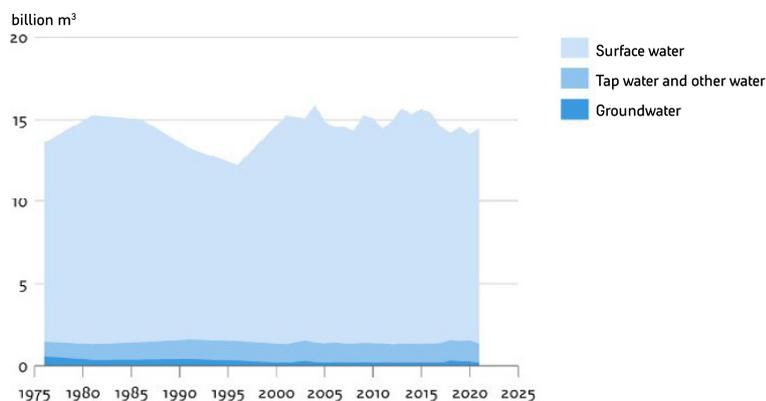
The structures we build can also affect surface-water quality by casting shade over the water. Residential and non-residential buildings use drinking water, which becomes contaminated through sanitary use and is discharged for treatment. In doing so, the quality of the drinking water used almost inevitably deteriorates. Heijmans also bears indirect responsibility for this impact on water quality.

Water risk

Our activities, and those of our upstream and downstream value chain, affect various aspects of water. Alongside these impacts, water also poses risks to the environment. The environment includes both our living environment and the natural environment.

Clean, sufficient and safe water is no longer a given. Surface-water and groundwater quality is under pressure, among other things, due to industrial discharges, run-off from land and infiltration. Climate change is making it clear that the water balance is increasingly characterised by extremes in precipitation, groundwater levels and surface-water levels. As a result, there are larger periodic fluctuations, with either shortages or surpluses. These extremes in the water balance can put the safety of the surrounding area at risk through flooding or water damage. Finally, we use water to live and to produce. Based on CBS data, water use in the Netherlands appears to have remained stable between 1975 and 2021 (Figure x). However, the RIVM¹⁰ warns that, without measures, drinking water shortages will arise across the Netherlands. This is due to a combination of rising demand, climate change and pollution, which reduce the availability of usable water.

Water use in the Netherlands



Source: Statistics Netherlands

Statistics Netherlands/Sep23
www.clo.nl/nl005717

Water use, water balance, water quality and water safety are also interrelated. Water use affects the water balance. High water use where water availability is low leads to **water stress**. The availability of water, in turn, affects water quality and safety. And water quality affects water safety in terms of environmental health. We define **water risks** as the *physical properties of water* that have an adverse impact on the environment. These physical water characteristics include quantity (for use and balance), quality and the associated safety for the environment.



We assess our impact using the Aqueduct water risk atlas indicators for physical risks: quantity and quality. Regulatory and reputational risks include access to clean drinking water and responsible wastewater disposal. This is not applicable to the Netherlands, and therefore not to Heijmans N.V., as both are regulated to an above-average standard in the Netherlands.

The south-east of the Netherlands has a high overall quantitative water risk, while the overall qualitative water risk for the Netherlands as a whole is low. A low overall qualitative water risk is unexpected for the Netherlands, but can be explained by the fact that the high risk of coastal eutrophication is balanced by the low risk of untreated wastewater discharge in the Netherlands. High quantitative water risks include water stress (south-east of the Netherlands), river flooding (the southern part of Zeeland) and coastal flooding (a small area in South Holland, south of Rotterdam).

These physical water risks translate into material risks for Heijmans. For example, the high risk of eutrophication has negative consequences for future projects due to the statutory requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD; KRW). The high level of water stress also means that homes and non-residential buildings are at risk of no longer being granted a drinking water connection by drinking water companies.

Water opportunities

Water risks also create opportunities for Heijmans' operations. Where we can influence water use, we can innovate to use alternative water sources, such as rainwater instead of drinking water. We can also innovate in water recycling, reuse and storage, and potentially in water treatment. Shifts in the water balance and climate change increase the risk of high water levels, creating opportunities for Heijmans to take on more work under the High Water Protection Programme (HWBP).

Social responsibility

Society is an important stakeholder for us. Clients set out what designs must comply with. This also helps to determine the impact. We hold discussions with (potential) clients about upcoming societal developments. Examples include water authorities, the High Water Protection Programme (HWBP), and companies in the drinking water sector. The outcomes of these stakeholder discussions with our water-chain partners are recorded in minutes. In this way, we can anticipate new needs in good time, including new developments in the way we design, deliver and manage, and new sustainable innovations.

In our projects, we regularly engage with stakeholders in relation to the work, requirements verification and permitting (direct impact on the environment). We also engage with end users of our projects through participation processes and information evenings, whether or not commissioned by the client (demand-driven). In many cases, we must apply for a water permit for our work. This permit sets out boundary conditions for the effects of our activities on the water balance, water quality and water use. Compliance with the permit is actively enforced.

We are affiliated with a number of initiatives to open up the discussion about the impact of our water consumption. These are:

- Water bank (public-private)
An initiative of De Dommel Water Authority and various other public and private parties to connect supply and demand across different sources
- Roundtable on drinking-water-efficient residential areas (public-private)
An initiative of the Province of Gelderland and drinking water company Vitens to reduce drinking-water use in residential development
- COP water quality (public-private)
STOWA is researching the influence of the changing climate on water quality. Within the COP, governance and implementation are further defined.
- Collective Nature-Inclusive Water

Green frontrunners from various institutions and companies work together on the transition to a nature-inclusive society



Managing our impacts

In the previous sections, we described our impact. In 2025, we started an in-depth screening of our impacts across the value chain (upstream and downstream). Because we are highly dependent on supplier data and are still interpreting the initial figures, we have not yet finalised the concrete control measures.

In our own operations, we are taking the first steps to reduce our water use. For example, we are exploring options for rainwater harvesting. We used the year 2024 to formulate our policy and map out our water footprint. We have now gained some initial insights that will help us determine the right actions to take. Our dashboard gives us insight into our own water consumption. The next step is to map water use upstream and downstream. From 2025 onwards, our annual report will show the top five specific measures we implemented in our own operations for projects in water risk areas, including areas of high water stress (where we were active in these areas).

In our projects, the following measures were taken in 2025 (downstream, Scope 3):

In water risk areas

1. Water (general): "Voice of Water" session for the Buitenplaats Vught area development.
Design workshop with the municipality, water authority, drinking water company and the province, where the "voice of water" explicitly has a seat at the table
2. Water use: Water Bank (matching water supply and demand between parties)
Specific: residual water scan in a project to reuse dewatering water
3. Redesign of streets in Valkenswaard (and various other projects): installation of wadi's to store and treat road runoff.
4. Water (general): EBW scan for the N201 Loenen aan de Vecht project; system analysis covering ecology, soil and water
5. Water quality: impact assessment under the Water Framework Directive (WFD)
Inventory of the activities we perform in projects, their impact on water quality, and the related control measures.
6. Water quality: compact mobile water treatment unit
For treating contaminated groundwater
7. Water balance: water compensation for the Parijsch area development (Gulemborg)

Outside water risk areas

1. Water use: Make-up water
Alternative water source: surface water instead of drinking water for grout mixing
Alternative water source: rainwater instead of drinking water for a mobile concrete batching plant (under investigation)
2. Water use: rainwater harvesting at the Overijssel provincial government building for toilet flushing
3. Water quality: Herwijnen side channel
Side channel restored as part of the Gorinchem-Waardenburg dike reinforcement project
4. Water quality: Lauwersmeerdijk dike reinforcement
creation of a natural salt marsh, construction of a dike opening and tidal area, and construction of an artificial reef

This in-depth analysis enables us to further define and manage risks: which risks, and which measures we can implement where, in practical terms. In 2025, we set targets for the other three water themes (a sound water balance, good water quality, and assured water safety). We will also look in more detail at how we manage risks/impacts for our own employees. We will use 2026 to further develop monitoring, evaluation and adjustment. This may result in a revised policy.

We can manage and restore our impact on the environment, including by:

- steering the use of different water sources (e.g. rainwater, surface water, groundwater or drinking water),
- raising awareness,
- applying our integrated Ecology, Soil and Water (ESW) scan,
- mapping water risk areas (water- and soil-guiding map),
- applying sustainable design principles and sustainable asset management principles,
- using the Natuurladder and NL Greenlabel



A more fundamental management measure could be whether or not to accept a contract based on its sustainability impact. The theme of water is knowledge-intensive due to legislation and the associated techniques. To keep a clear overview of all developments, Heijmans has set up a Water Knowledge Network. After all, knowledge becomes valuable when it can be applied in practice. This network ensures that knowledge is properly embedded and applied across Heijmans.

Vision, purpose and ambition

Heijmans has adopted a strategy through 2030 in which water, alongside climate and biodiversity, is one of three sustainability priorities. In recent years, Heijmans has already taken many initiatives relating to water quality, water management and water governance. However, in the coming years we will need a dedicated strategy for this theme, based on four perspectives:

- Societal objectives
- Sustainability objectives
- EU regulations
- Commercial opportunities

By 2030, we will be the sustainability leader. We give more than we take. We leave the environment in a better condition than we found it. We use water as a guiding principle in all our projects. This is how we help to restore water quality, improve the water balance, guarantee water safety and eliminate unnecessary (drinking) water use. We know where the **high water-risk** areas are and how to minimise our negative impact there and maximise our positive impact.

In our projects, we shape water and soil — also referred to as the “producibility of the landscape”. However, we are increasingly running up against the limits of the water and soil system. This includes land subsidence, low water levels, drinking water shortages and biodiversity loss. In addition, a changing climate — such as sea level rise, flooding, drought and heat — is bringing matters to a head. The quality and availability of water and soil have a major impact on shipping, agriculture, energy supply, industry and nature.

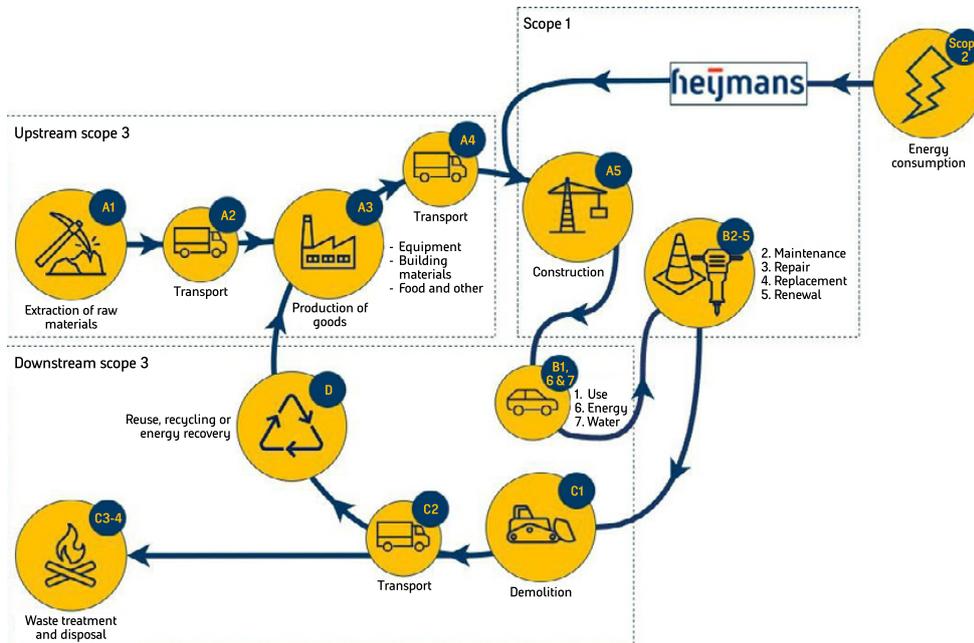
This has recently led to the principle of “water and soil as guiding factors”. The central government wants to make this approach the standard for all developments in construction and infrastructure. This results in a future-proof environment with healthy soil and sufficient, clean water.

Another water theme receiving significant attention is water quality. In the Netherlands, water quality leaves much to be desired. From 2027, the Water Framework Directive is expected to have a major impact on the permitting of our infrastructure and housing projects and may have financial implications. We have translated our impacts — both negative and positive — and the effects described into our definition of water and four guiding principles: water balance, water quality, water use and water safety.

Across Heijmans' various business areas, standards are being developed for water-related issues (and the protection of marine resources). Examples of these standards and solutions are described in the Heijmans Solutions Platform (HOP) for Infra, the product quality knowledge base, standard housing products and our standard design solutions. Developments relating to water issues (and the protection of marine resources) are mainly driven by central government policy — for example, the “water and soil as guiding factors” principle — and by permitting requirements.

Scope

The Water Matters! policy applies across Heijmans: to all locations and all projects, both current and future. The policy follows the scope approach that is standard for greenhouse gas emissions under the GHG Protocol. A distinction is made between Scope 1, 2 and 3:



Scope 1 – Direct water use

Scope 1 covers the direct water use and impact on water quality arising from Heijmans' offices, real estate and project locations. This includes, for example, water consumption in production processes (e.g. by our mobile concrete batching plant) and for sanitary purposes, as well as direct impacts on water quality, such as the discharge of pollutants into water. In short, all products and services delivered by Heijmans that directly impact water use and water quality fall under Scope 1.

Scope 2 – Indirect water use

Scope 2 covers indirect water use and impacts on water quality resulting from the energy purchased by the organisation. This includes water use and water quality impacts during energy production. In thermal power plants, water is used to generate steam to drive turbines or to cool processes. The condensed steam can be reused or discharged. In the event of discharge, this can adversely affect water quality due to temperature changes. Water use for non-thermal power generation is generally considered to have zero water consumption/water quality impact⁽¹⁾. As we procure our energy (electricity and gas) from non-thermal sources, we exclude Scope 2.

Scope 3 – Water use in the value chain

Scope 3 covers water use and impacts on water quality in the upstream supply chain for goods procured by Heijmans, as well as water use and water quality impacts arising from Heijmans' activities after delivery or after the end of a maintenance contract (downstream value chain).

- The upstream supply chain includes, among other things, water use and water quality impacts related to raw material extraction and the production of goods. It also includes the deterioration of water quality resulting from transport by water, which can cause pollution of (sea) water.
- The downstream value chain includes, among other things, the water use and water quality impacts associated with the products delivered by Heijmans. In residential projects, this includes water consumption in the completed homes. In infrastructure projects, this may include the water consumption required for maintaining delivered assets.

Heijmans' definition of Water

At Heijmans, we develop the vision and strategy across the organisation. In doing so, we use the following principles:

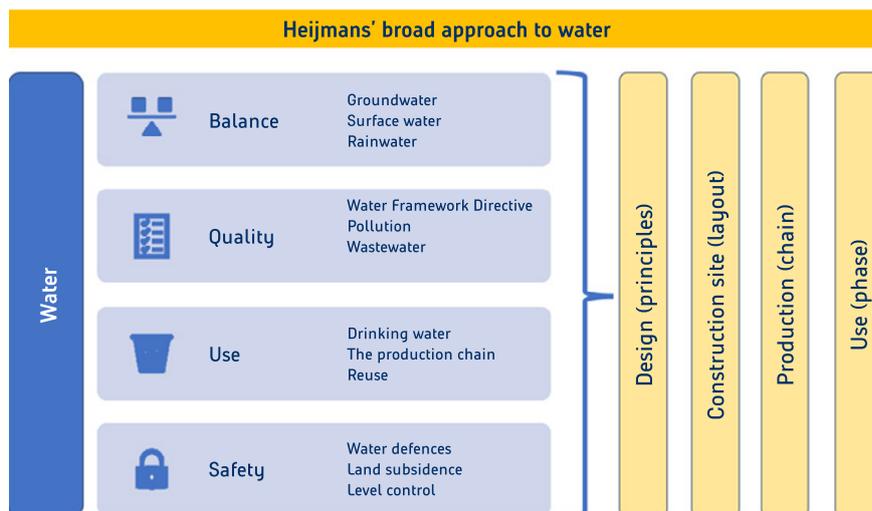
- we work from a Heijmans-wide vision
- we use common language and definitions
- each business area is responsible for further elaboration, the approach and implementation

Water is crucial to creating a healthy living environment. This concerns both the natural water system and a technical system developed to meet human needs and ensure safety. Broadly speaking, the natural system consists of rainwater, groundwater and surface water. The technical system includes, among other things, sewerage, hydraulic structures, dewatering, drinking water and process water supplies.

All of these forms of water are connected through various cycles. We can only achieve careful water stewardship by considering impacts across the entire water cycle. In doing so, we look at water quality, use, balance and safety.

In the following sections, we address these four definitions and provide context and the (potential) impact on Heijmans' field of work:

- Water balance in order
- Water quality is good
- Water use is reduced
- Water safety is ensured



Water balance

Definition and framework

The water balance is the ratio between the amount of water entering an area and the amount of water leaving an area. We look at the natural water system, which consists of groundwater, surface water and rainwater. A healthy water balance means that this ratio is in equilibrium, so there are no shortages or surpluses that are harmful to the urban environment, nature, agriculture, industry, drinking water supply, safety or health.

For water balance, we have formulated the following ambition:

- For every project designated as material, by 2030 we will take area-specific measures for flooding, drought and water stress in order to deliver a positive impact on the water balance.



Context

The water balance has been disrupted in numerous places in the Netherlands. This is mainly due to human interference in the water system. We have organised the surface water system to drain water as quickly as possible, and we lack the means to buffer and infiltrate water. We also artificially manage the groundwater and surface water levels, and we extract groundwater for drinking water. The water balance is also being disrupted by a rapidly changing climate. This is creating problems related to water safety, drought, water quality, food production, the natural environment and health.

In 2023, central government policy declared "water and soil as guiding factors" in spatial planning. This means the natural water and soil system is taken as the starting point for the (re)design and use of our country. This approach enables large-scale work to restore the (local) water balance.

The "water and soil as guiding factors" principle will be decisive in planning, particularly in decisions about where development will or will not take place (both real estate and infrastructure). Ultimately, this may affect planning timelines and potentially delay projects before they come to market. The first signs of the impact of the "water and soil as guiding factors" principle are particularly visible in housing development, including in (deep) polders and peatland areas. Here, public authorities (municipalities, water authorities, provinces and central government) may find themselves at odds. Ultimately, these new districts also need to be properly connected and serviced. As a result, infrastructure projects arising from these developments will also feel the impact of this debate.

Impact, opportunities and risks

In all our activities relating to living, working and connecting, we influence the water balance. When we widen a road or build homes, impermeable surfaces increase and more water runs off into the water system. In dewatering operations, carried out to enable dry working conditions, we abstract water from deeper soil layers and subsequently discharge it into surface water.

Our activities impact the various components of the water system and can lead to a disruption of the water balance. By viewing the water system as a whole, we can actually have a positive impact on the water balance with natural and technical solutions.

We can restore the water balance at both building and area level by applying the following principles, in the preferred order:

- Utilise and conserve: We make use of available water, for example by using rainwater for toilet flushing and landscaping, and we conserve water through efficient use;
- Retain and infiltrate: We retain water where it falls and infiltrate it locally into the soil, for example by creating sufficient space for greenery and water in projects and by designing layouts that allow for natural drainage;
- Store and discharge: We store water that cannot be used or infiltrated and discharge it gradually and in a controlled manner into the surrounding water system. In this way, we create a robust water system and prevent water nuisance.

Water quality

Definition and framework

Water quality concerns the suitability of surface water and groundwater for various uses, such as drinking water, nature and industry. It relates to both chemical and biological quality. This differs per location, time and depth.

For water quality, we have formulated the following ambitions:

- By 2030, we want to monitor water quality in our project environments and know how to improve it.
- By the end of 2026, we will understand how to comply with the Water Framework Directive by learning proactively in projects together with our clients and value chain partners.

Context

Our activities affect water quality during both the construction and use phases, for example through (temporary) dewatering, pollution from road runoff, sewage effluent and incorrect household connections, and the installation of heat and energy systems in the soil. We aim to improve our current impact on water quality by taking measures during our operations that contribute to a positive impact on water quality and that prevent or address water pollution. For example, by applying innovations in road and residential construction. Decentralised purification systems in buildings and areas represent opportunities for us. In the Netherlands, impacts on water quality are safeguarded through permitting, via the so-called water permit. The competent authority will grant permits only for activities that do not adversely affect water quality.



Where we operate in coastal areas or build offshore wind turbines, we affect the sea and the life it supports. This means we have an impact on water quality. We work with sustainable solutions and, where possible, apply nature-based solutions.

We improve water quality based on the following principles:

- Connecting water
- Varied transitions from land to water
- Source measures

We do this through:

- Using a robust natural system of water, ecology and soil
- Applying technical solutions (including through innovations)

Impact, opportunities and risks

The following consequences apply at national level (the Netherlands) and to the construction sector:

- The European Commission can impose substantial fines for failure to comply with the WFD
- Permits for (construction) projects may be withdrawn, or not granted, where there may be consequences for the water system
- Interested parties (environmental organisations) can submit views (objections) during the public inspection period for permit applications.
- Interested parties (environmental organisations, private individuals, local residents) can have projects suspended by the administrative court if there is a risk of water quality deterioration

The main risks for Heijmans are:

- A smaller order book due to delays or the suspension of market tenders because of uncertainty about, or negative impacts on, water quality
- Withdrawal of granted permits due to potential impacts on water quality
- A lack of knowledge about the impact of Heijmans' activities on water quality
- Standstill principle (the existing situation is the benchmark)
- Tailored requirements
- Mitigating measures
- Rules on return dewatering

The WFD offers Heijmans significant market opportunities. The vision is:

- **Positioning ourselves** as a partner in improving water quality in projects
- **Develop innovative approaches and solutions** that positively influence water quality and/or mitigate negative impacts
- Develop a **systems-based approach to landscape design**, recognising the interrelationship between water, soil, ecology and our activities

NB. Under the Environment and Planning Act (Omgevingswet), we are given the opportunity to propose measures based on our expertise, rather than having rules imposed on us by the government. Rules are not leading but supportive: "yes, provided that" instead of "no, unless". By anticipating this, we can ultimately influence permitting decisions and tailor-made conditions.

- Leverage and, where necessary, expand our **network of trusted partners** to fill knowledge gaps
- Various projects include the expansion of wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs), drinking water facilities, pumping stations, pressure mains and the (re)design of surface water systems.

Water use

Definition and framework

In terms of water use, we focus on two aspects: the use of drinking water and the use of water for (our) production activities. It is important to consider water flows of differing quality and to recognise that the impact of water use varies by location.

Our own activities result in the use of drinking water and other water. We ensure that we gain insight into this consumption through our water footprint analysis and commit to reducing it in water risk areas.



For water use, we have formulated the following strategic objectives:

- By 2030, we aim to reduce drinking water consumption in our office buildings and project locations by 30% compared with the 2019 baseline year. In particular in water risk areas.
- We also aim that, by 2030, all our residential and non-residential buildings contribute to drinking water savings per person per day. In the coming years, we intend to define a specific reduction percentage for this.

Context

Assessing the impact of water use in the production of goods and food is complex. It depends partly on the type of water used and the location where this takes place (dry or wet areas). A company's water footprint is the total volume of fresh water used to produce all goods and services delivered by the company. Water use is measured in cubic metres of water consumed (evaporated) and/or polluted per unit of time.

The availability of drinking water is limited and is reaching its limits for several reasons. Drinking water companies are increasingly unable to meet the required demand, due on the one hand to rising consumption and on the other to the limited availability of natural sources (groundwater and fresh surface water). Current drinking water consumption contributes to the depletion of these natural resources. When considering the expansion of water abstraction areas, the interests of agriculture and nature are also taken into account. In some cases, drinking water companies even have to reduce the capacity of pumping stations. This naturally has major implications for security of supply and means that developments in these areas may no longer be able to rely on a drinking water connection. Drinking water companies and the government therefore call on all of us to reduce our daily drinking water consumption. In autumn 2022, the Cabinet set a target of a 20% reduction. At Heijmans, we are taking an additional step forward.

Impact, opportunities and risks

For 2024, we reported a figure for our drinking water use for the first time and established 2019 as our baseline year. With the 2025 figures, we will be able to focus on high-consumption locations and implement targeted measures there. With the renovation of our head office in Rosmalen at the beginning of 2026, we are introducing our first water-saving measures. In 2025, we carried out an initial exploration of water use in the supply chain by material category. We will further refine and specify these initial data.

The objectives described here are based on our own intrinsic motivation (on a voluntary basis). As Heijmans, we want to give more than we take. We also want to fulfil our social responsibility by reducing our water consumption, particularly drinking water, which is becoming increasingly scarce.

The water footprint considers both direct and indirect water use across the entire value chain. A water footprint can be divided into a green, blue and grey water footprint¹⁷. This means:

- Green water originates from precipitation and is stored in the root zone of the soil, where it evaporates, transpires or is absorbed by plants. This water is particularly relevant for agriculture, horticulture and forestry.
- Blue water is abstracted from surface water or groundwater sources and either evaporates, is incorporated into a product or is transferred from one water body to another. Examples include irrigated agriculture, industry and domestic water use.
- Grey water is the volume of water required to assimilate pollutants to meet a specific water quality standard. This concerns point-source pollution discharged into a freshwater body directly via a pipe, or indirectly through drainage or leaching from soil, impermeable surfaces or other diffuse sources.

We report our total water consumption (in cubic metres) in water risk areas (including areas with high water stress) for all Heijmans offices and project locations. We also report our total water consumption (m³) in relation to net revenue (EUR million).

In our current processes and activities, we do not (yet) store water for later use. Nor do we (yet) reuse or recycle process water in our own operations. In 2025, we carried out an initial impact analysis of our water footprint (covering both our own operations and the supply chain). This analysis provides an initial insight into how much water different material categories use. It is still too early to determine whether water abstraction for our own operations could be considered a viable measure. It is not yet clear whether we will have to purify the water we collect. If this becomes a serious option, the quality requirements set for materials such as concrete will be a decisive factor.



Water safety

Definition / framework

Water safety is about protection against flooding. This is achieved by using flood defences such as dykes and dunes, but also by allowing space for a river. Managing our waterways such as rivers and lakes also safeguards our water safety.

For water safety, we have formulated the following ambition:

- Together with our water partners, we are developing a regional vision, 'Safe Water System Netherlands 2050', in which nature-based solutions are central.

Context

To guarantee basic safety, we take actions to prevent flooding from large bodies of water (prevention). In addition to this, we can limit the consequences of a potential flood by making the Netherlands water resistant (water robust). Finally, central government, regional water authorities, safety regions and provinces work together on flood crisis management, should the worst occur. The combination of prevention, flood-proof construction and crisis management is referred to as multi-layer flood risk management.

Impact, opportunities and risks

The consequences of climate change affect the suitability of infrastructure and areas for spatial development. We deliver projects under the Flood Protection Programme and protect our own projects against high water by integrating water safety into our designs and execution:

- Working on flood protection in the Netherlands with delta technology
- Taking into account the impact on our land holdings
- Water-resilient design of the living environment



Accountability and monitoring process

Water Matters! (Water Raakt!), Heijmans' water policy, was established in 2024 as an integrated policy across all business areas. This policy has been translated into various programme lines and guiding frameworks per business area. Initiatives to implement the policy are set out in so-called initiative cards and submitted for decision-making to the management boards of the respective business areas or to the Heijmans Group Council.

As our water ambitions are relatively new, we are not yet able to monitor the effectiveness of individual measures. Once the in-depth analysis has identified the appropriate measures, we will further develop our monitoring and evaluation framework.

Heijmans actively shares Water Matters! with its stakeholders and strategic partners to engage them in this shared challenge and, above all, to remain in dialogue on how Heijmans can further improve its impact where necessary.

The measurement and monitoring of our objectives, particularly water use, are described in a separate process description attached as an appendix to this document.



Appendix A: Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Term	Definition
WFD	The Water Framework Directive is a European directive on the quality of surface water and groundwater. It was adopted in 2000 and aims to ensure that, by 2027, all water in the Netherlands provides a suitable habitat for the plants and animals that belong there. And it must be reasonably easy to turn it into drinking water.
Scope 1	Water consumption and impact from own sources (at offices and construction sites).
Scope 2	Water consumption and impact from purchased energy such as electricity, gas or other fuels.
Scope 3	Water consumption and impact in the supply and delivery chain of everything we procure to carry out our work and everything we deliver.
Water balance	The water balance is the ratio between the amount of water entering an area and the amount of water leaving it.
Water use	In terms of water use, we focus on two aspects: the use of drinking water and the use of water for (our) production (food and goods). It is important to consider water flows of different qualities and to realise that the impact of water consumption varies per location.
Water quality	Water quality concerns the suitability of surface water and groundwater for various uses, such as drinking water, nature and industry. It relates to both chemical and biological quality.
Water risk	The physical properties of water that adversely affect the surrounding environment. These physical water properties include quantity (for water use and water balance), quality, and the associated safety of the surrounding environment.
Water safety	Water safety is about protection against flooding. This is achieved by using flood defences such as dykes and dunes, but also by allowing space for a river. Managing our waterways, such as rivers and lakes, also safeguards water safety.
Supply chain	The chain of parties and activities responsible for the supply of products and services to Heijmans.
Delivery chain	The chain of parties and activities delivered by Heijmans.
Water reuse	Heijmans treats water recycling and water reuse as one and the same. We therefore use the term water reuse because this is the most commonly used term. We define water reuse in line with the EU Water Directors [1] as the use of water originating from wastewater/a wastewater stream, with a quality, whether treated or untreated, that is suitable for the intended use. We distinguish between direct and indirect reuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct reuse is the reuse of water within a process with a direct connection between the source and the end use.• Indirect reuse is the reuse of water after it has been discharged into a water body, after which it can be used again at a later stage.
Water storage	Water of the desired quality that is collected and stored for later use within a business process.

1 Guidelines on Integrating Water Reuse into Water Planning and Management in the context of the WFD (2016)



Appendix B: References

Related regulations, legislation or external standards	Related internal documentation
Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)	
Water and Soil Guiding	
Water Framework Directive	
Drinking Water Directive	
Groundwater Directive	
Urban Waste Water Directive	
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)(MER)	
Water Act	
Water Authorities Act	
Laws and regulations on coast and sea	
Shipping Act	
Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) and wastewater	
Environment and Planning Act	
Delta Programme	
Policy Document on Drinking Water	

Water system management is not the responsibility of a single party, but a collaborative effort across all levels of government in the Netherlands. It is a shared responsibility. Under the Environment and Planning Act, responsibilities are broadly divided as follows:

Key players

- The national government is responsible for the national policy framework and strategic objectives (as laid down in the National Environmental and Planning Strategy – NOVI) for water management in the Netherlands
- The province is responsible for translating this into a regional policy framework and for setting strategic objectives at regional level
- The water authority (the national government for the main water system and the regional water authorities for regional water systems) is responsible for operational water management
- The municipality has only limited responsibilities in the management of water systems

Other relevant parties

- Delta Commissioner
- Administrative Water Consultation
- Directors' Consultation on Water and Water Programme Team

1. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/water/waterbeheer-in-nederland>
2. <https://iplo.nl/thema/water>
3. <https://iplo.nl/thema/water/oppervlaktewater/kaderrichtlijn-water/>
4. <https://www.denationaleomgevingsvisie.nl/samenwerking+en+uitvoering/nationale+programmas/nationaal+water+programma+2022-2027/default.aspx>
5. <https://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/onderwerpen/water-en-klimaat>
6. <https://www.drinkwaterplatform.nl/themas/klimaatverandering/klimaatadaptatie/>