



Addendum

Conservation Management Plan

for

Green Circle Bee Landscape

To register as a
Verified Conservation Area

Submitted by

Omgevingsdienst West-Holland /
Regional environmental protection agency West Holland

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1. Introduction

In the last months of 2018 the Conservation Management Plan for the Green Circle Bee Landscape has been audited by VCA-auditor by Dr. A.P.M. van der Zon (audit report Green Circles Bee Landscape Verified Conservation Area, February 2019). The audit was executed against the landscape standard of VCA (see below).

VCA landscape standard

The VCA intends to stimulate public and private partners to take initiatives to protect biodiversity jointly in a landscape approach. The landscape comprises public areas under the responsibility of local authorities, private lands, areas privately owned by involved partners and lands under the influence of the conservation measures. Apart from individual landowners/managers also a coalition of willing may seek the inclusion of a defined landscape in the VCA register. For this to be successful, it needs to be clear what the boundaries of the landscape (the area) are. It needs to be clear that the coalition has ownership or a management title on substantial parts of the area and is in a position to work with other landowners in the area to achieve the formulated ambitions. This collaboration with other stakeholders needs to be described, and translated to measures (communication, information/public awareness, incentives) to illustrate their potential contributions in the Conservation Management Plan. This plan also describes the conservation actions with the responsibilities of each of the partners for the actions in the timeframe covered by the management plan.

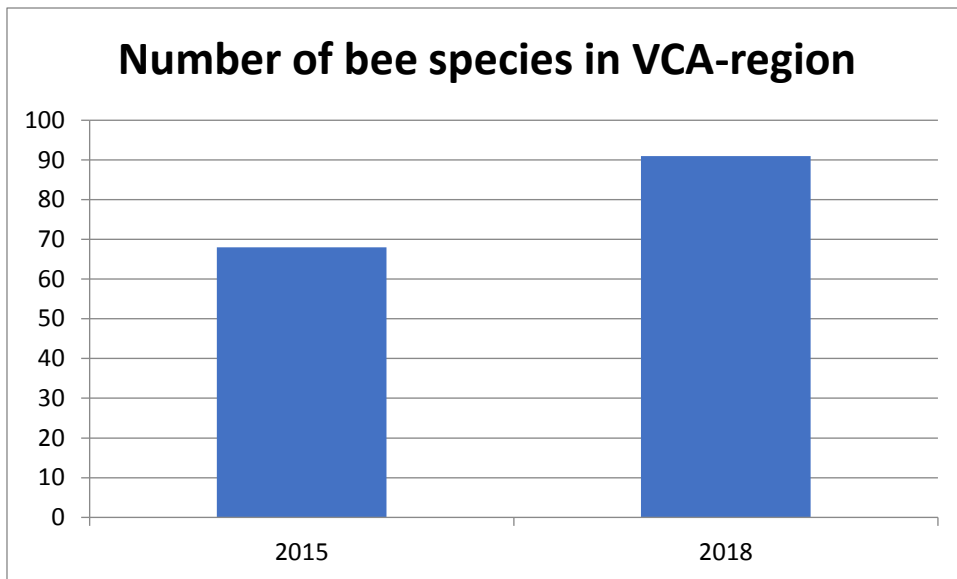
Public awareness of the conservation goals of the concerned landscape is an important component of the conservation actions.

The final conclusion of the audit is that the VCA Green Circle Bee Landscape conservation management plan is compliant with the VCA landscape standard and the area should be registered as a VCA.

In order to present an updated Conservation Management Plan for the purpose of registration an addendum has been made. This addendum includes the monitoring results of bee species in the area conducted in 2018, the new partners who have signed our vision, the letter of intent for VCA registration that has been signed by deputy, councillors and managers and some new contact details. In addition, the recommendations from the audit report are discussed.

2. Monitoring results 2018: 34% more bee species

In 2015 the European Invertebrate Survey conducted a baseline investigation in the VCA-region of the bee and hoverfly species present. The monitoring was repeated in 2018 (Reemer, M., M. Kos, L. Slikboer, 2018). The comparison involved 15 research areas divided into 59 subareas. In 2018 91 bee species and 81 hoverfly species were found. Compared to the 68 bee species and 85 hoverfly species in 2015 this means an increase of bee diversity of 34% and a decrease of hoverfly diversity of 5%. The average species richness per location has increased with 21% for bees and 1% for hoverflies. The number of locations where the species richness has increased compared to 2015 is higher than the number of locations with a lower species richness both for bees and hoverflies. This means that the goals for species richness for 2023 and 2030 are already within reach. Concerning the target species: *Andrena gravida* was found in more locations and *Andrena wilkella*, *Melitta leporina*, *Hoplitis leucomelana* and *Bombus jonellus* were found for the first time.



In 2021 the next investigation will take place. Than we might conclude that there is a positive trend.

3. Nineteen new partners

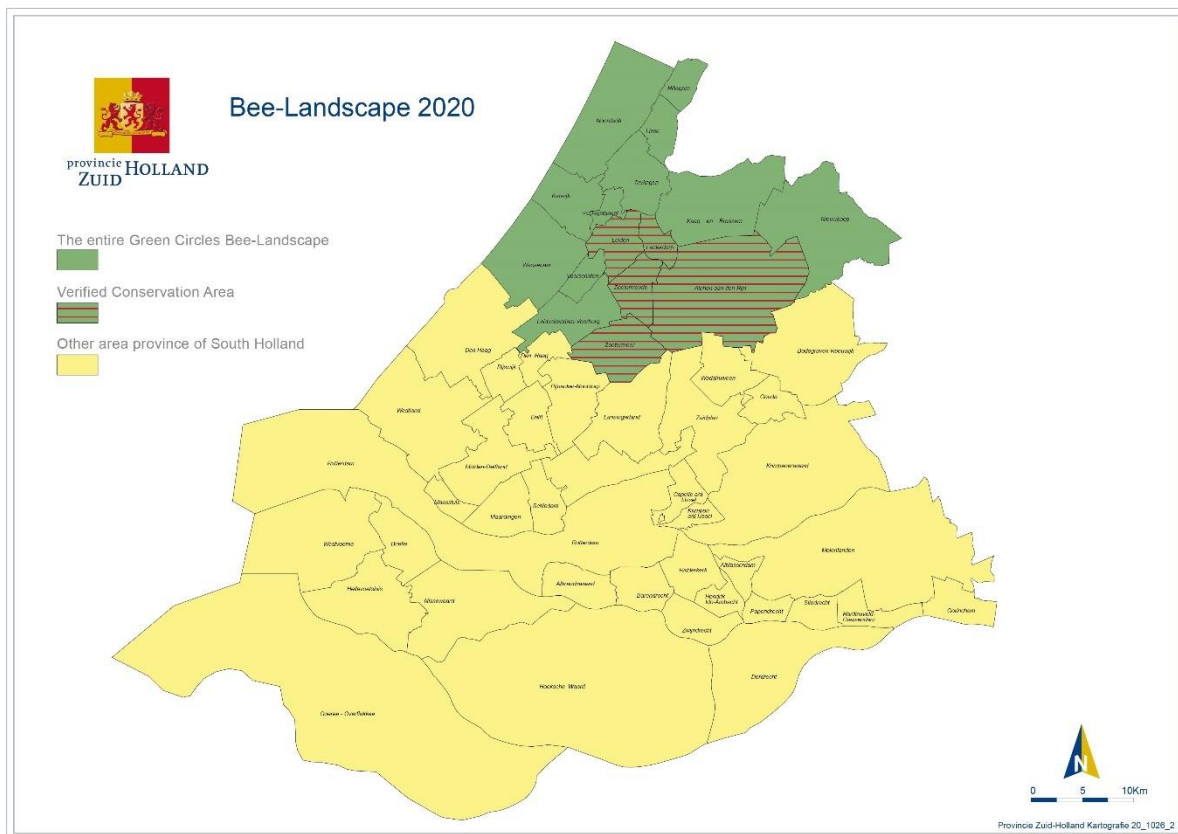
Since 2018 19 new partners (stakeholders) joined the Green Circle Bee Landscape by signing our vision. This makes the total number of partners 42. The signing took place in a festive manner during our annual meetings that are held for everyone who is interested in our work.



The new partners are: Nieuwkoop (municipality), Landschapstafel Duin- en Bollenstreek (area coalition), Dunea (drinking water company), BIZ Grote Polder (business park), NL Greenlabel (label for a sustainable environment), De Groene Stad (foundation for green in an urban environment),

Wellant College (secondary green education), Groei en Bloei (magazine and association for garden lovers), branchevereniging VHG (branch association for entrepreneurs in green), Staatsbosbeheer (nature organization), JUB Holland (bulb grower), Omgevingsdienst West-Holland (regional environmental protection agency), Biodivers Natuurzaden (specialist in natural seed mixtures), Oegstgeest (municipality), Netwerk Kinderboerderijen Actief (network for petting zoo's), Lubbe Lisse (bulb grower), Nationaal Park Hollandse Duinen (National Park), Stichting Steenbreek (foundation for green in the neighborhood) and Universal Greenfields (specialist in green roofs).

With the new partners the area of the Green Circle Bee Landscape has extended as well (see map below). The partners participate in the entire Green Circle Bee Landscape and are directly or indirectly active in the future Verified Conservation Area.



4. Signing letter of intent

On June 24th 2020 a letter of intent was signed by the eight partners that manage the largest part of the future Verified Conservation Area: municipalities of Leiden, Leiderdorp, Zoeterwoude, Alphen a/d Rijn and Zoetermeer, the province of South Holland, cooperation De Groene Klaver (agricultural nature management) and Staatsbosbeheer (nature organization). Signatories were the councillors, deputy and managers respectively. The letter of intent is meant to ensure and propagate the quality of the Green Circle Bee Landscape as Verified Conservation Area. By signing they commit to the registration and the obligations that result from it.

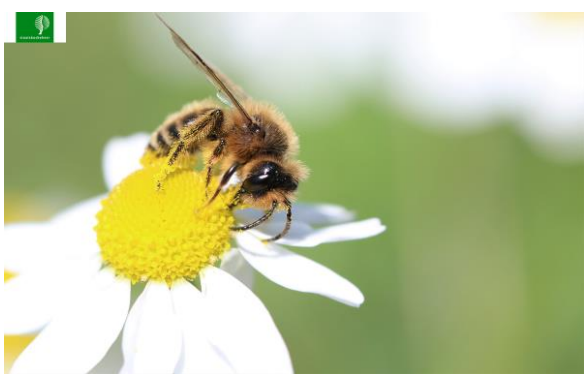
The most important sentences in the letter of intent are the following:

- ❖ ***As Verified Conservation Area we are an example for other bee landscapes by our internationally recognized approach and appealing results we achieve.***
- ❖ ***As Verified Conservation Area we are committed to sustainable befriendly management of our areas.***

- ❖ ***As Verified Conservation Area we are committed to cautious use of chemical pesticides and stopping where possible.***
- ❖ ***As Verified Conservation Area we are visible (ambassadorship).***
- ❖ ***As Verified Conservation Area are jointly responsible for achieving our goals.***

The province of South Holland has the ambition to become the most bee friendly province in the Netherlands. Therefore it is stimulating other regions of South Holland to develop bee-landscapes as well. Registration of the Green Circle Bee Landscape as a Verified Conservation Area ensures that there will be a good picture of what is needed to develop and maintain a good bee landscape in an area.

The signing took place during an online webinar organised by the Green Circle Bee Landscape. Prior to the signing the signatories showed a picture and gave an short explanation of a location or activity in their own area with which they contribute to the bee-landscape. The pictures are shown below.





5. Recommendations audit report

The recommendations in the audit report (Zon, A.P.M. van der, 2019) are the following:

1. Develop the governing structure into a board that is focussed on the development of the VCA Bee Landscape.
2. Focus on strengthening of the process within the existing VCA-borders. Currently the management unit is quite small and should not be stretched out more.
3. Put the focus more area-based with the wild flora and fauna (pollinators) as indicator species; put more focus on the wild bees since honey bees are hardly indigenous.
4. Set conservation priorities within VCA and focus on the development of major biodiversity-rich corridors.
5. Involve the owners of urban gardens in the Bee Landscape and develop with the municipalities a strategy for stone-poor and flower-rich gardens.
6. Link the Deltaplan Biodiversity Restoration launched by the Netherlands Ecological Research Network in 2018 with the Bee Landscape VCA that could become the area-based 'experimental garden' for the plan where the science can meet the practise.

Underneath our response to the recommendations:

1. The partners that signed the letter of intent (see section 4) will form a board controlling the development of the bee landscape in the Verified Conservation Area. They will meet twice a year discussing and adopting the multiannual program and annual implementation program. They are called the VCA core team.
2. The Green Circle Bee Landscape Verified Conservation Area serves as an example for the entire Green Circle Bee Landscape and for the new bee-landscapes in other regions of the province of South Holland. Therefore it is necessary to focus on the process within the existing VCA-borders. However, this does not detract from the importance of the entire bee-landscape. VCA and the entire bee-landscape are inextricably linked.
3. A bee-landscape is not only good for bees, it provides an ecological basic quality in an area. By more and various flowering plants more insects find food. These insects, in turn, are food for birds and other small animals, that can also survive better. This makes the landscape more lively and colourful. The bee, as it were, gives wings to biodiversity and to the amenities for residents and recreation seekers.
Till now our focus has been mainly on wild bees and not so much on the honey bee. This will remain so in the future.
4. Our main focus is to develop a cohesive ecological network of Bed&Breakfast areas and connecting landscape in between. Within this network however, it is necessary to have areas with a high species diversity that serve as core areas. The Bentwoud, managed by Staatsbosbeheer, can be considered as a core area. *Andrena gravida* is one of the species found there ((see the third picture on the right in section 4). In 2019 Staatsbosbeheer has become partner of the Green Circle Bee Landscape and member of the VCA core team. Major biodiversity-rich corridors are important as well. The Elfenbaan, situated in between an railway and a national road, is such a corridor (see the third picture on the left in section 4).

Zoeterwoude (municipality), Rijkswaterstaat (management of national roads) and Zuid-Hollands Landschap (nature organization) rearrange the strip for bees and butterflies based on advice of our bee help desk. The redesign will take place autumn 2020.

5. On June 24th Stichting Steenbreek (foundation for green in the neighborhood) has become a partner of the Green Circles Bee Landscape. This foundation takes action against the hardening of surfaces in green areas in order to reduce flooding, heat stress and air pollution and to increase biodiversity. They focus on both public and private spaces. Garden owners are encouraged to remove their tiles and return them in exchange for plants. Because they have become partners, we can work closely with them and set up a strategy together with the municipalities.
6. During our recent online meetings, respectively for all our partners and for everyone who is interested in the Green Circle Bee Landscape, Koos Biesmeijer (scientific director of Naturalis and professor of natural capital) held a presentation on the Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery. He addressed the possibilities for cross-pollination between the Delta Plan and the Green Circle Bee Landscape. For example the participants in the meetings were made aware of the possibility of applying for a subsidy from the Innovation Fund as part of the Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery. The contribution from the Fund is intended for projects with an area-oriented approach in a coalition to give biodiversity an important boost. The Delta Plan gives opportunities for new, surprising partners for the Green Circle Bee Landscape, e.g. banking, and connection with social challenges as energy transition, climate change, residential construction and circular agriculture. We want to focus on this in the near future.

6. New contact details

Since January 2019, the province of South Holland has submitted the program management of the Green Circles Bee-landschap to the Regional environmental protection agency West Holland. Names and contact details of persons that could be contacted:

- Mrs. Hannie Korthof, program management Green Circle Bee Landscape, h.korthof@odwh.nl; +31 652 443 166
- Mrs. Annette Piepers, program management Green Circle Bee Landscape, a.piepers@odwh.nl; +31 612 532 287
- Mr. Wieger Zwikstra; client for province of South Holland, w.zwikstra@pzh.nl; +31 631 945 442
- Mrs. Mags Dootjes; policy officer, provincie of South Holland m.dootjes@pzh.nl; +31 655 449 071

References

Reemer, M., M. Kos, L. Slikboer, 2018. Bees and hoverflies in the Land of Wijk and Wouden: repeat 2018. European Invertebrate Survey (EIS).

Zon, A.P.M. van der, 2019. Audit report Green Circles Bee Landscape Verified Conservation Area.