

Public support for the protection of nature and landscape explained by ethnicity and images of nature

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Despite the growing cultural diversity in many European countries, nature recreation is still a very “white” activity; immigrants scarcely visit non-urban green areas. Nature conservation organisations have also recognised a lack of immigrants in their memberships (Natuurmonumenten, 2007). In this context, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality has expressed concern about the limited support that the expanding immigrant community shows for protecting natural landscapes. They wish to gain deeper insight into the type of Dutch landscapes that immigrants prefer.

Some 11% of the Dutch population consists of non-Western migrants, of which the majority originates from two Islamic countries, Turkey and Morocco (CBS, 2007). Prior research has suggested that different perceptions of nature and landscape may be related to this limited nature bonding and support for nature and landscape protection (amongst others Zube and Pitt, 1981; Johnson et al., 2004; Stodolska and Livengood, 2006). Using the concept of images of nature (Buijs, 2009), cultural differences in meanings attached to nature can be explored. Our aim is to gain insight into the images of nature amongst native Dutch people and immigrants from Turkey and Morocco, and to relate this to nature bonding and public support for nature and landscape protection.

Table 1: Interaction with nature as well as support for nature and landscape protection of native Dutch and immigrants and people with different images of nature

	Nature interaction				Support for protection	
	Know about (% yes)	If known, use (amount of visits / year)	Attach-ment (scale from 1-10)	Future concern (scale from 1-10)	Nature (scale from 1-5)	Landscape (scale from 1-5)
<i>Origin</i>						
Native Dutch people	93	22.9	6.7	8.0	4.6	4.0
Immigrants	57	6.2	5.3	6.0	4.3	3.9
<i>Within immigrants</i>						
First-generation	51	5.5	5.4	6.0	4.3	4.0
Second-generation	74	7.6	5.2	6.1	4.2	3.7
<i>Images of nature</i>						
Wilderness	85	17.6	6.4	7.5	4.5	3.9
Inclusive	73	18.0	6.5	7.7	4.5	4.2
Functional	64	9.9	5.7	6.7	4.2	3.9

Figures in italics are not statistically significant. Know about: Cramer’s V = 0.41 *** (origin), 0.22 *** (within immigrants), 0.20 *** (images of nature). Use: $\eta^2 =$ (origin). Attachment: $\eta^2 = 0.11$ *** (origin) 0.02* (images of nature). Future concern: $\eta^2 = 0.23$ *** (origin), 0.05 *** (images of nature). Support for nature protection: $\eta^2 = 0.04$ *** (origin), 0.04 (images of nature). Support for landscape protection: $\eta^2 = 0.04$ (within immigrants), 0.03 (images of nature).

A quantitative survey was carried out amongst residents of three Dutch cities, namely Utrecht, Haarlem and Arnhem. Both native Dutch people and people of Moroccan or Turkish origin were questioned about their relation with two well-known nature areas close to the city they live, their images of nature and their support for nature and landscape protection. In total, 300 immigrants and 318 native Dutch people were interviewed; in each town, each group comprised a minimum of 100 people of each group. The overall response rate was 47%.

Three images of nature were described: (i) the wilderness image, which focuses on ecocentric values and the independence of nature; (ii) the functional image, which focuses on anthropocentric values and intensive

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management and (iii) the inclusive image, which focuses on ecocentric values and an intimate relationship between humans and nature. Native Dutch people are strong supporters of the wilderness image, while immigrants generally support the functional image. Second-generation immigrants seem to take a middle position between first-generation immigrants and native Dutch in their support for the various images of nature. These results could be a first sign of acculturation of second-generation immigrants, where they begin incorporating values from native Dutch culture into their own culture (see also Buijs et al., 2009).

It appears that ethnicity plays an important role in relation to nature interaction and public support for nature and landscape protection. Autochthonous people more often know nearby nature areas, make more use of it (see also Peters et al., 2010), are more attached to it and are more concerned about the future development of it. They are also more in favour of support of nature and landscape protection.

Again, acculturation processes seem to play some role in the sense that immigrants who are born in the Netherlands know more often about the existence of nearby nature areas and seem to visit slightly more often these areas. However, their support and future concern is not higher than those immigrants who are born in Turkey or Morocco. People with a wilderness and inclusive nature view have a more intensive relation with nature, although there is not much difference with people with a functional image if support for nature and landscape protection is considered.

The limited attachment of immigrants to and future concern for nearby nature might be a reason for concern. Notably, with respect to the non-existing differences between first and second generation immigrants. Forest and nature managers need to take notice of it and search for possibilities to strengthen the relation with immigrants groups.

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