

Improving Biodiversity in the HZ Garden



Introduction

- HZ Garden: part of a broader initiative to add more greenery around the school building of HZ Vlissingen
- Constructed in 2022, still developing
- Last summer part of the HZ Garden was destroyed and plants and structures were lost

“Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life you’ll find in one area... Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems, to maintain balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive: food, clean water, medicine, and shelter.”

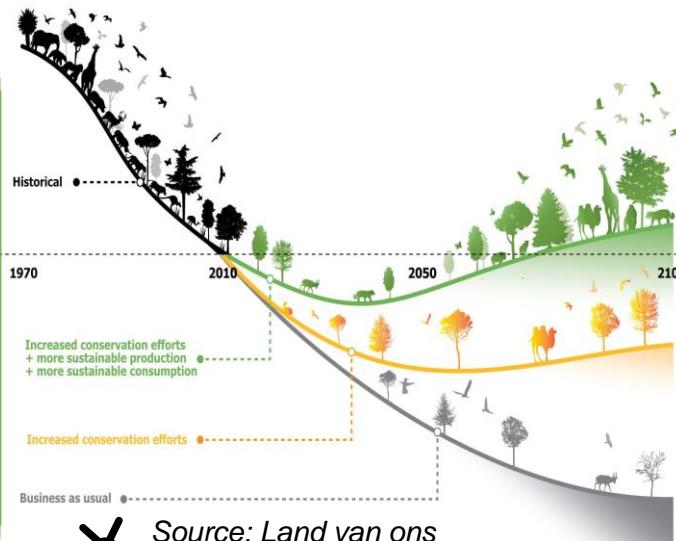
-Lorin Hancock, WWF

Research Question:

How can biodiversity be promoted in the HZ Garden while also improving its visual appeal?

Sub Questions:

1. *How can biodiversity be measured in the HZ Garden?*
2. *Which plants could improve the HZ Garden visually while also contributing to a greater biodiversity?*
3. *Which other structures could be added to the HZ Garden that look visually appealing and promote biodiversity?*



Method: Participatory action research (PAR)

- Challenges scientific knowledge instead focuses on smaller communities who see the world differently
- Stakeholder engagement
- Participating in HZ Gardening sessions
- Excursions
- Interviews:
 - Lecturer Watermanagement
 - City ecologist Middelburg
 - Food forest expert
 - Vegetable garden expert

Results:

Interviews and discussions led to

- Construction of an insect hotel
- Improvements to the seating area
- Filterable excel file with helpful plants, including which parts are edible and which plants are host plants
- Information useful for improving the pond and wadi



Conclusion:

- Biodiversity can be measured in multiple ways, but is reliant on the local fauna and flora and the season
- Native species of host plants, nectar plants, flowering plants, berry bushes
- Houses for insects, birds, hedgehogs, lizards etc. and water elements



Recommendations:

- Further develop the ideas of previous circular economy minor students!
- Focus on improving the conversation pit
- Improve the state of the pond and wadi

Learning points:

- New knowledge on permaculture, biodiversity
- Working in a team and working solo
- Prioritization
- Project limitations: Time, money, energy

