



## GOOD PRACTICE

### Title of the practice

Creating More Room for the Common Meuse

### Detailed description of the practice

The Common Meuse has a total length of 42 km. The River Meuse borders the Flemish Region (Belgium) and the Province of Limburg (The Netherlands). In 1993 and 1995 the River Meuse experienced extreme high water and major floods, which stressed the importance of flood prevention and strengthened cross border cooperation. Before that time, the Dutch and Flemish governments on both sides of the Common Meuse used to operate practically independent from each other and developed their own river management plans.

These plans were mainly defined by the physical characteristics and local interests. The Flemish Region formulated plans and legislation that provided the government with a basis for fast and adequate implementation of structural flood prevention measures (dike strengthening). The Dutch governments developed plans for river widening on the Dutch side of the Border Meuse. In these plans nature development and gravel extraction had to be combined.

In the beginning of the 1990's the two countries began to adjust their plans to those of each other. Although after the floods direct attention was given to dike reinforcement, a joint plan was elaborated to create more room for the river with the following objectives:

- Improvement of flood protection: flood risk after realisation 1:250 per year (nowadays 1/50 per year);
- Development of 1.250 hectares of new river nature;
- Extraction of approximately 50 million tons of gravel.

### Evidence of success

A joint cross-border plan was made dealing with the interests of many stakeholders and via a public-private partnership.

### Location of the practice

Country: *The Netherlands*

City: *Maastricht*

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