

# **The narrative construction of the Dutch SDI**

**Theory, methodology, and the Geoportal case**

Henk Koerten

RGI PhD meeting  
Amersfoort, november 13 2008

# A cultural-narrative approach (1/3)

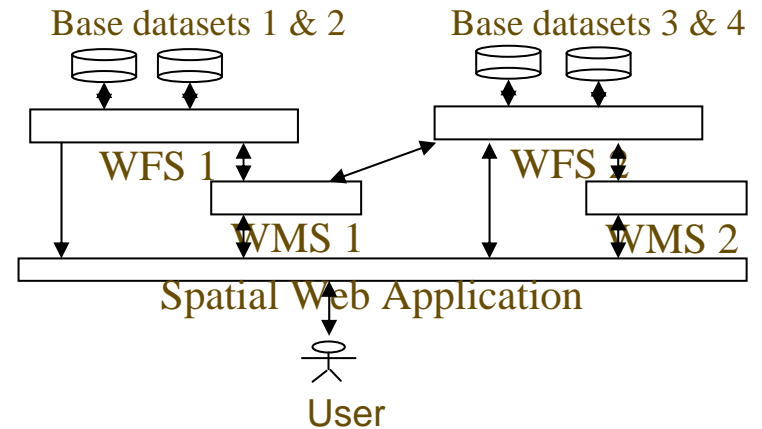
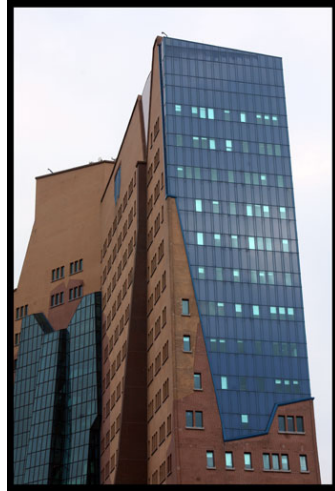
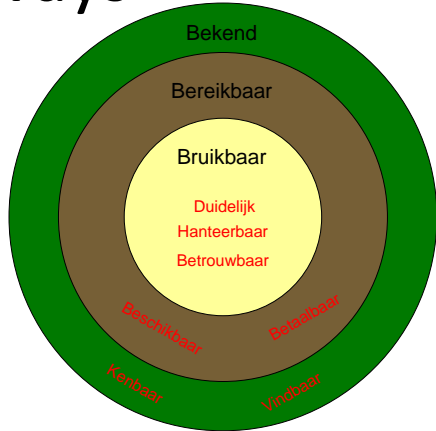
People tell stories:

- Telling
- In text and documents
- With figures charts and numbers
- Through physical environment

Why? To invoke meaning

# A cultural-narrative approach(2/3)

People tell stories in different ways



Stories generate meaning



Organisaties die geo-informatie beheren, ontsluiten deze informatie vaak via hun eigen loket. In de afgelopen jaren zijn op deze manier veel loketten ingericht, bijvoorbeeld het DINOLoket ([dinoloket.nitg.tno.nl](http://dinoloket.nitg.tno.nl)), Bodemdata.nl ([www.bodemdata.nl](http://www.bodemdata.nl)), DataLand ([www.dataand.nl](http://www.dataand.nl)), Rijkswaterstaat Adviesdienst



Narratives: are mostly tacit, they need to be elicited

## **A cultural-narrative approach(3/3)**

The story of the  
Dutch National Geoinformation Infrastructure?

- What is the scene?
- Who are the players?
- What is their role?
- What is changing?

# Methodology

Four cases that tell a narrated story:

- Geoportals (RGI geoloketten)
- National Clearing House Geoinformatie (NCGI)
- Large scale basemaps (GBKN)
- National Triangulation (RD)

Collecting data through:

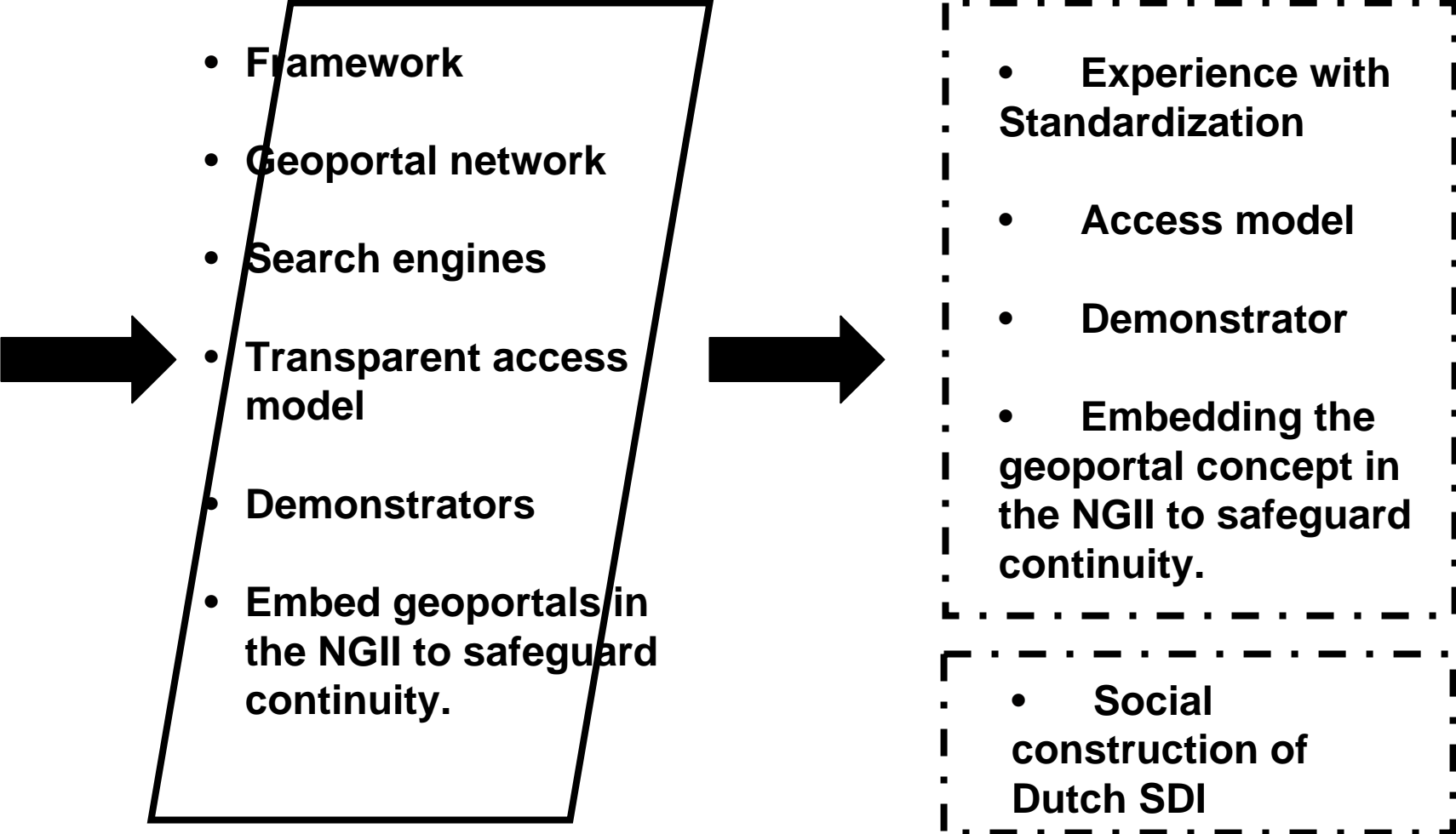
- Participant observation
- Interviews
- Professional journals
- Audio and video footage

# Geoportals project, 13 organizations participating

- *Answering societal questions with GI*
  - *Elicit latent questions*
  - *Leveling organizational, financial, juridical and technical barriers to increase accessibility*
- 

- **Geoportal network as a sub-NGII infrastructure**
- **Framework for easy access**
- **Innovative search engines based upon open standards**
- **Demonstrators for sector-crossing**
  
- **Utilized for societal problem solving**
- **Transparent access model**
- **Knowledge flow between practice and scientific research**
- **applications for citizen- government interaction**
- **Embed the geoportal concept in the NGII to safeguard continuity.**
  
- **Provide insight in success- and failfactors**

# Geoportals

- 
- Framework
  - Geoportal network
  - Search engines
  - Transparent access model
  - Demonstrators
  - Embed geoportals in the NGII to safeguard continuity.

- Experience with Standardization
- Access model
- Demonstrator
- Embedding the geoportal concept in the NGII to safeguard continuity.
- Social construction of Dutch SDI

Half way: 10 participants

End: 7 participants

# Preliminary conclusions

- Process of redefinition of goals
- Tension between tight project definition and project slogan: *liberty united*
- Continuous struggle between demands for a rigorously defined infrastructure and constantly changing technology standards
- Almost all participants call geoportals a success

# The Bottom Line



[h.koerten@tudelft.nl](mailto:h.koerten@tudelft.nl)