



≡ provincie  
Gelderland

## Cool Nature

Playing, exercising and learning in  
natural, everyday surroundings



## Cool Nature

Through the Cool Nature project, the Dutch province of Gelderland is hoping to create adventurous, accessible and natural sites in various locations in Gelderland. Magnificent sites with exciting nature where everyone will come from childhood onward. Where children can play, exercise and learn. And where young people can find their niche. A place for childcare, scouting, nature lessons with school or birthday outings, but above all for everyday visiting too.

### Natural place for playing and learning

Cool Nature differs from the usual play areas. There are no swings and slides and no paving. On the contrary, the intention is that the children use natural materials to play, such as branches, sand and water. This gives them more encouragement to discover things and seek out challenges. The intention is also that children and/or young people be able to learn something about nature. Schools and nature and environmental learning centres can come here for their fieldwork lessons.

### Green surroundings

The sites are some 2-5 hectares in size, are mostly in parks or wooded areas and, as far as possible, in the neighbourhood of the intended users. They have to be safe and social, easy to reach and easy to access, sustainable and easily identifiable. And it's the children, youths and the people from the neighbourhood that are jointly responsible for determining what is and isn't going to be included. Usually only minimal modifications have to be made to the area. Through zoning the sites are suitable for as many age groups and activities as possible.

*Playing with natural materials*



## *Multifunctional use of public green spaces*

### **Looking for suitable locations**

Together with the local authorities or other land owners wanting to set up Cool Nature sites, the province looks for a suitable location. Next the local authority or other land owner has to provide a project manager in order to prepare a design together with the children and/or young people that are going to use the site. After the construction, the local authority or other land owner bears responsibility for maintenance and usage. In this way, the various activities can be a permanent feature.

### **Financial support**

Cool Nature is part of the Gelderland climate programme 'Aanpakken & Aanpassen' ('Tackle & Change') and implements provincial objectives from a variety of policy areas, such as climate

adaptation, landscaping of water and green spaces, standard of living in neighbourhoods, education on nature and environment, societal involvement, quality of spatial planning and health and exercise. The province offers financial support for both the process and the implementation.

### **Encouraging knowledge and experience**

In addition to financial support, the province also offers support in the shape of a Community of Practice. Within this community, exchange of knowledge and experience is encouraged between and within the local authorities or other land owners, both with regard to the multifunctional use of public green spaces and the social cohesion that this generates. This way the wheel doesn't have to be reinvented each time.

### Cool Nature in summary

- Playing, exercising and learning in natural surroundings
- Local authority or other land owner responsible, province provides support
- Integral approach
- Sites 2-5 hectares in size and in the vicinity of user
- By means of zoning, sites rendered suitable for as many age groups and activities as possible
- Design is produced together with children and/or young people
- Community of Practice

### Further information

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*Provincie Gelderland, dichterbij dan je denkt*