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*Environmental justice in the Netherlands:  
some empirical data and their interpretation  
Justice environnementale aux Pays-Bas:  
Certaines données empiriques et leur interprétation*

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Hitherto attention to environmental justice or environmental equity has been scarce in the Netherlands. That is remarkable, even more as the country has a rather good reputation when it comes to the environmental domain, either in environmental concern, in science or in policies. Recently, however, research and debate on environmental justice seem to emerge gradually (induced a.o. by Blowers and Leroy (2006), Coenen and Halfacre (2000), the National Institute of Public Health and the Environment (2001), Walda (2002), and Kruize (2007)).

With this paper, we envisage to contribute to this debate. We therefore want (a) to display recently gathered empirical evidence at three different levels: the national, the regional and the local, including a first analysis of these data in terms of the relation between environmental quality on the one hand and socio-economic status on the other. We then (b) discuss some of the theoretical assets available to understand these data in terms of environmental (in)justice (section 2). The third section concludes (c) on some issues that could further both research and policy making in this domain.

In this abstract we restrict to an indication of the data. Kruize (2007) investigated environmental equity at national and regional level. The former relates to the Netherlands, the latter comprised two regions with a high spatial pressure and large infrastructure, the Rijnmond region (international harbour) and the Amsterdam Airport region (international airport). It aimed at (i) developing a methodology to analyse environmental equity; (ii) investigating the distribution of (accumulation of) environmental 'bads' and 'goods' among socio-economic categories; (iii) exploring the influence of market forces and state regulations on the environmental equity situation; and (iv) interpreting the environmental equity situation in terms of justice. Secondary data from national databases have been used to investigate the distribution of environmental quality among socio-economic categories. Traffic noise, NO<sub>2</sub>, external safety risks, and availability of public green space within 500 meters of the dwelling have been selected as environmental indicators, whereas income was the socio-economic indicator. Expert interviews delivered insights into the influence of market forces and state regulations on this distribution.

Michiels van Kessenich (2007) investigated environmental justice at local level in the city of Nijmegen. The exploratory study reported on was set up to learn whether Nijmegen is indeed 'undivided' when it comes to health perception and environmental quality. The study used and compared data from 'objective' (monitoring) as well as from 'subjective' sources (perception). The latter data originated from the 'Environmental Perception Study' and from the 'City of Nijmegen Monitor'. The former data originated from monitoring and from experts of the city of Nijmegen, leading to maps with the (uneven) environmental quality and harm in the neighbourhoods.