

Terschelling, 20 May 2022

Letter to the children of the world

Dear Mette,

I have been on Terschelling with 80 cool colleagues. I have shared your question: "Have you saved the world?" Silence fell in. Your question shook us and woke us up. I also shared my answer: "No, we haven't done that. There was no time, because we were busy worrying about daily issues." Again silence.

Let's first apologize. The infrastructure in the Netherlands is one of the best in the world, but we have ignored other values. We have used more resources than our sector, our generation and our country deserves. We didn't do this on purpose, it was partly unknowingly and mainly happened as it is difficult to rise above ourselves, even during these 5 days. And yet we are proud.

We now know what we want to achieve. We want to do this together. We are returning to what is essential: people, nature, well being, health and happiness. For you and the next generations, we will make conscious choices. We will only do what we know is important and we will pay a real fee. We don't do that just for the Netherlands. We do it for the world as a whole. We are respectful to the world, as it is the world that decides the space we have. The world determines how this can be done in a future proof way. We realise it's narrower.

How are we going to achieve this?

Our new values will be put first and top of mind and we want to learn how to implement them in our daily work. We will make our sector a place which is a good working environment for anyone who can and wants to play a part.

We want to commit to this, with achievements which can be measured and billable. We will build in a sustainable, circular and climate neutral manner and we include nature where we can. Every time we do something we ask ourselves: does this make sense?

We don't re-invent things all the time. We actively bring together, policy, execution and research. We take time to follow and improve the formulated transition paths. We choose to be leaders and enthuse as many people as possible and we will follow even more powerfully.

We are proud of people who choose to work in this arena and those who join it. We direct our hope to you and to ourselves. We will do much better than we have done up until this moment. You will do better than we have done. We promise to hand over the Dutch infrastructure to you in a sustainable way.

We will meet again and we will invite you next time. Not just you, but a large group of youngsters. My generation is in the position to realize change, but we can't do it without you. We hope that you want to accept our invitation. Feel free and know you are welcome.

Participants of the Infra5daagse