Committees at Work
Wiebe E. Bijker, Roland Bal, and Hendriks Ruud

in The Paradox of Scientific Authority: The Role of Scientific Advice in Democracies

This chapter addresses the question of how, during the advisory process, the Gezondheidsraad operates in the field of force between science, policy, and society, and considers four parts of the work of committees. First, it considers the issue of how, within committees, space is created for scientific doubt and debate, and how this space is at the same time sufficiently confined. Second, the chapter looks at the confidentiality of committee work: to what degree is the closed character of the committee’s work beneficial for the Gezondheidsraad’s positioning with respect to science, policy, and society? Third, it deals with the ways in which a committee organizes contacts with the outside world, focusing mainly on hearings and the public draft report, and finally, it analyzes the writing of the advice, and how these texts perform coordination work.

Preparing the Stage: Defining the Problem and Shaping the Committee
Wiebe E. Bijker, Roland Bal, and Hendriks Ruud

This chapter discusses two of the main issues with which the Gezondheidsraad has to deal with early in the advisory process: problem definition and committee formation. Problem definition is one of the coordination mechanisms with which the Gezondheidsraad
construes its position in relation to science, policy, and society. After the problem definition, the Gezondheidsraad positions itself relative to its environment by means of the tool of committee formation. While its standing committees function as antennas for picking up relevant developments, the Gezondheidsraad, by selecting committee members, draws in the outside world itself. Experts, if they are solidly rooted in the practice about which the Gezondheidsraad provides advice, offer a bridge connecting science, policy, and society.

Conclusion
Wiebe E. Bijker, Roland Bal, and Hendriks Ruud

in The Paradox of Scientific Authority: The Role of Scientific Advice in Democracies

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This concluding chapter adds the third element of the theory of scientific advice: the place and role of scientific advice in the process of democratic governance. It links the case study of the Gezondheidsraad to the broader context of democratization of modern societies, and answers the questions of how scientific advisory bodies escape the horns of the paradox of scientific authority and function in the democratic governance of our highly developed scientific-technical societies.

The Work and the Product of Scientific Advising
Wiebe E. Bijker, Roland Bal, and Hendriks Ruud

in The Paradox of Scientific Authority: The Role of Scientific Advice in Democracies

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This chapter argues that a theory of scientific advice should do at least three things. First, it should specify the characteristics of the product of that scientific advice, the advisory report. Second, such a theory should describe in detail the work that goes into making such scientific advisory reports. And third, it should position the work and product of scientific advice in the broader process of democratic governance of technological cultures: the role that experts play in the democratic procedures and institutions in modern societies which are permeated by science and
technology. The chapter discusses the first two elements, drawing upon the detailed analysis of the products and work of the Gezondheidsraad.

**Missionary Zeal and Repair Work**  
Wiebe E. Bijker, Roland Bal, and Hendriks Ruud

in *The Paradox of Scientific Authority: The Role of Scientific Advice in Democracies*

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This chapter focuses on the Gezondheidsraad’s public functioning and the various activities that accompany and follow the publication of its advisory reports. It also discusses some of the strategic instruments that the Gezondheidsraad relies on during this stage for positioning itself in relation to science, policy, and society.

**The Gezondheidsraad**  
Wiebe E. Bijker, Roland Bal, and Hendriks Ruud

in *The Paradox of Scientific Authority: The Role of Scientific Advice in Democracies*

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This chapter presents a brief characterization of the Gezondheidsraad (the Health Council of the Netherlands), its mission, and its position in the Dutch political and scientific landscape. The Gezondheidsraad is an independent advisory body tasked with providing ministers and Parliament with scientific advice on matters of public health. Ministers ask it for advice to ground their policy decisions. The Gezondheidsraad also has an “alerting” function that allows it to give unsolicited advice. Both forms of advice provide scientific support for the development of government policy.
Policy analysis in advisory councils
Laura Flamand
in Policy Analysis in Mexico

This chapter explores the increasing and rather prominent role of public advisory boards in the Mexican federal government with emphasis on policy analysis instruments and methods, conditions for sound analysis, and existing organizational capabilities. The chapter is organized into four sections. The first provides a definition of the term “advisory boards”, given its different and at times contradictory uses. The second section describes the construction and criteria used to build the first universe of advisory boards in the Mexican federal government, circa 2015. The third part presents a comparative analysis of two of the most influential advisory boards in Mexico: CONEVAL, devoted to the evaluation of social policy, and INECC, in charge of providing technical and scientific advice to environmental decision makers. The fourth section discusses the main findings and presents conclusions.