Wildlife Nature Case

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

Our client, Staatsbosbeheer, needs a tool (online and/or offline) that will help raise children's awareness of the animals living in our national parks.

OVERVIEW

The product will be a fully playable prototype that resembles a Pokemon GO style adventure game from an isometric point of view, the game will be focused on exploring Dutch national parks and finding different kinds of animals and wildlife that live in these parks. The player will explore the parks while interacting with NPC's to gain quests and objectives, these will task the player to begin searching for animals to scan within the parks and learn about. Once all animals in the national park have been documented, the game is over and the player has won the game. Based on our primary target audience, there will be no failure condition.

GOALS

1. Interactive and different for every user, takes user input and converts it to a unique user experience. The players should make some decisions in the start that will affect the game. (Changing UI colour, character colour, difficulty, starting items/ animals, etc.)
2. A list of animals that the user can find, scan and learn about. Potentially expanded to more animal types and species in the future.
3. Fully accurate representation of Dutch animal life, ecosystems, and national parks.
4. Informativ, fun, and engaging for our primary target audience.

TARGET AUDIENCES

1. Primary Target Audience: Dutch children aged 8-14 that have cell phones and are interested in nature.
2. Secondary Target Audience: Dutch school systems that are teaching students about nature, national parks, and animal life.

SPECIFICATIONS

A Unity 3D project that will require use of free assets from the internet for some models and environments, combined with original programming, 3D models, and designs to create an informative and entertaining game.

Controls

Basic Movement: WASD keys to move the player.

E: Primary interaction with objects, NPC's, etc.

Q: Scan animals when in view and range.

Esc: Open options menu.

Difficulty

Difficulty in the game can be managed in several ways, there can be set difficulties that influence animal movement speeds, movement patterns, and limitations towards scanning range. Additionally, there can be no specifically set difficulty that the player can choose, however the difficulty will be built directly into the interactions between the player and various animal life. Examples of this can be that certain animals can be naturally more difficult to scan such as birds that are agile and able to move through the game area more quickly than the player. This would lead to developing more skill based gameplay that requires the player to learn the movement patterns and maneuvers of animal life in order to successfully scan them.

Setting

The Dutch national park Schiermonnikoog that is located on the island of Schiermonnikoog located off the North coast of The Netherlands will be the primary location of the prototype.

The setting of the game takes heavy inspiration from the Pokemon franchise, in our world, a new camera technology has appeared and grown in popularity rapidly all across the globe. This technology allows users to learn various kinds of information about animals after taking photos of them. The user plays as a character who is a big fan of the Dutch National Parks, and decides to set out on a quest to discover all of the animals that exist within them using this new technology.

Platform

Made in Unity 3D for the personal computer utilizing the Windows operating system. Future improvements include expanding to iOS computers and phones, as well as Android phones.

Primary Gameplay Loop
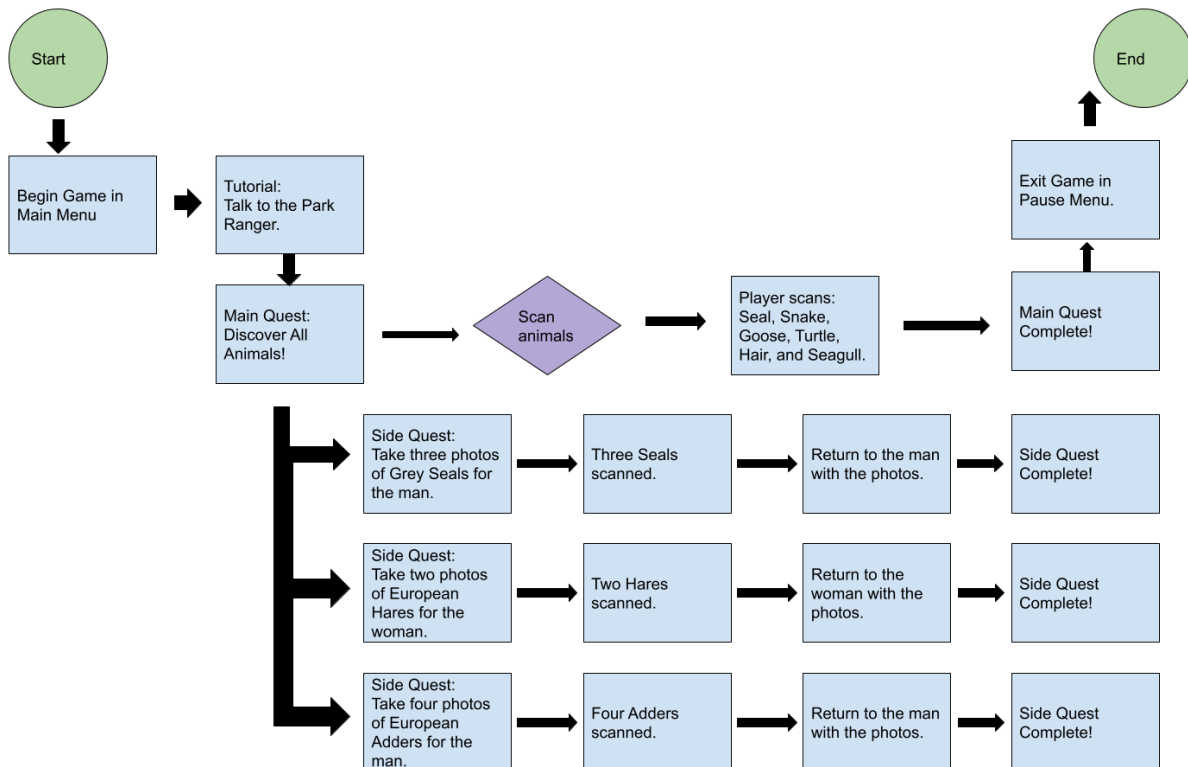
Dialogue

Game: "Press E to talk"

Park Ranger: "Welcome to Schiermonnikoog!"

Park Ranger: "Be sure not to disturb any wildlife while exploring the island!"

Park Ranger: "You can snap a photo of any wildlife you encounter with your personal camera when in range."

Park Ranger: "Watch out for snakes on the island! They have a painful bite."

Park Ranger: "Did you know that Schiermonnikoog is one of twenty one different national parks here in The Netherlands? There's so much to enjoy!"

NPC: "Are you looking for animals too? I'm studying marine life here! Did you know this island has a healthy seal population?"

NPC: "A bird just stole my french fry!"

NPC: "What a beautiful day! Glad I brought sunscreen."

NPC: "I can't believe the island is 16 kilometres long! I need to rent a bicycle!"

NPC: "I just saw a snake cross the road, almost snapped a picture of it too!"

NPC: "Did you know that the European Adder is the only venomous snake that can be found in several European countries?"

NPC: "Did you know that Barnacle Geese are sometimes hunted by Polar Bears?! This new camera technology is wonderful!"

NPC: "I was watching the ocean just now, a shark popped out of the water and ate a seagull! Did you see that?!"

NPC: "There are so many Hares around here! They're my favourite animal!"

NPC: "I can't believe how big this beach is! It's so beautiful!"

NPC: "Wow! This picture I took of a turtle looks great! Did you know they have almost no natural predators except some sharks and killer whales?"

NPC: "There are so many Seagulls in this area! They certainly have adapted well to live with humans. Earlier I saw one steal someone's french fry!"

Quests

1. Tutorial: Talk to the Park Ranger.
2. Discover All Animals: Discover Seal, Snake, Goose, Turtle, hair, and seagull.
3. Side Quests: Take three photos of Grey Seals for the man, take two photos of European Hares for the woman, take four photos of European Adders for the man.

MILESTONES

Playable Prototype

The first milestone the team is pursuing is to have a playable prototype where a player can explore around a representation of Schiermonnikoog from an isometric perspective, with at least one animal that is able to move around the game world and be scanned by the player. A single NPC that can be interacted with to gain a quest to scan the single animal will be the primary objective of this prototype.

Final Product and Demonstration

For the final product that our team will be demonstrating, the prototype will be composed of six animals and a large level that is a representation of Schiermonnikoog. The user will be able to explore around the island, scan animals with their character's personal camera, and complete several side quests. Once the user has scanned an animal they will be able to see various kinds of information about that animal within the registry. Once the main questline to discover all the animals on the island has been completed, the player can continue to explore and complete side quests until they wish to leave and exit the game.

Future Development

If the prototype continues with development in the future, it would be expanded to include all twenty one Dutch National Parks and a significantly larger catalogue of animals to be scanned. Additionally, more information and stronger consideration towards the interactions between the user and the animals would be developed in order to promote learning related to the animals. Part of the expansion would also include more advanced artificial intelligence for the non-player characters and animals in the game, as well as more advanced level design and controls.

CONCEPT ART