



Delta Programme 2020

Continuing the work on the delta: down to earth, alert, and prepared

Today, the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management submitted the Delta Programme 2020 to the States General. This is the tenth consecutive annual Delta Programme, yet it is the first Delta Programme for which I – in my capacity as Delta Programme Commissioner – have had the privilege of submitting a proposal to the Cabinet.

You may open DP2020 by [clicking here](#). DP2020 is also available on the english.deltacommissaris.nl website.

DP2020 sets out that the intended flood risk management, freshwater supply, and spatial adaptation measures are progressing as scheduled. This past year, the Netherlands has been faced with extreme weather conditions. Following an unusually long period of drought in the summer of 2018, the Elevated Sandy Soils have once more contended with considerable precipitation shortages during this year's summer months. Furthermore, the summer of 2019 beat the national heat record dating back to 1944. This drought once more emphasised that we need to continue to work on our freshwater supply, and it underscores the urgency of the Delta Plan on Freshwater Supply, phase 2 of which is in preparation.

The Flood Protection Programme has upped its focus on tackling essential dyke improvements, and the assessments of the primary flood defences are in full swing. The innovations that are being explored under the Flood Protection Programme are already yielding millions of euros in savings for the dyke improvements that have been scheduled. Within the framework of the Delta Plan on Spatial Adaptation, stress tests have been conducted for virtually all the municipalities in order to map out their vulnerabilities to extreme weather. A growing number of government authorities have embarked on risk dialogues and the formulation of implementation agendas.

Recommendations of the Delta Programme Commissioner

In order to be prepared for increasing waterlogging, drought, and heat, and to mitigate the impact of potential flooding, climate-adaptive and water-resilient construction must become the “new normal”. In the purview of realising this ambition, it is important for governments themselves to set a good example, and to encourage residents and the business community to do their share.

I set great store by adopting water as the guiding principle in spatial planning at all scale levels. That is why I have recommended that the Cabinet have the Delta Programme goals and its collective taskings integrated and accommodated in the collaboration agreements with the local and regional governments, which are based on the finalised National Environmental Vision, and to have such goals and taskings elaborated in the intended Environmental Agendas. The Cabinet has adopted this recommendation.

Six-year review and Sea Level Rise Knowledge Programme

In addition to taking essential short-term measures, we must also continue to look ahead to the future. This tenth Delta Programme shows that the Delta Decisions and Preferential Strategies set out in Delta Programme 2015 (DP2015) hold good until 2050 and are still charting the right course. However, the initial steps taken towards the six-year review – which will be completed by 2021 – have demonstrated the need for limited adjustments. Furthermore, to stay on the right track, it is crucial that we continue to work on the delta, and to give impetus to the implementation of the measures set out in the Delta Plans on Flood Risk Management, Freshwater Supply, and Spatial Adaptation. The new insights in a potentially accelerating rise in sea level have added to the uncertainties regarding measures beyond 2050. This calls for the exploration of short-term actions that will keep long-term options open. The Sea Level Rise Knowledge Programme has been launched to gain a better picture of the rate at which the sea level will be rising beyond 2050.

National Delta Conference 2019

The key theme of the National Delta Conference 2019, to be held in Goes on Thursday, 14 November will be “Continuing to work on the delta: down to earth, alert, and prepared”. The tenth National Delta Conference is a co-production of all the Delta Programme partners: the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, Rijkswaterstaat, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, the Association of Provincial Authorities, and the Association of Dutch Regional Water Authorities. To register for the conference, click here: <https://english.deltacommissaris.nl/dutch-delta-congress/tenth-dutch-delta-congress-2019>.

I hope to meet you there.

Peter Glas
Government Commissioner for the Delta Programme