



# DELTA IN TIMES OF CLIMATE CHANGE II

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE, SCIENCE, CITIES AND BUSINESS  
 ROTTERDAM THE NETHERLANDS, 24 – 26 SEPTEMBER 2014

Deltas in Practice, policy-practice sessions	
Deltas in Practice Theme 2. Adaptation strategies	
DP 2.3 Learning from the practical experiences in the science policy interface in Delta Cities	
Chair	Piet Dircke, ARCADIS, the Netherlands
Organised by	Ralph Lasage, VU University Amsterdam, the Netherlands
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeroen Aerts, VU University Amsterdam, the Netherlands</li> <li>• Jesse Keenan, Columbia University, USA</li> <li>• Prof. Ho Long Phi, Centre of Water Management and Climate Change HCMC, Vietnam</li> <li>• Augustin Sánchez-Arcilla, UPC, Spain</li> <li>• Peter van Veelen, City of Rotterdam and Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands</li> </ul>
Session topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Connecting Delta Cities network (CDC) aims to extend the collaboration from government-to-government (G2G) to knowledge-to-knowledge (K2K) in the C40 cities. This session explores how research can support policy making in, for example, developing climate adaptation strategies.</li> </ul>
Objective of the session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objective is to explore if and how a K2K network might be organised between delta cities. The desired outcome is (1) commitment of researchers and knowledge centres in coastal cities to share knowledge and potentially join the K2K network of CDC, and (2) building blocks for CDC K2K research agenda.</li> </ul>
Main conclusions and lessons learnt from the presentations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Knowledge does not always reach the policy domain. Within the CDC initiative, Rotterdam has taken the initiative, uniting a delta city, a private company (providing climate adaptation solutions developing projects) and a university. They have set out, using the existing CDC network, to make an inventory in books and a documentary with best practices in climate proof delta city management and development. From incidental cooperation, a productive network for knowledge exchange is now on the rise, with a growing number of cities joining the CDC network and more and more interaction (workshops, website, bilateral actions, etc) taking place.</li> <li>2) A large number of New York City reports on climate adaptation and urban development strategies are presented, highlighting various forms of cooperation between the academic realm and the public and private sector in climate proof urban real estate development. Lessons and challenges are summarised.</li> <li>3) In climate proofing itself, Ho Chi Minh City takes a balanced instead of an adaptive approach (too expensive for Vietnam). Developments are unpredictable in the dynamic urban environment, and inhabitants do not accept interference. Both climatic and non-climatic impacts on rainfall/flooding pattern. Not only technical and financial feasibility are required, but also social and institutional supportability. These “cannot be imported”: the buildup may take 30 years. 20 are years required to get a base level of flood protection, to be provided by government. Then, a credible appeal can be made to the city to adapt to climatic developments during the construction period.</li> </ol>	





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- 4) A European project on coastal protection is presented  
Mass media and economic impact have been used to mobilise a sense of urgency  
Tourism is affected when the beaches are eroded at a higher rate, due to climate change  
Systematic assessment of coastal vulnerability to sea level rise. Presented to scientific community and to the public
- 5) Peter van Veelen, City of Rotterdam official and TU Delft Scientist, tells a personal story of what happened in the 5 years of his PhD research, bridging the gap between science and politics. When a learning by doing opportunity arises, you should grab it as a researcher, but at the same time you should not neglect or postpone the development of fundamental knowledge.  
The next case study could not build on experience from the first case study.  
Everybody should have their Eureka moment in research (several times).

### Main conclusions of the discussion

- Arnoud Molenaar (Rotterdam): Delta cities often need short term research questions solutions from consultants or knowledge institutes. For the long term you need a scientific basis.
- According to Peter van Veelen, delta cities need to become living labs
- Community to community knowledge exchange is required as well
- Juliet Daniels (London Climate Change Partnership): there sometimes is a terminology problem which hampers connectivity, we mean different things by saying the same words
- Cees van der Guchten (Deltares): Known examples exist (UNEP, Delta Alliance), but those address national policies. Urban system have different actors and different entry points.
- Jaime Stein (Pratt Institute NYC): Interconnectivity: communities and universities should be brought together, so they can advocate to their policy makers
- Bert Hooijer (Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences/RDM Campus): Key elements are vision and being open to coincidence (meeting the right people), invest and show stamina, stick to it, students can be very important and bring people together.
- It's an all-in challenge connecting people.

### Main result or conclusion of the session

A general conclusion was not reached but an overall understanding that adaptivity in mental attitude and enduring commitment is required for sustaining a CDC G2G network and extend it successfully into a K2K network was generally agreed upon.

Elements of relevant knowledge for climate proof delta development are found in science, business and communities. Bringing these together is already a challenge at local level, although best practices are present. No common vision exists yet on how to fully develop the knowledge aspect in the next level of cooperation (internationally).

