



DELTAS IN TIMES OF CLIMATE CHANGE II

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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

<p>Deltas in Practice, policy-practice sessions</p> <p>Deltas in Practice Theme 6. Awareness, capacity building and community resilience</p> <p>DP 6.4 Deltas en estuaries in peril: towards a global "Community of Practice" on the ecosystem-based-management of deltas under global and climate change</p>	
Chair	<p>Hartwig Kremer, UNEP, Kenya</p> <p>Cees van de Guchte, Deltares/Delta Alliance, NL</p>
Organised by	<p>Hartwig Kremer, UNEP, Kenya</p> <p>Cees van de Guchte, Deltares/Delta Alliance, the Netherlands</p>
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prof. John W. Day, Louisiana State University, USA ● Dr. Ramachandran Ramesh, National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management, India ● Salif Diop, Cheikh Anta Diop University, Senegal ● Arnoud Molenaar, City of Rotterdam, the Netherlands
Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Efi Foufoula-Georgiou, University of Minnesota, USA ● Renske Peters, Delta Alliance, the Netherlands ● Robert Nicholls, University of Southampton, United Kingdom
Session topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In order to fill in the information gaps and to stimulate countries to build capacity and develop sustainable delta strategies and policies, UNEP seeks to establish a "Community of Practice" (CoP) on the sustainability and ecosystem based management of global deltas.
Objective of the session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A CoP could bring together best practices, scientific innovations and policy in the area of 'Climate change adaptation' and addresses key drivers of ecosystem degradation and global megatrends as well as developments of democratisation of and open access policies for data and information. As supporting infrastructure for the CoP, UNEP operates the data and knowledge management platform UNEP Live (www.uneplive.org).
<p>Main conclusions and lessons learnt from the presentations</p>	
<p>Professor Day presents the complexity of deltas and estuaries systems. The two examples of increased population and industrialization in India and the dependence on deltas and estuaries in West and Central Africa both clarify this. In order to maintain the ecosystems in deltas and estuaries there is a need for ecosystem based management which keeps the complex system of ecology, human developments and economic values in mind. Both case studies on India and West and Central Africa show the fragile relation between human activities and the condition of deltas and estuaries. Each can have a major effect on the other. The fact that nearly half of the human population will be living in deltas in the coming future underlines the need for a sustainable management of these environments.</p> <p>Climate change even enlarges the challenges deltas are facing. The livelihood of a large part of the world's population is under pressure. Therefore, a new approach to maintaining and managing deltas and estuaries needs to focus on the holistic approach incorporating all the different needs and stakeholders into the process.</p> <p>The City of Rotterdam presentation focuses on incorporating the delta into the city and making it part of the city's fabric. The examples show how to work with nature in the city. Instead of fighting against the water and climate change, Rotterdam chooses to adapt itself to it. This approach enhances the livelihood of the city and its inhabitants while it actively searches for potential solutions to incorporate the core values of the delta into the city.</p>	





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Main conclusions of the discussion

The following discussion focuses on the need for sustainable management of deltas and estuaries. Questions like 'what is real sustainability in deltas' and 'how to focus on long term instead of short term projects' are discussed. A possible solution could be a more accessible network of data and best-practice examples. In the process of connecting all the different sources of knowledge the focus should be on enabling the use of the data. The scientific world produces lots of data and society should be able to use it. Additionally, stories of best practices should be told in an appealing way. Therefore, a shift in the presentation and accessibility of data should be considered.

Main result or conclusion of the session

There was a positive response to the call for joining a UNEP CoP. The CoP should reach out to and actively invite policy makers and show national, regional, and international best practices and examples in an appealing way. Search for new forms of output in order to make it more useable and accessible for the society. A CoP supports the commitment of many countries to make their knowledge and data available and accessible and ensures the democratization of data.

Most exciting insights or outcomes

- There is a need for an ambassador of deltas and estuaries
- The best stories are told along camp fires where the knowledge is spread to different people.
- Include the new generation, now!

