



DELTAS IN TIMES OF CLIMATE CHANGE II INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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

International Climate Adaptation Business Challenge 2014	
Chair	Rens de Jong, BNR newsradio, the Netherlands
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SWAPP – salt water app, Marta Faneca Sánchez• AdBank, Elena Lopez-Gunn• FOURCE - farm water salinity reducer, Lodewijk Stuyt• SaltFarm Texel, Arjen de Vos• RESILIENCE climate service, Melanie Davis• Hydroalgae Power, Kaushik Rangarajan and Vishak Ramachandran• AQGRI+, Priska Prasetya and Jelmer van Veen• HGF Climate Vulnerability Reduction Credits, Karl Schultz and Maria Lasa Aresti

“Some people say that adaptation is ‘throwing the towel in the ring’” says Pier Vellinga, director of the Dutch research programme Knowledge for Climate. “I am frustrated that we didn’t reduce emissions in the last 30 years, so we should make the best of it and therefore I think we should innovate.” With these words the International Climate Adaptation Business Challenge is opened.

Presenter Rens de Jong (BNR Newsradio) introduces the jury and asks them what their main scope is while watching the finalists of this business challenge pitching their business plans:

Pier Vellinga: “I have an eye for innovations that create climate adaptation.”

Frans Nauta (Climate-KIC): “At Climate-KIC we see many idealistic entrepreneurs. But it can be a pitfall if you want to save the planet.”

Rutger de Graaf (Delta Sync): “I pay attention to societal impact and to the ownership of ideas.” And at last Lisette Heuer (Royal HaskoningDHV) says: “I will focus on the questions: Is there a client? And what can you offer the client?”

Now the pitching begins. Rens de Jong explains the rules: every finalist gets five minutes to pitch his/her idea and the jury will have five minutes to ask questions.

Marta Faneca Sánchez (Deltares) is the first pitcher. She presents ‘SWAPP, the Salt Water App’. Due to climate change deltas and coastal zones will get more salinization problems, resulting in smaller crops. With a salinity sensor attached to a smartphone it’s possible for farmers to measure the salinization of their land. All data will be visible on a map online. This saves a lot of time and money for governments and water boards who use expensive divers to measure the salinity.

Elena Lopez-Gunn presents the idea to launch the ‘Adbank’. “Water is to adaptation like CO2 is to mitigation,” she says. “Large economic losses from extreme water events will be expected.” Therefore she thinks that reducing water risks is the most important climate adaptation measure. First they will diagnose the location, environment and water availability of a company, then calculate how much water it needs and how much water it can save in times of water abundance. “We want to make a credit system that rewards saving water,” Elena says.





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Lodewijk Stuyt (Wageningen UR) has a new way to desalinate water for farmers. “Fresh water is not always available for farmers. In the Netherlands water authorities can supply 70% of the needed volume. The rest should be taken care of by the farmer,” says Lodewijk. Therefore he has a new way to desalinate salty ground water. In a container as big as a shower cabin he puts carbon electrodes with voltage from solar- and wind power. This removes most of the salt out of the water.

As a break, the winner of last year's Business Challenge, Arjen de Vos (SaltFarm Texel, Netherlands), tells how life has been since last year's prize. While passing around pieces of salty potatoes he tells: “Winning last year's prize was a recognition for our work. Since then we upscaled our experiments. And even king Willem-Alexander came by to see what we do.” His organisation experiments with using brackish water to grow potatoes and 120 other species. This year he produced 50.000 kg potatoes. In the coming weeks he will start a new project in Pakistan, where 40 million hectares of salinized soil is waiting for salt resistant crops.

Melanie Davis wants to start a ‘Resilience climate service’ that delivers near time climate predictions for energy companies. Pier Vellinga asks how it differs from other meteorological predictions. “We model future climate, based on the current weather state. Others look to the weather from the past and use that to predict future. That makes us unique,” Melanie answers.

Kaushik Rangarajan tells how he wants to make ‘hydroalgae power’ in plastic containers on the sea surface. “The algae use solar energy and grow on sea water, while they produce hydrogen.” After that he wants to use the algae as fertilizer. The jury comments that they miss a working prototype to prove the value of their ideas.

Priska Prasetya & Jelmer van Veen make quite a comic duo while presenting their AQGRI+ plans. “Waste water is a cool thing. It's loaded with nutrients. We see it as a resource for coffee plantations in Vietnam,” tells Priska. “We turn waste water into three valuable products: compost, irrigation water and fish. Frans Nauta remarks: “People don't like to eat their own waste. How is that in Vietnam?” “People in Vietnam are used to eating lower quality fish. We work with the standards of the World Health Organisation to ensure safety,” answers Jelmer.

The last pitch is held by Karl Schultz and Maria Lasa Aresti. They initiate ‘Climate Vulnerability Reduction Credits’. “Governments, corporations and international development agencies have budgets for adaptation projects, but we don't see results of their work. Therefore we want to turn climate adaptation into an asset. Organisations can buy credits for 50 euro, a currency to compare, prioritize, and credit measures that reduce vulnerability to climate change.”

After these seven pitches, the participants move to a plenary meeting, where Rens de Jong and Frans Nauta present the winners. The first prize, an amount of 25.000 euro, goes to Priska Prasetya & Jelmer van Veen with AQGRI+. Lodewijk Stuyt wins the second prize, 15.000 euro, to start experimenting with water desalination. The third prize, a voucher of 25.000 euro goes to Marta Faneca Sánchez and Eric Lammertsma with their Salt Water App. The fourth prize, a voucher of 15.000 euro, goes to Melanie Davis for the ‘Resilience climate forecasting’ project.

