

Future Telling



The future as a concept has always been something that has appealed to humankind. What will the future look like, what will we do, where will we go. In earlier centuries, a writer like Jules Verne fuelled imagination when his books were first published, with lots of the stories by this famous Frenchman coming true over the years. A more recent example is the TV-series 'Years and Years', broadcast by the BBC, portraying society by following the life of a family over the years 2019 till 2030. Quite scary to see how trends and events from now could pan out over the next decade when the authors have future-telling capacities. Sometimes the future was far away – times of slow development, sometimes catching up with the future is almost undoable – times of really fast development.

Artificial Intelligence

It is clear that nowadays we are in such an era of unprecedented technological progress and no one knows where it will end. Data almost always plays a role in that progress. That goes for hydrography as well. It is not so much the technology of acquiring data that is developing fast at the moment, but the possibility of gathering, combining, storing, analysing and even attributing forecasting capacity to data that will shape the nearby future of oceanography and data. Denis Hains from Canada wrote a story on Artificial Intelligence for the July/August 2019 issue of Hydro International (see page 16). Hains doesn't foretell the future in this article but describes where we are now. Who dares to take up the challenge and predict what will happen? We are happy to receive your future telling ideas.

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