

Hydrographic Society Benelux



Estuaries and Coast Management Workshops

During the last two workshops, members of the Hydrographic Society were introduced extensively to coastal issues. On Friday 23 April, the members attended presentations on Dynamic Deltas at the Hogeschool Zeeland, Vlissingen, The

Netherlands. Peter van Tilburg (Delta Academy) gave an introduction on education and the research that has been carried out to date and the research that still needs to be done. Jan van Dalfsen (Deltares) emphasised the role his organisation can play in realising coastal protection and developing estuarine areas all over the world. After a short break, Johan van Cranenburgh of Waterschap Zeeuwse Eilanden told the audience about the ditches, canals, pumps and roads this organisation has to maintain to ensure that the south-west area of the Netherlands stays dry. Peter Schreijgrond of Ecofys concluded the presentations by explaining how protective measures and nature can work together - even help each other.

The next workshop also focused on coastal issues. Organised by the Agency for Maritime and Coastal Services, Coastal Division, in Ghent (Belgium), the project Bringing Land and Sea Together (BLAST) was discussed by two speakers. Roy Hellesjø Mellum of the Norwegian Hydrographic Service and project manager of BLAST explained the project organisation and the progress made. Karin Vaksdal of the Norwegian Hydrographic Service and Work Package leader of BLAST demonstrated the efforts of Work Package IV, concentrating on ENC harmonisation. She also demonstrated how this can be done by a specially developed software tool. After the break, the emphasis was on coastal zone management. Kathy Belpaeme of the Centre for Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Belgium focused on the European perspective - as Belgium only has a short coast (68km). Tina Mertens of the Agency for Maritime and Coastal Services clarified policy and planning for a safe future in Flanders.

The lectures were concluded with a toast in honour of the International Hydrography Day. Chairman Leeke van der Poel commemorated the importance of hydrography for safe navigation and coastal protection. All attendees were invited to stay on the boat for a trip outside Ghent where they could see the centre of the city from the canals and the beauty of the Belgian countryside.