



Newsletter of the Knowledge Sharing Meeting

26 January 2017

Dynamic Deltas & Embassy of Bangladesh in the Netherlands



IGLUU, the Hague, the Netherlands



The Ambassador of Bangladesh, H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Belal opening the Knowledge Sharing Meeting



Knowledge Sharing Meeting Dynamic Deltas



Chair of the meeting
The Ambassador of Bangladesh to the Kingdom of the Netherlands
H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Belal

Date and location

Thursday, 26 January 2017, starting at 14:30
IGLUU, Louis Couperusplein 2, 2514 HP, The Hague

Programme

14:30-15:00	Registration	
15:00-15:15	Address of welcome	H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Belal Ambassador of Bangladesh
15:15-15:30	Context of Cooperation for Deltas in the Netherlands and Bangladesh	Catharien Terwisscha van Scheltinga Director Project Office WUR, Dhaka Dr. Jaap de Heer Twynstra Gudde, Team Leader Bangladesh Delta Plan
15:30-15:45	Outcomes of Dynamic Deltas	Dr. Jeroen Warner Dynamic Deltas, Wageningen University
15:45-16:00	New Insights on Adaptation and Urban Flooding	Farhana Ahmed Dynamic Deltas, VU Amsterdam University
16:00-16:45	Discussion	Dr. Jeroen Warner , moderator Aprul Hussain Manik , discussant Owner: Moonholding BV, Nusrat BV & Bombay Spices BV, Hengelo
16:45-17:00	Summary of the Discussion	
17:00-18:00	Drinks and Bites	

Registration

Please send an email to the Assistant Programme Coordinator of Dynamic Deltas
Janwillem Liebrand: Janwillem.liebrand@wur.nl





Dynamic Deltas – the first research programme on deltas

The Knowledge Sharing Meeting was an initiative of the Dynamic Deltas research programme and the Embassy of Bangladesh in the Netherlands, to share findings and exchange. Dynamic Deltas (2012-2017), funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), under the WOTRO Integrated Project programme, is a collaborative programme of Wageningen University (WUR), the Netherlands, and the Institute of Water and Flood Management (IWFM), Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET).

The key research question of the programme is: What can be learnt from the similarities and differences between the flood risk management approaches of the two countries? What knowledge from the Netherlands is useful for Bangladesh; and what knowledge of Bangladesh is useful for the Netherlands. The project focusses strongly on knowledge exchange.

The research project is guided by Chief Scientist Water Resources Management, Dr. Philippus Wester, Wageningen University and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), and Professor of IWFM, BUET, Dr. Shah Alam Khan. In total, 4 PhD students have been involved in the research project; 2 from the Netherlands (Arjen Zegwaard en Martijn van Staveren), and 2 from Bangladesh (Farhana Ahmed and Mahmuda Mutahara). These students have done research in deltas in the Netherlands and Bangladesh, and elsewhere.

The research project aims to contribute to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN. It also aims to generate new knowledge on Climate Adaptive Governance and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). The purpose of the meeting was to inform stakeholders and experts about research results and outcomes; and plan ahead. Some information and results are presented at: <http://dynamicdeltas.blogspot.nl/>

“I am happy to see that some Dutch water experts in the audience are more often in Bangladesh than myself”

In his opening address, **the Ambassador of Bangladesh** to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, **H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Belal**, emphasized the relevance of knowledge exchange between Bangladesh and the Netherlands. He expressed that it is important to keep the connections between researchers going and he was happy to see that some of the Dutch experts in the audience were more often in Dhaka than himself. Mr. Belal shared his observation that the Netherlands is a well-organised country, having a long history of dealing with flood risks; there must be a lot of useful knowledge for Bangladesh. Bangladesh is a country that undergoes enormous transitions, posing specific challenges how to deal with flood risks. This knowledge might be useful for the Netherlands.



Developing new knowledge for science policy interaction in Bangladesh



Director of the Project Office, WUR, and Delta Alliance International Secretariat, **Catharien Terwisscha van Scheltinga** provided a background on cooperation between the Netherlands and Bangladesh. Early projects in Bangladesh on water and flood management with Dutch involvement, for instance, were the Flood Action Plans (FAP) in the 1990s. More recently, it has been the National Water Management Plan in 2004, the Water Act of 2013, and the ongoing Bangladesh Delta Plan. To make these plans and projects work, new knowledge development for science policy interaction is critical. Building networks among stakeholders and experts is the way forward. She expressed the hope that this meeting will contribute to this goal.



Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100

Team leader for the Bangladesh Delta Plan, **Dr. Jaap de Heer**, from Twynstra Gudde, presented the latest developments in policy formulation. The new delta plan aims to formulate strategies for adaptive delta management in the face of climate change. Parallel to the strategic planning, an investment plan is prepared, 'to make it happen'. An intensive two-year period of consultation has been held to formulate different 'hotspot strategies', for major rivers, coastal zone, Barind and drought-prone areas, haors and wetlands, urban areas, and Chittagong hill tracts and coast. The new Delta Plan has been incorporated in the latest Five Year Development Plan of Bangladesh and a block provision of a minimum of 2% of GDP is set aside for a Delta Fund. These are promising developments for the future of Bangladesh.



Turning the tide?



Dr. Jeroen Warner, representing Dynamic Deltas, highlighted the changing context of research and policy discussions on deltas. Delta planning is an emerging field of study and expertise. Traditionally, it has been a field of engineers, but today, there is a trend to emphasize 'soft knowledges' to strengthen communities and institutions for flood resilience. In this regard, the Netherlands and Bangladesh represent interesting and very different cases. The first is dealing with floods in a 'rigid and stable' way, and the second in a 'dynamic and fluid' way. Interestingly, climate change is changing the game in both countries. Generally, large infrastructure solutions are no longer appropriate; the challenge is to increase flexibility, adaptability and sustainability.

Flood risks under urban growth and climate change dynamics: The case of Dhaka

In her presentation, **Farhana Ahmed**, PhD candidate of Dynamic Deltas and Specialist, Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services, Bangladesh, explained about her research findings on flood risk management in Greater Dhaka. Applying the 'adaptation tipping point approach' and using extensive participatory consultations among people in Dhaka, she developed new insights on methods to study and appreciate the effectiveness of flood risk management strategies. One of the key findings of her research is that adaptation tipping points are reached before it is anticipated.





Discussion: Living in a delta – a business perspective



What do floods mean for business continuity in the Netherlands, compared to Bangladesh? How do business people experience the risks for floods? Do they incorporate it in their business plans? To find out about the answers, **Mr. Aprul Hussain Manik**, living in the Netherlands and owner of Moonholding BV, Nusrat BV and Bombay Spices BV shared his views, acting as a discussant. He recalled that he used to put his trousers on his head as a young boy in Dhaka, to keep them dry when he went to school. He appreciates the safety of the Netherlands and the opportunities that it has given him for business. Floods in Dhaka do not pose a risk for him anymore, because he imports spices for his Indian restaurants from the UK

The Knowledge Sharing Meeting continued with questions from the audience. **Ad Spijkers**, retired FAO Bangladesh, commented that enormous gains have been made in raising agricultural productivity in the last decades, but that most of these gains have been inadequate in meeting the population growth in Bangladesh. This might also be true for the delta plan of Bangladesh; climate change might not be the biggest challenge; it is population pressure that is part of the equation. **Anna Wesselink**, researcher UNESCO-IHE, inquired about the progress of the Bangladesh delta plan. Compared to the Netherlands, where the formulation of flood management policies has taken more than 20 years, Bangladesh seems to have made significant gains in a period of 2 years: what has made it possible and what might be challenges ahead?

The meeting came to a conclusion with a vote of thanks for the presenters and drinks afterwards.



Janwillem Liebrand, Dynamic Deltas presents Mr. Belal, Mr. de Heer and Mr. Hussain Manik with a copy of his PhD thesis 'Masculinities among irrigation engineers and water professionals in Nepal', to keep the discussion going.

For more information on Dynamic Deltas and this event: Janwillem.liebrand@wur.nl

See next page for list of participants



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