



Report of the Review Meeting

Introduction

This report summarises the fruitful, open and constructive discussions and feedback during the Delta Alliance Review meeting held on 10 October 2013. Although there was criticism on the achievements of the Delta Alliance, the overall objectives of Delta Alliance as a neutral, facilitating knowledge network was broadly supported. The role and utility of Delta Alliance was recognized. We extracted the following main topics from the discussions.

How knowledge driven should Delta Alliance be? What is the niche?

Some had the impression that Delta Alliance tries to be a network for knowledge exchange in the scientific domain. This is not the case. The niche for Delta Alliance has always been to make knowledge accessible to practitioners and change agents: public sector, private sector and NGOs. Delta Alliance wants to act as a knowledge broker between these sectors. In the future Delta Alliance will (continue to) do the following:

- Focus on integrated delta management, including urban issues, regional planning, agricultural development, nature management and water management.
- Further develop and apply the comparative assessment method. This will result in a up-to-date overview of vulnerability of deltas, the networks present in these deltas and potential interventions. Delta Alliance can perform such assessments on demand. This information can be used to explore new markets for private sector parties and/or for governments in terms of building-up bilateral relations.
- Continue to build (and later maintain) the so-called Toolbox for Adaptive Delta Management (Delta Approach) with best practices from all over the world. This toolbox is an important knowledge product developed and maintained by Delta Alliance and its partners.
- Organize knowledge exchange events targeted to pressing issues in Wing delta's or other delta's (based on the results of the comparative assessment), focusing on sharing lessons learned and best practices (using the Toolbox for Adaptive Delta Management). These knowledge exchange events should be geared towards action, and therefore change agents (such as policy makers, private sector and NGO's) are key-participants in these events. In this way sharing knowledge, expertise and experiences can be the start of new business development and new policy development.
- Play a pro-active and stimulating role in the development of new (research) projects. These projects will be carried out by (a selection) of its members. Delta Alliance will not carry out research projects by itself.
- Knowledge institutes that are member of Delta Alliance will actively share their knowledge on delta issues and cooperate in knowledge generating projects through Delta Alliance.
- Delta Alliance will be a knowledge portal for both governments and private parties. These clients can bring their questions to the Delta Alliance International Secretariat, which will bring forward the most suitable team to answer these questions

Focus of the activities

In general, it was advised to create more focus. At this point in time Delta Alliance has 10 Wings and about 10 candidate wings. For real impact and visibility it was advised to concentrate for the next 2 years on less (but active) Wings, concentrate on the most pressing issues in these Wings and show impact in these Wings. Therefore Delta Alliance will:

- Select a few active wings to work with over the next 1-2 years; further develop and apply its method for comparative delta assessment (see above). Use the result of the comparative assessment to focus on delta's and on specific issues within these selected delta's.
- Identify new delta's of interest for private parties, governments and knowledge institutions.

Role of Dutch Wing

For the time being the Dutch Wing will have to be the flywheel for the Delta Alliance organisation and its network. At the same time the Dutch Wing should not dominate the international network. Therefore it was stressed that a distinct difference should be made between the strategy for the Dutch Wing and the strategy for the international network. In fact each Wing can have its own strategy as long as it also contributes to the overall objectives of the network. The Dutch Wing will undertake the following actions:

- The Dutch Wing could play an excellent role in the further development of the Delta Approach / Toolbox for Adaptive Delta Management. Such a toolbox will demonstrate the high standard of Dutch knowledge and expertise on delta management and further strengthen the international position of the Dutch sector.
- The Dutch Wing can become a knowledge portal for the Dutch public sector (as described in the review document). For the Ministry of I&M the Dutch Wing can map knowledge networks and existing knowledge in priority deltas. For the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Delta Alliance can play a role in setting research objectives in the field of water, climate and water-food issues (knowledge platform Water) to enhance targeted scientific research and further upgrading of the respective MASPs. Delta Alliance is in discussion with DGIS and I&M to further develop this role of knowledge portal.
- During the meeting it was suggested that the Dutch Wing can also be a knowledge portal for the Dutch private sector. The Dutch Wing can make an inventory of the knowledge needs of the Dutch private sector related to delta management, and provide the required information, such as best practices from other parts of the world, important networks in specific countries, etc.? Delta Alliance takes this as a good suggestion and will work this out in the near future.
- More Dutch knowledge institutions will have to become active and show commitment in the Dutch Wing, so it can in fact act as a broad, representative platform for the Dutch knowledge sector.

Cooperation with international organisations

Delta Alliance was asked by GWP to co-develop a Global Program of Action on Deltas ('Enabling Delta Life Initiative'), because of its specific expertise on delta's. In this Global Program the development of a toolbox for adaptive delta management is one of the objectives. Therefore this program could be a co-funder of the development of the Toolbox for adaptive delta management. Further, through this cooperation Delta Alliance can use the extensive GWP network for its knowledge activities.

Business model

The financial sustainability of the Delta Alliance is considered as a challenge. It is often assumed that knowledge is a good business generator, but this doesn't always prove to be that easy. Some examples of business generation through knowledge application were mentioned during the review meeting:

commercialise best practices through pilot projects, internationalise the (Dutch) Delta Approach, branding of sustainable delta development. These pathways most likely apply best for the Dutch Wing. At the same time it is also argued that Delta Alliance should not play the same role as NWP as a broker for the Dutch water sector. Various ingredients for a business model were discussed:

- The knowledge broker function towards the Dutch government, providing best practices from around the globe, providing overviews and existing networks in focus countries, and providing suggestions for new opportunities for the Dutch sector
- Within the UN community many activities are taking place concerning for instance the Green Climate Fund, for which guidelines and manuals will be needed. Delta Alliance could serve as a knowledge supplier and broker, among other through the comparative delta assessments.
- In this context it was also mentioned that Delta Alliance could develop into a NGO that focuses on the issue 'what do deltas need in times of climate change', that crosscuts with (more) sectoral NGO's.

Delta Alliance is now working on a business model with the following ingredients. Nationally Delta Alliance can generate income by working on concrete requests from the policy sector, by using instruments like Partners for Water, by using regular strategic research funds allocated to the Dutch knowledge institutes by EZ, and by facilitating internationalization of the innovations developed in the innovation contract of the Topsector water. Internationally Delta Alliance will (i) further focus on the global programme on delta's develop together with GWP, (ii) explore the possibilities to include European deltas in the network in access European funds for this, (iii) explore potential donors such as Green Climate Fund, Rockefeller Foundation, ADB and UN.

Cooperation with the Wings, organisation of the international network

The cooperation with and between the Wings has to be strengthened through more focus on the problems of the active Wings. In view of the overlap in objectives and geographical presence some argued that the organisation of the international network could be done by the strong operational network of GWP. One can wonder though whether this will not harm the identity of the Delta Alliance. It was generally agreed that for an active participation in the network there should be the right 'click' with the international secretariat and the other wings, and the willingness to contribute to the network: so be selective. For this purpose Delta Alliance will:

- Formalise its relationships with the wings and clearly define mutual roles and tasks.
- Intensify the activities and contribution of the Advisory Board, increasing ownership of the wings
- Continue the dialogue with the Wings for more inter-delta cooperation.
- Focus activities on the issues prevailing in the active wings, make a tangible contribution and expand the network step by step.
- Possibly connect with the GWP network, based on the intensifying cooperation between Delta Alliance and GWP