

Press Release: Delta Committee: Working with water

**Wide ranging intervention for water security urgent:
Decisiveness and investment needed**

The Government of the Netherlands requested an independent Committee of State (the Delta Committee) to give its advice on flood protection and flood risk management in the Netherlands for the next century, while keeping the country an attractive place to live, work and invest. Large parts of the Netherlands lie below sea level and are even now experiencing the effects of climate change and sea level rise. The Netherlands delta is safe, but preserving this safety over the long term involves action now. The Committee's chairman, Cees Veerman, presents the advice to the Cabinet on 3 September.

The Netherlands is the delta (with a coastline approximately 350 kilometers long) where major European rivers like the Rhine and the Meuse flow into the North Sea. Problems occur where the rivers meet the sea if the rivers have to discharge more water while the sea level rises – both effects of climate change. The excess water in the rivers cannot flow into the sea when the sea level rises, leading to a drastically increased risk of flooding in large areas of the Netherlands.

These regions lie along the coast and the rivers and are protected by dunes and dikes. Most of the population (nearly 11 million) lives in the threatened area, which is also the fulcrum of the Dutch economy: Schiphol Airport, the Port of Rotterdam, Amsterdam, the capital, and The Hague, seat of government. Roughly 65% of GNP is produced in the lowest region of the Netherlands, in some places several meters below sea level. The Netherlands is also home to a rich natural environment and has a wealth of history and culture, none of which can be lost. The Netherlands is safe, but has to start work on the future now.

The Delta Committee has made twelve recommendations to 'future proof' the Netherlands, even over the very long term, securing the country against flooding, assured of adequate fresh water, while remaining an attractive place to live. The basic issue is security, but the advice interfaces with life and work, agriculture, ecology, recreation and leisure, landscape, infrastructure and energy.

Together, the twelve recommendations make up the Delta Programme, which must be financially guaranteed by a Delta Fund. A new Delta Act will provide the legislative anchor for the political-administrative organisation for the improvement of water security and the Delta Fund.

View a summary of the [twelve recommendations](#) here.

For a summary of the complete advice click [here](#).

Click on [Delta Committee](#) for the Committee's membership

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