

The dynamic Waddenzee

Jointly organised symposium by HSB and DHyG

A report by ROB VAN REE

In February an inspiring event took place which was jointly organised by the Hydrographic Society Benelux (HSB) and the German Hydrographic Society (DHG). Members of both societies travelled to the island of Terschelling for a two-day workshop packed with presentations on the profession, standards and of course local surveying as the ever-moving sea-floor of the Wadden Sea has been the subject of research.

On 18th and 19th February an inspiring event took place between the two regional hydrographic societies. It was the third in a row, after Delfzijl in December 2011 and Papenburg in May 2013. During the Hydrographentag in Lübeck end of May 2014, the idea was born to invite members of the two neighbouring societies to a two-day event at the Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz on Terschelling. Gradually plans for the content developed. When in Lübeck Theresa Maierhofer presented her thesis on measuring seabed ripple transport off the coast of Texel, she agreed to repeat her performance in the Netherlands. From there the theme for the symposium was easily found: The dynamic Waddenzee. This would likely appeal to the hydrography students who were also invited to the symposium held in their training institute.

Guest speakers were found to present a most interesting variation of specialised views on the theme. This was on the second day. On the first day the program was built around seven maritime stakeholders from various applications and disciplines who were invited to give their educated guess for the development of hydrography in the next five to ten years. Each was allowed a pitch of ten minutes – a truly difficult task. Then HSB secretary Alain De Wulf presented the main results of a very recent employment enquiry among corpo-

rate HSB members. The full report will be made available on hydrographicsocietybenelux.eu, as indeed will be most of the presentations. The series of pitches was followed by a forum discussion, whereby the speakers were triggered to address subjects evolving from their views expressed earlier.

The event was attended by 85 DHG/HSB members (and three from THSUK) and 65 students from the first three years of the Ocean Technology training program. Although the students didn't participate in the complimentary dinner on the Wednesday evening, there was an easygoing and open interaction between visitors and students, aiding the start of a professional network for many of the students.

The maritime stakeholders presenting their views were

- Captain RNLN M.C.J. (Marc) van der Donck, as Hydrographer of the navy leading the Hydrographic Office in The Hague;
- Mr Thomas Dehling, head of the Hydrographic Surveying Division at BSH, lecturer at HafenCity Universität Hamburg, chairman of the IHO working group on capacity building, and DHG board member;
- Dr. Peter Gimpel, Director of Survey Systems at L-3 Elac Nautik;

Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz on Terschelling



Students' presentation

- Mr B.R.J. (Ben) van Scherpenzeel, Director of Nautical Developments, Policy and Plans of Port of Rotterdam;
- Mr Lorentz Lievens, head of the Survey Department of GeoSea (DEME);
- Mr Aris Lubbes, Chief Scientist of Fugro Off-shore Survey Division;
- and Mr Michiel van de Munt, head of the Survey Division at Allseas.

Both in their pitches and in their contributions to the forum discussion the stakeholders expressed their high involvement with hydrography as the professional discipline we're all concerned with. For many students it was the first time to experience a direct contact with the industry, they had the opportunity to speak to the representatives of companies and organisations that form their reference for apprenticeships, thesis assignments and innovative developments.

On the second day seven presentations shed their light on the various hydrographic aspects related to the Wadden Sea. The underlying reason for the choice of this theme is the school's research program which addresses the prevention and damage control of oil spills threatening the sensitive Wadden Sea. From year to year 4th year students co-operate to answer many questions about hydrographic aspects of this problem.

The guest speakers addressed changing seabed geomorphology at various scales (Ernst Lofvers); bathymetric surveying using multibeam echo sounder (Theresa Maierhofer) and LiDAR (airborne laser) (Ramona Baran); measuring current profiles with ADCP as well as surface currents over larger areas with radar mounted on light houses by Sicco Kamminga. Herman Peters gave an overview of governmental measurement campaigns in the Dutch Wadden Sea. And finally current modelling was addressed, both for open sea by Christian Maushake, and for areas with drying out tidal flats by Firmijn Zijl, including the aspect of validating such models with actual current measurements in order to put a quality figure to the predicted current values.

In time for all delegates to find their way home on the same day, the program ended by 4th year hydrography student Johan Zegers, who showed recent results of visualising the trajectory of an oil spill of a selectable quantity and viscosity, originating anywhere in the area, when moving by tide and wind. Apart from its usual objective to bring many colleagues together while focussing on some hydrographic theme, the symposium thus provided a very useful introduction to measuring in the marine environment for undergraduate students of the hydrographic training course at the Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz. [⚓](#)



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