

# International Workshop: 'Connecting Delta Cities'

*About global cities, climate change and adaptation; An exchange of experiences  
New York City, June 9-10<sup>th</sup> 2009*

## CLIMATE CHANGE & COASTAL CITIES

The potential effects of climate change on large coastal cities have been addressed in scientific literature over the past 10-15 years. Climate Change and sea level rise may exacerbate flood risks from storm surges as well as peak discharges from rivers. As a consequence, the vulnerability of infrastructure, people, nature and other economic sectors is expected to increase. Socio economic trends may further amplify possible consequences from future floods as more people are moving towards urban coastal areas and capital is continuously invested in ports, industrial centers and financial businesses. By 2040, more than 50% of the global population it is expected to live in urban coastal areas.

Adaptation to climate change and flood risks entails a broad portfolio of options. Adaptation strategies can be targeted to managing the probability of a flood or to minimizing its consequence. Furthermore, adaptation policies may address, evacuation



*Adaptation: Urban development 21ft above sea level: an example from Hamburg (Germany)*

## C40: EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEGDE

The C40 initiative (<http://www.c40cities.org/>), initiated by president Bill Clinton, recognizes the central role cities have to play in tackling climate change. C40 strongly supports the exchange of information and knowledge across coastal cities. Cities include New York, Jakarta, London, Tokyo, Sao Paolo and Rotterdam. Although C40, focuses on mitigating greenhouse gases, adaptation is increasingly seen as a key issue.



*How high can we construct flood walls and dikes?*

## GOAL OF THE WORKSHOP

The worhop will provide a stage for the state of the art science and policies in the area of adaptation to climate change in several key global cities. Innovations and bottlenecks in adaptation policies will be addressed as well as areas with potential for extended knowledge exchange.

The outcome of the meeting is a paper, which describes the key issues related to successful implementation of adaptation strategies. To illustrate the development and implementation of adaptation measures, the provides a comparative assessment between the cities of Rotterdam, Jakarta and New York showing CC effects, solutions and their ' pros and cons'



Manhattan ca 19<sup>th</sup> century (left) and current situation (right). Can we mainstream adaptation measures into ongoing investments in urban development & infrastructure?

### DOCUMENTARY "Connecting Delta Cities"

Within the context of C40 three Dutch partners (City of Rotterdam, CPWC and the VU University Amsterdam) have launched the development of a documentary on 4 cities: New York, Rotterdam, Jakarta and Alexandria. Within each city, policy makers and scientists address the potential threats from climate change but also sketch the potential for adaptation. The film shows that issues and solutions are similar across cities and cooperation is key to tackle the challenge of climate change. The movie will be premiered in Istanbul, Turkey 2009 at the World Water Forum 5 (<http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/>)

### Workshop: Day 1, June 10th

The first day will be dedicated to a plenary session with key note speakers from different global cities. Speakers include representatives from science, policy and business. A moderated discussion will focus on the common threats from climate change, possible solutions as addressed by the different cities and cross city cooperation.

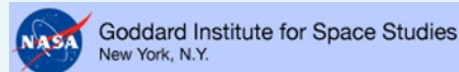
### Workshop: Day 2, June 11th

The second day will focus more in depth on three themes related to the development and implementation of adaptation strategies:

- Is the current scientific information on climate change tailored to the requirements of adaptation policy?
- What options for adaptation are available and what are priorities?
- What are institutional and economic bottlenecks for successful implementation?

### ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The symposium and resulting paper is supported by the following institutes:



The conveners of the Symposium are:

Cynthia Rosenzweig (GISS – NASA)

Malcolm Bowman (Stony Brook University)

Jeroen Aerts (VU University Amsterdam)

### CONTACT

NL: Jeroen Aerts: [Jeroen.Aerts@ivm.vu.nl](mailto:Jeroen.Aerts@ivm.vu.nl)

USA: Malcolm Bowman:  
[malcolm.bowman@gmail.com](mailto:malcolm.bowman@gmail.com)