

Holding back the flood

Delegates of the 2015 CEDA Dredging Days can visit one of the project sites of the Dutch water programme called Room for the River in the vicinity of Rotterdam, as **Veronika Farkas** reports

Room for the River is part of the largest Dutch water storage construction project since the Delta Works. The ambitious initiative started in 2007 with the aim of ensuring that flood protection remained a high priority in the Netherlands, to safeguard four million inhabitants in the Dutch delta.

This project allows restoration of the river's natural flood plain in places where it is least harmful in order to protect those areas that need to be defended. The Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment is running the project, which is budgeted at EUR2.3 billion (USD2.6 billion) and scheduled for 2015 completion.

Through a series of measures at more than 30 locations across the country, the flood plain will be lowered and broadened, while river diversions and temporary water storage areas will be created. Marshy riverine landscapes will be restored to serve once again as natural water storage 'sponges' and provide biodiversity as well as having aesthetic and recreational value. Discharge capacity on completion is estimated at 16,000 m³/sec.

Local provinces, municipalities, water boards, and Rijkswaterstaat, the central government agency responsible for water management, are all taking part in the implementation along with international partners such as neighbouring countries that are connected to the Rhine, Meuse, and Scheldt rivers.

Room for the River also shares knowledge acquired through its various projects with the wider international community and values the experience it has gained from these international exchanges.



Flood plain widening as part of Room for the River

Among other projects it is making more room for the River Waal. The municipality of Nijmegen is relocating a dyke 350 m farther away from the northern bank of the river to prevent frequent flooding and make the waterfront safer. Elsewhere, the municipality of Gorinchem is carrying out work to excavate a high-water channel in the River Merwede to make it deep enough for shipping and give room for an extra container park along the quayside. In an innovative approach, the four Lower Rhine projects were able to speed up excavation of the floodplain by assigning responsibility to a single authority during the planning and realisation stages.

Schedule of the technical visit, Wednesday 4 November 2015, 12.00–17.00



The coach will depart from Rotterdam at 12.00 and will return at about 17.00. Please check the conference's website for the most up-to-date information. Participants registering for the visit will receive detailed joining instructions from the conference secretariat.

The tour will be hosted by Room for the River of Rijkswaterstaat, part of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment responsible for the design, construction, management and maintenance of the main national infrastructure facilities.

Delegates must register for the tour in advance and there is an extra charge for participation of EUR50 excluding VAT. The organisers can accommodate a maximum of 50 people on the trip and places will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis.

This year's CEDA Dredging Days will focus on innovative dredging solutions for ports and delegates will be able to access the latest cutting-edge technology and business innovations related to dredging – all in one location.

In addition to the optional Room of the River technical visit described above and a programme of 22 highly focused presentations given by international specialists, other highlights of the event will include:

- A debate on sustainability in dredging, in which an expert panel and the audience will seek to find a common understanding of what it should mean for dredging projects.
- Young CEDA pitch talks, which aim to support our young dredging professionals.
- A technical exhibition, which gives delegates access to a showcase of the latest innovative products and services from participating organisations. **OPC**

For full details and to book a place, visit

» www.cedaconferences.org/dredgingdays2015

CEDA's trademark event runs alongside Europort 2015, the exhibition for maritime technology

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