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OPENING FLOATING PAVILION ROTTERDAM

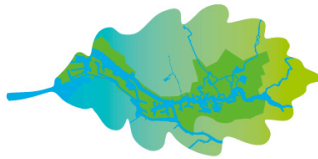
Water sector demonstrates pooling of resources to boost innovation

During the opening ceremony of the floating pavilion in the *Rijnhaven* in Rotterdam, the announcement was made today that this remarkable building in the *Stadshavens* district will become the showcase and centre of expertise for the National Water Centre that is currently in the process of formation. In the floating pavilion, Minister Huizinga was presented the formation document for the National Water Centre. In addition, she received the water manifesto entitled 'The Blue Perspective', describing the Dutch water sector plans to strengthen their national and international position and create exposure for the Netherlands as an international hub for water management expertise.

The floating pavilion is the reference centre for the innovative and inspiring approach to water management, climate change and energy issues. This focus will surely create visibility for the centre as the showcase for the National Water Centre and related projects. The floating pavilion will enhance the competitive position of the Dutch water sector across the board. During the opening ceremony, Mayor Aboutaleb referred to the fact that Rotterdam is perceived more and more as *the* climate city, both on a national and an international level. 'This perception helps to attract companies and organizations who are ready and willing to join us in our efforts and work together with us to achieve significant progress in this respect. It fills me with pride that the Dutch water sector has selected this exceptional building to establish the National Water Centre.'

Exceptional reception and exhibition area

The pavilion consists of a plaza section and a dome section comprising three interlinked half-spheres, the largest of which has a radius of 12 metres. The total floor area is approximately 46 by 25 metres. The floating pavilion can be rented for receptions and other events. One of the domes contains a lecture theatre seating groups of 150 guests. The pavilion presents exhibitions on water management, climate change and energy. On Architecture Day, on 26 June, the pavilion will be open to the public. The floating pavilion is a design by the Deltasync/PublicDomain Architects design team and was constructed within the space of six months by Dura Vermeer. It is climate change resilient, innovative, sustainable and flexible. The floating pavilion responds to the collective climate objectives of Rotterdam to reduce CO₂ emissions by 50% and to ensure that the city remains climate change resilient also in future. This is the first result of climate change resilient building in the areas outside the levees, and as such, the floating pavilion is a new and compelling example of intensive utilization of urban space in Rotterdam's harbour basin and the *Stadshavens* district.



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Outlook for the National Water Centre

The floating pavilion's main purpose will be to serve as a centre of expertise and a showcase for the National Water Centre. The document of formation that Mr Ed Nijpels (Chairman of the DDD2012 Review Board) presented to Minister Huizinga during the opening ceremony describes how in due course, the special features of the National Water Centre, in terms of its physical location, its display qualities and its character as a testing ground, will help to enhance the competitive position and increase the proceeds and profitability of the Dutch water sector. Eventually, the National Water Centre is to become a cluster of innovative and international knowledge institutions, companies and government bodies, accommodated in an international icon of (water) architecture in the future-resilient delta of the Rotterdam region.

This will be the scene where research projects are launched and conducted, where innovations in water management and delta technology are developed and designed, applied, displayed, marketed and exported around the globe. New developments will be presented to the public here, and students will discover the challenging possibilities of the water sector as a field of study. The idea for a National Water Centre was conceived from the Dutch Delta Design (DDD) project of the Netherlands Water Partnership (NWP). The 'founding fathers' of the National Water Centre are Arcadis, DHV, Dura Vermeer, Evides Waterbedrijf, Ahoy, Rotterdam University, Delft University of Technology and the City of Rotterdam.

Water manifesto

During the opening ceremony, the NWP presented the water manifesto entitled 'The Blue Perspective' to Minister Huizinga. In this document, the water sector calls on the cabinet to designate water management as a key focus area in policy development, lobbying and legislation. Now is the time to focus on ongoing excellence on a national as well as an international level, and to select a primary objective in doing so. In the next few decades, water management will increasingly dominate the political and economic agendas. The Netherlands has the power, the knowledge and the reputation to show leadership in the field of water management. The water manifesto presents an attractive, blue perspective for the Netherlands, connecting economic growth with sustainable development en international solidarity. Minister Huizinga proudly commented: 'Rotterdam has quite a reputation to live up to in terms of its sustainability ambitions, and this latest addition is a true icon for the city. Rotterdam never fails to surprise us, with its Rotterdam Climate Initiative, and with its green port. Other examples include the *Stadshavens* district and the innovative plans for temporary water storage in the city. All this reinforces Rotterdam's trendsetting position in the Netherlands and provides exposure for the city abroad!'