

# **Department of Ocean and Resources Engineering**

## *Seminar*

### **RESPONSE TO COASTAL FLOODING IN THE NETHERLANDS**

by

**Frans Gerritsen**

Emeritus Professor, University of Hawaii

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#### **Abstract**

Throughout history the low countries of The Netherlands have been subject to serious damage to life and property from flooding during storm surges. The Roman geographer Plinius in the beginning of the first century described the situation in these low lying countries as follows:

“a desolate country, which twice a day is flooded by the tides, so that its inhabitants are forced to live on self made heights, their members frozen by the northerly winds, which they warm at fires from dried silt”.

A not so pleasant situation as one may conclude.

In the presentation we will see how the Dutch people learned to live with their miserable environment, and what measures they took to make life livable, ultimately leading to the Zuiderzee Project and the Delta Project.

The storm of February 1, 1953 was particularly devastating, leading to great loss of life and land. The closing of the large tidal gaps from this storm was a challenging endeavor, which required the application of new technologies. This event gave rise to the conception of the large Delta Project, in which the lessons learned from the 1953 storm provided a solid base to start from.

In the presentation we will discuss different technologies that can be used to close tidal gaps and we will show how certain problems were solved in the closing of the large Haringvliet Estuary.