



Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat



# “Too much or too little water”

Guiding climate change adaptation in transboundary basins

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19 August 2009



## Outline

- Introduction on the Netherlands' situation
- Climate change:
  - The need for adaptation
  - The need for international cooperation
- UNECE Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change
- The Dutch approach
- Water management situation in Central-Asia
- Conclusions



## The Netherlands: a river delta under pressure



- About 600 km of main rivers
- About 350 km coastline
- 55% of land below sea level
- 60% of population below sea level
- 65% of GNP earned below sea level
- 3500 km of flood defences, hundreds of locks, sluices, pumping stations



## Water management is essential in The Netherlands

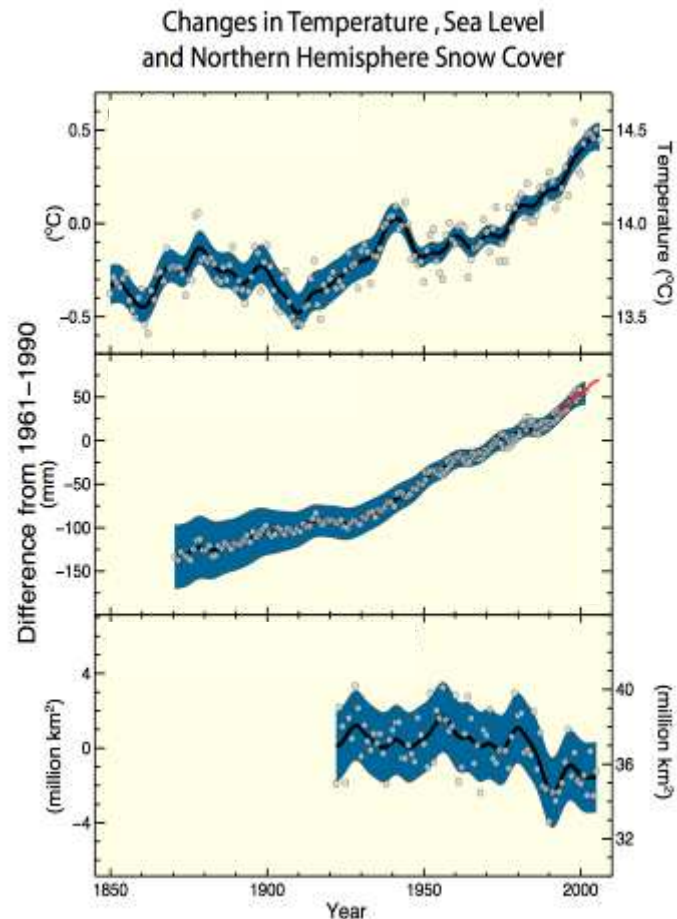
Crosscutting issue for:

- Agriculture
- Health
- Transport
- Energy
- Ecosystems
- etc.





# Climate is changing

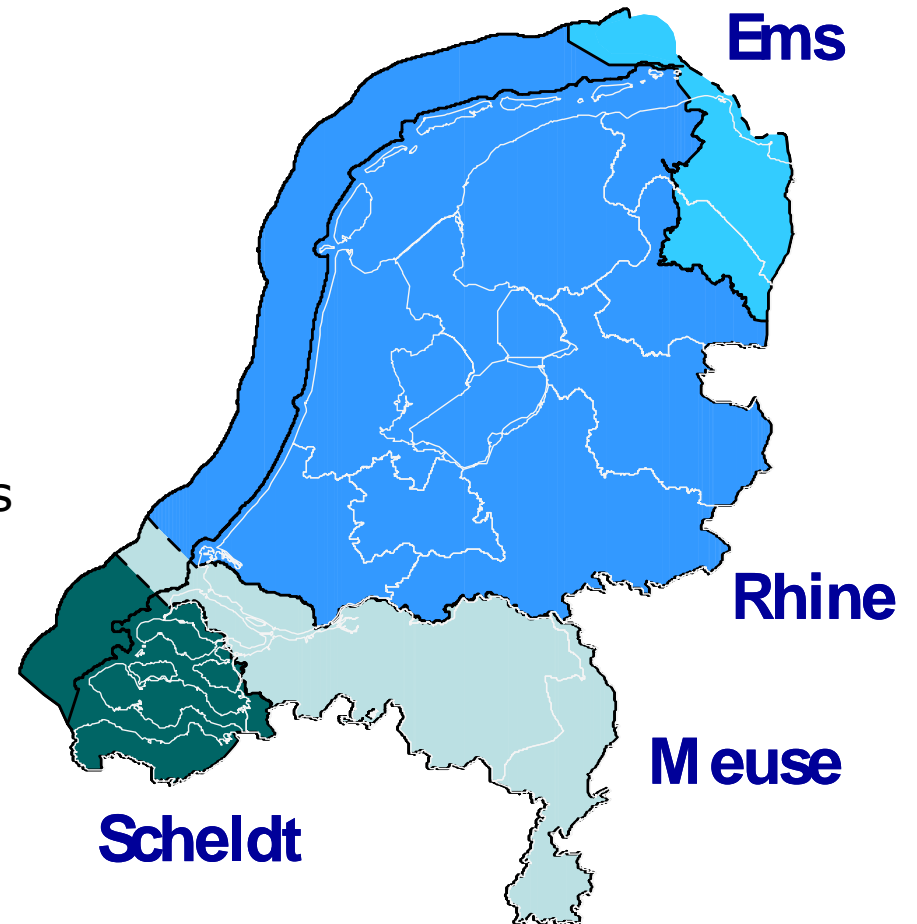


- Need to adapt now
- Climate change is one of many pressures in water management
- Netherlands experiences:
  - Sea level rise
  - Extreme precipitation
  - Floods
  - Fresh water shortage
- Transboundary cooperation is essential



## Transboundary cooperation

- The Netherlands is down-stream country of 4 international rivers
- Dependent on upstream water management
- Long-lasting cooperation with upstream countries
  - International river commissions
  - International agreements
- Mainly water quality and flooding
- EU Water Framework Directive: River basins are basis for water management







## Need for international cooperation

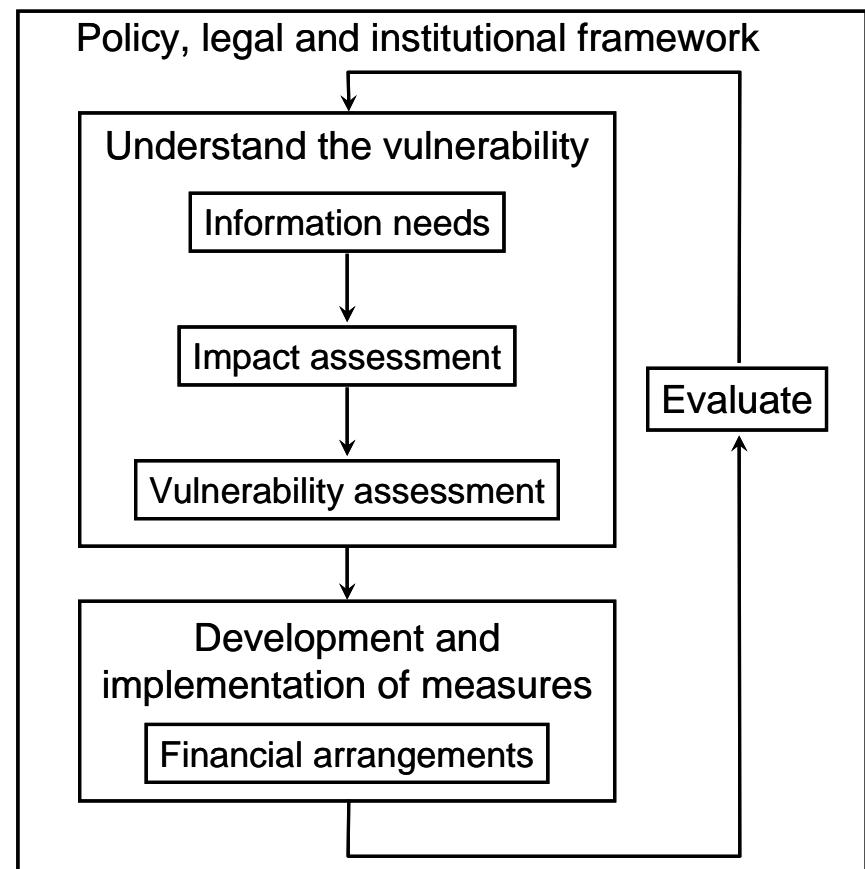
- Netherlands initiated Task Force on Water and Climate
- Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change  
-> brings together international knowledge and experience
- Guidance is unique document:
  - aiming at decision-makers
  - step-by-step approach towards adaptation measures





## Climate adaptation asks for an integrated and analytical approach

- Information and knowledge (Monitoring data are necessary)
- Impact assessment
- Vulnerability assessment
- Measures (technical, institutional and financial)
- Continuous evaluation
- Create enabling environment (policy, legal and institutional)







## Main messages

- The world needs to adapt to climate change without delay
- Uncertainty is not a reason not to act
- Adaptation needs to be flexible
- Developing and implementing adaptation measures: build on learning-by-doing
- Water is a key-factor to many different sectors
- Effective adaptation requires cross-sectoral approach and transboundary cooperation
- Effective adaptation strategies are a mix of:
  - structural and non-structural measures
  - regulatory and economic instruments and measures
  - education and awareness-raising



## Dutch answer and example

- Advice from Delta Commission
  - Low-lying area will be maintained
- Ministerial Steering Group - Prime Minister is chair
- Delta-act 2009
  - Delta-fund
    - Future proof
  - Delta-Programme
    - Area-oriented and general
  - Delta Director
    - National and regional/local



## Water management in Central Asia – a crosscutting issue

- Glaciers in South-East important water source
- Water needed for:
  - Agriculture (in summer)
  - Energy (much in winter)
- Climate change:
  - Less water available
  - More water needed
- Water management is crosscutting issue, key-factor for solutions and transboundary





## Conclusions

- Climate change asks for action now
- Climate change is a plus on the challenge of all countries but especially developing countries and countries in transition: mainstreaming
- Call for action towards Copenhagen:
  - Water is crosscutting issue and key-factor to climate change adaptation.
  - Adaptation to climate change is national responsibility.
  - Share knowledge and experience
- But 'water' adds an international dimension to that (in the Netherlands transboundary cooperation within river basins or aquifers more and more an absolute must).
- Guidance supports transboundary cooperation for adaptation
- Let's start working together



Thank you for your  
attention

