

Coastal protection requires international cooperation

BOOK REVIEW

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The Hague - Water is in the spotlight. Publications about climate change and the resulting sea level rise often predict an unavoidable natural catastrophe with global consequences. But that is not the conclusion of the book Climate of Coastal Cooperation (CCC), edited by Robbert Misdorp.

In the CCC Book and comprehensive Internet Publication, experts from Europe and Asia use a great many examples to demonstrate the opportunities offered by coastal areas. Misdorp, a specialist in the area of sustainable coastal development, succeeded in convincing no fewer than 100 colleagues to make a contribution to the book. Their articles paint a detailed picture of the possibilities inherent in coastal regions. Climate of Coastal Cooperation is in essence an optimistic book. It displays the fruits of international cooperation, while at the same time making it clear where and how more fruits can be harvested. But in spite of its optimism, the book does not minimize or deny the problems and challenges faced by coastal zones.

This is also made clear in the article contributed by Abu Taher Khandakar, general director of the Water Planning Agency in Bangladesh, who is very forthright in explaining that the coastal zone of his country is threatened by the consequences of climate change. As an example, he cites the consequences of the cyclone Aila in 2009, which are still being felt today. The area struck by the cyclone is still suffering from a lack of housing and unemployment, explains Khandakar. However, he also points to opportunities for helping the region to recover. He argues that international cooperation is essential here, an aspect which is

Invitation to utilize Dutch expertise

also mentioned in other articles. Of course, Dutch expertise in the area of coastal protection and sustainable development is not ignored. Various articles not only focus on Dutch expertise in this

area but also emphasize that the Netherlands is willing to share its knowledge with other countries.

This is evident in the entire CCC, but particularly in the articles dealing with Vietnam, where Dutch experts work closely together with local experts within the framework of the coastal protection and development program. By making it clear that Dutch specialists in this area are active in other countries, the CCC actually goes further than providing a comprehensive discussion of coastal issues. The book is also a well grounded and motivated invitation to governments of other countries to utilize the available Dutch expertise. "This sector, if properly approached and developed, can serve as an economic growth engine in view of the increasing challenges which the low-lying and densely populated coastal areas of the world will be facing," writes the editor in an explanation accompanying the presentation of the book.

Climate of Coastal Cooperation presents a varied and detailed picture of the problems and issues faced by coastal areas in Europe and Asia.

Opportunities, problems and possible solutions are presented in a clear and understandable fashion. And the potential role of Dutch experts in this area is also explained clearly and effectively.

Although the book is in English, there is a minimum of professional jargon, which means that the book is also easily readable for non-specialists. This makes it a valuable addition to the library of the professional as well as the interested layman. In view of the space devoted to the Dutch knowledge and expertise in the area of coastal protection and development, the book is also a must for entrepreneurs in this sector.

With the holidays fast approaching, Climate of Coastal Cooperation could also make quite an attractive promotional gift.

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The CCC book can be ordered, and a free download version is available, at <http://wwwv.coastalcooperation.net>