

# waterfronts **NL**

Promoting excellence in waterfront development  
Connecting you with Dutch expertise

Newsletter | Winter 2011-2012  
**Focus on Asia**



## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Waterfronts NL would like to wish you a very Happy New Year. In this Winter 2011-2012 edition of our newsletter, we are focusing on Asia to highlight issues facing waterfront development in one of the fastest growing regions on the planet. Recently readers of the popular travel website Lonely Planet voted on the top waterfront sites in Asia, including the four waterfronts featured on the front cover of this newsletter. In total, 5 of the 19 waterfront sites featured are from China.

Waterfronts NL is a Netherlands-based initiative to help promote excellence in waterfront development. We connect leading Dutch professionals in waterfront development with governments, developers, and other clients all over the world. We offer an integrated team of professionals who look beyond the boundaries of the waterfront itself, beyond the individual disciplines of each team member, and combine these different perspectives into a streamlined vision.

## THE EVOLUTION OF ASIAN WATERFRONTS: A “DUTCH PERSPECTIVE” ON INTEGRATED WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

Water has formed the basis of urban development around the world for centuries. In Asia, virtually all cities, old and new, are directly connected to water by sea, river, or lake. These cities have a special relationship with water, using it as a means for transportation, delivering access to regional and global trade, and providing a lifeline for the city on many levels.

As the fastest developing region of the world, Asia is facing major challenges to balance local traditions with modern Asian

and global influences. For this reason, an integrated approach that blends a wide range of perspectives – architecture, economics, culture, history, sustainability – is being re-discovered in the evolution of Asian waterfronts. With this new approach comes a new perspective on waterfronts, where water is no longer simply enjoyed as scenery, but also appreciated for its recreational, transportation, tourism, leisure, and ecological value.



The Netherlands has a long history of both integrated planning and design, as well as water-related expertise. The scarcity of developable land and continuous threat of flooding for almost 1,000 years has led to joint professional efforts for the creation of comprehensive plans and innovative solutions. The “Dutch perspective” on waterfront development is unique, shaped by our history of claiming land from the sea in one of the busiest and most complex river deltas in the world. Half of the country is located up to 7 meters below sea level, achieved through a combination of integrated water management, the construction of dikes, and the use of wind energy for draining marshes and lakes to create land for agriculture and urbanization.

Last year a Dutch initiative that applies an integrated approach to waterfront development was born. Waterfronts NL represents the best in Dutch waterfront development, offering the uniquely Dutch perspective on waterfronts, and providing a complete team of expertise including: engineers, urban designers, planners, environmental experts, social and cultural experts, financial experts, real estate experts, architects, landscape architects, and water-related expertise in the fields of lifestyle and leisure, hydrology, and geo-technical studies.

Here are a few examples from China of the added value of our integrated approach to waterfront projects:



### **The New Bund, Shanghai, China**

For over 100 years, the Bund has been considered to be the symbol of Shanghai, the gateway to the city stretching 1500 metres in length along the west bank of the Huangpu River. Within the Bund, plans to re-develop the former industrial area have faced many obstacles due to the complexity of the site. By applying an integrated approach, Waterfronts NL participants were successful in creating a feasible, sustainable plan that gained wide acceptance by the municipality of Shanghai with very positive responses.

The project site has several major constraints, cutting off the waterfront from the city's urban fabric. Flood walls, major city road axes, and abandoned industrial complexes block the connection between the city and the riverfront. To overcome these constraints the team searched beyond the borders of the waterfront, introducing elevated city parks and creating a hinterland development that interacts with its surroundings, bridging the waterfront with the surrounding urban fabric. The plan offers new opportunities for transportation, tourism, and urban activity, where magnificent views over the Huangpu River can be enjoyed while waiting for your boat departing from the new river tour terminal.



### **QianHai Bay, 360 degree city, Shenzhen, China**

In recent decades Shenzhen has grown from a small fishing village on the border with Hong Kong into a metropolis with around 15 million residents. With the QianHai Bay project, Shenzhen is taking the next step in its rapid growth. The project area will eventually host a staggering 1.5 million inhabitants who will live, work, and recreate in the bay, while providing a new distinctive 'face' for Shenzhen towards the sea.

Like many cities around the world, Shenzhen lacks sufficient fresh drinking water, despite being surrounded by several rivers that discharge directly into the sea along the city's coastline. The integrated approach applied to the project by Waterfronts NL participants resulted in a new ring city that captures the fresh river water in a central inner lake, providing fresh water for new residents. The integrated plan also proposes multi-functional city parks within its ring-shaped urban fabric. These city parks host agro-parks for local urban food production, and energy plants for generating energy from city-waste, while also functioning as urban filters that purify the air, prevent urban heating, provide leisure facilities, and generate a greater biodiversity within the city.

### **Zhongshan, China**

Located opposite of Shenzhen and Hong Kong along the Pearl River, Zhongshan's river delta has become increasingly vulnerable to extreme natural events due to past and current land reclamation works, urbanization and industrialization, and the over-utilization of its riverbanks and coastline. For Zhongshan's Cuiheng New District, Waterfronts NL participants were responsible for creating a conceptual urban design that captured the integrated approach of both "Building with Nature" and "Living with Water". These concepts combine building methods using natural materials with safety issues in an effort to live with, rather than fight against, the water. To accomplish this, the islands are designed according to the natural hydraulic character of the area and organised to allow for the flourishing of inter-tidal ecosystems, where mangroves and inter-tidal flats are part of the flood defense system, while providing views and transportation opportunities for residents.



# NEW! WATERFRONTS NL WEBSITE

Our new website showcases waterfront projects around the world, and provides helpful information on the waterfront development process. We have gathered the knowledge and skills of top leading professionals in waterfront development into one place for streamlined client convenience, and we also connect potential clients with waterfront professionals.

Come visit us at: [www.waterfrontsnl.com](http://www.waterfrontsnl.com)

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**About Us**  
Waterfronts NL is a Netherlands-based initiative to help promote waterfront development, and to connect people with our expert participants [More](#)

**The Process**  
The development of new and existing waterfronts can include any combination of uses, and can involve many stakeholders [More](#)

**Participants**  
Our participants represent the best in Dutch expertise, and share an interest in promoting excellence in waterfront development [More](#)

**Waterfront Examples**

**Shanghai Waterfront**  
Shanghai's waterfront is embraced by active users of all ages, where people use the waterfront as part of their daily lifestyle.

## ABOUT WATERFRONTS NL

Waterfronts NL began as a discussion between several Dutch planning, design, engineering, project management, and supply companies who had worked together on waterfront projects for years. They shared a common interest in promoting resilient waterfront development internationally, and saw a growing interest in waterfront re-development in emerging economies worldwide. Each company had its own strengths and approach, and together they could provide the A-Z of waterfront development for all types of projects, anywhere in the world.



## Waterfronts NL's Services

Our participants encompass the full range of services required for any waterfront development or re-development project. These include:

- ~ Local, city, and regional planning
- ~ Urban & landscape design
- ~ Architecture
- ~ Engineering
- ~ Environmental assessments
- ~ Tourism and recreational development
- ~ Project management
- ~ Specialisations for waterfront development, such as hydrology and geotechnical expertise