

Project Hedwige-Prosper: creation of new wetlands along the river Scheldt

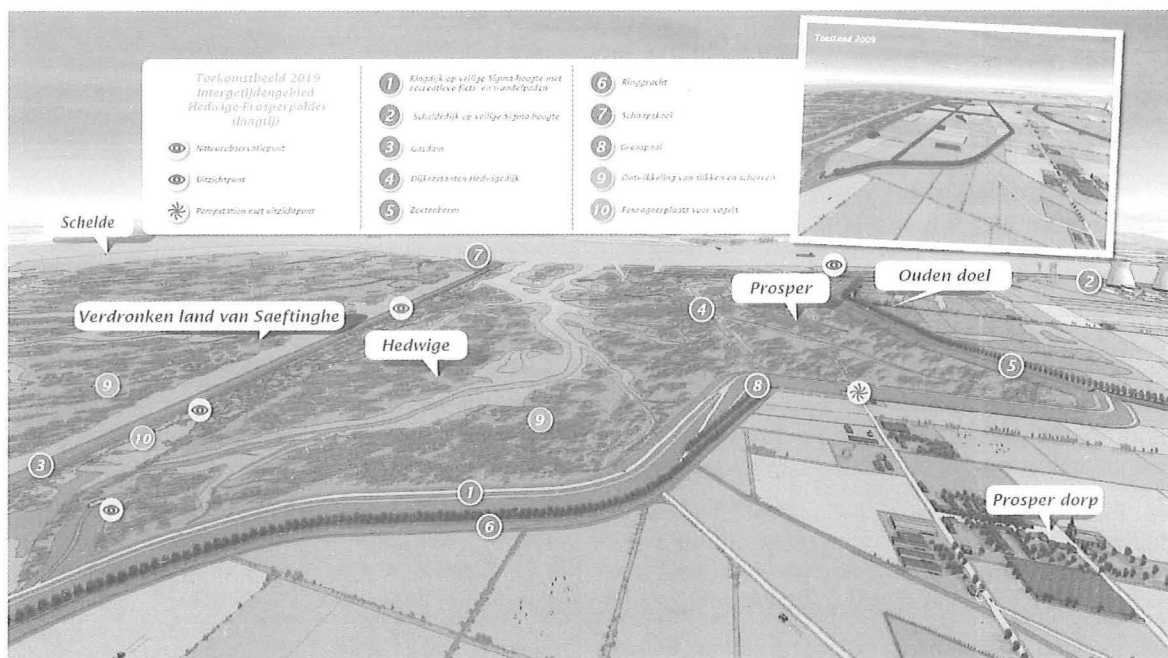
Jorgen Hubrechts¹, Dirk Defloor²

In 1847, duke Prosper Lodewijk van Arendonk had this area along the river Scheldt impoldered. In 1907 the Dutch side (Hedwigepolder) was reclaimed upon the river Scheldt to use it as cultivated land.

Under the actualized Sigmoplan (the water management plan made by the Flemish government), both polder areas are now given back to the river Scheldt. This water management plan combines the protection against floods with nature, economy and recreation. Also the climate change and the rise of water level are taken into account. The strengthening and construction of new dikes is combined with the construction of controlled flood areas.

The Hedwige Prosperproject will act as a buffer area in case of storm - and spring-tide in order to allow the water to flood a larger basin. By giving the river more space at the outfall, we create more safety against floods.

The Hedwige Prosperproject is a border crossing project of 465 ha, of which 170 ha is on Flemish Polder area. When completed, the Hedwige Prosperproject unites with the existing Verdrongen Land Van Saeftinge and forms a nature reserve of approx. 4000ha. The area will be flooded twice a day, at high tide and becomes a natural, tidal area or a so called 'Slikken and Schorren' area.



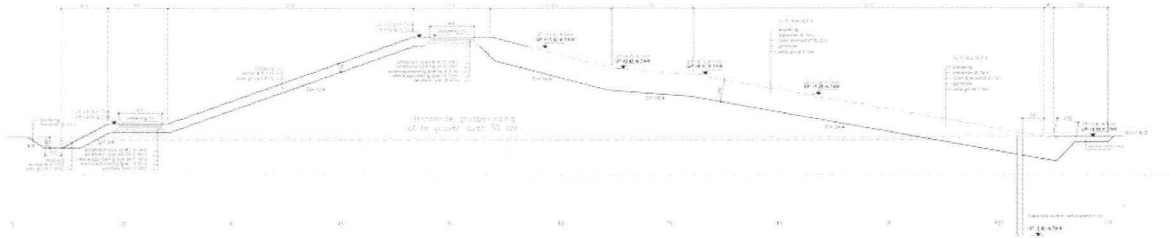
To accomplish the above, a new inland dike of 4,7m is being constructed, an average of 9m above ground level (+12,50m TAW) with a 80m wide foundation and a top width of 7m. The centre of the dike is build with sand (900.000m³) which is mainly delivered over water by the Client Waterwegen &

¹ Operations Manager Benelux, Dredging International - Scheldedijk 30 – 2070 Zwijndrecht
Email: hubrechts.jorgen@deme.be

² Deputy Area Manager, Dredging International - Scheldedijk 30 – 2070 Zwijndrecht
Email: dirk.defloor@deme.be

Zeekanaal nv. The slopes will be covered with clay and an open stone asphalt. The open stone asphalt will be covered with a layer of mould of 10cm.

The solid but permeable texture of this asphalt protects the enclosing dike against erosion and at the same time allows vegetation.



The rainwater coming from the hinterland is collected through a series of ditches into a collector and then pumped over the new dike into the Hedwige-Prosperpolder and into the river Scheldt.

The works on Belgian/Flemish territory have already started. The completion deadline is 900 workdays. The Project cost is approximately € 25.000.000 exclusive of VAT.

The contractor is THV Intertij, a temporary trading association with Jan De Nul, Aertssen and Dredging International.