

Overview Pressure Cooker-session Hong Kong, January 27th2018.

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1. Introduction on who and what Dutch Wavemakers are

Dutch Wavemakers is part of the Dutch ZSL foundation: Zealand Sports and Leisure www.zsl.nu

Dutch Wavemakers work on three goals:

- 1) Enlarge the water awareness by children and their (grand)parents by educating them about the importance of water in our daily life and everyone's contribution in it;
- 2) Inform youngsters and students about the impact of climate change on water management and the innovations and new technologies we need to solve it technical improvements. We try to seduce them to choose a water- or technical related study to have well educated water professionals and technicians in the nearby future;
- 3) Our ambassadors are students and Dutch professional water sportsmen, whom we like to preserve in the water sector after their sports career. Now they travel around the world for their sport or study and tell the world about the Dutch approach of foreseen water problems. After their sports career we wish them to start a career as a water professional of technician; all things they have seen in other parts of the world can be helpful for The Netherlands to improve our water management.

'Working together in the field of water & technique is more crucial than ever'

Prime Minister Mark Rutte emphasized this recently in his speech at the opening of the Amsterdam International Water Week 2017.

The water & technology sector are in full swing; the market is growing, technology is developing rapidly. This leads to an increasing need for 'golden hands & clever minds'. Living, working and recreating around the world in participating areas asks in the future for many water & technology experts. To achieve education and to ensure adequate influx and flow, close cooperation between education and industry is necessary. The Dutch Wavemakers provide an excellent platform for government bodies, cities, industry, (water) companies, young people and NGOs to create communities, share knowledge and turn promising plans into practice.

Dutch Wavemakers connects with worldwide sport events. During the Volvo Ocean Race, we are present at five stopovers: Cape Town, Hong Kong, Newport, Gothenburg and The Hague. At these stopovers we organize the so-called Pressure Cooker-sessions. In these meetings, representatives from local business, government and students are invited to discuss about the human capital-part of the impact of climate change. Based on one or two actual problems or projects, we'll discuss four human capital issues:

- A. What **challenges** should organizations and students cope with on destinations?
- B. Are there enough '**golden hands & clever minds**' to face the global challenges in the future?
- C. Is the current **education** sufficient for future vacancies?
- D. How can **You** make the difference?

Together we're trying to solve issues and exploit opportunities related to water.

We'll summarize all Pressure Cooker-sessions. A rough summary is published on our website <https://www.zsl.nu/hongkong>. A more detailed overview is send to members of our community. During the Pressure Cooker-sessions participants can become a member by signing in the online-form.

2. Summary PC#2 Hong Kong January 27th2018

a. Introductions by professionals

I. Interview with Peter Burling and Carlo Huisman, crewmembers of Team Brunel

Moderators Davy Scheffers and Irene van der Water interviewed Peter Burling and Carlo Huisman, Brunel's crewmembers in the Volvo Ocean Race.

Both sailors have seen a lot of plastic in the ocean during the race. Peter told that the boats in the Volvo Ocean Race (VOR) do what they can to minimize the amount of plastic on board. He referred to Turn the Tide on Plastic, one of the other boats in the race.

Lucy Hunt, **Sustainability Education Programme Manager** and developer of the **Volvo Ocean Race Sustainability Education Programme** discussed the rapidly growing and critical problem of plastic pollution in the ocean with Team Brunel sailors Peter Burling and Carlo Huisman. She was curious about what they do about this problem their selves, on board and at home.

Both sailors denied on the question if the VOR can be held plastic-free in the future. Carlo: "A plastic-free VOR is not possible at this stage. We do what we can to avoid plastic on board, but the truth is that all our food is wrapped in plastic. Of course, we store them on board and throw it away on shore. During a cycle-tour last day, we picked up plastic bottles we saw on the road." Peter admits: "Plastic is one of the biggest pollutions for oceans. But we all use it everywhere. It's hard to see all the plastics used as food coverage when you are back on shore, after having been on sea and watching all the plastics floating in the water."

b. Brainstorm session based on one theme: water quality.

I. Introduction

Hong Kong suffers from plastic pollution. Therefore, we choose the theme 'water quality' as the theme to discuss during the Pressure Cooker.

The audience consisted of 15 representatives from business and education, working in Hong Kong, for VOR-host city Hong Kong and in The Netherlands as well. They did not focus on the technical part of the problem, and neither searched for technical solutions. What they did, was investigate if there are sufficient well-educated students and young professionals to solve the plastic pollution worldwide, in the future. Is this problem mentioned during the education program? And are current traineeships prepared for the future water problems?

II. Joint discussion

Creating awareness

It was mentioned that host cities play an important role in creating awareness for plastic pollution. Such a simple thing as avoiding plastic straws in drinks should not be too difficult to realize. The host city can ask the enterprises for cooperation.

Worldwide just 10-15% of plastics is recycled. This means that shifting plastics from other trash in bins, is just part of the solution. What we should, is reduce plastics in products made. For example, coffee cups; they can easily made from paper instead of plastic.

We also must realize that consumers are lazy. Most people are not aware of the problem plastics cause. And if they are aware, they don't know what they can do themselves, beside putting plastics in the right bin. What we must do, is focus on chancing the mentality of people. And that starts best with children. Through them, we can influence their (grand)parents.

“If we continue asking awareness, then in the end people will listen”, one of the attendees mentioned. “If everyone asks for ‘no straw’, then in the end it will be clear to the producers that they have to stop making straws”.

Logistics and producers

In addition, it was mentioned that it takes everyone to reduce plastic pollution during the VOR: both the VOR-organization and sailors together. It was heard during the stopover in Cape Town that there are ideas of developing a VOR-boat made of hemp. It’s a great example of working together in finding new techniques to reduce plastics.

Coordination in transport can also make a difference. “One ship was travelling with plastic bottles from Hong Kong towards Europe, while at the same time a ship from Europe went to Africa with plastic bottles. Wasn’t it wiser to let one ship travel from Hong Kong towards Africa?” someone mentioned.

Government

China’s got a lot of start-ups and initiatives working on the reduce of air pollution. Government is playing an important role; their decision must be followed up. There’s no structure of cooperation and consultation with producers and transport companies.

In case of joint/national problems, then solutions are sought together with business. Perhaps we should do more to make the poor water quality and plastic pollution a major and National problem? Working in an interdisciplinary team is not common in China and Hong Kong.

Education

At international schools, there’s a lot of attention to climate change, water quality and plastic pollution. Unfortunately, little attention is paid to these subjects in regular education.

It’s necessary to teach children that 99% of all plastics in the sea are not visible. Those micro plastics are even more dangerous to sea life, and end-up in our food.

More education is needed to prepare the next generation on the changing and more complex problems they must face in the future.

In one-way Hong Kong can learn from China. In China there are taps all over to get fresh water and plenty of bins to dump your trash. In China you won’t see many people walking around with plastic bottles; there they carry stone cups filled with tea.

III. Answering the four human capital issues

What challenges should organizations and students cope with on destinations?

Hong Kong suffers from plastic pollution. Most people in Hong Kong are aware of the high usage of plastic, however the consequences for the environment and human health is still a bit unknown for most inhabitants. There’s a clear difference between different income groups in the usage of plastics and throwing it away in the correct bin afterwards. The higher income class, especially Western immigrants are aware, and they do a lot of beach clean-ups and they recycle and reuse their goods. In the densely populated areas with mainly the lower income class people, usage of plastics and causing pollution is a big issue.

Are there enough golden hands and clever minds to face the global challenges of the future?

According to different participants of the Pressure Cooker, the answer is no. What people are going to study has, especially in Asia, not yet much to do with world problems. Making money to be able to care for yourself and your family is much more important in Asia. The water sector is quite small and unknown. There are many clever minds and golden hands, it is just that they now must come together to tackle these major water issues in the world.

Is the current education enough for future vacancies?

At International schools in Hong Kong, sustainability and environment are becoming hot topics in primary and secondary school. However, the preparation for university or college or another education is lacking behind. Children do what their parents tell them to do. In university, education is too specialized. Technical studies should have knowledge about the biological and social aspects too, and vice versa. The best cooperation and results can be achieved, when people can understand each other. The knowledge and means are there, now we must combine all this to reach optimal results. After graduation, the work field seems to be a lot different than what you studied for. This can be improved by better cooperation between universities and business and governments. If students can do internships and traineeships, they know exactly which knowledge is required, and what parts are useful in their education.

How can you make the difference?

Change in behaviour of individuals and households should be stimulated by the government. New regulations and policies should be implemented to reduce the usage of plastics, especially in manufacturing. If they give a limit of plastic production, large scale plastic use is being reduced. Companies can make the difference as well. The Coca-Cola company has a major influence in the whole world, they can make a global change. They can give the right example, by using reusable products, doing beach clean-ups and refusing straws or plastic bags and recycling their waste.

3. Thanks to all participants

The Pressure Cooker in Hong Kong was the second one in a line of five, which will be held during the Volvo Ocean Race 2017-2018. After the VOR, the Dutch Wavemakers continue their mission, by connection other (global) sports events.

We are grateful to all participants who joined the discussion in Hong Kong and before in Cape Town during PC#1. They all mentioned remarks and examples about the human capital issues due to the water- and technical related issues, which we take with us towards Newport. It would be great if the audience in de Pressure Cooker in Newport can give something back to the participants in Hong Kong and Cape Town.

We are developing an online network community, which makes it far easier for all participants to stay connected: students, government, business and NGO's. We hope we can show you some more information about this during the stopover in Newport.