



Vlakte van de Raan

Joint cross-border policy making and management of an estuary: the story of the Flemish-Dutch Scheldt Commission (VNSC)

Willem Vuylsteke, Flemish secretary VNSC, department of Mobility and Public Works

Gent

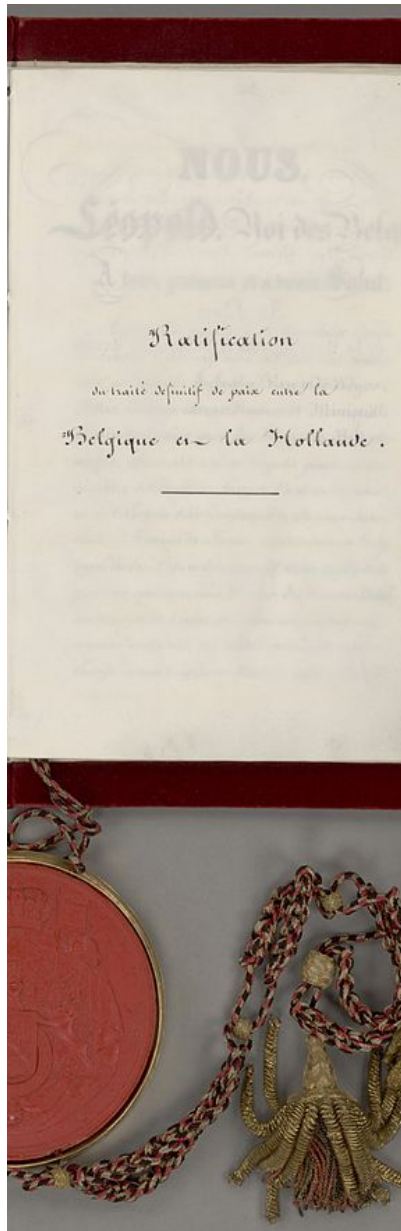
Antwerpen

A common Flemish-Dutch Scheldt estuary



Short history of joint management of the Scheldt

- 1839: Divorce Treaty
 - nautical cooperation
 - The Permanent Commission of Supervision of the Scheldt Navigation was established in implementation of Article 9 of the treaty
 - responsible for the safe and smooth handling of shipping traffic in the Scheldt area (from mouth to Antwerp).
 - No arrangements made on joint management of the estuary
- 1948: Establishment of the Technical Scheldt Commission (TSC)
 - Centralisation of all studies on the Scheldt estuary
- Late 90's: difficult discussions concerning third deepening of the Scheldt
 - The Netherlands proposes to jointly conduct an "integral" study in the TSC into the possible and desired development of the estuary in the future
- 2001: TSC develops long-term vision of the Scheldt estuary



Short history of joint management of the Scheldt

- 2005: Scheldt Treaties
 - Pilotage rates
 - Common nautical management
 - Common policy and management
 - Establishment of the Flemish-Dutch Scheldt Commission (VNSC) in succession of the TSC
 - Development Outline 2010
 - gives execution to the long term vision of the TSC of 2001 (OS 2010)

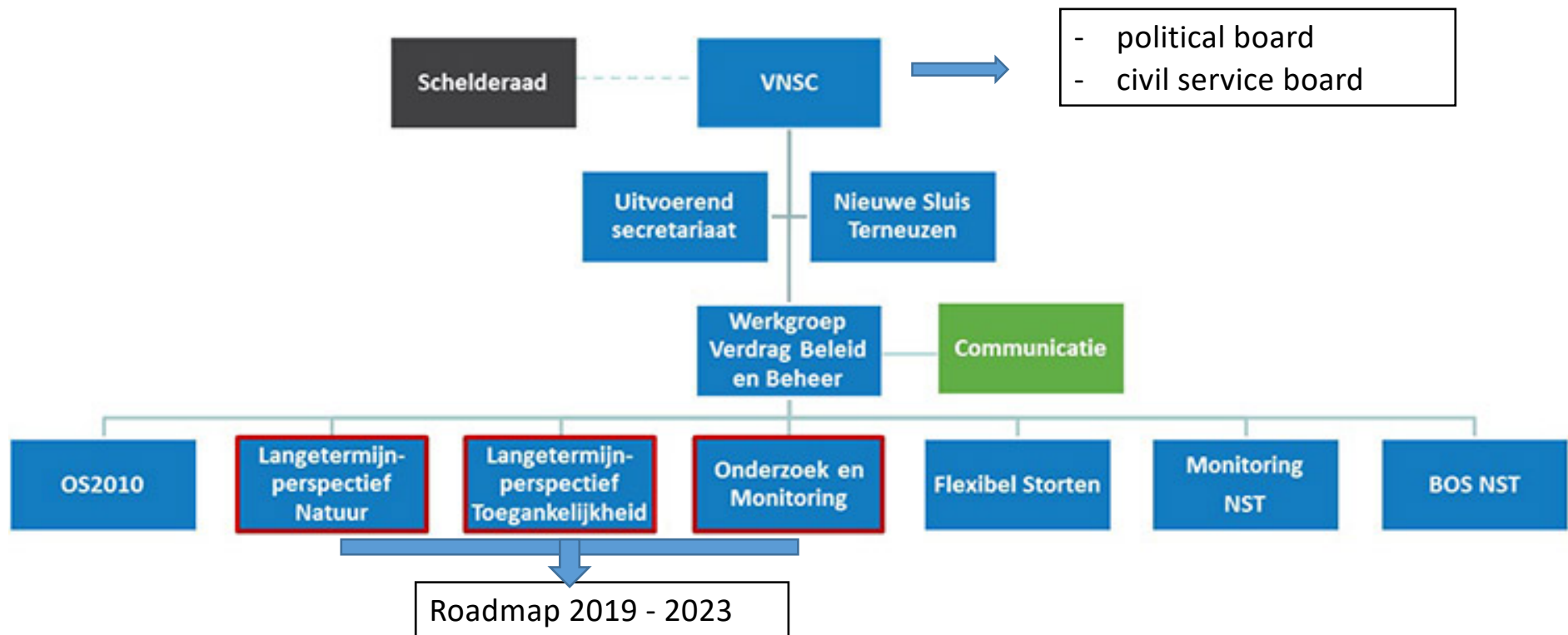
Goal of the VNSC: common policy and management of the Scheldt estuary

- Accessibility: ensuring optimal accessibility of the Scheldt ports
- Nature: maintaining a healthy and dynamic ecosystem
- Safety: provide maximum protection against flooding
- Communication

How?

- Common monitoring and research
- Develop programs and visions
- Execute projects

Governance of the VNSC



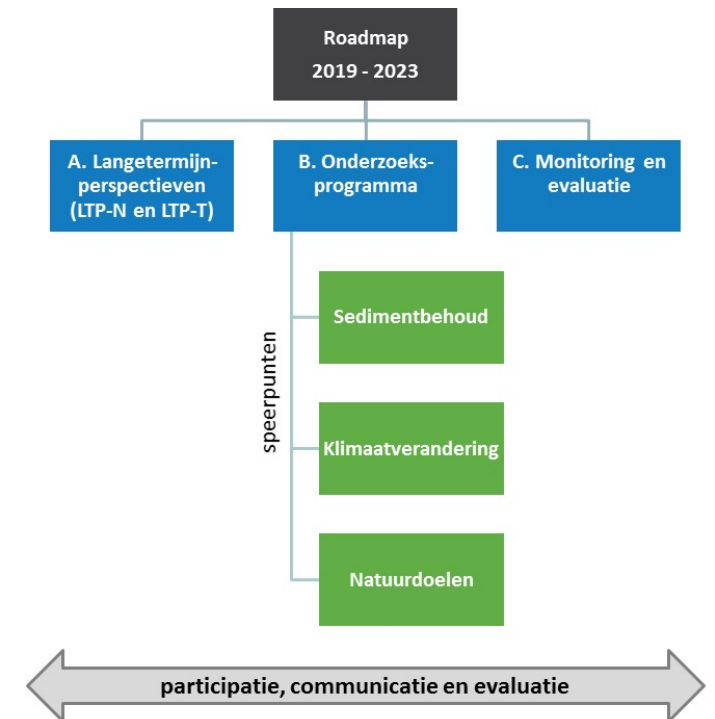
Stakeholdermanagement of the VNSC: the Scheldt Council (Schelderaad)

- 2014: establishment of the Scheldt Council
- Official advisory body to the VNSC
 - To stimulate the participation process of stakeholders
 - Local/regional authorities and representative civil society organizations (ports, employers, agricultural and environmental organizations)
 - Benelux secretariat-general as president
- Contributes to the future policy of the VNSC
 - Interactive policy making and "joint fact finding"
 - Formal advices



Roadmap 2019 - 2023

- Developed in collaboration with the Scheldt Council
- Participation and communication is key
 - Nature and Accessibility: a long-term perspective by a participatory process with the stakeholders
 - Communication
 - Knowledge sharing sessions (to inform and joint fact finding)
 - Meetings of the Scheldt Council (to inform and to participate)
 - Optimal use of our communications channels (newsletter, annual symposium, ...)



Key succes factors

- Common goal
- Fixed structure of cross border collaboration and collaboration with Scheldt stakeholders
- Joint fact finding
- Independent secretariat in support