

Social Annual Report 2023

NWP is a strong network of Dutch water organisations, working worldwide on co-creating future-proof solutions and catalysing global water impact.

Opening statement

The year 2023 saw the opening of a new chapter for NWP. After 13 fruitful years operating from the International Water House in The Hague, we started the year at a new office. Sharing a building with the Dutch Water Authorities offers a more fit-for-purpose office space for our one-on-one meet-ups, activities, and events. The numerous initiatives hosted at the office over the past year prove that the move was the right choice and that NWP's office remains the 'go-to water hub' for the Dutch water sector, both nationally and internationally.

Over the course of 2023, we made other important changes, including establishing a new governance structure in which leadership and operational responsibility are in the hands of the Director and Chair of the NWP Board. This role was conferred upon Caroline Bäcker, who handed it over to Nicole Hellwig and Rick Elmendorp in September. In addition, NWP's new governance structure now includes a Supervisory Board and an Advisory Board, representing diverse sub-sectors of the water sector, which has led NWP's efforts to remain a connector and advocate for the Dutch water sector.

Aside from these internal changes, we want to congratulate all NWP's members, employees, and the wider Dutch water sector for everything we have accomplished together and for growing our footprint abroad. We tried to keep our Annual Report short and sweet, but the number of activities we were involved in exceeded our expectations! The NWP team travelled the world to put water on the global agenda. The first UN Water Conference in many years was held in New York and it had many positive outcomes, including the adoption of the Water Action Agenda. There were also many knowledge exchange opportunities with visiting delegations to the Netherlands and an increasing numbers of cross-sectoral exchanges. There is still a long road ahead of us with all the climate challenges the world is facing, but as long as we keep working on making an impact as individuals, organisations, networks, and coalitions, there is hope!

We wish you a lovely read!

NWP Board of Directors,

Nicole Hellwig and Rick Elmendorp



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1. Member network

NWP is the first port of call for Dutch water organisations seeking business opportunities and/or collaborative partnerships around the globe. This year, another 20 organisations joined the NWP membership network, making NWP the largest and most diverse international water network in the Netherlands.

NWP's members are involved in all kinds of water projects related to water management, water governance, flood prevention, engineering, reliable supply, and safe drinking water and sanitation. NWP's members include companies, government agencies, knowledge institutions, and NGOs. An NWP membership gives members access to a strong and inclusive network of dutch water organisations working in the Netherlands and abroad on future-proof solutions that accelerate the global water impact.

[Member activities](#)

In 2023, NWP brought its comprehensive network of water professionals together on various occasions. [Read more](#)

[NGO water platform](#)

The NGO Water Platform is an exclusive member-only platform that, over the years, has proven to be an excellent means of making new connections, sharing expertise, and building organisations' capacity. [Read more](#)

[SME training trajectory](#)

Following much success in 2022, NWP again, offered a one-year training trajectory to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). [Read more](#)



1.1 Member activities

In 2023, NWP brought its comprehensive network of water professionals together on several occasions. NWP held well-attended Member Meet-ups and Member Tours and continuously facilitated access to market knowledge and local contacts for members who were looking at entering new markets. A great number of members profited from a stronger brand positioning and higher online visibility through NWP’s digital platforms.

NWP held a Member Meet-up every quarter in which we put our philosophy of ‘Share, Connect, Involve’ into practice. The Meet-ups gave members an excellent opportunity to connect to influential officials and gain insights into their perspectives, hear about events in the water sector, and engage in lively discussions with other members. What is clear is that, as our natural world continues to degrade, biodiversity protection is becoming increasingly important. With more than 40,000 species on the International Union Conservation of Nature’s Red List of



Members were also invited to join NWP’s Member Tours. One Member Tour visited the Marker Wadden Islands, where Natuurmonumenten, Rijkswaterstaat, and Boskalis explained how this new nature reserve came about. The other Tour visited the AWZI Harnaschpolder wastewater treatment plant, which is part of the ‘Delfluent consortium’.

Here, the consortium addressed the design, construction, finance, and management of new wastewater treatment facilities in The Hague region.



Besides the member-only activities, NWP continuously facilitated access to market knowledge and local contacts for members who were looking at entering new markets. One example is the 3-day study visit of the US City of Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, and the State of Maryland, which exchanged knowledge with ten NWP members.





20 new NWP Members



A great number of members profited from a stronger brand positioning and higher online visibility through NWP's digital platforms, including its social media channels and the international www.dutchwatersector.com website.

NWP actively endorsed its members online, announcing their corporate events, job vacancies, and water-related news, and featured them in articles and interviews. In 2023, NWP published nine Member Updates. These Updates are specially compiled for NWP members.

“As a member of NWP, we regularly engage with them to feature our job openings in their bi-weekly newsletter, a collaboration we gladly embrace. The online exposure through NWP's digital platforms is much appreciated and has proven instrumental in achieving our objective of attracting qualified candidates for our vacancies.”

Josien Sluijs, Managing Director at Aqua for All

1.2 NGO Water Platform

NWP considers close cooperation between NGOs, companies, governments, and knowledge institutes key to achieving sustainable access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene, and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The NGO Water Platform is an exclusive member-only platform for member NGOs that, over the years, has proven to be an excellent means of making new connections, sharing expertise, and building organisations' capacity. It acts as a forum for NGOs and gives its members mechanisms to keep abreast of water-related themes, policies, activities, meetings, and events.

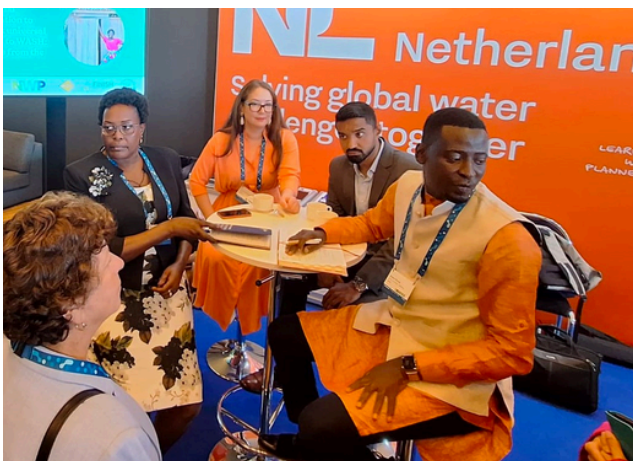
The members of the NGO Platform met three times in person in 2023. With the coordination and support of NWP, participants shared recent sector insights, ran joint policy analyses, and worked on shared activities, especially within the policy group. The policy group meets monthly and focuses on lobby and representing the NGOs working on water.

In March, the NGO Water Platform met with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the [UN Water Conference 2023](#), which resulted in both parties cooperating on the follow-up of the Water Action Agenda. Later this year, the NGO Water Platform contributed greatly to the [Stockholm World Water Week 2023 programme](#). More than 30 knowledge sessions were convened by NGO Water Platform members.

“The NWP NGO Platform is important for having discussions with other NGOs working on water. Jointly reflecting on the Netherlands' development policy on Water, Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) is especially relevant.

In addition, the Platform is beneficial for exploring and coordinating joint action in lobbying and preparing proposals, as well as for sharing knowledge, contacts, and ideas from the global water sector. NWP's NGO Platform is led by an enthusiastic and driven team.”

NGO Water Platform member: Woord & Daad



1.3 SME training trajectory

A large part of NWP's member network consists of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) with international ambitions. They operate across the Dutch water sector, including groundwater monitoring, desalination and water treatment, consultancy, flood management, and remote sensing. Determined to support this member group's growing ambitions, NWP launched a one-year training trajectory that covered the essentials of growing a business. Following much success in 2022, a new group of SMEs started in 2023.

The training trajectory, conducted by NWP on behalf of Wetskills, helped SMEs define an overall long-term strategy and produce a well-thought-out business plan that gave them focus and helped them set priorities. It also helped them expand their businesses and international networks, grow their professional development through capacity building, and build a learning community that will increase their impact.

"The training was incredibly valuable, immediately usable and it brought us visible business results within the first half year."

Daniel Heimans of Blik Sensing

"It was an engaging training that delved into multiple themes, providing detailed insights and practical strategies for SMEs in the water sector."

Riçardas Zaicas of Rainmaker Holland



2. Cross-sectoral collaboration and development

The Netherlands has always looked for ways to share its knowledge and expertise, and it seeks innovative solutions by bringing together diverse points of view. NWP supports the Dutch water sector by enabling it to have an even greater impact internationally through stronger sector collaboration. Last year, NWP was involved in a wide range of initiatives that benefited the Dutch water sector:



2.1 Kenya Innovative Finance Facility for Water

Initiated and managed by NWP since 2017 with the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kenya, the Kenya Innovative Finance Facility for Water (KIFFWA) is a co-developer of water initiatives in Kenya.

Last year, NWP's role shifted from an emphasis on management and pipeline development to partnership development under the conviction that KIFFWA can continue its endeavours as a fully autonomous entity. Along with the local KIFFWA team and the Dutch Embassy in Nairobi, we put our efforts into building partnerships that would ensure future project development and bring about a sustainable impact. At the end of 2023, we were in discussion with several partners about a partnership that will take further shape in 2024.

The KIFFWA Board convened physically four times in 2023 and visited several stakeholders, potential partners, and NWP members in the Netherlands. The NWP team also visited project sites and multiple stakeholders in and around Nairobi on two occasions last year and connected with potential local partners and embassies.

Further, the NWP team also assisted in the onboarding of a local finance officer and the handover of all IT functions in August, activities which were designed to further enable KIFFWA's autonomy.

“KIFFWA has become a reputable and established organisation that provides early-stage capital, finance, and technical expertise to support the creation of viable water investment opportunities in Kenya and attract private sources of funding.”

Rick Elmendorp, Director and Chair NWP



2.2 Nutrient Platform

The Nutrient Platform is a cross-sectoral network of Dutch organisations that believe in a pragmatic approach toward nutrient scarcity. Leaders in the water, agriculture, and waste sectors, and the chemical industry joined the Government, knowledge institutes, and NGOs to accelerate the transition towards sustainable nutrient management by creating a market for recycled nutrients. They are striving to create a circular economy by exporting surplus recovered nutrients from the Dutch market to be used to improve the soil and food security elsewhere. The Secretariat of the Nutrient Platform is hosted by NWP and the Nutrient Platform is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality.

The Nutrient Platform held several member meetings in 2023 to discuss strategies, objectives, and research projects. The Nutrient Platform has a Steering Committee which convened every 6 to 8 weeks. The Steering Committee represents its various member sectors and organisations. NWP supports the Platform's strategy, facilitates communication between its members, and coordinates its initiatives.

In 2023, the Nutrient Platform finalised the public-private partnership (PPS) PPS Micro-Nutriënten in de Kringloop (MIK, micronutrients in the circular economy) research project which ran from 2021 to 2023.

The research examined ways to close the micronutrient loop of some essential micronutrients in the Dutch food system within legal, environmental, economic, and technological frameworks.

This year also saw the start of a new PPS called Kringloopsluiting van Nutriënten uit Afvalwater en Proceswater (KNAP, closing the loop of nutrients in wastewater and process water). This PPS is coordinated by the Nutrient Platform and NWP members Leaf, KWR, and WUR. The PPS-KNAP is a research project involving 47 public and private organisations working on reducing losses from wastewater and process water and reusing them better. It will run from 2023 to 2026.



The Nutrient Platform also hopes to improve Dutch and European legislation related to turning 'waste' into resources. In this capacity, the Nutrient Platform is a key member of the European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform (ESPP), which directly influences European policies and translates the effects of these policies for members. ESPP's first action was to hold a Workshop on Nitrogen Recovery in Brussels in January 2023. This workshop addressed the 'technical recycling' of nitrogen from waste streams. Nearly 150 people attended the ESPP Workshop.



The Nutrient Platform took the stage at the Aquatech Amsterdam trade fair. It held a panel discussion in which it addressed the legal framework, technological challenges, opportunities, and innovations that come into play in nutrient recycling. [Watch the video.](#)



2.3 Saline Water & Food Systems Partnership

NWP and Netherlands Food Partnership are the ‘conveners’ of a multi-stakeholder partnership on Saline Water & Food Systems (SW&FS). Launched in March 2022, the SW&FS Partnership’s objective is to strengthen cooperation between the Dutch water and agrifood sectors to address the challenges of salinity in Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). The SW&FS Partnership is supported by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality. It consists of about 20 active partners who work on salinity challenges abroad and include representatives from the private sector, governmental institutes, NGOs, and research institutes. The SW&FS Partnership convened twice in 2023.

In 2023, five projects received seed money through the SW&FS Partnership. Three of the projects’ reports were published in November 2023. One report covered ways to address salinity from an integrated water-food system perspective. A second report looked at the impact of regenerative farming practices in Egypt, Iraq, and Jordan. A third report introduces the STAP (Salinity Transition Approach for Progress) framework, supports the forthcoming Global Campaign on Salinisation with a report and infographic, addressing global challenges related to increasing salinity levels.

One initiative consisted of a three-day knowledge sharing workshop in Turkana County, Kenya, on the challenges and opportunities of using saline resources. It brought together various stakeholders from local government agencies, NGOs, United Nations organisations, knowledge institutes, and the private sector.



During the UN 2023 Water Conference side event, organised by Wageningen University and Research, [NWP announced a Global Campaign on Salinisation](#) on behalf of NWP and the Netherlands Food Partnership.

The Campaign aims to raise awareness on the issue of salinisation among policymakers, researchers, and practitioners in the global water and food sectors, and drive a collective follow-up agenda.



The SW&FS Partnership provided support to FAO's WASAG (the Global Framework of Water Scarcity in Agriculture) International Forum. The Forum attracted 300 participants and included a technical session on saline agriculture and an announcement on the launch of farming guidelines, produced by a WASAG working group, on cultivating crops under saline conditions. The working group's 'Farmers' Guidelines on Soil and Water Management in Salt-affected Areas' was shared at the WASAG webinar last year.

Other activities

On World Food Day, SW&FS and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (University of Amsterdam, VU) convened an interactive session in which they launched the [Saline Agri Map](#). This is a new knowledge portal for saline agriculture projects showcasing a range of key saline agricultural initiatives in different regions of the world. It also shares the international stakeholder network of organisations working on saline agriculture.



At COP28, the SW&FS Partnership and its partners; the Wageningen University and Research, the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality hosted a hybrid session at the Food System Pavilion. The session consisted of a high-level panel discussion and a film that promotes the declaration of 2028 as the year of Saline Agriculture.



“This unique cross-sectoral collaboration aims not only to convene and connect networks, but also to add value in addressing the salinity challenge together.”

Babette Bodlaender of the Netherlands Food Partnership

2.4 Oman Netherlands Taskforce on Water

Oman and the Netherlands have been working together on water for many years. The Oman Netherlands Taskforce on Water was established in 2017 to intensify that bilateral collaboration. As Chair of the Taskforce, NWP runs the secretariat and supports the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Muscat to maintain bilateral relations. Since its founding, there have been numerous meetings and reciprocal exchanges of knowledge, including in 2023. The following are just three of many examples.

In May, our member Dunea received a delegation from Nama Water Services to jointly explore the possibilities for knowledge exchange. Dunea and NWP organised a network opportunity to meet the delegation from Nama.

Just a month later, we were honoured with another [Nama Water Services visit](#). As part of NWP's activities for the Taskforce, we arranged a special programme for Mr Hussain Al Balushi, CFO of Nama Water Services, to meet with representatives of the Dutch public and private sector and knowledge institutes.

Later in the year, [a delegation from Nama Water Services visited the Netherlands](#) and took part in a special programme that NWP designed for incoming delegations at Aquatech Amsterdam. The delegation hosted a session on the company, its history, and its ambitious Master Plan at the Netherlands Pavilion, learned about the innovative technology on display, and held roundtable meetings with representatives of the sector.

Looking to the future, NWP foresees many more potential opportunities for cooperation related to the water-energy-food nexus, and we aspire to connect the Dutch water sector to these opportunities.



“Oman is looking for water solutions to achieve its ambitious Master Plan.”

Sabrina Kraaijenbrink-Doetjes, Project Manager International at NWP

2.5 TKI Water Technology

TKI, or the Top Consortia for Knowledge and Innovation, is a visionary initiative designed to strengthen the Dutch water and maritime top sector. The TKI Water Technology programme brings together industry, research organisations, and government bodies by combining knowledge and innovation to propel ideas from conception to market. The programme is implemented by NWP and Water Alliance. In 2023, TKI orchestrated a series of targeted matchmaking events, catalysing fruitful partnerships and collaborations:

Activities

March: TKI Water Technology held a large matchmaking dinner during the Aqua Netherlands Trade Fair which was attended by 130 people. TKI also hosted a stand at the Aqua Lounge, the heart of networking at Aqua Netherlands and TKI Programme Support Activities (POA) organised two TechTalks.

May: TKI Water Technology hosted a grand networking session in a relaxed setting where water technology companies could meet each other. The session included a networking lunch, a tour around an integrated wastewater treatment plant, and a TechTalk entitled 'Water in industry'.

June: TKI had a strong presence at the matchmaking lunch at the National Water Symposium which was attended by more than 100 people.

June: TKI POA hosted a cross-sectoral TechTalk on agri and water at Greentech Amsterdam; the global meeting point for horticultural professionals

September: TKI Water Technology manned a stand at the Wetsus Congress in Leeuwarden, where industry representatives mingled, exchanged ideas and forged lasting connections.

November: TKI POA held a TechTalk on innovations in circular water at the Innovation Expo

November: TKI POA held two TechTalks at Aquatech Amsterdam



“Efforts to promote TKI Water Technology in 2023 resulted in a multitude of partnerships between public, private, and knowledge institutions, which helped drive the Dutch water technology sector towards a brighter, more sustainable future. Several examples are described on the news page of the [NWP website](#).”

Arjan Braamskamp, NWP Team Lead Business Relations

2.6 Top Sector Water and Maritime

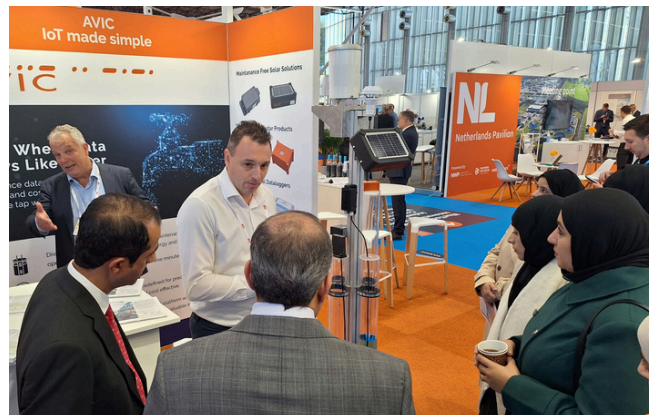
The Dutch Water and Maritime sector is one of the 10 sectors in which Dutch business and research centres excel worldwide. As the pivotal network organisation, NWP is involved in Top Sector's policies to foster strong connections within the Dutch water and maritime landscape.

In 2023, the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management again entrusted NWP with a vital mission: to spearhead the implementation of the [2022 Water Sector Export Index \(WEX\)](#) in collaboration with esteemed partners like Water Alliance and Top Sector Water and Maritime (TSWM). Alongside this, NWP orchestrated the impactful Excellent Promotion Programme and facilitated essential Sector Support Activities.



As part of the Excellent Promotion Programme, NWP actively drove opportunities for the Dutch sector to make an impact.

[It arranged international delegations from no less than 13 countries at Aquatech](#) and put together a customised programme comprising guided tours, company visits, insightful roundtable sessions, fruitful matchmaking opportunities, and network events.



Other activities

Through our Sector Support Activities, NWP leveraged its influential [Dutchwatersector.com](#) website to shine a spotlight on the Dutch water sector's international activities, events and groundbreaking projects.

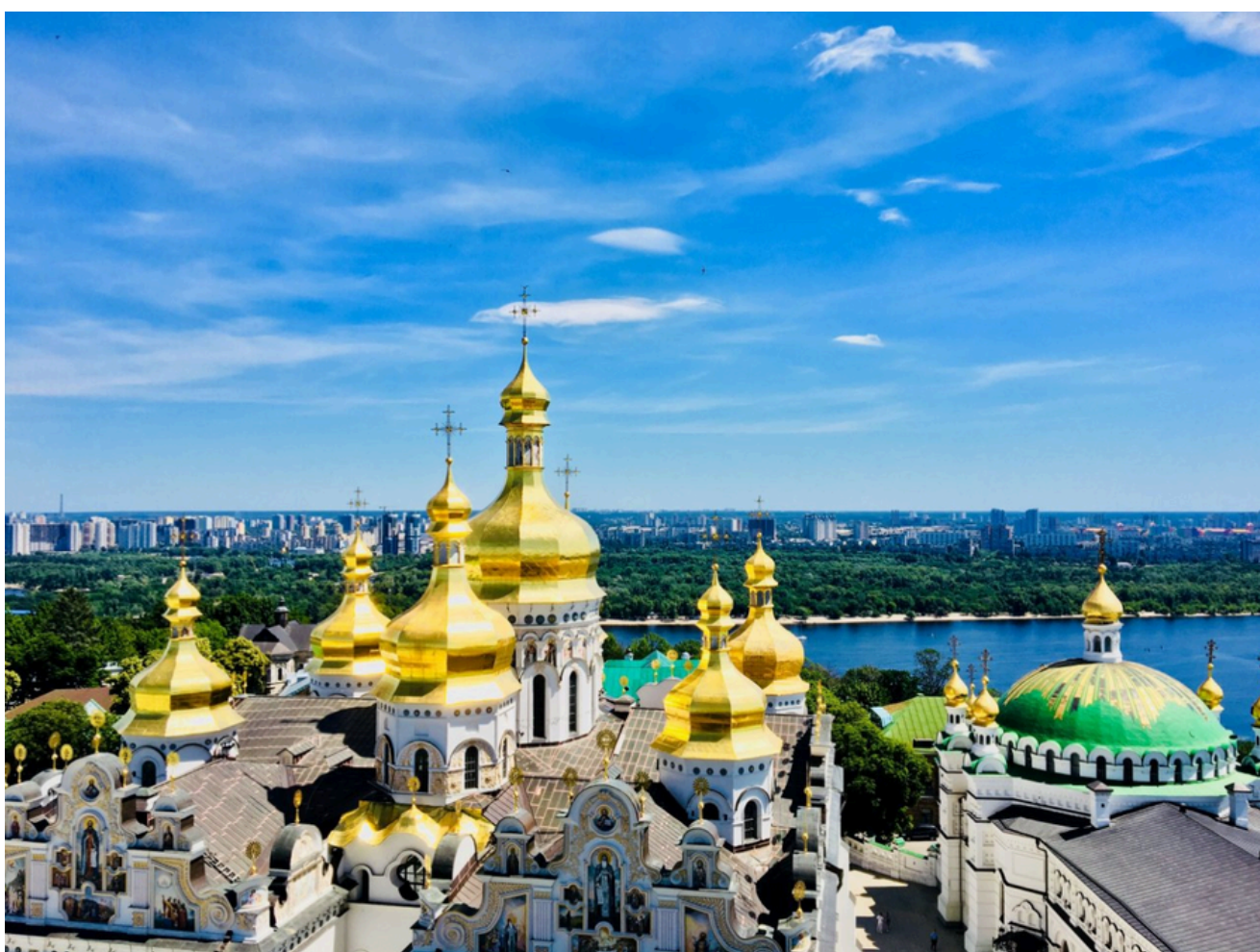
NWP also supported the TSWM Top Team, a diverse assembly of members from all its sectors including Water, Delta and Maritime Technology, International and Human Capital, and from all facets of the innovation spectrum including knowledge institutions, businesses, government bodies, and educational institutions. Moreover, NWP's presence in the 'Trekkers Internationaal Forum' – where representatives from various top sectors converge to amplify our collective impact on the world stage – underscored our commitment to placing the Netherlands firmly on the global map.

Further, NWP provided invaluable secretariat services to the TSWM's international core team which promotes the Dutch water and maritime sector's export and business opportunities. NWP also hosted several international core team meetings in 2023, serving as a nexus for collaboration and opportunities.

As the pivotal network organisation, NWP is an active influencer in shaping the policies and initiatives of the Top sector water and maritime.

2.7 Ukraine Water Public-Private Partnership Platform

The Ukraine Water Public-Private Partnership (UWP3) Platform was established in 2022 to help mobilise the Dutch water sector's resources and expertise in reconstructing Ukraine's water infrastructure in partnership with the Ukrainian water sector. The Platform is an initiative of the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. NWP was appointed as the Platform's coordinator to bring together organisations in the public, private, applied research, knowledge, and NGO sectors in action clusters to collaborate in Ukraine.



In 2023, the UWP3 Platform hosted a series of events to facilitate effective cooperation between Dutch and Ukrainian stakeholders and the development of project proposals on sustainable solutions.

As a brand-new platform, its first activities were designed to shape the initiative. In doing so, it held a Welcome Meeting, which set the collaborative tone among interested Platform members; a Spring General Meeting that focused on strategy and engagement; and, a Special Water Clusters Meeting to forge specialised collaborative groups. In addition, the UWP3 Platform held two Municipal & Oblast Day Talks (oblast are administrative regions in Ukraine) which were pivotal in aligning Dutch expertise with Ukrainian local needs; an Open House Meeting to boost the Platform's engagement with Ukrainian stakeholders, attracting further interest and partnerships; and, a meeting with international financial institutions which marked a solid step towards securing project financing and support. These events facilitated dynamic matchmaking, knowledge exchange, and the strengthening of Dutch-Ukrainian partnerships, demonstrating the Platform's vital role in driving forward the reconstruction of Ukraine's water sector.



The Ukraine 'water public-private partnership platform has a vital role in driving forward the reconstruction of Ukraine's water sector. As the outcomes of the UWP3 were positive, the Platform's work will continue in 2024.

2.8 Water for Food Programme

The Water for Food Programme, initiated by NWP and financed by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality, was initially planned for a period of two years (2021-2022) but was extended by a year (2023) after several stakeholders in the water-agrifood sector and the Government recognised that the Programme fills an important gap in connecting water and agriculture. The goal of its third year was to continue developing both sustainable and bankable business cases that improve the efficiency and productivity of water in agriculture, resulting in more sustainable food systems, and improved food security.



“The Water for Food Programme and the valuable support from NWP were crucial in kickstarting the development of our product. Their financial backing and neutral coordination were instrumental in enabling us to initiate and develop the product. Being part of the Programme was instrumental in bringing our goals to fruition. We greatly appreciate the support that we have received, and we would strongly encourage others to consider following in Nelen & Schuurmans’ footsteps by joining this impactful Programme.”

Kizjè Marif, Consultant at Nelen & Schuurmans

Three programme projects, run by three different dutch consortia, were finalised in the spring of 2023.

Data-driven decisions for climate-proof food production

Climate change and salinisation have severe impacts on agricultural production in Bangladesh. In particular, the Lower Ganges Delta in the southern part of the country is a vulnerable area due to increased climate variability. [Read more](#)



From Ground Pollution to Food Solutions in Uganda

A pilot project in the Imvepi Refugee Settlement in Uganda revolving around the circular use of the waste and wastewater from pit latrines in a refugee camp in Uganda, in the form of biogas, compost, and irrigation water. [Read more](#)



Smart Irrigation in Ghana

Agriculture, which is the largest water user in Ghana, is affected by high temperatures and changes in rainfall variability. This variability can make crop production and yield more uncertain jeopardising farmers' incomes. [Read more](#)





Three new projects were accepted by the Programme and the Dutch consortia behind them started their business cases in various parts of the world. At the end of the year, the consortia presented their business case results and promising future business indications to NWP and policymakers at the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality.

Sustainable sugarcane and sugar beet

A business case in India and Egypt set out to evaluate the resource requirements for sugarcane versus sugar beet cultivation while validating the water footprint and cost-benefit analysis. [Read more](#)

Water brings agriculture back to Kenya

A business case set out to find practical solutions to making land in the coastal zone of Kenya productive, improve food security, and restore its ecosystem. [Read more](#)



Fine resolution seasonal climate forecasts

A business case in implementing downscaled climate forecasts for agricultural use in Indonesia delivers seasonal forecasts that predict whether the upcoming season will be wetter or drier than normal. [Read more](#)

Another important Water for Food Programme activity was the masterclasses held in Spain and Bangladesh. These were in-depth training programmes, co-created and executed with local stakeholders that involved Dutch and local players.

In June, leading technical managers and extension officers at agricultural cooperatives and companies took a [masterclass](#) on soil and water management in Murcia, Spain. In November, a group of 25 farmers' leaders from the coastal area of Bangladesh were given a training course on saline agriculture.



“The masterclasses allowed us to see different perspectives in the sector and how current technical and scientific advances are being implemented. It was extremely gratifying to discover that one of your subjects was the study of soil, which is something that we at La Huerta de San Isidro S.A. have always emphasised and tried to pass on to our agricultural technicians. We would like to thank you for your contributions, and we sincerely hope that you can continue to provide quality solutions so that we can continue to live in a world based on the land, on nature, and human contact.”

Carmen Luján, La Huerta de San Isidro S.A.

2.9 WTEX10 Programme

The mission of the WTEX10 Programme, which is a follow-up to the WTEX10 2021 Programme, is to structurally increase the export of the Dutch water technology sector worldwide. The Programme facilitates Dutch companies with between 10 and 75 employees to grow internationally. It has four building blocks:

1. Actively promote Dutch water technology expertise internationally.
2. Develop market intelligence.
3. Actively search for and approach potential consortium partners.
4. Facilitate access to funding.

This year, the WTEX10 Programme funded several activities, including the [Dutch mission to WEFTEC Chicago](#). The Dutch water sector was well-represented at the event with 12 organisations showcasing their latest state-of-the-art expertise and technology solutions at the Netherlands Pavilion. The Dutch mission also comprised networking, pitch presentations and site visits.



“UVOX Redox was present at the Netherlands Pavilion at WEFTEC to launch the patented UVOX Redox technology for sustainable water treatment in the USA. The Netherlands Pavilion was the perfect platform to do this. The layout of the booth and the well-organised events led to a substantial number of leads. UVOX Redox was thus very pleased to be a beneficiary of the event.”

Barbara Berson, Uvox Redox

3. Knowledge exchange and development

Since its foundation, NWP has worked with both public and private sector organisations. We collaborate with Dutch ministries, embassies, and other governmental organisations to manage and implement large and medium-sized subsidy programmes that benefit the Dutch water sector in the Netherlands and abroad. One such large subsidy programme is the Young Experts Programme (YEP Programmes) which offers young professionals the opportunity to gain work experience in an international environment through Dutch organisations.

Governmental institutes abroad – such as embassies – also frequently reach out to NWP when organising missions, knowledge exchange, and matchmaking, and when performing market scans. They appreciate NWP’s reliability, flexibility and drive to make things happen.



3.1 Young Expert Programmes

As the lead agency of the Young Expert Programmes, 2023 was a very special year for NWP.

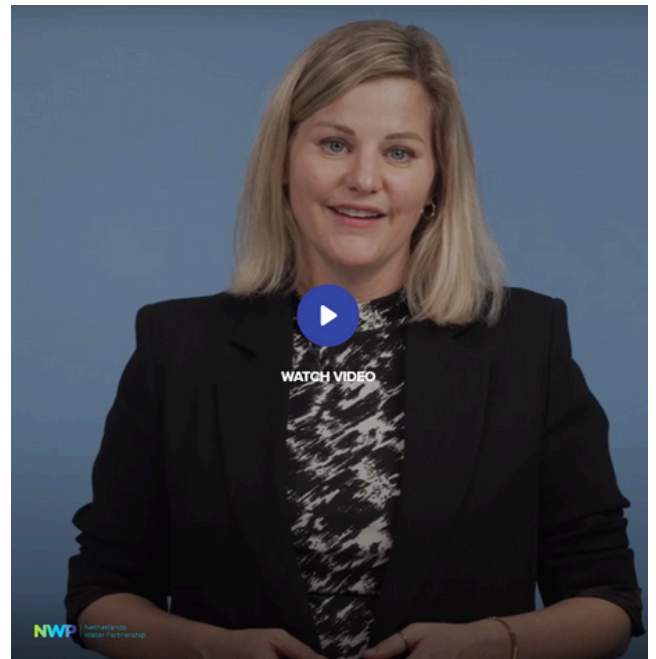


YEP Programmes celebrated its 10 anniversary and to commemorate this remarkable milestone, the YEP Global Network came together on 20 September in The Hague. It was a jubilant celebration in which over 250 people – ranging from Young Experts, alumni, organisations involved in the Programmes, government agencies and NWP colleagues from the YEP Programmes Bureau team – reflected on the Programmes’ impact and its contribution to Dutch international policy and the Sustainable Development Goals.

[Get an impression of the ‘YEP 10 Years’ event in this video.](#)



In a [video message](#), [Dutch Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Liesje Schreinemacher](#) acknowledged the impactful contributions of Young Experts and encouraged them to go the extra mile for global good.



“Your work has been of enormous value in making progress towards the SDGs, including Zero Hunger, Clean Water and Sanitation, and Clean and Affordable Energy.”

Liesje Schreinemacher, Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation



“YEP Programmes is not only good for the Netherlands’ image abroad, but also for the Netherlands because it is tremendously useful for us to have all that wisdom and experience at our disposal.”

Tabitha Gerrets, Director of Advance Insight and a Young Expert alumna

In addition to this extraordinary milestone, the YEP Programmes Bureau team ran other recurring and new activities in 2023, such as coordinating the Start Training and Return Training for several batches of Young Experts; launching two new tailor-made programmes for WaterWorX and Blue Deal; publishing two 'YEP Effect' magazines (issues [10](#) and [11](#)); organising various online meetings, alumni activities, online courses; and, representing the Programmes on international stages such as the UN2023 Water Conference, Stockholm World Water Week and Aquatech.



Over the last decade, the YEP Programmes has accomplished a great deal:

- More than 800 Young Experts have gained professional experience in the water, agrifood and renewable energy sectors, with almost equal representation of young men and women.
- About 200 organisations have employed one or more Young Experts.
- Almost 90% of the YEP Programmes alumni still work in the water -, agrifood – or renewable energy sector.
- Around 50 countries have been home to Young Expert positions.
- The dynamic global network where the YEP Programmes community shares its knowledge and expertise has grown.

3.2 Market Intelligence

NWP frequently produces and disseminates market reports, scans, and white papers that benefit the wider water sector in the Netherlands and abroad. In many cases, NWP is commissioned by third parties to produce these reports. Several Dutch embassies have already entrusted NWP with their water-related market studies, and request NWP to carry out successive follow-ups.

Market scans, reports and whitepapers that benefit the wider water sector, can be downloaded from [our website](#).



NWP White Paper series: The biodiversity crisis

In the NWP White Papers series, our members present solutions, innovations, projects, services, and products that enhance sustainability and help achieve a water-driven future. In 2023, NWP released a White Paper entitled '[A biodiversity crisis](#)', which follows 'Grants as a Financial Instrument' and the 'Groundwater- a Hidden Resource under pressure' White papers which were released in 2022.

Water Sector Export Index

[The Water Sector Export Index \(WEX\) report](#) shows the annual export trends in the Dutch water sector. It specifically targets the delta management and water technology sectors. The research was carried out by NWP member Panteia and was commissioned by NWP, in collaboration with Water Alliance and Top Sector Water & Maritime. It was funded by the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.

Market scans

In 2023, NWP conducted a [study on the water sector in Egypt and the challenges and opportunities for the Dutch water sector](#). It was conducted in collaboration with the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) at the request of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Cairo, Egypt.



4. Netherlands as a Centre of Excellence

NWP supports and facilitates the Dutch water sector in maximising the talents of the Netherlands in the field of water. As part of this, in 2023 NWP raised the Netherlands' international visibility, amplifying the voice of the sector, disseminating the latest industry advancements, and facilitating knowledge sharing and international collaboration. While doing so, NWP directly contributed to the Dutch Government's Netherlands International Water Ambition which demonstrates what the country and its water sector work are doing to secure global water security and water safety. NWP thus indirectly helped advance the Sustainable Development Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Looking back at 2023, we would like to give a special mention of the Netherlands' involvement in the [UN 2023 Water Conference and New York Water Week](#) and their significance to NWP. Leading and coordinating the programme for the Innovation Pavilion at the UN headquarters and supporting the Dutch programme at the Water House in New York City was both a gift and a challenge, as the coordination request by the Dutch Government was received at the last minute.

After 25 years of facilitating a neutral platform for organisations and individuals to connect and jointly safeguard our most precious natural resource, having the opportunity to coordinate the Dutch presence at these two major events was an unforgettable experience. NWP's team flew thousands of kilometres to be onsite to coordinate such contribution and organise [four sessions](#) around key challenges that are currently shaping the global dialogue on water resources, namely:

- integrated river basin management;
- conversion of water-related commitments into actions and measurable impact;
- water footprint implementation; and,
- circularity in water usage.





In addition, we hosted two dinners for NWP members who attended the Conference in New York and pledged to develop a [global campaign on salinisation](#) for the Water Action Agenda. The campaign is an NWP and Netherlands Food Partnership commitment as part of our joint [Saline Water and Food System Partnership](#).



All in all, the week placed great emphasis on our collective need to act now, and NWP showed the world that the Netherlands can help keep the Water Action Agenda moving forward. Apart from this excellent stage, NWP ran many other activities last year for and with the sector to increase its international visibility. Select a topic below to review some of these activities.



4.1 Displaying the latest trends and innovations in the Dutch water sector

The presence of the Dutch water sector at major fairs and exhibitions was entrusted to NWP on several occasions in 2023. At times with sector partners and at times on its own, NWP hosted the Netherlands Pavilion/Lounge at ACODAL (Colombia), [Aquatech Amsterdam](#) (Netherlands), IWA Water and Development Congress and Exhibition (Rwanda), [Oman Sustainability Week](#) (Oman), [Saudi Agriculture](#) (Saudi Arabia), [Stockholm World Water Week](#) (Sweden) and [WEFTEC Chicago](#) (USA).

For each of these events, NWP was deeply involved in the development of a bespoke programme for the booth's participants to shine. NWP facilitated numerous presentations, held many matchmaking activities, and supported several Dutch companies to showcase their latest innovative technologies and solutions for a more resilient tomorrow.



[Aquatech Amsterdam](#) was a very special activity for us as the world water sector gathered in our country. Along with our partners Water Alliance and the Dutch Government's Partners for Water Programme, we co-hosted one of the biggest Netherlands Pavilions ever. Up to 22 Dutch companies showcased their latest innovative and proven technology solutions. NWP coordinated the visits of international delegations from 13 countries and facilitated numerous insightful presentations and discussions at the NL Lounge and other stages around the exhibition floor.



“The incoming delegations programme, organised by NWP this year, was great and it certainly highlighted Royal Eijkelp’s week at Aquatech Amsterdam. Aligning with NWP and receiving the delegations at our booth made our company’s approach to integrated water management solutions stand out and advanced its approach to integrated Dutch water management solutions.”

Winnie Huang, Area Manager at Royal Eijkelp

4.2 Sharing Dutch know-how and best practices

In 2023, NWP showed yet again that we are the first port of call for entities and individuals seeking to connect with the Dutch water sector. Over the year, NWP hosted several incoming delegations interested in knowing the Dutch approach to water. Among them, we welcomed delegations from China, Malaysia, and the USA.

Some requests were submitted at the very last minute, but drawing on NWP's extensive network and experience, we were able to organise study tours and learning visits with bespoke programmes ranging from presentations, roundtable sessions and field trips, to company visits, networking meetings and matchmaking sessions. Each of them was carefully selected to meet the unique needs of our international guests.



“I wish to take this opportunity to render my million thanks to NWP and its team for your kind assistance and guidance during our three-day official visit to the Netherlands. They were very much appreciated.”

Ahmad Denney of the Department of Irrigation and Drainage Sarawak

A delegation from the China International Engineering Consulting Corporation (CIECC) came to the Netherlands to learn more about hydrodynamics and coastal infrastructure, such as surge barriers. CIECC is the largest comprehensive engineering consultancy company in China and is an important consultant to the central Government in the latter's decision-making and implementation of major national construction projects.



A delegation from the Malaysian state of Sarawak visited the Netherlands to gather ideas for a comprehensive Master Plan for Flood Mitigation and Stormwater Management for greater Sibul, and the development of a storm water management plan for Bukit Assek. The visit was a direct result of NWP's presence at Asia Water 2022. [Read more](#)

A delegation from the US City of Annapolis, in Anne Arundel County in the State of Maryland, visited Dutch cities and connected with Dutch experts on the topics of water resilience and active mobility to get some ideas on how to make Annapolis as cycling inclusive as the Netherlands. [Read more](#)



4.3 Fostering international trade and cooperation

Sparking new partnerships and collaborations in the field of water was also one of NWP's activities last year. This was mostly done through outbound missions. On several occasions, NWP partnered with the Dutch Government to coordinate the Dutch water sector's international visits.



[The Dutch Moroccan Water Days](#) is a good example of this collaboration. At the request of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Morocco, NWP helped coordinate the programme of this first-of-its-kind event that facilitated thematic discussions on major water challenges such as water efficiency in agriculture, groundwater monitoring, water reuse, and desalination, and gave a voice to several NWP members. The programme was designed to be an open space where both countries could share their water-related experiences and their water sectors could define and develop opportunities.

The Dutch Moroccan Water Days were part of the Dutch economic mission to Morocco in October 2023. The Moroccan Minister of Equipment and Water, Nizar Baraka, underlined the importance of the Dutch Moroccan Water Days as one of the first tangible outcomes of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Morocco and the Netherlands on the sidelines of the UN Water Conference 2023. After the positive outcomes of these first Dutch Moroccan Water Days, the organising partners expressed their intention to hold this event every year to continue nurturing the cooperation on water between Morocco and the Netherlands.

“The experience of water management in the Netherlands at the local level is quite interesting and inspiring. I had the privilege to bring the perspectives of local governments to the conversation between Dutch and Moroccan experts.”

Neila Akrimi, Head of Strategy and Network at VNG International



Another example of a successful trade mission was the visit to INTERGEO in Berlin, Germany. For the second year in a row, NWP joined forces with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Berlin, the Enterprise Europe Network, and the ROM Utrecht Region.

The delegation of twelve organisations worked closely with the Dutch Embassy to put together a side programme which was as interesting and impactful as the visit to the expo itself. The opportunity to sit down with a select group of representatives from the Kompetenzzentrum Wasser, the Berliner Wasserbetriebe and the German Water Partnership immediately produced joint topics of interest for future collaboration.



4.4 Bringing the Dutch water sector and international peers closer

The NWP team took to the stage to share information on the trends, approaches and solutions being developed by the Dutch water sector with an international audience.

In one example, at the [Grand Danish Water Day](#) hosted by the Confederation of Danish Industry, the Netherlands was invited to share its vision on the global water sector. NWP gave a keynote speech on the Dutch approach and philosophy towards water. We presented the state of the Dutch water sector and the reason why and how the Netherlands has earned its reputation as a global leader in water. We pointed out that the country's sense of urgency, its ability to turn threats into opportunities, the renowned multi-stakeholder and integrated approach, and a continual focus on cross-sectoral collaboration are key to this achievement.

NWP was grateful for the opportunity to reconnect with Denmark and follow up on conversations that started at the [IWA World Water Congress and Exhibition](#) in Denmark in 2022.

Another good example in 2023 is NWP's participation in the [Saudi Agriculture](#) event held in Riyadh last November. Here, we joined up with the Dutch horticulture sector, represented by Dutch Greenhouse Delta, to connect with Saudi partners. On stage, NWP co-presented feasible integrated solutions to achieve the food security and water-saving goals in Saudi Arabia's agricultural vision for 2030.



“Desolenator benefited from the matchmaking and networking activities that NWP arranged before and during Saudi Agriculture. The NWP professionals know their way around and are familiar with the network in Saudi Arabia, and can therefore easily make connections, which is very valuable to us.”

William Janssen, CEO of Desolenator

4.5 Showcasing Dutch water excellence

Part of NWP's digital assets is the [Dutchwatersector.com](https://dutchwatersector.com) website. The platform promotes Dutch expertise on water on the understanding that the complexity of today's water related global challenges could benefit from a transboundary cooperation based on knowledge sharing, innovative sustainable solutions, and a holistic approach. At the end of the year, the website had over 67,000 active users, nearly 83 percent of whom came from abroad.

In 2023, Dutchwatersector.com regularly shared news and activities featuring the Netherlands' work on creating a water secure world. As part of this, we promoted the Dutch water sector at various international events. Given the unique international reach of Dutchwatersector.com, NWP was contracted by the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management to cover the [Stockholm World Water Week](#) and [Aquatech Amsterdam](#) in detail.

The content published on the website was further disseminated through the platform's unique social media channels (X and Facebook), NWP's LinkedIn account, and the newsletters of both NWP and Dutchwatersector.com. All in all, the work conducted for the platform helped sustain and strengthen the international positioning of the Dutch water sector, promoting the Netherlands as a Centre of Excellence in the field of water, and inviting the international water sector to team up with the Netherlands to achieve a water-driven future.

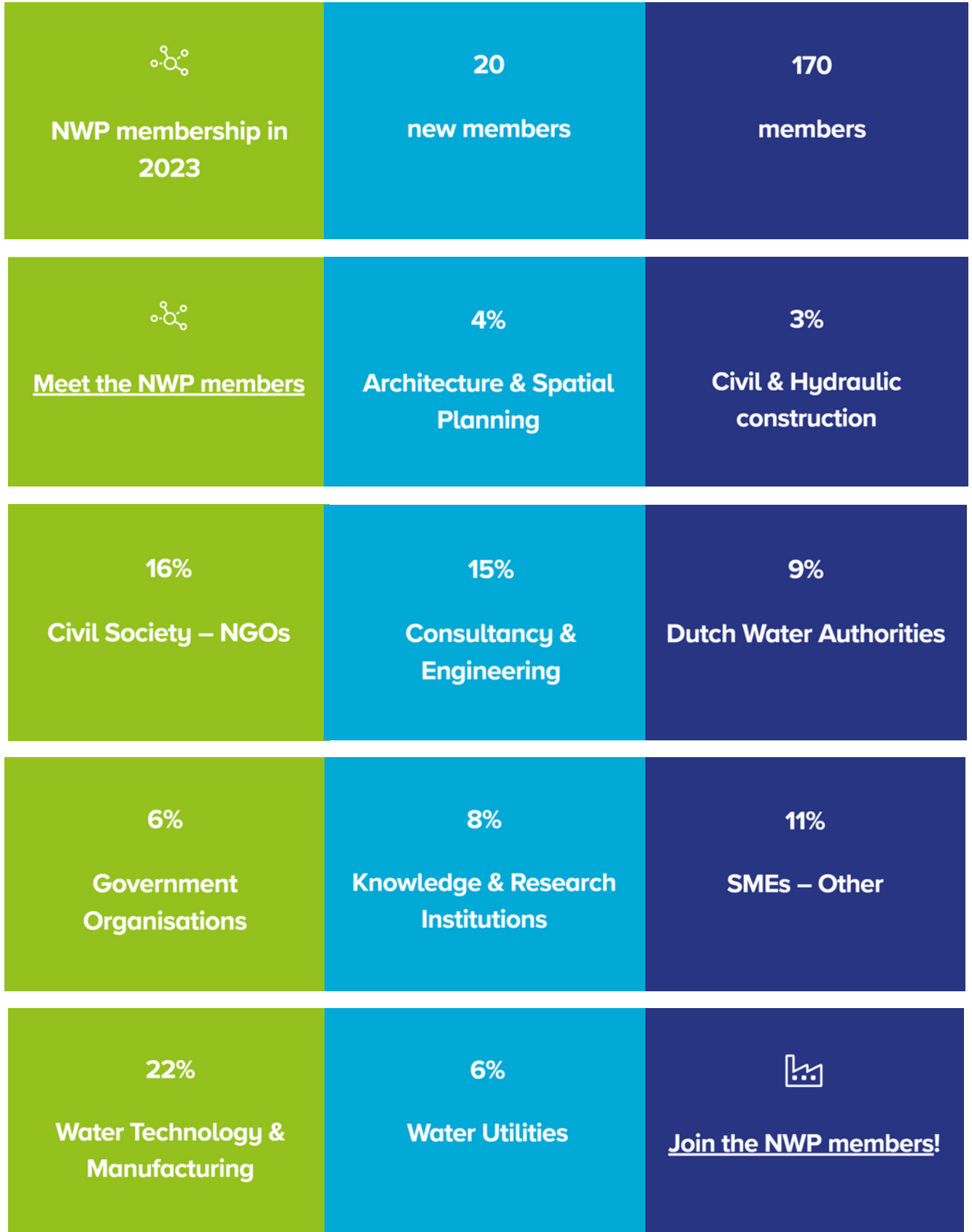


Today's water challenges call for cooperation and the exchange of knowledge and expertise. The Dutch water sector invites you to team up to find the best solutions for our changing world.

[Visit Dutchwatersector.com.](https://dutchwatersector.com)

5. Facts & Figures

NWP's members form the largest water network in the Netherlands that focuses on international collaboration to address global water issues.



Outreach and visibility

NWP connects the knowledge, expertise, and innovations of the Dutch water sector to the global demand for solutions to water-related challenges. While doing so, it creates and disseminates high-quality content and market intelligence that is conveyed through its various digital channels.



In 2023, NWP's outreach and sector visibility can be translated into:

 <p>www.netherlandswaterpartnership.com 47.8K active users & 64.7K sessions</p>	 <p>NWP 14K LinkedIn followers and 5.7K X followers</p>	 <p>NWP newsletter 9.5K subscribers</p>
 <p>www.dutchwatersector.com 99.7K active users & almost 120K sessions</p>	 <p>Dutchwatersector.com 1.3K Facebook followers / 7K X followers</p>	 <p>Dutchwatersector.com newsletter 10.8K subscribers</p>

NWP's global presence in 2023



6. NWP in 2023

NWP's core mission, to 'facilitate the Dutch water sector to solve global water challenges in a societally just and environmentally resilient way,' while growing its global reach and business success, has shaped the organisation since its inception almost a quarter of a century ago. In 2023, NWP continued fostering collaboration between members with an international outlook and within the Dutch water sector by creating conditions conducive to knowledge exchange, matchmaking opportunities, and sector initiatives.

Our strong alliance of the most innovative, entrepreneurial, and renowned Dutch water sector members makes NWP the first port of call for anyone anywhere in the world seeking collaboration and Dutch water expertise. Through its wide network, NWP can connect organisations and individuals in the water sector who may not always come across each other in their immediate circles.

As of 2023, NWP's new governance includes a Supervisory Board and an Advisory Board.



The 'share, connect and involve' philosophy that NWP has promoted for the past five years was again put into practice in 2023 to ensure that Dutch water knowledge and skills were brought in when and where they were needed.

Rick Elmendorp, NWP Director and Board Member

6.1 Supervisory Board

NWP's Supervisory Board, chaired by Rob Steijn, safeguards NWP's interests and its stakeholders' interests by providing oversight, guidance, and strategic direction. In December last year, [two new members were appointed to NWP's Supervisory Board](#), making the Supervisory Board complete. The Supervisory Board comprises Dorette Corbey, Esat Akkaya, Martijn van de Groep, and Rob Steijn.



6.2 Advisory Board

NWP is the bridge between the public and private sectors and research/knowledge institutes, and this is reflected in our newly formed high-level Advisory Board. The Advisory Board is an important body in NWP's governance structure that supports the foundation to carry out its mission of promoting and serving the interests, needs, and priorities of the Dutch water sector in the international community. Its representatives, as required by the NWP Statutes, reflect the key sectors in the wider Dutch water. [The Advisory Board](#) met four times in 2023.

“We strive to help NWP members connect their daily business to the international water arena.”

Henk Nieboer, Chair of NWP's Advisory Board

In 2023, NWP benefited from the expertise of the following Advisory Board members:

- Mr Henk Nieboer, Chair of the NWP Advisory Board.
- Mr Johannes Boonstra, representing Knowledge and Research Institutes
- Ms Meike van Ginneken, representing the Central Government
- Mr Jelle Hannema, representing the Water Utilities
- Ms Luzette Kroon, representing the Water Authorities
- Mr Boaz Neugebauer, representing Civil & Hydraulic Construction
- Ms Katja Portegies, representing the Central Government (Department of Waterways and Public Works)
- Mr Michel Riemersma, representing Consultants and Engineers
- Mr Yousef Yousef, representing Water Technology Innovation and Manufacturers

A seat on the Board for the Spatial Planning and Architecture key sector and one for NGOs was vacant in 2023.



Colophon

This Annual Report is a publication of the Netherlands Water Partnership.

Please contact us for more information on this Report, to become an NWP member, or for general questions.

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