

The Anthropocene in the proposed UNESCO Geopark Scheldt delta: geological history and future in Aquapuncture

Sjoerd J. KLUIVING

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Corresponding author: Sjoerd J. Kluiving. E-mail: s.j.kluiving@vu.nl

KEYWORDS: Schelde delta, geological history, cultural processes

In North-western Europe the rivers Rhine, Meuse and Scheldt have created a giant river delta over the past three million years. The area is usually observed by people as a flat and featureless type of terrain, although sometimes unexpected elevation differences and sharp contrasts in landscapes and omnipresent waterways occur. Geological phenomena, in the Scheldt region, in north-western Belgium and in the southern Netherlands testify from a highly dynamic landscape showing a range from very old to very young geological processes. The great diversity in geological processes and resulting landscapes is unprecedented on a global scale and has had its impact on the region's cultural and economic history, shaping Today's reality. In this paper we aim to a) reconstruct the Holocene Dutch-Flemish Scheldt delta history, in conjunction with the Holocene geological history of the area, b) review the typical lowland theme of the human battle against water in this region, along a cultural history that evolves into the Anthropocene in this area, c) the future in the Anthropocene along aquatic phenomena introducing the concept of Aquapuncture.