

Press Release

24 June 2019

Listen to the Sea

North Sea Embassy takes the next step towards a sovereign sea in 2030 with three days of public events: 'Listen to the Sea'

North Sea Embassy

11, 12 and 13 July

Event on the pier and beach at Scheveningen

In Stroom Den Haag, Nutshuis, Humanity House and Mauritshuis

The North Sea Embassy presents *Listen to the Sea*, a series of events at various locations in The Hague and Scheveningen on 11, 12 and 13 July. With this programme of lectures, art, tours and workshops, the North Sea Embassy appeals to all our senses, and to our sense of empathy. The aim is to learn to listen to the human and non-human voices in and around the North Sea, as a first step on the road to 2030, when the Embassy plans to present the North Sea as a separate political entity with the right to self-determination. With this target in mind, we will start to *listen* and *learn* about all the life in and around the sea, so that over the coming years we can *learn to speak on behalf of* and *negotiate on behalf of* the North Sea.

Dutch 'poet laureate' Tsead Bruinja to open proceedings

On Thursday 11 July, the Dutch poet laureate Tsead Bruinja will baptize *De Zeemond* with a poem dedicated to the North Sea. *De Zeemond*, an artwork by Carmen Schabracq in the form of an ossicle, will serve as the mouth and ear of the sea, and also act as a recognizable beacon throughout the event.

Programme in Stroom, Nutshuis, Humanity House and Mauritshuis

On Thursday, Stroom Den Haag is the venue for a presentation by cultural sociologist Ruben Jacobs based on his book *Artonauten: Op expeditie in het Antropoceen (2018)* and by anthropologist Ester Heiman. That same evening, Jesper Buursink hosts a live radio show from the Nutshuis, with as his guests a fisherman, a biologist and a musician. On Friday, Humanity House hosts a programme about maritime law, with lawyer and researcher Laura Burgers and Ombudsman for Future Generations Jan van de Venis. On Saturday, Harpo 't Hart is at Mauritshuis to lead a search for new seascapes.

On the hunt for colour, scent, sound and Godzilla

In addition, tours and workshops for young and old take place over the three days. We will find out about the smells of the sea with Frank Bloem, we will make new colour gradations of the North Sea with artist Valerie van Leersum, and we will listen to underwater sound compositions by composer Stef Veldhuis. During a drawing workshop, children will discover what it's like to be a shrimp, and we close the event with a press conference by Godzilla. This ancient sea monster not only looks back in

time but also considers her own future and that of humankind. Moreover, on this one occasion she is willing to take some questions from the press.

[See the whole programme here](#)

The North Sea Embassy

The North Sea Embassy was set up on 1 June 2018 at Lange Voorhout 19 in The Hague, on the basis of the principle that 'the sea belongs to itself'. The North Sea Embassy is initiated as a case of The Parliament of Things. It gives a voice to things, plants, animals and people in and around the North Sea. The Embassy views the North Sea as a political partner, with a constituency that stretches from France to Norway, and from the seabed to the atmosphere. From microscopically tiny users such as plankton, to large users such as people and whales. **For the multi-annual plan Route 2030 see below.**

Initiators and partners

The group working on the North Sea Embassy consists of a three-person board, a team of organizers, a team of designers, scientists and artists, two working groups with about ten members, and a varied group of individuals, including policy-makers. All these people are affiliated with various organizations such as Artis Zoo, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Ombudsman for Future Generations, the Academy of Theatre Amsterdam, and various universities and colleges of higher education in Amsterdam, Eindhoven, Tilburg and Wageningen. The activities for 2019 are supported by the Creative Industries Fund, Mondriaan Fund, Fonds1818 and Bank Giro Loterij Fonds.



Note for the editors: for more information or photographs, or to contact representatives of the North Sea, please get in touch with Christiane Bosman at christiane@ambassadevandennoordzee.nl or 06 - 24 11 04 19. The attached image can be used provided that the photographer is named: Cleo Campert.

www.ambassadevandennoordzee.nl

www.theparliamentofthings.org

Facebook/ Instagram: theparliamentofthings

Further readings:

[About the Embassy of the North Sea. Anne van Leeuwen, co-founder of the Embassy of the North Sea, pronounced this speech during the Human Rights Weekend @DeBalie, Amsterdam](#)

About the multi-annual plan Route 2030

Phase 1: Listening (2018 – 2021)

Emancipatory Phase: Scientific Recognition.

Starting from the research question ‘What does the North Sea do?’ the Embassy will listen carefully to the sea and talk to a range of specialists. The Embassy will first explore the main ocean currents (from the Delta Stream to the Gulf Stream). Based on those currents, new political North Sea collectives of people and other entities will be assembled. Moreover, the Embassy will adopt an open attitude towards the conflicts and relations among those involved with the North Sea. The research phase ends with the presentation of the assembled collectives.

Phase 2: Speaking (2021 – 2026)

Emancipatory Phase: Social Acceptance. Once the collectives have been assembled, the polyphonic North Sea can be seen, heard, felt, smelt and tasted in a new form of political activism. The focus in this phase lies on representing the North Sea collectives and increasing visibility.

Phase 3: Negotiating (2026 – 2030)

Emancipatory Phase: Legal Equality. After the assembled North Sea collectives have voiced their opinions, the Embassy will embark on a series of negotiations with other authorities. In a diplomatically risky manner, it will advocate an inclusive North Sea Op democracy. An important aspect of this phase is ‘embedding’ the assembled North Sea collectives in the current web of human laws, interests and regulations, taking into account the resultant questions, frictions and opportunities. In association with other authorities, the Embassy will formalize its relations with other nation states bordering the North Sea, and legally assess the desirability of declaring the North Sea to be an independent legal entity. If so, this entire phase will be devoted to building the case for the North Sea.