

Depoldering Groot Schoor (Hingene)

What

This action involves the realization of a depoldering (also known as 'managed retreat') of an area called 'Groot Schoor' (same name as previous area but different location, Hingene). This area has a surface of approximately 23 hectares.

Where

Groot Schoor is located along the river Scheldt, on the right bank, near the village of Hingene, in the province of Antwerp.

How

A inland ring dyke of approximately 1200 meters will be constructed to protect the urban area nearby. The ring dyke will be planted on the location of a small existing dyke around the polder. After the removal of the asphalt road on the original river dyke this dyke will be breached over a distance of 75 to 100 meters to allow the daily inflow of the river water.

In this Groot Schoor a single breach of maximum 100 meters was chosen instead of the complete lowering/removal of the river dyke. A sufficiently wide breach is needed to allow the full tidal cycle in the area.

Furthermore the onset of a creek is dug out for a better drainage and enhance the ecological development towards the optimal habitat. Quarry stones are placed for the protection of the dykes that have to stay in place.

Why

Many houses in Bornem and Puurs (villages nearby) are situated on a lower level than the mean daily high water level on the Scheldt. Measures are needed to guarantee the safety of these homes. Besides Groot Schoor (Hamme) other safety/nature measures are taken in this area of the Scheldt, but are not part of SPARC.

The contact between the river and its estuary will be enlarged and space is created for natural, dynamic, physical, chemical and ecological processes. The result of this measure is an intertidal habitat with a high nature value and an increased resilience to climate change.

This area will hence contribute to the nature targets for the Scheldt estuary, as devised within the framework of the Bird- and Habitat directives.

The contact of the river with its expanded streambed creates an important shear on the water which causes a mitigation of the rivers force during events of high tide or storm tide. Consequently the pressure of the water is released so there is a lesser likelihood of flooding further inland.

Creeks improve the drainage of the water towards the river and enhance the ecological development towards the optimal habitat.

