**Flood resilience building in living labs**

Building flood resilience in coastal and riverine areas requires an integrated systems approach that develops capacities in infrastructure, society and the environment. Living labs present opportunities for development of such capacities through experimentation in real-world settings, formulation of partnerships that capture domain-based knowledge and needs, and joint utilization of tacit and theoretical knowledge. But what makes a living lab effective? This seminar explores the key elements of a living lab and discusses insights into answering this question. The analysis is based on key findings and lessons learnt within the Living Lab Hedwige-Prosperpolder (LLHPP). LLHPP was created in 2020 in a Dutch-Belgian cross-border managed realignment site in the estuary of River Scheldt to work towards flood resilience building and climate adaptation. The living lab consisted of a 3 Km-long earthen levee that is has been removed to facilitate the expansion of an adjacent intertidal area. Professionals, experts and students from four European countries and fourteen organizations collaborated in the design and execution of levee stress tests, field surveys and emergency response exercises in a setting that allowed them to exchange knowledge, combine resources, test new technology and ideas, validate models and contribute to benchmarking of recent innovations. The living lab activities lasted for two years and they have just been completed.

**Bio**

Vana Tsimopoulou is a civil engineer with expertise in the field of hydraulic engineering and flood risk management. She received her PhD in civil engineering at Delft University of Technology in 2015. For her PhD she developed analytical and numerical models to support risk-based decision making in water safety ventures in the Netherlands and Japan. Vana has worked as a consultant for several companies such as Van Oord, HKV Consultants and Lynkeus Srl, and she has been involved in projects in many countries including the Netherlands, Turkey, USA, Bulgaria, Japan, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia. Since 2015 she has increasingly dedicated time in education in the roles of associate lecturer in probabilistic design at IHE-Delft Institute for Water Education and lecturer in safety and security management at The Hague University of Applied Sciences. She joined the Building with Nature group of HZ University of Applied Sciences in 2020 as a project leader of the Hedwige-Prosperpolder research and later as a research coordinator. Her current educational activities involve teaching coastal engineering and coastal management as well as thesis supervisions.