

The Headlines

[Onderzoekers met liefde voor het noorden](#), FD

[See for yourself: Alaska's disappearing glaciers, then and now](#), Alaska Dispatch News

[Inuit fear they will be overwhelmed as 'extinction tourism' descends on Arctic](#), the Guardian

Coming Up

14 September: [Seminar on Fishing in the Polar Regions](#)

27 September: [EU PolarNet Discussion 'Towards the 1.5°C climate goal. Perspectives from the Polar Regions.'](#)

28 September: [Arctic Science Ministerial](#)

4-6 October: [Senior Arctic Officials meeting, Arctic Council](#)

7-9 October: [Arctic Circle](#)

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In the picture

Twice a day, the German scientists from AWIPEV launch a weather balloon from Ny-Ålesund. The balloon carries instruments aloft to send back information on atmospheric pressure, temperature, humidity and wind speed. About 800 locations around the world launch these balloons. The data is being used for weather forecasts. The Arctic ambassador launched the balloon during his visit.

Dutch Arctic Ambassador visits Svalbard

The new Arctic Ambassador, Kees Rade, made his first visit to the Arctic from 6-9 July. The primary objective of his trip to Svalbard was to learn more about (Dutch) Arctic research, education opportunities and economic activities on Svalbard, and to discuss the new Dutch Polar Strategy. Svalbard presents the Netherlands with a relatively inexpensive way to conduct high quality research and to educate the next Dutch Arctic experts, in Ny-Ålesund as well as at the University of Svalbard.

Ny-Ålesund was the first destination of this introductory visit. Ny-Ålesund is an international research town, located north-west on the island of Spitsbergen. Due to easy accessibility and the rich and diverse natural environment, Ny-Ålesund is particularly suited to climate and environmental research. The Dutch Arctic research stations are located here.

The CEO of [Kings Bay](#), the company that owns and operates the town, Ole Øiseth, and the Dutch station manager, Maarten Loonen welcomed the Ambassador to Ny-Ålesund. Ole Øiseth gave a short overview of the organisation of the town. Scientists from twelve different countries conduct research in Ny-Ålesund. Due to the town's small size (35 permanent residents, ranging up to max 180 in the summer) and the extensive co-operation among the scientists, Ny-Ålesund is a unique international community.

Maarten Loonen gave a tour through the town and showed several research stations and the historical buildings of Ny-Ålesund that originate from the mining days, among which the two Dutch research stations. The Dutch stations are rather basic and small and

provide Dutch researchers and students with a place to work and sleep. After 2018, the subsidy for one of the stations will end. It's necessary to find new funding in order to avoid losing half of the Dutch research infrastructure on Svalbard.

The visit to Ny-Ålesund ended with the launch of a weather balloon and a boat trip to a retreating glacier. You can find a short impression of the trip on the website of the [Dutch polar station](#).

In [Longyearbyen](#), the capital of Svalbard, the Ambassador met with the Governor of Svalbard and the [Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators](#), and paid a visit to the [Kongsberg Satellite Services](#) and the [University of Svalbard](#).

One important topic to discuss with the Governor was the Norwegian [White Paper on the future of Svalbard](#). In this White Paper, Norway indicates that it wants to increase efforts to secure ongoing activities as tourism, research and higher education, and that changes will be made in relation to organising and running the research activities in Ny-Ålesund. The Ambassador stressed the importance of Ny-Ålesund for Dutch Arctic research and complimented Norway for the way international research on Ny-Ålesund is currently organised. The Governor assured the Ambassador that the proposed changes in the White Paper will not affect the organisation of Dutch Arctic research, or the ability to conduct our own research program.

The Ambassador's visit to Svalbard was highly appreciated by everyone and the appointment of a Dutch Arctic Ambassador was warmly welcomed by Norway.