

Lauwersmeer National Park

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Before 1969, the Lauwerszee, the former inland sea, looked much like the Wadden Sea. The tides exerted their powerful influence by forming gullies and channels. Salt and fresh water mingled continuously. The village of Zoutkamp was once located by the sea and a lively fishing port in its time.

From Lauwerszee to Lauwersmeer



By 1600 schemes were already afoot to seal off the lake, however shipping was too important a source of income to countenance the plan in those days. The Dokkumerdiep was closed off following the Christmas flood of 1717, which cost a great many lives. The Reitdiep was also sealed off at Zoutkamp in 1877. From this point forward, Groningen became tide free.

After the disastrous storm surge of 1953 it was decided to completely seal off the Lauwerszee. The sea eventually became a lake, and the name changed to

Would you like to explore the area?

The area surrounding the Lauwersmeer has been known as Lauwersmeer National Park since 12 November 2003. You can explore the park in many ways; on foot, by bicycle, boat or canoe. There are a number of beaches at various places along the lake's shore, ideal for enjoying the sun and swimming. This truly is an area for lovers of the natural environment, as well as sports enthusiasts. You are nature's guest here!

Lauwersmeer. This was a gigantic undertaking, finally completed in 1969. The village of Zoutkamp was hit hardest by the works. With the closure, the village lost its function as a fishing port; a black period for the Zoutkampers. On 23 May 1969, when the Queen visited Zoutkamp, flags in the village were even flown at half mast.



In a relatively short period the Lauwersmeer region has been transformed into a beautiful natural environment. The lake and the alternating woods and fields provide superb resting terrain for migrating birds on their long journeys to the north or south. In recent years even sea eagles have been spotted here. The area supports an abundance of wildlife.

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