

## Construction RV *Wim Wolff*



### Progress report #37: February 2024

The RV *Wim Wolff* is a new shipbuilding project for the Dutch national research fleet. The fleet is owned and operated by the National Marine Facilities (NMF), a department of the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ). The NMF fleet consists of three vessels capable of conducting research from the shallow coastal waters out into the open ocean.

The RV *Wim Wolff* is intended to replace the Wadden Sea research vessel RV *Navicula*, and with its shallow draught of 1 meter it is specifically designed for overnight voyages for research in the Wadden Sea, the Zeeland delta or the coastal zone.

With a permanent crew of four, the RV *Wim Wolff* will offer state-of-the-art facilities for a maximum of 12 passengers, and is equipped with onboard dry and wet lab facilities. The vessel also has room for two customised lab containers on the working deck.

The RV *Wim Wolff* is being built by Thecla Bodewes Shipyards (TBSY) in Harlingen, and is scheduled for delivery in the 1st quarter of 2024.

## CHRISTENING

The shipyard spent February completing the last finishing work, and making the various systems and their connections operational.

This work was briefly interrupted for the RV *Wim Wolff*'s christening ceremony on Thursday, 15 February. The day before, the RV *Wim Wolff* sailed from Kampen to the NIOZ harbour on Texel.



*The RV Wim Wolff approaches the locks in Den Oever for the first time en route to Texel.  
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Charly Wolff and Caroline Visser from the Dutch Research Council served as sponsors for the christening, which drew a large crowd of spectators.



*The christening ceremony for the RV Wim Wolff on Texel, 15 February, drew a large crowd.*



*The moment the vessel was christened. ©Evalien Weterings*



*The RV Wim Wolff returning to Kampen after the christening, for the last checks before definitive delivery to NIOZ. The NIOZ harbour is visible in the background. ©Flying focus*

## DELIVERY

The RV *Wim Wolff* returned to the yard in Kampen after the christening to dot all the i's and cross all the T's before definitive delivery to the NIOZ. Aside from the last checks and completion of a few systems by subcontractors, the last details mainly include sea trial observations by the classification society.

Once the systems and equipment have been put into operation and the remaining work has been completed, the vessel will undergo a sea trial with representatives from the classification society and the NIOZ aboard. If the sea trial is successful, the certifications will be issued and the RV *Wim Wolff* can be handed over to the NIOZ so that the research crew can begin studying the Wadden Sea.



*Load check and test of the A-frame and winches, using a water-filled bag.*

The delivery and transfer of the RV *Wim Wolff* is scheduled for late March 2024.

## THE FUTURE

The RV *Wim Wolff*'s planned service life of around 40 years gives the Dutch research community a sustainable, state-of-the-art research platform for decades to come.

The choice for diesel-electric propulsion already offers a dramatic reduction in fuel consumption compared to its predecessor, the RV *Navicula*, even though the *Wim Wolff* is a larger vessel.

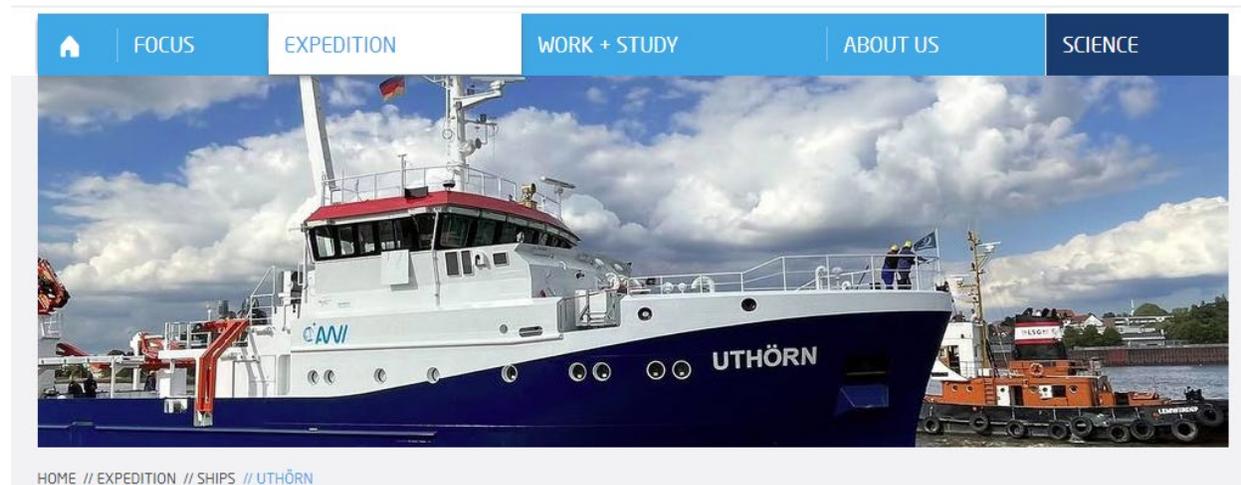
Using HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) instead of diesel also makes a big step towards a completely climate-neutral vessel.

HVO was chosen over alternative green fuels, like methanol, ammonia, or hydrogen, due to their limited availability and the as-yet undeveloped regulation of these fuels. The next few years will determine which of these fuels may replace HVO in the future.

The design of the RV *Wim Wolff* made preparations for future operations using more environmentally friendly fuels. Green fuels like methanol, ammonia or hydrogen offer less energy per unit of volume, which in turn requires a larger fuel bunker.

The RV *Wim Wolff* was built to accommodate a larger bunker, and if necessary can 'easily' be extended by a few meters to offer more bunker capacity.

However, developments in this field are progressing at a rapid pace. The Alfred Wegner Institute in Bremerhaven recently chose to use green methanol to power the planned replacement of one of its coastal research vessels, the RV *Uthörn*. For more information, see [www.awi.de](http://www.awi.de).



*The RV Uthörn on the AWI website. ©AWI*

For more information, please visit: <http://www.NewResearchFleet.nl>