# Introduction

Fresh groundwater resources in coastal regions are a topic of study that may become increasingly important in the face of challenges of modern times: environmental, socio-economic, and geopolitical. Coastal regions are home to a significant share of humanity. In 2016, 44% of the world population was living within a 150km range of the coastline (J. Akrofi, 2016), where people largely rely on fresh groundwater resources, for domestic, industrial, and agricultural use (Delsman, 2015). In coastal areas, fresh groundwater resources are susceptible to degradation due to their proximity to saline seawater, high demands, land use change, climate change and sea level fluctuations (Werner et. al., 2013).

This study aims to assess and enhance state of the art groundwater modeling techniques for freshwater reservoirs in dunes. The coastline of the Netherlands is deemed a suitable study area for this aim, thanks to extensive research and desirable study conditions (See section 1.2). The insights and analyses from this study may contribute to developing more efficient models used to increase the robustness and sustainability of drinking water resources in coastal areas globally.

## State of the Art

A prerequisite to sustainable management of coastal fresh groundwater reserves is an accurate description of their present-day distribution, which is difficult to obtain due to the sparse measurements at depth (Delsman, 2015). The coastline of the Netherlands may be an exception to this statement, as numerous studies have been conducted on its geohydrology, which provide a basis for further research. (Stuyfzand, 1993) conducted a hydrochemical facies analysis to identify the origins of over 2000 groundwater samples collected along the coastline; (Oude Essink, 2001) introduced the concept of a fresh-saline groundwater interface and discussed problems that arise in the Dutch coastline as a result of variable density flow, by using a numerical three-dimensional groundwater flow model; (Delsman, 2015) used a two-dimensional numerical model to perform a paleo-hydrological reconstruction, to investigate intrusion of saline groundwater from the sea over a longer timescale, throughout the Holocene.

Dunea manages drinking water supply from fresh groundwater reserves in the dunes of The Hague and seeks to increase their supply with 30% from 2021 to 2025 to account for future increases in demand, or deficits in precipitation due to climate change (Bootsma et al., 2021). In a preliminary study to investigate the feasibility of brackish groundwater as an additional source for producing drinking water, (Bootsma et.al., 2021) used a numerical three-dimensional state-of-the-art fresh-saline groundwater flow model to find that the extraction of brackish groundwater as a drinking water resource may be feasible, but that further research is necessary.

The state-of-the-art model’s applicability and reliability can be questioned, however, since it has only been calibrated on hydraulic head data (Bootsma et.al., 2021), potentially overseeing effects of variable density flow and thereby neglecting validation on groundwater salinity. Moreover, the model’s calculation times are impractical for use, exceeding 40 days for a simulation of 1000 years (REF) (not an uncommon simulation timescale for a geohydrological model), using powerful computing by Amazon Web Services.

The necessity for further research to increase the sustainability of drinking water in the dune area of the Netherlands and the limited applicability of state-of-the-art model’s results call for an assessment of conventional model validation techniques for drinking water management, that may be applied to coastal drinking water resources globally.

Diagram

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Figure 1: Threats to coastal aquifers in the Netherlands. (Delsman, 2015)

## The coastal dunes of Meijendel-Berkheide as a study area

The densely populated coastal dunes and adjacent polders of the Western Netherlands suffer from all environmental evils of modern times. They are faced with a wide spectrum of natural variations and anthropogenic impacts, side by side as well as superimposed (Stuyfzand, 1993). Intrusion of saline groundwater, over extraction of freshwater resources, increase in demand due to growth, these are threats that coastal aquifers suffer in the Netherlands (see Figure 1).

The Netherlands has an elaborate history of water management. First accounts date back to 800AD, when drainage of coastal salt marches commenced (Delsman, 2015). Its rural landscape is characterized by polders, canals, and reclaimed lakes, initially drained using windmills. This pursuit dates to 1000AD (van der Ven, 1993), and is keeping water tables sufficiently low for agricultural use. Consequently, this drainage also resulted in compaction of soils due to oxidation of organic matter in peat soils, which were now exposed to air (Hoogland et. al., 2012).



In the area of Meijendel-Berkheijde, water management has a particular history, making it ideal to study the development of fresh-saline groundwater interactions over time, with human intervention. In the period of 1874 to 1955, excessive groundwater exfiltration caused significant desiccation and groundwater salinization in the dune area of Meijendel-Berkheide (Stuyfzand et al., 1993). To recharge the freshwater reserves, pumping river water from the Rhine into the coastal aquifers commenced in 1956. Since 1976 additional water from the Meuse River is pumped into the dune reserves to further enhance the reservoir’s recharge (see Figure 2).

Diagram

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Figure 2: Saline groundwater intrusion and overextraction in Meijendel-Berkheide, interpreted by (Stuyfzand, 1993). Cross section perpendicular to coastline, east-west. AM = Artificially infiltrated Meuse water, AR = Artificial Rhine, D = Dune freshwater.

Although it is found that long timescales are involved in establishing the current fresh-saline distribution in deltas (van Engelen, 2020) and salinity in the coastal groundwater of the Netherlands predominantly derives from sea water infiltration during Holocene marine transgressions (Post and Kooi, 2003), human intervention in coastal aquifers may disrupt this long timescale transience. As recognized by (Oude Essink, 2001), in areas where extensive human intervention (like extraction of groundwater) takes place, the anthropogenic influence on fresh-saline distributions may become primary, on a much smaller timescale. The geochemical analysis confirms that this is also the case in Meijendel-Berkheide (Stuyfzand, 1993).

Moreover, most data available are “snapshots” and provide little information on the long-term development of fresh-saline groundwater distributions. Modern techniques like the use of airborne electromagnetics to map groundwater salinity are on a relatively small timescale compared to the development of fresh-saline groundwater distributions. This lack of historical data causes model validation to be based on “snapshots”. Hydrochemical Facies Analyses (HyFA) like (Stuyfzand, 1993) may provide a contribution to model validation, as origin tracing provides insight in the “path” of water flow in the subsurface. The use of HyFA provides an opportunity to improve model validation techniques.

The coastal area of the Netherlands is judged as suitable for studying due to (a) an extensive amount of geohydrological studies and data obtained in the area for model validation (see section 1.1); (b) the HyFA providing insight in the path of groundwater flow in the area by (Stuyfzand, 1993), providing a research opportunity for fresh-saline groundwater model validation; (c) numerous studies with a successful numerical groundwater modeling approach in the area and (d) site specific human-induced conditions that disrupt the long timescales over which fresh-saline interfaces develop, consequently making the area preferable for modeling fresh-saline groundwater distributions efficiently, over a shorter period of time.

## Fresh-saline interface

Variable density flow occurs due to a gradient water density. In the context of this paper, the variability in groundwater density is due to its salinity. Typical ocean (saline) water has a density of and freshwater typically has a density of . Saline groundwater with a higher density tends to flow down, with respect to fresh groundwater, with a lower density due to gravitational forces. As a tool to gain insight in the density flows in coastal aquifers, (Oude Essink, 2001) introduced a conceptual fresh-saline interface, based on the Badon-Ghyben-Herzberg principle:

where is the piezometric head of the groundwater with respect to the sea level, and is the depth of the freshwater lens saline groundwater interface below the sea level. This principle is visualized in Figure 3, where a representation of an elongated island surrounded by sea water, and its fresh-saline groundwater interface is shown.

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Figure 3: Fresh-saline interface in an elongated island

Although this representation of the variable density groundwater distribution neglects the brackish groundwater zone in between fresh and saline groundwater, it is a conceptual tool to visualize and calculate the shape and size of the fresh groundwater volume.

## Scope of Study

3D modeling techniques for fresh-saline groundwater interactions in coastal regions can be seen as the central concept of this study. Motivated by the conditions named in sections 1.1 and 1.2, the aim of this study is:

*To assess and improve efficient modeling practices and conventional model validation techniques for fresh-saline groundwater flow models used to study coastal drinking water resources.*

In this statement “*efficient modeling practices*” and “*model validation techniques*” require further specification. They are addressed in the following sub-objectives:

1. *Efficient modeling practices*: Increasing the efficiency of state-of-the-art groundwater flow model techniques while preserving accuracy.

2.1. Propose methods to increase efficiency

2.2. Review their effect on accuracy of model the model result

1. *Model validation techniques*: The suitability of Hydrochemical Facies Analyses (HyFA) for fresh-saline groundwater flow model validation, when investigating the hydrology of coastal fresh groundwater resources.

1.1. Assess conventional model validation techniques

1.2. Investigate suitability value of HyFA for model validation

## Report overview

Go through structure of paper.

# Modeling groundwater flow in coastal aquifers

## Conceptual modeling approach

Scientific models are a simplified representation of physical processes that are widely used to gain insight and understanding of these physical processes. At its most basic level, modeling is a process for thinking systematically about a problem (Jakeman et. al., 2008). A distinction can be made between models that are *empirical* and *physics based*. Empirical modeling would disregard all theory and focuses on observations only. This method can be used to predict a range of possible outcomes based on data or find an empirical relation between parameters. Physics based modeling would be applying a purely theoretical approach, based on established laws of physics (axioms) and not on data. To the authors’ interpretation, in this case the predictive applicability of the model, but also effort required in developing and applying the model increases as more physics are involved. The question remains what to take as a starting point:

*To what level is the model required to be physics based?*

Specifically for the aim of this research, *efficient modeling practices* and model *validation techniques* need to be addressed. To increase efficiency, a more empirical approach can be applied, by making assumptions, calibrating parameters to data or focusing more on data and validation techniques. On the other hand, physics can be reintroduced if an empirical representation of a physical process is not accurate enough. An iterative approach that attempts to balance between efficiency and accuracy is applied in this study. Figure X provides a conceptual schematic of the feedback between the model and data with which it is validated.

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Figure 4: Conceptual modeling approach (CHANGE FONT)

### Metamodeling approach

A heavy computational load is often caused by expensive analysis and simulation processes to reach a comparable level of accuracy as physical testing data. To address such a challenge, metamodeling is often used (Gary Wang and Shan, 2006). Keeping these metamodels simple facilitates the involvement of stakeholders in the modeling process, the communication of associated uncertainty, and improves the credibility of its results, as recognized by (Basco Carrera et.al., 2018). In this study, a metamodel is created from the state-of-the-art groundwater flow model for the dune fresh groundwater reservoir near The Hague. This model is the “original model” whose input and output will be used as a starting point for the metamodel. The metamodel’s purpose then, is to assess the validation techniques and computational efficiency of the original model.

An iterative approach is required to improve efficiency of a metamodel, whilst still retaining sufficient accuracy for the purpose of the model: fresh groundwater resource management. Model calibration is done based on the original model’s input and output. Here the discrepancy between the results of the metamodel and the original model can be quantified and analyzed both statistically and spatially, in a series of calibration runs. Based on an analysis of the discrepancies between the metamodel and the original model, the metamodel can be justified to be sufficiently calibrated, to represent the state-of-the-art original model. After this is justified, the metamodel can be validated to new data. The model structure needs to be addressed (section 2.2 Model structure, before further engaging in the calibration and validation (section 2.4 Model calibration, 2.5 model validation).

## Model structure

In this section, the structure of the metamodel and the original model in MODFLOW and iMOD SEAWAT are discussed, to provide the reader with background knowledge on model features that influence efficiency and accuracy. This chapter will be referred to throughout the rest of this report.

### Domain and discretization

Along the coastline, the model domain ranges from Loosduinen (south), to Katwijk (north). Inlands it reaches until Zoetermeer (west). This domain discretization and the according parametrization of the original model are based on the preceding Bridging Model (Arcadis, Deltares, KWR, 2019). The original model has a horizontal cell size of 25m (Bootsma et. al. 2021). Vertically, the model top reaches the highest hydraulic heads found in the dunes (15m NAP) and reaches a depth of 250m below NAP. The top 30m of the model domain consist of 15 cells that are each 2m thick, followed by 22 cells of 5m thick and 12 cells of 10m thick. (Bootsma et. al., 2021) The vertical discretization is unchanged in the metamodel and its influence on model performance is outside of the scope of this study.

The phreatic groundwater variability throughout the model domain is schematized in Figure 5 below. For the sake of simplicity, the subsurface is represented by two aquifers and two aquitards and the fresh-saline groundwater distribution is disregarded.

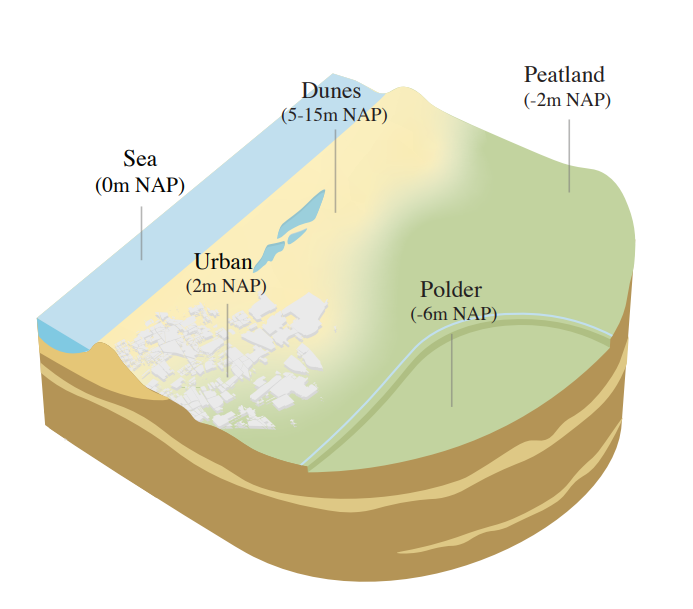


Figure 5: Model domain and piezometric groundwater head. In the dunes, the infiltration ponds can be seen.

To model the geohydrology of the domain show above, SEAWAT is used. SEAWAT is MODFLOW based and simulates 3D variable-density groundwater flow coupled with multi-species solute transport (Langevin and Guo, 2006). It is used to create cells that interact in a 3D grid. Both horizontally and vertically, this cell size can vary. These cells interact as water flows from one cell to another, based on groundwater flow equations, boundary conditions and cell parameters (horizontal and vertical permeabilities, heads, salinity) per timestep. They represent a pore volume in a soil, saturated or unsaturated with water.

### Boundary conditions

In this section, boundary conditions and their influence on the model’s efficiency are discussed. Referring to the conceptual modeling approach presented in section 2.1, boundary conditions can be seen as *assumptions* to increase model efficiency, that can make the model less *physics-based* and more *empirical,* under the circumstance that the model’s predictive capability remains sufficient. For modeling in MODFLOW, boundary conditions summarize processes into conditions applied to cells for certain, or all timesteps. These conditions can be used to specify values of variables for which differential equations are solved, consequently the use of boundary conditions can decrease calculation times as the solver now solves easier differential equations. Boundary conditions can be applied along boundaries of a domain or for specific cells in the MODFLOW modeling structure.

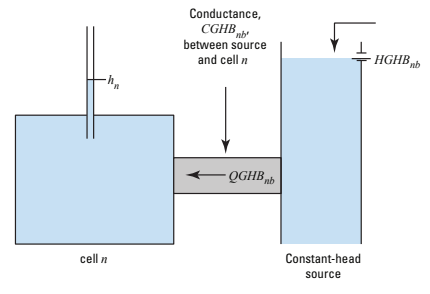


Figure 6: Diagram showing the flow between a General Head Boundary condition and its adjacent groundwater cell (Harbaugh, 2005), (Langevin et. al., 2017).

The flow between a boundary condition and an adjacent cell *n* representing the groundwater system, is governed by a conductance term between the two, as shown in Figure 6 in one dimension. The higher the conductance, the higher the flow between the boundary condition and the adjacent cell.

Boundary conditions can be used in MODFLOW to represent hydrological features in the groundwater system: rivers, lakes, ponds, precipitation, etc. The use of boundary conditions involves empirical calibration as their use implies a simplified representation of the hydrological feature in the model. The conductance term is used to calibrate groundwater flow around the hydrological feature that the boundary condition represents. It should be recognized that use of a single conductance term to account for the resulting three-dimensional flow process is inherently an empirical exercise, and that adjustment during calibration is almost always required (Langevin et al., 2017).

Diagram

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Figure 7: Schematic overview of boundary conditions in a cross section perpendicular to the coastline. Subscripts refer to implementation of boundary conditions: MM =Meta Model, OM = Original Model

* + - 1. Domain boundaries

Theory: the boundaries of a model domain are sufficiently far away when the conditions applied at the boundary do not influence the study area

Hypothesis: changing the domain edges from fixed head to no flow & its expected influence on the conceptual f/s interface

* constant head vs no flow & influence on model efficiency and accuracy
  + - 1. General Head Boundary vs River package

As discussed in section 1.2, artificially enhanced infiltration in the study area commenced in the 1950s, by engineering infiltration ponds and pumping supplementary Rhine and Meuse water into the dunes. To represent these features in the hydrological model, a boundary condition can be applied for certain cells representing infiltration ponds, rivers, and polders. In this study, the difference between a fixed head boundary condition (GHB) and a variable head and drainage condition (RIV) in their effect on model efficiency and accuracy is investigated.

When implementing a General Head Boundary, a linear relation between the head of the adjacent cell and that of the GHB is established. This relation needs to be solved in the system of differential equations:

Where is the flow into cell from the boundary expressed as a fluid volume per unit time (L3 T-1), is the boundary conductance (L2 T-1) and is the head assigned to the boundary condition (Langevin et. al., 2017). The flow between a GHB cell and its adjacent cell is visualized in Figure 7. In this case, intercellular groundwater flow is linearly dependent on the head of the cell, the head of the boundary condition cell and the conductance term between the two cells.

A graph of a slope

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Figure 8: QGHB flow for a general-head boundary as a function of head, h, in cell n, where HGHB is the source head and C is the conductance term for the GHB (Harbaugh, 2005), (Langevin et. al., 2017).

For a RIV boundary condition, the flow between a RIV cell and its adjacent cell is visualized in Figure 8. In this case the groundwater flow is either constant or follows a linear relation between the head of the adjacent cell and the river head. The following relation is established:

,

,

Where is the flow between the river and the groundwater system, positive if flowing out of the river (L3 T-1), is the water level (stage) in the river (L); is the hydraulic conductance of the river-aquifer interconnection (L2 T-1); and is the head at the node in the cell underlying the river reach (L) (Langevin et. al., 2017).

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Figure 9: QRIV as a function of head, h, in the cell, where RBOT is the elevation of the bottom of the riverbed and HRIV is the head in the river (Harbaugh, 2005), (Langevin et. al., 2017).

When applying a GHB condition instead of a RIV condition, a linear relation of groundwater flow on and can be used to solve a differential groundwater flow equation for a specific timestep. On the other hand, when a RIV condition is used, the flow from the boundary condition into the groundwater system is either linear, or constant, depending on , and . Therefore, the hypothesis is that the use of a GHB boundary condition for the infiltration ponds instead of a RIV boundary condition will increase efficiency as the differential equations require less calculation time to be solved.

* + - 1. Drainage

The drainage package in MODFLOW is designed to simulate the effect of hydrological features that remove water from the groundwater system. (Langevin et. al., 2017). This package is used to simulate surface runoff and piezometric pipe drainage in the groundwater reservoir in Meijendel-Berkheide. This boundary condition’s dependency on adjacent cell head is shown Figure 10.

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Figure 10: QDRN as a function of head in the adjacent cell. Negative QD denotes flow into the drain, out of the groundwater system (Harbaugh, 2005), (Langevin et. al., 2017).

* + - 1. Canals & Polders

To represent the effect of canals and polders on the groundwater flow in the model, the river package or the General Head Boundary package can be used.

### Input and output

The model inputs relevant to this study are discussed in this section. Horizontal and vertical hydraulic conductivity are parametrized with three data sources: REGIS, GeoTOP, and the parametrization used for the TRIWACO model for Meijendel-Berkheijde using the geometric mean (Bootsma et. al., 2021). The starting salinity of groundwater used for this model corresponds to a 100y simulation of the original model, which in turn used a starting salinity provided by TNO. This starting salinity is assumed to be steady state under the constant fluxes in the original model. For the starting heads, a series of steady state calibration steps were performed (see section CALIBRATION). A mean annual precipitation according to KNMI is used as an influx on the top cells. The pumping rate from the reservoir, for drinking water is represented in the Well and DRN packages, in accordance with the original model.

**Runs**

* 40y with starting concentration
* SS runs (validation & calibration on budgets)

### Solving the differential equations

* Link to boundary conditions
* SS vs transient
* Variable density flow
  + We used chloride to represent salinity, as chloride is the dominant anion in Dutch coastal groundwater and density is linearly related to it within naturally occurring concentrations (Delsman,)

## Regridding

Increasing efficiency of a model by decreasing calculation time is one of the main subjects of this study. Decreasing the number of equations to be solved in the system of equations may be an effective approach. By increasing cell sizes, but maintaining the same model domain, the number of cells for which EQUATION needs to be solved decreases, thereby reducing the calculation times. The effect of horizontal cell size on model performance is investigated, but changing the vertical cell size and using variable horizontal cell size throughout the domain are outside the scope of this study.

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Figure 11: Diagram showing regridding process: upscaling cell dimensions & hydraulic conductivities

As shown in Figure 10, regridding to a larger cell size changes the cell volume. When regridding, hydraulic conductivities, governing intercell groundwater flow, should also be accounted for. In the case of Figure 10, replacing 9 cell parameters with one cell parameter reduces 9 groundwater flow differential equations to be replaced by one.

Where represents individual cell flows in the initial cell discretization (L3 T-1) and represents flow through the replacing regridded cell (L3 T-1). To increase efficiency, whilst retaining accuracy, the regridded flow should be equal to the initial flow when the hydraulic head gradient is constant. The relation that should be satisfied becomes:

Rearranging gives:

In the case described above, the regridded hydraulic conductivity should be the sum of all hydraulic conductivities it replaces, to represent the same flow of groundwater. A geometric mean is the most robust method to rescale hydraulic conductivities (Bootsma et. al., 2021)

## Model calibration

As stated in (Section 2.1.1. Metamodeling approach), the metamodel is calibrated to the original model. This is an iterative process, a feedback loop between data for calibration (output and input of the original model) and the metamodel (See Figure 4). Referring to the conceptual modeling approach (Section 2.1), process focuses on model *accuracy* of the metamodel. The input and outputs of both models is compared, the discrepancy is analyzed, then changes are made to improve accuracy, and then the model is run again, see Figure 12.

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Figure 12: Model calibration. MM = Metamodel, OM = Original model

The discrepancies of the metamodel are analyzed by a comparison between the water balances, the groundwater salinity (concentration of Cl-, see Section 2.2.4), and the hydraulic heads. These model outputs are compared in a series of cross sections perpendicular to the coastline, along with an analysis of discrepancy between the two models, expressed as errors and presented statistically and spatially. The extent of the cross sections is shown in Figure 13

A map of a city

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Figure 13: Extent of cross sections over the study area

As introduced in Section 2.2.2, the conductance between a boundary condition and the adjacent groundwater system is a term that requires calibration. After regridding to a different horizontal cell size, cell budgets and vertical flows (Flow Lower Face) are used to calibrate the conductance term beneath the infiltration ponds to the water balance of the study area.

* + Add that for the study area, the water balance weighs heavier for calibration than hydraulic heads, hence the larger error in heads than in water balance?
* + Add the order in which calibration is done: hydraulic heads for global changes, water balance for infiltration ponds conductivity, combined with motivation why one weighs heavier than the other.
* + Add FLF and import figures

## Model validation

After the metamodel has been motivated to be sufficiently efficient and accurate, new data can be introduced to assess conventional model validation techniques. The original state-of-the-art model for the fresh-saline groundwater distribution of Meijendel-Berkheijde has not been calibrated on groundwater salinity, although it incorporates variable density flow. As mentioned in section 1.2, the HyFA provides insight in the “path” that groundwater particles travel through the soil. In his study, (Stuyfzand, 1993) analyzed over 2000 samples obtained from boreholes along the coastline of the Netherlands. By sampling different depths per borehole, he could represent the origin of various groundwater regions by their chemical composition in three dimensions.

(INTERPRETED STUYFZAND FIGURES)

As shown in Figure X, the geohydrology of the study domain is now not only subdivided by fresh, brackish, and saline groundwater, but also by origin. The HyFA is used for model validation by implementing origin tracers as species in MODFLOW SEAWAT. The species that are defined to validate the model output to (Stuyfzand 1993) are given in Table X

Table 1: Species defined for model validation, inspired by Stuyfzand, 1993)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *A* | Artificial infiltration  *fresh, infiltration ponds and injected freshwater* |
| *F* | Fresh groundwater  *precipitation and infiltration through surface waters* |
| *B* | Brackish groundwater |
| *S* | Saline groundwater |

In addition to the origin and path of groundwater, the representations by (Stuyfzand, 1993) also provide information on the rate at which artificial infiltration can be achieved. For model validation, this means it can be used when examining the rate at which the depth of the conceptual fresh-saline interface increases.

+ fresh-saline interface development?

# Results

What results are presented to answer the research questions? Presentation of results can be presented in a table/graph, since calibration and sensitivity analyses have intermediate results that are worth showing.

## Model calibration

### Hydraulic head distribution

The hydraulic head distribution of a parallel metamodel and original model simulation of 39 years can be seen in Figure 14. In CS1, CS2, CS3, the regional groundwater flow from the sea and dunes (high hydraulic heads) on the left, to the polder areas (low hydraulic head) on the right can be seen. The regional flow that is seen in the original model output can also be seen in the metamodel. Additionally, the range of hydraulic heads visible in the model domain are of the same magnitude.

A screenshot of a video game

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Figure 14: Cross sections perpendicular to coastline, after 39 years. OM = Original Model, MM = Meta Model

To investigate the discrepancy statistically, the output of the OM was regridded to the same cell size of the MM, after which an error could be calculated. The global mean error on hydraulic heads through the entire domain is calculated to be , with a standard deviation of .

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Figure 15: histogram showing hydraulic head error of the MM, compared to the OM

### Groundwater salinity

The groundwater salinity of the OM and MM are shown in parallel cross sections, perpendicular to the coastline (see Figure 13) in Figure X. As discussed in Section 2.2.4, the groundwater salinity is represented by the concentration of Chloride, since dominant anion is Cl-. In it, the effects of variable density flow can be seen. Generally, the fresh groundwater lies on top of the heavier saline groundwater.

A screenshot of a video game

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Figure 16: groundwater salinity of metamodel (MM) and original model (MM)

### Water balance

After the global calibration is deemed sufficient, the cell budgets and intercell flows are used to calibrate the conductivity below the infiltration ponds (represented as General Head Boundary condition, see Section 2.2.2.2.) to the water balance in the study area. Figure 17 shows the water balance of the study area in the OM to which the conductance of the infiltration ponds is calibration. After six iterations, the conductance term below all GHB cells inside the study area in the MM have been decreased to a factor of 0.625 to match the water balances.

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Figure 17: water balance of the study area in the original model (OM)

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Figure 18: Steady state water balance for the study area for the metamodel (MM) after 6 iterations on conductance (cond6)

Figure 19 shows the error in vertical flow beneath the study area, , with a standard deviation of . By convention, this means that in the MM a higher vertical flow appears than in the OM, in the study area.

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Figure 19: Steady state error of Flow Lower Face (FLF) of MM compared to OM inside the study area

+ Add the spatial variability of the error of heads and link this to this higher vertical flow? Or add this to the discussion?

## Model validation

* Origin tracers vs Stuyfzand
* Fresh -saline interface

# Discussion

Are the results sufficient to answer the research question? Is the objective of the study fulfilled?

## Validation of OM vs MM

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As discussed in section 1.1, the state-of-the-art fresh-saline groundwater model used by Dunea for assessing the feasibility of brackish groundwater as a groundwater resource, has only been validated on hydraulic head data, not on groundwater salinity and therefore neglecting validation on variable density flow, although it is incorporated in the model’s groundwater flow. For the sake of argumentation, validation solely on hydraulic head data can be conceptually represented in Figure 3 (R), where there is only information on the phreatic groundwater surface level. Calibration of a fresh-saline groundwater flow model on this data may be right for the wrong reasons, it doesn’t incorporate the conceptual fresh-saline groundwater interface shown in Figure 3 (L).

Page 32 Delsman – boundary conditions and initial salinity, False SS assumptions

## Study area hydraulic heads

For the study area, the mean error on hydraulic heads is , and . The histogram of the error between the MM and the OM the study is shown in Figure 15. As can be seen in the histogram, most cells of the MM have a lower hydraulic head than the cells at the same location in the OM. The highest largest number of cells of the MM have a hydraulic head that is around 0.25m lower than the OM. The positive peak in the histogram shows that the MM has a fraction of cells which hydraulic heads are about 0.5m higher than the heads of the same location in the OM.

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Figure 20: Histogram of steady state hydraulic head error in the study area

* Another discussion: p21 Delsman: *“We did not attempt to calibrate our model, recognizing that calibration would only be possible for the most recent periods, and a rigorous sensitivity analysis was impossible given the long calculation times. We regard our model therefore primarily as a conceptual tool.”*
  + The pros and cons of paleo modeling without validation and calibration, vs validation done in this study. Can provide an extra argument, combining with Gualbert, that for drinking water resource and artificial recharge, model validation on a shorter timescale is better
  + Introduce the contradiction of these two arguments by Delsman’s introduction to paleo modeling on p15:
    - False SS assumptions
    - Sparse measurements (especially at depth)
  + One thing he says is: *However, as a result of the density feedback of solute concentration on groundwater flow, this requires an adequate description of the initial solute concentration: a vicious circle of having to know the salinity distribution to model the salinity distribution*
    - Here he neglects the fact that this is incorporated in SEAWAT?
  + Discuss, discuss discuss

# Conclusion

List the objectives, the research questions, the answers.

# Acknowledgements

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