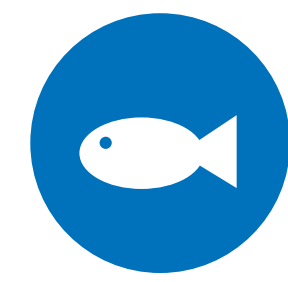


The Afsluitdijk open for fish

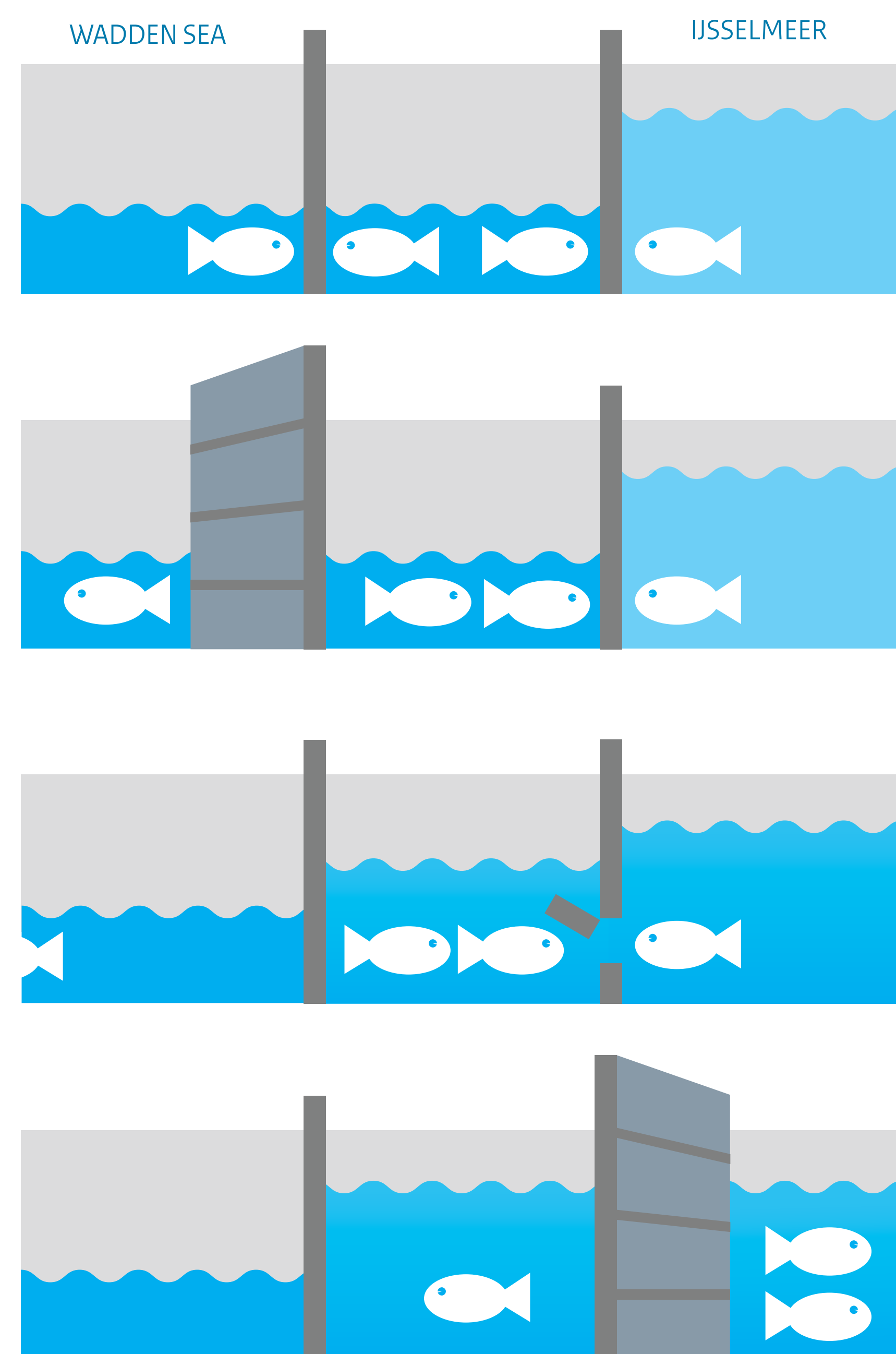
At 1,233 km long, the Rhine is Europe's largest river. Its river basin occupies around 200,000 m³. A large part of the Netherlands is located in the Rhine Delta. To protect the land against the risk of flooding, a 32 kilometre-long flood defence barrier, the Afsluitdijk, was built in 1932. The Afsluitdijk is a barrier for migratory fish. Migratory fish species need both seawater and freshwater in order to reproduce and to grow. Together with De Nieuwe Afsluitdijk, Rijkswaterstaat is opening the Afsluitdijk up for fish.



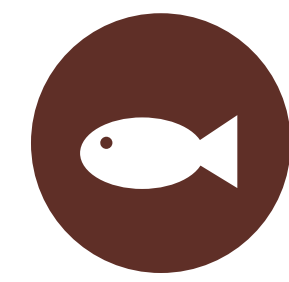
Fish-friendly lock management



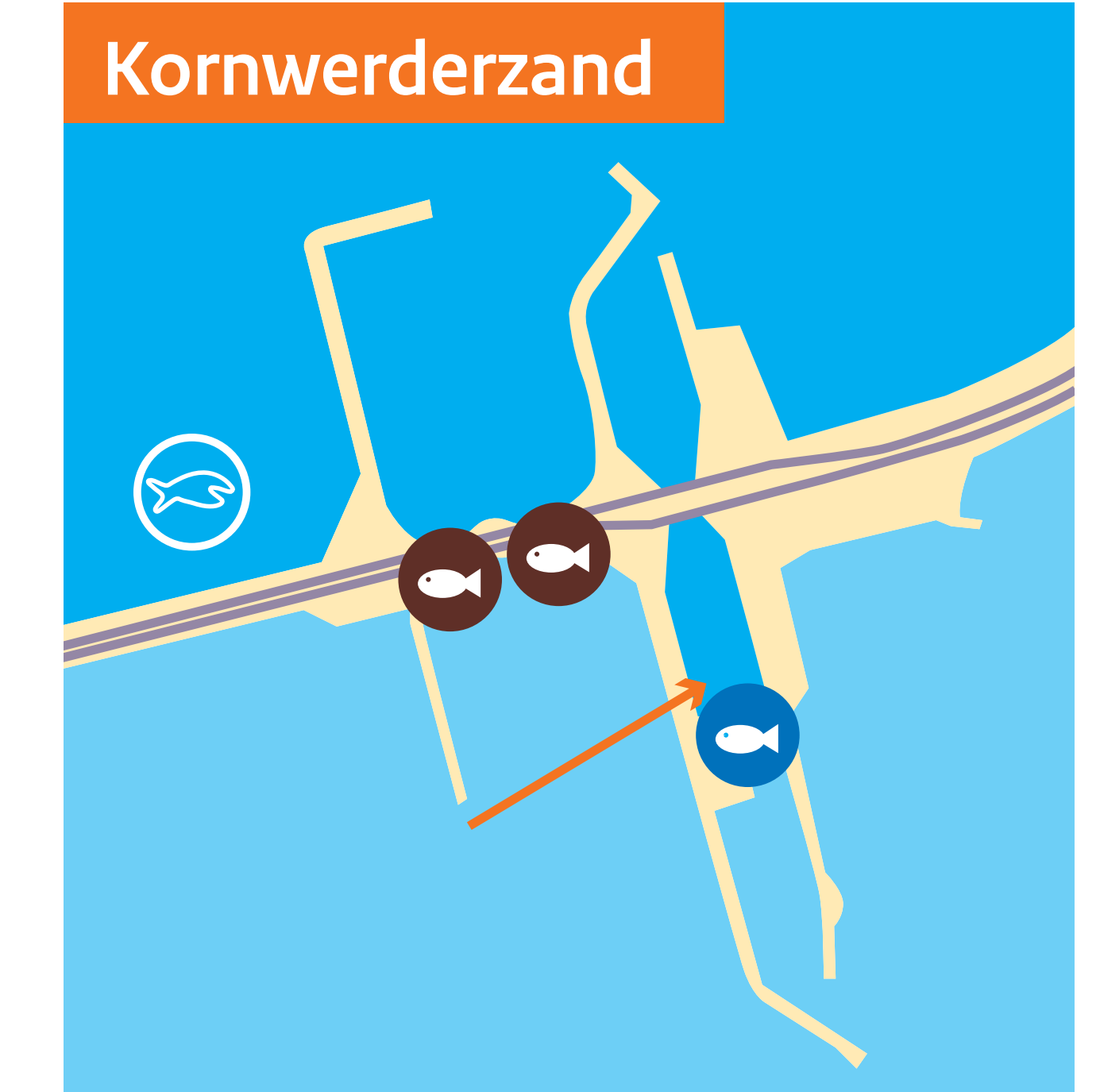
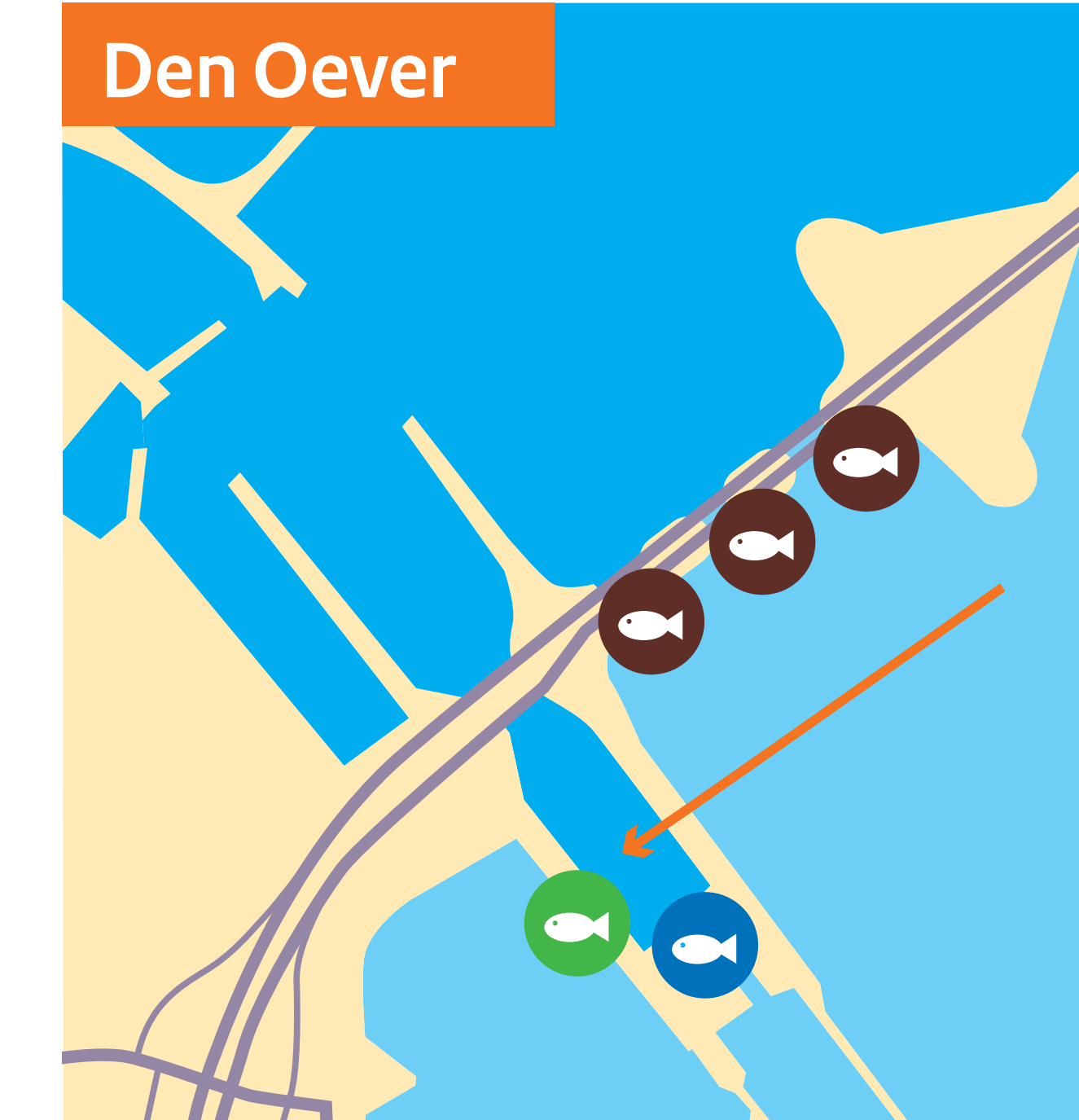
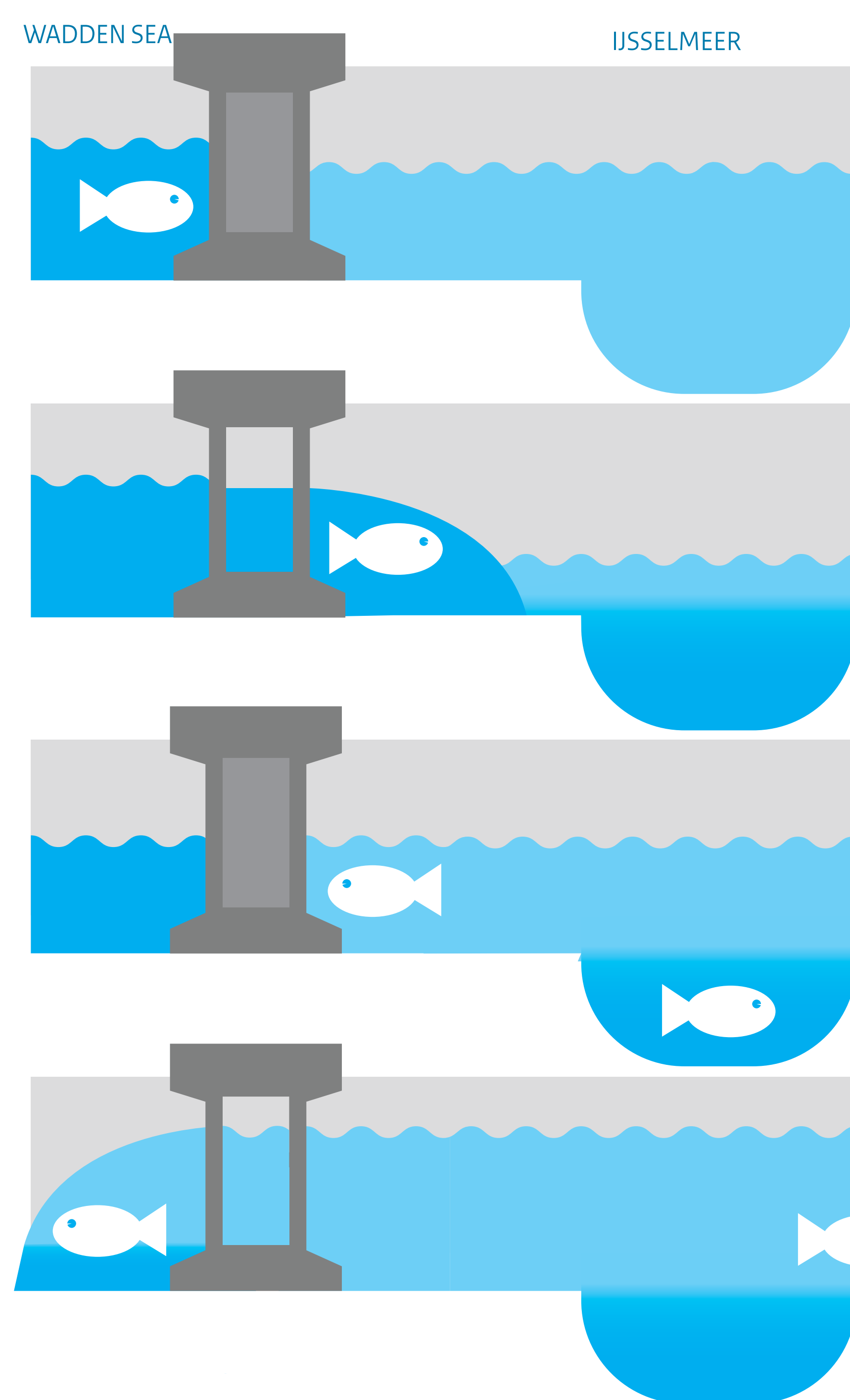
The purpose of the locks is to bridge the difference in water level between the IJsselmeer and Wadden Sea for ships. Rijkswaterstaat now specially opens the lock gates for fish, also at night. As a result, 160 million additional fish are admitted.



Fish-friendly discharge sluice management



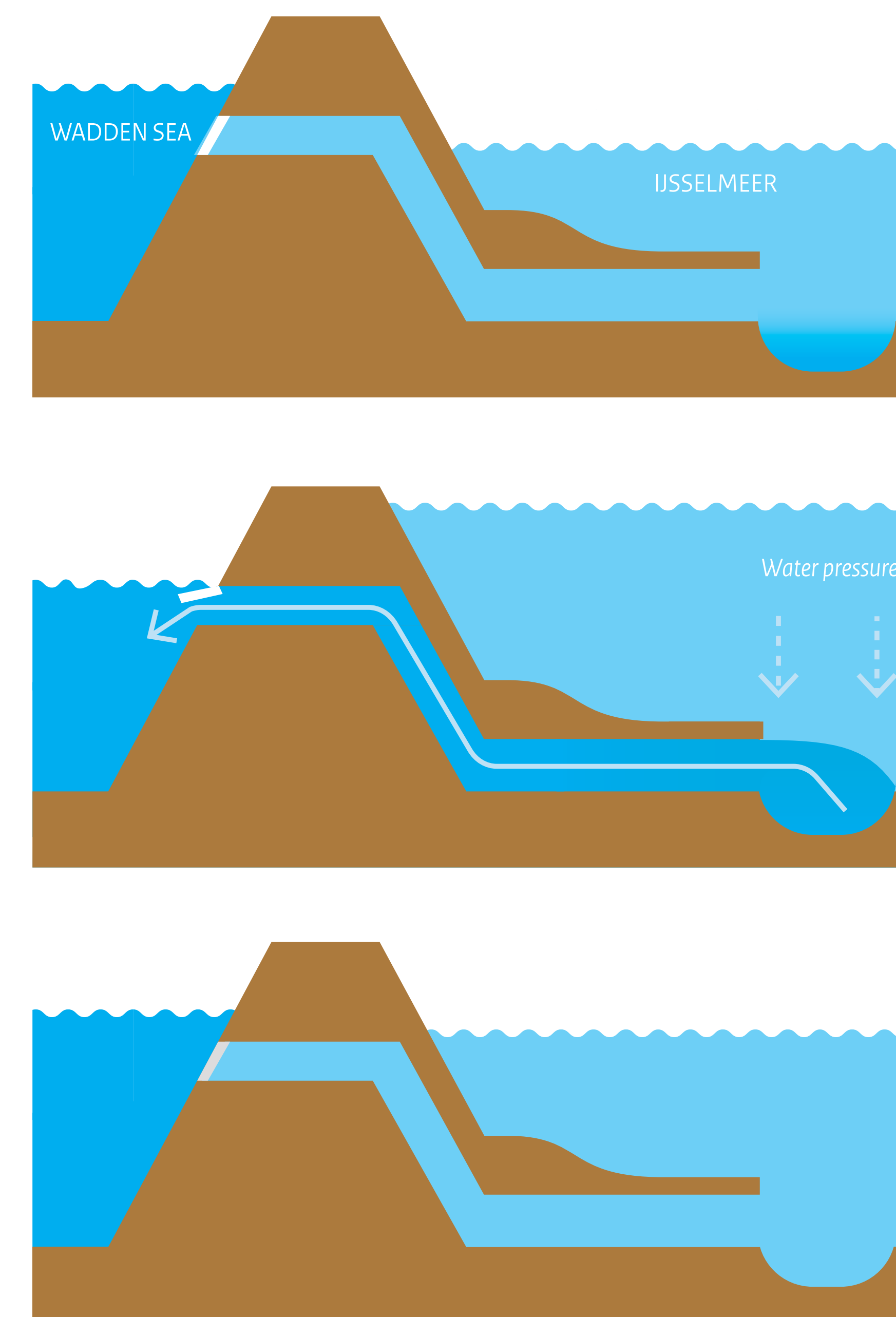
The discharge sluices are used to discharge excess water. Fish are unable to overcome the considerable flow of discharge water. Ten of the 25 discharged sluices are now opened 15 minutes earlier, allowing the passage of an additional 185 million fish per year.



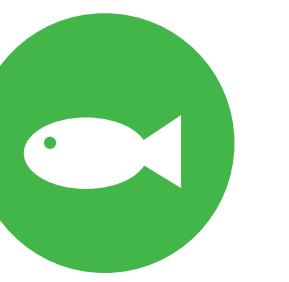
Seawater discharge system



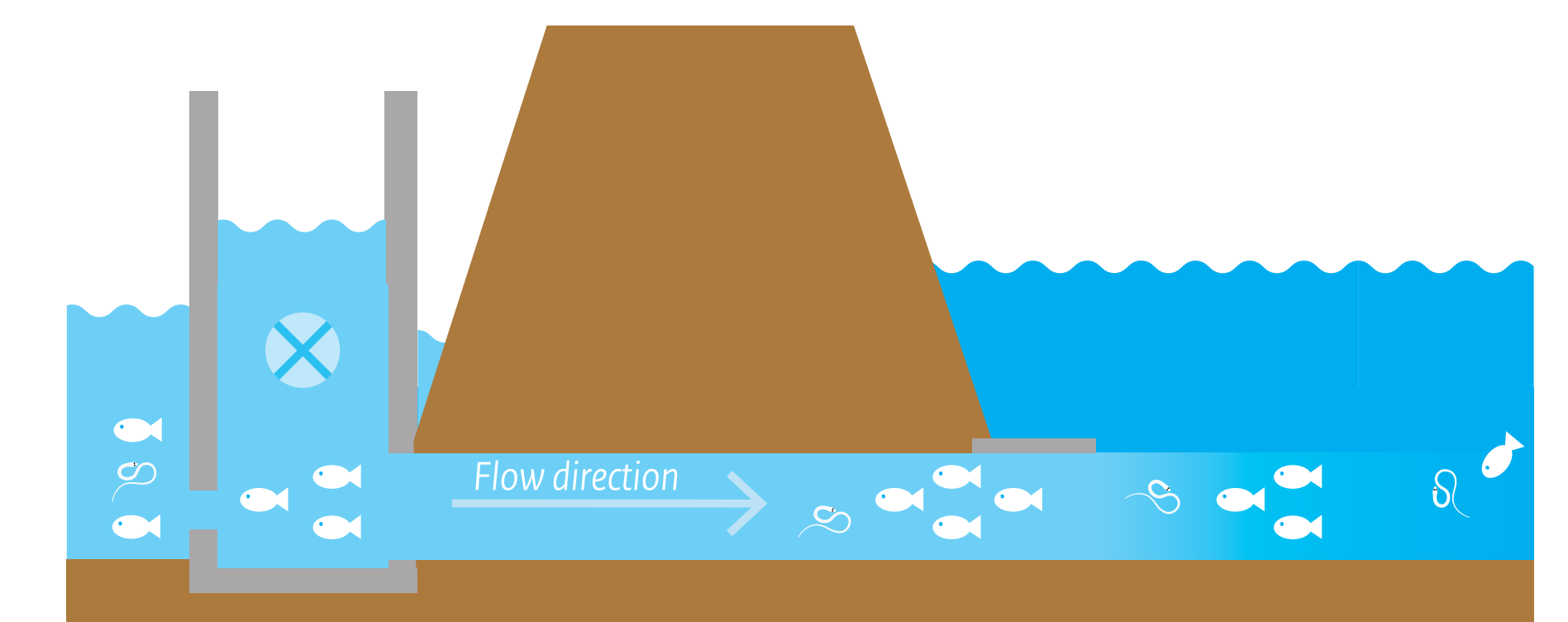
The additional seawater which enters as a result of the fish-friendly discharge sluice management must itself be discharged because of drinking water preparation and agricultural use. As soon as the water level in the IJsselmeer rises high enough, the seawater is forced back into the Wadden Sea through a series of long pipes.



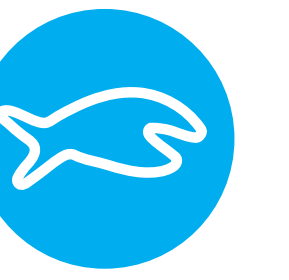
Fish pass Den Oever



The fish pass is a permanent connection for small fish species. Fish are attracted by the flow of freshwater, and swim through the dyke. In April-May, around 30,000 glass eel pass through the dyke each night.



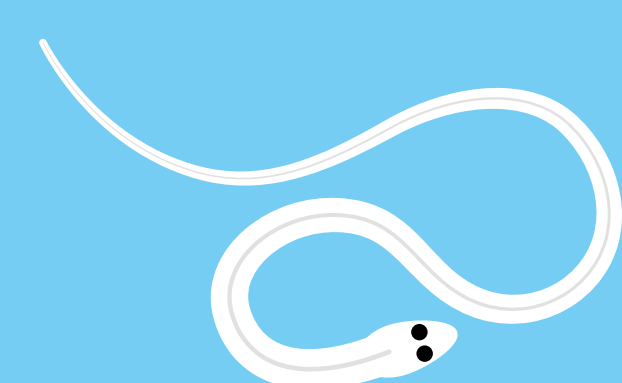
Fish migration river



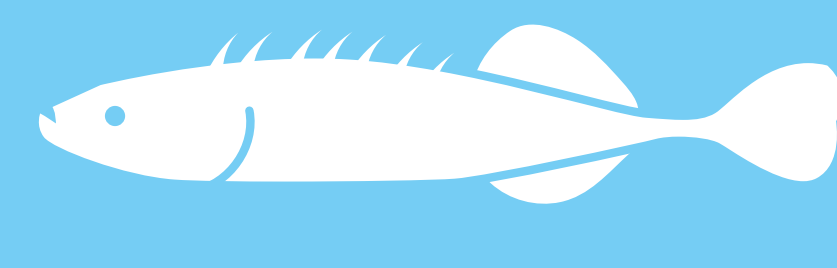
The Afsluitdijk fish migration river is an ecoduct several kilometres long that passes through the Afsluitdijk and in which migratory fish can gradually become used to the transition from seawater to freshwater. Rijkswaterstaat and the partnership De Nieuwe Afsluitdijk aim to repair the ecological link between the Wadden Sea and lake IJsselmeer.



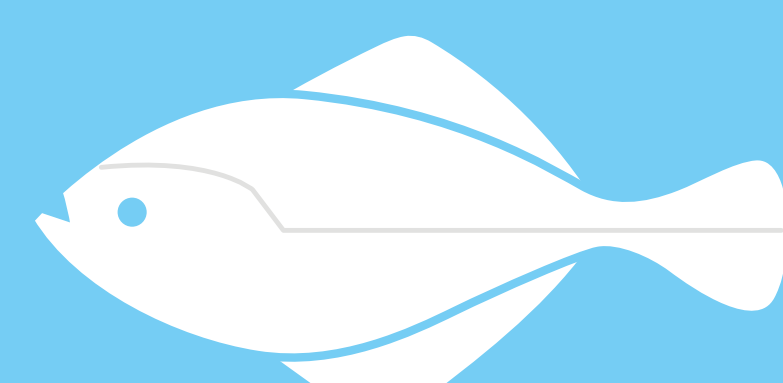
Example fish species



Elver



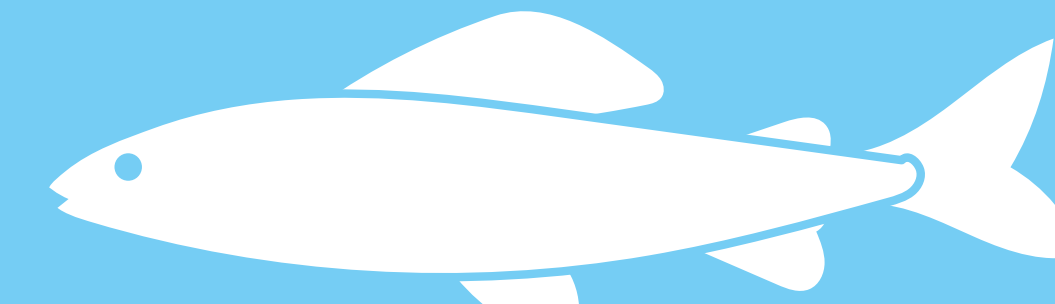
Stickleback



Flounder



Eel



Salmon



European smelt

