

# Wadden Sea Board

**WSB 14  
11 June 2015  
Copenhagen**



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| <b>Agenda Item:</b>  | 5                           |
| <b>Subject:</b>      | Priorities Dutch presidency |
| <b>Document No.</b>  | WSB 14/5/1                  |
| <b>Date:</b>         | 15 May 2015                 |
| <b>Submitted by:</b> | The Netherlands             |

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The attached Paper was submitted by the Dutch Presidency, which has requested the Secretariat to provide the following explanatory statement and request to the Wadden Sea Board:

The Dutch presidency paper was discussed at the last Wadden Sea Board meeting. It was appreciated that such a paper was produced and there was agreement on the principles in this paper. At the end several agreements were made which have been followed up. A constructive dialogue was held on March 18th with representatives from the German delegation and from the CWSS to ensure the common interpretation of the objectives and the anticipated planning envisaged. The connection and consistency between the planning of our common Business Plan and the Dutch priorities were examined and it became clear that the anticipated planning of all these priority issues was in accordance with the time frame of the Business Plan 2014-2017 (WSB 12/6/1).

Written comments were received from the Danish delegation and finally, the climate issue has been further elaborated. Regarding this last issue, it should be noted however, that the TG Climate has not yet convened.

All these inputs were taken into account and included in this final version, which has been approved by our responsible Minister for Agriculture, Ms. Sharon Dijksma.

**Proposal:**      **The meeting is invited to welcome the document**

## **Priorities of the Dutch presidency of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation 2014-2018**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

#### *Background.*

Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands have worked together since 1982 on the protection and management of the Wadden Sea. The aim of this cooperation is to benefit protection. Protection measures are commonly agreed and harmonised, keeping in mind each country's economic activities and cultural values in this area. The parties also cooperate in the field of research and monitoring, and learn from each other.

With the extension of the World Heritage Property 'Wadden Sea' by the Danish part, the trilateral cooperation enters a new period. This period will be marked by highlighting and confirming the status of the Wadden Sea as a World Heritage by protecting the Outstanding Universal Value, and sharing the opportunities of this status for nature and sustainable development.

#### *Objectives Trilateral Cooperation*

**The general framework for our cooperation** in the coming years is provided by the **2010 Joint Declaration** with the associated Guiding Principle and Vision, which set out the five main objectives for the cooperation:

- A natural ecosystem, its functions and characteristic biodiversity
- Adaptability to climate change and other impacts
- Maintenance of the landscape and cultural heritage
- Sustainable use as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity and as referred to in the Habitats Directive
- Public support for the protection of the Wadden Sea.

#### *Selection of Key objectives 2014-2018*

**In the Tønder Declaration (February 2014)** the above objectives are developed into themes and specific activities. A large number of these activities are vying for implementation in the coming years. The Netherlands therefore proposes a number of key objectives within these themes and activities which should be achieved in the next four years.

To set these priorities **the Netherlands applied the following principles:**

- The agreement leads to an achievable and concrete product /result which in turn leads to a demonstrable improvement in nature which is visible in society;
- Clear trilateral realisation; the theme has relevance on that scale;
- It is politically interesting for Germany and Denmark as well as the Netherlands;
- Clarity for playing the initiating role, preferably well distributed over the three countries, with initiating roles delegated to organisations outside the direct TWSC very much on the agenda whenever feasible and trilaterally acceptable;
- Regular delivery/completion times (within time-limits set and approved by the Wadden Sea Board at consecutive meetings and/or at appropriate times ).

### *Main categories*

Based on the classifications used in the Joint Declaration and the Tønder Declaration and taking into account the potential value of the trilateral World Heritage Strategy for the Wadden Sea, Prioritisation along four major lines is envisaged:

1. *The Wadden Sea World Heritage Site*
2. *Conservation of nature in the nature reserve of the Wadden Sea (to be regarded as the basis for the trilateral cooperation and the World Heritage Site )*
3. *Sustainable use of the Wadden Sea*
4. *Impact of Climate Change on the Wadden Sea*

This doesn't mean that the other objectives and actions in the Declaration are less important or will not get the right attention. Certainly those items which do have a (legally) mandatory character will definitely have to be followed-up .

In addition there will always be the possibility to put new accents in objectives if required due to political or social-economic developments.

With regard to implementation, some projects require a clear initiating role to be played by the trilateral cooperation, others lie largely in one or several countries, or belong more to external parties. In order to achieve additional funding, the prospect of associated external (e.g. EU) funding could always be explored..

## II. KEY OBJECTIVES

### A. Conservation of the Wadden Sea

#### 1. Birds: Improvement of breeding bird numbers and protection of flyway routes

In long-term analysis of breeding birds in the Wadden Sea, 16 bird species show a continuous negative trend in numbers in the Wadden Sea.

Objective:

Halt the decline in birds that breed in the Wadden Sea

To take effective measures to maintain the migratory bird species that visit the Wadden Sea, it is vital to have knowledge of the presence of migratory birds and the risks they run along the entire length of the flyway. UNESCO also reiterated this point in 2009.

Objective:

The conservation of migratory birds can be assessed at the level of the flyway, and this has led to the first most urgent protection measures being taken also in other countries along the flyway

#### 2. Fish

There is little knowledge/insight into the exact scale, composition and distribution of fish stocks present in the Wadden Sea. There is however a decline in fish stocks, with some typical species even missing and in general a lack of older and larger fish.. Furthermore we have insufficient information concerning the role of the Wadden Sea as a *breeding ground*.

Objective:

Recovering of (some) declining fish populations in the Wadden Sea to attain viable stock of populations and a natural reproduction of typical Wadden Sea fish species

#### 3. Innovation in monitoring

The need for monitoring is increasing to obtain a better overall picture of developments such as climate change and how that relates to the flyway f.i., but also for rapid response and adequate protection measures via real-time measurements. The next Quality Status Report (QSR) to be delivered should note the developments and recommendations for their use in the future should be included. .

Objective:

By promoting innovative forms of monitoring, to obtain a better overall picture of the Wadden Sea ecosystem and the diverse factors which influence it. This is to facilitate adequate management and good communication.

## **B. Wadden Sea World Heritage Site**

### **4. World Heritage Site: Foundation**

Various initiatives are taking place in the three Wadden Sea countries to highlight the value of the Wadden Sea as a World Heritage Site and to consider how the Wadden Sea can also be used sustainably. Based on the principles of the World Heritage Strategy, with the creation of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation, which is open to respected representatives of the major strategic partners and stakeholders, we can make a significant contribution to coordinated and widely supported action in this area. In connection to the envisaged Competence Centre or network, the trilateral cooperation shall pay attention to its governance and decide in which way this can be most successful.

#### Objective:

The establishment of a Foundation is desirable to reinforce public support for the World Heritage Site, to create a greater sense of identity and commitment, to ensure clear trilateral branding of the World Heritage Site and to secure additional sponsorship. The relation of such a Foundation to the envisaged Competence Centre/network will have to be clearly defined.

### **5. World Heritage Site: Boost the education network through the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS).**

To interest young people and visitors in the World Heritage Site we need to work constantly on an attractive range of (educational) programmes for them to learn about and experience the Wadden Sea.

#### Objective:

A substantial proportion of the children living in or visiting the Wadden Region have visited and experienced the Wadden Sea at least once.

### **6. World Heritage Site: Joint Implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy**

The Tourism Strategy was endorsed by 14 organisations as well as the competent authorities at the Tønder Conference. Now it must be put into action. A well concerted approach by the responsible players within the three partner countries can add value to the potential of the World Heritage Site for sustainable tourism as well as acceptance and support for nature protection.

#### Objective:

Strengthened engagement of relevant stakeholders allowing more people to enjoy and experience the Wadden Sea in a sustainable manner and with full respect of the integrity and natural values with the aim of strengthening support for its World Heritage Site status. The economic benefits of World Heritage Site status are generated and used responsibly.

## **7. Scientific agenda for the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site**

The Wadden Sea has long been a site of much and diverse scientific research. For good management of the World Heritage Site there are plenty of questions that will require common and better coordinated research.

### Objective:

A coherent scientific agenda, relevant to the World Heritage Site which supports decision-making on current and future issues, captures the interest of young scientists and promotes scientific cooperation between institutions.

## **C. Sustainable use of the Wadden Sea**

### **8. Shipping**

The Wadden Sea lies just south of one of the busiest shipping routes in the world. Maritime traffic is expected to increase in the wider North Sea area until 2030, inter alia due to the increase of constructions and maintenance traffic for wind parks. Maritime activities may, due to circumstances, cause an incident, posing a threat to the (marine) environment.

### Objective:

To maintain at least the current level of safety in the Wadden Sea and the North Sea by continuing the dialogue between the competent shipping authorities and nature conservation authorities and stakeholders and by reviewing and accordingly implementing the measures of the operational plans which have been recognised trilaterally..

Awareness with regard to the Wadden Sea PSSA and its status as a World Heritage property will be raised to harbours and their visiting ships, which will be organised with stakeholders. To increase safety, new techniques will be used.

### **9. More sustainable Wadden Sea ports**

The Wadden Sea ports are being challenged to reduce their contribution to environment pollution in the Wadden Sea and the Wadden Region. Specific efforts are focused on accelerated introduction throughout the Wadden Sea of LNG as a (transition) fuel for shipping, Eco-Port certification, and encouraging businesses in the maritime sector to adopt a code of conduct.

### Objective:

The Wadden Sea ports are aware of their position close to the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site and are obtaining certification. To this end they want to show that they are voluntarily taking extra measures. LNG is being preferentially introduced as a clean fuel in the Wadden Region.

## **10. Fisheries: More sustainable fishing**

Various initiatives are running in the Wadden Sea to make the various forms of fishing more sustainable. A coherent, level playing field approach is essential in the process of improving sustainability.

### Objective:

Fishing takes place in a sustainable, responsible and trilaterally coherent manner, based on knowledge of fish, mussel and shrimp stocks, knowledge of the effects of fishing on the flora and fauna present, and the application of best practices.

## **D. Impact of Climate Change on the Wadden Sea.**

## **11. Adaptation to climate change effects**

The effects of climate change have an influence on nature as well as on the possibilities for a joint use of the Wadden Sea area. On trilateral level the knowledge on the sand-sharing system, which is regarded as the geomorphological foundation of the Wadden Sea, is not yet geared for one another. In addition, the three countries should learn from each other regarding the knowledge gained of the geomorphological processes in relation to climate change.

The follow-up of the accomplished trilateral sediment-study will gain insight in the undesired effects of climate change. This will form the basis for the three countries to agree on opportunities for action to avoid these effects as much as possible. Appropriate spatial planning as an instrument provides opportunities to anticipate what is coming.

Objective: To maintain the adaptive capacity and natural dynamics of the Wadden Sea hydromorphological system by anticipating timely to the effects of climate change

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## **12. Organisation of the 13th Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference in 2018 (Leeuwarden)**

The Netherlands will host the next Wadden Sea Conference. It is to be held in Leeuwarden to take advantage of the wider opportunities offered in the context of Leeuwarden being European Capital of Culture, 2018.

Objective: A successful conference in form and content which has fixed broad attention on the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site.

### III. PLANNING

| <b>Timing</b>           | <b>Action</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|
| WSB-13. 29 January 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dutch memorandum on ambition</li> <li>• World Heritage governance issues: : procedural follow-up feasibility study</li> </ul>   |
| WSB-14. Spring 2015     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birds breeding success – establish action plan</li> <li>• WH Governance (Competence Centre/Foundation/CWSS): feasibility study completed.</li> <li>• Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative: establish follow-up programme</li> </ul>   |
| WSB-15. Autumn 2015     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHF decision in principle - ( possible) appointment of initiator</li> <li>• LNG conference with port authorities</li> <li>• Establish programme to boost education network World Heritage</li> <li>• Results trilateral study on sedimentation</li> <li>• Proposal on process and approach of the Sustainable Fishery Strategy</li> </ul> |
| WSB-16. Spring 2016     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set trilateral agenda on improving fish populations</li> <li>• Set draft trilateral scientific agenda</li> <li>• World Heritage certification for businesses complete</li> <li>• Comparative study of safety measures with regard to offshore developments.</li> </ul>  |
| WSB-17. Autumn 2016     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Flyway assessments available</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> monitoring with application of new innovative forms</li> </ul> <p>Inventory of PSSA's sub-regions with regard to the environmental sensitivity to oil and HNS (sensitivity mapping) as a basis for further developments of emergency plans.</p>                     |
| WSB-18. Spring 2017     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct: agreement and organisation of related events at a congress</li> <li>• Decision on trilateral pilot projects on sustainable fishing</li> <li>• Establishment of draft Leeuwarden Declaration for consultation within regions</li> <li>• (the Netherlands: start ad-hoc organisation of Conference)</li> </ul>             |
| WSB-19. Autumn 2017     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of final draft of Leeuwarden Declaration after regional consultations,</li> <li>• Operational and harmonised specific Waddensea emergency plans..</li> </ul>  |



## IV. Annex: Explanatory notes on key objectives

### A. Nature conservation for the Wadden Sea

#### 1. Birds: Improvement of breeding bird numbers and protection of flyway routes

In 2013 analyses covering a 19-year period were presented on trends in bird numbers in 26 bird species. The analyses indicate a continuous negative trend in 16 of these species. The main causes are predation (particularly on islands), human disturbances, natural disturbances due to more and higher floods and storms, and shortage of food.

#### Objective:

#### Halt the decline in birds that breed in the Wadden Sea

The following interim results/findings can be considered to achieve this objective:

- Guide for managers on measures to increase breeding success

*Outcome:* in due course more attention will be given to the management plans for salt marshes/dunes etc. to the restoration of [the] natural drainage and diversity in vegetation.

- Trilaterally agreed predation control system, particularly for the islands, to improve the chances of breeding success.

*Outcome:* more regular attention to breeding birds on islands at the relevant municipal management levels..

- Map of main breeding grounds that are sensitive to disturbance is completed and issued to managers and competent authority.

*Outcome:* better public information, zoning measures are taken to protect beach-nesting birds, and more preventive attention from the competent authority.

#### Delivery times:

- Spring 2015 guide and map completed.

Lead: TG-M via existing bird expert groups

In addition to improving breeding success, it is important to improve safeguards and protection of the flyway routes. UNESCO has asked the Wadden Sea countries to strengthen cooperation along the flyways. In recent years Germany and the Netherlands have invested in capacity building for the East Atlantic Flyway (EAF) and in better monitoring, particularly in West Africa. These activities take place within the framework of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI), in which the Wadden Sea countries cooperate closely with the Conservation of Migratory Birds project directed by Bird Life International.

A synchronous count of all key sites along the flyway was carried out in January 2014, with the support (also financial support) of several parties.

#### Objective.

The conservation of migratory birds can be assessed at the level of the flyway, and this has led to most urgent protection measures being taken also in various countries along the flyway.

We are working via the following outcomes to achieve the objective:

- High-quality bi-annual count of key sites along the entire EAF, with a follow-up synchronous count in 2019, to obtain clear insight into the main problem areas for those bird populations that also visit the Wadden Sea, and to facilitate a flyway assessment.

*Outcome:* input for N2000 Wadden Sea management plans to benefit any measures to be taken along the flyway to maintain the species

- Map showing main threats to migratory birds along the flyway, in cooperation with Bird Life International.

*Outcome:* the map serves as input to bring together for more focused conservation initiatives from, say, development cooperation, donors and probably any projects emanating from the newly created Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation

- Most urgent conservation measures have been taken in some of the countries to protect migratory birds.

Delivery times:

- Autumn 2015: Distribution of risk map through WSFI to relevant directors and managers and establishment of WSFI programme for 2014-2018

- Autumn 2016: the first Flyway assessments of some migratory bird species are completed, based on several years of flyway counts, and are included in the QSR.

Lead: Steering group of WSFI (including BirdLife International) via the TG-M

## 2. Fish

It transpires from observations, research and catch data that there is a decline in a number of fish species in terms of scale and/or composition of the fish stocks, including age. Ray and shark species for example are among those who are declining. The Wadden Sea also fulfils an important function as a breeding ground.. However there is a lack of good stock records in the trilateral Wadden Sea to give insight into the scale of fish stocks present, and their composition and distribution. There is also insufficient knowledge about its nursery function.

Objective:

Recovering of (some) declining fish populations in the Wadden Sea to attain viable stock of populations and a natural reproduction of typical Wadden Sea fish species.

Interim results:

- Analysis report on available knowledge and research on fish stocks in the Wadden Sea

*Outcome:* trilateral agreement and agreement with stakeholders with regard to knowledge gaps and urgent requirements

- Analysis report on formulated goals with regard to fish from Natura 2000, WFD, MSFD and trilateral goals

- Knowledge agenda for research and desired optimised trilateral fish stocks monitoring, taking into account recent relevant developments in e.g. MSFD implementation programmes and QSR analysis reporting..

*Outcome:* broadening of knowledge concerning stocks and fish species and more insight into patterns affecting fish stocks

- Advice on potential measures to benefit maintenance and improvement of fish stocks

*Outcome:* improvement of the scale and composition of fish stocks in the Wadden Sea

Delivery times:

- End of December 2014 analysis report on available knowledge and research on fish stocks complete
- January 2015 trilateral symposium CWSS / PRW on results of knowledge analysis
- December 2015 knowledge and research agenda complete
- Beginning of 2016 trilateral agenda with measures relating to fish species

Lead: ad-hoc group via TG-M.

### 3. Innovation in monitoring.

The Trilateral Wadden Sea cooperation has an approved and harmonised monitoring programme - TMAP. This forms the basis for the regular descriptions in the reports on the status of Wadden Sea (Quality Status Reports). There is the trilateral task of extending monitoring and including new parameters. Developments arising from climate change, developments in shipping and new EU directives require an update of the existing monitoring. Efforts are aimed at testing and applying innovative (remote sensing) techniques to obtain a better overall picture of the international Wadden Sea and associated areas such as those along the flyway. Efforts must also be made to make real-time information available, which, with good presentation and communication, should lead to adequate management measures.

Objective:

By promoting innovative forms of monitoring, to obtain a better overall picture of the Wadden Sea ecosystem and the diverse factors which influence it. This is to facilitate adequate management and good communication

Result:

- More effective and cheaper monitoring of one or more parameters of the trilateral monitoring programme

*Outcome:* breakthrough to set up a more extensive monitoring programme within the existing budget, and with the use of innovative techniques to contribute to both better understanding of adequate management measures and a broadening of the research community for the Wadden Sea.

Delivery times:

- Autumn 2016: start of monitoring of a single parameter, such as a seal count with the aid of new types of aerial counts.
- Autumn 2017: TMAP is extended to further parameters and various parameters are monitored in accordance with state of the art techniques

Lead: Ad-hoc group under TG-M&M, consisting of representatives of relevant authorities, (client monitoring), researchers, data specialists.

## **B. Wadden Sea World Heritage Site**

### **4. World Heritage: Foundation**

The primary aim of the creation of a Foundation is to widen public support for the World Heritage status and to increase the sense of ownership. Organisations and companies (people) can become members. The Foundation Feasibility Committee has advised putting the Foundation in charge of the branding of the World Heritage Site and the sponsoring and financing of projects in the World Heritage Site in addition to those where the governments are responsible for. The Foundation operates entirely under the authority of the Wadden Sea Board, which retains its responsibilities.

#### **Objective:**

The establishment of a Foundation is desirable to reinforce public support for the World Heritage Site, to create a greater sense of connection, to ensure clear trilateral branding of the World Heritage Site and to secure additional sponsorship.

We will continue to work towards the possible establishment of a World Heritage Foundation by means of the following activities:

- Exploration of harmonisation in developments concerning a possible World Heritage Competence Centre, the CWSS and a Foundation
- 1<sup>st</sup> follow-up to feasibility study; further exploration of support and expectations for a Foundation.
- The establishment of a Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation (WSWF) with at least renowned representatives from the major stakeholder groups of the Wadden Sea

*Outcome:* strengthening public support for the World Heritage Site and increased capacity for research and projects in the Wadden Sea and showcasing the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site on the international stage.

#### **Delivery times:**

- Spring 2015: study on alignment of WHCC, CWSS and follow-up study on public support competed.
- Autumn 2015: decision in principle on the establishment of WSWF and start of activities in this respect
- Autumn 2017: report: chances of success of establishment, financial clause, proposal for the Council for the Foundation, etc.
- Spring 2018: establishment of WSWF at the conference

Lead: WSB ad-hoc group lead by the chair..

### 5. World Heritage Site: boost to education network via IWSS

In 2014 three countries expressed their commitment to give continued support to this network, building on the existing International Wadden Sea School network, via a coordination centre at WWF Germany (which intend to meet at least half the costs of coordination and for service from additional sources)

At the Tønder conference the Dutch minister gave an explicit undertaking to the Wadden Association to contribute funds to a project to involve more classes in the mud flats. Further parties need to be found to collaborate on this and contribute funds.

#### Objective:

A substantial proportion of the children living in or visiting the Wadden Region have visited and experienced the Wadden Sea at least once.

The following actions are envisaged to contribute to this goal:

- Led by the IWSS and with the aid of the Wadden Association project, to work with all the information and education centres along the Wadden coast to take classes to the mudflats with the help of local businesses.
- To hold a schools competition to organise the most exciting visit to the mud flats in collaboration with information and education centres and supported by businesses
- Presentation to winning school class at the conference in Leeuwarden (2018)

*Outcome:* information and education on Wadden Sea World Heritage Site becomes an increasingly common part of school curricula and the agenda in business circles. This project will also raise visibility, recognition and awareness, at every level, including the local level of residents and businesses.

#### Delivery times:

- Spring 2015: start of project with information and education centres, in which classes go to the mud flats with support from local businesses.
- Spring 2017: schools competition.
- Spring 2018: presentation and ceremony with the winning school class. .

Lead: the trilateral education network (IWSS) under the direction of WWF in Husum

### 6. World Heritage: Joint Implementation of the Tourism Strategy

Fourteen organisations signed up to the Sustainable Tourism Strategy at the Tønder Conference. The task for the years ahead is the implementation of this strategy by the many parties involved. This means creating some attractive products from the associated Action Plan. Continuing close coordination between the three countries is vital here. Implementation will require some regional customisation. For example, the Netherlands will need an adequate cooperative organisation (with both government and market players) to ensure good promotion and marketing, particularly for the Wadden coast. It is also important to take advantage of the opportunity offered by holding the next trilateral Wadden Sea governmental conference in Leeuwarden in 2018, when Leeuwarden is the European capital of culture.

Objective:

Strengthened engagement of relevant stakeholders allowing more people to enjoy and experience the Wadden Sea in a sustainable manner and with full respect of the integrity and for natural values with the aim of strengthening support for its World Heritage Site status. The economic benefits of World Heritage Site status are generated and used responsibly.

This requires the following interim results:

- Responsible marketing organisations in and along the trilateral Wadden Sea carry out a joint marketing campaign to position Wadden Sea World Heritage Site in the market.
- Tourism businesses in cooperation with local councils, umbrella organisations etc., are properly equipped to exploit the world heritage status responsibly (perhaps through certification).
- Good access, up to date information and good visibility about where and how to experience the Wadden Sea.

*Outcome:* positive contribution to the socio-economic sustainable development of the Wadden Region.

Envisaged delivery times:

- Spring 2015: institution of annual trilateral Wadden Sea World Heritage Site Day
- Autumn 2015: collaborative agreements signed between marketing organisations
- Spring 2016: Wadden Sea World Heritage Site Certification ready for sustainably operating tourism businesses. First certificate issued.
- Spring 2018: Conference in Leeuwarden links cultural events with world heritage status

Lead: TG-STs, in which all parties concerned are represented.

## 7. Scientific agenda for Wadden Sea World Heritage Site.

The Wadden Sea is internationally recognised for the extensive pioneering research carried out here over the years by a range of educational establishments and institutes. With the recognition as a World Heritage Site the trilateral cooperation seeks to gain clearer insight into what research questions need to be answered to maintain the integrity of its world heritage and to support current and future decision making. It will take planning to get the necessary cooperation between the Wadden governments and respected institutes off the ground. This should produce a coherent and coordinated research agenda, increasing the likelihood of obtaining the necessary funding and improving cross-border scientific cooperation on the Wadden dossier.

Objective:

A coherent scientific agenda, relevant to the World Heritage Site which supports decision-making on current and future issues, captures the interest of young scientists and promotes scientific cooperation between institutions.

The first step in establishing such an agenda is further elaboration of the established science-policy-matrix and following up the initial research results after the transnational start in the area of research into Geo- and Biorisks in the Wadden Sea.

Delivery times:

- Spring 2016; draft scientific agenda
- 2017 – input for Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium
- Spring 2018: establishment of scientific agenda by the TWSC with several institutes from the three Wadden Sea countries

Lead: Scientific Steering Group in relation to Wadden Sea Board..

### **C. Sustainable use of the Wadden Sea**

#### **8. Shipping**

Shipping is always high on the agenda of the residents of the Wadden region. The Tønder Declaration explicitly addressed this theme and the importance of good dialogue between the competent shipping authorities and nature conservation authorities and stakeholders.. A common action plan indicates measures that will contribute to preventing pollution from shipping, to the safety of shipping in general, to calamity abatement and to raising awareness.

These comprise both preventive measures to reduce the risk of incidents and measures to deal with incidents that do occur in the vulnerable nature reserve. Increasing maritime traffic combined with increasing claims on space at sea, for wind parks for example, strengthen the focus on these matters.

#### **Objective:**

To maintain at least the current level of safety in the Wadden Sea and the North Sea by continuing the dialogue between the competent shipping authorities and nature conservation authorities and stakeholders and intensifying the cooperation under the Bonn Agreement and the implementation of by reviewing and accordingly implementing the measures of the operational plans which have been recognised agreed trilaterally. during the last 4 years.

Awareness with regard to the Wadden Sea PSSA and its status as a World Heritage property will be raised to harbours and their visiting ships, which will be organised with stakeholders. To increase safety, new techniques will be used. This involves:

- A strong common Wadden position of the three countries in relevant international maritime forums (IMO, OSPAR, etc.)
- An adequate and harmonised operational disaster response strategy adapted to the specific circumstances in the Wadden Sea, using the Best Available Techniques.
- The inclusion of a Wadden Sea Particular Sensitive Sea Area course in the curricula (Standards of Training Certification and Watch Keeping) of all nautical centres along the Wadden coast.
- Harmonisation and coordination between the three countries with regard to the maintenance of at least the current safety level for the Wadden Sea..

**Delivery times:**

- Autumn 2015: 1st 3-yearly report on reported incidents for the Wadden Sea PSSA.
- Spring 2016: comparative study into preventive measures taken at national level to guarantee safety in view of offshore developments.
- Autumn 2016: inventory/chart of Wadden Sea PSSA sub-regions that are vulnerable to oil and HNS(sensitivity-mapping), as the basis for further developments of emergency plans.
- Spring 2018: operational, trilaterally harmonised emergency plans, specifically adapted to the Wadden Sea.

Lead: TG-Shipping with relevant parties (conservation NGOs, nautical centres, ship owners, owners of recreational vessels, representatives, residents).

### 9. More sustainable Wadden Sea ports

Various activities in the Wadden Sea ports are included in the Tønder Declaration. This concerns improvements in sustainability that the ports and port businesses can make to further reduce the pollution caused by their activities. This involves:

- Promoting the accelerated introduction of LNG as a (transition) fuel for small vessels.
- Encouraging port authorities to meet the standards of Green Port certification
- Encouraging companies with maritime operations that use the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site to draw up and endorse a common code of conduct containing rules on how to carry out installation and maintenance activities with environmental minimal, in accordance with Best Practice and state-of-the-art techniques.

**Objective:**

The Wadden Sea ports are aware of their position in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site and are obtaining certification. To this end they want to show that they are voluntarily taking extra measures. LNG is being preferentially introduced as a clean fuel in the Wadden Region.

**Results:**

- All the larger Wadden Sea ports have LNG terminals.  
Outcome: more ports along the North Sea coast install LNG terminals so that more coastal vessels can convert to this cleaner fuel.
- All the larger Wadden Sea ports have (permanent) Green Port certification, or have indicated that they will join the scheme.  
Outcome; Creating a link to the World Heritage Site and PSSA helps to raise greater awareness, attention to and potential willingness to contribute to world heritage status
- The larger maritime companies operating internationally out of one of the Wadden Sea ports have also signed such a code of conduct.

*Outcome:* licence applications are facilitated with good dialogue with the parties involved such as nature conservation organisations.



Delivery times:

- Spring 2015: Start of inventory and approach to all Wadden Sea ports concerning Green Port certification
- Autumn 2015: Wadden Sea Ports Trilateral Conference on chances of introducing LNG
- Autumn 2015: Establish draft Code of Conduct, signing by the first companies
- Spring 2017: Conference on working with the Code of Conduct in practice

Lead: Port authorities, ship owners, chairs of umbrella organisations. The WSB just sets up an ad-hoc WSB group to initiate the process.

#### 10. Fisheries: More sustainable fishing

Fisheries are a major user of the trilateral Wadden Sea. Fishing dates back a long way and so is an important part of the culture and regional identity of the trilateral Wadden Sea. Various fishery sectors have taken steps in recent years to move to more sustainable forms of fishing. Many initiatives are still running and talks are taking place between nature organisations, authorities and the various sectors about opportunities for greater sustainability. Making Wadden Sea fisheries more sustainable is an important task which attracts a lot of social and political attention. It is important to maintain a level playing field in the process of improving sustainability.

Objective:

Fishing takes place in a sustainable, responsible and trilaterally coherent manner, based on knowledge of fish, mussel and shrimp stocks, knowledge of the effects of fishing on the flora and fauna present, and the application of best practices.

The following interim results will contribute to this objective:

An operating schedule, which includes the negotiation phase and the implementation process in close cooperation with responsible authorities and relevant stakeholders and initiatives. *Outcome:* improvement of trilateral coordination on fishing and sharing knowledge about fishing.

- Analysis of the “appropriate assessment” methods as used in the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark
- Advice on common standards and methods for appropriate assessments

*Outcome:* comparable methods for testing the effects of fishing in the trilateral Wadden Sea

- Trilateral analysis of applied fish methods and best practices

*Outcome:* insight and knowledge sharing on fishing methods and innovations

- Advice /guide concerning use of best practices and number of trilateral pilots

*Outcome:* broader application of innovative sustainable fishing methods in the Wadden Sea

Delivery times:

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- Autumn 2015: analysis of appropriate assessments
- Autumn 2015: analysis of fishing methods and best practices

- Autumn 2015: proposal on process and approach of Sustainable Fishery strategy
- Spring 2016: advice on standards and methods for appropriate assessments
- Autumn 2016: guide on best practices and trilateral pilots
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Lead: WSB through an ad-hoc group or TG on fisheries including relevant administrations and stakeholders. (Germany is preparing a proposal on how to start the procedure/dialogue).

## **D. Development of knowledge regarding the impact of climate change on the Wadden Sea.**

### **11. Adaptation to climate change effects**

At the Tønder Conference the Climate Adaptation Strategy was adopted. This strategy contains the excellent principles to start with and further expand the proposed development of knowledge.

Objective: To maintain the adaptive capacity of the Wadden Sea system by anticipating timely to the effects of climate change

The following actions are proposed which contribute to the realisation of this objective:

- Exchange of best-practice experiences on spatial planning issues
- Providing an overview of and gain insight into the effects of practical field-experiments like the climate buffer Feugelpolle (south-western part of the island of Ameland)
- To exchange knowledge and gain renewed insights on sediment behaviour in tidal areas,
- Proposals regarding measures to be taken for climate adaptation.

### **12. Organisation of the 13th Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference in 2018 (Leeuwarden)**

In 2018 Leeuwarden will be European Capital of Culture. To tie in with this the Netherlands will hold the next ministerial conference in Leeuwarden in the spring of 2018. The aim of the conference will be to seize the opportunity to draw broad attention from young people, residents and others involved to this common world heritage, and to what it means to all the parties and what we can and want to contribute.

To this end the Netherlands as host country must in good time ensure adequate organisation and the necessary resources.

Objective:

A successful conference in form and content, which has fixed broad attention on the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site.