MEETING DOCUMENT

**Ad hoc Working Group SWIMWAY (WG-SWIMWAY 20-2)**

22 June 2020

Virtual meeting

**Agenda Item: 7. Roadmap, Terms of Reference and future constituency**

**Subject: Constituency and Terms of Reference Expert Group**

**Document No.:** WG-SWIMWAY 20-2/7/2

**Date:** 11 June 2020

**Submitted by: Adi Kellermann, CWSS**

The ad hoc Working Group SWIMWAY has been set up by the Wadden Sea Board (WSB) at its 28th meeting in March 2019 under the trilateral Task Group Management (TG-M) to initiate the SWIMWAY Vision and Action Programme 2019 – 2024.

For 2020, a transformation of the WG SWIMWAY to a permanent Expert Group (EG) has been envisaged. Amongst the tasks of the ad hoc Working Group SWIMWAY is an elaboration of Terms of Reference (ToR) for such a possible EG on fish.

The group is invited to discuss transformation to an Expert Group and the respective ToR, also under consideration of the [conference report SWIMWAYs: Understanding connectivity within the life cycles of coastal fish](https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/sites/default/files/2019_Swimway%20conference%20report.pdf) and monitoring report (WG-SWIMWAY20-2-6).

This document contains a memo of the chairperson (Adi Kellermann) & CWSS on the future constituency, ToR of the ad hoc WG-SWIMAY (ANNEX 1).

**Proposal:** The group is invited to discuss and consider tasks for Tor and constituency

## Constituency and ToR for the future SWIMWAY group

## Background

The current status of the SWIMWAY group is that of an ad-hoc working group under the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation´s (TWSC) Task Group Management (TG-M). It is staffed by governmental (and freelance) research institutes, administrations and regional management authorities and with representatives from NGOs, all from the three TWSC countries. Additional SWIMWAY supporters are regularly invited as guests.

The group was installed with a clear instruction to take appropriate action to approach the trilateral fish targets of the Wadden Sea Plan (WSP) 2010 and to improve the conservation status of fish spending at least part of their life cycle in the Wadden Sea (by initiating the SWIMWAY Vision and Action Programme; compare Terms of Reference in ANNEX 1). From 2020, the ad hoc WG SWIMWAY may be transferred to a trilateral Expert Group (EG) on fish.

The group has thus been instructed to develop Terms of Reference (ToRs) (Tasks, ANNEX 1) and as a consequence consider its constituency as required.

## TWSC Group structure

Following an outline presented at the Wadden Sea Board (WSB) meeting 28 (WSB-28-7-1-1), trilateral Expert Groups are generally long-term or permanent technical groups – exceptions are allowed.

They have operational and advising tasks and

a. report to the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) – WSB may allow exceptions; EGs are also connected or in some cases report to relevant TGs;

b. are chaired by CWSS staff or a group member;

c. are (in principle, but not necessarily) permanent;

d. have the opportunity to report annually to WSB

Task Groups are generally policy task groups, while Expert Groups report management and – or monitoring matters to TG-M and the Task Group Monitoring and Assessment (TG-MA).

## ToR and tasks

The group has carried out a broad scientific discussion of the issues of concern around Wadden Sea fish at the conference SWIMWAYs: Understanding connectivity within the life cycles of coastal fish in Hamburg 2019. The most important step would be the installation of a permanent Fish Expert Group with carefully selected members and well-defined terms of reference to oversee the process in the long term and to keep SWIMWAY capable of acting. Given that SWIMWAY is already established as kind of brand, the new group should keep this name.

In addition, the group has developed a sound basis for recommendations to policy makers, and it has produced a comprehensive overview of fish monitoring programmes in the Wadden Sea. Next steps for a trilateral group are recommended in the trilateral fish monitoring report (WG-SWIMWAY 20-2-6):

The future work of the group under the TWSC under consideration of recommendations may comprise:

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| **ToR for EG may comprise:** | **Recommendations(1), (2)** |
| Coordination of a future (harmonized) trilateral fish monitoring programme as part of the TMAP, including the promotion of research programmes to complement the monitoring programme; | Identify existing and future research and monitoring programmes which can address the Fish Targets and will augment the programmes currently utilised (1);  Present proposal on improving TMAP with respect to the Swimway at 2nd Swimway Conference (tentative date 2022) (1);  Following this submit a further prioritised and revised version as part of the “TMAP 2.0” (1); |
| Define a concept for a forum to stimulate and support exchange of information on Wadden Sea fish, and for coordination with other, EU – wide or global SWIMWAY and related activities; |  |
| Promote communication of its work and actions to other national, trilateral and international groups and to the public at large; | Increase visibility and public outreach to generate support for the SWIMWAY aims (2); |
| Oversee progress towards reaching the trilateral fish targets under the TWSC, in particular by liaising with and/or participating in relevant actions to improve the conservation status of Wadden Sea fish, such as national and international research projects and action plans; | Linking SWIMWAY to other programs and knowledge communities (2);  Cooperative research projects (2);  Stakeholder analysis: Whom to integrate, why and when? (2);  Development and implementation of SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound) sub-targets for overarching Trilateral Fish Targets (1, 2); |
| Make regular assessments based on the monitoring programme and other, scientific programmes in order to provide advice to management relevant for fish life cycles in the Wadden Sea; |  |
| Contribution to and update of the Quality Status Report thematic report on fish; |  |
| Coordination and implementation of the Swimway Vision and Action Programme. |  |
| … |  |
|  |  |

*(1) Recommendations for a trilateral group in the trilateral fish monitoring report (WG-SWIMWAY20-2-6)*

*(2) Dänhardt, A. (2019) SWIMWAYs: Understanding connectivity within the life cycles of coastal fish. Conference report, 24-26 September 2019, Hamburg, Germany. Jesteburg/ Lüllau, 105 pages. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.*

## Members of a future Expert Group

A successful future work of SWIMWAY will benefit greatly by members who are motivated to participate by the relevance of the meetings for their work. For this purpose and in order to enable effective coordination and communication throughout the various decision levels, taking on board the diverse actors and decision makers will be key to success. As recommended by Dänhardt (2019), one next step may be a stakeholder analysis: Whom to integrate, why and when?

The science-based work of a future SWIMWAY group will have be maintained in support of operating on a best-knowledge and best-practice baseline. The focus of the current scientific, project-based work in SWIMWAY is the bottleneck concept which includes natural mortality, fishing mortality and life-cycle blockers (“train stoppers”) such as coastal and upstream barriers. This calls for involving fishermen and water managers for relevant topics of the future SWIMWAY group under the TWSC.

The topic of sustainable fisheries in a trilateral context is overall tackled by TG-M, while it is currently taken up specifically as one of four key management topics under the Single Integrated Management Plan (SIMP).-

TG-M has underlined their recommendation to the ad hoc WG-SWIMWAY that a possible future group should concentrate on fish and not include fisheries, thus leaving the policy part with TG-M (TG-M 20-prelim and TG-M 20-2).

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# ANNEX 1: Ad hoc Working Group Swimway Vision Initiation 2019

(ad hoc WG-Swimway)

Terms of Reference

*(WSB-28/7.1/1 TWSC TOR of groups, amended with SDG consideration 2019-03-14)*

Background

At the Ministerial Council Meetings in 2014 and 2018, the three Wadden Sea countries confirmed the wish to implement the five Trilateral Fish Targets, which were adopted as part of the Wadden Sea Plan at the Trilateral Governmental Conference in 2010. These targets aim at improving the conservation status of fish spending at least part of their life cycle in the Wadden Sea. They acknowledge the uniqueness of the fish community in the Wadden Sea, with several fish populations having declined in recent decades, due to largely unknown reasons. To that effect, the Trilateral Swimway Vision 2018-2024 was approved by the ministers at the 13th Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea on May 18th in Leeuwarden, The Netherlands.

Since further preparatory work is needed before it is considered feasible to establish e.g. an Expert Group Fish, the group of authors of the Swimway Vision has recommended that they continue through 2019 as an ad hoc Working Group Swimway Vision Initiation under the auspices of TG-M according to the approved organisational set-up of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation. This Working Group could possibly be replaced by an Expert Group Fish (or Swimway) in 2020[[1]](#footnote-1), which this Terms of Reference (TOR) reflects as it only comprises tasks to be completed in 2019. In fulfilling its mandate, this group will duly take into account and seek to promote the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) insofar as these are relevant to its work. The group reports to TG-M but also to TG-MA if appropriate.

Objective

The Swimway Vision is based on 4 pillars (1. Research & Monitoring, 2. Policy, 3. Measures and 4. Stakeholder involvement, communication and education). The overarching objective of the ad-hoc Working Group Swimway Vision Initiation is to solve tasks linked to and defined by 8 activities as they appear from the work programme for 2019 which could lead to a formation of an Expert Group Fish in 2020. The aim after 2019 could be to further elaborate and implement the Swimway Action Programme as an integrated approach to achieve the Trilateral Fish Targets as instructed in para. 13 and Annex 3 of the Leeuwarden Declaration (LD).

Tasks

1. Coordination and implementation of the Swimway Vision and the further elaboration of the Swimway Action Programme;
2. Elaborate TOR and a work plan for a possible Expert Group Fish;
3. Initiate activities as described in the above-mentioned work programme for 2019;
4. Prepare, organize and hold a “Swimway Summit” event in October 2019 for stakeholders and key participants etc.

Deliverables

1. The specific deliveries corresponding to each of the above listed tasks will take place according to the above mentioned Swimway work programme;
2. Regular status reporting to TG-M regarding the implementation of the above tasks, including contributions to the on-going budget- and work programme control by CWSS;
3. A final report from the group on the overall status of the implementation of the Swimway Vision, as a possible transition to the formation of a subsequent Expert Group Fish.

Composition/Membership

The ad-hoc Working Group Swimway Vision Initiation consists of the present Swimway Vision and Action Programme core-writing group plus the Swimway coordinator. The Swimway Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating the ad-hoc Working Group. The CWSS will take part in the meetings and will provide logistic and other assistance, as set out in the above-mentioned work programme. The group can, in agreement with TG-M to whom they refer, supplement itself as needed, either on a temporary or a permanent basis.

Time schedule

The ad-hoc Working Group will work through 2019, and could cease to exist if an Expert Group Fish is established in 2020.

**Composition/Membership**

Chairperson with capacity to function as SWIMWAY Action Programme Coordinator.

Two members per region (DK, HH, LS, NL, SH) and NGOs, representing scientific expertise in Wadden Sea fish and/or monitoring and management measures. Attention should be paid to involvement of stakeholders and the right level of representatives from each region.

Participation by additional experts to SWIWMAY meetings and activities is welcome.

**Time schedule**

According to the decision by the Ministerial Conference, the implementation of The Swimway Vision/Action Programme is foreseen to be accomplished within the German Presidency plus two years i.e. in the period 2020 – 2024.

1. *Depending on discussions at the TWSC review process and decisions by the WSB* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)