

Wadden Sea Board

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Attached is a progress report by the secretariat on developments and activities since the WSB 1 on 3-4 June 2010.

Proposal

The Wadden Sea Board is proposed to comment and note, as appropriate, the progress report by the secretariat.

OVERVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT SINCE THE SYLT CONFERENCE

Communication and Information

1. At WSB 1 the secretariat reported on the publications that had been published since the Sylt Conference, namely the 3rd CPSL report, the project report “Exploring Contrasting Trends of Migratory Waterbirds in the Wadden Sea” and the “Trends of Migratory Birds and Breeding Birds in the Wadden Sea”. Currently the trend analysis for migratory birds this year is under preparation and will be published at the end of the year. The trend analyses are world class outputs reflecting the excellent work of Wadden Sea bird experts over more than a generation. Also the report on the alert system project and adaptations of the breeding success will be available soon on the website of the secretariat <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/>. These reports and analyses will be used in the forthcoming work on bird developments in the framework of the Business Plan.
2. The full Quality Status Report 2009 (QSR 2009) is now available on <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/QSR-2009/index.htm>. Over 110 scientists from the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark contributed to this project during 2008-2009 and prepared 30 thematic reports. The QSR gives again a comprehensive overview of the status of all habitats and main species in the Wadden Sea, including main pressures (e.g. eutrophication, chemical substances, fisheries, tourism, energy, extraction and dredging). In addition to the well-established trend analyses of birds and seals, long-term population trends of fish and macrozoobenthos have been statistically analyzed for the entire Wadden Sea for the first time.
3. The QSR synthesis report is now in the final phase. The report is written by Wim Wolff, Karsten Reise, Jan Bakker, and Karsten Laursen. As already announced in June, the preparation of the report has been delayed both because of the workload of the authors and the secretariat. A final draft was circulated to the authors on 6 September for final comments within two weeks in order to print the report in mid October. The report will be published under the responsibility of the authors. Prior to publication, the Wadden Sea Board will receive a copy for information.

Secretariat Organization

4. It is understood that the legal status of the secretariat will be enacted by German law by mid 2011. Also as of 2011 the salary payments and benefit payments will be done externally. The processing of travel costs will be done with new software at the secretariat. There are additional costs related to this shift in activities to be paid of the annual budget of the secretariat. It is referred to the triennial budget 2011 – 13 for further information.
5. The terms of reference for the staff will be amended to enable the new tasks to be fulfilled and to ensure an effective task division between the staff members pending the approval of the 2010 – 13 Business Plan for the Cooperation.

WaLTER

6. At WSB 1 the secretariat informed the meeting about the involvement in the Dutch Nature Restoration Programme and the WaLTER application at the Dutch Wadden Fund. WaLTER is the acronym for Wadden Sea Long Term Ecological Research. The overall aim of WaLTER is to provide a basic contribution to the sustainable future of the Wadden Sea region through increasing the effectiveness of the use of knowledge, necessary for planning processes, policy and project development, and adaptive management. The aim will be achieved by
 - Establishing a web-based, low-threshold, user-friendly central knowledge platform, for making available existing and new knowledge.
 - Achieve consensus about a basic system of monitoring, i.e. which basic system variables (ecologic and socio-economic) must be monitored to be able to understand the functioning and development of the Wadden Sea system.
 - Achieve a good tuning between running and future monitoring programmes, measuring networks and data portals.
7. The first phase of the project (2011-2012) is the inventory phase. In this phase the knowledge requirements of all potential users will be inventoried and the necessary monitoring parameters determined. In addition an inventory and evaluation of conceptual ecological and economical models will be carried out, resulting in an overview of necessary monitoring requirements. In phase two (2013-2014), the data portal will be developed and the results from phase one analysed, focusing on a comparison of data needs and data availability. The analysis will reveal overlaps and redundancies in current monitoring practices and make recommendations for improving effectiveness. Finally a monitoring programme for ecological and socio-economic parameters will be developed, based upon the outcome of the analyses regarding customer needs and effectiveness. In order to secure the involvement of trilateral monitoring and data handling, the CWSS has been requested to participate in the project. A decision about granting of WaLTER is expected by the end of 2010 at the latest.

Trilateral Wadden Sea Day

8. The 5th Trilateral Wadden Sea Day was held in Wilhelmshaven on 26 August 2010. Over 110 participants attended the conference on “Neobiota in the Wadden Sea – Challenges for Nature Conservation”. The great response on the registration clearly showed the high relevance of this issue. Experts from the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark gave information on the colonization and distribution of alien species in the Wadden Sea, introduced tools for assessing the risks of ballast water exchange, pointed out impacts on different management strategies or risks of mussel transports, and presented new concepts for monitoring changes in biodiversity, including proposals for enhancing public awareness on the issue “introduction of alien species”. Furthermore, the experts made proposals for prevention, management and control of invasive alien species.
9. During the concluding discussion, priority issues in terms of the implementation of a trilateral management plan on alien species were named. The main recommendations on these priority issues were:

- preparing an inventory of ongoing projects and activities, also in view of identifying gaps in monitoring and managing alien species in the Wadden Sea,
- establishing a Task Group on the issue of alien species (the secretariat to invite respective experts, formulation of ToR and research goals for the group),
- using the existing framework of national, international and EU regulations for managing alien species,
- setting up mechanisms to control introduction of alien species, and also
- enhancing cooperation between the countries by developing a trilateral management plan for the Wadden Sea.

Conference PRCM

10. The secretary participated in the annual meeting of the Regional Coastal and Marine Forum of West Africa, PRCM, 28 June – 1 July 2010, in Nouackchott, Mauritania. The ongoing collaboration project with WWF WAMER is part of the overall PRCM programme. The PRCM is a stakeholder arrangement of governmental and non-governmental organizations from the seven West African countries with the aim to improve conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity in the region. Major supporting partners in the programme are the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), Wetlands International (WI) and the International Foundation for the Banc d'Arguin (FIBA), who co-operate on the basis of a formal Partnership Agreement. The PRCM-process is coordinated by a secretariat in Nouakchott (Mauritania). The programme also receives substantial support from the Dutch and German governments. Within the PRCM, Marine Protected Areas (MPAs, including offshore and coastal areas) are considered a priority target for action. It has been decided to devise a two-pronged strategy aimed at strengthening the role of MPAs as instruments for natural resource management and bringing West African MPAs together in a network. The Wadden Sea Cooperation through the WWF, Dakar supports activities of the PRCM. The long-term aim of the cooperation, as stated in the Schiermonnikoog Declaration 2005, is to enter into a political cooperation with West Africa.
11. In the context of the PRCM, forum meetings are held every 18 months to inform on the status of ongoing projects and activities. The Nouackchott Conference was attended by some 100 persons including representatives from the mentioned partner organisations. The conference concluded with 21 recommendations for further focuss activities of the Forum in the coming period.
12. In the context of the Forum, the first ministerial meeting of environment ministers of the 7 West African states, participating in the PRCM, took place. The meeting was also attended by the above mentioned partners and representatives of other international organizations including the CWSS. The Nouackchott Declaration can be found at <http://www.prcmarine.org/>. The significance of the Declaration is not so much related to its content but to the fact that it institutionalizes a future cooperation on the ministerial governmental level between the countries. A political platform for cooperation has hence been created.
13. The PRCM is doing significant work in West Africa. Many of the projects are relevant for the Wadden Sea in a flyway context and a network has been established which is indispensable for working in the region and supporting

activities. The Dutch and German governments are via development aid activities already supporting projects in the PRCM context. The PRCM has resulted in the establishment of a political platform. In considering the future cooperation with West Africa also in the context of the flyway management, the PRCM framework is very important. It seems the Wadden Sea Cooperation has also a very important role to play as a role model for trans-boundary cooperation on conservation and management of nature areas. It could be considered whether the Cooperation should become a partner of the PRCM, in particular, to support the political process.

Symposium Wadden Academy

14. In cooperation with CWSS, AWI, GKSS and GEUS, the Wadden Academy organizes a scientific symposium on the Wadden Sea Region, 8-10 December 2010, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands. The title of the symposium is "Towards a trilateral research agenda". Scientists of all disciplines - geology, ecology, cultural history, economy, climate - will present their research findings in a trilateral perspective. What are the commonalities and differences between sub-regions? The central aim of the symposium is to identify important cross-border gaps in our knowledge of the Wadden Sea Region. The second part of the symposium will be dedicated to the exploration of possibilities to set up trilateral research programmes which follow an integrated system approach. More detailed information and the registration form will be placed on the website of the Wadden Academy <http://www.waddenacademie.knaw.nl> in early autumn.

International Cooperation

15. As announced at the WSB 1, the cooperation with Korea in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been continued. Two workshops have been prepared with the aim to exchange information, to promote the TWSC as a role model, and to support capacity building in Korea.

- A workshop on environmental education and information has been organized by the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS) and the Korean partners of the KFEOM from 29.9. – 2.10.2010.
- A second workshop, focusing on the application of monitoring and assessment, especially with regard to bird monitoring and the bird alert system, was prepared together with the the Korea National Park Service - Migratory Birds Centre and the Joint Monitoring Group of Migratory Birds (JMMB). The workshop is scheduled on 11 – 16 October 2010.

A workshop on benthos monitoring as a follow-up of the Sylt benthos workshop at the AWI in List/Sylt in March 2010 was postponed to 2010 because of time constraints.

16. Representatives from the Korean National Park Service (of the Korean Environmental Ministry) visited the CWSS and the German National Parks (Wilhelmshaven and Tönning) in August 2010. The KNPS proposed a closer collaboration with the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation in particular with regard to site management, restoration projects and public information. The CWSS suggested including this information exchange under the existing MOU with the Korean MLTM in order to streamline and coordinate all Korean-Wadden Sea contacts via the liaison officer at the secretariat.