

# Wadden Sea Board

**WSB 5**  
**14 - 15 March 2012**  
**Leeuwarden/**  
**The Netherlands**



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<b>Agenda Item:</b>	6
<b>Subject:</b>	Wadden Sea Conference
<b>Document No.</b>	WSB 5/6/1
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<b>Submitted by:</b>	WSB Ad-hoc Working Group

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Attached is the discussion document by the ad-hoc working group established at WSB with the task to elaborate a systematic catalogue of themes until WSB 5, to be included in the draft Ministerial Declaration for the next Wadden Sea Conference, based also on the Sylt Declaration and other topical issues with an indication of the agreements and decisions to be taken including, as appropriate, different positions. The draft Declaration must have political substance and direct the work in the following period to ensure that the Conference would be politically relevant and be attended by ministers.

Based on the catalogue, the WSB should consider whether the next Conference should be postponed in relation to the current schedule of mid-March 2013.

The note concludes that

- There are sufficient relevant political issues that will attract and necessitate political attendance
- There is an issue of timing in relation to the current time schedule and that a postponement of the conference would be appropriate taking account also of the work load of a policy assessment report *provided this will not take the pressure of the progress on the issues outlined.*

## Proposal

The meeting is proposed to discuss the note with a view to

- (1) Decide whether to postpone the conference to a later date than March 2013 and
- (2) Provide guidance for the further process.

## OUTLINE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL DECLARATION WADDEN SEA CONFERENCE

### A. Task Ad-hoc Working Group

As instructed by WSB 4 the task of the ad-hoc working group is the elaboration of a systematic catalogue of themes until WSB 5 to be included in the draft Ministerial Declaration for the next Wadden Sea Conference based also on the Sylt Declaration and other topical issues with an indication of the agreements and decisions to be taken including, as appropriate, different positions. The draft Declaration must have political substance and direct the work in the following period to ensure that the Conference would be politically relevant and be attended by ministers.

### B. Structure

The following structure has been used in elaborating the systematic catalogue:

(1) *Issue/Headline MCD*

A description of the issue, progress in relation to the Sylt Declaration (SD) or new issues and current input from the work of the Task Groups, projects and other activities.

(2) *Review*

Review of progress and indication of a possible agreement/decision to be included in draft MCD including possible different positions

(3) *Anticipated decision*

A preliminary indication of the expected political outcome for the coming draft Ministerial Council Declaration and the timing in relation to the Conference schedule.

(4) *Political Relevance*

Assessment of whether indicated agreement/decision warrants political relevance (and has sufficient substance to ensure attendance of ministers)

Political relevance	+ or – indicates relevance
Will Encourage attendance ministers	Yes/No
Timing	Assessment of whether subject is in time or delay recommended / preferred

### C. Overview Issues Draft Ministerial Council Declaration

Below follows an overview of the issues potentially to be included in a draft Ministerial Council Declaration for the forthcoming Ministerial Council meeting:

#### 1. Wadden Sea World Heritage

The overall Communication and Marketing Plan for the current period is under implementation; the Wadden Sea World Heritage property was extended with the Hamburg Wadden Sea and the Danish extension is anticipated to be elaborated in 2012. Task Group World Heritage (TG-WH) coordinates overall activities but

proposal for Declaration has not yet been developed and discussed pending a key stakeholder meeting in January 2012.

### Review

The Wadden Sea World Heritage issue has developed rapidly since the inscription on the List, has deepened the cooperation and created a platform for advancing the conservation of the Wadden Sea and regional development. The property has been extended with the Hamburg National Park in 2011. An extension of the property with the Danish part and in the Niedersachsen section will only reinforce this development. The issue has the potential of promoting regional identity and commitment through also through the possible establishment of a World Heritage Foundation under the condition that new cooperation arrangements are created institutionally and financially. The issue is potentially the “umbrella” for further decisions throughout the Declaration.

### Anticipated Decision:

Welcome Danish extension including the extension of the Niedersachsen and Hamburg part and the progress made since the 2009 inscription; 3-year overall marketing and communication plan for advancing the Wadden Sea World Heritage in collaboration with the stakeholders; foundation arrangement.

*Timing:* Elaboration of nomination document time consuming and will tie up many resources both at the CWSS as well as at the parties in 2012.

### Political Relevance

Political relevance	++
Will Encourage attendance ministers	Yes
Timing	Delay is preferred to have sufficient time for in particular the Danish nomination

## **2. Sustainable Tourism Strategy**

The elaboration of a sustainable tourism strategy for the Wadden Sea World Heritage as requested by the World Heritage Committee and the Danish National Park was agreed at the Sylt Conference. Draft strategy is under development in the context of the Interreg IV project PROWAD together with the development of an action plan

### Review

The draft strategy will be elaborated in a participatory approach with relevant local and regional stakeholders in 2012, defining vision, principles and objectives of sustainable tourism, and establishing a stakeholder network to implement the strategy. On the basis of an action plan, joint projects will be carried out enhancing awareness for nature and its protection amongst visitors and inhabitants, and supporting regional development and marketing of sustainable high-quality tourism products. The drafting of the strategy and the involvement of the stakeholders is complex and time consuming. The elaboration of a concrete action plan which also includes synergies is an essential part of the follow up.

### Anticipated Decision:

Adoption of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Strategy together with an action plan.

*Timing:* Elaboration of document time consuming realistically a first draft will be ready in mid 2012. A second round of stakeholder consultations is probably necessary to enhance ownership of the strategy. Therefore a draft for further consultation by the

WSB will be available sometime in 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2012 or later. More time is assessed to be needed for consultation to create ownership of the strategy including the action plan.

### Political Relevance

Political relevance	++
Will Encourage attendance ministers	Yes
Timing	Delay preferred

### **3. Wadden Sea Plan/Nature Management**

Wadden Sea Plan/Nature Management may cover several sub-issues such as (mussel) fishery, alien species, EU harmonization including roof report N2000, alignment WSP, overall sustainability and establishment of common policies for specific fields (e.g mining, dredging, goose management).

#### Review

Activities with regard to the Wadden Sea nature management have been initiated:

- Inventory of alien species policies has been produced, the development of a strategy is under consideration together with the planning of a LIFE+ project
- Sustainable fishery study has been initiated
- Considerations with regard N2000 roof report, conservation priorities etc. has just commenced.

The progress has not yet been substantial and reached a stage at which it is possible to indicate the exact outcome and feasibility of political decisions in this regard.

#### Anticipated Decision:

(1) alien species strategy, (2) principles and policies on sustainable fisheries, (3) N2000 roof report approach and harmonization initiatives (assumption Conference in early 2014), (4) specific management issues (ecosystem management).

*Timing:* Work in progress and demands time for further elaboration; consultation will be time consuming (estimation half a year).

### Political Relevance

Political relevance	++
Will Encourage attendance ministers	Yes
Timing	Delay preferred

### **4. Climate**

The Task Group Climate (TG-C) is responsible for the implementation of the Sylt Declaration agreements regarding increasing the linkage between climate change and coastal protection, nature protection, the adaptability of the Wadden Sea ecosystem and spatial planning, initiating a trilateral study on sustainable solutions to balance the expected sediment deficits on the basis of research questions specified by the CPSL, as well as initiating a project developing model spatial plans for pilot sites in the Wadden Sea region with the aim of developing a practicable spatial planning methodology to meet the challenges of climate change (MCD §23). Additionally work is ongoing to implement the first steps of developing the Wadden Sea Region into a CO<sub>2</sub> – neutral area by 2030 or before (MCD §24).

#### Review

TG-C is preparing a draft trilateral vision on adaptability of the Wadden Sea to climate change. The vision will integrate the main elements of the work carried out in the past decade by the CPSL, as well as the current work of TG-C with regard to spatial planning. The vision will set out the trilateral policies for the coming decade. TG-C proposes to discuss the draft vision in a workshop with the WSB at the WSB-6 meeting.

The terms of reference for a trilateral sediment study have been prepared. It is expected that the study will start in the first half of 2012 under the lead of the authorities responsible for coastal protection. It is not expected that this task will already deliver politically relevant results for the coming conference.

With regard to spatial planning, TG-C has elaborated dossiers for several pilot sites which will be discussed in a workshop with local and regional spatial planning authorities with the aim of identifying policy recommendation to enhance the possibilities for spatial planning to anticipate on climate change impact.

As a first step of the implementation of the CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral area objective an inventory will be made to provide an overview of the state of the art regarding specifically on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, analyze the role and efforts of the region in a European respectively global context and on the basis of the above provide recommendations for the main elements of developing a climate friendly, respectively a CO<sub>2</sub> neutral Region.

#### Anticipated Decision

Trilateral Wadden Sea (policy) vision on climate change adaptability. Political recommendations regarding enhancing possibilities for spatial planning to anticipate on climate change impact. Decision on further steps to implement the CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral objective e.g. with emphasis on the islands together with the WSF.

*Timing:* Submission of first draft trilateral adaptability vision to WSB-6, WSB to discuss the political relevance of the subject at this meeting (WSB 5). Discussion with WSB on political elements of the vision in workshop at WSB-7. Spatial planning workshop June 2012. Results reported to WSB-6. Draft political recommendations to WSB-7.

#### Political Relevance

Political relevance	?
Will Encourage attendance ministers	?
Timing	Delay will not produce any further result

### **5. Maritime Safety and Pollution Prevention of Shipping**

The Task Group Shipping (TG-S) has been tasked with the implementation of the agreements of the Sylt Declaration. Currently a draft vision is under development based on a.o. the outcome of the Hamburg workshop. The draft vision is intended to be an operational vision to guide activities of the cooperation in the inter-sessional period.

#### Review

The elaboration of a vision on maritime safety and pollution prevention of shipping is one of the central decisions of the Sylt Declaration. It expresses the aspiration of all stakeholders to attain a consensual understanding of the concerted efforts to maintain and enhance maritime safety and prevent pollution from shipping. The development of such a vision will support the Wadden Sea World Heritage listing. Issue is considered a regional priority by stakeholders. The vision in principle covers the all the relevant issues addressed in the 2010 Declaration. Issue is potentially

controversial because of the economic interests shipping and harbor industries and world class ecological interests and high vulnerability of the Wadden Sea.

#### Anticipated Decision

Wadden Sea PSSA Vision together with an operational action plan (prevention, emergency assistance etc.).

*Timing:* Realistically the draft vision will not be finished before the end of 2012 or beginning 2013 also to allow for the necessary broader stakeholder involvement.

#### Political Relevance

Political relevance	++
Will Encourage attendance ministers	Yes
Timing	Delay preferred for external consultation

### **6. Monitoring & Assessment**

The TMAP was reconfirmed at the 2010 Conference being of central importance for the cooperation. TG-M is current working on the long term TMAP strategy in accordance with §43 of the Sylt Declaration. WSB has indicated that a starting point for developing the strategy is cost neutrality of the TMAP. Furthermore TG-M suggests that an update Quality Status report be prepared for 2016 to feed into various EU reporting schemes.

#### Review

The submission and agreement of a long term TMAP monitoring strategy is very important for the Wadden Sea World Heritage property central to the reporting commitment and for a wider audience. The International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium (ISWSS), November 2012 may provide input to the further long term monitoring strategy.

#### Anticipated Decision

Adoption of the long term TMAP strategy to be further made operational in the inter-sessional period.

*Timing:* Delivery long term strategy TMAP in time possible.

#### Political Relevance

Political relevance	Highly relevant for policy and management
Will Encourage attendance ministers	No
Timing	Possible

### **7. Science Cooperation**

Sylt Declaration promoted the development of a joint inter-disciplinary research agenda in conjunction with the establishment of common research platform. The Wadden Academy has held an international scientific conference in 2010 and a bilateral German-Dutch program to fund Wadden Sea projects has been established by the funding authorities. The ISWSS is in principle also a stage for discussing science cooperation.

Review

The establishment of the platform has become central with the inclusion of the Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List. Being a World Heritage property assumes the responsibility to maintain high level of scientific investigations and coordination in order to help maintain the values of the property. It is anticipated that the ISWSS recommendations will provide further input to the discussion, but too premature to anticipate decision on platform before the feasibility is investigated and science ministries have been involved.

Anticipated Decision

Acknowledge the establishment of a research platform pending investigation feasibility together with science ministries and support of the trilateral research agenda.

*Timing:* Time to follow up from Scientific Symposium necessary.

Political Relevance

Political relevance	Low
Will Encourage attendance ministers	Unlikely if political process is well advancing
Timing	Possible

**8. Cultural Heritage**

The Sylt Declaration stipulates that only those Lancewad recommendations which are relevant for the Wadden Sea Conservation Area shall be implemented trilaterally coordinated by the responsible authorities consistent with the overall trilateral policies. Denmark to take in initiative to implement decision.

Review

The cooperation on the issue has been resumed in in 2011 with holding a workshop for responsible authorities and other stakeholders. In the coming period further steps must be taken to implement Sylt Agreement under Danish initiative including possible collaboration between the responsible authorities.

Anticipated Decision

Unclear

*Timing:* Unclear

Political Relevance

Political relevance	Low
Will Encourage attendance ministers	No
Timing	Unclear

**9. Wadden Sea Forum**

Wadden Sea Forum (WSF) has established itself an independent organization. It is at this stage unclear how the WSF will report to the Conference. The WSF has agreed to take responsibility for implementing a number of agreements of the 2010 Declaration including the development of a goose management plan.

Review

It is to be expected that the recommendations of the WSF will relate to activities, developments and policies outside the Wadden Sea Area and therefore not directly within the mandate of the Cooperation. The recommendations should in substance aim to advance sustainable development and in this sense the sustainable indicators are central to policy development. Relationship with the Wadden Sea World Heritage stakeholder involvement to be considered together with the continued financing.

#### Anticipated Decision

Adoption goose management plan.

*Timing:* Due to late start work on goose management plan delay can be foreseen.

#### Political Relevance

Political relevance	+
Will Encourage attendance ministers	Likely
Timing	Delay envisaged

### **10. International Cooperation**

The international cooperation concerns the cooperation with Korea in the context of the MoU and the flyway cooperation in the context of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Cooperation. The activities with regard to the Korean MoU are developing as planned.

With regard to the flyway cooperation a workshop with participation of international experts has been held to discuss flyway cooperation. Recommendations of the workshop are under implementation through projects.

Obligation to support the UNESCO World Heritage activities internationally in particular through the marine program is strongly recommended.

#### Review

MoU Korea will be confined to political statement of follow up cooperation between the world's largest tidal area systems. Concrete proposal for decisions flyway not anticipated, an overall vision for flyway cooperation to be prepared and of high political importance. Attendance of representatives from authorities along the flyway (West Africa, Russia) would signal commitment and contribute to enhance awareness.

#### Anticipated Decision

Continuation Cooperation Korea, confirm commitment for international support World Heritage, adopt vision Flyway and have this statement supported by attendance 2-3 key persons

*Timing:* Delivery later would be appropriate considering the timing of projects.

#### Political Relevance

Political relevance	Low
Will Encourage attendance ministers	No
Timing	Possible but delay would be appropriate



## 11. Communication, Awareness, Education

Communication Strategy is under development and a network of educational centers has been extended to promote the cooperation between the centers with regard to education and the production of common educational material.

### Review

The Communication Strategy is anticipated approved by the WSB in autumn 2012 and will direct the Communication around the Wadden Sea in the coming period. The promotion of the International Wadden Sea School has a clear objective and mandate and is widely supported by the “field” but lacks financial resources for coordination and development of educational material.

### Anticipated Decision

Confirmation Communication Strategy, support continuation of the International Wadden Sea School as part of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Marketing and Communication Plan.

*Timing:* Ongoing

### Political Relevance

Political relevance	Low
Will Encourage attendance ministers	No
Timing	Possible

## D. Overall Assessment

Overall it can be concluded that

- There are sufficient relevant political issues that will attract and necessitate political attendance
- There is an issue of timing in relation to the current time schedule and that a postponement of the conference would be appropriate taking account also of the work load of a policy assessment report *provided this will not take the pressure of the progress on the issues outlined.*