

Wadden Sea Board

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Hamburg



Agenda Item:	5
Subject:	Business Plan
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Attached is a brief summary of the outcome of the 13th International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium (ISWSS-13), as well as recommendations for a trilateral research agenda, a research platform and a research fund, based upon the outcome of the ISWSS-13.

Proposal

The meeting is proposed to discuss options for establishing a trilateral research agenda, a trilateral research platform, as well as a joint trilateral research fund on the basis of the informal discussion with members of the Wadden Academy Board and German and Danish scientists.

13th International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium, Leeuwarden, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, 21 – 23 November 2012.

The three-day symposium, attended by some 200 researchers, policymakers, managers and other stakeholders from the entire Wadden Sea region, Korea and Australia, focused on the role of science and management of the Wadden Sea world heritage site. It was the first symposium held after the Dutch and German parts of the Wadden Sea were inscribed on the World Heritage list.

Main organiser was the Wadden Academy, in close cooperation with several other partners, a.o. the CWSS (Common Wadden Sea Secretariat).

The first day started with some official welcome words by representatives from the Waddenacademie, the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Wadden Sea Board. Jens Enemark (CWSS) set the stage for the key note lectures by emphasising the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Wadden Sea, outlining the key issues for the trilateral research agenda in relation to the OUV.

Key note lectures were given by prof. Karsten Reise (Alfred Wegener Institute Wadden Sea Station Sylt), prof. Chul-hwan Koh (Seoul National University) and dr. Fergus Molloy (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority). Reise argued that the evolution of the system is largely determined by chance and that there is no such thing as a 'natural balance of the system'. Koh emphasized the cooperation between Korea and the Wadden Sea for the protection of Korean tidal flats, which are under high pressure. Dr. Molloy provided insight into the management of the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest natural heritage site. He presented a method which is used in the Great Barrier Reef. to prioritize the research agenda in relation to policy questions.

Starting Wednesday afternoon, the symposium was subdivided into four thematic sessions:

- Climate and Water;
- Biodiversity;
- Science for Management and Policy;
- Sustainability and Ecosystem Services.

The session Climate and Water stressed the importance of starting a dialogue between climate researchers and stakeholders from the trilateral Wadden Sea region to discuss the possible options for adapting to sea-level rise and their (long-term) effects.

The session Biodiversity focussed on the importance of biodiversity for the ecosystem. There is increasing scientific evidence that a high biodiversity generally means that the Wadden Sea ecosystem will be more resilient to changes.

In the session on Science for Management and Policy the importance of an integrated monitoring and data for the Wadden Sea was emphasised. Pleads were made to expand the Dutch monitoring project WaLTER, financed by the Dutch Wadden Fund, with German and Danish input.

The last session, on Sustainability and Ecosystem Services, provided quite different contributions (from fisheries, via the Dutch warfts to the future of harbour and sustainable tourism. The discussion focussed on the importance of story-telling in the valuation of the Wadden Sea Region.

For all information, see

http://www.waddenacademie.nl/Symposium_November_2012.504.0.html?&L=1

Managing integrity

As stated above the symposium focused on the role of science and management in a world heritage site. The central requirement for managing a world heritage site is to maintain its integrity. This was amongst others confirmed by the presentation by Molloy on the management of the Great Barrier Reef world heritage site.

As demonstrated at the symposium, the integrity of the ecosystem is determined by key processes and features, such as hydrodynamics, geomorphology and biodiversity. These processes and features, as well as how they are impacted by human activities, must be studied at the ecosystem level, i.e. across the whole Wadden Sea, making optimal use of regional differences, amongst others through comparison at the tidal basin level.

Recently, some cross border research projects, focusing on processes relevant for ecosystem integrity (impact of invasive species; sea level rise and sedimentation) have been initiated by the joint Dutch-German Georisk-Biorisk programme. See

http://www.ptj.de/waddenseacall_results

It is considered crucial for advancing the scientific basis of integrity management that cross-border research projects are further developed and stimulated. For this, there are three basic requirements:

1. A trilateral research agenda must be agreed upon, focusing on research issues most relevant for integrity management. First steps have already been taken in the past years. In the course of 2009, the Wadden Academy has established contacts with German and Danish scientists, with the aim of reinforcing scientific co-operation across boundaries in the Wadden Sea Region, and to establish a common international research agenda.

This resulted in the publication of the brochure 'Towards a trilateral research agenda', http://www.waddenacademie.nl/fileadmin/inhoud/pdf/02_taken/Internationaal/Wadden_academie_Internationale_Brochure.pdf which was presented at the eleventh Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea on Sylt, Germany, 17 -19 March 2010.

2. A trilateral research platform must be established with the following tasks:
 - To further specify the issues from the trilateral research agenda,
 - To promote and advance cross-border research project
 - To review cross-border research applications

Several alternative options for a trilateral research platform are currently discussed by the Wadden Academy, German and Danish scientists and the CWSS.

3. A joint Dutch-German-Danish Wadden Sea research fund must be established through which projects from the research agenda are financed. Such a fund can be built upon the experiences with the Georisk-Biorisk programme.

Proposal

To discuss options for establishing a trilateral research agenda, a trilateral research platform, as well as a joint trilateral research fund.