

Wadden Sea Board

WSB 8
26-27 June 2013
Copenhagen



Agenda Item:	7.3
Subject:	Policy Assessment Report
Document No.	WSB 8/7.3/1
Date:	31 May 2013
Submitted by:	CWSS

The ad-hoc working group MCD has discussed the procedure for preparing the Policy Assessment Report (PAR) at its meeting of 28 May 2013.
The proposals and remarks by the group are listed on page 2.
The first draft of the Policy Assessment Report (PAR), as prepared by the CWSS is attached as Annex.

Proposal

The meeting is invited to

- (1) Discuss and decide upon the proposals by the ad-hoc working group MCD on the contents, the desired status and the procedure for finalising the PAR.
- (2) Note the first draft of the PAR.

Policy Assessment Report

At its meeting of 28 May 2013, the ad-hoc working group MCD has discussed the contents and format of the Policy Assessment Report (PAR, the desired status of the PAR, as well as the procedure for finalising the PAR.

The comments and proposals of the group are briefly summarised below.

1. Contents and format of the PAR.

The first draft PAR (Annex) was generally regarded as a good starting document. The concise format of Section 3 (Assessment of the Sylt Declaration) with texts directly relating to the decisions of the Sylt Declaration was supported. It was suggested that each policy assessment would be concluded by a statement on how to continue. In this respect the first draft is still unbalanced. That is also the case for the length of the different text pieces.

With regard to Section 2 of the PAR, the assessment of the ecosystem, it is the intention to include here a brief summary of policy relevant themes. These themes will be presented in a more comprehensive form in a separate brochure.

Proposals

- Support the basic structure of the PAR as in the first draft
- Prepare a separate ecosystem assessment brochure and include a brief summary of ecosystem relevant themes in Section 2 of the PAR.

2. Status of the PAR

Three different options were discussed, namely

- to adopt the PAR at the Ministerial Council meeting, together with the MCD;
- to consider the PAR as a technical background document that does not need the adoption of the ministers;
- to consider the PAR as a technical background document and to prepare a 3-page summary of the PAR as annex to the MCD.

Proposal

- WSB to make a choice for one of the three alternative options.

3. Finalisation of the PAR

Proposals

- Collect comments to the first draft of the PAR and submit a consolidated balanced version to WSB-9.
- TMAG to work on a separate assessment report, containing 10-15 ecosystem themes to be highlighted and to be published in a separate brochure to be published on the occasion of the conference.

ANNEX. Policy Assessment Report. Draft 1

[Input to the first draft has already been delivered by TG-M and TG-C. This input is not yet contained in this draft.]

12th Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea
Tønder, Denmark, February 2014

Policy Assessment Report

Draft

May 2014

1. Introduction

The 11th Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea, held on the island of Sylt, 18 March 2010 marked the start of a new era of the Cooperation. A new Joint Declaration on the Protection of the Wadden Sea was signed to replace the 1982 one and new governance structures were launched with the Wadden Sea Board as the governing body of the cooperation in between the meeting of the Ministerial Council and the Governmental Conferences.

The period since the 2010 Conference has been a very active, engaged and fruitful period but also a very demanding one. The 2010 Declaration and the Wadden Sea World Heritage activities outlined a very broad agenda for the period which in retrospect required a longer period of work and therefore a rescheduling of the Conference into 2014. It has required the cooperation and input of many organizations and people outside the formal cooperation and without the input of those it would not have been possible to make such substantial progress.

Also on the national and regional level the protection and management of the Wadden Sea has progressed. The Danish Wadden Sea National Park was inaugurated in October 2010 and has assumed its work on the basis of the recently adopted management plan. The Niedersachsen National Park was significantly extended in 2010 to include the relevant offshore Bird Directive areas to form a comprehensive and consistent protection regime. The National Park partnership scheme in Germany has expanded significantly during the last couple of years and has developed into regional support of the national parks and the Wadden Sea World Heritage. And in the Dutch Wadden Sea the mussel transition programme to progressively phase out fishery affecting the bottom has made substantial progress during the past three years in the context of the "Programme towards a Rich Wadden Sea".

The current Policy Assessment Report encompasses an assessment of the Wadden Sea ecosystem for particular issues as a follow up of the 2009 Quality Status Report and a brief and concise overview of the implementation of the agreement of the Sylt Declaration. Based on the assessment and the implementation overview policy recommendations are listed in the final chapter as an input for the 2014 Conference and the meeting of the Ministerial Wadden Sea Council.

2. Assessment of the Wadden Sea Ecosystem

(Currently a list of policy relevant assessment themes to be highlighted at the conference is being elaborated on the basis of a so-called science-policy matrix. This matrix provides an overview of policy relevance and information availability of a broad catalogue of Wadden Sea relevant themes. A first draft of the matrix has recently been approved by TMAG. The matrix will be presented at WSB 8 including a proposal for a list of priority assessment themes. The full draft assessment will not be available before September/October 2013)

3. Implementation of the 2010 Sylt Declaration

Governance Wadden Sea Cooperation

1. **Authorize** the Wadden Sea Board to commence its activities as the governing body of the Cooperation, to provide strategic and collective leadership and to ensure performance and accountability through good governance and good external relations and communication with all key stakeholders in accordance with Article 5 (2) of the Joint Declaration.
2. **Appreciate** the willingness of stakeholders to act as advisors to the Board.

The Wadden Sea Board (WSB) commenced its work immediately after the 2010 Conference and has held ## meetings. It approved of the Strategy for the work of the Cooperation covering a 6 year period until 2016 and based on the Strategy a Business Plan for the period until the 2014 Conference has been launched. Furthermore, it has rearranged the organization of the Cooperation including installed 5 Task Groups to carry out specific tasks. The work of the Cooperation has been streamlined and made more effective in particular through the business planning. In view of the anticipated increase in activities following the further extension of the Wadden Sea World Heritage the Governance of the Cooperation should continue to enhance its

Wadden Sea World Heritage

3. **Welcome** the inscription of the Dutch-German Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List under natural criteria (viii), (ix) and (x) by decision of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee at its 33rd Session, Seville, June 2009 and **acknowledge** that the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value adopted by the Committee encompassing the current rules and regulations and management and enforcement activities governing the protection of the Wadden Sea constitutes the basis for the future protection and management of the property according to Article 155 of the Operational Guidelines.

The Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the Wadden Sea World Heritage property is the basis of the Communication and Marketing Programme 2010-13 cf. § 5. The Statement is a key document for understanding the essence and spirit of the Wadden Sea World Heritage constituting the highest quality brand and must therefore be part of all future activities of the Cooperation including generating benefits for the wider region.

4. **Agree** to start in the forthcoming period a possible nomination of the Danish Wadden Sea in accordance with encouragement of the World Heritage Committee and the nomination of the Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park including, where necessary and appropriate, minor boundary modifications for inclusion on the World Heritage List to complement the existing property.

The Hamburg Wadden Sea National park was inscribed on the World Heritage List in June 2011 following a minor boundary modification of the property. The Danish nomination was submitted in January 2013 together with a proposal for an extension of the German (Niedersachsen) part of the property following an extension of the Niedersachsen Wadden Sea National Park in 2010. Since the Danish nomination is a response to the request of the World Heritage Committee, its inscription by mid 2014 is anticipated. It will result in a complete inscription of the Wadden Sea on the List which will reinforce its integrity and should be the central element of the Cooperation in the future.

5. **Instruct** the Board to initiate and organize the development of an overall Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy for the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site, in order to meet the request of the World Heritage Committee, the Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park, and the Danish National Park, pending formal approval by its forthcoming board, and as a first step to adopt a Wadden Sea Communication and Marketing Programme 2010-13.

The Communication and Marketing Programme 2010-2013 was established to enhance protection and awareness of the property, to strengthen the common responsibility for the site, and to support international cooperation. Several information and awareness activities were launched, such as the World Heritage website, official road sign posts, World Heritage information modules, the story hunter campaign, a discovery booklet for kids and a new World Heritage poster which succeeded enhancing the visibility of World Heritage in the Wadden Sea region as well as internationally.

Implementing the request of the World Heritage Committee, the Dutch-German-Danish project "PROWAD – Protect and Prosper. Sustainable Tourism in the Wadden Sea" started in October 2011 co-financed by the Interreg IVB North Sea Region Programme. The project has brought together all relevant stakeholders in the Wadden Sea and developed the "Strategy for Sustainable Tourism in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination" in a participatory approach with stakeholders on local, regional and trilateral level.

The strategy aims to enhance understanding and appreciation of the values of the Wadden Sea World Heritage, with enables stakeholders to contribute to the protection of its Outstanding Universal Value through involvement in tourism management and development, to deliver a consistent communication and marketing framework for the destination, and to provide benefits from the World Heritage status for nature conservation, tourism and local communities. The joint strategy acts as common framework for the future cooperation on sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea World Heritage destination and is complemented by an action plan to implement the strategy.

6. **Engage** in a close cooperation with the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) with a view to promote and strengthen cooperation on management and research on the African Eurasian Flyways with relevant state parties as requested by the World Heritage Committee and **establish** cooperation for the protection and management of migratory birds relying on the Wadden Sea.

Two flyway projects in West Africa focusing on capacity building and monitoring were launched by Germany and the Netherlands and started under the umbrella of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) in the beginning of 2012. Since February 2012 both projects are closely cooperating on basis of a joint action plan with the Conservation of Migratory Birds (CMB) project of Birdlife International and Wetlands International.

The WSFI has been successfully presented at the AEWA MOP5 in May 2012. African and European delegates welcomed the Initiative and stated the importance of collaboration along the East Atlantic flyway for the conservation of migratory waterbirds.

The WSFI Advisory Board meeting welcomed the close cooperation of the WSFI projects with the Wetlands CMB partnership project, AEWA and other organizations. The Advisory Board in cooperation with a wide range of organizations developed a flyway vision, which shall outline how to strengthen the cooperation with partners along the flyways.

It is essential for the protection of the migratory birds for which the Wadden Sea assumes a global responsibility that the cooperation on the flyway with regard to monitoring, protection and management and awareness is continued after the conclusion of the projects and is transformed into a long terms WSFI programme.

Nature Conservation and Management

7. **Adopt** the Wadden Sea Plan 2010 in Annex 1, as elaborated in accordance with §6 of the Schiermonnikoog Declaration.
8. **Acknowledge** the broad spectrum of harmonisation already achieved within the trilateral cooperation and its value added, in particular with regard to monitoring and assessment at an integrated ecosystem level.
9. **Focus** future harmonisation efforts on high priority challenges, for example climate change, invasive non-native species, decline of birds, and on fisheries, in the national implementation of the Birds, Habitats, Water Framework and Marine Strategy Framework Directives.

Harmonisation of high priority nature conservation issues has been done with regard to climate change, invasive species and fisheries. This has resulted in a common Strategy on adaptation to climate change, a common strategy on the control of invasive alien species and on common principles for sustainable fisheries. These issues are covered in more detail under the respective overall themes elsewhere in this report.

Despite conservation efforts on local, national and international level coastal breeding birds in the Wadden Sea are threatened. On the basis of annually published trends on breeding bird numbers and on trilateral expert analysis it has become certain that 2/3 of the trilaterally monitored breeding bird species are declining and some species are even on the brink of disappearance. The decrease can be attributed to low breeding success mainly caused by predators, disturbance and unfavorable water table management. Specific recommendations have been prepared for the management of threatened breeding bird species. Improving habitats by restoring water regimes, predator control and disturbing limiting measures are the proposed management measures.

10. **Support** the further development of integrated assessments and reporting in the framework of these Directives, including investigating the option of preparing a common integrated Natura 2000 Wadden Sea report.

The feasibility and added value of a common N2000 roof report have been investigated. It was concluded that there is very little room to move within the current system of reporting, which is to a high degree automated. Moreover, the national reporting does not provide information on specific areas, such as the Wadden Sea and is focused on individual species and habitat types.

11. **Increase** collaboration in relation to appropriate assessments under the Habitats Directive, and especially to exchange experience on the interpretation and application of site integrity, in combination effects and compensation measures.

The exchange of information necessary for comparing appropriate assessments has proven useful, in particular with regard to compensation measures. This activity will be continued aiming at exchanging best practices.

12. **Support** the start of necessary further developments of the Wadden Sea Plan during the Danish presidency, e.g. regarding the harmonized application of European legislation and taking account of the preliminary recommendations of the High Level Review study on strategic elements.

Several strategic elements for the further development of the Wadden Sea Plan have been developed, i.e. a Climate Adaptation Strategy, an Invasive Alien Species

Strategy, principles for sustainable fisheries, a TMAP strategy, a Shipping Vision, a Sustainable Tourism Strategy and a flyway vision. These elements will have to be integrated into a further developed Wadden Sea Plan, also taking due account of the World Heritage Status requirements and principles.

13. **Authorize** the Board to develop and adopt a programme of projects and measures for the forthcoming period to support the implementation and further development of the Wadden Sea Plan with a view to strengthen and, where necessary, also restore the natural functioning of the Wadden Sea, incorporating the appropriate actions and activities of this Declaration.

A programme of project and measures has been developed and adopted. The programme has provided guidance for a broad catalogue of priority activities carried out or initiated since the Sylt Conference.

14. **Welcome** the Guidance for Goose Management in the Wadden Sea Region as prepared under the leadership of the Wadden Sea Forum, in cooperation with the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation, and **declare** their willingness to support the development of a Goose Management Plan in cooperation with relevant authorities, to achieve a balanced management to accommodate geese in the Wadden Sea region.

A goose management plan has been developed under the guidance of the Wadden Sea Forum. A goose management framework scheme to accommodate geese in the Wadden Sea Region was elaborated, based upon the 2010 GMG-report. Due account was taken of existing national and international regulations and the fact that geese are a valued natural asset of the Wadden Sea Region. The main results, being an inventory of the geese populations in the Wadden Sea Region as well as recommendation how to accommodate geese, including a concrete action plan, have been submitted to TGC 13.

15. **Reaffirm** the guidelines concerning taking and releasing of seals from the Leeuwarden Declaration (§§60 and 61) and **instruct** the Board to update the Seal Management Plan, which will expire this year, for the period 2012 – 2016, based on an evaluation of the current Plan.

According to Article IV of the Seal Agreement the Parties were requested to develop, a conservation and management plan for the harbour seal population on the basis of scientific knowledge. This plan shall contain a comprehensive statement of actions which are or are to be undertaken by the Parties to achieve the goals of this Agreement. The Parties shall keep the plan under review and amend it as may be required, taking into consideration, the results of scientific research in particular. The Seal Management Plan (SMP) will be valid for the period 2012-16. Since the grey seal population increased significantly in recent years and its requirements in terms of habitat protection are similar to the harbour seal, it has been included in the SMP.

The protection of seals is a huge success owing also to the Seal Agreement which provides a coordinated framework for conservation and management. The close cooperation on the implementation of the Agreement should be continued. In view of the very successful increase in the population it is necessary to look at the rehabilitation practises in the different regions to ensure a continued healthy population.

Sustainable Use of the Wadden Sea

16. **Reaffirm** the concept of sustainable use as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity in protecting and conserving the ecological integrity of the Wadden Sea ecosystem, thus supporting lasting economic prosperity and social well-being.
17. **Acknowledge** promising developments of recent years towards sustainable fisheries, notably on shrimps and blue mussels, and ask the Board to develop Wadden Sea wide trilateral policy principles for a further development of sustainable fisheries, inter alia aiming at the consistent implementation of the Natura 2000 objectives, in close cooperation with the fisheries sector and nature NGOs.

A comprehensive overview of fisheries in the Wadden Sea was prepared, as well as an analysis of current fisheries practices for compliance with different forms of sustainability. It was concluded that fisheries in the Wadden Sea should comply with the principles of strong sustainability in order to be compatible with the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directive. Subsequently a catalogue of principles for strong sustainable fisheries was elaborated and [...]

Landscape and Cultural Heritage

18. **Acknowledge** that a comprehensive draft cultural landscape strategy has been developed in the framework of the LancwadPlan project. The cooperation on landscape and cultural heritage takes place to a large extent outside the Cooperation Area, for which the governments of The Netherlands, Germany and Denmark have declared their cooperation.
19. **Request** the Board to discuss and evaluate the draft strategy in order to decide together with the relevant regions upon whether or not parts of it may be accepted by the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation.
20. **Encourage** the competent authorities to develop the accepted parts into a trilateral policy provided that the principles and policies of the Wadden Sea Plan are reflected.

Two workshops have been held in 2011 and 2012 to discuss the follow up of the strategy. The 2011 workshop resulted in the adoption of an action plan of which the indicative planning was the central theme for the 2012 workshop. A joint project on indicative planning for the Wadden Sea is under preparation which in addition to making an inventory of the marine cultural heritage seeks integration with the natural heritage through innovative spatial planning. Also as a result of the 2011 workshop a brochure was published in 4 languages. The booklet "The Wadden Sea Region. A World Class cultural Landscape" made the results of a comparative analysis of the Wadden Sea Region with similar areas in the world public for a wider audience. The further work should continue to seek further integration between the natural and the cultural landscape through appropriate spatial planning, conservation measures and awareness building.

Climate, Sea Level Rise and Coastal Protection

21. **Concerned** that climate change and its consequences such as enhanced sea level rise, higher storm surges, increased temperatures and increasing sediment deficits will have impacts on the ecology and landscape of the Wadden Sea and may affect the safety of the inhabitants.
22. **Aware** of the long time scales of the processes and reactions involved, and thus of the urgent need to strengthen natural processes, to continue mitigation activities and to start concrete measures for adaptation to the expected impacts of climate change in the Wadden Sea Area and to ensure the safety of the inhabitants of the region and the ecological integrity.
23. **Aware** that more knowledge is needed for adaptation and mitigation measures and therefore **determined** to improve the trilateral knowledge base and **instruct** the Board to
 - Initiate a trilateral study on sustainable solutions to balance the expected sediment deficits on the basis of research questions specified by the CPSL.
 - Initiate 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.
 - Establish a working group focusing on increasing the adaptability of the Wadden Sea ecosystem and landscape to climate change, also responsible for coordinating and supervising the above studies.

A Task Group Climate (TG-C) was established, consisting of representatives of nature protection, coastal defense and spatial planning. TG-C has drafted a climate adaptation strategy for the Wadden Sea, also based upon the experiences made by the trilateral CPSL working group during the period 1998-2005. A central element of the strategy is the use of spatial planning tools to anticipate possible impacts of climate change.

TG-C has also initiated a study on sedimentation under the responsibility of coastal defense authorities. The first phase of the study has started in 2012 and focuses on sedimentation behaviour of different tidal basins under different sea level rise scenarios. First results indicate that [...]

24. **Support** the global and national efforts to mitigate causes of climate change at the regional level, by calling especially upon local and regional competent authorities and stakeholders, to work towards developing the Wadden Sea Region into a CO₂-neutral area by 2030 or before, putting the focus on the special threats for coastal zones by global warming and sea level rise.

Under the auspices of the Wadden Sea Forum an international energy symposium was held 3 June 2013. The symposium focused on energy transition and on the reduction of CO₂ emissions in the Wadden Sea Region. In this respect also management instruments such as emission trading, taxes as well as carbon capture and use were addressed. The recommendations of the Symposium were submitted to TGC-13.

Alien Species

25. **Support** the ongoing international efforts to prevent and manage alien species introductions *inter alia* by ratifying the 2004 International Convention for Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention) as soon as possible, but in all cases not later than 2013 and instruct the Board to investigate the possibility to get involved in already ongoing ballast water projects covering the Wadden Sea (e.g. the Interreg Project "North Sea Ballast Water Opportunity).

The BWM Convention has been ratified by all three Wadden Sea countries. Involvement in ballast water matters will be done through the LIFE project alien species (see below).

26. **Instruct** the Board to develop during the period until the next Ministerial Conference a common strategy for dealing with alien species introductions in the Wadden Sea, also taking account of the request of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and the BWM Convention.

A Strategy for the control of Alien Species in the Wadden Sea has been developed and submitted to TGC-13. In the coming years a management and action plan for the implementation of the Strategy will be developed. To this end a proposal has been submitted to the 2013 call of LIFE+ programme. The proposal covers all relevant marine vectors, i.e. ballast water, hull fouling, transport of shellfish and transport via bordering countries.

Shipping and Ship's Safety

27. **Acknowledge** the progress made in improving ship safety and reducing the environmental impact of shipping since the designation of the Wadden Sea Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) in 2002 by the IMO and the improvements resulting from the implementation of the Schiermonnikoog Declaration.
28. **Welcome** all efforts to reduce air emissions and water pollution in shipping and in the harbours in the Wadden Sea Region by e.g. the introduction of environmentally friendly energy and logistic infrastructure (so called "Clean Shipping Approach")
29. **Recognize** the importance of shipping to the Wadden Sea Region but also that it is necessary to continue to raise the awareness of the Wadden Sea as a PSSA and the ongoing efforts of the IMO and the EU to enhance the shipping safety and to reduce the environmental impact from shipping.
30. **Coordinate** and **handle** within the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme the collection of relevant shipping and environmental data for the Wadden Sea PSSA, taking into account existing data bases as SafeSeaNet in order to avoid additional effort.
31. **Coordinate** and **intensify** raising the awareness and education for the Wadden Sea PSSA and other relevant regulations to mariners and relevant stakeholders.
32. **Establish** within the already existing framework of the DenGerNeth Agreement the coordination mechanisms for issues related to the Wadden Sea PSSA.
33. **Encourage** the competent authorities to complete the entries concerning the Wadden Sea PSSA in charts.
34. **Enhance** the awareness of the shipping community for container losses. and support relevant studies concerning prevention of the loss of containers.
35. **Closely follow** the steps and outcome of the project "Sub-regional risk of spill of oil and hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea (BRISK)" under HELCOM and to **encourage** the competent authorities to consider to transfer the experiences and the methodological approach accordingly to the North Sea, taking into account the objectives and requirements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
36. **Reaffirm** the importance of shipping safety with respect to any offshore activity. The safety of shipping in the North Sea Area should be kept at least at the present level, irrespective of which kind of offshore development might occur, and where feasible be enhanced.
37. **Instruct** the Board to evaluate the interrelation and potential conflicts between the interests of shipping and wind energy production and their potential implications for the Wadden Sea ecosystem.
38. **Instruct** the Board to discuss the PSSA Evaluation Report and further steps of implementation with the relevant competent authorities and develop a vision on the impact of shipping and ship's safety on the Wadden Sea PSSA.

The Task Group Shipping was instructed by the Wadden Sea with the elaboration of a draft vision on maritime safety and pollution prevention from maritime traffic for the Wadden Sea PSSA. The Terms of Reference for the Task Group also encompassed the other relevant para's of the Declaration. Two stakeholder workshops have been held in 2011 and 2012 to discuss the 2010 PSSA Evaluation Report and develop a vision together with the stakeholders. The draft vision has been further operationalized with regard to prevention of accidents, preparedness and response in the case of accidents, operational pollution, information and awareness and cooperation. The vision including the package of operational measures lays a solid foundation for the cooperation around the Wadden Sea PSSA and for a continued enhancing of the maritime safety and the reduction of pollution also in the view of the anticipated increase of maritime traffic off the Wadden Sea World Heritage.

Communication

39. **Convinced** that the perception of and the identification with the Wadden Sea as a shared ecological and cultural heritage constitute an essential basis for a successful Wadden Sea protection in the long term, and therefore **strengthen** the communication about the Trilateral Wadden Sea and the Cooperation, in particular regarding the World Heritage Site and the Danish and Hamburg National Parks, by developing a trilateral communication strategy, which should include the activities of the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS), and **enable** the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat accordingly to fulfill these tasks.

In 2011 a Communication Officer was employed at the secretariat with the specific task to develop a communication strategy and to further the communication activities of the secretariat and coordinate the IWSS activities. The Communication Strategy was approved by the Wadden Sea Board in 2013 following an extensive inventory of the current communication and the communication needs of stakeholders. The development of the Strategy was made financially possible by Germany. It is essential for the Cooperation and the further developments of the Wadden Sea World Heritage that the Communication Strategy will continue to be implemented.

In the framework of the Trilateral Communications Strategy the IWSS plays a key role for achieving general acceptance and popularity of the aims of the TWSC. The strategy proposes to continue the successful work of the IWSS with the aid of the existing means of communication, but also to enlarge the circle of recipients. The IWSS has in the past period developed some high level products such as the small booklet on the different “fives” and posters for school classes. The past period has however shown that the current organizational framework is not an appropriate and effective one and therefore needs to be reconsidered. The IWSS serves a much broader audience than is possible to for an inter-governmental organization and demands a competent pedagogic and almost full time background which is not currently available at the CWSS. The IWSS must therefore be given back to the working field and WWF has offered to host its coordination.

Monitoring, Assessment and Scientific Research

40. **Aware** that an acceleration of global change entails unprecedented effects on the geomorphology and biodiversity of the Wadden Sea ecosystem, and that in order to be able to cope with these changes, a joint interdisciplinary research agenda for the protection of natural values and the development of sustainable use perspectives in a changing world is needed.

A trilateral research agenda has been elaborated in close consultation with the Dutch Waddenacademie, based upon the major topical trilateral policy issues and the availability of knowledge. The recommendations of the 13th scientific Wadden Sea symposium have played an important role in developing the agenda. The research agenda was submitted to TGC-13 and will guide the development of trilateral research projects.

41. **Support** the establishment of a trilateral research platform preferably directly connected with existing national networks. The platform will elaborate a trilateral agenda for policy-relevant research in consultation with the Board, based upon the QSR analysis and the outcome of the scientific symposium, and initiate trilateral research projects, explore financing possibilities, and communicate the outcome with the Wadden Sea Board.

The 13th scientific Wadden Sea symposium recommended making the concept of safeguarding “ecosystem integrity” operational through delivering the scientific basis for managing cross border challenges, in particular

- Invasive alien species and biodiversity

- Impacts of sea level rise and sedimentation
- Bird population developments along the Flyway

Several options for establishing a trilateral research platform have been investigated. [...]

42. **Reconfirm** the central importance of the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP), which was further revised to fit the requirements of relevant EC Directives as stipulated in the Schiermonnikoog Declaration, as the indispensable basis for the joint status assessment and the successful management of the Wadden Sea as a single ecological entity.
43. **Reconfirm** the continuation of TMAP and **incorporate**, as necessary, parameters to develop TMAP in order to facilitate an integrated assessment across the relevant EC Directives and better monitor new challenges, e.g. climate change and its impacts, and agree on a long term development strategy to increase its value to a wider range of stakeholders.

A Strategy for the continuation and further development of the TMAP was elaborated and submitted for adoption to TGC-13. On the basis of the strategy a working plan for the TMAG was drafted, focusing on monitoring new challenges. Work has started on the development of a trilateral information system, through which the information generated by the TMAP will be made available for a wider range of stakeholders. The information system will be further developed in the coming years.

Wadden Sea Forum

44. **Take into account** the activities and recommendations by the Wadden Sea Forum on sustainable development and participatory processes, in particular with regard to
 - The development of a sustainability indicator tool for the Region
 - The further development of ICZM and marine spatial planning
 - Future energy generation developments along and adjacent to the Wadden Sea
 - Trilateral goose management
 - The inscription of the Dutch-German Wadden Sea as a World Heritage site.
45. **Support** the cooperation with WSF as an independent stakeholder organisation for the period 2011-2013 with a focus on the elaboration of joint projects regarding integrated management and the protection of the Wadden Sea and **welcome** the mutual exchange of information, ideas and visions and **acknowledge** the function to act as a platform for developing conflict solutions.

The Wadden Sea Forum continued its work and has held several meetings since the last Conference. The work has focused on the issues indicated and the Forum has delivered a progress report to the Conference with several suggestions for future issues.

International Cooperation

46. **Welcome** the aim of the OSPAR Ministerial Meeting 2010 to further develop the ecosystem approach for the Northeast Atlantic Ocean, as well their contribution to the further specification of the Good Environmental Status (GES) definition under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, because both activities are highly relevant for the protection of the Wadden Sea, which is the world's largest tidal flat ecosystem and World Heritage site
47. **Offer** to support these activities by contributing the extensive experience of the Wadden Sea states with integrated ecosystem management and sustainable human use in a transboundary context.
48. **Continue** the cooperation with Korea in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding, concluded in 2009 with emphasis on information exchange and capacity building.
49. **Acknowledge** the ongoing cooperation with WWF WAMER for sustainable development of the West African Ecoregion, which plays a key role for migratory birds passing through the Wadden Sea.

50. **Continue** the exchange of information and experiences on the Wadden Sea and the Wash North Norfolk Coast with Natural England in the framework of the Memorandum of Intent, concluded in 1991.

WWF WAMER

The cooperation with WWF WAMER ended in 2011 on the expiration of the contract which had been concluded in 2006. The project achieved basically all the objectives set and produced a number of very good outcomes such as supporting the nature management of several reserves in West Africa, capacity building of managers and school books. The experiences of the project have been collated and are now used in the Wadden Sea Flyway initiative which has established itself as the appropriate cooperation forum.

Korea

The joint activities with Korea in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (2009) focusing on three topics: 1) information, awareness and environmental education, 2) policy and management, and 3) monitoring and research (migratory birds, benthos, monitoring strategies). Since 2009, managers, scientists and NGOs from the Wadden Sea and Korea participated in nine joint workshops or conferences which have resulted in good cooperation and exchange of experiences on the working level¹. This cooperation was also communicated at international conferences such as Ramsar, CBD and IUCN and acknowledged as a model for exchange. It also underlines the global importance of tidal mud flats e.g. as stopover for migrating birds and significance for biodiversity, and the joint responsibility for its protection in the framework of the World Heritage Convention

Wash

The cooperation between the Wash-northern Norfolk Coast and the Wadden Sea is based on the Memorandum of Intent signed in 1991 (§ 43 Esbjerg Declaration). In the period 1995 – 2000 the exchange focused on management and monitoring and the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive. The work programme adopted in 2007 included best practice exchange in implementing the Water Framework Directive, on conditions required for sustainable fisheries and assessment of offshore wind farm developments. The UK and Wadden Sea experts participated in various relevant workshops and conferences.

In 2012, a Wadden Sea delegation visited the Wash-Northern Norfolk coast to exchange knowledge on coastal protection, management and monitoring and to identify fields for future cooperation and mutual exchange. The study visit resulted in a draft working document which identified contact persons and proposed activities for specific work fields such as World Heritage, invasive species, monitoring, climate change, fisheries, offshore wind energy, management and EU Directives.

¹ More information see Korea MoU evaluation (in prep.)

Cooperation 2010 – 13

51. **Thank** Germany for chairing the Cooperation during a prolonged period of time.
52. **Welcome** the chairmanship of Denmark for the forthcoming period 2010 – 2013.
53. **Hold** the next Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea and the regular Trilateral Governmental Council meeting in 2013 on the invitation of the Danish Government.
54. **Hold** the 13th International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium in 2012 in the Netherlands on the invitation of the Dutch Government.

The Conference was postponed from 2013 to the beginning of 2014 to take account of the work on the nomination of the Danish Wadden Sea for inscription on the World Heritage List. The Netherlands will assume the presidency after the Conference for a three year period. The next Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea and the regular Trilateral Governmental Council meeting should be held (at the end of) 2017 in the Netherlands in accordance with the tri-annual schedule stipulated in the Joint Declaration.

The International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposia have proved to be a valuable platform for science and policy exchange. The 14th Symposium should be held in Denmark roughly a year in advance of the 2017 Conference.

4. Outlook 2014-2017

(an assessment of the progress made in conjunction with the assessment of the ecosystem and overall policy recommendations for the next period in terms of the issues to be addressed in the Declaration)

As indicated in the introduction, the past period has been a very busy and demanding period but also a very fruitful and successful one. The progress on the implementation of 2010 Declaration is a very positive one. The very large majority of the agreements have been implemented and the overall outcome has shaped Wadden Sea policy and management in the past period.

(Assessment)

It is clear from the above that the inscription on the World Heritage List is a unique recognition of the Wadden Sea and that the inscription once the whole property is anticipated to be on the List as of mid 2014 will not only reinforce the joint protection and management of the Wadden Sea but also opens up for new unprecedented opportunities for sustainable development. The Wadden Sea World Heritage should constitute the core of the Wadden Sea Cooperation in the future taking account of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and support and promote regional sustainable development.