

Wadden Sea Board

WSB 8
9-10 October 2013
Groningen



Agenda Item:	6
Subject:	Progress Report World Heritage
Document No.	WSB 9/6/1
Date:	25 September 2013
Submitted by:	TG-WH

Attached is the progress report by the Task Group World Heritage (TG-WH) with an overview of the activities since WSB 8.

Proposal

The meeting is referred to the document.

MEETING WADDEN SEA BOARD 9-10 OCTOBER 2013. PROGRESS REPORT WADDEN SEA WORLD HERITAGE.

1. Objective

The objective of the progress report by the Task Group World Heritage (TG-WH) is to provide the Wadden Sea Board with an overview of the activities since WSB 8 and request the Board to agree in principle to a twinning arrangement.

2. Field Mission

The IUCN field mission 19-23 August 2013 to evaluate the Danish-German Wadden Sea World Heritage extension nomination was implemented very satisfactorily thanks to the preparation by the Danish and German authorities in collaboration with the Task Group.

During the final session on Friday 23 August 2013 at the CWSS the evaluators summarized their impressions of the field mission. It is worthwhile to briefly summarize their observations in order to provide an assessment of what might be requested in terms of additional information by the IUCN and to align positions.

Overall, the evaluators commended the conservation and management of the nominated property, the high level of expertise, the many high standard information centres and the inclusive consultations in connection with the nomination. Also the nominated property has unquestionably Outstanding Universal Value but in terms of the integrity there were a number of issues which raised concern, in particular

- The use of the beaches on the Danish islands of Fanø and Rømø by cars
- Military activities on the northern part of the island of Rømø and the associated high noise level
- The status and authority of the Danish Wadden Sea national park and its financial solidity
- Fishery within the highest protection zone in particular the lack of information on the possible impact of shrimp fishery
- The external impacts on the property including wind parks outside the property associated with cable laying across the property.

As regards the further procedure, the report of the evaluators will be delivered to the IUCN World Heritage panel which will meet in December to assess all the information gathered in the context of the evaluation. As a result of the meeting of the panel additional information may be requested by the IUCN. This may however also be requested before the meeting of the panel to inform its deliberations. Supplementary information, when requested, must be finally delivered until the 28th of February (Operational Guidelines Para. 148 h).

TG-WH should be tasked with coordinating the process leading up to the World Heritage Committee session in June 2014 including any follow up activities such as a possible request for supplementary information.

3. Flyway Twinning

As reported at WSB 8, the CWSS was invited to a UNESCO World Heritage Centre mission to Banc d'Arguin in March this year in the context of the Marine Programme to consider cooperation between the two properties. The CWSS was further invited to a similar mission to the Tubataha coral reef in the Philippines in May, in particular to discuss sustainable tourism development.

The cooperation between Banc d'Arguin and the Wadden Sea World Heritage properties has been discussed regularly with the Centre since the mission. The Wadden Sea is now assisting with a feasibility study which the Centre has commissioned for both the Banc d'Arguin and the Tubataha because of the long terms experience with PSSA in the Wadden Sea context.

As regards the more formal twinning arrangement it has been indicated that this should be embedded within the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) and be open to other relevant properties. The World Heritage Centre, however, strongly proposes and anticipates that a formal agreement should be signed in general as an input to the work of the Convention, in particular to the Marine Programme as drivers for global conservation. The Centre has indicated that it is willing to facilitate this process and to pay for a person to attend the Tønder Conference to sign a twinning agreement.

A twinning arrangement of World Heritage properties has already been signed in the Pacific between the Phoenix Islands Marine Protected Area and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. This agreement is titled "Towards a Strategic Management Alliance". It is focussed on site management and signed on the management level, i.e. on the level of the respective management authorities.

In order to display good will it is proposed that a twinning arrangement between the Wadden Sea and the Banc d'Arguin World Heritage properties is signed under the conditions that

- The agreement will be embedded within the WSFI follow up and will contribute to its aims and activities and hence be a mutual agreement to reinforce World Heritage activities, contribute to the Convention and reinforce site management activities
- Will be an agreement in future open for other relevant properties along the flyway, e.g. both in West Africa as well as in the Arctic
- Will include no financial commitments or a work plan at this stage; this has to be discussed in the follow up of the implementation of the agreement

The next meeting of the Marine Programme involving all marine World Heritage Sites will be held on Corsica 18-20 October 2013. It is proposed that this occasion is used to explore the twinning arrangement and instruct the secretary accordingly and report to WSB 10.

4. Information Request Mining

Following a letter for the Dutch Wadden Society on behalf of a number of Dutch nature conservation organizations on the salt mining under the western Dutch Wadden Sea near the harbour of Harlingen, the World Heritage Centre has requested information from the Netherlands government in accordance with paragraph 174 of the Operational Guidelines on the potential impact of the activity on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property to allow the Centre to verify the source and contents of the information.

The Wadden Sea World Heritage is one and undivided and since such request in principle concerns the property as such it has been agreed that the draft reply should be consulted within TG-WH.

5. Proposal

In summary, WSB is proposed to

- (1) Task TG-WH with coordinating the process leading up to the World Heritage Committee session in June 2014 including any follow up activities such as a possible request for supplementary information.
- (2) Authorize the secretary to discuss a twinning agreement with the Banc d'Arguin on the occasion of the Marine World Heritage Conference on Corsica under the conditions outlined and report to WSB 10.
- (3) Note the information on the World Heritage Centre information request on salt mining.