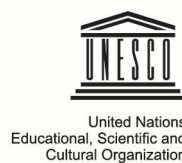


**Wadden Sea World Heritage**

**One Year of Inscription of  
“Our Wadden Sea World Heritage”**

**Progress Report**  
July 2010



Wadden Sea World Heritage Project Group  
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

## **WADDEN SEA WORLD HERITAGE. ONE YEAR AFTER THE INSCRIPTION**

### **Progress Report on the Activities and Initiatives since the Inscription of the Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List**

#### **1. Introduction**

After 20 years of preparation of the nomination and with the support of the region the Dutch-German Wadden Sea was inscribed on the World Heritage List on 26 June 2009, by decision of the World Heritage Committee at its 33<sup>rd</sup> session in Seville. The inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List under the World Heritage Convention represents the highest global recognition of a natural area in its kind, and the acknowledgment and appreciation by the world community of the responsible state parties and its inhabitants to protect and conserve its Outstanding Universal Values.

The inscription of the Wadden Sea on the exclusive World Heritage List is a unique opportunity to promote the site and sustainable development, and to further regional development. The inscription on the List also encompasses the commitment of the state parties to ensure that the outstanding universal value and the conditions of integrity at the time of the inscription are maintained or enhanced in the future. These conditions are included in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the property, adopted by the Committee and the basis for its future protection and management.

There has been a tremendous support for the nomination of the Wadden Sea and full awareness of the commitments following the inscription from all stakeholders. The follow-up by all key stakeholders involved has been amazing and the developments since the inscription has demonstrated that there is a determination among the key stakeholders to make this a further success story and to make use of the benefits of the inscription.

On 19 June 2010, the inscription certificate was handed over to Ms Verburg, the Dutch Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, by the Deputy Director of the World Heritage Center Mr Rao at a celebration event on the Dutch Wadden Sea on the occasion of the Dutch World Heritage weekend. In the event, representatives of basically all Dutch stakeholders participated, being a further token of how well the designation has been received and supported. In autumn, the inscription ceremony will be held for the German part.

This report briefly outlines the initiatives and activities that have been taken by the state parties and the stakeholders since the inscription of the site in the field of the political follow up of the decision of the World Heritage Committee, and in terms of information, communication and marketing.

#### **2. Follow up Decisions World Heritage Committee**

In addition to the decision to inscribe the Dutch-German Wadden Sea on the List under natural criteria viii, ix and x and the associated Statement of Outstanding Universal Value the World Heritage Committee also decided

- to encourage Denmark to nominate its part of the Wadden Sea as soon as feasible to complement the existing Property;
- to request the elaboration and implementation of a Tourism Development Strategy,
- to implement a strict monitoring program to control invasive species associated with ballast waters and aquaculture in the Property, and;

- to request Germany and the Netherlands to strengthen cooperation on management and research activities with States Parties on the African Eurasian Flyways.

## 2.1 Wadden Sea Conference 2010

The inscription of the Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List had a prominent place in the preparation of the 11<sup>th</sup> Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea, which was held on the island of Sylt, 17 – 18 March 2010. In the following, the key decisions of the Ministerial Council meeting are briefly outlined. These decisions can be considered a general follow up of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

The Sylt Declaration, adopted at the Ministerial Council meeting, welcomed the inscription of the Dutch-German Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List under natural criteria (viii), (ix) and (x). It acknowledged that the Statement of OUV, adopted by the Committee and 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.

In addition to addressing the further four decisions of the Committee the Declaration encompasses a package of decisions and agreements which aims to meet the future challenges and to improve the conservation and management of the Wadden Sea also in the sense of the Statement of OUV. In particular should be mentioned:

- Adoption of the (updated) 2010 Wadden Sea Plan, which was aligned with requirements of the World Heritage designation, and an agreement to improve the joint conservation and management in the coming period including common assessment.
- Elaboration of a Goose Management Plan in consultation with the relevant authorities;
- Development of Wadden Sea wide trilateral policy principles for a further development of sustainable fisheries.
- A programme of measures and studies to address adaptation to the expected impacts of climate change in the Wadden Sea Area including working towards developing the Wadden Sea Region into a CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral area by 2030 or before.
- Measures to improve shipping safety of the Wadden Sea Particularly Sensitive Sea Area.
- Improved cooperation in the field of monitoring, assessment and scientific research aiming at the establishment of a trilateral research platform preferably directly connected with existing national networks.
- Continued international cooperation.

A highlight of the Conference was the signing of the 2010 Joint Declaration on the Protection of the Wadden Sea. The 2010 Joint Declaration replaces the Joint Declaration, signed at the 1982 Wadden Sea Conference in Copenhagen, which had become progressively outdated. The 2010 Declaration will not alter the spirit or legal status of the Cooperation. This will remain a formal (but not legally binding) Cooperation between the governments of the three countries. In conjunction with the signing of the 2010 Joint Declaration new governance structures were launched and replaced the existing structures. The Trilateral Wadden Sea Board is the governing body of the Cooperation. Peter Ilsøe, Denmark, was appointed by the ministers as the first chairman of the Board.

The Sylt Declaration, the 2010 Joint Declaration and the Governance Arrangements can be found at <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/tgc/TGC-Sylt-2010.html>.

Following the Sylt Conference, the Wadden Sea Board held its first meeting. At the meeting, the Strategy for the Cooperation for the next 6-year period was adopted and the draft

Business Plan implementing the Sylt Declaration in conjunction with the Strategy and the establishment of Task Groups and expert network groups were discussed.

## **2.2 Extension of the Property**

On the decision of the Committee to encourage the extension of the property with the Danish part, it was agreed to start in the forthcoming period a possible nomination of the Danish Wadden Sea in accordance with the 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 state government, already in advance of the Sylt Conference, decided to nominate its part of the Wadden Sea as early as possible, preferably as part of a full extension nomination. Should this, however, not be possible, the state government intends to pursue the nomination in order to have a nomination submitted at the earliest possible date.

The draft statutory order on the designation of the Danish Wadden Sea as a national park is currently subject to a public consultation. The designation of the national park will establish the preconditions for a nomination and it is expected that soon after the inauguration of the national park, scheduled for mid October 2010, a prompt start can be made with the first steps of the nomination. It is the intention to have a joint nomination submitted within the forthcoming period and have the possible inscription accepted in 2013 in advance of the next Wadden Sea Conference to be held in autumn that year.

## **2.3 Sustainable Tourism**

As a follow up of the request of the World Heritage Committee to prepare and implement an overall Tourism Development Strategy for the property that fully considers the integrity and ecological requirements of the property and that provides a consistent approach to tourism operations in the property, it was agreed at the Sylt Conference to authorize the Board to initiate and organize the development of an overall Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy for the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site which should also cover the Danish Wadden Sea National Park.

In autumn 2009, a Tourism Strategy Group (TSG) was established with representatives from the state parties, the tourism sector and green NGOs. The group has been tasked to develop a sustainable tourism strategy for Wadden Sea World Heritage Site. The work on the development of the strategy started in February 2010 with support of external experts (NIT Kiel, Kenniscentrum Recreatie Den Haag), by preparing an inventory of existing relevant tourism strategies in Germany and the Netherlands, as well as on EU and international level, including experiences from other WH sites.

The TSG discussed objectives, principles, work field and organizational aspects of the strategy which will be used as starting point for the development of the strategy in a participatory process with all stakeholders in 2010/2011. The Terms of Reference for the development of the strategy in the context of a joint project are under elaboration and will be adopted at the WSB meeting in October. The project is intended to be launched immediately afterwards.

## **2.4 Alien Species**

The request of the Committee to implement a strict monitoring program to control invasive species associated with ballast waters and aquaculture in the Property was also addressed in the Sylt Declaration. The Board was instructed to develop, over 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 requests of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and the International Convention for Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments.

The implementation of this decision will have priority in the next period. In this context the annual International Wadden Sea Day conference on 26 August 2010 is devoted to neobiota in the Wadden Sea. The conference has the aim to provide insights in recent research and management projects along the Wadden Sea coast, to assess the possible threat to the World Heritage and to discuss with scientists and managers how new challenges by marine alien species can be met by trilateral policy and management.

## **2.5 Flyway Cooperation**

In response to the request of the Committee to strengthen cooperation on management and research activities with States Parties on the African Eurasian Flyways it has been agreed in the Sylt Declaration to 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 and establish cooperation for the protection and management of migratory birds relying on the Wadden Sea.

Monitoring of migratory birds in the Wadden Sea has a long tradition and is of a world class standard. In the context of monitoring some outstanding products such as the annual trend, estimated for migratory and breeding birds, are produced. Based on the monitoring of migratory birds there is also a long tradition for cooperation along the flyway. Some 10 years ago the Wadden Sea Cooperation supported the monitoring of migratory birds and capacity building in Guinea Bissau through a project agreed in the context of a MoU concluded between Guinea Bissau and the Wadden Sea Cooperation. In the second project period, the project was implemented through Wetlands International. The project was highly successful in spite of the very difficult circumstances under which the project was implemented. For the first time, the project brought evidence of the critical importance of the Guinea Bissau archipelago for migratory birds being much more important than earlier estimated. The project further set a standard for capacity building of local people with regard to monitoring of birds and education of the local communities.

Since the 2005 Wadden Sea Conference, the Cooperation supports a project for sustainable development in the West African Ecoregion through the WWF (WAMER). Governmental and non-governmental organizations cooperate in the regional program for a coastal program (Programme Regional de Conservation de la Zone Cotière et Marine en Afrique de l'Ouest – PRCM) covering the West African states of Mauritania, Cap Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the knowledge of birds, their protection and their habitats as well as the development of recreational bird watching in marine protected area (MPA) and its periphery including informing and sensitizing the population. The specific objectives of the project are

- to implement appropriate measures for the management of birds and their habitats for integrated governance MPA;
- to develop and coordinate a program of monitoring, research and risk management of birds in specific MPAs, a.o. Banc d'Arguin;
- to develop and make an operational program of information, awareness and education for multiple targets (resource users, local people, managers, schools, government, NGOs, civil society).

PRCM Conferences are held every 18 months. The Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) participated in the last two conferences in Guinea Bissau and Mauritania. The conferences are in addition to the exchange of information on ongoing activities and projects essential for further networking of activities and organizations in the West African context which is a key area for Wadden Sea migratory birds on the flyway. At the recently held

PRCM Conference in Nouakchott, Mauritania, the first Environmental Ministers Conference was held in which also the secretary of the CWSS participated.

Since last year's inscription further consideration has been given on how to implement the request of the World Heritage Committee. The migratory birds expert group has developed a proposal for further monitoring activities on the flyway. In the context of the Dutch Wadden Sea nature recovery program, it is the aim to focus also on flyway management in cooperation with the other partner in the Wadden Sea Cooperation. Contacts have been established with the secretariat of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) to align with the activities of the agreement. It is the intention to hold a meeting with all involved partners in autumn to discuss the implementation of the request to ensure a coordinated implementation of the activities.

### **3. Communication and Marketing Wadden Sea Heritage.**

#### **3.1 Stakeholder Cooperation**

The work in the period since the inscription between the key stakeholders has been based on mutually agreed action plans and resulted in a number of concrete products and working arrangements including a cooperation structure.

As indicated above a comprehensive information and communication program was launched on the day of the decision of the World Heritage Committee, 26 June 2009 based on the Communication and Marketing Action Plan agreed with the stakeholders in advance of the inscription. The program encompassed the following main elements:

- (1) The Wadden Sea World Heritage website in three languages with key information on the site, the key nomination documents, the IUCN evaluation report including the decision of the Committee, and the published news and press releases.
- (2) A trailer to celebrate the inscription of the Wadden Sea on the List and present the property in a wider context. The trailer is included on the website and available for all key stakeholders.
- (3) A leaflet in Dutch, German and English and three posters with different motives to inform the wider community. The leaflet has been printed in almost 300,000 copies.
- (4) Flags and banners.

The inscription was also celebrated at various meetings and events along the coast with the stakeholders involved. The inscription obtained a substantial attention in the media both the regional as well as the national and international media.

Following the inscription of the Wadden Sea on the List and the launch of the information campaign on the property a Communication and Marketing Action Plan was launched with the stakeholders for the period until the Sylt Conference. The main aims of the plan were to follow up on, strengthen and extend the already launched activities and develop new ones, to integrate the ongoing information and education activities into the World Heritage activities, to follow up on the decision of the World Heritage Committee on the development of sustainable tourism strategy and to further strengthen and extend the stakeholder network cooperation. The action plan was intended to bridge the period until the Sylt Conference in March 2010 at which the lines for the next three year period would be set out.

The Action Plan September 2009 – March 2010 focused on four main actions:

- The further development of the [www.waddensea-worldheritage.org](http://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org) as a first class website portal for an electronic gateway to the site to serve stakeholders and the wider community.
- The development of a joint World Heritage Brand including a Corporate Design/Logo for the site, externally to be used also for stakeholders.
- The development of a tourism marketing strategy for the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site within a sustainable tourism approach.
- The further development and enhancement of the awareness and education of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site for inhabitants and visitors through continued common interpretation activities.

In the framework of the Action Plan a work structure has been established with advisory and working groups linked to each of the actions. The groups have met several times in addition to two plenary stakeholder meetings. The outcome of the work has been reported to the Wadden Sea World Heritage project group which has provided the necessary support to facilitate the process.

The stakeholders have given full support to the Action Plan and worked enthusiastically in the various groups to implement the agreements. The work has laid a firm foundation for the next three-year Communication and Marketing Action Program.

### **3.2 Wadden Sea World Heritage Website**

The website <http://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/> has been improved and further developed by Interwad, the Dutch organization which operates the site on behalf of the CWSS, and was relaunched on the occasion of the Sylt Conference. The website is now a state of the art website supporting the main target groups, - authorities, tourism organizations and information centers - in three languages with new functions and an up-to-date map function to help visitors to navigate in the area. The website will be further improved to serve target groups more effectively.

### **3.3 Wadden Sea World Heritage Logo**

A new joint Wadden Sea World Heritage logo was selected in a creative competition with participation from Dutch and German agencies and design professionals. Over 35 proposals were submitted which were assessed by a jury consisting of representatives of all stakeholders during April and May. The logo has been designed to communicate the property consistently and as one trans-boundary entity in all regions through a broad number of stakeholders both government as well as non-government organizations. It is protected under the international World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) act, and use of the WSWH logo is only allowed after written permission by the CWSS on behalf of the State Parties and Länder.

The selection of a common logo/brand for the Wadden Sea World Heritage is evidence of the engagement of people in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site. The guidelines for the use of the logo are under development.

### **3.4 Joint Campaign**

A joint campaign has recently been launched as a follow up of the 2009 campaign to further enhance the awareness of the Wadden Sea World Heritage and to create pride and enthusiasm among key target groups. Specifically, the goals are to increase the public awareness for the universal values of the property, to support nature conservation and sustainable tourism and intensify the cooperation between all stakeholders. Publicis Hamburg was selected to implement the campaign after a creative competition in which 11 communication agencies participated of which 5 presented a pitch.

The specific long-term mission of the campaign is to build the Wadden Sea Brand Equity to the benefit of the conservation and management of the property, of the inhabitants of the

coastal region, and present and future visitors. The budget for the campaign for 2010 is around € 100,000 and it is intended to repeat and expand the campaign in the coming years.

### **3.5 Communication and Marketing Program 2010 – 13**

The Wadden Sea Board has been authorized to adopt a Communication and Marketing Program 2010 – 13 for the property. This program is under elaboration by the Wadden Sea World Heritage Project Group and builds upon and continues the work launched in the period since the inscription of the property on the List. Three objectives have preliminarily been set:

- To further promote and enhance the protection, management and awareness of the property;
- To further promote and advance stakeholder cooperation and networking to strengthen the common responsibility for the site;
- To promote, support and benefit from national and international cooperation and awareness on World Heritage.

In addition to the outlined joint activities numerous activities have been initiated regionally in the field of marketing, such as the “Big/Small Five” campaign in Schleswig-Holstein and organized trips for the press. An important activity has been to enhance the qualification of the staff of information centers and tourism offices in the region through targeted information programs.

The Wadden Sea World Heritage designation has been subject to extensive media attention in news papers and on television and other media, both regionally as well as nationally. In addition several presentations have been made by the staff of the secretariat and others not only at regional conferences and meetings but also at international ones on the topics the Wadden Sea World Heritage designation, the implications and the opportunities and challenges such a designation offers.

## **4. Information and Education**

All Wadden Sea information centers have been invited at a workshop on 8 February 2010 to develop joint activities covering World Heritage elements for exhibitions, excursions and qualification of staff, for inclusion in the overall communication action plan 2010 – 2013. At the meeting, it was agreed to jointly develop an information module which can easily be copied by the various centers. The module must be integrated into the existing information and communication structures.

The concepts which are under development consist of a basic information module with can be expanded depending on available room and needs of the user:

- 1) A basic information module consists of about f 1x1 m width and a height of 2 m (models for indoor and outdoor use) with information about the World Heritage (see the World Heritage flyer of 2009). Simple, mechanical and robust interactive tools could be included.
- 2) A basic information module, extended with a touch screen/PC or other electronic devices (for indoor use).
- 3) Extension modules with additional interactive/PC elements with themes additional to the basic module.

Potential users of the basic module are information centers, tourist information centers, municipalities and others. Each national version will also contain English text (for foreign visitors). If a touch screen is used, all four languages (English, German, Dutch, Danish) should be available. The module will inform on the World Heritage Site, express uniqueness



of the site and pride. It will be an eye catcher - a kind of a "trophy" which makes it more distinguishable from existing exhibition elements.

The Lower Saxony Environmental Ministry supports the development of basic info modules which include the production of prototypes and equipment with the module of all 16 national park info centers in Lower Saxony. The info module will be developed in cooperation with Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein and the Netherlands.

The activities of the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS) [www.iwss.org](http://www.iwss.org) have been integrated into the World Heritage concept. It is the intention to further extend the IWSS educational program for the property.

## 5. Organization

The organization which has developed in the period before the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List has been continued. It consists of:

- Wadden Sea World Heritage Group  
The Wadden Sea World Heritage Group is the work group established by the responsible states to prepare the nomination and to coordinate and oversee the follow up activities.
- Wadden Sea World Heritage Stakeholder Forum  
The Wadden Sea World Heritage Stakeholder Forum is the principal consultation body for discussing matters related to the Wadden Sea World Heritage; it expresses the joint responsibility for the protection and management of the site by all stakeholders in the sense of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value; it oversees and provides input to all activities around the World Heritage Site.
- Working Groups  
The Stakeholder Forum appoints working groups to prepare and undertake specific tasks, plans or projects defined within the working areas, such as the Tourism Strategy Group and the Logo/Corporate design work group.

The CWSS continues to serve as the secretariat for the Wadden Sea World Heritage activities, facilitates and coordinates the activities of the World Heritage Group, Forum and task and work groups. A Communication Officer will be employed at the CWSS to develop an overall communication strategy in order to enhance and coordinate communication around the Wadden Sea property.

The organization may change in the future in consequence of the implementation of the new Governance Arrangements referred to in chapter 3.1.

In each of the three regions, a regional coordination group has been established or continued to oversee and coordinate the regional activities and to serve as a link and coordination mechanism between the regional and trans-boundary level. The regional coordination groups are facilitated by the responsible regional authorities.

## 6. Outlook Wadden Sea World Heritage

The first year of the inscription of the Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List has been an amazing year. The inscription has created an incredible enthusiasm and pride among stakeholders, residents and visitors to the region and an awareness of the uniqueness of the property far beyond its boundaries.

The follow up of the decisions of the World Heritage Committee has been swift and substantial. The acknowledgment of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the future protection and management of the property is critically important and will be the framework for the work of the Wadden Sea Cooperation. Also the extension of the property with the Danish and the Hamburg parts has come much closer and can be foreseen in the next three-year period until the 2013 Wadden Sea Conference.

The Netherlands have comprehensively responded to the inquiry of the World Heritage Center on the construction of the waste incineration installation in Harlingen. The installation is located outside the property and the environmental impact assessments have demonstrated that it will not have impact on the values of the property.

A very delightful and essential development has been the joint cooperation between governments and non-government organizations to actively promote the property and the close cooperation with regard to all joint activities. The development of the joint campaign, the elaboration of a Sustainable Tourism Strategy and the cooperation between the information centers has laid the foundation for further, more extensive cooperation between the stakeholders for the benefit of the property and regional activities. This is a clear and unmistakable sign of the shared responsibility for the property.

The activities in the first year of the inscription have confirmed that the real work starts after the designation on the List. The results reached in the first year have been promising and the Wadden Sea World Heritage will have a prominent place in all future activities, initiatives and cooperation arrangements.