

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 42)

23 November 2023
Wilhelmshaven, Germany



Agenda Item:	5.3 Manage and communicate effectively (paras 44-56)
Subject:	Wadden Sea World Heritage Brand
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Submitted by:	CWSS

As mentioned in the Wilhelmshaven declaration (§ 56) has the Wadden Sea World Heritage Brand to be adequately managed for nature conservation.

To develop a strategy on Brand Management for the TWSC, the UK based company [ASHA](#) were invited to support in reviewing all brand management activities in the Wadden Sea and to recommend a brand hierarchy that will structure our visibility within the TWSC work for the future.

The session at WSB 42 will include a summary of the key findings of the Diagnostics phase of the project, followed by a presentation of the recommended Brand Architecture System, for review and agreement by the WSB.

Additional recommendations will be made by ASHA covering other initiatives required to maximize the effectiveness and more fully realise the potential of the WSWH brand to promote the importance and conservation of the Wadden Sea World Heritage site.

Proposal: The meeting is invited to note and discuss the results and implications of the study presented in person by representatives from ASHA&Co.

Place Brand Architecture Management Strategy - Board Paper by ASHA & Co

Introduction

The WSWH Place Brand Architecture & Management Strategy project was initiated to create a bold, future-focused, and compelling Wadden Sea World Heritage place brand architecture & management system. The purpose of this is to serve as a link for the initiatives within the existing cooperation and the partnerships envisioned for the future. The brand requires a brand architecture that helps the TWSC, and its stakeholders understand how different aspects of Wadden Sea World Heritage fit together and creates connections between the different entities that positively impact each other.

Creating an architecture that effectively delivers this will lead to a wider and more impactful presence of the brand, greater public understanding of the importance of the Wadden Sea and more participation in its protection and conservation.

Methodology

In order to create a system that both works and is adopted by target participants, the architecture will need to meet the needs of the TWSC as well as adding value for the stakeholders. The project methodology has therefore been:

Phase I

Diagnostics and engagement;

- stakeholder engagement and consultation across the CWSS, country stakeholders and varying roles and perspectives
- an audit of current brand adoption and use
- review of documentation, guidance and strategy
- analysis
- agreement of challenges and objectives with the CWSS team

Phase II

Strategy:

- workshoping of possible scenarios and consequences with the CWSS team
- creation of a recommended architecture and structure
- review and agreement with the CWSS team

Challenges

Whilst the importance of the TWSC and the role of the Secretariat was universally acknowledged and valued, the Diagnostics phase identified a number of communications challenges including:

- a complex organizational picture that feels complex and confusing to the world outside of the CWSS
- poor adoption and use of the WSWH brand across stakeholders in all countries
- an inconsistent understanding of what value the WSWH brand provides (varying significantly by country and stakeholder type)
- practical issues when applying the brands of multiple stakeholders with the WSWH brand to communications, leading to insignificance and confusion
- different audiences with different needs
- a sense that the WSWH brand is distant and not felt to be locally relevant by some audiences

Required outcomes

There is a consensus that the current brand architecture does not work well. The new system needs to:

- work consistently across all three countries whilst recognizing their different needs
- create clarity rather than confusion
- deliver a clear value for stakeholders and participants so that there is an incentive to adopt the WSWH
- be easy to use (also in conjunction with multiple other brands)
- create the feeling of being part of 'something bigger' when used by a stakeholder
- recognize the different roles of different stakeholders
- balance the challenges of accessibility, value delivery and criteria for use

The brand architecture system cannot, in isolation, create the sense of value, pride, credibility and clarity that the stakeholders seek, and additional initiatives will be needed alongside the new system to fully maximize the brand's potential.