



Wadden Sea Forum

10th Meeting

Groningen, 29-30 May 2007

FINAL MINUTES

1. Opening and adoption of the Agenda

Document: WSF-10-1. Draft Annotated Agenda

The chairman opened the meeting 29 May at 13:00 hours. The participants were welcomed by Mr. Kneppers, deputy director of the Chamber of Commerce Groningen. The agenda was adopted and is in Annex 1. A list of participants is in Annex 2. A list of meeting documents is in Annex 3.

2. Adoption final draft minutes WSF-9

The meeting **adopted** the final draft minutes of the WSF-9 meeting, Tønder, 30 November – 1 December 2006.

3. Minutes meeting Steering Committee

*Documents: WSF-10-3.1. Report SC-2
WSF-10-3.2. Report HOD-SC*

The chairman proposed to discuss the minutes of the SC-2 meeting and the joint HOD-SC meeting under agenda item 7.

4. Announcements

Mr. Rothkopf informed the meeting about a high-level conference about the EU Green Paper, held 3-4 April 2007 in Bremen. Abstracts of presentations, as well as the final declaration of the Conference are available at <http://www.bmvbs.de/artikel-,302.994977/Die-kuenftige-Meerespolitik-de.htm>

Mr. Schuhbauer gave a presentation about plans by RWE/DEA for additional oil exploitation in the German Wadden Sea.

Replying to questions by Mr. Wesemüller he informed that the concession is continuously prolonged every 5 years. It would also be possible to carry out activities within the National Park, because exceptions to the National Park Law were possible.

To this Mr. Wesemüller replied that at the federal level it had been decided that there would be no drilling within the National Parks, Mittelplate being the only exception

Mr. Janssen referred to the last meeting of the National Park Beirat of Niedersachsen, where RWE/DEA had given a presentation and had not been able to clarify the question who would be responsible for eventual damage.

To this Mr. Schuhbauer replied that there will be alarm contact points and alarm plans, just as this is now the case for Mittelplate.

Following this discussion a presentation was given by Mr. Rösner, focussing on various agreements and decisions, among which the National Park Laws, Breaking the Ice and the trilateral Wadden Sea Plan, according to which exploitation from within the Wadden Sea is not allowed. He also referred to the decision by Shell not to carry out exploration and exploitation activities in world heritage sites.

He furthermore stated that the issue of renewable energy had hardly been addressed by the Wadden Sea Forum.

Mr. Wesemüller asked what the influence of the anticipated activities would be on the world heritage nomination.

Mr. Koßmagk-Stephan expected that there would be critical comments by the UNESCO Committee, as had been the case for such activities elsewhere.

Mr. Schuhbauer stated that the WSP is in contradiction with the national mining law, according to which the concessionaire is obliged to carry out activities.

With regard to renewable energy he stated that there are differences of view, also within the WSP and emphasised that fossil fuel is still needed in the present world.

The chairman closed the discussion and stated that the information exchange had been very useful and would be continued in the future.

5. Progress trilateral cooperation

Document: WSF-10-5.1 Progress trilateral cooperation

The secretary introduced document WSF-10-5.1 about relevant developments of the trilateral Wadden Sea cooperation. As decided by the Steering Committee, this would be a fixed agenda item at WSP plenary meetings.

With regard to issue 1 (further development of the WSP), Mr. Frederiksen remarked that there were not yet concrete conservation objectives under the Habitats Directive in Denmark.

With regard to issue 5 (spread of pacific oysters), Mr. Holstein stated that pacific oysters should be allowed to be fished by shellfish license holders.

Mr. Rösner remarked that fishing the oysters would not solve the problem.

Mr. Loos emphasised the need to develop sustainable fishing methods.

Mr. Rösner informed that experiments were carried out in Schleswig-Holstein.

Mr. Verheij suggested discussing the issue in the WG fisheries.

6. Membership WSF

Document: WSF-10-6.1. Member list

The secretary presented an overview of changes in the WSP membership. The new members Ms. Newe (succeeding Mr. Stamp) and Mr. Sinnema (succeeding Mr. Keurentjes) were welcomed.

Mr. Andresen informed that the first meeting of the Danish advisory board would be held 1 June 2007. At this meeting a WSP representative would be nominated.

Mr. Loos informed that Ms. Stam, representing the Dutch Wadden Sea mainland municipalities, would withdraw from the WSF.

7. Progress and future WSF

*Documents: WSF-10-7.1. Progress Report
WSF10-7-1 add. Copies letters
WSF10-7-2. Questions German parliament
WSF10-7-3 Agriculture
WSF10-7-4. Fisheries
WSF10-7-5. Tourism*

PROGRESS WSF ACTIVITIES

ICZM

Mr. Verheij, chairman of WG ICZM, briefly reported about the proceedings of this WG. To the information provided in documents WSF-10-7.1 and WSF-10-7.2, he added that the WG was looking for showcases of ICZM, to be analysed and discussed at a workshop in autumn. Upon the question by Mr. Hinrichs whether good examples of ICZM did exist at all, Mr. Rösner emphasised that one should not be too idealistic and that there certainly were good examples. He mentioned the WSF and the trilateral cooperation.

Mr. Frederiksen promised that he would deliver 3-4 examples from Denmark.

INDUSTRY/ENERGY/INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Rothkopf, chairman of WG EII, informed the meeting that this WG still had to elaborate more detailed terms of reference. However, a condition for continuation was sufficient participation, in particular from Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark.

Mr. Rösner stated that not all members had been invited. The secretary replied that all WG members had been asked to deliver a representative for this group.

It was **agreed** that the terms of reference of WG EII would be sent to all WSF members with the request to participate.

Upon request of Mr. Loos, it was furthermore **agreed** that a list of all WSF and WG members would be prepared.

TOURISM

With regard to document WSF-10-7.5, in which the secretary and chairman of this group announced to dissolve the WG, Mr. Verheij and Mr. Janssen stated that this decision had not been taken in consultation with the members.

The meeting then discussed whether or not there was a need to continue with a WG Tourism.

The chairman **concluded** that generally the meeting considered it relevant to continue work of tourism and announced that he would contact the chairman, Mr. Smit.

GASTRONOMY AWARD

The secretary informed that a meeting of the project group gastronomy award was necessary, in order to discuss how to proceed now that it had become clear that the Award could not be organised in Schleswig-Holstein in 2007 (see annex to document WS-10-7.5).

It was **agreed** that information about the Gastronomy Award would be made available for WSF.

SHIPPING

Mr. Loos, chairman of WG shipping, stated that the main task of the group was to check the implementation of shipping-safety relevant decisions.

He informed that that the group had asked for information about implementation of decisions of the Schiermonnikoog Conference. The impression of the group was that several important issues had not been solved. He mentioned in this respect save havens and towing capacity.

FISHERIES

Mr. Holstein stated that the fisheries sector was not in favour of continuing the work on rules and regulations. For this, he gave four reasons. First, there was not sufficient facilitation. Second, almost all problems the sector was faced with, were caused by the Habitats Directive, but that there were substantial differences in implementation between countries. He referred in this respect to document WSF-10-7.4 in which the designation of mussel beds as reefs was addressed. Third, the sector feared that the strictest interpretation would be taken over. Finally, there appeared to be no future for fisheries in the Wadden Sea, which was not in agreement with what had been agreed upon in Breaking the Ice.

Mr. Rösner stated that he could not agree with the conclusions of document WSF-10-7.4.

Mr. Verheij considered it useful to have a WG on rules and regulations, the more so because, as indicated by Mr. Holstein, there were substantial differences between the countries.

Mr. Tougaard emphasised that it had originally been the idea of the fisheries sector itself to investigate rules and regulations.

Mr. Baerends stated that the issue of a level playing field is very interesting for governments. He indicated to be prepared to participate in such a WG.

Mr. Koßmagk-Stephan agreed with Mr. Baerends and announced that he would investigate possibilities for participation.

Also Mr. Frederiksen supported Mr. Baerend's view and offered participation in a WG on rules and regulations.

Mr. Holstein stated that with sufficient participation of governments, as well as facilitation, he would be willing to continue the WG.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. Hinrichs introduced document WSF-10-7-3. He stated that there were national differences in the implementation of the habitat and bird directives and a need was felt to exchange experiences.

Mr. Sinnema stated to be particularly interested in how neighbour countries dealt with geese grazing. This would become a problem in the near future.

Mr. Verheij suggested and the meeting **agreed** that all forum members would be asked to nominate members of the WG.

Mr. Fromsejer suggested that government representatives would also participate in the WG Agriculture.

Mr. Frederiksen and Mr. Koßmagk-Stephan promised that they would investigate possibilities.

Mr. Baerends stated that also regional government representation was important.

Future WSF

The chairman introduced this discussion point by referring to the Steering Committee meeting and the joint meeting of the Steering Committee with the Heads of Delegations (documents WSF-10-3-1 and 10-3-2). At these meetings the aims and financing of the WSF as well as the poor participation in WGs had been discussed.

Mr. Janssen presented a resolution by the Euregio Wadden Conference in which it was stated that the work of WSF had not been satisfactory since the Schiermonnikoog Conference. National, regional and local governments were called upon to implement the WSF results and to reorganise the tasks of WSF.

The meeting then comprehensively discussed aims, structure and facilitation of WSF.

Aims of the WSF

Mr. Krijnen underlined the need for the forum to be a market place for exchanging ideas and creating mutual understanding.

Mr. Rösner supported this approach and stated that WSF should not focus on implementing projects. It was in his view a failure to concentrate on the Action Plan. He proposed to have more room during meetings for presentations, as had been the case at this meeting for oil activities. He proposed to have reports of the national advisory boards at each plenary meeting.

Also Mr. Janssen agreed on the forum being primarily a platform for information exchange. He proposed to have two annual WSF meetings and asked for a joint meeting of the Steering Committee and the Euregio Board to discuss the future role of WSF. He also proposed to have a back to back meeting of WSF and the next Euregio conference.

Mr. Loos underlined the need for finding solutions to activities with which all parties could work, but that WSF should not become a political forum.

Mr. Rothkopf stated that apparently the trilateral cooperation had a different expectation of the forum. It focused very much on the implementation of the Action Plan.

Mr. Hinrichs stated that projects were needed to create a common Wadden Sea identity.

According to Mr. Verheij the WSF was important for creating broad overviews of topical issues and for preparing advice. It should, however not be over-ambitious with regard to the latter.

Mr. Vollmer warned not to reduce the ambition level too much. He feared that WSF would not be viable as a debating club only. He therefore underlined the need for a clear agenda for WSF.

Mr. Schuhbauer emphasised that WSF should set its own priorities and should identify a number of clear issues to focus on. He felt that a future WSF would be most valued as an expert group.

Mr. Cazemier supported the suggestions by Mr. Rösner to involve the national advisory boards in the WSF. This would help avoiding duplication of work.

Structure of WSF

Mr. Rösner stated not to be in favour of permanent working groups. WGs should only be installed on an ad-hoc basis and for topical issues.

Mr. Loos warned for a fully ad-hoc approach. He stated that a certain structure was needed (availability of experts) to be able to react quickly to topical issues.

Mr. Verheij pointed to the need for institutionalisation of WSF. In his view WSF should evolve into a trilateral advisory council. He also stated that it was necessary to involve more ministries than only those responsible for nature protection.

The latter was supported by Mr. Rothkopf and Mr. Schuhbauer.

According to Mr. Frederiksen the central question was how to turn the WSF from a project into an institutionalised body. He referred to the role WSF would have to play as a consultation body for the further development of the Wadden Sea Plan and informed the meeting that the trilateral working group (TWG) would decide upon the process in November this year.

Financing of WSF

Mr. Schuhbauer emphasised that WSF had accomplished more than had been expected. He was disappointed that the contribution in kind by the WSF members was not recognised as equivalent level.

Mr. Frederiksen replied that Denmark did recognise the in-kind contribution. He suggested options to involve local and regional authorities in the facilitation.

Mr. Rösner warned not to focus too much on the financial aspects. In his view the covering of own costs was sufficient. He did not think extra money was needed.

The secretary informed that currently about 30% of his time was spent on facilitating the forum. However, with the next trilateral conference coming nearer, there would be less time available for WSF. This development was not compatible with the increasing need for facilitating WSF WGs.

Mr. Loos emphasised that WSF could play an important role but was in doubt whether this role could be fulfilled without sufficient facilitation.

Mr. Verheij stated that it was mainly the three governments that benefited from the forum work. If they wanted to continue to use the network, provided by the forum, they should provide sufficient support.

Mr. Rösner put this into perspective by stating that the original idea to establish a forum had not come from the governments but from the NGOs.

The chairman summarised the discussion. He stated that there were reasons enough for continuing WSF. The main functions of WSF were

- to exchange views on general themes and topical issues;
- to prepare advice if felt necessary by forum members;
- to implement projects and actions on topical issues;
- to serve as consultation body for governments.

Working Groups would be installed on an ad-hoc basis, upon request by forum members.

Furthermore, contacts with Euregio and the Wadden Sea advisory boards would be

strengthened. Reports from the Advisory Boards would be a fixed WSF agenda item.

With regard to the position of the WSF in relation to the trilateral cooperation, including facilitation, the chairman proposed and the meeting agreed, to await the outcome of the evaluation of the trilateral cooperation.

The chairman was **mandated** by the meeting to negotiate with the trilateral cooperation about the future relation with WSF.

8. Sustainability Indicators

Mr. Peter Madsen from COWI, the consultant hired to elaborate Wadden Sea Region specific sustainability indicators, presented details about the work carried out so far.

The secretary explained that it was the intention to discuss the draft final report of COWI at a meeting of the ICZM WG on 19 June.

Mr. Rösner advised, as he had also done in the SC-1 and WSF-9 meetings, to limit the number of indicators to the extent possible, so as to arrive at a workable system.

He furthermore suggested using the trilateral monitoring and assessment programme as a basis for the fixing of ecological indicators.

Mr. Hinrichs emphasised that high quality data should be used and not to base indicator assessment on estimated data.

It was **agreed** that the final draft report would be presented for discussion at WSF-11.

9. EU Green Paper Maritime Policy

Document: WSF-10-9.1.Green Paper

The secretary briefly introduced document WSF-10-9-1.

After clarification of some question and the adoption of some amendments, the WSF statement to the Green Paper was **adopted**. The amended statement is in Annex 4 (changes marked).

10. Lancewadplan

Mr. Vollmer presented the final results of the Lancewadplan Project. He announced the final project conference to which all sectors would be invited.

Mr. Krijnen questioned the relevance of specific tasks to be implemented by the network that was proposed to be installed after finalisation of the project..

According to Mr. Vollmer specific tasks would improve the cooperation between the participants.

Mr. Verheij asked if the project had delivered criteria for judging boundaries between traditional developments and new developments.

Mr. Vollmer replied that this was not the case and had to be judged on a case by case basis. The intrinsic values, as well as the wishes of the local community were relevant aspects.

Mr. Rösner emphasised that also regional and national planning were relevant, for example with regard to the installation of wind turbines.

11. Next meeting

It was **agreed** to hold the WSF-11 meeting 26-27 November 2007. Wilhelmshaven was mentioned as a potential location. Mr. Rothkopf informed that he was investigating possibilities for hosting the meeting.

12. Any other business

Mr. Loos pointed to the relevance of the implementation of the Habitats Directive and the Water Framework Directive for the Wadden Sea Region and asked for a WG to investigate the consequences.

The secretary informed that this was part of the discussion on the further development of the Wadden Sea Plan for which WSF would be involved as consultation body.

Mr. Rothkopf asked when the results of the evaluation of the trilateral cooperation would be available.

The secretary informed that the draft final report of the evaluation would be presented to the Senior Officials on 12 June. He did not expect the final report to be distributed before summer.

13. Closing

The chairman closed the meeting at 12:00 hours and thanked the participants for their constructive contributions.

ANNEX 1. Agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the Agenda

2. Adoption final draft minutes WSF-9

3. Minutes meeting Steering Committee

4. Announcements

5. Progress trilateral cooperation

6. Membership WSF

7. Progress and future WSF

8. Sustainability Indicators

9. EU Green Paper Maritime Policy

10. Lancewadplan

11. Next meeting

12. Any other business

13. Closing

ANNEX 3. Documents

Document No.	Contents	Delivered		
		by	date	how
	Draft Programme	Secretariat	24/05/07	e-mail
Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda				
WSF10-1	Draft annotated agenda WSF-10	Steering Committee	23/04/07	e-mail
Agenda item 2: Adoption final draft minutes WSF-9				
	Final Draft minutes WSF-9	Secretariat	20/12/06	e-mail
Agenda item 3: Minutes Steering Committee				
WSF10-3-1	Final Draft Minutes Steering Committee (SC-2)	Secretariat	16/05/07	e-mail
WSF10-3-2	Final Report joint meeting HODs-SC	Secretariat	24/05/07	e-mail
Agenda item 4: Announcements				
Agenda item 5: Progress trilateral cooperation				
WSF10-5-1	Progress trilateral cooperation	Secretariat	24/05/07	e-mail
Agenda item 6: Membership WSF				
WSF10-6-1	Member list May 2007	Secretariat	16/05/07	e-mail
Agenda item 7: Progress and future WSF				
WSF10-7-1	Progress WSF work	Secretariat	16/05/07	e-mail
WSF10-7-1 add	Copies letters	Secretariat	22/05/07	e-mail
WSF10-7-2	Questions German parliament	Secretariat	22/05/07	e-mail
WSF10-7-3	Agriculture	Agriculture NdS	24/05/07	e-mail
WSF10-7-4	Fisheries	Fisheries NL, D	24/05/07	e-mail
WSF10-7-5	Tourism	Secretariat	24/05/07	e-mail
WSF10-7-6	Draft Resolution Euregio The Wadden	Janssen	29/05/07	Handout
Agenda item 8: Sustainability indicators				
WSF10-8-1	Proposal COWI	COWI	29/05/07	Handout at meeting
Agenda item 9: EU Green Paper				
WSF10-9-1	WSF statement to EU Green Paper	Secretariat	9/05/07	e-mail