



**Wadden Sea Forum
11th Meeting
Wilhelmshaven, 26-27 November 2007**

FINAL MINUTES

1. Opening and adoption of the Agenda

Document WSF-11-1. Draft Annotated Agenda

The chairman, Mr. Klimant, opened the meeting at 13:00 hours. He welcomed the new participants Mr. Douwe Hollenga, deputy of Ms. Kruisinga, Mr. Thomas Holst Christensen, secretary of the Danish Wadden Sea Municipalities and Ms. Karen Boel Madsen, representing the new Danish Wadden Sea advisory board.

A list of participants is in **Annex 1**.

The meeting adopted the agenda. The agenda is in **Annex 2**.

2. Adoption final draft minutes WSF-10

The meeting adopted the final draft minutes of the WSF-10 meeting, Groningen, 29-30 May 2007.

3. Announcements

Mr. Hollenga and Mr. Baerends informed that the Dutch minister of Agriculture, Nature Protection and Food Safety will sign a covenant with provinces and island municipalities, stating that the current legal regime is the basis for the Wadden Sea World Heritage site.

Mr. Klimant informed that a similar agreement has been made in Schleswig-Holstein. Both the government and parliament have now adopted the WHS nomination.

Mr. Verheij informed that the Dutch Wadden Sea Society and some other nature protection organisations had held a campaign to draw attention to the poor state of the Ems river, which was mainly due to dredging activities.

Mr. Rothkopf informed that Lower Saxony had designated an area of some 53,000 ha as FFH area. It concerns an area north of the east Friesian Wadden Sea islands.

4. Minutes meeting Steering Committee

Document: WSF-11-4.1. Report SC-3

The meeting took note of the minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee, SC-3, Wilhelmshaven, 31 October 2007.

5. Future Wadden Sea Forum

Documents: WSF-11-5.1 Letter SOs to WSF; WSF-11-5.2 Draft Memorandum of Understanding; WSF-11-5.3 Draft Budget

The chairman introduced the discussion by referring to the proposals made by the Steering Committee (doc WSF-11-4.1). He proposed to first discuss the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between WSF and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC), as in document WSF-11-5.2 and then to discuss the financing of WSF facilitation, as proposed in the letter by trilateral Senior Officials (SOs). He invited Mr. Dettmann to provide some background information about the SO letter.

Mr. Dettmann explained that the 50/50 financing offer by the SOs, including the future role of WSF, was part of a series of activities in the framework of the evaluation of the TWSC. Other activities concerned the development of a refreshed foundation agreement and a new structure of TWSC. It was the aim to agree upon a refreshed foundation agreement in May 2008, in conjunction with the conference of the parties (COP) to the Biodiversity Convention, to be held in Bonn.

The meeting generally **welcomed** the offer by the TWSC, which was considered a good opportunity for strengthening the position of WSF.

Several amendments to the draft MOU were put forward.

Ms. Westinga raised a principal issue, namely that the WSF could try to integrate the advices from the regional advisory boards (MOU section 3.1, 2nd bullet), but that these boards would continue to function as independent bodies. The meeting **supported** this view. Furthermore the issue of membership of the WSF chairperson in a possible Wadden Sea Board was raised and the proposal by the SC (see minutes SC-3) **adopted** that the WSF chairperson would not become a full member of a trilateral body.

A new draft MOU in which the amendments are marked, is in **Annex 3**.

The secretary informed that it was the intention that the MOU would be valid for a period of three years and could start in spring 2008, pending agreement by all parties,.

With regard to the financial aspects, the chairman referred to a draft budget in document WSF-11-5.3. The Steering Committee had come to the conclusion that the best option for finding the 60,000 Euro to be financed by WSF, would be to request regional authorities to provide 20,000 Euro each. This would not compromise commercial organisations and it would be possible to collect the money within a short period of time.

It had, furthermore, been suggested that commercial organisations would contribute to a fund, from which projects could be financed.

The chairman informed the meeting that he was confident that the German regional authorities would soon be able to give green light for financing WSF.

Mr. Hollenga, on behalf of the Dutch Wadden Sea provinces, informed that there was agreement on supporting WSF with 20,000 Euro per annum.

Mr. Andresen, on behalf of the Danish Wadden Sea municipalities, stated to be confident that the money would be found.

The meeting **agreed** the financial agreements, proposed by the Steering Committee and **welcomed** the promised support by the regional governments. It was also **agreed** that, for practical reasons, the support would be divided over three parties, i.e. NL, D and DK.

The chairman **concluded** that a very clear signal had been given that WSF would be able to collect the necessary 60,000 Euro. He therefore expressed his conviction that the TWSC parties would soon find the other 60,000 Euro and would not start negotiating the budget.

Mr. Frederiksen informed that the issue had not yet been discussed by the Danish national authorities, but that there was no signal that the amount requested would be fully available. In this respect he referred to §10 of the Schiermonnikoog Declaration and the corresponding SO decision to contribute maximally 1 full-time equivalent.

6. Membership WSF

Document: WSF-11-6.1. Member list

The meeting **took note** of changes in the membership list.

Mr. Cazemier would enquire whether the Dutch mainland Wadden Sea municipalities were still interested in participating in WSF.

7. Progress WSF activities

Document WSF-11-7.1. Progress Report

Document WSF-11-7.2. Blue paper

WG AGRICULTURE

Mr. Hinrichs informed the meeting about a WSF workshop on goose grazing in the Wadden Sea Region, held 20 September 2007 in Rastede, D. He stated that geese numbers were increasing and geese were staying longer, causing higher damage, which was in many cases higher than the compensation paid. Also the inflexibility of contracts was becoming a problem with the rapidly changing market prices.

Since problems were comparable within the Wadden Sea Region, the workshop had recommended that WSF would send a letter to the EU Committee of the Region to draw attention to the problem.

Additional information on developments of goose populations was given in a presentation by Mr. Kruckenberg. He stated that the reproduction success of brent goose, barnacle goose and white fronted goose was declining and that populations were decreasing or stable. The problems farmers in the Wadden Sea region were faced with, were caused by the concentration of geese in this part of NW Europe, where agriculture was most intensive.

Mr. Kruckenberg also warned for scaring off or hunting geese, since this would cause concentration of the birds in a smaller area, as well as increased energy need, both resulting in higher damages.

Following this presentation Mr. Rösner made a plea for finding intelligent management solutions, looking both

- a. to those farmers who face more damage than on average to be expected anyway when farming close to wetlands, and
- b. to the geese, where there is an international responsibility for the well-being of their wintering populations at the Wadden Sea region and who also provide chances for nature oriented tourism. Therefore, the letter to the EU should express a balanced viewpoint on the issue.

Mr. Hinrichs replied that farmers were aware that hunting was no option. This had also been a clear conclusion of the workshop. Instead, there should be more flexible contract options.

The meeting **agreed** that a draft text for a WSF letter to the EU Committee of the Regions would be prepared by Mr. Hinrichs and that this text would be circulated to WSF members for commenting.

WG ICZM

Mr. Verheij informed that WG ICZM had discussed the sustainability indicator tool (see further agenda item 8), as well as the analysis of specific cases for their ICZM "content". For the latter issue, work was now carried out to evaluate a number of cases according to the EU ICZM principles. The results of this exercise would be the basis for a workshop to be held in spring 2008.

WG EII

Mr. Rothkopf informed that WG EII had agreed that it would concentrate on exchanging information on best practice, in particular related to offshore wind energy, innovative energy production and harbour developments including the whole logistic chain. He again underlined the need for participation from Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein. It had been agreed to collect information on relevant activities in the Wadden Sea Area through a simple excel sheet. All WSF members were requested to provide relevant information. Mr. Rothkopf finally referred to presentations by Mr. Hube (EWE, wind energy) and Mr. Niemann (WHV, harbour, energy and infrastructure).

Mr. Loos remarked that several issues were also relevant for shipping safety and requested any information relevant for shipping safety to be reported to him.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

At the SC-3 meeting, Mr. Holstein had made clear that the fisheries sector would not continue with collecting information of rules and regulations, as agreed earlier. The main reason was that the sector feared that the strictest interpretation would become the general rule.

The chairman asked the meeting for suggestions how this activity could be picked up, since it was one of the focal points in "Breaking the Ice."

Mr. Christensen suggested to investigate whether a student or post-doc position could be found for a study.

Mr. Rösner wondered whether there really was a problem with "too many rules and regulations", or whether the real issue is rather that some do not like certain rules and regulations (which, just to remember, had been set by the elected parliaments and governments). In his view it should first be clear for what reason information is collected, before initiating a study.

After some discussion it became clear that most WSF members were in favour of collecting information on rules and regulations, in order to be able to judge the magnitude of the problem.

The secretary suggested two possible options. The first is to see whether a study can be carried out in the framework of an Interreg IVB project under the lead of the TWSC. The trilateral working group will discuss a trilateral application next week.

If this option is not feasible, WG ICZM or a new WSF working group should coordinate the work necessary for collecting information on rules and regulations.

The meeting agreed on this approach.

TOURISM

Mr. Janssen proposed and the meeting agreed to try to restart WG Tourism. To this end Mr. Janssen will send out an e-mail to potential participants, asking whether they are interested. If there is sufficient interest, a meeting will be organised in January 2008.

GASTRONOMY AWARD

Mr. Theessen presented information on the last international Wadden Sea Gastronomy Award, held in 2005 in Aurich. In the past year it had been tried to organise the Award in Schleswig-Holstein. This had, so far, not been successful, amongst others because a similar state-wide contest was in preparation.

The secretary suggested that a joint Danish-German initiative in the border region might be an option. The representatives of the Danish Wadden Sea municipalities promised to investigate the feasibility.

EU BLUE PAPER

Mr. Rothkopf presented some additional information on the EU communication document on the EU maritime policy (doc WSF-11-7.2) in which the EU Commission, Parliament and Committee of the Region set out the main elements of an EU maritime policy. This so-called "Blue Paper" is a follow-up to the Green Paper and incorporates the comments to the Green Paper. According to Mr. Rothkopf the document is so general that nothing can be said against it.

It is not possible to comment on the document, but several of the actions that are announced will be open for commenting. The meeting therefore **agreed** to closely follow the implementation of the document.

8. Sustainability Indicators

Document WSF11-8-1 COWI Report

Document WSF11-8-2 COWI Manual

Excel file: sustainability indicator tool

Mr. Verheij presented the final draft version of the sustainability indicator tool, developed by COWI. Earlier drafts had been extensively discussed by WG ICZM. Mr. Verheij considered the tool a good one since it could easily be checked how aggregation from one level to another was done. Also the basic data were available as well as their sources.

Mr. Rösner acknowledged the progress which has been made, e.g. that the number of indicators had been reduced. However, none of the indicator addresses the very important issue of impacts of climate change on the Wadden Sea. For this reason and also because of a number of other indicators, he did not believe that the indicators as they are now can really indicate whether a sustainable development in the region will be achieved or not. He suggested much more discussion on the content before the indicators finally could be adopted.

The secretary replied that the tool should still be considered as a product under development. On the basis of comments and suggestions by the WSF indicators could be added or skipped. In this respect he informed that also for the ecology indicators additional work would be necessary, so as to make optimal use of the TMAP data.

It was **agreed** that the sustainability indicator tool would be tested in the coming years. WG ICZM would coordinate the further development of the tool.

9. Reports Wadden Sea Advisory Boards

NETHERLANDS

Mr. Cazemier reported about activities of the Dutch Advisory Board.

Two advices have been prepared recently:

1. Natural fishing. This advice has been prepared upon request of the Dutch Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality (LNV), also responsible for fisheries. The report concludes that the Dutch fisheries policy has always been reactive. It is advised that the ministry takes the lead in a continuous dialogue between conservationists and the industry.
2. National boundaries. Also this advice had been prepared upon request of the minister of LNV. The advice discusses methodologies to judge whether a certain activity can be allowed or not. It is concluded that caution must be exercised with activities within a nature area and that it is wise to maintain certain margins.

Both reports are available in English after they have been handed over to the minister on 5 December 2007.

An advice on possibilities for placing wind turbines onshore near the Wadden Sea (in total 1500 MW) is in preparation. Some sites have been identified where wind turbines do not cause much additional visual disturbance.

DENMARK

Ms. Madsen reported about activities of the Danish advisory board.

New organisational structure

With the Local Government Reform in Denmark the counties disappeared and the number of municipalities was reduced from 206 to 98. In the Danish Wadden Sea Region the number of municipalities was reduced from 10 to 4.

The Danish Wadden Sea Advisory Board which since 1998 was hosted and financed by two counties is now hosted by the four new Wadden Sea Municipalities. In connection with the new structure the four municipalities (Varde, Fanø, Esbjerg and Tønder) have set up a joint Danish Wadden Sea Secretariat with two employees.

A Danish Wadden Sea National Park

In 2003 a process to identify and nominate possible National Park Areas was set in motion. The Wadden Sea was selected as one of the candidates. In the summer of 2007 a new National Parks Act was passed through Parliament and the first park in the northern part of Jutland was announced. Two more park nominations are expected to be announced within a very short time following a government review of local proposals. On the 15th of November the Wadden Sea municipalities submitted their joint proposal for a national park in the Danish Wadden Sea Region including both sea, island and mainland areas.

Natura 2000 status

In Denmark the planning process to fulfil EU requirements for the Natura 2000 network is ongoing and the Advisory Board has arranged for presentations by the national authority in charge of the process to inspire NGOs and local authorities to engage in the process. Specific management plans for the individual SACs and SPAs (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) will play a major role in the future management of the Wadden Sea area and thus need the attention of all parties concerned.

Test Fishing of Pacific Oyster

The Danish Institute for Fisheries Research together with the local fishermen have carried out a series of tests to find out if and how the pacific oyster can be caught and processed without causing damage to the environment. The work is closely followed by local representatives of the Danish Fishermen's Association who also report to the Advisory Board. The hope is that the pacific oyster from being a threat can develop into an economical asset as a designated Wadden Sea speciality.

Marine Disaster exercise

In August this year national and local authorities carried out an exercise in the Danish Wadden Sea simulating an explosion onboard a chemical tanker off the coast of the island Rømø causing oil and chemicals to leak into the sea and later on drift ashore on the west coast of Rømø. Ships from Germany and Holland took part in the exercise on the first day but due to strong winds and heavy seas the activities at sea had to be given up.

Conclusions from the exercise were that oil that reaches the beaches can be handled with the present resources – both with regard to personnel and equipment. Oil reaching the tidal flats will cause substantial problems in cleaning up. There is a need to exploit possibilities within this field – the present defence is hardly adequate in preventing the oil in reaching the coast. A final evaluation of the exercise is being elaborated.

To this Mr. Frederiksen added that the activities had been carried out in the framework of the DenNethGer Cooperation and that it had become clear that oil sampling was not possible with waves higher than 2 metres.

Mr. Loos remarked that this underlined the importance of disaster prevention and asked whether further activities were being planned, focusing on disaster prevention. He particularly referred to towing capacity.

Ms Lübcke informed that the North Friesian islands had asked Danish authorities about installing towing capacity. The official answer was that there were no plans to do so.

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

Mr. Klimant informed that the main topic in the Dithmarschen advisory board had been the WHS nomination. The board had given a positive advice.

Mr. Rösner informed that also the Nordfriesland advisory board had supported the WHS nomination. Furthermore, a presentation of the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS) had received a very positive response.

Mr. Dettmann informed that the Lower Saxony advisory board had discussed the World Heritage nomination with a positive attitude. Another issue discussed was the spatial planning in the coastal area of Lower Saxony. The next meeting in December 2007 will address the work of the Havariekommando.

Mr. Dettmann furthermore informed the meeting that the deadline for the delivery of the WHS dossier to UNESCO is 31 January 2008. If the submission is in time and if the dossier is judged to be of sufficient quality, a decision by the UNESCO can be expected in July 2009.

10. Progress trilateral cooperation

The main issues dealt with by the TWSC, i.e. the evaluation and the WHS nomination, have been addressed in foregoing agenda items.

11. Next meeting

It was **agreed** to hold the next meeting (WSF-12) 5-6 June 2008. It will be tried to organise the meeting in Husum.

12. Any other business

Mr. Rösner suggested and the meeting **agreed** to address the theme climate change and climate adaptation in the Wadden Sea Region at WSF-12.

Mr. Verheij proposed to discuss a draft working programme at WSF-12, so as to structure the work of WSF.

It was **agreed** that proposals for issues to be dealt with by WSF would be submitted to the Steering Committee.

13. Closing

The chairman closed the meeting 27 November at 12:30 hours. He thanked Mr. Rothkopf and the Wilhelmshavener Hafenwirtschaftsvereinigung for sponsoring the meeting and the dinner. He furthermore thanked Mr. Marquenie for his presentation of the green light project, as well as Mr. Niemann for his presentation about harbour and energy developments in Wilhelmshaven.

ANNEX 2. AGENDA

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