



**Wadden Sea Forum**  
**25<sup>th</sup> meeting**  
**Heide, 20-21 November 2014**

FINAL DRAFT MINUTES

**1. Opening**

*Document: WSF-25-1 Draft Agenda*

The chair of the meeting, Henk Staghouwer, welcomed the participants in Heide and opened the plenary meeting at 10:00 on 20 November 2014. He thanked the county of Dithmarschen for hosting the meeting. A list of participants is in **Annex 1**.

The meeting adopted the agenda without amendments and is in **Annex 2**. A list of agreements and decisions as summary of WSF-25 is in **Annex 3**.

The participants were briefly informed about the program of the WSF-25 meeting, which included a guided tour to the Multimar-Wattforum in Tönning.

**2. Adoption of the Minutes WSF 24**

*Document: WSF-24 Final Draft Minutes*

The meeting adopted the final draft minutes of the WSF-24 meeting on 23-24 May 2014 in Tønder. All decisions were implemented, respectively were on-going due to the agreed tasks.

**3. Membership WSF**

*Document: WSF 25-3.1 Membership list*

The secretary referred to the distributed WSF member list and informed the meeting about some changes.

Henk Staghouwer has been elected as new chair, but the post of a vice-chair is still vacant.

Preben Friis-Hauge is the representative of the Varde municipality.

Vacancies are still the case in the sectors Tourism and Energy of Lower Saxony.

On request of the chair and secretariat, the meeting agreed being supportive to fill the gaps in membership, particular to fill the position of the vice-chair.

**4. Announcements**

Klaus Koßmagk-Stephan reported that in spring the avian influenza H10N7 arose in Kattegat and has spread to the Wadden Sea from September to November, causing increased mortality among harbor seals. Approx. 600 severely sick or dead harbour seals were found in the Danish Wadden Sea, around 1600 in Schleswig-Holstein until 20.11.2014, with the vast majority reported from the islands of Sylt, Helgoland, Amrum and Föhr. In the Netherlands first dead harbour seals were reported.

The influenza virus H10N7 was confirmed in all parts of the Wadden Sea. The level of mortality is decreasing at now in Schleswig-Holstein.

Although the epidemic causes the death of hundreds of seals, it is not regarded by the trilateral seal experts as a threat to the population based on the present mortality. A rehabilitation of sick seals is not recommended in accordance with the seal agreement.

For detailed information see:

<http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news-and-service/news/14-21-11increased-harbour-seal-mortality-in-the-wadden-sea>”

Bernard Baerends informed that in the Netherlands a covenant on the transition of the shrimp fishery and the nature-ambition towards a rich Wadden Sea has been signed between the shrimp fishery-sector, nature NGO's and the relevant governmental bodies (the 3 Wadden Provinces and the Ministry of Economic Affairs). The covenant might be marked as a historical step because an agreement has been reached regarding the area to be fished, the magnitude of the shrimp fishery and the perspectives for the shrimp fishery in a sustainable way for the long term. The covenant has a horizon up to 2026. To realise these aims, an executive program has been established in which the agreements have to be further specified regarding e.g. reduction of by-catch, reduction of the fishery impact up to 50%, and at the same time how to improve the attractiveness and the social-economic perspectives of the remaining shrimp fishery. This work was supported by the program towards a rich Wadden Sea.

The program towards a rich Wadden Sea ([www.rijkewaddenzee.nl](http://www.rijkewaddenzee.nl)) will be prolonged for another 4 years. This program contributes to the transition towards a sustainable fishery as well as towards nature recovery of the Wadden Sea. The support to the program has been extended: the 3 Wadden Sea Provinces as well as the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment will also financially contribute.

Anne Marboe-Husum reported that the World Heritage nomination of the Wadden Sea was completed by the extension of the Danish part in June. The nomination was marked by a reception on invitation of T. R. H. Prince Joachim and Princess Marie and the minister for the Environment and a celebration by invitation of the municipalities. The celebration was followed by local events in the four municipalities from August to October.

Denmark is working to set up a project organization for implementation for the Wadden Sea World Heritage especially the Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

Hans-Ulrich Rösner informed that on the occasion of the Wadden Sea Day on 28 August 2014 the environmental NGOs from all three Wadden Sea countries published "The 2014 Call for Action for the Wadden Sea" ([www.wwf.de/fileadmin/fm-wwf/Publikationen-PDF/The\\_2014\\_Call\\_for\\_Action\\_for\\_the\\_Wadden\\_Sea.pdf](http://www.wwf.de/fileadmin/fm-wwf/Publikationen-PDF/The_2014_Call_for_Action_for_the_Wadden_Sea.pdf)).

The call was focusing on two issues: First, following the acceptance of the Danish Wadden Sea as part of the World Heritage Site, the society should live up to the guiding principle and the conservation targets for the area in order to safeguard its "Outstanding Universal Value". Second, the underwater world of the Wadden Sea is in such poor condition that efforts should be enhanced for solutions to be implemented in a period of no longer than 10 years.

Furthermore, he briefly reported about a symposium on coastal birds, held from 14 to 16 November on the island of Norderney with about 170 participants. The focus was on the declining numbers of many breeding and staging birds in the Wadden Sea, on the issue of man-made predation in particular on the islands, and how to achieve more natural processes in the Wadden Sea.

## 5. Minutes Steering Committee

*Documents: WSF 25-5.1 Minutes SC-2014-2*

The meeting took note of the minutes of the Steering Committee meeting, SC-2014-2 on 29 September 2014 in Bremen. A special attention was given to the agreements about the implementation of the ICZM strategy as well as to the nomination of Michael Zettlitzer as second WSF advisor in the Wadden Sea Board.

## 6. LNG Implementation in the Wadden Sea Region

*Presentation: Patrick Cnubben, Energy Valley Groningen*

Patrick Cnubben gave a presentation about the opportunities and challenges of introducing LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) in shipping and harbour business. He explained the value chain, the different priorities in implementation as well as the needed infrastructure. Furthermore, first examples of using LNG in the ferry traffic were highlighted. It was underlined that the use of LNG should be seen as an intermediate solution, as it still signifies the usage of hydrocarbons. Nevertheless, it would be the best available solution for the time being to reduce emissions in ship traffic and to decrease oil consumption in the transport business. However, future technologies like electric power and fuel cells, generated by renewable energy, should be further promoted and supported.

The meeting welcomed the presentation and the introduction of LNG in ship traffic. It was agreed to put this issue also on the agendas of the working groups energy and shipping, also in order to analyse the benefits as well as requirements and its impacts on society and environment.

## 7. Progress WSF Activities

*Documents: WSF 25-7.1 Summary progress report*

*WSF 25-7.2 Planning Portal user statistics*

*WSF 25.7.3 WSF website user statistics*

The meeting was made aware of the progress report, which briefly describes the activities carried out since the WSF-24 meeting.

Herman Verheij amended that the implementation of the ICZM strategy would be in progress (see agenda item 8) and an enlarged ICZM group would be working on a detailed work program and action plan. He further introduced the new graphs of the sustainability indicator tool (<http://www.waddensea-forum.org/index.php/wsr-indicator-tool/analysis>) and informed the meeting that contacts have been made with the Brabant Centre for Sustainable Development of Tilburg University to further analyze the indicator tool. For the analysis an extra budget would be needed. On the basis of a cost projection, the feasibility of implementation should be discussed, depending on financial support.

The secretary briefly informed about updates regarding activities of the other working groups.

a) The energy meeting was postponed to 16 December 2014.

b) A decision about the installation of a joint shipping group (stakeholders and authorities) has not been taken yet, which was seen as an unsatisfactory situation by the WSF. The increasing ship traffic would demand further measures like VTM in shipping safety. Also actions supporting the development of green ports and the introduction of LNG had to be taken soon.

c) A meeting of the working group cultural identity was postponed to the beginning of 2015.

d) The goose management group has made a step further. A draft action plan to implement the goose management scheme has been elaborated and the four governments have been requested to nominate responsible persons for the project group, being in charge of implementing the scheme.

Finally, the secretary pointed at the issue of communication and commitment. To strengthen the WSF, a sound communication in the regions would be necessary. Articles from the stakeholders, placed in the newsletter would contribute to this.

The engagement in the working groups has to be definitely increased to reach the agreed objectives. The reputation of the WSF on EU level is on a high level and the Wadden Sea Region is seen as a model region for stakeholder involvement and participation. This can and should be used to strengthen the say in decision making.

The meeting considered those reflections and **agreed** that the WSF should develop clear statements on relevant issues and position itself at the political arena. Furthermore, it was consensus that collaboration with the North Sea Commission (NSC) should be aimed at, as both organization have similar objectives in coastal and regional development. Contacts will be made through Preben Friis-Hauge, a member of the WSF and chair of the NSC transport group.

As part of the progress report, the user statistics of the WSF website and in particular of the Planning Portal were introduced and explained. The Planning Portal in average has 2500 visits of 600 computers a month, which underlines the value of the instrument.

The top scorers of the website's main pages are the working group ICZM, Steering Committee and plenary meetings, goose management, planning portal and cultural identity. Also the reports "Without Frontiers" and the "ICZM Strategy for the Wadden Sea Region" are at the top of the scorer list.

## 8. ICZM Strategy Implementation

*Document: WSF 25-8.1 work program topics*

*Document: WSF 25-8.2 Cooperation WSF-WSB*

The meeting briefly discussed the proposed work program of the ICZM group and **agreed** on the following tasks:

- a) The WSF is seeking for more involvement in planning and management processes. Involvement, necessary contributions and responsibilities will be discussed case by case. The ICZM group will forward proposals to the plenary.
- b) Risk management will play an important role in the future WSF work and will be integrated in the implementation of the ICZM strategy.
- c) The indicator tool is worthwhile of being analyzed in detail. A cost projection will build the basis for further decisions.
- d) The added value and feasibility of enlarging the Planning Portal by covering the whole North Sea will be carried out. Also the possibilities of cooperation with EU organizations will be checked. Following, financing possibilities will be analyzed with the stakeholders as well as according to EU programs.

Secondly, the meeting discussed the proposal for cooperation between WSF and WSB. In conclusion, the proposal was seen as too general and the definition of concrete steps and actions as well as responsibilities in cooperation were missed. The meeting tasked and mandated the secretariat to define the proposal for cooperation more precisely and to forward it to the forthcoming WSB meeting in January 2015. The cooperation due to World Heritage Site and Tourism Strategy was seen more in a supportive way rather than taking responsibilities on actions.

## 9. Are natural and cultural landscapes separate entities?

*Presentation: Karsten Reise, AWI Sylt*

Karsten Reise raised the question in his presentation, why do we distinguish between natural and cultural landscapes, whereas the historic development of the Wadden Sea Region reflects both, the natural dynamic processes as well as the imprint of land cultivation by man. Furthermore, he lined out unconventional solutions in the far future about living with water due to climate change and rising sea level.

Following the presentation, a panel discussion took place to debate the opinions about future living along the coast, taking into consideration five stimulating questions, which were:

- Are natural and cultural landscapes merely mental constructions?
- Shall the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site be extended beyond dikes?

- May dikes separating the sea and land become outmoded by a relentless rising sea and a sinking marshland?
- Is growing with the sea by sand nourishment an option for the entire coast?
- Is living with more water an option in the coastal lowlands?

After the panel discussion, the plenary contributed to a vivid debate. In the following, different aspects of the discussion are mentioned, while there was no general conclusion or decision on this complex issue.

The focus was more on the coming 50 years rather than thinking about changes and challenges in the far future. The dike is still a separating system between natural and cultural landscapes. An extension of the World Heritage Site to the landscapes behind the dikes was not wished. The coastal hinterland was given priority to economic and social development, but in a sustainable way. The success of large scale sand nourishment for coastal protection was seen diverse. It might safeguard sand barriers, sandy tidal flats and parts of the islands but on the other hand, it was also mentioned that dredging shipping lanes and harbor access channels would increase due to an increased sedimentation. Also the impacts on mussel beds and saltmarshes could be negative, but the knowledge about these effects is still quite low.

Conservative coastal protection was supported, also for the coming decades. In general, coastal lowlands should be continuously drained and used by agriculture and necessary infrastructure. Only for exceptional cases, rewetting measures in nature sites should be undertaken. But there were also opinions, that living with water and rewetting measures should be extended. In Denmark, the entire marsh areas behind the dikes are Natura 2000-areas and half of them part of the National Park Vadehavet. This area will be less drained and sustainably developed for both, agriculture and nature.

Even though the statements of the panel were conservative orientated, the meeting acknowledged the visionary approach of Karsten Reise, having led to a lively discussion about the long term future.

## 10. Reports Wadden Sea Advisory Boards

No progress activities were reported from Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony. Denmark reported about three main issues:

- An external evaluation of the advisory board came to the conclusion that the board should be more visible in public;
- The Danish ministry for environment is looking into the possibilities of implementing the goose management scheme;
- As a follow up, and a wish from the Danish nature environment organization, the four Danish Wadden Sea municipalities were requested to deliver a status report about the work towards CO<sub>2</sub> neutrality according to the Tønder declaration.

## 11. WSF Budget 2015

The secretary informed the meeting about the financial situation of the Forum and stated that in 2014 and 2015 a balanced budget would be reached. The financial support of stakeholders, the increase of the budget of the Danish municipalities as well as the involvement of the WSF in EU programs had contributed to a better financial situation. The budget just covers the maintenance of the secretariat so that no budget for projects and studies is available. Also for the years from 2016 on, additional financial support is necessary, as some contributions from EU projects and companies will not continue. The meeting welcomed the balanced budget in 2014/2015 and **agreed** to support the secretariat to reach also balanced budgets in the coming years too.

## 12. WSF Communication

The communication of the WSF has been improved during the past months. Presentations were given on regional level, information was forwarded to the regional political and administrative level and the WSF newsletter was re-launched under the umbrella of EUCC-D. The meeting discussed further actions to improve communication about the WSF. It was stated that press releases about the work of the Forum and even more important, clear statements and positions with regard to development issues would sharpen the picture of the WSF. In this context, the definition of target groups would be important. The meeting requested the secretariat to forward a communication proposal to the next plenary meeting for a further debate and decision making.

## 13. Next Meeting

The meeting proposed 23-24 April for the WSF-26 meeting to be preferably held on the island of Ameland. According to several inconveniences with this date and after consultation with the chair, the meeting has to be postponed and will be held on **21-22 May 2015**. Again, it will be a one and a half-day meeting, starting on Thursday 10:00.

## 14. Any other business

No other business discussed.

## 15. Workshop risk management

*Document: WSF 25-15.1 Outline risk management workshop*

Beate Ratter and Birgit Gerkenmeier from the HZG introduced the second workshop on risk management with a focus on responsibilities, cooperation and transnational perspectives. With regard to content, the emphasis was laid on uncertainties and risks due to demographic changes in the Wadden Sea Region.

In the following, the meeting was split into 5 groups to elaborate on threats and consequences regarding climate change and demography. As method, the bow-tie analysis was introduced. Bow-tie is one of many barrier risk models available to assist the identification and management of risks. The diagrams used, clearly display the links between the potential causes, preventative and mitigative controls and consequences of major hazards.

A result report will be elaborated by the HZG and forwarded to the WSF in the coming weeks. The report will also serve as basis for third and final workshop on risk management at the spring plenary meeting in 2015.

## 16. Closing

The chair thanked all participants for their contributions and closed the meeting at 12:30 hours on 21 November 2014.

**ANNEX 2**

**Wadden Sea Forum  
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**A G E N D A**

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- Agenda item 2. Adoption of the Minutes WSF 24**
- Agenda item 3. Membership WSF**
- Agenda item 4. Announcements**
- Agenda item 5. Minutes Steering Committee**
- Agenda item 6. LNG Implementation in the Wadden Sea Region**
- Agenda item 7. Progress WSF Activities**
- Agenda item 8. ICZM Strategy Implementation**
- Agenda item 9. Are natural and cultural landscapes separate entities?**
- Agenda item 10. Reports Wadden Sea Advisory Boards**
- Agenda item 11. WSF Budget 2014**
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- Agenda item 14. Any other business**
- Agenda item 15. Workshop risk management**
- Agenda item 16. Closing**

**ANNEX 3**

**Wadden Sea Forum  
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**Decisions and Agreements**

- The WSF members will be supportive to fill the gaps in WSF membership, working groups and in particular to fill the position of the vice-chair.
- The issue of LNG implementation will be put on the agendas of the working groups energy and shipping, also in order to analyze benefits as well as requirements and its impacts on society and environment.
- In the future, the WSF will develop clear statements on relevant issues and position itself at the political arena. Furthermore, cooperation with the North Sea Commission (NSC) should be established as both organizations have similar objectives in coastal and regional development.
- The WSF will seek for more involvement in planning and management processes.
- Risk management will play an important role in the future WSF work and will be integrated in the implementation of the ICZM strategy.
- A cost projection for a deeper analysis of the indicator tool will be carried out. The secretariat is responsible for this task.
- The added value and feasibility of enlarging the Planning Portal by covering the whole North Sea will be carried out. In this respect, the possibilities of cooperation with EU organizations will be checked. The ICZM group will be responsible for this task.
- The plenary tasked and mandated the secretariat to define the proposal for cooperation more precisely and to forward it to the forthcoming WSB meeting in January 2015.
- The meeting requested the secretariat to forward a communication proposal to the next plenary meeting for a further debate and decision making.
- The meeting welcomed the balanced budget in 2014/2015 and agreed to support the secretariat to reach also balanced budgets in the coming years too.