

# Integration of the Wadden Sea Forum (WSF) in the Wadden Sea Heritage Partnership Hub

Final report by Beate Ratter to the Operational Team  
PartnershipHub

Presentation to the WSF Forum  
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## Challenge 1



.... requires an organisational restructuring  
of the trilateral Wadden Sea cooperation  
and cooperation area

.... however, there is a quite confusing  
situation – about a *Partnership Centre*,  
*Partnership Hub*, a *Networking Unit*, and a  
building in Wilhelmshaven...



Winner design by Danish architect Dorte Mandrup

## Developments so far...

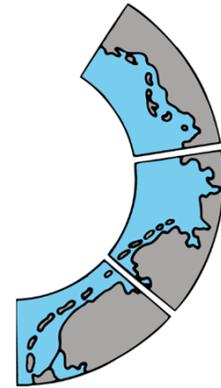
- June 2013 two feasibility studies were commissioned to Andy Brown about the realisation of a World Heritage Competence- Centre
- March 2016 installation of a *Partnership Centre Drafting Group (PCDG)*
- June 2017 in addition installation of the *Operational Team Partnership Hub (OPteamPH)*
  - To **elicit** – in an open dialogue – **potential strategic partners**, existing goals and wishes
  - To **develop options** of an **intensified engagement** of strategically important interest groups.

## A. Brown studies 2015

- **Wadden Sea World Heritage Competence Centre/Network Feasibility Study and Governance Study**
  - Recommendations for the feasibility and implementation of a new trilateral Wadden Sea Centre
  - Governance structure
  - Financing through a new Wadden Sea–Foundation
  - **to base the trilateral Wadden Sea work on a solid and sustainable basis....**

## Challenges 2

- Long standing history of single, collaborative and trilateral activities
- Open communication and sincere integration is questionable
  - e.g. Discussion about the Partnership Centre is perceived as „closed shop“
- Communication is not conducted as appropriate
- Trust, transparency and credibility is impaired



## Trilateral Conference Leeuwarden 2018

MD – the Ministers welcome:

- “...with appreciation the preparatory work for building a Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Centre in Wilhelmshaven, Germany,
- which will **accommodate the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, a Partnership Hub** (*networking unit*) intended to work with envisaged partner organisations at the hub itself
- and in networks as a complementary set of institutional structures“.



## Brown (2015) about the WSF

Wadden Sea Forum (WSF) exists since 2002 as stakeholder forum with trilateral representation...

➤ *“The only other organisation that should be mentioned at this stage is the Wadden Sea Forum...”*

*The Wadden Sea Forum consists of representatives of a variety of sectors and national Governments who are represented as observers...*

*The Wadden Sea Forum should be recognized as a trilateral partner.”*

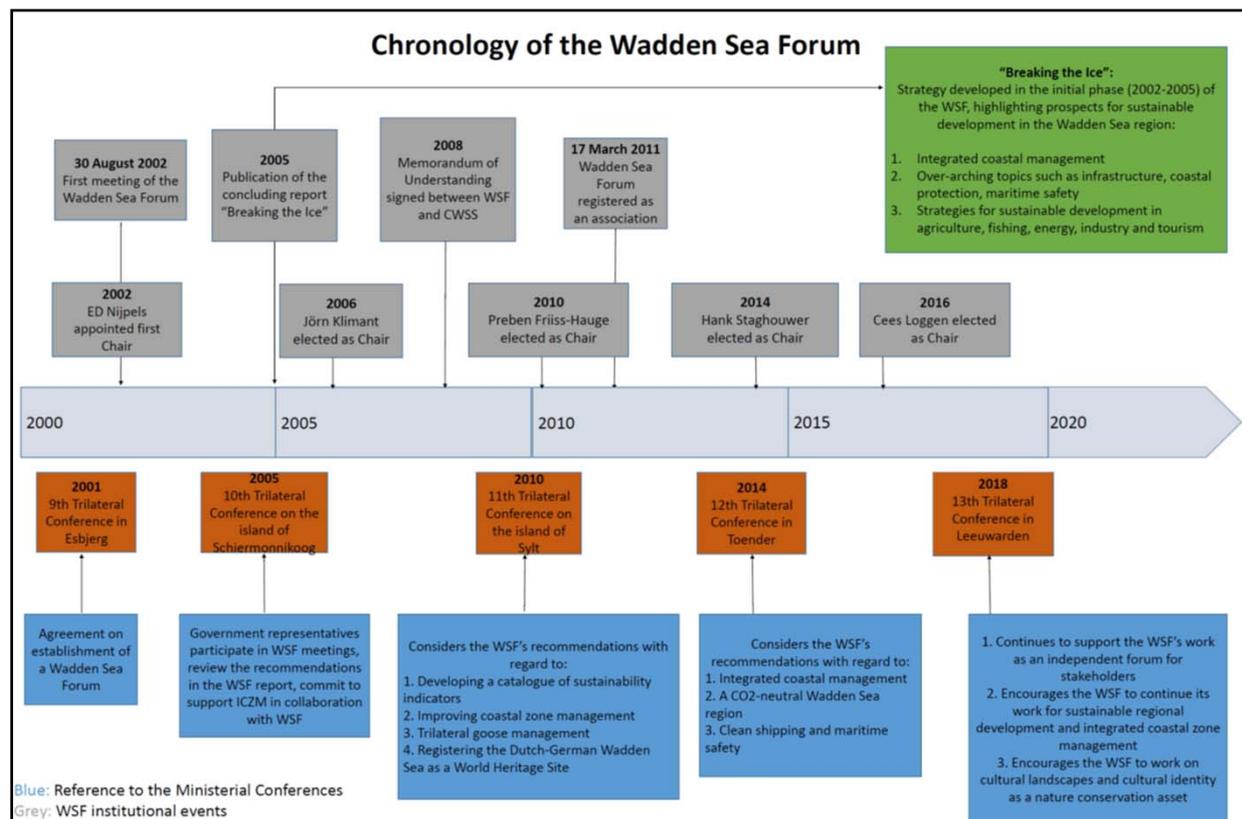
## History and contribution of the WSF

WSF was initiated by the Environmental-NGOs at the 9th trilateral Wadden Sea Conference in Esbjerg 2001 as independent platform of Stakeholder-Organisations in the Wadden Sea Region of NL, G, DK

➤ inaugurated in 2002

- Modell was taken from the UK
- Important contributions during the years...





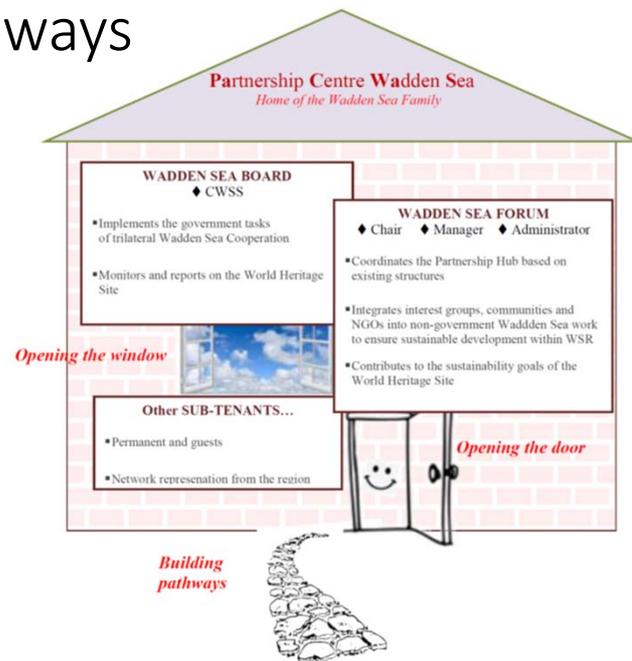
## WSF in the World Heritage process

- For the WSF the World Heritage nomination is as well an acknowledgement of their work
- WSF has decisive **advantages** :
  - Wadden Sea Region as activity area includes all adjacent communities including interests and population
  - WSF has intrinsically motivated participants fostering sustainable development in the WSR
- WSF has decisive **disadvantages** :
  - So far mainly non-commissioned and only partly noticed studies, statements and recommendations
  - Widely unknown beyond the inner circle
  - Thematic plurality
  - Underrepresented sectors
- There is room and **need for improvement** in **structure, penetration power and implementation** in the WSF!

proposal: Open the door, open the window, built pathways

Task of the networking unit:

- The integration of trilateral Wadden Sea communities, stakeholder and interest groups
- in an **integrative AND partnership based** role.



proposal: Possible activities in the Partnership Hub

- **Networking** ... inside and outside the WSR
- **Connecting**... thematically meetings, workshops for early career scientist AND admin personal
- **Exploring**... summer schools and open house days
- **Facilitating**... providing temporary office space; translating text, ideas and background information
- **Sustaining**... best practice cases, collaboration between parties

## Conclusion

The UNESCO World Heritage nomination asks for a **re-structuring of the trilateral Wadden Sea Work** - including the interests of stakeholders and the population at large.

Existing structures should be used and **synergies explored**.

The **WSF** has a role and can play a **future coordinating role** in a trustful and liable cooperation.

The WSF members can be **ambassadors for a sustainable development** and a protection of the outstanding universal values in the region.

**There needs to be an adjustment of the WSF to deliver these tasks.**



*Comments?*

## Partnership Hub Mission statement (proposal)

- 1) "*Opening the door for a broad engagement of identified and not yet identified interest groups and stakeholders of and in the Wadden Sea Region*"
- 2) "*Opening the window for an increased transparency of policies and political processes taking place on the governmental levels in the trilateral, national and regional work*"
- 3) "*Building pathways for collaboration on a local, regional, national, trilateral and international level to foster a common and shared engagement for the protection of the Wadden Sea's environment and a sustainable development of the Wadden Sea Region and the Wadden Sea World Heritage*".

## General positions:

Agreeing positions in all kinds of papers and studies:

➤ use Synergy effects

Brown (2015) in Governance-Study:

- „A full partnership model is proposed for the whole Site. State Parties may wish to lead the partnership but it is essential that
- bodies willing and able to contribute knowledge, expertise or money are invited to join.
  - There should be a broad and flexible approach to defining partners and essentially any individual, group, organisation or business could be recognized as a partner if they commit to achieving the vision for the Site and are willing to help achieve it in some way.
  - Contributing partners would be recognized at trilateral, national, regional and local levels.”