

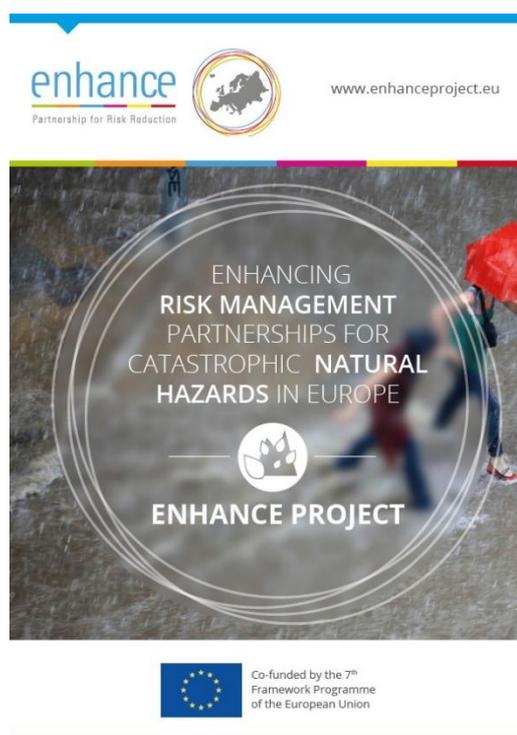


## 1<sup>st</sup> Stakeholder Workshop on Risk Management

13 - 14 May 2014 on Rømø, Denmark

### Summary Report

In cooperation with the Helmholtz-Zentrum Geesthacht (HZG), the WSF is part in the European research project ENHANCE that is focusing on “enhancing risk management partnerships for catastrophic natural hazards in Europe”. Cooperative activities are concentrated in a case study on risk management in the Wadden Sea Region (WSR). The common goal of this cooperation within ENHANCE is to assist the WSF in order to foster a common discussion and cross-sectoral sensitization of stakeholders towards different risks in the WSR and enhances the transnational exchange of knowledge and experiences. Not the least there is a necessity to increase the awareness of stakeholders and the society at large towards cascading effects between different risks and to sensitize them for direct and indirect impacts as well as uncertainties related to these risks.



The half-day introductory workshop on May 14 aimed to start a dialogue between the members of the WSF about risks and uncertainties in the WSR. Beate Ratter generally introduced the topic “risks and uncertainties” and Birgit Gerkenmeier gave an introduction to the research project ENHANCE, its background and the intended collaborative actions between HZG and WSF. The main focus of the workshop was directed to an exchange between the participants of the workshop on their perspectives and assessments of risks and uncertainties in the Wadden Sea Region. In this regard, working groups were asked to work on two questions:

- “From your personal, institutional and national perspective: what risks and uncertainties do you identify for the WSR?”
- “Are you content with the current management of the risk and uncertainties mentioned here?”

By using the table-set method, the participants were asked to answer these questions in written form. This method demands the participants not only to identify risks but also to comment on the input of other group members. This procedure supports the process of get in contact with and addresses different perspectives on risk and uncertainties. In the following discussion the presented statements had been synthesized within the working groups and were presented to the plenary. The results of the working groups were brought together in a list of risks in the WSR and in consequence ranked by awarding priority points.



## Results of the working groups

The main issues mentioned by the consortium are presented in the following list which is in order of the awarded priorities:

- Storm surges / sea level rise: With regard to climate change, changes in storm surge patterns and an increased sea level rise are expected to increase; moreover, climate change is seen as a major risk for increased inland flooding events, as well as increased temperatures and changes in precipitation patterns. Their diverse impacts on different sectors have to be recognized. In this context, the future development in coastal protection has to adapt to the expected changes.
- Demographic change / aging society: There is a need of management strategies to handle an aging society; strategies for the development of regions / countryside have to be developed; Adaptation measures in health system are necessary and further impacts of climate change (increase of diseases, pests, etc) should be taken into account
- Changes in society: Emigration of young people is expected to become a larger issue; risks on maintaining services are of special public interest; increased migration from other regions and countries to the WSR may have an impact on the regional cultural identity
- Conflicting spatial uses between different user interest and especially with conservation issues
- Shipping and oil tanker accidents: Improvement of prevention measures is needed
- Economic crises (on global and regional level) and their impacts of decreasing economic activities are important issues (often linked directly to loss of jobs)
- Emissions (especially CO<sub>2</sub>) and pollution of rivers and the North Sea (e.g. plastic waste)
- Loss of biodiversity and increase of alien species in the WSR (e.g. pacific oyster)
- Energy: Availability and sustainable management of energy supply will become a future challenge
- Outside events like meteor strike, impacts of wars (outside the WSR) on the WSR, nuclear power accident

The compiled list of issues represents a wide range of causes and consequences of risks and uncertainties in the WSR. The questions remain if the current risk management strategy for each of these risks is satisfying or if there is room for new strategies for their handling and management. Is there openness for new ways to handle risks? Can we learn from other regions? Is multi-stakeholder involvement an option? These questions will be addressed and discussed in the following meeting.