

**3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop on Risk Management**  
**21-22 May 2015 on Ameland (NL)**  
**Summary Report**

The trilateral Wadden Sea Region (WSR) is a multi-risk area where risks are dealt with on different levels of responsibility – on local, regional or national level. Building on the results from the two previous workshops the third workshop addressed the question about the potential role of the trilateral level in any future risk management in the WSR.

The workshop was guided by the questions: Where could activities on trilateral level increase effectiveness of risk management processes? What role can the Wadden Sea Forum (WSF) play today and in the future? These questions represent the last step of a cooperative discussion on integrative risk management. In the two previous workshops the members of the Wadden Sea Forum discussed and prioritized perceived risks in the trilateral Wadden Sea Region and highlighted current management needs. A detailed risk analysis was performed by using bow-tie-diagrams for a structured discussion between the stakeholders and the adjustments of responsibilities. In the third workshop the WSF members developed risk strategies and measures to adapt for application to the causes of risks and for reducing the consequences of the risks. The discussion focussed on how to handle gaps in management, how to strengthen already existing management strategies and measures, and how to define roles and responsibilities for these actions.



The three break up groups addressed these questions and discussed three visionary future risk situations:

- a) a very low pressure system heading towards the WSR;
- b) an oil tanker crashes in an Offshore Windfarm and leaked;
- c) the closure of grocery shops in peripheries cause special problems of provision especially for the rural WSR.

The elaborated scenarios and respective future management needs including the role of the WSF are briefly summarized. An in-depth analysis of the outcome and interpretation is on the way and will follow in due time.



## a) A very low pressure system heading towards the WSR

Scenario 1:



Setting the scene:

A major storm swept across the Wadden Sea Area in November 2030 and caused severe damage to different sections of the Wadden Sea Region. The working group elaborated the scenario by the assumption that the coastal defense system remained in function and is considered still appropriate. However, the turbulences caused major damages in the region especially on the infrastructure. The region's energy supply is hampered for days.

Anticipated impacts: In 2030 changes in energy supply will be able to dilute the impacts of the storm. The increase of individual energy supply and storage will widely prevent outages in private households. Transport and mobility have also suffered due to the storm. Individual mobility has been reduced for several days and the limited road access handicapped emergency operations during the peak of the storm. Nevertheless, the overall damage can be remedied and no lives were lost. Storm surge management will not be essentially different to today's situation. Coastal defense systems in the WSR are designed to ensure safety against very high storm surges in 2030. However, preparation for severe weather situation need more coordinated spatial planning.

Strategies and measures proposed: In the future there is potential need of a trilateral approach to coastal risk management and coordinated spatial planning. The WSF can contribute by fostering awareness and coordinating trilateral approaches. The already available WSF's planning portal should be advertised and used for these discussions.

The currently applied contingency plans are working well and there is no need for improvement.

The anticipated decentralized energy supply in 2030 might cause problems for industries which will call for a joined dedication and engagement in the field of energy supply. The WSF's energy working group might contribute here, but a clear role for the WSF has not been detected. Initiating a discussion about the responsibility for infrastructure, infrastructure emergencies and joined energy grid might be potentially taken on by the WSF on a trilateral level.



## b) An oil tanker crashes in an Offshore Windfarm and leaked

Scenario 2:



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### Setting the scene:

In 2030 an oil tanker on its way from Rotterdam to Hamburg harbor crashed into a windmill in an offshore wind farm and lost great amounts of oil. The working group further elaborated this situation, assuming that the oil spill caused severe consequences for all three countries in the Wadden Sea Area. The oil pollution affected animals and plants both off-shore and on-shore and is still recognizable two years after the crash. In addition, the cleaning of the coast caused huge financial losses. The oil pollution also affected main economic sectors of the Wadden Sea Area, including the shipping sector, the fishing sector as well as the energy sector, since the crash also had a direct, albeit not quite as serious, impact in the energy sector.

Due to the accident the connecting cable was damaged and electricity supply was hampered for two days. The tourism sector has begun to dwindle as the region suffers from the strong and long-lasting pollution on the World Heritage Site. In total, the catastrophe has not only affected the economic but also the political sphere. The incompetence of responsible politicians has had political consequences, with some voices even demanding reelections.

Strategies and measures proposed: Enhanced management strategies and an integrated trilateral approach are needed. Prevent ships from taking dangerous routes requires trilateral, mandatory shipping routes. Whereas shipping safety in the WSR was addressed already in many fora, the resulting available recommendations need implementation and application. The WSF and the Wadden Sea Board should cooperate and promote installation of the shipping rules as well as implementing adequate safety measures. Harmonized windfarm installation on a trilateral level would be a supportive action. At this point the already existing planning portal tool of the WSF should be promoted. In addition, reinforcement of the WSF working group shipping could create structural links between the discussions in the shipping sector and other interest groups.



**c) The closure of grocery shops in peripheries cause special problems of provision especially for the rural WSR**

Scenario 3:



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Setting the scene:

Increased closure of grocery shops in peripheries in the Wadden Sea Region cause special problems of provision especially for the rural WSR. The elaborated scenario of the working group highlights major developments in society, particularly in terms of supply and communication in 2030. These developments have transformed peoples' way of living in the rural areas along the Wadden Sea Coast. Retail shops and other facilities have been closed and replaced with multi-functional spaces that combine the changing needs of society and overcome the obstacles of decreasing infrastructure in rural areas. The community includes the individual to participate, thus increasing individual responsibility and sharing. New technologies support the interconnection between villages' inhabitants and

facilitate gatherings, contributing to the development of a new way of living. Societal changes and the need to think differently have created new possibilities.

Strategies and measures proposed: Desirable changes, as assumed in the scenario, the start has to be done by ourselves - meaning by the WSF as much as by each of the participants. Facing this aim, the WSF could find its role as ambassador and promote role models. Find a common goal and be itself a common best practices project, could be a major task for the WSF. Supporting and promoting best practice examples, as well as communicating these to the public could enhance public discussions.



General findings of the working groups' discussions and from the following plenary discussion highlight practical steps about the potential role and contribution of the WSF to the improvement of a trilateral risk management. The WSF plenary identifies its role as ambassador and communicator of best practice examples in risk management in the WSR. In order to become more visible, communication of the WSF's aims, tasks and position to the public is essential and has to be strengthened.



In addition, enhanced communication and cooperation between the WSF and the Wadden Sea Board is recommended in order to join forces to foster implementation of existing rules and strategies (e.g. with regard to existing shipping rules). Existing products of the WSF can be used to enhance necessary cross-country planning to address different risks in the WSR (e.g. the planning portal can support coordinated spatial planning on a trilateral level). Moreover, reinforcing specific working groups (shipping group, energy group were mentioned here) is suggested to foster the exchange of knowledge due to cross-sectoral burning issues on the trilateral level.