

Stepping up efforts: Fish and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation

Julia A. Busch

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS), Virchowstr. 1, 26382 Wilhelmshaven, D
busch@waddensea-secretariat.org

40 YEARS OF TRILATERAL COLLABORATION

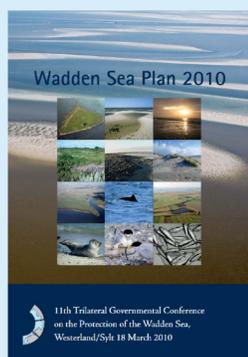
For more than 40 years, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands have jointly collaborated to protect the Wadden Sea as one ecological entity in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC). Trilateral nature conservation policy and management is directed towards achieving the Guiding Principle **“to achieve as far as possible a natural and sustainable ecosystem in which natural processes proceed in an undisturbed way”**.

THREE COUNTRIES. ONE HERITAGE.



TRILATERAL FISH TARGETS

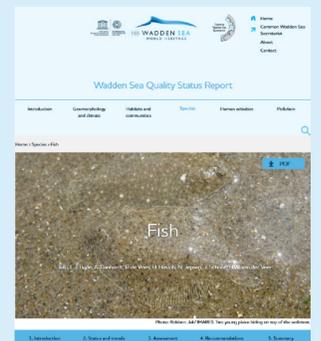
The Wadden Sea Plan – a framework for integrated management of the Wadden Sea Area – was adopted at the 11th Trilateral Governmental Conference (TGC) (Sylt, 2010). It contains Trilateral Fish Targets, conservation objectives for fish, developed by trilateral experts:



- Viable stocks of populations and a natural reproduction of typical Wadden Sea fish species;
- Occurrence and abundance of fish species according to the natural dynamics in (a)biotic conditions;
- Favourable living conditions for endangered fish species;
- Maintenance of the diversity of natural habitats to provide substratum for spawning and nursery functions for juvenile fish;
- Maintaining and restoring the possibilities for the passage of migrating fish between the Wadden Sea and inland waters.

QUALITY STATUS REPORT (QSR) 2017

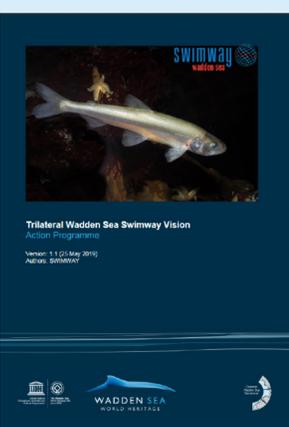
Regularly, external experts describe and evaluate the ecological status of the Wadden Sea in thematic reports of the QSR. Findings form an invaluable foundation for the further implementation of the Wadden Sea Plan Targets. The last QSR was published online in 2017.



Authors of the fish chapter stressed knowledge gaps in the importance of the Wadden Sea for life cycles of fish. Long-lasting trilateral projects would be needed to catch up with this backlog, e.g., by research on functional relationships and trilateral methodological issues.

<https://qsr.waddensea-worldheritage.org/reports/fish>

SWIMWAY ACTION PROGRAMME



https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/sites/default/files/2019_swimway_action_programme.pdf

In their TGC in Tønder, DK in 2014, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands acknowledged the importance of fish for the Wadden Sea ecosystem and instructed the trilateral Wadden Sea Board (WSB) to further implement the Trilateral Fish Targets.

Since then, efforts were increased, in particular by formulation of a trilateral SWIMWAY Vision (signed at the 13th TGC in Leeuwarden, NL, 2018) and SWIMWAY Action Programme (2018 – 2024). This programme contains actions to improve knowledge on relevant processes, optimise population monitoring, adjust policies and develop, realise and evaluate measures towards reaching the Trilateral Fish Targets.

OUTLOOK

- Joint trilateral expertise, capacity and resources;
- Collaboration with existing activities and programmes
- Project based approach for SWIMWAY implementation: Research & monitoring, policies, measures, education;
- Implementation of Trilateral Fish Targets.

