

**Wadden Sea Board**

**WSB 12**

**20-21 May 2013**

**Groningen**

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**Agenda Item:** 6

**Subject:** Alien species management and action plan

**Document No.** WSB 12/6/5

**Date:** 8 May 2014

**Submitted by:** CWSS

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Attached is a document by the CWSS providing information and a brief evaluation of the reasons for the rejection of the LIFE project proposal WIASAP (Wadden Sea Invasive Alien Species Action Plan), as well as proposals for next steps to be taken in order to fulfill §35 of the Tønder Declaration.

**Proposal**

The meeting is invited to discuss the document and to adopt the proposals contained in it

**TRILATERAL ALIEN SPECIES MANAGEMENT AND ACTION PLAN**

**Background**

On 25 June 2013 the trilateral project application WIASAP (Wadden Sea Invasive Alien Species Action Plan) was submitted to the LIFE+ programme by a consortium consisting of ministries/authorities from the Wadden Sea countries/Länder and Wadden Sea research institutes.The development of the proposal has been coordinated and facilitated by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The main purpose of the project was to develop a trilateral alien species management and action plan, within the framework of the trilateral alien species strategy, elaborated by the Working Group Alien Species (WG-AS), under the auspices of the Task Group Management (TG-M). The strategy was not adopted by MC2014 but in §35 of the Tønder Declaration it was agreed to further develop the strategy including an alien species management and action plan.

On 24 April 2014 the Ministry EZ was informed that the application has not been awarded.

**Objective**

The objective of this document is to provide a summary and a brief analysis of the main reasons why the proposal was rejected, as well as proposals for implementing §35 of the Tønder Declaration.

**Evaluation LIFE+**

The main scoring categories of the EU evaluation document (**Annex 1**), concern the technical and financial coherence and quality of the project, the contribution to the general LIFE+ objectives and the European added value. For all these categories the scoring is below the minimum level.

The main EU critique on the technical coherence and quality can be summarised as insufficient clarity (detail, quantification) of the contents of the various activities, as well as how the results of the activities can/will be applied in practice. A very specific comment is that the date of the adoption of the management and action plan is missing.

With regard to the financial coherence and quality it is concluded that the value for money is very low. This is caused by the combination of unclear results (see above) and high costs for several activities.

The contribution to the general LIFE+ objectives is considered insufficient because “the beneficiaries fail to demonstrate the application of numerous research-oriented actions to practice.”

For the category “European added value and complimentarity and optimal use of EU funding” in particular the unclear nature and role of stakeholders is criticised.

**Conclusions**

From the side of the CWSS it is concluded that the LIFE+ evaluators have judged the proposal on the basis of classical, mainly terrestrial oriented conservation practices. Here, generally, project activities and practical applicability of project results can be described with high level of detail. This is generally not the case for marine activities and certainly not for the very new and complicated field of invasive species and their impacts.

Although several activities could be described in more detail, this is certainly not the case for their precise application in practice. The testing of several innovative methodologies for their use in policy and management was in fact the core of the project.

The overall conclusion is that improving and resubmitting the proposal will very probably not lead to success because, as argued above, the applicability of various research activities will first have to be tested and evaluated and cannot yet be described and specified in more detail.

**Proposals**

It is proposed

1. not to resubmit the project under the LIFE+ Programme for reasons given above and that the coordinating beneficiary (Dutch Ministry EZ) informs the project partners accordingly
2. to set up a trilateral project with the aim of elaborating an alien species management and action plan, in accordance with §35 of the Tønder Declaration, making maximum use of the contents of the LIFE proposal, the consortium network and the financial means originally reserved for the LIFE project.

**Annex 1**

**EU evaluation WIASAP application**