MEETING DOCUMENT

**Task Group Management (TG-M 21-5)**

17 December 2021

Online meeting

**Agenda Item: 6. Ministerial Conference Declaration (MCD) and Governmental Conference (TGC)**

**Subject: Ministerial Conference Declaration (MCD) and Governmental Conference (TGC)**

**Document No.:** TG-M 21-5/6

**Date:** 10 December 2021

**Submitted by: CWSS**

At their TG-M 21-4 meeting, TG-M started discussing possible content for the Ministerial Council Declaration (MCD) 2022 and agreed to continue the discussion with the aim to formulate related articles for the Ministerial Declaration.

This document contains TG-M related parts of the draft PAR, as well room to start collecting possible topics for the Ministerial Declaration 2022. In addition, outcomes of the Wadden Sea Board (WSB) meeting 34 will be considered, in particular related to [WSB 34/7/1 Progress report of the DG-MCD](https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/system/files/WSB-34-7-1%20Progress%20report%20of%20the%20DG-MCD.pdf).

This document contains first suggestions by TG-M members resulting from an email consultation in the online document TG-M/Consultation/21-11-09.

**Proposal:** The group is invited to agree on topics/articles for submission to Ministerial Conference Declaration drafting group and start planning side event(s) (and suggest to German presidency) while noting that the responsibility for formulating the articles is with the Drafting Group Ministerial Conference Declaration.

# Ministerial Council Declaration

At their TG-M 21-4 meeting, TG-M started discussing possible content for the Ministerial Council Declaration (MCD) 2022 and agreed to continue the discussion with the aim to formulate related articles for the Ministerial Declaration. This section starts with current articles of the Leeuwarden Declaration 2018 and ends with room for suggestions for the Ministerial Declaration 2022.

## Leeuwarden Declaration 2018

The current Leeuwarden Declaration 2018 contains the following articles under responsibility of TG-M:

**PREAMBLE**

*We, the Ministers responsible for the protection of the Danish, Dutch, German Wadden Sea, representing our respective Governments in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Governmental Council on the Protection of the Wadden Sea,*

*[..]*

*Acknowledging the problem of marine litter in the Wadden Sea ecosystem, and committing to the circular economy as one important approach to preventing introduction of litter to the sea and contributing to the implementation of respective strategies developed on national and international level;*

*[…]*

*Acknowledging the importance of healthy estuaries for the Wadden Sea ecosystem and the fact that many ports, as vital elements of living and sustainable use in the Wadden Sea Region, are located in those estuaries;*

*Recalling the status of large parts of the Wadden Sea as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area, designated by the International Maritime Organization and welcoming the work achieved by the DENGERNETH Maritime Administration Group on the Operational Plans, as provided for in the Tønder Declaration;*

*Appreciating the progress made by the ports since the Tønder Declaration, welcoming the cooperative initiative ”Trilateral Wadden Sea Ports”, and noting the letter of intent issued at the initiative’s conference in Harlingen, Netherlands, on 17 May 2018, as an important encouragement for further dialogue on sustainable port operations;*

*[..]*

*Reaffirming the continued validity of the Tønder Declaration and the previous Ministerial Council declarations;*

**NATURE CONSERVATION AND INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT**

*The Ministers*

*[..]*

*14. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to work intensively on cooperation at the operational management level and to secure adequate wardening and management across the whole Wadden Sea Area, in order to strengthen the protection of the Wadden Sea World Heritage*

*[..]*

*21. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to further develop steps for the sustainability of fisheries in the Wadden Sea Area on the trilateral level, in order to achieve the conservation objectives of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation as well as a level playing field. This should be done in close cooperation with responsible authorities and relevant stakeholders and initiatives (e.g. certification procedures), within the Framework for Sustainable Fisheries, taking into account both the importance of the ecosystem service of providing regional seafood in this respect and the integrity of the World Heritage Site.*

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*The Ministers*

*22. Strive to substantially reduce the amount of marine litter in the Wadden Sea by the year 2030;*

*23. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to make use of all relevant existing monitoring and action programmes, as well as existing action plans, taking into account local, national and multilateral initiatives to gain and exchange adequate additional knowledge on sources and impacts of marine litter (such as microplastics) on the Wadden Sea ecosystem and stimulate and support appropriate measures.*

*[..]*

*29. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to review and monitor the impacts of renewable energy production and energy transportation on the Wadden Sea ecosystem and to consider measures to avoid or mitigate possible negative impacts by looking for best environmental practices also with the aim of developing, for example, related common principles to evaluate the impact of high-voltage power cables in the Wadden Sea Area in close consultation with the responsible bodies and stakeholders*

*30. Encourage ports and ferry companies working in the Wadden Sea Area to develop codes of conduct to further demonstrate their willingness to work towards environmentally sound standards in accordance with best available technology;*

*31. Request the Wadden Sea Board to consider the different approaches of the three countries in order to identify the most sustainable modes of transport for ensuring naturefriendly site-specific connections to the islands in the future;*

*32. Encourage the competent national shipping and nature conservation authorities to continue their dialogue in order to achieve an even higher level of safety and cooperation, inter alia by raising the general awareness and information level;*

*33. Encourage the further development and application of environmentally friendly port concepts through the joint organizations of ports, for example by exchange of best practices;*

*34. Note the ongoing discussions in the framework of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on a possible mandatory prewash of cargo tanks having contained paraffins, whereby the prewash residue shall be discharged into a port reception facility;*

## Tønder Declaration 2014

*23. Agree therefore to cooperate in evaluating the assessments under the Habitats Directive, also with the aim to prepare a common Natura 2000 roof report for the Wadden Sea.*

## Wilhelmshaven Declaration 2022 - Brainstorming

While in-depth discussions on content issues for the outline of the next MCD are still needed, major recent developments in global and European environmental policy like e.g., on Climate Change, Convention on Biological Diversity, EU Green Deal incl. the EU-biodiversity strategy for 2030, and realising the importance of addressing those issues on the upcoming Trilateral Governmental Conference, the DG-MCD recommends to aim for common core message(s) for the next Ministerial Declaration in their [Progress report WSB 34/7/1](https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/system/files/WSB-34-7-1%20Progress%20report%20of%20the%20DG-MCD.pdf) for the Wadden Sea Board meeting 34 on 18 November 2021.

The ”main part” contains information from TG-M 21-4.

For your consideration, information on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) [Preparations for the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework](https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/wg2020-03/documents) and [first draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/abb5/591f/2e46096d3f0330b08ce87a45/wg2020-03-03-en.pdf) and the [European Green Deal](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en) with [actions on Environment and Ocean](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/protecting-environment-and-oceans-green-deal_en) and [EU biodiversity strategy for 2030](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en).

**PREAMBLE**

*We, the Ministers responsible for the protection of the Danish, Dutch, German Wadden Sea, representing our respective Governments in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Governmental Council on the Protection of the Wadden Sea,*

* Crucial site for sustainable biodiversity (from talk Peter Shadie, IUCN, how can we harness the power of WH post 2020?)
* Need to have a sound basis for decision-making (management measures required, inform regional/local policies/strategies) : have a harmonized, long-term, adequate monitoring in place which will be adapted to current developments/needs

**NATURE CONSERVATION AND INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT/SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*The Ministers*

Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to

* to consider a restriction for certain places or times of the year as e.g., for Eider ducks, e.g., voluntary.
* The biodiversity strategy may offer an additional strategic way: if a closure of 10% (as resource use/ use free zones) would be requested, the trilateral ambition -being World Heritage- may be higher..
* to increase knowledge and scientific insight to substantiate the benefit of nature by possible measures, e.g., the importance of the Wadden Sea as spawning ground or nursery area for g fish.
* exchange of best practices on how to make fisheries more nature friendly on trilateral level. also an exchange on the consequences for the Wadden Sea due to the planned increase of wind energy offshore and the necessity for its maintenance and connection to land may be fostered.
* developing an implementation strategy on how to achieve a level playing field (fisheries) in the three countries (go up from the lowest one) (compare article on level playing field in the Leeuwarden Declaration 2018)
* Exchange on best practices regarding wardening , management measures (predator management, restoration of habitats, protected areas for species, visitor guidance system...)
* The SIMP can be used for first steps to identify fields of work and the institutions/persons relevant for implementation.
* Renewable energy – consequences for Wadden Sea of the implementation of the ambitious goals of the three Wadden Sea states to accelerate construction of offshore wind farms in their EEZs (and territorial waters) , need for common approach regarding cable crossings
* Interconnectedness between coastal waters, the hinterland and the offshore zone for migrating species such as birds, fish, marine mammals – different functions in the life cycles or in the course of the year
* Shipping safety measures – consider input from local level
* Identify adequate measures/ information tools to communicate trilaterally what is/will be done regarding the topic of marine litter (fishing gear, microplastic, single use plastics) on a national level (MSFD, round tables Marine Litter etc) and international level (OSPAR)