

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board

(WSB 41)

15 - 16 May 2023
Esbjerg, Denmark



Agenda Item:	5.1 World Heritage
Subject:	Draft Adaptive SIMPlementation Strategy
Document No.:	WSB 41/5.1/3
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Submitted by:	TG-WH

WSB 37 (Aug. 2022) requested TG-WH to develop the SIMPlementation strategy considering a step-by-step approach and a strategic prioritisation of the activities. The implementation strategy should be considered as a living document. WSB 38 (Oct. 2022) endorsed TG-WH's proposals consisting of practical considerations for the SIMPlementation strategy, the use of the SIMPlementation matrix and a preliminary roadmap ([WSB 38/5.1/3 Draft implementation strategy of the SIMP](#)).

TG-WH 40 (2 February 2023) agreed that any communication and workshops within and beyond TWSC need to wait until the Wilhelmshaven Declaration is signed and the SIMP is formally adopted by the three countries. However, it is possible to make progress in the planning of the implementation strategy and the identification of priorities and opportunities. TG-WH 41 discussed and agreed on the draft operational framework and noted the activities included in the supplementary budget 2023 that support the implementation of the SIMP. TG-WH also agreed that the further discussion on priorities and work plan for 2024 should be carried out in consultation with the competent authorities and trilateral groups also in conjunction with the budget planning.

Proposal: The meeting is invited to:

- 1. Endorse** the operational framework of the draft Adaptive SIMPlementation strategy including the draft strategic prioritisation of activities in 2023 taking into account the supplementary budget 2023 (Table 1).

Progress on the preliminary roadmap

The preliminary roadmap endorsed by WSB 38 included four immediate next steps required for developing the implementation strategy and implementing the SIMP involving the TWSC and stakeholders. The state of play is the following:

1. CWSS key role as Secretariat for the SIMP implementation.

The BMUV has extended the contract of the CWSS Program Officer for the SIMP until December 2023.

2. Definition of an agile setup for working on the strategy and the SIMPlementation.

The SIMPlementation needs to be overseen, monitored, and guided so that it is possible to define the best path that brings the most benefit. This is included in the overall review of the TWSC groups' structure (WSB 41 Agenda 7.4). The outcome will be included in the Draft Adaptive SIMPlementation strategy.

3. Work on the implementation matrix within TWSC and the stakeholders beyond TWSC and considering the review and integration of strategies (especially Wadden Sea World Heritage Strategy 2014-2020).

The draft SIMPlementation Matrix can only be communicated and discussed within and beyond TWSC with the relevant trilateral groups after the Wilhelmshaven Declaration is signed and the SIMP is formally adopted by the three countries.

4. Design systematic communication of the SIMP and its implementation process (3 levels: reporting to WSB, in the TWSC and beyond the TWSC).

No progress made so far as this depends on steps 2 and 3.

Draft Adaptive SIMPlementation Strategy (2023-2026)

The SIMP Integrated Management Plan for ONE Wadden Sea World Heritage should be applied as a strategic decision-making tool that facilitates a strategic, proactive, and collaborative transboundary management approach to maintaining and enhancing the OUV and addressing to the various pressures identified, including potential cumulative impacts. Effective management of the Wadden Sea needs to assure nature conservation and an ecosystem approach that integrates the management of the existing protected areas with enhancing the sustainability of other key activities, including the most important economic activities, whilst safeguarding the OUV.

The SIMPlementation Strategy aims to:

1. operationalise the activities for the SIMP key topics,
2. support climate change adaptation and mitigation activities and
3. contribute to strengthen the complementary activities to support management (Science and Research, Monitoring and Assessment, Knowledge Management, Education for Sustainable Development and Interpretation, Communication as well as Collaboration and Partnerships).

Operational Framework

The SIMPlementation follows a step-by-step approach to allow for gradual progress, participation, and adaptation of the activities and/or the strategy.

Activities build on, enhance the integration, and improve the use of existing plans, strategies, visions and frameworks carried out, for example, in the frame of the WSP 2010.

Specific activities are clear and carefully considered to complement and build on each other as much as possible (pool resources and use synergies across the TWSC and beyond).

1. Agile setup for working on the strategy and the SIMPlementation

The SIMPlementation uses the existing structures designed to implement the Ministerial Declarations.

CWSS administrates and coordinates the SIMPlementation.

CWSS and the (to be) assigned trilateral group (management in close cooperation with the trilateral world heritage group-*tbd*) maintains an overview of the SIMPlementation activities (incl. SIMPlementation Matrix), promotes collaboration and exchange between initiatives and groups, and provides guidelines for communication and reporting.

The SIMPlementation itself is entrusted to the respective TWSC bodies as much as possible (trilateral groups and associated bodies: Partnership Hub, Trilateral Programming Committee Wadden Sea Research, Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative Steering Group). Activities that fall under legal requirements must be dealt with in the official group structure and not in the associated bodies. The implementation of activities in collaboration with groups and stakeholders beyond the TWSC requires agreeing on case specific approaches and setups by the WSB (in close collaboration with activities in the framework the Partnership Hub and sometimes case specific).

2. Coordinated Approach

The SIMPlementation is on the agenda of all TWSC groups and their updated ToRs. The SIMPlementation is in the work plans of the CWSS and the members of the TWSC.

The TWSC groups, the WSB and advisors and collaborators outside the TWSC are invited to identify opportunities for cooperation, synergies, interdisciplinary research (considering climate change, cumulative effects, the ecosystem approach).

Good coordination and close communication with the various partners submitting project proposals or executing projects that support the implementation of the SIMP activities (i.a. shipping and ports, pipelines, and cable laying) is required. The Partnership Hub approach, if resources and capacities are available, is used to support further exchange and collaboration among partners, projects, organisations (e.g. via the exchange platform, workshop series or events, common project initiatives).

3. Resources

The implementation of SIMP activities requires appropriate resources and staff capacities which need to be dedicated by the whole of the TWSC and the involved stakeholders.

Strategic prioritisation, a step-by-step approach and regular reporting are key to allocate resources.

Co-funding by EU project(s) is used to meet the resource needs for the implementation of specific activities.

4. Progress Reports (aligned to existing reporting cycles and rules of procedure)

Progress on the implementation of the SIMP will be presented once a year at the WSB to allow for yearly budget planning and adjustment of activities. Progress reports will gather the progress done in implementing the SIMP activities and will consider the QSR Thematic reports, UNESCO reporting and other relevant reports that contribute to inform or to adapt the SIMP activities. CWSS and the assigned trilateral group are responsible of gathering progress information and produce reports.

A cumulative progress report is prepared in due time before the next Trilateral Governmental Conference to emphasise priorities resulting from the SIMPlementation to include in the upcoming Ministerial Declaration.

5. Expectations and risk management

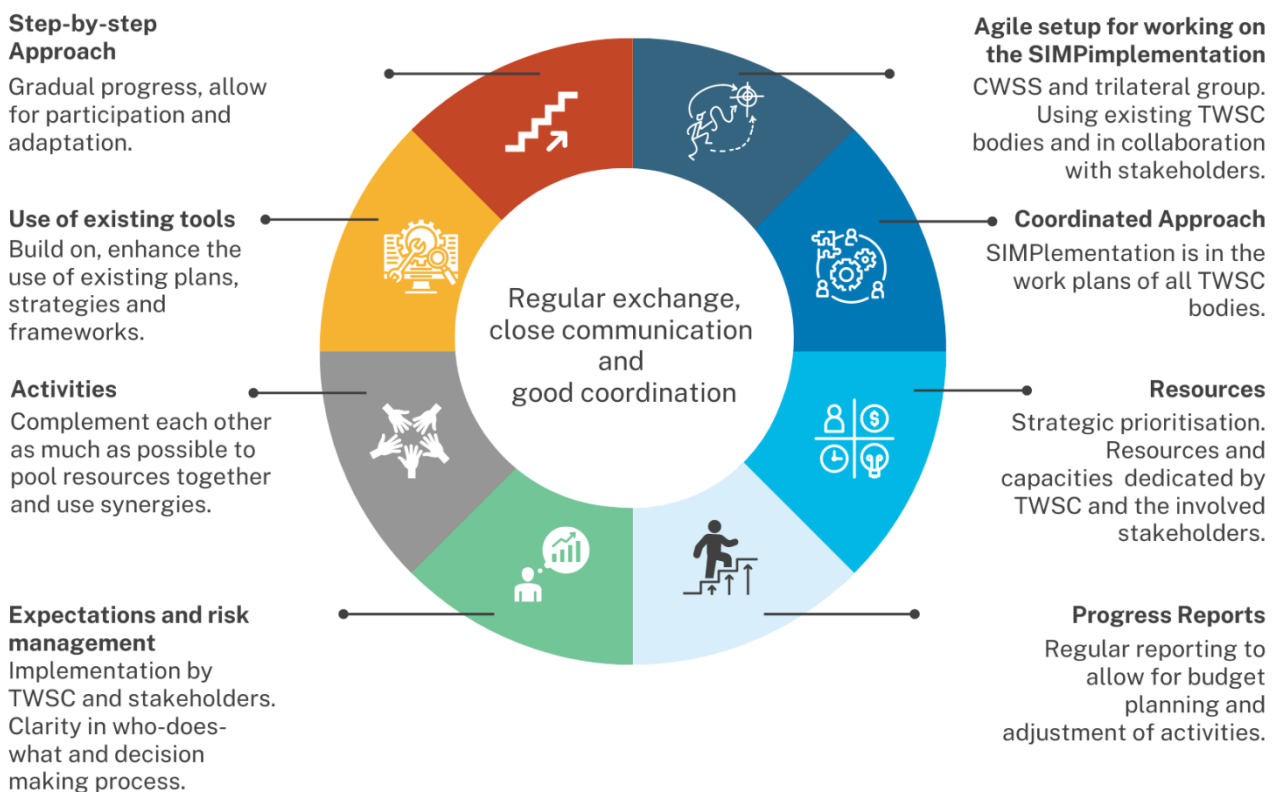
The SIMP activities should be performed within the TWSC in collaboration with the competent authorities and relevant stakeholders. The SIMPlementation requires work at various levels, in different formats, with different actors. Therefore, implementation activities may also be led by organisations outside the TWSC. In this case, decision making process should be agreed in advance and anchored in the TWSC, overseen by the WSB.

CWSS, the TWSC, stakeholders, NGOs and sectors have different ambition levels. Regular and clear communication should help adjust activities, improve distribution of responsibilities, and regulate expectations (be brave but also realistic). Adjustments should be reflected in the SIMPlementation Matrix.

Clarity in responsibilities: who is doing what and who is the lead and decision-making process is clear and visible to avoid “too many cooks” on one aspect, or to avoid overloading a few organisations.

Plan and act to reduce the possibility of failure and frustration in sensitive topics: share responsibilities at all phases (design, planning, executing, reviewing, and adapting activities) and support each other.

DRAFT SIMPlementation Operational Framework



DRAFT Strategic prioritisation (in relation to SIMPlementation)

The draft strategic prioritisation for 2023 is mainly based on the activities approved in the Supplementary Budget 2023 that support the implementation of the SIMP.

Future strategic priorities or opportunities for the term 2024-2026 will be identified by the assigned trilateral group together with other relevant groups or stakeholders considering that a realistic and (financially) feasible approach in time is needed. Also, key is to align with relevant national developments, to avoid any doubling.

Proposed criteria to consider for the future prioritization (2024 and later) are:

- Topics that need urgent tackling and are politically highly relevant e.g. energy transition.
- National and federal state's priorities that are currently being implemented and that are also in line with the SIMP (especially for enhancing site management).
- The decisions in the Wilhelmshaven Declaration and in the Joint Statement in the 14th TGC.
- Priorities of the Danish presidency.
- The objectives of the SIMP.

The exact phasing of execution of all these activities, the definition of objectives and deliverables, as well as other aspects of the endorsed preliminary the SIMPlementation Matrix ([WSB 38/5.1/3 Draft implementation strategy of the SIMP](#)) is to be discussed and decided in the future.

The finalisation or, if necessary, the update of the respective QSR Thematic Reports are to be coordinated with all key topics and the cross-cutting topic climate change.

Table 1. (Proposed) Draft strategic activities in relation to the SIMPlementation for 2023 based mainly on the supplementary budget (2023). The related SIMP activity/recommendation is shown as (SIMP Act. #) and the related paragraph in the Wilhelmshaven Declaration is shown as (WD #).

SIMP key topics
Develop and agree on acceptable impact models for monitoring and assessing tourism impacts on the Wadden Sea World Heritage as integral part of the TMAP. (SIMP Act. 3A, B, C, WD 64)
Support transboundary coordination of integrated grids and interconnectors and mitigation of impacts on OUV (SIMP Act. 2, WD 41, 42). Potential project proposal. For the time being coordination by Ad hoc group Cables and Pipelines.
Best practices exchange on nature-based solutions for improving nature and coastal protection at the same time. In collaboration with EG-C and MANABAS Coast project (SIMP Act. 1, 2, rel. WD 47, 57). Coordination by CWSS.
Climate Change
Report on the significance and management of Wadden Sea salt marshes for CO2 sequestration. One workshop on 2023 for exchange on next steps to further define topic in collaboration EG-C, EG-SM&D and members from MANABAS Coast (SIMP Recomm. 6, WD 55). Coordination by CWSS.
Complementary Activities to Support Management
Science and research
There is the opportunity to bring forward/propose research ideas related to SIMP key topics to the Trilateral research call (WD 60-61) with focus on Climate Change and transformative change of Human Uses (call open April-June 2023). The SIMP is among the aspects building the framework.
Monitoring and Assessment (TMAP)
Continue parameter review with focus on climate change, tourism impacts (consider future relevant socio-economic parameters). Specific parameter workshops are envisaged. In collaboration with/coordination by TG-MA and NG-ST, CWSS (WD 64).

Knowledge Management
Facilitation of World Heritage communication and engaging of stakeholder groups and sectors with the Wadden Sea World Heritage (online branding toolbox). Development of the strategy on Brand Management of the Wadden Sea World Heritage brand for the TWSC. Coordination by CWSS. Activation of new Partnership Hub online exchange platform for SIMPlementation projects and activities.
Collaborations and Partnerships
Use the Partnership Hub as an approach to reach objectives and implement activities/projects where close cooperation is needed beyond the TWSC (incl. SIMP). Coordination by relevant groups/CWSS depending on the type of activities.