

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 32)

04 March 2021
Online meeting



Agenda Item:	5.4 Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme
Subject:	Progress Report TG-MA
Document No.:	WSB 32/5.4
Date:	18 February 2021
Submitted by:	TG-MA

This document contains a progress report of the Task Group Monitoring and Assessment (TG-MA) including a work plan 2021-22 of the group (Annex 2) and a note from the chairperson (see below). Since WSB 31 in June, three TG-MA meetings and one workshop had been held as conference calls due to the contact and travel restriction resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Proposal: The WSB is invited to note the information and to endorse processes or proposals where indicated.

Note from the chairperson TG-MA:

TG-MA is now entering its third year of reviewing and revising the TMAP and its data handling procedures, including support of the 2021 ISWSS and preparing upcoming QSRs. Good progress has been made on the overview of the programme and the data sources. First steps towards addressing and solving the issues of compatibility of programmes and data within TMAP were identified which will be followed by the integration of new elements. The renewed participation of our RWS colleagues is explicitly acknowledged for their contributions. The participation of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality was welcomed during the critical phase in 2020. The year 2021 will offer new perspectives for the existing TMAP and for a broader and more integrating coverage of the quality status of the Wadden Sea.

Task Group Monitoring and Assessment (TG-MA) progress report to WSB 31

Since WSB-30 the TG-MA has progressed on the following specific items:

1. Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP) and trilateral data handling

1.1 TMAP

During its first meeting, the TG-MA decided to initiate the activities on TMAP and data handling with an inventory of the programme covering all regions and the full set of parameters. The underlying table was based on former attempts of the predecessor group TMAG. The near completion of the table was achieved in late 2020 and the basis for the corresponding online workshop on 10-11 December 2021. During this workshop, the table was intensely discussed, gaps were identified and concrete actions to attempt solving these issues were identified. As an overall result, a complete overview on the TMAP programme and its current implementation was achieved for the first time for several years. This table would be the basis for a further adjustment of the programme to current needs (e.g. emerging issues or relevant EU directives), but also be used as a basis for the further exploration, assessment and revitalization of the trilateral data handling (see also 1.2).

The TG-MA envisaged a series of workshops to be conducted in 2021 with the aim to fill the discovered deficiencies, but also to explore the integration of new parameters from emerging issues (e.g. climate change, new pollutants, alien species). The workshops would be planned in cooperation with relevant trilateral groups but in parts also with external experts. Due to the travel and contact restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the workshops were expected to be held in an online format. This was considered as a limiting condition but needs to be overcome to safeguard further progress.

The following conceptual TMAP workshops are planned during 2021 to further modernize and develop the programme:

Beaches and Dunes / Salt Marshes / Subtidal Habitats / Geomorphology and Hydrology

An additional TMAP workshop, involving also external/international experts was planned on emerging issues, like e.g., climate change or alien species, with the aim to explore options for an enhanced coverage of these topics by TMAP.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

1.2 Trilateral Data Handling

During its last meeting TG-MA decided to start investigation of the data handling process by approaching the responsible persons within the regions directly for a first contact. With the TMAP parameter table now at hand, the data delivery processes should be followed up and a performance overview should point to existing deficiencies. This exploration phase would result in a common workshop on data handling. All activities would be in consultation with EG-Data.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

2 Quality Status Report (QSR)

2.1 QSR Thematic Reports

TG-MA considered earlier that a full QSR during the German presidency was not realistic due to capacity issues and the ongoing TMAP and data handling revision. As an alternative, it was proposed to present selected updated QSR Thematic Reports. The first set of QSR Thematic Reports to be selected for updating was under the consideration of the major themes of the International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium (ISWSS) (now postponed to November/December 2021). Additionally, it was discovered that during the development of the SIMP, underlying information on the five key topics (Coastal protection, Energy, Fisheries, Shipping and Tourism) needed to be further explored and collected, such as inventories and status

and trends reports. As this mirrors the ground laying activities for creating a QSR Thematic Report, the coordinators of SIMP and QSR within CWSS developed a plan to interlink and streamline these processes and products, also to operate cost effective. A list of QSR Thematic Reports which are currently updated is in Table 1.

An additional product for the Ministerial Conference would still need to be developed by TG-MA with a potential involvement of the new QSR Editorial Board (see also 2.2).

Table 1. Selected QSR Thematic Reports for updating

QSR THEMATIC REPORT	Update selection Criterium	Trilateral group involved	remarks
1 Alien Species	ISWSS	EG-Alien Species	
2 Breeding Birds	ISWSS	EG-Breeding Birds	
3 Climate Change	WG initiative	EG-Climate	
4 Energy	SIMP	TG-Management	
5 Fish	ISWSS	WG-Swimway	
6 Fisheries	SIMP	TG-Management	
7 Flyway	ISWSS	EG-Migratory Birds, WSFI Steering Group	
8 Hazardous Substances	Pending report from 2017 QSR	TG-Monitoring and Assessment	Study on data status commissioned - report further delayed
9 Marine Mammals	ISWSS	EG-Seals (Marine Mammals)	
10 Migratory Birds	ISWSS	EG-Migratory Birds	
11 Shipping and Harbours	SIMP	TG-Management	
12 Sublitoral Habitats	ISWSS	TG-Monitoring and Assessment	
13 Tourism	SIMP	NG-Tourism	
14 Salt Marshes and Dunes	EG initiative	EG Salt Marshes and Dunes	implementation depending on finances
<i>Coastal Protection</i>	<i>SIMP</i>	<i>EG-Climate</i>	<i>Cancellation based on author assessment</i>

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

2.2 QSR Editorial Board

TG-MA drafted new Terms of Reference (TOR) for the coming QSR Editorial Board and also discussed potential participants. TG-MA agreed that the QSR Thematic Reports should ideally be scientifically independent products. Regarding those reports under the headline ‘human use’, the trilateral authorities might support the process with information supply and advise, coordinated by the Editorial Board, in cooperation with TG-MA and TG-M. The QSR Editorial Board should have a scientific background and is expected to act independently. The panel will play a vital role in the review process safeguarding scientific soundness and in the development of QSR relevant content for the Ministerial Conference in consultation with TG-MA and TG-M where necessary. The panel would be brought into effect for the duration of the German presidency and a subsequent review would reveal options how to proceed, also depending on the properties of future QSR products. The TORs for the QSR Editorial Board are in ANNEX 1.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

3. 15th International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium 2021

TG-MA decided to take advantage of the postponement of the 15th International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium (ISWSS) (now 30. November – 03. December 2021) and therefore to envisage the presentations of the completed QSR Thematic Reports with relevance for the programme. Corresponding slots are foreseen in the schedule.

Furthermore, TG-MA and CWSS would continue in supporting the organizers e.g. by proposing key note speakers, moderators and rapporteurs for the conference and also to consider contributions by group members. At an earlier stage, the trilateral groups were requested by TG-MA for delivering further support on relevant items.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

4. Single Integrated Management Plan (SIMP)

The basic chapters on TMAP and QSR were drafted by CWSS and TG-MA as part of the SIMP content development. Any developments on TMAP during the first half of 2021 would be considered for inclusion into the draft SIMP document.

Furthermore, TG-MA performed during its parameter review workshop an additional exercise to allocate the currently active TMAP parameter groups to the ten key values determined for the OUV. The resulting table was acknowledged by the coordinator of the SIMP process, Ms Luna, and would be a substantial part in the OUV assessment.

Close cooperation was achieved in interlinking the SIMP key topic chapters and the corresponding QSR Thematic Reports (see also 2.1).

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

5. TG-MA draft Workplan 2021-22

The document contains an updated draft TG-MA workplan for 2021-22 in ANNEX 2.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

QSR Editorial Board (QSR-EB)

Terms of Reference

Background

The regularly published Quality Status Reports describe and evaluate the ecological and environmental status of the Wadden Sea. The aim is to scientifically identify changes of this status and possible causes, to classify issues of concern and to indicate possible measures of redress, including the evaluation of the likely effectiveness of these measures, and to detect gaps in knowledge. The QSR is mainly based on the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP) and is assessing the status against the targets of the Wadden Sea Plan (WSP) as well as safeguarding the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the integrity of the World Heritage Site. CWSS, together with the Task Group Monitoring and Assessment (TG-MA), is responsible for an effective planning and smooth processes. The QSR Editorial Board is an effective and independently acting panel for safeguarding sound scientific content by considering the involvement of an appropriate group of reviewers in consultation with TG-MA and TG-Management (TG-M) on relevant topics. The Editorial Board is responsible for the content of the QSR and will contribute to the scientific products for the Ministerial Conference. The Wadden Sea Board (WSB) may mandate a policy response on the outcome, e.g. a Policy Assessment Report.

Objective

Supervise, as an independent scientific panel, on the academic quality of relevant QSR products, on review and evaluation of content of QSR Thematic Reports, but also on further QSR products for the next Ministerial Conference. Safeguard the assessments against the WSP targets, the existing trilateral strategies and the OUV of the World Heritage site within the Thematic Reports.

Tasks

Evaluation and review of scientific content of QSR Thematic Reports and QSR products in preparation of the Ministerial Conference in November 2022. During the German presidency, it was agreed to consider updates on selected QSR Thematic Reports and to provide a report that will summarize these chapters. The TG-MA supports the Editorial Board with the required data and/or, together with TG-M, the necessary links to the involved governmental bodies.

In particular:

- 1) Evaluate the scientific content of current QSR Thematic Reports on soundness and topicality;
- 2) Advise on planning and outlining of QSR Thematic Reports e.g. by suggesting alternative processes and content;
- 3) Coordinate and have an active role in the review process also by involving further external reviewers from their network and the trilateral community. This coordination will be conducted in consultation with TG-MA and TG-M on relevant topics (e.g. human use chapters), while these groups are not foreseen to participate in the actual reviews themselves;
- 4) Develop and contribute on content on agreed QSR relevant products for the Ministerial Conference together with TG-MA and TG-M;
- 5) Consider presentation of the outcomes of the QSR Thematic Reports at the International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium (ISWSS) in Nov./Dec. 2021.

Deliverables

- 1) Coordination of the scientific review of selected QSR Thematic Reports;
- 2) Assessment of scientific content of Thematic Reports and, if applicable, its relevance for WSP targets and the OUV;

- 3) QSR relevant products/documents, also for the MC in November 2022. (EB in consultation with relevant trilateral groups).

Composition/Membership

- Coordinator of QSR (CWSS) and Chairperson (from the trilateral framework).
- 1-2 members per region and/or state (NL, DE, LS, HH, SH, DK).
- The composition of the EB should reflect the subject areas of the QSR complex.

Time schedule

During German presidency.

The QSR EB will have a minimum of five meetings during the remaining working period of the presidency (approx. 1.5 years).

