

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 35)

10 March 2022
Online Meeting



Agenda Item:	5.1 World Heritage
Subject:	Progress Report World Heritage
Document No.:	WSB 35/5.1/1
Date:	17 February 2021
Submitted by:	Chairperson TG-WH

Attached is an overview of the progress of the Task Group World Heritage since last WSB and other World Heritage activities and projects carried out in the framework of the TWSC work plan.

The main focus of TG-WH was the preparation of the SIMP (see separate document WSB 35/5.1/2).

Since WSB 34, TG-WH had two online meetings on 13-14 December 2021 and on 27-28 January 2022. The next regular meeting is scheduled on 24 March 2022.

Proposal: The meeting is referred to the proposals in the document.

Progress Report Wadden Sea World Heritage

1. State of Conservation reporting to UNESCO World Heritage Centre

TG-WH has the task to coordinate the reporting of the States Parties to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in order to emphasize also to the Centre that the Wadden Sea is managed as one property.

According to the Operational Guidelines (OG) of the World Heritage Convention, these reports can be distinguished into state party information (OG § 172) and reports upon request by the World Heritage Centre, which has received third party information on specific issues and requests information/clarification from States Parties (OG § 174).

The Netherlands informed TG-WH that a response on the World Heritage Centre's request was submitted on 20 January 2022 to answer questions regarding a new permit for gas drilling in the Ternaard gas field outside the property. In addition, the Dutch ambassador to UNESCO has contacted the World Heritage Centre asking for advice on the proposed permit. TG-WH and WSB will be kept informed about any further activities.

An overview of reports submitted to the World Heritage Centre until 2021 is provided in Annex 1.

PROPOSAL: WSB to note.

2. Periodic Reporting 2022 - 2023

The Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting will commence in the Europe and North American region in autumn 2022 (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/prcycle3/>).

Prior to this, the concerned State Parties will be requested in the months of **May-June 2022** to submit to the World Heritage Centre the contact details of the designated National Focal Point and the World Heritage site manager who will be responsible to fill out the Third Cycle questionnaire (online).

The World Heritage Site Manager is responsible for completing Section II of the Questionnaire for her/his respective World Heritage site, while the National Focal Point is responsible for the completion of Section I (done on the country level) and for validating Section II of the questionnaire after it is completed by the respective Site Manager(s) (for the site level).

For the Wadden Sea, as a serial transboundary property, TG-WH proposed to reconfirm CWSS as "World Heritage site manager" to coordinate the completion of the questionnaire. The States Parties are invited to designate a "National Focal Point" who submits both sections to the WHC on behalf of the other two states:

Section I (State Party/national focal point level):

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/prcycle3/?page=draft&did=5154>

Section II (World Heritage property/site manager level):

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/prcycle3/?page=draft&did=5155>

The last Periodic Report was submitted in March 2014. Jens Enemark (CWSS) acted as site managers, and Brigitta Ringbeck (German World Heritage Focal Point) as National Focal Point who submitted both reports.

PROPOSAL:

- 1. to task TG-WH with the Periodic Reporting for the Wadden Sea World Heritage.**
- 2. to appoint CWSS as “World Heritage site manager” to coordinate the Periodic Reporting**
- 3. to designate a “National Focal Point” (one of the three countries) to submit the report.**

3. Wadden Sea World Heritage Strategy

The Wadden Sea World Heritage Strategy, subtitled “Challenging the global dimension” and “working with partners”, was adopted in 2014 to focus the TWSC work carried in implementing the World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage requests. A roadmap provided an overview of the status of planned or ongoing activities. The last update of the roadmap dates from 2017 in preparation of TGC 2018.

The WH Strategy defines the five themes to be dealt with trilaterally.

1. Work theme 1: Nature conservation and international cooperation (WSFI, WH programmes, MoU).
2. Work theme 2: The World Heritage Brand Management (WH communication and brand identity across the property, engagement of stakeholders.).
3. Work theme 3 Outreach and education (outreach material, Education Strategy 2018, IWSS)
4. Work theme 4 Sustainable Tourism (Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2014, NG ST, PROWAD Link).
5. Work theme 5 Regional Sustainable Development (WH Partnership Hub).

Some of the working topics are addressed in the main SIMP themes (such as nature conservation, human activities) with recommendations for implementation. The SIMP also refers to several other themes, such as raising stakeholder awareness on WH, international cooperation on WH, education and communication between stakeholders on WH, and promoting science and monitoring to improve OUV, but implementation is done in other trilateral strategies or action plans.

Since 2014, large parts of the proposed activities have been implemented under the five work themes and in the trilateral partnership initiative, the Partnership Hub, and other, new aspects have developed. The meeting therefore proposed that the strategy and roadmap still has additional value and should be reviewed and updated as needed.

TG WH recommends keeping strategy should as a stand-alone document for mainstreaming World Heritage for all activities in the Wadden Sea. It should be an overall strategy that refers to and links existing plans and strategies, including the SIMP.

An update should include clear linkages to the SIMP and be aligned with the Wilhelmshaven Declaration 2022. Therefore, TG-WH proposes to WSB to prepare a revised WH Strategy for adoption by WSB after the TGC 2022.

PROPOSAL:

To instruct TG-WH to prepare a revision of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Strategy for adoption by WSB after TGC 2022

4. Marine Site Managers Conference 2023

Every three years, site managers from the now 50 marine sites across 37 nations come together to share their best practices and discuss conservation solutions. The conferences are geared toward replication of success. Latest edition was held in September 2019 (Glacier Bay) and build upon 2016 (Galapagos), 2013 (Corsica) and 2010 (Hawaii) managers conferences. Representative from the Wadden Sea have participated in these conferences to profile the work of the TWSC and to profit from the knowledge of these unique global network. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-managers/>

The next conference was originally scheduled for 2022 but has been postponed with one year to autumn 2023.

In November 2021, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre requested the Wadden Sea to host the 5th Marine Programme Site Managers Conference in autumn 2023. After consultations with the trilateral focal points and positive feedback by the Wadden Sea Board (WSB 33 and 34), CWSS informed the World Heritage Centre accordingly. The event will take place during the Danish presidency and Denmark has already announced its willingness to host this conference as joint trilateral event, in collaboration with Schleswig-Holstein and with support from all three states and CWSS.

A first meeting with the World Heritage Centre took place on 24 February 2022, to start with the preparatory work including programme and budget. TG-WH and WSB will be informed accordingly

The Conference will a unique opportunity to profile the TWSC as an international role model for transnational cooperation, management and stakeholder involvement on the protection of the Wadden Sea, the only marine World Heritage shared by three countries.

The Conference could also give insights how to maintain and improve management in the Wadden Sea by learning from other World Heritage sites in dealing with emerging issues such as climate change adaptation, energy transition and shipping safety.

Furthermore, the Conference is an opportunity to also enhance the visibility of the TWSC amongst the stakeholders the Wadden Sea itself, with the World Heritage as an achievement of joint protection and collaboration for over 40 years. This will also enhance the awareness and support of stakeholders and local communities for the aims of the TWSC and the implementation of the SIMP.

PROPOSAL:

To note / to comment as appropriate

ANNEX 1**Table 1: Reports to the WH Centre on projects (OG § 172, state party information) (version 07.02.2022)**

No	Report to WHC	Topic	Status	TG-WH involvement
1	26.05.2020	New Pier at port of Rømø, DK	Response by WHC with IUCN evaluation, 8.10.2020	Informed
2	18.06.2020	New World Heritage visitor centre, Lauwersoog, NL	Request by WHC for additional information 14.06.2020, Letter to WHC on 22.07.2020	Informed
3	13.10.2020	District Heating Plants, Esbjerg, DK	Response by WHC on 19.10.2020, IUCN evaluation pending	Informed
4	10.11.2020	Tjæreborg Wind Farm Project, DJ	Response by WHC on 16.12.2020 with evaluation by IUCN	Informed

Table 2: Request from the WH Centre requests concerning State of Conservation (OG § 174, third party information) 2018 – 2021 (version 07.02.2022)

No-	Date WHC request	Topic	Status	TG-WH involvement
1	03.04.2018	Esbjerg Harbour extension plans, DK (third party information and state party reporting)	Additional information provided 8.5.2019, 18.11.2019 (revised plans), IUCN	Informed

			evaluation done 8.10.2020	
2	30.05.2018	Houting population decline, DK.	Reply on 23.10.2018	Informed
3	11.01.2019	MSC Zoe container spill, NL	Final draft on 28.03.2019, submitted by NL, including information from Germany (container spill and Glory Amsterdam incident).	Provided input in drafting
4	05.06.2019	Elbe deepening, D	Reply in preparation by Germany	Informed
5	20.6.2019	Fossil Fuel Mining, NL	Final draft on 16.08.2019 submitted by NL to TG-WH for comments	Provided input in drafting
6	25.02.2020	Salt Mining, NL	Reply on 2.12.2020, IUCN evaluation ongoing. Request for information on Agenda 2050 (7.12.2020)	Informed
7	25.06.2020	Wind farm project, Schleswig Holstein	Reply in preparation by Schleswig-Holsten	Informed
8	07.05.2021 and 30.11.2021	Gas Mining, climate change, NL	Reply on 20.01.2022	Informed

According to the trilaterally agreed procedure, TG-WH was informed respectively involved in preparing a reply to a WHC request on the State of Conservation of the property.