

FINAL DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD

36th Meeting of the Wadden Sea Board (WSB 36)

28-29 April 2022
Varde, Denmark



1. Opening of the Meeting

The meeting was opened by the chair, Karin Lochte, at 13:30 on 28 April 2022 and she welcomed the participants.

Nanou Beekman and Janne Liburd joined online due to other obligations. The Dutch members Johan Hamstra and Theo Meskers were excused.

The chair also welcomed Adi Kellermann, chair of the Task Group Monitoring and Assessment as an invited guest with a contribution on agenda item 5.3. (Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme). Kees Bastmeijer from the Dutch Wadden Academie was welcomed to do a presentation on the Rights of Nature. Paddy Walker was welcomed online to do a presentation on fish in the Wadden Sea on the second day. Both presentations were provided in relation to Agenda item 7 (Trilateral Governmental Conference 2022) in regard to potential content of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration.

A list of participants is in Annex 1.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Document: [WSB 36/2 WSB 36 Draft Annotated Agenda](#)

The agenda prioritised the list of the key topics to be discussed, to be decided upon or to give guidance on the further process. An outline of the agenda can be found in Annex 2.

Hans Ulrich Rösner enquired about the content of the letter from the UNESCO sent to the Dutch government about gas drilling activities in the Netherlands. The Dutch delegation offered to inform on the status under agenda item 4. (Announcements).

The WSB **adopted** the agenda as submitted.

3. Record WSB 35

Document: [WSB 36/3 WSB 35 Draft Summary Record](#)

Comments on the first draft have been received and taken-up. The Final Draft was sent around by e-mail on 21st of April 2022. No further comments were received.

The WSB **adopted** the summary record of WSB 34.

4. Announcements

Denmark

- Anne-Marie Vægter Rasmussen informed on the recently launched Danish initiative which is high on the political agenda, to substantially extend the efforts on renewable energy by 2030: wind farms on land should be doubled in numbers, while the solar energy capacity should be increased by factor ten. Also wind farms on sea should be doubled compared to what was earlier politically decided – depending on further analysis.
- .
- Ms Rasmussen informed on a concise review of the Danish national monitoring programme to meet the budget constraints and continuously comply with EU requirements.
- Christina Egsvang Føns informed on the detection of polluted drinking water on the island of Fanø. Activities for cleaning the water from fluoride were undertaken. Parallel to this, it was also considered to install a pipeline for drinking water from Esbjerg which would go through the Wadden Sea area. The Task Group World Heritage (TG-WH) and the World Heritage Center/IUCN will be informed if this will be the preferred solution.
- Janne Liburd informed on two projects with involvement of the Danish National Park: A) a joint project with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and under the lead of the University of southern Denmark on the use of drones for nature monitoring with financial support of the EU-Horizon; B) the e-DNA expeditions in marine World Heritage sites project launched by the UNESCO on engaging citizen-scientists in revealing the richness and vulnerability of biodiversity for the conservation of UNESCO sites in a changing climate..

Germany

- Ilka Wagner informed on a major re-organization within the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV). A separate department on marine protection was installed, reflecting this new priority area of the Minister. The structure was already decided, but personal resources not finalized.
- Volker Brengelmann reported that the minister for economy informed the cabinet on planned gas exploitation activities at the Dutch-German border. In October last year the Lower Saxony parliament expressed its will to weigh nature conservation in the lower Saxon Wadden Sea (National Park and World Heritage site) as a high priority. However, the current Ukrainian war made it necessary to reassess the situation in order to achieve independence from Russian gas supplies as quickly as possible. The Lower Saxon government and the Dutch company One-Dyas intend to sign an agreement. At the same time, however, exploitation in the area may only take place if the protection of the islands and the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park is guaranteed. The drilling would be close to the World Heritage area but any negative effects to the property should be prevented.
- Vera Knoke referred to the announcements on the 15 International Scientific Wadden Sea Symposium sent in written format and expressed her thanks to all organizers, especially Marina Sanns and the CWSS. In this regard, Ms Lochte announced the letter of the chair of the Trilateral Programming Committee on Wadden Sea Research (TPC-WSR), Bernd Scherer, expressing content with the event, but also noting the underrepresentation of humanity topics. Ms Lochte recommended considering the offer of support by the TPC-WSR. Ms Liburd echoed the overall contentment with the event and congratulated the organizers. She informed that Cormac Walsh, University of Lüneburg, was compiling a list of scientists working in the humanities sector with relation to the

Wadden Sea. Ms Knoke added that a corresponding outlook session was cancelled due to insufficient participation beforehand.

- Ms Wagner informed on German plans, accelerated by the Russia-Ukraine war, to extend the capacity for offshore wind farms from 5.5 GW (in 2020) in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea to 70 GW by 2045 which might result in great challenges for nature protection in the EEZ and the adjacent Wadden Sea. Henrik Pind Jørgensen noted that the Task Group Management (TG-M) already started discussion relating best practice cases. Ms Knoke added on the recently installed TWSC-ad-hoc group on cable laying and pipeline activities under the lead of Maren Bauer.

Netherlands

- Nanou Beekman informed that UNESCO was planning to discuss the Dutch gas exploitation activities during their next Committee meeting which, however, was postponed due to the war in the Ukraine as the meeting would have been under Russian presidency. The discussion would also include Dutch salt mining activities. The UNESCO letter on gas drilling will be sent to the parliament first and then made publicly available and shared with the relevant TWSC groups. Karst Jaarsma added that the TG-WH was already informed.
- Ms Beekman informed on bilateral talks with Lower Saxony on electricity landings in the area of Eemshaven by the Ministry of Economy and Climate and on the dredging activities resulting from the construction of an LNG terminal.

Nature NGOs

- Hans-Ulrich Rösner welcomed the suspension of dumping of mud from the Hamburg harbour area near the island of Scharhörn. He expressed concern that this is not yet a permanent decision and also about another location for dumping at Neuer Lüchtergrund as being also close to the Wadden Sea and therefore with a potential risk for the World Heritage site.. This was echoed by Ms Knoke who informed that the Neuer Lüchtergrund site is located in Schleswig-Holstein coastal waters close to, but outside the National Park. Bernd-Ulrich Netz informed the meeting about their discussions with Lower Saxony on this issue. Ms Wagner referred to a corresponding letter of the mayor of Cuxhaven expressing his concerns to the BMUV minister. The potential role of the WSB in this matter was questioned.
- Mr Rösner informed on a project by Schutzstation Wattenmeer on tackling the increasing predation by brown rats on nests and chicks of coastal islands and Halligen in Schleswig-Holstein. .
- Marco Brodde informed on the results of breeding bird counts by the Danish NGOs and expressed severe concern on the low numbers detected even among most common birds and that corresponding action would be needed.
- Mr Brodde reported a successful project for excluding foxes from selected sites resulting in highest breeding success of two vulnerable species recorded in 25 years.
- Henk de Vries reported on an ongoing evaluation of the of Pact van Marrum, signed by the Dutch Wadden Sea Ports and a Wadden Nature Coalition, with the final aim of developing a new agreement.

Wadden Sea Forum

- In May 2022, the Dutch Omgevingsberaad Waddengebied (OBW) would visit Wilhelmshaven, also to sign an agreement with the WSF on future cooperation. The OBW had agreed on acting as Regional Round Table in the new framework of the WSF, i.e. working on the “Green Coastal Deal”. Further approaches for Regional Round Tables would be conducted in June 2022 in Schleswig-Holstein.

CWSS

Document: [WSB 36/4/1 Announcements by CWSS](#)

- Interreg North Sea Proposal MANABAS Coast
- East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum 2022
- UNESCO Marine World heritage – 5th Global Managers Conference, Esbjerg 18 – 21 2023
- Environmental education and youth engagement
- Flyway assessment report

Ms Wagner referred to the MANABAS project and asked for more background on the content and reminded the CWSS to put this on the agenda in time and not only under announcements, especially when budget related issues are at stake. The secretary replied that he would come back to this item at the next Representatives meeting but stated that a very careful internal assessment including any financial implications had been executed before signing up.

The Dutch delegation referred to the first set of printed copies of the Flyway assessment report they could distribute to the meeting. This 3rd Flyway assessment report was much welcomed by the meeting

The WSB **noted** the information.

5. Implementation Leeuwarden Declaration

5.1 Wadden Sea World Heritage

Ad hoc Working Group Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation (WG WHF)

Thomas Borchers orally informed on the progress of the Working Group World Heritage Foundation. The foundation supervisory authority in Lower Saxony agreed to the new proposal securing the management funding in order to begin right from the start with sufficient funding and as such avoiding unspecified recurring costs in future. He underlined the still existing general commitment by the founders. The final proposal was now discussed with the founders and in the states. He reported on new information from Denmark, that further internal legal checks are needed to determine the consequences. Ms Rassmussen specified that Danish participation in a foundation under German law seems to present a legal challenge which Denmark has not yet been able to settle fully satisfying

The WSB **noted** the oral report and expressed their concern about the timeline

5.2 Nature conservation and integrated ecosystem management

Document: [WSB 36/5.2/1 Progress report of the Task Group Management](#)

The WSB **noted** the progress report.

Document: [WSB 36/5.2/2 marine litter in the Wadden Sea](#)

The WSB **agreed** to support the recommendations as guidelines on how to take up the topic of marine litter in the next presidency, and to instruct TG-M to develop a roadmap for their implementation.

5.3 Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme

Document: [WSB 36/5.3/1 Progress report of the Task Group Monitoring and Assessment](#)

The WSB **noted** the progress report.

Document: [WSB 36/5.3/2 TMAP data handling scenarios](#)

As an introduction to the agenda item, Sascha Klöpfer held a presentation on the Quality Status Report activities in 2021-22. He explained the selection made for the Thematic Reports, e.g. in connection with the ISWSS and the Single Integrated Management Plan. An impressive amount of more than 85 authors were involved at that time, and more than 4000 visitors were counted on the QSR website only in the first quarter of 2022. All the updated selected Thematic Reports will be published on the QSR website soon. He reported some key findings from these reports and stressed the importance of a sound Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP) as the foundation of the ecological assessment, referring to major problems for QSR authors to request data from all countries.

The chair of the Task Group Monitoring and Assessment (TG-MA), Adi Kellermann, provided a presentation to introduce the document on data handling scenarios. He described the process from the start in 2019 with the burden to overcome some obstacles for TG-MA/EG Data, including general doubts about common data handling, but also for QSR authors when trying to assemble harmonized data from the regions. The initial aim was to deliver new TMAP/QSR information depending on availability and to increase the visibility of TMAP. As a milestone in the process, he highlighted the TMAP data handling workshop in January 2022 and the good cooperation with the Expert Group Data (EG-Data) since. He emphasized the necessity of a solid and sophisticated data handling system as originally outlined in the TMAP strategy in 2014 (Tønder Declaration), and a corresponding decision by WSB, stating that the QSR and an adequate TMAP are essential instruments for the Wadden Sea World Heritage.

Members welcomed and appreciated the presentations.

Martin Petersen underlined the importance of broad access to data in general and welcomed the revitalisation of the EG-Data. He also said, that in the process of elaborating the TMAP-update, Denmark will welcome a scenario approach, including a “zero-cost” scenario. He then referred to a comprehensive set of technical guidelines etc. developed in Denmark in connection with the streamlining of the National Danish Monitoring Programme (NOVANA) and the subsequent creation of [The Danish Environmental Portal](#) (DMP). On that background he stated that it will not be possible for Denmark to embark into trilateral activities that is not in full compliance with the foundation of - and preconditions for NOVANA and DMP. Since scenario IV potentially violates this, unless a framework comparable to the Danish - is implemented on a TWSC scale, Denmark cannot support further elaboration of scenario IV. To gain quick benefit in the coming process, He furthermore pledged for a step-by-step approach, where intermediate goals are formulated and implemented, for example the scenario I possibility of web-access all TMAP data as they are made available by the 3 countries, but before a full harmonisation. He further underlined Danish preferences for any solutions, as far as possible, to build on working solutions or services already existing in the 3 countries or in relevant European/international institutions.

Ms Wagner informed on the German position to clearly aim for the implementation of scenario IV, which was targeted already in the two previous declarations. Germany would be supportive to further elaborate on

the resources needed to be able to decide on the way forward. Volker Brengelmann suggested keeping all scenarios on the table for now and deciding based on cost estimates and technical feasibility.

Joost de Ruij noted that the Dutch position would be somewhat between the two others. It was important for the Dutch delegation to operate with FAIR data (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability), which should by any means remain at the source and under the regime of the national data strategy. He also noted that scientists should be the most important target group and agreed on the need to get a financial overview of the costs of the different scenarios.

Mr Petersen underlined Denmark's reservations concerning scenario IV and, as a reaction, Mr Kellermann emphasized that it would be unwise to exclude any scenarios before the financial impact and the technical options would be investigated further as the harmonisation efforts by technical micro services might not turn out as high as expected. Ms Knoke added that one of the preconditions was that the regional data bases remain unaffected and that an overview of which data sets were exclusively needed for the trilateral cooperation and not already collected under other conventions, e.g. OSPAR, might be helpful. There was agreement that any data harmonization processes would still be the major challenge.

The WSB **agreed** that TG-MA, together with EG-Data, would coordinate a study to investigate the necessary resources for implementing the different scenarios, including the option to incorporate additional data. Such study and a proposal on how to proceed with the TMAP would be delivered as WSB 37 document and presented during WSB 37 in August.

5.4 Communication and Education

Document: [WSB 36/5.4 IWSS Progress Report](#)

Members welcomed the progress report and the evaluation proposal. The Netherlands underlined the importance with respect to the evaluation of the Education Strategy to take into account also the more adult people and involve also organisations like e.g. the Dutch Waddenvereniging and their best practice examples etc..

The WSB **noted** the progress report and **agreed** on the proposal to evaluate the Trilateral Education Work Programme 2018-2022 as outlined in the document.

6. Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Hub

Document: [WSB 36/6 OPteamPH progress report](#)

Margrita Sobottka informed on the progress on the Partnership Hub (PH) with an evaluation of the pilot phase to be carried out in the months to come. This was commissioned to Kees van Es (WING company) who already has had a record of involvement in trilateral activities, including on the first steps of the PH.

The WSB **noted** the progress.

7. Trilateral Governmental Conference 2022

Document: WSB 36/7 draft of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration (sent by e-mail)

Thomas Borchers, as chair of the Drafting Group, shortly introduced the draft. He explicitly thanked all participants of the drafting group and referred to the input of the WSF and the WST which was duly taken into account.

The meeting welcomed the outline of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration and appreciated the new 'introductory' part with vision and mission and highlighting several aspects to be taken up.

The overall discussion in the WSB meeting is reflected in the agreed changes to the document.

Prof Kees Bastmeijer was invited to give a short introduction on the concept 'Rights of Nature' (RoN), one of the articles in the Wilhelmshaven Declaration might refer to.

From an independent expert's point of view, he gave a short historical overview of this concept. He pointed to the importance of issues like the precautionary principle, cumulative aspects and gaps in knowledge and how these issues have been handled. He carefully suggested that, if taken from a soft law perspective, this RoN concept could be considered more as an inspirational concept for the TWSC than to step into the process of a more difficult and formal legal acceptance.

During the discussion the ideas were generally welcomed as an interesting concept, realising the changed perspective in general from anthropocentric to ecocentric, but definitely in need of further exploration to see if this would give added value to the existing structures. It was also remarked that, when entering into this discussion, this should be done at an appropriate scale, similar to the Wadden Sea World Heritage process.

Dr Paddy Walker was invited to give a presentation on fish in the Wadden Sea in time and space. She highlighted and acknowledged the work of the Expert Group (EG)-Swimway, the high value of the QSR thematic report fish, the contributions to the 15th ISWSS, and progress and update on trilateral fish projects. The latter included insights in the interesting project recently started on a historical reconstruction to get a fish reference of the Wadden Sea by means of a systematic review (SWIMWAY historical reference -SHIRE). Already now, one of the promising outcomes of the project is the establishment of a trilateral network of trilateral MSc students working together. Janne Liburd invited the network to contact the TriWadCrew (the Universities of Groningen, Oldenburg, Bremen, Lüneburg, Hamburg and Southern Denmark) to learn more about existing joint summer school activities.

On request by the chair on the relation between this group on fish and fisheries, it was replied that fisheries provide an important source for SWIMWAY data. In particular, historical records on fish in the Wadden Sea available for the SHIRE project are those from fisheries. Also, present information on rare species, such as on the presence of sharks (as shown also in the recent draft of the QSR thematic report on fish) is only possible with information from fishermen.

The WSB concluded on the 1st draft version of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration to be distributed for the consultation phase. The DG-MCD was requested to conclude on the final editing on Monday 2nd of May.

Regarding the consultation phase, Denmark remarked that the consultation of the last two municipalities might not be finalized before mid-August.

For the next WSB37 meeting on 26th of August 2022, the DG-MCD was tasked to prepare a concise overview document based on the outcome of the consultation phase in the three countries, with only the essential points to be discussed at WSB level. On the request of Marco Brodde if new points could be taken up, it was commonly understood that this should be the outcome of the consultation.

The WSB **welcomed** the presentations and **endorsed** the 1st draft of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration for consultation, with the results to be discussed at the next WSB. All delegations were **requested** to submit their comments in writing in time for the next WSB.

8. Wadden Sea Board Advisors: Wadden Sea Forum; Wadden Sea Team

Wadden Sea Forum

The WSF was supporting the project Wattfossilfrei!, which is conducted by the Mellumrat in Lower Saxony. The project Wattfossilfrei! aims at the implementation of fossil fuel free propulsion of leisure boats in the Wadden Sea. At 25 April 2022, a workshop took place in Wilhelmshaven where the WSF presented its current work in the topic of shipping and harbours and offered support to disseminate the results and outcomes of the Wattfossilfrei! project on trilateral level, for example, at the plenary meeting WSF-41 in North Frisia. Taking into account the preliminary published results and insights of the Dutch Programme for a Rich Wadden Sea (PRW) project “Accessibility and Mobility”, a trilateral approach deemed promising.

The WSF is partner in the nationally funded project TrilaWatt, which made progress in contacting and discussing the project aims with Dutch institutions and research projects, for example connecting to the “Community of Understanding – Sediment Solutions” and Wadden Mozaïk.

In the weeks to come, the contact towards Danish institutions and projects would be started. Moreover, first conversation with members of staff at the CWSS on TMAP and EG-Data encouraged for a fruitful cooperation. The project consortium was open and eager for further exchange.

The WSB **noted** the information.

9. Any Other Business

Document: [WSB 36/9 Feasibility Study Trilateral Volunteer Service](#)

Mr Borchers informed on the background of the feasibility study which was difficult to commission due to the lack of capable consultancies. Several options for installing such services were outlined, e.g. by using the German or European system as a starting point. The challenges would be to overcome legal issues and various requirements in the states which turned out to be rather specific. The study was provided to raise first attention at WSB level but not to be further discussed at that point. He offered to have a detailed presentation of the results and an exchange on the issue at a trilateral level.

Ms Beekman replied that such system seemed to be well implemented in Germany already, but that such infrastructure would lack in the Netherlands. This was echoed by Mr Jørgensen for Denmark. Ms Liburd welcomed the study and emphasized the opportunities that could be created for young people, not directly within an institutional legal framework but within already existing networks. Mr Borchers added that it isn't the intention to establish the German system abroad but rather to see if the approach of a voluntary service is appropriate to pursue at the trilateral level. The feasibility study is just one component of information in this regard.

The WSB **noted** the information.

The secretary handed over a fact sheet outlining the Trilateral Youth Conference from 01 to 04/09/2022 in St. Peter-Ording, Germany. Mr Borchers noted that the Youth Conference Project Advisory Group would decide on the process of selecting up to 60 participants from the three countries.

Vera Knoke requested if it would be possible to distribute the presentations held at the WSB meeting.

10. Next meeting

Next meeting was scheduled on Friday 26th of August, in Wilhelmshaven, one day after the Wadden Sea Day on 25th of August, also in Wilhelmshaven.

11. Closing

The chair closed the meeting at 11:30 on 29 April 2022 and thanked participants for their engagement and CWSS for the preparations.

ANNEX 1: List of participants

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

35th meeting of the Wadden Sea Board (WSB 35)

10 March 2022



Chair

Prof. Karin Lochte

Burbarg 11
24226 Heikendorf
Mobile: +49 170 9184620
E-Mail: Lochte@deutsche-meeresforschung.de

Denmark

Ms Anne-Marie Vægter Rasmussen

Ministry of Environment and Food of Denmark
Environmental Protection Agency
Tolderlundsvej 5
5000 Odense C
Phone: +45 72 54 47 22
Mobile: +45 21 78 28 01
E-Mail: anvra@mst.dk

Mr Martin Petersen

Head of Department,
Ministry of the Environment and Food,
Environmental Protection Agency,
Jakob Gades Allé,
DK – 6600 Veien
Phone: +45 2078 2279
E-Mail: mpete@mst.dk

Ms Janne Liburd (online)

Professor, D.Phil., PhD, Department of Design and
Communication, Director, Centre for Tourism,
Innovation and Culture
Universitetsparken 1, DK-6000 Kolding
Phone: +45 6550 1576
Mobile: +45 2813 9918
E-Mail: liburd@sdu.dk

Ms Christina Egsvang Føns

Environmental Executive
Esbjerg Kommune
Torvegade 74
DK-6700 Esbjerg
Phone : +45 76161399
Mobile: +45 20473563
E-Mail : chfns@esbjergkommune.dk

Germany

Ms Ilka Wagner

Head of Division Marine Nature Conservation
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature
Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer
Protection, Germany
Zimmerstraße 69,
D- 10117 Berlin
Phone: +49 30 18 305 2780
Mobile: +49 173 276 3460
E-Mail: ilka.wagner@bmu.bund.de

Ms Vera Knoke

Ministry of Energy, Agriculture, the Environment,
Nature and Digitalization Schleswig-Holstein,
Mercatorstrasse 3
D - 24106 Kiel
Phone: +49 (0) 431-988 7288
Fax: +49 (0) 431 988 615 7288
E-Mail: vera.knoke@melund.landsh.de

<p>Mr Volker Brengelmann Ministry for Environment, Energy, Building and Climate Protection of Lower Saxony Archivstraße 2 D-30169 Hannover Phone: +49 511 120 3662 E-Mail: volker.brengelmann@mu.niedersachsen.de</p>	<p>Mr Bernd-Ulrich Netz Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, Ministry of Environment, Climate, Energy and Agriculture Department of Nature Conservation (BUKEA), National Park Administration Hamburg Neuenfelder Str. 19 D-21109 Hamburg E-Mail: bernd-ulrich.netz@bukea.hamburg.de</p>
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Netherlands

<p>Ms Nanou Beekman (online) Manager Nature and Water at Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality PO Box 20401 NL – 2500 EK Den Haag Phone: +31 (0)70 3798822 (secr) E-Mail: N.M.Beekman@minlnv.nl</p>	<p>Mr Joost de Ruig Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management P.O. Box 2232 3500 GB The Netherlands Phone: +31 (0) 6 10027159 E-Mail: joost.de.ruig@rws.nl</p>
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Feldfunktion geändert

Advisors WSF

<p>Mr Preben Friis-Hauge Wadden Sea Forum Varde Kommune City Council Bytoften 2 DK – 6800 Varde Phone: +45 (60) 21 45 44 E-Mail: prfh@varde.dk</p>	<p>Mr Frank Ahlhorn Wadden Sea Forum Virchowstr. 1 D – 26382 Wilhelmshaven Phone: +49 4421 910818 E-Mail: ahlhorn@waddensea-forum.org</p>
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Advisors Environment

<p>Mr Hans-Ulrich Rösner Wadden Sea Team WWF Germany, Head of Wadden Sea Office Hafestraße 3 D - 25813 Husum Phone: +49 151 122 90 848 E-Mail: rosner@wwf.de</p>	<p>Mr Marco Brodde Wadden Sea Team Danish Ornithological Society Phone: +45 30 35 16 37 E-Mail: MarcoRohdeBrodde@gmail.com</p>
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Feldfunktion geändert

<p>Mr Henk de Vries It Fryske Gea, Director Postbus 3 9244 ZN Beetsterzwaag Phone: +31 (512) 38 14 48 Mobile: +31 (6) 21 53 63 54 E-Mail: h.devries@itfryskegea.nl</p>	
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Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

<p>Mr Bernard Baerends Executive Secretary</p>	<p>Mr Sascha Klöpffer Ms Cristina Nazzari Ms Simone Prestes-Dürrnagel</p>
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Supporting Staff

<p>Mr Thomas Borchers Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, Germany Robert-Schuman-Platz 3 D-53175 Bonn Phone: +49 228 99 305 2629 Mobile: +49 173 2843906 E-Mail: Thomas.Borchers@bmu.bund.de</p>	<p>Ms Margrita Sobottka National Park Authority Lower Saxony Virchowstr. 1 D-26382 Wilhelmshaven Phone: +49 (0)4421 911 277 Mobile: +49 (0)172 4421684 E-Mail: Margrita.Sobottka@nlpvw.niedersachsen.de</p>
<p>Ms Marina Sanns Agency for Coastal Defence, National Park and Marine Conservation Schleswig-Holstein Schloßgarten 1 D 25832 Tönning phone: +49 (0) 486161645 e-mail: Marina.Sanns@lkn.landsh.de</p>	<p>Ms Carolin Galler Ministry for Environment, Energy, Building and Climate Protection of Lower Saxony Postfach 4107 D - 30041 Hannover Phone: +49 (0) 511 120 3378 E-Mail: carolin.galler@mu.niedersachsen.de</p>
<p>Mr Karst Jaarsma Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality Directorate-General Nature, Fisheries and Rural Area Postbus 20401 NL-2500 EK The Hague Phone : +31 (0)64 85860 E-Mail: k.c.a.jaarsma@minlnv.nl</p>	<p>Mr Henrik G. Pind Jørgensen Environment Protection Agency Jakob Gades Allé DK-6600 Veien phone: +45 (0) 72 54 34 44 E-Mail: hepgj@mst.dk</p>
<p>Ms Heidi Nielsen Ministry for Environment and Food Miljøstyrelsen Jakob Gades Allé DK-6600 Veien Phone: +45 (0)22 19 42 14 E-Mail: heidn@mst.dk</p>	
<h3>Invited Guest</h3>	
<p>Mr Kees Bastmeijer Mr Adi Kellermann Ms Paddy Walker (online)</p>	

ANNEX 2: Agenda

FINAL AGENDA

**36th meeting of the Wadden Sea Board
(WSB 36)**

28-29 April 2022



- 1. Opening of the Meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 3. Summary Record WSB 35**
- 4. Announcements**
- 5. Implementation Leeuwarden Declaration**
- 6. Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Hub**
- 7. Trilateral Governmental Conference 2022**
- 8. Wadden Sea Board Advisors: Wadden Sea Forum; Wadden Sea Team**
- 9. Any Other Business**
- 10. Next meeting**
- 11. Closing**

ANNEX 3: Action items arising from the 36th WSB

ACTION ITEMS

**36th meeting of the Wadden Sea Board
(WSB 36)**

28-29 April 2022



Action #	Agenda item	Actions agreed upon	Person responsible	Deadline
1	5.3	Create / commission a study on the resources needed for each TMAP data handling scenario	TG-MA / EG Data / CWSS	WSB 37
2	5.4	Initiate evaluation of the Trilateral Education Work Programme 2018-2022	WWF/ IWSS	WSB 37
4	6	Provide evaluation of PH, commissioned to Wing	OPteamPH	WSB 37
5	7	Prepare update draft of Wilhelmshaven Declaration based on discussions during WSB 36	MCD drafting group	05/03/2022
6	7	Prepare updated draft of the Ministerial Conference Declaration	MCD drafting group	WSB 37
7	5.3 / 7	Provide presentations to WSB members	CWSS	Depending on availability