48th meeting of the Wadden Sea Board (WSB 48)

Meeting Document No. WSB 48/5.2/1

4 March 2026
Online

Agenda Item	5.2 Manage and Communicate Effectively (Paras 44-56)
Document Title	WSB 48/5.2/1 Communications Guideline
Submitted by	Brand Taskforce & CWSS & ASHA&Co.
Submitted on	11 February 2026
Proposal	The WSB is invited to **adopt** the communications guidelines.

CWSS was tasked to lead the development of an integrated approach to brand positioning and strategic communication for Wadden Sea World Heritage within the Trilateral Cooperation. The goal was to develop a clear, unified framework that would strengthens and guide the Cooperation's messaging and identity, ensuring it remains focused, credible, and effective in achieving long-term impact.

On 20 November 2024, WSB 48 adopted a cohesive brand platform with Wadden Sea World Heritage as its core. This platform reflects the shared values, purpose, and ambitions of the Cooperation, and provides the common narrative foundation from which all communication activities can be aligned.

The following document provides the communications guideline compiled for communications managers of the member organisations of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC). This guideline translates the brand platform into practical, step-by-step guidance for communications across the TWSC, it serves as a practical tool to support the consistent application of our brand. The guideline does not add another communication strategy to the existing strategies of the member organisations but instead serves as an application to convey the trilateral brand within these strategies. For CWSS, the guideline forms the basis of its communication strategy.

The contents of this document were developed through a professionally facilitated co-creation process with representatives from all three countries and CWSS. It offers a shared reference for message creation, audience specific communication, and coordinated storytelling.

With this document, the process of integrating brand positioning and strategic communication for the TWSC is concluded.

TRILATERAL WADDEN SEA COOPERATION

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINE

unesco
World Heritage Site

WADDEN SEA
WORLD HERITAGE

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

CONTENTS

03 *Our Shared Identity*
Brand Platform

05 *What, Where, When, To Whom*
Using the Platform

10 *Step-by-step process*
Crafting Proposition

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Compiled for communications managers of the member organisations of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC), this communication guideline provides an understanding of our brand identity and main audiences (pages 3-4) as well as a step-by-step guidance to apply it in communication creation (pages 8-9). The document does not add another communication strategy to the existing strategies of the member organisations, but is instead serves as an application to convey the TWSC brand within these strategies.

The contents of this document were developed and tested in a professionally guided co-creation process by representatives of each nation and the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS).

The framework can be applied to all media formats, from leaflets to social media posts.

BRAND PLATFORM

The brand platform on page 4 is shared and agreed across all countries. It defines our core purpose, values, positioning, and voice, and is therefore consistently true everywhere. It provides common foundation that ensures alignment, clarity, and consistency across the organisation. While how it is expressed may vary, what it stands for does not change.

It was developed in the context of the area's UNESCO recognition:

'In 2009, the Wadden Sea was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in recognition of the 'Outstanding Universal Value' of the area and the progress made in protecting and managing it for more than a generation. The World Heritage status is the highest possible award for a natural site in recognition and acknowledgement of its outstanding global importance.'

www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/node/115

and seeks to express the natural importance of the region.

The brand platform draws from existing documentation and specifications and seeks to express these in a way that can be used for engaging communication with external audiences. The objective is to remain consistent with the existing meanings and spirit of the Trilateral Cooperation's documentation and descriptions.

The platform itself provides a source document that can be used for the creation of all communications to any audiences via all channels.

The use of this common source document will create a sense of coherence across all communications, and unity across the different TWSC member organisations.

WHO IT'S FOR

The platform can be used by anyone who is seeking to communicate about Wadden Sea World Heritage and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation. It ensures consistency across messages, documents, and campaigns, while also inspiring creative expression. It helps teams speak with one voice, align internal and external communications, and create content that is authentic, relevant, and true to the brand.

HOW TO USE IT

The following matrix creates the complete brand platform narrative. This means every statement doesn't contain every detail. Communications will normally need to draw from a number of the sections in order to fully communicate with the target audience. For example, the matrix identifies top-level-audience categories, but sub-groups within these will need to be addressed for specific communications (e.g., youth).

The platform exists so that each of these communications has a common source, and the content can be tailored by message and audience, but the communicator does not need to start with a blank sheet of paper each time.

© Peter ProkoschFebruary 2012

Collective **Name**	**Wadden Sea World Heritage**	THE PLACE
Collective **Narrative** (What it is)	Spanning three nations, Wadden Sea World Heritage is a globally significant natural landscape; rich in biodiversity and shaped by its dynamic tidal ecosystem and culture. Recognised by UNESCO, it is renowned for its trilateral conservation efforts and commitment to maintaining the area's integrity and natural balance. It is embedded in an area committed to sustainable development.	
Collective **Descriptor**	A unique ecosystem, recognised by UNESCO, where collaborative conservation enables nature to thrive.	
Collective **Belief**	The Wadden Sea is one of the earth's unique treasures. As stewards, we protect this vital landscape by enabling natural processes to happen largely undisturbed. Through the power of collective action, community engagement and education we can safeguard and enhance the natural richness of the Wadden Sea for future generations.	WHO WE ARE
Collective **Vision**	A thriving and dynamic natural landscape; recognised for its fundamental role in supporting the biodiversity of the planet, where sustainable practices and community engagement restore and enrich its health for generations to come.	
Collective **Purpose**	To protect, sustain and enhance the unique ecosystem within the dynamic landscape of the Wadden Sea, ensuring its value is appreciated by all, while fostering sustainable development that benefits both local communities and the planet for present and future generations.	
Collective **Character**	**Collaborative** Pioneering Empowering Protective	
Collective **Mission**	Preserve and strengthen the outstanding universal value of the Wadden Sea and promote sustainable practices throughout the region and beyond. Prioritise environmental interests within a sustainable economy, while fostering research and monitoring that informs conservation efforts. Support climate adaptability and policy consistency through international cooperation. Enhance community engagement, public awareness and education about its ecological and cultural significance.	
Collective **What we do**	Environmental stewardship Community engagement Education & awareness	
Generative Idea	**Connected by Nature**	
Positioning	Wadden Sea World Heritage is a place where nature shapes a living coastline that knows no borders. As one of the world's most important and largest unbroken tidal flat systems, it is a dynamic landscape where land, sea, and sky meet in harmony. Here, three nations are united by a shared commitment to conservation, forging a future where humans and nature can thrive together. It is a sanctuary for wildlife, a heartbeat of the earth, and a testament to the power of collaborative stewardship. This is a place where the world's breath is felt, and its pulse is visible – a timeless wonder, conserved for generations to come.	

Audiences	**Decision Makers**	**Business & Industry**	**Local Community & Civil Society**	**Visitors**
Messaging outcomes	A model of collaboration, with nature conservation, sustainable development, climate adaptability at the forefront; aligning policy to ensure that local economies can flourish in harmony with nature.	A benchmark of sustainable economic activity, with businesses leading in eco-friendly practices and actively contributing to conservation efforts that ensure the Wadden Sea's long-term preservation.	A proactive alliance, committed to the stewardship of the Wadden Sea, recognising its ecological and cultural value, while playing a vital role in its ongoing protection and sustainable development.	An experience of the Wadden Sea as an inspiring ecosystem, where visitor engagement supports its conservation, and creates a deeper understanding of the area's global environmental significance.

GLOSSARY

CULTURE
Here, culture is the sum of human interaction with nature. It recognises that the interaction between people and nature shapes both people and nature both currently and throughout history. This means the way local people interact with their natural surroundings is shaping their way of life. It is also the interaction with visitors and outsiders and about ensuring that local customs can continue.

LANDSCAPE
This includes the elements of geophysically defined landforms such as mountains, hills, water bodies such as rivers, lakes, ponds and the sea. Living elements of land cover including indigenous vegetation, human elements including different forms of land use, buildings, and structures, and transitory elements such as lighting and weather conditions. We are defining landscape as the UNESCO property and the areas adjacent to the designation in each country.

STEWARDSHIP
: the office, duties, and obligations of a steward
: the conducting, supervising, or managing of something especially: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.

USING THE PLATFORM

WHAT IT'S USED FOR

To communicate effectively, we must be grounded in a clear and consistent understanding of who we are and what we stand for. The brand platform for Wadden Sea World Heritage provides the base for all the communication work we do. It defines our collective purpose, our values, and our role as stewards of one of Earth's most important natural landscapes.

By articulating our shared Vision, Mission, and Belief, we establish the principles and priorities that guide our work. These foundations help everyone, from local communities to international partners, understand what the Wadden Sea represents and why it matters. This gives us the tools to speak with one voice, ensuring our message is as enduring and dynamic as the landscape we protect.

WHAT IT SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR

The brand platform should not stifle creativity or local expression, but instead guide it, helping to achieve consistency in how we communicate. While this is important, we also value nuance, flexibility, and relevance to local audiences.

It should never be used to greenwash or misrepresent activities that do not align with our environmental or ethical commitments. Any messaging that uses the Wadden Sea World Heritage name must genuinely support the values we stand for and not be misleading in any way.

Lastly, the brand platform should not be applied to initiatives that operate outside of our core purpose. It is not a tool to endorse unrelated commercial ventures, nor should it be co-opted for political purposes that do not align with our trilateral goals. Protecting the integrity of the brand means ensuring it is used only in service of our shared vision.

INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL USE

The brand platform is a powerful tool but it must be used with care and clarity. Certain elements are designed for public-facing communication, helping to present a united message across nations, partners, and audiences. Others are meant to remain internal, guiding strategic decisions, tone of voice, and creative direction behind the scenes.

Understanding this distinction is crucial. When applied thoughtfully, the platform ensures coherence without rigidity, balancing the need for consistent values and messaging with the freedom to adapt and inspire in local, nation-specific ways.

© Stephan Sprinz, Universität Heidelberg, Heidelberg, Germany

WHERE TO USE IT

Key areas where the Wadden Sea World Heritage brand platform can and should be applied to ensure consistent, clear, and purposeful communication:

- Tourism
- Projects
- Education
- Onboarding for new employees
- Information for stakeholders
- Information for UNESCO and IUCN
- Politician and administrator briefings
- Board/advisory board representation
- Media outreach
- Website
- Partner websites

Camera team © CWSS/ Bostelmann

Family on dike © Marleen Annema/ Waddenagenda

Circular assembly © CWSS/ Bostelmann

WAYS TO USE IT

The brand platform can be used in two ways – as a definitive foundation for consistency, and as a source of inspiration for creative expression. Together, they ensure our messaging is both unified and engaging across all contexts.

1. A definitive reference

Use the platform word-for-word when you need to provide a clear understanding of the organisation, for example, in an "About Us" section, proposal, or official documentation. It can also be used to describe the trilateral cooperation to partners, funders and decision makers.

This ensures that the messaging is unified across all three countries, reflecting what has been jointly agreed and endorsed. It enables us to align reports, policy documents, funding bids, strategic presentations and other official documentation with a shared voice and purpose.

In these cases, the platform acts as a fixed foundation of consistent principles that we can return to again and again.

2. A driver for communication and expression

Use the platform as inspiration when developing content for more creative communications such as campaigns, exhibitions, events, educational tools, and digital assets.

This means using the essence of the platform: in particular, the character, generative idea and positioning to inform and inspire creative decisions. Here, the platform acts as a checklist to ensure content is aligned with the brand while allowing room for originality, storytelling, and adaptation to different audiences or formats.

The role of the generative idea – 'Connected by Nature' is crucial here. As an engaging and inspiring expression of the brand, it captures what makes Wadden Sea truly special. Every piece of communication should align with this statement whether visually or through copy.

WHAT AREAS ARE FLEXIBLE?

While the brand platform is intended to reflect a unified, trilateral approach, there is space for nation-specific expression. The purpose of the platform is to present a collective narrative, not three separate ones, and signal a step forward in cross-border collaboration. However, it also recognises the importance of local relevance, especially in how different audiences engage with the Wadden Sea.

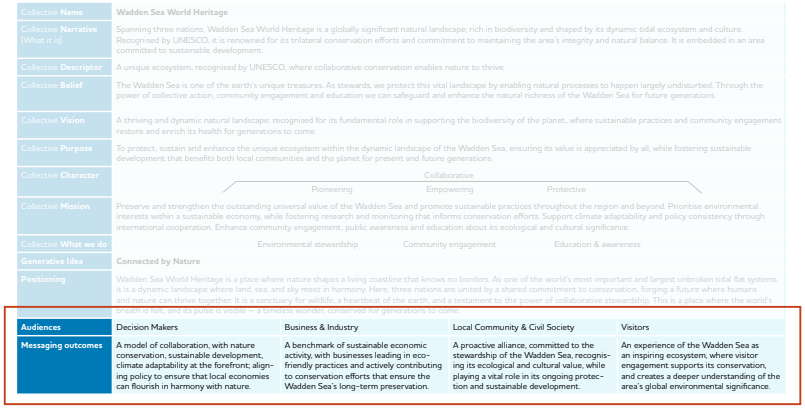
Each country has its own priorities, pressures and opportunities. For example, one nation may wish to dial up environmental stewardship, while another may lean into tourism or community engagement.

These flexible areas may include:

- Tone and emphasis in storytelling (e.g. highlighting tourism, education, or conservation more strongly depending on context)
- Local implementation of shared goals (e.g. how education or stewardship is delivered)
- Language and cultural nuances to better connect with national audiences
- Engagement methods used with national or local stakeholders (e.g. tourism boards, schools, or civil society groups)

That said, all communications should still support the bigger picture. The intention is to present an aligned overall message, without losing the individuality of each national voice.

AUDIENCES AND MESSAGING OUTCOMES



Audiences	Decision Makers	Business & Industry	Local Community & Civil Society	Visitors
Messaging outcomes	A model of collaboration, with nature conservation, sustainable development, climate adaptability at the forefront; aligning policy to ensure that local economies can flourish in harmony with nature.	A benchmark of sustainable economic activity, with businesses leading in eco-friendly practices and actively contributing to conservation efforts that ensure the Wadden Sea's long-term preservation.	A proactive alliance, committed to the stewardship of the Wadden Sea, recognising its ecological and cultural value, while playing a vital role in its ongoing protection and sustainable development.	An experience of the Wadden Sea as an inspiring ecosystem, where visitor engagement supports its conservation, and creates a deeper understanding of the area's global environmental significance.

As we communicate to different audiences within specific geographic areas, we will need to align those communications to their specific requirements, therefore localised areas will need flexibility to nuance their communications appropriately.

EXAMPLES OF CREATING COMMUNICATIONS

This section gives examples of how to approach and develop communications using the different elements of the brand platform.

Some elements are more suited to internal audiences while others can be used externally.

Communications will need to be nuanced for regional audiences although we would also expect there to be a consistency of messaging throughout our communications based on this process.

1. Tourism

For Destination Management Organisations and Visitor Centres

1. Identify your audience:
E.g. Visitors and tourists.

2. Identify key challenges:
E.g. Continuity and integration of WSWH brand with other brands.

3. Convey internally:
Belief, Vision, Purpose, Mission

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

4. Convey externally:
Communications should align with 'Visitor Outcome':
An experience of the Wadden Sea as an inspiring ecosystem, where visitor engagement supports its conservation, and creates a deeper understanding of the area's global environmental significance.

To get here, you should use the:
Narrative
Descriptor
Generative idea
Positioning

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

2. Conservation

For National parks (authority/partner), Managers of Wadden Sea and Nature NGOs

1. Identify your audience:
E.g. Educators and visitors.

2. Identify key challenges:
E.g. Dissemination / education / funding

3. Convey internally:
What we do, Belief, Vision, Purpose, Mission

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

4. Convey externally:
Communications should align with 'Visitor Outcome':
An experience of the Wadden Sea as an inspiring ecosystem, where visitor engagement supports its conservation, and creates a deeper understanding of the area's global environmental significance.

Communications should align with 'Decision makers':
A model of collaboration, with nature conservation, sustainable development, climate adaptability at the forefront; aligning policy to ensure that local economies can flourish in harmony with nature.

To get here, you should use the:
Narrative
Descriptor
Generative idea
Positioning

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

3. Administrative

For Municipalities, Provinces, Governmental agencies, Ministries and Entrepreneurs

1. Identify your audience:
E.g. Decision makers and management.

2. Identify key challenges:
E.g. Management, economy, nature.

3. Convey internally:
What we do, Belief, Vision, Purpose, Mission

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

4. Convey externally:
We would anticipate different strands of communication for nuanced audiences, these could include:

'Decision makers': A model of collaboration, with nature conservation, sustainable development, climate adaptability at the forefront; aligning policy to ensure that local economies can flourish in harmony with nature.

'Local community and civil society': A proactive alliance, committed to the stewardship of the Wadden Sea, recognising its ecological and cultural value, while playing a vital role in its ongoing protection and sustainable development.

'Business and Industry': A model of collaboration, with nature conservation, sustainable development, climate adaptability at the forefront; aligning policy to ensure that local economies can flourish in harmony with nature.

To get here, you should use the:
Belief, Vision, Purpose, Mission, Narrative, Descriptor, What we do, Generative idea, Positioning

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

4. Secretariat

For CWSS

1. Identify your audience:
Big member organisations e.g. environmental ministries

2. Identify key challenges:
E.g. Organisations that are difficult to identify / reach, time constraints

3. Convey internally:
What we do, Belief, Vision, Purpose, Mission

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

4. Convey externally:
Consider time constraints, use the more punchy, simple elements from the platform and shape concise messages:
Narrative, What we do, Purpose, Mission

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective. The stewardship of the Wadden Sea, recognising its ecological and cultural value, while playing a vital role in its ongoing protection and sustainable development.

'Business and Industry': A model of collaboration, with nature conservation, sustainable development, climate adaptability at the forefront; aligning policy to ensure that local economies can flourish in harmony with nature.

To get here, you should use the:
Belief, Vision, Purpose, Mission, Narrative, Descriptor, What we do, Generative idea, Positioning

Ensure that your character comes across in the communication:
Collaborative, pioneering, empowering, protective.

CRAFTING PROPOSITIONS

THE PROPOSITION

What a proposition is

A proposition is a clear and compelling message to influence a specific audience to take action. It explains the value being offered in a way that is easy to understand and relevant to them.

What it's used for

Propositions sit beneath the brand platform and are more flexible. They translate the shared brand foundation into relevant messages for specific countries, audiences, and contexts. This allows for local nuance, cultural relevance, and different communication goals, while still staying true to the brand platform.

THE DIFFERENCE

The Brand Platform and Propositions work at different levels and serve different purposes.

The brand platform

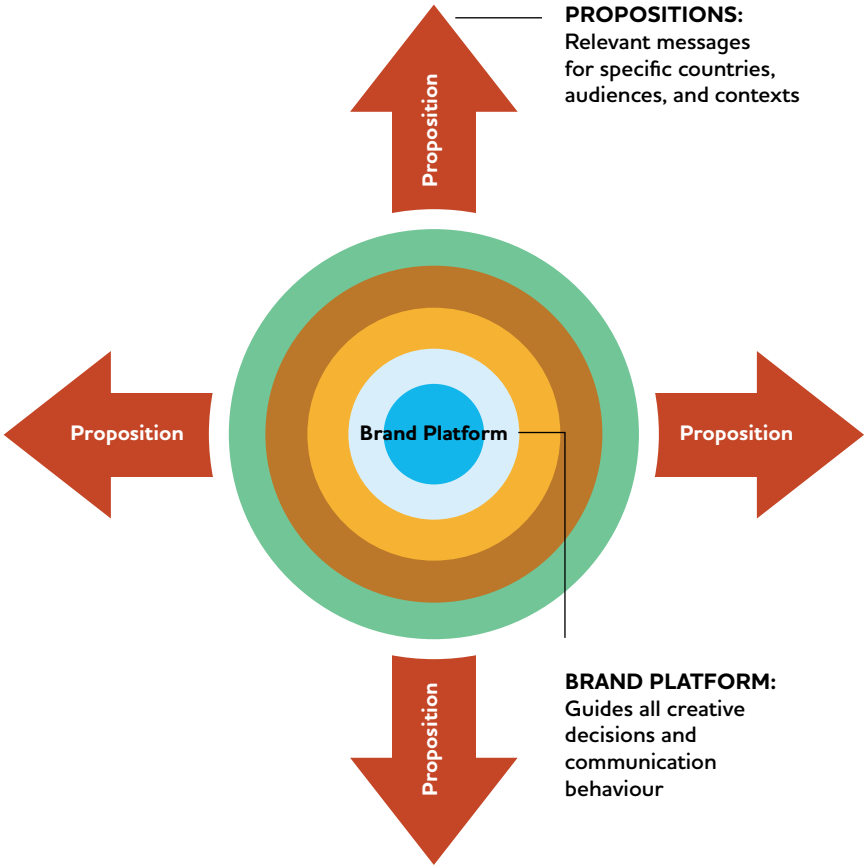
- Works at a high level
- Defines who we are, what we stand for, and how we show up
- Is long-term and stable
- Guides all communication, behaviour, and creative decisions
- Ensures consistency and alignment across everything we do

The proposition

- Works at a practical, tactical level
- Focuses on a specific audience, message, and outcome
- Can change depending on the context, audience, or goal
- Turns the brand platform into clear reasons for action

In short

- The brand platform sets the foundation and direction.
- The proposition uses that foundation to drive specific actions in specific situations

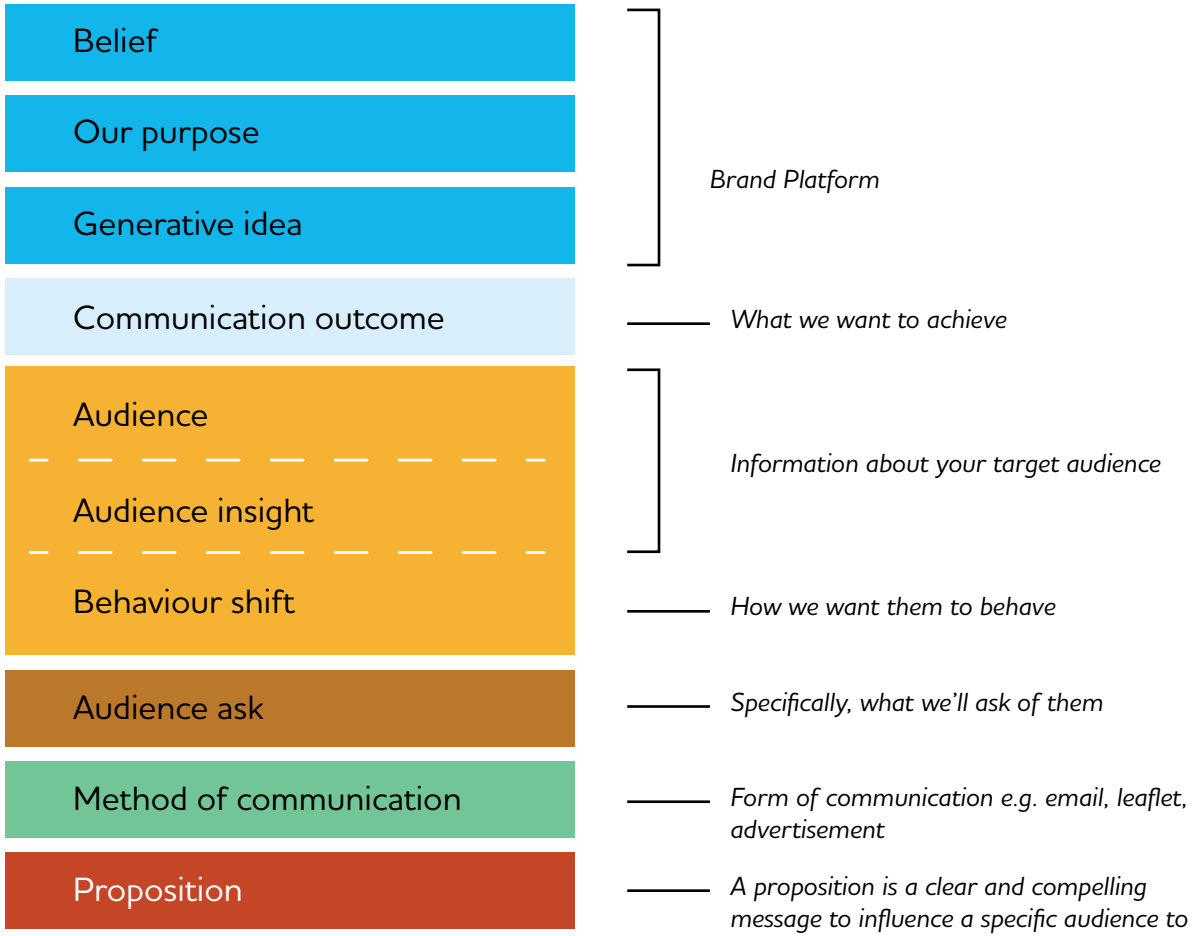


WHICH AREAS APPLY?

Key areas for proposition work.
See following pages

Collective **Name**	**Wadden Sea World Heritage**				THE PLACE
Collective **Narrative** (What it is)	Spanning three nations, Wadden Sea World Heritage is a globally significant natural landscape; rich in biodiversity and shaped by its dynamic tidal ecosystem and culture. Recognised by UNESCO, it is renowned for its trilateral conservation efforts and commitment to maintaining the area's integrity and natural balance. It is embedded in an area committed to sustainable development.				
Collective **Descriptor**	A unique ecosystem, recognised by UNESCO, where collaborative conservation enables nature to thrive.				
Collective **Belief**	The Wadden Sea is one of the earth's unique treasures. As stewards, we protect this vital landscape by enabling natural processes to happen largely undisturbed. Through the power of collective action, community engagement and education we can safeguard and enhance the natural richness of the Wadden Sea for future generations.				WHO WE ARE
Collective **Vision**	A thriving and dynamic natural landscape; recognised for its fundamental role in supporting the biodiversity of the planet, where sustainable practices and community engagement restore and enrich its health for generations to come.				
Collective **Purpose**	To protect, sustain and enhance the unique ecosystem within the dynamic landscape of the Wadden Sea, ensuring its value is appreciated by all, while fostering sustainable development that benefits both local communities and the planet for present and future generations.				
Collective **Character**	**Collaborative** Pioneering Empowering Protective				
Collective **Mission**	Preserve and strengthen the outstanding universal value of the Wadden Sea and promote sustainable practices throughout the region and beyond. Prioritise environmental interests within a sustainable economy, while fostering research and monitoring that informs conservation efforts. Support climate adaptability and policy consistency through international cooperation. Enhance community engagement, public awareness and education about its ecological and cultural significance.				
Collective **What we do**	Environmental stewardship Community engagement Education & awareness				
Generative Idea	**Connected by Nature**				
Positioning	Wadden Sea World Heritage is a place where nature shapes a living coastline that knows no borders. As one of the world's most important and largest unbroken tidal flat systems, it is a dynamic landscape where land, sea, and sky meet in harmony. Here, three nations are united by a shared commitment to conservation, forging a future where humans and nature can thrive together. It is a sanctuary for wildlife, a heartbeat of the earth, and a testament to the power of collaborative stewardship. This is a place where the world's breath is felt, and its pulse is visible – a timeless wonder, conserved for generations to come.				
Audiences	**Decision Makers**	**Business & Industry**	**Local Community & Civil Society**	**Visitors**	
Messaging outcomes	A model of collaboration, with nature conservation, sustainable development, climate adaptability at the forefront; aligning policy to ensure that local economies can flourish in harmony with nature.	A benchmark of sustainable economic activity, with businesses leading in eco-friendly practices and actively contributing to conservation efforts that ensure the Wadden Sea's long-term preservation.	A proactive alliance, committed to the stewardship of the Wadden Sea, recognising its ecological and cultural value, while playing a vital role in its ongoing protection and sustainable development.	An experience of the Wadden Sea as an inspiring ecosystem, where visitor engagement supports its conservation, and creates a deeper understanding of the area's global environmental significance.	

PROPOSITION STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS



The proposition process helps you create:

- a specific message for
- a specific audience to achieve
- a specific outcome

It's important that we establish who the audience is, what we want to communicate, and how we would like them to act. The table on this page is designed to help us answer these questions.

First, use the brand platform to complete the core sections: belief, purpose and generative idea. **These elements are already agreed and should stay consistent across all countries and topics.**

In addition, you should be aware of the general audience you are addressing and the overarching messaging outcome for that sector.

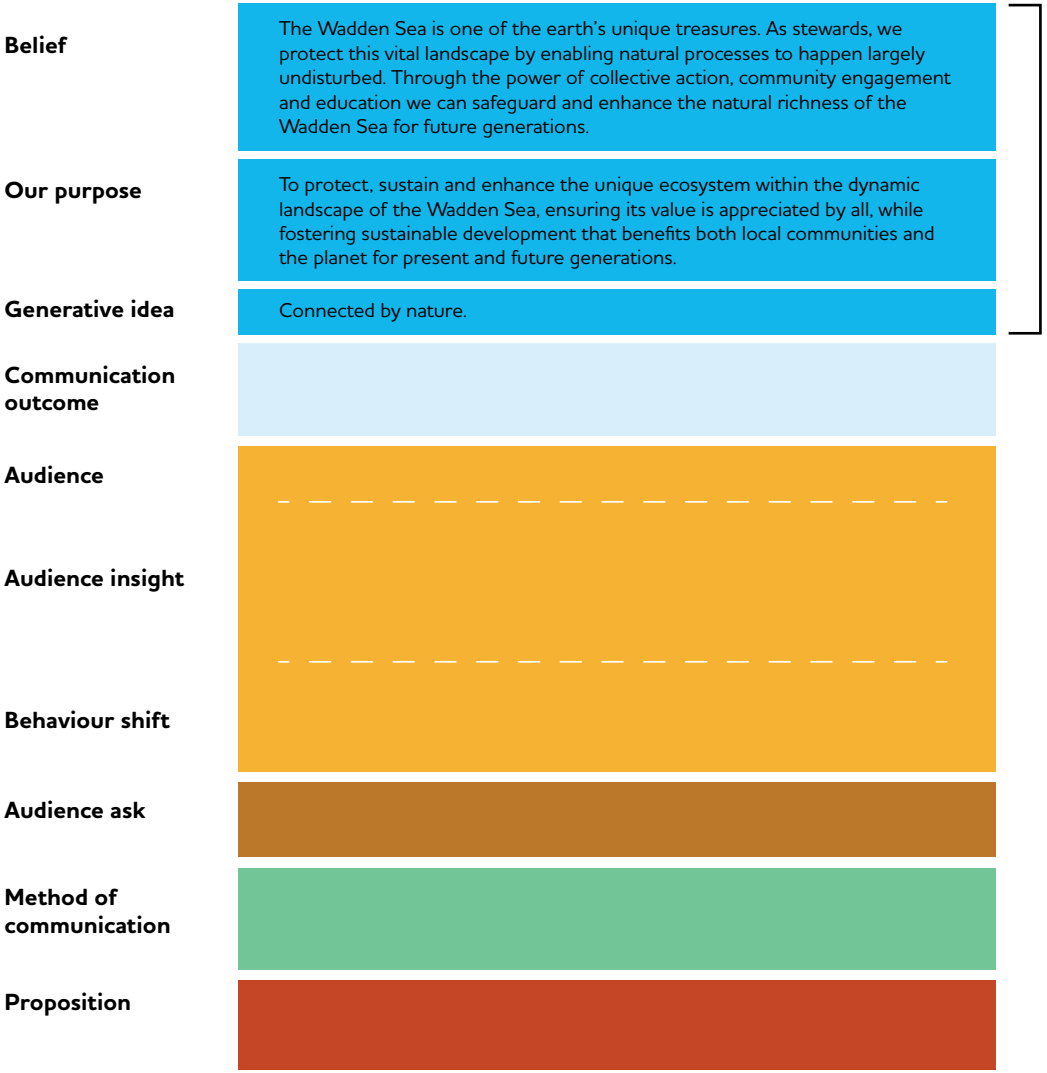
From there, the process is flexible, not necessarily linear. Start by completing the sections you know and build from there.

The method of communication could be one or several channels depending on budget and desired audience reach.

Gather insights about the audience and add these where appropriate. This helps shape the message so it is meaningful, relevant, and more likely to drive the desired action.

By completing the fields within the table you will have established a comprehensive, focused brief and content to create your communication product.

STEP 1: BUILDING ON OUR FOUNDATIONS



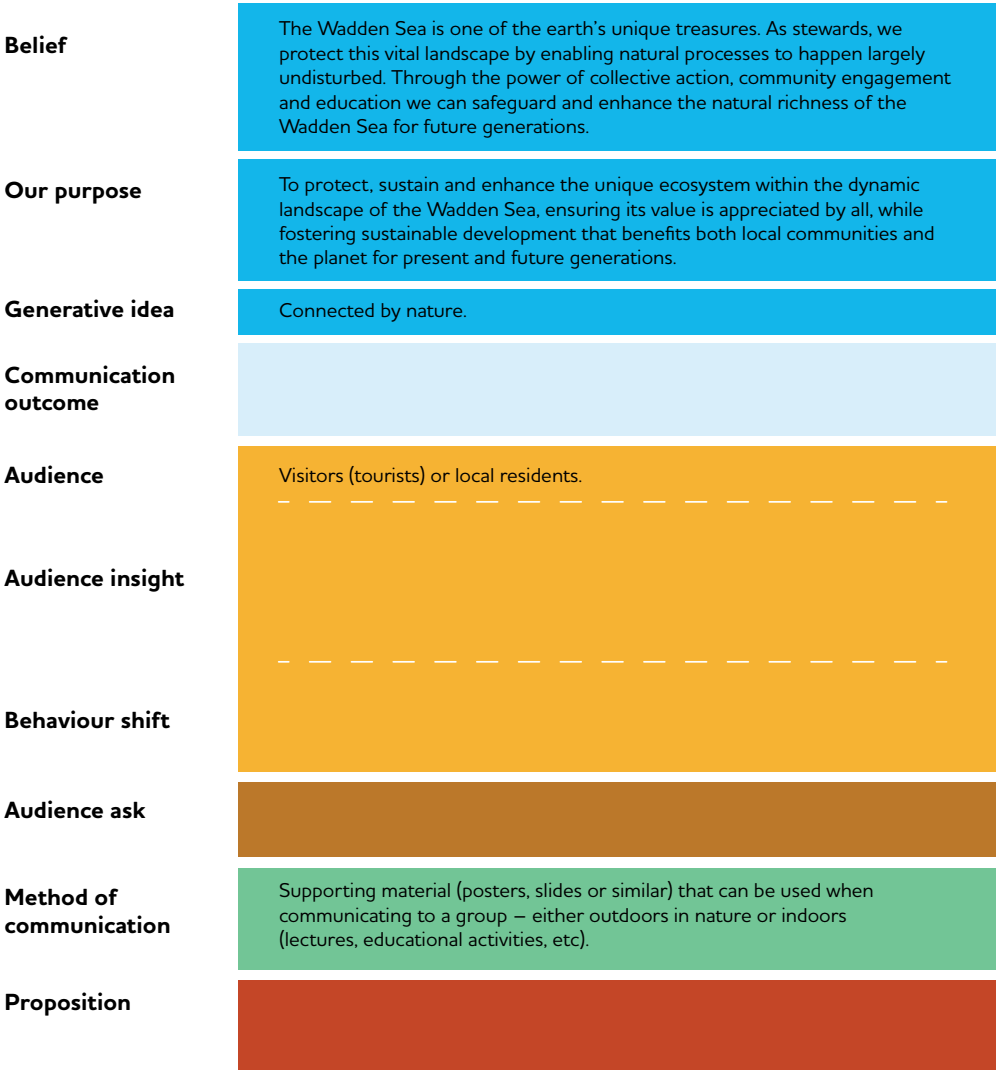
Core content from Brand Platform (see page 11)

The principles established in our Brand Platform give us a unifying and consistent way of approaching each piece of communication. At the beginning of each proposition, it's important to use them as a reference point and a lens through which to view the project.

EXAMPLE 1 – Visitors and Local Residents (Denmark)

The propositions form of the following pages is filled with an example from the Danish co-creation workshop.

STEP 2: UNDERSTANDING THE AUDIENCE



To get the most out of your communication, it's important to create a clear and well-considered brief. The key to this is having a strong understanding of your audience. You can begin to build this understanding by answering the following questions.

1. A definition of the target audience, for example 'Visitors' or 'Business Leaders'.
2. The desired outcome of the communication – what do we want the audience to do as a result?
3. Identity & Influence – how do they see themselves and who's shaping that view?
4. Mindset & Attitudes – how do they see the world, and what do they believe?
5. Feelings about nature and the environment – attitudes, values, and emotional relationships with the subject matter?
6. Needs & Motivations – what do they want or need emotionally or practically?
7. Barriers & Pain Points – what's stopping them from doing what we want them to do?
8. What do they care about most deeply?

STEP 3: KEY INSIGHTS

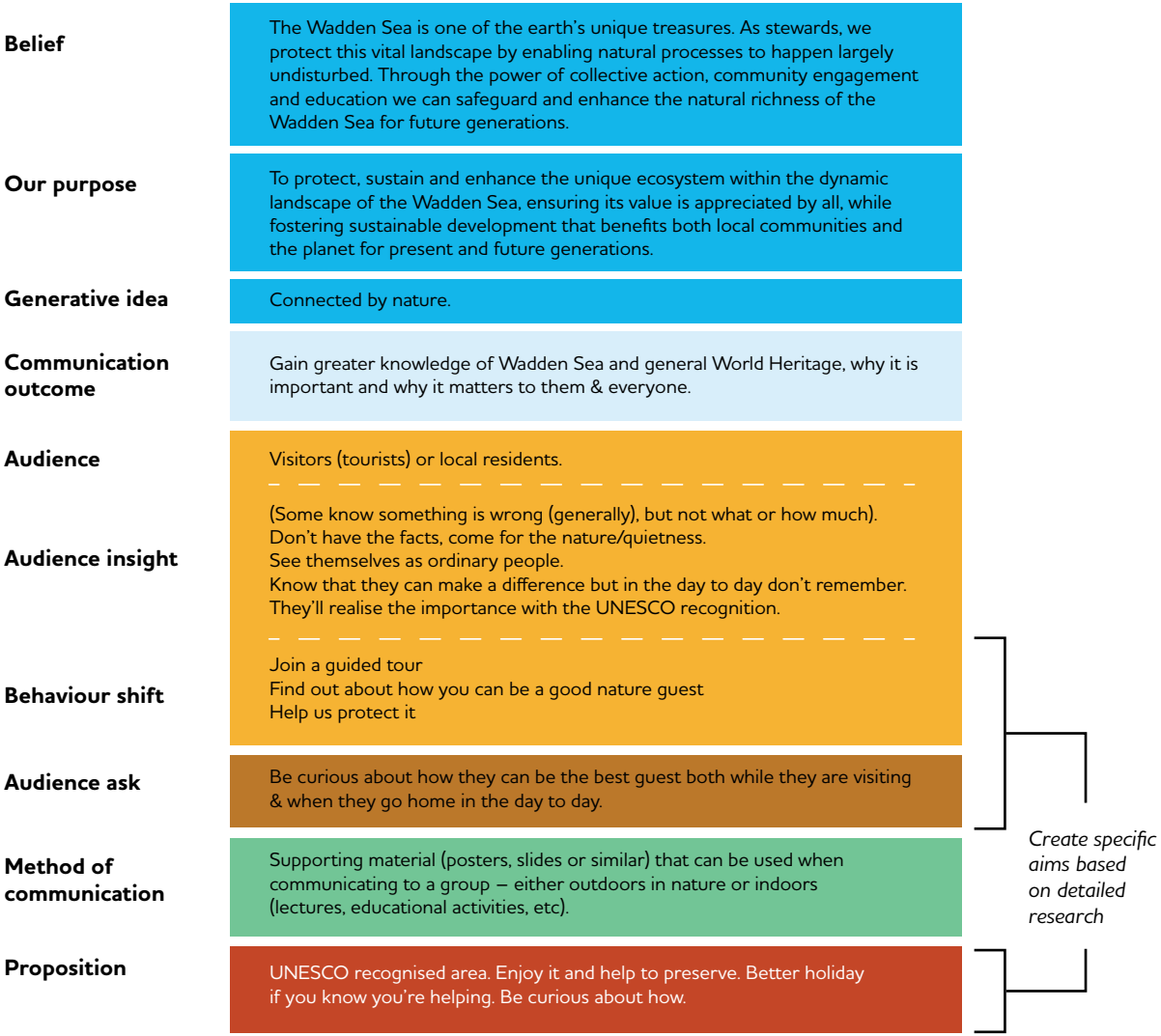
Use the key points from your research

The next step is to identify key audience insights from what is understood about the audience's behaviour. This insight may also shape the audience outcome.
A key insight is something that is specific to this audience, genuinely useful, and helps explain what will motivate them or influence their behaviour. These insights will help shape clearer, more effective propositions.

EXAMPLE 1 – Visitors and Local Residents (Denmark)

- *Interested in and seeks experiences in the Wadden Sea nature, is curious, and wants to learn more.*
- *See themselves as ordinary people with a particular interest in nature and, to some extent, nature conservation.*
- *Find nature and experiences in nature important — both for themselves and for their families and friends.*
- *Want more knowledge about nature and the World Heritage and* **would like to make a difference.**
- *Need information and inspiration that enables them to go out and experience the nature and the World Heritage themselves.*
- **Lack of knowledge about the Wadden Sea and the World Heritage is a barrier.**
- *Both can sometimes be difficult to understand immediately (require interpretation/ communication).*

STEP 4: THE FINISHED PROPOSITION



Having gathered all the detail in the previous steps of the process, and with our overarching Brand Platform principles in place, the last step is to decide how we want the audience to behave and specifically what we'll ask them to do.

This should give us the easy-to-understand reasonable approach to the content creation.

Whats next?

With the strategic foundations now established, the next step is to translate your proposition into a clear plan for execution for yourself or the professional or team most suited to delivering the final creative piece of work.

Start by defining the scope and ambition of your communication piece. Identify which channels, formats, and content types will best deliver your message – many of these choices will already have been influenced by your earlier 'Method of Communication' decision.

Depending on the nature of your project, you may need to coordinate a mix of skills such as copywriting, graphic design, photography, illustration, animation, web content production, or overall creative direction.

Make sure the key insights and decisions captured in your planning table are shared with everyone involved in developing the communication materials. This alignment helps maintain focus and increases the likelihood of producing a coherent and successful communication outcome.

EXAMPLE 2: TOURISTS AND VISITORS (GERMANY)

Belief	The Wadden Sea is one of the earth's unique treasures. As stewards, we protect this vital landscape by enabling natural processes to happen largely undisturbed. Through the power of collective action, community engagement and education we can safeguard and enhance the natural richness of the Wadden Sea for future generations.
Our purpose	To protect, sustain and enhance the unique ecosystem within the dynamic landscape of the Wadden Sea, ensuring its value is appreciated by all, while fostering sustainable development that benefits both local communities and the planet for present and future generations.
Generative idea	Connected by nature.
Communication outcome	Obtain more information by visiting centres or go along certain pathways, take part in activities.
Audience	Tourists and visitors.
Audience insight	Unique very special place & nature – world heritage – protected, rules apply Experience the nature – be surprised by it – don't know about it Your visit matters – you can be part of protecting nature & world diversity, by following rules, or you could damage it.
Behaviour shift	Take part in activities, related to nature and WSWH conservation.
Audience ask	Find out more.
Method of communication	Communication for tourist information points, monitors and counters, booking systems.
Proposition	You'll be surprised by the nature and wonder of WSWH. Experience it and what there is on offer. Find out more.

These examples allow us to see how research and outcomes can be nuanced to suit local, regional and national audiences.

EXAMPLE 4: VISITORS TO THE WADDEN SEA (NETHERLANDS)

Belief	The Wadden Sea is one of the earth's unique treasures. As stewards, we protect this vital landscape by enabling natural processes to happen largely undisturbed. Through the power of collective action, community engagement and education we can safeguard and enhance the natural richness of the Wadden Sea for future generations.
Our purpose	To protect, sustain and enhance the unique ecosystem within the dynamic landscape of the Wadden Sea, ensuring its value is appreciated by all, while fostering sustainable development that benefits both local communities and the planet for present and future generations.
Generative idea	Connected by nature.
Communication outcome	Understand that the Wadden Sea is shared by three countries, that it is unique in the world. We want them to take responsibility and behave in a way fit for such a unique area.
Audience	Visitors to the Wadden Sea.
Audience insight	They've been behaving the way they have for a long time. They feel that they own the Wadden Sea and not some nature organisation. Some locals have a lot of knowledge & others are ignorant.
Behaviour shift	Keep the dog on the leash, understand and tell others that the Wadden Sea is much more than the area behind the dyke. Savour it.
Audience ask	Keep in mind you are nature's guest. For more info go to QR code.
Method of communication	Signboard, with limited text option / or more text behind a QR code.
Proposition	Experience more and enrich your experience. by finding out about the nature that is here. Click on the QR code for more information.

EXAMPLE 4: TRILATERAL WADDEN SEA COOPEARTION

Belief	The Wadden Sea is one of the earth's unique treasures. As stewards, we protect this vital landscape by enabling natural processes to happen largely undisturbed. Through the power of collective action, community engagement and education we can safeguard and enhance the natural richness of the Wadden Sea for future generations.
Our purpose	To protect, sustain and enhance the unique ecosystem within the dynamic landscape of the Wadden Sea, ensuring its value is appreciated by all, while fostering sustainable development that benefits both local communities and the planet for present and future generations.
Generative idea	Connected by nature.
Communication outcome	To become actively contributing members and advocates for Wadden Sea protection. Feel that they're part of something bigger – everyone's helping to protect the Wadden Sea. Need to get them to recognise the role they can play – they are empowered and their actions have significance.
Audience	New members of the TWSC.
Audience insight	Want to be taken seriously and valued – their work is important. Participation is needed. Time poor, short of resources, needs to be easy. Their context gives them a view that informs how they feed in.
Behaviour shift	Be active, be respectful. Open to collaborate and compromise.
Audience ask	Be pro-active, don't be intimidated by other's experience, stand up for what you believe, participate beyond the group, share, take the initiative.
Method of communication	Introduction brief (digital, sent by mail) into TWSC works and code of practice/conduct (set of tools). Need to look at the product and make sure it's easy for them.
Proposition	Be pro-active, you're recognised and important. You're a valued part of The Cooperation that has safeguarded and enhanced the Wadden Sea for future generations – be part of the collective action. It's an opportunity and a privilege.

This is an example of how a proposition can work for an internal audience. The process remains the same as for external communications but works just as effectively.

The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation Communications Guideline was published in March 2026 by the
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS)
Virchowstr. 1, 26382
Wilhelmshaven, Germany
+49 (0)4421 9108 0
info@waddensea-secretariat.org
www.waddensea-worldheritage.org
Represented by Sascha Klöpper
Edited by Annika Bostelmann and Anja Domnick
Cover image © Henry Czauderna
Design by KIRK & HOLM, CWSS, ASHA & Co.