

Wadden Sea Board

WSB 18
3 November 2016
Wilhelmshaven



Agenda Item: 5.8
Subject: WSF – WSB Cooperation CO₂ project
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Submitted by: WSF

Proposal: The meeting is invited to discuss the proposed project and to finally take decision about cooperation and further steps.

CO₂ project in cooperation with WSB

Political framework

At the 11th Trilateral Governmental Conference for the Protection of the Wadden Sea on Sylt in 2010, it had been stated that the Wadden Sea Region (WSR) shall develop into a CO₂-neutral region. § 24 reads as follows: *"... support the global and national efforts to mitigate causes of climate change at the regional level, by calling especially upon local and regional competent authorities and stakeholders, to work towards developing the Wadden Sea Region into a CO₂-neutral area by 2030 or before, putting the focus on the special threats for coastal zones by global warming and sea level rise."*

In February 2014 the Tønder Declaration referred to that statement by addressing the following in §47: *"Appreciate the ongoing efforts, especially at the local and regional levels, to work towards developing the Wadden Sea region into a CO₂-neutral area, and reconfirm the Sylt Declaration §24."*

Also the work of the WSF was appreciated in the Tønder Declaration:

"Take into account the activities and recommendations by the Wadden Sea Forum on sustainable development and participatory processes, in particular with regard to... efforts and recommendations of the WSF to contribute working towards a CO₂-neutral Wadden Sea Region as envisaged by the governments."

Developments and actions

Shortly after the Sylt Conference, the WSB together with the advisors of NGOs and WSF discussed initial actions to contribute to the agreed goals. It was proposed to compile information about CO₂ emissions and to carry out a review about ongoing activities of mitigating and reducing CO₂ in the WSR as baseline for further actions. Also CO₂ neutrality as such should have been defined. Unfortunately, these actions did not come into force.

In 2014 and 2015 the WSF has elaborated on the project "CO₂ neutral Wadden Sea Region", co-financed by the German Federal Government as part of the trilateral financial contribution for the WSF. The objectives encompassed a rough analysis of the sources of greenhouse gas emissions with a focus on CO₂, a preliminary definition of CO₂ neutrality for the Wadden Sea Region and a compilation of developments of concrete measures to reduce CO₂ on the regional and local level.

State of the art

Many actions on the regional and local level within the WSR are undertaken to mitigate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Besides concrete measures of economic sectors, climate action plans have been adopted by several municipalities and counties. These action plans encompass reduction and adaptation measures, awareness and education as well as guidance and management tools.

Still, a complete picture of the various developments in the trilateral WSR is missing. It is unclear how the regional and local activities are contributing to the trilateral aim. Furthermore, there is no answer yet to the questions what CO₂ neutrality means and how the region is defined. In conclusion it must be stated that a trilateral approach to reach the defined aim of developing the WSR into a CO₂ neutral region is missing. Instead of aiming at CO₂ neutrality, the more realistic approach of a climate friendly WSR with an ambitious CO₂ reduction should be taken as a common goal.

Proposal

It is proposed that WSB and WSF cooperate to firstly define the meaning of a CO₂ neutral WSR and secondly to establish an inventory with regard to energy transition and best examples of CO₂ reduction. The inventory should – under the guidance of the WSF energy group and in close coordination with the WSB - be developed by a consultant to proceed within short time. Stakeholders and governments should contribute compiling existing/ongoing measures and development plans. The state parties are asked to provide the necessary budget.

Following, an action plan including responsibilities can be jointly developed and finally be implemented to reach the envisaged aim of a CO₂ neutral Wadden Sea Region. The outcome and recommendations of the WSF project shall be taken into account to have the stakeholders seriously involved.

Finally, the joint initiative of WSB and WSF including the elaborated results should be processed, well covered by the media and reported to the forthcoming Trilateral Governmental Conference 2018 in Leeuwarden. It would be a highlight at the TGC-13, if progress could be announced developing the WSR, encompassing the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site and its hinterland, into a climate friendly transboundary region.

Action plan (preliminary)

- WSB and WSF nominate responsible persons to specify the tasks and to oversee the project
- The state parties provide a budget to hire a consultant for the inventory
- On the basis of the inventory, an action plan for additional measures will be elaborated
- A report for TGC-13 will be carried out
- Results will be included in the Ministerial Declaration of TGC-13
- A storyline will placed in the media