

Wadden Sea Board

**WSB 19
24 March 2017
Wilhelmshaven**



Agenda Item: 5.1 Wadden Sea World Heritage
Subject: TG-STs Progress Report
Document No. WSB 19/5.1/5
Date: 20 March 2016
Submitted by: TG-STs

Attached is the progress report of the Task Group Sustainable Tourism Strategy (TG-STs)

Proposal: The meeting is referred to the document

Task Group Sustainable Tourism Strategy (TG-ST5) Report to WSB-19

Chair / Secretariat: Oeds Bijlsma / Harald Marencic, Anja Domnick,

Meeting: TG-ST5 18: Berlin, 10 March 2017,

1. Coordination of tourism and marketing projects

TG-ST5 acknowledged the successful preparation of a full application "PROWAD LINK" to the Interreg VB North Sea Region Programme in January 2017, and thanked CWSS and all partners for their work on the application.

TG-ST5 discussed the coordination of the ongoing and planned Wadden Sea projects implementing the Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination.

The approved or planned Interreg 5 A projects "Waddenagenda" (NL and Niedersachsen), and NAKUWA (DK and Schleswig-Holstein) will exchange their project results and cooperate on some themes (e.g. training and qualification of tourism entrepreneurs). Both project will also closely tuned with the planned PROWAD LINK project.

- a. The 'Waddenagenda', Interreg 5A Deutschland-Nederland, October 2015 – December 2018, lead partner: Ostfriesland Tourismus GmbH (budget 2.6 Mio €), main activities:
 - Online training of employees in tourism by webinars (3 topics implemented: World Heritage and national park, tides/ebb and flood, experience the Wadden Sea; also themes are accompanied with short videos,
 - Preparation World Heritage birthday: at over 15 locations in Lower Saxony and in the Netherlands, a birthday breakfast event with a mudflat walk will be organized on 25 and 26 June 2017.
 - In the Netherlands, there will be several locations where a large number of activities will be organised, f.i. special activities for children, expeditions, music and creative activities.
 - Development of routes for children which are combined with an especially for children written booklet, app and website. The stories tell about the region along the Wadden Sea and about the Wadden sea.
 - Guidance World Heritage packages (by PROWAD): Workshop on Terschelling with 10-15 entrepreneurs and in Lower Saxony to develop specific packages for theirs region,
 - Support of entrepreneurs to apply e-learning in their marketing.
- b. "NAKUWA" project (Nachhaltiger Natur- und Kulturtourismus UNESCO Weltnaturerbe Wattenmeer) was approved by Interreg VA Denmark-Schleswig-Holstein: start is in April 2017. Development of nature experience offers including cycling and hiking, qualification of bird watching guides, and training of tourism entrepreneurs.

The Netherlands:

- World Heritage brand workshop and development of a brand compass,

- New international marketing campaign: "World Heritage is part of Holland national parks" as follow up of "Wadden Sea is the most beautiful Dutch nature area".
- New staff to enhance marketing of World Heritage ("boegbeeld" Gerard Kremer).
- Dutch World Heritage Association promotes the ten Dutch WH sites in the Netherlands (app, videos, campaign under the motto "World Heritage – now also in the Netherlands" with TV clips),
- The Dutch Waddenvereniging continues the concept of Werelderfgoedweken in cooperation with local entrepreneurs which takes place without external funding every summer (started 2013). The issue of sustainable transport (mainly tourism) is also on the agenda in the Netherlands as well as in the Wadden Sea Forum.

Lower Saxony:

- Training tourism stakeholders on sustainability (one workshop held with 80 participants, four further workshops are planned).
- 9th Migratory Bird Days on 14 – 22 October 2017.
- Two new staff members at the national park administration to support World Heritage communication and marketing.

Schleswig-Holstein:

- Regional ITI/EFRE-projects „Nationalpark Partnerschaft Plus“ and „Visualisierung des Weltnaturerbes Wattenmeer“ will be submitted in March and might start in June 2017 if approved),
- Annual meeting of National Park partners took place on 9.2.17 in Breklum with > 100 participants with good exchange and networking. New partners welcomed (a.o. St. Peter-Ording, DB Regio, StrandGut Resort), total number now 158 National Park partners in 16 categories,
- Application of Nordsee SH for competition on the most sustainable tourism destination in Germany, coordinated and submitted by NTS: <http://www.bundeswettbewerb-tourismusdestinationen.de/>
- Brent Goose Days celebrate their 20th anniversary from 22.4. - 7.5.2017: <http://www.ringelganstage.de/>
- Westküsten-Vogelkiek (birdwatching event) in extended version this year: 30.9. – 8.10.2017: <http://www.westkuesten-vogelkiek.de/>
- 2017 is the National Park theme year on saltmarshes -> will be focus in public relations and offers. More info: <http://www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de/sh/misc/themenjahr-salzwiese/4013>
- New for ITB: virtual reality glasses with 360° films about experiencing the WH outdoors in Westerhever and indoors in Multimar Wattforum,
- Latest market research results by Westcoast University of Applied Sciences in Heide on touristic meaning of WH sites and National Parks in Germany. The Wadden Sea is the second most well-known and the most likeable WH site in Germany. Presentation can be found here: <http://www.sh-business.de/de/tourismustag-sh>

- A National Park foundation has been established to promote projects fostering nature conservation in the National Park Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea as well as in adjacent regions and promoting information and education about the National Park.

Demark

- Joint project of World Heritage sites in Southern Denmark (Wadden Sea, Kings of Jelling, Christiansfeld) to increase awareness of pride amongst local citizens of WH-sites. Create joint experiences for local citizens and incoming tourists. Content marketing, PR and higher awareness on a sustainable basis. Euro 0.4 mio. Region funding, municipality funding.
- Experiences in the Wadden Sea World Heritage. Bring more people out to 1) pluck (Gigas) oysters + develop code of conduct and 2) visit local cultural events. Develop local training modules for nature rangers and others who take people and tourists out in the Wadden Sea in criteria 8, 9 and 10. Enhance knowledge and stimulate a more considerate behavior, when taking groups out in nature.
- Waiting for response on application for a project 2017-2020 with focus on 1) Code of Conduct, 2) Junior Ranger, 3) competence development for nature rangers and volunteers, 4) develop MitVadehav to target age 12-18 with new learning materials and training of teachers. Collaboration with Danish National Parks, Danish Outdoor Council, green organizations and educational institutions.
- Study tour to Leuwaarden and Schiermonnikoog Wadden Sea National Park board and secretariat on 17 – 18 March.

TG-STG underlined the importance of exchanging information about regional activities, in order to make use of synergies and to exchange experience and results, and to link to with the planned PROWAD LINK project.

Therefore, TG-STG will act as a coordination platform for all tourism related projects in the Wadden Sea World Heritage.

Proposal: To support the role of TG-STG in coordinating and facilitating tourism projects and activities across the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination.

2. WH Merchandising

TG-STG took stock of WH merchandising which started in 2013 based on the results of the Merchandising Concept Study (PROWAD), and which was coordinated by a merchandising expert group. A call of expression of interest was prepared in 2014, and a pilot license agreement was set up with a producer of high quality postcards. The contract was not continued because of lacking interests of the point of sales across the entire WH.

However, there is, apparently, still a high demand for branded WH merchandise, and producers are interested to exploit this market. To also avoid unauthorized use of the brand, TG-STG agreed finding a pragmatic solution for WH merchandise by the next TG-STG meeting in September 2017.

Because of lacking resources to develop a trilateral business plan for merchandise, TG-STG suggested a de-central merchandising approach applying joint criteria for branding them as WH merchandise. For example, merchandising articles should be

sustainable and have a high quality, support the WH conservation goals, enhancing the WH brand image (irreplaceable, committed, inspiring) and awareness, and provide revenues for WH (licence fee).

TG-STC instructed CWSS to prepare a proposal together with the merchandising expert group and interested points of sale (e.g. info centres) how to select suitable WH merchandise items with the expected quality and supporting the brand image, and to implement a pilot project by the next meeting in September 2017 accordingly.

Proposal: To approve the proposed approach.

3. Trilateral tourism and marketing activities

With regard to the ITB 2017 (8 – 12 March 2017), TG-STC appreciated the exceptional programme developed with and supported by a large number of international, national and regional partners to present the Wadden Sea World Heritage, and supported the preparation of a programme at ITB 2018. Several partners have already indicated to also participate in 2018.

With regard to the WH campaign workshop (see TG-WH progress report to WSB), TG-STC **supported** the proposal by TG-WH to use the campaign slogan “It’s your nature” as part of the regular WH communication and to implement the campaign in the framework of PROWAD LINK.

Proposal: To support the preparation for the ITB 2018 and to approve the use of the WH campaign slogan.

4. Business Cooperation Programme

TG-STC noted the proposal by the working group to find a common approach for the different partner groups (see document WSB 19/5.1/1).

It was underlined by TG-STC that the WH programme should be developed in the framework of PROWAD LINK and that the quality and contents of existing programmes should be kept.

Proposal: To note

5. Next TG-STC meeting

The next TG-STC meeting is scheduled on 28 – 29 September 2017 in the Netherlands. Main focus will be the preparation of a SWOT analysis on where we stand now, regarding the strategy that is developed and produce a proposal for the Ministerial Council Meeting, May 2018.