

Wadden Sea Board

**WSB 20
16 June 2017
Harlingen, Netherlands**



Agenda Item: 6.1

Subject: Information concerning the WSWH Foundation and Trust Fund
(version 12-6-2017)

Document No. WSB 20/6.1/1

Date: 15 June 2017

Submitted by: Jochem Pleijsier

Proposal: The meeting is invited to consider the document.



INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WADDEN SEA WORLD HERITAGE FOUNDATION AND TRUST FUND (WS-WHF&T)(version 12-6-2017)

Submitted to WSB 20 by the Chair.

Proposal: Just for your information

What happened until now?

- **January 2014.** Publication of 'Report Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation, Feasibility-Necessities-Opportunities-Merits', written by the 'Foundation Committee', on behalf of the WSB. Conclusion is that the creation of a well-known international WS-WHF&T can 'stimulate the strengthening of ecological and sustainable development¹ of the World Heritage area' (which is a strict UNESCO obligation). A Foundation should lead to a broadening of the 'ownership' of the Wadden with private partners.
- **February 5th 2014.** The (Tønder) Ministerial Council Declaration *agreed to consider to establish a Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation*. The Netherlands would like to formally endorse the creation of this Foundation on the next Trilateral Governmental Conference (May 2018).
- **June 2016.** The WSB meeting dealt with an Action Plan of the Dutch presidency. Paragraphs 1 and 2.1. are accepted by the WSB: prerequisites for a Foundation and exploration talks with private stakeholders for which the WSB mandated Mr. Verdaas.
- **December-March 2017.** Mr. Pleijsier was appointed by the chairman for supporting him in the further exploration of the possibilities of a WHF&T in cooperation with the CWSS. Interviews with all delegations and a lot of experts on this subject.
- **March.** WSB 19 took note of the progress paper on WS-WHF&T.
- **April/May.** On the basis of a proposal of the Netherlands and Lower Saxony, the WS-WHF&T was integrated in the (draft) total governance structure, linked to the Partnership Center (PC). The total, integral package was discussed during meetings of the Partnership Center Development Group (PCDG).
- **May 24th.** High Level Group+ meeting. With regard to the preparatory work for the Foundation the Heads Of Delegations concluded:
 - This work should be from now on conducted independently of the work regarding the PC. The legal/institutional framework for interaction between the governing body of CWSS, the Partnership Hub and the governing board of the Foundation will need to be defined in the future;
 - Co Verdaas continues his exploratory work on the Foundation, taking into account the remarks of the HOD's;

¹ The recovery and development ambitions are insufficiently realized (on certain topics: birds, fish etc.) according to the draft Policy Exploration Future Role and Ambition of (The Dutch) government and region for the Wadden Sea area (November 2016). Other documents confirm this.

- The German delegation will facilitate contact with a Berlin-based BMUB expert who is managing the German 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative <http://www.business-and-biodiversity.de/en/>
- Hans Christian Karsten will explore options for a face-to-face meeting between Janne Liburd, Christina Egsvang Føns and Co Verdaas to discuss the Danish viewpoint (JP: 10th of August).
- **May-June.** Co Verdaas and Jochem Pleijsier had and will have explanatory talks with some Dutch CEO's/directors, amongst others:
 - Mr. Jeroen de Haas from ENECO (energy company) <https://vimeo.com/153777488>
 - Mr. G.J. Lankhorst, CEO of Royal VEMW (organization of energy users (companies), and former chairman of the WSB-Foundation Committee, (2013/2014);
 - (NB. We could unfortunately not give a presentation in the influential Dutch CEO Think Tank on sustainability);
 - Mr. Kees Vendrik, Chief Economist at Triodos Bank. This bank is the most sustainable one in the Netherlands;
 - Mr. Peter Bakker and/or one of his directors (later this summer), CEO of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development (and former chairman of TNT).

Earlier conclusions on the basis of the interviews with mainly public partners until March (presented in WSB 19):

- The Dutch and German delegations are in favor of a private Foundation & Trust fund. Denmark has a neutral attitude towards a Foundation;
- The scope of the Foundation: there is support for a money generating and advisory focus. Some delegations want a role for management and communication of the Brand, others not;
- As a threshold, all delegations agreed upon using the criteria laid down in the WH Strategy 2020 as well as approved in the Working Group Business Cooperation Partnership in December 2016 ('the five c's').
- Private entities or members of the board of recommendation must have a 'heart for nature' and a track record with sustainable choices;
- It will be a *tour de force* to get private partners involved. It is therefore necessary to speak/brainstorm with some of them in an early stage. In close cooperation with private partners we try to develop the WHF&T. (Important: what's in it for them?);
- Quick development of a concrete proposal concerning the Foundation, but at the same time *work very sound and solid*. And of course in close connection with the colleagues;
- We need to have sound icon projects for fund-raising which are well connected to the interests of private partners. Choose projects which have a cross border or trilateral impact (first reflections of the delegations: flyway, swimway, 'plastic soup problem', scientific research, Wadden Sea chairs at Universities, sponsoring of marketing activities).

Summary of the opinions of some Dutch CEO's of sustainable private companies about private involvement in the Wadden Sea World Heritage:²

- Overall conclusion until now: in the first place it is important that there is a PPS connection possible. (The PPS must of course contribute to WSWH-goals).

² This summary, or parts of it, does not necessary reflect the complete opinion of all CEO's according to this matters.

Sustainable private partners are more eager to join when problems/challenges in the Wadden area are congruent with their core business and company mission;

- Sponsoring seems to be 'passé';
- Identify 10 major business themes/propositions (JP: obviously taking into account national and EU-regulations, UNESCO-criteria etc.). These are 'themes' for the longer term and match the core business of companies or other private institutions, like family foundations. Absolutely no 'hit and run' projects;
- One theme may be '(energy) self-reliance of the Wadden islands'. A good example in this respect is the PPS (municipality, ENECO etc.) at Ameland. This could eventually also be rolled out on the other islands with diverse stakeholders, so there is one big energy neutral World Heritage area;
- In the initial phase, choose one or two of these specific themes/propositions (on which private activities can be linked). Examples are: 'banning of plastic soup' and increasing biodiversity in the Wadden area. Probably also buying out regular fishing in the Wadden area?
- Choose two connectors (facilitators) who are competent, who know the region and political cultures of the three countries and the different regions;
- Ministers and government officials must know, support and protect these facilitators and their work. The WSB can pay these people (with a 'yellow' Insights profile) for a long period of time (from a Governmental (process) budget);

What's next in 2017:

- **June-October.** A working Group of NL, DK and D (3 persons) will search possible and concrete themes/business propositions (like the self-reliant programme Ameland), will make a concrete draft proposal WHF&T, possible members of the Foundation, possible members committee of recommendation;
- **Autumn.** WHF-articles in draft Trilateral Wadden Government Declaration;
- **November.** Final go-no-go decision in de WSB;
- **May 2018.** Possible approval of the draft WHF&T at the trilateral government conference.