

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 32)

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Virtual Meeting



Agenda Item:	5.2
Subject:	Progress report TG-M
Document No.:	WSB 32/5.2/1
Date:	11 February 2021
Submitted by:	TG-M

This document contains a progress report of the Task Group Management (TG-M).

Proposal: The WSB is invited to note the information.

Task Group Management (TG-M) progress report to WSB 32

Since WSB-31, the TG-M has progressed on the following specific items:

1. Flyway & Breeding Birds

§5 Agree to continue and further consolidate the work on the Flyway Vision in the framework of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative with the relevant governmental and nongovernmental organisations and aim to extend the cooperation in the context of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative, especially with regard to the Arctic, to continue monitoring along the entire flyway, to continue specific capacity building and to increase the activation of partners;

End of March 2020, the 1st stage project application of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) 'Climate Resilience for Critical Sites for Migratory Birds and People along the East Atlantic Flyway' (Short Title: Climate Resilient East Atlantic Flyway) has been submitted under a call within the International Climate Initiative (IKI) funding instrument of the German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (see [WSB31/5.2/2](#)). This proposal has been selected in the first stage of the thematic-oriented IKI-selection procedure. This does not constitute a commitment for future funding by BMU since further assessment procedures are necessary, but the preparatory next phase can be entered.

In January 2020 the third total count of the East Atlantic Flyway was organized along 32 countries, from Norway to South Africa. A compilation of national reports contains first results of the simultaneous January 2020 waterbird and wetland census along the East Atlantic Flyway: [Van Roomen et al., \(2020\) Simultaneous January 2020 waterbird census along the East Atlantic Flyway: National Reports. Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative p/a Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany. Wetlands International, Wageningen, The Netherlands, BirdLife International, Cambridge, United Kingdom.](#)

In addition, in 2020 the WSFI assisted with the development and management of critical site networks in West Africa and conducted community-based site activities: (1) support the nomination of the Bijagos Archipelago as a World Heritage Site, (2) develop a network of experts to address the management of intertidal flats, especially for migratory waders, (3) raise awareness for migratory birds among the general public with campaigns and infrastructure projects and contribution to the new flyway movie "A call for cooperation saving the place migratory birds call home".

§12 Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to oversee the further implementation of the Action Plan for Breeding Birds and support an exchange of experiences of national and regional activities, including a potential further development, and to undertake an evaluation in time for the next Trilateral Governmental Conference;

The progress report 'Breeding Birds in the Wadden Sea - Trends 1991-2017 and results of total counts in 2006 and 2012' has been published. The report provides baseline information on trends in breeding numbers in the period 1991-2017 and an account on total counts in 2006 and 2012, all carried out in the framework of the TMAP program: [Koffijberg et al., \(2020\) Breeding Birds in the Wadden Sea: Trends 1991- 2017 and results of total counts in 2006 and 2012. Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 40. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Joint Monitoring Group of Breeding Birds in the Wadden Sea, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.](#)

A WSFI microsite is being implemented with the company Creative Concern. This microsite serves as template for subsequent sites, e.g., for Swimway and Alien Species.

In the Wadden Sea, outbreaks of type H5N8 bird flu were reported for wild bird species and farm poultry. Upon the proposal for CWSS to take on some coordination which arose during the online exchange session / webinar for the Wadden Sea Board on 19 November 2020, trilateral information exchange has started in the Expert Groups Migratory and Breeding Birds (EG-MB/BB) 20-2 meeting held on 24 November 2020. [Resulting information is being shared on the World Heritage website.](#)

Since 15 January 2021, Ms Kristine Meise functions as new secretary of EG-MB/BB and the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative Steering Group (WSFI Steering Group), as successor of the retired Mr Gerold Lüerssen.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

2. Fish targets / Swimway

13 Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to further develop and contribute to implementing the SWIMWAY Vision (at Annex 3) as an integrated approach to achieving the Trilateral Fish Targets by investigating, monitoring, managing and communicating topics concerning the ecology of fish of the Wadden Sea Area;

The ad hoc Working Group Swimway (WG-Swimway) has further implemented the SWIMWAY Vision and Action Programme 2019 – 2024 since WSB 31 by:

- Establishing a temporary subgroup of experts to develop a proposal for a common fish monitoring programme in the Wadden Sea regions under the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP), upon request by the Task Group Monitoring and Assessment (TG-MA). A first meeting of this group was held on 4 February 2021;
- Publication of a fish monitoring report: [Walker, P.A. \(2020\) Trilateral fish monitoring: overview of monitoring and research for SWIMWAY. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany;](#)
- Drafting a policy review on existing legislation relevant to the realisation of the trilateral fish targets. Priority recommendations are formulated in the document “Trilateral Fish Targets and European Policies -Policy Statement” (submitted as WSB 32/5.2/4)
- Preparation of a trilateral research proposal under Swimway, by members of WG-Swimway and engaged Danish, Dutch and German scientists;
- Preparation of project proposals for national projects to complement the Dutch Waddentools SWIMWAY Waddenzee project: A German project proposal on bottlenecks in the life cycle of fish in the Wadden Sea will be submitted to the Federal Biodiversity Program by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, a Danish project proposal is being prepared for re-submission after rejection;
- Planning for a Swimway website, which will be established as microsite, with the template provided by the WSFI microsite.

As requested by their ToR, the WG also drafted Terms of Reference for their possible transformation to an Expert Group on fish, which has been submitted as separate document (submitted as [WSB 32/5.2/3](#)).

Therewith, WG-Swimway has fulfilled its envisaged tasks for 2020. TG-M has commented on and approved of the Policy statement as well as of the ToR.

The chairperson of WG-Swimway Mr Adi Kellermann will continue his work in 2021.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information

3. Wardening & management

14. *Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to work intensively on cooperation at the operational management level and to secure adequate wardening and management across the whole Wadden Sea Area, in order to strengthen the protection of the Wadden Sea World Heritage*

A planned wardening workshop has been postponed to 2021, due to the COVID-19 travel- and meeting restrictions.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

4. Seal Management Plan

15. *Reaffirm the rules on taking and releasing of seals in accordance with Article IV of the Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea and adopt the updated Seal Management Plan 2018-2022, which also takes into account the management of grey seals;*

The reports on grey seals and harbour seals have been published on beginning of July 2020 and November 2020 respectively: [Brasseur et al \(2020\) EG-Seals grey seal surveys in the Wadden Sea and Helgoland in 2019-2020. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.](#)

[Galatius et al. \(2020\) Trilateral surveys of Harbour Seals in the Wadden Sea and Helgoland in 2020. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.](#)

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information

5. Harbour porpoises

16. *Agree to duly take account of the fact that harbour porpoises are present in the Wadden Sea, thus addressing the conservation of the species;*

At their WSB 30 meeting held on 21 November 2019 in Wilhelmshaven, Germany the WSB endorsed the TG-M recommendation to include harbour porpoises into the responsibilities of the EG-Seals. The Expert Group (EG)-Seals has incorporated harbour porpoises to their proposed ToR for a new EG Marine Mammals (EG-MM) (submitted as [WSB 32/5.2/2](#)).

The envisaged harbour seal workshop 2020 in the scope of the 30th anniversary of the seal agreement (concluded in 1990) is postponed to 2021, due to COVID-19 restrictions and to comply with the enforcement of the agreement in 1991.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information

6. Alien Species

17. *Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to undertake further steps towards a Trilateral Management and Action Plan Alien Species (MAPAS) (as described in Annex 4), which should include relevant steps for public awareness and cooperation on early warning and measures, integrating a related monitoring programme, based on the national data underpinning the Trilateral Assessment and Monitoring Programme, including the installation of the network platform at the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat;*

The Expert Group Alien Species (EG-AS) is working towards development of operational assessment criteria/targets for neobiota, which can be integrated into the future parameter set and programme array of the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP).

The planned alien species network platform will be established as microsite (following the Flyway and Swimway sites). The technical outline (functionality, navigation, view) for the site has been developed and CWSS maintains contact with Creative Concern to implement the platform as microsite. The upload of content will follow in cooperation with EG-AS.

Mr Klöpper functions as secretary for this group from WSB 31.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information

7. Sustainable Fisheries

21. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to further develop steps for the sustainability of fisheries in the Wadden Sea Area on the trilateral level, in order to achieve the conservation objectives of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation as well as a level playing field. This should be done in close cooperation with responsible authorities and relevant stakeholders and initiatives (e.g. certification procedures), within the Framework for Sustainable Fisheries, taking into account both the importance of the ecosystem service of providing regional seafood in this respect and the integrity of the World Heritage Site.

At the Wadden Sea Board (WSB) meeting 31 held online on 18 June 2020, the Board endorsed the working approach on sustainable fisheries submitted by TG-M ([WSB 31/5.2/1](#)):

- 1) Update and completion of fishery inventory
- 2) Status and recommendations for principles Framework for Sustainable Fisheries (Annex 3 [Tønder Declaration](#))

Product 1: Inventory on fishery activities in the Wadden Sea Conservation Area.

Product 2: Document with status and recommendations for principles of the Framework for Sustainable Fisheries (Annex 3 Tønder Declaration), including analysis how existing legislative framework, regulations, agreements and initiatives support the Framework for Sustainable Fisheries.

TG-M has proceeded towards two envisaged products for 2020 in a topical meeting sustainable fisheries on 17 July 2020.

A first draft of the inventory on fishing activities has contributed to the SIMP key topic headings “Inventory” and “Common ground”. This first draft will need revision and inclusion of further information before a summary can be integrated to the SIMP document. This information will serve also as input to a thematic report fisheries for the Quality Status Report (QSR). TG-M has supported a legal framework fisheries drafted by CWSS intern Ms Marine Perrin.

TG-M has started to provide input on the status assessment for the principles listed in the Framework for Sustainable Fisheries (Working approach 2). Missing information for both products will be gathered in the frame of the SIMP and QSR development, with support by QSR authors and consultants. Recommendations for principles of the Framework for Sustainable Fisheries will be discussed after completion of the status (Note: Participants of the topical meeting sustainable fisheries agreed that the term “recommendations” in product 2 (Status and recommendations of the Framework Sustainable Fisheries principles) includes procedural recommendations. Therefore, the term may be revised.)

For SIMP and QSR see [WSB 32/5.1/2](#) and WSB 32/5.4.

Proposal : WSB is invited to note the information

8. Marine litter

22. Strive to substantially reduce the amount of marine litter in the Wadden Sea by the year 2030;

23. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to make use of all relevant existing monitoring and action programmes, as well as existing action plans, taking into account local, national and multilateral initiatives to gain and exchange adequate additional knowledge on sources and impacts of marine litter (such as microplastics) on the Wadden Sea ecosystem and stimulate and support appropriate measures.

Upon initiative of the Netherlands, TG-M has assembled an inventory on marine litter initiatives and activities. The group has prepared a trilateral overview on marine litter related policies and activities in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Region (see [WSB 32/5.2/5](#)). Recommendations on future trilateral activities on this matter will be directed to WSB 33.

9. Light Emissions

24. Request the Wadden Sea Board to stimulate various initiatives, together with communities and relevant stakeholders, aiming to reduce light emissions, such as measures to avoid unnecessary lighting, the exchange of best practices, technological innovations or monitoring, for the benefit of the whole Wadden Sea Area, whilst ensuring safety standards prescribed by pertinent legislation;

The Wadden Sea Forum (WSF) has taken up initiative on the issue of Light Emissions/Dark Sky within the Trilateral Partnership in support of the Wadden Sea World Heritage. Reference to OPteamPH progress report to WSB32 ([WSB32/6/1](#)). TG-M therefore proposes that this aspect will be treated further under the auspices of the WSF.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

10. Energy

29. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to review and monitor the impacts of renewable energy production and energy transportation on the Wadden Sea ecosystem and to consider measures to avoid or mitigate possible negative impacts by looking for best environmental practices also with the aim of developing, for example, related common principles to evaluate the impact of high-voltage power cables in the Wadden Sea Area in close consultation with the responsible bodies and stakeholders

The review of impacts of renewable energy is being conducted in the frame of the SIMP. TG-M has supported SIMP development with contacts for specific experts on this topic, and a compilation of a policy framework, led by Schleswig-Holstein. On-going work on this topic is supported by an external consultant. These efforts are conducted in line with the development of the QSR thematic report energy. For SIMP and QSR see [WSB 32/5.1/2](#) and WSB 32/5.4.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

11. Ports and shipping

30. Encourage ports and ferry companies working in the Wadden Sea Area to develop codes of conduct to further demonstrate their willingness to work towards environmentally sound standards in accordance with best available technology;

31. Request the Wadden Sea Board to consider the different approaches of the three countries in order to identify the most sustainable modes of transport for ensuring naturefriendly site-specific connections to the islands in the future;

32. Encourage the competent national shipping and nature conservation authorities to continue their dialogue in order to achieve an even higher level of safety and cooperation, inter alia by raising the general awareness and information level;

In June 2020, The Dutch Safety Board has published an investigation report on the loss of containers from the MSC Zoe in 2019: [Dutch-Safety-Board-Safe-container-transport-north-of-the-Wadden-Islands-Lessons-learned-following-the-loss-of-containers-from-MSZ-ZOE](#). In December 2020, the respective response from the Dutch Minister of Infrastructure and Waterstate was published. The minister announced the following measures focused on risk management in regard to losing containers;

- The Netherlands will lobby within IMO for a broader analysis of the extent to which international rules are not in line with the increase of scale for containerships and lobby for obliging new guidelines;
- Since October 31st, the coastguard advises big containerships to avoid the southern route with certain weather(circumstances). Due to results of additional research, the coastal guard is also advising this for smaller containerships;
- Germany will give the same advice for ships sailing into western direction;
- The Netherlands will also focus its efforts on creating a better information position for the crew on ships. For example, in regards to using a machine measuring swing angle and trace containers.

As key topic, shipping and ports is being tackled within the frame of the SIMP. TG-M has supported the round table approach (see below) and a legal framework shipping drafted by CWSS intern Ms Marine Perrin. On-going work on this topic is supported by a consultant, including Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) [Operational Plans](#) implementation assessment, potential conflicts of shipping with the 10 OUV key values and potential next activities. These efforts are conducted in line with the development of the QSR thematic report shipping. For SIMP and QSR see WSB 32/5.1/2 and WSB 32/5.4.

At the Wadden Sea Board (WSB) meeting 30 held on 21 November 2019 in Wilhelmshaven, Germany, the establishment of a round table for shipping as a partnership initiative led by the WSF with the support of the CWSS/ PH admin unit and in collaboration to TG-M ([WSB30/5.8/2 WSF Shipping Group](#)) was approved. The round table was originally planned as in person meeting, which should also give input to the SIMP. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this meeting is now planned as online event (see TG-M21-1-5-2-WSF-Round-table/[WSB 32/9/1](#)) TG-M actively supports the preparation with its network to raise awareness about the issue and to contact further representatives of shipping organisations, authorities and governments.

33. Encourage the further development and application of environmentally friendly port concepts through the joint organizations of ports, for example by exchange of best practices;

34. Note the ongoing discussions in the framework of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on a possible mandatory prewash of cargo tanks having contained paraffins, whereby the prewash residue shall be discharged into a port reception facility;

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

12. Trilateral Research Agenda

Following the formal establishment of the Trilateral Programming Committee - Wadden Sea Research on the basis a ToR approved by WSB at WSB 31, TG-M no longer reports separately on this issue, and thus TPC-WSR reports independently to WSB, re. agenda item and document [WSB 32/5.5](#).

13. Natura 2000 roof report

TG-M is contributing towards finalizing the report/feasibility study, which will include last contributions regarding the implementation of the NATURA-2000 complex in the respective countries.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

14. Single Integrated Management Plan (SIMP)

See separate WSB agenda item ([WSB32/5.1/2](#)).

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.

15. QSR

20. Instruct the Wadden Sea Board to produce updates of the online Wadden Sea Quality Status Report and to deliver a comprehensive synthesis report in time for the next Trilateral Governmental Conference;

An update of QSR thematic reports of TG-M related key topics of the SIMP is. Authors have started working on thematic reports fisheries, shipping and energy. For SIMP and QSR see [WSB 32/5.1/2](#) and WSB 32/5.4.

Proposal: WSB is invited to note the information.