

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 32)

04 March 2021
Virtual meeting



Agenda Item:	9.1 Wadden Sea Board Advisors
Subject:	Application for funding
Document No.:	WSB 32/9/2
Date:	11.02.2021
Submitted by:	Wadden Sea Team and Wadden Sea Forum

Covernote:

The Leeuwarden Declaration of 2018 states in five points the need to move towards environmentally sound standards for ports and shipping in the Wadden Sea Region. Nevertheless, little progress has been made in reducing the negative impacts of the shipping industry on this fragile ecosystem of international importance, which is inter alia listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ramsar site and UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve. Due to the many different stakeholders involved and the transboundary nature of this challenge, it is evident that current structures are insufficient not conducive to make sufficient progress. To date stakeholders tend to discuss within their particular sector and country or local region, and are rarely aware of the technological, ecological and political momentum regarding sustainable shipping. Furthermore, the incentives for the shipping and port sector to change their operations towards more sustainable and climate-friendly practices are limited. To change this is rather a mid-term programme rather than a small project. However, every big task needs a start and the presented project will reinvigorate and build momentum for greening the shipping sector. Looking for solutions in the topic of port and shipping on the basis of cooperation among the willing actors is one promising approach to tackle this challenge. The already conducted in-depth interviews for the Round Table “Shipping” as well as the cursory survey of the WSF for the Trilateral Stakeholder Analysis (WSF, 2020) confirms that a majority of stakeholders covering several sectors is willing to engage in and strengthen a trustworthy and reliable dialogue.

WST and WSF propose three concrete actions within a period of 18 months that will help lead to a new basis of understanding and knowledge and cross-fertilise and multiply good practices from one region to another. This project will work closely with the two projects from the Mellumrat e.V. - Naturschutz- und Forschungsgemeinschaft “WATTfossilfrei” and the Waddenvereniging “Clean Up XL” which have already been granted. Furthermore, WSF and WST plan to apply also for further funding outside of the TWSC which, if successful, needs to be seen in combination with the funding applied for at the WSB as well as another possibly a project currently being evaluated by WSF and WST.

Proposal:

The meeting is invited to discuss the project proposal and decide on funding.

Application for funding

**Within the “Wadden Sea Sustainable Shipping Programme (WaSSSP)”:
Strengthening the contribution of shipping to a well-protected
Wadden Sea World Heritage**

Step 1 (WaSSSP I): Sharing and developing knowledge

Submitted by the Wadden Sea Team and the Wadden Sea Forum

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OUR LONG-TERM VISION

**Sustainable and environmentally sound shipping and port operation in and around a healthy
and well-protected Wadden Sea**

1 Background and Need

1.1 Point of departure

The Partnership Hub

On 30 June 2019 in Wilhelmshaven, representatives of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum, environmental NGOs, the research and the tourism sector from Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the TWSC on the establishment of a “Trilateral Partnership in support of the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage”. The MoU stipulates a strengthened transboundary cooperation for the protection of the Wadden Sea and an enhanced and intensified trilateral network beyond the governmental collaboration within a planned trilateral network establishment, the “Partnership Hub”. The MoU also forms the basis for forthcoming joint projects within the Partnership Hub. The shared goal is to protect the world's largest tidal flat system and to preserve it for future generations. NGOs and the associated civil society provide the essential building blocks to ensure local implementation. This project is part of a new start for a shipping network that would strengthen the collaboration stipulated in the MoU.

Environmental status and the impact of shipping in the Wadden Sea World Heritage site

Despite the fact that the Wadden Sea is the largest interconnected coastal wetland of its kind globally and has highest international recognition of its ecological importance for global biodiversity, the Wadden Sea remains in a precarious state. Not a single marine habitat across the trilateral area has been assessed to be in Good Environmental Status. Whilst celebrating important successes with regard to the protection of the Wadden Sea area over the last decades, it needs to be recognized that still many environmental problems exist and some of them are getting worse.

In 2020 Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands officially failed to achieve the Good Environmental Status for the North Sea, as envisaged under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). The Wadden Sea Quality Status Report (QSR) 2018 also emphasizes the importance of this unique World Heritage Site but also the many threats it still faces. The QSR noted that “technical advancements and shore-side surveillance have reduced the environmental impact of shipping and substantially improved the safety of ships in the region. However, due to the high and especially anticipated growth of traffic the advancements achieved will require a follow-up in the future. Due to the special and recognized importance of the Wadden Sea Area additional regionally focused efforts, based, for example, on the provision of more effective incentives for commendable performance in shipping should be further envisaged.”

Since the international development of standards is running behind the local implementation of Best Environmental Practices, the WSF and WST are suggesting to work more closely with stakeholders to create support to spread those good practises over the whole Wadden Sea region. Based on information from the QSR, the SIMP and other publications, a broad field of reasonable measures are available to be utilised meanwhile. They range from small sized local activities (e.g. improvement of reception facilities) to more ambitious approaches (e.g. decarbonisation of domestic shipping). Examples include, the launching of the Danish electro-driven car-ferry “MS Ellen”¹ in 2020 or German Wadden Sea ferry operators who are committed to comply with the ambitious requirements of the “Blue

¹ <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/long-distance-electric-ferry-completes-first-year-in-operation>

Angel Award²” for their vessels. The Wadden Sea could and for ecological reasons should become a pilot region for climate-neutral and environmentally friendly shipping. This project is designed to act as a catalyst to kick-start this change from the bottom-up.

Policy and regulation: mandates for action

In addition to the Declaration of Leeuwarden 2018³ there are numerous policy documents and other processes aiming to make shipping more environmentally friendly in the Wadden Sea, such as:

- The Tønder Ministerial Council Declaration, Annex 5, “PSSA Wadden Sea Operational plans” of 2014⁴
- The Pact van Marrum of 2018⁵
- The MSC Zoe report⁶
- The process to develop a Single Integrated Management Plan (SIMP)⁷
- The resolutions of the Advisory council of Niedersachsen and the National Park advisory boards in Schleswig-Holstein

This project aims to support the integration of lessons learnt, necessary stakeholder dialogue and subsequent implementation of these. We aim to work in close cooperation with those involved in the various processes, to avoid duplication and maximise synergies.

1.2 Need for action

Shipping and ports can make a considerable contribution to safeguarding the Wadden Sea for future generations. Given the current challenges the region faces, constructive solutions for green shipping and ports are urgently needed.

Acknowledging that the shipping sector is of great importance for our economy, it still has many deficiencies concerning the ecological component of sustainability, especially with regard to the vulnerability of the Wadden Sea World Heritage. Well-known examples of such deficiencies include dredging impacts related to port accessibility, shipping accidents and emissions into the air and sea.

The negative impacts of shipping and ports on an ecosystem such as the Wadden Sea are relatively well understood and widely recognised, however the pace at which transformation and change are being realised is too slow. In order to build up a larger programme and multiply the application of best practices, this project aims to lay the foundation for communication and cooperation in this direction.

² <https://www.faehe.de/die-reederei/umwelt/>

³ <https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/resources/2018-leeuwarden-declaration>

⁴ https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/sites/default/files/2014_toender%20declaration.pdf

⁵ <https://waddenseaports.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Webversie-Pact-van-Marrum.pdf>

⁶ https://safety4sea.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Dutch-Safety-Board-Safe-container-transport-north-of-the-Wadden-Islands-Lessons-learned-following-the-loss-of-containers-from-MS-C-ZOE-2020_06.pdf

⁷ https://waddensea-worldheritage.org/system/files/WSB-31-5-1-2-SIMP%20status%20report_0.pdf

2 WaSSSP I: Sharing and developing knowledge

WaSSSP I will act as a catalyst for making progress towards environmentally sound shipping in and around the Wadden Sea World Heritage site. **WaSSSP I** will work towards a comprehensive knowledge base on specific topics. Bringing together the appropriate actors and facilitating effective stakeholder negotiations are key project activities. Some early outputs are already planned (see below), however it is intended that this stakeholder dialogue will shape the future direction and outputs of a larger follow-up project. Stakeholders include shipping companies, port companies, authorities, NGOs, research institutes and independent experts.

The main activities are divided into 3 categories:

1. Ship operation

One of the areas where progress is both feasible and urgently needed is the reduction of emissions from ships – into the air, the water and the seabed. There are good regional examples where individual shipping companies are leading the way in terms of ship design and operations, such as Scandlines ferries which are on their way to develop emission-free ferries in the Baltic Sea⁸. In close contact with the project “WATTfossilfrei” that addresses the decarbonisation of recreational boats, we intend to work with leading organisations in the ferry sector to inspire others in the Wadden Sea to follow suit. Ferries are particularly suitable for electrification given their short journeys and localised operation, therefore this project will initially focus on this particular sector.

Another area is international regulations of shipping. Since 2002 the Wadden Sea has been classified as a “Particularly Sensitive Sea Area” (PSSA) under the IMO⁹. However, to date the Associated Protective Measures (APMs) for the Wadden Sea are not sufficient. Building upon the SIMP process and the indications resulting from the site managers workshops, we propose to build a roadmap scheme to develop a comprehensive proposal for Associated Protective Measures for the Wadden Sea PSSA with the long-term goal of submitting it to the relevant national authorities of the three Wadden Sea countries for consideration.

Furthermore, we intend to expand the scope of the Dutch project “Clean Up XL” to Germany and Denmark. The project aims at supporting the implementation of the recommendations from the MSC Zoe report. It will e.g. investigate the need for additional measures on the shipping routes close to the Wadden Sea and possible adjustments to the routes as well as make suggestions on how to reduce cargo loss in the future.

Outputs:

- Initiating close dialogue with ferry operators in the Wadden Sea in order to assess options for operations towards zero emissions and nature-friendly site-specific connections to the islands (see Leeuwarden Declaration Nr.31).

⁸ <https://www.scandlines.de/uber-scandlines/greenagenda/zero-emission>

⁹ <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Environment/Pages/PSSAs.aspx>

- A roadmap proposal for evaluating existing and developing recommendations for (appropriate) new Associated Protective Measures for the Wadden Sea PSSA based on the relevant international guidelines and legal framework.
- Develop recommendations for the implementation of the outcome of the MSC Zoe report for presentation at the Trilateral Governmental Conference in 2022.

2. Ports

Based on the work done by harbors with regards to the Pact of Marrum, the existing cooperation in the initiative "Trilateral Wadden Sea Ports", as well as the Letter of Intent signed by many Wadden Sea Ports¹⁰, the project will build on the existing cooperation and explore the possibility to extend it to a wider stakeholder group. It is the aim to have all Wadden Sea Ports and representatives of the Wadden Sea Team sign on to a cooperation to make port management environmentally sound by the Trilateral Governmental Conference in 2022. To start concrete steps in the initiative, we also aim at setting concrete due dates for specific measures towards improved environmental management of the Wadden Sea Ports.

We will thrive to bring different threads together that might touch on the same topic such as the initiative ECOPorts¹¹ which was launched in 1997 in order to "create a level playing field on environment through cooperation and sharing of knowledge between ports". Though it does not specifically consider the needs of world heritages, the sound experience and their related "Port Environmental Review System" may provide an important fundus of measures to be exploited for the benefit of the Wadden Sea area.

Outputs:

- Information package (both online and hard copy) about the new port cooperation and its implementation in all 3 languages
- Signing of all Wadden Sea Ports and representatives of the Wadden Sea Team of a joint document stating cooperation to make port management environmentally sound at the Trilateral Governmental Conference in 2022.
- Compilation of ecoports/greenports best practices in the Wadden Sea Region (building on the compilation already done by the Wadden Sea Ports¹²) to reduce their impact on the Wadden Sea World Heritage including recommended due dates for possible transformations. The compilation will be translated into all three languages, distributed to all relevant ports and will include an outlook and recommendations for the future. It will also be presented at the Trilateral Governmental Conference in 2022.

¹⁰ <https://waddenseaports.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Afbeelding1.jpg>

¹¹ Since 2011 integrated into the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO): <https://www.ecoport.com/about>

¹² <https://waddenseaports.com/best-practices/>

3. Contributing to disseminating knowledge

- Ensure close contact of any work done with the Round Table Shipping.
- Liaise closely with regional or national networks such as MARIKO and Green Shipping Niedersachsen in order for these to actively participate in the project, learn about planned initiatives, but also feed information into the networks to increase the communication between stakeholders.
- Raising awareness among mariners on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Wadden Sea World Heritage and the PSSA Wadden Sea, by incorporating information via the respective websites of the Wadden Sea Ports, nautical guides or the Port Information Guides.

Outputs:

- Contact port authorities of the main ports in each of the three countries. Explore their awareness on and communication via websites or Port Information Guides about the requirements of the PSSA Waddensea and seek for possible improvements. Offer text modules to inform mariners about the OUV of the Wadden Sea WH and the PSSA Wadden Sea.

2.1 Qualifications of the applicants

The “Wadden Sea Team” is a cooperation of green NGOs active in the Wadden Sea area and beyond and has been active within the trilateral cooperation of the Wadden Sea countries since its beginning in 1978. The green NGOs issued “Statements of Concern” in the early years and later on “Calls for Action” toward the Trilateral Cooperation with its three governments. Via its “advisors” (in earlier years “observers”) and through memberships in different working groups the green NGOs contributed continuously and constructively to many aspects of the trilateral work and are proud of their share in the successes of this work so far. These always included a keen focus on shipping issues: as an example, the green NGOs suggested and supported very much the proposal to designate the Wadden Sea as PSSA (with the clear assumption that this should contribute to the protection of the Wadden Sea).

Furthermore, our coalition of NGOs have been active across the maize of relevant international, regional and national instruments to strengthen sustainable shipping in the Wadden Sea and beyond (e.g. IMO, OSPAR). We bring civil society to the table and ensure that under optimal circumstances policies fit local circumstances, have buy-in and provide vital input for local implementation.

The Wadden Sea Forum was established in 2002 as independent multi-stakeholder network in order to serve as sparring partner for the TWSC. Many stakeholder from shipping and ports are represented in the WSF, which are keen to get involved in these new initiatives. Furthermore, the WSF is responsible for organising and conducting the Round Table “Shipping” to revitalise and enliven a currently slumbering dialogue. The Lower Saxon National Park Wadden Sea authority commissioned the WSF to prepare a trilateral stakeholder analysis for potential participants of the Round Table. In a cursory survey conducted for this technical report it was revealed that starting a broad and trustworthy

dialogue is required by a majority of stakeholders¹³. For example, the WSF member Wintershall/DEA is going to convert supporting vessels approaching the Mittelplate with hybrid engine using hydrogen. On the one hand, the aim is to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases and on the other hand to reduce noise emission into the Wadden Sea.

This proposal was jointly developed by BUND, DN, DOF, NABU, Stichting De Noordzee, Schutzstation Wattenmeer, Waddenvereniging, WWF Germany and the Wadden Sea Forum.

¹³ WSF (2020): Round Table “Shipping” – A Trilateral Stakeholder Analysis. Final draft of the Technical Report under the auspice of the Lower Saxon National Park Wadden Sea Authority.

3 Finance plan

As was discussed at the Meeting of the Operational Team Partnership Hub 17 on the 12th of January 2021, the Wadden Sea Forum and Wadden Sea Team started pursuing other sources of funding to fund Steps 1 and 3 of the WST proposal on Shipping that was submitted to the Wadden Sea Board on the 29th of October 2020 for the interim meeting on the 19th of November 2020 as WSB 32 was postponed due to the pandemic. Step 2 of the said proposal was adapted for the present proposal.

	July 2021- Dec 2021	Jan 2022 - Dec 2022	Total for the project (18 months)
DE: Project coordination and implementing of project actions in DE, focus Niedersachsen	25.000,00 €	48.500,00 €	73.500,00 €
DE: Implementing of project actions in DE, focus Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg	5.000,00 €	10.000,00 €	15.000,00 €
NL: Implementing of project actions in NL	10.000,00 €	20.000,00 €	30.000,00 €
DK: Implementing of project actions in DK	20.000,00 €	40.000,00 €	60.000,00 €
Wadden Sea Forum	15.000,00 €	25.000,00 €	40.000,00 €
External and travel costs	3.000,00 €	4.500,00 €	7.500,00 €
Project SUM	78.000,00 €	148.000,00 €	226.000,00 €
Funding from WSB	30.000,00 €	60.000,00 €	90.000,00 €
Funding from other sources (not confirmed yet)	48.000,00 €	88.000,00 €	136.000,00 €
NABU, WWF and Waddenvereniging will take part in the project through in-kind contribution			