

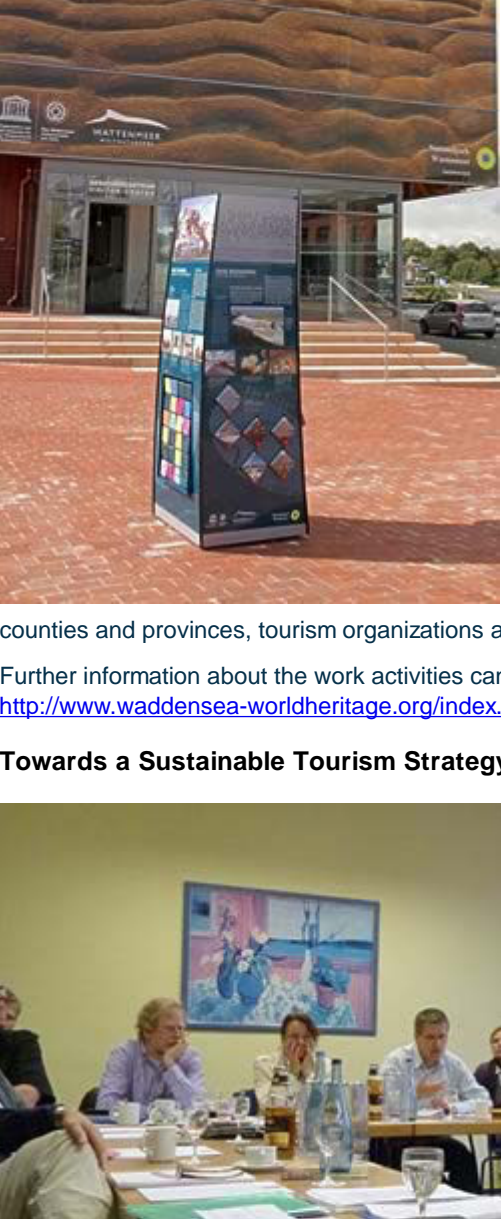
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1. Policy & Management

Wadden Sea World Heritage - what's on?



The communication of the Wadden Sea as World Heritage has generated huge enthusiasm among and broad support by the stakeholders at local as well as regional level. The national park administrations initiated qualification programs, extended the National Park Partnership Programs and the existing exhibitions with World Heritage theme. In Lower Saxony, the national park enters in Wilhelmshaven and Cuxhaven were converted into World Heritage Visitor Centers. The tourism and marketing organizations have developed various marketing activities on local and regional level reflecting the high identification level of the World Heritage status of the Wadden Sea and its recognition.

On the international level, an updated joint information flyer was produced, which now includes the Hamburg Wadden Sea National Park. The World Heritage information columns (on photo) which have been developed by the German national parks in Dutch and German (with English translation) are now being placed in the regions.

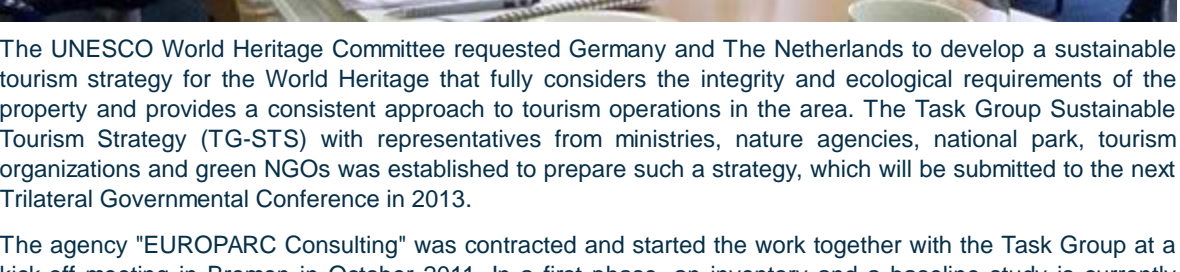
The main focus of the World Heritage work in 2011 was the joint "Story-Hunter Campaign" and the start of the work on the Sustainable Tourism Strategy (see below).

The framework of all these activities is the common "Communication and Marketing Program 2010 - 2013" with its four main work fields on information/awareness, environmental education, tourism and international cooperation. This program and perspectives for future joint activities will be discussed with representatives from ministries, nature agencies, national park advisory boards,

counties and provinces, tourism organizations and entrepreneurs at the workshop on 26 January 2012.

Further information about the work activities can be found in the Annual Report 2010/2011 <http://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/index.php?id=56&L=0>

Towards a Sustainable Tourism Strategy



The UNESCO World Heritage Committee requested Germany and The Netherlands to develop a sustainable tourism strategy for the World Heritage that fully considers the integrity and ecological requirements of the property and provides a consistent approach to tourism operations in the area. The Task Group Sustainable Tourism Strategy (TG-STs) with representatives from ministries, nature agencies, national park, tourism organizations and green NGOs was established to prepare such a strategy, which will be submitted to the next Trilateral Governmental Conference in 2013.

The agency "EUROPARC Consulting" was contracted and started the work together with the Task Group at a kick-off meeting in Bremen in October 2011. In a first phase, an inventory and a baseline study is currently being prepared to show perspectives how a joint strategy could be developed which has an added value for all stakeholders. As the next step, regional workshops in the Netherlands, Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein will be organized in spring 2012 to actively involve regional and local partners in the preparation of the strategy as early as possible.

Development of a trilateral Communication Strategy

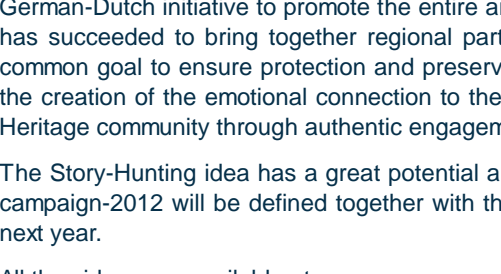
The communication strategy for the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation, that is currently being developed, aims at providing a consistent and coordinated approach in all communication activities among stakeholders on local, regional and national level. Such systematic approach in Wadden Sea communication will facilitate the cooperation among partners along the Dutch-German-Danish coast, which is especially vital for protection and conservation of the Wadden Sea area. The strategy will define communication tools, channels and target audiences for the Trilateral Cooperation, so that the stakeholders speak with one voice to national and international communities.

The communication agency Papenfuss has been contracted to complete the task of the communication strategy development, which is being carried out with involvement of all responsible stakeholders in a participatory process that considers the interests of all involved parties.

Currently the first stage of the communication strategy is being realized – "analysis and research" – which includes interviews with key persons in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. The remaining interview partners, who have not been available for personal interviews, will be interviewed by telephone within the next weeks.

The definition of communication goals will be provided by the end of the year based on the analysis results, while the final communication strategy including communication measures is expected to be delivered by July 2012, after the approval of the Wadden Sea Board.

Story Hunter Campaign in the Wadden Sea World Heritage successfully concluded



The first Wadden Sea wide campaign to promote the Wadden Sea World Heritage amongst locals and visitors was carried out in May-June 2011, in which people were asked to share their personal story about the Wadden Sea.

In total the story-hunters collected 360 stories from tourists and locals along the German-Dutch Wadden Sea coastal line, 163 German and 53 Dutch most interesting stories in the respective languages can be found at the campaign page.

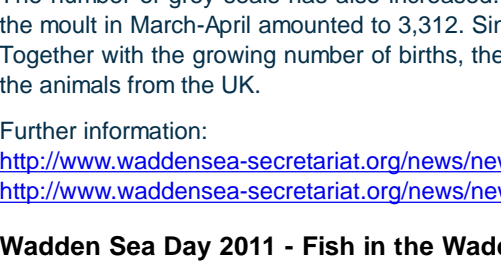
While the touring of the Story-Hunters is over, the campaign materials (pins, posters, stickers etc.) can be further used by all the partner organizations, which supported and helped to implement the campaign. The best stories have been distributed to the respective organizations already, in future the collected stories are planned to be used in written form. The campaign has become the first German-Dutch initiative to promote the entire area of the Wadden Sea World Heritage site from Texel to Sylt. It has succeeded to bring together regional partners from all the Wadden Sea World Heritage regions with a common goal to ensure protection and preservation of the Wadden Sea. The campaign contributed greatly to the creation of the emotional connection to the Wadden Sea and the creation of the new Wadden Sea World Heritage community through authentic engagement of locals and tourists.

The Story-Hunting idea has a great potential and is planned to be continued in 2012. The activities within the campaign-2012 will be defined together with the Dutch and German partner organizations at the beginning of next year.

All the videos are available at: <http://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/223.0.html>

2. Research & Monitoring

Number of harbor seals increased in 2011



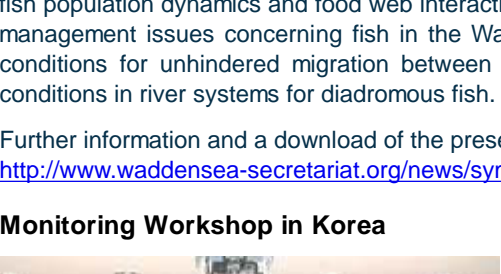
The results of the coordinated aerial counts of the harbour seals and grey seals in the Dutch-German-Danish Wadden Sea have been collated and assessed by the Trilateral Seal Expert Group which consists of seal experts from all three countries. The total number of seals counted during coordinated surveys in August was 24,118 animals, which is a 9% increase compared to 2010. The number of pups born in 2011 has also grown. During the peak in pupping in June, 7,044 pups were counted, which is 8% more than last year.

The total count of 24,118 harbour seals in the Wadden Sea was composed of 3,105 (699 pups) in Denmark, 8,493 (3,294 pups) in Schleswig-Holstein, 4,699 (1,606 pups) in Lower Saxony and Hamburg, and 7,821 (1,445 pups) in the Netherlands. The general increase is however unevenly distributed, an extremely high increase in the Dutch part whereas the numbers in Schleswig-Holstein hardly grew and, in the lower Saxon part, they slightly dropped. The harbour seals are counted when they rest on the sandbanks during low tide, while some are in the water. It is estimated that the total number of the seal population corrected with those in the water is around 35,500.

The number of grey seals has also increased. The number of counted grey seals in the Wadden Sea during the mout in March-April amounted to 3,312. Since 2007, the annual growth rate has been about 15% per year. Together with the growing number of births, the steady increase is presumably partly caused by immigration of the animals from the UK.

Further information: <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/news/Seals/Annual-reports/seals2011.html>
<http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/news/Seals/Annual-reports/Grey%20Seals/greyseals2011.html>

Wadden Sea Day 2011 - Fish in the Wadden Sea



On 25 August 2011, the sixth annual Wadden Sea Day took place in Wilhelmshaven. Over 80 participants from the three Wadden Sea countries, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, attended the scientific conference on "Fish in the Wadden Sea - Exploring an Unknown World". With this year's topic a very important issue for the Wadden Sea was addressed, which often does not get enough attention.

The Wadden Sea is used by fish as spawning, breeding and foraging grounds and serves as an acclimation area and transit route for long-distance migrants from the North Sea to their spawning grounds located in fresh water. The conference further tended to highlight the ecological importance of fish for the Wadden Sea and the importance of experts also discussed natural and human factors that may influence the development of fish populations.

Overall, results of long-term research projects indicated changes both in seasonal composition and abundance of different fish populations in several Wadden Sea regions. According to the assessments of these findings, some of these changes might be induced by climatic change. Further detected changing migration behaviors and resident times could cause a mismatch in predator-prey-abundance in food webs. Based on these results it will be possible to close certain knowledge gaps and reveal the areas, where further research is required, e.g. fish population dynamics and food web interactions. Furthermore, the experts gave recommendations for future management issues concerning fish in the Wadden Sea, like the restoration of habitats in order to promote conditions for unhindered migration between the sea and inland waters and improvement of the physical conditions in river systems for diadromous fish.

Further information and a download of the presentation are at: <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/symposia/WaddenSeaDay2011/WaddenSeaDay2011.html>

Monitoring Workshop in Korea



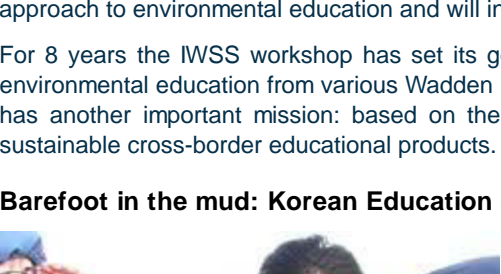
Since the establishment of the "Memorandum of Understanding Wadden Sea - Korea" in 2009, joint activities have been carried out focusing on three topics: 1) information and education (cooperation info centers), 2) policy and management (integrated ecosystem approach), and 3) monitoring and research (migratory birds, benthos, monitoring strategies).

In September 2011, a two-day joint workshop on monitoring and research (with focus on benthos) followed by a two-day field excursion including laboratory work took place at the University of Mopko in Korea. It was organized by the Korean Science and Technology Center for Wadden Sea, the CWSS, the University of Oldenburg, the Schleswig-Holstein State Agency L.L.U.R., the Lower Saxony National Park Administration, and the CWSS. The main aim was to compare monitoring strategies and methods including remote sensing, and to investigate the ecological similarities and differences of tidal flats in Korea in the Wadden Sea regarding biodiversity, possible impacts of climate change and invasive alien species. In addition, management of oil spills and restoration of marsh areas were addressed.

Proposals for follow-up activities on the scientific level (bilateral scientific projects or exchange of PhD students), monitoring (application of remote sensing methods) and on site management (salt marsh restoration, exchange oil spill experiences) were identified.

3. Information and Education

The first IWSS Workshop within the new structure



The 11th International Wadden Sea School Workshop and the first workshop under the coordination of the Network Group Education will take place on Texel, 28-30 November, hosted by Ecomare, the center for the Wadden Sea and North Sea. It is expected to have overall 29 participants from regional national park houses and informational centers along the coast including the members of the Network Group Education to take part in the interactive workshop program and several excursions to the island mudflats and a lighthouse.

The workshop program is diverse: from discussion sessions and brainstorming sessions, e.g. the international implementation of the originally German project "Beach Explorer" to the presentation of the current Wadden Sea World Heritage activities and a scientific report on trends in bird numbers and human impact on Wadden Sea nature. Ecomare will share with the participants its approach to environmental education and will invite them to a field work demonstration in the mud.

For 8 years the IWSS workshop has set its goal to provide an information exchange platform for experts in environmental education from various Wadden Sea regions. Apart from networking opportunities, the workshop has another important mission: based on their extensive experience the participants suggest and develop sustainable cross-border educational products.

Barefoot in the mud: Korean Education experts visit the Wadden Sea



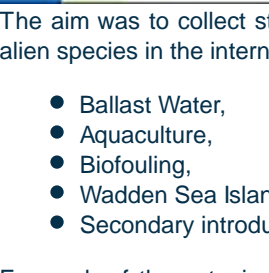
A Korean delegation with 6 representatives from the Korean Ministry MLTM and the tidal flat information centers visited information centers in the National Park Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea (Husum, Tönning, Hooge, Sylt) and the Ecomare Center on Texel from 4 - 12 October 2012. The visit was organized with support by the Schutzstation Wattenmeer, WWF and Ecomare. The aim of the visit was information exchange concerning how strategies on tidal flat experience and education are being developed and implemented in the Wadden Sea and the Korean tidal flats. The main focus was on the development of eco-tourism that supports sustainable regional development. The visit of the Korean colleagues was conducted within the "Memorandum of Understanding Wadden Sea-Korea" and the framework of the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS).

Colleagues from the Schutzstation Wattenmeer, among which the Korean student Jin Ha, who currently volunteers in the information center in Hörnum, gave insight into practical Wadden Sea education out on the mudflats - walking barefoot was truly a new experience for the delegation - as well as into the planning and constructing of exhibitions. On Hallig Hooge, the group got live impressions of a staff training course for conservation volunteers and learned about the volunteering schemes "Freiwilliges ökologisches Jahr" and "Bundesfreiwilligendienst".

After 4 days full of impressions, information and vivid discussions on visitor information and tidal flat education in Germany, the study visit continued with exciting days on the island of Texel, The Netherlands. During the official welcome in Ecomare the island's major, Mrs Francine Gtskes, discussed with the delegation touristic development, sustainable tourism and energy issues. Professor Han Lindeboom from IMARES/Wageningen University gave a lecture about sustainable use and protection of the Dutch Wadden Sea. The delegation visited several locations like the Maritime Museum, the National Park, the lighthouse, the harbor etc. and discussed with the managers and people involved to get an overview of the connection there is made on Texel between nature, culture, history and tourism.

4. Publications

Neobiota in the Wadden Sea



The Dutch Program "Towards a Rich Wadden Sea" (PRW) and the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) have commissioned an inventory study into policy and research concerning invasive alien species in the international Wadden Sea.

The aim was to collect state of the art research regarding the following five topics related to introductions of alien species in the international Wadden Sea:

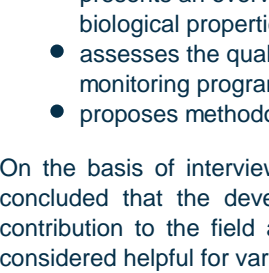
- Ballast Water,
- Aquaculture,
- Biofouling,
- Wadden Sea Islands,
- Secondary introductions through natural routes of dispersal.

For each of these topics (developments in) policies and legal aspects, as well as monitoring and research programs were addressed and main gaps and recommendations identified. The report identified gaps in policies for dealing with fouling of ships' hulls and other hard substrates (such as offshore and harbor structures), which is considered to be one of the main vectors for alien species introductions. It was also concluded that there are gaps in monitoring and that an overall integrated approach to dealing with invasive alien species is lacking. The report recommends setting up a trilateral strategy based upon a policy cycle consisting of prevention, early warning and monitoring, assessment, decisions about management actions, management actions and evaluation.

The report will serve as a starting point for the development of a common trilateral strategy on invasive alien species, as decided at the 11th Trilateral Governmental Wadden Sea Conference (Sylt, Germany March 2011).

The full report is available at: http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/management/alien_species/alien_species.html

Data Inventory of the Tidal Basins in the Trilateral Wadden Sea



D. Kraft, E.O. Folmer, J. Meyerdirks, T.Stiehl. Programma Naar Een Rijke Waddenze, 43 pages.

The Dutch program "towards a Rich Wadden Sea" (PRW) has commissioned a study with the aim of investigating the relevance and feasibility of comparing the tidal basins of the Wadden Sea. Such a comparison may provide insight into the ways natural and anthropogenic factors influence the conditions of tidal basins. The study, carried out between November 2010 and August 2011:

- presents an overview of the most relevant policy questions and associated science topics,
- presents an overview of the main parameter groups, needed to describe the physical, chemical, and biological properties of tidal basins and their use by humans,
- assesses the quality and availability of existing data, collected or compiled by the most comprehensive monitoring programs in the Wadden Sea,
- proposes methodology by which synoptic comparisons may be made.

On the basis of interviews with scientists and experts in the Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark, it was concluded that the development of a tidal basin atlas was generally considered a potentially important contribution to the field and that a comparison of tidal basins on the basis of general characteristics was considered helpful for various kinds of policy and research topics.

Additionally, the main policy questions, for which this approach could be useful, including related scientific questions and associated parameters, were identified as well as the availability of relevant data. Several recommendations on how to use the tidal basin approach are presented. In order to overcome the current problem of insufficient data coverage, it is recommended that a selected set of indicative basins be used, that models be applied, and that remote sensing data be integrated into the approach.

The full report (English with Dutch summary) is available at: <http://www.rijkewaddenzee.nl/rappporten-links/rapporten> (koberingsrapport)

5. Trilateral Meetings

6 - 7 December
Task Group Climate (TG-C)

13 December
Trilateral Data Handling Group (TDG)

20 December 2011
Task Group Sustainable Tourism Strategy (TG-STs)

19 January 2012
Task Group Shipping (TG-S)

23 - 24 January
Task Group Management (TG-M)

27 January 2012
Task Group World Heritage (TG-STs)

15 February 2012
Expert Network Group Fish

28 - 29 February 2012
Joint Monitoring Groups Breeding and Migratory Birds (JMBB/JMMB)

14 - 15 March 2012
Wadden Sea Board (WSB-S)

29 March 2012
Task Group Shipping (TG-S)

A complete overview is at: <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/trilat/meetings/meetings.html>

Meetings of the Wadden Sea Forum (WSF) are at: <http://www.waddensea-forum.org/calendar.html>

6. Symposia & Workshops

Upcoming events

8 - 9 December
7th Wadden Academy Symposium
Wadden Academy
<http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/symposia/symp.html>

28-30 November
11th International Wadden Sea School Workshop
Texel, the Netherlands

A complete list of upcoming events is at: <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/events/othercont.html>

Impressum

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