

The transboundary Wadden Sea as a world natural heritage

interaction of nature, socio-economic interests and trilateral governance



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In 2009 the Wadden Sea has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is one of the largest intertidal mudflats in the world and is of exceptional value for its dynamic landscape and highly valued wildlife, including a pivotal role in bird migration. These values depend on the integrity of a varied and variable ecosystem with high productivity.

The resilience of the Wadden Sea is at the complex interface of three different domains (fig. 1.). Therefore an integrated systems approach for science is needed to support the management of the Wadden Sea Region.



Pavel Kabat (in front), Hessel Speelman, Jouke van Dijk, Jos Bazelmans and Peter Herman is the board of the Wadden-academie.

It is the ambition of the Wadden-academie to develop the Wadden Sea Region into an incubator for widely applicable integrated knowledge of sustainable development of a coastal area, in which natural values are a key element and form the foundations of the local and regional economy. The region is a meeting place for scientists from the Netherlands and elsewhere, administrators, policy makers and management agencies. Together, they develop sustainable and innovative solutions based on interdisciplinary knowledge. By 2020, the trilateral Wadden Sea Region will be the best monitored and best understood coastal system in the world.

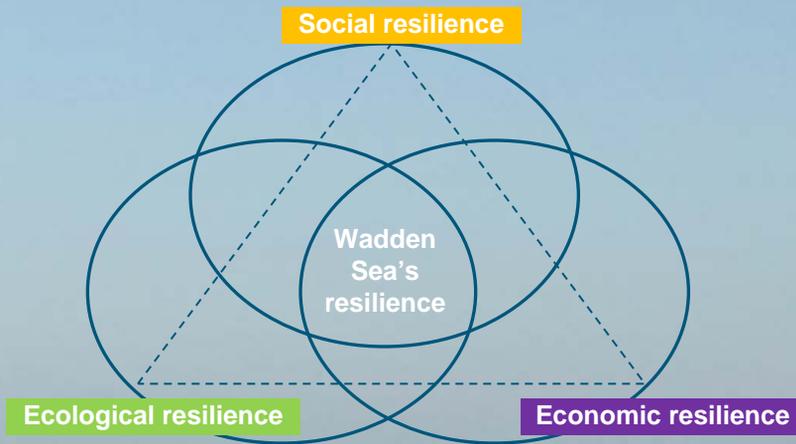


Fig. 1.

Challenges to the trilateral governance

For the coming decades, it will be a challenge to the management of all three 'wadden' countries (The Netherlands, Germany and Denmark) to deal with:

- nature conservation in a changing world – a focus on values is needed rather than on the states;
- the changing scales of driving forces, such as the globalisation of the economy;
- the increasing uncertainties in the external forcing of the system because of climate change.



Fig. 2. The invasion of the Pacific Oyster in the Wadden Sea is caused by globalisation.