

Conservation and Management Plan for the Wadden Sea Seal Population 2007- 2010

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE WADDEN SEA SEAL POPULATION 2007 - 2010

According to Art. IV. of the Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea, which has entered into force on October 1, 1991.

Explanatory note:

The measures of the conservation and management plan are outlined according to the following scheme:

Seal Agreement: *The objectives and obligations of the Agreement itself.*

Required effort and objectives: *The objectives and the individual activities and measures that need to be undertaken to achieve the objectives.*

Action in 2006 – 2010: *The activities and measures which trilaterally and / or each country / state shall implement in addition to the (seal) protection measures which already exist in the given state, in order to fulfill the prescriptions.*

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE		
<p><i>Seal Agreement Art. III</i></p> <p>The Parties shall cooperate closely with a view to achieving and maintaining a favorable conservation status for the seal population."</p>	<p>To achieve these general objectives it will be necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to achieve and maintain a comprehensive conservation and management of the seal population of the Wadden Sea through common, coordinated measures of the responsible authorities; and - to achieve and maintain a public understanding and awareness of the Wadden Sea seal population as an entity and as an integrated part of the ecosystem. 	
Definition: Agreement Area		
<p><i>Seal Agreement Art. II, b) and d)</i></p> <p>a) The "Agreement Area" means the area of water known as the Wadden Sea, including all sandbanks therein as well as all shore areas of the North Sea coasts of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands between Blaavandshuk to the north and Den Helder to the west. The main ranges and the main migration routes are located in the Wadden Sea.</p> <p>d) "habitat" means any part of the Agreement Area which is essential to the maintenance of the vital biological functions of seals, including but not limited to breeding, whelping, nursing, feeding or resting;</p>	<p>The Agreement Area is the Wadden Sea Area (Trilateral Cooperation Area).</p>	

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
2. CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES		
Habitats		
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VII, 1</i></p> <p>1. The Parties shall take appropriate measures for the protection of habitats. They shall pay due regard to the necessity of creating and maintaining a network of protected areas also in the migration areas of the seals in the Agreement Area and of ensuring the preservation of areas which are essential to the maintenance of the vital biological functions of seals.</p>	<p>It will be necessary to identify, maintain, extend and create seal interest zones / reserves of an appropriate size in the trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation Area and in adjacent areas and to take appropriate measures, i.e.:</p>	<p>THE NETHERLANDS AND GERMANY Conclude discussions on and designation of reserves in the Eems-Dollart region. After the joint designation of candidate SAC's TSEG will incorporate those in the work plan of the SMP, including a pragmatic management.</p>
	<p>- to ensure that the existing seal reserves cover the main birth, nursery and resting areas of seals and ensure that there is an adequate number of seal reserves;</p>	<p>TRILATERALLY See action for Eems-Dollard above; haul-outs in the western Wadden Sea: these are included as SAC's in NATURA 2000 network for the marine ecosystem. Continuation of the monitoring for new haul-outs which are not covered by existing reserve network.</p>
	<p>- to ensure that at present and in the future, in view of expected increases in populations, assignments of seal reserves are based on well defined criteria of critical habitats;</p>	<p>TRILATERALLY Referred to RESEARCH AND MONITORING "investigations of habitat requirements of seals in relation to recreational demands"</p>
	<p>- to identify and if necessary maintain, extend and create a seal protection zone of an appropriate size outside the Trilateral Wadden Sea Conservation Area related to appropriate measures and ensure that this zone covers the foraging area offshore particularly during winter.</p>	<p>TRILATERALLY Timely implementation of NATURA 2000 – <u>according to the given deadlines</u> - in the marine ecosystem, and promotion of generic measures regarding environmental quality of important offshore areas.</p>
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VII, 2</i></p> <p>2. The Parties shall preserve habitats and seals present from undue disturbances or changes resulting, directly or indirectly, from human activities.</p>	<p>- to ensure that the seal reserves are created in such a way that disturbance is limited to a minimum;</p>	<p>TRILATERALLY Development of a trilateral framework for guidelines to regulate excursions by boats, and adjust criteria for excursions on sub-region level.</p>

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
	- to reduce the disturbance by air traffic;	Referred to: Necessary measures outlined in the Wadden Sea Plan
	- to prohibit disturbing activities in seal reserves at least in the time between 15.05. to 01.09;	Referred to: Necessary measures outlined in the Wadden Sea Plan
	- to reduce the number of seals caught as by-catch and ensure that seals do not drown in fyke nets;	<p>THE NETHERLANDS Recent results from Dutch experiments will be communicated to relevant authorities in Denmark and Germany, to enable use such seal guards in fyke nets in all sub-regions in the Wadden Sea where this type of fishery is carried out.</p> <p>The nL will provide a summary of the fyke net experiments.</p> <p>TRILATERALLY Continuation of stranding networks and autopsies to identify and investigate for drowning as cause of death.</p>
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VII, 3</i></p> <p>3. The Parties shall have regard to the protection of habitats from adverse effects resulting from activities carried out outside the Agreement Area.</p>	- to avoid and determine the number of seal-by-catches in fishery activities.	<p>TRILATERALLY Improve the central collection of information on drowning/entanglement of seals in fisheries in the Wadden Sea and adjacent waters, either via existing stranding networks or through establishing such a system.</p>
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VII, 4</i></p> <p>4. The Parties shall explore the possibility of restoring degraded habitats and of creating new ones.</p>		
<p>Pollution</p> <p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VIII, a</i></p> <p>The Wadden Sea States are determined to do their utmost to further reduce pollution of the North Sea from whatever source with the aim of conserving and protecting the Agreement Area.</p> <p>To this end they shall:</p>	<p>It will be necessary</p> <p>a. to reduce the pollution from whatever source, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to continue to commonly implement the decisions of the North Sea Conferences; - to continue to coordinate efforts in the framework of the North Sea Conferences to further reduce the pollution of the Wadden Sea and North Sea. 	<p>TRILATERALLY</p> <p>Referred to: The necessary measures are and / or will be outlined in the Wadden Sea Plan, the decisions of the North Sea Conferences and other relevant international fora.</p>

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
a) endeavor to identify the sources of such pollution; <i>see also Seal Agreement, Art. VIII, b and c under 3. RESEARCH AND MONITORING: Monitoring of Pollution</i>	b. if possible to use seals as an indicator of the condition of the environment.	
	c. to ensure that dumping of dredged material, or taking of mud and sand in or near the Wadden Sea will have no negative effects on seals resp. seal banks.	TRILATERALLY Promote inclusion of this aspect into the EIA's and/or SEA's for activities in or near the Wadden Sea.
Wardening		
<i>Seal Agreement, Art. VI, 4</i> 4. The Parties shall take appropriate action to suppress illegal hunting and taking of seals.	It will be necessary to ensure the enforcement of the provisions of the agreement by an adequate management and wardening system, which should - concerning all seal matters - be coordinated at state administrative agencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to ensure that the seal reserves are, as parts of the nature reserves and the national parks, adequately warded; - to designate administrative agencies responsible for seal wardening. - to ensure a coordination of the state and voluntary wardens. - to ensure that the seal reserves are clearly marked and indicated on sea charts. 	TRILATERALLY No additional action is required.
3. RESEARCH AND MONITORING		
Research and Monitoring		
<i>Seal Agreement, Art. V, 1</i>	<u>Research</u> It will be necessary	TRILATERALLY Continuation of the provision of an overview on ongoing

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
1. The Parties shall coordinate their research programs and projects and their monitoring of the seal population to increase their knowledge of the biology and the habitat including harmful effects of human activities on the seal population to provide a basis for measures to improve its conservation status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to establish an overview of recent and ongoing research projects on seals to ensure information exchange; 	<p>and planned research projects, reporting of achieved results derived from these projects, and assessment of relevance therefore for the trilateral management and research.</p> <p>Report all research projects on seals or related to seals in the Wadden Sea to the coordinating institution, and to the TSEG. After completion of a project, a report on the results should be made available to the coordinating institution for further evaluation by the TSEG.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to consider a trilateral project on feeding ecology of seals; 	<p>TRILATERALLY</p> <p>Continuation and completion of both projects in NL and SH, evaluate outcome for trilateral managements, and consider continuation through a trilateral joint project addressing seal-fishery interactions.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to consider a trilateral project on habitat requirements of seals in relation to recreational demands. 	<p>TRILATERALLY</p> <p>In the course of 2007/2008, results of the relevant projects in NL, SH and DK should be evaluated and possible implications for trilateral management related to disturbance identified and addressed accordingly.</p>
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. V, 2</i></p> <p>2. They shall, in particular, monitor and coordinate their research on,</p>	<p><u>Monitoring</u> It will be necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to designate institutions responsible for the monitoring; - in order to guarantee continuity in reliability and comparability of data obtained by the monitoring scheme, the monitoring should be carried out by institutions on a long-term basis: - in order to obtain more comparable results, to be used for the assessment of population sizes and other demographic parameters, to promote the harmonization of the surveys in the different countries; 	<p><u>Designated monitoring institutions:</u></p> <p>DENMARK: Fiskeri-og Søfartsmuseet, Esbjerg</p> <p>SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN: Nationalparkamt Tönning / FTZ Büsum der Univ. Kiel</p> <p>NIEDERSACHSEN: NP Verw., LAVES, Univ. Oldenburg</p> <p>THE NETHERLANDS: IMARES, Texel</p>

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. V, 2 a and b</i></p> <p>a) population trends e.g. through periodic aerial surveys and counts;</p> <p>b) seal migration;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to closely follow the population development according to a coordinated scheme specified basically in the report by the Trilateral Seal Expert Group-plus (TSEG-plus 2000): - in order to assess trends in population size, to carry out at minimum 5 aerial surveys each year, 3 during the pupping and 2 during the moulting period; 	<p>TRILATERALLY Continuation of the</p> <p>a) planning of the coordinated dates for the five coordinated flights (TMAP-parameter), and</p> <p>b) assessment of the aerial survey results (in terms of numbers and distribution) and reporting to TWG and TMAG.</p> <p>More flights in one year (a few more flights in the pupping season) should be carried out in a trilaterally coordinated way in case of emergency or because of special local/regional reasons on the basis of agreed requirements.</p>
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. V, 2 c</i></p> <p>c) seal population parameters, e.g. diseases, survival, age structure, sex ratio.</p>		<p>TRILATERALLY Continuation of the involvement of TSEG in the discussions (within OSPAR, ICES, BDC, EC Habitat Dir.) on the definition of appropriate ranges for change in population size as an alerting signal to take management measures, and propose these for adoption to TWG/TMAG.</p>
<p>Monitoring of Pollution</p>		
<p><i>Seals Agreement, Art. VIII, b</i></p> <p>b) coordinate their research projects regarding seal diseases and the effects on the seal population of such substances, e.g. organochlorine compounds, heavy metals and oil, and agree on methods which permit a comparison of research results;</p> <p><i>see also Seal Agreement, Art. VIII, a under 2. CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES: Pollution</i></p>		
<p><i>Seals Agreement, Art. VIII, c</i></p>		<p>No action because implementation of further TMAG-parameters is unlikely.</p>

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
<p>c) monitor in the Agreement Area, in particular in seal tissue and organisms which are preyed upon by seals, the levels of those substances which in the light of the results of research appear to play a major role in the conservation status of the seal population.</p> <p><i>see also Seal Agreement, Art. VIII, a under 2. CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES: Pollution</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to monitor seal tissue concerning selected contaminants with coordinated and standardized methods within the framework of TMAP - to consider the establishment of a tissue bank according to common guidelines. 	
4. TAKING AND EXEMPTIONS FOR TAKING		
Taking		
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VI, 1</i></p> <p>1. The Parties shall prohibit the taking of seals from the Wadden Sea.</p>	<p>The taking of seals from the Wadden Sea shall be prohibited by the parties.</p>	<p>NATIONAL LEVEL Implement provisions in appropriate form in national legislation.</p>
Exemptions for Taking		
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VI, 2, first part</i></p> <p>2. The competent authorities may grant exemptions from the prohibition referred to in the first paragraph authorizing persons to take seals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for institutions to be designated performing scientific research into the conservation of the seal population in the Wadden Sea or the conservation of the Wadden Sea ecosystem, insofar as the information required for such research cannot be obtained in any other way; or 	<p>It will be necessary to ensure §§ 56 - 61 of the Leeuwarden Declaration (LD), which are based on the "Statement on Seal Rehabilitation and Release, based on scientific experience and knowledge" elaborated by seal experts in 1994:</p> <p>§ 60 to reduce the current number of seals taken from and released to the Wadden Sea to the lowest level possible, by applying guidelines for handling diseased or weakened seals or evidently abandoned pups, and to release seals based on the precautionary approach, referred to in the "Statement on Seal Rehabilitation and Release, based on scientific experience and knowledge" as elaborated by seal experts.</p>	<p>NATIONAL LEVEL Given the prosperous development of the seal population in the Wadden Sea, suggesting vitality in terms of both health and reproduction, §56 - §61 of the Leeuwarden Declaration (LD) are strongly reconfirmed, especially §60, taking into account that ethical considerations, legislation, as well as management practices differ in the three countries.</p> <p>Annual reporting of this items according to the agreed format no.1 "Found dead seals - Taken seals" to the coordinating institution. Analyses of the annual reported data by TSEG and reporting to TWG and TMAG.</p>
	<p>The guidelines shall be based upon the following principles:</p> <p>§ 60.1 only a very limited number of persons in each</p>	<p><u>Designated national authorities responsible for granting of exemptions from taking and releasing:</u></p> <p>DENMARK Skov- og Naturstyrelsen</p>

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
	<p>country shall be authorized to decide on the handling of diseased or weakened seals or abandoned pups, including taking and releasing of the animals, and only such animals may be taken which have a chance to survive;</p> <p>§ 60.2 seals rehabilitated shall only be released into the wild on a permit granted by the national authority responsible for nature conservation and management if the following criteria are met:</p>	<p>NIEDERSACHSEN Landkreise Aurich and Cuxhaven, further agencies involved by the Landkreise</p> <p>SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN Nationalparkamt, Tönning</p> <p>THE NETHERLANDS Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality, Direction of Regional Affairs Location Noord, Groningen</p> <p><u>Designated scientific institutions (1) and nursery stations (2):</u></p> <p>DENMARK Fiskeri-og Søfartsmuseet, Esbjerg (1,2)</p> <p>NIEDERSACHSEN LAVES (1); Aufzuchtstation Norden / Norddeich (2)</p> <p>SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN FTZ Büsum, Univ. Kiel (1); Seehundstation Friedrichskoog (2)</p> <p>THE NETHERLANDS IMARES, Texel (1); Zeehondencrèche, Pieterburen (2); Ecomare, Texel (2)</p>
	<p>(i) the seal has not been treated with specific groups of medicine to be further specified.</p>	<p>TRILATERALLY After the finalization of checking the collected data 2000 - 2005 on consistency and completeness, which is currently done by TSEG the further dealing with this matter including regarding the further reporting to the coordinating institution will be proposed.</p>
	<p>(ii) the seal does not carry pathogens alien to the wild population; (Definition alien: Pathogens which are normally not found in the Wadden Sea are alien.)</p>	

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
	(iii) the seal is released as soon as possible but not later than half a year after it has been brought in for rehabilitation;	
	<p>(iv) the seal has not been kept in a center where species of animals alien to the Wadden Sea, or marine mammals not resident in the Wadden Sea, are held;</p> <p>(Definition: Every area which does not belong to the Wadden Sea should be considered alien in this context.)</p>	<p>NATIONAL LEVEL Prohibit the keeping of seal species, other than common and grey seals, in Wadden Sea seal centers. Avoid the taking of common and grey seals from areas outside the Wadden Sea and keeping them in Wadden Sea seal centers. Prohibit the release of seals, having been kept in other than the Wadden Sea seal centers, into the Wadden Sea, taking into account that ethical considerations, legislation, as well as management practices differ in the three countries.</p> <p>Annual reporting of this items according to the agreed format no.2 "Keeping of seal species in the Wadden Sea seal stations" to the coordinating institution. Analyses of the annual reported data by TSEG and reporting to TWG and TMAG.</p>
	<p>§ 60.3 seals should only be released in the areas where they were found;</p> <p>§ 60.4 seals shall not be transported between subregions of the Wadden Sea;</p> <p>§ 60.5 seals held in captivity shall, in principle, not be released into the wild;</p> <p>§ 60.6 seals born in captivity shall not be released into the wild; exemptions can only be allowed after the approval of the competent authorities.</p>	
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. VI, 2, second part</i></p>		

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
<p>- for institutions to be designated nursing seals in order to release them after recovery, insofar as these are diseased or weakened seals or evidently abandoned suckling seals.</p> <p>Seals which are clearly suffering and cannot survive may be killed by the persons referred to in this paragraph.</p>	<p>It will be necessary</p> <p>to ensure at each seal station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - specialized veterinarian monitoring of the animals; - writing of a station diary on each individual animal; - full time specialized supervision of the station; - standards for the supervision have to be developed. 	<p>TRILATERALLY AND NATIONAL LEVEL</p> <p>Enable an independent check of the station records at a national/trilateral level by responsible state agencies.</p> <p>Annual reporting of this items according to the agreed format no.4 "Check of Station Records" to the coordinating institution.</p> <p>Analyses of the annual reported data by TSEG and reporting to TWG and TMAG.</p>
<p><i>Seal Agreement Art. VI, 3</i></p> <p>3. Any Party having granted exemptions as mentioned above shall notify the other Parties as soon as possible and provide them an opportunity for review and comment.</p>	<p>It will be necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to report annually exemptions and the number of taken and released seals to the coordinating institution (CWSS). 	<p>TRILATERALLY</p> <p>From all animals taken, either euthanized, otherwise killed, or rehabilitated and released, at least the following information has to be collected:</p> <p>Number of seals, age (length), sex, time and location found at, and time and location of release of rehabilitated seals.</p> <p>In the beginning of the year, each country provides the coordinating institution with a complete list of the above-mentioned data collected in the past year. The data will be provided to the TSEG in order to evaluate the data for their significance in relation to monitoring possible changes in the population. The results should be reported to the TWG and TMAG.</p> <p>The TSEG should advice on a revision of the presently used, standardized annual reporting formats, as well as on possible other relevant data to be collected from seals taken.</p> <p>Annual reporting of this items according to the agreed format no.5 "Detailed data of taken seals" to the coordinating institution.</p> <p>Analyses of the annual reported data by TSEG and reporting to TWG and TMAG.</p>

Seal Agreement	Required effort and objectives	Action from 2007 - 2010
5. PUBLIC INFORMATION		
<p><i>Seal Agreement, Art. X</i></p> <p>The Parties shall take such measures as may be required to make the general public aware of the conservation status of the seal population, of the content and aims of this Agreement, and of the measures they have taken pursuant to this Agreement, including the Conservation and Management Plan, to improve this conservation status.</p>	<p>It will be necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to inform the public on a common basis to contribute to the continuous implementation of the conservation and management plan; - to recognize the fact that the seals of the Wadden Sea belong to one population and are an integrated part of the Wadden Sea ecosystem; - to ensure that in each seal station a qualified full time public awareness officer takes care of the public information; - to ensure, that information, that could enhance the taking of seals, will be avoided; - to ensure, that the public knows, when they disturb seals and how they can avoid it; - to ensure, that the public knows, what to do in case they find a live or dead seal on the beach. 	<p>TRILATERALLY / NATIONAL LEVEL</p> <p>Publish a brochure including, e.g., information on the status of the seal population, the aims of the Seal Agreement and the Seal Management Plan, the views on rehabilitation, the need to guarantee the primary objective to achieve managing the Wadden Sea as a nature area with the least human interference possible.</p> <p>The state agencies responsible for seal management should bring this message to the public.</p> <p>As required under the EC Environmental Directive, e.g. seal counts will be published on the national levels on the internet.</p>
6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS		
<p>a. national: The implementation of the common Conservation and Management Plan in national measures including monitoring to be financed by the contracting parties.</p>		
<p>b. common: Possibly joint brochure.</p>		

7. ADDITIONAL MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE GREY SEAL IN THE WADDEN SEA

According to the Conservation and Management Plan for the Wadden Sea Seal Population 1991 - 1995 (Seal Management Plan), which was elaborated in accordance with art. 4 of the Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea, the only concerned species has been the common seal (*Phoca vitulina*). Since the Seal Management 1996-2000 additional measures for the protection of the grey seal (*Halichoerus grypus*) in the Wadden Sea are also included, according to §61 of the Leeuwarden Declaration 1994(LD). Due to §61 LD, the principles and guidelines concerning taking of seals, rehabilitation and releasing of seals, which are given under §60 LD, should also apply to the grey seal in the Wadden Sea.

Taking and exemptions for Taking:

§ 60 of the Leeuwarden Declaration and the concerned chapter of the Seal Management Plan 2002 - 2006 for the common seal is also valid for the grey seal in the Wadden Sea.

LD § 60 to reduce the current number of seals taken from and released to the Wadden Sea to the lowest level possible by applying guidelines for handling diseased or weakened seals or evidently abandoned pups, and to release seals based on the precautionary approach.

Further activities regarding additional measures to be taken for the protection of the grey seal in the Wadden Sea are being addressed here:

It will be necessary:

Habitats:

- to ensure that the grey seal colonies are protected as reserves which are maintained, extended and created in such a way that disturbance is limited to a minimum;
- to install seal sanctuaries on beaches including a wardening system, where possible and acceptable and to install a flexible protection scheme of "contemporary undisturbed areas" in regions where grey seal pups rest regularly;
- to restrict disturbances near pupping grounds;

ACTION FROM 2007 -2010

- ensure by special measures protection of grey seals during weeping-breeding-moulting in NL;
- promote timely implementation of NATURA 2000 Network (Marine Ecosystem).

Research and Monitoring:

- to consider a research project on habitat use and demands, behavior and health status of grey seals in the Wadden Sea and to invite institutions in Schleswig-Holstein and The Netherlands to draft such a project;
- to improve the monitoring of breeding colonies during breeding season by regular ship and / or aerial surveys;

ACTIONS FROM 2007 - 2010

Grey seals are increasingly forming part of the fauna of the Wadden Sea. However, part of the encountered animals may not belong to local breeding rookeries. Grey seals are known as being very mobile, and there will be significant migration into and out of the area. It is considered essential for a proper management to acquire knowledge on developments in distribution and abundance of animals in the Wadden Sea and on Helgoland. These actions on population biology of grey seals need to be trilaterally coordinated.

Major elements of these actions are:

- a) Synchronous counts (at least twice) during the moulting period (March – April) preferably by aerial survey ;
- b) At least three counts of pups born in December and January, either from plane of from land;
- c) Assessment of developments: For the time being, seasonal peak numbers counted at haul-outs in the different survey areas, and distribution in the Wadden Sea can be given, as well as a joint total number synchronously observed in the entire Wadden Sea . Assessment of the results in terms of trends in numbers and distribution will be done by TSEG and reported to TWG and TMAG.
- d) In order to improve the insight into relationships between the animals at the breeding and non-breeding haul-outs in the Wadden Sea and the haul-out on Helgoland, it is recommended to carry out a trilateral photo-identification study, initially in the NL, on Helgoland and around

Amrum/SH, possibly complemented by a population genetic study. The latter should preferably be conducted jointly with or at least compared with possible existing data from grey seals in the UK, Norway, and France.

In the NL funds have been secured for a 3 years (2006-2008) grey seal population biology project but co-funding is needed as well as for the other relevant sub-regions.

- e) Mapping of the grey seal haul-outs (distribution).

From autumn 2006 onwards, also the results of the moult counts of grey seals colonies of the concerned year will be included in the article on seal counts which will be published regularly on the homepage and the WSNL.

Wardening:

ACTION FROM 2007 -2010

- to promote a wardening system consisting of "flexible protection zones" which are active during breeding season in regions where grey seal pups are regularly born;

Public information:

ACTION FROM 2007 -2010

- to inform the public on a common basis on grey seals as a indigenous resident species of the Wadden Sea which is resettling the area;
- to inform the public, how to deal with stranded (dead / live) grey seals.

8. RESPONSIBLE BODIES*(according to Art. IX of the Agreement on the Conservation of Seals in the Wadden Sea)***Responsible national authorities:** **(should be checked by TSEG-plus)**

DENMARK:

Responsible for the Seal Agreement:

Ministry of the Environment and Energy
 The National Forest and Nature Agency
 Haraldsgade 53
 DK - 2100 Copenhagen Ø
 phone: + 45 39 47 22 50
 fax: + 45 39 27 23 04

Responsible for the management of seals and wildlife:

John

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY:

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
 Arbeitsgruppe - NI2-
 Postfach 12 06 29
 D - 53048 Bonn
 phone: +49 (0)228 - 305 2621
 fax: +49 (0)228 - 305 2697

Federal Agricultur Minister

in cooperation with the Federal States

THE NETHERLANDS:

Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Quality
 Directie Regionale Zaken Noord
 Postbus 30032
 NL – 9700 RM Groningen
 phone: + 31 (0)60 – 222 85410
 fax: + 31 (0)

COORDINATING INSTITUTION:

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat
 Virchowstr. 1
 D - 26382 Wilhelmshaven
 phone: + 49 (0)44 21 – 91 08 11
 fax: + 49 (0)44 21 – 91 08 30
 E-mail: reineking@waddensea-secretariat.org

The coordinating institution shall be informed on all developments and activities which concern the Conservation and Management of the Wadden Sea Seal Population and an annual report shall be made on the implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan, to be sent also to the Bonn Convention Secretariat.

Trilateral Seal Expert Group (TSEG):

DK: Svend Tougaard, Fiskeri-og Søfartsmuseet, Esbjerg
 SH: Ursula Siebert, FTZ Büsum der Univ. Kiel; Kai Abt, Consultant
 Nds: Michael Stede, LAVES Cuxhaven
 NL: Peter H. Reijnders and Sophie Brasseur IMARES, Texel

The Trilateral Seal Expert Group has the task to coordinate and supervise the implementation of monitoring activities and the assessment of the results, assess relevant research results and, as appropriate, give advice regarding management on request of the trilateral cooperation. TSEG should continuous to be a group which can act independently.

Tasks of TSEG:

- analyze (chronic and sudden) developments in the common and grey seal populations (e.g. oil pollution, higher mortality) and accordingly provide through the CWSS management advise to the responsible authorities;

- coordinate, supervise and execute monitoring activities as identified in the SMP and assess the results;
- formulate, in cooperation with the CWSS, concrete plans to achieve the objectives of the SMP (work plan), in particular the identified required efforts and objectives;
- coordinate and supervise, in consultation with the CWSS, the implementation of the SMP;
- evaluate progress in the implementation of the SMP and advise on interim management measures to enhance execution of the planned actions;
- elaborate and submit proposals to the responsible authorities to initiate and implement research activities as identified in the SMP and assess relevant research results;
- evaluate the current SMP and formulate, in cooperation with the CWSS and further experts, an outline for the new SMP;
- Report to TWG and TMAG.