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Colophon

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1999
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat
Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group
Quality Status Report Group

With the publication of this Report it is the third time that a comprehensive, integrated, assessment of the Wadden Sea ecosystem and the impact of human activities is presented in the framework of the trilateral Wadden Sea cooperation.

The first integrated evaluation "The Wadden Sea, Status and Developments in an International Perspective" was submitted to the 6th Trilateral Governmental Wadden Sea Conference, Esbjerg, 1991. The second assessment was published in 1993 as sub-regional report of the OSPAR North Sea Quality Status Report.

In the past ten years important political decisions have been taken within the trilateral cooperation, most notably the adoption of a common delimitation of the Wadden Sea Area, the adoption of common Targets for the different Wadden Sea habitats and the adoption of a common management plan, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan.

These developments are reflected in this new Wadden Sea Quality Status Report: As a result of the common delimitation, Beaches and Dunes, the Estuaries and the Offshore-Zone have become part of the trilateral cooperation and evaluations are presented about the status of these habitats. Another new feature is the overall assessment in chapter 6, which is related to the common Targets.

This 1999 QSR also reflects the fact that several monitoring programs have now been opera-

tional for two decades or more, allowing for the analysis of long time-series.

The Report was prepared under the responsibility of the Trilateral Quality Status Report Group and the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group. It is a technical Report which will be used as important background material in the preparation of the 9th Trilateral Governmental Wadden Sea Conference, which will be hosted by Denmark in 2001.

I want to thank all those who contributed to the Report, in particular authors from non-government institutions who contributed on a voluntary basis and the Dutch Institute for Coastal and Marine Management (RIKZ) which was responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the chemical data.

I express the hope that this 1999 QSR will provide a solid basis for discussions in the coming years about the status of the Wadden Sea ecosystem, the role of Man and future policies for the protection and sustainable use of the Wadden Sea region.

Ole Christiansen

Chairperson of the Wadden Sea Senior Officials

One of the basic aims of the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Program (TMAP) is the scientific assessment of the status of the Wadden Sea ecosystem. To this end the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group (TMAG) must, amongst others "describe and evaluate the current status of the Wadden Sea, including the identified changes in this status and the possible causes thereof" and "evaluate the status reached in the implementation of the ecological targets".

In 1995 the Trilateral Working Group commissioned TMAG to start the process of drafting a new QSR.

The 1999 Wadden Sea Quality Status Report was prepared under the responsibility of the Trilateral Quality Status Report Group (QSR-Group), an ad-hoc sub-group of the TMAG.

The following persons participated in the QSR Group

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Ms. P. Potel; National Park Administration Niedersachsen, Wilhelmshaven;

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The Report consists of five chapters containing basic information and a final chapter in which this information is evaluated and used for the assessment of the status of implementation of the trilateral Targets.

Chapter 1 contains an overview of the main national and international regulations in the Wad-

den Sea Area. It should be noted that, during the finalization of the manuscript, a new National Park Law was adopted by the Schleswig-Holstein Government. The main elements of the new Law have been included in chapter 1, but could not be taken into consideration in chapters 2 and 5.

In chapter 2 a comprehensive overview is presented of human activities in the Wadden Sea Area.

Chapter 3 addresses climate change and is divided into a part about changes in storminess and water level and a part about effects of changes in temperature.

In Chapter 4 data on inputs and concentrations of nutrients, heavy metals, selected organochlorines and oil are evaluated, generally for the period 1985-1996.

Chapter 5 deals with biological features. In the first part of this chapter species and communities are addressed and in the second part the typical Wadden Sea habitats.

The material presented in chapters 1 to 5 was contributed by a large number of experts from government institutes, universities and consultancies.

The assessment chapter 6 was drafted by the QSR Group on the basis of the expert information from chapters 1 to 5. In 1997 already a preliminary assessment had been published on the occasion of the 8th Trilateral Governmental Wadden Sea Conference in Stade, Germany. On the basis of comments received and new data, an updated assessment was prepared.

Although chapter 6 has been drafted under the responsibility of the trilateral Quality Status Report Group and the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group, the main conclusions reflect the opinions of the individual contributors.

Chapter 6 is intended as a starting point for discussions with experts, policy makers and managers in the run-up to the 9th Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference. It will become clear in these discussions to what extent further specification or generalization will be necessary.

The editors

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