



Village mound Ziallerns,
Lower Saxony
(Photo: Wesemann, Bez.
Reg. Weser-Ems)

LANCEWAD – Landscape and Cultural Heritage of the Wadden Sea Region

Background

The Wadden Sea is not only an important ecological entity, the Wadden Sea Region as a whole has also a common cultural identity with a very specific regional historic diversity. The cultural-historic and landscape heritage in this region is essential for the comprehension of the area's development and identity and the inhabitants' identification with the landscape. It also entails a distinctive international dimension comparable to its natural values.

In order to enhance the knowledge in this field and to ensure that the available information would be on the same level as with regard to natural heritage, an inventory of the most important cultural-historical and landscape elements of the Wadden Sea area became necessary.

The three Wadden Sea countries have therefore jointly agreed to give high priority to the outstanding importance of these values. At the 8th Trilateral Governmental Conference in Stade, a joint project, making an inventory of the landscape and cultural historic values in the North Sea Region, was initiated, and finally, the project LANCEWAD started in December 1999.

Objectives

The aim of the project was to contribute to the protection as well as to a sustainable development of the landscape and cultural heritage of the Wadden Sea Region. This included proposals on how heritage can be addressed in physical planning, and how to make use of it in developing economic activities such as cultural tourism.

Results

After almost two years, the project was finished by the end of October 2001. In summary, LANCEWAD has delivered comprehensive information on and a valuation of the landscape and cultural heritage of the Wadden Sea Region and recommendations for policy and management to protect and use this heritage in a sustainable way. The project has furthermore contributed to an extensive awareness raising for the importance of the heritage in the region and has involved the stakeholders in developing and formulating the recommendations for management and use. The project has laid a firm basis for the development of conservation and sustainable management of the heritage trilaterally, nationally and regionally/locally both in terms of the input to the further process and in terms of a well functioning organizational structure.

Characterization of the Region

In detail, the project described and characterized the Wadden Sea Region as a whole in order to place the historic landscape and cultural elements within an overall international and European context. The area has a very rich diversity of landscapes, which covers the dunes and moraine islands, the coastal and tidal river marshes, the peatlands as well as the Geest ridges with an important relationship to the marsh areas. From the Stone Age (before 2000 BC) on, Man shaped the environment to a unique and characteristic cultural landscape. The project described the cultural historic development during the different ep-

Manfred Vollmer
Common Wadden Sea
Secretariat,
Wilhelmshaven, FRG

ochs, from Prehistoric Time (before 400 AD) to Modern Times and explains both, the similarities and the differences in the Wadden Sea Region of Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands.

After the general description of the Wadden Sea Region, LANCEWAD focused on the regional historic development. On the basis of historical and contemporary political and geographical boundaries, a division into sub-regions was made in order to take typical characteristics of certain areas into consideration. Characterizing the cultural historic values on the sub-regional level, emphasis was put on those objects and structures that can still be recognized in the landscape. These are archaeological remains such as barrows, cultural-historic buildings like castles or mills, but also landscape elements such as dwelling mounds or field patterns.

Historical and Current Perceptions of the Landscapes

Besides studying the tangible values of the landscape and cultural heritage such as agrarian buildings, dykes, sluices, polder mills, lighthouses and water systems, the project also touched the more philosophical aspects of perceiving the landscapes.

Current perceptions are always formed by cultural tradition. The way a landscape is perceived is also always the result of the way the course of history expresses itself in culture and mentality. Just as we can recognize clear shifts in perceptions of the Wadden Sea coast in our time, we can also establish or discern that the same sort of changes occurred in earlier times. It is clear that, at least in modern times, several radical transformations in the dominant understanding of the Wadden Sea landscape have taken place. For the project, it was important to reflect this issue and to take the different views on the cultural landscapes into consideration in order to get a better understanding of landscape history.

Mapping the Cultural-historic Landscape

The primary aim of the LANCEWAD project was to make an inventory of the most important cultural-historic and landscape elements in the Wadden Sea Region. With the database that resulted from the inventory, the characteristics of the cultural landscape and the diversity between the regions could be mapped in a Geographical Information System (GIS).

The focus was on elements and structures in the cultural landscape that are seen as the most important and characteristic ones for the cultural

history, as well as for the identity of the landscape in the Wadden Sea Region. The project elaborated some 40 maps on the trilateral level as well as on the regional level. The maps illustrate the distribution of the cultural heritage objects very clearly, and the context of the element objects is well depicted on the thematic maps. Some relevant themes, which differ among the regions, are for example "monuments and historical buildings", "water management" and "settlement history". As an example of depicting the results, a map with the distribution of dwelling mounds is shown in Figure 1.

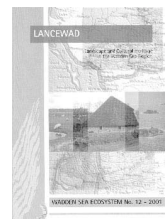
Guidelines for Management and Sustainable Use of the Heritage

Finally, the project has laid a firm basis for the development of conservation and sustainable management. An analysis of the organizational structure regarding planning, conservation and management pertaining to the landscape and cultural heritage in the three countries was carried out. The aim of the analysis was, in particular, to clarify similarities and differences in legal systems, planning, policies, management structures and responsibilities.

Furthermore, draft proposals for criteria and guidelines for the sustainable management and use of the heritage were elaborated. The proposal relates to spatial planning, conservation and management of the heritage and a cross-sectoral management. The project also delivered a set of recommendations regarding:

- the targets and strategies of sustainable management,
- conservation, planning and management,
- sector development,
- knowledge building,
- monitoring and
- follow-up projects.

A detailed description of the project activities and results are given in the final report which is available as hard copy for Euro 15.00 or in electronical form on the CWSS home page (<http://cwss.www.de>). The full report can be downloaded chapter-wise as pdf files.



Manfred Vollmer
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat
Virchowstr. 1
D-26382 Wilhelmshaven
vollmer@cwss.whv.net

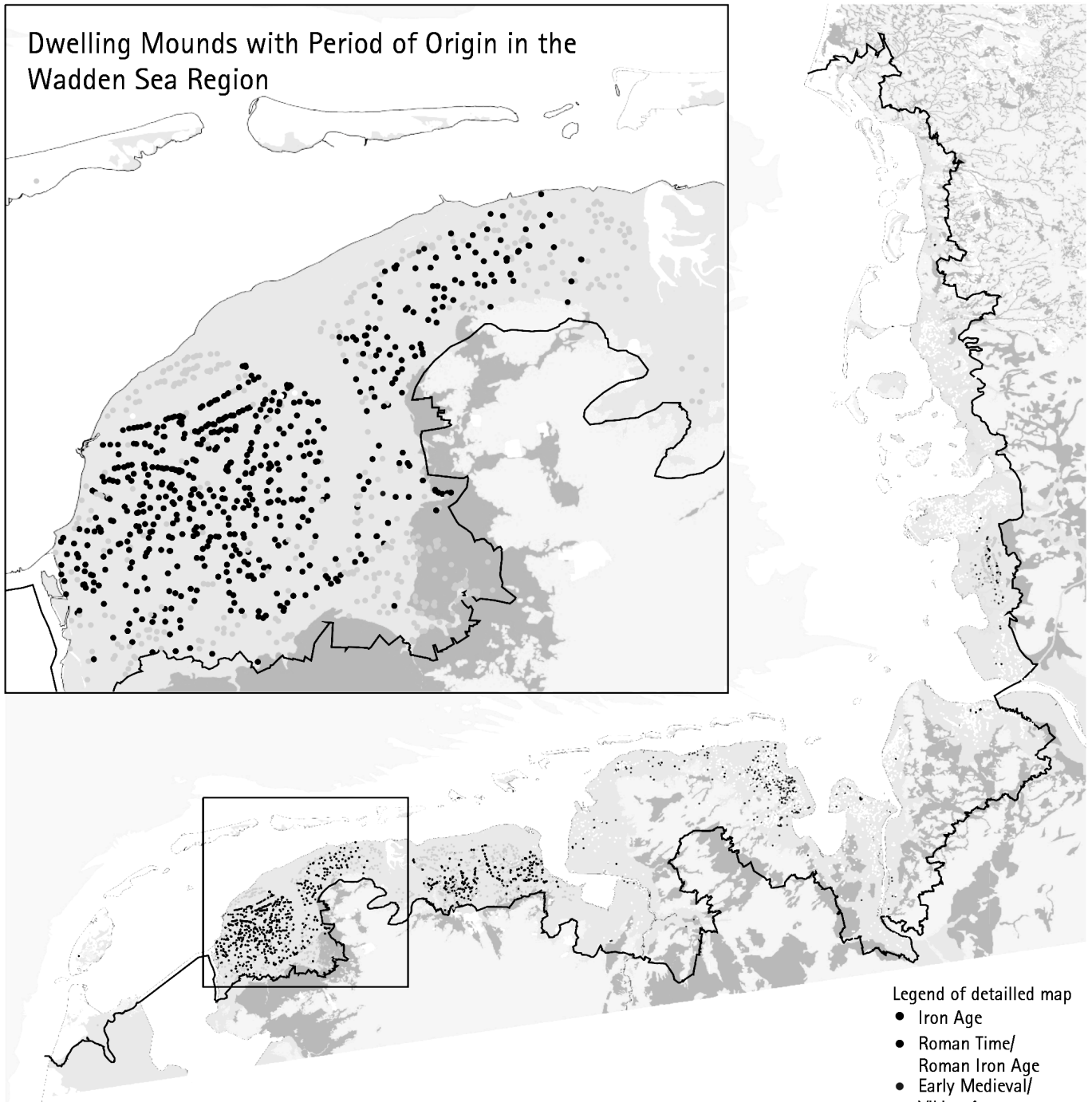


Figure 1:
 Dwelling mounds with period of origin in the Wadden Sea Region.
 The distribution of dwelling mounds in the Wadden Sea Region reflects the settlement history from the Iron Age to Modern Times. The mounds are one of the most important landscape and cultural features and document the adaptation of living in the tidal areas.
 The first mounds, which could be dated back to the Iron Age, were built on the highest grounds in the marshland, but a further spreading into low-lying areas took place in later periods. This sequence could best be seen in the marsh areas of The Netherlands (see detailed map).
 As of the Middle Ages, only a few dwelling mounds have been erected, because dykes, as a more efficient protection against flooding, make the mounds unnecessary. Even though only limited data about the period of origin is available in Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, the map indicates quite clearly the settlement in the marsh area. Particularly, the enormous number and density of mounds give the impression of the most characteristic features in the Wadden Sea Region.

- Legend of detailed map
- Iron Age
 - Roman Time/
Roman Iron Age
 - Early Medieval/
Viking Age
 - Late (and High)
Medieval Time
 - Early Modern Time
 - Modern Time
 - No data on period
of origin available
 - Lancelwad
delimitation area