

Annual Report CWSS 2001

This Report presents a brief overview of the most important developments with regard to the trilateral Wadden Sea cooperation, and activities carried out by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, CWSS, in 2001.

The 9th Trilateral Governmental Wadden Sea Conference

Preparation

The activities of the trilateral cooperation in 2001 concerned in particular the preparation of the 9th Trilateral Governmental Wadden Sea Conference, which was held in Esbjerg in Denmark on 31 October 2001.

In the course of 2001 several projects and activities were finalized and the results used for the preparation of the draft Ministerial Declaration (see further below).

In addition to the Ministerial Declaration, a comprehensive Progress Report was drafted, containing the progress made in the implementation of the Stade Declaration and the Wadden Sea Plan.

The main conclusions from the Progress Report, together with the Conclusions and Recommendations of the 1999 Quality Status Report, supplemented with new data, were the basis for an integrated policy assessment, laid down in the so-called Policy Assessment Report. This assessment was carried out by an ad-hoc subgroup of the TWG.

The Esbjerg Conference

The 9th Wadden Sea Conference, the Esbjerg II Conference, hosted by Denmark, was attended by some 100 representatives of central, regional and local governments and observer organizations. The national delegations were headed by the Danish Minister of Environment and Energy, Mr. Svend Auken, the German Parliamentary State Secretary at the Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Ms. Gila Altmann, and the Dutch State Secretary for Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, Ms. Geke Faber.

Observer delegations of the Inter-regional Wadden Sea Cooperation (IRWC), EUREGIO Die Watten, the Cooperation of North Sea shrimp POs, COGEGA, the International Sailing Association,

Seas At Risk, the Wadden Sea Team, World Wide Fund for Nature and the Oil and Gas Producers (OGP) were present.

Before the official start of the meeting, children from the Esbjerg Bakkeskolen, who had won the poster competition, and from the Dutch "Expedition Esbjerg" project were welcomed by the minister and state secretaries.

The main decisions of the Conference were to start up a process of designating the Wadden Sea as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) and to establish a so-called Wadden Sea Forum in which all stakeholders would develop scenarios for sustainable development as a contribution to the 10th Wadden Sea Conference in 2005.

Implementation of the Stade Declaration and Wadden Sea Plan

With a view to the preparation of the Esbjerg Conference (see above), the emphasis of the trilateral work was on finalizing the projects and actions of the Stade Declaration (SD) and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan (WSP). In the following, a brief overview is given of the developments in 2001 regarding the trilateral projects and actions.

World Heritage Site Nomination

In 2001, the national consultations on the nomination of the Wadden Sea Conservation Area for inscription in the World Heritage List started. For the purpose of the national consultations, a brochure was elaborated in the three languages to inform a wider audience about the intended nomination, and the chances, opportunities and obligations related to the potential inscription in the List. It was indicated prior to the start of the consultations that local and regional support for a designation would be necessary to continue with the nomination. In the period up to the Conference extensive consultations were held in the entire region, with the participation of regional and local authorities, user groups and other stakehold-

ers. In the Danish Wadden Sea Region, there was a majority against the nomination. The regional authorities concluded, after having heard local authorities and user organizations in the region, that there was no support for a nomination at the current point in time. In the Dutch Wadden Sea Region, the support was too limited for a nomination, but strong enough to continue considering a nomination. The state government of Hamburg decided to approve a nomination. In the German Wadden Sea Regions of Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, several information and consultation meetings were held but the process could not be concluded before the Esbjerg Conference. At the Esbjerg Conference, it was therefore concluded that the consultation process had not been finalized and that therefore the consultations should continue with a view to their finalization within one to two years (Esbjerg Declaration §36).

Landscape and Cultural Heritage

The "Landscape and Cultural Heritage of the Wadden Sea Region" project, which was launched in November 1999, was concluded in 2001. The budget of the LANCEWAD-project was about 2 million Euro, co-financed by the European Interreg IIC Program. The project encompassed an extensive inventory of the landscape and cultural heritage of the Wadden Sea Region, on the basis of a common database related to a GIS-mapping system. Further, the project contained a characterization of the heritage in conjunction with recommendations for policies and management. The Esbjerg Conference welcomed the report of the project and agreed to encourage the application of the overall conservation and management strategy, as set out in the report as, e.g., the managed development of the heritage and the use of the heritage as an opportunity for regional development. The Conference also decided to support a follow-up project in the framework of the Interreg Program.

Coastal Protection and Sea Level Rise

The trilateral working Group "Coastal Protection and Sea Level Rise" (CPSL), which started in 1999, held three meetings in 2001 and finalized its work with the publication of a final report. The report contains a comprehensive description of the possible impacts of sea level rise and increase in storminess in the Wadden Sea area. The remit of the group, which comprised experts from nature protection and coastal defense authorities, had been to address both safety and nature protection aspects of sea level rise. This is clearly reflected in the recommendations contained in the

report, which formed the basis for a series of decisions taken at the Esbjerg Conference.

Eutrophication

The project "Development of Wadden-Sea specific eutrophication criteria", which started late 1998, was finalized in the year 2001 with the publication of a final report. On the basis of the criteria developed, it was concluded that the whole Wadden Sea must still be regarded as a "Eutrophication Problem Area". A popularized summary of the report is contained in the Policy Assessment Report. The results of the project have also been submitted to the relevant Working Groups of the OSPAR Convention.

Dredging and Dumping of Dredge Spoils

This project is a merger of two Wadden Sea Plan projects, namely an analysis of national dredging practices and of national dumping practices. A first tentative analysis of information received through a questionnaire was carried out in 2001. It was concluded that the material was partly suitable for comparing national criteria for the dumping of dredged material, but that additional information was needed regarding conversion factors.

The information about dredging practices (for example selection of suitable sites and periods) was too limited or incompatible.

It was, therefore, not possible to finalize the project before the Esbjerg Conference. The project will be continued in 2002.

Shipping

Following the decision of the 1997 Stade Conference, a feasibility study into the possibilities for a proposal to the IMO to designate the Wadden Sea and an adjacent zone as Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA), was compiled by the Marine Research Center of the Southampton Institute, UK. Two workshops were held in Hamburg in April and July 2001, in which the results and recommendations were discussed with experts and representatives from all three Wadden Sea countries. The PSSA issue, as well as the impact of shipping was discussed within the TWG/SO in several meetings. At the 2001 Esbjerg Conference, the ministers decided to submit a trilateral application to the IMO for the designation of the Wadden Sea as a PSSA, exclusively on the basis of existing measures in the field of shipping safety, access to harbors and the protection of the marine environment.

Trilateral Thematic Maps

Maps with the new boundaries of the Wadden Sea Area, the Conservation Area and the PSSA were developed for the Ministerial Conference in Esb-

jerg. Several maps concerning landscape and cultural heritage of the Wadden Sea Region and a map with geomorphological information were developed, produced and harmonized within the LANCEWAD-project.

The Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Program (TMAP)

Trilateral Monitoring & Assessment Group

The Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group (TMAG) has the task to supervise and coordinate the implementation of the TMAP and to prepare assessment reports on the status of the Wadden Sea environment.

The TMAG had three meetings in 2001 and focused its work on the implementation of the Common Package of TMAP parameters and the associated data handling system.

The TMAG prepared an Evaluation Report, which documented the achievements since the State Conference in 1997, the gaps in implementation, especially with regard to the data handling, and proposals to optimize the TMAP for future requirements, in particular, with regard to the Targets and the relevant EU Directives (Bird Directive, Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive).

Implementation of the TMAP

The large majority of the Common Package parameter groups were implemented as part of the regular monitoring program in the three countries. However, gaps still exist for several parameter groups, which could not be implemented in one or two countries because of financial reasons, e.g. macroalgae surveys in the Netherlands, salt marsh and dune surveys in Denmark and monitoring of boats at sea in parts of Germany.

The TMAP monitoring guidelines were further modified and updated according to developments of the national monitoring programs and international requirements (e.g. OSPAR and EU Directives).

Technical preconditions for the implementation of a common TMAP data handling system in the Netherlands and Denmark were established in 2001, in order to catch up with the results and status of the German data handling project from 1998/99. The work has been coordinated and supported by the trilateral data handling coordinator. Necessary technical modifications and adaptations of the data units and changes in the data model of the biological and chemical parameter groups

have been coordinated and agreed on the trilateral level. This allows for an easy adoption and adaptation of technical improvements made in Denmark (NERI, Roskilde) and the Netherlands (RIKZ, Haren) for later activities in Germany. The trilateral coordinator also implemented and improved the TMAP database extension, developed in cooperation with the data handling experts in Denmark and the Netherlands.

The Trilateral Data Handling Group (TDG) met 3 times to supervise and quality check the work carried out at the Dutch and Danish data units and by the trilateral data handling coordinator. A workplan was elaborated to organize a coordinated implementation of the data handling system in all three countries in the period until December 2002.

Breeding and Migratory Birds

Within the monitoring programs of breeding and migratory birds, which are carried out in the framework of the TMAP, the agreed surveys were performed. Both the breeding (JMBB) and migratory bird monitoring group (JMMB) met twice in 2001 and supported the trilateral cooperation regarding the implementation and elaboration of recommendations of the relevant Wadden Sea Plan projects concerning birds, as basis for further decisions on the ministerial level.

Seal Management Plan

The Seal Management Plan (SMP) 1996 – 2000, which had been prolonged by one year, expired in 2001. Already in 1999 an extended Trilateral Seal Expert Group (TSEG-plus) had been installed to assess the current SMP 1996 – 2000, and to develop recommendations for a new management period. The TSEG-plus met once in 2001 and submitted a comprehensive Report "Evaluation of the Status of the Common and Grey Seal Population in the Wadden Sea, including an Assessment as to whether the SMP needs to be revised and amended" to the TWG/SO. After consultations within these groups the amended "Seal Management Plan 2002 – 2006" was adopted at the Esbjerg Conference.

The Trilateral Seal Expert Group (TSEG) coordinated and supervised the implementation of the trilateral monitoring activities of the Seal Management Plan, and supported the TSEG-plus with expert statements. The results of the monitoring activities were assessed. During coordinated flights in 2001, a total of about 19,400 seals including 4,000 pups were counted in the entire Wadden Sea.

Cooperation with Other Bodies

North Sea Conferences

Information about developments in the trilateral cooperation was submitted to the drafting groups of the Progress Report for the 5th North Sea Conference. The trilateral cooperation was represented by the CWSS in the September 2001 meeting of the North Sea Senior Officials (CONSSO).

A Statement to the 5th North Sea Conference was adopted at the Esbjerg Conference and submitted to the CONSSO meeting of January 2002.

OSPAR Commission

Comprehensive information about Wadden Sea specific eutrophication criteria was submitted to the contact persons in the OSPAR Eutrophication Committee (EUC) in the framework of the OSPAR Comprehensive Procedure for the identification of the eutrophication status of the OSPAR area.

Ems-Dollard

The sub-commission G of the German-Dutch Transboundary Water Commission held two meetings in 2001. The CWSS is observer in the sub-commission. In 2001, the sub-commission focused on the implementation of the joint management plan for the disputed area, elaborated in line with the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan. A particular point of attention of the work of the Commission was the discussion on the mussel seed fishery in the disputed area, and the aim to reach a common position on this issue.

Wash-Wadden Sea Collaboration

The information exchange between the Wash/Northern-Norfolk coast was continued in 2001, in particular with regard to monitoring and development of management schemes for Natura 2000 areas.

There were no activities with regard to specific projects in 2001.

Inter-regional Wadden Sea Cooperation

The Inter-regional Wadden Sea Cooperation (IRWC) is a collaboration of the Dutch Wadden Sea provinces, Wadden Sea regional authorities in Schleswig-Holstein and the Danish Wadden Sea counties. The collaboration is coordinated by an interregional coordinator located at the Ribe county council in Denmark. A collaboration and close coordination of activities with the trilateral cooperation has developed. In September 2001, the 4th Inter-regional Wadden Sea Conference was held in Dokkum, the Netherlands. Important decisions were taken related to tourism, the World

Heritage nomination, the involvement of stakeholders in the management of the Wadden Sea, shipping safety and environmental impact assessment. The decisions provided a vital regional input to the Esbjerg Conference.

As a result of the "Sustainable Tourism" project and the adoption of a tourism action plan, the collaboration employed a tourism coordinator with the task to implement a number of projects ensuing from the "Sustainable Tourism" project. The IRWC has further committed itself to participate in the organization and implementation of the Wadden Sea Forum in order to facilitate the process with the experiences from the NetForum tourism process.

Guinea Bissau – Wadden Sea Cooperation

The collaboration with Guinea-Bissau continued in 2001 under the coordination of Wetlands International. In 2001, an ornithological team was trained, and a total count of Waterbirds carried out by the local team in cooperation with Wetlands international and two Danish ornithologist, in accordance with the three year work program 2000-02. The Esbjerg Conference agreed to finalize the ongoing work program and to continue the collaboration in the context of the Memorandum of Intent (Esbjerg declaration §§92-93).

Information and Communication

The WADSIS Project

The CWSS participated in the WADSIS project, which started on 1 January 2000 and ended in December 2001. In WADSIS, which was co-financed by the DG XIII of the EC, several public and private organizations cooperated with the aim of making public information more easily accessible to a broad public. Within the project the CWSS coordinated the activities of the public organizations.

In 2001, a website was completed and filled with meta-data about geographical information in possession of the public organizations. In addition, a popular CD-ROM was produced, containing comprehensive information about all aspects of the Wadden Sea region.

Information about WADSIS can be found on www.waddenseamaps.net.

Publications in 2001

PSSA Wadden Sea Feasibility Study

By D. Johnson, S. Lewey, P. Park, J. Hoar, M. Pourzanjani, S. Fletcher, S. Tarver, Southampton Institute Maritime Research Centre, Faculty of Technology, Southampton Institute, May/ July 2001;

Wadden Sea Specific Eutrophication Criteria

By J.E.E van Beusekom, H. Fock, F. de Jong, S. Diehl-Christiansen, B. Christiansen, Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 14;

Coastal Protection and Sea Level Rise

Final Report of the Trilateral Working Group on Coastal Protection and Sea Level Rise. Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 13;

Landscape and Cultural Heritage in the Wadden Sea Region

By M. Vollmer, M. Guldborg, M. Maluck, D. van Marrewijk, & G. Schlicksbier, Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 12;

Contaminants in Bird Eggs in the Wadden Sea

Spatial and temporal trends 1991 - 2000. By P. H. Becker, J. Muñoz Cifuentes, B. Behrends, K. R. Schmieder, Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 11;

Information Borchure World Heritage

in Dutch, German, Danish;

Wadden Sea Newsletters

No. 23, 2001-No. 1 Special Issue: Eider Mortality in the Wadden Sea in Winter 1999/2000;

No. 24, 2001-No. 2;

No. 25, 2001-No. 3.

Homepage

All publications and additional information are available via the CWSS homepage (<http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org>). In 2001, the website was visited about 45,000 times.

Organizational Aspects

Chair

In the period January 1, 1998 until December 31, 2001, the Trilateral Cooperation was chaired by Denmark. On 1 January 2002, the Netherlands took over the presidency of the Trilateral Cooperation.

Senior Government Officials

The Senior Government Officials meetings have been installed to discuss trilateral Wadden Sea policy and to address issues of common interest between the Governmental Conferences.

The officials were:

- Mr. O. Christiansen, Deputy Director General of the National Forest and Nature Agency of the Ministry of Environment, Denmark, chairperson;
- Dr. M. von Websky, Deputy Director General of the Department Nature Conservation and Sustainable Use of Nature of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany;
- Mr. H.R. Oosterveld, Director, Department North of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, the Netherlands.

In 2001, three Senior Government Officials meetings were held. The meetings addressed, in particular, the preparation of the Esbjerg Conference and, in this respect, the progress with regard to the implementation of the Stade Declaration and

the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan, the implementation of the agreements with regard to the World Heritage Site nomination, the Particularly Sensitive Sea Area Wadden Sea and the conservation of seals.

Trilateral Working Group, (TWG)

The TWG, established for the preparation and elaboration of trilateral policy issues, consists, in principle, of representatives of the responsible ministries of each country and representatives of the German federal states and regional authorities in Denmark and the Netherlands. If necessary, the TWG is supplemented by representatives of other ministries and experts on special issues. The TWG was chaired by Mr. Anton Beck from the National Forest and Nature Agency of the Ministry of the Environment, Denmark.

In 2001, the TWG met three times. In addition, there were two meetings of the TWG Heads of Delegations and two meetings of a TWG subgroup, the latter prepared the Policy Assessment Report.

Since 2000, trilaterally recognized non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with activities in the Wadden Sea region have participated in the TWG. In 2001, the following NGOs supported the work of the Trilateral Cooperation:

- Wadden Sea Team
- Seas At Risk
- International Association of Oil and Gas Producers
- North Sea Shrimp POs
- Europeche/COGEGA
- International Sailing Association

Expert Working Groups

In 2001, seven standing/ad-hoc expert working groups supported the trilateral cooperation:

- the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group (TMAG) and the following subgroups of the TMAG:
 - the Trilateral Data Handling Group (TDG);
 - the Coordination Groups for the Joint Monitoring Program for Breeding Birds (JMBB) and
 - for Migratory Birds (JMMB);
 - Beached Bird Surveys (TBBS);
- the Trilateral Seal Expert Group (TSEG);
- the TSEG-plus, consisting of the TSEG, supplemented with policy makers;
- the Working Group on Landscape and Cultural Heritage (WADCULT);
- the Coastal Protection and Sea Level Working Group (CPSL);
- the PSSA preparation group

Secretariat

The execution of the duties of the CWSS is, according to the Administrative Agreement for the secretariat, supervised by a committee of representatives. In 2001, it consisted of

- Mr. A. Beck, The National Forest and Nature Agency of the Ministry of the Environment, Denmark, chairman;
- Dr. L. Fiedler, Department of Nature Conservation and Ecology of the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany;
- Mr. A. L. Bosch, Department North of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, the Netherlands.

The CWSS is based in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. Its 2001-budget was Euro 501,423.95. The following persons were employed in 2001:

- Mr. J. A. Enemark, secretary;
- Mr. F. de Jong, deputy secretary;
- Ms. B. Reineking, deputy secretary;
- Dr. H. Marencic, deputy secretary;
- Ms. M. Polanski, administrative assistant;
- Mr. G. LürBen, data handling coordinator;
- Mr. M. Vollmer, LANCEWAD project coordinator.

In addition to participating in meetings and workshops, as part of the above described activities, the CWSS employees took part in the following events:

- Guest lecture about Trilateral Monitoring of Birds in the Wadden Sea at the WAU Jever, 16/01/2001, Jever, Germany,
- Conference of the Wadden Sea islands, 17/5/2001, Fanø, Denmark;
- Lectures information meetings World Heritage Nomination, 6-7/6/2001, Husum and Heide, Germany;
- Participation at the Workshop on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, 18-19/6/2001, Cuxhaven, Germany;
- Danish Wadden Sea Advisory Board-meeting, 3/8/2001, Ribe, Denmark;
- Inter-regional Wadden Sea Conference, 20/9/2001, Dokkum, the Netherlands;
- Guest lecture about the Trilateral Cooperation at the Van Hall Institute, 11/10/2001, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands;
- Lecture regarding TMAP parameter at the National TMAP-Monitoring Workshop, 13-14/11/2001 Sylt, Germany;
- Presentation of a case study on the 1st European Symposium on New Methods on Conflict Resolution and Participation, Vienna, Austria, November 2001;
- Meeting of the World Heritage Committee, 8-12/12/2001, Helsinki, Finland,