

Annual Report 1998

This Report presents a brief overview of the most important developments with regard to the Trilateral Danish-Dutch-German Wadden Sea Cooperation and activities carried out by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, CWSS, in 1998.

Implementation of the Stade Declaration and Wadden Sea Plan

The Stade Declaration (SD), including Annex 1, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan (WSP), entails a large number of projects and actions to be implemented in the period until the 9th Governmental Wadden Sea Conference, which will be held in Denmark in 2001.

In the following, a brief overview is given of the developments in 1998 regarding the projects and actions.

Communication

The Stade Declaration underlines the need for communication with all Wadden Sea stakeholders, in particular, regarding the implementation of the Wadden Sea Plan. It was therefore agreed to support a Dutch initiative to organize a trilateral workshop with the aim to investigate possibilities for enhancing the quality of public participation (SD § 35). As a first step in the preparation of the workshop, interviews with stakeholders were carried out.

Zoning

A trilateral ad-hoc working group on zoning was established at the end of 1998. Its task is to implement Chapter 1, §11 of the Wadden Sea Plan by establishing a common understanding of the various protection regimes in the way they are applied in the three countries. The different national protection regimes will be compared and assessed based on a common classification tool. Based on this assessment, the need for harmonization of zoning, in relation to other instruments, will be investigated.

Landscape and Cultural Heritage

With the aim of preparing an inventory and a map of the most important cultural-historical and landscape elements of the Wadden Sea (WSP § 1.2.2) the trilateral project "Mapping Landscape and Cultural Heritage of the Wadden Sea Region" was launched in 1998 with the establishment of the trilateral working group on Cultural and Landscape Heritage (WADCULT). The group held three meetings and drafted a joint work plan as a basis

for an application for financial aid to the European Interreg IIC-Program in 1999.

Coastal Protection and Sea Level Rise

For the implementation of a study on possible effects of enhanced sea level rise, a trilateral ad-hoc working group was installed consisting of experts in the field of coastal protection and nature protection. Terms of reference were drafted which entail the development of a common understanding about, amongst others, effects of increase of the volume of the tidal basin, the role of salt marshes in the overall sediment budget and effects of changes in the inundation area through outbanking of summer polders.

It is anticipated that the group will submit its final report to the TWG by the end of 1999. On the basis of the report, proposals for future integrated coastal protection and nature protection policies will be developed.

Eutrophication

In 1998, the "Trilateral Project on the elaboration of Wadden Sea Specific Eutrophication Criteria" (EUT Project) was continued with the comprehensive analysis of nutrient data from all parts of the Wadden Sea. In the first progress report, the important role of the offshore area as a source of organic material for the Wadden Sea tidal area was highlighted.

Sustainable Agriculture

For the rural area, the Wadden Sea Plan contains the decision to explore the possibilities for sustainable agriculture and the combination of agriculture and nature management. In September 1998, a trainee of the University of Münster started an inventory of the situation regarding agriculture in the Wadden Sea region and, in particular, ongoing and anticipated initiatives for sustainable agricultural projects.

Trilateral Thematic Maps

The GIS covers, collected and elaborated in the map project in 1997, were used in 1998 for various publications and projects, both internally and externally. Examples are the Stade Declaration/Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan and the Quality Status Report.

Furthermore, a series of thematic maps was produced for the Ems-Dollard Commission.

Fisheries

The need for both studies concerning the effects of shrimp fisheries on the bottom fauna and shellfish stocks, e.g. spisula, seaward of the islands, were endorsed at the Leeuwarden Conference in

1994 and included as Trilateral Projects and Actions in the Wadden Sea Plan, 1997. In 1998, coordinated proposals under the lead of Denmark and The Netherlands were submitted to the European Commission under different EU programs. Because both proposals failed, a revision of the proposals and a new application in the framework of the new EU 5th Framework Program are planned for 1999.

The Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Program (TMAP)

Trilateral Monitoring & Assessment Group

The Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Group (TMAG), which is responsible for the implementation of the TMAP, had two meetings in 1998. The work focussed on the preparation of the technical and organizational preconditions to implement the Common Package of monitoring parameters, adopted at the Stade Conference.

The DEMOWAD Project (co-financed by the LIFE Program of the European Commission) ended in June 1998. The project elaborated the TMAP monitoring guidelines including the TMAP data management system. A final report was submitted to the EU in June 1998.

Implementation of the TMAP

Several parameters of the Common Package had already been implemented in 1998. This concerns mainly ongoing monitoring programs, which were adapted or modified to fulfill the requirements of the TMAP guidelines. The parameter 'Pollutants in Bird Eggs', which is a completely new parameter group in regular monitoring, was already implemented in The Netherlands and Germany in 1998. In some cases, the TMAP guidelines were refined or amended according to recommendations from experts of national monitoring institutions and decisions taken by the OSPAR regarding the JAMP guidelines.

Data Handling

In Denmark and The Netherlands, negotiations concerning the employment of data handling experts for the trilateral DEMOWAD Units (data exchange system) were undertaken, but without results. Germany started a project to create the necessary requirements for the TMAP data handling system. Four persons were employed at the future DEMOWAD locations in Tönning and Wilhelmshaven. The available basic concept was

revised and proposals of data structures for parameters of the Common Package were elaborated.

The Trilateral Data Handling Group (TDG), an ad-hoc group under the TMAG, met once in 1998 to discuss and integrate the German project results on the trilateral level.

The CWSS and the European Environmental Agency (EEA) organized an international DEMOWAD Data Handling Workshop in Copenhagen in February 1998. The positive judgment of the DEMOWAD data management concept, recommendations for future developments in data policy and the future cooperation with the EEA via the Interregional Forum were the central issues of the meeting. The final minutes of the workshop are available on the CWSS homepage.

Quality Status Report

The work on a new Wadden Sea QSR was continued in 1998. Amongst others, because it was decided to incorporate 1996 data on inputs and concentrations of nutrients and hazardous substances, the work could not be completed in 1998.

Breeding and Migratory Birds

Within the joint monitoring program of breeding birds, which is carried out in the framework of the TMAP, surveys were performed on selected census areas and on colony breeders. A study of the representativeness of breeding bird monitoring in the Wadden Sea area was initiated. The results of the two trilateral two-year pilot projects in the framework of the TMAP on "Breeding Success" and "Pollutants in Coastal Bird Eggs" were published in autumn 1998. However, only the second parameter is a parameter of the agreed common TMAP package and was implemented in Germany and The Netherlands in 1998. Within the joint monitoring program of migratory birds of the TMAP, the agreed surveys and counts were done without any problems. A trilateral workshop on imputing techniques for migratory bird data was carried out in The Netherlands in the framework of the JMJB-group. The recommendations and results of the workshop are important aspects and will be implemented in the data processing in the future.

Both the breeding (JMJB) and migratory bird monitoring group (JMJB) met twice in 1998 and supported the trilateral cooperation regarding the elaboration of the concerned QSR chapters as well as the proposals for the implementation of the relevant WSP projects.

Seal Management Plan

The trilateral Seal Expert Group (TSEG) met twice in 1998 to coordinate and supervise the implementation of different trilateral actions of the Seal Management Plan. The results of the monitoring activities were assessed. During coordinated flights, a total of about 14,400 seals including 2,700 pups were counted in the entire Wadden Sea.

Cooperation with other bodies

Wash-Wadden Sea Collaboration

Based on the proposals made during a meeting of experts and managers from the Wash and the Wadden Sea at the Stade Conference in 1997, a draft work program was prepared in 1998 defining common fields of interest and joint projects. Contacts between managers and scientists have been established to enhance the transfer of knowledge.

North Sea Conferences

Due to time constraints, the CWSS did not participate in the 1998 meeting of the Committee of North Sea Senior Officials (CONSSO), preparing the fifth North Sea Conference. A presentation about the trilateral Target Concept was given at the Oslo Workshop on the Ecosystem Approach in June.

Oslo and Paris Commission

The CWSS participated as an observer in the 1998 meetings of the OSPAR Assessment and Monitoring Committee (ASMO), the SIME Working Group and the IMPACT Working Group. For the latter, the CWSS was the lead country on the issue "Impacts of coastal protection and land reclamation on coastal habitats".

In the framework of the preparation of the QSR 2000, the CWSS took part in meetings of the Regional Task Team for the North Sea (RTTII).

Ems Dollard

The trilateral cooperation has observer status in the Ems-Dollard Commission. In 1998, the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat participated in the two meetings of the Sub Commission "H" Ems-Dollard.

Inter-Regional Wadden Sea Cooperation (IRWC)

The Interregional Wadden Sea Cooperation (IRWC) coordinates the interregional project "Sustainable

Tourism" which is supported by the EU: The CWSS is involved in the "Netforum" Group in which common proposals for sustainable tourism are drafted by regional authorities and non-governmental organizations.

The IRWC is also coordinating activities regarding the exchange of information concerning environmental impact assessments. In 1998, the work to come to harmonized procedures for information exchange was continued.

Organizational Aspects

Chair

Denmark presides over the trilateral cooperation in the period January 1, 1998 until the next Trilateral Governmental Conference, which will be held in Denmark in late 2001.

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. In 1998, no Senior Government Officials meetings were held. The officials were (situation up to 31.12.98):

Ms. K. Westerby-Juhl, Director General of the National Forest and Nature Agency of the Ministry for the Environment and Energy, Denmark, chairperson;

Dr. M. von Websky, Deputy Director General of the Department Nature Protection and Ecology of the Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany;

Mr. P. de Jongh, Director of the Directorate Nature Management of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, The Netherlands.

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 Ms. Anne Marie Rasmussen from the National Forest and Nature Agency of the Ministry of the Environment, Denmark. In 1998, the TWG met twice.

Expert Working Groups

In 1998, nine 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 Quality Status Report Group (QSR);
 - the Ad-Hoc Trilateral Data Handling Group (TDG);
 - the Coordinator Groups on the Joint Monitoring Program for Breeding Birds (JMBB) and
 - for Migratory Birds (JMMB);
- the Trilateral Beached Bird Survey group (TBBS);
- the Trilateral Seal Expert Group (TSEG);
- the Ad-hoc Working Group on Landscape and Cultural Heritage (WADCULT);
- the Wadden Sea Newsletter Editorial Board.

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 1998, it consisted of

- Ms. Anne Marie Rasmussen, The National Forest and Nature Agency of the Ministry for the Environment and Energy, Denmark, chairperson;
- Mr. F. Dieterich, Department of Nature Conservation and Ecology of the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany;
- Mr. H. Kool, Department of Nature Management of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, The Netherlands.

The CWSS is based in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. Its 1998-budget was 886,000 DM. The following persons were employed in 1998:

- Mr. J. A. Enemark, secretary;
- Mr. F. de Jong, deputy secretary;
- Ms. B. Reineking, deputy secretary;
- Dr. H. Marencic, monitoring coordinator;
- Mr. G. Lüerßen, data handling coordinator;
- Ms. M. Polanski, administrative assistant;
- Dr. J. van Beusekom, EUT Project.

New Publications in 1998

- Stade Declaration (in English, German/English, Dutch/English, Danish/English)
- Wadden Sea Newsletter, 1998 No. 1;
- Wadden Sea Ecosystem No. 8: Breeding Success of Coastal Birds. Pollutants in Coastal Bird Eggs.