



ANNOUNCEMENT

(Version 04 July 2011)

Wadden Sea Day 2011 **Fish in the Wadden Sea: Exploring an Unknown World**

Wilhelmshaven – Wattenmeerhaus

25 August 2011

10:30 – 16:30 h

Organized by

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat & National Park Administration Wadden Sea Lower Saxony

Background and Objective

The Wadden Sea provides indispensable ecological functions for a whole range of fish species in the course of their lifecycles, such as reproduction, maturing and feeding, not only for fish species living permanently in it, but also for those species which migrate in a later stage of their life to the North Sea and Atlantic Ocean. The area serves also as an acclimatization area and transit route for long-distance migrants from sea to their spawning grounds located in fresh water.

In the Wadden Sea Plan 2010, trilateral targets referring explicitly to fish have been included. The need to include fish in Wadden Sea Plan and TMAP has grown because the EU Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive recognize fish as a biological quality element for transitional waters (estuaries) and as qualitative descriptors of the good environmental status respectively. In addition, selected fish species are listed in the Habitats Directive.

The Quality Status Report for the Wadden Sea 2009 has shown that climatic changes have led to corresponding changes in fish abundance that are sometimes outranging the long-term average and could lead to a regime shift in the ecosystem. Abundances of several fish species have decreased in almost all regions, but factors (natural or anthropogenic) causing these changes are still largely unknown. The QSR 2009 also showed that there is still insufficient knowledge about spatial and temporal development of fish populations with regard to their protection and management. In addition, recent projects underlined the importance of salt marsh gullies for many fish – an issue which has been underestimated in the past.

The conference has the aim to provide insights in recent research and assessment of monitoring data, to identify research priorities for trilateral projects, and to discuss with scientists and managers how the challenges in accordance with the targets on fish in the Wadden Sea Plan 2010 can be met.

The Program

The sessions of the conference will focus on

- Status of fish in the Wadden Sea (distribution, tidal flats and saltmarsh gullies as nurseries) and legislation under EU Directives (WFD, MSFD, Habitat)
- Monitoring (national and international, TMAP) and research projects on Wadden Sea fish
- Management and policy (different habitats, population developments, recruitment, food webs)

The draft program will be distributed in June 2011 together with the possibility for registration.

Who shall attend?

Invited are policy makers, conservation managers, scientists, and non-governmental organizations. The number of participants is limited to 100 persons.

Further information and registration

Confirmation of attendance will be possible from 30 June 2011 **until 15 August 2011** at the latest, by returning the attached registration form to WSD2011@waddensea-secretariat.org.

For further information, please contact:

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