

# MEETING DOCUMENT

## Wadden Sea Board (WSB 32)

4 March 2021  
Online meeting



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<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>6.1 Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Hub</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Progress Report of the Operational Team Partnership Hub</b>
<b>Document No.:</b>	WSB 32/6/1
<b>Date:</b>	11.02.2021
<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>OPteamPH</b>

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### Covernote:

Since the last full Wadden Sea Board 31 meeting, the OPteamPH held two meetings (OPteamPH16; 10.12.2020 and OPteamPH17; 12.01.2021). Meetings and all other forms of communication were restricted to the use of virtual media due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since then nevertheless, much progress has been made: The new project officer for the Partnership Hub (PH) at CWSS, Cristina Nazzari, has taken office by the first of September and the Lower Saxon in-kind contribution to the hub, Margrita Sobottka, will continue during 2021; the OPteamPH has developed general principles for common projects and discussed and agreed on pragmatic organisational structures for the start-up-phase of the PH; manifold collaborative projects are underway; an outline for the annual work programme 2021 of the PH has been drafted. The application to register the trilateral partnership on the UN's global registry of partnerships for SDGs has been submitted.

### Proposal:

The meeting is invited to take note of the progress and approve of

- principles for common projects to be annexed to the existing Partnership Hub Concept (Annex 1);
- text on the organisational setting of the Partnership Hub to complement chapter 5 of the Partnership Hub concept (Annex 2);
- the outline for an annual work programme of the Partnership Hub (Annex 3).

The meeting is proposed to task the PH administration unit at CWSS to amend the Partnership Hub Concept accordingly.

## Progress Report Operational Team Partnership Hub

### 1. Concept for the trilateral Partnership Hub

The Partnership Hub Concept (WSB 30; 21.11.2019) is available online, see <https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/resources/trilateral-partnership-concept-partnership-hub>.

At its 13th meeting (11.12.2019; Hamburg), the OPteamPH tried a first answer to the question, which characteristics might qualify common projects and actions to be taken up within the realm of the Trilateral WH Partnership and be facilitated by the Partnership Hub. After discussions at following meetings and a written round of feedbacks, the OPteamPH 16 meeting (16.09.2020, online) agreed on general principles for common projects and actions (Annex 1).

The 16<sup>th</sup> OPteamPH-meeting initially discussed options for the organisational set-up of the Partnership Hub and continued at the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting to develop a concrete proposal. Previous ideas from Andy Brown and the Partnership Centre Drafting Group were taken into account.

A complete organisational concept for the Partnership Hub in a theoretical sense would contain

1. Institutional aspects (legal status and enforceability)
2. Structural aspects (governance and network management structure)
3. Operational aspects (ways of working, rules of play, procedures)
4. Relational aspects (coordination/ interaction with the TWSC a. o.).

Because institutional, operational and relational aspects (No 1, 3, 4) are expected to be developed during the start-up phase by learning by doing and lessons learned, as well as reflected in the evaluation at the end of this period, the OPteamPH agreed, that the concept should primarily focus on structural aspects (No 2) for the start-up phase (2020-2022) in a pragmatic way. The main requirements to the structural settings should be that they are lean and fit for purpose. The starting phase shall be concluded by an evaluation, including structural aspects.

The Concept for a Partnership Hub (WSB 30; 21.11.2019), Chapter 5 'Setting up the Partnership Hub', will be complemented with a short description on how to structure the organizational setting during the three year start-up-phase (2020-2022). Also a short glossary to define the most important terms around the partnership will be added to foster consistent communication (Annex 2).

### 2. Implementation of the Start-Up-Phase of the Partnership Hub

#### 2.1 Staffing of the Partnership Hub administration unit

During the start-up phase (2019-2022), the Partnership Hub administration unit is associated to the CWSS. In 2021, it consists of 1 ½ fte. In addition and complementing the in-kind contribution (1/2 fte), provided by Lower Saxony, resources from PROWAD Link enable CWSS to appoint a full-time project officer for one year until summer 2021.

#### 2.2 Draft outline annual work programme 2021

The draft outline for an annual programme 2021 (Annex 3) is based on the specifications of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Partnership Hub Concept, which describe vision and mission, ways of working and structure of the Partnership Hub. The year 2021 is part of the start-up phase, in which the main aim is to further consolidate the trilateral partnership through joint activities and to try out forms of action. Limiting factors are the staffing of the PH administration unit of 1.5fte, associated to the CWSS, and the trilateral supplementary budget, which is not intended as a funding instrument but exclusively for start-up financing. PH development activities are also funded from the PROWAD LINK project. The COVID-19 pandemic makes communication and planning more difficult. This is to be countered by increasing

digitalization. Despite these constraints, all partner sectors are active and committed, depending on their financial capacity and capability, in advancing joint projects from initial ideas to application and implementation stages. The OPteamPH, which is transferred into the Partnership Hub Committee (New name proposed by the PH administration unit at the OPteamPH17 for the start-up phase, see Annex 2) leads through this work process in agreement with the WSB and is supported practically by the PH administration unit. Lessons learned and projects well under way should be the main outcome of the first year in practise.

### **3. PROWAD Link activities for the Partnership Hub**

The Interreg VB North Sea Programme-project PROWAD Link (2019-2022) helps substantially with the establishment of the PH. Activities as reported to WSB31 are ongoing. Whether and how to apply for funds for an additional project extension is currently under discussion among the PROWAD LINK project partner consortium.

### **4. Registration of the trilateral partnership at UN platform “Partnerships for the SDGs”**

The Partnerships for SDGs online platform is United Nations’ global registry of multi-stakeholder partnerships made in support of sustainable development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. For more information see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships/> . After approval by the WSB in a written round in November 2020, the PH administration unit at CWSS has submitted the application, to let the “Trilateral Partnership in support of the Wadden Sea World Heritage” be registered at the platform.

### **5. Partnership Centre Building in Wilhelmshaven**

The holder of the construction project, the city of Wilhelmshaven, has completed the design phase and submitted the building application in May 2020. Before the building permission can be granted, inter alia a concrete concept for taking a third party tenant into the building (room concept, costs) has to be worked out in contact with CWSS. Decisions are expected for March 2021.

## ANNEX 1

### **General principles for common projects and activities (Version date: 16.09.2020):**

- They are Wadden Sea World Heritage specific;
- They contribute to the protection of the Wadden Sea, to safeguarding its Outstanding Universal Value and to a sustainable Wadden Sea Region with socio-economic developments and vibrant communities;
- They fit under the thematic lines as defined in the WH strategy;
- They closely relate and contribute to the fulfillment of goals and objectives of the Trilateral WH Partnership as described in the MoU of the Trilateral Partnership in support of the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage and the Concept for a Partnership Hub;
- As a minimum two or three regions collaborate, inspired by or inspiring the trilateral level; whereby region is defined as involving different countries (might be on a local level such as provinces or districts);
- Different stakeholders are involved; representing different sectors;
- Partners collaborate across sectors;
- Preferably collaboration between public/ state partners/ TWSC and non-public partners;
- They might be organized decentrally under the umbrella of the Partnership Hub;
- They communicate the goals and objectives of the Trilateral Partnership and demonstrate commitment to this network in support of the Wadden Sea World Heritage;
- They shall be branded as WSWH projects and activities;
- These projects and actions shall consider the safeguarding of the OUV and the integrity of the WH site when designed, (which means its potential impact before being implemented shall be assessed);
- The quality of possible actions/projects should outweigh the quantity as it is the aim of the collaboration to promote a high standard of quality and the sustainability of the products that will be developed and promoted.

## ANNEX 2

### Concept for a Partnership Hub; Chapter 5, proposed additions, rest of the chapter remains unchanged

#### 5. Setting up the Partnership Hub

After

„The individual strategic partners’ primary interest ... This start-up phase shall be concluded by an evaluation.“

add the following text, graph and glossary:

The Operational Team Partnership Hub, which paved the way to found the trilateral WH Partnership in 2019, will be transformed into a Partnership Hub Committee. The OPteamPH will prepare the transformation. The Terms of Reference and rules of procedure of the OPteamPH will be revised and amended in agreement with the WSB to serve the new function of the committee. The composition of group will also be revised by the signatories of the MoU/partner-consortium, nomination of who to sit on the committee will be (re-)confirmed. The Partnership Hub Committee shall be chaired by the executive secretary of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat.

The committee shall report the outline of an annual work programme and proposed changes and updates of the Partnership Hub concept to the Wadden Sea Board for approval. Representatives of the partner networks within the committee report into their network organizations, consult with them and vice versa feed in their positions within their own responsibility and capacities. Decision making within the Partnership Hub Committee in general follows the consensus principle. It aims at ensuring agreement and participation by all partners.

The Partnership Hub administration unit associated to the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat acts as secretariat and support team to Partnership Hub Committee and partners insofar as engaged with common projects within the partnership. The management of projects and other deliveries of the trilateral partnership are carried out in close cooperation between the partners involved, like in project partner consortia, supported and/or facilitated by the PH administration unit.

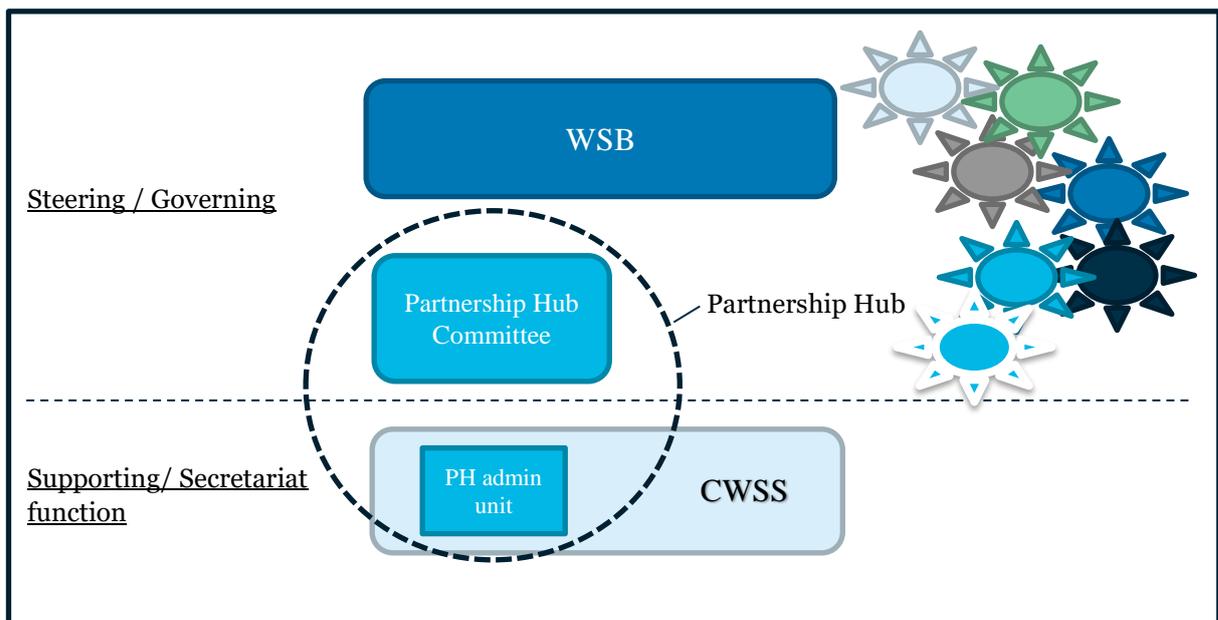


Figure x: Structural setting of the Partnership Hub

## **Glossary:**

### **Trilateral Partnership: A network of networks**

The „Trilateral Partnership in support of the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage“ is a strategic, multi-stakeholder, transboundary partnership, incorporating governmental and non-governmental sectors and networks committed to the protection of the Wadden Sea and sustainable regional development. The partners concluded a Memorandum of Understanding to set goals and ambitions.

### **Trilateral Partnership Hub: Network management and platform**

The trilateral “Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Hub“ supports management and organisation of the trilateral partnership. It consists of the Partnership Hub Committee to guide the trilateral partnership and the trilateral Partnership Hub administration unit with supporting and secretariat functions towards activities within the partnership. During the start-up-phase (2020-2022), the Partnership Hub administration unit is directly associated to the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat. The partners agreed on a first concept for setting up the hub.

### **Trilateral Partnership Centre: Location**

The „Trilateral Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Centre“ is a building, currently under construction, which will serve Partnership Hub, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, the Wadden Sea Forum and the International Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation as home base for activities throughout the whole Wadden Sea Region and the trilateral partnership as a location for meetings, workshops and conferences. The building in Wilhelmshaven shall be finalised by autumn 2022.

### **Trilateral Foundation: Resources and international perception**

The „Trilateral Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation“ is intended to support transboundary initiatives and projects to safeguard the Outstanding Universal Value and to raise international profile and recognition. The foundation shall also become a future funding source for the trilateral partnership.

## ANNEX 3

### Draft Outline Annual Work Programme for the Partnership Hub 2021

#### **1) Partnership's network development and management:**

A lean and pragmatic network organization and management will be developed further by an update of the PH concept on the organizational structure, in particular by transforming the Operational Team Partnership Hub (OPteamPH) into the Partnership Hub Committee, resulting in a (re-) confirmed composition, amended terms of reference and rules of play. New trilateral strategic partner sectors and –networks, which approach the trilateral WH Partnership will be involved in negotiations on taking the stepwise ‘partnership journey’ route towards signing the MoU. There will be no active partner acquisition by the PH.

#### **2) Communication for and of the Partnership:**

The OPteamPH/PH Committee will hold 4-5 meetings, additional jours fixes will be organized to enhance internal communication focusing at project level. CWSS media products and channels (Update CWSS Partnership Webpage, linkages to partner's webpages, CWSS annual report, project reports in newsletter etc.) will be used increasingly for external communication. The trilateral partnership will apply for registration at the UN platform partnerships for SDGs. The annual PROWAD LINK Forum meeting shall help to develop closer contact to partnership initiatives at national level.

#### **3) Activation of the WSWH Brand:**

To enhance the visibility of the partnership in addition to the external communication activities, common activities should be co-branded with the WSWH logo. PROWAD LINK, Work package 6 will provide a knowledge exchange platform which contains a brand activation toolbox (Work package 3) as one core element.

#### **4) Knowledge exchange and mutual learning:**

The PH (TWSC (lead), Dutch Wadden Academy, green NGO) will develop a concept for a yearly summer school offer for students and young scientists. The organization of a webinar and/or excursion on sediment issues (coordinated by PRW, Research) will be supported.

#### **5) Meetings, workshops and conferences:**

Under the pandemic situation, no PH related conference will take place in 2021. Meetings and workshops will be held mainly online, serving the projects and activities as mentioned in this outline.

#### **6) Projects and common activities:**

A proposal to update the WSWH Strategy – working with partners (2014-2020) will be submitted to the Task Group World Heritage. While some common projects and activities are well underway and their organization secured by a consolidated project partner consortium (PROWAD LINK, Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative with the IKI project application, Trilateral Research Programming Committee, International Wadden Sea School), thus not in need of extra organizational support by the hub in 2021, others are in earlier stages of development, highlighted here in particular:

- **Shipping**

A “Round Table Shipping” is currently organized and will be led by the Wadden Sea Forum with support of the TWSC, green NGOs. The Partnership Hub administration unit will be assembling the different strands dealing with the topic of shipping and ports by organizing regular meetings among the parties active within and potentially also beyond the trilateral cooperation.

The Partnership Hub administration unit is offering support to the further development and implementation of the WST/WSF project proposal on shipping.

- **Dark Sky**

The Trilateral Dark Sky initiative is promoted by the Programma naar een Rijke Waddenzee (PRW) and the Wadden Sea Forum. The aim is to gather the attention on the importance nocturnal darkness

both for the ecosystem and the people. The Partnership Hub administration unit is supporting the initiative to emphasize the connection with the OUV and the World Heritage designation.

The Partnership Hub administration unit is offering organizational support in the preparation of an international webinar that will take place in spring 2021. The PH administration unit is also offering support by compiling a state-of-the-art policy review on light pollution. The Hub will also support the group in working towards the recognition of the importance of Dark Sky at the trilateral ministerial Conference and the inclusion of light pollution with appropriate parameters in the TMAP programme.

- **Seals and tourism**

A project investigating the behaviour of seals to tourism-driven influences and the importance of seals for tourism is being developed within the Partnership Hub. The Partnership Hub will offer networking opportunities and encourage the integration of SMEs during the project development and implementation.

The project will be supported in its early development within the Hub and be prepared for submitting to the implementation document of the Trilateral Research Agenda.

Further project ideas, especially in the working field of the Network Group Sustainable Tourism, like f. e. on the issue of marine litter or a connection of nature and preventive health care will be investigated and explored within the partnership approach.

#### **7) Individual agreements of cooperation**

At project level, the PH will facilitate negotiations and prepare individual agreements between partners where needed and appropriate.

#### **8) Fundraising**

Within Work package 4 of PROWAD LINK, an analysis on funding opportunities will be commissioned to a consultant to provide all partners with focused information on EU and national funds matching the range of activities of the trilateral WH partnership.