

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 37)

26 August 2022
Wilhelmshaven



Agenda Item:	5.1 World Heritage
Subject:	Progress Report World Heritage
Document No.:	WSB 37/5.1/1
Date:	05 August 2022
Submitted by:	Chair TG-WH

Attached is an overview of the progress of the Task Group World Heritage since last WSB and other World Heritage activities and projects carried out in the framework of the TWSC work plan.

The main focus of TG-WH was the preparation of the SIMP (see separate document WSB 37/5.1/2).

Since WSB 35, TG-WH had two online meetings on 25 April 2022 and on 12-13 July 2022.

Proposal: The meeting is referred to the proposals in the document.

Progress Report Wadden Sea World Heritage

1. State of Conservation reporting to UNESCO World Heritage Centre

TG-WH has the task to coordinate the reporting of the States Parties to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in order to emphasize also to the Centre that the Wadden Sea is managed as one property.

According to the Operational Guidelines (OG) of the World Heritage Convention, these reports can be distinguished into state party information (OG § 172) and reports upon request by the World Heritage Centre, which has received third party information on specific issues and requests information/clarification from States Parties (OG § 174).

An overview on state party information and of responses on requests from the World Heritage Centre until June 2022 is provided in Annex 1.

PROPOSAL:

- **To note**

2. Wadden Sea State of Conservation Report – Requests from the UNESCO WH Centre and 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee

The Netherlands informed TG-WH that a response on the World Heritage Centre's request was submitted on 18 May 2022 to answer questions regarding a new permit for gas drilling in the Ternaard gas field outside the property. The World Heritage Centre will be provided with further information (English translation of the EIA including assessment of potential impacts on the OUV). With letter of 6 July 2022, the World Heritage Centre informed that this information will be taken into account in the State of Conservation Report to be brought to the attention of the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee under the standing Item "State of Conservation reports of properties inscribed on the WH List". Such an item may also include other elements which are of interest to the WH Committee. The Netherlands sent the translated EIA and additional information on 21 July 2022. In addition, the World Heritage Centre sent another letter to Germany and the Netherlands also on 6 July 2022 concerning plans for gas mining in Dutch German coastal waters and plans for a new production licence in Schleswig-Holstein (Mittelplate).

The World Heritage Centre welcomed the offer by the Netherlands to organise a technical briefing and informed that it will consider the offer once the requested documents have been reviewed by the Centre and IUCN.

The Document for consideration by the WH Committee (including a draft decision on the State of Conservation) will only be published six weeks before the start of the World Heritage Committee meeting. Although the meeting dates for 2022 have not yet been determined, TG-WH suggested to

prepare a strategy how to deal with the report in a coordinated way and involving all three states parties jointly.

PROPOSAL:

- **To agree on a joint approach by the three States Parties in responding to the State of Conservation Report and to instruct TG-WH to prepare a strategy until the next WSB meeting.**

3. Meeting with WST advisors

On 31 May 2022, Hans-Ulrich Rösner, on behalf of the Wadden Sea Team (WST), addressed the WSB Chair with a request to hold a separate (online) meeting of the Wadden Sea Board as soon as possible to discuss the policy and practical implications of the UNESCO letter to the Netherlands of 30 March 2022. After consultation with the Chairs of WSB and TG-WH, it was decided to invite the WST to the next TG-WH meeting on 12 July 2022 to share information on the status of the request.

The Wadden Sea Team expressed their concern that the World Heritage Centre considers mining in the Wadden Sea as a threat and that the Wadden Sea will be put on the agenda of the next meeting of the Committee or possibly even on the List of World Heritage in Danger. They were also concerned that new gas developments (NL/D border 20 km off Borkum) and additional oil production licence (Mittelplate Germany) could have an impact on the OUV. In principle, mining is incompatible with the World Heritage Site. Therefore, they stressed explicitly that the TWSC should take a more proactive approach and show a shared responsibility for the whole area. They proposed to discuss in the Wadden Sea Board how to address these challenges trilaterally.

TG-WH stressed that the issue of mining has already been raised several times and that the States Parties have committed themselves of "not allowing oil and gas exploration and exploitation within the boundaries of the property" (Statement of OUV 2009, 2014).

TG-WH also informed the WST members on the procedures within the WH Convention (reactive monitoring, communication with States Parties, periodic reporting) and the way the TWSC handles requests from UNESCO.

The TG-WH also acknowledged the support of the WST to protect the OUV and actively engage in the processes.

The meeting concluded that dialogue on this issue should continue and that the TG-WH will continue to inform and advise the WSB on these issues. The further approach to the issue of requests from the WH Centre is addressed under 2 (see above).

PROPOSAL:

- **To note.**

4. New UNESCO World Heritage logo combination

In 2021, UNESCO has changed its logo and the World Heritage Centre has adapted the World Heritage logo (UNESCO logo and WH emblem) accordingly. This new World Heritage logo no longer includes property-specific information (site name and date of inscription), but this can be added to the logo as properties wish.

TG-WH agreed to use the new UNESCO World Heritage logo combination as proposed by the World Heritage Centre in combination with the Wadden Sea World Heritage logo for trilateral World Heritage communication (website, reports, documents).



Figure 1: Combination of generic UNESCO WH Logo (left) and the Wadden Sea WH Logo (right) (on white and on dark background).

PROPOSAL:

- To adopt the new logo combination for TWSC

ANNEX 1**Table 1: Reports to the WH Centre on projects (OG § 172, state party information) (version 14.07.2022)**

No	Report to WHC	Topic	Status	TG-WH involvement
1	26.05.2020	New Pier at port of Rømø, DK	Response by WHC with IUCN evaluation, 8.10.2020	Informed
2	18.06.2020	New World Heritage visitor centre, Lauwersoog, NL	Request by WHC for additional information 14.06.2020, Letter to WHC on 22.07.2020	Informed
3	13.10.2020	District Heating Plants, Esbjerg, DK	Response by WHC on 19.10.2020, IUCN evaluation pending	Informed
4	10.11.2020	Tjæreborg Wind Farm Project, DK	Response by WHC on 16.12.2020 with evaluation by IUCN	Informed
	02.03.2022	Power-to-X (PtX) facility in Esbjerg,	Response by WHC on 10.03.2022	Informed

Table 2: Requests from the WH Centre concerning State of Conservation (OG § 174, third party information) 2018 – 2021 (version 14.07.2022)

No-	Date WHC request	Topic	Status	TG-WH involvement
1	06.11.2017	Grounding MV Glory Amsterdam	Reply by Germany on 26.02.2018	Involved
2	03.04.2018	Esbjerg Harbour extension plans, DK (third party information and state party reporting)	Additional information provided 8.5.2019, 18.11.2019 (revised plans), IUCN evaluation done 8.10.2020	Informed
3	30.05.2018	Houting population decline, DK.	Reply on 23.10.2018	Informed

4	11.01.2019	MSC Zoe container spill, NL	Final draft on 28.03.2019, submitted by NL, including information from Germany (container spill and Glory Amsterdam incident).	Provided input in drafting
5	05.06.2019	Elbe deepening, D	Reply in preparation by Germany	Informed
6	20.6.2019	Fossil Fuel Mining, NL	Final draft on 16.08.2019 submitted by NL to TG-WH for comments	Provided input in drafting
7	25.02.2020	Salt Mining, NL	Reply on 2.12.2020, IUCN evaluation ongoing. Request for information on Agenda 2050 (7.12.2020)	Informed
8	25.06.2020	Wind farm project, Schleswig Holstein	Reply in preparation by Schleswig-Holstein	Informed
9	07.05.2021 and 30.11.2021, 30.03.2022, 06.07.2022	Gas mining, climate change, offshore grid connection, NL	Replies on 20.01.2022 and 18.05.2022 (two letters: gas mining and grid connection). On 21.07.2022 sent translated EIA and additional information	Informed
10	06.07.2022	Gas mining D/NL and oil drilling D		

According to the trilaterally agreed procedure, TG-WH was informed respectively involved in preparing a reply to a WHC request on the State of Conservation of the property.