

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 38)

6 October 2022
Tønder, Denmark



Agenda Item:	5.1 World Heritage
Subject:	Progress Report TG World Heritage
Document No.:	WSB 38/5.1/1
Date:	26 September 2022
Submitted by:	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 documents WSB 38/5.1/2 and 3).

Since WSB 37, TG-WH had one online meeting on 07.09.2022. The next regular meeting is scheduled on 7 November 2022.

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

Progress Report Talk Group 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

With date of 6 July 2022, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to Germany and the Netherlands concerning new gas developments (NL/D border 20 km off Borkum) and plans for a new oil production license (Mittelplate Germany). Germany has taken the lead to prepare a draft answer together with the Netherlands.

With regard to the Ternaard gas field, The Netherlands sent additional information (English translation of the EIA including assessment of potential impacts on the OUV) to the World Heritage Centre on 21 July 2022, as requested by the Centre in May 2022.

With letter of 6 July 2022, the World Heritage Centre also announced 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 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 45th session World Heritage Committee meeting. So far, a meeting date for the next Committee session has not yet been scheduled because of the ongoing war in Ukraine.

TG-WH discussed scenarios regarding a potential WHC draft decision paper and proposed some ways to strategically work with these.

Options for draft decisions are (in the order of "strictness"):

- a) Proposal to list the Wadden Sea on the WH List of danger (unlikely, but still on option).
- b) Decision to list the Wadden Sea on the WH List of danger in case that specific requests of the Committee are not implemented.
- c) not a) and b) but the request to prohibit any mineral extraction,
- d) any other requests (as we have already received, such as alien species, flyways, tourism, the SIMP); might be combined with a-c.

Way to deal with this:

1. Analyse the draft decision after it has been published.
2. Check if the draft decision and the information in the document are factually correct.
3. Discuss in TG-WH if and how we might need to "lobby" for changes.
4. Organise the "lobby" work in a strategic way via our Permanent representations in Paris (and absolutely avoid the that one of the 3 countries acts individually)

PROPOSAL:

- **To agree on a joint approach as outlined above and instruct TG-WH to prepare the necessary steps to be carried out immediately after the publication of the draft decision.**

ANNEX 1**Table 1: Reports to the WH Centre on projects (OG § 172, state party information)
(version 20.09.2022)**

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
	14.09.2020	Deepening of the Grådyb fairway at Esbjerg Harbour	Draft letter to WHC in preparation. The issue concerning deepening the fairway to Esbjerg has been notified formally. The project has also gone into formal ESPOO Art. 3. Project notification to NL and D according Espoo Convention	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 25.03.2021	Wind farm project, Schleswig Holstein	Draft prepared by Schleswig-Holstein, Reply to WHC by D 19.07.2021	Involved

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, NL sent translated EIA and additional information.	Informed
10	06.07.2022	Gas mining D/NL and oil drilling D	Joint NL and D response letter in preparation.	Involved

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.