

# FINAL DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD

## 41<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Wadden Sea Board (WSB 41)

15-16 May 2023

Esbjerg, Denmark

Britannia Hotel, Torvegade 24 DK 6700 Esbjerg



### 1. Opening of the Meeting

The meeting was opened by the chairperson Anne-Marie Rasmussen at 12.30 on 15th of May 2023. She passed apologies from Ilka Wagner, substituted by Thomas Borchers and Volker Brengelmann who was substituted by Caroline Galler; Nanou Beekman, substituted by Marre Walter; and Johan Hamster, substituted by Melissa van Hoorn, also deputy of the Province of Groningen.

The chairperson welcomed the two new Danish Delegation members Kristian Hansted, Head of Department of the Danish Coastal Authority and Henrik Studsgaard, Director of Technical and Environmental area in Esbjerg Municipality, representing the 4 Wadden Sea municipalities and the new supporting staff member, Thomas Larsen from the Danish Coastal Authority, who introduced themselves. Also, from the Dutch Delegation new supporting staff members were welcomed: Auke Vogelzang from Rijkswaterstaat, who will replace Floris van Bentum in future; Kees Praamstra, from the Wadden Sea Municipalities; Olaf Herfst, guest from the ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate and Sara Koek, Youth Network representative, were welcomed as guests to the meeting.

The chairperson announced the MoU signing ceremony with the Korean Delegation at the end of afternoon. She thanked the Danish host for the lunch offered and the interesting thematic programme developed for the next day around the topic 'energy transition and nature protection'.

### 2. Adoption of the Agenda

*Document:* [WSB 41 Draft Annotated Agenda](#)

An outline of the agenda is in Annex 2.

The WSB **adopted** the agenda as submitted.

### 3. Record WSB 39 and WSB 40

*Documents:* [WSB 41/3/1 Final Draft Summary Record WSB 39](#)  
[WSB 41/3/2 Final Draft Summary Record WSB 40](#)

Comments received have been taken up. The Final Drafts were sent around by e-mail on 21<sup>st</sup> of April. With the comments to add Henk de Vries and Joost de Ruig to the participants' list of WSB 39 and WSB 40, the minutes were adopted.

The WSB **adopted** the summary record of WSB 39 and WSB 40.

## 4. Announcements

### Denmark

- Martin Petersen informed the meeting about the approval of the state budget, so the Danish contribution to the TWSC budget could be formally approved.
- The priorities for the Danish presidency period 2023-2026 were distributed by e-mail to the WSB and handed out at the meeting.
- A new chair of the Danish National Park was expected to be announced soon.
- Janne Liburd informed the meeting that the former reduction of the state budget-contribution to the Danish NP remains, but a supplementary budget has been allocated for 2023 .

She again raised her great concern about the envisaged test centre of giant wind turbines within and adjacent to the Danish NP borders. She informed the meeting that this was managed by the Ministry of Church Affairs and criticised the non-transparency and asked if the World Heritage Centre has been informed. The concern was echoed by the municipalities.

- Henrik Studsgaard announced to launch a large restoration project of 100 M DKR in the river Kongeå; more information would be presented tomorrow.
- He also referred to the launching of a coastal water council for the Wadden Sea, which also includes the agricultural and business sectors, as a new way to fulfil the EU Water Framework Directive
- The revised statutory order of the Wadden Sea has not yet been finalized.

### Germany

- Bernd Ulrich Netz informed the meeting that Hamburg is participating in the EU Commission project RescueMe with the case study of Neuwerk. The project aims to develop innovative solutions for better resilience of cultural heritage and landscapes threatened by climate change and natural disasters. The WSB will be regularly informed.
- The amended Ordinance on the Navigation of Federal Waterways in the Wadden Sea National Parks came into force on 28 April . It regulates navigation, shipping in general as well as recreational boating comprising watersports in the three German Wadden Sea National Parks with the aim of reducing disturbances from shipping. Now, the Wadden Sea National Parks' protection zones will be shown on the official nautical charts.
- Due to their professional and content-related proximity and friendly ties, the Lake Neusiedl - Seewinkel National Park (Austria) and the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park signed a cooperation agreement on 28 April 2023, according to Carolin Galler. Both national parks are united by their special natural value and reputation as "bird national parks". They were recognised as respective parts of transboundary UNESCO World Heritage Sites. They are also listed as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.

- She also informed the meeting that on 27 April 2023, the Thünen-Institut presented the results of the multi-year (2018-2022) collaborative research project CRANIMPACT on the impact of brown shrimp fishery on benthic habitats to the expert public (<https://www.thuenen.de/de/newsroom/detail/forschungsprojekt-liefert-wichtige-erkenntnisse-zu-den-auswirkungen-der-krabbenfischerei-auf-den-meeresboden>). It is based on comparative field studies of sites in Germany and Denmark, as well as on fishing experiments. The experts concluded that the species composition is influenced by fishing intensity to the extent of about 10%, in addition to other factors. However, the investigations focussed only on sandy habitats, a transfer of the results to other habitats, like reefs, coarse sand or shell detritus is not valid. The study is subject to methodological scientific criticism. Further the publication coincides regionally with fisheries and environmental policy debates on the draft EU Action Plan for Fisheries.
- Thomas Borchers informed the meeting about the German-Dutch research call which was recently launched. Proposals are welcomed until 6 July, with an increased budget of 16 M €. He thanked the TPC-WSR for their work in this respect.

## Netherlands

- With reference to the Breeding Bird Action Plan, Melissa van Hoorn informed the meeting that the Wadden provinces and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality are quite advanced with funding of another two projects in this regard:
  - Us and Birds of the Wadden Sea
  - Sentinel Birds

Us and Birds of the Wadden Sea focusses on improving the living circumstances for birds in the Wadden Sea. It focusses on physical measures (such as breeding islands), reducing disturbance (through communication and awareness enhancement) and knowledge plus monitoring (focusing on effectiveness of measures). Project sentinel birds will focus on the monitoring of six specific migratory birds and focus on better understanding the effects of measures taken in the Wadden Sea on the populations. This cannot be done with the current measurements.
- Marre Walter informed the meeting that recently the implementation programme which supports the Agenda for the Wadden 2050 was agreed upon. The Agenda for the Wadden 2050 was established with all stakeholders. This implementation programme consists of various pillars supporting the preferred transition towards the sustainable protection and development of the Wadden Sea. One of these pillars is the recent trilateral scientific research call.

Another pillar is focused on reducing the (cumulative) impact of all activities in the Dutch Wadden Sea to restore the balance between nature and economy. The process of looking for these reductions is running now together with stakeholders. Via this process the Single Integrated Management Plan is implemented nationally.
- Marre Walter also announced that the shrimp fishermen submitted an application for a new nature permit. As the application was not complete yet (the nitrogen emission demands were not complete), a ‘tolerance decision’ has been issued for 9 months in order to allow the fishermen to meet the demands during that period.
- With reference to EU Commissions<sup>1</sup> proposal to phase out mobile bottom fishing in marine protected areas by 2030 to reduce impact on seabed, she explained that the Dutch government endorses the ambitions for nature restoration and the European biodiversity strategy and that increased efforts are needed to achieve the objectives. However, the Dutch government does not support the EU Commissions proposal for a complete ban on mobile bottom fishing in all protected areas, by stating that it is

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<sup>1</sup> [Action plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries \(europa.eu\)](#), adopted by the European Commission on 21 February 2023

important that measures are based on scientific substantiation and support the specific protection objectives for the various areas. According to the legal analysis by the Ministry, a generic prohibition does not arise from existing regulations and therefore cannot be enforced by means of a notice.

Looking to the future, the pressure on mobile bottom fishing will continue to increase, especially in areas that are protected for the seabed habitats or for bycatch of young fish. Marre Walter stated that it is more important than ever to focus on innovation and to seek cooperation with colleagues from other Member States.

Finally, she announced that the Ministry, together with the sector and nature organizations, has started a process (the Shrimp Vision) whereby space for (smaller) sustainable shrimp fisheries must remain possible.

## **Shrimp fisheries permit request , decision postponed to next year (Nitrogen)**

### **Wadden Sea Forum**

- Preben Friis-Hauge referred to the interim stakeholder workshop on the TrilaWatt project (16 Feb 2023) , which was well attended by over 80 participants. In total 3 workshops were conducted; more information is presented under agenda item 8.
- He also mentioned the final conference of the DBU project on shipping and ports, held in Bremen (19 Apr 2023), attended by more than 20 participants. He referred to the written contribution submitted under agenda-item 8.
- Finally, he informed the meeting that the last WSF plenary meeting, which took place in Harlingen (28/29 March 2023), in which stakeholders were invited to present their topics, the most prominent ones which were prioritised to work on were shipping and ports, brown shrimp fishery and water management related issues, e.g. the Water as Leverage project, sediment management and alternative ship propulsion. He informed that the next WSF-44 plenary meeting will take place 7 and 8 September 2023 in the county of Friesland, Lower Saxony.

### **Wadden Sea Team**

- Marco Brodde informed that the Danish NGOs have been closely following the discussions around the wind turbine test centres. While supporting green energy in general, the NGOs in this case plea for finding alternative sites more inland located.
- He further informed that a new Danish research paper demonstrates that new water sport activities taking place in formerly inaccessible areas do disturb bird roosting sites and feeding areas.
- Finally, he raised his concern about the legislation revision process on the Wadden Sea order which is now going on in Denmark after 12 years in which the newest developments are not properly taking up in his opinion.
- Henk De Vries informed the WSB that the Dutch NGOs have put pressure on the shrimp fishery to come forward with better options towards sustainable fishery. An initial proposal was turned down, therefore the NGOs started this appeal. He stressed the fact that the intention was not to have a complete ban on the shrimp fishery, but to make it really environmentally friendly. It is an important conflict in the Netherlands, resulting in many protests.
- He also raised his concern about the devastating effects of bird flu in the Netherlands.
- Hans Ulrich Rösner referred to the CRANIMPACT study and the statement launched by WWF ([download PDF](#)) on this occasion, indicating that this study was not appropriate to take management decisions on.

## **CWSS**

Document: [WSB 41/4 Announcements by CWSS](#)

In addition to the written contribution, four points were mentioned by the secretary:

- He was pleased to announce that the Interreg North Sea Darker Sky Project was officially kicked-off on the 1st of May 2023. This project was developed within the Darker Sky Initiative and with support of the Partnership Hub, connecting to partners e.g. Aarhus university and municipality of Esbjerg, Bezirksamt of Altona (Hamburg), Niedersachsen Ports and Lauwersoog port, Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park etc.). It aims to reduce light pollution and to increase biodiversity and ecological connectivity in the North Sea region. It fits in the implementation of the Wilhelmshaven declaration. Lead partner is the University of Western Brittany (Brest, France).
- With reference to the WSB 33 meeting, with a thematic session on climate change adaptation and its conclusion that it was time for action, the secretary announced the development of the so-called 'Water as Leverage (Wal) Wadden project for a climate-proof future of the Wadden Sea region. When this development proceeds well, it will be submitted for a full Interreg NSR application before the 1st of July. Lead partner will be the province of Fryslân. A mixture of Danish, German and Dutch partners will participate, including the WSF. The WaL approach is based upon developing inspiring, feasible, scaled-up climate adaptive solutions addressing pressing local climate change adaptation challenges in an integrative way at several local pilot projects. The CWSS envisages to take on a very modest position to contribute in disseminating the information and connecting to our trilateral networks and vice-versa, which also enhances our networks. The secretary will inform asap about any financial and capacity implications once the project application is finished before further steps can be taken.
- The WSB was shortly informed about the upcoming retirement of the long-standing and highly appreciated CWSS staff member Harald Marencic as of 1st of June. The secretary was very pleased to announce that this position will be taken over by Soledad Luna.
- He informed the meeting about the yearly upcoming Wadden Sea Day, on 31 August 2023 in Wilhelmshaven. CWSS is organising this together with the National Park Wadden Sea of Lower-Saxony, who has the lead this year. The theme is 'Put the Wadden Sea's Biodiversity on the path to recovery'. All are invited!
- Harald Marencic informed about the finalisation of the Interreg NSR project PROWAD Link and the release of the final report on the project results: 'Linking sustainable growth with nature protection', available in print via CWSS and [as download](#).

## **5. Implementation Leeuwarden Declaration**

### **5.1 Wadden Sea World Heritage**

#### **5.1.1 Progress report of the Task Group World Heritage**

Document: [WSB 41 /5.1/1 TG-WH Progress report](#)

The progress report includes two main aspects: 1) a proposal on how to arrive at a draft joint position paper to a draft State of Conservation (SOC) Report for the preparation of the next World Heritage Committee meeting; and 2) information on finalization of the questionnaire on the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of Periodic Reporting on the application of the World Heritage Convention.

Serious concerns were raised in the meeting around the current pre-screening of potential areas for a national test centre for 450 m high wind turbines on the mainland near the Danish Wadden Sea area. Janne Liburd explained that only two technical criteria, substantial wind conditions and few people, omitting nature and environmental protection criteria, and the simplistic criteria determining the pending decision. Members of the WSB expressed that the TWSC is responsible for protecting the integrity of the transboundary World Heritage Site and therefore the three Wadden Sea countries should do their utmost effort to avoid risks and reduce impacts to the Site. Also, how to address cumulative impacts should be further discussed and consulted at national levels.

The Danish EPA clarified that this is a pre-screening. The process is currently at the stage of collecting data, the Danish Ministry of Environment has not been asked for comments or advice, and that so far there is no official position from the Danish Ministry of Culture and Palaces, responsible for World Heritage sites in Denmark. No final decision has been taken on the six proposals on the table, and therefore an EIA has not yet been initiated and therefore the World Heritage Centre has not yet been informed.

The meeting, in view that there is not enough information available to develop a joint position, tasked the TG-WH to address this topic. Janne Liburd argued that it would be too late to act when the decision is made by Parliament either before or after the summer holiday 2023 to commence the expensive EIA.

The WSB **agreed** on the proposal on how the joint reaction to a draft State of Conservation report will be organised and **noted** finalization of questionnaire on the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of Periodic Reporting.

#### 5.1.2 Final SIMP version for adoption at the Trilateral Governmental Council

*Document:* [WSB 41 /5.1/2 Final SIMP](#)

With the signing of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration, the last signature just received, the final SIMP version is adopted. The German Delegation was thanked for their generous support to allow for an additional position at the CWSS for a SIMP officer. The TG-WH, the chair Barbara Engels, and Soledad Luna are thanked for their engagement and work.

The WSB **welcomed** and **acknowledged** the official adoption of the SIMP with the signing of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration.

#### 5.1.3 Draft Adaptive SIMPLEMENTATION Strategy

*Document:* [WSB 41 /5.1/3 Draft SIMPLEMENTATION Strategy](#)

Contributing to the SIMPlementation, the TG-M ad hoc working group on Cables and Pipelines informed the WSB 41 about the draft energy project proposal planned as a small-scale project application for the Interreg North Sea Region Programme.

The three Wadden Sea Countries expressed full support to the draft adaptive SIMPlementation strategy and noted that it is a challenging task that requires good coordination and that it needs to go hand-in-hand with the resources allocated in the CWSS/TWSC business plan and national procedures.

The meeting expressed full political support to the draft energy project idea with pending decisions upon the final budget. Melissa van Hoorn strongly advised to consider and make use of the currently running projects about energy landing in the region.

The WSB **supported** the draft SIMPlementation Strategy and **welcomed** and **appreciated** the proposal for the small-scale energy project, taking into account any budget implications.

#### 5.1.4 Updated MOU Korea-Wadden Sea integrating World Heritage

*Document: WSB 41 /5.1/4 Updated MOU Korea-Wadden Sea (sent via email)*

The updated version of the Memorandum of Understanding between Korea and the Wadden Sea, integrates World Heritage, enables the local partners to get directly involved in joint MoU activities and is in line with current topics and activities in the Wadden Sea, strengthening in that way the exchange with the Korean partners. Soledad Luna will be responsible to follow-up and coordinate the implementation of activities.

The updated version will be signed later today.

The WSB **endorsed** the updated MoU Korea-Wadden Sea and **agreed** on the signing of the MoU.

## 5.2 Nature conservation and integrated ecosystem management

*Documents: [WSB 41/5.2/1 Progress report of the Task Group Management](#)  
[WSB 41/5.2/2 Update on the outcome of the trilateral Bird-flu workshop](#)*

The progress report of the TG-M was noted.

Kristine Meise, Programme Officer of Biodiversity & Flyway presented the scope and specific requirements of the Climate resilient East Atlantic Flyway project (IKI proposal), as well as the outcome of the trilateral Bird-Flu workshop.

The WSB much appreciated the organisation of the bird-flu workshops and their product, the management guidelines, which are already more widely used than only in the Wadden Sea. Concerns were raised about possible transmission to other animals including potential transmission to humans. Kristine Meise indicated that the guidelines list several recommendations on how to protect yourself when entering into bird colonies. She also referred to the importance of following up on the recommendation on data collection to understand the dynamics of the virus spread.

The WSB was informed about the development in the preparation of the IKI project proposal. Kristine Meise clearly indicated to the WSB the need for support in identifying co-funding opportunities. The decision on internal funds to be provided to the CWSS for use as 'own funds' in the IKI project should be made by the end of September. Other external co-funding opportunities need to be identified as soon as possible to allow for the preparation of additional funding applications, where necessary. She kindly asked the Wadden Sea Board members to provide information within the next 3 months and to supply her with supporting contacts, e.g. the embassies in the countries involved.

She further explained that initially Russia was involved in the project as a partner, but due to the well-known geopolitical developments, instead of Russia and/or other Arctic partners which were considered but did not meet the requirements, the project was upscaled within Africa.

The chair thanked Kristine Meise for her excellent work and reiterated her call for appropriate funding for the Flyway-project.

The WSB greatly **appreciated** the realisation of the bird-flu workshops and the resulting management guidelines.  
The WSB **supported** the process of developing the Climate resilient East Atlantic Flyway project (IKI-proposal).

### 5.3 Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment.

*Documents: [WSB 41/5.3 QSR process improvement](#)*

The meeting expressed full support to the process proposal on how to improve the full production cycle of QSR Thematic Reports in general, as the QSR is generally recognised as fundamental to the TWSC. The meeting requested to clarify who will be interviewed and to consider that the QSRs on management issues (human activities) are different and therefore require a different politically sensitive approach, as well as to continue the synergy with the SIMP key topics.

The WSB **noted** and **supported** the QSR process improvement proposal.

### 5.4 Communication and Education

*Documents: [WSB 41/5.4 Proposal for process of TWSC communication strategy evaluation](#)*

The meeting expressed full support to the proposal on how to conduct the review process on the Communication Strategy. The process will rely on the existing social media group following a modest ad-hoc approach.

Upon request by Joost de Ruig in the next WSB meeting in November further details will be provided on the scope of the communication strategy including the audience and the potential content (for whom and what).

The WSB **endorsed** the ad-hoc approach on reviewing the Communication Strategy relying on the existing group and with the request to deliver further information on the strategy's scope at the next WSB meeting.

## 6. Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Hub

Documents: [WSB 41/6 Progress report Draft Road Map of the PH 2023-2024](#)

Bernard Baerends introduced the draft roadmap of the Partnership Hub which was requested by the last WSB 40. He emphasised on the main challenges of the reduced capacity to support the PH despite the growing interest and the opportunity to use it as a platform and approach to also support the SIMplementation. To improve the representativeness of the members, a proposal was to invite the signatories to back-to-back events with the WSB meetings. Finally, he pleaded to the TWSC to understand and see the PH as a new concept which requires time to develop and to improve its understanding.

The WSB expressed their full support to the PH. Martin Petersen emphasised that this should continue to gain strength as a mainly stakeholder driven organisation. Janne Liburd reminded of the TriWadWalk, which was generously supported by the PH and should also be listed as such, also in relation to the future Wal Wadden project. Melissa van Hoorn also accentuated the importance of the PH for working with the stakeholders beyond the governments. Thomas Borchers elaborated and referred to the PH as a facilitator and highlighted the importance of maintaining a good coordination, now at the CWSS level. The chair wished for a vision of the PH with more drive from the stakeholder's sides.

The WSB **endorsed** the draft Road Map of the Partnership Hub

## 7. Trilateral Governmental Conference 2022

### 7.1 Wilhelmshaven Declaration

Documents: [WSB 41/7/1 Final draft of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration \(sent via email\)](#)

The chair officially announced that the 3 responsible ministers of the 3 Wadden Sea states had signed the Wilhelmshaven Declaration, the last signature just arrived this afternoon. She thanked Germany for their patience and persistence to conclude this process and announced that the official signing of the Declaration will be made public by sending out the press release today on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May. A picture of all WSB members to commemorate this formal concluding of the signing of the Wilhelmshaven Declaration was taken.

### 7.2 Draft Business Plan TWSC/CWSS 2023-2026

Documents: [WSB 41/7/2 Draft Business Plan/Priorities TWSC/CWSS 2023 – 2026 \(sent via email\)](#)

The WSB generally welcomed and appreciated to have the Business Plan (BP) prepared by the CWSS. The announced yearly revision was also much welcomed.

Martin Petersen asked for some time to review the table by the Danish side, to review and see if the Danish priorities are in line with the BP. (*afterwards confirmed by Danish EPA*). Janne

Liburd asked for a check to review if the content is aligned with the headlines, as some restructuring might be needed.

The Netherlands welcomed the BP as a readable document with concrete issues. Referring to para 54, about the reviewing of existing strategies, Marre Walter asked to separate this specifically and give it a higher prioritisation. Regarding the Operational Plans on shipping, she informed the WSB that RWS offered to take the lead on the shipping evaluation. She proposed to start with this evaluation first, and then follow-up with the 2<sup>nd</sup> steps etc. Finally, referring to the Danish priorities paper, she asked the Danish members what their intention is with their proposal to prioritise the update of the WSP 2010. This was replied by Henrik Pind Jørgensen stating that the WSP is still valid, however there are some recently upcoming items like energy transition which merit more attention, as well as the idea to make use of all new data collected to refine the targets. The way how this should be approached needs to be discussed and decided upon.

Germany proposed to add some specific issues on the protection and strengthening of the OUV which are not yet explicitly reflected in the BP, but mentioned in the Wilhelmshaven Declaration (e.g. para 4-8). With regular updates some points which are missing now could be tackled in the upcoming years, starting for 2024, linked to budgets made available.

The chair concluded that the Business Plan is a preliminary document that would be reviewed and amended every year. Some topics as discussed during the meeting need to be taken into account to be added and/or revised or prioritised like e.g. the addition of para 54 and a process proposal on how to update the WSP.

The WSB **endorsed** the Business Plan TWSC 2023-2026 taking into account the considerations given by the Board and agreed on a yearly update.

### 7.3 Trilateral Youth Network

*Documents: WSB 41/7/3 Trilateral Wadden Sea Youth Network (sent via email)*

The youth representative Sara Koek thanked for the invitation and the opportunity to explain briefly the document. She proposed to work closer together with the TWSC and via a working unit or group to work on a common strategy on youth involvement. She raised her concern about the issue of the representation of the youth, and asked the WSB if there are specific questions or topics the Youth could examine, as that would be very helpful and welcomed. Regarding the proposed youth event in 2024, any help for additional funding would be appreciated.

Martin Petersen replied positively about the chances of finding support for the Youth event in 2024 and asked if the PH could give some guidance to this group. The secretary responded positively, stating that this was already the case.

Leo Pieter Stoel asked for patience as youth involvement takes time, but he also called upon all members to take action to involve the youth actively in their own settings. He supported the proposed iterative process and suggested to explore organising a bigger event next year to attract more youth, even if this might be more costly.

With reference to the 1<sup>st</sup> Youth Conference organised by Germany, Thomas Borchers suggested that the group could self-organise to be in charge of the TYC (instead of having a project officer like on the very first TYC) which would help improving the youth network.

Some modest economic support would also allow for the youth group to participate in WSB meetings and other relevant initiatives.

Marco Brodde recommended the youth to reflect and clarify internally if they would like to be involved in policy making or rather be a kind of an NGO group. To find out what the main interest is, would be crucial to remain inspired.

Suggestions to the youth were made to become involved in the communication strategy, to develop a vision/a dream for the future as this would imply to address a series of topics or f. e. to explore the concept Rights of Nature for the Wadden Sea.

The chair concluded that the TWSC would provide financial support for the youth event in 2024 as an informal event and noted Janne Liburd's suggestion that the trilateral youth conference should not take place around the end of August/beginning of September.

Furthermore, an ad-hoc working group / working unit including representatives of the Youth Network, the TWSC and any associated bodies would be installed to develop a common strategy on youth involvement to explore how to involve and what would be the best way the youth could contribute to the TWSC, both short term as well as long term. The three countries will nominate people for the group to develop this joint strategy. The WSB members were called to identify what is already going on at national levels and what is available.

The WSB **welcomed** the report by the youth, **underlined** their intention to financially support the youth conference 2024 and **agreed** to set-up a joint working group with the youth to develop a youth strategy.

#### 7.4 Review TWSC

*Documents: WSB 41/7/4 Review process of TWSC (sent via email)*

Two main points were initially discussed: 1) the improvement of the WSB and 2) the trilateral groups structure. Additionally, the synthesis suggested to install a small ad-hoc group, with nominated people to take on the process of improvement and alignment of the TWSC groups with the tasks from the Wilhelmshaven Declaration including the WSB performance.

Regarding the first point, the German Delegation reflected that a division between improvement of the WSB and the trilateral groups structure should be made, that therefore more time is needed to come up with proposals and supported the establishment of an ad-hoc group. The Dutch Delegation also supported the instalment of the group and would send their proposal to an ad hoc group.

Regarding the second point and based on the combined overview produced by CWSS based on the countries' input, the meeting suggested that the existing groups continue their work until the review is finalised. From the overview, it is clear that there is the need of a group coordinating the SIMPLEMENTATION, that TG-WH should focus on formal issues of WH and exchange with UNESCO only, and that for the aspect of monitoring and assessment, CWSS takes the lead supported by an advisory group or some similar body. The meeting agreed to nominate members for the SIMPLEMENTATION coordinating group by the end of May.

Martin Petersen suggested to first discuss the instalment of Task Groups and clearly define the TOR. Thomas Borchers emphasized that the governance agreement and Joint Declaration of 2010 are still valid. Vera Knoke requested that all suggestions handed in by the countries are considered in the review process and groups are to be streamlined to reduce double work.

The meeting agreed to nominate members for the ad-hoc group by the end of May to take on the review process. As a start, a one-day workshop would be organised by CWSS with this ad-hoc group to continue with the review process and to come up with a first draft for further improvement preferably before summer break.

The WSB **agreed** to install an ad-hoc working group to further the review process of improvement and alignment of the TWSC groups and to **prepare** a proposal on improvement on the WSB performance to the next WSB meeting.

## 8. Wadden Sea Board Advisors: Wadden Sea Forum; Wadden Sea Team

*Documents: [WSB 41/8/1 Communication note on TrilaWatt](#)  
[WSB 41/8/2 Information paper on shipping and ports](#)*

The meeting is invited to take note of and comment on the contributions of the Advisors.

After a short introduction by the chair of the WSF, Preben Friis-Hauge, as partner of the project TrilaWatt, requested support from the WSB with data provision, with proposals for specific case studies, and to use any result in working groups.

The meeting took note of the information provided. Marre Walter informed the meeting and the WSF that the relevant Dutch parties are involved. Thomas Borchers pointed out that German data were covered already. Martin Petersen also offered availability of data.

Referring to the Information paper on shipping and ports, Frank Ahlhorn informed the meeting that as a follow-up of the Sustainable Shipping and Ports initiative for a well-protected Wadden Sea (SustSPI) signed last 14th TGC, the signatories identified three priority topics to collaborate on. They proposed to develop a roadmap which would identify the contributions of the partners as well as potential constraints.

The meeting recognised the topics listed and welcomed the proposal to develop a more detailed roadmap which subsequently can be carefully assessed.

Furthermore, Joost de Ruig proposed to work on advancing the evaluation and review of the Operational Plans of the PSSA. He explained that as an authority, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management (Rijkswaterstaat) would take the lead at the governmental level starting with the evaluation in 2024, which should result in a joint proposal by the authorities, the WSF, shipping and ports sector. The WSF would lead the process at the stakeholder level. The PH would be the environment in which the governmental authorities, the stakeholders and further sectors can maintain meetings and exchange. CWSS was requested to handle the necessary tender procedure. He urged the delegations to support the contacts with the relevant authorities as the review of the OP of the PSSA is a sensitive topic and needs to be handled appropriately and with good coordination, involving the responsible ministries.

The chair concluded that the meeting welcomed the progress on the SustSPI and looked forward to the roadmap on how to proceed. She also thanked Rijkswaterstaat to take on the evaluation and review process of the PSSA, signalling the need for a clear process concerning

the involvement of responsible authorities and the stakeholders. She welcomed the idea of having a joint roadmap in this respect between the RWS and the WSF/stakeholders.

The WSB **welcomed** the progress on the SustSPI and the development of the follow-up roadmap and **welcomed** the proposal by RWS to take the lead regarding the evaluation and review process of the PSSA.

## **9. Any Other Business**

The meeting was informed by the Danish host on the thematic programme of the next day ([Document WSB 41/9](#)).

The challenges and focus of the Danish Presidency 2023-2026 were distributed to the meeting (document by e-mail 21 April)

## **10. Next meeting**

Next meeting is scheduled for 23 November 2023, normally in Wilhelmshaven.

## **11. Closing**

The meeting was closed at 17.00 on 15<sup>th</sup> of May and was followed by the MoU signing ceremony with the Korean delegation and dinner.

**ANNEX 1: List of participants**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Wadden Sea Board  
(WSB 41)**

15-16 May 2023



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**ANNEX 2: Agenda**

**FINAL AGENDA**

**41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Wadden Sea Board  
(WSB 41)**

15-16 May 2023



- 1. Opening of the Meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 3. Record WSB 39 and WSB 40**
- 4. Announcements**
- 5. Implementation Leeuwarden Declaration**
- 6. Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Hub**
- 7. Trilateral Governmental Conference 2022**
- 8. Wadden Sea Board Advisors: Wadden Sea Forum; Wadden Sea Team**
- 9. Any Other Business**
- 10. Next meeting**
- 11. Closing**

**ANNEX 3: Action items arising from the 41<sup>st</sup> WSB****41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Wadden Sea Board  
(WSB 41)**

15-16 May 2023

Action #	Agenda item	Actions agreed upon	Person responsible	Deadline
1	5.1.1	To develop a position paper in response to SoC report/ draft Decision WHC	TG-WH	Before Committee meeting in Sep. 10-25
2	5.1.3	To submit a small-scale Energy project proposal to Interreg NSR Programme	CWSS/Ad hoc group Cables and Pipelines	30 June
3	5.2	To identify potential cofunding opportunities to the IKI project: a) Internal “own funds” b) External co-funding opportunities	WSB members	a) End of September b) As soon as possible
4	5.3	To clarify who will be interviewed for the QSR improvement process	CWSS	WSB 42
5	5.4	To elaborate and inform the WSB on the envisaged scope and outline of the communication strategy.	CWSS/ad- hoc Group Communication Strategy	WSB 42
6	7.2	To update the business plan by taking up the comments provided in WSB 41 and provide an update for 2024.	CWSS	WSB 42
7	7.3	To install a joint working group of TWSC and the Youth; Delegations appoint members.	CWSS	1 June 2023
8	7.4	To install ad hoc- working group for review process; Delegations appoint members.	CWSS/ Delegations	1 June 2023
9	7.4	To develop a proposal based on the review	CWSS/ Ad hoc working group	Joint proposal on the review WSB 42
10	7.4	To install a SIMP coordination group; Delegations appoint members.	CWSS/ Delegations	1 June 2023
11	8	To develop a roadmap on the 3 priority topics selected in the frame of SustSPI.	WSF	WSB 42
12	8.	To present the joint proposal for the PSSA evaluation and review process led by RWS.	RWS	WSB 42

