MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 32)

4 March 2021 Virtual meeting



Agenda Item: 5.1

Subject: Report on Evaluation & Needs Assessment of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy

Action Plan

Document No.: WSB 32/5.1/5

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Submitted by: Network Group - Sustainable Tourism

The Network Group - Sustainable Tourism (NG-ST) evaluated the recent Action Plan (2019 - 2021) of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy to report on the progress in the implementation so far. In a SWOT analyses the group highlighted the key success factors but as well pointed out barriers and issues. A needs assessment on each action in the plan with a review of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations (- until end of 2020 and with outlook of 2021) will help to identify possible new areas of actions or renewed priorities. This is to ensure that the updated Action Plan (2022 and onwards) continues to address obstacles to the implementation of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination in the most appropriate way. In the NG-ST 27 meeting (scheduled for September 2021) the group will finalize the updated Draft Action Plan to be submitted to the WSB for approval in November.

The results of this self-assessment are summarized in this document to the WSB.

Proposal: The meeting is invited to note the document.





Evaluation & Needs Assessment of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy Action Plan

Background

The joint implementation of the strategy on "Sustainable Tourism in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination" is an important work theme for the Cooperation according to the Leeuwarden Declaration (LD § 4). The work contributes to the World Heritage Strategy (TD § 5) and the aims and objectives of the World Heritage Convention.

Since 2013 the respective Action Plan is an important tool for the relevant stakeholders to implement the strategy.

In November 2017, a first overview on what has been achieved since 2014 in implementing the Sustainable Tourism Strategy, and how to continue the work in the forthcoming period 2018 - 2021 was submitted to the WSB.

As an ongoing task was the current Action Plan 2019 - 2021 (Annex 2) reviewed by the NG-ST (Meeting 26 on the 10.02.2021) to determine if progress has been made on each of the actions in the Plan. The result of the analysis will provide input to the development of an updated Action Plan for 2022 - onwards.

Outcome - overview

The STS Action Plan of 2019 consists of 37 actions, from which about 25 have been categorized as high priority. Only 4 actions have not yet been implemented mainly due to lack of resources, whereas the rest are ongoing.

The two Interreg A projects **Wadden-Agenda 2.0** with project partners in Lower Saxony and the Netherlands & **NaKuWa** with project partners from Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark are strong partners in implementing the Action Plan locally. Just like the national parks in Denmark and Germany. Actions trilateral/North Sea wide are mainly covered by Interreg B project PROWAD Link, lead CWSS.

The SWOT analysis of the Action Plan (Annex 1) revealed the strength and the opportunities, but also several weaknesses mainly due to lack of ownership and connection with the local level, but also with regard to technicalities (e.g. different local structures) that make communication and crossborder cooperation difficult.

NG-ST regarded intensifying of the cooperation and further enhancing of the network as important tasks to implement the Sustainable Tourism Strategy and create more ownership. Once again it was stressed that sufficient resources should therefore be made available trilaterally. The focus should be on practical work and implementation at the local level. Important to note is that the development of a joint WH marketing plan for the Danish-Dutch-German Wadden Sea which was defined as the main goal for this period has not yet been tackled and was now questioned as feasible. This must be further discussed with the group as it is one of the deliverables agreed on in the terms of reference for NG-ST.

To conclude: NG-ST mandates CWSS to form an Editorial board for the preparation of the upcoming draft action plan 2022 onwards to integrate in a bottom-up approach the local levels and make the action plan more tangible and mutual beneficial for stakeholders. Also, the planning process will not only provide a path forward but also will address the plan's implementation.

ANNEX 1 SWOT ANAYSIS

1. SWOT Analysis Implementation Action Plan 2019-2021

Strength

- Established and enhanced networking: exchange of information and best practices, involvement of many actors, combining local & trilateral level.
- 2. Building and Sustaining Commitment
- 3. Effective and successful implementation: Of 37 actions, 33 have been done or are ongoing / continuing.
- 4. Balanced Instrumentalization: Baseline <-> target approach not restricting but outcomes measurable.
- 5. Initiating cooperation and common projects (e.g. INTERREG projects, local initiatives)
- 6. Providing capacity to attract financial support, e.g. application for project funding (INTERREG A, B, Leader, etc.)
- 7. CWSS as coordination body

Weakness

- Implementation challenges: cross border- cooperation made difficult by different (local) structures and funding. Too little coordination, activities are not always connected / communicated to local levels.
- 2. Tourism Stakeholder Involvement missing; resulting in lack of ownership and commitment.
- 3. Information exchange not comprehensive on all levels.
- Financing: implementation depends on project funding. A core financing is lacking on trilateral and national level.
- 5. Technicalities: complicated structure, overview missing, lack of measurability.

Opportunities

- Creating synergies by connecting / collaborating and working together with pre-defined goals.
- 2. Intensify cooperation and enhance the network.
- 3. Increase visibility and communicate achievements.
- 4. Compile overview of (EU) funding options.
- 5. Draft a popular version in a bottomup approach.

Risks

- Fluctuation of contact/responsible persons, no continuity: lack of ownership
- 2. Action Plan not taken up by regional and local stakeholders and partners.
- 3. Unbalance between local and trilateral level due to missing involvement of regions in activities.
- 4. Implementation/ connection to daily work not given.
- 5. Poor tourism monitoring data = no reliable information to support decision-making.
- 6. Loose ability to focus: too many activities

ANNEX 2

DRAFT Action Plan (updated 25.08.2020) – Time Period 2019 - 2021

Priority: High	Priority: Medium
Connection to SIMP - upda	te

		Objective 1 To ensure all stakeholders WH property. Commitments to reach the of Awareness raising and of economy and society. Providing stakeholders of the local context and ne sharing, networking). Developing educational				
	No.	Action	Who is responsible?	SMART?	What shall be achieved (impact indicators to be defined)	Resources
	1	Trilateral overview on WH	related events a	is basis for potential common activities		
1	1.1	Actions local / regional Compile overview of 1) specific WH events and 2) event with co- communicating WH	(fill in focal points) NL: Nds: HH: SH: DK:	Events dedicated specifically to World Heritage (annual WH events/days/week). Baseline: 2 NL WH weeks/dag (June) Nds: WH anniversary events (June) Target: 5 One specific WH event per region per year.	Enhanced coordination of local and regional WH events, create synergies.	Within planned / allocated budget
2	1.2	Actions trilateral Provide template for WH events and compile information from the regions for publishing on the WH website (bi- annually).	CWSS	Template to compile events which specific focus on WH or WH related topics on trilateral WH website and linking to each other's events. Baseline 0	Enhanced coordination of local, regional and trilateral WH events, enhanced profile of events, potential synergies.	Within planned / allocated budget

		Use 10 th Anniversary (June 2019) to establish a routine.		Ad-hoc compilation of events on website. Target: 1 Template for regular update of events.		
	2	Trilateral inventory on Wh	IS training cours	es and material for stakeholders as basi	s for transfer and adaptation	
3	2.1	Actions local / regional Compile overview of training courses and material for stakeholders which can be shared with stakeholders from other regions.	(fill in focal points) NL: Nds: HH: SH: DK:	Training courses for stakeholders (SME, NP-Partner) with information on WH, nature conservation and sustainability. National parks partner meetings (or comparable events): Baseline 3 Target 5	Enhance exchange of knowledge amongst stakeholders on awareness of WH and OUV. Engage local partners in exchange.	Within planned / allocated budget
4	2.2	Actions trilateral Provide template for overview and publish online for access by stakeholders (meta information(CWSS	Collect information about training courses and related information material one a year Baseline 0 Target 5	Enhance trilateral exchange of knowledge amongst stakeholders on awareness of WH and OUV	Within planned / allocated budget
	3	Identify Wadden Sea wide	topics / content	s / stories for awareness raising of "ONE	Wadden Sea – ONE World Herita	age"
5	3.1	Actions local / regional Compile overview of topics / contents / stories used for WH communication by multipliers in the regions focusing on ONE WS- ONE WH	(fill in focal points) NL: Nds: HH: SH: DK:	Provide best practice of WH communication in the region as an example for other stakeholders Baseline. 1 (The "Five" brochures) Target: 15	Enhanced knowledge of available topics, enhanced synergies	Waddenagenda NAKUWA PROWAD LINK WP 3
6	3.2	Actions trilateral (WP 3) Compile overviews and distribute to partners in the regions. Explore potential of a coordinated approach for trilateral communication	cwss	Communicate best practices trilaterally and internationally (WH networks). Integrate information into trilateral communication (flyer, media, website). Develop a common core story (to share contents) Baseline: 0 Target: 15	Enhanced trilateral coordination of contents / stories used transnational WH communication. Potential synergies by enhanced collaboration.	PROWAD LINK WP 3

	4	Continue and enlarge exc	hange programr	nes, visits and study tours of stakeholde	rs in the Wadden Sea	
7	4.1	Actions local / regional Develop / extend annual exchange programmes as regular offer for specific stakeholders (tourism, business), e.g. similar to annual IWSS network workshop.	(fill in focal points) NL: Nds: HH: SH: DK:	Integration of annual exchange programmes for stakeholder (focus on SME) between regions into existing stakeholder programmes (e.g. NP partner). Baseline: 3 NL: stakeholder visit in Lower Saxony DK: stakeholder visit in the Netherlands (2017) Target: 10	Engage more stakeholders in WH related topics and long-term cooperation	Additional resources on regional level to participate
8	4.2	Actions trilateral Coordinate exchange programmes trilaterally and provide support on contents	CWSS PROWAD LINK	Documentation and communication of exchanges trilaterally and internationally. Provide support of exchanges. Baseline: 0	Enhanced trilateral coordination of contents / stories used transnational WH communication. Potential synergies by enhanced collaboration.	PROWAD LINK (focus on SME)
	_			Target: 10		
	5	Establish a region/island		I O and the state of the state	Edward Charlette and	Address
9	5.1	Actions local / regional Form social partnerships to foster friendship and understanding between.WS/WH communities	(fill in focal points) NL: Nds: HH: SH: DK:	Support twinning between islands and regions. Baseline: 0 Target: 3	Enhanced friendship and understanding between WS/WH communities	Additional resources on regional level to participate
10	5.2	Actions trilateral Support twinning trilaterally and provide support	CWSS	Documentation and communication of twinning trilaterally and internationally. Provide support of twinning. Baseline: 0 Target: 3	Enhanced profile of twinning internationally	Additional resources on trilateral level to provide support
		OBJECTIVE 2 To ensure stakeholders ta involvement in tourism m Commitments to reach the	anagement and	y for and contribute to the protection of to product development.	the 'Outstanding Universal Value'	through

		 Common tourism management and planning schemes for the entire World Heritage in line with the OUV of the property and using a destination approach. A strong Wadden Sea World Heritage brand as starting point for development of quality products, services and facilities (common standards and quality schemes). A sustainable Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination, building upon transboundary cooperation and partnerships. 						
	No.	Action	Who is responsible?	SMART?	What shall be achieved (impact indicators)	Resources		
	1	World Heritage Partnersh	ips					
11	1.1	Actions local / regional Extend or develop partnership programmes in the Wadden Sea (SH: extension in ITI project, NL: development in PROWAD Link) [add DK, Nds and HH]	(fill in focal points) NL: Nds: HH: SH: DK:	Develop, extend or adapt existing programmes, initiatives and networks Baseline: 3 DK, D: NP Programmes NL: several initiatives Target: 5	Enhanced engagement in long-term collaboration	Regional projects, PROWAD LINK		
12	1.2	Actions trilateral Development trilateral partnership hub linking to regional and local programmes (PROWAD LINK)	CWSS PROWAD LINK	Develop and implement concept for a trilateral approach (WH partnership hub) Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced engagement of stakeholders in long-term collaboration on trilateral level. Enhanced trilateral coordination and synergies.	PROWAD LINK WP 4		
	2	Visitor management and i						
13	2.1	Actions local / regional Compile basic tourism data for a defined region to calculate impacts (socio-economic impacts, impacts on nature values) considering EU /UNWTO definitions. Carry out visitor surveys, preferably in cooperation with other WS regions, to	NL:Gast- onderzeoken Friese Wadden- eilanden Nds: / HH: SH: / DK:	Define and collect regional data for the period 2016-2021 (as part of TMAP and QSR) Baseline: 0 Target: 1 Develop, extend or adapt existing Surveys on WH (PROWAD LINK) Baseline: 2 NDS/SH survey Target: 3	Enhanced knowledge on impacts of tourism on local/regional level, in specific on regional economic development.	Additional resources for regional data collection / compilation PROWAD LINK WP 5		
		enhance synergies		Target: 3		VVP 5		
		Actions trilateral						
14	2.2	Development proposal of a trilateral monitoring and assessment approach (TMAP, QSR).	CWSS (TMAP),	Prepare proposal based on recommendation from QSR 2017 (TMAP). Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Harmonized, comparable set of basic tourism data for trilateral assessment (QSR)	Additional resources required for a trilateral project		

15	2.3	Trilateral guest survey (PROWAD LINK) and exchange of best practice	PROWAD LINK WP 5.7 and 5.8	Develop and implement a survey trilaterally. Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced understanding of visitor needs, expectations and motivations	PROWAD LINK WP5
	3	Vision "Wadden Sea Wor	ld Heritage as the	most sustainable destination"		
16	3.1	Actions local / regional Compile best practices for sustainability. Ambition for Wadden islands to become self- sufficient in energy.	(fill in focal points, e.g local councils)	Best practice from entrepreneurs in the regions (selection criteria to be defined * suggestion to be in line with GSTC Criteria) Baseline: 0 (PROWAD list of sustainable offers) Target: 1	Additional selling point for local stakeholders. Enhanced awareness of transnationality of WSWH on local level.	Additional resources required
17	3.2	Actions trilateral Feasibility study to develop preconditions for a transnational sustainability destination approach	CWSS /NG-ST	Feasibility study. Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhance engagement of stakeholders to invest a transnational sustainability approach.	Additional resources required
	4		mitigate marine li	tter pollution and use of plastic		
18	4.1	Actions local / regional Engage stakeholder in local events and projects on awareness, monitoring, removal and avoidance of marine litter and plastics, incl. circular economy	(fill in focal points)	Provide overview of local events Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced engagement in reduction of marine litter and plastics to protect the OUV	Additional resources required on regional level
19	4.2	Actions trilateral Exchange experiences and best practice examples in the Wadden Sea. Cooperation with UNESCO and other international organisations Sustainable Transport	CWSS /NG-ST	Communicate best practices in the Wadden Sea trilaterally and internationally Baseline: 1 Target: 2	Enhanced coordination of relevant activities and initiatives related to WH	Additional resources required on trilateral level

20	5.1	Actions local / regional Compile best practices of sustainable transport in connection with WSWH (e.g. zero emission agreements) NL/Nds: Waddenagenda 2.0	(fill in focal points)	List of best practice in sustainable transport linked to WSWH Baseline: 0 Target: 5	Enhanced engagement of stakeholders in sustainable transport in WH	Within planned / allocated budget
21	5.1	Actions trilateral Exchange experiences and best practice examples in the Wadden Sea.	CWSS /NG-ST	Communicate best practices in the Wadden Sea trilaterally and internationally Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced coordination of relevant activities and initiatives related to WH	Within planned / allocated budget
	6	Impacts of tourism / LAC	for tourism deve	lopment	1	
22	6.1	Actions trilateral Exchange experiences and best practice examples in the Wadden Sea.	WWF PROWAD LINK WP 5.6	Analysing visitor pressure impacts. Recommendations for the development of sustainable tourism offers and services, including visitor management. Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced understanding of the challenge of tourism in the WSWH destination and potential impacts an nature and socio-economic values	PROWAD LINK WP 5
		Objective 3 To ensure the tourism sequality tourism offers of Commitments to reach the Development of a joint Destination, which con Integration of World He Continuation of joint coworld Heritage Destination				
	No.	Actions	Who is responsible?	SMART?	What shall be achieved (impact indicators)	
	1	Marketing World Heritag				
23	1.1	Actions local / regional NL: Preparation of joint marketing concept story	(fill in focal points) i	Regional WH marketing activities to mplement STS Baseline: 3 Target: 3	Enhanced engagement of stakeholders marketing of WH	Regional projects,

		telling (6 yrs period), building on STS. NL/Nds: Waddenagenda 2.0 SH / DK: NAKUWA				
24	1.2	Actions trilateral Develop a marketing approach and planning for the WH including coordination of regional WH marketing activities by NG-ST. (including digital marketing tools). PROWAD LINK WP 3 / Online Toolbox Brandspace Supported by Development exchange platform for stakeholders (PROWAD LINK WP 6).	CWSS /NG-ST PROWAD LINK WP 3 WP 6	Develop marketing approach. Baseline: 0 Target: 3 Define contents of exchange platform, and stakeholders to be reached and time period (PROWAD LINK) Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced coordination of marketing activities and approaches related to WH.	PROWAD LINK
	3	Annual Wadden Sea Wo				
25	3.1	Actions local / regional Events and activities related to WSWH anniversary in June (2020, 21, 22)	(fill in focal points)	Compile annual WH anniversary events and activities in the regions Baseline: 0 Target: 3	Enhanced engagement of stakeholders WSWH day events and activities, and public response (participants, press, other media)	Within planned / allocated budget
26	3.2	Actions trilateral Coordination and communication of events and activities related to annual WSWH Day (PROWAD LINK WP 2 + 3).	CWSS	Communication plan for WH anniversary Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Within planned / allocated budget	Within planned / allocated budget

	4	Digital Communication WH					
27	4.1	Actions trilateral Regular exchange and support of focal points in charge of digital communication and marketing, e.g. social media workshops. (also PROWAD LINK WP 2 and 6).	CWSS	Conduct annual social media workshop. Baseline: 1 Target: 3	Enhanced coordination and support of digital marketing and communication.	Within planned / allocated budget	
	5	WH Information Materia					
28	5.1	Actions local / regional Regular update of existing material and communication (e.g. glocal flyer, maintenance WH columns), development of new material as appropriate (apps, guides, give-aways)	(fill in focal points)	Update Material Baseline: 0 Target: 5	Enhanced visibility of World Heritage in regions and engagement of stakeholders.	Additional resources required on regional level, Partly within allocated budget	
29	5.2	Actions trilateral Update and further development of trilateral concepts for WH material and communication (also PROWAD LINK WP 2+3)	CWSS /NG-ST	Update WH communication plan Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced visibility of World Heritage in regions and engagement of stakeholders.	Additional resources required on trilateral level, Partly within allocated budget	
		Objective 4 To ensure nature consections Commitments to reach the Increased engagemer and networking, cooperating World Herit Incal communities at Generating financial World Heritage.					

	No.	Actions	Who is responsible?	SMART?	What shall be achieved (impact indicators)	
	1	Engagement of stakeho		and international activities		
30	1.1	Engagement in trilateral activities and events, UNESCO Marine Programme and Sustainable Tourism Programme - ongoing	CWSS, NG-ST	Exchange with ST Programme, participation in relevant international events Baseline: 0 Target: 3	Enhanced engagement of stakeholders at trilateral level. Enhanced trilateral coordination and synergies.	Additional resources required. Partly within allocated budget
31	1.2	Stakeholder engagement at annual ITB tourism fair in Berlin (PROWAD LINK WP 2)	CWSS	Stakeholder booth, 10-12 entrepreneurs participating with own programme, annually (March) Baseline: 1 (2019) Target: 3	Enhanced profile of stakeholders and their WH offers and services contributing to OUV.	Additional resources required. Partly within allocated budget
	2			nomy, society and culture in the Wadder		
32	2.1	Actions local / regional Studies on socioeconomic impacts on World Heritage / national parks. Nds/SH- update NP Job study DK: study SEM	(fill in focal points)	Continue, adapt or extent studies on SE impacts Baseline: 2 Target: 5	Enhanced understanding of socio-economic potential of WH/NP by stakeholders and policy makers.	Additional resources required. Partly within allocated budget
33		Actions trilateral Trilateral studies and surveys on socio- economic impacts (PROWAD LINK WP 5.9)	CWSS /NG-ST	Brochure on added value of sustainable tourism in the WSWH destination Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced understanding of socio-economic potential of WH/NP by stakeholders and policy makers at trilateral level	PROWAD LINK
0.4	3	Providing financial reve		Cooperation with CNAT to married	In a read and a complete in a f	DDOWAD LINE
34	3.1	Actions local / regional Investigate possibilities of donations/funding of projects by tourism sector. Study on WH fee / willingness to pay.	(fill in focal points)	Cooperation with SME to provide support for local / regional activities to protect OUV Baseline: 550 Target: 1,000	Increased number of stakeholders engaged in WH knowledge partnerships	PROWAD LINK

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35	3.2	Actions trilateral Investigation cooperation with companies (PROWAD LINK WP 4+5).	CWSS /NG-ST	Develop trilateral cooperation and partnership schemes engaging entrepreneurs to provide support for protection of OUV Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Enhanced understanding of role and responsibilities of stakeholders for OUV protection at trilateral level	PROWAD LINK
36	3.3	Development of 21 product and services in co-creation	PROWAD LINK	Income from PROWAD LINK products and services Baseline: 0 Target: 5 Mio €	Increased income from WH specific sustainable products and services	PROWAD LINK
37	3.4	Increased sustainable facilities, developing and marketing of sustainable products and offers, and in supporting nature awareness and education/training for sustainable development.	PROWAD LINK	Additional investment by SME in increased sustainability Baseline: 0 Target: 2 Mio €	Increased investment in sustainability	PROWAD LINK