

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 38)

06 October 2022
Toender, Denmark



Agenda Item:	6 Wadden Sea World Heritage Partnership Hub
Subject:	Outlook for the next phase of the Partnership Hub
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Submitted by:	OPteamPH

Covernote:

At the last Wadden Sea Board 37 meeting, the evaluation results of the pilot phase Partnership Hub (PH) were widely acknowledged, a reconfirmation of the general support to the PH concept. The OPteamPH held one virtual meeting (OPteamPH22; 12.09.2022) to further the recommendations of the consultancy on the evaluation of the pilot phase of the Partnership Hub (PH) and discussed a constructive way forward for the future organizational setting and structure of the PH. Furthermore, possible topics and formats for future partnership activities were compiled as collected in a first brainstorm.

Proposal:

The meeting is invited to take note of the progress and

- to approve the approach on the future organizational development of the PH;
- to take note of and advise on the first draft outline for possible topics and formats for future partnership activities as a living document (Annex 1).

Progress Report Operational Team Partnership Hub

1. Proposal on the future organizational development of the Partnership Hub

In the short time between the two WSB meetings 37 and 38, the team was able to develop main outlines of the way forward leading into the next phase of the PH. A general conclusion of the meeting, supported by a considerable number and range of potential future topics, which would benefit from the PH approach, was to focus on SMART projects and activities rather than spend too much effort on structural discussions.

The WSF asked for a more in-depth bilateral talk about the cooperation within the partnership. A meeting between WSF and PH administration unit is scheduled for 28 September.

In consideration of the valuable recommendations of the WING Process Consultancy, presented to WSB 37 (Doc. WSB 37/6/6.2), and the results from the OPteamPH 22 meeting, the team recommends to the WSB 38 meeting to follow the evaluation advice on a future organizational setting and structure of the PH in a flexible, agile and adaptive growing model. The main aspects are

- Continue the trilateral Partnership and the Partnership Hub, entering the upcoming implementation period (2023-2026);
- Continue with the PH administration unit as PH management, associated to the CWSS, maintaining an appropriate staffing;
- Task the PH administration unit to develop a draft working structure model, which should be lean, flexible and adaptive in development, based on existing structures and networks and proven experiences,
- Task the PH administration unit to prepare, together with the partners involved including the OPteamPH, a model for an Advisory/Sounding Board of signatory representatives to advise and steer the future main course of the partnership in due time. This Board may be developed into the Partnership Hub Committee with more decisive power in a mid-term perspective;
- Apply an adaptive management cycle to the trilateral Partnership Hub management including a full review before the next Trilateral Governmental Conference in 2026.

The PH administration unit is tasked to amend the Partnership Hub Concept accordingly a. s. a. p..

The Partnership Hub Concept (04.03.2021) is available online, see <https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/resources/trilateral-partnership-concept-partnership-hub>

2. Possible topics and formats for future partnership activities

Taking into consideration the recommendations included in the Evaluation, the OPTeamPH22 collected a first list of themes and topics (see Annex 1) to address during the next phase. The broad range of proposed topics includes:

- themes on which partners are already working and for which a continuation is wished for (e.g. light pollution, Shipping and ports);
- upcoming activities that should be further developed and enlarged (e.g. involvement of youth, Summer Schools) as well as
- new topics as included in the Wilhelmshaven Declaration (e.g. climate neutrality, sustainable fisheries).

The team also listed an extensive set of formats that are instrumental for the development and implementation of these activities including inventories and researches, conferences, trainings and projects. The annexed list of priority themes and appropriate formats will be further developed.

In line with the Evaluation, the OPteamPH22 points out that, in order to coordinate the development of these activities, appropriate staffing capacity as well as financial support to initiate these activities would be necessary.

3. PROWAD Link activities for the Partnership Hub

The Interreg VB North Sea Programme-project PROWAD Link (2019-2022) continued to help substantially with the establishment of the PH. The final event of the project will be held within the pre-programme of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference, on the afternoon and early evening of 28 November 2022.

4. Partnership Centre Building in Wilhelmshaven

The holder of the construction project, the city of Wilhelmshaven, is optimistic that it will soon be able to actively pursue the realization plans for the project with envisaged support from German federal state level.

Annex I

Outline of possible topics and formats for future partnership activities

Topics	Challenge / Need to be tackled	Sectors / Actors To be involved, who should be play an active role	Format(s) or a combination of them	Potential deliverable / Expected outcome / Comments
Sustainable tourism	<p>a) Minimize the carbon footprint of the tourism sector including of recreational activities (e.g. seals watching tours), transportation (transportation to and on the islands)</p> <p>b) Foster digitalization of the sector</p> <p>c) Enhance monitoring and evaluation on tourism impacts on nature and socio-economic values to support management and planning</p>	NG-ST, Science sector, (Applied) Universities, research & development agencies, DKNT and other partners to be defined.	Networking event to share best practices; Trilateral or multi-lateral project; knowledge development; inventory; conferences; joint events of running projects (e.g. VaBeNe); Workshop tools like e.g. Tourism Radar;	<p>Joint EU project; e.g. Improved behaviour of visitors in the NPs; unlock funding opportunities to support monitoring.</p> <p>Comments: see also STS Action Plan for the proposed activities</p>
Sustainable shipping and ports	<p>a) Minimize plastic pollution generated by ports</p> <p>b) Increase the awareness of all Wadden Sea ports visitors about the OUV</p> <p>c) minimize the impact of dredging and dumping while ensuring accessibility</p> <p>d) aim for an EcoPorts certification of all ports by 2030</p> <p>e) strengthen and enlarge the cooperation among stakeholders including shipping stakeholders, f. e. a “ Sustainable shipping and ports initiative for a well-protected Wadden Sea”</p> <p>f) co-develop and implement joint activities</p>	<p>eNGOs</p> <p>Shipping stakeholders of the three countries (ship owners, shipping authorities)</p> <p>Ports of the WS (including SH)</p>	Trilateral project / more projects (?) to address specific topics; conferences; studies; network development-management	<p>Common activities on specific topics (e.g. development of propositions for enhanced safety measures, raising awareness of ports and shipping stakeholders on OUV, development of a non-binding, activity-oriented agreement</p> <p>Comment: Continue ongoing initiatives including the continuation of the Sediment Solution</p>

	<p>g) support the implementation of improved protective measures for the safety of shipping in and around the Particularly Sensitive Sea Area of the Wadden Sea</p> <p>h) support the transition to a climate-neutral and clean fleet</p>			Community of Understanding
Climate neutrality (incl. neutral site management)	<p>a) Achieve a zero emission WSWH management system of the Wadden Sea by 2030</p> <p>b) Mimimize the carbon footprint in the transport sector</p>		Inventories, research, project development	Climate Neutral TMAP Monitoring; Climate neutral transport; Climate neutral enforcement and surveillance.
Youth	<p>Youth is increasingly in the picture of decisionmakers, and their engagement is called for. However, “youth” is not a well-defined stakeholder, is scattered and diverse in ambitions to be involved. Similarly, the network of relevant stakeholders is wide and unorganized. Finally, the purposes to engage youth varies: hear their voice, share knowledge & educate, conduct thesis research, prepare next generation as Wadden professionals, etc. . This complex process of streamlining the network has to be designed and managed in order to be effective and sustainable.</p>	(Applied) Universities, Policy makers, private sector, network partners, young representatives from different sectors etc.	Workshops; Events; Summer schools; digital platform for research and internship positions, social media venues facilitating exchange of engaged youth	<p>Final aim: An active and engaged group of young students and professionals that contribute to the sustainable future of the Wadden & a better aligned network in which this young group can experience their “journey” from student to professional.</p> <p>Comment: align with the results of the youth conference</p>
Education	<p>Visitor information, Wadden Sea education and World Heritage awareness raising have a continuous need for qualification of multipliers</p>	NG-E, visitor centres, nature NGOs, NG-ST, (applied) universities, National Park resp. World Heritage partners;...	Tri- or multilateral e.g. Interreg or Erasmus+ project with networking and	Excellent standard of World Heritage interpretation and awareness raising;

	and innovation of approaches. Additional project activities e.g. in the framework of an Interreg project on awareness raising and nature interpretation could support and complement the ongoing IWSS activities for the implementation of the Trilateral Education Work Programme of the “Wadden Sea Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and World Heritage Interpretation”.		co-creation events, training and capacity building courses, study visits to best-practice examples, product development (e.g. on digitalization in education), etc.	innovative approaches implemented in Wadden Sea education; up to date, high-quality nature experience offers; consistent World Heritage communication
WH partnerships	a) Support the connection of SMEs and other actors with WH brand, share good practices on WH brand. b) Enhance partnerships and cooperation between e.g. tourism entrepreneurs and the nature conservation sector c) support exchange and mutual learning on	NG-ST, external partners tbd, funding experts, existing partner programmes in the region (NP and others)	Networking and co-creation events; trainings/capacity building; Meet & Match event; trainings; mentoring programme	Enable active networking: - to establish new contacts, encourage participants to initiate cooperations or joint developments as well as to gain a better understanding of the advantage to develop a project a joint project under one heading (WSWH Brand) - increased number of partnerships
Noise Pollution	Significantly reduce underwater noise in the Wadden Sea by 2030		Inventory, Research, Project Development	Comment: Take into account activities and projects already ongoing
Light pollution	Significantly reduce light pollution in the Wadden Sea by 2030	Universities, Ports, SMEs, Authorities, municipalities, NGOs	Project implementation, further research,	Comment: Continuation of the ongoing activities

			project development, exchange meeting	
Coastal development (incl sweet saltwater connections; climate adaptation)	Ensure the sweetwater influx to the Wadden Sea; Restore barriers between salt-sweetwater; stimulate salty agriculture/aquaculture.			
Climate change	Develop and maintain an overview on initiatives on climate change adaptation (including tourism-related initiatives)	NG-ST / TG-C, local communities	Inventory, workshop	Increased involvement of stakeholders in planning, development, and management Comment: see also STS Action Plan
Nature friendly energy transition				(development of economy closer to the coast)
Sustainable fisheries				