

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 31)

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Online Meeting



Agenda Item:	5.1 World Heritage
Subject:	Progress Report World Heritage
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Submitted by:	Chair TG-WH, CWSS

Attached is an overview of World Heritage activities and projects carried out in the framework of the TWSC work plan.

TG-WH has conducted two meetings in 2020, a joint TG-WH/TG-M meeting in Hamburg on 24 January, and an online TG-WH meeting on 29 April. The next regular meeting is scheduled in Bonn on 1st October 2020.

The main focus of this year's TG-WH meetings was the preparation of the SIMP (see separate document WSB 31/5.1/2).

Proposal: The meeting is invited to note the document.

Progress Report Wadden Sea World Heritage

1. State of Conservation request

Regarding the planned extension of Esbjerg harbour, Denmark submitted the Environmental Impact Assessment for the planned extension to the World Heritage Centre (WHC) on 2 April 2020. WHC informed the states parties that IUCN will review the information and provide feedback in June 2020.

Further State of Conservation requests from the WHC were sent to Germany regarding plans for the deepening of the River Elbe. The draft answer for the River Elbe is still under preparation by the competent German authorities and will be submitted to the TG-WH for discussion.

2. TG World Heritage work plan

According to the TWSC work plan 2019 -2022, the main focus of TG-WH in 2019/20 was the preparation of the SIMP (LD §3), the implementation of the World Heritage strategy / roadmap (LD §9) and cooperation with the UNESCO WH marine programme (LD §10). All activities are proceeding according to the work plan.

TG-WH is actively involved in the development of the Climate Change Vulnerability Index (CVI) and has supported the CVI workshop in Hamburg on 10-11 February 2020 as well as the preparation of the report.

WH strategy / roadmap

TG-WH identified four work topics to be handled with priority with regard to the supplementary budget 2020: International Wadden Sea School, cooperation with the World Heritage Centre's marine programme, the trilateral communication strategy, and the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI, see separate document).

International Wadden Sea School (IWSS): WWF has been tasked for another three years to coordinate the IWSS. (2020-2022) The IWSS micro-website has been integrated in the WH website and is continuously updated with education material. Unfortunately, the IWSS workshop 2019, which was postponed to spring 2020, had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 impacts. The workshop 2020 will take place in Schleswig-Holstein in the first week of November 2020.

TG-WH also discussed an update of the Wadden Sea World Heritage leaflet and video. CWSS is currently working on these products as well as continues broadening the communication channels by using social media and reintroducing a digital newsletter (see document WSB 31/4/1 Announcements CWSS).

With regard to the Wadden Sea WH logo use, CWSS has concluded the EU trademark application for the Wadden Sea World Heritage logo with five additional product classes in order to prevent non-appropriate registration by third parties. The EU trademark registration (four languages) was officially accepted in February 2020.

World Heritage Centre

The Centre requested all WH sites to submit information or links how the sites can be experienced digitally because many sites and/or visitor centres are closed due to the Covid-19 crisis. CWSS compiled the information with support of the regional focal points (mainly existing videos, current social media activities, and website) and submitted it to the WH centre in beginning of April 2020. Because WHC approached the states parties directly, there were two responses from the Wadden Sea (one from CWSS, one from the Netherlands). CWSS will make arrangements with TG-WH and the regional focal points to enhance coordination in case similar future requests.

WH Marine Programme

The Marine Programme covers all 50 marine World Heritage sites and supports site managers in sharing experience, expertise and solutions toward achieving sustainable marine protected areas in the framework of the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In April 2020, the first global e-meeting of site manager was organized (two meetings based on time zones) attended by about 60 people. The e-meetings will be conducted every two months addressing specific topics. CWSS is investigating whether other topics could be proposed to the WHC from a Wadden Sea perspective.

At the meeting, Prof. Carlos M. Duarte presented a global overview of the estimated quantitative contribution of World Heritage marine sites to global biodiversity and blue carbon. From the Wadden Sea, Julia Busch (CWSS) and Kelly Elschot (EG Salt marshes and dunes) participated in the online meeting. Ms Elschot also participated in the online survey on blue carbon and biodiversity.

On 10-11 March 2020, representatives of the Swedish-Finnish marine World Heritage site “High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago” visited the CWSS to exchange experiences in the areas of management, communication, visitor centres, and sustainable development of transnational sites. The exchange has started at the first marine WH Site Managers Conference in 2010 and continued with a workshop of European marine WH sites in Tönning in 2013, and a bilateral workshop in Kvarken in 2016. Possibilities to prepare joint EU funded projects have been explored.

WHC Project on renewable energy

The World Heritage Centre (WHC) is currently carrying out a project developing an online Guidance Tool for the installation of renewable energy projects within or near World Heritage properties. Funded by the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust, the project is currently in its first phase of development (project period 1 August 2019 to 31 March 2021), and will focus on wind energy installations in the Europe and North America region of the World Heritage Convention (whc.unesco.org/en/renewable-energy).

As a starting point, WHC invited to a first workshop in Madeira in 13 - 14 March 2020 to learn about the experience of the States Parties and understand their needs in relation to the guidance document. From Germany, Birgitta Ringbeck (German Foreign Office, national WH focal point) and Maren Bauer (MELUND) participated in the workshop. Both presented case studies (WH cultural sites in Germany/ WH Wadden Sea with a focus on the situation in Germany, especially Schleswig-Holstein). The discussion focused on the topics of identifying preventive tools (preceding the planning process for concrete projects), the design of adequate impact assessments, and aspects related to the relation between strategies/policies concerning renewable energies and the management system of the WH properties.

WHC will submit a first draft of the guidance document for comments by states parties by July 2020, and plans to finalize the tool by December 2020. A final workshop launching the tool is planned for March 2021.