

**WADDEN SEA FORUM**  
**THEMATIC GROUP FISHERIES**

**Meeting TG-F-5**

Harlingen, 2-3 March 2004

FINAL MINUTES

**1. Opening.**

Mr. Arlman, mayor of the city of Harlingen, welcomed the participants.

Mr. Holstein opened the meeting. A list of participants is in **Annex 1**. Ms. Lübke and Mr. Krog had informed the secretary that they could not participate. The agenda was adopted and is in **Annex 2**.

**2. Minutes TG-4**

The final draft minutes of TG-F-4 were adopted with two amendments.

Regarding the minutes Mr. Loos informed that there was no new information about the shrimp cartel case.

Ms. Geldorp apologized for not having participated in the last two meetings. This was due to internal problems with the municipality council.

**3. Announcements**

*Document: TG-F-5-3-1. Results EVA-II study*

The meeting discussed a preliminary English translation of the summary and recommendations of the Dutch evaluation of impacts of shellfish fisheries.

Ms. Geldorp asked if the outcome of the study might have implications for the German and Danish fisheries policies. Mr. Revier underlined that EVA-II was a research and not a policy project. The outcome would probably be used to revise Dutch shellfish policies. This might, via the trilateral cooperation, also have an influence on policies in Germany and Denmark.

Ms. Gubernator stressed that there could also be a direct influence, considering the broad interest of policy makers in the results of the study. This was confirmed by Ms. Mack who stated that also the EU Commission might use the results.

Ms. Gubernator warned for directly transferring research results from the Dutch to the German Wadden Sea, because of regional differences. Mr. Koßmagk-Stephan stated that the biology of the blue mussel is the same all over the Wadden Sea but that the translation of the research results into concrete policies might of course be different in the different parts of the Wadden Sea. They are also very different in the present situation.

The EVA-II study was generally regarded as an excellent piece of scientific work. It was recommended to discuss it in a broader perspective at the coming scientific Wadden Sea symposium.

Ms. Gubernator raised the issue of the preparation of a new trilateral Quality Status Report. She asked why the fisheries sector had not been informed that a QSR meeting would take place, for example as an announcement to TG Fisheries. Mr. Koßmagk-Stephan answered that the sector had been informed about the QSR plans via the observers in the TWG. He stressed the need for separating trilateral responsibilities from WSF responsibilities.

Mr. de Jong informed that the QSR meeting was an organisational one and that there were not yet draft texts to be discussed. As soon as these would be available there would, of course, be the opportunity for commenting. This would, however, be organised within the trilateral framework.

#### 4. External studies

*Document: TG-F-5-4-1. First draft Prognos study*

Mr. de Jong informed the meeting about progress in the external studies. Three studies had now been printed. It concerned the Danish and German socio-economic studies and the Oxford Brooks policy review study. The latter two had been distributed by regular mail to all Forum and TG members. The sustainability study had been finalized and would be printed soon. Four studies were still ongoing. These were the Prognos integrated socio-economic analysis, the Prognos perspectives study, a study into differences in environmental impact assessment in the three countries and, finally, a study into gaps in shipping safety regulations. The latter would be presented at the coming WSF-4 meeting in a special half-day session.

A first draft of the fisheries part of the Prognos perspectives study has been sent to the TG Fisheries. The TG members were asked to provide comments to this draft as soon as possible. Some members expressed their doubts about the added value of the study.

#### 5. Strategy development

##### 5.1 Introduction and presentation of Outline to WSF-4.

*Document: TG-F-5-5-1. Submission to WSF-4*

The meeting comprehensively discussed the different sections of the “end-product” of the TG-Fisheries work, which would be submitted to the WSF-4 meeting of 15-16 April 2004.

With regard to the “Vision” it was agreed to change the order and have “A healthy, dynamic ecosystem” as the first issue. Small-scale fisheries was changed into “Long-term profitable fishing”.

The strategy was composed on the basis of the strategy elements, selected on the basis of the discussion under 5.2 and 5.3.

With regard to the obstacles, Ms. Gubernator requested to underline the importance of external factors determining the implementation of the strategy.

She also stressed the importance of “the right to fish” (see also minutes TG-F-4). The meeting discussed the possible legal implications of this proposal. It was **agreed** to recommend that the Wadden Sea ministers would make a political statement about the long-term possibilities for fishing in the Wadden Sea.

The outcome of the discussions, i.e. the draft submission to WSF-4, is in **Annex 3**.

##### 5.2 Testing strategy elements

*Document: TG-F-5-5-2. Testing strategy elements*

The results of the testing (section 3 of document TG-F-5-5-2) could generally be supported.

The following remarks were made regarding the Strategy Elements:

#### 1. CATCH

**FLEXIBLE RULES.** There was general agreement that flexible rules, i.e. rules tuned to the dynamics of the system, make only sense within the framework of integrated resource management (see below).

**AQUACULTURE.** Best possibilities were seen for “hatchery”, for example breeding seed mussels on lines. Enlargement of culture lots was not considered very probable, but changing the location of culture lots to better suited positions is important. In the long term the option of breeding onshore might become feasible.

**STOCK MANAGEMENT.** It was agreed to use the term “Integrated resource management”. The most important criterion for resource management is the impact of the ecosystem. The central goals should be to have less ecosystem impact than today and to safeguard the reproduction of the target and other species. For the latter, amongst others, mesh size, closed areas and closed seasons were considered important.

It was discussed how important estimation of the stock size is for integrated resource management.

Ms. Gubernator argued that those estimations are often very inaccurate and that there are other methods. The meeting **agreed** that it would be important to have a trilateral basis for stock estimation, including harmonized monitoring.

#### 2. MARKET

**ORGANISATION.** The organisation of the primary producers was regarded most important for the position of the fishermen. Mr. Loos was in favour of mandatory organisation. Ms. Gubernator was more reluctant in this respect.

**DIRECT MARKETING.** Direct marketing appeared to be a complicated issue. Several questions were asked, amongst which how to guarantee food safety and the necessity of auctions. It was agreed that it would be useful to address these questions in a project.

**LABELLING.** Labelling, including quality control, was considered important, also for the image of the sector.

### 3. Structure

**LONG-TERM LICENSE.** Long-term licenses, in combination with integrated resource management, are a prerequisite for the long-term perspective of the sector. They will enhance investments and therefore also relevant for the processing part.

**LARGE SCALE/SMALL SCALE.** There was agreement that scale is mainly related to the structure of the sector and not to the size of the vessels. Small-scale means in this respect that there are functioning ships in many harbours and that there is processing in the region. Large-scale means concentration of harbour functions and of processing. It was generally **agreed** that a choice for either one cannot be made and that both types of structure should co-exist.

**MIXED-SPECIES LICENSE.** The participants considered mixed-species licenses as very relevant, although mainly for small-scale fisheries. The added value was estimated as high and it was relevant for all types of fishing. There was discussion whether such licenses would increase the impact on the ecosystem. For example, a cockle vessel, which is nowadays active for only a few weeks per year, could, with a mixed licence, fish many more days a year on other species. It was therefore **agreed** that such licenses should also be part of an integrated resource management plan.

### 5.3 Selecting strategy elements, Identification of obstacles, recommendations and projects

The following strategy elements were considered important for the strategy:

- Integrated resource management
- Long-term perspective.
- Labelling
- Diversification
- Organisation
- Facilities
- Innovation
- Best Environmental Practice

It was **agreed** that these would be taken up in the submission to WSF-4, together with a specification and motivation (see **Annex 3**).

In addition to the obstacles already identified at TG-4 it was **agreed** to include the very high number of rules and regulations and the unnecessary rules and regulations as an obstacle for implementing the strategy. The aim (recommendation) should be to simplify and harmonise rules and regulations.

It was **agreed** to propose to start a project in which an inventory of existing rules and regulations would be made and that these would be analysed for redundancy, complexity and transparency. There was a wish to start such a project already during the WSF work. Mr. de Jong promised that he would investigate the possibilities (time, money).

Other projects proposed were an inventory of fisheries relevant facilities in harbours, possibilities for promotion of Wadden Sea products, including a comparison of labelling and an investigation into bycatch of shrimp fisheries.

### 6. Sustainability Test

*Documents: TG-F-5-6-1. Sustainability matrix. TG-F-5-6-2. Sustainability testing*

The meeting tested the selected Strategy elements (agenda item 5.3) for sustainability, using the amended sustainability matrix in document TG-F-5-6-2.

The outcome of the testing is in **Annex 4**.

### 7. Information about the further process

Mr. de Jong informed that the WSF-4 meeting would have to decide about the further procedure with regard to the outcome of the TG work. The TG products must be integrated, i.e. synergies, discrepancies and contradictions will have to be discussed and an integrated draft product must be

developed. One option is to install an integration working group consisting of the chairmen of the TGs and one additional member of each TG.

The outcome of the integration group will have to be discussed at WSF-5 (15-16 September 2004) and presented at regional workshops in November 2004.

#### **8. Any other business**

The any other business consisted of several group members trying to assist Sandra getting her car functioning again. Unfortunately without success.

#### **9. Closing**

Mr. Holstein closed the meeting at 12:30 hours and thanked the municipality of Harlingen for the hospitality.

**TG-F-5. Final Minutes. Annex 1**

AGENDA

**1. Opening.**

**2. Minutes TG-4**

**3. Announcements**

**4. External studies**

**5. Strategy development**

5.1 Introduction and presentation of Outline to WSF-4.

5.2 Presentation results testing strategy elements

5.3 Discussion Strategy + identification of obstacles, recommendations and projects

**6. Sustainability Test**

**7. Information about the further process**

**8. Any other business**

**9. Closing**

**TG-F-5. Draft Minutes. Annex 3****WADDEN SEA FORUM****Sustainable fisheries in the Wadden Sea Region****Submission to WSF-4****March 2004****THE VISION**

- A HEALTHY, DYNAMIC ECOSYSTEM
- LONG-TERM PROFITABLE FISHING
- KEEP OCCUPATION AND ADDED VALUE IN THE REGION

**THE STRATEGY**

In order to work towards the Vision, the following Strategy will be pursued:

**INTEGRATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Fisheries in the Wadden Sea and adjacent coastal zone will be based upon Integrated Resource Management.

The aims of Integrated Resource Management are to reduce impacts on the ecosystem and to guarantee the reproduction of the stocks.

Integrated Resource Management will as much as possible make use of long-term licenses and flexible rules and regulations, tuned to the dynamics of the Wadden Sea ecosystem.

The knowledge basis for Integrated Resource Management must be derived from integrated trilateral research programs, trilateral exchange of relevant information, trilaterally comparable methods for stock estimation and trilaterally harmonized monitoring.

**LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE**

A long-term perspective for Wadden Sea fisheries is a prerequisite for the survival of the sector.

Conditions for a long-term perspective are long-term licenses and improvement of the image of the sector.

Long-term licenses will be a central element of integrated resource management plans.

Improvement of the image will include enhancing local support, amongst others by maintaining and increasing added value in the region and by safeguarding cultural-historical fishery elements.

**LABELING**

The position of Wadden Sea fisheries products will be strengthened by establishing a Wadden Sea label. Products under this label will be subject to strict quality controls and will be actively promoted.

The identity of the region will benefit from such an approach.

**DIVERSIFICATION**

The sector will strive for diversification and scale optimisation, both within the framework of integrated resource management.

Diversification and scale optimisation imply the fishing of a variety of species by vessels best suited for this purpose (in terms of good profits and low ecosystem impacts). Mixed licenses, embedded in integrated resource management plans are needed for diversification.

Also regional processing and regional selling will contribute to diversification of the chain of catching, processing and marketing.

#### ORGANISATION

Mandatory national and trilateral organisation of fish producers in producers' organisations is a prerequisite for integrated resource management.

#### FACILITIES

Good facilities in all current fisheries harbours, i.e. infrastructure, education and training (within the whole chain), hygienic control facilities and related services (ship yards, suppliers etc.) are a basic condition for the long-term perspective of the sector and the

#### INNOVATION

Innovation is necessary to reduce ecological impacts and improve profits. Innovation is only possible with proper financial and administrative support. Innovation should be carried out within a trilateral research framework.

#### BEST ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICE

The sector will apply Best Environmental Practice (BEP) on vessels and in harbours. This concerns BEP in fishing methods, sailing and processing.

### **Obstacles**

Fisheries in the Wadden Sea and adjacent waters is to a very high degree determined by conditions set by local, regional national and international authorities.

The implementation of a sustainable fisheries strategy is currently hampered by

- Static rules and regulations, not tuned to the dynamics of the system;
- Unnecessary and too complicated rules and regulations causing unnecessary losses of material and a high administrative burden;
- Insufficient or lacking long-term perspectives, mainly as a result of short term licenses;
- Insufficient support by local and regional authorities of local and regional economic developments;
- Increasing user conflicts resulting in loss of fishing grounds, for example by harbour extension and offshore wind parks.

### **Recommendations**

In order to remove the above obstacles and to clear the way for a sustainable fisheries strategy the following is recommended:

- A Political Commitment on long-term perspectives for sustainable fisheries in the Wadden Sea
- Long-term resource-based management plans, as a basis for flexible long-term licenses and mixed-species licenses
- Harmonisation and optimisation of rules and regulations
- Possibilities for carrying out innovative pilot-projects for improvement of fishing efficiency and reduction of ecosystem impact
- Compulsory trilateral POs responsible for resource management
- Integral marketing strategy for Wadden Sea products

- Active support of traditional fisheries by local and regional authorities
- Trilateral research and exchange of research information

### **Projects**

The following project are considered relevant for specifying the strategy

- An inventory and comparison of fisheries-relevant facilities in all Wadden Sea fishery harbours;
- An inventory of all relevant rules and regulations (incl. Safety standards) and an analysis of national and regional differences in implementation and application;
- An investigation of possibilities for promotion of Wadden Sea products, including a comparison of current labelling systems;
- An inventory of bycatch of shrimp fishing.

### **Annex**

[Documentation of the main results of the TG Fisheries work, including the testing procedure (by secretariat)]

**TG-F-5. Draft Minutes. Annex 4. Results sustainability testing**

Parameters	Sustainability Aim	What is Unsustainability?	Indicators	Strategy test result	Motivation/ Comments
<b>OVERALL</b>					
Safety	1. Safety at sea		- Quality vessels - Training crew	+	Possibly more modern vessels
<b>SOCIAL</b>					
Education, research & development	2. Keeping the young generation in the region 3. Perspectives for young people		- % young people in fisheries - Education facilities	+	
Employment	4. Safe working environment. 5. High-quality and diversity of employment	Low cost jobs	- Quality ships - Working hours	+	Modern vessels
Recreation/ attractions for citizens	6. Fisheries as recreation option		- Vessels in WS harbours - Direct selling - Attractions	+	
Local engagement	7. Local citizens are engaged and participate in local activities. 8. Use of local knowledge			+	
Cultural history	9. Traditional harbours		Functioning harbour	+	Traditional harbours with fleets
Regional identity	10. Feeling proud of being from Wadden Sea. 11. Production in the area 12. Good image sector		- Successors - Wadden Sea Labelling - Support for sector activities	+	See above arguments
<b>ECONOMIC</b>					
Economic resilience: Maintain and develop economically viable and region related activities + Use natural opportunities and natural qualities of region					
	13. Economic activities rooted in the region		% employment in region	0/+	Equal to or more than today
	14. Complete chain of activities		% processing in region	0/+	Equal to or more than today
	15. Simplification and harmonisation of laws and regulations		administrative burden	?	Depends on outcome simplification process

Parameters	Sustainability Aim	What is Unsustainability?	Indicators	Strategy test result	Motivation/ Comments
	Responsible entrepreneurs : 16. profit 17. Innovation 18. jobs			+ + 0/+	
	19. More added value to fishery-bulk		% processing in the region	+	
Tourism	20. Fisheries as a contribution to tourism	Economic developments which are counterproductive to tourism		+	
Infrastructure	21. Optimal accessibility for fishing vessels + related activities		Harbour facilities	+	
<b>ECOLOGIC</b>					
Darkness and silence	22. No unnecessary lights and noises in harbours and shipping			0	
Biodiversity	23. Maintain natural biodiversity		See Ecological Targets	+	
Contamination	24. Avoidance of pollution in harbours and by ships		Quality of air, water	+	
Emissions of polluting substances	25. Decrease of emissions by harbours and fishing vessels		Quality of air, water	+	
Regulation	26. Implementation of national and international regulations for protection			?	Depends on how regulations are implemented. Dialogue with user important
	27. Nature and environmental management			0/+	
Wadden Sea	28. Compliance with Guiding Principle trilateral WS co-operation		Ecological Targets [Should be set according to feasibility (i.e. amongst others dependent upon carrying capacity ecosystem)]	+	
Safety standards	29. Protection of the landscape and nature reserves against hazards	Decreasing safety		+	

Parameters	Sustainability Aim	What is Unsustainability?	Indicators	Strategy test result	Motivation/ Comments
BEP	30. All activities according to Best Environmental Practice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- % bycatch</li> <li>- ratio mussel seed/mussel landings</li> <li>- catch effort</li> </ul>	+	
Global respons- ibility				?	