



Wadden Sea Forum
WG Agriculture Meeting
Leer, 25 October 2010

FINAL DRAFT MINUTES

1. Opening

On behalf of the Wadden Sea Forum, the secretary welcomed the participants of the WSF working group agriculture and guests at Hotel Lange in Leer. Mr Hinrichs opened the meeting at 11:00 on 25 October 2010. A list of participants is in **Annex 1**. The proposed draft agenda was adopted without amendments and is in **Annex 2**.

2. Ministerial Declaration from Sylt and Goose Management

Erich Hinrichs referred to the Sylt-Declaration of March 2010 and recalled the paragraph with regard to goose management, in which it was stated "*and declare their willingness to support the development of a Goose Management Plan in cooperation with relevant authorities, to achieve a balanced management to accommodate geese in the Wadden Sea region*".

The meeting stated that the governments had to take more and reliable responsibility in this issue, also at a later stage, when the management plan will be implemented and compensation schemes will come into force. The agricultural sector offered best cooperation and support for the elaboration of a common goose management plan.

Further, the meeting intensively discussed the spatial dimension of goose management and the different compensation as well as protection schemes. Also diverging protection schemes and differences in contractual nature protection request a better harmonisation. In conclusion, the meeting requested to take into account

- Concerted actions for applicable EU compensation measures;
- A fund for compensating total yield losses;
- Flexible and adaptive management measures and sufficient compensation for "goose go areas";
- Harmonisation of protection schemes (Natura 2000) in the Wadden Sea Region;
- To integrate meadow birds in the goose management plane at a later stage.

It would be of great importance, to start elaborating a common management plan immediately, as problems are increasing. Particularly, defining go-areas for the geese would be a common task of the governmental level and the agricultural sector. This should include a reward for the services of the farmers.

3. New developments between goose protection and farmers interests

The participants informed the meeting about new development in their region.

Kresten Fromsejer briefly reported about a Danish management scheme, bird friendly farming guidelines. As there were too many restrictions, the farmers would not use these payment arrangements.

Meinte Engelmoer stated that the compensation schemes in NL were sufficient, but it was feared that changes in policies would have impacts on these schemes.

Susanne Werner reported about a program in Schleswig-Holstein, to attract geese staying in defined areas by feeding them with wheat, which did not work sufficiently. Also in discussion was to implement a pool of different areas as alternate farming areas when the geese stay in normally used areas.

Erich Hinrichs stated that in Lower Saxony contracts with farmers to feed geese for staying in certain areas was quite well accepted, but the conditions would change rapidly. Therefore, the measures had to be more flexible to react on changing conditions.

4. Future work of WG Agriculture

The meeting discussed the option also to work on management issues with regard to meadow bird protection. The numbers of meadow birds are declining due to changing farming practises and the pressure of predators. A sound management should provide the habitats as well as control mechanisms of predators. The provision of adequate habitats with e.g. higher water levels would affect the farming conditions. Therefore, also a balanced management is needed.

The meeting **agreed**, to first concentrate on goose management but to include management schemes for meadow birds at a later stage.

5. Introduction for the excursion

Mr Rudolf Bleeker from the peasantry Leer and Mr Rolf Bünthe from the chamber of agriculture Ostfriesland gave a presentation about farming in Rheiderland and the current situation of geese problems. Further they introduced the excursion and explained different topics to be seen during the field trip.

6. Any other business

No other business discussed.

7. Excursion

Start of the excursion into the northern part of Rheiderland.

8. Closing

Mr Hinrichs thanked for the guidance of the excursion and for the fruitful contributions and discussion and closed the meeting on 25 October 2010 on 16:30 hours.

Annex 2

Wadden Sea Forum WG Agriculture Meeting Leer, 25 October 2010

DRAFT AGENDA

- Agenda item 1. Opening**
- Agenda item 2. Ministerial Declaration from Sylt and Goose Management**
- Agenda item 3. New developments between goose protection and farmers interests**
- Agenda item 4. Future work of WG Agriculture**
- Agenda item 5. Introduction for the excursion**
- Agenda item 6. Any other business**
- Agenda item 7. Excursion**
- Agenda item 8. Closing**