



**Wadden Sea Forum**  
**33<sup>rd</sup> meeting**  
**Varde, 6-7 June 2018**

FINAL DRAFT MINUTES

**1. Opening**

The chair of the meeting, Cees Loggen, welcomed the participants in Varde. A special welcome was given to Preben Friis-Hauge from Varde municipality and the mayor of Varde, Eric Buhl, host of the meeting. Also the mayor welcomed the participants and pointed to the trilateral cooperation protecting the natural values. He further stated the importance of working together and the need to enhance the cooperation on cultural heritage issues.

Following, the chair informed the meeting that the order of the agenda was changed in order to discuss agenda item 10 the first day. The meeting **adopted** the agenda with the announced changes and is in **Annex 2**. A list of the agreements and decisions as summary of WSF-33 is in **Annex 3**.

**3. Membership WSF**

The secretary referred to the distributed WSF member list and informed the meeting about some changes.

- Christian Lorenzen from Fanø Municipality Council will replace Kristine Kaas Krog in WSF plenary and the Steering Committee
- Hauke Jöns from the Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung will be member in WSF (in the past only society)
- Bettina Taylor from BUND will replace Holger Wesemüller in the WSF business
- Kai-Uwe Bielefeld and Babette Bammann from the county of Cuxhaven are new members in the WSF
- Marina Sanns from the National Park Authority SH will replace Klaus Koßmagck-Stephan

Regarding the membership, the chair and the secretary asked the WSF members, to join the WSF society too to strengthen the administrative level of the WSF. General Assembly meetings would take place in combination with the plenary meetings, so that no additional efforts would be necessary. WSF members who are willing to support the society should **contact the secretariat** on this matter.

## 5. Minutes Steering Committee

*Documents: WSF 33-5.1 Minutes SC-2018-1*

The meeting took note of the minutes and discussed one item in more detail. With regard to the participation in Wadden Sea Board meetings, the plenary welcomed the agreement in the Steering Committee to prepare the WSB meetings in order to forward positions of the WSF. Further, the meeting requested the WSF advisors, who should be preferably chair and vice chair, to represent the WSF regularly in the WSB meetings to strengthen the role of the WSF in the future and to demonstrate commitment to enhance cooperation.

## 7. TGC-13 Outcome

*Document: WSF 33-7.1 Leeuwarden Declaration*

The secretary briefly informed the participants about the program, course and contents of the Trilateral Governmental Conference 2018 on 17 – 18 May 2018 in Leeuwarden. While the first day was dedicated to a Dutch Wadden Congress and a symposium on ports development, on the second day a conference open to public and the closed Council Meeting with the signing of the Leeuwarden Declaration took place. Additionally, a WSB meeting took place prior to the conference to finally discuss the draft Ministerial Declaration and a new constitutional WSB meeting was scheduled right after the conference, opened by the new German chair, Ms Karin Lochte.

Quite a number of WSF members participated in the Leeuwarden Conference, but only few were registered for the Council meeting. At this meeting, the chair introduced the work and achievements of the WSF and presented the ministers and state secretaries with the WSF report "Developments in the Wadden Sea Region". The feedback from the ministers was quite positive.

The main outcome of the conference, the Leeuwarden Declaration will be used by the WSF to define most important work topics for the near future (see agenda item 10)

## 10. Workshop Sessions in WSF Plenary Meetings

At the WSF-32 meeting on 7 February in Haarlem the WSF members agreed to change structure and course of the plenary meetings. It was wished to implement workshop sessions on defined themes to elaborate a better insight and to define, if possible a joint position regarding the chosen topics.

Beate Ratter from the University of Hamburg, recalled the agreements of the Haarlem meeting and explained the objectives of thematic workshops in more detail. The new structure should aim at more engagement than at just receiving information. The motivation for working together would increase by active involvement. This would stimulate vivid debates on chosen topics and could lead to clear positions of the WSF as stakeholder forum. Active involvement would also attract more plenary participants and would relieve the secretariat of work load. The secretariat should be more a facilitator and not only being responsible for the provision of information and the elaboration of contents documents. This would give more room for other players within the WSF.

The following discussion resulted in a broad agreement on the proposed new plenary structure. It was also consensus that an increased number of active participants are necessary for being successful as well as to represent the position of the WSF on defined themes to the political levels and other organisations. Nevertheless, also information and knowledge exchange will also be a part of future plenary meetings.

Based on the taken decisions, it was made clear that small ad hoc working groups are necessary and can be installed to prepare the workshops as well as being responsible for further elaboration between the plenary meetings.

It was **agreed** to implement a first thematic workshop at the next plenary meeting on 1-2 November. For defining a workshop theme, the meeting briefly discussed the Leeuwarden Declaration, which addresses several themes relevant for the Wadden Sea Forum (see list of themes in **Annex 4**). Topics like effects of climate change, CO<sub>2</sub> reduction

measures, marine litter, impacts of renewable energy on landscape and society and demographic changes were seen as future fields of work. Also port development and light pollution were mentioned as possible issues to elaborate on. A focus should be laid on overarching themes, which concerns and can involve various sectors.

The secretariat will briefly **analyse** the various themes with a view on its potential for involving almost all stakeholders and for elaborating on a common position. Following, the WSF will give a feedback to finalize a supporting discussion document for the thematic workshop.

## **8. Culture and Landscape - Use and Misuse**

*Presentation: Mette Guldborg, Fisheries and Maritime Museum Esbjerg*

The Wadden Sea Region holds many treasures of our cultural landscapes and history. In the past, several projects have been executed to broaden the knowledge about the cultural heritage and to safeguard the cultural assets. Mette Guldborg from the Fisheries and Maritime Museum Esbjerg gave a presentation on perspectives of cultural heritage in the Wadden Sea Region.

First, she recalled statements in the Leeuwarden Declaration about cultural heritage to analyze the work of the Trilateral Cooperation in this respect. Following, she presented examples of cultural treasures, visible in the landscape. Finally, Mette Guldborg reported on use and misuse of the heritage. The meeting very much welcomed the presentation, which is placed on the WSF website.

## **9. Cultural Tourism and Wadden Sea World Heritage**

*Presentation: Anne Husum Marboe, Nationalpark Vadehavet Denmark*

With a second presentation at WSF-33, Anne Husum Marboe from the Nationalpark Vadehavet Denmark informed about the Interreg 5A project NAKUWA, which is on "Sustainable Nature and Culture Tourism Wadden Sea World Heritage". The three years project with 6 partners from Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein aims at generating and marketing transboundary products in the field of nature and cultural tourism. The full outline of the project can be experienced with the documentation of her presentation, which is placed on the WSF website.

## **2. Adoption of the Minutes WSF-31 and 32**

*Documents: WSF-31 and WSF-32 Final Draft Minutes*

The meeting adopted the final draft minutes of the WSF-31 meeting in Wilhelmshaven, 1-2 November 2017, distributed by e-mail of 20 November 2017, and of the WSF-32 meeting on 7 February in Haarlem, distributed by e-mail of 5 March 2018. The final draft minutes are also available on the WSF website [www.waddensea-forum.org](http://www.waddensea-forum.org).

## **4. Announcements**

Pieter van Kuppenveld reported about actions of Wadvaarders collecting plastic waste on beaches. A special bag was produced and distributed to call attention to this action. The German Saltwater organisation had a cleaning action on the island of Minsener Oog.

Christian Lorenzen informed the meeting about plans to lay 400KV high voltage cables as overhead transmission lines in the Danish Wadden Sea Region. Six municipalities collaborate to request installing the cables underground.

He further briefly reported about plans and processes of extending the port of Esbjerg. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would be currently undertaken.

Thirdly, he referred to the plastic waste action in the Netherlands and informed that also a Danish initiative collecting plastic had been launched. This project would be integrated in the objectives and measures of KIMO.

The secretariat informed the meeting about the new EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which came into force on 25 May 2018. The WSF has placed a new disclaimer and data protection information on its website.

Furthermore, the secretariat asked for agreement that the WSF members are officially mentioned as WSF members on the website as well as for agreement that contact data is stored in the WSF data system. This was **accepted** by the participants.

## 6. Progress WSF Activities

*Document: WSF 33-6.1 Summary progress report*

*Document: WSF report "Developments in the Wadden Sea Region" (distribution hard copy)*

The secretary referred to the WSF report as well as to the summary progress report to point out actions and achievements of the WSF. A special view was laid on the sustainability indicator tool, an instrument to measure progress in sustainable development in the Wadden Sea Region since 2003. As this project takes a large part of the work of the secretariat, while the use of the results by the regional and local governments is almost not visible, the secretary questioned the value of continuing the efforts on this work.

The meeting briefly discussed the value of this tool. On one hand it was considered that the planning authorities and decision makers would use their own data and expertise instead of the WSF indicator tool, but on the other hand it was acknowledged that the results of the instrument would provide information to a wider community about the progress of sustainable development in the Region, which could lead to new actions, even internal data of the managing authority is used in planning processes.

The meeting **agreed** to discuss this further at the WSF-34 meeting. To facilitate the discussion, the secretariat will **elaborate** a document, which assesses the efforts and investments in this instrument as well as the value for possible users and the benefits for the WSF.

## 11. WSF Chairmanship

The chair referred to the procedure within the Trilateral Cooperation to change chairmanship with the Trilateral Governmental Conferences. After the Leeuwarden Conference in May 2018, Germany assumed the chairmanship from the Netherlands. The meeting **agreed** that this procedure should be taken by the WSF too, if a German candidate would be available.

It was also **agreed** that the chair in general should represent a regional government to demonstrate a sound profile to the outside.

Taking into account that chair and vice-chair should be available in plenary and Steering Committee meetings and will represent the WSF in almost all Wadden Sea Board meetings, it was stated that traditional procedures should be reconsidered so that the best available candidate should be elected as new chair at the next plenary meeting in November.

Nevertheless, the WSF, respectively the Steering Committee will increase efforts to find a German candidate and will come up with proposals at the Steering Committee meeting on 12 September.

## 12. Reports Wadden Sea Advisory Boards and WSB

The representative of the advisory board Danish Wadden Sea National Park, Preben Friis-Hauge, informed about themes discussed in the Board:

- Information about the Mandø project, to enhance nature protection with the support of farmers
- Possibilities of extraction of clay material to strengthen the dikes
- Coastal protection in general
- Cultural history of the Wadden Sea Region
- Fence construction along the Danish-German border to avoid immigration of wild boars to Denmark. The fence would be 68 km long and 150cm high. The Cities and villages are excluded of this construction.

## 13. WSF projects

The meeting was briefly informed about two main projects, in which the WSF is deeply involved and which are co-financed by the Wattenmeerstiftung Lower Saxony.

a) Development and analysis of sustainability indicators in Lower Saxony; this project runs for two years (2017-2018) and analyses sustainable development of some municipalities and the counties in the German Wadden Sea Region.

b) Project to contribute to the implementation of a partner-hub of the World Heritage Partnership Centre; this project runs until the end of 2018 and the WSF will deliver input to facilitate the concept of networking and collaboration between the main sectors, education and science.

## 14. Partnership Centre and the role of the WSF

*Document: WSF 33-14.1 Discussion paper Partner-hub*

The WSF contributes with network assessments and stakeholder advice the implementation of the partner-hub of the World Heritage Partnership Centre. Already at WSF-31 in November 2017 the plenary discussed a possible role of the WSF in the partner-hub.

At the WSF Steering Committee meeting in April 2018, representatives of the Operational Team Partner-hub, responsible for the implementation, started a first dialogue with the Steering Committee, introducing the objectives as well as the process of implementation.

The meeting agreed to continue the process of collaboration to further develop a clear concept for the partner-hub to strengthen ownership on the Wadden Sea World Heritage. Also the added value for participating organizations will play a role. It was proposed to define indicators for the WSF to assess the added value for investing in the partner-hub.

The meeting asked the Steering Committee to continue the dialogue with Operational Team and deliver advice to the WSF plenary, how to deal further with this issue.

## 15. WSF Budget 2018

The secretariat briefly informed the meeting about the balanced budget for 2018 and pointed out that for 2019 a severe financial gap has to be closed.

**16. Next Meeting**

The meeting **agreed** to hold the next plenary meeting WSF-34 on the proposed meeting date on 1-2 November 2018. The host and venue of the meeting are not clear yet, it will either be the county of Dithmarschen or the province of Groningen. The secretariat will take care of this matter and inform the WSF asap.

**17. Any other Business**

Fairwell of Herman Verheij.

Herman Verheij became member of the WSF at the very beginning in 2002. The secretary honoured his merits for the Wadden Sea Forum. Herman Verheij was an active player in the WSF plenary, in the Steering Committee and in several working groups, in some of them as chairman. He also had a great and valuable share on elaborating the WSF reports, particularly on Breaking the Ice. Another merit was his engagement as ambassador for the WSF. Beside these involvements, Herman Verheij was member of the WSF society and member of the Executive Committee for 7 years.

The meeting appreciated and honoured his engagement for the WSF and wished him all the best and a more relaxing future.

**18. Closing**

The chair summarized the agreements made, which are in **Annex 3**, thanked the participants for their commitment and contributions and closed the meeting at 11:30 hours on 07 June 2018.

**ANNEX 2**

**Wadden Sea Forum  
33<sup>rd</sup> meeting  
Varde, DK, 6-7 June 2018**

**Agenda**

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Agenda item 1.</b>      | <b>Opening</b>  |
| <b>Agenda item 2. (3)</b>  | <b>Membership WSF</b>                                 |
| <b>Agenda item 3. (5)</b>  | <b>Minutes Steering Committee</b>                     |
| <b>Agenda item 4. (7)</b>  | <b>TGC-13 Outcome</b>                                 |
| <b>Agenda item 5. (10)</b> | <b>Workshop Sessions in WSF Plenary Meetings</b>      |
| <b>Agenda item 6. (8)</b>  | <b>Culture and Landscape - Use and Misuse</b>         |
| <b>Agenda item 7. (9)</b>  | <b>Cultural Tourism and Wadden Sea World Heritage</b> |
| <b>Agenda item 8. (2)</b>  | <b>Adoption of the Minutes WSF-31 and 32</b>          |
| <b>Agenda item 9. (4)</b>  | <b>Announcements</b>                                  |
| <b>Agenda item 10. (6)</b> | <b>Progress WSF Activities</b>                        |
| <b>Agenda item 11.</b>     | <b>WSF Chairmanship</b>                               |
| <b>Agenda item 12.</b>     | <b>Reports Wadden Sea Advisory Boards and WSB</b>     |
| <b>Agenda item 13.</b>     | <b>WSF projects</b>                                   |
| <b>Agenda item 14.</b>     | <b>Partnership Centre and the role of the WSF</b>     |
| <b>Agenda item 15.</b>     | <b>WSF Budget 2018</b>                                |
| <b>Agenda item 16.</b>     | <b>Next Meeting</b>                                   |
| <b>Agenda item 17.</b>     | <b>Any other Business</b>                             |
| <b>Agenda item 18.</b>     | <b>Closing</b>  |

**ANNEX 3**

**Wadden Sea Forum**  
**33<sup>rd</sup> meeting**  
**Varde, DK, 6-7 June 2018**

**Decisions and Agreements**

- The meeting requested all listed WSF members to consider becoming a member of the WSF e.V. (society) to strengthen the administrative level. This would be an important step.
- The meeting agreed on a new plenary structure. Thematic workshops will be part of the WSF plenary meetings to elaborate on topical issues and to define a WSF position.
- The plenary requested to install ad hoc groups to facilitate the workshop session.
- A first workshop will be implemented at the WSF-34 meeting on 1-2 November 2018. A theme will be chosen prior to the meeting by email correspondence with the secretariat. For this, the secretariat will distribute a list of themes, briefly analysed with a view on its potential for involving almost all stakeholders and for elaborating on a common position.
- The secretariat will elaborate a document, which assesses the efforts and investments in the indicator instrument as well as the value for possible users and the benefits for the WSF.
- With regard to chairmanship, the meeting agreed to follow the procedure to change chairmanship in line with the Trilateral Cooperation.
- It was agreed that chair and vice-chair should represent the WSF in the Wadden Sea Board meetings. A commitment for participation would be necessary.
- The Steering Committee is requested to increase efforts to find a German candidate and will come up with proposals at the Steering Committee meeting on 12 September.
- The Steering Committee is requested to prepare for the WSB meetings in order that the advisors can actively contribute to the topics of the meetings.
- The meeting agreed to continue the process of collaboration with the WSB, respectively the Operational Team Partner-hub to further develop a clear concept for the partner-hub to strengthen ownership on the Wadden Sea World Heritage.
- Indicators should be defined to assess the added value for investing in the partner-hub.

**ANNEX 4**

**Wadden Sea Forum  
33<sup>rd</sup> meeting  
Varde, DK, 6-7 June 2018**

**Relevant themes for the WSF mentioned in the Leeuwarden Declaration**

**Preamble:**

- Partnership-hub
- climate change adaptation strategies for the WSR
- marine litter
- light emissions, darkness
- sustainable ports
- landscape and cultural heritage

**§§ World Heritage:**

- development of partnership-hub

**§§ Sustainable development:**

- reduction of marine litter
- reduction of light emissions, dark sky initiative
- mitigation of climate change on regional level, reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> (request to the WSF)
- impacts of renewable energy
- sustainable standards for ports and ferry companies
- green port concept
- demographic change and sustainable development opportunities

**§§ WSF:**

- sustainable regional development and ICZM
- cultural landscapes, history and identity