



Report from the Trilateral Workshops on Developing a sustainable tourism strategy for the Wadden Sea

Leeuwarden, Netherlands, 13 February 2012

Wilhelmshaven, Lower Saxony, Germany, 21 March 2012

Husum, Schleswig Holstein, Germany, 22 March 2012

Rømø, Denmark, 16 May 2012

Prepared by
EUROPARC Consulting
for the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Preface

The overall PROWAD project aim is to identify opportunities and perspectives for sustainable socio-economic development in the Dutch-German-Danish Wadden Sea region following the designation of the Wadden Sea as UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2009.

In particular, PROWAD is analysing the potential for sustainable tourism and is working with stakeholders from the nature and tourism sector to help develop a joint vision, aims and principles for inclusion in the Wadden Sea Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan.

A series of four participatory workshops, designed to help develop a consistent and consensual approach to sustainable tourism took place between February and May 2012. The events were organised by the ministries, provinces and national park administration in cooperation with the tourism and marketing organisations together with EUROPARC Consulting and the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat on behalf of the Task Group Sustainable Tourism Strategy in the framework the Interreg IVB project “PROWAD – Protect and Prosper - Sustainable Tourism in the Wadden Sea” (www.prowad.org).

The PROWAD partners are:

- The Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (Lead Partner),
- The Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation,
- The Regiecollege Waddengebied,
- The National Park Administration Lower Saxon Wadden Sea,
- The LKN National Park Administration Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea,
- The World Wide Fund for Nature Germany (WWF)
- The Danish Ministry of the Environment – Nature Agency



Ministerie van Economische Zaken,
Landbouw en Innovatie



Nationalpark
Wattenmeer



NIEDERSACHSEN

Nationalpark
Wattenmeer



SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN



Miljøministeriet
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Introduction

One of the objectives of the PROWAD Protect and Prosper trilateral project is to create a Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the Wadden Sea that links conservation and tourism in a way so that the outstanding universal values of the area are maintained, experienced and used sustainably.

The Sustainable Tourism Strategy and its Action Plan will help improve the quality of the tourism product across the entire Wadden Sea while taking into account the conservation and sustainability objectives of the area. It will be a blueprint for the whole Dutch, German and Danish Wadden Sea area and offer the best possible direction for tourism activities and offers within the natural, cultural, economic, and social environment, and its coherent development in time and space.

The draft of the Strategy is being informed through extensive research and consultation, including an initial series of participatory workshops designed to build a consistent and consensual approach. An Action Plan for all partners will contain short and long-term goals. From the many good ideas, current activities and potential new opportunities identified in each of the workshops we will be able to assess synergies, share expertise and develop joint working across the entire Wadden Sea region. It is intended that through this project mechanisms will remain in place for future cooperation, management, action and excellence of sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site.

The Task Group – Sustainable Tourism Strategy (TG-STs) approved four regional workshops as a joint framework for the project. EUROPARC Consulting, working with the TG-STs, prepared the framework, workshop format and provided a supporting and facilitating role at each of the four events. Organisation for each of the regional workshops were by the local hosts, who invited stakeholders involved in tourism such as tourist boards, entrepreneurs active in the tourism industry, public transport, local and regional government, conservationists and other interested stakeholders. Over 220 people contributed in the four participatory events in three countries.

The aims of the four participatory events were to

- help deliver a contribution for the Sustainable Tourism Strategy
- describe opportunities for developing a sustainable tourism strategy related to the WHS status of the Wadden Sea, based on the special qualities and on the need to protect these qualities for future generations
- collect data and information on tourism related activities in the WHS
- develop a stakeholder forum in which entrepreneurs and other tourism related parties are actively involved in sustainable tourism developments

Locations and dates

- Workshop 1: Netherlands, Leeuwarden, 13 February 2012. Hosts in the Netherlands: Province of Fryslân.
- Workshop 2: Germany (Niedersachsen), Wilhelmshaven, 21 March 2012. Hosts in Niedersachsen: National Park Administration and Nordsee GmbH.
- Workshop 3: Germany (Schleswig-Holstein), Husum, 22 March 2012. Hosts in Husum, Schleswig-Holstein: National Park Administration and Nordsee-Tourism Service
- Workshop 4 (called Seminar): Denmark, Rømø, 16 May 2012. Hosts in Denmark: The Danish Ministry of the Environment – Nature Agency, The Danish Common Municipal Wadden Sea Secretariat and The Wadden Sea National Park.

Link:

www.prowad.org

Workshop 1 - The Dutch Workshop Leeuwarden, The Netherlands, 13 February 2012

Hosted by the Province of Fryslân



Presentations

- [Werelderfgoed en duurzame toerisme Strategie](#)
- [Best Practice examples](#)
- [Inventarisatie en Analyse](#)

Setting the scene

(i) Participants worked in four thematic groups covering the following topics:

- Market research, marketing and communication,
- Information and interpretation (its importance) and the necessity of qualified staff,
- The “hardware” - public transport, eating, staying and sleeping,
- Nature conservation and tourism - developing sustainable tourism without damaging the landscape and natural habitats.

(ii) Within each thematic group participants were asked to consider, investigate and discuss the following in the development of sustainable tourism:

- Develop their ideas, goals and actions,
- Prioritise their ideas, goals and actions,
- Research and identify:

- Which parties are the stakeholders in that part of the process,
- Which stakeholder(s) are primarily responsible for this item or action.

(iii) Each thematic group Chair and Secretary received prior guidance on how to conduct the workshop and the Secretaries recorded the discussion outcomes. Based on the reports written by workshop secretaries, a short summary from each thematic group follows:

Thematic Groups

1. Market-research, marketing and communication (Chair: Bernard Baerends: Ministry of Economics, Innovation and Agriculture; Secretary: Femke van Akker: province of Fryslân)

It concluded that there are a lot of initiatives dealing with sustainable tourism, but that a common aim and a common label is still lacking. The WHS status could become this common label, pointing the way for further development e.g. on the mainland and the less visited parts of the Wadden Sea.

It is important that the use of the WHS logo is protected, but this should, however not harness the use of the logo in such a way that potential users walk away from using it because barriers are set too high.

The WHS status and participants who are the proud ambassadors of the WHS designation could give focus to the central image of the Wadden Sea: Enjoy and Experience the Wadden Sea!

That central focus is helpful to raise the profile, for entrepreneurs, for inhabitants, but most of all for enhancing the profile of the place.

In order to reach this goal we should invest in concrete actions and prevent that those actions are frustrated by lack of coordination.

At the same time we should listen to the wishes of new (visitor) target groups. Enjoyment and experiencing the place is key, and improved quality is essential. For growing visitor numbers, nature as such is not the motive for visiting the place, but the quality of nature in terms of the atmosphere of the place and landscape is nevertheless essential. Also, for many people, the experience of walking on the mud-plains is a magical experience. That experience should be possible for all visitors without additional costs. In the Action plan of the Tourism Strategy the following issues should be emphasised:

- Well-coordinated and with clear goals. A central hub/spider in the web is essential to reach this well-coordinated and clear goal,
- Make sure entrepreneurs are part of this,
- Do not create yet another new working group or stakeholder forum. Use existing networks to inform people and take care that focus on action remains intact.

2. Information and interpretation (its importance) and the necessity of qualified of qualified staff (Chair: Herman Verheij: Waddenvereniging; Secretary: Albert Ettema, Ministry of Economics, Innovation and Agriculture)

As an example, the national park training course for tourism entrepreneurs was mentioned. Apart from it providing people to get a better understanding of the place it has been very helpful to forge new alliances within the tourism industry.

It was a unanimous conclusion that the new WHS status should not suddenly change the central image of the Wadden Sea. “Enjoy and Experience the Wadden Sea!” should still be the central image and brand. The WHS status is however not a contradiction to this but should and could help to enforce this image/brand. As a result the visibility of WHS status should be improved, not only in terms of visibility in the direct sense, but also in terms of the meaning of the status and by coordinated information actions for various target groups like inhabitants, entrepreneurs etc.

Make sure that, in particular, island inhabitants have a sense of pride for the place. Every inhabitant should be an ambassador and storyteller! Make sure the people who are at the receiving end of the message are involved (do not develop sender orientated information but receiver orientated information!).

Use social media actively (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, app-store) and make sure there is coordination and continuity. Use ferries, ferry terminals and visitor centres as marketplaces for all related types of information, instead of the present situation (nature information in the visitor centre, tourist information at the tourist information centre etc.).

In general much more could be done with the rich cultural heritage of the place, for example:

- The churches near the Wadden Sea on the mainland are of international heritage importance,
- The very characteristic dwelling mounds on which hamlets were built to prevent them from being flooded during high tides (from the days before floodwalls were erected),
- Military heritage and remains of the Second World War Atlantic Wall,
- Development of specific heritage trails, using smartphones,
- The use of derelict heritage when new tourism initiatives emerge.

Due to a lack of time the subject “qualified staff” was not discussed (apart from the statement on the top of this part).

The title of the report on sustainable tourism in WHS Wadden Sea should mention what it is about in just one sentence: ‘Heaven and Earth on one stage, experience the Wadden Sea’. A further recommendation could be the model that the national parks use as a platform/forum for discussion and reaching a joint vision on where to go - could be useful for the entire Wadden Sea.

3. The “Hardware” - public transport, eating, staying and sleeping (Chair: Liesbeth Meijer, regional coordination board Wadden Sea; Secretary: Maaïke Veldhuis, marketing Fryslân)

The groups conclusion was that any strategic document should emphasise that “experience the Wadden Sea” should be the core message and that an action plan should facilitate hands on actions to raise the visibility of this core message. For visitors to the islands this should start at the ferries.

For the islands a different strategy is needed in comparison to the mainland. For the mainland the wealth of cultural heritage and raising the sense of pride should be central themes in the strategy.

To reach this target, more coordination is needed in order to create coherent information and interpretation. The Wadden information centres should have a clear role in this and ferry

companies and the fleet of traditional (hire) sailing boats should be more involved. Special attention is needed for:

- The use of social media,
- Curriculum on the WHS Wadden Sea for primary schools (6-12 year olds),
- Curriculum on the WHS Wadden Sea for bachelor studies.

Existing ways of dissemination of information and interpretation should be used as much as possible. A permanent campaign informing visitors (and other target groups) about the special qualities of the place and the need to use it sustainably would be very useful (Why WHS?). An emotional (not only your head, but also your heart) link with the Wadden Sea should be connected with an emotional link with WHS Wadden Sea.

Dissemination of information should not only be a task for the tourism sector and conservation organisations (the present situation), but should be a task of every economic sector and inhabitants, in order to develop a widely used and accepted “Wadden identity”. In this way every organisation and inhabitant would be an ambassador for the Wadden Sea.

Final remarks for the strategy document:

- Stimulate the interaction with the agricultural community to stimulate the use of local produce and develop an alliance between local produce (especially the local produce brand “Waddengoud”) and sustainability (Green Key),
- Local organisations and entrepreneurs should be more involved in public transport,
- Develop new types of funding to maintain the quality of the WHS Wadden Sea (especially necessary as government funding is decreasing), e.g. a Wadden Sea Development Fund.

Final remarks for the action plan:

- Organize “door to door” luggage transport in order to promote the use of public transport,
- Improve the possibilities for island hopping and combine this with possibilities for mud-plain walking,
- Organize an annual competition “sustainable entrepreneurship”,
- Develop self-supporting islands and use that as a marketing tool,
- Make ferries to the islands more sustainable with less air-pollution.

4. Nature conservation and tourism - developing sustainable tourism without damaging the landscape and natural habitats (Chair: Ronald Wymenga, regional coordination board Wadden Sea; Secretary: Jeanine Sterken, Chamber of Commerce)

Sustainable tourism is an important economic driver for the region and the landscape and natural habitats as are the main reasons visitors come. The views of participants from this thematic group is that more visitors should not be an aim in itself but, with the proper conditions, tourism can grow. These conditions are:

- Proper visitor management (an example is “Oerol” a multiday open air theatre and music festival on the island of Terschelling with (inter)national reputation and large visitor numbers (50,000-60,000),
- Improving (harbour)facilities for people boating on the Wadden Sea,

- Participation of all parties involved in this process,
- Improving information and interpretation facilities and techniques,
- Improving the use/visibility of the WHS brand as this brand is saying “this a special place and we want to develop in a sustainable way”,
- Improving the visibility of the WHS brand in harbours, ferry terminals, starting points for mud-plain walking, visitor centres, tourism information centres, restaurants, campsites etc.,
- If you want people to support (nature) conservation, it is essential that visitors can have a “magic experience” themselves. This is all about a proper balance between accessibility of areas and the vulnerability of some places (e.g. the mud-plains during breeding seasons or parts of the Wadden Sea where young seals are resting on sandbanks during low-tide),
- Make sure interesting packages are available that support the above mentioned balance. An example: meeting-package combined with guided nature tour and lunch buffet with local produce,
- Proper information is a joint interest of government and the tourism industry. So both parties should invest! A Toolkit in the action plan should deliver hands-on ideas how entrepreneurs could use the quality of nature and landscape sustainably as an asset for their own businesses.
- Good interpretation is needed to raise the level of knowledge on the Wadden Sea, because only then you can fully appreciate its special features as the following anecdote says...”A man who worked all his life for nature conservation in the Wadden Sea retired. A foreign colleague participated in the farewell party and later in the day they both went to see the Wadden Sea. The man sad at leaving said: Isn’t it magic? The foreign colleague answered: What is?”.

Summary:

- Possibilities exist for more visitors mainly on the mainland but improved quality is necessary to achieve this goal,
- Select various target groups and make sure they are presented with a targeted offer,
- Use the enormous heritage potential on the mainland,
- Toolkit for entrepreneurs with best practice and “do and do not” examples,
- Create/use a clear structure for collaboration and use existing mechanisms to the maximum.

Participant List

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K. Wesselius	Province Fryslân
M. Redeker	Gemeente Ameland
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B. Baerends	Min. EL&I
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Jarp de Jay	Amerlander Musee
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N. Smit	
G. Visbeek	De Seedykstertoer
V. van Vuuren	NHN
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K.H.C. Bik	Province Fryslân
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W. de Waal
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VVV Texel
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Workshop 2 – The Lower Saxony Workshop Wilhelmshaven, Germany, 21 March 2012

Hosted by Arndt Meyer-Vosgerau, the National Park Administration “Wadden Sea Lower Saxony” and Oliver Melchert, the regional tourist board Die Nordsee GmbH



Presentations

- [Weltnaturerbestätten - Best-Practice Beispiele aus anderen Regionen.](#)
- [Was bedeutet Nachhaltiger Tourismus?](#)

Setting the scene

(i) Participants worked in six thematic groups covering the following topics:

- Market research, marketing and communication,
- Quality qualification and further education, e.g. (the importance of) information and interpretation and the necessity of qualified staff ,
- The “hardware” public transport,
- The “hardware” catering and accommodation (eating-, drinking- and sleeping facilities),
- Environmental education and nature experiences,
- Nature-conservation, heritage and tourism and potential conflicts: How do we develop sustainable tourism in balance with conservation and heritage as these are the assets tourism -as an important economic driver for the region- depends on?

The Niedersachsen workshop additionally covered the following:

- to provide a definition/explanation of what sustainable tourism means and why it is necessary to develop a sustainable tourism strategy.

- to provide information about the status of a baseline study,
- to identify additional benefits to the region and new ways of sustainable tourism that builds on the natural heritage and its preservation.

(ii) Within each thematic group participants were asked to consider, investigate and discuss the following in the development of sustainable tourism:

- Develop their ideas, goals and actions,
- Prioritise their ideas, goals and actions,
- Research and identify:
 - Which parties are the stakeholders in that part of the process,
 - Which stakeholder(s) are primarily responsible for this item or action.

(iii) Each thematic group Chair and Secretary received prior guidance on how to conduct the workshop and the Secretaries recorded the discussion outcomes. Based on the reports written by workshop secretaries, a short summary is given in the following sections.

Thematic Groups - short summary - based on collected ideas

1. Market-research, marketing and communication (Chair: Kai Pagenkopf Organisation: Tourism Consultant, Münster)

Special focus was put on internal marketing with the main aim to inform stakeholders about the World Heritage status through print media, a standard web page linking all important information about the World Heritage, workshops and forums and other means of internal marketing towards the tourism industry. In particular there should be a consistent use of the Wadden Sea World Heritage logo and key visuals by the tourism stakeholders in order to communicate the topic to their guests. Tourism stakeholders therefore should be equipped with a "design toolbox". Market research, especially basic research, needs to be improved fundamentally.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- improvement of cooperation among tourism service providers, local authorities & associations,
- more regional PR work / improvement of communication & information of tourism service providers & inhabitants,
- improvement of information distribution at the tourist-information centers,
- more participation of the inhabitants / involving them in actions and decision-making processes,
- create positive emotional connections to the Wadden Sea: find multipliers,
- networking with strong partners on specific themes,
- extend National Park partnership / find further sustainable tourism partners,
- communicate and establish events with close links to the World Heritage Site.

2. Quality qualification and further education (Chair: Friedrich Reuter, rural adult education; Organisation: Weser-Ems Bad Zwischenahn)

It was suggested to bring the world natural heritage into the minds of the inhabitants as something special - away from the everyday perception. At the level of consciousness the sense of unity and commonality must be strengthened.

Strengthening the **knowledge level** is also considered as a basis: Well-trained staff are necessary, especially in the tourist information offices. On the **supply side** the World Heritage-tourism has to be established and recognized as a high-quality tourism. A stakeholder network to promote and enhance the language skills should be established (especially English language skills); language courses must be incorporated into training programmes with relevant offers as early as possible (in school education and vocational training).

"Ambassadors" of the world heritage should promote the concept and content of the World Heritage status. These ambassadors should be trained to provide information to others e.g. to act as 'multipliers'. At the international level priority should be given to exchange visits for inhabitants and stakeholders getting to know their neighbours in Denmark and the Netherlands.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- continuing further education in professional know-how, service orientation, cross sectoral content-related knowledge,
- achieve more participation in training courses by accommodation providers & tourist information boards,
- information about the whole offer (training of staff at tourist information offices),
- offer training on the importance of the Wadden Sea and WNH (for using in the guest information),
- better information spreading about training & events taking place,
- networking of educational institutions/visitor centres on the presentation of WH,
- ensure multilingualism in the service,
- recruit more National Park-Partners from the hotel and catering industry,
- take into account existing eco-labels, further develop & introduce them to accommodation providers and communicate about using such eco-labels or to develop another label and/or about the benefits of using a label - introduction of an independent audit,
- develop common sustainable standards for usage of quality labels,
- implementation of sustainability in tourism companies, associations and local communities - communities as models and initiators,

3. The "Hardware": public transport (Chair: Tilly Rachner, managing director transport region; Organisation: local public transport Ems-Jade)

The participants stated that the public transport system is already functioning very well in Lower Saxony. There is a special "tourist bus" in East Friesland, which is very well established and is well-known among the guests. It is necessary now to transfer this model to other areas. The local mobility needs to be further improved, in particular the public transport connections upon arrival at the railway station station.

Attractive fares should motivate both visitors and locals to switch to public transport means. Similar fares have to be introduced for non-overnight guests too. In addition, inhabitants and accommodation providers should be better informed about the fare system. Inhabitants and stakeholders, who are important multipliers, must understand the pricing system in order to communicate it to the guests.

The the long-distance connections from the source markets should be improved by reducing the number of train changes from the source areas to the final destination.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- Expand networking of mobility and tourism:
 - more opportunities for the transport of bicycles,
 - bring bicycle-bus-lines to further places/destinations,
 - networking of railway & bus,
 - ship-to-ship-connections,
 - ensure an annual offer of public transport services,
 - introduce public transport services on demand at central places, e.g. using shared taxis,
 - non-stop, barrier-free public transport arrival possibilities from the place of departure to the final destination,
 - improvement of service on the place (signage / baggage handling service/ E-Bike-stations etc.),
 - incorporate renewal of the east-west connection (north of Esens public transport) into the regional planning of Lower Saxony.

4. The "Hardware": catering and accommodation (eating-, drinking- and sleeping facilities) (Chair: Sandra Langheim, director; Organisation: tourist board Wurster Land)

Following main targets / ideas have been defined:

- preservation of the natural and cultural heritage / achieve more regionality and authenticity,
- improve the quality & authenticity of accommodation of small service providers,
- improve the quality of gastronomy offers: regional cuisine & regional products,
- communication of the regional products & regional cuisine: via specific communication platform,
- Ensuring of availability of ecological regional products - establish a distribution network (use the hinterland),

- introduce a quality label for catering (in the context of the NP-Partnership) at trilateral level.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- introduce regional products in catering / gastronomy,
- ensure availability of ecologically produced regional products for the gastronomy offers,
- Use and highlight regional products in restaurants and promote them in catalogues
- introduce theme menus,
- develop a label for sustainable products in the Wadden Sea region,
- place WH information & information about regional products at the tourist information boards & visitor centres/ensure attractive presentation - establish a distribution network,
- increase the NP-Partnership initiative / stronger promote and inform about the NP-Partner project,
- introduction & usage of the National Park-Partner-Pictogram in accommodation guides,
- development of own standards for use of quality and eco labels - information on different labels,
- honor and support of climate neutral companies & communities/associations.

5. Environmental education and nature experiences (*Bernd-Uwe Janssen, commissioner for nature conservation; Organisation: county Wittmund*)

Primary objectives are the development of pride in and appreciation of the World Heritage. Important points are the training of staff, teachers, and the anchoring of the World Heritage issue in schools and universities. Important measures to emotionally promote the world heritage should be taken, e.g. organisation of theme days, theme tours and story-telling.

On the other hand, the good marketing and communication of these activities through networked publication on the Internet and other media as well as improved communication between suppliers, management and government plays a major role.

Following main targets / ideas have been defined:

- setting up a joint visitor information system in all regions incl. information to/about the sub-regions,
- communicate reasons for the award/uniqueness of the WHS to the guests,
- communication of sustainable offers & WH themes,
- continuing the intense cooperation of visitor centres in the whole Wadden Sea region,
- further development and strengthening of the International Wadden Sea School as platform for WH education.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- develop offers, which can be used by all information centres,
- educational and information material for pupils/information posters,
- Wadden Sea wide projects, for example “Beach Explorer”,
- determine specific species for islands / places / mainland as image-builders of the WH - communicate regionality & biodiversity - develop mentoring & information & offers,
- extend the knowledge of the stakeholders about existing environmental education & Wadden Sea offers - communication between providers, marketing experts & administration,
- adapt the products in National Park Centres (offer only regional products in National Park Centres (authenticity!)),
- include the WH theme in schools and kindergartens of the region,
- develop curricula and materials (e.g. for hiking tours),
- arrange project and hiking days,
- establish WH task groups in schools,
- establish the school subject “outdoor education” (activities in nature and raise awareness of it),
- implement training for teachers/staff - organise an annual trip to the WHS,
- provide students environmental education about the WHS,
- continuation of theme days/weeks/tours/stories/guided tours,
- extend the Junior Ranger programme throughout the whole area.

6. Nature conservation / potential conflicts (Chair: Herr Tuinmann; Organisation: Foundation for the protection of Nature region Friesland-Wittmund-Wilhelmshaven)

The focus was put on actions to be implemented from the perspective of nature conservation to ensure a sustainable development of tourism. Interdependencies between tourism and nature protection should be identified, and a lack of knowledge among inhabitants and tourists should be addressed by environmental education and information.

The National Park centres have to be strengthened and equipped with a range of regional products; otherwise they are not authentic and are untrustworthy. Also ranger activities should be extended. A permanent visitor monitoring and consistent visitor management is necessary. A clear sign should be used to make the guests aware that they are in the National Park and a World Heritage Site.

The main problems to be solved are: the tourism pressure; the landscape consumption and water consumption especially on the islands. Solutions require varied measures, including improved regional planning and a network of services. New, potentially disturbing, sporting offers (e.g. kite-surfing) should be tested for environmental compatibility and controlled regularly.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- to ensure that the regional planning is consistent with the WHS,
- to identify dependencies and conflicts (tourism pressure, landscape consumption, water consumption etc.) and try to solve these problems,
- to make clear, who is responsible for what (to stop the confusion of competences),
- to strengthen the national park centres and to offer only regional/ local products (authenticity),
- to expand and extend ranger activities,
- to carry out permanent visitor monitoring and establish a joint visitor management system,
- to improve the signposting, nature trails and guided tours,
- to offer education programmes from the very beginning,

Participant List

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Raymond Kiesbye,	Wilhelmshaven Touristik & Freizeit GmbH
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Johann Tempel,	Gemeinde Jemgum
Uwe Garrels,	Inselgemeinde Langeoog
Bernhard Jährling,	Gemeinde Nordholz
Michael Hook,	Samtgemeinde Dornum
Thees Haren,	Stadt Norden
Hanno Wiesmann,	Stadt Norden
Friedrich Reuter,	Ländliche Erwachsenenbildung
Bernd-Uwe Janssen,	Regionales Umweltzentrum
Nils Meyer,	Museum Moorseer Mühle
Tilli Rachner,	VEJ
Annette Kummer,	NordWestBahn GmbH
Juliana Horn,	Fahrtziel Natur (P.DVP 4 (M))
Kathrin Bürglen,	Fahrtziel Natur (P.DVP 4 (M))
Jörn Wrede	Vorsitzender Mellumrat e.V.
Ulrich Judick	NAKUK Das Friesische Landhotel GmbH
Michael Recktenwald	Panorama-Restaurant-Café Seekrug,
	R. Recktenwald & Söhne OHG
Michael Recktenwald	Dünenhotel Strandeck,
H. & M. Recktenwald GbR	
Hans Ortelt,	Wattführergemeinschaft

Karsten Uphoff,
Anja Szczesinski,
Ulrich Appel,
Armin Tuinmann,
Bernhard Mosbacher,
Iris Bornhold, Soltwaters
Kai Wätjen,
Ludger Kalkhoff,
Erwin Krewenka,
Claudio Schrock-Opitz,
Jens Albowitz,
Joachim Krug,
Juliane Reich,
Jörn Bunje,
Arndt Meyer-Vosgerau,
Peter Südbeck,
Birgit Fasting,
Bernd-Uwe Oltmanns,
Imke Zwoch,
Oliver Melchert,
Marc Klinke,
Stephanie Rohenkohl,

Harald Marencic,
Anja Domnick,
Nataliya Drozdovich,
Romy Sommer,
Grit Hofmann,

Onno e.V.
WWF Deutschland
Landschaftswacht
Landkreis Friesland / UNB
Ameropa-Reisen GmbH
Wattseglerversammlung
Alfred-Wegener-Institut
Touristik GmbH Krummhörn-Greetsiel
Nordseeheilbad Cuxhaven GmbH
Wirtschaftsbetriebe der Stadt Norden GmbH
Wirtschaftsbetriebe der Stadt Norden GmbH
Fahrgastverband Pro Bahn
Nationalparkverwaltung Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer
Nationalparkverwaltung Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer
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Nationalparkverwaltung Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer
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Nationalparkverwaltung Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer
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Die Nordsee GmbH
Die Nordsee GmbH
Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Arbeit und
Verkehr
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) Wilhelmshaven
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) Wilhelmshaven
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) Wilhelmshaven
Europarc Consulting
Europarc Consulting



Workshop 3 – The Schleswig-Holstein Workshop, Husum, Germany, 22 March 2012

Hosted by Constanze Höfinghoff, Nordsee Tourism Service and Christiane Gätje, National Park Administration



Presentations

- [Was bedeutet Nachhaltiger Tourismus?](#)
- [Was haben wir bisher in unserer Region erreicht?](#)
- [Weltnaturerbebestätten - Best-Practice Beispiele aus anderen Regionen.](#)
- [Ergebnisse der Umfrage zu Weltnaturerbe und Tourismus \(Kurzfassung 48 Seiten, Stand 22. März 2012\).](#)

Setting the scene

(i) Participants worked in four thematic groups covering the following topics:

- Market research, marketing and communication,
- The “hardware” - public transport,
- The “hardware” - catering and accommodation,
- Environmental education and nature experiences.

The Schleswig-Holstein workshop additionally covered the following:

- to provide a definition/explanation of what sustainable tourism means and why it is necessary to develop a sustainable tourism strategy,
- to provide information about tourist activities and existing projects related to the World Heritage status,
- to identify additional benefits to the region and new ways of sustainable tourism that builds on the natural heritage and its preservation.

(ii) Within each thematic group participants were asked to consider, investigate and discuss the following in the development of sustainable tourism:

- Develop their ideas, goals and actions,
- Prioritise their ideas, goals and actions,
- Research and identify:
 - Which parties are the stakeholders in that part of the process,
 - Which stakeholder(s) are primarily responsible for this item or action.

(iii) Each thematic group Chair and Secretary received prior guidance on how to conduct the workshop and the Secretaries recorded the discussion outcomes. Based on the reports written by workshop secretaries, a short summary from each thematic group follows:

Thematic Groups - short summary - based on collected ideas

1. Market-research, marketing and communication (Chair: Frank Ketter, Business Development Corporation of Nordfriesland ; Secretary: Nataliya Drozdovych, CWSS)

There are many areas of activity that is working well e.g. market research, Visitor Survey Schleswig-Holstein (GBSH), supply chain management, development of products etc. The main work areas to improve are a more effective internal marketing as well as information and training of staff and all stakeholders of the Wadden Sea region. The communication channels should be utilized optimally to achieve both the stakeholders and the guests of the World Natural Heritage sites.

The following main targets/results have been drawn up:

- Unique market research with focus on the WHS,
- Better and more effective communication,
- To strengthen the international marketing,
- Quality of accommodation and catering,
- Information packages and possibility to use social media for stakeholders,
- To involve not only the hot spots, but also the hinterland.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- To provide a picture tool for the marketing of the stakeholders (Database Tourist Board Schleswig-Holstein),
- To establish and optimize the website of the Wadden Sea region (Who to reach?) and to optimize the accessibility at internet search engines,
- To provide more information material for the guests (Information boards, leaflets, brochures etc.),
- To strengthen the network and knowledge of all stakeholders through organized events, training or individual interviews with stakeholders about news, using different communication channels to meet the stakeholders 'where they are at' e.g. at channels and platforms they are using,
- To ensure the presence of rangers and environmental associations.

2. The “hardware” - public transport (Chair Romy Sommer, Europarc Consulting, Secretary: Constanze Höfinghoff, Nordsee Tourismus-Service)

The participants summarised that there is an existing system of public transport which is working well. However, additional ideas were discussed with concrete goals and actions. A particular interest was in improved communication about the existing public transport services / offers to visitors and also to the service providers, so that they are confident in communicating the public transport offer to their customers. The offers should be designed and communicated in a simple way and should be made accessible to visitors/guests at the service providers. A transport consultant, to inform visitors, residents and stakeholders about the existing rail and public transport services should be considered.

It was suggested that a regional conference on these topics should be organised in the autumn of 2012 to examine working examples from other regions and to discuss how the public transport service for tourism can be improved in the region, as well as how the present, very good, transport service can be communicated to guests and stakeholders.

The main targets and measures that need to be taken are:

- hailed shared taxi as alternative to lack of bus services (in places where potential demand is too small),
- improve bicycle transport facilities on train and bus,
- make public transport service offers better known and improve district tariff for rail & bus (an easily understood pricing system and integration of ferries - islands have been previously restricted or not incorporated),
- improve the communication of public transport offers by tourism service providers to guests.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- organisation of a regional conference on public transport,
- to examine best-practice examples from other regions, compare and check transferability of good examples from other regions,
- to develop a specific action plan for public transport,
- to define means of communication and to determine responsibilities,
- to inform the stakeholders by consultations, interviews or visits about the offers (e.g. mobility adviser, easy explanation, newsletter).

3. The “Hardware” - eating, staying and sleeping (Chair: Grit Hofmann, Europarc Consulting, Secretary: Matthias Kundy, National Park Wadden Sea Schleswig-Holstein)

The following main targets/results have been drawn up:

There are many things working well. Particularly the National Park Partnership, the DTV classification and the basic conditions. Focus should be put on a better communication of the variety and advantages of existing quality labels, certification and classification systems for accommodation, in particular within the National Park Partnership model.

Certified companies should be better presented as premium partners in catalogues and booking systems, high-quality and regional offers to be better communicated at tourist information centers and with tourism stakeholders. In addition more local products/ecological products should be offered in catering and accommodation, particularly with regard to the World Heritage. Furthermore information should be provided via different communication channels and by training. The development of a USP is seen as very important to bring the natural world heritage to the attention of guests.

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- to communicate with the producers and retailers about distribution channels for regional /ecological products and how to ensure the deliveries of regional/ecological products,
- to promote these products and their producers and to communicate about the WH in general,
- to clarify the diversity of quality labels and certification systems,
- to recruit more National Park Partners by better information about the National Park Partnership Programme.

4. Environmental Education and Nature Experiences (Chair: Harald Marencic, CWSS, Secretary: Christiane Gätje, National Park Wadden Sea Schleswig-Holstein)

The following main targets/results have been drawn up:

There are well established offers and information provided in the areas of environmental education and nature experience. Existing environmental education programmes are run very successfully. Participants are satisfied. The cooperation with tourism stakeholders is working well.

There are five important topics that need to be worked on:

- Education:
 - teaching the contents of world heritage in schools,
 - influence and integrate regional politicians and decision-makers in the development of school programmes / curricula,
- Participation of local people in the communication of the World Heritage concept (“Local heroes” as “messenger”) - networks and partnerships should play a significant role (“friends of the WHS”),
- Cross-border tourism offers have to meet various common requirements (emotional, wild, not depending on the weather etc.),
- A modern communication of environmental education and nature experience offers via new media / social networks to young people with an affinity to new media,
- General problems need to be solved where tourism activities are in conflict with nature protection (e.g. solutions for disturbing sporting activities such as kite surfing, clarification of refinancing nature protection costs by a tourism tax etc.).

The following issues should be emphasised in the Action Plan:

- To inform and work together with schools, other institutions and connected stakeholders to establish a central educational platform for the Wadden Sea region,
- Further development of the well-established “Junior ranger programme”,
- To start a campaign “You are World Heritage” and communicate via television, radio and posters,
- To intensify partnerships and cooperation,
- To inform and integrate local key actors,
- “Public science” – to use Facebook and other social media channels (“e.g. beach explorer”) for publishing natural phenomena,
- To establish an annual trip to the World Heritage in the school curriculum in Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony until 2020,
- To introduce a school subject “outdoor education” (outdoor activities and increase awareness for WH),

Participant List

Jutta	Albert	Tourismus und Stadtmarketing Husum/ Nationalpark-Partner/ Husumer Bucht-Ferienorte an der Nordsee e.V.
Carina	Balow	Industrie - und Handelskammer zu Flensburg
Anke	Becker	FH Westküste
Rahel	Behre	FH Westküste
Volker	Blohm	DB Regio AG, Regionalbahn Schleswig - Holstein
Kirsten	Boley-Fleet	Landesbetrieb für Küstenschutz, Nationalpark und Meeresschutz Schleswig-Holstein, Nationalparkverwaltung
Rainer	Borcherding	Schutzstation Wattenmeer
Silke	Claußen	Harlies Hus/Nationalpark-Partner
Lilo	Cordts- Sanzenbacher	Naturköstliches/Nationalpark-Partner
Daniela	Deutzer	FH Westküste
Teresa	Dieske	FH Westküste
Werner	Domann	Tourismus-Zentrale St. Peter-Ording
Anja	Domnick	CWSS
Nataliya	Drozdovych	Gemeinsames Wattenmeersekretariat
Dennis	Fiedel	Landesweite Verkehrsservicegesellschaft Schleswig-Holstein GmbH
Silja	Fischer	Uni Köln
Brigitte	Friedrichs	Touristinformation Meldorf
Christiane	Gätje	Nationalparkverwaltung SH Wattenmeer
Sandra	Gerlach	Nord-Ostsee-Bahn GmbH
Barbara	Gerster	Tourismus-Agentur Schleswig-Holstein GmbH
Jørgen	Hansen	Tex Tour
Dieter	Harrsen	Landrat Nordfriesland, Vorsitzender NP Kuratorium
Kathrin	Hartung	FH Westküste
Constanze	Höfinghoff	Nordsee-Tourismus-Service GmbH/Nationalpark- Partner
Christian	Mende	Dithmarschen Tourismus/Nationalpark-Partner
Grit	Hofmann	Europarc
Catrin	Homp	Tourismusverband Schleswig-Holstein e. V.
Erco Lars	Jacobsen	Touristikbüro Hallig Hooge
Dorit	Jensen	Tourismusverband Schleswig-Holstein e. V.
Armin	Jeß	Öömrang Ferian
Bevan	Joubert	Bio - Hotel Miramar
Katja	Just	Haus am Landsende/ Vergaberat Nationalpark-Partner
Frank	Ketter	Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Nordfriesland mbH
Michael	Klisch	Gemeinde Hallig Hooge/Nationalpark-Partner
Romy	Sommer	Europarc Consulting
Matthias	Kundy	NPV, Vergaberat Nationalpark-Partner
Astrid	Lahrsen-Loges	Tourismus-Service Friedrichskoog/Nationalpark-Partner
Elfi	Lang	Steinburger Linien
Sandra	Lessau	Föhr Tourismus GmbH
Moritz	Luft	Sylt Marketing GmbH/Nationalpark-Partner
Harald	Marencic	CWSS
Anne-	Marggraf	Kreis Nordfriesland, ÖPNV

Kathrin		
Svenja	Martin	FH Westküste
Kerstin	Meyer	NBE nordbahn Eisenbahngesellschaft mbH & Co.KG im Haus Hochbahn
Henning	Nielsen	NEG Niebüll mbH/Nationalpark-Partner
Mareike	Perko	FH Westküste
Katja	Pfau	FH Westküste
Sigmund	Pfingsten	Naturerlebnis Nationalpark/Nationalpark-Partner
Matthias	Piepgas	Fri Boysens Hus/Nationalpark-Partner/ Vergaberat Nationalpark-Partner
Christian	Pögel	Region Meldorf aktiv e.V.
Niels	Reinecke	
Regina	Reuß	Kurverwaltung Nordstrand/Nationalpark-Partner
Jens	Risch	Soltwaters Wattseglervereinigung e.V.
Telse	Ronneburger	Die Kate/Nationalpark-Partner/BUND Nordfriesland
Hans- Ulrich	Rösner	WWF Wattenmeerbüro
Simone	Roß	Bio - Hotel Miramar
Göran	Rust	Werbetechnik Nord UH, Vergaberat Nationalpark- Partner
Andrea	Scheibe	Nordfriesland Tourismus GmbH/Nationalpark-Partner
Matthias	Schenke	Kreisseglerverband Nordfriesland
Christian	Schmidt	Tourismus-Agentur Schleswig-Holstein GmbH
Mandy	Schröder	Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Nordfriesland mbH
Romy	Sommer	Europarc
Anja	Szczesinski	Vergaberat Nationalpark-Partner
Doreen	Verges	DB Regio AG, Regionalbahn Schleswig - Holstein
Ricarda	Volk	DB Vertrieb GmbH/ Fahrtziel Natur
Claus	von Hoerschelmann	LKN, Nationalparkzentrum Multimar Wattforum
Henner	Wachholtz	Wachholtz Verlag GmbH
Maïke	Walter	Vergaberat Nationalpark-Partner



Workshop 4 - The Danish Workshop Rømø, 16 May 2012

Hosted by Anne Husum Marboe, the Danish Ministry of the Environment – Nature Agency, Anne Krag Svendsen, the Danish Common Municipal Wadden Sea Secretariat and Thomas Holst Christensen, Wadden Sea National Park



Setting the scene

In order to properly introduce the participants to the Protect and Prosper trilateral project five presentations were made:

Presentation 1: *Introduction to the PROWAD-project. What is a trilateral sustainable tourism strategy for the Wadden Sea? Why do we need such a strategy?*

By Jens Enemark, CEO, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat

Presentation 2: [*The Danish Wadden Sea National Park and its connection to the trilateral project – developing together and on our own.*](#)

By Thomas Holst Christensen, CEO, Wadden Sea National Park (DK)

Presentation 3: [*Tourists Travel to Denmark to experience nature*](#)

By Maria H. Christensen, International project manager, VisitDenmark

Presentation 4: [*Branding and the Wadden Sea: “Best practice” examples. Branding experiences from e.g. Holland and Germany.*](#)

By Anne Husum Marboe, Project Coordinator, Danish Ministry of the Environment – Nature Agency

Presentation 5: [*A brief introduction to the headlines of the sustainable tourism strategy for the Wadden Sea*](#)

By Peter Kvistgaard, consultant, EUROPARCS / KvistgaardConsulting

In addition to the five presentations there was also a brief general discussion on sustainable tourism among the participants. This discussion was facilitated by Peter Kvistgaard.

Thematic Groups based on the SWOT model - sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea

The participants were (randomly) divided into four groups. Firstly, each group received prior guidance on how to conduct the work in groups. Secondly, the groups were asked to discuss one of the four elements of the SWOT-model, i.e. strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This lasted about 35 minutes. Secondly, each group prepared and carried out a brief presentation of the main findings to all the workshop participants. The groups themselves appointed the persons to make the presentations.

The groups were asked to base their work on the following themes:

- Target groups and marketing,
- Development of competencies,
- Infra-structure – in general and with focus on tourism,
- Products,
- Conservation of nature.

Short summary from each SWOT- group - based on the groups' presentations of their work in groups.

1. Strengths

Target groups and marketing

- Focus is on all target groups – this makes the product less vulnerable to changes in target group preferences, needs and wants.
- Important to realize and work with the fact that we already at school age start developing as tourists – therefore it is a good idea to work with and influence children, e.g. in co-operation with schools.
- Nature is a strong brand.
- Joint marketing activities across borders – there seems to be a strong interest in this.
- Each season has its own main attractions in the Wadden Sea. This makes the Wadden Sea a year round attraction.
- There are great stories for the media all year round.

Development of competencies

- High quality in the work carried out to inform guests about the Wadden Sea. This is an excellent platform for further development for information / guide services,
- A clear interest in further development of information / guide services,

Infrastructure

- The physical infra-structure is ok,
- Modern information technology infra-structure exists,

- Very good person infrastructure – relevant people and organisations know each other very well. This is highly convenient as co-operation is of the utmost importance.

Products

- Generally good products are offered,
- Strong communication level as regards experiences in the area,
- A large number of products that can be further developed – also in a sustainable direction.

Conservation of nature

- High level of conservation is a strong stamp of quality. Conservation preserves the foundation for nature and culture.

2. Weaknesses

Target groups and marketing

- Strong focus on the German market,
- Strongest target groups not well represented; i.e. persons who buy expensive products, guided tours and experiences,
- Limited marketing budgets – e.g. in relation to entering new markets,
- Lack on joint / common marketing vision in relation to the Wadden Sea – important parties: private enterprises, Destination Southwest Jutland and VisitDenmark.

Development of competencies

- Current offering does not have strong support,
- Strong information services for the Wadden Sea must be developed,
- Staff should be able to deliver clear messages about the experiences. But it can be difficult to convey the complexities of the Wadden Sea using just a few words.

Infrastructure

- Public transportation is a clear weakness – today the Wadden Sea is for people who arrive by car,
- Signs and information posts,
- The connections to the airport in Billund,
- Room for improvements in the organizational infrastructure,
- Maritime infrastructure,
- Lack of coordination of the many routes, roads etc. Also, as concerns the way in which these are communicated,

Products

- Wadden Sea products MUST be of high quality – clear guidelines are missing,
- Few experience packages on offer,

- Narrow assortment of products. It would be a good idea to create stronger links to products not directly connected to the Wadden Sea, but to the surrounding local area.

Conservation of nature

- Protection against major pollution.

3. Opportunities

Target groups and marketing

- Adult couples,
- Danish schools which for years have sent students on week-long study trips to the island of Bornholm. If children get to know an area early on, there is a chance that they want to go back later in life. Also, the children tell their families about the area,
- International schools,
- There is a global trend towards the linking of mindfulness and nature – this is something that guides / information services should explore,

Development of competencies

- Upgrading the information / guide services offered.

Infrastructure

- Easier access to the water than today – e.g. for kayaks and canoes,
- Information infrastructure: make it clear to both guests and locals what happens where and when. Basically: create an easy to navigate overview of all activities throughout the year.

Products

- Teaching visitors to use the water for recreational and exploration purposes,
- Playing on the water (fun on the water),
- Teaching visitors to optimize their meetings with nature.

Conservation of nature

- Linking conservation of nature to authenticity.

4. Threats

Target groups and marketing

- No real direction regarding marketing,
- Lack of measurability in relation to marketing initiatives.

Development of competencies

- Not enough people with academic backgrounds involved,
- Lack of political attention / interest – due to remoteness of the area,
- Not an attractive sector for career-minded young people – e.g. due to seasonality,

- Lack on relevant education programs at the right educational levels.

Infrastructure

- Lack of investments – e.g. shuttle buses, airport connection, highway.

Products

- Price does not match quality generally speaking.
- Laws and regulations, e.g. the 3-day minimum rule in connection with summer cottages / houses.

Conservation of nature

- Lacking understanding among locals for the need for conservation,
- Limit development opportunities,
- Teaching tourist about conservation of nature,
- Pollution – e.g. from shipping industry.

Participant List

Jens Philipsen,	Danhostel, Ribe
Britt S. Nielsen	Ribe Byferie
Søren Hansen	Skærbæk Kursus & Fritidscenter
Flemming Juel Søndergaard + Iver Gram	Sort Sol
Mette Nielsen	Erhvervskonsulent og LAG Koordinator, Tønder
Bodil Glistrup Thomsen,	Turistchef
Annemarie Kruuse	SVUF
Erik Dam	SVUF
Winnie Abildgaard	SVUF
Jørgen Nielbæk	Udviklingschef, Varde Kommune
Tina Farup Christensen,	Udviklingskonsulent, Varde Kommune
Keld Hansen	Tønder kommune, Teknik og Miljø
Søren Rask Jessen	Naturvejleder, RAF
Claus Kjeld Jensen	Museumsdirektør, Varde Museum
Bent Poulsen	Formand, Nationalpark Vadehavet
Thomas Holst Christensen	Leder, nationalparksekretariat
Anne Kragh Svendsen	Kommunernes Vadehavssekretariat
Lulu Anne Hansen Forsker,	Syddansk Universitet
Ulrik Geldermann Lützen	Vadehavets Formidlerforum
Maria Haugaard Christensen	VisitDenmark
Jens Enemark,	Det Internationale Vadehavssekretariat
Peter Kvistgaard	EUROPARC / Kvistgaard Consulting
John Hird	EUROPARC Consulting/Hird & Ko ApS.
Anne Marboe Husum	Naturstyrelsen

What happens next?

The results of all four workshops and the outcome of the online survey on sustainable tourism will provide input to develop a first draft of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy by EUROPARC Consulting.

The draft will be discussed by the trilateral Task Group Sustainable Tourism Strategy (TG-STs) on its next meeting meeting in Tönning on the 9-10 July 2012.

Feedback and comments provided and a second Draft Strategy and a first Draft Action Plan prepared for mid-October 2012 for a second round of consultation. At this stage it is envisaged a Final Draft Strategy and Action Plan could be complete by the end December 2012.

The TG-STs will continue the participatory approach in developing the strategy because broad support by all involved stakeholders is critical for the success the strategy and the following implementation of the action plan.