World Heritage Cooperation Program for Business Partners , Three Countries – One Wadden Sea – One global Heritage

Feasibility Study

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World Heritage Cooperation Program for **Business Partners** "Three Countries – One Wadden Sea – **One global Heritage"**

Feasibility Study

inspektour & NL RNT June 2015

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Colophon

The feasibility study 'World Heritage Cooperation Program for Business Partners. "Three Countries – One Wadden Sea – One global Heritage" was written by inspektour and NL RNT in the framework of the Interreg IVB project "PROWAD – Protect and Prosper - Sustainable Tourism in the Wadden Sea" (www.prowad.org). The study reflects the views of the consultants. The second appendix contains the call for tender of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat.

The PROWAD project 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.

PROWAD is to analyse the potential for sustainable tourism and carries out regional workshops with stakeholders from the nature and tourism sector developing a joint vision, aims and principles for sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea.

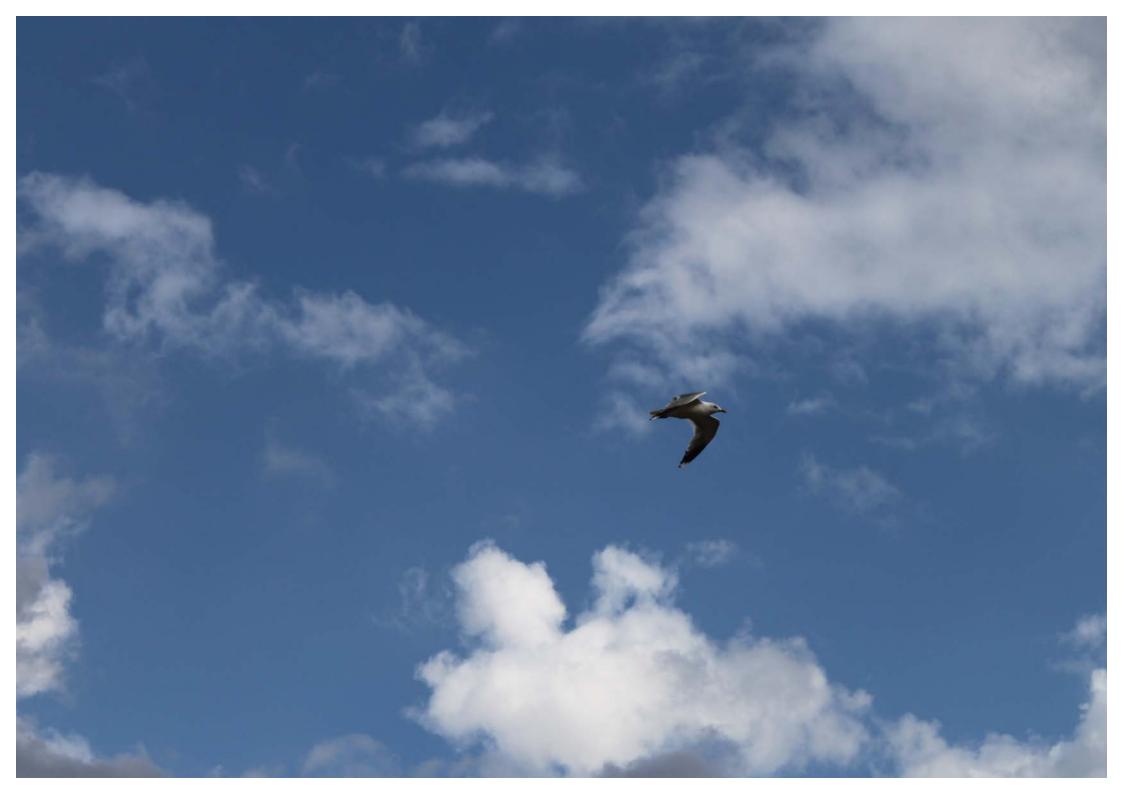
The PROWAD partners are:

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

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Pictures by inspektour, Hanneke Schmeink (pages 1; 8; 28 & 40) and Theo de Bruin (page 22)







1 Project description

1.1 Introduction

With the extension of Denmark in June 2014, the entire Wadden Sea stretching along the North Sea coast of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark is World Heritage Site. A result of a fruitful cooperation between three countries that, within the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (since 1978), have recognized the cultural, economic and ecological importance and values of the Wadden Sea.

Due to this milestone and in line with the ongoing efforts of transboundary protection, the World Heritage title underlines the responsibility of the three countries to maintain the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) towards the world community for present and future generations. The OUV contains different aspects beside the ecological qualities and the unique landscape. The value of the Wadden Sea also lies in the economic activities taken place in the region and the societal dynamics within the different islands and communities in and around the Wadden Sea. The many 'old and involved' organizations in the three countries serve as a good indicator for the abovementioned values. Local citizens, 'nature-lovers', entrepreneurs are - one way or another - involved in the decision making processes of their Wadden Sea. They already are organized in several associations, foundations or other societal structure and express more or less powerful their interests in and concerns about the management and development of the Wadden Sea.

The trilateral cooperation with the World Heritage title as one of the results creates the obligation to harmonize legislation, policies and programs of cooperation and partnership in the three different countries.

1.2 Question

In the three countries Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands are different approaches of cooperation programs between nature conservation organizations and businesses, e.g. the national park partnership programs in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands. The Danish and German national park organizations have their responsibility in the entire Wadden Sea area where in the Dutch Wadden Sea region the National Park organization only serve in three small parts of the Wadden Sea area.

With World Heritage assignment as a new dimension in the Wadden Sea region, it will be necessary to find a consistent approach for the entire property for a World Heritage cooperation program, considering regional, national and international stakeholder, private local, visiting and interested persons as well as associations, schools and further pressure groups. The cooperation should provide opportunities to existing programs to participate and ensure quality and credibility fully aligned with the philosophy of the World Heritage brand. Further members of the cooperation should be able to make use/profit of the distinction Wadden Sea World Heritage and at the







same time support and contribute to the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

1.3 The approach

The feasibility study to be carried out has two objectives:

[1] Drawing up an overview of existing programs and cooperation initiatives in the entire Wadden Region that are relevant to the Wadden Sea World Heritage site and [2] analyzing the benefits of and opportunities for a transnational World Heritage cooperation program with businesses and establishing how this can contribute to protecting the OUV.

Based on these objectives, the feasibility study comprises two different activities: [1] A preliminary study consisting of a desk study, interviews, site visits and a SWOT analysis. Interviews have been held with representatives of the Dutch national parks in the Wadden Sea, the Dutch Wadden Sea secretariat, Wadden Coalition, World Heritage Kinderdijk and the Beemster, Waddenvereniging, Secretariat of the Dutch World Heritage organization Wadden Sea. In Germany the situation of the three national parks organizations was analysed intensely, framed in the German approach of partner-initiatives within the protected areas nationwide. In Denmark there has been a helpful correspondence with the Wadden Sea National Park in Rømø. Further interviews with experts from outside of the Wadden Sea area were interviewed such as a representative of the Instituto de Management y Turismo S.R.L., Salta Argentina and the University of Potscefstroom in South Africa.

[2] Describtion of the challenges and opportunities for a joint cooperation program in the future and

determining how such a program could be linked to existing programs and what steps need to be taken to carry out such a program.

1.4 World Heritage Site Wadden Sea

The Wadden Sea is a unique natural area located in three different countries, the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. It is the largest continuous tidal flat system in the world, formed by various physical and biological factors. It includes sand flats, salt marshes beaches and dunes. The area is one of the most important sites on earth for migratory birds. Annually up to 12 million birds visit this area underlining the global importance of the Wadden Sea. The Wadden Sea is an internationally recognized and valued site and this must of course continue. It provides space for nature, but also for human activities. This requires creative and innovative solutions. These solutions must be good for the environment but also for the people who live in the Wadden Sea region, work and recreate in order to maintain the Outstanding Universal Value.

The world heritage brand

The UNESCO World Heritage brand is a worldwide known distinctive title given to sites that for cultural, historical and/or natural reasons are defined with outstanding, unique values. The holder of this title is obliged to preserve this site for the world community, the present and the future generation. A growing number of people are becoming familiar with the World Heritage as a distinctive mark of extraordinary quality.

The Wadden Sea region is, for many years, a tourist destination; a brand on its own due to its natural and

its tourism and recreational features and opportunities. The World Heritage title can be considered evidence of these nature qualities. For the Wadden Sea region itself, it is a very new situation and hence essential to create awareness, do educational advertising and generate personal identification and responsibility with the Wadden Sea "being a World Heritage site".

Tourism in the Wadden Sea region

For decades, in all three countries, the Wadden have already been visited by large numbers of tourists. Tourism is an important pillar in the economy of the Wadden. In general terms the outstanding unique value of the Wadden Sea is compiled in the following words: the sea, dunes, beaches, estuarial landscape, the extra ordinary light at daytime and the darkness during night-time, outstanding natural beauty, birds paradise, ecological diversity, more or less untouched geomorphological processes, to slower pace of living, 'away from the mainland and 'mainstream'.

In the international Wadden Sea region, about 3,7 million people are living and are partly earning their living by undertaking some economical activity somehow. The economic activities are taking place in several different sectors: agriculture, fisheries, energy & mining, harbours and industry, business services, education and last but not least leisure and tourism. Harbour related industries, agriculture and tourism are the most important sectors.

A couple of general facts can be given concerning the different socio-economic development and activities.

The Wadden Sea is a relatively sparsely populated area;





- The development of population in the Wadden Sea area remains significantly behind the development in areas outside the region.
- The existing employment has decreased in recent years and remains still significantly behind the national situation; unemployment is higher than the national level;
- Disposable income is lower than the national level; is the difference in recent years there have risen slightly;
- The level of training and education of the unemployed in the Wadden area average lower than the national level in the three countries;
- The development of internet access isn't very well developed in main parts of the area;
- The whole region is confronted with the challenge of protecting the natural site that is essential for their living.

In the Netherlands, tourism is basically limited to the Wadden islands. The mainland has, in contrast to Germany, only a few touristic hot spots, for example Den Helder, Harlingen and the Lauwersmeer region. But although Germany is offering many touristic destinations of interest, the Wadden Sea is one of its own and one of the favourite travel destinations attracting many tourists along the coast and hence ensuring the economical background of many businesses in that region. People living close to the Wadden Sea in Denmark have a really high identification with their nature and tourists are intensely visiting the area as one of the main touristic attractions. Around 10 million tourists visit the international Wadden Sea region, spending an average of 5 nights per holiday. Approximately 30 - 40 million daytrips are carried out in this region. The annual expenditure by these tourists is estimated around 3 -5 billion euros.





2 Institutional landscape

2.1 Denmark

With a population of 5.6 Mio, Denmark is the less populated country of the three Wadden Sea nations owing the longest coastline of 7314 km including the 406 islands.

The Danish Ministry of the Environment – Nature Agency or "Naturstyrelsen" is responsible for nature restoration, national parks, leisure activities and forestry. The agency manages about 200.000 hectares of forests and nature land owned by the Ministry of Environment. Important nature themes for Denmark are restoring nature areas and afforestation. There are 252 Natura 2000 areas, 261 sites of community importance and 113 Special Protection Areas covering 8.3 % of the land and 17,7 % of the sea and further 27 wetland areas have been designated as Ramsar areas. In total Denmark owes six UNESCO world heritage sites, thereof three natural sites of which one is the Wadden Sea since 2014 that at the same time is one of the four national parks. Still the level of familiarity with the different protected areas is limited, as shown in figure 2.1 (next page) presenting the results of a survey from 1.000 local habitants in the years 2013 and 2014.

The Danish Wadden Sea National Park is established as an independent state foundation under the Ministry of Environment. The National Park is under the governance of the National Park Board with 15 members (Ministry of Environment, municipalities, advisory councils, NGOs and interest groups). To advice the Board an Advisory Council with 30 members coming from relevant organizations or specific local communities has been appointed. The Danish national park covers the conservation area, as well as the entire islands and parts of the mainland.

2.2 Germany

Germany has a population of 80 Million people, living in 16 constituent states, 22 Government Districts, 402 municipal level districts, 295 rural districts and 07 urban districts.

Overall in Germany there are 15 National Parks, 104 nature parks and 16 Biosphere Reserves (15 UNESCO). The Wadden Sea areas in Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg and Niedersachsen are set out as national parks and biosphere reserves. The German part of Wadden Sea in the three federal states was inscribed together with the Dutch Wadden Sea on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2009.

In Schleswig-Holstein, the National Park Administration is subordinated to the Schleswig-Holstein Ministry of the Environment. Important decisions concerning the National Park are discussed by the National Park Committees of Nordfriesland and Dithmarschen. The National Park Administration is strongly supported by nature conservation





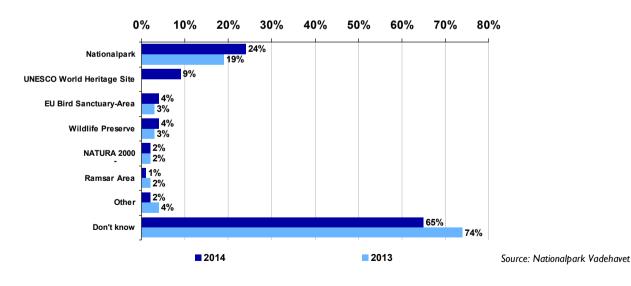


Figure 2.1: The level of familiarity with the different protected areas in Denmark



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associations. They warden National Park areas and run National Park information centers, support environmental monitoring and lead numerous excursions in the National Park. In Hamburg, the national park administration is part of the agency for urban development and environment based in Hamburg, but the domicile for the fieldwork is based directly on Neuwerk. In Niedersachsen, the national park is part of the federal state Niedersachsen and hence subordinated to the National Park Administration in Wilhelmshaven and is part of the Niedersachsen Ministry of Environment and Climate Protection and further institutions supporting nature conservation.

One of the most important economic factor for residents of the National Park area is tourism. In Schleswig-Holstein alone it contributes to 37 percent of people's income on the Schleswig-Holstein North Sea coast, receiving 2 million overnight stays and 16 million day visitors per year and offering over 10,000 trips and tidal flat tours, boat tours with wildlife watching and similar activities by nature conservation organizations, National Park tidal flat guides and National Park rangers.

2.3 The Netherlands

The Netherlands is a small, densely populated country with 16,9 million citizens living on a total surface of 41.543 km2. The country consists of 12 provinces and 393 municipalities. There are 20 national parks in the entire country and 163 Natura 2000 sites.

In the Netherlands the conservation status of the Wadden Sea is determined by the planning procedure agreements (Planologische Kernbeslissing PKB), the third plan for the Wadden Sea (derde Nota Waddenzee) and the National Nature Network (the new name of the formal Main Ecological Infrastructure - Ecologische Hoofdstructuur). These policy plans provide the measures needed for the development of the Wadden Sea area, including the developments of recreation activities and fisheries. These plans are in compliance to the Nature Flora and fauna conservation laws (Trilateral Wadden Sea World Heritage Foundation, 2014. Roel During, Ingrid Coninx and Vanya Simeonova)

In the Netherlands there is no umbrella organization that manages the entire Wadden Sea area. The management is partly covered by the national government (eg. the Wadden Sea by Rijkswaterstaat and Ministry of Economic Affairs), partly by provinces (Noord-Holland, Friesland, Groningen) and Waterboards and partly by the municipalities (5 +12 island - and mainland municipalities). The nature reserves are managed by various management conservation organizations, including the State Forestry Commission, Natuurmonumenten and the Fryske Gea which are the key players in this area. The national parks In Netherlands, 3 of which are in the Wadden Sea (Duinen van Texel, Schiermonnikoog and Lauwersmeer), have a special status, but are managed by the nature management and conservation organizations. However, the total area of these 3 national parks is very small compared to the total area of nature in the Wadden Sea and do not cover the World Heritage area Wadden Sea.

At the same time efforts have been made to solve the problem of coordinating competing powers of national, regional, and local authorities, and those of numerous other departments and institutions. Currently a new law proposal on Nature Protection (in 2012) is discussed with the Parliament. Actually the government amends this proposal and incorporates numerous reactions that were given in a concerted action by NGOs, which took place at the 13th of January 2014.

In order of the Ministers of Infrastructure and Environment and Economic Affairs an approach is started to improve the management and monitoring of the Wadden Sea. In 2018 task like management, monitoring, promotion, education, surveillance and control have to better coordinated without touching the topics of policy and organisation.

2.4 Summarizing overview

The following table summarizes the main aspects of the different institutional landscapes.





 Table 2.2: A summary of the different institutional landscapes

| | The Netherlands | Germany | Denmark |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| Structure | National government 12 provinces 393 Municipalities | National government Republic 16 constituent states 22 Government Districts 402 municipal level districts 295 rural districts 107 urban districts | National government 5 regions 98 municipalities |
| Number & type of parks | 20 National parks; 3 NP's in Wadden Sea region 163 N2000 sites | 15 National Parks; 3 NPs in Wadden Sea Region 104 nature parks 16 biosphere Reserves (15 UNESCO) | 4 National Parks 252 Natura 2000 areas 261 sites of community importance 113 special protection areas 27 wetland areas |
| Responsibilities | Provinces (policy and providing money to) Nature management- & conservation org. Several NGO's | States and park services | Danish Ministry of the Environment – Nature agency |







3. Actual partnerships in the three countries

3.1 Partnership Program in Denmark

Denmark's plan for the Nationalpark Vadehavet 2013-2018 contains 12 main targets. Three of them involve the development of tourism and leisure offers (target 6), the collaboration of local protagonists (target 8) and the general development of communication and cooperation (target 10). One main component to reach these targets is the national park partner program founded in 2014.

The idea of the partner program in the Danish national park area is to spread the awareness and knowledge about the national park by attracting two main target groups:

1) Locals by creating "local ownership", improve their knowledge about the site and finally to give them a reason wanting to live in the region,

2) Guests by giving them a further reason repetitively visit the destination, talk about the region and educate them about the sensibility of the area.

Figure 3.1 (next page) shows the idea of spreading the national park information. The partnership is optional for any business in the region that is related to tourism. As per May 2015 there are in total 124 national park partners in nine different categories: rangers (48), leisure (4), arts (2), accommodation (30), education (4), events (8), non-food (1), food – products and gastronomy (24), further (3). A partner committee has been installed as the core "controlling system" of the partnership. The committee assembles people from very different areas such as: agricultural, tourism, tour operators and the national park board.

The further development of the partnership program follows the bottom-up principle, e.g. in workshops with the partners themselves basic questions, challenges and courses of action are discussed and decided.

There are two approaches to become a partner: Firstly, the attention of the potential partner is called due to marketing via different channels. The application then has to be submitted online through the website. The partner committee will then decide whether the applicant can become a partner, what preconditions might have to be fulfilled or whether the applicant does not fit into the program. Secondly, the partner committee claims potential partners that then will be contacted by the partner program and are asked whether a partnership with the national park makes sense to them.

On-site-visits are taking place to some extent. Advantages for stakeholders that become partner of the national park program are various, e.g.

- the right to use the logo of the national park,
- their name and website is linked to nationalparkvadehavet.dk and publicized in further articles and news-feeds,
- a choice of workshops,
- an enamel plate, marketing materials and
- a local network with like-minded people interested in the Wadden Sea area.





Figure 3.1: The spreading the national park information

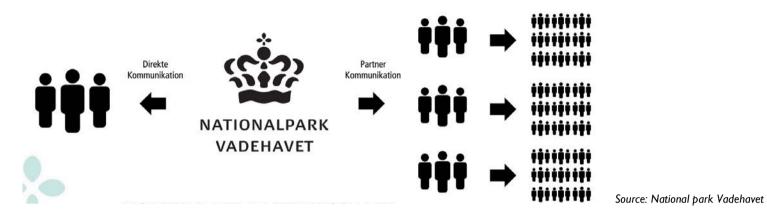


Figure 3.2: 3-Steps-procedure of the National Park Partner Program in Schleswig-Holstein

| Submit questionnaires | > On-site-visit | > Decision by Steering Board |
|---|--|---|
| General questions about: A) Identification B) Environmental efforts C) Quality D) Information E) Cooperation Category- specific questions If applicable: Viabono → Completed questionnaires to be sent to National Park Administration (NPA) | A representative of the NPA visits the site in order to: • Get to know each other • Clarify questions • Inspect the fulfillment of criteria concerning the partnership and if applicable concerning Viabono | The National Park Partner Steering Board decides about the acceptance as a National Park Partner. If necessary: objective agreements. Meetings take place every other months. |



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Source: National park Schleswig-Holstein

The board of the World Heritage is in the decision process of deciding whether the Danish partners are on the positive list of stakeholders allowed to use the World Heritage logo in an editorial context according to the guidelines for the use of the logo. To be a good partner the committee is expecting the stakeholder to communicate very well on the Wadden Sea and spread the information and brochures of the national park, respectively including links and logos on own websites and materials and so on. It is obligated to participate in one workshop a year. Restaurants have to offer at least one menu permanently with ingredients of the Wadden Sea and retailers are asked to offer at least three national park-products. The partnership dues two years, after that a recertification takes place. Partners pay neither to become nor to be a partner. The partner program is based on confidence.

Perspectival, the committee and the partners are working on a code of conduct, random inspections, food provisions, an art committee and a new certification system for field guides.

Although the start of the partner program was very quick and effective there are four main challenges the committee is facing: (1) development of value and visibility of the partners, (2) finding proper partners, (3) contract suitable manufacturer and (4) satisfy the different needs of the variety of partners.

3.2 Partnership programs in Germany

Since the year 2000 there exist the idea of publicprivate partnership cooperation within the natural landscapes and mainly touristic business in Germany. Partners are certified according to nationwide harmonized minimum standards and criteria for protected areas developed by Europarc. Each of the 22 partner programs have additionally developed distinctive criteria on top of the minimum standards. The by now more than 800 partners in the whole country are understood as ambassadors for conservation and protection of their natural landscape.

On a regional level there are six main targets:

- Protection of nature and culture, and the support of a sustainable use of land and resources
- Better information and awareness raising of guests
- Close contact and cooperation of conservation organisation and the businesses
- Building a network of regional, like-minded businesses
- Advancement of subsistence strategy, regional economic cycles and sustainable regional development
- Increasing acceptance for natural landscapes by locals, policy and decision maker

Two of the 22 German partner programs are located in the Wadden Sea region: "National park-Partners in Schleswig-Holstein" and "National park- and Biosphere reserve Partners in Niedersachsen". These two initiatives will be explained in more detail in the following.

In both partner programs partners have to fulfil high quality and environmental criteria and be able to inform guests and customers professionally about the National Park, World Heritage and the region. The self-concept of the partner-program is summarized in the following statement: "We support nature conservation and the National Park/Biosphere reserve idea. We want to convince the public of the National Park/Biosphere reserve idea, reach (new) guests and develop our region in a sustainable way." Reinforcing the statement there are eight main ideas and goals of the partnership programs:

- Identification with the idea and goals of the National Park
- Promotion of sustainable and high-quality tourism offers
- Conservation and protection of the Wadden Sea
- Communication and networking
- Raising awareness among and spreading information to the guests
- Role model for further partners
- Appreciation and respect
- Establish and empower the brand of the National Park Partner Program

National Park Partner Program in Schleswig-Holstein

Regional businesses from Dithmarschen and Nordfriesland with commitment to the National park and sustainable tourism can become National Park Partners in Schleswig-Holstein since 2003.

Applicants for the National Park Partner Program in Schleswig-Holstein have to pass through a 3-stepprocedure (see information page 18)

The checkup is conducted by the National park administration collaboratively with two external partners (1) Viabono doing the sustainable-check and (2) inspektour – tourism- and leisure institute doing the overall external evaluation.

The decision whether an applicant is allowed to become a partner is finally taken by the National Park Partner Steering Board. After a 3-year contract period the re-certification takes place by the NPA, Viabono and inspektour. The fees are depending on the size of





| | Turn overs | Total fee <i>per yea</i> |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Accommodation Contractory Commoitor Tour | up to 100.000 € | € 150 |
| Accommodation, Gastronomy, Campsites, Tour | 100.001 – 500.000 € | € 330 |
| certified agriculture businesses with on-site-shop | more than 500.000 € | € 880 |
| | Accommodation capacity | |
| Accommodation for groups | up to 100 | € 250 |
| | 100-200 | € 400 |
| | more than 200 | € 500 |
| | Overnight stays | |
| Local municipalities | per year | |
| | up to 100.000 | € 400 |
| | 100.001 – 500.000 € | € 700 |
| | more than 500.000 € | € 900 |
| | Overnight stays | |
| | per year | |
| Tourist information | up to 100.000 | € 250 |
| | 100.001 – 500.000 € | € 400 |
| | more than 500.000 € | € 600 |
| National Park Guides, | Turn overs | |
| Museums & Galleries | none | 50 € |
| | Turn overs | |
| Shipping and rail companies, bike rentals | up to 100.000 € | 150 € |
| F | 100.001 – 500.000 € | 300 € |
| | more than 500.000 € | 800 € |

Table 3.3. Fees of national park partners per June 2015



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the business and have a range of $150 - 900 \in$ per year (divided between NPA and Viabono). The fees are used for projects within the national park partnership program (e.g. website, flyer). Table 3.3 on page 20 is showing the fees of national park partners as per June 2015.

The Steering Board is composed of regional representatives of the national park administration, regional marketing agency (NTS), national park partners and guides, conservation agency. There are about six meetings of the committee a year. The idea is having an independent committee deciding about (1) the application acceptance, if necessary (2) further requirements of applicants, (3) marketing strategies, (4) further topics concerning the National Park Partners, (5) providing advice and support to the National Park Administration. Taking decisions together ensures wide regional acceptance.

By now there are about 140 partners in the following categories: tourism organizations, tour operators, National Park guides, railway and shipping companies, accommodation, gastronomy, local municipalities, green NGOs, exhibitions & galleries, water sport, bike rentals.

Additionally to the national park partners there are eight national park schools that broach the theme national park in their education.

National park- and Biosphere reserve Partners Niedersachsen

Since 2000, guides of the Wadden Sea could become partner of the national park. For about four years the National Park administration in Wilhelmshaven is managing the partner program of the national park and biosphere reserve for further categories. Applicants for the Partner Program can decide on their own whether they want to apply for the national park or biosphere reserve partner program. The application process, the benefits, the treatment will be the same, but the identification of the applicant might not be the same, hence the applicant can choose. The application process in Niedersachsen is very similar to the one in Schleswig-Holstein, but there is no external evaluation; reviews are based existing certifications. Further, there are no fees for the partners. The Steering Board owns the same tasks and responsibilities like the one in Schleswig-Holstein and is composed of regional representatives of the national park administration, tourism industry, economy, politics, conservation agency, agriculture and science.

By now there are about 45 partners in the following categories: tourism organizations, National Park guides, accommodation, gastronomy, educational establishments, fisheries and agriculture. The benefits for National Park Partners in Schleswig-Holstein and National Park/Biosphere reserve partners in Niedersachsen are the following:

- Positioning as a National Park- and environmental friendly business
- Direct contact with the National Park Administration
- A range of education and trainings for partners and their employees
- Network of partners, e.g. joint efforts, offers and projects
- Representation on a professional website, facebook and at trade and road shows, exhibitions etc.
- Access to an online data base with high quality pictures for own use

- Flyer and brochures of National Park Partner will be displayed in national park information centers
- Comprehensive NP information material available, e.g. info-plates, table sets, marketing materials, flyer, brochures, pins, flags
- Promote their own business as National Park Partner by using the logo
- Use of the Wadden Sea World Heritage logo is possible if appropriate guidelines are respected

Benefits of the National Park Partnership for the national park and nature conservation

- are ambassadors of the National Park idea
- inform about the National Park in a friendly and qualified way
- operate sustainable
- collaborate with each other and with the NPA
- provide certified high quality (good service, regionally integrated, environmental are)
- are certified by Viabono (accommodation, gastronomy, campsites, tour operators, touristic stakeholders & companies, bio-certified agricultural businesses with on-site-shops)
- exemplify and promote a sustainable and environmental friendly behaviour → important multipliers and role models
- give important support in political debates on conservation topics (e.g. in mussel conflict, NP evaluation)
- take part in NP+WH activities/events \rightarrow additional work and staff resources for NPA

Overall the partner programs are well accepted in the particular politics and mainly known in the region. Partner-programs overall in Germany still have to



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Picture of magazine Waddenvereniging



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work substantially on the reputation within the locals and travellers.

3.3 Partnership programs in the Netherlands

There has not been a long tradition in partnership programs around natural areas and national parks in general. On an individual basis and for many years, national park management organizations have given out concessions for tourism activities such facilitating catering services, fishing licenses, exploitation of a lodging accommodation or an organization for photo safaris.

Host/Ambassador program

About 10 years ago, IVN (Dutch Institute for Nature education and Sustainability (NGO)), responsible for education and information in the national parks, started with a hospitality program that was carried out in almost all national parks in the country. National Parks as well as other natural areas and national landscape participate in this project. The goal of the program is to inform local SME businesses about the national parks, its values, opportunities and other background information. With this information the local entrepreneurs and their employees are better able to inform their visitors and perform as a host / ambassador for national park visitors.

The only criterion for becoming a National Park Host (or ambassador) is partaking in the course (3 evenings). During the meetings, among other topics, attention is given to the history, fishing, cultural, special venues, tourist and recreational opportunities, local products and typical flora and fauna of the area. After this exchange of information and education, the new host and entrepreneurs is listed on the website and is allowed to present a small but visible shield on his front door or porch stating 'being an official host and partner of the national park'. Twice a year the National Park organisation is holding meetings for the network of 'qualified hosts' and entrepreneurs to share new and or extra information. Although not obligatory, there is some social pressure to attend these meetings and show the local commitment. In most national parks the ambassadors don't have to pay a contribution, but some (f.e. Schiermonnikoog) partners pay a contribution of \in 75,= per year. Besides the course, meetings and shield, in most national parks (also those in the Wadden Sea area) there is cooperation between the NP-organization and the companies on marketing, organizing events, merchandising of products and services (f.e. arrangements).

The provinces mostly subsidize the entire program. Around the three national parks in the Wadden Sea; Duinen van Texel, Schiermonnikoog and Lauwersmeer, a total number of approximately 150 entrepreneurs/companies are partaking.

Green Key

Companies who want to become in partner of ambassador of the national park don't have to fulfil certain criteria of sustainability or running their business in a society responsible manner. Companies, who want certification on these issues, mostly take part in the program of the Green Key Foundation (KMVK). For the entire Dutch tourist and hospitality sector this organisation is certifying accommodations, events, marina's, etc in order to encourage these companies to care for the environment and to make this policy know to guests and other parties, such as the local authority and residents in the area. Each company can do this step by step, moving from bronze to silver and then

to gold.

Accommodations with a Green Key meet strict standards in terms of sustainability, the environment and CSR. These standards focus on internal and external communications, sustainability in the management of the company, use of energy, gas and water, waste management, transportation, food & beverage, green maintenance, durable measures taken in office, paper consumption, type of printing, sustainable procurement etc. For the various business sectors, there are different standards.

All the companies must comply with all mandatory standards and a number of optional standards. The compulsory criteria are basic environmental standards, such as recording and saving of gas, water and electricity and reducing the amount of (residual) waste. The optional standards go a step further. This includes measures such as the use of renewable energy, eco-conscious cleaning or purifying waste water itself

The standards are set by the Board of the Foundation KMVK and meet international standards of Green Key which determined again by the Executive Board of FEE and the International Steering Committee Green Key. As written, the Green Key consists of mandatory (m) and optional (o) standards. All mandatory standards must be met. The Green Key level, i.e. bronze (minimum mandatory level), silver or gold, is determined by the number of optional measures that are introduced and implemented in the company. The entrepreneur or company is free to choose these







optional standards from the full list of 59 optional standards. The Green Key certificate is handed out for one year, in principle. To avoid having to furnish the same certificates with a new date and signature and then upload them again, it is sufficient to fill in an updating declaration (available for download on the Green Key website under 'tables and certificates'), whereby the management of the company declares that all documents are fully valid for the relevant inspection year.

Approximately 22 companies in the Dutch Wadden Sea region are labelled with any of the green keys, showing an intention in investing in sustainable development.

Waddengoud

For the Dutch Wadden Sea area Waddengoud is a independent label/brand and certifying foundation for products and services from and in the Wadden Sea area. The foundation is also owner of the regional label for Ameland products.

Waddengoud is judging products and services by two main These principles are translated and operationalized into different criteria dealing for example with the origin of raw material, method of production, animal welfare, agro-biodiversity and rules for the indication of origin.

Besides agro- and food producing companies, the Waddengoud-certification and -logo is also given to lodging accommodations, restaurants, art galleries, etc.. The approval is based upon a questionnaire in which the management have to give information about its business and its relation to the Wadden Sea region (historical building, amount and manners of Wadden information, use of Wadden products, etc.). For the Ameland products and services the same set of criteria are used with one exception for the products/services originating from Ameland.

Up to this year, 120 companies or organizations have a licensee to use the Waddengoud brand and logo and in total approx 250 companies are involved (because after each licensee sometimes more businesses are involved; f.e. a butchery has a licensee to use the brand/logo and behind 25 farmers provide this butchery with cows and sheep (meat); also these farmers have to fulfil the criteria of Waddengoud). In return Waddengoud is certifying the products and services, actively promoting regional products and services by all means (markets, websites, press releases, etc.) and producing displays in shops and restaurants.

Since 2013 the Waddengoud Foundation may use the logo of the Wadden Sea World Heritage for information about the Wadden Sea World Heritage (according trilateral guidelines for the use of the logo).

Waddenvereniging

In May 2015, the Dutch Waddenvereniging has started an initiative WAD500. WAD500 is a new network, exclusively for entrepreneurs, to share knowledge and experiences and take advantage of the opportunities that the World Heritage status of the Wadden Sea. The sustainable preservation of the unique natural values of the Wadden Sea can go hand in hand with economic development that uses the value of the area. With the new WAD 500 Club the Waddenvereniging wants to help capitalize on opportunities with entrepreneurs. Approximately 70 tourist entrepreneurs took part in this meeting. From their perspective with conservation as fundament, the Waddenvereniging has defined chances of cooperation within tourism (highest priority), fishery, education, healthcare, harbor related industries and agriculture. Their aim is to enhance cooperation, create extra (sustainable) opportunities for entrepreneurs and other organizations in order to enhance the OUV of the Wadden Sea.

Being an ambassador of the Wadden Sea, the Waddenvereniging also educated several Wadden Sea World Heritage guides and is organizing guided WH tours in the Dutch Wadden Sea region.

3.4 Short summary

Table 3.4 on the next summarizes the main aspects of the different partner program-situations in the three Wadden Sea countries.



Table 3.4: Summary of the main aspects of the different partner program-situations

| | The Netherlands | Germany | Denmark |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| Background information | Hospitality program around 3 national parks in Wadden Sea area (not within WHS boundaries) Waddengoud (Brand and certification of local products and services) 'Green Key'; independent foundation for certification; national program sustainable accommodation, harbours, boat hire companies | Founded in 2005 Nationwide public-private partnership cooperation Partner initiatives exist in 22 natural landscapes Harmonized minimum standards and criteria Networking and exchange of experiences Joint marketing campaigns across Germany | Founded in 2014 Cause of the partner program: Plan for Nationalpark Vadehavet 2013-18 → 3 of 12 targets include tourism, cooperation and communication |
| Rules & regulations | For the hospitality program: partake in 3-days- course There are a few rules, like signage, course, info etc | Schleswig-Holstein & Niedersachsen • Submit questionnaires • On-site-visit • Decision by Steering Board | Submit questionnaires Decision by Steering Board |
| Target groups | Local businesses around national parks Guests to the region Categories e.g. Tourism organizations, tour operators, shipping companies, accommodation, gastronomy, exhibitions & galleries, water sport, bike rentals. Total 150 Partners | Local businesses Guests to the region Categories e.g. Tourism organizations, tour operators, National Park guides, railway and shipping companies, accommodation, gastronomy, local municipalities, green NGOs, exhibitions & galleries, water sport, bike rentals. Total 140 Partners | Local business Guests to the region Locals Categories e.g. Rangers, tour operators, arts, accommodation, education, events, non-food, food, other Total 124 Partners |
| Targets | Branding & Information Support nature conservation and the National Park idea Convince the public of the National Park idea Identification of businesses with the idea and goals of the National Park Communication and networking Raising awareness among and spreading information to the guests Role model for further partners Appreciation and respect Establish and empower the brand of the National Park Ambassadors Program | Support nature conservation and the National Park idea Convince the public of the National Park idea, reach (new) guests and develop the region in a sustainable way Identification of businesses with the idea and goals of the National Park Promotion of sustainable and high-quality tourism offers Conservation and protection of the Wadden Sea Communication and networking Raising awareness among and spreading information to the guests Role model for further partners Appreciation and respect Establish and empower the brand of the National Park Partner Program | Tourism & conservation cooperation and communication Branding Information |





| Giving Program → partners | Right of use the NP logo Promote their own business as National Park Ambassador by using the logo Positioning as a National Park- friendly business Direct contact with the National Park Administration Some education and trainings for partners and their employees Network of partners, e.g. joint efforts, offers and projects Representation on a professional website, folders, brochures etc. Comprehensive NP information material available, e.g. info-plates, table sets, marketing materials, flyer, brochures, pins, flags | Use of the Wadden Sea World Heritage logo according guidelines Promote their own business as National Park Partner by using the logo Positioning as a National Park- and environmental friendly business Direct contact with the National Park Administration Range of education and trainings for partners and their employees Network of partners, e.g. joint efforts, offers and projects Representation on a professional website, facebook and at trade and road shows, exhibitions etc. Access to an online data base with high quality pictures for own use Flyer and brochures of National Park Partner will be displayed in national park information centers Comprehensive NP information material available, e.g. infoplates, table sets, marketing materials, flyer, brochures, pins, flags | Use of the Wadden Sea World Heritage logo according guidelines Promote their own business as National Park Partner by using the logo Name and link are represented on the website http://www.nationalparkvadehavet.dk, articles, media etc. Training and Workshops door signs and marketing materials local network with like minded people |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Giving Partners → program | Be able to inform guests and customers professionally about the National Park and the region. Be ambassadors of the National Park idea Inform about the National Park in a friendly and qualified way Collaborate with each other and with the National park services Exemplify and promote a sustainable and environmental friendly behaviour → important multipliers and role models Take part in NP activities/events → additional work and staff resources for NPA | Fulfil high quality and environmental criteria Be able to inform guests and customers professionally about the National Park, World Heritage and the region. Be ambassadors of the National Park idea Inform about the National Park in a friendly and qualified way Operate sustainable Collaborate with each other and with the National park services Provide certified high quality (good service, regionally integrated, environmental care) Be certified by Viabono (accommodation, gastronomy, campsites, tour operators, touristic stakeholders & companies, bio-certified agricultural businesses with on-site-shops) Exemplify and promote a sustainable and environmental friendly behaviour → important multipliers and role models Give important support in political debates on conservation topics (e.g. in mussel conflict, NP evaluation) Take part in NP+WH activities/events → additional work and staff resources for NPA | Respectfully and professional communication about the Wadden Sea Sharing information material about the national park Information about the national park on the own website Linking the national park website Attending the workshops Gastronomy: Always at least one menu with the main ingredients of the National Park Retailer: Always at least three National Park products |





Tabel 4.1: Overview 13 transnational UNESCO World Heritage Sites

| 1. | Białowieża Forest | Belarus, Poland | _ |
|-----|---|---|---|
| 2. | Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst | Hungary, Slovakia | Source: inspektour and NL RNT |
| 3. | High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago | Finland, Sweden | - Source. Inspektour und ME KINT |
| 4. | Kluane / Wrangell-St. Elias / Glacier Bay / Tatshenshini-Alsek | Canada, USA | |
| 5. | Monte San Giorgio | Italy, Switzerland | 1 Martin |
| 6. | Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls | Zambia, Zimbabwe | E De Aller |
| 7. | Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve | Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea | |
| 8. | Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and the Ancient Beech Forests of Germany | Germany, Slovakia, Ukraine | A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A |
| 9. | Sangha Trinational | Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo | |
| 10. | Talamanca Range-La Amistad Reserves / National Park | Costa Rica, Panama | |
| 11. | Uvs Nuur Basin | Mongolia, Russian Federation | |
| 12. | Wadden Sea | DK, GE, NL | |
| 13. | Waterton Glacier International Peace Park | Canada, USA | |





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4. International examples – in general the impression

4.1 Examples of transnational UNESCO World Heritage Sites

One of the steps in this study was analysing similar structured UNESCO World Heritage sites. Looking at the 13 transnational UNESCO World Heritage Sites (listed in the table 4.1 previous page) there was hardly any transnational cooperation program in the sense of stakeholder participating in the conservation due to own actions of the natural site found. There are few approaches of social support-programs taking care of the treatment and exposure to aboriginal people living in the World Heritage Site e.g. in the Waterton Glacier International Peace Park (Canada, USA) or partnership & donation programs supporting local projects.

4.2 Examples of cooperation-programs within worldwide nature conservation projects

The second step was to find out whether other nature conservation institutions are managing a partner-

program that is based on the idea of the partner "using" the image of the park and therefore contributes to its conservation. Overall 13 further partnership models have been reviewed, several E-Mails exchanged and ten intense interviews conducted.

During the analysis we looked at the following aspects of the partnership program:

- 1. Best practice(s)
- 2. Brief description WH site
- 3. Description Partnership
- 4. Context Partnership
- 5. Structure of the partnership
- 6. Motivation of the partners to join a (transnational) partnership
- Benefits of transnational partner programs for the partners
- 8. Benefits of transnational partner programs for the (natural) site
- 9. Terms and conditions to be complied by partners to be part of the partnership
- 10. Perception of the consumer

- 11. Influence of the partnership in the destination
- 12. Strengths and Weaknesses
- 13. Other notable remarks
- 14. Sources

The complete analysis for each partner program model is illustrated in the first appendix. In the following paragraphs the main results valuable for this feasibility study are presented by means of four best practices.

The Reef guardian and eye on the reef program in

Australia are very good examples of how to involve a very populace including many different sort of institutions. While the idea of the reef guardian program is to motivate different people and groups to get involved into voluntary actions or come up with their own ideas of how to contribute to the environmental protection, the eye on the reef program encourages everyone interested to monitor the happenings in the region, record and report them. Due to the personal involvement people get the







feeling (and in actuality) are part of the environmental preserve.

The Jurassic Coast trust program in Great Britain aims at engaging local communities and residents. Due to money raised through small and large businesses, individuals, sponsors and the sale of publications different projects such as education, conservation, arts and science are supported. It is hence a good example of how to steer and support very different, but very controlled projects.

The world heritage program in the USA is basically carried out by the National Park Service. Adjacent to the national park service and closely working together is the National Park Foundation, the official charity of America's national parks. The foundation raises private funds that directly aid, support and enrich America's national parks and their programs.

The English World Heritage organisation in for example the Hadrian Wall is an example of the Anglo-Saxon approach of involving private stakeholders, citizens and other parties in a cooperative program with a large emphasis on gaining commitment and raising money. The world heritage title is used for a strong socio-economic approach in which the main goals are attracting tourist and external money.

Overall it has to be stated that the idea of a transnational World Heritage Cooperation Program for Business Partners follows an innovative approach that does not exist yet.

Based upon the inventory amongst several transnational heritage sites, the general conclusion can be drawn that each site has its own and unique setting



of collaboration among partners with its specific dynamics in between partners and participants. Each site has its own characteristics in terms of organizations involved, level of cooperation, emphasis on protection and/or socio-economic development and which partner is having the lead. There is no blueprint or any scheme for development for the Wadden Sea World Heritage. Therefore, the development of a transnational approach for business partners in the Wadden Sea is a new and innovative approach.









5 Relevant notions

Based upon the outcomes of interviews, added with the knowledge of the project team about and experiences with the mindset of entrepreneurs as well as inhabitants in and around the Wadden Sea, several remarks can be made concerning the context of developing a new World Heritage cooperation with businesses.

First of all, the Wadden Sea region is a large delta with many islands and furthermore more or less isolated local communities who have a strong tendency to show an allergic reaction towards any new plan, rule and law. The general attitude towards external involvement of governments or any other institution is defensive. This is based upon a feeling of losing their freedom, influence and control over their way of living. Examples are the rights of fishing being diminished, agricultural activities strongly regulated, restrictions on driving on the beach, gas drilling, etc. This sentiment was also the case for example during the period of introduction of the world heritage title for the Wadden Sea. Long lasting discussions have been held finally resulting in a precise drawing of the world heritage territory with an exclusion of some of the islands from the World Heritage Wadden Sea region. Another, Dutch example is the laborious process of collaboration between the islands municipalities. Although progress is clearly made, the main focus is upon their own island and community.

The other side of the same spectrum is that the above-mentioned citizens and communities are very and perhaps extremely proud of living in the Wadden area or on a Wadden island. There is a very strong 'sense of place' and a people are very concerned about and involved in their every day surroundings.

Another reason for the above mentioned general reluctant attitude is that living on a Wadden island does not imply that inhabitants consider themselves a part of the Wadden Sea region; they are part of the community of their own island. Entrepreneurs operating on the islands have hardly any contact nor cooperation with colleagues from other islands and sub regions of the Wadden Sea. The sea itself doesn't only function as a physical barrier but also as a large social barrier. Although from a distant point of view a lot of shared interest can be defined for all Wadden islands together, so far this is not an argument for cooperation or joint action for the people working and living there. For example cooperation for a joint marketing of the Wadden Sea is at a relatively low level since the promotion organizations of the individual islands mainly care for their own tourism business. This situation is logically in line with the fact that the main interests lie with the local stakeholders. These local entrepreneurs have their own business in mind, in their local communities and that's what should be promoted. There is no attachment to the 'bigger story' of the Wadden Sea.

From a wider perspective and in line with the trilateral cooperation during the last decades between the three governments of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, the natural and landscape values of the Wadden Sea region have been fully recognized and











protected under several laws and plans. National Parks were established in the three countries and nature conservation and management organizations are putting a lot of effort in conserving these values. But not only institutional conservationists care for the Wadden Sea, many citizens show their commitment to the Wadden Sea. There are a number of NGOs that are very active in protecting the Wadden Sea, the Dutch NGO Waddenvereniging with 40.000 members is a strong societal power in any development in or around the area, as well as Natuurmonumenten, Stichting Groninger Landschap, It Fryske Gea, Landschap Noord-Holland, Staatsbosbeheer, Stichting Wad and Vogelbescherming Nederland (all part of the De Coalitie Wadden Natuurlijk), in Germany there are organisations such as the BUND, the Schutzstation Wattenmeer, Verein Jordsand, Naturschutzbund Deutschland (NABU), the Mellumrat, Niedersächsischer Heimatbund and in Denmark, there are NGOs such as Danmarks Naturfredningsforening and the Dansk Ornitologisk Forening. Further the WWF in all three countries, focussing on preserving the Wadden Sea nature and landscape but also on other global nature conservation issues, is an active organisation in the Wadden Sea region. They are all playing an important political role.

The commitment in preservation of the Wadden Sea, resulting in regulations and restrictions, is in itself a source of conflict with (a part of) the local communities on the islands and elsewhere in the Wadden Sea region. Most of the time new rules come forward from a top down approach with little influence by local inhabitants and stakeholders. And on top of this phenomena, these new rules often result in restrictions and diminishing opportunities for economic activities and other outdoor-recreational behaviour for the local communities. In socioeconomic terms, it is a limitation in their everyday life and work. In itself it is not an absolute barrier but an intense dialogue is again needed to involve the local communities in preserving 'their' Wadden Sea being the daily environment.

The partner-programs in Germany mainly forced the change in thinking about doing business within the natural sites while protecting them. Directly after the establishment of the national parks, businesses, especially involved in the travel industry, strongly had the perception that conservation of the natural site excludes having a business within the protected area. Today there is a very good understanding of cooperation with the national parks and doing business in a preserving and especially in the tourism industry informatory way. Beside the change of minds and the literal fact that most businesses in the Wadden Sea region are based on the natural resources, that therefore have to be protected, businesses additionally use the idea of protecting and identifying themselves with their natural environment as an emotional sales argument. Further the involvement of clients and guests in nature protection became even part of some businesses. The safeguarding of the surrounding nature became an essential part of maintaining own businesses. This is a very good example for cooperation being a good approach of changing people minds, sharing opinions and information, loosen up old-established relations, create different and new views and use synergies.

As written in a previous chapter and like the partnership programs of the national park organizations show, the societal situation in and around the Wadden Sea World Heritage does have lots of nuances and opportunities. Many inhabitants do care about their nearby environment and are proud of their island and are more than willing to partake in any activity expressing this commitment or providing a tourist a joyful stay on the island.

In this context of opinions the inscription of the Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List a couple of years ago, causing lots of discussions before the final decision was taken. Now, some years later, this negative sentiment has flowed away more or less and changed into a more positive attitude in terms of 'being an inhabitant of a world heritage site'. Entrepreneurs are showing some and a growing interest since this title might be an extra reason for tourist to visit one of the islands and above all, their accommodation or services.

The introduction of a new cooperative WH-program in the three countries does fit into the blank situation of not having an associative movement at this very moment. Nevertheless there are partner programs that do exist as described in the previous chapters. All of these programs link with national park organizations in the Wadden Sea region. These organizations all express a similar, wait- and discouraging reaction to the development of a new cooperative program; veering between seeing new chances and worrying about the situation of their existing programs. Their fear is mainly based upon the more or less subjective impression that this new WHprogram is in competition with their own activities and will harm their own work

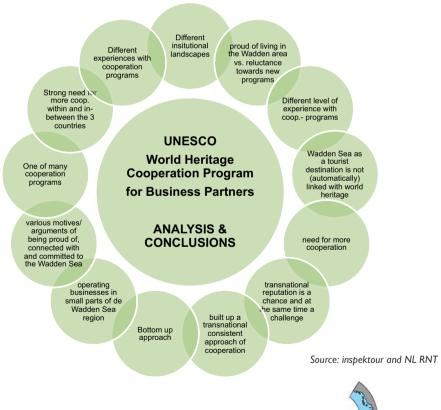
Likewise the entrepreneurs, being a national park partner, have strong reservations against a new cooperative program. They are also in favour of a



program that is strongly connected with the existing ones. Main reason seems to be to avoid another administrative procedure, more or less similar with the one they've build up during the last couple of years.

Entrepreneurs that aren't involved in any programs vet, are either not interested at all in any kind of cooperation program or they are in favour of developing, or at least be part of developing, a program by a bottom-up approach to add their own thoughts and values, at least on a regional level. That effect could strongly be observed while building up the Danish National park partner program. In that case the stakeholders are mainly involved in the development of the framework of their partner program. But a strict framework setting rules and values is necessary to build on to and it is even more important the larger the area involved is. The baselines of a healthy partner program are a leitmotif and basic rules allowing a central decision-makingbody to take decisions on the same base, without having too many local exceptions. Partners involved should be able to benefit from a partner program and desire to collaborate to get back an added value, but at the same time there is the need for certain standards at the same level, across the whole partnerprogram area. The exact same partner that is benefitting from the nature has to contribute its share to the protection of the natural environment and OUV.

Figure 5.1: A summary of the main aspects of the analysis and conclusions





6 Analysis & conclusions

In this chapter the main results of the analysis and conclusions based on the research and long-lasting experiences within the regions are listed, building a strong foundation for the recommendations in the next chapter.

- The institutional landscape differs in the three countries around the Wadden Sea Region. In Denmark there is one and in Germany there are three national park organisations responsible for the management of their part of the Wadden Sea region. In the Netherlands an overall authority is missing; a lot of different organisations and authorities are involved in the management.
- At the local level, local citizens are very proud of living in the Wadden area but there is also a deeply felt reluctance towards new programs, new rules, new whatsoever that could diminish their own span of control as a community or individual entrepreneur.
 Two sides of the same coin.

- While in the national park Wadden Sea region in Denmark and Germany the *idea of partner programs* already exist for some time, in the Netherlands there are only in and around three small national parks in de Wadden Sea region host-/ ambassador programs. In the vast majority of the Dutch Wadden Sea region there are no equivalent programs. There is currently not one (nature management) organization that logically could take the lead or has a mandate in setting up a cooperation program.
- At this moment Wadden Sea as a tourist destination is not (automatically) linked with world heritage.
 Nevertheless there are some and probably a slowly growing number of entrepreneurs and companies who are willing to show some sort of connection with the world heritage site. Though this is focused upon their own local/regional setting, the connection is with the entire Wadden Sea region (outcome of interviews).
- There is a strong need for more cooperation of organisations dealing with partnership programmes and WH-organisations within and in-between all three

countries. The use of synergies is capable of development.

- The transnational reputation is a chance and at the same time a challenge. While for the Netherlands the topic of cooperation programs is generally pretty new, Denmark and Germany already have some experiences. But the handling and management of doubts and hopes of all institutions in the three countries have to be continuously considered and treated very sensitively.
- Part of the above mentioned challenge is to built up transnational consistent approach of cooperation with same standards everywhere since it is about one Wadden Sea region and one World Heritage site and entity being preserved for a global audience.
- There is an expressed need for a bottom up approach in building up a cooperation program for the WH organisation (outcome of interviews and workshop). By this participatory process local stakeholders, but



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also representatives of existing cooperation programs should become involved and committed to and have influence in the program.

- Many companies and other stakeholders are operating their business in a very small part of de Wadden Sea region without knowing or realising the OUV of the entire area. Nor is there any insight into what is happening elsewhere in the Wadden Sea area. This is partly due to their reluctant attitude towards changes in whatthey-thought-of being new regulation by World Heritage. Besides this, many entrepreneurs or citizens hardly have a profound understanding about the grandeur of being a world heritage site
- Being proud of, connected with and committed to the Wadden Sea has various motives and arguments. They are based upon preservation and protection of the OUV and the socio-economic use of the Wadden Sea such us living and or working in the region. Therefore
 within the cooperation program - a good and careful balance needs to be found between the goals of cooperation giving room to these different arguments. Sustainability is definitely part of the answer in this consideration.
- Entrepreneurs in a partner program with the national parks or any further nature related program are reserved towards a new and additional World Heritage cooperation program (outcome of interviews). The challenge is to convince them about the opportunities of taking part in WH cooperation programs
- In the Dutch opinion, existing programs should first being expanded and can then add gradually World Heritage aspects into their program

- In the German opinion, existing programs should not be united with a further approach, that will cause confusion with the existing already known programs
- In the Danish opinion, existing programs should be part during the development process
- Entrepreneurs that do not participate nor are confronted with a similar affiliate program yet, have hardly any idea about the values, possibilities, commitments and possible extent of such a program with nature organizations and / or World Heritage. Also in this case it is even more important to explain and convince them about the opportunities of cooperation programs in general and more specific of those of WH.

The graphic on page 36 summarizes the main aspects of the analysis and conclusions.





7. Challenges and Recommendations

The Wadden Sea region stretches out over three countries with quite different governments, institutional and cultural settings and nature conservation organisations. The interest in preserving and participating in the maintenance of the honour of being a UNESCO World Heritage site with all its duties and reputation, exist in all three countries to the same extent; there is a strong intention to keep the UNESCO reputation in long-term.

At the same time, among local inhabitants and entrepreneurs in and around the Wadden Sea region, the status and importance of the UNESCO World Heritage title is poorly understood and recognized. It is important to increase the communication about the Wadden Sea being a world heritage site. Cooperation with local partners and stakeholder can be a very efficient tool for this communication.

Local communities and companies tend to - on first hand - reject new programmes so a bottom up process is needed to inform and step-by-step involve local actors in a WH-cooperative program. Principal entry has to be the proudness of living and working in the Wadden Sea region. In this process the added values and benefits when engaging with World Heritage such as enhancing profile and credibility, better marketing, have to be put forward strongly.

Institutions and organizations that are operating in the Wadden Sea region are aware of the meaning, challenges and opportunities of being a world heritage site. The main opportunity is to develop the intensity of cooperation between the three countries by using synergies and work together on different levels such as tourism, sustainability, during natural disasters etc. A UNESCO World Heritage cooperation programme would be a very good approach supporting the given chances to develop to a very well working collaborative network. However, a number of challenges needs to be addressed as outlined above, in specific the organizing of framework that can fit in the specific regional situation and context in the three countries. Given these assumptions, the following challenges and recommendations can be appointed:

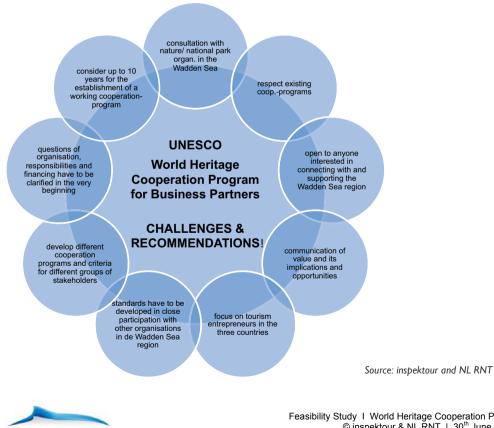
- If there is a desire to introduce (new) partner programs for the entire Wadden Sea area, it is recommended to consider first a consultation and work out a strategy with stakeholders like tourism businesses and nature and national park organizations in the Wadden Sea. In addition it should be viewed if there is an opportunity to roll out or collaborate within existing programs and if there is an opportunity to add World Heritage elements to such existing partner programs.
- It is essential to involve the existing partner-programs of (national park) organisations in the Wadden Sea area in the ongoing discussions, consider their doubts, hopes and wishes during the whole process. Acceptance is the key to a successful implemented transnational program.
- The cooperation-program should be open to anyone interested in connecting with and supporting the



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WADDEN SEA



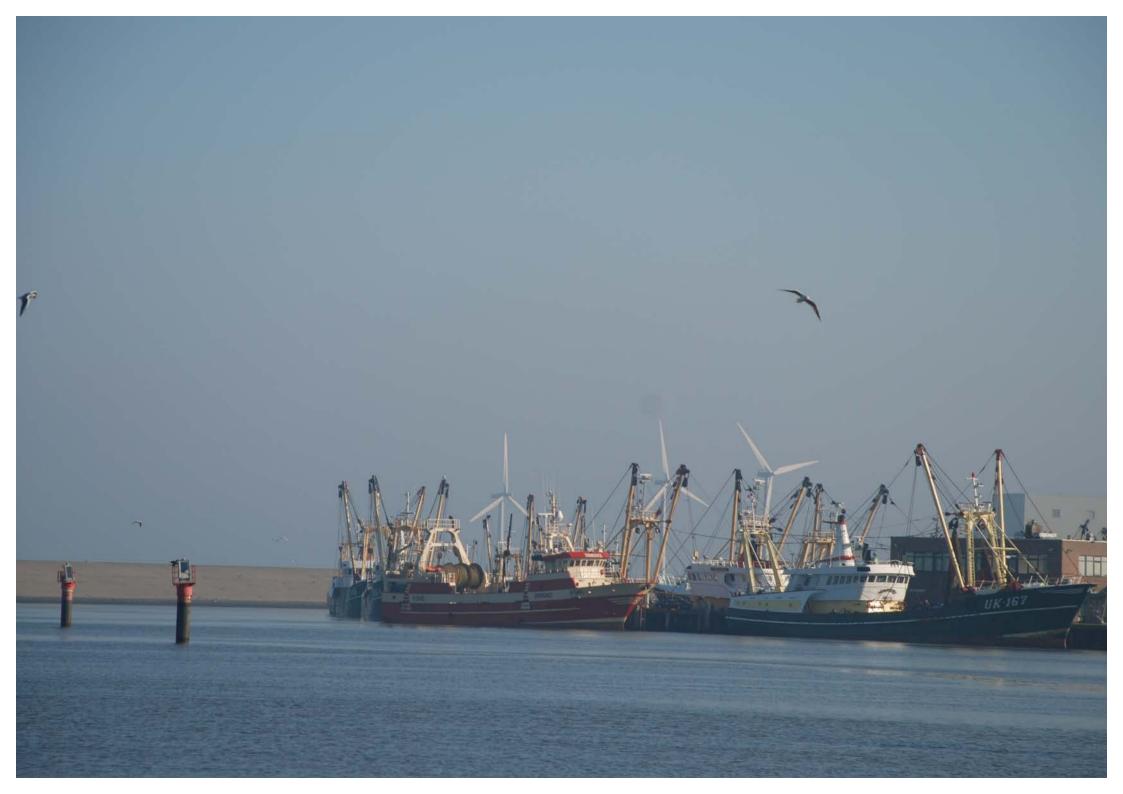
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- Wadden Sea region, meaning interest-groups, local and non-local stakeholders, touristic and non-touristic companies. This means, a cooperation programme should be defined in a general and broad way that gives all those potential partners a chance to participate for their own interest and that of World Heritage Wadden Sea.
- Being a world heritage site and its grandeur of this inscription, are hardly known in the Wadden Sea region. A lot of effort has to be put into communication of the value and its implications as well as opportunities.
- In the first phase of development of the program, it should be considered to focus on tourism entrepreneurs in the three countries because this is the largest sector with a lot of public exposure, often already involved in partner programs and for them the advantage is most obvious. Secondly it should be discussed whether other businesses related to the Wadden Sea can join the cooperation program and thirdly companies from elsewhere can partake.
- For all future WH-partners, there is a necessity when working with World Heritage to adhere to certain transnational standards. These standards have to be developed in close participation with other organisations in de Wadden Sea region.
- It seems necessary to develop different cooperation programs and criteria for the different groups of stakeholders and smaller and larger businesses who are willing to join the program. These criteria and standards have to be developed and discussed within a representative group of people involved in one way or the other.

- Depending upon the results of these first rounds of consultation, steps can be made to further outline the organisation that is carrying out the cooperation program, for example, examining the entries by an independent board, carrying out inspections. In general the questions of organisation, responsibilities and financing have to be clarified in the very beginning.
- It should be considered that it can take up to 10 years for the establishment of a working cooperationprogram. Therefore it makes sense to establish a 3year "starting-project" to begin discussions and processes in all three countries at the same time.







8 Next Steps

Based on the interviews, the actual situation in the three countries and other outcomes of this study, we advise the following next four steps to develop a WH partner program for the whole Wadden Sea region:

Step 1 Develop and execute a strategy, 'starting project' with a detailed action plan for a period of 3 years based on the conclusions, challenges and recommendations in the previous chapters. In this project discussions and processes have to start in all three countries at the same time. The main goal of this starting project is to get a common trilateral agreement on assumptions/starting points (objectives, decentral vs central, standards etc), including benefits for WH and its partners. This should be done in a participative approach.

Step 2 Based upon a participative, careful approach, estimate and calculate the costs to execute this project and search and find enough funds to execute this project in a proper way. Important is to appoint the right person(s) to implement this starting project, because when it fails it will take years to get a new opportunity.

Step 3 Within this starting project a pilot action in a special area or island could be carried out. Within a more concrete situation a more extensive process could lead to valuable experiences that could be used in step 2.

Step 4 At the end of the starting project (step 1) a proposal how to implement the WH partner programme should be developed. Part of this proposal is the content, the organisation, the costs and time frame.

As mentioned the time frame of this starting project is recommended to last 3 years. The time frame to implement after step 4 will be another 5 to 10 years. The costs for the starting project are mainly personal or staff costs, travel & accommodation and supplier costs for meetings and workshops. Roughly estimated there is a need for deployment and staffing of a 3 proactive and inspiring coordinators is needed for about 1 day a week in each country. At this moment it is difficult to make a good calculation, but a rough estimation gives an annual amount of costs for the start-up of a WH-cooperation program of \in 150.000 for the next 3 years.



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Appendix 1. Analysis for partner program models

| Individual partnership program-models | Hands-on, community-based approach | Involving the Tourism staff | Certification in high standard tourism | Community project |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Best practice(s) | Reef Guardians | Eye on the Reef program | The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) | Jurassic Coast |
| Brief description WH site short typing / #visitors / #structure of organization | Great Barrier Reef in Australia 2.09 Mio visitor <mark>per day</mark> | Great Barrier Reef in Australia 2.09 Mio visitor per day | Great Barrier Reef in Australia 2.09 Mio visitor per day | Jurassic Coast in Great Britain number of visitors to the Jurassic Coast annually could be anywhere between 5.5 million and 20million, with a fair estimate at 12 – 15 million visitors a year (day trips and staying visitors). |





| Description Partnership Goal of the partnership / type of partnership / legal structure / subjects / activities | Reef Guardians are taking on voluntary actions beyond what is required by law and sharing information. The program involves working closely with those who use and rely on the Reef or its catchment for their recreation or business to help build a healthier and more resilient Reef. A key objective of the Reef Guardian Schools program is to create awareness, understanding and appreciation for the Reef and its connected ecosystems. | Tourism staff involved in the Monitoring Program are trained to monitor and record the health of the Reef. Scientists use this information for their research activities and Marine Park managers use it to identify areas requiring concentrated effort. Tourism staff assist with management of the Reef by reporting any interesting and unusual things they see in the Marine Park through the Sightings Network A free Eye on the Reef app can be used to capture, submit and share sightings, photographs and video recordings with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and others. The program brings together four assessment and monitoring programs that collect valuable information about reef health, marine animals and incidents: Sightings network, Rapid Monitoring, Tourism Weekly Monitoring, Reef Health and Impact Surveys. Next to the tourism staff the Eye on the Reef is a powerful monitoring program that enables anyone who visits the Great Barrier Reef to contribute to its long-term protection. | The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) encourages tourism operations to adopt high standards for protection, presentation and partnership within the Marine Park. These standards enhance environmental protection, reef resilience and tourism sustainability. | The Jurassic Coast Trust launched its Heritage Lottery-funded 'Growing the Jurassic Coast Community' project in mid-2014. The project aims to engage local communities and residents with the World Heritage Site so that it can be better cared for and understood, and so that it can deliver benefits back to these communities The Trust is strongly focused on helping people understand and enjoy the Site. It raises money through different levels of support including large and small businesses, individuals, project sponsors, and the sale of publications. The Trust's objectives: educate the public on the importance of the Dorset and East Devon World Heritage Site; conserve the World Heritage Site for public benefit; encourage sustainable economic regeneration |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Context Partnership #organizations & entrepreneurs in region WHS / # participants in co- operation / sort of partners (tourism, local (rural) producers?) | Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) Reef Guardian Schools which includes 310 schools more than 123.000 students and 8218 teachers. Reef Guardian Councils Reef Guardian Fishers include 17 fishing operations Reef Guardians Farmers and Graziers | Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) Tourism Industry Anyone who visits the Great Barrier Reef | Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) Tour Operator Ecotourism Australia | Local Communities and residents |





| Structure of the partnership kind of head- organization / responsibility for the assessment (who/how) / financing of the system (who to what extend) / etc. | of projects in their classrooms, schools and communities Reef Guardian Councils covers program covers 300.000 km ² and a population of 900.000 people and undertake environmental initiatives in the following areas: Water management, Land management, Climate change - planning and policy, Community management Reef Guardian Fishers include 17 fishing operations; participants in the program set robust voluntary protocols for their operations, develop innovative practices to minimize impacts on the environment, share knowledge with other fishers and their communities. A key initiative of the Reef Guardian Fishers program is involving all participants in using an emissions calculator to measure carbon emissions and identify ways to more energy and cost efficient Many farmers and glaziers are doing good environmental work in the areas of: Soil and erosion management, Water management to ensure clean and healthy catchments, Waste reduction, Efficient energy use to minimize greenhouse gas emissions, Protecting natural areas etc. | The Eye on the Reef program is run by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Reef Health and Impact Survey sub-program is run in partnership with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. | The Certification Program runs by ecoaustalia.orgcertification and membership fees between 400 and 1400 depending on the turnover | Business Partners do a financial contribution to the Trust's work between 250-1000 Pound each year |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Motivation of the partners to join a (transnational) partnership Intrinsic / commercial benefit / regional solidarity / etc. | being part of the community; do something to keep the reef alive for the next generation; save a beautiful place; giving an "umbrella" under which they can to a lot of sustainability and environmental friendly activities, focus for new trends and direction, combine and share ideas with other schools; great platform to share ideas and skills which will have positive impacts on the reef; working together today for a healthier reef tomorrow; public support | They developed this monitoring system while thinking about how it will be possible to combine daily working with reef protection. To provide vital reef health trend information to inform and "give something back to the reef" | | |





| Benefits of transnational partner programs for the partners Increasing number of guests / specific knowledge about the happenings at the (natural) site / better image / cooperation with other partners / good feeling / complying the responsibility of sustainable development / etc. | During the school year, Reef Guardian Schools can participate in a range of events, activities and awards. Annual awards 1000 \$ for each winning school to expand projects and implement new initiatives Ripples of Change grants 500\$ for each winning school to implement environmental initiatives in their schools. By being in the program, participants can network with producers across the Great Barrier Reef catchment and share information and ideas. | - a healthy environment/nature benefits on the (tourism)business | - an extended permit term of 15 years for tourism program permits. - certified operators are listed on GBRMPA's website and are showcased at various trade events (for example, the Australian Tourism Exchange) and in publications (for example, the Australian Ecotourism Directory). | A listing on this website, which attracts over 35,000 unique visits per month Access to our network of Ambassadors, volunteers and other Business Partners, enabling a community of information sharing and knowledge building Access to Jurassic Coast training for staff, creating a more informed and motivated workforce Use of our Business Partner logo on promotional material, online and in-store Invitations to our extensive calendar of Business Partner events |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Benefits of transnational partner programs for the (natural) site Increasing environmental perception and knowledge / Improved behaviour in terms of the consumer / Contribution to the preservation of the heritage site of regional and supra-regional partners / etc. | - The program will help to improve the economic sustainability of industries operating in the Great Barrier Reef Region and ensure the environmental sustainability of the Marine Park - Participants also report back to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority on the health of the marine environment. For example, coral damage, sightings of rare or unusual species. | These programs enable people from all walks of life — Marine Park rangers, marine tourism staff, scientist, fishers, tourists and other reef users — to report their Reef sightings and observations to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. | | The Trust supports education and conservation of the World Heritage Site |





| Terms and conditions that have to be complied by partners to be part of the partnership certifications / marketing requirements / sustainable development (to what extend?) / taking care of natural resources / cost expenditure / etc. | Schools have to complete an environmental action plan for the year ahead. Joining the Reef Guardian Fishers program Commercial fishers operating in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park looking to join the program are assessed in operational areas including: Fishing operations, Vessel operations, Business management, Community engagement, Risk management. Participants and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority are working together to refine and develop the standard. | Ways you can keep an Eye on the Reef I Time needed to complete survey/report I Training requirement - Sightings Network I 5 minutes I None. Download the free Eye on the Reef smart phone app. - Eyes and Ears Incident Reporting I 5 minutes I None. - Rapid Monitoring Survey I 15-20 minutes I Completion of Rapid Monitoring online training modules recommended. - Tourism Weekly Monitoring I 30 minutes set aside on a weekly basis I Completion of 'Introduction to monitoring on the Great Barrier Reef' online training modules, plus attendance at quarterly training workshops and one annual in-water training day. - Reef Health and Impact Surveys I Up to 20 minutes per survey, three surveys per reef site I Completion of Reef Health and Impact Survey online training modules, plus at least one in- water training day for those undertaking this survey on an occupational basis. | a high standard in the Marine Park can apply to become certified by contacting Ecotourism Australia and demonstrating that their operations meet either the Ecotourism or Advanced Ecotourism levels of the ECO Certification Program. Operators who are certified with the ECO Certification Program (Ecotourism and Advanced Ecotourism levels) and wish to apply for a 15-year permit for a certified tourism product will need to complete the usual Marine Parks permit application form and provide evidence of certification. The application will be assessed as normal and an assessment fee will apply. | - Ambassador – Ambassadors assist on Jurassic Coast projects and also develop their own, with our support, in their particular area of interest. Ambassadors tend to have time to commit to the role and enjoy the responsibility of developing their own projects. multi-skilled people from a range of backgrounds - Business Partner – A key part of the project is to develop sustainable economic support for the Jurassic Coast through our Business Partners Scheme. There are substantial benefits to businesses in the form of training, networking opportunities and branding through association with the Jurassic Coast. In return we ask our partners to contribute to the Trust in a way that is comfortable for them, often via visitor/customer giving or fundraising. We work with partners of all sizes throughout the Dorset and Devon area and beyond. - Volunteer – There are opportunities throughout the year in a wide variety of roles such as guided walks and talks, education programs, fundraising events and conservation activities - Friend – people who are interested in the Jurassic Coast and would like to receive regular updates about what's going on. |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Source | http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/our-partners/reef-guardians | http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/managing- the-reef/how-the-reefs-managed/eye- on-the-reef | http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/our- partners/tourism-industry/high-standard- tourism http://www.ecotourism.org.au/ | http://jurassiccoast.org/get- involved/the-jurassic-coast-trust |











Appendix 2. Call for Tender

1. Background

With the extension of the Wadden Sea World Heritage with the Danish Wadden Sea a five-year journey has been concluded: The entire Wadden Sea stretching along the North Sea coast of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark is now on the World Heritage List – recognition of its global importance and its excellence in management and protection.

The World Heritage status strengthens the transboundary protection of the area which is an ongoing task of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation since 1978. It also underlines the responsibility of the threes to maintain the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) towards the world community for present and future generations. In addition, the World Heritage status opens new possibilities for profile the Wadden Sea region, attract investments, develop a regional identity and pride, and strengthen engagement and cooperation of stakeholders transnationally. The Rebanks study (2010) has defined various socio-economic impact areas of Wold Heritage which are also relevant for the Wadden Sea.

Therefore, there is a huge interest from the state parties to engage with businesses in the protection of the OUV and, at the same time, to enable business to profile themselves with World Heritage including the possibility for a commercial use of the World Heritage brand.

2. Feasibility Study for a World Heritage cooperation programme for business partners

In all three countries, different approaches for cooperation between nature conservation and businesses exists, e.g. the national park partnership programmes in Germany and Denmark, and voluntary agreements or certifications in the Netherlands. With World Heritage as a new and powerful brand in the Wadden Sea region, it will be necessary to find a consistent approach for a partnership programme for the entire World Heritage which integrates existing programmes and ensures quality and credibility that is fully aligned with World Heritage brand. As precondition, any commercial use of the World Heritage brand must follow the general aims and principles of the World Heritage Convention and the UNESCO Partnership Programme (2013).

3. Objectives of the feasibility study

The feasibility study should prepare an overview of existing programmes and cooperation initiatives relevant for the Wadden Sea World Heritage, and analyse the benefits and challenges of a transnational World Heritage cooperation programme and how it can contribute to the protection of the OUV.

4. Tasks

1. To compile and analyse existing partnership programmes, cooperation initiatives and networks and



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relevant certification schemes in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination (desk study, interviews, site visits), and their relation to mission and vision of the World Heritage Brand.

2. To investigate how a World Heritage cooperation programme with business partner can be connected to the existing programmes to ensure a consistent approach in the property (e.g. by applying a SWOT analysis) contributing the to the protection of the OUV.

5. Deliveries

- Inventory and analysis of relevant cooperation initiatives, networks or certification schemes in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination.
- A report on the potential and benefits of a World Heritage cooperation programme for the Trilateral Cooperation and potential business partners including recommendation for the next step in establishment of a cooperation programme.

6. Time

- Deadline Call for Tender (4 weeks): 16 March 2015
- Estimated effort: approximately 15 work days
- Time period: March-April 2015,
- Anticipated delivery of report 30 April 2015.

7. Background Information

7.1 Reports

 World Heritage "The Wadden Sea" by UNESCO Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), 2014

- World Heritage Strategy (draft version 2013): http://www.waddenseasecretariat.org/sites/default/files/Meeting_Documents/ WSB/WSB13/wsb_13-5-3-wh-strategy-draft.docx
- Sustainable Tourism in the Wadden Sea World Heritage Destination, Action Plan Sustainable Tourism
- Feasibility Study World Heritage Foundation: http://www.waddenseasecretariat.org/sites/default/files/Meeting_Documents/ WSB/WSB12/attachment_2-foundation-report-final-2014-01-23-lowres.pdf
- World Heritage Brand Paper: http://www.prowad.org/system/files/Wadden%20Sea% 20Brand%20Paper-lowres.pdf
- Feasibility Study World Heritage award for tourism partners http://www.prowad.org/sites/default/files/TG-STS-7-5-5%20Draft-Feasibilty_study.pdf
- UNESCO Comprehensive Partnership Programme (UNESCO, 192 EX / 2013)
- Rebanks 2010. Is there opportunity for social and economic benefit in World Heritage status? http://rebanksconsultingltd.com/resources/WHSTheEc onomicGainFinalReport.pdf
- 9. Workshop Reports
 - a. Communication Marketing: http://www.prowad.org/system/files/World_Herita ge_Stakeholder_Workshop_2012.pdf
 - b. Commercial use of the World Heritage Logo (Hamburg, 2013);

Feasibility Study I World Heritage Cooperation Program for Business Partners © inspektour & NL RNT | 30th June 2015 I page 52 http://www.prowad.org/sites/default/files/13-03-13%20Summary-Record-Logo-Workshop_0.pdf

10. Guidelines and application form for the use of the World Heritage logo (non-commercial use): http://www.waddenseaworldheritage.org/sites/default/files/downloads/guidelin es-logo-world-heritage-2010.12.02-en-final.pdf

7.2 Internet

www.waddensea-worldheritage.org www.prowad.org

You tube https://www.youtube.com/user/WaddenseaUWHS (all stories)

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYRzxEiSHoolO3 4pDaiObsw (story teaser, PROWAD, UNESCO-Doha 2014))

Facebook https://www.facebook.com/WaddenSea.WorldHeritag



