

ADVISORY DOCUMENT ON THE WADDEN SEA PLAN (2009/02)

SUMMARY

The Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality has asked the Wadden Sea Council to issue advice on the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan, the common Trilateral management plan for the Wadden Sea.

The Council observes that the European Birds, Habitats and Water Framework Directives have and have had a strong harmonising effect in the three Wadden Sea countries. To position the Wadden Sea Plan as a common Natura 2000 management plan has therefore only limited added value. Moreover, it is not currently feasible, in view of the legislative differences between the three Wadden Sea countries – and in Germany also between the three German federal states. E.g. in Germany a management plan is not mandatory, as it is in the Netherlands and Denmark. For that reason, this is not the right time for a proposal of that nature. However, for the future the possibility of a common Natura 2000 management plan should be explored.

The new Wadden Sea Plan must take the form of a strategic plan with an overarching vision on policy. The plan should in any case provide for mutual coordination between the national policies in the fields of Natura 2000 and the Water Framework Directive. Furthermore, other “free” subjects (not regulated by the directives) can and must be embodied in the Wadden Sea Plan.

It is in any case important to make clear arrangements to carry out the plan (such as terms and the like). The agreements in the Wadden Sea Plan are not as firmly binding as obligations based on European Directives, but they are morally binding.

The granting of World Heritage status could give momentum to imbue the Wadden Sea Plan with more ambition than would be possible without this status. The future Wadden Sea Plan can function as the management for the World Heritage site Wadden Sea. The UNESCO demands minimal requirements, which the Wadden Sea Plan can easily meet.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive calls for coordination at North Sea level, for which purpose the Wadden Sea countries could act jointly. This coordination also could take place in substance through the Wadden Sea Plan.

The Council furthermore points at the successful joint monitoring and exchange of knowledge and information for the Trilateral cooperation. These must be continued and extended.

The new Wadden Sea Board should have a steering role in the Trilateral cooperation. It must have a task in the preparation of the Trilateral Ministerial Conference and in supervision of the compliance with the agreements made.

The performance of the Wadden Sea Plan and the Wadden Sea Board should be evaluated in a few years’ time. The evaluation must cover the Plan’s role and function, the Board’s role, function and composition and the mutual relation between Board and Plan.

The importance of the (regularly organized) scientific symposium for the Trilateral cooperation is emphasized. It is important to have the conclusions of the scientific symposium translated into recommendations for the policymakers (the Wadden Sea Board and the Governmental Conference). The Council has recommended before to have a joint committee of independent scientists and government representatives for that purpose. The Council repeats that recommendation.

The Council’s recommendations are currently closely in line with the provision positions taken by the German and Danish fellow-advisory councils. The Council does however take the view that a more obligatory form of cooperation will have to be considered in the future.

RAAD VOOR DE WADDEN

[lange marktstraat 5](#)

[8911 ad leeuwarden](#)

[postbus 392](#)

[8901 bd leeuwarden](#)

[telefoon \(058\) 212 60 15](#)

[telefax \(058\) 212 01 58](#)

[e-mail info@raadvoordewadden.nl](mailto:info@raadvoordewadden.nl)

[site www.raadvoordewadden.nl](http://www.raadvoordewadden.nl)