

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board (WSB 38)

06 October 2022
Tønder, Denmark



Agenda Item:	7 Trilateral Governmental Conference
Subject:	Trilateral Youth Conference Event Report
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Submitted by:	CWSS

Trilateral Youth Conference overview of the programme, first results and follow-up process.

Proposal: The meeting is invited to note the document.

Trilateral Youth Conference Event Report

Introduction

The Trilateral Youth Conference (TYC) was held between 01 to 04 September 2022 in St. Peter-Ording, Germany, bringing together young adults who are already involved with or are enthusiastic about the Wadden Sea World Heritage. It aimed to discuss their common issues of interest as well as their visions for working together. Selected representatives will present youth perspectives at the 14th Trilateral Governmental Conference (TGC) at the end of November 2022.

The event was organised by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) on behalf of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC). It was hosted by the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park and sponsored by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) with funds from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV). The conference activities, lodging and meals were fully funded, and the travel costs subsidised.

The participants were indicated by partners in each country, based on their existing relationship with the site and their association with various organisations, or contacted the project coordinator directly to express their interest. We received 59 registrations and withdrawals for different reasons, mainly given health status before the event. The total attendance was 46 young adults between 18 and 30 years old, balanced in age and gender. The participants are volunteers, bachelor's and master's students, PhD candidates, young professionals, employees, and entrepreneurs. They are involved in different fields of activity – e.g. environmental conservation and education, sustainability and management, tourism and hospitality, social sciences and humanities, communication and arts. The event was in English.

The communication between CWSS and the participants started one month before the event when we established an online community platform in Discourse. There, we shared relevant information on logistics, and the participants had the opportunity to express their desires and opinions, e.g. on programme details and meal arrangements. The same community platform is used for the follow-up process in the preparation of youth perspectives for the 14th Trilateral Governmental Conference.

Programme

Day 01 – Our ONE Wadden Sea. The conference begins by focusing on meeting each other and sharing references about the site. Ms Anja Szczesinski, WWF Germany facilitated the activities. The Opening Session had a welcome speech by Ms Katja Günther, State Secretary in the Schleswig-Holstein Ministry for Energy Transition, Climate Protection, Environment and Nature Conservation; and an opening talk by Dr Karin Lochte, Chairperson of the Wadden Sea Board. After dinner, the first session of Insights into the Context was an opportunity to get to know the group and share opinions. They expressed ideas about their motivation to attend, their views on a successful TYC and contributions to that, what they consider the main challenges and opportunities for protection and commitment to safeguarding the Wadden Sea World Heritage site.

Day 02 – Our feet on the Mud. The conference follows by sharing personal involvement and creating new connections to the site. The day started with the Mudflat Walk Experience guided by four volunteers of the National Park House St. Peter-Ording – Schutzstation Wattenmeer. The activity successfully created bonds and a group feeling while the participants interacted with the landscape and shared its different features throughout the three countries. Ms Irina Bartmann, moderator and coach facilitated the activities. After lunch, the second session of Insights into the Context was an opportunity to examine the present by discussing examples of existing youth involvement, topics addressed and achievements. The participants explained the activities they are developing regarding clusters of involvement – i.e. living, working, and researching in the region as well as volunteering in the three countries – and specific projects and events – i.e. Watt'n Network, Waddenmars, Waddenlab, and North Sea Sustainable Innovation Challenge. Then, in a

World Café, they discussed their motivation, challenges and achievements in their respective clusters of involvement and specific project and events. The free evening gave time to spontaneously form groups of shared interests about relevant topics and relax at both the dike and the venue.

Day 03 – Our eyes on the Horizon. The conference advances with a workshop to discuss possibilities to further engagement and collective commitment to the site. The Futures Literacy Lab was facilitated by a team from the UNESCO Chair on Futures Literacy at Hanze University and One Resilient Earth composed of Loes Damhof, Ramila Khafaji Yadeh, Laureline Simon and Niyanta Shetye. The morning session focused on projections of impacts and risks associated with climate change, screening of short artistic movies, group exercises and collective reflections about the co-existence of several futures. Based on a reframed scenario about the Wadden Sea future, the afternoon session creatively explored and registered in pictures, drawing and writing. The evening session started with input from CWSS and the Schleswig-Holstein National Park about the TWSC, Wilhelmshaven Declaration and youth contribution to the TGC. Then, the facilitators presented the key themes/topics and underlying values that emerged and discussed them in plenary with the participants. Finally, after the vegetarian barbecue, a group of participants organised an open discussion about how to mobilise and organise the trilateral youth work after the event.

Day 04 - Our Compass for Actions. The conference ends with an exchange on how to develop youth perspectives to present at the TGC. The day started with input from CWSS about: the connection between the two conferences, communication products and the follow-up process to be organised under the participants' needs. The workshop wrap-up session focused on the objectives and method to collectively formulate messages based on guiding questions. The results of the open discussion organised by a group of participants in the evening before stimulated and revealed other ideas shared in the plenary. Working groups were formed for specific tasks in the follow-up process, i.e. to develop youth messages and organise the TGC side event exhibition.

First Results

The Trilateral Youth Conference demonstrated the diversity of the existing youth involvement in the Wadden Sea World Heritage, the numerous possibilities in connecting the activities, the extended interest in further youth engagement at the trilateral level and the vibrance of bringing together motivated young adults. The main desires expressed collectively are to expand connections among young adults in the region, have more opportunities to interact, and improve youth ownership of the site. For that, the participants suggested having: (a) direct and open communication with CWSS, (b) support for regular in-person trilateral meetings and continuous online communication; (c) the organisation of a second Trilateral Youth Conference; and (d) assistance in structuring a youth network to deepen the discussions and have permanent involvement in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation.

Follow-up Process

CWSS is leading a follow-up process to deepen the exchange among the participants, give more information about the TWSC structure and governance processes, prepare communication products about the TYC, and elaborate on youth perspectives to the 14th Trilateral Governmental Conference. The process is being held in partnership with the TYC facilitators and Waverunner Studios. The follow-up activities are (1) maintain communication with and among the participants; (2) exchange information about the event results; (3) evaluate the event; (4) provide more information about CWSS work and TWSC structure and documents; (5) support the participants in their discussions and organisation of working groups; (6) prepare communication products, i.e. reports, videos and texts for outreach; (7) develop youth messages and organise the side event exhibition for the 14th Trilateral Governmental Conference.



Day 01 – Opening Session. Photo: Sarah Fuhrmann, CWSS.



Day 01 – Insight into the Context Session. Photo: Sarah Fuhrmann, CWSS.



Day 02 – Mudflat Walk Experience. Photo: Lukas Gottwald, Waverunner.



Day 03 – Workshop. Photo: Niyanta Shetye, One Resilient Earth.



Day 03 – Workshop. Photo: Niyanta Shetye, One Resilient Earth.



Day 04 – Closing Session. Photo: Soledad Luna, CWSS.