

MEETING DOCUMENT

Wadden Sea Board

(WSB 44)

20 November 2024

Online meeting



Agenda Item:	5.1 Protect and strengthen the Outstanding Universal Value (paras 1-16)
Subject:	Progress on the joint Strategic Environmental Assessment
Document No.:	WSB 44/5.1/2
Date:	7 November 2024
Submitted by:	TG-WH/SEA subgroup and CWSS

The development of a joint Strategic Environmental Assessment (joint SEA) to assess the cumulative impacts on the OUV of the property was requested by the World Heritage Centre (WHC) in [Decision 45COM 7B.23](#) adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session (10-25 September 2023).

The trilateral SEA subgroup was established by the TG-WH to discuss and propose a way forward for the development of the joint SEA. During its 43rd meeting in May, the WSB **endorsed** the further details on the steps to develop the joint SEA and **supported** the preliminary roadmap to develop the national components and the joint SEA ([WSB 43/5.1/2 rev.1](#)).

During its 46th, on 21-31 July 2024 in New Delhi, India, the World Heritage Committee (decision [46 COM 7B.23](#)),

14. Further appreciates the updated information on the requested joint SEA to assess the cumulative impacts of extraction and infrastructure developments within and around the property, and requests moreover the States Parties to:

- a. Ensure that the focus of the SEA is on the potential impacts on the attributes which convey the OUV of the property, as well as other heritage/conservation values, in accordance with the principles of the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context,*
- b. Submit the scoping report of the SEA to the World Heritage Centre for review;*

The intense discussion in the SEA subgroup and the TG-WH 45 meeting (online, 11 oct 2024) on a first draft of the scoping report of the SEA revealed a need to clarify different understanding of the desired ambition level and methodological approaches voiced by the parties, before the draft scoping paper could be finalised and further implementation steps could be taken. The SEA subgroup is currently optimistic to overcome these issues but would require a bit more time than planned. A meeting with World Heritage Centre and IUCN on the draft scoping report, originally scheduled for November 2024 has therefore been postponed to January 2025. The aim of this meeting is to gain better understanding on the requirements of the SEA and whether the methodological approach outlined and the level of detail suggested are appropriate. The

corresponding draft scoping report of the SEA will be shared with the delegations once a substantial draft version will be available and before sending it to the WHC/ IUCN.

For the time of the submission of the State of Conservation Report (SoC) (01 February 2025), a clear signal to the UNESCO committee should be enclosed, that all parties have jointly started to carry out the SEA in a well coordinated manner, meeting UNESCO's requirements.

Proposal: The meeting is asked to **take note of the slight postponement and agree** on the further procedure for the coordination of the draft scoping report of the SEA with the WHC/IUCN