

Together for one Wadden Sea: 39 organisations sign a common declaration for more sustainability of shipping and ports in the Wadden Sea World Heritage

On the 14th Trilateral Governmental Conference on the Protection of the Wadden Sea, several organisations from the shipping, port and environmental protection sectors signed a jointed declaration for more engagement and sustainable management in the maritime and port fields in the Wadden Sea. The 39 signatories of the declaration "Sustainable Shipping and Ports Initiative for a well-protected Wadden Sea" recognised the importance of protecting the Wadden Sea while cooperating towards more sustainability for the shipping and port activities and contributing to a cross-sectoral dialogue at trilateral level.

The Wadden Sea is indeed the world's largest tidal flat ecosystem, stretching along the coasts of Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, and is home to a multitude of habitats and species. Simultaneously, the region depends economically and in terms of employment on the different commercial ports and smaller harbours, and the southern North Sea is a major traffic area for international shipping. Yet, various shipping and port activities affect the integrity of the Wadden Sea's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), making this cross-sectoral cooperation necessary. The signatories specifically want to address topics such as port accessibility, transition to a climate-neutral and clean fleet and find ways to protect this UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Together, the signatories have expressed their will to minimize the impact of shipping and port activities on the natural environment of the area and its OUV, and to cooperate towards climate-neutral operations as early as possible. By exchanging best practices on a trilateral level, reinforcing the cooperation between ports and environmental NGOs as well as cooperating for increased safety in shipping in and around the Wadden Sea, the signatories aim to preserve and maintain the uniqueness of the ecosystem. Therefore, they agreed on "the importance to develop a trustful, cross-sectoral dialogue process on a trilateral level" and to actively advocate for the continuation of the ongoing efforts.

This common declaration is the first formal step in a long-term collaboration. Further, synergies and opportunities for concrete cross-sectoral cooperation will be identified and exchanged.

Trilateral:

- Wadden Sea Forum e.V

Netherland:

- Coalitie Wadden Natuurlijk representing It Fryske Gea, Landschap Noord-Holland, Sportvisserij Nederland, Stichting Het Groninger Landschap, Stichting WAD, Vereniging Natuurmomenten, Vogelbescherming Nederland, Waddenvereniging
- Gemeente Schiermonnikoog – Municipality of Schiermonnikoog
- Gemeente Terschelling – Municipality of Terschelling
- Groningen Seaports
- Koninklijke Vereniging van Nederlandse Reders – Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners
- North Sea Foundation
- Port of Den Helder
- Port of Den Oever
- Port of Harlingen
- Port of Lauwersoog

Germany:

- Bremenports
- BUND (Niedersachsen and Schleswig-Holstein)
- JadeWeserPort Wilhelmshaven
- MARIKO
- NABU
- Niedersächsischer Heimatbund
- Niedersachsen Ports
- Schutzstation Wattenmeer
- Schutzgemeinschaft Deutsche Nordseeküste e.V.
- Verband Deutscher Reeder – German Shipowners' Association

- Wilhelmshavener Hafenwirtschafts-Vereinigung e.V.
- WWF Germany

Denmark:

- Danmarks Naturfredningsforening – Danish Society for Nature Conservation
- Dansk Sejlunion – Danish Sailing Association
- Danmarks Sportsfiskerforbund – Danish Sportfishing Association
- KIMO-DK
- Municipality of Tønder
- Nationalpark Vadehavet – Danish Wadden Sea National Park
- Ports of Esbjerg
- WWF-DK

Background:

The *Sustainable Shipping and Ports Initiative for a well-protected Wadden Sea* was developed by the partners of the project "Sharing and developing knowledge to strengthen the contribution of shipping to a well-protected Wadden Sea World Heritage" funded by the Wadden Sea Board of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and the project "Development of cross-sectoral and cross-stakeholder concepts for sustainable shipping in the trilateral Wadden Sea" funded by the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt.