

# MEETING DOCUMENT

## Wadden Sea Board (WSB 44)

16 May 2024  
Ameland, Netherlands



---

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Announcements by CWSS</b>
<b>Document No.:</b>	WSB 44/4
<b>Date:</b>	7 November 2024
<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>CWSS</b>

---

The following paper gives a written overview of the announcements of CWSS to the WSB 44.

**Proposal:** The meeting is invited to note the document.

## Announcements by CWSS to WSB44

### 1. New Project Officer Monitoring and Assessment

With the start of August, the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) welcomed a new staff member. **Antonia Immerz** takes on the position of the Project Officer Monitoring and Assessment. Her tasks include coordinating and managing the Trilateral Monitoring & Assessment Programme (TMAP) and the Quality Status Report as well as facilitating the Expert Groups Monitoring & Assessment and Data Handling.

Antonia has just returned from South Africa, where she researched for her master's thesis on humpback whales at the MRI Whale Unit of the University of Pretoria. With a background in computer science, Antonia supported marine research at the Alfred Wegener Institute, Helmholtz Centre for Polar and Marine Research in Bremerhaven for over 11 years. There, she was the overall responsible data manager for the MOSAiC project and on board the multidisciplinary and international Arctic drift experiment herself.

### 2. First trilateral summer school on Wadden Sea World Heritage

After ten days of learning about the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site and the intricate aspects of its ecology, nature conservation, sustainable development, and management, the first trilateral summer school was concluded on 30 August 2024. Through theoretical lectures, field visits, and collaborated solution-seeking, 18 Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD students from the Wadden Sea countries and abroad investigated the multifaceted challenges the Wadden Sea faces. The summer school participants presented their results in the framework of 2024 Wadden Sea Day.

The 2024 Wadden Sea World Heritage Summer School was a joint initiative of Alfred Wegener Institute, the FH Westküste University of Applied Sciences, the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, the Lower Saxon Wadden Sea National Park Authority, the Danish Wadden Sea National Park, and the Waddenacademie, supported by the Trilateral Programming Committee on Wadden Sea Research and the Partnership Hub within the framework of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation.

### 3. Quality Status Report Salt Marshes

The Wadden Sea Quality Status Report (QSR) on Salt Marshes by Elschot *et al.*, 2024 was published on 6 November 2024 and is available online at <https://qsr.waddensea-worldheritage.org/reports/salt-marshes>.

### 4. CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration workshop

On 13 June 2024, an online workshop on [CO<sub>2</sub> Sequestration in the Wadden Sea -State of knowledge and open questions](#) was held. More than 50 experts from the three Wadden Sea countries and beyond responded to the invitation from the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat and participated in the trilateral workshop, which served as a first knowledge exchange about carbon sequestration by salt marshes, sea grass, sediments, as well as mussel beds.

A workshop report is available: [Meise, K., Busch, J., Luna, S. \(2024\) Workshop report: CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration in the Wadden Sea - State of knowledge and open questions. Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.](#)

## **5. Wadden Sea project partner meeting MANABAS COAST and workshop *Nature Conservation and Coastal Flood Defence: How Much Salt Marsh Management Do We Want and Need in a Changing Climate?***

From 7-11 October 2024, project partners of the INTERREG North Sea Programme project MAInstreaming NAture BAsed Solutions through COASTal systems (MANABAS COAST; 2022-2027) met in Groningen, Netherlands. The meeting, organised by Rijkswaterstaat, NLWKN, and the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS), included multiple excursions at the Wadden Sea coast.

Back-to-back to the project meeting, a workshop titled "Nature Conservation and Coastal Flood Defence: How Much Salt Marsh Management Do We Want and Need in a Changing Climate?" was organised by CWSS, the trilateral Expert Groups Climate Change Adaptation, Salt Marshes and Dunes, and partners of the MANABAS COAST project on 10 October in Groningen. Over 60 participants from Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium and France discussed salt marsh management in the context of climate adaptation. The workshop emphasised the importance of natural dynamics – the guiding principle of the TWSC – and of system-wide understanding for salt marsh management and highlighted the role of historical data in informing future strategies. Participants also discussed the restoration of salt marshes – a topic with growing importance in the light of the EU nature restoration law. <https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/manabas-coast-workshop-focused-salt-marsh-management-changing-climate>

## **6. Workshop “The status of the Wadden Sea under European and International Law”**

A small-scaled online trilateral workshop “The status of the Wadden Sea under European and International Law” is held on 6 November 2024. The workshop is organised by the Dutch Waddenacademie, supported by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS). The 2024 workshop is preparatory in nature for a more comprehensive workshop to be organised in 2025. During the workshop on 6 November, we hope to trilaterally share knowledge about the most important treaties and EU directives that apply to the Wadden Sea in the field of nature, water and landscape protection, and jointly identify important implementation themes for more in-depth discussion in 2025 and the 2026 Trilateral Ministerial Conference.

## **7. EU project “Innovations for migratory bird monitoring along the East Atlantic Flyway (FLYWAY)”**

The TSI-FLYWAY project financed by the EU Technical Support Instrument (TSI) has come to an end. A comprehensive State of Play assessment has been conducted with input from Wadden Sea experts and international specialists in the fields of migratory waterbirds, remote sensing, and statistical analysis. To improve the bird monitoring and allow tailored management measures, the report highlights that further information is needed regarding abundance, vital rates, flyway boundaries and environmental conditions. Based on impact, urgency, costs and possible implementation speed a draft for a roadmap for implementation of innovative methods was developed. The final documents shall be published soon.

A video was produced by the EU to raise awareness for the outcomes of the project: [https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/green-transition/monitoring-east-atlantic-flyway\\_en](https://reform-support.ec.europa.eu/what-we-do/green-transition/monitoring-east-atlantic-flyway_en)

Encouraged by DG RFEORM, a new TSI project proposal ‘Integrated environmental monitoring informs adaptive management of coastal wetlands’ was submitted jointly on 30 October, by partners from the three Wadden Sea countries and Belgium, Spain and Portugal.

## **8. Harbour Seal counts 2024**

The latest [harbour seal report](#) was published on 4 November. Since the peak in moult counts in 2020, a 5% decrease has been observed, with numbers now being lower than ten years ago. Pup numbers have also decreased. The mechanisms behind these changes are currently unclear. During a workshop conducted with

representatives from seal centres on 22 October it was discussed if and how data from rehabilitated seals could be used to obtain information on the current changes and an approach was outlined to ensure the availability of data for future analysis. The Dutch seal project started on 4 November with the aim to better understand what is driving these changes, in collaboration with experts at the trilateral level.

## **9. Annual report**

The 2024 Annual Report will be published online on the day of WSB44. A small number of printed copies will also be made available. The publication gives an overview of the main activities of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation of the past year. The focal topic of the 2024 edition is energy transition.