

Wadden Sea Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and World Heritage Interpretation

Introduction

Building upon a network of people and activities evolved over decades, the “Wadden Sea Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development and World Heritage Interpretation” aims to provide a trans-boundary framework for environmental education and interpretation in the entire Wadden Sea. It stands for ONE Wadden Sea and builds on the numerous local, regional and national activities in this field. It is intended to provide an umbrella to promote the Wadden Sea’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in an international and interdisciplinary approach. Filling the strategy with life – from the local to the trilateral level – is a common responsibility.

The strategy has been developed as part of the work of the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS). Much has been contributed by the Trilateral Network Group Education, the members of which represent Wadden Sea education and interpretation at national and regional levels, and by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat. The work was supported by the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and its Wadden Sea Board.

The strategy links and contributes to implementing other important strategies for the Wadden Sea, namely the overall World Heritage Strategy and the strategy for sustainable tourism. It also contributes to the UNESCO Programmes for “World Heritage Education” and “Education for Sustainable Development”.

Our Vision for the Future

It is our joint vision that in the future:

- People who live, visit or work in any part of the Wadden Sea World Heritage region are aware of and appreciate the OUV and the unique landscape. They are committed to preserving these globally important assets for the benefit of present and future generations and for all humankind.
- Environmental education and interpretation provide access to the understanding and appreciation of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site and its global importance. High-quality information and nature, landscape and culture experiences ensure outstanding opportunities for all age groups to learn about, experience, enjoy, and support the protection of the Wadden Sea.
- Local, regional, and trans-boundary, as well as governmental and non-governmental offers complement each other, and committed partners actively cooperate at a national, trilateral and international level. All education and interpretation activities support the integral protection of the Wadden Sea as an ecological entity and the ecological requirements of its common World Heritage status.



Our Objectives and Measures – How the Vision becomes Reality

Three joint objectives set out how we want to achieve the vision:

- **Competent multipliers:** All stakeholders of Wadden Sea education have a transnational understanding and appreciation of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site, its OUV and its protection in a trilateral and global context.
- **High-quality information:** Comprehensive holistic information and education offers provide consistent communication of the OUV throughout the Wadden Sea Region and beyond.
- **Outstanding person-to-person communication:** Guided nature interpretation offers provide authentic experiences of the diversity, dynamics and beauty of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site for everyone.

Thirteen measures at the national as well as at the trilateral level are expected to achieve the objectives and to realise the vision in the long term. At the trilateral level, three measures comprise networking and service activities targeted at multipliers of Wadden Sea education as well as providing multilingual education resources focussing on the World Heritage Site. Ten measures at the national level range from training programmes for various audiences, to operating visitor centres and other information systems, numerous guided tours e.g. for the public and for classes, to online and offline information and education material.

Audiences

Our approach to Wadden Sea education and interpretation from the local to the trilateral level addresses various target groups in the framework of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

Schools of all kinds: The audience for “formal learning” includes school classes, schools and other formal learning groups, including schools of applied sciences and universities;

Stakeholders: The main audience for “non-formal learning” are multipliers of Wadden Sea World Heritage education and interpretation, such as visitor centres, NGOs, nature guides and youth groups engaged in extracurricular learning activities, such as Junior Rangers;

General public: The main audience for “informal learning” is the general public – i.e. local inhabitants and guests (tourists on holidays, including day-trips).

Implementation

The implementation of Wadden Sea World Heritage education and interpretation is a shared responsibility and common task of the signatories of the strategy. They include public authorities, NGOs, and other stakeholders at the national and trilateral level, while also being open to welcoming more supporters.

The implementation at the **trilateral level** – according to a Trilateral Education Work Programme further specified in annual work plans – is a core task of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and realized by the IWSS together with its network of education centres with guidance provided by regional representatives, the Wadden Sea Board and the Task Group World Heritage.

Implementation at the **national level** follows national work programmes – existing or future measures of the three Wadden Sea countries and their different regions – by public as well as private partners, such as municipalities, provinces, National Park administrations, NGOs, visitor centres, schools, etc. The regional networks identify representatives to support and advise the trilateral work programme.

