

## WORLD HERITAGE—

### Developing sustainable tourism



■ The unique, largely undisturbed nature of the Wadden Sea is an important asset for tourism. Therefore, only a sustainable tourism, which meets the ecological, economic and social requirements of the region, will secure the livelihood of the people and the conservation of the exceptional natural values in the future.

The **development of a Wadden Sea-wide strategy for sustainable tourism** is the foundation for the future of the tourism in the

Wadden Sea region which takes responsibility for the protection and maintenance of the World Heritage and, at the same time, supports sustainable regional development.

Through **transnational networking of local and regional stakeholders** from the tourism and nature conservation sector, a platform is forged for the joint development of sustainable tourism which will persist after the end of the period of the PROWAD project.

The **promotion and development of sustainable tourism** products provide impetus and initial building blocks for the implementation of the tourism strategy. It also makes the visitors aware of the values of the World Heritage.

National parks and environment ministries of Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands are working closely with the tourism sector, conservation organizations, and local and regional stakeholders—for a sustainable tourism with perspectives for people and nature.

The trilateral Task Group Sustainable Tourism Strategy (TG-STs), that steers the PROWAD project, was set up in the framework of the Trilateral Cooperation for the Protection of the Wadden Sea, and will present its findings at the next trilateral ministerial conference in Denmark in March 2014.

Want to learn more about the development of a strategy for sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea?  
Please visit our website:  
[WWW.PROWAD.ORG](http://WWW.PROWAD.ORG)

Further information about the World Heritage Site and the Wadden Sea national parks, please visit:  
[www.waddensea-worldheritage.org](http://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org)  
[www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de](http://www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de)

September 2012

Common Wadden Sea Secretariat  
Virchowstr. 1, 26382 Wilhelmshaven  
[info@waddensea-secretariat.org](mailto:info@waddensea-secretariat.org)  
[www.waddensea-secretariat.org](http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org)



Photos: Martin Stock, Bernd Hälterlein, Helge Bendle  
Design: Jan Wichmann  
Printed on 100% recycling paper.  
This publication is co-financed by PROWAD – Protect & Prosper.



The Interreg IVB  
North Sea Region  
Programme



European Union The European Regional Development Fund



Ministerie van Economische Zaken,  
Landbouw en Innovatie



Fryslân Marketing



Nationalpark  
Wattenmeer



Niedersächsisches Ministerium  
für Umwelt, Energie und Klimaschutz



Niedersächsisches Ministerium  
für Wirtschaft, Arbeit und Verkehr

die nordsee

nordsee\*



Danish Ministry of the Environment  
Nature Agency



[WWW.PROWAD.ORG](http://WWW.PROWAD.ORG)

PROWAD  
PROTECT & PROSPER  
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
IN THE WADDEN SEA



## PROWAD

### Protect & Prosper

### Sustainable Tourism in the World Heritage Site Wadden Sea



## HOLIDAYS IN THE WADDEN SEA— In the midst of a unique part of nature

■ The Wadden Sea is a worldwide unique natural area, situated along the North Sea coast of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. It is one of the last original natural landscapes of Europe. Here natural processes can unfold largely undisturbed, as the area has a protected status in all three countries: in Germany as national parks and in the Netherlands as nature reserves, also it has been designated as UNESCO World Heritage site since 2009.

Tourists appreciate the unique natural conditions of the landscape for recreation and opportunities for experiencing nature: each year 10 million overnight guests and 30–40 million day visitors come to the Wadden Sea islands and the mainland coast spanning from Texel in the Netherlands to Skallingen in Denmark, being one of the most popular holiday destinations.

Tourism is one of the most important economic factor for the Wadden Sea region and with a yearly turnover of 3 to 5 Billion Euro this industry contributes largely to preserve jobs in the region.

With the touristic use of the area yet also the risk occurs that the protection and conservation of the World Heritage Wadden Sea could be harmed by new touristic developments. The transnational project "PROWAD", being funded by the EU via the Interreg IVB North Sea Program, constitutes the framework for the development of countervailing strategies: How can sustainable tourism be guided into safe ways to minimize the environmental impact that may come with touristic activities in the World Heritage Wadden Sea area?

## TOURISM AND NATURE CONSERVATION— A partnership with potential

■ The World Heritage site status opens up new potential in the field of nature tourism for the tourism industry which is the most important income source in the region. At the same time nature conservation can benefit from the increasing awareness and popularity of the Wadden Sea area as a holiday destination: visitors become aware of nature and contribute to its protection and conservation.

How can the tourism sector assume the responsibility of protecting the Wadden Sea World Heritage? Which forms of tourism can permanently contribute to protect and conserve the World Heritage? How to strengthen the economic potential of the World Heritage and national parks in sustainable ways? These and other questions are dealt with transnationally with all stakeholders in the PROWAD-Project.

The work will be carried out in accordance with aims and principles of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention.

» [whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/)

## LEAD BY EXAMPLE— Nature compatible journeys

■ Nowadays ecologically oriented guests who love nature can already choose from many vacation offers in the Wadden Sea region: In Germany, over 250 partners of the National Park propose environmentally-adapted accommodation, regional culinary delights, nature-compatible boat trips and exceptional flat walking offers in the Wadden Sea.

» [www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de](http://www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de)



In cooperation with the WWF and the International Wadden Sea School certified tour operators offer climate friendly group tours and sustainable class trips. Some islands are completely car-free zones.

The German railway gives the opportunity of a carbon-dioxide-free journey to the Wadden Sea region in the framework of the program "Fahrtziel Natur" (Destination Nature). Once arrived at the destination, the region can be explored by public transportation, by bike or by renting an electrical bicycle.

## FASCINATION MIGRATING BIRDS

■ Twice per year the guests of the Wadden Sea can experience an extraordinary spectacle: in spring time when millions of migrating birds are stopping over in the area and in autumn when they fly back southwards. The birds are then on their long journey between their wintering grounds in Africa and breeding areas in the Arctic.

This represents a chance for the tourism sector to develop exceptional nature experience-offers in the pre and off-seasons which give a close-hand experience of the importance of the Wadden Sea for the conservation of the global biodiversity.



» Goose days in the biosphere Halligen

[www.ringelganstage.de](http://www.ringelganstage.de)

» Migratory days in Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park

[www.zugvogeltage.de](http://www.zugvogeltage.de)

» Goose days Neuwerk

» West Coast "Vogelkiek" in Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park

## REGIONAL PRODUCTS

■ The marketing of regional products is the cornerstone of "sustainable development" in the Wadden Sea region, namely in the UNESCO Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve in Lower Saxony and in the Halligen Biosphere in the North Frisian Wadden Sea. The initiative supports the cultural landscape and promotes its sustainable use.

The Dutch brand "Wadden Gold" stands out for its culinary delights from the Wadden Sea region and its sustainable activities from "cycling for delight" to flat walking offers in the Wadden Sea.

» [www.waddengoud.nl](http://www.waddengoud.nl)

These initiatives are just a few examples of sustainable tourism in the Wadden Sea and provide for the project PROWAD valuable input and guidance.