



A SUCCESSFULL COLLABORATION FOR MAN AND NATURE

The National Park and tourism

Nationalpark
Wattenmeer



SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

Colophon

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Realising the potential of the National Park

Schleswig-Holstein – the Land between the seas – is largely shaped by tourism. Many guests spend their holiday on the west coast. 45 percent of the Germans being interested in holidaying at Schleswig-Holstein's North Sea coast would prefer to spend a 'nature holiday'. This is reflecting an outstanding interest that is apparent throughout the entire country. The results of our market research confirm that 'Nature' is one of the major travel motivations of our guests.

„Experiencing Nature' thus plays a key role as a touristic theme in the reorientation of tourism in Schleswig-Holstein with respect to all three defined target groups.

The Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park is one of Germany's major areas of unspoilt nature. The park is beneficial to the region and lends a touristic

quality to the area. The touristic net product based on the combination of nature, experience and recreation serves to improve the living and working conditions within the National Park region.

The National Park and tourism have been cooperating for many years. We believe that their common potential has not been fully tapped as yet, so we are looking forward to an even more intensive cooperation – for the enjoyment of our guests and for the benefit of nature.

This compilation explores selected topics and issues of the collaboration. It outlines the general framework and characteristics and presents the results of surveys and economic investigations. It also pinpoints areas of successful collaboration and ongoing projects.



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Manageress,
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Tourism at the North Sea in Schleswig-Holstein

Tourism is among the most important economic factors for Schleswig-Holstein's west coast: According to the Nordseebäderverband (North Sea Resorts Association) the tourism sector contributes 37.5 percent to the economy of the North Sea travel area.*

As a traditional holiday destination, the North Sea in Schleswig-Holstein is one of Germany's most popular travel destinations of long standing. There are 2 million overnight visitors and 14 million same day visitors per annum coming to the west coast and the Wadden Sea National Park. Visitors from abroad contribute less than 2 percent. The current surveys done by the F.U.R.** within the scope of the travel analysis (as of 2006) show that the factor 'Nature' is playing a major role in the destination selection process. In this sample inquiry 36 percent of the Federal citizens questioned by F.U.R within the scope of the travel analysis 2005 gave 'nature holiday' as a kind of holiday they would possibly choose or were even fairly sure to opt for within the next three years. Among respondents interested in a holiday at the North Sea in Schleswig-Holstein the proportion of nature tourist is even higher at 45 percent. More than a third (38 %) of the respondents from Germany often or very often visited nature attractions during holidays (F.U.R travel analysis 2004). This goes with the concept of measures by Roland Berger



where "experiencing nature" has been identified as a relevant topic for all three target groups (sophisticated bon vivants, families with small children, best ager). The findings of the report

were brought into line with the conditions of the Land (Federal State), supplemented with suggestions of the stakeholders and combined into a new, target group specific, tourism strategy. Given the immediate strategic reorientation of the touristic marketing, it is not by chance that North Sea-Tourism-Service Ltd. (NTS), as the regional tourism marketing organisation, is now concentrating on the theme 'Nature/Experiencing Nature' besides the theme 'Beach and Bath'. As a first measure – taken in cooperation with the National Park Administration – an 'Information System on Nature Experience' was established that provides a calendar of nature events on offer along the west coast (at: www.nordsee-naturerlebnis.de).

* Nordseebäderverband (Hrsg.) (2006): Mehrwert – Die Bedeutung des Tourismus für die Region und warum wir alle davon profitieren. Broschüre, 16 S.

** Forschungsgemeinschaft Urlaub und Reisen e.V. (F.U.R.) (Hrsg.): Die 36. Reiseanalyse RA 2006 – Erste Ergebnisse ITB 2006, Berlin.

*** Roland Berger Strategy Consultants (2006): Handlungskonzept für die Neuausrichtung des Tourismus in Schleswig-Holstein – executive summary.

**** Wirtschaftsministerium des Landes Schleswig-Holstein (2006): Das neue Tourismuskonzept für unser Land. 28. S.

What do Germans feel about their national parks?

EUROPARC Deutschland (the umbrella organisation of national parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves) developed a communication strategy for Germany's large-scale protected areas and has launched a new umbrella brand: "National Natural Landscapes".

Within the scope of these activities the public opinion research institute emnid on behalf of EUROPARC Germany questioned 1,000 representatively selected Federal citizens about various aspects of the theme 'large-scale protected areas'*. The questions concerned the following issues:

- Significance of designating national parks
- Preferring to holiday in a region that has been set aside as a national park for conservation purposes
- Co-financing national parks by visitors

Question:

Would you prefer to holiday in a region set aside as a national park for conservation purposes?

71 percent of the respondents would preferably holiday in a region set aside as a national park for conservation purposes. A national park is appreciated as a place that guarantees for an intact nature.

Question:

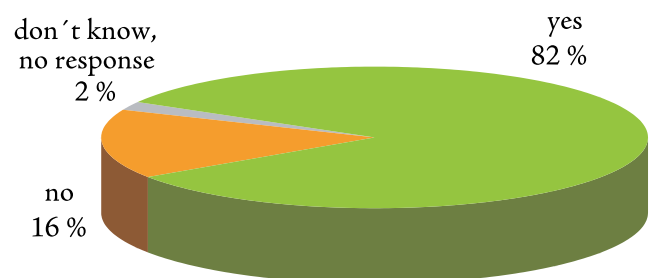
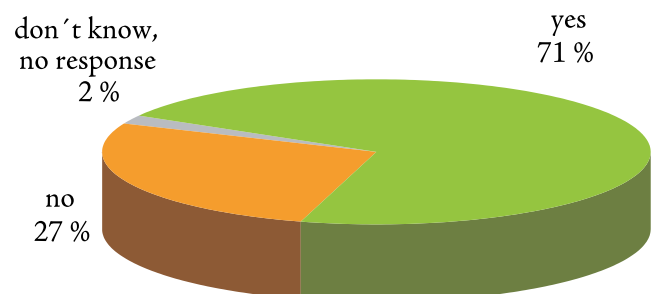
Would you agree that visitors to national parks should be called upon for co-financing through instruments like a tax for nature or admission fees?

82 percent of the respondents want visitors to be called upon for co-financing. The high willingness to pay reflects esteem for, and interest in, undisturbed and protected nature.

Nationale Naturlandschaften



The keen interest of Germans in holiday destinations that include a national park is also mirrored in the F.U.R travel analysis (2004). The respondents attach much importance to intact nature. 90 percent fully or rather agree with the statement „Intact nature at the holiday resort is important to me“.



* The data were provided by Dr. Christine Kolmar, EUROPARC Germany. Graphic art: NPA.

Basic conditions for a sustainable tourism in national parks

... The aim of National Parks is to safeguard, in the greater part of the area concerned, undisturbed ecosystemary interactions and their natural dynamic processes to the extent possible. Where and to the extent to which this is compatible with the protective purpose, National Parks should also serve the purposes of scientific monitoring and surveillance, education in the field of natural history, biology and related subjects, as well as enable the general public to experience nature.

*Federal Nature Conservation Act
Article 24 National Parks (2)*

... The conservation of nature by the national park should lead to an improvement of the living and working conditions of the human population living within the region through positive repercussion on tourism and the reputation of the region.

*National Park Law of 17 December 1999,
Article 2 (3) Protection and other objectives*

...Man is welcome to the National Park as a guest. The Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park is principally open to anybody. International criteria also demand national parks to provide a foundation for recreational, spiritual, and educational opportunities.

*Mission statement of the National Park Office
and National Park Service Ltd.*

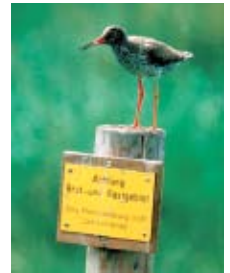
... The development of the brand "National Natural Landscapes" goes with the efforts of upgrading the tourism location of Germany. Strengthening domestic tourism is ecologically and economically wise. When nature becomes a goal of tourists, it will also reach economical value."

Astrid Klug, Parliamentarian State Secretary of the Federal Environmental Office, in joint statement with EUROPARC Germany Ltd. on march 7th, 2007.

Tourism and nature protection can mutually benefit!

Tourists are considerate towards nature if...

- ... the area is divided into (temporal and/or spatial) zones;
- ... an efficient and full-coverage visitor information and visitor guidance system has been implemented;
- ... attractive target-group-oriented nature experience and educational opportunities are offered;
- ... high-quality tourist assistance services are provided by skilled and trained staff (e.g. ranger, nature warden, Wadden Sea guides, staff members of conservation NGOs, touristic and private service providers).



Moreover, a sound data basis (Wadden Sea monitoring) is essential in order to be able to identify changes in good time.



The National Park as an economic factor

Tourists visiting Schleswig-Holstein's Wadden Sea region will help to increase the business volume of the local economy through their spending. The proportion of the turnover that goes into salaries, wages and business profits will add to the revenue of the region.

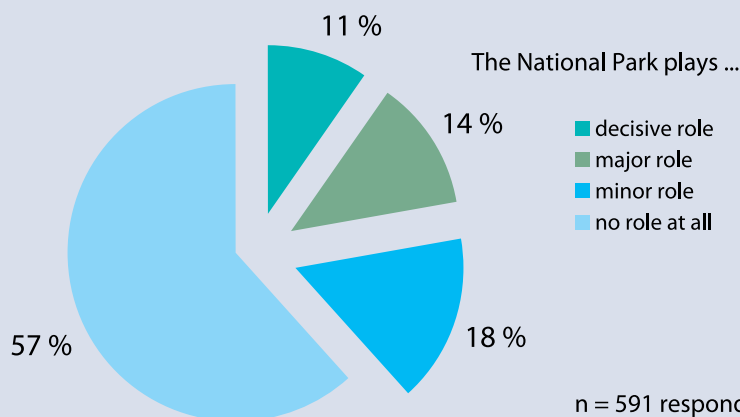
This is the background to a master's thesis* conducted at Dresden University of Technology with the objective to evaluate the importance of national park-related tourism to the economy of the regions of North Frisia and Dithmarschen. The designation 'National Park' is appreciated as a label that guarantees for intact nature, thus, contributing to the positive image of the west coast as a recreational area. In marketing the region as a national park destination and in extending the range of touristic offers based on this unique selling proposition is enough potential to maintain a distinction from competing destinations.



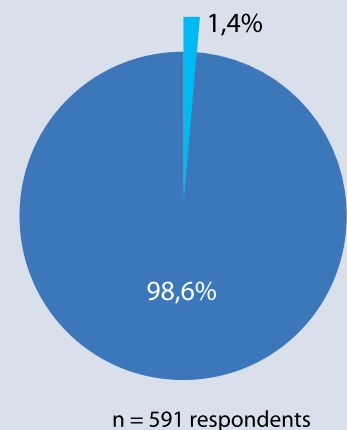
The cited survey was presented to the public by the author together with her supervisor Prof. Eisenstein of Westküste University of Applied Sciences and has been very positively received in the region.

In conclusion, the National Park brings money and jobs into the region!

Results of a survey of 591 overnight visitors (as of summer and autumn 2003) as to their preference towards national parks and their spending behaviour during their stay in the region*:



For 25 percent of the overnight visitors the National Park is playing a major (14 %) or even decisive (11 %) role in their destination selection process and, hence, it greatly influences the choice of the destination. These guests to the National Park (in the broader sense) generate a tourism-related gross value added of 131 million Euros – a calculated number of 5,900 full-time jobs.



1.4 percent of the overnight visitors would not have come to the region without its National Park status. Alone this – relatively small – group of guests to the National Park in the strictest sense produces a tourism-related gross value added of 6.4 million Euros – a calculated number of 280 full-time jobs.

* Korff, K. (2004): Die regionalwirtschaftliche Bedeutung des nationalpark-orientierten Übernachtungstourismus am Schleswig-Holsteinischen Wattenmeer. M.Sc thesis, Dresden University of Technology, Chair of Economics. The flyer (in German) is available at: www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de/themen/Wirtschaftsfaktor.pdf

The Wadden Sea National Park' brand

A brand is the image and positioning of a service. A brand will ideally create particular, distinctive images in the perception of people that arouse positive feelings and memories of events and experiences. Through a brand a complex product – such as the Wadden Sea National Park – and the associations attributed to it can be communicated in a condensed manner.



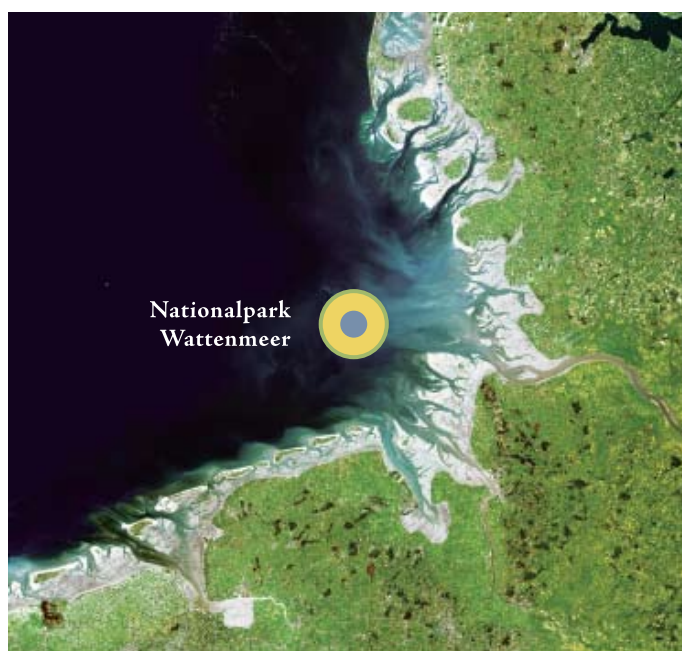
The Wadden Sea National Park' brand stands for enjoyable nature, that arouses emotions. It stands for responsibility towards society, future-mindedness and sustainability: "We Show Heart and Dedication". This will provide the clear distinction on the market and a strong identification with the region.

In mid 2006 the three National Parks on Germany's North Sea coast decided to promote a common umbrella brand. Although being managed separately, visitors nonetheless perceive the Wadden Sea as a coherent landscape. In order to better present themselves on the tourism market, the three national parks on the North Sea coast have joined forces for a tight cooperation. In future the collective products and joint projects will be marketed, and information will be spread, under the single "Wadden Sea National Park" brand and a common logo.

Information and products relating to a single park only will continue to be labelled with the particular logo of the Land. Of course, the official designations of the individual parks will also still apply. The Wadden Sea National Parks and the region's tourism sector are already benefiting from the high esteem of

their visitors. In order for the region's economy, local communities and associations to further profit from this positive image, the National Park partners are allowed to promote the whole region and to advertise on their own behalf under the Wadden Sea National Park brand. New partners continue to join this forward-looking brand partnership programme between the National Park and regional tourism enterprises.

The National Park Partner' sub brand stands for an informative, eventful, environmentally sound, and fully satisfying holiday experience in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park. The branding process is supported through the common standard of the partnerships (as to positioning, criteria, obligations etc.) targeted in all German national parks.



National Park Partners – nature conservation and touristic service providers are cooperating

Tourism enterprises and communities in the districts of North Frisia and Dithmarschen willing to cooperate with the National Park and to advocate the idea of national parks can become a National Park Partner.



Certificates that can be issued to touristic service provider – ranging from sole proprietorships (such as wadden sea guides and landlords of holiday homes) to hotels and the catering trade to corporations (such as transport services) – are awarded by a certifying board. The board consists of representatives delegated by the Islands and Hallig Conference, local governments, the North Sea-Tourist Service Ltd., wadden sea guides, nature conservation associations, National Park Partners, National Park Administration and National Park Service Ltd.

The collaborative core principles for National Park Partnerships as a quality seal of high standard:

- A manifestation of a long-standing collaboration between the National Park Administration and tourism enterprises;
- A cooperation towards common goals: environmental protection, improved visitor information and management programmes, regional network;
- The presentation of a high-quality enterprise or product, the labelling with the combined logo and brand name 'National Park Partner';
- A certification scheme coupled with quality requirements (including the Viabono criteria) and obligations to be observed by both sides in the course of the cooperation.



There are currently 73 National Park Partners in Schleswig-Holstein. Partnership programmes are being developed in other national parks according to similar criteria.



* from: Justification of the National Park Partnerships. Project Report inspektour, December 2005, supported by the „Regionen aktiv – Uthlande aktiv“ Programme on behalf of the „Insel- und Halligkonferenz“ and in cooperation with the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park Office. More information at: www.nationalpark-partner.de

National Park with a VIS – visitor information and visitor guidance

Eye-catcher and meeting point, picture book and beach reading, rain shelter and guidance for guests – all this is the visitor information system. It provides a consistent representation of the National Park. It helps to guide visitors and points out opportunities to experience nature – within the National Park and beyond.



Between 1998 and 2001 the European Commission and the Land Schleswig-Holstein together granted funds of 1.3 million DEM for the project “Protection of Birds in the Wadden Sea by Means of Visitor Guidance”. 30 percent of the project costs were allocated by the European LIFE Nature programme.

Today, this visitor information system (VIS) comprises around 115 information panels, 56 maps, seven nature trails, one information van and 17 information kiosks. New elements continue to be supplemented – such as the VIS elements that was installed on the island of Amrum in 2007.



With its visitor information system the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park provides attractive opportunities for visitors to become acquainted with the coast, the ecosystem and the National Park.

Everything is on show that makes the National Park enjoyable – mud flats, salt marshes, sea animals, birds, seals. Under the slogan “Angebot statt Verbot” (Opportunity – Not Restriction) tips are offered about where and how to experience nature, about what can be done to protect and preserve this beauty as well as what should not be done. This means that the VIS is also a tool to serves the National Park’s protection purpose.



Brent Goose Days – a success story

Each spring the Hallig island communities in cooperation with conservation NGOs and the National Park Service Ltd. invite holidaymakers and same day visitors to the north Frisian Hallig islands to enjoy the fascinating natural spectacle of migrating birds on their way to the Arctic.



The Brent Goose Days shall help to introduce a broader public to the natural phenomenon of bird migration as well as to promote Brent Geese as an attraction for birders and tourists alike. This event thus has a role as a joint project of nature conservation and tourism. Moreover, the Brent Goose Days help to extend the tourism season as well as to enhance the popularity of the Brent Geese and the Hallig islands and to boost both of the protected areas – the “Biosphäre Halligen” (Halligen Biosphere) and the Wadden Sea National Park.

Over the last years the publicity of the Brent Goose Days has been increased especially beyond regional level through extensive public relations efforts. Since launching the “Goldene Ringelgansfeder” (Golden Brent Goose Feather) award in 2002, the Brent Goose Days were mostly opened by ministers of the environment or agriculture. This adds to the significance of the event, pays tribute to the commitment of the Hallig islands’ citizens and honours the award winners. The “Goldene Ringelgansfeder” award is given to individuals for their outstanding contribution to the protection of Brent Geese and their habitats.

There are three weeks of activities and events about the Brent Goose and its habitat as well as the Wadden Sea National Park and the Hallig Biosphere. Mud-flat walks offer opportunities to experience nature right on the sea floor. Guided tours of the salt marshes provide informative insight into the bountiful environment of Brent Geese.

The Hallig island’s theatre troupes invite to the „Rottgoos” (Brent Goose) theatre. Talks and films provide information on the bird’s biology and ecology. There is also a special programme for children, including ventures into the geese’s environment, ‘making things’ activities and nature games.



„Through the Brent Goose Days we attract attention for the Hallig islands from throughout the country. We would have to spend hundreds of thousands to gain the same advertising effect.“

*Erco Jacobsen,
Hallig Hooge Tourist Bureau*



All information on the Brent Goose Days is made available in the current programme flyer and on the internet at www.ringelganstage.de.

The West Coast Bird Watch and other outdoor offerings – highlights for birders

Much the same as the staging birds gather in the Wadden Sea every year, so bird lovers from far and near meet on the first weekend in October for the West Coast Bird Watch to pick up their binoculars.



The beginning of October is the right time to watch artic waders everywhere on the west coast as they feed to build up fat reserves for their long flight to the south. On the “Hohe Watt” tidal flats off Westerhever bird species like Red Knots, Dunlins and Bar-tailed Godwits search for food during flood tide. Near St. Peter-Ording huge flocks of birds come in for a rest at their high-water roosting sites. On the “Kattingen Watt” mud flats nearby the „NABU-Naturzentrum” you can watch a great variety of waders and ducks. With luck, you may even encounter the first Barnacle Geese on their arrival from their breeding grounds in the Arctic.

Since 2005 day excursions by bus have become part of the West Coast Bird Watch offerings, which are conducted as a regional contribution to the European Bird Watch. The circular tours lead to the most attractive bird viewing sites along the west coast, such as Beltringhard-Koog or Hauke-Haien Koog. They are accompanied by biologists, rangers, and volunteers of the Wadden Sea National Park who are also willing to share some fascinating stories about the country and its people.

The West Coast Bird Watch has been instrumental in extending the tourist season at the west coast and in offering an attractive off-season nature experience programme. Ornithologists and bird lovers – both national and from other European countries – are regarded as a promising target group. Presumably, the number of visitors from abroad (currently making up less than 2 % of visitors to the North Sea region) can be further increased by such attractive offerings. This opens up a potential that has been little used so far.

There are many bird lovers from Scandinavia, the Netherlands and the UK who travel far to observe their plumaged friends. For them as well as for birders from Germany a special brochure entitled „Where to watch birds in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park and Biosphere Reserve“ was published. The brochure is also designed to actively promote a visit to the region that harbours the highest richness in bird life within Europe.



* Available for download at <http://www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de/wheretowatchbirds.pdf>

Ship cruises guided by rangers – National Park tourism with fresh ideas

Since 2005, the National Park Service Ltd. in collaboration with shipping companies has been offering ship cruises guided by rangers into the National Park and on the Eider river – with strong response.

In addition to cruises to the seal banks, there are the „Halligtörns“ (Hallig cruises) to Hooge, Gröde, Langeneß, and Nordstrandischmoor starting from Nordstrand or Schlüttsiel. Several cruises include a „Seetierfang“ (marine animals fishing), where, along with vivid explanations, sea animals are caught for the tourists to look at. Moreover, the „Halligtörns“ offer insight into the daily life on the Hallig islands.

To 79 percent of the visitors the presence of a ranger was an important factor for their decision to attend these cruise, as was revealed by a (non-representative) survey of 2005. The experience of a cruise inspired many visitors to request more information material about the National Park. 99 percent of the participants intended to recommend these cruises.

After the great success of the cruises in 2005 – more than 20,000 tourists made use of this offer – the number of fixed dates was increased by about one third to some 140 events. Depending on the size of the vessels, the National Park Rangers are able to communicate their sound information about the national park and the Wadden Sea to up to 350 individuals at a time.



This kind of cooperation is maintained with National Park Partners in particular. The partnership becomes animated, the network between nature conservation and enterprises of the region is strengthened and a long-term strategic tool is employed to communicate to the general public the national park idea and the idea of nature conservation as well as to open up new tourist potential. The partners are promoting the joint offers and services through own publications and on the internet (at www.nationalparkservice-veranstaltungen.de).



„We feel committed to the Wadden Sea and the National Park. We strive to show our guests the scenic beauty around us and to make them enjoy this experience with all their senses.“

Sven Paulsen, owner of the “Adler” (Eagle) shipping company and National Park Partner



A stroll on the sea floor – guided walks into the National Park’s mud flats

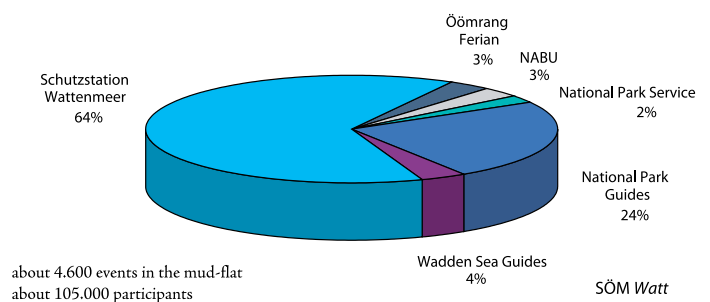
In 2006, about 4,600 guided tours of the National Park’s mud flats were conducted with some 105,000 participants (roughly two-thirds of which were children and young people).

Since 1999 the numbers of guided tours run within the National Park’s boundaries are recorded under a Socio-economic Monitoring Programme (SEM Wadden Sea). The number of guided tours of the mud flats is an obligatory parameter under the Trilateral Monitoring and Assessment Programme (TMAP).

The ‚National Park Guide‘ quality seal* is based on a voluntary agreement between the service providers and the National Park Administration who are thus obliged to carry out excellent educational work. A commitment towards the National Park, compliance with the agreed quality standards and the regular participation in advanced training courses are prerequisite for the certification. The latter ensures a high security standard, small groups as well as imparting to specific target groups interesting facts and things worth knowing about the Wadden Sea National Park and its inhabitants.

Moreover, staff members of conservation NGOs providing visitor assistance services within the National Park are trained by the National Park Administration during a week-long seminar and provided with information on current issues. Additional internal training courses are provided by the respective conservation NGOs. These volunteers through their services for visitors

Guided mud-flat walks, explorations, hikes, experience, excursions in 2006



Guided walks through the mud flats are a popular and much enjoyed nature experience offer. The “Schutzstation Wattenmeer” (Wadden Sea Conservation Station) is the largest provider. Its young staff members performing alternative national service or completing a voluntary ecological year conduct about two-thirds of the guided tours. Other conservation NGOs (NABU, Öömrang Ferian) undertake 3 percent each, the National Park Service Ltd. 2 percent. The 55 certified National Park Guides are involved in about a quarter of the tours.

to the national park take on a multiplier function. Conservation NGOs and National Park guides are indispensable partners of the National Park Administration, particularly in the field of nature experience offers and environmental education. This partnership is manifested through a joint promotion, intensive exchange of information and through combination offers.



* Flyer „Gut geführt im Watt mit den Nationalpark-Wattführerinnen und -Wattführern“ (Well guided through the Wadden Sea by the National Park Guides)(in German), available for download at www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de/downloads/Faltblatt_wattfuehrer.pdf

The Multimar Wattforum National Park Centre

The Multimar Wattforum National Park Centre in Tönning is the most successful of its kind in Germany. It is an outstanding touristic attraction on the west coast and a major economic factor for the region. Since its opening in June 1999, more than 1.3 million visitors have seen the exhibition.

The Multimar Wattforum explains and displays biological interrelationships of the National Park's environment and was the first visitor centre to present for the general public scientific results and issues in an entertaining and visitor-friendly way. The National Park centre is a venue for disseminating knowledge as well as a venue for discovering, experiencing, for exploring and playing. The didactic concept is groundbreaking for the educational work of large protected areas in general. The exhibition area will be extended by 825 square metres to 3,125 square metres by December 2008.

The new complex will contain a massive fish tank holding more than 250,000 litres of water, where large codfish and sharks will make their rounds and divers will provide first-hand explanations about the animals directly from the basin. Further attractions will be sweet water aquariums to display and explain Schleswig-Holstein's lakes and rivers and the enlarged interactive exhibition.

The National Park by phone: The experienced and qualified staff provide information about the Wadden Sea National Park and the offerings provided by the National Park Service Ltd.



The Multimar Wattforum National Park Centre has been visited by

- one third of all tourists surveyed on the west coast
- 62 percent of all inhabitants of Dithmarschen and North Frisia.

Guest surveys show that the Multimar Wattforum is top among the most popular offerings relating to the National Park: 94 percent of the respondents were 'very satisfied' (60 percent) or 'satisfied' (34 percent) after the visit.*

They advice on the Multimar Wattforum National Park Centre as well as on mud-flat walks and ship cruises guided by rangers.



* Socio-economic Monitoring Programme (SEM Wadden Sea) in the National Park Region (2007). Unpublished Report, National Park Office Tönning.

** Further information is available by phone under + 49 (0) 4861 96200 or at www.multimar-wattforum.de, www.nationalparkservice-veranstaltungen.de

... and other National Park Centres

Visitor centres operated by conservation NGOs, the Land or other institutions and organisations that are dealing exclusively or partly with issues relating to the Wadden Sea National Park and that are resourced with personnel and have regular opening hours received nearly 900,000 visitors in 2006.

They all work under a common concept* and offer their guests attractive indoor programmes and activities. The exhibitions and aquariums, interactive spaces and exhibits display and explain the National Park. They are very popular, for they are a child-friendly and all-weather supplement to the variety of other touristic offers. A good example of a successful collaborative project is the National Park Centre in Husum, which is open



life and a One World Shop offering gifts, souvenirs and produce from the region and all over the world.

The Seal Station Friedrichskoog sets new standards in the keeping and breeding of seals under near-natural conditions. Its three areas of activity are: Visitor information, the upbringing of seal pups, and research on this key species of the Wadden Sea. Since its extension in 2006 grey seals have been displayed as well. The visitor centres receiving the most visitors in 2006** include:

- Multimar Wattforum National Park Centre (169,000 visitors)
- Seal Station Friedrichskoog (143.000 visitors)***

The following attracted many visitors through free entry:

- Information pavillon on the List Force of Nature Experience Centre (172.000 visitors)
- Husum National Park Centre (55.100 visitors)

Even the smaller national park centres (e.g. Wadden Sea Conservation Station, NABU, Naturschutzgemeinschaft Sylt, Öömring Ferian) achieve good visitor attendance. They are highly instrumental in the assistance and information of tourists in rural areas.



rated by four partners, namely the National Park Service Ltd., the "Schutzstation Wattenmeer" (Wadden Sea Conservation Station), the WWF and the "Kirchenkreis Husum-Bredstedt" (Husum-Bredstedt parish). The Husum National Park Centre is an informational contact point for tourists visiting Husum that houses an information desk to answer all queries about the National Park, an exhibition on the National Park's rich bird



* Concept on the Cooperation of the Information Centres in the National Park Region (Concept on the Information Centres), updated version as of 16 June 2005

** Socio-economic Monitoring Programme (SEM Wadden Sea) in the National Park Region (2007). Unpublished Report, National Park Office Tönning.

*** Further information is available at www.seehundstation-friedrichskoog.de

„Erlebniszentrum Naturgewalten“ (Force of Nature Experience Centre) List – a new National Park Centre on Sylt

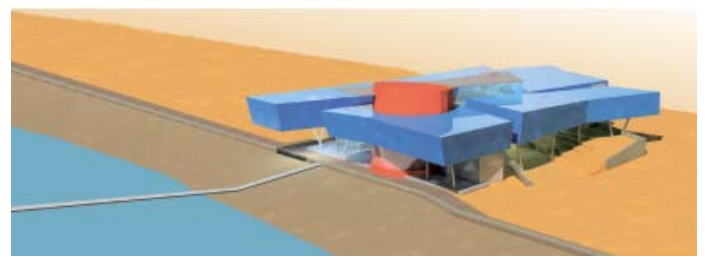
Nature and its power has always been a source of fascination for us humans. The natural forces and their impact as well as their uniqueness and fascination thus became the theme of an outstanding project: the 'Force of Nature' Experience Centre List on the island of Sylt.

Conveniently set in the harbour of List – already a visitor magnet – the experience centre is planned to be erected by 2008. Its purpose will be to fill the visitors with enthusiasm for the Wadden Sea National Park as well as the diversity, beauty and dynamics of the sea and coasts, to bring to life the impact and significance of natural forces and to impart current scientific results and issues.

Since several surveys attested the project's strong visitor attractiveness and high economic viability, the Land Schleswig-Holstein decided to fund 75 percent of the project's total costs of 11 million Euro with funds of the Regionalprogramm (Regional Programme) 2000 (predominantly EU funds). Additional third-party-funds were received from the BINGO-Umweltlotterie and the Michael Otto Foundation. Moreover, the sale of numerous "donation bricks" and the financial contribution by the 'Club 100' members demonstrate the enthusiasm and support of the islanders.



The project is a unique joint venture between several partners. No less than nine organisations founded the Circle of Friends „Maritimes Umwelt-Erlebnis-Zentrum e.V.“ (MUEZ). The concept for the „Erlebniszentrum Naturgewalten“ was developed in joint discussions.



The project partners are

- List/Sylt municipality
- Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research
- National Park Office
- Landschaftszweckverband Sylt e.V.
- Naturschutzbund Deutschland e.V. (Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union)
- Naturschutzgemeinschaft Sylt e.V.
- Naturschutzgesellschaft Schutzstation Wattenmeer e.V. (Nature Conservation Association Wadden Sea Conservation Station)
- Söl'ring Foriining - Sylter Verein e.V.
- Ev. Luth. parish of List
- WWF Germany

Updated information on the planning process, the institutions involved and on the nature experience programmes already on offer are available at www.muez.de.

People who are convinced of the idea and willing to do something meaningful for List, for Sylt, for the visitors and for future generations, can contribute to implement the project by donating 200 Euros for a symbolic brick



Cooperation models for nature experience and visitor support

The Hamburg Hallig and the Westerhever lighthouse are popular visitor destinations in the National Park that attract numerous visitors each year. Based on developmental concepts, it was concluded along with local communities and associations, how nature conservation and nature experience, tourism and regional development will mutually benefit.



Hamburger Hallig

The Amsinck House is the information and service centre situated at the dike next to the Hamburg Hallig. Opened in 2004, it offers a bike rental outlet and an eventful exhibition on the region's history, nature and culture – presented vividly and multimedia-based. The responsible body of the Amsinck House is the Zweckverband (partnership of convenience) Hamburger Hallig*.

The NABU National Park Station ‚Claus Jürgen Reitmann Haus‘ on the Schafberg half-way to the Hamburg Hallig was inaugurated in June 2006. It is the ideal contact point for people interested in nature who are keen to discover more about the region and its bird life. Since 1932 the NABU has been taken care of the former nature reserve Hamburg Hallig that is now part of the National Park. The Wattwerkstatt (Wadden Sea Workshop) on Hamburg Hallig, operated by the National Park Service Ltd., is a popular contact point for visitors who want to learn more about the Wadden Sea National Park. Visitors

can take a guided tour with a ranger to „Get to the bottom of the sea“. They are free to ask questions and to touch and explore anything, they can watch worms through a microscope and birds through a telescope.

Visitors can round off their natural experience on Hamburg Hallig with a visit to the rustic ‚Hallig-Krog‘ National Park Inn.

Westerhever

Set right at the foot of Germany's most famous lighthouse, the „Schutzstation Wattenmeer“ (Wadden Sea Conservation Station) offers visitors a pure natural experience at the heart of the National Park. The Westerhever National Park Seminar House – to be found in one of the former keeper's houses – provides accommodation and facilities for groups with a special interest in the coastal environment, in ecological interrelationships, and in the protection of the Wadden Sea landscape. Same day visitors will find much

to learn and to discover by taking a guided tour or a walk through the exhibition. The Westerhever-Poppenbüll Tourist Association invite visitors to climb the lighthouse – it's certainly a must.



* The members of the Zweckverband Hamburger Hallig (Hamburg Hallig Partnership of Convenience) are the Reußenköge Municipality, the Amt Stollberg, the Town of Bredstedt as well as the Schleswig-Holstein Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union, the National Park Service Ltd. and the National Park Office.

Wadden Sea Nature Experience and Tourism – a LEADER+ project

The marshland region along the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein has been designated as a project area under the LEADER+ EU Community Initiative. The West Coast region received funds of about two million Euros to implement the 'Integrated Developmental Concept Designed for the Sites' that had previously been developed in the region.

Project objectives

- Developing a basis to improve the integration of nature experience and tourism
- Using the findings of the meetings and the basic documentation to improve and advance the touristic offers, to optimise existing products and to develop new ones
- Developing and implementing with the assistance of experts suitable marketing measures for the regional nature tourism offers
- Developing and communicating the image of the region as a destination for tourist and same day visitors
- Unlocking customer potential, improving visitor satisfaction
-

This is the background to the project entitled 'Wadden Sea nature experience and tourism', which was developed by the National Park Office along with the Tourism Centres of Dithmarschen and Eiderstedt. The project's total budget was 95,000 Euros over the period of 2003 to 2006, which was financed half by the EU and half by the project partners.

The project entails the following components*:

- Elaboration of a basic documentation on the 'Wadden Sea Nature Experience'
- A Marketing seminar entitled 'Nature tourism and nature experience – Services put to the test'
- A guideline on the marketing of nature tourism offers
- Annual specialist conferences between 2003 and 2006
- Trial excursions to selected nature experience destinations for landlords and landladies
- Communication and marketing

The joint work on the project and the exchange during the conferences and meetings have advanced the partnership between nature conservation and tourism and opened up new perspectives for the future.



Nationalpark
Wattenmeer



* Downloads at www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de/LEADER

Nature and Tourism Cooperation Project

The ‚Nature and Tourism‘ project, running from 2004 to 2007, is a joint undertaking of the Nordseebäderverband (North Sea Resorts Association, NBV) and the National Park Service Ltd. (NPS). Besides NPS, the Dithmarschen County and the Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Nordfriesland (North Frisia Business Development Organisation) are financially involved. 50 percent of the project costs of 173,000 Euros are funded through the Regionalprogramm (Regional Programme) 2000 (predominantly EU funds).



The project aims at establishing a network between stakeholders of the nature and environmental conservation side and the tourism sector as well as developing marketable nature tourism offers.

With a view to improving the regional customer advisory services, a sales handbook was developed and made available to local tourist centres and agencies as an aid for their work. Regular updates are provided on the internet*.

Training courses to become a „Certified Nature and Field Guide of the Dithmarschen and North Frisia Counties“ were

conducted in cooperation with the Academy for Nature and Environment in the State of Schleswig-Holstein.

There were 24 participants to the course, although the number of people interested in attending was twice the number of available places. The course started in February 2006, the final examinations were held in May. The course imparts the skills needed to conduct an attractive nature experience offer.

The Nature and Field Guides are supplementing the higher qualified National Park Guides and National Park Rangers. Their service helps to exploit the potential in natural experience that also lies in areas beyond the National Park's boundaries, such as the network of „Naturerlebnisräume“ (nature-experience sites).

The „Nature and Tourism“ project is maintaining a close cooperation with the „Wadden Sea Nature Experience and Tourism“ LEADER+ project. Since 2004, the annual specialist conferences have been jointly organised.



nordsee*
schleswig-holstein

* available for download at www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de/Leader/angebote-nach-themen.pdf
www.wattenmeer-nationalpark.de/Leader/angebote-nach-regionen.pdf

What do visitors think of the National Park and its opportunities?

Surveys of visitors to the National Park within the scope of the Socio-economic Monitoring Programme provide information on the respondent's attitude towards the National Park and the degree of use and popularity of services and products relating to the National Park. For about one-fifth of the surveyed tourists and same day visitors coming to the North Sea region the National Park is playing a major in their destination selection process.

A great majority of the overnight visitors (95 %) does not feel hampered by the National Park's regulations. Merely one percent of the respondents stated that they feel hampered by its designation.

A majority of the tourists find the protective measures, such as exclusions and restrictions on access, well acceptable' (84 %), six percent even find them, not far-reaching enough'. Merely two percent deemed these restrictions to be exaggerated.

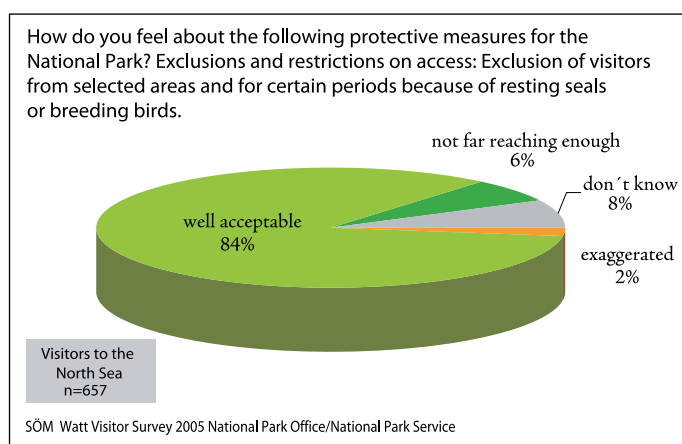
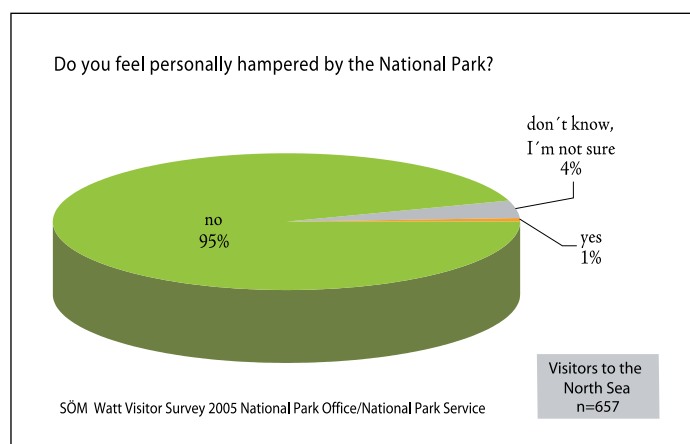
The services and products relating to the National Park continue to enjoy a high popularity. The first place according to the visitor surveys is shared year after year by the guided tours of the mud flats (2006: 62 % highly satisfied/35 % satisfied) and the Multimar Wattforum National Park Centre Year (2006: 60 % highly satisfied /34 % satisfied). Mostly second and third ranked are the tourist assistance services provided by the National Park Service (2006: 57 % highly satisfied/41 % satisfied) and the Seal Station Friedrichskoog (2006: 53 % highly satisfied/41 % satisfied).

All of these offers have received top scores since the start of the visitor surveys. Those offers with a low experience value,

The Hit List of Visitor Satisfaction		SÖM-Visitor Survey
2nd place	1st place	3rd place
2006: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	2006: guided mud-flat walks	2006: Tourist Assistance Services by the National Park Service
2005: Seal Station Friedrichskoog	2005: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	2005: guided mud-flat walks
2004: Seal Station Friedrichskoog	2004: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	2004: guided mud-flat walks
2003: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	2003: guided mud-flat walks	2003: Seal Station Friedrichskoog
2002: Tourist Assistance Services by the National Park Service	2002: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	2002: guided mud-flat walks
2001: guided mud-flat walks	2001: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	2001: Island and Hallig Cruises
2000: guided mud-flat walks	2000: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	2000: Island and Hallig Cruises
1999: guided mud-flat walks	1999: National Park Centre Multimar Wattforum	1999: Tourist Assistance Services by the National Park Service

such as lectures or information brochures, did consequently not score as well.

The acceptance of the National Park among tourists and same day visitors is assumed to be high. The National Park that harbours a pristine section of Wadden Sea receiving special protection enjoys a high esteem. Whilst few people feel hampered, the protective measures are accepted at large. The most popular facilities offering opportunities to experience nature are those that present living animals and provide qualified assistance services along with tours guided by volunteer or employed staff.



Conclusions

Schleswig-Holstein's west coast and its National Park feature among Germany's major travel destinations. When it comes to the field of National Park and Tourism, our Land is top in Germany..

When the National Park was declared in 1985, it first seemed as if nature conservation and tourism had to get used to each other and had to sound out each other. 20 years later, the situation has radically changed. When reading the 18 topics presented here, it becomes obvious that Nature Conservation and Tourism along Schleswig-Holstein's west coast are enjoying a fruitful collaboration. The vast variety of offers and projects mirrors the outstanding interest in nature of the visitors to this region. Presumably unparalleled in the country is the scientific monitoring that convincingly quantifies

and substantiates with economic characteristics the progress and extent of the cooperation.

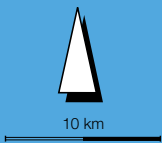
With the offers and projects relating to the National Park on the increase over the last years, the National Park and the tourism business are far from having exhausted the partnership possibilities. Quite the contrary, the experts of both sides agree to further develop new ideas and offers aligned to customer requirements – in correspondence to the demand of our tourists.







HELGOLAND



Nationalpark Wattenmeer

SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN



- National Park border
- special protection area
- tidal flats
- salt marshes
- sand banks, dunes
- National Park information