

Advocacy Coalitions and Policy Change in the Wadden Sea

Mareike Erfeling
University Twente

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University of Twente
School of Management and Governance
Educational Program: European Studies

Author: Mareike Erfeling

0134724

Supervisors: Dr. Willem Halfman
Dr. Gert-Jan Hospers (2nd reader)

Abstract

The Wadden Sea region – a trilateral cooperation between Denmark, the Netherlands, and Germany – has existed for more than two decades. The region is subject to policy changes as the EU places increasing importance on the governance of its oceans and seas.

In order to investigate the policy change the Advocacy Coalition Framework of Paul Sabatier is applied. After explaining its contents, the policy system is described into depth in regard to stable and external factors. The policy brokers are identified, as well as the conflicts of the advocacy coalitions in order to offer a deeper understanding of the policy system. The trilateral institutions are key actors but exert up to now a rather indirect influence. Now, the future EU Integrated Maritime Policy will be introduced leading to a shift in the policy regime. Its effects will be predicted by means of a comparison of the vision, involved sectors and principles included in the policy and in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan.

It seems that because of the close intergovernmental cooperation that exists in the Wadden Sea, future policy changes ought to be implemented effectively. Therefore, the stakeholder approach, one of the most important principles in the EU policy, is already implemented by means of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum.

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1. Introduction: Policy in the Wadden Sea

“The Wadden Sea¹ is an area of outstanding natural value. It is characterized by a high biological productivity and high natural dynamics. [it] is the largest European wetland area and its tidal flats form the largest unbroken stretch of mudflats worldwide. In addition, this valuable and unique natural area is (...) the basis for livelihood of the local people, tourism, recreation and other activities.” (TWSC, 1997, p.15)

Governance of the Wadden Sea is complex as it engages numerous facets of public policy and multiple institutions. National governments possess full policy-making authority but also rely on international cooperation. Already now, governments officially recognize the region's importance with the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation (TWSC). In the agreement Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany will work together to protect and conserve the Wadden Sea. They are striving towards a harmonized coordination to ensure the area's efficient handling. In addition, the EU has experted a greater role in regional management.

The policy system is subject to constant change. Due to altering external conditions interests are redirected and policies are revised. In the first part of this report, the policy regime of the Wadden Sea is systematically analysed by means of the Advocacy Coalition Framework of Paul Sabatier, an expert in the field of public policy. After introducing the region, it is described in detail following the framework's criteria. Subsequently, the TWSC and Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum (TWSF) are identified as Policy Brokers and the role of the German, Danish and Dutch governments is elaborated on. Two conflicts will highlight the presence of Advocacy Coalitions: the Blue- Mussel- fishing debate in the Netherlands and the sudden withdrawal of Hamburg from the World Heritage Nomination. The comparison of both facilitates conclusions about the present and future role of the TWSC and the TWSF. Finally, the recently introduced Integrated Maritime Policy is a critical part of the debate. Its effects are estimated by means of a comparison with the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan. Thereby, certain conclusions are drawn about how the management of the region's future development.

The most relevant policy changes are introduced with the IMP and former existing EU influences. Example are the direct effect of European legislation on national jurisdictions, a changing set of preferences and new principles to be applied such as the principle of competitiveness.

Relevance

The report will offer some empirical understanding of the power dynamic of regional development and intergovernmental efforts in and outside the European Union. Throughout its past, its responsibilities increased. Environmental Issues are a prime example of a policy arena that has increasingly been handled on a supranational level. The TWSC and the new Integrated Maritime Policy have similarly been views as domains of the EU in effort to foster regional cooperation.

From a societal perspective, the case study of the TWSC offers insight into multilateral cooperation and possible lessons for success. A functional intergovernmental organisation, the TWSC, can be compared to the European Union

¹ for geographical definition see Attachment 1

which will increase knowledge of benefits/ losses involved in such different ways of cooperation.

2. Theoretical framework

The goal of this thesis is to describe the development of the Wadden Sea policy regime and its policy change caused by external factors like an increasing influence of European legislation. It describes its present situation and additionally analyses the way policy evolved in the region. Thus, more general conclusions can be drawn. The methodology used to analyse this issue will be the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) designed by Paul Sabatier. It is one of the most promising theories of policy process (Fenger, Klok; 2001). Its usefulness has been proven in earlier research, especially for environmentally connected policies (Sabatier, Weible, 2005; Weible 2005).

2.1 Description of Sabatier's Advocacy Coalition Framework

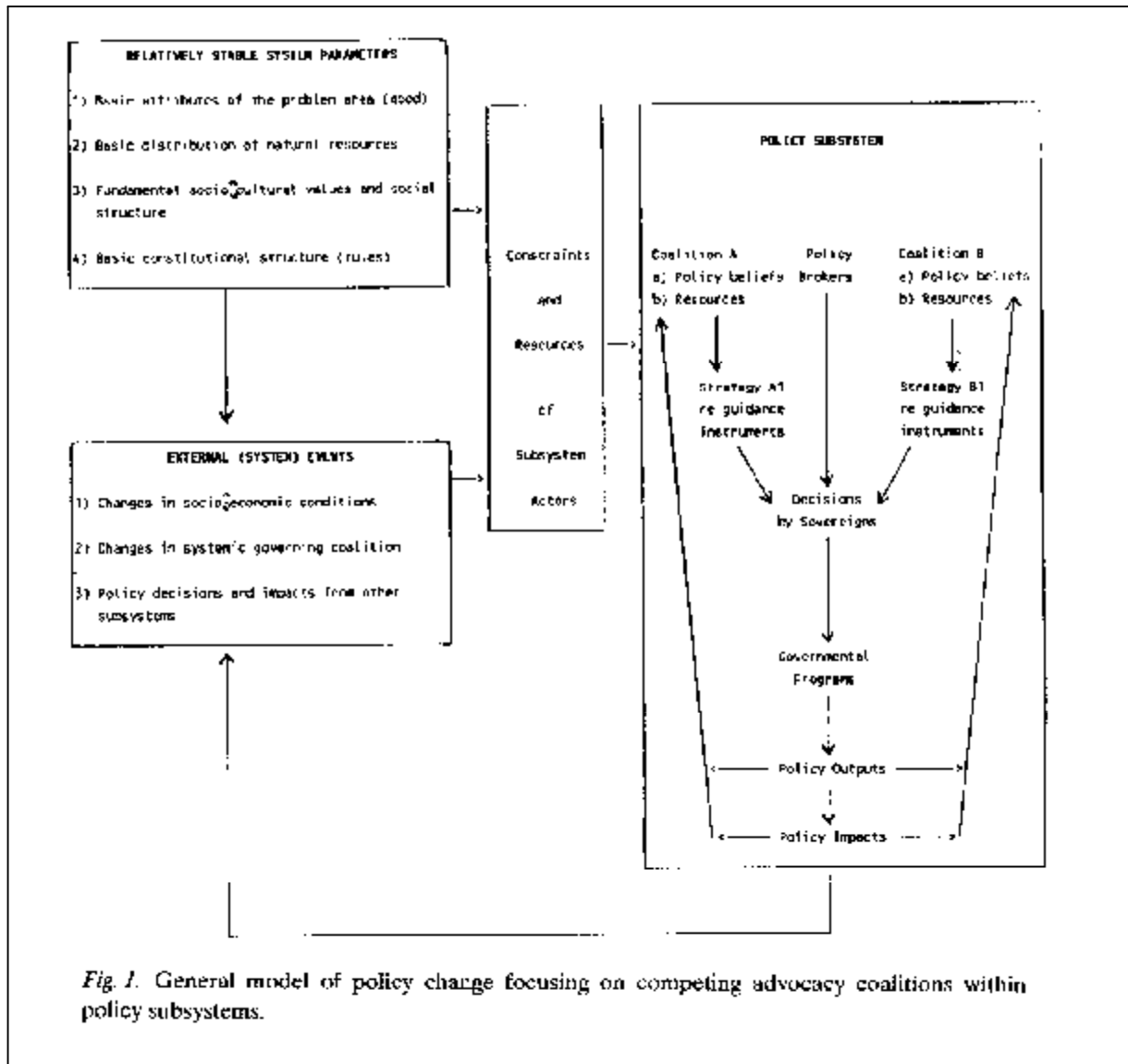
The Advocacy Coalition Framework offers a lens to view policy making over time. Policy formulation and change result from learning processes in and between competing belief systems of advocacy coalitions in policy sub-systems. The main aspects of the framework are policy subsystems with advocacy coalitions, who share a certain belief system, policy brokers and the concept of policy learning.

The objects of study are policy sub-systems, consisting of interacting public actors of all governmental levels and private actors, e.g. interest groups and journalists. A policy sub-system is composed of several so-called advocacy coalitions. Any of those coalitions embrace actors of different backgrounds who share their policy cores and beliefs systems. Normally, there are 2-4 in a sub-system. The coalitions are analysed over a long-term period, preferably a decade or more. Sabatier argues that the actors are self-interested and instrumentally rational. Everybody who plays either a role in generation, dissemination or evaluation of the policy idea is included (Sabatier, 1988). Sabatier summarizes the topic as follows:

“After considering several alternatives, I have concluded that the most useful means of aggregating actors in order to understand policy change over fairly long periods of time is by 'advocacy coalitions'. These are people from a variety of positions (elected and agency officials, interest group leaders, researchers) who share a particular belief system - i.e. a set of basic values, causal assumptions, and problem perceptions - and who show a non-trivial degree of co-ordinated activity over time.” (Bennett, Howlett, 1992, p.280)

In those belief systems they have to incorporate implicit theories of how to achieve goals, for instance value priorities or perceptions of important relationships and the state of the world. Furthermore, the policy beliefs have a three-fold structure: a deep core of fundamental norms and beliefs; a policy core of basic policy choices; and causal assumptions and secondary (implementing) aspects. Following this order, the difficulty and efforts necessary to change those decrease; secondary aspects can be modified more easily while the deep core is nearly immutable. After a core belief has finally been identified, the coalition tries its best to hold on to it and integrate it into the relevant policy programme, even in case of counterfactual empirical evidence or internal inconsistency. All coalitions seek to translate their beliefs into policy.

In addition, conflicts between the different coalitions are mediated by the policy broker. This is an actor who tries to balance the different coalitions while aiming to counteract conflicts and to promote common policy solutions in order to facilitate compromises.



(Source: Sabatier, 1988, p. 132)

The final governmental policy produces - mediated by some factors – certain policy outcomes. Those result in a variety of impacts on targeted problem parameter and side effects, and trigger policy learning (see Figure 1). Additionally, networks learn from past experiences how to better implement and enforce core beliefs. For instance, due to the perception of the adequacy of adopted policies or new information, belief systems can change. Normally, information that contradicts existing policy beliefs will be resisted. Nevertheless, the mentioned policy learning often occurs, and is likely to lead to policy changes (Schlager, 1995). This engagement into policy- oriented learning is also necessary to adapt to varying conditions as fast as possible.

More precisely, those changes can be the product of two processes: firstly, the efforts of coalitions to translate their policy cores and secondary aspects into policy and secondly, external, systemic factors can be influential² (Sabatier, 1988). As Sabatier explains, external changes can be either of a relatively stable or dynamic nature.

TABLE 1: DIFFERENTIATION STABLE AND DYNAMIC CONDITIONS		
	Stable conditions	Dynamic conditions
Changes in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic attributes of problem area - characteristics of goods - basic distribution of natural resources as strongly affecting society and viability of economic sectors (energy) - fundamental cultural values and social structure (political power correlated with social class, income, large organisations) - basic legal structure (norms, decentralised political system) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - socio-economic conditions and technology (changing causal assumptions, altering political support of various coalitions) - changes in systemic governing coalitions (more support for certain issue) or policy decisions - impacts from other subsystem like policy outputs (systems only partially autonomous).

(Source: Sabatier, 1988, p. 134-138)

According to Sabatier, external events are more likely to produce real policy change. Substantive changes are only likely with significant external influences like changes in socio-economic conditions, system-wide governing coalitions or policy outputs from other subsystems (Sabatier, 1988).

A differentiation has to be made between active and latent actors; the latter may become relevant when receiving more information by altering the balance of the system. What's more, in policy learning there is a differentiation between learning in a belief system versus learning across belief systems. The latter is by far more problematic than the former, as members of one coalition will tend to defend their beliefs and be reluctant to learn from another coalition. In Sabatier's opinion, the existence of a political forum is relevant as it facilitates an encouraging situation for dialogue. In it, experts of the coalitions are forced to confront each other, leading to a more fruitful debate.

In summary, this integrative multi-level framework provides the insight into policy sub-systems necessary to induce policy change. Like this, a better understanding of policy changes of the past and present, and possibly predictions of future policy changes can be reached.

2.2 Appropriateness of AC-framework

Paul Sabatier's model is useful for this analysis for numerous reasons. Main advantages are the wide range of factors that can be included and its particular suitability for policies with an environmental context.

First, there is a multitude of theories which try to explain policy processes and change; just a few are mentioned here. A differentiation is possible between those models focussing on one factor and those offering an all-encompassing framework to move beyond single factors and include the policy process as a whole. The former have been known to use institutions, ideas, rational choice, socio-economic pressure, or networks to explain policy (Sabatier, 1991; John, 2003). Examples of the latter include next to the one of Sabatier's ACF Hofferberg's model explaining governmental decisions based on the function of different factors, the model of institutional rational choice by Ostrom et al, or Kingdon's Policy Stream Approach. As the research goal is to analyse public policy of the Wadden Sea with its numerous actors, topics and levels, a more advanced model has to be applied. Because of its focus on belief systems, Paul Sabatier's model, provides a more suitable basis for exploring a policy system.

Secondly, another objective of this report is to explore policy change. In this regard, five conceptions compete in the literature, analysed by Bennett and Howlett (Bennett, Howlett, 1993): political learning, in which learning happens due to past experience and change due to outside stimuli; government learning, as focussing on organisational learning; lesson drawing, with policymakers learning from positive and negative experiences; social learning, seeing policy change as a reaction to past policies and change in information; and policy oriented learning or ACF, involving thoughts and behavioural intentions. The latter views analyses, ideas and information as a fundamental part of the political stream and major forces for change (Sabatier, 1991). His theory brings together different approaches which could help to guide policy changes. As required for the report, those actors can be state or non-state ones. Additionally, the framework is not limited to separate institutions, but goes more into depth by going beyond fixed institutional arrangements towards organisational networking (Bennett, Howlett; 1993). Examining belief systems and coalitions of actors provides greater depth of understanding of the policy process. Because of the correspondence in actors and objectives involved in the Wadden Sea and incorporated in the ACF, this method is very suitable for purposes of this thesis.

Additionally, the model fits best if governments consult with interest groups and organisations and react to problems or events (Sabatier, 1991), which is exactly what is occurring in the management of the Wadden Sea. The TWSC adopted extensive stakeholder participation with the establishment of the Wadden Sea Forum. Furthermore, stakeholder participation is one of the key principles of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP). Therefore, on the basis of the integrative character of the Wadden Sea policy system, an application of the framework that includes the different groups and their beliefs into the analysis is quite possible.

Another advantage of the ACF is that it was already applied several times to environmentally connected policies. Examples include the Californian Maritime Protected Area Policy (Weible, 2005; Weible, Sabatier, 2005) or the Western Water

Policies (Ellison; 1998). Sabatier himself states, that the framework is more suitable for natural than for social systems (Sabatier, 1988).

Summarizing, due to its focus on understanding policy systems and changes, its inclusion of numerous actors and aspects and its applicability to environmental policies the ACF of Sabatier is particularly suitable for an analysis of the policy-subsystem Wadden Sea as it is goal of this thesis.

3. A basis for understanding: stable and external factors concerning the Wetland area

3.1 Relatively stable system parameters

3.1.1 Basic attributes of the Wadden Sea region

The Wadden Sea is shared by Denmark, The Netherlands and Germany and covers in its extension from Blanwandshuk (DK) until Den Helder (NL) approximately 13,500 km² (CWSS, WADCULT, 2001). A wetland area, the Wadden Sea is home to rare species and one of the most critical ecological resources worldwide (Best, Verhoeven, Wolff, 1993). Although its relevance is recognized internationally and several measures have been taken to protect it, its delicate ecosystem is endangered. In addition to its nature, also its unique culture has to be preserved. The protection regime itself is complex due to the large amount of interests present in the region. Tourism, agriculture, harbour, and energy industries rely on the sea to sustain their economies.

3.1.1.1 A unique eco-system with a high natural value

Although commercial and public activities, such as the construction of dykes and the reclamation of land, have affected major parts of the Wadden Sea, large areas are still in original condition. Natural forces are the key factor determining its present form. Therefore, as in previous times, it includes tidal mud flats and shoals, barrier islands and fertile marshlands. The landscape is mixed with dunes, moraine islands, littoral (wadden) areas, coastal and tidal river marches, polder lands, drained lakes, fenlands, cut-over raised bogs and upland moors (Lancewad, 2007).

From an environmental point of view, it is unique because it constitutes

“the largest coherent tidal flat ecosystem in the temperate zone of the world [...]. [T]he completeness of subsystems, processes and structures, morphological as well as biological, underline the outstanding position [...]. There is no similar area in northern latitudes to be found.” (UNESCO, 2008, A)

The Wadden Sea is a highly dynamic eco-system, which constantly reacts on the forces of wind and waves and the changing sea levels. Various ecological niches were created by the multitude of transitional zones between land, sea and the freshwater environment which are shaped by the tides, great fluctuations in salinity and high temperature differences.

3.1.1.2 A culture shaped by the close relation between Humankind and Sea

In addition to its natural value, it has also a special cultural identity. Generally it is influenced by Jutish, Low Saxon, Frisian and Dutch culture. The Frisian language, which is accredited by the European minority language programme, is an example for cultural uniqueness. Traditionally, trading, fishing, and hunting have always been important factors influencing the historic landscape. For instance, original fisher villages are still to be found, especially on the islands. Included in cultural heritage are also historic settlements, buildings like churches and lighthouses, traditional farming

methods, historical Wadden Sea fishing practices and language. They form like the nature an important basis for tourism. Furthermore, they are necessary to understand the identity of the region. There are also important archaeological sites, such as ship wrecks, in need of preservation.

Once, the region was seen as a place for a survival battle between humankind and nature. Therefore, the inhabitants had to defend their settlements against the constantly present risk of inundation. Now, the largest threats are those produced by the people themselves. Natural dangers include changes in hydrology (e.g. changing ratio of groundwater), air pollution, eutrophication or toxification of surface waters and long-term threats like climate change. The exploitation of gas and the related necessity to build more pipelines as well as offshore wind parks and the required cables to transport the energy are also dangers worth mentioning. Additionally, human activities contaminate rivers that flow into the Wadden Sea and thereby endanger nature.

However, not only nature, but also the cultural identity is endangered. Tourism is one of the main factors here; it changes settlement structures and traditional ways of living (Lancewad Plan, 2007, p. 14). One of the main challenges is to counteract those threats in order to maintain the natural and cultural uniqueness.

Culture as it is lived today: three examples

In order to provide deeper insight into the cultural landscape of the Wadden Sea region, the situation in three entities is explained briefly on the basis of the Lancewad Plan project (Lancewad, 2007).

Terschelling (NL) is a ca. 90 km² large Wadden Island in the province of Fryslân (Lancewad, 2007, p. 366- 370). It is the longest West Frisian Island and shelters seven settlements. Still from the Hanseatic past the Wadden Sea area lies on a main maritime trading route, favouring maritime occupations and enabling West-Terschelling to develop a port. In modern times agriculture grew in importance with a concentration on dairy farming. Several of the farm buildings of that time and the lighthouse are unique in terms of shape and layout. Though the economical focus lay on agricultural and maritime activities for a long time, tourism was meanwhile discovered as a substantial source of income. This shift changed the landscape, for instance settlement structures. But at this point, agriculture is still an important industry. In addition, a special characteristic of production on Terschelling is the cranberry, a fruit serving as a base for various foodstuffs. Generally, nature, landscape and cultural heritage are highly valued. A challenge is to maintain sustainable agriculture.

The **Krummhörn** (DE) is a marsh area of approximately 275 km², which is situated on the Western edge of the East-Frisian peninsula (Lancewad, 2007, p. 301-308). Characteristic elements are agriculture, fishery, coastal protection, rural house forms and other specific settlements, churches, polders and dykes. Big farms are typical. The current landscape is dominated by lowlands, which are rather unfavourable for agriculture. Its history and landscape witnessed the constant battle to gain and preserve the marsh. Storms endangered the area especially in the 20th century with the extreme floods of 1953 and 1962.

In the past the social structure was determined by the size of land owned. The farmers were at the top of the social hierarchy, regardless whether they owned their land or leased it. Land ownership also determined voting rights.

Now, tourism is an important source of income and component of the economy. For instance, fishery has become less relevant but, as part of the local tradition, it makes the area more appealing for tourists. Industry is especially to be found in Emden, including its VW- works, shipyards and seaport. Moreover, natural gas and crude oil transportation pipelines are relevant regional structures. The threat of subsidence has to be evaluated. Wind parks and single windmills characterize the landscape. Apart from shipping routes the whole coastal area belongs to the national park.

There is population movement from Emden to more rural areas, which has to be planned carefully to preserve historic settlements. Agriculture is about to change, especially due to the EU Common Agriculture Policy, there is a decrease of farmland and an on-going intensification of production.

The area from **Ribe to Tønder** (DK), dominated by marshland, has an extension of 48-10 km and is located in the South-Western Danish coastal area (Lancewad, 2007, p.16-24). It includes the only Danish polder landscape. An example for Frisian cultural elements are the remains of the most Northern Frisian settlement and the biggest mound village. Characteristic elements are among others dykes, prehistoric burial mounds and "West Schleswig" style farms and houses. Again, the tidal dynamics and the coastal protection mechanisms represent a special feature of the landscape. Agricultural use characterizes large parts; harbours, trade and the production of lace also constituted important industries. Medieval towns still show the wealth of the past, when trade brought capital into the area. Today, there is only one place in which the traditional method of working is maintained in a polder landscape: Tøndermarsken. Its cultural-historic and landscape value is internationally recognized. Until now, this area of the Wadden Sea has only slightly been influenced by industrial uses. However, changes in the traditional working methods and infrastructure by for instance increased tourism could form threats in the future.

3.1.2 The basic attributes of the problem: conflicting interests

There are two distinctive intricacies of the issue to be dealt with and possibly solved in the policy regime: first, the difficulty and need to balance the wide community of interests and targets; second, its extension over three countries, which makes a close cooperation in the TWSC necessary to ensure an integrated and efficient management.

Normally, when various interests exist, the actors may pursue their objectives independently. However, if they have a common and direct dependence on natural resources, a common management approach is necessary to reduce inter-sectoral conflicts and to ensure a sustainable and equitable use.

The Wadden Sea is an exceptional natural reserve in which several interests collide. On the one hand, some actors claim that the uniqueness of the eco-system demands an efficient protection regime. On the other hand, those interests have to be balanced with others like tourism, industry, energy and shipping, which can sometimes limit the degree of protection. Conflicts like the ones mentioned in the following have to be arbitrated in policies.

Fishers, agriculture and tourism depend on a healthy environment, as only such can guarantee resources in the long-term. For instance in tourism, visitors come because of the attractive recreation areas with beaches and clean water, which raises the awareness for nature's importance to business. Nevertheless, their activities are affecting the environment negatively.

In regard to energy, the Wadden Sea offers great conditions for wind turbines. Those are, however, together with the modernization of agriculture (eutrophication) and day trip tourism, main dangers for the environment. Harbour and industry supply work and investment, but tend to counteract environmental protection efforts as it often involves higher costs and thereby reduce their competitiveness.

Rich in natural resources like fish, crayfish and mussels but also fertile marshland and gas, the Wadden Sea is strong in fishery, agriculture and energy. Due to their dependence on common resources (see Section 3.1.3), they are strongly interrelated. Another distinctive feature of the region is a clash of those interests, especially between the vulnerable eco-system, and the conservation of the cultural heritage and those using its resources.

Differences in interests have to be bridged in order to facilitate an effective management linking the interest groups. In this vein, decision-making is made more difficult by the existence of different targets connected with the interests mentioned: conservation of the natural and cultural heritage and striving towards economic growth.

Moreover, the varying national policy strategies hamper an efficient management of the region. The eco-system is located in three countries, which possess varying political and legal systems. An example is the regulation of hunting, an activity that disturbs the environment. Here, the Danish tradition to hunt wildfowl is in opposition to the strong Dutch rejection. A primary goal of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation is to reduce hunting as it belongs to the activities affecting the environment of the Wadden Sea negatively (TWSC, 1997, p.42). Those pressures inside the TWSC can help to improve environmental protection measures.

Furthermore, there are threats not restricted to this region, but endangering areas throughout the world. Global warming is an example for such an issue: in addition to threatening the eco-system of the Wadden Sea as a whole, it has universal effects. Countermeasures can only be effective if a range of countries cooperate.

Summarizing, for such an eco-system with conflicting interests, located on different national territories and threatened by specific and general dangers, cooperation in the TWSC, the EU and worldwide is of utmost importance.

3.1.3 Resources in the Wadden Sea

The most important resources of the region are species like fish, shell-fish, and mussels, gas and favourable conditions for wind turbines, its attractiveness for tourists, and its appropriateness for agriculture.

To begin with, it is an area of high biological production. There are numerous microscopic plants and animals, providing food for worms, bivalves and crustaceans. Those feed in turn several bird and fish species. Like this, it is the nursery ground for a large part of the North Sea fish stock and serves as foraging and resting habitat for seals and wintering place for various kinds of birds. Around 10-12 Mls of birds pass the area and more than 30 bird species use it for reproduction (UNESCO, 2008, B). In addition, for various birds of the East Atlantic Flyway it allows refilling their fat reserves, absolutely necessary for reaching their destinies.

Second, concerning energy interests, the Wadden Sea potentially carries new raw material and resources. There are major gas deposits and the adjacent infrastructure like

pipelines. Its extraction could influence the natural dynamics and even increase the sea rising effect (TWSP, 1997). An example of this conflict is the recent decision of Shell/Exxon to start commercial gas production in a field in this sensitive eco-system. The Netherlands own with 1.684 trillion m³ (January 1st 2006 est., The World Factbook, CIA, 2008) the second biggest European gas reserves after Norway. In 2004, the Dutch government decided to extend the extraction of gas also to smaller areas, because the Groningen field, which satisfied approximately 40% of Dutch gas demand, was close to depletion. Environmentalists fear natural impairments, like an endangerment of salt marshes (Adam, 2002).

Moreover, the Wadden Sea offers favourable conditions for the production of wind energy. Being a renewable source of energy there are clear advantages such as decreasing dependence on imports and reduced environmental pollution. Already now, the countries satisfy parts of their demand for energy through wind turbines. For instance, Denmark fulfilled 18% of those by wind power (Udenriksministeriet, 2004): a tendency that is even increasing every year. Next to the positive factors, there are also disadvantages that have to be taken into account. Examples include effects on other species and habitats and the high density of ships that complicate offshore wind parks (TWSC, 2001, p. 14).

Third, the unique environment and cultural landscape are important grounds for a successful tourism industry at the shoreline and shallow waters. This industry increases in relevance and is one of the most important job suppliers in the region. The coast line of the Wadden Sea offers a lot: beach holiday, sports activities and nature excursions. A slight contradiction exists as tourists endanger the biggest attraction: the nature. Sustainable management, ensuring its existence in the long term, is of utmost importance.

Fourth, in agriculture, fertile grounds and rich grass marshlands are an essential resource. There is an active livestock and farming industry. As a largely rural area, the region has historically relied on agriculture and continues to do so today.

In summary, the core of the policy regime is the necessity to ensure protection of the unique environment and culture while facilitating at the same time beneficial conditions for the other sectors such as energy. Only with a common management approach based on sustainable development the region can evolve in a way that satisfies all interest groups.

3.1.4 Values: Why should we care?

The unique and valuable eco-system of the Wadden Sea region and its culture undoubtedly need to be preserved (see further above). Both are severely endangered. The area's importance was made evident by the national, trilateral, European and international protection schemes applied. The extremely vulnerable area is endangered by its closeness to economic hub areas like Hamburg (De) and the Randstad (NL) and to one of the worlds most heavily sailed sea's, the North Sea. Other dangers like global warming and threats to species have been mentioned before. Cultural-historic and landscape heritage values are an additional factor to the natural worth and closely related to the social and economic development of the shallow region.

Over the years there has been a change in perception: the awareness of the threat towards the landscape rose and therefore also the public pressure on politics to act

accordingly. With the recognition of the value of the Wadden Sea, the importance to protect this vulnerable eco-system became a top-priority of regional policies.

3.1.5 The social structure; contradicting interests of urban centres and rural areas

The Wadden Sea is an area of importance for the conservation of biodiversity, but additionally an area in which people live, work and recreate. Its society has a mostly rural character. In the past agriculture and maritime activities were the most important sectors. The latter include fishing and shipping. Today, tourism and recreation activities are more relevant. The role of industry is limited to certain areas.

A contrast exists between the predominant rural communities and larger urban centres. The metropolis Hamburg has 1.7 MI habitants and is one of the biggest and richest harbour cities worldwide. A small part of the protected eco-system is also to find on its territory. This city and others like Bremerhaven, Delfzijl and Emden make use of the Wadden Sea. Tourism and passages from those harbours to open water are examples. The utilization of rural communities differs from that. Next to being their place of residence, various livings like of fishers, farmers or employees in tourism depend on a healthy environment. Hence, the composition of interests varies between rural and urban areas. Also, the positions differ for the regions. An example for both forms the World Heritage nomination case (further analysed below).

3.1.6 The basic constitutional structure; a trilateral issue

As the Wadden Sea area is divided into three national jurisdictions, policy making and the process of policy change occurs separately, at the governmental level of the different responsible administrations. Nevertheless, for this region in specific, policies are agreed upon, discussed and reviewed on international level by means of communication inside the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation or actions on EU level. Therefore, the three states on whose territory the Wadden Sea is situated recognize the importance of a common protection regime.

There are specific national protection measures. In Germany, large parts of the Wadden Sea in Lower Saxony and Schleswig Holstein are designated as national parks. The framework of the Nature Conservation Act includes protecting the Dutch part as a conservation area and other spots as national parks, examples include the Texel dunes and the island of Schiermonnikoog. The National Ecological Network shall cover all of the country and contribute substantially to natural protection. In Denmark in 2009 a national park will come into being. Historical monuments that lie exposed to or are converted by sediments are already protected a long time (in North Frisia the regulation dates back to 1973).

Furthermore, the three countries are members of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation, which strives towards common and integrated protection (further details Section 3.2.3). In most instances all policies and legislation is formulated on national level. Exceptions are EU directives and some international legislation.

The necessity to cooperate in the Wadden Sea is as critical as it is complex. Managing an ecosystem with territory spanning three countries might be more efficiently pursued as a cooperative effort.

3.2 External (System) events: a region subject to continuous change

3.2.1 Changes in socioeconomic conditions

Several recent changes in socioeconomic conditions influenced the policy sub-system Wadden Sea. The most relevant ones are happening in the sectors of tourism, agriculture and fisheries. In addition, there are phenomena like the introduction of alien species, global warming and energy.

In the past, agriculture and maritime activities represented the largest income-producing industries for the region. Now, tourism has become the dominant sector. With leisure facilities, sustainable produced regional products and increasing ecological and landscape values, there is also a shift from production to consumption. This shift has changed the area's economic structure, governance and development. The maintenance of environment and cultural heritage, both a base for tourism, are now of great importance and can be described as "marketable commodity" (Lancewad, 2007). As influential as the tourism sector has become, its support for natural protection could be a decisive factor in facilitating a sustainable future.

Agriculture changed in two ways. It has evolved to a high-tech industry and employs less than 5% of the population, a percentage that is further declining. In the 1990s employment declined 4% annually in the Danish and German parts (Prognos, 2004). In contrast, there has been a slight increase in the Netherlands because of labour-intensive production like horticulture. The general decline of employment in agriculture is accompanied by rising specialisation: farmers favour monocultures. The diversity of cultural landscapes and other unique elements of tradition have been threatened. This trend has to be counteracted because farms are part of the cultural landscape of the area. They are decisive for its attractiveness.

There is a rising tendency of farmers to increase income by using alternative methods of farming. Cooperation with tourism is one option. As is stated in Lancewad, 2007, p. 283:

"A chance of linking the two economic branches, tourism and agriculture, could be the expansion of ecological agriculture, as well as the inclusion and encouragement of farmers in processes aimed at preserving the countryside."

In fishery, there is increasing regulation by the EU. Stocks shall be protected by measures. Examples are next to the introduction of Total Allowable Catches technical measures like for instance closed areas and by-catch limits, limiting the vessel's number of days at sea and allocating authorizations concerning type and number of the ships that may fish.

The introduction of alien species into the eco-system endangers the ecological balance. Other species could be displaced or even eliminated. An example is the Pacific Oyster invasion (CWSS, 2007). Results of research show that they have already spread over the entire Wadden Sea. More precisely, though the oysters have been present sporadically in some areas for 20 years, a rapid increase in population has been documented recently. Now, they form massive reefs. The invasion is due to the overall increase in temperature and the fact that it barely has any predators. Due to global warming it will spread further, and endanger native blue mussel beds. Yet a co-existence of both seems

possible. Existing co-populations could have negative effects on fishery, as they cannot be exploited anymore. More oyster beds potentially deteriorate the situation for birds, especially those feeding traditionally on mussel beds.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of global warming imposes changes on the Wadden Sea. Slowly, the drastic effects for instance the connected rising sea level can have on the Wadden Sea are increasingly recognized.

It seems that the degree, to which this eco-system disappears, depends on its capability to accommodate change. Experts like professor Morten Pejrup from the University Copenhagen (CWSS, 2007, p. 4) state that the Wadden Sea is only endangered if the sea level rises faster than the sediment accumulates on the inter tidal flats. Dykes could limit this accommodation and could constitute one of the main dangers.

As the threat of this phenomenon becomes obvious, the necessity to include countermeasures into policies is seen. Examples are renewable energies or the orientation in energy towards gas, which pollutes environment less than crude oil. Reducing a global rise of temperature, the region could generally benefit from an increase in gas extraction. However, this issue is somehow contradictory, because for the Wadden Sea, the extraction of gas harbours danger. It could lead to subsidence of the sea bottom and intensify the sea level rise. Therefore, gas has only a clear advantage over crude oil if it is not exploited in the region itself.

Another factor adding to the problematic is the scarceness of energy resources. The discussion of extracting gas and constructing a wind park in the Wadden Sea stands in direct relation with this topic.

All those developments in turn confirm the importance of a comprehensive approach to ocean use management.³

3.2.2 Policy decisions and impacts from other subsystems: the international sphere is gaining influence

The Wadden Sea is subject to a far-reaching regime of protection, including both national and international measures. The different governments on local, state-regional and federal levels from Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands are the main decision-makers. In addition, there are influences from other subsystems like international institutions. An example is the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation, which contributes to the administration of the different constitutional structures present. The Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum ensures the influence of stakeholders⁴. Parts of the Wadden Sea are designated as national parks, Particular Sensitive Sea Area (International Maritime Organisation), Ramsar sites, Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation within the framework of NATURA 2000 (EU Directives). Additionally, it is member of OSPAR and North Sea Conferences and nominated as World Heritage Site. With all those treaties and agreements present, the Wadden Sea has obtained a comprehensive and extensive protection regime. It is unique with its harmonized national and international policies and management arrangements, the integrated monitoring process and the inclusion of social and economic developments

³ Due to the limited time of my research, I have not covered the change in systemic governing coalitions.

⁴ The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and the Wadden Sea Forum are particularly influential actors that will be discussed further below in part 4.1 in the analysis of possible policy brokers.

(Schiermonnikoog, 2005). In order to provide a basis for an analysis of the policy regime, the actors and initiatives are described.

The Wadden Sea is designated as a **Particular Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA)**, (Southampton Research Institute, 2001). It is a nomination of the International Maritime Organisation (UN), for vulnerable ecological areas that are in danger to be damaged by international maritime activities. The Wadden Sea is close to one of the internationally most used waters, the North Sea, and, as mentioned before, is thereby at risk. The PSSA program enables states to regulate the passage of ships more effectively. However, it is not limiting those activities, because it will not introduce new measures and is excluding major shipping routes. Already existing shipping related measures are further applicable. Examples are MARPOL, which is the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and compulsory reporting for vessels.

Additionally to this, the United Nations Convention on Law of the Seas (UNCLS) of 1982 is relevant in the management of maritime areas. It has no direct effect on the Wadden Sea.

The **RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands**, established in 1971, is ratified by all three countries and contributed substantially to prevent further loss and degradation of wetland areas (Enemark, 1998). This intergovernmental treaty provides a framework for local, regional, national and international actions in regard to the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. The Executive Order on the delimitation and administration of Special Protection Areas and RAMSAR sites shows the importance of its implementation. Following the order, no plans or activities like for instance infrastructure installations are allowed that constitute an intervention causing serious consequences for species living in the areas. Although it played a role in the protection of wetlands world wide, it has only an indirect influence on policy making.

OSPAR concerns international cooperation in maritime matters of the North-East Atlantic. The most recent convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic combines and actualizes the 1972 Oslo Convention and the 1974 Paris Convention. Important changes consist of various provisions like the adoption of binding decision and common principles like the precautionary or polluter-pays principles. Relevant strategies concern the topics of marine diversity and ecosystems, eutrophication, hazardous substances, offshore oil and gas industry, radioactive substances and monitoring and assessment (Ospar, 2004).

As decided at the Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference in 2005, a nomination of the Dutch-German Wadden Sea as **World Heritage Site** has been submitted in January 2008 (CWSS, 2008, A). Currently it is already to be found on the tentative list of UNESCO and is now being evaluated. In addition, it takes part in the UNESCO – Man and Biosphere Reserves (MAB) programme under which wetlands are recognized as protected areas (UNESCO, 2008, C). It aims at improving the relationship of people and environment by research and capacity capabilities.

The **North Sea Conference (NSC)** is a political cooperation undertaken by the nations surrounding the North Sea. It started in the 1980s and aims to protect the marine environment. Conservation and pollution are priority topics addressed. In it, the nations recognize the importance of coastal areas. Generally the Conference failed to translate this understanding into concrete decisions. Only at the 3rd conference a first declaration

was adopted referring to sustainable use and development plus the integration of the eco-system approach (Folkert, 1994). The North Sea Task Force was established in 1988 at the 2nd NSC for enabling a certain harmonization and the Quality Status reports. Though the conferences are non binding, they form a possibility to amend the international legal regime.

EU legislation like the Birds and Habitat directives are more powerful instruments, as they are directly applicable. The former establishes Special Protection Areas (SPA), and the latter explains conditions for plans and projects which also apply to the by the Bird directive defined areas. Both have to be implemented into the national law; the implementation process is monitored by the European Court of Justice. Together they form the NATURA 2000, a coherent ecological protection framework. In addition, there are the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and Water Framework directives. Although, because it is directly applicable European legislation seems to be more effective, it only refers to specific sites and not to the region as a whole (Enemark, 1998).

In general, there is a rising influence of the European Union. More and more European legislation exists like the just mentioned examples. Often it is directly applicable and influences the policy-system of the Wadden Sea substantially. The new Integrated European Policy constitutes a far-reaching change in the EU subsystem and will involve noticeable effects for the policy system Wadden Sea. Further below this recent development is discussed (see Section 5).

Moreover, that not only the international influence in the member states increases, but also the importance of common principles, which determine coordination. They indicate changes in the way management of this eco-system is handled. An example is the sustainability principle. For a long time the cooperation of the concerned countries has been focused on environment. However, since the 1990s additional aspects like for instance economics or safety have been beginning to play a larger role. Following the sustainability principle, a harmonic relationship between economic activities, societal needs and ecological integrity has to be guaranteed (TWSC, 1997, p.21), an objective to be implemented with intensive stakeholder integration. Communication plays an important role in guaranteeing transparent decision-making to secure the representation of their citizens' interests. Furthermore, according to the in sustainability highly relevant Brundtland Report a development shall be ensured that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Another relevant principle especially in the Wadden Sea is the eco-system principle. It shall ensure the inclusion of scientific knowledge of ecological relationships together with incorporating socio-political aspects and values in order to protect a native ecosystem in the long-term. Only with sufficient knowledge of the ecological structure, the function of coastal zones and impacts of exploitation an efficient management can be guaranteed. The EU, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation, the Wadden Sea Forum and the governments recognize it is a principle that points the way ahead. Other relevant ones include the Integrated Coastal Zone Management, stakeholder participation and the precautionary principle.

As we can see external subsystems exert a substantial influence. Their importance for policy making diverges. Only EU directives have a direct effect, which means that they have to be incorporated into national law. Other initiatives like the RAMSAR

Convention on Wetlands affect the Wadden Sea only indirectly and therefore to a minor degree as they impose no further obligations.

3.3 Old and new challenges

Summarizing, the necessity to cooperate is higher in the Wadden Sea than in other ecosystems as it is situated on the territory of three countries: the management of one ecosystem can most efficiently be pursued together. In addition, it is a region with rich resources. There are not only material resources like energy or fish, but also immaterial ones like the natural value and beauty. A complex set of actors is present whose interests are not easily reconciled. The management of this region is thereby highly intricate.

Moreover, several highly influential external changes can be identified. Firstly, future key issues include the further incorporation of EU legislation (TWSC, 2005), the rise in importance of international cooperation and of the appliance of the mentioned principles. There is a large number of external subsystems whose influence could rise in future. The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation has been operated already for more than two decades. Throughout this time period its objectives, methods and the actors involved were subjects of change. Especially in the last years new modifications began; the incorporation of EU legislation being a substantial part of them. With the introduction of the European Maritime Policy and the involved new legislation, the described policy regime will face new challenges and shifts.

Why has there been this rise in importance of international cooperation? The answer is twofold. First, issues become more and more global. There is a general development towards cross-border cooperation and joint handling of problems (Weston, 2007). Second, common problems alter the necessity to cooperate. An example is global warming. Already for a long time, experts have been identifying it as a central threat to nature and human kind. Now, evidence of the danger is inescapable and it is understood that countermeasures undertaken only by one or some countries lack in effect. Hence, the importance of international cooperation is recognized.

In addition, compared for instance to the 1990s, economic interests are more intensively integrated in the policy making. This becomes apparent if looking at the development of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation. From a purely environmental oriented organisation it evolved to one striving towards a sustainable future, integrating economic and social factors. There are certain fears existing that this development could endanger natural conservation. Under the umbrella of several frameworks, the protection of the Wadden Sea is ensured to a certain degree. Nevertheless, the environment is threatened. Often for instance the economic sector seems to have better resources to reach its goals (see below the World Heritage case Section 4.2.3).

Finally, the role of tourism increased. With this rise traditional interests like fishery lose ground. Being the main attraction of the area, a priority of this interest group is the conservation of environment. Thus, the position of nature is strengthened.

4. The Policy (sub) - System

4.1 The Policy broker discussion: who is mediating conflicts?

The first point of discussion in this context is the existence of a policy broker. For the Wadden Sea as a whole, not only one but two policy brokers can be identified: the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum. Both function as brokers, as they bring members of different coalitions together, facilitate compromises and issue recommendations. Governments represent and act in accordance with their own interests. Those are not the same for the whole body of government, but differ between for instance institutions and levels. For this reason, their positions are part of the section 4.2, discussing advocacy coalitions. The European Union plays an increasing role in policy making in environmental matters, so also in the Wadden Sea. In the following the role of those institutions is further elaborated on.

4.1.1 Governments

First, as mentioned earlier, there are 3 countries governing the region and coordinating activities, if including the German “länder” Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein even five. All make their own decisions in regard to policies. None of those is superior to the others. Therefore, none of those governments can be the policy broker who keeps conflicts in limits, balances different views and finds compromises, at least not resulting in one final policy for the whole of the concerned region. It is of primary interest to them to guarantee a well-functioning and beneficial management of their national territory, not of the region as a whole. A reason for this are re-elections. Therefore, a highly relevant motive of governing parties and their policies is the probability of being re-elected. They try to satisfy as much interest groups, that is to say voters, as possible to increase their chances to stay in office. E.g. for the German government, it is of minor importance to give consideration to Dutch and Danish citizens because they will not influence the voting outcome. For such a multinational policy regime a policy broker could only be an institution or organisation that brings together different national coalitions. Nevertheless, governments are highly relevant actors as members of the advocacy coalitions.

4.1.2 The European Union

Second, next to the national governments, there is the European Union. It forms in some policy areas an institution superior to national governments and exerts a growing influence also in environmental matters. As three of its member states are involved in the management of the area, this supranational organisation could be suited as a broker. However, also if there are already some relevant directives and recommendations, it is not yet an active participant in the governance of this region. Legislation like the Integrated Coastal Zone Management recommendation influence the policy process, but forms an additional input and has no mediating factor. Nevertheless, its influence is increased. As we will see in the later discussion of the Integrated Maritime Policy this situation could change in the near future.

4.1.3 The Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum

Third, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum (TWSF) is worth considering. It involves all relevant stakeholder groups and publishes recommendations and other material that are already compromises. Not only the conservation of nature is main objective like in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation, but as Ed Nijpels, the president of the forum states also the quality of life, development, accompaniment of people's voyage, innovation and well-being (WSF, 2005, p. 1)..

The Forum is accepted as valuable partner in achieving sustainable development and contributing to the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy (TWSC, 2005). Supported by Interreg III B⁵, it was founded by the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation because it felt an imbalance between ecological protection and social/ economic developments. The independent stakeholder forum has the purpose of including the inhabitants more intensively into the trilateral cooperation. Two problematic topics were the hampering of the region's development by natural protection and the fact that the region can still not be named sustainable. The Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum includes social, economic and ecological aspects and refers therefore to a sustainable development perspective. Stakeholders from the sectors nature, tourism, industry and harbour, energy, agriculture, fisheries and public authorities of the three participating countries (Denmark, the Netherlands, and Germany) are included. Representatives of the mentioned interests and countries meet in thematic work groups. In final meetings, the various stakeholders discuss the issues, find compromises and issue recommendations which are forwarded to the TWSC and the trilateral intergovernmental conferences. Their first common document and policy proposal was published in 2005. The "Breaking the Ice" report shows that different interest groups are increasingly willing to cooperate. Also a plan of action was published.

Now, can it be called a policy broker? To begin with, the involved groups learn about the interests and problems of the others, so that all different aspects and preferences are point of discussion. As clarified in the Final Report of 2003, the dealing with all different viewpoints of the regional policy discussion, led to deeper insights and understanding among advocacy coalitions. In this regard the institution clearly mediated between different coalitions and contributed to keeping conflicts low. An improved understanding between the coalitions is demonstrated by a common definition of sustainability.

For those reasons the Wadden Sea Forum is a policy broker. The implementation of the final compromises should be the next step. Members of the Forum are already included in the conferences as taking place in the realm of the TWSC. The real competence to implement however belongs to the governments. The recommendations will only have effect if the national administrations adopt them.

4.1.4 The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation

Finally, the **Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation** is an institution giving attention to various interests. Being an intergovernmental institution consisting of the three countries Denmark, the Netherlands, and Germany, it is closely connected to the national governments.

⁵ Interreg III is an EU initiative aiming to improve interregional cooperation. It is financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

Generally, the TWSC forms a common framework and a place for encounters. Here the three nations adopted a common vision and agreed on policies to act in concert to coordinate the eco-system in an integrated and common way. The cooperation works by means of intergovernmental conferences. Resulting agreements are implemented with help of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS), the administrative body of the cooperation. The organization is based on the Joint Declaration of 1982 and the Wadden Sea Plan of 1997. In those the three member states agree to harmonize policies, management objectives and legal and administrative arrangements; furthermore, in the latter the trilateral cooperation was approved at ministerial level, which increased its legitimacy.

In the 1970s, environmental protection first appeared in the agenda of countries and a comprehensive legal regime started developing. An example is the RAMSAR convention of 1971. Triggered by public pressures from environmental interest groups the trilateral cooperation was founded in the beginning of the 1980s. While the first decade of the cooperation had a focus on seals and birds a rather sectoral approach dominated. That changed at the end of the 1980s towards a more integrated approach. Economic interests were increasingly included in cross-border coordination (de Jong, 2006). Concepts like habitat management, eco-system management, stakeholder-approach and integration of social and economic issue were increasingly applied. Lancewad is an example for a common initiative. It is a programme aiming at maintaining the cultural identity including cultural-historical and landscape aspects. Especially for cultural tourism and tourism in general it holds advantages.

The Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan (TWSP) is a first common policy attempt on trilateral level. Approved at the State Conference in 1997, it is a management scheme combining various elements. Supported by the EU and the three concerned member states, it marks the joint national-international protection of nature. The implementation shall be achieved in cooperation and individually, on the basis of existing legislation and through participation of all stakeholders and interest groups. TWSP targets have been adopted for ten different categories⁶ and six habitat types showing the advance in environmental protection.

A trilateral monitoring and assessment programme and measures aiming at the improvement of communication in general and public participation in specific are present. Different topics included are next to environmental ones like the conservation of seals also tourism, information and cultural heritage. In addition, concerning the EC Habitat directive social and economic aspects shall be incorporated if appropriate. The implementation of this agreement is reviewed by Quality Status Reports, which are forwarded to the conferences and can stimulate changes or amendments of the plan.

Future key changes of the policy regime and the management plan include the further integration of different interests, the application of the mentioned principles and the incorporation of EU legislation (TWSC, 2005). The TWSC has been operating already for more than two decades. Throughout this time period its objectives, methods and actors involved were subject of change. Especially in the last years new modifications began; the incorporation of EU legislation is a substantial part of those.

In two respects it forms a forum in which compromises are found. On one hand, trilateral governmental conferences provide a framework for close cooperation, supporting the pursuit of a common approach for the eco-system. In that respect it can

⁶ Landscape and Culture, Water and Sediment, Salt Marshes, Tidal Area, Beaches and Dunes, Estuaries, Offshore Area, Rural Area, Birds and Marine Mammals

barely be described as an independent actor, as it provides only the framework for the meetings. On the other hand however, the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat acts as a supporting organisation by doing administrative work for the TWSC and the TWSF. Additionally, it brings various working groups of different coalitions together, which communicate and share their views in order to integrate them in recommendations and forward them to national governments at the conferences.

The following example shows the way it is operating as broker. In the Blue Mussel conflict in the Netherlands, which is discussed in detail further below, this institution did not actively take part. It occupied a rather advisory role. Instead of trying to influence policy making directly, it took the initiative to promote a common approach.

Therefore, in June 2008, a Trilateral Workshop on Blue Mussel Fishery Management took place. More than 60 scientists, managers and users from all three countries sharing the Wadden Sea region discussed their experiences from the last 10 years and effects of the EU Habitat directive. Additionally, representatives from a region in England were invited because of their experience that was thought to provide an interesting contribution. On trilateral level, targets for the amount of mussels allowed to be fished have been adopted in 1994 and a trilateral policy and management plan for fishery is included in the Wadden Sea Plan of 1997. During the workshop it became obvious that a common vision has to be defined for the Wadden Sea. It is not sufficiently clear what is wanted for the future of the Wadden Sea as eco-system and the fishers.

In summary, it is obvious that the TWSC is contributing to an inclusion of different stakeholder opinions into policy formulation and therefore also to the finding of compromises. Its mission is to protect the environment. As stated by Sabatier (Sabatier, 1988) brokers may also be advocates, particularly if they have a clearly defined mission. This is the case with the TWSC. Their mission is the protection of the eco-system Wadden Sea. It facilitates the dialogue across nations and advocacy coalitions. Additionally, it communicates recommendations, which combine the various beliefs and interests inherent to the policy system, to the intergovernmental conferences. Although the focus lies on environment, various interests and groups like energy or industry are included with increasing tendency. For those reasons, it is the main policy broker in the policy system, contributes to a deeper understanding across coalitions and reduces the degree of conflict.

Although policy decisions and implementation happen mostly on national level and the TWSC cannot assert direct influence there, its relevance can be proven indirectly.

4.1.5 Several policy brokers are present

Summarizing, there are several brokers in the process of policy change. First, the TWSC and TWSF facilitate a debate between and within the advocacy coalitions, the results of which are handed on to the governments. Those recommendations are compromises between the different coalitions, as they include all viewpoints and strive towards finding common denominators. Subsequently, governments take decisions based on those recommendations and their own preferences. The TWSC works here as a forum for the governments and provides together with the TWSF further input on the part of the coalitions. In the governmental conferences, taking place under the umbrella of the TWSC, common solutions are agreed upon. Those nations obligate themselves to

take certain policy steps and to find compromises. Nevertheless, the governments have their own core beliefs and mission, stemming from their political affiliations and national culture differences. Therefore, the implementation measures and policy outcome are not the same in the different countries.

4.2 Advocacy Coalitions: Conflicts

4.2.1 Introduction

The Wadden Sea is an area in which interests of fishery, agriculture, industry and harbours, research, environment, tourism, energy, and public agencies are in constant conflict. Tourism and fishery, environmental organisation and energy or shipping, their diverging interests are addressed in the process of policy formulation. In order to provide an insight as to how advocacy coalitions function in this policy system, two recent conflicts are examined. In the first debate, blue mussels are topic of discussion. Blue mussel fishery forms part of the Wadden Sea culture and provides jobs; on the other hand this economic activity could endanger the ecological balance of the region. In the second debate, the case of Hamburg's withdrawal from the World Heritage nomination constitutes an interesting addition to the application of Sabatier's advocacy coalition framework.

4.2.2 Blue mussels; a choice between threatening the cultural heritage and the natural landscape⁷

Blue mussel fishery is a topic recently discussed in the area of the Wadden Sea. As often the case, the utilisation of its marine resources is in conflict with conservation and recreational interests. In addition, an increasing political pressure demanding more sustainable development is a relevant factor.

Here, the main opposing parties are environmentalists and mussel fishers in regard to fishing licenses: economic value versus natural conservation. The fishing tradition is a relevant part of the distinctive culture of the Wadden Sea, which shall be preserved following agreements and the Lancewad plan. However, a continuation of the fishing activities could damage the sediment and endanger certain species that depend on it, such as birds.

Although the problem exists throughout the Wadden Sea eco-system, it shows national differences. In the whole area mussel fishery provides a viable industry in aquaculture. In the Netherlands and Denmark, it is of great economic and cultural significance. However, the two countries clash over their policies. The granting of the fishing permits were debated in the Netherlands while in Denmark, a permit was revoked because it deprived the bird population from a vital food source (CWSS, 2008, B). Here however, a study showed sufficient evidence that fishery does not influence blue mussels negatively so that limited fishing was allowed again in 2008. Quite the contrary the situation in Germany, here aquaculture is not a major part of the economy. German regulations for new licenses and permits are difficult to obtain and the regulatory framework is complex (Hilge, Rosenthal, 2000).

⁷ Lexis-Nexis, a database for searching articles of leading domestic newspapers, is used as source of information regarding this conflict inside Dutch borders as reported in the media

After discussing the change in external factors that affected the policy and led to the recent modification, the advocacy coalitions that emerged during the conflict in the Netherlands will be discussed.

4.2.2.1 New external situation caused policy change

Mussels are extremely relevant for the Wadden Sea. They are important for transport of material and energy, form reefs, are food for many animals like various bird species, habitat for others, increase sedimentation of fine sediments and are a nutrient buffer (Ens, n.d.). Therefore, they are an essential part of this eco-system.

Fishing is a traditional economic activity in the Wadden Sea. For centuries economic exploitation and natural resources persisted next to each other. Fishers earned their living and the environment stayed mostly unimpaired. Nowadays the impacts of fishery on blue mussels and the environment are disputed. Dredging could change the physical structure of the seabed which affects mussel growth and interactions with other species.

Nevertheless, a negative effect is not proven. Certain groups, such as a part of the public and many politicians, doubt the threat of fishery. Fishers have performed this activity for generations and up to now it did not lead to a destruction of reefs. Yet, as Ens states, there has been a situational change. In the past, the productivity of the natural reserve decreased. None the less, fishers did not adapt but tried to extract the same amount of shellfish as before (Ens, 2006). As a result, inter-tidal mussel beds disappeared completely around 1990, and did not recover until now. Thus, the hypothesis of scientists of the SOVON, the Dutch Centre for field Ornithology, states that mussel fishery may have caused a regime shift (see attachment 2). It includes among others changing presences of species. The new situation favours for instance an increasing population of worms. Quite the contrary, bird populations like the common eider decreased (Smaal, 2008). At the moment, the hypothesis of the regime shift is tested in a project of the institute. Although, it is certain that the situation in the Wadden Sea is shifting, the reasons for this difference are still to be found.

Furthermore, there are policy pressures on national and European level towards sustainable development. The Wadden Sea is not only a natural protected region but also a living and working area. None of those interests have priority, but all shall be integrated. In case of the Blue Mussel fishery, unlimited economic use has been possible up to now. However, actors like environmental groups perceive it as dangerous and pressured to limit fishery until its effects are investigated. In addition, there is a growing recognition of the importance of natural conservation, the vulnerability of the eco system Wadden Sea and an increasing body of information concerning the gravity of the actual state of affairs. Severe doubts have arisen over the likelihood that economically sustainable exploitation is possible. Therefore, even if negative effects are not proven yet, there has been a shift in the ability of advocacy coalitions to implement their beliefs into policy. As the suspicion that shellfishery is contributing to endangerment of species and damaging of the sediment grew stronger, the debate concerning licenses increased in intensity and the influence of those actors that support a limitation of fishery activities rose.

4.2.2.2 The tide of events in the Netherlands

The Dutch mussel conflict is a good example to analyse the advocacy coalitions involved. Early in 2008 the question of assigning licenses to the fishers constituted a serious conflict. The preceding events can be summarized as follows.

In Dutch politics, a shellfish fishery policy was designed in 2004, including the objective to facilitate a sustainable development. Fishers were guaranteed time until 2020 to implement it. Environmental organisations agreed to give the shellfish fishery sector this time and room to increase innovativeness and research. In 2005, an agreement between natural organisations and fisheries came into being in order to find the best compromise for all (Markensteijn, 2008). However, doubts arose about the sufficiency of this measure. Already in spring and autumn 2006, and autumn 2007, an appeal to mussel fishers was issued. In May 2006, allowances to fish 12 Million kilo mussel seeds were given. Afterwards, environmental organisations complained as they feared damage of the eco-system. On February 27, 2008 the licenses were cancelled.

The cancellation was backed up with the precautionary principle, which has to be applied in the Wadden Sea. Although a study by IMARES shows no clear difference in biodiversity between reefs that had been fished and those that had not (NRC Handelsblad, 03.03.2008), a long-term study is missing. Therefore, according to the environmental organisations, possible effects are not studied sufficiently. An endangerment of the eco-system, birds and mussels cannot be ruled out. The Dutch public authority spotted the same danger. As result, fishing of blue mussel seed was prohibited, at first from now on until 2010. By then the results of a necessary long-term research will be available.

Protests led to a change in decision. If the prohibition continued until 2010, the fishery sector could probably not be sustained. Public authorities tried to find alternative solutions to secure the surviving of the traditional sector. At last, the ban was limited to spring 2008. Afterwards, it is allowed to fish in certain areas and to a limited degree, until results of a long-term study show the precise effects of fishery. Furthermore, the minister of fishery Gerda Verburg initiated an external research, in which both interest groups, environmentalists and fishery, can bring in a researcher. This way the best balance shall be found between commercial exploitation of mussels and sustainable development (Volkskrant, 22.03.08).

4.2.2.3 Advocacy Coalitions: the question of scientific certainty

The opinions of different interest groups identify their belief-systems and thereby their belonging to one of two present advocacy coalitions. Once there was a battle of survival between human kind and nature in the Wadden Sea region, now it is a question of survival for both coalitions: for the Shellfish-Sector-Advocate (SSA) coalition, which approves fishery, the survival of a sector, and for the Precautionary coalition, which fears the negative effects on a valuable eco-system, the survival of many animal species. The differences between the various interest groups, recreation, environment, industry and others, stem from competition for marine resources and from a disagreement on the causes of their decline.

The most relevant actors in the process of the conflict were the environmental organisation "Vogelbescherming Nederland" and "Waddenvereniging", the shellfish-fishery industry such as the producer organisation, scientists and public authorities. Also others like the tourism industry have certain interests. Subsequently to the explaining of

one primary difference, their membership to one of the two present coalitions is discussed.

There is one substantial difference between the two coalitions, and that is the principle directing their actions. In the case of the SSA- coalition it is the principle of substantial evidence, which includes that something is safe until it is proven unsafe. In case of the blue mussels there is no strong scientific evidence that mussel fishery is endangering the mussels or birds, therefore there is no reason to prohibit it. The Precautionary coalition however is defending the application of the precautionary principle. Following it, prevention is better than cure. An action that might be harmful can be prevented also in the absence of scientific consensus until enough evidence exists that it represents no danger. Therefore, the lack of certainty should not be used as excuse to do nothing at all. This is also known as 'better safe than sorry'. In the blue mussels conflict there is some suspicion that fishery endangers the environment. From the Precautionary coalition's point of view this, combined with the lack of a long-term study justifies the prohibition of mussel fishery.

This difference in principle in which the actions and goals of the coalitions are founded, are a reason for the degree to which they diverge. Depending on which principle is applied, either mussel fishery is prohibited, or not. The degree to which this is done concerning geographical and time limits will show the success of both coalitions in accomplishing their policy objective. Now, a closer examination of the policy goals and arguments of both groups contributes to a better understanding of the policy change.

The **Shellfish-Sector-Advocate coalition** favours fishery, as it has a high economic value and belongs to the Dutch culture. Fishers form the largest group in the coalition. It can be divided into recreational and commercial fishers. A difference between both is for instance the greater dependence of the latter in regard to mussel fishing. The sector of tourism is also present, because a danger to the cultural heritage also forms a danger to the attractiveness of the region. Finally, as pointed out in the end of the discussion of advocacy coalitions in this conflict, public authorities and researchers are divided on the issue.

Its goal is to preserve this sector and at the same time the environment. The coalition shares an interest in preserving the environment with the Precautionary coalition, but has different ideas about the means to do so. As it applies the principle of substantial evidence, it does not see enough reason to limit fishery until a negative effect is proven. Therefore, it claims the mussel fishery never damaged the mussel reefs; the other coalition denies this. In addition, mussel fishery is a traditional, relevant part of the coastal landscape and should be preserved as such. According to this coalition, a prohibition would put an end to the shellfish sector and endanger a relevant part of the Dutch culture. In the following I explain the arguments of this coalition more in detail.

To begin with, the main argument put forward is that fishery is not damaging the environment. Fishers base their living on it, and therefore claim to treat the reefs with caution. They stress that this economic activity has even the potential to help the mussel populations. The seeds are first cultivated in a more beneficial and protected area in the Wadden Sea. They will be less damaged by storms and as a result biomass increases. In addition, the coalition argues wild reefs have always regenerated themselves, and they will continue doing so in the future. The core of this argument as seen from the point of view of the fishers is summarized by a statement of the mussel fisher Jos van Damme:

“the assumptions of the environmental protectionists can be compared with the assumptions that nature will be damaged when you are mowing your lawn. I cannot understand it. We are doing our work here already a hundred years and the mussel reefs are still there. We would be crazy to handle them without care. It is our primary source of income.” (de Volkskrant, 08.03.2008)

Secondly, the sector claims a prohibition would lead to a dying of the traditional mussel fishery sector as 98% of mussel seeds come out of the Wadden Sea (Volkskrant, 29.02.2008). Producer organisations confirm the threat to the culture of mussel fishers. If they cannot practice their profession until 2010 they cannot survive as a sector and will disappear (Volkskrant, 27.02.2008). This would come along with the vanishing of 3500 jobs, 72 boats and a high economic value (NRC Handelsblad, 03.03.2008).

Thirdly, if the “Zeeuwse” mussel, traditionally belonging to Dutch kitchen vanished from the menu the result would be an impoverishment of the Dutch culture like the disappearance of the tulip would (NRC Handelsblad 03.03.2008, Het Parool, 09.05.2008). The experience of culture being one of the reasons to travel to a foreign region, it would constitute a problem not only for fishers but also for tourism.

Finally, a last argument is that, in fact, for accomplishing the long-term study the continuation of fishery is necessary, as otherwise fishery effects on the eco-system cannot be measured. The study would only measure the state of an environment that is changing due to the stop of this economic activity.

The **Precautionary coalition** fears the negative effects on the eco-system and wants to ensure the appliance of the precautionary principle. The largest group belonging to this coalition are members of environmental organisations. In addition, the tourism industry is partly represented as it depends on a healthy environment.

Their ultimate goal is to conserve nature. It argues that the protection of the unique Wadden Sea environment has to be priority. Economic activities can only be allowed if the scientific evidence shows that it involves no risks for the nature. Nevertheless, it agrees that a sustainable solution has to be found, including a perspective for fishers, as their interests have also to be respected. Their arguments favouring a limitation of fishery look like the following.

On the one hand, there is threat to birds and mussel habitats. Already for years it was tried to press a sustainable management forward in order to protect both. Species like the common eider and the toppereend are in danger of extinction. For example, in 2002 ten thousands common eiders died of hunger mostly due to mussel fishery. In general, birds depend on mussels and are endangered by the 65% of mussels that are fished every year and by the damage to the sea floor (Trouw, 05.02.2008). The biomass of mussels is constantly decreasing (De Volkskrant, 09.02.2008) and mussels cannot develop sufficiently. Especially the instable reefs that are constantly under water require an effective protection.

On the other hand, although this coalition would prefer having a uniform and strict protection scheme for the whole of the Wadden Sea, they recognize that fishers also need a perspective to survive. According to the Waddenvereniging sustainability and natural protection can be balanced (NCR Handelsblad, 05.03.08).

Public authorities and researchers are divided. Generally, public agencies favour sustainable development. Therefore, they do not want to cast the mussel fishers out, but

emphasise the importance of a more sustainable fishing (de Volkskrant, 09.02.2008). There are no clear statements showing their affiliation with one or the other coalition.

Among researchers no coherent opinion can be found. A part of them is not sure of negative effects and even supports to some extent the side of fishers. An example is Aad Smaal, professor in sustainable shellfish culture at the University Wageningen. He states that there might be positive effects. In his opinion,

“both parties are partly right. Environmental organisations say that shellfish fisher has negative effects on biodiversity of the Wadden Sea; the fishers say mussel reefs recover after fishing. The truth can be found somewhere in between. (...) The parcel is rescuing from each mussel without chances: it facilitates the maintenance of the mussel seed that normally would stream away.” (NRC Handelsblad, 11.03.2008)

Other researchers state that the harming of birds is certain. What's more, effects cannot be predicted without a long-term study. Nevertheless, even if the growing up of mussel seeds on the parcels in the Wadden Seas leads to increasing biomass, sooner or later they will be transported again to Zeeland. Whether the cultivation of mussels is contributing to an increase or decrease in the number of mussels depends thereby on the moment in the cycle that one looks at.

4.2.2.4 At the end: Success for both coalitions

Looking at the evolution of public policy concerning the Wadden Sea, for a long time, economic utilisation of the region was preferred to environmental protection. As the pressure to integrate environmental interests to a larger degree grew, first a slow change was integrated. A change to a more sustainable utilisation of resources was to be achieved by 2020. However, as pressures from the Precautionary coalition grew, a sudden change in policy occurred in 2008. Rather unexpectedly, no licenses were given anymore to the mussel fishers.

In the following conflict, the Shellfish- Sector- Advocate coalition and the Precautionary coalition tried their best to implement their policy goals following the arguments as mentioned above.

The SSA-coalition has been successful. It achieved a restriction of the prohibition to spring 2008. Also if fishery is limited afterwards in quantity and to certain regions, the maintenance of the sector and its activity is guaranteed until the long-term study reveals the true effects of fishery on the environment. In some way also the Precautionary coalition was successful. It accomplished a higher protection of nature. The mentioned prohibition and ensuing limitation of fishery contributed significantly to their goal of conserving nature.

A factor contributing to the intensity of the conflict was a missing guidance from the top. A proof for this is the statement of the Dutch Minister of Fishery, Gerda Verburg, who declared:

“The creation of a common vision is first of all responsibility of regional stakeholders.” (NCR Handelsblad, 05.03.08)

Would it not be more efficient to find a common vision for the region Wadden Sea on governmental level? Its missing was confirmed on the Trilateral Workshop on Blue Mussel Fishery Management in June 2008, organised by the Trilateral Wadden Sea

Cooperation. It is certain that a sustainable development of this region is strived for. A formulation of how that shall be achieved, including the role of economic utilisation and environmental protection, would help to avoid conflict like the discussed one. Therefore, a coherent vision has to be found for the eco-system as a whole, including German and Danish territory. It would allow long-term planning and thereby improve the efficiency of the region's coordination. This is a success for the broker TWSC. During the common workshop the central necessity for this common vision was recognized. This progress was made without central guidance of governments. Its formulation would establish a common basis for action for all coalitions and actors. Thereby, conflict would be lower and differences in the belief systems of the coalitions decrease

4.2.3 Hamburg: World Heritage nomination divides the opinions

The Dutch-German Wadden Sea is nominated as World Heritage Site, as decided at the Trilateral Wadden Sea Conference in 2005. The competent authorities submitted a corresponding request for inscription to the World Heritage List on January 30, 2008. It is now being evaluated by the advisory body to the World Heritage Committee; a decision is expected in June/July 2009. A striking topic is that Hamburg, originally having agreed to participate in the nomination process, backed off in the last minute. 1.4% of the concerned Wadden Sea is situated on territory of Hamburg. The Netherlands, Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony and the Federal government of Germany decided to continue the process without the city state (BMU, 30.01.2008). Denmark pointed already earlier out that before it would consider a nomination as World Heritage site, first the Danish Wadden Sea National park shall be realized.

Why did Hamburg oppose the nomination? For more than ten years the city was one of the key players and supporters in the process (Danish School of Journalism, 18.04.2008). It seems that opposing interests of actors constitute the main factor: interests resisting the nomination grew stronger. According to different sources the change in policy is due to economic plans such as especially the intended deepening of the River Elbe (e.g. Safecoast, 21.01.2008). Being the portal to Hamburg's harbour and the core of its economy, this is a highly profitable project, but would alter current flows in the Wadden Sea. Also, the extension of extraction of oil by RWE plays a role. All those activities are already included in the nomination dossier, which means that even if the region becomes a World Heritage Site, e.g. the approval of the Elbe deepening is certain. Nevertheless, the government sees the economic success of the Metropolis endangered. Also other actors expect negative effects. The identification and discussion of present coalitions establish a deeper understanding of the policy change

4.2.3.1 Advocacy Coalitions

Like in the blue mussel conflict, two main coalitions can be identified: a Pro and a Contra World Heritage Site (WHS) coalition. The most important interest groups are industry, tourism, environment, energy and public agencies.

Generally, tourism and environment are in favour of assigning the Wadden Sea the World Heritage label, as it would, on the one hand, increase the tourist attractiveness of the region and, on the other hand, improve its protection. Industry and energy sectors showed the tendency to counteract the nomination and therefore belong to the anti coalition. Public agencies, including the Senate of Hamburg, are divided, among others

their membership differs concerning the type of ministry and the level they are operating on. Some industry actors like the harbour authority, which is subordinate to the economic senator, were in favour, whereas the Economic agency was strongly against the nomination (Der Tagesspiegel, 08.07.2008). Furthermore, there is a fundamental difference between the Senate of Hamburg and the Federal Government of Germany. As mentioned above, the Senate, though differing in opinion among single authorities, is opposed to the nomination. The Federal level, quite the contrary, emphasises that it would involve no limitations to economic growth, as activities like the dredging of the River Elbe or exploitation of oil are subject to national and not international laws (Deutscher Bundestag, 04.04.2008).

The coalitions diverge completely in their beliefs and arguments. If for one side the nomination does not have legal effects, it does for the other. If the Wadden Sea is perceived to need further protection, it is already sufficiently protected for the opposed side. No common beliefs can be identified. Both have a completely different vision for the future of the region. While one emphasises the importance of conserving this unique and endangered eco-system, the other focuses on the relevance of economic competitiveness and growth. Now, the coalitions and their goals and arguments are discussed more thoroughly.

To begin with, the **Anti- WHS coalition** consists of actors of private and public sectors. More explicitly interest groups like the harbour lobby including the Association of German Seaport Companies and the German Association of Ship-owners (Verband Deutscher Reeder, 14.01.2008) and actors belonging to the energy sector like the company RWE-DEA are members. In the public sphere Mayor Ole von Beust and the economic authority of Hamburg fit in the Anti- WHS coalition. After a general explanation of its argumentation, the two highly influential issues of the deepening of the Elbe and the planned increase in oil extraction are described.

In general, the main goal of this coalition is the guaranteeing of economic growth. The nomination is seen as a factor that could decrease regional progress, e.g. by imposing more regulations and bureaucracy and asking for regular reporting of for instance a change in flow speed to UNESCO. Therefore, being anxious that a strengthening of protection measures of the eco-system might lead to an increased number of obstacles, the coalition is opposed to the planned World Heritage nomination. The further development of the harbour and shipping traffic through the Wadden Sea could be made more difficult or even impossible. In addition, the effected area is already sufficiently protected by environmental laws and it is doubted that environmental protection would be improved (Abendblatt, 01.02.2008). This concern was already seen a time ago. Therefore, during the discussion whether to allow the Elbe deepening in 2007 the senate stated already that in the case of an approval of the project a further support of the nomination is doubtful.

Two recent, influential topics can be identified. The first one is the planned deepening of the Elbe, which would allow bigger container vessels to enter the harbour and create economic benefits. Therefore, one of the main goals of this coalition is the overtaking of Rotterdam as largest European container port by 2015. The deepening of the Elbe would enhance economic growth. For instance, the Association of German Seaport Companies perceive the nomination as a possible obstacle for further expansion, the planned dredging of the River Elbe and the dumping of the dredged material (Danish School of Journalism, 18.04.2008).

Second, there is the intended increase of extraction of oil from the Wadden Sea by the German oil company RWE-DEA (NDR, 21.01.2008). The coalition fears that the

nomination would prevent those activities that would contribute to economic growth. Already in 1985 the first offshore platform was approved; now, more than 2 MI tones of oil are extracted per year. Six test drillings are planned (Der Spiegel, 28.01.2008), also if the Wadden Sea becomes a World Heritage Site. The assignment of the new label will promote the area to the league of wonders of nature like the Grand Canyon or the Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and could complicate those plans. Therefore, it was not by chance that the company's intentions were made public before the nomination was accomplished. It was an attempt to raise the voice against it and to gather support for this stance. Nevertheless, according to their spokesman Schuhbauer, the exploitation of oil and natural protection are not mutually exclusive (Der Spiegel, 28.01.2008). Up to now, the company still does not have permission to use the oil from that region.

The **Pro- WHS coalition** can largely be split into environmental and recreational interests. Members include environmental organisations like NAVO, Greenpeace, the Dutch Wadden Sea Association and the WWF, the tourist sector as whole and public authorities like the Federal Ministry of Environment, the Environmental Authority Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony and the Harbour Authority of Hamburg, which is subordinated to the Economic Senator.

Its main goal is to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the Wadden Sea. The Wadden Sea is a unique natural area and habitat for millions of migrating birds and of various endemic, endangered species. According to the Coalition, it is not protected sufficiently; therefore, conservation should be strengthened. A common nomination of the whole eco-system as World Heritage Site would contribute to the recognition of its global importance and to a better protection. Also, for recreation and tourism, such a labelling would mean a great promotion and attract more visitors.

All members have lack of understanding for the withdrawal in common. They do not see any reason of how the nomination could influence economic activities in such a negative way, as to justify this change in policy. The German Wadden Sea is protected under the habitat and bird directives, is a national park and a by the UNESCO recognized Biosphere- area; as such it is recognized as a for its vegetation representative protection zone. For those reasons, an additional nomination as World Heritage Site would only be yet another label and not bring any further restrictions. Furthermore, economic activities are only subject to national or European law, but not to international legislation. As the UNESCO is no regulation association no more bureaucracy will develop. According to the coalition, the UNESCO is only interested in universal damage and not in a change in flow speed. No additional protection obligations are included.

In regard to the deepening of the River Elbe, the Wadden Sea expert Hans-Ulrich Rösner, who belongs to the WWF, summarizes the difference of the two coalitions in one sentence

“[t]he industry wants to adapt the river to the ships, but we think that the ships should be adapted to the river.” (Danish School of Journalism, 18.04.2008)

The blame for the withdrawal of the nomination is assigned to the powerful shipping and energy lobbies. According to Hidde van Kersen, the director of the Dutch Wadden Sea Association,

“Hamburg just wanted to please its industry.” (Danish School of Journalism, 18.04.2008)

4.2.3.3 Concluding remarks

The connection with public officials is relevant for coalitions, as it determines the degree they can realize their beliefs into policy. For now, it seems that in this case the Anti-WHS coalition, including especially economic interests, could advocate their interests better. It is the clear winner of the conflict and implemented its beliefs successful in public policy. The harbour lobby was here one of the strongest actor; it put high pressure on the government (Danish School of Journalism, 18.04.2008). The conflict is an example of how economic interests can endanger the protection of culture and nature. In Hamburg, an international economic centre, industry interests are strongly represented, which is recognizable in its policies. The proposal of international experts that a solution could be to relocate shipping to other harbours (Abendblatt, 01.02.2008), would mean a decrease in Hamburg's economic relevance. This general fear of having a financial disadvantage constitutes a possible explanation for its rejection.

In addition, the World Heritage case forms an example for the influence of different social structures existing (see Section 3.1.5). In contrast to rural areas the urban hub of Hamburg prefers economic growth to natural conservation. Furthermore, it shows how different positions between the regions can be.

It seems that marine management of the Wadden Sea will always be determined by a balancing act between different interests: especially of the economy (industry, energy) and the environment.

4.3 A detour to the TWSF and the TWSC

The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum are key actors in treating the Wadden Sea in an integrated way and not as separated entities. As we have seen in the policy broker discussion they form a place of encounter for different groups. In the discussion of the two conflicts it became apparent that they are rather potentially, than effectively important. They can influence the governments at the intergovernmental conferences but are no active participants in the issues on national level. Neither of them has a possibility to take binding decisions, but instead both have an indirect affect on public policies.

Nevertheless, their role as policy brokers is beyond doubt. In the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum coalitions are constructed and destroyed. The TWSC enables an increasingly harmonized coordination by providing information and facilitating frequent meetings of interest groups and governments. I now discuss those functions of institutions more detailed.

In the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum meetings two opposed phenomena happen: coalitions are destroyed and constructed. The Forum was founded in order to increase the influence stakeholders have on the coordination of the region. They get the opportunity to discuss with other actors and to learn about different points of view. Together with the implementation of the sustainability principle this forms a decisive factor in the destruction of coalitions.

Communication between the different interest groups and coalitions is crucial in order to find Common solutions that are beneficial for everybody. By facilitating those, the policy brokers TWSC and TWSF have means to keep the degree of conflict low. Furthermore, coalitions have fewer possibilities to dominate and push through their beliefs into public policy. A sustainable policy will hardly only be focused on economic

benefits; the effects on for instance environment always play a role. Some opinions as communicated in "Breaking the Ice" confirm the assumption of lower conflict and destroying of coalitions. Hans Revier summarizes as follows:

"Most of these forum members still remember the time when they met in court to defend their opposing views. Nevertheless, we managed to escape from this ritual dance of sticking to your own beliefs no matter what. We have a common starting point. No one wants the Wadden Sea fenced off." (quotation Hans Revier, "Breaking the Ice" p. 9)

Thus, in the report "Breaking the Ice" the TWSF found a common, integrative approach for all interests groups; a compromise to which all agreed. In it the all arguments and goals were heard and integrated. In this way coalitions are destroyed: not one coalition pushes through its goals, but all together. Nevertheless, the meetings facilitate encounters of different interests groups, in which some discover also similarities in beliefs with others. New coalitions can develop. Examples are tourism and environmentalists. Both can be called advocates of the conservation of landscape values (WSF, 2005, p. 64).

Based on beliefs as communicated in the TWSF report it seems that there has been policy learning. As can be recognized in the quotation of Hans Revier, a common starting point for the different interest groups and their diverging beliefs was found. Apparently, the principle of sustainability is implemented already that far that actors recognize the importance to cooperate. Possibly, they learned that as interrelated as all interests in this region are goals are best pursued together. A specific and detailed research on this would be needed to prove the occurrence of policy learning.

The TWSC's role in the policy regime is comparable to the TWSF, but, still functions quite differently. For the last years, other interests are included to an increasing degree. Nevertheless, instead of all stakeholders like in the TWSF, primarily actors with environmental interests meet in the Trilateral Cooperation. Its vision has always been to ensure natural conservation. Now, this focus is changing somewhat, which is made apparent by the inclusion of for instance economic preferences.

Although it exerts a rather indirect influence, its coordinating activities play a large role in enabling an increasingly integrated policy approach. Therefore, though it did not have a possibility to directly interfere in the Blue Mussel conflict in the Netherlands, it organized a Trilateral Workshop on Blue Mussel Fishery. It facilitated an exchange of information and positions of the three countries and different sectors and thereby a learning from each other. Such knowledge will be communicated to the next intergovernmental conference and contributes to a more coherent and harmonious approach for the eco-system as a whole.

The next step for both, the Wadden Sea Forum and the TWSC has to be to become more active in conflicts like the discussed ones. The latter played already an indirect role in the Blue Mussel conflict. Activities like the workshop should be organised more frequently to allow an inter coalition exchange of information. Without an intensification of the trilateral cooperation national policies will stay detached and no harmonic coordination of the eco-system as a whole can be established.

5. A look into the future of the policy regime Wadden Sea: the Integrated Maritime Policy and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation

5.1 Introduction: necessity of an integrated policy approach

An upcoming, drastic external change for this policy system is the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP). It will modify policy making in all European maritime regions, including the Wadden Sea. In the past, the EU did not have an own framework for dealing with maritime issues, but treated them on international and national level. Since October 10, 2007 there is a precise outline, published by the Commission, which will lead towards a common policy for maritime issues in the European Union. The supranational organisation is thereby following in the footsteps of Canada, Australia and the US who possess already own ocean strategies.

In contrast to other maritime areas in the Wadden Sea region, a well-established cross-border cooperation and management regime exists. The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation is already actively pursuing the incorporation of EU legislation such as existing directives. In the implementation of the IMP it will also play a role. The existing of such an organisation in the region itself is an immense advantage for implementing the European strategy and principles. The TWSC monitors the Dutch, Danish, and German attempts to manage the area according to the guidelines included in international and European legislation. Therefore, it could contribute to an efficient implementation of the IMP. Nevertheless, the TWSC has also its own vision for the future. The Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan constitutes an own management scheme for this Wetland area. The question arises of how the trilateral cooperation and the new European ocean management attempts can be combined. Beliefs could collide and hamper a well-functioning management of the region.

In regard to the Advocacy Coalition framework the introduction forms a change in dynamic beliefs or more precisely changing impacts from other subsystems that is the EU. It could influence the constraints and resources of the subsystem actors and hence also the degree to which the coalitions translate their beliefs into public policy.

In the following, first the development of the Integrated Maritime Policy and its contents are shortly elaborated upon. Afterwards, goals and principles of the two policies, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and the Integrated Maritime Policy are compared (for further information to TWSP see Section 4.1.4). Finally, the degree to which they differ indicates the potential for future development and conflicts. Here, a connection is made with the discussed conflicts of Blue Mussel fishery and the World Heritage nomination.

5.2 Formation process and content of the IMP

As explained in the sections 3.1.6. and 3.2.2, the Wadden Sea is no separate entity referring to a specific policy area, but connects various policies, competences, actors and levels of action. This is also valid for Oceans and Seas in general. The sector-to-sector approach, which was used up to now, leads to various separated policies. It could form an obstacle concerning efficiency if thinking at cross-border issues and the eco-system approach.

Furthermore, the EU has dealt with Maritime issues mostly on international level (Frank, 2006). The often lacking binding character of international agreements and the

confusing large number of organisations, conventions, directives etcetera (see Section. 3.2.3) lead to a rather ineffective protection regime. A comprehensive and integrated community policy is necessary, which can coordinate those separate actors and initiatives in order to benefit from the full potential of Europe Oceans and Seas. This refers not only to international initiatives, but also to already existing European ones like the European Maritime Strategy and the connected European Maritime Strategy Directive (European Commission, 2007, D). It would provide a legally enforceable framework, which has been missing in previous Regional Sea Conventions (Frank, 2006).

This need was recognized by the European Commission, leading to the launching of a period of consultation in 2005 and the adoption of the Green Paper in June 2006. In summary the paper argues that for reaching sustainable development like agreed upon in the Lisbon Strategy, there has to be mutual enforcement of economic growth, social welfare and environmental protection also in regard to the oceans (Green Paper/ EC, 2006).

In the year after the end of the consultation period the Commission published the maritime policy package on October 10, 2007. This integrated package shows the way towards the Integrated Maritime Policy. It consists of three main components: the “blue book”, which is a Communication referring to the European Maritime Policy; an Action Plan outlining an ambitious work programme for the years to come; and a Communication describing the conclusions of the consultation procedure by the Maritime Policy Task Force. In addition, a Communication to the other EU institutions and an impact assessment were published. The European Council welcomed the Communication on December 14, 2007.

The Integrated Maritime Policy is closely linked to the Lisbon Strategy and shall create a balance of

“economic, social environmental, security and safety aspects of maritime activities and ensure conservation of resources and improvement of competitiveness, long-term growth and employment in the Maritime Sector.” (Frank, 2006, p. 84)

Furthermore, the policy shall be based on excellence in maritime research, technology and innovation and will be anchored in the Lisbon Strategy and the Gothenburg Agenda for sustainability. The European Maritime Strategy Directive shall form the environmental pillar of the policy.

The appliance of an integrated approach to all sectors is a key condition to guarantee a coherent course of action. The member states have to construct national integrated maritime policies fitting to the common guidelines.

5.3 Comparison: a combination of matching and conflicting aspects

The comparison between the Integrated Maritime Policy and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan is divided in the following thematic parts: overall vision, involved sectors and principles. Subsequently, two examples are discussed to show, on the one hand, potential for aiding one another, but, on the other hand, also potential for serious conflict. Finally, a link is established to Sabatier’s framework.

5.3.1 Overall vision

The TWSP includes the shared vision to accomplish a healthy environment and sustainable use, to maintain and enhance ecological, economic, historic-cultural, social and coastal protection values, integrate human activities into the management and keep the community informed, involved and committed (TWSC, 1997, p. 17/18). In addition, the shared vision combines fourteen target features. Those consist not primarily of environmental protection, but also other factors like socio-economic aspects, e.g. the role of inhabitants and economic beneficiaries, and an integrated management of human activities play a role (TWSC, 1997, p. 18).

The Integrated Maritime Policy has the vision to cover all aspects of the relationship between humankind and oceans and seas. Such an innovative and holistic approach shall provide a coherent policy framework that would facilitate the optimal development of all sea-related activities in a sustainable way (European Commission, 2007, A). According to the EU, the integrative approach is essential, sectors and policies shall be integrated to guarantee the best possible use of the maritime areas.

Comparing both, it seems in first instance that both have remarkably similar visions. Nevertheless, there is a clear difference recognisable. The vision of the TWSP focuses particularly on nature. The Maritime policy however prioritizes an “optimal development of all sea-related activities”. The nature is only mentioned in relation to its connection to human kind and in the pursuing of a sustainable way. Therefore, it is not most important to protect nature but to ensure that all sea-related policies develop in a joined-up, balanced way, striving towards the Lisbon targets (see citation, Frank, Section 5.2).

5.3.2 Involved sectors

The Integrated Maritime Policy involves clearly more sectors than the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan.

The Maritime Policy links fisheries, environment, transport and energy, research, enterprise and industry, regional policy, competition, freedom, security and justice, employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, external relations and health plus consumers protection (EU, 2008).

The Wadden Sea Plan refers to environment, harbour and industry, shipping, fishery, energy, tourism and agriculture. Although the focus is on environmental conservation, it shall be balanced with the other interests (TWSC, 1997, p. 5). Research is a relevant mean to increase understanding of processes and connections, see the discussion of the Blue Mussel conflict and the importance of a long-term study above.

It becomes apparent that the Maritime Policy includes more sectors than the Wadden Sea Plan. On the one hand, also if they may be named differently, all sectors involved in the Plan are present in the Policy. Therefore, tourism, harbour and shipping are part of enterprise and industry. An exception to that rule is agriculture. It is in the EU not seen as a maritime issue and is already fully covered by the Common Agricultural Policy, but still plays a relevant role in the Wadden Sea and its coordination framework.

On the other hand, some that play a role in the policy are not mentioned explicitly in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan; namely, transport, enterprise, regional policy, competition, freedom, security and justice, employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, external relations and health, and finally consumer protection. A conclusive explanation is the difference in vision pursued by the organisations. The

governments declared in the TWSP that their vision is to achieve a natural and sustainable ecosystem. The unique environment of this wetland area shall be conserved while integrating also interests of other sectors related to natural conservation. Only those are included in the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan. In addition, the difference of level the different organisations operate on play a role. The work of the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation is limited to the Wadden Sea region. Most of the mentioned topics like for instance employment and external relations are better coordinated on a higher level like on a national or EU level. A specific coordination of those issues for the Wadden Sea is not pursued to be necessary.

In summary, the IMP involves far more sectors than the TWSP. It is limited to certain issues that are relevant for its vision. Slowly, more and more sectors are integrated and the economic influence is strengthened.

5.3.3. Principles

Principles determine policies and the way they are implemented. There are similarities and differences to find when comparing the principles included in the TWSP and the IMP.

The guiding principle of the TWSP is

“to achieve, as far as possible, a natural and sustainable ecosystem in which natural processes proceed in an undisturbed way.” (TWSP, 1997, p. 20)

Furthermore, there are seven management principles (TWSP, 1997, p. 20).

Those are:

- the Principle of Careful Decision Making, referring to take decisions based on the best information available
- the Principle of Avoidance, including the avoidance of activities that are potentially endangering the Wadden Sea
- the Precautionary Principle, which concerns the avoidance of actions which are assumed to damage the environment, even if there is not sufficient scientific evidence to prove this link
- the Principle of Translocation, refers to a translocation of activities which are endangering the environment to other areas where they are less harmful
- the Principle of Compensation, which involves a obligation to balance damage of nature with compensatory measures
- the Principle of Restoration, which concerns a possible restoration of areas of the Wadden Sea that are not in an optimal state and for which the original state is likely to be re-established
- the Principle of Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practice as defined by the Paris Commission, referring to the avoidance of unreasonable impairments of interests of the local population and that any user interests should be weighed on a fair and equitable basis

The Integrative Maritime Policy includes the following guiding principles:

- the Principle of Sustainability
- the Principle of Competitiveness
- the eco-system approach
- stakeholder participation

Maritime spatial planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management, referring to an integration of the sea, the land and their interfaces under a single integrated management, shall help to ensure a sustainable development and to restore environmental health.

When comparing both guiding principles, it is certain that there is a fundamental difference in the principles themselves and the basic way those are chosen and applied. A possible explanation is time, as referring to the difference in experience the two TWSC and EU have in this specific policy area. The TWSC was already active nearly 20 years when the Trilateral Wadden Sea Plan was adopted. Several intergovernmental conferences took place and agreements were formulated. For the EU its activity in maritime issues is a recent development.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the discussion of the visions, the TWSP is directed toward environmental protection, with other sectors being more and more integrated. Consequential the used principles are also directed towards the goal of natural conservation. All principles except the last one, which is connected to the users, are directly related to the environment. On the contrary, the principles of the Integrated Maritime Policy include with the sustainability and the eco-system approach ones environmental issues, but the economy is in the competition principle also represented.

Finally, that sustainability, the ecosystem approach and stakeholder participation are not mentioned as management principles in the TWSP does not mean that they do not play a role. Sustainability is rather seen as a goal than as a principle. The whole trilateral cooperation is based on the eco-system approach. It exists to enable a harmonious coordination of activities in the Wadden Sea as a whole. Concerning stakeholder participation, as already mentioned, the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum was established to increase the participation of stakeholders. The principle of competitiveness does only play a role for economic sectors, but not for the Trilateral Cooperation itself.

5.4 Future changes and challenges in the Wadden Sea

The introduction of the Integrative Maritime Policy has various effects on the policy system in the Wadden Sea. However, as we can see the change will not be as radical as it will probably be in other maritime regions. Effects include a strengthening of economic interests in regional policy making and the challenge of treating this eco-system in a harmonious, integrative way.

The IMP calls for the integration of different interests. Generally, this is not yet present in a lot of maritime region. The Wadden Sea region is here an exception. In the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation and the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum voices of various interest groups are heard and included in recommendations. For this reason there is already now a quite high degree of sustainable development.

Such a progress in regional policy coordination as happened in the Wadden Sea, namely from a sectoral environmental management to an eco-system approach and finally to an integration of other interests, was only possible through the existence of a common administrative organ. The Common Wadden Sea Secretariat inhibits here a special role. It provided an indirect leadership with the forwarding of information to the intergovernmental conferences including recommendations from previously organised work group meetings. Overall, policy developments were early recognized. Therefore, EU legislation has been integrated into the regional policies. With rising EU activities

on environmental level, the CWSS (TWSC) oriented itself more and more to the European Union. Principles and approaches that are part of the policy are already included in declarations and treaties. Examples include the ecosystem and the stakeholder approach. For this reason, the Integrative Maritime Policy will not bring as much change for the Wadden Sea as for other regions.

Nevertheless, some changes are inevitable. As is already happening for some years, the influence of the economic sectors will further be strengthened in the regional policy process. Until now, the regional Wadden Sea policies initiatives concern mostly the environment. Following the IMP the other sectors have to be integrated more intensively so that a truly integrative approach is guaranteed. Again, as there has already been a gradual increase in the integration of those interest groups, the policy will bring fewer changes than in other areas. In addition, the well-established institutional structures that exist already will simplify an efficient implementation of the policy.

A challenge will be to integrate another level of management into the trilateral cooperation. The cooperation on trilateral level offers a possible way to treat the Wadden Sea as one eco-system. On this level harmonic integration of the EU policy can be ensured. The future will show in how far the member states are willing to continue the common coordination and to implement agreements on their national territory.

Summarizing, the Wadden Sea is concerning regional cooperation a prime example of how to implement certain principles. As those principles are for most part also included in the IMP, the already gained experience could help other regions to implement the policy and its principles more effectively.

In regard to Sabatier's framework the policy issue was reframed by a new policy plan. This leads to a different force field between the coalitions. Moreover, next to changes in rules and principles there are different instruments that can be used to implement their beliefs into public policy.

5.5 The Integrative Maritime Policy and the conflicts of Blue Mussel fishery and the World Heritage nomination

There is a crucial difference between the influence of the TWSC and the IMP that is, the policy includes binding legislation like the European Maritime Strategy Directive but the Cooperation can only indirectly influence the happenings. Nevertheless, due to the increasing importance of stakeholder participation, the roles of the trilateral organisation and the connected forum will probably increase in relevance.

We have seen in the two conflicts that the TWSC was simply not present. Only in the blue mussel conflict it participated in some way. Therefore, it organised a workshop, which could increase understanding of the conflict and of the diverging interests, but nevertheless can only have an indirect effect.

The vision of the Cooperation emphasises the importance to protect nature. In addition, the precautionary principle is directing its activities. For those reasons, the organisation would probably be in favour of the nomination and of a prohibition of mussel fisheries until it is proven that it does not have any negative effects, even if such a ban would endanger the sector of fishery. However, it had no competence to influence Hamburg as to agree to the nomination or to pressure the Dutch government to prohibit mussel fishery. This incapability is due to its nature. The Trilateral Cooperation is more a forum and less an actor that has in fact a direct influence. Also the Common Wadden

Sea Secretariat can only publish recommendations and no binding decisions. The IMP however, includes binding legislation and has therefore a greater potential to influence policy making also on national level.

Nonetheless, the binding implementation of the mentioned principles could also lead to a stronger role for the TWSC and the TWSF to play. The EU policy asks for instance for stakeholder participation. The brokers provide already the necessary structures and experience concerning the inclusion of citizens and interest groups. They could use this chance to legitimise their role in the policy making process. In future, if the trilateral institutions can expand their roles, it could even decrease the influence of governments.

Looking at the discussed conflicts the reframing of the policy issue leads to a changing degree to which the coalitions could push through their policy beliefs. However, in both cases it is difficult to predict how. In the blue mussel conflict the Precautionary coalition would be strengthened with the Maritime Strategy Directive. It forms a binding instrument to enforce the protection of nature. However, economic beliefs are also stronger represented than before: the principle of competitiveness has to be implemented. Therefore, the Shellfish Sector Advocacy coalition and its main goal to protect the sector and the economic value it brings finds more support. Moreover, the long-term study was of importance. European cooperation in the field of research like sponsored cooperation of experts and a common database could improve estimating effects of mussel fishery on the environment.

In the World Heritage conflict changes are similar to those in the Blue Mussel conflict. EU measures are more binding, referring also to how the countries pressurize each other and not only to binding legislation. Probably Hamburg would not have dared to back off that easily with the European Commission watching closely its steps. Still, that is more speculation than a relevant change. Furthermore, as explained above the role of the trilateral cooperation and the forum could be strengthened. Therefore, their relevance as brokers increases and they could take part more actively in the conflicts. That would in turn strengthen their influence at the conferences on governmental policies, and allow a more harmonic and uniform management of the region. The ecosystem approach would be promoted. In addition, with the implementation of the principle of sustainability policies like the one of the Blue Mussel conflict in which no coalition pushes through all their beliefs but all coalitions theirs partially, will occur more often.

Nevertheless, the EU strives towards reaching the Lisbon goals and maximise economic growth and creation for jobs. Therefore, it could very well be that it will favour coalitions supporting such a development.

6. Conclusion

The Wadden Sea is an area that is subject of constant change. Here, policy formation is a highly complex issue. Therefore, it is located on the territory of three different nations, and there are highly conflicting interests present in the region (see discussion Blue Mussel and World Heritage conflict). Moreover, although the concerned countries the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany may have full policy making authority, in addition various multilateral agreements exert a certain influence (see Section 3.2.2). The EU legislation and the discussed policy brokers are the most influential ones. Both have a rather high effect on the process of policy formulation. In the present reframing of the policy issue their increasing influence plays the most relevant role. Until now it is of a rather potential nature.

In general, the governments support environmental protection, as they are all aiming at a sustainable development. Nevertheless, it is no priority. There is a gradual shift towards the inclusion of economic interests in the management of the region. The sustainability principle changed goals of governments and coalitions, as neither conservation of nature, nor economic development are favoured, but a combination of both. With this focus, the chances that only one coalition will transfer its objectives into public policy decreases. Instead there is a higher probability that various interest groups transfer them to a certain degree.

In a highly valuable eco-system like the Wadden Sea the right balance has to be found. An example is the Blue Mussel conflict as investigated following Sabatier's framework in Section 4.2.2. Not one of the present coalitions implemented their beliefs into public policy, but both a bit. In contrast the World Heritage conflict of Section 4.2.3 exemplifies the situation when one coalition has a stronger position. In the metropolis Hamburg economic interests are dominating,. Therefore it was possibly to avoid the World Heritage nomination despite advantages for both environmental and tourist sectors. In my opinion, it is a danger that with the implementation of the sustainability principle economic interests are included and environmental protection could be undermined. The European Union follows the Lisbon Strategy and priority is given to the increase of economic growth and job creation. The future will show whether the rising influence of the supranational organisation connected with its integration of different interests will in case of the Wadden Sea alter or decrease the degree of environmental protection. A further boost of sustainable working industries like tourism would certainly be a useful way to operate in such a vulnerable eco-system like this one.

Sabatier's framework proved itself useful to analyse policy formation and change in the Wadden Sea. It offers a well-structured approach, which guides the researcher towards a systematic evaluation of a policy system. It is a highly complex framework, but that made it in my opinion especially useable for this intricate topic. Due to the limited scope of my work, I could not go into depth concerning the beliefs systems of the coalitions. It was for instance not possible to use questionnaires, but instead my investigation is purely based on a content analysis, primarily of newspapers.

The applied framework is based on the assumption that policy-core beliefs are the principal link for establishing a common ground for inter-coalition interactions. Such an exchange of information as it happened in the Blue Mussel conflict could challenge this very core assumption. Especially if we think of the rising influence of the

principle of sustainability, it may be that the framework proves less useful in the analysis of European policy systems.

Furthermore, the inclusion of not only one, but two policy conflicts, allows a comparison of variations in formation of different advocacy coalitions in one policy system. On the one hand, the tourist sector has no clear position in the Blue Mussel case. Both the historical and natural heritage are highly relevant for the industry. Therefore a compromise of the beliefs of both coalitions, as it happened, was best for its interests. On the other hand, in the World Heritage case, tourism is a member of the Pro-World-Heritage-Site coalition. Another example is the Harbour Authority of Hamburg. Although, it is an economic agency and the harbour lobby is strongly opposing the nomination, this authority belongs to the Pro-World-Heritage-Site coalition. In the Blue Mussel conflict all of the concerned economic interest groups are in one coalition, the Shellfish-Sector-Advocate coalition.

The comparison reveals also another phenomenon. The coalitions in both conflicts differ strongly in the degree their beliefs oppose one another. Therefore, in the Blue Mussel case, they recognize the importance of the interests of the other, and strive towards finding compromises. In contrast, in the World Heritage case, the two coalitions are obviously striving to integrate their main goal in public policy, not caring about the opponent's position and the rightfulness of his opinion. In my opinion, the reason could be ascribed to two possible factors. Firstly, the stronger position of the Anti-WHS coalition, including public support from the Senate of Hamburg could be a possible factor. It did not have to cooperate to reach its goal. Secondly, the difference in progress that exists in the implementation of the principle of sustainability should be considered. In it, all interests have to be integrated, and this occurred to a larger degree in the Blue Mussel case.

This is a clear proof that the membership and nature of advocacy coalitions can not be generalised in a sub-system, but are changing in regard to different subject matters.

The final part of my report concerns the introduction of the Integrated Maritime Policy, which will have several effects. First of all, there is a change concerning the level on that policy making takes place: more will happen on a European one. Furthermore, directives like the Maritime Strategy directive will have a direct effect which could enforce environmental protection more effectively.

As we have seen in Section 5, other sectors, interests and principles play a role in the European policy compared to the management plan of the trilateral cooperation. Therefore, the economy could increase in relevance. In addition, the Policy could contribute to the enforceability of international cooperation concerning maritime matters. Enforceability needs sanctions that are coming into play if a state does not comply with the obligations. With the IMP the European Court of Justice gains some influence in this area and sanctions become available. The Court is the enforceable legal authority that the TWSC lacks.

Nevertheless, the TWSC can help to implement the policy more efficiently. It is a step ahead compared to other maritime areas. Here, an integrated approach is already advanced for years. The best example for this is the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum. Here, stakeholders from all sectors participate. Therefore, the necessary institution to ensure stakeholder integration already exists. For that reason, changes in this region will not be as radical as in other maritime areas. I hope the EU will recognize the trilateral organisation as the relevant regional partner that it is. Its function as platform of interests and governments, and its expertise in the coordination of the region should be

made use of. It can also help to monitor the three member states in their compliance with the EU policy.

In the future, a clear vision and a common definition of principles is necessary. A common vision for the eco-system will make national policies more efficient and effective. Therefore, sustainable fishing without reducing the economic outcome is possible (Dolmer, Frandsen, 2002) but only if a clear strategy will be established, including a shared goal, a collaborative approach and precise measures. Such a clear vision would also help to treat the Wadden Sea as one eco-system and not as three separate ones. As all the different sectors are to be integrated and economic growth, social welfare and environmental protection have to be balanced, their relationship has to be clarified. A common vision would help balancing preferences and counteract contradictions and conflicts between the different sectors and interests. A first step was done by the Trilateral Wadden Sea Forum. It recognized the common vision as basic condition for future cooperation and was already active formulating it.

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Attachment

Attachment 1

The geographical range of the Wadden Sea Plan is the Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation Area, in short, Wadden Sea Area, which is - the area seaward of the main dike, or where the main dike is absent, the spring-high-tidewater line, and in the rivers, the brackish-water limit; - an offshore zone 3 nautical miles from the baseline; - the corresponding inland areas to the designated Ramsar and/or EC Bird Directive areas; - the islands. The trilateral conservation area, in short the Conservation Area, is situated within the Wadden Sea Area, and consists of

- in The Netherlands, the areas under the Wadden Sea Memorandum including the Dollard;*
- in Germany, the Wadden Sea national parks and protected areas under the existing Nature Conservation Act seaward of the main dike and the brackish water limit including the Dollard;*
- in Denmark, the Wildlife and Nature Reserve Wadden Sea. A map of the Wadden Sea Area and the Conservation Area is given in Appendix I. It is recognized that within the Wadden Sea Area, there are areas in which human use has the priority. (Quotation, Wadden Sea Plan, p.20*

Attachment 2

Historic situation:

- low human impact
- structured by internal feedbacks
- ecosystem engineers important
- high heterogeneity and biodiversity

Current situation:

- high human impact
- structured by external forcing
- human engineering important
- low heterogeneity and biodiversity

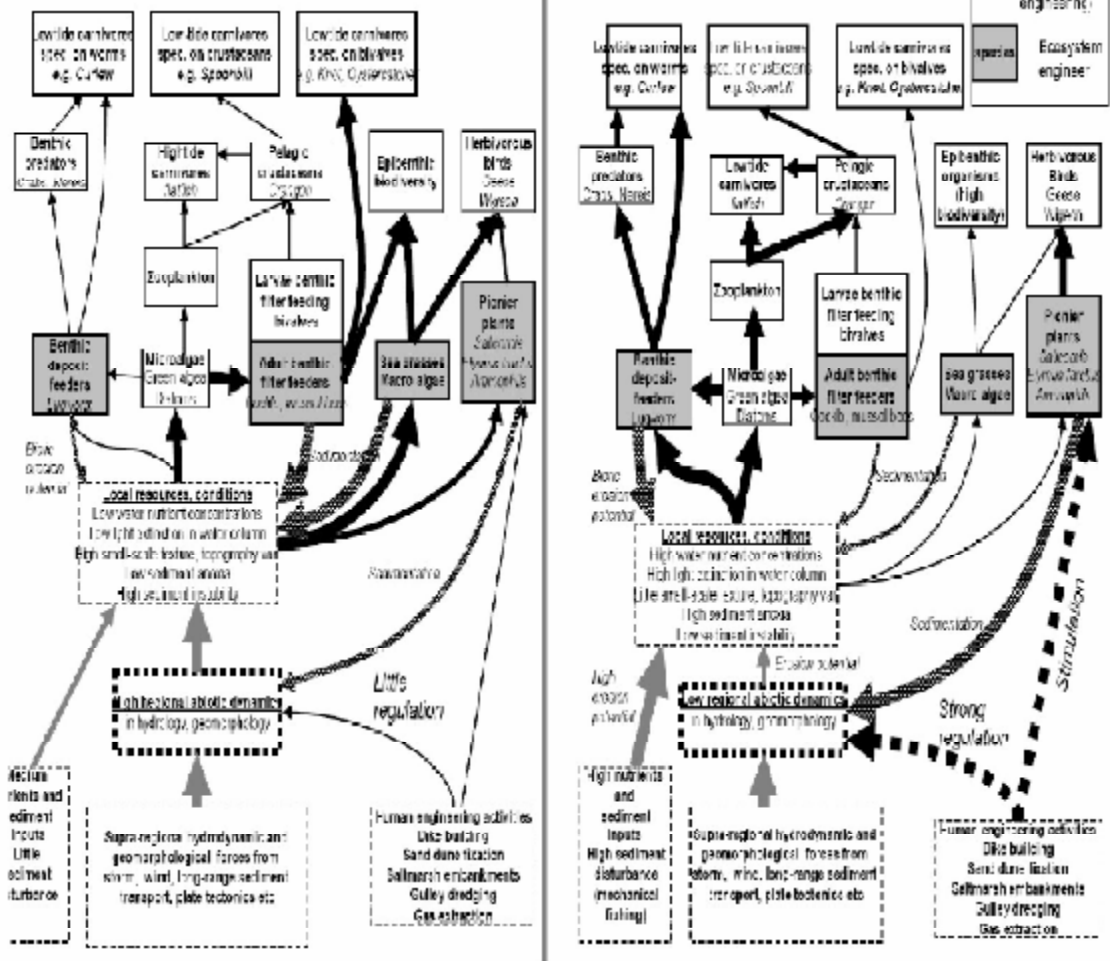


Figure 2 Hypothesized regime shift in trophic structure and ecosystem regulation due to the loss of ecosystem engineers in the Wadden Sea (see text for further explanation)

From <http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/symposia/mussel%202008/presentations/5-Ens-Impacts%20mussel%20fisheries.pdf>, retrieved 29.06.2008