

Save the date

Scientific symposium

Bright Future? Harbour porpoises in the Wadden Sea



**UNESCO-Weltnaturerbe Wattenmeer Besucherzentrum Wilhelmshaven, Südstrand 110b
11 April 2019**

As part of the annual 'Harbour Porpoise Days' in Wilhelmshaven, this trilateral symposium will highlight and further explore the role of this small and common whale in the Wadden Sea ecosystem. Organized by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat and the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage Visitor Centre, the event will welcome scientists and researchers, conservation managers, policy-makers, NGOs and other stakeholders concerned with Harbour porpoises. It should be an opportunity to gather new information on the ecology, state of the art monitoring methods, further research and on the level of resilience of harbour porpoises to threats and diseases in the Wadden Sea ecosystem and will provide an outlook and recommendations for the protection management of these unique whales.

Background

Although the overall Harbour porpoise population is considered as a 'North Sea population', the regular occurrence of harbour porpoises in the Wadden Sea indicates that the area is not only suitable, but also has a noticeable function in the seasonal and/or life cycle of these small whales. The Trilateral Cooperation on the Protection of the Wadden Sea (TWSC) recognizes the importance of marine mammals, as predators, with a complicated interaction to be explored further, but also as one of the key species for the area and its wild life, which is also gaining increasing public interest. The unique natural processes shaping today's Wadden Sea ecosystem, are providing a rich feeding and reproduction ground for marine mammals with the harbour porpoise being by far the most abundant whale species occurring in the area. Nevertheless, marine mammals are exposed to anthropogenic impacts on the Wadden Sea, such as underwater noise production (from sources like wind farm constructions, marine traffic) or the effects of dredging, dumping of sediments and fishing activities. The resulting consequences for the species need further exploration.

You are invited to distribute this information within your network. However, please be aware that the number of participants will be limited to 80 people and registration will take place on a first-come-first-served basis.

Registration will be possible until **22 March 2019** under info@waddensea-secretariat.org.

Looking forward to seeing you in Wilhelmshaven, more information on the programme soon to come.

Contact: kloepper@waddensea-secretariat.org

The conference is supported by the Danish Ministry for Environment and Food, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality.



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