East Atlantic Flyway Seminar
Hallig Langeneß
Abstracts and Presentations of the Programme April 11 - 14, 2025

***Jonny Waller**, Schutzstation Wattenmeer Chair of the Board*: **History and role of the Wadden Sea nature conservation society "Schutzstation Wattenmeer".**
The Wadden Sea Conservation NGO "Schutzstation Wattenmeer" was founded in 1962 by a group of dedicated young people to protect the Wadden Sea. At that time, the association differed from the established nature conservation organizations in its approach of 'educational nature conservation': inspiring people to protect the Wadden Sea habitats through guided nature tours.

The extensive voluntary work of the association's members was supported and expanded from 1972 by people doing alternative national service. Later, full-time employees were added to the administration and protected area management. After more than 60 years, the association, which was originally run by dedicated members, has become an organization with full-time professionals. Today, around 40 full-time colleagues and almost 100 volunteers from the BFD and FÖJ work for the association at 18 locations along the West Coast of Schleswig-Holstein".

See presentation.

***Peter Prokosch**, VISION 52, Arendal*: **Introduction and expectations**.

A brief review of a similar seminar held two years ago on Hallig Langeneß. How excellent teamwork led to the book on the East Atlantic Flyway of Coastal Birds. This year's seminar should provide a further valuable update on protected area developments and initiatives along the flyway.

See presentation.

***Bernd Scherer**, former Director of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park:* **What we experienced and learned when administering the Schleswig Holstein Wadden Sea National Park**.

The presentation reflects on the 40-year history of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park, highlighting key experiences and lessons learned in its administration. The park's establishment was rooted in a long process beginning in the 1960s, driven by the passion of individuals and collective efforts among nature conservation organisations, underscored by the political climate of the time. Acceptance of the park varied between urban areas, which showed support, and rural communities, where opposition often prevailed, pointing to a persistent challenge in achieving consensus in conservation initiatives.

Ecosystem research has been pivotal, allowing for the identification of knowledge gaps and launching interdisciplinary projects that enhanced understanding and management of the park's biodiversity. The 1997/98 amendment process exemplified the importance of public engagement, transparency, and government decisiveness in navigating contentious debates. The park's designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2009 marked a significant milestone, reinforcing public support for conservation efforts.

Despite these achievements, persistent challenges such as climate change, geopolitical pressures on ecosystems, and fishing practices remain critical concerns. This ongoing journey highlights that while significant progress has been made, continuous commitment and collaborative efforts are essential to ensure the protection and sustainability of the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park for future generations.

See full text of his presentation.

***Hans-Ulrich Rösner**, former Head WWF Wadden Sea office, Husum*: **Looking back and into the future of Wadden Sea from the perspective of WWF.**

If we look back 40 or 50 years, the situation for nature in the Wadden Sea was, in many ways, much worse than it is today. There were still large embankments, most salt marshes were over-grazed, and waterbirds and seals were still hunted. However, the Wadden Sea's great importance became increasingly apparent in the 1970s, and as a result, the "Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation" was founded in 1978 by Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands. At the same time, protection was improved in the individual Wadden Sea countries: National Parks and other large protected areas were established, embankments were stopped, the discharge of pollutants and nutrients into the North Sea was reduced, many salt marshes were allowed to develop more naturally, and hunting was largely stopped. In 1991, the three states decided, „*the Guiding Principle of the trilateral Wadden Sea policy is to achieve, as far as possible, a natural and sustainable ecosystem in which natural processes proceed in an undisturbed way.*“. Also, a comprehensive network of information centers and guided tours for Wadden Sea visitors has been established. In 2009 the Wadden Sea was inscribed as World Heritage Site.

In summary, Wadden Sea protection is a great success: The further loss of species and habitats seems to be halted, though a number of species and habitats continue to be missing or are in poor condition. In the region, nature conservation is now usually a matter of course. The Wadden Sea is protected according to all conceivable criteria and with mostly functioning structures, including a good cooperation between the three countries.

However, despite the protection, there are still significant threats from over-exploitation. The climate crisis even has the potential to completely destroy the Wadden Sea, particularly through an accelerated sea level rise. In order to do what is now most important to safeguard the Wadden Sea, WWF is focussing its work on

- “Growing with the Sea” – adapting the Wadden Sea to the accelerating sea level rise,
- conservation and restoration of the natural biodiversity and wilderness of the Wadden Sea,

- nature compatibility of energy transformation in the Wadden Sea region, and
- maintaining and promoting social support for the conservation of the Wadden Sea.

***Karsten Reise**, formerly Wadden Sea Station Sylt of Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research, Germany:* **History and effects of research work in the Schleswig Holstein Wadden Sea National Park.**

Aims of research in the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea shifted fundamentally in the course of the past one hundred years. Research for land claim dominated until the National Park was born in 1985. From then on ecological research took over. Finally, research for coastal sustainability facing the effects of global warming became the common goal. In the future, research for the National Park should reach out beyond its landward boundary with long-term, real-world experiments.

See presentation.

***John Frikke**, Danish Wadden Sea National Park*: **Experiences and concept of the Danish Wadden Sea National Park.**

As a result of the adoption of Denmark's first national park law in 2007, the Wadden Sea National Park was adopted in 2010. The national park was – like the other four Danish national parks – adopted in a democratic process. It was founded based on local support from both the population and the political strata of the four municipalities in which the Wadden Sea is located. The entire marine part of the Wadden Sea and the four islands – Langli, Fanø, Mandø, and Rømø – were incorporated into the national park, while the delimitation of the national park on the mainland coast was politically determined, which is why not all adjacent marsh areas are included in the park. The total area is 1,459 km2 – 1,100 km2 marine and 300 km2 terrestrial nature and landscapes.
A fundamental characteristic of the Danish national parks is that they are - unlike the German ones - not authorities and that all initiatives must be implemented on a voluntary basis. Under the law, each national park has a statutory decree that sets the framework for the work, and it prescribes the preparation of a national park plan every 6 years, within which six action areas

are worked on. The implementation of the initiatives always takes place in collaboration with external stakeholders and foundations.
The national park is run on a budget of approx. 1 million euros and by an independent board, which is advised by a council that together represents more than 30 interest groups, government authorities, and political bodies. Protection and improvement of nature falls under priority area 1 and is naturally one of the major activities. At the workshop, a few examples of nature projects that the Wadden Sea National Park has implemented or is currently implementing in collaboration with landowners, municipalities, and the Danish Nature Agency were given. These include various meadow and coastal bird projects, laying out nesting rafts for breeding Black Terns, and establishing safe breeding sites for terns at Esbjerg Harbour.

See presentation.

***Jens Enemark**, former Head of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat:* **How the status of UNESCO World Heritage Site was achieved for the International Wadden Sea, and what effects it has.**
The inscription of the (Dutch-German) Wadden Sea in the World Heritage List in 2009 supplemented with extensions of the Hamburg and Danish parts in 2011 and 2014 respectively was long and challenging process, necessary, however, for obtaining the public support for the nomination as requested by the World Heritage Convention and a prerequisite for subsequently harvesting the fruits of the being a World Heritage List in cooperation with the Wadden Sea region and its inhabitants. The inscription of the Wadden Sea into the World Heritage List was the recognition of the Outstanding Universal Value of the area being largest unbroken system of intertidal sand and mud flats in the world. Its conservation and management has profited from being a World Heritage property, it has further stimulated national and international nature conservation work of the Trilateral Cooperation such as the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative and encouraged work on sustainability, in particular within the tourism industry.

The management authority of the Wadden Sea World Heritage property is the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat. More information can be found at https://www.waddensea-worldheritage.org/

The story about the nomination and inscription of the Wadden Sea in the World Heritage List can be found in my publications “A Model System of

Transboundary Management", page 211-254 https://www.enemark-consulting.nl/assets/bookamodelsystemoftransboundarymanagement.pdf and "Journey. The Trilateral Wadden Sea Cooperation 1987-2014", page 79-91 https://www.waddenacademie.nl/organisatie/publicatie-lijst/publicatie-detail/journey-the-trilateral-wadden-sea-cooperation-1987-2014-a-personal-account/

See presentation.

***Nicola Crockford**, RSPB, BirdLife in the UK*: **Protecting Flyway Ecological Networks in the East Atlantic Flyway.**

Late last year several species of East Atlantic Flyway coastal waders were uplisted on the IUCN Red List. Furthermore, evidence was published that the Slender-billed Curlew is the Western Palearctic's first mainland bird extinction since records began. This underlines that the urgency has never been greater to step up our conservation of these birds and the ecological networks on which they depend. The next most threatened shorebird after the Slender-billed Curlew is the Spoon-billed Sandpiper of the East Asian Australasian Flyway. It depends on the Yellow Sea of China, South Korea and North Korea as a staging area. Inspired by the Wadden Sea these three countries have been progressing their own serial World Heritage nominations. This has inspired other countries of that flyway to begin considering serial transnational nominations. The RSPB has been supporting these efforts as the Spoon-billed Sandpiper is one of its global species recovery priorities.

This has catalysed us, also inspired by the Wadden Sea, to embark on World Heritage nomination of English East Coast Wetlands (Humber to the Thames). This is for their global importance for migratory birds and as an exemplar of coastal adaptation and conservation management in the face of climate change. Conversations have now begun in this the East Atlantic Flyway about possible serial transnational World Heritage nominations inspired by RSPB's work with a) the Icelandic BirdLife Partner, to conserve the lowland habitat that supports many breeding waterbirds of the East Atlantic Flyway and b) the Portuguese BirdLife Partner to defend the Tagus Estuary from the building of a new Lisbon airport. BirdLife with IUCN is embarking on producing a common roadmap, for relevant treaties, governments, and stakeholders, of priority sites for conservation of flyway ecological networks.
See presentation.

***Barwolt S. Ebbinge**, Team Animal Ecology, Wageningen Environmental Research, P.O. Box 47, NL-6700 AA Wageningen, Netherlands:* **Effect of hunting closure on the population development and behaviour of Dark-bellied Brent geese.**

The huge numbers of dark-bellied brent geese, that “darkened the sky” along the coasts of western Europe in the early 1900-s had declined to only 16,500 in 1958 because of excessive hunting. A hunting ban in France, England and the Netherlands, and finally in 1972 in Denmark, and in 1976 in Germany resulted in a spectacular recovery of the population to more than 300,000 individuals in 1992. Annual survival was estimated from counts and age ratio- censuses at 78 %: before 1972 and rose to 88 % after 1972 as estimated from colour-ring resightings. Breeding success usually shows a typical three-year cycle, in line with the lemming cycle on the key breeding grounds on the Taimyr peninsula in northern Siberia.

Closing hunting in western Europe has also had an impressive impact on the tameness of wintering Brent. Whereas in the seventies flocks were extremely shy and birds would concentrate in large flocks, nowadays the birds, in particular on the halligs in Nordfriesland, are extremely tame and occur in many smaller flocks, and can be approached closely by humans without being scared.

Small geese like brent can only nest successfully if they manage to avoid predation by arctic foxes. In order to do so brent nest on small islands in between large gull colonies, or in a lemming peak years also within the territories of nesting snowy owls. The latter is only possible because pomarine skuas (like snowy owls also only nesting in lemming peak years) attack these snowy owls so frequently that the owls can hardly prey on adult geese and their goslings and keep arctic foxes away. The extra breeding possibility in lemming peak years results in a higher breeding success for brent in such years. However, the number of predators (arctic foxes and snowy owls) has increased so much in the following year, that brent goose breeding success in the year following a lemming peak year is often virtually nil.

The spectacular increase in numbers of brent from 1972 to 1992 is now levelling off at 200,000 to 300,000 individuals. Possibly this is because safe nesting sites that were readily available when the brent Goose population was

extremely low due to excessive hunting on the wintering grounds, are now becoming a limiting factor, resulting in a marked reduction in breeding success.

Another interesting phenomenon is that with the increased population size, the sex ratio in adult geese has changed significantly. In the period 1970-80 the proportion of adult males in our catches was 48 %, but from 2000-2010 this had increased to 56 %. Another factor that could have an impact on breeding success is faltering lemming peaks because of earlier snow melt followed by refreezing that in some years has devastating effects on the number of lemmings.

See presentation.

***Preben Clausen**, Senior Researcher, Department if Ecoscience – Wildlife Ecology, University Aarhus, Denmark*: **The population development of the Svalbard Light-bellied Brent Goose and the changing history of hunting waterbirds in protected areas in Denmark.**

The focus of this talk is on the improvement in the protection of staging and wintering waterfowl that has been implemented in Denmark over the past slightly more than 50 years, hence has contributed to the protection of waterfowl along the East Atlantic Flyway. I will illustrate this with two examples that I have personally been professionally involved with.
One example is the improved protection of the East Atlantic Light-bellied Brent Goose population - whose status has changed from excessive hunting exploitation to almost total protection. The first protection was in the form of a hunting ban in Denmark in 1972, which (given the known take of Light-bellied Brent Geese from the Danish hunting bag statistics in the 1960s), has undoubtedly contributed to the population growing from a very low level of around 1600-2200 birds around 1970 to more than 10,000 birds today. This has happened even while the Brent Geese have been struggling with loss of *Zostera* and *Ruppia* in some of their major staging areas in Denmark. In addition, an increasing number of the areas they use for their winter quarters in this country are now protected as EU Special Protection Areas for birds and/or EU Special Areas of Conservation, whereby their habitats are now covered by solid protection against human physical interference. Almost all the areas they use are also with hunting-free reserves - which may not mean that much for a species that is protected from hunting.

But it reflects the second example of improved protection of waterfowl in Denmark – the shooting free reserve network. Here, some (and perhaps the most comprehensive in the world) studies of disturbances caused by hunting and other human activities on staging waterfowl in Danish wetlands were carried out. The most in-depth studies were experimental reserves, with thorough preliminary studies for three years without intervention and follow-up studies for three or more years with different reserve solutions. The food base for the focal species, primarily dabbling ducks, was also thoroughly investigated. The results showed that the numbers of dabbling ducks and geese multiplied in the areas during the years of the experiments, and it was concluded that the hunting that was carried out kept the carrying capacity of the wetlands down, by forcing birds out of the areas due to the disturbances. The lessons learned here resulted a compromise between hunters and conservationists in Denmark, which lead to a decision endorsed by the Parliament to implement a comprehensive network of reserves. This lead to doubling both the number and area of hunting-free areas from 1994 to 1999, which means that all EU Special Protection Areas for birds of significant importance to dabbling ducks today have one or more reserves. Since the establishment of the reserves in the 1990s, we have seen a steady increase in the number of staging dabbling ducks - so far culminating in the autumn of 2024, when 360,000 Eurasian Wigeon, the highest count on record in a nationwide dabbling duck count in October.

***Hans Meltofte**, Chief Scientist and Executive Editor Arctic Biodiversity Assessment; Aarhus University, Denmark*: **A worldwide assessment of flight distance changes of waterbirds in relation to hunting.**

The importance of shooting for the distances that birds and other animals flee from humans is a highly under-studied topic in wildlife research. There are tens of thousands of measurements of bird flight initiation distances from many countries all over the world, but not many have analyzed the distances overall in relation to the hunting pressure on the populations involved. In this review, I have collected many thousands of easily available flight distance measurements for waterbirds from many countries and related them to the hunting conditions the birds in question are exposed to. The comparison shows a factor of 10-12 increased shyness in hunted populations, both in relation to walkers and boats, which is discussed in relation to functionally lost habitats and people's opportunities for experiencing birds and other animals at

reasonable range, as well as not least the need for critical research into the consequences of both elements. It is conceivable that the indirect disturbances from hunting via unnaturally large flight initiation distances have much more serious consequences for the populations than the direct disturbances from the hunting itself.

See presentation.

***Nicola Crockford**, RSPB, BirdLife in the UK*: **Using flyway ecological connectivity to identify and protect sites from development threats – the example of the Tagus Airport in Portugal.**

In supporting BirdLife Portugal to prevent a new airport in the Tagus Estuary, the RSPB developed an approach to demonstrate to the national court and concerned treaties its transnational impact. Because these birds are shared along the East Atlantic Flyway, the airport would undermine conservation efforts of some 30 countries and 300 protected areas. This inspired a project of BirdLife's East Atlantic Flyway Initiative to apply network analysis to waterbird connectivity data from tracking and ring recoveries and sightings. The results for Black-tailed Godwit are published, revealing previously unknown key sites and key gaps in protection. The analysis for Eurasian Curlew is nearing completion.

See presentation.

***Andrew St Joseph**; Initiator and former Head of the IWRB Brent Goose Research Group; Farmer in Essex, UK:* **Combining Nature Conservation, Agriculture and Coast Protection on a sinking coastline in South East England.**

The east coast of England partially consists of soft cliffs that can erode quite fast. Some are defended, others are not and houses are being lost into the sea but with the coastal sediment transfer maintained. A longer length is protected from flooding by seawalls/ sea dikes which individually protect land areas ranging in size from more than 100 sq km to less than 0.5 sq km. Government support for the privately owned defences is linked to a cost/benefit assessment and in the outer Thames Estuary from Aldeburgh (Suffolk) to Southend on Sea (Essex) this is particularly challenging as this coast

has been gradually sinking and unlike the German coast, the sea dikes are in approximately the same alignment as they were over 200 years ago.
With rising contours, in some cases, only 500m from the dike line alternative management options are being trialled. These range from adding sediment to saltmarsh/ beaches, allowing the sea to reflood up to the natural contour level and controlling the rate of inundation to allow the site to benefit from a controlled transition in level and vegetation (regulated tidal exchange).
This area is the driest part of the UK with annual rainfall as low as 220mm p.a. and this favours arable farming for crops such as wheat and barley. However, grassland farming survives occasional saltwater flooding much better and the lower grass yields are balanced by the availability of 'countryside stewardship' grants to help facilitate such a change in farming system. Where fresh water supplies are available some land has been converted to wet lowland grazing. This is important as many of the most vulnerable locations are Natura 2000 designated freshwater habitats which could become mudflats within a few decades.

This is an extremely challenging situation and the problems and the solutions being trialled now in the UK might give some indications that may assist future planning on other European coastlines where these issues maybe less immediate.

See also coastal West Sussex farmer James Baird explaining how he needed a strategy rethink as climate and economic impacts buffeted his farm: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0q7J0_IL3w

See presentation.

***Myriam Johanna Perschke**, University of Southern Denmark*: **Enhancing Marine Protected Areas: The Blue4all Project and Conservation Efforts in the Danish Wadden Sea.**

Development plans and environmental threats guide the research of protected area initiatives, such as the Blue4all project. This EU-funded marine protected area initiative, involving 22 partners, aims to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and resilience of marine protected areas (MPAs) through a bottom-up approach. The project engages with 12 living labs, including the Danish Wadden Sea, to co-create solutions with local stakeholders.

This talk focused on the Danish Wadden Sea conservation area. Conservation area managers in the Danish Wadden Sea were engaged in identifying needs through comprehensive needs assessments, highlighting, among 12 other needs, the necessity for funding to support conservation activities. Subsequent research under Blue4all aims to guide the investment of funds in the area by demonstrating the value of nature and addressing development initiatives that pose environmental threats, such as the Esbjerg harbour development. The research focuses on sensitive and flagship species, including the dark-bellied Brent goose and dwarf eelgrass, to assess ecosystem services. Expert-based and visually appealing ecosystem service assessments are applied to link components, functions, services, and pressures, supporting decision-making and illustrating the complexity and value of the Danish Wadden Sea.

Link to the Blue4All website: https://www.blue4all.eu/. Link to an MPA community website: https://mpacommunity.network/ .

Eileen C. Rees. *Co-Chair IUCN SSC Swan Specialist Group; Editor of Wildfowl; Research Visitor, University of Cambridge:* **Long-term changes in the numbers and distribution of Bewick's Swans in NW Europe and East Med–Central Asia: Implications for site protection in a rapidly changing world.**

The world is in an exceptionally volatile state, with climate and associated habitat change affecting migratory waterbird populations globally. At the same time conflict and political uncertainty is increasing, which exacerbates the difficulty of coordinating effective conservation initiatives along migratory flyways. Long-term studies are invaluable for determining how environmental change influences the abundance, distribution, site use and phenology of migratory waterbirds, with the Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* being a particularly good example. The swans breed across the tundra of the Russian arctic and follow very different migration routes to wintering sites in northwest Europe, East Asia, and from the East Mediterranean to Central Asia. The NW European population, which has been studied since the 1960s, increased to a peak count of 29,000 birds during the mid-1990s but has since declined by 44%. An International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP) developed for Bewick's Swans in NW Europe was adopted by AEWA in 2012 and the presentation describes the work by several research groups to determine the reasons (*e.g*. variation in productivity and survival rates) underlying changes in the population over the decades, to inform the review of the ISSAP. Recommendations are likely to include that site protection and conservation

measures should be reassessed in relation to: (1) the reduced population size, and (2) the redistribution of Bewick's Swans at sites across NW Europe, given that the swans are now wintering further northeast, closer their breeding grounds. Additionally, the protection and management of site networks used by Bewick's Swans along their other migration routes should also be considered. Detailed information from tracking data, not only for Bewick's Swans but for a range of species, would also be invaluable for informing and potentially extending the boundaries of protection areas at established sites.

See presentation.

***Peter Prokosch**, VISION 52, Arendal, Norway*: **Examples and effects of no-take zones in marine protected areas from different parts of the world.**

The effects, significance, and challenges of no-take zones in marine protected areas in the context of the 30x30 / SDG 14 goal. A brief presentation of 12 examples of MPAs with no-take zones that were initially introduced against the resistance of local communities and fishers, who later became advocates of such areas.

See presentation.

***Karin Olsen**, Boad Member LEVE HAVET, Norway*: **History and mission of the newly established "Folkeaksjonen LEVE HAVET" for safeguarding the marine environment and sustainable fishery around the Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja in Northern Norway.**

She talked about the fight against oil/gas production in the region of Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja in the north of Norway. To give some insight into the reasons, some information was provided about Lofoten's history, fishing conditions and other history.

See presentation.

***Nicole Schrader**, Biosphere Halligen*: **How the initiative of the North Frisian Island communities for a UNESCO MaB biosphere area within the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park improved mutual understanding and cooperation between nature- and culture-conservation societies.**

Characteristics of the Halligen
The Halligen are ten small salt-marsh islands with around 280 residents. They feature 32 dwelling mounds (warften) and are regularly flooded during storm surges, highlighting their ongoing struggle with the sea. They are culturally significant and host rich natural habitats, including coastal breeding birds and salt marshes, many of which are protected as NATURA 2000 sites within the Wadden Sea National Park and UNESCO World Heritage.

Coastal Protection Measures
Historically, storm surges reduced the marsh landscape, causing erosion and population decline. Today, over 50 km of stone revetments protect the marsh islands from erosion, which is vital for their survival. These measures support both coastal safety and nature conservation, helping prevent the disappearance of the Halligen.

Current Challenges
The main issues include rising sea levels, erosion, and the need for sustainable shoreline protection. Balancing natural habitat preservation with coastal defense is crucial, requiring strategies that respect the dynamic Wadden Sea ecosystem while securing the marsh islands.

Future Goals and Strategies
The Halligen aim to identify concrete measures to promote surface growth and implement nature-based, ecosystem-focused protection strategies. They seek dialogue, model solutions, and cooperation with organizations and authorities like LKN (State Agency for Coastal Protection, National Park and Marine Conservation Schleswig-Holstein) and MEKUN (Ministry for Energy Transition, Climate Protection, Environment and Nature) to develop coherent, sustainable interventions.

Stakeholder Engagement and Communication
Open workshops, idea exchanges, and transparent reporting are important tools. The Halligen want to coordinate efforts, represent their interests externally, and ensure their voices are heard through local leaders and external partners, fostering a constructive dialogue on solutions.

Implementation and Pilot Projects
Starting in 2025, pilot projects—such as at Nordstrandischmoor—will

demonstrate best practices. Measures include securing roads and dwelling mounds, promoting acceptance among residents, and maintaining open communication to adapt to longer periods of land submersion.

Wadden Sea 2100 Strategy and Long-term Objectives
Developed over ten years ago, this strategy emphasizes preserving the Wadden Sea and its marsh islands amid climate change. It advocates for sediment management, flood protection, and raising awareness. The overarching goal is to sustain the cultural and natural heritage of the Halligen for future generations.

See video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFaDtndMz0o

See presentation.

***Pål Hals**, Vice Mayor of Farsund, Head of Lista Lighthouse and Visitor Centre Wetland Lista, Norway*: **Lista Lighthouse** and **The Western Agder Biosphere Initiative**

See presentation.

***Inge Charlotte Jensen**, Department Ecoscience – Wildlife Ecology, University Aarhus, Denmark*: **From opposition to partnerships in the Danish Wadden Sea area.**

Today, the Danish part of the Wadden Sea is protected through the Danish Nature Protection Law as well as through its status as National Park (since 2010) and World Heritage site (since 2014). The present protection scheme is, however, the result of a long process of confrontation between representatives from the national state and green NGOs and the local population. This talk aims to dick deeper into the nature of this conflict: What prompted resistance in the first place? Why did it linger on for several decades? What did the state and green NGOs do to meet the local population and their demands? How did dialogue come about. And, finally, where are we today?

See presentation

***Kristine Meise**, Programme Officer | Biodiversity & Flyway*
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat: **Development and Perspectives of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative.**

During their annual cycle, migratory birds cross multiple countries and continents, relying on a critical network of sites along the entire flyway. Effective conservation of these species can only be achieved by taking a collaborative approach to ensure the protection of all critical sites. The Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative (WSFI) is a partner initiative established to strengthen collaboration among governments, NGOs, scientists, local communities, and international organizations along the East Atlantic Flyway. Under the WSFI umbrella, two major multi-partner projects have recently been approved—one focused on flyway monitoring and the other on building climate resilience. In addition, WSFI supports a wide range of smaller projects, while many partner organizations continue to implement their own targeted conservation projects.

To maximize synergies, avoid duplication, and promote sustainable conservation outcomes, WSFI is calling on all stakeholders to share information on ongoing and planned capacity building activities for flyway monitoring. Interested stakeholders are invited to join the discussion and share their work via the newly set up workgroup on Capacity Building for Flyway Monitoring on the Wadden Sea exchange platform. To join the group, you may first need to register here. This exchange will help coordinate efforts and build a more resilient and connected flyway conservation network.

By working together, we can safeguard migratory birds throughout their entire range—now and for future generations.

See also East Atlantic Flyway Assessment 2023