



4th East Atlantic Flyway Seminar on Langeneß, April 16-20, 2026

Draft Announcement (20.11.2025)

After the seminars we had on [Hallig Langeneß](#) in 2023 (producing a book on the [East Atlantic Flyway](#)), in 2024 ("50 Years Schutzstation Wattenmeer on Hallig Langeneß") and in 2025 celebrating the 40th anniversary of the [Schleswig-Holsten Wadden Sea National Park](#), **VISION 52**, **SCHUTZSTATION WATTENMEER** and the **WWF WADDEN SEA office** are planning another similar gathering back to back with the "[Ringelganstage](#)" (Brent Goose Days) also in 2026. It was 50 years ago when the storm surge of the century struck the North Frisian and Danish Wadden Sea coast on 3 January 1976.

The near-breaches of the dykes near Tønder, in particular, led to German-Danish plans to build a new dyke in front of the salt marshes and mudflats of the Rodenäs foreland, extending as far as the Emmerlev cliff in Denmark. The feared loss of Germany's most important resting area for three species of geese, including the then small population of pink-footed geese from Spitsbergen, led to the merger of several nature conservation organisations into the 'Aktionsgemeinschaft Nordseewatten' (AGN) in opposition to this embankment. The simultaneous fight against the resumption of plans to enclose the Nordstrander Bay, which were a continuation of earlier land reclamation policies, ultimately led to a historic change in the assessment of the irreplaceable and internationally valuable nature of the Wadden Sea. Finally, the embankments were built on a smaller scale, and the areas reclaimed from the Wadden Sea were turned into diverse wetland nature reserves (Rickelsbüller Koog and Beltringharder Koog – now hotspots for wetland birds and birdwatchers) rather than being converted into intensive agricultural land as originally planned.

However, the main outcome of the debate was the general abandonment of a centuries-old tradition throughout the entire international Wadden Sea region of a policy that always linked coastal protection with the reclamation of new land for intensive agriculture. Due to the high international esteem in which the Wadden Sea is now held, national parks were established instead (first 1985 in Schleswig-Holstein, where they met with immense resistance from the local population and dyke builders), and the entire Wadden Sea area of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark is now recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. A dedicated [Common Wadden Sea Secretariat](#), representing the environment ministries of the three countries, is continuously preparing further decisions to improve trilateral Wadden Sea protection.

Today, 50 years later, new coalitions and interest groups have formed between technical coastal protection engineers and nature conservation organisations. The local population now also supports the national park, has established the Halligen Biosphere Reserve and celebrates Brent goose Days every year, honoring the birds that were considered a plague 50 years ago and symbolised the once hated conservationists.

Today, we face completely different and, above all, shared challenges:

- 1) How can the Wadden Sea and other important mudflat areas along the East Atlantic Flyway be saved from destruction in the long term in view of accelerated sea level rise expected as a result of climate change?**

At the same time, we face the short-term challenge of achieving the so-called 30X30 goal the world has committed to for the East Atlantic Flyway by 2030. This leads to the following question:

- 2) How can further coalitions between local people and nature conservation organisations be created to complete the 'string of pearls' of effectively protected nature areas along the East Atlantic Flyway by 2030?**

Invited are experts and experienced individuals from the African and European West coasts to our 4th East Atlantic Flyway Seminar on Hallig Langeneß to answer these two questions. We are not only thinking of **nature conservation experts** and **biologists**, but also of **coastal protection technicians**, **representatives of local administrations** and **people who have experience**,

communication skills or can share secrets on how representatives of different local interest groups (e.g. fisheries) could be won over for the establishment of effective protected nature areas.

The seminar will be held in the same way as in previous years at the

[Seminar House of the “Schutzstation Wattenmeer” on
Peterwarf/Hallig Langeness](#)

The status of the program as of today (20.11.2025) is:

Thursday, April 16:

18:00 Departure by ferry from Schlüttsiel (voyage via Hallig Hooge and along seal banks at low water; information on how to reach Schlüttsiel will be provided for those not familiar yet)

19:45 Arrival on Hallig Langeneß at Rixwarf (bicycle rent)

20:00 Bicycling ca 8 km from the Westside of the Hallig to Peterswarf in the East (we organize extra transport for luggage and those, which need/want to take a car)

21:00 Light meal and social gathering

Friday, April 17:

8:00 Breakfast

9:00-12:00 Excursion to Hunnenswarf: watching birds, such as clouds of Red Knots, Bar-tailed Godwits, Grey Plovers and Dunlins, leaving the mudflats to the highwater roosts on the island (highwater ca. 13:30).

12:00-13:00 Lunch

Seminar Session I:

13:00 - 15:30 (presentations are 15 minutes each + 5 min. discussion)

Peter Prokosch, VISION 52: The storm surge on 3 January 1976 and subsequent disputes over the embankments of Rodenäs-Vorland and Nordstrand Bay.

Kees Weevers, The Netherlands: How action in 1965 against a plan for dams to Ameland led to the establishment of the Dutch Waddenvereniging

***Jacobus Hofstede, Schleswig-Holstein State Ministry for Energy Transition, Climate Change Mitigation, Environment and Nature
Dep.Head of Division Coastal Flood Defence, Coastal Protection and Harbours:
The shared challenge of drowning tidal flats and salt marshes for nature conservation and coastal risk management in the Wadden Sea; possible ways of nature-based adaptation.***

Christian Winter, Coastal Geology and Sedimentology, Institute of Geosciences, Kiel University: Will the Wadden Sea grow with the sea?

Jannes Fröhlich, WWF Wadden Sea Office: The challenge of sea level rise for natural and climate-adapted Wadden Sea Region: about dikes, restoration, and sediments.

Robert Zijlstra, Rijkswaterstaat Noord-Nederland: Dutch coastal protection policy today and forecasts for the future development of the Wadden Sea. (TBC)

Wenyan Zhang, Helmholtz-Zentrum hereon GmbH, Geesthacht: Co-design of climate impact modeling of coastal wetlands along the East Atlantic Flyway.

Karsten Reise, Senior marine scientist; former director Wadden Sea Station AWI, List/ Sylt: Bright or dim futures for mudflats in the Wadden Sea?

15:30 Coffee Break

16:00 – 18:30

Seminar Session II

Gwenal Hervouet *Conservatoire-du-littoral, Franc*

EU MANABAS-Projekt / Nature-based solutions / managed realignments in Brittany (TBC)

Gwenaël Quaintenne, *Wetlands International, France*: The future of the Golf du Morbihan as important wintering site of Brent geese and other coastal birds in France. (TBC)

***Andrew St Joseph, Maldon, UK*: How can coastal protection and nature conservation go hand in hand?**

Joanna Staneva (or colleague), Helmholtz-Zentrum hereon GmbH, Geesthacht: about the CoastShape project.

Fatima Rassoul Gueye, Master's program in Ornithology, Conservation, and Development at Gaston Berger University in SENEGAL*: **Langue de Barbarie National Park: Conservation status of coastline habitats and birds under anthropogenic and climatic pressure .*

El-Hacen Mohamed El-Hacen, Mauritania*: **The further development of the Banc d'Arguin Nationalpark and how the local people are involved and benefitting.*

Oumy Signaté, Master's program in Ornithology, Conservation, and Development at Gaston Berger University in SENEGAL*: **The re-institutionalization of community participation in biodiversity management at the Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary.*

Saturday, 18 April:

8:00: Breakfast

9:00: Bicycling to the Westend of Hallig Langeness

(Ca 10:45: pick-up by MS Seeadler and transfer to Hallig Hooge tbc)

Participation at the opening ceremony and other programmes of the "[Ringelganstage](#)" on Hallig Hooge.

(ca 17:30: Return from Hallig Hooge by MS Seeadler to Hallig Langeness tbc)

Ca 18:30: Dinner at [Gasthaus Hilligenley](#).

Sunday, April 19:

8:00: Breakfast

Seminar Session III:

9:00 - 11:00

Barwolt S. Ebbinge et al. Team Animal Ecology, Wageningen Environmental Research, Wageningen, The Netherlands: Down and up again: Population size changes of Dark-bellied Brent Geese, a classic case of density dependence.

Veronika Mohr, Helmholtz-Zentrum hereon GmbH, Geesthacht, Germany: seagrass meadows in the Wadden Sea, with particular focus on their function for coastal protection and carbon sequestration.

Thomas Krumenacker, RiffReporter: Headlines for nature: How can we bring complex ecological issues into the media? Experiences from the "Future Earth" project on wetlands.

Mohamed Henriques, Guinea Bissau: The further development of the protected areas in the Bijagós Archipelago and how the local people are involved and benefitting. (TBC)

Ulf Bauchinger, Scientific Coordinator LIFE Godwit Flyway | State Agency for Bird Conservation, Lower Saxony, Germany: The southern dimension of the East-Atlantic Flyway - conservation efforts for an umbrella species, the black-tailed godwit.

Naïd Mubalegh, BirdLife Asker og Bærum, Norway: Overview about the most important tidal flat sites in Norway, their forecasted development and protection status.

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00

Henning Thiessen, Kiel: Impressions from two visits to Grand Béréby, once designated as Ivory Coast's first Marine Protected Area.

Thurid Otto, Stationsleitung, Landesamt für Umwelt des Landes Schleswig-Holstein (LfU) Integrierte Station Westküste: Wetland management in the Beltringharder Koog Koog and how the bird fauna in this nature reserve has developed to date.

John Frikke, Danish Wadden Sea National Park: The different wetland management approaches in the Danish Margareten Koog and the German Rickelsbüller Koog, and how the bird fauna in these nature reserves has developed to date.

13:00: Lunch

14:00 - 18:00 with break

Hans-Joachim Augst, Kiel: The migration picture of Bewick's swans after five years applying radio-transmitters.

Inge Charlotte Jensen, Institute of Eco-science, Aarhus University

Conflict resolution and coalition building along the East Atlantic Flyway. Learnings from the past and ideas for the future.

Britta Diederichs, Deputy Director, National Park Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea: **Bridging Tradition and Innovation: Multiple Pathways in Conservation Planning.**

Kristine Meise, Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat: **Integrating monitoring and research results into local management - the latest plans of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative.**

17:45: Summarizing together the key findings of the seminar and discussing ways of communicating them

19:00: Dinner

Monday, April 20:

excursion and/or departure.

The **seminar costs** per person will be **€380** for the entire period and will cover all costs on Hallig Langeneß and Hallig Hooge.

P.S. For further questions or proposals, please contact:

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