



## **Boschplaat Nature Reserve**

**Terschelling, The Netherlands**

**Annual Report 2019**

## **Boschplaat NL**

### **Annual report for the year 2019**

#### **Administrative and contact data.**

State: The Netherlands

Name of the area: Boschplaat

Year of award 1970

Last renewal 2010

49 years since the award of the European Diploma for Protected Areas:

#### **Central authority concerned:**

Name: Staatsbosbeheer

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#### **Authority responsible for its management:**

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8881 CM West Terschelling

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## 1. Conditions:

The renewal of the diploma is not subject to any conditions

## 2. Recommendations:

In 2010, the following recommendations were made for the renewal of the diploma:

1. sufficient financial resources need to be available on an ongoing basis in order to safeguard the interests of the Boschplaat's natural environment, especially monitoring, staff, public relations and communication;
2. measures should be taken to restore the original dynamics in the eastern part of the reserve. The present function of the "Stuifdijk" (artificial sand dike) should be taken into consideration. New insights based on recent scientific research on restoring natural dynamics should be included in the management plan, including the consequences of the current rise in sea levels;
3. communication with all those involved in the measures to be taken (which are still being contested locally) requires maximum attention and the deployment of the necessary resources;
4. annual shipping incidents in the North Sea to the north of the Boschplaat are a real concern for both people and the natural environment. Better guarantees of safety with regard to the transport of hazardous substances and oil should be instituted;
5. the number of motorised vehicles on the beach should be reduced.

### Recommendation 1. Financial resources

The financial resources for public relations and communication proved to be sufficient in 2019. When the 2020 annual plan was drawn up, it was indicated that the implementation of management activities for the entire Terschelling management unit requires a **40%** reduction. How this will affect the activities on the Boschplaat is not yet entirely clear.

### Recommendation 2. The "Stuifdijken" recovery of natural dynamics

The "Boschplaat 2050" future vision was officially presented to the Friesland Provincial Executive in November 2018; they are the party with principal responsibility for the implementation of habitat management. The content of the vision is widely supported by local residents and participating organisations on Terschelling. Among other things, the vision contains two measures in relation to the recovery of the natural dynamics and the "Stuifdijk". In anticipation of the next review of the 2000 N Management Plan, the province has set up a knowledge group for these themes. The knowledge group is a representation of scientists, coastal manager Rijkswaterstaat, the local authorities, local interest groups and experts, Staatsbosbeheer, in its capacity of site owner/manager, and the province.

During the past year, this group held two meetings to give shape to the possibilities for "more dynamics through sand and wind" (encouraging shifting sands) and possibilities for "more dynamics through sand and sea" (introduction of wash-over) and to determine specific locations.

Pilot project sand replenishment Amelander Zeegat.

Five million cubic metres of sand were deposited in the outer delta of the Amelander Zeegat in 2018 by means of sand replenishment (see also Chapter 8.3 of the 2011-2018 Report). The results are being monitored extensively.

Geohydrology. Three monthly measurements demonstrate that to date, the sand has remained reasonably in situ.

Ecology: (Young) lesser sand eels (three species) were found in large numbers in 2019; this is five times more compared to 2017. These fish play an important role in the ecosystem, because they constitute food for many sea birds and seals. The reason for this increase is still not clear. In addition, another 210 soil samples are being studied for the presence of small soil organisms. The results are expected in 2020.

### **Recommendation 3. Communication**

Between April and August, the bird wardens at the two guard's posts welcomed more than 4,100 visitors and provided them with information about the Boschplaat.

### **Recommendation 4. Maritime disasters**

Following the maritime disaster with the MSC Zoe container vessel on 02 January 2019, an additional memorandum was sent to the Secretariat.

In addition to this memorandum, the most important developments of this year are:

- . During this disaster, 342 (rather than the 291 initially reported in January) containers ended up in the North Sea, north of the Frisian Islands. By now, 299 containers have been recovered and two empty ones have been found.
- . Under the coordination of Rijkswaterstaat, a "Clear Up & Clean" plan of action with a term until mid-2020 was drawn up. This plan can be extended, if necessary. The total costs are estimated at € 35 million.
- . The search and clear-up processes at sea have continued to date.
- . After the major clear-up process on Terschelling, which involved more than four hundred volunteers, no large quantities of bulky waste have washed up on the beach or the salt marshes.
- . Fine waste, including micro-plastics, cannot be removed effectively. We still know very little about their impact on the environment and animal life. Rijkswaterstaat has instructed the Wadden Academy to study the long-term ecological effects. In anticipation thereof, field samples were taken as a basis for the study. The final report is expected in October 2020.
- . The need to make it compulsory for large vessels/hazardous cargoes to use the so-called deepwater route - which lies a lot more to the north of the Frisian Islands - from now on is currently being discussed. MS Zoe used the shorter TE route, which runs close to the north of the islands. In the event of a high wash and extreme weather conditions, vessels with a bigger draught run a risk of running aground.
- . Oil Prevention Implementation Plan. A field session with all parties involved in preventing oil disasters was held in September. The aim was to make an on-site assessment of the most efficient working methods to prevent an oil disaster. The site concerns an area of approximately 3,000 ha of dunes, salt marshes, tidal channels and mud flats with hardly any access paths. The experiences have also been used to make changes to the Implementation Plan.

### **Recommendation 5. Motorised traffic on the beach**

No changes.

**3. Site Management:** List here any changes to the European Diploma holding site management, in relation to both terrestrial and aquatic environments (as appropriate), and in relation to staff and finances, since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

**Training voluntary bird wardens.** In order to increase the islanders' involvement in the management of the Boschplaat, the Boschplaat Voluntary Bird Warden training course was started. A total of twenty islanders took part and they all received a certificate after completing a final exam. They will be employed to provide information and supervision of the Boschplaat in the 2020 season.

**4. Boundaries:** Give details of any changes to the boundaries of the European Diploma holding site since the last annual report was submitted to the Council of Europe. If there are any changes, please attach an appropriate map to this report. Please also indicate any unresolved difficulties that you have encountered.

**Land exchange with Rijkswaterstaat.** In 2019, an official survey was held into the possible exchange of land ownership on the Frisian Islands. The aim is to realise a logical ownership ratio that is based on the statutory management duties of Rijkswaterstaat and Staatbosbeheer. For the Boschplaat, it may mean that ownership of the sea channels east of the nature reserve will transfer to Rijkswaterstaat, a process that involves administrative, financial and legal aspects. It is unlikely to result in major changes to the daily management of the area. The aim is to have this process finalised in 2020.

**5. Other information:** List here any other information about the European Diploma holding site which you consider should be provided to the Council of Europe

As a result of the On the spot expert appraisal (02-03 July 2018) and the recommendations made, an English version of the 2050 Boschplaat Vision was prepared. It has been sent to the Secretariat separately (suggested recommendation 1).  
E-mail 13-02-2019 to Mr. Marc HORY

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