

REGENERATIVE RECREATION


A new approach to tourism and
recreation in the Wadden area



WADDEN

Fay de Koning
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Regenerative recreation is about restoration and improvement of nature, culture, and community. Where sustainable tourism focuses on limiting damage, regenerative recreation goes one step further.

It's not just about preserving what exists, but contributing to something better. Quite literally: ensuring that a place becomes more beautiful, stronger, or more vital through tourism and recreation.

Find more at [visitwadden.nl/en/regenerative-recreation](https://www.visitwadden.nl/en/regenerative-recreation)

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WADDEN

A REGENERATIVE FUTURE FOR THE WADDEN AREA



FOREWORD

As a marketing strategist, I am always cautious about trends and what's considered 'in'. Before you know it, you're following the crowd without it truly fitting your own offering, audience, or goals. But the emerging movement of regenerative recreation and tourism has been on my mind for quite some time.

Because what if tourism doesn't just take, but can also give back? My colleague Fay spent a year researching this topic, and together we discovered inspiring examples from around the world: from local food initiatives in Austria to tourists in Mexico helping with harvests. In Copenhagen, you can kayak for free if you collect plastic, and in the Faroe Islands the entire destination closes for a week so volunteers can help restore nature. These aren't heavy or complicated ideas, but meaningful experiences that contribute in a positive and enjoyable way.

But isn't regenerative recreation difficult? The short answer: yes. It involves a system change. It requires collaboration between entrepreneurs, residents, nature organizations, and visitors. And that can be challenging. How do you distribute benefits fairly? How do you prevent it from becoming just another marketing label?

It may sound big, and it is. But let's start small. Join in your own way, with regenerative elements. A ranger inviting visitors to participate in nature restoration. An entrepreneur offering SUP clean-ups. Visitors choosing local food and supporting a nature-inclusive farmer nearby.

Regenerative recreation is a journey full of bumps, dilemmas, compromises, and a lot of experimentation. But we believe that this region, precisely because it is vulnerable as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the place where we can (or perhaps must) take on this challenge together.

Sustainability remains an important foundation. But if we look a little further ahead, we see a future in which tourism and recreation not only protect the Wadden area, but make it stronger and more beautiful.

We welcome conversations, collaborations, and joint initiatives, with partners both within and beyond our sector. We're excited to work on this together in the years to come.

Enjoy reading!

Wendy Oude Veldhuis

Project Lead Visit Wadden





CONTENTS

FOREWORD	05
1. A NEW ERA FOR THE WADDEN AREA	08
2. WHAT IS REGENERATIVE RECREATION?	18
3. EXPERIENCE AND WILLINGNESS: MAPPING SUPPORT	26
4. OBSTACLES: THE PAIN OF CHANGE	32
5. A STEP TOWARD A REGENERATIVE FUTURE	44
6. MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER	62
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	67
APPENDICES	69
REFERENCES	72
COLOPHON	74



1. A NEW ERA FOR THE WADDEN AREA



Recreation and travel. For many people, it is a natural part of life. Getting away, clearing the mind, discovering something new. Close to home or a bit further away. What once started as leisure time has grown into an economic engine and an important carrier of regional identity.

The Wadden area also benefits from this: tourism creates employment, strengthens local communities and keeps culture, pride and traditions alive.

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that the current system also has ecological limits. Climate change, loss of biodiversity, land subsidence and extreme weather conditions no longer lend themselves to abstract discussions. They are visible and tangible, especially in vulnerable areas such as the Wadden area. Birds in particular experience increasing disturbance due to growing pressure.

The growth of recreation and tourism also leads in some places to new tensions: between visitors and residents, between economic gain and ecological carrying capacity, between short-term experience and long-term sustainability.

These developments underline that we must look at new forms of recreation and tourism. Not less tourism as a goal in itself, but better tourism. Tourism that contributes to restoration, resilience and balance.

That is why the concept of regenerative tourism is gaining importance worldwide. An approach that goes beyond sustainability and focuses on actively strengthening nature, culture and community.

In this chapter, we look at how that shift in thinking takes shape. We look at the paradigm shift that is taking place worldwide within the sector, a change in how we view the tourism sector and how we organise it. We then translate this to the specific context of the Wadden area. After that, we describe how Visit Wadden and its partners want to put this transition into practice, with a shared vision and a strategic compass that provides direction for the coming years.

THE CURRENT SYSTEM
HAS LIMITS

1.1 FROM GROWTH TO MEANING: THE PARADIGM SHIFT

For a long time, the development of tourism and recreation was mainly measured in numbers: more visitors, more overnight stays, more spending. Growth was equal to commercial success. But the value of the leisure sector cannot be captured in numbers alone. It is becoming increasingly clear that real progress only arises when recreation and tourism contribute to the well-being of people, communities and the nature of which it is part.

The British researcher Anna Pollock (2012) states that the industrial tourism model, in which tourism is seen as a linear chain of production and consumption, is losing its viability. She speaks of a different perspective, in which the Earth is approached as a living, self-regulating system of which tourism is a part and not something outside of it.

In this vision, tourism is not an activity that uses or exhausts places, but a process that functions in reciprocity with its environment. It no longer revolves around growth, but around strengthening the health and resilience of the place. The central question therefore shifts from "How do we get more out of a destination?" to "How does tourism contribute to the life that already exists here?"

Researcher Dianne Dredge (2022) also points to this necessary shift. She sees the future of tourism not in limiting damage, but in restoration. This means that tourism not only causes less negative impact, but instead plays an active role in strengthening ecosystems, communities and local economies. That change starts with awareness: from the idea that tourism takes something, to the realisation that it can also give something back. That humans can also be part of the solution, instead of the problem.

This way of thinking forms the basis of regenerative recreation. It is no longer about how many people come, but about what a visit delivers for nature, culture and the people who live here.

To make this happen, organisations are needed that apply this new way of thinking. For the Wadden area, there is a clear role here for Visit Wadden. In the next paragraph, you will read why Visit Wadden embraces regenerative recreation and what responsibility comes with it.





FUTURE-PROOF

The Wadden have an irresistible appeal. And rightly so. A major task that many in the area are working on is to ensure that future generations of visitors can continue to enjoy the area.

From NBTC, we support this; it is a challenge for more places in the Netherlands.

In Perspective 2030, we already wrote how important it is that tourism works for businesses, residents and visitors. In such a way that we support local communities and entrepreneurs, while minimising negative effects such as CO₂ emissions and excessive visitor pressure.

And that is ultimately what it is about: minimising negative impact, while making optimal use of the power of tourism.

This publication is another valuable step in that direction. And one with which the Wadden once again position themselves as a frontrunner in this field. Not only in the Netherlands, but in all of Europe.

NBTC is happy to contribute to spreading and applying this knowledge in practice. Because ultimately, we all benefit from a future-proof sector in a future-proof destination.

Thijs de Groot

*Programme Manager
Destination Development
Netherlands Board of
Tourism and Conventions
(NBTC)*





1.2 FROM GLOBAL MOVEMENT TO PRACTICE AT THE COAST

This new approach fits well with the challenges and opportunities of the Wadden area. The Wadden Sea is internationally recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its exceptional natural and landscape values, but at the same time it is an area where people live, work and recreate on a daily basis. The combination of high ecological value and intensive use makes the area vulnerable.

Visit Wadden works with partners on the shared task of making tourism future-proof. We focus on careful use of the area and work towards two ambitions:

- Contributing to broad prosperity, including the protection of nature, landscape and heritage;
- Positioning the Wadden area as the most sustainable destination in Europe.

Visit Wadden is responsible for destination management in the Wadden area. We help develop an offering that keeps the area strong in the future, align our communication with the type of visitor that fits here and monitor visitation. From that role, we contribute to ensuring that nature, community and economy remain in balance.

FROM RIB TOURS TO PLASTIC COLLECTING

The nature of the Wadden Sea is under pressure. Tourism is one of the factors that adds extra weight to an ecosystem that is already vulnerable. It raises a confronting question: are we together destroying what we actually come for? Will our children still be able to see flocks of birds, feel the mud under their feet and enjoy real Wadden products?

It is possible, but only if we start doing things differently. UNESCO already warned in 2009: how do you combine growing tourism with preserving the Outstanding Universal Value of the Wadden Sea? The answer came in 2014 with the Sustainable Tourism Strategy, from which Visit Wadden originated, a collaboration between three provinces and regional marketing organisations that shows that tourism and preservation of the area can go together. But working sustainably and regeneratively was not always self-evident. The promotion of fast RIB tours, car travel

and the COVID period did not help in that regard. Still, a shift occurred. The dialogue with nature managers became stronger. The ambassador programme grew and a ban on drone images was introduced.

Today, Visit Wadden tries not only to limit damage, but especially to take the next step. That step goes further than collecting plastic, eating locally or maintaining salt marshes. It requires creativity, making choices and above all good information for visitors and entrepreneurs, because that is where change begins.

And in that area, Visit Wadden is strong. By creating connections, sharing stories and providing direction, space arises for a future in which recreation does not exhaust the Wadden area but strengthens it. A future in which regenerative visitation slowly but surely becomes the new norm.



Sjon de Haan
Coördinator Wadden Sea
World Heritage NL

It is important to look further ahead into the future. A logical direction is regenerative recreation as an additional form of recreation, alongside existing forms.

This approach fits both the vulnerability and the strength of the Wadden area. And it aligns with the shared ambition to pass this landscape on in a healthy condition to future generations.

Such a direction requires a clear and shared vision of the future. That is why the following vision has been formulated:

When it comes to regenerative recreation, the Wadden area leads the way. Here, recreation and tourism contribute to strengthening nature, social resilience and broad prosperity.



1.3 POSITIONING OF THE WADDEN AREA

The Wadden area has a strong starting position to realise regenerative development. We are used to working together, there is a growing group of sustainable and locally rooted entrepreneurs ready, and the mentality is naturally focused on community. We have to make it work together. That fits seamlessly with regenerative thinking.

The provinces have expressed their circular ambitions, with Friesland as a global frontrunner in the circular economy (Circle Economy, 2025). This shows that careful use of resources, innovative thinking and system approaches are already deeply embedded in the region.

The Ambassador Programme within the Hospitality Programme also plays an important role. Entrepreneurs, organisations and residents commit themselves as representatives of the area. They share knowledge about the World Heritage and increase awareness of the value and vulnerability of the Wadden. In this way, a shared sense of responsibility and a strong regional identity grow.

VIEW ALL
AMBASSADORS



[visitwadden.nl/en/
regenerative-recreation](https://visitwadden.nl/en/regenerative-recreation)

The combination of circular ambitions, regional involvement and existing collaborations gives the Wadden area a solid foundation for a regenerative approach.





1.4 FROM VISION TO EXECUTION

The movement towards a regenerative Wadden area requires targeted choices. Visit Wadden translates this vision into four strategies that support the transition and fit the starting position of the region.

VISION IN FOUR STRATEGIES

1. Stimulating regenerative initiatives

Visit Wadden stimulates (just like partners such as the Association of Wadden Sea Municipalities, Economic Board Groningen, Innovatiepact Fryslân) the development of recreational and tourism offerings that contribute to nature, culture and livability. The organisation supports entrepreneurs in applying regenerative principles, facilitates knowledge sharing and makes inspiring examples visible.

2. Guiding visitors towards desired behaviour

Visit Wadden encourages visitors to make choices that do not harm the area, but rather strengthen it. We do this with clear communication, appropriate information and by making visible the ways in which you can contribute yourself. We stimulate demand for regenerative experiences and take visitors along in the unique value and vulnerability of the Wadden area.

3. Collaborating from one direction

A future-proof tourism system arises when everyone in the area works in the same direction. That is why Visit Wadden actively seeks collaboration with entrepreneurs, governments, nature organisations, managers and community initiatives. With joint projects, sharing knowledge and good coordination, we build one clear course for the entire Wadden area.

4. Positioning the Wadden area as a model region

By actively sharing successes, insights and methods, the Wadden area shows how regenerative recreation can be used as an additional form of recreation. Visit Wadden strengthens that movement by sharing knowledge, showing regional examples and connecting partners inside and outside the area.



BEST PRACTICE: HET ZILTEPAD

Het Ziltepad is a long-distance walking route along the Wadden coast. The route connects villages, residents and centuries-old churches with the unique landscape that directly borders the UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea. It is precisely the combination of that openness and vastness that makes Het Ziltepad special. Those who walk the route experience what silence and slowing down do to your wellbeing. You are not constantly distracted, but move through an area where the 24-hour economy does not play a role. You set out self-sufficiently, which makes the route an adventure.

Het Ziltepad contributes to regenerative recreation because walkers directly give something back to the area. By staying overnight in people's homes,

sharing meals or meeting residents along the way, the route strengthens the living environment and livability. Visiting the churches increases support for heritage and gives residents renewed pride in their village. With the menu booklet, walkers get to know and appreciate local food. In the coming years, activities will be added such as collecting litter or walking along with farmers and nature organisations.

Interest is growing rapidly. The interactive map is widely used, route booklets run out and overnight stays in churches are fully booked. The fact that young people in particular are also embracing the route feels like a gift to me personally. And that next year we will have a 400-kilometre continuous route along 22 churches truly feels fantastic.

Ruth ter Voort
Projectleider Het Ziltepad



2. WHAT IS REGENERATIVE RECREATION?



We already briefly mentioned regenerative tourism, but such a new term calls for a clear, shared definition. In the literature, much can be found about regenerative tourism.

In this publication, we choose to broaden the term to tourism and recreation. By speaking of regenerative recreation, we take a broader approach in which the leisure activities of residents of the Wadden area are also included.

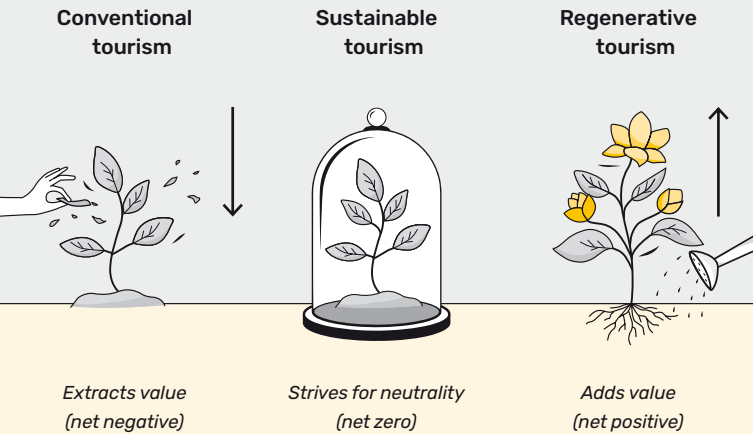
To arrive at a workable and future-oriented definition, we build on insights from various scientific perspectives on regeneration, sustainable

tourism and spatial development. The focus is explicitly on how these concepts can be translated to the specific context of the Wadden area.

It is important to clearly understand what regenerative recreation means and how it relates to sustainable recreation. When the direction is clear, all partners can speak the same language, pursue comparable goals and work on projects that truly contribute to restoration.



FROM CONVENTIONAL TOURISM TO REGENERATIVE TOURISM



When this principle is applied to recreation and tourism, it describes an approach in which leisure activities not only cause less damage, but actively contribute to improving the place where they take place. In the literature, regenerative tourism is described as a form of tourism that contributes to the restoration of ecosystems and to the strengthening of communities (Bellato, Frantzeskaki & Nygaard, 2022). It revolves around leaving a place better than it was upon arrival, by creating added value at ecological, social and/or economic level.

Examples of this can already be found in the Wadden area. Visitors and residents collect waste along the beach, remove washed-up materials from nature and can sometimes give found materials a new life in local workshops or with creative organisations (such as the Jutfabriek on Terschelling or DOK5 in Harlingen). The programme Wad Gaat Om also fits seamlessly with this: it brings parties together to reduce and prevent plastic pollution, stimulate circular alternatives and change behaviour. In this way, the programme contributes to a cleaner, healthier and future-proof Wadden area.

Walking Het Ziltepad is another regenerative example: walkers follow in the footsteps of pilgrims, stay overnight in local churches and share a simple meal with residents. This form of recreation directly connects visitors with landscape, culture and community and in this way strengthens social cohesion in the area.

A final example is the Wadden gastronomy programme, which strengthens the World Heritage experience. The aim of this initiative is to strengthen the culinary identity of the Wadden area by placing local products, producers and stories at the centre. Through networks, food routes, inspiration maps and education, both visitors and residents are encouraged to discover the taste of the Wadden. By cooking with products from nearby, not only the regional food chain is supported, but also the connection with landscape, health and conscious living is strengthened.

2.1 REGENERATIVE RECREATION REVOLVES AROUND RECIPROCAL VALUE CREATION

The word *regenerative* generally refers to restoring, renewing and allowing something that has been affected to grow again. Anyone who looks up the term in a dictionary will find concepts such as *recovery*, *renewal* and *bringing something back to life*. It is a principle that is applied in various sectors, ranging from agriculture and construction to energy, healthcare and spatial development.

REGENERATIVE TOURISM: A NEW WAY OF THINKING

Sustainable tourism and regenerative tourism are not completely separate worlds. However, there is an essential difference. Regenerative tourism is based on a different worldview: a perspective in which humans and nature are one and work together, instead of a model in which growth and economic prosperity come first (often at the expense of human and natural resources).

This requires a new way of thinking about recreation and tourism in which place and residents are central. Where previously the question was what tourism development delivers, that question is now reversed.

What positive development does this place need, both for people and nature? How can these strengthen each other? And in what way can tourism and recreation contribute to that?

Although there is overlap with sustainability, regenerative thinking requires a broader perspective in which the bigger picture is included and there is attention for the cohesion between place, people and nature.

Shirley Nieuwland

Expert in regenerative tourism





2.2 THINKING IN LIVING SYSTEMS

Regenerative recreation is best understood when placed within systems thinking. In this approach, an area is not seen as a sum of separate parts, but as one coherent whole in which nature, community, economy and landscape continuously interact. A change in one place has consequences elsewhere.

The British thinker Anna Pollock calls this living systems thinking: looking at a destination as a living system that grows, moves and continuously develops. A place is therefore not static, but a network of relationships between people, nature, culture, economy and infrastructure.

For the Wadden area, this is an important perspective. Ecological, social and economic processes are strongly interconnected here. The tides, vulnerable ecosystems, local communities, visitor flows and the regional economy continuously influence one another. Systems thinking helps to understand this interaction and shows where recreation can truly add value.

In this way, systems thinking forms the foundation of regenerative recreation. It makes clear how activities reach beyond one location and contribute to broader area goals.

2.3 SUSTAINABLE RECREATION AND REGENERATIVE RECREATION GO HAND IN HAND

Sustainable tourism has long been an important theme in policy for the leisure sector. It focuses on limiting negative effects so that nature, landscape and communities are not depleted and their quality is maintained. Sustainability therefore mainly revolves around preservation and preventing damage.

Regenerative recreation goes a step further. It focuses not only on reducing pressure, but on actively strengthening the ecological and social systems of which recreation and tourism are part.

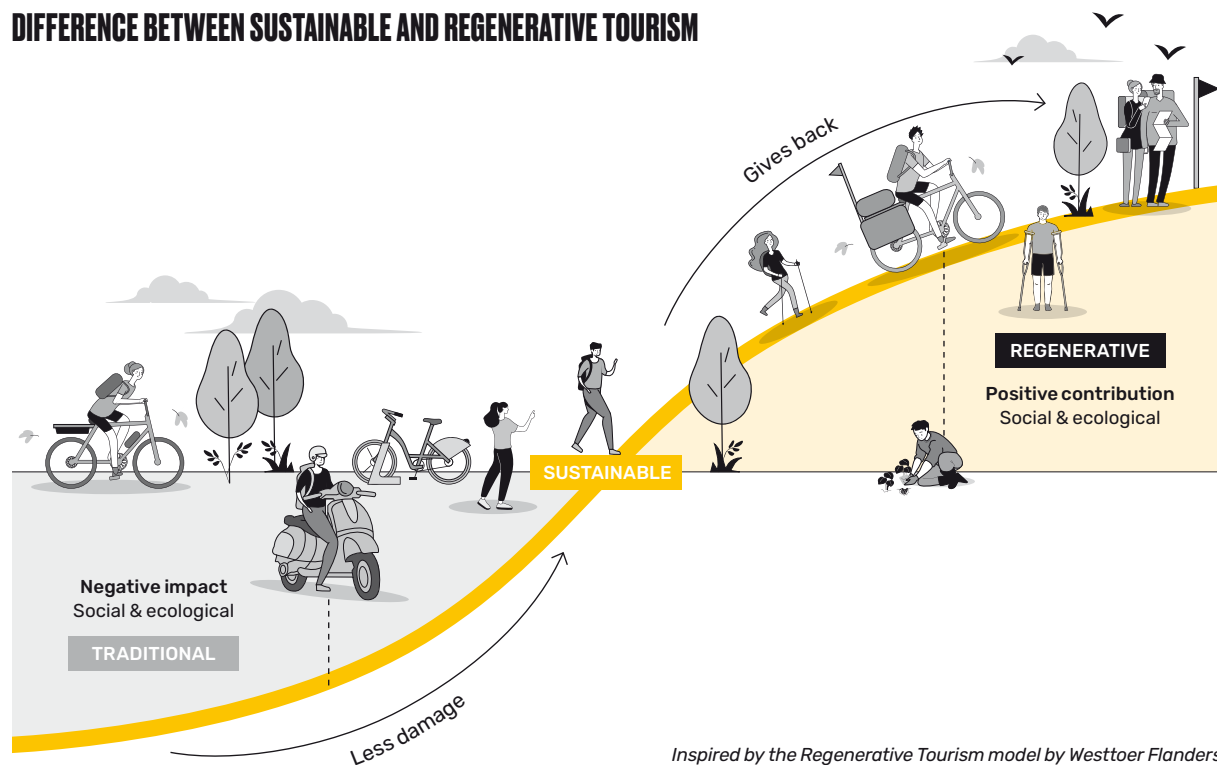
Jasper Heslinga (ETFI, 2022) emphasises that sustainable recreation often involves trade-offs between positive and negative effects. Regenerative recreation aims to break through

that tension by striving for multiple value creation, in which nature, community and economy are strengthened at the same time.

Sustainability and regeneration are therefore not opposites, but complementary. Without sustainable measures, such as energy reduction, smart mobility and visitor management, regeneration is not possible. At the same time, sustainability alone is not sufficient for the Wadden area, where restoration and strengthening are necessary.

Regenerative recreation can therefore be seen as a continuation of sustainable development. It builds on the same foundation, but shifts the focus from preventing damage to actively contributing to improvement.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUSTAINABLE AND REGENERATIVE TOURISM



Inspired by the Regenerative Tourism model by Westtoer Flanders

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

Regeneration can be large in scale, but often starts small. It is about meaningful connections and actions that anyone can take.



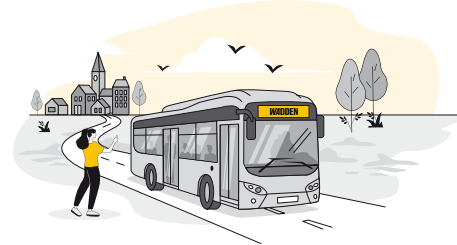
A campsite guest who helps a ranger remove vegetation in a place where this is needed.



A hotel that invites guests to harvest crops from a local farmer.



A bed & breakfast that connects guests with residents for a shared meal.



A municipality that invests tourist tax in better public transport for both visitors and residents.



2.4 FROM DIRECTION TO REALITY

The insights from this chapter show that regenerative recreation is more than just a concept. It offers a clear direction for development, with which the Wadden area can strengthen nature, community and economy in a future-proof way. The next step is to understand how this perspective connects with the people who use the area: visitors, residents, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders.



BEST PRACTICE: STERKE YERKE

Sterke Yerke I began in 1974 as an adventurous project by seven friends who built a raft from recycled materials. What started as a playful challenge on the Frisian lakes grew into an organisation with a mission: drawing attention to the health of seas and the Wadden. With Sterke Yerke II, the group sailed to London and initiated their first environmental projects. With Sterke Yerke III, they carried out research in 1979 into pollution of the Rhine through the Rhine-Wadden project, showing how pollution from rivers ultimately ends up in the Wadden Sea.

In that same year, they travelled to Curaçao to demonstrate the effects of oil pollution on the ocean. The raft unfortunately stranded on Bonaire. Today, Sterke Yerke IV represents a new generation.

Regenerative recreation only works if there is support to recreate differently, to do business differently and to view the area differently. This requires insight into values, expectations and willingness to change.

The next chapter therefore focuses on the people behind the system. How do they view recreation in the Wadden area? Do they recognise the need for change? And is there interest in this form of recreation among visitors?

Chapter 3 answers these questions and shows how regenerative recreation connects with what visitors and stakeholders find important.

REGENERATIVE
RECREATION IS MORE
THAN JUST A CONCEPT

The raft sails across the Wadden Sea with children, young people and volunteers to raise awareness about the impact of plastic on nature, birds and the vulnerable ecosystem. On board, children experience the beauty of the area, listen to the story of Pier de Plasticjutter and collect waste along the coast of Harlingen. The combination of experience, action and learning creates a deep and lasting impression.

Sterke Yerke shows that regenerative recreation starts with awareness. By inspiring young people, working in an action-oriented way and creating connection, the raft contributes to a healthier and more resilient Wadden area. An adventure with meaning.

Johan Vos
Chairman Sterke Yerke





3. EXPERIENCE AND WILLINGNESS: MAPPING SUPPORT

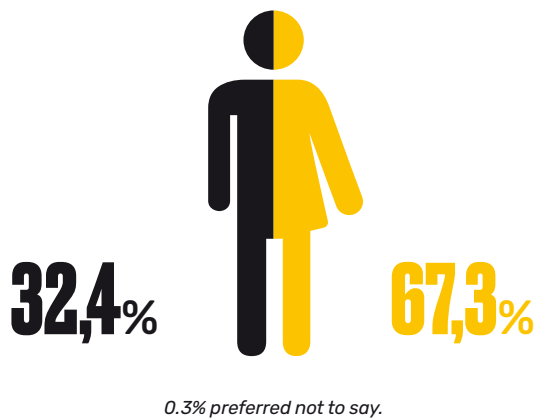
In the previous chapter you read what regenerative recreation is and why this approach fits as a development direction within the Wadden area. But a vision only gains value when the people who visit and live in the area recognise themselves in it. This chapter therefore focuses on their perspective. How open are visitors and residents to regenerative recreation, which values do they consider important and which barriers do they experience?

With a combination of literature research, quantitative research and in-depth conversations,

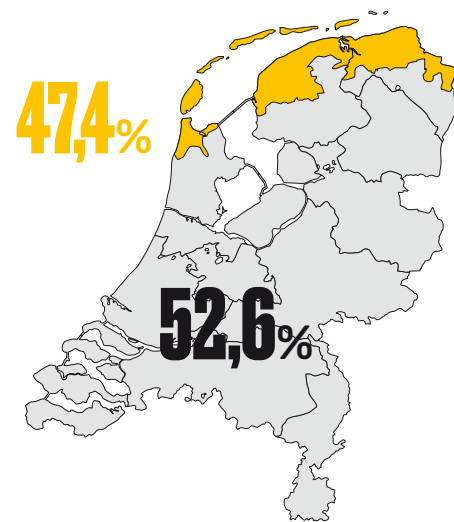
a clear picture emerged of motivations, expectations and concerns. We went out with an extensive questionnaire and presented it to more than 1,100 visitors to the Wadden area. The results are shown below.

The research methodology can be found in Appendix 1. In this chapter, we discuss the most important insights, so that it becomes clear how large the level of support is and where opportunities lie to strengthen regenerative recreation in practice.

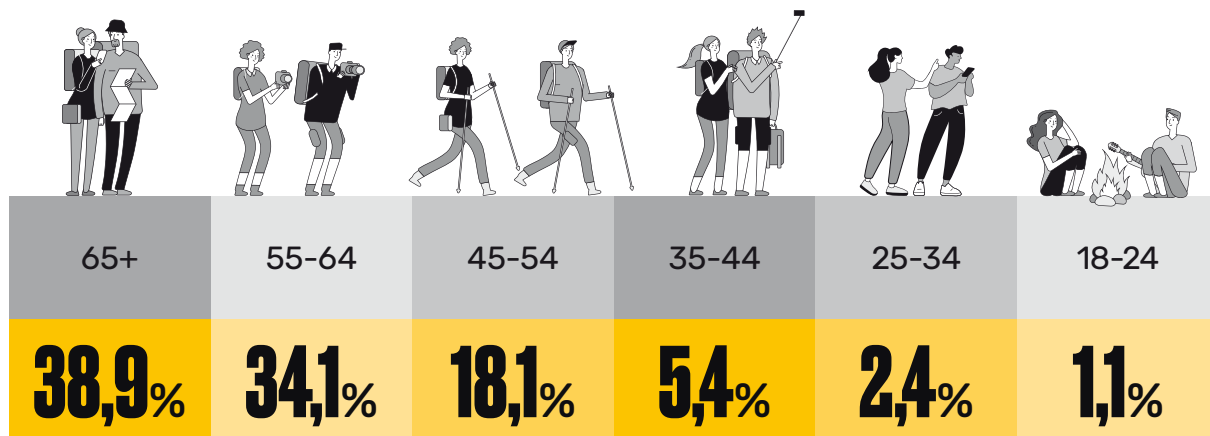
GENDER OF RESPONDENTS



ORIGIN OF RESPONDENTS



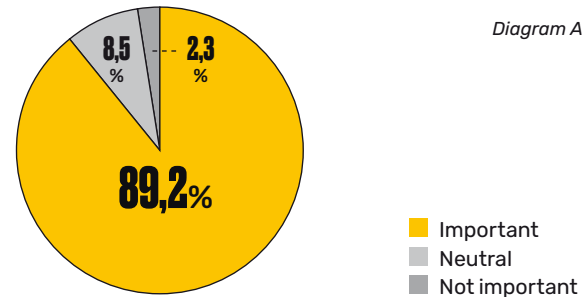
AGE CATEGORIES OF RESEARCH GROUP



3.1 VISITORS WANT TO CONTRIBUTE

The research shows that respondents are clearly positive about regenerative recreation. Diagram A shows that 89.2% consider this form of recreation important for the Wadden area. 8.47% remain neutral. Only a small group does not consider it important. This indicates broad support. The neutral group also represents a potential growth segment: they are not opposed to regenerative recreation, but may need more information to understand its importance.

RESPONDENTS WHO CONSIDER REGENERATIVE RECREATION IMPORTANT



This picture aligns with the conversations that were held: there too, we heard that people are positive about the idea, but that the understanding of what regenerative recreation exactly entails differs greatly from person to person. Many interviewees indicated that the concept appeals to them, but that they need clarity and concrete examples to better understand its relevance.

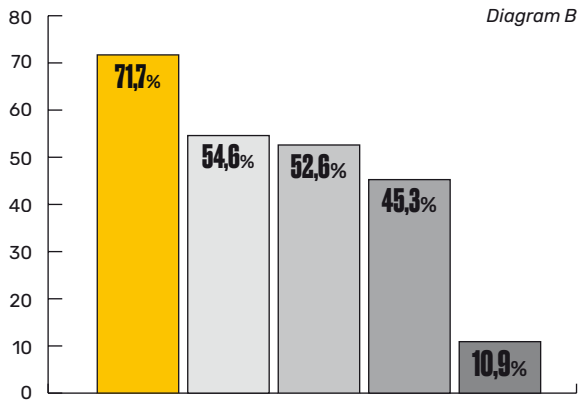
3.1.1 The main motivations behind regenerative choices

If we look more closely at the reasons why people choose regenerative recreation, a consistent picture emerges. Diagram B shows that nature protection is by far the most important motivation, followed by the desire to make a positive contribution to the Wadden area during their stay. Many respondents also indicate that they like to support the local economy, for example by buying local products or participating in small-scale initiatives. In the conversations, the same sentiment was expressed: *"If I know that I am helping a local entrepreneur, it simply feels better,"* said one of the interviewed visitors.

Respondents also mention the importance of careful use of natural resources. This aligns with their broader concern for the landscape and the environmental impact of recreation. A smaller group sees regenerative recreation as a way to connect more deeply with local culture and community. Although this group is smaller, it shows that for some visitors regenerative behaviour is not only about caring for nature, but also about depth, authenticity and connection.



WHY RESPONDENTS CHOOSE REGENERATIVE RECREATION



- Because of better protection of nature.
- They like that their stay has a positive impact on the area.
- They value responsible use of natural resources.
- They like to support the local economy.
- They see it as a way to connect with local culture or community.

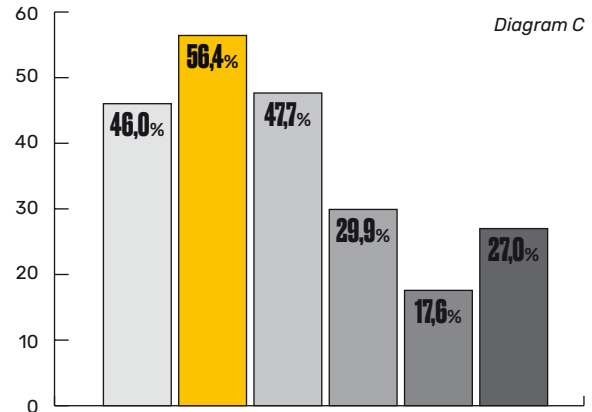
Together, these motivations show a clear pattern: visitors want to contribute to what makes the Wadden area special. From nature and landscape to culture and the local economy. They see regenerative recreation as a way to make their stay more meaningful. This combination of support and willingness to give something back forms a strong starting point for the transition towards a regenerative future for the Wadden area.

3.1.2 Which activities appeal to respondents?

To understand what regenerative recreation can look like in practice, visitors were asked which activities they themselves find appealing. This question shows which forms of offering best match their interests and motivations. Diagram C provides an overview of the most selected activities.

Diagram C shows that visitor interest is spread across many different types of activities. No

REGENERATIVE ACTIVITIES



- Willing to participate in nature conservation projects (clean-ups, biodiversity initiatives).
- Interested in local culinary experiences with regional products.
- Interested in educational tours.
- Open to workshops on local crafts.
- Willing to do volunteer work for social projects.
- Open to staying with local residents.

single activity clearly stands out, which offers opportunities. It shows that regenerative recreation can take many forms: from nature restoration and educational excursions to culinary experiences, craft workshops and social initiatives. There is no single right approach; multiple types of activities can contribute to regenerative development.

The conversations also revealed an important nuance. Activities must still feel like leisure. Visitors are willing to contribute, but it must remain light and enjoyable. As one respondent said: *"It should not feel like you are working all afternoon."* This shows that regenerative activities must be both meaningful and relaxing to truly fit within a recreational experience.

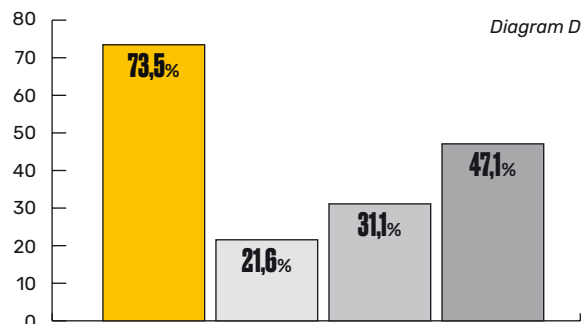


3.3 CHALLENGES THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF VISITORS AND RESIDENTS

In addition to broad support, visitors and residents also see a number of challenges that can slow down the development of regenerative recreation. Diagram D shows that the biggest barrier is a lack of knowledge and awareness.

73.45% of respondents indicate that they do not yet clearly understand what regenerative recreation is or how they can contribute themselves. This is also reflected in the conversations. Participants describe the concept as abstract and say that information is not always visible or easy to find.

EXPERIENCED CHALLENGES



- Lack of awareness/knowledge.
- Limited visibility of offerings.
- Insufficient collaboration.
- Costs as a barrier.

Respondents also mention that the current offering is not always easy to find or clearly recognisable. They want to contribute, but regenerative activities must fit within their limited time and clearly show what they deliver.

A portion of visitors also see cost as a possible barrier. There is a perception that regenerative or sustainable activities are automatically more expensive. This is not always the case, but the perception can influence choices. In conversations, visitors indicated they are willing to contribute, as long as it remains affordable and does not feel like an extra investment on top of their visit.

These insights show that willingness alone is not enough. Clarity, visibility and accessibility are needed to turn intentions into behaviour. The next chapter describes how these challenges relate to broader obstacles in the development of regenerative recreation in the Wadden area.

3.4 FROM WILLINGNESS TO REALITY: WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THE NEXT STEP?

The results from this chapter show that visitors and residents are willing to contribute to the Wadden area. At the same time, it becomes clear that a positive attitude does not automatically lead to action. This becomes evident with nature conservation: 94.6% consider it essential, but only 46.03% are willing to actively participate in related activities.



BEST PRACTICE: TEXEL PLASTIC FREE

When I worked in South America, I saw how pollution flows directly from rivers into the sea. I shared that experience on Facebook. Roland Bisschop responded. Our shared concern about the environment and health formed the beginning of Texel Plastic Free.

What started small has grown into an initiative that directly contributes to the regenerative future of the Wadden area. With twenty collection bins, beach clean-up actions and awareness campaigns for residents and visitors, the landscape is actively restored. In 2024, we collected 15,000 kilograms of washed-up plastic. Emptying the bins is always surprising: what will we find this time and how much has washed ashore?

This gap between what people find important and what they actually do also emerged in conversations. As described earlier, people are willing to help, but lack of clarity, limited visibility and the desire for recreation to remain enjoyable play an important role.

A clear conclusion emerges: support is strong, but to increase actual regenerative behaviour, clear information, accessible offerings and a coherent story are needed.

WHAT DOES THE NEXT STEP REQUIRE?

Volunteers, residents and visitors respond with great involvement and feel a shared responsibility for nature and the living environment. Our message to anyone who wants to contribute is simple: take a bag with you when walking, pick up what you come across and drop it off at a collection point. Every action strengthens the island and the Wadden area.

Henk Griffioen
Texel Plastic Free



4. OBSTACLES: THE PAIN OF CHANGE



HICCUPS ALONG THE WAY

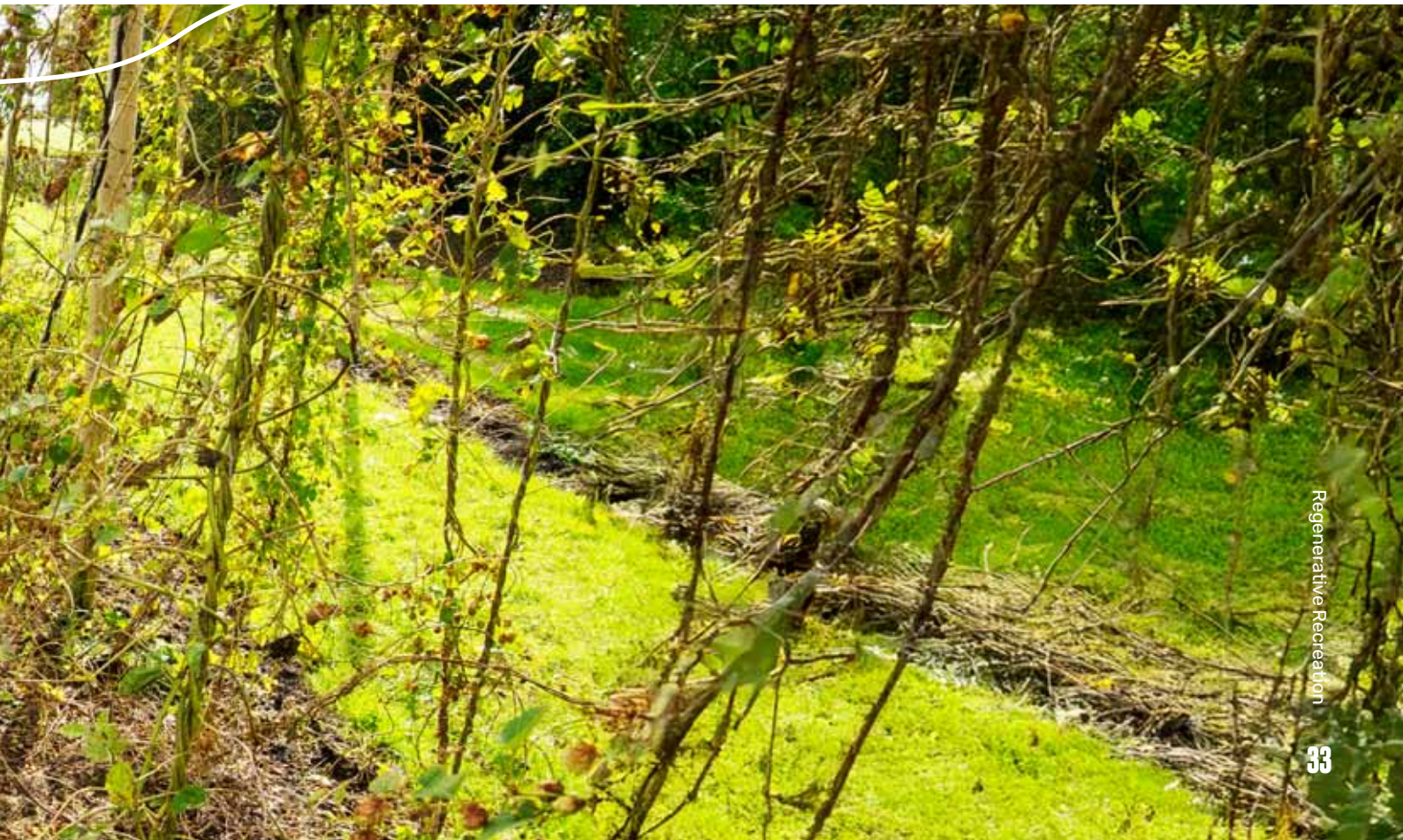
To make the movement succeed, we need to recognise and address the most important obstacles.

The gap between intention and behaviour 75% of Dutch people are concerned about the climate, but almost half do not want to adjust their lifestyle. There is a gap between intention and behaviour.

*The tension between economic growth and sustainability
Finding the balance between economic vitality and protecting nature and landscape.*

*Risk of fragmentation within the region
73.5% of respondents do not yet know exactly what regenerative recreation is or how they can contribute. Without a shared direction, valuable initiatives continue to operate separately from one another and impact remains limited.*

CONTRIBUTING
YOUR PART





In the previous chapter, we showed how visitors have a positive attitude towards activities that contribute to the area. But support alone is not enough. To truly get regenerative recreation off the ground, we must also understand which obstacles stand in the way of development and implementation.

The analysis is based on various sources. We spoke with entrepreneurs, nature managers, policymakers and other stakeholders about what they experience in their daily work. In addition, we included broader societal developments that influence recreation in the Wadden area. The results of the visitor and resident surveys, which provide insight into opportunities and concerns, were also included.

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONCERNS?

4.1 BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN INTENTION AND BEHAVIOUR

If we want something new, it does not happen automatically. There is (as is often the case with human behaviour) a gap between intention and behaviour.

We also see this gap at a national level. Statistics Netherlands (CBS, 2023) shows that around 75% of Dutch people are concerned about climate change and that many people believe their own behaviour makes a difference. Yet research by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP, 2024) shows that almost half of the Dutch population are unwilling to change their lifestyle, even if sustainability is achievable and easy.

These trends show that good intentions alone are not enough. To truly change behaviour, we must properly understand the barriers related to knowledge, convenience and motivation.

4.1.1 When everything is called 'sustainable'

Visitors are happy to contribute to nature and the living environment, but often do not know exactly what is expected of them. An important reason for this is that the concept of sustainability is used so broadly and so frequently that it loses meaning. From marketing labels to general calls to 'travel better': visitors are overwhelmed with information, without it being clear what truly helps and what actually does not.

In a recreational environment, where convenience and relaxation are central, this lack of clarity causes people to fall back into old habits. Or simply choose the easy option. The intention to do something good is there, but without clear guidance, action often does not follow.



As one of the respondents said: *"I think it is important to contribute my part. That is the least I can do. But sometimes I simply do not know where to begin."*

As a result, desired behaviour often remains a matter of coincidence. It is therefore up to us to communicate a clear and concrete message. Practical guidance is important, so that visitors know what they can do and how they can arrange it.

4.1.2 Regenerative recreation feels abstract

A second barrier is that regenerative recreation remains an abstract concept for many visitors. And let's be honest: it is quite a tongue twister. The term sounds technical and policy-driven and does not automatically connect to what people experience during a day trip or holiday.

The conversations and surveys show that visitors understand the core idea of regeneration quite well,

but struggle with the word itself. It does not sound like something you can actively do, but rather like a concept.

It is therefore important to use understandable language. We also see at other destinations that they avoid using the word directly and almost never refer to 'regenerative activities'. In Copenhagen, for example, the programme is called 'CopenPay'. On the Faroe Islands, their regenerative week is called 'Closed for Maintenance'.

By translating regeneration into recognisable words, images and examples, space is created for behaviour. It is therefore time for understandable language aimed at visitors.

4.1.3 Behavioural change

Closing the intention-behaviour gap requires more than simply offering information and options. A large part of our behaviour is guided unconsciously, for example by habits, convenience and emotions. That is why we can look at several elements that help guide behaviour. A few examples:

1. Connecting to personal values

The research shows that visitors consider values such as authenticity, connectedness, nature conservation, peace and inclusion important. When regenerative activities align with those values, the behaviour feels logical and meaningful. Behaviour that matches who someone wants to be is more likely to be carried out and repeated.

2. Freedom of choice

In recreational situations, imposing behaviour almost never works. Visitors come to enjoy themselves and want to make their own choices. The challenge is to make regenerative behaviour feel like the default mode: this is simply how we do things here. In addition, it is important that there is also a sense of enjoyment connected to the behaviour. It should contribute to a pleasant or valuable experience.

3. Pride as a driving force

Many visitors and residents feel strongly connected to the Wadden area and are proud of its unique character, strengthened by its UNESCO status. That sense of pride is a powerful motivation. When it becomes visible what collective efforts achieve, appreciation grows - as does the willingness to contribute.

REGENERATIVE
BEHAVIOUR
CREATES PRIDE!

4.1.4 Conclusion

These insights show that closing the intention-behaviour gap requires more than simply informing people or offering options. What matters is that visitors feel their contribution is logical and valuable, both for themselves and for the place. By activating personal values, presenting choices attractively and strengthening positive emotions, a context emerges in which regenerative behaviour becomes increasingly natural.

Knowledge from climate psychology and behavioural change plays a major role in better understanding visitors, but also in gently nudging them in the right direction.





CONSCIOUS DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE WADDEN AREA

The Association of Wadden Sea Municipalities values sustainable and integrated developments within the Wadden area. For recreation and tourism, this means that activities are developed carefully and fit the nature, scale and carrying capacity of the area. Regenerative recreation can offer added value in this regard, but is not a goal in itself. It should function as a form of awareness when developing new initiatives. There may be situations in which developments are not regenerative, but can still be considered desirable when weighed against broader criteria such as employment, broad prosperity and socio-economic effects.

The Association of Wadden Sea Municipalities considers it important that recreation and tourism contribute to the preservation and strengthening of nature, landscape, culture and local communities. By preventing excessive pressure, such as pollution or damage to landscape and living environment, the area remains attractive and liveable for both residents and visitors. At the same time, it remains a challenge to combine these qualities with economic development and sufficient employment

opportunities. In this context, it is important that awareness is created among users of the Wadden area.

The Association of Wadden Sea Municipalities sees that parties increasingly seek connection and collaborate from an integrated approach. By taking different interests into account, space is created for well-considered choices. In practice, more and more initiatives are emerging in which connection is central, such as combinations of agrotourism and recreation, and small-scale cycling and walking routes such as Het Ziltepad, which contribute to awareness of landscape and culture.

For the future, the Association of Wadden Sea Municipalities sees opportunities in further collaboration, knowledge sharing and steering towards quality, distribution and sustainability, so that recreation contributes to the regional economy without affecting the core qualities of the Wadden area. Experiencing nature, silence, darkness and small scale are examples of unique characteristics.

Folkert Bouma
*Association of Wadden Sea
Municipalities*







4.2 THE TENSION BETWEEN ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

The tension between economic ambitions and sustainability goals also plays a role in developments towards regenerative recreation. This emerged in almost all conversations with stakeholders. Everyone recognises the importance of treating the Wadden area with care.

At the same time, recreation and tourism are important pillars of the regional economy. Entrepreneurs depend on visitors to keep their businesses healthy. Meanwhile, nature managers and governments must safeguard the carrying capacity of the area.

This dual responsibility does not automatically lead to conflicts, but it does create situations in which interests do not always align seamlessly. The tension arises because the area has multiple functions, all of which are valuable. The challenge lies in finding a balance that fits both economic vitality and the protection and strengthening of nature and landscape.

4.2.1 Different interests, but the same values

The conversations show that the tension between economy and sustainability does not arise because parties pursue different goals. Entrepreneurs, residents, policymakers and organisations all want the same thing: a vital and future-proof Wadden area. The differences mainly lie in what they need in order to achieve that.

For entrepreneurs, the economic aspect is logically a major factor. Businesses depend on visitors. They ask themselves what sustainability concretely means for their operations, whether new forms of tourism and recreation are financially interesting and whether their efforts actually make a difference.

Many entrepreneurs are willing to take steps - some are already doing so - but they need clear examples, support and insight into the value of possible investments.

Other stakeholders mainly point to nature, peace and landscape as the foundation of the Wadden area. Without a strong ecology, the area loses its attractiveness and therefore also its economic opportunities. That too is a logical perspective.

Despite these differences, the underlying values are remarkably close to one another: love for the landscape, care for the community and the desire to pass the area on properly. This offers a strong starting point.

4.2.2 Economy and ecology and community

It is precisely from these shared values that space emerges to have the conversation. To explore how the Wadden area as a whole can become stronger. This requires a broader perspective on value, not only in financial terms, but also in terms of landscape, livability and future resilience. This fully aligns with the concept of broad prosperity.

Collaboration is indispensable. Bridging possible tensions only succeeds when entrepreneurs, nature managers, policymakers and others

continue to meet, learn to understand each other's positions and work together towards one direction for the area.

Three building blocks are essential in this:

A shared vision - A shared future perspective in which nature and economy strengthen one another.

Exchange of experiences - Allow stakeholders to look through each other's eyes, for example by letting entrepreneurs spend a day with nature managers, and vice versa.

Practical support - Provide examples, training, coaching and tools that demonstrate that sustainable and regenerative entrepreneurship is achievable.

When mutual understanding develops, the opposition between economy and ecology disappears. It then becomes visible that both actually need each other: a healthy landscape attracts engaged visitors, and those visitors bring value back into the area.





BEST PRACTICE: THE WADDENVERENIGING

The Waddervereniging organises many excursions that almost always revolve around the vulnerable nature of the Wadden area and how we can take better care of the Wadden and our environment. Many activities focus on species and the special qualities of the UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea. Sometimes we go deeper, for example during beachcombing safaris together with Ecosafari, or activities where clean-up actions and themes such as climate change and dynamic dunes play a central role. It is precisely there that the regenerative character becomes more visible.

We see that interest in activities where visitors actively contribute is growing. Especially during company outings, people want to roll up their sleeves and take responsibility for leaving the area more

beautiful than they found it. With some companies, we now organise annual clean-up activities, so that all employees consciously experience the Wadden at least once. These are strong signals. In practice, we notice that participation truly changes something. People who have joined us look differently at their surroundings afterwards. No beach walk is ever the same again - they naturally take litter with them and pay more attention to nature. The MSC Zoe disaster showed this as well: hundreds of people spontaneously came to help. Concern for Wadden nature is widely shared and, although awareness is difficult to measure, we do see small steps in the right direction.

Why is regeneration important? Nature has already suffered enough. If we want future generations to continue enjoying the Wadden area, then we truly need to take action. Our message is: work together with land managers and cooperate as much as possible. That works best, as we see within the Wad Gaat Om programme.

Renate de Backere
The Waddervereniging



4.3 FROM FRAGMENTATION TO COLLECTIVE STRENGTH

The Wadden area contains a great diversity of initiatives, projects and programmes that each contribute in their own way to nature, livability and a sustainable leisure economy. This richness of energy and involvement forms a strong foundation for the future.

4.3.1 One message about regeneration

The way we talk about regenerative recreation towards guests matters. When all organisations in the area choose the same words and use the same approach in communication, a strong unity emerges in the story. A shared story helps explain what makes the Wadden area unique, which choices belong to that and how visitors can contribute.

When everyone uses the same core message - in their own words, but from the same direction - the possibilities of regenerative recreation become visible and recognisable. Destination management organisations, destination marketing organisations, city marketers and communication staff of governments, NGOs and managers in the Wadden area play a key role in this. They can make the shared story visible in campaigns, support partners with communication and ensure that the message is communicated consistently.

When entrepreneurs, nature managers, municipalities and regional marketing organisations communicate from one shared story, a strong front emerges: a Wadden area that speaks with one voice about contributing to nature, culture and the role of visitors within this. A shared message is therefore also a strategic choice. It guides visitors, prevents fragmentation and strengthens the collective commitment to a form of recreation that contributes something positive.

4.4 OBSTACLES AS BUILDING BLOCKS FOR THE NEXT STEP

The insights we gain from this chapter form an important part of the strategic compass of Visit Wadden. The intention-behaviour gap, the tension between economy and ecology and the fragmentation in communication and projects are identified as structural challenges that we can actively address.

Entrepreneurs, product developers, regional marketers, policymakers and nature managers can also use these insights in their daily practice. For entrepreneurs, this means for example that knowledge about marketing and behavioural change helps to make offerings easier to find and to better persuade people.

Regional marketers gain direction for one clear outward-facing story: understandable and inviting communication that helps visitors make conscious choices. Policymakers and nature managers can use the insights to better align policy and management with what visitors need in order to actually take action.

The next chapter explores what everyone in the Wadden area can already do now to incorporate regenerative elements into recreation and tourism. Towards a practical translation.

WHAT WILL
THE NEXT
TRANSLATION
LOOK LIKE?

BEST PRACTICE: STAATSBOSBEHEER

Our team on Texel organises several activities that closely align with the philosophy of regenerative recreation. Twice a year we organise a large clean-up action in De Slufter. This is a moment when residents and tourists come together to leave the area cleaner than they found it. In addition, we organise an annual nature workday, where the activities differ each edition. The wonderful thing is that we see participants from both on and off the island at all these activities.

It is essential that recreationists learn about nature, landscape and biodiversity. Research shows that more than 90% of tourists visit Texel because of nature, but many visitors do not know its true value and vulnerability.

As Vogelbescherming says: "Protect what you admire." People treat the area with greater care when they understand how special it is. Our land is part of a unique natural environment, and that requires shared care and forms of nature experience that go hand in hand with nature protection. We notice that interest is growing. Tourists join spontaneously, and schools and organisations increasingly ask for additional clean-up actions or nature activities during camps or team outings.

What touches me most personally is the positivity: people genuinely enjoy giving something back. If more organisations encouraged this - by promoting nature activities or linking team outings to contributing to the landscape - recreation would naturally become more reciprocal.

Charlotte Maas
*Senior Forest Ranger at
Staatsbosbeheer Team Texel*



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5. A STEP TOWARDS A REGENERATIVE FUTURE



This chapter offers concrete tools and guidance. We build on something that is already firmly established: the seven pillars of the circular economy, developed by Circular Friesland and Metabolic. These pillars help make broad concepts such as regeneration and sustainability practical and manageable. The pillars function as a compass. They show where you can make a difference and help you move beyond isolated steps.



5.1 THE SEVEN PILLARS AS A STARTING POINT FOR REGENERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

In Friesland, circular thinking has already been embedded in society for quite some time. From the ambition to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, seven pillars were developed that help guide choices towards a future-proof region.

These pillars translate the vision of the United Nations into clear themes that entrepreneurs, initiators and organisations can immediately start working with.

THE PILLARS

1. Added value
2. Materials
3. Water
4. Energy
5. Biodiversity
6. Cultural diversity
7. Health and wellbeing

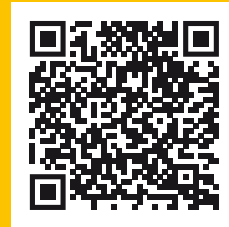
The first pillar, 'Added value', represents the goal you are working towards: leaving the area more beautiful than you found it. The other six pillars are the building blocks you can use in the restoration process: the way in which you contribute. Whether it is choosing local and nature-inclusive materials, using water wisely or generating energy in a way that fits the landscape - every step matters.

Not everything has to be perfect. In fact, that is impossible. The strength lies in all the small improvements together. That is where impact is created.

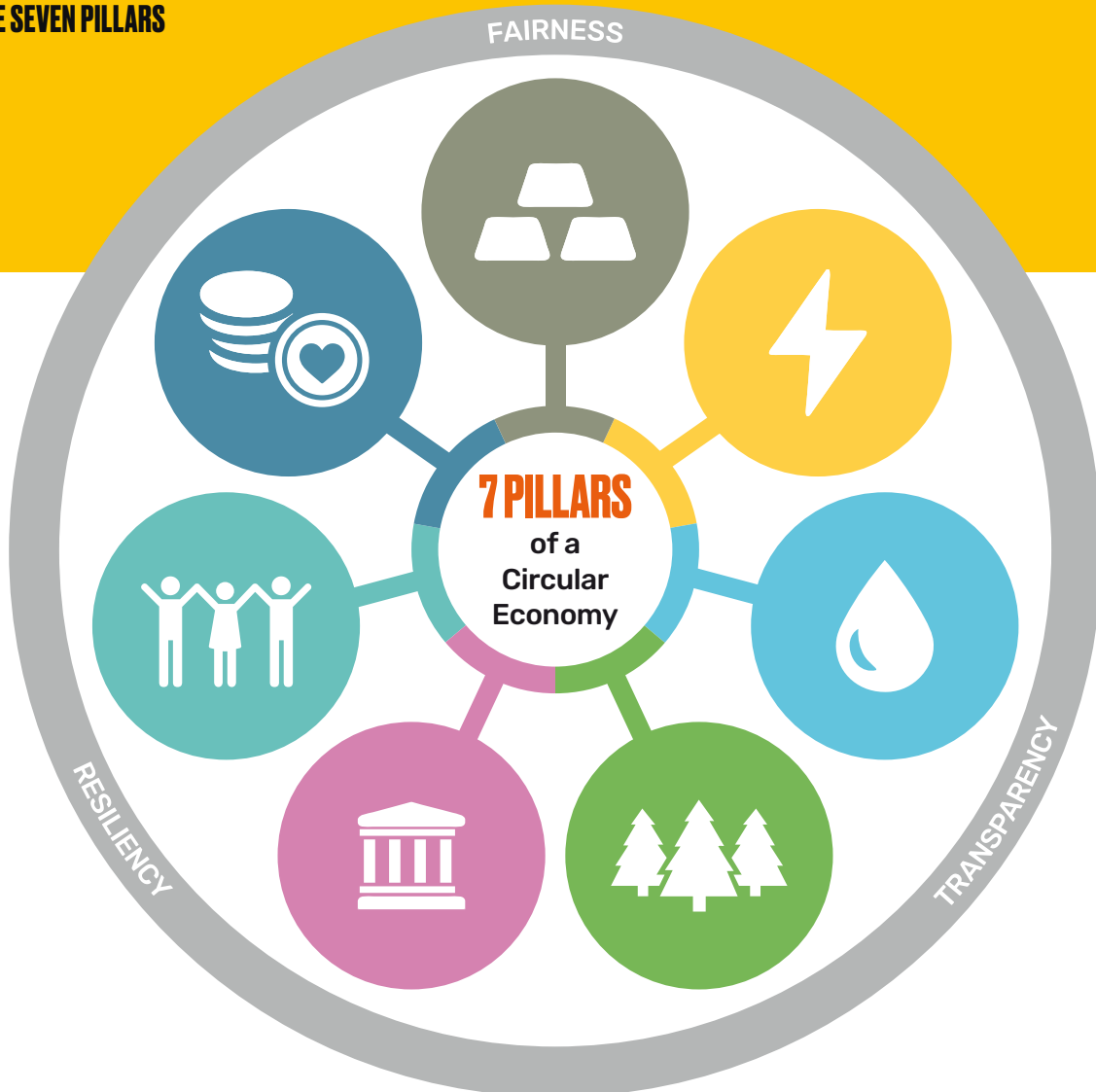
Start small. Choose one pillar that energises you and take your next step within that domain. Working regeneratively is not a sprint, but a journey. In the following sections, you will find several concrete regenerative examples for each pillar. Scan the QR code for more examples and tips.

[visitwadden.nl/en/regenerative-recreation](https://www.visitwadden.nl/en/regenerative-recreation)

VIEW
EXAMPLES
AND TIPS
HERE



THE SEVEN PILLARS



5.2 ADDED VALUE

Added value can take many forms, depending on what fits your goals. The following tools help you take that first step.

TAKE THE
FIRST STEP



1. Look at what the area needs

Regenerative work starts with sensing and understanding the place. You look at what the area needs, what nature requires and what lives within the community. That is where you begin. By working from the ground up and listening to residents, nature managers, nature-inclusive farmers, sustainable fishers and organisations in the region, space is created for plans that give something back and strengthen the area.

2. Support nature restoration and knowledge development

Ecological value arises when entrepreneurs, governments and organisations actively contribute to the health of ecosystems.

For example by:

- Reserving part of revenues for nature restoration projects or partners such as Staatsbosbeheer or nature organisations;
- Collaborating with researchers on monitoring, such as bird counts, biodiversity measurements and soil research;
- Supporting or helping organise local nature projects.

3. Organise activities that strengthen the community

Social value is at least as important within a regenerative approach. Examples include:

- Organising activities for vulnerable groups (such as nature experiences, dinners, workshops, coffee afternoons or lectures);
- Offering space to volunteer initiatives, such as excursions and cultural projects;
- Collaborating with neighbourhood associations and village initiatives;
- Creating places where residents and visitors meet each other, not entirely by coincidence.

4. Cherish and share local culture

Culture is a living system. By giving local traditions, stories and makers a stage, culture

is preserved while also gaining new meaning. This can be done by:

- Offering activities centred around traditions, stories and crafts;
- Giving visibility to local makers, musicians or artisans in programmes or products;
- Collaborating with churches, historical associations or village communities.

5. Choose quality over quantity

A regenerative approach is not about attracting as many visitors as possible, but about attracting the right visitors: people who consciously choose the environment, nature and meaningful experiences. Less, but more valuable recreation leads to:

- Less pressure on nature and infrastructure;
- Higher value per visit, often economically as well;
- Space for deeper experiences

Quality over quantity is therefore an important principle within regenerative recreation.



5.3 MATERIALS

The use of materials is a pillar where significant gains can be achieved. This includes the furnishing of accommodations, the construction and renovation of facilities and the materials used daily in hospitality and activities. It is precisely in this area that visible impact can be made.

The Wadden area already offers inspiring examples. The WEC (World Heritage Centre Wadden Sea), for example, consciously chose circular and reused materials for its interior design: fish made from recycled hospital plastic, stages made of biolaminate produced from local residual streams, benches made from crushed shells and stools finished with recycled denim.



This type of material use demonstrates how reuse, local residual streams and creative design together contribute to both a stronger story and a lower impact on nature.

5.3.1 Practical ways to work regeneratively with materials

The following five measures show that regenerative material use does not have to be complicated. It is about gradually making more conscious choices: choosing what lasts longer, what is locally available and what can be reused. By approaching materials in this way, you visibly contribute to the future of the Wadden area.

1. Use reused or second-hand materials

Reuse extends the lifespan of materials and prevents raw materials from being lost. Furniture, building materials and interior elements can often be given a second life. This lowers impact and gives a location character.

2. Choose local materials and suppliers

Materials from the region have a lower environmental impact because little transport is required. They also fit the landscape, culture and identity of the area. By working regionally, a stronger chain is created in which entrepreneurs and suppliers within the Wadden area strengthen one another. Local procurement therefore also contributes to social and economic value.

3. Donate items to others

Regenerative work means keeping materials valuable for as long as possible, even when you no longer need them yourself. By donating furniture or equipment to other entrepreneurs, social initiatives or local makers, you prevent unnecessary waste streams while also strengthening the community. Many materials can be used excellently elsewhere: in community centres, at nature organisations, in studios or by starting entrepreneurs who are still building their place.

4. Prevent disposable materials

Single-use plastic has a major impact on nature and water quality. In coastal areas, lightweight material is easily blown away and ends up in the sea or vulnerable natural environments. Within a regenerative approach, reducing single-use plastics and other disposable items is therefore self-evident.

More and more hospitality entrepreneurs are taking steps in this area. Through the Wad Gaat Om programme, intensive work is being done to reduce plastics in the Wadden area. Alternative products that entrepreneurs can purchase and use in their businesses are being explored. In addition, many alternatives already exist: reusable tableware, refill systems for cleaning products, paper packaging, refill stations or a simple 'bring your own cup' concept.

Such solutions make it easier for visitors to make sustainable choices without sacrificing comfort.

5. Organise waste streams intelligently

Within a regenerative approach, waste is not only about separation, but above all about recovering value. Organic waste can be composted and used to improve soil quality. Other residual streams can be given a second life through local makers or by transforming them into new products.

Proper waste separation remains the foundation, but greater impact is achieved by making waste streams visible and understandable. Show visitors what happens to collected materials or which streams are reused. This makes the system more transparent and invites people to use raw materials more consciously. Who knows - they may return home with new ideas. In this way, waste no longer becomes an endpoint, but the beginning of something new.

BEST PRACTICE: WONGEMA

Wongema in Hornhuizen is both an inn and a village café, but above all a place where people meet who otherwise would never come into contact with one another. Visitors come to sleep, work, gain inspiration or find peace, but they also stay because of the silence of Het Hogeland and the unexpected conversations that arise there. Sustainability is interwoven into everything Wongema does. Local and organic food, cleaning without harmful substances and extensive waste separation - from bottle caps to tea lights - form the foundation.

By reusing many material streams and purchasing consciously, Wongema works daily from regenerative principles, placing both people and landscape at the centre.

Through themed weekends such as the Potato Festival, Hedge Weekend and Landscape as Inspiration, connections are created with the village, the surrounding area and nature. These events increase awareness of biodiversity, culture and landscape, while bringing together people from different backgrounds.

Experience shows that small sustainable choices can have a major impact. Wongema demonstrates that regenerative work begins with conscious attention to materials, surroundings and encounters.

Lucas Boerwinkel
Wongema



5.4 WATER

Water shapes the Wadden area. It defines the landscape and drives ecological dynamics. For entrepreneurs, water use is also a fixed part of daily operations: from sanitary facilities to cleaning, from hospitality to landscape management.

Within a regenerative approach, the focus is not only on using water sparingly, but on using it intelligently, reusing it and retaining it within the landscape. In an area sensitive to drought, salinisation and extreme rainfall, conscious water use offers an opportunity to strengthen nature while also reducing costs.



5.4.1 Practical ways to work regeneratively with water

Regenerative water management revolves around conscious choices that slow down, retain and use water streams more intelligently. Many measures are easy to implement and immediately deliver results, both for nature and for business operations. The following three steps form a practical starting point.

1. Collect rainwater and use it locally

A rain barrel or rainwater system is an accessible solution for entrepreneurs. Collected rainwater can be used for watering plants, cleaning or flushing toilets. This reduces pressure on drinking water sources and allows water to remain longer within the landscape.

2. Make smart water use part of daily operations

ZAs mentioned earlier, regenerative water management revolves around using water consciously and efficiently. Water-saving taps and showers, efficient flushing systems such as modern dishwashers and the use of waterless urinals reduce consumption while maintaining comfort.

Structurally measuring your own water use provides insight. As soon as you know how much water a business, organisation or household uses, it becomes easier to identify opportunities. Measuring makes it clear where improvements can be achieved and turns progress into something concrete and achievable.

3. Raise visitor awareness about water use

During holidays or day trips, visitors do not automatically think about their water consumption. Subtle and positive communication helps them adjust their behaviour. The use of so-called nudges also works well to influence behaviour on site.

Think of:

- Small reminders in showers about saving water (for example through stickers, showerheads that display a red light after two minutes or playlists that stop playing when time is up);
- Information signs at rainwater collection systems so guests can see what they are contributing to;
- Educational elements during activities or excursions (or organising a 'behind the scenes' experience - guests are often curious and open to new information during their holidays).

By making water visible, enjoyable and understandable, awareness among visitors grows and regenerative water use becomes a natural part of their leisure time. Positive framing works strongly here: not 'take shorter showers', but 'save water so together we can protect the Wadden Sea'.



5.5 ENERGY

Energy consumption makes up a large part of an organisation's footprint.

A regenerative approach revolves around two core ideas:

- Reducing demand;
- Generating the energy you need as locally, cleanly and nature-friendly as possible.

REGENERATIVE
APPROACH
TO ENERGY



Energy autonomy is an important goal in this. The less dependent you are on external sources, the stronger and more resilient the organisation becomes.

For some organisations, CO₂ compensation models or participation in regional energy projects offer a valuable intermediate step. They help take responsibility while you may be working towards fully renewable sources.

5.5.1 Practical ways to work regeneratively with energy

The following tools show which concrete steps you can take towards a regenerative approach to energy.

1. Structurally reduce energy consumption

In a regenerative approach, energy gains do not begin with generation, but with reducing energy demand. Every kilowatt hour that does not need to be used relieves nature and lowers costs. Effective measures include:

- Insulating and optimising existing buildings, such as draught-proofing, roof insulation and HR++ glass;
- Smart heating and cooling with solar systems or smart thermostats;
- Energy-efficient equipment in hospitality, sanitary facilities and accommodations;
- LED lighting and timers, especially in outdoor spaces to prevent light pollution.

By saving energy first, the transition to local renewable energy becomes smaller, more achievable and more affordable.

2. Switch to renewable and local energy sources

In a regenerative approach, it is about energy that fits the place. This means choosing sources as much as possible that:

- Are renewable, meaning energy from natural sources;
- Can be generated locally;
- Cause little or no disturbance;
- Contribute to energy autonomy.

Practical options for entrepreneurs include:

- Solar panels;
- Solar boilers for hot water;
- Heat pumps for heating and cooling;
- Joining local energy cooperatives, which often invest in small-scale generation;
- Participation in regional CO₂ compensation or reforestation projects.

It is important that energy generation is done carefully, so that landscape and nature are not affected. For the Wadden area, this means: no large-scale wind installations in vulnerable zones and careful use of lighting and infrastructure.



BEST PRACTICE: HOTEL DE WALVISVAARDER

Hotel De Walvisvaarder sees sustainable and regenerative recreation as a natural part of doing business on Terschelling.

Our vision is that a stay on the island should not only cause as little damage as possible, but may also actively contribute to nature, community and living environment. That is why we have been investing for years in energy saving, electrification and local cycles: from a large solar installation and hybrid inverters to heat pump boilers, smart storage solutions and gradually making our buildings future-proof.

In our kitchen too, we work as locally and seasonally as possible, with minimal waste and close cooperation with island producers.

We are especially proud of the overall picture: the long-term commitment with which we keep taking the next step towards a circular and self-sufficient hotel. In the coming years, we want to strengthen this further with battery storage, fully electric heating and even more intensive cooperation with the Terschelling community.

Bram Visser
Hotel de Walvisvaarder



5.6 BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity forms the ecological foundation of the Wadden area. The richness of species and habitats makes this area unique and vulnerable. Regenerative action means contributing here to the restoration and strengthening of natural systems, so that the landscape retains space to grow and breathe.



5.6.1 Preventing disturbance of nature: the foundation of biodiversity

Strengthening biodiversity starts with protecting what is already there. In an area as sensitive as the Wadden area, this requires attention to behaviour that leaves animals in peace, keeps habitats intact and clean, and respects moments of rest. By giving space to what lives, you lay the foundation for restoration.

Think of:

- Walking on the paths;
- Speaking softly;
- Leaving drones at home;
- Avoiding vulnerable breeding or resting areas;
- Dimming lighting to preserve darkness;
- Taking waste with you.

The Code of Conduct for Wadden Lovers helps tourists and residents treat the area with care. This set of behavioural guidelines explains what desired behaviour looks like in the Wadden area. It offers practical guidance. Following this code of conduct is not a regenerative action in itself, but it is an important precondition. Only in calm and stable nature do species get the space to recover, reproduce and expand further.

visitwadden.nl/en/about-ons/erecode

VIEW THE CODE
OF CONDUCT HERE



5.6.2 The Biodiversity Desk

For entrepreneurs, biodiversity can seem abstract, while in practice it often comes down to feasible, concrete adjustments with direct effect. To guide organisations, there are valuable initiatives such as the Biodiversity Desk in Friesland. The desk translates ecological knowledge into practical possibilities and gives advice on ways in which you, as an entrepreneur, can take the next step.

In addition, the desk provides insight into projects and programmes within the province, so that everyone can contribute to stronger biodiversity in Friesland. Small adjustments already make a difference for insects, birds and plants, and quite literally create a beautiful foundation for a lively landscape.

VIEW THE BIODIVERSITY
DESK HERE



5.6.3. Practical ways to strengthen biodiversity

Increasing biodiversity does not have to be complex. Simple, targeted interventions have a strong effect and help species find a place.

1. Create microhabitats

Microhabitats provide food, nesting opportunities and shelter for all kinds of species. Think of insect hotels, nest boxes for birds or roosting boxes for bats. A brushwood hedge, a sturdy stack of pruning wood made from wood residues from your own site, also forms a valuable shelter and nesting place for small animals. Such structures immediately bring more life around a recreational location and strengthen the ecological foundation.

2. Green paved surfaces with native planting

Replacing paving or hard surfaces with greenery is one of the most effective ways to increase biodiversity. Native plants, shrubs and herbs attract insects and birds and contribute to a healthy food chain. By choosing species that naturally occur in the Wadden area, the planting connects better with the local ecosystem and with the natural appearance of the landscape.

3. Do not mow me

By mowing less often or working in phases, plants get the chance to flower and form seed. This provides food for butterflies, bees and other pollinators, and creates more variation in the landscape. A small adjustment in management creates noticeably more life on the site.



4. Connect green spaces with each other

By planting hedges, shrub edges or flower strips, small ecological connecting routes are created through which animals can move safely. This makes a site not only greener, but part of a network of habitats.

5. Limit light pollution

Night-time darkness is essential in the Wadden area. By using warm light, low light intensity and well-directed fixtures, disturbance of nocturnal species such as bats and moths is limited. Less light means more peace and more nature around your location.

5.7 CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Where other pillars focus on nature, materials or energy, this pillar focuses on human ecosystems. The people, stories and connections that together form the social network. It is about cherishing what is characteristic of the Wadden area, while also being open to new ideas that allow culture to move with the times. Diversity of perspectives contributes to social resilience, creativity and inclusiveness.

AN INCLUSIVE REGION
WHERE EVERYONE
PARTICIPATES



5.7.1. Practical tips to increase cultural diversity

To strengthen cultural diversity, entrepreneurs, organisations and initiatives in the Wadden area can take concrete action in various ways.

1. Cherish and share what is unique

The culture of the Wadden area becomes stronger when people actively experience it and pass it on. This can be done by giving local customs, crafts, regional products, language elements or old stories a place in activities, routes or dishes. By making culture a natural part of what people experience, recognition, pride and a strong connection with the place emerge.

2. Make room for different perspectives

A future-proof culture is open to new ideas and influences. By collaborating with diverse groups from the region, such as young people, new residents, artists or people with different cultural backgrounds, the offering grows along with social changes. This enriches the recreational offer and shows visitors that the Wadden area is an open and contemporary region.

3. Stimulate encounters between visitors and residents

Encounter is a powerful driver of mutual understanding and social cohesion. It helps when recreational activities and facilities are designed in such a way that visitors and residents can naturally meet one another. This can happen in shared spaces, such as a garden or a café.

Accommodation where guests are close to the daily lives of residents, such as a small-scale B&B in the village or sleeping at a farm, also strengthens mutual connection. When recreation and everyday life naturally touch each other, an inclusive and hospitable culture grows in which everyone feels involved.

4. Equal opportunities

An inclusive and diverse community also requires equal opportunities in the labour market. Organisations can contribute to this by giving people with different backgrounds, ages and skills a place within their organisation. This can be done by recruiting consciously, offering internships or work experience placements, or collaborating with local initiatives that guide people towards suitable work.

A diverse workplace not only strengthens the social structure of the area, but also creates a richer hospitality experience in which more stories, languages and perspectives come together. In this way, the recreation sector contributes to a society in which everyone can participate.



5.8 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Health and wellbeing form an important part of a regenerative approach to recreation. The Wadden area naturally has everything needed to help people come to rest: open landscapes, clean air, wide views and silence. In a regenerative context, it goes further than offering a pleasant environment. The central question is how recreation can contribute to a healthy and valuable stay while at the same time strengthening livability for residents.



5.8.1 Valuing communities

Before recreation can contribute to health and wellbeing, it is important that the daily lives of residents are not put under pressure. Peace, safety and livability in villages and hamlets form the foundation of a healthy community. That is why it is necessary that recreation does not cause nuisance, such as noise in the evening hours, extra traffic pressure or crowds in residential streets.

Entrepreneurs and organisations contribute to this by planning activities carefully, clearly informing visitors about desired behaviour and placing facilities in such a way that they remain outside the quiet zones of villages.

When communities are protected from disturbance, the Wadden area remains a pleasant place to live and a healthy, hospitable destination to visit.

5.8.2 Strengthening health and wellbeing

The following tools show how recreation can actively contribute to the wellbeing of visitors and residents.

1. Facilitate peace and relaxation

Peace forms a strong foundation for recovery. By offering quiet places, beautiful walking routes or low-stimulus zones, space is created for relaxation and mental balance. The landscape already invites slowing down. Look at where you can add value to relaxation, release or reflection.

2. Stimulate movement in nature

Moving outdoors has a proven positive effect on wellbeing. Accessible walking paths, cycling routes or other outdoor activities help visitors to be active without it feeling like effort. This makes health a natural part of the experience.

3. Make healthy and local food visible

Healthy food contributes to vitality and at the same time strengthens the connection with the landscape. By working with local, seasonal products, predominantly plant-based according to the principle of Dutch Cuisine, a nourishing and sustainable culinary experience is created. This fits both a healthy lifestyle and the identity of the Wadden area. Think of icons such as salty vegetables, potatoes, garlic, sea buckthorn, cranberries, local fish or shellfish.

4. Create space for meaning and awareness

The Wadden area invites slowing down and reflection. By offering activities that make people pause to consider the value of the landscape and the relationship between humans and nature, space is created for depth. Such moments help visitors to be more consciously present during their stay. That

awareness ensures that they approach the area with more respect and responsibility, which strengthens both their experience and care for the area. Develop offerings that fit these principles, such as retreats, yoga, constellation work, writers' weekends or solo travel, or connect with one of the existing initiatives, such as Het Ziltepad, Walk of Grief or De Kop Leeg.



BEST PRACTICE: SAVANNEBOERDERIJ VERBAARUM

For us, everything started with the realisation that food, health and the environment are closely connected. The many food scandals, the growing number of lifestyle diseases and the visible environmental problems made it clear that things must change and can change. We are not necessarily people who take to the barricades, but "Improve the world, start with yourself" has always been our guiding principle. From that perspective, we followed a permaculture course. During such a course, you learn how to design sustainable and self-restoring systems by imitating the workings of natural ecosystems. In addition, we bought an old, authentic farmhouse to put our vision into practice.

Regenerative work means to us that everything we do contributes to improvement. That our land,

our surroundings, our own wellbeing and that of our animals and guests become better because of it. You see this reflected in careful manual work, working with the seasons and making choices that are not commercially driven, but are good for the system as a whole.

We see every day how this place gives back. Compost toilets feed the land, the food forest is developing strongly, we share seeds, plants and knowledge, and biodiversity increases every year. Our small market garden feeds more than one hundred people with pure food. Guests come here to find peace, learn new skills and experience how little you actually need. Our guests are most touched by the space that simplicity, rawness and purity bring.

Team Verbaarum



6. MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The previous chapters show that the Wadden area has a strong foundation to continue developing into a regenerative destination. Visitors and residents are open to it, entrepreneurs are already taking steps, nature organisations contribute valuable knowledge and countless initiatives strengthen landscape, culture and community. The question now before us is how we move forward. What does this vision mean for the coming years and what does it ask of everyone who feels connected to the Wadden area? In this final chapter, we move towards answers.

HOW DO WE
MOVE FORWARD?







6.1 A shared responsibility

Research and conversations show that regenerative recreation truly takes shape when everyone feels responsible for the area and acts from that shared responsibility. It is not about individual efforts, but about a collective movement in which choices continuously contribute to a healthy and resilient Wadden area. In practice, this shared task takes shape around three elements that reinforce one another.

1. Developing regenerative offerings that add value

Regenerative recreation becomes tangible when it is reflected in the offerings created by entrepreneurs, organisations and communities. It is about activities or elements, places and experiences that give more back to the area than they take from it. This can be small-scale, such as working with local products or adding nest boxes and insect hotels. Or structural, such as accommodation that contributes to clean-up activities, social connection or culture.

By consciously choosing value creation, the recreational offer grows alongside the needs of the area. The more organisations incorporate these elements into their own operations, the stronger the collective movement becomes.

2. A shared message that provides direction and clarity

Regenerative recreation works best when we tell the same story. And keep repeating it. When entrepreneurs, governments, nature managers, DMOs and regional marketers choose the same direction, visitors and residents understand what the Wadden area stands for. Where we are heading. A shared message clarifies which choices fit here and how people can easily participate. Think of explanations about low-impact recreation, why local products have value or how to give space to nature, communities and villages. In this way, regenerative action becomes something that belongs to the Wadden area.

3. Education, knowledge sharing and inspiration

An area develops when it continues learning. Efforts only truly gain strength when partners continue inspiring one another with ideas, sharing experiences and making knowledge easy to access. By showcasing practical examples, organising gatherings and making results visible, a learning culture develops that helps regenerative recreation move forward.

Education plays a major role in this. For entrepreneurs and policymakers, but equally for visitors and residents. The better people understand what their choices mean, the easier it becomes to act consciously and regeneratively. In this way, the movement stays closely connected to practice and everyone gradually grows along with it.

We must be careful not to fall into the trap of becoming the strict teacher. It is our task to make regenerative elements within our offer enjoyable, accessible and valuable for visitors. But also for ourselves. Because it truly is a wonderful starting point – something that should above all give us energy.

6.2 The role of Visit Wadden in the coming years

As described in Chapter 2, Visit Wadden has the task of providing direction to the movement towards a regenerative future. The most important assignment is facilitating a shift in mindset: seeing recreation and tourism not as something that only takes, but as something that adds value to nature, culture and community. We fulfil this role with pleasure as a connector and driving force.

We do this in a practical way: a way of working that grows through doing, testing, reflecting and adjusting. The plan for the coming years is therefore not fixed, but develops alongside lessons from practice, the needs of partners and the dynamics of the landscape.

We continuously monitor what is happening in the area: which choices work well, where visitors encounter obstacles and what entrepreneurs need. This allows us to identify opportunities and address challenges.

By regularly evaluating and refining the direction, a system develops that moves along with nature, the community and the recreation sector.

Regenerative recreation therefore requires adaptability, an open mindset and the confidence to gradually build something that sustainably strengthens the Wadden area.

6.3 An invitation to build together

Regenerative recreation is not a goal in itself. It is an additional route through which we make the Wadden area stronger, more resilient and future-proof. This sometimes requires looking differently: thinking beyond tomorrow, being open to collaboration and remaining curious. Because beautiful things can emerge when nature, community and recreation reinforce one another.

The insights in this book form a first milestone in a movement that is already underway. This foundation invites everyone to actively help build a regenerative future. That begins with conscious choices: choices that add value, create connection and treat the landscape with care.

Every step counts. An entrepreneur starting a new initiative. A conversation in the village hall. A visitor choosing a regenerative activity. An organisation adapting its offering. Together, these steps form a movement that not only protects the Wadden area, but allows it to grow.

The UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea region deserves a future in which residents continue to feel at home, nature can follow its own rhythm and visitors recharge while also experiencing meaning and connection. It will not be perfect. And that is okay. Because when a large group takes a small step in the right direction, we move further than when we wait for perfection.

We shape the future of the Wadden together. Every choice, no matter how small, brings the area closer to a regenerative destination in which the visitor becomes part of the greater whole. We invite you to take your next step – or, if you prefer, first have a meaningful conversation about practical perspectives for action. We are excited to continue. Do you still need a little extra inspiration? In Appendix 2, we compiled a list of ideas for regenerative recreation.

THE ROAD TOWARDS REGENERATIVE RECREATION



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Would you like to know more about regenerative recreation in the Wadden area, do you have questions or good advice? Or would you like to exchange ideas with us sometime? Please contact us via info@visitwadden.nl. This publication is only the beginning - we would love to continue the conversation about the next steps.

Thank you!



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This appendix explains how the research conducted by Fay de Koning of Visit Wadden was carried out as part of her Master's programme in Strategic Communication. The research took place in the spring of 2025. It describes the steps taken to gain insight into the attitudes and experiences of visitors, entrepreneurs and nature managers in the Wadden area. By combining literature research with a survey and in-depth conversations, a nuanced picture emerged of how regenerative tourism can take shape in this region and what is needed for this.

Literature review

The research began with a literature study on regenerative recreation and tourism, sustainable travel, behavioural change and societal developments influencing these themes. Recent scientific publications, policy reports and practical examples from both the Netherlands and abroad were used. This knowledge formed a solid foundation for understanding how regenerative recreation differs from existing sustainability approaches and how it can be applied within the context of the Wadden area.

Qualitative and quantitative research

Following the literature study, a phase of quantitative and qualitative research was carried out. The aim was to gain insight into how visitors,

entrepreneurs and nature managers think about regenerative recreation and which role they see for themselves within this development. The research focused on visitors and residents belonging to Visit Wadden's primary target group, described in the persona Nora van de Wadden.

By combining multiple research methods, a broad and in-depth understanding emerged of how both recreationists and regional stakeholders view regenerative recreation. This triangulation increases the reliability of the conclusions: patterns that recur across both research methods can more confidently be regarded as broadly supported insights within the region.

Quantitative research among visitors and residents

The quantitative component consisted of a survey distributed among visitors and residents of the Wadden area. In total, 1,104 respondents completed the questionnaire. Most participants either live in the Wadden area or visit it regularly; additionally, respondents from other provinces participated who know the region as a recreational destination.

It is important to note that the survey was distributed through Visit Wadden's social media channels and newsletter. The respondents therefore represent a group with relatively strong involvement in the Wadden area. As a result, the findings mainly provide insight into the attitudes and motivations of Visit Wadden's primary target group and are not directly representative of all visitors to the region.

The questions focused on values and motivations, attitudes towards sustainability, willingness to contribute to nature and community and which forms of behaviour or activities are perceived as feasible and appealing.

Qualitative interviews

In addition, anonymous semi-structured interviews were conducted with visitors, residents, nature managers and entrepreneurs. These conversations were recorded, coded and analysed thematically in order to identify patterns, experiences and motivations.

A learning and future-oriented process

Finally, broader external developments affecting tourism and livability in the region were examined. Trends such as climate change, ageing, digitalisation and changing societal values demonstrate that the movement towards regenerative recreation does not stand alone, but forms part of a broader societal transition.

The research process was not strictly linear, but developed step by step. New insights from conversations led to adjustments in the questionnaire, while survey results revealed new themes. This flexible and learning-oriented approach made it possible to continuously align the research more closely with the reality of those involved. Based on knowledge, research and dialogue, this book forms a strong foundation for continuing to build together towards a regenerative future for the Wadden area.

APPENDIX 2 - EXAMPLES OF REGENERATIVE ELEMENTS

01. Let visitors actively help restore salt marshes or sleeping dikes under the guidance of a nature manager.
02. Design your site with microhabitats and let guests help maintain them themselves.
03. Start an adoption programme for a local breeding site or nature project to which your guests directly contribute financially through a booking or purchase. .

04. Transform your garden or campsite into a 'living testing ground' for soil restoration and involve visitors in measuring soil quality.
05. Install insect hotels.
06. Create a seasonal nature task calendar in which visitors can participate (pollarding willow trees, restoring ditch banks).
07. Offer walks during which guests help monitor meadow birds or plant species.
08. Transform part of your site into a testing field for salt-tolerant plants suited to the Wadden area. Share the story with guests or followers.
09. Build birdhouses, bat boxes or hedgehog shelters together with guests and place them on your property or donate them to a nature organisation.
10. Organise harvest meals at local (nature-inclusive) farms where visitors harvest produce themselves and learn about cultivation methods.
11. Cook with products from regeneratively managed land and actively share the stories behind their origin with guests.
12. Allow guests to participate in fieldwork with a fisher using innovative, nature-inclusive methods, followed by a shared meal.
13. Create a mini food forest on your property where visitors can harvest produce themselves.
14. Organise 'residual-stream cooking workshops' with local producers in which food waste is actively prevented.
15. Let guests work with a farmer to test how different cultivation methods influence soil life.
16. Use your own kitchen as a learning environment for local young people to discover regenerative food chains.
17. Let visitors help maintain monumental churches, mills or dike houses through organised volunteer or community workdays.
18. Develop cultural arrangements in which guests support local makers by practising traditional crafts themselves (repairing fishing nets, basket weaving).
19. Start a programme in which visitors contribute to preserving maritime heritage by helping with maintenance or restoration.
20. Offer accommodation in historic buildings that visitors help make more sustainable.
21. Organise storytelling evenings with village residents and invite talented visitors to contribute by documenting stories for archives.
22. Start an adoption project through which guests contribute annually to preserving a specific heritage site.

23. Develop walking routes where visitors help clear or maintain historic paths.
24. Offer workshops in traditional Wadden techniques such as flax cultivation, shrimp peeling, wood carving or basket weaving.
25. Let visitors actively contribute to digital heritage collections (scanning old photographs, recording stories).
26. Work with a local exchange system (time = value) in which guests 'pay' volunteer hours in the village in exchange for a discount.
27. Let visitors participate in village dinners where proceeds support community livability projects.
28. Create a mini library, seed library or shared tool station to which guests also contribute.
29. Start a microfund in which every guest automatically contributes a small amount to a local project.
30. Offer workshops in which visitors help improve village spaces, such as playgrounds or picking gardens.
31. Pair visitors with a village resident for one day to exchange knowledge or share an activity.
32. Develop local festivals or commemorative days where guests are welcome to help organise activities.
33. Create a community garden where visitors and local residents work and harvest together.
34. Develop regenerative field lectures in which visitors learn to measure things themselves: soil life, water quality and biodiversity.
35. Offer educational night excursions about darkness, silence and the impact of light pollution.
36. Offer arrangements where guests remove invasive exotic species in nature areas together with a guide.
37. Let guests contribute to citizen science projects such as bird or butterfly counts.
38. Start a shadowing programme with forest rangers or nature managers in which visitors assist with small management tasks.
39. Develop lecture series in which local experts (farmers, fishers, craftspeople) involve visitors in current challenges.
40. Offer courses in saline gardening or nature-inclusive garden design.
41. Create regenerative working days for companies as bookable arrangements.
42. Offer public transport arrangements including luggage service and rental bicycles so visitors genuinely leave the car at home.
43. Offer visitors free access to shared mobility when participating in a regenerative activity.
44. Start a shuttle service powered by renewable energy and combine it with educational storytelling during the journey.
45. Use your organisation as a testing ground for circular materials and let guests actively follow the process (online or through social media). Suggestions from home are welcome.
46. Start an annual regeneration report in which guests are presented as co-investors in your restoration projects.
47. Transform your organisation into a learning environment for local young people and let guests host or attend workshops.
48. Use your site for climate adaptation pilots (water retention, heat-resistant planting) and involve visitors in the process.
49. Build a living route through your organisation in which every step demonstrates how regeneration is applied.
50. Open a daytime café where visitors and residents can meet and exchange stories.
51. Donate collected tourist tax revenue to a local project chosen by the community.
52. Offer beachcombing and clean-up activities by bicycle, canoe, e-chopper, SUP, scooter or on foot.
53. Organise storytelling evenings for visitors where village residents talk about traditional crafts they once practised.
54. Let visitors collaborate with artists working with washed-up materials to create new objects or artworks.
55. Create an exchange wall or cabinet where visitors leave behind, for example, a book, recipe or small object and take something contributed by someone else in return.
56. Organise communal meals where visitors can dine in residents' homes. Naturally, this can also take place at a B&B.
57. Organise a small-scale flea market or second-hand market where visitors and residents exchange or sell items so materials receive a second life.
58. Donate food surpluses to local food banks or initiatives that prepare meals for the community.
59. Collaborate with local ecologists to select native planting suitable for your site or accommodation while simultaneously strengthening soil quality, water management and biodiversity.
60. Consider opening facilities within your accommodation to the local community and in doing so contribute to vibrant, resilient villages.

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More information and download the e-book visitwadden.nl/en/regenerative-recreation



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