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## Press statement

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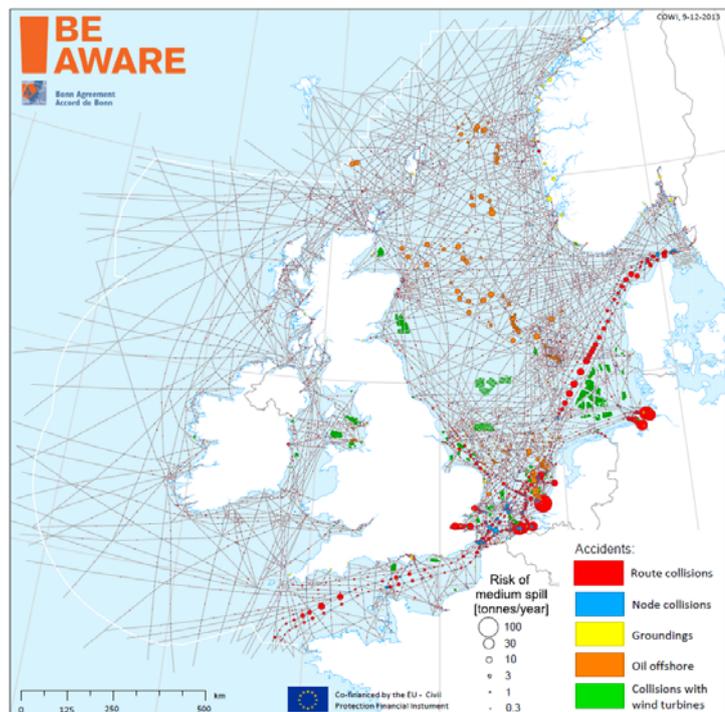
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# BE-AWARE: Mapping the risk of marine pollution in the Greater North Sea and its Approaches

*The BE-AWARE project, coordinated by the Bonn Agreement, has for the first time been able to map the risk of marine pollution from shipping and the offshore industry in the Greater North Sea and its approaches. The project has undertaken a detailed analysis of the current risk of accidents and oil pollution both for the reference year of 2011 and the projected future risks in 2020.*

In 2012 the Bonn Agreement Secretariat along with Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands started the 2 year BE-AWARE project (Bonn Agreement: Area-wide Assessment of Risk Evaluations) in order to meet the commitments by Bonn Agreement Ministers in the 2010 Dublin Declaration. The project is part funded by the EU Civil Protection Financial Instrument and the Project Partners, with co-financing from Norway and Belgium and technical support from two consultancies: COWI and MARIN.



Risk of spills between 300-5000 tonnes in 2020

The aim of BE-AWARE was to assess the risk of accidents from shipping through ship-ship collisions, groundings and collisions with fixed objects, such as oil installations and wind farms. The assessment considered the risk of accidents for 2011, based on ship movement data collected by the automatic identification system (AIS), and for 2020 based upon the expected growth both in ship numbers and ship sizes. The assessment also includes spills from offshore installations.

The study then identified the likelihood of oil spills of different sizes occurring across the Greater North Sea using the accident risk and the expected loading condition of different ship types, based on detailed cargo data for the major ports in the region. This means that for the first time it is possible to have a clear picture of the accident risk and spill likelihood for the whole Greater North Sea using a standard approach.

The project also undertook a qualitative assessment of the risk of Hazardous and Noxious Substances spills based upon the cargo data and overall accident risk from shipping.

Bonn Agreement President Gert-Jürgen Scholz stated: "For the first time we now have a clear idea of the risk of accidents and likelihood of spills right across the Greater North Sea area, which is a key step in determining where we need to develop response capacity and risk reducing measures in the future."

The project will also have a second phase: BE-AWARE II, which will start in early 2014, and will model the oil spills and combine them with the vulnerability of the environment and economy of the region to oil pollution. This will allow the impact of spills to be identified for different response and risk reduction scenarios, allowing the development risk management conclusions for the greater North Sea and its sub-regions.

Further information on BE-AWARE can be found at [beaware.bonnagreement.org](http://beaware.bonnagreement.org)

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#### Note for editors

1) The Bonn Agreement (Agreement for cooperation in dealing with pollution of the North Sea by oil and other harmful substances, 1983) is the mechanism by which the North Sea and Irish Sea States, and the European Union (the Contracting Parties), work together to help each other in combating pollution in the North Sea and Irish Sea Area from maritime disasters and chronic pollution from ships and offshore installations and to carry out surveillance as an aid to detecting and combating pollution at sea.

Based on a German initiative, this important Agreement on the protection of the marine environment was concluded in 1969 in the former federal capital of Bonn. Since then, Germany has been the Depository of the Bonn Agreement. In 1983 and 1989, the Agreement was extended and adapted to take account of the latest developments.

The North Sea and Irish Sea States are Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

2) In 2010 the Bonn Agreement ministers adopted the Dublin Declaration and the Bonn agreement Action Plan to guide the future work of organisation. They can be found here ([www.bonnagreement.org](http://www.bonnagreement.org)).

3) The BE-AWARE project partners are Admiral Danish Fleet Headquarters, MUMM (Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences) and Rijkswaterstaat (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment, The Netherlands).

4) The project is part funded by the EU Civil Protection Financial Instrument, DG ECHO.

5) The project is co-financed by the Norwegian Coastal Administration and DG Environment, Belgium.

6) The project technical subcontractors are COWI Denmark and MARIN (Maritime Research Institute Netherlands).