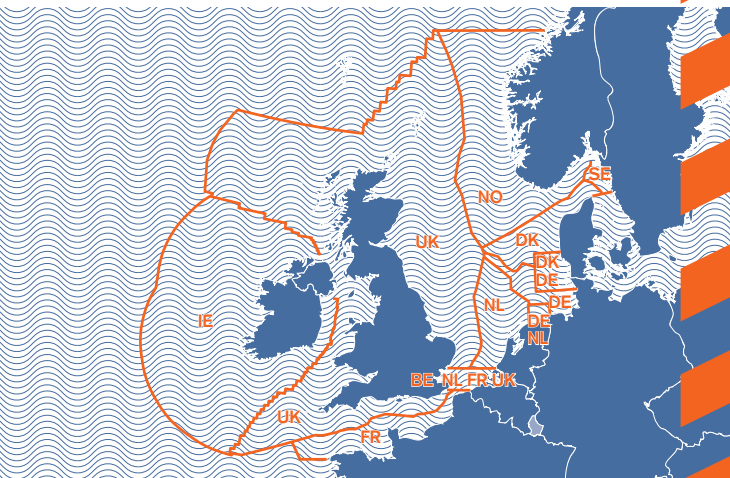


BONN AGREEMENT

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.

Since 1969, Germany has been the Depository Government of the Bonn Agreement. The Agreement area, as outlined in the map below, has been extended on several occasions most recently in 2010 with the accession of Ireland. 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.

Contracting Parties to the Bonn Agreement have agreed to ensure that an adequate balance of resources is maintained for response work in the Greater North Sea and its Approaches, based on existing sub-regional risk assessments, which should be integrated where necessary as a priority action within the Bonn Agreement Action Plan (2010–2013), to avoid marine pollution disasters happening and to mitigate the impacts of man-made hazards (oil pollution and hazardous and noxious substances).



BE-AWARE PROJECT PARTNERS

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www.bonnagreement.org

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Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (Dept. VI: Management Unit of the North Sea Mathematical Models) www.mumm.ac.be
Federal Public Service Public Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, DG Environment www.environment.belgium.be

Denmark:

Admiral Danish Fleet Headquarters www.forsvaret.dk/sok/eng/Pages/default.aspx

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Bonn Agreement
Accord de Bonn



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BE AWARE



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AREA-WIDE RISK ASSESSMENT OF THE GREATER NORTH SEA AND ITS APPROACHES

COMPETITION FOR SPACE IN THE GREATER NORTH SEA IS GROWING

The need for an area-wide risk assessment and associated benefits were recognised by Ministers in 2010 (Bonn Agreement Dublin Declaration). In particular Ministers noted enlargement of the Bonn Agreement area as a result of the accession of Ireland in 2010, predicted increased storminess as a consequence of climate change, increased export of oil products from the Russian Federation transiting through the Bonn Agreement area, and new maritime uses and activities collectively contributing to a complex pattern of sea use and maritime development for which an overview risk assessment to look at potential improvements to disaster prevention is vital. As a consequence there is a need to further develop and update hazard identification and risk modelling, draw lessons learned from past disasters and raise awareness and prevention capacities at a regional level involving multinational participation.



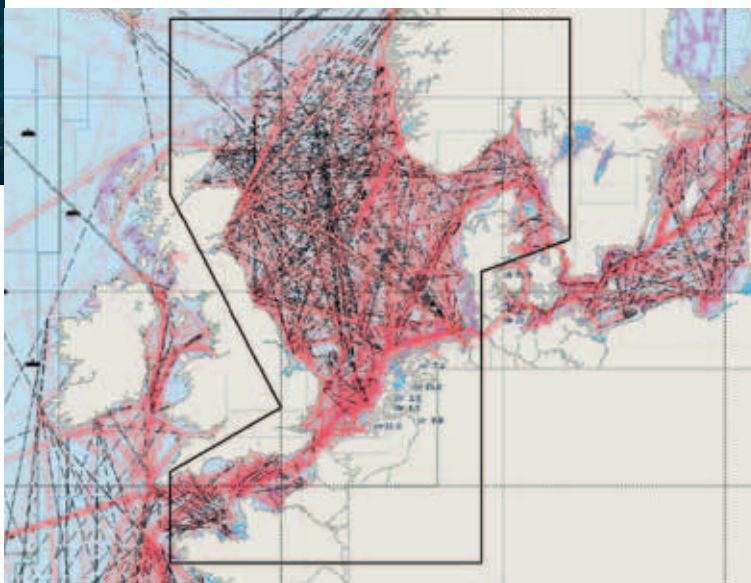
Courtesy of J. Haelters/MUMM; Oseberg platform

The competition for space in the Greater North Sea and its approaches continues to grow year on year. The area contains some of the busiest shipping lanes in the world and is also a major oil and gas production area with over 1300 installations. However in recent years there have been new demands for space. Concerns over climate change and the adoption of carbon reduction targets have led to a huge increase in the planning and installation of offshore wind developments with over 10,000 turbines installed in the Bonn Agreement area. International targets to increase the coverage of marine protected areas have also reduced potential for development in sensitive areas and emerging uses such as ocean aquaculture and carbon capture and storage have the potential to use additional space.

CO-ORDINATED PREVENTION PLANNING IS NEEDED

The Bonn Agreement has achieved considerable success over 40 years enabling enhanced co-operation between States, undertaking joint exercises, sharing research and development and agreeing joint operational manuals. However, the Bonn Agreement area currently has no overview area-wide risk assessment. There are knowledge gaps both in terms of total resources available to tackle marine pollution at a regional level and the extent and future projected uses of maritime space that influence probability of any future disaster.

The Greater North Sea and its wider approaches comprise a variety of very different coastal and marine ecosystems. Some of these environments are 'high energy' ecosystems where wind, wave and current action will naturally disperse oil pollution but others will 'trap' pollutants. National risk assessments currently in place use different methodologies and an accepted approach to environmental sensitivity analysis for the Greater North Sea and its wider approaches has yet to be agreed or undertaken at the regional level. Cross-border and civil protection mechanisms that use a common tool to mobilise disaster response have yet to be properly tested in the context of a North Sea marine pollution scenario and there is a need to disseminate results not only to those directly involved but also to other European stakeholders.



Shipping traffic in the North Sea with connections to other waters.



Rijkswaterstaat, the Netherlands

BE-AWARE PROJECT

The **BE-AWARE** project is a two-year initiative (2012–2014), co-financed by the European Union with a total budget of €540,800, that will make a significant contribution to the prevention of marine pollution.

The overall aim of **BE-AWARE** is to clearly understand the regional risk of marine pollution in the Greater North Sea and its approaches and to compare the effectiveness of different strategies with the goal of optimising marine pollution prevention.

BE-AWARE will develop an area-wide marine pollution prevention policy quantifying resources available, current and future maritime activity levels and environmental sensitivity. The partners will undertake three separate complementary studies (each of 6–9 months duration) evaluating resources, use levels and environmental sensitivity. These discrete expert-led work packages will generate reports and GIS products to be shared and critiqued at a Workshop of Bonn Agreement Contracting Parties and project stakeholders at the mid-point of the project.

BE-AWARE then intends to produce a well-understood and unanimously accepted blue-print for disaster prevention at the regional level that has been tested and validated. This area-wide overview, identifying agreed areas of highest risk and any gaps that could weaken disaster prevention, will then be validated on a specific sub-region.

The results of the project will enhance capacity building and will be shared and discussed at a final project conference of wider stakeholders in December 2013.