



CFNS

Connectivity Fieldlab North Sea

To keep the North Sea safe and in balance with nature and to facilitate the growing importance of the blue economy, we need to collect, exchange and process more and more digital information at sea. At the moment, maritime information exchange is usually not based on digital connectivity and is therefore a matter of improvising. Rijkswaterstaat wants to change this by setting up a field lab in which all interested parties can work together on solutions and thus provide the entire Dutch Continental Shelf with suitable connectivity by 2030.



IT'S GETTING BUSY ON THE NORTH SEA

The North Sea is one of the most intensively used seas in the world. There are important shipping and aviation routes and there are unique nature reserves. There are fisheries, and oil, gas and sand are extracted.

Military exercises and recreation take place. Underwater, there are pipelines and cables. And off the coast, but soon also far out at sea, more and more wind farms are appearing. The plans for large-scale solar parks, seaweed, oyster and fish farming at sea and energy hubs are taking more and more definite shape. Moreover, after Brexit, our border with the United Kingdom has become an EU external border. This means that we have to monitor it with more and with different means.

CURRENT MEASURING NETWORK AT SEA IS UNDER THREAT

Approximately 65 of the 150 oil and gas platforms on the Dutch Continental Shelf will be dismantled between now and 2025, eliminating installation points for sensors at sea and the associated communication infrastructure. And there is a need for information facilities in more and more places where there are currently no prospects of connectivity. New solutions must be set up quickly for this.

NEW CONNECTIVITY FEATURES

In the meantime, technological developments are going very fast and, for example, 5G is now being rolled out on land. Providing full coverage in the 12-mile zone is technically not a problem. Also, large numbers of satellites are now being launched by several parties, which will eventually lead to global constellations and broadband, also on our waters. In order to respond to these trends and not

to further widen the digital divide between land and sea, we will test out different combinations of these new and existing wireless communication techniques at sea in the fieldlab.

AUTONOMOUS SAILING AND FLYING AT SEA COMING SOON!

Developments are also going fast in the logistics sector, shipping and the off-shore industry. Autonomous or remotely controlled vessels and aircraft will soon also be deployed in the North Sea. The Netherlands must prepare for this digitization in the blue economy, which requires a more active directing role from the government at sea than on land.

(INTER)NATIONAL COOPERATION NECESSARY

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management bears coordinating responsibility for the North Sea on behalf of the government. That is why we are getting ready to tackle these challenges together with others. We invite all parties involved to find the best solutions together. The unique position of our Dutch Continental Shelf makes cooperation with neighboring maritime countries necessary. With this, the CFNS aims to put the Netherlands on the map as a maritime nation, also in the telecom area!

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit www.cfns.nl, or send a message to cfns@rws.nl