

## **North-Eastern Atlantic- North Sea Community of Common Interest**

### **Kick –off document**

#### **Intention:**

The intention is to increase the bonding and the exchange of information between EBA members by addressing those issues that are of common interest to boaters in a given area. The areas concerned in this note are the North-Eastern Atlantic Coastal zones and the North Sea. For this area the OSPAR convention is a valid reference. The contracting countries for this convention include the listed EBA countries/ members below.

- Norway
- Denmark
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Belgium
- France
- Ireland
- Iceland
- United Kingdom

#### **Scope of a Community of Common Interest:**

The initial scope is to provide actual information on developments that may affect boating activities and are specific to the area concerned. By providing this kind of information we may identify common issues that we want to further investigate and take action on.

As some EBA members will also be represented in other Communities of Common Interest my suggestion is to appoint one member per country, preferably an active sailor in this area. This may not always be possible.

Before the Berlin General Assembly meeting we have allowed time on the agenda for meetings of the Communities to discuss the way ahead. The groups will meet at 10.00 hours on Friday 16 October 2015.

For the purpose of starting up our Community I have selected a number of activities that in my view are of interest now and should be monitored. You are invited to give your reaction but also to provide additional activities that you think are of concern.

Merely to illustrate I have entered a short statement of the situation in the Netherlands as I know it.

## **Activities:**

### **OSPAR.**

From the OSPAR website:

*OSPAR is so named because of the original Oslo and Paris Conventions ("OS" for Oslo and "PAR" for Paris).*

*The OSPAR Convention is the current legal instrument guiding international cooperation on the protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic. Work under the Convention is managed by the OSPAR Commission, made up of representatives of the Governments of 15 Contracting Parties and the European Commission, representing the European Union.*

*The OSPAR Convention recognises the jurisdictional rights of states over the seas and the freedom of the High Seas, and, within this framework, the application of main principles of international environmental policy to prevent and eliminate marine pollution and to achieve sustainable management of the maritime area.*

EBA has observer status within OSPAR and it is my understanding that Emma Barton from now on will fulfil this position on behalf of EBA. Her feedback from OSPAR is to be used by us as input for considering new activities.

### **Water Framework Directive (WFD) and Marine Strategy Framework Directive(MSFD).**

On the Berlin GA under Agenda Item Environment, you will be informed by Emma Barton on the “Advice on River Basin Management Plans and MSFD consultation” which gives you an update on the currently ongoing consultation processes. The importance here is that:

- a- you are aware this is taking place;
- b- this is a National Consultation process whereby you can react to the national plans that are made to conform to these European Directives.
- c- EBA as such cannot deliver this input but if a common concern is identified then we could prepare a statement which after endorsement by the GA can be processed further.
- d- the MSFD specifically obliges the North Eastern Atlantic region to obtain international coherence and cooperation; specifically for the North Sea.

*For the Netherlands consultation was open till 22 June 2015 and there are possible areas of concern.*

*An example : the MSFD is done on the basis of 11 descriptors; for each of which measures may be developed to reach a good ecological standard in 2020. Awareness is required for possible regulations in the field of:*

- *Invasive Alien Species i.r.t. hull fouling guidelines. See Draft European Code of Practice on IAS by Emma and forwarded by Sally to all members by e-mail on 28 August, which is an excellent example of EBA participation.*
- *Marine litter*
- *Eutrophication effects.*

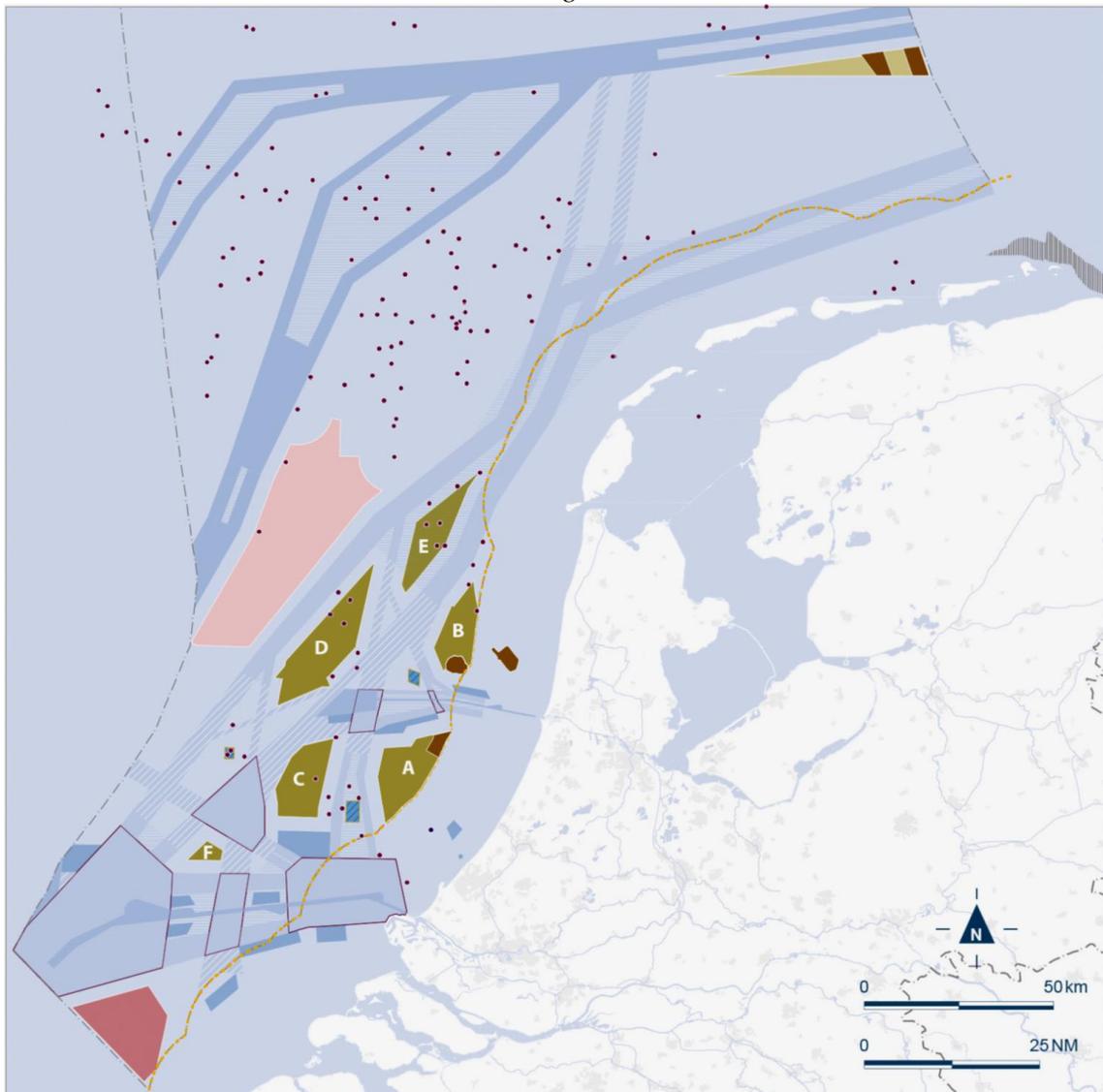
## Spatial Planning.

In the Southern North Sea, The Irish Sea and the Channel spatial planning is an issue. After the wide spread introduction of oil and gas rigs in earlier years, we recently saw the development of windfarms as Off Shore Renewable Energy Plants. These windfarms cover enormous areas and (international) harmony in both spatial planning and legislation has so far not been achieved. The current situation is that Belgian- and Netherlands windfarms are closed for any form of shipping.

With the “Atlantic” Community we could make an inventory of these developments, establish where that leaves us from a boating perspective and either try to influence our National Authorities or prepare an EBA draft statement. Do we want unified regulations at sea??

*An example: In the Netherlands North Sea area the shipping routes were altered in the summer of 2013. The reason behind this was to optimise available space for windfarms. No consideration was given to the effect on small seagoing craft. Although the Netherlands parties are still in direct consultation with the Governmental representatives the outcome is by no means certain. A chartlet is presented below.*

*Note: the small dark brown areas are existing or under construction*



## **Routing.**

For commercial shipping routing information is well established and Traffic Separation zones, Clearways, Fairways, anchoring areas etc are laid down.

For pleasure boating this is not the case.

The RYA produced a "UK Coastal Atlas" in 2008 that presented an inventory of frequently used "cruising" routes. This information has been used when commenting on spatial planning issues.

To my knowledge statistical data on pleasure boating activities are not available.

A common task could be to build a "cruising route information atlas" taking the RYA information as a best practice to follow.

## **European Natura 2000 network**

From a web document:

*The Birds and Habitats Directives require all EU countries to:*

*- set up a strict protection regime for all wild European bird species and other endangered species listed.*

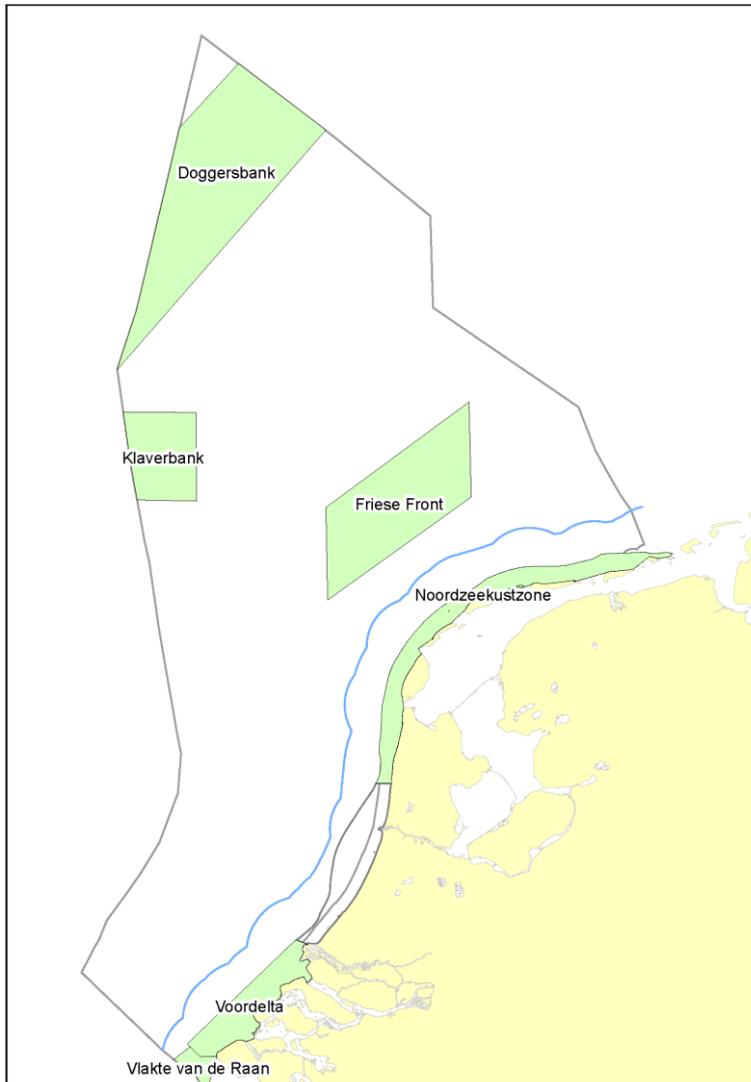
*- designate core sites for the protection of species and habitat types listed*

*Together, these designated sites form part of a network of areas for nature - the European Natura 2000 Network. This consists of some 27 000 protected areas of high biodiversity value covering about 18% of the EU and over 4% of its seas.*

The 4% sea area is not a worrying figure as such. However what can be of influence are area closures. These will be discussed during National consultation and we should try and participate in these discussions. Although areas closed to pleasure boating are already in existence and this information can be found on charts, we should encourage exchange of information on such areas and try and avoid further closures.

*An example: in the Netherlands we are familiar with closed areas in the "Waddenzee" for various periods of time ( part of the year or around low water). However we were unable to avoid a seasonal closure in wintertime for N-2000 areas that lay in the coastal shipping lane just North of the Wadden Islands. Designated areas are closed for all shipping between 1 November and 1 April.*

In the North Sea there are also some areas further away that have been designated as N 2000 area. I am not aware that any restrictions for sailing through those areas are pending but these are big areas that connect with EEZ's of other countries and we may wish to monitor developments. See chart below.



Netherlands N 2000 areas on the North Sea..

### **Concluding:**

When I asked Carl Gerstrom at our last General Assembly to share some of his experience with the Baltic Sea Network he mentioned amongst other things:

- we were lucky with common enemies;
- it was important to know what was going on in other countries.

With the above I hope to have identified a limited number of subjects that may fall in either of these categories. I invite you to prepare comments on this first note and bring your own contribution to the Kick-Off meeting for our Community of Common Interest in Berlin. I will start as the focal point of contact for this Community. Look forward to set the stage for the future together with you.

Best Regards,

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