MULTI-USE OF INFRASTRUCTURES FOR MONITORING IN THE NORTH SEA

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Multi-use of infrastructure in the North Sea

Background

- A better integration and international collaboration is needed to coordinate the North Sea monitoring activities, crossing national borders, as monitoring is extremely costly,
- Acknowledging the limitations in budget, maintaining the time series integrity and respecting the original goals of the programmes.

Aim

- Testing the process of designing a cross-border integrated monitoring strategy, efficiencies in data gathering by covering two policies (Common Fishery Policy and Marine Strategy Framework Directive), through competencies in different ministries.
- Focus on the extension of the International Bottom Trawl Survey (IBTS) of ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea)
- Close cooperation with DG ENV project ‘New knowledge for integrated management of human activity in the sea’. The paper exercise proposed in that project requires input from the field to become aware of the obstacles to overcome and the limitations of monitoring platforms and measurement techniques. This is where the pilot action planned to play a role.

Activities & new tools

- Additional monitoring proposals made to existing fish stock surveys at workshop 9 Nov. 2013 - of which a number is tried out by 7 countries during various IBTS cruises in 2014 (extending the 1st experience in 2013) as indicated in the table:

In-kind contribution through development fact sheet for monitoring + assistance and test performance on cruise	Fact sheet prepara-tion	Cruise led by NL	Cruise led by DE	Cruise led by DK	Cruise led by NO	Cruise led by SE	Cruise led by UK (2013)	Cruise led by FR (2013)
Biodiversity benthos (1) from the catch (lead DE) and (2) box-cores (lead NL)	X	X	X		x			x
Video/photos of the seafloor for epifauna (lead NL)	X	X						
Marine litter from the catch (lead DE-NL)	X	X	X	X	X	X	x	x
Microplastics in water column (lead FR)								
Nutrients (lead UK)		x	x		x		x	
Hydrological data (lead UK)								
Stomach samples (lead DK)	X (2013)	X (2013)	X (2013)	X (2013)	X (2013)	X (2013)	x (2013)	
Extra egg samples (lead NO)	X	X	X	(2013)	X	X		x
Weight non-target species (lead DK-SE)	X			X	X	X		
Jellyfish (lead FR)		X			X		x	x

Outcomes

- The experiments at sea have resulted in some simple overviews of costs related to more integrated monitoring.
- The whole process has given an impression of issues and problems related to organising additional monitoring (funded or not from outside the regular funding for the survey), for incorporating flexible, adaptive elements to the traditional approach, allowing for the implementation of future needs as they emerge.
- The pilot action finished end 2014 - final reporting by end May 2015.