

Save the North Sea



A project to reduce marine litter run by ALTERRA, The Netherlands, FEE Norway, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation, KIMO INT., UK, Skagen Uddannelsescenter, Denmark, and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. Co-financed by EU Interreg III B. www.savethenorthsea.com

Save the North Sea Project

Background

The MARPOL Convention Annex V, 1991 the North Sea; the London Dumping Convention 1972, the OSPAR Convention 1992, and the EU Bathing Water Directive (76/160/EEC) all focus on measures prohibiting marine litter at sea. Despite international legislation prohibiting dumping at sea, large quantities of operational and galley wastes are still dumped at sea instead of being discharged to shore reception facilities. The proposed EU Directive (*Directive 2000/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2000 on port reception facilities for ship-generated waste and cargo residues*) will require ports and harbours to be more proactive in waste management practices and will require more robust and effective management of waste on vessels.

The results of a study “Impacts of Marine Debris and Oil” by KIMO International, 2000, recommends more research about the effects of marine debris to the fishing industry and further research about the public perception of marine debris and acceptable levels of litter on beaches. Professor J.A. van Franeker, ALTERRA, The Netherlands, has studied how plastic affects fulmars located off the Dutch coast and how wastes from the increasing business operations (tourism, shipping, fishing, etc) are negatively affecting this bird species.

The Save the North Sea project has chosen the approach to work towards changing attitudes and behaviour of those stakeholders who are part of the sources of marine litter and investigating why the marine litter situation persists despite EU directives and conventions.

It also aims to have an overall campaign that ties together research, market surveys, and training course activities into one united project with common messaging and with the purpose of changing attitudes and behavioural patterns.

Project Aims

The Save the North Sea project’s main aim is to contribute to sustainable and balanced development in the North Sea Region by influencing attitudes and behaviour among the target sectors in the region that are among the key sources of marine litter. These are the oil, fishing and shipping industries and the recreational sector. The project will illustrate the “eco-chain” that exists between these groups and how their behaviour and actions affect both themselves and others in this region. It is this interdependency this project will highlight with a range of activities as well as supporting research efforts to give greater insight into the complexity and consequences of marine litter on the environment.

This project’s focus is on marine litter as defined as Plastics (fragments, sheets, bags, containers), Polystyrene (cups, packaging, buoys), Rubber (gloves, boots, tyres), Wood (construction timbers, pallets, fragments of both), Metals (drink cans, oil drums, aerosol containers, scrap), Paper and

cardboard, Cloth (clothing, furnishings, shoes), Glass (bottles, light bulbs), Pottery/ceramics,

Discarded fishing nets, fishing boxes, ropes, etc, Discarded medical and sanitary equipment, Waste from cargo holds (dunnage, wire straps, and covering material such as plastic sheets, and non-harmful cargo residues, Waste from households (cardboard boxes, empty glass and plastic bottles, tins and other small containers).

Target Groups

- Fishing industry
- Oil industry
- Recreational sector with focus on leisure craft owners
- Shipping industry

Objectives

1. Create public awareness campaign with a positive tone focused on showing that marine litter is a global issue and must be solved by international cooperation.
2. Map attitudes and behaviour towards marine litter in the target groups by conducting interviews.
3. Expand the research studies on the effects of plastic litter on the fulmar birds' situation to the greater North Sea region and incorporate this research material into the campaign and use this seabird as the unifying PR symbol of the Save the North Project.
4. Expand the Marine Environmental Awareness courses and the Marine Fishing Litter Initiative to other North Sea countries.
5. Create a Marine Litter study program for children and youth in the Eco Schools about marine litter.
6. Extend the Individual Blue Flag certificate program as an instrument for taking personal responsibility for the reduction of marine litter.
7. Conduct a pilot study on recycling of mixed-material fishing nets/equipment and investigate relevant waste management systems for these.

Project Partners

Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation, Lead Partner, Sweden

Keep Scotland Beautiful, UK

ALTERRA-Texel, The Netherlands

KIMO International (Kommunenenes Internasjonale Miljøorganisasjon), UK

Skagen Education Center, Denmark

Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), Norway

Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Sweden

International Reference Group

- Blue Flag International, Denmark
- Danish Fishermen's Association
- Green Guide/Skagen Environmental Board, Denmark
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency, UK
- National Board of Fisheries, Sweden
- Nederland Schoon
- NOGEPa, The Netherlands
- Norwegian Oil Industry Association, OLF
- Norwegian Shipowners' Association
- OKQ8, Sweden
- OSPAR Monitoring Litter, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Sweden
- Preem Petroleum AB, Sweden
- Royal Association of Netherlands' Shipowners

- Royal Norwegian Boating Federation
- Royal Norwegian Yacht Club
- Shell U.K. Exploration and Production
- Shetland Fishermen's Association
- Swedish Fishermen's Association
- Swedish Maritime Administration
- Swedish Shipowners' Association
- The Danish Shipowners' Association
- The Norwegian Fishermen's Association
- The Swedish Boatowners' Association
- Wallenius Wilhemsen Lines, Sweden/Norway

Activities

The Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation has the Secretariat for this EU project. It is also conducting market research studies on attitudes and behaviour to marine litter among the target audiences, and organizing public awareness events, Eco School seminars and Individual blue Flag activities on the west coast of Sweden.

ALTERRA-Texel is studying the amount of litter in the stomachs of fulmars as one of the Ecological Quality Objectives for the North Sea (EcoQOs), as an indicator of the amount of marine litter in the North Sea. ALTERRA is collecting dead fulmars for this study from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Sweden, UK and The Netherlands.

FEE Norway is working together with the Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation on organizing seminars on marine litter in Eco Schools located in the North Sea region. It also promotes the Individual Blue Flag campaign that encourages leisure craft owners to join and reduce marine pollution.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is contributing with public awareness marine litter campaigns as part of their annual beach clean-ups.

KIMO International coordinates the "Fishing for Litter" and "Marine Environmental Awareness Courses" (ProSea Foundation). Many fishermen in the North Sea participate in the Fishing for Litter Initiative by bringing ashore the litter they catch in their nets while fishing. The marine courses' aim is to improve the environmental knowledge among marine professionals.

Skagen Education Center is conducting a pilot study on recycling old fishing nets.

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency contributes to the project financially and through its environmental competence.