

# Outline of the policy

Policy decisions	
<b>Marine ecosystem</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The conservation and recovery of the marine ecosystem are assessed when making spatial planning decisions on activities.</li><li>• Natura 2000 areas at sea: Voordelta, North Sea Coastal Zone, Vlakte van de Raan and, probably from 2016 onwards, Dogger Bank, Cleaver Bank and Frisian Front. The decision on the possible designation of Brown Ridge as Natura 2000 area is in 2016.</li><li>• Programme of measures for Marine Strategy:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Existing measures, including in terms of the marine ecosystem, invasive exotic species, eutrophication, pollutants, litter and underwater noise;</li><li>- New measures with regard to litter;</li><li>- New measures with regard to seabed protection.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Renewable energy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Generating renewable energy (from the wind or otherwise) is an activity of national interest.</li><li>• Space for operational capacity of 4,450 MW of wind energy at sea by 2023.</li><li>• Wind energy areas: Borssele, Coast of Holland, IJmuiden Ver and North of the Wadden Islands. Search areas: strip between 10 and 12 NM adjacent to the Coast of Holland wind energy area. The Central Government does not grant permission for wind farms to be built outside of designated wind energy areas. Within the designated areas, permission is only granted for wind farms to be built within the bounds of the Offshore Wind Energy Act (Wet windenergie op zee).</li><li>• Development in harmony with other uses of the North Sea:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- design criterion 'distance between shipping routes and wind farms';</li><li>- design process 'distance between mining sites and wind farms';</li><li>- policy with regard to 'passage and multiple use'.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Surface minerals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sand extraction for coastal defences and filling is an activity of national interest.</li><li>• Sand extraction strategy with preferred routes for cables and pipelines.</li></ul>
<b>Oil and gas extraction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity of national interest.</li><li>• Making the most of the potential of the oil and gas reserves.</li></ul>
<b>CO<sub>2</sub> storage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity of national interest.</li><li>• Sufficient space for CO<sub>2</sub> storage as a temporary tool in the process of developing a fully renewable energy supply.</li></ul>
<b>Cables and pipelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The activities (wind) energy, oil and gas extraction and CO<sub>2</sub> transport, including requisite cables and pipelines, are of national interest.</li><li>• Bundling cables and pipelines; removal obligation for cables and pipelines no longer in use.</li><li>• Tighten up removal obligation for pipelines.</li><li>• Checklist for determining removal obligation for cables or pipelines revised.</li></ul>
<b>Shipping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity of national interest.</li><li>• Maintaining a system of traffic separation schemes, clearways and anchoring areas capable of accommodating vessels safely and swiftly.</li><li>• Implementing measures to reduce pollution caused by shipping (merchant vessels, fishing vessels, offshore, supply and recreation).</li></ul>
<b>Defence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity of national interest.</li><li>• Sufficient exercise zones in the North Sea.</li></ul>
<b>Fishing, aquaculture and mariculture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fostering responsible fishing and aquaculture practices and balanced use of fish stocks, striving towards a state of equilibrium between fishing and nature and a different division of responsibilities between government and industry.</li><li>• Continuing to contribute to the primary objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and implementing measures with regard to the marine ecosystem.</li></ul>
<b>Underwater Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The conservation of underwater cultural heritage is assessed when making spatial planning decisions on activities.</li></ul>
<b>Tourism and recreation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilitating and encouraging the tourism and recreation sector as a network partner in a partnership between entrepreneurs, market institutions and research institutes.</li><li>• Engaging in dialogue with local and regional government authorities and other parties where spatial planning or other policy developments in terms of the North Sea impact marine and coastal recreation.</li></ul>
<b>Interaction between land and sea</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When formulating spatial planning policy, specific attention needs to be paid to the interaction between land and sea, having due regard for the implementation of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive.</li></ul>
<b>International cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thematic approach to partnerships with neighbouring countries.</li></ul>