

# Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to outline how wind farms in the Belgian part of the North Sea have been established and what the consequences are for the marine traffic. This is why the use of marine spatial planning in that area is investigated further as well as its evolution. Finally we draw upon the current planning process that has to be repeated every six years. On the basis of many illustrations and explanatory notes, the complicated text from the Royal Decree of March 20th 2014, as published in *het Belgisch Staatsblad*, becomes more readable and illustrative. Many of the coordinates of the various zones have been plotted on a nautical chart in support of the waterway user, as a handy visualization. Subsequently, the concession zones provided for wind farms are discussed and analyzed, while an overview of the nine current wind farms and their specifications follows. The consequences of the wind farms for the marine traffic and the mitigating measures taken by the government to enhance safety are also examined.