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Couling, Nancy

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The unseen spaces of extended urbanisation in the North Sea

OVERVIEW

This project investigates the ocean as a spatial realm and the site of unfolding urbanisation processes as a challenging new field within urban studies. Although the ocean is investigated by many scientific fields, research about ocean space is scarce. But increases in energy production, extraction of resources, infrastructural and logistical development has resulted in an exponential shift in the scale and intensity of spatial demands;

- North Sea oil and gas production occupied 2nd place in combined offshore oil/gas quantities in 2006 after the Persian Gulf. It is still the location of the most offshore rigs world-wide with a count of 184 in 2018, but an estimated 1200 wells are to be plugged and abandoned and their structures removed from the North Sea in the foreseeable future through decommissioning.¹

- 185 million people live in the highly industrialised northern European countries of the North Sea watershed, which carries unwanted substances down into the North Sea ecosystem.

- The EU is marked by a significant energy gap and is still 80% dependent on sea-borne oil imports to North Sea ports and refineries.²

- North Sea water, as the largest producer of oil and gas in the world, annually produces 350 million cubic metres of seawater containing unwanted substances, which are carried by tidal and wind-driven current systems into the North Sea ecosystem.

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- Offshore construction worker
- Seabirds
- Offshore safety manager
- The watt- UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea
- Cook
- North Sea haddock
- Researcher
- North Sea crab
- North Sea water
- Offshore maintenance manager
- Norse Goddess Frigg

¹. Source: www.havbase.no


⁵. Critically examine and theorize the contradictory spatial dimensions of maritime transport - although the ocean is investigated by many scientific fields, research about ocean space is scarce.


