Offshore wind mill farms in the Belgian part of the North Sea

Johan Vande Lanotte, Minister of North Sea
26 November 2013, Brussels
Current effects

- New habitats (hard structures)
- Reduced bottom disturbance
- Local increase of biodiversity
- Soft bottom environment also changes
- Several fish species use it as a habitat
- Crabs and shrimps tend to be larger
- Harbour porpoise: no effects could be detected here (international studies show attraction)
- ...
“artificial”

= also opportunity

Can we enhance the positive ‘side effects?

Wind farm areas as ideal experimental zone to test offensive policy measures
Defensive policy: certain activities are managed to restore or conserve a specific nature value.

Offensive policy: is complementary to the defensive policy; it is comparable to what is done in terrestrial environments: specific installations or adaptations are used to enhance the nature value.
Artificial reefs
Artificial reefs

Worldwide, different categories of material are used to build artificial reefs:

1. Natural materiala (e.g. gravel);
2. Waste materials (e.g. car tyres, ships, trains, oil platforms etc.);
3. Modules: especially designed structures.
The wind mill farms C-Power en Belwind support the action:
‘adding artificial structures’
A first experimental action within the zone for renewable energy
Actieplan zeehond?
Scientific follow up

• The artificial reefs are to be considered as an experiment based on the findings on the effects of the wind mills itself;

• Several scientific institutes are involved in the follow up (which is embedded in the wind mill monitoring programme);

• The evaluation of the effects aims at developing an active biodiversity policy at sea