

What are your thoughts on the North Sea? – call for subjects for the Think Tank North Sea

In the wake of the North Sea Vision for 2050 process, the Think Tank North Sea is raring to go. In the last few months, the steering group - chaired by the KBIN and VLIZ - has drafted a set of internal regulations and carefully mapped out the path to follow. From now on anyone with an interest can suggest subjects for consideration by the think tank. The following template can be used to send in the hottest topics on the North Sea.

In 2016, while the marine spatial plan for the Belgian section of the North Sea (2020-2026) was under review, a future development path was marked out for a long term vision for Belgian sea policy (Horizon 2050). Representatives from the fields of science, policy, industry, civil society and society as a whole formed three working groups (Naturalness, Multiple Use of Space and Blue Economy and Innovation) to examine the main challenges, opportunities and threats facing the Belgian section of the North Sea.

After the North Sea Vision for 2050 was launched in December of 2017, the State Secretary for the North Sea, Philippe De Backer, thought the time was right to extend the unique dynamic of the process by setting up an independent Think Tank North Sea. The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS) and the Flemish Institute for the Sea (VLIZ) have joined scientific and state institutions already involved in North Sea Vision for 2050 to plot a course for the new think tank. The Think Tank North Sea pursues three objectives in subjects relating to the North Sea: gathering support and ensuring harmonisation; providing the seedbed for a new vision, and providing recommendations based on science. In the months gone by, the steering group for the Think Tank North Sea met several times to draft a comprehensive and transparent set of internal regulations and pave the way for the process.

On 9 July a **call** will be launched for subjects deserving of the think tank's consideration. This 'bottom-up' approach allows stakeholders and anyone with an interest to put forward their discussion points. Relevant subjects for discussion can be sent to the Think Tank North Sea (info@thinktanknorthsea.be) using the following template. By the autumn we will see which subjects have attracted the most interest. The first working groups are expected to be up and running by the new year.

By way of example, we suggest below a few subjects which have already been developed by members of the steering group and may offer a source of inspiration.

- Marine Litter
- Marine Food Impact

Any questions? info@thinktanknorthsea.be

More info? <http://www.thinktanknorthsea.be/>