

# North Sea Checkpoint: Audit of the Blue Economy



SeaZone, UK, has been appointed to lead the North Sea Checkpoint, a European Commission initiative to drive forward the blue economy. The North Sea Checkpoint will establish a method for “valuing” the data made available through initiatives such as EMODnet and Copernicus.

The project team is applying semantic web approaches that are more routinely encountered on ‘smart’ websites that help users choose hotels or consumer goods. Aim is to show in a transparent way the value of the data. With so much information coming on line, users need to both find and trust the data they download. This allows us to steer users towards the data most likely to support their marine project requirements.

The North Sea Checkpoint will run until December 2017. A parallel checkpoint is running for the Mediterranean Sea with checkpoints for other seas coming online from 2015.

The blue economy is driven by the sustainable exploitation of our marine resources, and access to effective and appropriate data is key to its success. [EMODnet, the European Marine Observation and Data Network](#), is a EC DG Mare initiative to unleash public sector marine data and direct it to support marine policy and developments in the blue economy. A number of marine data portals have already been launched as part of this initiative, and DG Mare is testing their effectiveness through a series of ‘checkpoints’ for European sea basins. SeaZone is leading the checkpoint for the North Sea basin.

*Image: The North Sea. Image courtesy: NASA.*

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