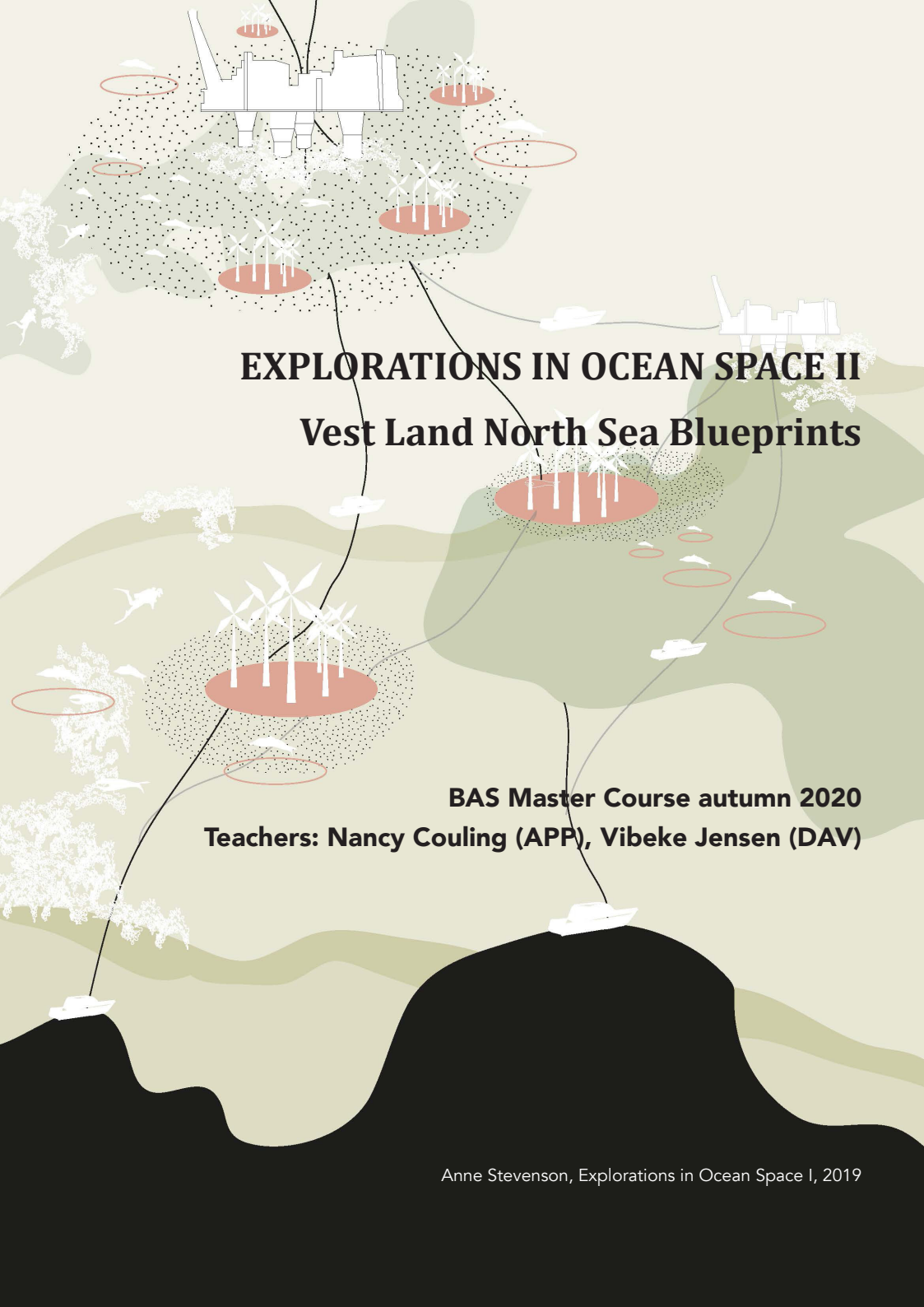


# EXPLORATIONS IN OCEAN SPACE II

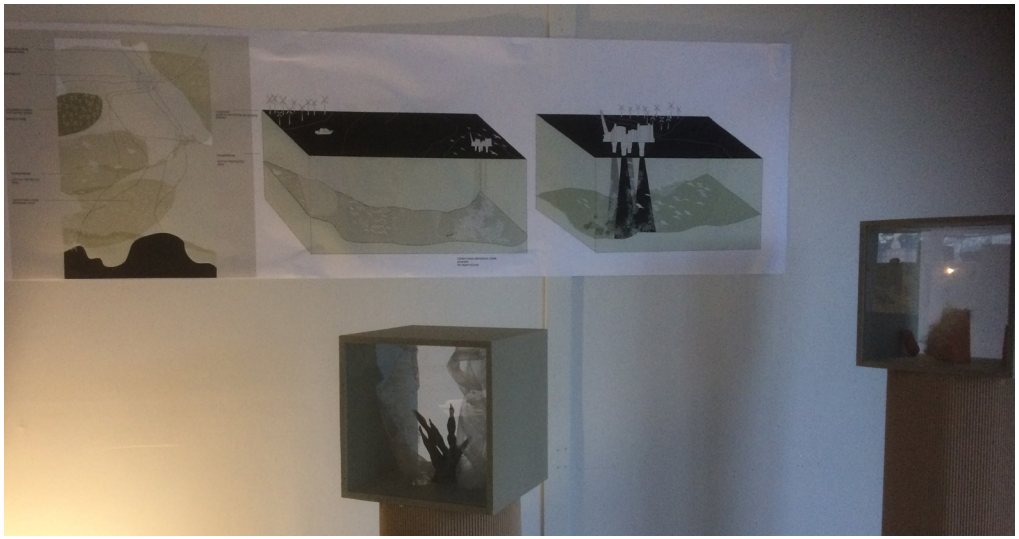
## Vest Land North Sea Blueprints

**BAS Master Course autumn 2020**

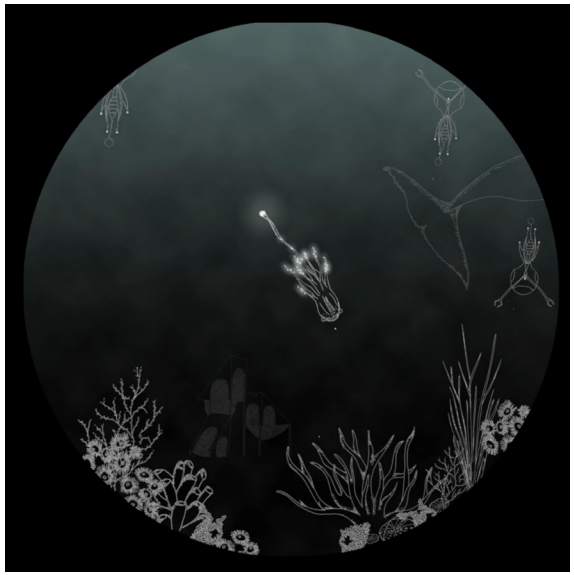
**Teachers: Nancy Couling (APP), Vibeke Jensen (DAV)**

Anne Stevenson, Explorations in Ocean Space I, 2019

# BACKGROUND



*Ecocommons,* Malin Johannessen, Inga Mannsåker, Anne Stevenson & Marthe Wernø BAS 2019

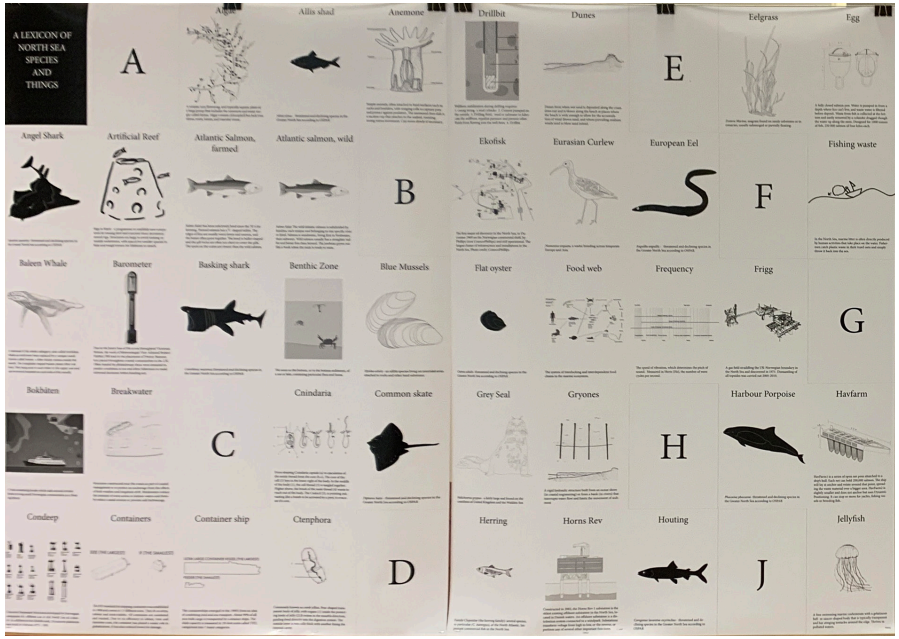


Video still, artistic research Justine Sleurs BAS 2019

*How can ocean literacy- our understanding of oceanic systems- inform our architectural interventions both at land and sea? How have human spaces and histories been entangled with the sea in the Bergen region and how do we assess the current situation? How can architecture and design be activated to articulate, mediate, connect or de-compose critical aspects of Bergen's maritime relations?*

The course is the second in a series of explorations on the interactions between sea and land, ways of representing and communicating these interactions, and ways of intervening as architects and urban designers. The ocean is a spatial realm about which we still know very little, despite its global importance in regulating climate, as a maritime habitat protecting biodiversity, in providing resources and as a global transport surface. At a time when the condition of the world ocean is gaining our attention, architectural design is a medium through which both artistic and scientific knowledge can be communicated, the ocean as a spatial realm can be unfolded and innovative proposals for new typologies of engagement imagined. The course aims to activate architecture and urban design in finding new ways to read, represent and transform the spaces articulating Bergen's relationship to the North Sea and beyond.


*The Last Drop*, David Aadland, Mats Edal, & Alvar Larsen, BAS 2019




North Sea Lexicon of Species & Things, BAS 2019

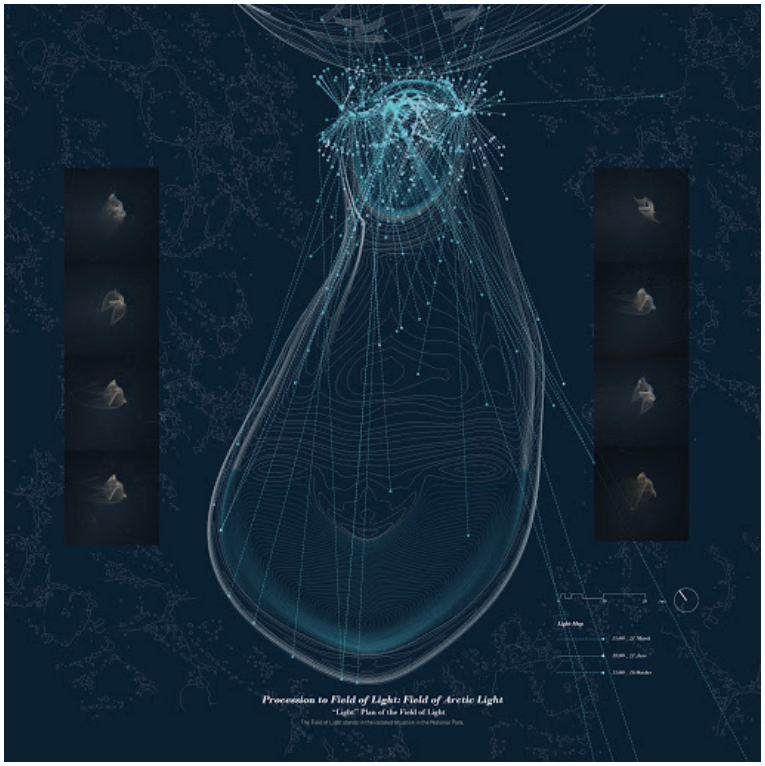
# INTRODUCTION

Building on the North Sea findings from **Explorations in Ocean Space I** (BAS autumn 2019), the course looks more closely at interactions with the geographical, political, socio-cultural and ecological context of the Greater Bergen region.

This is an exemplary maritime region where sets of relations, contracts and exchanges have been forged with the sea and its resources throughout history, however as one of the world's most industrialised seas, the North Sea has been described as being *virtually dead* (John Palmesino).

It is urgent that the extraction of resources be viewed in relation to the common responsibility for the environment, both short- and long-term. Bergen is directly experiencing the effects of climate change, of maritime pollution and of major transformations in the fishing industry, while new technologies for "clean" fossil fuel and closed system fish farming are promoted as solutions. We make a critical appraisal of Bergen's relation to the sea, aiming to reveal fault lines, disjunctions and to identify emerging spaces of renegotiation.

To firstly comprehend and then to postulate about oscillations through and across the land/sea threshold, we work on two parallel starting points, at land and at sea. The semester work is structured around three interconnected phases, within which the formulation of research questions and the development of a visual language to communicate the findings will play an important role. This language is our response to ocean literacy and will serve to inform the on-going design process. The North Sea Lexicon of Species and Things produced in the previous year will be expanded and refined as an on-going common project during the semester, providing a framework for many different uses, readings, projections and effects.



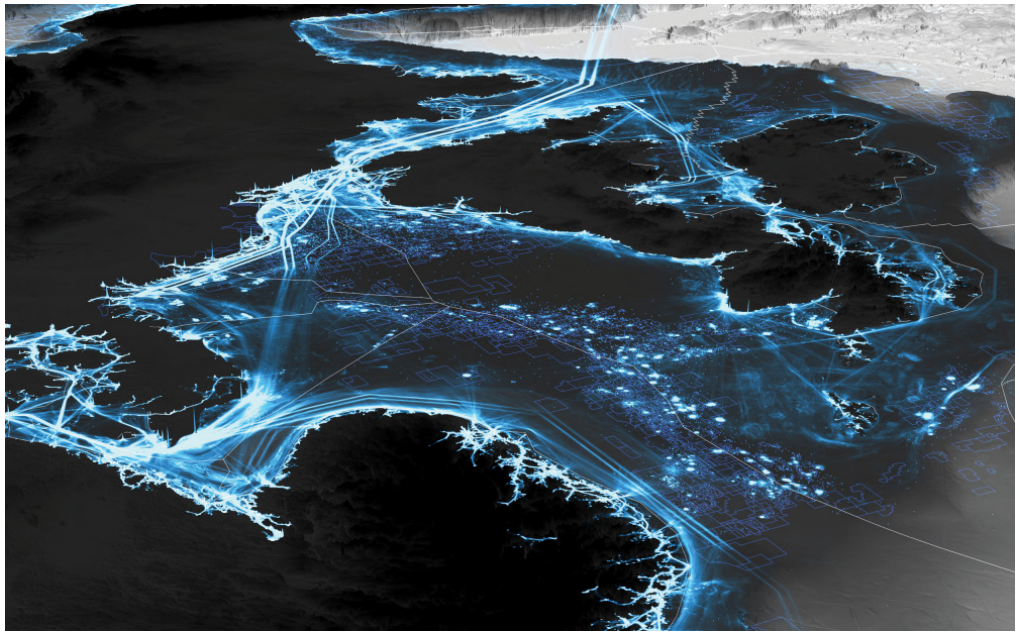

LightMap_AAprojectsReview2011

The project begins in Bergen, investigating the anchors of the five maritime industries most vital to the economy; fishing, oil & gas, shipping, tourism and renewables, but also tracing the global trajectories of these industries and how they have moulded space and culture, developed their own regimes of control and produced specific understandings and types of knowledge. Tensions emerging between containment and fluidity, remoteness and closeness could inspire a series of preliminary speculative “blueprints” to be explored in collaboration with Bergen Kunsthall and exhibited as part of their Ocean Exhibition 4.09-8.10

The second project phase jumps directly into the space of the sea. Differentiated, mostly unknown North Sea sites will be investigated, mapped and explored, their links to land and to global networks communicated and assessed. As a group we aim to produce a second Blueprint- a common composite North Sea map with accompanying protocols.

Both phases one & two serve to support the emergence of an architectural or urban design project within which a specific question is investigated spatially. They will lead us to uncover controversial activities at unfamiliar land-side places as well as unimagined maritime worlds.
The third and longest phase is therefore dedicated to the development of this project. Working with the sea demands the simultaneous understanding of embedded local and global scales and a recalibration of man-environment relations - an opportunity to explore and radically rethink inherited spatial parameters of scale, time, linearity, the commons and enclosure. The course aims to unleash the creative potential of the students in the formulation of new visions and project proposals founded on critical research – something urgently required in this domain.

collaborative North Sea mapping, BAS autumn 2019



Territorial Agency—Oceans in Transformation commissioned by TBA21-Academy. The European continental shelves are among the most exploited areas of the global ocean. Aggregate shipping activity and oil licenses. EMODnet data.


# COURSE STRUCTURE (17 weeks)

## PHASE ONE: NORTH SEA BLUEPRINT 1

(4 weeks- 24.08-18.09) group work

In collaboration with the Bergen Kunsthall “Ocean” exhibition (4.09-8.11), the first project phase aims to produce “blueprints” that tell stories about Bergen’s long and oscillating legacy of relations to the sea. These stories will be produced during a series of workshops involving both artistic and scientific research methods- interviews, drawing, printing, collage and technical mapping with GIS data.

An invited artist from Kunsthall will provide the leading impulses for the artistic workshop and a GIS workshop will take place at BAS under an external expert. Designed and curated to be part of the exhibition, North Sea Blueprints will be placed in the exhibition room of Bergen maritime “artefacts”.

## FIELD TRIP VENICE:

(Week 5. Mon. 21- Sun 27.09)

Subject to lifting of coronavirus restrictions, or postponed to end Oct./Nov.

**Mon. 21.09**: arrival

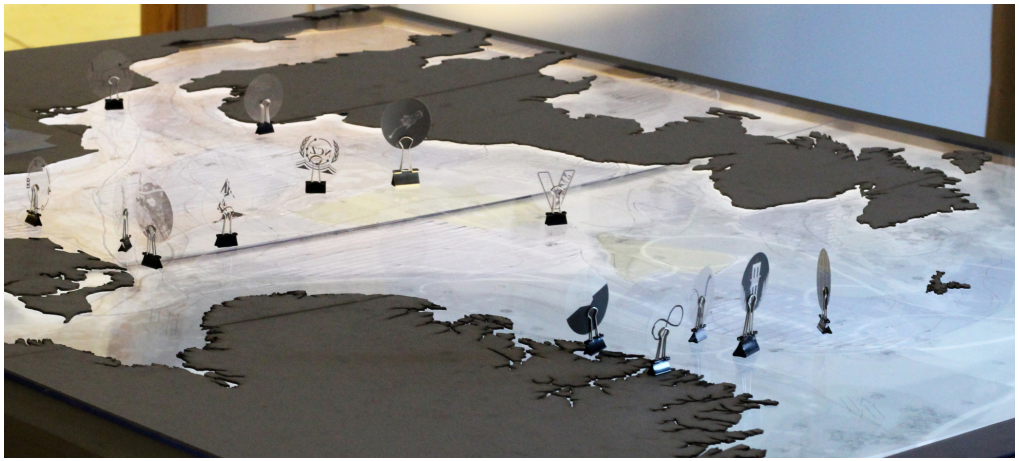
**Tue. 22.09-Wed 23.09** Venice Architecture Biennale, individual tasks/exploration

**Thur. 24.09-Fri 25.09** Organised visits: Moses water control project / Lagoon trip / Intro to Marine Spatial Planning Course, Venice University IuaV

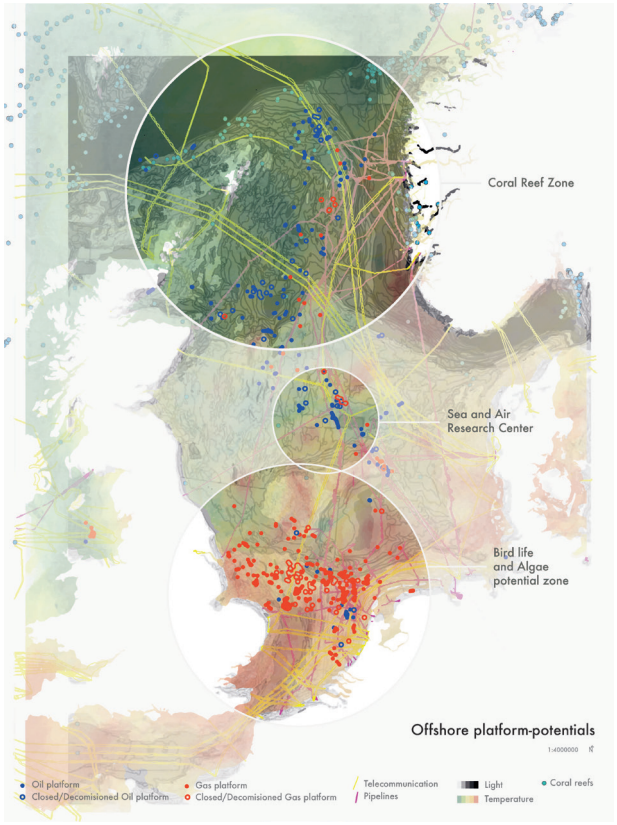
**Sat. 26.09** Exhibition Oceans in Transformation by Territorial Agency at Ocean Space (TBA 21 Academy)https://www.tba21.org/#item--oit--2042

**Sun 27.09** Departure

Approx. travel costs: €350 plus 6 night’s accommodation



*Ecocommons,* Malin Johannessen, Inga Mannsåker, Anne Stevenson & Marthe Wernø BAS 2019

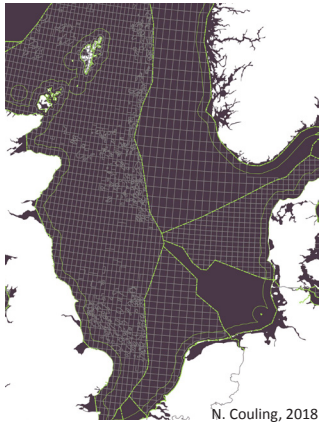



David Aadland, Mats Edal, & Alvar Larsen, BAS 2019

## NORTH SEA BLUEPRINT II

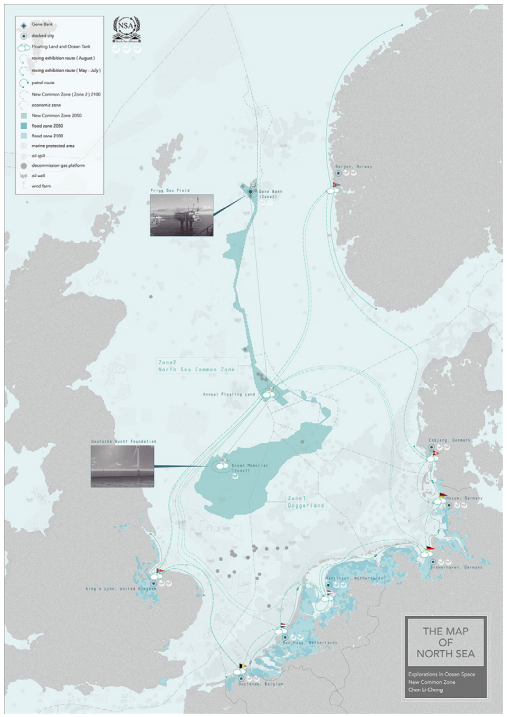
(4 weeks- 28.09—30.10) group work with individual contributions

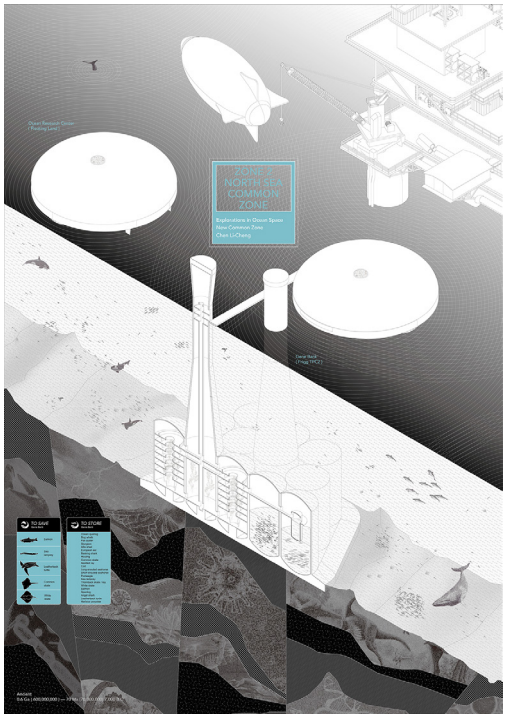
The second project phase concentrates on the offshore space of the North Sea as a whole, and on selected sites discovered through the trajectories outlined in phase one. The objective is to develop an understanding of the sea-space itself, the issues transported to and from the offshore through the five industries investigated, and to produce a common, situated North Sea map.
We call this map and the accompanying protocols a “Blueprint” meaning it is also a projection of possibilities.



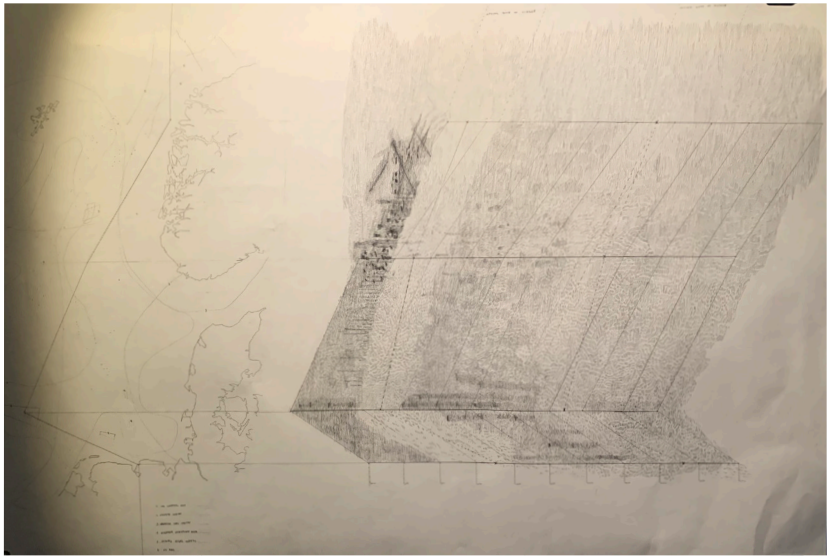
N. Couling, 2018

From the edge of Norway’s territorial sea (12 nautical miles from shore), measured quadrants of sea space were set-up to facilitate petroleum exploration in the early 1960’s, directly subsequent to the first constitutional regulations for the sea initiated by the United Nations Conferences on the Law of the Sea. One block of the Norwegian petroleum licensing grid – a subdivision of the initial quadrants, is fifteen minutes latitude x 20 minutes longitude, corresponding to circa 10 x 25 km. These blocks provide an initial referential geometric system communicating some aspects of scale, however we aim to dissolve these static land-based spatial containers, proposing alternative “units” and systems based on the sea’s own inherent spatial properties. In parallel to the production of large-scale maps, artistic methods should be used in an in-depth exploration of seemingly empty sea sites, which in fact are vital, contested socio-political and ecological spaces – partially already planned. Inputs from ocean experts at the University of Bergen are planned.




*New Common Zone,* Li-Cheng Chen, BAS 2019



*Moving Zone of Silence,* a 500-year North Sea soundscape, Julia Morrissey, BAS 2019

## INTERVENTION- BLUEPRINT 3

(8 weeks 2.11–18.12) group or individual- small groups encouraged

The outcome of this work is an architectural, urban or territorial intervention responding to the research carried out in Phase 1 and Phase 2.
Based on the themes addressed in the course, we can imagine one of three project possibilities (but not only):

- an intervention on shore (a Landing),
- a "system" intervention which operates within a network,
- or an offshore intervention in the North Sea.

Spatial interventions should be based on student's own interests and unfold at their chosen site/s. Scope is given to freely develop specific thematic and material explorations, using findings from the within the course and elsewhere.
Interventions should engage in a dialogue relating back to the common maps & informing the localised situations. We argue that collaborative work is essential in the complex realm of the sea & in developing skills for architectural practice and encourage opportunities for regular critical reflection and discussion amongst groups throughout the course. The exploration of what a "Blueprint" could be in relation to the intervention, is an integral part of the course:

*- a design plan or other technical drawing*
*- something resembling a blueprint (as in serving as a model or providing guidance)*
*especially: a detailed plan or program of action.*

## OBJECTIVES:

The course aims to connect artistic and technical knowledge and to enable us to appropriate the different forms of expression that these genres offer. It is important that students experiment and develop a “language” for the ongoing explorations and in each phase, articulate their position in relation to architectural projections- how to act/intervene. The artistic and technical modules are programmed in two concentrated workshops during the first part of the course, with the intention of offering a range of working tools, which can be applied throughout the semester. These cartographic tools are complimented by more ethnographic methods involving interviews and observations.
We encourage a continuous production and exhibition of tests, “objets trouvés”, visual arts work & models in the studio space to document the paths taken, to reinforce the materialities of the ocean and human interactions and as an ongoing source of inspiration.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Skills:
developing artistic methods of representation as well as basic GIS skills in data search and map composition. Cultivate informed spatial criticality and sharpen communication skills through writing critical questions and short descriptions, exhibition formats, interviews, publications and direct local interventions.

2. Knowledge:
Understanding of the spatial dimensions and changing conditions of the North Sea. Knowledge of important maritime industries, history of the Bergen region and sensitivity for local knowledge. Understanding of current issues around the relational land-sea causes and effects of climate change on the seas and oceans.

3. Competencies:
Ability to synthesize, extract and communicate the essence of complex spatial relations. Interscalar design competencies and the ability to connect the local geographic context to contingent & volatile large-scale systems.

## SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

A master course is considered a formal exam at BAS.
The only grading is Pass /Fail. An external examiner will be present during the final review, and participate on the final grading of the student in collaboration with the teacher(s) in charge on the course. The course teacher will notify candidates at the latest 2 weeks before the final review if one lacks the minimum level and attendance to be evaluated during the exam. As a master course is based on the effort and work during a whole semester, this will be the basis for the approval for the exam.
Written notice shall be given during the semester if a candidate does not have the required progress or attendance. If there are minor weaknesses that could improve the project in order to pass, a candidate may be given supplementary work that is to be completed within 2 weeks after the final review.
The supplementary work will be evaluated to either a pass or a fail.

The final assessment will be made by the teacher in charge of the course plus an external examiner during the final review, and will be based on:
1. The individual submission for the different stages of the project.
2. The level of participation and contribution to the collective work.
3. The assessment of the work achieved by the studio as a whole.

## LITERATURE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