

Using Marine Regions in communication

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The Marine Regions Project started 4 year ago by integrating MarBound and VLIMAR into one web portal. Both projects were initiated in 2005 by the Flanders Marine Institute. MarBound contains a representation of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the world. The VLIMAR Gazetteer is a database with geographic (mainly marine) names of seas, sandbanks, seamounts, etc.

The website (<http://www.marineregions.org>) offers a marine gazetteer with over 60,000 place names. Each geographic object has a unique ID, the MRGID. Each record is defined by one preferred name, with its synonyms, a place type (country, island, reef, Exclusive Economic Zone, ...) and coordinates.

Different relations exist between the different objects: part of, adjacent to, streams through,... This structure allows the user to group joint geographic units and to create a hierarchical classification of different places.

Another section is on Maritime Boundaries. The shapefile of the Exclusive Economic Zones one of the most popular products with over 2500 yearly downloads.

In 2016 new features are added: a layer with the territorial seas (the 12 nautical mile zone), together with a layer of the contiguous zone (from 12-24 nautical miles) and a layer with the internal waters for each country.

Through the website it is possible to download different shapefiles of marine boundaries or access the URL's of the web services. Both can be used in GIS Software or applications like StoryMaps to create your own map. By using the web services, the latest information will always be shown in your products.

The website also offers some static maps, which can be used in publications, on website, etc.

The information of Marine Regions may be used but is subject to two requirements:

1. a mail should be sent to info@marineregions.org informing Marine Regions about the intended use of the data;
2. If any of the information is published the following acknowledgments needs to be published alongside with it: Claus, S.; De Hauwere, N.; Vanhoorne, B.; Deckers, P.; Souza Dias, F.; Hernandez, F.; Mees, J. (2014). Marine Regions: Towards a global standard for georeferenced marine names and boundaries. *Mar. Geod.* 37(2): 99-125. hdl.handle.net/10.1080/01490419.2014.902881.

The list of publications in which Marine Regions played a role can be found online at http://www.marineregions.org/stats_pubs.php. One example is the map showing the Exclusive Economic Zones in National Geographic (2013) in an article on the research for natural resources in the American EEZ and the possible extension of the continental shelf.

References

- Claus, S.; De Hauwere, N.; Vanhoorne, B.; Deckers, P.; Souza Dias, F.; Hernandez, F.; Mees, J. (2014). Marine Regions: Towards a global standard for georeferenced marine names and boundaries. *Mar. Geod.* 37(2): 99-125. hdl.handle.net/10.1080/01490419.2014.902881
- Ballard, R. (2013). Onbekende wateren. *National Geographic Nederland-België* 2013(November): 82-87. In: *National Geographic Nederland-België*. G+J Publishing: Diemen. ISSN 1568-1718