

Non-indigenous species of the Belgian part of the North Sea and adjacent estuaries

VLIZ Alien Species consortium*

Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) and its consortium of experts on non-indigenous species conduct an ongoing effort to collect and maintain a list of alien species with documented established populations in the Belgian part of the North Sea (BNS) and its adjacent estuaries.

The list strives to include all currently known alien and cryptogenic species registered in salt and brackish environments in the Belgian part of the North Sea, the Belgian coastal zone and adjacent estuaries (Yser, Scheldt, Ostend Sluicdock). This effort scrutinizes both the intentional and accidental introductions by man or by other vectors. Alien species for which no evidence is available of established populations, are not included in the list, nor are species whose distribution is limited to the freshwater environment. Newly registered species as a consequence of (expected) natural migrations, are also excluded.

The initiative provides an online source of information on alien species for the BNS, as well as on the network of experts for this study area (since 2008). This includes definitions, information sheets, pictures and a fully documented reference list, by species. Each information sheet describes the life cycle and ecology of the species, the introduction pathways and distribution, the potential effects of the species on its environment and possible mitigation measures. To date (July 2013), 72 alien species with established populations have been identified in the study area. The taxa Arthropods (28) and Algae (11), count the highest number of alien species.

***VLIZ Alien Species Consortium (network of experts):**

<http://www.vliz.be/imis/imis.php?module=project&proid=2170>

and the fully documented list of alien species is available from :

http://www.vliz.be/wiki/Lijst_niet-inheemse_soorten_Belgisch_deel_Noordzee_en_aanpalende_estuaria