

## **DEVELOPMENTS AND GEOGRAPHIC INTERFACE OF THE VLIMAR GAZETTEER**

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Focussing on marine biogeography, the Flanders Marine Data Centre is working not only towards standardized taxonomic databases but also standardized relational lists of geographic names, coupled with information, coordinates and maps on the geographic location of these geographic features. About a year ago, VLIZ started developing the VLIMAR gazetteer, now the VLIMAR website has officially been launched at [www.vliz.be/vmdcdata/vlimar/](http://www.vliz.be/vmdcdata/vlimar/). The purpose of the gazetteer is to improve access and clarity of the different geographic, mainly marine names such as seas, sandbanks, ridges, bays or even standard sampling stations used in marine research. The geographic cover is global, however the gazetteer is focused on the Belgian Continental Shelf and the Southern Bight of the North Sea. At the moment the VLIMAR gazetteer lists and provides geographical relations on more than 8000 marine geographic place names. Main contents are the GEBCO Gazetteer of undersea feature names, Exclusive Economic Zones, ASFA geoterms, FAO Fishing Areas and the Large Marine Ecosystems. The higher classification of these marine features is based on the atlas 'Limits of Oceans and Seas', published by the International Hydrographic Organization. The VLIMAR marine gazetteer is based on a relational database (SQL server) that is linked to the geographic features database of the 'SVG Snippet Server' (S3). This makes it possible to generate interactive SVG based maps showing the location and contour the different regions.

The gazetteer is designed to be incorporated in other applications. It is currently used in three biogeographic websites developed at VLIZ (World Database of Proseriata and Kalyptorhynchia, World Porifera Database and World Cumacea Database) and in the data pages of the MarBEF website.