

MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

by

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1984

Belgium

(A. Vyncke)

1. The effects of dumping industrial wastes off the Belgian coast on the fish and shrimp stocks and invertebrates were studied further.

A monitoring programme was carried out every three months at two dumping areas for industrial wastes derived from titanium dioxide production, one area for wastes from the production of thiocarbamates and of anilines and an area for an industrial waste containing 1,5 % phenols.

A biological and physico-chemical survey was carried out.

2. The biological and physico-chemical monitoring of the Kwinte Bank, Buiten Ratel, Oostdyckbank where sand extractions are taking place was continued.
3. The monitoring programmes on heavy metals and organochlorines in fish and shellfish were continued. Samples of cod, flounder, brown shrimps and mussels from the Southern North Sea were analyzed (JMJ area 1). The study on the evolution of mercury in Solea solea in the North Sea and the Irish Sea was finalized.
4. Petroleum hydrocarbons were analysed in sediments and biota samples taken off the Belgian coast. Special emphasis was laid on the area around the wrecked MS "Mont Louis".
5. The radioactivity of sediments and samples of fish and shellfish from Belgian coastal waters was measured.
6. Studies on fish pathology were continued in Belgian coastal waters, especially in dumping areas.

7. The regular monthly survey to assess the general state of the marine environment was carried further out till June 1984. Samples were taken in a 28 stations grid. From July 1984 onwards the new oceanographic vessel "Belgica" replaced the old "Mechelen". The monthly survey was actually resumed in October 1984.

Parameters : temperature, salinity, suspended matter, plant pigments, heavy metals (Hg and Cd), PCB, tritium and beta + K40 radioactivity.

8. The survey of the benthic fauna was continued in relation with the program COST 47 and also the problem of sand extraction.
9. Geomorphological surveys (bathymetry, sedimentology, seismology) were continued in the coastal area.
10. The monthly survey of the Scheldt estuary parallels the survey at sea.

Parameters : hydrology, heavy metals (Hg and Cd) and PCB.

11. A special campaign was devoted to the study of the flux of heavy metals through the sediment interface in the Scheldt estuary.

Canada

(J.F. Uthe)

A study to develop water quality criteria for the coastal marine environment of southeastern Nova Scotia is being carried out through assessment of available baseline data for water, sediment and biota; an examination of present water uses and coastal activities; and a determination of anticipated activity in the area. The study hopes to be able to develop environmental criteria which can be applied to any activities in the coastal zone with the potential of degrading the marine environment, in an effort to preserve a reasonable standard of environmental quality (EPS).

An overview of environmental quality in the Baie des Chaleur, northern New Brunswick, has been completed and a report including and extensive bibliography has been published (EPS).

The types, quantities and, where possible, origins of persistent litter adrift in the North Atlantic are being studied through the collection of monthly samples on several 1 km beach sections of Sable Island. Sable Island is ideally situated to trap litter in an offshore setting. The work will provide a initial measurement of the problem which has not been previously examined in these waters (EPS).

Under Canada's Ocean Dumping Control Act, several proposed and potential ocean disposal sites were sampled for baseline contaminant levels and a number of follow-up studies were performed to evaluate the environmental impact of disposal of contaminated dredge spoils. The Ocean Dumping Research Fund sponsored a series of research programs to evaluate the physical and chemical environmental impacts of dredging operations (EPS).