

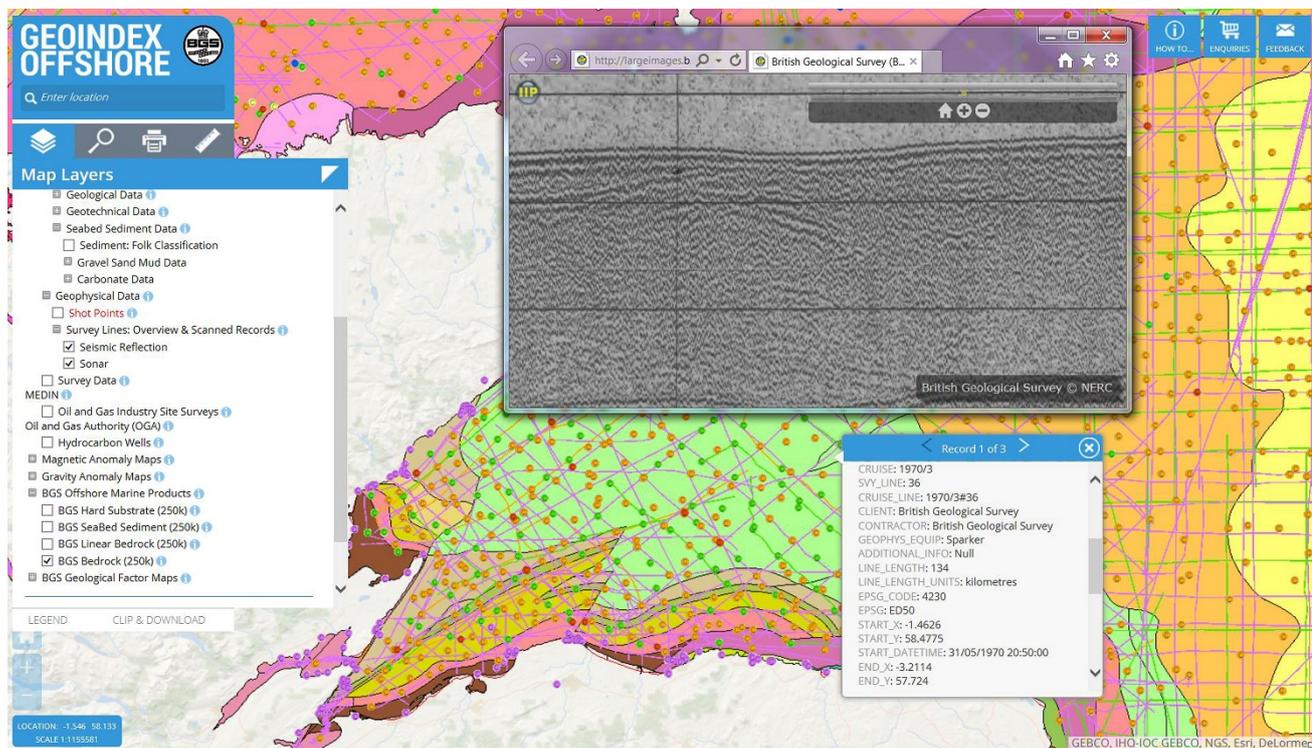
PRESS RELEASE

23rd March 2016

Free access to marine treasure trove from the British Geological Survey

The British Geological Survey (BGS) has released a wealth of information on the geology of the sea bed around the UK. These data are available to download for free, accompanied by viewable maps, and will be a valuable resource for companies, researchers and decision makers in their work to ensure sustainable developments of the marine environment. The information comprises geophysical data representing 800,000 kilometres of the geology of the UK marine environment, enough to wrap around the British Isles over 200 times or to the moon and back!

The data are derived from 18,500 paper records which have been scanned and can now be viewed online on the BGS Offshore GeoIndex. This builds on the release in 2014 of geological data from around 80,000 sampling locations.



Screenshot of the BGS Offshore GeoIndex map interface

This release also includes viewable BGS digital geological map products together with new geological maps of the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS) area, produced in collaboration with the Crown Estate, which provide the geological context for the GeoIndex data.

Bob Gatliff, Director of Marine and Energy Geoscience at the BGS said:

“The free release of 800,000 km of BGS single-channel shallow-marine seismic data represents another step-change in easy access to BGS data which will benefit offshore developers, researchers and government. This latest release follows a major scanning programme completed prior to the BGS Scotland move to the Lyell Centre.”



As the UK national collection, the BGS would welcome donation of additional digital data to benefit the entire community of users.

Keith Westhead, Marine Geologist at the BGS said:

"The Offshore GeoIndex now includes a critical mass of open data and geological mapping, meaning it is the 'must see/ go to' resource for UK offshore studies. The new 'clip-zip-ship' tools make it an efficient and practical starting point for projects studying the seabed and subsurface across the UKCS."

Peter Edmonds, Spatial Data Manager with the Crown Estate said:

"This update provides a step change in the accessibility of detailed geological data. By digitising, re-interpreting and making data available for free in this way, the BGS is making a huge contribution to the ability to research, plan and understand the UK's seabed."

Clare Postlethwaite, MEDIN Coordinator said:

"We welcome the strides BGS are making to ensure offshore geophysical data is easy for the marine community to find and use."

Sam Franklin, GIS Manager with LR Senergy said:

"This is a really useful addition to the already valuable "Offshore GeoIndex" from the BGS. The marine sectors are under pressure to make better use of existing data and the BGS is certainly playing its part by releasing data under the Open Government Licence (OGL). Lloyd's Register is looking forward to working with the BGS to help liberate further data in future releases for the benefit of the wider industry."

Ends

For further details or to arrange media interviews please contact:

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Notes for Editors

The following are available for interview:

- Bob Gatliff, British Geological Survey
- Keith Westhead, British Geological Survey

For additional information go to: www.bgs.ac.uk

Access to the BGS marine data is via our website.

This is the link to the Marine Data information page describing what we make available:
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeoIndex/offshore.htm>



This is the link to the Offshore GeoIndex: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeoIndex/offshore.htm>

Release of circa 18.5k scans of BGS-held geophysical records (seismic reflection and sonar) – view, download and use as open data. These are all the records that were held in our BGS Scotland office, covering the northern UKCS, delivered as JP2 images to view directly in your browser.

The Offshore GeoIndex is also available as a Web Map Service (WMS), which allows you to pull it into your desktop GIS system as a set of layers, allowing to view our data with your data. https://map.bgs.ac.uk/arcgis/services/GeoIndex_Offshore/offshore_data/MapServer/WmsServer

Users can select an area of interest and 'clip, zip, ship' selected data layers as an ESRI Geodatabase for local use. These downloads include the URL for the PDFs and JP2s, so allow viewing of these too.

This update of the Offshore GeoIndex includes three new geological maps showing Quaternary Deposit Summary Lithologies, Quaternary Deposit Thickness and Bedrock Summary Lithologies.

These were produced in collaboration with the Crown Estate as part of a wider project to understand the interaction of engineering structures with seabed geology across the UK Continental Shelf, to support the sustainable development of this natural resource and unlock value in the long term.

More information on this work can be found here: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/research/marine/seabedGeologicalConstraints.html>

The British Geological Survey

The British Geological Survey (BGS), a component body of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), is the nation's principal supplier of objective, impartial and up-to-date geological expertise and information for decision making for governmental, commercial and individual users. The BGS maintains and develops the nation's understanding of its geology to improve policy making, enhance national wealth and reduce risk. It also collaborates with the national and international scientific community in carrying out research in strategic areas, including energy and natural resources, our vulnerability to environmental change and hazards, and our general knowledge of the Earth system. More about the BGS can be found at www.bgs.ac.uk.

The Natural Environment Research Council

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is the UK's main agency for funding and managing world-class research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. It coordinates some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, food security, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on earth, and much more. NERC receives around £300 million a year from the government's science budget, which it uses to fund research and training in universities and its own research centres. www.nerc.ac.uk