

# PRESS RELEASE

14<sup>th</sup> November 2014

## Free Geological Data from beneath the waves

The British Geological Survey (BGS) has today published an online database of freely viewable and downloadable Marine Geoscience Data, available through the [Offshore GeoIndex](#), covering the whole UK Continental Shelf. It holds approximately 80,000 sampling locations that have a range of valuable geochemical, geological, geotechnical and sediment data including PDF files of legacy scanned data sheets and borehole logs. Offshore data like these are important for research into areas such as carbon storage, energy resources, planning, habitat mapping and conservation.

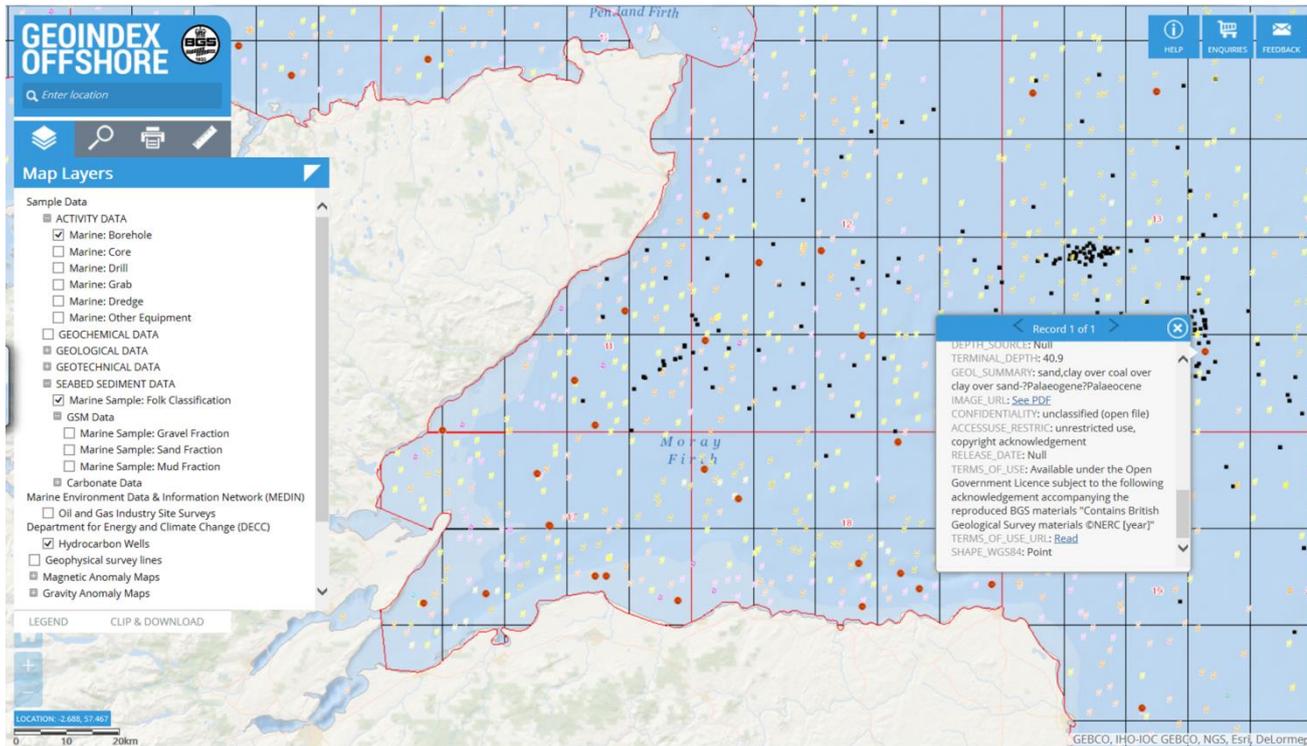


BGS retrieving a 'core' that's been drilled from the bed of the southern North Sea. NERC © BGS

"Geology isn't just under our feet; it's under our seas too. We want this data to benefit the whole geoscience community by aiding research and inspiring new spinout products." said [Bob Gatliff](#), BGS Director of Energy & Marine Geoscience. "The marine environment is an ever increasingly important area of scientific study as it is worth more than £48.6 billion to the UK economy, which is predicted to double by 2030. At 3.5 times the UK land mass, it is an area with vast economic and environmental potential".

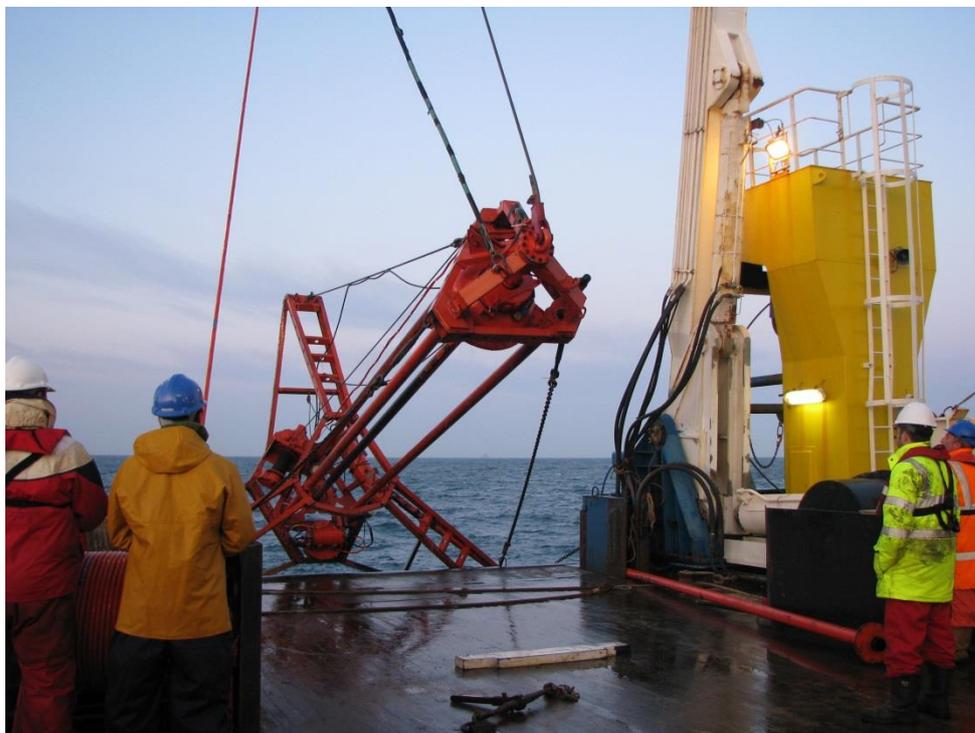
Until now these Marine Geoscience Data have been an internal BGS resource used to underpin our range of Digital Information Products\*, which are made available via MAREMAP\*\* and the BGS website. As part of the BGS OpenGeoscience initiative the data have today been made available to the public and the Marine community to use under an Open Government Licence (OGL).

The data have been collected as part of the BGS regional and local mapping programme as well as from third-parties. Included in the data are around 33 thousand sediment data records, 18 thousand geochemical values and core photos of 8000 Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) [offshore hydrocarbon wells](#). A detailed over view of all the data available, together with other useful information, can be found [online here](#).



Screen shot of the Offshore GeoIndex displaying:  
Marine Boreholes and Sediment data off the Scottish East coast. NERC © BGS

BGS operate the UK National Geoscience Data Centre (NGDC) and are also the Marine Environment Data and Information Network (MEDIN) Data Archive Centre (DAC) for Geology and Geophysics. Within these roles, BGS undertake long term archiving and delivery of publically funded data augmented by data provided by other organisations, agreed for release.



BGS Vibrocore being deployed in the North Sea to drill 'core' samples, the data from which now reside in the Offshore GeoIndex. NERC © BGS

**\*Ends\***



\*BGS Information Products: BGS create a range of Information Products ranging from Digital Maps to Specialist Reports. These are generally available to licence or purchase <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/products/home.html> although some are now being made available under the OGL <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience/home.html> .

\*\*MAREMAP: The Marine Environmental Mapping Programme (MAREMAP) is a co-ordination effort between NERC Centres and associate partners that aims to improve seafloor and shallow geological mapping to achieve national objectives such as habitat mapping, Quaternary science, coastal and shelf sediment dynamics and the assessment of human impacts and geohazards in the marine environment: <http://www.maremap.ac.uk/index.html> .

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**Notes for Editors**

The following are available for interview (this afternoon ONLY):

- Bob Gatliff, BGS Director Energy and Marine Geoscience, Edinburgh

Photographs are available from our ftp server:

<ftp://ftp.bgs.ac.uk/pubload/bgspress/MarineGeoData>

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**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](http://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](http://www.nerc.ac.uk)