

New ship route system in the Skagerrak and Kattegat

The maritime authorities in Denmark and Sweden have since 2008 worked closely together on a major route initiative in order to increase navigational safety in the Skagerrak and Kattegat. A modern ship routing system can reduce the risk of accidents and oil spills, thus protecting the marine environment.

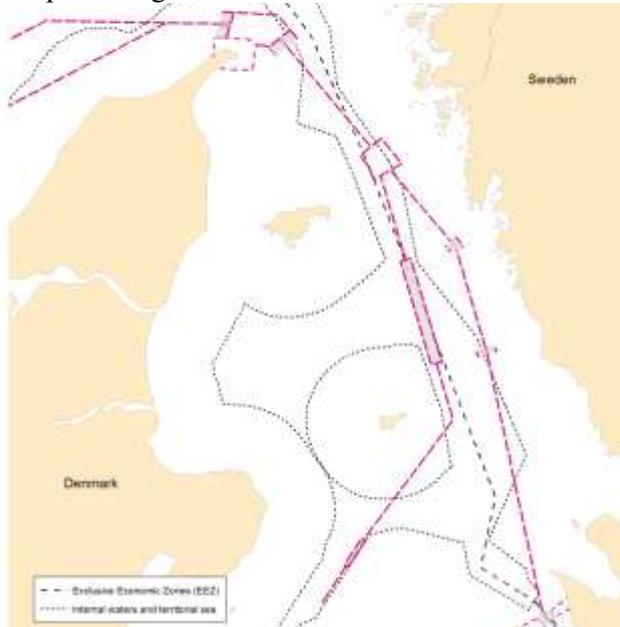


Figure 1 – The new route system.

In Kattegat there is only one recommended transit route, which was established over 40 years ago. The ships are today much larger than before, and there is therefore a need to establish a new route system to organize ship traffic.

The Danish-Swedish route group

Therefore, the maritime authorities in Denmark and Sweden have worked closely together on a major route initiative in order to increase safety of navigation.



Figure 2 - Section of the new paper chart no. 121. (Skagen)

The Danish Geodata Agency and the Swedish Maritime Administration have participated in the Route group, which among other things, has collected and used marine geodata to solve the task of designing a coherent system of routes, traffic separations and deep-water routes from the Skagerrak into the Kattegat and down towards the Great Belt and the Sound.

Approved by IMO

The group has also prepared navigational chart material for use by the public consultation of authorities and organizations, as well as for the presentation of the proposals for a new ship route

system in the International Maritime Organization (IMO). IMO gave the final approval in May 2018 with implementation on July 1, 2020.

New depth data

In most of the Kattegat, there is not much space available for maneuvering in relation to the location of routes. The large ships actually sails in the gates that the meltwater floods from the last ice age created from the Baltic Sea out through the Great Belt and the Kattegat. From a hydrographic point of view, it will not be reassuring to establish new routes without surveying in order to identify the maximum draft ships can use in the routes.

The surveying has been carried out in sectors and corridors in the planned route system, especially where full bottom surveying were lacking.

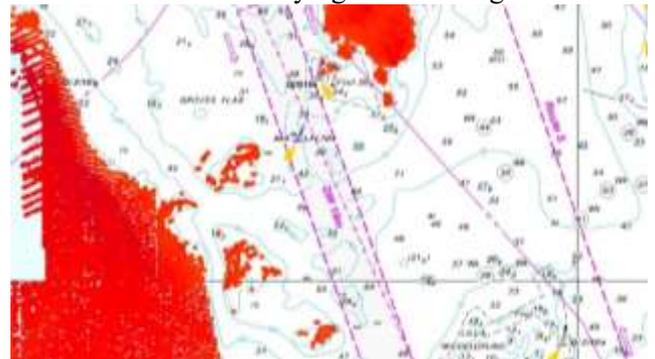


Figure 3 - Section with a new deepwater route with a depth of 19 m. Depths below 19 m are highlighted in red.

New depth data have been used for fine-tuning especially the deep-water routes and identifying the minimum depth in the routes in the Kattegat and Skagerrak.

New paper charts and electronic charts



Figure 4 - Section showing a new Precautionary Area (symbolized with triangle with exclamation mark) and the new deep-water route (DWR Kattegat North) southeast of Laeso.

The Danish Geodata Agency and Swedish Maritime Administration is in the process of producing and publishing a number of new paper and electronic charts covering the relevant areas. The work includes processing of new depth data as well as renewed and closer selection of depths from existing depth data. In addition, harmonization of depth data across the border between Denmark and Sweden is included.

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