

The MAREANO Programme:

MAREANO is a multidisciplinary marine mapping and documentation programme aiming at providing the foundation for ecosystem based sustainable management of the Norwegian coastal and sea areas. A major focus is bridging the knowledge gap in a poorly mapped but very sensitive area. Especially the ocean areas have received little attention and coverage from modern surveys. High quality multibeam bathymetry is regarded as a premise for further geological and biological investigations. The Norwegian Hydrographic Service (NHS) is responsible for bathymetry data acquisition, and effective data management and distribution of survey data and derived products and services. An important facet of the programme will be web-based geodata distribution, and distributed data management as part of a National Spatial Geodata Infrastructure.

The NHS is a programme partner with the Institute of Marine Research (IMR, programme management) and the Geological Survey of Norway (NGU). The phase 1 of the MAREANO programme, runs from 2006-2010, and covers 142 000 km² from Lofoten to South Barents Sea with a typical depth around 250-300m. The plans include a total budget exceeding 250 mill. NOK in which an excess of 100 mill NOK is estimated to cover the NHS' responsibility for bathymetry surveying and data management.

In 2005 the NHS received NOK 1.7 mill NOK, and for 2006 NOK 7.87 mill. NOK through earmarked funding to Mareano through the National budget with a focus in the South Barents Sea. The first MAREANO survey (1000 km² WNW of Hammerfest) was successfully completed in November 2005 in collaboration with the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment (FFI). In April another 1100 km² was added through the same arrangement. In May through June a follow up geology and biology survey in the same areas is conducted jointly by the IMR and NGU. This will be standard procedure, first bathymetry, then biological and geological investigations based on interpretations from the depth data.

The plan is to cover Tromsoeflaket in 2006, and for the remaining field season of 2006 an invitation to an international tender was published with a deadline June 1. The NHS received 8 requests for information, and finally 6 competitive bids.

A careful evaluation process where elements in the tender documents were given scores based on evaluation criteria based on the tender specifications produced a relative company rank. Consistent high scores on price, technical merit, delivery or completion date, quality, security of supplies, after sales service and technical support, delivered a company which will be offered a contract after a holding period. Especially the combination of low price, strong technical merit and early completion date provided the three main distinguishing criteria. One tender was rejected on formal reasons.

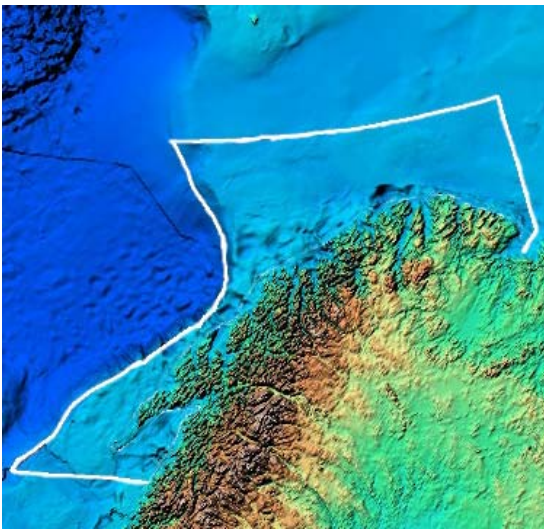
For surveying in 2007 and the coming 2-3 years we anticipate publishing a Prior Information Notice this fall (based on preliminary budget estimates), and announcing an Invitation to

tender as soon as the 2007 National Budget is clear. Funding for surveying in Mareano, as administered by the Norwegian Hydrographic Office, will be fully dependent on yearly earmarked funds from the National Budget.

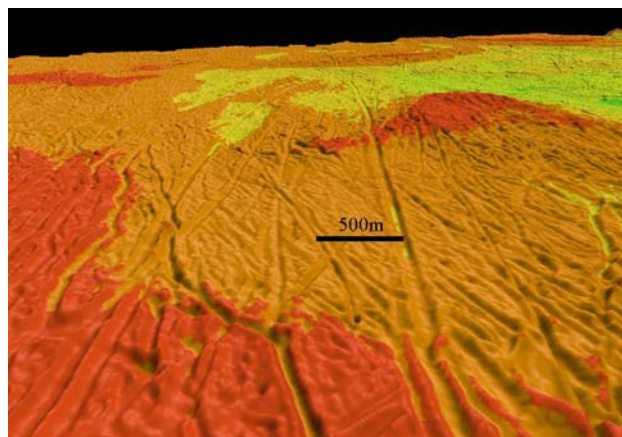
Additional geophysical surveys such as gravimetry and hullmounted, high resolution ground penetrating sonar is planned in parallel during the same missions, and will be administered by the NHS. The geophysics data processing, data management and geological interpretation will be performed by the Norwegian Geological Survey.

Further information and results will be available on www.mareno.no. This website will be a portal for knowledge dissemination mainly through effective map services and documentation aimed at both government decision-makers and the general public. This will be a joint effort among the programme partners, but the project management is led by the Institute of Marine Research. A new webportal will be published early 2007, but this will be under continual improvement.

MAREANO will be a major undertaking for the NHS in the years to come, and is mainly aimed at non-navigational purposes.



Figur 1 The Mareano phase 1 area, Lofoten to South Barents Sea



Figur 2 Sea Floor Iceberg plough marks from Tromsøflaket