**“We believe seaweed has great potential to make positive impact on our global challenges”**

Zinzi Reimert, Manager Offshore Test Site at North Sea Farmers

*North Sea Farmers is one of the parties that started pretty much from scratch in building a seaweed farm in the North Sea in 2014. Now, almost 10 years, later they succeeded in creating a strong network of partners in Seaweed farming. This sector organisation leads other parties how to run a commercially viable seaweed farm. Besides other seaweed partners they are leading the offsore test site in front of the Dutch Coast, to expand business and knowledge.*

There is an increasing interest and need for local resources to meet growing consumer demand in various European markets. It lowers the footprint and reduces dependency on international unstable supply chains. Seaweed is already used world wide in food, feed, biomaterials, agriculture and cosmetics. Therefore, European seaweed could enable this transition to more local supply chains for these markets.

*“When we set out on this mission, we knew that we were taking a giant leap forward"*

Zinzi Reimert, Manager Offshore Test Site at North Sea Farmers

**HOMEGROWN**

Their success owes tribute to their location in The Hague, surrounded by the thriving maritime sector around Rotterdam, the world-leading horticulture sector in Westland, a large and highly skilled high-tech industry, leading Maritime research institute Marin, plant and food expertise from WUR, and engineering expertise from TU Delft as well as TNO, a renowned organization for applied research. Their central location on the Dutch coast means that whenever someone needs to monitor or test their systems offshore, they are there within 30 minutes average, and in 20 more minutes they are at the offshore test site.

**IMPACT**

In line with North Sea Farmers' mission, “make positive climate impact with seaweed”, North Sea Farmers felt the urge to create space which would allow for businesses to test their newest innovations. Since an essential part of making a change is to act.The Offshore Test Site is located 12 km (6,5 N mi) out the coast of The Hague.

A permit has been issued to use 6 km2 of North Sea as test site. The OTS is divided into six plots, all plots covering 1km2. The Offshore Test Site is only available for their users, creating a safe environment to test new innovations.

[Download original size](https://storiesofpurpose.thehague.com/sites/default/files/styles/original/public/2023-09/Map%20Offshore%20site.png?itok=eMUnb2Ll)

**Building a seaweed farm within an offshore wind farm**

*After 8 years of development, the next big step for North Sea farmers is the start of building the first seaweed farm within an offshore wind farm: North Sea Farm #1. Here the seaweed farm will be combined with an eco-system of all kinds of multi-use like floating solar panels and coastal reefs with mussels and oysters. This is meant to grow into a large-scale industrialized commercial seaweed farm that will supply bio based materials to the European market and provide an eco-positive solutions that contribute to limiting climate change. Amazon is financing via their Right Now Climate Fund a big part of this project with €1,5 million for the suetup of the farm and researching tools.*

## **How did it start?**

The team started with a single buoy in the North Sea, to see if the seaweed grew on it. "After half a year, they went out to inspect the harvest, taking along a bunch of journalists without knowing the result beforehand. It must have been very exciting, and a great relief when the result came out really positive.” Zinzi reconstructs the stories told by her colleagues, as she hadn’t joined North Sea farmers yet at that time.

Today, North Sea Farmers have evolved into a 100+ -member sector organization, managing a 6 km2 offshore test site at 12 km off the Scheveningen shore. Partners from various industries collaborate to develop, pilot and optimize their systems, from seaweed farmers to equipment manufacturers and developers of management and monitoring systems, to researchers

*They way how seaweed is harvested*

## **How is scaling up the the seaweed sector looks like?**

What is the potential of European seaweed production? What will be the economic, social and environmental impacts of scaling up? And how can the seaweed sector look in 2030, 2040 and 2050? Answers you will find in the interactive roadmap of North Sea Farmers, a visual tool as result of the collaboration during the project Wier&Wind.

[**How is scaling up the the seaweed sector looks like?**](https://www.northseafarmers.org/news/20230202-roadmap)

## **Want to know more about the Offshore Test Site**

The Offshore Test Site is accessible for anyone who wants to pilot new technologies or test marine innovations for upscaling. If you want to start commercial activity offshore, this is the place to start! North Sea Farmers has a permit (Waterwet) until 31 December 2028 for using 6km2 field lab to accelerate innovations in the field of sustainable multi-use by facilitating and supporting innovative test projects. Get in touch with Zinzi for any remaining questions.