



GEOLOGICAL  
SURVEY OF  
NORWAY  
- NGU -

# Geomorphometry in the deep Norwegian Sea

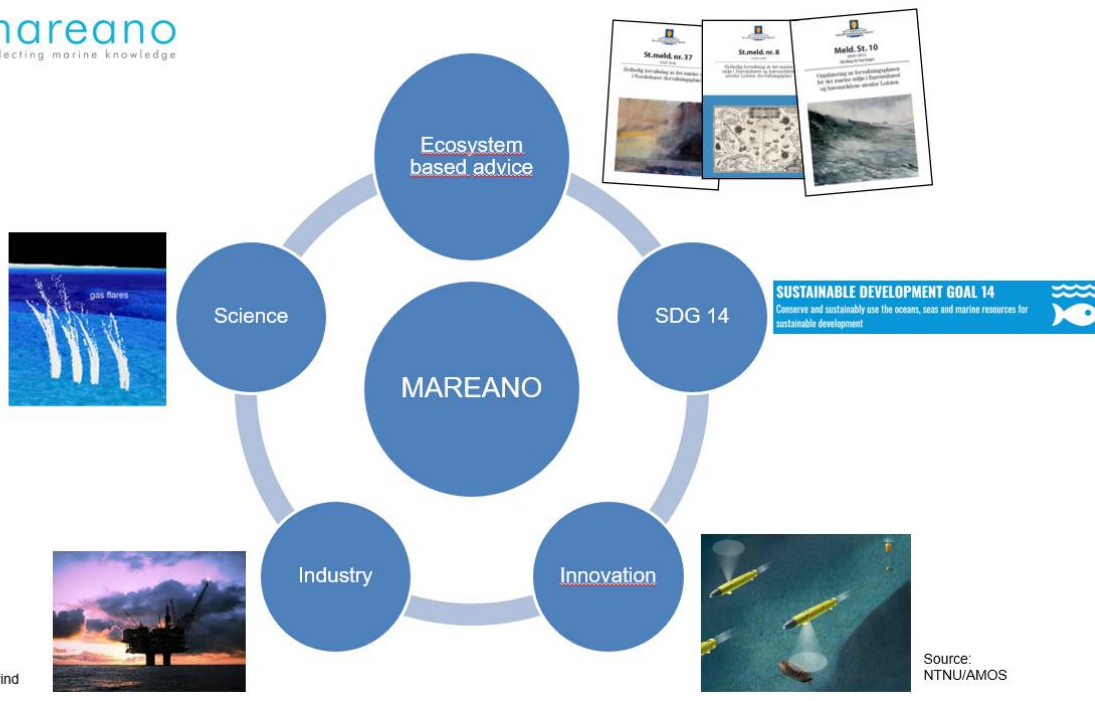
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Terje Thorsnes, Markus Diesing, Shyam Chand  
Geological Survey of Norway (NGU)

**Geomorphometry 2021**

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**Twitter:** [@DrMagzOfTheDeep](https://twitter.com/DrMagzOfTheDeep)

# MAREANO seabed mapping programme, Norway



**Kartverket**

**GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF NORWAY**  
- NGU -

**INSTITUTE OF MARINE RESEARCH**



**Data and maps**

- Bathymetry
- Geology
- Biology
- Environmental status



# MAREANO – into the deep Norwegian Sea

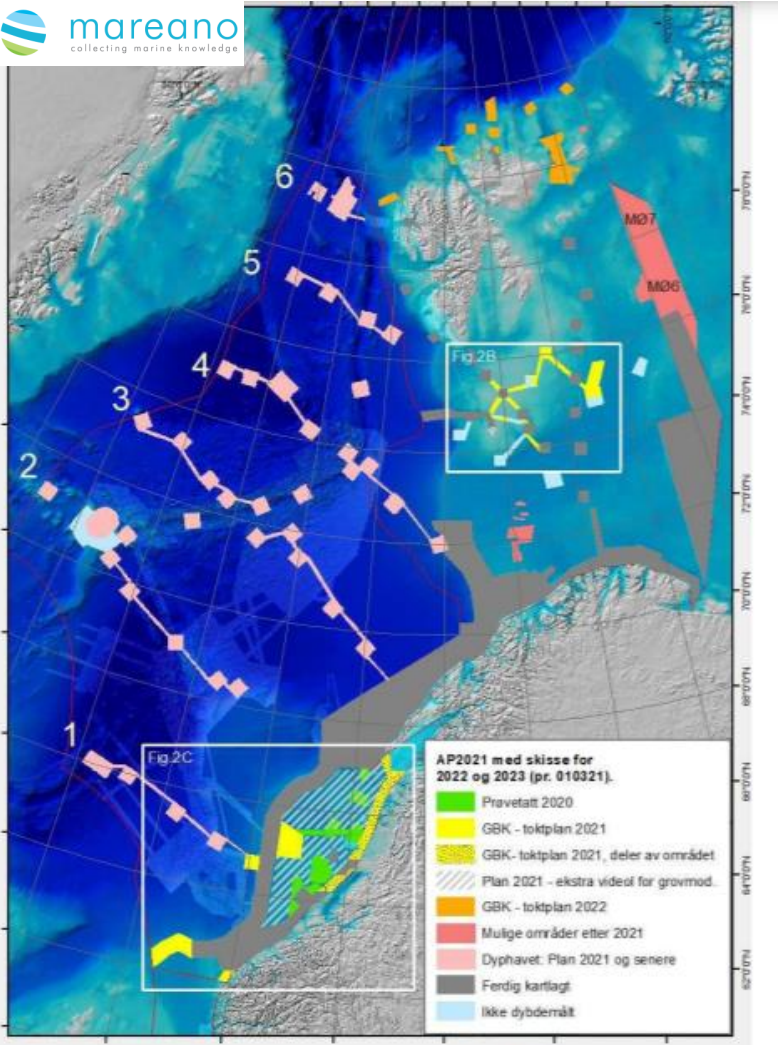


Figure from MAREANO activity plan 2021 (Norwegian)

Shift focus from shelf/slope to deep sea

Varied terrain, environment and seabed habitats

- abyssal plain
- Mid-Atlantic Ridge
- Molloy Deep
- seamounts
- etc.



Knowledge needed for update to management plan

- rich minerals
- unique and vulnerable ecosystems
- geo/bio diversity
- the unknown...

**<< 100% mapping**

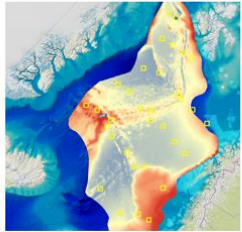


# Pre-survey characterisation the deep Norwegian Sea

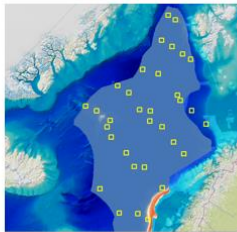


Survey strategy based on statistical analysis and expert assessments

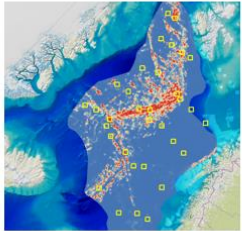
Continuous and categorical data from Emodnet, IMR, NGU and other sources were combined with expert advice from UiB (K.G. Jebsen Centre), HI and NGU



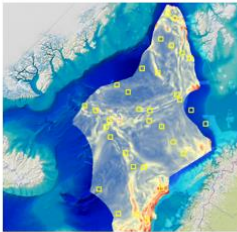
Bathymetry



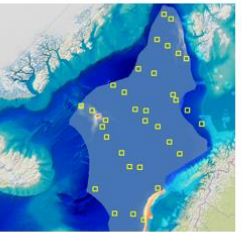
Temperature



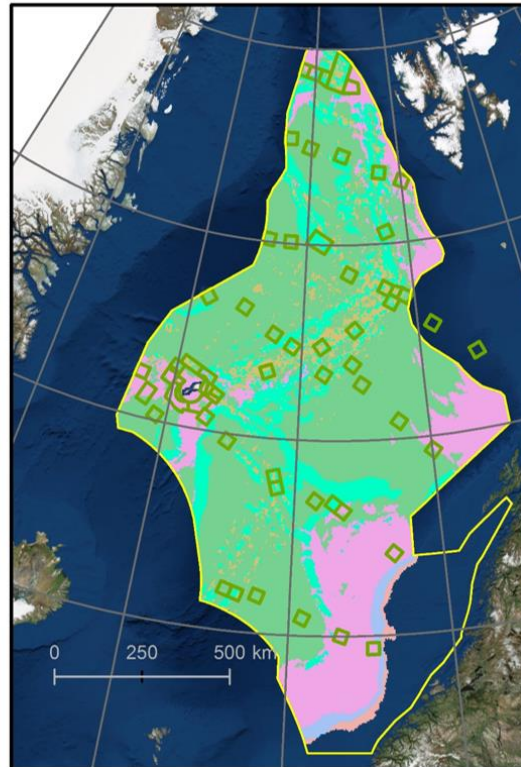
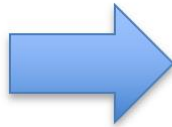
Terrain variation



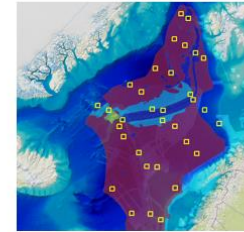
Current velocity



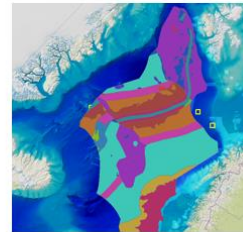
Salinity



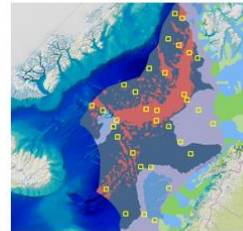
*~40 'representative' boxes*



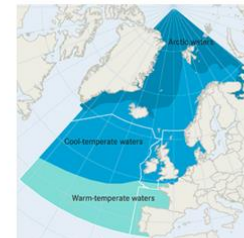
Lithology, Emodnet



Age, Emodnet



Landscape, MAREANO



Biogeographical regions, OSPAR

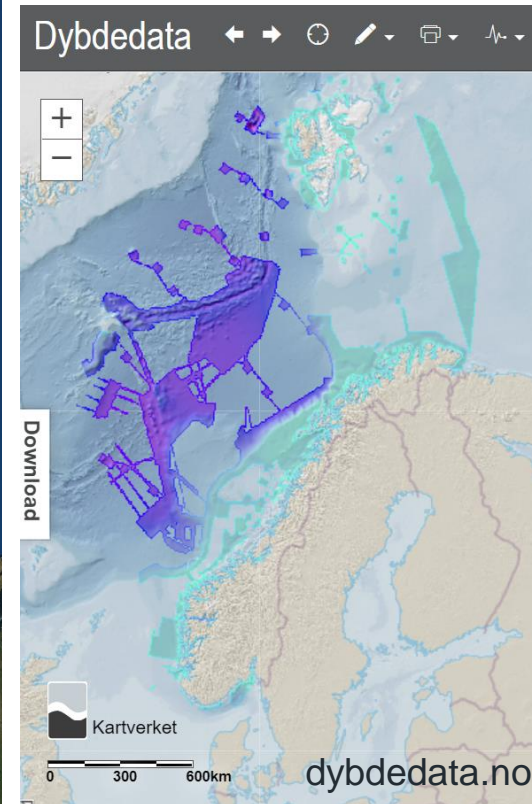
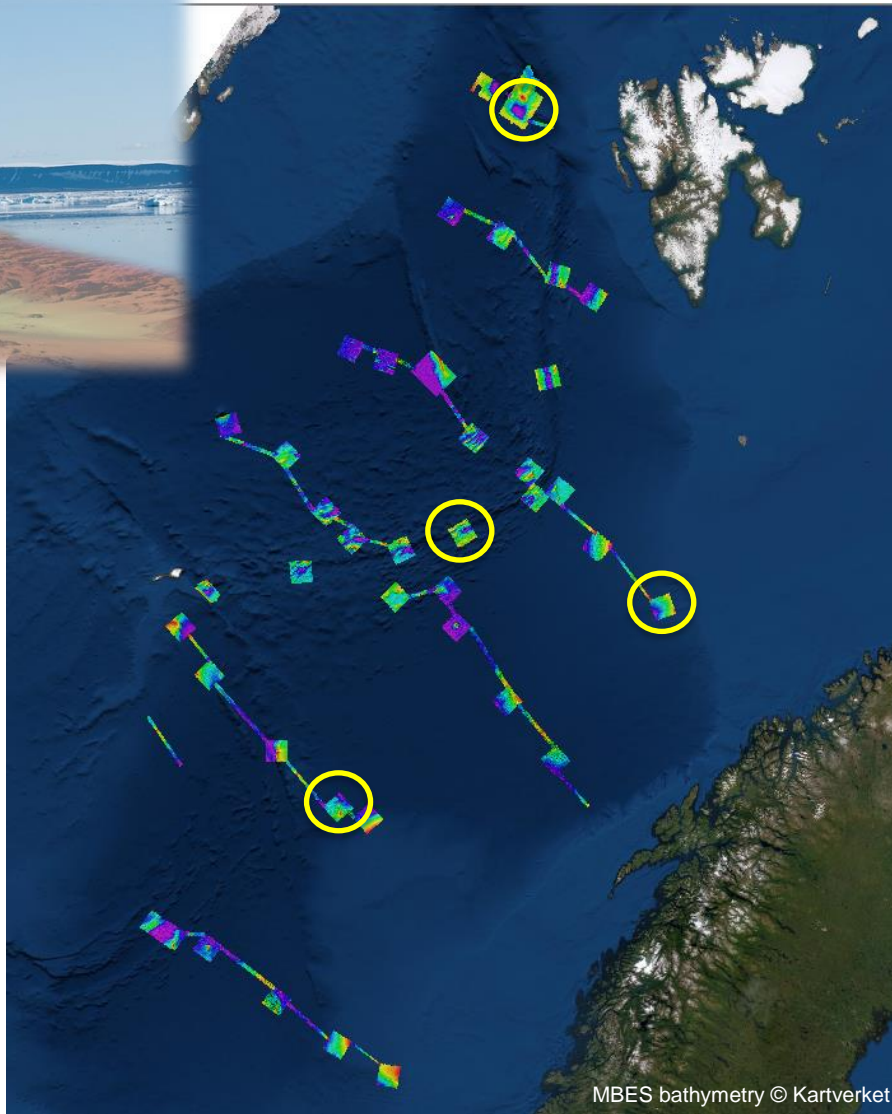


# MAREANO in the deep sea

Image: Kartverket



- Surface-based multibeam echosounder mapping 2019
- 64 000 km<sup>2</sup> mapped across ~40 boxes (~35 x 35 km)



# Example bathymetry data quality

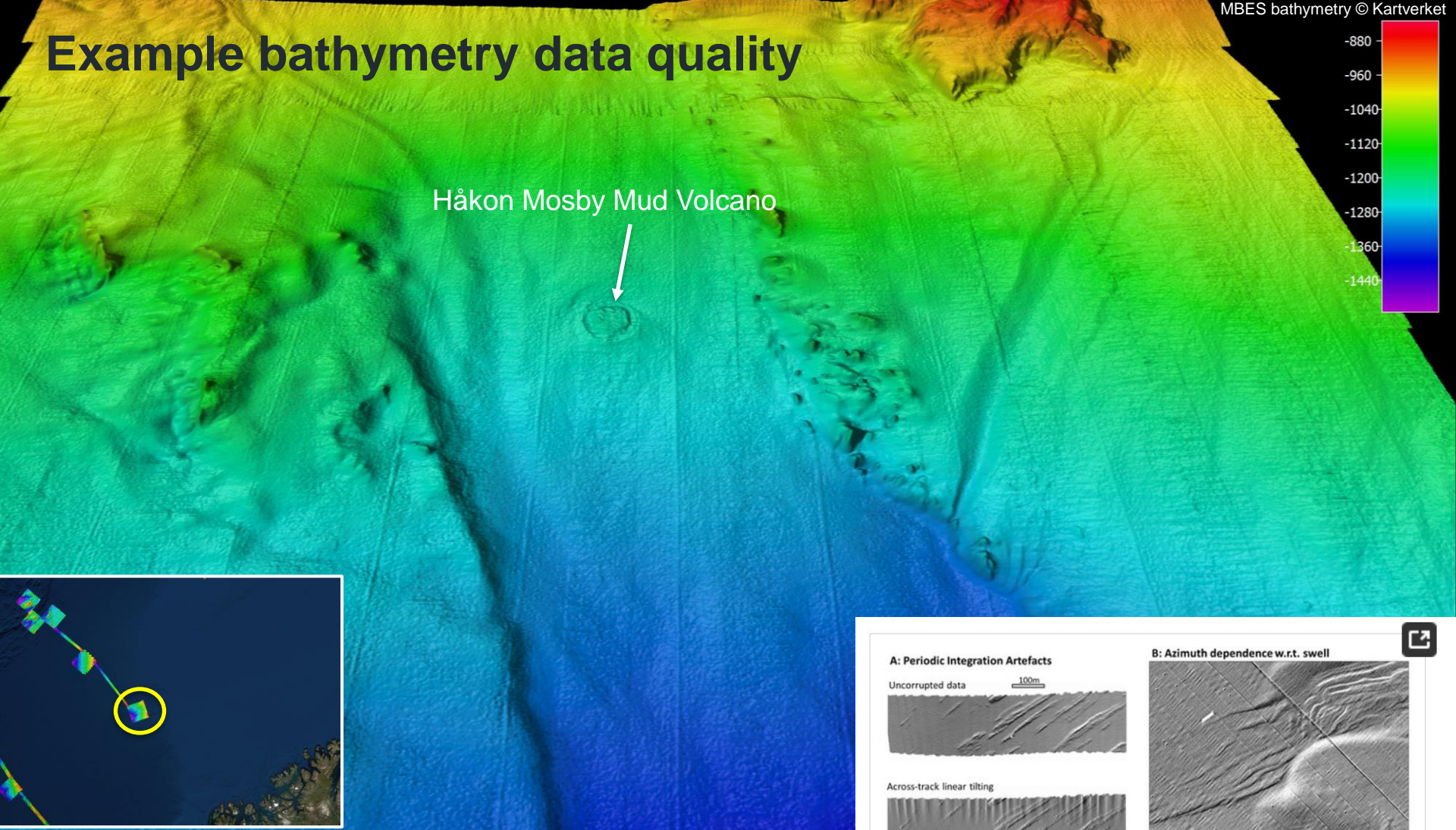
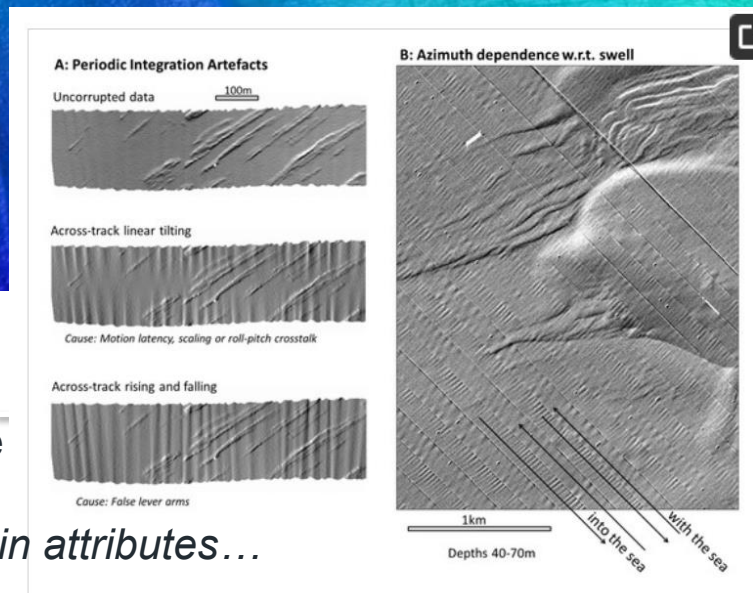


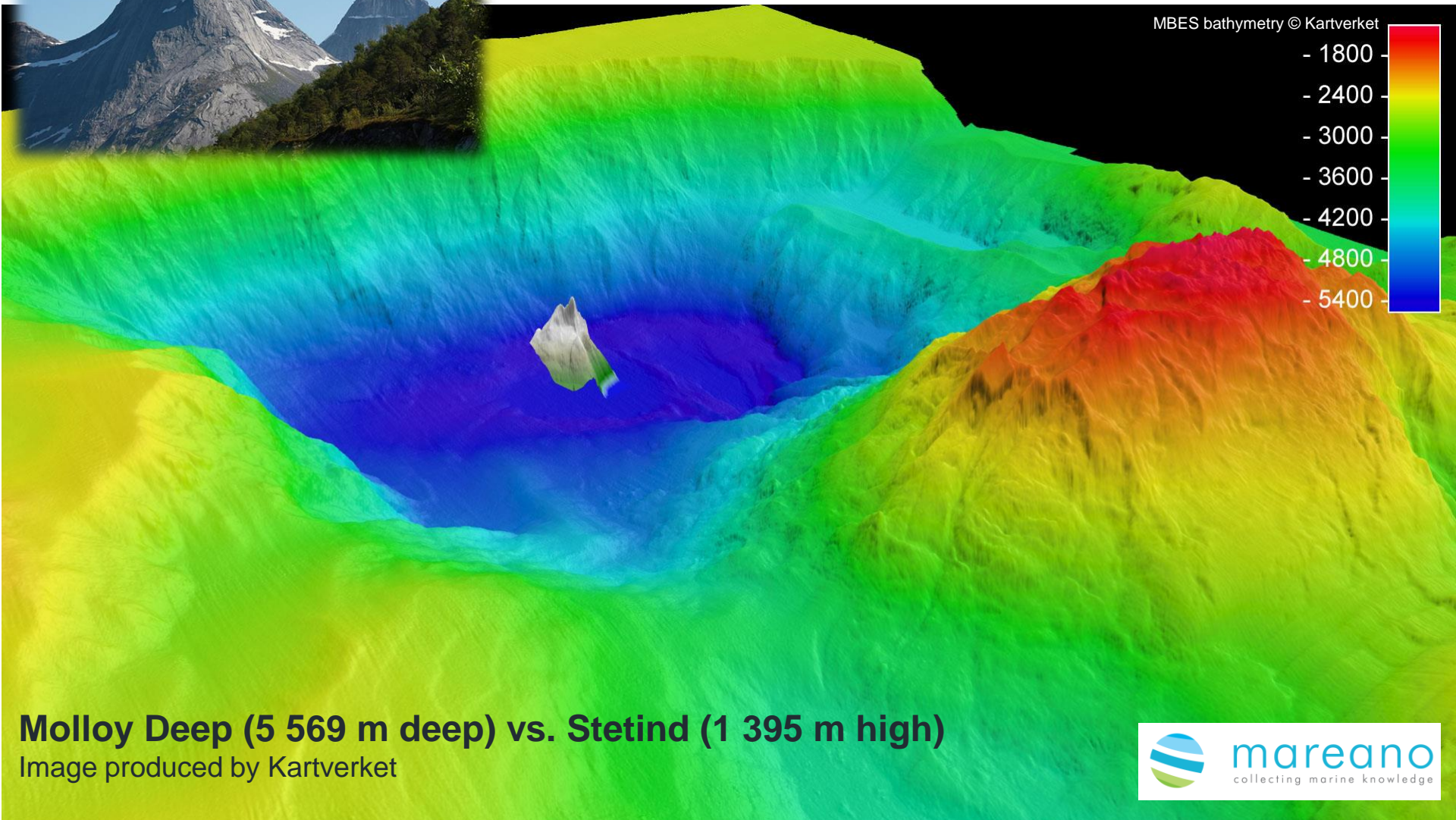
Image: Kartverket



Motion related artefacts  
 c.f. Hughes Clarke (2018)  
 Geosciences Special Issue  
 Marine Geomorphometry  
 ➤ *Consequences for terrain attributes...*



# Extreme depths!



**Molloy Deep (5 569 m deep) vs. Stetind (1 395 m high)**

Image produced by Kartverket



# Relative relief

- Common metric in nature-type mapping
- Depth range within 1 km<sup>2</sup>
- Overview & context cf. mainland based on 100 m bathymetry



*Jotunheimen*





# Adapting tools & methods for deep sea surveys (acoustic, video, sampling)

Towed video



Image: MAREANO



Image: MAREANO



Image: T.Thorsnes

AUV



Image: MAREANO

Grabs and  
other  
sampling  
gear



Image: UiB

ROV

Shallow → Deep

*fast* → *slow*

€ → €



Image: MAREANO

'VAMS'

➤ **Cost effective survey suited to terrain and info needs**



# How can terrain attributes help plan underwater seabed mapping and sampling surveys?

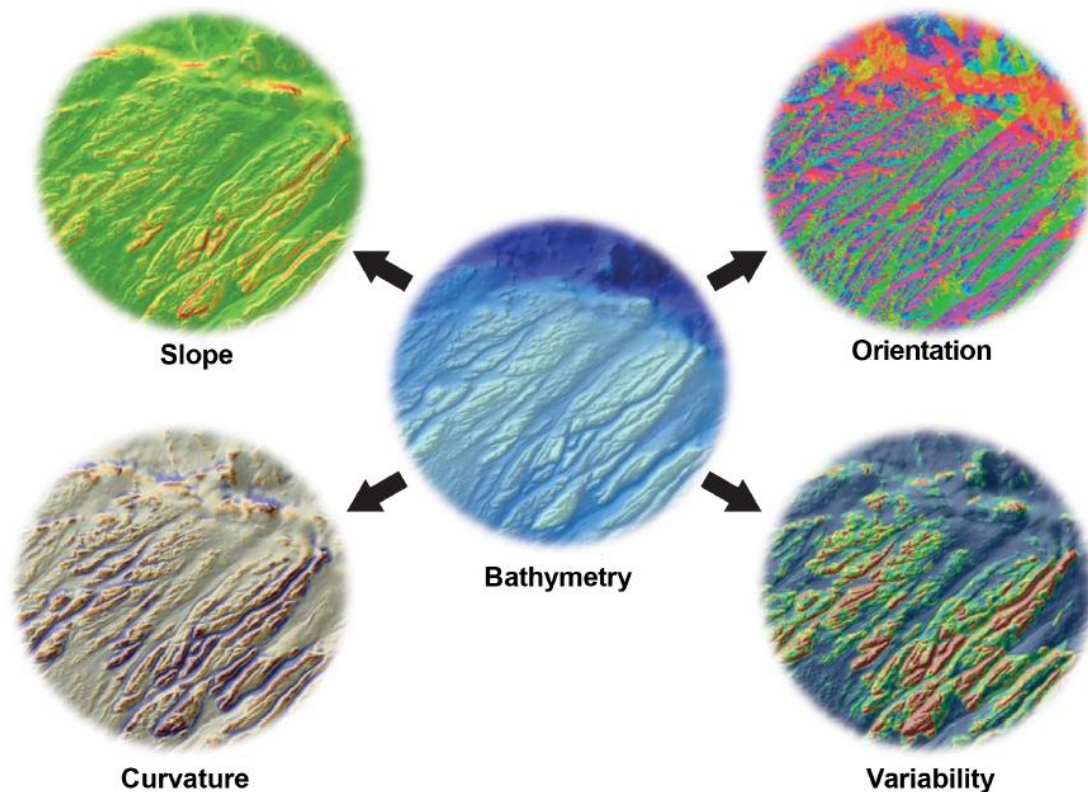


Image: Kongsberg Maritime



Image: UiB

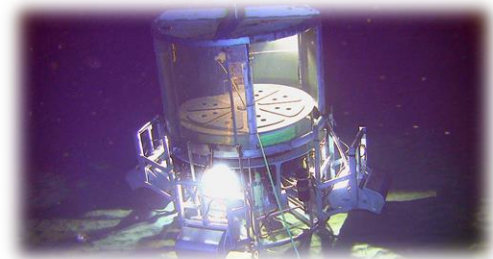
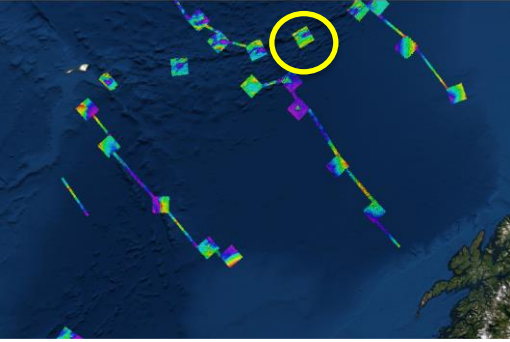


Image: MAREANO

Figure: Lecours et al. 2016

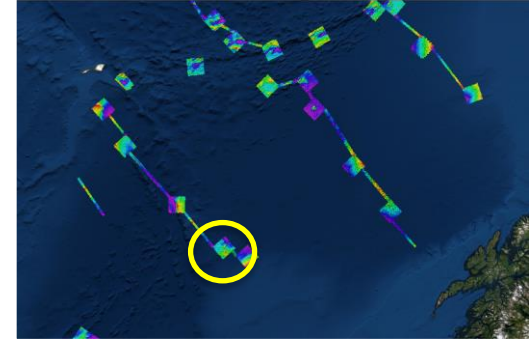
- Intuitive terrain attributes that will help assess accessibility with underwater vehicles etc.
- Which attributes are helpful? At what scales?



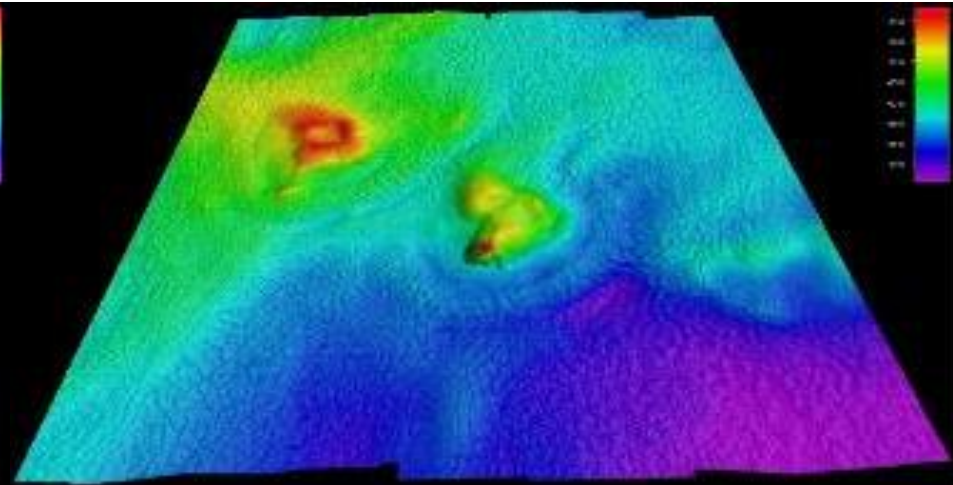
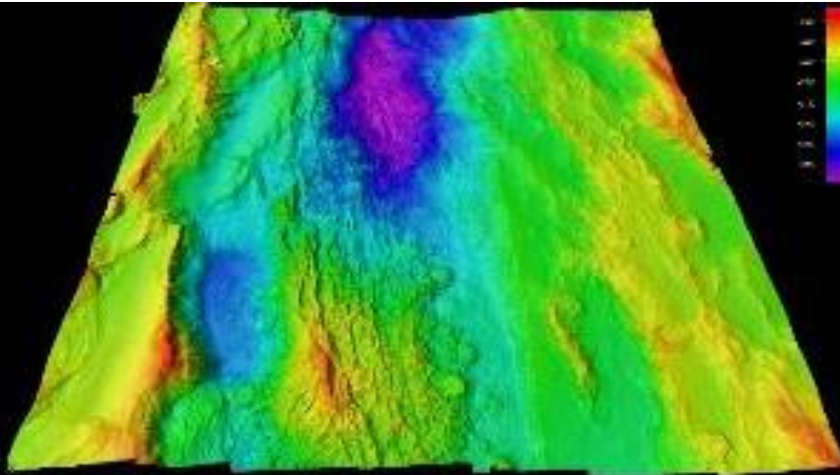


# Survey planning examples

## Rugged vs. flat box



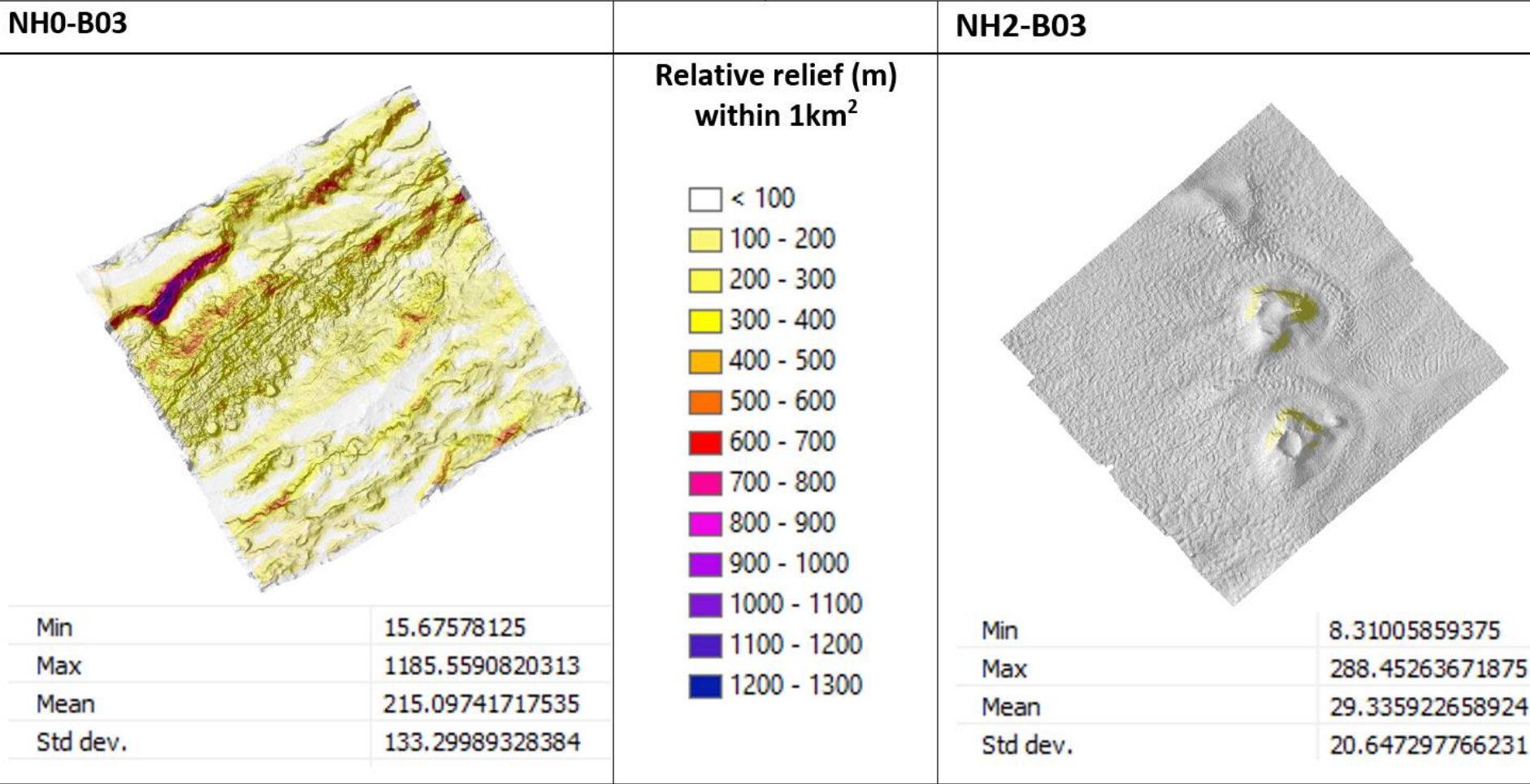
MIBES bathymetry © Kartverket



|        | Complex rugged site at MAR | 'Flat' site with mounds/craters |
|--------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| min    | 1579                       | 2564                            |
| max    | 3564                       | 2996                            |
| mean   | 2457                       | 2822                            |
| s.d.   | 355                        | 76                              |
| median | 2386                       | 2829                            |
| mode   | 2186                       | 2839                            |



# Rugged vs. flat box : Relative Relief

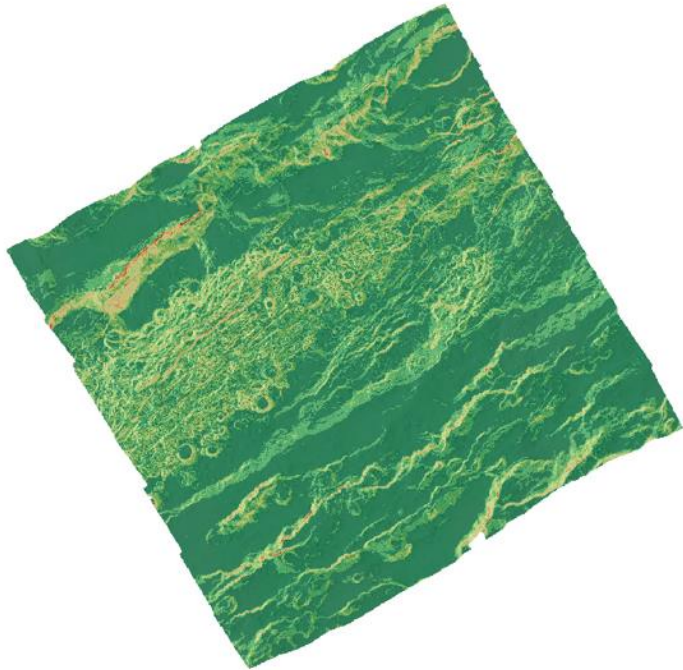


Bathymetry grid: 20 m  
Method: focal statistics

# Flat vs. rugged box: Slope

Bathymetry grid: 20 m  
Method: r.param.scale

**NH0-B03**



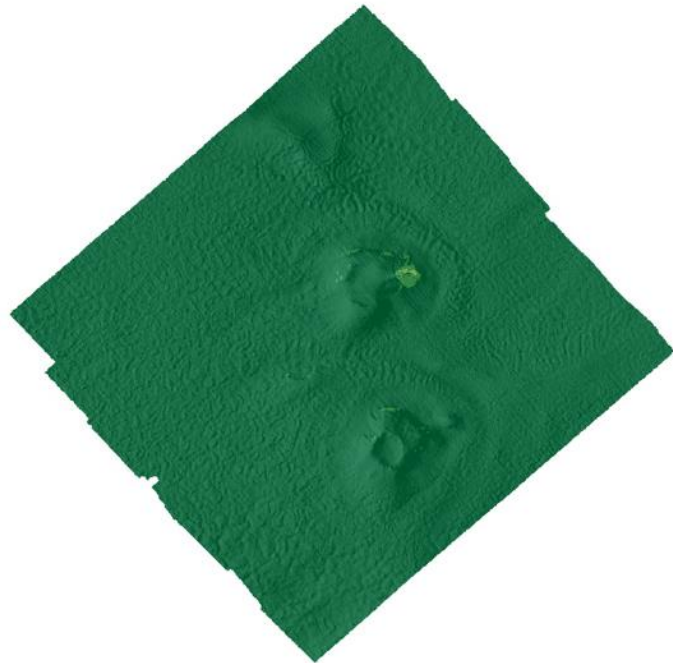
**Local slope (degrees)**  
analysis distance **100 m**

*5x5cells*

- 0 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 30
- 30 - 40
- 40 - 50
- 50 - 60
- 60 - 70
- 70 - 80

|          |                          |
|----------|--------------------------|
| Min      | 0.003583853746234565     |
| Max      | <b>74.97022782541367</b> |
| Mean     | 11.61179306959016        |
| Std dev. | 10.11112662615443        |

**NH2-B03**



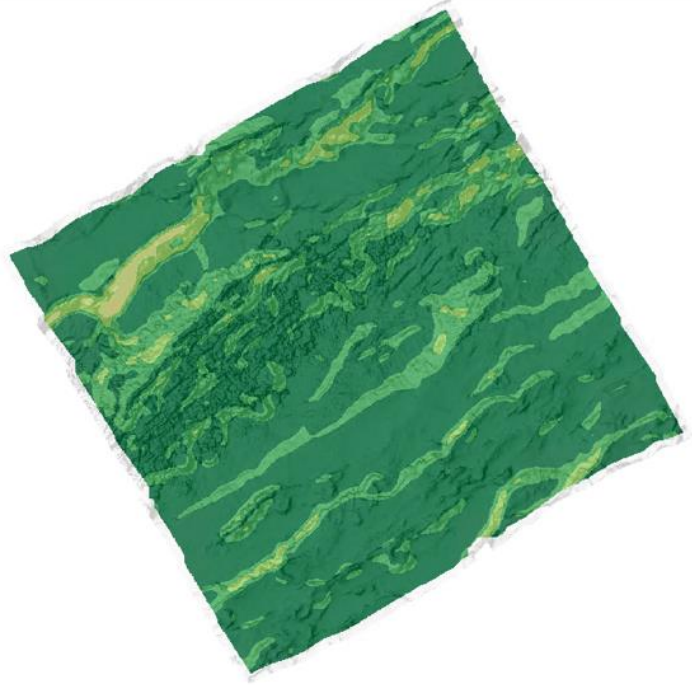
|          |                       |
|----------|-----------------------|
| Min      | 0.0007295366866981664 |
| Max      | 28.32241500969228     |
| Mean     | 1.942384845805645     |
| Std dev. | 1.396008847819817     |



# Flat vs. rugged box: Slope

Bathymetry grid: 20 m  
Method: r.param.scale

NH0-B03



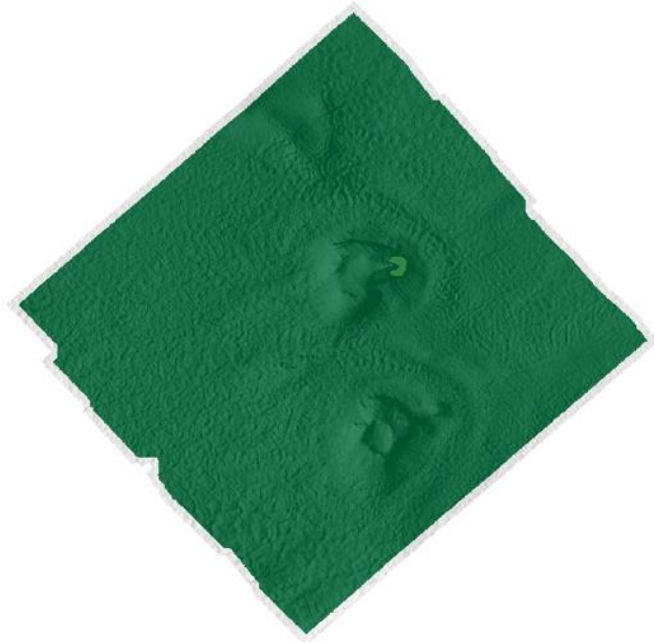
|          |                      |
|----------|----------------------|
| Min      | 0.005330115743774398 |
| Max      | 41.81793128395108    |
| Mean     | 7.734973923295072    |
| Std dev. | 6.003191637588627    |

**Broadscale slope  
(degrees)**  
analysis distance

1 km *49x49cells*

- 0 - 10
- 10 - 20
- 20 - 30
- 30 - 40
- 40 - 50
- 50 - 60
- 60 - 70
- 70 - 80

NH2-B03



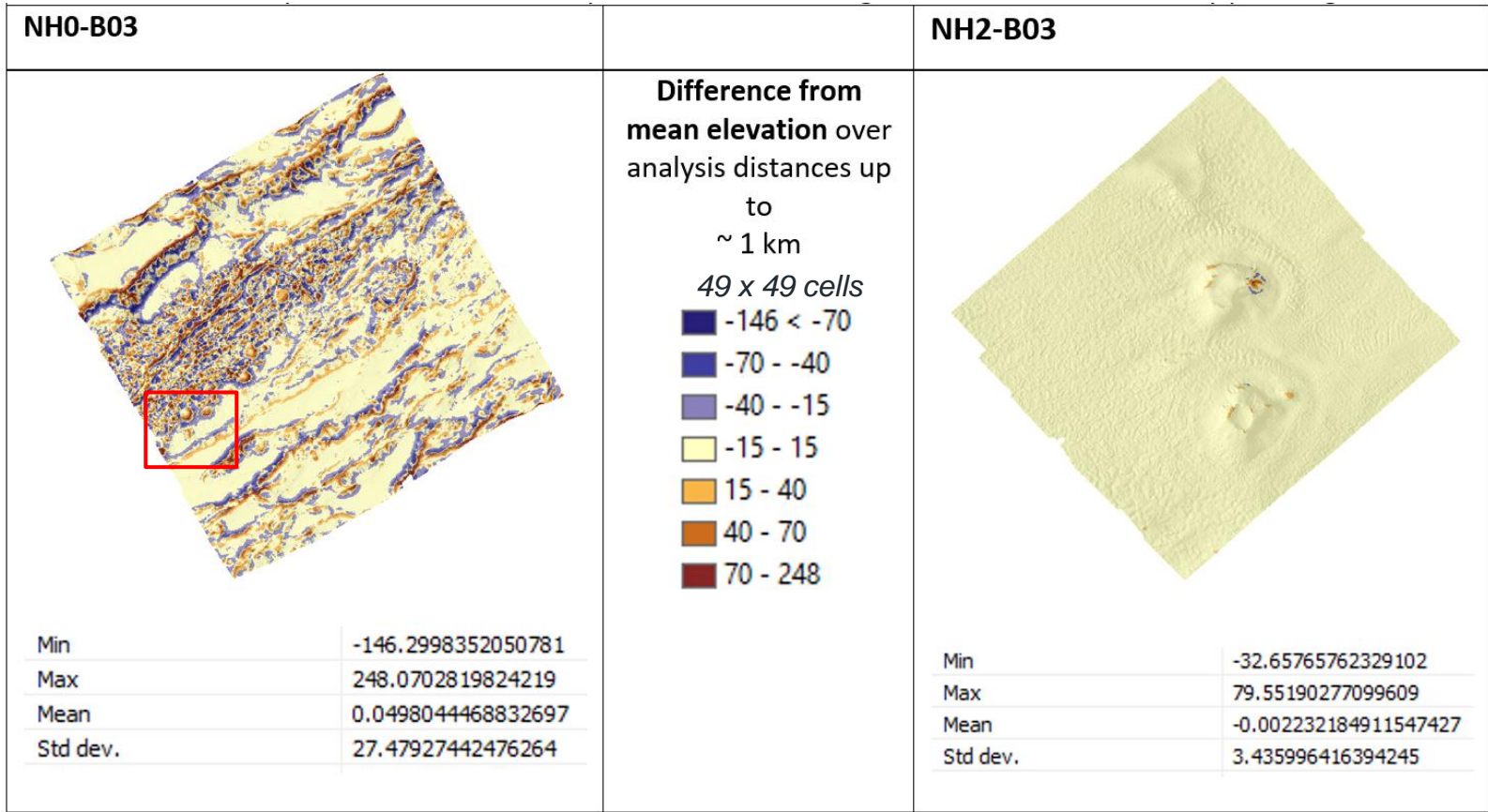
|          |                       |
|----------|-----------------------|
| Min      | 0.0009278240731720338 |
| Max      | 14.64297526278237     |
| Mean     | 0.9556217360983562    |
| Std dev. | 1.02966292685382      |



# Flat vs. rugged box: Local Topographic Position

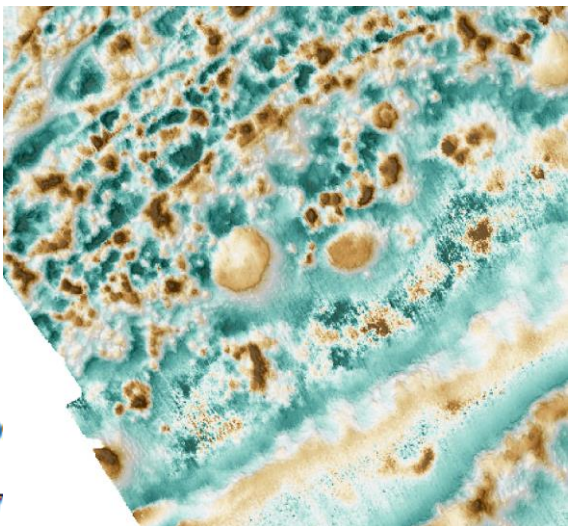
Bathymetry grid: 20 m

Difference from mean elevation – WhiteboxTools – *absolute LTP*

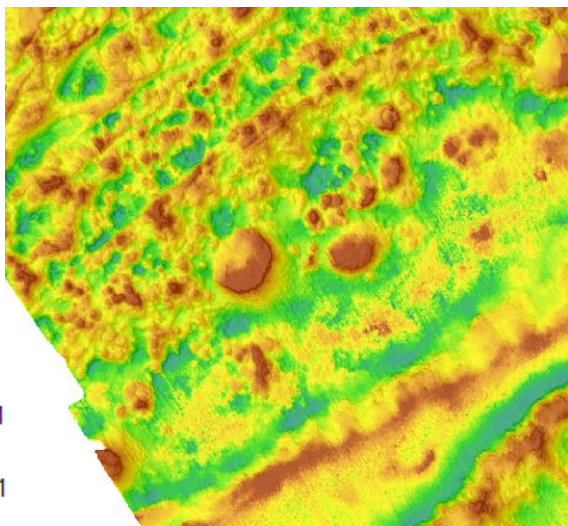


- ~BPI common in marine applications [BTM toolbox for ArcGIS (Wallbridge et al. 2018)]
- Finer scale analysis captures mostly noise/artefacts – multiscale analysis options important. *Alternatives...?*

# Alternative metrics – use relative LTP? e.g. Newman et al. 2018

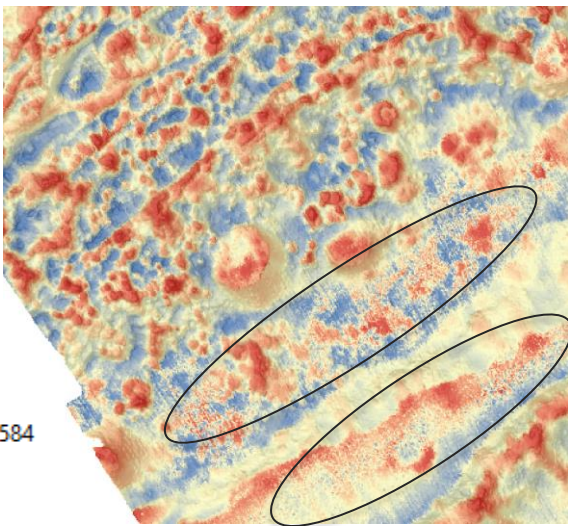


~1 km analysis  
49 x 49 cells



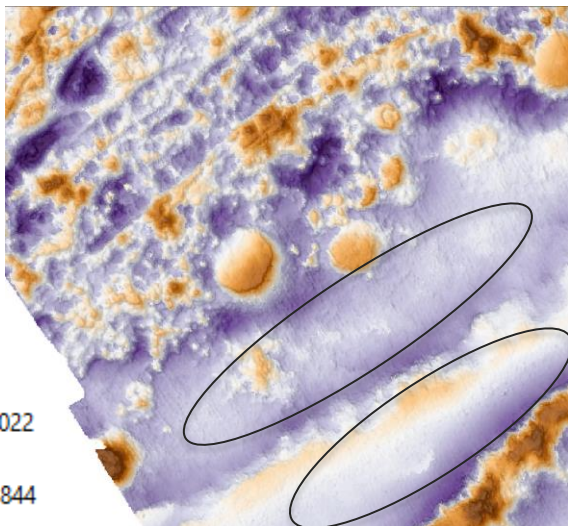
Deviation from mean elevation *relative LTP*

Relative topographic position *relative LTP*



**Artefacts  
vs.  
geomorphology**

**Intuitive values**



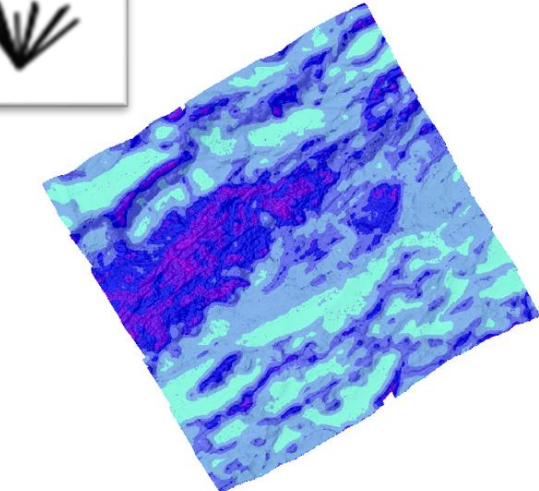
Elevation percentile *relative LTP*

Difference from mean elevation ☺ *absolute LTP*





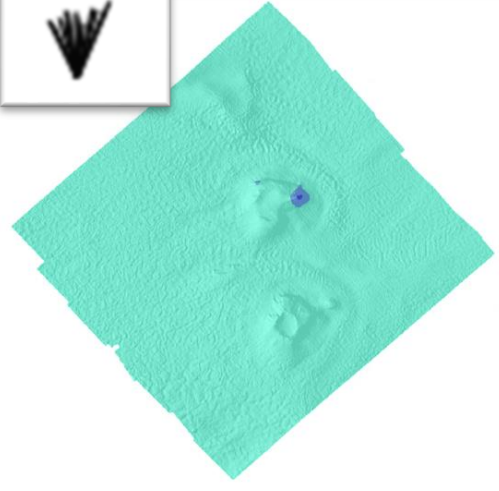
# Flat vs. rugged box: Roughness/ruggedness



**Magnitude of maximum multiscale roughness (degrees) over distances of up to 1 km**

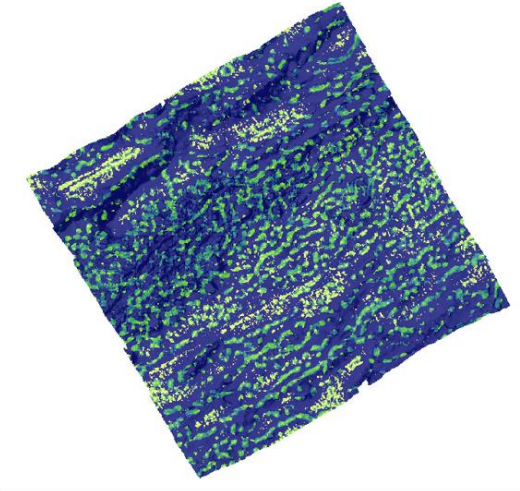
- < 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 15
- 15 - 20
- 20 - 25
- 25 - 30
- 30 - 35

|          |                   |
|----------|-------------------|
| Min      | 2.108821153640747 |
| Max      | 32.15636825561523 |
| Mean     | 10.51933101845606 |
| Std dev. | 5.582087150841384 |



|          |                    |
|----------|--------------------|
| Min      | 1.578232169151306  |
| Max      | 10.61559581756592  |
| Mean     | 2.471979528344201  |
| Std dev. | 0.4405687744265555 |

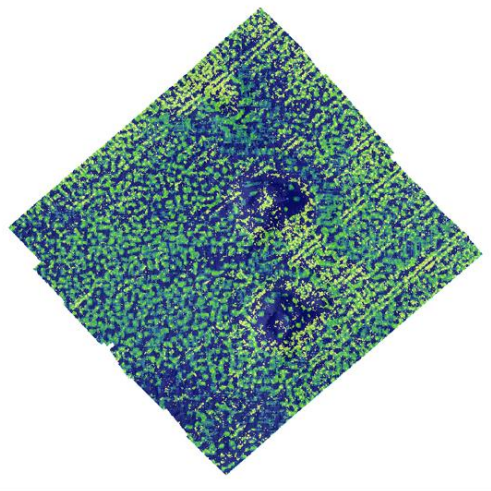
- Lindsay et al. (2019) multiscale roughness based on dispersion of surface normal
- Magnitude and scale outputs
- Max scale ~1km – relevant to AUV/ROV operations
- Bathy grid 20m



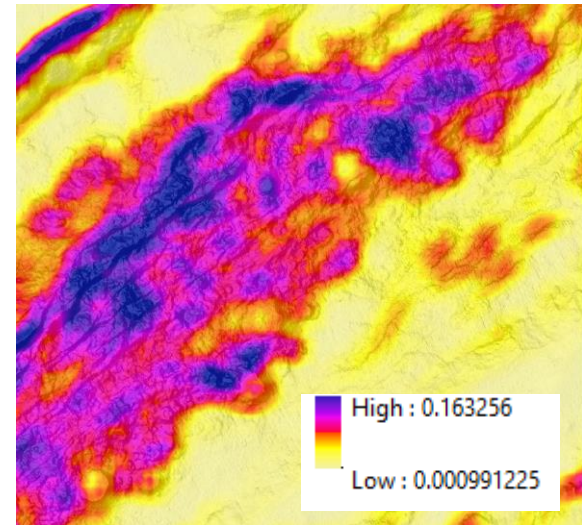
**Scale of maximum multiscale roughness**

- 1 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 15
- 15 - 20
- 20 - 25

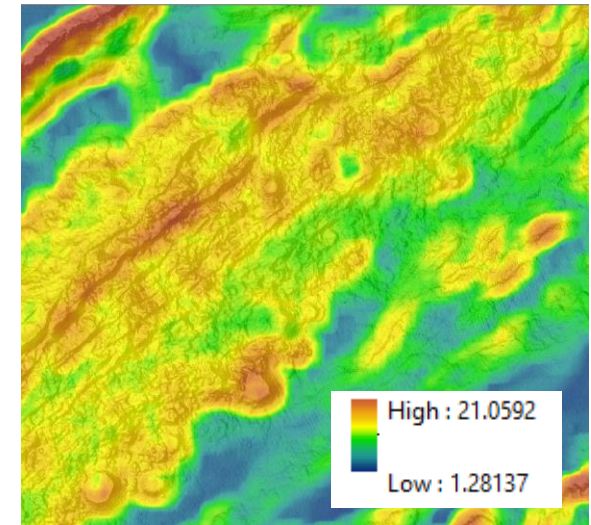
Filter radius in cells



# Alternative roughness/ruggedness metrics...

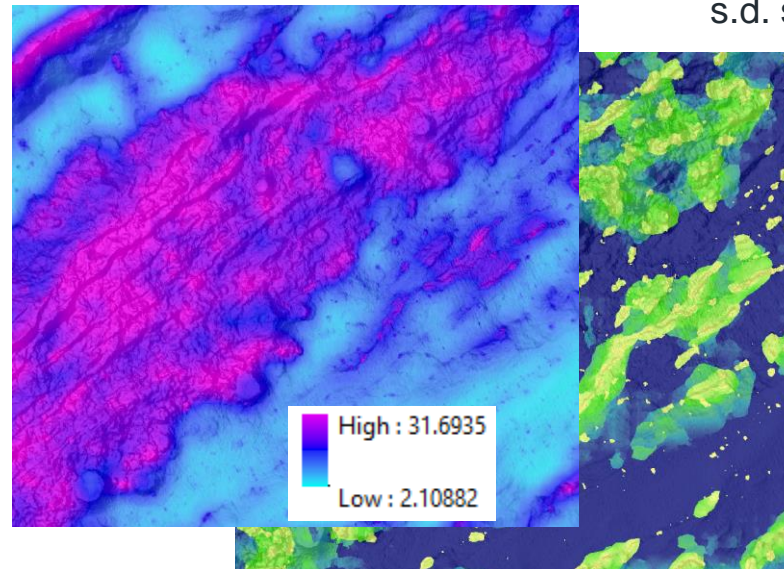


Neighbourhood effects  
vs. intuitive values  
vs. interpretability



s.d. slope (WhiteboxTools) ~1km  
e.g, Grohmann et al. 2010

Vector ruggedness measure ~1km  
Sappington et al. 2007  
(BTM toolbox ++)



Multiscale roughness (magnitude & scale) – combine?



# Conclusions and further work

- Terrain attributes useful for **quantitative characterisation**
- **Intuitive metrics** preferred for survey planning
- Find **thresholds** for safe operation of different gear
- Improve multibeam DTMs for geomorphometric analysis & fuse with regional data?
- Follow up surveys and characterisation of seabed geo/bio/environmental status

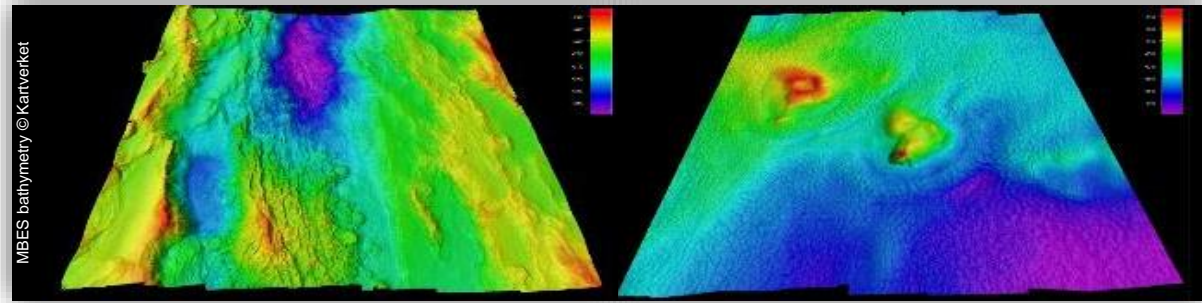


Image: Kongsberg Maritime

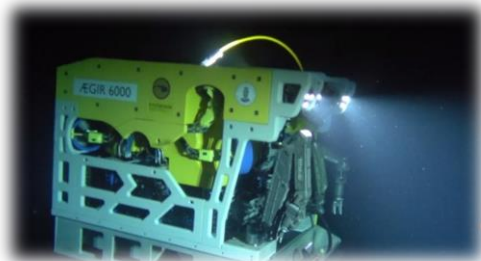


Image: UiB

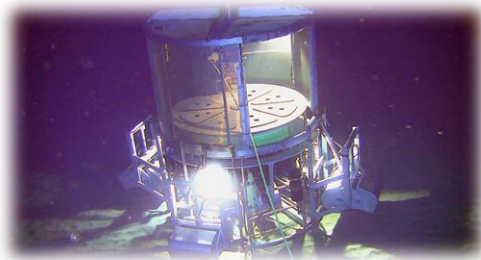


Image: MAREANO

